



CHIRP-N-CHATTER

The Newsletter of the Wintu Audubon Society

Chapter of the National Audubon Society serving Shasta
and eastern portions of Trinity County, California

May / June 2010

May Activities

Field Trips

Bear Creek Watershed Outing and Field Survey
—Saturday, May 1 @ 8:00 am

A rare chance to bird on private property! Wintu Audubon vice-president Esther Cox also belongs to this watershed organization and has interested property owners to learn the bird species that live on their spreads. We will visit several of them. Meet at the Redding Convention Center to carpool or join Esther at the Share-A-Ride parking at the intersection of Hwy. 44 and Black Butte Road. This will be a full day trip, so bring a lunch and water.

Second Saturday Bird Walk—May 8 @ 8:00 am

This open-to-the-public outing will be at Shasta College. Meet in the north parking lot for this ½ day trip. The oak woodlands, wastewater treatment pond, riparian, and fields support a wide variety of species. Connie Word will lead.

Local Weekday Bird Walk – Lema Ranch,
Tuesday, May 18 @ 8:00 am

Lema Ranch, an oasis of open space in Redding, is excellent year-around birding. The ponds, orchards, and fields of the McConnell Foundation Headquarters provide an abundance of birds. We will look for Common Moorhens, rails, Lewis's Woodpecker, Lark Sparrows, and maybe the resident Merlin. This will be a 2-3 hour walk. We will meet at the North Parking Lot off Hemmingway St.

Hemmingway St. is across from Mountain View School on Shasta View Drive. Linda Aldrich will be your leader. Fine public restrooms and paved trails make this a very pleasant and rewarding bird walk.

Hart Ranch in Shasta Valley--
Saturday, May 22
@ 7:00 am

Hart Ranch is a working cattle ranch near Montague, Siskiyou County. Frank and Darliss

Sanderson have arranged for us to visit this private ranch. Highlights should be nesting Sandhill Cranes with chicks. In addition, we should expect to see a number of geese, ducks, waders, raptors, gulls, terns, and passerines. **Please note: Because of the distance we will leave our rendezvous location at the Redding Convention Center at 7:00 am**

General Meeting

Tuesday, May 11, 2010 @ 7:00 pm
A Birders' Tour of South Florida

Bill and Judee Adams, distinguished photographers and birders return to the Turtle Bay Theatre this time to present their recent 10-day trip to the area south of Tampa that included:

- * Corkscrew Marsh and Swamp;
- * Six Mile Cypress Preserve;

WINTU A.S. CHAPTER MEETINGS ARE ON THE SECOND TUESDAY OF THE MONTH AT 7:00 PM in the theatre of the Turtle Bay Exploration Park, 840 Auditorium Drive, Redding.

BOARD MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH AT 7:00 PM in the Turtle Bay Exploration Park classroom adjacent to the visitor center. All members are urged to attend to contribute information and new ideas.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

May 11: Bill & Judee Adams; **A Birders' Tour of South Florida**

June 8: **Annual Picnic**

- * Marco Island (Burrowing Owls);
- * Everglades (2 days);
- * Florida Keys (2 ½ days) including a trip out to the Dry Tortugas;
- * Finally, a couple days searching for Parrots, Parakeets, and Macaws around Miami.

Some of the neat sightings were Masked and Red-footed Booby, 15 species of warblers, Red Whiskered Bulbul, Blue and Yellow Macaws, and lots of egrets and herons.

2010 Shasta Chapter CNPS Garden Tour

After a year off, the Native Plant Society is offering another tour of local gardens that feature native plants. As in years past, Wintu Audubon will have tables at some of the gardens to offer literature on birds and how to invite them into people's yards; and to sell books. There are three private gardens on this year's tour: one mixes native plants with edible plants; another shows how native plants can be used to create a formal effect and the third uses native plants along with horticultural varieties to give the lush effect of an English garden. The two public gardens are at Carter House in Lake Redding Park and at the Gaia Hotel in Anderson. To attend the garden tour, you may purchase tickets at the local plant nurseries. **To volunteer at one of our tables (and get in free), sign up at our May meeting or call Linda Aldrich at 223-5341.** Many of the people who come to native plant tours are also interested in birds and the environment, so this is a very stimulating tabling opportunity.

June Activities

Field Trips

A Bluebird Nest Box Tour—June 5 @ 8:00 am

Join Larry Jordan, the Shasta County Coordinator for the California Bluebird Recovery Program, to learn how to monitor birdhouses. Larry will lead you on a tour inside the Lema Ranch nest boxes to check on the baby Western Bluebirds and Tree Swallows. Meet Larry at 8:00 am in the North Parking Lot off Hemmingway St. (see directions found for May 18 outing)

Annual Picnic

Tuesday, June 8 @ 6:00 pm

As is our custom, the last general meeting before our summer meeting hiatus will be a bring-your-own picnic at the Camden House (Tower House) at Whiskeytown National Recreation Area. We will enjoy good birding and good fellowship in this lovely setting. The parking lot for the Camden House is on the left side of Hwy. 299W just before the turnoff to French Gulch. Some members may wish to carpool or to ride with others who have a seasonal or permanent pass for Whiskeytown by assembling in the parking lot of the Sunset Market on Eureka Way in Redding at 6:00 pm.

Camp-out at Lassen Volcanic National Park—Saturday & Sunday, June 26-27.

We enjoyed the birding and camping at the Lost Creek Group Campground the last two years so much that we are planning a repeat. Group Camp Sites 5 and 6 have been reserved for the nights of June 25 and 26. We have again invited the Altacal Audubon Society and the Redwood Region Audubon Society to join us. Folks can either camp at Lost Creek or drive up for either or both days. Campers and day trippers will meet at the Redding Convention Center at 7:30 Saturday morning. We will bird Manzanita Lake and vicinity, meeting the Altacal and Redwood Region folks at noon at the Lost Creek Group Camp. Last year notable sightings were Pileated and Black-backed Woodpeckers, a hen Sooty Grouse with 5 chicks and Green-tailed Towhees. Lost Creek has primitive facilities—pit toilets and no electricity, but potable water is available. Day trippers for Sunday, June 28, will meet at the campground at 8:30 am. Bill Oliver will lead.

Please Note: Wintu Audubon Society assumes no responsibility for injuries, personal or otherwise, incurred while attending society-sponsored activities and will not be held liable for accidents. You attend at your own risk. A responsible adult must accompany minors on all outings. Rain cancels all activities.

Trip Reports

Second Saturday Birdwalk at Shasta College--- April 10

Five participants saw 46 species of birds under cloudy skies with a few drops of rain. Best birds were first-of-season Western Kingbirds, Lewis' Woodpeckers, one male and several female Common Yellowthroats and Cinnamon Teal. There was a male Ruddy Duck in full, garish breeding plumage on the sewer pond. Generally, all of the birds were very colorful and singing in accordance with the season. One surprise was a Green Heron in the top of a large oak tree. A very interesting morning was had by the group.

Dye Creek Preserve and Cone Grove Park, Tehama County---Saturday, April 17

Seven birders spent a beautiful day in Tehama County birding Cone Grove Park, Foothill Rd. and the Dye Creek Preserve. A total of 69 species were seen. Highlights were: a Golden Eagle nest in a cavity in a spectacular rock cliff face across Dye Creek Canyon, with one adult and one chick present. The adult later flew out and gave us wonderful looks as it soared above the cliffs. An American Kestrel nest was spotted further up the trail in another rock cliff face. The cavity looked tiny in the massive rock and we would never have found it if an eagle eyed birder hadn't seen a Kestrel fly in. These are the unexpected moments that keep us birding.



he latest Wintu A.S. news and
birding information visit our
website:

www.wintuaudubon.org

Black Rail

The Black Rail is not a bird. It is a member of the order *Invisiblae*. It is a noise. It has no visible manifestation. You may "tick" one but nobody will believe you. Just ask Bill Oliver, Ken Bachman, George Horn, and Michele Swartout. They have all visited Upper Butte Creek near Chico and heard the "*kik kee derr*" literally at their feet and never saw anything

2009-2010 OFFICERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS & DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

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Ken Bachman, John Coon, Mike Damoth, Connie Word,
Alicia Young

Birding Tips from the Fertile Imagination of Pete Dunne

In all but a very few very plain cases, the underparts of Orange-crowned Warbler show blurry or shadowy streaks.....and an-eyelash-fine dark eye-line.

Hint: If you are looking at a warbler that is utterly plain and devoid of any distinguishing field marks, you are probably looking at an immature Yellow.

-Gleaned by Ken Bachman from *Pete Dunne's Essential Field Guide Companion*