

Wintu Audubon Society

Activities – Events – Projects Apr 2009 – Mar 2010

The following is a resume' of events, arranged chronologically, which present a gross overview of chapter activities for the elective year, April 2009 through March 2010. Some of these are chapter oriented to improve membership and funding, some are environmentally oriented to preserve space and species, and some are public service oriented to inform, improve and protect our local area. These events represent the output of both the chapter officers and the membership.

Continuing 2009 **Turtle Bay Exploration Park and Museum**

Wintu Audubon has a collaborative working arrangement with Turtle Bay Exploration Park and Museum. In return for providing periodic bird walks, serving in an advisory capacity on bird life and habitat, and opening our meetings and programs to Turtle Bay membership, we have been given free use of their classroom and theater facilities. Our program and meeting schedules are included in their bi-monthly calendars, and both organizations benefit through mutual support.

Continuing 2009 **Association with Shasta Land Trust**

Wintu Audubon has been a contributing member of the Shasta Land Trust since its beginning. In addition to our annual membership donation, chapter members donate their time/talent to host events such as Catered Bird walks, used as a fund raiser by the Land Trust. Shasta Land Trust is successful locally in keeping ranch/farmland from development through conservation easements, to the degree that property owners now seek them out.

Continuing 2009 **www.wintuadubon.org**

Over the past four years, the Wintu Audubon website has grown to one of the most informative in the state. Our webmaster, has incorporated links to a mass of information of use to the general public with respect to area birding, bird care, habitat, and the environment and the site grows weekly. The chapter has recently received messages of appreciation for completeness and content from users.

Continuing 2009 **Audubon Shade Grown Coffee Sale**

The chapter has a continuing Audubon Coffee Sales program initiated by Nola Wade, Treasurer. Orders are taken and deliveries made at regular meetings. Banked by the chapter, this program contributes to our general fund.

Continuing 2009 **New and Used Book Sales**

Wintu Audubon conducts new and used book sales at our regular meetings. These books are contributed by members and friends and resold at substantial savings. Titles are bird related subjects, photography, natural sciences,

environment, and similar. When new books are available at below market prices, the chapter purchases them for resale at meetings and mission related affairs. All profits to the general fund.

Continuing 2009 **Watershed District Involvement and Assistance.**

Three Chapter Officers, Bea Currie, Nola Wade, and Esther Cox are members of local watershed groups and attend meetings. Bea and Nola attend meetings of the Stillwater - Churn Creek and the ShastaWest Watershed Groups, and Esther Cox is a member of the Bear Creek Watershed Group. They affect liaison for the chapter and there is a good information exchange and working relationship.

April 2009 **Nature Walk at Anderson River Park**

On 3 April, a nature walk was conducted at Anderson River Park for the Center for Spiritual Living of Redding, CA. conducted by Linda Aldrich. Seven adults attended.

April 2009 **Bird Program for the California Retired Teachers Assn.**

April 9, Don Goodykoontz, Education Chair, gave a thirty minute slide show presentation on Shasta County Birds to 39 members of the California Retired Teachers Association at one of their regular monthly meetings.

April 2009 **“Planting for Birds” Featured in Local Newspaper.**

April 11, the Record Searchlight, Redding’s daily newspaper, ran a ¾ page plus article with photos entitled, “Creature Comforts” in it’s Home & Garden Section. The article featured comments and planting recommendations from Linda Aldrich, Wintu Director and Program Coordinator, plus several other home owners, gardeners, and biologists. Wintu Audubon Society was mentioned several times in the article. Our chapter provides handouts on bird friendly planting at local events, much of it prepared by Linda and the chapter has gained a reputation as a local authority as a result.

April 2009 **Bear Creek Watershed Bird Census**

18 April, Esther Cox, Chapter Vice President, led a team of volunteers to conduct our annual bird census for the Bear Creek Watershed. Four properties were visited, fifty one species identified, and information shared with property owners and the watershed management team. An effort is made to identify nesting species where possible.

April 2009 **Program for California Native Plant Society**

21 April, Linda Aldrich and Esther Cox presented a program to the Shasta Chapter of the California Native Plant Society on “Attracting Birds to your Backyard”. The audience was in excess of 20 adults.

April 2009 **Redding Whole Earth & Watershed Festival**

April 23, Redding held its first combined Whole Earth and Watershed Festival at City Hall Community Room and on the City Hall Sculpture Park grounds. The

theme was “A Green Environment and Sustainability”. Wintu Audubon staffed a table at the festival and provided Audubon flyers, free back issues of birding and Audubon magazines donated by members, as well as Audubon Shade Grown Coffee and books for sale. Linda Aldrich and Bea Currie coordinated the very successful chapter outreach effort.

May 2009

State Parks Bird Checklists

6 May, Bob Yutzy, Wintu Chapter Director, was contacted by the Superintendent Cascade Sector, Northern Buttes District, California State Parks, to see if chapter volunteers might be interested in assisting in developing bird checklists for specific state parks in the district. Assistance was offered and we await further input from the superintendent.

August 2009

Bluebird Trail in New Community Park

The 20 August edition of the East Valley Times Country Living section contained a half page spread with photos of nesting Western Bluebirds. The article submitted by Larry Jordan, Wintu AS Director, Webmaster, and Shasta County Coordinator for the California Bluebird Recovery Program, outlined efforts to establish bluebird trails to assist in species recovery. Larry also outlined how he recognized the new Palo Cedro City Park as prime bluebird habitat, approached the Park Board of Directors for permission, and ultimately installed nest boxes in March of 2009. This first season, two successful broods totaling ten Western Bluebirds fledged. The article also contained information of other cavity nesting species in the area which might use the boxes, information on box construction, and valuable information on professional assistance in the area. A great example of working with a small community to promote conservation and instill community pride.

August 2009

An Address to the Humanist Peace Society

23 August, Linda Aldrich spoke to the Humanist Peace Society on “The Effects of Dietary Choices on the Environment”. Linda is chapter programs chair and a well known vegetarian locally. Over twenty adults attended.

October 2009

Shingletown Library Owl Display

In early October, Esther Cox, Chapter Vice President, put together a display case for the Shingletown Public Library featuring an Owl theme. The display ran for a month.

October 2009

PRBO Bird Count Article Features Wintu AS

A 1 October article in the local Record Searchlight Newspaper included a substantial input from Wintu Director Bob Yutzy regarding bird counts in general and their contribution to the general knowledge on bird populations and their distribution and movements. The original PRBO article featured information promoting an annual Point Reyes Bird-a-Thon to raise funds supporting PRBO

activities.

October 2009

Wintu Audubon Society Donations

17 October, CH2M Hill Engineering of Redding hosted a “Rising Star Gala” benefit to support the Whiskeytown Environmental School and Schroeder Planetarium. Wintu officers and members donated 2 spotting scopes and a tripod, bird houses and feeders, books and various smaller items for their live and silent auctions. A substantial donation. The event brought in over \$20,000. Chapter President George Horn coordinated the Wintu AS effort.

October 2009

Return of the Salmon Festival

On 17 October, under the organizational direction and guidance of Bea Currie, Corresponding Secretary and Connie Word, Director, a team of chapter volunteers manned a popular table at the annual “Return of the Salmon Festival” sponsored by the Coleman National Fish Hatchery. This year the festival drew an attendance of over 10,500 providing a huge conservation oriented audience. No book sales were authorized this year, but much environmental information was given away including back issues of Audubon Magazine, Birding , Birder’s Digest, and other conservation oriented magazines and books donated by chapter members. A popular feature was how to make a California Quail call taught by President George Horn’s daughter Alika. A very successful and worthwhile outreach chapter endeavor, and a chance to network with other conservation oriented groups.

October 2009

Eukia NorCal Audubon Regional Conference

Claudia Yerion, Conservation Chair, and Larry Jordan, Wintu Website Webmaster, attended the NorCal Audubon Regional Conference on 24 October at Eukia. Claudia gave a presentation on her work with the Hatchet Ridge Wind Farm Project, and Larry spoke on his Burrowing Owl Nest-box Project.

October 2009

Wind Farm Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

As site work for the Hatchet Ridge Wind Farm Project commenced, a charter for the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was circulated among potential members. Wintu AS has been invited to set on the TAC as a voting member with Claudia Yerion, Conservation Chair, as primary member and Rose Powder, Chapter Recording Secretary, as alternate. Inclusion of an environmental group voting member on the TAC is a precedent setting move for California wind projects. Other TAC members are representatives from Shasta County Planning, California Department of Fish and Game; US Fish and Wildlife Service; and, the project owner, Pattern Energy.

October 2009

TANC Power-line Project Halted

The planning and permitting process for the TANC power-line project was halted due to massive public outcry and several power companies withdrawing their support as partners. WAPA removed the project from the federal register. Claudia Yerion, Chapter Conservation Chair, worked with Audubon California Policy

Director Dan Taylor providing him with an analysis of the impact of the project on our local region. Additionally, Claudia prepared a twenty page written response to the Notice of Preparation for the project.

November 2009 **Hosting the 2010 NorCal Audubon Regional Conference**
At the November Wintu AS Board Meeting, it was unanimously decided that Wintu Audubon would host the 2010 NorCal Audubon Regional Conference currently scheduled for 23 November 2010. Arrangements are going forward and it is hoped the McConnell Foundation facilities at Lema Ranch will be available.

November 2009 **Burrowing Owl Nesting Box Project**
On 12 November, Larry Jordan, Wintu AS Webmaster, advised that the Chapter would receive a Collaborative Funding grant from California Audubon for 2010. Larry and Claudia Yerion, Wintu AS Conservation Chair, submitted a grant application to install artificial burrows for Burrowing Owls, a “species of Special Concern” in California. Larry had initiated the project, made contact with local property owners in Shasta and Tehama counties, and developed a plan to install artificial burrow sites. Chapter members indicated a desire to assist.

November 2009 **An Address to the Redding Vegetarian Society**
Linda Aldrich, Wintu AS Program Chair, spoke to a dozen members of the Redding Vegetarian Society on “The Effects of Dietary Choices on the Environment”.

December 2009 **Use of Turtle Bay Museum Facilities for 2010**
George Horn, Wintu AS President, advised that he had met with Turtle Bay Museum authorities on 1 December and they have extended our facilities use agreement through 2010. The museum asked for assistance with several projects over the coming year, and the Chapter has agreed to do so. This will include assisting with Girl Scout Merit Badge project in February, with identification and cataloging the museum bird nest collection, providing a program at one of the museum evening meetings, and possible field trips/ birdwalks around the Turtle Bay area.

January 2010 **County Bird Check List Distribution**
At the suggestion of Frank Sanderson, Wintu AS Publicity Co-Chair, Shasta County Bird Checklists and excess newsletters will be distributed to local Visitor Centers as part of the Chapter’s outreach program.

January 2010 **Lassen Peak Hiking Trail Rehabilitation**
Lassen Volcanic National Park has put forward a proposal to rehabilitate the Lassen Peak hiking trail and has asked for a review and comment on their proposal. Claudia Yerion, Conservation Chair, will respond.

January 2010 **Burrowing Owl Nesting Project - Phase One**

Larry Jordan reported that Phase One of the Burrowing Owl Nesting Project is complete with sixteen nesting units installed on private property near Parkville Road east of Redding.

January 2010 **Donations for Youth Attendance at Winter Wings Festival**

At the January Wintu AS Board meeting, a \$250. Donation was authorized to assist in funding a fourth grade class attendance at the Klamath Fall, Oregon, Winter Wings Festival which features Bald Eagles. Our Chapter has been a contributor to this effort for over ten years, and hundreds of children have attended as a result. These children, under the guidance of their teacher, Mrs. Nikki Manning, work small projects for and with the USFS to enhance eagle habitat at Shasta Lake.

January 2010 **Wind Farm Issues Briefing**

21 January, Claudia Yerion, Wintu Conservation Chair, spoke at a panel presentation to the Redbud Audubon Society on issues relating to Wind Farm Projects, such as mitigation matters, EIR involvement, and related subjects. Rose Powder, alternate on the Burney Ridge Wind Farm TAC committee accompanied her.

February 2010 **Conservation Issues Letters**

Chapter Conservation Chair Claudia Yerion prepared letters on two issues of concern. Use of a radio controlled model airplane park at Anderson River Park where model airplane noise presents a disturbance to wildlife use of a large riparian area of the park, and a second letter stating chapter concerns over a county plan to change large portions of Tehama County from rural to higher density housing. The letter of support to be addressed to a group suing the county over that issue.

February 2010 **State Parks Initiative Petition**

During February and March, under the leadership of Nola Wade, chapter Treasurer, and George Horn, Chapter President, Wintu Audubon participated in the Audubon California sponsored program to obtain petition signatures to support the state parks initiative keeping state parks open and available to the public. Permission was sought and granted by the city of Redding to set-up tables at trail heads in the area to collect signatures.

February 2010 **Great Backyard Bird Count**

Once again, Redding placed highly in the Great Backyard Bird Count coming in second only to Sacramento in the state of California. Redding has placed first three times and second three times in the past six years. This remarkable success by a town of only 192k inhabitants is directly attributable to the chapter effort to get the word out through local media.

February 2010 **Girl Scout Badge Day at Turtle Bay**

On 20 February, an enthusiastic group of Wintu Audubon Society volunteers led by

Bea Currie, Corresponding Secretary, assisted Turtle Bay Museum personnel in conducting a Girl Scout Badge Day at the museum. A small turnout of young girls with short attention spans, but Turtle Bay most appreciative of the assistance.

February 2010 **Turtle Bay Museum Birds Nest Identification**

On 25 February, a team of seven Wintu Audubon volunteers headed by President George Horn, met with Turtle Bay's Mary Harper, Education and Programs Manager, to identify numerous nests in the museum's collection so they could be used for future exhibits. After identifying the nests as to species, the volunteers will furnish information for placards as to habitat where found, materials used in construction, peculiarities of the nest, etc., over the next few months. An ad hoc committee was formed to provide the information. The project is part of the mutual support pact between Turtle Bay Museum and Wintu Audubon Society.

March 2010 **Burrowing Owl Nest Project**

Larry Jordan, Chapter Project Coordinator, reports completion of another segment of the nest box sites in the Chico area, with 8 new nests installed there. Added to the 16 sites already in place in Anderson, good progress is being made toward a target goal of 48 nest sites. The Chico area sites were constructed on 20 January by ten volunteers from AltaCal (Chico) and Wintu ASs (Redding), and several other interested parties using pick and shovel. Larry continues to look for acceptable sites to expand the project.

March 2010 **Greeting New Members**

In an effort to improve attendance at meetings and chapter involvement, Bea Currie, Corresponding Secretary, has initiated phone calls to new members to welcome them to the area or to the chapter. Bea discusses chapter activities and projects, programs and outings, and where to look to find additional information, the Chapter Website. Bea works with the Membership Chair/President George Horn for current lists of new members. Calls have been well received and some national members have been surprised that they were also chapter members.

March 2010 **Program for Sierra Club Local Chapter**

16 March, Linda Aldrich presented a program to a dozen members of the Shasta County Sierra Club Chapter on "Attracting Birds to Your Backyard".