

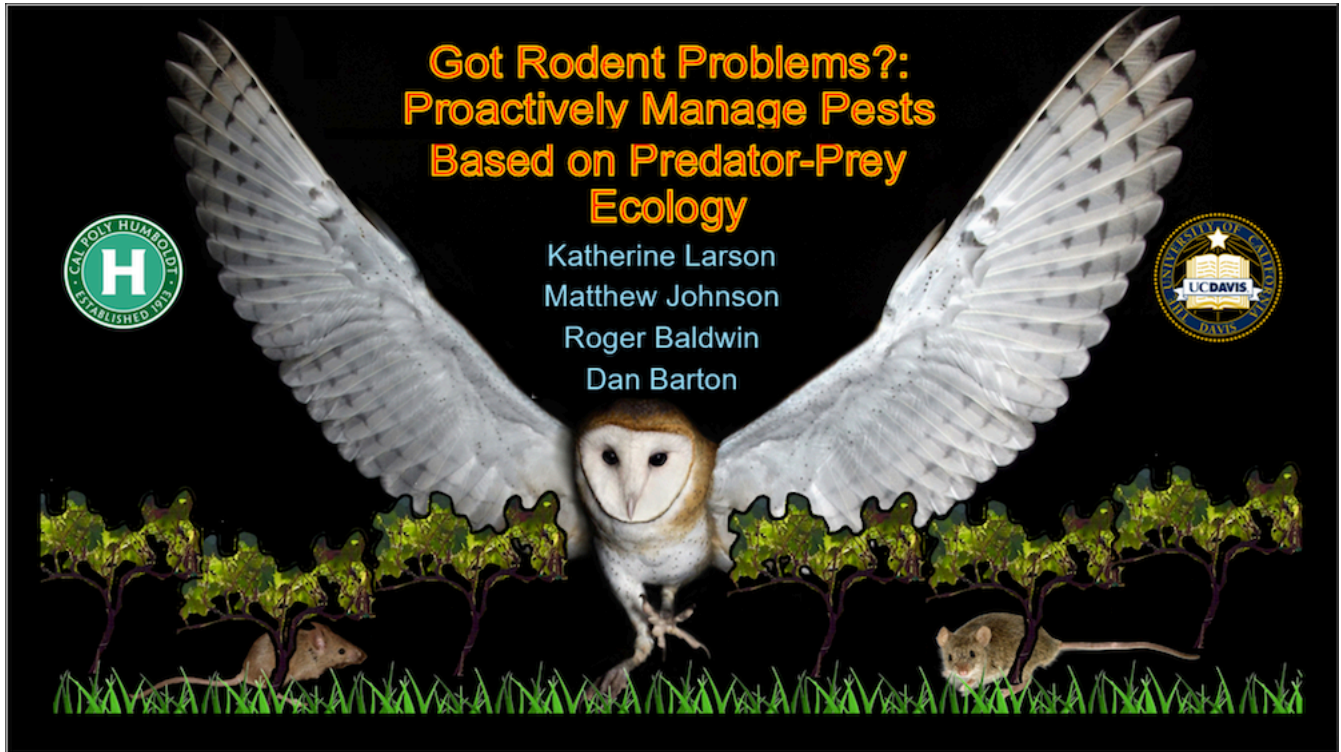


CHIRP-N-CHATTER

The Newsletter of the Shasta Birding Society

A Wintu Country Chapter of the National Audubon Society

October 2024



Katherine Larson is a wildlife biologist with the Redding Bureau of Land Management (BLM), where she helps to make informed land management decisions that benefit birds. She hopes to grow in this position by coordinating with avian biologists along birds' entire flyways and life cycles, and by incorporating citizen science and outdoor education on BLM land. Prior to this position, Katherine studied wildlife biology at Humboldt State University after transferring from University of Colorado where she played NCAA softball, rock climbed and was a white-water raft guide. When not thinking about birds, Katherine can be found backpacking in the Trinity Alps, cooking and baking, or hanging out with Buddhist monks.

Research Abstract:

Ecological theory predicts that raptors exert top-down effects on their prey by direct consumption, indirectly by imposing risk of predation, or a combination of both. However, empirical evidence for these effects is mixed and inconsistent. Understanding relationships between raptors and their prey is especially important where raptors may contribute to the control of agricultural pests. Earlier work shows promise that barn owls may control rodent pests, but empirical evidence is limited and the distinction between direct and indirect effects remains unresolved. Here, we investigate the top-down effects of barn owls on rodent pests in winegrape vineyards in Napa Valley, California. We monitored barn owl occupancy, reproductive status, and fledgling success in over 300 nest boxes in 2023. We used this to create a spatially and temporally explicit barn owl hunting pressure model from hunting locations and from prey delivery rates that vary as nestlings develop. The hunting pressure layers were used to examine the direct effect of barn owls on rodent abundance (measured with chew blocks), and the indirect effect of barn owls on rodent perceived predation risk and activity (measured with giving-up density trays and game cameras respectively). We found that barn

owls exert both direct and indirect effects on rodent pests and that dense vegetation favors the acoustically attuned barn owls over the visually-oriented rodent pests. We contribute to growing evidence that barn owls can be used as biological control in agricultural systems, and we show that growers can manipulate vegetation to enhance the effect of barn owls and to induce more fear in rodents.

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Shasta Birding Society is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Proactively Manage Pests Based On Predator-Prey Ecology

Time: Nov 13, 2024 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88004338851>

Meeting ID: 880 0433 8851

One tap mobile

+12532158782,,88004338851# US (Tacoma)

+12532050468,,88004338851# US

Dial by your location

• +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

Meeting ID: 880 0433 8851

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/u/kcrlfN8Lk9>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS!

To show how much we appreciate our donors we want to recognize you in our monthly newsletter! These are our recent generous donors: John Hatcher, Marti Weidert, Linda Casagnoli, Jan and Burton Brockett, Joanne Boulden, Harvey and Jeanette Carroll, Mary Severson, Patricia Ford, Brian Sorrick, Teresa Hunt, Jaci White, and Dan Bye - Thank You!

Donations can be made either through our [PayPal link](#) or by check at Shasta Birding Society, PO Box 994533, Redding, CA 96099-4533

NOVEMBER ACTIVITIES

Note: If you have been exposed to COVID-19 within the last 10 days you must provide a certificate of vaccination or negative test results no longer than 72 hours prior to and as a requirement to participating in these events.

Lema Ranch Bird Walk - Saturday, November 2nd @ 7:30 am



Join Shasta Birding Society for a bird walk around Lema Ranch on Saturday, November 2nd at 8:00 am. We will be birding the oak woodlands and ponds at the Ranch on fairly level paved paths. We will bird Leah's loop beginning at the main parking lot. This two mile paved trail overlooks Secluded Pond and Hidden Pond. The trail offers excellent views of Lema Pond, the largest pond on the site, and Leah's Pond. We expect some late summer birds as well as migrants and a variety of waterfowl. Park and meet your leader, Larry Jordan at Lema Ranch main parking lot at 610 Armando Avenue off Hemingway Street. Questions? webmaster@shastabirdingsociety.org

Gray Lodge Wildlife Area - Saturday, November 9th @ 6:30 am to 3:30 pm



Gray Lodge's diversity and location along the Pacific Flyway make it a haven for wildlife. Surrounded by miles of rich agricultural lands, the approximately 9,100-acre area is managed for the wildlife that call Gray Lodge home for all or part of the year. Reflective ponds, grassy fields and wooded riparian areas provide food, water and shelter for more than 300 species of resident and migrant birds and mammals. Meet at the [Kutras Park parking lot](#) at **6:30am sharp** to carpool or at parking area 14 at the refuge at 8:30am. Bring a lunch and water as this is an all day event. It is not unusual to see over 50 species of birds at this location and is the only place I know to commonly find all three "Teals". We will traverse the walking trail around the ponds, to the

viewing platform and back to the parking lot. Following lunch we will drive the auto tour loop. Questions? Contact Larry Jordan at webmaster@shastabirdingsociety.org Gray Lodge Public Access Map - A CDFW Lands Pass must be in possession by each visitor who is 16 years of age or older, however, visitors who are in possession of a valid California hunting or fishing license in their name are exempt from this requirement. Lands passes may be purchased on-line, by phone at (800) 565-1458, or in-person at locations wherever hunting and fishing licenses are sold. They are also available in the parking area at Gray Lodge for \$4.50. Here is a link to the bird list: <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=88006&inline>

Fall River Lake/McArthur Swamp - Saturday, November 16th @ 7:30 am to 4:30 pm

Locations of where we will meet: Carpooling from Redding, at [Kutras Pond Parking Area](#) should meet, then depart at 7:30am. We will make one stop, 8:45am in Burney, at Safeway parking area for others coming from other locations. Here we might be able to carpool once more before we reach [Fall River Mills](#). Walking distance estimated at 1 – 1.5



miles (1.6 – 2.4 km), Driving (birding) distance 6 - 10 miles (9.7 -16.1 km) This is a no fee event.

Fall River Lake is great for Water Birds, High Desert Species, and an occasional Raptor. Start from the west end of town (Fall River Mills) we will start birding immediately from the outflow end of the lake's dam. The method of touring this section is generally done by stopping at each parking area or pullout along the west edge of Fall River Lake. McArthur Swamp will begin with a 3-mile drive of Rat Farm Rd. This path is great for many Raptor and High Desert Species. At the end of the road, we will arrive at Horr Pond boat launch. From here we will survey the west side of our second lake for Water Birds. Take lunch. Our final stage of McArthur Swamp will begin with a 3.5-mile of McArthur Swamp Rd. This path is great for Diving and Wading Birds along the canal that follows along the right side. At the end of the road, we will arrive at the swamp where we will survey the east side of the pond area.

Recommend that you bring plenty of water, lunch, and snacks. Trip Leader: Dan Bye, contact me by danbye56@gmail.com for more information.

Churn Creek Open Space - Saturday, November 23rd @ 7:30 am



Let's go birding! Whether you are a seasoned birder or are newly interested and curious about birds, our friendly group will guide you on an easy walk through one of Redding's largest open spaces. The trails along Churn Creek feature gently rolling hills with oaks and pines, open grasslands, and a lush creekside along the length of the area. **Meet at the Parking Lot at 7:30 am.** The parking lot is on the corner of Tidmore Ln. and Dakota Way, just south of College View Dr. The path is gravel and dirt. There are 2 loops to the trail, both about 1.5 miles, for a total of about 3 miles. We encourage everyone to go the distance with us, but you are, of course, free to cut out when you need to. Please dress in layers, and bring sun protection, water, and a light snack for yourself. The closest bathrooms at Lema Ranch or the Student Marketplace on College View Dr. GoogleMaps link: [Churn Creek Trail Parking](#)

Coleman Fish Hatchery - Saturday, November 30th at 5:30 am



Location of where we will meet: Parking area at 24411 Coleman Fish Hatchery Rd, Anderson, CA 96007 – Drop Pin [Coleman Fish Hatchery](#) Walking distance total estimated at 2.5-3 miles (4-5 km). We will walk through sections of the fish hatchery and exit at the west gate to enter Battle Creek Salmon Trail. This 1.4-mile path will provide great access around ponds and views along Battle Creek with exceptional sections of riparian habitat. We will quickly enter Battle Creek Wildlife Area where we will join the Oaktree Trail for an additional 1.2-mile walk through large tracts of oaks, willows, and many other native and non-native plants and trees. Under ideal conditions, we should see many

waterbirds, raptors, and passerines within this 582-acre area of exploration. One vehicle will be staged at parking area of Battle Creek Wildlife Area, and drivers will be shuttled back to Coleman Fish Hatchery parking lot and pick up

others at the end of our walk. We will reschedule if rained out. Trip Leader: Dan Bye, contact me by danbye56@gmail.com for more information.

TRIP REPORTS

Turtle Bay Bird Sanctuary on October 5th



unexpected Black-crowned Night-Heron!

Seven determined birders observed over 50 species at the Turtle Bay Bird Sanctuary on a cool, early walk. A Merlin was spotted at the beginning of the walk giving us great expectations for the day! We tallied a total of 51 species with a walk along the southern edge of the sanctuary, followed by the main trail along the Sacramento River, ending at the Sundial Bridge. A large contingent of Double-crested Cormorants were spotted along the river, as well as a Bald Eagle. Turkey Vultures, Bushtits, and Cedar Waxwings each tallied over 30 individuals and Yellow-rumped Warblers were close behind. The best bird of the day however, for myself and several others, was an

Paynes Creek Wetlands Bilingual Bird Walk on October 12th



Brought together by their love for the birds, ten birders representing cultures and experiences from across the Americas met on a dewy morning at Paynes Creek Wetland. In this outing, hosted by Altacal Audubon and Shasta Birding Society and supported by Redding BLM, participants identified birds and their habitats in both Spanish and English. Several of the birds they observed, such as golondria tijeretas (barn swallows), were themselves on their southbound migration from North America to winter in Mexico or South America. Others, like reyezuelo matraquitas (ruby-crowned kinglets), had just arrived after a long journey from Alaska or Canada to winter in the Central Valley. The group identified 47 species including rascón cara grises y gallineta frente roja en los estanques (Virginia rails and common gallinules in the ponds), carbonero encineros y los carpintero belloteros en los robles (oak titmice and acorn woodpeckers in the oaks), martín pescador norteros en el pantano (belted kingfishers in the marsh), pradero del oeste en los terrenos (western meadowlarks in the fields), and several gorrión especie en los arbustos (sparrow species in the shrubs). Many of the birds were migrating for the first time after being born this spring, while others were seasoned pros. Similarly, Oliver, an outstanding one-year-old birder, accompanied the veteran professionals and curious young adults for this undoubtedly special event.



Return of the Salmon Festival on October 19th



Larry Jordan, Rebeca Ladron de Guevara and Stephanie Hughes manned our table at the annual Return of the Salmon Festival October 19th. Larry set-up our extensive nest display with corresponding pictures--thanks to Jeanette Carroll. The children's table featured the Great Horned Owl for October, with coloring and info sheets, children's books and free-hand drawing. There was a huge turn-out. We gathered nine new names for our newsletter mailing list and enjoyed camaraderie with our neighbors the Shasta Land Trust, and rangers from Manzanita Lake, plus others. A great time was had by all. Join us next year!

Paige Ranch Field Trip on October 24th



The Shasta Birding Society partnered with the Shasta Land Trust for a morning of bird watching at Paige Ranch on October 24th, the trip was part of the Land Trust's annual Wildways series of events. Paige Ranch is a recent addition to the Trust's extensive protected lands in the Fall River Valley and is located along the south shore of Eastman Lake and the Little Tule River. The special location allowed the group of 28 birdwatchers unobstructed views of roosting Black-crowned Night-herons located along the north shore of Eastman lake. During the chilly morning walk, the group tallied a total of 35 species with other notable birds as an American Barn Owl, Prairie Falcon, ring-necked pheasant and a Red-naped x Red-breasted Sapsucker (hybrid). We thank the Paige Ranch owners and the Shasta Land Trust for hosting a great morning of birding and a delicious lunch.

Clear Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant on October 26th



This fall morning was cold, crisp, and clear, and all eight birders were ready for a Big Day. And a Big Day it was, with 62 species observed on 2-mile walk at CCWTP Hotspot. We had the pleasure of hosting two new birders on this walk at the start which is always nice to see. One big shout out to George Horn for his watchful eye in finding the Peregrine and sharing his excitement birding together with the group of that morning's adventure. Thanks, Julie and Larry for posting great photos on our shared [eBird checklist](#). We covered all areas of the treatment plant available for the public. Bird traffic on the river was minimal with waterfowl opening day activities in full swing. Of course, the bird activity on the plant site pulled us all through all the hunting distraction. Our high-count species were White-fronted Goose, Northern Shoveler, Killdeer,

Double-crested Cormorant, American Pipit, Red-winged Blackbird, and Yellow-rumped Warbler. To round out our list, Canada Goose, Tundra Swan, Wood Duck, Green-wing Teal, Bufflehead, and Common Merganser. Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Great Blue Heron. Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Cooper's, Red-shouldered, and Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, and Peregrine Falcon. Belted Kingfisher, Acorn, Downy, and Nuttall's Woodpecker. Filling out our remaining passerine species for the day are; Black and Say's Phoebe, California Scrub Jay, Common Raven, Oak Titmouse, Bushtit, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, White-breasted Nuthatch, the new eBird named Northern House Wren, Marsh Wren, Bewick's Wren, European Starling, Northern Mockingbird, Western Bluebird, American Robin, Cedar Waxwing, House Finch, Lesser and American Goldfinch, White-crowned, Golden-crowned, Savannah, Song, and Lincoln's Sparrow. Round out with California and Spotted Towhee, Western Meadowlark, Brewer's Blackbird, Orange-crowned Warbler, and Common Yellowthroat.

MIGRATING TURKEY VULTURE VORTEX

