



CHIRP-N-CHATTER

The Newsletter of the Shasta Birding Society

A Wintu Country Chapter of the National Audubon Society

DECEMBER 2024



Join us for an evening of bird photography from your webmaster, Larry Jordan. Larry joined the Wintu Audubon Society as its webmaster back in May 2008. At the time he had been posting on his own blog, The Birders Report, for about a year, using photos from other photographers (with their permission, of course). Over the years he has created quite a collection of bird photos, several (such as the photo above) taken from the photo blinds available at the Colusa, Delevan, and Sacramento National Wildlife Refuges. Of course several of his photos are taken during our many outings throughout the year as well.

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

Topic: Some of My Favorite Bird Photos

Time: Dec 11, 2024 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81721568249>

Meeting ID: 817 2156 8249---

One tap mobile

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS!

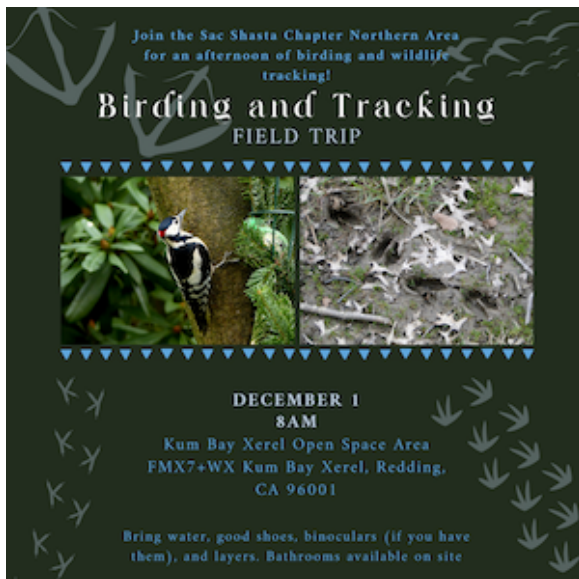
To show how much we appreciate our donors we want to recognize you in our monthly newsletter! These are our recent generous donors: Julie Doerr, Jay and Terri Thesken, William and Diane Ruess - Thank you!

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

DECEMBER 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.

Birding and Tracking Field Trip - Sunday, December 1st @ 8:00 am - Noonish



Come join us for something a little different on Sunday. The Sacramento-Shasta Chapter of The Wildlife Society and The Shasta Birding Society are hosting a collaborative field trip at Kum Bay Xerel along the Sacramento River in South Redding. With the help of expert wildlife trackers, you can learn how to search for, and identify, tracks and sign found in nature. We will also be birding along the way as usual. Anyone interested in birds or learning about wildlife tracks is welcome. The Sac-Shasta Chapter of TWS is a chapter of the Western Section of The Wildlife Society, and is comprised of over 300 active members throughout 23 counties in the Sacramento Valley and the interior mountainous region of Northern California. Founded in 1937, the Wildlife Society's mission is "To inspire, empower, and enable wildlife professionals to sustain wildlife populations and habitats through science-based management and conservation." The Wildlife Society enhances their members' networking and learning opportunities, professional and career development, and provides numerous ways for them to get more involved in creating a better future

for wildlife and their habitats. Nationwide, its members include nearly 10,000 wildlife managers, biologists, ecologists, and students. Learn more about the Sac-Shasta Chapter of TWS here. Meet at the Parking Lot at 8:00 am. The parking lot is on Riverland Drive, about ½ mile south of Knighton Road off of I-5 exit #673, in South Redding. The first ¾ mile of the trail is paved and is great for birding along the river bank. There is an additional mile of dirt trails on adjacent BLM land where we will do most of the tracking. Expect wintering waterfowl on the water and many songbird species along the lush wooded riparian corridor, as well as raptors, including eagles, soaring overhead. Bathrooms are available in the parking lot. GoogleMaps link: Kum Bay Xerel

Turtle Bay Bird Blind Work Day - Sunday, December 1st @ 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm



Dear members and friends, here's your chance to participate with us in a careful, thorough blackberry removal workday at the bird blind on the Bird Sanctuary Trail at Turtle Bay, Sunday afternoon, December 1st, from 1-4pm. We will be cutting back vines and digging out blackberry crowns while leaving native plants in place. Bring your own gloves and shovels, and a wagon or cart if you have one available. We will be meeting at the Monolith parking lot and taking the dirt path to the blind. Please call Education Chair Stephanie at 530-782 8070 if you have any questions. Hope to see you there! Thank you for helping to allow birds and the other riparian life to prosper at Turtle Bay! Your Shasta Birding Society Team.

Churn Creek Open Space - Saturday, December 7th @ 7:30 am to 11:30 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

Fall River Christmas Bird Count - Saturday, December 14th - THIS IS AN ALL DAY EVENT



This is our 42nd year for the Fall River Mills CBC! It will be on Saturday, December 14, 2024. Please let us know by email at boby@c-zone.net if you plan to attend, and include what section or area you prefer, and what team you want to bird with. All counters and section leaders will know their assigned area prior to the count day as usual. Everyone should plan to use their own vehicle unless they make arrangements with their section leader or another team member. Count forms and section details will be emailed to everyone prior to count day. There will be no post count compilation gathering but all totals and details of the count will be emailed to everyone.

Shingletown CBC - Tuesday, December 17th - THIS IS AN ALL DAY EVENT



Join us for the largest bird-oriented citizen science project in the western hemisphere. The Christmas Bird Count is an annual event that has been tracking winter birds since Christmas Day of 1900. With over 2,600 counts across more than 20 countries in the Americas, there is bound to be a Christmas Bird Count near you. Our circle covers the communities of Shingletown, Inwood, Manton, Paynes Creek, and the Black Butte area in Shasta and Tehama Counties in Northern California. We are situated in the California Cascades, in the foothills of the Lassen Volcanic Center. Please contact us at ShingletownCBC@gmail.com if you are interested in joining us in the Shingletown area for this year's count. All details, assignments, maps, and instructions can be discussed over email. We will be using eBird for data collection, but let me know if you require other arrangements. Please let me know if you would like

to do any early/late owling. Learn more about the Christmas Bird Count [here](#).



Anderson CBC - Saturday, December 21st - THIS IS AN ALL DAY EVENT



The National Audubon's Christmas Bird Count is the longest running and largest Citizen Science Event held each year for the past 124 years, and for this 125th annual CBC we will take part in this great tradition. This year is our 14th annual Anderson CBC which will run from 7am to 5pm on Saturday, December 21, 2024. All sections have Section Leaders assigned for a Sunrise Start. Please contact me by email at anderson.cbc@gmail.com if you are interested in joining our team. Our count circle is primarily areas that include the towns and communities of Anderson, Cottonwood, and east of the Sacramento River. Section Leaders have received their assignments. Everyone is expected to follow Section Leaders instructions, drive your own vehicle or make arrangements to ride with others in your group, respect others property, and to be safe and all times.

Redding Christmas Bird Count - Thursday, December 16th - THIS IS AN ALL DAY EVENT



The Redding Christmas Bird Count is scheduled for December 26th, and it promises to be a fantastic event for bird enthusiasts and citizen scientists. Participants will be assigned specific sections to observe and record bird species throughout the day. After a day of birdwatching, there will be an evening compilation dinner held at a location to be determined, providing an excellent opportunity to share observations and socialize with fellow bird lovers. To get involved or learn more about this exciting event, please contact Randy Bush at rbush10@hotmail.com. Join us in celebrating the holiday season by contributing to our understanding of local bird populations and their conservation.

TRIP REPORTS

Lema Ranch on November 2nd



Six determined birders endured a cold start, with temps in the 40's, to observe fifty-two species at Lema Ranch. It would be tough to choose a bird of the day between a juvenile Cooper's Hawk that perched conspicuously at the top of an oak tree for several minutes for all to enjoy, or the Fox Sparrow that gave us just a fleeting glimpse. Large flocks of Cedar Waxwings were observed flying overhead and feeding in the trees. Waterfowl were abundant with Canada Goose numbers followed by Greater White-fronted Goose, Mallard, American Wigeon, Ring-necked Duck, Wood Duck (19), Northern Shoveler, with a pair of Green-winged Teal and Bufflehead. Songbirds also had a good showing with eighteen Western Bluebirds, ten White-breasted Nuthatches and ten Oak Titmouse, one spotted with its head sticking out of a nest hole in

an oak tree.

Gray Lodge Wildlife Area on November 9th



Five truly joyous birders tallied sixty-nine species, starting off with a Say's Phoebe at the check-in. What a way to start the day! A male American Kestrel was also seen kiting above the grassland. As we parked our vehicles a Green Heron was perched on a branch out in the open for all to see. We began our adventure on the 2 mile Flyway Loop Trail spotting a juvenile Black-crowned Night-Heron flying up into a tree to everyone's surprise, a couple dozen Bushtits, and three Golden-crowned Kinglets! Yellow-rumped Warblers were thick as thieves as were the Red-winged Blackbirds trying to hide in the reeds. A Cooper's Hawk, a Red-shouldered Hawk and a Northern Harrier joined eight Red-tailed Hawks and over two dozen Turkey Vultures rounded out the raptors. Virginia Rails and Sora were calling and a dozen Common Gallinules were spotted. White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows

ruled the day but we did manage to find one of my favorite sparrows, a Lincoln Sparrow that popped out into the open long enough for a perfect photo op! Good birds and good friends!

Fall River Lake/McArthur Swamp on November 16t



It was a full day and well worth the effort. Three Birders enjoyed good weather, great birding and accumulated 6 checklists with a winning total of 51 species. Raptors were abundant throughout the day with Bald Eagle, Cooper's Hawk, Northern Harrier, Red-shouldered, Red-tailed, Rough-legged, and Ferruginous Hawk, along with American Kestrel, Merlin, and Prairie Falcon. Fall River Lake provided 25 total species most notables were Ring-necked Ducks, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, and plenty of American Coots. We also witnessed Pied-billed, Eared, and Western Grebe, Ring-billed Gull, and Double-crested Cormorant. On dry land we had a viewing opportunity of Townsend's Solitaire, Common Raven, American Robin, White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrow. On a couple of bridges in Fall River Mills we observed 17 total

Species like Barrow's Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Belted Kingfisher, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Song Sparrow, and White-breasted Nuthatch. On our drive of McArthur Swamp/Rat Farm we saw 18 total species which includes the majority of the before mentioned Raptors along with Great Egret, Great Blue Heron, European Starling, and Western Meadowlark. More from the field area we found a Chukar, California Quail, Lesser Goldfinch, and Brewer's Blackbirds.

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.

Coleman Fish Hatchery/Battle Creek Wildlife Area Walk on November 30th



It was an extremely cold start for 10 brave souls, ready to seize the day. We started our walk through the hatchery, where Brewer's Blackbird and Turkey Vulture were doing their part to warm up for the new day. Continuing toward the ponds to the west we saw Brown-headed Cowbird, Killdeer, White-crowned Sparrow, Black Phoebe, and Ruby-crowned Kinglet. In the first pond section we saw our first waterbirds, Mallard, Common Goldeneye, and Hooded Merganser. Suddenly a flurry of Wilson Snipe jumped up along the water's edge and flew a short distance away to be counted. We would approach the remaining ponds to observe Wood Duck, American Wigeon, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, American

Coot, and Pied-billed Grebe. Some of our pond favorites, often heard but not seen, sounded off to be counted were the Common Gallinule, Sora, and Virginia Rail. Along the pond edges we saw California Quail, Great Egret, Great Blue Heron, Acorn, Downy, and Nuttall's Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, California Scrub-Jay, Marsh, Bewick's, and Northern House Wren, Song and Golden-crowned Sparrow, Northern Mockingbird, California and Spotted Towhee. Three premiere raptors we observed were the Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, and Red-tailed Hawk. When we transitioned from the pond area to the Battle Creek riparian areas, we had a few surprises of Cedar Waxwing, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Red-shouldered Hawk, and Red-winged Blackbird. Our count totaled 54 species and by the end of the day, we shrugged off the cold and left the field with a sense of accomplishment.



BLUE-WINGED TEAL PREENING AT SACRAMENTO NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE