



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

January / February 2011

January Activities

Field Trips

Second Saturday Bird Walk---January 8 @ 8:00 am

This outing is open to the public and all skill levels of birders are welcome. We will assemble in the parking area behind the monolith at Turtle Bay to observe the bird life on and around Turtle Bay and Kutras Lake. A great cross section of waders, raptors, waterfowl, gulls, and winter resident passerines can be seen close up with usually a surprise or two on this half day walk. Linda Aldrich will lead.

Local Weekday Bird Walk---Battle Creek State Wildlife Area, Tuesday, January 18 @ 8:00 am

Battle Creek SWA is adjacent to the Coleman National Fish Hatchery. Ca. Dept. of Fish and Game is restoring riparian habitat along Battle Creek and maintains trails. Recently a trail was developed along impoundments all the way to the Hatchery. During this 1/2 -day trip we expect to see a good variety of winter passerines, Bald Eagles, rails and ducks. Assemble in the Redding Convention Center Parking Lot. Wear sturdy shoes. Trails are groomed but ground is uneven. Our President, George Horn will lead.

Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge--- Saturday, January 22 @ 7:30 am

This nationally-known gem is well-worth the 90-mile drive. Enormous numbers of waterfowl fill the skies and numerous impoundments in fall and winter.

Snow, Ross' and Greater White-fronted Geese, Northern Pintails, Northern Shovelers and Gadwalls are assured. Other possibilities are

White-faced Ibis, Green-winged Teal, Black-necked Stilts and various raptors. We hope to provide 2-way radios to report sightings and alert people in other cars to look for them. Most of the birding is done from cars. Meet at the Redding Convention Center to carpool. Bring a lunch for this full-day trip. Bill Oliver will lead.

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

January 11: Ray Bruun: A *Photographic Tour of Dragonflies and Damselflies of Northern California.*
February 8: Laura Cunningham: *Forgotten Landscapes of California.*

This is a rescheduling of a rained-out trip on November 20. Larry Jordan went early and had a rewarding day. Here is his report:

I went down to Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge Saturday and counted 43 species without doing any walking on the trails. In other words, I could have seen many more passerines had I taken the time to walk the trail in the 45 degree weather. The sun was out most of the day, the rain coming at 2:30 that afternoon.

I saw a Peregrine Falcon on the first leg of the auto tour. It met up with another and entertained me with a mock dogfight for about 30 minutes. I think they were juveniles practicing their areal maneuvers. I saw the adult in the usual spot on the last northbound section of the tour. It was the first time I've seen three Peregrines there. I also spotted two Great Horned Owls resting in trees, one in the lone tree on the first leg out and one in the row of trees along the back side of the tour where hawks are also seen.

General Meeting

Tuesday, January 11 @ 7:00 pm

A Photographic Tour of Dragonflies and Damselflies of Northern California

Wintu Audubon member Ray Bruun has been photographing dragonflies and damselflies for almost 10 years, mostly in Shasta and surrounding counties. His pictures have appeared in numerous publications including *Dragonflies and Damselflies of the West* and the second edition of *Common Dragonflies of California*, in which he was the main photographer. Ray will discuss identification techniques and life histories pertaining to many of the 77 species of Odonata found in Shasta County.

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

www.wintuadubon.org

February Activities

Field Trips

Second Saturday Bird Walk---February 12 @ 8:00 am

We will visit Turtle Bay and Kutras Lake for its great cross section of waders, raptors, waterfowl, gulls, and winter resident passerines. We will assemble in the parking area behind the monolith at Turtle Bay. This ½-day walk with Bea Currie is open to the public and all skill levels of birders are welcome.

Local Weekday Bird Walk---Anderson River Park, Tuesday, February 15 @ 8:00 am

This gem of riparian habitat has many groomed trails and will be led by Ken Bachman who lives nearby and has a wealth of experience in the Park. We will assemble at the amphitheater in the park for this half-day outing.

Llano Seco Unit, Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge, and the Chico Wastewater Treatment Plant---Saturday, February 26 @ 7:30 am

Llano Seco has a couple of viewing platforms overlooking large impoundments and marshy islands. We should see a wide variety of dabbling ducks. Sandhill Cranes, Tundra Swans, and geese are likely. Renovation and improvements to the Chico WWTP is complete and includes improved access to birders including a blind. We should again see a variety of dabbling ducks. Meet the leader, George Horn, at the Redding Convention Center to carpool. Bring a lunch for this full-day trip.

General Meeting

Tuesday, February 8 @ 7:00 pm

Forgotten Landscapes of California

Join us for a slide show by artist/naturalist/author Laura Cunningham who will highlight local items of interest from her book, *A State of Change: Forgotten Landscapes of California*. Using her sleuthing skills, Laura has studied historical accounts, paleontological

findings and archeological data to discover and show what the California landscape looked like before the arrival of European settlers. Her work is pertinent both for understanding past change and present conservation in our current-day landscape. Laura will be available to sign her book after her presentation.

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

Turtle Bay and Kutras Lake---November 13,
Linda Aldrich reports that at Kutras Lake they saw 3 male Common Goldeneye, 1 male Barrow's Goldeneye and 2 female Goldeneye that they could not positively identify to species (they had their heads tucked into their back feathers most of the time). She noted that there was 1 female goldeneye with each species. The Common and Barrow's goldeneyes were resting/foraging about 60 yards from one another. The group also saw 5 species of grebes - Western, Clark's, Horned, Eared and Pied-billed.

Lema Ranch--- November 16, 2010
Nine birders met the leader, Linda Aldrich, at Lema Ranch for a beautiful sunny fall morning of birding. Although it wasn't very "birdy", we saw 43 species, including a flock of Band-tailed Pigeons flying overhead, probably a first for that species at Lema Ranch. Several site specialties, including Lark Sparrows and Common Moorhens put in appearances. Larry Jordan's bluebird trail must have done well last spring, because we saw quantities of Western Bluebirds.

The Great Backyard Bird Count February 18-21

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent and in Hawaii. Anyone can participate, for beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds. Here's how:

1. Plan to count birds for at least 15 minutes on one of more days of the count. You can count longer than that if you wish. Count birds in as many places and on as many days as you like--one day, two days, or all four days. Submit a separate checklist for each new day. You can also submit more than one checklist per day, if you count in other locations on that day.

2. Count the greatest number of individuals of each species that you see together at the same time.

3. When you are finished, enter your results through the web site: www.birdsource.org/gbbc. You'll see a button marked "Enter Your Checklist" on the website home page beginning on the first day of the count. It will remain active until the deadline for data submission on March 1. If you do not have internet access, you can phone (530-941-7741) or email: wwoliver9@gmail.com Bill Oliver for more directions and your results.

Birding Tips from the Fertile Imagination of Pete Dunne

Shape, not plumage, is the first, middle, and last word in the identification of Canvasback. Plumage is just a footnote.

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

Snow Goose Festival of the Pacific Flyway---January 27-30, 2011 in Chico

This "local" bird festival, now in its 12th year, gets bigger and better. It's so close we urge you to attend one of the 50 field trips, presentations and workshops. Join Jack Muir Laws, Naturalist, Author, and Educator at Saturday night's Gathering of Wings banquet for his presentation: *Finding Connection in Nature: The Sierra Nevada Mountains*. Call: 530-345-1865 or email: info@snowgoosefestival.org for details



Beetle Bailey has it right!

2011 Winter Wings Festival

Phenomenal birding/nature-related opportunities for all ages are yours at the Winter Wings Festival on Presidents' Day Weekend in Klamath Falls, Oregon. The Klamath Basin is a key stopover on the Pacific flyway and the home of the largest concentration of wintering Bald Eagles in the lower 48 states. The dawn flyout of hundreds of Bald Eagles from a nearby canyon has been a perennial highlight. Three full days of birding and nature photography activities are offered including a host of new presenters and field trips. Contact Molly Russell (877-541-2473) or email: info@winterwingsfest.org for details.

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Ken Bachman, John Coon, Mike Damoth, Connie Word, Dan Greaney,

Anderson River Park Never Disappoints

By Larry • December 22, 2010 •

(Larry Jordan, our Wintu Audubon Webmaster, has recently been appointed as a West Coast Beat Writer for the blog 10000Birds. Here is a portion of his latest contribution.)



Driving down Rupert Road you will undoubtedly see lots of birds as you make your way toward the Anderson River Park entrance. As you enter the park, across from the boat ramp, on your right, there are soccer fields where the **Yellow-billed Magpies** hang out.



Atop one of the soccer field light poles is an **Osprey** nest. The top photo was taken in June of 2009 when I witnessed this [Osprey's maiden flight](#) from the nest. Yes, that is a **Western Kingbird** harassing the poor youngster. Like I said, Anderson River Park never disappoints.

This is one birding location that delivers in all seasons. Fall brings in a stream of south-bound migrants and in winter we find several species of ducks and gulls on the river and ponds. In the Spring you will see migrant warblers working their way along the river and Yellow-billed Magpies nesting in the large oaks near the paved parking lot.



Leaving the parking lot next to the amphitheater, a paved trail starts you off next to a small cove on the left where resident **Wood Ducks** can be found. Just beyond the duck cove, as you come to the river proper, you may [hear the rattle of the Belted Kingfisher](#) that fishes the river there.



The path that leads you along the river's edge holds many surprises. **Double-crested Cormorants** are seen winging their way up and down the river, **Great Blue Herons** and **Great Egrets** fish along the banks. **Black Phoebe** hawk insects from riverside perches and skim bugs from the water's surface as **Yellow-rumped Warblers** glean insects from the overhanging trees



This day I caught sight of a first year **Glaucous-winged Gull** scavenging on a salmon in the middle of the Sacramento River.

