



# CHIRP-N-CHATTER

The Newsletter of the Shasta Birding Society

A Wintu Country Chapter of the National Audubon Society

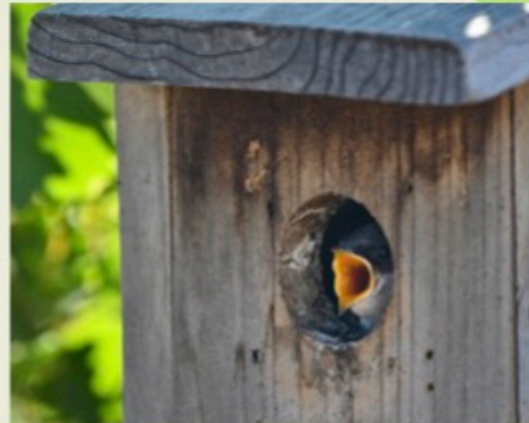
FEBRUARY 2025



Shasta Birding Society Presents

## WHAT DO SONGBIRDS HAVE TO DO WITH WINE!?

BY ELEANOR MACDONALD



Agricultural expansion threatens biodiversity, but promoting native species like insectivorous birds in agriculture could benefit both biodiversity and farm productivity alike. Recently, some California winegrape growers have used nest boxes to attract birds, such as Western Bluebirds and Tree Swallows, to help control insect pests. Tune in to discover the beautiful and complex intersection between birds and agriculture, and to find out what's in it for the wine, for the birds, and for you.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12 AT 7 P.M.  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82926444555>  
Meeting ID: 829 2644 4555



Eleanor is a graduate student at Cal Poly Humboldt in Dr. Matt Johnson's Habitat Ecology lab. She is investigating how the addition of songbird nest boxes affects bird communities and whether this has any top-down effect on insects in Napa Valley wine-grape vineyards. She is examining avian point counts and insect sampling conducted over the 2023 and 2024 breeding seasons on 20 vineyards, 10 with existing nest boxes and 10 with nest boxes added between field seasons. Her project focuses on vineyards that lie along gradients of local habitat and landscape complexity and will also address how local habitat and landscape composition influence bird communities. Eleanor is passionate about researching how anthropogenic effects influence avian population and community dynamics and how management can help mitigate these effects. Agricultural expansion threatens biodiversity, but promoting native species like insectivorous birds in agricultural landscapes could benefit both biodiversity and farm productivity alike. Recently, some California wine-grape growers have used nest boxes to promote biodiversity and attract insectivorous birds, such as Western Bluebirds and Tree Swallows, in an effort to help control insects. This presentation will focus on the results of a before-after-control-impact experiment involving the addition of nest boxes to wine-grape vineyards that previously had none in Napa Valley, California. This research has the potential to offer deeper insights for management decisions concerning pest control by investigating the potential benefits of attracting more insect-eating birds to agricultural landscapes. This is part of a large collaborative research effort between Cal Poly Humboldt, UC Davis, UC Riverside, and UCCE and is funded by the Agricultural Research Institute.

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

Topic: What Do Songbirds Have To Do With Wine?

Time: Feb 12, 2025 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82926444555>

Meeting ID: 829 2644 4555

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• +1 646 931 3860 US

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• +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

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Meeting ID: 829 2644 4555

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82926444555>

## **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: Bruce & Martha Webb, Pablo and Alicia Herrera, and Jaci White - 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

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### **Shasta Birding Society Celebrates Sáttítla Highlands Monument**

On January 14, 2025, President Joe Biden issued a proclamation creating the Sáttítla Highlands National Monument. Readers will remember we described the hoped for designation of Sáttítla in the November, 2024 Newsletter. The Monument includes 224,000 acres within the Medicine Lake Highlands, in Siskiyou County. This land is sacred to and the ancestral homeland of the Pit River and Modoc peoples. The volcanic landscape of Sáttítla includes high desert, forest, spatter cones, obsidian deposits, and lava tubes. Its complex underground aquifer system is an integral source of the pristine springs feeding Fall River, tributary to Pit River and Shasta Lake. The area is habitat for many special status birds, including American Goshawk, Bank Swallow, Black-backed Woodpecker, Golden Eagle, Greater Sandhill Crane, Northern Spotted Owl, Prairie Falcon, Purple Martin and Sharp-shinned Hawk. The Swainson's Hawk returns from South America in the spring to breed in the low-elevation juniper forests, sagebrush, and bitterbrush habitats found along the northwestern edge of the area, and in the northern portion of Sáttítla, the Three Sisters Bald Eagle Winter Roost Area provides habitat for the State endangered Bald Eagle. Although we monitored this monument designation process in 2024, our birding hats are off to the Pit River Tribe, whose members have advocated so strongly and diligently for the preservation of this sacred land.

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### **THE CONSERVATION CORNER**

**from Bruce Webb and Rebeca Ladrón de Guevara, Conservation Co-Chairs**

While we celebrate the Sáttítla Highlands Monument designation to our north, we are concerned with several projects with potential to threaten birds and their habitat closer to home. We were recently made aware of vegetation removal activity of native species by the City of Redding within riparian areas close to the Sundial Bridge and sensitive areas both upstream along the river's edge and downstream close to wildlife viewing areas. This vegetation removal is ongoing and transforms a natural area with wildlife benefits that complement the bridge, instead encouraging pedestrians to stray off dedicated pathways into wildlife habitat and turning the riparian resources into a managed "park-like" setting which is relatively inhospitable to bird life. Native species removed include toyon, California rose, white leaf manzanita and redbud, among others. We are investigating why the City finds this necessary in this case. While the City progresses with its Riverfront Specific Plan preparation, the removal of native species in riparian areas may make it easier to justify future more intense development along sensitive riparian habitats on the riverfront and adjacent to it.

We are also investigating a Shasta County rezone project at the Hawes Ranch Farm at the southeast corner of Deschutes and Dersch roads in Anderson. On Tuesday, January 28th, SBS Conservation Co-Chair, Rebeca Ladrón de Guevara, attended an informational meeting regarding Hawes Farms Proposal for Zone Amendment for an Amusement Center. The meeting was led and attended by neighbors of Hawes Farm. The Environmental Initial Study and Negative Declaration was drafted, submitted and approved by the County Planning Commission back in 2023. This same plan is the one being voted on by the Board of Supervisors at their public meeting on February 25th @9:00 AM. Shasta County Supervisors, Corkey Harmon and Matt Plummer were in attendance to hear citizens' complaints as well as the scope of the



project. Hawes Farms is requesting a rezoning of approximately 146 acres, including land up to the Sacramento River. The rezoning would legitimize operations at the site that have expanded over the years to include “agritainment” including Christmas themed events with carnival rides, a pumpkin festival in October, and open-air concerts for up to 10,000 attendees on occasion. The Amusement Center will also include Tent & RV Camping, Corporate Retreats, Farm Vacations and a myriad of other activities. SBS is involved because there is controversy on whether the applicant’s resource studies adequately assess the potential impact on birds and bird habitat in the area. We are investigating further and we will comment to the County decision makers as necessary. If you would like more information, you can contact Bruce Webb or Rebeca Ladrón de Guevara of SBS, or Project Lead, Lio Salazar, Planning Division Manager at [lsalazar@shastacounty.gov](mailto:lsalazar@shastacounty.gov) or (530) 225-5532. Letters regarding the zone amendment must be sent to the Shasta County Board of Supervisors no later than February 22nd. Public comments are also encouraged on the day of the meeting.

## FEBRUARY 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.

### Clear Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant - Saturday, February 8th @ 8:00 am



We are scheduling our first 2025 Saturday visit to the ponds targeting waterfowl, shorebirds and wintering passerines. Assemble at the Treatment Plant’s Administration Building at the end of Metz Road at 8:00 am sharp to meet your leader, Larry Jordan. This is a 1/2-day trip that may end in the early afternoon if the birding is good. Directions to the Clear Creek Plant: Take Hwy 273 south, after crossing Clear Creek and past the Win-River Casino, take the second left turn at River Ranch Road and cross over the railroad tracks. Turn left on Eastside Rd. Entrance is at 2200 Metz Road on the right. Rain cancels. Questions contact [webmaster@shastabirdingsociety.org](mailto:webmaster@shastabirdingsociety.org)

### For Love of the Turtle Bay Bird Sanctuary Trail - Saturday, February 15th @ 10:00 am



Please join us to celebrate the dedication of the Bill Oliver Bird Blind. Bill's lifelong passion for birds led him to help found the Wintu Audubon Society in 1975; he served as president of the society on four different occasions and was the coordinator for the annual Christmas Bird Count for 45 years. Bill led countless bird walks over the years, compiled statistics, and helped introduce others to his love of birding. In 2021, Bill was honored by the Shasta Environmental Alliance with the Environmental Champion Award for his work as a citizen scientist. The bird blind site is seeing renewed restoration efforts, the permanent pushing back of invasive blackberry species and replanting of diverse, bird-attracting native plants. **The ceremony will be followed by a family friendly birdwalk.** Beginning birders are encouraged to join us. All are welcome. We will meet at the bird blind about a 1/4 of a mile down the bird sanctuary trail past the museum. Hope to see you there.

## Trinity County Bird Outing / Trinity River Hatchery and More – February 16 @ 8:00 am – 5:00 pm



Global Event - No Fee for this event on the last day of 'The Great Backyard Bird Count'. See link for more information about the 'GBBC', <https://www.birdcount.org/> This SBS outing is targeting Trinity County for the last day for the GBBC, on Sunday only. Trinity County Resource Conservation District is hosting one venue open to the public on Sunday at Trinity River Hatchery. To make a trip to Trinity County seems like an opportunity to visit a few more birding hotspots and contribute more data for the GBBC. Along with the stop at Trinity River Hatchery, we are adding three additional venues. Each venue will require short walks. We will meet at the [Redding Civic Auditorium parking lot on the west side](#). For anyone interested in a ride for the whole

event. I have room for two people so please contact me in advance if you would like one of these seats. The plan is for a departure at 8am sharp. We will take a lunch break after birding Trinity River Hatchery so please bring a lunch.

Birding Outing Details: We will drive straight to 'Lewiston-Lowden Ranch Historic Site' arriving at 9am. Location: [Lowden Ranch Historic Site](#) - Depart at 10:40am. Drive 15 minutes to attend the main event at 'Trinity River Hatchery' arriving at 11am. Location: [Trinity River Hatchery](#) – Have Lunch then depart at 1:30pm. Drive 30 minutes to 'Weaverville WTP' arriving at 2pm. Location: [Weaverville WTP](#) – Depart at 2:55pm. Drive a very short distance to 'Weaverville Basin Wetlands' at 3pm. Location: [Weaverville Basin Wetlands](#) – Depart at 4pm, with a 1 hour estimated time back to Redding.

## Llano Seco Unit - NWR - Saturday, February 22nd @ 7:30 am to Noon



This 1,732 acre U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service owned property known as the Llano Seco Unit is a no fee area. The Llano Seco Unit offers wildlife viewing, a short walking trail and photographic opportunities for visitors. The 1-mile trail (1/2 mile out and back) departs from the Observation Deck at the Visitor Area located on 7-Mile Lane, just 15 minutes southwest of the city of Chico. The trail takes you through the wetlands to an Observation Mound with a picnic table. From October - February you will find great viewing of sandhill cranes and waterfowl.

There is very limited shade in this wetlands area, so we highly recommend proper head coverings and sunscreen. Also be prepared with insect repellent. From Redding, Llano Seco Unit is

a 90-minute driving south on I-5 to, to Orland turn east on SR-32, to Hamilton City turn south on SR-45, to Ord Ferry Road turn east and continue 5.2 miles, and turn south at 7-Mile Lane for 2.2 miles to your final destination. Here is a pin drop of the location: [Llano\\_Seco\\_Unit\\_NWR\\_Location](#). If you have never visited Llano Seco before, I think you will be pleased with the access of two Observation Decks which are a half-a-mile apart, and the easy access trail that provides great views from the center of the upper Sacramento Valley. [Llano Seco NWR Visitor Guide](#)





## NESTBOX MONITORS WANTED!



Do you love birds? Would you like to get up close and personal with cavity nesting birds and their nestlings like these Tree Swallows? We have three locations that need nestbox monitors; Lema Ranch, Sacramento River Trail and Palo Cedro Park. Your webmaster, Larry Jordan, will teach you how to monitor nesting birds and record your progress on the Shasta Birding Society's Nestwatch site on Cornell Lab. The season runs from April through July. If you are interested, contact Larry Jordan at [webmaster@shastabirdingsociety.org](mailto:webmaster@shastabirdingsociety.org)





# JOIN A DIVERSE GROUP OF BIRD WATCHERS!



“All life is interconnected”  
-Dr. Martin Luther King

- Reduce stress
- Explore new places
- Get fresh air
- Improve memory and attention



Scan to learn more about black perspectives in bird watching.



@ShastaBirdingSociety



“Vital connections have been severed between human beings and nature; within nature itself; and between people, religions, governments, and commerce. This disconnection is the origin of the climate crisis, it is the very root - and it is where we discover solutions and actions that can engage all people, regardless of race, gender, or belief.” Paul Hawken 2021

Stephanie Hughes and Katherine Larson tabled this event and enjoyed participating in various parts of the program. Several members of SBS stopped by to say hello and were interested to hear about the February 15th event coming up at Turtle Bay. We had over twelve folks sign up for the newsletter to learn more. Our theme was "Getting to Know Birds Where We Live." Our display featured the Anna's Hummingbird who manages to live here year round and pictures of the Manzanita flowers that help sustain them. Children colored fact sheet pictures and drew their own portraits of this hummingbird. It was a great occasion for networking with other organizations as well.

## TRIP REPORTS

### Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge on January 11th



billed Curlew (that flew overhead near the last pond) and forty-two American White Pelicans! We tallied sixty-six species in all!

On a VERY windy morning, Dan Bye, Larry Jordan, and two new friends, Maria and Pedro, began the day with an abbreviated Wetlands Walk before retreating to our vehicles to drive the auto tour loop at Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge. The Wetland Walk gave us twenty-seven species including a large flock of White-faced Ibis and two Bald Eagles, an adult and a 3rd year bird, as well as a Cooper's Hawk. The impoundments along the auto tour route and surrounding habitat gave us scarce waterfowl in some locations as many of the birds were sheltering along the islands rather than bucking the winds. The upside to that was there were several spots where the waterfowl gathered in large groups. Like fourteen Blue-winged Teal and sixty-four Cinnamon Teal! Other birds of note were four Cackling Geese, five Wilson's Snipe, four Black-crowned Night-Heron, two Long-

### Nur Pon Open Space on January 18th



On a very cool morning with no wind and a clear sky, eight determined birders enjoyed sighting fifty-one of our feathered friends. Early on, three species of gull were sighted, American Herring Gull, California Gull, and of course, the Ring-billed Gull. The Turkey Vultures were out in force and an Osprey and a Bald Eagle graced the sky. Picidae were well represented with Red-breasted Sapsucker, Acorn, Downy and Nuttall's Woodpeckers, and Northern Flicker. We counted five Yellow-billed Magpies in a tree near the southern bridge and as we turned back northward we spotted one of the most beautiful, chocolate colored (dark morph) Red-tailed Hawk I had ever seen. As we progressed northward, back to the inland pond, we found not only Bufflehead, Ring-necked Duck, Mallard, and Common Goldeneye, we spotted three Barrow's Goldeneye as well! All the while a Belted Kingfisher played hide and seek with us, never giving us a really good look at him/her.



## Red Bluff Recreation Area on January 25th



We have a shout out to three birders new to our SBS Bird Outing from Shasta Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation of Kacie, Brendan, and Kate. We have another shout out to Lynn and Sabrina for their first visit to Red Bluff Recreation Area. Together we had seven brave bird nerds ready to push against the wind to see what birds were up for the challenge as well. The first thing that we noticed was the high number of Turkey Vulture that were up early and riding the currents as we arrived. Continuing with Raptors we saw Sharp-shinned Hawk, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, and Peregrine Falcon. Other non-passerine species included were Canada Goose, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser,

Mourning Dove, Anna's Hummingbird, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, American Herring Gull, Pied-billed Grebe, Great Egret, Acorn and Nuttall's Woodpecker, and Northern Flicker (Red-shafted and a Yellow-shafted x Red-shafted). The more notable passerine species of the day were Black Phoebe, California Scrub-Jay, Yellow-billed Magpie, Oak Titmouse, Bushtit, Ruby-crown Kinglet, White-breasted Nuthatch, Northern Mockingbird, American Pipit, House Finch, Lesser and American Goldfinch, Lark – White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, California and Spotted Towhee, Western Meadowlark, and Yellow-rumped Warbler. Our total species count was 47. In summary, everyone had a great time and saw many birds for our effort. Please check out our SBS Website 2025 calendar for other birding fee free events at: <https://shastabirdingsociety.org/calendar/month/2025-02/>

