



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

September / October 2010

A Busy Organization Needs More Membership Involvement: A Plea from Our Wintu A.S. President

Once again Red Modeen has done an excellent job of documenting our activities and accomplishments for our annual report to the National Audubon Society (see www.wintuadubon.org/board.htm to view the report). He has listed our involvement in events and projects, collectively and individually, as diverse as bluebird trails, newspaper articles, conservation issues such as the Hatchet Ridge Wind Farm near Burney, land use issues, booths at local festivals, educational programs for local schools and community groups, involvement in bird censuses and bird counts, to name just a few.

As you can see, Wintu Audubon Society is very involved in and is well respected as a resource in our community. As you can also see we constantly need help in many and varied ways. Whether helping in a booth or digging trenches for Burrowing Owl nests, there's a place for everyone! Please let me, or one of our board members, know if you would like to get more involved, even in a small way.

Currently we have a need for someone to train for our Treasurers position. Nola Wade has done a great job for many years and is also involved with many environmental issues. She would like to help someone take over as Treasurer so that she can be even more involved in our community. Call her and she can tell you what the job entails.

The Membership position also needs filling. It requires someone who is fairly proficient on a computer and is willing to keep our mailing list updated each month and to mail our newsletter five times a year.

Please call me for details on any of the above.
George Horn, President

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

September 14: Sharon Dale & Amber Davis; *Turtle Bay's Live Birds of Prey*

October 12: Linda Aldrich; Inviting *Inviting Birds to Your Backyard*

September Activities

Field Trips

Second Saturday Bird Walk---September 11 @ 8:00 am

This open-to-the-public outing will be at Shasta College. Meet in the north parking lot for this ½ day trip. The oak woodlands, wastewater treatment pond, Stillwater Creek riparian, and open fields support a wide variety of species. Bea Currie and Connie Word are the co-leaders.

Local Weekday Bird Walk---Lema Ranch, Tuesday, September 21 @ 8:00 am

Lema Ranch, an oasis of open space in Redding, is excellent year-around birding. The ponds, orchards, and fields of the McConnell Foundation Headquarters provide an abundance of birds species. We will look for Common Moorhens, rails, migrant passerines, and the resident Merlin. This will be a 2-3 hour walk on paved trails with fine public restrooms. We will meet at the North Parking Lot off Hemmingway Street. Hemmingway Street is across from Mountain View School on Shasta View Drive.

McArthur/Burney Falls State Park---Saturday, September 25 @ 7:30 am

This park in northeastern Shasta County is famous for its falls and nesting Black Swifts. The swifts will have migrated but the Falls, riparian zone along Dry Burney Creek and Lake Britton should provide a wide variety of birds. Bring a lunch, water, and sturdy shoes. We will rendezvous in the parking lot on the South side of the Redding Convention Center. We should return to Redding in later afternoon. George Horn will lead.

General Meeting

Tuesday, September 14 @ 7:00 pm ***Turtle Bay's Live Birds of Prey***

Sharon Dale, Curator of Animal Programs along with Amber Davis, Head animal trainer at Turtle Bay will display their live hawks, an owl and a Turkey Vulture. This will be our

chance to see these magnificent raptors up close and to hear stories of their natural history. Ms. Dale has 18 years in this field and was involved in the captive rearing and release program that saved the Bald Eagle. You won't want to miss the stories she has to tell!

October Activities

Field Trips

Second Saturday Bird Walk---October 9 @ 8:00 am

We will return to Turtle Bay and Kutras Lake for the fall and winter seasons. We will assemble in the parking area behind the monolith at Turtle Bay. This walk with Linda Aldrich is open to the public and all skill levels of birders are welcome. 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.

Local Weekday Bird Walk---Anderson River Park, Tuesday, October 19 @ 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.

Bird Walk at Lema Ranch---October 23 @ 7:30 am

A bird walk on the Lema Ranch trails will be held for attendees of the Northern California Audubon Council Meeting. All Wintu Audubon members are invited, also, regardless of whether you wish to attend the meeting (see below).

Wintu to Host the Northern California Audubon Council

The eight northern-most chapters in California, Wintu, Altacal, Redbud, Peregrine, Mendocino Coast, Redwood Region, Mt. Shasta Area, and Eagle Lake Audubon Societies comprise the Northern California Audubon Council. This regional Council, one of five sponsored by Audubon California, will be hosted this fall by Wintu Audubon. Garry George, Chapter Network Director for Audubon California, will describe the recent activities of our state organization and Scott Huber, our representative to the state office will bring us up-to-date on issues of more local interest. Each Chapter will report on their activities and organizational successes and failures. This Council meeting is a great opportunity to meet neighboring Chapter leaders and learn of their experiences.

The meeting will be held at the **McConnell Foundation headquarters at Lema Ranch on October 23 from 9:00 am to late afternoon.** A bird walk around Lema Ranch from 7:30 to 9:00 will precede the meeting. A catered lunch will be available at a cost of \$12. All Wintu members are urged to attend. We simply ask that you inform either George Horn or Larry Jordan so we can plan for the number of lunches.

General Meeting

Tuesday, October 12 @ 7:00 pm

Inviting Birds to Your Backyard

Each of us can have our own conservation project at home by recognizing and providing the food, shelter and other attributes that birds need to enhance the habitat. Long-time Audubon member Linda Aldrich's PowerPoint presentation will feature native plants that both bring birds in and are attractive in the landscape.

Return of the Salmon Festival--- October 16 at the Coleman National Fish Hatchery

View salmon spawning operations, a salmon aquarium, natural resource information booths and much more. Wintu Audubon will staff a booth. Contact Bea Currie Phone: 243-3955 for details for lending a hand.

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

www.wintuadubon

Trip Reports

Hart Ranch, Shasta Valley, May 22

Ten Wintu Audubon Society members traveled to this working cattle ranch in Shasta Valley near Montague in Siskiyou County.



The Hart Ranch folks, friends of Frank and Darliss Sanderson, kindly invited us to explore the birds in this rich habitat. Snow showers in the surrounding mountains and an occasional flurry on us reminded us that this is not our usual spring. Nevertheless, we saw 73 species, counting those seen to and from the Ranch. Probably the most memorable sightings were an immature Golden Eagle being harassed by Black-billed Magpies seen by the Sandersons, Larry Jordan and Michele Swartout and several Virginia Rails called to within 10 feet of us by Michele's tape.

Rendezvous with Wintu at Lassen

By Sue Leskiw, Redwood Region Audubon Society

On June 25-27, several RRAS members took the Wintu Audubon chapter up on its invitation to a camp-out at Lassen Volcanic National Park. This is the third year that Wintu has invited neighboring chapters to join it for a weekend of birding. Eureka residents Tom and Sue Leskiw, Jim and Donna Clark, and Chet Ogan joined Garrett and Kerry Watty from Salyer on the outing organized by Bill Oliver. Wintu chapter president George Horn and photographer Larry Jordan also camped out at Lost Creek group



camp (visit thebirdersreport.com for photos of birds and other animals seen during the trip).

Several "day trippers" from the Redding area met up with the campers Saturday morning to bird around Manzanita Lake. Ducklings were out in full force, as we observed baby Buffleheads, Wood Ducks, and Mallards cruising with their mothers. Upland brush fields and forest produced species such as Dusky Flycatcher, three kinds of Nuthatch, and a Yellow Warbler singing atop a white fir.

Walks from the campground yielded Pileated and White-headed Woodpeckers and Mountain Bluebird, but Black-backed Woodpecker was a no-show. At the former

Hat Lake (now a creek since the demise of a beaver dam), Clark's Nutcracker, American Dipper, and a large number of Spotted Sandpipers were noted. In between birding forays, we relaxed, conversed, ate, and drank around the campfire.

On Sunday morning, we stopped by PG&E's Lake McCumber to look for birds before returning home, with the highlight there a Common Loon. Bill Oliver compiled a list of 59 species seen by group members during the weekend in Lassen, plus 20 species viewed at Lake McCumber. RRAS should consider a similar outing, inviting our sister inland chapters to join us for some coastal birding.

Update on the Hatchet Ridge Wind Facility and the Technical Advisory Committee Proceedings

Wintu Audubon, represented by Conservation Chair Claudia Lyons-Yerion and Rosemary Powder, is currently serving on the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for the Hatchet Ridge Wind Facility. The TAC consists of Shasta County Dept. of Resource Management, CA Dept. of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and the project owner, Pattern Energy. The formation of the TAC was the result of efforts by Wintu Audubon, CDFG and USFWS to ensure oversight as part of the mitigation requirement package to address impacts to birds and bats. The purpose of the TAC is to provide input and guidance on these mitigation requirements.

The TAC has had two meetings to date, in which the following were accomplished:

- Approval and adoption of the TAC Charter
- A list of consultant candidates was compiled, from which one will be selected to design and perform the Avian and Bat Mortality Study & Monitoring
- Creation a list of objectives to include in the 'Request for Proposals' (RFP) to send to the

consultant candidate for the Mortality Monitoring Study
Shasta County drafted the RFP and sent it to the consultant candidates

The TAC will meet in late August to review the proposals for the Avian and Bat Mortality Study & Monitoring and will make the final selection of the consultant.

Claudia and Rose were granted a tour of the Hatchet Ridge facility in July and were able to get a firsthand look at the site and the turbines, and gained a better understanding of the technical and operations aspects of the facility.

The turbines have been undergoing operations testing this summer and groups of turbines have been observed rotating on several occasions.

The facility will begin commercial operations sometime between September and the end of October.



Birding Tips from the Fertile Imagination of Pete Dunne

People have difficulty distinguishing Downy from Hairy because they give too much weight to plumage and not enough to the powers of human perception. Downy is a tiny compact woodpecker that would have to stretch to see over a coffee mug. Hairy is a full-sized big billed street brawler of a woodpecker that would have no trouble peering over a beer mug.

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

2009-2010 OFFICERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS & DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

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DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

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

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.

14th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium

Hey birders! One of the premier birding festivals in the U.S. is in Stockton, practically in our backyard! It will be held at the Hilton in Stockton, Nov. 18-21, 2010.

This year's evening programs feature dynamic photographer and author Paul Bannick on *Owls and Woodpeckers of the West*, and author and award-winning photographer Moose Petersen on *California's Threatened and Endangered Birds*. Workshops include Jon Dunn on sparrows and Joe Morlan's shorebird ID workshop focusing on loons and grebes. Add in the field trips, Birder's Market, and the camaraderie of hundreds of like-minded folks, and you know you'll have a good time! For more information or registration go to the website at www.cvbs.org or contact Frances Oliver at hummer52@sbcglobal.net