

THE HOOT OWL

May - June 2015
Issue 3, Volume 53

San Joaquin Audubon Society
Affiliated with the National Audubon Society-California

PROGRAMS

There will be no general membership meetings during our regular summer hiatus (May through August). The next general membership meeting will be Tuesday, September 9.

Annual Chapter Picnic Saturday, May 16

Save the date! On Saturday, May 16, San Joaquin Audubon will hold its Annual Chapter Picnic at the Mokelumne River Day Use Area/Fish Hatchery. We will start off birding at 8:00 a.m., combining our bird walk with the monthly bird census of this delightful park. The pot luck brunch will follow at approx. 10:00 a.m., so bring a dish to share. We'll also have a short Annual Business Meeting. Meet in the fish hatchery parking lot (below the dam).

BREEDING BIRD SURVEY

Volunteers are needed to conduct roadside Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) routes in California in 2015.

The route needs to be run just once each year during the months of May or June; exact dates vary with each route. The main requirement for volunteering is the observer needs to be able to identify most of the birds along the route by call/song and all by sight.

California has 228 BBS routes and currently has 94 routes that are vacant. Maps showing the available routes can be found here: <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs/results/routemaps/index.html>

If you are interested in volunteering for a survey route or two, please contact Lyann Comrack at 916-341-6981 or e-mail her at lcomrack@dfg.ca.gov.

FIELD TRIPS

SATURDAY, May 2— *Introductory Birding Field Trip*

Join leader Dale Smith at the north end of Laurel Ave. in Lodi (on the east side of Lodi Lake Park, off of Turner Rd.) at 8:00 a.m. Birders of all skill levels are welcome, but the focus will be on birding fundamentals. Extra binoculars and field guides will be available.

WEDNESDAY, May 6— *Mitchell Canyon, Mount Diablo State Park*

Join leaders John Blades and Terre Ronneberg for our walk up this sylvan, riparian canyon. We will hike until we hit the steep hills, and then take a break; about 2 miles in and out again. For those who choose to go further, there are unlimited trails up the mountain. Expect migrating birds and native wild flowers. Meet leader John Blades at Toot Sweets (northwest corner of March Ln. and Quail Lakes Dr.) at 7:00 a.m. to carpool, or meet in the Mitchell Canyon parking lot at 9:00 a.m. There is a \$6 (\$5 senior) per vehicle parking fee. Bring lunch, water, sunscreen, hat, and binoculars.

SUNDAY, May 10— *Mother's Day Walk, Bear Creek Bike Path*

After feeding Mom breakfast in bed, meet leader Dale Smith at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot of Michael Faklis Park, which is off Cosumnes Drive near Mokelumne Circle southwest of I5/Eight Mile Rd. interchange. This easy walk features riparian and marsh habitat with recent sightings including Sora Rail and Peregrine Falcon. Extra binoculars and field guides will be available.

THURSDAY, May 14— *Cosumnes River Preserve / River Walk*

Join leader Jim Rowoth (487-3489 or rowoth@sbcglobal.net) for the monthly River Walk bird count through the varied habitats of the CRP. Meet Jim at the visitor center on Franklin Rd. at 5:45 a.m. for this all morning visit. Bring sunscreen, water and snack. Check website www.cosumnes.org for last minute updates.

SUNDAY, May 17— *Woodbridge Wilderness Area*

Join leader Mark Elness for our monthly census of this small riparian park on the banks of the Mokelumne River. Meet at the north end of Meadowlark Lane in Woodbridge at 8:00 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, May 27— *Electra Road, Amador County*

Join leader Joanne Katanic (483-2578) to explore Electra Road, near Jackson off of Highway 49. This is a great spot for newly arriving migrants and summer breeding birds. Past finds have included Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak, Yellow Warbler, Bullock's Oriole, and Yellow-breasted Chat. To carpool, meet in Lodi at the Park N Ride at Highway 99 and Victor Rd. (Highway 12) at 7:00 a.m. To meet in Jackson, be in the parking lot for Mel & Fay's Diner at 8:00 a.m. (also a Park N Ride).

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Margaret Williams

(March 22, 1934 – March 18, 2015)

Margaret Williams, past president of San Joaquin Audubon Society, passed away on March 18th of this year. She was a few days short of her 81st birthday.

Her family moved to California from Colorado at an early age, and her father helped with construction of the Oroville dam. She had a brief marriage, after which she attended nursing school in the Bay Area. She worked as a nurse for several years. She went back to Stanislaus State and the University of Hawaii to receive her Masters in Medical Geography in the 1970's, which took her to Samoa and Indonesia. She used to regale us with stories of the long houses she slept in, with rats nibbling at her hair, and of delicacies like chicken lungs that she was served while overseas. After returning to the states, she worked for several years at SJ General Hospital in French Camp. She eventually ended up as director of nursing at the Hospice of San Joaquin, where she retired around 2000.

She became active in the birding community as the result of her volunteer work at Micke Grove Zoo in the early 1990s. This is where I first met her. We became fast friends and took countless birding excursions throughout the county, state, and country. Several of us from SJAS enjoyed her company on birding trips to Veracruz and Costa Rica. She was incredibly curious and adventurous, traveling to Trinidad, the Yucatan, Ecuador, Morocco and Scotland as well. In addition to birding, she took road trips throughout the US with friends and family.

Margaret served on the board of directors of SJAS for most of the 1990s. She was a key member of the group that assembled our local county birding guide (now out of print). She assisted with field trips for the local group, as well as the Crane Festival and the Central Valley Birding Symposium. After retirement, she relocated to Nevada City to be closer to family, and she became active in the Sierra Foothills AS.

Margaret was renowned for the memorable “nosh” that she brought on birding trips, and for the legendary meals she provided on overnight SJAS camping trips to Mono Lake, the White Mountains, and the Kern River Preserve. She loved wildlife and loved to watch nature programs on PBS. She would often pick up the phone and strongly “suggest” that I turn on the TV to watch certain programs on birds as well. In addition to nature, she enjoyed music and the theater. We often attended concerts and the opera together. She loved playing games, especially Scrabble.

Margaret was tough as nails and as sharp as a tack up to the end. She leaves behind a son and two grandsons, as well as numerous cousins. SJAS was lucky to have her sharp wit and insightful curiosity. Her passing leaves a great void for those of us who knew and loved her.

FIELD TRIPS

(continued from page 1)

FRIDAY, May 29–SUNDAY, May 31— *Annual Sierra Valley Campout*

The Sierra Valley/Yuba Pass areas offer great habitat for birds, with many lakes, meadows, marshes, streams, and trees. As usual, we will be camping at the Cottonwood Creek Campground on Highway 89 north of Truckee, or you can choose to stay at the Globe Hotel in Sierraville (www.sierrahotsprings.org). Please phone or email trip leader Dave Wagner (943-6997, dajwagner@aol.com) to RSVP. For anyone wanting to join us early Saturday morning, we will be meeting for breakfast at 7:00 a.m. at the Sierraville Kitchen. The café's phone number is (530)994-3400.

SATURDAY, June 6— *Introductory Birding Field Trip*

Join leader Susan Schneider at the north end of Laurel Ave. in Lodi (on the east side of Lodi Lake Park, off of Turner Rd.) at 8:00 a.m. Birders of all skill levels are welcome, but the focus will be on birding fundamentals.

SUNDAY, June 7— *Calaveras Big Trees State Park/Birds and Blooms*

Join leaders Kurt Mize (915-6264, klmize@aol.com) and Bob Stahmer (CA Native Plant Society) for our annual visit to one of California's oldest and most beautiful state parks. We'll be on the lookout for neotropical migrants and local breeding birds, and the wildflower species of the mixed coniferous forest. Bring lunch, water, mosquito repellent, and sunscreen. We'll picnic by the river. Meet at the park in the North Grove parking lot at 8:30 a.m., or at the Country Café in Lockeford at 7:00 a.m. if you wish to carpool.

SATURDAY, June 13— *Cosumnes River Preserve / River Walk*

Join leader Jim Rowoth (487-3489 or rowoth@sbcglobal.net) for the monthly River Walk bird count through the varied habitats of the CRP. Meet Jim at the visitor center on Franklin Rd. Check website www.cosumnes.org for last minute updates. Double check with Jim for start time.

SATURDAY, June 20— *Woodbridge Wilderness Area*

Join leader Liz West for our monthly census of this small riparian park on the banks of the Mokelumne River. Meet at the north end of Meadowlark Lane in Woodbridge at 8:00 a.m.

SUNDAY, June 21— *Mokelumne River Fish Hatchery*

Join leaders Liz West and Joanne Katanic for our monthly census of this lovely little riparian area below Comanche Dam. Meet the leaders in the fish hatchery parking lot at 8:00 a.m.

SUNDAY, June 28— *Ripon Oak Grove Park & Sewage Ponds*

Join leader Mark Elness for a visit to this undeveloped 55 acre park on the banks of the Stanislaus River in Ripon, and the adjacent Ripon Sewage Ponds. We will meet in the parking area on S. Stockton Rd. at 8:00 a.m. Bring drinks and insect repellent. Call Mark at (209)629-4673 with any questions.

BIRD SIGHTINGS

February 12, 2014 - April 14, 2014

(All sightings pertain to San Joaquin County)

Submitted by Liz West

On the March 7th beginning bird walk at Lodi Lake, Pat and Dave Croft found a **Steller's Jay** along the river near marker 13. It was last spotted April 12th in the same general location.

Barry Parkin found three **Band-tailed Pigeons** at Mokelumne Fish Hatchery on February 21st, in the top of a cottonwood. Mark and Lorna Elness saw a couple at the Ripon sewage ponds on March 8th. On March 11th, Ralph Baker found two at Lodi Lake while looking for the Steller's Jay. The monthly field trip to Woodbridge Wilderness area led by Mark Elness saw five Band-tailed Pigeons, March 21st.

The **Red-throated Loon** found on the Kelso Rd. pond in January, was last seen March 7th.

Sal Salerno saw a **Long-tailed Duck** at the Ripon Sewage Ponds, March 13th.

Dan Williams found a single **Pacific Golden-plover** among the 120 Black-bellied Plovers on the levee road between the ponds at Lodi Sewage Ponds, March 12th. It was last seen April 10th.

On March 23rd, David Yee saw an "apparent" **interior Western Scrub Jay** towards the back of Oak Grove Regional Park in Stockton. David also mentioned that the interior and Pacific forms might be split in the future.

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