

## Napa Solano Audubon Society Birding Notes #15

**Hello NSAS friends and members –**

Are you enjoying the sounds of spring? The songs of the Hooded Oriole, the Bewick's Wren, the Spotted Towhee, and many others are around us. Check out Note #3 to learn about a new App to help identify a bird when you hear it sing.

### **Note #1 –NSAS announcements**

1. Nominations for elected Board positions are completed. You will soon be contacted via e-mail to vote for the President, VP, Secretary, and Treasurer who will represent the NSAS and you for the 2021 – 2022 year.

If you weren't interested in filling a board position, **we can still use your help**. We have six (6) Standing Committees who organize many of the NSAS activities throughout the year. These are the Communications, Conservation, Education, Field Trips, Membership, and Program Committees. Each of these committees could use extra hands to help them with their activities. If you are interested in getting more involved with the NSAS, you might consider volunteering to help on a Committee. For more information contact Tom Slyker at [solanobirder@gmail.com](mailto:solanobirder@gmail.com) or Mark Stephenson at [napabirder@gmail.com](mailto:napabirder@gmail.com).

2. On Saturday, April 24, there will be a **NSAS Field Trip to Mines Road** and Del Puerto Canyon. Trip details can be found on our website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/Event/20210424-NSASFieldTripToMinesRoadAndDelPuertoCanyon>.
3. On Thursday, May 13 at 7 PM, our monthly Members Meeting will highlight a presentation by Mark & Lucas Stephenson. They will be discussing their ***Observations of Sea Birds and Mammals*** from their West Coast Pelagic Trips over the last 6 years. For more information about this presentation and the Zoom Link for attending see the NSAS website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/Event/20210513-NSASsMaySpeakerZoomPresentationWestCoastSeaBirdPelagicTripsWithMarkLucasStephenson>.



Clark's Grebe by Floyd Hayes

4. If you missed the presentation about the ***Western and Clark's Grebes Populations at Clear Lake*** by Dr. Floyd Hayes, you missed some great pictures (see above) and information about Clear Lake and its Avian inhabitants. However, don't despair. You can still view the presentation on YouTube at [https://youtu.be/xC842LXd\\_GU](https://youtu.be/xC842LXd_GU).
  
5. ***Our weekly Saturday Field Trips - led by Andrew Ford - have resumed.*** Every week it's a trip to someplace new. In April we've been to Kennedy Park, Lynch Canyon, and Patwino Worrtila Kodoi Dihi Open Space Park (formerly Rockville Trails Preserve). **Andrew will not be available to lead a walk on April 24.** However, we expect he will be ready to go again on May 1. A list of his anticipated walk destinations for May can be found in our Spring Newsletter at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/Newsletters/Current>.

## Note #2 – *What about the birds?*

1. You never know what you will find on the internet. I recently discovered an article titled, “**The bizarre reason watching birds can make you happier than money.**” The author starts the article with “You know the feeling of spotting a brightly colored robin or blue jay perched outside your window; a fleeting moment that offers a feeling of joyful glee and [curiosity akin to being a kid.](#)” It’s true that I feel a “joyful glee” when I see birds. They do make me happy.

She then follows by describing 7 special benefits that can result from taking a few minutes to observe the birds around us. You can find the article and a description of those benefits at <https://www.theladders.com/career-advice/the-1-outdoor-activity-proven-to-make-you-happier-than-money>.

2. Because I liked the picture. This photo was taken from the Spring Issue of “Bird on a Wire: Latest News from Audubon California.”



Barn Owls. Photo: Pamela Dimeler

**Note #3 – Recently**, Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Chemnitz University of Technology **published a new machine-learning algorithm named BirdNet to analyze bird songs and identify songs on recordings**. Best of all, they have a *free, easy to use*, and pretty darn accurate **new smartphone app** that you can download and play with. Check it out at <https://birdnet.cornell.edu/> or download the iPhone or android BirdNet app from the app store.

If you've used **Merlin**, which is also a free app from Cornell Labs, you know how easy they make it to identify birds you see by entering a few characteristics and colors into the cell phone app. *If you haven't used Merlin, what are you waiting for?* It is a wonderful tool to help everyone with identifying the birds they see. And this new **BirdNet app** looks to be just about as easy to use as Merlin! I've downloaded it and am ready to give it a go. Identifying bird songs has always been a difficult challenge for me and I'm looking forward to having this new tool to help me improve my birding skills. Hopefully, you will also give it a go and will let me know how the app works for you.

**Note #4 – Advocacy opportunities.** There are two opportunities that have recently come up where you can have a direct impact on the direction of public projects. Your opinions count only if you make them known. These opportunities provide a way for you to help impact the future protection of the birds and natural resources around us. Please take advantage of these opportunities to help decide our future and the future of California for our children.

1. You're invited to join Audubon California's **Virtual Advocacy Day on Thursday, June 10th, 2021**. State legislators are making important decisions that will dramatically impact millions of birds and our communities. We need your voice now.

Audubon members from across the state will meet with legislators via ZOOM to discuss our top priorities for birds and people. Audubon staff will facilitate the meetings and provide participants with the tools and information you need to successfully participate. For details about this event and how to register go to <https://ca.audubon.org/get-involved/advocacy/virtual-advocacy-day#:~:text=We%20are%20excited%20to%20announce,for%20birds%20and%20our%20communities!>

2. Highway 37 between Vallejo and Novato is going to be rebuilt. **RESILIENT37** is a program for Planning a More Resilient Highway 37 for All. Think about Highway 37 as more than just a commute! The future of this corridor demands finding solutions to chronic traffic congestion and periodic flooding. But it will also require balancing transportation needs with protecting and enhancing sensitive marshland habitats. Planning a long-term solution presents an opportunity to provide bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and carpool options for all travelers.

Get involved in planning Highway 37 and help make it resilient, reliable, safer, and built to last for all travelers! To learn more about the planning processes and how to provide your valued input to make the new Hwy 37 a place to bird and walk and enjoy being outdoors go to this website <https://scta.ca.gov/resilient37/> If you don't participate you can't complain about how this development in your backyard turns out.

This is a photo from a Highway 37 pullout from December. It's one of many pictures in eBird of the species found along Hwy 37 that need our help in protecting their habitat.



Willetts and Curlew by Andrew Ray

- If you have ideas for what can be done to make the NSAS a better birding resource for our community or have Birding Notes and/or Pictures to share with the rest of the NSAS community please send them to Tom Slyker at [SolanoBirder@gmail.com](mailto:SolanoBirder@gmail.com).
- Be sure to check the calendar at the NSAS website (<http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/>) for meeting announcements and Field Trip updates.
- This is issue number 15 of our biweekly series. Past copies of Birding Notes are posted on the NSAS website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/>
- If you would like to unsubscribe from receiving all email communications for NSAS, including these Birding Notes, please send your unsubscribe request to [SolanoBirder@gmail.com](mailto:SolanoBirder@gmail.com).