

Napa Solano Audubon Society Birding Notes #22

Hello NSAS friends and members –

Migration is in full flow. First of the season (FOS) Northern Pintail ducks were seen at American Canyon Wetlands on Monday. A FOS Yellow-rumped Warbler was seen at Benicia Community Park on Wednesday. And on Wednesday morning we saw the first flight of fall geese heading east over Benicia on their way to their winter home in the Central Valley. It's an exciting time of the year to be a birder!

Note #1 – NSAS announcements

1. **We NEED your help!** We are seeking to *hire a part-time Education Coordinator*. We are looking for someone with a background in Wildlife Biology and/or Education to serve in Napa & Solano County schools. The **Education Coordinator** would: conduct classes in Elementary Schools in Napa & Solano Counties, Lead Beginning Bird Walks, Organize and Lead the Christmas Bird Count for Kids, and provide support for other NSAS Events, Citizen Science activities, and similar NSAS tasks from September - June 2021-22. See our website at http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/nsas/docs/Education_Coordinator_Job_Description.pdf for more information about this position.

If you know of anyone who might be interested in this position, please ask them to contact Mark Stephenson, our NSAS President, at napabirder@gmail.com.

2. Our October and November Members Meetings will be Zoom events.
 - a. On Thursday, October 14th Monique Liguori will share beautiful visuals in her talk titled “**The Incredible Lives of Hummingbirds.**” Full details about the talk and Zoom link information can be found on our website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/Event/20211014-NSASPresentsOnZoomTheIncredibleLivesOfHummingbirdsWithMoniqueLiguori>.

- b. On Thursday, November 11th author and artist Keith Hansen's will present "**Birds of the Sierra Nevada.**" Keith recently published the definitive field guide for the identification of Sierra Nevada birds. In this presentation Keith will share his experiences and adventures in the pursuit of the birds that are documented in this guide. Full details about the talk and Zoom link information can be found on our website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/Event/20211111-NSASPresentsBirdsOfTheSierraNevadaWithAuthorAndArtistKeithHansen>.

3. Field Trips:

- a. Our Saturday Weekly Bird Walks with Andrew are continuing throughout October. The tentative schedule for the month is: Oct. 2 - Kennedy Park, Oct. 9 - Skyline Regional Park, Oct. 16 - Grasslands Regional Park (Tentative), Oct. 23 - Benicia State Recreation Area, and Oct. 30 - San Pablo Bay Trail. Announcements confirming each walk with details about when and where to meet will be sent to the NSAS Field Trips email list a day or two before the walk takes place. If you are not receiving these announcements and would like to be added to our Field Trips email list, please contact Tom Slyker at solanobirder@gmail.com.
- b. Our **October Field Trip** is a visit to the Monterey Bay area on October 16 - 17. This is an overnight trip and sign-ups are required as the trip is limited to 15 participants. Trip details and information on how to sign up can be found on our website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/FieldTrip/20211016-MontereyBayArea>. Note that participation in our monthly field trips is prioritized for NSAS Members. Non-members will be added to a waiting list and will only be included if space is available after members have registered. To become a member, you can sign up via our website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/Main/Join>.
- c. The September Field Trip was to Martinez. We explored some new areas that I had not previously birded. The highlight of the trip was the view from the ridge high above Martinez with a wonderful panorama of the Carquinez Strait and delta region beyond. We were entertained by stilling Red-tailed Hawks and hunting Kestrels flying along the top of the ridge.

d. The Weekly Walk for September 25 was moved to American Canyon Wetlands, and we had 20+ participants who observed 53 species during the morning walk. We did miss the Northern Pintails that showed up the following Monday, however there were plenty of ducks and shorebirds to be seen along with a good variety of raptors. And the Soras, Common Gallinules, and the Pied-billed Grebe all came out to entertain their audience. Doug Matacio shared the following picture he took while on the walk.



American Avocet by Doug Matacio



Long-billed Dowitchers by Doug Matacio

4. The next NSAS Board meeting is being held on Monday, October 25 in Benicia. If you are interested in attending and learning more about the workings of our society, please contact Mark Stephenson at napabirder@gmail.com.

Note #2 – The Joy of Birds –

1. Owls! They seem to be in vogue. Cornell Labs is offering a new course called “**The Wonderful World of Owls.**” Even if you don’t take the course, it is worth the time to check out the FREE Preview. There are a couple of YouTube Videos to watch with interesting facts and owl trivia. Follow this link to learn more https://academy.allaboutbirds.org/free-preview-the-wonderful-world-of-owls/?utm_campaign=VC%20migration%20celebration%2021&utm_medium=email&hsmi=165830322&hsenc=p2ANqtz-9Anar7P7x1f4O4No40nRXPeCVFmUJqtLlBybiKwrVKeLxw07p2cS6xkacib3yQspcZVCZ3I5s49s3FxQKk4dGBPBErA&utm_content=165134453&utm_source=hs_email#life-of-an-owl.



Photo: Northern Saw-whet Owl by Andrew Renkert/Audubon Photography Awards

2. Owls! Audubon California has designated the **Northern Saw-whet Owl** (see above) as their bird of the month. To learn more, visit this website - <https://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/northern-saw-whet-owl?emci=ff0b276a-0c22-ec11-981f-501ac510a405&emdi=082eb551-2222-ec11-981f-501ac510a405&ceid=3257812>.
3. Hopefully you received the email indicating that Mark Stephenson had released the *NSAS Rare Bird Alert #10*. This is a report on **Fall Warbler Migration** and the recent sightings of rare Warblers at the Point Reyes National Seashore. The full report has been posted on our website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/nsas/RareBirdAlert/RareBirdAlert10.pdf>.
4. **House Finch or Purple Finch** – *how do you tell them apart?* If you're like me, it seems impossible. Now the National Audubon is providing some clues to help distinguish between these two often-confused finches. Check out their ID tips at https://www.audubon.org/news/house-finch-or-purple-finch-heres-how-tell-them-apart?ms=digital-eng-email-ea-x-engagement-20210917-engagement-burst-3&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement-20210917-engagement-burst-3&utm_content=&emci=dc4d6fbf-2d17-ec11-981f-501ac57ba3ed&emdi=3d655cbd-d017-ec11-981f-501ac57ba3ed&ceid=3257812.
5. **Are you looking for the best places to go birding in California?** Audubon California has just released their list of the "*Top 16 Places to Spot Migratory Birds in California*." Luckily, we will get to hit two of these spots during the October Field Trip to Monterey. You can see the full list of "Hot Spots" at this website [https://ca.audubon.org/news/top-16-places-spot-migratory-birds-california?ms=ca-eng-email-ea-newsletter-engagement-%28ca%29-sept-2021-newsletter&emci=ff0b276a-0c22-ec11-981f-501ac510a405&emdi=082eb551-2222-ec11-981f-501ac510a405&ceid=3257812&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement \(ca\) sept 2021 newsletter](https://ca.audubon.org/news/top-16-places-spot-migratory-birds-california?ms=ca-eng-email-ea-newsletter-engagement-%28ca%29-sept-2021-newsletter&emci=ff0b276a-0c22-ec11-981f-501ac510a405&emdi=082eb551-2222-ec11-981f-501ac510a405&ceid=3257812&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement%20(ca)%20sept%202021%20newsletter).

Note #3 – Fire and Drought

1. It would wonderful if all we had to think about was the “Joy of Birds.” Unfortunately, the news from the last few weeks was not all upbeat. Audubon California highlighted **Fire and Drought in California** in their October newsletter. They state, *“From fires in the Sierra to clouds of windblown dust at the Salton Sea, the effects of climate change in California are impossible to ignore.”* The picture below of Cranes in a smoky haze is the cover picture for their news. For the full story see this website [https://ca.audubon.org/conservation/conservation/global-warming/fire-and-drought?ms=ca-eng-email-ea-newsletter-engagement \(ca\) sept 2021 newsletter&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement \(ca\) sept 2021 newsletter&emci=ff0b276a-0c22-ec11-981f-501ac510a405&emdi=082eb551-2222-ec11-981f-501ac510a405&ceid=3257812](https://ca.audubon.org/conservation/conservation/global-warming/fire-and-drought?ms=ca-eng-email-ea-newsletter-engagement%20(ca)%20sept%202021%20newsletter&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement%20(ca)%20sept%202021%20newsletter&emci=ff0b276a-0c22-ec11-981f-501ac510a405&emdi=082eb551-2222-ec11-981f-501ac510a405&ceid=3257812).



Sandhill Cranes. Photo Haoyu LiAudubon Photography Awards

2. Mia McPherson was also recently discussing “[Thoughts on Our Drought, Douglas Firs, And Birds](https://www.onthewingphotography.com/wings/2021/09/27/thoughts-on-our-drought-douglas-firs-and-birds/)” on her blog at <https://www.onthewingphotography.com/wings/2021/09/27/thoughts-on-our-drought-douglas-firs-and-birds/>. In the blog posting she provides a link to a Scientific American article that discusses, “The Great Basin, one of North America’s most important habitats for migratory birds, is getting warmer, drier and saltier—and that’s a problem for some of the species that call it home.” Both her blog and the article are worth a read. Also, the blog has an excellent photo of a Red-breasted Nuthatch that I’m sure you will enjoy.

- 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.
- 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 22 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.