



Song Sparrow

www.napasolanoaudubon.com

NSAS General Meeting
7:00 P.M. **Tuesday, November 9, 2004**
Solano County Office of Education
Waterman Room
5100 Business Center Drive, Suisun City

Tuesday November 9, 2004—Speaker 7:30
Solano County Breeding Bird Atlas and the
Benicia Christmas Bird Count

Robin Leong

Robin Leong will announce the start of Solano County Breeding Bird Atlas (SCBBA) Project (January 1, 2005-December 31, 2009). The program on the SCBBA will include a brief history of Atlasing, how it is done, and a request for volunteers. *Breeding Birds of Napa County* will be used as a reference and will be on sale for \$27.

Also included in this program will be a brief history of Christmas Bird Counts (CBC), its purpose and the rules of a CBC. The history of the Benicia Christmas Bird Count, a map of the 15 mile diameter circle, and the 14 birding territories within this circle, will be on display. Sign ups for the next Benicia CBC December 27, 2004 will be taken. Please come to learn about these two exciting Napa-Solano Audubon Society projects.

Robin was one of the organizers and authors the Napa County Breeding Bird Atlas (1989-1993). He has been a co-compiler and compiler of the Benicia CBC for the past 17 years.

Directions: Take the Green Valley exit from eastbound or westbound I-80 and go north to the first road which is Business Center Road. Turn west and head toward the Costco store which is northwest of the junction of I-80 and I-680. The Board of Education Building is on the right side of the road before you reach Costco. If you're coming north on I-680, take the Cordelia Road exit and make three right turns to go under the highway and north on Green Valley Road which is the frontage road west of I-80. Go over I-80 and make a left turn on Business Center Rd. The meeting will be held in the Waterman room. For more information: visit www.napasolanoaudubon.com or call (707)224-6133.

Audubon Activists Invited!

This is an invitation to join other activists at the Audubon Assembly happening at the Radisson Hotel in Stockton on November 17th and 18th. The Assembly is a statewide meeting open to all members and is a chance for Audubon activists to gather and discuss some of the major conservation issues in California and how the election will affect those issues. Activists from around the state will share what is happening locally and help shape Audubon California's legislative priorities for the coming year. Workshops will be led by experienced chapter leaders and staff and will highlight how to improve conservation results at the local level. Highlights include:

- Activism with impact: Recruitment, training and tools for effective activism
- How to replicate and expand on local chapter conservation successes
- Building your base: On the ground conservation approaches that excite and inspire volunteers
- Innovative Education Programs
- Salton Sea Restoration
- The basics of bird monitoring

Other great workshops will be featured that emphasize strengthening chapters and grassroots activists. We'll be there to share and learn from each other.

There will also be a special trip to the Woodbridge Crane Reserve near Lodi to watch for the crane fly-in at dusk. Swans, ducks, geese, hawks, herons, owls and other wildlife are often seen on these tours. For full details about the Audubon Assembly contact Jill Shirley at 530-795-0550 or jshirley@audubon.org. Or visit the website at www.audubon-ca.org. We look forward to seeing you there!

Jill Shirley, Director, phone: 530-795-0550
Chapter Outreach Program, Audubon California
5265 Putah Creek Road, Winters, CA 95694

Field Trip to Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge and Gray Lodge Wildlife Refuge

DATE: Saturday, November 13, 20004

LEADER: John Boyd, Ph.D. 707-255-1475

COORDINATOR: David Takeuchi 643-5544
davidtakeuchi@aol.com



DESTINATION LOCATION: The trip will start at the parking lot of the Sacramento NWR at 10:00 AM, just off I-5. About 2 miles south of Willows, turn off (east) at the Norman Road exit, then left (north) on the access road to the brown marked entrance to Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge.

Car Pool: Meet at 8:30 AM, Solano at the County Education Bldg. across from Costco, 5100 Business Center Drive, Suisun City. This is an all day birding trip, and into the evening for some. Please read on and note that there maybe an "evening flyout" viewing. Carpool accordingly. Please notify David, preferably by e-mail, by Thursday evening, November 11, if you are interested in viewing the "evening flyout".

Come join us as Dr. Boyd leads us to view the Pacific Flyway Fall Migration of water fowl through the central valley. Dr. Boyd who we affectionately or irreverently call John, taught Biology for many years at Napa College, and is now enjoying his well earned retirement. Over the past two decades, he has been an active participant in the raptor migration census and banding at Hawk Hill and Marin Headlands. He is a former Napa-Solano Audubon Field Trip Chairman.

We will bird the refuge for seasonal ducks and geese and with a bit of luck see the resident Peregrine Falcon, Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle. Often there are good opportunities for photos. After lunch we will caravan over to Gray Lodge WR where we will see swans, Sandhill Cranes, ducks, geese, songbirds and raptors. If there is sufficient interest and the weather holds up, Dr. Boyd will make arrangements to stay to see the often awesome "evening flyout", which **starts just after sunset**, at one of the refuges. Conditions have to be just right but if it happens it will be a sight and sound you will remember for the rest of your life.

Dress warmly, in layers, including gloves, and bring snacks, lunch (dinner snack for some), liquids, mosquito repellent, sun-block, and your Motorola 2-way radios. Remember to bring your binoculars, and scope if you have one.

A reminder from the Field Trip Coordinator: Car-poolers will share driving expenses (recommended \$.25/mi to be split by the number of riders).

FIELD TRIP: Nature in the City - North and West Neighborhoods of Vacaville.

DATE: Wednesday, November 3, 2004

LEADER: John C. Wagnitz, 707- 447-2685, c5jd@pacbell.net

COORDINATOR: David Takeuchi, (707) 643-5544
davidtakeuch@aol.com

DESTINATION TIME AND LOCATION: 8:30AM, Meet at 241 Hidden Valley Lane, Vacaville CA located at the end of North Alamo, Vacaville CA. After the walk, those interested may join the leader for a no host lunch and wine or coffee in a local restaurant in downtown Vacaville.

CARPPOOL LOCATION: Solano County Education Building across from Costco 8:00am.—5100 Business Center Drive, Suisun City.

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Napa-Solano Audubon Society

Officers

President	John Wagnitz.....707-447-2685
Vice President	Marge Irwin.....707-224-6184
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Field Trips	David Takeuchi.....707-643-5544
Hospitality	Louise DeBenedetti.....707-642-3993
Membership	<i>Unassigned for coming year</i>
Programs	Robin Leong707-643-1287
Publicity	Cheryl Harris.....707-224-6133
CBC	Robin Leong707-643-1287

Song Sparrow

Editor	Susan Lane707-649-8033
Features	

Web Page www.napasolanoaudubon.comJohn Wagnitz

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NSAS Board of Directors Meeting are held the last Wednesday of the month, from 7 to 9 p.m. at Re/Max Realty Office, 723 & 729 Amador, corner of Amador and Ohio Streets in Vallejo. All members are always welcome.

Nature in the City

We have begun a Wednesday mid-week bird-walk, in conjunction with the upcoming Solano Breeding Bird Atlas five year census which will be start on January 1, 2004. The aim of these mid-week walks is to introduce us to birds in our local community and become aware of what they are "doing" to increase their numbers.

On our first walk Wednesday, November 3rd, we will stroll the sidewalks and paved bike trails of North and West Vacaville and along Alamo Creek looking for Nature in the City. The trip leader will be John Wagnitz, the current President of Napa-Solano Audubon Society. He has lived in the neighborhood since 1986 and has led nature walks at UC Davis Arboretum, Cosumnes River Preserve, Davis Wetlands, and Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area. Birding will be the focus but a wide range of nature subjects will be addressed. Come and enjoy Nature in the City!

We will then carpool to downtown old town Vacaville where we will stroll past old Victorian homes and under a canopy of majestic oak trees to the Creek Walk. The Creek Walk, although short, goes into a remnant riparian habitat right in downtown Vacaville. We will look for Black Phoebe, Yellow-billed Magpie, Yellow-rumped Warbler (both races), Belted Kingfisher, Northern Mockingbird, Red-winged Blackbird, and with luck a late migrating passerine such as Yellow Warbler. Dress in layers, bring sun-block, mosquito repellent, snacks, and liquid.

NAPA-SOLANO AUDUBON SOCIETY FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

www.napasolanoaudubon.com

November 2004 - April 2005

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>LEADER</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
November 3 - Wednesday	Northwest Vacaville Neighborhood	John Wagnitz	707-447-2685
November 13 - Saturday	Sacramento Wildlife Refuge, Glenn Co/ Gray Lodge, Butte Co	John Boyd	707-255-1475
December 4 - Saturday	Rush Ranch, Solano Co	Joanne Castro	707-644-8191
December 18 - Saturday	Newell Ranch, American Canyon, Napa	Jo Maillard	707-226-6665
December 27 - Monday	Benicia Christmas Bird Count	Robin Leong	707-643-1287
January 15 - Saturday:	Lake Solano/Monticello Dam, Solano Co	Jim Knight	707-448-6596
January 21 - 23	9 th Annual San Francisco Bay Flyway Festival, Mare Island, Vallejo, CA	Myrna Hayes, Festival Coordinator	707-557-9816
February 2 - Wednesday	Northwest Vacaville	John Wagnitz	707-447-2685
February 12 - Saturday	Open		
February 19 - 20 - Sat - Sun	Klamath Basin/Tule Lake, Siskiyou Co	Charlotte Kisling/ (John Boyd)	916-397-2770
February 26 - Saturday	Owling, Solano Co	Robin Leong	707-643-1287
March 12 - Saturday	Grizzley Island, Fairfield, Solano Co	John Robinson	707-864-8279
March 23 - Wednesday	Rush Creek, Black John Slough, Sonoma Co	Jim Knight	707-448-6596
April 6 - Wednesday	Hanns Park, Vallejo, Ca	Joanne Castro	707-644-8191
April 16 - Saturday	Solano Co Transect	Robin Leong	707-643-1287

Yolo Basin Foundation Workshop:

DISCOVER THE FLYWAY by Margaret Barson

Pat Hildreth, Cheryl Harris and Margaret Barson recently attended a teacher training day geared primarily toward class visits to the Yolo Wildlife Area. A resident Cooper's Hawk greeted us near the parking lot, and from then on the day was filled with wetland activities presented by educational directors Teri Engbring and Corky Quirk.

The demonstration wetlands near the education center was the primary site for field exercises. Dragonflies were just beginning to hatch from the newly filled wetland pond. Microscopes aided our study of pond invertebrates. Plant identification, animal tracks, soil type testing, salmon sensing to find native streams and even a trail showing the long life of human litter all helped our understanding of the wetland habitat.

Although ducks and geese had not yet returned, our tour of the Yolo Wildlife Area produced shorebirds as well as resident herons, egrets and pelicans. We could easily see the importance of this area as a resting and wintering place for migratory birds.

After an enjoyable and successful day, we came home with packets of educational materials and many ideas for our own programs and Flyway Festivals.



Field Trip Report— October 16, 2004 Huichica Creek and Gourmet Picnic

by Margaret Barson

Thirteen birders met at Buchli Station on an overcast day, perfect for birdwatching and a relief from the recent warm weather. We watched a pair of White-tailed Kites hovering above the parking lot and heard a nearby Sora as the group assembled. No ducks or coots were present on the fresh water pond but with some patience we finally heard Virginia Rail and saw the first Common Yellowthroat of the day.

The theme of the day was identification clues of birds in flight. The white patterns on the tails of American Pipit and Western Meadowlark were good examples, as well as the black and white of the Black-necked Stilts and single White Pelican we saw as a fly over. The flycatching behavior of Say's and Black Phoebe are also good clues.

We walked to the end of the first levee identifying Least and Western Sandpipers, American Avocet, Greater Yellowlegs and Willet. From the end of the levee we could see both Egrets and the first ducks to arrive, including Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall and Ruddy Duck. In all, we saw 37 species.

After birding we shared a wonderful gourmet potluck, with ribs, a great array of salads and chocolate deserts. Bouchaine winery graciously offered their picnic tables and poured several of their wines for us to taste with lunch. Good birds, good food and wine, good people; you can't ask for a more pleasant way to spend a day.

FRIENDS OF NAPA-SOLANO AUDUBON SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP ONLY \$25 per year

One hundred percent, of *Friends of the Napa-Solano Audubon Society* Membership dues will stay in our local Chapter to support local birding, local conservation education and advocacy, and local birding science including the new Breeding Bird Atlas of Solano County. *Friends of the Napa-Solano Audubon Society* members receive periodic issues of Song Sparrow but do not receive Audubon Magazine.

NAME: _____ EMAIL: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____

1. _____ I do not wish to receive any communications from National Audubon Society.
2. _____ Do not share any of my personal information with any other organization.

Please make your \$25 check for Friends of the Napa-Solano Audubon Society Membership payable to Napa-Solano Audubon Society (NSAS) and mail it to: NSAS, PO Box 5027, Vallejo, CA 94591

National Audubon Society new memberships and renewal dues support national conservation issues. A token amount for each new member is sent to the local chapter as a modest 'safety net' payment based on the total local chapter membership. National Members receive Audubon Magazine and receive our local NSAS newsletter, *Song Sparrow*. National Audubon Society Membership is \$20 for the first year.

To join the National Audubon Society, please remit \$20 and make your check payable to National Audubon Society and mail directly to National Audubon Society, Membership Department, PO Box 51005, Boulder, CO 80323-1005. You may also join or renew online at <http://www.audubon.org/audubon/>.



Napa-Solano Audubon Society
P.O. Box 5027
Vallejo, CA 94591

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Napa-Solano Audubon Society Solano County Breeding Bird Atlas Project

Around July 1, 2003, Napa-Solano Audubon Society (NSAS) published the *Breeding Birds of Napa County* under the very capable leadership of Ann Smith. I hope you all have your copy of this fine reference book on breeding Napa County avian fauna. Your Board of Directors gave the authorization to start a Solano County Breeding Bird Atlas Project on Oct 29, 2003.

Those of you new to NSAS and birding, may ask just what is a Breeding Bird Atlas (BBA)? The Breeding Bird Atlas concept was developed in Great Britain and Ireland in 1966. The country was divided into uniform blocks and volunteers were sent out in the countryside to determine what species bred within each block. There was a committee to develop definitions of what constitutes a breeding bird. It was decided to do the study for 5 years to allow for the blocks to be adequately sampled, and to allow for the year-to-year variation due to weather, as habitat changes from wet years to drought years. While this project was being completed, biologist and birders in North America started to do atlases in the Canadian Provinces and in certain states within the USA. The American Ornithological Union has a subcommittee to standardize how a statewide BBA should be done. California, because it is so large, has had no state effort to do a Breeding Bird Atlas. But birders in California have not let that deter them. They started doing BBA's by counties, first starting with Marin, then Orange, etc. Now all of the Bay Area counties have completed fieldwork except for Solano. In the Bay Area, atlases have been published for Marin, Sonoma, San Mateo and Napa Counties.

Those that have e-mail addresses known to our membership chair have seen an announcement of the formation of committees to do a Solano County Breeding Bird Atlas this summer. We have had its initial meeting on July 14, 2004. A Yahoo Club has been developed to facilitate discussion on Solano County Breeding Bird Atlas matters. So far there are 42 members of the club.

This article is to announce to the rest of the membership that we are starting this project in January 1, 2005, and will continue through Dec 31, 2009. We invite all of you to join us in this adventure. It should be emphasized that you do not need to have a computer or e-mail to help with this project. Nor do you need to work on the project every year, but it is highly encouraged. We can use whatever talents you have. We need people to help:

- Develop the website for inputting field data.
- Enter field data on that website.
- Do publicity for this project.
- Build bird boxes
- Develop strategies for fund raising
- Obtain permission to enter private and public property
- Survey the blocks for breeding bird evidence.
- Develop the end product, an atlas detailing what 5 years of field work found.

The new website for NSAS www.napasolanoaudubon.com has information on the Solano County Breeding Bird Atlas project. LSA and Associates has developed pro bono, two maps; one that shows the Universal Transverse Mercator grid with physical features of Solano County including major roads and another that shows the habitats. 123 blocks need to be surveyed (94 have more than 50% of Solano county in a block compared to 72 in Napa County). So far 58 (29 NSAS members) people have volunteered to participate, and this does not include **you** and those volunteers expected from the adjoining Sacramento and Yolo counties. We have a good start, but **we could use your help**. Even though you might be a novice, I have found from doing the Napa Atlas that those with a passion to learn are the best contributors of an atlas project. **Participating in the SCBBA will improve your birding skills and let you discover Solano County**. Please contact Robin Leong at 336 Benson Avenue, Vallejo, CA 94590-3027 (707) 643-1287 robin_leong@netzero.net and spread the word.

Benicia and Angwin Christmas Bird Counts (CBC)~

The Benicia CBC is scheduled for Dec 27, 2004. See the enclosed sheet to sign up.

The Angwin CBC is scheduled for January 1, 2005. Please contact Wendy Cole at

beehaven@jps.net or call her at (707) 963-2331

NAPA-SOLANO AUDUBON SOCIETY

To: All the Friends of the Napa-Solano Audubon Society's **Benicia Christmas Bird Count (BCBC)**
From: Benicia CBC Compiler Robin Leong
Re: **BENICIA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - MONDAY DECEMBER 27, 2004**

We hope you can find some time to help us during this busy season! **Please** let us know as soon as possible if you can help.

Volunteers are needed in all areas -- especially counters in boats, canoes, at feeders or just cook for the potluck!

American Birds requires that all participants pay a \$5.00 fee to offset developing website cost. Please be prepared to pay this fee or have a sponsor. If this is a hardship, please let us know. Some times we are lucky to receive grants from the businesses that are in our count circle. This money is expressly for counters that cannot afford this fee.

We have reserved a Solano County Board of Education room to do our compilation, share birding stories of the day, and share a sumptuous hot potluck dinner. It is located at: **5100 Business Center Drive, Suisun City, CA,** (For directions see article on newsletter page 1 about meeting, .)

Help is needed with the potluck. Please call Liz Knight at (707) 448-6596 if you can help. Food and drink free for all guest counters, so NSAS members please bring extra large helpings of warm food. Thanks in advance for all your support for this feast.

Tentative schedule:	Totalizing and rewarming time:	5:30 PM (earlier if its wet) to dark
	Drink, eat, and renew friendships	6:00 PM
	Species totals and Best CBC Bird Saga	6:45 PM about 1 1/2 hours

Please fill out form and return to : Robin Leong (707) 643-1287 E-mail: robin_leong@netzero.net
336 Benson Ave
Vallejo, CA 94590

PLEASE HELP MAKE THE 58th BENICIA CBC THE BEST EVER!!

BENICIA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT PARTICIPATION SIGNUP

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

E-mail Address _____

Can Bird: _____ full day _____ 1/2 day _____ boat/canoe _____ feeder

BCBC area Requested (please circle) Benicia BSRA Vallejo
Hunter's Hill and Sulfur Spring Lake Herman American Canyon Jameson Canyon
Luther Gibson Hwy Rockville Park and Green Valley Cordelia Joyce Island
Grizzly Island Suisun Bay Martinez As Assigned

Dinner/Compilation Party - (Please check those that apply):

_____ Will attend _____ Will not attend

_____ Can bring dish _____ Prefer to order take-out (NSAS folks only donate \$ instead)

Note: drinks, plates, cups, napkins, and utensils will be provided