



# Song Sparrow

Newsletter of the Napa-Solano Audubon Society  
Volume 39 No.4 Fall 2010

For details and information not included in this newsletter  
check the web site: [www.napasolanoaudubon.com](http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com)

## New President for National Audubon Society

The National Audubon Society has announced that David Yarnold had been named its new President and Chief Executive Officer. A passionate conservationist, Yarnold has served as Executive Director of [Environmental Defense Fund](#) and President of Environmental Defense Action Fund. Prior to that, he was a Pulitzer Prize-winning editor at the *San Jose Mercury News*.

"David brings proven leadership in the for-profit and non-profit sectors to Audubon at a time when efforts to protect birds, habitats and the resources that sustain us are needed more than ever;" said Holt Thrasher, Audubon's Board Chair. "His leadership ability, his passion for conservation and grassroots action, his communications skills and his organizational expertise all make him the perfect fit for the Audubon of 2010 and beyond."

Yarnold has been at EDF since April 2005, where he was responsible for all operations, from programs, to development and marketing/communications. Yarnold's *San Jose Mercury News* was consistently ranked as one of America's 10 Best Newspapers. He was also one of three Pulitzer Prize finalists for editorial writing in 2005. He will assume the Presidency of Audubon on Sept 1.

## Annual Membership Gathering Sunday, October 17 at Vine Village

Join us for a delightful afternoon at \*Vine Village in southwest Napa—visit with friends, tour the fruit, vegetable and flower gardens, vineyards, wildlife areas (heron rookery), view the artwork of the Vine Village residents, play bocce, and enjoy good food & drink! Bid on wine, art & specialty items in a silent auction to benefit Vine Village & our Napa Solano Audubon education programs; Invitations will be mailed to all current Chapter members. For questions, RSVP, or to donate items for the silent auction contact Helen Walka Dake at (707)963-0888, [helen.walka@gmail.com](mailto:helen.walka@gmail.com).

*Cheryl Harris, President*

## Celebrating Urban Birds at the Vallejo Library



Local school children and their parents enjoyed an afternoon Celebrate Urban Birds presentation at the Vallejo John F Kennedy Library July 10<sup>th</sup>. The children learned about John J. Audubon, Citizen Science, perils facing birds and their young, bird sound surveillance and bird watching in the field. Thanks to Cheryl Harris, Pat Hildreth, and Lore Dias for organizing & assisting with this event. Thank you to Eloisa Azcarraga, Betty Labastida, and Noma Lane who volunteered to help make this event a success.

## General Meetings and Programs

General Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at The Florence Douglas Senior Center, 333 Amador St., Vallejo (see map on our website). Meetings begin at 7 pm with about 15 minutes of social time, sharing of birding experiences and refreshments; this is followed by announcements and a short period of chapter business (field trip, conservation, and membership reports, etc.), most meetings feature a special presentation or guest speaker. Visit our web site to learn about our projects and programs.

*Cheryl Harris, President*

**NSAS Program  
Gardening for Wildlife and Birds  
September 14, 2010**

Kathleen Chasey, Curator of the Martha Walker California Native Habitat Garden in Napa will engage our members and share her extensive knowledge about native plants and birds at the Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> general meeting.

The Martha Walker California Native Habitat Garden is cared for by the California Native Plant Society Napa Valley Chapter. Over the years CNPS Napa Valley and Napa Solano Audubon have partnered to improve habitat in the garden as well create demonstration beds to help educate the public on the importance of wildlife corridors and creating habitat at home. This year the garden celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary from a former Napa State Hospital garbage dump to a three acre habitat garden. Explore what the garden has to offer today, ideas for tomorrow and learn top California native plants for attracting birds to your garden. Many specimens will be on hand that hint at the over 1,000 plants that will be available at the upcoming fall plant sale October 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>. Visit [www.napavalleycnps.org](http://www.napavalleycnps.org)

**Dorothy Erskine, Graceful Crusader  
for Our Environment**

**“Dorothy Erskine, Graceful Crusader for Our Environment” written by our very own Napa Solano Audubon board member Janet B. Thiessen.**

The work explores the fascinating life of one of the Bay Area's most influential civic and environmental activists. For over forty years Erskine worked tirelessly behind the scenes to support housing for the poor, sound urban and regional planning, preservation of farmland, and creation of parks and open space. If you care about the San Francisco Bay Area's history and its beautiful environment, you will want to own this book. Available for purchase at our monthly meetings.

**64<sup>th</sup> Benicia Christmas Bird Count December  
20<sup>th</sup>**

The 64<sup>th</sup> Benicia Christmas Bird Count (CBC) will be held on Monday Dec 20. What is a CBC? It's a fun citizens science count of all of the birds seen or heard within a 15 mile diameter circle for a 24 hour period. The center of the circle is 1 1/4 miles north of Pierce Lane on Hwy 680. It was established by Benician Emerson Stoner, in 1930. Don't be turned off by the name, Benicia CBC, as besides Benicia, it covers part of Martinez, most of Vallejo, Green Valley, and Cordelia. See our NSAS website [www.napasolanoaudubon.com](http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com) for the exact area where we count.

**How can you help?** Everyone can help. What we need are eyes and ears. We need spotters, data recorders, beginner to expert birders, folks that are willing to count their bird feeders (if your live within the count circle) and volunteers to help set up our CBC dinner Potluck. Please contact CBC chair Robin Leong at [robin\\_leong@netzero.net](mailto:robin_leong@netzero.net) or call (707) 643-1287. Pot Luck chair, Lore Dias can be contacted at [lore645@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lore645@sbcglobal.net) or 707-642-5577.

For information about the Angwin CBC on Jan.1, contact Louise Vicencio 707-224-9385, or call Murray Berner 707-224-5897. Check our website for notices about CBC programs for Kids Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> and Dec. 28<sup>th</sup>.



Martha Walker Garden Skyline Park, Napa

**NSAS Monthly Field Trips**

Field trip details are provided below for September through November, 2010. Unless otherwise noted, the following applies to all field trips:

**COORDINATOR:** David Takeuchi (707) 643-5544. He is the Coordinator for all Field Trips unless otherwise indicated. If calling and want a return call, leave the city of your return phone number. Email David at [davidtakeuchi@aol.com](mailto:davidtakeuchi@aol.com) (enter: "Subject: Field Trip"). Bring snacks, liquids, and pack a lunch. Recommendations: wear a hat, bring sunscreen and bug repellent. Dress in layers. Don't forget your binoculars! Heavy rain cancels. Non-members are welcome on most field trips.

**CARPOOL LOCATIONS:** Cordelia: Solano County Office of Education parking lot (5100 Business Center Drive, Fairfield) near Costco. Vallejo: Old Wal-Mart parking lot across from Baskin-Robbins (5182 Sonoma Blvd.). Napa: Riverpark Shopping Center; by Sweeney's Sports,, 1537 W. Imola Avenue.

Check the details for the specific trip to see which carpool locations will be used for that trip. The carpool times listed are departure times. Finally, carpoolers



will share driving expenses. The recommended reimbursement rate to the driver is 30 c/mile, to be split by the number of riders, excluding the driver. Please arrive early.

### NSAS Field Trip Schedule

Sept 2010 - Jan 2011

Visit our web site at [www.napasolanoaudubon.com](http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com)

Dave Takeuchi (707)642-5544

**Saturday September 18, 2010** - Tubbs Island, Sonoma County – Leader David Takeuchi

**Saturday, October 16, 2010** - Tennessee Valley, Marin County – Leader David Takeuchi

**Saturday, November 13, 2010** - Gray Lodge, Butte County – Leader David Takeuchi

**Saturday, December 18, 2010** - Benicia Christmas Bird Count Preview -Leader Robin Leong

**Saturday, January 15, 2011** - Thornton, San Joaquin County – Leader David Yee

**Feb, 2011** – San Francisco Bay Flyway Festival

**Sat, Feb 12, 2011** - Grizzly Island, Fairfield Water Plant

### Field Trip Tubbs Island

San Pablo Bay Lands

Saturday, September 18, 2010

**DESTINATION LOCATION/TIME:** Tubbs Island, 8:30 AM – 2:00 PM. Going west on Hwy 37, make a u-turn at Hwy 121 traffic light and double back going east on Hwy 37 about 1/4 of a mile to the parking lot on the right. **Critical to be on time.** The gate keeps out automobile traffic, however, for this event, it will be opened to let us drive in. We will go in and leave as a group. We will drive 2.5 miles in and walk around the ponds and scope the shoreline.

**GENERAL INFO:** You will be provided a hands on visual experience of marsh, shore birds, and plants supported by marsh land and the salt waters of the bay. We anticipate seeing migrating ducks and shorebirds. Tubbs has a healthy population of the endangered California clapper rail. We will lunch in-the-field. Pack snacks, liquids, and backpack a lunch. It's always a good idea to wear a hat and bring sunscreen. Dress in layers. Don't forget your binoculars.

### Field Trip Tennessee Valley, Marin County

Saturday, October 16, 2010

**DESTINATION LOCATION/TIME:** Tennessee Valley Parking Lot, 9:00 AM, ending around 2:00 PM.

**DIRECTIONS:** Head west on CA-37 to CA-101 south. Follow CA-101 south and take the Mill Valley / Stinson Beach / Hwy. 1 exit . Follow Shoreline Hwy. until you see the Tennessee Valley Road sign, the turn off will be on the **left** . Drive 1.6 miles to the parking lot at the end of the road.

**CARPOOL LOCATION:** Napa: 8:00AM or Vallejo: 8:00 AM

**GENERAL INFO:** Reference extracted from: [http://www.nps.gov/goga/planyourvisit/tennessee\\_vall](http://www.nps.gov/goga/planyourvisit/tennessee_vall)

[ey.htm](#) . “Tennessee Valley is an amazing offshoot of the Marin Headlands, with hiking trails that suit the whole family. The Tennessee Valley Trail is mostly level; it begins at the parking area and travels 1.7 miles to Tennessee Beach. For the more adventurous hiker, there are a number of other trails leading into the hills above Tennessee Valley... Tennessee Valley contain a bevy of wildlife; from mighty raptors to common swallows, the birds of the valley will keep your eyes on the skies. The skies are not the only place to view wildlife; the valley is teeming with deer, coyote, and on an occasion you might even see a bobcat.”

For a detailed description of this area, check out Jean Richmonds description on page 136 at this web site: <http://www.diabloaudubon.com/birds/books/BirdingNorCal.pdf>

### Field Trip to Gray Lodge

Wildlife Area Butte County

November 13, 2010

**DESTINATION LOCATION/ TIME:** 9:15 AM, Gray Lodge Wildlife Area, 3207 Rutherford Road, Gridley, CA 95948. Meet at the Check Station. Ends 2:00PM.

**DIRECTIONS:** From I-80 East, take CA-113 North towards Woodland, take exist 538 and continue on CA-113 N towards Yuba City, take Highway 99 north to Live Oak. Turn west on Pennington (North Butte) Road. Turn right on Almond Orchard Avenue and continue to entrance. The distance from Live Oak is about eight miles. Driving time from Cordelia is about 1 hour 45 minutes. For detailed driving instructions, check with CSAA.com , mapquest, or your GPS. Be aware that the different web sites will give different directions.

**CARPOOL:** Napa: 6:30 AM; Cordelia: 7:00 AM

**GENERAL INFO:** Join a guided tour at 10:00AM; afterwards we will have lunch followed by more birding.

With a backdrop of the world's smallest mountain range, the Sutter Buttes, Gray Lodge is the perfect site for viewing and photographing nature. Reflective ponds, grassy fields and wooded riparian areas provide food, water and shelter for more than 300 species of resident and migrant birds and mammals.

### California Coastal Clean-up Day

Saturday, September 25, 2010

The NSAS Education team will honor California Coastal Clean Up Day by joining girl scouts of the local area in American Canyon at its new section of the Napa River trail wetlands area. We will have a NSAS information table at the site and will also offer a bird walk for all those interested in learning how to sight birds. Set up will be at the corner of Eucalyptus and Wetlands Edge Road. Join us for a fun filled afternoon from 1-3 p m. Volunteers are needed. Call or email Lore at (707)642-5577 or [lore645@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lore645@sbcglobal.net). Thank you for your interest.

**SAVE PAPER!** Request to receive your newsletter by email only. Send requests to our webmaster Dave McMullen ([red-tail@comcast.net](mailto:red-tail@comcast.net)).

**Napa-Solano Audubon Society**  
**P.O. Box 10006**  
**Napa, CA 94581**



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*Great food and great company at the NSAS Picnic! NSAS members enjoy a beautiful day at Benicia State Recreation Area on April 17. They also enjoyed a tour with Gene Doherty in the Forrest Deaner Native Plant Botanic Garden which rests on the hillside overlooking Suisun Bay.*

**Join Our Friday Morning Bird Walks**

Please check the website for any last-minute updates regarding our events. [www.napasolanoaudubon.com](http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com)

**Event Calendar At-a-Glance**

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Tue, Sept 14      | Gen Meeting, Program: Native Gardens & Elections |
| Fri, Sept 17      | Membership, Vine Village, Napa                   |
| Sat, Sept 18      | Field Trip, Tubbs Island, Sonoma                 |
| Sat, Sept 25      | Educ, Coast Clean Up, Am Canyon                  |
| Tue, Oct 12       | Gen Meeting, Program: TBA                        |
| Sat, Oct 16       | Field Trip, Tennessee Valley, Marin              |
| Sun, Oct 17       | Membership Party, Vine Village, Napa             |
| Tue, Nov 9        | Gen Meeting, Program: TBA                        |
| Sat, Nov 13       | Field Trip, Gray Lodge, Butte Co                 |
| Wed, Dec 8        | CBC Education Program, Benicia Library           |
| Sat, Dec 18       | Preview, Field Trip Christmas Bird Count         |
| Mon, Dec 20       | Benicia Bird Count & Compilation Dinner          |
| Tue, Dec 28       | CBC Education Program, Napa Library              |
| Sat, Jan 1, 2011  | Angwin CBC & Compilation Dinner                  |
| Tue, Jan 11, 2011 | Gen Meeting, Program: TBA                        |
| Sat, Jan 15, 2011 | Field Trip Thornton, San Joaquin                 |
| Tue, Feb 11, 2011 | Gen Meeting, Program: TBA                        |
| Sat, Feb 12, 2011 | Field Trip, Grizzly Island/Fairfield             |



**To our National Audubon members and our NSAS Chapter members**

This note is a request that you *join or renew your membership\** in your local Napa Solano Audubon chapter—we have called this a ‘Friends’ membership in the past. National Audubon gives us only a very small baseline payment each year— we cover our insurance, communications, room rental for our meetings, and support our education and citizen science projects with funding from our Chapter memberships.

This next season, we have a wonderful lineup of programs, field trips, youth education programs, continuation of our ***Together Green Habitat*** programs and our two “Citizen Science projects: the Benicia & Angwin Christmas Bird Counts. For an update on our current activities, please take a look at our website: [www.napasolanoaudubon.com](http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com) or our Facebook pages: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Napa-Solano-Audubon/164867857587>;

I hope you will join us in some of these activities, but even if you cannot, we would really appreciate your continued support! Please complete the form below and mail with your check today!

\*Note: check the address label on this newsletter – if there is an asterisk (\*), then you have already paid for membership through June 2011. If no asterisk – it is time to renew.

**NAPA-SOLANO AUDUBON SOCIETY CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP**

Annual Membership is July 2010 through June 2011

Our Chapter members enjoy invitations to special Chapter members' events (including the Oct. 17 Membership Gathering), discounts on books & gifts, and more.

NAME(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Providing your e-mail address = receipt of updates & reminders about special NSAS events and activities

Please mail your check (\$25 individual, \$35 family) today:

Payable to **Napa-Solano Audubon Society (NSAS), P.O. Box 10006, Napa, CA 94581**

Enclosed is my additional tax deductible gift of  \$200  \$100  \$75  other \_\_\_\_\_ to support Napa Solano Audubon special projects: Solano County Breeding Bird Atlas, Education, Outreach, Conservation, mini-grants for youth

I would like information about volunteer opportunities

Please send my newsletter by e-mail

## **New Education Chairperson for Napa Solano Audubon**

Lore Dias, with thirty years teaching in Napa and Vallejo schools, has been selected the new education chairperson for Napa Solano Audubon Society. Pat Hildreth is stepping down after eight years of dedicated service as education chair. We can not thank you enough, Pat!

Lore's first priority is to generate interest in Birding throughout the broader areas of Napa and Solano County. The education chair, along with faithful volunteers, will present Birding awareness and best practices at libraries, classrooms, scouting events and other nature venues including partnering with environment related agencies. Lore's plan is to develop inquiry based educational programs for children and align them with California State Standards in Math, Science and Language Arts.

Lore and Cheryl Harris recently attended the Northern California Educational Summit sponsored by Audubon, California at the Richardson Bay Audubon Center in Tiburon. The group discussed mutual education goals and shared curricula and resources. The agenda also included improved data keeping, conservation outcomes and guidelines for chapter education programs.

If you know of any group that is interested in Napa Solano Audubon Society Education presentations or NSAS table information set ups, please let us know. Here are some of the upcoming education events for NSAS with more to come.

Sept 18, 2010 1-3 pm	NSAS Education will provide a short presentation on "Birds of the Wetlands" to Girl Scout Troops American Canyon, New Wetlands Trail
Sept 25, 2010	NSAS Education Information Table and Bird Walk California Coastal Clean Up Day American Canyon, Eucalyptus & Wetlands Edge Drive
Oct 16, 2010	NSAS Education Bird Walk - Napa Treatment Ponds 65 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Napa Sanitation District
Oct 17, 2010 1-4 pm	NSAS Education Art Project Membership Gathering, Vine Village, Napa
Dec 8, 2010 2-4:30 pm	Benicia Library -Birding 101 and Bird Walk In preparation for the Benicia Christmas Bird Count
Dec 28, 2010 (tentative)	Napa Library – Birding 101 and Bird Walk

The need for volunteers is great! Come and join our team for fun filled educational birding experiences using resources such as Celebrating Urban Birds, Citizen Science, Backyard Birding, Christmas Bird Count for Kids, Bird Sleuthing, and more. The need for volunteers is great!

Contact Lore Dias for details at [lore645@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lore645@sbcglobal.net) or (707)642-5577.