



Song Sparrow

Newsletter of the Napa-Solano Audubon Society
Volume 40 No. 2 Spring 2013

For updates and additional information, check our Website:
www.napasolanoaudubon.com

Let's Celebrate!

As Spring bursts forth and the birds are adorned in breeding plumage, it is surely time to CELEBRATE!

Please join us for a celebratory afternoon in downtown Benicia -- enjoy an art glass demonstration, a bird walk, and a little wine, cheese and companionship.



This event will offer an opportunity to find out more about the upcoming **Solano Breeding Bird Atlas** publication—view some of the draft species pages as well as some of the amazing photos being considered for the book and talk with the people who are making it happen!

AND let's celebrate the work of our volunteers! We are proud of our chapter members who helped with our two successful Christmas Bird Counts, the wonderful Flyway Festival activities, a series of excellent programs, field trips and now the advent of our **Solano Breeding Bird Atlas** publication.

We also want to thank and recognize the many volunteers who helped with the monitoring and gathering of data over the past six years for this Breeding Bird Atlas. Once completed, this will be the primary resource on the nesting birds of Solano County—a beautiful reference book that you will be proud to display in your home or give as a gift. So, please join us in Benicia--Save the date: **Saturday, March 23, 2013**. Event details will be posted soon on our website and also sent out by email.

Flyway Festival Accolades

Many thanks to all of you who helped out with our various activities at the San Francisco Bay Flyway Festival this year---leading field trips, sharing what you are seeing through a spotting scope along the Wetlands trails, chatting with folks at our information tables at the event on Mare Island and at our welcome table in the American Canyon wetlands, offering beginning bird walks and journaling for families, helping with outreach, exhibits, setup, take down and more.

What a wonderful legion of volunteers---48 to be exact!! We received plenty of accolades and invitations to participate in further events.



Thanks too to the Open Space committee & staff of the City of American Canyon for all of their energetic and cheerful support. We had a great time, met lots of interesting adults and delightful children as well! If you have not yet visited this area, please stop by at our next

American Canyon event on **Saturday morning, May 11**. If you would like to help, contact Cheryl Harris at 707-294-6423.



Upcoming Field Trips

Panoche Valley and Los Banos Wildlife Area – Saturday, March 16 - Sunday, March 17, 2013

Tucked away in the Coast Range just east of Pinnacles National Park is a valley of birding splendor. It is a premier winter birding spot for uncommon and sometimes hard to find species such as Mountain Plover, Long-eared Owl, Cassin's Kingbird, Sage Thrasher, Mountain Bluebird, and Greater Roadrunner. Other possibilities include Golden Eagle, Ferruginous Hawk, Prairie Falcon, Rock Wren, and Vesper, Lark, and Sage Sparrow.

Bodega Bay – Sunday, April 14

With very diverse habitats, this area attracts a wide variety of birds. Along with the open ocean and harbor, there are extensive mudflats, beaches, rocky shore, salt marsh at the southeast end of the lagoon, tidal ponds, eucalyptus groves, and varied bushy vegetation. Birds range from loons and grebes, to waterfowl, to shorebirds, and seabirds.

Putah Creek – Saturday, May 18

Dr. Manfred Kusch, retired from UC Davis, has lived the last 22 years along the south bank of Putah Creek. Dr. Kusch has turned part of his property into a private bird preserve that includes large riparian woodland. Varied habitats attract many species of wintering and breeding birds. The tour is about two hours with a one-mile walk over mildly uneven terrain along the creek. This trip will be limited to 12 people. A signup will be available in April.

North Lake Tahoe – Sat, June 15 – Sun, June 16

North Lake Tahoe is not only one of the state's majestic getaways, it is home to a plethora of mountain bird species. Species we hope to find include White-headed Woodpecker, Williamson's Sapsucker, Clark's Nutcracker, Mountain Chickadee, Townsend's Solitaire, Green-tailed Towhee, Brewer's Sparrow, Evening Grosbeak, Cassin's Finch. The Sooty Grouse, Blacked-backed Woodpecker, Gray Flycatcher, and Pine Grosbeak are also possibilities.

Note: *If you are interested in the weekend field trips to Panoche Valley on 3/16 & 3/17 or the Tahoe area on June 15 & 16, contact our Field Trip Coordinator Craig Cummings at nsas.field.trips.chair@gmail.com. He will provide details about target species, meeting times, locations, & suggestions for accommodations. Advance registration may be required.*

Specific field trip and carpool information is always on our website. You can also sign up for the email notification list to receive special announcements or field trip information.

General Meetings and Programs Second Tuesday, Monthly

General Meetings are usually held on the second Tuesday of most months 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, and finally, a special presentation or guest speaker. Non-members are welcome.

March and April Programs

Our guest speaker for the **March 12th** general meeting will be Rich Cimino, an experienced birder and Yellowbilled Tours Field Guide from the Bay Area. Rich will present a program on **Birds of Nome, Alaska** and will show us digital photos and maps of the many species seen on his annual tours of Nome, Alaska. He covers a wide variety of habitats in the Nome area, including coastal lagoons, tundra wetlands and spruce forests. Most of the birds are in their resplendent breeding plumages – rarely, if ever, seen in the "lower 48".

On **April 9th**, our guest speaker will be naturalist and author David Lukas. David will present a program on **How Birds Work**. This program will cover the intricate ways that bones, feathers, and muscles all work together to help birds fly and live in their environments. If you've ever found a bird feather or bone and wondered what you could learn from it, then this presentation will give you some key insights and ideas of what to look for. You'll never see birds the same way again!

Special Offer: Yellowbilled Tours (YBT) Field Guide, Rich Cimino, has three non-California birding field trips scheduled in 2013. Rich will offer a monetary donation to Napa Solano Audubon Society for each of our members who attend one of these YBT field trips.

- 1.) **Wisconsin** - May 6-10 and May 13-17; \$50.00 donation per member
- 2.) **Nome, Alaska** - There are four trips: May 28, June 1, 6, and 10; \$150.00 donation per member
- 3.) **Northern New Mexico** - August 5, 9, 11 and 15; \$50.00 donation per member

Please go to: www.yellowbilledtours.com for a complete day-by-day itinerary for each trip.

NSAS Selected Board Members

President	Cheryl Harris	707-294-6423
Vice President	Dr. John Glover	jcglover@pol.net
Treasurer	Dr. Robert Martin	rkjbhome@gmail.com
Secretary	Diane Ley	707-552-2905
Membership Chair	Mary Wilson	707-718-4527

Please check our website for a complete list of Board members. The Board meets in the evening on the last Wednesday of the month, and all members are welcome.

Are you interested in serving on the Board or one of our committees? We will have Board elections later this year, and we have many openings on our committees, including Education, Programs, Conservation, and Publicity & Outreach. If you are interested in helping at any level or wish to serve on the board, contact Cheryl Harris at 707-294-6423 or cheryleharris@sbcglobal.net.

Update on the Solano County Breeding Bird Atlas

The work on the publication of the *Solano County Breeding Bird Atlas* has begun in earnest and is progressing well. We are still focused on a December publication date and are keeping to that schedule. Research and analysis is ongoing, the writing is underway, and photos are beginning to be collected. Thank you to all the photographers who are contributing great images of many of the more than 150 species to be covered in the book.

Fundraising for the printing costs (the single most expensive item) is off to a good start, with more than 40 species sponsored to date. The Solano Land Trust, LSA Associates, and Zynga have also made recent contributions.

A special thank you goes to the NSAS Board of Directors for their generous support and to all our members for making this ongoing project possible.

Please consider symbolically adopting one of your favorite birds to help bring the Atlas to life! More than 100 species are still in need of your sponsorship!! See the Napa Solano Audubon Society website at www.napasoloanoaudubon.com for details and complete the form inserted in this newsletter.

– **Mike Rippey**

This Breeding Bird Atlas is such an exciting project! I hope you will participate in this undertaking by making a donation of your time or help with the funding. We need volunteers to help with editing or proofreading, selecting photographs or artwork, outreach, publicity, marketing and more. If you can give a little of your time, please contact Mike Rippey at 707-815-8957 or napamikie@aol.com.

– **Cheryl Harris**

Watch for “Bird of the Week”

Each week on our website and Facebook page, we will feature a “bird of the week,” one that has not yet been sponsored for the Atlas. You will learn a little about the species, perhaps a fun anecdote, and interesting stories by our local birders.



This rogue turkey peering in my bedroom window led to a strange adventure...I'd love to tell the story. How about you---do you have a bird story to share? Send us a note about it and watch for “Bird of the Week” on our website.

BAY AREA NATURE JOURNAL CLUB

Discover the wonders of nature (and birds!) in a new way.

From Jack Laws website: "Grab your sketchbook and join these free nature journaling workshops and field trips throughout the Bay Area. **The Bay Area Nature Journal Club** is a free, family-friendly, intergenerational community who connect with nature through art and field journaling. We are nature sketching enthusiasts who support and inspire each other. Activities include monthly field trips, and a related technique workshop that is repeated at different times and locations throughout the SF Bay Area." If this interests you, let me know! We can carpool or plan local trips together. For details, go to: www.johnmuirlaws.com. – **Cheryl Harris**

Napa-Solano Audubon Society
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Weekly Friday Bird Walks in and around Napa and Solano County

Please check the NSAS Website and Facebook
for any last-minute updates regarding our events.
www.napasolanoaudubon.com

*Save Paper! Receive your newsletter by email by
contacting our Webmaster Dave McMullen at
red-tail@comcast.net.*

2013 Event Calendar At-a-Glance

- Tues, March 12,** General Meeting/ Program: *Birds of
Nome, Alaska*/ Speaker: Rich Cimino
- Sat, March 16-17,** Field Trip – Panoche Valley
- Sat, March 23,** Celebration Event in Benicia
- Tues, Apr 9,** General Meeting/ Program: *How Birds Work*/
Speaker: Dave Lukas
- Sun, Apr 14,** Field Trip – Bodega Bay **Note: This field trip
is on Sunday instead of Sat.*
- Sat, May 11,** Birding activities in American Canyon Wetlands
- Sat, May 18,** Field Trip - Putah Creek followed by Potluck
Picnic at Lake Solano
- Sat, June 15-16,** Field Trip - North Lake Tahoe

Watch for email updates or check the NSAS Website at
www.napasolanoaudubon.com for more information. You
can also go to our Facebook page. **Note:** you do not need to
join Facebook to view our information.



Great Horned Owl © Phil Gulley, Atlas Volunteer

Find out more about the **Solano Breeding Bird Atlas** in
this newsletter.