



FALL 2017, Vol.45 No.1

FALL 2017 CALENDAR AT A GLANCE



- Sat Sept 2 **Beginning Bird Walk**
- Wed Sept 6-10 **Visions of the Wild**
- Sat Sept 9 **Napa Sanitation Open House**
- Sat Sept 9 **6th Annual Sonoma Optics Fair**
- Tues Sept 12 **Program**
- Sat Sept 16 **Beginning Bird Walk**
- Thurs Sept 21 **Creek Speak Program**
- Sat Sept 23 **Field Trip**
- Sat Sept 23 **Il Fiorello Owl Walk**
- Sat Oct 7 **Beginning Bird Walk**
- Sat Oct 7-8 **Vallejo Waterfront Festival**
- Tues Oct 10 **Program**
- Thurs Oct 19 **Creek Speak Program**
- Sat Oct 21 **Beginning Bird Walk**
- Sun Oct 29 **Field Trip**
- Sat Nov 4 **Beginning Bird Walk**
- Tues Nov 14 **Program**
- Sat Nov 18 **Beginning Bird Walk**
- Sat Nov 18-19 **Field Trip**

Go to www.napasolanoaudubon.com for more info or to sign up for email alerts.

President's Corner

One of the first tasks I must tackle as your new President is to write this column. It is the scariest, as I am not a writer, but here goes!

This is your organization and I would like to know what is important to you. We have many excellent board members working on citizen science, conservation, education, field trips and so forth, but we forget to ask where your interests lie, so I would like to hear from you. Are there projects that you would like to be involved in? Is there a cause you feel NSAS should get behind? How can we, as an organization, improve? We also have several board positions open and welcome your involvement.

Our newsletter includes a "Members" column, and we would love to have you contribute a photo or story. Send us pictures that we can publish. Let us know what you have been involved in, such as special projects or trips. Tell us about sightings that are special to you. For example, after birding for about 18 years I finally saw a Clapper Rail, now known as Ridgway's Rail of CA. I was nonchalant at first since I was with friends and wanted to be cool about it, but my excitement could not be contained, and I had to break out in a silly "happy dance." I certainly looked foolish, but my friends understood. Again, this organization is about you, and we want to hear from you.

So contact me at sally.birder@sbcglobal.net and let's make this the best Audubon chapter around.

Sally Baumer, President

Meet Our New Board Members!

Last May, our chapter was fortunate to elect three new board members, who have generously volunteered to serve in the following positions this coming year.



Sally Baumer is our new President, although she's not new to the Board. Sally has been

our Membership Chair for the past three years and has been a member of our chapter for four years. When Sally retired, she became actively involved in birding and joined the weekly walks in our chapter.

Although Sally has been birding for many years, she became a more active birder when she retired and joined the weekly bird walks in our chapter. She was quickly enlisted to participate in some of our volunteer activities—first at tabling events and then as Membership Chair. She lives in Benicia and enjoys traveling, genealogy, and gardening.



David and Helena Kassel, our new Treasurer and Secretary, respectively, have been Napa-Solano Audubon members for the past five years. They enjoy traveling and photographing birds and wildlife in whatever parts of the world they find themselves, or simply watching the birds and butterflies that can be found at local birding hotspots or in their own backyard in Napa. Helena spent many years as an RN in a Napa pediatric practice with our fellow member Dr. Don Wong. David is a computer programmer and photographer. His photo of the Western Meadowlark is in our Breeding Birds of Solano County atlas.

Other members have stepped up to chair some of our committees. **Carol Boykin** is our new Field Trip Chairman.

Carol was raised in Kittery Point, Maine, and moved to the island of Guam when she was 16.

She lived there for six years and then married a boy from St. Helena and moved to Napa. Carol's father was always interested in birds, so she, too, took an interest. Since Carol has retired, she has more time to go birding while hiking and kayaking.



Wendy Schackwitz, our past President, is now our Executive Director and Chairman of our Ways and Means Committee. And Andrew Ford, who has been leading walks for our chapter the past year, is now our Weekly Walk Leader. ***Thank you to all of these board members for generously donating their time to make our chapter better.***

HELP STUDENTS THRIVE!

SCHOLARSHIPS

Napa-Solano Audubon offers two \$2,000 scholarships to assist local graduating high students pursue studies in Environmental Studies or a related field. This year's scholarships were awarded to Brenna Eikenbary from Vintage High School in Napa and Yvette Diaz from American Canyon High School.

These scholarships were made possible through the generosity of our members who have specified that their donations go to our Scholarship Fund. If you would like to donate to this fund, please indicate that your donation should be applied to NSAS Scholarships.



Calendar of Events

PROGRAMS

Programs will be held at the Florence Douglas Senior Center, 333 Amador Street, Vallejo, on the second Tuesday of each month at 7pm (unless noted otherwise).

The Suisun Marsh and Pacific Flyway Center Tuesday, September 12, 7:00pm

Steve Chappell, Executive Director of the Suisun Resource Conservation District, will present an overview of the history of the Suisun Marsh, the 1977 Suisun Marsh Preservation Act, and explain how managed wetlands are operated and maintained for the benefit of resident and migratory wildlife species. He will then focus on the vision of the Pacific Flyway Center and the future opportunity to educate the public about the wetland and wildlife resources of Solano County, CA and the Pacific Flyway. Steve has over 20 years of experience in Suisun Marsh wetland and wildlife habitat management, regulatory and environmental permitting, and wetland habitat restoration and enhancement.

Birds and Wildlife of Ecuador Tuesday, October 10, 7:00pm

Ecuador is a country of great diversity, from the high elevation of the cloud forests to the desert conditions of the Galapagos. John Glover, NSAS Vice President, will explore the wildlife and especially the birds that inhabit this diverse country. He saw over 40 species of hummingbirds and as many species of tanagers on a recent trip. These beautiful birds typify the great diversity of birds. Please join us as we see Ecuador through the lens of its wildlife.

Birds of Kauai Tuesday, November 14, 7:00pm

Although few in number, the birds of Kauai are truly amazing, and now that Hawaii is in the ABA, it is worth learning more about them. Mark Stephenson and his family had the pleasure of visiting Kauai during the spring and fell in love with some of the more remote sections of the island in search of their colorful indigenous and non-native birds. They were not disappointed and will share some of Kauai's favorite hot spots and photos of its unique bird life. Mark has been a noted birder for years, involved with Cornell's Laboratory of Ornithology since childhood. He has worked for Massachusetts Audubon and the Foresta Institute before teaching in Benicia and serving as a principal at Napa schools. He will be joined by his son Lucas, who is also an avid birder.

BEGINNING BIRDING

Walks and workshops aimed at Beginning Birders are held twice a month on Saturdays. All workshops begin at 9am, followed by bird walks at 9:30am until noon. Contact Andrew Ford at ajf51@humboldt.edu for more information, or go to our website at www.napasolanoaudubon.com for location directions.

Habitat and Native Plants Saturday, September 2, 9am Newell Canyon Preserve and Saturday, September 16, 9am Lynch Canyon

What are the elements that create a wildlife habitat? We will explore different habitats along the walk, and explore how each one supports different birds. We will also give tips

on how you can easily create some habitats in your own yard, deck or patio.

Migration Saturday, October 7, 9am American Canyon Wetlands and Saturday, October 21, 9am, Lake Solano Regional Park

Ever wonder why migrating geese fly in a V? Or why migrating hawks and vultures fly around in big circles? This month we will answer these questions and explore why some birds migrate and others stay put.

Waterfowl Saturday, November 4, 9am Newell Canyon Preserve Saturday, November 18, 9am Lagoon Valley Regional Park

Late fall is a great time to study waterfowl. They winter in the thousands, have gorgeous fresh plumage, and are busy flirting and chasing each other, making for some great bird drama. We will learn the differences between a dabbling and a diver, why female ducks are so drab, and why the male ducks seem to disappear in late spring. Bring the kids along; we will have free duck masks.

Your Legacy

Your support has been important in helping NSAS promote conservation and the scientific understanding of wild birds and their habitats.

A gift through your estate plan can provide NSAS with the continued ability to always be there for the birds in Napa and Solano Counties.

FIELD TRIPS

Note: Most field trips require RSVPs to the trip coordinator. See www.napasolanoaudubon.com for additional logistics and carpool information.

Sacramento and American River Parkway
Saturday, Sept 23, 7:30am
Leader: TBD

We will view fall migrants in the Sacramento area and bird in several of the parks along the American River Parkway, which follows the American River. There is a \$5.00 entrance fee to the Parkway per vehicle.

Please RSVP to Bruce Thomsen at brucecthomsen@yahoo.com by September 18, 2017.

Il Fiorello Owl Walk
Saturday, Sept 23, 5:30pm
Leader: Jane Hicks

Looking for an evening with a really good possibility of seeing and hearing owls? Join us at Il Fiorello Olive Oil Company for an evening of socializing, birding, and specifically owling. We will meet at 5:30pm for mingling and a light snack, and then will walk through the olive groves looking for birds. We will have a good chance of seeing burrowing owls along the irrigation canal. We will return to the house by sunset

and watch the trees for barn owls. We will depart Il Fiorello by 8:30pm and those wanting more owling are invited to come along to Twin Sisters Road for possible western screech owls and great horned owl in Gordon Valley plus other possible stops. **This field trip is limited to 15 people and costs \$10 per person.**

Please RSVP to Jane Hicks at hixholtz@earthlink.net or 707-553-8901 by September 9.

Cosumnes River Preserve
Sunday, Oct 29, 4:30pm
Leader: Woodbridge Ecological Reserve docent

In this tour we will view Sandhill Cranes and other unique wintering waterfowl, hearing a presentation on Sandhill cranes and their Reserve habitat. We will view the cranes' impressive, nightly behaviors at a location that is only open to the public during these special tours. Docent guides are trained in crane ecology, the area's natural history and the Reserve's habitat management, and want your experience to be memorable and educational. Tours usually conclude a half hour after sunset with the anticipated fly-in of the cranes at the North Site where a viewing shelter allows us to be hidden from the incoming birds. It is an awesome sight to view these magnificent birds warbling and flying in to roost for the

night. **This field trip is limited to 30 people and costs \$10 per person.** Please RSVP to Wendy Cole at beehaven2@comcast.net by October 20.

Klamath Basin
Sat & Sun, Nov 18 & 19
Leader: Dave Hewitt

Join us for a fall birding adventure into the Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge Complex. Wet meadows in the Wood River Valley and Upper Klamath and Klamath Marsh National Wildlife Refuges are home to Sora, Virginia Rail, and the elusive Yellow Rail. The refuges along the border of Oregon and California (Lower Klamath and Tule Lake) host upwards of 80% of the migrating waterfowl that use the Pacific Flyway, numbering at times to over a million birds and including large numbers of Ross's Geese. These refuges and the surrounding agricultural lands also provide hunting grounds for one of the densest concentrations of wintering raptors in the country. Indeed, the Basin hosts the largest wintering concentration of Bald Eagles in the lower 48 states, many of which roost together in Bear Valley National Wildlife Refuge. **This field trip is limited to 15 people.**

Please RSVP to Bruce Thomsen at brucecthomsen@yahoo.com by November 8, 2017.

Your Donation for Birds and Their Habitats

\$25 Individual Membership \$35 Family Membership \$65 *Breeding Birds of Solano County* \$_____ Donation
Membership \$_____ + Donation \$_____ + _____ Copies of *Breeding Birds of Solano County* \$_____ = Total Enclosed \$_____
Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____
Address _____ City State & Zip _____

Send this information and make all checks payable to:
Napa-Solano Audubon Society, PO Box 10006, Napa, CA 94581

Join or Donate Online!

To become a member, donate online, or to order your copy of *Breeding Birds of Solano County*, go to goo.gl/2oj2uw

Conservation Advocacy

Nancy A. Piotrowski, Ph.D., NSAS Conservation Chair

Thank you for allowing me to serve this last year and with your patience as I learn this role. The year sped by with many activities: local chapter Board meetings, a National Audubon Society board meeting, a California Audubon Society summit, Bay Area Regional Chapters meetings, and Advocacy Day in June with California Audubon. Additionally, there were two letters to editors about local issues, three meetings with local government officials on birds and their environments, and several environmental impact reports, in varying stages of development, needing review and comment. Add in some letters to elected officials, posting on Facebook, and training a conservation intern for four months, and you can see that this role is busy.

Whew! That said, if any of this sounds like fun, please consider joining my committee. I can use help reading, looking for items where we need to be on alert or responding, and folks who might want to help with attending a meeting or two either with me or to take notes if I cannot get there. Just send an email to napiotrowski@yahoo.com

with your contact information and interests.



Intern Amy Graves stands beside original Audubon print in the Capitol Building in Sacramento.

Along these lines, thank you to our first Conservation Advocacy intern, Amy Graves, for all her work. Amy is a student at Solano Community College who helped to develop a list of contacts for potential advocates for birds and their environment in our chapter area. She also learned about all of the activities noted

above to dip her toes into learning about what advocacy involves. In a recent debriefing lunch where I hosted Amy she reported that the Advocacy Day in June was the most impactful activity for her. I mention this because this is a place where any of our members can get involved and join in for the experience. It involves a couple of emails, a phone call, and a day in Sacramento! **Your efforts matter, however big or small** Keep this in mind for next year. Oh, and before I forget – thank you also to Wendy, our fearless leader, for helping to get the grant money to support Amy in her activities.

Again, many people report a desire to chip in and do whatever they can to help conservation efforts. If you have an hour, or a day, or another measure of time to give, consider volunteering. There is plenty to do and every little bit counts to bring the power of Audubon chapters to fruition – your efforts matter, however big or small. Thanks for your consideration!

Members' Corner

While monitoring birds for our Bird Seasons project, Betty LaBastida, Diane Ley, and Wendy Schackwitz came upon a family of Common Gallinules in an American Canyon Wetlands pond. They were fortunate enough to see this bird in all stages of development, as a chick, a juvenile, and an adult (boldly marked with a brilliant red shield). The Common Gallinule inhabits marshes and ponds from Canada to Chile, and this year there have been many sightings in the freshwater ponds at American Canyon Wetlands.

NSAS
Member
Scope
Photo





NAPA-SOLANO AUDUBON SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 10006
NAPA, CA 94581

napasolanoudubon.com



VOLUNTEER!

Are you looking for a worthwhile volunteer opportunity where you can learn new skills or give back in a meaningful way? Well, we would love to have you.

We are currently looking for volunteers to fill the following positions:

**Membership Chair
Communications Director
Volunteer Coordinator**

If you are interested in any of these positions or any other NSAS volunteer opportunities, please contact Sally Baumer at sally.birder@sbcglobal.net.