

Central Sierra Audubon Society's
Sierra Squawker



February Program

LightHawk

Flying isn't just for the birds--it's also people working to protect them and their habitats. LightHawk is a non-profit organization that provides flight in small planes at no charge to improve conservation efforts throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico and Central America. LightHawk provides a whole new kind of bird count, enabling scientists to quickly survey bird populations over large areas, including Eared Grebes in Mono Lake, Flamingos in the Caribbean and Oystercatchers on the Gulf Coast. Each year, LightHawk staff coordinate with their corps of over 200 volunteer pilots to fly hundreds of missions to track jaguars, photograph proposed wilderness areas, monitor eelgrass beds and much more.

Local resident Lee Pagni first benefitted from LightHawk's work as a partner, requesting flights over the imperiled butterfly forests of Central Mexico where he was working for the San Diego Zoo. Lee has now been working for LightHawk for nearly a decade. He will share stories about a range of projects and some of the successes that the organization has been a part of within the state and internationally.

Please join us for this excellent program at the Tuolumne County Library on Greenley Road in Sonora, Wednesday, February 20 at 7 p.m. For more information, please contact David Harden at 533-1668 or email dharden@sonnet.com.

David Harden, President

January's program by Dan Webster, "**Birds Matter**", was excellent! (Editor)

Coming Programs

March

John Muir Laws: "The Art of Drawing Birds"

April

Harold Basey: "Mountain Lions"

May

Nancy Muleady-Mecham: "Giant Sequoias"

(Monthly programs are held in the Tuolumne County Library)



Self-portrait of Lee Pagni over Belize



Nesting colony of Flamingos in Yucatan. Photo: Lee Guerrero

Field Trips

Note: In general, rain cancels a trip. Please do not hesitate to call the trip leader if you have questions. Bring binoculars, water (and lunch if indicated), layered clothing and comfortable shoes. Birding scopes and field guides are desirable options. Children are always welcome.

Sunday, February 3 (Away)

Salt Springs Valley: Near Copperopolis

Trip leader: **Barry Boulton**

Ph. 596-0612 rbarryboulton@gmail.com.

Time and Directions: 9:00 a.m. until mid-afternoon. We will meet at Rock Creek Road just off Highway 4 on its northwest side. Driving west on Highway 4 from Angels Camp, turn right onto Rock Creek Road and park on the right side of the road. From Tuolumne County take O'Byrnes Ferry Road (E15) from Highway 108/120, meeting Highway 4 as you pass through the historic town of Copperopolis. Rock Creek Road is directly across from Highway 4.

You can meet us there, arrange your own carpools, or call me and I'll try to find a carpool for you.

We will repeat our annual birding exploration of the Salt Springs Valley and reservoir in Calaveras County. Seen January 4: Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks as well as a Short-eared Owl. Other species that have previously been seen include Bald Eagle, Merlin, Burrowing Owl, Rock Wren, Loggerhead Shrike, Phainopepla, Woodpeckers and many others.

Wednesday, February 6 (Local)

GCSD: Groveland Community Service District

Trip leader: Jeanne Ridgley Ph. 962-7598

Time and Directions: 8 a.m. to 10:00 or 11:00 a.m. From Highway 120 in Groveland take Ferretti Road and then watch for the GCSD sign on the left at 18966 Ferretti. Drive in and park in the lot to the left.

This Bird Walk is held the first Wednesday of the month. The property encompasses an area

of more than 200 acres of oak, pine and willow habitat with three water storage ponds. 132 species of birds have been seen there since November of 2007.

Saturday, February 16 (Local)

Calaveras County: Central Hill Road, Old Southern Pacific & Calaveras River

Trip leader: **Patty Raggio**

209-754-0164 (R) 209-840-8533 (C)

Time and Directions: 9 a.m. to 12 noon. From San Andreas go west toward Valley Springs on Highway 12 to Central Hill Road. Turn right and park on the left (beside the creek). We will walk across Highway 12 to access the trail. Join Patty for a bird walk along the old Southern Pacific Railway and the Calaveras River toward Lake Hogan.

This 3 mile round trip walk through the Foothill Oak Woodland should provide sightings of our favorite resident and wintering birds including Oak Titmice, Western Bluebirds, Kinglets, Northern Flickers and various Woodpeckers. If we are lucky, the day may gift us with sightings of Eagles, Ospreys, Sharp-shinned Hawks and Belted Kingfishers.

Sunday, February 17 (Local)

Tuolumne County: Woods Creek/ Quartz Mountain Reservoir

Trip leader: **Guy Van Cleave**

Ph. 614-5548(C) 878-0529 (night before trip)

Time and Directions: 9 a.m. to 12 noon. From Stockton Street, take Woods Creek Drive (not Forest Road) up the hill to the parking area near the baseball diamond.

A short walk through the riparian area next to the creek yields good views of Kinglets, both varieties of Towhees and Golden-crowned Sparrows. A Hermit Thrush usually makes an appearance along with a Red-shouldered Hawk. Band-tailed Pigeons seem to like this area. A Red-breasted Sapsucker is an occasional treat. From here we will carpool to Quartz Mountain Reservoir (about 6 miles) where we should find some open country birds like Say's Phoebes

and Western Bluebirds There is usually a good supply of various dabblers and divers on the reservoir along with Pipits, gobs of “butter-butts” (Yellow-rumped Warblers for the more “genteel” reader) and the resident Rock Wrens. If it is sunny expect to see plenty of soaring raptors.

QUIZ: (They will get harder!)

What am I? (Answer below) Photo: **Ken Smith**



SIGHTINGS

Adapted from: Central Sierra Audubon's Listserv. [Please see below]

January 13: Steven Umland

The weather for yesterday's New Melone's Eagle Count was beautifully clear and frightfully cold. Our boat toured the Angel's Creek section of the lake. Before we got to the furthest section of our area we had already seen Eared, Horned, Western, Clark's, and Pied-billed Grebes. In one of the small bays near Angel's creek were three Eared Grebes and another which was larger with a bigger bill that had some orange coloration. The face coloring was nothing like the Eared (or Horned). It had some white streaking. I was looking at my first Red-necked Grebe for the foothills!

[Answer to quiz: A male, Green-winged Teal]

Join CSAS_Birds Listserv!

You will be informed of the most recent local sightings, encouraged to post your own sightings, able to ask questions and exchange information on birds and birding knowledge. Our club would like to build up a database of sightings, and your participation is needed.

It is very easy to join: Just send an email to csasbird@gmail.com and request to join the CSAS_Birds Listserv. You will receive a return “invitation” via email and all you need to do is click on the line to join. It is that easy! If you have any questions, please contact csasbird@gmail.com.

John Turner, Website

CONSERVATION

A Narrow Victory

In the 1970s, Presidents Nixon and Carter ordered the Forest Service to better protect plants, water, and wildlife from off-road vehicles and to close areas damaged by off-road vehicles. However, Forest Service officials delayed complying with those and numerous other legal mandates until finally approving a Stanislaus Forest Motorized Travel Management Plan in 2009 over the objections of The Wilderness Society, the Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center (CSERC), and Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER). In 2010 The above conservation groups filed a lawsuit challenging that Plan in August of 2010 to stop Forest Service approval of 137 miles of user-created unauthorized off-road vehicle routes, many of which cause environmental harm in the Stanislaus National Forest. The suit sought to block a significant expansion of motorized trails that often damage streams and habitat for rare species.

The Federal District Court, in its ruling issued Jan. 4, 2013, agreed that the Forest Service failed to show that the agency had followed the law and had clearly minimized the environmental impacts that were caused by Forest officials adding 137 miles of previously unauthorized routes to the legal motorized system.

There will be a hearing in mid-February for the Court to hear what the plaintiffs are asking for in terms of resolving the case, and to hear what the Forest Service is willing to do. It is a narrow victory, but still a major step in a positive direction.

Tom Parrington, Conservation

Central Sierra Audubon Society

(A Chapter of the National Audubon Society)

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209-532-0570

www.centralsierraaudubon.org

Please bring your used printer cartridges to our general meeting. CSAS turns them in at Staples for credit we can use to defray the cost of printing our newsletter and needed supplies.

General Meetings: Third Wednesday, 7 p.m.

(except July and August)

Tuolumne Public Library,

Board Meetings: First Wednesday, 6 p.m.

(September through May)

Jamestown Community Hall

Your Audubon Board

David Harden, President	533-1668
Dan Ward, 1st VP/Programs	533-3940
Tom Parrington, 2nd VP/Conservation	928-3835
Tom Harrington, Secretary	694-8564
Rick Baird, Treasurer, Past President	532-1106
Ken Smith, Field Trips	949-922-1445
Jeanne Ridgley, Membership	962-7598
Pamela Blair, Education	533-1668
Jan Jorn-Baird, Publicity	532-1106
Irv Logan, Newsletter	505-3250

Your Audubon Committees

Suzanne Kilburn, Bird Box Trail	532-1938
Tom Harrington, Book Sales	694-8564
Anthea Neilson, Hospitality	533-0360
Joyce Schieferstein, Scholarship	586-1680
John Turner, Website	852-2348
Steven Umland, Sightings, Sonora CBC	352-6985
Barry Boulton, Calaveras CBC	596-0612

Rich Cimino is leading trips to **Nome** (Alaska), **New Mexico** and **Wisconsin** in 2013. For more information on all three trips contact: Rich Cimino at 925-353-0266. yellowbilledtours@gmail.com or visit the website www.yellowbilledtours.com

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

To become a member of BOTH the National Audubon Society, with subscription to *Audubon* magazine, and of **Central Sierra Audubon Society**, with subscription to CSAS newsletter, *Sierra Squawker*, complete this form and mail with check for \$20 payable to **National Audubon Society** to:

Jeanne Ridgley, CSAS Membership Chairman, 19353 Pine Mountain Dr., Groveland, CA 95321

*(To become a member of **only CSAS**, with subscription to the CSAS newsletter, *Sierra Squawker*, please make your check for \$15 payable to CSAS)*

Name _____ Phone _____

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