

Central Sierra Audubon Society's
Sierra Squawker



May Program

"Giant Sequoias--a Natural and Historic Legacy" with Nancy Muleady-Mecham

The western slope of the Sierra Nevada is home to the largest trees on the planet. Come and explore their fire-adapted ecology and place in history, both recent and geological, with Dr. Nancy E. Muleady-Mecham.

"Doc Nancy" is an Adjunct Professor of Biology at Northern Arizona University, a Visiting Lecturer for the University of Virginia Semester At Sea program, and a Fulbright Scholar who taught biology and astronomy and conducted research in Siberia in the Russian Federation.

Nancy is a retired National Park Ranger, which included working 14 seasons in Sequoia National Park. She is the author of several books and recently completed a Fellowship at the University of Arizona.

We are very fortunate to have Nancy as our guest speaker for the May general meeting. Please plan on joining us at the Tuolumne County Library on Greenley Road in Sonora at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, May 15. Refreshments will be served after the presentation. For more information contact David Harden at 533-1668 or email dharden@sonnet.com.

URGENT: Help Wanted!

Central Sierra Audubon Society is looking for a treasurer to join the Board of Directors starting in July. Prior experience in balancing your checkbook is helpful, but not mandatory! The position comes with no pay or prestige other than the dubious pleasure of getting to hang out with us at our scintillating monthly meetings.

To jump at this golden opportunity, please contact David Harden or any of the other members of the Board.

Coming Programs

June	Potluck/Annual Elections
July, August	No meetings/Happy Birding!
September	Jim Mori "Butterflies"
October	Ed Pandolfino
	"Natural History of Sierra Nevada Birds"
November	Chris Calonje
	"The Birds of Colombia"

(Monthly programs are held in the
Tuolumne County Public Library)

Field Trips

GCSO: Groveland

May 1, 8:00 a.m.

The "First Wednesday of the Month Bird Walk" at the Groveland Community Services District [located at 18966 Ferretti Road, Groveland] is led by Jeanne Ridgley. The property encompasses an area of more than 200 acres of oak, pine and willow habitat with three water storage ponds. 133 species of birds have been seen there since November of 2007.

Dates for upcoming trips are May 1, June 5, July 3 and August 7. Meet the group in the GCSO parking lot at 8:00 a.m. Bring binoculars and a birding field guide if you have one. Rain will cancel the trip. The walk will last about two-three hours. If you have any questions, call Jeanne at 962-7598. [Thanks, Jeanne, for reminding us of the upcoming dates as the newsletter doesn't usually go to print until the first of the month--too late at times to remind us of your field trip. Ed.]

Tuolumne RR Grade

May 18, 8:00 a.m.

Steven Umland will be leading the May 18th Field Trip to the Tuolumne RR grade. We will meet at the trailhead at 8:00 a.m. The Tuolumne RR Trail is also called the Westside Trail. It is about 1/4 mile out of Tuolumne on the Buchanan Mine (Cherry Lake) Road. The trail can be seen from the road and there is a parking area. It is an easy grade and should take about 3 hours. If you would like more information you may contact Steven at 209-352-6985 or you may email him at stevenum71@gmail.com.

President's Message

Like most small, community-based organizations, Central Sierra Audubon relies on volunteers to carry out its mission. We strive to contribute to the conservation of birds and wildlife habitat here in the Sierra foothills through our education and scholarship programs and by offering field trips and engaging speakers at our general meetings. A small handful of people do the work necessary to keep our chapter viable.

This is where YOU come in. If you like our programs and are concerned about the environment of the Central Sierra, maybe it is time to step forward. We would love to have new faces and ideas and welcome any help you could offer. The annual election for our Board of Directors is coming up next month, and there are also other opportunities for willing participants. Please lend us your expertise and let us know that you're willing to help. [Please see urgent appeal for a treasurer, page 1]

David Harden, President

Birdhouse Sale a Big Success. Thank you!

Thanks to all who helped to make the sale on April 20 a great success. We sold 22 birdhouses/feeders, three bat houses plus numerous books and other items and realized \$783 which will go toward our scholarship programs. Special thanks to those who built the houses and feeders--the success of the sale depends on you! The next sale will be in October, so please keep on building for that event. Again, many thanks--it was a great team effort.

Tom Harrington, Secretary

Birding Northern New Mexico with Rich Cimino

August 5 to August 9 and August 11 to August 15, 2013

Each trip is limited to four birders. Comfortable seating.

New Mexico is a spectacular state with an astonishing variety of habitats, wide-open blue sky, eastern plains, grasslands, mountain ranges, deep canyons, and pine and juniper forest situated on the spine of the Continental Divide. Birding in New Mexico offers bird species found west of the Continental Divide—Pacific Flyway, as well as bird species from east of the Continental Divide—Central Flyway, which contribute to an impressive birding experience. July begins the fall migration for both Great Basin land birds and water birds, and we'll take time to observe and understand the "Interior West" subspecies we encounter. For more information contact: yellowbilledtours.com or **925-353-0266**. [Trip cost includes a \$50 donation to CSAS]

CSAS "Adopt a Highway" Cleanup: May 16

If you'd like to join the fun, and see a profusion of spring wildflowers in the process, meet at Perko's at 7:30 a.m. and we'll head for the Don Pedro Vista parking lot on Highway 49/120. We should be back at Perko's by 10 a.m. If the weather looks threatening, call **Tom Harrington** (694-8564) before 7:00 a.m. for any update. The money for the recyclables goes into our scholarship fund (see article in this issue). Our account at Cal Sierra is "Sierra Audubon" in case you'd like to donate your recyclables to the cause. Thanks!

Scholarship Awards

Central Sierra Audubon Society is pleased to announce that two recipients have been selected this year for the Edey Dingman Scholarship: Nathan Ashmead and Joseph McLeod. A Summerville High School graduate, Nathan attends UC Berkeley and will continue his interest in Integrative Biology/Marine Science with the goal of becoming an aquatic or fisheries biologist. Joseph currently attends Columbia College, planning to transfer to a UC campus this fall and study Ecology and Evolution to become a freshwater ecologist. CSAS will present the awards at our annual election meeting and potluck dinner on June 19th at the Jamestown Community Center.

This year the Sierra Club's Tuolumne Group joined with CSAS to interview our outstanding pool of applicants and chose two of their own candidates to award their scholarships: Megan Fiske and Susan Wisheart. A student currently at Columbia College, Megan will transfer this fall to Humboldt State University to major in Wildlife Management and Conservation. Her goal is to become a wildlife biologist. Susan graduated from Sonora High School and attends the University of Washington where she is an Earth and Space Science - Geology major. She plans to become a geologist. The Sierra Club will present their awards during their general meeting on May 30. Delighted to support our local youth, we look forward to their many successes in their bright futures!

Pamela Blair, Education

Visit the "Osprey Cam"

<http://chesapeakeconservancy.org/osprey.html>

Field Trip Reports

Merced NWR March 3, 2013

Trip Leaders: Ken and Evelyn Smith

Scope of trip: Highway J-59, Dawson Pond and the rancher's zoo on the South side of Highway J59 between Turlock Road and Oakdale Road. Six of us left Sonora at 7:10 a.m. and met up with two others at J59 & Highway 132 (LaGrange Road) at 7:45. We observed 70 species and had a special treat at a ranch* on J59 that I have observed for years. Evelyn & I call it the "J-59 Zoo". How often does one see a free range Ostrich and Emu? While we were there the rancher fed the various animals and with enthusiasm gave us a brief history of the exotic livestock and the ranch. Below are the highlights of each location. I was remiss and did not catch his name.

Dawson Pond : Common Mergansers, Double-Crested Cormorants, Greater Yellowlegs, Bald Eagle, Osprey, Western Meadowlarks, Ruby-crowned Kinglet and a Wilson's Snipe (in flight).

Rancher's Zoo: Sharp-shinned Hawk, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Cattle Egret, Great Egret, Yellow-billed Magpie, Ostrich*, Emu*, American Bison and all sorts of other bison, Asian Water Buffalo, Llamas, Zebras and various hybrids of cattle, and an 8 year old Zedonk (Zebra/Donkey hybrid.) These animals are free-range on this ranch and are often visible as close as three feet away.

Merced NWR: White Pelican, White-faced Ibis, Tundra Swan, White-fronted Goose, Snow Goose, Ross Goose, Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged teal, Cinnamon Teal, White-tailed Kite, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Bald Eagle, Osprey, Sand-Hill Crane, Black-bellied Plover, Greater Yellowlegs, Great Horned Owl (a nesting pair), Long-billed Marsh Wren, Mockingbird, Ruby-crowned Kinglet and a Loggerhead Shrike. **Ken Smith**, Field Trips

QUIZ: What am I? (See answer on last page)



Sorry--I'm having a bad hair day! Photo: **Irv Logan**

April Sightings

The influx of spring migrants is rushing along at a headlong pace. We have been flooded with Orioles, Swallows, Pacific-slope Flycatchers, Western Kingbirds and several species of Wood Warblers. Nests are appearing everywhere. The first broods of Canada Geese are hatching and all this hustle and bustle is so much fun to watch. On the other side of the coin, our winter waterfowl are all but gone. A lone Common Merganser remains on Phoenix (through 4/19) as the last vestige of a large flock that wintered there. Here are some of the reports gleaned from the CSAS Listserve.

Steve Stocking reported **Ospreys** nesting on an artificial platform on a pole over Highway 12 in Wallace and on another structure adjacent to a pond behind the feed store on Highway 49 just north of Angels Camp. Rick Hoppe found a **Hooded Oriole** on Cabezut Road on March 21 and a FOS (First Of Season) **Ash-throated Flycatcher** on April 10. John Turner saw his FOS **Hooded Oriole** on March 29 in his Don Pedro neighborhood. April 8 was just another regular day at Phoenix Lake, as Steven Umland was eyeing 2 **Northern Shoveler** when he noticed the large dark birds behind them were not DC Cormorants but a pair of **White-faced Ibis**! First time seeing them on the Lake and only the second time seeing them in Tuolumne County. On April 7, near the town of Milton, Steve Stocking saw over 50 **Tricolored Blackbirds** fly over. In the Red Hills, Charlotte Ginn saw a lone **Lawrence's Goldfinch** at her feeder (first for her house) and a FOS **Bullock's Oriole** and her FOS **Black-chinned** and **Rufous Hummingbirds** on April 17. Jeanne Ridgley was out on Cherry Lake Road on April 14 and spied her FOS **Bullock's Oriole** and **Orange-crowned Warbler**. As always: everyone PLEASE REPORT YOUR SIGHTINGS! The more information you report the better our understanding of our avian community. You can report to the CSAS Yahoo Group Listserve. It is the best place to share your finds with everyone in an ultra-timely manner or you can report to me by phone (209-352-6985) or email me, Steven Umland, at **stevenum71@gmail.com**. Last but not least, report your trip lists to eBird. This data can be used by anyone to further research on numbers and timing of arrivals and departures. It is an invaluable resource to birders and researchers everywhere. **Steven Umland**, Sightings

Central Sierra Audubon Society

(A Chapter of the National Audubon Society)

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Sonora, CA 95370

209-532-0570

www.centralsierraaudubon.org

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

Answer to Quiz: Female Common Merganser.

If you have a suggestion for a Mystery Bird please contact the editor. Thank you!

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
Tom Parrington, VP/Conservation	928-3835
Tom Harrington, Secretary	694-8564
Rick Baird, Treasurer, Past President	532-1106
Ken Smith, Field Trips	949-922-1455
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
Pamela Blair, Scholarship	533-1668
John Turner, Website	852-2348
Steven Umland, Sightings, Sonora CBC	352-6985
Barry Boulton, Calaveras CBC	596-0612

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)*

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