

Central Sierra Audubon Society's
Sierra Squawker



Volume XXXIV No. 1

September 2013

September 18th Program

Forest Ecology through the Eyes of Butterflies. Presented by Jim Mori



Butterflies are very observable in their various habitats and are tied very closely to their larval food plants. If a specific butterfly is seen in a specific area, one knows the larval food

plant of that butterfly is close by, and also that the environmental requirements of these plants are being met.

The program concentrates along the west slope of HWY 108, from the town of Sonora to Sonora Pass. 113 species of butterflies occur along this 65 mile corridor, a very large number, made possible by the 5 different plant communities/life zones along this stretch of highway.

Jim Mori is a 78 year old retired Entomologist who has had a life-long infatuation with these fascinating animals, something ornithologists will easily understand. Over the past 50 years, my wife (Glenna) and I have floated down the Amazon, hiked over the Himalayas, climbed the highest mountain in Borneo, pitched tents in many of the rain forests, deserts, and mountains from The Andes to Alaska, and were stoned by angry Arab sheep herders in the Middle East who thought we were going to harm their animals with our butterfly nets.

Please join us at 7 PM, **September 18** at the Tuolumne County Library on Greenley Road in Sonora for what is sure to be an enlightening and entertaining program. The public is always welcome and refreshments will be served after the program. Products and publications on a wide range of birding topics are on display at each meeting.

For more information please contact **David Harden, 533-1668** or email dharden@sonnet.com

President's Message for 2014

We at Central Sierra Audubon are back from our summer hiatus and are excited to be starting another season of general meetings at the Tuolumne County Library on the third Wednesday of the month. We have a great lineup of guest speakers coming up and hope that you can join us for the various enlightening and entertaining programs.

Ours is a small, local chapter that keeps very busy with the help of some remarkably dedicated individuals volunteering their time and efforts. Lack of space precludes me from talking about everyone right now, but I hope to feature one of our active volunteers each month in the Squawker this year. Our Vice-president, Tom Parrington, keeps his finger on the pulse of numerous local conservation issues, attending meetings and writing letters, to provide much-needed input from an ecological and environmental perspective. He also handles our insurance needs, and brings his legal-sharp mind to the task of keeping me in line when I need reminders.

Thanks, Tom for the great job you do!

On a sad note, I am sorry to learn of the recent passing of our former newsletter editor, Kate Sim, after a long illness. Her charming smile and wry wit will be sorely missed.

David Harden

Coming Programs

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|------------------------|--|
| <u>October</u> | Ed Pandolfino
Natural History of Sierra Nevada Birds |
| <u>November</u> | Chris Calonje
The Birds of Colombia |
| <u>December</u> | No meeting. Christmas Bird Counts and potlucks instead. Please think about signing up – they're great fun. |

Kate Sim – former Newsletter Editor

Some people have a unique charm that sets them apart, and Kate was one of those special people. As David mentioned, her charming smile and wry wit will indeed be sorely missed.



After Kate contracted Lou Gehrig's disease, I got to know her quite well, spending time with her in Douglas Flat where she loved living among the oak woodlands with an abundance of bird life, and finally at her sister's apartment in Dublin. I was always impressed with her constant radiance and ability to talk quite calmly about her destiny.

But more than that, Kate was an eclectic person with an exceptional intellectual and cultural background that consumed us in many a happy hour of animated conversation. Perhaps it's not surprising that one role in her professional life was as a ballet dancer with both the Oakland Ballet and San Francisco Dance Theatre, and we can see her sheer grace and elegance in this photo.

One of Kate's passions was caring for injured wildlife which she pursued as a volunteer at the Rose Wolf Wildlife center. I remember being at her home one day when her cat came in with what looked like a dead Bewick's Wren (her pet was normally an indoor feline, but on this occasion had escaped long enough to capture the wren). Kate quickly rescued the wren and after gently caressing it for several minutes, placed it on the balcony railing outside, hoping that the bird might recover. To her absolute delight, within minutes the wren had recovered and was on its way! Given her passion for wildlife, the CSAS Board has made a \$100 donation to the Center in Kate's honor.

Her family is organizing a Celebration of Life at 3pm on Sunday, September 22nd. It will take place at the home of a niece in Alamo near Walnut Creek. I shall be attending and if you are interested in joining, please contact me for more details.

Barry Boulton

New Board Member – Walt Kruse



As is the way with non-profit organizations, people come, contribute their enthusiasm and skills, and then step aside for new faces. So it is that we're delighted to welcome Walt Kruse to the CSAS Board as VP for Programs.

That means of course that he is not just a VP but also a **VIP** because our monthly programs remain at the core of our activities!

Walt informs us that he and his wife, Sheila, moved to Tuolumne County in 1981. After a stint away he is now back full-time and enjoys fishing, hiking, and gardening here. He is happy to join the Board and assist the CSAS. We are happy too!

Roadside Clean-up

The next roadside cleanup will be on September 19. We'll car pool from Perko's at 7:30am to the Lake Don Pedro vista parking area on Hwy 120/49. This is an easy one to two mile stroll and we're back at Perko's before 10:00am. Come along and join the party!

Info: Tom Harrington 694-8564

Birdhouse Sale

CSAS's next Birdhouse sale is fast approaching, especially for those who would like to make and donate some birdhouses, feeders or bat houses. Our inventory is rather low after the successful spring sale so please consider crafting one or some of these items. The profits help pay for the scholarships CSAS awards to two college students. If you need some lumber or plans, call Tom Harrington.

Info: Tom Harrington 694-8564

Field Trips

Field trips present a tremendous opportunity to get outside and enjoy this wonderful set of ecosystems that surround us with so many bird species. Getting people to volunteer to lead trips has been difficult and so I'd like to try a new approach. If, during this next three months as we move into Fall with all of the returning migratory birds, you would like to go on a birding walk, please send me an email. Indicate whether you prefer Saturdays or Sundays. I'll find you a trip leader!

Ken Smith, kenksingz_2@yahoo.com

Groveland Community Services Walks

Jeanne Ridgley is our most consistent birding leader, visiting GCSO with groups at least once each month. She also uploads her observations onto eBird and is providing a gold mine of invaluable data.

She leads a group on the first Wednesday of each month at the GCSO property at 18966 Ferretti Road. The property encompasses an area of more than 200 acres of oak, pine and willow habitat with three water storage ponds. 135 species of birds have been seen there since November of 2007

Dates for upcoming the regular Wednesday walks are Sept 4, Oct 2, Nov 6 and Dec 4.

She will also lead a Bird Walk at GCSO on Saturday, Oct 19. The group meets in the GCSO parking lot at 8:00 AM. 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. Those that would like to carpool can meet in the parking lot at Perko's in Sonora at 7 AM.

BIRD SIGHTINGS REPORTS

Windy Ridge by John Luther, Oakland

Windy Ridge is around 8000 ft elevation about 14 miles northeast of Strawberry on highway 108. You turn off 108 at the Eagle Meadow sign and go on to Forest road 5N01. From 108 it is about 12.5 miles to the sign that says Windy Ridge. The first 6 miles are paved and then dirt and rocks. There are two small stream crossing in the dirt part where you get your tires wet (first is Eagle Creek and second is Long Valley Creek). Windy Ridge was a very "birdy" area where I observed 38 species on August 2nd. I birded for over 3 hours along the road and walking through the willows and the sage. Brewer's Sparrow and Pinyon Jay were new for me in Tuolumne County. The Sooty Grouse were a big surprise right along the road as I walked up to them. One of the youngsters finally had enough of me staring at it from about 10 feet and went into the willows rather than responding to Mom's calls. Mom flew across the road and followed it into the willows. So then the other youngster flew across the road to join them making a very dusty belly first landing at the edge of the road before also disappearing in the willows. I could hear them in the willows talking to each other as they moved away from the road. Fun place to visit!

Note: John Luther is what we term a "County Birder" which is a committed birder who spends time in many counties attempting to net at least 100 birds in each.

Pinecrest Lake by Ellen Reintjes, Pinecrest

I'm new to the [CSAS Birds@yahoo.com](mailto:CSAS_Birds@yahoo.com) list. I've had a cabin in Pinecrest for 30 years and enjoy the central Sierra birds. From time to time, I'll post what we see, especially sightings that might be a bit out of the ordinary. I've created a photo album and will add photos that might help with ID.

With the summer season now largely over, there is much less human activity on Pinecrest Lake and hopefully bird activity will increase. From our boat on Monday (8/19), we saw two small ducks with white oval cheek patches we ID'd as female buffleheads. I also reported this sighting to eBird and received a notice that this was rare. I was surprised as we've seen buffleheads enough times in the past that I was confident with the sighting and might have called them uncommon or occasional .

On Tuesday, also from our boat we saw 17 eared grebes. Interestingly, eBird challenged the number as being high. Perhaps the fires in other parts of the Sierras are sending birds to clearer places? We also saw 2 adult bald eagles sitting in a tree high above the lake. We did not see the buffleheads on Tuesday.

Arnold Birds in June & July by John Sutake

On June 2nd a migrating female Townsend Warbler was observed. A pair of White-headed Woodpeckers successfully nested and fledged young from a north-facing nest hole 16 feet up utility pole. To my surprise and delight the vacated cavity was then investigated by a pair of Hairy Woodpeckers which are uncommon here at our elevation of 4,000 ft. In fact, this was only my second sighting of a Hairy in eight years.

At White Pines Lake the summer birding was poor, possibly due to intense human activity, although we did see the occasional Osprey. Belted Kingfishers are usually in attendance at White Pines, but not this year, so perhaps the poor birding was due to reduced fish populations.

Down at Meadowmont Pond, Yellow Warblers made their annual appearance along with one female Wood Duck and her young who seemed quite happy in the company of several Mallards.

At home along the Arnold Byway, my bird bath with its gently trickling water supply surrounded by protective foliage was visited by a rich assortment of species. We enjoyed Western Tanagers, Mountain and Chestnut-backed Chickadees, Brown Creeper, Cassin's Vireo, American Robin, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Spotted Towhee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Junco, Steller's Jay, Annas and Rufous Hummingbirds, Yellow-rumped Nashville (Calaveras), Wilson's, Black-throated Gray and MacGillivray's Warblers, and even a Band-tailed Pigeon.

Central Sierra Audubon Society

(A Chapter of the National Audubon Society)

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www.centralsierraaudubon.org

Newsletter Editor Changeover

I am delighted and privileged to have the honor of following Irv Logan as Editor of the Squawker. Irv has done a magnificent job over the past year and I will do my best to follow in his footsteps and maintain his quality.

As some of you will know, I enjoy writing about birds and so if there is a topic that you think might be interesting to other readers, let me know and I'll consider it. Indeed, if you have an interesting bird story to tell, then please write it and email me at rbarryboulton@gmail.com.

Similarly, avian book recommendations would be appreciated.

General Meetings: Third Wednesday at 7 p.m.
(except July and August). Tuolumne Public Library.

Board Meetings: First Wednesday at 6 p.m.
(Sept. through May). Jamestown Community Hall.

Your Audubon Board

David Harden, President	533-1668
Tom Parrington, VP Conservation	928-3835
Walt Kruse, VP Programs	588-8067
Tom Harrington, Secretary	694-8564
Rick Baird, 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
Barry Boulton, Newsletter	596-0612

rbarryboulton@gmail.com

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 the National Audubon Society with a subscription to Audubon magazine, and a member of the Central Sierra Audubon Society, with a subscription to the CSAS newsletter *The Sierra Squawker*, complete this form and submit it with a check for \$20 payable to National Audubon Society.

To become a member of CSAS, with a subscription to the CSAS newsletter *The Sierra Squawker*, please make your check for \$15 payable to CSAS. Please mail either request to:

Jeanne Ridgley, CSAS Membership Chairperson
9353 Pine Mountain Drive, Groveland, CA 95321

Name _____ Phone _____

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