

Central Sierra Audubon Society

Sierra Squawker



PUBLIC PROGRAM - SEPTEMBER 17

Multimedia Presentation on Wilderness Lands of North America and their Amazing Wildlife

Presented by Ed MacKerrow

Ed MacKerrow of Mountain Horizon Photography will present a multimedia show of imagery from the wilderness lands of western North America and their amazing wildlife. A discussion of wildlife species and nature photography will follow the show.

Ed grew up in northern California and was inspired by the Sierra Nevada where he spent as much time as possible rock climbing, backcountry skiing, fly-fishing, and backpacking. He noticed the light was different in the mountains and began to photograph the special places, mountain summits, and wildlife found there. Capturing the relationship between mountain ranges, their inhabitants, and the sky became his focus. Ed, who has a PhD in optical physics, resides in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of northern New Mexico.

Join us at 7 PM, September 17th at the Tuolumne County Library on Greenley Road in Sonora to enjoy Ed's presentation.



The public is always welcome at our monthly programs and refreshments are served after the program. Products and publications on a wide range of birding topics are on display and on sale at each meeting. For further information, please call David Harden at (209)533-1668 or email dharden@sonnet.com.

Welcome back after our summer break to another year of CSAS activities with a shuffled Board of Directors as shown with contact information on the last page of this newsletter. Our esteemed Programs VP, David Harden, has already lined up a set of first class monthly programs for the coming year, commencing with wildlands/wildlife photographer Ed MacKerrow this month, and so I urge you to set aside these dates.

Barry Boulton, Editor

Upcoming 2014 - 2015 Public Programs

October 15: David Arsenault, Grebes and Owls

November 19: Steven Umland, Africa Tour, Part I

December: Christmas Bird Count Report & Potluck

January 21: To be determined

February 18: Tom Hahn, Red Crossbills

March 18: Karen Amstutz, Nepal

April 15: John Harris, Sierra Mammals

May 20: Steven Umland, Africa Tour, Part II

BIRDING IN SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA

by Steven Umland

Southwest Arizona is a must see destination for birders. Situated close to the US-Mexico border, it attracts many rare birds from their northernmost range limits south of the border. I make a yearly migration here to catch birds moving to their summer ranges in the US and the chance to see a Mexican rarity or two.

A week into my trip, I was setting up camp in lovely Madera Canyon in the Santa Rita Mtns, 30 miles south of Tucson. I was on a mission to find the Rufous-capped Warbler which had been observed (by others) nearby. That night in the tent I heard Whiskered-screech, Elf, Western-screech and Long-eared Owls along with Common Poorwill. That was fantastic. The following



Mexican Jay

morning while I was making breakfast, **Mexican Jays**, Bridled Titmouse, Verdin, the elegant Painted Redstart, Juniper Titmouse and White-throated Swifts, calling overhead, greeted me. I then drove over to Florida Canyon in search of the Warbler. In numerous hours over a three day stretch, I never did find the Warbler, but I found solace in Cardinals, Pyrrhuloxia, Cactus and Canyon Wren, Rufous-winged Sparrow, Gray Hawk, Bell's Vireo, Costa's and **Broad-billed Hummingbird** among dozens of other species.

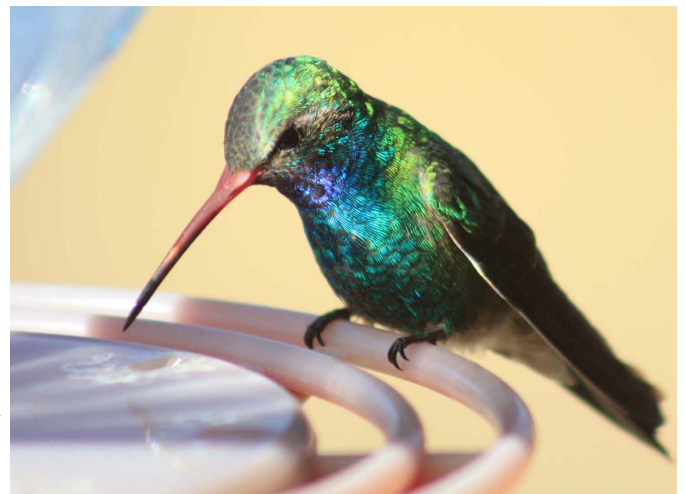
I moved on to the Sonoita-Patagonia region where the two highlights are the Sonoita-Patagonia Preserve (Nature Conservancy), and the Paton's Yard. At the Preserve, I had a fabulous walk and added the brilliant Vermillion Flycatcher and Roadrunner to my list. The highlight was being caught in the middle of a foraging herd of 15 Javelina!

The other jewel of the area is the Paton's yard. This is an unassuming house next to Sonoita Creek in Patagonia, one mile from the Preserve. It is a large yard with 7 hummingbird feeders on the house. Large branches smeared with peanut butter and seed hang in various locations along with many seed feeders and a water feeder complete the scene. Observers get to sit in seats under a large canopy, although many decide to stand outside in the sun. During my stays there, about 6 hours total, I saw 6 species of hummingbird! Inca Dove, Bullock's and Scott's Oriole, Lazuli Bunting, and Abert's Towhee, and Curve-billed

Thrasher were easy to find. The caretaker, Larry, was very helpful identifying birds as well as dispensing the history of this birding gem.

My next destination was the Sierra Vista area. The San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area is home to one of the very few streams flowing north from Mexico. It provides an outstanding corridor for migrants and rarities to move through. Two ponds, along with the river, provide habitat for Mexican Mallard. I was lucky enough to see a young Broad-winged Hawk flying north.

My last stop was Cave Creek Canyon in the Chiricahuas. A narrow canyon of red walls, spires, a perennial stream, and caves, it is one of the most beautiful places in the state outside of the Grand Canyon. People flock here to see the lovely Elegant Trogon. Even though they had been seen in other parts of the state, they had not shown up here. Along with all the other birds I had already seen, I heard the mournful cry of the Dusky-capped Flycatcher and I finally picked up my Arizona Woodpecker!



Broadbilled Hummingbird

These are only a few of the many rich birding sites in this part of the state. In the spring, the weather is highly variable. Indeed, this year the weather was cold and windy the entire time. Although I camp, you can wrangle lodging in all of the areas that I mentioned. Research the area and plan out a trip. You will not be disappointed. If you need any other information, you can get in touch with me at 352-6985.

Steven Umland

CSAS SUMMER BIRD SIGHTINGS

June 29

On Sunday June 29 I saw 2 **Black Swifts** from Cherry Lake Rd., which had recently opened after Rim Fire closure. My vantage point was reached by taking the Cherry Lake Rd. exit off Hwy 120, then taking the immediate left to the 2nd big pullout. It was early in the morning and I had great light illuminating them as they rocketed through the canyon. Three **Lawrence's Goldfinches** were also present.

Emilie Strauss, Berkeley, CA

June 12

First-of-season **Rufous Hummingbirds** at our feeders. Since then the hummingbird wars have been a constant. The **Anna's Hummingbirds** have largely been cooperative with each other, sharing the resource and as many as 6 birds on one feeding station at a time. The **Rufous** hummers, Eve calls them "**ruffians**", are spending most of their energy chasing other hummers away, regardless of species. Last evening we had dinner on our deck with 3 of our 4 feeders in sight. We estimate the hummer population at at least 40 birds.

June 24 at 7 a.m. A doe gave birth to two fawns on the path next to our lower deck. Kinda neat watching them take their first wobbly steps. Mother and fawns rested some 30' on down the path in the shade for most of the morning.

June 28 First-of-season male **Hooded Oriole** at our hummer feeder.

Ken & Eve Smith, Sonora, 1 mile north of the Phoenix Lake Golf Course.

July 23

Last evening I decided to check on a friend's report of **Lesser Nighthawks** at the pond on Rock River Rd. At about 8:10pm just as the sun was going behind a hill I saw two Lesser Nighthawks foraging over the pond. The pond is near the eastern end of Rock River Rd.

Jeanne Ridgley, Groveland, CA

July 24

I've had three hummingbird species at my feeders the last week - **Anna's**, **Rufous**, and **Black-chinned**.

Charlotte Ginn, Red Hills Chinese Camp.

August 24

Three **Eared Grebes** on **Pinecrest Lake** all in breeding plumage, plus a **Common Merganser** and seven **Ospreys**.

August 26 - 16 Eared Grebes, mostly non-breeding plumage.

Ellen Reintjes, Pinecrest

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UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

September 3rd & October 1st, GCS D Walks

Jeanne Ridgley will lead the Bird Walk at the Groveland Community Services property at 18966 Ferretti Road, Groveland. The property encompasses an area of more than

200 acres of oak, pine and willow habitat with three water storage ponds. 138 species of birds have been seen there since November of 2007. Recently we have seen a **Western Tanager**, **White-throated Swifts** and a **Rufous Hummingbird**. Some bird species will be migrating and winter birds will be returning in the next couple of months. Meet the group in the GCS D parking lot at 8:00 AM. Rain will cancel the trip. The walk will last about two-three hours. **Jeanne Ridgley 962-7598**.

September 21st - String of Pearls, Knights Ferry

We will follow the Stanislaus River Parks west to Oakdale through a variety of habitats and should see some early fall migrants. Meet at 7:30 at Perko's lot on Mono Way to carpool, or 8:15 at Knights Ferry Park by the Visitor's Center. We will finish by 2:30 p.m. **Suggested apparel:** Muted colors in clothing and hats, sturdy shoes. Dress layered in fall months. Carry water, snacks or lunch. Bring binoculars, spotting scopes, birding field guides, hand-set radios if you have them, insect repellent and sunscreen if needed. Local field trips are subject to cancellation in the event of inclement weather.

Trip leader: Paolo Maffei at (209)532-8426

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FALL BIRD BOX SALE - OCTOBER 11

Come join us for a morning of sunshine and socialization with our friends from the California Native Plant Society at our annual Bird Box sale in Rocca Park in Jamestown. This is our big fund raising event for the year that supports our scholarship program. If you can help during the sale from 9am - 12 noon, or are willing and able to build a bird or bat house, or feeder, please call **Tom Harrington**, 694-8564, for plans and/or wood.

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ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY CLEAN-UP - SEPT. 18

The next Adopt-a-Highway clean-up will be on Thursday, September 18. We will meet at Perko's in Sonora at 7am to carpool to the Don Pedro Vista parking area, to start the clean-up at 7:30. We will be back to Perko's before 10am.

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THE GREAT SIERRA RIVER CLEAN-UP

SEPTEMBER 20, 9am - 12 noon

The **Great Sierra River Cleanup** is the premier volunteer event focused on removing trash and restoring the health of waterways throughout the Sierra Nevada Region. This cleanup is an annual event coordinated by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and held in conjunction with California Coastal Cleanup Day. We will focus on sites around New Melones Reservoir, as declining water levels reveal more and more trash.

Check-in for team assignments will be at the New Melones visitor center on Highway 49, between Sonora and Angels Camp. **Call (209)533-6993 for details.**

CALIFORNIA SWAN FESTIVAL MARYSVILLE, NOVEMBER 7 - 9

The 2nd Annual Swan Festival in Marysville celebrates the return of spectacular winter waterfowl to the North Sacramento Valley, especially the profusion of Tundra Swans to our verdant rice fields and wetlands.

Many field trips, as well as slide presentation and live animal workshops, led by renowned wildlife naturalists, will explore the beauty of local flora and fauna, and mysteries of the great Pacific Flyway.

Free wildlife exhibits, activities for children and an exhibition of Wildlife Art are all part of a full weekend of wholesome outdoor fun and education.

View at: <http://caswanfestival.com/>

Or, call (530) 743-6501

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CENTRAL VALLEY BIRDING SYMPOSIUM STOCKTON, NOVEMBER 20 - NOVEMBER 23

The Central Valley Bird Club will host the 18th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium at the Stockton Hilton Hotel. Come meet the CVBS board & staff members! Reconnect with old friends! Meet new ones! Take advantage of the scrumptious Hors D'oeuvres buffet & No Host Bar on Thursday night.

Thursday Night's Keynote speaker is **Ed Harper** presenting a program on "**Appreciating the Birds of the Central Valley**". The CVBS gets off to a supercharged start with this lively and informative presentation. Ed is a widely known, popular and highly sought after speaker.

Friday Night's keynote program is presented by **Nat Seavey** on "**From Flood to Drought: A Bird's-Eye View of Water Management in the Central Valley**".

Central Sierra Audubon Society - CSAS

Chapter of the National Audubon Society
P.O. Box 3047
Sonora, CA 95370

www.centralsierraaudubon.org

General Meetings: Third Wednesday at 7pm (except July and August), in the Tuolumne Public Library on Greenley Road, Sonora.

Board Meetings: First Wednesday at 6pm (Sept. through May) in the Jamestown Community Hall.

Membership of National Audubon & CSAS

If you are not already a member, we would be honored to have you join us. You can join as a full member of National Audubon Society which includes dues for CSAS membership or, alternately you may join as a local member of CSAS in which case you will receive the monthly Squawker newsletter and be privy to all other CSAS activities. An application form is on the front page of the CSAS website at www.centralsierraaudubon.org

Saturday Night's keynote program is presented by **Joel Greenberg** on "**The Echoes of their Wings: The Life and Legacy of the Passenger Pigeon**." For the past four years he has been a leader in Project Passenger Pigeon which aims to mark the anniversary of the species' extinction.

He is co-producing with director David Mrazek the documentary, "**From Billions to None: The Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction**" which will be available in the Spring of 2015.

Workshops include: "**Subspecies for Birders**" by Joe Moran, "**What Birders should know about Taxonomy in Flux**" by Jon Dunn & Kimball Garrett, and a photo workshop by Bob Steele, plus, informative talks by Monica Iglesia, Sara Kross, and Bob Meese. Andy Engilis and his UCD Museum crew will present the very popular Specimen Workshop.

Our field trips always turn up exciting birds. Add in the always entertaining and educational Bird ID Panel, the wonderful display of art and gifts for yourself or others at the Birder's Market and the camaraderie of hundreds of like-minded folks, and you know you'll have a good time! There's something for everyone interested in birds. Come and join us to bird, learn, and just have fun!

To look over the line-up of speakers, workshops, and field trips or register, check out our website at: <http://www.2013cvbs.org/>

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Common Nighthawk

Photo:
Lucia Gonzalez



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