

# Sierra Squawker



## PUBLIC PROGRAM - SEPTEMBER 16

### “Why do Birds do what they do?”

Presented by Barry Boulton

**B**ird behavior has increasingly fascinated me since becoming an active member of CSAS a few years ago. As I watch and video birds in their day-to-day behavior I tend to think about that behavior in evolutionary terms: **what** are they doing (not always obvious)?, **how** are they doing it?, and **why** are they doing it (often even less obvious)?. When I say “evolutionary”, I mean not just genes, but cultural as well – for all bird species have a culture which they learn from their parents and other birds and that, over time, evolves. This learned culture intersects with genetics and environment to form the behavioral patterns that we can enjoy. For instance, the many songs of the Marsh Wren are learned and improvised as they go, always in concert with neighboring birds so that they all know their boundaries. When we put all of this together, we can see that birds, just as humans, have meaning and purpose in their lives – you will see in this video a family of Western Bluebirds feeding together soon after leaving the nest, where you can sense the joy, care and meaning in their lives.

**S**haring video sequences of birds in their natural settings is a delight for me, not least because it allows us to talk about our different experiences and interpretations, and so that is what we will be doing on the 16th.

**J**oin us at 7 PM, **September 16th** in the Tuolumne County Library on Greenley Road in Sonora where I hope to delight you! 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.



*Lesser Sandhill Crane landing - Lucia Gonzalez*

For further information, please call me, **Barry Boulton**, at (209)596-0612 or email [rbarryboulton@gmail.com](mailto:rbarryboulton@gmail.com)

### Upcoming 2015 - 2016 Public Programs

<b>Oct 21:</b>	<b>Karen Amstutz</b> - Nepal	<b>Jan 20, 2016:</b>	<b>John Harris</b> - Sierra Mammals
<b>Nov 18:</b>	<b>Sal Salerno</b> - Andrew J. Grayson (California's J.J.Audubon)	<b>Feb 17, 2016:</b>	<b>Richard Anderson</b> - Birds of Midway Is
<b>Dec 16/19:</b>	Groveland & Sonora, CBCs	<b>Mar 16, 2016:</b>	<b>Tania Nilsson</b> - South Georgia Island
<b>Jan 2, 2016:</b>	Calaveras CBC	<b>Apr 20, 2016:</b>	<b>Pete Devine</b> as Galen Clark

## RECENT BIRD SIGHTINGS

July 23

I was visiting a neighbor in Sonora Hills community (across from the hospital) when I saw some rustling and fluttering up on her thermometer. At first I wasn't sure which owl it was, but with the help of my Sierra Birds book, based on the pigeon size, grey face and yellow ringed eyes I'm sure that was a **Western Screech Owl**.

Sue Phalen



*Western Screech Owl - Sue Phalen*

July 26

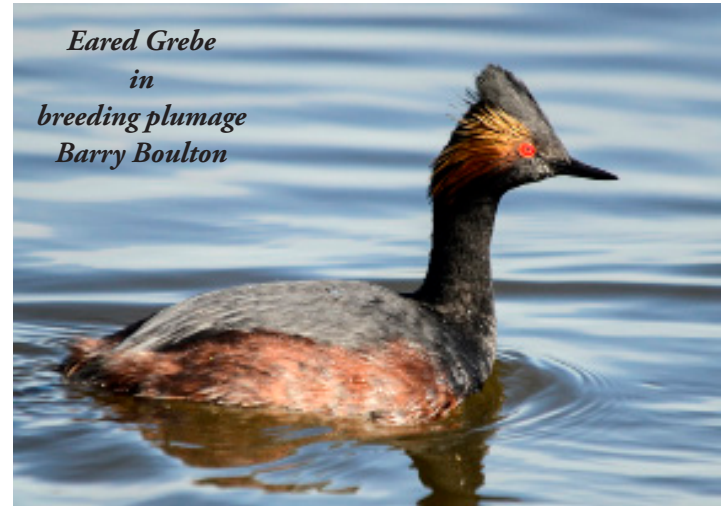
Yesterday evening, while returning from Mono Lake, I stopped briefly by the pond on the upper part of Rock River Road (a couple miles from its intersection with Green Springs Road). There were about a dozen **American White Pelicans** there. They have been reported there in previous years, but I thought it would be worth mentioning.

John Harris, Oakdale

August 1

We spent the last two weeks at Pinecrest. We saw the **Bald Eagles** several times around the lake. On Friday 7/31, an immature flew into a tree just below an adult.

Also on the morning of 8/1, we saw 24 **Eared Grebes** in the middle of the lake. I had expected to see them on the lake during migration, but not this early. We saw one long line of 21 with 3 farther beyond them.



*Eared Grebe  
in  
breeding plumage  
Barry Boulton*

In addition to the Pinecrest "regulars," I saw 2 **Hairy Woodpeckers** and 1 **Williamson's Sapsucker** during the past week. After the rain showers on Friday afternoon, we had some nice activity around our cabin, including a **Brown Creeper**.

Ellen Reintjes

August 2

This morning I birded the first 2.5 miles of Cherry Lake Road from Hwy 120 east of Groveland. Highlights were a **Green-tailed Towhee** and 4 **Lawrence's Goldfinches**.

Jeanne Ridgley, Groveland



*Green-tailed Towhee - Barry Boulton*

August 24

**E**ve & I drove to Tuolumne Meadows, Yosemite National Park. On the way we stopped at the Lake May lower parking lot. There is a small, 3-4 acre pond below the lot. The water is quite clear. We hiked down to the pond and for twenty minutes or so, observed 9 juvenile/female **Mallards** actively diving, completely submerged, not dabbling, evidently for food. This activity took place in several areas around the pond. We did not observe any dabbling activity while we were there.

**I** have never heard of Mallards diving, so when we returned home, I addressed the possibility on line and found several instances where this unusual activity had been observed. I suspect these were juveniles from the same brood and possibly have spent most of their life at this pond. If you plan to travel to the meadows, stop and take a look.

**Ken Smith, Chinese Camp**

.....

**CSAS FIELD TRIPS**

**September 2nd & 19th GCS D Walks**

**T**he first Wednesday of the month Bird Walk at the Groveland Community Services property at 18966 Ferretti Road, Groveland will be led by Carol Rosalind on Sept 2. The property encompasses an area of more than 200 acres of oak, pine and willow habitat with three water storage ponds.

**M**eeet the group in the GCS D 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 **Carol** at **962-6018**.

**A**dditionally, Jeanne Ridgley will lead a **weekend** walk on Saturday, September 19. All other details are as shown above. For questions, call **Jeanne** at **(209)962-7598**

.....

**FALL BIRD-HOUSE SALE - OCTOBER 24**

**O**ctober 24 is the day for the fall birdhouse sale, so it's not too early to start building a birdhouse, bat house or bird feeder to donate to the sale. For wood and/or plans, call Tom Harrington at 209 694-8564 or John Turner at 209 852-2348. We also will need volunteers to help with the sale, which will be held at Rocca Park, Jamestown, between 9am and 12pm. Thanks in advance for your participation.

**S**ales of bird houses is one of our major sources of income to fund natural science college students as they go off to face increasingly burdensome tuition fees. We are proud of our increasing investment in local students who have a purpose beyond money-making. At the same time, if you've been thinking of installing

a bird box, this is the perfect time because the box will be in place and appearing natural to the birds as they move into their 2016 breeding season.

**S**o, come along to buy, shoot the (birding) breeze, or to help on our stand!

**Tom Harrington**

.....

**PRESENTATIONS TO GROUPS**

**J**ohn Turner and I frequently give bird presentations to various groups, so if you represent a group that would like us to do that, please let us know. We can tailor our presentation using photos and videos to your group's interests. Alternatively, if you wish to organize a public presentation in your local community, we'll be happy to do that too. We thoroughly enjoy sharing our love of birds with others who have the same interest – and we always find people who are interested in birds to be joyful souls to whom we can relate very easily.

**Call John at (209)532-2348 or myself, Barry Boulton, at (209)596-0612, or email to rbarryboulton@gmail.com**

.....

**JEANNE RIDGLEY – PASSING THE TORCH**

**N**on-profit groups such as CSAS depend very much on a small cadre of enthusiastic and committed activists, and one of our core group has been Jeanne Ridgley who has served so well as our long-time Membership Chair. It's one of those jobs that doesn't get the limelight, but it's essential to the smooth running of the group. We need to know our members, when they joined, maintain their email addresses, keep track of dues and so on. A whole host of such important details has been Jeanne's role and we as the Board of CSAS are extremely grateful to her and extend our sincere thanks.

**I**n addition to being Membership Chair, Jeanne has consistently birded the Groveland Community Services District property for several years and has created a bird list of 140 species and counting - very impressive. Additionally, she leads regular monthly tours of the property that are always popular and well-attended.

**J**eanne has been known to drive to Texas to spot a rare bird, and I think we can anticipate her continued participation in avian ventures, including support for CSAS as ever. So, thanks a million Jeanne!

**W**herever she birds - home, Texas, Alaska and so other places, she enters her sightings into **eBird** of which she is an enthusiastic supporter.

.....

## **GIVING OPPORTUNITY!**

The Sonora Foundation administers a fund that provides mini-grants to qualified non-profits organizations assisting in Tuolumne County non-motorized trail improvements and enhancements. These projects are good for birders and you may wish to consider donating to the Foundation. If so, their website is at: <http://www.sonora-area.org/grantapplication.html#Priorities>

## **CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS**

Somehow, it seems crazy to be thinking about Christmas-time during this current heat wave - but if we don't prepare it'll suddenly arrive to much scrambling, so this must be said! This year we will organize three CBCs rather than our normal two which means there's a lot of extra organizing necessary, so this is what we'll be doing:

### **Groveland CBC, December 16, 2015**

Thanks to the vision of Bill Zachman, ably assisted by Jeanne Ridgley, a new Christmas Bird Count was created in the Groveland area in 2007, thus expanding knowledge of birds in our region over winter which is important data in these days of birds struggling to survive. Unfortunately, Bill is not able to continue the count but we are happy to continue his good work, and we have settled on Wednesday, December 16, as the count day. If you are interested in joining a fun and important day of birding, please contact either Jeanne Ridgley at [jeanneridgley1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jeanneridgley1@sbcglobal.net) or Barry Boulton at [rbarryboulton@gmail.com](mailto:rbarryboulton@gmail.com). The count will last from 8am to 4pm followed by a potluck at which we will socialize and tell stories of the day's count. Meanwhile, you can appreciate the birding opportunities in the Groveland area by viewing Bill's excellent website at <http://www.whzard.com/tcchecklists.htm>

**Organizer: Barry Boulton at (209)596-0612 or [rbarryboulton@gmail.com](mailto:rbarryboulton@gmail.com)**

### **Sonora CBC, December 19, 2015**

**Organizer: Steven Umland at (209)352-6985 or [stevenum71@gmail.com](mailto:stevenum71@gmail.com)**

### **Calaveras CBC, January 2, 2016**

**Organizer: Barry Boulton at (209)596-0612 or [rbarryboulton@gmail.com](mailto:rbarryboulton@gmail.com)**

If you wish to participate in any (or all!) of these CBCs, please contact the relevant organizer so that we can be well prepared to do a competent job. Each CBC count time will be from 8am to 4pm, followed by a potluck.

## **CENTRAL VALLEY BIRDING SYMPOSIUM**

**November 19 – 22, 2015**

The Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the 19th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium in Stockton. Please come and help us kick off this year's CVBS!

Thursday Night's Keynote speakers are Ed Harper & Ed Pandolfino presenting a program on "A Central Valley Year of Sights & Sounds". The CVBS gets off to a supercharged start with this lively and informative presentation. Both Eds are widely known, popular and highly sought-after speakers.

**View details at: <http://www.cvbsreg.org/>**

### **California Naturalist 5 week Certification Training at Calaveras Big Trees State Park**

Sept. 11/12, Sept. 18/19, Sept. 24, Oct. 2/3, and Oct. 9 /10

This event is still open for registration at: [http://ucanr.edu/cbt\\_canat\\_2015](http://ucanr.edu/cbt_canat_2015)

## **Central Sierra Audubon Society - CSAS**

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

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

**Board Meetings:** Third Wednesday at 3pm (Sept. - May) at the Blood Bank Conference Room behind Rite Aid on Greenley Road, Sonora.

### **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.centralsierraudubon.org/join-us/](http://www.centralsierraudubon.org/join-us/)

## **YOUR AUDUBON BOARD**

Tom Parrington, President	(209)928-3835
Walt Kruse, VP Conservation	(707)548-1829
David Harden, VP Programs	(209) 533-1668
Tom Harrington, Secretary	(209) 694-8564
Linda Millsbaugh, Treasurer	(209) 586-9557
Ken Smith, Field Trips	(949)922-1455
Pattie Henderson, Membership	(209)586-2169
Pamela Blair, Education	(209)533-1668
Jan Jorn-Baird, Publicity	(209) 532-1106
Barry Boulton, Newsletter Editor	(209)596-0612

[rbarryboulton@gmail.com](mailto:rbarryboulton@gmail.com)

## **YOUR AUDUBON COMMITTEES**

Ron & Barbara McDow, Bird Box Trail	(650)391-5277
Tom Harrington, Book Sales	(209) 694-8564
Anthea Neilson, Hospitality	(209) 533-0360
Pamela Blair, Scholarship	(209) 533-1668