



## PUBLIC PROGRAM - OCTOBER 21

### “Birds in Nepal”

Presented by **Karen Amstutz**

Join Karen Amstutz for a trip to Nepal to hear about her recent project there. After many journeys to this part of the world, mostly with her husband Paul and 3 daughters, Karen has gotten familiar enough with birds, language and people in Nepal that she created a birdwatching program for local secondary students there. With a grant from the Himalayan Children’s Foundation, Karen was able to return to follow up on the program a second year. Karen stayed for a month and led birdwatching outings each Saturday and taught classes on several weeknights. She covered all aspects of ornithology, touched on conservation biology - especially local issues, and had a great time looking for birds together! What a mutual learning experience this was! Come and hear the colorful stories and see the touching images of budding, young Nepali birders... Please check out the blog at [birdingnepal.blogspot.com](http://birdingnepal.blogspot.com) for more detail and photos.

Karen Amstutz has been a Ranger Naturalist in Yosemite National Park for more than 16 years. She spends summers living in a tent cabin in Tuolumne Meadows, sharing the natural and human history of the High Sierra with Park visitors. She is a passionate birder, and teams with NPS Biologists in ongoing research & population surveys of alpine birds & butterflies. She is the education director for the Mariposa/Oakhurst Audubon chapter, working to establish regular bird watching programs in local schools.



Join us at 7 PM, **October 21st** in the Tuolumne County Library on Greenley Road in Sonora for Karen’s inspiring 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](mailto:dharden@sonnet.com)

### Upcoming 2015 - 2016 Public Programs

**Nov 18:** **Sal Salerno** “Andrew Jackson Grayson, Audubon of the West”

**Dec 16:** Groveland CBC

**Dec 19:** Sonora, CBC

**Jan 2, 2016:** Calaveras CBC

**Jan 20, 2016:** **John Harris** “Sierra Mammals”

**Feb 17, 2016:** **Richard Anderson** “Birds of Midway Is”

**Mar 16, 2016:** **Tonya Nilsson** “South Georgia Island”

**Apr 20, 2016:** **Pete Devine** as Galen Clark

## RECENT BIRD SIGHTINGS

August 28

**R**on and Barbara McDow joined me this morning birding the 1st 2.5 miles of Cherry Lake Rd from Hwy 120 east of Groveland. We saw 20 species including Bell's Sparrow, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and Lawrence's Goldfinches.

**Jeanne Ridgley**, Groveland

August 28

**A** Red breasted Nuthatch came to visit me this morning while watering. He got on fence maybe 3ft from me. First one seen here. Last evening saw Blackthroated Sparrow near my feeders with the House Finches. Been a few years since I saw one here. Same time of year.

**Charlotte Ginn**, Red Hills, Chinese Camp, 972ft elevation



*Black-throated Sparrow*  
*Barry Boulton*

August 30

**B**ill Zachman called to report that Jeanne Ridgley and he had just found two Solitary Sandpipers at the GCSD ponds on the outskirts of Groveland.

**Dave Quady**, Berkeley

August 31

**W**e spent the last two weeks of August at Pinecrest with signs that summer is waning and fall coming on. We saw the Ospreys every day, but the Bald Eagles only a few days. A Northern Goshawk flew by the dam one day. We often see the Ospreys catch generally modest-size fish, but one day I snapped a photo of an Osprey flying with what appears to be the "catch-of-the-day" at <https://flic.kr/p/x7U7H4>

**W**e saw small numbers of Eared Grebes and an increasing number of Common Mergansers.

**A** first for me at Pinecrest were seven Common Nighthawks flying high above the beach one evening just before sunset.

**O**ther sightings included a Great Blue Heron, Spotted Sandpiper, Hairy Woodpecker and Red-breasted Sapsucker. Very few of the summer birds remained.

**I**mmature California Gulls showed up from time to time. I'm not an expert at immature gulls, but would take this one to be a juvenile per the pictures in Sibley – this one was very tame and came up close to the boats <https://flic.kr/p/wFBXjY> With the white rump, I'd take this one to be a 2nd winter bird: <https://flic.kr/p/xj2Wgq>

**Ellen Reintjes**, Pinecrest



*Juvenile California Gull - Ellen Reintjes*

September 5 & 6

**B**oth this afternoon 9/6/15 and yesterday 9/5/15 there was a single American Wigeon (early arrival) on the Rock River Road pond along with other ducks (mostly Mallards) and Canada Geese. Three Greater Yellowlegs were there on both days. My eBird checklist for both days are at: <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S24921257> and <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S24921317>.

**T**his morning 9/6 I spent an hour at Dodge Ridge Ski Area, watching the stream and willow thicket area just downhill from the main lodge building. The spot was teeming with warblers and sparrows. I observed Orange-crowned Warblers, Nashville Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Townsend's Warbler, Hermit Warbler, Chipping Sparrows, and Lincoln's Sparrows. A complete checklist is here: <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S24921296>.

**Gena Zolotar**, Mountain View / Twain Harte

September 13

**A**t Phoenix Lake I saw two adult Eared Grebes by themselves. Later, a group of 19 swam into view. Most were young of the year accompanied by 2 adults. Very different than the Pied-billed Grebes also on the lake. Neck more slender, slightly larger, dark above with a whitish spot behind the eye. Bill slender with the upturned appearance. Also 15 other species observed.

**Steven Umland**



*Immature Eared Grebe - Barry Boulton*

September 15

First white crowned sparrows arrived today! Almost to the day every year! Have had Lincoln's Sparrows the last week also foraging below feeders. Bewicks Wren getting a drink yesterday.

And RAIN!!!!

**Charlotte Ginn, Red Hills, Chinese Camp, 970' elevation.**

September 15 - 20

Coming up to Arnold for a few days, I was delighted to see so many species. Perhaps the most interesting was the lone White-crowned Sparrow which could have been either a "Mountain" W-C Sparrow that was coming down after breeding at higher elevations in the Sierra, or a "Gambel's" which is a winter visitor from its breeding grounds in Alaska and Canada. Unfortunately, I was unable to see the lores and bill clearly enough to see the subtle differences.



*White-crowned Sparrow; gambeli sub-species - Barry Boulton*

Two female Hermit Thrushes were migrants that had bred in Alaska and Canada. Resident Sierra Hermit Thrushes normally migrate to northern Mexico by late August.

Two Western Tanagers were present, presumably preparing to migrate out to southern Mexico or Costa Rica where they over-winter.

Abundant dogwood berries are pleasing the American Robins which are more plentiful than last year. I expect to see Northern Flickers gorging on the berries too.

**John Sutake, Arnold, 2,000' elevation.**

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### AN ASSESSMENT OF BIRD OBSERVATIONS DURING SUMMER OF 2015

**by John Turner**

This has been an unusual late summer and migration time for bird sightings. We have had only about 10 per cent of the normal count of hummingbirds. There were hardly any Rufous, a few Calliopes and a few Black-chinned. Where we usually go through 1-1/2 gallons per day of sugar water for hummingbirds, we were only using about 2 quarts every three days. Where we usually have Lawrence's Goldfinches in the spring and summer, we've not seen any this year. There were a lot of Bullock's and Hooded Orioles. The Bullock's left at about the usual time, however the Hooded Orioles stuck around nearly a 6 weeks longer than usual. We still had a few female Hooded Orioles last Friday. We had virtually no migration of hummers this August and September. In August two recently fledged Great Horned Owls showed up at a water dish on the ground. We are still seeing them in the early evening when it is very hot, and also in the morning at daybreak.

Our first-of-season Spotted Towhee arrived on Tuesday, September 15th, and the White-crowned Sparrows came last Friday. Our first-of-season Northern Flicker was seen Saturday morning.

I believe the drought is beginning to show on the populations of birds. Our Bluebird population has dwindled, as well as the California Quail, and California Towhees.

**John Turner**

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### CSAS FIELD TRIPS

#### October 7 GCSD Walk

The first Wednesday of the month Bird Walk at the Groveland Community Services property at 18966 Ferretti Road, Groveland will be led by Jeanne Ridgley on October 7. The property encompasses an area of more than 200 acres of oak, pine and willow habitat with three water storage ponds.

Meet the group in the GCSD 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.**

**October 25 (Sunday) Knights Ferry "String of Pearls"**

This will be an all-day field trip. The fall migration is at its peak so we hope to see lots of waterbirds plus others too. Meet either at Perko's Sonora at 8 am to carpool, or at the Knights Ferry Visitors Center at 8.30am. Some of the walking will be over stony walkways, so boots are recommended. Bring water, food and scopes if available.

**Trip leader: Paolo Maffei 532-8426.**

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

October 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.

Sales 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.

**Tom Harrington**

**CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS**

**Sonora CBC, December 19, 2015**

Greetings everyone! It is getting toward the end of September! Already! Our 32nd CBC is rapidly approaching and I want to get the word out so you can **SAVE THE DATE!** We need anyone who wants to get out and commune with nature. Although preferred, birding expertise is not required.

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

The Sonora CBC is one of about 2500 Counts worldwide and covers an area of just less than 177 m<sup>2</sup>! That's a lot to cover, so the Count Circle is broken up into 20 areas. Each area has a leader that is well schooled in bird identification as well as some or all the others. As you can see, this makes for a crack squad of "twitchers" (British phrase) that can help you learn some of the local bird life.

After the Count, everyone gathers at the Tuolumne Co. Ambulance headquarters and shares stories and information about the day. There is pot-luck food and a warm embracing environment.

Not sure you can make it out "in the field"? Well then, how about assisting us from the comfort and safety of **YOUR OWN HOME!** We have need of Feeder Watchers and you can tap into the birdlife you have attracted to your feeders.

So please, get the word out! Join us on this great day and do your part to further local "Citizen Science".

**To sign up or if you have questions contact me, Steven Umland, at 209.352.6985 or stevenum71@gmail.com**

**Groveland CBC, December 16, 2015**

As you may have seen in the September edition of the Squawker, we are re-starting the Groveland Christmas Bird Count and so if you are interested in joining a fun and important day of birding, please contact one of us:

**Steven Umland at 209.352.6985 or stevenum71@gmail.com**

**Barry Boulton at (209)596-0612 or rbarryboulton@gmail.com**

**Jeanne Ridgley at jeanneridgley1@sbcglobal.net**

**Calaveras CBC, January 2, 2016**

**To sign up, please contact me, Barry Boulton at (209)596-0612 or rbarryboulton@gmail.com**

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