

Sierra Squawker



www.centralsierraaudubon.org

September - 2022

PUBLIC PROGRAM

In-person at Sonora Library and via Zoom

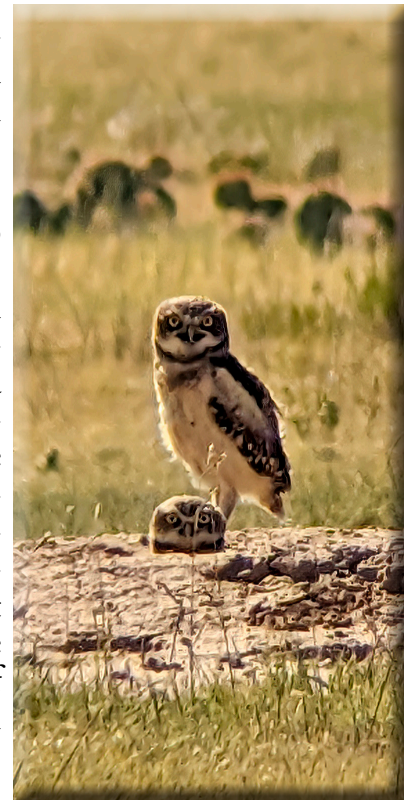
Wednesday, September 21, at 7pm

Burrowing Owls by Caitlyn Rich

Avian Research Technician, Caitlyn Rich, will be giving a presentation on Burrowing Owls. She will share how prairie dogs are both their housemates and their threats, and how scientists can create an estimation of how many owls are in the wild, etc.



Caitlyn was our scholarship awardee in 2018 and 2019 after attending Summerville High School in Tuolumne County followed by UC Santa Cruz with a major in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. She was recently the field biologist with CSERC, caring for our local wildlife and environments, and is now in Colorado where she worked on a project for Colorado Parks and Wildlife doing a population assessment of Burrowing Owls across eastern Colorado.



Zoom URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84954271718>

Note: The presentation will commence at 7pm sharp, so it's good to log in by 6:55pm to allow time for possible internet issues. When you're there, wait until the host lets you in. Please keep your microphones muted throughout the presentation until Q&A time. **Remember, your camera "sees" your whole room - and so do we! If you are planning to eat, it's best to turn off your video.**

SEPTEMBER FIELD TRIPS

Note: our website (<https://centralsierraaudubon.org/>) contains maps for each field trip and will also indicate cancellations due to weather or other reason, so, if in doubt, check it out!

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Wednesday, September 7 - Groveland Community Services District (GCSD)

Please join me Wednesday September 7th. for our next Field Trip to the Groveland Community Services District. We have been lucky in the past for a stray shorebird to show up in September, keep your fingers crossed for a Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper or a Least Sandpiper.

Met the group in the GCSD parking lot at 8:00 AM. Bring binoculars and a birding guide if you have one. The walk will last about two-three hours.

Kit DeGear (925)822-5215, or kdegear@gmail.com

Sunday, September 25 - Indigeny

Iwill be starting the 4th Sunday of the month Indigeny trips this month. Last fall we were treated to 4 warbler varieties, including a Common Yellowthroat, some Cedar Waxwings and even a Western Tanager.

The walk will last 2-3 hrs. Children are welcome! Meet in the parking lot at 8:00 AM. Rain will cancel the trip. Follow the signs from the intersection of Greenley and Lyons/Bald Mountain Roads in Sonora. After a few miles on Lyons/Bald Mountain Road, turn right onto Apple Hill Drive where there is a large sign that says "Apple Valley Ranches." A quick left turn onto Summers Lane leads you to Indigeny.

Kit DeGear (925)-822-5215 or kdegear@gmail.com

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SUMMER FIELD TRIP REPORTS

June 1 - Groveland Community Services District (GCSD)

Sal Salerno, Stanislaus Audubon Chapter President, joined me and 5 others for a tour of the district property. Highlights included seeing some Wood Ducks, Bullock's Orioles, a Western Wood-Pee-wee and we assume the same vibrant Rudy Duck from last month. There was another unique duck which Sal believed to be a Mallard/Gadwall hybrid. Also of interest was locating a Bullock's Oriole nest and a very busy bee hive.

Kit DeGear

Happy birders at GCSD!

Photo by Barbara Salerno



June 7 - Osprey Count at New Melones

Several CSAS members joined Ranger Pat Sanders at New Melones to participate in the annual Osprey Count as we have done for several years now. The weather was absolutely gorgeous, and enabled us to see and enjoy 24 Ospreys plus 22 Bald and 2 Golden Eagles. A highlight was a pair of Golden Eagles trying to consume a Canada Goose and being harassed by a pair of very aggressive Ravens.



One Eagle was beautifully captured on camera by **Elissa Wall** as it flew away from the harassment, goose in its talons (**right**).

Osprey hunting by Barry Boulton



June 17 - Big Trees State Park

A few of us from CSAS joined the Stanislaus Audubon Society outing co-led by Sal Salerno, Chapter President, and Xavier Sandoval. Sal lent his bird knowledge and Xavi chipped in on plant identification as well. It was a particularly nice cool morning. We were able to observe 23 species which is a good number for this time of year. Highlights included good views of Red-breasted Sapsucker, White-headed Woodpecker, Pacific Wren and MacGillivray's Warbler. While we did not get a glimpse of the Pileated Woodpecker we certainly heard its loud drumming. We enjoyed walks through the North Grove, Scenic Overlook and out from the South Grove. Some fun stories were shared at our lunch near the river. View the eBird checklist at: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S113158230>

Kit DeGear

Group photo by Barbara Salerno

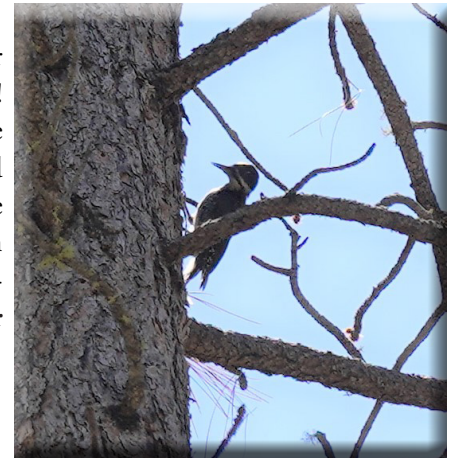


June 29 - Ackerson Meadow

Ackerson Meadow is along Evergreen Road on the way to Hetch Hetchy where our target bird was the Black-backed Woodpecker – and we saw not just one but two! A lifer for me and others. Other highlights included Pygmy Nuthatch, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Cassin's and Purple Finches and White-headed Woodpecker plus a beautiful male Calliope Hummingbird. Some of us did see the Chestnut-backed Chickadee and Brown Creeper at Carlin Falls and at least a half dozen Band-tailed Pigeons at Hardin Flat Road. Total for the day 37 species! View eBird report at: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S114065405>

Kit DeGear

Black-backed Woodpecker by Ron Lopez



July 6 - Bennett Juniper

I managed to find 8 individuals, also bored with the local summer doldrums, for an adventure up Hwy 108. I will try and plan an actual Audubon Trip here next summer. It is such a beautiful area. If the birds don't cooperate the vistas will and cooler temperatures are an added bonus! Over the course of the day 30 plus species were observed. Highlights included Western Tanager, MacGillivray's, Wilson's and Orange-crowned Warblers and the best view I have ever had of a Green-tailed Towhee plus a pair of Red-breasted Sapsuckers.



Green-tailed Towhee by Ron Lopez

Of course we also enjoyed seeing the special Bennett Juniper aged between 2,000 and 6000 years old! An extremely fun and unique outing.

View eBird report at:

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S114567707>

Kit DeGear



Red-breasted Sapsuckers by Cyril Ashe

July 1 - Guided Trip for Out-of-Towners

A couple, John and Ana Hilda Mosher from Corte Madera, contacted me via email. They were hoping to join one of our scheduled field trips or get a name of a guide in our area. While I was planning a couple of outings for a few of us the trips did not fall into their time frame. However, I love birding and showing fellow birders some of my favorite areas, so I offered to take them out. They had a target list and I tried to pick a locale that would allow for the opportunity to see those species. I settled on a trip to the Bennett Juniper. We had a great day and saw many species with, fortunately, some on their list. I took them to Donnell's Vista, too. A day with many beautiful scenic views.

I had recently seen the Black-backed Woodpecker, another bird on their list, at Ackerson Meadow so I proposed an additional trip there. We met the McDows 2 days later, who lent their expertise in addition to my just general enthusiasm. Unfortunately, the Black-backed was a no-show for us although the McDows saw it before we arrived. We were only able to hear the distinctive drumming. We did get a brief glimpse and much singing from a Grasshopper Sparrow which is rare in our county. We had nice observations of Cassin's Finch and Lawrence's Finch as well. They very kindly took me for lunch at the Evergreen Lodge. A very nice treat! While I would never bill myself as a guide, I did enjoy showing them some of our great birding sites in our county. I got a very nice card from them. They have joined our chapter and made a donation.

DeGear



Kit

The Bennett Juniper by John Mosher

Aug. 16 - A "Double Dipper Day"

Six of us escaped the 100+ temps and headed up Hwy 108 to higher elevations and cooler weather. We birded around Niagara Campground just off the highway on Eagle Meadow Rd. Then we headed to Clarks Fork Rd. all the way out to the end to Horse Meadow. The birds were much quieter and harder to spot than on earlier junkets. Juveniles in rough plumage kept us on our toes. We still had a great day and saw many good birds. Highlights included Hermit and Wilson's Warbler, Cooper's Hawk, a Clark's Nutcracker and two American Dippers! Looking forward to the return of our regularly scheduled and advertised outings this fall.

See Niagara Campground eBird report at: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S117075026>

See Clarks Fork Road eBird report at: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S117075237>

Kit DeGear

Central Sierra Audubon Society - CSAS

(Chapter of the National Audubon Society)

P.O. Box 3047, Sonora, CA 95370

Public Presentations: As of this month, April 2022, we will hold monthly in-person presentations in the Sonora Library as we did before covid, and simultaneously share them on Zoom so that you have flexibility in attendance. Monthly details shown in the Squawker and on our website at www.centralsierraaudubon.org

Board Meetings: Please call Barry Boulton (209)596-0612.

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 you may join solely 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 for local membership is available on the CSAS website at: www.centralsierraaudubon.org/join-us/

CSAS Officers

Barry Boulton, President	(209)596-0612
Tom Parrington, Conservation	(209)928-3835
Ralph Retherford, VP Programs	(209)770-6124
Jean Dakota, Secretary	(209)591-9952
Linda Millspaugh, Treasurer	(209)586-9557
Kit DeGear, Field Trips	(925)822-5215
Gail Witzlsteiner, Director at Large	(209)586-4025
Jan Jorn-Baird, Publicity	(209)532-1106

CSAS Committee Chairs

Bird Box Trail - Gail Witzlsteiner	(209)586-4025
Book/Bird Box Sales - Jean Dakota	(209)591-9952
Scholarship - Gail Witzlsteiner	(209)586-4025
Website - Barry Boulton	(209)596-0612
Newsletter Editor - Barry Boulton	(209)596-0612
Education - Kit DeGear	(925)822-5215
YSS delegate - Walt Kruse	(707)548-1829