

Sierra Squawker



www.centralsierraaudubon.org

June - 2023

CSAS Annual Meeting & Potluck

Saturday, June 3 at 4pm



Join us for an enjoyable social time!

Our annual meeting this year will again be an in-person social event in the beautiful gardens of our Programs VP, Ralph Retherford in Sonora, just like last year.

Although we will formally elect Board members for the coming twelve months, this will primarily be a social event where you can meet Board members as well as friends - old and new - and talk to your heart's content in this delightful open garden space. You will also meet our scholarship recipients who will discuss the next steps in their environmental careers.

This will be a potluck, so please bring your food to share, along with plate, cup and utensils.

Location: 20405 Lyons Bald Mountain Road, Sonora, CA 95370

(See detailed map on our website at: <https://centralsierraaudubon.org>)

Our brief Officer elections for 2022-23 will take place by voice vote at this meeting with candidates as below:

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • Tom Parrington - President | • Linda Millspaugh - Treasurer |
| • Ralph Retherford - VP Programs | • Jean Dakota - Secretary |
| • Gail Witzlsteiner - Director-at-Large | |

Note: you will not be press-ganged into any of these roles because all of the above have accepted their nominations. But, if you wish to train with us for a role in the future, just mention it to one of us at this potluck.

MAY FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Confidence Trail, May 18

This walk was led by Tom Hahn who was our presenter on the previous evening. Tom's report is that "Sunny, warm, calm day. Fairly quiet bird-wise except for numerous black-headed grosbeaks singing. It was interesting just how few warblers were around. We did not detect Hermit Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler, MacGillivray's Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler. Also, did not detect Chipping Sparrow, and although I thought I heard a Dusky Flycatcher once, I never heard one again, and it was a very brief call and I wasn't confident of it. Not sure if some of those things will show up soon, or what, but I know we had all of those things on the previous field trip, I believe back in 2019".

The full eBird list of birds observed is at: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S138306391>

Editor's note: if anybody has noticed lateness or non-arrivals of migrant birds that you normally see, please let me know at rbarryboulton@gmail.com and I'll include those observations in the next Squawker.

Three enthusiastic birders on the Confidence Trail - Jeanie Nash, David Harden (previous President) and Pamela Blair (previous Education Chair).

Photo - Gail Witzlsteiner



Big Trees State Park, May 21

Sal Salerno, President of Stanislaus Audubon led this bird walk with about 10 birders from the Valley and Tuolumne County on a bright and beautiful morning and early afternoon in both the North Grove and part of the South Grove.

Birds seen or heard were Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, White-headed Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pacific Slope Flycatcher, Common Raven, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Golden-crown Kinglet, American Robin, MacGillivray's Warbler, Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Junco.

Tom Parrington

Indigency Reserve, May 28

Suppose the birds and birders had other plans for the Memorial Day weekend. There were only 5 of us and one was my daughter. The birds were particularly quiet, although we did see 23 species. We did get to see the Bullock's Oriole, Black-headed Grosbeak and a Western Wood-Pewee. Another highlight was a brief glimpse of a Great Horned Owl flying off to find another spot for his day roost. I will resume the 4th Sunday of the month walks next fall in September. Hope you will join me then!

Kit DeGear

Red Hills Romp

Tom Parrington, Ralph Retherford and I once again had the pleasure of working with teachers Sheri Betz, Linda Cazares and their wonderful students, the "dragons" from the Chinese Camp Science Academy. It was a rather hot morning and the birds were not out to be observed very often. The students did their best to help in the search. 12 species were seen or heard. A Red-tailed Hawk perched not too far away and an American Robin overhead provided the best views. We will look forward to joining them again next fall.

Kit DeGear

One of the students created this image of an Acorn Woodpecker



JUNE 2023 FIELD TRIPS

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



June 8 (Thursday) - Fahey Meadow

This is an interesting habitat outside of Long Barn that I have enjoyed exploring for several years. There is a bend in the road on the way to Fahey with a water seep that tends to attract a few birds and I usually make a brief stop. The year before last we saw 40 species, and this wet year might be prolific too. We of course will stop this year, too, but I cannot guarantee such variety. While we may not see a high number of species at the Meadow, I believe we will see some more unusual ones. Highlights from past visits have included Calliope Hummingbird, Green-tailed Towhee, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Chipping Sparrow and some Warblers and Flycatchers, as well. Please bring snacks/lunch, water and sunscreen.

We will meet at the Mi-Wok Ranger Station (along Hwy 108 less than 10 minutes above Twain Harte) at 8:00 am. We hope to have car pooling available for fully vaccinated attendees or at the discretion of those driving. It will be about a 40 minute drive from the ranger station. We will make a brief pit stop at the North Fork Day Use Area on our way out. There are no facilities at the Meadow. We will return to this site for our lunch where there are picnic tables overlooking the river. We have seen an American Dipper here in the past. The trip will involve walking on mostly level terrain of about a mile. We should be back to the ranger station by 1:30 or 2:00 pm.

Note: as I write this (May 29), the road to Fahey Meadow is still closed due to snow, so please check the website or contact me the day before.

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

June 15 (Thursday) - Wards Ferry Road, Sonora

We will take our annual bird walk along Wards Ferry Road and through our ranch and our neighbor's 400 acre ranch known as the Kiriluk ranch which overlooks Turnback Creek. That creek flows into the Tuolumne River. This is a repeat of an outing held over the last five years before covid. Bring a bag lunch. Refreshments will be provided at the barn.

The walk starts at 8:00 a.m. by the barn at 15589 Wards Ferry Road which is approximately 5 miles southerly from its intersection with Tuolumne Road, and about 1/4 miles southerly of the intersection with Yosemite Road.

Trip leader: Tom Parrington

Stanislaus National Forest Activities in Tuolumne County during June

See their website at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/summer-2023-roadside-geology-of-sonora-pass-with-glen-white-tickets-637008839587> Do scroll down because this url takes you to the geology trip, but there are others down the page.

San Joaquin Audubon Society Field Trips in June

The San Joaquin Audubon Society has several interesting field trips in June - including Big trees State Park on Friday, June 16. See their schedule and sign-up at <https://www.sanjoaquinaudubon.org/>

Representative Tom McClintock's Statement on the Endangered Species Act

Representative McClintock responded to one of our member's letter on an ESA issue with the following statement:

"For all its good intentions, the ESA is in desperate need of reform. If the law functioned properly, we would be regularly delisting species as populations recovered. Instead, the ESA regularly adds species to the protected list, further hampering economic activity under the guise of protecting them, while failing to deliver meaningful results.

Rather than continuing to impose bureaucratic edicts that restrict land use and destroy economic value, we should reform the ESA to give state and local governments more control to better protect species on the lands that they know best."

I thought it might be worth analyzing the distortions in his understanding to determine how we might respond to him. If you have comments, please let me know and we can hold a dialogue in The Squawker on this important topic. My responses are in [blue](#):

For all its good intentions, the ESA is in desperate need of reform. If the law functioned properly, we would be regularly delisting species as populations recovered.

- That is a reasonable action - indeed, it is the wish and goal of the environmental community and of the ESA itself. Actually, the purposes of the ESA are two-fold: to prevent the extinction of specific species, and to recover those species **to the point where the law's protections are not needed**. Delisting before sustainability is accomplished would make the whole process purposeless.
- If, as you say, *"the ESA is in desperate need of reform"*, we might assume that you can provide plenty of such illustrations of that *"desperate need"*? It would be instructive if you would name a selection of species that you regard as worthy of delisting. Perhaps you will be good enough to provide the data that justifies delisting these species.
- Of course, there can be no such thing as *"regular"* delisting because delisting is dependent upon robust and sustainable recovery of each particular species.
- In truth, it would be more correct to say that species are only listed under the ESA when they are **desperately close to extinction**.

Instead, the ESA regularly adds species to the protected list, further hampering economic activity under the guise of protecting them, while failing to deliver meaningful results.

- Please name species where you regard it is the case that listing is *"failing to deliver meaningful results."* You will, of course, be familiar with the successful recovery of the Bald Eagle and other raptors where *"meaningful results"* have clearly been achieved due to the withdrawal from the market of DDT.
- As you know, the ESA doesn't *"regularly add species to the protected list."* In fact, the ESA doesn't do anything; rather, the listing action is taken by relevant agencies under a scientific process as authorized under the ESA. It is live, real people who list endangered species using science to analyze and justify the listing.
- Here again, the use of the word *"regularly"* is incorrect and misleading.

Rather than continuing to impose bureaucratic edicts that restrict land use and destroy economic value, we should reform the ESA to give state and local governments more control to better protect species on the lands that they know best.

- A scientific process that analyzes the pros and cons of listing a specific species can hardly be called *"bureaucratic"* in the normal understanding of that word. Listing a species under the ESA is the result of a very robust and well-considered process, out in the public and open to scrutiny and contention. Consequently, it is incorrect to call it a *"bureaucratic edict"* because it is based on a rigorous process, not on ideology.
- You wish to *"give state and local governments more control"* so perhaps you would be good enough to enlighten us as to which local government entities within the 5th District might have been capable of analyzing the reasons why raptors were not reproducing in the 1960s. You might review the EPA document **The Case of DDT: Revisiting the Impairment** at <https://www.epa.gov/caddis-vol1/case-ddt-revisiting-impairment> to understand the scientific complexities in the listing process and why it is beyond local government capabilities. You will also see that the process was scientific, not bureaucratic.
- You say that local governments could *"better protect species on the lands that they know best"* – but what do they really know about those lands? We can be sure that they know the commercial value of the land, but to *"better protect species"* as you say, they would need the expertise to understand species dynamics; that is beyond local governments' spheres of capabilities. Furthermore, wildlife and particularly birds, don't know local government boundaries. That is why the ESA is administered jointly by the **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service** and **NOAA Fisheries**.

Analysis by Barry Boulton rbarryboulton@gmail.com

See action request on next page

More on Tom McClintock and the ESA

As you see, Representative McClintock surely does not represent the Endangered Species Act accurately or fairly, and certainly not to the benefit of birds and other wildlife. It is difficult to change the minds and actions of people whose mindset is based on ideology rather than science - but, still, we should make the attempt. In the world of politics, numbers count - sadly, not as much as lobbying and donations! - but if every one of our members were to communicate with him on this issue, he may just think about it.

This analysis has been sent as a letter to Rep. McClintock requesting him to stop using this misleading statement when referring to the ESA. For your requested action, it is available for download on our Home page at <https://centralsierraudubon.org/>; if you download it and send to his office with your endorsement, it will help to justify a potential rethink on his part.

His office addresses are:

Washington, D.C. Office

2256 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: 202-225-2511

El Dorado Hills Office

4359 Town Center Blvd, Suite 210
El Dorado Hills, CA 95762
Phone: 916-786-5560

Modesto District Office

1020 15th Street, Suite 11
Modesto, CA 95354
Phone: 209-550-6910

We request that you send a letter of endorsement accompanying our CSAS letter to both the local and the Washington office.

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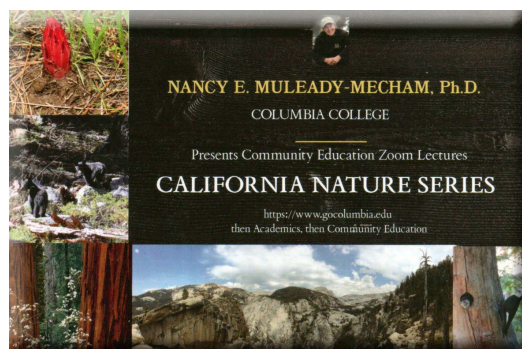
CSAS member Nancy Muleady-Mecham from Arnold will be presenting a series of talks under Columbia College Community Education known as the California Nature Series.

You can review and enroll at: <https://gocolumbia.edu>

Then: [Academics](#)

Then: [Community Education](#) (at bottom of page)

Then: [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)



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.centralsierraudubon.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.centralsierraudubon.org/join-us/

CSAS Officers

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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
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