



The Sandpiper

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2016



REDWOOD REGION AUDUBON SOCIETY www.rras.org

FIELD TRIPS

Every Saturday: Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary. These are our famous rain-or-shine docent-led field trips at the Marsh. Bring your binocular(s) and have a great morning birding! Meet in the parking lot at the end of South I Street (Klopp Lake) in Arcata at **8:30 a.m.** Trips end around 11 a.m. August 6: Ken Burton; August 13: Gary Friedrichsen; August 20: Chet Ogan; August 27: Larry Karsteadt.

For some of our more far-reaching field trips, we suggest donating gas money to drivers. A good rule of thumb is \$5 per ½-hour drive time to field trip destination.



Yellow-headed Blackbird, © Gary Bloomfield

Friday, August 5-Tuesday, August 9: Malheur NWR and Steens Mountain. Rob Fowler and Gary Bloomfield will lead this 5-day trip to this famed area in southeast Oregon. Birds we hope to see that we don't get in northwestern California regularly include: Trumpeter Swan (breeder), Greater Sage-Grouse, large numbers of White-faced Ibis, Swainson's Hawk, Franklin's Gull, Black Tern, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Calliope Hummingbird, Williamson's Sapsucker, Red-naped Sapsucker, Gray Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Loggerhead Shrike, Black-billed Magpie, Canyon Wren, Rock Wren, Juniper Titmouse, Mountain Bluebird, Sage Thrasher, Black-throated, Brewer's, Sagebrush, and Vesper sparrows, Bobolink, and Yellow-headed Blackbird. Pronghorn antelope and other mammals are sure to be enjoyed, too! Cost is \$50 per person to help cover leader costs. More details can be seen on the RRAS yahoo group post here: <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/rras/conversations/messages/1953>.

Sunday, August 14: Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge. This is a wonderful 2- to 3-hour trip for people wanting to learn the birds of the Humboldt Bay area. It takes a leisurely pace with emphasis on enjoying the birds! Beginners are more than welcome. Meet at the Refuge Visitor Center at **9 a.m.** Call Jude Power or David Fix (707-822-3613) for more information.

Saturday, August 20: Southern Humboldt Community Park. Jay Sooter (707-444-8001) and/or John Gaffin will lead this monthly walk. All ages and experience levels are encouraged to participate and revel in the beauty of the park and its avian inhabitants on this easy 2- to 3-hour walk. Binoculars are not provided, and dogs are not allowed; field guides are usually available, but please bring your own if possible. Steady rain cancels. Meet at **8 a.m.**, parking at the Tooby Park parking lot, which is about 100 yards past the entrance to the park.

Saturday, August 27: Arcata Marsh Willow Walk. Let's take a closer look at willows and why they are so attractive to birds both summer and winter. This is a short walk but we will spend time looking at the wildlife and plants that depend on willows. We might even see the parade of woolly worms crossing the road! Join Pete Haggard at **1 p.m.** at the first I street parking lot on the left just before crossing the railroad tracks. For more information, contact Pete Haggard at 707-839-0307 or phaggard@suddenlink.net.

Sunday, September 4: Blue Lake. The riparian zones along the Mad River are under-birded in fall; let's see what's out there! Meet leader Ken Burton (707-499-1146) on Valley West Blvd. near Village Pantry in Arcata at **7:30 a.m.** or at the end of Taylor Way in Blue Lake at 7:45 a.m. for this half-day outing.

Sunday, September 11: Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge. See August 14.

Saturday, September 17: Southern Humboldt Community Park. See August 20. START TIME CHANGES TO **8:30 a.m.**

Sunday, September 18: Eureka Waterfront. Meet at **9 a.m.** at the foot of W. Del Norte St., where we will scope for birds off the public dock until everyone assembles. We will then drive to the base of the Hikshari' Trail at Truesdale St. and bird along the trail to the Elk River Wildlife Sanctuary. Leader: Ralph Bucher (707-499-1247; thebook@reninet.com).

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM: FRIDAY, SEP 9

BIRD HIGHLIGHTS OF 2016 FROM THE STATE OF JEFFERSON AND BEYOND



Green Heron, © David Price

Join us for an entertaining evening of pictures and tales by masters of photography and birding. Various folks will present interesting birds that graced our shores this past summer, pictures of amazing birds in exotic places, and bird and nature stories from our birding adventures near and far. On the agenda are world-class pictures, dessert offerings from members, and coffee and tea. **Leslie Stokes Anderson, David Price, Rob Fowler, Jared Wolfe, and David Fix** are among those who have agreed to present vignettes. If you would like to share some thoughts, a short poem, or some pictures, let C.J. Ralph (cjralph@humboldt1.com) know.

The program starts at **7:30 p.m.** at the **Six Rivers Masonic Lodge**, 251 Bayside Rd., Arcata. Bring a mug to enjoy shade-grown coffee, and please come fragrance-free.

CHAPTER LEADERS

OFFICERS

President— Hal Genger 707-499-0887
Vice President— Jim Clark 707-445-8311
Secretary Pro Tem — Ken Burton..... 707-499-1146
Treasurer—Syn-dee Noel..... 707-442-8862

DIRECTORS AT LARGE

Ralph Bucher 707-443-6944
Jill Demers 707-667-6163
Harriet Hill..... 707-267-4055
Chet Ogan 707-442-9353
Susan Penn..... 707-443-9660
C.J. Ralph 707-822-2015
Denise Seeger 707-444-2399

OTHER CHAPTER LEADERS

Conservation — Jim Clark 707-445-8311
Eductn/Schlrshps — Denise Seeger ..707-444-2399
eBird Liaison — Rob Fowler 707-839-3493
Facebook — Cindy Moyer..... 707-822-1886
— Rob Fowler 707-839-3493
Field Notes — HELP NEEDED
Field Trips— Rob Fowler 707-839-3493
Finance— Syn-dee Noel707-442-8862
Historian — John Hewston 707-822-5288
Membership — Susan Penn.....707-443-9660
NEC Representative — C.J. Ralph..... 707-822-2015
Nominating - Jim Clark 707-445-8311
Programs — Ken Burton707-499-1146
Publications — C.J. Ralph..... 707-822-2015
Publicity — Harriet Hill..... 707-267-4055
Sandpiper (Editor)—Jan Andersen ... 707-616-3888
Sandpiper (Layout)- Gary Bloomfield ..707-362-1226
Volunteer Coordinator- Susan Penn.....707-443-9660
Website — Susan Penn.....707-443-9660
Lake Earl Branch — Sue Calla..... 707-465-6191
RRAS Web Page..... www.rras.org
Arcata Bird Alert707-822-LOON (707-822-5666)

The Sandpiper is published six times each year by
Redwood Region Audubon Society
P.O. Box 1054, Eureka, CA 95502.

Thinking of Joining the National Audubon Society?

If so, please use the coupon below. By sending in your membership on this form, rather than replying to solicitations from National Audubon, \$20 is sent directly to RRAS. This is how NAS rewards local chapters for recruiting national members. (Otherwise, the RRAS dues share per new member is only a couple of dollars.) Thank you.

Chapter Membership Application

Yes, I'd like to join.

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and of my local chapter. Please send AUDUBON magazine and my membership card to the address below.

My check for \$20 is enclosed. (Introductory offer)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

email _____

Local Chapter Code: C24

Please make checks to the National Audubon Society.

Send this application and your check to:

National Audubon Society

P.O. Box 422250

Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250

-----LOCAL CHAPTER----- RED-
WOOD REGION AUDUBON SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 1054, EUREKA, CA 95502

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Hal Genger

This is another active summer for Redwood Region Audubon Society. I hope everyone is enjoying the beautiful weather this time of year and is getting outside to see some birds. RRAS is offering a trip to the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in southern Oregon as well as many organized trips to view the birds and nature in our region. See the Field Trips section for more detail. Let us know if there is somewhere you would like us to lead a trip.

The Conservation Committee is active on several fronts. They are researching ways to enhance bird-friendly areas using native plants and helping to clean up areas of importance like the cottonwoods near Blue Lake and the Palco Marsh area behind the Bayshore Mall. RRAS is working with the City of Eureka on interpretive signs for the extension of the Hikshari' Trail through this region (see article in this issue). The committee is also having discussions with the county planning department about the regulation of cannabis cultivation. If you are interested in helping RRAS with any of these projects, please attend the Conservation Committee meetings held the 2nd Thursday of the month at noon at Rita's Margaritas and Mexican Grill, 1111 5th Street, Eureka. If you can't make these meetings, please contact Jim Clark or Chet Ogan to let them know of your interest.

On another interesting note about birding, Thomas Palmeri, PhD, at Vanderbilt University, received a grant from the National Science Foundation to examine how perception and memory in birders differs between beginners and experts. The study wants to recruit birders of all experience levels, from beginners to experts. Their experiments are all online. Birders can simply register and participate by copying and pasting this link: <http://expertise.psy.vanderbilt.edu> into their browser. Once you register and complete a short survey of your birding expertise, you will be able to participate in any experiments that are available. They expect to add new experiments over time. Some future experiments may include modest compensation. If you have questions, please contact Professor Palmeri (<mailto:thomas.j.palmeri@vanderbilt.edu>).

RRAS is always in need of more volunteers. We especially need someone to help Harriet Hill with publicity, and we are still looking for a volunteer to take over as the editor of *The Sandpiper*. Please let me or any board member know if you are interested in volunteering. Your service would be greatly appreciated, and what's more, you'd enjoy it.

SCIENCE, POLITICS, AND CONSERVATION

By Jim Clark

As a 501-(c)3 nonprofit, our chapter can't advocate for any candidate for public office. We can, however, advocate for taking a stand for our chapter's purpose. As an organization, we can publish position statements; as individuals, we can vote.

One of the 3 principles of our methodology is science, not just the science of discovery of knowledge but logical thinking. Unfortunately, logical and systematic thinking to solve problems is rare in the political arena, and conservation is no exception. As we slog through the miasma of political rhetoric, sound bites, and slogans to the upcoming election, our responsibility as citizens and Audubon members is to advocate for conservation and science and vote accordingly.

Much of the information provided on candidates and ballot measures rises only to the level of hypothesis with little or no real data to bring it to the level of theory, much less fact. Nevertheless, it is often presented as fact, and doubts are attempted to be erased by simply repeating the non-facts. We can make a difference to birds by voting for conservation directly and indirectly. A ballot measure to approve one thing may result in a significant secondary habitat conservation effect.

So, fellow Audubon folks, let's do the research, discuss with others, advocate for conservation, and put the science back into "political science."

NEW MEMBERS

RRAS welcomes the following new members and subscribers:

Arcata — L. Alan Lowry, Robert Stuart
Bayside — Gay Gilchrist
Crescent City — Jennifer Swedberg
Eureka — Berti Welty
Ferndale — Nancy Courtemanche
McKinleyville — Kelli McPhaul, Keith Millard,
Elizabeth Poston
Redway — Wesley Stoft
Willow Creek — Becky Cape

We look forward to seeing you on field trips and at our monthly programs.



Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler, © David Price

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

PROGRESS ON THE PALCO MARSH INTERPRETIVE TRAIL



Marbled Godwit & Short-billed Dowitcher, © Gary Bloomfield

By Chet Ogan

On July 12, 2016, representing RRAS, I met with Denise Newman from Redwood Community Action Agency and Miles Slattery and Donna Woods from City of Eureka Parks and Recreation Department to walk the trail route and look at proposed locations for interpretation and recreational opportunities.

The site has changed much from when we helped with the May 21 city-sponsored cleanup. Gone are the walls of the structures, excavators, and hydraulic drills that were used to break up the concrete and pull out the rebar, old railroad tracks, and miscellaneous rods. Currently the concrete is being fed through a rock crusher and hauled to piles where the old drying sheds were. This concrete will be used for base rock for the trail. A workman was using a hydraulic drill to bore drainage holes through concrete bases, which will be left in place and covered up with some of the spoils.

Most of the area between Broadway Avenue and the bay shore is composed of fill that was brought in and spread on salt-marsh and mudflats, covering natural pickleweed, salt grass, Humboldt Bay owl's clover, eelgrass, and hairgrass to create land for an industrial site. Since the mills were abandoned, the area has vegetated with a mix of native and invasive non-native vegetation. Some of the native plants currently on the site are wax myrtle, arroyo willow, red alder, and California blackberry. Non-native and invasive plants include Himalaya berry, cordgrass (*Spartina*), Scotch broom, English ivy, holly, cotoneaster, rattlesnake grass, vetch, periwinkle, wild radish and mustard, and fennel. Many

on the non-native nuisance plants are being removed.

The trail will follow a trace of roads within the old mill complex. Near the south end will be built a playground composed mostly of climbing structures. Slattery also showed us where a trail-side exercise area for joggers is proposed near the old drying kilns at the north end of the Bayshore Mall parking lot. ADA-accessible interpretive platforms are proposed at 3 locations along this trail; what may be interpreted and at which locations are still being discussed. Because this is a continuation of the Hikshari' Trail where Wiyot tribal uses are described, more may be offered in this section. Other signs will cover industrial use of the site starting about 1910 and perhaps include traditional and current fishing uses. Reference may be made to the graffiti-covered walls and recent transient occupants.

Other signage may be placed along the trail. For instance, we discussed including how invasive plants have filled roles that native plants could replace: kinnickinick or salal to replace English ivy; wax myrtle to replace Scotch broom.

Denise and Donna proposed putting together a package to include the interpretive signs and presenting that to stakeholders and interested public before the decision about the final package is made.



Gray Jay, © Gary Bloomfield

REMINDER: WFO 2016 CONFERENCE IN HUMBOLDT COUNTY

The Western Field Ornithologists' annual conference is being held in Humboldt County September 28 through October 2, 2016. This is a 4-day event that includes scientific presentations, workshops, field trips, experts' sound and visual identification panels, and social activities. The conference offers the opportunity for motivated youths to meet those who earn their living and/or volunteer in field ornithology, bird conservation, biology, and other distinguished fields. For further details and conference registration, visit www.westernfieldornithologists.org/conference.php.



Laughing Gull, Eureka Waterfront, HUM,
© Elias Elias



Bullock's Oriole, © David Price

Redwood Region Audubon Society

Home What We Do Join Us About Us Calendar

Latest Newsletter
CONSERVATION
RESEARCH
CONTACTS
LINKS
Workshop

Welcome to the Redwood Region Audubon Society
RRAS is the volunteer California Chapter of the National Audubon Society, with over 800 members in Humboldt, Del Norte, and western Trinity Counties.

We carry out our mission through Fieldtrips, Seminars, and Workshops. Special events, Data Collection, Museum, Research, and Captures. Our Website page includes some of the many ways you can get involved.

What's New and Exciting!
On Friday, March 18, 2016, David Wells, PhD will give a talk about the Western Field Ornithologists' annual conference on our coast. He will share with us a decade of experience studying Western Field Ornithologists' museum, education, and conservation efforts. The program will be held at the former Redwood Center High School on 1100 The Drive, a very nice, very green coffee and tea house.

March 2016 Program: Field Seminars and Workshops
Reference Website regularly views issues our monthly programs and events. Please see our website calendar. You can also find us on page 208-210 on the page.

Find us on

For a complete listing of the latest bird watching news visit our homepage on

KEEP UP-TO-DATE WITH
RRAS.ORG

If you haven't yet, check out the RRAS website www.rras.org. It has been thoroughly revamped and is now actively up-to-date, including a calendar of upcoming events and field trips.

Field Notes

Summary of Uncommon and/or Rare Northwestern California Birds

By Ken Burton, Guest Reporter

May 1 to June 30, 2016

Field Notes is a compilation of reports of rare and out-of-season birds in Humboldt, Del Norte, and Trinity counties. Reports are acquired from eBird (www.ebird.org), the Northwest California Bird Alert (<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/northwest-california-bird-alert>), and nwcabird (nwcabird@yahoo.com) listserv. For more details, view these sources directly. Not all reports presented here have been vetted.

Editor's Note: Field Notes is a long-running service provided by RRAS to the interested public and aspiring birdwatchers. Even with the many sources for avid birders to keep current on migrants, vagrants, and just WOW birds, we hope it is of interest to all bird lovers. It may even inspire out-of-town nature lovers to visit our area to experience the bounty of flora and fauna for themselves. If you can help us continue this service by becoming a Field Notes compiler and editor, please contact me (j.andersen.415@gmail.com) or [707] 616-3888).



Wedge-rumped Storm-petrel, HSU Wildlife Museum, Arcata, HUM, © Natalie McNear

Greater White-fronted Goose: 1 continuing, *S. Arcata Bottoms/Arcata Marsh*, May 1-27 (BE, MH) • **Cackling Goose:** 8, *Alexandre Dairy*, May 27 (DP, JP) • **Tundra Swan:** 1 continuing, *Klamath River mouth*, May 1-June 8 (LB) • **Redhead:** 1-6, *Arcata Oxidation Ponds*, May 3-21 (BE, CH, AL) • **Harlequin Duck:** 1, *S. Humboldt Bay*, June 23 (BE) • **Black Scoter:** 1, *Crescent City Harbor*, May 25 (DP, JP) • **Ruddy Duck:** *Lewiston Lake*, June 11 (JT) • **Laysan Albatross:** 1, *offshore Del Norte County*, May 20 (BR) • **Murphy's Petrel:** 2, *offshore Del Norte County*, May 12 (PL) • **WEDGE-RUMPED STORM-PETREL** (1st regional record): 1 dead, *South Spit*, May



Hudsonian Godwit, Clam Beach, HUM
© Rob Fowler

1 (DK) • **American White Pelican:** 2, *Salmon Creek Unit, Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge*, May 4-8 (BE) • **White-faced Ibis:** 1-3, *Moxon Road Dairy*, May 6-17 (BE, RF, CH); 1, *Arcata Marsh*, June 4-18 (AL) • **ZONE-TAILED HAWK** (potential 1st regional record): 1 unconfirmed, *Benbow State Recreational Area*, May 26 (CR) • **Pacific Golden-Plover:** 1, *Mad River spit*, May 16 (LF); 1, *Centerville Beach*, May 27 (LF) • **HUDSONIAN GODWIT:** 1, *Clam/Little River/Mad River Beach*, May 20-26 (RF, LF) • **Surfbird:** 1, *North Spit jetty*, May 30 (MM) • **Dunlin:** 1, *Clam/Little River Beach*, May 27 (EE) • **Baird's Sandpiper:** 1, *Alexandre Dairy*, May 10 (TK, CR) • **Pectoral Sandpiper:** 2-4, *Alexandre Dairy*, May 6-13 (LB) • **Semipalmated Sandpiper:** 1, *Alexandre Dairy*, May 6 (LB) • **Scripps's Murrelet:** 4, *offshore Humboldt County*, May 20 (BR) • **Sabine's Gull:** 5, *offshore Del Norte County*, May 20 (BR) • **Laughing Gull:** 1, *Eureka*, June 4-25 (EE) • **Franklin's Gull:** 1, *South Spit*, May 8 (NP, LF); 1, *Clam/Little River Beach*, May 20-23 (TK) • **Mew Gull:** 1, *Crab Park*, May 12 (BE); 1, *Eel River Wildlife Area*, May 20 (LF) • **Thayer's Gull:** 1, *South Spit jetty*, May 4 (BE) • **Common Nighthawk:** 1, *Arcata*, May 12 (DK) • **Chimney Swift:** 1, *Klamath Glen airstrip*, May 21 (LB); 1, *Terwer Valley*, June 5 (CR) • **Calliope Hummingbird:** 1, *Alexandre Dairy*, May 10 (TK, CR); 1, *Grizzly Camp Trailhead*, May 13 (KB); 1, *South Fork Mountain*, May 27 (KB) • **Lewis's Woodpecker:** 1, *Lyons Ranch Trail*, May 1 (GS, BC) • **Northern Flicker** (intergrade): 1, *Friday Ridge Rd*, June 12 (RF) • **Least Flycatcher:** 1, *Bailey Road*, June 30 (LB) • **Gray Flycatcher:** 1, *McKinleyville*, May 14 (RF); 1, *Chimney Rock Trail*, June 27 (LB) • **Eastern Kingbird:** 1, *Orick*, May 31 (CA); 1, *N. Arcata Bottoms*, June 7-9 (LB); 1, *Kellogg Road*, June 9 (BA, JG) • **Red-eyed Vireo:** 1, *Klamath Glen Airport*, June 21-27 (LB) • **White-breasted Nuthatch:** 2 nesting, *Doctor Rock Trail*, May 30 (LB); 1, *Boundary Trail*, June 27 (LB) • **Rock Wren:** 2, *Doctor Rock Trail*, May 30 (LB) • **Mountain Bluebird:** 3, *Boundary Trail*, June 27 (LB) • **WHITE WAGTAIL (Black-backed):** 1, *Lakes Talawa & Earl*, May 10 (CR, SM, GA) • **American Pipit:** 2, *North Spit jetty*, May 1 (CO); 4, *South Spit*, May 1 (NP); 7, *Trinidad*, May 1 (EM); 6, *S. Arcata Bottoms*, May 1 (CD); 1, *Arcata Marsh*, May

3 (AL) • **Lapland Longspur:** 1, *Lake Talawa*, May 10-27 (SM) • **Orange-crowned Warbler** (*orestera*): 3, *Arcata Marsh*, May 6 (RF) • **Hooded Warbler:** 1, *Klamath Glen*, June 8 (LB) • **American Redstart:** 1, *Smith River*, June 8 (AB); 1-2, *Mad River County Park/School Road Trail*, June 18-25 (CR, RF) • **Northern Parula:** 1, *Terwer Valley*, June 6 (TK); 1, *Hammond Bridge*, June 8 (TK) • **Chestnut-sided Warbler:** 1, *Lyons Ranch Trail*, May 29 (MC); 1, *Terwer Valley*, June 1-26 (LB); 1, *Arcata Marsh*, June 9 (RF); 1, *Crescent City*, June 23 (AB) • **Fox Sparrow (Sooty):** 1, *Elk Head*, May 30 (RF) • **Summer Tanager:** 1, *Klamath Glen*, June 28 (EE) • **Indigo Bunting:** 1, *Humboldt Bay Bird Observatory*, May 25 (BO); 1, *Terwer Valley*, June 8-21 (LB) • **Yellow-headed Blackbird:** 1-6, *S. Arcata Bottoms*, May 5-14 (LF, LL, RF); 1-9, *Alexandre Dairy*, May 10-30 (TK, LF, LB); 1, *Big Lagoon*, May 18 (BW) • **Great-tailed Grackle:** 2, *Crescent City*, May 12-13 (SL); 1-3, *Hoopa*, May 13-24 (GD, EE, MD, KB); 1, *Willow Creek*, May 17 (BB); 1, *Elk River Wildlife Area*, June 4 (NM) • **Red Crossbill (type 3):** 1, *McKinleyville*, June 24 (RF) • **Lawrence's Goldfinch:** 1, *Korbel*, May 22 (RF).



White Wagtail (Black-backed), DELN,
© Sean McAllister

Observers: Bob Altman, Colin Anderson, Glenn Anderson, Alan Barron, Brian Boeing, Lucas Brug, Ken Burton, Mark Colwell, Britta Countryman, Gabe Dougherty, Melissa Dougherty, Cédric Duhalde, Elias Elias, Brad Elvert, Lizzie Feucht, Rob Fowler, Gary Friedrichsen, Joel Geier, Chris Heys, Michael Hunsinger, Deven Kammerichs-Berke, Tony Kurz, Alexandra Lamb, Laurie Lawrence, Paul Lehman, Sky Lloyd, Sean McAllister, Matthew McConnell, Natalie McNear, Elizabeth Medina-Gray, Brian O'Donnell, Rob O'Donnell, Chet Ogan, Nora Papian, Debby Parker, Jim Parker, Bruce Rideout, Casey Ryan, Gregory Schrott, Jaclyn Tolchin, Bill Wenger, Zolotar.