

Napa Solano Audubon Society Birding Notes #26

Hello NSAS friends and members –

Whoo Hooo!! Birding at Benicia Community Park about 10 days ago and we saw our first Bullock's Oriole of the spring. Wonderful sight! The Tree Swallows and Western Bluebirds are beginning to build nest and lay eggs in the nesting boxes at American Canyon Wetlands. Spring renewal is happening all around us. Be sure to get out and enjoy the season.

Note #1 – NSAS announcements

1. The annual election of our NSAS officers is coming up in May. There are four positions on the NSAS Board that are elected positions. They are President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. If you have an interest in running for one of these positions, **please contact Betty (Mo) Mosher** at mosher.b@comcast.net and let her know the position you are interested in. All candidates for office must notify Mo no later than April 15th. Once the candidates are identified we will be holding our election via a Survey Monkey survey and our new board members will be introduced at the May 12 monthly Members Meeting.
2. Our Spring 2022 "Song Sparrow" newsletter has been printed and circulated to the membership. Hopefully you've requested to receive your copy by e-mail. Every chance we have to save money, and printing and mailing the newsletter does cost money, helps to fund our ongoing Education Program for 4th and 5th grade students at our local schools. If you haven't seen a copy of the newsletter, it is available on our website at http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/nsas/newsletters/2022_spring_newsletter.pdf. It's chock full of information about our ongoing activities along with some interesting birding stories. I especially liked the Spring Migration article that describes specific locations where you might observe some of the special migrants that visit us each year. It is worth a read.
3. The opportunity to apply for our NSAS scholarship program ends on April 1. **Each year NSAS provides two scholarships to deserving students** who will

be continuing their education at a 4-year college with the goal of earning a degree they can use to focus on conservation and protecting the environment. Each scholarship is worth \$2,000 towards the cost of their education. We have posted notices about these scholarships at all high schools and community colleges in our two counties and hopefully all interested students have seen these postings. However, we know that not everybody may have read the notice. If you are aware of any graduating senior who is interested in pursuing a career that focuses on conservation, sustainable agriculture, environmental sciences, or another similar field make sure they know about these scholarships. Applications can be obtained from Tom Slyker at tcslyker@comcast.net.

4. Field Trips:

- Our **March monthly field trip** to the “**Petaluma Wetlands**” was postponed because of concerns about the March 19 rain storm that never really happened. **The new date for the trip is Saturday, April 2.** Details for this trip can be found on the NSAS website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/FieldTrip/20220319-PetalumaWetlandsFieldTrip>. Participation is limited, however with the change of dates there may have been some cancelations. Check with Wendy Cole at beehaven2@comcast.net if you are interested.
- Our **April monthly field trip** will be to **MILLIKEN RESERVOIR** on **Friday, April 15.** This area is not open to the public, but the city of Napa water department has granted us half-day access to the property. The trip leader will be Murray Berner. There is a participation limit of 15 NSAS members for this trip. If you would like to attend RSVP to Wendy Cole, beehaven2@comcast.net. Details for this trip can be found on the NSAS website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/FieldTrip/20220415-MillikenReservoir>.
- The email message outlining the details for our **May / June field trip was just released** to our Field Trips mailing list two days ago. This outing will be a spring birding trip to the eastern Sierra Nevada at Mono Lake on June 5, 2022. We will be birding throughout the Mono

Lake Basin and into the higher elevations surrounding the lake. Participation is limited to 12 NSAS members and there will be a charge of \$70 for attendance, payable upon acceptance to the trip. If you are interested, **RSVP to Bruce Thomsen** at brucecthomsen@yahoo.com.

- *Saturday Weekly Bird Walks with Andrew* are continuing. You should be receiving weekly announcements for these trips. If not, please email tcslyker@comcast.net and ask to be added to our Field Trips mailing list. Note that this coming Saturday, April 2, Andrew will be leading the *monthly field trip to the "Petaluma Wetlands."* Also, I've been asked to remind you to keep an eye out for any last-minute changes the trip details as Andrew's availability can change at any time.

5. Monthly Member's Meetings:

- Our **March** monthly meeting was held on Thursday, March 10. Harry Fuller presented "*A Virtual Birding Tour from the Sonoma Coast to Oregon and the Great Basin.*" It was an inspiring talk. Harry spent the time telling stories and anecdotes about where to find difficult to see species in a variety of locations between here and Oregon. His attention to habitat, elevation, time of year, etc. helped me to better understand some of the issues that need to be considered if you want to see a specific bird species. The presentation was recorded and is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/QL0yyetHkdo>.
- For **April**, our meeting will be held via Zoom on **Thursday, April 14th**. Annie Schmidt from Point Blue will present, "***The Coldest, Driest, & Windiest: Studying Adélie Penguins on the Harshest Continent.***" Details for this talk can be found on our website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/Event/20220414-NSASPresentsTheColdestDriestWindiest>.
- Our **May** meeting will be the last one for the NSAS calendar year. We will have a break for the summer and will start up our meetings again in September. Hopefully by then we will find a way to provide a hybrid of in person / Zoom presentations for our meetings. The **May**

meeting will be held on Thursday, May 12th with Mark & Lucas Stephenson describing their *Adventures in Arizona*. Details for this talk can be found in the Spring Newsletter at http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/nsas/newsletters/2022_spring_newsletter.pdf.

6. NSAS will participate in this year's **Napa RCD Earth Day Cleanup on Sunday, April 24 from 9 – 11 AM**. Our cleanup location is along the *Napa River Trail* near the Napa Sanitation Water Treatment Plant at 1515 Soscol Ferry Road. Betty Labastida will be the NSAS Coordinator in charge of our area. Details for this event can be found on our website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/Event/20220424-EarthDayNapaCommunityCleanup>. You can register for the event at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/earth-day-napa-community-cleanup-2022-tickets-291584957457>. Be sure to sign up for the location at "***Napa River Trail near NapaSan.***"
7. Be sure to mark your calendars for the "Napa Solano Audubon Big Day of Birding" on Saturday, May 7. This is your chance to join other NSAS birders for the opportunity to spend the day birding. We'll see which county, Napa or Solano, can produce the most species identified in a single day. And, in addition to having a FUN birding day, we hope that we can raise some donations to help fund our ongoing Educational Outreach programs for 4th and 5th grade students in our two counties. For more details about this event check out the Spring Newsletter or see our website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/Event/20220507-NapaSolanoAudubonsBigDayOfBirding>.

Note #2 – What about the Birds?

1. Every day photographer Mia McPherson adds a new posting to her blog. With the approach of spring, I appreciated her posting of "**Spring Has Arrived When the Swallows Return to Northern Utah.**" Check out her photos of swallows at <https://www.onthewingphotography.com/wings/2022/03/05/swallow-photos/>.



Violet-green Swallow adult back view by Mia McPherson

2. Carol Boykin kindly forwarded a video of a flock of ~ 300 or more Sanderlings running back and forth with the waves at Half Moon Bay State Beach. It's just a minute of time to watch these birds chase the waves. Check it out at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvI9Ix9LH6U>.
3. Part of a recent Cornell Labs newsletter was a link to "**Amazing Feeder Action in West Texas.**" Check out the non-stop action at the West Texas feeder cam. Acorn Woodpeckers, Woodhouse's Scrub-Jays, Black-crested Titmice, Pine Siskins, and Chipping Sparrows all visit the feeder during a short 5-minute video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQx_aPy6QIE.



Acorn Woodpecker by German Garcia (Photo from the eBird website)

4. With publication of this year's Benicia Christmas Bird Count results, Karen Sheldon, who volunteers with the International Bird Rescue (IBR) organization in Suisun, noticed that 3 Brown Pelicans were seen. Karen contacted Robin Leong to ask if there were photographs as she wanted to know if these birds had a large blue sight bands on a leg. If they did have a blue leg band the Pelicans would have passed through IBRs rehab facility. In Nor Cal IBR releases these pelicans at Fort Baker and they are very interested in where the birds go following release. If at any time you observe a blue banded Pelican please document your sighting at the following website <https://www.birdrescue.org/contact/found-a-bird/reporting-a-banded-bird/>

Note #3 – Conservation News

1. Audubon California recently sent an announcement titled "[StoryMap: Why the Great Central Valley is Key to 30x30 Success.](#)" The announcement provided a link to a presentation method that was new to me. The photos were phenomenal. The overlay of story was well done. It was a very professional presentation of why the Central Valley (just on the other side of the hills to the

east of us) is critical to the success of California' new 30 x 30 plan. I would recommend that you check out the StoryMap at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/2feb2afa9dcd477ebb91d5abedab4b41?emci=e818b02a-7584-ec11-94f6-281878b85110&emdi=bb436feb-1685-ec11-94f6-281878b85110&ceid=3257812>. Just scroll down through the presentation. I really think you'll like it.

2. I think Audubon CA has a new toy they are trying out in the StoryMap presentation process. The second StoryMap announcement I recently received documents "***California's Biodiversity Hotspots***" and the efforts underway to protect these hotspot locations throughout the state.

"California is one of the most biodiverse places on Earth. It is a global biodiversity hotspot, a distinction for only 36 bioregions across the planet. With its dramatic coastlines, lush forests, blooming valleys, salt lakes, and vivid deserts, California is home to a whopping *450 species of birds*. It's a thrilling state for all you listers out there." I think you will appreciate the content of this presentation. You can review all of the Hotspot locations throughout the state via the StoryMap at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/4152f4c0ed6841abb605e67f780378ea>.



Costal Cactus Wren – Photo by David Rein (Audubon Photography Awards 2015)

3. A news items I recently came across provided an update on the actions being taken to open up the Pacific Flyway Center in Suisun. This article was published in the Fairfield Daily Republic newspaper and was titled “Benicia emerges as new player in Pacific Flyway Center project.” You can read the latest Flyway Center developments at <https://www.dailyrepublic.com/all-dr-news/solano-news/fairfield/benicia-emerges-as-new-player-in-pacific-flyway-center-project/>.

- If you have ideas for what can be done to make the NSAS a better birding resource for our community or have Birding Notes and/or Pictures to share with the rest of the NSAS community, please send them to Tom Slyker at SolanoBirder@gmail.com.
- Be sure to check the calendar at the NSAS website (<http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/>) for meeting announcements and Field Trip updates.
- This is issue number 26 of Birding Notes. Past copies of Birding Notes are posted on the NSAS website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/>
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