



The Phoebe

Newsletter of the Sierra Foothills Audubon Society

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President's Corner

Rudy Darling, SFAS President

There are probably as many ways to enjoy birdwatching as there are birdwatchers. One of my favorites is the "Big Day." It is very much like a scavenger hunt. One goes out for as much of a 24-hour day as one can tolerate to attempt to find as many species as possible in a prescribed area (county, natural area, etc.). Even more grueling is the "Big Year." You guessed it – find as many species as one can in a prescribed area (county, state, North America, world). A variation is the photographic big year in which one attempts to photograph as many species in a year as possible. These can be quite solitary endeavors which I enjoy and – call me crazy – I have done all of them, but only on a county level (not quite as crazy now, eh?). Perhaps this is not your cup of tea (which is preferably well-caffeinated for a Big Day).

But many, including me, also enjoy birding with others. An enjoyable variation of a Big Day is the annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) which just concluded January 5 and is open to all interested individuals. One gets to spend a day in the field with other enthusiasts, and since it takes place near the winter solstice, the Big Day is not as big (9-10 hours) as a June Big Day (15-18 hours or more). Neither is the prescribed area as big (a circle 15 miles in diameter). However,

Continued on page 2

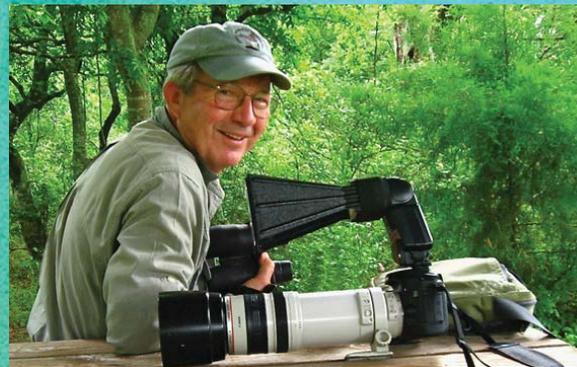
SFAS GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, February 6th at 7:00 pm
Beecher Room, Placer County Library
350 Nevada Street, Auburn CA



BIRDING THE FOUR SEASONS OF MONTANA

Join us at this month's meeting as ED HARPER takes us through Montana's varied seasons, sharing with us the great diversity of birds he has managed to photograph over many years of intensive coverage. Whether it is a majestic Gyrfalcon in winter or an Upland Sandpiper in summer, you will find a myriad of images that are not only pleasing to the eye, but also convey a wealth of information. Born and raised in Montana, Ed's vibrant passion for the Big Sky Country is clearly evident through his superb photography and informative narration. Bring a friend to share in this fine program.



Ed Harper was born in Montana where he developed his first interest in birds at the age of six. That passion has grown over the years to where he is now one of the leading birders in Montana shuttling back and forth between homes in Bozeman, MT and Carmichael, CA. In 1980 he started leading tours for the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Since then he has led many tours throughout the USA and Africa by way of his company, Sandpiper Journeys. An enthusiastic teacher, Ed taught both mathematics and birding classes over a period of 34 years at American River College in Sacramento. He is a past president of Sacramento Audubon Society, past board member of the Western Field Ornithologists, and currently serves on the Montana Bird Records Committee. As an accomplished photographer, Ed has photographed over 800 North American birds and countless more species on seven continents. Now fully retired, he is constantly afield with binoculars and camera.

the weather may not be as nice. It happens on the scheduled day regardless of snow, rain, shine, or wind, whatever nature throws at us. One is not looking just to find a large number of species (well, actually that is a big part of the fun of it), but to census every bird found in the area. This gives researchers a great database (since 1900) for research on species distribution and size during the December 14 – January 5 timeframe, taking observer effort and weather into account. Maybe this whole day of bird counting doesn't float your boat either, although some of the rainstorms we have been out in may float your boat away. In fact one year a storm did wash away one of the roads in the Grass Valley CBC, stranding counters on the wrong side and making them take the long way around.

What about data for other times of year? Since 1966 the USGS has been running a Breeding Bird Survey that tracks where species are breeding, primarily during June. Volunteer professional or skilled amateur birders follow prescribed routes during breeding season and note all birds present. Methods are very specific so that results can be compared from year to year. This may not be your bag, as most of us don't qualify or have the time required for such an endeavor. However, if you're into birds in bags or in the hand (and don't mind getting up early), check out volunteer opportunities with Gold Country Avian Studies (google it or go to their Facebook page) bird banding program. Well, if this doesn't frost your cake (there was plenty of frost at the banding station the



An unexpected backyard visitor like this Evening Grosbeak can be exciting
Photo by Rudy Darling

day I visited), there are plenty of other opportunities to enjoy birds and even to help citizen science programs.

This brings me to what I actually sat down to write about – the Great Backyard Bird Count. Many of us simply enjoy the birds that come into our backyards. This doesn't involve being sleep-deprived (go ahead – sleep in), getting out into the elements (just look out your window), coming home exhausted (after all, you're already home), counting species or number of individuals of each (but you can, if you want, create a yard list), or identifying them and hoping for something unusual to show up (though most of us enjoy that aspect at home as well). If you feed the birds, you DO have to buy the seed, put it in the feeders, and clean them – a minor nuisance at worst. If this describes you, the Great Backyard Bird Count may fill the bill, and the good thing is you don't even get a bill – it's free! Launched in 1998 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, the Great Backyard Bird Count was the first online citizen-science project to collect data on wild

birds and to display results in near real-time. Now, more than 160,000 people of all ages and walks of life worldwide join the four-day count each February to create an annual snapshot of the distribution and abundance of birds. And it's easy! For at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count, February 14-17, 2020 (President's Day weekend), simply tally the numbers and kinds of birds you see. You can count from any location, anywhere in the world, for as long as you wish. Then, just enter the results on their website (just google "Great Backyard Bird Count"). But why stop there? The data goes into the same system as e-Bird (ebird.org) where you can enter your data all year long – and you won't even have to leave your house if you don't want to.

But if getting out of your house flies your kite, join one of the many SFAS field trips listed in The Phoebe and on our website or Facebook page. You might even see a White-tailed Kite. Bird on dudes and dudettes! ... in whatever manner tickles your fancy. Now, I forget, where is my fancy? Is it even ticklish?



A White-tailed Kite seen on one of SFAS' field trips to Colusa NWR
Photo by Rudy Darling

Nevada County Conservation Report

□ Don Rivenes, Conservation Chair Nevada County

Audubon just released a new scientific report, *Survival by Degrees*, showing that 64 percent (389 out of 604) of North American bird species are at risk of extinction from climate change. The good news is our science also shows that if we take action now we can help improve the chances for 76 percent of species at risk. We know what to do to protect the birds we love and the places we all need now and in the future.

In the West, we're already dealing with a multi-decade historic drought and longer, more intense fire seasons. Climate change threatens western water resources and some researchers are calling our new reality "aridification." Overall, the West has experienced increases in the severity and length of droughts over the past 50 years, taking a toll on water supplies.

Climate change not only alters the quantity of flows, but also the timing. Rising temperatures in the winter cause more precipitation to fall as rain rather than snow in mountainous areas from Colorado to California. Furthermore, warming temperatures are causing snow to melt earlier in the spring, altering the timing of streamflow in headwaters rivers.

It's essential that we curb carbon emissions to limit temperature increases and work proactively, doubling down on conservation practices, so that these already stressed water ecosystems can sustain life in the arid West for decades to come.

How were the species evaluated? Audubon scientists analyzed 140 million bird records, including

observational data from bird lovers and field biologists across the country, to assess vulnerability for species based on the amount of a species' range that may be gained or lost with climate change. Audubon designated species that may lose much more range across North America than they have potential to gain as climate vulnerable. Sources for this report include eBird, U.S. Geological Survey, North American Breeding Bird Survey, and Global Biodiversity Information Facility.

What does this mean for bird species in the arid West? It should come as no surprise that western forests are one of habitat groups with the most threatened bird species in warming scenarios. As temperatures increase, drought, extreme heat, and fire will become more intense, more widespread, and more devastating across the West. This has implications for water quality and watershed health and will affect both birds and people.

Two examples of birds associated with Western Water priority freshwater and saline lakes habitats that are highlight climate vulnerable in Audubon's report are Yellow Warbler and Long-billed Curlew. The bright, sweet song of the Yellow Warbler is a familiar sound in streamside willows across the West. Long-billed Curlews are often found around emergent wetlands and marsh, as well as using agricultural fields where nesting and brood-rearing take place in pastures and hay meadows.

Of the birds listed as vulnerable, there are distinctions between those that would respond favorably if we limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (versus 3 degrees C) and would benefit from our actions: Yellow Warbler (High vulnerability in 3 degrees C warming scenario, moderate in summer at both 2 and 3 C); Long-billed Curlew (High vulnerability rangewide in summer at 3 C, moderate at 1.5 and 2 C)

One key takeaway is that if we reduce emissions by 2050 and hold warming to 1.5 C, we expect 38 percent of the species would come off the climate vulnerable list.

What are the best ways to help birds (and people) in the West?

- Improve resiliency for healthy watersheds (rivers, wetlands, and lakes);
 - Increase reliability of our water supply (now and in the future) through planning and cooperative, multi-benefit agreements among stakeholders;
 - Fund conservation and clean energy measures at the local, state, and federal levels (ask your elected officials to expand conservation funding and clean energy development in your community);
 - Restore and protect priority habitats;
 - Manage water comprehensively with an understanding of the connections between surface water and groundwater, and more.
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Field Journal

For field trip updates, changes or cancellations check <http://sierrafoothillsaudubon.org/>
Our field trips are free. Carpooling drivers appreciate participants offering to share fuel costs

Bird Walk for Beginners - Traylor Ranch, Penryn

Saturday, January 11, 2020

9:00 - 11:00 AM

Leader: Howard Williams oldbackpacker@me.com

Meet in the parking lot off Humphrey Road at the southeast corner of Traylor Ranch Nature Reserve and Bird Sanctuary in Penryn. Note: the address for the Reserve is different. This trip is intended for beginners, but experienced birders are welcome and add to the experience for all. Traylor Ranch affords an opportunity to see the resident species of the lower foothills and valley floor, usually twenty or more different species. We'll spend about two hours and walk a little more than a mile. Come on out, bring your binoculars and help us find some birds. The more eyes and ears, the more birds we'll see. Here's the Placer Co. web site for Traylor Ranch: <http://www.placer.ca.gov/departments/facility/parks/parks-content/parks/traylor-ranch-nature-reserve>

Bird Walk at South Yuba State Park at Bridgeport

Saturday, January 11, 2020

8:00 - 10:00 AM

Leaders: Bob Slyker bgsly@aol.com Carol & Bruce Malnor (530-263-9392) cmalnor@comcast.net

Meet at Bridgeport's north parking lot (just over the highway bridge) on Pleasant Valley Road. Easy walking on a wooded trail along the river. We anticipate seeing species common to an oak woodland/riparian ecosystem such as Oak Titmouse, Black Phoebe, Bewick's Wren, Hermit Thrush, White-crowned Sparrow, Nuttall's Woodpecker and possibly an American Dipper and/or Bald Eagle. Please contact leaders if the weather is questionable.

Beginner's Bird Walk - Traylor Ranch, Penryn

Saturday, January 18, 2020

9:30 - 11:30 AM

Leader: Heath Wakelee 916-870-5253 hwakelee@gmail.com Meet in the parking lot off Humphrey Rd. at the south-east corner of Traylor Ranch Nature Reserve. Note: the address for the Reserve is 5050 English Colony Road in Penryn. Humphrey Road borders the Reserve. Please call or write Heath if you need additional information. Bring water, a snack, warm clothes if warranted and a positive attitude, we will see a lot of great birds. Traylor Ranch affords an opportunity to see the resident species of the lower foothills and valley floor, usually twenty or more different species. We'll spend about two hours and walk a little more than a mile on dirt/grass trails. Please contact Heath if the weather is questionable.

Bird Walk For Beginners In Grass Valley

Sunday, January 19, 2020

8:00 - 10:00 AM

Leader: Dan Stewart 530-265-4677 dcstew@outlook.com

This walk is designed for beginners, but more skilled birders are helpful and welcome. We'll talk about binoculars, how and where to find birds, what to look for when you find one. We meet in the parking lot of the Briar Patch Market on Sierra College Drive in Grass Valley. We walk for a little less than two miles and it usually takes about two hours. Fifteen to twenty different species are almost guaranteed, especially with enough sharp eyes and ears. It's a nice walk up over the hill at Sierra College and back to the Briar Patch. Come on out and help us find and identify some birds. Please contact Dan if the weather is questionable.

City of Lincoln Wastewater Treatment Facility

Tuesday, January 21, 2020

9:30 - 11:30 AM

Leader: Heath Wakelee 916-870-5253 hwakelee@gmail.com

Meet at the City of Lincoln Wastewater Treatment Facility, 1245 Fiddymont Road, Lincoln, CA 95648 Phone: (916) 434-2450.

We will meet in their parking lot just inside the gate. Each car has to sign in and out at the facility. This will be primarily a car birding trip so those with access and functional needs are welcome to attend. We should see a full compliment of our winter water birds such as: Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Ruddy Duck, Ring-necked Duck, Canvasback, Mallard, American Coot, Pied-billed Grebe, Great-blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, and even a Bald Eagle is possible. Please contact Heath if the weather is questionable.

Bird Walk at South Yuba State Park at Bridgeport

Friday, January 24, 2020

8:00 - 10:00 AM

Leader: Sylvia Wright, Sylvia.L.Wright.1@gmail.com 530-379-5124

Meet at Bridgeport's north parking lot (just across the highway bridge) on Pleasant Valley Road. Easy walking on a wooded trail and along Kentucky Creek and the Yuba River. Dress warmly. We anticipate seeing species common to an oak woodland/riparian ecosystem such as Oak Titmouse, Black Phoebe, Bewick's Wren, Hermit Thrush, White-crowned Sparrow, Nuttall's Woodpecker and possibly an American Dipper and/or Bald Eagle. Please contact Sylvia if the weather is questionable.

Colusa National Wildlife Refuge

Saturday February 1, 2020

8:00AM-3:00PM

Leaders: Dale Rubach 530-272-3698 rubby7676-birds@yahoo.com

Meet at the park and ride at Pleasant Valley Road and Hwy 20 to carpool. We will first visit the District 10 rice fields on Woodruff Lane, north of Marysville, to see the concentrations of Tundra Swans. We will then return to Highway 20 and head across the valley to Colusa NWR where we should see large numbers of waterfowl with easy viewing, along with raptors, shorebirds and songbirds. Bring a lunch, and something to drink. Birding will mainly be from cars with one or two short walks on level ground. Please call to reserve a place, and contact leader if weather is questionable. All levels of birders are welcome.

Bird Walk at South Yuba State Park at Bridgeport

Saturday, February 8, 2020

8:00 - 10:00 AM

Leaders: Bob Slyker (530-205-9011) bgsly@aol.com Carol and Bruce Malnor (530-263-9392) cmalnor@comcast.net

Meet at Bridgeport's north parking lot (just across the highway bridge) on Pleasant Valley Road. Easy walking on a wooded trail and along Kentucky Creek and the Yuba River. Dress warmly. We will see species common to an oak woodland/riparian habitat, such as California Quail, Lark Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Black Phoebe, California Towhee, and Acorn Woodpecker. There's a possibility of seeing Bald Eagle and American Dipper. Please contact Bob or Carol if the weather is questionable.

Bird Walk for Beginners - Traylor Ranch, Penryn

Saturday, February 8, 2020

9:00-11:00 AM

Leader: Howard Williams oldbackpacker@me.com

Meet in the parking lot off Humphrey Road at the southeast corner of Traylor Ranch Nature Reserve and Bird Sanctuary in Penryn. Note: the address for the Reserve is different. See January 11, 2020 listing for trip description. Please contact leader if the weather is questionable.

Beginner's Bird Walk - Traylor Ranch, Penryn

Thursday February 13, 2020

9:30-11:30AM

Leader: Heath Wakelee 916-870-5253 hwakelee@gmail.com

Meet in the parking lot off Humphrey Road at the southeast corner of Traylor Ranch Nature Reserve

and Bird Sanctuary in Penryn. Note: the address for the Reserve is different. See January 18, 2020 listing for trip description. Please contact leader if the weather is questionable.

Lake-of-the-Pines Wastewater Plant

Saturday February 15, 2020
8:00 – 11:00 AM

Leaders: Ted Beedy and Rudy Darling (530-272-6504, rdarling@sbbmail.com)

Short drive, easy walking. Meet at the CVS parking lot at the corner of Hwy 49 and Combie Road. This trip is held in conjunction with Ted Beedy's Sierra College Kaleidoscope class, but is open to all. The LOP WWTP is probably the closest thing to a wetland refuge in western Nevada County with its ponds and Magnolia Creek bordered by oak woodlands and pastures. Expect waterfowl, wading birds, and winter songbirds. Call if in doubt about weather cancellation.

Bird Walk For Beginners In Grass Valley

Sunday, February 16, 2020
8:00-10:00 AM

Leader: Dan Stewart 530-265-4677 dcstew@outlook.com

Meet in the Briar Patch parking lot at 8:00AM. See January 19, 2020 listing for trip description. Please contact Dan if the weather is questionable.

City of Lincoln Wastewater Treatment Facility

Tuesday, February 25, 2020
9:30 - 11:30AM

Leader: Heath Wakelee 916-870-5253 hwakelee@gmail.com

Meet at the City of Lincoln Wastewater Treatment Facility, 1245 Fiddyment Road, Lincoln, CA 95648 Phone: (916) 434-2450.

We will meet in their parking lot just inside the gate. Each car has to sign in and out at the facility. This will be primarily a car birding trip so those with access and functional needs are welcome to attend. We should see a full compliment of our winter water birds such as: Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Ruddy Duck, Ring-necked Duck, Canvasback, Mallard, American Coot, Pied-billed Grebe, Great-blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, and even a Bald Eagle is possible. Please contact Heath if the weather is questionable.

Bird Walk at South Yuba State Park at Bridgeport

Friday, February 28, 2020
8:00 – 10:00 AM

Leader: Sylvia Wright, sylvia.L.Wright.1@gmail.com 530-379-5124

Meet at Bridgeport's north parking lot (just across the highway bridge) on Pleasant Valley Road. Easy walking on a wooded trail and along Kentucky Creek and the Yuba River. Dress warmly. We will see species common to an oak woodland/riparian habitat, such as California Quail, Lark Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Black Phoebe, California Towhee, and Acorn Woodpecker. There's a possibility of seeing Bald Eagle and American Dipper. Please contact the Sylvia if the weather is questionable

Beginner's Bird Walk – Traylor Ranch, Penryn

Saturday March 7, 2020
9:30-11:30AM

Leader: Heath Wakelee 916-870-5253 hwakelee@gmail.com

Meet in the parking lot off Humphrey Road at the southeast corner of Traylor Ranch Nature Reserve and Bird Sanctuary in Penryn. Note: the address for the Reserve is different. See January 18, 2020 listing for trip description. Please contact leader if the weather is questionable.

Bird Walk for Beginners - Traylor Ranch, Penryn

Saturday, March 14, 2020
9:00-11:00 AM

Leader: Howard Williams oldbackpacker@me.com

Meet in the parking lot off Humphrey Road at the southeast corner of Traylor Ranch Nature Reserve and Bird Sanctuary in Penryn. Note: the address for the Reserve is different. See January 11, 2020 listing for trip description. Please contact leader if the weather is questionable.

Bird Walk at South Yuba River State Park at Bridgeport

Saturday, March 14, 2019
8:00-10:00 AM

Leaders: Bob Slyker 530-205-9011 bgsly@aol.com Carol and Bruce Malnor (530-263-9392) cmalnor@comcast.net

Meet at Bridgeport's north parking lot (just across the highway bridge) on Pleasant Valley Road. Easy walking on a wooded trail and along Kentucky Creek and the Yuba River. Dress warmly. We will see species common to an oak woodland/riparian habitat, such as

Lark Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Black Phoebe, California Towhee, and Northern Rough-winged Swallow. There's a possibility of seeing an American Dipper.

Please contact Bob or Carol if the weather is questionable.

Bird Walk For Beginners In Grass Valley

Sunday, March 15, 2020
8:00-10:00 AM

Leader: Dan Stewart 530-265-4677 dcstew@outlook.com

Meet in the Briar Patch parking lot at 8:00AM. See January 19, 2020 listing for trip description. Please contact Dan if the weather is questionable.

City of Lincoln Wastewater Treatment Facility

Thursday, March 19, 2020
9:30-11:30AM

Leader: Heath Wakelee 916-870-5253 hwakelee@gmail.com

Meet at the City of Lincoln Wastewater Treatment Facility, 1245 Fiddyment Road, Lincoln, CA 95648 Phone: (916) 434-2450.

We will meet in their parking lot just inside the gate. Each car has to sign in and out at the facility. This will be primarily a car birding trip so those with access and functional needs are welcome to attend. We should see some winter water birds such as: Northern Shoveler, Ruddy Duck, Mallard, American Coot, Pied-billed Grebe, Great-blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, and even a Bald Eagle is possible. Please contact Heath if the weather is questionable.

Bird Walk at South Yuba River State Park at Bridgeport

Friday March 27, 2019
8:00 – 10:00 AM

Leader: Sylvia Wright, sylvia.L.Wright.1@gmail.com 530-379-5124

Meet at Bridgeport's north parking lot (just across the highway bridge) on Pleasant Valley Road. Easy walking on a wooded trail and along Kentucky Creek and the Yuba River. We will see species common to an oak woodland/riparian habitat, such as Lark Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Black Phoebe, California Towhee, and Northern Rough-winged Swallow. There's a possibility of seeing an American Dipper. Please contact Sylvia if the weather is questionable.

Rice Farming and Wildlife in the Sacramento Valley

The Author: Luke Matthews is the Wildlife Programs Manager at the California Rice Commission and provides technical assistance to the California Ricelands Waterbird Foundation. Matthews received both his B.S. in Wildlife, Fish, and Conservation Biology and his M.S. in Waterfowl Biology at the University of California, Davis.

The California Rice Commission (Commission) represents all rice growers in California. The Commission manages all policy, environmental quality, and wildlife issues for the entire rice industry. A vast majority of rice grown in California is produced right here in the Sacramento Valley. In fact, annually there are approximately 520,000 acres of rice planted. While California is not the largest rice producing region in the nation, the Sacramento Valley has the highest yielding rice crops anywhere in the world and grows essentially all of our nation's sushi rice.

California's rice fields provide economic benefits to our state while those same fields contribute to the status of the Sacramento Valley as one of the major winter migration stopping areas within the Pacific Flyway. When rice fields are flooded after harvest, they become surrogate wetlands and provide a majority of the wetland habitat needed by the 7-10 million migratory waterbirds that heavily rely on our region during the winter. California's rice fields and wetlands are designated as a Site of International Importance by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network. In addition to the benefits realized from the surrogate wetlands from post-harvest flooding, waste grain from our rice crops provides a massive food source for wintering and resident waterfowl. In fact, rice alone provides over 60% on the nutrient needs for waterfowl in the Central Valley. Without this critical habitat and food provided by rice growers the Sacramento Valley would not be able to support the millions of migratory birds it currently hosts.

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Welcome New Members

Auburn:	Karen Bleuel Bill Becker Jean Piette Dana Smith Saugstad Patricia Ruud
Camptonville:	Monica Murgia
Cedar Ridge:	Gunther Wagner
Colfax:	Ken Ross
Grass Valley:	Debora Hufford Rebecca Sass Amy Patterson Josiah Legler Thomas Osypowski Connie Tingle Micki Malone Bobbi Navickis Wilkes Vickie Gutierrez
Lincoln:	Christina Fox Roald Waraas B. Clift
Meadow Vista:	Denise Pavelko Betty Faucette
Nevada City:	Mary Cuneo Cindy Lazzareschi Syd Brown Glenda Brooks
Newcastle:	Barbara Kiesewetter
Rocklin:	Clifford Todd Swaminathan Vasudevan Deanna Gove
Rough & Ready:	Tony Peard
Truckee:	Catherine Valle Bob Long Chandler Bertoli Susan Williams
Yuba City:	Linda Hornstein Kathleen Caldwell Richard Hutton

The Commission has worked to develop numerous wildlife programs for the last 20 years. We often partner with a wide range of non-profit wildlife conservation organizations and state and federal agencies. Using these partnerships, the Commission is able help develop and manage wildlife programs on ricelands. Since 2011 the commission has helped deploy nearly \$28 million of federal funding onto California ricelands for the benefit of wildlife. The vast majority of these funds have been used for incentive payments to rice farmers who are willing to alter their farm operations for the benefit of waterbirds. In order to continue these efforts, the Commission has led a group of 13 partners, including Audubon California, to submit a \$10 million grant request to the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) in early December. If we are awarded this funding, the Commission and its partners will work with rice farmers to enhance the value of their farms for wildlife. These enhancements include providing flooded shorebird and waterfowl habitat, creating nesting cover for local waterfowl, and planting native forbs to provide habitat for pollinators and upland birds.

In addition to our habitat work at the Commission we also operate habitat programs through the California Ricelands Waterbird Foundation (Foundation) calricewaterbirds.org. Paul Buttner, the Manager of Environmental Affairs at the Commission started the Foundation in 2015. The purpose of the Foundation is to enable interested donors to make tax deductible contributions to benefit birds and other wildlife. Such donations can also be used as match funding to secure more federal money for our wildlife related work on ricelands. Shortly after its creation, the Foundation began partnering with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to cost effectively deploy our donor funding on the ground on habitat programs. The mechanism we chose to use was a program called BirdReturns. Between 2015 and 2018 the Foundation supported TNC's program and was responsible for the enhancement of over 3,000 acres of critical shorebird habitat through BirdReturns.

Over the years the Foundation has grown and developed. The Foundation is finally at a point where we will be administering our own habitat programs. This Spring the Foundation is launching its first habitat program called Bid4Birds. This program, much like BirdReturns, will provide critical shallow flooded habitat for migrating shorebirds when it is most needed on the landscape. The first round of Bid4Birds contracts will provide habitat from mid-February to April, targeting late season migrants in the Pacific Flyway. During these months most post-harvest flooded rice fields and managed wetlands are drying out which means providing a source of water for migrating waterbirds is more important than ever.

SFAS Officers, Board and Committee Chairs

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Theresa Thomas (2)
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Heath Wakelee (2)
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Appointed each year

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The Phoebe is published five times per year on or about the first of January, March, May, September and November. Newsletter submissions are due by the 10th of each month preceding newsletter publication.



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The mission of the Sierra Foothills Audubon Society is to educate ourselves and others to the variety and the beauty of our natural environment and to protect our wildlife and natural places



Become a SFAS Member

Two levels of membership are available: SFAS Chapter Membership is \$20 annually and includes a subscription to The Phoebe newsletter and an invitation to the many chapter activities. For \$200 you receive a lifetime membership in the chapter. Send a check payable to Sierra Foothills Audubon Society, P.O. Box 1937, Grass Valley, CA 95945.

An introductory membership to the National Audubon Society is \$20 and includes automatic membership in the local SFAS chapter. Subscription to NAS includes the bi-monthly NAS Audubon Magazine and the SFAS Phoebe newsletter. Send a check payable to NAS, Membership Dept, PO Box 97194, Washington, DC 20090-7194. Or you can join online at www.audubon.org and click on "JOIN." For more information, contact Kate Brennan at 530-268-1682.