



The Phoebe

Newsletter of the Sierra Foothills Audubon Society

Volume 39 Number 5 • November - December, 2018

President's Corner

Rudy Darling, SFAS President

I was outside working a couple of weeks ago (defensible space clearing, if you must know) when I heard a faint bird sound in the distance. I waited for a repeat, but when none came, I passed it off as one of the varied sounds of the local raven family. The next day again found me doing battle with those pesky bushes and trees (did more of them grow up during the night?), and again I heard that distant prehistoric sound. This time it was repeated, then was joined by others, high in the sky. Fall had arrived! Soon a group of six Sandhill Cranes came into view and headed off to the southwest. Over the next couple of weeks, daily flocks of up to 100 cranes passed overhead, heading for their favorite wintering spots in the Central Valley. It got me to thinking about how my perception of the changes of the seasons is tied more into the avian calendar than to the one on the wall.

To me spring begins not on March 21, but when the first migrants, usually Orange-crowned Warblers in my neighborhood, arrive back from their winter vacations in warmer climes. Before long I hear a Pacific-slope Flycatcher whistling for a taxi down by the creek. As far as I know, no taxi ever arrived, but he did eventually attract a mate. When the first Black-headed Grosbeaks show up at the feeder, I know spring is here to stay. Soon the woods are full of bird song and birds in their feathery finest perch in plain view for a change.

Continued on page 2

SFAS GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, December 6, 2018 at 7:00 pm
Community Room, Madelyn Helling Library
Nevada County Government Center, Nevada City

Cranes, Cranes, Cranes



Photo by: Rudy Darling

Why We Love Watching Sandhill Cranes

Across the world, cranes are revered by many cultures - including our own. So what makes cranes so special? This program combines video footage, photos with research results and personal anecdotes to introduce you to Sandhill Cranes to help you understand their life history and the physical and behavioral characteristics that make them special. Our presenter, Paul Tebbel, has spent over 40 years of his life watching, researching and learning about cranes. This program is suitable for all age audiences, especially those just learning about cranes.

Please join crane expert Paul Tebbel for a 2.5 hour tour of the north Delta to find and observe sandhill cranes on Saturday December 8th from 12:30 - 7:00 pm.
See page 4 for details...



Orange-crowned Warbler

Photo by Rudy Darling

After the birds spend a brief frenetic period of nest building, feeding the bottomless pits of the young, fledging, etc., I suddenly realize that the woods are pretty darn quiet. Summer has begun. Bird families are out fattening up for migration or winter. Many leave the area as soon as the young are self-sufficient. At higher elevations, activity continues, for most birds up there have to wait for the snow to melt and insects to emerge before they can successfully raise a family. It's a good time to bird the summit areas and the east side

of the Sierra. As summer progresses, migrants from up north start to pass through as early as late July, especially near the east side lakes. Shorebirds, waterfowl, raptors, gulls, terns, even jaegers make brief appearances.

In fall the migration picks up after what I consider the summer doldrums of birding – many breeders have left and winter birds haven't yet arrived. Migration is the time when you never know what might show up, like the male Ruby-throated Hummingbird that visited my feeder for nine days one year. But for me, fall really begins when I hear the Sandhill Cranes passing overhead. Wintering visitors start showing up – waterfowl, White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Cedar Waxwings, Varied Thrushes, Lewis' Woodpeckers, etc. The Central Valley birding list-serve is full of enthusiastic reports of rare shorebirds and passerines. Northern Shrikes occasionally pop up here and there.



Sandhill Cranes

Photo by John Kimura

Fall is an exciting time of flux and surprises.

Things settle down somewhat in winter, but huge numbers of waterfowl amass in the Central Valley for one of the nation's greatest avian spectacles.



Sandhill Cranes

Photo by Rudy Darling

To me, winter officially begins with my first Christmas Bird Count, usually the Auburn Count on the first Saturday of the count period (Dec. 14 – Jan. 5). My last count is the Grass Valley CBC, typically on the last Saturday of the count period (Jan. 5 this year). For a list of all the California CBCs' dates and contact persons, visit <http://www.natureali.org/cbcs.htm> on the web. It's a fun way to participate in citizen science, get to learn more about birds, meet new people, and for those of us who don't know better, it's an acceptable way to lose sleep by getting out at 4:00 to commune with owls before dawn. My avian calendar goes 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. I sure wish this old body did, too ...

ZZZZZZZZZ.

A report from Audubon California on ground water

Making sure that water under the ground helps birds above the ground

By Garrison Frost

"It's clear that the ramifications of our decisions on groundwater are going to stretch decades into the future, and what we do now will really matter."

Spending a lot of time in the San Joaquin Valley in recent years, Audubon California's Samantha Arthur has seen the toll that drought and the subsequent California water wars have taken on the few remaining wetlands.

"It's tough to see a place that should be full of water, teeming with ducks and geese, just dry as a bone, lifeless," she says.

Although the plight of California's public and private Central Valley wetlands has many causes, one of them has been the massive overdrafting of groundwater in recent years. Many refuges – cut off from natural rivers – rely on groundwater pumping, and yet can't compete with neighbors with the resources to drill deeper or pay the high costs to run the pumps. Moreover, the incredible subsidence of the valley floor in recent years has upset the flow of many canals that refuges depend on to deliver water.

Thankfully, in 2014, the state of California finally passed a law requiring the local watersheds to start using groundwater sustainably. But Arthur and the rest of the Working Lands team are realizing that this has big implications for birds and habitat.

"We knew the law was a big deal,

but I don't think we understood the implications for our work right away," Arthur recalls. "Now it's clear that the ramifications of this are going to stretch decades into the future, and what we do now will really matter.

Arthur is working closely with our partners on the Migratory Bird Conservation Partnership -- Point Blue Conservation Science and The Nature Conservancy -- to ensure that discussions around groundwater take into account the need for bird habitat.

State law requires the formation of local Groundwater Sustainability Agencies that will allocate groundwater use, and if wetlands and habitat-friendly crops are left out of this discussion, birds could suffer. These Agencies could eliminate or severely limit the amount of water that these habitats receive – water that is needed to create the food, nesting and resting areas these birds rely on. The flip side of this threat is that there may also be opportunities to benefit birds, as these local agencies plan for winter flooding to recharge groundwater, that could create new habitat opportunities if done right.

"This is not unlike the situation with renewable energy," where the overall goal of the program makes a lot of sense, but that it's incredibly important that someone represent the voice of birds."

The challenge for Audubon California and its partners is that

these Groundwater Sustainability Agencies don't meet in Sacramento. Instead, they're scattered throughout the Valley, meaning that engagement is time-intensive and highly individualized for each agency. Audubon California is currently targeting groundwater basins in the San Joaquin Valley where overdraft is most severe and wetlands are most at-risk. The state also requires these critical overdraft basins to complete sustainability plans two years earlier than the rest of the basins.

"There could come a time when the issues boil up to Sacramento and are addressed by the Administration or a new bill, but right now, we've got to speak up for birds, one agency at a time," Arthur says. Arthur's experience with groundwater embodies the approach of Audubon California's Working Lands Program, which is to work locally within the community of farmers and ranchers to create and protect habitat opportunities for birds.

SFAS Calendar

2018 Board Meetings - 7:00 p.m.
2018 Membership Meetings - 7:00 p.m.
A general meeting will be held the first Thursday of every second month:
February 1, 2018, April 5, 2018, June 7, 2018, October 4, 2018 and December 6, 2018

For meeting updates please visit
www.sierrafoothillsaudubon.org

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, November 3, 2018

8:00-10:00 AM

Leader: Bill Covington 916-645-0727

Meet at 8:00 AM 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 5050 English Colony Road in Penryn. 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 For Beginners In Grass Valley

Sunday, November 18, 2018

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 at 8:00 AM 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.

COLUSA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE/SUTTER BUTTES

Saturday, November 24, 2018

8:00AM - 5: 00PM

Leader: Ted Beedy

We always schedule this trip in late November

to maximize our chances of seeing large concentrations of waterfowl and other water birds wintering in the Central Valley. Colusa National Wildlife Refuge is among the best places to view this great, annual spectacle. We should see more than 100,000 geese and ducks, and on past trips we have identified more than 80 species of birds. We will also drive around the Sutter Buttes to look for raptors, songbirds, and Sandhill Cranes, and we'll go from there to District 10 north of Marysville to see thousands of Tundra Swans, White-faced Ibis, and myriad other waterfowl as the sun sets over the Buttes. Bring a lunch & something to drink, and wear warm clothes and bring a raincoat if the weather is wet and cold—the trip is on, rain or shine. Meet at the Park & Ride at the intersection of Highway 20 and Pleasant Valley Road at 8:00 am, and we will carpool from there. We'll get back to Grass Valley at about 5 pm, estimated driving time is 1.5 hours each way. Please pre-register at least a week before the trip by contacting me at 530-274-7232 or tbeedy@comcast.net

Bird Walk for Beginners - Traylor Ranch, Penryn

Saturday, December 1, 2018

8:00-10:00 AM

Leader: Bill Covington 916-645-0727

Meet at 8:00 AM in the parking lot off Humphrey Rd. at the south- east corner of Traylor Ranch Nature Reserve and Bird Sanctuary in Penryn. Note: the address for the Reserve is 5050 English Colony Road in Penryn. See November 3, 2018 listing for trip description.

Bridgeport at South Yuba State Park

Saturday, December 8, 2018

8:00-10:00 AM

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

Meet at Bridgeport's north parking lot (just over the highway bridge) on Pleasant Valley Rd. Easy walking on a wooded trail and along the river. We will see species common to an oak woodland/riparian ecosystem, such as Oak Titmouse, Black Phoebe, Cedar Waxwing, Hermit Thrush, White-crowned Sparrow, Acorn Woodpeckers, and possibly a Bald Eagle.

North Delta

Saturday December 8, 12:30-7:00PM

Join crane expert Paul Tebbel for a 2.5 hour tour of the north Delta to find and observe sandhill cranes. We will meet at the Rood Government Center in Nevada City to form carpools before driving the two hours to the Delta. Once there we will locate and observe cranes in and around the Cosumnes River Preserve before moving to a good location to observe cranes returning to shallow water to roost for the night. We will see both subspecies of sandhill cranes, cackling geese, greater white-fronted geese, possibly tundra swans and other wintering water birds. Participants should bring binoculars, folding chairs, appropriate clothing for cooler weather by sunset, and their own munchies and drinks for the afternoon.

Bird Walk For Beginners In Grass Valley

Sunday, December 16, 2018

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 November 18, 2018 listing for trip description.

Bird Walk for Beginners - Traylor Ranch, Penryn

Saturday, January 5, 2019

8:00-10:00 AM

Leader: Bill Covington 916-645-0727

Meet at 8:00 AM in the parking lot off Humphrey Rd. at the south- east corner of Traylor Ranch Nature Reserve and Bird Sanctuary in Penryn. Note: the address for the Reserve is 5050 English Colony Road in Penryn. See November 3, 2018 listing for trip description.

Bridgeport at South Yuba State Park

Saturday, January 12, 2019

8:00 - 10:00 AM

Leaders: Bob Slyker & Carol and Bruce Malnor bgsly@aol.com & 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

and 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.

Sierra Valley

Wednesday, January 16, 2019
7:00 AM to ?
Leader: Dale Rubach 530-272-3698
rugby7676-birds@yahoo.com

Sierra Valley is a unique and exciting area. It is located on the east slope of the Sierra Nevada mountains encircled by the towns of Sierraville, Loyalton and Portola. In winter it is the home to many raptors including: Red-tailed Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Prairie Falcon, and both species of Eagles. It is also home for many passerine species like; White-headed Woodpecker, Townsend's Solitaire, Pygmy Nuthatch and Mountain Chickadee. We will carpool from the Nevada County Government Center (Rood Center) at 950 Maidu Ave, Nevada City. A four wheel drive vehicle is recommended for this trip. All levels of birders are welcome. We will bird mainly from cars with one or two short walks on level ground. Inclement weather will cancel. Call or e-mail to reserve a spot. If weather looks questionable please call the evening before for an update. Bring drink, food and warm clothes. This is an all day trip.

Bird Walk For Beginners In Grass Valley

Sunday, January 20, 2019
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 November 18, 2018 listing for trip description.

Donation to SFAS

Sierra Foothills Audubon Society welcomes gifts and bequests for specific conservation projects or the general operation of SFAS. They can also be memorial gifts to honor a friend or relative. All gifts will be recognized in *The Phoebe* as well as personally on behalf of SFAS.

Mail gifts to:
Sierra Foothills Audubon Society
P.O. Box 1937
Grass Valley, CA 95945

All gifts are tax deductible



Do you love birds or birdwatching?

Want to see wild songbirds up close, in hand?



Join Gold Country Avian Studies and Bear Yuba Land Trust in our effort to better understand local bird populations through bird-banding research.

We are seeking bird-banding volunteers at Empire Mine State Historic Park who can contribute 2 or more days per month for 6-7 hours (starting before sunrise), and can make at least a one-year commitment to the program.

Previous bird-banding or handling experience preferred but not necessary. Volunteers will be trained in bird handling, capture, banding, ageing, species identification, and other techniques. Persons of all physical abilities are welcome but the program does involve a considerable amount of walking on uneven ground.

We are also seeking data-entry volunteers!



For more information, please contact:
director@goldcountryavianstudies.org



Landscaping for the Birds

By Kate Brennan

I have a passion for gardening. I have a passion for birds. Wow, what can I do with those two passions?? GARDEN FOR THE BIRDS, WHAT ELSE?!

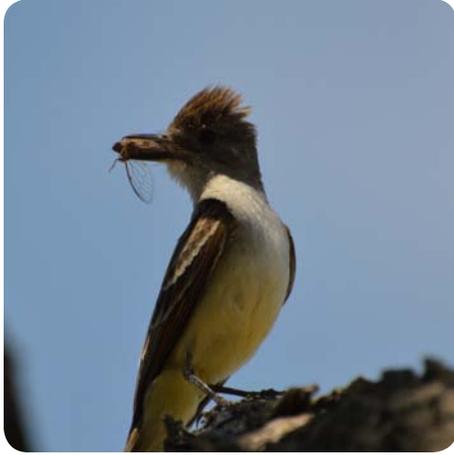


Photo by Patricia Clark

So, everyone these days, well, the experts like Audubon Society, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, CA Native Plant Society, and others, are all stressing the importance of creating native habitat by using CA native plants for landscaping. In doing so, you are creating habitat for native insects, birds, and mammals, and you can do it by keeping the natives you already have and already enjoy on your property, and augmenting that with natives you never knew could be so beautiful. For more on this, you could read Doug Tallamy's book *Bringing Nature Home*. It is a short, quick read that will change the way you think about landscaping your property.

If you love birds and want to help them in this time of drought and climate change, think about what role plants play in a bird's life. Plants like shrubs and grasses provide cover when a bird needs to escape a predator. Shrubs like elderberry, toyon, coffeeberry, and currant (various *Ribes* species) provide not only emergency shelter, but nesting sites and BERRIES in the fall and winter when other food is scarce. Plus native plants attract BUGS, and birds need

lots and lots of bugs in the spring when they are feeding their young. A typical songbird, let's say a Western Bluebird, may have a nest with 5 young in it, and after about a week they have a voracious appetite and the parents must bring about 500 bugs per day in order to provide the protein to meet the babies daily needs. The parents are looking for caterpillars, moths, dragonflies, beetles, etc. and these bugs have to be in close proximity to the nest site. I'm exhausted just thinking about it. So, once again, a plea for native plants in your garden because they will host native bugs, and the birds evolved right alongside those native plants and bugs. In this way the birds become a form of natural pest control.

One other thing that really helps attract birds is having a water supply. It can be as simple as a bird bath, but a running stream or pond is pretty wonderful too. I have a little Zen fountain on a table on my deck, and I frequently see nuthatches and titmice (and squirrels) sipping out of it.

And the last really important piece of infrastructure is nesting sites. Quite a number of our local birds use holes in trees as nest sites. However, invasive species such as the European Starling and English Sparrow, who are much more aggressive than our songbirds, have usurped many of those natural cavities. So when you have the opportunity to save an old dead tree, one that is in no danger of landing on you, your house, or your car, let it stand. It may host one of these species of local cavity nesters: Oak Titmouse, Tree Swallow, Western Bluebird, Nuthatch, Ash-throated Flycatcher (that's one in the photo with the Laceywing), or the House Wren. I kept an old dead willow trunk about 10 feet from my back door (in photo with Ash-throated Flycatcher) for many years. That trunk, over a 3-5 year span, hosted nests of Western Bluebird, Red-breasted

Sapsucker, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Ash-throated Flycatcher, and the dreaded European Starling. I took it down once the Starlings moved in, because there would be no getting rid of them.

And last, and maybe most importantly, reduce pesticide and herbicide use. If you absolutely must use such products, read the label and do the research so you are using the least toxic substance necessary and applying the chemical exactly as prescribed on the label, and please apply them at a time of day when insects, especially bees, are not yet active (cold, early morning).

By introducing more and more native plants into your landscaping and providing additional infrastructure mentioned above, you could see your yard come alive with birds.

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. 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 SFAS Chapter Membership, subscriptions to the bi-monthly *NAS Audubon Magazine* and *Phoebe* newsletter from SFAS. Send a check payable to NAS Membership Department, P.O. Box 422250, Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250. Please write C1ZC460Z in the memo section of your check. For more information contact Dan Stewart at (530) 265-4677.

Education Committee Report

By Kate Brennan & Jim Groeser

2018 Bluebird Trails Report By Kate Brennan

Well, it's that time again for the results from this year's bluebird nestbox monitoring project. All the Western Bluebird young are now looking much like adults and gaining the necessary hunting skills they will need to raise their own broods next year.

This year, Sierra Foothills Audubon had 15 volunteer monitors braving the heat of the summer, gathering data along 14 trails in Placer and Nevada Counties. A huge THANK YOU to those dedicated monitors. Along those 14 trails we had 185 nestboxes from which fledged 402 Western Bluebirds and 304 fledglings of other species, including Tree Swallow, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Oak Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren, and Violet Green Swallow. Tree Swallows had the second greatest number of fledglings with 218 for the season.

I did not have very good success on my own trail this year, experiencing more depredation and death (probably some from the heat) than from previous years, and I rather expected our numbers overall to be down. So I checked last year's summary and discovered that we

were nearly identical with Western Bluebirds (402 vs 408) and saw a somewhat significant increase in other species fledged – 304 other species this year vs 226 last year. Can't begin to guess what that is about.

So a typical monitoring session goes like this: You approach your box after having checked your log to see what the status of the box was when you visited the previous week. Let's say you had 2 beautiful blue eggs last time, so you expect to see the clutch completed with between 5 and 7 eggs. Voila – there are 6 Western Bluebird eggs in the nest. Now you compute when those eggs will hatch, and when you might see baby bluebirds (called "pinkies") in the box. After they hatch, they will stay in the nest about 21 days, putting on feathers and weight and learning how to use those crazy wing things. If you are really observant you just might see the young being fed by a parent, as in the photo.

If this all sounds like a lot of fun to you, you might want to think about volunteering to monitor nestboxes next year, and/or propose a new trail in a place where you frequently see bluebirds. Contact me if you have any ideas or questions about our bluebird monitoring project (woodswoman55@goskywest.com).

.....and a few words on Turkey Vulture business.

The month long vulture, heavy migration period ends around Oct. 15. The total for the month should be in the area of 12,000 vultures.

Deren Ross leads the vulture observation on the lookout hill, just east of the Auburn fairgrounds, every day for 30 days, 9 am to 1200 noon. Five counters and several observers record the total number of vultures that migrate within optical range of the hill (about a 5 mile wide flyway).

It's exciting to see the vultures form kettles north of Auburn and gradually glide past the lookout. On banner days 1100 to 1400 vultures can glide by on the thermal currents.

Deren started the vulture study in 2003 and has gained much info on vulture culture along rte. 80 and elsewhere. Check out the Auburn Vulture Migration website for the daily count and lots of other facts.

So, bring your significant other and your checkbook and come on down to downwind Deren's hangout and partake of the spectacle.

(But you will have to wait 11 months. We will notify everybody next Sept.)



Photos by Patricia Clark



SFAS Officers, Board and Committee Chairs

OFFICERS:

Rudy Darling, President
rdarling@sbbmail.com (530) 272-6504

William Hall, Vice President
yardcard@usamedia.tv

Patti DeLuca, Secretary
drpatti27@gmail.com

Don Rivenes, Treasurer
rivenes@sbcglobal.net (530) 477-7502

ELECTED AT LARGE BOARD MEMBERS:

Jim Groeser (1)
redtailh@gmail.com

Dan Stewart (1)
dcstew@hotmail.com

Theresa Thomas (1)
randtthomas@sbcglobal.net

Heath Wakelee (1)
hwakelee@gmail.com

Dale Rubach (2)
rugby7676-birds@yahoo.com

Jane Hall (2)
yardcard@usamedia.tv

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR:

Appointed each year

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Don Rivenes, Conservation Chair (Nevada City)
rivenes@sbcglobal.net (530) 477-7502

Jim Groeser, Education Chair (Nevada City)
redtailh@gmail.com

Patti DeLuca, Membership Chair
drpatti27@gmail.com

Dale Rubach, Field Trip Chair
rugby7676-birds@yahoo.com

Theresa Thomas, Program Chair
randtthomas@sbcglobal.net

SPECIAL COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Heath Wakelee, Scholarship Chair
hwakelee@gmail.com

Jane Hall, Publicity/Hospitality
yardcard@usamedia.tv

OTHER POSITIONS:

Kate Brennan, Database Manager
woodswoman55@goskywest.com

Emily Rivenes, Phoebe Publication
phoebe@sierrafoothillsaudubon.org

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.





P.O. Box 1937
Grass Valley, CA 95945-1937

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 25
Auburn, CA

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

THE CHILDRENS FESTIVAL

... a pint-sized Renaissance Faire for kids and adults alike – returned to Pioneer Park, Nevada City Friday, July 27, 2018.



The Children's Festival offers arts and crafts tables, a Pyrate Skool, a Troll on the Troll-bridge, Claude the fire-breathing dragon, and many more magical activities.

Sierra Foothills Audubon Society (SFAS) sponsored our 15th annual "Ye Old Audubon Table of Birdies" – a Festival favorite for kids to make a painted bird pencil-holder. (This year SFAS added a bird mask craft table.)

SFAS would like to recognize and honor the two volunteers that make the SFAS table possible – Jim and Lorraine Groeser. Jim, our Education chairperson, spends the entire year painstakingly making birdies in his wood shop – approximately 600–700 birdies!! Lorraine holds court over the drying table, making sure these wondrous works of art get back to the kids at the end of the day.

What we love about the event is that it's completely volunteer run – thanks to the many people who help to create this magical experience. If you missed the event this year, find info for 2019 online at:

<http://www.thechildrensfestival.com/tcf/Home.html>

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Childrens-Festival-125444720826438/>