



CHIRP-N-CHATTER

The Newsletter of the Shasta Birding Society

A Wintu Country Chapter of the National Audubon Society

JANUARY 2025



Elizabeth "Lizzi" Meisman grew up in rural Colorado and moved to Northern California more than a dozen years ago to attend Humboldt State University (now Cal Poly Humboldt) where she completed a B.S. in Wildlife Conservation Biology in 2016. She is also currently an NSF Graduate Research Fellow in Dr. Matt Johnson's Habitat Ecology Lab at Cal Poly Humboldt continuing one of the longest running raptor projects in North America, the Butte Valley Swainson's Hawk project. Lizzi also works as a wildlife biologist for Dudek, an employee-owned environmental consulting firm. She is highly engaged in the local community, dedicating her efforts to mentoring students and early-career scientists. Additionally, she contributes to long-term monitoring initiatives through various activities, including bird banding, participation in community science survey efforts, and leading birding field trips.

Join us for a fascinating lecture by Elizabeth "Lizzi" Meisman, who will present preliminary findings from her Master's research on habitat quality and selection for breeding Swainson's Hawks in the Butte Valley. Discover insights gained from monitoring efforts and learn about the broader research initiatives connected to our long-term project. The Butte Valley is home to a rich diversity of breeding and wintering raptors, and Lizzi will also highlight key findings related to other breeding raptor species in the study area. Don't miss this opportunity to delve into the ecology of these remarkable birds!

Shasta Birding Society is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Habitat quality and selection for breeding Swainson's Hawks in the Butte Valley

Time: Jan 8, 2025 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84782229625>

Meeting ID: 847 8222 9625

One tap mobile

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Meeting ID: 847 8222 9625

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/u/ks9Uo77Rc>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS!

To show how much we appreciate our donors we want to recognize you in our monthly newsletter! These are our recent generous donors: Larry Jordan and Douglas Mandel - Thank you!

Donations can be made either through our PayPal link or by check at Shasta Birding Society, PO Box 994533, Redding, CA 96099-4533

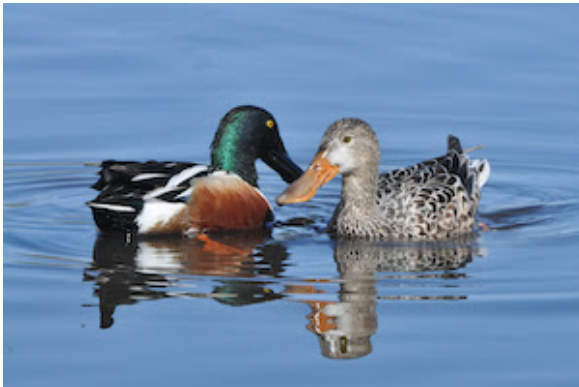
SHASTA BIRDING SOCIETY CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS

Please make sure you join us for Lizzi's presentation on Wednesday but also our February presentation when we will be voting on our Bylaws Update! You can read our updated bylaws at this link: <https://shorturl.at/cv5w4>

JANUARY ACTIVITIES

Note: If you have been exposed to COVID-19 within the last 10 days you must provide a certificate of vaccination or negative test results no longer than 72 hours prior to and as a requirement to participating in these events.

Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge - Saturday, January 11th @ 6:30 am



The Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge is a national gem, well worth the short, 90 mile drive to Willows. Enormous numbers of waterfowl fill the sky and the impoundments in fall and winter. Snow, Ross's and Greater White-fronted Geese, Northern Pintails, Northern Shovelers and Gadwalls are assured. Possibilities are White-faced Ibis, Green-winged and Cinnamon Teal, Black-necked Stilts and various raptors, including Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon. We will begin the morning walking the two mile Wetland Walk Trail next to the visitor center, then drive the auto tour route, stopping at the observation platform for lunch. We will provide 2-way radios to report sightings to all vehicles along the way. Meet your leader Larry Jordan at 6:30 am sharp at Kutras Park on Park Marina Drive to carpool or at the visitor center at 7:45 am, and

bring a lunch for this full-day trip. Fees to enter the refuge are \$6 per car for the day. Most carpool drivers have senior lifetime passes and can enter for no additional fee. For more information email webmaster@shastabirdingsociety.org

Nur Pon Open Space - Saturday, January 18th @ 8:00 am



Join Shasta Birding Society for a bird walk around Nur Pon Open Space. Nur Pon, or "Salmon Run" in the Wintu language, was once known as Henderson Open Space before the City of Redding and numerous other agencies began a restoration project that established a side channel along the Sacramento River for salmon spawning. The parkland has been cleared of debris, much of the non-native vegetation has been removed and the area fenced and secured. This easy walk of approximately 1.5 miles should take about three hours to identify the birds of river and oak woodland. Hiking boots are recommended for the river cobble areas. Nur Pon is off Hartnell Avenue at the intersection of Parkview Avenue and Henderson Road on the east side of the river. Note: dogs in the park are off leash. Rain cancels. For more information

email webmaster@shastabirdingsociety.org

Red Bluff Recreation Area - Saturday, January 25th @ 7:30 am



Location of where we will meet: 1000 Sale Lane, Red Bluff, CA. at the upper-level parking lot. South end of Sale Lane next to the Sacramento River Discovery Center. Walking distance estimated at 2-2.5 miles (3-4 km), and most of the trails are level and paved. Please join us on a journey with many trails at this very diverse public land with no fees. Sacramento River bisects 488 acres, at this Recreation Area of riparian forest, flowering grasslands, wetlands, and oak woodlands providing very diverse natural viewing experiences. This location is Tehama Region's number one eBird's hotspot. Ideal spot for migratory species in the fall and spring seasons. Also, a great home for many varieties of Sparrows, Warblers, Wrens, Woodpeckers, Waterfowl, and Wading Birds. Both the Acorn and Nuttall's Woodpecker, California and

Spotted Towhee, House and Bewick's Wren, Yellow-billed Magpies and Phainopeplas are often found here year-round. Recommend that you bring comfortable rugged footwear, plenty of water, snacks, and insect repellent. Rain will cancel this event, and feel free to email me to confirm on any possible cancellations. Trip Leader: Dan Bye, contact me by danbye56@gmail.com for more information.

THE CONSERVATION CORNER

Bruce Webb and Rebeca Ladrón de Guevara, Conservation Co-Chairs

The Fountain Wind Project is a wind turbine power generation project proposed by Repsol Renewables for a site south-west of Hatchet Ridge summit and south of Hwy 299 in Shasta County. Readers may remember this project when it made its way through the Shasta County use permit approval process in 2021. The project site is south-west of the existing Hatchet Ridge Windfarm. The County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors denied the use permit for Fountain Wind, but passage by the State Legislature in 2022 of AB205 allowed for an "Opt-In" process whereby a local jurisdiction's permit denial could be reversed by the California Energy Commission (CEC). The applicant has "opted" to pursue the project under that process, and for all of 2024, the CEC has been studying the proposal and preparing a new draft Environmental Impact Report. Your SBS has tracked this project from its inception, and advocated for improvements to the mitigation scheme when the County reviewed it and when CEC began preparing its new EIR pursuant to AB205.

The National Audubon Society and Audubon California both recognize the advantages of wind power projects to address climate change and reduce carbon emissions, and support them provided impacts are fully identified and mitigated. Although your SBS Board agrees, we are concerned about the potential for impacts to birds and bats of this project due to the forested nature of the site, the possible presence of several protected bird species, and other potential impacts and mitigation proposals offered during Shasta County's review process. It remains to be seen whether these concerns will be addressed by the CEC's review process and new EIR. However, rest assured we will continue to follow the project closely and advocate for changes as necessary.

Interested readers can review all of the CEC project studies and comments compiled so far, whether prepared by the applicant, other outside experts or members of the public, on the CEC's website, accessed here:

<https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/Lists/DocketLog.aspx?docketnumber=23-OPT-01>

At this site you can also view SBS's comment letter listing our concerns about the appropriate content and scope of the CEC's new EIR. Please see CEC's document #253510.

Bruce Webb, Conservation Co-Chair

TRIP REPORTS

Churn Creek Open Space on December 7th



A small crew of 4 birders was able to spot 31 species on the trails along Churn Creek. It was a relatively warm winter morning with overcast skies and, fortunately, no wind. The area was alive with American Robins, Acorn Woodpeckers, California Scrub-jays, Spotted Towhees, and White-breasted Nuthatches. A Belted Kingfisher rattled out its calls up and down the creek during the walk. Several ruby-emerald Anna's Hummingbirds were a joy to see against the gray December sky. We were surprised by the sight of a Band-tailed Pigeon resting in a gray pine along the creek. Deep in the shade along the water was a lone Hermit Thrush haunting the underbrush. Out on the oak-studded ridge, we spotted a Merlin perched atop a dead pine. It was a great day to be out birding with fellow nature-lovers! The event was attended by David

Garza, Trip Lead and eBird Recorder, Sabrina Ott, Lynn Bancroft, and Mary Severson.

[eBird Checklist - 07 December 2024 -Churn Creek Trails - 31 species](#)

Fall River Christmas Bird Count on December 15th



The Fall River Mills CBC was completed Sunday, December 15th, after being postponed from Saturday due to snow and rainy conditions. Our intrepid group got a total of 121 species. The count average is 115 species! There were 29 species that only had 1, 2, or 3 birds seen! The weather held out for us and it was a beautiful crisp day in the snow. Chipping Sparrow was possibly the best bird on the count but there were many goodies. Eurasian Wigeon, Turkey Vulture (Yes, Turkey Vultures), Lesser Yellowlegs, Western Screech-owl, White-headed Woodpecker, both Northern and Loggerhead Shrikes, Rock, Canyon and Pacific Wrens, a Dipper, Tricolored and Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Purple and Cassin's Finch, and Red Crossbill. However, we did completely miss Sora, and Virginia Rails. Thanks very much to our counters! Obviously, there is no count without your efforts and support.

Shingletown Christmas Bird Count on December 17th



For our 2nd Shingletown CBC, we documented 102 species. The total number of individual birds was 6186. We found 17 new species in the circle this year, bringing the total number found in the Shingletown area to 112 species! The new species were: Hooded Merganser (Inwood), Common Merganser (Paynes Creek), Wilson's Snipe (Inwood and Manton), Western Screech-owl (Black Butte), Pileated Woodpecker (Inwood), Peregrine Falcon (Inwood), Prairie Falcon (Paynes Creek), Loggerhead Shrike (Paynes Creek), Pacific Wren (Paynes Creek), Marsh Wren (Paynes Creek), Northern Mockingbird (Inwood), Townsend's Solitaire (Inwood), Cassin's Finch (Manton), Red Crossbill (Paynes Creek), Lark Sparrow (Inwood), Lincoln's Sparrow (Paynes Creek), Orange-crowned Warbler (Paynes Creek). The top ten species

with the highest counts were (from more to less): European Starling, Western Bluebird, Dark-eyed Junco, Acorn Woodpecker, Red-winged Blackbird, White-crowned sparrow, Spotted Towhee, Golden-crowned Sparrow, California Quail and Canada Goose. We had 11 people participate this year. Thank you very much to Emily (Inwood), Julie (Shingletown), Brian (Shingletown), Larry (Manton), Dan (Manton), Al (Manton), Michele (Paynes Creek, Manton), Bob (Black Butte), Carol (Black Butte), and Marti (Shingletown) for being part of the crew this year! Your dedication to bird monitoring is very much appreciated. Despite the foggy morning for a lot of the area, it turned out to be a great day! Here is a link to the trip report for the day: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/305379>

Anderson Christmas Bird Count on December 21st



When the day arrived knowing it would be inclement weather, fourteen spirited volunteers came through on the challenge to survey their respective areas in the Anderson CBC Circle. This circle straddles both Shasta and Tehama counties and the area is diverse with river, streams, wetlands, foothills, floodplain, farmlands, woodlands, parks, and communities. We collectively compiled 61 checklists, observed 109 total species, and tabulated 12,965 individuals. Species in abundance, greater than 100 individuals observed, and not surprising were Snow Goose, Greater White-fronted Goose, Canada Goose, California Quail, Mourning Dove, Turkey Vulture, Acorn Woodpecker, California Scrub Jay, Horned Lark, European Starlings, American Robin, Dark-eyed Junco, White-crowned Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Western

Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Tricolored Blackbird, and Brewers Blackbird. And unique species, less than three individuals were observed, like Lesser Scaup, Barrow's Goldeneye, Ring-billed Gull, Green Heron, Golden Eagle, Sharp-shinned Hawk, American Barn Owl, Hairy Woodpecker, Merlin, Loggerhead Shrike, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Rock Wren, Northern House Wren, California Thrasher, Hermit Thrush, Phainopepla, Lark Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, and Rufous-crowned Sparrow. The effort to accomplish this task is measured by mode of travel, hours, and mileage of each participant in the field. Our CBC team traveled through the following weather conditions with temperatures from 45-49F, rain and constant drizzle of 0.6 inches, winds from the SW at 0-7 mph. Our Anderson CBC team did an outstanding job which is no surprise to me, as each of them were prepared to carry-on this historic tradition. Keep on birding! Here is a link to our team's eBird Trip Report link: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/308380> sharing details of our observations and photos from our CBC team. We hope you will enjoy it.

Redding Christmas Bird Count on December 26th



December 26th over 20 people participated in the Redding Christmas Bird Count, counting birds in 11 sections in a 15 mile radius circle centered at the convention center. The weather was cold, cloudy, and at times misty to rainy throughout the day. While the number of individuals was below average, we ended up with 118 species total. Highlights from the count were two Barn Swallows, a first for the count, two Rufous-crowned Sparrows, one Canyon Wren, one Great-tailed Grackle, six Tri-colored Blackbirds, and a Say's Phoebe! We also had highs in White-crowned Sparrows, Pied-Billed Grebes, and Cooper's Hawks. Many of the participants met at Woody's after the count to compile the birds which is always enjoyable. Thank you to all that participated in this year's count!





GADWALL COURTSHIP DISPLAY