

## **Napa Solano Audubon Society Birding Notes #16**

Hello NSAS friends and members –

Everywhere you look birds are building nests, incubating eggs, or feeding chicks. It's a great time to be out of doors. Hope you are having FUN watching the birds!

### **Note #1 –NSAS announcements**

1. **Congratulations to our 2021 NSAS Scholarship winners Jade Schlatter and Liesl Wolf Heineman!** Both are graduating from Saint Helena High School.

We also want to let you know that over the last few years there has been attrition among the volunteers who staff our Scholarship Committee, and ***we need help to keep this program running.*** We are especially interested in increasing our outreach to high schools in Solano county as there has been a recent decline in the number of applications from Solano students. If you have suggestions as to how to generate more interest from Solano county students, or if *you would like to help reward some deserving high school seniors with funding for their college education,* please contact Tom Slyker at [SolanoBirder@gmail.com](mailto:SolanoBirder@gmail.com).

2. On **Thursday, May 13 at 7 PM,** our monthly Members Meeting will highlight a presentation by Mark & Lucas Stephenson. They will be discussing their ***Observations of Sea Birds and Mammals*** from their West Coast Pelagic Trips over the last 6 years. *For more information* about this presentation and the Zoom Link for this event see the NSAS website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/Event/20210513-NSASsMaySpeakerZoomPresentationWestCoastSeaBirdPelagicTripsWithMarkLucasStephenson>.
3. ***Andrew Ford just published an updated schedule for his weekly Saturday Field Trips.*** You should have received an email from Andrew with this information. If not please email me at [solanobirder@gmail.com](mailto:solanobirder@gmail.com) and I will add you to our Field Trips mailing list. Andrew's new schedule is listed

below. Hopefully, you will be able to make some of these trips as birding with Andrew is an enjoyable way to spend a Saturday morning.

May 8: Lake Hennessey

May 15: Skyline Regional Park

May 22: Pena Adobe Regional Park/Lagoon Valley

May 29: Newell Open Space

June 5: Bothe-Napa State Park

June 12: Benicia State Recreation Area

4. Wendy Cole and Bruce Thomsen organize and coordinate our Field Trips that usually take us outside of the Napa and Sonoma county areas. They have three trips that have been organized for May and June. They are:
  - a. **Point Reyes National Seashore** field trip, which is scheduled for Saturday, May 22 with the group meeting at Point Reyes at 8 AM. Mark Stephenson will be leading this trip. There will be a limit of 15 participants and NSAS members will have priority. If you would like to participate in this trip RSVP to Bruce Thomsen by May 12 at [brucecthomsen@yahoo.com](mailto:brucecthomsen@yahoo.com).
  - b. **Dover Park Heron/Egret Rookery** field trip, which is scheduled for Sunday, June 6 from 10 AM to Noon. The location is Dover Park, 800 East Travis Blvd., Fairfield. Ron Brown, who is the volunteer monitor of the Dover Park rookery, will be leading the trip. If you haven't had the opportunity to visit a rookery during the nesting season, it is an amazing sight! No RSVP necessary. Just show up between 10 and 12 and prepare to be entertained. If you have questions about this trip, you can email Wendy Cole at [beehaven2@comcast.net](mailto:beehaven2@comcast.net).
  - c. **Yuba Pass and Sierra Valley** field trip, which is scheduled for June 4 - 6, 2021. Robin Leong is leading this trip which officially begins at Yuba Pass on Hwy 49 at 7 am on Saturday, June 5. On Sunday, June 6, we will watch the morning birds at Yuba Pass and then head down to Sierra Valley. Robin will be scouting for birds on Friday, June 4 starting at 6:30 am at Yuba Pass and you're welcome to join him. **If you are interested in joining this trip, please RSVP to Wendy Cole at**

[beehaven2@comcast.net](mailto:beehaven2@comcast.net). When you sign up, she will send you more details about the trip.

**Note #2 – *What about the birds?***

1. I want to thank all of the people who have volunteered to monitor our Bluebird Nesting Boxes this year. We are currently monitoring 73 boxes at 5 separate locations with 130 Western Bluebird eggs or chicks having been counted so far. In addition to the Bluebirds, we also have 12 Tree Swallow nests with a majority of these nests having eggs in them. So far, it's turning out to be a good season for our nesting birds.



Western Bluebird eggs and newly hatched chicks by Mark Stephenson

2. Check out this 30-second YouTube Nest Cam video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RISsiVIWV-M>. “You'll Flip for This Albatross Clip,” as it's not every day you see a bird do a somersault.

3. Mia McPherson seems to have a great life. From what I can tell she spends her time taking pictures of birds and publishing her blog. “Life is good.” This picture of an Ibis is just one of twenty delightful images she posted on her website as “An Assortment of Spring Birds from Bear River MBR.” You can see all of the pictures at <https://www.onthewingphotography.com/wings/2021/04/23/an-assortment-of-spring-birds-from-bear-river-mbr/>.



White-faced Ibis adult scratching by Mia McPherson

4. Patricia Innes sent me this image of “Mama Hummingbird” feeding her young in a nest the bird built on her porch. Pat has been able to monitor this nest from its being built and hopefully will see the baby birds fledge.



5. In March, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced the latest population estimate for Bald Eagles, and the news was heartening. Some 316,000 eagles now cruise the skies in the Lower 48—more than four times the previous estimate, from 2009. And the number of nesting pairs has more than doubled since 2009. See the Cornell website at [https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/new-bald-eagle-population-estimate-usfws/?utm\\_source=Cornell%20Lab%20eNews&utm\\_campaign=d7757cca59-Cornell-Lab-eNews-April-2021&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_47588b5758-d7757cca59-320297257](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/new-bald-eagle-population-estimate-usfws/?utm_source=Cornell%20Lab%20eNews&utm_campaign=d7757cca59-Cornell-Lab-eNews-April-2021&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_47588b5758-d7757cca59-320297257) for the full story about the successful recovery of our Bald Eagles.

**Note #3 – If you listen to Podcasts and you like birds,** you should check out the NPR Fresh Air podcast “*The Amazing Lives of Migratory Birds.*” In this podcast author Scott Weidensaul talks about the millions of birds flying unseen over our heads in the night sky, how the bar-tailed godwit can fly more than a week over water without stopping, and how new tracking technology may help with strategies to keep these migrating birds alive. He has written a new book is 'A World on the Wing' which is the source of information for the talk. The podcast is available on your iPhone or Android or you can listen to it from your home computer at <https://www.npr.org/2021/03/29/982259545/the-amazing-lives-of-migratory-birds>.

**Note #4 – Advocacy opportunity - “Attention Solano County Residents!”** Solano Land Trust (SLT) is updating their strategic plan to guide their work over the next five years and **they need your help to ensure this is a community effort.** As part of that effort, they are hosting five focus groups around Solano County to provide feedback, input, and fresh perspectives. In particular, they are looking for participants who are not already part of the land trust’s work. They are trying to understand “How can natural areas better support the needs of all people who live in Solano County” and “How important is it for kids to connect to nature and agriculture?” They are looking for Solano County residents to join them for a zoom community conversation and will reward participants with a \$20 gift card to a local small business and a free parking pass for Lynch Canyon Open Space. If you are interested in helping the Land Trust, please sign up to attend one of these focus groups at <https://solanolandtrust.org/we-need-your-input>.

- 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](mailto: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 16 of our biweekly series. Past copies of Birding Notes are posted on the NSAS website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/>
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