

Napa Solano Audubon Society Birding Notes #2

Hello NSAS friends and members –

This is the second issue of our biweekly series of short notes and updates on activities and birding opportunities within Napa and Solano Counties. Enjoy!

Note #1 – Don't forget that our next Zoom presentation will be on **Thursday, October 8 at 7 PM** and the speaker will be Dr. Bruce Lyon of UC Santa Cruz. Dr. Lyon and his research team have been studying the social interactions of Golden-crowned Sparrows for over 17 years. The same birds return to the same wintering location every year, which has enabled Bruce and his team to begin to understand the complex social interactions that go on within this sparrow community. It's a good talk and an interesting window into the behavior of birds we see around us. For more information about the presentation and details for the talk Zoom Link visit our website at <http://www.napasolanoaudubon.com/Event/20201008-NSASOctoberSpeakerSeriesOnZoom>.

Hope to see you there!

Note #2 – What's being seen locally –



- Tom Harris of Benicia has been birding recently at American Canyon Wetlands and observed the pied-billed grebe as well as many dowitchers, yellowlegs, and least sandpipers. At his home in Benicia the first white-crowned sparrow of the season showed up at his feeders and he had a juvenile Cooper's hawk visit his backyard to check out the feeders. The hawk stayed around for quite a while, so he got some good photos.
- Check out the eBird reports for Lake Herman at <https://ebird.org/hotspot/L818100/activity?yr=all&m=>. In late September birders are seeing somewhere between 40 and 80 species.
- The Huichica Creek Unit of the Napa-Sonoma Marshes has been averaging sightings of 40 – 50 species during the last few weeks. Check out <https://ebird.org/hotspot/L590812/activity?yr=all&m=> for more details.
- Also, it may be too late to see them this year but mark your 2021 calendar to check out the annual fall migration of Vaux's Swifts. You can see them at McNear Brickyard in San Rafael. Each year, in September and early October visitors to the brickyard can watch the migrating swifts pour into the smokestacks at sunset. The numbers can vary from night to night: some nights you will see a few hundred, other nights you can see many thousands. On September 20, I watched as a few swifts showed up, then a few more, and then more till the sky was full of ~ 10,000 birds who circled the top of a smoke stack and slowly, over a period of ~ 30 minutes, they disappeared. Check out <https://natureinnovato.com/2018/09/08/mcnear-brickyard/> for more information about this unique phenomena of nature.

Note #3 – Carol Boykin forwarded this YouTube link to me. If you like Hummingbirds you'll love this 5 minute video of "Ultra Slow Motion Action and Amazing Hummingbird Facts." It is well worth it to take a short break from what you're doing and check out <https://www.youtube.com/embed/FPRswRWZ23Q>

Note #4 – Birding Festivals are a great way to visit new locations, meet new birders, and take field trips in locations we normally wouldn't be able to

bird. The pandemic has deprived us of the opportunity to participate in these events this year. Another loss in a difficult year. However, it turns out you can attend a virtual Festival in the beautiful islands of Hawaii. Holly Jessop forwarded information on the Hawai'i Island Festival of Birds which will be held this year from October 15-19, 2020 and it is both virtual and free. Check out <https://birdfesthawaii.org/> for information about the Festival and how to register for the event. You'll almost be able to hear the sound of the waves and feel the warm, soft breeze as you spend time in virtual Hawaii.

Note #5 - In case you missed it, the 2020 Audubon Photography Award Winners were announced in July. As Audubon claims, "This year's top shots delight with dazzling colors and fresh perspectives." Check out the winning pictures at https://www.audubon.org/magazine/summer-2020/the-2020-audubon-photography-awards-winners?ms=digital-eng-email-ea-x-engagement_20200708_eng-email_apa-winners&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement_20200708_eng-email&utm_content=apa-winners&emci=ce89b409-23c1-ea11-9b05-00155d03bda0&emdi=62184382-27c1-ea11-9b05-00155d03bda0&ceid=3257812

and see the Top 100 pictures at https://www.audubon.org/magazine/summer-2020/the-2020-audubon-photography-awards-top-100?ms=digital-eng-email-ea-x-engagement_20200708_eng-email_apa-top-100&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=engagement_20200708_eng-email&utm_content=apa-top-100&emci=8313e098-edc2-ea11-9b05-00155d03bda0&emdi=7d5c9455-15c5-ea11-9b05-00155d03bda0&ceid=3257812



Photographer: Andrew Lee from Top 100 list

Even if you've seen them before, they are definitely worth seeing again!

- 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 updates.
- If you would like to unsubscribe from receiving these birding notes please send your unsubscribe request to SolanoBirder@gmail.com.