

SATURDAY FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS

Saturday, September 10, 2022

Note: All Field Trips are half day and return by 11am

All trips are by Carpool are leaving from Prefunction A and down the escalator

Difficulty levels:

Easy—flat ground some walking.

Moderate—walking needed to get to the birding sites, some elevation changes.

Difficult—fair amount of walking with elevation changes

1SAT Silver Saddle Ranch & Carson City Area Volunteer Leaders: Scott Dietrich

This trip will visit one or more of the ebird.com hot spots in Carson City including Silver Saddle Ranch and others as time permits. A variety of habitats (riparian cottonwood forest, agricultural fields, linear ditch willow complex, and sagebrush foothills) should yield a good species list for this time of year. Expect raptors, sparrows, and other species that use agricultural fields to be observed along the northern portion of the ranch property. The riparian habitat along the Carson River supports such fall migrants as raptors (Red-shouldered Hawk, accipiters, Osprey, etc.), waterfowl, wading birds, woodpeckers/sapsuckers, and passerines (warblers, wrens, bushtits, sparrows, etc.). A flock of Pinyon Jays may also be observed along the river corridor or flying over going between the Pine Nut Mountains and Sierra Nevada's. This ranch trip includes a sunny walk along a two-track road between the ag fields and flat dirt trail along the river corridor and other habitats.

Departure Time: 7:00 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Transportation: carpool

Distance (one way): ~ 40 miles

Time (one way): ~ 45 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Moderate

2SAT Little Washoe Lake & Davis Creek

Volunteer Leaders: Nora Livingston

CAPACITY FULL

The lake should have good dabbling duck variety plus grebes. The marshes have blackbirds including Yellow-headed. The surrounding open country is good raptor habitat and both eagles are possible. Davis Creek is excellent for woodpeckers including White-headed and all three nuthatches are here. Expect an excellent mix of migrant sparrows, warblers (possibly including MacGillivray's), and flycatchers. There could also be some late Western Tanagers and Black-headed Grosbeaks lingering into September.

Departure Time: 7:00 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Transportation: carpool

Distance (one way): ~ 25 miles

Time (one way): ~ 30 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Moderate with some short steep uphill at Davis Creek RP

3SAT Damonte Ranch Wetlands

Volunteer Leader: Carlos Gonzalez

This complex of wetlands and scrub can hold a surprising variety, especially this time of year. Expect good diversity of dabbling ducks and maybe a few divers as well. Both Virginia Rail and Sora are here plus many other water/marsh birds. If the water levels are right, this spot can host lots of shorebirds in early September, with double-digits numbers of species possible. Watch for terns over the water and Northern Harriers patrolling the marsh. Marsh Wrens are here year-round, Song and White-crowned sparrows should be around and some migrant sparrows and warblers are possible, in addition to lingering Yellow-headed Blackbirds.

Departure Time: 7:00 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Transportation: carpool

Distance (one way): ~ 20 miles

Time (one way): ~ 30 minutes

Restroom facilities: Options nearby

Difficulty level: Easy

4SAT Swan Lake NSA

CANCELLED

Swan Lake Nature Study Area, a Nevada Important Bird Area, is a delightful patch of habitat surrounded by suburbs and warehouses. It includes marsh, open water, sagebrush, and the Lemmon Valley Wastewater Ponds, so water birds are the feature. Dabbling ducks have included Blue-winged Teal and diving ducks such as Redhead may be present. Eared Grebes are here year-round and should still be sporting fancy summer plumage in early September. Shorebirding may be good, depending on the water levels. This is a great spot to hear (and maybe see) rails. Sparrows abound at this site and you are likely to encounter migrating Orange-crowned Warblers and lingering Common Yellowthroats.

Departure Time: 7:00 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Transportation: carpool

Distance (one way): ~ 15 miles

Time (one way): ~ 25 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Easy

5SAT White's Canyon Trail

Volunteer Leader: Don Marsh

CAPACITY FULL

Enjoy a walk through a fine montane riparian area during passerine migration peak. Resident species include White-headed and other woodpeckers, Cassin's Finch, and all three nuthatches (Red and White-breasted, and Pygmy). Western Wood-Pewees should still be around and you may catch a lingering Olive-sided Flycatcher. A migrant empid or two is also possible at this time. You stand a good chance of finding Clark's Nutcrackers here. Sparrows include Chipping and Green-tailed Towhees and most any of the montane-breeding warblers are possible now.

Departure Time: 7:15 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Transportation: carpool

Distance (one way): ~ 20 miles

Time (one way): ~ 25 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Moderate

6SAT Crystal Peak Park (Verdi)

Volunteer Leaders: Steve Rose and Jenny

Anderson-Sweatt

CAPACITY FULL

This park is set in a matrix of different Sierra foothill habitats: riparian, pine woodland, meadow, and upland shrub. Woodpeckers here include Hairy, Downy, Northern Flicker, and Red-breasted Sapsucker. This is a particularly good spot for finding flycatchers including Olive-sided and maybe some empids. Cassin's Vireos may be passing through (and, luckily, they will sing in fall migration) as well as a good variety of sparrows and warblers. Keep a look overhead for Osprey or eagles and also check the Truckee River for American Dipper. The pond can hold ducks and a variety of blackbirds.

Departure Time: 7:15 AM

Return Time: 11:00 AM

Cost: \$35

Transportation: carpool

Distance (one way): ~ 15 miles

Time (one way): ~ 20 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Moderate

7SAT McCarran Ranch

Volunteer Leaders: Kayla

Henry

CAPACITY FULL

This Nature Conservancy Preserve along the Truckee River is a great example of what can be accomplished with a concerted effort to restore a riparian system following decades of degradation. This is a combination of outstanding riverside habitats, some ponds, oxbow channels, and wetlands. The surrounding open country guarantees outstanding bird diversity. Expect a variety of dabbling ducks including Wood Ducks, grebes, and a good chance for Spotted Sandpiper along the shores. Hawks including Red-shouldered and Cooper's are regular here and Lewis's Woodpeckers sometimes pass through in early September. Wood-Pewees and Say's Phoebes usually linger well into September here and this month is ideal for seeing Loggerhead Shrike. Five species of wren are possible, including Rock and Canyon. Western Tanagers should still be around. Sparrow variety should be good and the warbler diversity in early September can be excellent. This site has records for such rarities as Blue-winged Warbler and Painted Bunting!

Departure Time: 7:00 AM

Return Time: 11:00AM

Cost: \$35

Transportation: carpool

Distance (one way): ~ 20 miles

Time (one way): ~ 25 minutes

Restroom facilities: Limited

Difficulty level: Moderate

8FRI Rosewood NSA at Boynton Slough

Volunteer Leader: Ken Drozd

Boynton Slough has become a nature study area called Rosewood NSA. In recent years, the area has become more open to the public but is not well birded. It is a Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation wetland restoration site and includes a diverse mix of wet habitats and open shrubby uplands surrounded by suburban development. Given the limited access in the past, this spot has not been birded well, so surprises may be in store and any data collected will aid the foundation's restoration plans. Dabbling ducks, shorebirds, and other water birds should be a feature and the habitat is ideal for Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk and American Kestrel. Migrants could include some unexpected species and marsh-breeding blackbirds such as Yellow-headed and Red-winged Blackbirds may be present.

Departure Time: 7:45 AM (Change from original 7:00 AM due to opening of study area).

Return Time: 11:00AM

Cost: \$35

Transportation: carpool

Distance (one way): ~ 10 miles

Time (one way): ~ 20 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes. Restrooms open at 9:00 AM

Difficulty level: Easy

9SAT Caughlin Ranch Trail

CANCELLED

This trail follows a nice riparian corridor through a suburban neighborhood. In spite of its location, it hosts a remarkable variety of bird life with many montane species (Steller's and California Scrub-Jay, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Mountain Chickadee, Black-headed Grosbeak, etc.). Accipiters are likely and 3 species of Hummingbirds are possible, as well as flicker, thrushes, and maybe a Williamson's Sapsucker. A series of small ponds and open areas increases the diversity. This patch of good habitat surrounded by development is just the sort of place that can attract surprising migrants (and maybe a vagrant or two!) at this time of year.

Departure Time: 7:30 AM

Return Time: 11:00AM

Cost: \$35

Transportation: carpool

Distance (one way): ~ 10 miles

Time (one way): ~ 15 minutes

Restroom facilities: No

Difficulty level: Easy

10SAT Oxbow NSA

Volunteer Leader: Liz West

CAPACITY FULL

Oxbow Nature Study Area is a real gem, one of the few high-quality riparian areas on the Truckee River in Reno. There is a short wheelchair-accessible boardwalk that provides good access to the SOME of the habitat. This is a true migrant "trap" and could host most any migrant passerine in early September. The site attracts a wide variety of migrant warblers and eastern "vagrants" such as Blackpoll, Black-and-White, and Northern Parula have been recorded here. Western Tanagers should be passing through and Black-headed Grosbeaks still on site. Red-shouldered Hawks have been increasing and expanding their range in the west in recent decades and this is one of the best places to find them in the Reno area.

Departure Time: 7:30 AM

Return Time: 11:00AM

Cost: \$35

Transportation: carpool

Distance (one way): ~ 5 miles

Time (one way): ~ 10 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Easy

11SAT Cottonwood Park/UNR Ag Fields

CANCELLED

This site offers a good combination of habitats with the riparian along the Truckee River hosting a good variety of passerines and woodpeckers, and open ag fields to the south attracting grassland birds. It is a good spot for raptors including Swainson's Hawk and American Kestrel. Several heron species are here with White-faced Ibis lingering well into September. Several species of sparrow should be around and surprises are always possible this time of year.

Departure Time: 7:00 AM

Return Time: 11:00AM

Cost: \$35

Transportation: carpool

Distance (one way): ~ 10 miles

Time (one way): ~ 15 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Easy

12SAT Rancho San Rafael Park

Volunteer Leader: Linda Pittman

This site, the closest of all our field trips, offers ideal fall birding. The park is located on the northern edge of Reno and includes woodland, open areas, and some ponds and wetlands. A good selection of dabbling ducks should be around and there is an opportunity to rack up four hummingbird species (Anna's, Black-chinned, Rufous, and MAYBE a late Calliope). Migrants will probably be the focus with several flycatchers possible, vireos passing through, many sparrows, and nearly all the montane-breeding warblers are possible.

Departure Time: 7:00 AM

Return Time: 11:00AM

Cost: \$35

Transportation: carpool

Distance (one way): ~ 3 miles

Time (one way): ~ 10 minutes

Restroom facilities: Yes

Difficulty level: Moderate

13SAT Student's Program Field Trip Volunteer Leaders: Kelly Colegrove and Elisabeth Ammon

Bird Banding with Great Basin Bird Observatory

Bird banding is an important research tool for gathering bird population information on migration and dispersal, demographics, life span and survival, and spatial use patterns. Safely capturing live birds and outfitting them with unique identification bands requires patience and training but is rewarding for those that do it. Participants will be invited to join the long-term banding effort at the McCarran Ranch Preserve where the Nature Conservancy has been working to restore the riparian area along the Truckee River. Attendees will be able to see how a banding station is run and get up close to the many riparian and migrating bird species passing through the area this time of year. Banding station crew will provide introductory instruction on banding methods and ageing/sexing birds in the hand.

SATURDAY WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Saturday, September 11

All workshops are just off Prefunction A. Look for the signs.

2SAT-WS Workshop: "Birding Costa Rica"

Workshop Presenter: Mario Córdoba

Time: 8:00AM–11:00AM

Where: Relay Peak Room

Cost: \$35

Workshop description: If you have dreamed of birding in Costa Rica, and would like to learn more about the country's geography, ecosystems and bird life, then this workshop can help you to see what is possible in this diverse country.

Leader's Bio: Mario Córdoba has been a nature guide in Costa Rica for more than two decades. During all these years he has been able to constantly expand his knowledge and appreciation for the country's unique features; and more importantly he has been able to proudly introduce visitors to all these facts.

His passion for birds and nature developed as he grew up in the rainy mountains and valleys of San Carlos in northern Costa Rica, then during his career with many hours in the field, he has been able to gather expertise and knowledge about the flora and fauna of Costa Rica; which has helped him design and lead handcrafted tours all over Costa Rica.

Mario attended Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica for his professional training in Eco-Tourism. This career was first offered as an option to fill the existing need for naturalist guides in the growing tourism business in the early 1990's, as well as the Costa Rican Tourism Bureau credential as a certified tour guide.

In 2010 he founded Crescentia Expeditions, a local outfitter specialized in custom designed itineraries with a focus on birding and natural history tours, as well as field studies programs for both high school and college students.

3SAT-WS Workshop: “Ear Birding with Your Phone” [Workshop Only]

Workshop Leader: Nathan Pieplow

Time: 8:00—11:00 AM

Where: Whitney Peak Ballroom

Cost: \$35

Workshop Description: In Saturday morning's workshop, Nathan Pieplow will discuss apps for recording and identifying birds with your cell phone, with special attention to Merlin Sound ID. If you have a favorite app, you can bring it and discuss it; if you've never used your phone for recording, identifying, or making spectrograms of bird sounds, we will get you set up. This is a **WORKSHOP ONLY**.

OR

4SAT-WS & FT “Ear Birding with Your Phone” [Workshop and Field Trip]

Workshop Leader: Nathan Pieplow

Time: 8:00—11:00 AM

Where: Whitney Peak Ballroom

Cost: \$35

Workshop Description: In Saturday morning's workshop, Nathan Pieplow will discuss apps for recording and identifying birds with your cell phone, with special attention to Merlin Sound ID. If you have a favorite app, you can bring it and discuss; if you've never used your phone for recording, identifying, or making spectrograms of bird sounds, we will get you set up.

In Sunday morning's follow-up field trip, a smaller group will attempt to put our phones and apps to the test on real birds under field conditions. Location and time for the field trip will be announced at the Workshop. This is a **WORKSHOP & FIELDTRIP**.

Leader's Bio: **Nathan Pieplow** is the author of the *Peterson Field Guide to "Bird Sounds of Eastern North America"* and the forthcoming Peterson Field Guide to *"Bird Sounds of Western North America."* He has been fascinated by birds since his childhood in South Dakota and has intensively studied bird sounds since 2003. He is the founder of the bird sound blog Earbirding.com, one of the authors of the Colorado Birding Trail, and the former editor of the journal *Colorado Birds*. Nathan teaches writing at the University of Colorado in Boulder.