



SNOWY EGRET

© Rich Brown

# The Valley Habitat

## July/August 2026

*A joint publication of the Stanislaus Audubon Society  
and the Yokuts Group of the Sierra Club*

### Walking the Green Path

Nice things to share to-day. I'll start with a review of a documentary on PBS called "Wilding". It's about a couple in England who own farmland. For years they have taken steps toward restoring the land to its former wild state. They have enhanced species present and reintroduced other species. It has taken time, patience and a willingness to walk through bureaucratic channels in order to get needed permits. I found it enthralling as I brimmed with pleasant feelings while watching this transformation. As mentioned before if you are a PBS member and you have PBS PASSPORT, you have a pass to tune in this program and many others.

**Cont. on page 2**

The name "Yokuts Group" honors the Native Peoples who inhabited the area now known as Stanislaus County.

### Sierra Club Monthly Programs

Socializing and Snacks: 6:45 PM | Presentation: 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM  
Office of Valley Improvement Projects, 1224 K Street, Modesto

#### STATE OF THE CENTRAL SIERRA

**Speaker:**

**John Buckley, CSERC**

**Friday, September 18, 2026**

Trump politics, shrinking budgets, staffing cutbacks, and other changes threaten our forests. Our presenter, John Buckley, served as a wildland firefighter for 13 years prior to setting up a non-profit conservation center. That organization, the Central Si-

erra Environmental Resource Center (CSERC) is intensely engaged in all forest issues affecting millions of acres of the central region of the Sierra Nevada. They also survey rare wildlife species, manage restoration projects, monitor logging, livestock grazing, and roads on national forest lands. His slideshow will also contain some great photos of the forest and wildlife. Join us and lets find out what we can do to help!

### So Long, Elaine

We are sad to report Elaine Gorman is leaving our Yokuts Group, as she is moving to Humboldt County. Elaine has been advocating for local/regional/national environmental issues with the Sierra Club, and particularly the Yokuts Group, for the past 40+ years.



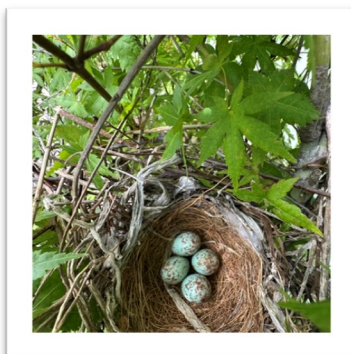
ELAINE GORMAN WITH THE 2019 YOKUTS SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

**Cont. on page 3**

## NESTING SEASON

By Salvatore Salerno

When presenting nests and eggs at events to families, I would often ask the children a simple question: How do you find nests? The answer is deceptively simple: You look for them! For backyard birdwatchers or trail-walking birders, this means deciding to become more observant tomorrow than they were yesterday. This involves watching the movements of birds more carefully. If a bird is carrying nesting material or prey in its bill, you can follow to where the bird goes to the nest. Then you can watch from a discreet distance as the nest is being built or the nestlings are being fed. This is what Mark and Lorna Elness did, which yielded their discovery of this Northern Mockingbird nest with eggs in their Japanese maple tree.



NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD NEST

The months of March through September constitute the breeding season of most local songbird species. By paying more careful attention, you may find an extra dimension of enjoyment in watching birds perform the most fascinating activities of their life cycles. Have a birdy summer!

## Walking the Green Path cont.

If you get the Modesto Bee, you probably saw the front-page story (May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026) titled "Tuolumne River Regional Park advocates create a native plant garden to heal ecosystem". I was present at this event. It was a treat to see familiar faces and new ones. It was great to have front-page attention focused on local habitat restoration efforts together with facts about the riparian ecosystem. In the past year or so I have become very aware of the years of hard work done to restore the Tuolumne River Regional Park. I find conservation work with others to be rewarding. Previously I have shared facts gleaned from the "Earthweek" page in the San Francisco Chronicle. Today I discovered that you can access this page without subscribing to said newspaper. Simply go on-line and enter Earthweek/Chronicle. It covers worldwide environmental issues and various links to information. As always questions and contributions of information are welcome.

Steve Tomlinson  
[stomlinson015@gmail.com](mailto:stomlinson015@gmail.com)

## STANISLAUS AUDUBON OUTINGS



CALAVERAS BIG TREES STATE PARK  
 MAY 16, 2026



MODESTO RECFEST  
 MAY 17, 2026



KNIGHTS FERRY  
 MAY 24, 2026



THE DARDANELLE  
 JUNE 6, 2026

## STANISLAUS AUDUBON FIELD TRIPS

### July-August 2026

No scheduled Field Trips  
 Watch the Stanislaus Audubon website and/or Facebook page for possible August pop-up trips!

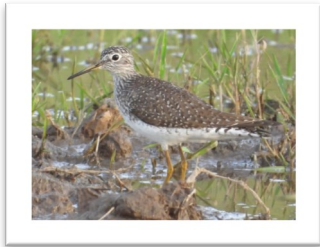
RECENT SIGHTINGS OF **RARE** OR UNCOMMON BIRDS

APRIL – MAY 2026

\*Review Species

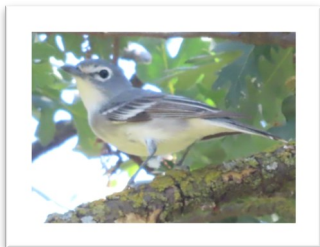
STANISLAUS COUNTY

Harold and Sharon Reeve had a SOLITARY SANDPIPER on Carter Road on April 4.



SOLITARY SANDPIPER  
© Sharon Reeve

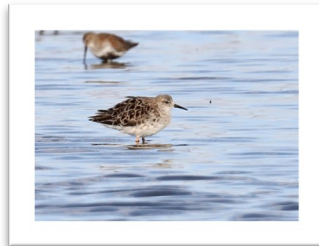
Dale Swanberg had a GRAY FLY-CATCHER at Dry Creek Regional Park on April 8. Daniel Gilman had a **PLUMBEOUS VIREO\*** near Wycliffe Drive in Dry Creek Park on May 13.



PLUMBEOUS VIREO  
© Daniel Gilman

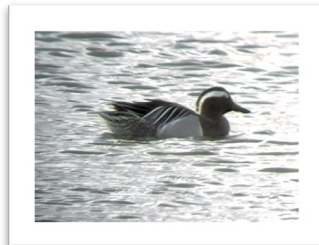
MERCED COUNTY

Jack McDonough and Swanna Berg had a **RUFF** at Merced N.W.R. on April 1.



RUFF  
© Jack McDonough

Pete Dunten had a CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD at Dinosaur Point Road on April 5. John Fulton had four SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS at Merced N.W.R. on April 6. Steve Johnston had two **GARGANEYS** on Gun Club Road on April 13.



GARGANEY  
© Steve Johnston

Gary Woods had a CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD at Lake Yosemite on April 14. Rob and Jeanene MacLean had a **WHITE WAGTAIL** at Merced N.W.R. on April 18. Pete Dunten had a GRAY FLY-CATCHER at Basalt Campground on April 19.

**So Long, Elaine cont.**

She has been on 200+ hikes/backpacks as a leader or participant.

During this past year, Elaine authored a book on hikes in the San Joaquin Valley region. In Elaine's own words:

"I have become a better advocate and appreciator of nature and wilderness thanks to the Sierra Club. The San Joaquin Valley is a special landscape, but not that easy to protect or conserve, thanks to water, development, toxins, and other issues with financial interests. Our Yokuts management team has always stood up for the environment and worked to inform our community to help become better stewards."

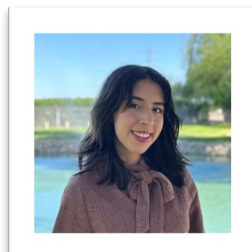
Elaine taught junior high science in Modesto for years, exposing students to the natural world including taking them on field trips. When I think of Elaine, these words come to mind - teacher, leader, scientist, advocate, giver, author, musician, hiker, backpacker, and friend.

Not surprisingly, Elaine has already "plugged into" the North Coast group of the Redwood Chapter of the Sierra Club. Our loss is their gain. Thank you Elaine for your many years of service to our group and for the environment. As you follow your heart to Humboldt County, know that you will be missed.

Kent Mitchell  
Political Chair

**2026 GRAYSON SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT**

Priscilla Garcia, M.S. candidate in Biological Sciences of Stanislaus State, is the eighth recipient of the Grayson Scholarship awarded by Stanislaus Audubon Society. On April 16, 2026, Sal Salerno gave the \$1,000 check to Priscilla at the Vasche Library.



PRISCILLA GARCIA

Our Audubon chapter would greatly appreciate any directed donations from its members for this ongoing scholarship. Donations may be sent by check to Stanislaus Audubon Society, with "scholarship" in the memo line, to: P.O. Box 4012, Modesto, CA 95352.

## STANISLAUS AUDUBON SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2025-26

**President, Newsletter:** Salvatore Salerno    **Vice President, Field Trips, Membership:** John Harris  
[jhh.birder@gmail.com](mailto:jhh.birder@gmail.com)

**Treasurer:** Annhenrie Campbell    **Secretary:** Daniel Gilman    **Conservation:** Jody Hallstrom

**Christmas Bird Counts:** Harold Reeve, Siera Nystrom , John Fulton    **Social Media:** CeCe Hurst

**Events, Education, Scholarship, Online Newsletter:** David Froba, Chris Magaña, Kathy Rasmussen, Tom Myers, Xavier Sandoval, Ann Kohlhaas, Madeline Yancey, Bella Howell, Jim Ross

**Advisory Committee Members:** Eric Hopson, Richard Brown    **Website Manager:** Jim Gain

Visit our website at [stanislausbirds.org](http://stanislausbirds.org). Like us on Stanislaus Audubon Facebook and Instagram.

Those who wish to receive Valley Habitat online, please contact John Harris.

New members or renewing members: Use renewal form from National Audubon Society,

<http://www.audubon.org/renew>. Use Chapter Code C36.

Renewal date of membership is on the label of Audubon Magazine. Memberships are \$30 yearly.

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New members: <http://www.audubon.org/membership/benefits>

Renewal members: <http://www.audubon.org/renew>

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION UPDATE FOR NEW OR RENEWING AUDUBON MEMBERS

Stanislaus Audubon Society memberships are processed by National Audubon Society. If you are a current member, your membership number and expiration date will *no longer* appear on your newsletter label, but on your Audubon Magazine label. You should receive Audubon Magazine quarterly. If you wish to receive Valley Habitat online only, or if you have questions about your membership status,

please contact John Harris at [jhh.birder@gmail.com](mailto:jhh.birder@gmail.com)

If you are *not* a current member, please consider joining during this opportune time to do so.

**Membership donations from all new members go directly to your local chapter in your first year of membership. This would help to pay for our chapter's ongoing expenses, such**

**as the Grayson Scholarship, printing of Valley Habitat, tabling events, and presenting Zoom bird programs, among others. Our chapter code is C36. You may join National Audubon Society at this website:**

<https://www.audubon.org/membership/benefits>

**Yokuts Group of the Sierra Club**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Chair: Steve Tomlinson  
[stomlinson015@gmail.com](mailto:stomlinson015@gmail.com)  
 Vice Chair: *Vacant*  
 Political Chair: Kent Mitchell  
 Secretary: *Vacant*  
 Treasurer: Sandy Wilson  
 Conservation and Sustainability Chair: Milt Trieweiler  
 Membership Chair: Anita Young  
 At-Large: Jeanne Homsey

**SPECIAL / STANDING COMMITTEES**

**Finance**

Sandy Wilson  
 Steve Tomlinson  
 Candy Klaschus  
 Doug Hardie (Calendar Sales)

**Outings**

Chair: *Vacant*

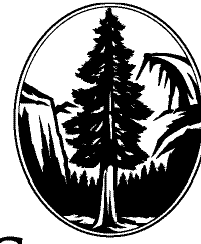
**Communications**

Kathy Weise (Mailings)  
*Vacant* (Publicity)  
 Kevin Augustine (Valley Habitat)  
[kaugustine@csustan.edu](mailto:kaugustine@csustan.edu)  
 Jeanne Homsey (Hospitality)  
*Vacant* (Programs)  
 Jason Tyree (Webmaster)  
*Vacant* (Elections/Nominating)

**Recycling**

*Vacant*

\*Executive Committee officers are elected by the general membership and are appointed by the Executive Committee for two-year terms.



**SIERRA CLUB**  
 FOUNDED 1892

Sierra Club membership enrollment form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_  
 State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Individual Membership</b>	<b>Joint Membership</b>	
___ Special Offer	\$15	
___ Regular	\$39	\$49
___ Supporting	\$75	\$100
___ Contributing	\$150	\$175
___ Life	\$1000	\$1250
___ Student	\$25	\$35
___ Senior	\$25	\$35
___ Limited Income	\$25	\$35

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax-deductible. Your dues include \$7.50 for the subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1.00 for your chapter newsletter.

Payment Method: Check \_\_\_ Mastercard \_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_  
 Cardholder Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Enclose payment information and mail to:

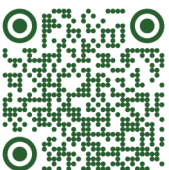
Sierra Club  
 P.O. Box 7059  
 Merrifield, VA 22116-7509

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 Yokuts Group

[Yokuts website](#)

[Yokuts MeetUp](#)

[Yokuts Facebook](#)



Yokuts Group  
Mother Lode Chapter  
Sierra Club  
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Modesto, CA 95353

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CURRENT RESIDENT OR

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## Yokuts Outings

Check out the current outings posts at our Meetup page:

<http://www.meetup.com/S-M-S-SierraClub>



All adults are welcome, including those who are not members of Sierra Club. We generally meet at a designated local parking area and then carpool to the event site. We also have fun off the trail with social events such as dinners, movie nights, Christmas Parties, and potlucks.