



# White-tailed Kite

NEWSLETTER OF ALTACAL BIRD ALLIANCE

Dedicated to Preserving and Protecting Birds and Their Habitats. Serving Butte, Glenn, and Tehama Counties of Northern California

October • November 2026

## AltaCal Programs

Programs for the general community are normally held on the third Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at 1968 E 8th St, Chico, CA 95928

In December the program is held on the second Monday.

In June, July, and August there are no programs.

## October Program

Monday, October 19, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.  
at Chico Creek Nature Center & on Zoom

## From The Galápagos Islands to Machu Picchu- Ecuador and Peru

Presented by Ken Sobon

Join Ken Sobon as he shares stories from his recent journey to the Galápagos Islands, Ecuadorian cloud forest, coastal islands of Peru, and the iconic Machu Picchu. This presentation promises to both entertain and inspire, with a mix of birds, animals, and fascinating ancient history.

See the elusive Genovesa Island finches that elude many travelers, the majestic giant tortoises, and the four distinct species of boobies. He also delves into the history of the ancient Inca Empire, highlighting the awe-inspiring Saqsaywaman, a citadel with one rock weighing an estimated 200 tons, and then finally the lost city of Machu Picchu."



Great Frigate Bird



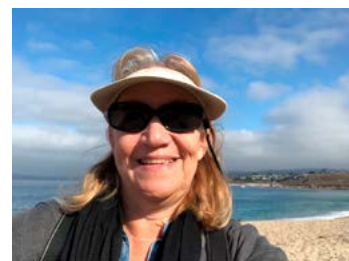
Blue-footed Boobie

## Behind the Binoculars: Meet Your AltaCal Bird Alliance Field Trip Leaders

by Karen L. Smith

### Joyce Bond

Joyce has been an avid birder for more than three decades. She is a member of AltaCal Bird Alliance and has led birding trips for AltaCal for over 10 years. She is a seasoned field trip leader and helps participants learn how to identify birds in the field from field marks and by ear. She also teaches a class called "Birding in the Chico Area" for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at CSU, Chico. Her hobbies include painting and photographing birds. Join Joyce at Bucks Lake September 27, Rio Vista Unit and Llano Seco Unit in November.



Joyce Bond

### Noah Ramsey

Noah is the newest member of our Field Trip Leader team. He grew up in Oroville and graduated from Cal Poly Humboldt with a Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Ecology, Conservation, and Management in 2026. While attending Cal Poly Humboldt he worked on bird banding projects and point count surveys in the Eastern Sierras. When not working in the field he enjoys birding, kayaking, and hiking; spending as much time outside as possible. Join Noah at two upcoming field trips: Loafer Creek Trail in October and Gray Lodge Wildlife Area in November.



Noah Rasey



## AltaCal Bird Alliance

635 Flume St, Chico, CA 95928

(530) 520-9050

### Staff

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## Board Meetings

4:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month.

AltaCal Members are welcome to attend.



## Trip Report

### Revisiting Paradise Lake and Merlo Park

August 13, 2026

*By Karen L. Smith*

A small group of birders joined AltaCal Bird Alliance for cool birding at Paradise Lake in Magalia and Clotilde Merlo Park in Stirling City led by Joyce Bond. At the beginning of the Paradise Lake trail, the group was pleasantly surprised to hear a **Pileated Woodpecker**, a much sought-after bird, in the trees above. It did a fly-by a couple of times and everyone got to see it. The group also saw **Wilson's Warbler**, a first for the season. At Clotilde Merlo Park, the group was excited to spot a **White-headed Woodpecker** and saw several fledgling **Yellow-rumped Warblers** chasing each other through the trees. All participants had a great time and spent time cooling off before returning to the high temperatures of Chico. Below is a list of birds that were seen at each location.

#### Paradise Lake, Magalia

- » Mallard
- » Anna's Hummingbird
- » Turkey Vulture
- » Osprey
- » Red-shouldered Hawk
- » Belted Kingfisher
- » Acorn Woodpecker
- » Pileated Woodpecker
- » Northern Flicker
- » Western Flycatcher
- » Cassin's Vireo
- » Steller's Jay
- » Red-breasted Nuthatch
- » Brown Creeper
- » Bewick's Wren
- » Lesser Goldfinch
- » Spotted Towhee
- » Wilson's Warbler
- » Western Tanager

#### Clotilde Merlo Park, Stirling City

- » Mallard
- » Anna's Hummingbird
- » Turkey Vulture
- » Hairy Woodpecker
- » White-headed Woodpecker
- » Black Phoebe
- » Common Raven
- » American Crow
- » Bushtit
- » Golden-crowned Kinglet
- » Red-breasted Nuthatch
- » Brown Creeper
- » American Robin
- » Lesser Goldfinch
- » Yellow-rumped Warbler

# Bird Trips

**Please note our new field trip registration process is now done through Zeffy. Links for each field trip can be found at [altacal.org/calendar](http://altacal.org/calendar)**

- Pre-registration is required for trips and can be completed by following our registration links to Zeffy.
- Signing an AltaCal Liability Waiver is a requirement to attend all field trips. Completed Liability Waivers are valid until June 30, 2027.
- Carpools are encouraged, but are optional and up to the individual. It is always nice to offer compensation to the driver if you ride in a carpool.

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## Humboldt County Camp and Bird

*October 7-11*

**Leader: Ken Sobon**

REGISTRATION IS FULL

Join us for our annual fall camping trip to Humboldt County. This year, we're excited to explore the diverse birding opportunities and rare bird sightings that Humboldt County has to offer. This trip replaces our annual trip to Pt. Reyes.

## Slacker Saturday at Gray Lodge Wildlife Area

*Saturday, October 17, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.*

**Leader: Skip Augur**

Fee: \$5.97 Lands Pass required

Meet at Park and Ride at 10 a.m. (closest to Hwy 99). We will then carpool to the Gray Lodge Wildlife Area (arrival at 11 am). A Lands Pass (\$5.97) or hunting/fishing license is required for this field trip. You may purchase a lands pass here: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Licensing/Lands-Pass> or at Sportsman's Warehouse, Dick's Sporting Goods, or Big 5 Sporting Goods. All birders and nature lovers are welcome, especially those just learning about birds or wanting to learn about the birds of the Pacific Flyway. Bring binoculars, lunch, water, bug repellent and a snack. Contact Skip Augur [wba@acm.org](mailto:wba@acm.org), 530-519-4724 for questions. To register for this field trip, go to [altacal.org/calendar](http://altacal.org/calendar) and click on the Zeffy link.

## Loafer Creek Loop

*Saturday, October 24, 8 – 11 a.m.*

**Leader: Noah Ramsey**

Limit: 15 participants

Fees: \$8.00 parking fee at the park

This trip is located within Lake Oroville State Park at Loafer Creek Recreation Area. The trail begins on the shores of Lake Oroville with views of the Bidwell Bridge then quickly turns inland towards an oak forest. Much of the beginning of the hike travels through a burn scar from the north complex offering unique views of perching birds and new habitat evolving each year. The hike is a total of three miles with the option of stopping at Brooks Orchard which is only 1 mile from the trailhead. The loop will take us through Brooks Orchard across a few small creeks and dense oaks. Then the trail follows the park road back to the trailhead. The beginning of the trail is prime habitat for passerine species and woodpeckers while later in the hike raptors can be spotted among the denser canopies of oaks and along the road section the trail is lined with manzanita, a favorite of Anna's hummingbirds. The trail is mostly flat with only a few hills to

AltaCal Bird Alliance's scheduled field trips are a great way to experience a variety of birding areas, with an experienced trip leader.

Occasionally "Pop-up" Birding Field Trips, that aren't listed here, will be posted on the AltaCal Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/altacalaudubon/>) and the AltaCal Bird Alliance webpage (<http://www.altacal.org/calendar>). All field trip registration is done through Zeffy.

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traverse, the portion from the trailhead to Brooks Orchard is not shaded due to the burn scar but the latter portion is all shaded. Bring water, snacks, sturdy shoes and binoculars. Location of the trailhead (39.5319289, -121.4470258)

Detailed directions will be sent to those who register for the field trip. For questions, contact Noah Ramsey at [noahramsey16@gmail.com](mailto:noahramsey16@gmail.com). To register for this field trip, go to [altacal.org/calendar](http://altacal.org/calendar) and click on the Zeffy link.

## Chico Oxidation Ponds

*Thursday October 29, 8:30 – 11 a.m.*

**Leaders: Karen White and Karen Smith**

Limit: 15 participants

Join us for a leisurely walk at the Chico Oxidation Ponds. We will likely see Shorebirds, Herons, Egrets, Kingfisher, Ducks and Geese, maybe even a Virginia Rail or Sora. Meet at the main gate to the Chico Water Pollution Control Plant at 4827 Chico River Road at 8:30 am. Bring binoculars and/or your camera. If you need to borrow binoculars, please let us know as we have extras that are available on loan. Optional items: water, snacks and insect repellent. For questions, contact Karen White at [kwhite36912@yahoo.com](mailto:kwhite36912@yahoo.com). To register for this field trip, go to [altacal.org/calendar](http://altacal.org/calendar) and click on the Zeffy link.

## Llano Seco Unit of the Sacramento River NWR

*Sunday, November 1, 8:30 – 10:30 a.m.*

**Leader: Grant Heath**

We'll meet at Llano Seco's parking lot at 8:30 a.m. and bird from the platform before walking to the back section. We could see sandhill cranes, shorebirds, waterfowl, loggerhead shrike, western bluebirds, and raptors! Bring water, snacks and binoculars. For questions, contact Grant Heath, [grantheath01@gmail.com](mailto:grantheath01@gmail.com). To register for this field trip, go to [altacal.org/calendar](http://altacal.org/calendar) and click on the Zeffy link

## Rio Vista Unit of the Sacramento River NWR

*Saturday, November 7, 9–11:30 a.m.*

**Leader: Joyce Bond**

Limit: 12

The mixed habitats at the Rio Vista Unit gives us the opportunity to see a variety of birds, including several species of woodpeckers, White-breasted Nuthatches, Western Bluebirds, a variety of sparrows, wrens, and other songbirds. We'll walk around the 2.5-mile loop trail through woods, open areas, and along the river. Contact Joyce Bond at [chantedor@gmail.com](mailto:chantedor@gmail.com) if any questions. To register for this field trip, go to [altacal.org/calendar](http://altacal.org/calendar) and click on the Zeffy link.

## Bird Trips

Continued from previous page

### **Beginning Birding – Mendocino Genetic Resource Center aka Chico Seed Orchard**

*Saturday, November 14, 8:30-10:30 a.m.*

**Leaders: Karen Smith & Karen White**

Limit: 10 participants

Join us for a flat mile-and-a-half stroll through the Mendocino Genetic Resource Center, a 209-acre site used for plant research and breeding that provides a beautiful habitat for a variety of birds. We hope to see quail, sparrows, flycatchers, woodpeckers, finches, bushtits, raptors, and more. This field trip will be focused on beginning birders but is open to all levels of birding experience. Stephen Thomas, with the U.S. Forest Service, will join us to give a brief talk about the history of the Chico Seed Orchard and what's new today. If you need to borrow binoculars, please let the field trip leader know ahead of time. Meet us at 2741 Cramer Lane at 8:30 a.m. Contact Karen Smith for questions at [fieldtrips@altacal.org](mailto:fieldtrips@altacal.org). To register for this field trip, please visit [altacal.org/calendar](https://altacal.org/calendar) and click on the Zeffy link.

### **Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge**

*Sunday, November 15, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

Leader: Skip Augur

Fee: \$6.00 per vehicle, free with National Parks pass or federal duck stamp

Join us for a fun-filled day of looking for winter migrants. Meet at the Chico Park & Ride at 10 a.m. (closest to Hwy 99). We'll carpool to the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge, located just south of Willows. The refuge has an auto tour loop and an observation deck that offer great views of huge numbers of ducks and geese, including Pintails, Northern Shovelers, Ring-Necked Ducks, Buffleheads, and Snow Geese, as well as grebes, herons, and other waterbirds. All birders and nature lovers are welcome, especially those just learning about birds or wanting to learn about the birds of the Pacific Flyway. There is a \$6 per vehicle fee, free with a National Parks pass or federal duck stamp. Bring binoculars, lunch, water, and a snack. For questions, contact Skip Augur at [wba@acm.org](mailto:wba@acm.org). To register for this field trip, go to [altacal.org/calendar](https://altacal.org/calendar) and click on the Zeffy sign-up link.

### **Gray Lodge Wildlife Area**

*Saturday, November 21, 8 – 11 a.m.*

**Leader: Noah Ramsey**

Limit: 15 participants

Fee: \$5.97 Lands Pass required

This trip is located within the Grey Lodge Wildlife Area. We will meet at Parking Lot 14. The two-mile flat trail begins with a large pond where cormorants and many duck species take shelter. As well, river otters are a common sighting in this pond. The trail meanders towards a viewing platform where many species can be seen from waterfowl to shorebirds. Near the platform turkey vultures may be roosting in the large grove of trees along the trail. These trees are also the first of many to check for migrants like Phainopepla. As the trail continues along the waterways that control the various ponds we get another site at a large pond with more waterfowl. There is a visiting blind at the far corner which will give us time to practice identification of waterfowl. Crossing the road, we come to the far edge of the pond we

saw at the parking lot and another pond which houses another viewing blind. Species we may see: Double-crested Cormorant, Red-shouldered Hawk, Bald Eagle, Mallard, American Wigeon, Green Heron, Bushtit, Red-winged Blackbird. After the trip has ended, you have the option to drive the auto tour and see even more ponds with plentiful waterfowl and other species like the Loggerhead Shrike.

A Lands Pass \$5.97 for the day of the trip is required unless you have a hunting or fishing license. You may purchase a lands pass here: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Licensing/Lands-Pass> or by phone 800-565-1458 or wherever hunting and fishing licenses are sold. For questions, contact Noah Ramsey at [noahramsey16@gmail.com](mailto:noahramsey16@gmail.com). To register for this field trip, go to [altacal.org/calendar](https://altacal.org/calendar) and click on the Zeffy link.

### **Llano Seco Unit of the Sacramento River NWR**

*Saturday, November 28, 9 a.m. – noon*

**Leader: Joyce Bond**

Limit: 15

We'll spend some time observing the waterfowl and other birds from the viewing platform, then we'll walk to the back section. This is a great location to see an abundance of wintering waterfowl and shorebirds. Besides a variety of ducks and geese, we may see Sandhill Cranes, Long-billed Curlews, and Loggerhead Shrikes, as well as raptors such as Bald Eagles and Northern Harriers. Contact Joyce Bond at [chantedor@gmail.com](mailto:chantedor@gmail.com) if any questions. To register for this field trip, go to [altacal.org/calendar](https://altacal.org/calendar) and click on the Zeffy sign-up link for this trip.

## **Birding Festivals**

### **California Swan Festival November 12 – 15, 2026**

Join Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust for a weekend of wildlife viewing across the Yuba-Sutter Region.

[www.caswanfestival.org](https://www.caswanfestival.org)

### **The Central Valley Bird Club Symposium November 19 – 22, 2026**

Stockton, California

Registration opens in early September 2026.

This year's speakers are Ed Pandolfino, Keith Hansen, and Hob Osterlund. Activities include: workshops, field trips, presentations by local college students studying bird populations, distribution, and conservation in the Central Valley, programming opportunities for high school-aged Young Birders, and more.

<https://cvbirds.org/events/central-valley-birding-symposium-2026/>

## Local Chapter Membership Form

### *Please join us!*

Your membership will help AltaCal Bird Alliance continue its important work.

For more than 50 years, AltaCal Bird Alliance has been dedicated to protecting birds and the places they call home. As a non-profit organization, 100% of membership dues support our mission.

We offer regularly scheduled **field trips** that focus on birds and bird habitats; membership **programs** with media presentations on birds and related topics; a bi-monthly **newsletter**, the **White-tailed Kite**; **website** [www.AltaCal.org](http://www.AltaCal.org); and **advocacy** to protect and conserve local habitats as well as special programs.

Leave a legacy for your grandchildren by writing AltaCal into your will or trust.

### **White-tailed Kite Submissions**

Articles, reports, sightings, and photos for publication should be sent by email to: Carla Resnick at [carlaphoto@gmail.com](mailto:carlaphoto@gmail.com), on the first of the month, prior to the next issue. For best results please send images as high resolution attachments.



### **AltaCal Programs & Projects**

Major sponsor, participant and fiscal agent for the annual  
**Snow Goose Festival**

Founder of the  
**Chico Creek Nature Center**

Sponsor of the City of Chico  
**Oxidation Ponds Wildlife Sanctuary**

Leading annual Christmas Bird Counts  
**in Chico and Oroville for more than 65 years**

Focusing on our Youth through  
**Scholarships and Environmental Education**

Advocating for Birds & Wildlife  
**when they are threatened**

Conducting surveys and participating in  
**Avian Research Projects**

Promoting bird-friendly yards through the  
**Neighborhood Habitat Certification Program**

### **AltaCal Bird Alliance Membership Form**

☐ **Goldfinch** \$5 / month or \$60 / year

☐ **Quail** \$7 / month or \$84 / year

☐ **Bluebird** \$10 / month or \$120 / year

☐ **Woodpecker** \$15 / month or \$180 / year

☐ **Falcon** \$20 /month for \$240 /year

☐ **Great-horned Owl** \$25 /month or \$300 / year

☐ **Robin** Low income\Student \$2-\$3 /month \$24-\$36 /year

☐ **Soar Higher** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
with Additional Donation

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☐ Save Paper! Send me an email only

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☐ email me *AltaCal in Action* Alerts

☐ I would be interested in volunteering to help

Please make check payable to AltaCal Bird Alliance, P.O. Box 3671, Chico, CA 95927

To pay using credit card or PayPal, please go to: [AltaCal.org](http://AltaCal.org) and click on **Join/Donate**

**IMPORTANT:** Membership in AltaCal Bird Alliance does not include membership in the National Audubon Society. We encourage you to also support National Audubon in their important education and lobbying efforts. To join the National Audubon Society, visit their website [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)

ALTACAL BIRD ALLIANCE  
POST OFFICE BOX 3671  
CHICO, CA 95927-3671

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In-home Delivery  
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Chico, Calif 95927



CURRENT RESIDENT

#### White-tailed Kite Submission Deadlines

| Issue       | Due Date |
|-------------|----------|
| Dec/Jan     | Nov 1    |
| Feb/Mar     | Jan 1    |
| April/May   | Mar 1    |
| June/July   | May 1    |
| August/Sept | July 1   |
| Oct/Nov     | Sept 1   |

## October Program

Monday, October 19, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.  
at Chico Creek Nature Center & on Zoom

## From The Galápagos Islands to Machu Picchu- Ecuador and Peru

Presented by Ken Sobon

