



White-tailed Kite

NEWSLETTER OF ALTACAL BIRD ALLIANCE

Chapter of the National Audubon Society serving Butte, Glenn, and Tehama Counties of Northern California

December 2025 • January 2026

AltaCal Programs

Programs for the general community are normally held on the third Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

In December the program is held on the second Monday and in June, July, and August there are no programs.

December Program – Movie Night

Monday, December 8, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

Chico Creek Nature Center 1968 E 8th St, Chico and on Zoom

HAWK WATCH Documentary Screening & Christmas Bird Count Updates

Every spring, thousands of Swainson's Hawks soar over Borrego Springs on their journey north. It's a breathtaking sight, but a fragile one. Habitat loss and climate change are putting their environment at risk. The time to act is now.

HAWK WATCH visually depicts the perilous existence of raptors during their journey, and the power of individuals to try to make a difference for their world. The survival of Swainson's Hawks depends on local communities. This is the heart of our story.

Support the Cause of HAWK WATCH!

www.gofundme.com/f/supporting-the-cause-of-hawk-watch

Also, this evening you'll hear about the upcoming Christmas Bird Counts in our area and get a preview of the bird count areas in Chico and Oroville. Christmas Bird Counts: Marysville - Thursday, December 18, 2025; Chico - Friday, December 19, 2025; and Oroville - Saturday, January 3, 2026.



Join Zoom Meeting

- » <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9227958804?pwd=Fiz5B4XvMuU7gppWBJAW1iGDdbOeTbO.1&omn=83733178435>
- » Meeting ID: 922 795 8804 Passcode: 468753

January Program: Snow Goose Festival of the Pacific Flyway

AltaCal is having our biggest program of the year!

26th Snow Goose Festival of the Pacific Flyway, Thursday – Sunday, January 22 – 25, 2026

All sorts of wonders are in store for birders and outdoor enthusiasts of all skills and ages at the 26th Snow Goose Festival of the Pacific Flyway, Thursday – Sunday, January 22 – 25, 2026. This action-packed 4-day event celebrates the remarkable journey of millions of waterfowl and raptors along the Pacific Flyway that call Northern Sacramento Valley their home during the winter months.



Events & Features

- Snow Goose Festival HQ featuring workshop presentations, exhibits, and free family Jr. Naturalist activities
- More than 50 field trips filled with fun and adventures

• "Gathering of Wings" Banquet at Bell Memorial Union at Chico State on Saturday, January 24, 2026

• Keynote Speaker: Kate Marianchild, environmental educator, naturalist, and author of award-winning book "Secrets of the Oak Woodlands" will speak at the banquet

• "Perch, Flutter, Soar" Art Exhibit at the Museum of Northern California Art (monca)

The festival is a great opportunity to spend the day, or all four days, learning about the natural wonders of the Pacific Flyway and its inhabitants. Visit our website snowgoosefestival.org for program and registration information. And be sure you are on our email list and "like" us on Facebook & follow us on Instagram as these are great sources for Festival information and updates.



AltaCal Bird Alliance

P.O. Box 3671, Chico, CA 95927-3671

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Board Meetings

*4pm on the second Wednesday of each month.
AltaCal Members are welcome to attend.*

AltaCal

You might have noticed our capital C in our name AltaCal. We're using this arrangement to emphasize our name's meaning: Upper California.



2024 Chico CBC. Photo by Joyce Bond

2025 Christmas Bird Counts

Marysville Christmas Bird Count
Thursday, December 18, 2025

Contact Asher Perla for more details: (530) 713-5562 or asher.perla@gmail.com

Chico Christmas Bird Count
Friday, December 19, 2025

Contact Jared Geiser (530) 520-9050 or director@altacal.org if you want to participate.

Oroville Christmas Bird Count
Saturday, January 3, 2026

Contact Jared Geiser (530) 520-9050 or director@altacal.org if you want to participate.

Classroom Education Starts in Orland

AltaCal Bird Alliance will be doing six weeks of classroom education in six fourth grade classes, starting November 4th and running up till the second week of December. As a culmination of the lessons on Raptors, Ducks and Geese, and Shorebirds, we will be going on buses to the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge, south of Willows. We will be teaching to more than 180 students. This is our third year of teaching fourth graders in Orland.

Each class will receive three hours of classroom instruction and presentations about our local birds, and many that migrate here to our Pacific Flyway and spend the winter. Students will make bird books that have many of the birds we will see at the refuge. AltaCal Bird Alliance will pay for the buses and material used for the lessons. Each meeting will focus on introducing and understanding the importance of biodiversity in the natural world and our impact on it. We will tell positive stories of making laws and regulations, providing habitat that protect, and show our interconnectedness and interdependency with our natural world.

—John Seid, Education/Biodiversity

From the Director's Desk

By Jared Geiser, Executive Director

Fall and winter are some of the best times for birding in the Sacramento Valley. In part due to our position on the Pacific Flyway and the incredible diversity of habitat our area has to offer. It always warms my heart to hear and see flocks of Sandhill Cranes and Snow Geese flying overhead. There's no better place to spend a fall morning or evening than the Llano Seco Wildlife Viewing Platform where it feels like we can get a glimpse of how the Sacramento Valley might have looked thousands of years ago. Large wetland areas expanding endlessly in all directions, Coast Ranges to the west, Sierra Nevada-Cascade Mountain Ranges to the east, Mt. Shasta to the north and the Middle Mountains¹ protruding from the Valley to the south. Although the wetland landscape surrounding Llano Seco is heavily managed, the flooded rice fields and managed wetlands provide crucial habitat for countless migratory waterfowl, shorebird, and raptor species, as well as tremendous beauty for outdoor enthusiasts and serious birders alike.

We've been busy at AltaCal Bird Alliance this fall promoting the appreciation and protection of birds and their habitats. Our new grad student intern, Tania Aguilar, and I reviewed CEQA environmental review documents for a large Glenn Colusa Irrigation District (GCID) erosion

mitigation project on the Sacramento River, which proposes to harm one mile of Riverside Bank Swallow nesting habitat. Check out the Conservation Corner article in this issue to learn more. In October, we led two outdoor education bird walks at Paradise Lake for at-risk youth. Ten highschoolers from the Butte Community School based in Chico and 20 elementary students from Spring Valley School based in Butte Valley above Oroville all got to experience bird watching and birding by ear on a hike in a beautiful, forested setting.

We're well into fall now, and our Monthly Program season has been off to a great start. AltaCal President, Ken Sobon, started us off with an amazing presentation which took us all on a journey through Northeast India, exploring the birds and wildlife of the Mishmi Hills & Assam regions. In October, we heard from Marily Woodhouse, all about her amazing work rescuing and rehabilitating raptors as well as protecting the Battle Creek Watershed through conservation advocacy and citizen science. NorCal Regional Land Trust presented *Celebrating and Conserving Ecosystems of our Region* at our November Program, a theme that unites all of us at AltaCal.

¹ Maidu tribes often referred to the middle mountains as Histum Yani and these mountains in the middle of the valley are associated with their creation story. John Sutter was a brutal European colonizer guilty of exploiting and murdering indigenous Californians. As such, the "Middle Mountains" is a more appropriate name than "Sutter Buttes" for these sacred mountains.

Fall Fund Drive

I'm excited to announce our Fall Fund Drive we are kicking off through Zeffy to raise funds for a few of AltaCal's special programs:

- **Northern Saw-whet Owl Research & Education Program**
- **Snow Goose Festival of the Pacific Flyway**
- **Classroom & Outdoor Education**
- **Youth Scholarships**
- **Neighborhood Habitat Certification Program**

How you can support AltaCal this fall:

1. **Donate:** Every dollar counts. Contribute now to help us reach our goal.
 - \$100+ donation makes you eligible for a **free BIRD box** (courtesy of seasoned woodworker and AltaCal member Calvin Hamilton)
 - \$50 donors are eligible for a **free AltaCal bumper sticker**
 - \$25 donors are eligible for a **free AltaCal sticker**
2. **Share:** Share our campaign with your friends, family, and on social media. Your advocacy can amplify our impact.
3. **Volunteer:** Your time and skills can make an impact too. From the Fall Fund Drive webpage on Zeffy, check the box "Add me to the AltaCal volunteer list" before checking out. Or send an email to director@altacal.org.

You can access our Fall Fund Drive donation link from our website [altacal.org](https://www.altacal.org), Or the link below:
<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/fall-fund-drive--2025>



Llano Seco at sunset. Photo by Jared Geiser

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

- 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, 2026.
- 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.

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.

Oxidation Ponds

Friday, December 5, 9 – 11:30 a.m.

Leaders: Matt Forster & Stuart Angerer

Limit: 20 participants

Join us on a trip to the Oxidation Ponds. This is a good place to learn (or re-learn) your waterfowl and to occasionally see some rare birds! We will likely see shorebirds, herons, egrets, and maybe hear a Virginia or Sora rail. Meet at the main gate to the Chico Water Pollution Control Plant at 4827 Chico River Road to sign in. Space is limited. Please bring water, snacks, binoculars and insect repellent. For questions, contact Matt Forster at findforster@yahoo.com. To register for this field trip, go to altacal.org/calendar and click on the Zeffy link.



Phainopepla.
Photo by Pamela Waldsmith

First Saturday at Llano Seco Unit of the Sacramento River NWR

Saturday, December 6, 8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Trip Leader: Ken Sobon

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 Ken Sobon, altacalpresident@gmail.com. To register for this field trip, go to altacal.org/calendar and click on the Zeffy link.

Beginning Birding at Peregrine Point Disc Golf Course

Tuesday, December 9, 9 – 11 a.m.

Leaders: Diana Hoffmeister and Liz Webster

Join us at a new location for this beginning birding field trip to the Peregrine Point Disc Golf Course, 8715 Deer Creek Hwy, Chico. Meet at the restroom and Bidwell Park/Peregrine Point Trail Head sign. This field trip is focused on beginning birders but is open to all levels of birding experience. This is a lovely area, with views of Chico and interesting terrain. Birds we may see are Nuttall's Woodpecker, California Scrub-Jay, Dark-eyed Junco, and Lesser Goldfinch. For questions, contact Liz Webster, elizabethw1107@gmail.com. To register for this field trip, go to altacal.org/calendar and click on the Zeffy link.

Hooker Oak Park

Saturday, December 13, 9 – 11 a.m.

Trip Leaders: Grant Heath and Pamela Waldsmith

We'll meet at the first parking lot at Hooker Oak Park closest to the disc golf course and walk along the trails. We will see a variety of plant and bird life through the oak woodlands, and over Big Chico Creek. We hope to see birds such as Golden-Crowned Sparrows, Hermit Thrushes, Phainopepla, and Ruby-Crowned Kinglets. For questions, contact Grant Heath, grantheath01@gmail.com or 530-514-0487. To register for this field trip, please visit altacal.org/calendar and click on the Zeffy link.

Winter Birding Trek: Colusa National Wildlife Refuge

Saturday, December 13, 8 – 11:30 a.m.

Trip Leader: Oscar Rodriguez

Meet: Colusa National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Parking Lot, 2180 Hwy 20, Colusa, CA 95932

Difficulty: Easy (flat trails and accessible viewing platform)

Join us for a winter birding trek through one of California's premier waterfowl refuges! December brings a spectacular migration of tens of thousands of geese, ducks, and shorebirds to Colusa's wetlands. We'll explore the observation platform and auto tour loop on foot, taking our time to spot Sandhill Cranes, Snow Geese, Northern Pintails, Cinnamon Teal, and maybe a Bald Eagle overhead. Bring binoculars, layers for cool weather, and a camera if you'd like to capture the morning light over the wetlands. For questions, contact Oscar Rodriguez, lonewolfthunderhorse@gmail.com. To register for this field trip, please visit altacal.org/calendar and click on the Zeffy link.

Chico Christmas Bird Count

Friday, December 19, 2025 7:30 am – 4:30 pm

Compiler: Jared Geiser

We will meet at the Chico Creek Nature Center at 7:30 a.m. to go over the details and assign any sections that haven't been claimed. All levels of birders are welcome. Beginners will be paired up with experienced birders. You will be assigned an area and spend the day counting birds in this area. Bring warm clothes, hiking shoes, lunch, bird books and binoculars. Compilation dinner will start at 4:30 p.m. at the AltaCal office—635 Flume St. To do a half-day, notify Jared ahead of time. If you want to participate in this important community science effort, please contact Jared Geiser (530) 520-9050 or director@altacal.org.

Oroville Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, January 3, 2026, 7:30 am – 4:30 pm

Compiler: Jared Geiser

All levels of birders are welcome. Beginners will be paired up with experienced birders. You will be assigned an area and spend the day counting birds in this area. Bring warm clothes, hiking shoes, lunch, bird books and binoculars. Compilation dinner will start at 4:30 p.m. (location to be determined). To do a half-day, notify Jared ahead of time. If you want to participate in this important community science effort, please contact Jared Geiser (530) 520-9050 or director@altacal.org.

Sunset Birding Trek: Oroville Wildlife Area

Saturday, January 10, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Trip Leader: Oscar Rodriguez

Meeting Location: Oroville Wildlife Area CA-162 E

39.49427780844716, -121.67333415532563

Difficulty: Easy (flat trails and observation points)

Join us for a sunset trek through the Oroville Wildlife Area, one of the Sacramento Valley's hidden gems for winter waterfowl. Watch as Snow Geese, Greater White-fronted Geese, ducks, and Sandhill Cranes gather on the flooded wetlands and raptors soar overhead. Participants will enjoy easy trails and observation points while guides share tips for identifying birds, spotting behaviors, and understanding winter wetland ecology.

Bring binoculars, warm layers, and a flashlight with a red lens for the return walk if needed. Cameras are encouraged — the golden light on the wetlands at sunset is spectacular. For questions, contact Oscar Rodriguez, lonewolfthunderhorse@gmail.com. To register for this field trip, please visit altacal.org/calendar and click on the Zeffy link.



Cedar Waxwing. Photo by Karen White



Fall Fund Drive!

***Now is the time to consider giving a little extra
to help whichever program(s) you would like to support:***

Northern Saw-whet Owl Research & Education Program Collecting valuable data and educating people about owls and their habitats for over 20 years.



Snow Goose Festival of the Pacific Flyway January 2026
will mark the 26th Annual!

Classroom & Outdoor Education Working with schools in Butte, Glenn, and Tehama Counties, AltaCal teaches students about local birds their habitats, and biodiversity both in the classroom and outside on field trips.



Neighborhood Habitat Certification Program We help people learn how to convert their thirsty lawns to drought-tolerant native plant gardens improving habitat for birds and wildlife



***...check out the cool bonus gifts at altacal.org
and donate today!***

Go to altacal.org and click on the FALL FUND DRIVE 2025.

Trip Report Birding and Kayaking on the Forebay

By Pamela Waldsmith and Karen L. Smith

On October 1, a fun, lively group of birders braved the cold and wet weather for an adventure kayaking and birding on the Thermalito Forebay. This was such a positive group of people, who stayed engaged through a bit of fall weather (cold, rain, wind). The highlights included a group of **Killdeer** taking a bath on a sandy shore, a flock of female **Common Mergansers** in the water, remnants of a Great Blue Heron rookery, a **Red-tailed Hawk** taking off, a group of **Turkey Vultures** migrating together in a sizable group, and a **Belted Kingfisher** made its debut briefly.



California Native Seed & Plant Swap

By Deborah Halfpenny, Neighborhood Habitat

Our first California Native Seed & Plant Swap, held on October 26th, was successful beyond our dreams! We would like to give a shout out (and a whole bunch of hugs) to all of the people who volunteered their time, money, and expertise to make the day possible. Besides the hardworking organizers from AltaCal's Neighborhood Habitat Certification Program and the Mount Lassen Chapter of CNPS, many other volunteers went above and beyond: Heritage Growers donated pounds of bulk seed, Chico State CA Climate Action Fellows packaged hundreds of seed packets, and Chico State College Corp helped at kids' activity stations. Even with all of the people who acquired free seeds for their gardens and projects, we had enough seeds left over to donate to restoration projects in Chico and Paradise.

Plans are already underway for next year's swap. We will be offering seed saving and cleaning workshops and other educational presentations beginning next spring and will be inviting other local groups who are working with native plants to join in the event. Watch for announcements throughout the coming year and start thinking about what you can grow to share with other native plant enthusiasts and biodiversity gardeners in our communities.

Flight for Survival: Take Action for Birds in a Changing Climate

By Dawn Garcia, Wildlife Biologist

Birds fill our skies with color and song, and for more than a century they have inspired citizen science projects and scientific research. Yet since the 1970s, North America's total bird population has declined by almost a third, nearly three billion breeding birds, and their numbers continue to decline. These are our everyday companions, finches, sparrows, and swallows, those that pollinate plants, disperse seeds, control insects, and signal the health of our ecosystems. Think of the canary in the coal mine.

Climate change is accelerating their decline. More frequent and intense storms, floods, fires, and heat waves destroy nesting grounds and food sources. Some birds are adapting by shrinking in body size or shifting their migration timing, but many are struggling to keep up. As the planet warms, birds must find new breeding grounds, coastal and island nests wash away, wetland habitats dry up, and delicate food cycles fall out of sync. Can they keep up?

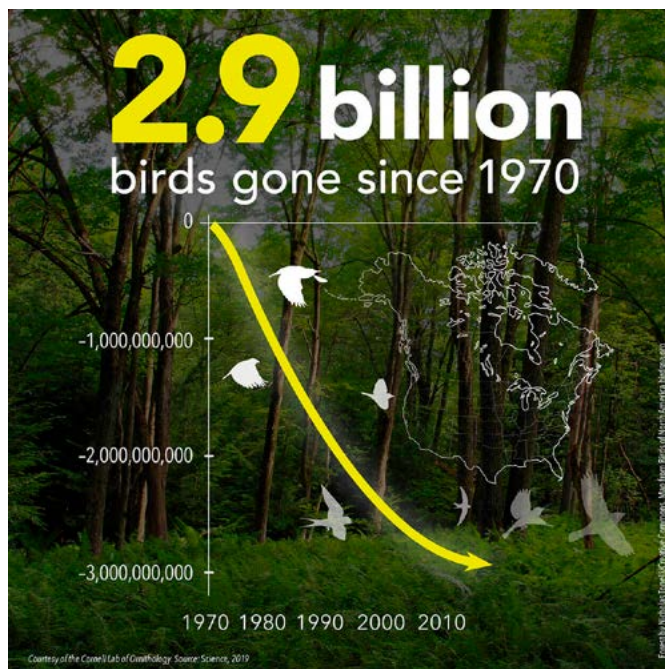
There is hope, and power, in what we do today. We can make a difference:

Protect nature: Support and vote for climate-smart policies, land conservation, and habitat restoration. American Bird Conservancy (ABC), National and California Audubon Societies, The Cornell Lab of Ornithology are examples of influential groups who monitor legislation and offer action alerts to easily contact your representative. AltaCal Bird Alliance actively supports Climate initiatives.

Create habitat: Provide clean water sources and plant native vegetation patches and containers in your yard or balcony. Contact your very own AltaCal for their Neighborhood Habitat Program. Calscape offers excellent native garden design.

Keep birds safe: Keep cats indoors or in catio, apply bird-safe window treatments, and avoid pesticides. ABC, Acopian Bird Savers, and Birds Be Safe offer solutions. BirdsBeSafe (a colorful cat collar) has scientifically proven that outdoor cats wearing these collars reduces bird kills!

Every garden, every choice, every voice matters. Let's help birds survive their greatest flight, the fight against climate change, to ensure their songs continue to greet every new dawn.



Conservation Corner: Protecting the River-loving Bank Swallows

By Tania Aguilar, AltaCal Intern & Chico State graduate student

Riparia riparia...their scientific name says it all. Commonly known as the bank swallow, these chatty birds rely on sandy river cliffs and riverbanks in riparian corridors to build their nesting colonies. Bank swallows are found in all continents except Australia and Antarctica, and in our neck of the woods, we can find them in the Sacramento and Feather Rivers. Combined, these rivers support about 70 percent of the statewide population, with most colonies occurring on the Sacramento River between Colusa and Red Bluff.^{1,2} Steep riverbanks subject to natural erosion provide suitable habitat for these migratory birds who journey to AltaCal in March from South America to breed and nest before returning to their wintering grounds in September.

Despite our deep understanding of their habitat needs, their cozy cavities and riparian areas they depend on are quickly disappearing. Bank stabilization and water diversion from our rivers have contributed to the bank swallow's decline³. Recently, Glen-Colusa Irrigation District proposed a "bank stabilization" project on 5,200 linear feet of the Sacramento River.⁴ Their plan to install riprap and huge concrete spur dikes protruding from the river's edge would remove nearly one mile of suitable bank swallow habitat. Impacts on local colonies would be detrimental to this state threatened species protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and CA Endangered Species Act. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology reports that bank swallows are common bird in steep decline and their population has "crashed by an estimated 89% since 1970"⁵

On October 21st, AltaCal submitted a public comment on the project's "Mitigated Negative Declaration" to Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District (GCID), informing them of the significant



Bank Swallows leaving their nest hole. Photo by member of the BANSTAC

unmitigated impacts their bank stabilization project would have on bank swallow nesting grounds. While advocating bank swallow conservation, AltaCal also emphasized the need for healthy rivers to support a thriving ecosystem. We urge GCID to adequately outline their environmental impacts. These waters and the ecosystems they support deserve our respect. It takes a colony to protect, restore, and conserve our local species, so keep an eye out for future opportunities to comment on this and other issues. Contact Jared, director@altacal.org, if you want to join our conservation committee to help us protect birds and their habitats.

Now, grab your binoculars and go enjoy the flocks of honking geese, cranes, and other birds traveling the wonderful Pacific Flyway.

1 Green, M, L Mewaldt, R Duke, and D Winkler. "California Department of Fish and Wildlife California Interagency Wildlife Task Group- Bank Swallow." September 1999, n.d.

2 Schlorff, R.W. Bank Swallow Recovery Plan. Calif. Dep. of Fish and Game, Nongame Bird and Mammal Section. Report. 93-2. 27pp. 1999.

3 Golet, Gregory H., Kristen E. Dybala, Joseph G. Silveira, et al. "The Importance of High Streamflow and Bank Erosion for the Bank Swallow, a Sentinel Species of Alluvial River Systems." *Ecological Indicators* 174.2025.

4 Anchor QEA. Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District Gradient Facility Rehabilitation Project-Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration Draft. September 2025. https://www.gcid.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Draft-ISMND-GCID-Gradient-Facility-Rehabilitation-Project_Public-Review.pdf

5 allaboutbirds.org/guide/Bank_Swallow/lifehistory

Bird Spotlight

Snow Goose (*Anser caerulescens*)

By Ryan Schwalm, AltaCal Media Editor

The titular bird of AltaCal's very own Snow Goose Festival, these geese are widely loved for their snowy plumage and the sheer immensity of their migrating flocks. Snow geese have a white and dark color morph, the latter of which was once known as the Blue goose, and thought to be a separate species until 1983. The white morph is all white with black wing tips and a pink bill. The blue morph has darker body feathers to varying degrees, and retains a white head. Often their face feathers have an orange hue which is caused by iron oxides from foraging. Snow geese appear similar to the smaller, more compact Ross's goose.

Conservation

Snow geese are one of the most populous waterfowl in the world, but it wasn't always so. Hunting was banned in 1916 due to population decline (down to ~3,000 for the Greater snow goose), but it was reopened in 1975 after regrowth. Now, populations are so numerous that some breeding and wintering habitats are suffering from being over-foraged. Current estimates are around 14-16 million for the global breeding population. However, these geese are still federally protected as a game bird and hunting is managed differently for each population/area. Waterfowl habitat restoration is a major factor supporting the population rebound of the snow goose. This includes winter flooding of rice fields and managed wetlands such as Gray Lodge and the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge.

Habitat

Breeding and summer seasons are spent in the tundras of Northern Alaska and Canada, closer to the coasts, with some even reaching as far as Northeast Russia and Northwest Greenland. Winter migrations travel into the U.S. and Mexico, in three distinct vertical bands across North America (western, mid-continent, and eastern). During migration, they can be found in large flocks around lakes, ponds, coastal salt marshes, streams, farm fields, estuaries, brackish marshes, slow-flowing rivers, grasslands, marine inlets and sandbars.

Nesting

Snow geese mate for life. The female chooses a nest site usually protected by vegetation or rocks in elevated areas where the snow first melts in spring. Females build the nest on the ground by scraping a depression in the earth and padding it with her own down and sometimes material like sea-lyme grass, eelgrass, leaves, seaweed, and twigs. The first egg may be laid within one hour of choosing the nesting site. Females incubate for 21+ hours a day, while the male may stand guard against predators and other geese.



Snow Geese flying at Sac Refuge.
Photo by Mary Muchowski

Eggs

2-6 eggs in a clutch, about 3.2"x2.1" in size. Oval-shaped and various textures. Eggs are creamy white and very susceptible to stains. Dirtier shells often indicate the eggs which were laid first. Only one brood in breeding season. Incubation lasts 24 days.

Young

Chicks are quite developed upon hatching and may leave the nest within a few hours of hatching to forage for food. Young grow quickly and may walk up to 50 miles within the first few weeks. Molting snow geese can outrun many predators, proving evasive even without flight. Snow geese fledge at 42-50 days, and will stay with their parents until mate selection at 2 or 3 years of age. Mates chosen will be a similar color/size of the family the goose grew up with.

Diet

Snow geese are entirely vegetarian except for goslings which may eat fly larvae in early life. Through a foraging process known as "grubbing" they will uproot and eat almost any part of a plant including tubers, roots, leaves, seeds, and stems. Wild grasses, sedge, bulrushes, horsetail, berries, flowers, and waste grains are all part of a Snow goose diet.

Sources:

https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Snow_Goose/id
<https://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/snow-geese>
<https://ebird.org/species/snogoo>
<https://abcbirds.org/bird/snow-geese/>

Local Chapter Membership Form

Please join us!

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

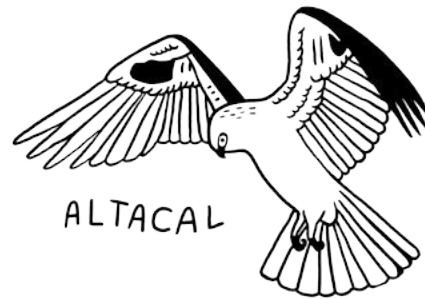
AltaCal Bird Alliance is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. AltaCal is a separately incorporated non-profit organization with a local chapter membership. 100% of membership dues goes to support local projects and activities.

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; 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. Reach out to director@altacal.org for more information on how this can be set up.

White-tailed Kite Submissions

Articles, reports, sightings, and photos for publication should be sent by email to: Carla Resnick at 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

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goldfinch \$5 / month or \$60 / year | <input type="checkbox"/> Falcon \$20 /month for \$240 /year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quail \$7 / month or \$84 / year | <input type="checkbox"/> Great-horned Owl \$25 /month or \$300 / year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bluebird \$10 / month or \$120 / year | <input type="checkbox"/> Robin Low income\Student \$2-\$3 /month \$24-\$36 /year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Woodpecker \$15 / month or \$180 / year | <input type="checkbox"/> Soar Higher \$ _____
with Additional Donation |

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ email _____

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☐ Renewal

☐ Gift

☐ email me *AltaCal in Action* Alerts

☐ I would be interested in volunteering to help

Please make check payable to AltaCal Audubon Society, P.O. Box 3671, Chico, CA 95927

To pay using credit card or PayPal, please go to: 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

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CURRENT RESIDENT

White-tailed Kite Submission Deadlines

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

December Program

Monday, December 8, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.
Chico Creek Nature Center 1968 E 8th St, Chico and on Zoom
**HAWK WATCH Documentary Screening & Christmas
Bird Count Updates**



January Program

26th Snow Goose Festival of the Pacific Flyway
Thursday – Sunday, January 22 – 25, 2026

All sorts of wonders are in store for birders and outdoor enthusiasts of all skills and ages at the 26th Snow Goose Festival of the Pacific Flyway, Thursday – Sunday, January 22 – 25, 2026. This action-packed 4-day event celebrates the remarkable journey of millions of waterfowl and raptors along the Pacific Flyway that call Northern Sacramento Valley their home during the winter months.

