



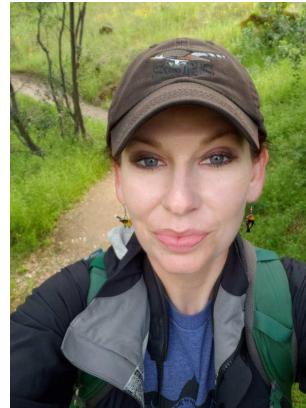
Fresno Audubon Society Annual Report for 2019

For more than a century, Audubon has built a legacy of conservation success. It connects people with nature and provides them the power to protect it. Audubon operates in widely diverse spheres ranging from protection and restoration of local habitats to the implementation of policies that safeguard birds, other wildlife and the resources that sustain us all—in the U.S. and across the Americas.

Nearly 500 Chapters nationwide engage members in grassroots conservation. The Fresno Audubon Society (FAS) chapter was organized in 1966 and is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. The mission of Fresno Audubon is to engage local communities in building a sustainable environment for people, birds, and other wildlife through education, science, and advocacy.



Robert Snow, FAS President 2014-2020



Rachel Clark, FAS President 2020

Board

The board of directors of Fresno Audubon Society determines the direction of and has fiduciary responsibility for the organization. The current yearly cycle of FAS activities starts in September and ends in May of the following year with little activity in June through August. The board meets monthly on the last Sunday of the month from August through May. FAS board meetings, held typically at the Fig Garden branch library, are open to the public and all are welcome. Annual elections are held at the December meeting each year. Board terms are for two years.

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Membership on the Board

At the end of 2019 the FAS board consisted of the following members:

Robert Snow – President
Radley Reep – Vice President
George Folsom – Treasurer
Barbara Bailey – Secretary
Rachel Clark – Member at large
Rich Gilman – Member at large
Nancy Gilmore – Outreach Chair
Nancy Griesser – Membership Chair
Judy Johnson – Member at large

At the December board meeting the following people were elected for two-year terms beginning in January 2020:

Rachel Clark – President
Robert Snow – Past President
Radley Reep – Vice President
George Folsom – Treasurer
Barbara Bailey – Secretary
Judy Johnson – Member at large
Nancy Gilmore, Nancy Griesser and Rich Gilman enter the second year of their two-year terms.

Work with California Audubon and sister chapters

There are 48 local Audubon chapters in California divided into five councils. FAS belongs to the Central Valley/Sierra Council. The other 11 chapters in our council are: Central Sierra Audubon Society, Eastern Sierra Audubon Society, Kern Audubon Society, Kerncrest Audubon Society, Sacramento Audubon Society, Sierra Foothills Audubon Society, Stanislaus Audubon Society, Tulare County Audubon

Society, Yolo Audubon Society and Yosemite Area Audubon Society. The council meets annually in October to discuss issues common to their chapters and to National Audubon Society. Because of the large geographical area covered by our council, the last meeting was held as a video conference.

National Audubon Society maintains a California office known as Audubon California, headquartered in San Francisco and with a significant presence in Sacramento. Each of the five California councils elects a representative to serve on the board of Audubon California to attend four meetings annually and to serve as liaison between their chapters and the Audubon California. Robert Snow is serving in his second 3-year term (expiring February 2022) as the representative of the Central Valley/Sierra Council.

Finances

Fresno Audubon Society had a nearly balanced budget in FY 2019 (January to December) with income of \$8,509 and expenses of \$8,578. We decided to move \$30,000 from our savings account to an investment account in mid-year, and our interest income increased from \$4 per year to \$1,454 for 6 months. A budget summary page is attached to this report as Appendix A.

Fundraising activities

In 2019 FAS had several targeted fundraising campaigns. These campaigns included a Birdathon, requests for donations for the purchase of 10 pairs of binoculars for our Introduction to Birding

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classes and a bird fountain for the bird feeder station at the River Center. These activities raised \$1,769. We received \$42 from Amazon Smile donations and \$73 from merchandise sales.

Grants

FAS had no grants in 2019, but we did apply for two grants for FY 2020. We requested \$4,329 from Audubon's Western Water program to fund a coordinator for the Pacific Flyway Shorebird Survey. This grant was not awarded. We also applied for \$650 from Audubon's Collaborative Grant program to install a native plant garden at the River Center around our bird feeder station. This grant was awarded for 2020 and work is proceeding.

Communications

Fresno Audubon Society communicates with current and potential members and the community through our monthly blog, *The Yellowbill*, through our Constant Contact e-mail system (909 contacts), and through Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (approximately 2,600 combined followers).

Website

The FAS website was refreshed in 2017 with a total makeover that included a subscribable Event Calendar for the first time. The update also moved our website to WordPress making it very simple to maintain and modify using internal resources. We are now considering updating again in FY2020 and are seeking member ideas on content.



FAS Website

The Yellowbill

FAS now publishes our newsletter as an online blog instead of as a printed newsletter. The newsletter (published September through May) includes the President's message, upcoming field trips and birding classes, a column by Jeff Davis on noteworthy birds seen in the previous month in Madera and Fresno counties, links to recent news articles about birds, and member photographs.

E-mail

FAS uses Constant Contact to inform our members about activities. Constant Contact also allows us to create events that members can register to attend. Registration allows trip leaders to know about how many people will attend, and it speeds the process by including a liability waiver during registration. Constant Contact is also used to manage our membership roster and has built-in fundraising tools. We had 909 contacts at the end of 2019.

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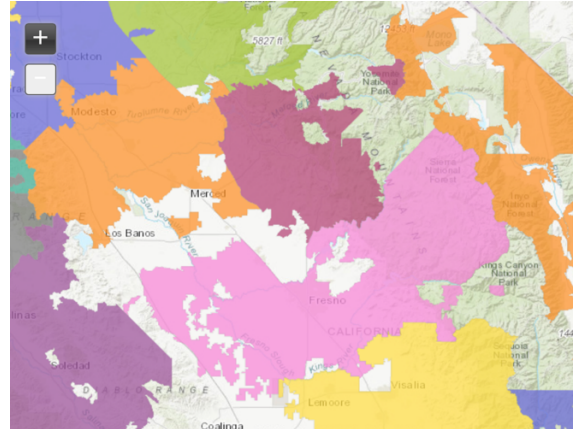
Social media

FAS maintains three social media accounts managed primarily by Nancy Gilmore. Our followers on Facebook (@FresnoAudubon) increased 70% from 714 in January 2019 to 1,214 in January 2020. We also maintain both Instagram (@fresnoaudubon, 217 followers) and Twitter (@fresnoaudubon, 1,167 followers) accounts. Social media and posting to KVPR, KFCF and FresYes Community Calendars have greatly increased the recruitment of people to our events.

Membership

Numbers: national and local

Any member of the National Audubon Society within the boundaries of Fresno Audubon Society (roughly Fresno and Madera counties with the exception of Fresno County within the Yosemite Area Audubon territory) is automatically a member of Fresno Audubon Society. In December 2019 FAS had 410 members through the National Audubon Society (NAS). We annually receive \$1,580 from NAS as a share of NAS dues for members within our territory. This is a fixed amount and is not dependent on the number of members we have through NAS.



Fresno Audubon Society territory is shown in light pink. The island without color represent zip codes without members.

FAS also has our own local chapter membership plan. The FAS membership year is from September 1 through August 31 each year. We had 122 local chapter members in December 2019. Three of these are lifetime members. Local chapter membership is a significant portion of our annual income.

We had a nominal increase in dues in September 2019. Annual dues for individuals were raised \$5 to \$25, and for families they were raised \$10 to \$35. This was the first increase in at least a decade and resulted in a nearly balanced budget for 2019.

Membership Activities

Fresno Audubon Society engaged over 700 people in activities in 2019 including 90 children. Nineteen volunteers contributed 2,164 hours to FAS efforts.

General Meetings

We held six General Meetings in 2019. Attendance was typically 10-30 people except for the December meeting which

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attracted 55 participants. The speakers and presentations were as follows:

January, "Sierra and Sequoia National Forests Conservation" by Jamie Ervin, Sierra Forest Coalition

February, "How Birds Navigate" by Larry Parmeter

March, "River Survey Training" by Robert Snow

April, "FAS Birding Class at the River Center" by Robert Snow

September, Potluck member dinner at Lost Lake Park

December, "Southeastern Arizona Bird Photography by Gary Woods

In August the board decided to reduce the number of general meetings to quarterly owing to low attendance. We held a potluck dinner in September instead of having an indoor meeting at our usual venue, the University of California Merced Center for Continuing Education.

Outings

FAS lead 30 field trips on Wednesdays and Saturdays in 2019. Field trip destinations included Merced Grasslands, O'Neill Forebay, Lost Lake Park, McKenzie Table Mountain Preserve, Shinzen Gardens, Kings River, Kern County deserts, Finegold Preserve, Ball Ranch, Basalt Campground, Swanson Meadow, Kings Canyon/Grant's Grove, Pinnacles National Park, Fresno/Clovis Wastewater Treatment Plant, Mariposa Grove/Wawona, Avocado Lake/Choinumni Park, Kaweah Oaks, Cricket Hollow, Panoche Valley, Merced National

Wildlife Refuge, and Del Puerto Road.

Attendance ranged from 8 to 35 people per trip.



Engaged birders by Larry Cusick

Birding Classes

FAS held two Introduction to Birding classes at the River Center in 2019 attended by a total of 35 people. We held one class at the BLM San Joaquin River Gorge property, teaching 12 people. We also presented 30-minute bird classes to the Sierra Unified School District 3rd grade class at the BLM Gorge property teaching 90 children.



Robert Snow teaching about birds to third grade class in the San Joaquin River Gorge.

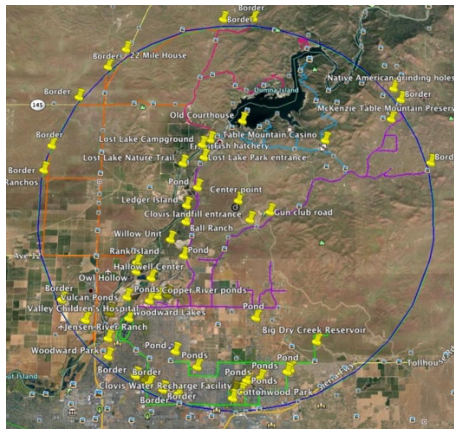
Citizen Science

Fresno Audubon undertakes a variety of projects each year under the general

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category of Citizen (or Community) Science. Citizen Science projects use volunteers to collect data for a variety of uses. The best-known example is the Christmas Bird Count (CBC), which has been held annually by Audubon chapters for over a century. FAS manages the Lost Lake CBC, and is involved in the Merced National Wildlife Refuge CBC and the Tehachapi CBC. In 2019, long-time CBC coordinator Kevin Ens-Rempel handed the reins over to Rachel Clark, who managed her first FAS CBC on December 14. A total of 35 participants formed 11 groups to cover the accessible sections inside the count circle. Between the 11 groups, a grand total of 262.7 miles were covered (224.7 by car and 38 by foot), and approximately 79.75 hours were spent counting birds (31 by car and 48.75 on foot). By the end of the day, 125 species had been observed. California Gull was by far the most numerous, with 5,595 individuals observed.



Lost Lake CBC circle

In 2019 FAS began surveys of the local San Joaquin River areas being restored to native habitat. Volunteers survey the areas at least monthly and record their data using eBird.

The goal is to monitor any changes in the avifauna along the river as a result of the restoration efforts. Volunteers submitted 31 checklists in 2019 for this project. We also participated again in the [Pacific Flyway Shorebird Survey](#) (PFSS) covering Mendota State Wildlife Area (SWA) and Los Banos SWA. The data were submitted to a database managed by [Point Blue Conservation Science](#). PFSS is an effort led by Point Blue and designed to guide the management and conservation of wintering shorebirds in the Pacific Flyway. This project contributes data to the Migratory Shorebird Project, the largest coordinated survey of wintering shorebirds on the Pacific Coast of the Americas now spanning 13 countries.

Community Outreach

Earth Day

FAS has been a sponsor and exhibitor of Earth Day Fresno for the past five years. We staff a booth that provides a quiz on birds and teaches the public about bird-friendly communities. We plan to again exhibit in 2020. Vice President Radley Reep also serves on the board of Earth Day Fresno.

County Board of Supervisors advocacy

Fresno Audubon has partnered with the League of Women Voters through FAS Vice President Radley Reep to get the county to include the public in developing a new general plan as required by State law.

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) will affect the availability of water for refuges. Members of Audubon California and Fresno Audubon have been

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attending meetings of the Groundwater Sustainability Agencies responsible for the refuge areas. Without our involvement the refuges may not have been considered in the drafting of the required Groundwater Sustainability Plans.

Fresno Audubon and Friends of Lost Lake Park are keeping a close watch on the Lost Lake Park Master Plan implementation. Lost Lake Park is the number one birding location in Fresno & Madera counties as indicated by the number of species observed there. The Master Plan has the potential to totally change the character of the property by removing riparian growth to increase river access and by recontouring large swaths of the floodplain area.

State legislature advocacy

Each year Audubon California organizes a "Lobby Day" at the state capital where volunteers meet with state senators and assembly members in support of legislation considered important to Audubon. In 2019 Robert Snow attended and met with staff of Senator Borgeas, Assemblyman Jim Patterson and Assemblyman Frank Bigelow to discuss legislation that would restore protections to migratory birds that were eliminated by the Trump administration.



Audubon Lobby Day 2019

Bird-friendly Communities

In 2019 FAS sought to increase our reach by teaming with the San Joaquin River Parkway. We installed a bird feeder station with bird fountain at the River House and began teaching Introduction to Birding classes there. We also applied for and were awarded a grant to install a Plants for Birds garden near the bird feeders. The plants were selected using Audubon's Plants for Birds website

(<https://www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds>), which allows a user to select native plants for their area that are valuable resources for birds.

Conclusion

We provide this report in an effort to give our membership a clear idea of how we spend the money our members entrust us with. This report is a first-of-its-kind for Fresno Audubon. Please let us know, through social media or email to admin@fresnoaudubon.org, whether you found this useful and informative. Your input will help us determine how to improve the report to meet your needs.



Appendix A

Fresno Audubon Society 2019 Financial Report

Opening Balance, All Accounts	\$41,189.37
Closing Balance, All Accounts	\$41,120.21
▼ Money In	\$7,053.03
Budget Income	\$6,821.14
Donations	\$1,161.13
FAS Membership	\$3,171.01
Fundraising Income	\$650.20
Amazon Smile	\$42.15
Birdathon	\$608.05
Goodies Sales Income	\$73.37
NAS Dues Share	\$1,579.75
Returned item	\$185.68
Returned Check	\$231.89
▼ Money Out Includes transfer to FAS CD account	-\$38,578.48
Budget Expense	-\$8,578.48
Californis Audubon meetings	-\$440.33
Conservation	-\$900.00
Constant Contact	-\$785.00
Education	-\$1,822.10
Equipment	-\$1,751.98
Printing	-\$70.12
Events	-\$200.00
Insurance	-\$1,548.00
PO Box	-\$234.00
Presentations	-\$189.00
Meeting Room Rent	-\$189.00
Storage Unit	-\$676.00
Taxes, Tax Prep	-\$718.00
Nonprofit status fee-tax	-\$18.00
Secretary Of State Annual Statement	-\$100.00
Tax Preperation	-\$600.00
Website Fees and Updates	-\$1,066.05
CD purchase	-\$30,000.00
Money In:	\$7,053.03
Net Total Income and Expenses	-\$1,525.45
Intrest Earned	\$1,456.29
Difference	-\$69.16