

EXPLORE BIRDING



BUTTE
COUNTY

Each year millions of birds soar along the Pacific Flyway as they migrate from Alaska to as far south as South America! Being rich in rice farms and waterways, Butte County is a destination for millions of waterfowl, making it a perfect place to experience the grandeur of the bird variety show during the winter months.

Try your hand at birding by using our local #BirdButteCA brochure to find the best bird watching spots in Butte County. Get out and explore the skies!

THE BEST BIRD VIEWING SPOTS

Using our list of easy-to-find bird viewing spots, we're sure you'll be able to spot all 15 birds (and more) during the winter migration.

A Bidwell Sacramento River State Park
12105 River Rd. Chico
Birds: 1,6,8,11,14

B Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve
3521 14 Mile House Rd. Forest Ranch
Birds: 1,2,5,8,14,15

C Gray Lodge State Wildlife Area
3207 Rutherford Rd., Gridley
Parking Fee \$4.58. Pay online at:
wildlife.ca.gov/Licensing/Lands-Pass
Birds: 1,3,4,6,7,8,10,11,12,14

D Jonesville Snowmobile Park
About 2 miles east of Cherry Hill
Campground on the Humboldt Road
(Butte County Road 91422), which is
accessed via Highway 32.
Birds: 2,5,14,15

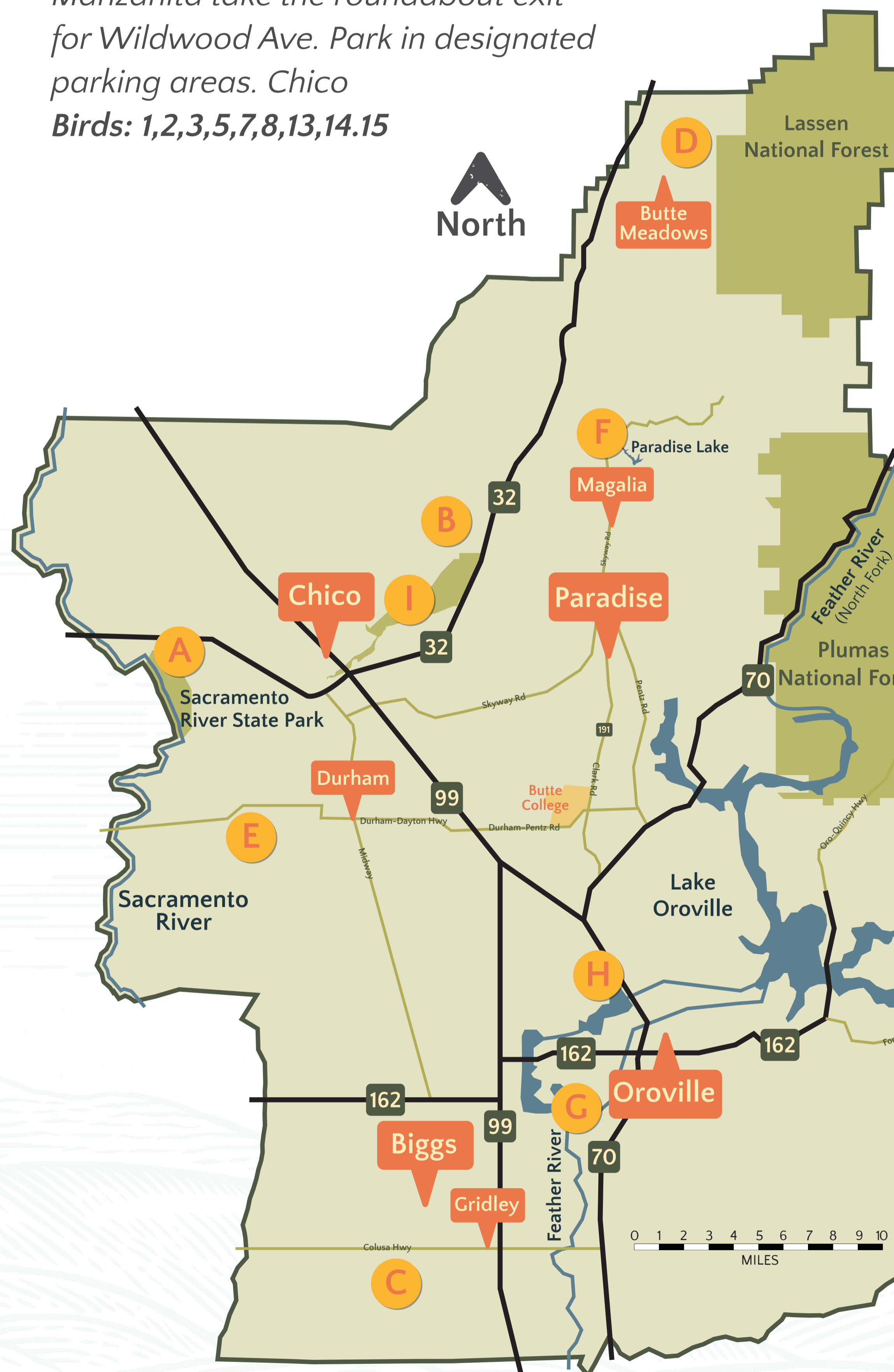
E Llano Seco Unit
The Llano Seco Unit may be seen from:
Viewing Platforms/Walking Trail off of
Seven Mile Ln. (County Road)
Birds: 3,4,6,8,10,11,12,13,14

F Paradise Lake
Located just north of Paradise near
Magalia. Take Skyway North to Coutelenc
Rd. Turn right (east) on Coutelenc Rd.
Follow the road 2.7 miles to Lucretia Rd.
Turn left on Lucretia. Follow to Parking Area
Birds: 1,2,5,8,14,15

G Riverbend Park Feather River Trail
50 Montgomery St, Oroville
Birds: 6,7,8,10,12,14,15

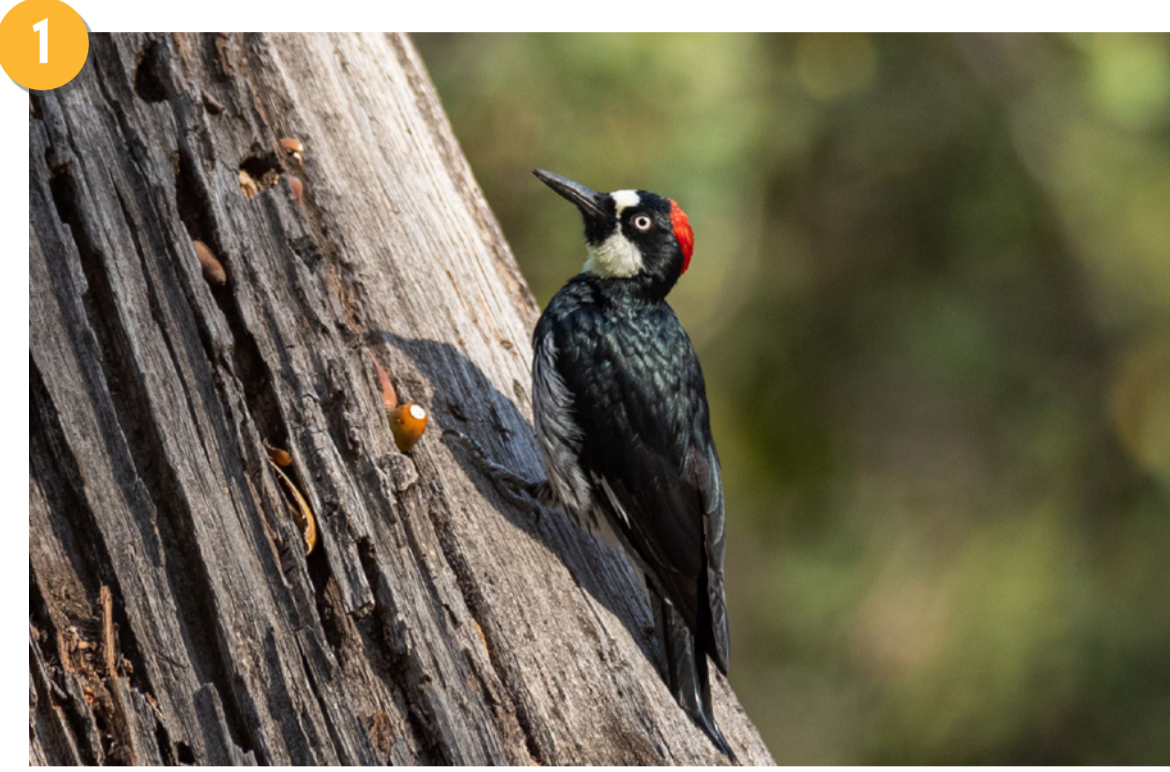
H Thermalito Forebay
930 Garden Dr, Oroville
Birds: 1,6,7,8,9,10,11,14

I Upper Bidwell Park
At the intersection of East Ave. and
Manzanita take the roundabout exit
for Wildwood Ave. Park in designated
parking areas. Chico
Birds: 1,2,3,5,7,8,13,14,15



15 BIRDS TO SPOT DURING FALL & WINTER

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Acorn Woodpecker

This medium-sized bird boasts a red cap, with an ivory face, and a black patch around the bill. During flight you can see its white belly, and white patches on the wings. See if you can spot this woodpecker storing its acorns into a tree trunk.

Northern Pygmy-Owl

This owl has a round head, brown body with white dots and a long tail. It is small in size with large yellow piercing eyes, and a yellow bill. Their features include, lack of ear tufts, and dark patches on the back of the head resembling eyes! See if you can spot this unique day hunter!



Snow Goose

This goose can come in different colors! The dark morph, or “Blue goose”, will have a dark grey body with a white face. The light morph will be all white with black flight feathers. This goose has pink legs, and a pink bill with a dark line.

Sandhill Crane

A tall grey bird, with long black legs; notable for its wingspan which can reach over 6 feet! This slender silhouette is finished off with a short tail covered by droopy feathers. Perhaps the most distinctive feature is its beautiful red skin patch on its forehead and crown.



Stellar's Jay

This adventurous noisy bird is easily identifiable by the triangular crest that sticks prominently atop their charcoal head while the rest of their body is a brilliant blue. As inquisitive song birds, they like searching for food on the ground by hopping around on their long legs.

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Great Blue Heron

The great blue heron is a large wading bird that is common in wetlands, but can also be seen in grasslands looking for rodents. With a large orange bill, black and white stripes on the head, and a greyish blue body, they nest in large colonies, “rookeries”, often with Great Egrets.

Phainopepla

The shiny, sleek-black male, has a red eye and a cute crest, while the females are grey. They will usually be seen in the vicinity of mistletoe clumps in oak trees or other hardwoods. They are the only species of “silky flycatchers” in California!



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Red-shouldered Hawk

This hawk, with its orangish red chest and shoulders, thrives in the cities of Butte County. They are one of the noisiest hawks that we have, and are especially loud during the early breeding season. You might see them zooming past your backyard chasing birds, snakes or rodents to eat.

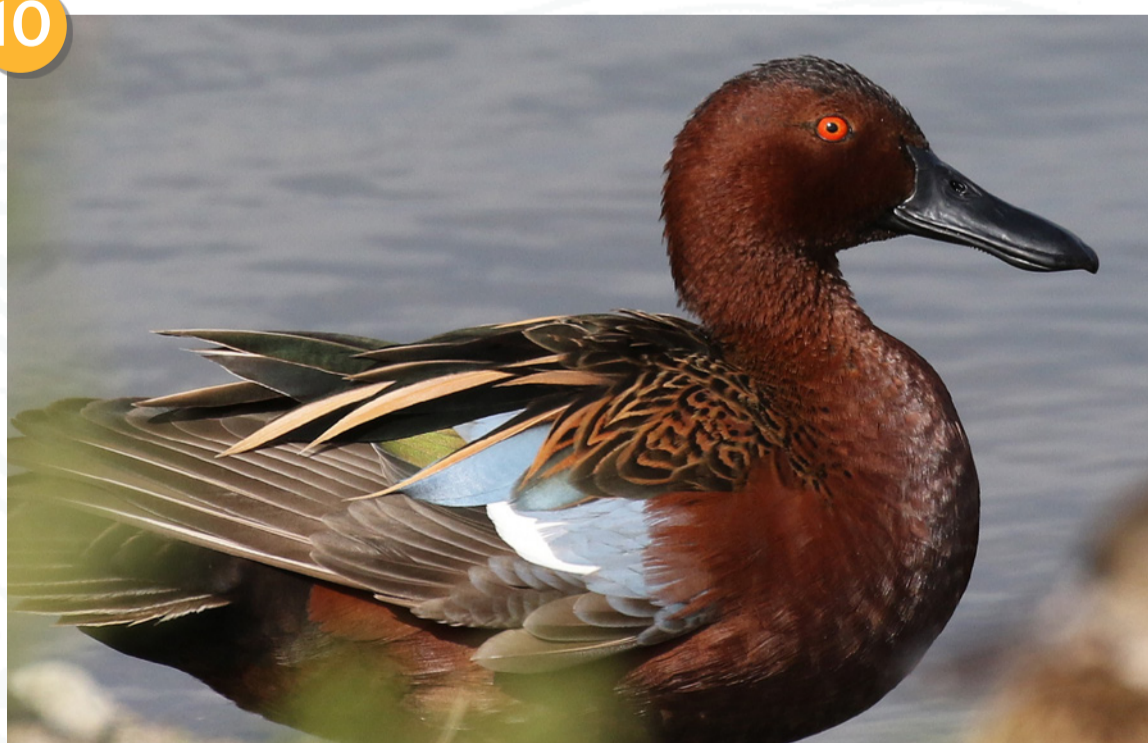
Clark's Grebe

These birds have a striking black and white look, and red eyes to top it off! Other features include a long skinny neck, and a thin straight bill. These water birds are common on Thermalito Afterbay, and build floating nests. After hatching, the adults carry their young on their backs.



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Cinnamon Teal

A rich cinnamon color, black bill, and red eyes makes these breeding males quite stunning! Females, and non-breeding males, are pretty shades of brown with dark eyes. These ducks are small dabbling ducks, and can be found on freshwater ponds, flooded fields, and streams.

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American White Pelican

While the California coast has the Brown Pelican, the American White Pelican is an inland bird. These huge birds have a large pouch built into their bills, and can be found in groups called a “squadron”. Sometimes you can see them soaring above, rarely ever flapping their wings.

Black-necked Stilt

It’s difficult not to notice this elegant bird! This slender black and white shorebird has long reddish legs and is quite the show stopper. They can usually be seen walking along close to the shorelines in the shallower water. Spot them foraging for small aquatic invertebrates!



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Burrowing Owl

These little owls with lots of attitude can be seen during the day in large open grasslands. They will perch on the ground or on fences and nest in burrows; they are mostly seen in the winter. Their under belly is a patchy white with a mottled brown body; sporting thick white eyebrows and golden eyes.

Anna’s Hummingbird

The most common hummingbird in Butte County, the males can flash the feathers on their heads and throats a brilliant pinkish-red color. The females have a small amount of pink on their throats. If their feathers are not reflected by light, their heads can look blackish or dark green.



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Purple Finch

Male Purple Finches sport a soft rosy colored head and breast, with cinnamon notes on their belly. Females however have no pink notes at all and are striped on their breast with brown and white, that includes a dark line down the side of the throat.



Snow Goose Festival 2022

Do you want to get up close and personal with birds this year? The Snow Goose Festival, a 4-day bird-centric event, will have several outdoor field trips and art exhibits January 27-30, 2022. For more information SnowGooseFestival.org.

Explore Butte County

This brochure is created by Explore Butte County in partnership with Altacal Audubon Society. For more information about Butte County birds visit altacal.org or email altacal.info@gmail.com. For information to plan your trip in Butte County, ExploreButteCounty.com.