



Land of the West Wind

Volume 22 Issue 2

May 2022

Historic Shiloh Church

Anyone who travels down Shiloh Road on the way to break some targets at the sporting clays course has probably noticed the Shiloh Church tucked away behind the Kirby Hills just north of Birds Landing. One of the ever-dwindling historic landmarks in Suisun Marsh, Shiloh Church is easy to notice, but the history is relatively unknown. The Shiloh Church originally was built in 1869. Originally a site of devout worship by Solano pioneers, the church hasn't been in use since the 1920s—when the cemetery grew faster than the local population—and the building fell into disrepair before being rebuilt by the local community in the late '90s.

The Church was designated with California Historical Landmark Status in 1969.

A 1964 article in the Vallejo Times written by columnist Ernest D. Wichels is one of the few sources of details on the history of the church. Details about its history provided by Edward L. Jenkins of Birds Landing, a member of the Solano County Historical Society.

The first iteration of the church was established in 1876 as the Cumberland Presbyterian Congregation, and the first ministers were the Revs. Bushnell and Crawford. Shortly thereafter on an inauspicious Christmas Eve, the church burned down, and the present church was built a few years later. The early Solano pioneers were devout worshippers: they hitched a span of horses to their spring wagon, loaded their families into the wagon and drove many miles to attend meetings at the church—in all kinds of weather! Many early pioneer names are connected with Shiloh Church. Sunday School teachers included Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Bullard, and John Bird served as clerk during the '70s. Early trustees included G. N. Daniels, J. B. Carrington and James Blacklock. A quaint old cemetery surrounds Shiloh Church, and many pioneers of Solano County have their final resting place here. Like Tremont Church and the Rockville Church, Shiloh stands as a monument to the past in Solano County.



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Quarterly Newsletter of the Suisun
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SRCD's public meetings are
held at 2 PM on the second
Wednesday of each month at the
Solano County Supervisors Chambers
675 Texas Street
Fairfield, CA 94533

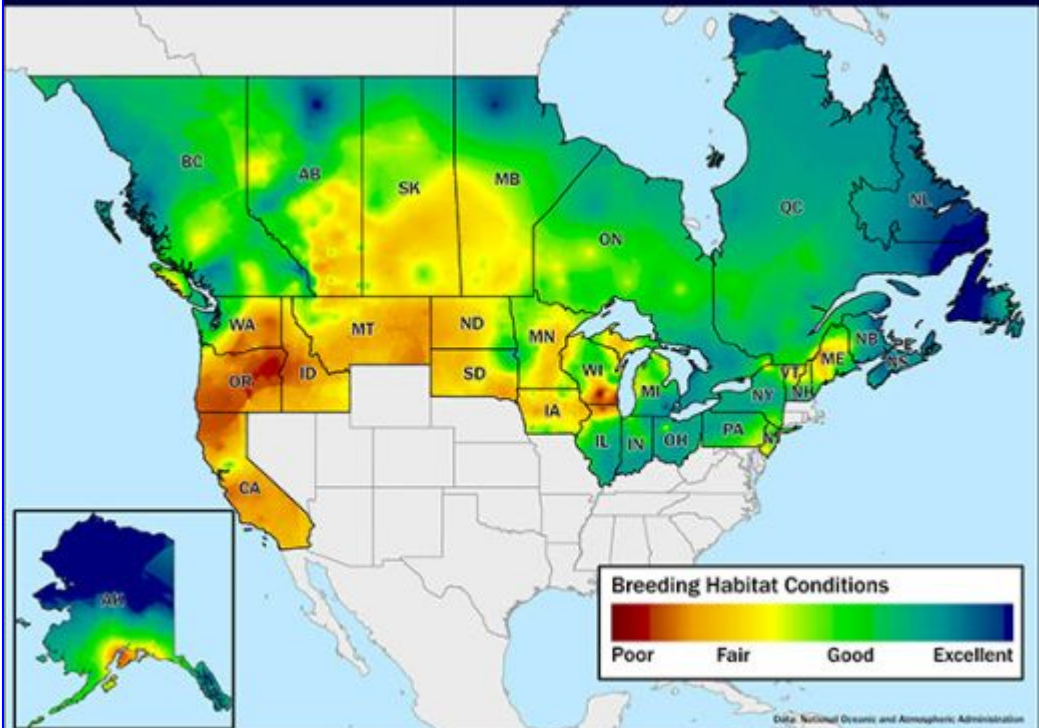
SRCD represents private landowners of the Suisun Marsh at the Federal, State, and local levels. Its historic goal has been to achieve a water supply of adequate quality so that preferred wetland habitat values will be retained through appropriate management practices. Through cooperation with landowners and various agencies, SRCD seeks to develop new programs aimed at protecting and improving the Suisun Marsh for future generations.

Conditions for Breeding Waterfowl in California

In the Pacific Flyway, drought conditions continue to plague California, and reduced water allocations for the crop season will hamper duck production. Farther north, wetland conditions have improved in Washington and Oregon, while important waterfowl breeding areas in Alaska are starting the spring in good to excellent shape. Compared to last year, conditions look favorable.

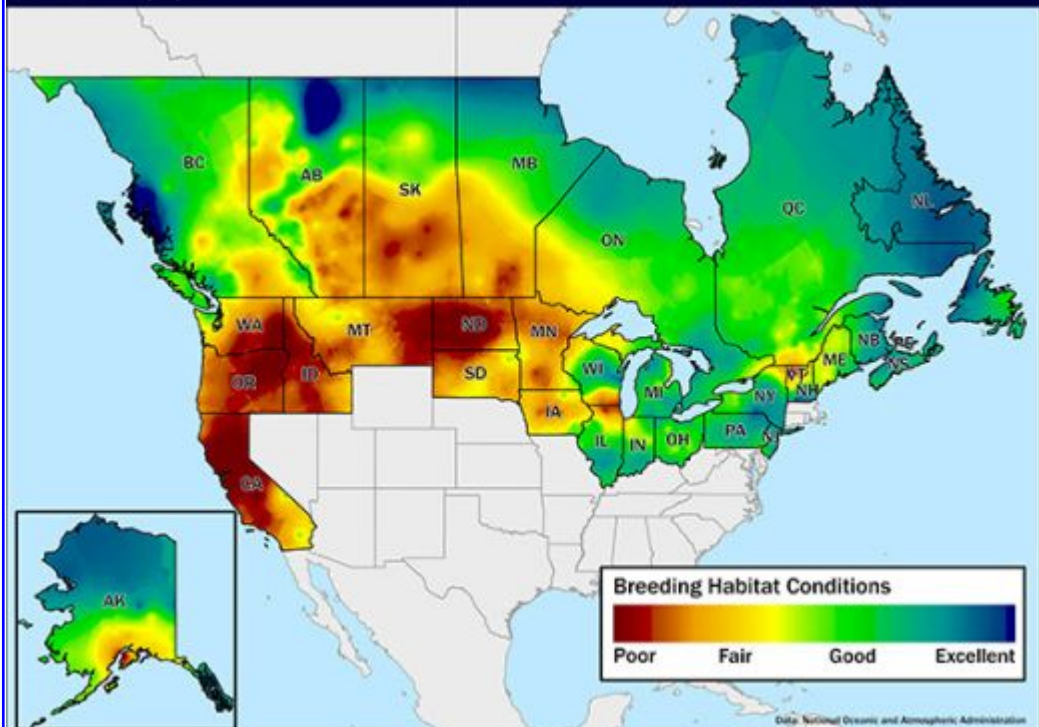
2022 Waterfowl Breeding Habitat Conditions

Conditions as of 2/28/22



2021 Waterfowl Breeding Habitat Conditions

Conditions as of 9/30/21



Breeding Habitat Conditions—*Better, But Not Great*

Last duck season was an odd one in California as many Central Valley hunters feared an apocalyptic opener due to drought conditions. With restricted water allocations and low outflows, it seemed like much of California's waterfowl habitat was going to be dry on opening weekend. Conversely, Suisun Marsh seemed poised to have a solid duck season as one of the few areas of the State actually able to flood on time. On opening Sunday, however, all of that changed. The Sacramento Valley was hit with almost 6 inches of rain, and new water on the landscape meant new habitat availability for waterfowl that had previously flocked wherever the scarce water had been available. A second massive storm in December with more than 6 inches of rain in the Central Valley provided sheet water in rice fields for the remainder of the season. The rain may have provided the ducks with wintering habitat, but it could only do so much to improve the outlook for the 2022 breeding season in California.

Mike Buxton, waterfowl programs manager for Delta Waterfowl, gathers hydrologic and weather station data and compiles it into Delta's Waterfowl Breeding Habitat Conditions Map (*Page 2 to the left*). The February 28, 2022 map showed outstanding improvement over very poor habitat conditions going into the winter.

The projected breeding habitat conditions from Delta Waterfowl shows an improved outlook from last year, but California and Washington remain drought-stressed. Resident breeding species of the Pacific Flyway such as mallards likely are the most adversely affected with continued drought conditions.

More green and blue areas on the habitat map is positive, but even favorable breeding habitats don't necessarily equate to robust waterfowl populations in the fall flight. Molting habitats also are of critical importance, and unfortunately, these habitats are drought limited in the Pacific Flyway. The greater Klamath Basin Region is a prime example of critical habitat threatened from a lack of water. An estimated 80 percent of waterfowl on the Pacific Flyway rely on the Klamath Basin refuges as stopover sites in the spring and the fall migration. While there are many complicated issues and difficulties surrounding water rights and water supply in the Klamath Basin, during drought, there is not enough molting habitat. Disease and loss of viable habitat may result in a great decrease in waterfowl population numbers. When historic summer molting grounds dry up, it leads to more ducks in smaller areas aggregated around poor quality water that can become toxic. Disease outbreaks are common in these circumstances, and they threaten ducks that use the area as well as other waterfowl in the Pacific Flyway.

Current water supply limitations will result in significant reduction in acreage of rice planted and early estimates of only 30,000-60,000 acres of post-harvested flooded rice await this fall. Additionally, the Sacramento Valley State and Federal refuges are currently facing water supply reductions of 50% to 80%.

Publication of “Waterfowl of the World” by Gary Kramer — a lifetime achievement

Interviewed by John Takekawa and Phelan McKinney, SRCD

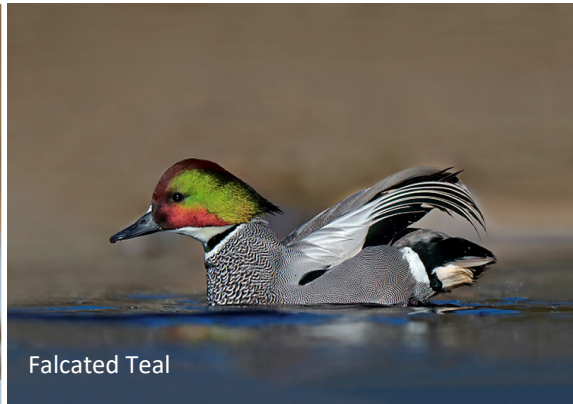
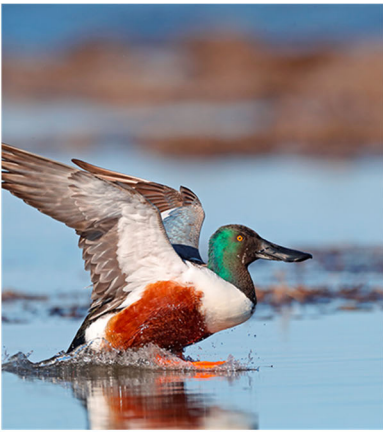
Gary Kramer’s recently released book entitled “*Waterfowl of the World*” represents a monumental accomplishment to capture images of all of the waterfowl in the world in their natural habitats with notes on their biology, distribution, and conservation status. A renowned waterfowl photographer and biologist, Gary began working on the project more than 4 years ago with assistance on the text from biologist Greg Mensik.

Raised in Los Angeles, Gary was a self-described “outdoorsy kid,” who read *Outdoor Life*, *Field and Stream* and hunted doves in the desert. He became interested in waterfowl conservation, and he completed undergrad and graduate degrees at Humboldt State University where he wrote a thesis on black brant migrating from Mexico. Gary graduated and began work as a waterfowl habitat manager at several wildlife areas in California, finishing a 26-year career with the USFWS as the project leader for Sacramento NWR Complex.

Starting in the 1970s, Gary began to write articles for magazines on the side, and he quickly learned that articles are more likely to be published if you provide good photographs to go with them. What started as a part-time hobby turned into a lifelong pastime. Gary has now published more than 1,000 articles and well over 20,000 photos in magazines as well as completing 7 books since retiring in 1999. He was named to the California Waterfowler’s Hall of Fame in 2011.

Not one to rest on his laurels, Gary became intrigued with the challenge of taking high resolution photos of every species of waterfowl in a natural setting, following up on the 1996 book “*Natural History of Waterfowl*” by Frank Todd which was 25 years out-of-date and included many species photographed in captivity. Kramer was determined to do better, promising:

“I don’t want any photos of a scoter on a lawn”



Falcated Teal

All Photo Credit to Gary Kramer

Waterfowl of the World, Continued

Gary traveled to many countries on his hunting and fishing adventures, but to obtain high-resolution pictures to complete the book, he had to travel to over 40 countries in 3 years. Covid interrupted his plans during part of the project, but he still was able to photograph almost all of the 167 species and only missed 2 species.

One missing species was the Stejneger's scoter that was recently identified as a separate species from the White-winged scoter in 2019, but Covid travel restrictions prevented him from visiting its breeding or wintering areas. The other was Eaton's pintail, as his extensive efforts to obtain permits to travel to the remote French-governed islands where it is found were frustrated by local bureaucracy.

“If there were two things that made this book possible, it was digital photography and the internet [to arrange the travel]”

Remarkably, Gary was able to photograph 165 waterfowl including the Andaman teal with a population of 1,000 birds found only on the remote Andaman Islands; Salvadori's teal hidden in the rainforests of Papua New Guinea which required >60 hours sitting in blinds for 5 minutes of pictures; and the Madagascar pochard with only 74 known birds in the wild.

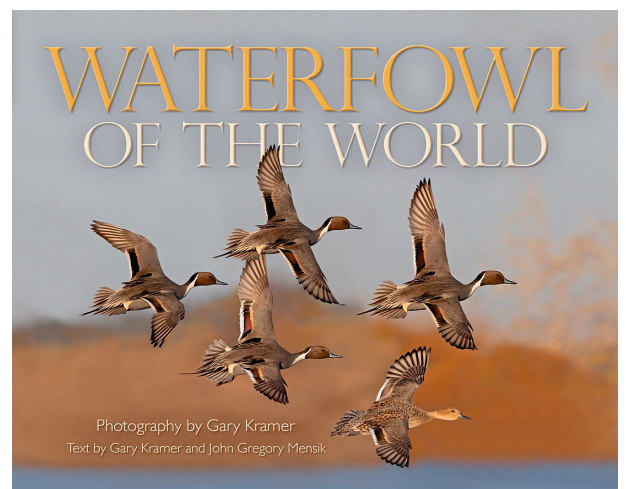
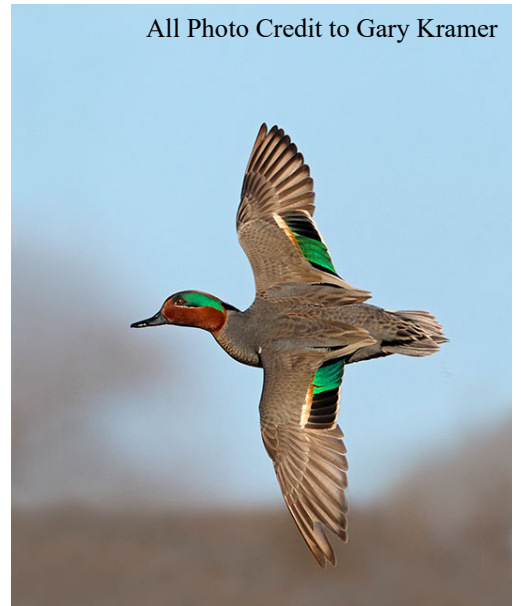
SRCD Operations Manager-Biologist, John Takekawa had the opportunity to travel with Gary on one of his trips in the winter of 2018 to find and obtain images of colorful Mandarin ducks swimming on urban streams under highways and skyscrapers of Seoul, South Korea. When we asked Gary about the experience of making the book, he said it was best described as “blind faith” in the project, and that he is still amazed that he got it done.

“The sites I traveled to were places that I had never been, with guides I had never met. I didn't know the weather or habitat going in”

How do I obtain the book?

Waterfowl of the World is a 540-page coffee table book (12" x 10 1/4") with 1,299 photographs and 167 range maps. It is available to order in California postpaid for \$106 (limited edition available for \$250) at <https://www.garykramer.net/waterfowl-of-the-world-standard-edition>.

All Photo Credit to Gary Kramer



Effects of Chemical Shortages on the Pest-Weed Control Program

By Tim Edmunds, SRCD Water Manager

This year, there are reductions in the pest-weed program due to chemical shortages of glyphosate herbicide worldwide. There is limited availability of 2.5-gallon herbicide containers, so SRCD will not have a hand application program this year. The extent of the aerial program also will be curtailed, because SRCD was only able to purchase a sufficient amount of bulk glyphosate to aerially spray approximately 275 acres. There will not be a cost share for the chemical application program this year. We hope that the hand spray program will return next year and that funding may be found to support a cost share program in the future.

How Much Does Aerial Spraying for *Phragmites* Cost?

Landowners will be billed for the actual helicopter time used to treat their property and for the amount of chemical applied. For planning purposes, estimated costs for the helicopter runs about \$1,650 per hour and the chemical will cost roughly \$50.00 per acre. Managed wetlands must be dry to participate in the treatment program.

Phragmites Map Coverages and Historical Analysis

Under a Delta Stewardship Council grant, SRCD is working on a historical analysis of *Phragmites* in Suisun Marsh that will map the growth and spread of the troublesome invasive. In the future, these coverages will be used to promote effective and efficient management by helping to target the fastest growing and largest problem areas. We hope that these coverages will help landowners and managers with early detection and rapid response (EDRR) of emerging patches and encourage early control of *Phragmites* before it escalates into a larger problem.



SRCD Update

Suisun Conservation Fund Fun Shoot and Social on July 29th

Join SRCD at the Birds Landing Sporting Clay and Hunting Preserve for the annual Suisun Conservation Fund fundraiser. Come out for a good time and help support the Suisun Conservation Fund!

PAI Program 2022

The PAI program has returned! The 2022 Preservation Agreement Implementation (PAI) Fund provides grant funding for activities needed to improve managed wetland facilities, operational efficiency and water management capabilities. Instructions for each cost-share program specify which types of habitat improvements may be eligible for participation. The deadline for the final 2022 application is June 30th.

Portable Pump Program

Under the Portable Pump Program, two types of pumps are available to the landowners (at a subsidized cost) to perform leach cycles and enhance marsh habitats. Water Managers oversee operation, maintenance, and distribution of the pumps. The pumps are available for draining operations (leach cycles) on individual ownerships and state-owned lands. For details on costs and leasing a pump, contact your Water Manager.



39th Annual

CWA Day in the Marsh

Saturday, June 4, 2022

Grizzly Ranch - Suisun, CA

FREE ADMISSION 9:00 AM TO 4:00 PM

KIDS EVENT FROM 9:00 AM TO 1:00 PM

Pre-Order Only: Order by May 29th to receive a New York Steak lunch with sides, salad & drink for \$40

Birrieria Gera Food Truck and Hot Dog lunch are available the day of event.

Activities

- Youth Duck Calling Contest
 - Youth Shooting
- Youth Art Projects
- Bounce Houses
 - Vendors
- Live Auction
 - Raffle

Winner Takes All Raffle

\$50 Per Ticket ~ Only 150 Tickets Available

One lucky winner will receive:

- Browning Gun Safe • Winchester SX4 12 Ga
- Weatherby Vanguard Sporter .300 Rifle
- Smith & Wesson SD .40 Cal handgun.

Need not be present to win.

Early Bird Special!

Purchase a Raffle Pack by **Friday, May 27th** and receive Double Progressives!

\$100, \$300, \$500 & \$1,000 Packs Available.

Inspiring Conservation For Over 75 Years



WATERFOWL



WETLANDS



HUNTING



EDUCATION



ADVOCACY

For more information, Contact Orlando Rocha at (916) 719-1993, Robert Eddings at (916) 275-1007, Jeff Taylor at (530) 588-3765 or Dan Haugh at (916) 871-9000

Or Register Online by visiting calwaterfowl.org/events and select the CWA Day in the Marsh page.

Land Of The West Wind
SRCD Newsletter

2544 Grizzly Island Road
Suisun CA 94585

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Delta Smelt Gate Monitoring - Increased Diversion Restrictions

The Suisun Resource Conservation District will continue gate monitoring for the Spring Run of Delta Smelt starting April 1st through May 31st. SRCD will be checking all intake gates in these designated Delta Smelt areas by boat for the duration of the monitoring period. Intake gate stem measurements collected during the 2013 spring closures will be used to ensure that these gates are compliant with restrictions. This is a reminder for landowners, so that proper water management can be ensured under these restrictions.

Currently, the diversion restriction is not to exceed 20% open

Diameter of Pipe	20% Open	35% Open
12 inches	3 inches	5 inches
18 inches	4 inches	7 inches
24 inches	5 inches	8.5 inches
30 inches	6 inches	10.5 inches
36 inches	7 inches	13 inches
48 inches	10 inches	17 inches

Should an intake be found out of compliance, SRCD is required to report to the appropriate agencies and the landowner will be contacted and asked to reduce their intake immediately. Compliance with these permit conditions is essential to prevent jeopardizing water diversions for all landowners in Suisun Marsh.