

THE HOOT OWL



January / February 2016
Issue 1, Volume 54

San Joaquin Audubon Society
Affiliated with the National Audubon Society-California

PROGRAMS

The meeting location is at Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific Avenue (across from UOP) in Stockton, and begins at 7:30 p.m. Plenty of parking and refreshments. Everyone is welcome.

There will be NO general membership meeting in January, 2016.

TUESDAY, February 9

James Jones

"USFW Safe Harbor Agreements"

What is a USFWS Safe Harbor Agreement?

A Safe Harbor Agreement (SHA) is a voluntary agreement involving private or other non-Federal property owners whose actions contribute to the recovery of species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

In exchange for actions that contribute to the recovery of listed species on non-Federal lands, participating property owners receive formal assurances from the Service that if they fulfill the conditions of the SHA, the Service will not require any additional or different management activities by the participants without their consent. In addition, at the end of the agreement period, participants may return the enrolled property to the baseline conditions that existed at the beginning of the SHA.

James Jones is a Wildlife Biologist II for the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD). EBMUD is water provider for approximately 1.3 million customers in the east bay. He is the primary wildlife biologist for EBMUD lands in the Mokelumne river watershed and central valley. His duties include bird, mammal, herpetological, and vegetative surveys in the Mokelumne River watershed and delta. Additional duties include the implementation, monitoring, and riparian habitat restoration associated with the US Fish and Wildlife Service Safe Harbor Agreement (SHA) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Resource Management Agreement (RMA).

FIELD TRIPS

SATURDAY, January 2— *Wallace-Bellota Christmas Bird Count*

Don't be left out! What better way to start out the New Year than by participating in the Wallace-Bellota CBC? The foothill counterpart to the Stockton CBC. Get out in the country for some fresh air and great birds in the company of some great people! To sign up for this once-a-year adventure, please contact Kasey Foley, kaseyfoley@sbcglobal.net or call (209) 473-3904 to sign up.

SATURDAY, January 9— *Introductory Birding*

Join leader Pat Paternostro at the north end of Laurel Ave. in Lodi (on the east side of Lodi Lake Park, off of Turner Rd.) at 8:00 a.m. Birders of all skill levels are welcome, but the focus will be on birding fundamentals. Extra binoculars and field guides will be available.

SUNDAY, January 10— *Cosumnes River Preserve*

Join leader Jim Rowoth (487-3489 or rowoth@sbcglobal.net) for the monthly River Walk bird count through the varied habitats of the CRP. Meet Jim at the visitor center on Franklin Rd. Check website www.cosumnes.org for last minute updates. Double check with Jim for start time.

SATURDAY, January 16— *Woodbridge Wilderness Area*

Join leaders Virginia and Kathy Bonham for our monthly census of this small riparian park on the banks of the Mokelumne River. Meet at the north end of Meadowlark Lane in Woodbridge at 8:00 a.m.

SUNDAY, January 24— *Mokelumne River Fish Hatchery*

Join leaders Liz West and Joanne Katanic for our monthly census of this lovely little riparian area below Comanche Dam. Meet the leaders in the fish hatchery parking lot at 8:00 a.m.

SATURDAY, January 30— *Flood / Waverly Road Area*

Meet leader Mark Elness in Toot Sweets parking lot (southwest corner of March Ln. and Quail Lakes Dr.) at 7:30 a.m. for carpooling to this excellent raptor viewing area.

SATURDAY, February 6— *Introductory Birding Field Trip*

Join leader Pat Paternostro at the north end of Laurel Ave. (on the east side of Lodi Lake Park, off of Turner Rd.) in Lodi at 8:00 a.m. Birders of all skill levels are welcome, but the focus will be on birding fundamentals. Extra binoculars and field guides will be available.

SATURDAY, February 13— *Cosumnes River Preserve*

See entry for SUNDAY, January 10 (above).

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GLOBAL WARMING AND BIRDS

Global warming is the greatest threat to birds and other wildlife in human history. The rate of global warming is already impacting birds, their prey, and their habitat. Those impacts will become more severe over the coming decades, leading to the loss of one-quarter to one-third of all species on earth, including many bird species.

Although some amount of change is inevitable, we can still take steps to prevent the most dangerous impacts of global warming and begin to stabilize the climate again. In the meantime, conservation, especially of larger areas with migratory corridors and buffer zones; better control of invasive species; and adaptive management are critical to stem the loss of bird and wildlife species.

This loss will impact agriculture, forestry, public health, recreation, and hunting. The financial impact will be many billions of dollars annually.

Why Does Global Warming Matter for Birds?

Global warming impacts birds and wildlife in many ways. Birds and other wildlife will face habitat loss due to sea level rise, more frequent and severe wildfires, flooding and droughts, invasive species, changes in vegetation and precipitation, and loss of snow and ice, among others. Birds, like most species, are highly adapted to particular vegetation and habitat types.

To compensate for the warmer temperatures, the ranges of these habitats may move closer to the poles or higher elevations. Habitat types that cannot colonize new areas may rapidly decline or cease to exist. New pests, invasive species, and diseases will create additional risks. The timing of birds' migration, reproduction, breeding, nesting, and hatching are all highly adapted to match specific local conditions, such as the availability of suitable habitat and adequate food sources.

Since climate change will affect different species differently, bird behavior may no longer be in sync with their food sources and other habitat needs. For example, robins in the Rocky Mountains arrive an average of two weeks earlier in spring than they did a few decades ago, but the worms and other food that they eat are not yet available for their newly hatched offspring.

Is Global Warming Already Affecting Birds?

Scientists are already seeing alarming impacts of global warming on birds. More than 80% of plant and animal species studied have shown changes in the timing of migration or reproduction, shifts in habitat or migratory routes, or other changes associated with climate change. Some of the observed impacts on birds include:

- Several North American warbler species have shifted northward more than 65 miles. The Golden-winged Warbler's range has moved nearly 100 miles north just in the past two decades.
- Between 1971 and 1995, many British bird species began laying their eggs an average of nine days earlier each year. A dozen species in Great Britain have shifted their ranges an average of 12 miles northward in the past 20 years.
- On Michigan's Upper Peninsula, 15 species—including the Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Black-throated Blue Warbler—are arriving up to 21 days earlier than in the 1960s.
- Adelie Penguins are taking longer routes to find food in the ocean as icebergs break off the Ross Ice Shelf.

Will Some Species or Habitat Types Be More Vulnerable than Others?

Birds that already live at high altitudes or latitudes may not be able to move with the changing climate. Endangered species with limited habitat or small gene pools may also not be able to adapt quickly enough to avoid extinction. Coastal and polar species will be vulnerable as coastlines advance inland and ice melts. Sea level rise and erosion will jeopardize the threatened Western Snowy Plover and other shorebirds.

More frequent and severe droughts in the central U.S. are likely to cause prairie pothole wetlands to dry up, jeopardizing millions of waterfowl during breeding season. The projected loss of neotropical migrant songbirds is very high: 53% in the Great Lakes region, 45% loss in the Mid-Atlantic, 44% loss in the northern Great Plains, and 32% fewer in the Pacific Northwest.

Why Can't Birds Adapt to Global Warming ?

In the past, species and ecosystems were able to respond to global temperature shifts in part because average global temperatures changed slowly. As they did, habitat patterns changed gradually and wildlife could either follow their preferred habitat to new locations or adapt to new conditions. Now, though the change is simply too fast for many species to adapt. The rate of temperature increase over the next century will be ten times faster than the rate of increase since the last Ice Age. In addition, species that could otherwise move or adapt are now limited by urban and industrial development, large-scale agriculture, and adjacent habitat fragmentation and destruction. For instance, the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker in the southeastern U.S. depends on mature pine forest, a habitat type that cannot spread to new areas quickly or at all.

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GLOBAL WARMING AND BIRDS

(continued from Page 2)

Why is Loss of Bird Species Important for People?

Birds have great economic and personal value to people. One-third of all human food comes from plants that are pollinated by birds, butterflies, and other wild pollinators. Birds also disperse seeds and help to control rodents, insects, and other pests that would otherwise devastate crops, forests, and ecosystems. In the western U.S., Savannah Sparrows, Sage Thrashers, egrets, and other birds help control grasshopper populations that would otherwise destroy many crops. In the eastern U.S., nesting wood warblers consume 84% of the eastern spruce budworm that would otherwise decimate forests.

Birds are loved for their aesthetic value, playing an essential role in the U.S. economy and improving the quality of life for many Americans. More than 80 million Americans observe, fish, hunt, and otherwise enjoy birds and other wildlife. Together, they support more than 2.6 million jobs in the U.S. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, America's 46 million birders spend \$32 billion annually, generating \$85 billion in overall economic output and \$13 billion in state and federal income taxes.

From Fact Sheet: Global Warming and Birds, copyright © 2014 National Audubon Society

FIELD TRIPS

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SUNDAY, February 14— *Mokelumne River Fish Hatchery*

Join leaders Liz West and Joanne Katanic for our monthly census of this lovely little riparian area below Comanche Dam. Meet the leaders in the fish hatchery parking lot at 8:00 a.m.

SATURDAY, February 20— *Woodbridge Wilderness Area*

Join leader Liz West for our monthly census of this small riparian park on the banks of the Mokelumne River. Meet at the north end of Meadowlark Lane in Woodbridge at 8:00 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, February 24— *Panoche Valley / Mercey Hot Springs*

Join leader Terre Ronneberg at 7:00 a.m. in Toot Sweets parking lot (northwest corner of March Ln. and Quail Lakes Dr., in Stockton) for carpooling. Bring lunch. There is a \$5 per person entrance fee at Mercey Hot Springs to see Long-eared Owls.

SATURDAY, February 27— *Stockton Rural Cemetery*

Join leader Jim Rowoth at 8:00 a.m. at the cemetery office for this morning ramble through the beautiful and historic Stockton Rural Cemetery.

BIRD SIGHTINGS

October 15, 2015 - December 3, 2015
(All sightings pertain to San Joaquin County)

Submitted by Liz West

Nancy Houlihan found a **Pectoral Sandpiper** in a flock of Dunlin at Staten Island on November 5th.

November 8th, Terry Ronneberg saw a **Cassin's Kingbird** at the Tracy Sewage Ponds. On November 16th Colin Dillingham reported two at the sewage ponds. One of them continued through to November 25th. On November 29th, Jim Rowoth saw three **Cassin's Kingbirds** at the Koster Rd. gravel ponds.

Susan Steele had a female **Red-breasted Merganser** at the Lodi Sewage Ponds, November 21st. It was present the next day and viewed by a number of CVBS participants.

David Lanphear saw a **Eurasian Wigeon** in a flooded field on Woodbridge Rd. at the Isenberg Preserve, November 28th. It was still present December 3rd.

While leading the December 5th San Joaquin Audubon Beginning Bird Walk at Lodi Lake, Pat Paternostro located a **Long-eared Owl** that jays were harassing. He also saw a tree with nine **Band-tailed Pigeons** near Pig's Lake.

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