

# THE HOOT OWL



July / August 2019  
Issue 4, Volume 57

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

## PROGRAMS

There will be no general membership meetings during our regular summer hiatus (May through August). The next general membership meeting will be Tuesday, September 10.

## Welcome New President

### Pat Paternostro

At the Annual Meeting on May 18, those present elected nominee Pat Paternostro as the new President of San Joaquin Audubon. Congratulations, Pat, and thanks for agreeing to serve!

As of July 1, the new Board consists of Pat (President), Liz West (Treasurer), Cathy Mathis (Secretary), and Board members Jim Hoagland (Field Trips), Rene Reyes, Jim Rowoth, Susan Schneider, Rebecca Severin, and Amy Weiser.

## Can Migrating Birds Adapt to Climate Change?

Flocks of warblers and vireos descend on woodlands to feed and rest after a grueling migration, and to fuel up for the next leg of their journeys. At a casual glance, the scene looks timeless. But for the birds, this always-risky return to breeding habitats is becoming more so. Increasingly, odds are there's something missing: the insect larvae that provide most of the calories for their journey. As the climate warms, many insect larvae are hatching weeks earlier than they used to. The birds can't find food. As they cross states and continents, their stops to rest may no longer match up to hatching insects, blooming flowers and fruiting trees.

Scientific literature is clear that climate change affects the seasonal cycles of plant and animal life, the field known as phenology. Whether it's wildflowers blooming earlier in the Rockies or mayflies shortening their entire life cycle, the changing climate can have dramatic phenological impacts.

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## FIELD TRIPS

### SATURDAY, July 6— *Introductory Birding Field Trip*

Join leader Kasey Foley 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.

### SATURDAY, July 13— *Cosumnes River Preserve*

Join leader Jim Rowoth (487-3489 or [rowoth@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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](http://www.cosumnes.org) for last minute updates. Double check with Jim for start time.

### WEDNESDAY, July 17— *White Slough*

Join leader Jim Rowoth (487-3489 or [rowoth@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rowoth@sbcglobal.net)) for this evening visit to this local site. Evening delta breezes should make for a pleasant stroll among the willows. Meet at the Flag City McDonald's at 6:30 P.M. Bring water and hat.

### SATURDAY, July 20— *Woodbridge Wilderness*

Join leaders Kathy and Virginia 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, July 21— *Mokelumne River Fish Hatchery*

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

### SATURDAY, August 3— *Introductory Birding Field Trip*

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.

### SATURDAY, August 10— *Cosumnes River Preserve*

Join leader Jim Rowoth (487-3489 or [rowoth@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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](http://www.cosumnes.org) for last minute updates. Double check with Jim for start time.

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## FIELD TRIPS

*(Continued from page 1)*

### **SUNDAY, August 18— Mokelumne River Fish Hatchery**

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

### **FRIDAY, August 30— Lodi Waste Water Treatment Plant**

Join leader Susan Schneider (susanschneider7@gmail.com) for this walking tour of these local sewage ponds. We'll be hoping for good shorebird conditions and looking for southbound migrants. Meet Susan at 8:00 a.m. at the Flag City McDonald's and carpool to the WTP office to sign in. Note - you must check with Susan (email) in advance since we may have to limit the number of participants.

## Can Migrating Birds Adapt to Climate Change?

*(Continued from page 1)*

Those changes can have cascading ecosystem effects, including on migratory birds.

This spring, the National Phenology Network indicates that for birds along eastern and central flyways, leaves are appearing on time or early in the south, and late as they head north - a year of "hurry up and wait," with potential to change rapidly as spring continues. However, within a given landscape there are differences (sometimes subtle) in topography, landforms, types of soil and bedrock. These differences can in turn affect the timing of insect hatching or plant blooming, even in a relatively small geographical area.

"It often does not take much elevational difference to influence phenology," says Kim Hall, climate change scientist for The Nature Conservancy. Protecting sites with ecological and topographical diversity is also important for migratory birds. Hall coauthored a paper with David Ewert that called for increasing protection of sites that "retain variation in the phenology of resources during the migratory period. Some habitats can be quite small but have soil or moisture characteristics that affect when plants bloom, and that in turn impact when insects hatch," says Hall.

Hall says there are many examples of how different habitats can buffer against climactic changes. For instance, migratory bird habitat adjacent to coastlines and rivers can protect food and cover from late spring freezes. Open water tends to act as a buffer against cold weather, providing just enough protection to keep leaves from serious damage. Leaf health in turn means better insect survival, which means more food for birds.

Conservationists can perhaps better understand the impacts of climate change on birds for one reason: We know a lot about them. And one of the reasons we know a lot about them is because people love them. In fact, millions of people take part in citizen science projects including recording birds at their backyard feeders and participating in annual Christmas Bird Counts.

This wealth of data allows conservationists to move beyond a site-by-site evaluation of risks and responses to climate change towards a better understanding of what's happening across the landscapes that support millions of migrants. Advances in citizen science and accessibility of datasets that cover the full range of species are giving us new insights into how birds are responding to climate change.

"Climate change has complicated impacts," she says. "Research provides us with tools for understanding population-wide impacts that utilize large-scale datasets. This isn't just about timing, not just about range boundaries, but it's trying to tease out climate signals in complicated patterns of changes happening across large areas."

As you head out to catch the spring migration, those complicated patterns may seem to lie well beyond the reach of your binoculars. The woods you're birding may look much the same. But nonetheless, your observations matter: After all, it's the recorded sightings of birders and other citizen scientists that are helping scientists track changes in migration and phenology. The work wouldn't be possible without them.

Your sighting adds a data point that can help shape a better future for migratory birds and a climate-resilient future.

Citation:

Matthew L Miller. "Can Migrating Birds Adapt to Climate Change" CoolGreenScience.CoolGreenScience, May 2019. <https://blog.nature.org/science/2019/05/08/can-migrating-birds-adapt-to-climate-change/>

## NEST SHARING IN ACORN WOODPECKERS

Acorn Woodpeckers live in close-knit family groups and have one of the most complex breeding systems of any bird in the world. In about 20 percent of family groups, up to 3 related females may lay eggs in the same nest. They raise the chicks cooperatively with one or more related males. This behavior is known as joint nesting or "cooperative polyandry." Only five other species of birds worldwide are known to do this. The reasons that may be driving the behavior are outlined in a study recently published in *The American Naturalist*.

Lead authors Sahas Barve at Old Dominion University (Cornell Ph.D. '17), and Cornell Lab of Ornithology scientist Walt Koenig, used demographic data collected during 35 years (1982–2016) at the Hastings Natural History Reservation in central coastal California. They analyzed the costs and benefits of joint nesting, hoping to explain why some woodpecker females exhibit this rare behavior.

They found that joint nesting was more common in years when Acorn Woodpecker population density was high, all the breeding territories were occupied, and opportunities for a female to nest on her own were very unlikely.

Although nesting with others reduces the number of offspring each female can produce compared to when she nests alone, Barve says such females make the "best of a bad situation" by nesting jointly with their mother or sister rather than not nesting at all because of the lack of real estate.

Females that decide to nest jointly do so in groups where there are two or more breeder males, thus increasing the number of caregivers and the total number of chicks that females can successfully raise. Years of population boom may have therefore been an important mechanism driving the evolution of such highly social behaviors like joint nesting among Acorn Woodpeckers.

Citation:

Cornell University. "What drives multiple female acorn woodpeckers to share a nest? Study explores the possible benefits of rare behavior." ScienceDaily. ScienceDaily, 2 May 2019.

<[www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/05/190502104845.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/05/190502104845.htm)>.

## BIRD SIGHTINGS

*April 13, 2019 - June 14, 2019*  
(All sightings pertain to San Joaquin County)

Submitted by Liz West

Jim Rowoth saw a **Hammond's Flycatcher** at Lodi Lake on April 16<sup>th</sup>. A group led by David Yee saw two Hammond's and a **Gray Flycatcher** at Heritage Oaks Winery on April 21<sup>st</sup>. They also found a probable **interior subspecies of White-breasted Nuthatch**, very rare this side of the Sierra.

David Yee observed seven **Brewer's Sparrows** and a **Vesper Sparrow** on Waverley Rd. about a mile south of Flood Rd on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. On April 27<sup>th</sup> he found a **Grasshopper Sparrow** on Waverly Road but no Brewer's Sparrows. The next day John Robinson found two **Grasshopper Sparrows** on Waverly Rd.

A highlight of the May 18<sup>th</sup> San Joaquin Audubon picnic at Mokelumne Fish Hatchery was an immature **Bald Eagle** being chased by an Osprey. John Harris saw an adult **Bald Eagle** May 24<sup>th</sup> at the Fish Hatchery.

David and Sue Yee heard then saw a **Common Nighthawk** flying north over their home June 9<sup>th</sup>. Common Nighthawks usually arrive in the state in June and are not recorded in San Joaquin county very often. On June 12<sup>th</sup>, John Luther saw and heard three **Common Nighthawks** at Bird Road and one at Blewitt Road where it crosses the canal.

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Website: [www.sanjoaquinaudubon.org](http://www.sanjoaquinaudubon.org)

Listserve: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sjbirds/>

## Other California Birding E-mail Listserves

<https://groups.io/g/calbirds>

<https://groups.io/centralvalleybirds>

<https://groups.io/g/StanislausBirds>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/central-sierra-birds/>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sierra-nevadabirds/>

## Membership

### *National Membership*

By joining the National Audubon Society you are also a member of the San Joaquin Chapter. This includes subscriptions to the award-winning *Audubon Magazine* and to the chapter newsletter, *The Hoot Owl*. Both publications are bimonthly. For *national membership*, send check payable to the **National Audubon Society** to the address below.

• National Audubon Membership Rate: \$20

### **San Joaquin Audubon Society**

**Attn: Membership (National)**

**P.O. Box 7755  
Stockton, CA 95267**

### *Local-Only Membership*

This includes a subscription to the bimonthly chapter newsletter, *The Hoot Owl*. For *local membership*, send check payable to **San Joaquin Audubon Society** to the address below.

• Chapter Newsletter—mailed paper copy \$15

• Chapter Newsletter—electronic copy \$10

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