

THE HOOT OWL



November / December 2016
Issue 6, 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.

TUESDAY, November 8
Nancy Muleady-Mecham
"California's Golden Geology"

The geology of California with a special look at the Mother Lode and gold mining. Join Nancy for an in-depth look at the fascinating element, gold. What are its unique properties, what is the geology behind the Mother Lode Story, and how did we get our hands on it throughout time?

Doc Nancy is an Adjunct Professor of Biology at Northern Arizona University as well as a Visiting Lecturer for the University of Virginia Semester At Sea Program where she taught biology around the world. She also teaches part time at Columbia College. She was a Fulbright Scholar and traveled to the Russian Federation to teach at Gorno-Altai State University in southwest Siberia and to conduct research in remote protected areas.

Nancy is a retired United States National Park Ranger and lives in the Sierra Nevada with her family. When not working on her research on Giant Sequoias she loves to backpack. She has completed solo hikes of the John Muir and High Sierra Trails through the Sierra Nevada, hiked through the Alps on the Haute Route from Chamonix to Zermatt, and is a Pacific Crest Trail section hiker. She is the author of several books.

TUESDAY, December 13
David Yee
"Christmas Bird Count Primer"

This is our annual December meeting that gets us "In the mood" for the Christmas Bird Count (what were you thinking?!) Please join us for the ever-informative presentation by David Yee who likes to mix it up for those who attend every year but also keep it useful for first timers.

David will discuss, well, whatever he likes but mostly it will be about birds and what to expect during our CBC's in the Central Valley.

FIELD TRIPS

FRI-SAT-SUN, Nov. 4, 5, & 6— *Lodi Sandhill Crane Festival*

A weekend of fun for the whole family. General Admission is free. See article on page 3.

SATURDAY, November 12— *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.

THU-SUN, November 17-20— *Central Valley Birding Symposium*

Come help us celebrate our 20th anniversary! This outstanding birding festival is always one of the highlights of the birding year! Key notes, field trips, workshops, vendors, and unbeatable camaraderie! See article on page 2.

SATURDAY, December 3— *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.

SATURDAY, December 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, December 17— *Stockton Christmas Bird Count*

Join your friends at San Joaquin Audubon for one of our biggest and most important field activities of the year. This dawn-to-dusk outing goes on regardless of weather conditions, so it's always an adventure! For more information or to sign up, contact Jim Rowoth (487-3489, or rowoth@sbcglobal.net).

SUNDAY, December 18— *Mokelumne River Fish Hatchery*

Join leaders Liz West & 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, December 31— *Wallace-Bellota CBC*

Don't be left out! What better way to end the 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.

20TH Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium



The Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the 20th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium Nov. 17–20, 2016, at the Stockton Hilton Hotel in Stockton, CA. Please join us for this special 20th anniversary CVBS! Come meet the board and staff members! Reconnect with old friends and meet new ones! Enjoy the scrumptious Hors D'oeuvres buffet & No Host Bar on Thursday night.

The CVBS gets off to a great start with Thursday Night's Keynote speaker, professional bird photographer Bob Steele, presenting a program on "*Birding in the Central Valley Over the Past 20 Years*".

Friday Night's keynote program is presented by Kimball Garrett on "*The Central Valley's Prominent Place in the Past and Present of California Field Ornithology*".

Saturday Night's keynote program is presented by Ed Harper and friends on "*Celebrating 20 Years of the CVBC and the CVBS.*"

Workshops include: "*Specimen Workshop*" with Andy Engilis, "*Convincing Details and Other Birding Fiction*" by Joe Morlan, "*Challenging Shorebirds ID Workshop*" by Jon Dunn, and "*CVBC/CVBS Studies in Review*", a series of 15–20 minute programs by Dan Airola and Ed Pandolfino. Plus, attend informative workshops by Bob Steele (Image Editing), Keith Hansen (Bird Sketching), Sal Salerno (Beginning Birding) and Jim Burcio (Carving).

Field trips, offered Friday, Saturday and Sunday, always turn up exciting birds. Add in the entertaining and educational Bird ID Panel, the wonderful display of art and gifts at the Birder's Market and the camaraderie of hundreds of like-minded folks, and you know you'll have a good time! There's something for everyone interested in birds. Come and join us to bird, learn, and just have fun!

Goodbye, Yellow-rump: Will We See a Return to Myrtle and Audubon's Warblers?

For most of the last century the Yellow-rumped Warbler was two species, the Myrtle Warbler of the East (and far north) and the Audubon's Warbler of the West. But, in 1973, scientists lumped them based on evidence that the two species routinely hybridize in a narrow zone in western Canada.

Now, evidence from more than 37,000 regions of the birds' DNA suggests that Myrtle and Audubon's really are separate species. The wealth of genetic data—far more than was available in 1973—provided enough resolution for the researchers to see clear patterns of natural selection, even though the overall degree of genetic difference was quite small. For instance, differences between Myrtle and Audubon's forms were clustered within only about 60 relatively short regions of DNA. These hotspots likely contain the genes responsible for making Myrtle and Audubon's warblers different, said lead author David Toews, who performed the research at University of British Columbia and is now a postdoctoral researcher at the Cornell Lab. Natural selection likely caused those genes to change while leaving the rest of the birds' DNA relatively unaltered, he said.

So what about that hybrid zone that swayed scientists to lump the species back in 1973? It's relatively narrow—just 80 miles across—and recent research shows it has not moved or widened in 50 years, Toews said. Although the two forms interbreed freely in that zone, there must be some sort of weakness in hybrids that keeps them from surviving and carrying the genetic mixing farther afield. Although what that weakness is, exactly, remains to be discovered, Toews said.

There will be no immediate change to birding lists: formally splitting the species requires a decision by the North American Classification Committee of the American Ornithologists' Union. They publish an annual set of updates to the official checklist each year in July.

(From article by Hugh Powell, August 24, 2016, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, allaboutbirds.org)

LODI SANDHILL CRANE FESTIVAL

Mark your calendars for the 20th annual Lodi Sandhill Crane Festival, to be held Nov. 4–6, 2016, at Hutchins Street Square, in Lodi. The festival kicks off with an opening reception and Art Show on Friday, November 4th from 6:00 to 8:30 PM.

In addition to the art show, this year's festival features workshops, presentations, live animal shows, music, children's activities, displays, vendors, food, and nature tours. General admission to the festival is FREE, although there is a charge for field trips. There is a full schedule of programs on Saturday and Sunday, and a wide variety of field trips is offered all three days. For registration and information, go to www.cranefestival.com or call 800-581-6150.

BIRD SIGHTINGS

August 15th, 2016 - October 15th, 2016
(All sightings pertain to San Joaquin County)

Submitted by Liz West

On August 17th, Sal Salerno went back to Caswell State Park and witnessed juvenile **Lawrence's Goldfinches** begging from an adult. Mark and Lorna Elness have also seen two pairs of adults feeding several juvenile **Lawrence's Goldfinches** at their thistle feeders in Manteca. There are few breeding records for Lawrence's Goldfinches in the Central Valley.

Daniel Gilman found a juvenile **Semi-palmated Sandpiper** at the Ripon Sewage Ponds on August 19th. It was still present August 22nd. On August 27th, David Yee found a juvenile **Semi-palmated Sandpiper** at the Tracy Sewage Ponds

David Yee saw a **Black Swift** flying low over Cord Rd. on September 16th. On the same day he also saw a probable **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** at Lodi Lake Nature Area, it didn't stay long enough for a positive identification.

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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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