

THE HOOT OWL



January / February 2014
Issue 1, Volume 52

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, 2014.

TUESDAY, February 11

Tim D. Manolis

"Field Guide to the Spiders of California and the Pacific Coast States"

Tim Manolis is the illustrator of the brand new book *Field Guide to the Spiders of California and the Pacific Coast States*. Tim will be talking about spider biology and the types of spiders that occur in California. We will learn about some of the common spiders likely to be seen in Central Valley homes and yards, and, finally, focus primarily on jumping spiders.

Tim Manolis is an artist, illustrator, and biological consultant. From 1986 to 1990, he was the editor and art director of the magazine *Mainstream*. His papers on birds and his bird illustrations have appeared in many journals and magazines. He is the author of *Dragonflies and Damselflies* and illustrator of *Butterflies of the San Francisco Bay and Sacramento Valley Regions*.

If we are lucky, R.J. Adams, the author of *Field Guide to the Spiders of California and the Pacific Coast States* will also be here.

R.J. Adams is a special education teacher and wildlife tour leader in Monterey, California. He has a BS in biology from Humboldt State University, California and an MS in biology emphasizing entomology and host-parasite coevolution from the University of Utah.

FIELD TRIPS

SATURDAY, January 4—*Introductory Birding Field Trip*

Join leaders Pat & Dave Croft 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 5—*Buckley Cove*

Join leaders Kathy and Virginia Bonham for their monthly visit to this productive little area. Meet the leaders at 8:00 a.m. near the west end of March Lane just before the Buckley Cove Park sign. Park along either side of the road.

SATURDAY, January 11—*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.

SUNDAY, January 12—*Delta Meadows State Park*

Join leaders Kurt Mize (915-6264) and Alan England for a visit to this undeveloped park near Walnut Grove. Meet in the Starbucks parking lot off Trinity Center Parkway in north Stockton at 7:30 a.m. to carpool. Time and energy permitting, we may also visit nearby Staten Island on our return trip.

SATURDAY, January 18—*Woodbridge Wilderness Area*

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

SUNDAY, January 19—*Mokelumne River Fish Hatchery*

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

SATURDAY, January 25—*Flood and Waverly Roads*

Join leader Liz West for a visit to this great east-county area for wintering raptors. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot at Toot Sweets (off Quail Lakes Dr. and March Lane) in Stockton to carpool.

SUNDAY, January 26—*Colusa National Wildlife Refuge*

Join leader Joanne Katanic (483-2578) for a visit to this great area for wintering waterfowl. Meet at Flag City (I-5 and Highway 12) McDonalds parking lot at 7:15 a.m. to carpool. Please call in advance if you plan to attend. Plan to bring a lunch or eat in Williams. Granzella's is a great lunch spot. Our tour should end by 12:30 or 1:00 p.m.

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Lyman Belding (1829-1917)

Lyman Belding could be considered one of the first birders from this area as he lived in Stockton for 30 years. He has rightly been described as a “bird collector,” as that is what he did both in California and Lower California in the 1870’s and 1880’s. Quite a few early ornithologists made at least a part of their monies by collecting bird eggs, the skins of birds, or both which they sold to museums, research institutions or collectors. Even John J. Audubon was a collector in that he shot birds so that he could have them “in hand” to paint. The father of Bernd Heinrich, the ornithologist who wrote the excellent “Ravens in Winter”, was one of the last full time collectors. He went all over the world to collect and sell specimens.

In 1879 Belding wrote “A Partial List of the Birds of Central California” which was published in the Proceedings of the United States National Museum (the Smithsonian) and edited by ornithologist Robert Ridgeway. Ridgeway was the curator of birds at the Smithsonian who added some editor’s remarks including one that Mr. Belding had correctly identified all 600 specimens submitted. Belding also wrote at least 5 papers about his collecting in Lower California. He must have had quite a “life list”.

Belding made lists of several areas where he observed and collected. He submitted lists from Marysville, Stockton, Murphys, and Calaveras Big Trees. He described Stockton as being on the eastern margin of a vast tule swamp. The plains to the east of Stockton and around Marysville were sometimes cultivated or had short grass except along the watercourses where there were oaks, willows, poplars, grapevines, briars, weeds and grass. Murphys is described as being at the juncture of the chaparral and the pine belt, and Calaveras Big Trees as being in the coniferous forest.

He lists 108 species observed at various times in the vicinity of Murphys. From August 27 to September 5, 1878, he observed 42 species in the vicinity of Murphys, with many of the summer residents gone. 66 species were seen at Big Trees from July 4 to August 27, 1878. He added a few more species from Moran’s and Dunbar’s meadows 2 or 3 miles west of Big Trees. This was followed by detailed discussions of the various species including where and when they occurred. For instance, the Varied Thrush arrives in Stockton about the middle of November and leaves in March or April. It takes a bit of careful reading as some of both the common names and scientific binomials have changed. I may write another article once I sort these all out.

There are at least 5 subspecies which have been named after Belding, three of these by Robert Ridgeway of the Smithsonian. He was thus honored because he collected the early specimens. Probably the most famous California bird among these is Belding’s Savannah Sparrow which is a south coast salt marsh specialist. A recent paper has been done on the “Reproductive Success of Belding’s Savannah Sparrows in a Highly Fragmented Landscape,” by Abby N. Powell and C.L. Collier. I do not know if Belding’s Ground Squirrel of the high Sierra was named after Lyman Belding but it was named by C.Hart Marrion in 1888 and Lyman collected in the area where they are found. Let me know if you find any more information about Lyman.

Steve Stocking, Education Chair

Galt Winter Bird Festival

Mark your calendars for the 7th annual Galt Winter Bird Festival, to be held Saturday, February 1, 2014, at McCaffrey Middle School, 997 Park Terrace Dr., in Galt.

Many migratory and resident birds call the Galt area their winter home. This year’s festival features a youth art show, guided tours, presentations, guest speakers, and free family fun! The Winter Bird Festival steering committee and volunteers hope that you will find this festival to be an exciting and educational opportunity to celebrate the winter birds and habitats we all call home. For more information or to register, call 209-366-7115.

Help SJ Audubon Go Green

Each issue of *The Hoot Owl* is distributed to 600+ recipients. That's a lot of paper and energy expenditure that adds to our carbon footprint--not to mention a \$2900 annual drain on our minimal treasury. Many conservation organizations are moving towards electronic-only communications. If you are willing to receive *The Hoot Owl* in an electronic-only version, please let us know at wdchkgsqrl@yahoo.com.

Thanks,
Alan England, President/Membership Chair

Field Trips

(Continued from Page 1)

SATURDAY, February 1— *Introductory Birding Field Trip*

See entry for Saturday, January 4. Join leader Dale Smith at the north end of Laurel Ave. in Lodi at 8:00 a.m.

SUNDAY, February 2— *Modesto Reservoir/Turlock Lake*

Join leader Ralph Baker for this joint field trip with Stanislaus Audubon – should be great for waterfowl, shorebirds, and raptors. Meet at Toot Sweets in Stockton (4755 Quail Lakes Dr.) at 7:30 a.m. or at the Stanislaus County Library parking lot in Modesto (1500 I Street) at 8:00 a.m. Bring lunch. Please email Ralph at sharks_hockey_maniac@yahoo.com if you plan to go or if you have any questions.

SATURDAY, February 8— *Cosumnes River Preserve*

See entry for Saturday, January 11.

SATURDAY, February 15— *Woodbridge Wilderness Area*

See entry for Saturday, January 18. Join leader Kurt Mize at the north end of Meadowlark Lane in Woodbridge at 8:00 a.m.

SUNDAY, February 16— *Mokelumne River Fish Hatchery*

See entry for Sunday, January 19. Meet leaders Liz West and Joanne Katanic in the fish hatchery parking lot at 8:00 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, February 19— *Panoche Valley/Merced Hot Springs Resort*

Join leader Terre Ronneberg for this mid-week visit to a great winter birding area. Please call Terre (c 610-8060 or h 835-7847) in advance if you plan to attend, as the number of participants will determine where the group meets to carpool. If only a few people are going, the meeting place will be at Terre's home at 1035 Wood Thrush Lane, in Tracy, at 7:00 a.m. If a larger group is going, the meeting place will be the Park N Ride at the Tracy Outlet Mall on Pescadero Ave. (off MacArthur Blvd.) at 7:00 a.m.

SATURDAY, February 22— *San Luis National Wildlife Refuge*

Join leader Dave Wagner on this winter birding trip to San Luis NWR. A great place to see migratory waterfowl, shorebirds and other water birds, the preserve is also home to a herd of endemic Tule Elk. Meet Dave at 7:30 a.m. at Toots Sweets at March Lane and Quail Lakes Dr. for car pooling. Call Dave at 943-6997 if you have any questions or for more information.

BIRD SIGHTINGS

October 17, 2013 - December 9, 2013
(All sightings pertain to San Joaquin County)

Submitted by Liz West

On October 19th, Bruce Cousens determined that a large **Tree Swallow** roost was occurring in southern San Joaquin County. The last time this happened in the county was in October 2005. Jim Rowoth, David Coursey and Elionora Bjur went out and found two separate roosts, one located on Linne Rd., near Tracy. Numbers were estimated at 100,000 swallows and continued through at least October 27th.

Cliff Hawley found a **Thick-billed Fox Sparrow** at Heritage Oaks Winery on October 24th.

Mathew Dodder saw two **White-throated Sparrows** at Mokelumne Day Use Area on November 29th.

On November 28th and 29th, David Yee photographed a dark-lore'd White-crowned Sparrow in his backyard in north Lodi. It is possibly of an eastern race, rather than Gambel's.

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