

THE HOOT OWL



March / April 2008
Issue 2, Volume 46

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

Meetings

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, March 11

Jim Rowoth

"Birds of San Joaquin County"

March is when our winter birds are moving out and the calm before the burst of spring bird activity. Local bird expert and long-time San Joaquin Audubon member Jim Rowoth will help us get ready for the coming excitement by discussing when to go where and what to look for in San Joaquin Co.

TUESDAY, April 8

Kathy Biggs

"Those Dazzling Dragonflies: Identification and Understanding their Unique Behaviors"

Dragonflies are survivors – they were flying long before the appearance of the dinosaurs (and therefore birds). But if you think their behavior is simple, come find out just how wrong you are! We'll also be shown the 35 species already recorded in our area and their field marks for IDs. Coming in all the colors of the rainbow, plus metallic hues, this promises to be a visually delightful program even for those not interested in making dragonfly identifications.

2008 Tricolored Blackbird Survey

VOLUNTEERS are needed for the 2008 Tricolored Blackbird Survey coordinated by Audubon California in collaboration with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This citizen-based, statewide survey provides critical information for determining the status of Tricolored Blackbird populations in California and is critical in conservation strategies to protect this species. The survey will take place over one full day that is convenient for you between April 25th and 27th, 2008. If you are interested in participating, please contact Rodd Kelsey (530) 795-0660 or rkelsey@audubon.org.

Field Trips

Bad weather (rain, dense fog, strong winds) cancels trips,

SATURDAY, March 1—Introductory Birding Field Trip

At Lodi Lake Nature Area. Join leader Dave Wagner for a 2–3 hour birding walk on the trails through the “wilderness” area at Lodi Lake. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the north end of Laurel Ave. in Lodi (east of Lodi Lake Park off of Turner Road). Birders of all skill levels are welcome but the focus will be on birding fundamentals.

SATURDAY, March 22— Stockton Sewage Ponds

Join leader Jim Rowoth for this morning visit as we check out the birds of the Stockton Sewage Ponds. Contact Jim (956-2648, rowoth@sbcglobal.net) the week before to confirm details.

SATURDAY, April 5—Introductory Birding Field Trip

Meet leader Kurt Mize at 8 a.m. on Laurel Ave. next to Lodi Lake (see above for more details).

SATURDAY, April 12—McHenry Avenue Recreation Area

Come join us at this popular park as we search for resident specialties and spring migrants along the Stanislaus River. Expect a 2 to 3 hour stroll over easy terrain. Free day-use and parking. Rain cancels. Directions: The park is located on the outskirts of Escalon. From Hwy. 99 take Hwy. 120 east into Escalon. Turn right (south) on McHenry Ave. and go approximately 2.5 miles and turn right (west) on to River Rd. After 0.8 mi., watch for the park entrance sign and turn left into the park. We will meet in the main parking lot at 8:00 a.m. Leaders: Lorna and Mark Elness (209) 629-4673

SUNDAY, April 20—Stockton Rural Cemetery

We'll seek out the spring birds at this peaceful urban oasis. Meet leader Jim Rowoth at the entrance at the N end of Cemetery Lane at 7:30 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, April 23—Kiln Canyon Hummingbird Extravaganza

Join leaders Kasey Foley and Rich Petersen (209-473-3904 or kaseyfoley@sbcglobal.net) for our annual mid-week pilgrimage to this hummingbird mecca. Rufous, Anna's, Costa's, and Calliope Hummingbirds are to be expected. Meet in the parking lot at Toot Sweets (NW corner of March Ln. & Quail Lakes Dr., behind Black Angus) at 7:30 a.m. to carpool, or at the entrance to Carnegie SVRA (18600 Corral Hollow Rd., southwest of Tracy) at 8:30 a.m.

SAT., April 28—Del Puerto Canyon

Join leader Kurt Mize for this trip to scenic Del Puerto Canyon. Bring lunch and drinks as we will be picnicking at Frank Raines Park. Meet in the parking lot at Toot Sweets (corner of March Lane and Quail Lakes Dr. in Stockton) at 7:00 a.m. for carpooling. For more details call Kurt at 957-0676.

Earth Day 2008

The 2008 Earth Day Festival will be held at Victory Park in Stockton on Sunday, April 20, 2008, 11am–5pm. Come visit the Audubon booth and buy some T-shirts, hats, dragonfly coloring books, butterfly books or San Joaquin County bird guides.

Kern River Valley Spring Nature Festival

The 30 Apr–6 May 08 Kern River Valley Spring Nature Festival web pages (<http://kern.audubon.org/bioregion.htm>) are up and running! This festival is centered on the Kern River Valley and Southern Sierra Nevada and includes Southern San Joaquin Valley birding trips. Of interest to Central Valley birders are some of our central valley trips including trips to Kern National Wildlife Refuge and Bakersfield birding hotspots (Spotted Dove, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Hart Park).

There are thirty field trip options offered this year, many of them offered all seven days. Although dinners, exhibitors, featured speakers, and workshops are still being fleshed out, field trip sign-ups are in full swing and several sections for specific days (but, no trip options overall) have already sold out. Anyone interested in anything other than field trips should contact Alison Sheehey at 760-378-2029. Anyone interested in field trips should contact Bob Barnes at 760-382-1260 or e-mail bbarnes@lightspeed.net

"The Tail Tells"

"The male Anna's hummingbird emits an emphatic squeak as he swoops above his intended mates, but it's his tail, not his voice, that makes the sound. A study published online January 29th in the 'Proceedings of the Royal Society B' settles a 68 year old debate about the source of the chirp.

Ornithologist Christopher Clark of the University of California, Berkeley, suspected that the sound had something to do with the birds' unusually shaped outer tail feathers. So his team took high-speed videos of the birds doing dive displays in a California park. The videos revealed that a quick tail flick coincided with the squeak, and the displays of four consistent chirpers were silenced when researchers trimmed their tails.

In the lab, the researchers found that isolated feathers produced a continuous whine when subjected to an air stream. They fluttered like little flags, generating the same frequently regardless of wind speed. 'We were blown away,' Clark says, when they realized that the feathers worked like musical reeds, a mechanism previously unknown in birds.

The study 'fully solves' the question of the Anna's chirp and is likely to explain other non-vocal bird sounds as well, says biomechanist Douglas Altshuler.

(Science, Vol 319 8 pg 705. February 2008.)

Lark Bunting Plumage Variation and Sexual Selection

In Lark Buntings the females are brown with dull white wing patches. The male is mostly black but has patches of brown feathers of different sizes in different places as well a very obvious white wing patches with also very in size and color.

The theory of the evolution of ornamental male traits as a result of sexual selection assumes consistency in selection through time. It has not been known the degree to which individual female preferences are flexible. This study showed that sexual selection of male traits varied dramatically through the years. Individual females were fickle in their mate choice, changes in the choices and in mating patterns through time may "weaken the strength of sexual selection and could maintain genetic variation underlying multiple sexual ornaments."

(Extracted from "Adaptive Plasticity in Female Mate Choice Dampens Sexual Selection on Male Ornaments in Lark Bunting". Alexis S. Chaine & Bruce E. Lyon. Science Vol 319. pgs. 459–462. January 25 2008.



MONTHLY BIRD CENSUS

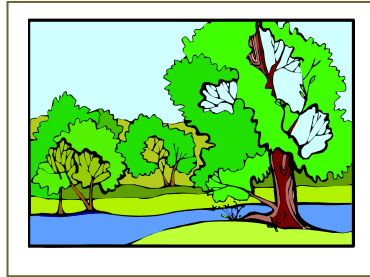
RIVER WALK (formerly Willow Slough)
SUN., March 9, at 6:00 a.m., and SAT.,
April 12, at 6:00 a.m. Meet at the
 Visitor's Center.

With John Schick (209)464-8304

TALL FOREST

SAT., March 15, at 6:45 a.m., and SAT.,
April 19, at 6:00 a.m. Meet at the Farm
 Center.

With John Trochet (916)684-2816, ext. 5



MOKELUMNE RIVER MONTHLY BIRD CENSUS

LODI LAKE

March date uncertain. Saturday, April 5.

Contact Kurt Mize, 957-0676, for more information.

MOKELUMNE RIVER DAY USE AREA

Saturday, March 22. April date uncertain.

Contact Liz West, 744-0218, for more information.

STILLMAN MAGEE COUNTY PARK

Sunday, March 30. April date uncertain.

Contact Jim Rowoth, 956-2648, for more information.

Please call as schedules often change

WALDO HOLT HABITAT FUND

You may have heard about the Waldo Holt Habitat Fund, but just in case you haven't, let me tell you about it.

A group of people got together last year with Waldo to discuss the possibility of purchasing some property on his behalf to attempt to memorialize what Waldo helped create in this county; protection of habitat for wildlife, threatened, endangered, or otherwise.

Members of this group have been meeting since then to discuss the options available within San Joaquin County and think they have found one.

There is property along the Mokelumne River, immediately adjacent to the Woodbridge Wilderness Area (previously known as Woodbridge Regional Park) that may be available to purchase in the future. This property is a beautiful riparian area with a large grove of mature Valley Oaks mixed with Live Oaks providing a lot of habitat for birds, mammals, reptiles, and insects.

If you are one of those about to receive that tax rebate and didn't know what to do with it this would be a great way to spend it and help this dream be realized.

To learn more about the property and details of this purchase, please feel free to contact any of the people listed below or check the San Joaquin Audubon website www.sanjoaquinaudubon.org and upcoming *Hoot Owls* for updates.

Thanks for helping keep Waldo's memory alive.

Kasey L. Foley
 (209) 473-3904

kaseyfoley@sbcglobal.net

Steve Stocking
 (209) 754-9029

snlsox@earthlink.net

San Joaquin Audubon Society

Jerre Murphy	President
Alan England	Secretary
Dennis Smith	Treasurer
Walt McInnis	Conservation/President-elect
Kurt Mize	Newsletter Editor
Jim Rowoth	Director at Large
Lorna Elness	Director at Large
Liz West	Director at Large
Dave Wagner	Director at Large

Kasey Foley	Membership, Website
Steve Stocking	Education
Sandi Schoeppe	Hospitality
Cheri Pillsbury	Listserve Moderator

New website: www.sanjoaquinaudubon.org

Calif. Bird Alerts

Central Valley	916-783-2331
No. California	415-681-7422
Monterey	831-626-6605
Morro Bay	805-528-7182
So. California	818-952-5502
Santa Barbara	805-964-8240
Los Angeles	323-874-1318
San Diego	619-688-2473

Joint membership in National Audubon and San Joaquin chapter includes a subscription to both *Audubon* magazine and *The Hoot Owl*. Make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to:

San Joaquin Audubon
Attn: Membership
P.O. Box 7755
Stockton, CA 95267

(Renewals should be mailed directly to National Audubon per renewal notice.)

Introductory rate:	\$20	Student/Senior:	\$15
Basic Family;	\$35	Lifetime (ind.):	\$1000
Newsletter only: (non-member)	\$10	Lifetime (fam.):	\$1500

Notice: "Newsletter only" yearly dues have increased

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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