

# THE HOOT OWL

March / April 2013  
Issue 2, Volume 51

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, March 12**

**Chris Conard**

*"Spring Migration in Ohio"*

This program of photos and short videos will feature 37 species of warblers and many other highlights from a May 2012 trip to Ohio, which included short visits to Kentucky and Michigan. The most wanted birds successfully found included American Woodcock, Black-billed Cuckoo, Henslow's Sparrow, Swainson's Warbler and Kirtland's Warbler. In addition to photos, life birds, and videos of a singing Wood Thrush, among others, the trip produced 30 eBird checklists from 22 locations. Sites visited and suggested itineraries will also be discussed.

Chris Conard is a Natural Resource Specialist at the Bufferlands of the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District. He regularly leads field trips for Sacramento Audubon, serves as the Sacramento County editor for *North American Birds*, and is the current president of the Central Valley Bird Club.

**TUESDAY, April 9**

**John C. Robinson**

*"Birding 101 (10 Secrets to Identifying Birds)"*

John C. Robinson will share his fool-proof secrets to identifying birds. The author of *Birding For Everyone, Encouraging People of Color to Become Birdwatchers*, John has worked as a wildlife biologist and professional ornithologist for nearly 30 years, including stints at two federal conservation agencies—the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service—and has led bird watching tours all over the world.

An environmental advocate, John's mission is to  
*(Continued on Page 2)*

## FIELD TRIPS

**SATURDAY, March 2—*Introductory Birding Field Trip***

Join leader Susan Schneider at the north end of Laurel Ave. in Lodi at 8:00 a.m. for a leisurely stroll on the trails of the Lodi Lake Wilderness Area. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Extra binoculars and field guides will be available.

**SUNDAY, March 10—*Cosumnes River Preserve***

Join leader Jim Rowoth (956-2648 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.

**SATURDAY, March 16—*Woodbridge Wilderness Area***

Join leader Kurt Mize (915-6264) for the monthly census of this delightful little park on the banks of the Mokelumne River. Meet Kurt at the north end of Meadowlark Lane in the town of Woodbridge at 8:00 a.m.

**SUNDAY, March 17—*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, April 6—*Introductory Birding Field Trip***

Leader undetermined at time of printing. Meet at the north end of Laurel Ave. in Lodi at 8:00 a.m. for a leisurely stroll on the trails of the Lodi Lake Wilderness Area. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Extra binoculars and field guides will be available.

**WEDNESDAY, April 10—*Round Valley Regional Preserve***

Join leader John Blades (473-7073) for a mid-week visit to this 1900 acre preserve in the inner coast range near Brentwood. Meet in the parking lot at Toot Sweets, near the northwest corner of March Lane and Quail Lakes Drive in Stockton, at 8:00 a.m. to carpool. Expect eagles, raptors, and Lewis' Woodpeckers. If you can carry a scope—bring it. Bring lunch. Rain cancels.

**SATURDAY, April 13—*Cosumnes River Preserve***

See entry for Sunday, March 10. Meet leader Jim Rowoth at the visitor center on Franklin Rd. Double check with Jim for start time.

**SUNDAY, April 14—*Buckley Cove***

Join leaders Kathy and Virginia Bonham (email [bonhamtwin@att.net](mailto:bonhamtwin@att.net)), for a morning visit to this small but surprisingly productive spot on the edge of the delta. Meet at the Buckley Cove parking lot at the west end of March Lane in Stockton at 8:00 a.m.

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## PROGRAMS

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encourage all people, especially minorities, to learn about the natural world. Deeply concerned about the lack of participation by minorities in outdoor recreation activities, John works with non-profit organizations to increase minority interest in bird watching in hopes that involvement will give people a reason to protect the environment through nature conservation in the future.

The author of numerous books, including *An Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Tennessee*, *Secret of the Snow Leopard* and *Common Birds of Mount Diablo*, John has been a member of the Audubon Society, American Ornithologists' Union, American Birding Association, Iowa Ornithologists' Union and Tennessee Ornithological Society. John has served on several wildlife organization boards, participated in environmental initiatives and worked at wildlife refuges across the country. The federal government has recognized him for superior service with several special achievement awards.

John previously was also the Chief Ornithologist for the Scotts Miracle-Gro company and he was recently nominated as a 2012 TogetherGreen Fellow (National Audubon Society). John spends most of his time studying birds and helping others learn more about birds and nature.

## LONG DISTANCE FLIGHT

Using data from geo-locators, scientists have established that the Northern Wheatear winters in Africa and nests in Canada. This makes it the only songbird known to migrate regularly across the Atlantic. The flight covers at least 4,600 miles in each direction. (Nat'l. Wildlife, Feb/Mar, 2013)

## WALLACE- BELLOTA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

26 participants braved reasonably good weather to bird eastern San Joaquin and western Calaveras county for the 2012 count. 13 teams covered this area which is mostly foothill woodland but includes some agriculture and an increasing amount of rural residential use. 134 species were identified, as were several of the gull sp. and sparrow sp. tribe. Probably the most unusual sighting, and a first for this count, was a Mountain Quail seen by Dick Filson in the Rancho Calaveras area. Other birds unusual to the count area were Pacific Slope Flycatcher, Sandhill Crane, the red form of Fox Sparrow and Pacific Wren. Pacific Wren and Winter Wren were split in 2010 and the species most often found in California is now called the Pacific Wren. Pacific Wren is not a common bird on this count.

All educational articles and Wallace-Bellota CBC data provided by Steve Stocking, Education Chair

## FIELD TRIPS

(Continued from Page 1)

### SATURDAY, April 20— *Woodbridge Wilderness Area*

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

### SUNDAY, April 21— *Mokelumne River Fish Hatchery*

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

### WEDNESDAY, April 24— *Kiln Canyon Hummingbirds*

Join leader John Blades for our annual mid-week visit to this hummingbird hot spot in the foothills west of Tracy. Meet in the parking lot at Toot Sweets near the northwest corner of March Lane and Quail Lakes Drive at 7:00 a.m. to carpool, or at the entrance to Carnegie SVRA (18600 Corral Hollow Rd., southwest of Tracy) at 8:00 a.m.

### MONDAY, April 29— *Panoche Valley*

Join leader Terry Ronneberg (835-7847) for a trip to this Important Bird Area. Meet Terry at 8:00 a.m. at the Park 'N' Ride at the entrance to the Tracy Outlet Mall located at MacArthur and Pescadero in Tracy. Please call Terry if you have any questions.

## SPRING WILDFLOWERS!

### SUNDAY, April 7— *Calaveras Foothills*

Meet leader Steve Stocking at 9:30 a.m. at the overlook at Hogan Dam for this special field trip in search of spring wildflowers. We plan to visit Salt Springs Valley, Copperopolis, and perhaps some vernal pools on a cattle ranch. With any luck, some late rains will really bring out the flowers. The birding should be good, regardless. For more info, contact Steve at [snlsox@earthlink.net](mailto:snlsox@earthlink.net).

## RETURN OF THE BERMUDA PETREL

Conservationists are racing against time to build up new populations of Bermuda's official national bird. Dogs, cats and rats brought by colonists were thought to have eliminated this ground-nesting bird in the 1620's. It turned out to be "almost extinct" as a few nesting pairs were found in the early 1900's. Artificial burrows, recorded breeding calls and attempts to get the birds to nest on higher ground to avoid climate change problems are helping to build up the number of nesting pairs. (Nat'l. Wildlife, Feb/Mar, 2013)

## POLLUTION, POLITICS AND VULTURES

"Two decades ago, vulture populations across the Indian subcontinent began a collapse to just 1% of what they had been." This became a public health problem as the vultures had been disposing of the vast tonnage of cattle carcasses. It turned out that the birds were being poisoned by an anti-inflammatory drug widely used on cattle which was then being passed on to the vultures when they fed on the dead cattle. It took some years to get all of the countries involved to ban the drug but now many vulture populations are increasing. (Science, Vol. 339, Feb 8, 2013)

## FISH AND GAME PUBLICATIONS

Some western states produce magazines to support the efforts of their "Fish and Game" departments. At one time California was one of these states and published "Outdoor California". Correct me if I am wrong but I believe that this magazine is no longer published. Two states which still publish such magazines and so provide an excellent source of wildfowl articles and photos are "Wyoming Wildlife" and "Montana Outdoors." Montana Outdoors charges \$9 for six issues and Wyoming Wildlife charges \$12.95 a year.

Examples of beautifully illustrated articles from these magazines include "Rednecks" about Red-necked Grebes, and "Shorebirds Without a Shore" in the July 2012 issue of Wyoming Wildlife, and "Wyoming's Jays- Smart, Adaptable and Beautiful" in the Nov. 2012 issue of Wyoming Wildlife.

Provided by Steve Stocking, Education Chair

## BIRD SIGHTINGS

*December 11, 2012 - February 19, 2013*  
*(All sightings pertain to San Joaquin County)*  
Submitted by Liz West

At least eight **Short-eared Owls** were seen on Flood and Waverly roads during the Wallace-Bellota Christmas bird count on December 29<sup>th</sup>, collectively by Mark and Lorna Elness, Kathy Schick and Pat McEwen. The next day Pat Bacchetti found six more on Waverly road about 1 mile south of Flood Rd. On January 7<sup>th</sup>, Ralph Baker counted 8 spread out along the Waverly Rd. one mile south and north of Flood road.

Also during the Wallace-Bellota CBC, Joanne Katanic found an out of season **Pacific-slope Flycatcher** in her area, near the east end of Eight Mile Rd.

On the January 5<sup>th</sup> Beginning Bird walk at Lodi Lake, mobbing Western Scrub Jays alerted Jim Rowoth, who found two **Long-eared Owls**.

Joe Schultz, while doing a goose survey on Staten Island, January 18<sup>th</sup>, spotted a **Brant** hanging out with the Aleutian Cackling Geese. It was last seen on January 19<sup>th</sup>.

David Yee found three **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** associating with Bushtits at Oak Grove Park January 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Ralph Baker saw a **Green-tailed Towhee** at Jacob Myer's park, February 4<sup>th</sup>. It continues to be seen by many people and has been taking flights across the river into Stanislaus county. The towhee is the first wintertime record for San Joaquin County.

John Cant picked out a first year **Glaucous Gull** from a group of three hundred gulls at the Quarry pond on Koster Rd., just north of the Recology plant on February 7<sup>th</sup>.

Also on February 7<sup>th</sup>, David Yee encountered an immature **Northern Goshawk** perched on a power pole on Thornton Rd. just south of Woodbridge Rd. It then flew off to the south not to be seen again.

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*New website:* [www.sanjoaquinaudubon.org](http://www.sanjoaquinaudubon.org)

## Calif. Birding E-mail Discussion Groups

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Calbirds>  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sjbirds/>  
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San Joaquin Audubon C3ZC220Z  
Attn: Membership  
P.O. Box 7755  
Stockton, CA 95267

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