

THE HOOT OWL

November / December 2012
Issue 6, Volume 50

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 13
Jim Rowoth
"Do you eBird?"

A real-time, online checklist program, eBird has revolutionized the way that the birding community reports and accesses information about birds globally. Its goal is to maximize the utility and accessibility of the vast numbers of bird observations made each year by recreational and professional bird watchers. It is amassing one of the largest and fastest growing biodiversity data resources in existence. Learn more about this program and why you should get involved.

A long-time active member of San Joaquin Audubon Society, Jim is an outspoken and enthusiastic proponent and user of eBird, and after hearing his talk, you will be too!

TUESDAY, December 11
David Yee
"Bird Identification - Christmas Bird Count Refresher"

Everyone is encouraged to attend this annual Christmas Bird Count refresher by local birding authority David Yee. David has a talent for presenting information in a way that makes it interesting and useful for birders of all skill levels, from beginner to advanced. David's ID tips and birding strategies are guaranteed to help you make the most of your day in the field. Bring your binoculars for this always-popular presentation!

An icon of San Joaquin County birding, David's birding skills are legendary. Among his many other accomplishments and affiliations, David is a founding member and past president of the Central Valley Bird Club and is the driving force behind the Central Valley Birding Symposium, now in its 16th year.

FIELD TRIPS

FRI-SUN, November 2-4—Lodi Sandhill Crane Festival

Workshops, presentations, field trips, children's activities and more. See announcement on page 2. Please note that this month's *Introductory Birding Field Trip* at Lodi Lake will be combined with a Crane Festival field trip and will start at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, November 3rd.

SATURDAY, November 10—Cosumnes River Preserve

Join leader Jim Rowoth (956-2648 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, November 11—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.

THU-SUN, November 15-18—Central Valley Birding Symposium

Don't miss Northern California's premiere birding festival, and one of the highlights of the birding year! Field trips, workshops, vendors, and art show. See article on page 2.

SATURDAY, December 1—Introductory Birding Field Trip

Join leader Dave Wagner 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.

SATURDAY, December 8—Cosumnes River Preserve

Join leader Jim Rowoth (956-2648 or rowoth@sbcglobal.net) for the monthly River Walk bird count at CRP. Check website www.cosumnes.org for last minute updates. Double check with Jim for start time.

SATURDAY, December 15—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, December 16—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 (956-2648 or rowoth@sbcglobal.net). See Page 2 for information on the Wallace-Bellota CBC.

(Continued on Page 2)



16th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium

The Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the 16th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium Nov. 15-18, 2012 at the Stockton Hilton Hotel in Stockton, CA. Please come and help us kick off this year's CVBS! Come meet the CVBS board & staff members! Reconnect with old friends! Meet new ones! Take advantage of the scrumptious Hors D'oeuvres Buffet & No Host Bar on Thursday night.

Thursday Night's Keynote speaker is Ed Harper presenting a program on "Appreciating the Birds of the Central Valley". Come sit back and watch as Ed takes us on a photographic journey to catch a glimpse of the avian world of the Central Valley.

Friday Night's keynote program is presented by Sophie Webb on "Seabirds & Marine Mammals of the Tropical Eastern Pacific." Sophie has spent countless hours on research vessels over the deep seas all over the world, including the chartered waters off the west coast of North America. She will give us a wonderful glimpse into the natural history of the fascinating birds and mammals she has encountered in this Region.

Saturday Night's keynote program is by Carlos Bethancourt on "The Natural Splendor of Panamá!" Join the knowledgeable and entertaining head guide of the Canopy Tower, Carlos Bethancourt, on a photographic journey across Central Panama, where myriad tropical birds, bizarre mammals and unusual reptiles and amphibians are seen in their natural setting! Carlos will keep you spellbound with his stories of discovery and vivid images. Come experience why Panamá is indeed the country of Natural Splendor!

Other workshops include: "Century of Field ID" by Joe Morlan, a "Bird ID Workshop" by Jon Dunn, and 2 photo workshops by Bob Steele & Ron LeValley. Also programs by Paul Baicich & John Robinson.

Our field trips always turn up exciting birds. Add in the always entertaining and educational Bird ID Panel, the wonderful display of art and gifts for yourself or others 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!

To look over the line-up of speakers, workshops, and fieldtrips. Check out our website at: www.cvbs.org

CVBS Steering Committee
cvbsreg@gmail.com
209-369-2010



Lodi Sandhill Crane Festival

Mark your calendars for the 16th annual Lodi Sandhill Crane Festival, to be held Nov. 2-3, 2012, at Hutchins Street Square, in Lodi. The festival kicks off with an opening reception and Art Show on Friday, November 2nd from 6:00 to 8:30 PM. Enjoy hors d'oeuvres and Lodi wines from Heritage Oak Winery. The reception is free and open to all.

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 both days. For registration and information, go to www.cranefestival.com or call 800-581-6150.

Field Trips

(Continued from Page 1)

SATURDAY, December 29— *Wallace-Bellota Christmas Bird Count*

All day long bird-counting extravaganza in the fabulous foothills. Don't miss out on the premier birding activity of the year! Seasoned birders and beginners are welcome on this fun-filled journey that contributes to the scientific knowledge of bird distribution. Oh yeah, the food is good too! See you there. Contact Kasey at kaseyfoley@sbcglobal.net or (209) 473-3904.

SUNDAY, December 30— *Mokelumne River Fish Hatchery*

Join leader Liz West for our monthly census of the day-use area below Comanche Dam. Meet Liz in the fish hatchery parking lot at 8:00 a.m.

GREAT GRAY OWLS OF YOSEMITE

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

This is a gentle reminder to the birding community that it is against Yosemite National Park policy to post locations of Great Gray Owls in Yosemite on the internet.

Great Gray Owls in California are endangered and very rare. They are particularly vulnerable to disturbance when they are pursued, usually by birders and photographers. As the Yosemite Ornithologist and Lead Great Gray Owl Researcher, we ask that you help us to protect this amazing bird by respecting and enjoying it from afar. On our park website <http://www.nps.gov/yose/naturescience/birding-tips.htm> lists ways to avoid negative impacts to special status species. These include: not using broadcasts to elicit responses (including apps on smart phones), not divulging locations – particularly over the internet, and not using flashlights or spotlights on animals after dusk and before dawn.

That being said, if you wish to experience the Great Gray Owl in a respectful manner, we would recommend visiting a mid-elevation (4,000–7,000) meadow that is lined with several large mature conifers, situating yourself with a view along the meadow edge to both sides, and sitting as quietly as possible on the meadow edge in a concealed location (e.g., under a draping branch) during dusk. Watch for movements along the meadow edges. When owls hunt, they will often perch at the meadow edge, look and listen for their prey (voles and gophers) in the meadow, then swoop down on their prey. If you are quiet and still enough, you may be rewarded with a view of the Great Gray Owl displaying its natural behavior, and have the satisfaction that you are minimizing disturbance to it.

We realize that the vast majority of birders mean no harm, but it's particularly important to be respectful of one of the rarest birds in the state of California. There are only an estimated 200 individuals in the entire state of California. A recent genetic study found the "effective population size" to be 14 individuals, meaning that either there are very few breeding individuals and/or there has been a dramatic reduction in genetic diversity resulting from recent population bottlenecks (Hull et al. 2010). To learn more about this genetic study, you can read the paper here

<http://www.nps.gov/yose/naturescience/upload/great-gray-owl-2010-keane-pre-print.pdf>

to learn more about the Yosemite Great Gray Owl in general you can look

here <http://www.nps.gov/yose/naturescience/great-gray-owl.htm>

Sarah Stock and Joe Medley, Great Gray Owl Research Team

BIRD SIGHTINGS

August 17, 2012 - October 16, 2012

(All sightings pertain to San Joaquin County)

Submitted by Liz West

Liz West found a **Solitary Sandpiper** at the Lodi Sewage ponds August 30th. It was walking around the edges of the mud and weeds.

The San Joaquin Audubon field trip led by Jim Rowoth saw 2 **Red-breasted Sapsuckers** at Stockton Rural Cemetery on September 23rd. The first of an irruption, the SJ Audubon field trip to Stockton Rural Cemetery saw more **Red-breasted Nuthatches** than White-breasted on October 14th. Sal Salerno found one October 3rd at Caswell State Park. There were also a half dozen at Delta College.

On October 13th, Joanne Katanic found a **Red-naped Sapsucker** in the elm tree in her front yard. It continues to be seen.

Correction: The **Tri-colored Heron** seen July 9th should have been designated as a possible sighting, since no one was able to find it again.

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Calif. Birding E-mail Discussion Groups

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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 C2ZC220Z
Attn: Membership
P.O. Box 7755
Stockton, CA 95267

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The Hoot Owl is published six times a year by the San Joaquin Audubon Society.