

THE HOOT OWL

September / October 2011
Issue 5, Volume 49

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, September 13

Chris Conard

"You Can Get There From Here: dispatches from road trips through North America"

Ohio by way of Texas? South Dakota by way of Utah? So much to see and so little time. Over the past 22 years Chris has driven from Sacramento to 37 states and four provinces. This program of photos and short videos will highlight some of the travels, uncomfortable nights, and wonderful sunrises. The main subject will be the birds, other wildlife and natural areas seen, with a focus on trips to Colorado, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. Like a road trip, there will be a lot to see at a fast pace.

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 a Central Valley Bird Club Board Member.

MONDAY, October 24

Matthew Bronson

"The Center For Land-Based Learning"

This is a joint meeting with the Sierra Club. **Please not that the start time is 7:00 pm.** Matthew will discuss the programs the center offers in San Joaquin County to high school students. One program, FARMS, was created to teach the next generation about the cause and effect relationship between agricultural practices and the environment. Another program, SLEWS (Student and Landowner Education and Watershed Stewardship) combines land-based education with watershed stewardship. For more info, please visit their website: <http://www.landbasedlearning.org>.

FIELD TRIPS

SATURDAY, September 3—Introductory Birding Field Trip

Join Leader Susan Schneider 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, so don't be shy! Extra binoculars and field guides will be available. Passerine migration should be well under way, so we'll be on the lookout for flycatchers, grosbeaks, and warblers--oh my!

SATURDAY, September 17— Woodbridge Wilderness Area

Join leader Dave Wagner for our monthly census of this beautiful little undeveloped park on the banks of the Mokelumne River. Meet Jim at the north end of Meadowlark Ln., off of Woodbridge Rd., in the town of Woodbridge at 8:00 a.m.

SUNDAY, September 18—San Joaquin River NWR

Let's check out the recently opened to the public San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge, just across the river in Stanislaus Co. Meet leader Jim Rowoth (956-2648 or rowoth@sbcglobal.net) in the Toot Sweets parking for targeted departure time of 7:30 am. For those who wish to go directly, plan to meet us at the gate at 8:00. The length of our visit will depend on the bird activity, so bring along a sack lunch and drink.

SATURDAY, September 24—Delta Meadows State Park

Meet leader Kurt Mize in the parking lot of the Starbucks on Trinity Parkway (in the Spanos Park West shopping center at Interstate 5 and Eight Mile Rd.) at 7:30 a.m. for a visit to this undeveloped and relatively unknown state park at the confluence of the Mokelumne and Sacramento Rivers near Walnut Grove. The habitat—a mixture of riparian forest, meadows, ponds, and sloughs—is excellent, and should provide a good variety of species. For more information, contact Kurt at 209-915-6264 or k1mize@aol.com.

SATURDAY, October 1—Introductory Birding Field Trip

See entry for Saturday, September 3. Join leader Kasey Foley at the north end of Laurel Ave. in Lodi at 8:00 a.m.

SATURDAY, October 15— Woodbridge Wilderness Area

See entry for Saturday, September 17. Join leader Liz West at the north end of Meadowlark Ln., in Woodbridge at 8:00 a.m.

SUNDAY, October 16— Stockton Rural Cemetery

Come along with Jim Rowoth for a morning visit to one of his favorite birding haunts, the Stockton Rural Cemetery. Meet him at the office inside the gates at 8:00 a.m. We'll look for recently arrived winter visitors among the expected resident species.



15th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium

The Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the Fifteenth Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium Nov. 17–20, 2011 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 Keynote speakers are: Ed Harper & John Sterling presenting a program on "Appreciating the Birds of the Central Valley". Come sit back and watch as Ed & John take 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 Ron LeValley on "The Writings of William Leon Dawson—a California Bird Pioneer". Dawson's writings are humorous, sad, spiritual, satirical, and inspirational. Ron's presentation and photography captures much of this feeling.

Saturday Night's keynote program is by Jeff Gordon on: "10 Birds that Changed Birding." There is the "spark" bird—the one that turned you from a casual observer into an avowed birdwatcher, willing to endure long miles and early hours in search of new species. There are birds that thrilled you with their rarity, their beauty, and their unexpected behaviors. Come hear what Jeff has to say.

Other events include workshops on Swallow Identification by Joe Morlan & a Warbler ID Workshop by Jon Dunn. There are also programs on topics about Bird Migration & Wetlands Icons.

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 field trips 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 14th annual Lodi Sandhill Crane Festival, to be held Nov. 4–6, 2011, at Hutchins Street Square, in Lodi. The festival kicks off on Friday, Nov. 4, with a wine & hors d'oeuvres reception from 6:00–8:30 p.m. sponsored by the wineries of Woodbridge Uncorked that opens the festival and art show.

This year's festival features family activities, an art show, workshops, wildlife demos, 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.

BIRDING 101

Jim Rowth will again offer his beginning birding workshop, Birding 101, at Delta College this fall. The class consists of five morning sessions on alternate Saturdays from Sept 17 thru Nov 12, each of which is followed by a field trip to a local birding hotspot (e.g., Stockton Rural Cemetery, local sewage pond, etc.). We will examine the various birds found locally and some not so locally in this workshop. We will look at what makes a bird a bird and the great variety of different types found in nature, as well as their endlessly fascinating vocalizations, habits and lifestyles. We will also discuss the growing sport of bird-watching and bird-watching equipment. Participants will work on improving their abilities to find and to identify birds in both in class settings and in the field. Registration details can be found at <http://www.adultedreg.com/delta/index.cfm>; follow the link "For the Birds".

Survey reveals steep decline in numbers of rare Tricolored Blackbirds

Emeryville, Calif. – A comprehensive survey of rare Tricolored Blackbirds in California has confirmed that the population of the rare bird has declined more than 30 percent in the last three years. The Tricolored Blackbird, which once numbered in the millions, lives almost entirely in California.

The 2011 survey, conducted by Audubon California with the help of more than 100 volunteers, identified about 259,000 birds at 138 sites in 29 counties. In 2008, a similar survey counted approximately 395,000 Tricolored Blackbirds in California.

The survey confirmed that the Tricolored Blackbird continues to mostly reside in California's San Joaquin Valley. A full 89 percent of the birds were found there during the survey. The survey also confirmed that the birds continue to struggle in southern California. The Tricolored Blackbird, once the most common bird in San Diego County, only numbers about 6,000 in the southern half of the state.

The survey report identifies low breeding productivity as the potential main reason for the dramatic decline in Tricolored Blackbird numbers. Several years of drought certainly played a role in that reduced productivity, as did colony failure. The report notes that large breeding colonies on private farms continue to be lost as fields are harvested before young birds have fledged.

An agreement among public agencies, conservation groups and agricultural representatives to form the Tricolored Blackbird Working Group has brought diverse parties together to protect and grow the state's struggling Tricolored Blackbird population. Since then, Audubon California has negotiated a number of agreements to protect large breeding colonies on private farms, and is developing strategies to create new breeding habitat on public lands.

Just this spring, Audubon California secured the safety of several large colonies of rare Tricolored Blackbirds on private property. In all, the agreements resulted in the protection of the breeding production of at least 50,000 birds.

BIRD SIGHTINGS

June 15, 2011 - August 22, 2011

(All sightings pertain to San Joaquin County)

Submitted by Liz West

On June 25th, Karen Zumwalt and Linda Pittman found an **Upland Sandpiper** on Waverley Rd. It was seen by a number of other observers in the next couple of days. It was last seen the evening of the 28th.

Lynette Buckman saw an immature **Brown Pelican** feeding off her dock on Lincoln Lake in Stockton on June 29th. A day earlier a friend of Dave Fries saw one on Meadow Lake in Stockton. July 20th Linda Pittman saw a juvenile Brown Pelican at the Lodi sewage ponds. One continues to be seen off and on at the Lodi Sewage ponds.

While looking for the Upland Sandpiper, Chris Conard and Kimya Lambert found a singing hatch year **Grasshopper Sparrow**, July 1st. Birders visiting Waverley Rd. saw up to six Grasshopper Sparrows, through July 6th.

David Yee saw an adult **Semipalmated Sandpiper** at the Lodi Sewage ponds July 3rd. Ed Harper and Sacramento Audubon field trip members had another Semipalmated Sandpiper at the sewage ponds August 7th. David Yee again found one at LSP on August 18, along with a juvenile **Pectoral Sandpiper** and a continuing group of four **Marbled Godwits**. A group of six Marbled Godwits were first reported at LSP by Jim Rowth on August 13th, and as many as seven were still being seen on August 22nd.

On a Sacramento Audubon field trip to Lodi Sewage ponds Ed Harper found a **Least Tern**, August 7th. Jim Rowth saw it a little later the same afternoon; it disappeared while he was getting ready to phone people about it.

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New website: www.sanjoaquinaudubon.org

Calif. Bird Alerts

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
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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 C1ZC220Z
Attn: Membership
P.O. Box 7755
Stockton, CA 95267

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