CALL NOTES ...Bruce Schoppe, President

Another program year draws to a close. Thank you to all who have contributed to making 2016-17 another great year. The members of our Board of Directors and committee chairs provide many hours of volunteer work to plan, organize and actually do what we do. Thank you also to the individuals and organizations that support our work. As a volunteer organization dependent upon gifts and grants to provide the financial support we need, we have been fortunate to see that support grow over the last several years.

As a reminder, our Annual Meeting and BBQ will be held on Saturday, May 13th at Church of the Foothills preceded by birding at Arroyo Verde Park. Meet at the parking lot at the back of the park at 9:00. Remember, there is a fee for parking on weekends. Please be sure to send your check for $13.00 for the BBQ to Marianne Slaughter by May 6th if you plan to attend.

Previous editions of Call Notes have highlighted the need for volunteers to take on several important tasks. If we want to have programs next season, we need a Program Chair. Talk to Debby Burns or Janice Susha about the job and the resources available to the Program Chair OR Committee. This is definitely a job that can be shared.

Similarly, if you want to receive a newsletter next season, we need a Newsletter Editor. Talk to Dee Press about the requirements for this position. It really needs one person to put it together but, many hands create the content.

Lastly, we are now well into nesting season for the Western Snowy Plover. There are nests at both Ormond Beach and Hollywood Beach. Training programs for Volunteer Naturalists are scheduled for May 20th and June 3rd at the Channel Islands District office of California State Parks at San Buenaventura State Beach. Volunteer Naturalists are our most important link between recreational beachgoers and the birds for which Beaches Are Habitat! See the flyer elsewhere in this newsletter.

ENJOY THE SUMMER!

SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER!
March is typically a slow month for new finds of rare or uncommon species as many of our wintering birds are gone or nearing the end of their stays, and northbound migrants are just starting to arrive. April and May will bring even more migrants streaming north and by late June we will already see the start of southbound shorebird migration, which will continue through the summer. This is the last “Notes From the Field” until September (which will then summarize sightings of note from April-July) so get out in the field and seek out birds that are on the move or nesting locally. The local mountains are great for breeding birds during the late spring and summer, shorebirds and waterbirds should be evident in wetlands and lagoons along the coast, and migrant songbirds can be found virtually anywhere there is an abundance of trees or dense vegetation. If you are feeling adventurous, try a pelagic birding trip (Island Packers is offering one on July 16) or take a trip to the Channel Islands to see some of the seabirds found off our coast.

Much of the local wintering waterfowl, waterbirds, and shorebirds started to move on to breeding areas to the north or south. A Long-tailed Duck continued near Point Mugu through 24 Mar and a Cattle Egret was at Point Mugu on 9 Mar (JP). A Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was a surprise find at the Ventura Settling Ponds on 19 Mar (MT). As the population of Yellow-crowned Night-Herons continues to grow at Point Mugu, sightings like this at other coastal locations in the county should increase. Shorebirds of note were few, but a Ruff was on the Oxnard Plain 9-16 Mar (LS).

Raptor reports were scarce; however, California Condors continued near Lake Piru through 31 Mar when a high of 11 birds were seen (BS), and four were on Squaw Flat Road on 28 Mar (DM). A Bald Eagle continued at Lake Piru through 22 Mar and the pair at Lake Casitas continued through 31 Mar.

Over the past month northbound migrant landbirds started arriving including common species such as Pacific-slope Flycatchers, Western Kingbirds, Warbling Vireos, Black-headed Grosbeaks, Hooded and Bullock’s Orioles, and others; however, a few uncommon species lingered or arrived. Red-naped Sapsuckers continued in Fillmore through 1 Mar, in Canada Larga through 10 Mar, and in Ojai through 15 Mar. The first northbound Hammond’s Flycatcher was in Sisar Canyon on 30 Mar (JB). A Plumbeous Vireo was at Moorpark College 25-26 Mar (MSM). Mountain Bluebirds continued along Canada Larga Road through 2 Mar and a Yellow-headed Blackbird was on the Oxnard Plain on 10 Mar (DP).

Whale watching, wildlife cruises, and other trips offshore Ventura turned up a number of uncommon pelagic birds. A Manx Shearwater was offshore Ventura on 10 Mar (JB) and another (the same bird or different one?) was seen on 12 Mar (JH & KC). Ancient Murrelets were found on several boat trips off Ventura including three 9-10 Mar (JB), two on 25 Mar (DP), and another two on 25 Mar (JB). Other notable birds off Ventura included a White-winged Scoter on 16 Mar (DM), a Black-legged Kittiwake on 25 Mar (JB), and a Brown Booby on Anacapa Island on 25 Mar (DM).

Thank you to those who reported sightings during the last month. If you have any questions about local birds or have a good one to report (please no calls about nuisance birds), call or e-mail David Pereksta at 659-5740 or <

Good birding,
David Pereksta

Observers: Joel Barrett, Katy Carter, Jim Howard, Dan Maxwell, Kris Ohlenkamp, David Pereksta, Jeremiah Psiropoulos, Michael San Miguel, Larry Sansone, Brooke Smith, and Michelle Townsley
Beginners are welcome on all field trips. Light drizzle does not necessarily cancel trips, but heavier rain will. If in doubt, please call the trip leader. For all trips, please wear appropriate clothing (layers are suggested), comfortable shoes, and bring snacks, water, hats, sunscreen, binoculars and field guides.

A few reminders about birding etiquette: Stay behind the leader, move quietly, ask questions, listen to what people are pointing out. When socializing, stay behind the group.

Saturday, May 6, 2017 8:30 a.m.
Hedrick Ranch Nature Area
Leader: Sandy Hedrick (805) 340-0478.
Sandy will lead a bird hike in the Hedrick Ranch Nature Area which is managed by The Friends of Santa Clara River. The birding usually yields some interesting birds including Hairy Woodpecker, Lesser Bells Vireo, Blue Grosbeak, Swainson’s Thrush and Common Yellowthroat.
Directions: Take Hwy 126 to Santa Paula, 10th St. Exit. Go under freeway, rt. on Harvard, rt. on 12th and cross the S.C. River Bridge. Go 3.7 miles to 20395 S. Mountain Rd. Turn left onto the dirt road & follow it to the end (approx. ½ mile). Even a little rain can make the road impassable; if in doubt, call Sandy to check road conditions.

Sunday May 7, 8:30 a.m.
Emma Wood/Ventura River Estuary
Leader: David Torfeh 805-647-3325
We will begin at the entrance to Emma Wood State Beach, searching the scrub for sparrows and warblers. We will follow the path that leads through the willow forest (often finding wrentit and other secretive birds here) and finally across the sand dunes to the Ventura River Estuary. The estuary is always an exciting place to bird, and target birds will include: Snowy, Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plovers, Willet, Whimbrel, Black Turnstone, Red-necked Phalarope and Forster’s Tern. There will be a fair amount of walking, so please dress appropriately in layers and comfortable shoes.
Directions: From US-101, exit California St, turn right and then make a quick left onto Thompson Blvd. Follow Thompson (becomes Garden St) and turn left on W. Main St. Follow W. Main St until just before it enters the northbound 101 freeway. Emma Wood is on the left. There is ample street parking along the outside of the park on W. Main St (we must park outside and walk in). Please do not leave valuables in your car, and be sure to lock your vehicle.

Thursday, May 11th 8:30 a.m.
Private Botanical Garden west of Ojai
Leader: David Lee email david@davidnlee.com.
This walk will feature native birds among plants from Australia and South Africa. With blooming flowers and plenty of water, this is sure to be a bird hotspot. We will likely see Bullock’s oriole, canyon wren, oak titmouse, acorn woodpecker, and bandtailed pigeon, just to name a few. Suggested donation for the garden is $5 per person.
Directions: Due to lack of parking, carpooling is required. Please meet at 8:15 in Mira Monte at Highway 33 (N. Ventura Ave) and W. Villanova Rd. in the parking lot on the north side of Rite Aid, across from the car wash at 8:30 a.m. For those of you coming from Ventura, we will meet behind Carrows on Harbor Blvd at 7:45 AM, next to the Chevron Station to meet up at the carpool spot listed above at 8:15. If you have questions, please email me.

Saturday, June 17th 8:30 a.m.
Pine Mountain (NEW TRIP!)
Leader: Tevin Schmitt 661-904-1563
If you have never birded Pine Mountain (not to be confused with Mt Pinos), now is time! Join us as we bird several locations, beginning at Pine Mountain Inn on Hwy 33 and ending at the top of Pine Mountain, at an elevation of 6600 feet. The fields around Pine Mountain Inn (our first stop) are teeming with sparrows and finches, including Lawrence’s Goldfinches and Golden-crowned Sparrows. Glowing golden cottonwoods will add to the fall scenery, so bring your camera for some photo ops. Further up the mountain, we will be seeing and hearing usual mountain species, such as Mountain Chickadee, Pygmy Nuthatch and Steller’s Jays. Other exciting birds that were present in November of 2014 were Lewis’s Woodpecker, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Cassin’s Finch, Varied Thrush and Evening Grosbeak…so who knows what we may find?
Directions: Carpooling is suggested for this trip, due to narrow, winding roads. The majority of the road is paved, but we will encounter some rough, rocky roads on our way to the peak. There are pit restrooms in the campgrounds.
This will be a day trip, so bring a lunch and snacks. Dress accordingly, as it may be quite cold in the morning. To carpool from Ventura: Meet at 7:15 a.m. at the Casitas Vista exit under the bridge. From Hwy 33, exit Casitas Vista, take two right turns and park under the bridge. If you wish, you may meet the group at Pine Mountain Inn at 8:30 a.m., located on the right side of the Hwy 33 (it is an abandoned inn/restaurant with a fence around it). If for some reason weather makes Pine Mountain impassable, we will bird Wheeler Gorge as an alternate.

**WEEKDAY SUMMER SERIES**

Monday June 12th 8:30 a.m.
Emma Woods
Leader Linda Easter 805-482-7537
We will begin at the entrance to Emma Wood State Beach, searching the scrub for sparrows and warblers. We will follow the path that leads through the willow forest (often finding wrentit and other secretive birds here) and finally across the sand dunes to the Ventura River Estuary. The estuary is always an exciting place to bird, and target birds will include: Snowy, Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plovers, Willet, Whimbrel, Black Turnstone, Red-necked Phalarope and Forster’s Tern. There will be a fair amount of walking, so please dress appropriately in layers and comfortable shoes.

**Directions:** From US-101, exit California St, turn right and then make a quick left onto Thompson Blvd. Follow Thompson (becomes Garden St) and turn left on W. Main St. Follow W. Main St until just before it enters the northbound 101 freeway. Emma Wood is on the left. There is ample street parking along the outside of the park on W. Main St (we must park outside and walk in). Please do not leave valuables in your car, and be sure to lock your vehicle.

Tuesday June 20th 8:30 a.m.
Ojai Meadows
Leader Adele Ferguson 805-415-4304
This beautiful preserve is a birding hotspot and includes a restored wetland and native plantings. To carpool, meet behind Carrows next to the gas station (on Harbor near Seaward) at 8:00 a.m.

**Directions:** Take Hwy 33 toward Ojai and turn left at the Y. The preserve is on the left side. Parking is available in front of the entrance and also at Nordoff High School. We will meet at the entrance. Target birds will include: Western Bluebirds, Sora, Belted Kingfisher, Western Meadowlark, Merlin, Cedar Waxwing, Lark Sparrow, Lincoln’s Sparrow and White-crowned Sparrows.

Monday June 26th 8:30 AM Wheeler Canyon
Leader: Gary Tuttle 805-525-2327
This canyon provides good birding opportunities. We will be looking for raptors, ground doves, Western Bluebirds and maybe a Hairy Woodpecker.

**Directions:** Take Foothill Road from Ventura toward Santa Paula beyond Wells Rd. and past Aliso Canyon Rd. until you come to Wheeler Canyon Rd. on the left. Meet at the beginning of the road where there is parking.

Tuesday July 11th 8:30 AM
Canada Larga
Leader Adele Ferguson 805-415-4304
Meet near the beginning of the road off Hwy 33. We will carpool from that location as we walk and drive this long county road. Target species will include Blue and Black-headed Grosbeak, Barn Owl, Bullock’s and Hooded Orioles, Lark Sparrow, Roadrunner, Phainopepla, various species of swallows and possibly a Lazuli Bunting.

**Directions:** Take Hwy. 33 toward Ojai. Exit Canada Larga Rd. Meet near the beginning of the road. Bring binoculars, a field guide, hat & water.

Monday July 17th 8:30 a.m.
Carpinteria Salt Marsh
Leader: Linda Easter 805-482-7537
To car pool meet behind Carrows (on Harbor) next to the gas station at 8:00.

**Directions:** Take HWY 101 North to Carpinteria, exit Casitas Pass Rd., rt. on Carpinteria Ave. left on Linden & rt. on Sandyline Rd. to Ash. Park along Ash. Bring your own lunch as we have been graciously invited to join Debby Burns at her ocean front home at Rincon Point. She will provide drinks and dessert. Details to the home will be provided at the walk.
NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Ventura Audubon Society will be held:
Saturday, May 13, 2017 at 11:00 AM

Church of the Foothills
6279 Foothill Road, Ventura, CA

Birding will precede the meeting at 9:00 AM. Directions: Take Victoria Avenue north to Foothill Road. Turn right onto Foothill Rd. The driveway for the church will be on the left in about one-half mile. The church is hidden from view but, there is a sign.

The annual meeting is followed by a BBQ lunch available for $13.00 per person ($6.50 for children). The menu will include chicken, tri-tip, veggie beans, potato salad, green salad and garlic bread. Vegetable kabobs are available for our vegetarian members. If you would like the vegetarian menu, please order when you make your reservation. Please bring your own plates and utensils (to reduce trash) and an appetizer or dessert to share. You may also bring your own beverage including beer and wine. VAS will provide water. If you wish to have the BBQ, reservations are required by May 5, 2017. Please send a check to Marianne Slaughter, Treasurer at P.O. Box 24198, Ventura, CA 93002. You may also call Marianne or Bruce with your reservation and pay at the event.

The Agenda includes election of directors for the 2017-2018 Program Year. The candidates for the Board of Directors are:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Debra Barringer</th>
<th>Joyce Schoppe</th>
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<tr>
<td>Deborah Burns</td>
<td>Bruce Schoppe</td>
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<td>Adele Fergusson</td>
<td>Marianne Slaughter</td>
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<td>John Connor</td>
<td>Janice Susha</td>
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<td>Cynthia Hartley</td>
<td>Jim Susha</td>
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<td>Sandy Hedrick</td>
<td>Jackie Worden</td>
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Nominations from the floor may also be made.

VAS OFFICERS AND CHAIRS

President        Bruce Schoppe 805-658-2396
Vice-President   Cynthia Hartley 805-795-4115
Secretary        Joyce Schoppe 805-658-2396
Treasurer        Marianne Slaughter 805-484-8415
Conservation     Sandy Hedrick 805-643-2408
Field Trips      Adele Fergusson 805-415-4304
Programs         Deborah Burns 805-933-0647
Publicity        Jim Susha 805-983-3929
Membership       Jackie Worden 805-657-2837
At Large:        John Connor 805-654-1805
                  Janice Susha 805-983-3929
WSP/CLT Team:    Cynthia Hartley 805-795-4115
                  Debra Barringer Unlisted
Webmaster        Christi Lester 310-722-9557
Education        Betsy Bachman 805-646-4407
Newsletter Editor Janice Susha 805-983-3929

MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION: If you are not sure whether your membership has expired, please email Jackie at jbworden7@gmail.com and she will check it out for you.

BOARD MEETING: The next Board of Directors meeting will be on Tuesday, May 2. The location will be Jim and Janice Susha’s home at 2207 Eastridge Ct., Oxnard, 805-983-3929. VAS members are welcome to attend.

THE VENTURA AUDUBON SOCIETY holds its monthly program on the second Tuesday of the month at the Poinsettia Pavilion, 3451 Foothill Rd. in Oxnard at 7:30 p.m., September through April. The May meeting is a barbecue. Call the President for information. Board Meetings are held bimonthly on the first Tuesday of the month. A membership form is available on the VAS web site.

THE CALIFORNIA CONDOR is published nine times per year (September-May). Members are encouraged to submit articles, announcements, letters and drawings, preferably in WORD format, or in the form of an e-mail message. The deadline is noon on the 12th of the month preceding the month of publishing.
Volunteer Naturalists Needed!

Learn about Endangered Shorebirds and Share Your Knowledge with Others

3-hour training sessions (select 1):
9 a.m.—12 noon

May 20, 2017
June 3, 2017

We will teach you about the western snowy plover and California least tern in Ventura County

- Ventura County beaches: where these birds nest and when
- Federal Status and what that means
- Life history: migration, mating, feeding, nesting, chick rearing
- How to conduct public outreach

Make a difference! Sign up today!
Contact: Chelsea.Fletcher@Parks.ca.gov

All training programs are held at:

Channel Coast District Conference Room
San Buenaventura State Beach
911 San Pedro Street, Ventura
Time: 9 am – 12 noon

We request trained docents commit to regular beach visits during nesting season on any Ventura County public beach where these birds nest