As May arrives, we draw near to the close of another program year for Ventura Audubon. My sincere thanks to the Board of Directors, Committee Chairs and others who have volunteered their time to make our many conservation efforts successful. A sincere thanks also to those who have supported our efforts financially through Birdathon or otherwise.

Terms for the current Board and officers will end as of June 30th. You will have the opportunity to elect a new Board at our Annual Meeting on May 11th at 11:00 am at Church of the Foothills. Please join us for the meeting and the Taco “BBQ” that follows. Details are elsewhere in this newsletter.

The Board you elect will look exactly like the outgoing board. That’s good – and, bad! Many of the board members have been on the board for a long time as have many of the officers. Having the benefit of experience and “institutional knowledge” is important but, no organization can continue to thrive without a regular infusion of “new blood”.

Ventura Audubon is an entirely volunteer organization. According to the membership list, VAS has more than 700 members, some “national”, some “VAS only” and some both. There are 25 or 30 people who make up the core of the organization and, perhaps, 100 including those who volunteer on a regular basis to fill some need. Point being: There is a lot more talent out there!

Ventura Audubon needs your talent, your experience and your enthusiasm for conservation to continue as a leader in the conservation movement. Help schedule field trips or, lead one. Help schedule the monthly programs. Join our Education Committee to help bring the message to the next generation. Join the Conservation Committee to help monitor what cities and counties, the state and the federal government are planning that could affect wildlife habitat.

You can do any of these things without becoming a Board member. It is your time and talent that are needed. But, perhaps, maybe, hopefully your enthusiasm will grow so you will want to become a part of the leadership team.

Go to the website and fill out the Volunteer Survey to tell us what interests you. We’ll contact you.

ENJOY YOUR SUMMER!
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 4, 2018 8:30 a.m. Hedrick Ranch Nature Area
Leader: Sandy Hedrick (805) 340-0478
This is not a work day. We should see some interesting birds, possibly blue grosbeak, hairy woodpecker walking through the riparian area near the Santa Clara River. 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 5, 8:30 a.m. Malibu Creek State Park
Leader: Tevin Schmitt (661) 904-1563
There are trails through oak and sycamore woodlands on chaparral-covered slopes in Malibu Creek State Park.

Directions: Malibu Creek State Park is about 45 minutes from Ventura. Take 101 Fwy East, Exit at Las Virgenes Rd. Continue 4 miles south of the 101, past Mulholland Dr, make your first right into Malibu Creek State Park. Continue straight to the first large parking lot on the left, meet here at 8:30AM.

Here are the coordinates https://maps.google.com/?q=34.099464,-118.713582&hl=en&gl=us

Parking fees: All day – $12.00 per car, per day, 3 hrs – $9.00 per car.
2 hrs – $6.00 per car so hopefully many of you will carpool.
To car pool, meet behind Carrows on Harbor Blvd next to the gas station at 7:30 a.m. sharp.

Saturday, May 11th 8:30 - 10:30AM Arroyo Verde Park, before our annual Picnic at Church of the Foothills
Leader: Adele Fergusson and Linda Easter, (805) 415-4304, (818) 519-2833

Enjoy birding the oak woodland, grassy areas, and chaparral in this long, broad canyon. We should see Towhees, Juncos, Acorn Woodpeckers, possibly California Quail and California Thrashers. Hopefully we will see our summer birds, Hooded Oriole and Bullocks Orioles and possibly Western Tanager.

Directions: Take Victoria Ave. north, left on Foothill Rd., right on Day Rd. entrance to the park. Meet at the last parking lot by the restrooms. On Saturdays there is a $2 per hour fee, maximum of $5, or you can park outside of the part.

FIELD TRIPS...(Continued on Page 3)
Saturday, May 18th 8:00 a.m. Las Llajas Canyon, Simi Valley
Leader: Cody Swanson (805) 304-2505
This is a beautiful trail in Simi Valley full of coast live oak, sage scrub, cottonwood, willow, and many other native plants. Water is present year-round in this riparian canyon so many summer migrants like to nest along the canyon. Year-round species include: woodpeckers, western bluebirds, house wrens, oak titmouse, blue-gray gnatcatcher, California and spotted towhees, hummingbirds, and several raptors. Summer migrants include: phainopepla, ash-throated flycatcher, pacific-slope flycatcher, black-headed grosbeak, blue grosbeak, and lazuli buntings. We will be hiking in about a mile and a half and exiting the way we came in. The hike is pretty easy, with the exception of the first and last 0.2 miles of the hike, which is steep. Be sure to bring water, wear hiking shoes, and dress in layers. There is not a lot of shade so wear sunscreen and bring a hat.

Directions: From Highway 118 in Simi Valley, exit Yosemite ave and head north (turn left). Turn right onto Evening Sky Drive (near the big scrub oak in the middle of the road) and park on the same side as the trailhead. The trail is located near 5715 Evening Sky Drive in Simi Valley.

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Tuesday, June 4th 8:30 a.m. Carpinteria Salt Marsh
Leader: Rocky Ludes (805) 208-9648
The Salt Marsh Reserve is an excellent birding location due to the estuary, wetlands, and upland habitats. Special birds of concern can be found here, including Belding’s Savannah Sparrow, and White-tailed Kite. Several species of heron are often seen at once.

Directions: Take HWY 101 North to Carpinteria, exit Casitas Pass Rd., rt. on Carpinteria Ave. left on Linden & rt. on Sandylane 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.

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Monday, June 10th, 8:30 a.m. Frazier Mountain Springs
Leader: Kay Regester (805) 258-1025
This is near Mt. Pinos, off of Lockwood Valley Road. The high elevation provides different environs and birds. We hope to see breeding mountain specialties such as green-tailed towhee, white headed woodpecker, pygmy nuthatches, Lawrence's Goldfinches and various warblers.

Note: This trip is limited to 8 people. We will carpool from Ventura area in 2 vehicles.

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Tuesday, June 11th 8:30 a.m. Canada Larga
Leader: Linda Easter (818) 519-2833
Canada Larga is a beautiful canyon that is a little-known gem in the Ventura area. We will meet at the beginning of the canyon and 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. Make a right and park along the side of the road before the avocado trees. Bring binoculars, a field guide, hat & water.
SUMMER FIELD TRIPS…(Continued from Page 3)

Tuesday, June 18, 2019 8:30 a.m-12, Port Hueneme Exploration/Bubbling Springs
Walter B. Miranda Park, part of Bubbling Springs, and J Street Canal to the Port Hueneme Beach
Leader: Adele Fergusson (805) 415-4304
Bubbling Springs is a fantastic place to view many gulls and ducks up close such as Mallards and Widgeons etc., also, warblers and hummers. Then we will check out J St Canal and walk to Hueneme Beach to the East, towards the estuary, and then to the West toward the pier where we will see a variety of gulls, grebes and shorebirds.
Directions: Take Ventura Rd south, make a left on Hueneme Rd. Make a right onto Surfside Drive. Go several hundred feet and you will see the stream on the right, park on the street or the parking for Walter B. Miranda Park.

Saturday, June 22, 2019 8:30 a.m. Mt Pinos
Leader: Tevin Schmitt (661) 904-1563
Mt Pinos with the high elevation provides different environs and many different bird species. We hope to see breeding mountain specialties such as green-tailed towhee, white headed woodpecker, brown creeper, Clark's nutcracker and various warblers.
Note: We will carpool from Ventura. Please contact Tevin if you are interested in participating, to obtain directions and carpooling instructions.

Tuesday July 9, 2019 8:30 a.m. Arroyo Verde Park
Leader Linda Easter (818) 519-2833
Enjoy birding the oak woodland, grassy areas, and chaparral in this long, broad canyon. Migrants may include Western Tanager, Rufous Hummingbird, Ash-throated Flycatcher, and Phainopepla, Hooded Orioles, Oak Titmouse, Pacific Slope Flycatcher.
Directions: Take Victoria Ave. north, left on Foothill Rd., right on Day Rd. entrance to the park. Meet at the last parking lot by the restrooms.

Tuesday July 23, 2019 8:30 a.m. Ventura Settling Ponds
Leader: Adele Fergusson (805) 415-4304
Enjoy a morning of mostly waterfowl birding. Spotting scopes are always welcome.
Directions: Take Harbor Blvd to Spinnaker and enter Ventura Harbor. The Water Treatment Plant is on Angler before Spinnaker curves to the right. Park either across from the entrance on Angler or if there is not room, park in the lot on the right side of Spinnaker past the Ventura Boat Yard and meet at the gate.
Note: Take care in crossing Spinnaker due to the blind curve.
March is 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. Over the past month northbound migrants were reported widely including Rufous Hummingbirds, Western Kingbirds, Warbling Vireos, Hooded and Bullock’s Orioles, Black-headed Grosbeaks, and others. 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 14) or take a trip to the Channel Islands to see some of the seabirds found off our coast.

Two Greater White-fronted Geese were on the Oxnard Plain on 11 Mar (BH), which increased to 25 on 15 Mar (BT). Another Greater White-fronted Goose continued at Lake Casitas through 19 Mar. A Snow Goose remained at Lake Sherwood through 15 Mar. Wood Ducks included continuing females at Lake Sherwood through 18 Mar and Oak Park through 21 Mar. A Eurasian Wigeon was at Lake Sherwood through 15 Mar. A Common Gallinule continued at the Ventura Settling Ponds through 23 Mar and as many as four Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were there through 30 Mar. Two Reddish Egrets continued in Mugu Lagoon through 15 Mar. A Ruff was seen by many excited birders at the end of Arnold Road on the Oxnard Plain through 17 Mar.

Birds of prey continued at Lake Piru including as many as 7 California Condors through 23 Mar, 2 Golden Eagles through 16 Mar, and a Bald Eagle through 30 Mar. As many as three California Condors continued to be seen in Fillmore through 21 Mar. As many as five California Condors and three Golden Eagles were near Valle Vista Campground 9-31 Mar (JP; RA, FK & CS). The nesting pair of Bald Eagles were reported at Lake Casitas through 29 Mar.

A Calliope Hummingbird was in Ojai on 27 Mar (JG); several weeks earlier than expected for this species. A Lewis’s Woodpecker continued at Lake Sherwood through 27 Mar and a Red-naped Sapsucker continued at Lake Casitas through 19 Mar. Vermilion Flycatchers were found at several locations including Lake Piru 19-30 Mar (TVH) and Santa Paula on 26 Mar (KK). A Green-tailed Towhee continued in a Ventura yard through 16 Mar with a “Red” Fox Sparrow (TB). Two Vesper Sparrows were at Canada Larga on 3 Mar (BH) and as many as four continued at Rancho Potrero through 23 Mar. An American Redstart was near Santa Paula on 26 Mar (KK).

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 pereksta@pacbell.net

Good birding,
David Pereksta

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting and BBQ are scheduled for Saturday, May 11, 2019 at 11:00 AM. This is the official notice of that meeting. It will be held at Church of the Foothills, 6279 Foothill Road, Ventura CA, 93003.

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.

As usual, we shall do some birding beforehand starting at 9:00 am, at Arroyo Verde Park. There is a fee for parking on weekends or park outside and walk in.

Again, this year, we will have tacos. Famous Taco Bar will provide the tacos and will make chicken, pork or fish tacos for us with all the associated fixings! 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. Famous Taco Bar will provide lemonade and VAS will provide water.

The meeting will start at 11:00 a.m. This is the meeting at which you, the members, elect the board of directors to lead VAS for the next program year. A slate of proposed nominees for 2019-2020 appears below. The Board elects the officers. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the meeting.

The price again this year will be $11.00 per person (adult or child). Please send your reservation with check to Ventura Audubon at P.O. Box 24198, Ventura, CA 93002 by May 6th. Or, you may email Sherry Dorris at sdorris@roadrunner.com or Bruce Schoppe at bschoppe6698@sbcglobal.net and pay at the event.

Proposed Candidates for 2019-20 Board of Directors:

Debra Barringer
Tom Black
Deborah Burns
Frank DeMartino
Sheryl Dorris
Adele Fergusson
Cynthia Hartley
Sandy Hedrick
Kaitlyn O’Dea
Bruce Schoppe
Janice Susha
Jim Susha
Jackie Worden
Every year we set up a booth at this event. Our purpose is to inform and educate the public on our mission and conservation efforts within Ventura County. Of particular interest is our work at Ormond and Hollywood Beaches where our Shorebird Recovery Program is at work March to August each year.

Behind the booth is Western Snowy Plover time. Above (left to right) is Paulina Garcia, Cynthia Hartley, and Alecia Smith who worked with the children constructing snowy plovers with cardboard, cotton, glue, and beans.

Below are the kids doing the work while the parents and siblings watch on. This has proven to be quite popular the past 4 years.
THE VENTURA AUDUBON SOCIETY holds its monthly program on the second Tuesday of the month at the Poinsettia Pavilion, 3451 Foothill Rd. in Ventura at 7:30 p.m., September through April. Board Meetings are held bimonthly on the first Tuesday of the month. A membership form is available on the VAS web site. The May meeting is a barbecue.

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 15th of the month preceding the month of publishing.

MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION: If you are not sure whether your membership has expired, please email Deborah at debburns38@gmail.com and she will check it out for you.

BOARD MEETING: The next Board of Directors meeting will be on Tuesday September 3rd, 2019. Our meetings are held at Wild Birds Unlimited located at 4020 E. Main Street, Ventura, 805-765-4594. Because the store will be closed, parking is available. VAS members are welcome to attend.

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