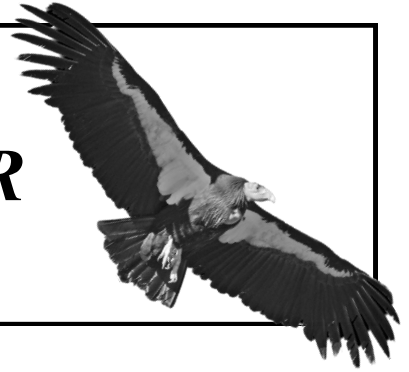


The **CALIFORNIA CONDOR**

Ventura Audubon Society **January 2018** Volume 42, Number 5
A Chapter of the National Audubon www.VenturaAudubon.org



CALL NOTES ...Bruce Schoppe, President

It is difficult to celebrate anything as this year ends and a new year begins so soon after the devastation caused by the Thomas Fire. I know that some have lost their homes and many more members were displaced by the fire. Our hearts go out to all who have been affected, especially those whose homes were lost.

The devastation is epic. Recovery will take some time for the people and also the wildlife. As of this writing, the Thomas Fire is the 2nd largest fire in California history and has burned into Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties, in an area exceeding 272,000 acres! Much of the Ventura hillsides and many of the prime birding areas have burned. Many acres of habitat have been lost. Birds and other wildlife are affected. Frequent fires are part of the ecosystem to which native species have adapted. The problem is that these ecosystems have been altered by "the hand of man". It will be interesting to see if the Christmas Bird Count finds where the birds went as they escaped the burned areas. Easily 50% of our Count Circle burned and we'll have to bird the edges if we can.

Santa Ana winds and the threat of wildfires are a fact of life in Southern California, made worse by the persistent drought. An online story in the VC Star on December 9th said, "there is no precedent in modern history for this much fire in Southern California this late in the year".

These events emphasize the importance of habitat preservation and restoration which are key parts of our mission. Support for other organizations that actually acquire land to preserve and/or restore habitat for wildlife is essential. We work with many of them including Ventura Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, Friends of the Santa Clara River and others.

The governor has said this is the new normal because of Climate Change. And we should prepare for more fire seasons like this. That is truly scary.

For all of you, we wish you a happy and birdy new year!

JANUARY PROGRAM

Bald Eagle Recovery on the Channel Islands...Annie Little

7:30 p.m. Tuesday, January 9 Poinsettia Pavilion, 3451 Foothill Road, Ventura



The presentation will focus on the 37-year effort to restore bald eagles back to the Channel Islands, after their disappearance by the 1960s due to impacts from the chemical DDT. Today, there are 19 known breeding territories and over 60 resident bald eagles on the Channel Islands. Since 2006, 140 bald eagle chicks have naturally hatched on five of the Channel Islands. The presentation will highlight the milestones of the successful recovery program.

For the past 21 years, Annie Little has worked as a Wildlife Biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Based out of the Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office in southern California, she initially worked on endangered species conservation in Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego Counties. Since 2002, Annie has been the lead avian biologist for the Montrose Settlements Restoration Program. In this role, she oversees the implementation of multiple seabird restoration projects on



NOTES FROM THE FIELD

...David Pereksta

Geese at the Victoria Lakes Golf Course included a **Ross's Goose** 12-27 Nov (DB & DC), two **Snow Geese** 12-21 Nov (BD & DC) that were joined by a third 24-27 Nov (TB & BO, DP), and two **Greater White-fronted Geese** on 24 Nov (TB & BO, DP). A **Ross's Goose** was also at Arnold Road on 8 Nov (AS). **Snow Geese** included as many as three at Lake Casitas 10-29 Nov (AS, JP) and as many as 2 continuing on the Arnold and Casper Roads sod fields through 8 Nov. **Greater White-fronted Geese** included one at Marina Park 31 Oct-8 Nov (KR), one at Lake Casitas 17-28 Nov (LF), two at Lake Sherwood 13-26 Nov (AG), one at Lake Piru 14-20 Nov (AS), and two at Rancho Simi Park on 25 Nov (KRu). A **Wood Duck** was in the Arroyo Simi on 24 Nov (BCB). As many as 15 **Common Goldeneyes** were at Lake Piru 14-23 Nov (AS). A **Cattle Egret** continued on the Oxnard Plain through 8 Nov and **Reddish Egrets** continued at Mugu Lagoon through 30 Nov with a high of five birds on 21 Nov (JP). As many as three **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** were at the Ventura Settling Ponds 12-26 Nov (DB & DC). Individual **Common Gallinules** were at McGrath Lake and the Santa Clara River Estuary on 12 Nov (DB & DC), and the Ventura Settling Ponds on 26 Nov (LB). **Red Knots** continued at Mugu Lagoon with a high of four 24-30 Nov (DP & MR). **Black Skimmers** continued at Mugu Lagoon with a high of 28 on 24 Nov (DP & MR). Rare south of Point Conception, a **Marbled Murrelet** was in the Santa Barbara Channel on 3 Nov (GL).



Rare birds found on the sod fields of the Oxnard Plain in October continued including an **American Golden-Plover** through 18 Nov, as many as six **Pacific Golden-Plovers** through 17 Nov, a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** through 3 Nov, and a **Red-throated Pipit** through 8 Nov. Raptors of note were scarce, but a few species were of interest. A **Zone-tailed Hawk** was in Ojai 5-17 Nov (JG) and is likely a returning bird from previous winters. **Bald Eagles** included one at Lake Piru 2-14 Nov (GVH) and the continuing pair at Lake Casitas through 29 Nov. A **Short-eared Owl** was at Ormond Beach on 13 Nov (MF).



A **White-winged Dove** was at Ormond Beach on 4 Nov (JA). A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was in Canada Larga 3-29 Nov (MA & JO). A **Red-naped Sapsucker** was at Krotona in Ojai 3-17 Nov (DM) and another was at Lake Casitas 13-29 Nov (DS). **Gray Flycatchers** breed in the north county, but are rare on the coastal plain in migration or winter so one at Woodside Park in Camarillo 4-22 Nov was notable (JM). A **Tropical Kingbird** was a likely returning bird at Calleguas Creek on 21 Nov (LE). Individual **Pacific Wrens** were in Wheeler Gorge on 5 Nov (ZH), Ojai on 10 Nov (PC), and another continued at Rincon Creek through 30 Nov. Two **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were at Arroyo Verde Park on 2 Nov (PD). Three **Lapland Longspurs** were at Point Mugu 1-

30 Nov (AP). Individual **Palm Warblers** were at Lake Casitas on 7 Nov (JB) and the Ventura Settling Ponds on 12 Nov (FD). A **Black-and-white Warbler** was likely a returning bird for its third winter at Valle Lindo Park on 27 Nov (AS). A **Scarlet Tanager** and a **Vermilion Flycatcher** were on San Nicolas Island on 20 Nov (AP). A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was at Sycamore Canyon 1-8 Nov (JM). **Red Crossbills** were widespread in the mountains on 3 Nov including 2 at Frazier Mountain, 5 on Mount Pinos, and 18 at Mutah Flats (DP).

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

Observers: Michael Abrams, John Apperson, Joel Barrett, Debra Barringer, Laura Bauer, David Bell, Tom Benson, Peter Cantle, Bonnie Clarfield-Bylin, Dan Cooper, Frank DeMartino, Preston Duncan, Linda Easter, Mike Forsman, Linda Frazier, Allison Goodley, Zachary Holderby, Jesse Grantham, Graham Langley, Dan Maxwell, John Mueller, Brittany O'Connor, John Oliver, Andrew Partin, David Pereksta, Jeremiah Psiropoulos, Kay Regester, Martin Ruane, Karen Rusch, Adam Searcy, David Sexton, and Gerard Van Heijzen



JANUARY FIELD TRIPS...Adele Fergusson

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.

Friday, February 16, 2018 Point Mugu

This trip has been rescheduled from our cancelled November trip. Paperwork needs to be completed ahead of time to go on the Navy Base. We have 10 open spots. If you are interested in participating, please email me at: adelefergusson@yahoo.com as soon as you can and no later than January 15, 2018. You can also call me at 805-415-4304.

Sunday January 7 2018, 9a.m. Work Day Fillmore Fish Hatchery

Leader: Sandy Hedrick (805) 340-0478

This is a new venue for restoration planting for the balance of this work season. Planting native plants for a future interpretive center on 5 acres at the entrance to the Fish Hatchery. There will be opportunity to do some birding around the outside of the hatchery structure before work starts at 9. Just like at HRNA long pants and closed shoes are required. Bring water, gloves, and sun protection.

Directions: Meet at the Fish Hatchery which is located to the right off Highway 126 just 1.2 miles East of Fillmore and 26 miles from Ventura.

Saturday January 13, 2018 8:30 a.m. Santa Clara River Estuary/Surfers Knoll

Leader: Kay Regester (805) 258-1025

We hope to see a variety of shorebirds including Snowy Plovers, Ruddy and Black Turnstones and hopefully Surfbirds which are always an exciting treat. We will also tackle some gull and tern identification, so bring your field guides!

Directions: Take Harbor Blvd to Spinnaker and enter Ventura Harbor. Follow Spinnaker as it curves around to the right. Surfers' Knoll is on the left. Please bring scopes if you have them. We will be walking a good distance on sand, so please wear appropriate footwear and plan on dressing in layers

Monday January 15, 2018 8:30a.m. Walter B. Miranda Park, part of Bubbling Springs, and J Street Canal to the Port Hueneme Beach

Leader: Adele Fergusson (805) 415-4304 and Perry Candianidis

Bubbling Springs is a fantastic place to view many gulls and ducks up close such as Mallards and Widgeons, etc. Then we will check out J St Canal and walk the Hueneme Beach to the pier where we will see a variety of grebes and shorebirds.

Directions: Take Ventura Road south, make a left on Hueneme Road. 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 lot for the Walter B. Miranda Park.

VENTURA AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

December 30, 2017

Calling all birders! Our Christmas Bird Count is **Saturday, December 30, 2017**. The CBC is the longest running citizen science effort in existence. Bird counts take place all over North America with a few in the Caribbean and Latin America as well. This will be the 118th Christmas Bird Count conducted by National Audubon. On the Ventura Audubon count last year, we recorded 175 species and more than 19,000 individual birds.

Frank DeMartino is Organizer and Compiler. Please contact Frank at (frank@colynx.com) or (856) 906-8733. (Yes, 856 is the correct area code!) or, you may call the Section Leader with whom you have counted previously or may wish to work with this year. Online registration through National Audubon is NOT available this year.

Birders of all skill levels are encouraged to participate. The more participants we have, the more areas we can cover and we can cover them more thoroughly. Sector Leaders usually start at 8:00 or 8:30 although some of the more ambitious leaders may start earlier! Those looking for owls need to be out early or stay late! Most counts end by noon; however, it is not necessary to stop at noon. If you have the energy and stamina, go back in the afternoon to search out birds you should have seen but, didn't.

Volunteer counters are assigned to one of the sector leaders who coordinate the count in each of eight areas within the VAS count circle. If you wish to participate in the count, please contact the section leader of the area where you would like to count, directly. He/she will give you the start time, meeting place and other details.

Section	Location	Section Leader	Section Leader Email Address	Telephone #
Section 1	Ventura River	Kay Regester	kaybirder@aol.com	258-1025
Section 2	Lake Casitas	Jesse Grantham	ojaismimmer@gmail.com	746-0975
Section 3	Ojai	Rick Burgess	rburgess@toaks.org	449-2326
Section 4	Cañada Larga	Linda Easter	Dleaster17@gmail.com	818-519-2833
Section 5	Wheeler Canyon	Gary Tuttle	Gt10k2826@verizon.net	525-2327
Section 6	Ventura City	Frank DeMartino	frank@colynx.com	856-906-8733
Section 7	SCRE & Coast	Alexis Frangis	alexisraehamilton@gmail.com	217-4833
Section 8	Ocean	David Pereksta	pereksta@pacbell.net	404-8265

We will get together at the end of the day to review the day's highlights and to consolidate the sector counts for a provisional total of species count.

The end of day review includes a potluck dinner at the Church of the Foothills. 6279 Foothill Road, Ventura at 6:30 PM. The potluck is open to members, friends and guests; you do not have to be a field observer to be included. Those attending are requested to bring the following types of dishes based on the first letter of your last name.

Main Dish: S-Z

Salad: K-R

Dessert: A-J

Please bring your own place settings, utensils and beverages (water and hot coffee are provided).

...JANUARY PROGRAM *(Continued from Page 1)*



the California Islands and the reintroduction of the Bald Eagle to the Channel Islands. Annie's focus is the conservation of unique island ecosystems, including eradication and control of invasive species, biosecurity, habitat restoration, and reestablishment of native species.

Annie is the U.S. coordinator for the Trilateral Island Initiative which promotes island conservation and collaboration among partners in Canada, U.S., and Mexico. Annie is stationed at Channel Islands National Park in Ventura, California. She graduated from the University of California, San Diego with a B.S. in Biology: Ecology, Behavior, and Evolution. Annie has been fortunate to do field-work in remote places of the world, including Ecuador and the subantarctic island of Crozet, but she is most happy working close to home on the California Islands.

...FIELD TRIPS *(Continued from Page 3)*

Sunday, January 21, 2018 8:30 a.m. Ventura Settling Ponds

Leader: David Torfeh (805) 647-3325

The settling ponds at the Ventura Harbor are a reliable place to find ducks, grebes, gulls and terns, as well as songbirds and raptors. We should hear Yellow Warbler, Yellow Rumped Warblers and Blue-gray gnatcatchers.

Directions: Take Harbor Blvd to Spinnaker Dr. and enter Ventura Harbor. The water treatment plant is on Angler, a left turn before Spinnaker curves to the right. Park either across the street from the entrance on Angler or in lot on right hand side of Spinnaker Dr. Use caution in crossing road at blind curve. Meet in front of gate.

Sunday January 28, 2018 8:30 a.m. Camino Real

Leader: Raeann Koerner (805) 701-1919

Camino Real is a grassy park surrounded by pines and eucalyptus and is an excellent place to see birds. Target birds will include Red Shouldered Hawk, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Yellow Warbler and Townsend's Warbler.

Note Directions: We will meet outside the park and walk in. Take Telegraph Road toward Ventura College. Across from Ventura College, turn onto Estates, take a right on Aurora, go to the grass beltway across from the mobile home park. Park closest to the last house in the residential tract. We will start birding along the barranca and go into the park



VAS Officers and Chairs		
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President	Bruce Schoppe	(805) 658-2396
Vice President	Cynthia Hartley	(805) 795-4115
Treasurer	Marianne Slaughter	(805) 484-8415
Secretary	Joyce Schoppe	(805) 658-2396
Board Members		
Conservation	Sandy Hedrick	(805) 643-2408
Publicity	Jim Susha	(805) 983-3929
CBC	Frank DeMartino	(856) 906-8733
Field Trips	Adele Fergusson	(805) 415-4304
Membership	Deborah Burns	(805) 933-0647
Newsletter	Janice Susha	(805) 983-3929
WSP/CLT Team	Debra Barringer	Unlisted
Outreach	Vacant	
Programs	Vacant	
At Large	John Connor Jackie Worden	(805) 654-1805 (805) 657-2837
Chairs		
Webmaster	Christi Lester	(310) 722-9557
Education	Betsy Bachman	(805) 646-4407
Social Media	Rachael Cavanagh	

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, **January 2**. Future meetings will be 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.

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.*

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