

# *The CALIFORNIA CONDOR*

Ventura Audubon Society **APRIL 2016** Volume 36, Number 8  
A Chapter of the National Audubon [www.VenturaAudubon.org](http://www.VenturaAudubon.org)



## *CALL NOTES ...Bruce Schoppe, President*

### *BIRDATHON*

**Birdathon** is Ventura Audubon's only major fundraiser of the year. With your generous response, VAS can continue to provide outstanding monthly programs and schedule regular field trips. We can also continue to develop educational outreach programs, fund local conservation and environmental projects and help inform the public on important birding and wildlife issues. Any scheduled trip during the month of **APRIL** may be used as the basis for your pledge of an amount per species seen. Or, if you prefer, you may make a donation in any amount. All contributions are tax deductible. Ventura Audubon is a 501(c)3 corporation. You will receive a mailing with a pledge form and an envelope in which to return your pledge or donation. Send your pledge or donation to P.O. Box 24198, Ventura, CA 93002. Thank you for your continued generosity!

### *NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING*

The Annual Meeting and BBQ are scheduled for **Saturday, May 14, 2016 at 11:00 AM**. This is the official notice of that meeting. It will be held at **Hedrick Ranch Nature Area, 20385 South Mountain Road, Santa Paula, CA**. This is the place we held the annual meeting for years until the last few when it was in use by the farm. **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). As usual, we shall do some birding beforehand starting at 9:00 am. The price this year will be \$15.00 per person (half price for children under 12).

Please send your reservation with check to Marianne Slaughter at P.O. Box 24198, Ventura, CA 93002 **by May 6th**. Or, you may call Marianne (805-484-8415) with your reservation and pay at the BBQ. The menu will include chicken, tri-tip, veggie beans, two salads, garlic bread and special steamed vegetables for our vegetarian members. **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 would like the vegetarian menu, please make your wishes known *when you make your reservation* so we can be sure to have enough.

The meeting will start at 11:00 am. This is the meeting at which you, the members, elect the board of directors to lead VAS for the next program year. The Nominating Committee has prepared a slate of nominees which appears elsewhere in this newsletter and will be on the website. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the meeting.

### *APRIL PROGRAM*

**7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 12th, Poinsettia Pavilion, 3451 Foothill Road, Ventura**  
**"A YEAR AT LAKE CASITAS" with JOHN HANNAH**

John Hannah of Ojai is a naturalist and wildlife photographer and has presented to Ojai service clubs as well as the Ojai Photography Club. He will present a program on Lake Casitas and especially on the saga of the Lake Casitas Bald Eagles. He will show birds from each month, recap the eagle takeover, and finish with his recent pictures of white-tailed kites. It took nearly a year to figure out their habits and peculiarities to the point where he could get close shots of them at their daily activities. Please join us for an extremely fascinating program.



## NOTES FROM THE FIELD

...David Pereksta

### FEBRUARY 2016

The most exciting report of February was a **Blue-footed Booby** found on Anacapa Island during a pelagic trip on 27 Feb (JB et al.). This is the first **Blue-footed Booby** to be seen with the recent large influx of **Brown Boobies** to the island. Numbers of **Brown Boobies** continued at Anacapa Island through 27 Feb with a high of 128 on 10 Feb (JH). A **Thayer's Gull** was also at Anacapa Island on 3 Feb (DP).

Two **Snow Geese** were at the Simi Hills Neighborhood Park on 27 Feb (DP) and one was at Lake Casitas 7-11 Feb (KR). As many as three **Cackling Geese** continued in Simi Valley through 26 Feb. The **Long-tailed Duck** continued in the Channel Islands Harbor through 6 Feb. After an absence of the species in January, **American White Pelicans** reappeared at several locations including one at the Ventura Settling Ponds on 22 Feb (BH), four at Point Mugu on 26 Feb (M. Obs), two at Lake Casitas on 27 Feb (AF & KL), six at the Santa Clara River Estuary



on 28 Feb (BT), and one over Camarillo on 29 Feb (DP). A **Reddish Egret** and at least 20 **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** continued at Mugu Lagoon through 26 Feb. Two **Sandhill Cranes** were a rare local find at Lake Casitas 27-29 Feb (LF) and the pair of **Bald Eagles** continued there through Feb.

A few notable passerines and other perching birds were reported in February. Two **White-winged Doves** continued in Camarillo through 4 Feb. Simi Hills Neighborhood Park hosted a variety of uncommon or rare woodpeckers including a **Williamson's Sapsucker** on 13 Feb (ET), a "**Yellow-shafted**" **Northern Flicker** 13-26 Feb (ET), and a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** on 27 Feb (DP). A **Vermilion Flycatcher** continued at Point Mugu through 19 Feb. A **Golden-crowned Kinglet** was at Valle Lindo Park on 29 Feb (DP). The **Black-and-white Warbler** reported at Valle Lindo Park since December was found to be two different birds on 17 Feb (AS). Another **Black-and-white Warbler** continued at Marion Cannon Park in Ventura through 10 Feb. Sparrows of

note included the continuing **Field Sparrow** in Ojai through Feb 28, a **Swamp Sparrow** at the Ventura Settling Ponds on 2 Feb (FD), and a continuing **White-throated Sparrow** in Camarillo through 2 Feb.

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), email or call David Pereksta at <pereksta@pacbell.net> or 659-5740.

Good birding,  
David Pereksta

Observers: Joel Barrett, Frank DeMartino, Adele Ferguson, Linda Frazier, Bruce Henderson, Jim Howard, Karen Laing, David Pereksta, Kay Register, Adam Searcy, Bill Thomas, and Ed Thomas





## *APRIL FIELD TRIPS ...Karin Kersteter*

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. Carpooling is offered for many trips, but is not guaranteed. If you arrive at the carpool spot and no one is there, please proceed to the trip location.

**Saturday, April 2, 8:00 a.m. Work Day Hedrick Ranch Nature Area. Leader: Sandy Hedrick (805) 340-0478.** Arrive at 8:00 for self-guided birding which usually yields some interesting birds. **Work from 9am – noon. Long pants and boots or closed shoes are required.** Bring water, gloves & sun protection. **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 impassible; if in doubt, call Sandy to check road conditions.

**Saturday, April 9, 8:30 a.m. Taft Gardens. Leader: John Pavelko (805)640-9040.** This peaceful, private garden contains lovely water features and blooming plants from Australia and South Africa. We should see early Spring migrants such as tanagers and orioles and plenty of hummingbirds, possibly Costa's hummingbirds! Due to lack of parking, carpooling is **required (NO EXCEPTIONS)** and this trip is limited to 20 people. The **registration deadline is Monday, April 4.** To register, call Karin at (805)901-2203 or email [karinkersteter@gmail.com](mailto:karinkersteter@gmail.com) and provide your name and phone number. **For carpooling from Ventura, meet at 7:45 a.m.** behind Carrows, located in the Vons Shopping Center at the corner of Harbor and Seaward. We will caravan to the garden. **To carpool from Ojai, meet at 8:10 a.m.** at the Vons at the corner of the 33 and 150 and park in the spots next to the 33. **Directions (from Ventura):** Hwy 33 to Baldwin Rd/Hwy 150, turn left. Proceed 2.3 miles and turn right at the cluster of mailboxes on a hard to see, unmarked private road (it is 1/2 mile past the better marked Ranch Rd.) Drive another 1/2 mile on the private road and meet at the large white wall with a paved pull out.

**Saturday, April 16, 8:30 a.m. Santa Clara River Estuary/Surfers Knoll. Leader: Alexis Frangis (805)217-4833.** We hope to see a variety of shorebirds including Snowy Plovers, Ruddy and Black Turnstones and hopefully Surfbirds. We may get some arriving phalarope, 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.

**Tuesday, April 19 , 8:30 a.m. Lake Casitas. Leader: Adele Fergusson (805)415-4304.** Join us on a nice walk at the lake, looking for early Spring migrants. We may see Rufous Hummingbirds, grosbeaks and orioles, as well as ducks, geese and waterfowl. **Directions:** Take Hwy 33 towards Ojai; exit Casitas Vista Rd. Turn rt. and go under freeway past Foster Park to 1st rt., Santa Ana Rd. Follow to park. Or take Hwy 33 to Hwy 150, turn left and follow signs to the lake. Park and meet out front and we will walk in.

**Saturday & Sunday, April 23-24. Spring weekend trip to Eastern Sierra Bishop area. Leader: Matthew Page.** Stunning scenery and amazing birds are sure to make this trip memorable. Please email Karin at [karinkersteter@gmail.com](mailto:karinkersteter@gmail.com) if you would like more information or to reserve your spot for this trip. Pre-registration is required. Plan on driving up on Friday April 22, as we will be starting early Saturday morning! Hope to see you there!

**Saturday, April 30, 8:30 a.m. Camino Real Park. Leader: Raeanne Koerner (805)701-1919.** Camino Real is a grassy park surrounded by pines and eucalyptus and is an excellent Spring migrant hotspot. Target birds will include Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Yellow Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Western Tanager and Black-headed Grosbeak, but any number of cool warblers show up at this park during migration! **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. This trip will end promptly at 11 a.m.



***VOLUNTEERS NEEDED...***  
***CALIFORNIA BROWN PELICAN ROOST***  
***AND COASTAL ACCESS POINT SURVEY***  
***MAY 7, 2016 (5:00-7:00 PM)***

This year, Audubon California, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, eBird and state wildlife agencies are sponsoring a statewide Brown Pelican survey. We are looking for Audubon chapter members who would like to participate in the survey. If you would like to volunteer, please contact [alexisraehamilton@gmail.com](mailto:alexisraehamilton@gmail.com) or 805-217-4833.

In 2016, Audubon California, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, state wildlife agencies, and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's eBird are collaborating to initiate a biannual survey of the California Brown Pelican subspecies (*Pelecanus occidentalis californicus*). This iconic bird was removed from the Endangered Species List in 2009 after decades of successful conservation efforts. In recent years, however, this subspecies has experienced poor breeding success and unusual mortality events, raising questions about its conservation status. It is more critical than ever to track the distribution, abundance, and population structure of Brown Pelicans as their ocean and coastal environment changes. Of highest importance in the survey are observations of pelicans at known roosts, as they are ideal places for citizen scientists to reliably report on the numbers and ages of pelicans. Pelicans at roosts will be counted, aged, and photographed. Data will be reported through a special portal set up in eBird. In addition to roosts, participants can report observations at other coastal access points within the same time frame.

Please participate on May 7 between 5:00–7:00pm and help the brown pelicans!



***BIRDERS OF ALL SKILL LEVELS NEEDED***

Vanderbilt University is looking for birders of all levels of experience to participate in a project examining how perception and memory for birds differs between beginners and experts. We really do mean all levels of experience, from the true beginner to the expert with decades of study, and everything in-between.

These experiments are online on the web. They measure your ability to remember and identify birds and sometimes other animals or objects. Many experiments are fairly short. They can be done on any computer, wherever and whenever you decide to do them.

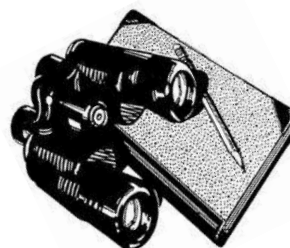
One of our current experiments is a bird identification test. ***Go online and test your birding skills.***

This is the web site for our experiments: <http://expertise.psy.vanderbilt.edu>

Once you register your own login id and password on the site, and complete a short survey of your birding expertise, you will be able to participate in any experiments that are available. We expect to add new experiments over time. Some future experiments may include modest compensation.

If you have questions, please contact Professor Thomas Palmeri ([thomas.j.palmeri@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:thomas.j.palmeri@vanderbilt.edu)) at Vanderbilt University.

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## BEACHES ARE HABITAT - SHARE OUR SHORE!



The Ventura Audubon sponsored event was held March 12<sup>th</sup> at the CSUCI Boating Center in Channel Islands Harbor. About fifty people attended, many from the Hollywood Beach and Channel Islands area. They heard four excellent

presentations. Dr. Clare Steele from CSUCI spoke of beach and dune ecology providing background and vocabulary on the natural processes that form beaches and dunes. She also spoke of the threats to beach ecosystems as a result of the "hand of man". Tom McCormick talked about what happens when the ecosystem is thrown out of balance and what can be done to restore the natural balance

With an understanding of beach and dune ecology in mind, Alexis Frangis told how the endangered California least tern and the threatened western snowy plover make use of this environment.



Uniquely adapted to life on the beach, these birds nest on the beaches of Ventura County and are very much in need of our help. An Environmental Scientist, she manages the western snowy plover and California least tern nesting program for the Channel Islands District of State Parks.



The final speaker, Debra Barringer has been the biologist contracted to monitor WSP and CLT at Hollywood Beach for several years. She spoke of the unique challenges these birds face at Hollywood Beach because of intense human activity.

She also spoke of the potential opportunity to remove invasive beach grass from some of the remaining dunes in the area near the harbor entrance and restore a more natural dune and beach habitat.

A question and answer session followed each presentation and tabletop displays by TNC, USFWS, CSUCI and Ventura Audubon provided additional learning opportunities. Several attendees volunteered for docent training and service. We received a lot of positive feedback on the program.

## REPORT OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee recommends the following for the Board of Directors for the program year 2016-2017:

|                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Debra Barringer | Joyce Schoppe      |
| Deborah Burns   | Bruce Schoppe      |
| Adele Fergusson | Marianne Slaughter |
| Alexis Frangis  | Janice Susa        |
| John Connor     | Jim Susa           |
| Cynthia Hartley | Jackie Worden      |
| Sandy Hedrick   |                    |

The Nominating Committee included John Connor, Alexis Frangis and Sandy Hedrick.

Sandy Hedrick  
Chair, Nominating Committee

# Volunteers!

**At present, volunteers are needed to help middle school students learn about birding on their field trips to Ormond Beach.** Contact Betsy Bachman at [eabirder@sbcglobal.net](mailto:eabirder@sbcglobal.net) if you can help out for a day or more

If you'd like to renew your faith in humanity and the youth of today *please volunteer* to help out at one of the VAS Education events. You won't be sorry.



The children are eager to learn and become conservation-minded citizens. They may even teach their parents a thing or two. Other events might involve staffing a table with other volunteers for a few hours, possibly taking students on bird finding walks, basically being a representative for VAS at events sponsored by other entities.

Please email Betsy for more details.

**Betsy Bachman, Ed. Chair, [eabirder@sbcglobal.net](mailto:eabirder@sbcglobal.net)**



...Just Do It!

## **VENTURA AUDUBON SOCIETY**

P.O. Box 24198  
Ventura, CA 93002

### **...FIELD TRIPS** (continued from Page 3)

#### **Mark your calendars!**

Sunday, May 1 – Wheeler Gorge

Saturday, May 14 – BBQ and Annual Meeting – Hedrick Ranch Nature Area

Tuesday, May 17 – Tuesday walk at Ventura Settling Ponds with Adele Fergusson

Saturday, May 21 – Canada Larga



*Springtime*

### **VAS OFFICERS AND CHAIRS**

|                   |                    |          |
|-------------------|--------------------|----------|
| President         | Bruce Schoppe      | 658-2396 |
| Vice-President    |                    |          |
| Secretary         | Joyce Schoppe      | 658-2396 |
| Treasurer         | Marianne Slaughter | 484-8415 |
| Conservation      | Sandy Hedrick      | 643-2408 |
| Field Trips       | Karin Kersteter    | 901-2203 |
| Publicity         | Jim Susha          | 983-3929 |
| Webmaster/Science | Alexis Frangis     | 217-4833 |
| Membership        | Jackie Worden      | 657-2837 |

|           |                 |          |
|-----------|-----------------|----------|
| At Large: | Adele Fergusson | 415-4304 |
|           | John Connor     | 654-1805 |
|           | Janice Susha    | 983-3929 |
|           | Deborah Burns   | 933-3929 |

|                    |                 |          |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------|
| Education          | Betsy Bachman   | 646-4407 |
| Newsletter Editor  | Dee Press       | 484-8415 |
| Program Committee: | Laura Gulovsen  | 642-6544 |
|                    | Margaret Wilson | 647-7962 |
|                    | Audrey Vincent  | 525-5826 |

|               |                 |          |
|---------------|-----------------|----------|
| WSP/CLT Team: | Cynthia Hartley | 795-4115 |
|               | Debra Barringer | Unlisted |

If you are not sure if your membership has expired, please **email** Jackie at [jbworden7@gmail.com](mailto:jbworden7@gmail.com) and she will check it out for you.

**BOARD MEETING:** There will be a Board of Directors meeting on Tuesday, May 3rd, at Marianne and Dee's home, 1656 Riente Street in Camarillo. Call (805) 484-8415 for more information. VAS members are welcome to attend.

**THE VENTURA AUDUBON SOCIETY** holds its regular meeting 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 bi-monthly 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.* Send submissions to [deepress2@gmail.com](mailto:deepress2@gmail.com)