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The California Condor

Ventura Audubon Society
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venturaaudubon.org



Call Notes - We're Back!

by Cynthia Hartley
VAS executive director

Greetings birders!

It's great to be back after a very strange spring and summer. September begins our 2020-21 program year, with more changes than our chapter has ever experienced in such a short time. The changes are too numerous to detail in Call Notes, so this newsletter is dedicated to describing how our chapter will move forward this year.



photo by @alecia_birds

Many of the changes are a result of the pandemic which necessitated finding new ways to safely connect with our members. Other changes are due to a number of retirements of long-term board and committee members who have filled many key chapter roles. We are so deeply grateful to our outgoing folks, who now join our advisory committee, for all you have done over many years. We welcome our new incoming board members! We have several new faces, new ways of connecting to our members, and lots of innovation and inventive ideas. I am excited to see how our organization will pull together, grow and evolve.

Finally, and most important, none of this alters our core mission, which is to protect birds and their habitat. Birds need us now more than ever, as we need them. Remembering this has grounded us during this strange time and is what

has helped us navigate our decisions through many special board meetings this past summer. We look forward to the 2020-21 year and all the challenges and changes it will bring.



Photo by [CDFW, CC BY 2.0, wikipedia](#)

Newsletter and Monthly Email Format

by Cynthia Hartley

One of the first changes you may notice is this email! Our retiring newsletter and Constant Contact editors left very big shoes to fill, which to date remain unfilled. Therefore yours truly is the default editor for both publications. Until we fill this position we will not produce a conventional newsletter, but instead will fold all of our news into a once monthly Constant Contact email.

We welcome your feedback, so please click the link below if you can help us by filling out a short survey (3 questions) to give us your opinion about things you'd like to see in our newsletter.

Let us know your opinion! Please take our
[Newsletter Survey](#)



(Limited) Field Trips Are Back With Special COVID Safety Modifications...

by Adele Fergusson
Field Trip Coordinator

We (VAS) were saddened that we had to cancel all of our walks back in March 2020 and then also throughout the summer. This has been a difficult time for everyone with the pandemic, and the many subsequent changes and losses.



After much discussion and work developing safety protocols, we have decided to bring back birding field trips in September. In order to balance birding with safety, we will be implementing a number of COVID safety procedures that will limit the number of trips and

attendees, and ensure distancing.

- We are limiting trips to **4 people per 1 leader**
- **Advanced sign up required** [click here to sign up](#)
- Participants will read, understand and adhere to our [COVID policy](#) and complete a pre-trip COVID questionnaire

Visit our [field trip page](#) for detailed trip info, or email fieldtrips@venturaaudubon.org

Sat 9/19/20 - 8:30am

Camino Real Park [google maps](#)

Leaders: Linda Easter and Corine Barksdale

Wed 9/30/20 - 8:30am

Arroyo Verde Park [google maps](#)

[Bird sit](#) and bird walk

Leaders: Adele Fergusson and Raeann Koerner

Sat 10/10/20 - 8:30am

Satwiwa [google maps](#)

Leaders: Tevin Schmitt and David Torfeh



Monthly Programs

Now Online

Like many other organizations that have public meetings, we will hold our meetings, such as all program speakers, and board and committee meetings, via Zoom for the foreseeable monthly future. There are benefits to this, geography is no longer a constraint to attendance. So in addition to our VAS 2nd Tuesday of the month speaker, we will bring you information about other meetings of interest to birders.

VAS September Program

The Ventura River and Santa Barbara Channelkeeper



Speaker: Ben Pitterle ([bio](#))

Time and Date: 7:00 PM - September 8, 2020

[Zoom Meeting Link](#)

Meeting ID: 852 6638 5994

Passcode: 816149

For 20 years, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper has been a watchdog and advocate for the

protection, restoration and sustainable management of the Ventura River and its groundwater. The least bell's vireo is an endangered bird that nests in the Ventura River, and this bird, as well as many other riparian birds, are dependent on the health of the Ventura River.

This program will cover background information about the history of Channelkeeper's involvement in the Ventura River watershed including events that led to Channelkeeper's litigation against the State Water Board and City of Ventura to address over-pumping.



Least Bell's Vireo by @Kate Griffith, Griffith Wildlife Biology, 2020

Wild Birds Unlimited, Ventura **September Classes**

Falling for Migration - Online Class

Migration is one of the most amazing feats that birds perform. Humanity has been fascinated with the pattern of appearing and disappearing birds for millennia. Understanding migration is a key step to realizing the challenges and threats that birds deal with on a regular basis. We will look at some of the myths that have surrounded migration and highlight the many obstacles birds face and the incredible ways they have evolved to deal with them. Finally, we will discuss current conservation issues that pertain to migration, including Cornell's "Seven Simple Actions to Bring Birds Back" and Wild Birds Unlimited's Save The Songbirds campaign.



Saturday 9/9/20 2-3pm [Zoom Meeting Link](#)
Sunday 9/13/20 2-3pm [Zoom Meeting Link](#)

Beginner Bird ID Class - Fall Edition

Struggling to identify sparrows? Frustrated with finches? Are there flashes of yellow going through your yard that you wish you could name? Fall migration is in full swing and mystery birds are everywhere! We will be having a beginner bird identification class focusing on the most common species that you are likely to see at your feeders this time of year and how you can tell them apart. The talk will last for about 40 minutes with time at the end for any questions.



Saturday 9/19/20 2-3pm [Zoom Meeting Link](#)
Sunday 9/27/20 2-3pm [Zoom Meeting Link](#)



Morro Coast Audubon Society

Serving San Luis Obispo County Since 1966

Monday 9/21/20, 7:00pm

Why Do Birds of a Feather Flock Together?

Presented by Jessica Griffiths

[Zoom Meeting Link](#)

Meeting ID: 881 7329 8656

Passcode: 961503

You may have heard the old saying that birds of a feather flock together. But have you ever stopped to wonder why? Join Jessica Griffiths for a fascinating look at bird flocks and flocking behavior. Why do some species of birds form flocks, while others do not? Can different kinds of birds join together in a flock? Why do geese and ducks fly in a "V" formation? Learn the answers to these questions and more in this presentation, which touches on bird biology and behavior, and highlights some remarkable scientific discoveries

[Optional Link](#)



Volunteer Spot Light

We may be social distancing for the foreseeable future, so we are looking for new ways to stay connected. We have so many amazing people working behind the scenes to make Ventura Audubon Society tick, we thought it would be fun to create a newsletter column to introduce them. Each month we will highlight one or two of our team members to showcase the people behind the birds.

Special thanks to Suzy Bell! Eco-journalist and volunteer naturalist for your help with these articles!

If you are would like to learn more about VAS opportunities please email volunteer@venturaaudubon.org or take our [volunteer survey](#).

Meet our New Web Master! Lindsay Tally

Ventura Audubon Society's vibrant, new webmaster and GIS* bird nerd, is Lindsay Tally, who just loves the techy side of conservation and restoration projects.

"I loved my Environmental Studies in college as I am passionate about conservation of species, and birds are a favorite!" says Lindsay who works by day at a local craft brewery in Ventura.

Growing up in Los Angeles, Lindsay loved watching the little house sparrows, finches, and scrub jays visit her garden feeders.

"I've always been excited with new and rare bird sightings, like the bald eagles in Lake Shasta, but I still always return back to that childlike sense of wonder and joy when I see those common house sparrows and finches in my own backyard or at work. I love our smaller birds like our common sparrows, and figure I'd probably come back as one of them. I love seeing the different personalities of some of our most common bird species. It's all exciting to me!"

Lindsay, a passionate gardener, whom you may have spotted at your local Lowes with happy armfuls of succulents and cacti, attributes her love of birds to her parents. "There were always a lot of feeders in our backyard!" she laughs.

With an Environmental Studies bachelor's degree with minors in Computer Science and Geography and her vast experience with GIS, Lindsay is a welcome, new asset to VAS who are always looking for enthusiastic new volunteers to share their wonderful skills.

While studying at Sonoma College, Lindsay worked closely with the Sonoma County Audubon chapters, so when she moved to Ventura in 2019, she naturally gravitated to volunteer with VAS to do her naturalist training.

"I had a goal to get involved in some respect with the Ventura chapter, so when I heard about a volunteer meeting they were having, I jumped on it!" smiles Lindsay.

"Getting out in the field has opened my eyes to the importance of getting more people involved in the work we do to create a broader appreciation for all the birds around us, in particular, the shorebirds throughout Ventura County's coastal areas. Outreach is a big part of that, so I'm excited for launching the new website and hopefully bringing in new faces!"

We asked Lindsay to share with you just one key thing that we can all do to help bird conservation.

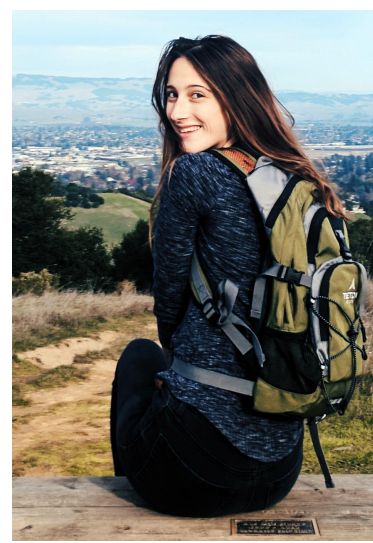
"I think we could all do better at noticing the smaller creatures around us and the larger impact they have on us and the world around us. I believe that we all too often separate ourselves from 'nature', when we are in fact all one and part of the same thing! The survival of the species and their environment go hand in hand. Get involved in whatever ways you can, outreach and education are key!"

~~With such warm enthusiasm, and love of small creatures, and with such a positive community spirit, we are confident in Lindsay's noble quest to launch our vital new, interactive website to engage with our loyal members and attract wonderful new volunteers to VAS!~~

CSUCI Summer Intern - Heidy Yupe

Heidy Yupe was hired thanks to an Audubon in

Action grant provided by the National Audubon Society. We found Heidy through the Cal State





VAS summer intern, Heidi Yupe

University Channel Islands Audubon chapter (Channel Islands Audubon). Initially the plan was to hire a student to work as a field assistant, but then the pandemic happened and it looked like our plans were not to be. But we adapted, and brought Heidi, who is also fluent in Spanish, onboard to develop bi-lingual outreach materials, compile important banded snowy plover data and develop a protocol for beach wrack assessment. Heidi was able to round out her conservation experience by joining our limited volunteer program over the summer and assisted with nest surveys, emergency fence construction and tide line surveys.

"I have always had a passion for animals and wildlife," shared Heidi, "so I was looking for something exciting and elevating to take part in. I jumped on the opportunity to do volunteer work in protecting and restoring endangered animal species when I came across the VAS Volunteer Naturalist

Training hosted by Channel Islands Audubon."

Heidi believes that birds are a vital part of the ecosystem. "Being involved with VAS this summer and getting a taste of the endless work that is done in conservation missions has really opened my eyes to this world. All animals play a significant role in their ecosystem and I got to experience a taste of how human activity can change or destroy habitats which ultimately can diminish animal and plant species," adds Heidi.

With her focus on shorebirds, Heidi says she learnt that the main concern was getting people to read and follow the signage. "Signage and fencing allow the public to know their limitations for the wellbeing and success of the nesting birds," explains Heidi.

Currently in her fourth year of studies as a Biology major at California State University Channel Islands, Heidi was born in Los Angeles, but spent most of her childhood in the beautiful Antelope Valley, home to an incredible diversity of plants and animals.

Heidi feels that working with Ventura Audubon this summer gave her a "real-world hands-on experience with conservation efforts."

"And," adds Heidi, "This has encouraged me to get involved in wildlife conservation as my career!" she beams.

That's good news for our endangered shorebirds, and wonderful news for wildlife conservation all round!



Diversity in Birding

Ventura Audubon Society is committed to fostering, cultivating and preserving a birding culture of diversity, equality and inclusion. Ventura Audubon Society encourages and embraces members of different ages, color, disability, ethnicity,

gender identity or expression, race, religion or sexual orientation, birding ability and other characteristics. We hope that we can continue to foster and contribute to the protection of birds and their habitat by contributing inclusive programming to the communities we serve and to promote a greater understanding, respect and need for diversity.

One of the goals of our outreach committee is to invite a diverse series of birders/photographers to "take over" our VAS Instagram feed for a week in order to share their birding experiences and amazing photography.

Visit our Instagram feed to view Adi's and other takeovers



Instagram Take Over

Meet our September Featured Birder

Hi! My name's Aditya, and I am a nature and wildlife photographer specializing in birds. I am currently based in Bahrain, a small island in the Middle East, and aim to document the local and migratory bird species - raptors and shorebirds, in particular.

My love for bird photography started on a late-winter morning in 2013. A casual walk around my neighborhood introduced me to the world of raptors in the form of a Marsh Harrier. Time froze as I watched the harrier fly directly overhead in hot pursuit of prey. I was hooked! Similarly, a trip to the local beach gave me the first taste of Bahrain's most well-known shorebirds - Flamingos and Cormorants.



To me, bird photography is a getaway from the stress of everyday life. To be able to watch these beautiful creatures in their habitat is a thrill that absolutely nothing can come close to fulfilling. In return, I hope to raise awareness and inspire others to help conserve what we are blessed to have today. Visit Adi's Instagram feed to see some truly amazing bird photos [@aditya.sridhar](https://www.instagram.com/aditya.sridhar) . Click this [link](#) to read the full text story that goes with each photo.

Black Winged Stilts



Kentish Plover



Kentish plover, catching a fish!



Lesser Sand Plover



Thank You Supporters!

Financial contributions to our chapter allow us to continue our work protecting birds and their habitat. If you would like to donate please click on [this link](#).

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife and United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Endangered Species Act Section 6 Grant (S6)
- National Foundation of Fish and Wildlife (NFWF)
- Beth Zuma, Hueneme Patient Collective , Port Hueneme
- National Audubon Society, Audubon in Action Grant
- Skunkmasters, Port Hueneme
- The Baltoro Trust, Yvon Chouinard Family Trustees

Individuals:

- Marian Ashe

- Grayson Baumann
- Karen Kraus
- Jufith R. Owen
- Linda & Ron Phillips
- Carol Reed
- Marianne Slaughter
- Joshua and Carol Stanton
- Loi and Adele Nguyen Charitable Fund



Volunteer Position Vacancies!

There are **many** jobs that need to be done to keep our chapter running, and lots of work to be done achieve our mission of protecting birds and their habitat. If you would like to become involved or find out more we have the following vacancies. You can also fill out our [volunteer survey](#) to help us match up your interests and experiences with our volunteer needs.

To find out more about the positions below email volunteer@venturaaudubon.org

- Program Chair
- Education Committee - chair and members
- Volunteer Naturalist
- Conservation Committee
 - Bird Friendly Gardens outreach
 - Climate Change outreach
 - Monitor local meeting agendas
- Newsletter help
- Fundraising Committee



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