

The California Condor



California Conder by Alister Skinner

Ventura Audubon Society
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venturaaudubon.org

Call Notes

by Lindsay Tally
President

Welcome everyone to our 2025/2026 season! I hope everyone had a wonderful summer.

Our shorebird recovery team has been hard at work all summer - I recommend you check out our bird blog for all sorts of nesting news and updates on all the great work our team has been doing out on the beach. We continue to recruit dog rangers with our tabling events - our team is out at the Ventura Botanical Gardens monthly, Sailor and Friends Pet Wellness, and we attended CARL's annual "Pooch Parade" which was a blast. We have also been tabling at the Channel Islands Farmers Market and were able to attend Ventura Land Trust's Wild and Scenic Film Festival.



I am excited to announce that VAS has welcomed a few new board members - Sean Fox

(Secretary), Kristen McKenna (Outreach Coordinator), Lindsay Rose, Justin Ruby, and David Wappler. I want to thank Sandy Hedrick, who will not be returning this year, for his years of service on our board. I also want to acknowledge that Rachel Ameche is still a member of our board, now serving as Vice President, and will be teaching me all I need to know in my new role as president. Thank you to Rachel for everything she's done as president the last two years, and I can't wait to collaborate with her and our new and continuing board members this season!

I am very honored to be stepping into my new role as president. I have been a VAS board member for the last 3 years and have been working with the chapter as webmaster for the last 5 years, which I'll continue to do in combination with my president role. Our mission at VAS and my mission as president is to protect birds and the places they need through outreach, education, and habitat protection in and around Ventura County. Ventura's wildlife and wild places define our landscape, bring us joy, and show us how important it is that we protect our natural world. I can't wait to work with our community and am excited to meet everyone, and see some familiar faces, at our events this season.

We have a lot of great field trips coming up, starting off at the Settling Ponds which is one of the top birding locations in Ventura County. We also have a members only field trip to Carpinteria Salt Marsh which I'm very excited for. I also hope to see you all at our first speaker program of the season highlighting the California Condor, a favorite bird of mine. A reminder that you can hear about outreach events, field trips, programs, etc. through our socials, our website, and our newsletter here.

Looking forward to the upcoming season! Thank you all who are reading for being an integral part of conserving our wildlife and wild places.

[Membership Webpage](#)

[Join VAS via PayPal](#)

Shorebird Recovery Program Update

by Cynthia Hartley
Shorebird Recovery Program Lead



2025 Ormond Nesting Season Summary

This year we documented 56 snowy plover nests. Out of those, 26 hatched (46.4%), 28 failed (50%), and 2 had to be transferred to the Santa Barbara Zoo for captive rearing. Most exciting of all, we recorded about 18 fledglings at Ormond this season. Seeing young plovers survive to that stage is a real win.

Least terns are typically not numerous at Ormond Beach and nests that are established there do not do well, but they surprised us a little this year. We found 28 nests: and while only 5 hatched, it's still an improvement from last year, when only one nest hatched and the chick survived just one week. But this year, at least four chicks survived to fledging, the first tern fledglings we've seen here in years.

For more information the 2025 season, check out the VAS Bird Blog below

BIRD BLOG



Snowy plover chick, about 3 weeks old. Photo by A. Patterson

Become a Volunteer

By Kristen McKenna
Chapter Coordinator

Looking to get more involved with Ventura Audubon? This section highlights upcoming volunteer opportunities—some recurring monthly and others offered only occasionally. For outreach events, some background knowledge of the chapter is preferred, but don't worry—you can reach out to volunteer@venturaaudubon.org with any questions beforehand, and a quick run-through will also be provided the day of the event. More hands-on volunteer opportunities are in the works, so keep an eye out for updates!

Seed Collection & Birding Event at the San Marcos Foothills



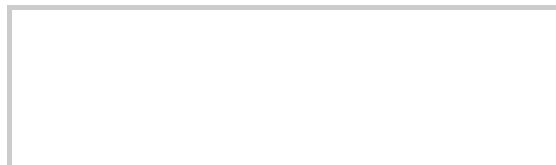
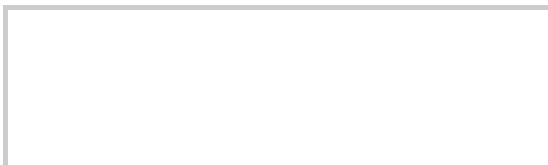
Photo Credit: John Ziegler

Did you know California Biodiversity Day is being celebrated all next week? Our home state is one of the most biodiverse regions in the world. To mark the occasion and help bring awareness, VAS is teaming up with Channel Islands Restoration (CIR) to offer a **Seed Collection & Birding Event at the San Marcos Foothills Preserve.**

CIR and their volunteers routinely visit the preserve in Santa Barbara to learn about the significance of seed collection for ecosystem restoration. VAS will be joining the morning to share insights about the local birds.

Find out more details and signup through the link below!

[SIGNUP HERE](#)





Ventura Botanical Gardens Friday, September 12 10AM-12PM

One Friday every month, we set up an outreach booth at the Ventura Botanical Gardens to share about our Shorebird Recovery Program and recruit new Dog Rangers.

Dog Rangers educates dog owners so their four-legged friends can be bird protectors, rather than bird disturbances.

The gardens is a favorite outreach location, with curious visitors eager to have their pup join the pack. This month also marks our one-year anniversary of conducting outreach at the gardens!

Come hang out with VAS staff for a couple of hours, chat about Shorebird Recovery, and meet some adorable dogs.

GARDENS SIGNUP



Channel Islands Harbor Farmers Market Sunday 9/14 or 9/28

For the past few months, VAS has been visiting the Channel Islands Harbor Farmers Market one Sunday a month. This outreach location has been ideal not just because of the large amount of people we get to talk to, but because we can point behind us and say, "the birds we work hard to protect are right there!"

Since VAS is not a regular market visitor, we're notified only a few days in advance about our attendance. If you sign up for a shift, the Chapter Coordinator will be in touch with you to confirm.

There are a few shifts to choose from—pick the one that works best for you and come ready to talk all things Ventura Audubon Society!

MARKET SIGNUP

Education Committee Recruitment

We're excited to announce that VAS is relaunching our Share the Shore education program! It's been a few years since we've run this initiative, and we're refreshing the structure to connect with a larger number of students. We've partnered with elementary and middle schools in Ventura and Oxnard to bring 1–2 hours of classroom discussions, hands-on activities, and on-campus birding experiences.

Classroom visits are scheduled from late September through December, and we need your help to make this program thrive! With more volunteer support,

we can reach even more schools across Ventura County. Our goal is to spark curiosity about shorebirds, foster a lasting appreciation for them, and inspire the next generation of birders.

If you have experience working with youth—whether in a classroom, at summer camps, or anywhere in between—this is a fantastic opportunity to get involved. Know someone who might be interested? Please send them our way! There will be a recorded training session for volunteers to complete to go over the schedule and activities, then a short follow-up call with the Outreach Coordinator will be arranged afterward to answer any questions.

Join the Ventura Audubon Education Committee and help share your passion for shorebirds with young minds!

SIGNUP HERE

September 2025 Speaker Program

The California Condor: Brought Back from the Brink

Speaker: Debbie Parisi

Date: Tuesday Sept 9th

Time: 7pm PST

Live at the Poinsettia Pavilion and via Zoom, see link below.

This month we have a special program planned for you. Come out to the Poinsettia Pavilion for a social where we will have a musical performance by Sus Corez, meet our program speaker and get a chance to purchase Condor and VAS merchandize.

Program Description:

Join us for a brief history of the California Condor with the cause of its demise, and the establishment of the California Condor Recovery Program with its goal to establish captive breeding and the reintroduction of this critically endangered species back into the wild.

The California condor was listed as an endangered species in 1967. In 1987 California Condors were on the verge of extinction with only 27 alive, as the last free flying condor, AC9, was taken from the wild. In 1992, the USFWS began reintroducing captive-bred condors to the wild to

reestablish the population. Today, there are over 560 birds with over half of them flying free in the wild in various populations including California, Arizona, and Baja Mexico. The California Condor is a resident of the local area and can be found in the mountains behind Ojai, Santa Paula, Fillmore, Piru, and Santa Barbara.

The Recovery Program is currently focusing its efforts on the captive breeding and reintroduction of California condors to the wild in the hopes of establishing a self sustaining population of two geographically separate populations, one in California and the other in Arizona, each with 150 birds and at least 15 breeding pairs.

Friends of California Condors Wild and Free is a nonprofit 501c3 all volunteer organization, that has the mission to enhance public awareness of the endangered California Condor and to ensure that they are protected, healthy, and free.



Speaker Bio:

Debbie is a board member of the non-profit Friends of California Condors, Wild & Free. Our organization supports the USFWS refuges that are home to the critically endangered California Condor. I have been a USFWS volunteer since 2008 working on the refuges as a CACO nest monitor and radio telemetry tracker in support of the California Condor Recovery program. I completed the CA naturalist program and I have a level 3 wildlife track and sign certification.



To join the program visit our

[Monthly Speaker webpage](#)

Then click the
"Watch Virtually Via Zoom" button
at the top of the webpage

Special birding trip to Trinidad and Tobago

VAS is proud to announce a fund raising trip with Benny Jacobs-Schwartz next year. VAS Members get the first chance to secure spots for this special event. Become or renew today!

Join or Renew

Ventura Audubon Birding Field Trips

Beginners are always welcome on field trips!

Please do not be shy if you are learning bird ID or are just curious.

We love having and encouraging beginner birders!

- We request that all participants sign up no less than 24 hours in advance for field trips - *this allows us advance time to ensure we have enough trip leaders*
- This also enables us notify participants of any changes

Sign up early to participate in a field trip and to get notifications if a field trip is changed or cancelled!

1. Visit our [Field Trip webpage](#)
2. Scroll to the bottom of the field trip descriptions, and fill out; your name, email address and select the trip you want to attend
3. You will be sent an email by our Field Trip Coordinator

Questions or need help? Email fieldtrips@venturaaudubon.org

Light drizzle does not necessarily cancel trips, but heavier rain will. Please wear appropriate clothing (layers are suggested), comfortable shoes, and bring snacks, water, hats, sunscreen, binoculars and field guides.

September Field Trips

Special Announcement! Our first-ever members-only field trip is happening Sunday, September 28th. [Become a member](#) for just \$20/year and unlock all the details.

Join or Renew

Ventura Settling

Ponds

Saturday September 13th
Meeting Time: 8:30am

An easy walk along dirt paths around the shore of the settling ponds, one of the top birding locations in Ventura County.

We'll be looking for Ducks, Grebes and Herons. Gulls and Pelicans are likely, and Hawks and Harriers possible. No restrooms or drinking water, nearest public restrooms are at Surfer's Knoll parking lot.



For directions please sign up here: [Field Trip webpage](#)

Beginner's Bird Walk

Wednesday, September 24th
Meeting Time: 8:30am

This monthly walk is specifically for beginning birders. Space is limited to ensure the guides can provide a quality experience for those less familiar with bird

identification. The walk will be at Ventura Settling Ponds where a great variety of birds can be found. The walk will introduce some of the species seen and provide tips on how to identify them.



For directions please sign up here: [Field Trip webpage](#)

Thank you to our supporters!

Financial contributions to our chapter allow us to continue our work protecting birds and their habitat

- The Holdfast Collective
- The Nature Conservancy, National Coastal Wetlands Conservation (NCWC) grant
- National Foundation of Fish and Wildlife (NFWF)
- National Audubon Society, Audubon in Action Grant
- California Coastal Commission, Whale Tail Grant
- California Coastal Conservancy
- Schorsch Trust
- 1% for the planet
- Ventura Coast Brewing Company
- Conejo Valley Audubon
- The Krause Family

Support Ventura Audubon Society

Ventura Audubon Society is a registered tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization.

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