

The California Condor

Ventura Audubon Society
January 2023 Volume 64, Number 5
A Chapter of the National Audubon Society
venturaaudubon.org

2023 Shorebird Fundraiser Calendars Are Still Available



Shorebirds 2023
By Alecia Smith

- Net proceeds support the Shorebird Recovery Program at Ventura Audubon
- Size: 11 x 8.5 (High-Quality Matte Finish)
- \$36 US Shipping Included
- To order your calendar visit Alecia's [website](#)

Call Notes

by Vince Kinsch
President

Ventura River Estuary

a nursery, a food web, a unique ecosystem



Ventura Audubon Society

What is an estuary?

An estuary is a place where fresh river water mixes with salty ocean water. Estuaries are among the richest habitats known.

Estuaries remove pollutants from river water and produce oxygen. Plankton, tiny organisms, are the base of a complex food web in which plants convert the sun's energy into food energy. Small invertebrate animals feed on these plants and then themselves become food for fish, birds and other animal life.

Estuaries provide a nursery and valuable habitat for the growth of fish. They provide wintering habitat for migrating waterfowl such as ducks, geese and gulls and support long-legged wading birds like egrets and herons.

About the estuary:

The Ventura River Estuary is a remnant of the historic Ventura River Delta, which once stretched from here to the Ventura pier.

Today the estuary is a dynamic, low salinity environment which transforms from a small summer flow into a wild narrows during winter storms. The flooding river can exceed 20,000 cubic feet of water per second. It changes the location of the sandbars and channels from year to year. In summer, the flow of the river is bolstered by over a million gallons of water a day released from the Ojai Wastewater Treatment Plant.

To learn more about finding and keeping estuaries healthy in Ventura County contact the Ventura Audubon Society, a Chapter of the National Audubon Society.
www.venturaaudubon.org

Can you find these birds?

									
Marsh Godwits move slowly, probing deeply in the mud with their very long pink upturned bill.	Bullock's Loons take the summer and fall migrations, searching for food. They fly north to breed in the summer.	Caspian Terns fly over water with long necks held pointed down. They hover and dive headfirst in water to catch small fish.	Peregrine Falcons make a swift plunging dive from above their prey, striking with their feet and using any the rock with a powerful curved beak.	Great Blue Herons and Egrets wade on long legs, then stand like statues, waiting. Seeing a fish or a frog, they make a lightning-fast strike with their spear-like bill. They also fly to roost at night where they eat mice and gophers.	Black-bellied Plovers pick the sand and silt, skittering across the ground, with wings out of the sand.	Raccoon Plovers live in the ocean with long bill and upturned gape, then are common for foraging, nesting, parenting, and nesting.	Pied-billed Grebes live underwater to eat aquatic insects, crustaceans and small fish.	Western Gulls scavenge on refuse and eat small fish, crustaceans, and nesting material.	Willet probe the mud with long straight bills, searching for shells, sand crabs and worms.

A project of the Ventura Audubon Society. Design & Text by Jane Spitzer. Illustrations by Peter Gaudin.



Photo by: Cynthia Hartley

Happy New Year! On behalf of everyone at Ventura Audubon, we wish you a safe and happy 2023. In this edition of call notes, I'd like to extend a special thank you to Jim and Jan Susha. They have been actively involved in VAS for decades. If you've ever submitted a "Contact Us" form on our web site, it is Jim who reads them and forwards

to the appropriate contact. Recently VAS installed a new sign at the Ventura River Estuary, it is located along the sidewalk at the end of the Surfers' Point parking lot. Jim and Jan generously donated the funding to make this happen. VAS extends our deepest gratitude for this donation.

The preliminary numbers from the Christmas Bird Count are in: He had over 80 volunteers count 188 species with more results coming in. This species count is well above our historical average. Among the species observed were the Golden Eagle, Northern Parula, Gray Flycatcher, Virginia's Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Gray Catbird, Red Knot and lots more. Frank DeMartino will be finalizing the count and we will publish it in an upcoming newsletter.

Many of our members love to feed our backyard (or front yard) birds. Have you ever wondered what kind of food is appropriate or where and when to feed them? Check out this [link](#) from Audubon Society that sheds light on this subject.

Audubon is dedicated to advocating for and securing the space, clean air and clean water that birds and people need to live and thrive. Check out this [link](#) of the Top Audubon Successes of 2022.

We look forward to working with our partners and members to improve our environment for both birds and us. Please join us on a field trip or attend a meeting to meet the dedicated volunteers that make this chapter a success.

[Membership Webpage](#)

[Join VAS via PayPal](#)

What are we learning from the CBC?

Each year CBC data is added to a database and is available to researchers and the public. The Ventura count has been held each year since 1980. Brad Sillasen created an interactive database that shows trends in bird populations within Ventura Audubon's Count Circle. Below is an overview of the data we have collected. To explore the data, please visit the website link below:

[Click to visit the Ventura Audubon CBC database](#)

Years on Record: 42
Total Species Recorded: 304
Most Species Recorded: 202 (1987)
Least Species Recorded: 156 (1981)
Average Species Recorded: 178

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:

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.

January Field Trips

Rancho Simi Community Park

Saturday Jan 7th, 2023
Meeting Time: 8:30am

The park has open green fields, walking paths with intermittent tree shade, and a big pond where water fowl and other birds congregate. There is plenty of parking and public restrooms are available.



Birds of interest include: Plumbeous Vireo, Ross's Goose, Ruby crowned kinglet, Hooded merganser, black crowned night heron.

Directions: The park is located at 1765 Royal Ave in Simi Valley. Take 101 South to CA-23 North. Take CA-23 to CA-118 and exit at Erringer Road. You can enter the park off Erringer. We'll meet in the parking lot by the swimming pool.

[GOOGLE MAPS](#)

Lake Piru

Saturday Jan 28th, 2023
Meeting Time: 8:30am

Let's take a walk along the lake! Nestled in the Los Padres National Forest, picturesque Lake Piru offers an escape from city life.

There are plenty of shade trees, moderate amount of walking, and features many different habitat types including a large lake where birds of prey can be seen fishing. The lake hosts a variety of bird species including Williamson's Sapsucker, Common Goldeneye, Bald Eagle, and Rock Wren.



There is a \$10.00 entrance fee per car.

Directions: Lake Piru is located at 4780 Piru Canyon Rd, Piru, CA 93040. Take state route 126 to Piru Canyon Road and turn left.

[GOOGLE MAPS](#)



"A 27 YEAR WILDFLOWER JOURNEY: THE MAKING OF BEAUTY AND THE BEAST: CALIFORNIA WILDFLOWERS AND CLIMATE CHANGE "

Speaker: Rob Badger and Nita Winter

Date: Tuesday Jan 10th 2023

Time: 7pm

Via Zoom, see link below.

Speaker Bio:

Internationally acclaimed conservation photographers Rob Badger and Nita Winter have been life partners and creative collaborators for more than three decades.



Rob's environmental images have won multiple awards, including Best in Photojournalism in international competition. He was one of three American photographers chosen to document Russian nature preserves in Siberia. In 1998, he presented a slideshow documenting the impact of mining on our public lands at the National Press Club in Washington DC for the Sierra Club to support the Clinton administration's efforts to reform the antiquated 1872 Mining Law.

Nita began her photographic career documenting her work fighting wildfires in northern California and later as a National Park Ranger on Alcatraz. In 1986, Nita had her first major exhibit, "The Children of the Tenderloin." This documentary project launched her career and directed her focus toward creating healthy communities. The series received extensive media coverage and showed her first-hand the power of photographic storytelling. Over the next 17 years, she produced and created portraits for six major public art projects celebrating the Bay Area's diverse communities.

Their work has been featured in NBC-TV, KQED-TV, Time, Mother Jones, and Sierra magazines, the New York Times, Washington Post, San Francisco Chronicle and the Los

To join the program visit our

[Monthly Speaker webpage](#)

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

Notes from the Field Sep - Oct 2022 by Dave Pereksta

September and October are the peak of southbound migration through Ventura County and this year provided a lot of excitement for local birders with a number of rare and uncommon species being found across the county. An **American Golden-Plover** was on the sod fields at Arnold and Casper Roads 23-30 Oct (LT et al.) and a **Pacific Golden-Plover** was on the sod along Arnold Road 16-25 Oct (MB). As many as four **Stilt Sandpipers** were on the Oxnard Plain on 2-18 Sep (DP). **Sabine's Gulls** are rare migrants onshore so ones at Lake Casitas on 30 Sep (SC & LF) and Lake Piru 6-11 Oct (TT) were notable. A **Flesh-footed Shearwater** was in the Santa Barbara Channel off Ventura on 5 Oct (JB). A **Masked Booby** was on Anacapa Island 1-11 Oct (DP, JB, JF & m obs.) and a **Red-footed Booby** was at Anacapa on 27 Sep (JB). Individual **Neotropic Cormorants** continued in Fillmore through 15 Sep and at Lake Sherwood through 18 Oct. Now rare in the county, two **Cattle Egrets** were on the Oxnard Plain on 24 Sep (DP).

Individual **Broad-winged Hawks** were over Oxnard on 7 Oct (JB) and over the Red Mountain Fire Road on 8 Oct (PG). Individual **Swainson's Hawks** were over the Oxnard Plain on 9 Sep (SS & GA), over the Ventura River on 18 Oct (PG), and over Mount Pinos on 29 Oct (DP). A **Zone-tailed Hawk** was over Sulphur Mountain Road 12-24 Oct (MB, AB) and possibly the same bird was over Ojai on 18 Oct (LLG) and 25 Oct (EBC).

A **Williamson's Sapsucker** was at the Chucupate Campground on 4 Oct (JV) and another was in Thousand Oaks on 16 Oct (GR). A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was at Wheeler Canyon Road on 22 Oct (KK) and a **Red-naped Sapsucker** was at Lake Casitas 16-30 Oct (LLG & SK). A **Tropical Kingbird** was in Ventura on 11 Sep (AS) and another was at Arnold Road on 16 Oct (AM).

A **Blue-headed Vireo** was at Valle Lindo Park 30 Sep-2 Oct (JM & DP) constituting the first record in the county in 21 years. A **Plumbeous Vireo** was on Pine Mountain on 24 Sep (KS), in a yard in Thousand Oaks 2-5 Oct (GR) and another was at Rancho Simi Park 27-29 Oct (PR). A **Red-eyed Vireo** was at the Ventura Settling Ponds on 18 Oct (WB) and a dead one was found in Camarillo on 4 Oct (JM). **Pinyon Jays** invaded our local mountains this fall starting with two at Valle Vista Campground on 7 Sep (MH) where the species may breed, then growing to as many as 100 on Mount Pinos 12-31 Oct (BK et al.). A **Verdin** continued in a Simi Valley backyard through 25 Sep. A **Purple Martin** was at the Ventura Settling Ponds on 25 Oct (SK) and as many as three **Bank Swallows** were over the Oxnard Plain on 18-25 Sep (DP). **American Dippers** continued in Santa Paula Canyon through 28 Oct.

A **Gray Catbird** was in Ventura 21-31 Oct (RM). A **Sage Thrasher** was at Ormond Beach on 29 Oct (SS). As many as two **Red-throated Pipits** were seen on the sod fields along Arnold Road 18-29 Oct (SS, MB). A **Lapland Longspur** was on the sod fields along Arnold Road 23-27 Oct (SS) and a **Thick-billed Longspur** was on the Arnold Road sod 24-25 Oct (MB). **Clay-colored Sparrows** included individuals at Canada Larga Road on 29 Sep (SS) and Oxnard College on 18 Oct (NA). A **Swamp Sparrow** was at Oxnard College on 29 Oct (NA). The only **Bobolink** report of the season was on the sod along Arnold Road on 23 Oct (LT et al.).

Northern Waterthrushes included one at Point Mugu 13 Sep (MR), one at Sycamore Canyon 16 Sep (SS), and perhaps two were at the Ventura Settling Ponds 13 Sep-29 Oct (SS). **Black-and-white Warblers** included individuals at the Data School on 25 Sep (SN), Sycamore Canyon on 30 Sep (RB), Valle Lindo Park 2-16 Oct (SH), Pitts Ranch Park on 27 Oct (DP), and as many as

two at the Ventura Settling Ponds 16 Sep-25 Oct (MB et al.). **Tennessee Warblers** were reported widely during September and October including individuals at Matilija Lake 10-11 Sep (LLG et al), Bob Kildee Park on 18 Sep (JM), Oxnard College on 28 Sep (SC), east Ventura 2-3 Oct (DP), Wildwood Park on 6 Oct (BCB & SB), Gonzales Road tamarisks 7-23 Oct (DP), McGrath State Beach on 9 Oct (SK), Bubbling Springs Park 14-23 Oct (NA), Oxnard College on 21-22 Oct (NA) and 26 Oct (SC), Camarillo Ranch on 25 Oct (NA), and the Ventura Settling Ponds on 29 Oct (NB). A **Lucy's Warbler** was in Camarillo on 25 Oct (NA). Individual **Virginia's Warblers** were at Camino Real Park on 2 Oct (SS), Conejo Community Park on 3 Oct (RS), and the Gonzales Road tamarisks 7-8 Oct (DM). **American Redstarts** included individuals at Matilija Lake on 11 Sep (EBC & TM) and 25 Sep (LLG), one in Sycamore Canyon on 16 Sep (SS), individuals at Bubbling Springs Park on 7 Oct (JB) and 14 Oct (NA), two in tipus along Posada Drive in Oxnard 10-12 Oct (MB), and one at the Ventura Settling Ponds 20-21 Oct (JM). A **Northern Parula** was at Rincon Creek 5-9 Oct (SS). Individual **Magnolia Warblers** were at the Ventura Settling Ponds 10-15 Oct (MB), Point Mugu on 12 Oct (MR), and Ventura 19-22 Oct (ETG). A **Blackburnian Warbler** was at the Gonzales Road tamarisks on 7 Oct (DM) and another was reported in Simi Valley on 25 Sep (DK & CK). A **Chestnut-sided Warbler** was at Bob Kildee Park 27 Sep-4 Oct (JM) and another was at Conejo Community Park on 11 Oct (RS). A **Black-throated Blue Warbler** was at the Gonzales Road tamarisks 7-9 Oct (DP). A **Pine Warbler** was in Oxnard 30-31 Oct (NA). Ventura County's first mainland **Yellow-throated Warbler** was at Valle Lindo Park 30 Sep-2 Oct (JM). A **Prairie Warbler** was at Oxnard College 21-22 Oct (NA).

Summer Tanagers included one at Lake Casitas 7-10 Sep (LLG & SK), two continuing at Sycamore Canyon through 10 Sep, and another continuing at Matilija Lake through 25 Sep. A **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was at the Laguna Road Tamarisks on 16 Sep (TT) and another was at the Agromin Plant along Arnold Road 16-21 Oct (JA). A **Dickcissel** was in a Camarillo Yard 4-9 Oct (LH).

Thank you to those who reported sightings during this period. If you have any questions about local birds or have a good one to report (please no messages about nuisance birds) e-mail David Pereksta at <pereksta@pacbell.net>

Good Birding,
David Pereksta

Observers: John Apperson, Noah Arthur, Glenn Austin, Joel Barrett, Marc Better, Mario Borunda, Wm Box, Nathan Bradford, Elizabeth Brewer Chouinard, Andrea Bruce, Ryan Burnett, Stephen Bylin, Bonnie Clarfield-Bylin, Sammy Cowell, Peter Gaede, Linnea Hall, Susan Haymond, Sangeet Khalsa, Crystal Klabunde, Don Klabunde, Karl Krause, Bill Krick, Lukas Le Grice, Thomas Maloney, Jerry Maryniuk, Dan Maxwell, Robert McMorran, Ava Molnar, John Mueller, Sally Noone, David Pereksta, Peter Robertshaw, Griffin Rohrer, Martin Ruane, Kirill Shtengel, Spencer Seale, Roger Swanson, Antal Szijj, Tina Tan, Elisa Taylor-Godwin, Luke Tiller, John Vanderpoel

Become a VAS Volunteer

Do you like to go birding? Interested in science and advocating for birds?
Then VAS needs you!

We are looking for volunteers to help lead our monthly field trips. Field trip leaders guide participants around the field trip location. They help the group identify and log the birds we observe. You don't have to be an expert birder, just excited to share the joy of birding. If you're interested, email outreach@venturaaudubon.org and put 'Field Trip Leader' in the subject line.

We are also looking for volunteers to join our Conservation Committee. The Conservation Committee is a diverse group that is dedicated to advocating for birds and their habitat in Ventura. They meet every other month to discuss issues that impact bird habitat, review environmental impacts from

development and conduct outreach with local officials. If you're interested in joining the Conservation Committee, email outreach@venturaaudubon.org and put 'Conservation Committee' in the subject line.

Other Audubon Events on the Central Coast



SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON SOCIETY

Program: Unforgettable Birds of Brazil

Date: Wednesday, Jan 23 7PM

Location: Fleischmann Auditorium, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History 2559 Puesta del Sol, Santa Barbara, CA 93105

Program Speakers: Satie Airamé, Jeff Chemnick & Raphael E. F. Santos

Home to 1,971 bird species, Brazil is a birding paradise with more than half of the species found in South America. Many of the world's most interesting bird species live in Brazil's patchwork of habitats, including more than 260 endemics that occur nowhere else on Earth. Some are colorful and gaudy birds such as parrots, macaws, and toucans. Others are elegant, glittering gems such as hummingbirds, jacamars, cotingas, and manakins.

Click this [link](#) for more details

Thank you to our supporters!

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

Grants

- National Foundation of Fish and Wildlife (NFWF)

Support Ventura Audubon Society

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

Join

Donate ONLINE

amazonsmile

VOLUNTEER: Fill out this SURVEY FORM



[Contact Us](#)

Visit our website

Ventura Audubon Society | P.O. Box 24198, Ventura, CA 93002

[Unsubscribe cynthia.hartley@venturaaudubon.org](mailto:cynthia.hartley@venturaaudubon.org)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by contact@venturaaudubon.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!