

The California Condor

Ventura Audubon Society
February 2021 Volume 62, Number 7
A Chapter of the National Audubon Society
venturaaudubon.org

Call Notes

by Cynthia Hartley
VAS Executive Director
Ventura Audubon Society

It's hard to believe, but snowy plover nesting season is just a little over one month away! We have nearly wrapped up our reports and post-season meetings with USFWS, CDFW and all of the other sites that monitor nesting snowy plovers and least terns. We have posted our 2020 reports on our website for [Ormond Beach](#) and [Hollywood Beach](#). As we set our sites on the 2021 nesting season, we are repairing and replacing habitat fencing and signs, beginning the hiring process for student summer interns, and preparing our gear for a new season. We are also reaching out to local agencies and land owners to secure a safer season for nesting plovers and terns. These activities all come under the umbrella of our Shorebird Recovery program.



Alecia Smith

This month we are announcing a special fundraiser in the spring to benefit our Shorebird Recovery program. In past years we've held our Birdathon fundraiser in April, which raises money for general funds which allows us to run the chapter. Due to delays from the pandemic, for the first time in our history we held it in October last year. It was such a success that we plan to continue a fall Birdathon this year. As we ready for snowy plover nesting season, we recognize that our Shorebird Recovery program has grown and needs better funding. So, our fundraising team has been hard at work building a fun (virtual) event. See the "save the date" announcement in this newsletter. The March newsletter, which coincides with the start of nesting season, will have lots of news and information about our Shorebird Recovery program and the April fundraiser.

In other news, we are still carefully waiting out the COVID pandemic before we resume our most popular activity, field trips! Besides protecting habitat for birds, we believe

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sharing and fostering the joy of birding is a fundamental part of what we do. We are optimistic that group field trips are not too far off. In the meantime, we continue to share a variety of online activities to help you connect with bird activities and other birders online. We also have volunteer opportunities for anyone who would like to help our chapter work to protect birds and their habitat.

Raise the Roost for the VAS Shorebird Recovery Program



photo by Alecia Smith

Save the Date! April 3rd & 4th Fundraiser

Ventura Audubon will host a spring fundraiser to benefit our Shorebird Recovery Program, coinciding with World Birding Day in April. Our goal is to raise \$5,000 dollars to fund critical supplies and nest monitoring for the conservation and protection of local nesting Western Snowy Plover and CA Least Terns. Both species are State and Federally listed as either endangered or threatened.

The fundraiser will include a silent auction with items from companies like Vortex and Hydroflask, and experiences like a virtual wine and truffle tasting! We have also scheduled conservationists to present, including a presentation on Fairy Terns and another on bird photography. More to come! Watch for details in our March newsletter.

Donation of auction items are still being accepted, are tax deductible, and very much appreciated. You can also help by donating your time to assist with fundraiser logistics. Please contact Kat at kat.whitehouse@venturaaudubon.org for more information.

Conservation Committee Update

One of our chapter's missions is to protect bird habitat, and as we face the specter of climate change this is becoming increasingly urgent. Our chapter Conservation Committee meets every other month to discuss these issues and take action when necessary. Usually action comes in the form of written comment letters, attendance at meetings and public comment, newspaper articles and outreach to the public and policy makers.

This winter we directly submitted or signed on to the following letters and articles:

1. [Opposition to Reyes Point Logging](#) submitted to the US Forest Service
2. Letter to LA Regional Water Quality Board to [enforce their MS4 permit](#) in order to reduce plastic pollution in our waterways
3. [Opposition to Arctic Refuge Drilling](#) submitted to the Bureau of Land Management, Alaska State Office
4. City of Port Hueneme General Plan Update [comment letter](#); submitted to City Council of Port Hueneme, advocating the city become better stewards of Ormond Beach by enforcing existing ordinances that protects sensitive species and rare dune habitat
5. [Comment letter](#) to USFWS on the Manzanita Wind Power Incidental Take Permit for Condors
6. Opinion article in the VC Star, written by committee member Jan Stevens: [Bird Abuse in Time of Pandemic](#) (pdf) - Direct link to [VC Star op ed](#)

If you are interested in helping with local conservation efforts to protect bird habitat, please join us at an upcoming committee meeting.

To find out more, please contact Cynthia at ed@venturauadubon.org.

VAS Speaker Program: 7pm on Feb 9, 2021

Birds of California Photography

Speaker: Brent Paull
Title: Wildlife Photographer

Time and Date: Feb 9, 2021 at 7:00 pm

To join this presentation, follow this link to our "[Monthly Speakers](#)" web page and click on provided link (look for the Watch Here button)

[Program Description](#)

Brent Paull has had unique photography experiences that have created a wealth of knowledge for him to draw on in his photography. He has shot air-to-air and air-to-ground in both planes and helicopters. He has shot for numerous government agencies, including: the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Forest Service, and the State of Utah. He has shot custom brochure images for snowmobiling, hunting, horseback riding, fishing, hot-air ballooning, and other "people in nature" type photography. Some of his commercial assignments have included the still photography for Hollywood commercials being filmed in Utah.

[Speaker Biography](#)

Brent Paull was born in 1959 in Redwood City, near San Francisco - and raised in Gilroy, California. He has lived throughout Montana, Colorado, Utah and California. Today, he spends most of his time leading photo safaris around the American West and teaching photography. His wife, Jacqueline, and his sons (with their wives and children) have all spent time exploring the vast reaches of the American West.

Did you miss a previous program, or just want to re-visit one of them?

Speaker Programs: Other Audubon Chapters



**SANTA BARBARA
AUDUBON SOCIETY**

Estuaries - California's Marine Nurseries

Speaker: Andrea Jones

Audubon California, Director of Bird Conservation

Wednesday, February 24th 2021

7:30pm-9pm

[Link to program info on SBAS website](#)

Program Description

Something special happens when a river meets an ocean. Freshwater rivers and streams flow from inland to mix with salty ocean water, creating a unique habitat called an estuary. Estuaries, and the wetlands and bays that surround them, are some of the most productive areas in the world for birds, other wildlife, and humans. Presenter Andrea Jones will focus on California's coasts and estuaries, which are part of the Pacific Flyway-the migratory bird highway stretching from the Arctic to Patagonia, supporting nearly a billion birds.



Speaker Biography

Andrea Jones is Director of Bird Conservation for Audubon California. For the past 13 years, she has worked with staff and the network of Audubon chapters across the state to implement conservation projects at high priority Important Bird Areas. In particular, she has focused on leading Audubon's conservation efforts along the coast and in estuaries, focusing on restoration, advocacy and engagement. Her work has also included providing science expertise and negotiating conservation agreements at saline lakes, including Owens Lake and Salton Sea. She oversees efforts in priority bird species and serves as the spokeswoman for bird conservation across California. Prior to California, Andrea worked at Massachusetts Audubon where she served as the Director of the Coastal Waterbird and Grassland Bird Programs



Morro Coast Audubon Society
Serving San Luis Obispo County Since 1966

**Climate Smart Solutions for Grassland Birds:
Conservation Ranching California**

Speaker: Matt Allshouse
Audubon California, Conservation Ranching Program Manager

Wednesday, February 15th 2021
7:00 - 8:30pm

[Link to program info on MCAS website](#)

Program Description

“Grassland bird conservation is inextricably linked to management practices on millions of acres of rangelands, the vast majority of which are privately owned. Significant grassland habitat enhancement can only be achieved through cooperative approaches that work with ranchers that live and work on these lands. Audubon’s Conservation Ranching Program uses an innovative, market-based approach to connect conservation-conscious consumers to ranchers who employ bird-friendly management practices in raising their livestock. The program addresses loss in ecosystem function and health through the conservation of focal bird species and the habitat they depend upon. It incentivizes bird-friendly livestock management practices, emphasizing regenerative grazing approaches that improve soil health, diversify habitat structure, and ensure environmental sustainability that benefits pollinators and other grassland wildlife.”



Speaker Biography

Matt Allshouse came to Audubon California from Wyoming and has been the Conservation Ranching Program Manager for the state since September 2019. As a rangeland ecologist, he has 13 years of experience associated with land policy, management, and science. Previously, Matt served as Ranch Manager for Antelope Springs Land and Cattle in Wyoming, as a Biologist for the Peregrine Fund in Belize and Guatemala directing conservation field research, and as Ecologist with the consulting firm Trihydro Corporation focusing on restoration ecology. Matt holds a dual Bachelor’s degree in Environment and Natural Resources, and Rangeland Ecology and Watershed Management from University of Wyoming.

Classes for Birders



Bird ID Class: The Subtlety of Sparrows

by Frank DeMartino
Saturday, February 13, 2021
2-3pm

[Zoom Link](#)

[Facebook link](#)

Class Description

This class will focus on those pesky "little brown

birds" that can be found on our feeders and in our yards: Sparrows! Inspired by our visiting Lincoln's Sparrow, Abe, we have decided to go ahead and try our hand at a sparrow ID class! We'll take a look at some of the many sparrow species that winter in our area and talk about how to tell them apart. It is possible, we promise!



Nesting Presentation

by Frank DeMartino

- Saturday, February 20, 2021; [Zoom link](#), [Facebook event link](#)
- Sunday, February 28, 2021; [Zoom link](#), [Facebook event link](#)

Both classes are from 2-3pm

Class Description

Nesting season is underway for some of our local birds and many more are getting ready to start! If your birds are eating you out of house and home, there's a good chance they are getting ready to nest. We will talk about what birds nest in our area, what foods you can provide to help them along, what sort of nesting materials are good to offer, tree trimming and nesting boxes!



Virtual Bird Festival in Kansas

Take part in this year's Wings & Wetlands Festival from wherever you are!

Virtual Wings & Wetlands Birding Festival

The Wings & Wetland Festival, normally held in Kansas, will be a virtual event this year and will take place on **March 24 - 26, 2021**.

Registration is \$20. Proceeds from the Wings & Wetlands Festival will benefit conservation efforts at Cheyenne Bottoms and Quivira National Wildlife Refuge.



Through a series of Zoom classes, we will bring you leading experts on birds, wetlands, and conservation messages and resources to enhance your next wetland visit. Featured presenters include Kenn Kaufman (field Guide author, naturalist, and artist), Alvaro Jaramillo biologist, conservationist, guide), Sharon 'The Bird Chick' Stiteler aka (Birder, speaker, author) and others. Topics of presentations will include the link of Kansas wetlands to bird migrations, the psychology of birding, humorous birding stories, bird

identification, Kansas wetlands, Kansas raptors and SmartPhone birding.

Information and registration at <http://www.wingsandwetlands.com>

JOIN US VIRTUALLY

FOR THIS ONE-OF-A-KIND CONFERENCE FOR BIRD WATCHING

March 24 -26, 2021
Virtual Conference via Zoom
www.WingsandWetlands.com

JOIN RENOWNED INDUSTRY EXPERTS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT BIRD WATCHING

FEATURED SPEAKERS



KENN KAUFMAN **ALVARO JARAMILLO**
SHARON STITELER **BOB GRESS**
*Speakers are subject to change prior to the event

WINGS & WETLANDS FESTIVAL



The Wings & Wetlands Festival is going virtual for the 2021 conference! We will bring you industry-leading experts on bird watching with resources that will improve your identification skills and bird knowledge.

The Wings & Wetlands Festival will take place on March 24 - 26, 2021. Unlock the interactive series of zoom classes and resources that will be yours to keep with your registration.

Proceeds from the Wings & Wetlands Festival will benefit conservation efforts at Cheyenne Bottoms and Quivira National Wildlife Refuge.

Registration is \$20. Tickets are available now.
www.WingsandWetlands.com



VAS Needs You! Volunteer Opportunities

The core of everyone non-profit is their volunteer team. This is a fun way to get to know the chapter and our programs, use your skills to make a difference for birds, develop new skills or just meet other birders!

If you would like to get involved in new ways, please review this month's featured volunteer positions. All of these jobs can be done remotely as well.

- **Social Media** - Lots of different opportunities (pick your favorite):
 - Set up Facebook events
 - Help curate content for Facebook and/or Instagram
 - Help brainstorm a TikTok account
 - Develop content for our Twitter account
- **Newsletter** - Help with monthly columns and content
- **Membership** - We are re-organizing our membership records, so we are looking for someone who has a knack for spreadsheets
- **Conservation Co-chair** - You don't have to be conservation expert! Our Conservation Chair needs assistance with organizational and program tasks. It's a great way to learn about bird conservation!
- **Board Membership** - Help guide the VAS chapter. Our nomination committee is working on our 2021-22 board list for our May Annual Meeting. Duties include bi-monthly meetings and voting on items that help guide chapter policy.

Please reach out if you are interested, or are just curious to learn more about these opportunities! Contact volunteer@venturaaudubon.org

Thank you to our supporters!

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

Grants

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife and United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Endangered Species Act Section 6 Grant
- National Foundation of Fish and Wildlife (NFWF)
- National Audubon Society, Audubon in Action Grant

Support Ventura Audubon Society

Please consider VAS for your donations.
Ventura Audubon Society is a registered tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization.

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[Contact Us](#)