

The California Condor

Ventura Audubon Society
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A Chapter of the National Audubon Society
venturaaudubon.org

Call Notes

by Vince Kinsch
President

March is here! Cynthia Hartley and the shorebird recovery team have been working hard to prepare for the upcoming Western Snowy Plover and California Least Tern nesting season. Her update is below. We are also introducing a brand new field trip destination this month, the Ventura Botanic Gardens! Thank you to all who renewed their membership and to our new members! Have a great March and we hope to see you at our March program or field trips.

[Membership Webpage](#)

[Join VAS via PayPal](#)

Shorebird Recovery Program Update

by Cynthia Hartley, Shorebird Recovery Program Lead

Snowy Plover Nesting Season is Here!

The month of March is the beginning of nesting season for western snowy plovers on our Ventura County beaches. These birds are among the smallest shorebirds in California and they make their nests in the sand above the high tide line in small indentations called “scrapes.” Their perfectly camouflaged eggs blend into the sand, making them extremely difficult to spot.

We have already found birds establishing territories and pairing off on Ormond Beach, and we look forward to welcoming their cute cotton ball chicks soon. Our Shorebird Recovery team has been working diligently to create a safe place for these federally threatened birds so they can raise their families. A big thank you to [Ojai C.R.E.W.](#) for their hard work pounding over 400 posts and stringing 1.5 miles of mesh and cable!



One of last year's nesting snowy plovers, photo by Alex Vaca



Alecia Smith and Alex Vaca, both with CREW, stringing mesh on T-posts to protect snowy plover nesting areas

Annual Habitat Fencing Installed at Ormond Beach

Thanks to all who donated during Raise the Roost and throughout the year to our Shorebird Recovery Fund. Your generosity funded the purchase of 213 fence posts, 1,320 feet of mesh fencing and 4,000 feet of cable. This material along with our salvaged fence materials from last year was used to fence over 100 acres of Snowy Plover and Least Tern habitat. Nesting season is just starting and we have 6 months of nest monitoring and habitat protection to go, so if you'd like to contribute to the purchase of monitoring equipment and supplies, please visit our donation [page](#), or join our effort as a volunteer Beach Naturalist by taking one of our training classes. Email our outreach coordinator Alecia at outreach@venturaaudubon.org to join our next training workshop on April 15th. See the article below for info on our upcoming annual "Raise the Roost" fundraiser.



From the entire Shorebird Recovery team, THANK YOU!!



SAVE THE DATE: RAISE THE ROOST

When: Saturday, April 29th Noon to 5pm
Where: Ventura Coast Brewing Company,
6 S Oak St, Ventura, CA

Raise the Roost is our annual fundraiser for the Shorebird Recovery Program. Proceeds benefit the Shorebird Recovery Program and the continued conservation work by VAS Biologists for threatened and endangered shorebirds on Ventura County Beaches. As we did last year, the Auction will be live at [Ventura Coast Brewing Company](http://VenturaCoastBrewingCompany.com) and online. We will have some exciting items for the auction and a new Shorebird Recovery beer glass!

We Need Silent Auction Items!

Do you know a local business that would be interested in donating a product, service or experience, or do you own a business that would be interested? Contact outreach@venturaaudubon.org or kat.whitehouse@venturaaudubon.org for more information on donating to our silent auction.

Ventura Audubon Young Birder Program

The VAS Young Birders Club led by Biologist Kat Whitehouse, Outreach Coordinator Alecia Smith and Youth Liaison Max Breshears, provides a community for those young and young at heart to share their enthusiasm for birds and their habitat. Birders, mostly under the age of 18, meet one to two times per month for birding, photography and exploration at various sites around Ventura County. The club provides a welcoming and fun



environment for youth to interact with their peers, share their interest in birding and just generally have an awesome time. VAS Young Birders will also join VAS field trips to gain knowledge from our more experienced birders.

The average age of participants is 13 and they come from Summerland to Thousand Oaks! If you would like more information, know a young birder in Ventura County who would like to be a part of this new VAS program or are interested in becoming a mentor, please reach out to the Young Birders Club on Instagram @vas_youngbirdersclub or email outreach@venturaaudubon.org. Type "Young Birder's" in the subject line.

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 to 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.

March Field Trips

Ojai Meadows

Friday, March 17
Meeting Time: 8:30am



This beautiful preserve is a birding hotspot and includes a restored wetland and native plantings. Target birds: Western Bluebirds, Sora, White-tailed Kites, Western Meadowlark, Merlin, Lark Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow and White-crowned Sparrows.

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

Ventura Botanical Gardens

Saturday March 25th
Meeting Time: 10:00am



Beautiful garden with walking trails throughout. The lovely plants on display attract many local pollinators including a variety of bird species such as Costa's Hummingbird, Hooded Orioles, Nuttall's Woodpecker, and many more.

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

March 2023 Speaker Program



The 6 Steps to Starting a Conservation Photography Project

Speaker: Jaymi Meimpuch

Date: Tuesday March 14th

Time: 7pm PST

Via Zoom, see link below.

Program Description:

Fired up about conservation photography and ready to dive in, but have no idea where to begin? There are six stages of starting a photo project idea, with each stage moving you from just a vague idea in your head, to taking action, to producing something tangible. Learn step-by-step how to find your next perfect photo project idea and launch your project **WITHOUT** the overwhelm, educrastination, or falling into the spiral of second-guessing.

Speaker Bio:

Jaymi Heimbuch is a wildlife conservation photographer, Photo Editor for Ranger Rick and Ranger Rick Jr Magazines, founder of Conservation Visual Storytellers Academy, and is the host of Impact: The Conservation Photography Podcast. Her photography and writing has appeared in outlets such as Audubon, National Wildlife Magazine, BBC Wildlife, bioGraphic, and National Geographic.



Jaymi is passionate about creating step-by-step, results-driven training and coaching to conservation-focused photographers so that they find success and fulfillment in their work.

To join the program visit our

[Monthly Speaker webpage](#)

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

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. The next meeting is April 4th. If you are interested in joining the Conservation Committee, email outreach@venturaaudubon.org and put 'Conservation Committee' in the subject line.



Snowy plover dad and chick at Ormond Beach taken last summer by intern Alex Vaca

Other Audubon Events on the Central Coast



Morro Coast Audubon Society
Serving San Luis Obispo County Since 1966

Program: A Virtual Tour of Pacific Wildlife Care

Date: Monday, March 20 at 7pm

Location: Via Zoom

Program Speaker: Claudia Duckworth, Pacific Wildlife Care Volunteer

Pacific Wildlife Care (PWC) is San Luis Obispo County's only licensed rehabilitation center that cares for injured birds, mammals, and reptiles. PWC also maintains a wildlife hotline that the public can call to report distressed wildlife-injured, sick, orphaned-and to receive information about local wildlife. In this presentation, longtime PWC volunteer Claudia Duckworth will show us what is happening behind the scenes at the rehab center, and will explain how the animals received by the center are treated, cared for, and rehabilitated.

Click this [link](#) for more details.



**SANTA BARBARA
AUDUBON SOCIETY**

Program: Something to Crow About: Stories and Biology of Crows, Ravens, Jays and MAGpies

Date: Wednesday, March 22 at 7:30pm

Location: Via Zoom

Program Speaker: Dr Kaeli Swift

Corvids, including crows, ravens, jays and magpies, are found on nearly every continent and many thrive in human dominated environments. They have influenced art and literature throughout history, and whether they inspire love or hate, they have certainly impacted the hearts and minds of the humans who share their space. Because American crows are so common, it may be easy to overlook the fact that they are very intelligent and have complex behaviors and social structures. Dr. Kaeli Swift will explore commonly asked questions about crows, how crows have co-evolved with people, and what crows and other corvids can teach us about the nature of intelligence.

Click this [link](#) for more details

Wild Birds Unlimited Ventura Events



Beginner Bird ID Class - Spring Edition March 18th 2pm PST on ZOOM

Struggling to identify sparrows? Frustrated with finches? Are there flashes of yellow going through your yard that you wish you could name? 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. This talk will include common western and eastern species!

Click this [link](#) to sign up

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)
- Patagonia--\$10,000 grant

Support Ventura Audubon Society

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

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Donate ONLINE

VOLUNTEER: Fill out this SURVEY FORM



[Contact Us](#)

Visit our website

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