

The CALIFORNIA CONDOR

Ventura Audubon Society **JANUARY 2020** Volume 57, Number 14
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CONSERVATION NOTES **Bruce Schoppe, VP Conservation**

Recently, two conservation bills of local interest have advanced in the U.S. House of Representatives.

In late November, the House Committee on Natural Resources passed the **Central Coast Heritage Protection Act (H.R. 2199)**, heeding the call of Californians to safeguard some of the state's most unique public lands and rivers for future generations.

The **Central Coast Heritage Protection Act** is the product of years of discussion and negotiation involving business leaders, conservationists, elected officials, ranchers, mountain bikers, and other stakeholders interested in the use and well-being of these iconic lands. It would protect forests, grasslands, and wild rivers across the region by safeguarding approximately 245,000 acres of wilderness, creating two scenic areas encompassing roughly 35,000 acres, and designating 159 miles of wild and scenic rivers in the Los Padres National Forest and the Carrizo Plain National Monument.

The **Central Coast Heritage Protection Act** now awaits a vote by the full House and a hearing in the Senate.

More recently, on December 12, 2019, the U.S. Senate Committee on Natural Resources passed the **Rim of the Valley Corridor Preservation Act (S.774, Feinstein D-CA)**. The Rim of the Valley Corridor Protection Act would require the National Park Service to work to protect 130,000 acres from the San Gabriel Mtns of LA county across into the Simi Hills and Santa Susana Mtns of Ventura county and on into the coastal Santa Monica Mtns, adding the Rim of the Valley Corridor to the Santa Monica Mountains Recreation Area.

A natural wildlife corridor which would allow for passage recreational use as well as historic preservation and educational use.

The bill passed the House Natural Resources Committee in early December and now moves towards full House and Senate votes, likely in January 2020.

Also, two recent reports on threats to birds resulting from climate change have gained attention. In late summer, Cornell Lab of Ornithology released a report reporting that nearly three billion birds across North America had been lost since 1970. The report published in **Science** in September 2019 was followed by Audubon's update of an earlier study highlighting bird species threatened by climate change: *Survival By Degrees*, 389 North American bird species are vulnerable to extinction from climate change.

We'll have an opportunity to hear from Dr. Kenneth Rosenberg, the Cornell reports lead author. The **UCSB Arts & Lectures Thematic Learning** event will take place at on Wednesday, January 29, 2020, at Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History Fleischmann Auditorium at 7:30 PM. Sponsored by Santa Barbara Audubon Society and others, Dr. Rosenberg will discuss the analysis that led to this sobering conclusion, what the loss of common birds signals about the health of our environment and what we can do to reverse these trends and restore bird populations.

JANUARY PROGRAM

Protecting Wildlife and Wild Places...James Hines

7:30 p.m. Tuesday, January 14th, Poinsettia Pavilion, 3451 Foothill Road, Ventura



The program will cover some of the Sierra Club's work locally protecting the Los Padres National Forest, Channel Islands National Park and Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary. He will also discuss the Sierra Club's work on protecting mountain lions, banning wildlife killing rodenticides (rat poison) and protecting local wildlife corridors. And touch on some of the work he does as part of the Sierra Club National Public Lands Team which works to protect national public lands units in the west.

Biography

James Hines lives in Ventura and is the 5th generation of his family to be born, raised and live in Ventura county. He was born on his family's 40,000-acre ranch which today is part of Lake Casitas. He was born there before the dam and lake were created.

He is the former chair of the Sierra Club Los Padres Chapter (Ventura and Santa Barbara counties) and currently serves as the Los Padres Chapter conservation director. He has worked on the Sierra Club National Public Land Team and also on the Sierra Club Protect Wild Utah campaign.

He is, currently, the team leader of the Sierra Club's California/Nevada Wildlife Team, a team made up of Sierra Club staff and volunteer activists who develop and carry out wildlife protection campaigns for the Sierra Club in the two states as well as marine mammals and marine species offshore of California.



JANUARY FIELD TRIPS...Adele Fergusson

Beginners are welcome on all field trips. Light drizzle does not necessarily cancel trips, but heavier rain will. If in doubt, please call the trip leader. For all trips, please wear appropriate clothing (layers are suggested), comfortable shoes, and bring snacks, water, hats, sunscreen, binoculars and field guides.

A few reminders about birding etiquette: Stay behind the leader, move quietly, ask questions, listen to what people are pointing out. When socializing, stay behind the group. If you have any questions you may contact me at fieldtrips@venturaudubon.org Adele Fergusson

Saturday, January 4, 2020 Christmas Bird Count

If you would like to participate, contact Frank DeMartino at (frank@colynx.com) or (856) 906-8733.

Sunday Jan 12, 2020, Work Day Hedrick Ranch Nature Area 8 a.m.

Leader: Sandy Hedrick 805-340-0478

Arrive at 8:00 for self-guided birding which usually yields some interesting birds. Work from 9am – noon. Long pants and boots or closed shoes are required. Bring water, gloves & sun protection.

Directions: Take Hwy 126 to Santa Paula, 10th St. Exit. Go under freeway, rt. on Harvard, rt. on 12th and cross the S.C. River Bridge. Go 3.7 miles to 20395 S. Mountain Rd. Turn left onto the dirt road & follow it to the end (approx. ½ mile). Even a little rain can make the road impassable; if in doubt, call Sandy to check road condition

Monday, January 13, 2020 Camino Real Park 8:30 a.m.

Leader: Adele Fergusson 805-415-4304

Camino Real is a grassy park surrounded by pines and eucalyptus and is an excellent place to see birds. Target birds will include Red Shouldered Hawk, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Yellow Warbler and Townsend's Warbler.

Note Directions: We will meet outside the park and walk in. Take Telegraph Road toward Ventura College. Across from Ventura College, turn onto Estates, take a right on Aurora, go to the grass beltway across from the mobile home park. Park closest to the last house in the residential tract. We will start birding along the barranca and go into the park

Saturday January 18, 2020 Ventura Settling Ponds 8:30 a.m.

Leader: Linda Easter 818-519-2833

The settling ponds at the Ventura Harbor is a reliable place to find ducks, grebes, gulls and terns, as well as songbirds and raptors. We should hear Yellow Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warblers and Blue-gray gnatcatchers.

Directions: Take Harbor Blvd to Spinnaker Dr. and enter Ventura Harbor. The water treatment plant is on Angler, a left turn before Spinnaker curves to the right. Park either across the street from the entrance on Angler or in lot on right hand side of Spinnaker Dr. Use caution in crossing road at blind curve. Meet in front of gate.

Sunday January 26, 2020 Ormond Beach 8:00 a.m.

Leader: Tevin Schmitt 661-904-1563

Join us at this excellent coastal location, where we will look for a variety of waterfowl, such as Willets, Whimbrels, Black necked Stilts, Black bellied plovers and other interesting birds. We will also look for Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Peregrine Falcon, and Blue-Gray Gnatcatchers. Dress in layers, as the morning may be chilly. Please bring a scope if you have one.

Directions: Hwy 101 south and exit on Rice, turn right and continue to Hueneme Rd. Turn right on Hueneme Rd. After Olds Rd. take a left on Arnold and continue to the end of the road. Please note: Avoid leaving valuables in your car if you are parking it at the end of Arnold Rd. To carpool, meet at 7:50 a.m. at Carrow (which is closed) on Harbor Blvd. near Seaward, in the parking lot behind the closed restaurant next to the Chevron gas station.



NOTES FROM THE FIELD ...David Pereksta

The most exciting find of the month was a **Painted Redstart** at Arroyo Verde Park 21-26 Nov (AF & SD). It is likely that this bird will spend the winter at this date. Let's hope it stays for the Christmas Bird Count in early January. A **White-winged Dove** was also there on 26 Nov (KK).

Redheads included two at Point Mugu on 13 Nov (MR), three at Lake Sherwood on 12 Nov (MH), one at Conejo Creek Park 19-24 Nov (MH), and one at the Ventura Settling Ponds on 23 Nov (m. obs). **Common Goldeneyes** were reported from a few locations including one at Mugu Lagoon on 15 Nov (MR), one at the Santa Clara River estuary 21-27 Nov (SK), and seven at Lake Piru on 29 Nov (TB & BO'C). The **Red-necked Grebe** continued off Point Mugu through 22 Nov. Two **Mountain Plovers** on the sod fields along Casper Road on 2 Nov (NA) were the only ones reported this fall. The **Ruff** continued at Point Mugu through 25 Nov and a **Stilt Sandpiper** and four **Red Knots** were also found there on 25 Nov (DP). Gulls of note at the Santa Clara River estuary included a **Franklin's Gull** on 21 Nov (SK) and an **Iceland Gull** on 27 Nov (DP). Two **American Bitterns** were at Lake Casitas on 4 Nov (LF). A new high count for **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** in the state was established when 61 were documented at Point Mugu on 22 Nov (DP, MR et al.). **Reddish Egrets** continued at Mugu Lagoon with as many as four through 25 Nov.

Ferruginous Hawks included one at Canada Larga on 11 Nov (KW) and one at Point Mugu 13-22 Nov (MR). A subspecies rarely seen in our region; a "**Harlan's**" **Red-tailed Hawk** was at Point Mugu on 13 Nov (JMu). The **Zone-tailed Hawk** was seen again in Ojai on the eastern side of the valley on 17 Nov (JG et al.)

Lewis's Woodpeckers appear to be on the move this year with as many as eight at Canada Larga 4-17 Nov (m. obs.), one at Sulphur Mountain on 15 Nov (JMu), and a continuing bird at Lake Casitas through 15 Nov. A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was at a yard in Fillmore 6-30 Nov (KO) where it will likely spend the winter. A **Red-naped Sapsucker** was in Santa Paula Canyon on 12 Nov (BH). The **Tropical Kingbird** continued along Calleguas Creek through 4 Nov. **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** continued along Rincon Creek through 8 Nov. Three **Golden-crowned Kinglets**, two **Townsend's Solitaires**, and a **Red Crossbill** were on Mount Pinos on 1 Nov (DP). A **Varied Thrush** was at Matilija Creek on 24 Nov (JG & RR). Anacapa Island hosted a **Sage Thrasher** on 4 Nov and a **Chestnut-collared Longspur** 3-4 Nov (JH). A **Swamp Sparrow** continued near the Conejo Mountain Cemetery through 6 Nov with a second one found there on 5 Nov (DP). A **Black-and-white Warbler** was at Pleasant Valley Park on 8 Nov and may have been continuing from October (DB).

Unseasonal records of birds we normally expect to see in our local mountains during the summer included a **Hammond's Flycatcher** in Somis on 5 Nov (KO), a **Dusky Flycatcher** at Matilija Creek 22-24 Nov (JG & RR), a continuing **Cassin's Vireo** at Mission Oaks Park through 24 Nov, another **Cassin's Vireo** at Mae Boyer Park on 30 Nov (DC), and a **Green-tailed Towhee** at the Santa Susana Field Lab on 15 Nov (AdB & JM). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** and **Pine Siskins** continued to be reported widely, indicating a cyclic irruption of both species into our region.

Thank you to those who reported sightings during the last month. If you have any questions about local birds or have a good one to report (please no calls about nuisance birds), call or e-mail David Pereksta at 805-659-5740 or <pereksta@pacbell.net>.

Good birding,
David Pereksta

Observers: Noah Arthur, Tom Benson, David Buettner, Dan Cooper, Alexander deBarros, Sherry Dorris, Adele Ferguson, Linda Frazier, Jesse Grantham, Mary Hansen, Bruce Henderson, Jim Howard, Sangeet Khalsa, Karl Krause, Joshua Moses, John Mueller, Brittany O'Connor, Kris Ohlenkamp, David Pereksta, Rick Ridgeway, Martin Ruane, and Ken Ward.


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MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION: If you are not sure whether your membership has expired, please **email** Deborah at debburns38@gmail.com and she will check it out for you.

BOARD MEETING: The next Board of Directors meeting will be on Tuesday **January 7th, 2020**. Our meetings are held at Wild Birds Unlimited located at 4020 E. Main Street, Ventura, 805-765-4594. Because the store will be closed, parking is available. VAS members are welcome to attend.

THE VENTURA AUDUBON SOCIETY holds its monthly program on the second Tuesday of the month at the Poinsettia Pavilion, 3451 Foothill Rd. in Ventura at 7:30 p.m., September through April. Board Meetings are held bimonthly on the first Tuesday of the month. A membership form is available on the VAS web site. Our May meeting is a barbecue.

THE CALIFORNIA CONDOR is published nine times per year (September-May). Members are encouraged to submit articles, announcements, letters and drawings, preferably in WORD format, or in the form of an e-mail message. The deadline is noon on the 15th of the month preceding the month of publishing.

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