

The **CALIFORNIA CONDOR**

Ventura Audubon Society April 2019 Volume 51, Number 8



CALL NOTES...Bruce Schoppe



Birdathon is Ventura Audubon's major fundraiser of the year. With your generous response, VAS can continue to provide outstanding monthly programs and field trips. We can also continue to develop educational outreach programs, fund local conservation and environmental projects and help inform the public on important birding and wildlife issues.

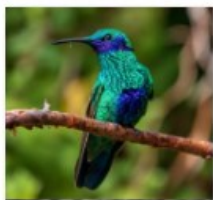
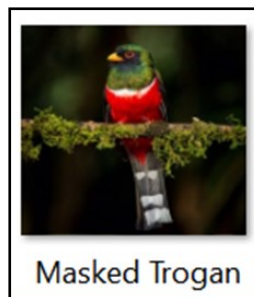
Any scheduled field trip during the month of **APRIL** may be used as the basis for your pledge of an amount per species seen. Or, if you prefer, you may make a donation in any amount. All contributions are tax deductible. Ventura Audubon is a 501(c)3 corporation.

You will receive a mailing with a pledge form and an envelope in which to return your pledge or donation. Send your pledge or donation to P.O. Box 24198, Ventura, CA 93002. You may also donate by going directly to the website (www.venturaaudubon.org) and click on the **Birdathon** button.

APRIL PROGRAM...Benjamin Isaac Jacobs-Schwartz **FEATHERS AND FLIGHT: A JOURNEY TO THE NEW WORLD TROPICS**

7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 9th, Poinsettia Pavilion, 3451 Foothill Road, Ventura

Delving into topics of migration, tropical speciation, and bio-diversity, Benny Isaac Jacobs-Schwartz will share his dazzling photos, videos, and animated story-telling to bring a slice of the tropics to California. This media-rich journey will highlight some of the fascinating and unique birds that inhabit the new-world tropics. Both educating and entertaining, this presentation will leave you with a deeper understanding of tropical ecology and knowledge about where some of our backyard birds spend their winters.



Sparkling
Violetear

Benny Isaac Jacobs-Schwartz or BIJS (Bee-jus) works full time as a naturalist, wildlife photographer, and international bird guide, most recently in coastal Alaska, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Ecuadorian cloud forest.

While at home base in Los Angeles, he owns and operates his burgeoning lifestyle brand, BIRDS by BIJS. His business initially began in response to many requests for urban birding outings, the business has now grown to encompass; a nature inspired clothing line, bird photography and wildlife documentaries and of course local and international bird watching excursions. Through his work he hopes to inspire others to care and protect the wild spaces around us.



APRIL 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.

Saturday April 6, 2018, 9 a.m. Work Day Hedrick Ranch Nature Area(HRNA) Spring Clean Up

Leader: Sandy Hedrick 805-340-0478

Arrive at 8:00 for self-guided birding which usually yields some interesting birds. This will be our Spring Clean Up we will 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 conditions.

Sunday April 14, 2017 7:45 a.m. Matilija Creek

Leader: Jesse Grantham ojaiswimmer@gmail.com, 805-746-0975

This will be a combined walk with Conejo Valley Audubon Society (CVAS)

Matilija Creek is a major tributary to the Ventura River, located off Highway 33 a short distance from Ojai. We will explore the riparian habitat and lake upstream of Matilija Dam, which host a diverse array of birds, aquatic life, and native plants. The cattail marsh just behind the lake provides habitat for Least Bitterns, Sora, and Virginia Rail (which breed here), and the alder/cottonwood/willow gallery forest along the creek is an excellent place to look for migrants. Abundant rainfall this season means the creek will be flowing and the area will be wet, so wear appropriate footwear, sturdy rubber boots if you have them. To date, 145 species have been recorded there. Newest additions to the list last fall include Black and White, Chestnut-sided, Blackpoll, and Parula Warblers. The chaparral-dominated slopes and mountains above the creek (yes, Mountain Quail can be heard) will provide a scenic backdrop to our birding adventure. This is very important...we will traverse uneven ground, walking on cobbles, stepping over fallen limbs, and perhaps crossing wet areas. Not for the faint of heart.

Directions: There is little parking, so we will meet at Nordhoff High School, 1401 Maricopa Hwy, in Ojai at 7:45 a.m. to consolidate into fewer vehicles and carpool to the site. There are no restrooms on site so we suggest you use the Shell station in Oak View. If you would like to carpool meet behind Carrow's Restaurant at Seaward and Harbor by 7:15 a.m.. A checklist can be downloaded from eBird. Go to Hotspots, enter Matilija Riparian and Lake, and follow links.

Saturday April 20, 2019 8:00 a.m. Fillmore Fish Hatchery/Lake Piru

Leader: Tevin Schmitt 661-904-1563

At the Fillmore Fish Hatchery there are many herons/egrets and ducks outside the cages so we will be close to the birds. Then we will carpool to Lake Piru, a reservoir located in the Los Padres Forest, stopping along the way as we see birds. At Lake Piru there should be many herons, grebes and possibly cedar waxwings or California Condors. Significant rainfall this season hopefully means that we will see an abundance of birds.

Directions: If you want to carpool, meet behind Carrows (Harbor Blvd and Seaward) at 7:15 a.m. Otherwise you can meet at 8 a.m. at the Fillmore Fish Hatchery, 612 E. Telegraph Rd which is off of 126 after you have gone through Fillmore.

Note: Lake Piru has a \$2 per person entrance fee, or \$13 per car. So, we will decide on carpooling at Fillmore Fish Hatchery.

FIELD TRIPS...(Continued on Page 3)

FIELD TRIPS...(Continued on Page 2)

Tuesday April 23, 2019 8:30 a.m. Ventura Settling Ponds

Leader: Adele Fergusson 805-415-4304

Enjoy a morning of mostly waterfowl birding. Spotting scopes are always welcome.

Directions: Take Harbor Blvd to Spinnaker and enter Ventura Harbor. The Water Treatment Plant is on Angler before Spinnaker curves to the right. Park either across from the entrance on Angler or if there is not room, park in the lot on the right side of Spinnaker past the Ventura Boat Yard and meet at the gate. Note: Take care in crossing Spinnaker due to the blind curve.

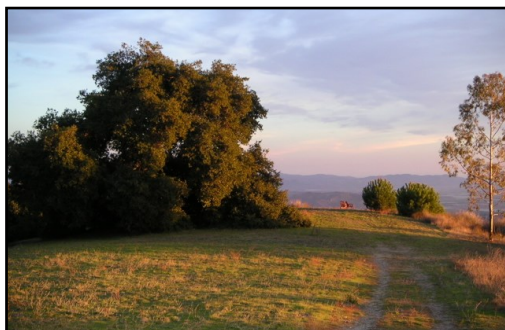
Sunday April 28, 2019 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. Rancho Ventura Conservation Trust (RVCT) (the hills behind Arroyo Verde)

Leaders: David Torfeh 805-794-5334

This is a special event as the RVCT is opening up their property to the public. We will not be walking far, but will go up one steep hill which provides an amazing view of the ocean. On a rarely used path we will look for quail, lazuli bunting, red-tailed hawks and Costa's hummingbirds. This walk is limited to 20 people, you need to sign up ahead of time, schedule at <https://rancho-san-buenaventura-conservation-trust.networkforgood.com/events/11775-spring-bird-watching-with-ventura-audubon-society>. When you go online to register, there is a recommended donation, please know that this is optional. You will enter Arroyo Verde Park, at the gate tell them you are here for a RVCT event and they will not charge you for parking. Go all the way to the back and past the baseball fields. We will have signs to direct you.

Just another Reminder...

***Meher Mount Family Bird Day
Saturday, April 6, 2019***



Meher Mount is a 172-acre universal spiritual center dedicated to Avatar Meher Baba. Visitors come to Meher Mount in Ojai, California, for pilgrimage, for celebrating Divine Love and Oneness, for loving God through nature, and for service.

VAS is supporting this event. The particulars are below.

- 8:00 a.m. Gate opens and visitor sign-in
 - 8:30 to 10:30. Early birding walk, led by Rick Burgess
 - 9:30 to 11:00. Second birding walk leader to be determined
 - 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Ambassador birds presentation by Ojai Raptor Center
 - 12:30 to 1:30. Lunch (bring your own) on Topa Topa Patio
 - 1:30 to 3:00. Afternoon birding walk
-
- Activities throughout the day:
 - Bird art—for kids of all ages
 - Hummingbird watching



NOTES FROM THE FIELD ...David Pereksta

A **Snow Goose** was at Lake Sherwood 12-21 Feb (MH). **Greater White-fronted Geese** included one at Lake Casitas on 16 Feb (JG et al.) and two at the Saticoy Spreading Ponds on 24 Feb (RM & AA). **Wood Ducks** continued in Simi Valley through 19 Feb, in Oak Park through 23 Feb, and at Lake Sherwood through 28 Feb. A **Eurasian Wigeon** was at Lake Sherwood 1-18 Feb (MH). Two **Common Goldeneyes** continued near Callegas Creek through 21 Feb and another was on the Oxnard Plain on 24 Feb (M. Obs.).

A **Common Gallinule** remained at the Ventura Spreading Ponds through 27 Feb. The wintering **Ruff** continued on the Oxnard Plain through 28 Feb. As many as five **Reddish Egrets** continued at Mugu Lagoon through 7 Feb. A **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** was near Round Mountain on 18 Feb (BH) and as many as five continued at the Ventura Spreading Ponds through 28 Feb.

California Condors were reported frequently in February with sightings of as many as 10 birds over Fillmore on 5-11 Feb (KO) and as many as 16 were at Lake Piru 9-28 Feb (BH, JBe). As many as three **Bald Eagles** continued at Lake Piru through 28 Feb and two were at Lake Casitas through 23 Feb. Individual **Ferruginous Hawks** were in Fillmore on 6 Feb (KO) and 17-19 Feb (KO), and Lake Piru on 9 Feb (BH). A flock of 22 **Swainson's Hawks** was over Lake Piru on 23 Feb (JF).

A **White-winged Dove** continued in Ventura through 3 Feb and another continued in Camarillo through 11 Feb. A **Lewis's Woodpecker** continued at Lake Sherwood through 28 Feb. A wintering **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was at Canada Larga through 24 Feb. Away from the Point Mugu area, **Vermilion Flycatchers** were in Port Hueneme at Pleasant Valley Park on 7 Feb (JB) and Garden City Acres Park 18-19 Feb (SC). Individual **Mountain Bluebirds** were at the Saticoy Spreading Ponds on 18 Feb (RM) and San Nicolas Island on 27 Feb (AS). A **Green-tailed Towhee** was in a Ventura backyard on 3 Feb, an unusual location and date for this species (TB). A **Vesper Sparrow** was at Rancho Santa Susana Park on 10 Feb (NG) and as many as 4 continued at Rancho Potrero through 22 Feb. A **Swamp Sparrow** was on the Oxnard Plain on 8 Feb (DP). Two **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** continued at the end of Arnold Road through 28 Feb.

Good birding,
David Pereksta

Observers: Allison Alvarado, Joel Barrett, Joe Beck, Tom Boucher, Sammy Cowell, Jeffrey Fenwick, Noah Gaines, Jesse Grantham, Brad Hacker, Mary Hansen, Bruce Henderson, Robert McMorran, Kris Ohlenkamp, David Pereksta, and Adam Searcy

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING



The Annual Meeting and BBQ are scheduled for Saturday, May 11, 2019 at 11:00 AM. This is the official notice of that meeting. It will be held at Church of the Foothills, 6279 Foothill Road, Ventura CA. 93003.

Directions: Take Victoria Avenue north to Foothill Road. Turn right onto Foothill Rd. The driveway for the church will be on the left in about one- half mile. The church is hidden from view but, there is a sign.

As usual, we shall do some birding beforehand starting at 9:00 am, at Arroyo Verde Park. There is a fee for parking on weekends or park outside and walk in.

Again, this year, we will have tacos. *Famous Taco Bar* will provide the tacos and will make chicken, pork or fish tacos for us with all the associated fixings! **Please bring your own plates and utensils (to reduce trash) and an appetizer or dessert to share.** You may also bring your own beverage including beer and wine. Famous Taco Bar will provide lemonade and VAS will provide water.

The meeting will start at 11:00 a.m. This is the meeting at which you, the members, elect the board of directors to lead VAS for the next program year. A slate of proposed nominees for 2019-2020 appears below. The Board elects the officers. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the meeting.

The price again this year will be \$11.00 per person (adult or child). Please send your reservation with check to Ventura Audubon at P.O. Box 24198, Ventura, CA 93002 by May 6th. Or, you may email Sherry Dorris at sdorris@roadrunner.com or Bruce Schoppe at bschoppe6698@sbcglobal.net and pay at the event.

Proposed Candidates for 2019-20 Board of Directors:

Debra Barringer
Tom Black
Deborah Burns
Frank DeMartino
Sheryl Dorris
Adele Fergusson
Cynthia Hartley
Sandy Hedrick
Kaitlyn O'Dea
Bruce Schoppe
Janice Sussha
Jim Sussha
Jackie Worden

Come Visit Our New Ormond Beach Eagle Scout Information Kiosk ***by Cynthia Hartley***

VAS would like to extend a huge thank you to boy scout Billy Busse, Billy's parents, Leigh and Richard, and Troop 252 for building a new information kiosk at the Arnold Rd entrance to Ormond Beach. The kiosk will provide a centralized place for birders to post their bird sightings, updates on snowy plover and least tern nesting activities and a bulletin board for field trip announcements, community messaging and educational materials. It is replacing an old plywood stand that has become a useless eyesore over the past several years.

Billy provided the labor and design with support from the Boy Scout community and his parents. Billy will deservedly earn his Eagle Scout badge with this project.

Billy also raised most of the money for this project himself. The final costs were donated by generous responses to our first Facebook Fundraiser. Thank you to everyone who contributed! 100% of the funds went to materials and a kiosk fund to provide maintenance and repairs.



Snowy Plover Nesting Season Begins!

March 15 began the official start of snowy plover nesting season. Plovers have been actively courting and scraping (building nests) at Ormond Beach for the past month. Eggs are expected any day. Ventura Audubon supports nest monitoring at Hollywood and Ormond Beaches, which entails weekly nest surveys and habitat protection. These efforts are supported by grants and your contributions to the chapter. If you would like to be a part of our Shorebird Recovery Program please consider becoming a volunteer naturalist. Dates announced below.



Volunteer Naturalists Training Dates Announced

Have you ever wanted to be a part of a conservation program that makes a difference to endangered birds? Consider becoming a volunteer naturalist with our Shorebird Recovery Program. Our first training session of the year is April 14th from 9am-noon. We will teach you about snowy plover and least tern life history and how to interact with the public. Then you can put your knowledge to work supporting our nest monitors by engaging and educating the public during 2-hour beach shifts during nesting season. You can pick which beach to work on and what days and hours. Nesting beaches to choose from include Ormond, Hollywood or and Ventura State Parks beaches. There are also many other opportunities in our Shorebird Recovery program. See training dates below. Contact Alexis Frangis to sign up or for more information. Alexis.Frangis@parks.ca.gov Phone: 805-585-1852.



Volunteer Naturalist training dates (choose one): April 14, May 4, June 8, June 22

Explore the Coast: California Coastal Conservancy – Thank you!

The California Coastal Conservancy is one of the major landowners at Ormond Beach and they are currently working on a long-term restoration plan for over 1000 acres of rare coastal wetlands at Ormond. In the meantime, Ventura Audubon partners closely with the conservancy to address current conservation needs for endangered shorebirds at Ormond. We would like to extend a special thank you for their generous support through the Explore the Coast grant which has funded our Ormond Beach conservation work.

Volunteer Naturalists: Volunteer Naturalists are trained to be “plover ambassadors” and engage the public in a positive way. After 3 hours of classroom training, they engage the public and share their knowledge. Explore the Coast funds supported supplies for volunteers at Ormond Beach.

ORMOND BEACH KIOSK...*(Continued on Page 7)*

ORMOND BEACH KIOSK...(Continued on Page 6)

CSUCI Conservation Training: Explore the Coast funds provided for supplies, training and supervision for CSCUI students who performed 424 hours of service-learning hours on Ormond Beach in 2018. These students are our conservation leaders of the future.

Share the Shore program which engaged 3rd graders at Curren Elementary in Oxnard. We visited the classroom and taught the children about snowy plovers, then brought them to the beach for immersive education with 3rd graders. The students created artwork about the snowy plovers, which we fabricated into beach signs with Explore the Coast funds.

A BIG THANK YOU

A big thanks to staff members of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service, primarily from the Ventura Office, that helped put up nesting fences at Hollywood Beach at the start of this year's sensitive bird nesting season. This involved manual labor that VAS usually has to pay for. The Channel Islands Harbor Department also lent us a helper and his truck to haul materials. The group experienced fierce winds that day but the federal workers were real troopers and got the job done.



Left to right, unless otherwise noted all are from the Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office: Lena Chang, Todd Lemein, Debra Barringer (Ventura Audubon), Jeff Phillips, Raphaela Ware, Mark Metevier, Kendra Chan and Ray Bransfield, Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office (front).



VAS OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS 2018-2019		
Officers		
President	Bruce Schoppe	805-658-2396
Vice President	Tom Black	805-985-2325
Vice President/Conservation	Cynthia Hartley	805-795-4115
Treasurer	Sherry Dorris	805-985-7273
Secretary	Alexis Frangis	805-217-4833
Board Members		
Conservation	Sandy Hedrick	805-643-2408
Publicity	Jim Susha	805-983-3929
Field Trips	Adele Fergusson	805-415-4304
At Large	Jackie Worden	805-657-2837
Membership	Deborah Burns	805-933-0647
Christmas Bird Count	Frank DeMartino	856-906-8733
Newsletter	Janice Susha	805-983-3929
At Large/Conservation	Debra Barringer	303-880-0308
At Large/CSUCI Audubon Club	Kat O'Dea	818-916-4154
Chairs & Committee Members		
Webmaster	Christi Lester	310-722-9557
Education	Betsy Bachman	805-646-4407
Conservation Committee Cynthia Hartley - Chair Shorebird Recovery: Debra Barringer Alexis Frangis Cynthia Hartley Kat O'Dea	Santa Clara River Issues: Sandy Hedrick Ventura River/Least Bell's Vireo: Jackie Worden Coastal Planning Issues: Debra Barringer	

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 **May 7th, 2019**. 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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