



ROADRUNNER

Founded 1968

Published by the Conejo Valley Audubon Society
A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

VOL. 39

December 2007

NO. 4

**General Meeting December 3
7:30 pm Western Foundation**

Backyard Safari

Jess Morton, long-time friend of Conejo Valley Audubon Society, and member of Audubon's national board of directors, will take us on a "Safari to Your Back Yard." This tour, illustrated with photos of scores of birds, butterflies, bugs and other denizens of our yards, will answer the common question, "What is THAT?" The program is meant for kids--young and old--who want to know what lives around them. But Jess won't leave out weighty matters like conservation, wrapping our safari into thoughts about what it is that



Audubon Adventures

Thelma Williams is delighted to announce that due to the generous donations from members of CVAS we have seventeen classrooms of children that will be enjoying and using the Audubon Adventures program. One of our primary goals is to educate our young about the environment and the animals, birds, insects and plants in it. We have made a wonderful start for the 2007 - 2008 school year in our CVAS area. Thank you to everyone that donated!

Important Bird Area

by Cheryl Williamson

Boyce Thompson Arboretum is a must see spot if you are ever in Arizona. It is on highway 60 just east of Mesa. It recently attained Important Bird Area status. Don and I were introduced to this beautiful oasis in the desert by our daughter Judy. We visit there every time we go to Arizona. The arboretum has a check list with more 250 species of birds. We have seen 59 species there, eight of them life birds. The arboretum is proud of a hybrid Broad-billed/Violet-crowned Hummingbird which has taken up residence in the park. If the birds are hiding, the butterflies, damselflies and dragonflies are very entertaining. The plantings in the arboretum are extraordinary and every time we go something new is in bloom.



CALENDAR

December

1	7:45 am	Field trip	Canada Larga
3	7:30 pm	General meeting	Western Foundation
9	7:45 am	Field trip	T.O. Twin Ponds and Borchard Ponds
13	9:00 am	Field trip	Beginners Bird Walk
15	7:45 am	Field trip	Saticoy Ponds
29	7:45 am	Special Event	Christmas Bird Count

***** Pre meeting Dinner *****

Ottavio's in Camarillo at 5:15 pm

Call Nobuko Mc Clure
for reservations

24 hours in advance of the monthly
general meeting (805) 482-0411.

CVAS Events

The public is welcome to attend any CVAS meeting or field trip. CVAS assumes no responsibility for injuries, personal or otherwise, incurred while attending a society sponsored activity and will not be held liable for such accidents. One attends at one's own risk. Please call the trip leader in advance to learn of any changes to the field trip plans.

Field Trips

The times specified are departure times - **be sure to arrive 15 min earlier.** Try to car pool when ever possible and don't forget to give the driver gas money!

RAIN CANCELS!

Saturday, Dec 1 Canada Larga

Leave Las Posas Park and Ride at 8 am. Lots of sparrows and possible sapsuckers, bluebirds, hawks and grassland birds. Leader is **Thelma Williams at (805) 492-2796.**

Sunday, Dec. 9 Thousand Oaks Twin Ponds / Borchard Ponds

Leave Las Posas park & ride at 8:00 am or meet at the trailhead at Ricardo and Olas at 8:15 am. to see what they might have for the Christmas Bird Count - lots of ducks, and chaparral birds. Leader will be **Babette Lawall at (805) 498-0610.**

Take the 101 to Borchard Road in Thousand Oaks; go south up into Dos Vientos; take a right at Rancho Dos Vientos Drive (at the corner of Dos Vientos Community Park); go to Via Ricardo and turn right; park on Via Ricardo across from Via Olas and we will hike up to the ponds (It's shorter if you take the Wendy off ramp; turn right onto Old Conejo Road; then left onto Reino Road; then right onto Borchard)

Thursday, Dec 13 Beginner's Bird Walk

Meet at Camarillo Springs Park at 9:00 am, this is a Pot Luck, bring a dish to share. There will be a bird walk before lunch. Contact **Angie Kobabe (818) 991 - 4055** between 9 am & 9 pm.

Saturday, Dec 15 Saticoy Ponds

Leave Las Posas Park and Ride at 8 am, or meet at the gate at 8:30 Many species of ducks, hawks, sparrows, Horned Larks, Amer. Pipits, possible Bald Eagle, some shorebirds. Leader **Tom Halpin (805) 746-4598.**

Sunday, Dec 29 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Sign up at Dec. meeting with a leader - we need everyone to come out and help locate and count our birds!! Call

David Pereksta at (805) 659-5740 or email him at **pereksta@pacbell.net**

Shutterbugs by Don Williamson

The December meeting will be in the channel 25 room at Leisure Village. The topic will be "Portraits", we will have the studio lighting available. There will be no picture theme for Dec. to allow more time in the studio.

If you are interested in attending the Shutterbugs meetings, contact Jerry Spector at (805) 384-9039 or jerbear007@yahoo.com to be put on the access list for Leisure Village.

Bird Festivals

January 17-20, 2008 Wings Over Wilcox

Wilcox, Arizona
Call (800) 200 - 2272
or visit www.wingsoverwilcox.com

January 18 - 21, 2008 Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival

c/o Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 1175
Morro Bay, CA 93442
Call: (805)772-4467 or (800)231-0592
Fax: (805)772-6038
Email: birdfest@morrobaybirdfestival.org

February 6 - 11, 2008 San Diego Bird Festival

Keynote speaker Kenn Kaufman
(619) 682-7200
sandiegoaudubon.org

Conservation Corner by Cheryl Williamson

I happened to be reading through the *Chaparral Naturalist*, a publication of **Pomona Valley Audubon Society**, and found this article written by **Richard Moore**, their conservation chair. I thought it was important enough to be shared with our chapter members.

A Reminder

Unused medications should not be discarded down the drain because sewage systems cannot remove these medications from water that is released into lakes, streams, rivers, and the ocean where they have adverse effects upon fish, other aquatic animals and consequently birds and mammals. Store unused medicine in a safe place and then take them to a local Household Hazardous Waste Collection site.

Christmas Bird Count

by David Pereksta

If you are looking for a great way to close out 2007, and find some great birds and contribute to citizen science while doing it, please join us for the National Audubon Society's 108th annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on **Saturday December 29th, 2007**, and help cover the Conejo Valley Audubon Society's "Thousand Oaks" CBC circle.



This is our 33rd CBC, and we're hoping to find a few more than last year's impressive count of 191 species. That was good enough for 12th place for CBCs held north of the Mexican border (1,997 total CBCs). Highlights included a White-winged Scoter, 1000s of Black-vented Shearwaters, and two Marbled Murrelets off Mugu Rock; an Eurasian Wigeon, six Black Scoters, a Swainson's Hawk, three Clapper Rails, a Black-legged Kittiwake, two Ancient Murrelets, five Burrowing Owls, a Short-eared Owl, and a Vermilion Flycatcher at Point Mugu; a Cackling Goose and Red-naped Sapsucker at Lake Sherwood; a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Pepper-tree Park; and seven Wood Ducks and a White-throated Sparrow at Hill Canyon. When all was said and done, we recorded over 38,000 individual birds!! We hope to do even better this year, but need hardy CVAS members to close out the year right by getting up early and be ready to bird.

The National Audubon Society's web-based pre-registration program is up and working, so just go to www.audubon.org/bird/cbc and click on "Get Involved" or "Data Entry/Review" for more instructions (The Conejo Valley's four-letter CBC code is CATO). This system allows you to register for as many CBCs as you wish, and if you want to participate in four or more CBCs, you can do so for a flat \$20. Your name and contact information is forwarded to me, so I have a better idea of how many people are going to participate, and can plan accordingly. You can also pay on-line, which simplifies my life during the post-count dinner. For those who prefer to contact me directly, please send an e-mail to pereksta@pacbell.net, call (805) 659-5740, or sign up during the November and December meetings at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology.

As we did last year, we will cover the area from Westlake to the Oxnard Plain, and from Leo Carrillo State Park to California Lutheran University in Thousand

Oaks. As always, we need people to cover the Santa Monica Mountains, La Jolla Canyon, Big Sycamore Canyon, Leo Carrillo State Park, Camarillo Regional Park, the CSU Channel Islands campus, Mugu Lagoon, Camarillo Springs Park, Thousand Oaks Botanic Garden, Los Robles Golf Course, Hill Canyon, Wildwood Park, Calleguas Creek, Revelon Slough, the Oxnard Plain, Hidden Valley, Satwiwa, and many other areas. Please pre-register as soon as possible, and let me know where you are available to bird or who you want to bird with.

You can also help by "staking out" unusual or hard to find species such as American White Pelican, Cattle Egret,



Wood Duck, Blue-winged Teal, Red-head, Hooded Merganser, Osprey, Band-tailed Pigeon, Greater Roadrunner, Western Screech-

Owl, Burrowing Owl, Common Poorwill, Lewis's Woodpecker, Red-breasted and Red-naped Sapsuckers, Yellow Warbler, White-throated Sparrow, Tricolored Blackbird, Yellow-headed Blackbird, and Lawrence's Goldfinch.

The CBC began over a century ago when 27 conservationists in 25 localities, led by ornithologist Frank Chapman, changed the course of ornithological history. On Christmas Day 1900, this small group initiated an alternative activity to the "side hunt." Participants in the "side hunt" would split up into teams and see who could shoot the most birds and small mammals in a day. Dr. Chapman proposed instead to identify, count, and record the birds they saw, thus founding what is today considered the most significant citizen-based conservation effort in the USA. The CBC is open to birders of all skill levels. If you don't wish to go out and count birds, consider "feeder watching" in your back yard. You might attract an unusual hummingbird to your feeder, find an uncommon sparrow or finch, or keep an oriole around for us to include.

We will gather to tally up the Christmas Bird Count totals, compare notes, and socialize beginning at 5:30 pm at Nobuko McClure's home. We will have pizza and other potluck goodies. If your last name begins with A – M please bring hors d'oeuvre or munchies to share; N – Z, a finger food type dessert which is easy to serve. Paper goods, plastic utensils, coffee, and tea will be provided – or bring your own beverage.

If you plan on attending please **call Nobuko at (805) 482-0411** so she can plan accordingly and provide directions to her house.