



ROADRUNNER

Founded 1968

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

VOL. 42

December 2010

NO. 4

**General Meeting December 6
7:30 pm Western Foundation**

**Conservation Column
By Dee Lyon**

Walt Sakai on: Bird Banding in Zuma Canyon

Though the practice of tying messages to birds' legs goes back at least as far as the Punic wars in the second century BC, banding wild birds in order to gather scientific information didn't start until just over a century ago. Today ornithologists all over the world affix bands or other identification tags to birds in order to keep track of the migration, longevity, mortality, territoriality and feeding behavior of bird populations.

Longtime friend of CVAS, Walt Sakai, is a Master Bird Bander. He, his students from Santa Monica College and other volunteers have maintained a bird banding station in Zuma Canyon in the Santa Monica Mountains since 1995. Their work covers a wide array of habitats and they typically band around 1000-1500 birds of 60-80 species each year. Join us December 6th for an update on Walt's work in Zuma Canyon.



An adult male Lazuli Bunting, caught and banded in Zuma Canyon in spring 2009

A 13 page article in the July 26, 2010 New Yorker magazine (*Emptying The Skies* by Jonathan Franzen) states that "In the Mediterranean, songbirds are being decimated for fun and profit - and in open defiance of law. Cyprus harbors the most intensive songbird killing operations in the European Union. During Autumn migration, the Cypriots put lime sticks, straight switches, about thirty inches long, that are coated with the gluey gum of the Syrian plum and deployed artfully, to provide inviting perches, in the branches of low trees. Blackcaps are the main target, but rare shrikes, warblers, cuckoos, golden orioles, even small owls and hawks are caught.

Lime-stick trapping has been traditional and widespread in Cyprus since at least the sixteenth century and was once an important seasonal source of protein. Now these little birds are fried in restaurants for a special nostalgic treat. The Cypriot government was trying to stop this slaughter in order to be admitted to the EU, so that the annual take fell to around one million. But now the number of trapping sites is rising.

Every spring, some five billion birds come flooding up from Africa to breed in Eurasia, and every year as many as a billion are killed deliberately by humans, most notably on the migratory flyways of the Mediterranean. Italian hunters like to go to Albania where they can shoot as many birds as they can find, whenever they want. The wealthiest go to Siberia to shoot woodcock during their springtime

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CALENDAR

December

4	8:00 am	Field Trip: CLU & Surrounding Open Areas
6	5:15 pm	Pre meeting Dinner: Ottavio's
6	7:30 pm	General Meeting Western Foundation
9	9:00 am	Beginner's Bird Walk
12	8:00 am	Field Trip: Paramount Ranch
18	8:00 am	Field Trip: Chesebro Canyon

***** Pre meeting Dinner ***
Ottavio's in Camarillo at 5:15 pm**

**Call Nobuko McClure
For Reservations (805) 482-0411
Reservation Deadline *Before!*
9:00 am Day of General Meeting**

CVAS Events

Everyone 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.

Board Meeting Notice

The January Board Meeting will be held on Monday, January 17. All CVAS members are invited to attend monthly CVAS Board Meetings. Meetings start at 7:00 pm and are held in the home of a board member with meeting locations varying monthly. Please contact CVAS Secretary, **Gary Evans** at (805) 231-5692 or GaryE@ConejoValleyAudubon.org for meeting location and directions.

Field Trips

The times specified are departure times – **be sure to arrive 15 min earlier**. Try to carpool whenever possible and don't forget to offer the driver gas money!
RAIN CANCELS!

Saturday, December 4th CLU & Surrounding Open Areas

Meet at CLU parking lot at 8:00 am. From Camarillo area take 101 Fwy south; exit at Lynn Rd in Thousand Oaks. Turn left (north) onto Lynn Rd and go 3.4 miles to Campus Drive. (Note: Lynn Road changes in 2.7 miles to Olsen Rd at Ave. de los Arboles.) Turn left on Campus Drive and go .25 miles to parking area on right next to soccer/track field; street parking also available. We'll be looking for Cactus Wren, Cal Thrasher, Flycatchers, Gnatcatchers, Acipitors, flocks of Meadowlarks, Pippets, and Sparrows feeding in the fields and a wide variety of other birds along the riparian and on the campus as well. Trip Leader is **Dennis Allen (805) 807-4501**.

Thursday, December 9th Beginner's Bird Walk

Second Thursday of each month. Call **Angie Kobabe (818) 991-4055** between 9 am and 9 pm to let her know you are coming and to find out where it will be held. Rain or temperatures above 90 degrees will cancel.

Sunday, December 12th Paramount Ranch

Meet at the Paramount Ranch parking lot by the Old West Town at 8:30 am. This former movie ranch has mixed woodland and riparian habitat. Ventura

Freeway (101) to Kanan Road exit. South on Kanan 0.75 mile. Left on Cornell Way then south 2.5 miles to entrance on right side of the road. Trip Leader is **David Person (805) 496-9587**.

Saturday, December 18th Chesebro Canyon

Meet at Rancho Park and Ride at 8:00 am. Expect lots of birds in the oaks including Titmice, Nuthatches, Bluebirds, many Sparrows, Kites, Accipiters and other Raptors. Trip Leader is **Dee Lyon (805) 499-2165**.

Conservation Column

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display flights, or to Egypt where you can shoot ibises and globally threatened duck species until your arms are tired. The Republic of Malta is the most savagely bird-hostile place in Europe. There are 12,000 registered hunters who consider it their birthright to shoot any bird unlucky enough to migrate over Malta.

Spring in the Old World is liable to fall silent far sooner than in the New.”

Christmas Bird Count

By David Pereksta

If you are looking for an easy way to contribute to understanding the status of wintering birds in North America, please join us for the National Audubon Society's 111th annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on **Sunday January 2, 2011**, and help cover the Conejo Valley Audubon Society's "Thousand Oaks" CBC circle.

This is our 36th CBC, and we're hoping to top last year's count of 182 species. That was good enough for 17th place (for the second year in a row) for CBCs held north of the Mexican border (2,053 total CBCs). Highlights included 23 Blue-winged Teal, 2 Black Scoters, a White-winged Scoter, 2 Common Goldeneyes, 2 Yellow-crowned Night-Herons, a Ferruginous Hawk, 5 Clapper Rails, 13 Red Knots, a Burrowing Owl, 2 Vermilion Flycatchers, 3 Tricolored Blackbirds, 9 Yellow-headed Blackbirds, and a first county record Lesser Black-backed Gull at Point Mugu; a Red-necked Grebe south of Deer Creek Road; Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers, Common Murre, and Rhinoceros Auklet offshore; nearly 9,000 Black-vented Shearwaters to the squid boat fleet off of Leo Carrillo; a Burrowing Owl and California Gnatcatcher at Cal Lutheran; Red-naped

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Christmas Bird Count

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Sapsucker at Las Robles Golf Course; several Lewis's Woodpeckers near the entrance to Lake Sherwood; and a Prairie Falcon and three Common Moorhens on the Oxnard Plain. Notable misses were Eurasian Wigeon, Osprey, Black Oystercatcher, Black and Ruddy Turnstones, Wandering Tattler, Caspian Tern, Black Skimmer, Western Screech-Owl, Costa's Hummingbird, Sage Sparrow, and Grasshopper Sparrow. When all was said and done, we recorded 46,400 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, or sign up during the December meeting 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, Redhead, 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, Pine Siskin, and Lawrence's Goldfinch. In addition, last year we often came close to missing a few common species including Hutton's Vireo, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Townsend's Warbler, so keep an eye out for them prior to the CBC.

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.

To cover the cost of the pizza and paper goods etc. we will be asking for a \$5/person donation. If you plan on attending please **call Nobuko at (805) 482-0411** so she can plan accordingly and provide directions to her house.

Annual CVAS Membership Dues Reminder

As a reminder to all members, CVAS membership dues now match our activity year. The current membership year runs from July 2010 to June 2011. So for most members – those who last renewed or joined prior to January 2010 – your dues for our next activity year are now due and payable using the CVAS Membership Application on page 4 of this newsletter. If you have questions about when your membership ends, please contact the membership secretary at (membership@conejovalleyaudubon.org).

ROADRUNNER

Conejo Valley Audubon Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 4782

Thousand Oaks, CA 91359

December, 2010



Officers and Committee Chairs			Username
President	Carol Langford	805-987-2721	president
Vice Pres			
Secretary	Gary Evans	805-231-5692	GaryE
Treasurer	Ron Barns	818-991-9967	rtbarns@netscape.net
Programs	Chrystal Klabunde	805-522-8023	chrystal
Conservation	Dee Lyon	805-499-2165	chickadee
Education	Thelma Williams	805-492-2796	thelma
Field trip: Co	Dee Lyon	805-499-2165	chickadee
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Publicity	Ron Barns	818-991-9967	rtbarns@netscape.net
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Historian	Bets Buchanan	805-482-0063	
Special Events			
Photographer	Don Klabunde	805-522-8023	photographer
Special Projects	Nobuko McClure	805-482-0411	nobuko
Webmaster	Frank DeMartino		webmaster
CVAS Web Site	http://www.ConejoValleyAudubon.org		
Send E-mail to	username@ConejoValleyAudubon.org		



Cheryl and Don Williamson report that this Sharp-shinned Hawk was a thirsty visitor to their birdbath during a recent hot spell. They also have a Red-shouldered Hawk visiting the birdbath but haven't gotten a good image yet. (Photo by Cheryl Williamson)

Regular meetings are held on the first Monday evening of each month at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, 439 Calle San Pablo, Camarillo at 7:30 pm, unless otherwise noted. **Everyone is welcome.** Take Pleasant Valley Road or Lewis Road to where they cross south of the 101 Freeway. Go west to the second street, Calle San Pablo. Turn right. The Foundation is the fifth building on the left.

The Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology is a non-profit organization founded in 1956 to promote the study and conservation of birds and other vertebrates. The organization makes contributions in the areas of natural history collections, original research, and conservation.

The *Roadrunner* is published monthly except July and August by the Conejo Valley Audubon Society. It is sent to paid CVAS members only. Members are invited to submit articles, announcements, letters, photos, and drawings for publication consideration. Copy deadline is the 5th of the month. Send items to Charlie Lucas, 465 Havenside Ave., Newbury Park, CA 91320, or by E-mail: newsletter@ConejoValleyAudubon.org.

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

C0ZC230Z

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society. I have enclosed \$20 (\$15 for seniors and students), payable to **National Audubon Society**, for an introductory membership.

Mail it to: National Audubon Society, P. O. Box 422250, Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250

Renewing memberships should be sent to National Audubon with the renewal form and envelope you receive.

For questions regarding national membership status call: National Audubon Customer Service 1-800-274-4201

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail address _____

CONEJO VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please enroll me as a member of Conejo Valley Audubon Society. I have enclosed \$20, payable to CVAS, for a family membership. Mail to: CVAS, P.O. Box 4782, Thousand Oaks, CA 91359 __ Please send my newsletter by E-mail.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail address _____