



ROADRUNNER

Founded 1968

Published by the Conejo Valley Audubon Society

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

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VOL. 43

May, 2012

NO. 9

**General Meeting May 7
7:30 pm Western Foundation**

Alaska with Guy Commeau

In 1982 Guy and Louise Commeau spent 6 months and drove 14,000 miles to and through Alaska, exploring virtually every road that state had to offer at the time. Planes and boats got them to such faraway places as the Pribilof Islands, where they bumped into Jon Dunn and were able to tag along with his birding group.

In 1982 Alaska's 663,000 square miles were occupied by only 403,000 people. For comparison, California's population is 52 times as large living on only one quarter of the land area. Alaska is the "last frontier", like the "Old West" of a century ago, still largely empty of humans ... but the wildlife, the forests, the flowers, the mountains, the rivers, and the islands!! Motoring the Alaska Highway, camping in Denali National Park, birding the cliffs of Saint Paul Island, exploring the Kenai Peninsula; these are experiences one can never forget. Come and share the beauty and excitement of their journey, and perhaps you will get the bug to go.

Guy Commeau has presented many times for CVAS, and we always look forward to his beautiful photography and entertaining narration.

**Conservation Column
By Dee Lyon**

Talk about Birding; share the message!

Have you been looking at a wonderful bird and people walk past you? Tell them about the birds. Especially if you have a scope, invite others to take a look. That person just might catch the birding bug. At the least they become aware that birding is taking place in their vicinity, and you could go ahead and exclaim about what wonderful birds there are in their park or meadow or wherever you are.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife now says there are 50 million people in this country watching and feeding birds. That's about one in six Americans, and like us, they all have their bird stories or questions. The more we talk about birding, the less we'll get that blank stare and response: "You're doing what?"

Wear your binoculars into the restaurant or motel and tell them the birding is really fun in their area; then they will vote to keep their park open or to protect some habitat.

While you're doing your Conservation duty, pull up www.duckstamp.com and pay your \$15 for a duck stamp to help the Wildlife Refuges.

CALENDAR

May

5&6	7:00 am	Field Trip: Butterbredt Springs
7	5:15 pm	Pre meeting Dinner: Ottavio's
7	7:30 pm	General Meeting Western Foundation
10	9:00 am	Field Trip: Beginner's Bird Walk
19	8:30 am	Field Trip: Taft Gardens, Ojai
20	6:00 am	Field Trip: Lockwood Valley
26	8:00 am	Field Trip: Pine Mountain

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

Ottavio's in Camarillo at 5:15 pm

Call Nobuko McClure

For Reservations (805) 482-0411

Reservation Deadline: 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 May Board Meeting will be held on Monday, May 21. 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 / Sunday, May 5th / 6th Butterbrecht Springs

Meet at Rancho Road Park & Ride at 7:00 am on Saturday. We will bird in the afternoon and camp Saturday night. Be aware that there are **No Facilities** or **Water** there. Bring a folding chair. (As an alternative, you may wish to stay Saturday night in Mojave.) This is a wonderful migrant area located in the Piute Mountains. Look for Ladder-backed Woodpeckers, Scott's Orioles, Mountain Quail, Western Tanagers, Thrashers, various Flycatchers, and many Warbler species. **Important:** Call the leader to check on current conditions of the dirt roads. Leader is **Ron Barnes (818) 991-9967**.

Thursday, May 10th Beginner's Bird Walk

Second Thursday of each month. Call **Angie Kobabe (818) 991-4055** between 9:00 am and 9:00 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.

Saturday, May 19th Taft Gardens, Ojai

This is a special location 55 acre garden featuring South African and Australian plants designed and implemented by John Taft. We will walk and bird through the gardens and a portion of the property that is California native habitat. **Directions: Car-pooling recommended.** Take Highway 33 North to

Highway 150 (Baldwin Rd.). Turn left on Highway 150 and proceed for 2.4 miles, crossing over the Ventura River, and past the entrance on the right to Rancho Matilija housing development. One-fourth of a mile from the entrance you will come to an "S" curve with an unmarked road on the right. There are mail boxes on one side of the road and a low wall on the other. Turn right and **meet at the entrance at 8:30 am**. From there we will caravan about 1.5 miles to the parking lot and entrance to the gardens. This is a private road. Please stay on the main road and avoid disturbing the neighbors. Leader is **John Pavelco (805) 640-9040**.

Sunday, May 20th Lockwood Valley

Meet at the Erringer Avenue Park & Ride in Simi Valley at 6 am. We will bird the Lockwood Valley area, Highway 33, and Quatal Canyon Road. There are **limited facilities and no water** on this trip. Bring a picnic lunch. The Lockwood Valley and its canyons are under-birded areas in Ventura County that deserve closer attention in spring. Target species include Brewer's and Sage Sparrows, Hairy Woodpecker, Pacific-slope, Olive-sided, Gray, and Ash-throated Flycatchers; Western Wood-pewee, Mountain Quail, Scott's Oriole, and Lawrence's Goldfinch. Leader is **Matthew Page (805) 990-6534**.

Saturday, May 26th Pine Mountain

Meet at 8:00 am at the Los Posas Park & Ride in Camarillo. We will drive up Highway 33 with a stop at Wheeler Gorge for those who want to meet us there with lunch at Pine Mountain Campground. **High clearance vehicle is needed.** Bring lunch and water and suitable clothing for the mountain. We will look for mountain birds such as Mt Chickadee, Mt Quail, Pygmy Nuthatch, Purple Finch, Black-chinned Sparrow and White-headed Woodpeckers. Leader is **Dee Lyon (805) 499-2165**.

Message from the Editor

The editor would appreciate any articles of interest, photographs, or field trip reports from members. Please get them to me by the 5th of the month. I prefer them in electronic form with articles in plain text or rich text format (RTF) and pictures in jpeg format.

Local Birder Declared Wildbird's 2011 Birder of the Year

Once each year, Wildbird readers crown one of their peers as Birder of the year from candidates who appear as Forum Birders and Backyard Birders in each issue throughout the year. The contest is open to everyone who responds to the questions posed in each issue of the magazine.

The March/April issue of Wildbird magazine declared Bonnie Clarefield-Bylin, a local birder, Wildbird's 2011 Birder of the Year.

In introducing Bonnie to its readership, Wildbird initially highlighted two gifts received by this year's winner: a Swarovski 8x32 EL binocular and an expenses-paid five-day trip for two to Costa Rica with Swarovski and Wildbird hosts.

With room to share just a few of Wildbird's biographical sketches of Bonnie, we've selected the following:

Home: Thousand Oaks, Calif.

Occupation: district ranger, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, National Park Service.

Educational Background: graduate of Stockton State College in Pomona, N.J., degree in environmental science.

Year started birding: 1967 as a curious child, 1977 with specific intent.

Number of birds on current life list: 438+/-.

Number of North American birds on life list: 408+/-.

Most memorable sighting: A Wood Stork flew across the highway in front of my truck when I was en route to Everglades National Park for a seasonal job.

Rarest bird on your list: California Condors soaring over California's Sespe Wilderness.

Hardest-to-get bird on your list: Resplendent Quetzal in Guatemala.

Most unusual backyard bird: Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in April 1994. The Zuma Canyon Trailhead in the Santa Monica Mountains was literally my backyard when I lived in park housing; the Flycatcher remained for three days before leaving.

Why you enjoy watching birds: I find them beautiful and entertaining, but more importantly, they reflect the health of our environment. I feel at peace when I am surrounded by birds and Nature.

Favorite Website: Wildflowers of the Santa Monica Mountains: www.researchlearningcenter.org/bloom.

Field Trip Reports

Rio Grande Birding Festival by Dee Lyon November, 2011

Thelma Williams and I drove a camper 4100 miles to and from and around Texas! We saw 144 species and thought that the classes and programs were quite good.

We attempted to find Whooping Cranes at Aransas, but we had no luck. We did have hundreds of Sandhill Cranes fly over us and a huge flock of White Pelicans circling, in addition to many sparrows and water birds.

The next day we headed to Edinburg Wetlands since they had been so good the day before. Somehow we ended up at Edinburg Lake instead and found some good birds. We checked out Bentsen State Park with limited success, then the finale was Estero Llano where we saw the Common Parauque (my only new bird; Thelma saw 26). Next day we headed down to Sabal Palm, which was not too birdy; might be the new giant wall. Then on to South Padre Island which was the best. The new boardwalk at the Visitor's Center has the birds practically under your feet, (including Clapper Rail) so that we could put our new ID skills to the test. The Roseate Spoonbills flying in the very blue sky are unforgettable. Following day we headed to Laguna Atascosa to enjoy all the Herons and Egrets, Tropical Parula and many small birds. The Green Jays seem so numerous and not as skulking as in the past. On the way home we stopped at Santa Ana Wildlife Refuge where we stood on the hawk platform scanning for a Hook-billed Kite for a couple of hours to no avail. Swainson's, White-tailed, Zone-tailed Hawks, White-tailed Kite and Red-tails appeared, so it was a fun experience. We enjoyed the feeders at Salineno, where we had Audubon's, Altamira and Hooded Orioles and Bobwhites. No Seedeaters at San Ignacio, so we headed home. Lots of fun, but a long drive.

FINAL DONATION REQUEST: TOM HALPIN MEMORIAL OAK TREE AND BENCH

We will be planting a Valley Oak at the Conejo Valley Botanic Garden with a nice bench to celebrate the life of our dear friend.

Please send donations to Conejo Valley Audubon Society at Post Office Box 4782, Thousand Oaks, CA 91359.

ROADRUNNER

Conejo Valley Audubon Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 4782

Thousand Oaks, CA 91359

May, 2012



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
Field trip: Co	Charlie Lucas	805-498-6447	newsletter
Publicity	Cory Taylor		publicity
Newsletter	Charlie Lucas	805-498-6447	newsletter
Membership	Barbara Hopkins		membership
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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		

REMEMBER THIS DATE

Sunday, May 6th

Dee Lyon to Speak On Birds & Native Plants

At The Matilija Poppy Festival In The Kids Adventure Garden Of The Conejo Valley Botanical Garden

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 **C2ZC230Z**

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 for a family membership.

Additional Gift: ___\$25.00 ___\$50.00 ___\$75.00 ___\$100.00 \$_____ Other _____

Membership \$ _____ Donation \$ _____ Total (check payable to CVAS) \$ _____

Mail to: CVAS, P.O. Box 4782, Thousand Oaks, CA 91359 Newsletter will be sent by E-mail.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail address _____