The Kite Call
Ohlone Audubon Society, Inc.
A chapter of the National Audubon Society
Serving Southern Alameda County, CA

January 1-February 14
Volume 43, Number 5

Jan. 6  Membership Meeting, Eden Church Hayward
Jan. 15  Coyote Hills RP
Jan. 18  Marshes and Mudflats of DESFBNWR
Jan. 20  Board Meeting, call Evelyn Cormier
        Deadline for 2/15-3/31 Kite Call
Feb. 3   Membership Meeting, Pleasanton
Feb. 8   Pleasanton Alviso Park
Feb. 12  Lake Elizabeth
Feb. 14-15 San Joaquin Valley Refuges and Little Panoche Rd

Membership Meetings
Date:     January 6  Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place:    Eden Church
          21455 Birch St., Hayward 94541
Topic:    Acorn and Nuttall’s Woodpeckers:
          Living Together in California’s Oak Woodlands
Presenter: Steve Shunk
Both the Acorn and Nuttall’s Woodpeckers maintain strong
populations in California, and they often occupy identical habi-
tats. Their life-styles, however, are quite different. Join Oregon
naturalist and woodpecker expert Steve Shunk as he opens a
window into the lives of California’s two most characteristic
woodpecker species. Steve will discuss the feeding, breeding, and
social behaviors of the Acorn and Nuttall’s Woodpeckers, and he
will share insights on niche partitioning between the two species.
He will also cover anatomical and other morphological differ-
ences between these two populations and how these shape their
respective life-styles.
Steve Shunk has studied woodpeckers for the last 10 years
on the east slope of Oregon’s Cascade Mountains and across
the North American continent. In addition to conducting avian
research in his home region, Steve leads birding tours through-
out western North America, and he recently finished writing the
Eden United Church is on the corner of Grove Way and Birch
in Hayward. From Mission Blvd. turn right onto Grove Way.
(Grove Way is off of Mission approximately 7/10th mile north of
“A” Street.) The Church is on the corner of the first block.

Date:     February 3  Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place:    Pleasanton Middle School
          5001 Case Avenue, Pleasanton 94566
Topic:    Breeding Biology of the Orange Bishop &
          Nutmeg Mannikin in Southern California
Presenter: Scott Smithson
In the 1990s, introduced populations of Orange Bishops and
Nutmeg Mannikins in Southern California showed significant
increases, leading to a study of their breeding biology and pest
potential. Scott Smithson will present results from three field sea-
sons with these two interesting species, which occasionally occur
in the Bay Area as escaped cage birds. During the course of the
study, Scott color-banded over 400 birds and studied dozens of
active nests. How do weavers and finches from Africa and Asia
survive in the urban jungles of the Los Angeles Basin? Come
find out how riparian habitat conversion and exotic plants played
a role in supporting these naturalized bird populations.
Scott Smithson is the new Executive Director of the San
Francisco Bay Bird Observatory. At the conclusion of his talk,
Scott will give an update on the conservation science programs of
the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory.
To reach Pleasanton Middle School, take I-680 toward Pleas-
anton. Exit at Bernal Avenue and head east on Bernal to Case
Avenue. Turn right on Case. The school is located on the right.
Park at the south end of the parking lot. We are meeting in the
library, which is to the left once you enter the campus.

Burrowing Owl Monitors Needed
Ohlone Audubon conservation is forming a working commit-
tee to support BUOW sites. As a committee we’ll activity encour-
age responsible land management with agencies and private
property owners.
Please contact Rich Cimino at rscimino@earthlink.net.—RC

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Field Trips

Jan. 15, Thu., 8:15-11:30, Coyote Hills Regional Park, Leader: Stephanie Floyd, scfloyd2000@yahoo.com and Mona Brauer, tgdgmb@pacbell.net 510.537.0311 $

Walk about two miles through varied habitats looking for rare visitors such as snow goose and blue-gray gnatcatcher. The ponds and wetlands will be full of wintering ducks and shorebirds, and we should see many raptors. Scopes are helpful. Be prepared for cold and rain. Heavy rain cancels.

To reach the park from I-880, take SR-84 west toward the Dumbarton Bridge. Exit at Paseo Padre Parkway (last exit before the bridge), turn right on Paseo Padre and go about a mile. Turn left on Patterson Ranch Road to enter the park. Buy a $5 parking ticket from the machine at the entry kiosk and continue to the end of the road to meet at the parking lot in front of the visitor center.

Jan. 18, Sun., 9 a.m., Marshes and Mudflats of Don Edwards NWR, Leader, Rich Nicholson, rsn711@yahoo.com, 510.483.5481.

Meet at the first parking lot by La Riviere Marsh. We’ll walk the boardwalk and trail through the marsh to search for the many species supported here. Walking is mostly level and easy. From here we’ll move to the salt ponds and the slough by the visitors’ center, stopping by to check on the resident Barn Owl. Moving on, we’ll head to ponds and mudflats by the Dumbarton Bridge. There are a lot of possibilities on this trip. Over 100 species were found on the 2007 Christmas Bird Count. You don’t have to be an expert to join, only an enthusiast.

To get to Don Edwards, take I-880 to Decoto Road/Dumbarton Bridge exit. Go west to Thornton/Paseo Padre exit BEFORE the toll plaza. Turn left and go back over the freeway. It’s about 1/4 mile to the entrance of Don Edwards.

Heavy rain cancels —RN

Feb. 8, Sun., 1 p.m., Pleasanton Alviso Park, Leader: Rich Cimino, rsc1mino@earthlink.net.

This is a chance to take a bird, nature and history walk in the new Pleasanton Alviso Adobe Park located at 3465 Old Foothill Road, Pleasanton 94566. The restored Alviso Adobe was built in 1840 and offers wonderful views of Mount Diablo, Brushy Peak and Cedar Mountain. The new 7-acre hillside park has wonderful 400 year old oak trees which support several species of the oak woodland birds.

At the October 25 grand opening of the park, Rich Cimino represented Ohlone Audubon. He presented “Birds of the Oak Woodlands” using bird skins loaned by the UC Berkeley Museum of Vertebrate Zoology and Biology. He answered questions from well over 125 visitors, reaching many grammar schoolers and adults.

Pleasanton is negotiating with the neighboring landowner for another 22 acres of oak and walnut trees to expand the park.

There is much to learn about the natural and social history of Alviso Adobe. Visiting is a most rewarding experience.

Directions: Take I-680 to the Bernal Ave. exit, go west (toward the ridge). Turn left on Old Foothill Road and proceed about a half mile to the park entrance on the left.

Feb. 12, Thu., 9:00-11:30, Lake Elizabeth, Fremont, Leaders:

Stephanie Floyd, scfloyd2000@yahoo.com and Mona Brauer, tgdgmb@pacbell.net 510.537.0311 $

Walk about two miles on a flat, paved trail around the lake and by Mission Creek looking for visiting loons, cackling geese, raptors, early swallows and selasphorous hummingbirds, and wintering ducks and shorebirds. Be prepared for cold and rain. Heavy rain cancels. Meet on the deck in front of the boathouse.

From I-880, exit at Stevenson Blvd. and go east to Paseo Padre Parkway. Turn right on Paseo Padre, then left on Railway Drive (the first entrance to the park). Park behind the boathouse.

Feb. 14-15, Sat. & Sun., 9 a.m., San Joaquin Valley Refuges and Little Panoche Road, Phil & Pat Gordon, pagpeg@aol.com, 510.538.3550

We are returning to one of our favorite winter birding locations, the San Joaquin refuges and the Little Panoche Valley.

Saturday will be spent brushing up on waterfowl ID, and sorting through ducks and geese for that “rare” one. We will bird O’Neil Forebay first, then the San Luis and Merced refuges. Sunday we will head south to Little Panoche Road, looking for the specialties—Mountain Plovers, Vesper Sparrows—and lots of raptors. Meet each morning at the O’Neil Forebay.

To reach the O’Neil Forebay parking area, take I-5 south to Santa Nella, then south on SR-33. We are planning to have dinner at the Wool Growers Inn, a Basque restaurant in Los Banos.

Campers can spend the night at the Basalt Campground at San Luis Reservoir. Motels in the Santa Nella area include Motel-6, 209.826.6644, and the Holiday Express, 209.826.8282. For more information give Phil or Pat a call. Trip will go rain or shine. Only heavy flooding cancels.

Future Class

In March, Rich Cimino will teach Beginning Birding for Livermore Adult Education. The class will start on Tuesday evenings, beginning March 4 and continuing weekly through March 18. Students will be invited to join the instructor in the field on intervening Saturdays. A second class will start April 20. Register on line at: www.livermoreadulted.org.

—RC

GAS at Alviso Adobe 10/25/08
**Duck Stamps for Habitat**

This note was a contribution to the Central Valley Birds listserve. I believe the sentiments and recommendations are appropriate for our membership. The author offered to buy stamps at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area and deliver them to members of the Central Valley Birders, an offer we are unlikely to accept. The stamps are available at Fish and Game, most gun stores and the US Post Office locally and at usps.com/ at cost. The stamp program brings in lots of money for conservation. A similar program, e.g., adding a small amount to birding equipment (e.g., binoculars) received lukewarm support from birders and active antipathy from sellers:

“For those of you who don’t hunt birds and don’t know hunters well, the idea of purchasing hunting stamps might not be something you’d think of doing. Hunters have to purchase a hunting license, but also must affix special stamps to the license in order to hunt. These stamps support purchase and maintenance of habitat.

“Waterfowl hunters must buy a federal duck stamp. This year’s is a painting of a pair of Northern Pintails. It costs $15 and can be purchased at U.S. Post Offices (Davis, CA has them) or can be ordered on line at www.duckstamp.com. It may take a while to arrive, if that’s an issue. If you sign the front of the stamp it can be used as a season pass to any National Wildlife Refuge (e.g. Sacramento NWR). To date, stamp sales have provided $700 million to purchase 5.2 million wetland acres for the National Wildlife Refuge System.

“In California, waterfowl hunters must also purchase a California Duck Stamp. This year’s is a painting of Mallards rising from a pond. It costs $16.80 from vendors such as sporting goods stores, but is $16.00 from Fish and Game directly (at the License and Revenue Branch or at the Hunter Check Station at Yolo WA and other state Type A Wildlife Areas).

“Upland game hunters must purchase a California Upland Game Bird Stamp in order to hunt quail, pheasants, doves, etc. The stamp is usually beautiful, but this year is ugly. Nonetheless, the money goes to the Game Bird Heritage program for habitat enhancement. That stamp costs $7.90 from a vendor, or $7.50 from Fish and Game, as above.”

**Birding Class**

Alice Hoch’s January 2009 Birding Field Trips class begins Jan. 6 and continues through Feb. 3. Her birding class is different because it consists of tutoring during actual birding, rather than sitting through lectures.

The classes will bird a different excellent birding site on five Tuesdays from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm.

Alice has been teaching Birding Field Trips for over 33 yrs. and is an active member of Ohlone Audubon Society. Her classes are filled with friendly, helpful people at all levels from absolute beginner to very experienced. Many Audubon members have taken and are taking her classes.

We would love to have you join us!

Class size is limited to 15, so register early.

Questions about class and registration information:

Contact Alice at 510-657-0475 or amhoch@aol.com —AH

**Homeschoolers’ Guide**

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology has just released its newly revised, free, Homeschoolers Guide to Project FeederWatch.

For more than 20 years, Project FeederWatch has been an easy, fun way for children to learn about birds and strengthen their skills in observation, identification, research, computation, writing, creativity, and more. FeederWatchers keep track of the numbers and kinds of birds at their feeders through the winter and report what they see to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

The Homeschoolers Guide to Project FeederWatch will guide you through bird-related activities that promote learning across many disciplines, including science, math, history, and the arts. Examples of these activities include:

* Natural history: Observe and research a birds behavior and life cycle
* Math: Calculate average seed consumption rate and graph data
* Writing: Keep a nature journal to write stories and poetry
* Geography: Research the geographic ranges of birds
* Art: Keep a feeder-bird sketch book or create a papier mache mask

To download the Homeschoolers Guide to Project FeederWatch, visit www.FeederWatch.org and click on the Education/Home School button. You’ll be able to download the PDF in low (2.2MB) or high (6.7MB) resolutions.

You may choose to use the free guide as a stand-alone resource, or sign up for Project FeederWatch to submit the data you gather. If you would like to be a project participant, the signup fee is $12 for members of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, $15 for nonmembers. There are discounts for group participation.

——CLO

**Condors = Canaries?**

At Ohlone’s April, 2008 membership meeting, John Moir described the California Condor’s dramatic rescue from the brink of extinction and the ongoing battle to preserve this iconic bird. Carol Lyke points out that you can read his new article, “Condors in the Coal Mine” in the September 9, 2008 issue of the online Smithsonian magazine. It details how the presence of lead in prey (such as deer/elk) that has been killed by lead bullets, is found in humans that eat the animals. Studies are ongoing in North Dakota and other states. He sums up the situation: “Like canaries in a coal mine, the condors are acting as sentinels, providing a warning for anyone eating hunter-shot game. This ancient bird is telling us to pay attention and to be careful.”

To read the article, go to http://tinyurl.com/69kk8q or, search for “John Moir Smithsonian Magazine”. —CL

**Membership**

Ohlone sends a warm welcome and thank you to the following new and renewing chapter members:

Mona Brauer, M. Brower, Loree Clavell, Patti Cole, Loyd Davis, Roger and Betty Fahey, Jean P. Jones, Terry Preston, Mr. and Mrs. Gail Stanton, Jo Wang, Joe Wiley, Faye and Lee Younker

Your support is greatly appreciated. —PAG
**Field Observations: November-early December 2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>DATE(S)</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>LOCALITY</th>
<th>OBS.</th>
<th>REMARKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Snow Goose</td>
<td>11/28; 12/3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>HAYWARD: Shoreline</td>
<td>BD; BR</td>
<td>San Lorenzo Trail: Radio Towers Hill near Frank's Dump West pond; w/ Canada and Cackling Geese. Reached from the end of West Winton Ave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross's Goose</td>
<td>12/2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>FREMONT: Lake Elizabeth</td>
<td>AH+c, EC</td>
<td>In the soccer fields between the tennis court parking lot and the ball fields w/ Canada Geese.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cackling (Aleutian) Goose</td>
<td>12/3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>HAYWARD: Radio Tower Hills</td>
<td>BR</td>
<td>Now delisted as Endangered Species. Seen increasingly throughout this region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hooded Merganser</td>
<td>11/22</td>
<td>1 pr.</td>
<td>FREMONT: NILES: Alameda Creek</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>Pair seen with newly arrived Common Goldeneyes (1 m. &amp; 3 f.). Also 2 Spotted Sandpipers here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hooded Merganser</td>
<td>11/27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>LIVERMORE: Greenville Rd.</td>
<td>AE</td>
<td>Pond at south end of Greenfield Rd. near gate to Charles R. Winery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hooded Merganser</td>
<td>11/30</td>
<td>1 f.</td>
<td>LIVERMORE: Brushy Peak pond</td>
<td>ES</td>
<td>In a ranch pond along West Loop Trail at east leg. Seen with Buffleheads (7) and imm. Cooper's Hawk at pond edge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Merganser</td>
<td>11/4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>FREMONT: NILES: Alameda Creek</td>
<td>AH+c</td>
<td>Large number, likely the result of successful nesting within the ALA Creek watershed. (This duck is a cavity nester.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Fulmar (Dark)</td>
<td>11/29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>MORRO BAY: Morro Strand SB</td>
<td>SLO Co., P&amp;P</td>
<td>Flying with Black-vented Shearwaters (see BVSh, 11/29).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown Pelican</td>
<td>11/3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FREMONT: Quarry Lakes RP</td>
<td>AH</td>
<td>Very unusual here. The largest numbers of these Mexican migrants are being seen this year along our coast. Watch inland waterways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Bittern</td>
<td>11/29; 12/2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FREMONT: Lake Elizabeth</td>
<td>SF; CJ, BD,; JW; AH+c, EC</td>
<td>Rarely seen in S. ALA Co. (uncommon and secretive). In a newly developed marsh on the east side of Lake Elizabeth. Good views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peregrine Falcon</td>
<td>12/2</td>
<td>1 imm.</td>
<td>HAYWARD: 1922 Hillsdale St. yard</td>
<td>PEG, RM, DO</td>
<td>Second sighting (since 1991). Soaring in a thermal above the yard w/ Sharp-shinned Hawk Turkey Vultures (4) and 3+ Swallow sp. (white bellied) - 3:15 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peregrine Falcon</td>
<td>12/2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FREMONT: Central Park</td>
<td>AH</td>
<td>Flew across small pond (See AmBi. 11/29 above). Calling (unsolicited?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sora</td>
<td>12/2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FREMONT: Lake Elizabeth</td>
<td>AH+c</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Snow Goose Festival**

The tenth Snow Goose Festival of the Pacific Flyway is set for Chico, Jan. 22-25. Over 60 field trips, presentations and workshops are offered. The festival starts with a Wildlife Art Reception on Friday January 23. Ed Harper will be the keynote speaker at the Saturday night banquet and silent auction.

The weekend events at Festival Headquarters include free events for the entire family, educational exhibits and displays, vendors of binoculars to bird feeders, Junior Naturalist activities, and live presentations about owls, hawks, and native reptiles.

Contact and register:
530.34 5.1865
info@snowgoosefestival.org
www.snowgoosefestival.org

---SGF

**Bertillons Honored**

In October, two of OAS board members received accolades from the community of Hayward. Evelyn and Helen describe it as follows:

Jackie and Allen Bertillion were honored at the annual Hayward Volunteer Dinner. This dinner was established about 30 years ago to recognize the wonderful Hayward area volunteers who help the community provide services that would not otherwise be available due to local entities’ tight budgets and shortage of staff personnel.

Allen and Jackie have their fingers in a lot of pies, not only in Hayward, but also work tirelessly on projects including the Oakland Museum White Elephant Sale and the Children’s Hospital Auxiliary.

—EC, HS
## Field Observations: November-early December 2008

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<tr>
<td>Black Oystercatcher</td>
<td>11/25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ALAMEDA: Ballena Cove</td>
<td>AH+c</td>
<td>Also in nearby Crab Cove were Red-throated and Common Loons among other spp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Knot</td>
<td>12/3</td>
<td>several</td>
<td>HAYWARD: SLZ Trail mudflats</td>
<td>BR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock Sandpiper</td>
<td>11/30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SANTA CRUZ: Rocky shore SCZ Co.</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td>Very uncommon, but very local.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurasian Collared-Dove</td>
<td>11/27</td>
<td>4; 9</td>
<td>LIVERMORE: Mines Rd.; Cross Rd.</td>
<td>AE</td>
<td>Near where Art reported the first (verified-wild) ECDs for ALA Co., at MP 1.3 on Mines Rd.(4); 1/4 mi. N.of Tesla Rd. on Cross RD. (9 is the largest number seen yet). Reported spread from populations first introduced in Florida - fast expanding through North America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hairy Woodpecker</td>
<td>12/1</td>
<td>1 m.</td>
<td>HAYWARD: 1922 Hillsdale Street</td>
<td>PEG</td>
<td>Calling and foraging in walnut tree. Unusual here (1 - 2 per year).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barn Swallow</td>
<td>12/3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>HAYWARD: Inland Shoreline Marsh</td>
<td>BR</td>
<td>One of only 3 ever seen here in Nov. (BR).(-- should be in Argentina - PEG).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Bluebird</td>
<td>11/14</td>
<td>1 m.</td>
<td>LIVERMORE: Patterson Pass Rd.</td>
<td>SF</td>
<td>Infrequent winterers in/near hills surrounding San Joaquin and Sacramento Valleys. Near Charles R. Winery gate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phainopepla</td>
<td>11/27</td>
<td>1 m.</td>
<td>LIVERMORE: Greenville Rd.</td>
<td>AE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITE-THROATED SPARROW</td>
<td>11/30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>HAYWARD (NW): Yard feeder</td>
<td>DB</td>
<td>Quick (3-5 minutes) feeder bird, re-visiting (when?). Likely hatched in Canada.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lapland Longspur</td>
<td>11/30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>HAYWARD: Shoreline</td>
<td>PD</td>
<td>Found ca.1 p. m. Perches on/near rolled straw erosion control bale beside the paved trail between W. Winton &amp; SF Bay (San Lorenzo Trail EBRPD).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great-tailed Grackle</td>
<td>12/3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>HAYWARD: Depot Rd. (West end)</td>
<td>BR</td>
<td>Seen around city ponds. Now known to breed along shoreline. However, none found on CBC 2007.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbreviations: m. = male, f. = female, imm. = immature, Reg. = Regional, N = north(ern), W. = west(ern), EBRPD = East Bay Regional Park District, SBO Co. = San Luis Obispo County, SCZ = Santa Cruz, (all other records, Alameda County), sp. = species, spp. = species (plural), CBC = Christmas Bird Count, EBRPD = East Bay Regional Park District, RP = Regional Park, SB = State Beach, fide = information source, ad. = adult, ca. = circa, about, nr. = near, w/ = with, MP = mile post, standard abbreviations often not translated.


Report Observations for the Period: mid-Dec. 2008 to early Jan. 2009 to:
Phil Gordon, 1922 Hillsdale St., Hayward, CA 94541 510.538.3550; or PAGPEG@aol.com

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**Annual Message**

Soon after receiving this Kite Call there will be a changing of the guard in Washington D.C. This event brings with it a renewed hope for protecting the environment and all the wildlife as well as the rest of us. We will need to be diligent in our efforts even though the economy is in a slump.

The good thing about bird-watching is that it does not take much more than the interest in getting out there and enjoying the out-of-doors.

Ohlone Audubon is blessed with a great number of willing volunteers that keep us all moving forward. We do need to fill a couple of vacancies because two of our members moved out of the area. We are looking for a person to do the Ways & Means sales at our membership meetings and we are looking for a person willing to head up the Field Trips committee. There are a goodly number of willing assistants in the group so it isn’t a go-it-alone kind of job. We hope you will consider either of these positions for the remainder of the year.

In these challenging times, we wish you a happy and prosperous New Year. One way we can add some cheer to our lives is to take our binoculars and scopes, go out in the field and enjoy the birds.

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