Meetings

Date: Jan. 3  Time: 7:30 p. m.
Topic: Acorn Woodpecker Lifestyle
Presenter: Ruth Troetschler
Location: Math-Science Nucleus
4074 Eggers Drive, Fremont 94536

Have you ever wondered about those noisy, colorful woodpeckers that live in our oak woodland? Why are they so common? Do they eat anything other than acorns? Why do they sometimes make holes in our houses? How can we prevent that damage while still protecting the birds?

Ruth Troetschler holds a masters degree in biological science, and has studied Acorn Woodpeckers for seven years. She will answer all these questions, as well as give us tips on the relationship of oaks to the protection of this colorful species in a presentation with illustrations and sound.

We will meet in the Children’s Natural History Museum. Come a little early and check out the exhibits—the Wes Gordon Fossil Museum, the Miller Planetarium, mineral and animal collections, and the Hall of Small Wonders. The museum is managed by the Math Science Nucleus (http://msnucleus.org). It is located on the corner of Fremont Blvd. and Eggers Drive, about 1/2 mile north of Mowry Ave, across the street from Washington High School in central Fremont.

—PAG

From I-880N, take the Mowry exit; go east on Mowry 1-1/2 miles to Fremont Blvd. Turn left and go 1/2 mile. Turn left on Eggers Dr. and left again into the first parking lot. From I-880S, take the Thornton Avenue exit heading east (left) and go one mile. Turn right on Fremont Blvd and go one mile. Make a right onto Eggers Drive, then a left into the second driveway. From I-680, take the 238/Mission Blvd exit toward Hayward and go two miles. Turn left on Stevenson Blvd., right onto Paseo Parkway, then left onto Eggers Drive. Just past Fremont Blvd turn left into the first parking lot.

Date: February 7  Time: 7:30 p. m.
Topic: Sunshine Daydream: Barnstorming Alaska
Presenter: Glen Tepke
Location: San Leandro Library, Karp Room
300 Estudillo Ave, 94577

Glen Tepke’s presentation will chronicle a two-week birding marathon across Alaska—from the glacier-studded fjords and boreal forests of the south coast to the rolling tundra of Beringia, the vanishing pack ice of the Arctic Ocean, and the fog-swept sea cliffs of the Pribilof Islands. Using his and his companion’s photos, Glen will illustrate the unique birds and dramatic landscapes of The Last Frontier, highlighting the threatened species that live at the epicenter of global warming. Along the way he’ll address such burning questions as: Where the heck is Beringia? Can you really photograph birds by the light of the midnight sun? Where did all the Kittlitz’s Murrelets go, and why should I care? And, is Arctic Pizza really the best restaurant in Barrow?

A recreational birder and photographer living in Oakland, Glen is particularly interested in using his photos to promote conservation of endangered species and has contributed to the publications and websites of Golden Gate Audubon, Audubon California, National Audubon, American Bird Conservancy, and many other organizations. Glen’s photos have also appeared in several field guides including the recent Stokes, Smithsonian, and National Wildlife Federation.

To reach San Leandro Main Library from I-580, take the Estudillo exit. Follow Estudillo to library on the right. From I-880, take the Davis St. exit, head east, passing under BART tracks. Go through light at E. 14th St (Davis becomes Callan). Continue 1-1/2 blocks to library on right. The parking lot can be entered from both Callan or Estudillo. Meet in the Karp Room.

Bring a cup to enjoy beverages after meetings. —J&AB
Field Trips

Jan. 8, Sun., 9:00 a. m. Arrowhead Marsh. Leader: Phil Gordon, 510.538.3550, pagpeg@aol.com

A high tide of 7.4 feet will hit Arrowhead Marsh about 11:00. That should create good viewing opportunities. We’ll get there a bit earlier and, as the tide comes in, be watching for rails, certainly Clapper, with a chance for Sora and Virginia. Ducks and shorebirds should be plentiful. The area is completely paved, so if it’s raining, we’ll go anyhow as rain and high tide are supposed to be optimum conditions for seeing rails. Just wear your boots and Gortex! This is a wheelchair accessible bird walk. Bring snacks if you like. Beginners always welcome. Restrooms are available.

Exit I-880 at Hegenberger. Go west toward the airport then turn right on Pardee. Make a left at Swan and then right into Arrowhead Marsh driveway, which is part of the Martin Luther King Regional Park. Follow the entry road all the way to the end. However, on the way to the parking area, drive slowly and keep an eye out for Burrowing Owls on the berms to the right.

Jan. 21, Sat., 8:30-11:30 a. m. Shadow Cliffs Regional Recreation Area. Leaders: Kathy Robertson, kaetsdz@aol.com & Steve Huckabone

Wintering waterfowl, Common Gallinules (Moorhens), egrets, herons, grebes and Osprey are found on and around the lakes and ponds, while the trees hold woodpeckers and nut-hatches. Notable sightings in past years have included California Thrasher, Common Loon, Common and Hooded Merganser, Wilson’s Snipe, and Peregrine Falcon. Wide, level trails make walking easy except for one short uphill climb to the levee trail. Beginners welcome. Bring your scope if you have one.

Directions: Take I-580 east to Pleasanton, exit right on Santa Rita Rd., left on Valley Ave., left on Stanley Blvd.. The park entrance is on the right at the first traffic signal. Follow signs to the boat rental—we will meet in the parking lot. Restroom available at meeting location. $6 parking fee. Heavy rain cancels.

Jan. 29, Sun., 9:00 a. m. Wintering Raptors of Sutter Buttes. Leader: Don Schmoldt, bajaowl@gmail.com

In the morning we will drive on West Butte Road looking for Golden Eagles, falcons, Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks and Mountain Bluebirds. At nearby Gray Lodge we will eat lunch, then observe geese and ducks in the afternoon-Eurasian Wigeon is a possibility. Bring water, snacks, and lunch; there are NO rest rooms on this trip until we get to Gray Lodge.

Meet in the town of Sutter at South Butte Market located at the corner of South Butte Road and Acacia Road. Reach Sutter by going east on I-80 to Davis, then go north on SR-113 and SR-99 then turning left on SR-20 (near Yuba City), then right on Acacia Road to South Butte Rd. Sutter is about 7 miles west of Yuba City. An alternate route is to take I-5 to Sacramento to SR-99. Hard rain cancels. Almost all is birding from car; all probably wheel chair accessible.

Gray Lodge has a $4.32 entrance fee per person which is due to Ohlone at beginning of trip. Please see additional information in this newsletter regarding fees to visit Dept. of Fish & Game wildlife areas. Permits are now required in advance. Ohlone will have some of these passes available on this trip.

Feb. 4, Sat., 8:30 a. m. Don Edwards SFBNWR-Fremont. Leaders: Stephanie Floyd, scfloyd2000@yahoo.com & Rich Nicholson, rsn711@yahoo.com

We’ll search the marshes, mudflats, salt ponds and open bay. There’s always a good variety of birds here, including the resident Barn Owl. This field trip features easy walking on mostly paved paths. Restrooms are available. Everyone is welcome to join us for a morning (3-4 hours) of birding. Let’s get outside!

To reach Don Edwards, take I-880 to Decoto Rd./Dumbarton Bridge exit. Take the Thornton/Paseo Padre exit, turn left at the bottom of the ramp and go over the freeway. Turn right at the entrance and park in the first lot on the right. Heavy rain cancels.

Feb. 8, Wed., 9:00 a. m.-11:00 a. m. Lake Elizabeth, Leaders: Sandy Ferreira, sferr224@comcast.net & Stephanie Floyd, scfloyd2000@yahoo.com

Join us for a walk around Lake Elizabeth and Mission Creek. We’ll look for wintering ducks and geese, check out whose roosting on Duck Island, look for some early swallows and much more. From I-880, exit at Stevenson Blvd. and go east to Paseo Padre Parkway. Turn right on Paseo Padre, then left at Baylis Street entrance. Turn right once you drive into enter the park. Drive past the new Water Park and follow the parking lot to the end where you will see 5 large palm trees. We will meet there. Heavy rain cancels.

Access Costs Up

Californians who enjoy visiting the state’s wildlife areas and ecological reserves are reminded that day-use and annual passes are no longer sold at on-site checkpoints. Since October 3, visitors to these areas must make an advance purchase of a $4.32 daily lands pass or a $22.68 annual lands pass, either online at www.dfg.ca.gov/licensing or at one of the California Department of Fish and Game’s 1,500 license agents or license sales offices. (Please note that daily passes purchased online cannot be printed immediately and require mail delivery. If those items are needed immediately, they should be purchased directly from a license agent or at a DFG counter.)

Areas requiring day-use or annual passes for non-hunting visitors include Gray Lodge, Grizzly Island, Los Banos, San Jacinto and Imperial Wildlife Areas, and Elkhorn Slough and Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserves. After providing proof of a pre-paid pass, visitors will be issued a daily entry permit at these areas. Elkhorn Slough Ecological Reserve, is an exception. It will still sell daily and annual passes at its Visitor Center. —CDFG

San Diego Bird Festival

There comes a time every year when I feel a desire to visit a warmer climate. That time usually begins at some point in December and continues until March or later.

The folks in San Diego sympathize, and are offering a second reason to visit in 2012. Their festival begins March 1 and continues through March 4. It features trips, workshops, socials and art classes with varying fees. On Sunday, there are special free events for families. Registration is $10.

For detailed information and registration, on the web, visit SanDiegoAudubon.org/bird festival, or birdfest@cox.net. For not on the web: 858.273.7800

—MB

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—DE
West County Issues

It appears Fremont won’t be able to boast being home to one of the deepest bodies of water in the U.S. Plans to fill the 300 feet deep Dumbarton Quarry pit with water have dried up. The new plans now appear to be refilling this enormous pit with “suitable” fill material. If there are any opportunities for public review or comment we will post the information on our website.

The Fremont Planning Commission received an update on the status of the Patterson Ranch project as required by the Development Agreement in December, 2011. Bioremediation of on-site toxaphene is ongoing and testing is tentatively set to occur in January or February 2012. We still have concerns that the current EPA protocols do not require testing for toxaphene breakdown products that can persist. Some of these breakdown products have been reported to be as toxic as the original toxaphene. There are hopes that some of the lands west of Patterson Slough will be transferred in 2012, but we have also been told this will occur over an extended period of time parcel-by-parcel and not all at once for tax purposes. The fate of the lands between Ardenwood Blvd. and Patterson Slough are still unclear. 10 acres have been proposed for construction of churches and associated parking lots, and somewhere between 32 and 40 acres may be donated to the City of Fremont.

We are still awaiting news of the proposed road widening and tree slashing Caltrans project in scenic Niles Canyon. Alameda Creek Alliance filed a lawsuit and was successful in obtaining a temporary injunction to prevent further destruction of the Niles Canyon ecosystem. To date approximately 100 trees, mostly native, have been cut down and plans to chop down almost 500 more are still lurking. All this tree cutting, road widening and curve straightening is purported to be in the name of increasing safety...one wonders how much driving speeds will increase within the canyon corridor if Caltrans is allowed to proceed.

—CH

Cormier Crossing

Having misplaced my crystal ball I have no startling pronouncements for the coming year. However, there are a number of events to look forward to with anticipation such as our monthly programs and very invigorating field trips. And I hope you each receive a copy of the Alameda County Breeding Bird Atlas in your holiday stocking. As for the bigger picture we will be keeping an eye on a number of environmental issues in the works or looming on the horizon. Our conservation chairs are busy tracking a number of habitat areas that have not yet been resolved. Climate change is going to continue to be something we will be watching carefully, especially as to the impact it could have all along the S F Bay shoreline. The availability of water continues to be an issue that will impact the entire state. Of course all of these happenings impact the birds and how well they are able to be sustained. We are fortunate to live in an area of diverse landscapes which provide us with great opportunities for enjoyment. So if I could find my crystal ball I think it would say that we are fortunate to be living here and appreciating our world of birds.

—Evelyn

Membership Notes

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


—PAG

Donations

We are grateful for the generosity of the following who made contributions to Ohlone Audubon Society.

Ken and Linda Back, Gail and James Bartlett, Liz and Bob Bathgate, Thomas Berry, Mona Brauer, Patricia Brennan, Marilyn Davis, Alvin Dockter, Carol Donohoe, Denis Dugas, John Giles, Elsa Glines, Alan Goggins, Anne Marie Gonsalves, Marie Grubbe, Helen Hancock, Mary Ann Hannon, Charles Hazen, Connie Holm, Jean King, Kimiko Kitayama, Eduardo Kneler, Patricia Lindsey, David Lovejoy, Debra Lovendusly, Lois and Harry Lutz, Pat Mann, Eva Gayle Marion, John Marshall, Laurie Matthews, Susan Mayfield, Michael McDonnell, John Mena, Richard and Betty Milam, Jackie and Alan Mode, Rich Nicholson, Hans Peeters, Treet Pelletier, Tom and Judy Rognlien, Mr, and Mrs. James Scofield, Brenda Senturia, Donna Stanley, Winifred Stribling, Larry Thompson, Irv and Diane Tiessen, Marilyn and George Trabert, John Vincent, Holly Walter, Ken Walters, Joan Wehr, Doris Whitaker, and Anna Wilcox

—PAG

Time to Renew?

Your mailing label answers that question. For example: “Pd Thru 01/1/2012” indicates you are paid thru January 1, 2012. A red “RENEW?” indicates this is your last Kite Call! A “JOIN LOCAL!” indicates you joined National Audubon, but alas, not your local Ohlone chapter. To renew or join Ohlone send a $20 check to Pat Gordon, Membership Chair, 1922 Hillsdale Street, Hayward, CA 94541-5428.

—PAG

“New” Programs Chair

For several months, Pat Gordon has filled in to keep our membership meetings going while Marilyn Trabert guided her daughter through cancer treatments (successfullly!) Pat has performed admirably in that as she did her other duties. She is especially grateful that Marilyn can resume the programs task.
New Bird Records for Alameda County

A first county record SLATY-BACKED GULL was found at Pacific Commons Linear Park in southern Fremont on Saturday, 19 November 2011 by Noah Arthur (fide). Many observers had successful opportunities to see and photograph this fine adult plumaged, visitor from primarily northeastern Asia (Japan, China, Siberia). Nesting now occurs along Alaskan coasts. First wintering California records are quite recent (reports from Half Moon Bay, fide Alvaro Jaramillo). On search for the SBGu, Bob Richmond later (28 Nov.) found a very rare LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL at the same park, which is located at the west end of Auto Mall Parkway (from I-880).

A first county record VERMILION FLYCatcher was photographed and reported by Cedric Duhalde (fide: Amy McDon ald) at Lake Elizabeth, Fremont Central Park on Sunday, 30 Oct. 2011. The sub-adult male VeFl was seen and photographed by many (see a reference below). Last date recorded here was from the very windy Wednesday, 30 Nov. 2011. Photos were posted by many in Listserv: East Bay Birds. One typical photo set can be seen from Juan Benjumea (fide):

http://preview.tinyurl.com/6q95tkh —PEG

Alameda County Breeding Bird Atlas Now Available

The result of three official years of observation and fifteen years of digestion and production became available December 2. If you haven’t pre-ordered or already bought it, you may hope there are some left when you read this. It is a beautiful book and the information is not fifteen years old. New findings are noted in the text, so you can get a glimpse of range expansions as you read it. Range contractions must wait for a future edition, as they require another concentrated effort, perhaps by a new generation of citizen scientists.

The price has been lowered to $22 for the general public, $20 for members of Ohlone and GGAS. Another attractive feature.

Direct orders and questions to Pat Gordon, 510.538.3550.

Bird Learning

Alice Hoch’s next Birding Field Trips class runs from January 10 through January 31, on four consecutive Tuesdays.

Alice’s birding class is different because it consists of tutoring during actual birding, rather than sitting through lectures. The class will bird a different excellent birding site each Tues. for 4 weeks from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Alice has been teaching Birding Field Trips for over 36 years 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 Ohlone 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.

For questions about class and registration information, contact Alice at 510.657.0475 or amhoch@aol.com —AH

Drawing for a Hans Peeters Painting

Here is your chance to win a framed, original painting by world-renowned artist and birder Hans Peeters. The beautiful painting portrays a great-blue heron perched on a log. Other prizes included are tickets to Disneyland, tickets to Beach Blanket Babylon, and numerous gift cards!

The drawing proceeds will benefit the wildlife education and rehabilitation programs at Sulphur Creek Nature Center. To purchase tickets you can come into the center or simply send a check payable to HARD to:

Att: Rose
Sulphur Creek Nature Center
1801 D Street
Hayward, CA 94541

Tickets are $2.00 each or a book of twelve for $20. Be sure to include your name, address and phone number with your order. Volunteers will write your name on the tickets and send you a receipt. The drawing will be held on March 29. You do not need to be present to win.

—sulphurcreek@haywardrec.org

View the Kite Call on the website OhloneAudubon.org to enjoy the painting and photographs in color

©2011 Jerry Ting Slaty-backed Gull Pacific Commons Found 11/19 by Noah Arthur

©2011 Jerry Ting Vermilion Flycatcher Lake Elizabeth Found 11/by Cedric Duhalde
Great Bird Count 2/17-20

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It’s free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds.”

As movie-goers watch the stars of The Big Year in their quest to count birds, some may be motivated to try the hobby for the first time. The annual Great Backyard Bird Count, [http://www.birdcount.org/] is the perfect opportunity. The event is hosted by Audubon [http://www.audubon.org/], the Cornell Lab of Ornithology [http://www.birds.cornell.edu/], and Canadian partner Bird Studies Canada [http://www.birdscanada.org/]. The results provide a snapshot of the whereabouts of more than 600 bird species.

Anyone can participate in this free event and no registration is needed. Watch and count birds for at least 15 minutes on any day of the count, February 17-20, 2012. Enter your results at www.birdcount.org, where you can watch as the tallies grow across the continent. The four-day count typically records more than 10 million observations.

“When thousands of people all tell us what they’re seeing, we can detect patterns in how birds are faring from year to year,” said Janis Dickinson, director of Citizen Science at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. “The Great Backyard Bird Count is a perfect example of Citizen Science,” says Audubon Chief Scientist, Gary Langham. “Like Audubon’s Christmas Bird Count, volunteers help us with data year after year, providing scientific support that is the envy of many institutions. It’s also a lot of fun.”

“We’re finding that more people are taking part in our bird count programs every year—and the more that take part, the better it is for the birds,” says Richard Cannings, Senior Projects Officer for Bird Studies Canada.

The 2011 GBBC brought in more than 92,000 bird checklists submitted by participants from across the United States and Canada. Altogether, bird watchers identified 596 species with 11.4 million bird observations. Results from the 2011 GBBC included:

- Increased reports of Evening Grosbeaks, a species that has been declining;
- A modest seasonal movement of winter finches farther south in their search for food;
- The Eurasian Collared-Dove was reported from Alaska for the first time, more evidence of an introduced species rapidly expanding its range.

Although it’s called the Great “Backyard” Bird Count, the count extends well beyond backyards. Lots of participants choose to head for national parks, nature centers, urban parks, nature trails, or nearby sanctuaries. For more information, including bird-ID tips, instructions, and past results, visit [www.birdcount.org/](http://www.birdcount.org/).

The count also includes a photo contest and a prize drawing for participants who enter their bird checklists online.

It costs nothing. Do it! —GBBC

Seem Warmer to You?

Taking much from a publication, “Climate Change and Conservation” by PRBO, [www.prbo.org/cms/docs/climatechange/](http://www.prbo.org/cms/docs/climatechange/), I’ll try to summarize what people believe about what to expect in a few years. The publication describes changes in migration timing, ocean variability, mismatch in food and nesting of Pacific seabirds, and altered bird distributions over the past few years, and projects their course over the next few years, using projections of global (globalchange.gov) and California (climatechange.ca.gov) climate.

With respect to migration timing, more than half the 21 migratory songbirds studied experienced climate-related changes in arrival and departure dates. For instance, Wilson’s Warblers are arriving earlier in the spring. In a study, by the American Bird Conservancy, [www.abcbirds.org/newsandreports/special_reports/select “act for songbirds”), Wilson’s is number 27 of the largest population declines over the last 40 years at 45%. [Top of that list was Black-chinned Sparrow at 89%, followed by Cerulean Warbler at 83%.) So the early bird doesn’t get an advantage in the survival lottery.

Ocean temperature variability has been observed to affect the amount of prey species, hence nesting success of sea birds. For instance Cassin’s Auklets were hit badly in 2005-2006 because of the lack of krill due to delayed and weakened ocean upwelling. This was the extreme effect of the variations over 35 years’ observations. Some species, e.g., Common Murres haven’t been able to adjust to the timing changes, producing chicks when the food supply is sparse.

The distribution of bird species has changed in concert with climate and vegetation changes. PRBO has projected range changes based on their observations. Some will expand their range, most will contract and become less abundant. [prbo.org/climatetemaps) Some species, though projected to expand, may be adversely affected by human population growth.

PRBO projects that more than half of California could be occupied by new bird communities, due to individual species’ differing geographic shifts. In some areas, groups of species may not have a present-day analog.

Dr. John Wiens, PRBO Chief Conservation Science Officer, is quoted “Birds are nature’s barometers. If birds occur in different combinations in the future, it’s likely that other organisms such as insects and plants will as well.” We may find our xeriscapes need water and our tomatoes stunted by the climate.

Sea level changes point toward salt water pushing inland, drowning tidal wetlands and pushing species to new higher, shallower wetlands. We might not have so far to drive to find Black Rails (or maybe we’ll have to drive farther.)

PRBO uses the observations and projections to offer scientific guidance to attempts to preserve and restore habitats. They have ideas about minimizing impacts of climate change on riparian birds, fish and other wild things. They work with National Forests to raise the biodiversity and water yield of mountain meadows.

The organization is revising the “California Species of Special Concern” to account for expect changes in climate to produce “California bird species of future concern.”

I recommend checking out the links in this note. —DE
Please renew your Ohlone membership by the date shown on your address label. Direct questions about Kite Call Delivery to the Membership Chair.