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

Calendar

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Membership Meetings

Date:          October 1
Time:          7:30 p.m.
Location:      Pleasanton Middle School, 5001 Case Ave, 94566
Topic:         Birds of the Sierra Nevada
Presenter:     Ed Pandolfino

Ed will take you on a virtual transect of the range from the oak savanna in the west, through serene conifer forests of the west side, up into the majestic alpine regions, and down the steep eastern escarpment to the pinyon/juniper woodlands and open steppes of the Great Basin. Along the way we’ll see and hear the stunning diversity of birds that make the Sierra their home. We’ll learn about which birds are in decline and which are expanding and increasing. He will address some mysteries surrounding some of those species and discuss how birders can help to solve them.

Ed Pandolfino is President of Western Field Ornithologists, a Regional Editor (Northern California) for North American Birds, and has published more than two dozen articles on status and distribution of western birds. He co-authored with Ted Beedy, Birds of the Sierra Nevada: Their Natural History, Status, and Distribution, illustrated by Keith Hansen and published by U.C. Press in May 2013.

To reach Pleasanton Middle School, from I-680 take the Bernal Avenue exit and head east on Bernal to Case Avenue. Turn right on Case. The school is located on the right, about midway down the street. Park at the south end of the parking lot. We will meet in the library, which is to the left once you enter the campus.

Date:          November 5
Time:          7:30 p.m.
Location:      Casa Sandoval
               1200 Russell Way, Hayward, CA 94541
Topic:         Adventures of a Nature Photographer
Presenter:     Eleanor Briccetti

Award-winning wildlife photographer Eleanor Briccetti will share her experiences of photographing birds and other wildlife in places such as Africa, Ecuador, and Antarctica. She will conclude with photographs of some of her favorite North American birds. Her presentation will feature photos of birds unique to various areas, including the Painted Bunting, Great Kiskadee, and Blue Grosbeak in Texas, the Crowned Crane, Little Bee-eater, and Lilac-breasted Roller in Kenya, and, from several trips to the Falkland Islands, South Georgia Island, and Antarctica, King, Adelie, and Gentoo penguins.

Casa Sandoval is on the corner of 2nd and Russell. From “A” or “B” Streets in Hayward, turn north on 2nd St. and follow it to Russell. Here’s a link to directions on Casa Sandoval’s website:
http://www.casasandoval.com/ —MLT

Post Presentation Socials

Bring your reusable cup to enjoy finger snacks provided by volunteers, liquids provided by OAS and conversation provided by fellow attendees. —J&AB

Field Trips

October 19, Saturday, 8:30 - 11:30
Coyote Hills Regional Park

Leaders: Jerry Ting and Vicki Robinson
fieldtrips@ohloneaudubon.org

Fall is one of the best times to bird Coyote Hills. Winter ducks and sparrows will be arriving, the raptors will be back, and migrant shorebirds and songbirds will be passing through. Last year on this date we had Pine Siskins and a Magnolia Warbler at the park! More than 60 species are possible. Come help us find them! Rain cancels. Meet at the Visitor Center.

To reach the park from I-880 take SR-84 towards the Dumbarton Bridge. Exit at Paseo Padre Parkway, turn right on Paseo Padre and go about one mile. Turn left on Patterson Ranch Road to enter the park. $5 parking fee, free to East Bay Parks annual pass holders.
November 2, Sat., 8:00 - noon
Ward Creek Canyon, Hayward
Leaders: Brenda Senturia and Vicki Robinson
fieldtrips@ohloneaudubon.org

The trail along Ward Creek in Hayward runs for about 3 miles through a heavily wooded greenbelt and offers the possibility of locating some hard-to-find species: Pacific Wren, Varied Thrush, and Golden-crowned Kinglet. We will also look for Hairy Woodpecker, Brown Creeper, Red-breasted Sapsucker, and wintering warblers. We will meet at the upper end of the greenbelt and hike down, leaving the trail to visit East Avenue Park on the way. Scopes will be a liability unless you are very agile. A walking stick would be helpful for a few steep areas. Bring some snacks for a restroom break at East Avenue Park. Heavy rain cancels.

To reach the starting point, from Mission Blvd (SR-238) in Hayward, take Carlos Bee east up the hill toward Cal State East Bay. Pass the entrance to the college and take the next left on Hayward, take Carlos Bee east up the hill toward Cal State East Bay. Pass the entrance to the college and take the next left on Campus Drive (traffic light). Drive downhill and at the bottom of a sweeping curve turn right on Oakes. We will meet at the greenbelt trail head on Oakes Drive at the junction with Campus Drive. We will then carpool to the upper end of the trail.

November 16, Saturday, 8:30 - noon
Pacific Commons Linear Park & Coyote Creek Lagoon
Leaders: Brenda Senturia and Rich Nicholson
fieldtrips@ohloneaudubon.org

Fremont’s Pacific Commons Linear Park is a productive winter birding site. The ponds are excellent for many waterfowl species. Waders such as American Bittern inhabit the pond edges and wetlands. The fields are productive for wintering sparrows and possibly Tri-colored Blackbirds or even a stray Yellow-headed Blackbird. We have a good chance at seeing interesting raptors. Snow, Ross’s and Cackling Geese often visit this time of year.

To reach the park, exit I-880 in Fremont at Auto Mall Parkway. Go west on Auto Mall Parkway for a mile to a small pull-off area on the left at an entrance sign, and park along the road. After birding Pacific Commons, we will carpool about 3 miles south along Cushing Parkway and Fremont Blvd. to Coyote Creek Lagoon trail for some wetlands and salt marsh birding. This area is good for shorebirds and gulls. Bring a scope if you have one. Heavy rain cancels. No facilities at Pacific Commons, but we will make a stop en route to Coyote Creek.

November 20, Wednesday, 10:00 - 1:00
Berkeley Pier and Environs
Leaders: Jim and Linda Hargrove
fieldtrips@ohloneaudubon.org

Join us on a walk out the Berkeley Pier, about one mile round trip, in search of Brandt’s and Pelagic Cormorants, loons, shorebirds, and uncommon visitors like Red-Necked Grebe and Parasitic Jaeger. We’ll also check out the marina and visit Cesar Chavez park, if time allows, to look for Burrowing Owls. Scopes are helpful. Be prepared for cold and wind. Heavy and pervasive rain cancels. Beginners welcome.

To reach the pier, go west from I-80 on University Avenue in Berkeley. Park along Seawall Drive facing the bay or in one of the parking lots off of University Avenue near the marina, and meet at the foot of the pier.
OHLINE AUDUBON SOCIETY PHOTO BIRD-A-THON

Outstanding birder/photographers Jerry Ting and Davor Desancic will pair up on October 16 for a sunrise to sunset birding and photography blitz in the East Bay, from Fremont to Berkeley, identifying and photographing as many species as possible. Their goal is to find at least 140 species and photograph no fewer than 120 species. Cheer them on and contribute to Ohlone Audubon with a supporting donation! Pledge an amount per bird or donate a set amount. Every person who donates $50 or more will have the opportunity to select one 8x10 print from 40 images chosen by Jerry and Davor from their extensive, magnificent photography collections. The top five donors will have a special opportunity to attend a workshop at Coyote Hills RP where Jerry and Davor will share photography and birding tips as well as take some photos in the field. All donations are greatly appreciated!

Good luck to Jerry and Davor on their Photo-Bird-A-Thon!

Tax-deductible donations can be made via PayPal by clicking on the “DONATE” button under “JOIN” on ohloneaudubon.org or by mailing a check. Please indicate that your donation is for the “BIRD-A-THON”. You may pledge per species by filling out the form below and mailing it or by sending the information by email to fieldtrips@ohloneaudubon.org.

Name________________________________________________________
Address______________________________________________________
Phone number__________________________________________________
Pledge per species_______________________________________________

Mail pledge forms or checks payable to Ohlone Audubon Society to: Treasurer, Ohlone Audubon Society, 18492 Capricorn Ct., Castro Valley, CA 94546
Questions? Contact us at fieldtrips@ohloneaudubon.org
Florence LaRiviere
A Tribute to Florence LaRiviere and The Citizen’s Committee to Complete the Refuge
By Joan Morris, Contra Costa Times

Undaunted by the drone of traffic on nearby highways, the distinctive call of an endangered California clapper rail rises from somewhere deep in the LaRiviere salt marsh along the border of Fremont and Newark. The sounds make Florence LaRiviere, the woman for whom the restored marsh was partly named, smile with delight.

Although Florence, in her late 80s and suffering from failing eyesight, sees only glimpses of her beloved marshland, the sound is proof that her 47-year crusade to restore the wetlands, marshes and salt ponds of San Francisco Bay is working.

“It takes persistence,” Florence says. And of that, she has plenty.

Plodding along the freeways that skirt the bay, many of us don’t give much thought to the fragile coastlines, and yet their survival is crucial to the millions of creatures that live in the mud and salty marshes, and the millions more that pass through twice a year on migrations. They also are critical to human survival. The wetlands and marshes are our first line of defense against a rising sea level. They act as sponges, reducing the impact of high tides and floods. They also purify the water.

Almost 85 percent of the bay’s original marshes and shoreline, conservationists say, have been changed by development and commercial salt operations.

Some of the areas have been mined and abandoned to the point that they now resemble moonscapes, vast stretches of encrusted white nothingness. Except, of course, life does exist there, and with the help of Florence and her Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge, life can thrive there.

Florence and her late husband, Philip, cofounded the all-volunteer group in the late 1960s when they saw what was happening. They initially focused on the salt marshes, but realized that the entire bay needed to be preserved and enriched.

The volunteers went door-to-door, handing out fliers and educating the public. They spent countless hours at city planning and council meetings, reading environmental impact statements until their vision blurred, and talking reason to anyone who would listen and quite a few who wouldn’t.

Eventually, U.S. Rep. Don Edwards joined the efforts and got congressional approval to purchase the lands for what would become the first national urban wildlife refuge, what was later named the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

The result of their work is a joy to see. The “wildlife island in an urban sea” supports migratory birds and year-round residents. It also is home to the endangered salt marsh harvest mouse, which drinks salt water and lives on a diet of pickleweed -- a salt marsh stalwart. Those moonscapes have been transformed into lush marsh, rippling with life.

The work is far from finished. The Citizens Committee’s goal is to restore the available bay shoreline and marshes to wildlife habitat.

For years, the Citizens Committee—still small and still dedicated—has been trying to bring an area known as Area 3 and Area 4, Whistling Wings and Pintail Duck clubs in Newark, into the refuge, but developers have plans for luxury homes and a golf course.

The group has mounted a lawsuit seeking to protect these valuable lands. It is a fight they will not give up on, even though it seems a never-ending battle.

If you’re interested in the Citizens Committee preservation efforts, it could use your help and your tax-deductible donations. Go to http://www.bayrefuge.org or mail to P.O. Box 50991, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

Joan Morris’ column runs five days a week in print and online. Contact her at jmorris@bayareanewsgroup.com

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This handsome Virginia Rail was a new backyard bird for Jim Altman of Livermore in mid-July. Jim lives in a part of town not usually associated with shorebirds.

Two photos by Davor Desancic above and two by Jerry Ting below to give you an idea of what kind of picture you can receive for a donation of $50 or more to the Bird-A-Thon.
Solar v. Raptors

The County Supervisors Transportation Committee received a plan from the Alameda County Planning Dept. (ACP) that offers reasonable protection to the raptors using the Mountain House Road corridor for foraging. They recommend a three mile buffer at the base of the Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area on which no solar facilities can be sited. They also offered 1000 acres of important farm lands (irrigated fields) to the east for solar development. Alameda County only has 3000 acres of such important farm lands left in inventory. I spoke before the AC Board of Supervisors asking that the 1000 acres be reduced to 500 acres. Supervisor Haggerty agreed and asked ACP Planning reduce their 1000 acre recommendation to 500 acres. The ACP Solar was “approved” and is moving on to the County Agriculture Committee for discussion. It will return to the AC Transportation Committee for another public hearing. If passed, a CEQA hearing will be held. The final step is to move to the Board of Supervisors for a vote on acceptance. It may be another nine months before this new zoning regulation is finalized.

The East Alameda County Zoning Board dealt a blow to raptor conservation and Bay Area Audubon Societies when they approved a Conditional Use Permit for winter operation for one wind turbine operator within the Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area. The operator is the Altamont Winds Inc. The results of this decision will have a significant impact on migrating Golden Eagles which use the Altamont Pass area during the winter months.

Golden Gate Audubon and Ohlone Audubon are collaborating on training docents to conduct Burrowing Owl surveys along the San Francisco Bay shoreline. Volunteers are needed. For more information and to sign up for the project, contact Rich Cimino at Conservation@OhloneAudubon.

—RC

A Great and Gracious Lady

Eva Ricciarelli, a friend of Ohlone and founder of Friends of Heirloom Flowers Garden Club in Fremont passed away on Friday, August 30th. Eva founded the garden club in 1994. It took over the care of Shinn Park and the Niles Rose Garden.

Eva was instrumental in helping Ohlone build the Bette Wenzel Butterfly and Hummingbird Garden at Shinn and wrote the award grant request to the Candlelighters that procured the gazebo at the garden. She spent many Tuesday mornings working with us in the hummingbird garden.

On her “non-gardening days” Eva and her husband, Rod, conducted historical tours of the Shinn House for Fremont’s school age children, with Eva actually churning the butter! Many of us remember Eva for her help during Ohlone’s annual potluck in June when it was held at the garden. Among other things, she made the much needed warm coffee.

Eva showed us what volunteering was about. To quote the garden club, “Her legacy is not only the beautiful garden at Shinn Park but Eva’s sunny outlook at life. She always had a can-do attitude!” We will miss this great and gracious “garden” lady.

—PAG

PayPal Now an Option

Ohlone has taken one more step into the use of technology. Thanks to work by some Board members and our Webmaster, we are set up to accept membership renewals and donations via PayPal. For example you can donate or pledge to Ohlone, including the Photo Bird-A-Thon, by hitting the DONATE button on either our Facebook page or web site.

—SF

Fremont-Newark

Senator Ellen Corbett has offered to host an ice cream social for the 2013 Habitat Means Home poster contest winners at her district office. We are currently working on finding a date that will work with the Senator’s very busy schedule. A huge “Thank you!” to Senator Corbett and her staff for their continued support of the poster contest. Her interest has been gratefully appreciated by the students and their families.

The Dumbarton Quarry Park Plan includes the creation of 63 RV camp sites, 37 car and walk-in camp sites, a small store, laundry and shower facilities, the construction of a 13,000 square foot event center, a 150-person outdoor amphitheater with outdoor camp fire pit, formal picnic areas with BBQs, children’s playground and play areas, parking areas, restroom facilities, and trails. An additional condition specific to avoiding the attraction of nuisance species was added in response to one of several citizen objections. The city council was scheduled to decide whether to approve the project on September 17th.

OAS members are encouraged to visit the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project Science Symposium webpage to view information that was presented during the symposium. The topics covered were expansive, ranging from information regarding mercury studies in the south bay, sediment supply, public access impacts on bird use, value of created nesting islands, the ongoing problems of California Gull overpopulation, and many others. Videos of the presentations, as well as the individual presentations can be viewed at http://www.southbayrestoration.org/science/2013symposium/

The City of Newark has released a General Plan “tuneup” EIR that incorporates the changes approved in the Area 3 and 4 specific area plan, the subject of an ongoing lawsuit. Area 4 is home to the former Whistling Wings and Pintail Duck Clubs. In addition to providing habitat for burrowing owl, and migratory and resident waterbirds, the site has been known to support the endangered salt marsh harvest mouse. Comments on the general plan EIR were due by September 27th. Information regarding the general plan EIR and the Area 3 and 4 specific plan proposal can be found at: http://www.ci.newark.ca.us/departments/planning-and-economic-development/on-going-projects/

—CH

A Warm Welcome

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

Fremont-Newark


Donors

We are grateful to Christine Bard, Mona Brauer, Jeanette King and the GE Foundation for their generous donations.—PAG
Please renew your Ohlone membership by the date shown on your address label. Direct questions about The Kite Call delivery to the Membership Chair.

President: Evelyn Cormier, President@OhloneAudubon.org, 510.471.0475
Vice Pres: Allen Bertillion, 25384 Mohr Dr., Hayward 94545, 510.782.4874
Past Pres: Helen Sowers, 18492 Capricorn Court, CV 94546, 510.537.2377
Treasurer: Helen Sowers, Treasurer@OhloneAudubon.org, 510.537.2377
Rec. Secty: Carin High, Secretary@OhloneAudubon.org.
Cor. Secty: Margaret Emery, 260 El Caminito, Livermore 94550, 925.443.3073
Directors: 2014 Michael Mortensen, mg_av_m@hotmail.com 510.459.8466
2015 Vicki Robinson, director2015@ohloneaudubon.org, 510.683.0790
2016 Jackie Bertillion, 25384 Mohr Dr., Hayward 94545, 510.782.4874
Web Site: http://OhloneAudubon.org
WebMaster: Leslie Koenig, webmaster@ohloneaudubon.org

Education: Phil Gordon, Education@OhloneAudubon.org, 510.538.3550
Hospitality: Allen & Jackie Bertillion, 25384 Mohr Dr., Hayward, 510.782.4874
Editor: Don Emery, Editor@OhloneAudubon.org, 925.443.3073
Field Trips: Stephanie Floyd, FieldTrips@OhloneAudubon.org
Membership: Pat Gordon, Membership@OhloneAudubon.org, 510.538.3550
Programs: Marilyn Trabert, Programs@OhloneAudubon.org, 925.939.5798
Publicity: Arlene Chin, 925.447.8843
Conservation: Rich Cimino, Conservation@OhloneAudubon.org, and
Carin High, Secretary@OhloneAudubon.org.

NAS California: 765 University Avenue, Suite 200, Sacramento 95825, 916.649.7600, http://www.ca.audubon.org

WEB SITE: http://OhloneAudubon.org

RETURN TO:
OHLONE AUDUBON SOCIETY
1922 HILLSDALE STREET
HAYWARD, CA 94541

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Yes, I want to Join Ohlone Audubon Society!

Please sign me up today.

Name: _________________________________________________
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[ ] I prefer to receive the Kite Call by e-mail. [ ] Please send me e-mail updates and action alerts.

Ohlone Audubon Society does not share our mailing list or your personal information with others.
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All are welcome to enjoy any of our events, meetings or field trips.

Join Ohlone Audubon Society by mailing a $20 check payable to OAS with this coupon to:
Pat Gordon
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Thank you for your support!

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