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

January 1 - February 14, 2014
Volume 47, Number 5

Calendar
Jan.  2 Arrowhead Marsh/Garretson Point, ML King RS
Jan.  7 Membership Meeting, Fremont
Jan.  9 Cascade Ranch/Pigeon Point Lighthouse, Pescadero
Jan. 11 Meincke Ranch
Jan. 18 Shadow Cliffs Regional Park
Jan. 21 Board Meeting, Call Evelyn Cormier
Jan. 21 Deadline for Feb. 15-Mar. 31 Kite Call
Feb.  1 Coyote Hills Regional Park
Feb.  4 Membership Meeting, Pleasanton
Feb.  8-9 Sacramento Refuges
Feb. 12 Lake Elizabeth
Feb. 22 San Joaquin River NWR

Membership Meetings
Date: January 7  Time: 7:30 p.m.
Location: Carlton Plaza of Fremont, 3800 Walnut Avenue, 94538
Topic: A Carbon-Free Big Year!
Presenter: Keith Hansen

Join Keith Hansen for an action packed evening as we come along on a Carbon-Free Big Year! Only counting species of birds encountered carbon-free, Keith limited his modes of “birding transportation” to bicycle, kayak, canoe, skateboard, unicycle, pogo stick, hang glider and Teva shoes. He was banned from using an automobile, motorcycle, motor driven water craft or air craft, space shuttle or any interstellar mode of transportation. Using rapid fire video taken of each of the species encountered, Keith not only shares special moments with each species, but adds helpful identification tips to the “race with the calendar.”

Keith Hansen is a highly regarded wildlife illustrator who specializes in the accurate portrayal of birds. His work has formed the major artistic contribution to over a dozen books. More than two hundred of his illustrations have appeared in various ornithological journals, magazines, and environmental newsletters and grace the front of many a birder’s t-shirt. Keith has a gallery and studio in Bolinas near Point Reyes.

After the meeting Keith will show some of his art in the form of Limited Edition Prints from his new book, *Birds of the Sierra Nevada*, written by Ted Beedy and Ed Pandolfini, as well as the book itself which will be available for purchase and signing.

To reach Carlton Plaza of Fremont, take I-880 to the Mowry Ave off-ramp, then Mowry east (inland) to Fremont Blvd. Turn right on Fremont Blvd, then left on Walnut. Carlton Plaza is on Walnut between Fremont Blvd and Paseo Padre Pkwy.

Date: February 4  Time: 7:30 p.m.
Location: Pleasanton Middle School
5001 Case Avenue, 94566
Topic: The Low-Down On Getting High In Colombia?
Presenter: Bob Lewis

Bob will present some knockout images of Colombian birds seen during two trips to Colombia. One focus of these trips was hummingbirds, and the Bearded Helmetcrest was a primary target. Part of the challenge was its habitat, at over 4,000 meters (over 13,000 feet) in the Andes. Colombia has 147 species of hummingbirds, affording many opportunities to photograph these delightful birds Bob spent most of his time in the three mountain ranges of the Andes, where habitats change with altitude, and the bird species are many and local. Colombia has more species of birds than any other country, with over 1,850. In addition to hummers, we’ll look at ovenbirds, tanagers, flycatchers and other brightly colored denizens of the Colombian mountains. Besides the Andes, we’ll explore the unique mountain range in the north eastern Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, reaching 18,700 feet, the highest mountains in Colombia. We’ll take a brief side tour for a cup of Colombian coffee.

Bob is a birding instructor, bird photographer and world traveler. He is a board member of Golden Gate Audubon and chair of their Adult Education Committee, and President of the Farallon Islands Foundation. He’s currently teaching “Bay Area Birds” with friend Rusty Scalf, which they have done for over 20 years, as well as “Master Birding,” a new course offered at the California Academy of Sciences with Eddie Bartley and Jack Dumbacher. Also, he is co-compiler of the Oakland CBC.

To reach Pleasanton Middle School, take I-680 toward Pleasanton. 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. —MLT

Post Presentation Socials
Bring your reusable cup to enjoy a post meeting beverage along with volunteer provided finger snacks and conversation with fellow attendees. —J&AB
Field Trips

We welcome beginners to all our field trips.

Jan. 2, Thursday, 10:00 a. m. - 1:00 p. m.
Arrowhead Marsh/Garretson Point, Martin Luther King Regional Shoreline
Leaders: Rich Nicholson and Brenda Senturia, fieldtrips@ohloneaudubon.org
An 8.1 ft. high tide will hit Arrowhead Marsh at 12:12 p.m., creating an opportunity to see Clapper Rails, Virginia Rails, and Soras. Wintering ducks and shorebirds will be plentiful. The area is completely paved, so if it’s raining, we’ll still go as rain and high tide are optimum conditions for seeing rails. One year a very rare Yellow Rail was seen here in cold, driving rain! Dress in layers and raingear as needed. This is a wheelchair-accessible bird walk.

From I-880, go west on Hegenberger Road towards the airport and turn right on Pardee Drive. Make a left at Swan Way and turn right into the entrance to Martin Luther King Regional Shoreline. Follow the entrance road all the way to the end. On the way to the parking lot, drive slowly and keep an eye out for Burrowing Owls on the berms to the right.

Jan. 9, Thursday, 9:00 a. m. - 3:30 p. m.
Cascade Ranch Brussels Sprouts Farm and Pigeon Point Lighthouse, Pescadero
Leaders: Mona Brauer and Stephanie Floyd, fieldtrips@ohloneaudubon.org
Piles of Brussels sprouts at Cascade Ranch in Pescadero are left to compost after harvest, and the rotting vegetables attract insects and insectivores. Warblers, sparrows and thrushes are commonly seen. In past years, rare birds here included Nashville Warbler, Hermit Warbler, and Harris’s Sparrow. We’ll walk among the mounds and investigate the creekside willows. Then we’ll move on to scenic Pigeon Point Lighthouse where from the bluffs we’ll see a variety of gulls, cormorants, shorebirds such as oystercatchers and surfbirds, guillemots, loons, and maybe even a passing whale. As time allows, we’ll visit other hotspots in the area where rare birds may be visiting. Last year, we took a short drive up Pescadero Creek Road to see a rare Black-Throated Blue Warbler! Be prepared for cold, wind, and uneven footing at the farm. Scopes are helpful at the lighthouse. Bring a lunch or join us at Chez Shea in Half Moon Bay for a late sit-down lunch after the field trip. Rain cancels.

We’ll meet in Hayward to form carpools before heading over the San Mateo bridge. Go east on Jackson from I-880 and turn right on Santa Clara (the first right after you leave the freeway). Go past the Valero gas station, make a U-turn, and park along the street. If you prefer to meet us at the coast, contact the leaders to arrange a meeting site.

January 11, Saturday, 8:30 a.m. - noon
Meincke Ranch (Garin Regional Park, Carden Lane Entrance)
Jerry Steenhoven 510.881.1233, steenhoven@sbcglobal.net, Brenda Senturia 510.581.1997, Bbsenturia@sbcglobal.net
Meincke Ranch in Garin Regional Park has recently been opened to public use. The habitat includes oak savannah, open grasslands, rocky outcrops and marshy fields. An historical marker in the area commemorates the home and grave of Ukrainian religious leader, Agapius Honcharenko. The views are outstanding. The route is on dirt road and relatively flat, about 3 miles, but can be muddy in winter.

From Mission Blvd in Hayward take Carlos Bee east. Stay on the main road, which becomes Hayward Boulevard. Continue uphill to Stonebrae Elementary School on the right. Turn right at the traffic circle in front of the school, then immediately right again on Carden Lane. Park on the street in front of the park gate (Garin Park/Carden Lane Entrance). The distance from Mission Blvd. to the entrance is 3.7 miles. Bring snacks, rain gear, and good footwear. Heavy rain cancels.

Jan. 18, Saturday, 8:30 - 11:30 a. m.
Shadow Cliffs Regional Recreation Area, Pleasanton
Leaders: Steve Huckabone and Kathy Robertson, fieldtrips@ohloneaudubon.org
Join us at Shadow Cliffs Regional Recreation Area to explore the lake, levees, and marsh for wintering waterfowl, Common Gallinules, egrets, herons, and grebes. Osprey are found around the lake and ponds, while the trees hold woodpeckers and nut-hatches. Notable sightings in past years included Bald Eagle, Golden Eagle, Great-tailed Grackles, California Thrasher, Common Loon, Common and Hooded Merganser, Wilson’s Snipe, and Peregrine Falcon. Wide, level trails make walking fairly easy except for one short, steep uphill section to get onto the levee. Scopes are helpful.

From I-580 eastbound, take the Santa Rita Road exit, keep right and follow signs for Downtown to merge onto Santa Rita Road. Turn left on Valley Avenue and left on Stanley Boulevard. Restrooms are available. $6 parking fee unless you have an EBRPD annual pass. Heavy rain cancels.

February 1, Saturday, 8:30 a. m. - Noon
Coyote Hills Regional Park
Leaders: Jerry Ting and Maggie Clark, fieldtrips@ohloneaudubon.org
Coyote Hills Regional Park is a popular birding destination because of its many wintering waterfowl and winter passerines. We’ll visit a variety of habitats: ponds, open fields, willow groves, and the Visitor Center area with its gardens and trees. Be prepared to walk a few miles on mostly paved trails with some up and down. Scopes will be useful. We’ll meet at the Visitor Center. 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. At Patterson Ranch Road, turn left and continue to the Visitor Center parking area. $5 entrance fee payable at kiosk (free to EBRPD annual passholders).

February 8-9, Saturday-Sunday, 9 a.m. both days
Sacramento Valley Wildlife Refuges, Colusa NWR, and Gray Lodge Wildlife Area
Leaders: Phil and Pat Gordon, 510-538-3550, pagpeg@aol.com
This year we are refuge birding to the north. Saturday will be spent birding the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge, followed by a look at the Delevan unit, and ending the day at Colusa National Wildlife Refuge. The refuges promise good long looks at flocks of waterfowl including Snow, Ross’s and Greater White-fronted Geese as well as several species of ducks. We have often
found Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons among the many wintering Red-tailed Hawks and American Kestrels. We hope to find fields full of Sandhill Cranes and Tundra Swans. In past years, we have found many Wood Ducks in the Llano Seco Unit.

Meet Saturday morning at the Sacramento NWR kiosk parking area. The refuge is north of Williams off I-5. From I-5 take the exit for Road 68 (Norman Rd.) and follow the signs. Driving time from the Bay Area is about two hours.

Sunday we will begin the day at Colusa-Sacramento River State Recreation Area near the town of Colusa. Then we’ll proceed to the Llano Seco unit northeast of Willows, and then drive to Gray Lodge Wildlife Area for sunset fly-in ($4 fee, no change available). The trip goes rain or shine; only heavy flooding cancels. Please contact the leaders with any questions.

To reserve campsites at the Colusa-Sacramento River SRA go to: http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=461.

For other lodging options, go to:
Williams: http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotels-g33272-Williams_Cali-
ifornia-Hotels.html
Colusa: http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotels-g32239-Colusa_Cali-
ifornia-Hotels.html,

February 12, Wednesday, 9:00 a.m. - noon
Lake Elizabeth - Fremont Central Park
Leaders: Stephanie Floyd and Park Ranger Sandy Ferreira, fieldtrips@ohloneaudubon.org

Lake Elizabeth in Fremont’s Central Park is a great place to find birds in winter. Cackling Geese, Greater White-fronted Geese, and sometimes Ross’s and Snow Geese visit the soccer lawns with the Canada Geese. Wintertime ducks are plentiful on the lake. In the reeds that line the lake and in the willows along the creek we often find herons, woodpeckers, sparrows, and sometimes a surprise, such as an American Pipit. Tree Swallows and Allen’s Hummingbirds may be arriving. Ranger Sandy always has great stories to share about the Tree Swallow nesting program and all the different species that use the nest boxes, from Bewick’s Wrens to chickadees. Plan to walk about 2.5 miles on paved paths. Heavy rain cancels.

From I-880, exit at Stevenson Blvd and go east (towards the hills). Turn right at Paseo Padre Parkway and follow the signs for the Aqua Adventure Waterpark. The parking lot for the Waterpark dead ends at the south end of the lake. Meet at the five tall palm trees at the end of the parking lot.

February 22, Saturday, 8:00 a.m. - mid-afternoon
San Joaquin River NWR Pelican Nature Trail, Stanislaus County
Leader: Steve Huckabone, shuckabone@comcast.net

This 4-plus mile foot-access nature trail, opened in 2011, meanders through seasonal wetlands, restored riparian woodlands and old-growth valley oak stands. The trailhead features interpretive kiosks and picnic areas. Open sunrise to sunset daily.

You can reach the Pelican Nature trailhead by taking I-580 to SR-132 East (towards Modesto), take a right on River Rd, go 3 miles, and then take a left on Dairy Rd and travel 1.5 miles. The parking area is approximately 40 minutes from Livermore. This is a 1/2 to 3/4 day trip so pack a lunch and bring water. Restrooms are available at the trailhead. The trail is primarily a gravel, flat levee road. Heavy rain cancels.

Following the hike, a short drive to the viewing platform on Beckwith Road is a great side trip.

—SF

Alice’s Avians

Alice Hoeh’s January Birding Field Trips class will be held on four alternate Tuesdays, January 7, 21, February 4, and 18. Classes will bird different sites from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., concentrating on the field identification, life styles, and ecology of local birds. Alice’s birding class is different because it consists of tutoring during actual birding, rather than sitting through lectures. Alice has been teaching Birding Field Trips for over 38 years and is an active member of Ohlone Audubon Society. Class size is limited to 15, so register early. For questions about the class and registration contact Alice at amhoch@aol.com or 510.657.0475.

—AH

Donations

We would also like to thank the following for their generous donations: Maggie Clark, Nelson Lee, Martha Morrow, Mark Rauzon, Susan Teefy, and Gail West.

—PAG

Presidential Proclamation

On December 3, Ohlone Audubon had what might be called an overflow crowd to hear Doug Bell of East Bay Regional Park district discuss the Altamont Pass Wind Farm impact on birds, especially Golden Eagles, to see some great member slides, and to pig out on a wonderful assortment of cookies.

After the meeting, I read the long letter from California Audubon and several other organizations commenting on a document entitled Draft Environmental Impact Assessment (DEA) for the Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the Shiloh IV Wind Project in Solano County. This is the first DEA in California and one of the first in the nation to require a “take permit” for Golden Eagles. Audubon’s letter includes eighteen well stated recommendations for improvements to the DEA document, based in part in what has been learned from what has happened over the years at Altamont. The DEA states that the Golden Eagle population appears to be stable but Tuesday night Doug Bell seems to refute that information. One attendee asked Doug if wind turbines could be resited if found to be a problem. Well this document would happen at Altamont there might be a collective sigh of relief. You can read the DEA at http://tinyurl.com/knfgqe2 and get the letter from GGeorge@audubon.org. —EC
Happy New Year!

Please renew your Ohlone membership by the date shown on your address label. Direct questions about The Kite Call delivery to the Membership Chair.

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Yes, I want to Join Ohlone Audubon Society!

Please sign me up today.

Name: _________________________________________________
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Ohlone Audubon Society does not share our mailing list or your personal information with others.
National Audubon Society membership dues are separate from those of Ohlone Audubon Society.
All are welcome to enjoy any of our events, meetings or field trips.

Thank you for your support!

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