Membership Meetings

Date: May 6  Time: 7:30 p.m.
Location: Pleasanton Middle School
5001 Case Avenue, 94566
Topic: The Fascinating World of Bird Mimicry
Presenter: Denise Wight

What do California Thrasher, Phainopepla and Lawrence’s Goldfinch have in common? Aside from being some of the favorite species one can see on a Mines Road-Del Puerto Canyon field trip, they all mimic the sounds of other bird species.

Denise Wight will explore the weird and wonderful world of avian vocal mimicry. From the well know mockingbird to lesser known mimics, some of these birds copy not only the sounds of their own species but also those of other bird species and, sometimes, even the sounds of animals and mechanical objects. We’ll gain an understanding of who mimics whom and some of the theories for this behavior. We will also learn how bird mimicry can be a challenge for those of us who bird by ear. Throughout her talk, Denise will share some favorite stories of how she, too, has been confused and fooled by mimics.

Denise Wight is an accomplished birder, and her expertise includes teaching others how to recognize birds by the sounds they make. She is familiar with all of the breeding birds of the San Francisco Bay Area as well as those that winter in or migrate through the area. Denise has led birding field trips since 1989, taught general classes in birding since 1996, and birding by ear classes since 2006. She participated in, reviewed parts of, and was listed as a “local expert” in the Alameda County Breeding Bird Atlas.

Post Presentation Social

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

Date: June 3  Time: Setup: 5:00 p.m.
Dinner: 6:00 p.m.
Place: Alviso Adobe Community Park
3465 Old Foothill Road, Pleasanton 94588
Topic: Annual Potluck Picnic/Installation of Officers/Silent Auction Climax

Ohlone Audubon’s annual potluck picnic will be held once again in the relaxing and mild-weather surroundings of the lovely Alviso Adobe Community Park in Pleasanton. The 7-acre site of the interpretive park was established in 1854 by Francisco Alviso. Its original adobe building, one of a few remaining in the Bay Area, depicts what a home would have been like in the 1920s.

Bob Meese has been conducting research on Tricolored Blackbirds for 10 years and banding them for 8 years. His talk will focus on two topics related to tricolored blackbird conservation: the recent, rapid decline in abundance and his research that is intended to explain it; and conservation measures that have been and will need to be taken to stem the decline and to reverse the population trend. He will review his work of the past 10 years that shows chronic poor reproductive success and the relationship between insect abundance in regions surrounding breeding colonies and reproductive success. He will review conservation actions of the past decade which have been shown to be insufficient to halt the decline in abundance and suggest additional measures that may be taken which may result in more effective conservation outcomes.

Remember that this is your last opportunity to be the highest bidder and take home the beautiful Keith Hansen Print.
As always, our members will provide us with a nice spread of delicious food. Please bring your own table service, serving utensils, and a favorite dish to share (about 10 to 12 servings). By last names please bring (A - G: Dessert); (H - N: Vegetable, salad, or side dish); (O - Z: Entree). Beverages will be supplied courtesy of OAS. Visitors are requested to refrain from bringing alcoholic beverages into the park. If you would like, you can come early and bird among several large oaks on the grounds of the Alviso Adobe.

To reach Alviso Adobe from Fremont or Contra Costa, take I-680 toward Pleasanton to the Bernal exit. Drive west on Bernal to Foothill and turn right. Follow Foothill a little more than a half mile to the Alviso Adobe on your left. From Hayward, take I-580 to the Foothill exit and follow Foothill about 3 miles to the Alviso Adobe on your right. Meet in the Milking Barn. —MLT/J&AB

Save the Date:
Sept. 2  John Bradley: “Birds & Blooms of Alaska”
There will be no membership meetings in July and August. September 2 will be the first membership meeting after the potluck. Learn the location in future issues of the Kite Call. —MLT

Silent Auction
Artist Keith Hansen generously donated to Ohlone Audubon Society a limited edition print of a stunning woodpecker plate from his upcoming book, Field Guide to the Birds of the Sierra. You have a chance to be the proud owner of this beautiful print by participating in our silent auction. The print will be available for viewing and bidding at our June membership meeting, where an auction bid sheet will be posted. The highest bidder at the end of the meeting will be the new owner of this wonderful print.

You may examine Keith’s print at his website:
http://preview.tinyurl.com/loyh8kh
—MLT

Field Trips
May 29, Thursday, 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Niles Hotspots
Leaders: Kathy Robertson and Stephanie Floyd, fieldtrips@ohloneaudubon.org
We will visit several great birding spots in the Niles area along the Alameda Creek channel and in the woods in hopes of seeing spring migrants and nesting birds including Hooded Orioles, warblers, and waterfowl. Meet at Niles Community Park.
To reach the park, from I-880, take Decoto Road northeast about 2 miles. Turn right (east) on Alvarado-Niles Road and stay on it for about 2 1/2 miles (it becomes Niles Blvd.). Turn right on H St.; the park is at the end.
From I-680, take Niles Canyon Road (SR-84) southwest to Fremont. Cross Mission Blvd. to reach Niles Blvd. and bear right on Niles Blvd. to go through the main part of Niles. Turn left on H St. and drive to the end.
From Mission Boulevard north or south, turn onto Niles Blvd. and follow the directions above. —SF
June 28-29, Saturday-Sunday, 9 a.m.
Mono Lake Basin and Tioga Pass with Yosemite’s High Country
Leaders: Phil and Pat Gordon, pagpeg@aol.com,
510.538.3550

Join us as we return to the east and high Sierra for our annual birding campout! Who knows what kind of winter we will have had? We plan to camp near Lee Vining in canyons such as Lee Vining or Lundy. Some higher altitude camps may be available near lakes along eastern Tioga Pass Road or June Lake loop off US-395 south of Lee Vining. Some are first come, first served. Book now! This popular area fills up early.

Mountain forest species, many of them neotropical migrants, will be in various stages of nesting. We plan to visit several lakes, streams, wet meadows, rocky and forest trails of varying elevations, and the area around Mono Lake. Hiking in extreme elevations will be very short term, if at all; recall that Tioga Pass is at 9945 feet. We hope for abundant wild flowers; they will be sought out and appreciated as well as any other aspects of this very special and often surprising part of our world. We will search for higher-elevation birds like Williamson’s Sapsucker and Sooty Grouse, and lower elevation birds like Wilson’s Snipe and Brewer’s Sparrow. At least 100 species are possible.

To reach Tioga Pass (Yosemite) from the Bay Area, take I-580 east to I-205 and follow signs for I-205 Tracy-Stockton. Merge briefly onto I-5 N; exit at CA-120 E, toward Manteca /Sonora. Stay on CA-120 E to the Yosemite Park entrance at Crane Flat (2.5 hours from Manteca; gas available; national park fee $20 per vehicle). At Crane Flat head north on CA-120 E to Tioga Pass Road (NOT the right “Y” to Big Oak Flat Road to Yosemite Valley). Proceed through Tuolumne Meadows (store, restrooms) over Tioga Pass, noting the small Tioga Lodge and campgrounds and Ellery Lakes, on down to US-395. Go north (left) on US-395 to enter Lee Vining. We will meet each morning at 9 a.m. at the Mono Lake Scenic Visitors Center overlooking the lake on the north end of town (http://www_monolake.org/visit/vc).

Sierra Trip Lodging options:
Campgrounds:
http://preview.tinyurl.com/pzueozb
RV Parks in Lee Vining:
http://www.leeving.com/rvparks.htm
Motels in Lee Vining:
http://preview.tinyurl.com/knb6xd3
Motels on June Lake loop (15 miles south of Lee Vining):
http://preview.tinyurl.com/mlcrrthl
Motels in Mammoth Lakes (28 miles south of Lee Vining):
http://preview.tinyurl.com/d6bwqbj
Motels in Bridgeport (25 miles north of Lee Vining over 8143’ Conway Summit):
http://preview.tinyurl.com/lupsfab
For more information, contact the leaders. —PAGPEG

Field Trips Planning Meeting
Saturday, May 31, 4 p.m.
Every year, our 24 or so field trip leaders meet more than 30 field trips. At our all-important annual planning meeting we’ll share ideas and decide where and when we’re going on our next round of field trips (July 2014 - June 2015) and who’s leading them. The meeting starts at 4 p.m. and lasts a couple of hours, and then we enjoy a delicious potluck dinner. Mona graciously hosts us at her roomy and comfortable house in Hayward.
Truly Rare!

A truly rare, not just uncommon, bird was found in the farm fields south of Dixon on April 9 and enjoyed by many birders through April 12. Marsh Sandpiper is Code-5 on the American Birding Association’s checklist of birds, meaning this is an accidental occurrence of a species that’s been recorded five or fewer times in the checklist area or fewer than three records in the past 30 years. According to the ABA, this is the second record for California and only the second record of the species ever in the ABA area away from Alaska. Marsh Sandpiper is only known in the ABA area from about 10 previous sightings in the eastern and western Aleutians and the Pribilofs. California’s first recorded Marsh Sandpiper and first in the ABA area outside of Alaska was at the northern Salton Sea last year. Photos, identification details, and behavioral notes for this truly rare bird may be seen on Joe Morlan’s web site:

http://fog.ccsf.edu/~jmorlan/MarshSandpiperP1160097s.htm

—SF

Membership

Ohlone sends a warm welcome and thank you to the following new and renewing chapter members: Debra Bedford, Bruce Brown, Brian Carter, Michael Christopherson, Michele Dennis, Lynn Feindel, Michael & Peter Grunow, Carin High Family, Michael Karpinko, Ed Kneler, Mary Krentz, Anthony Lee, Barbara Lonergan, John Mena, Lois Moore, Patty O’Rourke, Dave Riensche, Steve Steinke, Barbara Trowbridge, Scott Whitaker and Stanley Winterman.

—PAG

Donations

Thanks to the following generous donors!
Carin High family and Ed Kneler.

Help Wanted

Make your membership count - join the Board!
Would you like to take a more active role in Ohlone Audubon society? Your participation on the Board will help us to continue the important work we do to connect with nature and to preserve and protect the environment. Two positions are open.
Treasurer: If you like to work with numbers, the position of Treasurer would suit you well. As Treasurer, you’ll manage our balance sheet and income statement and take part in making financial decisions for our chapter.
Conservation Chair - Eastern Alameda County: If you’d like to be a powerful influence in environmental issues, the position of Conservation Chair - Eastern Alameda County is for you! Represent Ohlone Audubon. Participate in discussion and decision-making with government and private parties on plans to develop sensitive habitats.
You can make a real difference in either of these volunteer positions. Contact President Evelyn Cormier at 510.471.0475 or president@ohloneaudubon.org to sign on!

—SF

Alice Hoch’s Birding Class

Subtitled, “Field identification, life styles, and ecology of local birds,” Alice’s next Birding Field Trips class will be held on four consecutive Tuesdays from May 20 through June 10. (Note: The change to consecutive Tuesdays for this class is due to the birds’ schedule.) This is the time to see birds in their breeding plumage (usually their brightest) and to see them nesting and caring for their young. It’s the time to hear them singing and the time they will be the easiest to see. It’s the time to observe their behavior and appreciate their lifestyles. Besides all that, the weather should be its best. Treat yourself to four Tuesday mornings of enjoying the birds, the butterflies, the flowers, and the great outdoors with a group of like-minded, helpful companions!

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 Tuesday for four weeks from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Alice has been teaching Birding Field Trips for 40 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.

Class size is limited, so register early. I expect this to be my last class until late August

—AH

Evelyn’s May Rant

The plight of the Tricolored Blackbirds made me realize the enormity of the situation. First there was the distress call from California Audubon asking for donations to help out the farmer in whose fields the birds were nesting so the farmer would not disturb the nests. The drought and the water situation have made the plight of small farmers even more tenuous than ever. Pumping from wells drains the aquifer causing the land to sink and the aquifer to collapse. Water from the canals and the delta will not be available this year and the future is cloudy on that score.

California Audubon is now suggesting that we develop a fund that would be available in the future to help protect the Tricolored Blackbirds. I heartily concur. But larger entities such as Nature Conservancy and Trust for Public Lands were suggested by one of our board members as a source for preserving a large enough area with suitable habitat for the birds to be able to forage, nest, and fledge their young.

In June we will have a speaker we’ve heard from a few years back talk to us about this problem. Come and listen. Perhaps we’ll be able to come up with some plans. It’s always great to help out the birds.

—EC

Read Your Label

Is it time to renew? Look at your mailing label - it will tell you. For example: “Pd Thru 7/1/14” indicates that you are paid thru June, 2014. A red “RENEW?” indicates that this is your last Kite Call! If you see a “JOIN LOCAL?” on your label this indicates that you have joined the National Audubon Society, but alas, not your local Ohlone chapter. To renew or join us please send a $20 check to Pat Gordon, Membership Chair, 1922 Hillsdale Street, Hayward, CA 94541-5428. Thanks!

—PAG

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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: ____________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________

__________________________________________________

Phone: ___________________E-mail: ____________________

[ ] 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.
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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