

# ROADRUNNER

FOUNDED 1968

Published by the **Conejo Valley Audubon Society** a Chapter of the **National Audubon Society**

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VOL. 50

December, 2019

No. 4

**General Meeting, Dec. 2**  
**Western Foundation**  
**Brian Elliott and Gary Charlton**  
**Birding Mongolia: The Gobi Desert and Beyond**



**Black Kite**

Mongolia is legendary for reasons which include its nomadic culture and Genghis Khan, the 13<sup>th</sup> century Mongol Empire leader. It is also a very interesting country for birding. Varied birding locales include the immense and beautiful Gobi desert and its mountains. There are also lakes, wetlands, the grass environment of the steppe and the evergreen forest of the taiga. More than 400 bird species are found, including many that migrate to and from Siberia. Domestic camel herds range freely throughout the Gobi as well as herds of horses. Several species of wild antelope also make their

Pomona Valley Audubon Society members Brian Elliott and Gary Charlton took an 18 day birding trip to Mongolia in the summer of 2018. Lodging on the trip was primarily in gers, the traditional nomadic style of temporary shelter. They will share their images from the trip and discuss the unique birding adventure they experienced in this fascinating country,

## **Conservation**

*by Dee Lyon*

### **What's the matter with GMO's**

Genetically modified organisms are created to tolerate herbicides such as Roundup. Most corn, canola and soybeans grown in the US are genetically engineered to withstand herbicides. The use of toxic pesticides has increased sharply since the 1990s, which has fueled the emergence of superweeds which are resistant to pesticides.

Whether consuming GMO ingredients in foods poses risks is still unclear. Consumer Reports has concerns and says "GMOs have not been around long enough for us to know their longterm health risks or environmental impact." Choose organic or non-gmo product verified food labels.

## **December 2019**

Dec. 2	5:15 pm	Pre-meeting dinner: Ottavios
Dec 2	7:30 pm	General Meeting WFVZ
Dec 8	8:00 am	Hill Canyon/Santa Rosa Park
Dec 11	8:00 am	Rancho Sierra Vista/Satwiwa
Dec 14	8:30 am	Mission Oaks Park

### **\*\*\*Pre meeting Dinner\*\*\***

Ottavio's in Camarillo at 5:15 pm

### **Call Nobuko McClure**

For Reservations (805) 482-0411

Reservation Deadline: 9:00 am

Day of General Meeting

## **CVAS Events**

Everyone is welcome to attend any CVAS meeting or field trip. CVAS assumes no responsibility for injuries, personal or otherwise, incurred while attending a society-sponsored activity and will not be held liable for such accidents. One attends at one's own risk.

### **Sunday, December 8, 8:00 am Hill Canyon/ Santa Rosa Park**

Hill Canyon/ Santa Rosa Park is at the north edge of Thousand Oaks, off of Santa Rosa Road. This park features a trail that follows Conejo Creek into the canyon, downstream of the water treatment plant. Raptors may soar overhead. We'll scour the cottonwoods and eucalyptus for warblers, Hermit Thrush and woodpeckers. We'll also explore the canyon for Bewick's, Rock, Cactus and Canyon Wrens. We could spot Thrasher, Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher and a variety of sparrows and even a covey of quail. Meet at the park, 10241 Hill Canyon Road. There is free parking right across the road from the bridge. If full there, park for \$4.00 at Santa Rosa Valley Park very close by. Trip leader is Richard Armerding (310) 701-3878.

### **Wednesday, December 11, 8:00 am Rancho Sierra Vista/ Satwiwa**

Conejo Valley Audubon invites birders of all experience levels to attend our monthly Beginner Bird Walks at Rancho Sierra Vista/Satwiwa. These walks are held on the second Wednesday of each month. We will meet at 8:00 am at the main parking lot, which is accessible off Lynn Road at Via Goleta in Newbury Park. Rancho Sierra Vista is an excellent place to see many of the oak woodlands birds that are common in the Conejo Valley area. We will take time to introduce beginning birders to these species and will teach the best techniques for locating and identifying them. If you have binoculars please bring them. A few pairs of loaner binoculars will be available. Wear comfortable walking shoes. No sign-up is needed; just show up. In the event of heavy rain, we will cancel the walk. The walk leader will be Richard Armerding (310) 701-3878.

### **Saturday, December 14, 8:30 am Mission Oaks Park**

This park has potential but appears to be rarely birded. So let's explore it together. Ball fields empty in the morning provide opportunities to spot Western Meadowlark, Western Bluebird, Say's Phoebe, American Pipit and Lark and Chipping Sparrow. Creek and wooded areas may yield view of Cedar Waxwings, American and Lesser Goldfinch, Lincoln's Sparrow, Northern Flicker, American Robin and Dark-eyed Junco. Address is 5501 Mission Oaks Blvd., Camarillo. Park near the tennis courts. While not a strenuous walk there is a short descent where a walking stick might be good to have with you. Trip leader: Linda Easter (818) 519-2833

### **Sunday, December 22, 2019 Christmas Bird Count**

If you are looking for a way to contribute to understanding the status of wintering birds in North America, please join us for the National Audubon Society's 120th annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on **Sunday December 22, 2019**, and help cover the Conejo Valley Audubon Society's "Thousand Oaks" CBC circle.

This is our 45<sup>th</sup> CBC, and we're hoping to top last year's count of 192 species! Last year's highlights included one first for our count circle; a Hooded Oriole. Other notable birds included a Wood Duck, a Eurasian Wigeon, 6 White-winged Scoters, Red-necked Grebe, 30 American White Pelicans, 4 Least Bitterns, 6 Reddish Egrets, 49 Yellow-crowned Night-Herons, Bald Eagle, Swainson's Hawk, 2 Ferruginous Hawks, Ruff, 6 Red Knots, 2 Burrowing Owls, Lewis's Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 3 Red-naped Sapsuckers, 3 Vermilion Flycatchers, Tropical Kingbird, 6 California Gnatcatchers, 4 Grasshopper Sparrows, White-throated Sparrow, 2 Bell's Sparrow and Swamp Sparrow. Birds recorded within a week of the count, but missed on count day were Black Scoter, American Bittern and a count first Tricolored Heron. Notable misses for the count period were Ross's Goose, Greater White-fronted Goose, Cackling Goose, Canvasback, Hooded Merganser, Ridgway's Rail, Common Gallinule, Golden Eagle, Mew Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Black Skimmer, Common

Ground-Dove, Prairie Falcon, Northern Rough-winged Swallow and Red-breasted Nuthatch. However, when all was said and done, we recorded 24,500 individual birds! We hope to do even better this year, but need CVAS members to close out the year right by getting up early and being ready to bird.

The National Audubon Society's web-based pre-registration program should be up and working during November, so just go to <https://www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count> (The Conejo Valley's four-letter CBC code is CATO). This system allows you to register for as many CBCs as you wish, and there is no registration fee! Your name and contact information is forwarded to me, so I have a better idea of how many people are going to participate, and can plan accordingly. For those who prefer to contact me directly, please send an e-mail to [pereksta@pacbell.net](mailto:pereksta@pacbell.net), call (805) 659-5740 or sign up during the November and December meetings at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology.

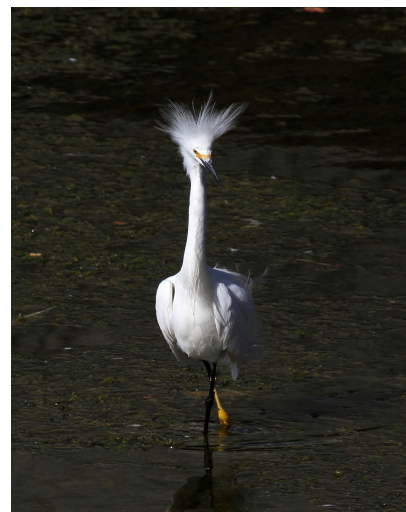
As always, we will cover the area from Westlake to the Oxnard Plain and from Leo Carrillo State Park to California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks. We need people to cover the Santa Monica Mountains, La Jolla Canyon, Big Sycamore Canyon, Leo Carrillo State Park, Camarillo Regional Park, the CSU Channel Islands campus, Mugu Lagoon, Camarillo Springs Park, Thousand Oaks Botanic Garden, Los Robles Golf Course, Hill Canyon, Wildwood Park, Calleguas Creek, Revelon Slough, the Oxnard Plain, Hidden Valley, Satwiwa and many other areas around Camarillo and Thousand Oaks. Please pre-register as soon as possible, and let me know where you are available to bird or who you want to bird with.

You can also help by "staking out" unusual or hard to find species such as American White Pelican, Cattle Egret, Wood Duck, Cinnamon Teal, Redhead, Hooded Merganser, Osprey, Band-tailed Pigeon, Common Ground-Dove, Greater Roadrunner, Western Screech-Owl, Burrowing Owl, Common Poorwill, Lewis's Woodpecker, Red-breasted and Red-naped Sapsuckers, Yellow Warbler, White-throated Sparrow, Tricolored Blackbird, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Pine Siskin and Lawrence's Goldfinch. In addition, we often come close to missing a few common species including Hutton's Vireo, Townsend's Warbler and Brown-headed Cowbird so keep an eye out for them prior to the CBC.

The CBC began over a century ago when 27 conservationists in 25 localities, led by ornithologist Frank Chapman, changed the course of ornithological history. On Christmas Day 1900, this small group initiated an alternative activity to the "side hunt." Participants in the "side hunt" would split up into teams and see who could shoot the most birds and small mammals in a day. Dr. Chapman proposed instead to identify, count, and record the birds they saw, thus founding what is today considered the most significant citizen-based conservation effort in the USA. The CBC is open to birders of all skill levels. If you do not wish to go out and count birds, consider "feeder watching" in your back yard. You might attract an unusual hummingbird to your feeder, find an uncommon sparrow or finch, or keep an oriole around for us to include.

We will gather to tally up the Christmas Bird Count totals, compare notes, and socialize beginning at 6:00 pm at Nobuko McClure's home. We will have pizza graciously provided by Wild Birds Unlimited of Thousand Oaks and other potluck goodies. If your last name begins with A – M please bring hors d'oeuvre or munchies to share; N – Z, a finger food type dessert which is easy to serve. Paper goods, plastic utensils, coffee, and tea will be provided – or bring your own beverage.

If you plan on attending please **call Nobuko at (805) 482-0411** so she can plan accordingly and provide directions to her house.



**Snowy Egret ( had hair day)**

*by Don Klabunde*

# ROADRUNNER

December , 2019

Conejo Valley Audubon Society, Inc.  
P.O. Box 4782  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91359

## Officers and Committee Chairs

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Except for Carol Langford – must add @conejovalleyaudubon.org after every username above

Regular meetings are held on the first Monday evening of each month (except June, July, August) at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, 439 Calle San Pablo, Camarillo at 7:30 pm, unless otherwise noted. **Everyone is welcome.** Take Pleasant Valley Road or Lewis Road to where they cross south of the 101 Freeway. Go west to the second street, Calle San Pablo. Turn right. The Foundation is the fifth building on the left.

The Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology is a non-profit organization founded in 1956 to promote the study and conservation of birds and other vertebrates. The organization makes contributions in the areas of natural history collections, original research, and conservation.

The *Roadrunner* is published monthly except July and August by the Conejo Valley Audubon Society. It is sent to paid CVAS members only. Members are invited to submit articles, announcements, letters, photos, and drawings for publication consideration. Copy deadline is the 5th of the month. Send items to Gary Evans, 29 Sabra Ave., Oak Park, Calif. 91377-1126 or by E-mail: GaryE@ConejoValleyAudubon.org.

For information on joining the National Audubon Society, please go to [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)

## CONEJO VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please enroll me as a member of Conejo Valley Audubon Society. I have enclosed \$20 for a family membership.

Additional Gift: \_\_\_\$25.00 \_\_\_\$50.00 \_\_\_\$75.00 \_\_\_\$100.00 \$\_\_\_\_\_Other

Membership \$\_\_\_\_\_ Donation \$\_\_\_\_\_ Total (check payable to CVAS) \$\_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: CVAS, P.O. Box 4782, Thousand Oaks, CA 91359 ☐ ☐ ← Check to receive newsletter by mail

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