



ROADRUNNER

FOUNDED 1968

Published by the Conejo Valley Audubon Society a Chapter of the National Audubon Society
visit us at: www.ConejoValleyAudubon.org or www.facebook.com/ConejoValleyAudubon

Volume 52, Number 4

December, 2020

CALENDAR

Nov. 17, 7:00 pm

Board Meeting via zoom
everyone's welcome
contact Richard for invite

Dec. 7, 7:30 pm

General Meeting via zoom
see easy instructions →

Dec. 9, 8:00 am

Rancho Sierra Vista/Satwiwa
Beginner Bird Walk



CS Klabunde
Dark-eyed Junco

Dec. 20, all day

Christmas Bird Count



Don Klabunde
Red-breasted Sapsucker

CVAS MEETINGS IN THE TIME OF COVID

For health and safety, we will be conducting our CVAS Monthly Programs online using Zoom, which is a computer tool that allows you to meet with other people online. Zoom can be used on a computer, tablet or smartphone. We will send out an email prior to each meeting with instructions for joining the meeting. If you have never used Zoom before, you may wish to watch this video for some tips:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9isp3qPeQ0E>

The link to join the Monthly Programs is: <https://zoom.us/j/6155249106>

When you join the meeting, you will be able to hear and see the presenter on your computer. If your computer has a microphone and camera, you will also be given the choice of whether other meeting participants can hear or see you. However, in most cases we will be muting all meeting participants except for the presenter.

DECEMBER MONTHLY PROGRAM

MEET THE BIRDS

Join us for an enjoyable photo experience that celebrates the beauty in Nature. You'll see uncommon views of birds, learn a bit about birds, and discover how you make a difference. Professional photographer Steve Kaye will show his photos and tell provocative stories about the photos.

This is an excellent program for anyone who wants to know more about birds. And it's a wonderful reminder of the extraordinary beauty that we have outdoors. So bring a friend. If you have yet to attend a meeting, this program is for you.

Steve Kaye has been taking photos casually since 1965 and professionally since 2010. Now he uses his photos in presentations and articles to inspire respect for Nature. He has spoken at photo clubs, judged photo contests, and conducted classes on Nature Photography. Two of his photos appear in Woodpeckers of North America, by Stephen A. Shunk (published May 2016). Find more than 600 photos, 138 blog posts, and dozens of articles at: www.stevkaye.com



CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT



Birders, 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 121st annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on **Sunday December 20, 2020**, and help cover the Conejo Valley Audubon Society's "Thousand Oaks" CBC circle. [continued on page 2](#)



CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT continued

This is our 45th CBC, and we're hoping to top last year's count of 195 species! Last year's highlights included three firsts for our count circle; **Gray Flycatcher**, **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**, and **Plumbeous Vireo**. We also recorded our first **Green-tailed Towhees** in 45 Years! Other notable birds included a **Red-necked Grebe**, 5 **Reddish Egrets**, 63 **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons**, a **Swainson's Hawk**, and 7 **Vermilion Flycatchers** on the Navy Base, a **White-winged Scoter** and two **Black Scoters** near Mugu Rock, a **White-winged Dove** in Camarillo, several **Red-naped Sapsuckers** (TO and CSUCI), a **Tropical Kingbird** at CSUCI, **American and Least Bitterns** at Lake Sherwood, 4 **California Gnatcatchers**, a **Grasshopper Sparrow**, and 2 **Bell's Sparrows**. Birds recorded within a week of the count, but missed on count day were **Eurasian Wigeon**, **Western Screech-Owl**, **Common Poorwill**, **Mountain Bluebird**, and **Western Tanager**.



Don Klabunde
Mountain Bluebird

Notable misses for the count period were **Cackling Goose**, **Wood Duck**, **Canvasback**, **Common Merganser**, **Common Ground-Dove**, **Ridgway's Rail**, **Common Gallinule**, **Black Skimmer**, **Bald Eagle**, **Ferruginous Hawk**, **Prairie Falcon**, **White-throated Sparrow**, and **Yellow-headed Blackbird**. However, when all was said and done, we recorded 24,000 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.

Please note that the COVID-19 pandemic will affect CBC participation this year. Pending local restrictions, many counts will be done under the COVID-19 guidelines sent to compilers. Online registration will not be available this year so please contact me directly at pereksta@pacbell.net. Due to the pandemic, we will not be sending out large groups at locations where we normally include numbers of novice birders. Since we will be focusing on small groups, we will not be able to accommodate many beginners or first-time counters this year.

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.

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 has traditionally been open to birders of all skill levels, but this year if you can't go out and count birds with a team, 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.



CS Klabunde
Plumbeous Vireo

While we normally gather in the evening to tally up the Christmas Bird Count totals, we will likely be doing that via Zoom. Details of how we will gather, virtually or otherwise, will be shared with participants before count day.

CONSERVATION

WHY DOES IT MATTER TO CARE ABOUT BIRDS?

This is the time of year when Conejo Valley Audubon is putting the finishing touches to its Lawn to Habitat program; a program that has flourished for the last seven years thanks in large measure to people in the community who want to make a difference in the natural world. Why is such a program so important? To quote the Handbook of Bird Biology from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, "Every piece of outdoor space, from city parks and suburban backyards to rural farmlands and forests, can serve as habitat that helps conserve birds. The elements that birds need to survive - shelter, nesting habitat, food and water - can be maintained in all kinds of backyards, schoolyards, and parks." In observing nearby natural habitats where birds can be found, such as the local oak woodlands and hillside chaparral, there are several things that are apparent. The native plants offer ready protection from predators as well as safe places to build a nest and successfully raise young. These same native plants support the variety of bugs and worms essential to the nutritional requirements of fast-growing chicks. When walking your native habitat, i.e., yard, it is important to remember that bugs are essential so no pesticides or lawn chemicals should be used.



Cooper's Hawk, immature
Mary Hansen

Placing water close to protective shrubbery is also important. A simple shallow plate that is about an inch deep provides birds with drinking water as well as a place to bathe and to cool off. I will never forget seeing a young Coopers Hawk standing in one of these dishes in my yard on a very hot day. He looked a little out of place and he certainly lost any ability to sneak up on the songbirds at the feeders, but he was hot and needed to cool off.

In talking about providing a safe habitat for birds it must, also, be noted that cats should be kept indoors all year round. In the US alone, about 2.4 billion birds are killed annually by free-roaming house cats.

There are many ways to create a bird-friendly habitat from a sterile expanse of green lawn and now is the time to do it.

DECEMBER 2020 TRIP DESCRIPTIONS

CVAS will continue its modified approach to birding trips now that we are living with a pandemic. **Each trip will be limited to 15 people maximum, and thus will require advance registration with the trip leader.** Since it will be hard to share guidebooks, we encourage you to bring your own or download one on your mobile phone (the Sibley guide is available as a book and an application for both Android and iPhone). Also, for safety we will not have extra binoculars to share, so please be sure to bring your own pair. Finally, given social distancing requirements, it may be difficult to hear each other. If you have a walkie talkie, it might be a good idea to bring that as well.

While you are out birding, please take precautions to ensure your wellbeing and that of those around you by wearing a mask over your nose and mouth and being prepared to follow these guidelines from ebird.org:

- **Keep your optics to yourself.** Don't share your scope, binoculars, or camera with others; disinfect the eye caps of your optics after each birding trip.
- **Maintain distance.** If you are birding near others (whether they are birders or not), maintain at least 6 feet of space between yourself and other people at all times. Take turns at blinds, shelters, and in other situations where proper distancing may not be possible.
- **Avoid touching communal surfaces.** This includes railings, doorknobs, handles, and other frequently used areas of public sites. If you touch these surfaces, wash your hands and/or use hand sanitizer immediately.
- **Respect restrictions and closures.** Check if your favorite park, trail, or wildlife refuge is still open before heading outside. Plan your birding trips in accordance with the latest recommendations of your local authorities.
- **Share checklists, not phones:** eBird Mobile users should avoid passing phones to review checklists for the time being. Confirm lists verbally before submission and if you need to make changes after you submit, it is easy to **share and correct lists** on the eBird Mobile app!

Wednesday, December 9th, 8:00 a.m. 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. Wear comfortable walking shoes. In the event of heavy rain, we will cancel the walk.

Please register in advance by contacting walk leader Richard Armerding at (310) 701-3878.



Golden-crowned Sparrow
CS Klabunde

ROADRUNNER

Page 5

Volume 52, Number 4

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



OFFICERS		USERNAMES
President	Frank DeMartino	<i>president</i>
Vice Pres	Richard Armerding	<i>vice president</i>
Secretary	Ann Glass	<i>secretary</i>
Treasurer	David Person	<i>treasurer</i>
COMMITTEE CHAIRS		
Programs	Dee Lyon 805-499-2165	<i>programs</i>
Conservation	Mary Hansen	<i>conservation</i>
Garden Tour	Jennifer de la Torre	<i>garden tour</i>
Education	Thelma Williams 805-492-2796	<i>thelma</i>
Field Trips	Angela Bonfiglio Allen	<i>fieldtrips</i>
Publicity	Ann Glass	<i>publicity</i>
Newsletter	Chrystal Klabunde 805-522-8023	<i>newsletter</i>
Membership	Jean Stoutenborough/Catherine Armerding	<i>membership</i>
Librarian	Jean Stoutenborough	<i>librarian</i>
Photographer	Don Klabunde 805-522-8023	<i>photographer</i>
Webmaster	Richard Armerding	<i>webmaster</i>
Facebook	Matthew Page	<i>media</i>
member at large	Bonnie Clarfield-Bylin 805-405-5632	<i>bonnie</i>
member at large	Nobuko McClure 805-482-0411	<i>nobuko</i>
Newsletter Emeritus	Gary Evans	<i>gary</i>



To contact board members, add @conejovalleyaudubon.org after each username above

EVERYONE IS WELCOME. Under normal circumstances, meetings would be held on the first Monday evening of each month (second Monday when the first one's a holiday) at 7:30 pm, at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, 439 Calle San Pablo, Camarillo, CA. Directions: from the corner of Pleasant Valley Road and Lewis Road in Camarillo, go west to the second street, Calle San Pablo, and 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 and dedicated to the study of birds and their habitats. As a world-class natural history collection, they have long made significant contributions to original research, and conservation. They also accept contributions. Visit WVZ.org

The *Roadrunner* is published monthly except July and August by the Conejo Valley Audubon Society. It is sent to paid CVAS members via either email or snailmail. Members are invited to submit articles, reviews, letters, photos etc. for publication consideration. Copy deadline is the 5th of the previous month. Send items to Chrystal Klabunde at newsletter@ConejoValleyAudubon.org, or 1229 Nonchalant Dr., Simi Valley, CA 93065.

For information on joining the **NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY**, please visit www.audubon.org

To join **CONEJO VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY** please visit www.ConejoValleyAudubon.org or mail in this

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please enroll me as a member of Conejo Valley Audubon Society. I have enclosed \$20 for a family membership. (An additional gift of \$25.00, \$50.00, \$75.00, \$100.00 or any amount would also be greatly appreciated.)

Make check payable to CVAS for membership at \$20.00 plus donation \$? equals a total of \$ _____

Mail to: CVAS, P.O. Box 4782, Thousand Oaks, CA 91359

() Check here to receive a black and white newsletter by snail mail, otherwise a color version will be sent by email.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email address _____