



# ROADRUNNER

FOUNDED 1968

Published by the **Conejo Valley Audubon Society** a Chapter of the **National Audubon Society**  
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Volume 56, Number 5

January, 2025

## CALENDAR

**Dec 22, Sun, all day**  
**Christmas Bird Count**

**Jan 4, Sat, all day**  
**New Year's County Count**  
see page 2

**Jan 6, Mon, 7:00 pm**  
**Monthly Program**

**Jan 11-12, weekend**  
**Salton Sea**  
see page 2

**Jan 8, Wed, 8:00 am**  
**Beginner Bird Walk**  
see page 2

**Jan 18, Sat, 8:00 am**  
**Mt Clef Open Space CLU**  
see page 2

**Jan 24, Fri, 8 am-1 pm**  
**Point Mugu Naval Base**  
see page 2



White-throated Sparrow  
© CS Klabunde

## JOIN US AT THE WESTERN FOUNDATION!

We have the privilege of holding our meetings at the **Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology** (also known as the Bird Museum), 439 Calle San Pablo in Camarillo. If you arrive when the doors open at 6:30, you'll have the rare opportunity to look around the museum's collections for a half hour before the meeting starts at 7:00 pm. (Also check out [wfvz.org](http://wfvz.org))

CVAS's meetings will be hybrid, simultaneously live at WfVZ (recommended) and on Zoom. The link to join on Zoom is <https://zoom.us/j/6155249106>.

Anyone interested in joining us for dinner at Wood Ranch Camarillo before the meeting, let Chrystal know you're coming (805-261-9885), then meet at the restaurant by 5:00 pm.

## JANUARY 6th MONTHLY PROGRAM

### BIRDING UNDER THE INFLUENCE:

#### CYCLING ACROSS AMERICA IN SEARCH OF BIRDS AND RECOVERY



On January 1st, 2014, Dorian Anderson boarded his bicycle for the adventure of a lifetime. His two-wheeled journey was an ecofriendly twist on the Big Year. While his predecessors utilized cars, planes, and boats, Anderson's goal was to replicate their transcontinental travels without the use of petroleum, a herculean challenge no one before him had accepted. He ultimately survived subzero temperatures, drifting snow, gusting winds, lightning storms, mountainous ascents, dog attacks, crumbling roads, and several accidents. By December 31, he'd amassed 618 bird species across 18,000 miles of riding, totals no one imagined possible when he set off with zero cycling experience. Anderson will speak about the genesis of his bike-birding project, provide a thrilling recount of his travels, highlight

the birds he saw, and reveal how his adventure changed his life. His personality and enthusiasm are infectious, and his tales of birding, cycling, and self-discovery will inspire others to venture into the outdoors, take note of the birds around them, and make positive changes in their own lives.

Dorian started birding in his Philadelphia backyard at age seven, included the Delaware Valley and Jersey Shore during his preteens, and attended several of Victor Emanuel's youth birding camps as a teenager. He envisioned himself as an ornithologist but got distracted by molecular biology and alcohol, so his childhood passion for birds lay comatose until he got sober at age 30. Despite that alcoholism and drug abuse which plagued him through his twenties, he completed a B.S. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from Stanford, did predoctoral biomedical research at Harvard University, and earned his Ph.D. in Developmental Genetics and Molecular Cell Biology from New York University. He then spent three years as a Postdoctoral Fellow in Molecular Neuroscience at Massachusetts General Hospital. Exhausted by the academic rat race and searching for direction, he resigned his postdoctoral position to undertake his Biking for Birds project. Momentum from that life-changing pivot opened many doors including public speaking, travel writing, and tour guiding. He worked in Colombia as a consultant for the National Audubon Society and is currently an international birding guide for Tropical Birding. He is an accomplished bird photographer and has just published his memoir: *Under the Influence: Cycling across America in Search of Birds and Recovery*.



## JANUARY BIRDING TRIPS

CVAS birding trips are open to everyone, regardless of skill level. Experienced birders lead these trips so that everyone has their best chance to see the wide variety of migrant and resident bird species that our area has to offer.

**Please bring water, wear comfortable shoes, a hat, and observe good birding etiquette. RAIN CANCELS**

### Saturday, Jan. 4th: Ventura County New Year's Count

Join us for a county-wide count of wintering birds in the entire Ventura County.

Please note this count is different from the CBC's in that: 1) it covers the entire county, not just the CBC circle, which allows us to cover areas in Oak Park, Moorpark, Simi Valley, and the whole north county that aren't covered in the CBC counts. And 2) this isn't a nationally organized event, but rather something for our curiosity and desire to understand more about the species that overwinter in our county. While we don't have any direct plans for how this data can be used, we plan on keeping annual records for future use on local conservation planning, habitat management, etc. If interested in helping out, please contact Lukas Le Grice ([lukaslegrice@gmail.com](mailto:lukaslegrice@gmail.com)) or Sammy Cowell ([samueldavidcowell@gmail.com](mailto:samueldavidcowell@gmail.com))

### Saturday-Sunday, Jan. 11-12: Salton Sea

This oasis in the desert beckons! For this overnight trip, we will start early Saturday afternoon, near the north end of the Salton Sea, and then probably bird down the west side of the lake to Unit 1. We'll spend the night in Brawley and bird a little around the town early on Sunday, then continue to work our way north on the east side of the lake, stopping at several hotspots before heading home Sunday afternoon. Please note that the trip will require some limited driving on unpaved roads.

Target birds: thousands of Snow and Ross's Geese, Sandhill Cranes, lots of ducks and waders, rails, raptors, Burrowing Owls, Mountain Bluebirds, Mountain Plovers, and desert species like Gambel's Quail, Abert's Towhee, doves, Gila and Ladder-Backed Woodpeckers, and Vermilion Flycatcher.

Please contact Peter Robertshaw ([peterrobertshaw@verizon.net](mailto:peterrobertshaw@verizon.net), 909-771-9720) for the details and to arrange for carpooling and lodging recommendations.



### Saturday, Jan 18th: Mount Clef Open Space CLU

Meet at the end of Bainbridge Ct. at 8 am. We'll poke through the prickly pear patches (try not to get poked!) as we look for Greater Roadrunner, Cactus Wren, and the endangered California Gnatcatcher. If time permits, we may go down to CLU and explore different habitats on campus. Trip leader: Sammy Cowell (818) 470-7098.

### Friday, Jan 24th: Point Mugu Naval Base

Join us as we explore Ventura County's most biodiverse hotspot (please note, that this trip is limited to 15 current CVAS members only). The Navy must background check each attendee before admittance, so members will need to email [fieldtrips@conejovalleyaudubon.org](mailto:fieldtrips@conejovalleyaudubon.org) to complete and return the form **by January 3rd!** Also, this trip lasts longer than our normal field trips (8 a.m. - 1 p.m.), and **you are not allowed to be on the base without our trip leaders.** So, if you cannot make it the whole time, please come another time. Target species include Brant, Black Skimmer, shorebird species, Vermillion Flycatcher, and more!

Trip Leaders – Martin Ruane and David Pereksta.

### Beginner Bird Walk – Rancho Sierra Vista / Satwiwa January 8th, Wednesday, 8:00 am

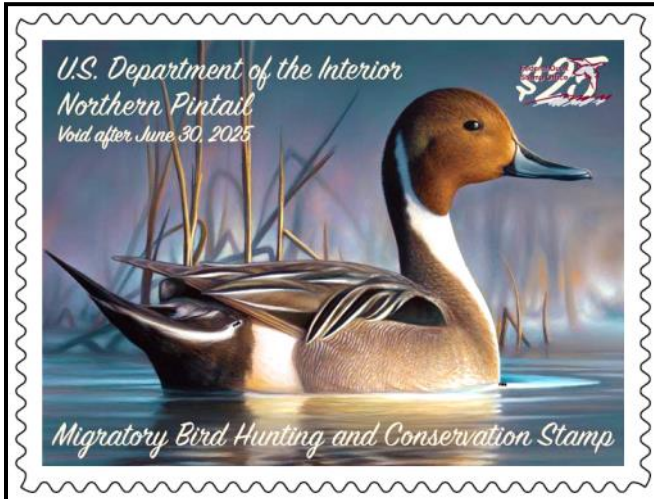
Conejo Valley Audubon invites birders of all experience levels to attend our monthly Beginner Bird Walk at Rancho Sierra Vista/Satwiwa. These walks are held on the second Wednesday of each month. We will meet at 8:00 am at the main parking lot, which is accessible off Lynn Road at Via Goleta in Newbury 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 and layered clothing, and bring water.

Contact walk leader Richard Armerding at (310) 701-3878 (texting is OK)

**Disclaimer:** Everyone is welcome to attend any Conejo Valley Audubon field trip, but Conejo Valley Audubon Society assumes no responsibility for injuries, personal or otherwise, incurred while attending a CVAS sponsored activity and in order to attend, all attendees agree that CVAS is not liable for such accidents. Everyone attends at their own risk.

## THE FEDERAL DUCK STAMP

### WHERE ART, HUNTING, AND CONSERVATION MEET



Each year, artists enter their work in the Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest. The winning image is placed on the Federal Duck Stamp (aka. The migratory bird hunting and conservation stamp).

According to the US Fish and Wildlife Service website it is "the longest running single-themed stamp in the world." There are plenty of good reasons to purchase a duck stamp. For one, you will be directly helping the environment. Ninety-eight percent of the proceeds goes towards acquiring and protecting wetland and grassland habitat. This wetland ecosystem is important for many animal and plant species including threatened and endangered. All sorts of waterfowl, shorebirds, and songbirds need this type of habitat. Secondly, the stamp is beautiful. Five judges choose one beautiful image out of hundreds of entries. This year's Duck stamp displays the elegant male Northern Pintail. Stamp collectors and wildlife art collectors are interested in these stamps. Waterfowl hunters, 16 years and older, are required to purchase the stamps as their hunting permit. These stamps also allow recreationists entrance into the national wildlife refuges.

Federal duck stamps can be purchased at the US postal service, Amplex, and most sporting goods stores such as Big 5.

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**CVAS's ANNUAL**

**GALA DINNER and AUCTION**

will be held on

**March 2nd, 2025**

again at the lovely

**Palm Garden Hotel**

in

**Thousand Oaks**

# ROADRUNNER

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Volume 56, Number 5

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

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

OFFICERS		USERNAMES
President	Frank DeMartino	<i>president</i>
Vice Pres	Sammy Cowell	<i>vicepresident</i>
Secretary	Ann Glass	<i>secretary</i>
Treasurer	David Person	<i>treasurer</i>



COMMITTEE CHAIRS		
Programs	Nicole Ball	<i>programs</i>
Field Trips	Sammy Cowell	<i>fieldtrips</i>
Conservation	Tina Tan	<i>conservation</i>
Lawns to Habitat	Erik Oberg	<i>lawnstohabitat</i>
Garden Tour	Jennifer de la Torre	<i>gardentour</i>
Education	Thelma Williams and Meg Thackoorie	<i>education</i>
Membership	Catherine Armerding	<i>membership</i>
Publicity	Bonnie Clarfield-Bylin	<i>publicity</i>
Social Media	Bonnie Clarfield-Bylin	<i>media</i>
Newsletter	Chrystal Klabunde	<i>newsletter</i>
Webmaster	Chrystal Klabunde	<i>webmaster</i>
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Member at Large	Nobuko McClure	<i>nobuko</i>
Member at Large	Gary Evans	<i>gary</i>
Member at Large	Matthew Page	<i>matthew</i>

To contact board members, add [@conejovalleyaudubon.org](mailto:@conejovalleyaudubon.org) after each username above

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME.** Monthly meetings are held on the first Monday evening of each month (second Monday when the first one's a holiday) at 7:00 pm, at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, 439 Calle San Pablo, Camarillo, CA. Directions: from the corner of Pleasant Valley Rd. and Lewis Rd. in Camarillo, go west to the second street, Calle San Pablo, and turn right. The Foundation is the fifth building on the left. [Or join via Zoom \(see page 1\)](#)

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](http://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](mailto:newsletter@ConejoValleyAudubon.org), or 1229 Nonchalant Dr., Simi Valley, CA 93065.

For information on joining the **NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY**, please visit [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)

To join **CONEJO VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY** please visit [www.ConejoValleyAudubon.org](http://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 your newsletter by snail mail, otherwise a digital version will be sent by email.](#)

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