



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 56, Number 9

May, 2025

CALENDAR

Apr 27, Sun, 9 to 3
Bird-Friendly Garden Tour
check the website or
the April *Roadrunner*

May 3, Sat, 8:00 am
SCORE
see page 2

May 5, Mon, 7:00 pm
Monthly Program

May 10, Sat, 6:30 pm
Two Rivers Park
see page 2

May 14, Wed, 8:00 am
Beginner Bird Walk
see page 2

May 18, Sun, 7:30 am
Santa Cruz Island
see page 2

May 25, Sun, 8:00 am
Mount Pinos
see page 2

May 31, Sat, 8:00 am
Beginner Birding Class
see page 4



American Kestrel
© CS Klabunde

MAY 5th MONTHLY PROGRAM

NATIVE PLANTS AND FIRE SAFETY

Ojai Valley Land Conservancy's Rewild Ojai Coordinator, Claire Woolson, will give a presentation and discussion on using native plants to create habitat for birds in your own backyard. Claire will talk about the importance of native plants and offer resources to add them to your yard. In addition, she will discuss wildfire and how to incorporate firewise tactics while still using native plants.



© OVL

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)

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.

SPECIAL REPORT!

This is the first in a series of reports from our friend and fellow CVAS member, Teodelina Martelli, who is working as a Fulbright Scholar on conservation of the Andean Condor in Chile. She is now our new Conservation Correspondent. Enjoy:



© CS Klabunde

Did you know that Andean Condor research played a key role in California Condor conservation? In the 1980's, when the entire genetic pool consisted of 22 condors, methods for the emergency captive breeding program were tested on captive Andean Condors first. A flock of this larger species even roamed the California hills at one point in an early unsuccessful attempt to help reintroduce young native condors. I saw the Andean Condor pop up again and again in the California Condor's story as I researched conservation archives in Jan Hamber's office at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History in 2018. Talking with ornithologists in Chile and Argentina, I had glimpses "through the looking-glass:" reflected across the Earth's equator from us was this sister species in its mirror world. Los Angeles sits at latitude 34. A month ago, I arrived at

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

MAY 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, May 3rd - Santa Clara River Estuary

Meet at 8 am at the Surfer's Knoll parking lot off of Spinnaker Drive. The beginning of May marks the tail end of shorebird migration, the peak of songbird migration, and the beginning of the breeding season for summer residents, and Santa Clara River Estuary is a great place to see all of this in action! We will look for ducks, gulls, phalaropes, plovers, swallows, warblers, and more.

Trip leader - Sammy Cowell: (818) 470-7098



Surfbirds
© Don Klabunde

Saturday, May 10th - Two Rivers Park

Meet at Two Rivers Park at River and C in Fillmore at 6:30 pm in the evening. The Nature Conservancy has recently opened its Santa Clara River property to the public! This is a great opportunity to see species like Bell's Vireo in restored willow riparian habitat. We will be going just before dusk to hopefully see nighthawks come out! If you want, we will meet at Daniel's Gourmet Food Co. in Fillmore at 5 pm beforehand for food and drinks.

Trip leader - TBD



Island Scrub-Jay
© Don Klabunde

Sunday, May 18th - Island Scrub-Jay Pelagic rip to Santa Cruz Island from 8 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

This trip is organized by Island Packers, not CVAS. Tickets must be purchased through them either on the Island Packers website <https://islandpackers.com/oxnard-to-scrub-jay/> or call (805) 642-1393. The Cost is \$138 per person. Leaves from Oxnard Harbor. Get there early.

We will take our time on our way over to the island, looking for shearwaters, alcids, and other pelagic species. Once on the island, we will spend an hour or so looking for the endemic Island Scrub-Jay and other unique island wildlife! Then, we will spend the rest of the afternoon cruising around the Santa Barbara Channel looking for more birds and other wildlife.

Sunday, May 25th - Mount Pinos

Join us as we go into the mountains to find some alpine birds. To carpool, meet at 6 am at the Janss Park & Ride, located on the east side of the 23 freeway at the Janss Road Exit by the soccer fields. Alternatively, meet at 8:00 am at the Mt. Pinos Nordic Base parking lot at the end of Mount Pinos Road (GPS: [Cuddy Valley Rd, Forest Rte 9N24, Frazier Park, CA 93225](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Cuddy+Valley+Rd,+Forest+Rte+9N24,+Frazier+Park,+CA+93225) — or use coordinates 34.8134, -119.1263). **Dress warm!**

Target species include – Clark's Nutcracker, Mountain Chickadee, Pygmy Nuthatch, Olive-sided Flycatcher, White-headed Woodpecker, Townsend's Solitaire, Green-tailed Towhee, Red Crossbill and more!

Trip leader - Richard Armerding: (310) 701-3878.

Beginner Bird Walk Rancho Sierra Vista / Satwiwa May 14th, 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 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)

COLOMBIA TRIP NEXT DECEMBER

We are going to the Central Andes from December 6-14. The website to sign up is:

<https://secure.holbrooktravel.com/myaccount/TripOverview/CODPS40V1-C>

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.

LAWNS TO HABITAT GRANTS



Suffering lawn
© D Person

Do you have a lawn that's turning brown, or worse, artificial turf that's fading in the sun? Would you like to create a beautiful native garden that supports birds, pollinators, and other wildlife instead, while saving water and money? Starting June 1, we will be accepting applications for Conejo Valley Audubon Society's LAWNS TO HABITAT grant program, helping people turn their sad looking yards into thriving native plant habitats, resplendent with wildlife!



Black-headed Grosbeak eating blue elderberries
© CS Klabunde



Garden with California native plants
© CS Klabunde

Each summer CVAS accepts applications for these grants to help people make the transformation from LAWNS TO HABITAT. Successful applicants will receive:

- \$250 worth of native plants (40-50 plants, depending on size)
- Design advice from local native plant enthusiasts



© E Oberg



Additionally in response to the wildfires that have wreaked such destruction in Southern California this past decade, CVAS has inaugurated a new program, ASHES TO HABITAT, with special stipends for people in our area whose homes or neighborhoods were directly affected by our local fires, from 2018's Woolsey Fire to the more recent Mountain Fire. Stay tuned to the CVAS website for more details as the application period approaches.



© Don Klabunde

CVAS BEGINNER BIRDING CLASS IS COMING



Snowy Egret
© CS Klabunde



Western Bluebird
© CS Klabunde

Saturday, May 31: Beginner Birding Class Part 1

The first class, meets at 8 am at the Conejo Valley Botanic Garden, 400 W. Gainsborough Rd., Thousand Oaks. Drive to the parking lot off of Jeanine Drive. Class will be held in the Kids' Adventure Garden. A \$10 cash donation will be collected for CVBG. Bring water & snacks, wear comfortable shoes and binoculars if you have them. All ages welcome!

Please RSVP at education@conejovalleyaudubon.org

Saturday, June 7th: Beginner Birding Class Part 2

Walk will be at 8 am at Hill Cyn Trail off of Santa Rosa Valley road, Camarillo. This habitat location will assist you to put into practice your ongoing birding knowledge. Bring water & snacks, wear comfortable shoes and binoculars if you have them.

Please RSVP at education@conejovalleyaudubon.org



© CS Klabunde

Saturday, June 14th: Beginner Birding Class Part 3

Walk will be at 8 am at Rancho Simi Community Park, 1765 Royal Ave., Simi Valley. A blend of habitats to continue to develop your birding skills. Bring water & snacks, wear comfortable shoes and binoculars if you have them.

Please RSVP at education@conejovalleyaudubon.org

CONDOR CONSERVATION CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1:

latitude -33 in Santiago, Chile, to meet the researchers at Proyecto Manku with whom I am carrying out Fulbright research on the Andean Condor's situation. In line with Fulbright's interests in cultural exchange, I brought the diplomatic gift of a dummy condor egg (courtesy of the LA Zoo.) The wooden piece, painted a very pale blue-green, was slightly smaller than the actual size of an Andean Condor egg, but my contact at Proyecto Manku was thrilled. She could now scan the physical imitation, adjust its dimensions, and get Andean Condor replica eggs 3D printed for outreach.

The first two days had been packed with the Fulbright Commission's schedule of meetings, talks, and tours in central Santiago (during which I privately toasted my 24th birthday in the ornate, antique barroom of the practically bankrupt Club de La Union.) So I assumed I should meet the folks at Proyecto Manku in my best attire, and it wasn't until I arrived at the raptor rehabilitation center thirty minutes southwest of Santiago, that I realized I was overdressed. Llamas sauntered off the dirt road ahead of our truck's approaching dust cloud, making me glad my collaborators had sent me back into the hotel to change from heels into boots. But I found myself wearing a suit in the middle of a field, helping them release kestrel after screaming kestrel ("cernicalo" in Chilean Spanish.) "Asesino!" ("murderer!") cried a rehab staffer jovially in fun at the panicked keening of the tiny raptors.

Besides those American Kestrels, the Centro de Rehabilitación de Aves Rapaces (CRAR) houses a number of larger raptors, including Magellanic Horned Owl (*Bubo magellanicus*), and Andean Condors, with several pairs in their captive breeding program. When I peered into the enclosure of one pair, a fluffy gray condor chick, hunched in its nest, stared suspiciously back at me.

Another enclosure housed several teenaged condors (between 4-6 years old) where they could fly from perch to perch under the mentorship of a matriarch, who had long worn the white ruff and secondaries the younger birds still lacked. At the end of the year, these birds will, undergo acclimation in an outdoor enclosure somewhere in Patagonia, where the matriarch will join them and encourage them to keep eating regularly. After several weeks, the young birds will be released into the wild population in a ceremony that will mark the end of my Fulbright collaboration.

Unlike the intensive conservation program in California, the Andean Condor population has never been confidently assessed, with estimates ranging between 9,000 and 25,000 birds. What is certain is that their population density increases the farther south one gets – the Andean Condor being declared extinct in Venezuela but increasing in numbers southwards to large flocks in Patagonia. Like with the California Condor and other vultures, the Andean Condor population suffers from human ignorance and suspicion. Poisoned carcasses are set out purposely to target the large population of feral dogs that wreak nightly havoc on farmsteads and wildlife alike. The birds become collateral damage to such practices, adding to losses from powerline collisions, microplastic ingestion and habitat destruction, therefore the condor's population is considered IUCN Vulnerable.

They are breathtaking, and intimidating, up close – one of the rehabbers presented a dapper male with a 10-gallon bucket half-submerged in water, which the bird first nibbled at, then violently pulled out of the water with remarkable strength. The male proceeded to edge up close to the fence, regarding us questioningly with dark mustard-yellow eyes. The female in the same enclosure, who had backed out of the male's way, stared with her own deep red irises. It was a bracing, engrossing morning face to face with the condor I am traveling to study. Their striking personality, and the unquestioning commitment of the humans helping them, bear a strong resemblance with the situation of the condor back home in California – a familiarity that is a comfort even now in travels through the Atacama Desert as I work with the California Condor's sister species far to the south.



Young Andean Condor flying within enclosure
© T Martelli



Andean Condor matriarch
© T Martelli

Teodelina Martelli, San Pedro de Atacama, April 5th, 2025

ROADRUNNER

Page 6

Volume 56, Number 9

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	Gena Nicole Ball	<i>programs</i>
Field Trips	Sammy Cowell	<i>fieldtrips</i>
Conservation	Vacant	<i>conservation</i>
Lawns to Habitat	Ann Glass	<i>lawnstohabitat</i>
Garden Tour	Jennifer de la Torre	<i>gardentour</i>
Education	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>
Photographer	Don Klabunde	<i>photographer</i>
Librarian	Jean Stoutenborough	<i>librarian</i>
Member at Large	Carol Langford	<i>carol</i>
Member at Large	Dee Lyon	<i>dee</i>
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 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

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 your newsletter by snail mail, otherwise a digital version will be sent by email.](#)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email address _____