



ROADRUNNER

FOUNDED 1968

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Volume 56, Number 10

June, 2025

CALENDAR

May 31, Sat, 8:00 am
Beginner Birding Class 1
see page 3

June 7, Sat, 8:00 am
Beginner Birding Class 2
see page 3

June 8, Sun, 8:00 am
Pre-picnic Bird Walk

June 8, Sun, 11:00 am
CVAS ANNUAL PICNIC

June 11, Wed, 8:00 am
Beginner Bird Walk
see page 7

June 14, Sat, 8:00 am
Beginner Birding Class 3
see page 3

Yarrow
© CS Klabunde



SPECIAL EXTRA JUNE EDITION

NEXT MONTHLY PROGRAM IS SEPTEMBER 8

THE CVAS ANNUAL PICNIC

Sunday, June 8 at Los Robles Open Space



Meet at 8:00 am for the morning bird walk, then at 11:00 for the potluck lunch.

It's been twenty-four years since we first held our CVAS Annual Picnic at the Los Robles Trail area adjacent to the original Janss House in Thousand Oaks, and the area has changed a



bit. We can no longer drive right down to "our" oak tree, the lawn is gone and a few new picnic tables have been added, but "our" tree is still there as shady as ever.

At the south end of Moorpark Rd. turn right onto Greenmeadow Ave and proceed approximately one mile to the parking area. Carpooling is encouraged as parking is limited. Please bring your own table service, drinks and chairs, and this year, bring whatever dish you like. :-)

LAWNS to HABITAT and ASHES to HABITAT GRANTS



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!



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



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.



CVAS BEGINNER BIRDING CLASSES!

Get to know your local birds! Three Saturday morning classes are scheduled in May and June where you can learn the basics of birdwatching, bird identification, and how to use field guides and your binoculars. These classes are free and open to all ages!!

Greater Roadrunner
© CS Klabunde



California Quail
© 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 in the Kids' Adventure Garden. Drive to the parking lot off of Jeunine Drive. (for this meeting only, a \$10 cash donation will be collected for the use of CVBG's facilities) Bring water and snacks, and wear comfortable shoes. Bring binoculars if you have them.

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, and wear comfortable shoes. Bring binoculars if you have them.

Please RSVP at education@conejovalleyaudubon.org



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 great blend of habitats to continue to develop your birding skills. Bring water & snacks, and wear comfortable shoes. Bring binoculars if you have them.

Please RSVP at education@conejovalleyaudubon.org

THE BIRD-FRIENDLY GARDEN TOUR WAS GREAT

A huge thank you from Jennifer de la Torre, CVAS's Bird-Friendly Garden Tour Coordinator

I am so grateful for the fantastic team who made our 2025 Bird-Friendly Garden Tour a smashing success! A HUGE thank you



Summer Tanager house
© Don Klabunde



Rock Wren house
© Don Klabunde

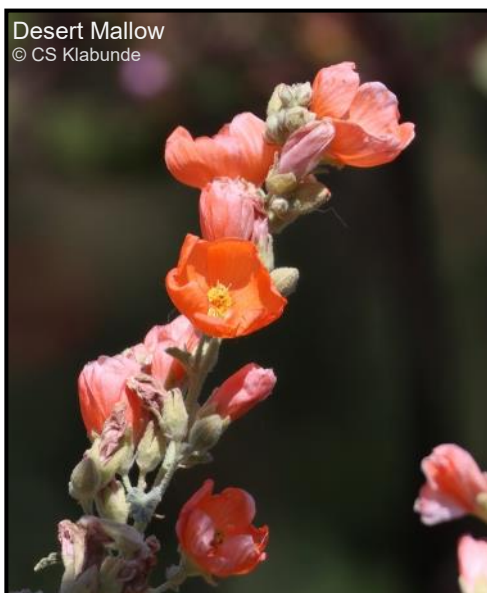
to our AMAZING hosts: **Dan Long (Western Tanager)**, **Jennifer Hall (Rock Wren)**, **Laura Bauer (Summer Tanager)**, **Mark Mendelsohn (Band-tailed Pigeon)**, **Tedra Osell (Hummingbird House)**, and **Ann Troxell (Junco)**. Each and every host was warm, welcoming, enthusiastic, and knowledgeable. The gardens looked simply spectacular and were varied enough to suit everyone's different tastes in gardening style.



We were honored to be able to partner with The California Native Plant Society (Channel Islands) this year. BIG, BIG thanks to "dynamo" Terri Burgess (CNPS) for her amazing enthusiasm and energy. She was kind enough to reach out to her membership and connect me with our hosts for this year's tour – this was SUCH a huge help!



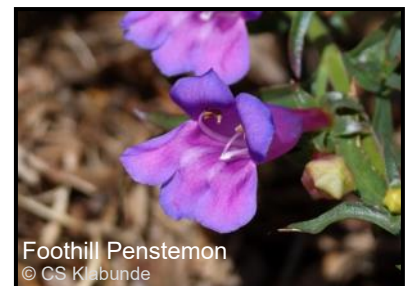
Blue Eyed Grass
© CS Klabunde



Desert Mallow
© CS Klabunde



Honey Bee
© CS Klabunde



Foothill Penstemon
© CS Klabunde

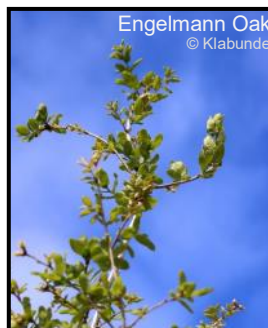
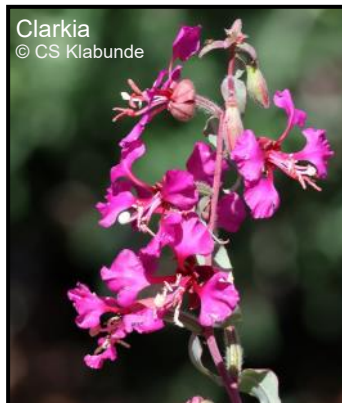
BIRD-FRIENDLY GARDEN TOUR continued



Frank DeMartino, Bonnie Clarfield-Bylin, Martin Fletcher, Trisha Munro and Rick Burgess all pitched in to help with the hosting. Don and Chrystal Klabunde took the time to visit each garden and take beautiful photos. ***These are all some seriously wonderful folks*** – the tour would not have been possible without their help and participation.



And to the guests, you MADE the tour! THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING - it was so much fun to visit and chat with everyone!



We hope our tour inspired you to enhance your garden, and that you will spread the word about the important connection between California Native Plants and our local and migrating BIRDS! ***You can find our follow-up information on the website under "HABITAT".***

PLEASE

Consider volunteering with CVAS! Ashes to Habitat and Lawns to Habitat could use your help!

SPECIAL REPORT!

This is the second in a series of reports from our 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:



Volcanos Licancabur and Juriques
© TM

This month, I write from the Puribeter Reserve, an unusual green patch in one of the driest deserts on Earth. Nights here in San Pedro de Atacama are famously dark – so dark that training my Vortex scope on a bright star and holding my hand near the eyepiece yields a visible twinkling on my fingertip. During the day, the Andes dominate the reddish landscape. Licancabur, a 19,000-ft. conical volcano, towers on the horizon next to the smaller Juriques volcano. Further South, the volcano Lascar is visible as a squat cauldron of smoke. The striking emptiness of the place emphasizes the fact that the California Condor's sister species is no longer a regular sight.

Out on the reserve, this desert and its mountains seem unchanged and unchangeable. But in 1997, when NASA began testing Mars rovers nearby, there was practically no tourism. Since then, interest and real estate value have soared. The majority of San

Pedro's population are tourists blitzing through its implacable surroundings. This interest has brought some environmental protections, but the shadow of mining activity lies heavy on the community. This area used to be part of Bolivia until Chile seized it for nitrate deposits during the War of the Pacific. The salt flats here are rich in lithium, and parts of the mountains are newly marked for silver and gold extraction. Rarely, the words "la minera" (mining company) or "litio" (lithium) are heard, spoken with a sort of resigned contempt. It is fortunate that the region hosts three species of flamingos, along with vizcachas (rabbit-like chinchilla relatives), pumas, and other species driving ecotourism and legal protection.

Andean Condors seem to have mostly disappeared from this area around thirty years ago, although interviewees reported a few individuals in the past decade, mostly in the mountains. When I asked about the condor's decline, people speculated on the scarcity of carrion, connecting it with the overharvest of yareta (*Azorella compacta*). This cushion plant, like peat, is slow-forming, burns well, and was collected for fuel until its near extinction. Juan Carmelo Ramirez, from the local community of Catarpe, recounted stories saying that regular rain disappeared along with yareta. As a once-common plant, he told me, its transpiration may have played an important role in local weather patterns, not to mention feeding llamas and vicuña populations. I could not help but be skeptical of that theory, since my own drives upslope, and the comments of locals, revealed an apparent abundance of llamas, vicuñas, and burros. How were the condors not finding enough food?

It's possible that a historical scarcity of livestock drove Andean Condor numbers down enough to impact cultural learning. In the California Condor, younger birds are reliant on mentors to teach them how to use wind patterns and find food across vast landscapes. Lacking this, young birds may starve or venture into populated areas. Young California Condors released with equally inexperienced Andean Condor "mentors" in 1992 just huddled in one spot in the California hills! There may also be other unknown threats keeping condor numbers down in the Atacama Desert.

Despite its scarcity, the Andean Condor remains a key figure in Andean indigenous culture. Depicted often with the snake and the puma, it represents the celestial world and is thought to carry departed souls into the Pleiades where they may begin a long walk along the Milky Way.

- Teodelina Martelli, San Pedro de Atacama, May 5th, 2025



Tatio geysers
© TM

Thanks to Sammy Cowell for all the great field trips he's arranged as Fieldtrip Chair. Last month's Two Rivers Park trip was his last for us, and we wish him all the best for his future up north.

**So now we need a new Fieldtrip Chair!
Get in on the fun!
Join the CVAS board!**

© M Fletcher



JUNE BIRDING TRIPS

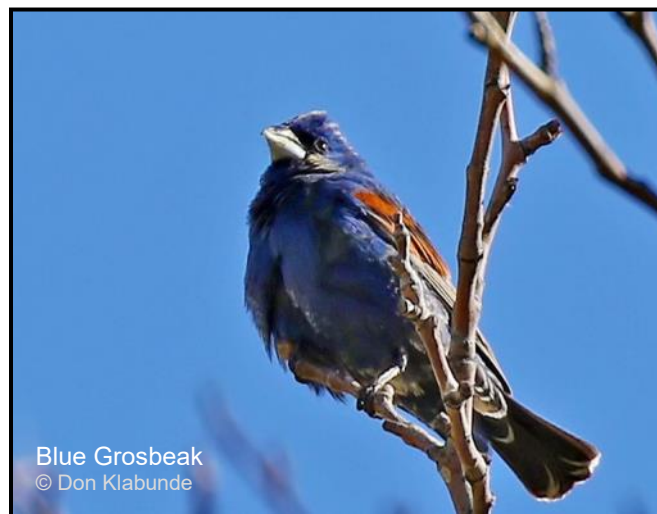
CVAS will continue its careful approach to birding trips. Masks will no longer be required for outdoor events, but we may not be offering extra binoculars to share, so please bring your own. And finally, **please bring water, wear comfortable shoes, a hat, and observe good birding etiquette.** **RAIN CANCELS**

May 31, and June 7 and 14 - Beginner Birding Classes
(see page 3)

Sunday, June 8th, 8:00 am - Pre-Picnic Bird Walk
Meet at 8 am at our picnic location. (see page 1).

June 11th, Wednesday, 8:00 am – Beginner Bird Walk
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 bring water.

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



Blue Grosbeak
© Don Klabunde

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.

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

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| Secretary | Ann Glass | <i>secretary</i> |
| Treasurer | David Person | <i>treasurer</i> |

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| Field Trips | Vacant | <i>fieldtrips</i> |
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| Lawns to Habitat | Ann Glass | <i>lawnstohabitat</i> |
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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

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