



Field Trips

Pacific Commons Linear Park
Sunday 14 November 2021, 8:30am - noon
Leaders: Rich Nicholson & Michael Christopherson
rsn711@yahoo.com

Fremont's Pacific Commons Linear Park is a productive winter birding site. The ponds are excellent for many waterfowl species. Waders such as American Bittern inhabit the pond edges and wetlands. The fields are productive for wintering sparrows and possibly Tricolored Blackbirds or even a stray Yellow-Headed Blackbird. We have a good chance at seeing interesting raptors such as Ferruginous Hawk. Snow, Ross's and Cackling Geese often visit this time of year. Bring a scope if you have one. Heavy rain cancels.

Directions: Exit I-880 in Fremont at Auto Mall Parkway. Go west on Auto Mall Parkway for a mile to a small pull-off area on the left at an entrance sign. Park at the turn around at the far end of the road, which is now the only legal parking area. No facilities at Pacific Commons, but you pass a Starbucks on the north side of Auto Mall Parkway on your way to the park.



ZOOM MEETING INSTRUCTIONS:

Due to COVID-19, Ohlone Audubon's membership meetings will continue to be online via Zoom. Registration is needed for OAS's membership meetings in 2021! As before, you only need to do it once for ALL 2021 meetings. Click the URL / link below to register for OAS's 2021 membership meetings:

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0ldeyopjoiHdxrlasw95GYo7GazoqhtELu>

(After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.)

Hayward Regional Shoreline: Longspurs and Shorebirds
Saturday 20 November 2021, 8:00am - noon
Leaders: Bob Toleno & Juli Chamberlin
birding@toleno.com

November is the best month to see longspurs in Alameda County. We'll start this trip walking around the damp shortgrass of Mount Trashmore searching for Lapland Longspurs (or possibly other longspurs), as well as pipits, geese, sparrows, and larks. When we've had our fill of grassland birds, we'll head over to Frank's Dump where a +7.4 high tide should push lots of shorebirds up into the roost. If we're extra lucky, we might see a Short-eared or Burrowing Owl. Rain cancels.

Directions: Exit I-880 at Winton Ave. and head west all the way to the end. Meet at the paved parking lot inside the gate (not the dirt lot outside the gate). A restroom is available at that lot. Pre-registration is not required, and all are welcome.

Arrowhead Marsh: Martin Luther King Regional Shoreline
Saturday 4 December 2021, 9:30am - noon
Leader: Megan Jankowski
mindfuldocumentation@gmail.com

An 8.4' high tide will hit Arrowhead Marsh at 11:12 AM, creating an opportunity to see Ridgway's Rails, Virginia Rails, and Soras. Wintering ducks and shorebirds will be plentiful. The area is completely paved, so if it's raining, we'll still go as rain and high tide are optimum conditions for seeing rails. One year a very rare Yellow Rail was seen here in cold, driving rain! There also could be an opportunity to see a Nelson's Sparrow that sometimes winters here in the marsh. Dress in layers and raingear as needed. This is a wheelchair-accessible field trip. Pre-registration is not required, and all are welcome.

Directions: From I-880, go west on Hegenberger towards the airport and turn right on Pardee. Make a left at Swan and turn right into the entrance to Martin Luther King Regional Shoreline. Follow the entrance road all the way to the end. On the way to the parking lot, drive slowly and keep an eye out for Burrowing Owls on the berms to the right.

Field trips continued next page



Field Trips (continued)

Garin Regional Park
Thursday 16 December 2021 9:00am - 1:00pm
Leaders: Judy & Jerry Steenhoven
steenhoven@sbcglobal.net

The outdoors in late fall can be especially beautiful - fresh and clear with deciduous plants shedding spent leaves that have turned yellow and brown. We'll spend our morning in Garin Park, looking for wintering sparrows, warblers, and thrushes. Be prepared for rain and cold. Heavy rain cancels. All are welcome, and pre-registration is not required.

Directions: To reach Garin Park, take Mission Blvd. in Hayward to Garin Avenue, just south of Industrial Pkwy. Follow Garin Avenue uphill until you reach the park. Meet at the barn.

Shadow Cliffs Regional Recreation Area
Saturday 8 January 2022, 9:00am - noon
Leaders: Kathy Robertson & Rich Nicholson
katbirdca@aol.com

Join us at Shadow Cliffs Regional Recreation Area to explore the lake, levees, and marsh for wintering waterfowl, Common Gallinules, egrets, herons, and grebes. Osprey are found around the lake and ponds, while the trees hold woodpeckers and nuthatches. Notable sightings in past years included Bald Eagle, Golden Eagle, Great-tailed Grackle, California Thrasher, Common Loon, Common and Hooded Merganser, Wilson's Snipe and Peregrine Falcon. Wide, level trails make walking fairly easily except for one short, steep uphill section to get onto the levee. Scopes are helpful.

Directions: From I-580 eastbound, take the Santa Rita Road exit, keep right and follow signs for Downtown to merge onto Santa Rita Road. Turn left on Valley Avenue and left on Stanley Boulevard. Turn right in to the park. Meet in the first parking lot by the swimming beach. \$6 parking fee/permit.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

**HAYWARD-
 FREMONT**
**SUNDAY DEC. 19,
 2021**



Last year was our most successful bird count ever—**182 species!** Let's do it again. Seventy-two counters found 99,887 in our count circle. We have such a diverse area! National Audubon has not announced the count status from last year, but we are sure to place in the top 25 of the nation.

Just about all our past leaders have graciously agreed to lead their respective areas again. But, more help is always welcomed! We are again planning for more small birding groups only, following current Covid-19 protocols. **Therefore we are encouraging more feeder counts this year! Involve your neighbors!** If you would like to participate as a feeder counter, please contact us with your address and we will let you know if your home is in the count circle. Data, including species seen and numbers along with hours watched, can be submitted to pagpeg@aol.com.

We will be holding a ZOOM meeting on count night, **December 19, 2021, at 7:30PM.** We will share exciting events of the day. Anyone can join the Zoom Meeting at :
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/4206513037?pwd=bGVzOHhWskQ2ZFFkUXE3VGFOb3ZiUT09>
 Meeting ID: 420 651 3037 Passcode: 0mh5Zt

One tap mobile
 Meeting ID: 420 651 3037 Passcode: 120570
 Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/u/keizuQB5gO>

We have been successful in years past and need your help to be successful once more. Remember, this is Citizen Science of the highest degree. It must be stressed that our success in securing the important, basic scientific accuracy of the count hinges on coverage and consistency (participants - you!). The count benefits from the hard work of our 17 section leaders, and participation of each person who carries out the necessary jobs.

Want to help? Contact us at Phil and Pat Gordon, pagpeg@aol.com, or call 510-538-3550.



BIRDING OBSERVATIONS

Fall/Winter 2021

By Vicki Robinson



Lincoln's Sparrow

Fall migration is in full swing now with our backyard sparrows and common winter birds visiting our feeders and fountains. We welcome home the **White-crowned**, **Golden-crowned** and **Lincoln's Sparrows** along with the occasional **White-throated Sparrow**. The **Yellow-rumped Warblers** are everywhere and happy to show their five yellow spots. Also, **Hermit Thrushes**, **Fox Sparrows** and **Ruby-crowned Kinglet's** have found their way back to us.



Yellow-rumped Warbler

Bill Chen at Lake Elizabeth continued his rare bird finding streak with a **Blackpoll Warbler** and 2 or 3 **Palm Warblers**. Ardenwood Farm not to be outdone had a **Tennessee Warbler** and a **Nashville Warbler** passing thru on their way south to warmer climates.



Palm Warbler



White-faced Ibis

An uncommon, **Red-necked Grebe** and uncommon **Common Tern** have been seen at Ballena Bay in Alameda.

A **White-faced Ibis** was seen at Lake Elizabeth along with **Greater White-fronted Geese** and a **Snow Goose** stopping on their way to greener pastures.



Blackpoll Warbler



Broad-winged Hawk (B. Chen)

The Hawk migration was still in full swing with observers counting them on Hawk Hill in Marin. A **Broad-Winged Hawk** was seen by Bob Toleno fly over Hayward and Bob Dunn saw one over Del Valle in Livermore. So, it never hurts to look up high for hawks flying east. And how about that **California Condor** seen in the Round Valley area near Mt. Diablo!



Tennessee Warbler

Bald Eagles have been seen at Ardenwood Farm and Quarry Lakes. Another pair, possibly the famous Milpitas pair can be seen at Pacific Commons along with a Golden Eagle as a regular visitor.

We are happy to have **Bald Eagles** and **Golden Eagles** present in our area. A pair of



Golden Eagle



Bald Eagle



Northern Shoveler

Our winter ducks are returning in large numbers to Freshwater ponds, marshes and sheltered salt water. **Northern Shovelers**, **Northern Pintails**, **Bufflehead**, **Green-winged Teals**, **American Wigeon** and an occasional **Eurasian Wigeon** have all been seen.



Thick-billed Kingbird (D. Pomeroy)

On the other side of the bay a few mega rarities have summoned all the local birders to add to their life lists. A **Dusky Warbler** a rare Siberian vagrant was seen by many in Corte Madera. Another surprise vagrant, a **Thick-billed Kingbird** was seen at a local park in Menlo Park. This bird is sometimes seen in Arizona near the Mexican Border but very rare to California. (All photos by Vicki Robinson, except as noted)

President's Corner



One of the things I enjoy about birding is birding festivals. In addition to our annual trip to the Lodi Sandhill Crane Festival, where Tanya serves as a tour leader, we try to go to at least a couple every year. With COVID, almost all of these events have been cancelled or been “virtual” over the past couple of years. I’ve noticed lately that some festivals have gone back to in person events and field trips. Some require proof of vaccination, but if you feel safe attending start thinking about the ones coming up.

I looked at the schedule of festivals coming up the first half of 2022 and there are some great ones. If you want to stay close to home, there are three you might consider :

January 13-17 is the 2022 Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival <https://morrobaybirdfestival.org>

January 27-30 2022 Snow Goose Festival of the Pacific Flyway, Chico www.snowgoosefestival.org



April 21-24 is the 2022 Annual Point Reyes Birding and Nature Festival. <https://pointreyesbirdingfestival.org>

I have never attended either the Morro Bay or Point Reyes Festivals, but everyone I have talked to who did said they had a wonderful time. These are two you should definitely think about.

If you want to go a bit farther afield look to Othello, Washington for the **March 25-27, 2022 Othello Sandhill Crane Festival** <https://www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org> Tanya and I have tried to make this festival each of the past four years and for several reasons it didn’t happen. We are definitely going this year.

If you are up for something bigger, there are three I recommend, first is in **Port Aransas, Texas February 24, 2022 Whooping Crane Festival** <http://www.whoopingcranefestival.org> Tanya and I attended this festival and had a great time. Of course there are the Whooping Cranes, but there are also wonderful birding opportunities on the Texas coast.

If this one isn’t for you, try **March 5- April 10, 2022 Nebraska Crane Season** <https://rowe.audubon.org/crane-viewing> This is the famous Sandhill Crane Festival at Rowe Sanctuary on the Platte River in Nebraska. Tanya and I attended a few years ago. It is absolutely amazing to see the cranes in this setting and is something all birders should do. The exact date hasn’t been set yet, but will be within this window. My only caution is the March in Nebraska is still winter and other than the cranes, there isn’t much other birding.

Finally you could try the **Black Swamp Bird Observatory in Maumee Bay in Ohio May 6-15, 2022** The Biggest Week in American Birding <http://biggestweekinamericanbirding.com>. This festival is world famous for its warblers. We had planned to go last year, and definitely are planning to go in 2022.



Birding festivals are great fun. You see great birds and meet great people.

There are many more than I have listed, take a look at <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/birding-festivals/> To see any that you would like. We will be at Othello and The Biggest Week this year, hope to see you at one of them.



-Bill Happes

Conservation

Things in the Altamont are Going in the Wrong Direction!

The Altamont Pass is a gap through the Diablo Mountain Range. Air in the Central Valley is warmer than the air over the Bay Area. Air moves from the cooler bay to the warmer valley, moving through the



Altamont at an average of 15mph. The Altamont Pass area provides an excellent location to capture this wind energy. However it is also an important migration pathway for many bird

species. The first wind farms were built in the Altamont Pass area in the early 1980s. By 1985 the 64 square mile Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area (APWRA) was filled with 26 wind farms with nearly 5000 turbines. Soon after the wind farms began operations, reports began circulating that raptors, especially Golden Eagles were hitting the turbine blades resulting in high numbers of raptor deaths.

Eventually we learned that The APWRA had the highest numbers and rates of raptor kills of any wind facility in the world, killing an estimated 900-1300 birds of prey, including 116 Golden Eagles each year. Because it was such excellent raptor habitat and on a major migration route, The APWRA was drawing in eagles and raptors from our entire region and becoming an ecological sink having major region-wide population impacts on raptors.

In 2007 the bay area Audubon Chapters sued Alameda County, the agency responsible to approving wind power projects in the APWRA. Alameda County and the chapters subsequently reached an agreement in which

1. The Chapters dropped the suit.
2. The County committed to
 - Reduce avian mortality by 50% by 2009
 - Implement a rigorous adaptive management plan if that goal was not met
 - Develop a comprehensive conservation plan to benefit species affected by the wind turbines.

Reduction in avian mortality was to be accomplished through “re-powering”, replacing existing small turbines with fewer, larger turbines.

The belief was that avian mortality was a function of the number of turbines and that fewer turbines would lead to significant reductions in raptor deaths. None of the above happened.

Since 2007 project after project has been approved for the APWRA despite objections by the Audubon Chapters, the State Wildlife Agencies and the County’s own Technical Advisory Committee. Despite all this re-powering, avian deaths have not declined and, in fact, are on track to exceed the level of mortality seen in 2007. Back in 2007 the consensus was that the number of turbines was the issue, fewer turbines through repowering would lead to fewer raptor deaths. What we have learned instead is that the number of turbines is less important. Instead it is the number of megawatts from projects. The more megawatts from projects in the APWRA the greater number of eagle deaths, regardless of the number of turbines.

The Audubon Chapters have worked strenuously to get Alameda County to listen to the wildlife agencies and its own technical advisory committee, live up to the promises it made in 2007 and change its approach to wind power in the APWRA.



Recently the East County Zoning Board of Adjustments (ECZBA) approved the MulQueeney Ranch Wind Repowering Project, an 80 Mw project planned for the APWRA. Analysis by

wildlife agency experts determined that if this project was built, along with those already approved, Golden Eagle fatalities in the APWRA would exceed those before repowering began. Despite significant concern expressed by the wildlife agencies and the fact that this project had never been reviewed by the TAC, the ECZBA rubber stamped the applicant’s proposal.
(continued on page 7)

(Altamont continued)

The Audubon Chapters appealed to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. Audubon strongly supports responsible development of renewable energy. We believe that wind power can be developed in the Altamont that does not decimate region-wide populations of Golden Eagles, other raptors, and bats as is happening in the APWRA now. Our request to the Board was simple, not to deny the project, but to delay final approval. To send the project for review to the TAC, the entity set up to advise the county, and which had never reviewed the MulQueeney Project. Once the TAC, working with the applicant had developed a project that reduced raptor mortality yet still made financial sense for the applicant, we would support that design and drop our appeal. The Board of Supervisors refused to take that step and approved the MulQueeney projects as proposed with no real restrictions. With this vote the Board firmly declared that they have no intention of abiding by the commitments they made in 2007.

This is not over. Audubon believes that responsible wind power projects are possible in the Altamont. Applicants may not be able to squeeze every last nickel out, but we do not have to sacrifice a region-wide wildlife resource just so they can. Alameda County has failed in its duty and gone back on its word. The Audubon Chapters, including Ohlone, are evaluating the next steps to take to bring responsible wind power development to the Altamont.

SAVE Tesla Park

Protecting the Tesla Park Land

Now that Tesla Park is permanently protected from damaging motorized recreation, the next step is to establish Tesla Park as a State Natural and Cultural Reserve. There will be a planning process to establish Tesla as a unit of the State Park system.



Sen Steve Glazer, Assemblyperson Rebecca Bauer-Kahan

SAVE NEWARK WETLANDS

New Short Film Profiles Efforts to Save Newark Wetlands from Development



This month, a new short film “Bay Rising: Voices for Newark Area 4” was released by videographer Mark Weaver, profiling the region-wide efforts to protect Newark Area 4, a 500-acre undeveloped mosaic of wetlands and upland habitat directly adjacent to the Don Edwards SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge, which is at risk from a proposed “executive” housing development. The film includes beautiful images of the site alongside interviews with SF Bay advocate Florence La Riviere, coastal ecologist Peter Baye, climate expert Zoe Siegel and Newark resident Jana Sokale on why protecting these lands is so critical to the future of the Bay.

Watch the full-length film at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jYao5TIAq6A> and then, if you haven’t yet, Savenewarkwetlands.org to sign the petition to protect and restore Newark Area 4 and include these lands in the Don Edwards SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge!

Another industrial scale solar facility proposed for eastern Alameda County

On October 28, the eastern Alameda County Zoning Board of Adjustments agreed to proceed with an EIR for another industrial scale solar plant for eastern Alameda County. Soltage, LLC is proposing to construct, and operate an approximately 2 MW solar photovoltaic facility known as the Alameda Grant Line Solar 1. The project is located on a 23.07-acre agricultural site at the Alameda County-San Joaquin County line on West Grant Line Road and Great Valley Parkway in eastern Alameda County at the San Joaquin County line. The draft and final EIR preparation is scheduled through Summer 2022.

More Thank Yous!

We are featuring two of our local agency biologists: **John Krause** of the Cal Department of Fish and Wildlife Service (CDFWS) and **Mark Taylor** of the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD).



**John Krause, Cal Dept Fish
& Wildlife Service**



**Mark Taylor, Hayward Shoreline Park Supervisor
with Eric Swalwell, US Representative**

John was promoted to Senior Supervisor in June, thus leaving the day- to- day work at Eden Landing Ecological Reserve, but promises he will still be involved.

Mark is retiring (finally!) from EBRPD, as Park Supervisor of the Hayward Shoreline after 41 years. No one knows the Hayward Shoreline better than Mark! We wish Mark well in his well-deserved retirement to Humboldt County.

We profoundly thank both of these men for all their hard work and dedication to the Hayward Shoreline and leadership in the restoration efforts of our bay. Both of them were our “go to” person when issues arose along the shoreline, from granting us access for the Christmas Bird Count and shorebird census,

discussing with us plans for restoration, sharing their expertise, and participating in local meetings. Mark even arranged a tow truck for one of our counters who’s car was mired in bay mud!

The following excerpts were taken from the CDFWS website:

Wildlife biologist John Krause is a 20-year CDFW employee who serves Marin, Alameda and Contra Costa counties. In the heavily populated San Francisco Bay Area, human-wildlife issues often dominate his workday, but his professional pride and joy is the Eden Landing Ecological Reserve near Hayward. John has spent his career overseeing the restoration of 6,400 acres of commercial salt ponds to tidal marsh and other natural habitats while creating access and recreational opportunities for the public.

When asked what drew him to the field of wetland restoration, John said it was the outcome of “his exposure to SF Bay, and spending much of his youth in the American River and the foothills and Sierra Nevada mountains.” He is proud to be a part of the “renaissance” of San Francisco Bay wetlands.

John earned a Bachelor of Science degree at U.C. Davis in ecology and conservation. John was looking to find a practical application for his resource management studies that dealt with ecology and conservation in consideration of the changing world of future generations. There, he “gained a profound respect for the diverse ecology and landscapes of California, and how those landscapes have changed over time, both naturally and more recently by our society.”

Prior to working for CDFW, John was District Biologist for the Caltrans Oakland office, as well as a scientific aid with CDFW, and crew leader for Marin County Open Space District. At UC Davis he assisted researchers studying Sierra Nevada and Lake Tahoe Basin old growth forests. He now spends his time in the wetlands at the bottom of the watershed.

When asked “What is special about the Eden Landing Ecological Reserve?”, John shared this:

It’s part of the largest wetlands restoration on the West Coast – 15,100 acres in the South Bay. It’s what I studied in college. Landscape change over time. We are restoring salt ponds to tidal marshes, keeping some managed ponds that birds have come to rely upon. It’s a 50-year project that started in 2003. I’m the guy on the ground working with all of our contractors and partners.

(continued page 9)

(Thank yous to Mark and John continued)

The water birds are the real stars of the show out there. They are the poster species for nature. We manage the ponds for the different seasons and bird species. I will go out and take a dry pond that has been set aside for snowy plover nesting in the spring, flood it up in late summer and watch the bugs come back. And a couple of weeks later the shorebirds show up and are taking advantage of it. And then later in the year we transition from shorebirds to ducks and we start flooding it up a little more for ducks. We've got shallower ponds for the dabblers and deeper water for the diving ducks

Fun fact about John:

I'm in a band. I play rhythm guitar and sing back-up vocals with friends I met in college. The band is called Sticky's Backyard – Sticky was the nickname of a guy in Davis and we played our first gig in his backyard. That was 26 years ago, and we are still together. We play all original music. Jam rock is the best way I can describe it. We played the Lucasfilm employee holiday party in December. It's a fun outlet – scientist by day, rocker by night. Sometimes those days and nights blend together.



Thank You to the following new and renewing members:

Ken & Linda Back, John Cant, William Chestnut, Thomas Colby, Lavonne Coleman, Ramona Confer, Joanna

Dixon, Ruth Ann Hunt, John & Sara Holmes, Arnold Joe, Pat Kite, Susan & Steve Levenson, Bill & Pat Lewis, Jeremy McCullough, Lori Moon, Candice Niccolson, Steve Rentmeesters, Kathy Robertson, John Sack, Barbara Sacks, Marlina Selva, James & Valerie Watts

Donations: John & Becky Bradley, Paula Flessatti Mary Norton, Wayne Miller, Carol Schneider

ACTION ALERTS

Want to be included in our action alerts when items come up that need your help? Please send an email to pageg@aol.com.

PLEASE CONSIDER AN ELECTRONIC KITE CALL!

We are urging members to switch over to an electronically issued *Kite Call* (but you don't have to!) The benefits are a cost savings to our chapter, in both printing costs and postage. Other benefits include getting it quicker and it is **much more colorful!!!!!!** See all of these beautiful photos in color! Also, note that links are live! **GO GREEN!**
Send your request to pageg@aol.com



IS IT TIME TO RENEW?

Look at your mailing label - it will tell you. A "RENEW?" indicates that this is your last *Kite Call*! A **cmp** means you are chapter membership paid; a **nnmp** means you are a national member only and a "JOIN LOCAL?" on your label indicates that you have joined the National Audubon Society, but alas, **not** your local **Ohlone** chapter. We would love to have you join us. If you receive your *Kite Call* electronically, look for a reminder in your email box. To renew or join us please send a \$25 check to Pat Gordon, Membership Chair, 1922 Hillsdale Street, Hayward, CA 94541 or thru PayPal on our website www.ohloneaudubon.org

Birdability.org



Birdability ... because birding is for everybody!

Check out this website about accessibility for all birders. Their vision is that birding truly is for everybody and every body, regardless of disability or other health concerns. Through education, outreach and advocacy, *Birdability* works to ensure the birding community and the outdoors are welcoming, inclusive, safe and accessible for everybody. Read Virginia Rose's story about her challenges to birding. Find "birdability" maps.

The organization focus on people with mobility challenges, blindness or low vision, chronic illness, intellectual or developmental disabilities, mental illness, and those who are neurodivergent, deaf or hard of hearing or who have other health concerns. In addition to current birders, they strive to introduce birding to people with disabilities and other health concerns who are not yet birders so they too can experience the joys of birding.



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