



The Kite Call

Ohlone Audubon Society, Inc.

*A chapter of the National Audubon Society
Serving Southern & Eastern Alameda County CA*

*Our Mission: To celebrate and protect birds and their habitats in
Southern and Eastern Alameda County*

www.ohloneaudubon.org

Calendar

May 2 FIELD TRIP
San Juaquin NWR
CANCELLED

May 5 GENERAL MEETING
CANCELLED

May 9 FIELD TRIP
Vargas Plateau
CANCELLED

May 14 FIELD TRIP
Garin Reg Park
CANCELLED

May 17 FIELD TRIP
Mitchell Canyon
CANCELLED

May 20 FIELD TRIP
Lake Chabot
CANCELLED

June 2 ANNUAL MEETING
CANCELLED

Jun 24 –25 Sierra Trip
**CHANGED TO JULY 25-26
TENTATIVE!**

Sept 26 ANNUAL
MEMBERSHIP PICNIC
SHADOW CLIFFS
TENTATIVE!

Follow us on Facebook!



See updates and photos from our activities that you can share with your friends! Find us by doing a Facebook search for Ohlone Audubon Society

...birds are there for us when we need them-for joy, for a pleasant distraction, to stoke curiosity, and to remind us about the wonderful gifts in nature. Sometimes birds can help us make the best of bad situations.

from Gustave Axelson, Editorial Director, *Living Bird*, spring 2020, Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

Membership Meetings/Field Trips



Western Bluebird
Lake Elizabeth 5/3/20
(S. Ferreira)

IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS AND OHLONE AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

Dear Ohlone Members and Supporters, National Audubon has recommended the following for chapters:

- *All in-person engagement, education, and outreach activities are suspended until further notice, including bird walks, on-the-beach outreach, volunteer activities, and other gatherings.*
- *All Audubon events and events held in our spaces will be cancelled or postponed through June 30.*
- *All stewardship and monitoring activities are prohibited when local, state, or federal shelter-in-place or equivalent orders are in place.*
- *All Audubon Centers are closed through June 30.*
- *All Audubon summer camps are cancelled or have been transformed into virtual ones.*
- *All non-essential travel is banned through June 30.*

We will provide updates to our website and **Facebook** page regarding our upcoming events www.ohloneaudubon.org

We are disappointed but thank you for your patience and understanding. We miss you. Meanwhile, enjoy your local and backyard birds. We are!

**Be Safe Stay well Practice Social Distancing
Protect Others Stay Connected!**

BE SURE TO CHECK WEBSITE AND/OR FACEBOOK BEFOREHAND TO CHECK STATUS OF EVENTS/TRIPS



Field Trips

**BE SURE TO CHECK WEBSITE AND/OR FACEBOOK
BEFOREHAND TO CHECK STATUS OF TRIP**

Upcoming Field Trip! **TENTATIVE RESCHEDULED**

July 25-26, 2020
is the new date for our annual Sierra
weekend to Yuba Pass area
and Sierra Valley

Leaders: Phil & Pat Gordon pagpeg@aol.com

Limit: 20 participants (reservations required)

(A few slots are still available)

***Note that this trip is still tentative
Participants will be notified of status***

The final itinerary has not been set, and based on the current situation, is only tentative. We will plan on birding the Yuba Pass and Sierra Valley areas. The trip is limited to 20 participants and reservations are necessary. Exact details will be emailed prior to the trip.

Campgrounds may be available at Yuba Pass and along SR-49 as well as in the Gold Lakes Basin. See <http://www.forestcamping.com/dow/pacficsw/tah.htm>

Other lodging possibilities (within driving time to the meeting site) include:

- Bassetts Station in Sierra City 530.862.1297
<http://www.bassetts-station.com/index.html>
- Sleepy Pines in Portola 916.832.4291
<http://www.sleepypinesmotel.com>
- River Pines in Blairsden 916.836.2552
<http://www.riverpines.com>
- Globe Hotel/Sierra Hot Springs in Sierraville
530.994.3773 www.sierrahotsprings.org

Field trips Anyone? Help Needed!

Field trip Chairman Lynn Feindel is moving to Maine before the end of 2020. Therefore, Ohlone Audubon needs someone to take over for her.

The job involves setting up the list of trips each year, getting trip descriptions of upcoming trips into the Kite Call and on our website and Facebook page, checking with leaders to make sure a trip is going, saving sign-in sheets, and reporting to the board. If you are interested in this position, please contact Lynn Feindel.

FieldTrips@Ohloneaudubon.org

BIRDING OBSERVATIONS

April 2020

By Stephanie Floyd

Swallows are in! **Tree Swallows**, the first to arrive, are already feeding young in nest boxes at Lake Elizabeth and Coyote Hills. **Barn Swallows** and **Cliff Swallows** are busy along creeks and shorelines collecting mud for nest-building in colonies under bridges, freeway over-crossings, tile roofs and the eaves of tall buildings as well as cliffs. Look for gourd-shaped nests (Cliff) and cup-shaped nests (Barn). Look for **Northern Rough-Winged Swallows** under bridges or flying in and out of nesting holes along the banks of rivers and lakes such as Lake Merritt.

Stars of the show this spring are hummingbirds in the lovely purple Pride of Madeira bushes on the hillsides near Garin Regional Park. In addition to the common **Anna's** and seasonal **Allen's** and **Rufous**, birders have been finding uncommon **Calliope** and **Black-Chinned** hummers.



Calliope Hummingbird, Garin RP 4/16/20 (J. Ting)

Over at the shoreline at Don Edwards NWR, in late April Jerry Ting captured in-flight photos of a **Red-Necked Phalarope** in lovely breeding plumage. Jim Chirapolos reported a big early-morning migrant push through his Orinda yard in late April: flycatchers, warblers, vireos, buntings, rufous hummingbirds, and tanagers.

Many birders are finding it's surprisingly rewarding right now to bird their own backyards. Parks are crowded, parking is limited, and restrooms are closed. Skip all that - you may see something really special from your own window!

Please Bird Mindfully (from Team ebird 4/17/20)

For birders, one way to get through this period is to spend time outdoors enjoying birds—just remember to keep health and safety your top priorities. Follow the recommendations of your local health authorities at all times, even if it means staying at home and focusing on your yard or garden list instead.

If you do go out birding, please take precautions to ensure the wellbeing of you and those around you. Your local authorities probably haven't issued guidance specific to birding, so here are some suggestions to ensure your birding activities align with current health recommendations:

- 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!

Birding and interacting with nature provide us with hope. At this time, eBird will maintain all outputs of bird information through the Explore tools. We hope that eBirders can use the sightings from others to track seasonal arrivals and departures, and dig into patterns of movement that can be observed even from your home. Information on bird sightings is not inherently dangerous—as long as people stay informed, make responsible decisions, and enact healthy behaviors. As long as this remains true, eBird will continue to provide resources to help you enjoy birds in a safe capacity.

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW AND RENEWING OHLONE MEMBERS!

Ohlone sends a warm welcome and thank you to the following new and renewing chapter members: Bruce Brown, Lynn Feindel, Elsa Glines, James Holland, Jeanette King, Cathy Loewen, Richard Matsutani, Michael O'Brien, and Joseph Smith

We also want to thank those who have generously donated: Jeanette King, Lawrence Livermore Lab, Cathy Loewen, Mary Norton, Joseph Smith



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!!!!!! GO GREEN!** Send your request to pagepeg@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



President's Corner

Update on Arrowhead Marsh



Some months ago I wrote an article for the Kite Call on the invasive *Spartina* eradication program going on in the bay area and the potential impact it could have on Ridgeway's Rails at Arrowhead Marsh. At that time I promised an update and that is past due. Marilyn Latta, Project manager for the San Francisco Estuary Invasive *Spartina* Project recently gave an update to the East Bay Regional Park District and some of the following is based on her presentation. Recall the problem

is that an invasive hybrid *Spartina* grew in dense stands in tidal wetlands throughout SF bay and interfered with native marsh restoration. A team under the leadership of USFWS and the Coastal Conservancy developed a program using chemical means to eradicate stands of the invasive *Spartina* to promote marsh restoration. Some conservationist's, most notably Joe Morlan pointed out that even though the hybrid *Spartina* was invasive, it provided quality habitat for rails and questioned whether there was adequate suitable habitat available for rails displaced by the treatment. The concern was that the eradication project would result in an overall reduction in rail numbers. The Ohlone board agreed to monitor the

situation at Arrowhead Marsh since 1) it was scheduled for treatment in 2019, and 2) it remains perhaps the best place in the bay area for birders to see Ridgeway's Rails. Whew! OK back up to speed?

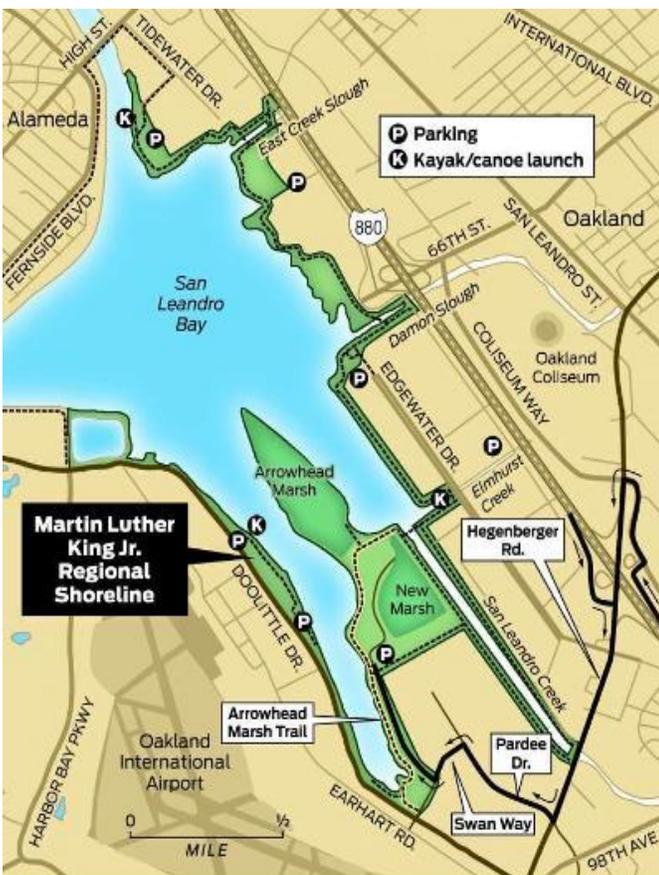
Olofson Environmental Inc. (OEI) conducted bay wide rail surveys for the Coastal Conservancy in 2019. They detected 835 rails in 70 of the 99 tracts censused for rails in (California Ridgeway's Rail Surveys for the San Francisco Estuary Invasive *Spartina* Project 2019. Report to The State Coastal Conservancy. Prepared by Olofson Environmental, Inc, January 12, 2020). This represents a decrease of 17% since 2018 but a 7% increase since 2004. The average relative density at sub-areas where rails were present was 0.29 Ridgeway's Rails per acre. The average relative density at sub-areas where *Spartina* treatment occurred annually since 2011 was 0.16 rails per acre. At the eleven formerly restricted sub-areas (no treatment from 2011 to 2018), the average relative density was 0.75 rails per acre. Rail numbers are higher in untreated areas. This can lead to year to year decreases in rail numbers, although the long term trend is to higher bay wide numbers.

Arrowhead Marsh is included in the San Leandro Bay Project area. For Project purposes, Arrowhead Marsh is divided in east and west. Arrowhead Marsh west was treated on November 5 and 21 in 2019. Arrowhead Marsh east was not treated in 2019. Arrowhead Marsh west had a highest count of birds of 3 resulting in a relative density of 0.14 birds per acre. This represents a 73% decrease since 2018, but a 4% increase over five years. Arrowhead Marsh east, not treated in 2019 had a count of 38 birds resulting in a relative density of 1.85 birds per acre. This represents a 27% increase since 2018 and a 1% decrease over five years. It is clear from this Arrowhead Marsh is pretty much like the rest of the bay; year-to-year decreases in rail numbers following treatment, although the long term trend bay-wide is positive.

I spoke to Jennifer McBroom, lead author of the OEI report concerning Arrowhead Marsh. She told me that the untreated side of Arrowhead (east) has a much denser population of Ridgeway's Rails, though it has had a small decline over the 5-year period. The treated side (west) is in an unfortunate loop where it is treated every year, but then re-infested every year by the meadow on the other half of the marsh. So the treated side is not able to move forward into a native state and opportunities to plant natives are very limited at Arrowhead Marsh (and in San Leandro Bay in general). The situation is a lot more hopeful in other portions of the Bay that have returned to native wetlands and support a stable population of Ridgeway's rails, as well as a diverse assemblage of other native tidal marsh species.

So, to summarize, treatment is leading to local, short term reductions in rails, although the overall, bay-wide trend is positive. As to Arrowhead Marsh itself, the west side is presenting a special challenge to the project as it gets re-infested quickly after treatment. The east side, not planned for treatment maintains a healthy population for rails. The Ohlone Board will continue to monitor the situation at Arrowhead as the invasive *Spartina* eradication project continues.

-Bill Hoppes



John Blanchard / The Chronicle

Conservation

A WIN FOR MOUNTAIN LIONS... *but some problems persist*

By: Terry Preston

On April 16, 2020 the California Fish and Wildlife Commission voted unanimously to list the Southern California/Central Coast **Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU)** of **mountain lions (*Puma concolor*)** as a **candidate species** for protection by the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). They will receive protection under CESA while listing is finalized.

Currently there are 10 populations of mountain lions in California, six are within the ESU. Generally, with large territories, these populations occur in low densities. As a **keystone species**, mountain lions play a critical role in ecosystem health. They are territorial and solitary with large territories ranging from 20-30 square miles in females to over 100 square miles in males. They continuously move throughout the territory. They have a polygynous social structure and the young stay with the female from 13-24 months. While denning, the female tries to avoid roads and human activity. While dispersing from the female, searching for their own food and attempting to find an unclaimed territory, the young are more prone to mortality and depredation deaths.

Most of the factors threatening the Southern California/Central Coast ESU are human related. Construction of highways and developments, lack of wildlife corridors, secondary poisoning from environmental toxins and rodenticides, death by poachers and from depredation permits, vehicle deaths, intraspecific strife, wildfires and climate change are some of the challenges this species encounters.

As the population of California grows, the availability of suitable habitat continues to decline. Roads and development now dissect mountain lion territories and prevent newly independent young animals from dispersing. This loss of habitat connectivity has led to inbreeding and a lack of genetic diversity. The result is physical distress and increased vulnerability to disease. Studies reveal that the mountain lions in the SoCal/Central Coast ESU already show very low genetic diversity.

Construction of highways and continuous sprawling development has resulted in an increase in vehicle deaths. Mountain lions avoid freeways if possible yet in California approximately **100 mountain lions are killed annually by vehicles**. From 2008 to 2018, 6 mountain lions were killed on Highway 17. From 2014-2016 at least 3 were killed on Highway 280. In Alameda, Santa Clara and San Mateo counties alone, 35 lions have been killed on roads since 2008. These numbers are significant given that the entire estimated population in the state of California is approximately four to five thousand and declining.

From **2011-2019, at least 1,846 depredation kill permits were issued** by CDFW with a minimum of 802 killed (some kills go unreported). From 2010-2016, **thirty-four mountain lions were killed** with depredation permits **in Bay Area counties alone**. The majority were sub-adults attempting to disperse from the female to establish their own territory. Although **Proposition 117** (1990) went a long way to protect mountain lions it could not protect them from death by depredation permits. In 2017, the **Mountain Lion Three-Strikes Policy** was created in order to refine the depredation permit process in limited parts of California. In February of this year, California, under Governor Gavin Newsom (whose father, William, was a founding member of the Mountain Lion Foundation), expanded the boundaries of the 2017 Mountain Lion Three-Strikes policy to include all the lands within the SoCal/Central Coast ESU (which includes Alameda Co. and several Bay Area counties). This policy now requires that for the first offenses, property owners must utilize non-lethal methods to discourage mountain lions from killing pets or livestock. After the third offense, the property owner may be issued a depredation permit to kill the animal. In addition to depredation permits, the poaching of mountain lions is also a problem in California.

(continued on page 6)



Nominations 2020-2021

In accordance with the Bylaws of our organization, the slate of officers nominated for the upcoming year must be presented to the membership, followed by the election of officers to occur at the May monthly meeting.

In view of the current situation, the slate of Officers for the Board of Directors 2020-2021 FY is listed below and members will be asked to vote "virtually" via email or by regular mail. Other board positions are appointed by the President. Please send your vote (yea or nay) electronically via this link <https://forms.gle/MFL4LvdctPDHKJpY8> or via our Facebook page or via mail to 1922 Hillsdale St, Hayward, CA 94541. Write-ins are also accepted. Please vote by May 31, 2020. Thank you.

Slate of Officers for FY 2020-2021

President: Bill Hoppes
Vice President: Marty Morrow
Treasurer: Gail Ryuji
Recording Secretary: Kathy Robertson
Corresponding Secretary: Jackie Bertillion
Director at Large (2023): Marlina Rose Selva

I accept the above slate of Officers Yea ___
 Nay ___

Write in: _____

Please Vote by May 31,2020

Newest Board of Directors Nominee

Marlina Rose Selva has been nominated as a 3-year Director-at-Large. Here is an introduction to her (with our thanks!).

Marlina Rose Selva was born in Hayward, CA. She spent her childhood with her sister in Castro Valley and visited her grandparents in Hayward, where she currently resides.



Marlina grew up bird watching since she was a young child, as her father provided her with binoculars and taught her his love for birds. She wrote in kindergarten that she wanted to be an ornithologist when she grew up. In fact, she had toy toucans instead of stuffed teddy bears as a child! She loves animals and enjoys visiting Sulphur Creek Nature Center in Hayward where she volunteered for two years before leaving for college at UCLA. She holds a doctoral degree in psychology and spends her spare time in nature.

She is very passionate about wildlife conservation, including habitat protection and restoration. She enjoys hiking trails and takes a special interest in observing birds in wetlands, especially shorebirds. The shorebirds have been her favorite exhibit at the Monterey Bay Aquarium from the time her parents first took her in early childhood. Birds and other wildlife bring her a sense of peace that she hopes to share with others through her commitment as a Board Member of Ohlone Audubon Society.

Mountain Lions (continued)

High levels of intraspecific strife have also been detected in these populations likely due to the decline in availability of adequate habitat and territories. This often results in dead mountain lions.

Environmental toxins and secondary poisoning with rodent poisons are also taking a heavy lethal toll on mountain lions in California. A study showed that 92% of tested mountain lions throughout the state were positive for rodent poisons. These poisons (often coming from human dwellings, farms and illegal cannabis grows) may not kill immediately but compromise the immune system resulting in the animal succumbing to diseases that they can no longer fight off. For example: the incidence of infection or death by mange in predator species is on the rise.

We have witnessed an increase in number and intensity of wildfires in California over the past few years. Many of the fires are believed to be related to climate change. This and other aspects of climate change have reduced the availability of a significant amount of suitable habitat to mountain lions.

WHAT'S NEXT: Creating wildlife corridors for mountain lions and other species is critical to the health of species. Experts suggest that the state legislature could use transportation funding to finance bridges and tunnels for wildlife to use when moving throughout California.

Statewide and regional planning should be required to limit development and roads in critical habitat areas. The creation of effective wildlife corridor infrastructure must be a vital factor for consideration before approval of any project.

Within **12 months** of the date of publication of "candidacy" notice (April, 2020) the CDFW will submit a Status Report for the Fish and Game Commission. Final consideration of the petition will be scheduled for the following Commission meeting. The Commission will then make a finding of whether or not the petitioned action is warranted. If the finding is **YES**, the Southern California/Central Coast ESU will be added to the California Endangered Species list under CESA.

Ultimately, without a reversal of these trends, mountain lions will disappear from the Southern/Central Coast ESU in the coming decades, representing a loss of this species from a significant portion of its range in California.



Three Tough Pairs

By Bill Hoppes

A beginning birder is getting better when they can identify the family a bird belongs to. If you can say “that’s a sparrow”, or “that’s a plover”, or that’s a warbler”, instead of leafing through your field guide in frustration, you can zero in on the handful of birds you might be looking at. That makes things much easier. Sometimes, though, even if you can get it down to just two species, you just can’t be certain which it is. In our area we have several such difficult pairs. Following are three that always give me trouble and some field marks I use to increase my confidence in identifying them.

Swainson’s Thrush and Hermit Thrush

When I first heard these birds sing, especially the **Hermit Thrush**, I didn’t quite believe animals could make such sounds. I have the **Hermit Thrush** song as the ringtone on my iPhone. As a rough rule of thumb, we can consider the **Swainson’s Thrush** our “Summer” Thrush and the **Hermit Thrush** our “Winter” Thrush.

Swainson’s Thrush usually breed in coniferous forests, except in coastal California where they are found in deciduous streamside woodlands, alder or willow thickets, and occasionally in coastal scrub from sea level to 8500’. **Swainson’s Thrush** that breed in our area, winter south to Panama.

Hermit Thrush breed in southern Alaska, Canada south of Nunavut and the Northwest Territories, and western and northeastern continental United States. They winter throughout the southern and western United States, Mexico, and Central America. Hermit Thrush wintering in the San Francisco Bay Area migrate to a region spanning the Alexander Archipelago in the Alaska Panhandle, the British Columbia coast, to the Olympic Peninsula in Washington. Both species can co-occur in our area during Spring and Fall migrations posing an ID challenge for birders.



Hermit Thrush - note lack of buff around the eye, and the rusty tail.

So you see a bird skulking low under the forest canopy, first thing you need to determine is whether it is a thrush. So who generally skulks around in the underbrush—thrushes, sparrows and towhees (yes I know a towhee is a sparrow). First thing to notice, as usual, is the bill. Sparrows and towhees have short powerful bills for cracking seeds. Thrushes have longer, pointed bills—think American Robin. Second, thrushes are an overall olive-greenish-brown color with spots on the breast rather than streaks. Finally, since thrushes are long distance migrants, they have long pointed wings compared to the stubby short wings of sparrows. So you are sure you have a thrush. If you are in the dead of summer, you likely have a **Swainson’s Thrush**, if you are in the dead of winter, a **Hermit**. But there is great overlap during migration and you should learn the field marks anyway.



Swainson’s Thrush -note the buffy wash around the eye and the olive green tail-same color as the back.

The first thing you will notice about the **Swainson’s Thrush** is that it has a buffy wash around the eye. Often you can see the buffy eye ring. The **Swainson’s** overall color is olive green and most important this olive green extends along the tail feathers. The tail feathers are pretty much the same color as the back. **Hermit Thrush** lacks the buffy wash around the eye, is overall more reddish in color and most importantly the top of the tail feathers are rusty brown, contrasting with the back rather than olive green on the tail of the **Swainson’s**.

First determine that you have a thrush, second check for a buffy wash around the eye, third, check for an olive green or rusty tail. These marks should enable you to tell our two common thrushes apart.



Don’t let this guy fool you. Fox Sparrow skulks around in the underbrush just like the thrushes and has a rusty tail just like the Hermit Thrush. But note the sparrow beak and the heavy streaking on the breast rather than the light spotting of the thrushes and you won’t be confused.

Fox Sparrow, from the beak alone you know this is not a thrush. Also note the heavy streaking on the breast rather than the spots on the thrushes.

Three Tough Pairs (continued)**Wintering Eared and Horned Grebes**

I have spent many moments with other birders staring out over the water at groups of these grebes trying to decide which are which. Both these small grebes winter along our Pacific coast. The Horned Grebe heads north to breed on ponds and lakes from western Canada to Alaska. Eared Grebes seek out freshwater lakes in the mid-western US and Great Basin north to southern Canada. To me the key mark is the pattern of coloring on the grebe's neck. When you look at an Eared Grebe the white and gray are smudged together. Your grandmother would say that the grebe needs to wash behind their "ears". Get it, "ears", Eared Grebe. That's how I remember it.

Conversely, there is a sharp contrast between the light and dark on the neck of the Horned Grebe. This is a "sharp" contrast, just as "horns" are sharp.

Another clue that works is that Eared Grebes tend to ride high on the water and often fluff their rear feathers, giving them the appearance of a "high stern" or bustle.

Use these clues. There will be birds that seem intermediate that you can't identify, but in any group there will be enough individuals that have these marks that you can be confident of which one you have.



This Eared Grebe needs to wash behind its ears



This Horned Grebe has a "sharp" contrast between the light and dark on its neck.



An Eared Grebe showing its "bustle"



Downy on the left and Hairy on the right. Note size and bill difference

Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers

These guys always give me trouble. Though they're very similar, there are some key differences to look out for. One difficult clue is size. The **Hairy** is half again as large as the **Downy**. Unless they are side by side this comparison is as tough as Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs. If you have seen them enough you can get an impression of "hey that is an awfully big **Downy**", and go onto some of the other field marks.

The best field mark for me is bill size. The **Downy's** bill is dainty and about one-third the length of the bird's head. The **Hairy's** bill is much more formidable and almost as long as the its head. The comparison that works for me is that the **Downy's** bill is a nail, while the **Hairy's** is a chisel.

Their calls distinguish them also. The rattling call of the **Hairy Wood pecker** is mostly on the same pitch. But the **Downy's** call drops down (from **Downy**) in pitch. The **Hairy** also has a distinctive call note that works for some folks. They describe it as someone squeezing a squeak toy, but I have never been able to hear it enough to have it work for me.

Finally, remember that the **Downy Woodpecker** is much more abundant than **Hairy**, especially in suburbia. The **Hairy** prefers towering trees and deeper woods, while the **Downy** will settle for the suburbs and everything in between.

(continued on page 9)

Continued from page 8



Downy Woodpecker, note "nail-like" bill, shorter than width of head.



Here is a Hairy, note the very different bill, powerful and nearly as long as the head.

Work on these pairs and you will get them down. Then there are other difficult pairs for you to work on: Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Western and Clark's Grebe. There is always another ID challenge out there for you.

Meanwhile. . .



Visit Paulbannick.com

TWO NEW OWL BOOKS

On October 1st two new owl books by Paul Bannick will officially be released; ***Snowy Owl: A Visual Natural History*** and ***Great Gray Owl: A Visual Natural History***.

If you have seen his last book ***Owl: A Year in the Lives of North American Owls***, you will appreciate how these new books allow you to learn more about each particular species through several dozen never-before-published images, some of which capture behaviors rarely witnessed and perhaps never photographed. The photos work with first-hand field accounts, which are illuminated by our most up-to-date understanding of these species.

Each of these books dives deep into the usually hidden aspects of each species lives through a year from pairs courting, mating and raising families to young owls struggling to gain independence and later surviving the winter. The images and narrative will also help you learn more about each owl's habitat and the animals with which they share these places. Special attention is paid to threats to each species and what we can do to ensure that these owls survive.

Both books are published by **Mountaineers Books**. Each of the new books is a 9.2 x 8.2 inch 128 page long, hardcover book weighing 1.7 pounds and featuring roughly 85 new images. They are available now for pre-order at \$18.95 plus shipping and packaging and will be shipped out after shortly after October 1st.



I Saw A Bird: Audubon's Spring Migration Show

Tune in every Wednesday at 7:00pm (ET)! (4:00pm PST)

While people across the country and globe are staying home to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus, Audubon has launched *I Saw A Bird: Audubon's Spring Migration Show* to bring a bit of the bird world indoors for everyone, no matter where they are. This weekly Facebook Live show highlights funny, engaging, educational, and sometimes weird bird-related topics and discussion, all while fostering a sense

of community for everyone who has found joy in birds while stuck at home.

Each week, Audubon's social media producer Christine Lin and chief network officer David Ringer will welcome celebrities and guests to offer a fresh look at the world of birds and birdwatching. Episodes will air every Wednesday at 7:00 pm ET as a Facebook Live on **Audubon's Facebook page.**

RETURN TO:
OHLONE AUDUBON SOCIETY
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HAYWARD, CA 94541

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RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED



Please renew your Ohlone membership by the date shown on your address label. For those receiving electronic copy, an email will be sent. Direct questions about Kite Call delivery to the Membership Chair.

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PAST PRES: Evelyn Cormier 510-471-0475
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