

# 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

Jan 9 GENERAL MEETING
Via Zoom
NOTE 2nd TUESDAY!

Jan 7 FIELD TRIP Panoche Valley

Jan 13 FIELD TRIP Arrowhead Marsh

Jan 20 FIELD TRIP North Livermore

Jan 27 FIELD TRIP Shadow Cliffs

Feb 6 GENERAL MEETING Via Zoom

Feb 17 FIELD TRIP Sacramento/Colusa WRs

Feb 18 FIELD TRIP Llano Seco/Gray Lodge WRs

Mar 6 GENERAL MEETING Via Zoom

ZOOM MEETING INTRUCTIONS:
Welcome! You are invited to
join a meeting: Ohlone
Audubon Membership Meetings.
After registering, you will receive a
confirmation email about joining the
meeting.

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/ register/tZIsfiupj4iGNwWOZRGoiFQxSQ-ANIL8dNP#/registration

# **Membership Meetings**

Coming in January: (via Zoom)

A History of Field Identification A Retrospective Celebrating Decades of Misidentifications,
with Joseph Morlan.

NOTE: THIS WILL BE HELD THE 2nd TUESDAY OF THE MONTH, ON JANUARY 9th.

**Date:** January 9,2024 **Time** 7:30PM Via Zoom (See Zoom directions to the left or Pre-register here)

Joe Morlan will present a history of bird identification starting with early pioneers in sight identification, and a personal look back at how birding and bird identification has changed over the decades. Sight identifications, considered by Ludlow Griscom to be impossible in 1922, are routine today. Likewise, our knowledge of bird distribution has grown dramatically since the days of Griscom and other pioneers. But what will future generations think of our own conventional wisdom when it comes to bird identification and distribution? Technology continues to advance in the fields of optics and photography. These advances have been an integral part of the rapid evolutionary changes in the way we see birds and the way future generations will see them. Join us for this entertaining and thought provoking presentation.

Joe Morlan taught Field Ornithology at City College in San Francisco for forty years. He was awarded the ABA's Ludlow Griscom Award for outstanding contributions to regional ornithology in 2010 and served on the California Bird Records Committee for thirty years, most recently as chair. He co-authored two books on birds and published numerous scientific papers in peer-reviewed journals. We welcome him back as a presenter!

Programs continue on page 2

#### Programs continued



#### Acting Locally to Address Global Biodiversity: San Francisco Bay Marsh Habitats and Invasive Spartina

# With Tobias Rohmer, Monitoring Program Manager for the San Francisco Estuary Invasive Spartina Project

**Date:** Feb 6, 2024 **Time** 7:30PM Via Zoom (Pre register or see Zoom directions page one) Pre-register here

San Francisco Bay is more than the geographic feature that defines our region. It is a major global biodiversity hotspot. It is the largest estuary on the west coast of North America. It is a critical stopover point along the Pacific Flyway migration route for millions of shorebirds and waterfowl. At a time when the world's biodiversity is under increasing pressure, we have a golden opportunity to protect the treasure at the heart of the Bay Area. Rimming the Bay, between freeways, airports, and dumps, remain precious wetlands. After more than a century of destruction, restoration projects are poised to reverse the trend. However, restoring these saltwater marshes may be for naught if we cannot stop another threat that we unleashed in the last century. Atlantic cordgrass planted as erosion control in the 1940s has since hybridized with Pacific cordgrass to create a super strain that crowds out other vegetation and colonizes mudflats. Since 2005, the Coastal Conservancy's Invasive Spartina Project has used airboats, genetic testing, sophisticated GIS, and a lot of hard work to push back the invasive species that threatens endangered species like the Ridgway's rail. Learn about how hometown heroes are doing their part to address the global biodiversity crisis.

**Tobias Rohmer** is the Monitoring Program Manager for the San Francisco Estuary Invasive Spartina Project and works for Olofson Environmental, Inc. Toby studied at UC Davis, where he did his master thesis on California Ridgway's rails, which included substantial field work and monitoring in SF Bay marshes with USGS and other partners.

#### **COMING IN MARCH:**

Birding Adventures in the Central Himalayan Kingdoms of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan with Dr. James Bland

Date: March 5, 2024 at 7:30 pm Via Zoom

Panoche Valley
Sunday, January 7, 8:00am – 4:00pm
Leaders: Bob Toleno & Juli Chamberlin
RSVP by January 4 to birding@toleno.com

We'll meet at the dirt parking lot overlooking Little Panoche Reservoir, just over four miles down Little Panoche Road from I-5. We'll start at the reservoir, bird a few spots along the road in Little Panoche Valley Rd and Griswold Hills. We'll then continue south thru Panoche Valley and finish in Paicines around 4:00pm (give or take). We'll be looking for all the area specialties, especially Ferruginous Hawk, Prairie Falcon, Phainopepla, Mountain Bluebird, Bell's Sparrows (and maybe even a Sagebrush Sparrow), Sage Thrasher, and of course, Mountain Plovers.

# Field Trips



Bring a lunch and plenty of water, as there is no place to buy food on the route. Heavy rain will cancel the trip. There's a port-a-potty at Little Panoche Reservoir, and a couple other spots on our route, but services are very limited. A little walking may be involved, but nothing difficult, and no serious hiking.

**Directions:** From Castro Valley, head east on I-580, then south on I-5, where you'll continue past Los Banos to Exit 379 (Shields Avenue/Mendota). From there, turn right onto Little Panoche Road and drive west about 4 1/2 miles to Little Panoche Reservoir.

(FIELD TRIPS continued on page 3)

## Field Trips continued

Arrowhead and New Marsh -MLK Regional Shoreline, Oakland Saturday, January 13, 10:30am – 1:00pm Leaders: David Riensche & Maggie Clark driensche@ebparks.org

A 7.48 high tide will hit Arrowhead Marsh 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! We will use "Doc Quack's" special access code to visit the New Marsh and "peep at" the newly finished "Shorebird Sanctuary" island. Dress in layers and rain gear 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.

North Livermore/Springtown
Saturday, January 20, 9:00am – noon
Leader: Kathy Robertson
katbirdca@aol.com

We will walk along the Arroyo, where we can expect wading birds such as stilts and egrets, ducks, incl. Cinnamon Teal, and many wintering and resident songbirds. Rails and snipe are possible. The open fields are productive for raptors - Golden Eagle has been seen here. Wide, level trails make walking easy. Bring your scope if you have one. Heavy rain cancels.

Directions: Take I-580 east to Exit 54 for First Street/Springtown Blvd; turn left onto First Street, which becomes Springtown Blvd. Turn right (east) on Bluebell Dr. and continue about a mile and a half to Marlin A. Pound Neighborhood Park. We will meet at the bridge crossing the Arroyo. Park on either side of the street. No restrooms are on our route, so you may wish to make a pit stop before arriving at the meeting point.

Shadow Cliffs Reg Park
Saturday, January 27, 9:00am – noon
Leader: Kathy Robertson
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 easy 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.

Sacramento & Colusa National Wildlife Refuges
Saturday, February 17,
9:00 – 11:00am (Sacramento NWR);
12:30 – 3pm (Colusa NWR)
Leaders: David Riensche & Maggie Clark
RSVP required by 2/12/2024
maggieclark99@gmail.com

At these two premier bird watching destinations in the heart of California's Central Valley you can witness the drama and dynamics of the Pacific Flyway on a spectacular scale. Join us and be mesmerized by the sights and sounds of hundreds-of-thousands of ducks, geese and swans spiraling overhead like a tornado! During this adventure you may observe a rich array of waterfowl, waders, shorebirds, raptors, and songbirds. With more than 70,000 acres of habitat this refuge complex provides habitat for almost 300 species of birds! These Important Bird Areas play winter host to nearly the entire global population of Tule Greater White-fronted Geese and most of the Ross's Geese.

(Continued on page 4)

#### **Sacramento and Colusa Refuges (continued)**

#### Meet at the Auto Tour Routes at both Refuge Headquarters

**Directions:** To reach **Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge** headquarters which is located approximately 90 miles north of the metropolitan area of Sacramento on Interstate 5 and six miles south of the town of Willows. When traveling north on Interstate 5 passed the town of Maxwell, take exit #595 Road 68, and make a left turn and travel north on County Road 99W for 1.5 miles and reach the refuge entrance. The six-mile Auto Tour Route starts at the Visitor Center. Restrooms and parking spaces are available at the Visitor Center. The driving surface of the auto tour route is an all-weather packed gravel road. At this location a fee is required for a pass, or it is free for seniors, and/or a Federal Duck Stamp.

To reach the Colusa National Wildlife Refuge from the town of Colusa, travel roughly .5 miles west on Highway 20 to the refuge entrance on your right (south). We will meet at the Interpretive kiosk located at the start of the three-mile self-guide auto tour route. The driving surface is an all-weather packed gravel road. As time permits, we may explore the one-mile Nature Discovery Walk and viewing deck. Restrooms and parking spaces are available at the staging area/Interpretive kiosk.

WANT TO MAKE A WEEKEND OF IT? JOIN PHIL AND PAT GORDON FOR LLANO SECO SAC NWR UNIT & GRAY LODGE ON NEXT DAY— **SUNDAY, FEB. 18, 2024** 

Llano Seco & Gray Lodge State Wildlife area Sunday, February 18, 9:00am – sunset Leader: Phil & Pat Gordon pagpeg@aol.com

After a great day of birding the other two refuges above, continue onto the llano Seco Unit and later Gray Lodge State Wildlife Area for more views of waterfowl. Llano Seco has viewing platforms which afford great close views of ducks and geese! Often on the drive to the unit we see Tundra Swans in the fields, along with Sandhill Cranes. Afterwards we will proceed south to Gray Lodge to hopefully view the fly in (or out?) of waterfowl at sunset. Depending on timing we may do a short walk. We plan on meeting the group at Starbucks in Willows at 505 N. Humboldt. This is just adjacent to I-5 on the east side. We can then drive to Llano seco together checking the fields. Bring you lunch. Trip will go rain or shine.

If you plan on an overnight stay, there are several hotels in Willows (Best Western, Holiday Inn, Super 8, Motel 6)

Note: Gray Lodge Wildlife Area does require a CDFW Lands Pass (\$5.40 in 2023), which can be https://wildlife.ca.gov/Licensing/Landspurchased or by calling (800) 565-1458. Purchase Pass available after 1/1/24

**Directions:** from I-5 in Willows go east on Hwy 162, turn left on N. Humboldt to the Starbucks. If you wish to go directly to Llano Seco, continue on Hwy 162 thru Butte City, left on Rd 2, staying on that road, then left on 7-mile Rd to the unit. Restrooms are available. The group should be there about 10AM.



#### IS IT TIME TO RENEW?

Look at your mailing label - it will tell you. "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

#### 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!

Send your request to pagpeg@aol.com



#### 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

# **BIRDING OBSERVATIONS**

*Winter 2023* 

By Vicki Robinson

We are finally getting to winter birding. The days are shorter and colder.

Our expected geese have arrived to mix with the local Canada Geese at many parks and shorelines. Cackling and Greater White-fronted Geese were seen, along with the still present Brant at the MLK Regional Shoreline. Snow and Ross's Geese have been sighted at Middle Harbor Shoreline Park.

Some uncommon visitors have been showing up along the bay. A Long-tailed Duck and a White-winged Scoter have been seen at Port View Park in Oakland, and a Harlequin Duck was spotted off the shore of the Albany Bulb.

The expected winter visitors, Lesser and Greater Scaup, Surf Scoters, and Canvasbacks are found on the bay waters. Common Goldeneyes, Buffleheads, Redheads, and Ringed-necked Ducks can be found in various freshwater streams and lakes - including Alameda Creek and Quarry Lakes Regional Park. The harder to find Barrow's Goldeneye has been seen at MLK Regional Shoreline and at the San Leandro Marina.

The teals are back, including **Cinnamon**, **Blue-winged** and **Green-winged**. All can be found at Coyote Hills and Arrowhead Marsh.

Ruby-crowned Kinglets are everywhere, and Golden-crowned Kinglets can be found at Redwood Regional Park if you listen for their calls up high in the trees.

**Hooded Mergansers**, as well as **Common Mergansers**, can be seen on Alameda Creek, and **Red-breasted Mergansers** can be found on the bay, west of Coyote Hills.

Cassin's Kingbirds are being seen again on Cross Road in Livermore.

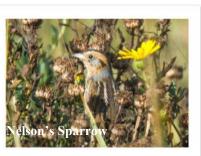
An uncommon group of **Red Crossbills**, which we don't get every year, have been seen at Redwood Regional Park.

Ferruginous Hawks are again flying over the Vargas Plateau.

The Nelson's Sparrow was once again seen at MLK Regional Shoreline.

And the rarity of this winter was a **Dusky-capped Flycatcher**, found at Middle Harbor Shoreline Park, Oakland.





(Photos by V. Robinson)











Late note: Bar-tailed Godwit found on CBC, 12/17/23—Eden Landing Ecological Reserve, Hayward (photo by Conrad Fay)

# President's Corner

In October we published the ABA code of birding ethics which works to promote the welfare of birds and their environment. It is just as important to promote the well being of our fellow birders. To that end the Ohlone board looked at codes of conduct from Audubon and Golden Gate Bird Alliance and adopted the following Code of Conduct for our activities and events.

#### Ohlone Audubon Code of Conduct

At Ohlone Audubon, we believe deeply in our dual responsibility to protect and enhance the welfare of bird populations and their habitats and promote a safe and welcoming birding experience. Please adhere to our code of conduct while birding and interacting with all the folks who participate in our programs, both in-person and online.

We emphasize the following:

- ◆ Do not insult, belittle, threaten or attack other participants under any circumstances, whether by private message, email, in person, on social media or chat group
- Be considerate of other people's personal space and make room for all participants. Do not touch others without their expressed verbal consent. Share access to viewing sites and take turns being in the front or at the scope during in -person field trips, classes and other programs.
- Be mindful that members of our community span different birding abilities, birding styles, economic backgrounds, sexual and gender identifiers, religions, cultures, political views, physical abilities and other identifiers that may or may not be visible. Assume nothing and respect everyone.
- Do not make offensive references to race, gender, sexual orientation, religion or physical or cognitive ability. Framing offensive remarks as a joke is no excuse.
- Disagreements and criticisms are best delivered privately and respectfully, not in public forums. Our responsibility is to adhere to the Code of Conduct and to encourage others to do the same. When in doubt, consider the welfare of those around you.

Violations of the code of conduct will be reviewed by the Ohlone Audubon Board of Directors and may lead to a ban from our social media, field trips, programs, volunteer events or other Ohlone Activities.

To report a Code of Conduct violation, email the Ohlone board president at President@OhloneAudubon.org.

-Bill Hoppes



### Thank you to the following new and renewing members. We do sincerely appreciate your continued support.

Ken Back Vinnie Bacon Melanie Barnett Liz and Bob Bathgate Tim Becker Allen & Jackie Bertillion Forrest Bottomley Lynn Candaux Nancy Christensen Michael Christopherson Susie Claxton Kellie Collier Elizabeth Dunbar East Bay Nature Lance Elworth Beth Farmer Judith Felber Rav Fontaine Sara Jane Frisbee Gatty Gatty John Giles Alan Goggins

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Direct questions about Kite Call delivery to the Membership Chair.

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2025: Dave Riensche Director2022@OhloneAudubon.org

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#### Yes, I want to Join Ohlone Audubon Society!



Please sign me up today

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_email: \_\_\_\_\_

Join Ohlone Audubon Society By mailing a \$25 check payable To OAS with this coupon to:

Pat Gordon

OAS Membership 1922 Hillsdale St. Hayward, CA 94541

I prefer to receive the Kite Call by e-mail [] (Recommended) Please send me e-mail updates and action alerts [].

Ohlone Audubon does not share our mailing list or your personal information with others.

National Audubon Society membership dues are separate from those of Ohlone Audubon Society.