

Hybrid 2022 Central Valley Birding Symposium - Program

It's become evident that COVID-19 isn't quite done with us, but that we can adapt to the challenge of presenting an engaging experience in a safe setting. This year, in addition to a virtual program on Friday and Saturday afternoon, we will offer three days of in-person field trips around the Central Valley. There will be a mix of familiar itineraries and new specialty trips, with leaders new and old. Depending on your trip point of departure, you may choose to stay nearby or drive from home. In addition, you can decide whether to share a car with others.

We feel that this presents the safest option for all concerned, and many bird festivals around the country are also adopting this format. We wish we could meet as before, but the safety of our members and presenters continues to be our priority. We are looking forward to seeing you in the field this year. This year's CVBS is Friday, November 18, through Sunday, November 20, 2022.

Friday, 11/18/22

4:00 PM - 4:15 PM

Opening Remarks: David Yee

Welcome back! Though we wish we could see all of you in person, virtual is the next best thing. David will welcome back the symposium family and preview the next two days.

4:15 PM - 4:30 PM

BREAK

4:30 PM - 4:40 PM

President's Message: Pat Bacchetti

Through the magic of Zoom, the Board was able to remain active through the pandemic. Pat will provide a summary of Club news, along with some new opportunities for membership involvement.

4:40 PM - 5:00 PM

BREAK

5:00 PM - 6:45 PM

Bird ID Panel: Moderated by Ed Harper

This program has become an annual favorite. What better way to learn about the finer points of bird identification than by listening to the experts go through the process! Our illustrious panel will include Jon Dunn, Lynette Williams, Konshu Duman, and Keith Hansen. They will be presented with photos of difficult-to-identify bird groups (such as golden-plovers, winter plumage ducks, female goldeneyes, etc.), then each will mention what features they use to aid in clinching an ID.

Ed Harper, an esteemed birder, photographer, and presenter, was a long-time educator before taking up bird photography. He and his wife travel extensively, viewing and photographing

the world's wildlife and scenery. Ed also spends much of his time in his beloved home state of Montana. Ed traditionally kicks off the Symposium with one of his stunning photography presentations. He also creates and directs the challenging Bird ID workshops at the Symposium and at Western Field Ornithologists conferences.

6:45 PM - 7:00 PM BREAK

7:00 PM – 8:15 PM

Keynote Program: Allen Fish

Revealing the Pacific Raptor Flyway – a Forty-Year Retrospective of the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory

Since the early 1980s, volunteers of the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory (GGRO) have been counting, banding, and tracking raptors of the Pacific Flyway. Forty years later, what have they learned? Join GGRO Director Allen Fish for the scientific headlines resulting from this annual autumn meet-up between several hundred community scientists and tens of thousands of birds of prey at the Marin Headlands – just above the Golden Gate.

As a cooperative program of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy and the National Park Service, GGRO staff and colleagues have uncovered many mysteries of raptor biology – from disease ecology to rodenticide impacts, from the timing of migration, to what fuels the migration of certain species. But even beyond the headline science, the GGRO has established systems for long-term raptor monitoring – for detecting population trends over time, for tracking movements and the finding the causes of injury and mortality in California's birds of prey.

Please join us for a fascinating evening of raptor science and stories that will illustrate the immense value of community volunteerism in conservation biology.

Allen Fish, Director of the GGRO since 1985, was trained in avian biology at UC Davis, and returned there to teach Raptor Biology in the 2000s. He has presented the GGRO stories and science at conferences on three continents, and was given the Hawk Migration Association's Maurice Broun Award for contributions to raptor conservation biology in 2003.

Saturday, 11/19/22

3:00 PM - 3:15 PM

Opening Remarks: David Yee

3:15 PM- 3:30 PM BREAK

3:30 PM - 4:45 PM

Keynote Program: Scott Weidensaul
A World on the Wing: The Global Odyssey of Migratory Birds

Even as scientists make astounding discoveries about the navigational and physiological feats that enable migratory birds to cross immense oceans or fly above the highest mountains, go weeks without sleep or remain in unbroken flight for months at a stretch, humans have brought many migrants to the brink. Based on his bestselling new book, "A World on the Wing: The Global Odyssey of Migratory Birds," author and researcher Scott Weidensaul takes you around the globe -- with researchers in the lab probing the limits of what migrating birds can do, to the shores of the Yellow Sea in China, the remote mountains of northeastern India where tribal villages saved the greatest gathering of falcons on the planet, and the Mediterranean, where activists and police are battling bird poachers -- to learn how people are fighting to understand and save the world's great bird migrations.

Scott Weidensaul is the author of nearly 30 books on natural history, including the Pulitzer Prize finalist, "Living on the Wind: Across the Hemispheres with Migratory Birds," and his latest, the New York Times bestseller "A World on the Wing: The Global Odyssey of Migratory Birds." Weidensaul is a contributing editor for Audubon and writes for a variety of other publications, including Living Bird and Bird Watcher's Digest. He is a Fellow of the American Ornithological Society and an active field researcher, studying saw-whet owl migration for more than two decades, as well as winter hummingbirds in the East, bird migration in Alaska, and the winter movements of snowy owls through Project SNOWstorm, which he co-founded. A native of Pennsylvania, he and his wife now live in New Hampshire.

4:45 PM - 5:00 PM BREAK

5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

Update on Central Valley Bird Conservation and Research Programs: Facilitated by Dan Airola.

Join us for short presentations on conservation and research programs based in the Central Valley.

Tricolored Blackbird Status Update: Dan Airola

Dan will summarize recent information from several key studies on the status of the Tricolored Blackbird, including the result of the 2022 Statewide Survey, a recent summary of the effectiveness of the program enacted to protect nesting tricolors in San Joaquin Valley agricultural fields, and the nesting population in the Sierra Nevada foothills.

Dan Airola is a Wildlife Biologist and Ornithologist who conducts conservation research for at-risk birds in Northern California. Dan is a Central Valley Bird Club Board member, Conservation Chair, and the Editor of Central Valley Birds. He also is the Past-President of the Western Section of the Wildlife Society, an organization of professional biologists. Dan has conducted long-term research on Purple Martins, Tricolored Blackbirds, Swainson's Hawks, Turkey Vultures, and migratory songbirds, and recent studies on Yellow-billed Magpies and Ospreys.

Continuing Declines of Grassland Birds in California's Central Valley: Ed Pandolfino and Lily Douglas

In this follow-up to an earlier study of trends of wintering birds in the Central Valley, Ed will show how grassland bird populations have fared in the six years since that earlier study. In addition, he will review changes in grassland habitats within the 17 Christmas Bird Circles used for these analyses.

Ed Pandolfino received his Ph.D. from Washington State University and has served as president of Western Field Ornithologists, vice-president of the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory, and on the boards of the Institute for Bird Populations and Western Field Ornithologists. He co-authored *Birds of the Sierra Nevada: Their Natural History, Status, and Distribution* (U.C. Press, 2013) and is lead author of *Sacramento Breeding Birds: A Tale of Two Atlases and Three Decades of Change* (Central Valley Bird Club, 2021). Much of his research covers status, distribution, and conservation of western birds, with particular emphasis on the Central Valley of California.

**Documenting Avian Diversity in a Forgotten Landscape:
the Museum of Wildlife and Fish Biology Research
Programs in the Sacramento Valley: Andy Engilis**

In this presentation, we will recap the Museum's diverse programs in documenting and studying the birdlife of the Sacramento Valley. We will summarize the specimen-based research, species specific research projects, nest-box research, and avian occupancy studies being undertaken through the Museum's programs. We will highlight several undergraduate student projects. The broader impact of the Sacramento Avian Inventory Program is its direct support of teaching, providing experiential opportunities for undergraduate students both in the lab and field. The MWFB now collaborates with the Central Valley Bird Club to publish updated species accounts and synthesize historic records as publications in the Journal Central Valley Birds.

Andy is the curator of the Museum of Wildlife and Fish Biology (MWFB) at the University of California, Davis. He was born and raised in Sacramento and Davis, California, and started birdwatching at the age of 11. Andy is also a Research Associate of the Bishop Museum, Hawaii, where he has forwarded conservation and recovery of endangered birds dating back to the 1980s. His primary research is on specimen-based avian and mammalian diversity and biogeography studies in the United States and globally. His research projects have spanned the world from the matorral of Chile to the rainforests of New Guinea, and remote Pacific Islands. Andy has published 90 professional papers dealing with specimen-based and basic research questions centered primarily on avian and mammalian distribution and diversity, systematics, ecology, and life histories in the United States, Central America, Chile, Tanzania, SE Asia, Mexico, and New Guinea.

Loggerhead Shrike Nesting Habitat in the Central Valley:
Robyn Smith

Loggerhead shrikes are a California Species of Special Concern and have been known to be declining statewide. Compared to other regions of the state, loggerhead shrike nesting biology in the Central Valley is less well known, though populations have been declining in our region based on Breeding Bird Survey and Christmas Bird Count data. The Sacramento-Shasta Chapter of The Wildlife Society was asked to help the Sacramento Valley Conservancy understand loggerhead shrike habitat use at their

Deer Creek Hill Preserve. Loggerhead shrikes were observed using oak-woodland habitat, with pairs being observed more commonly in the central, more heavily wooded portion of the preserve, and ladders observed on barbed wire next to grassland habitats. Loggerhead shrikes appear to use more tree-nesting structures and woodland habitats at this location compared to other portions of their range where shrikes have mostly been observed nesting in solitary shrubs. More research is needed on loggerhead shrike nesting in the Central Valley.

Robyn has been a wildlife biologist (and birder) for 11 years. After finishing her undergraduate degree at UC Davis, Robyn got her start in avian ecology at the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory and Point Blue Conservation Science's Palomarin Field Station. She got her master's degree in ecology at Utah State University studying the impacts of a non-native frog species on Hawaiian bird communities. She currently works as a Project Scientist for JNA-Consulting, working mainly with sensitive Sierra Nevada amphibians, birds, and forest communities. Robyn is also involved in the Sacramento-Shasta Chapter of the The Wildlife Society, serving as scholarship committee chair.

6:30 PM - 6:45 PM BREAK

6:45 PM - 8:00 PM **How to Look at Shorebirds with a focus on *Calidris* and *Tringa*:** Jon Dunn and Lara Tseng
As with so many things regarding birding, learning more than just the identification tips is essential before mastering these groups. But backing up, one needs to learn how to start looking at shorebirds. Learn the common species thoroughly before seeking the rarities and learn status and distribution as well as behavior. Frankly, just slow down! We'll cover fewer species in the hope that you will learn them. Quit worrying about how to identify the rarities when you are not fluent in telling the common species. We'll focus on a selection of *Calidris* species as well as the regular *Tringa* species that have occurred in California.

In the concluding third of our time, we will review the results of the 63rd Supplement of the AOS Supplement to the AOS Checklist published in July 2022. As always, in addition to the results, we'll discuss eternal themes for discussion, including issues involved with eponymous names. While in a sense I am a representative for the NACC (North American Checklist Committee), I have seldom been averse to offer my own

personal opinions and questions and a discussion are encouraged.

Jon L. Dunn has authored or co-authored many papers on status and distribution and identification. He was chief consultant or co-author on all seven editions of all seven extant editions of the National Geographic's Field Guide to the Birds of North America (from the 3rd to the 7th with Jonathan Alderfer) as well as *Birding Essentials* (2007) and co-authored with Kimball L. Garrett *Warblers* (1997) and *Birds of Southern California, Status and Distribution* (1981). Jon has been a member of the AOU's (now AOS) Committee on Classification and Nomenclature (NACC) since 2000. Jon has led tours for Wings since 1977. Jon was a charter member for Western Field Ornithologists and has served for nearly two decades on their board, currently as President.

Lara Tseng is a 15-year-old college student at California State University Los Angeles majoring in biology. She has conducted research on Western Bluebirds and recently published a paper on Western Bluebirds and eggshell consumption in a peer-reviewed journal. Her favorite species is the Dunlin and she is particularly keen on studying the ten named subspecies, particularly the smallest subspecies, *arctica*, which breeds in northeast Greenland and winters in West Africa.

8:00 PM - 8:15 PM **BREAK**

8:15 PM - 8:30 PM **Closing:** David Yee