



SNOWY EGRET

© Rich Brown

The Valley Habitat

September/October 2023

A joint publication of the Stanislaus Audubon Society
and the Yokuts Group of the Sierra Club

Walking the Green Path

Book Review:
PLASTIC FREE. How I
Kicked the Plastic Habit
and How You Can Too,
by Beth Terry.

An accurate definition of plastic could be stated as "A ubiquitous group of products that will never biodegrade and recycle in the biosphere". After reading this book I am decidedly *more aware* of how ubiquitous and toxic plastic products are. This book is an extensive compilation of information that supports such a definition. The author has painstakingly researched the manufacturing of plastics and the challenges of recycling them. She covers the United States as well as other parts of the world concerning humanity's use of plastics.

Cont. on page 5

The name "Yokuts Group" honors the Native Peoples who inhabited the area now known as Stanislaus County.

Sierra Club Monthly Programs

Socializing and Snacks: 6:45 PM | Presentation: 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM
College Ave. United Church of Christ, 1341 College Ave., Modesto

BIRDS OF THE MERCED NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Speaker: Linda Lagace
September 15, 2023

Retired, petrochemical engineer, enologist, and social worker, Linda Lagace will present her latest photographs of birds from images shot in the Merced National Wildlife Refuge.

Linda's Nikon of 10 years crashed in November of 2022 after more than 183000 actuations on its shutter. With replacement parts unavailable, she was forced to resort to the latest technology - mirrorless cameras.

This new technology emphasizes any deficiency in photographic technique and opens up a world of detail and capability not achievable with older photographic equipment. Her presentation will display images from her latest accomplishments with this new technology.

Greater resolution and faster performance enable much greater detail of colors and structures of the bird's eyes and feathers, wings and legs, etc. The ability to shoot up to 10 bursts per second lets the photographer catch the slightest movement or expression as the birds respond to the world around them.

GRASSROOTS: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN STANISLAUS COUNTY

Speaker: Bianca Lopez
October 20, 2023

This presentation will give participants a chance to learn about VIP's efforts to meet its mission through its current projects that include Stanislaus Community Air Monitoring Project & Emissions Reduction Plan (SCAMP/SCRAP), the Pesticide Safety Network & Pesticide Reform, Zero Waste, and Climate Justice Action Now youth engagement project. We will also include opportunities for local, regional, and statewide advocacy.

Valley Improvement Projects is a grassroots organization, fiscally sponsored by Social & Environmental Entrepreneurs. Their mission is to improve the quality of life of underrepresented and marginalized residents of California's Central Valley by advocating for social and environmental justice.

Bianca is a Co-Founder of VIP and is the wife of Thomas Helme also Co-Founder of VIP, they are parents of two wild and adorable children. Together they lead a small team of 4 multigenerational staff members, predominantly made up of Latinos who reside in the Central Valley and are currently expanding their efforts across the northern San Joaquin region from San Joaquin to Merced County.

NESTS AND OCCUPANTS

By Salvatore Salerno

To paraphrase the Porgy and Bess song, "Summertime, and the birding is local, / Birds are nesting, and the fledglings will fly..." The grebe photos are © Rich Brown, and the others are © Daniel Gilman. They were taken at brief intervals and from discreet distances, which is the recommended way to do so.



CASSIN'S KINGBIRD



RED-TAILED HAWKS



GREAT BLUE HERON



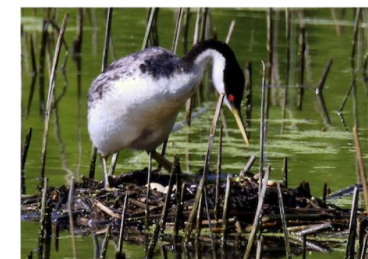
SWAINSON'S HAWKS



YELLOW-BILLED MAGPIE



DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT



WESTERN GREBE



BLACK PHOEBES



LOGGERHEAD SHRIKES



CLARK'S GREBE

RECENT SIGHTINGS OF
RARE OR UNCOMMON
BIRDS

*Review Species

STANISLAUS COUNTY

Caleb and Brian Snarr watched as a continuing male **SUMMER Tanager*** flew briefly into this county by crossing the Stanislaus River from Oak Grove Park in Ripon.



SUMMER TANAGER

© Rich Brown

Seth Greene saw a migrating flock of ten WHIMBREL on Hills Ferry Road on July 24.

MERCED COUNTY

Rachel Lawrence had nine WILLETS and three MARBLED GODWITS at San Luis Reservoir S.R.A. on June 29.

RECENT AUDUBON FIELD TRIPS



SAN JOAQUIN RIVER N.W.R.
July 15, 2023



VASCHÉ LIBRARY, GRAYSON
BOOKS
August 2, 2023

Save Del Puerto Canyon
COMMUNITY CLEAN UP
Every 3rd Saturday of the Month
Time: 8:00am
Location: 3300 Del Puerto Canyon Dr, Patterson

Trash bags will be provided. Please bring gloves, sturdy shoes and plenty of water
For more information please contact us at savedelpuertocanyon@gmail.com

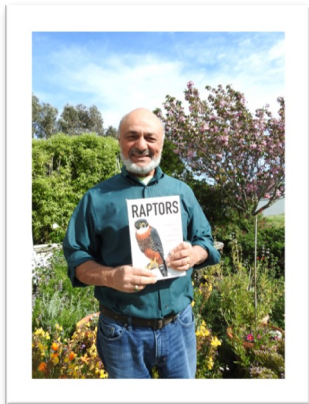
Audubon Zoom Programs

BIRDS OF THE SIERRA NEVADA MOUNTAINS

Rich Cimino

Wednesday, September 6, 2023
7:00 p.m.

This program will review a sampling of resident bird species of the Sierra Nevada that not often observed by birders. The presentation will address both the Eastern and Western slopes of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. There will be photos of these species and a discussion of their population distribution and habitat requirements. Rich Cimino of Marin County has been birding in California for 55 years. He was Conservation Chair for Ohlone Audubon and a stakeholder in the Altamont Pass Wind Resource.



RICH CIMINO

Rich's many activities include those with Marin Audubon Society, Point Blue Conservation, and The McNear Vaux's Swift Fall migration census group. Rich is an active participant in several Marin County Christmas Bird Counts and a Board Member of the Friends of Olompali State Historic Park, where he leads a team for the 2023 Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas. Rich is a field guide for Yellow-billed Tours, which offers birding tours to Nome, Alaska; Belize, Guatemala, and Panama, as well as throughout California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Wisconsin.

Register in advance for this meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81212566666>

RIPARIAN BIRD RECOVERY IN THE SOUTHWESTERN UNITED STATES

Chris McCreedy

Saturday, October 14, 2023
7:00 p.m.

This Power Point presentation will cover rare riparian obligate songbirds of the Southwest, with the focus on the status and habitat requirements of Least Bell's Vireo and Yellow-billed Cuckoo in the San Joaquin Valley. Chris McCreedy, currently based in San Diego, has worked in bird conservation all throughout the Southwest. Chris was the leader of desert projects for Point Blue Conservation Science for several years.



CHRIS McCREEDY

He currently serves as the Southwest Riparian Bird Recovery Coordinator for the American Bird Conservancy. Register in advance for this meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81212566666>

NOTE: After registering for a Zoom Program, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

River Walk Update

Last issue, I shared that Yokuts Group has gone on record opposing River Walk, the city of Riverbank's proposal for 2400 homes, along with businesses and parks, on farmland to the west of town. Since that time, a local group called Voters for Farmland have launched a ballot measure that could appear on the November 2024 ballot for Riverbank citizens.

This Urban Limit Initiative, if passed, would require voter approval of River Walk and most other future development west of the current Riverbank city limit. To be placed on the ballot, the initiative will require at least 10% of the registered voters in Riverbank (slightly less than 1,500) by late December. Co-organizer Denny Jackman reports that as of this writing 600 signatures have already been obtained. Yokuts volunteers and other concerned citizens are canvassing Riverbank neighborhoods with anti-River Walk flyers and the petition for the Urban Limit Initiative.

Kent Mitchell
Political Chair

STANISLAUS AUDUBON FIELD TRIPS

POINT REYES NATIONAL SEA-SHORE

Leader: Daniel Gilman
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30
6:30 a.m. – All Day

Point Reyes is noted for unusual birds, especially during fall migration, when off-course migrants show up at several locations on the outer Point. Specific stops will depend on what has been reported in the days prior to the trip. Meet in front of the Target in Riverbank (2425 Claribel Road, Riverbank, CA) at 6:30 A.M. or at Bear Valley Visitor Center (1 Bear Valley Visitor Center Access Road, Point Reyes Station) at 9:15 A.M. Questions? Email Daniel Gilman at spiderdan1974@att.net This is an ALL DAY trip so bring water and a lunch. It can be foggy or windy on the outer point, so be prepared for variable weather conditions.

SAN JOAQUIN RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

2714 Dairy Road, Vernalis
Leader: Eric Hopson
Date: TBA
8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

During these family friendly “walks with binoculars” we’ll be looking and listening for resident adult and

recently fledged young songbirds and waterbirds. Meet at the San Joaquin River NWR’s Pelican Nature Trail Parking Lot at 2714 Dairy Road, Vernalis. There are restrooms at the trailhead parking lot. Participants of all skill levels are welcome. They should bring their own binoculars, water, snacks, and insect repellent. For more information, please call Eric Hopson at (209) 587-5532

OAKDALE RECREATION AREA End of Liberini Road, off River Road, Oakdale, CA

Leader: John Harris
Date: Sunday, October 8
8:00-11:00 a.m.

We’ll check the ponds and riparian forest for waterbirds and migrant passerines. This park includes several ponds that harbor such birds as Green Heron. The riparian corridor along the Stanislaus River provides excellent birding. Restrooms are available. Take Liberini Road to its end at the park. We’ll meet there, start with the ponds and bird our way down the river to the boat launch area. For questions, contact John Harris at (510) 504-2427.

Walking the Green Path cont.

A need to phase out plastics and convert to a higher percentage of biodegradable products is evident. The unsafe nature of plastics and chemicals therein is thematic throughout the book. Ms. Terry has *lived* the practice of finding alternatives to plastic. Said alternatives are extensively described in the book. She cites creative and successful efforts by others who have found plastic alternatives. Food shopping strategies are also covered as well as ways to conserve energy on shopping trips. The author also discusses her home gardening efforts. It is clear that getting rid of plastic is a long-term and difficult challenge. Despite that I find it comforting each time I phase out a plastic item. Our over-consumerism is very apparent. We are invited or impelled to evaluate our consuming habits and simply evaluate what we *really* need. Ms. Terry lives and works full time in the Bay Area. She has a website and cites many others as well as books. She acknowledges the overwhelming challenge of phasing out plastics and discusses motivation to continue despite such a challenge. Ms. Terry describes the beginning of her motivation. As always, contributions of information and questions are always welcome.

Steve Tomlinson

stomlinson015@gmail.com

Supreme Court Drains Wetland Protections from the Clean Water Act

Delores Chan

July 25, 2023

California Native Plant Society

“As we navigate these uncharted waters, we must continue to advocate for the broad application of state law and the ample staffing necessary for its enforcement. We urge all Californians to keep a close eye on wetlands in your communities and nearby areas to protect the health and safety of these ecosystems” (Chan, 2023, para. 10).

<https://www.cnps.org/conservation/supreme-court-drains-wetland-protections-from-the-clean-water-act-35375>

STANISLAUS AUDUBON SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2023-24

President: Salvatore Salerno **Vice President, Field Trips:** John Harris
bees2@sbcglobal.net jhh.birder@gmail.com

Treasurer: David Froba **Secretary:** Daniel Gilman **Conservation:** Jody Hallstrom

Christmas Bird Counts: Harold Reeve **Online Newsletter:** Jodi Smith **Social Media:** CeCe Hurst

Events, Education, Scholarship: Chris Magaña, Kathy Rasmussen, Tom Myers, Rich Brown, Xavier Sandoval, Ann Kohlhaas, Eric Hopson, Madeline Yancey, Siera Nystrom

Visit our website at stanislausbirds.org. Like us on Stanislaus Audubon Facebook and Instagram.

Those who wish to receive Valley Habitat online, please contact John Harris.

New members: Use renewal form from National Audubon Society, <http://www.audubon.org/renew>.

Use Chapter Code C36. Renewing members, use the same link. Renewal date is on newsletter label.

New and renewal memberships are \$20 yearly.

Yokuts Yard Sale! **Saturday, October 21, 2023** **201 Virginia Ave., Modesto** **8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

We are happy to announce the Yokuts' will be hosting a yard sale this year. The sale will be held in Modesto at Steve Tomlinson's home at **201 Virginia Ave., Modesto, on Oct 21, 2023**. This is one of our major fundraisers and helps the Yokuts continue in our community and conservation work.

Start gathering those special items. Steve will be accepting donations at his home 10/14-10/19. Please have your items to Steve by the 19th so we have time to sort and price....remember those special items you have tucked away could

be perfect treasure for someone else. Regrettably, no clothing or electronics. We can always use help with the pre-sale and the day of the sale, 10-21-23. It's always a good time connecting with fellow members and also helping our group!!

You can contact me, Kathy at 209-601-8660 or Steve at 209-222-7289 with any questions. Start searching for those treasures! Looking forward to seeing you for the sale, 10-21-23...you may even find a treasure or two!

Yokuts Outings

Check out the current outings posts at our Meetup page:

<http://www.meetup.com/S-M-S-SierraClub>

All adults are welcome, including those who are not members of Sierra Club. We generally meet at a designated local parking area and then carpool to the event site (though Sierra Club does not officially organize carpools) which can be located nearby or several hours away. We also have fun off the trail with social events such as dinners, movie nights, Christmas Parties, and potlucks.

Yokuts Group of the Sierra Club

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair: Anita Young
youngbooks@gmail.com
 Vice Chair: Elaine Gorman
 Political Chair: Kent Mitchell
 Secretary: Sara Averett
 Treasurer: Doug Maner
 Conservation and Sustainability Chair:
 Milt Trieweiler

SPECIAL / STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance

Doug Maner
 Steve Tomlinson (Yard Sale)
 Candy Klaschus (Yard Sale)
 Doug Hardie (Calendar Sales)

Outings

Randall Brown
 Elaine Gorman
 Jeff Olson

Communications

Kathy Weise (Mailings)
 CeCe Hurst (Publicity)
 Kevin Augustine (Valley Habitat)
kaugustine@csustan.edu
 Anita Young (Membership)
 Vacant (Hospitality)
 Laura Stokes (Programs)
 Jason Tyree (Webmaster)
 Kathy Weise (Elections/Nominating)

Recycling

Sandy Wilson

*Executive Committee officers are elected by the general membership and are appointed by the Executive Committee for two-year terms.

Yokuts website:

Sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yokuts



[@YokutsSierraClub](https://www.instagram.com/YokutsSierraClub)



[Yokuts Group Sierra Club](https://www.facebook.com/YokutsGroupSierraClub)



Sierra Club membership enrollment form

Name: _____

Opt-in email: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

Individual Membership	Joint Membership	
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<input type="checkbox"/> Special Offer	\$15	
<input type="checkbox"/> Regular	\$39	\$49
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting	\$75	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Contributing	\$150	\$175
<input type="checkbox"/> Life	\$1000	\$1250
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$25	\$35
<input type="checkbox"/> Senior	\$25	\$35
<input type="checkbox"/> Limited Income	\$25	\$35

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax-deductible. Your dues include \$7.50 for the subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1.00 for your chapter newsletter.

Payment Method: Check Mastercard VISA

Cardholder Name: _____

Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Enclose payment information and mail to:

Sierra Club

P.O. Box 421041

Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041

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Yokuts Group

Yokuts Group
Mother Lode Chapter
Sierra Club
P.O. Box 855
Modesto, CA 95353

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Modesto, CA

CURRENT RESIDENT OR

View the Valley Habitat Online

Stanislaus Audubon is now sending out the Valley Habitat online to everyone for whom we have an email address. We encourage Audubon chapter members to opt in for electronic delivery, not only to reduce the expense and labor of printing, labeling, and postage, but also to reduce the amount of paper needed. To get your newsletter online, send your name and email address, with "Online Subscription" in the subject line, to John Harris at jhh.birder@gmail.com.



SAVE THE DATE!

Modesto RecFest

Gateway Parcel

Saturday, October 21, 2023

9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

**Members are encouraged
to attend!**