



SNOWY EGRET

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The Valley Habitat

May/June 2024

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

Walking the Green Path

"How to Find the Greenest, Least Toxic Textiles" by Jessian Choy.

This is a recent article from Sierra Magazine. As with many environmental products, issues, or questions research is called for on the reader's part. Products advertised as "natural" or "sustainable" may be manufactured with chemicals that enhance their desirable characteristics such as water-resistance, anti-static, or anti-microbial. However, many of these chemicals have not been tested for safety and/or are linked to harmful effects on the environment or human health. The author asserts that there are "locally grown, plant-dyed and less toxic options". Ms. Choy discusses "greenwashing" ...

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

THE IMPACT OF ANIMAL AGRICULTURE ON OUR ENVIRONMENT

Speaker: Mark Lutz

May 17, 2024

The impact of animal agriculture on our environment is a critical issue that deserves more attention than is presently being given to it. Despite very significant environmental impacts, the attention given to animal agriculture in the media is minimal. And even worse, animal agriculture is growing at a significant rate throughout the world.

Raising awareness about the environmental consequences of animal agriculture is crucial for sustainable and responsible food production.

This presentation will cover:

- The various environmental impacts including greenhouse gas emissions, land use, water consumption, biodiversity loss, health impacts and climate opportunity costs.
- A deeper dive into how animal agriculture environmental impacts are measured and assessed – and how easily this can be under-reported.
- An exploration of some factors that may contribute to this under-reporting - including economic in-

terests, cultural norms, and the influence of powerful industries.

- The current state of how these issues are being addressed – and how we, as individuals, have a much more powerful voice than we realize.

Time will be given at the end of this presentation for discussion and to answer any questions.

Mark is graduate of California State University and has been an independent environmental consultant and greenhouse gas verifier for the past 16 years.

During this time, he has

worked with many industries including wineries, electric utilities, food production, manufacturing, ethanol production, oil and gas production, landfills, and the dairy industry.

This includes working with some well-known companies such as Safeway, Bonneville Power Administration, Levi Strauss, Clif Bar, Modesto Irrigation District, Gallo Winery, Rodney Strong Vineyards and Beyond Meat. He was also on a consulting team to assist the country of Ethiopia to monitor and measure greenhouse gases connected to its Paris Climate Accords commitments.



MARK LUTZ

VAGRANT BIRDS

By Salvatore Salerno

Excerpt from *Of Birds, Birders, and Birding, Volume Two, 2016-10*

In the last issue of The Valley Habitat, I explained briefly how some birds become “unseasonable”—that is, expected but in the wrong season that is typical of their species. Here are some brief notes on that other group of unexpected birds, the ones we call “vagrants.” How do birds end up as so-called “vagrants” to begin with? One of the better explorations of bird vagrancy can be found in Steve Howell’s *Rare Birds of North America*, from which these main causes emerge.

DRIFT - Unpredictable forces of nature often alter the migration patterns of birds. In sudden storms of strong headwinds and heavy precipitation, migrating flocks will stop traveling and drift into any habitats where they can find refuge. Birds can also drift while assisted by intense tailwinds, winding up miles farther down range from where they would be in calm weather.

MISORIENTATION –

Migrating birds seem to have an innate compass by which they can orient themselves. At times, however, some individual birds will have a “defective” compass that causes them to travel 180° from their route, placing them exactly opposite to their intended destination. There is also “mirror-image” migration, in which the bird will confuse east for west, or north for south. Instead of flying southwest at 40° from its breeding grounds, for example, the hapless bird will fly *southeast* at 40°, thereby losing its flock and ending up lost, where a lucky birder may find it.

OVERSHOOTING – Migrating birds also appear to have an innate clock that tells them how many days they must fly to reach their breeding or wintering grounds. But when that “clock” goes awry, a bird will fly too quickly during the right number of days, or fly at the right speed for a wrong period of time. Either way, the hapless vagrant will overshoot its

mark, ending up as a stranger in a strange land, to the delight of some birder looking for such a rarity.

DISPERSAL – Post-breeding dispersals follow time-tested patterns, but there are always unforeseen disruptions to those patterns. Habitat degradation or loss, severe temperature changes, sudden food decline—all can cause birds to disperse into entirely new areas in search of suitable habitats.

Regardless of the causes, a lost bird will try to stay in the company of birds as closely related to its own species as possible—a Trumpeter Swan with Tundra Swans, a Bohemian Waxing with Cedar Waxwings, and so forth. Two examples of vagrant birds found recently were the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Clay-colored Sparrow, shown on the following page.

RECENT SIGHTINGS OF **RARE** OR UNCOMMON BIRDS
*Review Species

STANISLAUS COUNTY

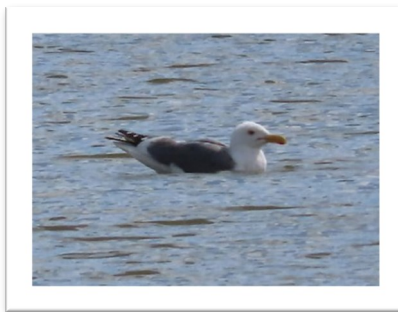
Garry Hayes had a **YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER*** at the Stan State campus on February 28.



YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER

© Ann Kohlhaas

Daniel Gilman had a **WESTERN GULL** at Naraghi Lake on March 12.



WESTERN GULL

© Daniel Gilman

Marcel Holyoak had a **GRASSHOPPER SPARROW** at Del Puerto Canyon on March 21.

Grasslands Wildlife Area, China Unit.



CLAY-COLORED SPARROW

© Pete Dunten

MERCED COUNTY

Pete Dunten had a **CLAY-COLORED SPARROW** on March 6 at the North

Sam Fellows had a **PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER** on March 24 at Merced N.W.R.

**Get to Know Modesto's Official City Bird
The Yellow-billed Magpie**



The City of Modesto is located near the geographic center of the Yellow-billed Magpie's range (See Range Map). These handsome, intelligent, and boisterous birds are only found here in California. Their contrasting black and white body, wings, and tail with their blue-green iridescent accents make them easy to identify. Magpies are large birds measuring nearly seventeen inches long and have a wingspan of two feet. Their diet centers on insects, seeds, nuts, and fruit; however they will eat almost anything including roadkill, nestlings, eggs, and rodents. They nest in colonies of fifteen to twenty pairs and build their large dome-covered nests high up in trees. They can be found anywhere in Modesto; however, if you want to look for this beautiful bird, we suggest Dry Creek Regional Park or MJC West Campus on most mornings.

River Walk Update

The deadline to make public comments to the Draft Environmental Impact Report has been extended to May 6. Yokuts has taken a stance against this project in large part because the land proposed for urbanization is at the top tier of quality soils in the world, well suited for groundwater recharge through irrigation. Other major issues with the River Walk proposal include:

- The development would be in an area at risk of flooding
- Infrastructure, including water and sewage issues
- River Walk would be in

large part an age-restricted community

- Traffic and access road issues

There are many other reasons to oppose this development. Personalize your comments and send them to:

Miguel Galvez, Contract City Planner

6707 Third St.

Riverbank, Ca. 95367

cityplanner@riverbank.org

Kent Mitchell

Political Chair

Walking the Green Path cont.

Ms. Choy discusses "greenwashing" which calls for, I believe, apprehension and research. She cites the "Circle Economy Foundation" as a source of info. Regarding the frequent inaccuracy of clothing tags or labels, she states that there are no laws regulating this and no laws regulating claims of "biodegradable" clothing. The author cites recycling clothing into other textiles as preferable to trying to biodegrade them. Recently I saw a news article stating that purchase of second hand clothing is way up due to inflation, a good re-using strategy. Denim clothing can be re-used or recycled. Look on-line for a location where you can drop-off or send your worn-out denim jeans. Resources for this are in Stockton or Sacramento.

Steve Tomlinson

stomlinson015@gmail.com

STANISLAUS AUDUBON FIELD TRIPS

**CALAVERAS BIG TREES
STATE PARK
1170 CA-4, Arnold
Leader: Sal Salerno
Co-leader: TBA
SATURDAY, MAY 18
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 P.M.**

Our annual visit to the giant sequoias will be a unique opportunity to see montane species of warblers, flycatchers, woodpeckers, wrens, and vireos, all beginning their breeding season. More uncommon species such as Pileated Woodpecker or Northern Pygmy-Owl may be experienced, too. Participants will meet the leaders at the main parking lot; there is a day use entry fee of \$10. Bring water and

lunch, sturdy shoes, and insect repellent. R.S.V.P. at bees2@sbcglobal.net is not required, but recommended, by Tuesday, May 14. *NOTE: A special invitation is extended to former students of Sal's Early Birder classes.*

**KNIGHTS FERRY
RECREATION AREA
17525 Sonora Road,
Knights Ferry
Leader: John Harris
SATURDAY, JUNE 1**

This trip will focus on breeding birds and late migrants in Knights Ferry's diverse habitats. The area includes rocky

hillsides, blue oak woodlands, and riparian forest. We'll look for Knights Ferry specialties Rock and Canyon Wrens and Rufous-crowned Sparrows along the trail above the parking area, and also check riparian habitat along part of the Russian Rapids trail. Later migrants such as Willow Flycatcher or Yellow-breasted Chat are possible.

Meet at the recreation area parking lot on the north side of the river, near the Army Corps of Engineers Visitor Center. There is a day use fee of \$10 (or have your National Parks pass). For more information, contact John Harris at jhh.birder@gmail.com



JANUARY 27, 2024

**TO ERIC HOPSON,
WE WISH YOU A
HAPPY AND BIRDY
RETIREMENT!**

**THE GOOD WORK
YOU HAVE DONE
IN RESTORING,
PRESERVING, AND
PROTECTING THE
SAN JOAQUIN
RIVER NATIONAL
WILDLIFE REFUGE
WILL REMAIN
ALWAYS.**



FEBRUARY 24, 2024



MARCH 16, 2024



APRIL 6, 2024

STANISLAUS AUDUBON SOCIETY GENERAL MEMBERSHIP ZOOM MEETING

Current members of S.A.S. are invited to the next Zoom meeting on **Tuesday, May 21 at 7:00 p.m.**

The purpose of this annual meeting is to elect officers for the 2024-25 term. The candidates are Salvatore Salerno, president; John Harris, vice-president; and Daniel Gilman, secretary. The position of treasurer is open, and we are requesting a volunteer from our membership to consider this position for the term.

You are invited to a Zoom meeting.

When: May 21, 2024 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Register in advance for this meeting:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAq-cOytqTgsGNNZ_PDw4iwz8C9Nd0hieRug](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAq-cOytqTgsGNNZ_PDw4iwz8C9Nd0hieRug)

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

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

A Reservation is required to enter the park on some dates in 2024.

Peak-Hours Reservation Required:

5:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

APRIL 13 - JUNE 30

Saturdays, Sundays, and Holidays only

JULY 1 - AUGUST 14

Daily

AUGUST 15 - OCTOBER 27

Saturdays, Sundays, and Holidays only

Peak hours reservations went on sale for the full covered season at 8 a.m. (PST) on January 5, 2024. Visit Yosemite Conservancy for more info.:

<https://yosemite.org/know-before-you-go-yosemite-reservations-in-2024/>

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.

JUNE POTLUCK

Friday, June 14

1009 Clarksburg Way,

Modesto

6:00 p.m. - ???

Please join your fellow members at the home of Doug and Judy Hardie for our annual potluck gathering. Bring your own service, whatever you would like to drink, and a dish to share for a visit with your fellow members. Doug and Judy have a beautiful backyard we always enjoy. There will be a plant exchange also, featuring some of Doug's offerings, as well as those members care to share. Look around your gardens for those items you have extras to pass along. Mark your calendars for a great June Friday evening! Hope to see you there!

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: Candy Klaschus

cklaschus@gmail.com

Vice Chair: Steve Tomlinson

Political Chair: Kent Mitchell

Secretary: Elaine Gorman

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

Chair: Jeff Olson

Randall Brown

Elaine Gorman

Communications

Kathy Weise (Mailings)

CeCe Hurst (Publicity)

Kevin Augustine (Valley Habitat)

kaugustine@csustan.edu

Anita Young (Membership)

Jeanne Homesy (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

___ Special Offer	\$15	
___ Regular	\$39	\$49
___ Supporting	\$75	\$100
___ Contributing	\$150	\$175
___ Life	\$1000	\$1250
___ Student	\$25	\$35
___ Senior	\$25	\$35
___ 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

F94QW09051

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.

