

MONTEREY BAY BIRDING FESTIVAL SEPT. 23-26, 2010

FULL-DAY FIELD TRIPS

VENTANA WILDLIFE SOCIETY - Condors, Bird banding demonstration and searching for rarities.

Date **Friday, Sept. 24, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.**
 Sunday, Sept. 26, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Description Located at Andrew Molera State Park in scenic Big Sur, Ventana Wildlife Society's Discovery Center offers visitors a fun and interactive look at area wildlife, including California Condors. This trip is actually three trips in one: mist netting/bird banding demonstration, a bird walk, and a Condor tour down Highway 1. Lunch provided. Limited to 24 per day.

Cost: \$115

Trip Leaders: Ventana Wildlife Society

Transportation: Caravan 50 miles from Watsonville Civic Plaza.

Activity: Moderate

SAN FELIPE LAKE/LLAGAS CREEK

Date **Friday, Sept. 24, 6 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

Description Explore the upper reaches of the Pajaro River watershed on this rare opportunity to bird the privately held wetlands surrounding San Felipe Lake in northernmost San Benito County. While it is still early for wintering waterfowl, we should encounter a good mix of raptors, rails, songbirds and waterfowl summering over, as well as a large resident population of American White Pelicans. This 2,300-acre ranch is the location of many first county records. Fall records have included Tropical and Eastern Kingbird. Loggerhead Shrikes spin away off fences, Prairie Falcon is regular and a resident healthy colony of Burrowing Owls may make an appearance. The property is home to a robust deer herd and coyotes are also frequently seen. Nearby, we will explore a tributary to the Pajaro, Llagas Creek. This creek, managed by the Santa Clara County Water District, is bounded by a restored native plant corridor. Paralleling the city of Gilroy's waste water treatment plant, it consistently offers surprises in any season. Again, access at this location is restricted. Participants should pack lunches and drinks for this nearly-all-day trip. We will need to carpool as parking is limited

Cost: \$25

Trip Leader: Mark Paxton

Transportation: Caravan/Carpool 50 miles from Watsonville Civic Plaza

Activity: Limited

PINNACLES NATIONAL MONUMENT

Date **Sunday, Sept. 26, 6:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

Description Pinnacles provides the birder with a chance to look for specialties of the California interior landscape, including a chance at Yellow-billed Magpie, Canyon Wren, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Greater Roadrunner, Prairie Falcon, and Loggerhead Shrike. Next to Big Sur, Pinnacles offers the next best chance of seeing a California Condor. A

full day trip. Make sure you have a full tank of gas.

Cost: \$25

Trip Leaders: Daniel George and A.J. Adams

Transportation: Caravan/carpool 60 miles to San Benito County

Activity: Moderate

CALIFORNIA SPECIALTIES

Date **Thursday, Sept. 23, 6:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

Sunday, Sept. 26, 6:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Description This trip will focus on seeing birds unique to California and the Western United States, such as Yellow-billed Magpie, California Thrasher, Wrentit, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Snowy Plover, California Towhee, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Clark's Grebe, White-tailed Kite, etc. Ranging from Pacific beaches to the foothills to the Salinas Valley, this fast-paced trip will help maximize your list of western birds. Perfect for the out-of-state birder, but fun for anyone.

Cost: \$25

Trip Leaders: Chris Tenney, Thursday; Tim Amaral, Sunday

Transportation: Caravan; have a full tank of gas for extensive travel

Activity: Moderate

HALF-DAY FIELD TRIPS

KIRBY PARK & ELKHORN SLOUGH RESERVE (Interior)

Date **Thursday., Sept. 23, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.**

Saturday, Sept. 25, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Description Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve, in the heart of Elkhorn Slough, is one of the premier bird watching sites in the western United States. Birding from the Reserve offers an excellent sampling of some of the many habitats and over 340 species that visit or take refuge throughout this watershed. Elkhorn Slough's importance is part of the great fall and spring migrations has led the American Birding Conservancy to declare it a "globally important" area.

Cost: \$15

Trip Leaders: David and Jane Styler, Thursday; Earl Lebow, Sunday

Transportation: Trips departs from Watsonville Civic Plaza

Activity: Moderate

ELKHORN SLOUGH/MOSS LANDING (Coastal)

Date **Friday, Sept. 24, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.**

Saturday, Sept. 25, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Description This half-day trip will find us scouring locations such as the mudflats of Moss Landing, visiting the famous Moon Glow Dairy, or checking the fresh-water pond of Zmudowski State Beach for the many migrating and wintering shorebirds, gulls, and waterfowl of the region. Peregrine Falcons and Merlin are often attracted to the large flocks of shorebirds, and California Sea Otters are usually in the area. Come see why Elkhorn Slough has long been a target destination for birders from around the world. Exact itinerary will be determined based on local conditions.

Cost : \$15

Trip Leaders: Bob and Bernadette Ramer, Friday; Rusty Scalf, Saturday

Transportation: Trip departs from Watsonville Civic Plaza

Activity: Moderate

WATSONVILLE SLOUGHS

Date **Friday, Sept. 24, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.**
 Saturday, Sept. 25, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.
 Sunday, Sept. 26, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Description Harkins, East & West Struve, Hanson, Gallighan and Watsonville Sloughs comprise the heart of the Watsonville Slough system. A variety of shorebirds, raptors, gulls, ducks, sparrows, and songbirds are present at the varied habitats of the sloughs and their associated uplands. Learn the local access sites for finding birds in Watsonville's front yard.

Cost: \$15

Trip Leaders: Todd Newberry, Friday-Sunday; David and Jane Styer, Saturday

Transportation: Trip departs from Watsonville Civic Plaza

Activity: Moderate, Limited

PAJARO DUNES/SUNSET BEACH

Date **Thursday, Sept. 23, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.**
 Saturday, Sept. 25, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Description Shorebirds, songbirds, and waterfowl are all likely as we visit the varied habitats of Sunset Beach and Pajaro Dunes. Snowy Plovers nest on the dunes themselves, and the Pajaro River Mouth has long been one of the premier locations for rare shorebirds, gulls and terns. Stands of Monterey Cypress and willow patches provide habitat for a variety of passerines. This trip highlights some of the richest birding areas of the entire Pajaro Valley.

Cost: \$15

Trip Leaders: Thursday to be announced; Matthew-Struiss Timmer, Saturday

Transportation: Trip departs from Watsonville Civic Plaza

Activity: Moderate

PINTO LAKE AND LOCAL HOTSPOTS

Date **Thursday, Sept. 23, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.**
 Sunday, Sept. 25, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Description Pinto Lake's many trails and wetlands harbor the Red-shouldered and Red-tailed Hawk, White-tailed Kite, California Thrasher, woodpeckers, ducks, and songbirds. We'll visit Pinto Lake City Park for a birder's quick-fix view of the lake, and then wander the trails of Pinto Lake County Park for a more intensive birding experience. Recommended for both beginners and experienced birders.

Cost: \$15

Trip Leaders: Thursday to be announced; Bob Ramer, Sunday

Transportation: Departs from Watsonville Civic Plaza

Activity: Moderate

SALINAS RIVERMOUTH

Date **Friday, Sept. 24, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.**
Sunday, Sept. 26, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Description The Salinas Rivermouth offers an excellent opportunity to find a vagrant shorebird, observe several species of terns, study Snowy Plovers, catch a Northern Harrier or a Peregrine Falcon on the wing, or just enjoy a walk to the Pacific Ocean. Fall is the premier time of the year to visit this locale.

Cost: \$15

Trip Leaders: Scott Smithson, Friday; Blake Matheson, Sunday

Transportation: Departs from Watsonville Civic Plaza

Activity: Moderate

VAGRANT CHASING AT THE CARMEL RIVERMOUTH

Date **Saturday, Sept. 25, 6:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**
Sunday, Sept. 26, 6:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Description September and fall migration is the time birders head to hot spots such as the Carmel Rivermouth to search for vagrants and rarities not found in the area at any other time of the year. The Carmel Rivermouth's riparian corridor is a fine example of coastal Monterey Bay birding. In addition to the passerines along the river, the mouth of the river itself often provides excellent shorebird habitat. Rubber boots or hip waders are advised to enable stream crossings.

Cost: \$15

Trip Leaders: Rita Caratello and Bill Hill

Transportation: Departs from Watsonville Civic Plaza, caravan to Carmel

Activity: Moderate

NATURAL BRIDGES STATE BEACH

Date **Saturday, Sept. 25, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.**

Description Natural Bridges is another locations that combines the appeal of vagrant warblers with easy access to the beach and ocean. Three species of cormorants are almost automatic; rocky shorebirds are expected, and a fine variety of warblers, sparrows, and other songbirds are likely along the riparian corridor trail.

Cost: \$15

Trip Leaders: Jennifer Rycenga

Transportation: Trip departs from Watsonville Civic Plaza

Activity: Moderate, Limited

RANCHO DEL OSO

Date **Sunday, Sept. 26, 6:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

Description Birding at this beautiful and historic locale brings together birds of a variety of habitats in a limited area. Turning from the birds of the ocean, beach, creek mouth and marsh, one can search amid riparian, Monterey pine, mixed evergreen and coast redwood forests. Along with local favorites, such as Wrentit, Pygmy Nuthatch, Purple Finch, House Wren, Hermit Warbler, Northern Pygmy-Owl, Marbled Murrelet, and various woodpeckers, this is a good place to encounter raptors and a chance for rare migrants and vagrants. Plan for a few miles of walking on mostly gentle slopes.

Cost: \$15

Trip Leader: Jennifer Rycenga
Transportation: Departs from Watsonville Civic Plaza
Activity: Moderate

POINT PINOS & THE MONTEREY PENINSULA

Date **Friday, Sept. 24, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.**
 Saturday, Sept. 25, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.
 Sunday, Sept. 26, 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Description Besides being one of the premier birding destinations of the area, Point Pinos has the added bonus of being one of the most scenic destinations of the region. The crashing waves and rocks are a great place for birds like Black Turnstones, Black Oystercatchers, and other rocky shorebirds, Coastal cypress trees are often excellent for migrant songbirds, and even true seabirds can sometimes be seen from some of the westernmost points of land adjacent to Monterey Bay.

Cost: \$15

Trip Leaders: Ken Wilson

Transportation: Departs from Watsonville Civic Plaza

Activity: Moderate

OWLS OF ROBINSON CANYON

Date **Friday, Sept. 24, 8:45 p.m. to After Midnight**
 Saturday, Sept. 25, 8:45 p.m. to After Midnight

Description Robinson Canyon is one of California's most productive owling sites and is sure to be one of our first trips to sell out. Western Screech, Great Horned, Barn and Northern Saw-White Owls are all likely, and Northern Pygmy and the endangered Spotted Owl are possible. This field trip, limited to 10, is a must if you're looking for owls. Bring a flashlight if possible. This trip is not recommended for those with an early field trip the following morning.

Cost: \$25

Trip Leader: Steve Rovell

Transportation: Departs from Watsonville Civic Plaza

Activity: Limited

BEGINNERS BIRDING

Date **Friday, Sept. 23, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.**
 Saturday, Sept. 25, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.
 Saturday, Sept. 25, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
 Sunday, Sept. 26, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Description Unsure about how to find birds in your binoculars? Don't know a Great Blue Heron from a Mourning Dove? Or, just looking for some tips about how to improve your identification skills? Come join us for an introductory bird walk emphasizing the ABC's of identifying and observing birds in the wild.

Cost: \$15

Trip Leaders: Wally and Lois Goldfrank

Transportation: Departs from Watsonville Civic Plaza

Activity: Moderate

PHOTOGRAPHING WILD BIRDS

Date Friday, Sept. 23, 8 a.m. to Noon

Description Unsure about how to photograph wild birds? Don't know a Great Blue Heron from a Mourning Dove? Or, just looking for some tips about how to improve your photography skills? Come join us to learn how to get that perfect wild bird photograph.

Cost: \$30

Trip Leaders: Larry Selman

Transportation: Departs from Watsonville Civic Plaza

Activity: Moderate

CREATIVE ART JOURNALING

Date Friday, Sept. 23, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Description Whether you use it to record ideas, for travel, or as a tool for observation or self-discovery, the practice of keeping a visual journal is an enriching way to express and record your deeper creative self. In your travels and daily life it helps you to experience place on a deeper and more meaningful level. It is a tool to awaken your senses and help you see the world through artist's eyes. We'll visit Watsonville Wetlands Watch and take advantage of an excellent collection of mounted birds –loaned by Richard Gurnee.

Cost: \$30

Trip Leaders: Susan Dorf

Transportation: Departs from Watsonville Civic Plaza

Activity: Moderate

WATER ADVENTURES

SHEARWATER JOURNEYS PELAGIC TRIPS

Date Thursday, Sept. 23, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Friday, Sept. 24, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 25, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Sunday, Sept. 26, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Description Monterey Bay's incredible submarine canyon hosts a vast variety of seabirds and marine mammals and bird-life within just a few miles of shore. Debi Shearwater has been conducting these trips for 35 years, and her tours attract sea birders from all over the globe. We can expect to see whales and dolphins in addition to Sooty, Pink-footed, and Buller's Shearwaters, Common Murres, Pigeon Guillemots, Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets, Pomarine & Parasitic Jaegers, and maybe a South Polar Skua. Black-footed Albatross, Black & Ashy Storm-Petrels, Sabine's Gull, and Arctic Tern are just a partial list of our possibilities. Limited to 20 per day.

Cost: \$140, festival rate, non-refundable.

Trip Leaders: Sept. 23 Wes Fritz, Terry Hunefeld and Debi Shearwater; Sept. 24 Wes Fritz, Jennifer Green, Terry Hunefeld and Debi Shearwater; Sept. 25 Abe Borker, Wes Fritz, Terry Hunefeld, Debi Shearwater, Special Guest Leaders: Mike Parr, Mark Rauzon; Sept. 26 Wes Fritz, Jennifer Green, Terry Hunefeld and Debi Shearwater.

Transportation: Go directly to Chris' Fishing Shop on Fisherman's Wharf Monterey. Do not meet at Watsonville Civic Plaza. Allow 1 hour travel time from Watsonville.

