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**WINTER HABITAT ASSOCIATIONS OF DIURNAL
RAPTORS IN CALIFORNIA'S CENTRAL VALLEY**

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ABSTRACT: The wintering raptors of California's Central Valley are abundant and diverse. Despite this, little information exists on the habitats used by these birds in winter. We recorded diurnal raptors along 19 roadside survey routes throughout the Central Valley for three consecutive winters between 2007 and 2010. We obtained data sufficient to determine significant positive and negative habitat associations for the White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus*), Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*), Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*), American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), and Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*). The Prairie Falcon and Ferruginous and Rough-legged hawks showed expected strong positive associations with grasslands. The Bald Eagle and Northern Harrier were positively associated not only with wetlands but also with rice. The strongest positive association for the White-tailed Kite was with wetlands. The Red-tailed Hawk was positively associated with a variety of habitat types but most strongly with wetlands and rice. The American Kestrel, Northern Harrier, and White-tailed Kite were positively associated with alfalfa. Nearly all species were negatively associated with urbanized landscapes, orchards, and other intensive forms of agriculture. The White-tailed Kite, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, and American Kestrel showed significant negative associations with oak savanna. Given the rapid conversion of the Central Valley to urban and intensive agricultural uses over the past few decades, these results have important implications for conservation of these wintering raptors in this region.

TRENDS IN RIPARIAN SONGBIRDS BANDED AT BIG SUR, CENTRAL CALIFORNIA COAST

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ABSTRACT: We assessed trends in rates of capture of eight riparian songbirds mist-netted over 17 years (1993–2009) at Big Sur, on the central California coast. The Warbling Vireo (*Vireo gilvus*) and Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*) declined significantly, whereas the Swainson's Thrush (*Catharus ustulatus*) showed a nearly significant increase. Rates of capture of the Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*), Wilson's warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*), Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*), Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*), and Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*) were stable. Negative trends for the Warbling Vireo and Yellow Warbler were particularly strong for hatching-year birds, indicating that factors acting in the breeding season were responsible for declines. We captured high ratios of transients to local adults, and at Big Sur trends for some of these species are associated more with populations breeding in other regions. However, in the Swainson's Thrush and Wilson's Warbler, we observed significant increases in local adults and local hatching-year birds, indicating the importance of local riparian habitat for some species at Big Sur.

NESTING SUCCESS OF THE YELLOW WARBLER IN A DISTURBED RIPARIAN FOREST IN COASTAL CALIFORNIA

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ABSTRACT: Widespread decline of Yellow Warbler populations in California has led to increased interest in their conservation and management. However, because the species is now rare throughout much of its historic range in the state, there is relatively little demographic information about it. Predation and Brown-headed Cowbird parasitism are cited as causing declines, but their effects are poorly quantified. To address this information need, in 2008 we investigated the reproductive biology of the Yellow Warbler along the Pajaro River in Santa Cruz and Monterey counties, California, where the species is still relatively abundant. We examined predation and parasitism pressures by monitoring nests and recording reproductive success. In this heavily disturbed area, the Yellow Warbler's nest success was very low (10%), revealing that one of the larger populations of this species remaining in the region may be threatened.

STATUS AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE BARRED OWL IN MARIN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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ABSTRACT: Marin County, California, is the southern limit of the range of the Northern Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*), listed as threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The density of the Marin population of the Northern Spotted Owl is unusually high, the population breeds in unique habitat associations, and it is genetically isolated from other Spotted Owl populations. Unlike elsewhere in the Northern Spotted Owl's range, habitat loss to logging is not an issue in Marin County. The Barred Owl (*Strix varia*) has been detected in Marin County only since 2002 and may pose a threat to the Northern Spotted Owl through competition and/or interbreeding. We amassed information on the distribution and abundance of the Barred Owl in Marin County via published literature, by consulting local birders, and primarily through data we obtained during our monitoring of the Northern Spotted Owl in Marin County. Monitoring, continuous since 1996, provides an opportunity for an evaluation of the effect of the Barred Owl invasion on the Northern Spotted Owl there. We estimate the county's current population of the Barred Owl at four to seven individuals, including one territorial pair and a single territorial male. We documented two nestings, with four young fledged. Two pairs of the Northern Spotted Owl have been displaced from territories. These results are of concern for an otherwise stable population of the Northern Spotted Owl.

NOTES

TWO RECENT RECORDS OF THE CLAPPER RAIL FROM THE BALLONA WETLANDS, LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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IMPORTANT RECENT BIRD RECORDS FROM ATTU ISLAND, ALASKA

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BOOK REVIEWS

Paseriformes del Occidente de México: Morfometría, Datación y Sexado, by Santiago Guallar, Eduardo Santana, Sarahy Contreras, Heriberto Verdugo, and Anna Gallés (2009). Published by the Institut de Cultura de Barcelona, Spain; 488 pages, hundreds of graphs and illustrations; available for free online at http://w3.bcn.es/V01/Serveis/Noticies/V01NoticiesLlistatNoticiesCtl/0,2138,418159056,418914204_2_1264006434,00.html?accio=detall&home

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ATTRACTION OF BIRDS TO HUMAN FOOD IN YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK, CALIFORNIA

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ABSTRACT: We studied the attraction of birds to human food at 50 picnic sites in Yosemite National Park, California, during summer 2009. At each site we made two 10-minute point counts, one in the morning, when human food was never present, and one at midday, when human food was always present. Eight of 26 species fed on human food. We found fewer individuals and species during counts with human food at high-elevation sites and more individuals and species during counts with human food at low-elevation sites. Significantly more Steller's Jays (*Cyanocitta stelleri*) and significantly fewer Mountain Chickadees (*Poecile gambeli*) occurred during counts with human food.