43rd Annual Conference of Western Field Ornithologists
Ventura, CA • September 26-30, 2018

Conference Schedule

Wednesday, September 26
3:00—6:00 PM Early registration is open at the Four Points by Sheraton Ventura Harbor Resort outside the San Buenaventura Ballroom

Thursday, September 27
5:00—7:00 AM Registration is open at the Four Points by Sheraton Ventura Harbor Resort outside the San Buenaventura Ballroom
5:30—7:00 AM Breakfast Grab & Go bag (PRE-ORDERED) available outside the San Buenaventura Ballroom
5:30—7:00 AM Box lunches (PRE-ORDERED) available outside the San Buenaventura Ballroom

FIELD TRIPS
ALL TRANSPORTATION BY CARPOOLING; Field Trips return by 5 PM

5:30 AM Assemble in the San Buenaventura Ballroom at the appropriate trip sign for full day field trip departure

• 1TH: Frazier Mountain and Mount Pinos
• 2TH: Northern Santa Barbara County
• 3TH: Western Antelope Valley & Castaic Lagoon
• 4TH: Tejon Ranch

5:45 AM Assemble in the San Buenaventura Ballroom at the appropriate trip sign for full day field trip departure

• 5TH: Gaviota, Refugio, El Capitan State Beaches
• 6TH: Rose Valley, Sespe Creek, Pine Mountain
• 7TH: Hopper Mountain or Bitter Creek Condors
• CANCELLED 8TH: Sepulveda Basin / Hansen Dam CANCELLED

6:00 AM Assemble in the San Buenaventura Ballroom at the appropriate sign.

• 9TH: Santa Cruz Island Landing and Pelagic
• 10TH Pt Mugu Naval Base
• 11TH Santa Barbara migrant hotspots
• 12TH Malibu Lagoon & Coast
• 13TH Ventura migrant hotspots

11 AM—4:00 PM WFO Board Meeting in the Commodore Board Room
4:30—5:30 PM Registration is open outside the San Buenaventura Ballroom
6:30—9:00 PM **Welcoming Reception, Sponsored by Rockjumper Birding Tours.** You are welcomed to a reception with hors d’oeuvres & cash bar in the Grand Ballroom. This welcoming reception is open to all conference registrants.

**Friday, September 28**

5:00—7:30 AM Registration is open outside the San Buenaventura Ballroom

5:30—7:30 AM Breakfast Grab & Go bag (PRE-ORDERED) available outside the San Buenaventura Ballroom

5:30—7:30 AM Box lunches (PRE-ORDERED) available outside the San Buenaventura Ballroom

**FIELD TRIPS**

ALL TRANSPORTATION BY CARPOOLLING; Field Trips return by 11 AM

6:15 AM Assemble in the San Buenaventura Ballroom at the appropriate trip sign for half day field trip departure

- 1FR Carpinteria Salt Marsh Reserve
- 2FR Wheeler Gorge Campground
- 3FR Lake Los Carneros and Devereux Slough
- 4FR Lake Piru

6:30 AM Assemble in the San Buenaventura Ballroom at the appropriate trip sign for half day field trip departure

- 5FR Wildwood Park and Briar Bluff Open Space
- 6FR Rancho Sierra Vista and Rancho Potrero
- 7FR Sycamore Canyon
- 8FR Rancho Simi Park and Arroyo Simi

6:45 AM Assemble in the San Buenaventura Ballroom at the appropriate trip sign for half day field trip departure

- 9FR Ventura Settling Ponds and Ventura Harbor
- 10FR Santa Clara River Estuary and McGrath State Beach
- 11FR Lake Casitas
- 12FR Camino Real Park and Arroyo Verde Park
- 13FR Ojai Meadows and Cañada Larga

**WORKSHOPS**

All workshops are in the Four Points Meeting Rooms except “Preparation of Bird Specimens”

7:00—11:00 AM FR-ws1 Molt Workshop: “Everything You’ve Been Afraid to Know and Haven’t Wanted to Ask.” with Peter Pyle in Four Points North

7:15–10:30 AM FR-ws2 Bird Preparation Workshop: “Preparation of Bird Specimens” with Phil Unitt at Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology. Meet under the appropriate sign on the San Buenaventura Ballroom at 7:15 AM or at the Foundation at 7:30 AM.
8:00—11:00 AM FR-ws3 Data Mining Workshop: “Let Me Google That for You” with Ted Floyd in Four Points Clipper East

8:00—11:00 AM FR-ws4 14SA Warbler ID Workshop: “Identification of Fall Warblers” with Jon Dunn in Four Points West. [Field Trip offered Saturday]

11:00 AM—12 PM Lunch break.

11:00 AM—12 PM Registration is open outside the San Buenaventura Ballroom

12:15—3:40 PM Plenary & Science Sessions in the San Buenaventura Ballroom

4:00—5:30 PM Bird Sound Identification: Team Challenge—Nathan Pieplow in the Grand Ballroom

5:30—6:30 PM Registration is open outside the Grand Ballroom

6:30 PM Dinner Break

7:00–8:00 PM Scholarship Recipients and Alumni Reception in the Lobby Lounge

Saturday, September 29

5:00—7:30 AM Registration is open outside the San Buenaventura Ballroom

5:30—7:30 AM Breakfast Grab & Go bag (PRE-ORDERED) available outside the San Buenaventura Ballroom

5:30—7:30 AM Box lunches (PRE-ORDERED) available outside the San Buenaventura Ballroom

FIELD TRIPS

ALL TRANSPORTATION BY CARPOOING; Field Trips return by 11 AM

6:00 AM Assemble in the San Buenaventura Ballroom at the appropriate trip sign for a half day field trip departure

• 15SA Youth Program Field Trip—Zuma Canyon Birding and Bird Banding

6:15 AM Assemble in the San Buenaventura Ballroom at the appropriate trip sign for half day field trip departure

• 1SA Carpinteria Salt Marsh Reserve
• 2SA Wheeler Gorge Campground
• 3SA Lake Los Carneros and Devereux Slough
• 4SA Lake Piru
• 14SA Fall Warbler Identification Field Trip with Jon Dunn

6:30 AM Assemble in the San Buenaventura Ballroom at the appropriate trip sign for half day field trip departure

• 5SA Wildwood Park and Briar Bluff Open Space
• 6SA Rancho Sierra Vista and Rancho Potrero
• 7SA Sycamore Canyon
• 8SA Rancho Simi Park and Arroyo Simi

6:45 AM Assemble in the San Buenaventura Ballroom at the appropriate trip sign for half day field trip departure
9SA Ventura Settling Ponds and Ventura Harbor  
10SA Santa Clara River Estuary and McGrath State Beach  
11SA Lake Casitas  
12SA Camino Real Park and Arroyo Verde Park  
13SA Ojai Meadows and Cañada Larga

**WORKSHOPS**

All workshops are in the Four Points Meeting Rooms

7:00—11:00 AM SA-ws1 **Bird Sounds Workshop:** "Identifying Birds by their Sounds" with Nathan Pieplow in Four Points Clipper North

8:30—11:00 AM SA-ws2 **Sketching Workshop:** "Sketching in the Field" with John Schmitt in Four Points Clipper East

8:00—11:00 AM SA-ws3 **Vireo ID Workshop:** "Identifying Vireos in California" with Peter Pyle in Four Points Clipper West

11:00 AM—12 PM Lunch break.

12:00 PM—1 PM Registration is open outside the San Buenaventura Ballroom

12:15—3:30 PM **Plenary & Science Sessions** in the Grand Ballroom

3:45—5:15 PM **Bird Photo ID: Expert Panel** with Ed Harper in the Grand Ballroom

5:30—6:30 PM Registration is open outside the Grand Ballroom

6:45—9:30 PM **Banquet and cash bar,** Annual Meeting and Election, Silent Auction and Keynote Address in the Grand Ballroom.

  "Recent population dynamics of seabirds, in response to their prey, in the Gulf of the Farallones"
  David Ainley, PhD

**Sunday, September 30**

5:00—7:00 AM Registration is open outside the San Buenaventura Ballroom

5:30—7:00 AM Breakfast Grab & Go bag *(PRE-ORDERED)* available outside the San Buenaventura Ballroom

5:30—7:30 AM Box lunches *(PRE-ORDERED)* available on the outside the San Buenaventura Ballroom

**FIELD TRIPS**

ALL TRANSPORTATION BY CARPOOLING; Field Trips return by 5 PM

5:30 AM Assemble in the San Buenaventura Ballroom at the appropriate trip sign for full day field trip departure

  - 1SU: Frazier Mountain and Mount Pinos
  - 2SU: Northern Santa Barbara County
  - 3SU: Western Antelope Valley & Castaic Lagoon
THURSDAY FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS

Thursday, September 27

Note: All Field Trips are full day and return by 5 pm

All trips by Carpool leaving from the Four Points San Buenaventura Ballroom

Difficulty levels:
Easy—flat ground some walking.
Moderate—walking needed to get to the birding sites, some elevation changes.
Difficult—fair amount of walking with elevation changes.

1TH Frazier Mountain and Mt Pinos

Leaders: Lance Benner and Cayenne Sweeney

Frazier Mountain and Mount Pinos allow easy access to higher elevations in the Transverse Range in northern Ventura County. This trip will start with a visit to a roadside spring on Frazier Mountain that often attracts a variety of passerines including Lawrence’s Goldfinch. From there we will continue to higher elevation habitats on Mt Pinos including pine and fir forest, montane meadow, and subalpine limber pine forest. Target species here include White-headed Woodpecker, Clark’s Nutcracker, Townsend’s Solitaire, Thick-billed Fox Sparrow, Cassin’s Finch, and other montane species.

Departure Time: 5:30 AM
Return Time: 4:30 PM
Cost: $30
Miles (one way): 99 miles
Time (one way): 110 minutes
2TH Northern Santa Barbara County  
Leader: Wes Fritz

This full day trip will explore a variety of locations and habitats in northern Santa Barbara County and seek out two target birds among others; the Yellow-billed Magpie and Chestnut-backed Chickadee. Both of these Pacific species (the magpie a California endemic!) reach the southern end of their ranges in this region. We are planning to visit a private ranch that has spectacular viewing and photographing opportunities for the magpie. The ranchlands, oak savannas, and oak woodlands in this area support a remarkable diversity of California resident species and should turn up migrants as well. We will also visit riparian habitat that supports Chestnut-backed chickadees and hopefully some migrant passerines. A scope may be helpful for birding the ranchlands and savannas of the Santa Ynez Valley.

Departure Time: 5:30 AM  
Return Time: 4:30 PM  
Cost: $30  
Miles (one way): ~75 miles  
Time (one way): ~80 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes (planned restroom stops will be announced)  
Difficulty level: Moderate

3TH Western Antelope Valley and Castaic Lagoon  
Leader: Luke Tiller

This trip will start in the western Antelope Valley near Quail Lake where we will spend the first few hours of the morning in the Mojave Desert. Target birds in this area include raptors, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Loggerhead Shrike, Verdin, Cactus Wren, Vesper Sparrow, Bell’s Sparrow (canescens), and others. We will also check Quail Lake for waterfowl, raptors, and more. While working back to Ventura, the trip will stop at Castaic Lagoon where there will be an opportunity for waterfowl and waterbirds, raptors, and a variety of resident and migrant passerines. A number of rare sparrows have been found here in recent years (American Tree, LeConte’s, and Cassin’s) so anything is possible. A spotting scope will be helpful for scoping the lakes and open country on this trip.

Departure Time: 5:30 AM  
Return Time: 4:30 PM  
Cost: $30  
Day Use Fee: $11 per vehicle  
Miles (one way): ~88 miles  
Time (one way): ~90 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

4TH Tejon Ranch  
Leader: Adam Searcy

At 272,000 acres—nearly 422 square miles—Tejon Ranch is the largest piece of private property in California. It straddles a significant portion of the Tehachapi Mountains, creating a critical ecological linkage where the Central Valley, the Sierra Nevada, the Coast Range, and the Mojave Desert mix. In many ways, the Tejon Ranch is a microcosm of California’s natural history—a crucible of geographic,
taxonomic, and evolutionary biodiversity. The ranch is not open to the public without special permission so this trip will provide a rare opportunity to spend time at this stunning property. The ranch is a stronghold for California Condors, Golden Eagles, and other raptors. Oak woodlands, pine forests, and grasslands will provide a diversity of birding opportunities and species. This will be a special trip. A spotting scope will be helpful.

Departure Time: 5:30 AM  
Return Time: 4:00 PM  
Cost: $30  
Miles (one way): ~81 miles  
Time (one way): ~80 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

**5TH Gaviota, Refugio, and El Capitan State Beaches**  
Leader: Justyn Stahl

These sites provide a mix of coastal scrub and chaparral, willow-riparian habitat and stream and canyon woodland on the south coast of Santa Barbara County. All three hot spots are a must when looking for fall rarities! Each campground is located at the mouth of a canyon along the Pacific coastline where migrant passerines become "trapped" at the edge of the ocean and sometimes linger in the trees and shrubs before continuing south. All three sites have a history of producing many of the rarest birds found in Santa Barbara County during September and October. Regular fall rarities include Palm, Virginia's, Blackpoll, Tennessee Warblers, Clay-colored Sparrow, plus most of the common western migrant land birds. Resident birds typical of coastal scrub include California Scrub-Jay, Spotted and California Towhees, and Chestnut-backed Chickadee at El Capitan. Ocean birds are easily spotted offshore due to the generally calm waters and include gulls, terns, shearwaters and jaegers. A spotting scope would come in handy for sea watching.

Departure Time: 5:45 AM  
Return Time: 4:00 PM  
Cost: $30  
Day Use Fee: $10 per vehicle  
Miles (one way): 61 miles  
Time (one way): ~ 55 minutes  
Restrooms: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

**6TH Rose Valley, Sespe Creek, Pine Mountain**  
Leader: TBA

Along Highway 33 above Ojai, these locations combine a variety of habitats and birding experiences into a day at mid to higher elevations in the Transverse Range. The Rose Valley was impacted by the recent Thomas Fire, but has a mix of montane chaparral and riparian habitats including two small lakes. Lawrence’s Goldfinch is a year-round resident in the valley and this area could turn up anything in migration. Sespe Creek runs along the highway and there are several areas to check for residents like Mountain Quail and Canyon Wren, and a variety of migrants in riparian habitat along the creek. The road up Pine Mountain traverses montane chaparral before climbing to pine and fir forests. This area hosts a number of montane species including Northern Pygmy-Owl, White-headed Woodpecker, Townsend’s Solitaire, and more including the potential for rarer visitors.

Departure Time: 5:45 AM
Return Time: 4:00 PM  
Cost: $30  
Miles (one way): ~35-45 miles  
Time (one way): ~40-60 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes - rustic  
Difficulty level: Moderate  

**7TH Hopper Mountain or Bitter Creek Condors**  
Leader: Brad Schram & Teodelina Martelli  
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) manages the recovery program for the California Condor and has been successful in the efforts to increase the species population and the number of areas throughout California and neighboring areas that now support the species. When the California Condor declined to perilously low numbers and was eventually removed from the wild, the species was confined to areas centered around the Transverse Range above Ventura. The Hopper Mountain and Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuges are set aside for the protection of nesting and feeding areas for the condor and are not open to the public. We will have the privilege of touring one of these areas with biologists from the USFWS to view condors in their natural habitat. Where we go will depend on where the viewing opportunities are best at that time. Other species we may see include Golden Eagle, Prairie Falcon, and a variety of foothill grassland species. A spotting scope is helpful on this trip.  
Departure Time: 5:45 AM  
Return Time: 3:30 PM  
Cost: $30  
Miles (one way): 38  
Time (one way): 80 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Easy to Moderate

**Cancelled**  
**8TH Sepulveda Basin / Hansen Dam**  
Cancelled  
The Los Angeles Basin is drained by two major rivers, the Los Angeles and the San Gabriel. During the mid-1900s, both were channelized, and large dams were constructed at regular intervals along their lengths. The open land preserved behind these dams has been devoted to various purposes that could sustain rare flood events with large areas left undeveloped. Though these debris basins were originally intended to be cleared out annually, this was done so infrequently that several have reverted back to their original habitat, providing a glimpse of how the non-channelized rivers would have appeared. Habitat for birds adjacent to these flood control structures include coastal sage, alluvial fan scrub, riparian, and open water, as well as lawns and planted trees. These areas attract a number of migrant and resident species including waterfowl, waterbirds, raptors, and a variety of landbirds. We will work to maximize the diversity of species we can find here. With luck, we may be able to find some of the local riparian nesting species although it is late in the season for them (Bell’s Vireo, Yellow-breasted Chat, Blue Grosbeak, etc).  
Departure Time: 5:45 AM  
Return Time: 3:30 PM  
Cost: $30
9TH Santa Cruz Island Landing and Pelagic Trip  Leaders: Dave Pereksta and others

Santa Cruz Island is home to the endemic Island Scrub-Jay and a variety of other island-evolved endemic subspecies (Allen’s Hummingbird, Orange-crowned Warbler, Loggerhead Shrike, and more). A trip to the island with Island Packers is the only way to see the Island Scrub-Jay! We will leave Ventura via one of Island Packers’ ultra-fast catamarans and look for pelagic birds and marine mammals en route to Santa Cruz Island. After a brief landing that will provide us the opportunity to see the Island Scrub-Jay, other island-endemic subspecies, and perhaps wayward migrants, we will return to sea to finish the day with more pelagic birding in the waters surrounding the northern Channel Islands. It will be a great time to look for migrants including shearwaters, storm-petrels, jaegers, skuas, and alcids. Rarities are possible including Brown Booby, Red-billed Tropicbird, Craveri’s Murrelet, and more.

Departure Time: 6:00 AM
Return Time: 4:30 PM
Cost: $130
Cost to Scholars: $55
Miles (one way): 3 miles
Time (one way): 10 minutes
Restroom facilities: Yes
Difficulty level: Moderate

10TH Pt Mugu Naval Base  Leaders: Scott Terrill and Ryan Terrill

Pt Mugu Naval Base Ventura County at Point Mugu is a working military base and is generally closed to the public. This field trip provides a rare opportunity to access this installation, which is one of the best birding sites in southern California. The centerpiece of the property is Mugu Lagoon; a functioning tidal salt marsh and lagoon system that hosts an incredible number and diversity of birds. Late September is prime time to scan the lagoon for migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, and waders. Shorebird numbers can be staggering and the potential for a rarity is great. The lagoon hosted a Tricolored Heron, Bar-tailed Godwit, and Ruff during the fall of 2017. Reddish Egrets are annual and regularly seen at this time of year. Elsewhere on the installation a variety of upland and wetland habitats host numbers of birds including two recent additions to the breeding avifauna of Ventura County; Yellow-crowned Night-Heron and Vermilion Flycatcher. This will be an exciting trip that should yield more than 100 species. However, due to military restrictions there will be no photography allowed...no exceptions! A spotting scope will be essential for scoping flocks of shorebirds and gulls, and sea watching. **Pt Mugu Naval Base is an active military base. As a result, background checks are necessary to obtain access for field trips. Prior to the trip, the Registrar will contact you for additional information to complete this process.**

Departure Time: 6:00 AM
Return Time: 3:30 PM
11TH Santa Barbara Migrant Hotspots  
Leader: Peter Gaede

The Santa Barbara area has a number of migrant traps and hotspots that make birding there in late September very exciting if vagrant chasing is your thing. This trip will visit a variety of locations in the vicinity of the city of Santa Barbara where uncommon to rare migrants have been seen in the preceding days. We have the potential to find a variety of warblers, vireos, sparrows, and other wayward migrants, as well as the expected western species.

Departure Time: 6:00 AM  
Return Time: 3:30 PM  
Cost: $30  
Miles (one way): 30 miles  
Time (one way): 30 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

12TH Malibu Lagoon & Coast  
Leader: Cliff Hawley

Anyone who has watched “Two and a Half Men” has seen aerial views of Malibu Lagoon in nearly every episode. Migratory birds get the same view as they are moving down the coast and this coastal wetland oasis attracts numbers of waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls, waders, and other water-dependent birds. We should see a flock of Western Snowy Plovers on the beach as well as Elegant Terns and perhaps Black Skimmers. Beyond the lagoon, we will also incorporate a spot for sea watching where we should see Black-vented Shearwaters and other near shore pelagic species. In addition, we will stop in a coastal canyon to look for a variety of resident and migrant species. We will have opportunities to see the Nanday Parakeet that is becoming established along the Malibu Coast. A scope will be essential for sea watching and picking through birds in the lagoon.

Departure Time: 6:00 AM  
Return Time: 4:00 PM  
Cost: $30  
Day Use Fee: $12 per vehicle  
Miles (one way): 45 miles  
Time (one way): 50 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

13TH Ventura Migrant Hotspots  
Leaders: Mary Freeman

The Oxnard Plain has a variety of natural and unnatural habitats that attract number of migrants during late September, including a variety of rare species. When the conditions are conducive, tamarisk rows host warblers and vireos and are bound to have a few vagrants in late September. The
tamarisk rows here are one of the most reliable places for Yellow-green Vireo in California. Local sod fields host flocks of shorebirds, pipits, and Horned Larks, and can include Pacific Golden-Plover, Red-throated Pipit, and other uncommon and rare species. The locations we visit will likely depend on where known birds of interest are located thus far in the season.

**Departure Time:** 6:00 AM  
**Return Time:** 3:30 PM  
**Cost:** $30  
**Miles (one way):** ~ 15 Miles  
**Time (one way):** ~ 20 minutes  
**Restroom facilities:** Yes  
**Difficulty level:** Easy

---

**FRIDAY FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS**

**Friday, September 28**

**Note:** All Field Trips are half day and return by 11am

All trips by Carpool leaving from the Four Points San Buenaventura Ballroom

**Difficulty levels:**

- Easy—flat ground some walking.
- Moderate—walking needed to get to the birding sites, some elevation changes.
- Difficult—fair amount of walking with elevation changes.

**1FR Carpinteria Salt Marsh Reserve**  
**Leader:** Justyn Stahl

The tidal salt marsh here is a rare habitat in southern California. This trip will visit both the publicly accessible part of the reserve and the section that is normally closed to the public. The marsh and adjacent scrubby habitat attracts a variety of birds including waterfowl, waders, shorebirds, and chaparral species. Yellow-crowned Night-Herons have become regular here and other rare species have been found here on occasion. Waterfowl are easy to approach and can include Blue-winged, Green-winged, and Eurasian Green-winged Teal (rare but regular). Ridgway’s Rail has been found here on occasion and rarities in recent years have included Wilson’s Plover, Vermilion Flycatcher, and Eastern Phoebe. There is often a very accommodating Greater Roadrunner here that poses nicely for photos. A spotting scope would be helpful here to scan for birds in the marsh.

**Departure Time:** 6:15 AM  
**Return Time:** 11:00 AM  
**Cost:** $20  
**Miles (one way):** 22 miles  
**Time (one way):** 24 minutes  
**Restroom facilities:** Yes  
**Difficulty level:** Moderate

**2FR Wheeler Gorge Campground**  
**Leader:** Mary Freeman and Cayenne Sweeney
This campground within the Los Padres National Forest is a popular local birding spot. Just seven miles above Ojai, the flowing creek, montane chaparral, and forested area comprised of alders, oaks, and sycamores attracts species usually found at higher elevations including Mountain Quail, Hairy Woodpecker, and Steller's Jay. It is also a reliable spot for Acorn and Nuttall’s Woodpeckers, Hutton’s Vireo, Canyon Wren, and other oak and foothill riparian species. In addition, it has regularly hosted more uncommon species in the fall and winter including Pacific Wren, American Dipper, and Varied Thrush.

Departure Time: 6:15 AM  
Return Time: 11:00 AM  
Cost: $20  
Miles (one way): ~22 miles  
Time (one way): ~30 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

3FR Lake Los Carneros and Devereux Slough  
Leader: TBA

The historic old Stow House at Lake Los Carneros County Park has a lush garden of exotic plants and trees worth looking through. Regular western birds such as Acorn and Nuttall's Woodpecker, Hutton's Vireo, California Thrasher, and winter sparrows are common. This habitat can be good for migrants in spring and fall with the occasional rarity being found. A trail around lake is good for viewing the water from different angles to find waterfowl, grebes, egrets and herons. Rails and bitterns are often spotted in the channel and among the reeds from the wooden footbridge at the north end of the lake. Nearby Devereux Slough can be very good for a variety of waterfowl, herons, egrets and shorebirds. Fall and winter are the best seasons for birding the slough and many rare birds have been found here including a White Wagtail and a Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher on the same day! The beach at the mouth of the slough provides habitat for Snowy Plovers and a variety of shorebirds, gulls, and terns. The pines and eucalyptus trees around the parking area and entrance road can be productive for migrant passerines. A spotting scope would be helpful here to scan for birds in at the lake and the slough.

Departure Time: 6:15 AM  
Return Time: 11:00 AM  
Cost: $20  
Miles (one way): 40 miles  
Time (one way): 38 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

4FR Lake Piru  
Leader: John Garrett

Lake Piru in eastern Ventura County is a large reservoir set in a canyon above the Santa Clara River Valley. The steep landscape creates updrafts that attracts numbers of raptors and has become an excellent place to observe California Condors in recent years. Bald Eagles, Golden Eagles, and Osprey are regular here as are Prairie Falcons and Ferruginous Hawks (latter in winter, but possible in late September). The lake itself harbors a variety of waterfowl and other waterbirds and is a reliable location for Common Merganser and other diving ducks. The chaparral covered slopes, oak woodlands, and riparian habitat harbor a diversity of resident and migrant species where we will have
a good chance to find Lark Sparrow, Phainopepla, Lawrence’s Goldfinch, Purple Finch, and others. A spotting scope is helpful for scoping birds on the lake.

**Departure Time:** 6:15 AM  
**Return Time:** 11:00 AM  
**Cost:** $20  
**Day Use Fee:** $13 per vehicle  
**Miles (one way):** 38 miles  
**Time (one way):** 45 minutes  
**Restroom facilities:** Yes  
**Difficulty level:** Moderate

**5FR Wildwood Park and Briar Bluff Open Space**  
Leader: Ryan Andrews

These locations in Thousand Oaks with cactus scrub and coastal sage scrub, support populations of the threatened California Gnatcatcher that were discovered over the last 10-15 years. Other species we can expect to find include Greater Roadrunner, Costa’s Hummingbird, Cassin’s Kingbird, Cactus Wren, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, and more. Birding will be along trails that may be steep or rocky in places. Sturdy footwear is recommended.

**Departure Time:** 6:30 AM  
**Return Time:** 11:00 AM  
**Cost:** $20  
**Miles (one way):** 27 miles  
**Time (one way):** 30 minutes  
**Restroom facilities:** Yes  
**Difficulty level:** Moderate to difficult

**6FR Rancho Sierra Vista and Rancho Potrero**  
Leader: Deven Kammerichs-Berke

Set in the Santa Monica Mountains Recreation Area, these birding sites have a series of trails that traverse rolling grasslands, chaparral, and riparian corridors. There is a resident population of Grasshopper Sparrows at these locations that we will try to coax into view. Other sparrows are expected here including Lark, Savannah, Golden-crowned, and Vesper. Raptors are also conspicuous with White-tailed Kite, Northern Harrier and Red-shouldered Hawk being regular here. Chaparral birds should also be evident with California Quail and Greater Roadrunners being particularly common here (the latter are sometimes friendly, so bring your camera). This site is under-birded during the fall, but several riparian areas could harbor western migrants or vagrants. Birding will be along trails that may be steep or rocky in places. Sturdy footwear is recommended.

**Departure Time:** 6:30 AM  
**Return Time:** 11:00 AM  
**Cost:** $20  
**Miles (one way):** 25 miles  
**Time (one way):** 28 minutes  
**Restroom facilities:** Yes  
**Difficulty level:** Moderate to difficult

**7FR Sycamore Canyon**  
Leader: David Vander Pluym
The campground and lower part of the canyon is a productive area for fall migrants and some of the
more sought-after resident birds in southern California for those from out of state (Nuttall’s
Woodpecker, Wrentit, California Thrasher, California Towhee). The campground is a legendary
vagrant trap and in recent years birders have found Great Crested Flycatcher, Tropical Kingbird,
Brown Thrasher, Bay-breasted Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow, and other vagrants there. A walk up
the canyon should yield Canyon Wren, Rufous-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows, and other
residents and migrants. The non-native Nanday Parakeet is established here and flocks are frequently
seen flying up and down the canyon.

Departure Time: 6:30 AM
Return Time: 11:00 AM
Cost: $20
Day Use Fee: $12 per vehicle
Miles (one way): 23 miles
Time (one way): 25 minutes
Restroom facilities: Yes
Difficulty level: Moderate

8FR Rancho Simi and Arroyo Simi

Leader: Scott Terrill

Rancho Simi Park with its lake, groves of sycamores and pines, and lawns provide an oasis within Simi
Valley for waterfowl, waterbirds, and migrant passerines. The park has been a reliable location for
Plumbeous Vireo in the fall and winter for over a decade. In addition, Black-and-white Warbler and
“Pink-sided” Junco have been found here on multiple occasions and it often harbors locally
uncommon wintering species including Red-breasted Sapsucker, Chipping and Lark Sparrows. The
adjacent Arroyo Simi is a man-made flood channel that has been left undisturbed to develop bird
habitats. It now attracts a number of birds including Green Heron, White-faced Ibis, Wilson’s Snipe,
and others. While a little early in the season for waterfowl, the park and arroyo regularly host
Eurasian Wigeon, Common and Hooded Mergansers, all three teal, and a variety of other species so
we will look to see what is there.

Departure Time: 6:30 AM
Return Time: 11:00 AM
Cost: $20
Miles (one way): 36 miles
Time (one way): 35 minutes
Restroom facilities: Yes
Difficulty level: Moderate

9FR Ventura Settling Ponds and Ventura Harbor

Leaders: Cliff Hawley

The Ventura Settling Ponds have recently increased access for birders. This location is now one of the
most popular birding sites in the Ventura area. The four treatment ponds are situated close to the
ocean and attract a variety of waterfowl, waders, and other waterbirds. Yellow-crowned Night-
Herons have been regular here of late, and it is also a reliable location for Blue-winged Teal, Green
Heron, and Common Gallinule. The willows surrounding the ponds host a number of resident and
migrant species, including the occasional vagrant. The Ventura Harbor and its breakwaters will be
checked for rockpipers (Black Oystercatcher, Black and Ruddy Turnstones, Surfbird, and Wandering
Tattler), cormorants (Brandt’s, Double-crested, and Pelagic), and other waterbirds. Several hybrid oystercatchers have frequented the harbor for years so we may practice using the Jehl Scale to score them. A spotting scope will be helpful for scanning the settling ponds and the jetties at the harbor.

Departure Time: 6:45 AM
Return Time: 11:00 AM
Cost: $20
Miles (one way): 3 miles
Time (one way): 10 minutes
Restroom facilities: Yes
Difficulty level: Moderate

**10FR Santa Clara River Estuary and McGrath State Beach**

Leader: Wes Fritz

The Santa Clara River Estuary and the adjacent McGrath State Beach have long been hotspots for finding migratory shorebirds. The estuary has had a number of vagrants through the years including mega-rarities such as Lesser Sand Plover and Red-necked Stint. The nature of the estuary has changed in recent years since it no longer breaches regularly, but this location is still a reliable location for waterfowl, gulls, terns, pelicans, and shorebirds. Baird’s and Semipalmated Sandpipers have been seen here over the last few years and a Bar-tailed Godwit was found on the beach here a few years ago in mid-September. Anything is possible at this location. McGrath State Beach also has riparian habitat that attracts migrants in September. A spotting scope is helpful here for scanning flocks of shorebirds, terns, and gulls.

Departure Time: 6:45 AM
Return Time: 11:00 AM
Cost: $20
Miles (one way): 3 miles
Time (one way): 10 minutes
Restroom facilities: Yes
Difficulty level: Moderate

**11FR Lake Casitas**

Leader: Ryan Terrill

This reservoir north of Ventura is surrounded by native oak and riparian woodlands as well as extensive plantings of pepper trees and eucalyptus within the recreation area that attract a wide variety of birds. Although the lake level has been affected dramatically by drought, birding within the area is productive year-round. Recently, a pair of Bald Eagles has taken up residency and is nesting in a very visible location near the lake. The lake itself also attracts Western and Clark’s Grebes, American White Pelicans, and a variety of geese and ducks including Common Mergansers. The weedy shorelines around the lake attract flocks of sparrows and other passerines and has consistently hosted Swamp Sparrow. Raptors found near the lake include Osprey, White-tailed Kite, Prairie Falcon, and Zone-tailed Hawk (rare but regular). Other birds seen here regularly include Nuttall’s Woodpecker, Red-breasted and Red-naped Sapsuckers, Hutton’s Vireo, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Phainopepla. A spotting scope is helpful for scoping birds on the lake.

Departure Time: 6:45 AM
Return Time: 11:00 AM
Cost: $20
Day Use Fee: $10 per vehicle  
Miles (one way): 15 Miles  
Time (one way): 21 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

12FR Camino Real Park and Arroyo Verde Park  
Leader: Lauren Harter

These areas can be birded in a morning and are an easy way to find many of southern California’s resident species. The perimeter of Camino Real Park has a variety of habitats and ornamental plantings that harbor a surprising diversity of birds. Resident Allen’s Hummingbirds are easily found here and the tall eucalyptus trees often harbor tanagers and orioles including Summer Tanager and Baltimore Oriole. In 2017, a Scarlet Tanager was found here. Among the many common species here, the park is a great place to find vagrants in late September. Arroyo Verde Park was threatened by the Thomas Fire, but much of the park is still intact including open grassy areas with ornamental sycamores, pines, ashes, and palms. What remains here is still being determined, but the large trees that were spared by the fire are productive for Hooded Oriole and Cassin’s Kingbirds. The park also supports a variety of resident species and vagrants are always possible in September.

Departure Time: 6:45 AM  
Return Time: 11:00 AM  
Cost: $20  
Miles (one way): 5 miles  
Time (one way): 10 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

13FR Ojai Meadows and Cañada Larga  
Leader: Adam Searcy

These two popular birding locations support a surprising diversity of birds along the edge of Ventura and Ojai. The Ojai Meadows is being actively restored and includes a small seasonal pond and mix of upland habitats. The pond can harbor waterfowl and other interesting species during migration including Sora, Wilson’s Snipe, and Yellow-headed Blackbird. Least Bittern has also been recorded here. Cañada Larga is a county road that traverses open grassland habitat with some oak woodlands and riparian habitat. The road is lined in places with pepper trees that can be attractive to sapsuckers, Phainopeplas, and a variety of other species. Birding at Cañada Larga is along the road as the adjacent areas are private property. However, it is still very productive. Birds expected at both locations include California Quail, Greater Roadrunner, Acorn Woodpecker, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Cassin’s Kingbird, Loggerhead Shrike, Western Bluebird, a variety of raptors, and much more. We will schedule a restroom stop somewhere along the way between the two locations.

Departure Time: 6:45 AM  
Return Time: 11:00 AM  
Cost: $20  
Miles (one way): 17 miles  
Time (one way): 25 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate
**FRIDAY WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS**  
**Friday, September 28**

All workshops are in the Four Points Meeting Rooms except “Preparation of Bird Specimens”

**FR-ws1 Molt Workshop: “Everything You’ve Been Afraid to Know and Haven't Wanted to Ask.”**

*Workshop Leader:* Peter Pyle  
*Time:* 7:00AM–11:00AM  
*Where:* Four Points Clipper North  
*Cost:* $20

**Workshop description:** Peter will begin the session with a PowerPoint trip through the various angles of bird molt, clarifying the tangled historical terminology and presenting the vastly improved H-P (Humphrey-Parkes) system in lay-person terms. He will consider the interactions between bird molt and plumage color, illustrate the fascinating molt patterns of ducks, ptarmigan, alcids, herons, raptors, parrots, passerines, and larger birds that undergo Stafflemauser, and conclude with some thoughts on stable isotopes and molt, molt in tropical birds, and avenues for future research. After a short break, the focus will be on ageing birds in the field using molt limits and other molt-related clues, as illustrated in PowerPoint images. Peter encourages participants to bring images and questions they have on molt, in general or in specific taxa, to discuss with the class.

**Leader’s Bio:** Peter Pyle’s knowledge of molt is based on a thorough familiarity with the scientific literature during years of working with the subject, as well as the examination of over 100,000 specimens in museum skin collections. He has published more than 45 scientific papers on molt and his *Identification Guides to North American Birds* includes detailed accounts of molt in all North American bird species. Peter is currently revising molt and plumage sections for all online Birds of North America accounts.

**FR-ws2 Specimens Workshop: “Preparation of Bird Specimens”**

*Workshop Leader:* Phil Unitt  
*Time:* 7:15AM–11:00AM  
*Where:* Four Points Grand Ballroom for carpooling to Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology at 7:15 A.M. or meet at Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology at 7:30 AM. Please notify Registrar at wfoconference@gmail.com if you plan to meet at the Foundation.  
*Cost:* $20

**Workshop description:** Specimens are as fundamental to ornithology today as they were 100 or 200 years ago. However, the art of making bird skins is a skill that must be handed down from one generation to the next, as from master to apprentice. In this workshop Phil will demonstrate some diverse ways in which research specimens of birds are prepared. He’ll talk about the kinds of information recorded during preparation and the ways in which specimens are used for research once prepared and integrated into museum collections.
This will be an excellent opportunity to learn more about birds’ external and internal anatomy. He will show how we learn about molt, fat deposition (migration), gonadal development (breeding phenology), parasites, and diet during the process of specimen preparation. Participants can see the different approaches different species and uses require and compare various techniques. If you have experience in skinning birds and would like to work on one with Phil, please notify Phil Unitt (birds@sdnhm.org) by Friday September 15th so he has adequate tools and specimen’s ready—even experienced preparators learn from each other.

The workshop will take place at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, a 17 mile drive from the Four Points Grand Ballroom. Carpool from the Four Points at 7:15 AM or meet group at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology at 7:30 AM. Phil welcomes questions and discussion throughout the workshop.

Leader’s Bio: Phil Unitt has served as editor of Western Birds since 1986 and as collection manager then curator of the Department of Birds and Mammals of the San Diego Natural History Museum since 1988. He is the author of the San Diego County Bird Atlas (2004) and co-author of Birds of the Salton Sea (2003), publications in which specimen and observational data are integrated. He has prepared more than 4000 bird specimens, from Calliope Hummingbirds to Common Loons and Canada Geese.

FR-ws3 Data Mining: “Let Me Google That for You”
Workshop Leader: Ted Floyd
Time: 8:00AM–11:00AM
Where: Four Points Clipper East
Cost: $20

Workshop Description: How to find, search and use the ornithological literature on line. We all know that there’s a ton—make that a petabyte—of bird data on the internet: eBird checklists, Xeno-Canto audio, Flickr photos and more. Less well known is that a great deal of the older ornithological literature is also online where it is easily searched, easily downloaded, secure and free. In this workshop, we’ll learn how to gain access to the old literature—not only those old monographs you’ve always wanted to track down, but also cool resources you never even knew existed. We’ll also discuss the best practices for citing, sharing and archiving the ornithological literature online. This workshop is especially appropriate for students, teachers, writers, editors, researchers and programmers—basically the entire WFO.

Leader’s Bio: Ted Floyd: Ted proudly serves as Editor of Birding, published by the American Birding Association. He is also the author of various recent and forthcoming bird books and he has published several hundred articles and papers on birds and nature. Floyd has served on the boards of directors of Western Field Ornithologists and Colorado Field Ornithologists and he is a frequent speaker at bird festivals and ornithological society meetings. Ted is the Cal Ripken of eBird with a consecutive-days streak exceeding 4,000 straight days of submitting at least one complete eBird list. He will hold this record until he dies.

FR-ws4 Warbler Workshop: “Identification of Fall Warblers”
Workshop includes a classroom session on Friday and a field session on Saturday. Registrants may sign up for the classroom session only or classroom PLUS field trip. NOTE: places for field trip are
limited so register early if you’d like to attend both. If you desire to take both, please sign up under FR-ws4 and 14SA.

Workshop Leader: Jon Dunn

Time: 8:00AM–11:00AM

Where: Four Points Clipper West

Cost: $40 for Friday classroom session PLUS Saturday field trip; $20 for classroom session only. Only 12 participants for the Saturday field trip.

Classroom Session: Jon Dunn will cover various aspects of field identification, status and distribution, and geographical variation in fall wood-warblers of western North America. He will start with a review of the genera of wood-warblers, including a discussion of recent taxonomic changes. He will then use a handful of the most familiar western warbler species to explore patterns of variation by age, sex, and subspecies. This will be followed by a survey of the species, appropriately grouped, that are most often found in the Pacific states—including many vagrant species from (primarily) eastern North America—with an in-depth exploration of key identification characters and occurrence patterns. Images, audio recordings, and specimens will all be used to explore key characters. The classroom session will close with selected problems in identification, status and distribution, geographical variation, and speciation that deserve further attention.

Field Trip: The destination for the Saturday field trip will be determined based on scouting shortly before the conference and will be selected to maximize success in finding a variety of species to study. The field portion of the workshop will deal with species identification, ageing and sexing criteria, vocalizations (particularly “chip” and flight notes), and various aspects of behavior. Our conference will take place near the peak of fall warbler migration, but like migration everywhere, numbers of migrants vary from day to day. Still, we can hope to see six to eight species and in any event we will take our time to study the birds carefully and note age and sex differences as well as discuss species differences.

Leader’s Bio: Jon Dunn is the co-writer and host of the two-video set Large and Small Gulls of North America as well as co-author (with Kimball Garrett) of Birds of Southern California: Status and Distribution (1981) and the Peterson Field Guide to Warblers (1997). Jon has a passion for teaching about field identification, status and distribution, both in the field and the classroom. Jon Dunn is the co-author of the seventh edition of the National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America (2017). He was chief consultant for the first five editions and co-author with Jonathan Alderfer for the 6th and 7th. Jon was also a co-author with Jonathan Alderfer on Birding Essentials (2007), an overview on how to be a better birder. He has been a member of the Committee on Classification and Nomenclature of the American Ornithologists’ Society since 2000, and has served 28 years on the California Bird Records Committee. He has also been on the Board of Directors for Western Field Ornithologists for over ten years. In 2012, Jon was the recipient of the ABA’s Roger Tory Peterson Award, given for a lifetime of achievements in promoting the cause of birding. Beyond birds, Jon has a keen interest in history, politics, cinema and Leonard Cohen.

SATURDAY FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS

Saturday, September 29

Note: All Field Trips are half day and return by 11am
All trips by Carpool leaving from the Four Points San Buenaventura Ballroom

Difficulty levels:
Easy—flat ground some walking.
Moderate—walking needed to get to the birding sites, some elevation changes.
Difficult—fair amount of walking with elevation changes.

1SA Carpinteria Salt Marsh Reserve  
Leader: Cliff Hawley

The tidal salt marsh here is a rare habitat in southern California. This trip will visit both the publicly accessible part of the reserve and the section that is normally closed to the public. The marsh and adjacent scrubby habitat attracts a variety of birds including waterfowl, waders, shorebirds, and chaparral species. Yellow-crowned Night-Herons have become regular here and other rare species have been found on occasion. Waterfowl are easy to approach and can include Blue-winged, Green-winged, and Eurasian Green-winged Teal (rare but regular). Ridgway’s Rail has been found here on occasion and rarities in recent years have included Wilson’s Plover, Vermilion Flycatcher, and Eastern Phoebe. There is often a very accommodating Greater Roadrunner here that poses nicely for photos. A spotting scope would be helpful here to scan for birds in the marsh.
Departure Time: 6:15 AM
Return Time: 11:00 AM
Cost: $20
Miles (one way): 22 miles
Time (one way): 24 minutes
Restroom facilities: Yes
Difficulty level: Moderate

2SA Wheeler Gorge Campground  
Leader: Peter Gaede

This campground within the Los Padres National Forest is a popular local birding spot. Just seven miles above Ojai, the flowing creek, montane chaparral, and forested area comprised of alders, oaks, and sycamores attracts species usually found at higher elevations including Mountain Quail, Hairy Woodpecker, and Steller’s Jay. It is also a reliable spot for Acorn and Nuttall’s Woodpeckers, Hutton’s Vireo, Canyon Wren, and other oak and foothill riparian species. In addition, it has regularly hosted more uncommon species in the fall and winter including Pacific Wren, American Dipper, and Varied Thrush.
Departure Time: 6:15 AM
Return Time: 11:00 AM
Cost: $20
Miles (one way): ~22 miles
Time (one way): ~30 minutes
Restroom facilities: Yes
Difficulty level: Moderate

3SA Lake Los Carneros and Devereux Slough  
Leader: Dave Compton
The historic old Stow House at Lake Los Carneros County Park has a lush garden of exotic plants and trees worth looking through. Regular western birds such as Acorn and Nuttall's Woodpecker, Hutton's Vireo, California Thrasher, and winter sparrows are common. This habitat can be good for migrants in spring and fall with the occasional rarity being found. A trail around lake is good for viewing the water from different angles to find waterfowl, grebes, egrets and herons. Rails and bitterns are often spotted in the channel and among the reeds from the wooden footbridge at the north end of the lake. Nearby Devereux Slough can be very good for a variety of waterfowl, herons, egrets and shorebirds. Fall and winter are the best seasons for birding the slough and many rare birds have been found here including a White Wagtail and a Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher on the same day! The beach at the mouth of the slough provides habitat for Snowy Plovers and a variety of shorebirds, gulls, and terns. The pines and eucalyptus trees around the parking area and entrance road can be productive for migrant passerines. A spotting scope would be helpful here to scan for birds in at the lake and the slough.

Departure Time: 6:15 AM
Return Time: 11:00 AM
Cost: $20
Miles (one way): 40 miles
Time (one way): 38 minutes
Restroom facilities: Yes
Difficulty level: Moderate

4SA Lake Piru
Leader: John Garrett

Lake Piru in eastern Ventura County is a large reservoir set in a canyon above the Santa Clara River Valley. The steep landscape creates updrafts that attracts numbers of raptors and has become an excellent place to observe California Condors in recent years. Bald Eagles, Golden Eagles, and Osprey are regular here as are Prairie Falcons and Ferruginous Hawks (the latter in winter, but possible in late September). The lake itself harbors a variety of waterfowl and other waterbirds and is a reliable location for Common Merganser and other diving ducks. The chaparral covered slopes, oak woodlands, and riparian habitat harbor a diversity of resident and migrant species where we will have a good chance to find Lark Sparrow, Phainopepla, Lawrence’s Goldfinch, Purple Finch, and others. A spotting scope is helpful for scoping birds on the lake.

Departure Time: 6:15 AM
Return Time: 11:00 AM
Cost: $20
Day Use Fee: $13 per vehicle
Miles (one way): 38 miles
Time (one way): 45 minutes
Restroom facilities: Yes
Difficulty level: Moderate

5SA Wildwood Park and Briar Bluff Open Space
Leader: Adam Searcy

These locations in Thousand Oaks, with cactus scrub and coastal sage scrub, support populations of the threatened California Gnatcatcher that were discovered over the last 10-15 years. Other species we can expect to find include Greater Roadrunner, Costa’s Hummingbird, Cassin’s Kingbird, Cactus
Wren, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, and more. Birding will be along trails that may be steep or rocky in places. Sturdy footwear is recommended.
Departure Time: 6:30 AM
Return Time: 11:00 AM
Cost: $20
Miles (one way): 27 miles
Time (one way): 30 minutes
Restroom facilities: Yes
Difficulty level: Moderate to difficult

**65A Rancho Sierra Vista and Rancho Potrero**

Leader: Deven Kammerichs-Berke

Set in the Santa Monica Mountains Recreation Area, these birding sites have a series of trails that traverse rolling grasslands, chaparral, and riparian corridors. There is a resident population of Grasshopper Sparrows at these locations that we will try to coax into view. Other sparrows are expected here including Lark, Savannah, Golden-crowned, and Vesper. Raptors are also conspicuous with White-tailed Kite, Northern Harrier and Red-shouldered Hawk being regular here. Chaparral birds should also be evident with California Quail and Greater Roadrunners being particularly common here (the latter are sometimes friendly, so bring your camera). This site is under-birded during the fall, but several riparian areas could harbor western migrants or vagrants. Birding will be along trails that may be steep or rocky in places. Sturdy footwear is recommended.
Departure Time: 6:30 AM
Return Time: 11:00 AM
Cost: $20
Miles (one way): 25 miles
Time (one way): 28 minutes
Restroom facilities: Yes
Difficulty level: Moderate to difficult

**75A Sycamore Canyon**

Leader: Lauren Harter and Cayenne Sweeney

The campground and lower part of the canyon is a productive area for fall migrants and some of the more sought-after resident birds in southern California for those from out of state (Nuttall’s Woodpecker, Wrentit, California Thrasher, California Towhee). The campground is a legendary vagrant trap and in recent years birders have found Great Crested Flycatcher, Tropical Kingbird, Brown Thrasher, Bay-breasted Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow, and other vagrants there. A walk up the canyon should yield Canyon Wren, Rufous-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows, and other residents and migrants. The non-native Nanday Parakeet is established here and flocks are frequently seen flying up and down the canyon.
Departure Time: 6:30 AM
Return Time: 11:00 AM
Cost: $20
Day Use Fee: $12 per vehicle
Miles (one way): 23 miles
Time (one way): 25 minutes
Restroom facilities: Yes
8SA Rancho Simi and Arroyo Simi  
Leader: Justyn Stahl

Rancho Simi Park with its lake, groves of sycamores and pines, and lawns provide an oasis within Simi Valley for waterfowl, waterbirds, and migrant passerines. The park has been a reliable location for Plumbeous Vireo in the fall and winter for over a decade. In addition, Black-and-white Warbler and “Pink-sided” Junco have been found here on multiple occasions and it often harbors locally uncommon wintering species including Red-breasted Sapsucker, Chipping and Lark Sparrows. The adjacent Arroyo Simi is a man-made flood channel that has been left undisturbed to develop bird habitats. It now attracts a number of birds including Green Heron, White-faced Ibis, Wilson’s Snipe, and others. While a little early in the season for waterfowl, the park and arroyo regularly host Eurasian Wigeon, Common and Hooded Mergansers, all three teal, and a variety of other species so we will look to see what is there.

Departure Time: 6:30 AM  
Return Time: 11:00 AM  
Cost: $20  
Miles (one way): 36 miles  
Time (one way): 35 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

9SA Ventura Settling Ponds and Ventura Harbor  
Leader: Wes Fritz

The Ventura Settling Ponds have recently increased access for birders. This location is now one of the most popular birding sites in the Ventura area. The four treatment ponds are situated close to the ocean and attract a variety of waterfowl, waders, and other waterbirds. Yellow-crowned Night-Herons have been regular here of late, and it is also a reliable location for Blue-winged Teal, Green Heron, and Common Gallinule. The willows surrounding the ponds host a number of resident and migrant species, including the occasional vagrant. The Ventura Harbor and its breakwaters will be checked for rockpipers (Black Oystercatcher, Black and Ruddy Turnstones, Surfbird, and Wandering Tattler), cormorants (Brandt’s, Double-crested, and Pelagic), and other waterbirds. Several hybrid oystercatchers have frequented the harbor for years so we may practice using the Jehl Scale to score them. A spotting scope will be helpful for scanning the settling ponds and the jetties at the harbor.

Departure Time: 6:45 AM  
Return Time: 11:00 AM  
Cost: $20  
Miles (one way): 3 miles  
Time (one way): <10 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

10SA Santa Clara River Estuary and McGrath State Beach  
Leader: David Vander Pluym

The Santa Clara River Estuary and the adjacent McGrath State Beach have long been hotspots for finding migratory shorebirds. The estuary has had a number of vagrants through the years including mega rarities such as Lesser Sand Plover and Red-necked Stint. The nature of the estuary has changed
in recent years since it no longer breaches regularly, but this location is still a reliable location for waterfowl, gulls, terns, pelicans, and shorebirds. Baird’s and Semipalmated Sandpipers have been seen here over the last few years and a Bar-tailed Godwit was found on the beach here a few years ago in mid-September. Anything is possible at this location. McGrath State Beach also has riparian habitat that attracts migrants in September. A spotting scope is helpful here for scanning flocks of shorebirds, terns, and gulls.

Departure Time: 6:45 AM  
Return Time: 11:00 AM  
Cost: $20  
Miles (one way): 3 miles  
Time (one way): <10 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

**11SA Lake Casitas**  
Leader: Scott Terrill

This reservoir north of Ventura is surrounded by native oak and riparian woodlands as well as extensive plantings of pepper trees and eucalyptus within the recreation area that attract a wide variety of birds. Although the lake level has been affected dramatically by drought, birding within the area is productive year-round. Recently, a pair of Bald Eagles has taken up residency and is nesting in a very visible location near the lake. The lake itself also attracts Western and Clark’s Grebes, American White Pelicans, and a variety of geese and ducks including Common Mergansers. The weedy shorelines around the lake attract flocks of sparrows and other passerines and has consistently hosted Swamp Sparrow. Raptors found near the lake include Osprey, White-tailed Kite, Prairie Falcon, and Zone-tailed Hawk (rare but regular). Other birds seen here regularly include Nuttall’s Woodpecker, Red-breasted and Red-naped Sapsuckers, Hutton’s Vireo, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Phainopepla. A spotting scope is helpful for scoping birds on the lake.

Departure Time: 6:45 AM  
Return Time: 11:00 AM  
Cost: $20  
Day Use Fee: $10 per vehicle  
Miles (one way): 15 Miles  
Time (one way): 21 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

**12SA Camino Real Park and Arroyo Verde Park**  
Leader: Dan Cooper

These areas can be birded in a morning and are an easy way to find many of southern California’s resident species. The perimeter of Camino Real Park has a variety of habitats and ornamental plantings that harbor a surprising diversity of birds. Resident Allen’s Hummingbirds are easily found here and the tall eucalyptus trees often harbor tanagers and orioles including Summer Tanager and Baltimore Oriole. In 2017, a Scarlet Tanager was found here. Among the many common species here, the park is a great place to find vagrants in late September. Arroyo Verde Park was threatened by the Thomas Fire, but much of the park is still intact including open grassy areas with ornamental sycamores, pines, ashes, and palms. What remains here is still being determined, but the large trees
that were spared by the fire are productive for Hooded Oriole and Cassin’s Kingbirds. The park also supports a variety of resident species and vagrants are always possible in September.

Departure Time: 6:45 AM  
Return Time: 11:00 AM  
Cost: $20  
Miles (one way): 5 miles  
Time (one way): 10 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

**13SA Ojai Meadows and Cañada Larga**  
Leader: Ryan Terrill

These two popular birding locations support a surprising diversity of birds along the edge of Ventura and Ojai. The Ojai Meadows is being actively restored and includes a small seasonal pond and mix of upland habitats. The pond can harbor waterfowl and other interesting species during migration including Sora, Wilson’s Snipe, and Yellow-headed Blackbird. Least Bittern has also been recorded here. Cañada Larga is a county road that traverses open grassland habitat with some oak woodlands and riparian habitat. The road is lined in places with pepper trees that can be attractive to sapsuckers, Phainopeplas, and a variety of other species. Birding at Cañada Larga is along the road as the adjacent areas are private property. However, it is still very productive. Birds expected at both locations include California Quail, Greater Roadrunner, Acorn Woodpecker, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Cassin’s Kingbird, Loggerhead Shrike, Western Bluebird, a variety of raptors, and much more. We will schedule a restroom stop somewhere along the way between the two locations.

Departure Time: 6:45 AM  
Return Time: 11:00 AM  
Cost: $20  
Miles (one way): 17 miles  
Time (one way): 25 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

**14SA Fall Warbler Identification Workshop and Field Trip**  
Leader: Jon Dunn

The destination for the Saturday field trip will be determined based on scouting shortly before the conference and will be selected to maximize success in finding a variety of species to study. The field portion of the workshop will deal with species identification, ageing and sexing criteria, vocalizations (particularly “chip” and flight notes), and various aspects of behavior. Our conference will take place near the peak of fall warbler migration, but like migration everywhere, numbers of migrants vary from day to day. Still, we can hope to see six to eight species and in any event we will take our time to study the birds carefully and note age and sex differences as well as discuss species differences.

Departure time: 6:15AM  
Return Time: 11:00AM  
Cost: $20  
Miles (one way): TBD  
Time (one way): TBD  
Restroom facilities: To be arranged depending on birding site
Difficulty level: Most birding will be done from near a car but some very minimal walking on flat ground may be required.

15SA Youth Program Field Trip—Zuma Canyon Birding and Bird Banding

Leaders: Walter H. Sakai, Elisa Yang & Homer Hansen

The field trip destination will be Zuma Canyon to spend time both birding and learning about bird banding. The bird banding will take place between 7:00 to 9:00 am and will allow attendees the opportunity to observe mist netting and banding processes and engage with data collection/recording. Between 10:00 and 11:00 am we will bird in the same area, with possible species including Nuttall’s Woodpecker, California Towhee, Wrentit, Bushtit, and California Thrashers. Walter Sakai has been a Master Bird Bander for 25 years and was a Professor of Biology (ret.) at Santa Monica College for close to 40 years. His emphasis has been to teach and train students how to band birds. His banding work covers a wide variety of habitats and he typically bands around 1000-1500 birds of 60-80 species each year. Wear sturdy shoes and minimize clothing with buttons, velcro, rings, watches, etc. (to avoid getting caught in the mist nets). Note: This event is planned specifically for the youth scholarship recipients, other youths in attendance at the conference, and parents (as needed for drivers). Youths should plan to carpool with parents or trip leaders.

Departure time: 6:00 AM
Cost: Free to youths and their parents
Miles (one way): 50 miles or less.
Time (one way): 60 minutes or less
Restroom facilities: Yes
Difficulty level: Easy walking overall.

SATURDAY WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Saturday, September 29

All workshops are in the Four Points Meeting Rooms

SA-ws1 Workshop: “Identifying birds by their Sounds”
Workshop Leader: Nathan Pieplow
Time: 8:00—11:00 AM
Where: Four Points Clipper North
Cost: $20

Workshop Description: “It is sometimes said that expert birders make 90 percent of their identifications by ear. It is also said that no aspect of birding is more frustrating for the beginner and more difficult to master than voice identification.” So says David Sibley in the introduction to the Sibley Guide to Birds, and many birders would agree.

Until recently, most attempts to teach bird sound identification have relied almost entirely on memorization techniques. This workshop will take a different approach. We will work on advanced listening skills, learning how to pay attention to the fine details of a sound. In the process, we will learn a common vocabulary for describing bird sounds. Just as beginning birders learn the different parts of the bird and how to distinguish colors like “buff” and “rufous”, we will learn the different
parts of a sound and how to distinguish tone qualities like “burry” and “polyphonic”. We will also study how to visualize sounds and read spectrograms, and we will use these skills to tackle some of the more significant audio identification challenges in the western United States, from *Empidonax* flycatchers to thrashers.

No matter what your level of experience, this workshop will help you listen to sounds more analytically, describe them more accurately, and use them more effectively in identifying birds.

**Leader’s Bio: Nathan Pieplow** is the author of the *Peterson Field Guide to “Bird Sounds of Eastern North America”* and the forthcoming *Peterson Field Guide to “Bird Sounds of Western North America.”* He has been fascinated by birds since his childhood in South Dakota and has intensively studied bird sounds since 2003. He is the founder of the bird sound blog Earbirding.com, one of the authors of the Colorado Birding Trail, and the former editor of the journal *Colorado Birds*. Nathan teaches writing at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

**SA-ws2 Workshop: “Sketching in the Field”**
**Workshop Leader:** N. John Schmitt  
**Time:** 8:30AM–11:00AM  
**Where:** Four Points Clipper East  
**Cost:** $20

**Workshop description:** Improve your observational and identification skills by learning useful tips and techniques to sketch birds in the field. Field Sketching is a great way to document your observations and help you to more accurately describe birds. John will give a presentation on bird anatomy and sketching techniques, then give each participant personal guidance as they make their own sketches. Participants should bring a sketch pad and pencils.

**Leader’s Bio: N. John Schmitt** is a life-long resident of California with a life-long passion for natural history with emphasis on birds. After a short stint in the U.S. Army, he participated in both the Peregrine Falcon and California Condor restoration programs. Always interested in bird art, John developed his skills as an illustrator which eventually led to being able to contribute illustration to numerous publications including the following books: *The Natural History of the White-Inyo Range; Birds Asleep; Cornell Handbook to Bird Biology; Bird of South Asia-the Ripley Guide; A Field Guide to Raptors of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa; Birds of Prey of the Indian Subcontinent; Birds of Peru; A Field Guide to the Birds of Trinidad and Tobago; Raptors of Mexico and Central America; The 7th edition of National Geographic Guide to the Birds of North America; and the Behavior of the Golden Eagle--an illustrated ethogram.* John is an avid birdwatcher and currently resides in California’s Kern River Valley.

**SA-ws3 Workshop: “Identifying Vireos in California”**
**Workshop Leader:** Peter Pyle  
**Time:** 8:30AM–11:00AM  
**Where:** Four Points Clipper West  
**Cost:** $20

**Workshop description:** Peter Pyle, co-author of *Identification Guide to North American Birds*, will cover various aspects of identification, status and distribution, and geographical variation in vireos of western North America. He’ll start with a survey of all 13 species that breed in North America, including a discussion of variation by age, sex, and subspecies. This will be followed by exploration of
key identification characters, touching on species presenting identification problems in California. Age determination and identification of vireos within the “Solitary Vireo” complex will then be emphasized. Peter has taken a special interest in separating Blue-headed from Cassin’s Vireo, discovering that, once age is determined, species determination

**Leader’s Bio: Peter Pyle** has been a member of the California Bird Records Committee since 1997 (off and on, mostly on) and has reviewed many records of White-eyed, Blue-headed, Yellow-throated, Philadelphia and Yellow-green vireos during this period. Peter has worked as an ornithologist and marine biologist throughout the Pacific. During the late 1970’s and early1980’s, he worked on the Hawaii and other Pacific Forest Bird Surveys. In 1985, he became a biologist for PRBO on the Farallon Islands, and since 1996 he has worked for the Institute for Bird Populations in Point Reyes Station. Peter is a research Associate at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco and the Bishop Museum in Honolulu. He has authored or co-authored more than 160 peer-reviewed papers, four books, and an on-line monograph of the birds of Hawaii. Among birders and banders, he is best known for his *Identification Guide to North American Birds, Parts 1 and 2*, which includes detailed descriptions of molt and criteria for ageing and sexing all North American birds in the hand and the field. In 2011, he had the fortune of describing a new bird species, Bryan’s Shearwater, and naming it after his grandfather.

**SUNDAY FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS**

**Sunday, September 30**

*Note: All Field Trips are full day and return by 5 pm*

All trips by Carpool leaving from the Four Points San Buenaventura Ballroom

**Difficulty levels:**

Easy—flat ground some walking.

Moderate—walking needed to get to the birding sites, some elevation changes.

Difficult—fair amount of walking with elevation changes.

**1SU Frazier Mountain and Mt Pinos**

Leader: Lance Benner

Frazier Mountain and Mount Pinos allow easy access to higher elevations in the Transverse Range in northern Ventura County. This trip will start with a visit to a roadside spring on Frazier Mountain that often attracts a variety of passerines including Lawrence’s Goldfinch. From there we will continue to higher elevation habitats on Mt Pinos including pine and fir forest, montane meadow, and subalpine limber pine forest. Target species here include White-headed Woodpecker, Clark’s Nutcracker, Townsend’s Solitaire, Thick-billed Fox Sparrow, Cassin’s Finch, and other montane species.

Departure Time: 5:30 AM

Return Time: 4:30 PM

Cost: $30

Miles (one way): 99 miles

Time (one way): 110 minutes
Restrooms facilities: Yes
Difficulty level: Moderate to difficult (high elevation)

**2SU Northern Santa Barbara County**  
Leader: Wes Fritz

This full day trip will explore a variety of locations and habitats in northern Santa Barbara County and seek out two target birds among others; the Yellow-billed Magpie and Chestnut-backed Chickadee. Both of these Pacific species (the magpie a California endemic!) reach the southern end of their ranges in this region. We are planning to visit a private ranch that has spectacular viewing and photographing opportunities for the magpie. The ranchlands, oak savannahs, and oak woodlands in this area support a remarkable diversity of California resident species and should turn up migrants as well. We will also visit riparian habitat that supports Chestnut-backed chickadees and hopefully some migrant passerines. A scope may be helpful for birding the ranchlands and savannahs of the Santa Ynez Valley.

Departure Time: 5:30 AM  
Return Time: 4:30 PM  
Cost: $30  
Miles (one way): ~75 miles  
Time (one way): ~80 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes (planned restroom stops will be announced)  
Difficulty level: Moderate

**3SU Western Antelope Valley and Castaic Lagoon**  
Leader: Luke Tiller

This trip will start in the western Antelope Valley near Quail Lake where we will spend the first few hours of the morning in the Mojave Desert. Target birds in this area include raptors, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Loggerhead Shrike, Verdin, Cactus Wren, Vesper Sparrow, Bell’s Sparrow (canescens), and others. We will also check Quail Lake for waterfowl, raptors, and more. While working back to Ventura, the trip will stop at Castaic Lagoon where there will be an opportunity for waterfowl and waterbirds, raptors, and a variety of resident and migrant passerines. A number of rare sparrows have been found here in recent years (American Tree, LeConte’s, and Cassin’s) so anything is possible. A spotting scope will be helpful for scoping the lakes and open country on this trip.

Departure Time: 5:30 AM  
Return Time: 4:30 PM  
Cost: $30  
Day Use Fee: $11 per vehicle  
Miles (one way): ~88 miles  
Time (one way): ~90 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

**4SU Tejon Ranch**  
Leaders: David Vander Pluym, Lauren Harter

At 272,000 acres—nearly 422 square miles—Tejon Ranch is the largest piece of private property in California. It straddles a significant portion of the Tehachapi Mountains, creating a critical ecological linkage where the Central Valley, the Sierra Nevada, the Coast Range, and the Mojave Desert mix. In many ways, the Tejon Ranch is a microcosm of California’s natural history—a crucible of geographic,
taxonomic, and evolutionary biodiversity. The ranch is not open to the public without special permission so this trip will provide a rare opportunity to spend time at this stunning property. The ranch is a stronghold for California Condors, Golden Eagles, and other raptors. Oak woodlands, pine forests, and grasslands will provide a diversity of birding opportunities and species. This will be a special trip. A spotting scope will be helpful.

Departure Time: 5:30 AM
Return Time: 4:00 PM
Cost: $30
Miles (one way): ~81 miles
Time (one way): ~80 minutes
Restroom facilities: Yes
Difficulty level: Moderate

5SU Gaviota, Refugio, and El Capitan State Beaches Leader: Dave Compton

These sites provide a mix of coastal scrub and chaparral, willow-riparian habitat and stream and canyon woodland on the south coast of Santa Barbara County. All three hot spots are a must when looking for fall rarities! Each campground is located at the mouth of a canyon along the Pacific coastline where migrant passerines become "trapped" at the edge of the ocean and sometimes linger in the trees and shrubs before continuing south. All three sites have a history of producing many of the rarest birds found in Santa Barbara County during September and October. Regular fall rarities include Palm, Virginia’s, Blackpoll, Tennessee Warblers, Clay-colored Sparrow, plus most of the common western migrant land birds. Resident birds typical of coastal scrub include California Scrub-Jay, Spotted and California Towhees, and Chestnut-backed Chickadee at El Capitan. Ocean birds are easily spotted offshore due to the generally calm waters and include gulls, terns, shearwaters and jaegers. A spotting scope would come in handy for sea watching.

Departure Time: 5:45 AM
Return Time: 4:00 PM
Cost: $30
Day Use Fee: $10 per vehicle
Miles (one way): 61 miles
Time (one way): 55 minutes
Restrooms: Yes
Difficulty level: Moderate

6SU Rose Valley, Sespe Creek, Pine Mountain Leader: John Garrett

Along Highway 33 above Ojai, these locations combine a variety of habitats and birding experiences into a day at mid to higher elevations in the Transverse Range. The Rose Valley was impacted by the recent Thomas Fire, but has a mix of montane chaparral and riparian habitats including two small lakes. Lawrence’s Goldfinch is a year-round resident in the valley and this area could turn up anything in migration. Sespe Creek runs along the highway and there are several areas to check for residents like Mountain Quail and Canyon Wren, and a variety of migrants in riparian habitat along the creek. The road up Pine Mountain traverses montane chaparral before climbing to pine and fir forests. This area hosts a number of montane species including Northern Pygmy-Owl, White-headed Woodpecker, Townsend’s Solitaire, and more including the potential for rarer visitors.
**7SU Hopper Mountain or Bitter Creek Condors**

Leader: Ryan Terrill

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) manages the recovery program for the California Condor and has been successful in the efforts to increase the species population and the number of areas throughout California and neighboring areas that now support the species. When the California Condor declined to perilously low numbers and was eventually removed from the wild, the species was confined to areas centered around the Transverse Range above Ventura. The Hopper Mountain and Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuges are set aside for the protection of nesting and feeding areas for the condor and are not open to the public. We will have the privilege of touring one of these areas with biologists from the USFWS to view condors in their natural habitat. Where we go will depend on where the viewing opportunities are best at that time. Other species we may see include Golden Eagle, Prairie Falcon, and a variety of foothill grassland species. A spotting scope is helpful on this trip.

**CANCELLED 8SU Sepulveda Basin / Hansen Dam CANCELLED**

The Los Angeles Basin is drained by two major rivers, the Los Angeles and the San Gabriel. During the mid-1900s, both were channelized, and large dams were constructed at regular intervals along their lengths. The open land preserved behind these dams has been devoted to various purposes that could sustain rare flood events with large areas left undeveloped. Though these debris basins were originally intended to be cleared out annually, this was done so infrequently that several have reverted back to their original habitat, providing a glimpse of how the non-channelized rivers would have appeared. Habitat for birds adjacent to these flood control structures include coastal sage, alluvial fan scrub, riparian, and open water, as well as lawns and planted trees. These areas attract a number of migrant and resident species including waterfowl, waterbirds, raptors, and a variety of landbirds. We will work to maximize the diversity of species we can find here. With luck, we may be able to find some of the local riparian nesting species although it is late in the season for them (Bell’s Vireo, Yellow-breasted Chat, Blue Grosbeak, etc).

**Departure Time: 5:45 AM**
**Return Time: 3:30 PM**
Santa Cruz Island is home to the endemic Island Scrub-Jay and a variety of other island-evolved endemic subspecies (Allen’s Hummingbird, Orange-crowned Warbler, Loggerhead Shrike, and more). A trip to the island with Island Packers is the only way to see the Island Scrub-Jay! We will leave Ventura via one of Island Packers’ ultra-fast catamarans and look for pelagic birds and marine mammals en route to Santa Cruz Island. After a brief landing that will provide us the opportunity to see the Island Scrub-Jay, other island-endemic subspecies, and perhaps wayward migrants, we will return to sea to finish the day with more pelagic birding in the waters surrounding the northern Channel Islands. It will be a great time to look for migrants including shearwaters, storm-petrels, jaegers, skuas, and alcids. Rarities are possible including Brown Booby, Red-billed Tropicbird, Craveri’s Murrelet, and more.

**Departure Time:** 6:00 AM  
**Return Time:** 4:30 PM

---

Pt Mugu Naval Base Ventura County at Point Mugu is a working military base and is generally closed to the public. This field trip provides a rare opportunity to access this installation, which is one of the best birding sites in southern California. The centerpiece of the property is Mugu Lagoon; a functioning tidal salt marsh and lagoon system that hosts an incredible number and diversity of birds. Late September is prime time to scan the lagoon for migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, and waders. Shorebird numbers can be staggering and the potential for a rarity is great. The lagoon hosted a Tricolored Heron, Bar-tailed Godwit, and Ruff during the fall of 2017. Reddish Egrets are annual and regularly seen at this time of year. Elsewhere on the installation a variety of upland and wetland habitats host numbers of birds including two recent additions to the breeding avifauna of Ventura County; Yellow-crowned Night-Heron and Vermilion Flycatcher. This will be an exciting trip that should yield more than 100 species. However, due to military restrictions there will be no photography allowed...no exceptions! A spotting scope will be essential for scoping flocks of shorebirds and gulls, and sea watching.

**Pt Mugu Naval Base is an active military base. As a result, background checks are necessary to obtain access for field trips. Prior to the trip, the Registrar will contact you for additional information to complete this process.**

**Departure Time:** 6:00 AM  
**Return Time:** 3:30 PM

---

Cost: $30  
Miles (one way): ~65 miles  
Time (one way): ~60 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

**9SU Santa Cruz Island Landing and Pelagic Trip**  
Leader: Dave Pereksta and others

Pt Mugu Naval Base Ventura County at Point Mugu is a working military base and is generally closed to the public. This field trip provides a rare opportunity to access this installation, which is one of the best birding sites in southern California. The centerpiece of the property is Mugu Lagoon; a functioning tidal salt marsh and lagoon system that hosts an incredible number and diversity of birds. Late September is prime time to scan the lagoon for migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, and waders. Shorebird numbers can be staggering and the potential for a rarity is great. The lagoon hosted a Tricolored Heron, Bar-tailed Godwit, and Ruff during the fall of 2017. Reddish Egrets are annual and regularly seen at this time of year. Elsewhere on the installation a variety of upland and wetland habitats host numbers of birds including two recent additions to the breeding avifauna of Ventura County; Yellow-crowned Night-Heron and Vermilion Flycatcher. This will be an exciting trip that should yield more than 100 species. However, due to military restrictions there will be no photography allowed...no exceptions! A spotting scope will be essential for scoping flocks of shorebirds and gulls, and sea watching.

**Pt Mugu Naval Base is an active military base. As a result, background checks are necessary to obtain access for field trips. Prior to the trip, the Registrar will contact you for additional information to complete this process.**

**Departure Time:** 6:00 AM  
**Return Time:** 3:30 PM

---

Cost: $30
**11SU Santa Barbara Migrant Hotspots**  
Leader: Jon Dunn

The Santa Barbara area has a number of migrant traps and hotspots that make birding there in late September very exciting if vagrant chasing is your thing. This trip will visit a variety of locations in the vicinity of the city of Santa Barbara where uncommon to rare migrants have been seen in the preceding days. We have the potential to find a variety of warblers, vireos, sparrows, and other wayward migrants, as well as the expected western species.

Departure Time: 6:00 AM  
Return Time: 3:30 PM  
Cost: $30  
Miles (one way): 30 miles  
Time (one way): 30 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

**12SU Malibu Lagoon & Coast**  
Leader: Dan Cooper

Anyone who has watched “Two and a Half Men” has seen aerial views of Malibu Lagoon in nearly every episode. Migratory birds get the same view as they are moving down the coast and this coastal wetland oasis attracts numbers of waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls, waders, and other water-dependent birds. We should see a flock of Western Snowy Plovers on the beach as well as Elegant Terns and perhaps Black Skimmers. Beyond the lagoon, we will also incorporate a spot for sea watching where we should see Black-vented Shearwaters and other near shore pelagic species. In addition, we will stop in a coastal canyon to look for a variety of resident and migrant species. We will have opportunities to see the Nanday Parakeet that is becoming established along the Malibu Coast. A scope will be essential for sea watching and picking through birds in the lagoon.

Departure Time: 6:00 AM  
Return Time: 4:00 PM  
Cost: $30  
Day Use Fee: $12 per vehicle  
Miles (one way): 45 miles  
Time (one way): 50 minutes  
Restroom facilities: Yes  
Difficulty level: Moderate

**13SU Ventura Migrant Hotspots**  
Leader: Deven Kammercihs-Berke

The Oxnard Plain has a variety of natural and unnatural habitats that attract number of migrants during late September, including a variety of rare species. When the conditions are conducive, tamarisk rows host warblers and vireos and are bound to have a few vagrants in late September. The
tamarisk rows here are one of the most reliable places for Yellow-green Vireo in California. Local sod fields host flocks of shorebirds, pipits, and Horned Larks, and can include Pacific Golden-Plover, Red-throated Pipit, and other uncommon and rare species. The locations we visit will likely depend on where known birds of interest are located thus far in the season.

Departure Time: 6:00 AM
Return Time: 3:30 PM
Cost: $30
Miles (one way): ~ 15 Miles
Time (one way): ~ 20 minutes
Restroom facilities: Yes
Difficulty level: Easy