

2026 Central Valley Birding Symposium

Field Trips Guide

Know Before You Go

- ♦ Please be considerate of your field trip leaders and fellow birders by arriving **at least 15 minutes before the scheduled departure time.**
- ♦ The meeting and departure point for all field trips will be on the first floor of the Stockton Hilton, unless otherwise stated in the trip description.
- ♦ Directions and maps will be provided at the meeting point before departure. The symposium does not provide transportation. If you choose to join a carpool, please consider offering the driver gas money. Estimated driving distances are included in each trip description.
- ♦ Don't forget to pick up your to-go breakfast and/or lunch if you pre-ordered one. Breakfast will be offered for pre-purchase daily; lunch will be offered only on Friday and Sunday. Saturday lunch will be at the hotel.
- ♦ All field trips will have a maximum capacity, usually around 12-15 participants, and are filled on a first-come, first-served basis when you register for the event. Once a trip is full, registrants may join its waitlist and will be notified if space becomes available.
- ♦ Mobility ratings have been provided for each trip. Contact field trip coordinator Clifford Hawley (yellowhammerCA@gmail.com) with any questions or to make other arrangements.
- ♦ Please note: the listing of Native land at each location represents traditional cultural regions, primarily determined using the Native American Heritage Commission's [Digital Atlas of California Native Americans](#). We welcome any corrections, additions, or other suggestions.

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Thursday Pre-Symposium Field Trip, Nov. 19

Fundraising Field Trip - Colusa National Wildlife Refuge (\$\$)

Jon Dunn will host attendees for a full day exploring the waterfowl and wintering passerines at the Colusa National Wildlife Refuge. Jon will pay particular attention to geese, with the goal of identifying the shy Tule Goose subspecies of Greater White-fronted Goose. The latest research on their life history makes them an intriguing candidate for a split. Birding will be from the platform at the first parking lot, then by carpool along the refuge loop. Radios will assist with communication, and you should bring a scope if possible. If time allows, we may visit additional locations in the vicinity.

Meeting Location: *This trip will meet in Williams, CA, NOT Stockton.*

Native Land: Patwin

County: Colusa

Departure Time: 8:00am in Williams, CA.

Drive Distance: to: 110 miles + during: 3 miles + from: 110 miles = total: 223 miles

Mobility Rating: Most birding in & around the car; observation deck is accessible

Restrooms: Accessible pit toilets are available at the refuge entrance

Additional Fees: \$125 donation that will benefit both the Club's Youth Scholarship and Publication funds

Friday Field Trips, Nov. 20

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 5:30am departure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merced National Wildlife Refuge • Salt Spring Valley & Vicinity • Slice of Yolo County: Cache • Sutter Buttes (\$\$) |
| 6:00am departure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dos Rios State Park • Eastern Stanislaus County • Fundraising Field Trip – Foothills of Tuolumne County • Pardee Reservoir Eagle Boat Tour • Sacramento County Bufferlands • San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge • Secrets of Cosumnes River Preserve • Southeastern Solano County |
| 6:30am departure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Western Amador County (\$) |
| 7:00am departure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ripon Oak Grove Park & Wastewater Treatment Plant |
| 8:00am departure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birding the UOP Campus and the John Muir Experience |

Additional fees are indicated as follows: (\$) modest day use/parking fee; (\$\$) larger donation.

Friday Field Trip Descriptions (Alphabetical)

Birding the UOP Campus and the Muir Experience

This two-part experience begins with a guided birding excursion on the University of the Pacific campus. The 175-acre Stockton Campus is regularly ranked among the most beautiful in America, conjuring up images of a New England campus with its Collegiate Gothic architecture. The grounds feature many large, mature trees and may host an interesting variety of wintering thrushes, warblers, sparrows, and woodpeckers.

The famed naturalist John Muir frequently reflected on the beauty and significance of birds in his writings. Following the campus birding excursion, explore UOP's Muir Experience before enjoying a special behind-the-scenes presentation and tour of the Holt-Atherton Special Collections and Archives, home to the world's largest collection of John Muir's writings. The tour will be hosted by University Archivist Mike Wurtz, who will provide unique insights into Muir's life, legacy, and enduring connection to the natural world.

Native Land: Northern Valley Yokuts

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 8:00am

Drive Distance: to/from: 3 miles = total: 6 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car; some areas suitable for wheelchairs & scooters

Restrooms: Facilities available on campus

Dos Rios State Park

Once farmland, the state's largest riparian floodplain restoration project at the confluence of the Tuolumne and San Joaquin rivers took 10 years to complete and opened as California's newest state park in June of 2024. This is a special chance to explore the park's 4 miles of trails, which are currently only open for guided tours. We expect to encounter a nice selection of riparian songbirds, such as wrens, sparrows, and finches.

Native Land: gathering and meeting land for Northern Yokut, Valley Miwok, Coastal Miwok, and Sierra Mewuk; includes a Native Use Garden

County: Stanislaus

Departure Time: 6:00am

Drive Distance: to/from: 40 miles = total: 80 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car; trails are not accessible

Restrooms: available at the parking lot

Eastern Stanislaus County

This field trip will focus on the grasslands, oak savanna, and foothill reservoirs of Eastern Stanislaus County. After regrouping in Waterford, we will visit the Basso Bridge Fishing Access on the Tuolumne River, looking for valley wintering riparian and wetland birds such as Phainopepla, Red-breasted Sapsucker, White-throated Sparrow, and others. Next, we'll head over to scope Dawson Lake, home to a variety of waterfowl, shorebirds, and raptors, keeping an eye out for Hooded Mergansers, Wilson's Snipe, and Bald Eagles. Finally, we will traverse Cooperstown Road on a slow drive through the grasslands, savanna, and blue oak woodlands along the far east of the county where we hope to find Lewis's Woodpeckers, Mountain Bluebirds, Vesper Sparrows, Burrowing Owls, & Ferruginous Hawks.

Native Land: Northern Valley Yokuts, Miwok

County: Stanislaus

Departure Time: 6:00am

Drive Distance: to: 50 miles + during: 30 miles + from: 70 miles = total: 150 miles

Mobility Rating: Birding both in & out of the car; some areas have places to sit

Restrooms: available at the meeting spot in Waterford, porta-potty at one stop, no additional facilities.

Fundraising Field Trip – Foothills of Tuolumne County

Jon Dunn will host attendees in the foothills of Tuolumne County. This will be a new destination for the Symposium. He will focus in particular on the areas of Don Pedro Reservoir and Rock River Road. The reservoir and neighboring lakes/ponds attract many rare waterfowl and divers, and the unique habitat along Rock River Rd is a noted spot for wintering Vesper Sparrow, Lewis's Woodpecker, Mountain Bluebird, and Ferruginous Hawk. Jon will have the added assistance of local experts.

Native Land: Miwok

County: Tuolumne

Departure Time: 6:00am

Drive Distance: to: 60 miles + during: 60 miles + from: 60 miles = total: 180 miles

Mobility Rating: Birding both in & out of the car; some areas have places to sit

Restrooms: may be available at Don Pedro Reservoir

Additional Fees: \$125 donation that will benefit both the Club's Youth Scholarship & Publication funds

Merced National Wildlife Refuge

Merced National Wildlife Refuge hosts staggering numbers of wintering waterfowl and Sandhill Cranes, as well as shorebirds, marshbirds, songbirds, and raptors. We will drive the refuge's auto loop, stopping at observation platforms where we can get out and set up scopes to view the spectacle. We will also explore the short trails along the route on foot. Depending on pre-trip scouting, we may visit additional sites in the vicinity, as this trip has historically encountered rare species, such as Ruff, Eastern Phoebe, and Swamp Sparrow.

Native Land: Northern Valley Yokuts

County: Merced

Departure Time: 5:30am

Drive Distance: to: 85 miles + during: 5 miles + from: 85 miles = total: 175 miles

Mobility Rating: Birding both in & out of the car; some areas have places to sit

Restrooms: available at the refuge visitor center

Pardee Reservoir Eagle Boat Tour

This scenic foothill reservoir is normally closed to the public during the winter months, but we are fortunate to offer this 4-hour boat tour led by a biologist from the East Bay Municipal Utilities District. Eagles, Ospreys, and winter waterfowl are expected. It can be chilly out on the water, so come prepared with enough layers.

Native Land: Miwok

County: Amador/Calaveras

Departure Time: 6:00am

Drive Distance: to/from: 45 miles = total: 90 miles

Mobility Rating: please ask for details

Restrooms: available at the boat launch

Ripon Oak Grove Park & Wastewater Treatment Plant

Oak Grove Park in Ripon is a 55-acre undeveloped remnant of riparian forest and riparian oak woodland on the north bank of the Stanislaus River at the southern edge of San Joaquin County. The park contains some excellent habitat, and the black currant, raspberries, elderberries, wild grape, and naturalized black mulberries provide an abundant food source for both resident and migratory species alike. Although the trails are level, they are not all well-maintained, so there may be a bit of bushwhacking, stepping over logs, ducking under branches, etc. If it rains, the trails may be muddy. The adjacent treatment plant consists of 15 acres of treatment ponds and 40 acres of accessible (on foot) disposal ponds. A Pacific Golden-Plover has been found here in past winters, and a variety of waterfowl, shorebirds, waders, and gulls is expected.

Native Land: Northern Valley Yokuts

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 7:00am

Drive Distance: to/from: 30 miles = total: 60 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car

Restrooms: available at the park in Ripon, where we stop for lunch between locations

Sacramento County Bufferlands

Visit an area with limited public access to see the fruits of more than 35 years of habitat restoration. The total property is 3,500 acres, with the wastewater treatment plant in the middle, surrounded by an open-space buffer called the Bufferlands. We will visit restored and remnant habitats, including tule and cattail marshes, managed seasonal wetlands, riparian forests, oak forests with trees more than 200 years old, and grasslands, to find a high diversity of species. The wastewater ponds can harbor a good diversity of shorebirds and other waterbirds. This tour provides an excellent chance to look for rails, raptors (including Burrowing Owls), winter songbirds, shorebirds, and waterfowl. We will visit several sites, with short to moderate walks at each.

Native Land: Miwok

County: Sacramento

Departure Time: 6:00am

Drive Distance: to/from: 36 miles = total: 72 miles

Mobility Rating: Birding both in & out of the car; includes dirt and gravel roads, mowed paths, and potentially muddy terrain

Restrooms: at the meeting location, with a mid-day opportunity, and a porta-potty in the field

Salt Spring Valley & Vicinity

East of Stockton, in the low foothills of Calaveras County, lies the Salt Spring Valley. Due to the variety of habitats visited, a nice selection of birds can be found. Expected birds will include good numbers and variety of raptors and waterfowl. Raptors usually include Bald and Golden eagles, Ferruginous and Rough-legged hawks, and Prairie Falcon. Waterfowl will include a mix of geese, dabbling and diving ducks, mergansers, grebes, shorebirds, herons, gallinules, and coots. The ranch is also good for Lewis's Woodpecker and Phainopepla.

Native Land: Northern Valley Yokuts, Miwok

County: Calaveras

Departure Time: 5:30am

Drive Distance: to: 44 miles + during: 30 miles + from: 44 miles = total: 118 miles

Mobility Rating: Most birding out of the car; includes rough and/or muddy terrain

Restrooms: available at Copperopolis on the way in and out; otherwise no facilities available

San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge

The San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge is located west of Modesto, within the historic floodplain at the confluence of the San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tuolumne rivers. Refuge lands consist of oak-cottonwood-willow riparian forest, pastures, agricultural fields, and wetlands. The refuge has an approved boundary of 12,877 acres, with over 1,900 acres of pristine riparian woodland and 800 acres of newly restored riparian woodland. It is the primary wintering site of 98% of the Aleutian Canada Geese that winter in the Valley (October—April), plus it is a major wintering/migration area for Lesser and Greater Sandhill Cranes, Cackling Geese, and Greater White-fronted Geese. The refuge's riparian forest provides important migration and breeding habitat for Neotropical migratory land birds, including the most recent celebrity, Least Bell's Vireo. We should expect to get close to 100 species on this trip.

Native Land: Northern Valley Yokuts

County: Stanislaus

Departure Time: 6:00am

Drive Distance: to/from: 33 miles = total: 66 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car; accessibility varies by route, please ask for details

Restrooms: facilities only available mid-late morning

Secrets of Cosumnes River Preserve

Cosumnes River Preserve is a conservation success story that boasts some of the finest valley oak riparian forest in California, as well as oak savanna, agricultural fields, managed wetlands, and a tidally influenced marsh. If conditions allow, you will have the opportunity to choose your own adventure for the day. The Tall Forest route visits a closed portion of the preserve, along with the Accidental Forest, so named for the trees that sprang up following a natural levee breach. This route involves navigating narrow trails, and rubber boots are encouraged, but the birding can be rewarding with a better chance of Pacific Wren, Varied Thrush, Hutton's Vireo, Wrentit, or unexpected rarities. The River Walk route includes trails that are flatter, unobstructed, and sample more habitats. This route will also visit the Lost Slough Boardwalk, with a chance to see Sora and Virginia Rail. Both routes also include wetlands along Desmond Road and by "The Barn," which is not regularly open to the public. Both routes will traverse 4–5 miles, and participants can expect to see Sandhill Cranes, as well as a diversity of waterfowl, raptors, and songbirds.

Native Land: Miwok

County: Sacramento

Departure Time: 6:00am

Drive Distance: to/from: 30 miles = total: 60 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car; accessibility varies by route; please ask for details

Restrooms: available at meeting spot and on the way out; no facilities along the Tall Forest route

Slice of Yolo County: Cache

Join us for a full day of exploring the under-birded heart of Yolo County. We'll start at the south end of the Capay Valley, where Cache Creek leaves the edge of Blue Ridge and flows into the Sacramento Valley. As a result of restoration, two parks along the creek, Capay Open Space Park and Cache Creek Nature Preserve, offer varied habitats for wildlife, including oak savanna, riparian, and grasslands. Capay Open Space Park is a good spot to look for California Thrashers and sparrows. Heading east, we'll stop at the Cache Creek Nature Preserve, a former gravel mining site, to check the pond for waterfowl, waders, and rails, and the riparian area for winter passerines. In Woodland, we'll walk the evaporation ponds at the Woodland/Davis Water Pollution Control Facility and scope the North Pond for waterfowl, shorebirds, and gulls. Anything can show up in these ponds! If there is time, we'll head south to a nearby area known for high raptor diversity and numbers. Possible raptors include Ferruginous Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, and Prairie Falcon. This trip should yield a high number of species and many educational opportunities. Bring lunch, snacks, and water.

Native Land: Patwin

County: Yolo

Departure Time: 5:30am

Drive Distance: to: 90 miles + during: 25 miles + from: 60 miles = total: 175 miles

Mobility Rating: Most birding out of the car; some areas have places to sit

Restrooms: facilities at the first two locations

Southeastern Solano County

The grasslands and farmlands between Dixon and Rio Vista offer some of the best open-country birding in the Central Valley, though some are eyeing the area for a new city. Target species include Mountain Plover and numerous raptors: Ferruginous and Rough-legged hawks, Prairie Falcon, Merlin, and both eagles are possible. This is also one of the best areas for the regionally declining Long-billed Curlew, Burrowing Owl, Loggerhead Shrike, and Tricolored Blackbird. The sheep paddocks of the Montezuma Hills harbor a large wintering flock of the California-threatened Tricolored Blackbird. Scattered wetlands harbor waterfowl and forested patches shelter songbirds. Much of the birding will be along lightly traveled roads.

Native Land: Miwok, Patwin

County: Solano

Departure Time: 6:00am

Drive Distance: to: 35 miles + during: 20 miles + from: 35 miles = total: 90 miles

Mobility Rating: Most birding in & around the car

Restrooms: available in Rio Vista, then no facilities available

Sutter Buttes

A gem of the Central Valley, the Sutter Buttes are not accessible without special permission. A guide from Middle Mountain Interpretive Hikes will lead our group on a hike through the grasslands and oak savanna of a private working ranch. The time of year will limit the diversity of birds, but it will be a good opportunity to enjoy this special place and for those working on their Sutter County bird lists. There are good opportunities for Golden Eagle and other raptors, Rock Wren, Phainopepla, and wintering songbirds. Irruptive species like Lewis's Woodpecker and Mountain Bluebird are possible.

Native Land: Nisenan, Patwin

County: Sutter

Departure Time: 5:30am

Drive Distance: to: 86 miles + during: 22 miles + from: 86 miles = total: 194 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car; includes rough and/or muddy terrain

Restrooms: at meeting location and portable available at start of the hike

Additional Fees: \$40 as a donation to Middle Mountain Interpretive Hikes

Western Amador County

East of Sacramento in the foothills of Amador County, numerous ponds, a large reservoir, fields, riparian woodlands, and oak savanna harbor a high diversity of birds. We will visit several hotspots to see waterfowl, grebes, pelicans, and eagles. In the past, rare wintering species have included Red-naped Sapsucker, Pacific Loon, Iceland Gull, Tundra Swan, Burrowing Owl, Eurasian Wigeon, Eurasian Green-winged Teal, and Black-and-white Warbler. We will visit Camanche Reservoir, the lone area, and numerous ponds in between. This area provides a great opportunity to see many birds for your Amador County list. Driving time is about 60 minutes each way.

Native Land: Miwok

County: Amador

Departure Time: 6:30am

Drive Distance: to: 40 miles + during: 15 miles + from: 42 miles = total: 97 miles

Mobility Rating: Most birding in & around the car

Restrooms: available at the reservoir, then limited availability

Additional Fees: \$12 fee per vehicle at Camanche Reservoir

Saturday Local Field Trips, Nov. 21

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|------------------|--|
| 6:30am departure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosumnes River Preserve • Flood/Waverly Roads |
| 7:00am departure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black Hole Duck Club • Lodi Lake Wilderness Area • Ripon Wastewater Treatment Plant • Staten Island • White Slough Water Pollution Control Facility (Lodi WTP) • Woodbridge Wilderness Area |
| 7:30am departure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caswell Memorial State Park (\$) • Micke Grove Park (\$) |
| 7:45am departure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shumway Oak Grove Regional Park (\$) • Stockton Rural Cemetery |

Additional fees are indicated as follows: (\$) modest day use/parking fee

Saturday Field Trip Descriptions (Alphabetical)

Black Hole Duck Club

The Black Hole is a balanced, sustainable wetland habitat created by Dino Cortopassi beginning in 1992. The property lies at the northwest end of W. Woodbridge Rd., Lodi. The habitat was created entirely with private money and has restricted access. The total property is 750 acres; however, only the west section of the Black Hole will be birded on this field trip. eBird shows the Black Hole West as a Restricted Hotspot with 129 bird species listed. The Black Hole was established as a duck club and was lightly hunted by Dino's family and friends in the early years. However, over the past 5-10 years, it has been managed entirely as a habitat for bird breeding and foraging. The habitat is truly unique and must be seen to be fully appreciated. One can expect to see many Sandhill Cranes, ducks, geese species, shorebirds, raptors, and winter songbirds on the field trip.

Native Land: Miwok

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 7:00am

Drive Distance: to/from: 20 miles = total: 40 miles

Mobility Rating: Birding both in & out of the car; includes rough and/or muddy terrain

Restrooms: no facilities available

Caswell Memorial State Park

Located along the Stanislaus River, which marks the border between San Joaquin and Stanislaus counties, Caswell Memorial State Park includes one of the finest examples of closed-canopy Valley Oak riparian forest in the Central Valley, a habitat type that has been nearly extirpated by agricultural and urban development. Caswell is an excellent spot for both resident and wintering woodland birds of the Central Valley, including Pacific Wren, Varied Thrush, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Brown Creeper, warblers, sparrows, and finches.

Native Land: Northern Valley Yokuts

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 7:30am

Drive Distance: to/from: 28 miles = total: 56 miles

Mobility Rating: Most or all birding requires being out of the car; includes rough and/or muddy terrain

Restrooms: available in all parking lots

Additional Fees: \$10 fee per vehicle (free with state park pass)

Cosumnes River Preserve

Cosumnes River Preserve is a conservation success story that boasts some of the finest valley oak riparian forest in California, as well as oak savanna, agricultural fields, managed wetlands, and tidally influenced marsh. This trip samples these habitats and includes flat, relatively unobstructed trails. Along the River Walk, there is a chance for Pacific Wren, Varied Thrush, Hutton's Vireo, and Wrentit. If time permits, the Lost Slough Boardwalk offers an opportunity for Sora and Virginia Rail. Participants can expect to see Sandhill Cranes, as well as a diversity of waterfowl, raptors, and songbirds.

Native Land: Miwok

County: Sacramento

Departure Time: 6:30am

Drive Distance: to/from: 30 miles = total: 60 miles

Mobility Rating: Most or all birding out of the car; includes rough and/or muddy terrain

Restrooms: facilities available

Flood/Waverly Roads

The Flood/Waverly rangelands in eastern San Joaquin County are a "Raptor Wonderland" in winter. Birds likely to be seen include Ferruginous and Rough-legged hawks, perhaps a Prairie Falcon or Merlin. Eagles, owls, and numerous other raptors are possible. Other birds may include Long-billed Curlews, Loggerhead Shrikes, Mountain Bluebirds, and perhaps gulls near the landfill.

Native Land: Northern Valley Yokuts

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 6:30am

Drive Distance: to: 18 miles + during: 15 miles + from: 26 miles = total: 59 miles

Mobility Rating: Most birding in & around the car

Restrooms: available at Linden on the way in; otherwise, no facilities available

Lodi Lake Wilderness Area

A 40-acre oak riparian jewel along the Mokelumne River near downtown Lodi. Maintained trails make for very easy walking. It is a great spot for wintering passerines such as Varied Thrush, Pacific Wren, and Golden-crowned Kinglet. It is a good vagrant trap, with some of the rarest birds in the county historically found here.

Native Land: Miwok

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 7:00am

Drive Distance: to/from: 18 miles = total: 36 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car; most areas suitable for wheelchairs & scooters and have places to sit

Restrooms: available, including accessible

Additional Fees: \$10 per vehicle entrance fee, limited free street parking available

Micke Grove Park

A 132-acre park south of Lodi, featuring several small to large groupings of native and introduced tree species, a Japanese garden, a forest with watered lawns, wetlands, and ponds. All are attractive for birdlife. Micke Grove is an eBird Hot Spot for the county with 130 species recorded. Birds that may be seen are wintering ducks, mergansers, herons, egrets, raptors, Barn Owl, possible rail species, Yellow-billed Magpie, Hutton's Vireo, woodpeckers, thrushes, Common Yellowthroat, and possible wintering warblers and sparrows. Wear water-repellent shoes, layer clothing, and bring water. Restrooms are on site. Drive time is only 20 minutes.

Native Land: Miwok

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 7:30am

Drive Distance: to/from: ~10 miles = total: ~20 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car; most areas suitable for wheelchairs & scooters and have places to sit

Restrooms: available, including accessible

Additional Fees: \$6 per vehicle entrance fee

Ripon Wastewater Treatment Plant

This consists of 15 acres of treatment ponds and 40 acres of accessible (on foot) disposal ponds just north of riparian habitat along the Stanislaus River. A Pacific Golden-Plover has been found here in past winters, and a variety of waterfowl, shorebirds, waders, and gulls is expected.

Native Land: Northern Valley Yokuts

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 7:00am

Drive Distance: to/from: 30 miles = total: 60 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car

Restrooms: no facilities available

Shumway Oak Grove Regional Park

Just 10 minutes from the hotel, this park is set in an attractive oak grove with a 10-acre lake. Acorn Woodpeckers abound, and there will be a nice mix of regular oak woodland species, native and introduced waterfowl on the lake, and maybe a surprise or two.

Native Land: Northern Valley Yokuts, Miwok

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 7:45am

Drive Distance: to/from: 6 miles = total: 12 miles

Mobility Rating: walking up to two miles on flat, paved and dirt roads, dirt tracks, and lawns

Restrooms: available at park

Additional Fees: \$6 per vehicle entrance fee

Staten Island

The 9,200-acre Staten Ranch on Staten Island is a Nature Conservancy property that is still actively farmed, but also managed for wildlife. The farm's corn and wheat fields are flooded in winter to provide critical habitat for Sandhill Cranes and other waterfowl. This is a great location to see Sandhill Cranes, Aleutian Cackling Geese, and a nice mix of waterfowl, shorebirds, and raptors.

Native Land: Miwok

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 7:00am

Drive Distance: to: 22 miles + during: 12 miles + from: 22 miles = total: 56 miles

Mobility Rating: Most birding in & around the car

Restrooms: no facilities available

Stockton Rural Cemetery

The large oaks, elms, and other trees in this historic cemetery host an interesting variety of wintering and migrating thrushes, warblers, sparrows, and woodpeckers, among others. Even when the birding is slow, visitors can enjoy a relaxing stroll through California history.

Native Land: Northern Valley Yokuts

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 7:45am

Drive Distance: to/from: 4 miles = total: 8 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car; some areas suitable for wheelchairs & scooters

Restrooms: no facilities available

White Slough Water Pollution Control Facility (Lodi WTP)

These small settling ponds are near the intersection of I-5 and Hwy 12. Highly productive over the years, they are one of the best spots to see Pacific Golden-Plover locally if they are around. When the conditions are right, they can attract good numbers of other shorebirds as well as gulls, terns, and ducks.

Native Land: Miwok

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 7:00am

Drive Distance: to/from: 11 miles = total: 22 miles

Mobility Rating: Most birding in & around the car

Restrooms: no facilities available

Woodbridge Wilderness Area

This wilderness area (open on selected weekends only) consists of lush riparian woodlands nestled along the south bank of the Mokelumne River in the town of Woodbridge. Dirt trails meander throughout the park. It is a great spot for wintering passerines such as Varied Thrush, Pacific Wren, and residents like Wrentit. This is a good vagrant trap, very similar to Lodi Lake, only wilder.

Native Land: Miwok

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 7:00am

Drive Distance: to/from: 18 miles = total: 36 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car; includes rough and/or muddy terrain

Restrooms: no facilities available

Sunday Field Trips, Nov. 22

Please note Sunday trips, and the Symposium, end at the last birding location of the field trip, so plan to head home from there. Trips should be finished by noon or 1pm.

9:30am departure

- Clifton Court Forebay (\$)
- Cosumnes River Preserve
- Flood/Waverly Roads
- Home is Where the Birds Are: Local Garden Tour
- Birds and Wine: Jessie's Grove Winery
- Lodi Lake
- Mokelumne Day Use Area
- Ripon Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Sacramento County Bufferlands
- Waldo Holt Preserve

Additional fees are indicated as follows: (\$) modest day use/parking fee

Sunday Field Trip Descriptions (Alphabetical)

Clifton Court Forebay

Starting out in northeastern Alameda County, we will bird roadside agricultural fields looking for raptors, Long-billed Curlews, and possible shorebirds. We'll then continue to the Mountain House area for hawks, eagles, possible Prairie Falcon, and Burrowing Owl. We will move on to Clifton Court Forebay in Contra Costa County, where we'll need scopes to scan for ducks, gulls, cormorants, possible Peregrine Falcon, and Merlin. Our last stop is Bethany Reservoir to use the restrooms and search for sparrows, warblers, and possibly wintering Swainson's Hawk. From the parking lot, we'll scan the reservoir for ducks, gull species, Golden Eagle, and possible Ferruginous Hawk. Note: The field trip finishes at Bethany Reservoir. The field trip leader will get the group back to Hwy 580/205.

Native Land: Northern Valley Yokuts

County: Alameda and Contra Costa

Departure Time: 9:30am

Drive Distance: to: 30 miles + during: 22 miles = total: 52 miles

Mobility Rating: Most birding in & around the car; some areas suitable for wheelchairs & scooters

Restrooms: Portables available at the forebay and restrooms available at Bethany Reservoir.

Additional fees: \$10 fee per vehicle, only by using the Yodel app (free with state park pass)

Cosumnes River Preserve

Cosumnes River Preserve is a conservation success story that boasts some of the finest valley oak riparian forest in California, as well as oak savanna, agricultural fields, managed wetlands, and tidally influenced marsh. This trip samples these habitats and includes flat, relatively unobstructed trails. Along the River Walk, there is a chance for Pacific Wren, Varied Thrush, Hutton's Vireo, and Wrentit. If time permits, the Lost Slough Boardwalk offers an opportunity for Sora and Virginia Rail. Participants can expect to see Sandhill Cranes, as well as a diversity of waterfowl, raptors, and songbirds.

Native Land: Miwok

County: Sacramento

Departure Time: 9:30am

Drive Distance: to: 30 miles

Mobility Rating: Most or all birding out of the car; includes rough and/or muddy terrain

Restrooms: facilities available

Flood/Waverly Roads

The Flood/Waverly rangelands in eastern San Joaquin County are a "Raptor Wonderland" in winter. Birds likely to be seen include Ferruginous and Rough-legged hawks, perhaps a Prairie Falcon or Merlin. Eagles, owls, and numerous other raptors are possible. Other birds to be looked for include Long-billed Curlews, Loggerhead Shrikes, Mountain Bluebirds, and perhaps gulls near the landfill.

Native Land: Northern Valley Yokuts

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 9:30am

Drive Distance: to: 18 miles + during: 15 miles = total: 33 miles

Mobility Rating: Most birding in & around the car

Restrooms: available at Linden on the way in; otherwise, no facilities available

Home is Where the Birds Are: Local Garden Tour

Curious about gardening for birds and pollinators? The Central Valley's hot, dry summers and cold, damp winters can make it a challenge. Join us as we explore local landscapes designed to support birds and pollinators. We'll visit several inspiring examples of wildlife-friendly, water-wise gardening in the Central Valley, featuring native plants, habitat features, and practical ideas for creating a vibrant, bird-friendly space at home.

Native Land: Northern Valley Yokuts, Miwok

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 9:30am

Drive Distance: total: ~20 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car; some areas suitable for wheelchairs & scooters and have places to sit

Restrooms: available

Jessie's Grove Winery: Birds and Wine

This winery is located on W Turner Road just a mile west of Lodi. The winery was established in 1868 on the 320-acre historic estate and features a lovely mature oak grove in the northeast part of the property. The eBird list for the site is small but growing at this underbirded location. Following the trip, you may choose to enjoy a wine tasting on the patio.

Native Land: Miwok

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 9:30am

Drive Distance: to: 22 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car; some areas suitable for wheelchairs & scooters

Restrooms: available at the tasting room

Additional Fees: \$20 for wine tasting, waived if a purchase is made

Lodi Lake Wilderness Area

A 40-acre oak riparian jewel along the Mokelumne River near downtown Lodi. Maintained trails make for very easy walking. It is a great spot for wintering passerines such as Varied Thrush, Pacific Wren, and Golden-crowned Kinglet. It is a good vagrant trap, with some of the rarest birds in the county historically found here.

Native Land: Miwok

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 9:30am

Drive Distance: to/from: 18 miles = total: 36 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car; most areas suitable for wheelchairs & scooters and have places to sit

Restrooms: available, including accessible

Additional Fees: \$10 per vehicle entrance fee, limited free street parking available

Mokelumne Day Use Area

This is a small, delightful riparian oak woodland along the banks of the Mokelumne River northeast of Lodi. Expect mergansers, sparrows, warblers, and an occasional Osprey or eagle. There are maintained trails in this area that lead from the parking lot to the river and the riparian forest.

Native Land: Miwok

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 9:30am

Drive Distance: to: 32 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car; some areas suitable for wheelchairs & scooters and have places to sit

Restrooms: pit toilets available, including accessible

Ripon Wastewater Treatment Plant

This consists of 15 acres of treatment ponds and 40 acres of accessible (on foot) disposal ponds just north of riparian habitat along the Stanislaus River. A Pacific Golden-Plover has been found here in past winters, and a variety of waterfowl, shorebirds, waders, and gulls is expected.

Native Land: Northern Valley Yokuts

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 9:30am

Drive Distance: to: 30 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car

Restrooms: no facilities available

Sacramento County Bufferlands

Visit an area with limited public access to see the fruits of more than 35 years of habitat restoration. The property is 3,500 acres, with the wastewater treatment plant surrounded by an open-space buffer called the Bufferlands. We will visit restored and remnant habitats, including tule and cattail marshes, managed seasonal wetlands, riparian forests, oak forests with trees more than 200 years old, and grasslands, to find a high diversity of species. The wastewater ponds can harbor a good diversity of shorebirds and other waterbirds. This tour provides an excellent chance to look for rails, raptors, including Burrowing Owls, winter songbirds, shorebirds, and waterfowl. We will visit several sites, with short to moderate walks at each. A shorter version of Friday's tour; we'll visit the most productive areas.

Native Land: Miwok

County: Sacramento

Departure Time: 9:30am

Drive Distance: to: 36 miles

Mobility Rating: Birding both in & out of the car; includes dirt and gravel roads, mowed paths, and potentially muddy terrain

Restrooms: at the meeting location, with a mid-day opportunity, and a porta-potty in the field

Waldo Holt Preserve

Located on the south side of Dry Creek in far northern San Joaquin County, the Waldo Holt Preserve includes 80 acres currently undergoing restoration to riparian woodland habitat. The preserve is not open to the public, and the elderberry, valley oak, and wild rose plantings have grown rapidly since our first visit in 2023. We are especially pleased the preserve has been named in memory of Waldo Holt, a longtime Conservation Chair for San Joaquin Audubon Society and member of the Central Valley Bird Club. Waldo loved all birds but was especially active in the preservation of Swainson's Hawks. On this trip, we expect to encounter a nice selection of riparian songbirds, such as wrens, sparrows, & finches.

Native Land: Northern Valley Yokuts, Miwok

County: San Joaquin

Departure Time: 9:30am

Drive Distance: to: 6 miles

Mobility Rating: All birding out of the car; includes rough and/or muddy terrain

Restrooms: no facilities available