

President's Message

This is truly an exciting time for the Central Valley Bird Club, as we begin turning dreams into realities. As Tim Manolis stated in the premier issue of the *CVBC Bulletin*, the idea of a regional bird club was something that had been in the minds of some of us for quite awhile. Now that we are official, we are finding the potential is limitless as to what the CVBC can do for birders, birds and wildlife habitat in the Central Valley.

I would like to comment on the current goals of the CVBC, as well as my personal goals for the club. The goals of the CVBC are to bring life to its purpose statement, found on the inside front cover of the *Bulletin*, "...dedicated to the study of the distribution, status, ecology, and conservation of the birds in the Central Valley of California." During the past 9 months, as the membership has grown and new input has been added, these goals have changed and been refined, giving the CVBC a true identity and reason for existence. At its very heart, the goal of the CVBC is to unify birders in the Central Valley. The CVBC hopes to work very closely with individuals, Audubon chapters, agencies, private organizations and whatever else is out there that involves itself in the study and conservation of birds and their habitats. We want to be able to establish a network within the Central Valley through which individuals and organizations alike will have access to the large amount of information that has accumulated and continues to accumulate within our region. Presently this information is very fragmented, and there is little or no forum to bring it into focus.

Presently, with our limited budget and membership, we feel we can best accomplish this by producing a quarterly publication, being actively involved in some specific bird projects, and having regular outings/programs throughout the Central Valley. Hopefully, this will establish a firm foundation to build on. And that is presently my personal goal for the CVBC: to see that the club establishes a strong membership base, is financially solvent, and works in unity. My hope is that the CVBC will not be just a flash in the pan that begins to fade when the present leadership decides to step down. With the creative involvement of folks like Bruce Webb (webpage/internet), Sid England and John Trochet (development of a bird data base), Leo Edson (bird projects), John Schick (legal advice), Rob Hansen, Jim Gain and John Fulton (outings/field trips), and Harold Reeve and Joan Humphrey (membership services), I don't think we can help but succeed. And this is mentioning but a few of those that are committed to seeing that the CVBC becomes something of substance. Our monthly board meetings have been averaging 15-20 people, with many new faces at each meeting. Eventually, we hope to have regular meetings at various spots up and down the valley, so all can participate. Right now, we're using e-mail as the primary means of communicating about meeting places and times, so if you have an e-mail address, please send it to Harold Reeve. I would love to see you at a meeting or outing.

Additionally, the CVBC will continue to sponsor the Central Valley Birding Symposium. The CVBS is an idea I had at the beginning of last year. When I mentioned it to Tim, we had the presence of mind to combine both ideas (the CVBC and the CVBS) so they could help jump start each other. The marriage worked and on December 4-7, 1997, the first CVBS, held in Stockton, drew about 160 participants and was a huge success. Every attendee became a Charter member of the CVBC. It was an ideal way to create a membership base and ignite a fledgling organization. The highlights of the CVBS were many. The event featured exceptional speakers, including Kenn Kaufman, Kimball Garrett, and Nancy Newfield at a venue that included the Stockton Hilton and Delta College. Sufficient funds were raised to get the CVBC rolling thanks to a generous sponsorship base and amazing volunteers.

First and foremost, the CVBS would not have been able to get to first base if it weren't for the generous seed money donated by San Joaquin Audubon Society. The very people who gave the nod for this donation then turned around and became the core of the Steering Committee, putting in countless hours towards the CVBS. My personal thanks to Kasey Foley, Cheri Pillsbury, Jim Rowoth, John Schick, Russ Stoddart, Sue Yee, and the San Joaquin Audubon Society. Marc Fenner and Tim Manolis were also members of the Steering Committee. I am confident in saying there would be no CVBS nor probably a CVBC if it were not for the immense contributions in time and resources donated by these folks. To all of you that led field trips - your expertise generated some of the most positive comments of the event. Almost 200 species were tallied during the 3 days. The CVBS benefited greatly from the leadership and help of Cindy T'Souvas and the Stockton/San Joaquin Convention and Visitors Bureau. Thanks! After the seeds were planted, the CVBS was rewarded with additional sponsors, who I would also like to personally thank: Jan Pierson and Fieldguides Inc.; Gluskins, Lewallen Cattle Co.; Lois Yee Cosmetics; M & T Staten Ranch; Douglas Martin; and Wandering Tattler.

Our next CVBS will be Nov. 19-22, 1998, in Stockton. It will serve as the annual meeting of the CVBC and will again include a host of great programs (Pete Dunne and Jon Dunn are lined up to speak), field trips, and meals. I hope you'll make plans to attend.

For the present, our primary means of exposure will be the *Bulletin*, word-of-mouth and the internet. The success of the CVBC depends on participation. Talk the club up. Invite others to join. Participate in meetings and outings when they are held in your neck of the woods. As you read through the pages of this new issue of the *Bulletin*, you'll see there are many opportunities to have fun with this new group. And this is just the beginning!

Here's to Spring Migration!

David Yee