

Announcements

President's Message

In the last Bulletin I had the pleasure of announcing the start of the Central Valley checklist project. The response was overwhelmingly positive as the large majority of those responding to this announcement looked beyond the challenging scope of the project to the benefits that having a checklist would bring to the bird club. I would like to take this opportunity to update you on a few exciting recent developments related to the checklist project.

The bird club is very close to finalizing and approving a map that will represent the checklist area. The proposed checklist area was developed using a digital map of California's ecoregions published by the U.S. Forest Service. To learn more about the U.S. Forest Service ecoregion project visit: http://www.r5.fs.fed.us/ecoregions/ca_sections.htm. A draft version of the map was produced and sent to a number of Central Valley birders for review and comment in April; it was also posted on our website at CVBirds.org. Based on comments received on the first draft, some minor modifications were made and the map was recirculated for another round of review. The revised check area map is currently being developed and will be unveiled at the board/general meeting and field trip in Fresno at the end of May. I would like to highlight the fact that the map will be available in a Global Information System (GIS) format and easily accessible on the internet. Having the checklist area in a GIS format will expand the range of options for the bird club for future regional bird census and conservation projects. The final version of the map will be posted on our website at CVBirds.org as soon as it's approved and we hope to include it with the Summer 2003 Bulletin.

Of course, developing the checklist area is really the easy part of this project. The challenge will be to finalize the checklist of birds. But thanks to John Sterling and Jon King, this effort is already well underway. These two CVBC board members have begun preparation of a draft checklist and John Sterling has assembled a large team of checklist advisors that include many of the Central Valley's most knowledgeable birders. The first responsibility of the checklist advisors will be to review and comment on the draft checklist. After completed, checklist advisors will play an important role on future refinement and revisions to the checklist. Each advisor will be responsible for one or more of the 22 counties included in the checklist area. I would like to thank John Sterling and Jon King for taking the lead on developing the draft checklist and those of you that have agree to volunteer your time as checklist advisors.

The bulk of work on the checklist project still lies ahead. For example, we've not even begun to discuss the checklist format or if it will be divided into subregions. But I believe that because we've got a superb and enthusiastic group of birders committed to completing this project, we can all look to finally having a checklist of our own in the not too distant future.

Leo Edson