

2018 Central Valley Birding Symposium Summary

With smoky skies and the tragedy of Camp Fire in Paradise hanging over us, the 22nd annual Central Valley Birding Symposium was held Nov 15-18, 2018. The Symposium Committee and the Board thanks attendees and field trip leaders for their flexibility, as many trips were re-routed to avoid heavy smoke.

A detailed summary of Symposium events is on the club's web site (<http://www.cvbirds.org/events/symposium/22nd-annual-cvbc-symposium/>). Several highlights follow.

As always, we had many interesting programs and speakers on bird identification, biology, and conservation. We thank the many presenters for their excellent work, including keynote speakers Ed Harper, Ed Pandolfino, and John Kricher, as well as daytime program presenters Andy Engilis, Ed Harper, Dan Airola, Joe Morlan, and Kimball Garrett. We thank the many others who gave talks and led workshops and field trips, as well as our vendors, organizers, event volunteers, and all attendees!

We celebrated Louise McCullough's impending 100th birthday with an owl cake and a rousing *Happy Birthday* rendition. Louise, with her ABA list at 845, is one of the Symposium's longest, most generous, and beloved supporters.

ABA Young Birder of the Year, Teodelina Martinelli, sister Justina (a 2018 Club scholarship recipient), and her parents attended. Teodelina ably served on Ed Harper's Friday bird ID panel with Kimball Garrett, Joe Morlan, Keith Hansen, and John Kricher. Fiona Gillogly, one of the Club's scholarship winners, described her experience at ABA Camp Chiricahua.

The Club's made its inaugural presentation of the annual Conservation Awards to Samantha Arthur, Neil Clipperton, and Dr. Robert Meese for their work in research and conservation of the Tricolored Blackbird (see accompanying article).

The Club bestowed the 2018 Service Award to Joan Humphrey and John Trochet, who both were among the founders of the Bird Club 22 years ago and remain active in the club today.

We thanked Chris Conard for his steady guidance and leadership as he stepped down after six years as club President, and I (Pat Bacchetti) was voted in new President. Dan Tankersley was recognized for his many years of service to the Board as he steps down, and Lily Douglas and Dan Airola were welcomed as new Board members.

In spite of the smoky conditions, 284 participants birded, learned about the birds we all care about, and cemented relationships with new and old friends. We thank you for attending, and we invite you all to the 2019 symposium, from November 21-24, 2019. Until then, good birding!

Patricia Bacchetti, CVBC President

Central Valley Bird Club Conservation Awards 2018: Samantha Arthur, Neil Clipperton, and Robert J. Meese

The Central Valley Bird Club awarded its inaugural Conservation Awards at the 2018 Central Valley Bird Symposium. The award will annually recognize and honor individuals or organizations who have made a meaningful contribution to the conservation of birds in the Central Valley.

Samantha Arthur, Neil Clipperton, and Robert J. (Bob) Meese were awarded 2018 Conservation Awards for their important work on behalf of the Tricolored Blackbird.

Samantha Arthur, Conservation Project Director at Audubon California, was recognized for her work coordinating the multi-stakeholder Tricolored Blackbird Working Group, securing grants to support protection of nesting colonies in dairy silage fields, co-authoring several papers on ecology and conservation of tricolors, and especially for leading critical advocacy efforts that led to the listing of the species as Threatened in California in 2018.

Neil Clipperton, Nongame Wildlife Biologist at the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, was recognized for his authorship of the Tricolored Blackbird status review, which was a key document that supported the need for state listing of the species. Neil also has had key roles in the Tricolored Blackbird Working Group, securing funding and implementing the silage colony protection program, and funding and overseeing key research and monitoring programs.

Bob Meese, recently retired from UC Davis, was recognized for his long commitment to research, monitoring, and conservation on behalf of the Tricolored Blackbird, including managing the Statewide Tricolored Blackbird survey; implementing a large banding program that has provided key information on survival and movements; publishing key research on population status, reproductive success, ecology, and habitat management; and developing and managing the Tricolored Blackbird portal, a central repository for information on the species.

Central Valley Bird Club members can nominate individuals or organizations for the 2019 award by contacting club President Pat Bacchetti (bacpab@comcast.net) or Conservation Chair Dan Airola (d.airola@sbgloblal.net).

Thank You To Our Supporters

The Board of Directors of the Central Valley Birding Club and the Central Valley Birding Symposium Steering Committee thank the following individuals, Audubon Chapters, and companies who gave to the CVBC's Bulletin and scholarship programs and supported the CV Bird Symposium during 2018. The generosity of these members contributed importantly to the quality of our programs.

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