

# President's Message

Even in these unsettled times, the Club has been engaged in several issues that may be of interest to you. Since adaptation is survival, our meetings have been switched to an online virtual setup, fine for conducting business but short on face-to-face comradery. But in the interest of health and safety, we will continue to meet this way until we all feel it is safe to meet again in person. Through prudent management of the budget, the Club continues to be healthy financially and we hope that many of you will renew your membership online this fall.

## **Symposium 2020**

In that vein, most of you are aware that the symposium has been postponed to 2021. Sadly, the prospect of gathering 300 birders and speakers from across the country in an enclosed hotel ballroom seemed unwise. If conditions in the fall of 2021 warrant, we will be back in business with keynote speaker Scott Weidensaul leading the program. We are lucky that the Stockton Hilton Hotel, our partner for over 20 years, was flexible and understood the nature of the current situation.

## **Youth Scholarships**

Because of your generosity, nine young birders were ready to go to camps all over the country this summer; however, you know what happened. Payments had already been made, but Cliff Hawley was able to recover all but our deposit amount from each venue. The deposits will serve as placeholders for next year's camps, and we are hoping that the young people will be able to attend in Summer 2021.

Board member John Harris has proposed that the Board award a stipend to a Central Valley college/graduate student doing bird-related research. In addition to developing young birders, we would like to encourage and develop young scientists. More will be coming about this as we start outreach.

## **Conservation**

The Club was also able to provide comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed expansion of the Valley Rail Sacramento Extension Project. The railway extension would go through the critical and protected Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District Bufferlands property and cause impacts to oak woodland, grassland, and wetland habitats elsewhere in Sacramento County. Board member Dan Airola and other members were able to submit comments for the Club. We are fortunate to have professionals on the Board and in the membership, who can provide relevant comments when situations like this arise.