



Volume 1, Issue 1
July—August, 2009

Yolo Natural Heritage Program Newsletter

Upcoming Events

- **The Yolo County Fair:**
August 19-23, 2009
- **Creekspeak:**
August 13, 2009
- **A Day in the Country,
Yolo Land Trust Celebration:**
September 13, 2009

About the Yolo Natural Heritage Program

The Yolo Natural Heritage Program (YNHP) is a county-wide Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP) for Yolo County. The YNHP plan will develop strategies to conserve the natural open space and agricultural landscapes that provide habitat for many special status and at-risk species found within the natural communities in Yolo County. It will also describe measures to allow appropriate permits for urban growth and public infrastructure projects, while preserving



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Featured Species: Tricolored Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*)

On May 7th, 2009, a visually estimated flock of 3,000 tricolored blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) was seen and heard at the pond at the west boundary of the Conaway Ranch in Yolo County, California, by Dr. Robert Meese, an

ecologist in the Department of Environmental Science & Policy at the University of California, Davis. Dr. Meese has been working with tricolored blackbirds in the region for the past five years. He continued to monitor this site over the next weeks and estimated a total breeding population of approximately of 25,000 adults. These birds bred throughout the month of May and by mid-June they had produced an estimated 15,000 young.

Thus, the Conaway Ranch hosted one of the largest and most productive breeding colonies in California in 2009, while supporting research that is contributing to our knowledge of the movements of tricolors through space and time. *Continued*



Tricolored blackbird fledglings

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News

CDFG Statement on the Yolo Bypass

On June 23, 2009, the California Department of Fish & Game (CDFG) issued comments on conservation and management of aquatic resources in the Yolo Bypass to guide efforts by the Bay Delta Conservation Plan



Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area
© CDFG

(BDCP) to improve conditions for fish and wildlife resources within the Delta. The Yolo Bypass Position Statement can be viewed here: yolo-bypass-policy.pdf.

Additional information about the BDCP can be found at <http://resources.ca.gov/bdcp/>.

Featured Species *continued from previous page*

For more information about the Conaway Ranch, visit <http://www.conawayranch.com/>.

The tricolored blackbird is protected under the California Fish and Game Code and is considered a Species of Special Concern. Although this designation does not afford specific protections, it has been used to identify species that are "rare, threatened, or endangered" under the California Environmental Quality Act. More information on California Bird Species of Special Concern is available at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/wildlife/species/ssc/birds.html>.



Tricolored blackbird flock at sundown

Upcoming Events

Yolo County Fair!

Date: August 19-23, 2009

Stop by and visit our kiosk! The YNHP will have an interactive informational exhibit at the Yolo County Fair that will enable interested citizens to learn more about our program goals and activities and about habitat and wildlife species in Yolo County. The exhibit will also provide opportunities for communicating concerns and opinions on conservation issues in Yolo County. Information about the Yolo County Fair can be found at <http://www.yolocountyfair.com/>.

CREEKSPEAK! "Putah Creek Fish Stories"

Date/Time: Thursday, August 13, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Location: Winters Community Center, 201 Railroad Avenue, Winters, California

Sponsored by: the Putah Creek Council

<http://putahcreekcouncil.org>

CREEKSPEAK! is held in the Winters Community Center, 201 Railroad Ave, from 7:00 pm-8:30 pm on the second Thursday of the month from May through October. All talks and events are free and open to the public. For more information, contact Libby Earthman, Director, Putah Creek Council, at 530-795-3006 or by e-mail at libby@putahcreekcouncil.org.

“A DAY IN THE COUNTRY” Yolo Land Trust Celebration

Date/Time: September 13, 2009, 3:00 – 6:00 pm

Location: Elkhorn Basin Ranch

The Yolo Land Trust will celebrate 21 years of preserving farm and open space in Yolo County at their 2009 fundraiser, “A Day in the Country.” This year’s

event will be held on Sunday, September 13 at the beautiful Elkhorn Basin Ranch, between the Yolo Bypass and the Sacramento River, north of Hwy 5.

For more information, contact Judy Boshoven, the Executive Director, at 530-662-1110 or by e-mail at judy@yololandtrust.org or visit the Yolo Land Trust website at <http://www.yololandtrust.org>.

Recent Accomplishments

YNHP Update

The first phase of the Yolo Natural Heritage Program is now completed. Some important accomplishments include establishment of a Steering Advisory Committee and a Technical Advisory Committee, preparation of a draft Ecological Baseline Report, development of a GIS data base and completion of the Independent Science Advisors process. The next major phase is underway and focuses on development of conservation strategies and preserve design alternatives. Please visit our website for more information and related documents

<http://www.yoloconservationplan.org>. A calendar of events and meetings is available at this site.



Swainson's Hawk

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Links to Other Organizations and Events

Cache Creek Conservancy

<http://www.cachecrk@yolo.com>

Putah Creek Council

<http://www.putahcreekcouncil.org>

Tuleyome, Inc.

<http://www.tuleyome.org/>

Yolo Audubon Society

<http://www.yoloaudubon.org>

Yolo Basin Foundation

<http://www.yolobasin.org>

Yolo Land Trust

<http://www.yololandtrust.org>

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

<http://www.fws.gov/sacramento/es/hcp.htm>

California Waterfowl Association

www.calwaterfowl.org

California Dept. of Fish & Game

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/habcon/>

YOLO NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

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