



Sea & Sage Audubon Society

Learning California Bird Sounds (LCBS)

An Intermediate-Level Birding Skills Workshop

presented by Sylvia Gallagher, with Doug Lithgow and Roy Poucher

Accomplished birders depend on their ears much more than their eyes for detecting and identifying many types of birds, especially when they are in wooded or brushy habitats. They walk along listening and only try to see the bird if they are uncertain about the identification of a vocalization they hear. Usually more than 90% of the birds they find are identified first by the sounds they make. If you are still bird-watching most of the time, here's a chance to start bird-listening. A Birding Skills Workshop, sponsored by Sea and Sage Audubon and presented via Zoom by a team chaired by Sylvia Gallagher, will serve as an introduction to **LEARNING CALIFORNIA BIRD SOUNDS (LCBS)**. We'll cover around 60 common species of the California lowlands west of the mountains that are most frequently detected first by voice. In addition, there will be a short lecture each week on the nature and meaning of bird sounds.

If you have a fairly good knowledge of the appearance of the common birds, you should be well prepared for this ten-week workshop. (The ten week Sea and Sage Introductory Birding Skills Workshop is the level of experience presumed for this one.) Those who have done LCBS before, are welcome to repeat it as many times as they wish. It usually takes at least one repeat to feel truly comfortable with the material.

Five sections will be offered but be aware that there is a possibility that one or more of them will be cancelled if enrollment is insufficient. Be sure to list as many choices as you can. The dates (including holidays) and times are as follows:

MON. evenings, 7:00 – ca. 10:00 pm, Jan. 5 – March 9

TUES. mornings, 9:00 – ca. 12 noon, Jan. 6 – March 10

WED. evenings, 7:00 – ca. 10:00 pm, Jan. 7 – March 11

THURS. mornings, 9:00 am – ca. 12 noon, Jan. 8 – March 12

THURS. evenings, 7:00 – ca. 10:00 pm, Jan. 8 – March 12

The workshop will be accompanied by MANY field trips, led by current and former workshop members who have some experience as aural birders. We'll try to have a couple of scheduled field trips every week, some on weekends, some on adjacent weekdays. In order to get full benefit from this workshop, plan to spend at least three hours every week listening to birds in the field in a variety of locations; the trips are designed to help you do this.

The maximum enrollment for each section is 21. If any section does not have at least 12 people enrolled by Dec. 19, it may be canceled. Reserve early though, because some sections will fill rapidly. A donation of \$180 or more is requested, if you can afford it. (Send check, made out to Sea and Sage Audubon Society), with your enrollment form.)

The required "textbook" for the workshop series is Sylvia's **LEARNING CALIFORNIA BIRD SOUNDS (4th ed., 2016**, available at Audubon House), a package containing worksheets and a flash drive with introductory and practice sounds (\$39). **Earlier editions will not be acceptable.** (If you last did the workshop in Jan. – March 2016 and only have the preliminary version of the workshop package used then, you must purchase the final version. It became available in summer, 2016; you may have purchased it then.) If two people in the same household plan to share the sounds, each one must have a copy of the worksheets. Make your own copies of the ones that come in the package. You must buy the required workshop package far enough in advance of the first session, so that you will have time to do a little homework prior to the first meeting. This will be outlined in your confirmation letter.

A strongly recommended book is the **Peterson Field Guide to Bird Sounds of Western North America** by Nathan Pieplow, also available at Audubon House. In addition, these four apps/websites are recommended. (The first 3 have both pictures and sounds.)

Sibley Guide to Birds

iBird Pro

Macauley Library, part of Birds of the World (BOW)

Xeno-Canto

Most important of all is that you install **Raven Lite** sonogram-making software in your computer—and you must have a computer (PC or Mac) in order to use the flashdrive. This free service from the Cornell University Lab. of Ornithology is available online from **RavenSoundSoftware.com**. In fact, **you will be seriously handicapped if you try to do the workshop without Raven Lite!** If you already have an older version, you must upgrade it to a current version of Raven Lite 2.0.4 (or higher). For problems with installation, contact Doug Lithgow dmlithgow@aol.com. People who register for the workshop will receive a set of instructions for using Raven Lite. Those that come with the software are very difficult to use.

To reserve a space in the workshop, please send the form below, **postmarked no sooner than Dec. 1** (two-day penalty for early reservation), to: **LCBS Workshop, Sylvia Gallagher, 21562 Kaneohe Ln, Huntington Beach CA 92646**. Enclose your check and a long (4"x9 1/2") self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE). Confirmation, further information, will be mailed Dec. 22. For further information, contact Sylvia Gallagher at sjrgallagher@yahoo.com (preferred) or 714-962-8990.



Enrollment Form for LCBS Workshop

Print VERY neatly!!! Be sure no symbol is ambiguous.

Enrollment Form – Learning CA Bird Sounds (Winter 2026)

Names of all participants _____

Address(es) _____

City _____ ZIP _____ Phone(s) _____

E-mail(s) _____

To ensure placement, check or rank **at least** two choices of section (three if one's a morning & one's an evening):

MON. pm ____ TUES. am ____ WED. pm ____ THURS. am ____ THURS. pm ____

SASE enclosed? _____ Workshop donation enclosed? _____



MAIL TO: Introductory Workshop, Sylvia Gallagher, 21562 Kaneohe Ln, Huntington Beach CA
92646