

## Winter Wildlife of the Central Valley

B. Elliott

Thank you for your interest in our program to observe winter wildlife in the western San Joaquin Valley. The program will begin in front of the Wildlife Check Station at Los Banos State Wildlife Area.

[Los Banos Wildlife Area web site](#). This web site has links to a map.

Participants should be dressed for cold, damp weather (perfect for geese.) We will leave from here for the day's ventures with runs along the tour routes of Merced and San Luis areas and finish in the late afternoon when viewing conditions for both elk and owls are optimum.

Please bring a lunch and beverage, as no public accommodations will be located along our route. There will be opportunities for restroom stops. In addition to proper clothing, you will certainly want to bring binoculars to enhance your wildlife viewing experience. If you have a sporting scope and/or camera, please feel encouraged to bring these along as well.

Please leave your dog or other pets at home! This class may occur in sensitive wildlife areas, and is subject to applicable national or state park or wildlife preserve regulations.

Do be advised that we go rain or shine (the birds don't care) and only the densest of tule fog will divert us from our proposed itinerary.

Our group meets in the main parking lot of the Los Banos State Wildlife Area check station (see map). We will conduct wildlife tours both by vehicle and on foot on authorized tour routes.

### **Directions:**

From the Bay Area or the Monterey Bay Area it is a one-and-a-half hour drive. From Gilroy on 101 take State Highway 152 eastward over the Pacheco Pass to the junction of the State Highway 33, a few miles below Los Banos Reservoir and Dam. Go north on Highway 33 to the small freeway town of Santa Nella. Take a right onto Henry Miller Avenue. Follow this eastward about twenty minutes driving time to State Route 165. Cross the Route 165 and proceed about one quarter mile further on Henry Miller Avenue to the entrance to the State Wildlife Area on the left-hand side.