

## Thursday, November 5 2015: Wild Turkeys

**Birding Information:** This month, we will be sharing an informative and engaging video from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology on bird behavior. Recognizing behavioral clues is a key component of bird identification. Improve your identification skills by watching Lab experts as they examine posture, foraging behavior and flight style.

**Main program:** Alan Krakauer: Wild Turkeys



**Main Program:** Dr. Alan Krakauer will chart the history of Wild Turkeys in California and elsewhere, tracing their recent rise from rare hunting quarry to controversial suburbanite. Turkeys in California provided a key to solving a long-standing puzzle in evolutionary biology— why should one animal help another? Male turkeys sometimes show up as teams to jointly court and defend females during the breeding season. One suggestion was that the males were brothers, and that males could be successful by helping a close relative pass on his genes. By combining field observations and genetic information, Alan was able to confirm that males in teams were kin and that these teams father many more offspring than males that display alone.

Alan originally hails from the east coast (North Carolina and Virginia) and received his B.S. from Cornell University. He moved to the Bay Area in 1998 to start graduate school at UC Berkeley. Alan spent several years studying turkeys at UC Berkeley's Hastings Natural History Reservation in upper Carmel Valley. His study of cooperation among males is now featured in several ornithology and animal behavior textbooks. Alan is now a lecturer and project scientist at UC Davis, and has been uncovering the behavior and ecology of Greater Sage-grouse since receiving his Ph.D. in 2005. He has published more than twenty scientific articles, presented his work at conferences from Iceland to Brazil, and helped with several nature documentaries including this year's *The Sagebrush Sea* on PBS.

More detailed information about the November program is available in our November 2015 Quail newsletter.

(Photo: Emily Duval)