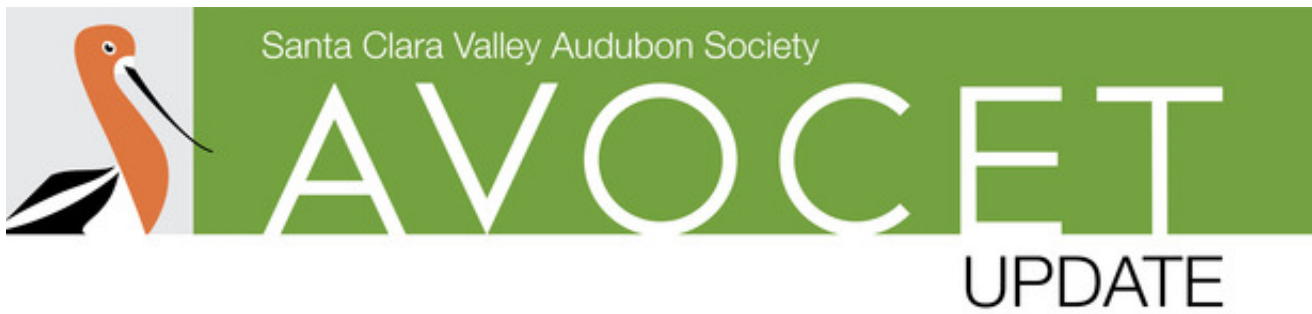


[Click to view this email in a browser](#)



Pacific Wren: Corey Raffle

## March 2022

There is so much to talk about this month. Most important is the upcoming Birdathon and the kickoff event with special guest speaker. But we also have the Spring issue of the AVOCET, plenty of new field trips on the calendar, new backyard birds, a new t-shirt, a new online class, and a new print-on-demand store! Check it all out below.

~**Matthew Dodder, Executive Director**

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# SCVAS BIRDATHON 2022

KICKOFF March 16 at 7PM

The SCVAS Birdathon  
March 26 – May 8



Cassin's Vireo. Photo by Luis Villablanca

**Birdathon Kickoff March 16, 7:00 PM (via zoom)**  
with special guest Freya McGregor of Birdability



 **Birdability**

We will present the selection of teams, new rules and COVID considerations, as well as the exciting prizes to be awarded after the final day of the Birdathon. Followed by the Birdathon kickoff, we will welcome our **March Speaker** Freya McGregor of Birdability. Birdability is on a mission to make birding accessible for everyone. Learn about ways this organization works to increase the accessibility of our favorite activity!

Sign up for the Birdathon Kickoff and Speaker Series [here](#).

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Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

Spring 2022 · Vol 70 Num 2



**SPECIAL EVENT**  
**BIRDATHON KICKOFF!**  
WITH SPECIAL GUEST  
FREYA MCGREGOR

Wed, March 16 at 7 pm  
via Zoom



As an occupational therapist and Birdability staff member, Freya understands how to modify the physical and cultural environments and adapt tasks and equipment to enable participation. Her work at Birdability is done through an occupational therapy lens and her 'dodgy' knee has been a motivator to improve accessibility those wanting to go birding.

More details at [scvas.org](https://scvas.org)

## A Year in Review

Shani Kleinhaus, Environmental Advocate  
Giulianna Pendleton, Environmental Advocacy Assistant

The SCVAS Environmental Advocates, Shani and Giulianna, cannot begin to express our gratitude and appreciation for all the work and support that our Environmental Action Committee (EAC) members have embraced in 2021, and the support of the SCVAS community at large.

This was the year we celebrated huge successes, such as the protection of Coyote Valley, the adoption of a Dark Sky and Bird Safe ordinance in Cupertino, the prioritization of biodiversity in the City of Mountain View and the start of a habitat garden in Cuesta Park, the allocation of state funds to design a wildlife bridge in the Pacheco Pass area, the adoption of Valley Water policy ([tinyurl.com/5xp2j65j](https://tinyurl.com/5xp2j65j)) to guide the development of creekside trails on this agency's property, and an urban-ecology focused plan for Google's development in downtown San Jose.

There were a few painful losses as urban "infill" continues to consume open space or encroaches on riparian buffers. San Jose's approval of a 16-story-2-block-long office project on the banks of the Guadalupe River, and the erosion of the 20-year creek protection policy in San Jose is a great disappointment to our team.

Here are a few of our many 2021 success stories, looking ahead to 2022 (and beyond), and volunteer opportunities for our members. For more opportunities to advocate for birds and nature in your community, please contact us at [advocate@scvas.org](mailto:advocate@scvas.org).

Continued on page 6

## New Avocet

The Spring issue of the Avocet is now available for download on our site. The issue includes the final CBC results, Conservation Corner, Field Notes, a new Track and Feather challenge, and tons more. [Download it here](#)



Matthew Dodder leading Merced NWR SCVAS Field Trip

## Field Trips

**In-person** field trips for March 1 - April 2 post on **Feb 26**. Locations covered include Coyote Ridge, San Tomas Aquino Creek Trail, Guadalupe Oak Grove Park, Rancho Cañada del Oro and more! Visit [field trips](#) for more information and to register.

Trips filled-up? Check a day or two before your trip of interest goes out. Sometimes we have cancellations.



Hey Birders! Do you have a favorite birding location that you would love to share with others? Consider leading a SCVAS trip, and joining our great team. Contact Eve Meier at [fieldtrips@scvas.org](mailto:fieldtrips@scvas.org) for details.

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House Finch: Hita Bambhania-Modha

## Self-Guided Field Trips

We have added two new guides to our selection:

- [Ed Levin Spring Valley Area: Hummingbirds at the "Magic Tree"](#) by Chris Johnson
- [Stile Ranch Trail in Santa Teresa County Park: A Short Climb for Chaparral and Grassland Birds](#) by Brooke Miller

For all of our March recommendations and the complete collection of guides, visit our [self-guided field trip page](#).

If you would like to write a guide for a location that you love to bird, please contact Eve Meier at [fieldtrips@scvas.org](mailto:fieldtrips@scvas.org).

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Lesser Goldfinch: Tom Grey

## Backyard Birding

Thank you to everyone who participated in the [Great Backyard Bird Count](#) from February 18 to 21! We hope you enjoyed birding, and sharing the joy of birds, with bird lovers everywhere. Your counts will be used by scientists to better understand birds and support conservation.

**What birds did you see in your yard or neighborhood during the GBBC?** Send your lists, stories, and photos to us at [backyardbirds@scvas.org](mailto:backyardbirds@scvas.org) and we'll publish them in our next All Around Town, our monthly round-up of backyard bird sightings.

Here are our latest backyard birding articles:

[Backyard Bird of the Month](#) - Our featured bird for March is the Lesser Goldfinch. This tiny, nimble finch eats seeds, buds, and flowers, and especially enjoys sunflower and thistle seeds at feeders. Our local Lesser Goldfinches have an olive-green back; below, they are a muted yellow (females and young birds) or a bright lemon color (adult males). Listen for the birds' high-pitched, descending whistle calls as they chat with each other.

[All Around Town](#) - Raptors hunt and soar, finches visit feeders, and waxwings munch on berries! Find out what birds our members and friends have seen lately in their yards and neighborhoods, and contribute your observations to this monthly publication.

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Barry showing off the new Sparrows of Santa Clara County t-shirt. Illustrations by Matthew Dodder.

## New T-shirts

The SCVAS 2022 Shirts are almost here! All the Sparrows of Santa Clara County. They'll be in our Nature Shop in just a few days. Shirts will also be available from our new Zazzle store (see below).



**New Sparrows Class Online**  
Monday, March 7, 14, 21 at 7:00 PM (via zoom)



Brush up on your identification skills for those “Little Brown Jobs” that confound so many of us. We’ll discuss the taxonomy, behavior and field marks of resident and migrant species, as well as the occasional rarities.

[Sign up here](#)

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Lehigh Quarry and Cement Plant. Photo by Jitze Couperus

## Conservation Corner

### **Petition: Say NO to Plastic Grass**

This spring, the Los Gatos Union School District will be considering converting elementary school sports fields from natural grass to plastic turf. We should be promoting native plants and grasses, not increasing plastic in our environment. Please [sign this petition](#) to ask Los Gatos elected officials to say NO to plastic turf.

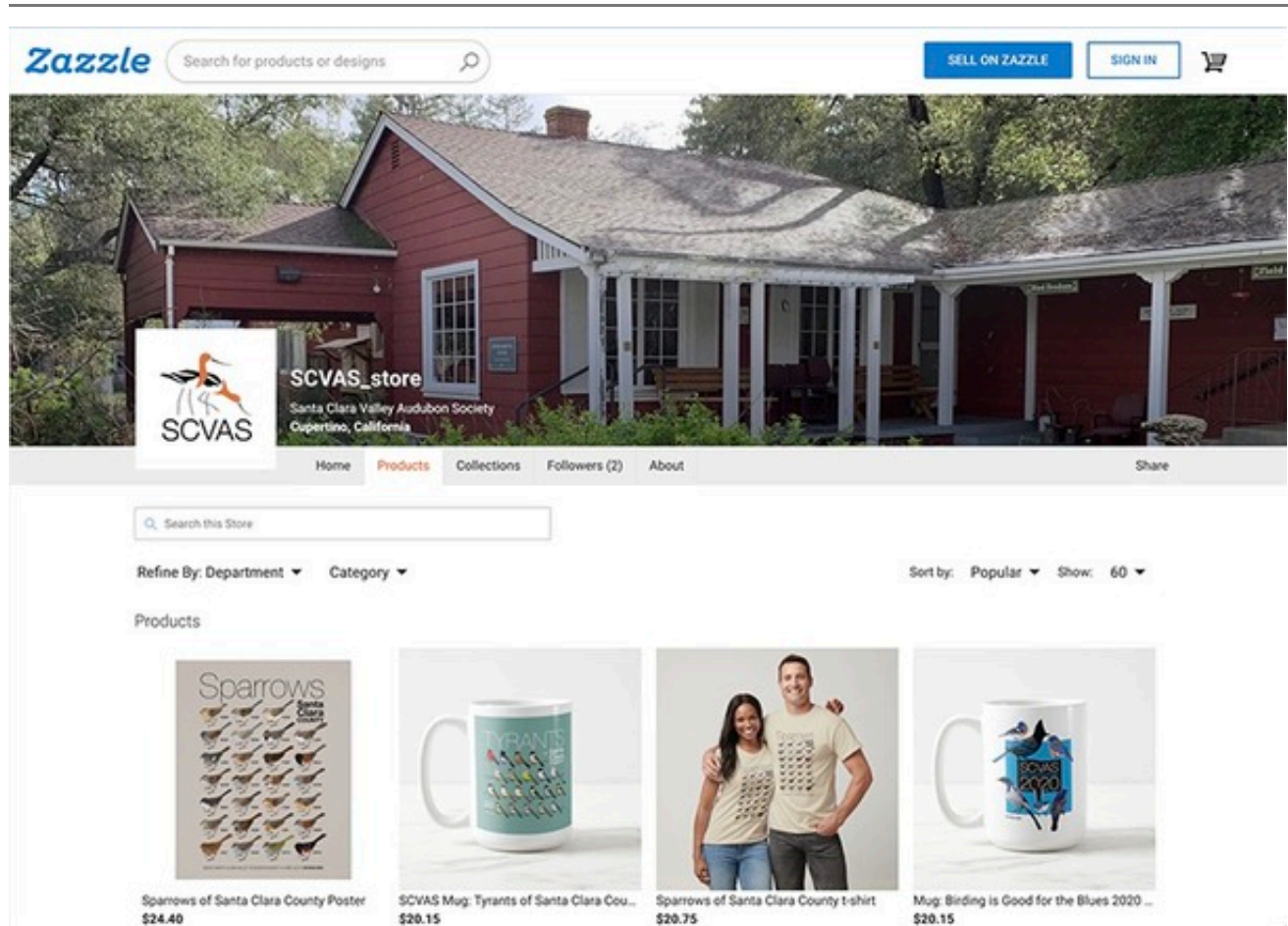
### **Lehigh Quarry and Cement Plant**

With huge public support (Thank YOU!), Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to approve Supervisor Simitian’s referral to direct Santa Clara County to prepare a roadmap for the acquisition of the Lehigh Cement Plant and Quarry property! Lehigh has been polluting our air and water in Cupertino for one hundred years, violating environmental regulations and scarring our landscape. We look forward to continuing our advocacy efforts to protect these hillsides!

If you are interested in more information about the current situation at Lehigh, please [register](#) for Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian’s annual Lehigh public meeting for Wednesday, March 2nd, from 6:30-8:30pm. The panelists include U.S. EPA, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Valley Water, and more! This is an important virtual meeting to participate in and speak for air and water quality, wildlife and nature.

### **San Jose Electronic Billboards Update**

Despite overwhelming public opposition, the San Jose City Council voted to approve the two digital billboards at Mineta San Jose International Airport. The vote was a difficult setback to our dark skies advocacy, but the vote did require stricter terms of agreement with Clear Channel: Clear Channel must take down at least 12 billboards (instead of 8) in lower-income neighborhoods, the new billboards must run on 100% renewable energy, and Clear Channel must replace each tree removed with 5 new trees in areas of the city with low canopy coverage.



## New Zazzle Store

In addition to our current online store, we now have a growing selection of print-on-demand items on Zazzle. New products will be added regularly. For this first release we have posters, shirts and coffee mugs. [Visit our Zazzle store here](#)

## Nature Shop Hours: March

The SCVAS Nature Shop will be running on limited hours in the month of March from the 7th to the 21st. Please contact us at **(408) 252-3747** before visiting. Standard operating hours (M-F, 10am-4:30pm) will be in effect for the remainder of the month.



Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

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