

# Birdcanso

# Thank you.

Thank you for supporting The Birdcassos, the first-of-its-kind Birdathon team for SCVAS. We are a team consisting of artists who work during a 4-hour window to draw or paint as many birds as we can. When we first discussed the idea, I expected everyone to meet somewhere birdy and support each other as we drew together. Then of course, that all changed two weeks ago when we realized we'd have to stay at least 6 feet apart.

So instead, we all worked independently and went wherever we wanted, and you know what? It still felt like we were working together! You can read where each of the artists went in the pages that follow... Enjoy their artistic renderings of local birds, and join us again next year!

Matthew Dodder

Wednesday, April 1, 2020

# Our Artists:

Mary Ann Allan  
Matthew Dodder  
Leena Khanzode  
Barry Langdon-Lassagne

Over 100 drawings were created, 76 unique species.



- |                        |                           |                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Canada Goose           | Marbled Godwit            | Oak Titmouse              |
| Blue-winged Teal       | Least Sandpiper           | Nor. Rough-winged Swallow |
| Cinnamon Teal          | Western Sandpiper         | Tree Swallow              |
| Northern Shoveler      | Long-billed Dowitcher     | Violet-green Swallow      |
| Gadwall                | Greater Yellowlegs        | Barn Swallow              |
| Mallard                | Willet                    | Cliff Swallow             |
| Green-winged Teal      | Ring-billed Gull          | Bushtit                   |
| Canvasback             | California Gull           | Ruby-crowned Kinglet      |
| Greater Scaup          | Forster's Tern            | Bewick's Wren             |
| Lesser Scaup           | Black Skimmer             | European Starling         |
| Bufflehead             | Double-crested Cormorant  | Northern Mockingbird      |
| Common Goldeneye       | Great Blue Heron          | Western Bluebird          |
| Ruddy Duck             | Great Egret               | American Robin            |
| Eared Grebe            | Snowy Egret               | Cedar Waxwing             |
| Western Grebe          | Black-crowned Night-Heron | House Finch               |
| Clark's Grebe          | Turkey Vulture            | Pine Siskin               |
| Rock Pigeon            | White-tailed Kite         | Lesser Goldfinch          |
| Band-tailed Pigeon     | Cooper's Hawk             | Dark-eyed Junco           |
| Eurasian Collared-Dove | Red-tailed Hawk           | White-crowned Sparrow     |
| Mourning Dove          | Nuttall's Woodpecker      | Golden-crowned Sparrow    |
| Anna's Hummingbird     | Northern Flicker          | California Towhee         |
| Common Gallinule       | Black Phoebe              | Red-winged Blackbird      |
| American Coot          | California Scrub-Jay      | Great-tailed Grackle      |
| Black-necked Stilt     | American Crow             | Yellow-rumped Warbler     |
| American Avocet        | Common Raven              |                           |
| Killdeer               | Chestnut-backed Chickadee |                           |

# Mary Ann's story

I was up bright and early on April 1st to eat and then drive to Alviso for the first part of my Birdcassos bird-a-thon. My plan was to visit a few of the Alviso birding hotspots and draw what I could, while sitting well-isolated in my car. The front seat was my workbench: binoculars on the center console, colored pencils in the cup holders. And the steering wheel a handy table for my sketchpad. The birds were there and waiting for me. Large numbers of American Avocets and Black-necked Stilts filled the shallow waters near State St. and Spreckles Ave. Nearby fields and residential areas were filled with song. There were more birds species than I could draw so I rushed to choose a bird that would be in view for a couple of quick looks and then focused on my drawing. The time flew by. A short walk to Mallard Slough near the Don Edwards Environmental Education Center yielded 5 species of duck and a lovely treat—a here-then-gone Common Gallinule. Darting Barn Swallows overhead were the first ones I had seen this season, newly arrived from southern lands. Then it was back home for a quick viewing of my familiar backyard buddies before the clock struck 12 noon.

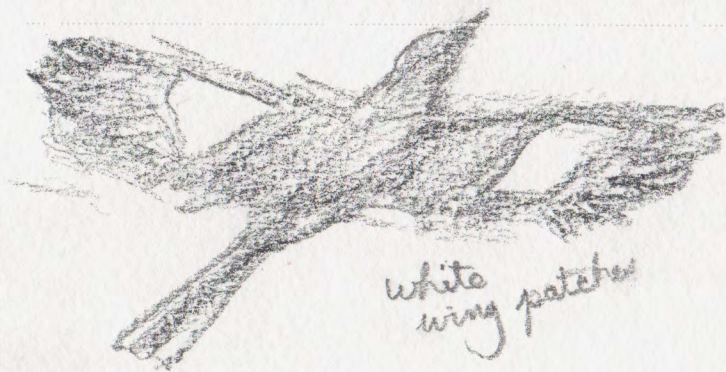
~ **Mary Ann**

“The front seat was my workbench,  
and the steering wheel a handy  
table for my sketchpad.”



①

NOMO



EUST

Alviso 4/1/2020

②



Black-necked  
Stilt

AMAV

Alviso,

State + Spreckles

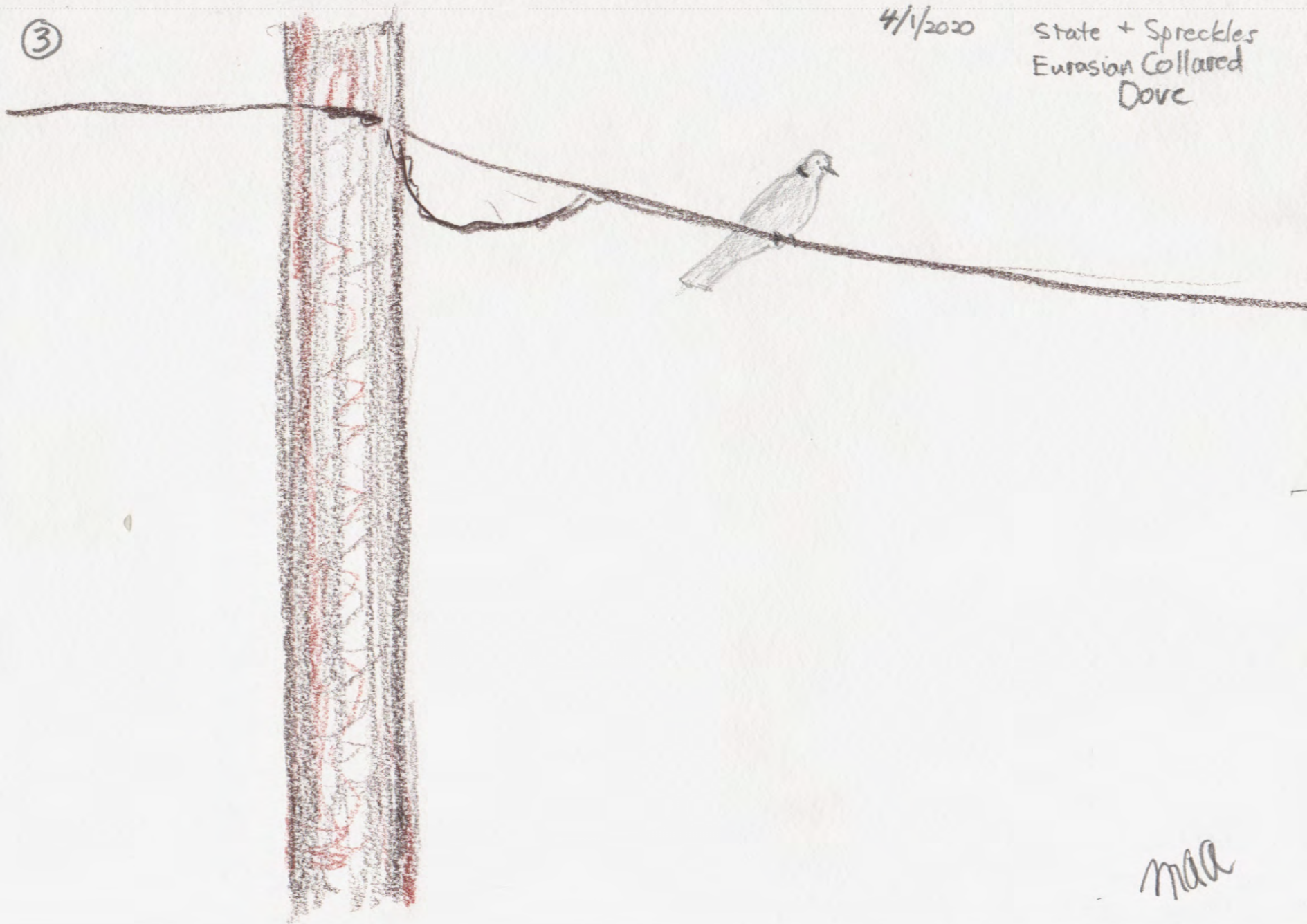
4/1/2020

MAC

③

4/1/2020

State + Speckles  
Eurasian Collared  
Dove



mae

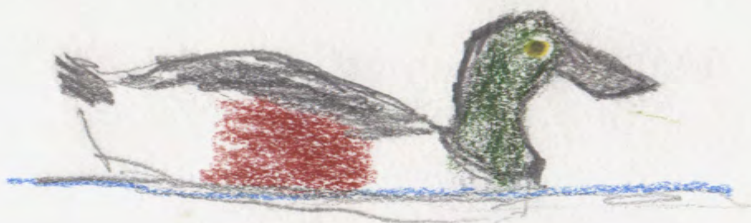
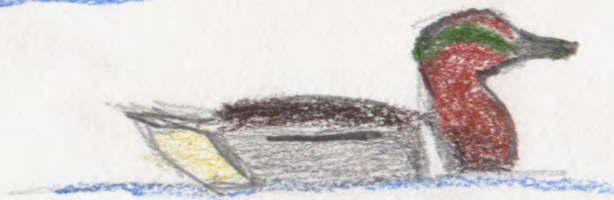
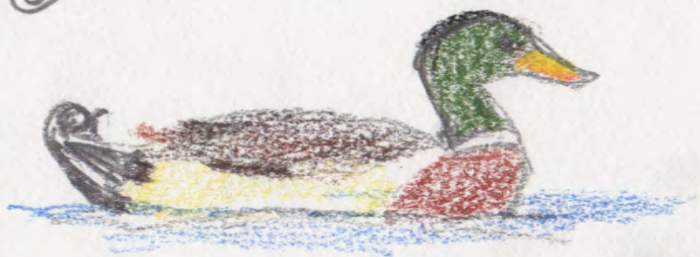
4



Fennel Patch, State + Spreckles 4/1/2020 ANHU + BUSH  
ma



5



Common  
Gallinule

MALLARD SLOUGH

4/1/2020

Mallard, Gadwall, Cinnamon Teal,  
Green-winged Teal, N. Shoveler, and

6



Canada Goose

Red-winged  
Blackbird

maa

⑦

Killdeer



CORA



AMCR

Alviso 4/1/2020

maa

⑧



Greater Yellowlegs



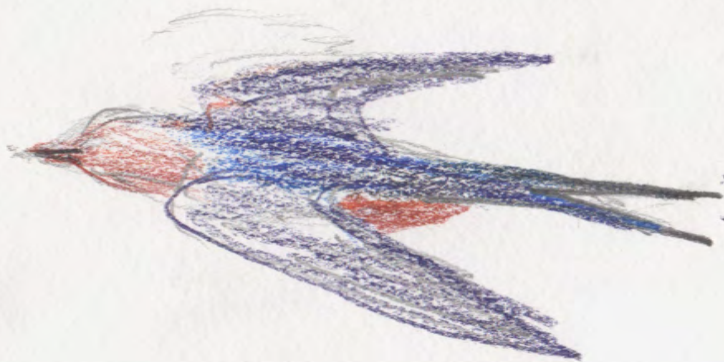
Red-tailed  
Hawk

Alviso, Don Edwards  
4/1/2020  
MCA

9

FOS

Barn Swallow



White-crowned Sparrow



California Towhee

maa

10



MODO



♀

♂

HOFI



DEJU

♂

Backyard 4/1/2020

macl



“I’m quite certain there’s an artist inside each of us... just waiting for an invitation to create.”

# Matthew’s story



I chose to go local and arrived at Charleston Slough at 8:00. I scanned the Coast Casey Forebay and found numerous Shorebirds and Waterfowl so I set up immediately on my portable chair beside the pump house and began drawing. The breeze blew my papers around a lot. I worked fast because my goal was to create 50 drawings during the time allotted. It meant however, that my work would be coarse, and despite having prepared a selection of colored pencil colors (including my whole library of cold and warm grays), I used only my trusty #2 pencil. Next I moved to Shoreline Lake, and finally, I made a dash for Palo Alto Baylands only to find that Embarcadero was closed before the water treatment facility. I parked and walked to the water before I returned home for lunch. I composed my favorite drawing in the last 10 minutes before the deadline.

The most joyful moment however, was at Shoreline Lake when 7 Black Skimmers flew around the island. Two of them split off to engage in what I assume was a courtship flight display. They were “volplaning” which means “sky dancing” in Skimmer, and Swift language. It was breathtaking. I wished the rest of my team had been there to see it with me.

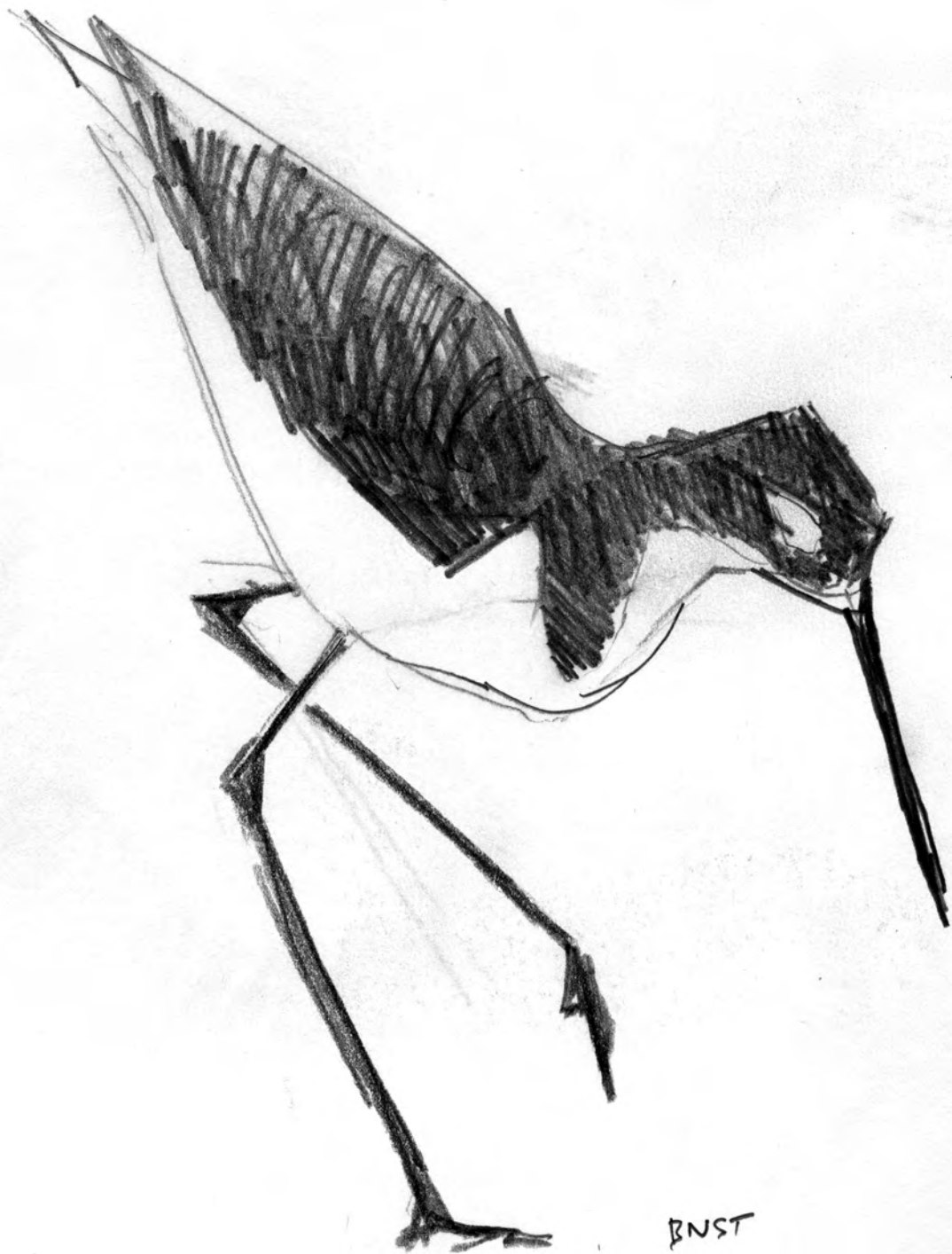
It was a wonderful day, and I look forward to joining this team again next year, and hopefully we will get even more participants. I’m quite certain there’s an artist inside all of us!

~ **Matthew**





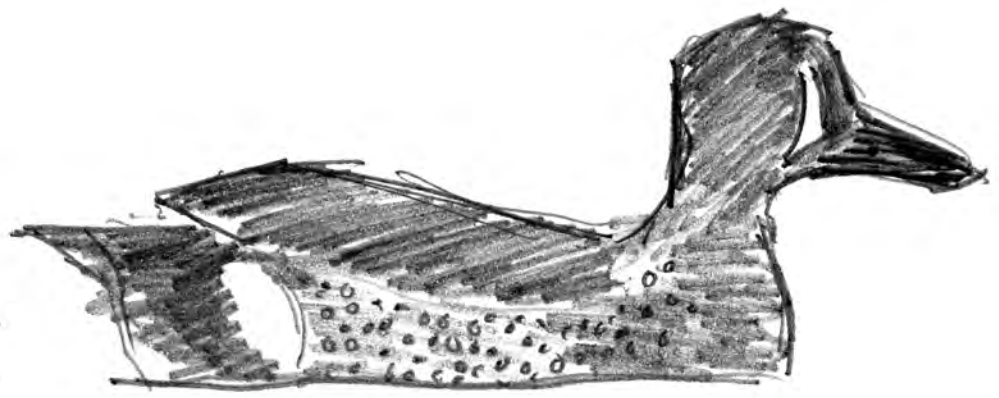




BNST



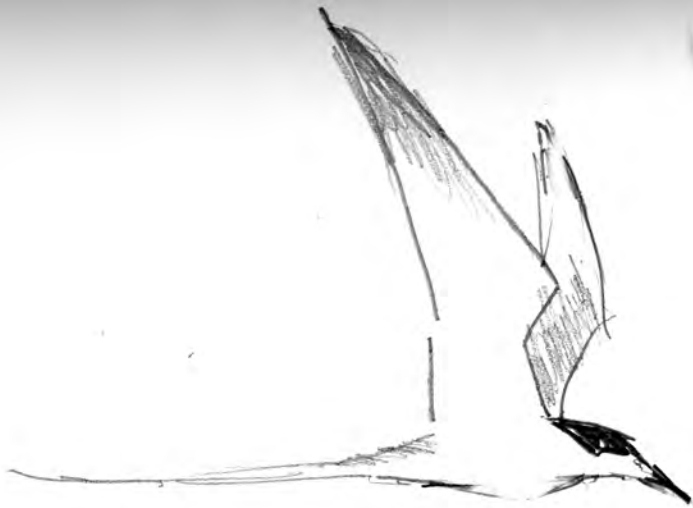
GTGA ♂



BWTE ♂



CAGU



FOTE



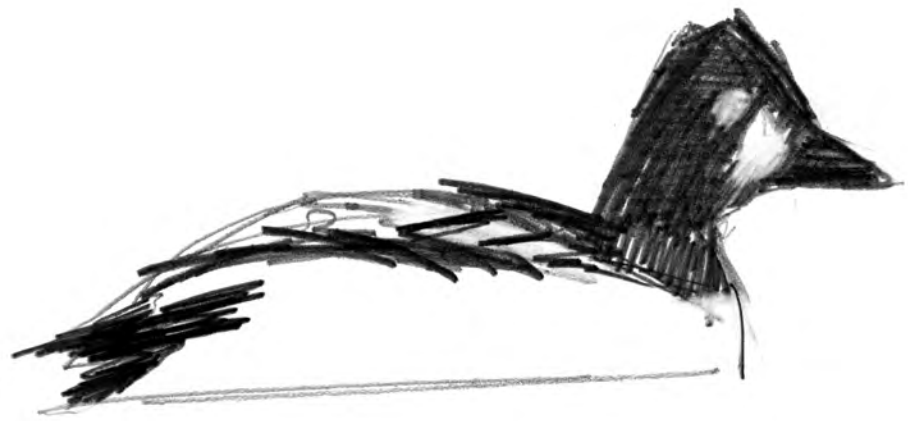
BLSK



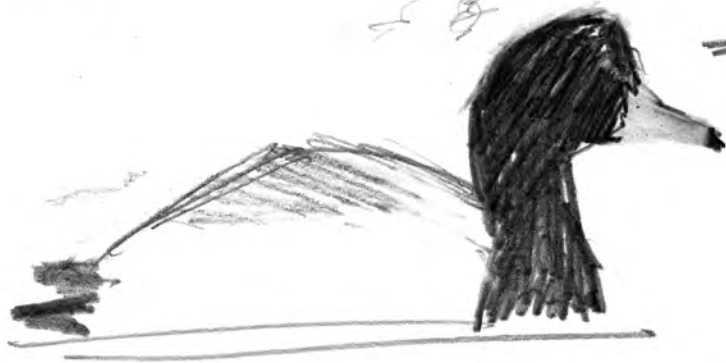
AMCO



COGA



COGO



GRSC



LESC



TUVU



AMCR



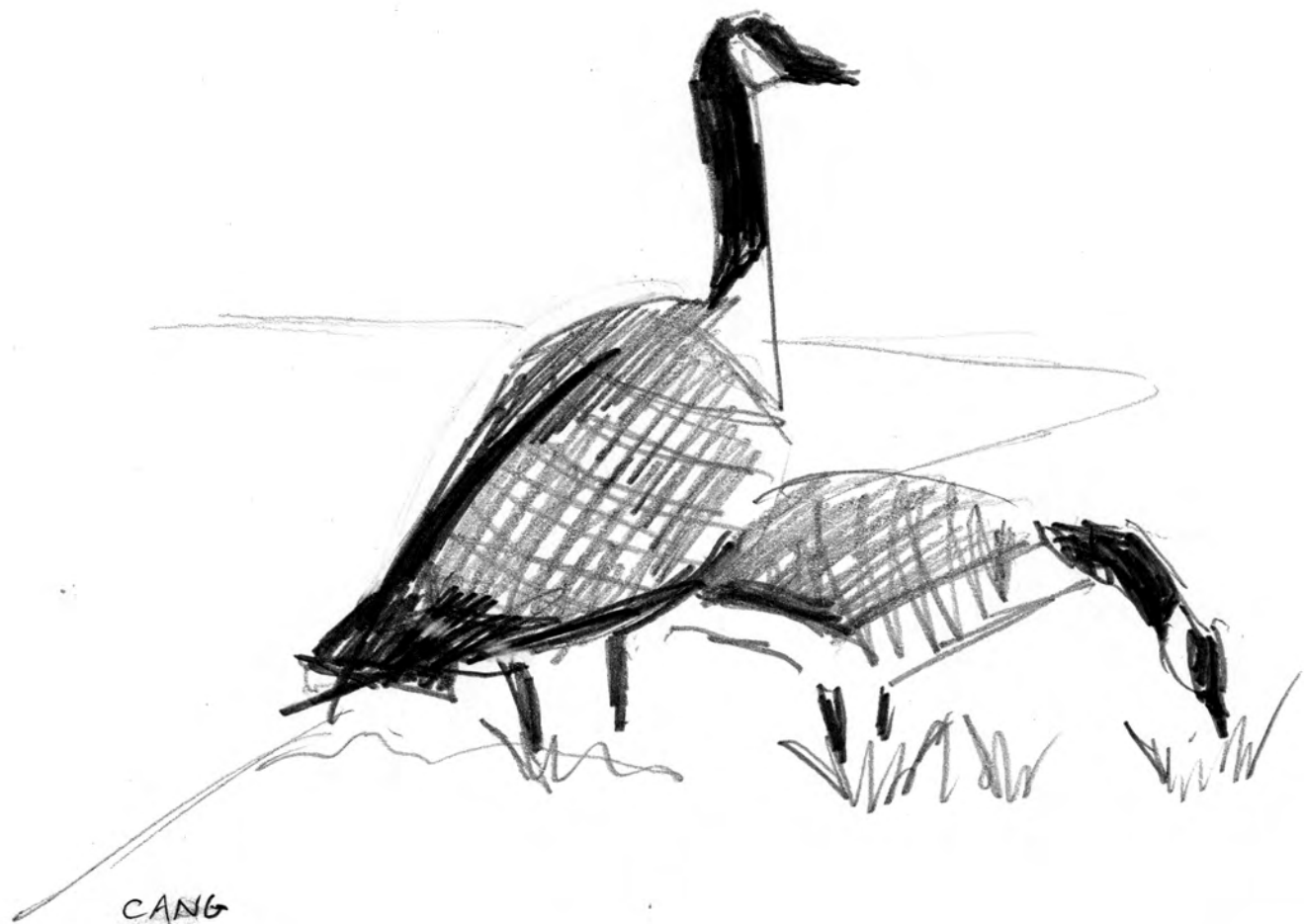
GTGR



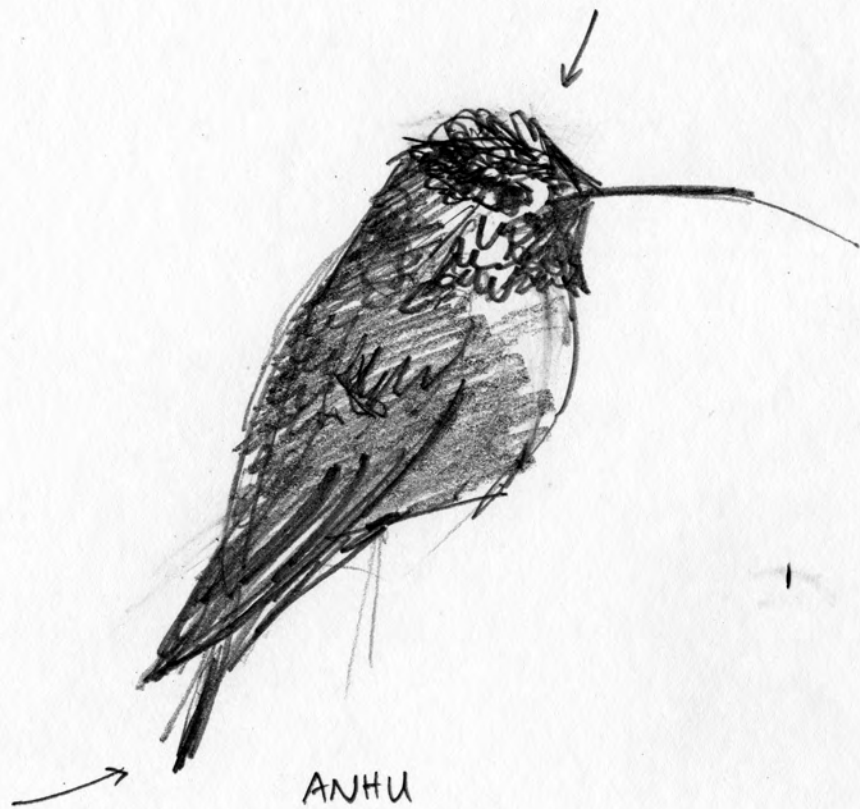
EUST



CORA



CANG



ANHU



RUDU

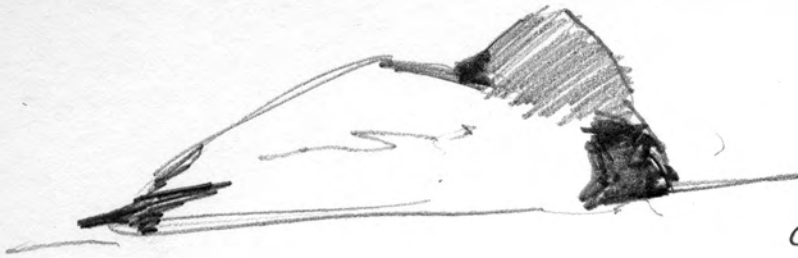




WCSP



GGCSP



CANV ♂



GRSC ♂



LESC ♂



CLGR



WEGR



VGSW



NRWS



BARS



TRSW



CLSW



WTKI



KIU



BLPH



BCNH

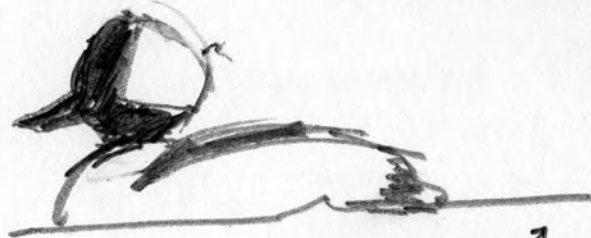


PCCO





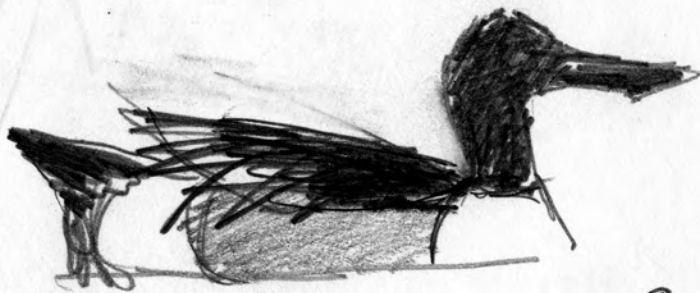
GADW ♂



BUFF ♂



NOSH ♂

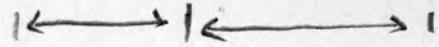


♂ NOSH

MAGO



GRYE



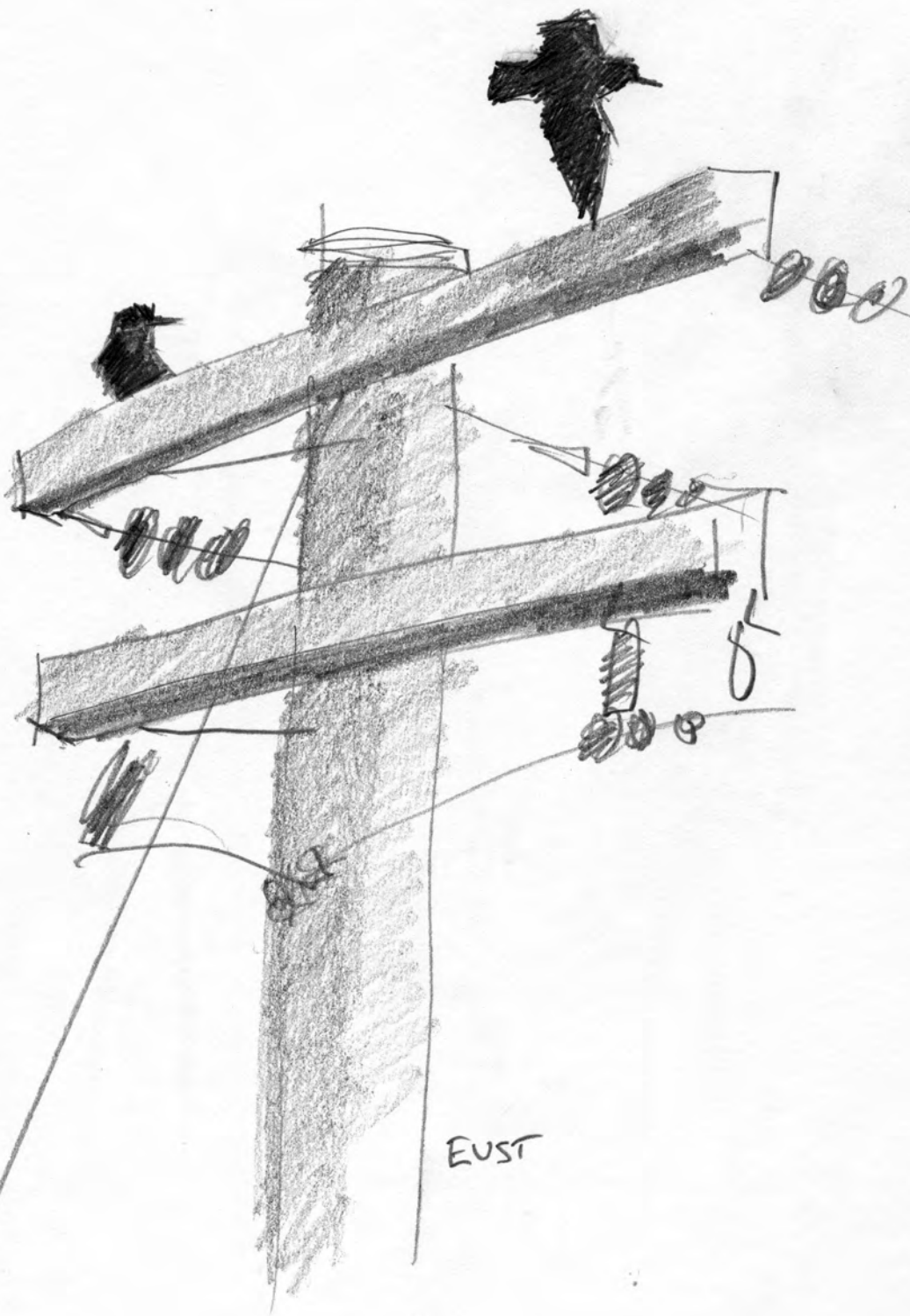
LBDO

WESA

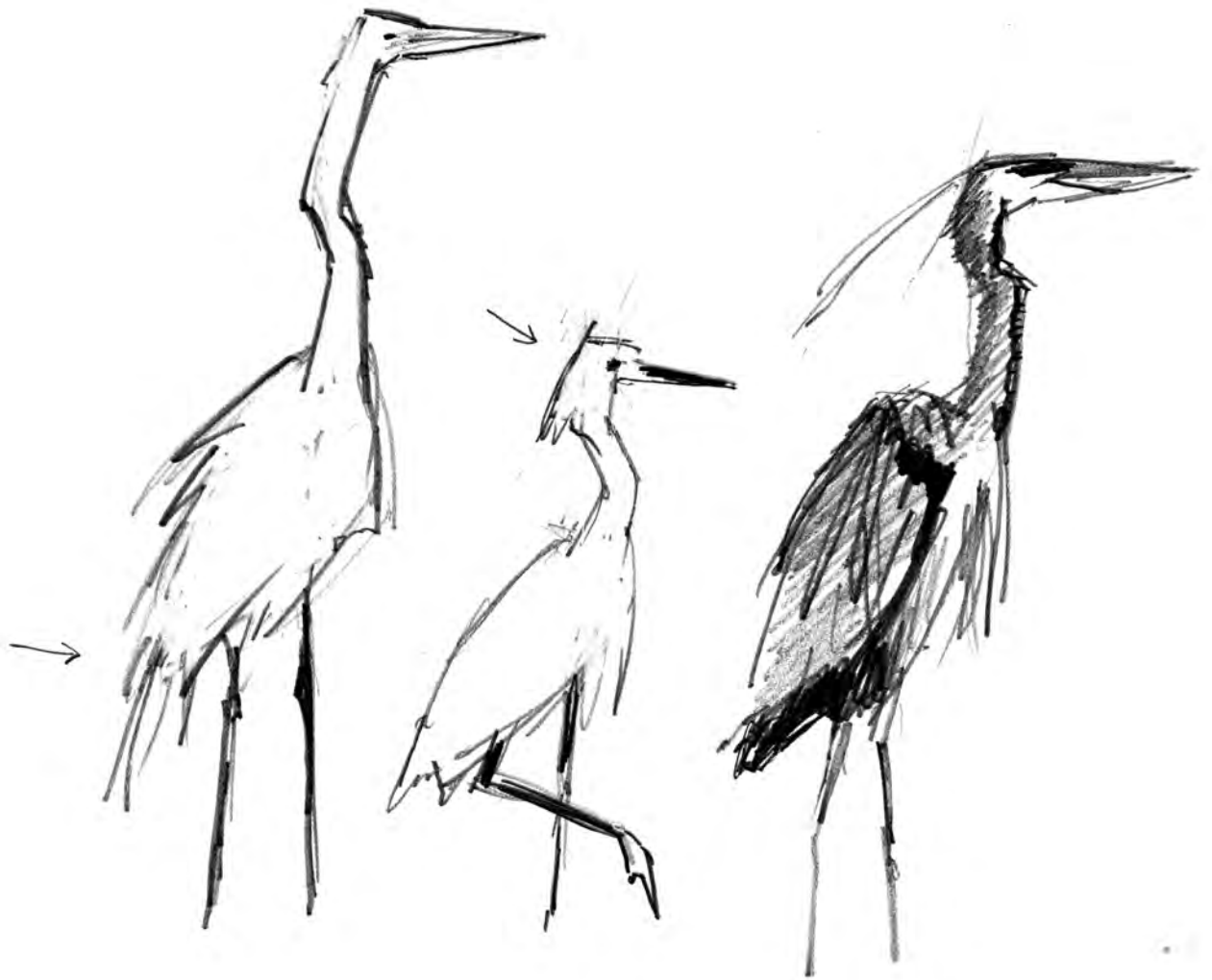
WILL

LESA





EUST



GREG

SNEG

GBHE

# Leena's story

Today's birdathon/sketchathon was quite memorable! Shelter in place due to COVID-19 changed how we did things but nevertheless it did not stop me from sketching some 30 species of birds that I saw in my neighborhood.

I started at 8 am, sketching in our yard. Within the next 15 minutes I had a Nuttall's Woodpecker and an Oak Titmouse in our frontyard—I almost screamed in joy!! I had to focus intensely on the face pattern of that Nuttall's. To sketch and then paint... became a challenge as the birds starting pouring in! I could only sketch the bird's face for most part in order to keep up with the birds I saw. I also sketched two Corvids (we don't talk about Covid)

I took a day off from work to relax and enjoy watching and sketching birds and to help raise funds for my Audubon chapter to educate and preserve habitat. What a win-win!!

~ Leena

“I had a Nuttall's Woodpecker and an Oak Titmouse in our frontyard—I almost screamed in joy!!”

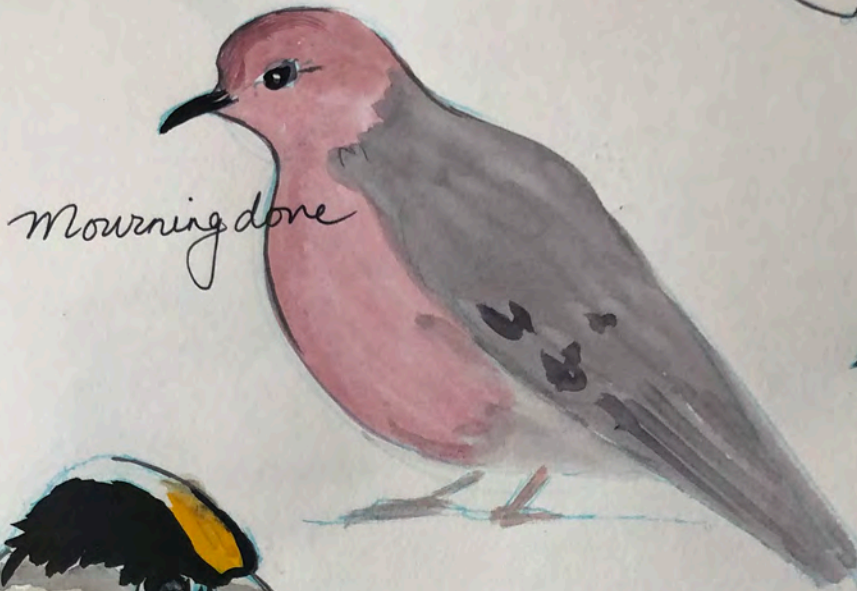




Band-tailed Pigeon



Anna's



Mourning dove



Lesser Goldfinch



Golden-crowned sparrow



Oak titmouse

# BIRDATHON 2020



Bushy-tit



House Finch

Bewick's wren



Nuttall's woodpecker



Cal. Towhee



Junco



American Crow

Plicker  
heard  
& seen  
@ distanc



Rock  
Pigeon



Canada  
goose

Mockingbird



Ring billed gull



Exc. Starling

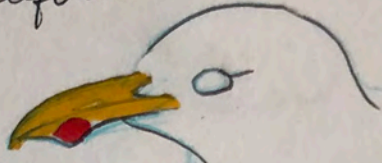


Cal.  
Scrub jay





California Gull.



Chestnut  
backed  
Chickadee



American  
Robin



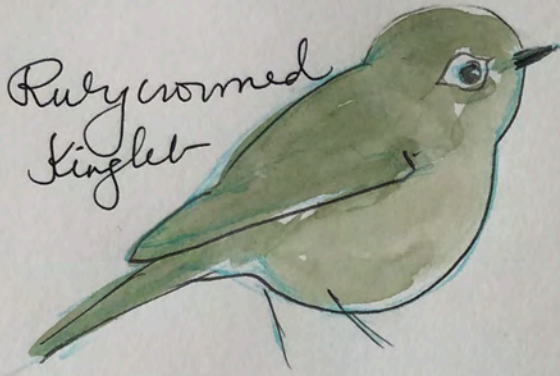
Black  
Phoebe



Yellow  
rumped  
Warbler



Mallard





“I used my iPad Pro, Apple Pencil and an app called Procreate to make drawings”

# Barry's story



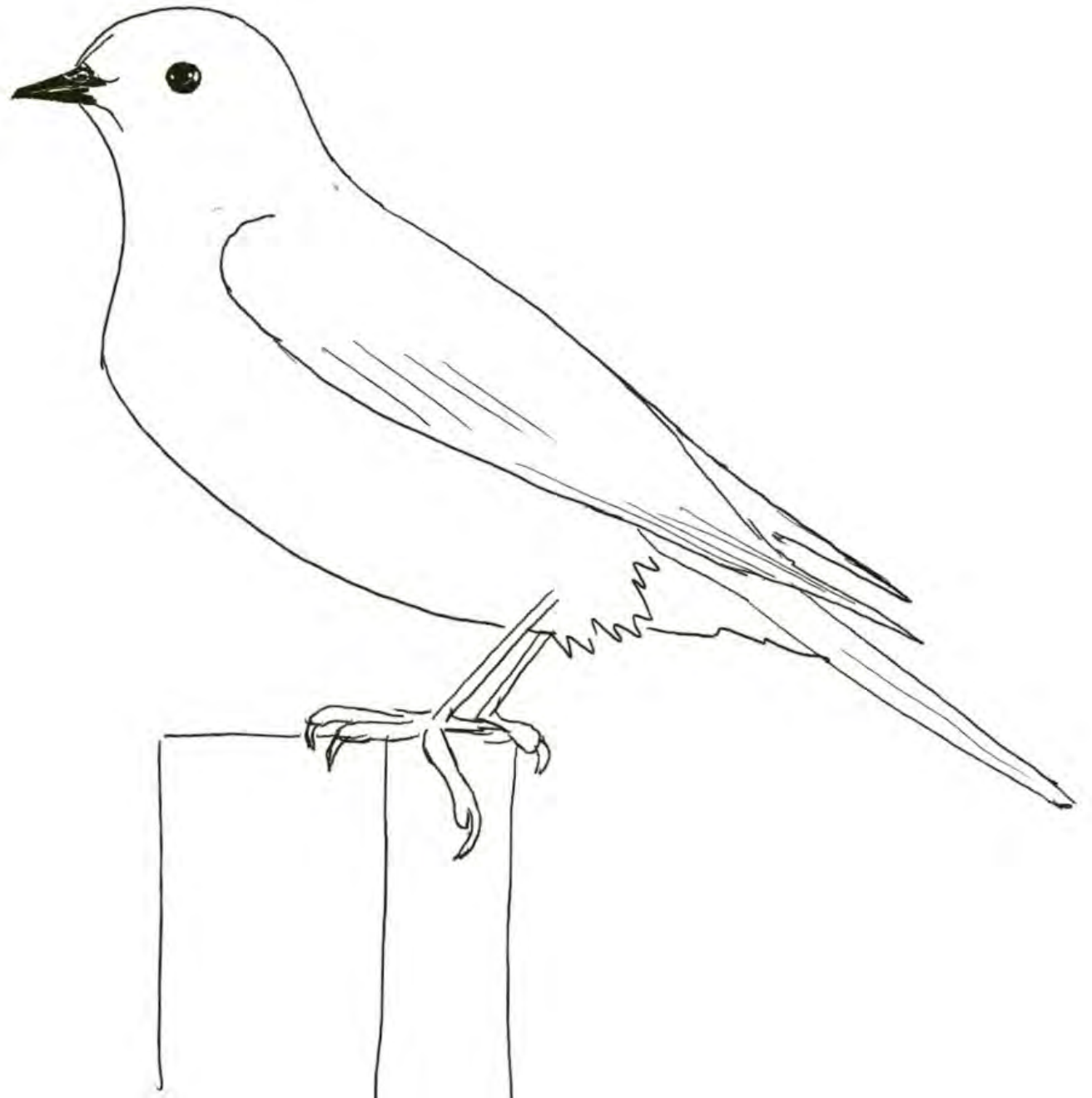
For the Sketchathon, I came up with a two-part strategy: Part 1: bird the neighborhood and local park, photographing birds along the way. Part 2: Draw as many birds as I can based on the photos I took. Turns out four hours is not nearly long enough!

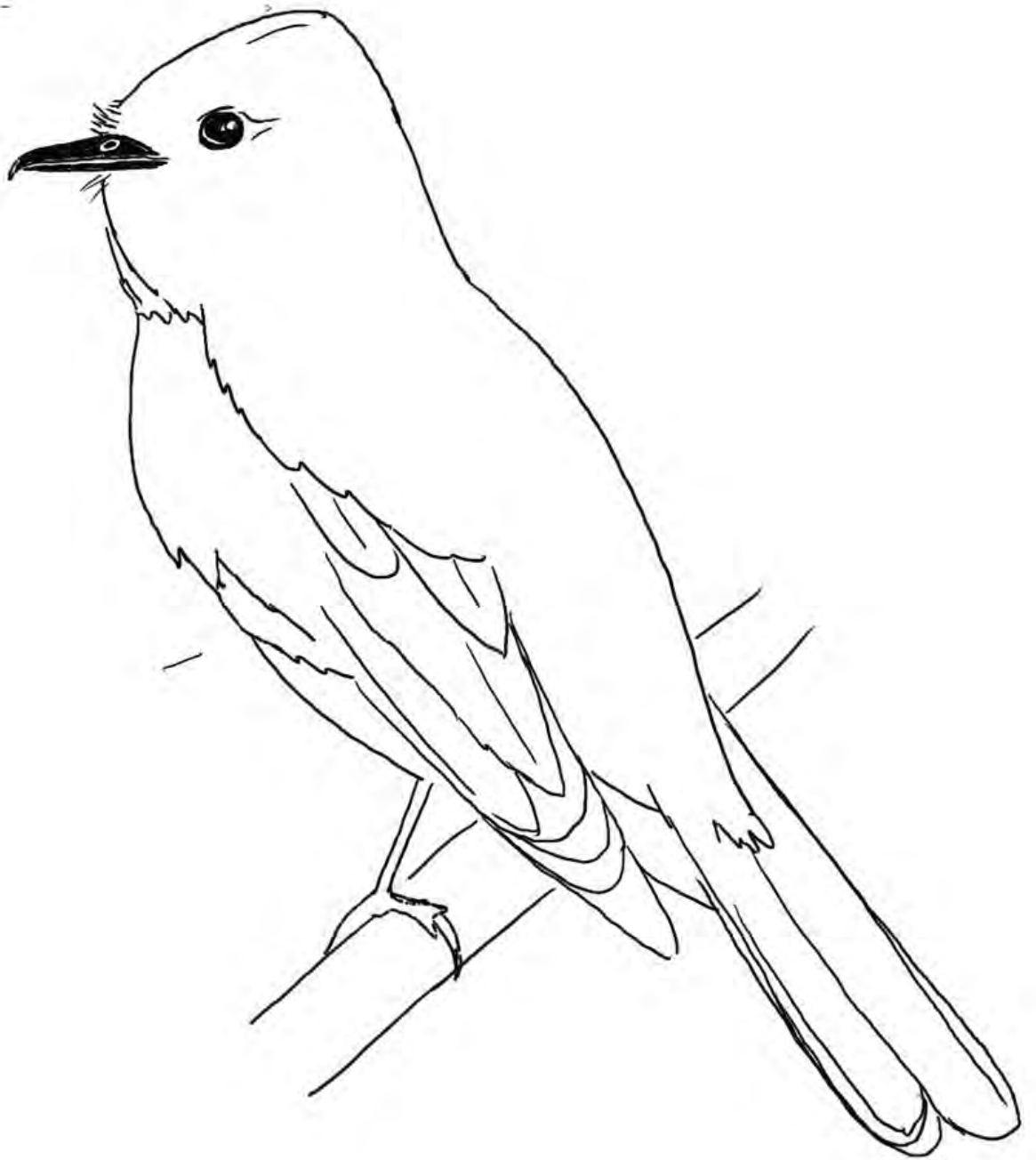
Part 1 went great. I saw twenty species and photographed the majority of them. The highlight was seeing a pair of Cooper's Hawks together in the same tree at Ponderosa Park. Having them pose side-by-side really points out the size difference between the male and female. I also had nice poses from a Yellow-rumped Warbler, lots of Black Phoebes in different parts of the park and an Oak Titmouse.

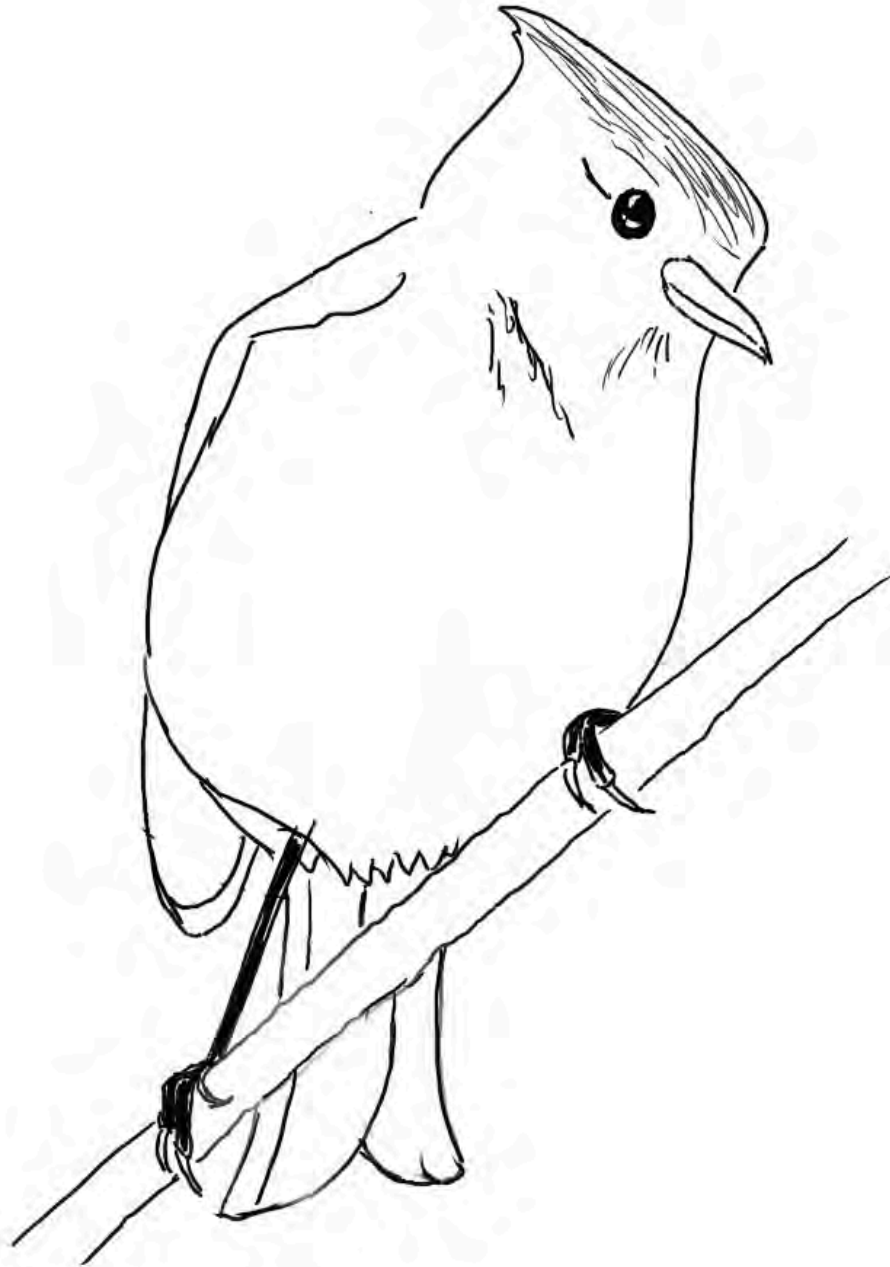
For Part 2, I settled indoors and got to work drawing. This didn't go quite as well as Part 1, since I only had an hour and a half left to draw as many birds as possible. I used my iPad Pro, Apple Pencil and an app called Procreate to make drawings of Western Bluebird, Black Phoebe, Oak Titmouse, Yellow-rumped Warbler and the pair of Cooper's Hawks. Then the clock ran out, so I didn't get a chance to refine them or color them. There were lots of photos that I was still hoping to use for inspiration: a Townsend's Warbler peeking out from the leaves of a sycamore, a California Gull screaming mid-flight, a Mourning Dove taking off, etc. Overall though it was a great learning experience and I'd love to do it again. And next time I'll spend less time birding and more time drawing!



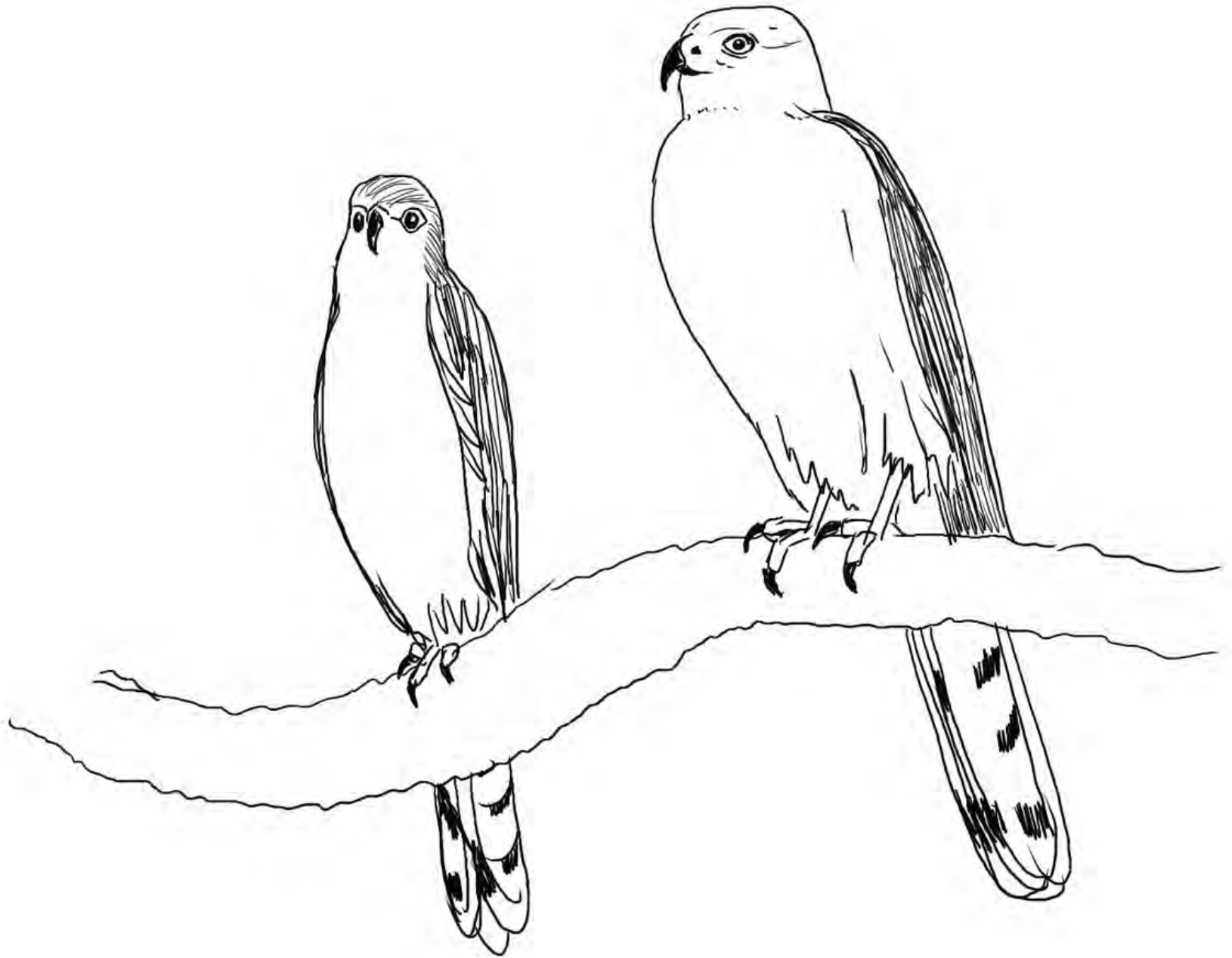
~ Barry













# See you again in 2021...

Don't be timid. We hope more of you will join The Birdcassos next year.  
Each one of us has an artist inside, just waiting for an invitation to create!

*Birdcassos*



The Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society promotes the enjoyment, understanding, and protection of birds and other wildlife by engaging people of all ages in birding, education, and conservation.

[scvas.org](http://scvas.org)