



# The Avocet

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

May 1993

## Introducing International Migratory Bird Day

Saturday, May 8, 1993 will be the first annual International Migratory Bird Day. On the second Saturday in May each year, individuals and organizations throughout the Western Hemisphere will participate in activities dedicated to the conservation of all migratory birds—songbirds, shorebirds, raptors, and waterfowl.

International Migratory Bird Day will provide a platform for the numerous conservation efforts already underway through the Partners in Flight - Aves de las Americas Program and will inspire others into action. The concerns of scientists will be taken to the press, the public, and legislators. Grassroots organizers in North America will join forces with their counterparts in Latin America. Children will encourage adults to "see" a warbler for the very first time.

More than 330 species of birds embark on annual migrations across the Americas, breeding in the north, wintering in the south, and traveling between during the spring and fall. For time untold, seasons have turned with the melodious song of the thrush and the soaring of hawks. In recent years, however, spring has grown quieter and the fall skies more still.

**Fact:** Populations of forest dwelling migratory birds in eastern North America declined at a rate of one to three percent a year over the 1978-1987 decade.

**Fact:** Between 1972 and 1983, at least nine species of shorebirds declined—Dowitcher 40%, Whimbrel 60%, and Sanderling 80%.

**Fact:** Although the populations of most species of raptors rebounded throughout the 1970's and 1980's in response to stronger controls on the use of organochlorine pesticides, Sharp-shinned

Hawks, American Kestrels, and Broad-winged Hawks all face trouble as their numbers continue to fall.

**Fact:** In 1985 the total breeding population of ducks was estimated at 30,833,000 individuals, the lowest ever recorded.

**Fact:** The decline of migratory birds is primarily due to the destruction and degradation of habitat through the Americas.

**Fact:** You can make a difference!

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### **General Membership Meeting, Wednesday, May 19 7:30 PM refreshments, 8:00 PM program.**

Palo Alto Cultural Center  
Newell & Embarcadero Rds.

### **Bay-Marsh Dwellers: Clapper Rails, Salt Marsh Harvest Mice and Other Listed Species**

Elaine Harding-Smith is the Fish and Wildlife Service's main wildlife biologist covering the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. The Refuge is involved in conservation efforts for endangered species including the Salt Marsh Yellowthroat, Alameda Song Sparrow, Peregrine Falcon, California Least Tern, Black Rail (state threatened), and the little known Salt Marsh Wandering Shrew. Elaine will present in-depth studies of the Clapper Rail and Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse, and will concentrate on the bay and tidal marsh species, including those that frequent salt ponds.

Meeting is co-sponsored by the Palo Alto Open Space and Sciences Division.

# Chapter News

## Chapter Elections

SCVAS members present at the May 19 General Meeting at the Palo Alto Cultural Center will vote on the following slate of nominated SCVAS officers and directors for 1993-94:

### Directors ('91-'94):

Earl Cilley  
Mike Rigney  
Alan Thomas

### Directors ('92-'95):

Jane Becker-Haven  
Reid Freeman

### Directors ('93-'96):

Bobbie Handen

### Officers:

President: Rob Colwell  
1st Vice President: Tony Eppstein  
2nd Vice President: Nick Yatsko  
Treasurer: John McLemore  
Rec. Secretary: Clysta Seney

## Your Help Is Needed

**Request for Information on the Purple Martin:** I am documenting the historical and present distribution of the Purple Martin in California as part of a study initiated by the California Department of Fish and Game. This information will be used to determine the status of the Purple Martin in California as well as for my own research purposes. I would greatly appreciate the submission of any records regarding Purple Martin nest sites and migratory staging areas. As much as possible of the following information is

*requested:* dates; location including county, nearest town, elevation, landowner, and detailed site directions (photocopied topographic maps are excellent); numbers of individuals (or pairs or nests); stage of the breeding cycle; nest substrate; reproductive success; habitat type including condition and proximity to water; presence of starlings; and other comments you believe may be useful. Please send information to: Brian Williams, P.O. Box 605, Loomis, CA 95650 or phone 916/624-4861.

## Gifts & Bequests:

In Memory of Oscar Buneman

Gift of: Mary C. Davey

In Memory of June C. Murphy

Gift of: Millie & Catherine Butera, Anna Marie Castro, Jack & Anita Grogan, Willa & Ed Kilbourne, The Mullins Family, and C.R. Tilbury, E. P. or Elizabeth P. Kiear.

SCVAS welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the SCVAS Board of Directors. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to: SCVAS,

22221 McClellan Rd., Cupertino, CA 95014. All gifts are tax-deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as the recipient, the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in the *Avocet*.

### SCVAS OFFICERS

President	Rob Colwell	415/326-2400
Past Pres.	Grant Hoyt	415/969-7892
1st VP	Tony Eppstein	415/326-1376
2nd VP	Nick Yatsko	408/247-5499
Treasurer	John McLemore	408/261-9431
Rec. Secty.	Clysta Seney	408/261-9431

### STAFF

Managing Dir. Cecily Harris 408/252-3747

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Bobbie Handen '90-'93	408/356-4263
Mike Rigney '91-'94	408/262-9204
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Reid Freeman '92-'95	408/255-4969
Clysta Seney '92-'95	408/261-9431
Jane Becker-Haven '92-'95	415/321-0776

### CHAIRPERSONS

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North County Field Trips	Alberta Jasberg	415/493-9546
South County Field Trips	Shirley Gordon	408/996-9863

General meetings are open to the public. Board of Directors meetings are open to all members. Call the office at (408) 252-3747 for times and directions.

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SCVAS is the chapter of the National Audubon Society for Santa Clara County.

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Rare Bird Alert: 510/ 524-5592

# May 1993 Calendar

*On all field trips carpool and share expenses. Bring binoculars, field guides, warm clothing, lunch (optional on half-day trips) and liquids. Field Trip Coordinator for May: Rod Norden 408/285-1687.*

\*\*Denotes Field Trip

**\*\*Saturday, May 1, 8:00 AM. Full day. Mines Rd./Del Puerto Canyon.** Leader: Art Edwards (510)447-3720. Meet at Nob Hill Shopping Center in Livermore. Take South Livermore Ave. to 8th St. in Livermore. 12 hour trip. Participants may turn back at San Antonio Junction. Carpooling necessary. Limited to 10 cars. Bring lunch, full tank of gas. Limited facilities. Highlights: Wood Duck, Golden Eagle, Wild Turkey, Phainopepla, Lewis' Woodpecker, Rock and Canyon Wren, Lesser Nighthawk, Lawrence's Goldfinch. Beginners welcome.

**\*\*Sunday, May 2, 8:30 AM. Half day. Alum Rock Park.** Leader: Allen Royer (408)288-7768. Directions: Meet at 2nd parking lot at back near YSI. Take I-680 to Alum Rock Ave. east into park. Highlights: possible Golden Eagle, Dipper and local breeding birds, spring migrants. Rain cancels.

**\*\*Wednesday, May 5, 8:30 AM. Half day. Coyote Creek Park at Anderson Dam.** Leaders: Emelie Curtis 408/779-2637 & Jane Glass 408/779-3637. Directions: Take Cochrane Rd. exit from Hwy. 101 and go east a short distance to parking lot (2nd) nearest dam. Lunch optional.

**Wednesday, May 5, 7:30-9:30 PM. Bay Area Bird Photographers.** Katherine Rambo will present a slide program. Meeting is at Palo Alto's Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center.

**Saturday, May 8, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM. International Migratory Bird Day** at the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge's Environmental Education Center in Alviso. To get there: Take Hwy 237, take a left on Lafayette, then right on Grand. Follow signs to the Center. For more information, call 510/792-0222.

**\*\*Saturday, May 8, 8:30 AM. Half day. Beginners trip to Stanford University Campus.** Leader: Judy Wagner 415/941-7586. Meet at the end of Palm Drive at the entrance to the Main Quad. Take Hwy. 101 to Palo Alto. Exit west on University Ave. It becomes Palm Drive. Highlights: Acorn Woodpecker, Plain Titmouse, California Thrasher. No limit on participants. Rain cancels. Designed especially for beginners.

**\*\*Sunday, May 9, 8 AM. Beginners trip to Charleston Slough. Half day.** Leader: Ed Rooks 408/867-4748. Directions: Take 101 to Mountain View, exit San Antonio Rd. east to its end at Terminal Way. Basics of birding with emphasis on waterfowl and shorebirds.

**Tuesday, May 11, 9:30 AM. Eve Case Bird Discussion Group** will meet at the home of Pat and Jean Dubois, 17150 Buena Vista Ave, Los Gatos. 408/395-4264. Topic: American Kestrel.

**Tuesday, May 11, 8:00 PM. Environmental Action Committee Meeting** at McClellan Ranch Park. Call Tony Eppstein 415/326-1376 for more information.

**\*\*Saturday, May 15, 8 AM. Monte Bello OSP. Half day.** Leader: Mike Mammoser 408/248-2288. Directions: Meet at the Page Mill Rd. I-280 Park'n Ride lot at 8 AM. Carpooling from here. Bring water, lunch optional. Long pants advised (ticks). Beginners welcome. Moderate hiking of 2 miles or so. Highlights: variety of grassland, marsh and woodland species, including Purple Finch, Black-throated Gray Warbler.

**\*\*Sunday, May 16, 7:30 AM. Rancho del Oso. Half day.** Leader: Earl Lebow 408/685-2035. Directions: Meet in the parking lot of Santa Cruz City Government Center, 701 Ocean Street (beyond the end of Hwy 17 in Santa Cruz). Easy walk will cover about 2 miles. Lunch optional. Highlights: Snowy Plover, Black-headed Grosbeak, Pileated Woodpecker (if extremely lucky).

**Wednesday, May 19, 7:30 PM. General Membership Meeting.** See box page 1.

**\*\*Saturday, May 22, 8 AM. Chews Ridge. Full day and optional camping.** Leader: John Mariani 408/997-1429. Directions: Call leader for directions and meeting time. This trip will cover Carmel Valley all day Saturday to find its special birds, including Mountain Quail, Dusky Flycatcher, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Western Tanager, Purple Martin. There will be optional camping at China Camp to allow owling after dark to seek our hard-to-find owls (hopefully Flammulated Owl, if very lucky). Don't miss this trip!

**\*\*Wednesday, May 26, 9:00 AM. Half day. Arastra Preserve, Palo Alto.** Leader: Al Huber 415/493-6854. Meet at Preserve parking lot on north side of Arastradero Rd. in the section between Alpine Rd. and Page Mill Rd. just south of I-280.

**\*\*Saturday, May 29, 8 AM. Stevens Creek. Half day.** Leader: Shirley Gordon 408/996-9863. Directions: Meet at first parking lot (Chestnut Picnic Area). From I-280 go south on Foothill Blvd. (becomes Stevens Canyon Road) 2.1 miles to park entrance on left. Parking lot is down hill. Lunch optional. Highlights: Spring migration!

## Plan Ahead

**\*\*Saturday, June 5, 8 AM. Palo Alto Breeding Bird Census.** Leader: Bill Bousman 415/322-5282.

**\*\*Saturday, June 12, 9 AM. Point Reyes. Full day.** Leader: Pete La Tourette 415/961-2741.

**\*\*Sunday, June 13, 8 AM. Beginners trip to Charleston Slough. Half day.**

## Non-Audubon Events

**Thursday, May 6, 7:00 PM or Saturday, May 10, 10:00 AM. Golden Gate Raptor Observatory Recruitment meetings.** GGNRA Headquarters, Bldg. 201, Upper Fort Mason, San Francisco. Learn about birds of prey! GGRO 415/331-0730.

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# Field Notes

By Bill Bousman

## Loons to Egrets

One to two **Red-throated Loons** have remained at Shoreline Lake through 27 Mar (m.ob.). Two together were last recorded on 4 Mar (AME). In contrast, extraordinary numbers were found at Calero Res. with eight on 28 Feb and eleven on 6 Mar (both MJM). At least one bird has remained through 28 Mar (WGB). Rarer than the Red-throated, a **Common Loon** has been found irregularly at Calero Res. with observations on 27 Feb (AV) and 26 Mar (SCR). An **American Bittern** near the Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) 27 Mar (SCR) is the only one found since December. **Cattle Egrets** have been fairly regular in Alviso along Nortech Parkway and at the Arzino Ranch with 4-5 seen 27-28 Feb (PJM, ADeM, MiF). A treat for many has been a single bird that has roosted in the Mountain View Forebay at least through 26 Mar (m.ob.).

## Waterfowl

Two **Greater White-fronted Geese** flying over the Alviso Slough Trail 27 Feb (PJM, ADeM) were unusual for the south bay. The **Ross' Goose** at the Sunnyvale WPCP has been seen at least through 27 Mar (m.ob.). Wintering **Wood Duck** have declined at the Almaden Res. with 25 there 21 Feb (MiF, A&KT) and 14 on 27 Feb. Since then small numbers have been noted in many of the areas where they normally breed (m.ob.). Two **Blue-winged Teal** remain in the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin (FCB) with observations on 19 Mar (SCR) and 20 Mar (MiF). Between one and three **Eurasian Wigeon** have been there as well with single males 28 Feb and 20 Mar (MJM) and three birds seen 19 Mar (SCR). Fifty-eight **Redhead** were counted on the North Pond of the FCB 20 Feb (AME) and had dropped to two birds by 19 Mar (SCR). Two male **White-winged Scoters** were

found at Shoreline Lake 2 Mar (MMR) and one has remained at least through 25 Mar (SCR, m.ob.). The last date on which both males were recorded was 4 Mar (AME). The female **Barrow's Goldeneye** at Shoreline Lake has been found through 26 Mar (WGB, m.ob.) and is the latest record we have for the county. Two **Hooded Mergansers** were found at the Los Alamitos perc. pond 20 Feb (AV) and 28 Feb (MJM). Single birds were at Lake Ranch Res. 12 Mar (WGB) and Alpine Pond 13 Mar (RWR). A pair was on the sag pond at the Pichetti OSP 14 Mar (WGB).

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*Vesper Sparrows found in two places on the west-facing slopes of the Diablo Range were exceptional*

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## Raptors through Gulls

Individual **Osprey** over Saratoga 12 Mar (HG) and at Chesbro Res. 26 Mar (SCR) represent typical dates for spring migrants. March records of **Merlin** include one at Moffett Field 1 Mar (MMR), a bird in Los Gatos 1-2 Mar (MiF), another in Mountain View 10-11 Mar (MMR), one at Alviso 21 Mar (MJM), and one at Charleston Slough 26 Mar (WGB). A **Peregrine Falcon** has been seen at the Palo Alto Baylands 28 Feb (JY, AL) and 21 Mar (AME) and two birds were in the Alviso salt ponds 21 Mar (MJM, MMR, SCR).

Only one **Snowy Plover** was found on the Knapp census on 7 Mar (MJM). A **Lesser Yellowlegs** at the Palo Alto estuary 11 Mar (WGB) is unusual for March. A belated report of a **Ruddy Turnstone** 19 Jan (SCR) on the Palo Alto estuary is of interest considering how seldom this species is found at the south end of the bay. **Sanderling** were found on the Knapp censuses this month with two found 7 Mar (MJM) and nine found 21 Mar (MJM,

MMR, SCR). A single bird was on the Palo Alto estuary 11 Mar (WGB) and two were seen off the observation platform on 19 Mar (SCR). Much less expected were the 13 **Red Knots** counted off the Palo Alto Baylands on 19 Mar (SCR). One to two imm. **Glaucous Gulls** have been found regularly at the Sunnyvale WPCP with observations 25 Feb (JiC), two seen 27 Feb (PJM, ADeM), and one on 7 Mar (MJM). Birds have also been found along the Alviso Slough Trail with three seen 27 Feb (PJM, ADeM), including two adults; an imm. 28 Feb (MiF), a near-adult 7 Mar (MJM), and two imm. 21 Mar (MJM, SCR). Additional sightings during the month include one in the Palo Alto FCB 28 Feb and on the Knapp census 7 Mar (both MJM), and one at the Palo Alto dump 19 Mar (SCR).

## Pigeons through Woodpeckers

**Band-tailed Pigeons** are enigmatic breeders in the county. They appear to nest in the Santa Cruz Mountains in the spring, as might be expected, but there are few acceptable records for the Diablo Range even though birds are present throughout the year. A bird found on a nest in Alum Rock Park 21 Mar (MMR) suggests that they may breed earlier in the Diablo Range than elsewhere. Two **Greater Roadrunners** were found just north of San Antonio Jct. 20 Mar (AME) and a single bird was along Canada Road east of Gilroy 24 Mar (SCR). **Northern Pygmy-Owls** have been found in Monte Bello OSP this period with observations 13 Feb (SCR, EB), 7 Mar (MMR), and 13 Mar (MJM *et al.*). A bird was also heard at Stevens Creek CP 7 Mar. **Long-eared Owls** continue to be found at Monte Bello OSP with one heard 13 Mar (MJM *et al.*) and a duetting pair were heard 19 Mar (WGB) and 23 Mar (SCR). The **Lewis' Woodpecker** wintering in the Arastradero Preserve was last recorded 5 Mar (WGB). Between four and eight birds were seen in their usual haunts in San Antonio Valley 20 Mar (AME) and 25 Mar (SCR).

*Continued on page 5*

# Field Trip Report

## Susanville — Sage Grouse and More

Bob Hirt led a group of 20 intrepid birders to northeastern California in search of Sage Grouse and other Great Basin specialties March 20-21, 1993. This trip was jointly sponsored by Santa Clara Valley and Golden Gate Audubon Societies.

The trip's first objective (both in emphasis and chronology) was to observe Sage Grouse. Our group assembled at 5 am for the 30 minute drive to the lek. Fortunately there had been no precipitation for the week since Daan Sandee's visits, so we were spared the worst of the mud. Being forewarned, we wore knee-high rubber boots but only needed them to cross a stream near the highway. After following a dirt track in the pre-dawn light up Shaffer Mountain for about a mile, we found them: Ten male Sage Grouse displaying on the rock-strewn lek. We maintained a distance of perhaps 150 yards so as not to disturb the birds, but still had good looks through binoculars and very satisfying 'scope views for the better part of two hours. We also could hear the resonant, bubbling sounds of the males' distended air sacs as they strutted about.

We were taken aback by the sheer size of these birds—they're enormous! A male Sage Grouse stands as much as 28 inches tall. He would just barely fit under your desk. With air sacs bulging and spiky feathers erect, the males are quite imposing! The females maintained a more horizontal posture at the lek, and were far less conspicuous from our vantage point, but could be seen occasionally. They seemed largely indifferent to the amazing spectacle around them.

We reluctantly returned to our cars, spotting Sage Thrashers, Horned Larks and Meadow Larks on the way. Our mammals list at this location included pronghorn antelope, wild mustang, and coyote (heard). Back at the road, at a distance of at least a mile from the lek, the white of the males' breast feathers could still be seen as they strutted around the rocky sagebrush

slope. One Sage Grouse, arriving late for the party, flew directly over us on a beeline for the lek. This was a most satisfying morning—nominated for our "best performance by a life bird" category!

Directions to the lek: Take Hwy. 395 north from Litchfield. In approximately nine miles Hwy. 395 crosses the Southern Pacific railroad tracks. Continue north for 1.1 miles to the first dirt road on the left (west). If you pass a lone tree hung with shoes (a shoe tree?) you've gone a bit too far, Park along the highway, and walk northwest along the dirt road. Cross the railroad grade and continue gradually uphill to the second dirt track on the left, perhaps 700 yards. Turn left and walk approximately half a mile uphill, keeping an eye out for the Sage Grouse lek on the right (north of the road).

Other notable birds of the weekend included: A flock of 30 Evening Grosbeaks on Wingfield Road near Janesville; Tundra Swans and Sandhill Cranes on Honey Lake; Sage Thrashers; Mountain Bluebirds; two Rough-legged Hawks and a distant Northern Shrike in Willow Creek Valley on CA 139 on the way to Eagle Lake; 25 Pinyon Jays on Eagle Lake Road before Spaulding; Four morphs of Red-tailed Hawk; "Standard," dark, rufous and Krider's; Mature Bald Eagles at Spaulding on Eagle Lake; and Black-billed Magpies throughout the area.

Sunday at Eagle Lake turned out to be a big Corvid Day: Pinyon, Steller's and an unexpected Scrub Jay; Black-billed Magpie, Clark's Nutcracker, and American Crows. The truly crazed among us talked openly about a mad dash to Ferndale for Gray Jay and back to the Central Valley for Yellow-billed Magpie and Common Raven to complete a clean sweep of California's corvids. But cooler heads prevailed.

—Chip & Jane Becker-Haven

Field Notes Continued from page 4

### Phainopeplas through Sparrows

Single **Phainopeplas** were found 7 Mar (WGB) in Jos. Grant CP and 20 Mar (AME) in San Antonio Valley. Two birds were found south of Calaveras Res. 22 Mar (SCR). **Vesper Sparrow** is one of our rarest wintering sparrows so two found along the west-facing slopes of the Diablo Range are of interest. The first was found along Sierra Rd. on 22 Mar and the second along Canada Rd. on 24 Mar (both SCR). Two **Sage Sparrows** found in San Antonio Valley 25 Mar (SCR) are from an area where they nest.

**EARLY ARRIVALS:** **Common Poorwill**, St. Josephs Hill, 20 Mar (MiF); **Pacific-slope Flycatcher**, Coyote Creek, 19 Mar (CCRS); **Western Kingbird**, San Antonio Valley, 20 Mar (AME); **Barn Swallow**, Ed Levin CP and Palo Alto Baylands, 6 Mar (MMR); **House Wren**, Arastradero Preserve (WGB) and Alum Rock Park (MMR), 21 Mar; **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher**, Loma Prieta, 16 Mar (SCR); **Warbling Vireo**, Sanborn-Skyline CP, 12 Mar (WGB); **Wilson's Warbler**, Gavilan College, 21 Mar (AME); and **Northern Oriole**, McClellan Ranch, 17 Mar (MiF).

**OBSERVERS:** Eric Bjorkstedt (EB), Bill Bousman (WGB), Jim Corliss (JiC), Coyote Creek Riparian Station (CCRS), Al DeMartini (ADeM), Al Eisner (AME), Mike Feighner (MiF), Harriet Gerson (HG), Amy Lauterbach (AL), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Peter Metropulos (PJM), Mike Rogers (MMR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Bob Reiling (RWR), Ann Verdi (AV), and James Yurchenco (JY).

**Rarities: Please drop me a note: Bill Bousman, 321 Arlington Way, Menlo Park, CA 94025.**

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# Environmental Action News

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## CALPAW 1994: A Bond Act to Preserve Wildlife, Native Plant, and Wildlife Habitats in California.

Californians for Parks and Wildlife (CALPAW) is gearing up for a statewide ballot initiative to provide badly needed funding for state and local park, wildlife and coastal projects. The initiative would be a general obligation park and wildlife bond act, much like those approved many times in the past by California voters. It would fund hundreds of state and local park and wildlife preservation projects throughout California, including expansion of state and local parks, coastal preservation projects, new and expanded wildlife areas, river protection projects, urban tree planting and other similar programs.

The entire bond act would be slightly under \$2 billion dollars with \$49.9 million dollars slated for Santa Clara County projects including Bear

Creek Redwoods (\$15 million), Chitactac - Adams Heritage County Park (\$.9 million), Guadalupe River Trail Corridor (\$3 million), (Jacques Ridge) Jamison Open Space (\$5 million), Henry Coe State Park (\$10 million), Santa Clara Open Space Authority (\$10 million), Silver Creek Fault Serpentine (\$5 million), and Del Puerto Canyon (\$1 million).

Californians for Parks and Wildlife is a project of the Planning and Conservation League, a statewide conservation organization. CALPAW is made up of a statewide coalition of dozens of conservation groups, including the Audubon Societies. A similar initiative bond act effort in 1988, known as Proposition 70, was approved by more than 65% of the voters. Recent polling indicates strong support by the voters for the new measure.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

Volunteers are now being sought to circulate the petitions for this initiative, which will be placed on the June, 1994, ballot. 650,000 signatures must be gathered this summer, and SCVAS is committed to gathering 5000. To accomplish this goal we'll need *your* help at signature gathering tables outside stores and at fairs. Generally, a two-person team can gather 100 signatures in 3 hours, so we'll be asking *all* of the SCVAS membership to help us make this happen. On Tuesday, May 25, at 7:00 PM, SCVAS will hold a 45-minute training session at McClellan Ranch Park that will cover the art of signature gathering and provide complete information about CALPAW. Signature gathering will begin at DeAnza Days, Sunday May 23, from 10 AM - 4 PM.. Please call Cecily Harris at 408/252-3747 for more information.

## The "Windowless" Audubon Moment

It's easy to come up against barriers to reconnecting with the natural world on an everyday basis. With a little ingenuity, opportunities for the renewal of an "Audubon Moment" can be created in unlikely places.

Recently, a colleague at another university lamented the impending loss of the view from his office window as a new building was going up alongside his own. By the end of summer, all he'll be able to see are bricks. His loss is all the more painful because he is an accomplished birder with a deserved national reputation. His distress was echoed by others whose desk locations place them far from even a glimpse of the outside.

Just days later, my husband Chip Haven experienced the following "Audubon Moment" in a windowless setting. Chip wrote back:

"Office windows aren't required to add a bit of nature appreciation to one's day.

"On Friday evening, I found myself in the attic of a 100 year old campus building, where I was installing equipment to link the building network to the campus internet. Over the noise of the power drill, I was suddenly aware of the twittering of White-throated Swifts. Regular nesters at the west end of Green Library, they must have been careening around the Quad hawking insects at dusk.

"I was transported away by their sounds and the images they evoked. After a few seconds, I was back at work, but with a much improved outlook about the way I was spending the evening."

We need not feel like prisoners in the structures in which we work. With an openness to natural experiences, we can work around the unnatural barriers that block that connection. May an "Audubon Moment" carry you beyond the confines of whatever buildings in which you find yourself.

— Jane F. Becker-Haven

# Ticking Off Birds

There are world class listers who, at great expense, travel the world to see how many different species they can tick off on their lists in a single year. At the other end of the environmentally correct

spectrum are those listers who carefully record each species seen from their living room window and who agonize whether a new species, seen only in the neighbor's yard, is "countable." Between those extremes lie those

who would, in one year's time, see as many kinds of birds as they could in Santa Clara County.

In late September, 1992 Mike Rogers proposed to Mike Mammoser and me that, since 1992 had been a very active atlas year, we should try to see what kind of list we could come up with for the

full year. The three of us set off in a horse race of sorts and eventually we enticed Mike Feighner to join us. The results of our contest are tabulated below.

PLACE	OBSERVER	SPECIES TOTAL	% COMPOSITE	% COUNTY LIST
1	MMR	234	84.5%	65.4%
1	MJM	234	84.5%	65.4%
3	WGB	216	78.0%	60.3%
4	MLF	215	77.6%	60.1%

The race between Mike Rogers and Mike Mammoser started at barely more than 200 species in early October, and for the next three months they were rarely more than a species apart until they wound up in a tie. The present county list stands at 358 species and the winners in this case achieved 65% of this total. A more appropriate

number for comparison, however, is the composite total of everyone who sent their records to me. The composite total for 1992 was 277 species, and the leaders in this case made nearly 85% of that total.

By any measure 1992 was an exceptional year in Santa Clara County. At least eight new species were added to the county list: Brown Booby, Garganey, Ancient Murrelet,

Eastern Phoebe, Virginia's Warbler, Northern Parula (2), Chestnut-sided Warbler, and Worm-eating Warbler. In recent years we have typically added two or three species to the county list each year. I doubt that any of us will ever see a year like this again.

—Bill Bousman

## Migratory Bird Day (Cont. from p. 1)

### Make a Difference

As an individual or part of an organization you can join the effort. You can:

- Take part in the North American Migration Count. Contact Jim Stasz, P.O. Box 71, North Beach, MD 20714.
- Set up educational displays in libraries, shopping malls and school cafeterias.
- Hold a town meeting to discuss the conservation of green space. Dedicate a community sanctuary or expand upon one that already exists.
- Plant native trees and shrubs.
- Protect and restore riparian habitats.

- Remove exotic plants species.

- Hold a fundraiser to purchase land needing protection or for a conservation organization in Latin America.

- Organize a beach clean-up and discourage off-road vehicles on beaches.

- Establish a hunter training course, emphasizing ecological values.

### Make Everyday a Migratory Bird Day

- Create and protect habitat for birds on your property. Don't use pesticides, reduce window reflection, keep cats inside, maintain healthy trees - but save the dead ones for cavity nesters.

- Put less pressure on our forests. Recycle.

- Support sustainable agriculture.

- Support legislation that protects our environment.

—Jamie Doyle  
Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center

For more information about Partners in Flight - Aves de las Americas, contact Peter Stangel, The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, 1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036.

How are we involved? SCVAS will have an educational display and birdwalk at the Environmental Education Center on May 8th (See May Callendar, page 3). If you'd like to help or need more information, please call Cecily Harris at 408/252-3747.

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Audubon Society  
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## New Nature Shop News!!

### Take Off \$2 On All T-Shirts!

During the month of May, all of your favorite Nature Shop T-shirts are marked down \$2. This spring special will outfit you for all of your summer birding adventures. Hurry in, for this sale will last only as long as the T-shirts last.

### Buy Your Bird and Nature Books By Mail.

We're pleased to announce a **Special Book Order** of nature books not normally carried in the SCVAS Nature Shop. The directions are easy: Order as many books as you like **by May 31st**. Bring or mail your check to: SCVAS, 22221 McClellan Road, Cupertino, CA 95014. Please include your full mailing address and daytime phone number with your order. We will have the books in the office by mid-June and they will be mailed directly to you. Questions? Call the Nature Shop at 408/252-3747.

The following books are available: (Prices already include shipping and sales tax.)

*Backyard Bird-Watcher*, by George H. Harrison. \$12.00.

*The Birder's Guide to Oregon* by Joseph E. Evanich, Jr. \$14.50.

*Birds Asleep*, By Alexander F. Skutch. \$27.00.

*Birding by Ear: A Guide to Bird Song Identification*, \$38.50.

*Gulls, A Guide to Identification*, by Peter Grant. \$41.00.

*Handbook for Butterfly Watchers*, by Mathew Tekulsky. \$10.00.

*Hummers*, by Millie Miller and Cyndi Nelson. \$7.00.

*Peterson Field Guides Series: Pacific States Wildflowers*, \$18.00; *Western Birds*, \$18.00; *Western Butterflies*, \$17.00; and *Western Trees*, \$18.00.

*The Practical Ornithologist*, by John Gooders. \$17.00.

*Season at the Point: The Birds and Birders of Cape May*, by Jack Connor. \$13.00.

*Shorebirds*, by John Marchant and Tony Prater. \$27.00.

*Talons*, by Millie Miller and Cyndi Nelson. \$7.00.

*The Traveling Birder* by Clive Goodwin. \$14.00

*Wildflowers of North America*, by Frank D. Venning and Henry W. Art. \$18.50.

**Membership:** We invite your membership in the National Audubon Society/SCVAS. To join, please complete and mail this form with payment to SCVAS, 22221 McClellan Road, Cupertino, CA 95014.

**Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society Subscription:** Check One  
[ ] Subscriber \$10 [ ] Supporter \$20 [ ] Donor \$35 [ ] Patron \$50 and more  
Members receive *The Avocet* newsletter. Make check payable to SCVAS.

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[ ] **Donation:** SCVAS greatly appreciates your tax-deductible donation. Your gift helps to fund the Chapter's birding, education, conservation and research programs.

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