



# The Avocet

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

April 1998

## Birdathon to Aid Salton Sea, Alviso Boardwalk

by Leda Beth Gray

Most readers have heard of the Birdathon, our Spring fundraising activity. SCVAS members put together teams and make funny names for themselves, then get others to sponsor the team to identify as many birds as they can in a 24-hour period that the team members select themselves. Sponsors may pledge a certain amount per bird species identified, or a fixed amount to the team of their choice.

Teams of hot-shot birders may race all over the Bay Area, competing with each other for the most species seen, while other teams may prefer to bird in their own neighborhoods, parks or open spaces. (It's amazing to discover how many birds come and go from familiar places like our own back yards when we watch carefully for an extended period!) Birders of any and all

levels of interest and intensity are welcome to participate in the Birdathon.

This year we've designated most of the proceeds from the Birdathon to a pair of important bird-related conservation efforts. One portion will go to Audubon California's effort to solve the urgent pollution problems in the Salton Sea. This massive body of water in southern California, although not a natural lake, has become a major breeding ground for numerous avian species and an important stopover for migratory species. The loss of 90 percent of southern California's natural wetlands and the near total loss of wetlands in the Colorado River Delta have made the Salton Sea a crucial substitute habitat for many birds and other wildlife. Extensive die-offs of

waterbirds and fish in recent years have alarmed scientists and the environmental community, and Audubon California is spearheading efforts to save the area from further pollution and degradation of habitat.

Another chunk of the Birdathon proceeds will be dedicated to San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society's "Buy a Board, Build a Boardwalk" campaign to replace an unsteady, worn out old boardwalk at the Don Edwards S.F. Bay National Wildlife Refuge Center at the south end of the Bay. The Education Center is located in an area known to local birders as "New Chicago Marsh" near the town of Alviso. According to S.F. Bay Wildlife Society, a boardwalk is the only practical way to visit this marsh, which is too wet and muddy for human traffic.

For many years SCVAS has used the Ed Center and boardwalk for our highly successful wetlands field trips for local schools, serving hundreds of students each year. Our Birdathon contribution gives us a chance to pay back the Wildlife Refuge for many years of cooperation by facilitating the construction of badly-needed new boardwalk.

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**General Membership Meeting**  
**Wednesday April 15**  
**Burrowing Owls of Santa Clara County**  
**with Dr. Lynn Trulio and Craig Breon**  
**Palo Alto Cultural Center**  
**Newell & Embarcadero Rds.**  
**7:30 Hospitality 8:00 Program**

They're just nine inches tall; they're the only species of owl that lives underground; unlike other owls, you can spot them day or night; and they are rapidly disappearing from our landscape. A slide show and discussion of one of the more rare and beloved birds in our County from two people working regularly on preservation of this species. Lynne Trulio is Associate Professor of Environmental Studies at San Jose State University and has been studying Burrowing Owl biology, conservation, and habitat restoration for more than a decade. Craig Breon is our Chapter's Environmental Advocate and has been one of the leaders in pushing for a regional owl preservation plan in Santa Clara County. Come see why this little owl inspires such deep devotion from birders and nonbirders alike.

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# VIEW FROM THE OFFICE

by Garth Harwood, SCVAS Chapter Manager

HERE THEY COME! By the time you read this, Spring migration will have brought us a different, and much more welcome sort of seasonal flood. This very morning (March 11) I heard my first Orange-crowned Warbler of the year at Pescadero. At McClellan Ranch, a number of species are courting and nest-building, including park regulars such as Western Scrub Jay, Bushtit, Oak Titmouse, and Anna's Hummingbird (who appear to have already fledged one brood this season, judging by the sudden crowd at our feeder). Many more species have literally "changed their tune", singing in the rich, melodious voices they save only for the breeding season.

OTHER SPRING MIGRANTS are appearing almost daily. The first Violet-green Swallows in this park showed up on March 2nd, while the Northern Rough-winged Swallows took another week to begin their annual breeding-season occupation of the damp drainage holes in the McClellan Road bridge over Stevens Creek. Other favorite migrants such as Yellow Warblers, Hooded Orioles, and Bullock's Orioles should be apparent by early April (oriole fans, get those high-volume nectar feeders up now!)

MIGRATION IS ONE OF THE GREAT WONDERS of the world, of course, but curiously, modern society has all but forgotten about it. Unless your office happens to overlook the Bay, where the clouds of waterfowl are impossible to ignore, it passes most of us by, unnoticed. For that reason, and because of the unique conservation problems faced by birds that require healthy habitats in more than one country to survive, a consortium of international groups, both public and private, has formed to celebrate and educate about migratory birds. Known as **Partners in Flight**, the organization sponsors **International Migratory Bird Day**, held at locations throughout the Americas on the second Saturday of May. Naturally, **Santa Clara Valley Audubon** plays a starring role in our local celebration each year.

SCVAS NEEDS VOLUNTEERS to help with our local IMBD event, to be held at the Alviso headquarters of the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge on Saturday, May 9, from 9AM-3PM. Volunteers are needed to take a shift of at least two hours at the registration table, driving the shuttle van between events (a few will be at the Coyote Creek Riparian Station), and to set up spotting scopes at choice locations to show off migratory birds to participants in bird walks and/or bicycle tours. If you're interested, call **Sandy Spakoff** at the Refuge office at (408) 262-5513. (Be sure to mention SCVAS!) Other volunteers including **Vicki Silvas-Young**, **Gerry Ellis**, and ace nestbox-builder **Gus Constant** are already committed to assisting with a Native Plant Sale (call 262-5513 for pre-order forms) and a take-home nestbox-building activity (\$5 materials fee for the box).

BLUEBIRD PROGRAM NOTES . . . Titmice led the charge this Spring, occupying many nestboxes at the beginning of March. Bluebirders met at McClellan Ranch on February 27, and most of the veteran trail monitors reported that last year's boxes had seen a lot of roosting activity through the winter---an excellent sign that the boxes are familiar to local birds and will probably be used for breeding. **Dave Poeschell** had an Acorn Woodpecker enlarge the opening of one box at Golden Oaks Park in San Jose. Upon opening the box, he was showered with acorns! Over the following two months the acorn stash dwindled to nothing. Now, by placing a scrap

## SCVAS OFFICERS and BOARD

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Avocet	Grant Hoyt	650/969-7892
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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: 415-681-7422**

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# April 1998 Calendar

*On all field trips carpool and share expenses. Bring binoculars, field guides, warm clothing, lunch (optional on half-day trips) and liquids.*

\*\*Denotes Field Trip

**Wednesday Apr. 1, 7:30 PM.** Bay Area Bird Photographers presents Chuck Tribolet with his underwater photography show entitled "Around the World in Two Hundred Dives." Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center, E. Embarcadero Rd., Palo Alto.

**\*\*Saturday April 4, 8:00 AM.** Half day. Ed Levin Co. Park. Leader: Bob Reiling (408)253-7527. Take Hwy 237 east through Milpitas as 237 becomes Calaveras Rd. Continue approx. 2 miles past 680 to just past golf course entrance; turn right into park entrance. Joint trip with Sequoia Audubon. Possible entrance fee; rain cancels.

**\*\*Wednesday Apr. 8, 8:30 AM.** Half day. Almaden Quicksilver Co. Park. Leader: Alan Thomas (408)996-9863. In San Jose take Almaden Expwy south to Almaden Rd through the town of New Almaden; turn right at park entrance. Spring woodland species should be quite active. Moderate walking of 3 miles. Lunch optional; rain cancels.

**\*\*Saturday Apr. 11, 8:30 AM.** Half day. Stevens Creek Co. Park. Leader: Frank Vanslager (408)257-3647. From I-280 in Cupertino take Foothill Expwy

exit, go south on Foothill Rd 2.1 miles, turn left into first (Chestnut) park entrance and meet in parking lot. Spring migrants and local breeders. Still one of the best riparian birding spots in the South Bay.

**Tuesday April 14, 9:30 AM.** The 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: Golden Eagle.

**\*\*Saturday Apr. 18, 8:30 AM.** Half day. Grant Ranch Co., Park. Leader: Dave Cook (408)949-8247. From Hwy 101 in San Jose take Alum Rock Ave east to Mt. Hamilton Rd, then approx. 9 miles to park entrance. Meet at Hall's Valley Lake parking lot on left. Possible Golden Eagle, Wild Turkey, Lazuli Bunting and a variety of oak woodland breeding species. Moderate 2-mile walk. Lunch optional; heavy rain cancels. Park entrance fee.

**\*\*Wednesday Apr. 22, 8:30 AM.** Half day. Stevens Creek Co. Park. Leader: Phyllis Browning (650)494-6360. See directions under Apr. 11.

**\*\*Saturday Apr. 25, 8:00 AM.** "Uncommon Loons" annual Birdathon outing at Arastradero Preserve, Stanford campus, and Charleston Slough. Leader Nick Yatsko and friends put the emphasis on fun as they go for 100 species for our Spring fundraiser. Lunch

at Stanford's Rodin sculpture garden is always a highlight. Donation to the Birdathon is suggested, but not mandatory. Meet at Arastradero Preserve parking area on Arastradero Rd, 1/2 mile west of Page Mill Rd just west of I-280 in Palo Alto.

**\*\*Saturday May 2, 9:00 AM.** Full day. Mines Rd. and vicinity. Leader: Don Schmoldt (510)215-1910. This year we'll try something different by starting in Del Puerto Canyon then moving west to San Antone Valley, ending up in Livermore. From I-580 go east over Altamont Pass, follow 580 south to Interstate 5. Go south on I-5 to Patterson exit and go west on Del Puerto Canyon Rd.; meet at first pullout (look for Don's "BAJA OWL" license plate). Highlights include possible Costa's Hummingbird, Phainopepla, Lewis' Woodpecker, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Lawrence's Goldfinch.

**\*\*Wednesday May 6, 9:00 AM.** Half day. Riparian birding at Anderson Dam. Leader: Ed Gustafson (408)377-1123. From Hwy 101 in San Jose take Cochrane Rd east; meet at parking lot at base of Anderson Dam. Carpool from meeting place if necessary. Lunch optional; rain cancels.

**\*\*Sunday May 10, 7:00 AM.** Half day. Birding by ear at upper Grant Ranch Park. Leader: Grant Hoyt (650)969-7892. 3 miles of up-and-down hiking through oak grassland with a host of challenging songs to identify, including Horned Lark, House Wren, Lazuli Bunting and Bullock's Oriole, plus Lark, Chipping and Grasshopper Sparrows all possible. Meet at Hall's Valley Lake to carpool if necessary (see Apr. 18 directions). Bring fluids, snacks, and sturdy hiking shoes.

**Tuesday May 12, 9:30 AM** The Eve Case Bird Discussion Group will meet at the home of Pat and Jean Dubois, 17150 Buena Vista Dr. Los Gatos (408)395-4264. Topic: Western Bluebird.

## OFFICE VIEW

*continued*

of plywood with a songbird-sized entry hole over the front, this box will do double duty as a swallow or bluebird nest.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST . . . A FEW THANK-YOU'S for some of our most outstanding volunteers. **Jim Liskovec** has recently stepped in as a frequent presenter of educational programs for kids. **Donna Ducey**, an office stalwart for many months, has begun to step outdoors for a few such presentations as well. And long-time office volunteers **Tibby Simon, Elizabeth Ryono, Han-Yu Loo, Marie Gordon, Joyce Chang, and Doug & Ardeth Greenquist** have now been joined by **Colleen Cunningham** and **Robert McLain**, a graduate student from Oregon putting his year in the Santa Clara Valley to effective use at the SCVAS office. This impressive corps of volunteers has made our office operation more efficient than it's been in a long time. Many thanks to all!

# Field Notes

by Bill Bousman

## Storm Strays

Torrential rains fell the night of 2 Feb and resulted in major flooding throughout the Santa Clara Valley. Continuing rain in the latter part of the week contributed to high creek levels and flooded wetlands. By the weekend of 7-8 Feb it was clear that the storms had delivered large numbers of Surf and White-winged Scoters to inland waters as well as good numbers of the normally maritime Greater Scaup and a few Red Phalarope. Storm strays are not always apparent in our sheltered valley—this particular invasion was well documented. It is unclear if the diving ducks were displaced from the coast or from the large flocks noted in the bay during the early winter.

## Loons through Egrets

Quite scarce this winter, one to two **Red-throated Loons** were seen on Lexington Reservoir on 8 Feb (SBT fide MMR, MMR) and one was on Salt Pond A12 in Alviso on 16 Feb (SCR). A single **Pacific Loon** on the Los Gatos Creek percolation ponds on 21 Feb (SBT fide SCR) was the first one found this winter. The **Common Loon** noted last month at the Campbell percolation ponds apparently remained in February (v.ob.) and two birds were there from 22 Feb (SCR, HLR) through the end of the month (v.ob.). Another bird was at Calero Reservoir on 8 Feb (SCR) and an immature was at Shoreline Lake on 10-11 Feb (SCR, MMR). It does not appear that February's storms had a significant effect on these coastal loons. Our record winter for **Red-necked Grebes** continued with two different birds on Lexington Reservoir; a mostly alternate bird on 5 Feb (LT fide SCR) and a basic bird on 8 Feb (MMR). Another alternate bird was seen on 8 Feb (SCR) on San Felipe Lake just south of the county line in San Benito

County, and additional individuals were seen on Salt Pond A12 on 11 Feb (SCR, SBT) and Shoreline Lake on 22 Feb (CIW, ChW). The total number of Red-necked Grebes recorded in the county has doubled this winter with five of the nine new records prior to the onslaught of February storms. **Brown Pelicans** are rarely found in February so and adult and immature over the Palo Alto Baylands on 8 Feb (MJM) is exceptional. An **American Bittern** in the Mountain View Forebay, first seen on 7 Feb (J&MMe), was found more or less regularly during the month (v.ob.). Single birds were also seen along Alviso Slough on 16 Feb (SCR) and near the Alviso Marina on 19 Feb (SBT fide SCR). On 8 Feb sixteen **Cattle Egrets** were seen along Frazier Lake

were seen on Bloomfield Road on 8 Feb and, nearby in the flooded Bolsa de San Felipe in San Benito County, 117 were counted the same day (SCR). Up to three **Eurasian Wigeon** have been found in ponded areas near Los Esteros and Grand in Alviso during the month (SCR, v.ob.) and a hybrid male **American X Eurasian Wigeon** was there as well (SCR). A male Eurasian Wigeon was also on San Felipe Lake on 8 Feb (SCR). A female **Blue-winged Teal** was on the ponds near Los Esteros and Grand on 5 Feb (SCR) and a male was found in the Sunnyvale Baylands on 13 Feb (RWR, FV). Seven birds were found in the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin (FCB) on 28 Feb (MJM). A male "**Eurasian**" **Green-winged Teal** was found on the ponds at Los Esteros and Grand on 5 Feb (SCR). **Ring-necked Ducks** are fairly common in the winter. Of interest were the high counts reported on 8 Feb when 220 were tallied on Calero Reservoir and 415 were seen on San Felipe Lake and flooded portions of the Bolsa (SCR).

**Greater Scaup** are not normally noteworthy in the county as there are usually a few mixed in with the much more common **Lesser Scaup**.

Following the early February storms 1100 to 1200 birds were counted on Salt Pond A4 in Sunnyvale on 11 Feb and 350 were on the Alviso salt ponds on 16 Feb (SCR), both unusually high counts. Away from the bay single birds were noted at Almaden Lake on 23 Feb (JMa) and along the Guadalupe River below Montague on 26 Feb (SCR). **Surf Scoters** moved inland in significant numbers after the early February rains. In ponded areas near the bay we occasionally encounter large numbers of Surf Scoters, so the 320 at Shoreline Lake on 10 Feb (SCR), while large, was not exceptional. The 260 tallied in a circuit of the Alviso salt ponds on 16 Feb (SCR), however, was a very high total for the local salt ponds. Further inland birds were found in numerous freshwater lakes and reservoirs and while the numbers were low they were still remarkable for this salt water

## Scoters and Red Phalaropes marked February's storms

Road, south of the county line in San Benito County, and two were nearby along Bloomfield Road within the county (SCR). The Arzino Ranch birds in Alviso reappeared with five on 10 Feb (SCR) and a peak count of seven on 14 Feb (NL).

## Waterfowl

The immature **Greater White-fronted Goose** at the Palo Alto Duck Pond has been seen more or less regularly through 22 Feb (MJM). A second bird at the Moffett Field Golf Course was seen again on 9 Feb (MMR). Four to five free-flying **Snow Geese** were attracted to pinioned birds belonging to an aviculturist in Morgan Hill and were observed on 19 Jan (MMR) and 8 Feb (SCR). Similarly, nine **Ross' Geese** were seen there on 8 Feb (SCR). An adult and immature **Tundra Swan**



## Field Notes *continued*

species. Examples include 40 birds on the Campbell percolation pond on 14 Feb (AV), 12 on Calero Reservoir on 14 Feb (AV), 12 on Lake Lagunita at Stanford on 19 Feb (TGr), seven on Vasona Reservoir on 14 Feb (AV), five on Chesbro Reservoir on 9 Feb (JG), two on the Guadalupe River on 26 Feb (SCR), and a male on Hidden Lake in Milpitas on 23 Feb (NL). For the well-birded Campbell percolation ponds there were still seven Surf Scoters there on 28 Feb (MMR, AK). By comparison, the bay off Palo Alto, which sometimes has thousands of scoters in the winter, had only about a hundred birds in mid-February (SCR). The stars of February, however, were the **White-winged Scoters**. One or two birds a winter is typical at our inland location, but this month alone we have had in excess of 25 birds. The majority have been on Salt Pond A12 at Alviso on 11–26 Feb (m.ob.) with a peak count of 17 birds on 19 Feb (SCR, SBT). Away from the bay two to three were on the Santa Clara Valley Water District pond at Almaden and Coleman 14–20 Feb (AV), one to two were at Shoreline Lake 15–17 Feb (NL, J&MMe), and one was on the Los Gatos Creek percolation ponds 21–28 Feb (v.ob.). **Barrow's Goldeneyes** have been scarce at Shoreline Lake with a female there on 8 Feb (AME) and two birds on 15 Feb (NL). **Hooded Mergansers** were found widely during February. Observations include 14 birds in flooded fields west of Coyote on 8 Feb (SCR), nine birds off Bloomfield Road on 8 Feb (SCR), two to seven birds on Barron Creek near Foothill and Arastradero on 6–28 Feb (v.ob.), one to three birds remaining at the Los Gatos Creek percolation pond through 28 Feb (m.ob.), two females on Lake Lagunita on 8 Feb (TGr), and an immature at Boronda Lake in Foothills Park on 25 Feb (RLe, PMB). Inland **Red-breasted Mergansers** include one to three birds at Almaden Lake Park 16–23 Feb (MJM, JMa) where they are not unusually found.

## Raptors through Sparrows

**Ospreys** continue to be seen regularly with one near Almaden Reservoir on 14 Feb (AV), one at Chesbro Reservoir on 16 Feb (MJM), one near Calero Reservoir on 22 Feb (AV), and a male at the Campbell percolation ponds on 28 Feb (MMR, AK). An adult **Bald Eagle** was at Calero Reservoir 8–17 Feb (SCR, MJM, AV). The heavy rains combined with the February high tides provided three **Black Rails** at the Palo Alto Baylands on 8 Feb (MJM). Wintering **Lesser Yellowlegs** continued to be found in ponds near Los Esteros and Grand in Alviso 3–9 Feb (SCR, AME). **Red Phalaropes** were our other storm waifs, but did not linger. Three to five birds were on Lexington Reservoir 8 Feb (SBT *fide* MMR, MMR), one was on San Felipe Lake on 8 Feb (SCR), two were on Moffett Field on 11 Feb (MMR), and one was at the Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) ponds on 11 Feb (SCR). The Newby Island landfill is one of the last gull feeding stations in the South Bay and a survey on 24 Feb (MMR, NL) provided interesting tallies including 8,000 **California Gulls**, 20,000 **Herring Gulls**, 350 **Thayer's Gulls**, 200 **Western Gulls**, and 800 **Glaucous-winged Gulls**. The immature **Lesser Black-backed Gull** at Lake Cunningham was seen again on 22 Feb (NL). February is normally a good month for **Glaucous Gulls**. A 2nd-winter bird was at the Palo Alto Baylands on 3 Feb (TGr). At least four different birds were found through 26 Feb in the Fremont Lagoons north of the Newby Island landfill (NL, MiF). A 1st-winter bird was at the Palo Alto Duck Pond on 16 Feb (ChW) and, at Newby Island on 24 Feb, there was an adult and three to four 1st-winter birds (MMR, NL). Our local **Black Skimmer** flock has lessened slightly in February but ranged further afield. Twelve birds were seen at the Palo Alto estuary mouth on 18 Feb (AME) and 11 were using both Shoreline Lake and Charleston Slough on 22 Feb (TGr, MJM, FV). An male **Red-naped X Red-breasted Sapsucker** was

seen near Felter and Sierra roads on 18 Feb (RCo) and is a different bird than the hybrid found nearby in Ed Levin CP in January. The **Eastern Phoebe** wintering at Shady Oaks Park in San Jose was seen again on 20 Feb (MMi). A **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** in Morgan Hill on 8 Feb (SCR) was perhaps three weeks ahead of the vanguard. **Winter Wrens** are rare winter visitors to the valley and its edges so one in Alum Rock Park on 1 Feb (AV, CH) is of interest. The **Yellow Warbler** wintering near the Alviso Environmental Education Center was seen again on 3 Feb (SCR). Particularly rare in the winter, a **Hermit Warbler** was seen at Alum Rock Park on 1 Feb (AV, CH). A male **Western Tanager** was found along San Francisquito Creek above Middlefield on 22 Feb (AME, RSTh), just over the county line. A **White-throated Sparrow** wintering at a feeder in Los Gatos has continued to be recorded in February (JD).

*Observers: Phyllis Browning (PMB), Rita Colwell (RCo), Jean Dubois (JD), Al Eisner (AME), Mike Feighner (MiF), Jane Glass (JG), Tom Grey (TGr), Caralisa Hughes (CH), Alma Kali (AK), Rosalie Lefkowitz (RLe), Nick Lethaby (NL), Mike Mammoser (MJM), John Mariani (JMa), John & Maria Meyer (J&MMe), Mark Miller (MMi), Mike Rogers (MMR), Bob Reiling (RWR), Heather Rottenborn (HLR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Linda Terrill (LT), Scott Terrill (SBT), Ron Thorn (RSTh), Frank Vanslager (FV), Ann Verdi (AV), Chris Wolfe (ChW), and Claire Wolfe (CIW).*



**RARITIES:** Please drop me a note: Bill Bousman, 321 Arlington Way, Menlo Park, CA 94025, or: bousman@merlin.arc.nasa.gov

# New Committee Seeks Volunteers

by Debbie Thompson  
SCVAS Membership Chairperson

We're forming a new group at SCVAS---the Membership Committee. Our focus will be on enhancing the membership experience of all SCVAS members as well as increasing membership and representing SCVAS at community and chapter events. We need your help! We will welcome any level of participation that you can offer. There's a place for those who can only spare a few days a year as well as those who can meet on a regular basis to help steer the committee. This is a great opportunity for you to get more involved in your chapter and to develop some first-rate friendships in the process.

One of our goals is to update and maintain the chapter's mobile display booth, taken to special events all over the county, so it will be a real attention-getter at community events. The theme of the booth will be to educate the public about the world of birds while promoting our ongoing programs at SCVAS, and simply to let the community know that a group like ours exists. We would also like to

have a list of members who could be called upon to run the booth at local events throughout the year.

Another goal of the committee is to follow up with non-members who have shown an interest in SCVAS activities such as general meetings and field trips. We would like to ensure that we never fail to extend an invitation to join our chapter.

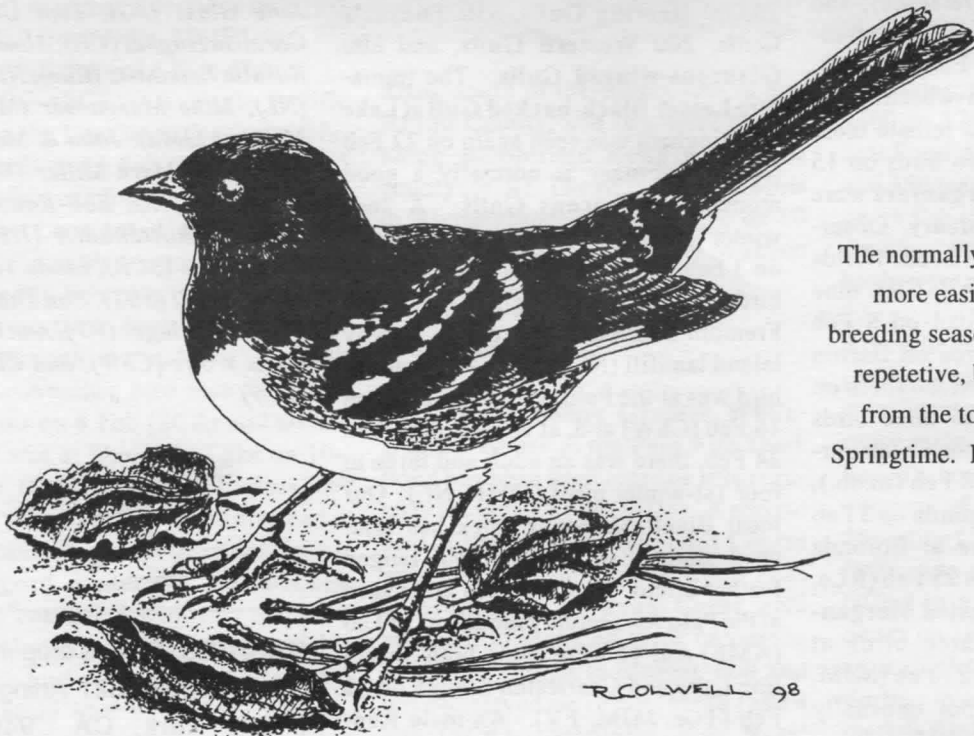
The Membership Committee will also encompass the present duties of the Hospitality Committee. We need additional help to host the monthly general meetings, as well as other events such as the annual dinner held every June. Volunteers will perform simple duties at these events such as setting up tables, putting out refreshments, welcoming members and selling goodies from the Nature Shop.

We will have a Membership Committee kick-off meeting at 7 PM on Tuesday, April 21 at the SCVAS headquarters at McClellan Ranch Park in Cupertino. Refreshments will be served. Anyone who can help in any capacity should attend to find out more information. Don't hesitate---duties will be divided up into small and manageable tasks to fit in with your

busy schedule. If you can't attend the meeting, but would still like to help out, call the chairperson, Debbie Thompson, at (408) 227-4604. We hope to make this a successful and fulfilling (as well as fun!) committee for our chapter.

Watch for further announcements in future editions of *The Avocet*.

*Editor's note: We're thrilled to have Debbie taking on the duties of Membership Committee Chairperson. Many of you know her as the friendly, efficient greeter and 'point person' at our monthly general meetings. Her plans to energize the Membership Committee will not only strengthen our public image but could also push our membership rolls toward the 5,000 mark. Why not come to the kick-off meeting on April 21 and look into this great volunteer opportunity?*



The normally shy Spotted Towhee is more easily viewed during the breeding season. Listen for the male's repetitive, buzzy trill, often given from the top of a tree or shrub in Springtime. Drawing by Rita Colwell

# Book Auction At April Meeting

The following books are on display at the SCVAS office and will be auctioned off to the highest bidder at the April General Meeting (see Page 1). Here's how it works: Until 6 PM April 15, you may submit bids on particular items by phone, e-mail, or by visiting the office. But, beware: all items will be brought to the meeting and, at last year's book sale, most bids were boosted by those in attendance at the meeting. This year, many back issues of popular birding periodicals will also be available for 25¢ each and there will be a few surprise items of a non-literary nature . . . plan to be there!

Author	Title	Year
American Birding Association	Birdfinding In forty national forests and grasslands	1994
Andrews, Roy Chapman	Nature's Way How Nature takes care of its own	1951
Armstrong, Edward A.	The life & Lore of the Bird	1975
Blanchan, Neltje	Bird Neighbours	1922
Blanchan, Neltje	Birds Worth Knowing	1917
Bodsworth, Fred	Last of the Curlews	1987
Brockman, C. Frank	Guide to field identification, Trees of North America	
Harrison, George H.	Roger Tory Peterson's Dozen Birding Hot Spots	1976
Heintzelman, Donald S.	A guide to Eastern Hawk Watching	1976
Holt, H.R.	A birder's guide to Southeastern Arizona	1989
Kieran, John	An Introduction to Nature	1955
Knue, Joseph	North Dakota Wildlife Viewing Guide	1992
Linduska, Joseph P. Editor	Waterfowl Tomorrow	1964
Lotz, Aileen	Birding around the World	1987
National Geographic Society	The Wonder of Birds	1983
Newman, Kenneth	Birds of South Africa 1: Kruger National Park	1980
Page, Jake	Songs to Birds	1993
Peterson, R.T.	A field guide to western birds	1941
Robbins, C.S., Bruun, B. & Zim,	Birds of North America	1966
Sill, B. & C. & J	Field guide to little-known & seldom seen birds	1990
Stokes, Donald	A guide to bird behavior, volumes 1-3	1979
Strange, Ian J.	Penguin World	1981
Terres, John K.	How Birds Fly	1968
Williams, G.R.	Birds of New Zealand	1973
Wilson, L	Bromeliads for Modern Living	1977
Wyatt, Betty & Stoye, Audrey,	Birding at the Bottom of the Bay	1983
Blake, Emmet Reid	Birds of Mexico	1953
Davis, L. Irby	Field Guide to Birds of Mexico and Central America	1972
Peterson, R.T. , Mountfort, G. & Hollom, P.A.D.	Field Guide to the Birds of Britain & Europe	1954
Pettingill, Olin Sewall	Guide to Bird Finding East of the Mississippi	1977
Ridgely, R.S.	A Guide to Birds of Panama	1976
Edwards, Ernest	Field Guide to the Birds of Mexico	1972
Bond, James	Birds of West Indies	1961
Udvardy, Miklos	Audubon Field Guide to North American Birds	1977
Stiles, F. Gary, Skutch, A.F. & Gardner, D.	A Guide to the Birds of Costa rica	1989
Heinzel, Herman	Birds of Britain & Europe	1974
Alden, P. & Gooders, J.	Finding Birds Around the World	1981
Brent, A C.	Life Histories of NA Petrels, Pelican & their Allies	1966
Choate, Ernest A.	The Dictionary of American Bird Names	1985
Scott, Peter	A Coloured Key to the Wildfowl of the World	1961
Davis, John & Baldrige, Alan	Bird year: a book for birders, with special reference to the Monterey Bay Area	1980
Williams, John G. & Arlott, N.	A Field Guide to the Birds of East Africa	1983
Peterson, R.T. & Chalif, E.L.	A Field Guide to Mexican Birds	1973
de Schauensee, Rodolphe Meyer & Phelps, Jr. William H.	A Guide to the Birds of Venezuela	1978
Austin, Jr. Oliver L.	Families of Birds	1971

## BIRDATHON

cont'd from Page 1

A list of teams already signed up for the 1998 Birdathon is presented below. Most teams will be holding their big day of birding in the last week of April, an optimal time for finding lingering winter species and late-arriving spring migrants, but the date is flexible. The most important thing for SCVAS members and friends to do is make a pledge—or go out and form your own Birdathon team and help us raise money for these worthy conservation causes. Birdathon Coordinator Bobbie Handen has organized the following teams for this year's effort:

### BIRD BRAINS---

Alan & Chuck Walther

### DOWN & DIRTY BIRDERS---

Pete LaTourrette, Brad Lowman

### EARTH-QUACKING

### THRUSHFAULT---

Leda Beth Gray, David Drake,  
Sue Hunt

### HUMMDINGERS---

Sandy Cortright & friends

### SANTA CLARA SWIFTS---

Ann Verdi & Clysta Seney

### UNCOMMON LOONS---

Nick Yatsko & friends

### VAGRANTS---

Grant Hoyt & Dick Stovel

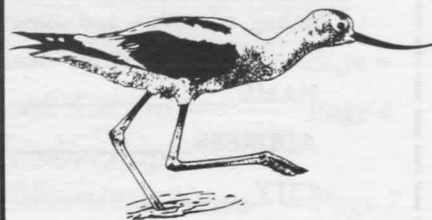
### WRONG TERNS---

Bobbie & Cindy Handen, Allen &  
Joanna Royer, Eileen Bowden

### WRY WRENTITS---

Harriet Gerson, Les Chibana,  
Gail & Doug Cheeseman

Call Bobbie Handen at (408)356-4263 if you're interested in forming a new Birdathon team.



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## International Migratory Bird Day

*S.F. Bay Nat'l Wildlife Refuge Environmental Education Center, Alviso*

**Saturday, May 9, 9 - 3 Free of Charge**

Join SCVAS, Coyote Creek Riparian Station, California Native Plant Society and other groups as we take part in the Partners in Flight celebration of bird migration in the Western Hemisphere. The event will feature bird walks, field trips to Coyote Creek Riparian Station and Alviso Slough, a native plant sale, birdbox building workshop, a poster contest, and plenty of activities for children.

SCVAS is taking a leading role in organizing this year's IMBD, as Garth has noted in this month's Office View column on Page 2. The rich wetlands, mudflats, and riparian habitat in and around Alviso and nearby Coyote Creek offer a perfect setting for birders and conservationists to appreciate the relationship between our species and the myriad of bird species that depend on such habitat for foraging and roosting during migration. It's an event made for Audubon.

Poster contest entries are now being accepted for display at the Environmental Education Center in Alviso. Children and adults are encouraged to enter. Posters must be no larger than 16" x 24" and will be accepted between April 1 - 27 at various locations. Call (408) 262-5513 for an entry form and list of drop-off sites.



We invite you to join the National Audubon Society and its Santa Clara County chapter (SCVAS). To join, please complete and mail this form with payment to: **SCVAS, 22221 McClellan Road, Cupertino, CA 95014.**

**Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society Membership:** (Check one)

Subscriber \$12  Supporter \$25  Donor \$35  Patron \$50 or more

Members receive *The Avocet* newsletter. Make check payable to SCVAS.

**OR**

**National Audubon Society Membership:** (Check one)

new members \$20  Membership renewal \$35

Members receive *Audubon* magazine and *The Avocet* newsletter. Make check payable to National Audubon Society.

Donation: SCVAS greatly appreciates your tax-deductible donation. Your gift helps fund Audubon's birding, education, and conservation programs.

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