

# THE AVOCET

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Audubon Society

Sept.-Oct. 2002

## It's A Good Job — Reason #24

### Executive Director joins volunteers on Coyote Creek restoration outing

by Craig Breon

Stretch a leg over and around a bay tree branch, pull some blackberry out of the way, plunge a shoe into a patch of leaf matter. Catch a moment of a kingfisher rattling downstream, worry about the poison oak to my left, then move on, wondering how long it will be before one of these Global Positioning System (GPS) units slips a hand and crashes to the ground . . . or worse, into the creek.

My thought: "How many of the people I graduated with from U.C. Davis Law School can count such a day as part of their work?"

It's a good job, to be here on a Saturday morning along Coyote Creek below Anderson Dam, three volunteers for companions. We're talking and observing more than working, feeling very much involved in this new restoration venture for SCVAS. The mix of nature, work, and good people is why I came to Audubon in the first place, why I went to law school, and why in my last year of college I somehow tuned in to my future and stood outside in a harsh New England winter experiencing "Bio 232: Field Botany and Plant Taxonomy" (AKA "Frozen Bark and Twigs" class).

**Avocet goes bi-monthly (see Page 9)**

For our piece of the Bay Area, there's no creek like Coyote Creek.

More than sixty miles long and the best valley-level riparian habitat in the South Bay (according to the Army Corps of Engineers, only the Napa River rivals it throughout the region). I've been with SCVAS for nearly nine years, and this is my first opportunity to walk these upper stretches, below Anderson but above the Ogier ponds. I have spent too many days discussing the more urban reaches with the San Jose Planning Department or the City Council.

We've begun our GPS mapping of invasive plant species along four local creeks, a project funded by the Water District (and our members) and staffed now by Jennifer Peritz, me, and nearly 40 trained volunteers.

It's early August, a lull in the local birding year, yet there's rarely a dull moment along this stretch of Coyote Creek. We spook a Barn Owl from a roost. Black Phoebes and Belted Kingfishers abound, White-tailed Kites hover in the fields nearby, and a Great Blue Heron perches atop a young oak tree about twenty feet over the water. One of those raptors I can't distinguish, probably a Cooper's or Red-shouldered Hawk, darts by.

My companions are Leon, a Water District retiree after twenty-seven years of service; Mamatha, a mother and high-tech worker; and Annee, a young student. We're picking our way through the understory vegetation together, sharing observations of the land around us and a bit about our lives

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### General Membership Meeting "Parallels and Contrasts of Galapagos and Antarctica" with Doug and Ted Cheeseman

Wednesday Sept. 18, 7:30 PM

Is Galapagos an "equatorial Antarctica?" Is the Antarctic a "polar Galapagos?" Ted and Doug Cheeseman, both photographers and biologists, will compare the superb wildlife in these unusual worlds in tonight's program.

The Antarctic Peninsula is a "banana belt," quite warm for the frozen continent with temperatures hovering around 0 C or 32 F during the Antarctic summer. The productivity during the brief Antarctic summer is amazing, with seals,

*continued on page 3*

Complete Events calendar on Page 3, including October General Meeting announcement

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◆ *Wildlife Education Day*  
—Saturday, Oct. 12 Page 5

◆ *New County breeding record*  
—Field Notes, Page 6

◆ *Wildlife, pets seek coexistence*  
—Advocate, Page 10

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# Sept.-Oct. 2002 Field Trips

*Please carpool if possible; bring binoculars, field guides, layered clothing.*

**LO = Lunch optional**

**RC = Heavy rain cancels**

## **Saturday Sept. 7, 9:00 AM Charleston Slough**

Half day. Leader: Allen Royer (408) 288-7768. From Hwy 101 in Mt. View take San Antonio Rd. north to Terminal Way parking area. Meet at entrance nearest San Antonio Rd. Trip recommended for, but not limited to, beginning birders.

## **Sunday Sept. 8, 8:00 AM Moss Landing and vicinity**

Half day plus. Leader: Todd Newberry. Local contact: Bob Reiling (408)/253-7527. Meet at Jetty Rd and Hwy 1 just north of Moss Landing. Itinerary includes Jetty Rd., Moon Glow Dairy, Kirby Park, Harkin Slough. Dress in layers, bring lunch, water and be prepared for a great trip with a local expert. Shorebirds, waterfowl, migrants.

## **Wednesday Sept. 11, 9:00 AM Moss Landing/Elkhorn Slough**

Half day. Leader: Harriet Gerson (408) 252-6244. Meet at Jetty Rd. and Hwy 1 just north of Moss Landing. Highlights: gulls, terns, ducks, shorebirds, raptors. LO

## **Saturday Sept. 14, 9:00 AM Point Reyes**

Full day. Leader: Peter LaTourrette (650) 961-2741. Our annual trip to the west coast's most active vagrant trap, where birds and weather are always exciting and unpredictable! From Hwy 1 in Marin Co. take Sir Francis Drake Blvd. west approx. 14 miles and turn left to Drakes Beach. Meet in parking area. Bring lunch, liquids, full tank of gas and be ready for fog, wind, sun and lots of difficult to ID birds. Be prepared to carpool from Drake's Beach.

## **Sunday Sept. 15, 8:30 AM Carmel Rivermouth /Pacific Grove**

Half day plus. Leader: John Mariani (408) 997-2066. Take Hwy 1 south to Carmel, turn left at Rio Rd., then immediately right into Crossroads Shopping Center. Meet near Crossroads Cinema at back of shopping center near river. After checking the Carmel River we'll continue birding along the Pacific Grove Shoreline. Seabirds, shorebirds, passerine migrants, possible vagrants. Bring lunch and liquids or buy food at meeting place. Temperatures vary—bring extra layers of clothing. Rubber boots optional (may be puddles in riverbed).

## **Saturday Sept. 21, 8:30 AM Arastradero Preserve**

Half day. Leader: Jim Liskovec (650) 969-5542. From I-280 take Page Mill Rd. west approx. 1/2 mile to Arastradero Rd. Turn right, meet at parking lot 1/2 mile on right. Woodland and grassland species; a good assortment of raptors possible. Two miles of moderate walking. RC

## **Sunday Sept. 22, 8:30 AM Coyote Hills Regional Park**

Half day. Leader: Frank Vanslager (408) 257-3647. Take Hwy 84 (Dumbarton Bridge) east to Newark. Exit right at Thornton, then go left over freeway as Thornton becomes Paseo Padre; turn left at Patterson Ranch/Commerce Rd into park. Meet at far end of Quarry parking lot on left, 1/4 mile past entrance. Entrance fee probable. LO, RC

## **Wednesday Sept. 25, 8:00 AM Palo Alto Foothills Park**

Half day. Leader: Alberta Jasberg (650) 493-9546. Fall migrants, woodland and grassland birds. Park open only to Palo Alto residents and their guests; group will meet at Page Mill/I-280 Park'n'Ride to carpool. LO, RC

## **Saturday Sept. 28, 8:00 AM Hawk Hill/Marin Headlands**

Full day. Leader: Nick Yatsko (408) 247-5499. Carpoolers meet at Page Mill Rd/I-280 Park'n'Ride at 8:00 AM. All others meet at tunnel entrance near parking area on Hawk Hill at 9:00 AM. Directions to Hawk Hill: after crossing Golden Gate Bridge, exit just past Vista Pt., cross under Hwy 101 and turn right just before entrance back onto Hwy 101 south. Drive up hill to highest point and park. Migrating raptors; possible Broadwinged Hawk. Weather variable; dress in layers, bring lunch and liquids. First of two trips to Hawk Hill. Heavy fog may change itinerary.

## **Sunday Sept. 29, 8:30 AM Ogier Ponds**

Half day. Leader: Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527. From Hwy 101 in Morgan Hill take Cochrane Rd. west to Monterey Hwy, turn right, go north 2.6 miles, turn right towards Model Airplane Park (street is unnamed). Follow road for 1/2 mile, park in gravel lot at first bend in road.

## **Saturday Oct 5, 9:00 AM Hawk Hill/Marin Headlands**

Full day. Leader: Don Schmoltdt (916) 739-8821. Meet at tunnel entrance near parking

area on Hawk Hill (see directions under Sept. 28 listing). Second of two outings to view migrating raptors from the west coast's premier hawk lookout. Heavy fog may change itinerary.

## **Sunday Oct 6, 8:30 AM Windy Hill OSP**

Half day. Leader: Kirsten Holmquist (408) 747-0988. Meet in parking lot at Sausal Pond edge of Preserve. From I-280 in Portola Valley take Alpine Rd. south (toward hills) about 2.9 miles to first stop sign (Portola Rd.), turn right and go 0.8 miles to parking lot on left side of road just past The Sequoias. RC

## **Wednesday Oct 9, 8:30 AM Ogier Ponds**

Half day. Leader: Kirsten Holmquist (408) 747-0988. See directions under Sept. 29 listing. Fresh water marsh birds, raptors.

## **Saturday Oct. 12, 8:30 AM Alum Rock Park**

Half day. Leader: Dave Cook (408) 257-1492. From Hwy 101 or I-680 take McKee Rd. northeast toward hills, then left on Toyon Ave, right on Penitencia Creek Rd and continue into park. Meet in Rustic Lands parking area on right just before reaching "T" intersection. Moderately strenuous 3 to 4 mile walk. Possible entrance fee. LO, RC

## **Sunday Oct. 13, 9:00 AM Charleston Slough**

Half day. Leader: Dick Stovel (650) 856-6105. Meet at Terminal Way at end of San Antonio Rd. north off Hwy 101 in Mt. View. Birding geared toward beginners but all are encouraged to attend. Bring your spotting scope and a friend.

## **Saturday Oct. 19, 8:00 AM Local Hot Spots**

Half day. Leader: Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527. Meet at Alviso Marina. From Hwy 237 in San Jose take Gold St. north to end of street, bear left on Elizabeth St. then right on Hope St. to Marina parking lot. A chance to visit some of the local hot spots you hear about and, we hope, to see some "good" birds.

## **Sunday Oct. 20, 8:30 AM Arastradero OSP**

Half day. Leader: Roland Kenner (408) 725-0468. From I-280 take Page Mill Rd. west approx. 1/2 mile to Arastradero Rd. Turn right and meet at parking lot 1/2 mile on right. Moderate walking. RC

## Field Trips *cont'd*

### Wednesday, Oct. 23 8:30 AM Bottom of Windy Hill OSP

Leader: John Arnold (650)948-4250. Meet at parking lot at Sausal Pond edge of Preserve. See directions under Oct. 6 listing. **LO, RC**

### Saturday Oct. 26, 8:30 AM

**Sunnyvale Water Treatment Facility**  
Half day. Leader: TBA. questions call (408)253-7527. From Hwy 101 take Hwy 237 east, exit north on Caribbean Dr., turn right on Borregas Ave then left to parking area. Great for duck study; scopes recommended. Fairly easy but long walk. **RC**

### Sunday Oct. 27, 9:00 AM

#### Western San Francisco

Half day. Leader: Alan Hopkins (415) 664-0983. *Note: Change in Daylight Savings Time; fall back or be an hour early for this trip.* From I-280 take 19th Ave to Golden Gate Park. Entering park on 19th Ave be in left lane; take Crossover Dr. to 25th Ave to Geary Blvd, then left on Geary. Meet in parking lot at Mirrie Way above Sutro Baths and Cliff House. **RC**

### Saturday, Nov. 2, 8:30 AM Grant Ranch County Park

Half day. Leader: Alan Thomas (408)265-9286. From I-680 take Alum Rock Ave northeast, turn right on Mt. Hamilton Rd, then proceed approx. 9 miles to park. Meet at Hall's Valley Lake parking lot on left side of road (just past main park entrance on right side of road). Fresh water ducks, oak woodland birds, possible Golden Eagle. Moderate 2-mile walk. **LO, RC**

### Sunday, Nov. 3, 8:00 AM Charleston Slough

Half day. Leader: Ann Verdi (408) 266-5108. Meet at Terminal Way at end of San Antonio Rd. north off Hwy 101 in Mt. View. Trip is designed for beginners; all are welcome.

### Saturday Nov. 9, 8:00 AM Elkhorn Ranch

Half day plus. Leader: Rick Fournier (831) 632-2473. Property owners have granted day access for a group of 15 to bird the Moss Landing Wildlife Area. Group will then pursue recently-reported vagrants throughout the general area. Trip continues after lunch for hard-core enthusiasts. Meet in parking lot of Maloney's Restaurant on Hwy 1 and north side of Moss Landing bridge in Moss Landing. Call leader to reserve space on this special trip. Shorebirds, ducks, passerines, vagrants. Bring food and liquids; dress in layers. **RC**

## Events Calendar

### Wednesday Sept. 4, 7:30 PM

**Bay Area Bird Photographers** features a Members' Slide Show. *Please note that for tonight's meeting only, the group will meet at the Fireside Room at Lucie Stern Center, 1305 Middlefield Rd. in Palo Alto.*

### Tuesday Sept. 10, 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: Summer birding experiences.

### Tuesday Sept. 10, 7:30 PM

**Board of Directors meeting**  
McClellan Ranch Park.

### Wednesday Sept. 18, 7:30 PM

**General Membership Mtg.** in Palo Alto  
See Pg. 1 for details.

### Tuesday Oct. 1, 7:30 PM

**Board of Directors meeting**  
McClellan Ranch Park.

### Wednesday Oct. 2, 7:30 PM

**Bay Area Bird Photographers** presents Kenneth Petersen with a program about "Digiscoping," the increasingly popular practice of using a digital camera to photograph (primarily birds) through a high quality spotting scope. Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center, E. Embarcadero Rd., Palo Alto.

### Tuesday Oct. 8, 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: Marbled Godwit.

### Saturday Oct. 12, 10 AM - 2 PM

#### Wildlife Education Day

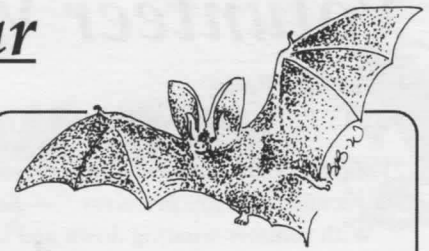
McClellan Ranch Park  
See announcement on Page 5.

### Sunday Nov. 10, 8:30 AM Ogier Ponds

Half day. Leader: Grant Hoyt (650) 969-7892. See directions under Sept. 29 listing. Raptors, freshwater marsh species. **RC**

#### PLAN AHEAD:

Dave Cook, Mike Mammoser and Frank Vanslager will lead a 2-day outing to the Sacramento Valley Wildlife Refuges, Gray Lodge, and Sutter Buttes on Friday-Saturday, Nov. 29-30. Details in the Nov. *Avocet*.



## General Membership mtg. "Bats of Belize" with Dave Johnston Wednesday Oct. 16, 7:30 PM Campbell Community Center

What sleeps hanging by its toes? A bat, of course! Dave Johnston will present a special program on Belize and its bats. Dave is a well-known Santa Clara Valley biologist and former director of the Youth Science Institute who recently completed his Ph.D in chiroptology (bat biology). Belize is known not only for its avian diversity but also its bats. Dave's slides of Belize include fantastic shots of Belizian bats and a fascinating presentation full of Belize's bat behavior. Tonight's presentation will take place in the Orchard City Hall, a 300-seat room at the Campbell Community Center, 1 West Campbell Ave., corner of Winchester.

## Cheesemans' slide show *cont'd from Pg. 1*

penguins, albatrosses and other seabirds all courting and reproducing. The cold waters of South Georgia and the Antarctic stimulate reproduction during the sunny months to feed millions of penguins. Likewise, in the Galapagos the cold water of the Humboldt Current supports the world's only equatorial penguins, plus vast colonies of boobies, frigatebirds and albatrosses. These pristine worlds are a testament to both the miracle of past preservation efforts and the ongoing need for conservation.

Ted and Doug Cheeseman will share a lecture and slide show rich with animal behavior illustrating the families that thrive in the Galapagos and Antarctica: whales, seals, penguins, albatrosses, petrels, shearwaters, cormorants, gulls, raptors, shorebirds, and landbirds.

# Volunteer Ventures

by Jennifer Peritz  
SCVAS Programs Coordinator

*"Volunteers are not paid — not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless." — Source Unknown*

With summer winding down and school beginning, it's time for SCVAS to fire up our *Wetlands and Woodlands Discovery Program Field Trips*. The more volunteers we have, the more schools we're able to reach, so once again we are offering our Volunteer Training Program during September and October. Either in the classroom or out in the field, this unique, hands-on learning program allows you to share your love and respect of the natural environment with local 4th-6th graders. For more details or to view our Volunteer Video, contact me at the number below.

SCVAS is also seeking **Outreach Volunteers** to offer presentations to either adult groups or school children. Every month we receive multiple requests for speakers on topics ranging from wetlands to conservation to Bay Area habitats to (of course) birds! Thanks to volunteer and staff efforts, we've developed scripts and slide shows on a few of the most popular topics. Now we need your help to begin spreading the SCVAS message. Presentations generally last no more than an hour, and SCVAS staff will prepare you with materials.

Are you interested in volunteering, but have difficulty committing to a definite time? Our newest volunteer position — **"On-call Volunteer"** — offers the freedom of flexibility! Often we have quick projects that require the help of a volunteer, but a regularly scheduled office volunteer is unavailable. This is where the On-call Volunteer fits in! I will simply give you a call to let you know that we have a 2-3 hour project for you. If you are available any time over the next week or so, we can schedule a time for you to come in. You are not booked into a set time and if you have other plans, you don't have to commit. You would have the flexibility to work as often as you choose. Tasks range from helping with mailings to computer work; sorting library books to stocking Nature Shop inventory. Please contact me today to become a part of the On-call Volunteer Network!

It's that time of year again — the Education Committee is currently preparing for our **11th Annual Wildlife Education Day!** ED Day activities include a bird-banding presentation, scavenger hunt, student poster contest, bird walk, and raffle, as well as the opportunity to build a nestbox, see live animals, and meet local wildlife-related organizations. With over 400 participants expected, we'll need a large pool of volunteers to make the day a success. Volunteers are needed to set up, staff SCVAS-sponsored tables, direct parking, assist guests, and much more. Mark your calendars now for Saturday, October 12 and contact me today to let me know your availability.

Jennifer Peritz, [programs@scvas.org](mailto:programs@scvas.org), (408) 252-3740



## Fall Birding Classes

### **Mountain View "Meet the Locals"**

**Instructor: Steve Rutledge**

This series of four field seminars is designed to introduce beginning and intermediate birders to the art and science of birding, with emphasis on field identification. The class is kept very small (8 participants) so the instructor can give each participant individual attention in developing birding skills. Participants will get good scope views of a variety of birds and practice separating closely related species. Focus of the class is on field identification, but basic bird biology and conservation will also be taught.

Short lectures will be held in the field, and the class will use extensive material prepared by the instructor on birding fundamentals. Day pack to hold 3-ring binder (supplied by instructor) is required. Class will meet four Sundays at 8 AM at gateway to Charleston Slough at junction of San Antonio Road and Terminal Way in Mountain View, and carpool to various local habitats including coastal and woodland sites. Classes end mid-afternoon; participants should bring lunch and liquids.

To register call the SCVAS office at (408) 252-3747. Additional classes may be offered if there is interest. Fee is \$40.

### **Fremont Birding Field Trips**

**Instructor: Alice Hoch**

Alice Hoch's popular Tuesday morning Birding Field Trips class at Fremont Adult School will resume on Sept. 10th and continue through Oct. 15th. Register by Thursday Sept. 5th by calling Fremont Adult School at (510) 791-5841. Register early as the class is limited to 15 students.

Alice's class is different because it consists of tutoring during actual birding (rather than sitting through lectures). Class will bird a different site each Tuesday from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM.

Alice is an active member of Ohlone Audubon Society who has been teaching Birding Field Trips for over 27 years. Her classes are filled with friendly, helpful people at all skill levels, from absolute beginner to very experienced. Be prepared to birdwatch at the first class meeting. (Class location will be announced at registration; usual Noll School site may be unavailable.)

For questions about class content but not about registration call Alice at (510) 657-0475. For questions about registration, call Fremont Adult School at (510) 791-5841.

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# 11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL WILDLIFE EDUCATION DAY

Saturday, October 12, 2002

10am-2pm

McClellan Ranch Park in Cupertino

Build a Birdhouse  
Live Animals . . . bats, birds, reptiles!  
Scavenger Hunt  
Bird Banding Demonstration  
20+ Environmental Organizations

Make a Bird Feeder  
Guided Nature Walks  
Learn about CA Wildlife and Habitats  
Fabulous Raffle Prizes  
Educational Presentations

## "Early Bird" ~ Shorebird Walk

8:00 am @ Charleston Slough ~ RSVP Required



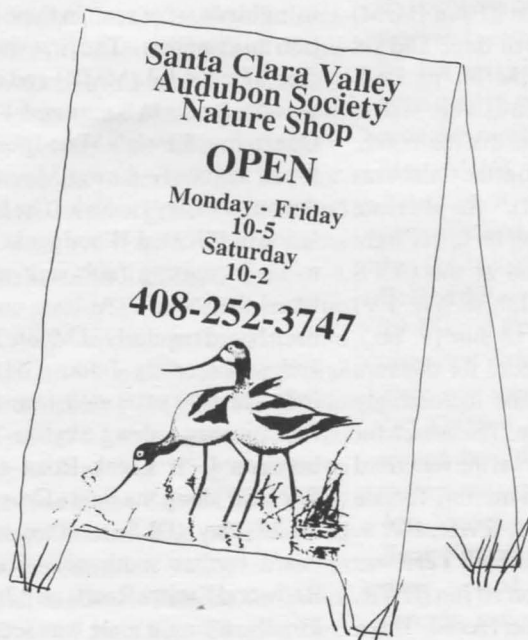
## !!! Poster Contest !!!

To enter, please call (408) 252-3740  
or visit the SCVAS website for more details

General Parking @ Monta Vista High School w/ FREE SHUTTLE SERVICE  
Disabled Parking ONLY @ McClellan Ranch Park  
IN CASE OF RAIN, all activities will be held at Monta Vista High School

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## SCVAS Nature Shop



*Be sure to visit the Nature Shop to see our new jewelry, T-shirts, stuffed animals (including an adorable Whooping Crane), and of course, all types of food and feeders for your feathered friends!*

# Field Notes

by Bill Bousman

## Pelicans through Skimmers

Five **Brown Pelicans** on the dike between Salt Ponds A9 and A10 on 14 Jul (MMR) were the first birds to arrive this summer (and were fairly late). Two **Cattle Egrets** at the Arzino Ranch on 25 Mar (MJM) were the only birds found this season. A female **Wood Duck** with four small ducklings on the Mallison Pond in San Antonio Valley on 20 Jul (AME) was the only report of breeding this summer. **American Wigeon** are rare in the summer so a male in the Lockheed-Martin ponds in Sunnyvale on 2 Jun and another male in the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin on 27 Jul were of interest (both MJM). As in most recent summers there was a scattering of reports of **Blue-winged Teal** locally. A pair was seen in the Mountain View Forebay on 4 Jun (PMB) and another pair on 6 Jun in the Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) ponds (SEM). Two more birds were seen at the Coyote Creek Field Station (CCFS) waterbird pond on 11 Jun (KO). No Blue-wings were found during the rest of June, but six birds were seen in the Palo Alto FCB on 6 Jul (MJM), a male was in the Mountain View Forebay on 8 Jul (WGB), and three were again found in the FCB on 26 Jul (MJM). **Green-winged Teal** were also observed more often this summer with a male in the Lockheed-Martin ponds on 1 Jun (MJM), a pair along Adobe Creek in the Palo Alto FCB on 2 Jun (MMR) and two males there on 24 Jun (WGB). Less expected was a pair of **Redhead** on the Sunnyvale WPCP ponds on 19 Jul (WGB) and a remarkable eight birds on the Palo Alto FCB on 26 Jul (MJM). Our previous high summer counts have never exceeded two birds. Matching the Redheads in rarity was a single **Ring-necked Duck** on Boronda Lake in Foothills Park on 1 Jun (LCh). Single **Osprey** were seen at Coyote Reservoir on 25 Jun (RWR, FV), at the percolation ponds near Coyote on 30 Jun (MJM), and at the Parkway Lakes on 27-28 Jul (MMR). An immature **Swainson's Hawk** found at the Arzino Ranch on 27 Jul (JiD)

is one of our few July records. **Mountain Quail** are undoubtedly one of our rarest residents. A single bird was heard northeast of Summit Ridge near Loma Prieta on 25 May (KPe et al.) and four birds were heard east of Black Mountain on 31 May (PLN).

A faded, basic **Lesser Yellowlegs** in the Mountain View Forebay on 18 Jun (WGB) was unusual. More typical were four arriving passage birds in Crittenden Marsh on 13 Jul (MMR). The high count in July was the five seen over the CCFS waterbird pond on 27 Jul (AME). Breeding **Spotted Sandpipers** included an adult with one precocial young at the upper end of Coyote Reservoir on 16 Jun (MMR, MJM) and three adults with at least one young on San Felipe Lake, San Benito

## *A first breeding record of Cedar Waxwings was the high note of the summer period*

County on 29 Jun (MMR, MJM, MP). A faded adult **Red Knot** in alternate plumage was seen at the old Palo Alto yacht harbor on 27 Jul (CS). A juvenile **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was found at the CCFS waterbird pond on 27 Jun (MJM) and the next day between three and six juveniles were found (MJM, m. ob.). Between one and three birds were seen at this location through the end of the month. A single juvenile was also at the Calabazas Marsh on 31 Jul (MJM). An alternate **Stilt Sandpiper**, missing its lower right leg and foot, was found at the CCFS waterbird pond on 10 Jun (RWR, FV) and was seen through 12 Jun (v. ob.). This is the first June record for this rare shorebird that has become increasingly regular in the fall passage. The search for Semipalmated Sandpipers at the waterbird pond paid dividends in a molting female **Ruff** on 30 Jul (PK, RK, RWR, FV, v. ob.). A 2nd-summer **Common Tern** was found at Salt Pond A16 on 10 Jun (RWR, FV) for an unusual summer record. Three **Least Terns** on Salt Pond A2E on 6 Jul (MJM) were the first of the season. The

peak July numbers here were 40 on 13 Jul (MMR). Ten to 14 birds were also seen on Salt Pond A1 on 16 Jul (RWR, FV). Multiple pairs of **Black Skimmers** nested on the islands in Salt Pond A16. Incubation was observed as early as 23 Jun (MJM). A chick hatched on the 3rd island on 5 Jul (MJM) and on the 1st island by 14 Jul (MMR). A pair also attempted to nest on the southeast island in Salt Pond A1 and incubation was observed on 4 Jul (MJM), but the nest was abandoned by 8 Jul (WGB).

## Roadrunners through Warblers

A **Greater Roadrunner** was found north of San Antonio Junction on 11 May (LCh et al.) and another bird was calling on Marsh Road on 30 Jun (BH *vide* MMR). Migrant **Black Swifts** in May included an early one at Rancho San Antonio OSP on 1 May (JLi) and flocks of 15 to 30 birds at Loma Prieta on 25 May (MJM, RK, PK), and about six birds on 30 May (MMR, LB, LCh). A male **Costa's Hummingbird** was identified at a feeder in San Jose on 15 Jul (JP) and was seen there more or less regularly through the end of the month. There is a rare but regular movement of Costa's following breeding to the northwest and they sometimes end up at our feeders on the valley floor. Two male **Rufous Hummingbirds** were seen in their fall migration this summer. The first was at Henry Coe SP on 4 Jul (MMR) and the second was at a feeder in Saratoga 4-8 Jul (LSu). One to four **Lewis's Woodpeckers** were found regularly during May in the San Antonio Valley (v. ob.). The local population of **Pileated Woodpeckers** appears to be increasing (although more often heard than seen). At least one bird has been heard regularly at Monte Bello OSP and was seen on 7 Jun (GHa). Either individuals or pairs were heard or seen in four locations along Skyline Boulevard between Bear Creek Road and Castle Rock SP along the Santa Cruz border on 24-25 May (DLSu). Two more were heard further south near Summit and Redwood Estates Roads on 3 Jul (DLSu). Finally, a single male was seen off Skyline Boulevard west of Table Mountain on 10 Jul (LCh, MCh).

## Field Notes *cont'd*

Rare in spring, a singing **Willow Flycatcher** was seen along Smith Creek on 9 Jun (EFe et al.). The first of the fall migrants was banded at CCFs on the early date of 28 Jul (*fide* MMR). The last refuge of **Purple Martins** in the county appears to be along Summit Ridge near Loma Prieta. At various times in May and June a male and one to two females were found along Summit Ridge or near the summit of Loma Prieta (v. ob.). A day trip to Henry Coe SP yielded three **Canyon Wrens** on 4 Jul (MMR). Finding this rare back-country wren generally requires the use of shanks' mare. An **American Dipper** was seen along Stevens Creek above Mt. Eden Road on 7 Jun (AG), an area where they are resident. Seven singing **Golden-crowned Kinglets** found along the Santa Cruz border on Skyline Boulevard from Bear Creek Road to Castle Rock SP on 25 May (DLSu) are part of a small breeding population that edges into Santa Clara County. A few **Cedar Waxwings** generally linger into early June, so one over Matadero Creek on 1 Jun (MMR) and 12 over San Antonio Road in Palo Alto on 2 Jun (PJM) are expected. However, Suddjian's discovery of two adults and two fledglings on Ensign Way in Palo Alto on 16 Jun is remarkable. The fledglings still had bits of down and the adults fed them the bracts from pineapple guava flowers. This is the first breeding record of this northern species in Santa Clara County. Small numbers of **Phainopepla** were found in San Antonio Valley in May (v. ob.), where they are rare but regular. Much more surprising were birds found further west. A female was on Loma Prieta's slopes on 18 May (AME). A male was seen in Hall's Valley on 2 Jun (MMR, AK). A pair was found in Alum Rock Park on 9 Jun (EFe et al.) and was studied on 15 Jun (MMR) for an extended period of time, but showed no evidence of breeding. Single males on the west side of the Santa Clara Valley were most unusual: one off Henwood Road in the Almaden Valley on 11 Jun (JMa) and another at Rancho San Antonio OSP on 17 Jun (JLi). Singing **Hermit Warblers** were found along the Santa Clara-Santa Cruz border from Bear Creek

Road to Castle Rock SP in late May. Six singing birds were found on 24 May and seven on 25 May (both DLSu) and at least one bird was singing at Castle Rock SP on 1 Jun (PG). Of most interest, however, were two birds carrying food to a Douglas fir about a mile southeast of Castle Rock on 25 May (DLSu). This Pacific Coast warbler is a rare breeder in Santa Clara County. Always rare and generally nonresident, a **MacGillivray's Warbler** was found singing at the sag pond at Monte Bello OSP on 8 May (JAC). Likely migrant **Yellow-breasted Chats** included one on Smith Creek on 5 May (CIW, ChW) and a singing bird in Hall's Valley on 11 May (MDd et al.). A bird singing on Llagas Creek above Bloomfield Road on 16 Jun (MMR, MJM) was likely resident, as was a singing bird found at the upper end of Coyote Reservoir on 16 and 25 Jun (MMR, MJM, RWR, FV).

### Sparrows through Goldfinches

**Black-chinned Sparrows** were widespread this summer. Two were singing in Henry Coe SP near Mississippi Lake on 5 May (JY), where not found before, and one was singing above China Hole in Coe on 17 May (RK, PK). Two birds were singing on Loma Prieta on 18 May (AME) and between one and six birds were found there and nearby on Summit Ridge through 26 Jun (m. ob.). This locale has often been used in the past. A bird was singing near the summit of Mt. Hamilton on 18 May (MJM), was heard there again on 9 Jun (EFe et al.), and a male was seen carrying food to a nest at this spot on 29 Jun (LCh et al.). Singing birds at Monte Bello OSP on 26 May (ChW, CIW) and 29 May (LCh, RCo et al.) were in the chaparral field there and although a female was seen near the parking lot on 8 Jun (TO), it does not appear the birds nested here this year. Another singing male was seen along the less often birded Mt. Umunhum Road on 3 Jun (JMa). **Sage Sparrows** were found in many of their typical breeding areas. Notable records include more than three birds singing above China Hole in Henry Coe SP on 17 May (RK, PK), at least four birds

"The local population of Pileated Woodpeckers appears to be increasing..."  
Sketch by Bonnie Bedford-White



at Loma Prieta and Summit Ridge on 24 May (RWR, FV, WGB), and three adults with two fledglings found in Henry Coe SP on 4 Jul (MMR) in an area where nesting had not been previously confirmed. **Grasshopper Sparrows** were also found widely. Eleven birds tallied in Hall's Valley on 2 Jun (MMR, AK) was a good count for one of the more reliable areas for this sparrow in May and June (m. ob.). Birds were also found on the west side of the valley at Monte Bello OSP 16 May-17 Jul (v. ob.) and near Calero Reservoir on 25 May (MMR). One singing along Llagas Creek above Bloomfield Road in the south county on 16 Jun (MMR, MJM) was on the valley floor. A 1st-summer male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was found in Stevens Creek CP on 7 Jul (LSu), but could not be found after that. More reliable, a pair of **Blue Grosbeaks** were found along Coyote Creek below Hwy 237 on 8 Jun (MJM) and were then seen regularly through 22 Jun. The male was last observed on 23 Jun (ViT). The pair was captured at CCFs on 12 Jun and banded (SH, DW). The female did not have a brood patch. Scattered **Great-tailed Grackles** were found in May, including a male along Prunedale Road north of San Felipe Lake on 1 May (JiD), one in Palo Alto on 16 May (DB *fide* LCh), and one at Grant Lake in Hall's Valley on 18 May (FV et al.). More interesting were nesting birds found at the Parkway Lakes on 26 May (MMR). A single male was seen on 26 May, but a female taking food to a nest in the tules was observed on 27 May (MJM). By 2 Jun, it was clear that at least three males and two females were present (MJM). On 30 Jun, five fledglings were counted at the lake (MJM). A male and female Great-tailed also appeared at Almaden Lake on 24 Jul (JMa). A Great-

## Field Notes *cont'd*

tailed Grackle pair nested here in 2000. **Lawrence's Goldfinches** had a "banner year" with birds found widely in the Diablo Range. Many were in areas where they normally nest, albeit in larger numbers. There also appeared to be a general shift westward with more birds found on the western side of the range, such as the 38 counted in Hall's Valley on 2 Jun (MMR, AK). A high count of 150 was obtained in San Antonio Valley on 27 Jul (JiD, CS *fide* MMR). A pair of birds was observed nest building at Smith Creek on 2 May (LCh, LB) and another pair was carrying nest material in Hall's Valley on 5 May (CIW, ChW). This apparent invasion extended to the Santa Cruz Mountains as well. Small numbers of birds were found in the various preserves along the crest of the mountains as well as at lower elevation sites such as Stevens Creek CP and above Almaden Reservoir. A few observations from the valley floor were less expected with a male singing south of the model airplane park along Coyote Creek near Morgan Hill on 1 May (JiD), one banded at CCFS on 9 Jun (*fide* SH), and one over Llagas Creek above Bloomfield Road on 16 Jun (MMR, MJM).

*Observers: Deborah Bartens (DB), Lou Beaudet (LB), Bill Bousman (WGB), Phyllis Browning (PMB), Les Chibana (LCh), Mary Chibana (MCh), Jack Cole (JAC), Rita Colwell (RCO), Jim Danzenbaker (JiD), Matthew Dodder (MDd), Al Eisner (AME), Eric Feuss (EF), Andy Gibb (AG), Phil Gordon (PG), Garth Harwood (GHa), Bob Hirt (BH), Shirley Hudson (SH), Alma Kali (AK), Roland Kenner (RK), Pat Kenny (PK), Jim Liskovec (JLi), Mike Mammoser (MJM), John Mariani (JMa), Peter Metropulos (PJM), Steve Miller (SEM), Paul Noble (PLN), Kris Olson (KO), Tadd Ottman (TO), Janna Pauser (JP), Mark Paxton (MP), Kenneth Petersen (KP), Bob Reiling (RWR), Mike Rogers (MMR), Chris Sloan (CS), David Suddjian (DLSu), Linda Sullivan (LSu), Vivek Tiwari (ViT), Frank Vanslager (FV), Chris Wolfe (ChW), Claire Wolfe (CIW), Debbie Wong (DW), and James Yurchenco (JY).*

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

## Craig on the creek *cont'd from Page 1*

here in the Valley. The number and variety of people who contribute their days, nights or weekends to SCVAS constantly impresses me.

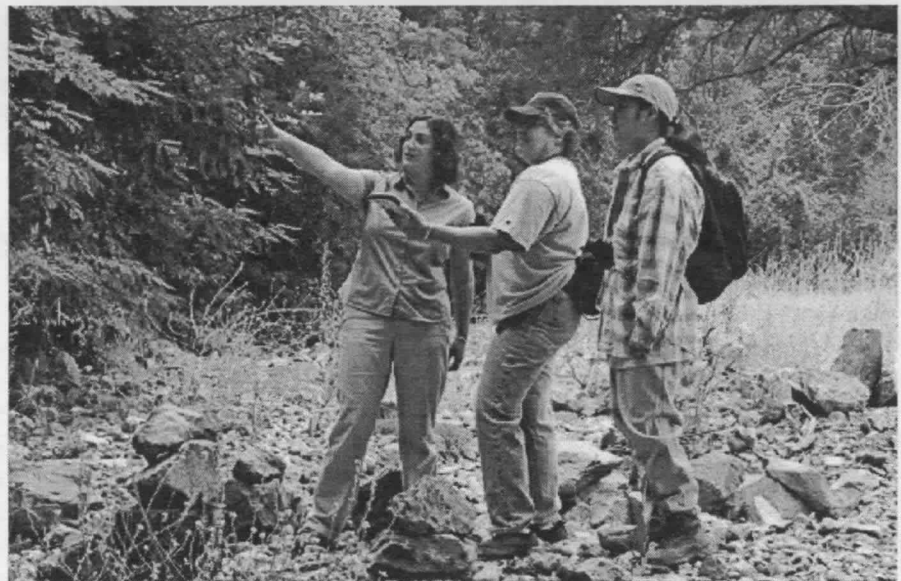
At one point, we encounter the evil *Arundo donax* (Giant Reed) on an island. The best way to map the island is to wade across the waters and pick my way barefoot through the dense, invasive mass of reeds, holding the GPS unit up high to clear signal interference. I cross to the island just where one channel of the stream hits a rock-lined gradient change and plunges to merge with the main channel, only to separate again a few meters down. One high-flow year from now and this pattern will morph: old rocks placed anew, waters led where land takes them and vice versa.

The structure of Coyote Creek in this area maintains a complexity missing from most of our remaining streams. We can stand twenty or even fifty feet from the main channel and still have mid-sized cobble beneath our feet, an indication that we're walking the high flow channel; these rocks may have been thrown up

here last year or last decade. After seeing so many constrained, deeply V-shaped channels with denuded banks, the multi-level canopy cover and dense understory vegetation of Coyote blesses my day.

More than thirty years ago foresightful men and women began discussing the Coyote Creek Park Chain — thirty miles of creek trail through what would become an extensive urban community in need of the solace of open spaces. The bike trail along Coyote is perhaps the best in the County — wide and curvaceous, with excellent views of grasslands, orchards, hillsides, big stands of sycamore and oak. Nonetheless, the bikes fly by, probably missing the subtleties of this changing streambed and the shy wildlife relying on it.

It's a good job that has me out here, reminding me often of why this work is both rewarding and worthwhile. That's my recommendation for this month — Coyote Creek: "Four-and-a-half stars" on a scale of five. And don't just ride the bike path . . . wade in!



Jennifer Peritz, Jan Talbert and Tami Nakahara take a GPS reading as part of their volunteer work mapping the invasive plant species along San Francisquito Creek in Palo Alto. Coyote Creek (see Craig's article on page one), Uvas and Stevens Creek are the other creeks being mapped for this project. Photo taken by Jennifer Peritz using a self timer!



# Lean times force budget cuts

## Avocet will appear every other month

by Craig Breon

You may have noticed (if you have a sharp eye) that the masthead for this volume of the *Avocet* is just a little different. Beginning this month, we will be publishing the *Avocet* every other month, or six times in the next year, rather than the traditional ten times a year. Regular *Avocet* readers, as well as our contributing writers, may need some time to get used to the new schedule, so I wanted to highlight the change now.

Our intent in making this change is to save money while still providing the information SCVAS members want. Since the Board chose to increase staff and expand programs two years ago, we have been adapting to financial changes in our organization. While fundraising has ramped up, costs have increased at a faster pace. It has not helped that in those same two years the economy of the Valley has taken quite a plunge. Among other things, this means that SCVAS receives less in interest and dividends from our reserve fund, traditionally a major source of income for the chapter.

During the past fiscal year (June to May) our operating budget ran in the red, which means that we drew down our reserves. Early this summer we faced a tough choice: we could cut a staff person, or find other ways to save money. We chose the latter, because our staff has been so valuable in implementing the directions of the Board — more conservation and education, more work in southern Santa Clara County, the beginnings of a habitat restoration program, more volunteer opportunities, and more ways to introduce people to birding and the wildlife around us.

SCVAS was already a lean organization, so finding places to cut wasn't easy. In the end, we delayed funding a new membership brochure for the chapter, cut my Executive Director's salary (at my own urging), and decided to go bi-monthly with the *Avocet*. We will also have to increase donations, grants,

and other sources of funding in order to maintain our current level of staffing and productivity.

So, back to the *Avocet*. There will now be a two-month calendar of field trips, general meetings, and special events. (If you misplace your *Avocet*, remember that the calendar is also posted on our website—[www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org).) Contributors who send in field trip reports, bird sightings, articles, etc. will have to remember that our deadline is the end of the first week in the month before publication (e.g. first week of October for the November/December edition). This means that for events such as annual Christmas Bird Counts we will have to start preparing by early October.

We may decide that a sixteen-page *Avocet* is sometimes needed, rather than the usual twelve, when there's simply too much information. In general, we hope to still convey the heart and soul of our chapter — whether that's a victory in lobbying the County Board of Supervisors, a big event like Wildlife Education Day, or a special speaker — just in a bit more compact format.

Please give us feedback on these changes. If you find yourself losing touch with the chapter because the *Avocet* isn't on your doorstep every month, we want to hear that. If you have suggestions for how we can give you the information you want more efficiently, let us know. A list of contact numbers for the Board and staff is on the final page of every *Avocet*.

*Editor's note: Thanks, Craig, for writing the piece every editor dreads ("We here at the Daily Babbler pledge to continue providing the hard-hitting, in-depth coverage you demand, despite drastic budget cuts and a hostile takeover by National Muckraker Inc. . . . etc., etc.") We here at the Avocet are hoping we don't forget Calendar items, that we can get Christmas Bird Count plans organized by early October, and that we don't squeeze the type so much that our content is unreadable without magnification. As Craig noted, your feedback is always appreciated.*

## Vietnamese-American Scouts Bird at Charleston Slough

On Saturday, June 15 a group of about 40 Vietnamese-American girl scouts, cub scouts, and parents joined SCVAS volunteers for a fun morning of birding at Charleston Slough. Together, this group of scouts goes by the name Lac Hong, a cultural reference to the traditional Vietnamese tale about the creation of the "first children."

Armed with SCVAS binoculars and accompanied by four guides, excited youngsters and parents found a total of 41 wild bird species. Among them were a nesting colony of Forster's Terns with downy chicks, a large group of young American White Pelicans posing nicely for the scopes, and adult pelicans showing off their synchronized aerobatics. Volunteers Lee French, Paul Du, Shan Weng, and I were privileged to share the enthusiasm of first-time birders as they marveled at the vibrant red color of a blackbird's wing, the amazing hovering ability of a White-Tailed Kite, and the spectrum of colors among six species of duck.

Added excitement was provided when several birders spotted a family of raccoons moving among the reeds, and we were all laughed at loudly by a Greater Sulfur-crested Cockatoo, flashing its crest while perched on the shoulder of a passing bicyclist! Youngsters were very engaged in the morning's activities, and frequently asked very thoughtful questions.

The trip was an unmitigated success! I have received thanks and appreciation from many of the participants, and we have discussed the possibility of future birding trips.

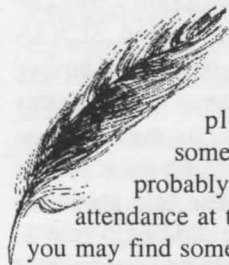
Thanks to Independence High School Counselor and troop leader, Kim Pham, who went to the trouble of coordinating the entire event. A special thanks to non-members Paul Du and Shan Weng who generously gave their time assisting the leaders, carrying and setting up birding scopes, etc.

—Greg Meissner

# Dogs & birds — broccoli & peanut butter?

by Kelly Crowley

SCVAS Environmental Advocate



If you are following the Santa Clara County strategic planning process in some detail (which you are probably not, given the sparse attendance at the public meetings), you may find some strange bedfellows. After all, dog owners and groups like Audubon don't have a history of collaboration, to say the least. In fact, imagining that Audubon's interests could align with dog owners' interests is kind of like imagining that peanut butter and broccoli go well together. But thanks to some responsible pet owners, I have realized that environmentalists and dog owners can effectively work together on occasion.

Some months ago the County began to review and update the Los Gatos Creek Park Master Plan. The eastern portion of the park contains several percolation ponds, owned by the Santa Clara Valley Water District and leased by the County. Many of you have probably birded there, or know the area by the name "Oka Ponds." It's a fantastic wildlife viewing area (see your copy of *Birding at the Bottom of the Bay*), evidenced by the list of over 100 bird species noted there. Unfortunately, the Oka Ponds have also been used as an off-leash dog area. On several occasions SCVAS members have seen people swimming their dogs (or in one case, training their hunting dog) in the ponds.

When the Master Plan for Los Gatos Creek Park came up for review, neighbors, birders, and SCVAS pressed to keep the proposed off-leash dog area out of the Oka Ponds. To continue to allow people to let their dogs loose in the ponds, we argued, would be detrimental to habitat and wildlife. However, we also supported a separate off-leash dog area in the park, with the idea that if you give people a designated space for their dogs to run, they won't use the more valuable habitat

areas. For their part, dog owners said they wanted the off-leash space to be aesthetically pleasing, but they could be flexible in its location, since the Oka Ponds were admittedly decent wildlife habitat.

In the end an off-leash dog park was included in the northwest portion of the park (far from the Oka Ponds) when the Parks and Recreation Commission approved the Master Plan at its August 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Soon after becoming involved in that Master Plan process, I showed up at one of those sparsely attended County Park Strategic Plan public meetings, trying to persuade the County to improve the "balance" between recreation and natural resource protection. The dog-swimming issue came up again. This time it was a woman who trains her Newfoundlands in water rescue. She said she has to go clear up past Davis to find a place to legally swim her dogs. (She did not say that she swims them illegally, but Davis is pretty far from home.)

I don't own a dog, and I'm not exactly sure how common it is for people to swim their dogs in valuable habitat areas. But I do know that when "Shasta the Wonder-Dog" recently developed serious back trouble, the vet recommended swimming therapy. Having no local place to take her, her owners (both staunch environmentalists) started asking around to see who had a backyard pool they could use. At a loss until they found one, they took her out to swim in the deeper portions of Stevens Creek.

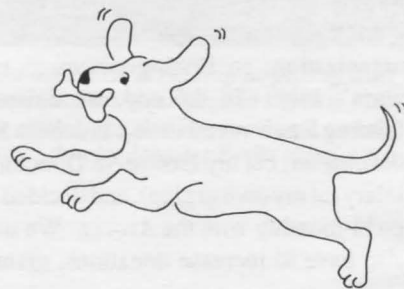
The issue of dogs (and their owners) recreating in sensitive habitats certainly is not limited to Santa Clara County. In fact it's a white-hot issue in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), which is considering whether

to allow unleashed dogs in the park, thanks to intense pressure from San Francisco dog owners who say they need more places for dogs to run free.

However, there is even more intense pressure from environmental groups to keep dogs on-leash in GGNRA because the park's beaches are home to the threatened Snowy Plover. Although many of those San Francisco dog owners will tell you they are responsible pet owners, trying to exercise their dogs the way responsible owners should, I would argue quite the opposite. Responsible pet ownership should include more than just properly caring for one's animal; it should also be about making sure the pet does as little damage as possible to local ecosystems.

As long as pet owners demand that their dogs have access to any and all kinds of habitat, they will continue to clash with environmental groups like Audubon and Sierra Club. Luckily, the dog owners I have met at County park meetings have been relatively responsible in asking for an off-leash area. They are not asking for access to prime habitats, but for some place to let their dogs to run and swim.

Thus, I found myself wondering lately whether Audubon should be pushing the County and some local cities to provide off-leash dog parks and swimming holes, in the interest of protecting wildlife, while meeting the very real demand for off-leash dog areas. Is it really in Audubon's interest to help get these areas established? Maybe. If so, it can't be our top priority, but talk about strange bedfellows. I suppose it is possible that broccoli does go well with peanut butter, on occasion.



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# San Jose's Dirty Creeks Exposed

by Craig Breon

After two years of field investigations and research, SCVAS has produced a report on the City of San Jose's failure to protect our local creeks from harmful sediment and pollution runoff from construction sites. The report, authored by Environmental Advocate Kelly Crowley and entitled "Stormwater and Sediment: An Evaluation of San Jose's Construction-site Monitoring and Enforcement Program," has been submitted to the City and the Regional Water Quality Control Board, the latter having primary authority to enforce the Clean Water Act throughout the Bay Area.

Beginning in the rainy season of 2000-2001, Jennifer Peritz and I began investigating construction sites in San Jose, looking for poorly maintained sites that could release tons of sediment and pollutants into local streams during rainstorms. When these sediments are dumped into creeks, fisheries are damaged, aquatic habitats are degraded, erosion often increases, and flooding potential worsens. Last year the Water District spent more than \$3 million to control sediment and erosion in local creeks. Some of those expenses would be unnecessary if San Jose was doing its job.

Kelly and several SCVAS volunteers continued these investigations in the rainy season of 2001-2002. In both years we found numerous public and private development projects violating the standards set by the Clean Water Act: mounds of earth exposed to the rains, streets filled with mud running toward local creeks, and pools of black, polluted water escaping into adjacent wetlands.

In between the first and second rainy seasons, SCVAS also issued an extensive Public Records Act request (a state law similar to the federal Freedom of Information Act) to the City of San Jose, seeking records to substantiate the city's claim that it was adequately controlling construction site runoff.

City records were perhaps more of a mess than the construction sites. There was no central authority for maintaining these records, and thus what we received was virtually unusable for our purposes — to see if they were doing their job. Oddly, San Jose submits an Annual Report to the Regional Board, supposedly based on its records of the previous year's activities. It would appear these annual reports are at least misleading, if not disingenuous.

We found that less than one-half of our questions could be answered satisfactorily, and the questions were based on the city's own written assertions regarding the program.

The SCVAS report includes recommendations for both the Regional Board and San Jose. These recommendations include:

- The Regional Board should take legal action against the City of San Jose for failure to adequately protect local creeks from construction site runoff;
- The Regional Board should implement a new, simplified reporting requirement, so that the true performance of a city can be judged;
- San Jose should create a record-keeping system that would allow it to adequately track the performance record of construction sites;
- San Jose should increase the vigilance of inspectors in the field and be prepared to stop work on a construction project when problems arise.

The SCVAS report was made possible by both the donations of SCVAS members and a grant from the Rose Foundation. The report and accompanying pictures of some construction sites can be seen on our chapter's website at [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org).

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## EPA Reverses Decision To Allow Use of Bird-killing Pesticide

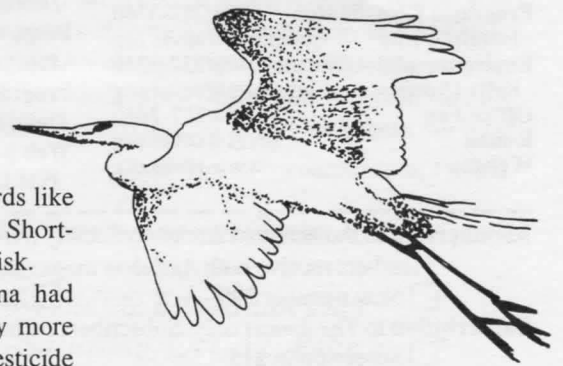
by Judd Klement  
National Audubon Society

Great news! Audubon and our partners in conservation — with tremendous help from thousands of Audubon supporters — has convinced the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to dramatically change course and deny use of 4,500 pounds of granular carbofuran on rice fields in Louisiana.

Granular carbofuran is one of the world's most potent bird-killing pesticides. One tiny granule can kill a songbird. Had the pesticide been applied to rice fields in Louisiana, hundreds of bird species would have been threatened, with wading birds

and neotropical migrant shorebirds like the Buff-breasted Sandpiper and Short-billed Dowitcher at the highest risk.

Rice farmers in Louisiana had requested authorization to apply more than two tons of this bird-killing pesticide to 10,000 acres of rice fields in southwest Louisiana. EPA initially intended to grant an "emergency use" application of the pesticide, but was forced by Audubon and our partners in conservation to open a five-day public comment period. During this very brief comment period, EPA received more than 5,000 public comments — including over 3,800 letters



from Audubon supporters — urging them to deny any further use of carbofuran. On Thursday, July 25, EPA responded by stopping use of the bird-killing pesticide! **Many thanks to those who contacted EPA about this issue — your participation made the difference!**

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**GENERAL MEETINGS** are held on the third Wednesday of each month except July, August and December and 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.

**RARE BIRD ALERT: (415) 681-7422**

**KEEPING CONNECTED:** E-mail us at <e-network@scvas.org> so we can send informative brief notes of special concern.

SCVAS welcomes gifts, including those made in honor of or in memory of friends or relatives. Such gifts will be used at SCVAS' discretion for its programs and activities unless specified otherwise by the donor. Tax-deductible donations may be made in the form of a check made out to SCVAS and sent to our Cupertino address. In addition, we gratefully accept bequests, which should specifically identify Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society as recipient. Gifts and bequests will be recognized by the Chapter in *The Avocet* unless the donor prefers otherwise.

*The Avocet* is published bi-monthly (except for July and August) by the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, address is above. Deadline is the 25th of two months prior. Send submissions to *The Avocet*, c/o SCVAS at the above address.

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

**2002 Volume 49, Number 7**

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