



THE

# AVOCET

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Audubon Society

January - February 2005

## Peace, trees, and good governance

### Nobel Prize winner also started Green Belt Movement in Kenya

by Craig Breon

The Associated Press headlined its article "First African Woman Awarded Nobel Prize" but quickly went on to note that Kenyan Wangari Maathai, 64, is also the first environmentalist to receive the honor.

Maathai founded the Green Belt Movement, ostensibly to teach the women of Kenya that planting trees was essential to their long-term livelihood and the health of the land around them (of course, those two are one and the same). In this goal she has no doubt been a huge success, with more than 30 million trees planted and her ideas spread to surrounding countries. However, perhaps more important has been her integrated approach to the strands of social progress. Along the way, she fought for women's rights and sustainable economic practices while fighting against government corruption. In doing so, she endured criticism, vilification, and beatings. It is likely that to truly succeed in the conservation movement of the future we will have to adopt this approach . . . and be prepared for the beatings to come.

We arrive at the intersection of peace, ecology, and good governance — a more holistic approach to activism that we may

have to acknowledge over time, but which greatly complicates our mission of conservation. Must we get rid of the despotic government of Myanmar (formerly Burma) to preserve the great forests of the earth? Must we transfer huge amounts of

wealth from the United States and Europe to countries such as India and Brazil in order to mount a serious effort against global climate change? Will fighting for the right to unionize in China or at Wal-Mart bring us closer to the sustainable use of natural resources? Will the war in Iraq mean fewer birds along the Pacific Flyway? I believe I could make a credible argument that the answer to each of the questions above is "Yes."

If someone then asked me, "And what does that mean for the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society?," I might quote John Muir: "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe." Muir was talking about ecosystems, before that word existed. The foundation of his statement clearly comes from science, though the implications reverberate through politics and the ways we lead our own lives. The question becomes: to what extent does that quote ring true beyond conservation biology and into poverty, armed conflict, free and fair elections, and corporate capitalism?

In her Nobel speech Ms. Maathai declared, "Today, we

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### General Membership Meeting "Breeding Birds of the Oregon Cascades"

with Steve Shunk

Palo Alto Arts Center, Newell & Embarcadero Rds.

Wednesday, Jan. 19

Doors open 7:30; program 8:00

A spine of volcanoes dissects Oregon between the Siskiyou Mountains and the Columbia River Gorge. With nine peaks over 9,000 feet, and a formidable crest between them, these mountains strongly define an absolute boundary between Eastern and Western Oregon. The west side (locally know as the "wet side") receives so much annual rainfall that it supports a habitat known as temperate rainforest. The east side boasts one of the steepest precipitation gradients on the continent, with nearly 140 inches of rain equivalent annually at the summit and a mere 12 inches just 30 miles to the east. The resulting habitat diversity distributed across nine million acres of public land makes the Oregon Cascades a premiere summer birding destination.

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*Young Audubon  
whale-watching*

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# Jan. - Feb. 2005 Field Trips

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

**LO = Lunch optional**

**RC = Heavy rain cancels**

**NF = No facilities available**

## Saturday Jan. 1, 7:30 AM County Chase

Half day. Leader: Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527. Get a head start on your County Year List for the New Year with some vagrant chasing. Bring a full tank of gas, lunch, and field guides as we attempt to track down some of the unusual birds seen on the Christmas Bird Counts in Santa Clara County. Meet in Alviso Marina parking lot. 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. Be prepared to car pool. **RC**

## Wednesday Jan. 5, 12 noon City of Sunnyvale landfill

One hour. Leaders: Freddy Howell and Lee French. Contact organizer Silviana Ruiz (408) 730-7545 to attend. All are welcome, but birding will be geared toward the beginning birder. Bring binoculars, loaners will also be available. Learn about the birds of this closed landfill.

## Saturday Jan. 8, 8:00 AM Panoche Valley

Full day. Leader: Clay Kempf (831) 761-8260. Meet at Paicines Store on Hwy 25 approx. 11 miles south of Hollister. Targeted species: Phainopepla, Mountain Bluebird, Prairie Falcon, Ferruginous Hawk, Golden Eagle; possible Mountain Plover, Bald Eagle, Vesper Sparrow, Greater Roadrunner, Chukar. Bring lunch and a full tank of gas; carpooling strongly recommended due to limited parking on narrow roads.

## Sunday Jan. 9, 9:30 AM Butterfly watching, Ardenwood Park

Half day. Leader: Moe Magoski (408) 410-7567. From I-880 in Fremont take Hwy 84 west toward Dumbarton Bridge, then take Ardenwood Blvd exit to right and follow signs to parking lot. Monarch Butterflies are our primary objective with other sites visited as time and conditions permit. Bring butterfly guides, close-focusing binoculars and your enthusiasm. Children welcome. **LO, RC**



## Sunday Jan. 9, 8:00 AM Ogier Ponds

Half day. Leader: Kirsten Holmquist (408) 747-0988. From Hwy 101 in Morgan Hill take Cochrane Rd. west to Monterey Hwy, turn right, go north 2.6 miles, turn right on unnamed road toward Model Airplane Park where the power towers cross Hwy. Meet at gated entrance to ponds. **RC**

## Wednesday, Jan. 12, 8:30 AM Los Gatos Creek Park/Oka Ponds

Half day. Leader: Jim Johnson (408) 996-3506. From Hwy 17 exit San Tomas Expwy; go south on Winchester toward Los Gatos; left on E. Hacienda, left on Dell, right into Park. Meet at end of parking lot. Possible entrance fee. **RC**

## Saturday Jan. 15, 8:30 AM Almaden Lake Park and Alamos Creek

Half day. Leader: TBD (questions - call Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527). Meet in west parking lot of Almaden Lake Park. From Hwy 85 take Almaden Expwy south. Park is on east (left) side of Almaden Expwy. Continue just past Coleman Rd. (and the park) and return northbound on Almaden Expwy to park entrance on right. 3 miles of easy walking. Waterfowl, raptors, riparian birds. **LO, RC**

## Sunday Jan. 16, 9:00 AM Charleston Slough

Half day. Leader: Allen Royer (408) 288-7768. Meet at Terminal Way at end of San Antonio Rd. north off Hwy 101 in Mtn. View. Birding will be geared toward the beginning birder but all are encouraged to attend. **RC**

## Saturday Jan. 22, 8:30 AM Foster City & Coyote Point

Half day. Leader: Al Eisner (days and voicemail: (650) 926-2018; evenings: (650) 364-3686). From Hwy 101 take E. Hillsdale Ave. toward Bay, turn right on Shell Blvd. (just after lagoon), park in Leo Ryan Park lot on right just beyond community center. At Coyote Point (admission fee) we will park in lot adjacent to yacht club. Shorebirds (including "rockbirds") and waterfowl, landbirds. Scopes useful. **RC**

## Sunday Jan. 23, 8:00 AM Fremont Lagoons

Half Day. Leader: Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527. From I-880 north of San Jose take Gateway Blvd exit west, turn left on Fremont Blvd. Park in lot on right at end of street. Be prepared to help ID gulls. Possible Thayer's and Glaucous Gulls. Scopes helpful. **RC**

## Wednesday Jan. 26, 9:00 AM Charleston Slough

Leader: Rosalie Lefkowitz: (650) 494-6358. Meet at Terminal Way at end of San Antonio Rd. north of Hwy 101 in Mtn. View. Bring spotting scopes! **RC**

## Saturday Jan. 29, 9:00 AM San Francisco's Southern Parks

Half Day. Leader: Alan Hopkins (415) 664-0983. Candlestick Point State Rec. Area is good for shorebirds, bay ducks, loons and raptors. We'll then visit San Francisco's second largest park — McLaren Park, for land birds and dabbling ducks. Other lesser-known but birdy parks may be visited, time permitting. From Hwy 101 exit just past Brisbane Lagoon at Candlestick Park off-ramp. Continue east along Harney Way, turn right onto Jamestown/Hunters Point Expwy. Watch for entrance to Candlestick State Recreation Area on right and enter (no fee). Meet at end of paved road that runs through park. **RC**

## Sunday Jan. 30, 8:00 AM Oka Ponds

Half day. Leader: Rich Page (408) 377-1092. From Hwy 17 in Los Gatos take Lark Ave. exit west. Turn right on Oka Rd, left on Mozart Ave. and immediately right on Oka Lane. Meet just inside gate. **RC**

## Wednesday Feb. 2, 12:00 Noon City of Sunnyvale landfill

One hour. Leaders: Freddy Howell, Lee French. Contact organizer Silviana Ruiz (408) 730-7545 to attend. All are welcome, but birding will be geared toward beginning birders. Bring binoculars; loaners also available. Learn about birds of this closed landfill.

## Saturday Feb. 5, 8:30 AM Coyote Reservoir

Half Day. Leader: Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527. From Hwy 101 in Gilroy take Leavesley Rd. east for 1.5 miles, turn left on New Ave. then right on Roop Rd. Go left at T intersection, then after 1.3 miles left again on Coyote Reservoir Rd and on to Lakeview Picnic area. **LO, RC**

## Sunday Feb. 6, 8:30 AM Alum Rock Park

Half day. Leader: Dave Cook (408) 275-1492. From Hwy 101 or I-680 take McKee Rd. northeast toward hills then left on Toyon Ave, right on Penitencia Creek Rd. into park. Continue under bridge, meet at far end of upper parking lot. Moderately strenuous 3 to 4 mile walk. Possible Rufous-Crowned Sparrow, Canyon Wren, early migrants, lingering winter birds. Be prepared for some mud! **LO, RC**



# Events Calendar

## Wednesday, Feb. 9 8:30 AM Alum Rock Park

Half day. Leader: TBD. (408) 274-2349. See directions above. *RC*

## Saturday & Sunday Feb 12 - 13 San Luis Obispo County

Two days. Leader: Jim Royer (e-mail address below, questions call Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527). Two full days of birding by car caravan (bring a lunch, liquids, warm clothes, full tank of gas each day). Meet on Sat. the 14th at end of Coleman Drive at Morro Rock in Morro Bay by 7:30 AM. We'll bird around Morro Bay and south along coast (stops determined by location of wintering rarities). Day 1 should include gulls, loons, grebes, ducks (Eurasian Wigeon), Peregrine Falcon, rocky shorebirds, passerines. Group dinner Sat. evening to go over day's birds. Gas up Sat. night; Day 2 will start at 6:00 AM at parking area on east side of Morro Bay. We'll drive to Carrizo Plain for Ferruginous Hawk, Prairie Falcon, Rough-legged Hawk?, Mountain Bluebird, Golden Eagle, Short-eared and Burrowing Owls, Sage Thrasher?, Vesper Sparrow, etc.; finish at or near Hwy 101 by mid-afternoon. Contact Jim Royer at <jcadroyer@aol.com> for questions and to reserve a spot. Participants should show up 10-15 minutes prior to two morning meeting times or risk being left behind. Later meeting places will not be arranged. Cold temperatures on the Plain; possible sprinkles (heavy rain will cancel), mud, poison oak, and moderate walking. Enthusiastic beginners welcome, but expect a quick birding pace. Bring a scope if you have one.

## Saturday Feb. 19, 9:00 AM Pescadero Marsh and vicinity

Half day. Leader: Sue James (650) 348-0315. Meet at first parking lot south of bridge over Pescadero Creek on Hwy 1. Shorebirds, gulls, grebes, and ducks. Bring your spotting scope. *LO, RC*

## Saturday Feb. 19, 9:30 AM Butterfly watching, Ardenwood Park

See Jan. 9 write-up on page 2.

## Sunday Feb. 20, 7:30 AM Santa Cruz Coastal Hot Spots

Half Day. Leader: Todd Newberry, Santa Cruz Bird Club (831) 426-8741. Meet at 7:30 AM sharp at Santa Cruz lighthouse on W. Cliff Drive. From Hwy 17 take Hwy 1 "north" (toward Half Moon Bay), turn left on Bay St. then right at end of Bay onto W. Cliff Drive to lighthouse. Dress in layers; trip goes rain or shine. At 8 AM we'll be on W. Cliff Drive checking inter-tidal shelves as we approach Natural Bridges overlook.

## Wednesday Feb. 23, 9:00 AM Redwood Shores/Radio Road

Leader: Rose Green (650) 493-8378. From Hwy 101 north take Holly Street/Redwood Shores offramp, head toward Bay. Meet in parking area at Nob Hill Market on right side of Redwood Shores Parkway just past Pacific Athletic Club. Scopes useful. *LO, RC*

## Saturday Feb. 26, 8:00 AM Arastradero OSP

Half day. Leader: Grant Webb (408) 578-0409. From I-280 take Page Mill Rd. west; turn right on Arastradero Rd., meet in parking lot about 1/2 mile on right. Moderate walking. *RC*

## Sunday Feb. 27, 7:30 AM Coyote Hills Regional Park

Half day. Leader: Frank Vanslager (650) 961-1505. Take Hwy 84 (Dumbarton Bridge) east toward Newark. Exit right on Thornton, then 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 1/4 mile past park entrance. Entrance fee. *LO, RC*

## Saturday Mar. 5, 8:30 AM Ogier Ponds

Half day. Leader: Rich Page (408) 377-1092. See directions under Jan. 9 listing. *RC*

## Sunday Mar. 6, 9:00 AM Stanford Campus

Half day. Leader: Dick Stovel (650) 856-6105. From Hwy 101 in Palo Alto take University Ave. exit west through downtown and into Stanford campus (University Ave becomes Palm Dr.). Meet at end of Palm Dr. at entrance to Main Quad. Local breeding birds, early returning migrants. Trip recommended for beginning birders. *RC*

Plan Ahead---

## Saturday & Sunday Mar. 19 & 20 Honey Lake, Eagle Lake & vicinity

Leader: Bob Hirt (408) 821-2732. A weekend trip to a remote corner of northeast California to see Sage Grouse on their booming grounds. Other expected species include eagles, hawks, geese, ducks, cranes, woodpeckers and other mountain specialties such as Townsend's Solitaire, Cassin's Finch, Mountain Bluebird, and Pinyon Jay. Trip limited to 20 participants, please call leader for further details and to reserve a space.

## Wed. 1/5, 7:30 PM

**Bay Area Bird Photographers (BABP)** features Mark Rauzon with a slide show on coral reefs of the South Pacific, with underwater photos and seabirds. Lucie Evans Baylands Interpretive Center, E. Embarcadero Rd., Palo Alto.

## Tues. 1/11, 9:30 AM

**Eve Case Bird Discussion Group** meets at the home of Pat and Jean Dubois, 17150 Buena Vista Ave., Los Gatos (408) 395-4264. Topic: Scrub Jay.

**Wed. 1/19, 8 PM** (doors open at 7:30)  
**General Meeting, Palo Alto** (see Page 1).

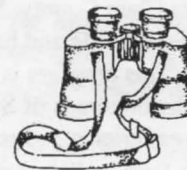
## Wed. 2/2, 7:30 PM

**Bay Area Bird Photographers (BABP)** features a slide presentation TBA. Lucie Evans Baylands Interpretive Center, E. Embarcadero Rd., Palo Alto.

## Tues. 2/8, 9:30 AM

**Eve Case Bird Discussion Group** meets at the home of Pat and Jean Dubois, 17150 Buena Vista Ave., Los Gatos (408) 395-4264, Topic: Prairie Falcon.

**Wed. 2/16, 8 PM** (doors open at 7:30)  
**General Meeting, Palo Alto** (see Page 9).



## Audubon by appointment

Would your family enjoy going on a guided bird walk? Call us to schedule a personal walk with one of our trained volunteers. We can explore parks in your very own neighborhood or go to a birding hot spot. These walks are fun, educational, and a great way to experience the South Bay area. They are also free, though donations are greatly appreciated. Binoculars are provided. Scheduling will depend on volunteer availability. Call (408) 252-3740 for more details.

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# Volunteer Ventures

by Kim Yuan-Farrell  
Programs Coordinator

Welcome to the New Year! This is a time of aspirations, fresh beginnings, and new hope. Along with the disbelief we feel at how quickly the previous year flew by and the subtle comedy of how often we will rewrite ~~2004~~—I mean, 2005, comes a re-evaluation of our lives over the past year — or maybe more. Some years we may feel more satisfied than others. Many of us will take steps toward improving our lives in some way.

This year, consider joining SCVAS as a volunteer. We offer a wide variety of opportunities and are interested in working with you to find activities that match your interests and skills. We can tailor your time commitment to a weekly, monthly, or even quarterly basis. Not only will our chapter and the larger community benefit from your support, but you will have the opportunity to learn new skills, explore areas of interest, meet other people, and feel a sense of accomplishment.

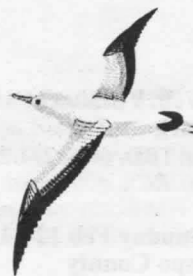
So, read the descriptions below to see if anything sparks an interest or feel free to call me to discuss other possibilities. After all, the sense of fulfillment you find in being an active community member might make those other New Year's resolutions, like cutting back on the chocolate, a little easier to fulfill. And if not, it might lessen any guilt!

**Wetlands Discovery Program Docent** – Do you have a love of nature and a desire to share it with the younger generation? If so, this program might be a good fit for you. The Wetlands Discovery Program shares the wonder and importance of wetland habitats with fourth and fifth graders throughout Santa Clara County. Volunteers guide students in exploring wetland wildlife and habitat both in the classroom and in the field. This program is rewarding for both volunteers and the hundreds of South Bay children who participate. No experience is necessary, as we will provide training for both field and class sessions. Scheduled group training will take place in early March.

**Binocular Cleaner** – SCVAS' collection of binoculars needs some light maintenance work. These binoculars get their share of finger smudges and dust — though not from lack of use! — as they are put to work in our education and birding programs. A few hours should be adequate time to get all of the lens cleaning, strap checking, and vision testing done. No experience necessary. This could be a good job for a high schooler or two.

**Cavity Nest Monitor** – Would you like to help support our populations of bluebirds or chickadees? As a nest box monitor, you could watch families of these and other cavity-nesters make their homes and raise their young. You may install nest boxes yourself or monitor pre-installed boxes. Monitoring involves consistent, weekly visits to boxes to record their use as well as box maintenance and can be very personally rewarding. A minimum one-year commitment is

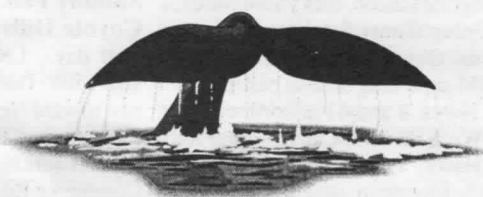
**The Avocet 4**



SCVAS Young Audubon presents

## Winter Whale Watching

~boating adventures for children and their families~



Saturday, January 22  
9-11 AM & 11-1 PM

Fisherman's Wharf, Monterey Bay

\$20/person for SCVAS members

\$25/person for non-members

Observe the magnificent Grey Whale during  
the peak of its southern migration!

Other sealife you'll be likely to spot include  
otters, sea lions, dolphins, and, of course,  
seabirds!

Space is limited, so call (408) 252-3740  
to reserve your space today!

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strongly encouraged. No experience is necessary, as we will provide training materials and guidance.

Contact Kim at (408) 252-3740 or [programs@scvas.org](mailto:programs@scvas.org) for more information about these listings or to discuss how you can become a volunteer.

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# Winter Adult Education classes

The following classes are sponsored by the SCVAS Education Committee. To register please call the office at (408) 252-3740. All cancellations require 72-hour prior notification for refunds.

## Meet the Locals: Birds of the Peninsula and South Bay with Steve Rutledge

This monthly series of field seminars will focus on the field identification, biology, and conservation of local birds. The class features in-depth treatment of common birds of San Francisco Bay and nearby foothills, and is ideal for birders who like short drives, late starts, short hikes, and relatively short periods in the field. Morning birding will be followed by informal lectures before and after lunch. These talks will review the biology and field identification of the birds we have seen. We will also work on building your birding skills.

The exact itinerary will be based on weather conditions and current birds in the area. Possible sites include Palo Alto Baylands and Stevens Creek County Park (other sites may be substituted). Bring your binoculars and your lunch. Be prepared for carpooling and park entrance fees. Proceeds from your tuition will be split between SCVAS' education programs and bird conservation efforts.

**Dates:** Saturdays 1/22, 2/19, 3/19, 4/23

**Time:** First class meets at 9:00 AM; some classes start earlier; all classes end before 1:30.

**Starting point:** McClellan Ranch in Cupertino.

**Fee:** \$30 members, \$35 non-members. Limit 10 students.

## Farther Afield: Birds of Northern California

with Steve Rutledge

Enjoy some of the most scenic areas in the greater Bay Area as well as great birds. This monthly series of field seminars presents the field identification, biology, and conservation of Northern California birds, and is especially suitable for birders willing to have early starts, long drives, and longer days in the field. Short, informal talks will explore the biology and field identification of the birds that we find. We will also work on building your birding skills.

The exact itinerary will be based on weather conditions and current birds in the area. Possible sites include Point Lobos State Park, Merced National Wildlife Refuge, Henry Coe State Park, Point Reyes National Seashore, and Pinnacles National Monument (other sites may be substituted). Pack your lunch and bring binoculars. Be prepared for carpooling, sharing gas expenses, and park entrance fees. On occasion, we will have an optional group dinner at a restaurant in regions we visit. Proceeds from your tuition will be split between SCVAS' education programs and bird conservation efforts.

**Dates:** Saturdays 1/29, 2/26, 3/26, and 4/30

**Time:** First class meets at 8:00 AM; some classes start earlier.

**Starting point:** McClellan Ranch in Cupertino

**Fee:** \$40 members, \$45 non-members. Limit 10 students.

## Saving Birds: The Crisis and the Challenge

with Steve Rutledge

This monthly evening class will explore the many facets of bird conservation in North America. Birds across the continent are facing unprecedented challenges. Their survival depends on the activism of people who care about them. The class will focus not only on birds of the Pacific region but also birds of boreal forests, grasslands, and other important ecosystems. Emphasis will be on how individuals can make a difference in protecting birds and their habitats. We will consider how each of us can reduce the size of our "ecological footprint." The class will be participation-oriented, featuring discussions and student reports on declining birds, the threats they face, and ways that birds can be protected. Proceeds from your tuition will be split between SCVAS' education programs and the bird conservation efforts.

**Dates:** Tuesday evenings 1/25, 2/22, 3/22, 4/26

**Time:** 7:00 -9:00 PM

**Location:** Conference Room, McClellan Ranch in Cupertino

**Fee:** \$20 members, \$25 non-members. Limit 20 students.

## Raptors of the Western States

with Lisa Myers

This three week class will focus on the meat-eating, flesh-tearing group of birds that impress so many people: the hawks and owls, also known as raptors. Monday evening class sessions will review hunting styles and food preferences of both diurnal and nocturnal raptors of the Western States. You will learn where to find each species and their key identifying field marks. You will also learn the different calls of each owl species so you can recognize the owls in your neighborhood. An afternoon field trip to search for as many raptors as possible is included.

**Dates:** Class: 1/24, 1/31, 2/7 7-9 PM; Field trip: 1/30 1-4 PM.

**Location:** Conference room, McClellan Ranch in Cupertino.

**Fee:** \$40 members, \$45 non-members. Minimum 8 students; maximum 20.



**Your Audubon Shop  
has all sorts of gear  
to help with your  
birding...**

**Happy New Year!**



# Field Notes

by Bill Bousman

## Waterfowl through Ibis

The first Greater White-fronted Geese of the season were two seen west of the Coyote Creek Field Station (CCFS) waterbird pond on 5 Oct (RWR, FV). Substantial movements after that included 18 birds over the Alviso Marina on 31 Oct (MMR, DVP, MB) and at least 12 over the New Chicago Marsh on 20 Nov (SCR). An adult Snow Goose was found at Lake Cunningham on 3 Nov (SCR) and was seen nearby through mid-month (v.ob.). Three Snow Geese were present as of 15 Nov (SB). An adult Ross's Goose was also seen at Lake Cunningham on 3 Nov (SB) and by the next day, both of these white geese were together in the Lake Cunningham Canada Goose flock (m. ob.). This bird was also present through mid-month. Curiously, another Ross's was found at Lake Ranch Reservoir in the Santa Cruz Mountains on 27 Nov (MS) where unexpected. Cackling Geese observed during the fall included 4-5 at Calero Reservoir 1-28 Oct (AV), one at Vasona Reservoir on 13 Oct (JBH), one near Hwy 101 and Cochrane on 3 Nov (SCR), 2-4 birds at Lake Cunningham 3-19 Nov (SCR, m.ob.), and one at a percolation pond off Bubb Road on 30 Nov (PD). There was a significant movement of Tundra Swans in the South Bay on 20 Nov with multiple large flocks seen generally in the Alviso area (SCR). The largest flock was of 49 birds which is a record count. Only 9-10 birds appear to have stayed on and were seen in Salt Pond A9 over the next two days (MMR, MJM, RWR, FV). The first Eurasian Wigeon of the season was an adult male at the Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) ponds on 28 Oct (RWR, FV). More birds were found there in November, with a high count of seven males on 20 Nov (SCR). A visit to Salt Pond A9 on 21 Nov (MMR) revealed 12 Eurasian Wigeons present, nine of them males. A pair of Blue-winged Teal found at Calero Reservoir in September remained through 12 Oct (AV). This teal was found widely after that with 1-4 birds near the Sunnyvale WPCP ponds 16-28

Oct (JPa et al., RWR, FV), a pair at the Coyote Creek GC on 20 Oct (MJM), up to six birds in the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin (FCB) 24 Oct-7 Nov (m. ob.), and a male in the Palo Alto estuary 8-18 Nov (MMR, PB, EG). A male "Eurasian" Green-winged Teal was seen in Stevens Creek below Crittenden Lane on 29 Nov (BM, BJ). Salt Pond A9 in Alviso has been favored in recent winters by Red-head as well as by Eurasian Wigeon; a visit on 21 Nov tallied 115 birds (MMR). A female or immature Barrow's Goldeneye was first seen on Shoreline Lake on 8 Nov (MMR) but was not recorded again

## *Two Lesser Black-backed Gulls, a Plumbeous Vireo and a Magnolia Warbler made for an exciting October*

until 27-28 Nov (SR, MDd, KDd, TGr). A male was seen there on 27 Nov as well (JMD, LH). Following September's early Hooded Merganser, no more were seen until a pair was found at the Los Gatos Creek CP percolation ponds on 27 Oct (FV). Birds were found in numerous locations in low numbers throughout November. As loons have been scarce in the South Bay in recent winters, it was nice that a Common Loon was found in closed salt ponds in Alviso on 30 Oct (MJM, MMR, RGJ). Another was seen off the Palo Alto estuary on 8 Nov (MMR). An American Bittern was found at the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) ponds on 15 Oct (JPa). Two bitterns were there on 19 Oct (JPa) and a last bird was observed on 22 Oct (JPa, GB). Three White-faced Ibis flying over Alum Rock Park on 24 Oct (FV et al.) were an unexpected treat for birders. Although no Bald Eagles have settled in at local reservoirs yet, an immature Bald was seen in flight near Calero Reservoir on 27 Nov (LM).

## Eagles through Skimmers

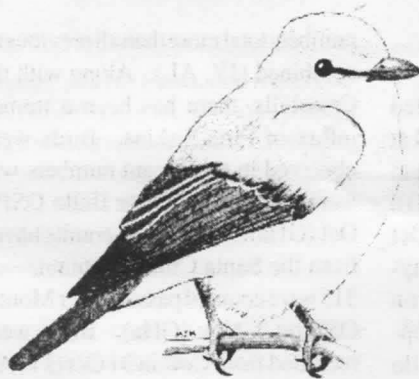
A "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk was seen over the Newby Island landfill on 12 Nov (EFe), but there is no sign yet of the bird that has wintered along the Guadalupe River in recent years (MJM). An adult Ferruginous Hawk was seen near New and Rucker in Gilroy 4-17 Nov (BB-W), where one has wintered in the past. An immature was found near Felter and Marsh Road on 17 Nov (RWR, FV) and a single bird was over Monte Bello OSP on 25 Nov (JBH). Prairie Falcon sightings included single birds along Coyote Ranch Road on 2 Oct (MJM), along the Alviso Environmental Education Center (ECC) entrance road on 27 Oct (MJM), and at Calero Reservoir on 23 Nov (AV). Two to three Lesser Yellowlegs seen at the New Chicago Marsh on 1 Oct (DH) were likely the last of our fall passage birds. Two Lessers seen there on 2 Nov (DW) were likely wintering as was the single bird east of Salt Pond A13 on 21 Nov (MMR). Two Sanderling were seen north of the Alviso Marina on 28 Oct (SCR) and single birds were found at the Alviso EEC on 3 Nov (KB) and possibly the same bird was on Salt Pond A16 on 7 Nov (MJM, RWR, SBT). Surveys of closed salt ponds in Alviso found eight Sanderling on 30 Oct and 17 on 29 Nov (MMR, MJM, RGJ). A record of a Baird's Sandpiper near the Newby Island landfill on 12 Nov (EFe) is the latest for the county by a month. There are a couple of November records from Monterey County, but any Northern California record this late is unusual. The passage of Pectoral Sandpipers continued into late October with most birds at the New Chicago Marsh and a few at the CCFS waterbird pond (m. ob.). A particularly late bird was at the New Chicago Marsh on 5 Nov (RWR, FV, DW). The Ruffs in the vicinity of New Chicago Marsh have been seen more or less regularly to early November (m. ob.). A female, probably the one seen occasionally since summer, was last recorded on 1 Oct (DH). A Franklin's Gull was reported from the New Chicago Marsh on 30 Oct (JW *vide* MJM). An adult Heermann's Gull found next to the Los Gatos Creek CP percola-

## Field Notes *cont'd*

tion ponds on 26 Oct (KPa) was a one-day wonder, but through the magic of the SBB listserv many saw this coastal stranger before dusk. The big gull news this fall was when not one but two adult Lesser Black-backed Gulls were found across the railroad tracks from the Alviso Marina on 31 Oct (DVP, MB). Initially thought to be a single bird, the finders were joined by MMR (through the magic of the cell phone) and it was determined that two birds were present: an adult with bright yellow legs and a second adult with dull yellow legs and some smudging on the bill. The duller bird was found again in Salt Pond A16 on 7 Nov (RWR, SBT, MJM). These are the 6th and 7th county records. A 1st-winter Glaucous Gull, quite early, was found at the Palo Alto Duck Pond on 28 Nov (SCR) and seen through the end of the month (v. ob.). A juvenile Sabine's Gull was found in the North Pond at the Palo Alto FCB on 21 Oct (GB), reported on the SBB listserv, and identified by a second observer (MJM). It was seen there and in nearby Salt Pond A1 over the next few days, last being seen on 24 Oct (m. ob.). An Elegant Tern was found in Salt Pond A1 on 22 Oct (MMR) and four were seen there on 31 Oct (MJM). Four Black Skimmers were seen in the outer part of Salt Pond A1, but no one has reported the formation of a wintering flock as in past years.

### Roadrunner through Warblers

The Greater Roadrunner at the Alviso Marina has continued to be seen in October and November (m. ob.). A Long-eared Owl was seen and photographed in Guadalupe Oak Grove Park on 21 Nov (JPa), but did not remain. A Short-eared Owl was found in the Palo Alto FCB on 23 Nov (MO'B, MMcG) and once again on 24 Nov (BJ). Single Vaux's Swifts at Calero Reservoir on 1 Oct (AV) and Lake Cunningham the same day (SCR) were the last of the fall passage. This swift rarely lingers into the second week in October. Four Lewis's Woodpeckers in the San Antonio Valley on 15 Oct (WGB) were the only ones noted. Resident Pileated Woodpeckers at Monte Bello OSP continue to be reported with



*Plumbeous Vireo*  
by Mike Mammoser

observations from 7 Oct to 1 Nov (GHa, DB). A Willow Flycatcher at Lake Cunningham on 1 Oct (SCR) was the end of the fall migration. A Plumbeous Vireo next to Great America, off Mission Boulevard, on 14 Oct (MJM) was a particularly good find. It was seen again on 15 and 18 Oct (v. ob.). This is the third county record; all have been in fall. This year is looking to be an extraordinary invasion winter for Red-breasted Nuthatches, even more so than the fall and winter of 1996. The first indication of an incursion was when five birds were seen at Lake Cunningham on 1 Oct (SCR). Following this, single birds were found at a half dozen locations on the valley floor. Some movement was also detected in the Santa Cruz Mountains with single birds away from known breeding locations. But the biggest surprise was the large numbers found in Henry Coe SP in areas of yellow pines. High counts varied from 20 to 30 birds (v. ob.). Almost as amazing was the discovery of Pygmy Nuthatches with one or more birds there as well on 10 Nov (PB), 13 Nov (JY, AL), and 25 Nov (SCR). This generally coastal nuthatch has not been recorded in Coe Park before (JY, AL). It is likely that these invading birds are from the Sierra Nevada or the Rocky Mountains as there does not appear to be any significant change in resident coastal birds (DLSu). It will be interesting to track these two nuthatch species and see if any linger to breed next spring. Single Canyon Wrens were found in Coe Park on 31 Oct (JY, AL) and 11 Nov (MMR). This species is rare, even in the interior of the Diablo Range. An American Dipper was reported from Alum Rock Park on 5 Nov (J&FBr *fide* JPa). Golden-crowned Kinglets may also be having an invasion year,

but the only report so far was of five birds in Henry Coe SP on 9 Nov (MMR). An adult male Nashville Warbler along San Tomas Aquino Creek above the Agnew bridge on 29 Oct (WGB) was a late migrant or attempting to overwinter. An immature female Magnolia Warbler was found at Lake Cunningham on 1 Oct (SCR) with possibly a second bird present. At least one of these birds was found the next day (m. ob.). It has been a good fall for Palm Warblers. The first was found along the Guadalupe River north of Coleman on 6 Oct (JPa, GB) and was seen through 16 Oct (v. ob.). A second bird was found next to Great America off Mission Boulevard on 14 Oct (MMR *fide* MJM) and was seen again on 18 Oct (MJM). This or a third bird was found along San Tomas Aquino Creek at Agnew Road on 26 Oct (MJM) and has been seen repeatedly along the creek, from the bridge to a half mile north, through 29 Nov (MJM). Finally, a fourth Palm Warbler was found along Calabazas Creek below Hwy 237 on 17 Nov (MJM). Although far fewer birds than the amazing invasion fall of 1993, this is still a good tally for this vagrant. Northern Waterthrushes found include one at Lake Cunningham Park on 1 Oct (SCR) and a second along Stevens Creek above Crittenden Lane on 6 Oct (WGB). It is possible that this latter bird has returned to winter in the Charleston Road marsh, as a waterthrush was well seen there on 29 Nov (BJ, BM). The last MacGillivray's Warbler of the fall was an adult male found at Lake Cunningham on 1 Oct (SCR) and refound there the

*continued on Page 8*



## Field Notes *cont'd*

next day (MJM).

### Sparrows through Goldfinches

Migrant Chipping Sparrows included six at a small pond off Page Mill Road at Monte Bello on 1 Oct (GHa), an adult in San Antonio Valley on 15 Oct (WGB), and an adult at Hidden Villa on 25 Oct (JB, GHa). Less expected was a Clay-colored Sparrow near Great America on 15 Oct (MJM, SCR). Single Grasshopper Sparrows were found at Monte Bello OSP on 1 Oct (GHa) and west of Willson Camp in Henry Coe SP on 6 Nov (MMR). It is unclear if these are late migrants or wintering birds. A Swamp Sparrow was found at the SCVWD ponds on 29 Nov (JPa). White-throated Sparrows showed up at the end of October. Single birds were found at Arastradero Preserve on 26 Oct (MD *fide* MDd), along San Francisquito Creek below El Camino on 27 Oct (MDd), on Coyote Creek at Sycamore Drive in Milpitas on 29 Oct (SCR), and at Hidden Villa on 29 Oct (GHa). The San Francisquito Creek sparrow has been seen a few times in November (*v. ob.*). A White-throated Sparrow has also been seen at a feeder in Los Altos from 8-10 Nov (BM). A more surprising feeder-bird was a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak in Palo Alto 16-20 Oct (DD). A male and female Great-tailed Grackle at the Palo Alto Baylands on 13 Oct (EG) are likely part of this species' range expansion north along the Pacific Coast. A short-tailed female oriole studied near Great America 16-17 Oct (RGJ, MMR, AME) showed characters suggestive of both Orchard and Hooded Orioles. After considerable study, it was concluded that the bird was likely a Hooded Oriole. Thirteen Red Crossbills were seen at Monte Bello OSP on 25 Oct and nine were found there on 29 Nov (GHa). Red Crossbills were first noted in Henry Coe SP on 6 Nov (SCR) when at least 40 birds were present (and perhaps many more). As with the nuthatches, these crossbills were foraging largely in the yellow pines near the park headquarters. Subsequent observations through the end of November have included counts ranging as high as 50 or 60 birds (JY, AL, 13 Nov). Although Red Crossbills have been found in Coe on rare occasions, the current

numbers total more than all previous records combined (JY, AL). Along with the Red Crossbills, there has been a tremendous influx of Pine Siskins. Birds were first observed in significant numbers when 25 were counted at Monte Bello OSP on 11 Oct (GHa). The largest counts have come from the Santa Cruz Mountains—at least 315 were counted passing over Monte Bello OSP on 1 Nov (GHa). Birds were first recorded from Coe on 31 Oct (JY, AL) and 55 were tallied there on 25 Nov (SCR). Siskins are also showing up at feeders at low elevations, including 20 at a feeder in the Almaden Valley on 13 Nov (BH). Nomadic rather than irruptive, one to six Lawrence's Goldfinches were found in Monte Bello OSP 11-15 Oct (GHa, MMR). About seven were seen along Colorado Creek at Mines Road on 15 Oct (WGB) and four were at the Palo Alto Hills Golf & Country Club on 25 Oct (AME).

*Observers: Gordon Barrett (GB), Bonnie Bedford-White (BB-W), Josh Bennett (JB), Kim Blythe (KB), Bill Bousman (WGB), Matt Brady (MB), Summer Brasuel (SB), Joan & Frank Brauch (J&FBr), Phil Brown (PB), Debbi Brusco (DB), Mike Danzenbaker (JMD), Marianne Dieckmann (MD), Kelly Dodder (KDd), Matthew Dodder (MDd), Peggy Don (PD), Dick Dworak (DD), Al Eisner (AME), Eric Feuss (EF), Eric Goodill (EG), Tom Grey (TGr), Barbara Harkleroad (BH), Garth Harwood (GHa), Donna Heim (DH), Lee Hung (LH), John B. Hutz (JBH), Richard Jeffers (RGJ), Bob Juhl (BJ), Amy Lauterbach (AL), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Michael McGrath (MMcG), Brooke Miller (BM), Lisa Myers (LM), Kathy Parker (KPa), Janna Pauser (JPa), Matthew O'Brien (MO'B), Sidd Ramachandramurthi (SR), Bob Reiling (RWR), Mike Rogers (MMR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Mike Salo (MS), Scott Terrill (SBT), David Vander Pluym (DVP), Frank Vanslager (FV), Ann Verdi (AV), Dave Weber (DW), Jim White (JW), and James Yurchenco (JY).*

**RARITIES:** Please drop me a note: Bill Bousman, 321 Arling-ton Way, Menlo Park, CA 94025, or: barlowi@earthlink.net

## Jan. program: Oregon birds *cont'd.*

The higher elevations support Gray-crowned Rosy-finch and small nomadic flocks of White-winged Crossbills. Harlequin Duck and American Dipper breed prolifically along the profluent rivers of the Western Slope. Eleven woodpecker species stretch throughout the Eastern Cascades. The abundant Hermit Warbler frequents Douglas-fir and mixed coniferous forests on both sides of the crest, while Green-tailed Towhee, Gray Flycatcher, and Pinyon Jay approach the ponderosa pine forest from Oregon's High Desert. In the shadow of Crater Lake, the Upper Klamath Basin supports Oregon's only nesting population of Red-necked Grebe, and Yellow Rail joins Wilson's Phalarope and Sandhill Crane to breed at high elevation marshlands. Other localized breeders include Black Swift, Red-eyed Vireo, Northern Waterthrush, and Boreal Owl (not to mention the other eleven nesting owl species).

Join Oregon naturalist and field ornithologist, and former SCVAS board member, Stephen Shunk for an evening exploring all corners of the Oregon Cascades. Steve will share stories of some of the 200-plus species breeding along these volcanic slopes. He will also introduce you to current conservation projects in the Cascades as well as the latest birding tourism effort to attract birders to the Oregon Cascades Birding Trail.

Steve will also be leading a number of birding day-tours in the Bay Area during his January visit. Those interested in joining him can reach Steve at 541-408-1753 or [steve@paradisebirding.com](mailto:steve@paradisebirding.com). Learn more about Steve's birding tour company, Paradise Birding, by visiting: [www.paradisebirding.com](http://www.paradisebirding.com).

—Stephen Shunk  
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## Nobel Prize winner continued from Page 1

are faced with a challenge that calls for a shift in our thinking, so that humanity stops threatening its life-support system. We are called to assist the Earth to heal her wounds, and in the process heal our own; indeed, to embrace the whole creation in all its diversity, beauty and wonder." Such words are easy to support, but what specific changes in our thinking, and concomitant actions, do they demand?

To give the conservation movement its due, many international and some regional organizations have for a time now promoted the concept that wild places and wildlife will not last long unless cultural and economic issues are addressed in the communities surrounding those resources. (For just one example of this, I suggest you look at the website of Los Altos-based Wildlife Conservation Network <[www.wildnet.org](http://www.wildnet.org)>). Despite such advances in the conservation ethic, we remain greatly distant from producing the "shift in our thinking" Maathai calls for in the larger population. Do we fault the masses for that? I don't think so.

Certainly, many of us would argue that a strong economy over decades and centuries is based, perhaps first and fore-

most, on healthy natural resources. We have argued this for years, and rightly so. Conservationists are incredulous that the Bush administration touts a strong economy while virtually ignoring the science of global climate change and the strong likelihood that serious economic impacts lay ahead for the world as a result.

Yet we don't seem to turn the table on ourselves often enough. Perhaps environmental progress in the context of a global economy cannot be seriously advanced without educating women on a massive scale, or demanding workers' rights, or reforming democracy at home and abroad.

Consider the implications of the following scenario: Purchasing 15,000 acres of the South Bay salt ponds for restoration will likely rank as one of the most important local accomplishments since the flowering of the conservation movement in the late 1960's. However, if global warming leads to sea level rise, will our newly restored wetlands be swamped by the rising Bay? Furthermore, can we forestall sea level rise without assuring that India, China, Brazil and

others do not pass through the dirtiest stages of economic development that we allowed ourselves (and some would say still do)? Can such a great leap forward be made in those three behemoth countries without increasing the power of women in their political and economic systems?

There are more questions, but I'll stop there. For now, we can celebrate the accomplishments of Wangari Maathai, and also the Nobel Foundation's acknowledgment that peace with the planet lies shoulder to shoulder with peace among peoples.

## Junk mail reduction campaign launched

Every year 100 million trees are cut down to produce 100 billion pieces of junk mail sent to American households. In an effort to address this concern 110 Bay Area cities and 9 counties have joined forces to sponsor a Bay Area Junk Mail Reduction Campaign at [www.StopJunkMail.org](http://www.StopJunkMail.org).

Starting in January 2005, the campaign focuses on easy ways Bay Area residents can substantially reduce junk mail at home and at work. The campaign will distribute a Stop Junk Mail Kit to help consumers reduce commercial access to their name and address so this information won't be traded, rented or sold to companies who send unwanted mail.

The Kit provides addresses and telephone numbers of organizations set up to help consumers reduce junk mail. The Kit also includes ways to contact service providers such as banks, insurance or wireless companies asking them to stop sending promotional mail.

It's good to recycle your junk mail. It's even better to stop getting it in the first place. Americans collectively pay \$370 million a year to dispose of junk mail that doesn't get recycled. To learn more about reducing junk mail call the Bay Area Junk Mail Reduction Campaign hotline at 877-STOPWASTE (786-7927) or visit [www.StopJunkMail.org](http://www.StopJunkMail.org).

—Source: Bay Area Recycling Outreach Coalition (BayROC)

### General Membership Meeting "Albatross: On the Wings of Ocean Wanderers" with Ted Cheeseman

Palo Alto Arts Center, Newell & Embarcadero Rds.  
Wednesday, Feb. 16

Doors open 7:30; program 8:00

Naturalist and expedition leader Ted Cheeseman will present an illustrated lecture sharing his experiences with some of the world's most majestic birds. From Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" to glimpses off our shores of Laysan and Black-footed Albatross, we know of albatross as visitors from a foreign realm. Through his expeditions with Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris, Ted frequently travels across the Southern Ocean and to its sub-Antarctic islands, the heart of prime albatross habitat. He will also include Waved Albatross at their nesting site in the Galapagos.

Albatross have forever been the subject of myth and ocean-faring legend, but it is only with recent study such as GPS-telemetry that we are seeing into their lives. We are only now learning how truly magnificent albatross are just as many species face sharp declines at the hands of industrial fishing. Ted will take you on the wing of an albatross, an entertaining and educational journey among the world's greatest mariners with beautiful photographs and the most recent bird science.

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# 13th Wildlife Education Day a grand success!!

By Freddy Howell

Education Committee Member

Nature education is a major goal of SCVAS. Toward that end, SCVAS' Education Committee produces Wildlife Education Day annually at McClellan Ranch Park. The 13<sup>th</sup> annual "Ed Day" was held on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, much to the delight of over 400 participants.

Starting at 8 AM at Charleston Slough, over 30 "early birds" were treated to great birding. Guides Allen Royer, Lee French, Jim Liskovec, Peg Bernucci and Freddy Howell led the children and their parents around the ponds where they had great views of a loggerhead shrike sitting in the "kite tree," avocets and dowitchers eating in the low tide mud, and common moorhens darting in and out of the reeds.

Back at McClellan Ranch, Programs Coordinator Kim Yuan-Farrell marshaled her considerable volunteer army putting up tents against a possible downpour. Fortunately, it sprinkled only once, very briefly. Twenty-two participating local environmental organizations offered children the opportunity to interact with live animals, such as snakes from the Bay Area Amphibian and Reptile Society, goats raised by Rolling Hills 4-H participants, and a red-shouldered hawk, Ameri-

can kestrel, and barn owl shown by Sky Hunters Environmental Education. City of Cupertino naturalist Barbara Banfield created "Bugville," captivating and fascinating many attendees with her assorted "creepy crawlies."

Interactive learning booths were very popular. Participants viewed pelts and skulls from the Marine Mammal Center; learned about water quality at the Stevens and Permanente Creeks Watershed Council table; and built nest boxes at a booth staffed by IBM volunteers. Longtime volunteer and expert nest box builder Norman Watenpaugh built a new display on cavity nesters which served as a great introduction to the nest box building station. One of the perennial favorite Ed Day booths was the "Tattoo Table" staffed, as always, by Ken and Patsy McKay.

One of the biggest draws of the day was the Poster Contest. There are two divisions: Public School and Art Studio. Ages of participants range from kindergarten through high school. The criteria for the contest include California native wildlife in California habitat. Prior to the judging, Kim and Education Committee

members contacted area schools and scheduled classroom presentations about habitat and native species. Our thanks to all the teachers who incorporated these visits and the poster contest into their curriculum. The winners this year produced very impressive entries resulting in multiple prizes within many categories.

The Education Committee would like to thank all the volunteers from the Board of Directors, general chapter, friends, and family that made the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Wildlife Education Day one to remember. This year Kim recruited many high school and college students who were anxious to volunteer at this event. A big "thank you" goes out to all the students who volunteered to staff our many booths, including those from Stanford University, Lynbrook High School's Octagon and Interact Clubs, Mountain View High School's Key Club, and Monte Vista High School's Octagon Club. We would also like to acknowledge all the participating organizations and our dedicated sponsors who provided funding, raffle prizes, and poster contest prizes.

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## Thank You Generous Education Day Sponsors...



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Richard Lowenthal



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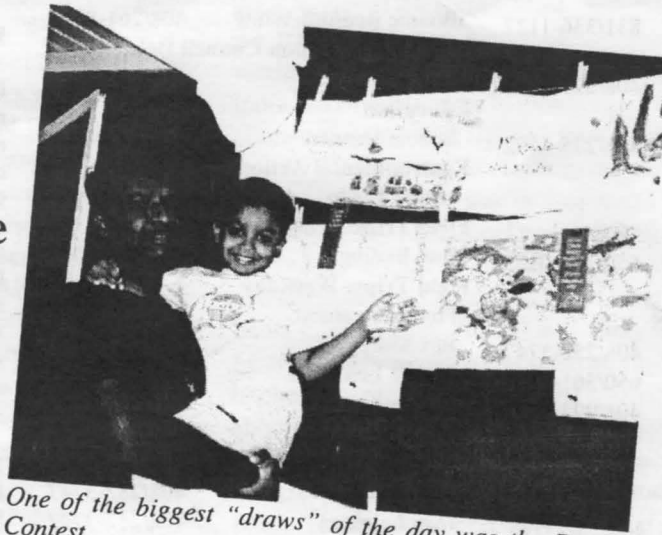


Two participants examine Norman Watenpaugh's cavity nest display



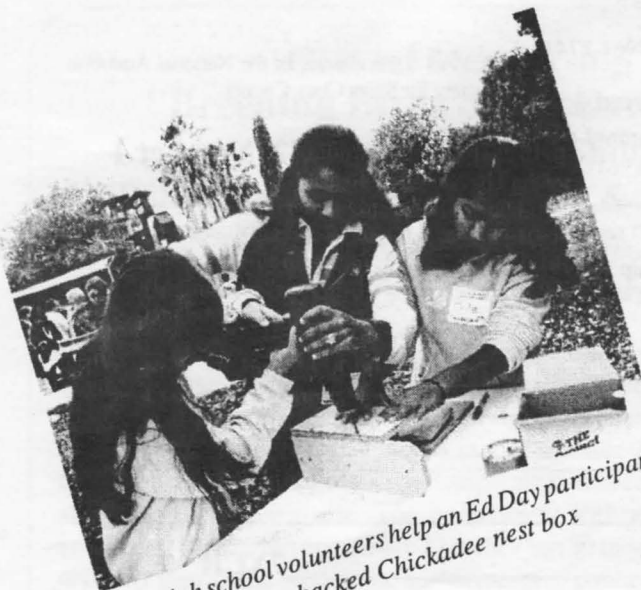
Karen Hoyt and Sparky the American Kestrel of Sky Hunters Environmental Education

## Snapshots from our 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Wildlife Education Day

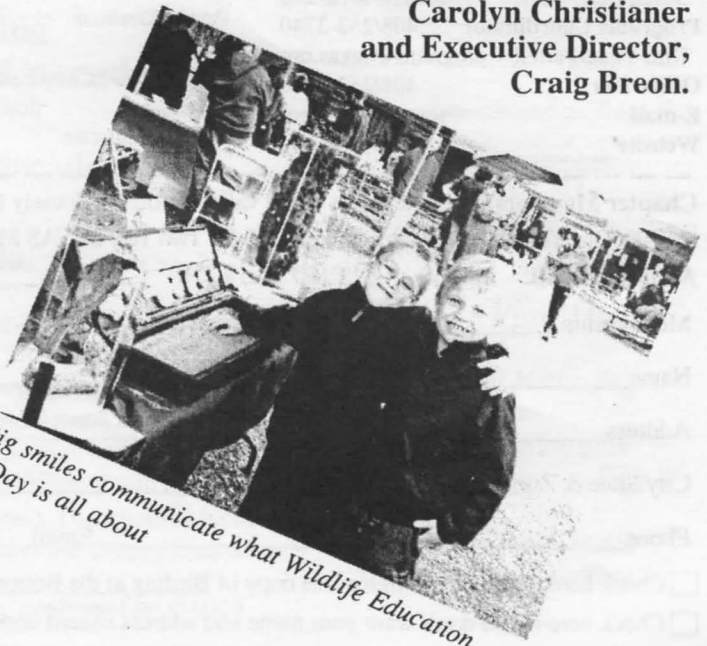


One of the biggest "draws" of the day was the Poster Contest

Thank you to our photographers, Education Intern, Carolyn Christianer and Executive Director, Craig Breon.



Two high school volunteers help an Ed Day participant build a Chestnut-backed Chickadee nest box



Big smiles communicate what Wildlife Education Day is all about



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

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

**2005 Volume 52, Number 1**

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