

THE AVOCET

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

September-October 2007

Santa Clara County Breeding Bird Atlas – Coming Soon!

See inserts between pages 6 and 7 for details and information about this exciting achievement, and how to sign-up to sponsor your favorite bird.

Reconfiguration is for the Birds

by Bob Power, SCVAS Executive Director

A 30-year+ implementation period will mean that much of the dramatic transformation of the South Bay salt ponds (the largest wetlands restoration project on the West Coast) will go unnoticed by the casual observer. However, two highly visible salt ponds will see significant changes (reconfiguration), hopefully for the better for both birds and birders, over the next year or two.

The success of the salt ponds restoration to a more natural and historic mix of tidal wetlands hinges on adaptive management. Adaptive management allows for lessons learned from earlier restoration phases to be incorporated into subsequent phases as plans and designs are updated. In other words, learn from your mistakes, build on your successes, and do it quickly.

To turn a salt pond into a tidal wetland means a change of habitats. A change of habitats means the birds who liked the old habitat are likely to move. The issue of “which species will move and where will they move to?” is where Adaptive Management and ponds A16 and SF2 intersect.

A16 we know and love. This is the ski-boot-shaped pond adjacent to the Alviso Environmental Ed Center and New Chicago Marsh. The long thin islands in A16 have become home to Caspian Terns, Forster’s Terns, and Black Skimmers (a recent delightful development) in the summer, and numerous gulls (notably Glaucous Gulls – 2006/2007) and waterfowl in winter. SF2 (just over the border in San Mateo County) is far more visible, but far less accessed by birders. This is the pond you see when you head for the Dumbarton bridge on the southeast corner of University Ave. and Hwy. 84. Peter Metropolis has reported Snowy Plovers from this area in the past year, but the “pond” has been more or less dry for two years and sees little reported birding activity.

Both ponds A16 and SF2 are slated for Phase 1 (Projects to be implemented by the end of 2010). In both cases, these ponds will be reconfigured to accommodate significant nesting and roosting islands (e.g. see map on page 8). The success of the nesting habitat for terns and skimmers on the levee islands on A16 is serendipitous. The long islands were installed to break up

the waves in the pond that were degrading the levee shoreline. The birds liked the islands. As any birder could tell you, they like them a lot. The questions for Adaptive Management are: how much do birds like them? How many island habitats could a pond support?

Cont’d on page 8

General Membership Meeting “Pole to Pole: Antarctica to the Arctic”

A video program hosted by
Steve & Debbie Thompson

Palo Alto Arts Center
Newell & Embarcadero Rds.
Wednesday, Sept. 19th
Doors open 7:30; program 8:00

First Steve and Debbie Thompson traveled to the Antarctic Peninsula via the Falkland and South Georgia Islands, then they ventured to the opposite hemisphere to the Svalbard archipelago in the Norwegian Arctic. This presentation will include two very fast paced short video programs, one of each trip that are very, very entertaining. Seeing these two videos together also gives you a glimpse of both the similarities and differences of these remote regions; polar bears and penguins, fjords and icebergs, walrus and elephant seals - as well as many bird species, from little auk to albatross.

Cont’d on page 4

“Life on Thin Ice”

see Page 8

◆ “Getting to Know the Avian Neighbors” with Steve Rutledge

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◆ Rose-breasted Grosbeaks Galore!

— Field Notes, Page 6

◆ “Common Birds in Decline”

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◆ PG&E’s ClimateSmart™ Program

— Page 11

Sept. - Oct. '07 Field Trips

(all of our Field Trips are also available online at www.scvas.org)

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

LO = Lunch optional

RC = Heavy rain cancels

NF = No facilities available

✓ Saturday Sept. 1 8:00 AM

Arastradero Preserve

Half day. Leader: Rich Page (408) 377-1092. From I-280 take Page Mill Rd. west approx. 1/2 mile to Arastradero Rd. Turn right and meet at the parking lot located 1/2-mile on the right. Woodland and grassland species as well as a good assortment of raptors are possible. Trip involves two miles of moderately strenuous walking. **RC.**

✓ Sunday Sept. 2, 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 the entrance nearest San Antonio Road. This trip recommended for beginning birders but all are encouraged to attend. Bring your spotting scope and a friend.

✓ Wednesday Sept. 5, 12:00 PM

City of Sunnyvale Landfill

One hour. Leaders: Freddy Howell and Elaine Gould. Contact organizer Silviana Ruiz (408) 730-7545 to attend. **RC** Donald M. Somers Water Pollution Control Plant, junction of Borregas and Caribbean. Meet at Trailhead at north end. Birding geared toward beginners. Bring binoculars; loaners also available. **RC.**

✓ Saturday Sept. 8, 9:00 AM

Point Reyes

Full day. Leader: Peter LaTourette (650) 961-2741. Our annual trip to the west coast's most active vagrant trap, where birds and the 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 the parking area. Bring lunch, liquids, a full tank of gas, and be ready for fog, wind, sun and lots of difficult to ID birds. Be prepared to carpool from Drakes Beach.

✓ Sunday Sept. 9, 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 the hills then left on Toyon Ave. and right on Penitencia Creek Rd continue on into the park. Drive under the bridge and meet at the far end of the parking lot. Possible entrance fee, trip is a moderately strenuous 3-4 mile walk. **LO, RC.**

✓ Wednesday, Sept. 12, 8:30 AM

Los Alamitos Creek Trail

Half day. Leader: Alan Thomas (408) 265-9286. Meet in west parking lot of Almaden Lake Park. From Hwy 85, take Almaden Expressway south. Park is on east (left) side of Almaden Expwy. Continue just past Coleman Rd. (and the park). Make a 'U' turn at the Macabee/Winfield Blvd. light and return northbound on Almaden Expwy to park entrance on right. Easy walking. Waterfowl, raptors, riparian birds. Possible fee. **LO.**

✓ Saturday Sept. 15, 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 towards the Model Airplane Park (street is unnamed). Follow the road for 1/4 mile and park in the gravel lot at the first bend in road (meet at the gate if the entrance is locked). **RC.**

✓ Sunday Sept. 16, 8:00 AM

Moss Landing & vicinity

Half day+. Leader: Todd Newberry (831) 426-8741. Starting on Jetty Rd (off Hwy 1, in Moss Landing), then Moon Glow Dairy, Reserve HQ, Kirby Park (if the tide smiles), and possibly Struve Slough (Watsonville) for marsh birds while returning north. Meet at the bend on Jetty Road at 8 AM sharp. Shorebird migration will be in full swing; wandering rarities can show up in these late summer weeks. Weather conditions can be highly variable, dress in layers, bring lunch and liquids.

✓ Saturday Sept 22, 9:00 AM

Hawk Hill/Marin Headlands

Full day. Leader: Nick Yatsko (408) 247-5499. Going north on Hwy. 101, after crossing the Golden Gate Bridge exit just past the Vista Point, cross under Hwy 101 and turn right just before entrance back onto Hwy. 101 south. Drive up hill to the highest point and park. Meet at tunnel entrance near the parking area or at the Hawk watch on top of the hill. Highlights: Migrating raptors including the possibility of seeing a rare Broadwing Hawk. Weather conditions can be highly variable, dress in layers, bring lunch and liquids. NOTE: This will be our only field trip to Hawk Hill/Marin Headlands this fall. Heavy fog may change itinerary.

✓ Sunday Sept. 23, 8:30 AM

Coyote Hills Regional Park

Half day. Leader: Frank Vanslager (650) 961-1505. Take Hwy 84 (Dumbarton Bridge) east to Newark. Exit right at Thornton, then go left on overpass, as Thornton becomes Paseo Padre turn left at Patterson Ranch/Commerce Rd into park. Meet at far end of Quarry parking lot located on the left, 1/4 mile past park entrance. Entrance fee probable, **LO, RC.**

✓ Saturday Sept 29, 7:30 AM

Sunnyvale Baylands Park

Half day. Leader: Pat Kenny (408) 725-0468. From Hwy 237 take the Lawrence Expwy./Caribbean Dr. exit toward Caribbean Dr. Turn right into the park at the first stoplight north of Hwy 237. Meet in the first parking lot to the right of the entrance kiosk. Possible \$5.00 parking fee.

✓ Sunday Sept 30, 8:30 AM

Carmel River

Half day plus. Leader: Norm Kikuchi (831) 459-9424. Take Highway 1 south to Carmel, turn left at Rio Rd., and then immediately turn right into the Crossroads Shopping Center. Meet near the back, southwest corner of the shopping center near Safeway and the river. After birding Carmel River and the lagoon we may chase locally reported vagrants in nearby areas. Bring lunch and liquids or buy food at the meeting place. Temperatures vary, so bring extra layers of clothing. Rubber boots optional as there may be puddles in the riverbed.

Field Trips *continued*

✓ **Wednesday Oct. 3, 12:00 PM**

City of Sunnyvale Landfill

See details under Sept. 5th listing.

✓ **Saturday Oct. 6, 8:00 AM**

Windy Hills OSP

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

✓ **Sunday Oct. 7, 8:00 AM**

Ogier Ponds

Half day plus. Leader: TBD. Contact Bob Reiling @ (408) 253-7527 with questions. For directions see write-up for Sept 15th.

✓ **Wednesday, Oct. 10, 8:30 AM**

Charleston Slough

Half day. Leader: Roxie Handler (408) 730-1745. Meet at Terminal Way at end of San Antonio Rd north off Hwy 101 in Mtn. View. Spotting scopes helpful.

✓ **Saturday Oct. 13, 7:30 AM**

Local Hot Spots

Half day. Leader: Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527. We'll meet at the Alviso Marina. From Hwy 237 in San Jose take Gold St. north to the end of the street, bear left on Elizabeth St. and then right on Hope St. to the 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. 14, 9:00 AM**

Charleston Slough

Half day. Leader: Allen Royer (408) 288-7768. See write-up for Sept 2nd.

✓ **Saturday, Oct. 20, 8:00 AM**

Charleston Slough

"Early Bird" Shorebird Walk. As part of our Wildlife Education Day, we will be leading a morning walk for families and children around the slough to explore our wintering species. Binoculars available for loan. Reservations are required; call (408) 252-3740 to sign up. **RC.**

✓ **Saturday Oct. 20, 7:30 AM**

Elkhorn Slough, Moss Landing, Moon Glow Dairy, Zmudowski State Beach & Pajaro River Mouth.

Half day plus. Leader: Rick Fournier, Rimbirding@aol.com. Meet in the parking lot north of the Elkhorn Slough Bridge just off Highway #1 in Moss Landing at the Sea Harvest Restaurant. With fall at hand we will bird the above environs for seasonal and regional specialties as well as reported vagrants. Plan on birding through lunch (stopping at Phil's Snack Shack) and finishing up early afternoon. Bring food and liquids. Dress in layers.

✓ **Sunday Oct. 21, 8:00 AM**

Arastradero Preserve

Half day. Leader: Jim Johnson. (408) 996-3506 See write-up for Sept 1st.

✓ **Saturday, Oct. 27, 8:30 AM**

Alum Rock Park

Half day. Leader: Al Eisner (650) 364-3686 evenings, (650) 926-2018 days and voice-mail. From Hwy 101 or I-680 take McKee Rd. northeast toward the hills then left on Toyon Ave. then right on Penitencia Creek Rd and continue on into the park. Drive under the bridge and meet at the far end of the parking lot. Expect a moderately strenuous 3-4 mile walk, looking for resident birds (possible Rufous-Crowned Sparrow, and American Dipper if we are lucky), migrants and early wintering birds. Possible entrance fee, **LO, RC.**

✓ **Sunday, Oct. 28, 8:30 AM**

Sunnyvale Water Treatment Facility

Half day. Leader: TBD, questions call Bob Reiling @ (408) 253-7527. From Hwy 101 take Hwy. 237 east, exit North on Caribbean Dr., turn right on Borregas Ave. then left to the parking area. This is a great place to study ducks. Trip is fairly easy but a long walk is possible. Scopes are highly recommended. **RC.**

✓ **Saturday Nov. 3, 8:00 AM**

Grant Ranch County Park

Half day. Leader: Rich Page (408) 377-1092. From I-680 take Alum Rock Ave. northeast, turn right on Hamilton Rd. and go approximately 9 miles to the park. Meet at Grant Lake (aka Hall's Valley Lake) parking lot, which is the first parking lot on the left side

of the road (do not enter the Main Park Entrance on the right). Fresh water ducks, oak woodland birds and possible Golden Eagle. A Park entrance fee will be required for the last half of the trip. A moderate 2-mile walk, **LO.**

✓ **Sunday Nov. 4, 8:00 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. When you enter the park on 19th Ave. be in the left lane and take Crossover Dr. to 25th Ave. to Geary Blvd. then left on Geary. Meet in the parking lot at Merrie Way above Sutro Baths and the Cliff House. **LO, RC.**

✓ **Wednesday Nov. 7, 12:00 PM**

City of Sunnyvale Landfill

See details under Sept. 5th listing.

Support SCVAS at the same time you're supporting your binoculars! The comfortable BinoSystem with the SCVAS logo is available from the Nature Shop, and proceeds go towards education and conservation programs.



Volunteer Ventures

By Toby Goldberg

SCVAS Programs Coordinator

I'd like to start by sending one more "Thank You" to everyone that participated in the Birdathon this year – the committee members, the sponsors, the donors, the birders, and all supporters of any kind. What a successful year! I'd also like to send out another special thanks to the Education Committee, all of our Adult Education Instructors, the Wetlands Discovery Program docents, all of our Earth Day volunteers, the Nature Shop volunteers, our Field Trip Coordinators and Leaders, and our Bird Count Coordinators, and anyone else that has done anything to help out this past year! It has been a very busy one, but we've been able to accomplish great things, and everyone has participated at amazing levels!

We're getting ready to start a new school year, with new opportunities to share our love for nature, birds, and the environment with our community. If you like working with children, are interested in education, enjoy leading field trips, then we definitely have some opportunities for you – just keep reading! We'll even provide you with training and scripts, where needed, so prior experience isn't required!

Wetlands Discovery Program Docent – This program shares the wonder and importance of wetland habitats with third through sixth graders throughout Santa Clara County. Volunteers guide students in exploring wetland wildlife and habitat both in the classroom and out in the field. No experience is necessary, as we will provide training for both field and class sessions. All a potential docent needs is a love of nature and a desire to share it with children.

Wildlife Education Day Support – As our largest annual event, Wildlife Education Day hosts a plethora of ways in which you can volunteer. With wonderful interactive booths, environmental organizations, educational presentations, live animals, a poster contest, raffle, and much more, this fun-filled affair will require volunteer support weeks before the event as well as on the big day – Saturday, October 20. We have many ways to help - from coordinating volunteers, to taking pictures, to helping build nest boxes! More details available online at www.scvas.org.

If you are interested in these or any of our other Volunteer positions, or if you have questions about how you might be able to help, please contact Toby at (408) 252-3740 or programs@scvas.org.

Sept. General Meeting, continued from page 1

Steve and Debbie are long-time SCVAS members who enjoy wildlife travel. Long before "YouTube", Steve had discovered videography and enjoys capturing the wildlife and natural beauty they find on their travels. He combines beautiful scenery, interesting animal behavior and often humorous situations into a lively and entertaining program. Steve has a special talent for synchronizing sound and action of exciting wildlife antics encountered on these Arctic and Antarctic adventures.

And don't miss the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory's program on Penguins, Wed, Sept 26th at 7:00PM: Ted Cheeseman will give a 30-minute presentation with beautiful photos of the 17 different species of penguins found in the world, followed by a repeat showing of the movie, *March Of The Penguins*. This fun and educational evening will be held at the Cinelux Theatres in Campbell. Seats are \$10 per person and the theatre is supporting the Bird Observatory event by allowing all monies received this night to go directly toward the SFBBO Fall Challenge. Please email - fallchallenge@sfbbo.org to reserve your seats.

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Events Calendar:

Tues. 9/11, 9:30AM

Eve Case Bird Discussion Group - meets at the home of Pat and Jean Dubois, 17150 Buena Vista Ave., Los Gatos (408) 395-4264 (Note: Nov. will be the 40th year!)
Topic: Earliest Bird Memories

Tues. Evn's 9/11-10/16
Birding Basics with Anne Creevy

Palo Alto Adult School
Contact 650-329-3752

Wed. 9/19, 7:30PM

General Meeting
Palo Alto Arts Center
(see page 1 for details)

Thur. 9/20, 7-9PM

Cavity Nesters Recovery Program (CNRP) End-of-Season Meeting
McClellan Ranch Park

Wed. 10/3, 6:30-9PM

Community Forum on the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Plan
Peninsula Conservation Center
(see page 12 for details)

Tues. 10/9, 9:30AM

Eve Case Bird Discussion Group - see details above
Topic: Brown Creeper

Wed. 10/17, 7:30PM

General Meeting
Campbell Community Center
(see page 8 for details)

Sat. 10/20, 10AM-2PM

Wildlife Education Day
McClellan Ranch Park
(see page 6 for details)

Sun. 11/4, 8-9:30PM

Special Presentation: "Life On Thin Ice" by Jenny Ross
Palo Alto Arts Center
(see page 8 for details)

Coming Soon:

Save the Date – 11/8
Book Signing - "Birder's Conservation Handbook: 100 North American Birds at Risk" by Jeffrey V. Wells

Quinlan Community Center, Cupertino
(Check out our website, www.scvas.org for more details.)

11/15-11/18

Central Valley Birding Symposium
Stockton
See www.cvbs.org to register and for more details.



Gordon Barrett, one of our Wetlands Discovery Program docents, leads students on a birding field-trip around Charleston Slough.

Adult Education Classes

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

Getting to Know the Avian Neighbors with Steve Rutledge

Sure, it is nice to know who your neighbors are. But the pleasures of knowing birds go well beyond simply knowing their names. The more you know about their natural history, the more you will appreciate their diversity and special adaptations (and the more you will want to contribute to their conservation)! In this class we will not follow the common birding objective of seeing as many birds as possible. Instead, we will slow down and spend time with the birds we find, not only focusing on how to identify them, but exploring various facets of their biology. Some questions we'll discuss are: Why are some year-round residents while others are only here for the winter? Why do some have curved bills while others have straight bills? Why do some have short and broad wings while others have long and thin wings? And many more – bring all those questions you've been puzzling over!

Our birding will take us to a nice mix of wetlands, forests, and coastal sites. The exact locations will depend on weather and recent bird reports, but here are some possible birding destinations for this class: Foothills Park (Palo Alto), Radio Road (Redwood City), Princeton Harbor (north of Half Moon Bay), Pescadero (south of San Gregorio), Elkhorn Slough and Jetty Road (north of Monterey), and Henry Coe State Park.

Dates: 4 Saturdays - 10/13, 10/20, 10/27, 11/3 - 7:45AM to approx. 3:30PM (will vary depending on location)

Location: Meet at McClellan Ranch to carpool.

Fee: \$40 members; \$45 non-members (there may also be some entrance fees, to be shared by participants). 50% of the proceeds will go to a bird conservation project of the instructor's choice. The rest supports SCVAS' education programs.

Class size limited to 7.

Please Note: You must be willing to carpool and share fuel expenses with a min. of 3 other people to attend this field trip. We will have a max. of 2, 4-person vehicles on this field trip. Pack a picnic lunch, binoculars and rain gear.



Long-billed Curlew
by Bonnie Bedford-White

Introduction to Shorebirds with Bob Power

From instantly identifiable to perpetually perplexing, we'll look at the common shorebirds of the San Francisco Bay, their vocalizations and field marks. The field trip will be a leisurely and flat stroll to Ora Loma Marsh where we'll be putting our identification skills to work. 3 miles roundtrip.

Dates: Workshop: Thursday, 9/27, 9:30-11:00AM; Field Trip: Friday, 9/28, 11AM-2PM

Location: Workshop: Conference Room, McClellan Ranch, Cupertino; Field trip: Hayward Regional Shoreline, Winton Avenue Staging Area.

Fee: \$50 members; \$60 non-members.

Class size limited to 15. Carpooling is strongly encouraged.

Red-tailed Hawks with Bob Power

We'll examine why identification of this gorgeous hawk, the majestic, soaring, omni-present raptor of the west, can present serious challenges. While comparing the Red-tailed to other hawks in the *buteo* family, we'll look at the full range of color-variation and sub-species of this magnificent bird. Our field trip will put us in position to see numerous adult and juvenile red-tailed hawks from various distances as they disperse through the Marin Headlands. We'll hope to observe and identify up to 10 species of raptors on this field trip.

Dates: Thursday, 10/25, 9:30-11AM; **Field Trip:** Friday, 10/26, 10AM-2PM

Location: Workshop: Conference Room, McClellan Ranch, Cupertino; Field trip: Hawk Hill, Marin Headlands

Fee: \$50 members; \$60 non-members.

Class size limited to 15. Carpooling is strongly encouraged.

Tax-Savvy Strategy for Giving

by Debbie Thompson, SCVAS Board Member

Recent surveys indicate that about 50% more Americans own stock today than 20 years ago. Do you fall into this category? If so, you are probably holding securities such as stocks, bonds, or mutual fund shares that have recently appreciated in value. Donating these directly to SCVAS is one of your most tax-efficient ways of giving.

Let's run the numbers: suppose you bought 100 shares of ABC Corp many years ago for \$10,000 and now it is worth \$100,000.

If you sell the stock and give the cash to SCVAS, your taxable income will be reduced by \$100,000, saving you \$35,000 in federal income taxes (assuming the highest tax bracket of 35%). But you will still owe tax of \$13,500 on your long-term capital gain (15% x 90,000). Therefore the real cost of the gift to you is its market value (\$100,000

plus the capital gains tax (\$13,500) minus the income tax savings (\$35,000), which equals \$78,000.

But if you had given the stock directly to SCVAS, you would have avoided the capital gains tax while still obtaining a deduction of \$100,000 from taxable income. The real cost of the gift to you is its market value (\$100,000) minus the income tax savings (\$35,000), which equals \$65,000. This is a savings of \$13,000!

Plus, donating appreciated securities is very easy to do - you can donate directly from your account. For example, E*trade states on their website, "We can transfer the stock from your account directly to the brokerage account of the charitable organization..." all you do is fill out a form, sign it, then mail it to E*trade.

Consult your own tax advisor or your brokerage account website for more details. Visit www.scvas.org or contact Bob Power at (408)252-3748 for more information.

FIELD NOTES

by Bill Bousman

Waterfowl through Ibis

A male **Eurasian Wigeon** was seen on Salt Pond A3W on 14 Jul (RWR, FV), no injuries were apparent on this oversummering bird. A pair of **Blue-winged Teal** was seen again on the Lockheed Martin ponds on 16 Jun (MJM). A flightless female was seen nearby on the south channel at the Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) ponds on 30 Jul (WGB). An oversummering male **Redhead** was found on the Sunnyvale WPCP ponds on 2 Jun and two males and a female were there on 18 Jun (MJM). A female found on Salt Pond AB1 on 24 Jul was incapable of flight (MMR). A female **Common Goldeneye** at the Renzel Wetlands in Palo Alto on 2 Jun (MMR) was quite late—this diving duck rarely oversummers in the South Bay. Occasionally late **Common Loons** are found into early June, but not after the first week. But this year, the second-year bird found in late May has remained at least until 22 Jul (m.ob.), apparently quite comfortable among the wind surfers and paddle

boats. Two **Cattle Egrets** were found irregularly at the Arzino Ranch through the summer months (DWe, v.ob.). Two young **Bald Eagles**, near fledging, were seen at the Calaveras Reservoir nest through 8 Jun (v.ob.) and apparently fledged sometime in June. Later, on 27 Jul, a single juvenile was seen in flight farther north (MO'B). We have only a few reports of **Swainson's Hawks** in

coming from if we never find the nest or the foraging adults with food? The egg collectors of the nineteenth century were able to find two sets of Swainson's Hawk eggs locally, but they must have been made of sterner stuff than us modern wimpy birders.

Plovers through Woodpeckers

Surveys of closed salt ponds in Alviso found 8 **Snowy Plovers** on 29 Jun (MMR, MJM, RGJ) including one bird on a nest and four precocial young. On a survey on 28 Jul (MJM, RGJ), they found 20 birds including three precocial young. Although no snowies were found north of the Alviso Marina CP or the New Chicago Marsh in June, birds were seen there again on 3 Jul (RWR, FV) and a peak count of six birds was recorded on 4 Jul (MJM). Counts of 1-5 birds have continued through the end of July. The first **Lesser Yellowlegs** of the fall season was an adult at the New Chicago Marsh on 4 Jul (MJM). The peak count for July was 4 birds found in the marsh on 27 Jul (MJM). An adult **Ruddy Turnstone** was seen on an island in Salt Pond A16 on 28 Jul (AME). A **Sanderling** was found in the New Chicago Marsh on 29 Jul (MJM),

A plethora of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks showed up this summer, and a cooperative Indigo Bunting made it a patriotic summer.

summer, so one seen in the north end of the Coyote Valley on 26 Jun (MJM) was quite unusual. Much less expected were 3 young birds brought to the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley (fide BP). This is at least the fourth instance of young birds being brought to the wildlife rescue folks in the last 10 years! Now here is the problem for our conventional wisdom—where are all these nestlings



Birdhouse Building!



Raffle Prizes!



Environmental Presentations!



Live Animals - Birds of Prey, Snakes, and Insects!

Join the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
and local Nature and Environmental Organizations
for

the 16th Annual Wildlife Education Day!

Saturday, October 20, 2007
10am-2pm

McClellan Ranch Park in Cupertino



"Early Bird" Shorebird Walk

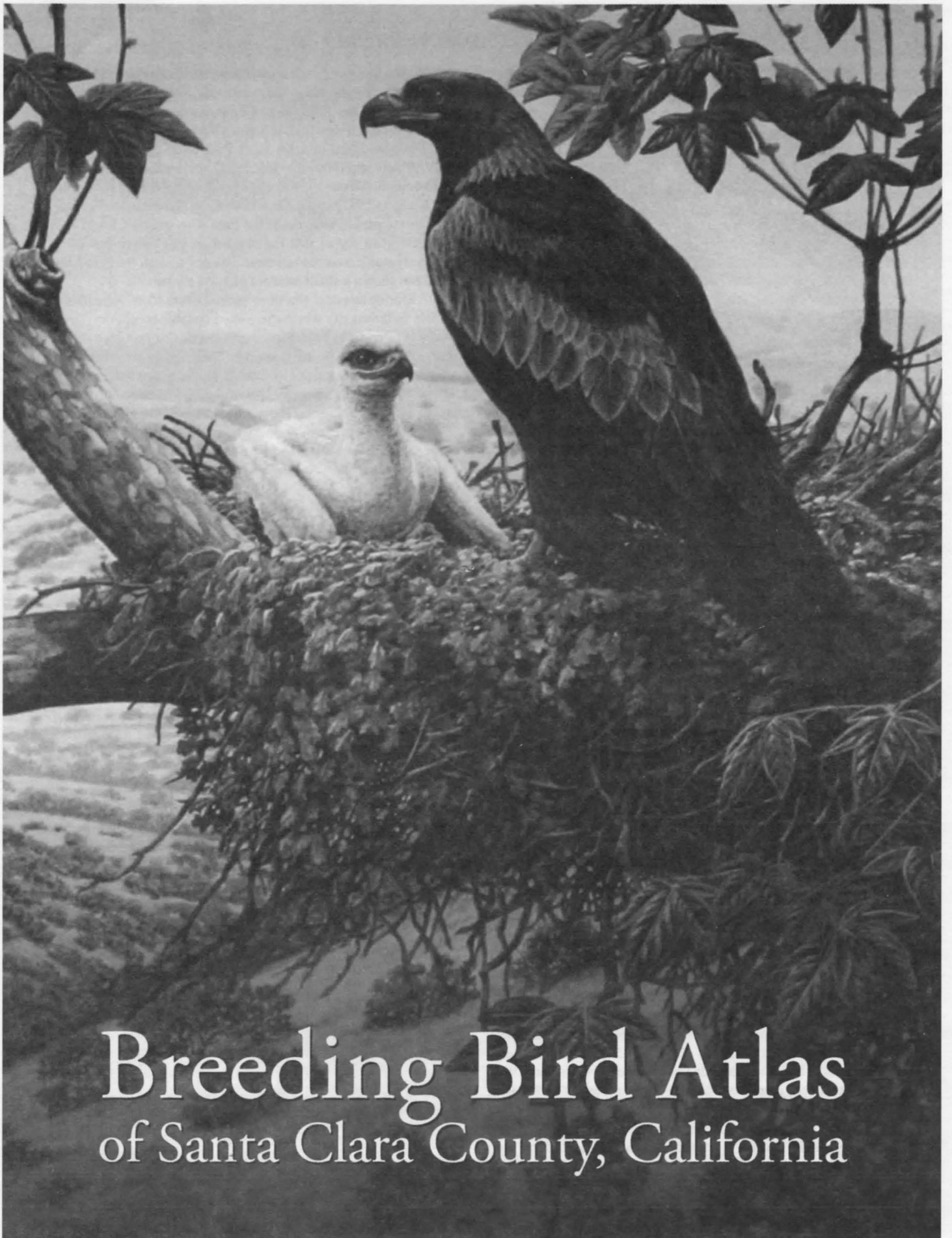
8:00 am @ Charleston Slough
RSVP Required

Annual Wildlife Poster Contest

Prizes and Awards announced @ 1:00 pm
Submission deadline 10/5

For details or reservations, call (408) 252-3740, or visit www.scvas.org

General Parking @ Monta Vista High School w/ FREE SHUTTLE SERVICE,
Disabled Parking ONLY @ McClellan Ranch Park



Breeding Bird Atlas
of Santa Clara County, California

SPECIES ACCOUNTS



Chestnut-backed Chickadee *Poecile rufescens*

This active, agile parid with its quiet “see-see-see” has undergone a range expansion in the last century throughout western North America, including Santa Clara County. Generally found within 80 km of the coast from southeast Alaska to central California, it is also established well inland in Washington, Idaho, and British Columbia, and in recent decades has expanded into the Sierra Nevada of California as far south as Madera County. Three subspecies are recognized, and the southernmost, *P. r. barlowi*, is the one that resides in Santa Clara County. The range of *barlowi* extends from San Francisco and Oakland south to coastal Santa Barbara County (Garrett and Dunn 1981). The type specimen of *P. r. barlowi* was a male collected by Joseph Grinnell along Stevens Creek in Santa Clara County in October 1900 (Grinnell 1900a). Today, the Chestnut-backed Chickadee is a common resident in the western portions of Santa Clara County wherever there are coniferous or broadleaved evergreen forests or woodlands. It is also fairly common in lowland areas with healthy riparian corridors, as well as in urban habitats with planted conifers and other suitable evergreen trees.

Van Denburgh (1899b) considered this species common near Saratoga, but less so in Los Gatos. Grinnell (1915), in his second distributional list of California birds, noted that the subspecies *barlowi* bred along the coast from San Francisco to the Little Sur River in Monterey County, and placed its easternmost extension on the west shore of the San Francisco Bay near the mouth of San Francisquito Creek. Grinnell and Wythe (1927) considered this distribution little changed at the time of their San Francisco Bay regional survey, and Grinnell and Miller (1944) repeated the earlier range descriptions but also noted breeding in the vicinity of San Jose. By the late 1940s it was apparent that this species was moving into the Berkeley Hills, and this finding led to a series of papers that examined both the range expansion of this chickadee and its ecological interactions with the established parid, the Oak Titmouse (Dixon 1954, Dixon 1960, Root 1964, Hertz et al. 1976). Dixon (1954) tracked the range expansion to Sunol in Alameda County as early as the late 1930s and speculated, plausibly, that the development of orchards in the Santa Clara Valley at the turn of the twentieth century (Broek 1932) had allowed this species to move across the valley and into the Diablo Range. It appears that this chickadee was well

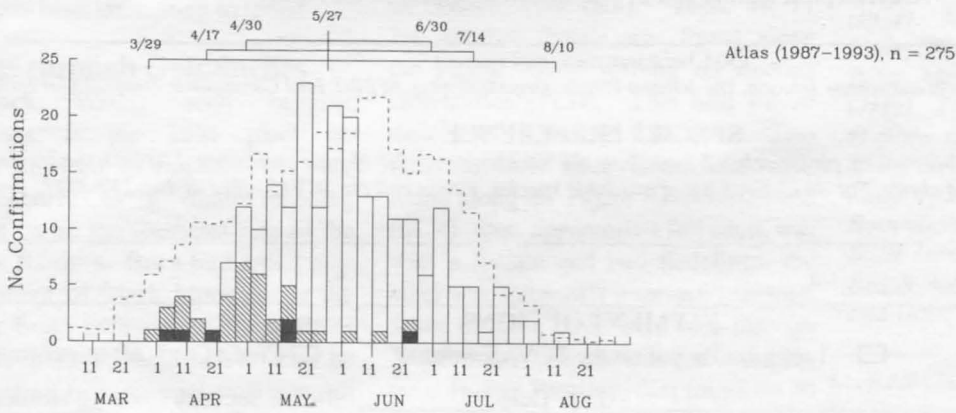
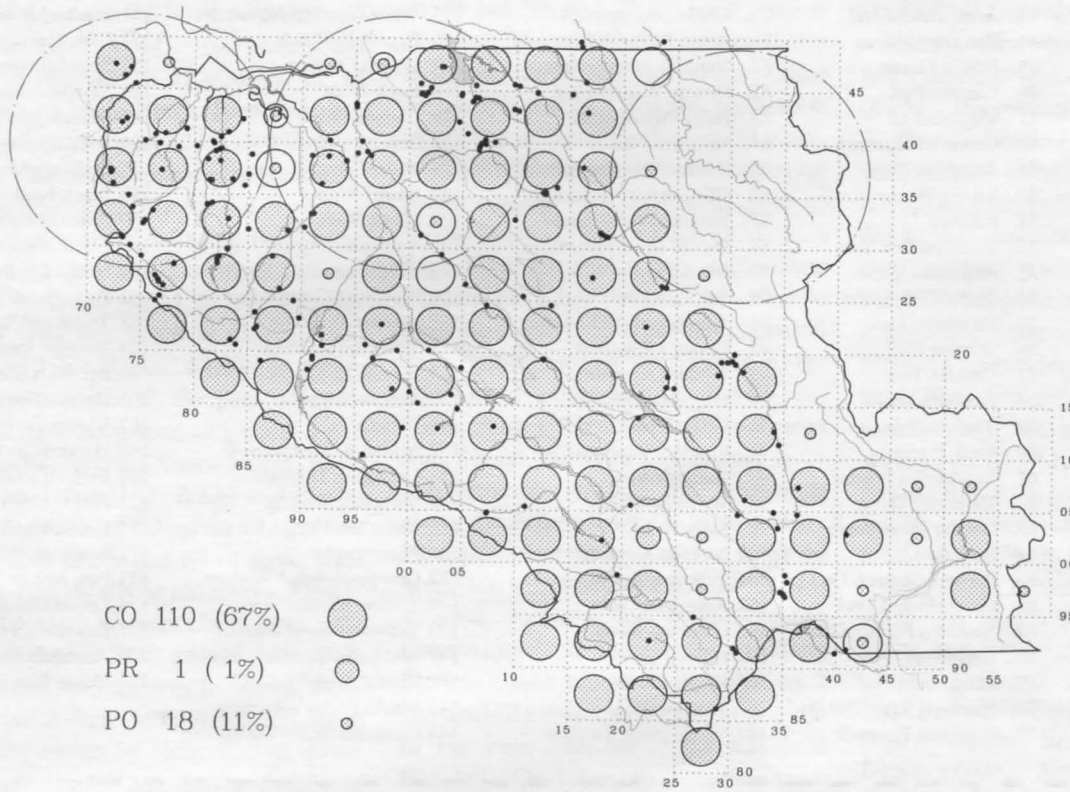
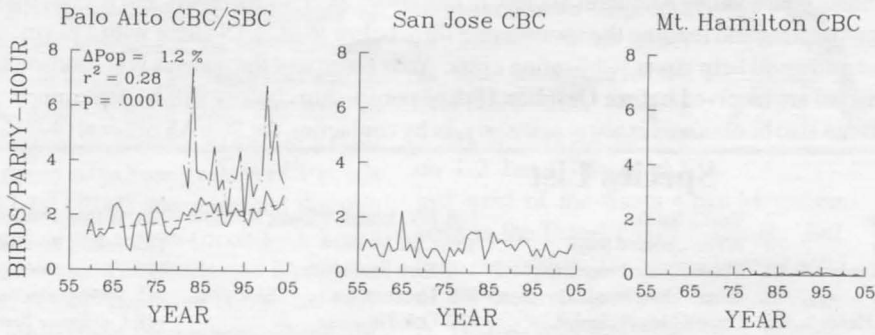
established in a number of locations on the east side of the Santa Clara Valley by the late 1920s and early 1930s. Two were recorded on 22 Dec 1928 on a “Christmas census” that covered habitats from Alviso to Berryessa (*Wren-Tit 1(1)* 1929), two families were noted in Alum Rock Park on 23 May 1931 on an SCVAS field trip (*Wren-Tit 3(3)* 1931), and systematic observations compiled from 1929 to 1936 in Alum Rock Park (Linsdale and Rodgers 1937) found these birds to be present on 61% of all trips to the park. Analysis of the Palo Alto and San Jose CBC and SBC data shows that the number of chickadees has been relatively stable over the last three decades, though the Palo Alto CBC has shown a small increase of 1.2% a year.

During atlasing, Chestnut-backed Chickadees were found widely in the county where there were suitable conditions, generally coniferous or broadleaved evergreens that provided shade and a relatively mesic environment. This was an abundant species on the western side of the county on the slopes and canyons of the Santa Cruz Mountains. On the valley floor they were found in lesser numbers, those present generally concentrated along streams with healthy riparian growth where they used evergreens such as coast live oak and California bay as well as deciduous trees such as western sycamore and various willow species. They were also widespread within urban areas offering established tree cover, especially planted evergreens. On the eastern side of the valley the species was found wherever suitable moist woodlands of coast live oak or California bay developed on north-facing slopes or in canyon bottoms. Farther east in the Diablo Range, as woodlands become more open and there are only small patches of broadleaved evergreens, this species was seen less frequently, and there was a remarkably sharp cutoff in its distribution there. It appears that the areas dominated by deciduous oaks, foothill pine, and chaparral in the eastern portion of the county are unsuitable for these birds. Competitive exclusion by the Oak Titmouse, as suggested by Roberson (1993u), may be a significant factor in their absence there as well.

The earliest evidence of nesting during the atlas period was a bird attending a nest in a cavity on 29 Mar. Following the atlas period, excavation of a nesting cavity was seen as early as 20 Feb 1997 (Leda Beth Gray, PADB). The earliest young during the atlas period were detected by their cries in a nest cavity on 10 Apr. A bird found carrying nest material as late as 23 Jun may have represented either a second brood or a re-nesting attempt. The latest evidence of breeding during the atlas period was fledged young seen on 10 Aug. The most common forms of nesting evidence were adults feeding young (38%) and fledged young (30%).

William G. Bousman

CHESTNUT-BACKED CHICKADEE




BREEDING BIRD ATLAS OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY

by William G. Bousman

This landmark book will be published by the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society in late 2007. SCVAS members and friends may sponsor one or more county breeding bird species by completing and mailing the sponsorship form below to SCVAS along with a payment of \$100 per species sponsored. This tax-deductible donation will help cover publication costs. Your name and the species you sponsor will be acknowledged in the Atlas if your form and donation are received **before October 15th**. Sponsorship choices will be determined on a **date-received basis**. Species lists and sponsor forms can also be obtained at www.scvas.org, or by contacting the SCVAS office at (408) 252-3747.

Species List

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Canada Goose | 36. White-tailed Kite | 72. Vaux's Swift | 108. Nor. Rough-winged Swallow | 144. Wilson's Warbler |
| 2. Wood Duck | 37. Northern Harrier | 73. White-throated Swift | 109. Cliff Swallow | 145. Yellow-breasted Chat |
| 3. Gadwall | 38. Sharp-shinned Hawk | 74. Black-chinned Hummingbird | 110. Barn Swallow | 146. Western Tanager |
| 4. Mallard | 39. Cooper's Hawk | 75. Anna's Hummingbird | 111. Chestnut-backed Chickadee | 147. Spotted Towhee |
| 5. Blue-winged Teal | 40. Red-shouldered Hawk | 76. Costa's Hummingbird | 112. Oak Titmouse | 148. California Towhee |
| 6. Cinnamon Teal | 41. Red-tailed Hawk | 77. Allen's Hummingbird | 113. Bushtit | 149. Rufous-crowned Sparrow |
| 7. Northern Shoveler | 42. Golden Eagle | 78. Belted Kingfisher | 114. Red-breasted Nuthatch | 150. Chipping Sparrow |
| 8. Northern Pintail | 43. American Kestrel | 79. Lewis' Woodpecker | 115. White-breasted Nuthatch | 151. Black-chinned Sparrow |
| 9. Green-winged Teal | 44. Peregrine Falcon | 80. Acorn Woodpecker | 116. Pygmy Nuthatch | 152. Lark Sparrow |
| 10. Canvasback | 45. Prairie Falcon | 81. Nuttall's Woodpecker | 117. Brown Creeper | 153. Sage Sparrow |
| 11. Redhead | 46. Clapper Rail | 82. Downy Woodpecker | 118. Rock Wren | 154. Savannah Sparrow |
| 12. Ring-necked Duck | 47. Virginia Rail | 83. Hairy Woodpecker | 119. Canyon Wren | 155. Grasshopper Sparrow |
| 13. Lesser Scaup | 48. Common Moorhen | 84. Northern Flicker | 120. Bewick's Wren | 156. Song Sparrow |
| 14. Common Merganser | 49. American Coot | 85. Pileated Woodpecker | 121. House Wren | 157. Dark-eyed Junco |
| 15. Ruddy Duck | 50. Snowy Plover | 86. Olive-sided Flycatcher | 122. Winter Wren | 158. Black-headed Grosbeak |
| 16. Ring-necked Pheasant | 51. Killdeer | 87. Western Wood-Pewee | 123. Marsh Wren | 159. Blue Grosbeak |
| 17. Wild Turkey | 52. Black-necked Stilt | 88. Pacific-slope Flycatcher | 124. American Dipper | 160. Lazuli Bunting |
| 18. Mountain Quail | 53. American Avocet | 89. Black Phoebe | 125. Golden-crowned Kinglet | 161. Indigo Bunting |
| 19. California Quail | 54. Spotted Sandpiper | 90. Say's Phoebe | 126. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher | 162. Red-winged Blackbird |
| 20. Pied-billed Grebe | 55. California Gull | 91. Ash-throated Flycatcher | 127. Western Bluebird | 163. Tricolored Blackbird |
| 21. Eared Grebe | 56. Western Gull | 92. Cassin's Kingbird | 128. Swainson's Thrush | 164. Western Meadowlark |
| 22. Western Grebe | 57. Caspian Tern | 93. Western Kingbird | 129. Hermit Thrush | 165. Brewer's Blackbird |
| 23. Clark's Grebe | 58. Forster's Tern | 94. Loggerhead Shrike | 130. American Robin | 166. Great-tailed Grackle |
| 24. Double-crested Cormorant | 59. Black Skimmer | 95. Bell's Vireo | 131. Wrentit | 167. Brown-headed Cowbird |
| 25. American Bittern | 60. Rock Pigeon | 96. Cassin's Vireo | 132. Northern Mockingbird | 168. Hooded Oriole |
| 26. Great Blue Heron | 61. Band-tailed Pigeon | 97. Hutton's Vireo | 133. California Thrasher | 169. Bullock's Oriole |
| 27. Great Egret | 62. Mourning Dove | 98. Warbling Vireo | 134. European Starling | 170. Purple Finch |
| 28. Snowy Egret | 63. Greater Roadrunner | 99. Steller's Jay | 135. Cedar Waxwing | 171. House Finch |
| 29. Little Blue Heron | 64. Barn Owl | 100. Western Scrub-Jay | 136. Phainopepla | 172. Red Crossbill |
| 30. Cattle Egret | 65. Western Screech-Owl | 101. Yellow-billed Magpie | 137. Orange-crowned Warbler | 173. Pine Siskin |
| 31. Green Heron | 66. Great Horned Owl | 102. American Crow | 138. Yellow Warbler | 174. Lesser Goldfinch |
| 32. Black-crowned Night-Heron | 67. Northern Pygmy-Owl | 103. Common Raven | 139. Yellow-rumped Warbler | 175. Lawrence's Goldfinch |
| 33. White-faced Ibis | 68. Burrowing Owl | 104. Horned Lark | 140. Black-throated Gray Warbler | 176. American Goldfinch |
| 34. Turkey Vulture | 69. Long-eared Owl | 105. Purple Martin | 141. Hermit Warbler | 177. House Sparrow |
| 35. Osprey | 70. Northern Saw-whet Owl | 106. Tree Swallow | 142. MacGillivray's Warbler | |
| | 71. Common Poorwill | 107. Violet-green Swallow | 143. Common Yellowthroat | |

Detach here 

Detach here

SANTA CLARA COUNTY BREEDING BIRD SPONSORSHIP FORM

NAME (print legibly and as you wish it to appear in the Atlas):

(50 Characters max, incl spaces)

{e.g. Individual(s): Johnny Johnson, Pamela and Johnny Johnson, The Johnson Family; Organization(s): SFBBO, Intel Corporation, Troup 52-Girl Scouts of America}

SPECIES PREFERENCE

In case your 1st choice has already been taken, please select 5 birds from the list above in order of your preference. List both the species name and number, as indicated above. For an updated list of available species, please call the SCVAS office at 408-252-3747.

Species Choice 1: _____ 2: _____

3: _____ 4: _____ 5: _____

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Check Enclosed

I paid via Paypal on the SCVAS website

Credit Card (fill in information below)

Card# (V, MC, Amex) _____ Exp. Date _____ 3-digit Security Code (on back of card) _____

Mailing Address: _____

Signature

Date

Telephone

E-mail

[Those wishing to sponsor more than one bird must attach a separate page for each additional sponsorship, providing sponsor's name and 5 choices, in order of preference.]

Field Notes, *continued*

away from its beloved coastal strand. The first **Semipalmated Sandpiper** of the season was also at the New Chicago Marsh on 31 Jul (SCR). This bird was an adult, which is more likely this early in the season. A juvenile **Franklin's Gull** was found at the Sunnyvale WPCP ponds on 27 Jul (PJM) and remained through the end of the month (m.ob.). A **Least Tern** was seen at Charleston Slough on 3 Jun (LBe)—we have almost no May and Jun records for this tern. Typically, staging birds return in early July and the first of these were 3 birds on Salt Pond A3E on 2 Jul (MJM). The peak count there in July was of 31 birds on 11 Jul (MMR). A basic **Black Tern** was seen on Salt Pond A16 on 12 Jul (RWR, FV). **Black Skimmers** appeared to be nesting in a number of locations, but no young were seen until 28 Jul when two young were seen at a nest site in closed salt ponds in Alviso (MJM, RGJ). A **Long-eared Owl** was heard at Monte Bello OSP on 2 Jun (GHa), a location where they have nested in the past. **Vaux's Swifts** have been seen in 1's and 2's in a shallow crescent from Monte Bello OSP on 2 Jun (ViT, AKh) and 30 Jul (GHa) to the Sierra Azul on 13 Jun (JPa, AV). It is likely that all of these birds are nesting locally in chimneys. One to two **Pileated Woodpeckers** were near Skyline Ridge OSP on 1-2 Jun (GHa et al.) and another was in Monte Bello OSP on 2 Jun (ViT, AKh), all birds near the center of their present range. **Horned Larks** are nearly extirpated from the valley floor, two singing on the Moffett Field runway on 2 Jun (MMR) may have been attempting to breed.

Wrens through Goldfinches

Rock Wrens with begging fledglings at the IBM plant on Bailey Road on 28 Jun (JPa, AV) are representative of a small breeding population on the southeast side of the Coyote Narrows. But a bird found near the summit of Black Mountain in the Monte Bello OSP on 29 Jul (DBr et al.), not recorded there before, may be a dispersant from a population that still nests in the private Hanson Permanente Quarry. One or more **American Dippers** were reported from Los Gatos Creek above the Main Street Bridge in

Los Gatos on 9 Jul (SBT fide LMy), where they have long been suspected of nesting. As many as four or five **Hermit Warblers** were singing in the Skyline Ridge OSP on 1-2 Jun (GHa et al.), just west of the Santa Cruz Mountain crest in the Peters Creek drainage. But they are seldom found on the east side of the crest within Santa Clara County. A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was singing along the Pajaro River below Hwy 101 on 23 Jun (SCR). Three adults and at least two juvenile **Chipping Sparrows** at Monte Bello OSP on 30 Jul (GHa) are likely a part of a remnant population which has declined in the last 20 years. A **Black-chinned Sparrow** was again heard singing in a chaparral field at Monte Bello OSP on 17 Jun (AME). A **Sage Sparrow** was found at the same location on 2 Jun (ViT, AKh). One to four Sage Sparrows in another chaparral field farther west in the Skyline Ridge OSP were observed 18 Jun-26 Jul (GHa, m.ob.). **Grasshopper Sparrows** were found widely, a particularly large concentration was in the grasslands above the Pajaro River on 23 Jun where 19 males were singing and at least 15 juveniles were tallied (SCR). It was a good summer for **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks**. A female found along Stevens Creek below La Avenida on 2 Jun (MMR) was one of the best birds of the Palo Alto SBC that was held that day. On 7 Jun, an immature male rose-breasted joined the Black-headed Grosbeaks feeding on ripening cherries at Hidden Villa (RF). Then, on 17 Jul, another female was found along the Pajaro River, feeding on ripened elderberries (PLD). This bird stayed there until at least 23 Jul (v.ob.). Two different male **Blue Grosbeaks** were found along the Pajaro River on 23 Jun (SCR). One, apparently a full adult, was with a female and two fledglings, the other was apparently a second-year bird. Some of these birds were seen through 29 Jul (m.ob.). Rarer still was a singing male **Indigo Bunting**, first found on 30 Jun (MDo, KDo, GDe) in the Skyline OSP and seen at least through 11 Jul (m.ob.). This bird spent most of its time in San Mateo County, although



*Rose-breasted
Grosbeak
by Bonnie
Bedford-White*

it occasionally moved across the county line into our home county for a few fortunate observers. On 8 Jul, a female bunting was seen here (ViT), but it was never clear whether the second bird was a Lazuli or an Indigo. **Great-tailed Grackles** continued to be found in the Sunnyvale area with a male singing near the Lockheed Martin ponds on 2 Jun (MJM) and a pair seen nearby on the Bay Trail on 11 Jun (PBr). At the Coyote Creek Golf Course at least 3 males and a female were seen on 11 Jun (SCR) and a juvenile was seen there on 26 Jun (MJM), suggesting successful nesting. A **Brown-headed Cowbird** fledged successfully from a San Jose Lesser Goldfinch nest on 10 Jul (LWR). Few of the finches make successful hosts since they feed their young regurgitated seeds, but this youngster had failed to read the appropriate scientific papers. As the breeding season has wound down, there have been few reports of **Lawrence's Goldfinches** from the Diablo Range, 2 at Ed Levin on 12 Jun (RLi) was the only report. But in the Santa Cruz Mountains 1-4 birds have continued to be reported from Monte Bello OSP, 14 Jun-30 Jul (GHa). Also at least 3 birds were seen along the Pajaro River 23 Jun-11 Jul (SCR, JMy).

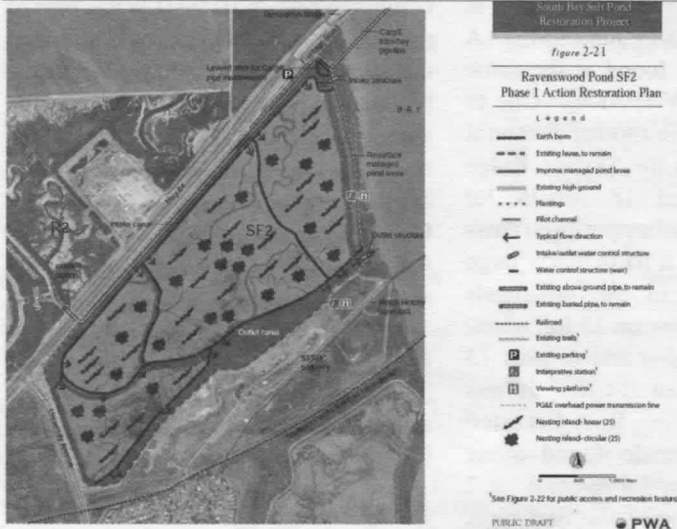
Observers: Laurie Bechtler (LBe), Bill Bousman (WGB), Paul Bridges (PBr), Debbi Brusco (DBr), Gary Deghi (GDe), Kelly Dodder (KDo), Matthew Dodder (MDo), Peggy Don (PLD), Al Eisner (AME), Rich Fox (RF), Garth Harwood (GHa), Richard Jeffers (RGJ), Ashok Khosa (AKh), Randy Little (RLi), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Peter Metropulos (PJM), Jean Myers (JMy), Lisa Myers (LMy), Matthew O'Brien (MO'B), Janna Pauser (JPa), Bob Power (BP), Laurie West Roberts (LWR), Mike Rogers (MMR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Bob Reiling (RWR), Scott Terrill (SBT), Vivek Tiwari (ViT), Frank Vanslager (FV), Ann Verdi (AV), and Dave Weber (DWe).

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

Salt Ponds Reconfiguration, continued from page 1

How many birds could an island support? Will birds displaced from one salt pond easily take up residence in this “new” pond? How to manage vegetation on these new ponds? How to manage predators? Dr. Lynn Trulio and the science advisory team will be studying these issues and many more and will take what they learn and adaptively manage A16, SF2, and future ponds accordingly.

Once the ponds are reconfigured, birders are likely to see a significant increase in bird abundance and diversity in these two ponds. Do not save your keen insights about this project for when the backhoes start building islands. We need your input and expertise now. The project website: southbayrestoration.org has all of the maps and background information to bring you up-to-speed and will be the source for announcing future public meetings. These two projects will greatly inform our understanding of the impact of managed habitats on salt pond bird species. This will be an exciting period for both professional and amateur ornithologists. Stay tuned.



LIFE ON THIN ICE
Polar Bear Biology, Ecology, Behavior & Conservation
A Lecture / Slideshow Presentation by Jenny E. Ross

Sunday November 4, 2007
8:00 - 9:30 PM

Palo Alto Arts Center
 Newell & Embarcadero Roads, Palo Alto

Doors open at 7:30 PM
Admission is Free

Presented By
 Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club
 Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

For more information, go to www.scvas.org and click on 'Calendar'

General Membership Meeting

“Science of the Bay’s Birds”

**with the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory’s Stephanie Ellis, Outreach Specialist
 Campbell Community Center, Campbell Ave & Winchester Blvd.**

Wednesday, Oct. 17th

Doors open 7:30; program 8:00

Do you wonder why you are seeing fewer numbers of birds in some places, but in other places with healthy, protected habitats birds are thriving? Stephanie Ellis has joined the SFBBO’s staff this year and is bringing a wonderful burst of excitement and outreach for the in-depth science that is happening right at our feet at SFBBO, which many of us as members of SVCAS have not heard about yet. This is a chance to answer many of your questions about current bird populations in the Bay! It is very exciting to have Stephanie coming to talk to SCVAS members about the amazing projects happening at SFBBO.

Birds are excellent indicators of ecosystem health. They are sensitive to the slightest environmental change. The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory pays close attention to impacts on birds and their habitats and gathers crucial data specific to bird populations in the South Bay. SFBBO conducts projects to save our native birds. Find out about the Bird Observatory’s 25 years of colonial water bird work and its leadership of the Bay’s Western Snowy Plover recovery effort and many other projects.

For more information about SFBBO, or how to join and support this organization, visit www.sfbbo.org.

Common Birds in Decline

By Bob Power, SCVAS Executive Director

The July-August 2007 issue of Audubon Magazine features Common Birds in Decline, A State of the Birds Report. In the context of this article, Common Birds are defined as species with more than 500,000 individuals worldwide, with a range of more than 385,000 square miles, and that do not qualify for Audubon's WatchList of at-risk species. The birds featured are those suffering the most severe declines over the past 40 years.

The common birds showing the most alarming declines are listed below. Some we know quite well. Some visit us regularly in migration, some visit us very rarely, and some don't visit us at all. Our chart identifies which of these species resides in Santa Clara County, bringing the report a little closer to home. The species are ranked from 1 to 20 starting with the Northern Bobwhite showing an 82% decline in population over the past 40 years. For the complete report as well as ideas on actions you can take that make a difference, see: <http://www.audubon.org/bird/stateofthebirds/CBID/index.php>

From: National Audubon "Birds in Decline"

# on top 20	Species	Breeds in County?	Winters in County	% decline*
1	Northern Bobwhite	No	No	82%
2	Evening Grosbeak	No	No	78%
3	Northern Pintail	Yes	Yes	77%
4	Greater Scaup	No	No	75%
5	Boreal Chickadee	No	No	73%
6	Eastern Meadowlark	No	No	72%
7	Common Tern	No	No	71%
8	Loggerhead Shrike	Yes	Yes	71%
9	Field Sparrow	No	No	68%
10	Grasshopper Sparrow	Yes	No	65%
11	Snow Bunting	No	No	64%
12	Black-throated Sparrow	No	No	63%
13	Lark Sparrow	Yes	Yes	63%
14	Common Grackle	No	No	61%
15	American Bittern	Yes	Yes	59%
16	Rufous Hummingbird	No	No	58%
17	Whip-poor-will	No	No	57%
18	Horned Lark	Yes	Yes	56%
19	Little Blue Heron	No	No	54%
20	Ruffed Grouse	No	No	54%

*Analysis derived from Breeding Bird Survey and Christmas Bird Count data over the past 40 years.



©Steven J. D'Amato

The Santa Clara Valley Birding Community Says Goodbye

This summer has seen the loss of two local dedicated birders, researchers, environmentalists, and friends. SCVAS wishes to say goodbye, and extend our condolences to the families of:

Brian Walton, Sept. 20th, 1951 – June 15th, 2007

A founding member of the Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group at UC Santa Cruz's Long Marine Lab who became an international figure for his work in reviving the once-endangered Peregrine Falcon population.

Shirley Gordon, Aug. 26th, 1928 – July 9th, 2007

A long time SCVAS volunteer, birder, world traveler, and supporter of the arts. She was a devoted mother, loving grandmother, a good friend to many, and will be sorely missed.

Audubon-at-Home: SCVAS' Bird Sanctuary Program

Dealing with West Nile Virus

by Toby Goldberg, Programs Coordinator

West Nile Virus is primarily an avian virus, infecting hundreds of birds each year, and is spread by mosquitoes. The birds primarily affected are large, migratory varieties such as crows, raptors, geese, and doves, as well as some domestic fowl. Less than 1% of people bitten by mosquitoes will develop West Nile meningitis or encephalitis; most people who are infected with the virus will never experience any type of illness, or only mild symptoms. SCVAS wants you to know that there are many, simple, steps that can be taken to help prevent the spread of this disease, while still maintaining a beautiful, bird-friendly yard:

1. Change/dump water in any outside objects that contain/collect water (birdbaths, pet dishes, wheelbarrows, flowerpots, boat covers) *every other day*.

2. Drain water from clogged roof gutters.

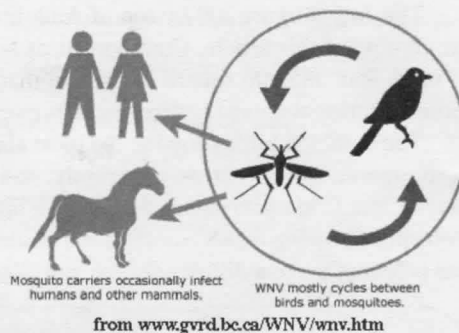
3. Keep swimming pools clean and chlorinated.

4. Stock ornamental ponds with mosquito eating fish.

5. Talk to your neighbors about following these same practices.

In addition to these practices, you should avoid handling dead birds, especially crows and other corvids. Contact the Santa Clara County Vector Control District (408-792-5010) to report dead birds in your area; this will help them monitor and track the spread of the virus more effectively.

In the end, it is important to realize that the existence of West Nile Virus in our area is no cause for panic, and definitely no



reason to stop taking care of the birds we all love! With a little bit of care, it is easy to maintain a healthy, beautiful yard – birdbaths, feeders, and all! – keep you and your family safe, and help to prevent the further spread of this disease.

For more information visit www.audubon.org/bird/wnv, www.CDC.gov, or contact Santa Clara County health department.

If you would like more information about creating healthy habitat in your backyard or patio, or becoming certified with the Bird Sanctuary Program, contact the SCVAS' Programs Coordinator at 408-252-3740 or programs@scvas.org.

We thank these members for their generous contributions from April through July 2007:

Organizational Support:

For the generous support of our Mitigation Monitoring Project: Derry and Charlene Kabcenell and Angela Siddall.

For the generous support of our environmental advocate fund: Ted, Gail and Doug Cheeseman.

For the generous support of our adult education programs: AshokKhosla—seeingbirds.com, BarbaraSamuelson—barbarascamera.com, Bill Schmoker – schmoker.org, David Seibel – DavidSeibel.com, Terry Sohl – sdakotabirds.com, Bob Steele – BobSteelePhoto.com, Brian K. Wheeler – virtualbirder.com/bkwheeler/.

Contributor:

Mary Lorey

Supporter:

Phyllis Browning, Dudley Carlson, Rose Green, Stanley and Elaine Gould, George and Lilo Miller, Daniel and Janet Farmer, Mary and Katie Smith, Elaine Piini, Elinor Spellman.

Associate:

James and Mary Abbott III, Barbara Bessey, Audrey Butcher, Ann Myers Dolan, Rosalie Lefkowitz, Thomas and Glenda Murray, Nick and Laura Tindall, Alan and Karen Thomas, Kathleen Weber.

Individual:

Sara Arzeno, Judy Atterholt, H. Alex Balogi, Prabal Bhattacharya, Dick and Sharon Blaine, James Bliss, Lorraine Blumberg, Patricia Boyle,

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Taking Action on Climate Change

by Darren Deffner, Senior Government Relations Representative for PG&E

Editor's Note: We're very enthusiastic about this innovative program offered by PG&E. At the same time, we urge all of our members to use less energy while participating in programs that compensate for the energy we have to use.

Fighting climate change is on everyone's minds these days. The scientific evidence is overwhelming that climate change is occurring and the need for action is now.

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) believes it is our responsibility to be among those leading the charge and partner with our communities – residents, businesses, and governments – to develop comprehensive solutions that address the problem. And, while PG&E can report a successful track record with fellow Californians through energy efficiency programs and clean energy sources, we must do more!

PG&E is proud to offer a third important piece to the climate protection puzzle that offers our customers the ability to “neutralize” all of the greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) associated with their energy use. It's called ClimateSmart.

Our new, voluntary program uses 100% of the funds collected from enrolled customers – less than \$5 a month for the average residential household – to pay for California environmental projects that reduce or capture GHGs by the same amount as what your energy use creates, making your household's energy “climate neutral.”

All ClimateSmart projects will have verified reductions by one of the leading organizations pioneering standards for carbon accounting – the California Climate Action Registry. We are striving to have a diverse portfolio with some of the projects conserving forest ecosystems, while others are reducing emissions from livestock farms. PG&E is committed to working with the California Climate Action Registry to add other types of projects, such as reducing emissions from transportation or expanding urban forests, which guarantee measurable and verifiable GHG reductions as our ClimateSmart program expands.

By the end of 2009, PG&E expects ClimateSmart to reduce our customers' carbon footprints by an amount equivalent to taking 350,000 cars off the road for a year. This will amount to 2 million tons of CO2 removed from the atmosphere through ClimateSmart.

At PG&E, we are committed to leading the fight against climate change. In fact, PG&E was the first customer to enroll in ClimateSmart, committing over \$1.5 million of shareholder funds to make our company energy use “climate neutral.”

We invite you to join us by continuing to conserve energy through energy efficiency and clean self-generation projects like solar and “neutralize” the remaining GHG emissions your energy use creates by signing up for ClimateSmart today.

To enroll in ClimateSmart or learn more about our program, please visit our website at www.pge.com/climatesmart. To find out what ClimateSmart would cost, please use the online calculator at www.pge.com/about_us/environment/calculator/estimator.html.

Online News and Noteworthy:

We'd like to encourage you to check out our website, www.scvas.org, for more information on the following:

• **Birding and Nature Festivals throughout California** -- We try and post information about any/all events that we think might be of interest to our members. Check out the Calendar and “What's New” sections for more details.

• **Restoration Connection: Where we connect you to habitats that need your help** -- Find out about monthly habitat restoration opportunities at the Ulistac Natural Area in Santa Clara.

And much more! You are also welcome to contact the office at (408) 252-3747 for more information on any of the above.

Philip Higgins, Burrowing Owl intern for Santa Clara Valley Audubon, explains the natural history of Shoreline Park's Burrowing Owls to participants of a workshop held in June.



SCVAS is Attending the Audubon California Assembly *All members are invited to attend!*

On October 7-9, 2007, the SCVAS staff will be in Pacific Grove attending the Audubon California Assembly. The Nature Shop and office in Cupertino will be closed or will have reduced hours during this time to support this important collaborative meeting.

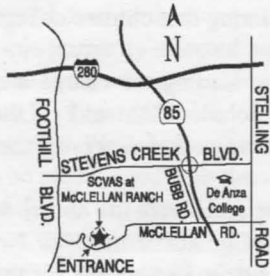
The Audubon California Assembly brings together over 300 chapter leaders, birders, scientists, volunteers, grassroots activists and staff for three days on the Monterey Bay. Anyone with an interest or desire to join the Conference is invited to attend!

For registration details, go to http://ca.audubon.org/audubon_assembly.html or contact Claudia Eyzaguirre at ceyzaguirre@audubon.org or (510) 601-1866, ext.3.

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**Wed. Oct 3rd
 6:30-9PM**

A Community Forum on
**Santa Clara Valley Habitat Plan:
 A Conservation Legacy**

Join the Sierra Club, the Committee for Green Foothills, the CA Native Plant Society and the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society for a public education forum on the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Plan (www.scv-habitatplan.org).



Learn How Over 30,000 Acres of Habitat In South Santa Clara County Could Be Saved and How You Can Be Involved

**Peninsula Conservation Center, Raptor Room
 3921 E. Bayshore Rd., Palo Alto**

For details and more information, go to the Calendar page on www.scvas.org or contact Melissa Hippard, Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter, 650-390-8414 melissa.hippard@sierraclub.org

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Check here if you would like a free copy of *Birding at the Bottom of the Bay*, our gift to new members!

Check here if you don't want your name and address shared with other organizations. **Make all checks payable to SCVAS.**