

# THE AVOCET

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

July-August 2009

Dear Friends of Audubon

**You are invited...**

**What:** To become a Supporting Member of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society (SCVAS).

**When:** Today, tomorrow....it's never too late!

**Why:** Supporting members ensure continuation and growth of the grassroots projects that have made SCVAS influential in the Bay Area community. Dues from Supporting Members directly underwrite costs associated with SCVAS' local wildlife education, conservation, and birding programs. In the past year, this has allowed us to:

- Provide the opportunity for almost 1500 students of all ages to participate in classroom activities and field trips.
- Organize and publicize the efforts of 400 volunteers in bird counts, cavity nesting programs, habitat restoration, and education.
- Lead efforts to create significant regional conservation plans including the county's Habitat Conservation Plan, Salt Pond Restoration Plan, and the Altamont Pass Natural Communities Conservation Plan.

The funding we receive from National Audubon Society does not cover the cost of sending you *The Avocet*, SCVAS' bi-monthly newsletter. And it does not sustain our critical conservation and education work in the Bay Area. We need your support at the local level! For members of National Audubon who are not supporting at the local level, we will be sending you an abbreviated version of each *Avocet* issue. The full issue can always be downloaded from our web-site, or better yet, let us know that you want to go paperless and give us a valid email address, and we will e-mail it to you.\*

## SCVAS Events Calendar:

**Birding and Boating and Banding - Oh My! Summer is the time for Young Audubon Nature Adventures!**

See Page 3 for more information, or go to [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org)

**Sun. 7/19; Approx. 11AM-1PM**  
**Elkhorn Slough Safari**  
Monterey Bay

**Sat. 7/25; 10AM-2PM**  
**SCVAS "Bird Day"**  
McClellan Ranch Park, Cupertino

**Sat. 8/8; 8:00-10:00AM**  
**Bird Banding with SFBBO**  
Coyote Creek Banding Station, Milpitas

Plan Ahead:

**Sat, 9/12; 7AM-4PM**  
**Stevens Creek 50K/SCVAS**  
**Benefit Run**

Runners and Volunteers are needed to participate in this fun event through the Santa Cruz Mountains. Runners are asked to donate a small registration fee, the proceeds of which go to benefit SCVAS' education and conservation programs. Go to <http://www.stevenscreek.com/stevenscreek50k.html> for more details about the race and how to register.

Please use the attached donation form to support our chapter's programs. You will, of course, continue to receive all the benefits provided by our chapter (free field trips and *Avocet* subscription, discounts at our nature shop and on class fees, and use of SCVAS' extensive lending library).

Very best regards,

Bob Power  
Executive Director

**\*for the Go Paperless option, please call us at 408-252-3748 or email [scvas@scvas.org](mailto:scvas@scvas.org).**

## July - August '09

### Field Trips

(Full details for all of our Field Trips are also available online at [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org))

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

**LO = Lunch optional; RC = Heavy rain cancels; NF = No facilities available**

#### Wednesday July 1, 12:00 PM

##### City of Sunnyvale Landfill

One hour. Leader: Freddy Howell. Contact organizer Silviana Ruiz (408) 730-7545 to attend. 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 July 11, 8:00 AM

##### Charleston Slough

Half day. Leader: Nick Yatsko (408) 247-5499. Meet at Terminal Way at the end of San Antonio Rd. North off Hwy 101 in Mountain View. All are encouraged to attend but birding will be geared toward the beginning birder.

#### Wednesday Aug. 5, 12:00 PM

##### City of Sunnyvale Landfill

One hour. See July 1st listing for details.

#### Saturday August 8, 8:30 AM

##### Ano Nuevo State Reserve

Half day. Leader: Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527. Plan on a 3-4 mile walk (half of it in sand), fog, bright sun and wind. Bring a scope, lunch, liquids, and dress in layers. Possible birds include Bank Swallow, Marbled Murrelet and early returning shorebirds. The entrance is along Highway 1 about 30 miles south of Half Moon Bay or 20 miles north of Santa Cruz. There is a \$5 per car parking fee; meet at the far (south) end of the parking lot, **LO.**

#### Saturday August 22, 8:00 AM

##### Charleston Slough

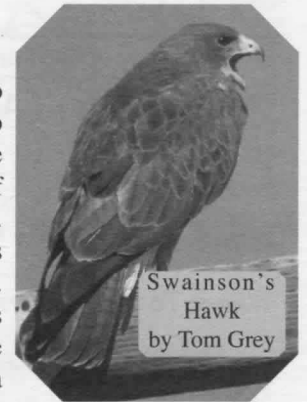
Half day. Leader: Nick Yatsko (408) 247-5499. For directions see the write-up for July 11th.

## 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. Information about our upcoming classes is also available on our website at [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org).

### Swainson's Hawks with Bob Power

Swainson's Hawks congregate in the lower Sacramento Valley in late summer as they prepare to leave for Mexico and Argentina for the winter. They rest up and gorge themselves in preparation for the trip, taking advantage of the rich riparian and agricultural resources of Yolo County. This is a wonderful opportunity to see Swainson's Hawks (knock on wood) in a wide variety of morphs/plumages, and get to know them on a more intimate basis. Perhaps the most graceful, often the most beautiful, clearly the long-distance migration sweepstakes winner (Alberta to Argentina); you owe yourself a good visit with these magnificent raptors.



**Date:** Sat. 8/15; 7AM (South Bay departure) to approx. 5:30PM (South Bay arrival)

**Location:** Agricultural lands south of Davis. **Fee:** \$30 members; \$40 non-members.

**Class sizes are limited to 15.**

**Important Note:** You must be willing to carpool and share fuel expenses with a minimum of 3 other people to attend any of these field trips. We will have a maximum of 4, 4-person vehicles on this field trip.

## Return of the Advocate

by Bob Power (SCVAS Executive Director) and the SCVAS Board of Directors

For several years our Board of Directors has been quietly working to raise the funds to hire an Environmental Advocate for our chapter. While our work in the advocacy arena has never faltered, our effectiveness has not been quite as great as we would like since we were able to fund a full-time environmental advocate to lead this effort. A non-stop series of environmentally significant long-range planning projects in the county and Craig Breon's continued work with his Mitigation Monitoring project have made it abundantly clear that the chapter needs a staff person focused solely on environmental issues.

On Tuesday, May 5th, Santa Clara Valley Audubon's Board of Directors decided to move into the next phase of its plan to hire an Environmental Advocate for our chapter by approving a recruitment and hiring plan for this position. We have posted a job announcement and are conducting a thorough hiring process, the end result of which will be a terrific new addition to our staff and significantly increased ability for our chapter to further support its mission. We hope to have the Environmental Advocate on board by the end of this summer.

Since we have thus far been able to find sufficient funding to cover 80% of the cost of the position for three years, we have decided to be conservative in our planning for this new position. We have chosen to jump-start filling this critical need by bringing the Environmental Advocate in now on a four-fifths time basis for three years. We hope to raise enough additional capital soon to be able to increase this position to full-time status. For now, we have adequate funding to ensure three years of steady advocacy at this part-time level. The Board believes that this conservative approach is in keeping with the current economic climate and looks forward to the opportunity to make this a full-time position when the economy picks up and as we accumulate additional support for this position. This plan was formally announced to the SCVAS membership at our annual meeting in June and we are now actively recruiting to fill this position.

The Environmental Advocate Campaign team would welcome any donations in support of this position.

SCVAS' Young Audubon Program invites you to share a summer of learning and exploration with us and our friends!

## Elkhorn Slough Safari

Nature Boat Tours in Elkhorn Slough

LOCATION: Moss Landing; DATE: Sun, July 19th;

TIME: 11AM - 1:15PM; AGES: For all ages 3\*\* and up!

COST: \$30/person for SCVAS members; \$35/person for non-Members



Join Capt. Yohn Gideon and SCVAS for a two hour boat cruise for an in-depth (and fun!) look at the slough's ecology, its fascinating history, and birding in the company of a naturalist guide. You can relax and enjoy a roomy, stable ride and refreshments on a coast guard certified 27 foot pontoon boat, the Safari, departing from Moss Landing, California. This is a great activity to take the whole family on!

\*\*All children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian for the activities indicated

## McClellan Ranch Bird Day

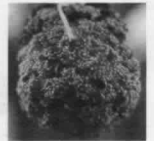
Bird watching, Bird walks, bird crafts, and so much more!

LOCATION: McClellan Ranch, Cupertino; DATE: Sat, July 25th;

TIME: 10AM - 2PM; AGES: 5-7 and 8-10

COST: \$20/child for SCVAS Members; \$25/child for non-members

(There is a multiple-child discount)



If your children are fascinated by the natural life around them, then this day is one not to miss! We will explore local bird (and other wildlife) activities, including: birds and birding arts and crafts; a feeder watch to catch a glimpse of some of the amazing species that come to our very door; a creek walk to explore the local flora and fauna; story time and puppet shows (including a chance for the older children to let their theatrical and creative juices flow!); Barn Owl pellet dissections; and more!

Priority will be given to groups with Children.

Scholarships for all activities are available for families in need\*

Space is limited for all activities, so sign up early!

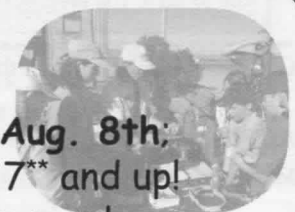
## Bird Banding

"Conservation in Action!" with SFBBO

LOCATION: McCarthy Ranch, Milpitas; DATE: Sat, Aug. 8th;

TIME: 8AM-10:15AM; AGES: For all Bird Lovers, ages 7\*\* and up!

COST: \$10/person for SCVAS Members; \$15/person for non-members



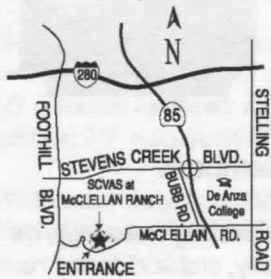
Come share in a very special opportunity to witness live bird banding demonstrations by experts from the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory (SFBBO). An invaluable tool for conservation, restoration and mitigation research, this bird banding activity will allow participants to view a wild bird up close and personal, as well as tour an area of active habitat restoration.

\*To sign-up or apply for a scholarship, call (408) 252-3740. For more information, send an e-mail to [programs@scvas.org](mailto:programs@scvas.org), or check out our website at [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org)

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### ***The SCVAS Bids a Fond Farewell to Bobbie & Carl Handen***

**2009 Volume 56, Number 4**

A former SCVAS board member and Education Committee chairwoman, Bobbie was instrumental in making this chapter the active, dynamic and well-organized one it is today. And where there was Bobbie, there also was Carl, an "unsung hero" of the volunteering world. The SCVAS Board, Staff and Education Committee count ourselves extremely fortunate to have known and worked with the Handens. We wish them all the best in their new life in Sacramento.



## **Join Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris for a special Antarctic Adventure that you'll never forget!!**



Join Cheesemans' Ecological Safaris on a voyage of discovery to an awe-inspiring world devoted to nature, wildlife, science and peace. From the stunning vistas of Tierra del Fuego to the busy penguin rookeries of the Falklands, from the dramatic landscapes of South Georgia to the ice-covered terrain of the Antarctic, this safari will have you completely captivated. Board the comfortable and safe 87-meter ice ship, the MV Polar Star, for an expedition offering 25 days on the ship, and an unparalleled seventeen landing days in the Southern Ocean (including 7 days along the Antarctic Peninsula). During days at sea, staff naturalists on the ship's bridge and stern share sightings of whales and seabirds, including many of the world's species of albatross and nesting Snow Petrels. Maximum time on shore will be available for photography, wildlife experiences and exploring the landscapes of the great Southern Oceans. This trip is sure to leave you breathless for years to come!

**Where:** The Antarctic Peninsula, South Georgia, and Falkland Islands

**When:** December 28, 2009 to January 25, 2010

**What:** A non-smoking expedition for wildlife enthusiasts looking to spend maximum time in the field.

**Expedition Leaders:** Doug, Gail and Ted Cheeseman as Expedition Leaders. **NOTE:** This will be Doug and Gail's last

trip to the Falklands, so this is an excellent chance to take advantage of their 16 (or more!) years of Antarctic experience.

**Size:** 92 participants, not including our expedition staff - everyone can go ashore at the same time, without requiring time-limited shifts.

Continuing decades of support for SCVAS conservation programs, a portion of the proceeds from this trip will be donated to the SCVAS chapter.

For costs, more information or to reserve your space, go to [www.cheesemans.com](http://www.cheesemans.com), email [info@cheesemans.com](mailto:info@cheesemans.com), or call (800) 527-5330 (toll-free) or (408) 741-5330 (local).

**Chapter Membership** in the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society (SCVAS) receives the SCVAS newsletter, *The Avocet*

\$20: One Year SCVAS Membership     \$35: Two Year SCVAS Membership

**Additional Gift:**  \$ 50     \$ 100     \$ 250     Other \_\_\_\_\_

Membership \$ \_\_\_\_\_ + Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_ = Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City State & Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**7XCH C14**

***Come by the office to pick up your free copy of Birding at the Bottom of the Bay, our gift to new members!***

**Make all checks payable to SCVAS.**

*Please note: As a generally policy, SCVAS does not share personal information with other organizations*