

THE AVOCET

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

November-December 2009

Big news from the Environmental Front

Welcome Shani Kleinhaus, Environmental Advocate!

Shani joined us in September and brings broad expertise in biological, ecological and conservation sciences to this position as well as significant experience in environmental planning, policy and review. Shani holds a Ph.D. in Ecology from U.C. Davis and a Masters degree in Biology from Ben Gurion University in Israel. Along with her academic credentials, Shani has significant practical experience in developing six master plans for watershed management in Israel, where she worked with regional multi-disciplinary planning teams. Shani implemented an Environmental Impact Analysis for a radio antennae field and a feasibility study for wind turbine farms as well as developed and conducted surveys of resident and migrating birds and estimated seasonal frequencies of threatened and endangered species.



She is passionate in applying her knowledge to conservation planning and advocacy and we are delighted to have her on our team. In her first month on the job Shani has tackled local and regional issues:

- Burrowing Owls at Moffett Field
- Solar development proposals for Panoche Valley
- Expansion of the Newby Island Landfill
- Ecological surveys of Stevens Creek

Our environmental advocacy has always been strong, and it just got stronger. Welcome aboard, Shani!

Craig Breon wraps up Mitigation Monitoring project; a great piece of work!

Craig's been working on mitigation monitoring issues for three years. The final piece to the puzzle is packaging what he learned into a "white paper" for use by agencies, environmental organizations, other Audubon chapters, or anyone who senses something's not right in a development they've been following. The paper is now complete and provides excellent advice on this incredible issue of disappearing resources through lack of monitoring. "Mitigation Monitoring" is available on our web-site and makes a great read for the armchair environmentalist and a critical tool for those engaged in the before, during, and after of local developments. Go to www.scvas.org/pdf/MitigationMonitoring_2009.pdf (and give it a moment to fully load).

**Annual
Christmas Bird
Count Coming
- sign up now!**

see Page 11

General Membership Meeting

"Birdwatching and Macaws of Peru" with Jose-Ignacio (Pepe) Rojas-Moscoso

Palo Alto Arts Center
Newell & Embarcadero Rds
Wednesday, November 18
Doors open 7:30; program 8:00

With one of the most diverse avianfaunas of the world, Peru is a real birdwatchers paradise. During this presentation, we will explore some of the best birding areas of Peru (and its specialties) with Pepe Rojas-Moscoso, a field ornithologist and a founding member of the Tambopata Macaw Project in Tambopata, Southeastern Peru. We will also explore the fascinating world of Macaws and claylicks, one of the best shows on earth. This is a talk not to miss!

For more information about Pepe and his research, go to the "Calendar" section of our website (www.scvas.org) and click on "Monthly General Meetings" on the left-hand side.

Burrowing Owl Committee makes an impact on HCP

The county's Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) is the last best chance for our local population of Burrowing Owls. The recently released 2nd draft of the plan allowed for comments on the Burrowing Owl Conservation strategy. Our committee submitted 7 pages of comments and received instant feedback that the comments were being carefully regarded by the drafters of the plan. Here's a sample of our comments:

"Santa Clara County Burrowing Owls are on the brink
(continued on page 3)

- 3rd Annual Creeks and Watershed Conference
— Page 3
- Special Premier-Destination Field Workshops
— Pages 5 & 8
- A Canada Warbler takes center stage this year!
— Field Notes, Page 6
- Cavity Nesters Recovery Program Results
— Page 7
- Holiday Open House
— Page 10

Nov.-Dec. '09 Field Trips

(Full details for 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

Sunday Nov. 1, 8:30 AM

Sunnyvale Water Treatment Facility

Half day. Leader: Frank Vanslager (650) 961-1505. 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. Note: Daylight Savings Time, fall back or be an hour early for this trip. **RC**

Wednesday Nov. 4, 12:00 PM

City of Sunnyvale Landfill

One hour. Leaders: Freddy Howell, Elaine Gould and/or Allen Royer. 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 Nov. 7, 8:00 AM

Alum Rock Park

Half day. Leader: Rich Page (408) 377-1092. 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 Nov. 8, 9:00 AM

Charleston Slough

Half day. Leader: Dick Stovel (650) 856-6105. Meet at Terminal Way at the end of San Antonio Rd. north off Hwy 101 in Mountain View. This is a trip that is geared toward the beginning birder but all are encouraged to attend. Bring a scope if you have one, friends and non-members are always welcome.

Wednesday Nov. 11, 8:30 AM

Lake Cunningham Park

Half Day. Leaders: Janna Pauser, (408) 997-1727 & Phyllis Swanson (408) 274-

2349. From Hwy 101 in San Jose, exit Tully Rd. Go east on Tully to park entrance, .1 mile past Capitol Expwy. Turn left into park and left again at entrance kiosk. Park in Marina parking lot. **LO, RC**

Saturday Nov. 14, 8:00 AM

Uvas Creek Park Preserve

Half day. Leader: Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527. From Hwy 101 in Gilroy go West on Tenth Street about a mile where it turns right and becomes Uvas Pkwy. Turn left at Miller Ave., drive over Uvas Creek and turn left into Christmas Hill Park and park in the first isle to the right. Trip is a fairly easy but long walk. Note: Low water conditions in the creek may require an alternate birding destination in the Gilroy area. **LO, RC**

Sunday Nov. 15, 8:00 AM

Western San Francisco

Half day. Leader: Alan Hopkins (415) 794-0281. 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. At 39th Ave., Geary becomes Point Lobos Ave. continue west on Point Lobos past the light at 48th Ave. and turn right into the new Merrie Way parking lot. **LO, RC**

Saturday Nov. 21, 8:00 AM

Alum Rock Park

Half day. Leader: Kirsten Holmquist (408) 747-0988. For directions see Nov 7th write-up. An entrance fee may be required. **LO, RC**

Sunday Nov. 22, 8:00 AM

Oka Ponds

Half day: Leader: Jim Johnson (408) 996-3506. From Hwy 17 in Los Gatos take Lark Ave. exit west. Turn right on Oka Rd., left on Mozart Ave and an immediate right on Oka Lane. Meet at gate. **RC.**

Friday - Saturday

Nov. 27 - 28, 9:00 AM

Sac'to Valley Wildlife Refuges, Gray Lodge, Sutter Buttes

Full day and a half. Leader: Mike Mammoser (408) 578-2429. Meet at Sacramento NWR headquarters on I-5 approx.

20 miles north of Williams. (It's recommended that people meet and carpool from McDonald's 2nd parking lot in Williams as carpooling and use of FRS radios, set to Ch 11, will allow for best viewing possibilities on this trip). Take Road 68 exit east (towards Princeton) from I-5, then immediately north on frontage road to Refuge. Bring spotting scope, full tank of gas. Allow for a three-hour drive from the South Bay. Highlights include ducks, geese, swans, cranes, and raptors. Trip is highly recommended for beginning birders. (No children under 12 please.)

Wednesday Dec. 2, 8:30 AM

Alum Rock Park

Half day. Leader: Phyllis Swanson (408) 274-2349. From Hwy 101 or I-680 take McKee Rd. northeast toward hills, then left on Toyon Ave., right on Penitencia Creek Rd. into park. Turn left at stop sign in park (junction of Alum Rock Ave. and Penitencia); meet at far end of last parking lot by locked gate. 3 to 4 mile walk. May be muddy. **RC**

Wednesday Dec. 2, 12:00 PM

City of Sunnyvale Landfill

One hour. Leaders: Freddy Howell, Elaine Gould and/or Allen Royer. Contact organizer Silviana Ruiz (408) 730-7545 to attend. See write-up for Nov 4th for more information.

Saturday Dec. 5, 8:30 AM

Charleston Slough

Half day. Leader: Dave Cook (408) 275-1492. For directions see the Nov 8th write-up.

Sunday Dec. 6, 8:00 AM

Sunnyvale Water Treatment Facility

Half day. Leader: Frank Vanslager (650) 961-1505. For directions and details, see write-up from Nov 1st.

Saturday Jan. 2, 7:30 AM

County Chase

Half day. Leader: Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527. Get a head start on your 2010 County Year List 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 near the entrance to the Alviso Marina parking lot. From Hwy 237 in San Jose take Gold St. north to the end, bear left on Elizabeth St. and then right on Hope St. to the Marina parking lot. Be

Field Trips *continued*

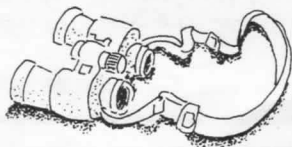
prepared to car pool as parking may be limited at some sites. **RC**

Sunday Jan. 3, 8:00 AM Ogier Ponds

Half day. Leader: Rich Page (408) 377-1092. 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**

Saturday Jan. 9, 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. This is one of our better "out of the county" field trips traversing oak woodland and open grassland via back roads into a unique habitat. Targeted species include Phainopepla, Mountain Bluebird, Prairie Falcon, Ferruginous Hawk and Golden Eagle; other possibilities include Mountain Plover, Bald Eagle, Vesper Sparrow, Greater Roadrunner and Chukar. Bring lunch and a full tank of gas, carpooling is strongly recommended due to limited parking on the narrow roads. Note: Do not expect to use the restrooms at the Paicines Store, as their use is limited to paying customers (buy something if you must).



Environmental Advocacy Updates *(cont. from page 1)*

of extirpation. Extreme measures have to be employed if we're serious about maintaining and increasing the size of existing populations. What we believe to be the core strategies that will successfully lead to recovery are as follows:

- Resources must be focused on existing colonies.
- Resources devoted to habitat acquisition outside of the 2-mile range of existing colonies will benefit other species, but are just a hope and a dream in the context of Burrowing Owl conservation.
- Strategies must have a strong emphasis on active management of colonies, including translocation, augmenting existing populations, captive breeding and any other technique of proven success in managing of Burrowing Owls.
- Annual surveys must be done to establish the real population

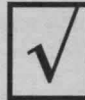
level of breeding owls.

- Working/partnership with WPCP is key.
- Management of San Jose landfills to optimize possible owl habitat should be explored.
- A working/partnership with VTA where owls are already present should be explored.
- Working partnerships with the managers of golf courses, airports, and county parks where BUOW have been recently resident, could augment current habitat."

As the public version of the plan nears release, we'll be looking for our Armchair Activists to bolster support for the comments we've made. Our Burrowing Owls need your help. Stay in touch with this issue and speak up when we need you!

SCVAS Events Calendar:

Tues. 11/3
ELECTION DAY
Don't Forget to VOTE!



Wed. 11/4, 7:30-9PM
The Bay Area Bird Photographers Meeting (Topic TBA). Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center - East Embarcadero Rd., Palo Alto

Tues. 11/10, 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
Topic: Eagle Owl (Europe)

Thur. 11/12, 2:30-7PM
Fundraiser Mailing Party
McClellan Ranch Park
Contact us at 408-252-3740 for more information or to help out

Wed. 12/2, 7:30-9PM
The Bay Area Bird Photographers Meeting (Topic TBA). Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center - East Embarcadero Rd., Palo Alto

Sat. 12/5, 10-2 PM
Holiday Open House
McClellan Ranch Park
See Page 10

Tues. 12/8, 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
Topic: Gambel's Quail

Christmas Bird Counts (CBC's) - see page 11 or go to our website (www.scvas.org) for more details:

Sun. 12/20
San Jose CBC

Sat. 12/26
Calero-Morgan Hill CBC

Mon. 12/21
Palo Alto CBC

Sat. 1/2
Mt. Hamilton CBC



The Santa Clara County Creeks Coalition announces the 3rd annual Creeks and Watershed Conference

hosted at Pioneer High School's (PHS) Performing Arts Center (PAC)
1290 Blossom Hill Rd., San Jose, 95118.

November 14, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Pre-Registration is requested at www.sccreeks.org

Volunteer Ventures

by Toby Goldberg
Programs Coordinator

I used to say that the Fall was our busiest time of year, but we've become so popular with educational programs, field trips, and community events, that we're pretty much kept hopping the entire year! That's why we appreciate our volunteers so much - they are what keep us thriving!

As you think about the holidays, vacations, and time to rest and relax, consider looking into some of the many opportunities to support and strengthen our chapter. Even a few hours once in a while can make a huge difference in our efforts to connect with the community, and achieve our mission of connecting people with nature. Whether you are someone who enjoys being outdoors, working with children, talking to members of the community, or even working on the computer, we have an opportunity to fit your interests, schedule, and energy!

Here are some of our most pressing needs - additional opportunities are posted online on our website (www.scvas.org) - and click on "Get Involved".

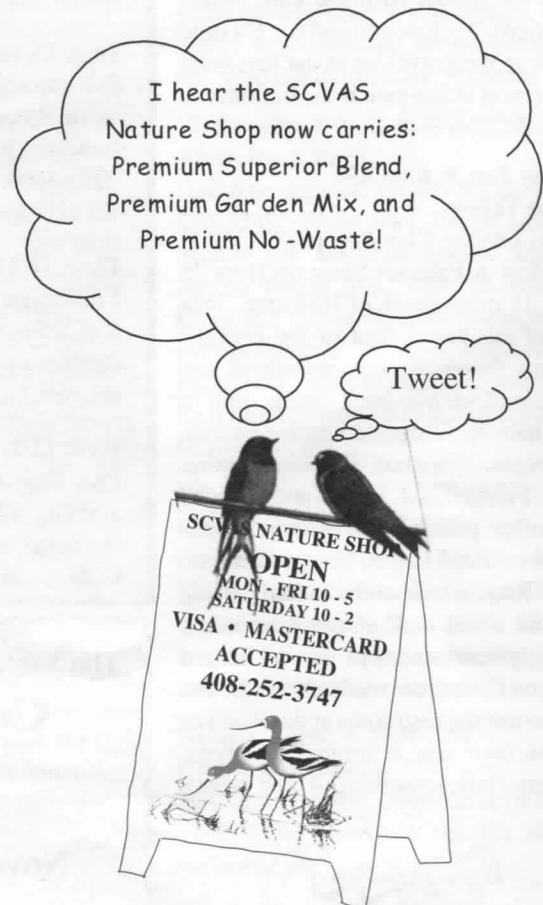
Publicity, Marketing, & Media Assistants - SCVAS always has a number of events, activities and classes, that we want to share with the community, but we need help getting the word out! We're looking for volunteers willing to work with us on a variety of media-related tasks throughout the year, including posting information on online calendars, updating our SCVAS website, etc. In particular, we'd like to expand our publicity and outreach for our Monthly General Meetings. This is a great opportunity to help get SCVAS' name out into the community!

Assistant Newsletter Editor(s) - If you're looking to expand your graphic design/layout/editing portfolio, and are willing to devote about 1 week every other month, then helping out on *The Avocet* may be the perfect opportunity for you! We are looking for someone to work with our current editor, and willing to help with layout, grammatical correction and more on a bi-monthly basis. **Required:** Experience with Adobe InDesign, strong attention to detail, and the ability to meet deadlines are absolute must-haves. **Desired:** an ability to come into the SCVAS office in Cupertino at least once during the editing process, and basic familiarity with SCVAS' programs and goals.

Nature Shop Assistants - We are still in need of a few more volunteers to give some time in the Nature Shop. Specifically, we are looking for additional help with our Saturday coverage - either one Saturday a month (from 10-2) on the third Saturday of each month, or floaters (who can sub if needed). No previous experience needed - we'll train you in everything from inventory to point-of-sale.

4th Wednesday Field Trip Coordinator - SCVAS is proud to offer wonderful birding trips to interesting locations free of charge to our members and the public. These outings are fun, social,

casual affairs scheduled by our fabulous Field Trip Coordinators and led by volunteer leaders. We currently need a Coordinator to schedule trips on the fourth Wednesday of the month (not December, or June-August). This coordinator will recruit field trip leaders for eight events per year and help leaders submit brief notices for *The Avocet's* Field Trips section. This job is usually not very time-consuming. Some familiarity with local birding sites is helpful, but training, background and contacts information will be provided.



THE SIBLEY GUIDE TO TREES



And don't forget this great Holiday Gift: The newly published "Sibley Guide to Trees!"

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.

SCVAS Field Seminar: Raptors of Robinson Road

with Bob Power



Merlin
by Tom Grey

The mixed agricultural and short-grass landscape of rural Solano County is an ideal fall and winter hunting ground for raptors of all shapes and sizes. We'll discuss the migration patterns, identification, and natural history of Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks, Merlin, and Prairie Falcon in the classroom portion of this workshop. The field trip will put us in position to observe as many as 7 species of raptor including the four target species and

observe their behavior in the wild. Along with these four superlative raptors, we hope to find Mountain Plover, Burrowing Owl, Horned Lark, Long-billed Curlew and other birds of the easy and not-so-easy to find variety.

Dates: Class: Friday, 11/6; 9:30-11:30AM; Field Trip: Saturday, 11/7; 8:30AM-5:30PM (includes transit time to/from Solano County). **Location:** Workshop: Conference Room, McClellan Ranch, Cupertino; Field trip: Eastern Solano County. **Fee:** \$40 members; \$50 non-members.

Class size limited to 15. Carpooling is required for this class. We will have a maximum of four vehicles. Please do not sign up for class if you're not prepared to carpool. Carpooling expenses are shared by the participants.

What's a CBC? with Bob Power

Ever think about participating in a Christmas Bird Count but were afraid to ask? Is this the year where you could participate but don't know exactly what it is? This workshop will tell you everything you want to know about Christmas Bird Counts from 1900 to today and from bird identification to data collection to data research. This class is designed as an orientation for anyone who wants to participate in one of the areas Christmas Bird Counts and wants to know more about what's involved and what's required. This is a fantastic way to contribute to citizen science and we need more volunteers. Come join us!

Dates: Friday 11/20; 9:30-11AM. **Location:** Conference Room, McClellan Ranch, Cupertino.

Fee: No Charge. **Class size limited to 20.**



Lewis' Woodpecker
by Tom Grey



Audubon Field Workshop: Dauphin Island and Fort Morgan, Alabama

with Rick Fournier

This fourteen-mile barrier reef off the Gulf Coast is said to be one of the top four locations in North America for viewing spring migration. The entire island is a bird sanctuary. An incredible 345 species have been reported on the island.

Dates: April 14th – 18th, 2010. **This trip is limited to 8 participants.** Guide fees are \$250/person; participants are responsible for all other expenses. A portion of these fees will be used for SCVAS conservation and education programs.

For all trip details and to register, please contact Rick directly: email – rimbirding@aol.com; phone – 831-632-2473.

Rick Fournier has been an avid birder for over 20 years and has a full appreciation for all aspects of nature. Rick owns and operates Monterey Birding Adventures, leading personalized and small group tours.

Winter 2010 - Young Audubon Adventures

Winter Whale Watching

in Monterey Bay

MLK Weekend*

Monday, January 18th

Ages: 3-years-old and up

Elephant Seal Walks

at Año Nuevo State Park

President's Day Weekend

Monday, February 15th

Ages: 7-years-old and up



Scholarships available
for families in need!



Don't miss either of these fun and exciting activities designed for children and families!
Space is limited for each activity, so be sure to sign-up early!

*More details are available on our website, www.scvas.org, and in the Jan/Feb issue of the Avocet.



Field Notes

(August-September 2009)

by Bill Bousman

Waterfowl through Hawks

There are few late summer reports of **Blue-winged Teal**, so an eclipse male on the Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) oxidation ponds on 25 Aug (WGB) and another male on Adobe Creek in the Palo Alto FCB on 26 Sep (MMR et al.) were of interest. Unusual inland, a juvenile **Brown Pelican** was seen at Almaden Lake on 31 Jul (JPa) and likely the same bird at Calero Reservoir on 1 Aug (AV). The high count of Brown Pelicans for the period was 53 birds on the Alviso ponds on 28 Sep (WGB). A casual visitor to the Palo Alto Duck Pond in recent years, a single **Cattle Egret** was there 27-30 Sep (SZ, v.ob.). Three **White-faced Ibis** were seen in the Mountain View Forebay on 15 Sep (SR) and one was in flight over the Palo Alto Baylands on 18 Sep (WGB). An immature **Swainson's Hawk** over San Martin on 23 Aug (SCR) was our token migrant for this fall. The first **Merlin** of the season was over the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) ponds on 25 Sep (AV).

Shorebirds through Skimmers

An adult **Pacific Golden-Plover** was seen on Pond A17 on 1 Sep (WGB). **Snowy Plover** nesting in the vicinity of New Chicago Marsh continued through at least 27 Aug (WGB). High counts during surveys included 36 birds (including 9 young) on 28 Aug and 22 birds on 27 Sep (MMR, MJM, RGJ). **Lesser Yellowlegs** were found in small numbers in August, but 79 on the Coyote Creek Field Station (CCFS) pond on 1 Sep (MMR) overwhelmed the 16 Greaters there that day and is probably a high count for the county. Numbers dropped after that with 12 there on 13 Sep (SCR, v.ob.) being the last birds found. Twenty-four **Red Knots** seen at the Stevens Creek mouth on 27 Aug (FV) were the only birds reported this period. Single **Sanderlings** were seen on closed refuge ponds in Alviso on 29 Aug (MMR, MJM) and 26 Sep (MMR et al.). Only two **Baird's Sandpipers** were found during the fall passage, single juveniles on the CCFS waterbird pond on 1 Sep (MMR) and on closed refuge ponds on 27 Sep (MMR, MJM). The numbers of **Pectoral Sandpipers** seemed limited as well. Based on timing, a bird found in New Chicago Marsh on 2 Aug (ChW) was likely an adult.

Seven birds were at the CCFS pond on 25 Sep (MMR, RGJ, MJM) and a single bird was at the Palo Alto Baylands the same day (BP). With luck, numbers may pick up in October. A single juvenile **Stilt Sandpiper** was seen on the CCFS waterbird pond 10-11 Sep (SCR, v.ob.). Ten juvenile **Least Terns** found on Pond A16 on 23 Aug (DWe) were the only birds seen this summer. The summering **Black Tern** on Pond A16 was last seen on 1 Aug (RGJ et al.). Three juvenile **Common Terns** were found in Pond A9 on 27-28 Sep (MMR, MJM, WGB), the only ones of the season. **Elegant Terns** were

Eastern vagrants were headlined by a Canada Warbler

slightly more common. Two were on Pond A11 on 28 Aug (MMR, MJM, RGJ). A single bird was in Pond A16 on 1 Sep (RWR, FV). Two were heard near Pond A1 in Mountain View on 21 Sep (MDO). Seven birds were on Pond A9 on 27-28 Sep (MMR, MJM, WGB) and an adult and begging juvenile were seen on closed refuge ponds on 27 Sep (MMR, MJM). The total count of **Black Skimmers** on Pond A16 in late September was six adults and three juveniles (m.ob.), suggesting some nesting success.

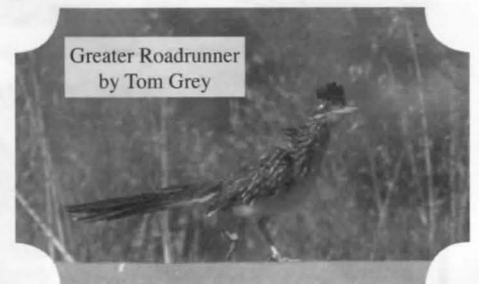
Roadrunners through Phainopepla

A **Greater Roadrunner** was seen south of Pacheco Pass on 5 Sep (JB). Fall numbers of **Vaux's Swifts** were similar to summer and mostly in similar locations. A high count was 20 birds over Alviso on 15 Aug (JT). An adult female **Costa's Hummingbird** was at a Palo Alto feeder from 29 Aug to the end of the period (N&RT). An adult male **Allen's Hummingbird** at a San Jose feeder 2-3 Aug (JT) was late. The first of the fall **Willow Flycatchers** showed up along Stevens Creek above Crittenden Lane on 17 Aug (RKe, PKe). Roughly 49 birds were found by the end of the period (m.ob.). The only report of a lowland **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was one found along Coyote Creek near Sycamore Drive on 17 Aug (RWR, FV, SN). I suspect this is a non-invasion year for montane birds. Single **American Dippers** were found along Stevens Creek above Mt. Eden Road on 4 Aug (DWe) and along Los Gatos Creek below the Los Gatos-Saratoga Road on 5 Aug (LMY). Both birds were

near areas where they breed. A female **Phainopepla** was seen near Llagas Creek at Bloomfield Road on 4 Sep (FV, RWR), well away from known breeding areas.

Warblers through Goldfinches

A hatch-year **Tennessee Warbler** was found at the Sunnyvale Baylands Park on 23-24 Sep (PKe, RKe, v.ob.), our premier vagrant trap. Migrant **Nashville Warblers** included one in a San Jose yard on 27 Aug (MV), a dull bird at the Sunnyvale Baylands Park found on 10 Sep (PKe, RKe, v.ob.) and apparently lingering there until 23 Sep, one in the fennel patch at the Palo Alto Baylands on 26 Sep (CG), and a second bird at Sunnyvale on 30 Sep (PKe, v.ob.). A hatch-year **Blackpoll Warbler** was discovered at the Gate 5 pond at Monte Bello OSP on 9 Sep (GHa), probably our first of this species found on our side of the Santa Cruz Mountains. A second bird was seen 22-24 Sep at the Sunnyvale Baylands Park (RGJ, v.ob.). A hatch-year **American Redstart** was in the same park on 21-23 Sep (RKe, WGB, v.ob.). Two passing **MacGillivray's Warblers** were found, one banded at CCFS on 9 Aug (*vide* MMR) and the other seen nearby along Coyote Creek on 13 Sep (SCR). The big surprise of the fall migration was a hatch-year **Canada Warbler** found at the Sunnyvale Baylands Park on 19 Sep (RKe, PKe, v.ob.). Amazingly, a second bird was found at the Palo Alto Baylands the next day (DWN). A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was banded at CCFS on 20 Sep (*vide* MMR). Four **Chipping Sparrows** were found at Jeffrey Fontana Park in San Jose on 27 Sep (JPa) and it is likely that these are part of the wintering flock that has been found there over the last few years. A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was in the Palo Alto Baylands fennel patch 28-30 Sep (PLaT, v.ob.). A second individual was found at the SCVWD ponds on 28 Sep (JPa).



A tailless **Brewer's Sparrow** was seen at the Palo Alto Baylands fennel patch on 10 Sep (BP) and remained there at least through 14 Sep (v.ob.). Another Brewer's was banded

continued on next page

Field Notes *cont'd*

at CCFS on 26 Sep (*fide* MDo). A male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was seen along Coyote Creek near Sycamore Drive on 16 Aug (RKe, PKe). A female/immature **Blue Grosbeak** was found along Stevens Creek below La Avenida 13-15 Sep (ChW, MMR). An adult male **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was at Shoreline Park 17-18 Sep (JMi, PLD). The only **Lawrence's Goldfinches** observed were one to two birds over Monte

Bello OSP 18-20 Aug (GHa) and a flock of at least three birds at Vasona Reservoir CP on 25 Sep (JPa).

Observers: Joseph Belli (JB), Bill Bousman (WGB), Matthew Dodder (MDo), Peggy Don (PLD), Carla Galloway (CG), Garth Harwood (GHa), Richard Jeffers (RGJ), Roland Kenner (RKe), Pat Kenny (PKe), Peter LaTourrette (PLaT), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Jeff Miller (JMi), Lisa Myers (LMy), Susan Nelson (SN), Janna Pauser (JPa), Bob Power (BP), Sidd Ramachandramurthi (SR), Bob Reiling (RWR),

Mike Rogers (MMR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Nancy & Richard Teater (N&RT), Jim Thomas (JT), Frank Vanslager (FV), Manny Vara (MV), Ann Verdi (AV), Dave Weber (DWe), Donald Weidemann (DWn), Chris Wolfe (ChW), and Steve Zamek (SZ).

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

Santa Clara County Cavity Nesters Recovery Program Results 1997 thru 2009 *Chicks Fledged from boxes monitored by Volunteers in Santa Clara County* *Preliminary 090909*

Species	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009 Prelim
AMKE	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
ATFC								0	0	154	83	96	106
BCCH													0
BEWR	0	27	23	33	38	29	19	52	69	63	44	33	62
BNOW	0	0	0	4	4	11	16	2	12	16	4	10	13
CBCH	5	13	50	96	106	127	114	104	218	256	217	187	187
DOWO													0
HOFI	0	0	0	4	10	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
HOSP										4	69	18	0
HOWR	11	18	3	13	44	61	44	61	104	37	72	116	94
MOBL												7	0
NUWO												1	0
OATI	5	122	167	173	133	249	192	180	343	281	104	270	274
RBNU													0
TRES	31	46	55	54	73	166	128	192	254	307	215	203	341
VGSW	52	175	198	89	107	295	183	219	236	266	250	225	278
WBNU	10	5	4	20	6	29	25	31	64	31	22	36	56
WEBL	90	274	189	204	271	432	369	398	502	509	491	487	813
WESO	0	0	4	4	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
WODU	0	0	0	0	0	6	20	7	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	229	697	747	754	877	1535	1208	1354	1938	1942	1582	1689	2245
TRAILS#	17	20	21	23	23	42	36	34	42/60	44/64	53/81	44/87	46/86
BOXES*	230	295	338	395	420	492	484	522	550/780	662/890	703/1100	707/1219	774/1300
SPECIES	8	9	10	12	12	12	12	13	11	15	15	14	10

trails reporting/trails in county (backyards counted as one trail)

* boxes in reporting trails/total in county

Despite some difficult weather (and some sad nesting failures) throughout the season, it turned out to be a banner year for Western Bluebirds. Most other species fared well, too. Thanks to all of the many volunteers who help monitor, install boxes, gather and compile data, and so much more! A particularly large "thank you!" to our County Nest Box Coordinator, Mike Azevedo, and our Database Coordinator (and President of the state-wide California Bluebird Recovery Program), Dick Blaine.

2009 Friends of SCVAS

Gifts received between August 1st, 2009 and September 30th, 2009.

Special thanks to:

The Anonymous donor who provided a \$3,000 matching grant for our Environmental Advocate Campaign.

All of the participants in the Stevens Creek 50K run raising \$2030, especially Steve Patt the race coordinator.

San Francisco Green Drinks.

Avocet Circle:

Doug, Gail and Ted Cheeseman/Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris, Tom and Joan Merigan.

Partner:

Wayne Krill, Franklin and Susan Orr, Steve Patt and Debi Jamison.

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Organizational Support:

Adobe Systems, Synopsys Philanthropic Matching Programs

Audubon Field Workshop: Southeastern Arizona

with David Wimpfheimer and Bob Power

Madera Canyon, Cave Creek, the Huachuca and Chiricahua mountains, Patagonia Roadside Rest area, up to 15 species of hummingbirds, and enough specialty birds to satisfy the most avid birders; in short, one of the top birding destinations in the world. We'll immerse ourselves in the mountains, canyons, and desert lowlands of southeastern Arizona during the area's "2nd spring," seeking all of the area's specialty birds from Elegant Trogon to Red-faced Warbler (the list of specialty birds makes us giddy). Join us for the birding trip of a lifetime.

Dates: August 7th – August 15th, 2010. **Eight participant minimum, 14 participant maximum.** Fees: \$1795/person, double-occupancy. \$350 single supplement. **Deposit required:** \$300

To register: Contact the SCVAS office at 408-252-3740 or programs@scvas.org

Proceeds from this workshop support SCVAS' Education & Conservation Programs.

David Wimpfheimer is a naturalist and a biologist with a passion for the birds and natural history of the West. During his twenty years of expeditions, in addition to local classes for the Point Reyes Field Seminars, Marin Agricultural Land Trust and the

California Academy of Sciences, he has led numerous tours to Mexico, Alaska, Scotland and other regions for groups including the Smithsonian Institution, Wild Wings, and Elderhostel. Although the majority of David's field trips are geared toward teaching and interpreting the language of the avian world, he is just as experienced teaching the rich diversity of the natural world. From wild birds to wildflowers, David will make every visit to the natural world memorable and enjoyable.

Bob Power is the Executive Director for Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society (SCVAS). Bob has taught birding classes for Palo Alto Adult School and SCVAS for the past five years and delights in helping field trip participants not only find birds but confidently identify them. Bob and David have been co-leading field trips for four years and strike a wonderful balance between exhilarating birding and general enjoyment of the natural world.

"My sincere thanks and appreciation goes to both of you for your outstanding teamwork during the "Big Day and More" field trip at last weeks' Mono Lake Chautauqua. The two of you worked together like seasoned pros - seriously. I really enjoyed the all-day field trip, and judging from the comments I heard from others, everyone had a great time. Thanks again for your outstanding leadership." – Terry Colborn

SANTA CLARA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY
 Comparative Statements of Income, and Balance Sheet
 For the Years Ended May 31, 2008 and 2009

	5/31/08	5/31/09
STATEMENTS OF INCOME:		
Revenue - Includes Nature Shop Net Sales, Investment Income and Program Revenues	\$ 96,272	\$ 67,480
Less Realized and Unrealized Capital Losses	-62,896	-161,770
Net Revenue	33,376	-94,290
Support- Gifts and Memorials, Bequests, Grants and Other		
Program Support	637,671	246,208
Total Revenue and Support	671,047	151,918
Expenses:		
Program Expenses	196,995	176,796
Fundraising Expenses	31,062	20,428
General and Administrative Expenses	36,275	65,956
Total Expenses	264,332	263,180
NET INCOME LESS EXPENSES	\$ 406,715	\$ -111,262
BALANCE SHEETS:		
ASSETS:		
Money Market Funds and Investments (at Market)	\$ 1,068,189	\$ 955,278
Fixed Assets, Inventory and Other Assets	64,192	66,387
Total Assets	1,132,381	1,021,665
LIABILITIES AND SURPLUS:		
Liabilities - Accounts Payable	2,597	3,142
Surplus:		
Balance, Beginning of Year	723,069	1,129,784
New Income (Loss), Current Year	406,715	-111,262
Balance, End of Year	1,129,784	1,018,522
Total Liabilities and Surplus	\$ 1,132,381	\$ 1,021,664
	5/31/08	5/31/09

Financial Report

As a service to our membership, the SCVAS Board of Directors presents this summary of our organization's financial position as of the conclusion of the fiscal year. Our balance sheet continues to reflect a strong financial position. Our surplus acts as a form of endowment in that most of it is designated by the Board of Directors to meet Long-Term needs, and the earnings generated from the investment of the surplus are used to pay for current operating expenses.

If you have any questions or wish to receive a copy of the financial report, please contact the SCVAS office.



Fans gushing over Sibley's new book.
 Susan Bell - Office Manager, Bob Power - Executive Director, and Debbie Thompson, Board President



Authors exchanging ideas.
 Bill Bousman, David Sibley

A Visit with David A. Sibley

Despite torrential wind and downpours, David Sibley's visit to the SCVAS offices was a definite highlight of the month. Many thanks to everyone who came out for this event!

Holiday Open House!

Saturday, December 5th;
10:00 AM until 2:00 PM

- Enjoy Holiday refreshments and a **special one day discount**.
- Browse through our books, jewelry, ornaments, and other bird related gift items.
- Enjoy a special display of paintings and photography by local artists.

Visit with Staff

Live bird presentation by the Youth Science Institute!

Gift Certificates Available.

All proceeds go to our education and conservation programs

*For more details, please contact Susan at (408) 252-3747 at the SCVAS Office and Nature Shop
22221 McClellan Road • Cupertino, CA*

Outside Events of Note

Nov. 7th, 2009

Community Dialog on the Environment, Gilroy: "The South Valley's Unique Landscapes - Where & Why They Should Be Preserved."

Hosted by the Committee for Green Foothills, this enlightening discussion will focus on historical, present, and future environmental conditions of this important area. For more information, contact info@greenfoothills.org or go to www.greenfoothills.org.

Nov. 14th, 2009 – early Apr., 2010

Project FeederWatch

By sharing information about which birds visit their feeders between November and April, backyard bird watchers can help scientists track changes in bird numbers and movements from year to year. Project FeederWatch is for people of all ages and skill levels. For more details go to www.feederwatch.org or call toll-free at (800) 843-2473.

Nov. 19-22, 2009

The 13th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium

Stockton Grand Hotel, Stockton CA

Attend workshops with raptor expert Bill Clark, birding pros Jon Dunn and Joe Morlan, as well as other informative folks. Evening programs include Murrelet Halterman on Yellow-

billed Cuckoos and Stephen Shunk on "The Magic of Birding".. For more info, check the website at www.cvbs.org, or contact Frances Oliver at hummer52@sbcglobal.net or (209) 369-2010.

Thinking ahead:

Feb. 12th-15th, 2010

The 13th Annual Great Backyard Birdcount

Bird watchers coast to coast are invited to take part in this citizen-science program from Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Each checklist submitted by these "citizen scientists" helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how the birds are doing—and how to protect them. For more information about the GBBC, visit the website at www.birdcount.org. Or contact the Cornell Lab of Ornithology at (800) 843-2473 or gbbc@cornell.edu.

April 9th-11th, 2010

Olympic Birdfest 2010, Sequim, Washington

Grab your binoculars and join the Olympic BirdFest 2010 celebration at the Dungeness River Audubon Center. Come experience with others the spectacular landscapes of the Olympic Peninsula ...you just might go home with a new bird for your life list! Check out the offerings by going on-line (www.olympicbirdfest.org), or calling for a brochure at 360-681-4076.

The Christmas Bird Counts are Almost Here!

Join us for another year of fun, adventure, and excitement as we help add to the body of bird research and knowledge throughout the country! Contact the compiler of the region you are interested in (see below). Participants are asked to provide \$5 to help cover the charge of the national CBC publication.

SAN JOSE Region

Yes, it is almost that time of year again - time to experience the fun of the annual scavenger hunt we call the San Jose Christmas Bird Count and, perhaps, the glory of finding a special species!

The San Jose Christmas Bird Count will be held this year on Sunday, December 20th. Birders of all experience levels are welcome and needed. Bird identification skills are great but other skills are important too, such as: 1) spotter, able to point and say "Bird!", and 2) tally-man, able to make small marks on increasingly grubby bits of paper. We are blessed with habitats to suit anyone's fancy: shoreline, oak woodlands, lake-side, or riparian, we can accommodate you. So, come have fun and contribute to an important, on-going biological census.

The countdown dinner will review all birds seen for the day. The Leininger Center in Kelley Park is the host location. There is a \$5 charge to cover the cost of the national CBC result publication. If you are interested in participating in the count, please contact Kirsten Holmquist before December 10 at 408.747.0988 or via email at kirsten.holmquist@comcast.net.

PALO ALTO Region

Make your plans now for a day of birding on Monday, December 21, as we count birds from the bay to Skyline Drive. Our count circle, centered near Stanford, covers a wide variety of habitats, offering something for everyone. The circle is divided into eight regions, and an experienced team of leaders for each region is poised, with your help, to comb the mudflats and the mountains for rarities and resident birds.

In addition to the better known birding locales of the region, we also cover many urban areas of Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, so we welcome birders from all over the mid-peninsula and beyond.

Want to know what's involved in a Christmas Bird Count (or CBC)? Read the descriptions below OR attend our informational session on Friday, Nov 20th (see page ## for more information).

Christmas bird counts are for everyone, the skilled and the novice. If you have participated in this count in the past, you may wish to contact your region coordinator and confirm your availability and territory. If you are new to the area or the count, please contact the count coordinator Jack Cole at 408-996-0434 or SNOYOWL@YAHOO.COM, and we will find a spot suitable to your skill level, time commitment and our coverage needs. Join the count - make your day!

CALERO-MORGAN HILL Region

The Calero-Morgan Hill CBC will take place on Saturday, Dec 26. Of our four local counts, this inland count is the only one that takes place in the southern part of Santa Clara County. The circle includes the Diablo Range foothills in the east to portions of the Santa Cruz Mountains in the west with valleys, parks, riparian corridors, and reservoirs in between the two ranges. Some areas of interest include a riparian stretch of Coyote Creek (including Ogier Ponds), Almaden Lake Park, Santa Clara Valley Water District headquarters, Santa Teresa County Park, Quicksilver County Park, Mt Umunhum, Edenvale Garden Park, Guadalupe Oak Grove Park, Coyote Valley, and inland reservoirs (Almaden, Calero, Chesbro, and a portion of Anderson Reservoir). While the purpose of the CBC is to census our wintering and resident birds, some special birds seen on previous counts have included Snow Goose, Greater Roadrunner, Rufous Hummingbird, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and American Redstart. If you're interested in this South County adventure, please contact count coordinator/compiler Ann Verdi by email wodu10@aol.com or by phone (408) 266-5108. Hope you can join us!

Here are just a few of the memorable birds from CBC's of years past (that we might even see again this year...):



Phainopepla



Rufus-crowned Sparrow



Townsend's Solitaire

Photos courtesy of Tom Grey

MT. HAMILTON Region

Mark your calendars for January 2nd! We hope to have a great count again through the Mt. Hamilton and San Antonio Valley area. Count leaders are especially needed. Contact Bob Hirt - 408-821-2732 (cell) - as soon as possible to participate.

Special Thanks to "San Francisco Green Drinks"

Through fundraising efforts at their 1st annual "Green Generations Gala", SCVAS has received much needed support for our Wetlands Discovery Program, which connects students throughout the county with their natural environment.

For more information about this organization and the good works it does, go to www.sfgreendrinks.org.

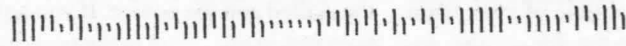
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 22221 McClellan Road
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GENERAL MEETINGS are held on the third Wednesday of each month except July, August and December and are open to the public.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS meetings are open to all members. Call the office at (408) 252-3747 for times and directions.

RARE BIRD ALERT: (415) 681-7422

GIFTS: SCVAS welcomes gifts, including those made in honor of or in memory of friends or relatives. Such gifts will be used at SCVAS' discretion for its programs and activities unless specified otherwise by the donor. Tax-deductible donations may be made in the form of a check made out to SCVAS and sent to our Cupertino address.

SCVAS is a private, non-profit corporation affiliated with the National Audubon Society

The Avocet is published bi-monthly by the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, 22221 McClellan Road, Cupertino, CA 95014. Deadline is the **25th of two months prior**. Send submissions to: *The Avocet*, c/o SCVAS at the above address.

Avocet Editor: Toby Goldberg

2009 Volume 56, Number 6

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 _____

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*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: SCVAS does not share personal information with other organizations.