

THE AVOCET

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

September-October 2013

Organizational Change for our Chapter

Executive Director Retiring To Pursue Field Ornithology And Eco-Travel

By Ashok Khosla, SCVAS Board President



Bob surveying Eared Grebes at Crowley Lake, Eastern Sierra. Photo courtesy Linda Votteri

After leading Santa Clara Valley Audubon for seven years, Bob Power has announced his retirement as executive director effective January 31st, 2014.

“This past year was exceptional for our organization and I will leave SCVAS in excellent financial shape with a very strong and experienced staff,” said Bob in a recent discussion with the Board of Directors. An executive search committee has been formed and is actively seeking qualified individuals to find someone who is a great fit for the conservation and education programs we are known for.

During Bob’s tenure, significant accomplishments were achieved. Some of the highlights have been:

- Brought back the Environmental Advocate as a permanent staff position.
- Worked with our coalition against the development in Panoche Valley.
- Participated in and helped to shape regional, long-term land-use plans such as, the county’s Habitat Conservation Plan, the Salt Pond Restoration Plan, and environmental policies of the Santa Clara Valley Water Department.
- Worked closely with Golden Gate Audubon and the Ca. Attorney General’s office to limit raptor mortality at the Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area.
- Ensured that SCVAS is a voice for Burrowing Owls in the Bay Area and beyond.
- Grew education and conservation fundraising through our Birdathon from \$26,000 to \$75,000 annually.

**22nd Annual
Wildlife Education
Day will be Bigger
and Better than Ever!**

Saturday, Oct 26th

-Page 8

General Membership Meetings

Cubberley Community Center, Rm H1

Palo Alto - Middlefield & Montrose Rds

(go to www.scvas.org for maps to this location)

Doors open 7:30; program 8:00



Wednesday, September 18th

“A Year with the Urban Gray Fox”

with Bill Leikam

This engaging program will begin with an overview of the Gray Fox and then follow them on their cycle of life adventure. From the time that they pair up – the romantic period – to when the pups are indistinguishable from their parents and are ready to disperse, Bill will share stories, photos, and videos about these remarkable creatures that will be sure to inspire.

Grey Fox Photo courtesy of Bill Leikam

(Additional information - including driving directions - is available on the SCVAS website: www.scvas.org, click on “Speaker Series.”)

Wednesday, October 16th

**“African Birds of Prey”
with Doug Cheeseman**

This informative fast-paced program about the raptors of Tanzania and Kenya will feature Doug’s best action and behavioral photos taken during more than sixty safaris in East Africa. Life histories and unique behaviors of seven eagle species, some accipiters, falcons and owls will be shown. The finale of the program will include special African mammalian predators. Doug will put his full energy into sharing lots of information combined with images.

Bateleur photo courtesy of Doug Cheeseman

- Developed our local chapter’s adult education and field seminar programs including eco-travel in Arizona, Costa Rica, and Alaska.
- Implemented the Legacy Fund to facilitate bequests that will ensure the organization’s program continuity.

(continued on page 10)

🦋 Audubon Classes and Field Seminars to Fill Your Every Birding Desire!

– Page 5

🦋 Summer Astounds with Black Rails (and more)!

– Field Notes, Page 6

🦋 September 25th will be a Date to Remember!

– Page 9

🦋 Cavity Nesters Recovery Program End-of-Season Wrap-up

– Page 10

The Avocet 1

Sept - Oct '13 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 Sept. 1, 8:15 AM

Arastradero Preserve

Half day. Leader: Rich Page (408) 377-1092. **Directions:** 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. **Highlights:** Woodland and grassland species as well as a good assortment of raptors are possible. **Difficulty Level:** Trip involves two plus miles of moderately strenuous walking. **RC**

Wednesday Sept. 4, 12:00 PM

City of Sunnyvale Landfill

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

Saturday Sept. 7, 8:00 AM

Ogier Ponds

Half day. Leader: Kirsten Holmquist (408) 747-0988. **Directions:** 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. 8, 8:00 AM

Almaden Lake Park & Alamos Creek

Half day. Leader: Steve Tracey (650) 966-3860. **Directions:** From Hwy 85 take Almaden Expwy south, turn left on Coleman Rd. and then right on Winfield Blvd. **Notes:** Parking is free on Winfield Blvd. **Highlights:** We will bird the lake and the trail upstream looking for waterfowl, raptors, and a wide variety of riparian birds. **Notes:** Meet at the bathrooms (blue building) near the east entrance to Almaden Lake Park. **Difficulty Level:** Expect about 3 miles of easy walking. **LO, RC**

Wednesday Sept. 11, 8:00 AM

Almaden Lake Park & Alamos Creek

Half day. Leader: Janna Pauser 408-569-9264. For details and directions, see the write-up for Sept 8th.

Saturday Sept. 14, 8:00 AM

Alum Rock Park

Half day. Leader: Jim Johnson (408) 996-3506. **Directions:** 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. **Notes:** Possible entrance fee. **Difficulty Level:** Trip is a moderately strenuous 3-4 mile walk. **LO, RC**

Sunday Sept. 15, 8:30 AM

Coyote Hills Regional Park

Half day. Leader: Frank Vanslager (650) 961-1505. **Directions:** 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. **Notes:** Entrance fee required. **LO, RC**

Saturday Sept. 21, 9:00 AM

Charleston Slough

Half day. Leader: Allen Royer (408) 288-7768. **Directions:** From Hwy 101 in Mt. View take San Antonio Rd. north to Terminal Way parking area. Meet at the entrance nearest San Antonio Rd. **Difficulty Level:** This trip is recommended for beginning birders but all are encouraged to attend. **Notes:** Bring your spotting scope and a friend.

Sunday Sept. 22, 7:30 AM

Sunnyvale Baylands Park

Half day. Leader: Pete Dunten (650) 210-6764. **Directions:** From Hwy 237 take the Lawrence Expwy/Caribbean Dr. exit toward Caribbean Dr. Turn right into the park at the first stoplight north of the freeway and meet in the first parking lot to the left of the entrance kiosk. **Notes:** a \$6.00 parking fee may be required. **RC**

Saturday Sept. 28, 9:00 AM

Point Reyes

Full day. Leader: Peter LaTourette (650) 961-2741. **Highlights:** Our annual trip to the west coast's most active vagrant trap where birds and the weather are always exciting and unpredictable! **Directions:** From Hwy 1 in Marin Co. (just south of Pt. Reyes Station), take Sir Francis Drake Blvd. west approx. 14 miles and turn left to Drakes Beach. Meet in the parking area. **Notes:** 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. 29, 8:00 AM

Ogier Ponds

Half day. Leader: Rich Page (408) 377-1092. For details and directions see the write-up for Sept 7th. **RC**

Wednesday Oct. 2, 12:00 PM

City of Sunnyvale Landfill

One hour. Leaders: Freddy Howell and Allen Royer. Contact organizer Silviana Ruiz (408) 730-7545 to attend. See additional details from Sept 4th.

Saturday Oct. 5, 8:00 AM

Oka Ponds

Half day. Leader: Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527. **Directions:** 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**

Sunday Oct. 6, 9:00 AM

Hawk Hill/Marin Headlands

Full day. Leader: Nick Yatsko (408) 891-3187. **Directions:** 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 the parking area or at the Hawk watch on top of the hill (arrive/depart the Hill at any time). **Highlights:** Migrating raptors including the possibility of seeing a rare Broad-winged Hawk. **Notes:** Weather conditions can be highly variable, dress in layers, bring lunch and liquids. This will be our only field trip to the Hawk Hill/Marin Headlands this fall. Heavy fog in the headlands will likely cancel the trip.

Field Trips *continued*

Wednesday Oct. 9, 8:30 AM

Vasona Lake County Park

Half day. Leader: Janna Pauser 408-569-9264. **Directions:** From Hwy 17 exit Lark Ave., go west to University Ave. Turn left onto Blossom Hill Rd. and use main entrance. Turn into first parking lot on your left after kiosk. We'll bird the south end of this popular Los Gatos Park. **Notes:** Gate opens at 8AM; there is a \$6 parking fee (or SC county park pass accepted). **Difficulty Level:** Easy walking. *LO, RC*

Saturday Oct. 12, 8:00 AM

Moss Landing & Vicinity

Half day. Leader: Todd Newberry, Santa Cruz Bird Club (831) 426-8741. **Directions:** Meet in Moss Landing in the big parking lot and boat launch ramp just north of the Elkhorn Slough Bridge off Hwy 1 next to the Sea Harvest Restaurant. **Notes:** Weather conditions can be highly variable so dress in layers, bring lunch and liquids. **Highlights:** Shorebirds, waterfowl and other migrants.

Sunday Oct. 13, 8:00 AM

Sunnyvale Water Treatment Facility

Half day. Leader: Frank Vanslager (650) 961-1505. **Directions:** From Hwy 101 take Hwy 237 east, exit North on Caribbean Dr., turn right on Borregas Ave. then left to the parking area. **Highlights:** This is a great place to study ducks. **Difficulty**

Level: Trip is fairly easy but a long walk is possible. **Notes:** Scopes are highly recommended. *RC*

Saturday Oct. 19, 7:30 AM

Local Hot Spots

Half day. Leader: Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527. We'll meet at the Alviso Marina. **Directions:** 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. **Highlights:** A chance to visit some of the local hot spots you hear about and, we hope, to see some "good" birds.

Sunday Oct. 20, 9:00 AM

Charleston Slough

Half day. Leader: Allen Royer (408) 288-7768. For details and directions see the write-up for Sept 21st.

Saturday Oct. 26, 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. **Directions:** 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. 27, 8:30 AM

Grant Ranch County Park

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

1092. **Directions:** 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). **Highlights:** Fresh water ducks, oak woodland birds and possible Golden Eagle. **Notes:** A Park entrance fee will be required for the last half of the trip. **Difficulty Level:** This will be a moderate 2 mile walk. *LO, RC*

Saturday Nov. 2, 8:00 AM

Moss Landing & Vicinity

Half day plus. Leader: Norm Kikuchi (831) 459-9424. For details and directions see the write-up for Oct 12th.

Sunday Nov. 3, 8:00 AM

Alum Rock Park

Half day. Leader: Jim Johnson (408) 996-3506. For details and directions see the write-up for Sept 14th.



Get ready for fall migrants with a Field Guide from the SCVAS Nature Shop!

SCVAS Events Calendar:

Wed. 9/4 & 10/2, 7-9PM

Bay Area Bird Photographers Meeting

Lucy Evans Interpretive Cntr, Palo Alto

Topic 9/4: Annual Members' Slides program

Topic 10/2: "Cuba: Birding Where Time Stands Still" with Alvaro Jaramillo

Go to www.scvas.org/babp for details

Tues. 9/10 & 10/8, 10:00AM

Eve Case Bird Discussion Group

Meets at the home of Pat Dubois - 17150

Buena Vista Ave., Los Gatos

(408) 395-4264

Topic 9/10: Mourning Dove

Topic 10/8: California Towhee

Wed. 9/11 & 10/9; 3-4:30PM

Nature Journaling with John Muir Laws

McClellan Ranch Preserve, Cupertino

Free workshops for all ages! No RSVP required, but please be on time. *Go to our website, www.scvas.org, for more details.*

Thurs. 9/12, 7-9PM

Cavity Nesters Recovery Program

(CNRP) End-of-Season Meeting

McClellan Ranch Preserve, Cupertino

All monitors are invited to attend. We'll all introduce ourselves, talk about the season, get a chance to ask questions, look at the data that has been submitted and bring closure to the 2013 nest box season. Please remember to submit your data online before the 12th! See details on page 10.

Sat. 9/28; 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 the event website - www.stevenscreek.com/stevenscreek50k.html - for more details about the race, how to register as a runner, or how to help as an event volunteer.

Sat. 10/26, 10AM-3PM

Wildlife Education Day

Blackberry Farm, Cupertino

Note the extended time and new location!

See page 8 for details

Conservation Corner

By Shani Kleinhaus, Environmental Advocate

July has been a busy month for our Environmental Action Committee and volunteers:

Burrowing Owls

On the evening of July 4th, we helped the City of Mountain View manage crowds at Shoreline and protected three pairs of Burrowing Owls and their chicks from a stampede of fireworks viewers. We got to see both the owls and the spectacular fireworks display. Two weekends later on a lovely summer evening, we headed to the Warm Springs Unit of the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge to survey for Burrowing Owls. We saw a total of 14 owls, confirmed 6 active nesting sites, and enjoyed vigorous exercise and a lovely sunset. **If you would like to volunteer for Burrowing Owl surveys and conservation actions in the coming months, please let Shani know. (shani@scvas.org).**

San Francisquito Creek Flood Control Project

Last year, we expressed concerns that the alternative selected for the San Francisquito Creek Flood Control Project could potentially threaten populations of clapper rails and black rails at the Faber Tract, an important site for the preservation of these species. The US Fish and Wildlife Service has recently reiterated our concerns. As a result, additional analysis is required before the US Corps of Engineers can approve the project.

The San Francisquito Creek Flood Control Project would utilize 7.4 acres of the Palo Alto golf course. This prompted Palo Alto to propose the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course Reconfiguration and Baylands Athletic Center Expansion Project. Here, the golf course would be denuded of trees and redesigned in a "Baylands theme". Playing fields and a gym would be approved between the golf course and US 101.

SCVAS did not oppose the reconfiguration of the golf course. However, we have significant concerns over some of the project's components and proposed mitigations. We are worried that the turf grass selected for its salt tolerance would become invasive, as it has in other estuaries in warm climates. We are also concerned with a proposal to mitigate for the loss of trees on the golf course by planting thousands of trees at the Pearson Arastradero preserve. We are advocating with the city to plant native grasses and shrubs at Byxbee Park instead.

Bird Friendly Campus Campaign

SCVAS continues to work with several local companies on improving their campuses to protect birds and enhance their habitat. Our campaigns include Habitat Enhancement (such as nest boxes), Bird Safe Design, and "Don't Take the Bait." We are currently engaged with Apple, Facebook, Google, Intuit, and Phillips Lumileds, hoping that these world leaders set an example for our valley and far beyond.

Volunteer Ventures

by Toby Goldberg, Programs Coordinator

It seems like school starts earlier every year - and 2013 is no exception. By the time of this publication, most school districts (and the SCVAS Education Committee) will be charging forward at full speed! We're proud of the programs we're able to offer to classrooms around the county, but we need your help!

If you're interested in education or working with children, this is definitely the perfect time to get involved. But, we also have a lot of other opportunities - office assistance, committee participation, and more - that will fit any interest and any schedule. Here are just a few pressing needs, but these, and many more, are also listed on our website under "Get Involved."

Wetlands Discovery Program Docents (Fall 2013) - You see this one on our "Volunteer Opportunities" list a lot, because it is one of our most visible, vital and volunteer-intensive activities - but so worth it! This program shares the wonder and importance of wetland habitats with 3rd-6th graders throughout Santa Clara County. Volunteers guide students in exploring wetland wildlife and habitat both in the classroom and out in the field. This program is rewarding for our volunteers and for the hundreds of South Bay children who participate (almost 1800 this past year!). **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.

Educational Presenters - With the school year already in high gear, we need more volunteers to fill requests for educational presentations in K-12 classrooms throughout Santa Clara County. We use slideshows, stuffed birds, and real nests to teach youth about local birds and their habitat. These presentations are engaging and come fully scripted. No experience is necessary though teaching and birding experience are helpful. Time commitment is flexible, and scheduling is based on classroom and volunteer availability.

Wildlife Education Day Support - As our largest annual event, Wildlife Education Day fields an abundance 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 a lot of volunteer support weeks before the event as well as on the big day - Saturday, October 26 (see page 8 - or online at www.scvas.org/WildlifeFestival - for more details). Here's how YOU can help:

Prior to the Event:	Classroom Presenter (CA
Poster Contest Coordinator	Wildlife, fully-scripted -
Publicity	and lots of fun!)
Mailing Support/ Handout	
Prep	
Day of the Event:	Nest Box Building Station
Set Up	Event Photographer (camera
Registration	can be provided)
Nature Arts & Crafts	Parking
High School Volunteer	Clean Up
Coordinator	And so much more!

Adult Education Classes - Fall 2013

The following classes are sponsored by the SCVAS Education Committee. To register please call the office at (408) 252-3747. All cancellations require 72-hour prior notification for refunds. Information about our upcoming classes is also available on our website at www.scvas.org.

“Raptors” with Lisa Myers

Fall is a fantastic time to study raptors as they return to the Bay Area to spend the winter. This three week course will be held exclusively in the field - where we'll be able to observe and enjoy falcons, hawks and eagles in nature. We'll focus on how to tell the different raptors apart from each other by using field marks, behaviors, food preferences and habitat. We'll have the opportunity to observe 14 different species as we bird three different areas. Beginning birders welcome!

Dates, Times and Locations:

- Arastradero - Tue. 10/8
(10:00AM-12:00PM)
- Coyote Valley - Tue. 10/15
(10:00AM-12:00PM)
- Ed Levin Park - Tue. 10/22
(10:00AM-12:00PM)

Fee: members: \$80; non-members: \$95

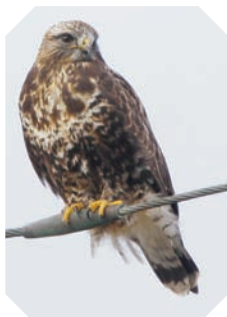


Peregrine Falcon
©Tom Grey

SCVAS Field Seminars with Bob Power - 2014

The SCVAS Staff and Board are always dreaming up, planning, and coordinating outdoor educational adventures that we think will captivate the birder in anyone. We are very excited, therefore, to be able to present our roster of Field Seminars for the coming year - we hope that you'll join us for one (or more) of these adventures! Additional information is also available online at www.scvas.org - click on "Calendar." Call the SCVAS office at 408-252-3747 to register.

Lower Klamath / Tule Lake Eagles Feb. 6th – 10th, Thursday – Monday



Rough-legged Hawk
©Tom Grey

The lower Klamath Basin is a magnet for Rough-legged Hawks, Ferruginous Hawks, Prairie Falcons, Golden Eagles, and of course, Bald Eagles in abundance. While we attempt to identify all birds seen on this trip, the focus is raptors. We'll see geese in phenomenal numbers, multiple duck species, and often see the first few north-bound Sandhill Cranes. Verna's Winema Lodge won't last forever. Come experience a northern California classic.

Lodging: Participants make their own reservations. There are other accommodations in the area, but we're not sure you'll be able to beat the convenience, dining, price combo of the Winema Lodge, which is ideally situated and puts on a great dinner and breakfast.

Additional information: Participants must be prepared to either drive a carpool or ride in a carpool on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. We will have a maximum of 3 vehicles, 4 guests per vehicle, as we wander around the backroads of the Lower Klamath and Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuges.

There is no fee for this trip, although guests will be invited to make a purely voluntary donation to SCVAS. **Trip limited to 11 participants.**

Bob Power is the Executive Director for Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society (SCVAS). Bob has been leading birding adventures throughout the west for 9 years, introducing birders to extraordinary places and wonderful birds.

Cave Creek Canyon and The Chiricahua Mountains May 20th – 27th, 2014

Cave Creek Canyon and the Chiricahua Mountains are famed for the presence of Elegant Trogon, Red-faced Warbler, Painted Redstart, and the beauty of the sky islands of southeastern Arizona. From our base at the Southwest Research Station of the American Museum of Natural History, we'll explore the varied habitats surrounding the Chiricahuas. Join Bob to seek all of the area's specialty birds at one of North America's premier birding destinations.

For an itinerary, e-mail bob at scvas.org

Fees: \$1550/person, double-occupancy. \$350 single supplement. Deposit: \$300. **Trip limited to 11 participants.**



Elegant Trogon
©Bob Power



Painted Redstart
©Tom Grey

Field Notes

(June - July 2013)

by Bill Bousman

Ducks through Hawks

One year in ten we may find an oversummering **Eurasian Wigeon**, so a male seen in Pond A2E on 1 Jun (MJM, LCr) was exceptional. **Northern Shovelers** occasionally nest in the South Bay so it was interesting to see a female with three ducklings at the Sunnyvale WPCP on 27 Jul (WGB). Female **Northern Pintail** were apparently incubating nests in New Chicago Marsh in Alviso on both 17 Jun (MJM) and 28 Jul (MJM, RGJ), but the outcome of neither attempt is known. **Redhead** occasionally oversummer as the example of five males in eclipse plumage in Pond A16 on 26 Jul (WGB) shows. A female **Lesser Scaup** with 11 ducklings a few days old was found at the Sunnyvale WPCP on 27 Jul (WGB). Some years, downy young are not seen until August, last year none were found. In most years we find **White-faced Ibis** in spring and fall, so their presence this summer is unusual. A single bird was seen in the north pond of the Palo Alto FCB on 10 Jun (MDo) but was not found there again. Two were discovered in the Lockheed Martin marsh on 18 Jun (DC), at least 10 were there on 22 Jun (MJM,

LCr, v.ob.) and at least a few nonbreeders have remained through the period (m.ob.). **Ospreys** are very scarce in the Diablo Range. One seen at Mississippi Lake on 22 Jun (JY) is only the third record from Coe Park in the last 30 years. Perhaps related to the amazing concentration of **Swainson's Hawks** during the spring migration, a pair of Swainson's built a nest along Coyote Creek on county park lands and raised a single youngster. The nest was found on 14 May (WGB) and monitored through the end of the present period (RPh, WGB). Eggs were

23 Jun, then were found farther out again (m.ob.) Two birds were heard calling on 10 Jun (WGB) and 27 Jun (JTh). A bird was heard from Artesian Slough 6-7 Jun (Pdu, v.ob.) and another again on Alviso Slough on 8 Jul (Pdu). One or two birds were last heard in Alviso Slough on 17 Jul (GR). At least two birds were involved in this incursion, maybe more. Based on egg collections, the California Black Rail, our local subspecies, lays eggs from 10 Mar to 6 Jul (Birds of North America), so these were likely birds trying to establish breeding territories. A **Virginia Rail** was heard along the maintenance road in Shoreline Park on 8 Jun (WGB), three weeks after this species has normally left the South Bay. A calling bird in Monte Bello on 16 Jun (MJM, LCr) was from the sag pond where they have been heard before in the summer.

Shorebirds through Guillemots

Snowy Plovers appear to have had a fairly good breeding season with multiple broods found from New Chicago Marsh and Pond A16 west to Pond A12 and the unnamed triangular pond north of Crittenden Marsh. On 28 Jul alone, young were found in New Chicago, the impoundment north of the Alviso Marina CP, Pond A12 (four broods), and the unnamed pond (MJM, RGJ, SCR, FV). The first of the returning adult **Lesser Yellowlegs** was found on Pond A16 on 2 Jul (WGB). Good numbers have been found in that area through the end of the period with a peak count of five on 20 Jul (MJM, LCr). The end of July has been good for **Ruddy Turnstones** with three or more birds in Pond A16 on 21-28 Jul (DWe, v.ob.) and one over Pond A9 on 29 Jul (WGB). Two **Red Knots** on Pond A9 on 28 Jul (MJM, RGJ, SCR) were the first of the fall birds. An adult **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was seen in New Chicago Marsh on 23 Jul (MJM, LCr) and an unaged bird was found Charleston Slough on 25 Jul (DPe). An adult **Pectoral Sandpiper** was seen in New Chicago Marsh on 28 Jul (SCR), the juveniles are not likely before September. The peak count of passage **Wilson's Phalaropes** was 2400+ in New Chicago on 18 Jul (WGB). The high count of **Red-necked Phalaropes** was 500 in New Chicago on 28 Jul (MJM, RGJ), we should

Summer was marked by three unrelated events: the first Pigeon Guillemot to be found in the county, the first nesting of Swainson's Hawk in a hundred years, and a remarkable summer incursion of Black Rails.

collected from a pair of Swainson's in 1889, but as far as we know, this is the first successful nest of this threatened species since then. I hope that details of this successful nesting can be distributed in the near future. Apart from the nesting pair (both intermediate morphs), a light morph adult was seen in Coyote Valley on 2 Jun (BHi, GP) and another light morph adult was over Hwy 152 at the Merced County line on 20 Jul (DLSu).

Rails

Like the case of the Swainson's Hawk, there is evidence from the 19th century of nesting by **Black Rails** in Alviso. Since that time, Black Rails have been an occasional wintering presence in some of our better marshes in favorable years. The two exceptions have been a bird heard calling at the peak of the spring period on 26-27 Apr 1993 in Palo Alto (MMR, WGB, SCR) and one seen on 30 Aug 1995 at the Sunnyvale WPCP (JMD). This summer a Black Rail was heard calling well out in Alviso Slough on 6 Jun (Pdu). For the most part, calling rails moved upstream in the slough through



Swainson's Hawk
©Pete LaTourrette

Field Notes *cont'd*

see much greater numbers in late August or early September. **Least Terns** arrived in their favored staging area of Pond A2E on 19 Jul (WGB) when 10 were seen. Numbers increased rapidly (v.ob.) and at least 118 were there on 31 Jul (WGB). An adult and juvenile **Elegant Tern** on Pond A2E on 21 Jul (MMR) were two to three weeks early. **Black Skimmers** nesting on an island in Pond A16 hatched two young on 20 Jul (FV), but one succumbed in a few days. Breeding attempts at Shoreline Lake by another pair were unsuccessful (v.ob.). On a survey for Snowy Plovers the team discovered a juvenile **Pigeon Guillemot** on Pond A14 in Alviso on 28 Jul (SCR, MJM, RGJ), a first record for the county. The youngster has been seen through the end of the month (m.ob.) and looks healthy, but the South Bay is not always a good place for alcids.

Roadrunners through Martins

Our token **Greater Roadrunner** of the period was a 'cooing' bird northeast of Hellyer Avenue on 27 Jun (WGB). Nesting of **Vaux's Swifts** include a belated report of birds calling in a chimney on Hosta Lane in San Jose on 8 May (BH fide JPa) and a pair that nested in a chimney near the McAbee entrance to Almaden-Quicksilver CP 21 Jun-23 Jul (JPa, v.ob.). An adult male **Rufous Hummingbird** was seen at a Morgan Hill feeder on 22 Jun (SCR). **Willow Flycatchers** are very scarce spring migrants so one banded at the Coyote Creek Field Station (CCFS) on 2 Jun (SFBBO) and two birds at Monte Bello OSP on 6 Jun (GHa) are of interest. Surprising in the northwest corner of the county, a **Say's Phoebe** was seen at Monte Bello OSP on



Pigeon Guillemot
©Tom Grey

1 Jun (ViT, PP). Better described as astounding was an adult with two fledglings at Moffett Field the same day (MMR, NMa). We have regular breeding records from the eastern Diablo Range, very occasional records from western edge of the Diablo Range (two fledglings were off Hellyer Avenue on 13 Jun (BJ)), but none from the South Bay edge. Two of the Moffett birds were seen again on 4 and 13 Jun (MMR) and one was at the edge of Crittenden Marsh on 31 Jul (WGB). At least two **Purple Martins** continued near the lower saddle on Loma Prieta Avenue through at least 17 Jul (v.ob.). Three birds were below Mt. Umunhum on 9 Jun (AV) and 11 Jun (BHi et al.). A female was at Monte Bello OSP on 6 Jun and an immature bird was there on 31 Jul (both GHa).

Wrens through Goldfinches

A **Rock Wren** was heard in the quarry adjacent to Rancho San Antonio OSP on 4 Jul (MMR, ARo). They have been resident in this private quarry for many years and are now accessible for those with sharp ears on the new Quarry Trail in the OSP. The nearest known populations are on the western side of the Diablo Range below Monument Peak and in the Santa Teresa Hills. **American Dippers** tend to be more reclusive in the summer so singles along Stevens Creek above Mt. Eden Road on 7 Jun (BM) and on Los Gatos Creek above Main Street on 21 Jun (DoS) were of interest. A single **Phainopepla** near Mississippi Lake on 22 Jun (JY) was the only one seen this summer (21 birds were seen there last summer). **Sage Sparrows** are scarce anywhere in the Santa Cruz Mountains so singles along the Indian Creek Trail in Monte Bello OSP on 1 Jun (RFu), beside Loma Prieta Avenue on 20 Jun (AMR), and on the Rancho San Antonio OSP side of Black Mountain on 4 Jul (MMR, ARo) are of interest. The singing male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** at Almaden Lake on 31 May (not 21 May as in my previous column) was seen briefly the next morning, 1 Jun (JPa et al.). Another singing adult was found along the Pajaro River east of Sargent Creek on 23 Jun (DLSu). **Blue Grosbeaks** continued to be found along the Pajaro River with a female near the Santa Cruz border on 3 Jun and an adult male singing nearby in both counties on 23 Jun (both DLSu). A **Yellow-head-**



Black Rail
©Pete LaTourrette

ed Blackbird in the Lockheed Martin channel on 5 Jun (BM) is only the fourth record for the summer period. **Great-tailed Grackles** were reported from the Palo Alto FCB to the Coyote Creek GC (v.ob.) with a peak count of 17 birds near Riverside Drive on 19 Jun (MJM). The adult male **Baltimore Oriole** continued at Vasona CP through 5 Jun (KBU, ViT). It was seen once again on 9 Jul (KBU). A single **Pine Siskin** over Monte Bello OSP on 2 Jun (RFu et al.) may have either been part of the coastal resident population or a lingering bird from last winter's invasion. Very few **Lawrence's Goldfinches** were reported from the Diablo Range and none from valley floor. Adults and juveniles were widely found in the Santa Cruz Mountains albeit in low numbers. Up to six birds were found in Rancho Canada del Oro OSP during the period and one or more nests were seen 8-19 Jul (JPa).

Observers: Bill Bousman (WGB), Karen Burnson (KBU), Dotty Calabrese (DC), Lea Crisp (LCr), Mike Danzenbaker (JMD), Matthew Dodder (MDo), Pete Duntun (PDu), Rob Furrow (RFu), Garth Harwood (GHa), Bev Hesse (BH), Bob Hirt (BHi), Richard Jeffers (RGJ), Bob Juhl (BJ), Nateri Madavan (NMa), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Brooke Miller (BM), Parag Patil (PP), Janna Pauser (JPa), Don Pendleton (DPe), George Peyton (GP), Ryan Phillips (RPh), Geary Ridings (GR), Alex Rinkert (AMR), Alma Rogers (ARo), Mike Rogers (MMR), San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory (SFBBO), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Don Starks (DoS), David Suddjian (DLSu), Jim Thomas (JTh), Vivek Tiwari (ViT), Frank Vanslager (FV), Ann Verdi (AV), Dave Weber (DWE), and James Yurchenco (JY).

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

Birdhouse Building!



Join the
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
and local Nature and Environmental Organizations
for a **FREE** event:

Nature Arts and
Crafts!



the 22nd Annual Wildlife Education Day!

Saturday, October 26, 2013
10am-3pm

☁️ **HEAVY**
RAIN Cancels

Blackberry Farm* in Cupertino
(Note the new time and new location for 2013!)

Sorry -
dogs are
not allowed

Environmental
Games, Demos and
Info for all ages!



Live Animals - Birds of
Prey, Snakes, Insects -
even a Mountain Lion (and
maybe a Shark, too)!

Hands-on Activities
and LOTS of Fun!



“Early Bird” Shorebird Walk

8:00 am @ Charleston Slough in
Mountain View

RSVP Required for walk *only*

Annual Wildlife Poster
Contest

Awards announced
@ 1:00 pm

Submission deadline 10/11

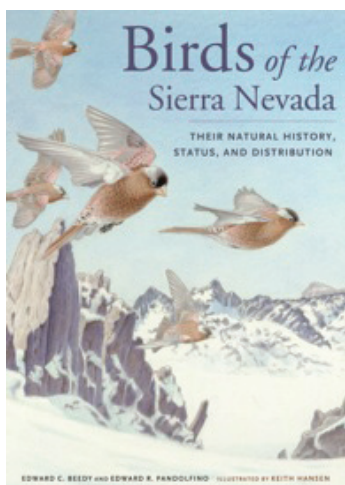
For more details or to make reservations for the Bird Walk, call (408) 252-3740,
or visit www.scvas.org

**Located at 21979 San Fernando Ave, Cupertino. Plenty of free parking!*

SAVE THE DATE SAVE THE DATE SAVE THE DATE

September 25, 2013

An evening with Keith Hansen and Ed Pandolfino, illustrator and co-author of
Birds of the Sierra Nevada



On Wednesday, September 25, SCVAS will host a very special event featuring Keith Hansen and Ed Pandolfino. Ed is president of Western Field Ornithologists and is one of the Regional Editors for the publication *North American Birds*. Keith is one of the most-admired bird illustrators working in the US today.

The evening will feature fine food and beverages, lively conversation, a presentation by Ed and Keith, and a book signing. Attendees will go home with a signed hard-cover edition of *Birds of the Sierra Nevada* (one book per person or couple).

Cost is \$125/person and \$200/couple.

Capacity is limited, and we expect this event to sell out. Contact the SCVAS office at 408-252-3747 to reserve your space.

Outside Events

Thurs. 9/5; 8:30AM-3:00PM

Western Burrowing Owl Workshop

Michaels at Shoreline - Mtn View, CA

The Elkhorn Coastal Training program will be expanding their Sensitive Species series this fall with the exciting addition of Western Burrowing Owl Workshop-2013!

Registration Fee: \$250

Visit the website for details and to register: www.elkhornsloughctp.org



September 12-15

*Featuring our very own
Bob Power!*

Designed for seasoned and beginning birders, as well as outdoor lovers, the festival offers a unique opportunity to explore, learn and appreciate world class habitats. *Go to www.montereybaybirding.org for more details and how to register.*

Sun. 10/20; 9AM-5PM

Wine Country Optics and Nature Festival

Cornerstone Gardens, Sonoma

The leading binocular and scope companies from all over the United States will be joining us in Sonoma this year. Stroll through award winning gardens and visit with over 25 major nature nonprofits from around San

Francisco Bay. *For more details, go to www.sonomabirding.com.*

A Look Ahead:

Thurs-Sun. 11/21-24

17th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium

Stockton, CA

Come to meet the CVBS board & staff members, enjoy a delicious Hors D'oeuvres buffet & No Host Bar, listen to amazing speakers on Central Valley Birds (and beyond), and of course, participate in fabulous field trips and the Birder's Market. *The schedule, brochure, registration form, etc., are available at www.cvbs.org.*

Organizational change *cont'd from page 1*

When asked what future plans he has, Bob shared the following: "I'm looking forward to spending more time with my family while finding my own niche as a volunteer with local environmental organizations. I have plans to travel with a focus on field research in specific habitats and targeted bird species.

And lastly, I fully expect to stay involved in adult education and bird and conservation related adventure-travel in Central and South America.

I sincerely appreciate the very generous support of my work and the work of SCVAS to protect our local environment while enhancing environmental education in the South Bay. I urge our members to continue to support the work of our chapter often and generously. This community has made a difference to me, to our staff and to our volunteers. I can't thank our supporters enough."

Calling All CNRP Monitors:



The end of the breeding season is upon us, so don't forget to **submit your data!** Our end-of-the-season meeting, on Sept 12th at 7PM (see calendar for details), depends on having information to share, so please don't procrastinate!

Your data is one of the main reasons for this program - this information helps us to plan future conservation programs, and make decisions about the Cavity Nesters Recovery program as a whole. Please help us continue this valuable conservation and research tool by submitting your data soon!



The online database is the preferred method for receiving year-end data – go to <http://AR2013.cbrp.org> OR go to the SCVAS website (www.scvas.org/cnrp).

Contact Toby, the SCVAS Programs Coordinator, at programs@scvas.org with any questions.

Summer Camp 2013 - Science, History, and Loads of Fun!



Just For Fun!
LEFT: Nature games, like this round of "scorpion tag" get both the blood and creative juices flowing!



Animals All Around
Left: Discovering that animals leave all sorts of clues behind them to help us figure out who's been there (and what they've been up to...).



At the Wetlands
Left: Learning about the salinity of our bay. Above: Becoming a "Wetlands Warrior" and pledging to help protect our wetlands.



Victorian History
Left: At the Rengstorff House in Mountain View, campers experience Victorian living, including what it might have been like to be a child at play.

2013 Friends of SCVAS

Gifts received between June 1st, 2013 and July 31st, 2013

\$1,000-10,000

Bay Area Bird Photographers
The Dirk and Charlene Kabcenell
Foundation
Peter and Sue LaTourrette
The Fenton Family Foundation

\$500-\$999

Linda Brownrigg
Jitze and Nancy Couperus
Kristine Kelly and Arthur Gleckler
Bruce Mast and Juliet Cox
David Presotto and Caryl Carr

\$250-499

Joyce Bartlett
Cynthia Berg
Peter and Patricia Biocini
Michelle Clapham
Tressa Coss
Marilyn Harris
Jan Hintermeister
John and Freddy Howell
Patty Hoyt
Louise Mabry
Jim and Donna Meyer
Network for Good
Roberta Preu
Susan Stickler
Cheryl Turner
Bruce and Lynn Watts
John Wills

\$100-\$249

Sylvia Alderman
Geraldine Brown
Phyllis Browning
Doug and Gail Cheeseman
Laura Cory
Jen Couperus
Jennifer Couperus
Peter and Arline Dehlinger
Jim Dehnert and Patricia Worthington
Philip and Susan Hammer
Jerry and Ginny Kaminski
Elizabeth Karen
Los Gatos Birdwatcher in honor of
Gordon Barrett
James Lyang
Shan March
Hugh and Debbie McDevitt
Joanne and Doug McFarlin
Christopher O'Connell
Christopher and Louise Rasmussen
Dina Saari
Theresa Serafini
Alice Smith
Ruth Troetschler
Vanessa Viso
David Weissman
Ofer Zajicek

\$60-\$99

Richard Grindeland
Bruce Hahne and Margaret Okuzumi
Carol Jordan

Jennifer and Phil Judy
Karen McCreddin
Ken and Patsy McKay
Frank Montgomery
Richard Moyer
Susan Packer and Shlomi Krepner
Bradford and Janice Santos
Kay Schroer
Jeff and Ruthe Smith
Shirley Wodtke

Up to \$59

Garnetta Annable
Raquel Armijo
Dimitri Avaloff
Jason Blanchard and Laura Danger-
field
Barbara Boyington
Frank and Joan Brauch
Byron and Kay Brown
Ina Checkman
Chevron Humankind Matching Gift
Program
Marilyn Close
Eda Coburn
Hazel Donaldson
Sharon Erickson
Margaret Falk
Heather Ferguson
Michael and Lynne Fitzjarrell
Suzanne Francis
Len and Terri Goldberg
Walter and Nancy Hay

Beverly Hesse
Richard and Diane Horn
Carsten Hughes
Dawn Isis
Susan James
Alberta Jasberg
John and Jane Kesselring
Janice King
Wendy Lee
David and Doreen Leith
David Lewis
Stuart and Margaret Matheson
Richard McElroy
Loren Mendel
Patricia Prickett
Pamela Putman
Mary Ann Roa
Marguerite Ryan
Mark Sapsford
Margaret Schmidt
Laverne Shaffer
Susan Steinbrecher
Richard Stovel
Kathryn Strachota
Elizabeth Taft
J.G. and Suzanne Van Stee
Sheryl Walters
Carol Warner
Betty Wyatt

SCVAS Education Interns Needed:

~ Paid Internships Available ~

Each fall, we search for outstanding Education & Outreach Interns to help us deliver the many programs we offer to local schools, community groups, and neighborhoods.

If you or someone you know is outgoing, enjoys working with children, wants to learn more about the world of environmental education, and wants to help us continue to offer high-quality programs, give us a call! We are looking for two interns available during the day (and occasional weekends) for about 10-15 hours per week. The exact schedule will be flexible, but **Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings** and some weekend availability will be required. **Saturday, October 26th** is also required. Some experience with environmental science, biology, education, or working with children is desirable, but we will train the right candidate.

¿Habla Español? Bạn có nói tiếng Việt? We are hoping to hire one intern who is fluent in Spanish or Vietnamese to help us deliver our programs more effectively to our multi-cultural community!

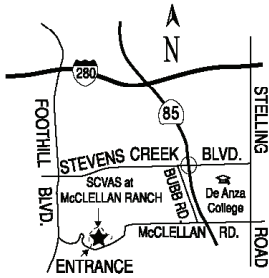
More information is available online at www.scvas.org - click on "About Us" - or contact the Programs Coordinator, Toby, at 408-252-3740 or programs@scvas.org.

Positions are open until filled.

Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society
 22221 McClellan Road
 Cupertino, CA 95014

Phone: 408-252-3747
 Fax: 408-252-2850
 E-mail: scvas@scvas.org
 www.scvas.org

Non-Profit Organization
 U.S. Postage Paid
 San Jose, CA
 Permit No. 5869



Go Paperless!



Sign up to receive your newsletter via email and enjoy these benefits:

- Save resources - eNewsletters save trees, postage, fuel (and more)!
- View the photographs in all their colorful glory!
- No waiting for the mail - get your newsletter up to 2 weeks sooner!



Contact the SCVAS office at scvas@scvas.org to start your paper-free membership today!

OFFICERS

President

Ashok Khosla

Vice President

Bob Hirt

Treasurer

Peter LaTourrette

Secretary

Joan Leighton

DIRECTORS

Debbie Thompson

Diane Hart

Melanie O'Brien

Peter Hart

Tom Grey

Vivek Khanzode

'11-'14

'11-'14

'13-'16

'11-'14

'12-'15

'11-'14

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

STAFF

Executive Director

Bob Power

408/252-3748

bob@scvas.org

Office Manager

Susan Bell

408/252-3747

scvas@scvas.org

Programs Coordinator

Toby Goldberg

408/252-3740

programs@scvas.org

Environmental Advocate

Shani Kleinhaus

650/868-2114

shani@scvas.org

Office Fax

408/252-2850

Office E-mail

scvas@scvas.org

Website

www.scvas.org

OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday

10 AM - 5 PM

Saturday

10 AM - 2 PM

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

RARE BIRD ALERT: (415) 681-7422

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

Avocet Editor: Toby Goldberg
Assistant Editor: Laura Dangerfield

2013 Volume 60, Number 5

Chapter Members in the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society (SCVAS) receive the SCVAS newsletter, *The Avocet*.

\$25 Song Sparrow (Student) \$35 American Avocet (Individual) \$60 California Quail (Family) \$100 Burrowing Owl

\$250 White-tailed Kite \$500 Peregrine Falcon \$1000 Golden Eagle Other _____

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

Name _____

Address _____

City State & Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

C1ZC140Z

*Come by the office to pick up your free copy of **Birding at the Bottom of the Bay**, and our **Breeding Bird Atlas** (if joining at the Burrowing Owl level or above).*

Send this information, and make all checks payable, to: SCVAS, 22221 McClellan Rd, Cupertino, CA 95014

Please note: As an organizational policy, SCVAS does not share member information with other organizations.