

# THE AVOCET

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

January-February 2015

## Got Mice? Don't Poison their Natural Predators

Adapted with Permission from Original Article by Jackie Turner

Wildlife Rehabilitator at WCSV and Palo Alto Junior Museum and Zoo



Great Horned Owl  
by Tom Grey

Many of us have had the unpleasant experience of finding mice in the attic or basement – or even inside the house. Our first reaction is usually to rush to the hardware store in search of battle tools or to call in a rodent-control service. But as you form your plan of attack, take a few minutes to consider the most humane, effective, safe, and ecologically sound way to rid yourself of these unwanted guests and most importantly, don't inadvertently poison their natural predators by using rodenticides (rat poisons).

A dying or dead animal that is killed by poison is toxic to any other animal that eats it. As the poisoned animal sickens and slows its pace over the days it takes to die, it becomes an easy target for a hungry predator or even a playful pet, which on eating it will in turn be poisoned.

Eating a single poisoned mouse or rat may not kill a predatory animal, but a mouse that has returned to the bait in the days prior to death, will have an increased level of rodenticide in its system. A predatory animal such as a Red-tailed Hawk, that consumes a steady diet of poisoned prey, may eventually succumb to the accumulated poison. It is a slow and painful way to die because most rodenticides contain anticoagulants which kill by preventing clotting and causing internal bleeding.

**The Impact of Rodenticides:** A study conducted at Tufts Wildlife Clinic at Tufts University (Grafton, MA) in 2011 found anticoagulant rodenticides in 86% of birds of prey tested over a 5-year period. Closer to home, from August 2013 through May 2014, WildCare, a wildlife rehabilitation hospital located in Marin County, conducted a research study to determine the prevalence of anticoagulant rodenticide exposure in wildlife patients brought to their hospital. The study revealed that 82 of 95 (86%) of predatory animal patients whose blood was tested at UC Davis showed exposure to rat poisons. According to WildCare's data, Great Horned Owls, Barn Owls, Raccoons, and Gray Foxes are the most affected, and ironically it is these animals that are the most adept at catching mice and rats, providing us

*(continued on page 10)*



**General Membership Meetings**  
**Cubberley Community Center, Rm H1**  
Palo Alto - Middlefield & Montrose Rds  
Doors open 7:30; program 8:00



Wednesday, January 21st  
"Saving the Burrowing Owl"  
with Joshua McCluskey

One of Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society's most important projects is to monitor and restore Western Burrowing Owl populations in the South Bay. With fun photos and videos, Josh will discuss the many methods currently being used to prevent their local extirpation, as well as the future constraints and challenges that face these owls. Come, learn about this pint-sized owl in peril!

Burrowing Owl Photo ©Tom Grey  
Nicole Sault Photo ©Nicole Sault

(Additional info and directions available at [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org) or by calling the SCVAS office)

Wednesday, February 18th  
"Condors and People: How We  
Live (or Die) Together"  
with Nicole Sault

While condors are once again flying over the California countryside, they are still endangered throughout the Americas where they are threatened by habitat loss, lead, micro-trash, hunting and poisoning, and even a growing feather trade and use in religious ceremonies. Nicole's presentation will provide an anthropological perspective on how a wide variety of people in the Andes view condors, and will address issues that California Condors face.

**Special eBird  
Presentation!**  
Hosted by SCVAS,  
SFBBO and Los  
Gatos Birdwatcher

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# Jan-Feb '15 Field Trips

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

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

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

## Saturday Jan. 3, 7:30 AM

### County Chase

Half day. **Leader:** Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527. Get a head start on your 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. **Directions:** From Hwy 237 in San Jose take Gold St. north to the end, bear left on Elizabeth St. and then right on Hope St. Meet outside the entrance to the Alviso Marina Parking Lot. Be prepared to carpool as parking may be limited at some sites. **RC**

## Sunday Jan. 4, 8:00 AM

### Los Capitancillos Ponds

Half day. **Leader:** Rich Page (408) 377-1092. **Directions:** If coming from Hwy 85, go south on Camden Ave. just past Blossom Hill Rd. Singletree Way is the next left turn-off near Beacon School. Park on the street, we will meet at the trail entrance located on the right just beyond the power plant. **Highlights:** We will bird ponds that are often filled with a wide variety of waterfowl and gulls, a nearby creek for riparian birds as well as other areas closely associated with the ponds that attract birds. **Notes:** Lack of water may require relocation to an alternate site. **RC**

## Wednesday Jan. 7, 12:00 PM

### City of Sunnyvale Landfill

One hour. **Leaders:** Freddy Howell and Allen Royer. No RSVP necessary, but contact the landfill coordinator, Silviana Ruiz, for directions or more details (408) 730-7545 with questions. **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 Jan. 10, 8:00 AM

### Panoche Valley

Full day. **Leader:** Clay Kempf (831) 761-8260. **Directions:** 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. **Highlights:** 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. **Notes:** To pre-order a sandwich from the Panoche Inn e-mail the leader (ltjaeger@att.net) between Jan 4th and Jan 7th with your choice of bread, meat (chicken salad, ham, pastrami) cheese and toppings. Or bring your own lunch and a full tank of gas, carpooling is strongly recommended due to limited parking on the narrow roads. **IMPORTANT:** Do not expect to use the restrooms at the Paicines Store, as their use is limited to paying customers (we encourage patronage of local businesses).

## Sunday Jan. 11, 9:00 AM

### Alum Rock Park

Half day. **Leader:** Jim Johnson (408) 966-3506. **Directions:** From Hwy 101 or I-680 take McKee Rd. northeast toward the hills then left on Toyon Ave., right on Penitencia Creek Rd. and continue on into the park. Pass under the bridge and meet at the far end of the upper parking lot. **Difficulty Level:** This is a moderately strenuous 3-4 mile walk. **Highlights:** Resident breeding birds (possible Rufous-Crowned Sparrow, and Canyon Wren if we are lucky) early migrants, and lingering winter birds. Be prepared for some mud! **Notes:** Expect to pay an entrance fee. **LO, RC**

## Wednesday Jan. 14, 1:00 PM

### Coyote Valley

Half day. **Leader:** TBD. **Directions:** Take Hwy 101 south, exit right (west) onto Bailey Rd. Turn left on Hale/Santa Teresa Blvd. In .8 miles, turn right on west Laguna Ave. and park. **Highlights:** Raptors. **Note:** This is an afternoon trip. **RC**

## Saturday Jan. 17, 8:00 AM

### Charleston Slough

Half day. **Leader:** Nick Yatsko (408) 891-3187. **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. **RC**

## Sunday Jan. 18, 8:15 AM

### Arastradero OSP

Half day. **Leader:** Frank Vanslager (650) 961-1505. **Directions:** From I-280 take Page Mill Rd. west; turn right on Arastradero Rd. and meet in the parking lot about ½ mile on the right. **Difficulty Level:** Moderate walking. **RC**

## Saturday Jan. 24, 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 the road (meet at the gate if the entrance is locked). **RC**

## Sunday Jan. 25, 9:00 AM

### San Francisco's Southern Parks

Half day. **Leader:** Alan Hopkins. Home phone (415) 664-0983, cell (415) 794-0281. **Directions:** Meet at the parking lot to Heron's Head Park. This newly created park is a great place to look for shorebirds

## Wintering Waterfowl Field Trip: It's Back!

Saturday Jan. 31, 1:30 PM  
Don Edwards National Wildlife  
Refuge, Alviso  
& Shoreline Park, Mtn View

Afternoon only. **Leader:** Stephanie Ellis, SCVAS' Executive Director; [executivedirector@scvas.org](mailto:executivedirector@scvas.org) or 408-252-3748. Want to sharpen your duck I.D. skills? Join us for a fun day viewing the abundance of waterfowl that spend their winter on San Francisco Bay. **Directions:** Please contact Stephanie for directions. **Notes:** Wear your woollies. Optional coffee/hot chocolate stop after the trip - on us! **Difficulty Level:** All are encouraged to attend, but the trip will be geared toward the beginning birder. **Trip is limited to 15; contact Stephanie to sign-up.**

## **Field Trips** *continued*

and bay waterfowl. Later we will then visit San Francisco's second largest park, McLaren Park, for land birds and a few dabbling ducks. From Hwy 280 or 101 take the Cesar Chavez St. exit east to Third St. Turn right onto Third St. after crossing the bridge turn left onto Cargo Way. Cargo Way ends at the Heron's Head Park parking lot. **RC**

### **Saturday Jan. 31, 8:30 AM**

#### **Coyote Reservoir**

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

### **Sunday Feb. 1, 8:00 AM**

#### **Ulistac Natural Area**

Half day. **Leader:** Steve Tracey (408) 966-3860. **Directions:** From Hwy 237 take Great America Pkwy south for about 0.8 miles, turn left on Tasman Dr. for about one mile, turn right on Lick Mill Blvd. and meet at the South entrance to the park on the left. **Highlights:** We will look for migrants and local breeding birds in diverse habitat that does not require an entrance fee. **NF**

### **Wednesday Feb. 4, 12:00 PM**

#### **City of Sunnyvale Landfill**

One hour. **Leaders:** Freddy Howell and Allen Royer. See Jan. 7th for details and directions. **RC**

### **Saturday Feb. 7, 8:00 AM**

#### **Charleston Slough**

Half day. **Leader:** Nick Yatsko (408) 891-3187. For directions see the write-up for Jan. 17th above.

### **Sunday Feb. 8, 8:30 AM**

#### **Merced & San Luis Wildlife Refuges**

Full day. **Leader:** Rich Page (408) 377-1092. **Directions:** Meet at the parking area near the first Observation Platform in Merced National Wildlife Refuge. From Hwy 101 in Gilroy take Hwy 152 east thru Los Banos, (no services past Los Banos, so check your gas gauge), approx. 20 miles then north 7 miles on Rte 59 to Sandy Mush Rd., turn left approx. 8 miles to Merced Wildlife Refuge, on the left. Allow 2.5 hrs driving time from San Jose, more if it's foggy. **Highlights:** Raptors, ducks, geese, Great Horned Owls, Sandhill Cranes and

White-faced Ibis possible. **Notes:** This will primarily be a driving bird trip so FRS radios (Walkie-Talkies) set to channel 11 will prove to be of value. After the Merced Wildlife Refuge we will caravan to the San Luis Wildlife Refuge for lunch and more birding. Dress in layers; bring lunch, liquids, and a full tank of gas. **RC**

### **Wednesday Feb. 11, 8:30 AM**

#### **Gilroy Water Treatment facility or Anderson Lake Co. Park**

Half day. **Leader:** Dennis Porter 408-205-0535. **Directions:** We will carpool from McDonald's on Cochrane Rd. in Morgan Hill. Take Hwy 101 south; exit Cochrane Rd. and turn right. Turn left at first stop light and park at McDonald's. We'll carpool from here. Do not meet at birding site. If the Gilroy ponds have water we'll drive the levee's for ducks and shorebirds. If not, we'll bird Anderson County Park. **Note:** Possible entrance fee. Specific location will depend on conditions. **RC, LO**

### **Saturday Feb. 14, 8:00 AM**

#### **Oka Ponds**

Half day. **Leader:** Jim Johnson (408) 996-3506. **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 the gate at the end of the lane. **RC**

### **Sunday Feb 15, 8:00 AM**

#### **Foster City, Coyote Point, San Mateo Bayside**

Half day. **Leader:** Al Eisner (days and voice mail: (650) 926-2018; evenings: (650) 364-3686). We will begin at the Foster City "shell bar", and then car-caravan to an additional Foster City location, and to Coyote Point (probable admission charge of \$6 per car) in time for an appropriate tide. **Directions:** Meet at 8:00 along Beach Park Boulevard in Foster City; park along the bay side of the Blvd., near the intersection with Tarpon St. (there is a church on this corner). To get there follow Hillsdale Blvd. east from Hwy 101; it eventually bears right and becomes Beach Park Blvd. **Highlights:** This trip should be good for shorebirds (including "rockbirds") and waterfowl (Harlequin Duck is possible) but we'll also look for landbirds. **Note:** Scopes will be very useful. **LO, RC**

### **Saturday Feb. 21, 8:30 AM**

#### **Coyote Hills Regional Park**

Half day. **Leader:** Frank Vanslager (650)

961-1505. **Directions:** Take Hwy 84, Dumbarton Bridge, east towards Newark. Exit right on Thornton, then left over freeway, as Thornton becomes Paseo Padre. Turn left at Patterson Ranch/Commerce Rd into park. Meet at far end of Quarry Parking lot ¼ mile past park entrance. An entrance fee should be expected. **LO, RC**

### **Sunday Feb. 22, 7:30 AM**

#### **Santa Cruz Coastal Hot Spots**

Half day (optional plus). **Leader:** Todd Newberry, Santa Cruz Bird Club (831) 426-8741. **Directions:** Meet 7:30 AM at the Santa Cruz lighthouse on W. Cliff Dr. From Hwy 17 take Hwy 1 "north" (toward Half Moon Bay), turn left on Bay St. (just after McDonald's), go to its end, turn right onto W. Cliff Dr., follow bluff-top to lighthouse. **Highlights:** A chance to visit local birding hot spots and to chase recently reported goodies. **Note:** Dress in layers; Todd's trip goes rain or shine. For those running late, at 8 AM we will be on West Cliff Drive, checking inter-tidal shelves as we approach the Natural Bridges overlook at the west end of West Cliff Dr.

### **Saturday Feb. 28, 8:00 A.M.**

#### **Lake Cunningham Park**

Half day. **Leader:** Pete Dunten (650) 210-6764. **Directions:** From Hwy 101 in San Jose go East on Tully to the entrance to Lake Cunningham Park, 0.3 miles past Capitol Expwy (Raging Waters). Turn left into the park and left again at the entrance booth. Meet in the Marina parking lot and pay the parking fee.

### **Sunday Mar 1, 8:30 AM**

#### **Coyote Valley OSP**

Half day. **Leader:** Rick herder (408) 779-3985. Meet at the western end of Palm Ave in Morgan Hill. **Highlights:** We will bird the lower elevations of the Open Space preserve to the west in search of recent spring migrants, soaring Hawks and Eagles. **Directions:** From 101 in San Jose take Bailey Ave. west, turn left on Hale Ave. (Santa Teresa) and right to the end of Palm Ave. **Note:** Cattle graze in the preserve, the trail can be rough and decorated with "cow pies". Trip limited to those over 12 years of age. Early risers will meet at 7:30 AM on the western portion of Laguna Ave. in Morgan Hill, the first right after turning onto Hale Ave. **RC NF**

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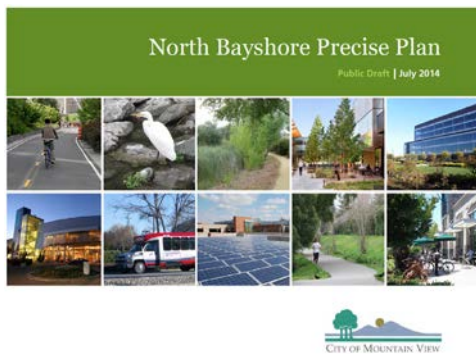
# Conservation Corner

by Shani Kleinhaus, Environmental Advocate

As always, the SCVAS Environmental Advocacy team is engaged in conservation projects throughout our County (and beyond):

**Burrowing Owls** continue to thrive at the Regional Wastewater Facility (RWF). With the City of San Jose, we continue to implement a robust Adaptive Management Program and the owls are responding: in November 16 owls wintered on the property. Please contact [owls@scvas.org](mailto:owls@scvas.org) if you are interested in volunteer opportunities.

**The North Bayshore Precise Plan in Mountain View** has been approved. The plan envisions including habitat and wildlife in the sustainable future of this sensitive area, while allowing growth and development. Our contribution during the public process resulted in robust setbacks that afford not only protection but also enhancement of riparian habitats and protection for Shoreline



Park. Native plants are recommended throughout the area, and strong guidelines for bird safe building design are included. The plan provides incentives for habitat restoration and enhancement.

Our work in **San Jose** focused on the Evergreen Area, where we worked with neighbors and with Council Member Herrera to settle our appeal of the Chaboya Ranch Project to the satisfaction of the community. Also in the Evergreen area, we joined forces with neighbors and environmental groups to defeat two creekside development proposals: a convenience store, gas station and car-wash on Silver Creek, and two homes within the riparian setback of Thompson Creek (both in the Coyote Creek watershed). On Coyote Creek itself, we helped neighbors of Shady Oaks Park direct a new master plan towards preservation of habitat and heritage.

Also in San Jose, housing development on Communication Hill was approved, as well as the Heritage Oaks Memorial Park - a cemetery situated on the hills between Calero Reservoir and Coyote Valley. In response to our letters and advocacy, City Council voted to require pre-construction surveys for burrowing owls and wildlife friendly fencing, and requested that the developer continue to work with environmental groups as the project moves forward.

In **Cupertino**, we have engaged our nature loving community in response to the initiation of yet another park master plan for the Stevens Creek Corridor. In **Palo Alto**, we asked our members and friends to fill a survey for the Palo Alto Master Plan for Park, Trails, Open Space and Recreation. In **Sunnyvale** we continue to advocate for burrowing owls and migratory birds in Baylands Park and on the landfill.

Want to get involved in these, or any of our many other projects? Contact [shani@scvas.org](mailto:shani@scvas.org)

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## Volunteer Ventures

by Toby Goldberg, Programs Coordinator

When a perfect confluence of a beautiful venue, clear weather, great organizations, fabulous volunteers, and amazing supporters all come together, it's not surprising that the result is another superb Wildlife Education Day!

On Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup> – our 23<sup>rd</sup> annual event - we had over 20 organizations highlighting important wildlife, conservation and environmental education programs throughout the Bay Area. Each organization brought a little something special – live animals, fun crafts, games, and more – that helped to share their message with event participants in memorable ways. And of course, the presentations from MickaCoo (soon to be Palomacy Pigeon and Dove Adoptions), SCC Open Space Authority, and Wild Cat Education and Conservation Fund were a delightful treat for the over 700 event attendees throughout the day.

For an event like this, there are so many people to thank that we could fill an entire newsletter! But we want to mention a few of note here:

- Over 60 dedicated volunteers showed up bright and early to help move tables, set up signs and oversee fun activities throughout the day. These included high school students from local schools, members of our Young Audubon community, and of course, the dedicated SCVAS volunteers from our EAC, Education Committee and Board of Direc-

tors. We couldn't have done this without each and every one of them!

- The City of Cupertino provided a tremendous service by allowing us to once again use the beautiful Blackberry farm – what a difference that location makes!
- And of course, we couldn't have offered such a wonderful event to our community without our event sponsors – their support of our mission and message is invaluable!



Believe it or not, we're already looking ahead to our Spring Birding Festival (Wingding Family Fest) and the 2015 Wildlife Education Day. We hope to see you all there with us again to celebrate the wonderful world of nature all around us - stay tuned!

And a VERY special "Thank You" to our up-coming 2015 (and beyond!) sponsor, the Michael Lee Environmental Foundation. Thanks to a generous grant, they will be the official sponsors of our event through 2019! *See photo on page 11.*



**Michael Lee**  
Environmental Foundation

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# SCVAS Adult Education: Adventure Travel with Bob Power in 2015

The following classes are sponsored by the SCVAS Education Committee. To register please call the office at (408) 252-3747. Cancellations require prior notification for refunds (see details for each field seminar below). Information about our upcoming classes and field seminars is also available on our website at [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org).

**The following field seminars still have a few spaces left. But don't wait - they're filling quickly!**

## **The Breeding Birds of Yuba Pass, Sierra Valley, and the Gold Lakes Region**

**Session 1: June 7th – 10<sup>th</sup>; Session 2: June 12th – 15th**

The northern Sierra offers a spectacular array of nesting birds, from Black-backed Woodpeckers and Hermit Warblers to Yellow-headed Blackbirds and Vesper Sparrows. We typically see 100+ species of birds during this workshop, few are species available to study in the south bay, and all are stunning. With a four-day trip, we're able to explore these unique habitats at leisure.

Class size is limited to 11. We organize carpools each morning and will have a maximum of three vehicles. Please do not sign up for this workshop if you're not prepared to carpool around the Yuba Pass / Sierra Valley region. Carpooling expenses are shared by the participants; typically \$5/person/day. Transportation to Yuba Pass, lodging and meals are the responsibility of each participant. Detailed itinerary will be forwarded upon registration. Fee: \$175 members; \$210 non-members



*Black-backed Woodpecker*  
©Tom Grey

## **Mono Basin and the Eastern Sierra Tuesday – Sunday, June 23rd – 28th**

The east slope of the Sierra offers a spectacular array of breeding, post-breeding and migratory birds, from Williamson's Sapsuckers and Clark's Nutcrackers to Osprey and Green-tailed Towhees. With a six-day trip, we're able to explore a number of unique habitats including the alpine zone surrounding Saddlebag Lake, the high desert sage grasslands of the historic ghost town of Bodie, the extraordinary tufa formations of Mono Lake and the basalt columns of Devils Postpile National Monument. We paddle with Phalaropes on Mono Lake and hang out with Rosy-finches at Virginia Lakes. This is the quintessential east-side birding adventure.

Class size is limited to 11. We organize carpools each morning on location and will have a maximum of 3 vehicles for our field trips. Please do not sign up for this workshop if you're not prepared to carpool each day. Carpooling expenses are shared by the participants and are not part of the base fee; typically \$5/person/day. Fee: \$275 members; \$310 non-members. Fee covers: Kayaking, Bodie Entrance, Devil's Postpile Entrance, and Saddlebag Ferry.

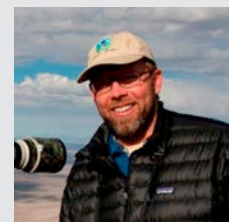
### *Important Notes:*

Altitude: Lee Vining is our daily departure point at 7,000 ft in elevation. We venture off one day to Saddlebag Lake, at 10,000 ft. and above. It is not unusual for participants to feel the effects of the altitude and to need a couple of days to acclimate.

Physical Activity: Each day involves some hiking at altitude. While at a birder's pace, it is still hiking at altitude. One morning is spent kayaking along the south shore of Mono Lake. Participants on this trip should be in reasonably good physical condition and should consult their doctor if altitude is a concern.

## **Special eBird Presentation with Los Gatos Birdwatcher, SFBBO and SCVAS with Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Brian Sullivan, eBird Project Manager**

A real-time, online checklist program, eBird has revolutionized the way the birding community reports and accesses information about birds. Launched in 2002 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, eBird's goal is to maximize the utility and accessibility of the vast numbers of bird observations made each year by recreational and professional bird watchers all over the globe. Millions of observations are entered into the eBird data system and these observations are shared and studied by a global community of educators, land managers, ornithologists, and conservation biologists. In time this data will become the foundation for a better understanding of bird distribution across the western hemisphere and beyond. We hope you can come learn about eBird straight from the source.



Date: Thur, Feb. 5. Doors open 6:30 PM; Presentation at 7:00 PM. Location: Campbell Community Center's Orchard City Banquet Hall (Wincheser Blvd. at Campbell Ave.). Event is free, but **reservations are required:** call 408-358-9453 or email [info@logatosbirdwatcher](mailto:info@logatosbirdwatcher).

# Field Notes

(October-November 2014)

by Bill Bousman

## Geese through Ibis

The first **Snow Goose** of the winter season as an adult found on Cottonwood Lake in Hellyer CP on 25 Nov (GZ), it has continued through the end of the month (m.ob.). A hatch-year **Ross's Goose** was seen at Shoreline Lake on 13 Nov (JuM), but did not remain. An adult was with the Snow Goose in Hellyer Park on 25 Nov (GZ). **Eurasian Wigeon** were found widely. One was at the South County Regional Waste Water Authority (SCRWA) ponds in Gilroy on 24 Oct (WGB). Up to four or five birds were seen in Adobe Creek or nearby Pond A1 from 8 Nov to the end of the month (m.ob.). One or two birds have been seen in Pond A14 in Alviso on 8-11 Nov (MMR, MJM, WGB) and a single male was found in the Almaden Reservoir on 15 Nov (JPa). Two male **Blue-winged Teal** were at the SCRWA ponds on 24 Oct (WGB). **Artesian (Mallard) Slough** and Pond A16 in Alviso provided sightings from 29 Oct to the end of the period (v.ob.), with at least five birds there on 6 Nov (WGB). A female was at the Sunnyvale WPCP oxidation ponds on 25 Nov (WGB). The first wintering **Redhead** were seven on Calaveras Reservoir and four on Pond A18 on 4 Oct (MMR et al.). Birds have been found widely Bayside with a high count of 381 in the Alviso ponds on 8 Nov (MMR, MJM). A female **White-winged Scoter** photographed on Guadalupe Slough near closed refuge ponds on 18 Nov (NW) is probably the same bird that summered in those ponds. A male hybrid **Common X Barrow's Goldeneye** was seen on the Guadalupe percolation ponds on 12 Nov (AV), probably the same bird that has wintered in the area over the last eight or nine years. Two female **Barrow's Goldeneyes** in Pond A12 in Alviso on 28 Nov (BM) were the first of the season. A straying **Ashy Storm-Petrel** was seen on Pond A12 in Alviso on 8 Oct (WGB), a third county record. A **Pelagic Cormorant** has apparently returned for another fall to the Alviso ponds, first seen on 8 Nov (MMR, MJM) and reported through the end of the month (v.ob.). A likely wintering **American Bittern** has shown up again in the entrance to the Mountain View Forebay, first seen on 26 Oct (JuM, MMR et al.). Two **White-faced Ibis** were seen over the Palo Alto Baylands on 1 Nov (DLK *fide* SHo).

## Hawks through Shorebirds

A review of photographs resulted in the identification of a juvenile **Swainson's Hawk** in the Coyote Valley on 7 Sep (JPa). A juvenile **Ferruginous Hawk** in the Coyote Valley on 11 Oct (WGB) was the first of the winter season. Four or more birds have used the valley

during the period (m.ob.). Elsewhere, single birds have been seen in the new Sierra Vista OSP, with one there on 14 Oct (MO'B) and 26 Nov (SPa et al.). Another was seen along Roop Road on 9 Nov (JStP et al.). Fall is when our **Snowy Plovers** gather in winter flocks and we often do not see them for months. During the period they have used a number of the Alviso ponds (v.ob.), but the big surprise was a record count of 157 on Pond A12 on 8 Nov (MMR, MJM). **Lesser Yellowlegs** transition to their low winter numbers in October and November. Single birds were seen in the Mountain View Forebay on 2-3 Oct (CLa, GLa) and one was at Shoreline Lake on 8 Oct (JuM). An arm of New Chicago Marsh at the end of Gold Street in Alviso held two to three birds through at least 8 Nov (v.ob.). **Black Turnstones** must hug the coast in their migration, as they are rarely found

*Exceptional fall records included an Ashy Storm-Petrel and an American Tree Sparrow*

at the southern edge of the Bay. One near Pond A10 in Alviso on 28 Nov (BM) was well past the fall passage and our first record for November. Pond A9 in Alviso occasionally provided good counts of **Red Knots** with three birds there on 12 Oct (MHo) and 72 on 11 Nov (WGB). The juvenile **Ruff** in Pond A12 was last seen on 8 Oct (WGB). An adult was found at the Palo Alto Baylands on 5 Oct (CJC). The first **Sanderlings** of the season were three sighted on Pond A9 in Alviso on 8 Nov (MMR, MJM). Singletons were seen there occasionally during the month (v.ob.). **Wilson's Phalaropes** are mostly gone



Ashy Storm-Petrel  
©Peter LaTourrette

by the end of September, so a single bird that remained at the end of Gold Street on 4 Oct (MMR et al.) and 8 Nov (MMR, MJM) was exceptional. **Red-necked Phalarope** stay in substantial numbers into the second week of October. One to two birds in Pond A12 through 8 Nov (MMR, MJM, PDU) were quite late.

## Jaegers through Falcons

The juvenile **Parasitic Jaeger** discovered on Pond A4 in September remained there through 11 Oct (v.ob.). A **Long-tailed Jaeger** was found at Mathilda and El Camino on 8 Sep and was taken to the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley, but it succumbed (TTs). In recent years, more and more **Elegant Terns** have lingered into November. This year, 89 Elegants were found on closed refuge ponds on 6 Nov (JStP) and two days later, the total on closed and open ponds was at least 93 (MMR, MJM). These numbers decreased through the month, a single bird on A10 on 28 Nov (BM) was the latest record so far for the county. Two **Black Skimmers** were at Charleston Slough on 2 Oct (CLa) and one there again on 17 Oct (GLa). A **Greater Roadrunner** was seen again northeast of Hellyer Avenue on 10 Oct (BJ). A singing bird was heard near the Coe Park headquarters on 23 Oct (WGB). The boat launch bird at Coyote Reservoir was recorded three times 1 to 13 Nov (m.ob.). A **Short-eared Owl** was seen along Alviso Slough on 11 Nov (WGB). Two birds were on Laguna Avenue in the Coyote Valley on 23 Nov (RFu). Wintering **Lewis's Woodpeckers** show up in about one year in two, although the number of birds and locations this year is greater than usual. The first of the birds was one along Sierra Road on 4 Oct (MMR et al.). Since then, individuals and groups have been seen at many locations including the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains near Stanford, the Alamitos Creek Trail, Santa Teresa CP, Calero CP, various spots in the Coyote Valley, and along Marsh Road and Roop Road in foothills of the Diablo Range (m.ob.). Some of these may have been migrating birds, but others may winter. Our rare sapsuckers can present difficult identification problems, as has happened this fall. A male **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was reported at Ed Levin CP on 26 Oct and there again through 11 Nov. But photos taken there on 18 Nov (BM) were of a female **Red-naped Sapsucker** with features similar to a male Yellow-bellied. It is possible that some or all of the earlier reports of a Yellow-bellied there were the female Red-naped instead. A sapsucker seen there on 30 Nov (DWe) was carefully observed and was a male Yellow-bellied. Thus we know that both species have been at this location at least some of the time this fall. There was no controversy over a Red-naped Sapsucker seen on the Alamitos Creek Trail on 25 Oct (JPa). The first lowland **Prairie Falcon** was one at Lake Cunningham on 20 Oct (PDU). A juvenile bird predated an American Coot at Shoreline Lake on 10 Nov (RFR).

## Field Notes *cont'd*

### Flycatchers through Goldfinches

The end of the **Pacific-slope Flycatcher** fall passage is typically the first or second week in October, so a bird on the Alamitos Creek Trail on 25 Oct (JPa) was very late or was attempting to winter. Similarly, a **Barn Swallow** near the Mountain View Forebay on 2 Nov (CLa) wintering bird. The only lowland **Red-breasted Nuthatch** of the period was in urban Mountain View on 27 Nov (GZ). Two **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** along the Calero Creek Trail on 7 Nov (JPa) and one nearby on 18 Nov (MJM) may represent birds attempting to overwinter again. Single **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were found away from their breeding areas, one was at the Sunnyvale Baylands Park on 2 Oct (GZ), another at Casa Grande in New Almaden on 4 Oct (JPa), and the third at the Sunnyvale Baylands Park on 13 Oct (PKe, RKe, GZ). A **Nashville Warbler** in Ulistac Natural Area on 4 Oct (SCT) was the last of our fall passage birds. A hatch-year **American Redstart** along the maintenance road at Shoreline Park on 15 Oct (WGB) was our second redstart of the fall. Possible wintering **Yellow Warblers** were seen, one in an Almaden Valley yard on 9 Nov (JPa) and the other at the Palo Alto Baylands on 18 Nov (MDo). A **Palm Warbler** was found along Stevens Creek above Crittenden Lane on 3 Oct (MMR) and was also seen later that day (CLa). Another Palm was along the outfall channel at the Palo Alto Baylands on 5 Nov (WGB). An **American Tree Sparrow** was seen along the Sunnyvale West Channel on 25 Oct (SCR) but could not be refound. This is the second record for the county—the first

was a bird banded exactly 40 years earlier near Alviso. Two **Chipping Sparrows** were found at Jeffrey Fontana Park on 2 Oct. At least one has been seen there again or at TJ Martin Park in November, locations where they have wintered in recent years (JPa). A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was seen in Shoreline Park on 10 Oct (RCa *fide* PDu). Filling out the **Vesper Sparrow** fall, a fourth bird was found in Joseph Grant CP on 19 Oct (JStP et al.). Single migrant (or perhaps wintering) **Grasshopper Sparrows** turned up at the Palo Alto FCB on 9 Oct (CLa), Calero CP on 11 Oct (PDU), and Santa Teresa CP on 18 Oct (JPa). A wintering **Swamp Sparrow** was at the Palo Alto Baylands on 5 Nov (WGB), the same place where birds wintered last year. The first **White-throated Sparrow** of the winter arrived at the Ulistac Natural Area on 4 Oct (SCT), a bit early. Over the rest of the period there three birds have been found at feeders and 10 more in other locations (m.ob). An immature male **Black-headed Grosbeak** was at Vasona CP on 3 Nov (BM) and may be wintering locally. A late female-type **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was found at the Sunnyvale WPCP on 1 Oct (BM). A couple of **Great-tailed Grackles** remained in the vicinity of the Sunnyvale WPCP through 2 Nov (v.ob.). Up to four birds have been wandering from Shoreline Lake to the Palo Alto Duck Pond during the period (m.ob.). A male was singing on a closed refuge pond on 8 Nov (MMR, MJM). A fall smattering of **Pine Siskins** has become more of a flood in November. A single siskin at a Willow Glen feeder on 26 Oct (BM) was the first out of the mountains. Numbers increased at feeders and in local parks through the period (m.ob.). The highest count was 60+ at Sanborn-Skyline CP



on 6 Nov (GZ).

Observers: Bill Bousman (WGB), Ruth Cantwell (RCa), Charles Coston (CJC), Matthew Dodder (MDo), Pete Dunten (PDU), Ron Fredrick (RFR), Rob Furrow (RFu), Marcel Holyoak (MHo), Susie Hons (SHo), Bob Juhl (BJ), Dan Keller (DJK), Roland Kenner (RKe), Pat Kenny (PKe), Caroline Lambert (CLa), Garrett Lau (GLa), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Juliana Manoliu (JuM), Brooke Miller (BM), Matt O'Brien (MO'B), Janna Pauser (JPa), Steve Patt (Spa), Mike Rogers (MMR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Jason St. Pierre (JStP), Steve Tracy (SCT), Traci Tsukida (TTs), Ann Verdi (AV), Natalie Washburn (NW), Dave Weber (DWe), and Gena Zolotar (GZ).

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

## SCVAS Events Calendar:

### General SCVAS Activities:

**Wed. 1/7 & 2/4, 7:30-9PM**

**The Bay Area Bird Photographers Meeting** - Lucy Evans Nature Center; E. Embarcadero Rd., Palo Alto.

*Topic 1/7: "A Bird and Wildlife Snapshot of Four Countries in the Neotropics" with John Richardson*

*Topic 2/4: "Avian in Flight" with Arash Hazeghi*

See *babp.org* for more details

**Tues. 1/6 & 2/10; 10:00AM**

**Eve Case Bird Discussion Group** - now meets at the home of Rosalind Roberts: 100 Kathy Ct., Los Gatos, 408 395 6631

*Topic 1/6: Bushtits*

*Topic 2/10: Western Screech Owl*

**Wed. 1/14 & 2/11; 3-4:30PM**

**Nature Journaling Club with John Muir Laws**

McClellan Ranch Preserve, Cupertino

These workshops are free and open to all ages (mature children must be accompanied by an adult). No RSVP is required, but space does fill. See *www.johnmuirlaws.com* for more details

**Sat. 2/14; 1-4PM**

**Cavity Nester Recovery Program Orientation and Training**

McClellan Ranch Preserve, Cupertino  
See details below

**Fri-Sat., 4/3-4/4**

**American River Trail Bicycle Trip Sacramento to Folsom and Return**

Maximum of 10 participants. Contact the leader, Cynthia Berg at 650-515-6493 or [BirderGirl@gmail.com](mailto:BirderGirl@gmail.com), for details and to register.

### SCVAS Young Audubon Program:

**Mon. 1/19; 8:30AM-12:30PM**

**Young Audubon "Day of Service" activity**  
Join us at McClellan Ranch Preserve to help restore some of the park's natural beauty.

**Mon. 2/16; Morning (exact times TBD)**  
**Young Audubon Elephant Seal Tours at Año Nuevo State Park**

Join us for a truly unforgettable experience (see page 11 details).

*Note: For all Young Audubon Activities, detailed information is available on our website - [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org) (click on "Kids' Corner").*

# The 2015 SCVAS Spring Birdathon Wants YOU!

**Everyone**, from beginner to expert birder, can participate in the 2015 SCVAS Spring Birdathon, a **major fundraising event** for SCVAS Conservation efforts and youth Environmental Education. **Your participation** makes a difference to kids, birds, and quality of life in the South Bay.

- **Anyone can win fabulous prizes**, from birding trips to resort getaways, excellent wines, and much more, by raising money and being a top fundraiser! It's not like the top 3 get prizes, or the top 5, or the top ten; **more than 30 participants won prizes** last year. This is a fun event folks. Join on in!
- **Anyone can join a team** by donating or raising at least \$50.
- **Anyone can sponsor a team or individual**. Check [www.scvas.org/birdathon](http://www.scvas.org/birdathon) after February 1, 2015, to pick a Birdathon team or individual to sponsor. Call the office to make a tax-deductible donation to a team or individual or donate online at [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org).

## How to join in the Birdathon fun, raise money, and compete for a prize:

1. Check [www.scvas.org/birdathon](http://www.scvas.org/birdathon) for rules, information, and prize list after February 1, 2015. Check back, as the prize list will be updated often.
2. **Talk to your birding friends** about forming a **Self-Guided Team** or joining a Guided Team for the 2014 SCVAS Spring Birdathon, pick a day to bird from March 28th to April 26th, inclusive.
3. \*\*\* **Photographers participate in the Birdathon too!** Just check the rules.\*\*\*
4. **Register** yourself and your team or join a **Guided Team** led by one of our many expert birders (see below) by calling Susan Bell at the SCVAS Office, 408-252-3747 or online at [scvas.org/birdathon](http://scvas.org/birdathon)
  - A. In the "4-hour category," join a team that birds several spots in four hours, or join one of our "Big Sit" teams.
  - B. In the "24-hour (anything more than 4 hours) category" join an all day guided team;



Left: The 2014 Snipe Hunters Team Scanning Calero Reservoir.

One of the top teams for encouraging support for the Birdathon, the Snipe Hunters are also known for birding the length and breadth of Santa Clara County!

Photo courtesy of Edward Rooks

5. **Plan your birding day** with your Self-Guided teammates. Create a 4-Hour or 24-hour (anything more than 4 hours) Birdathon that fits your team.
6. **Raise money - at least \$50 per team member**. It's so much easier than you think. **Just 5 friends sponsoring you at \$10 each!**
7. **Bird with your team** on your Birdathon Day and have fun! Post a photo of you in action on Facebook. Send your sponsors a bird photo.
8. **Collect your pledges** and be sure to turn in the money you've raised, pledge sheets, and results form to the SCVAS office by **May 12th, 5:00 p.m.**, to be eligible for prizes.
9. **Attend the free Birdathon Awards Dinner on Wednesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>.**

*The SCVAS Birdathon Committee hopes this is the year YOU will decide to join in the fun!*

Can't participate? Please consider sponsoring a team or an individual participant with a donation. Call Susan Bell at the SCVAS Office, 408-252-3747 or sponsor online at [scvas.org/birdathon](http://scvas.org/birdathon).

## Outside Events of Interest:

Feb 12-15, 2015

### Winter Wings Festival Klamath Basin

Featuring Richard Crossley and Jennifer Wu; winter is a WONDERFUL time to bird in the Klamath Basin!

See [www.winterwingsfest.org](http://www.winterwingsfest.org) for details and how to register

Feb. 13-16, 2015

### Great Backyard Bird Count

See [www.birdsource.org/gbbc](http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc) for details

March 5-8, 2015

### San Diego Bird Festival Marina Village Conference Center

With Keynote speaker Bernd Heinrich, and special festival guests, Laurie Lewis and Tom Rozum ("Birdy Bluegrass Virtuosos"), this is a festival sure to please everyone!

See [www.sandiegoaudubon.org](http://www.sandiegoaudubon.org) for details and how to register

April 10-12, 2015

### 12th Annual Olympic Peninsula BirdFest Sequim, WA

Visit the rain shadow of the Olympic Peninsula

to discover the birds of the coastal Pacific Northwest. Guided field trips, a boat cruise in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, silent auction, and a gala banquet.

See [www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org) for more details and how to register

### Registration Opens in February: 40th Annual WFO Conference June 10-14, 2015

#### Billings, Montana

The first time held in Montana, this year's conference will highlight field trips to some of the nation's most varied habitats.

See [www.westernfieldornithologists.org](http://www.westernfieldornithologists.org) for details and how to register



## Go "Guided" - Join one of our Prearranged Spring Birdathon Teams

We are looking for all levels of birders to join one of our prearranged Big-sit, 4-hour, or 24-hour (maximum count time) Guided Birdathon teams. All you have to do is raise the minimum requirement of \$50, grab your binoculars and go birding! Beginners can out-compete experts for great prizes by gathering more donations. Space on guided teams is limited. Register for and see descriptions of these teams at [scvas.org/birdathon](http://scvas.org/birdathon) after February 1st. The registration deadline is one week before the trip date. Each leader will contact you with complete details. *Here's a list of just a few of our amazing teams to whet your interest:*

### 4-hour Birdathon Teams

There is nothing more exciting than trying to see 100 species in four hours. These 4-hour birdathons give you the taste of a big-day, let you participate in the birdathon fun, and still be home for supper.

**Mean Green Birding Machine (MGBM) with Rob Furrow**  
– Date TBD. All on bikes, completely green, completely fun.

**Other teams to be announced**



*Rob Furrow's Birdathon-by-Bike adds a unique dimension to the competition!*

*Photo courtesy by Sylvia Wu*

### Join in the Big-sit Challenge:

What in tarnation is a Big Sit???: I.D. as many birds as possible from within a 17-foot diameter circle within a 4-hour period of time. A tail-gate party for birders! Multiple teams in multiple locations competing against each other and trying to break through the 60 species barrier. Join the fun on **Sunday, April 12th**, and register now!

**Data-sets with Stephanie Ellis** – Shoreline Lake (TBC)  
**Cheeky Chickadees with Debbie Thompson** – Location TBD.

**Your name belongs here!** Can you sit and scan for birds at the same time? Can you organize a gourmet feast? Form your team and join Year 5 in the grand tradition of Big Sits throughout the world!

### 24-hour Birdathon Teams (this category is for any team out for more than 4 hours)

Nothing gets the excitement rolling better than a traditional big-day Birdathon. You will find all families of birds in many different habitats. You will wow your donors who pledged for every species you see. **Friends, office-mates, relatives, will all be astounded.** "You did what?!!!" We hand-pick our skilled team leaders for an unforgettable Big Day.

**The OhMyGodwits! with Beth Hamel** (a photographer's special)  
-- Saturday, April 11th

**Rock Wrens with Bob Hirt** – Sunday, April 19th

**Varied Twitchers with Mike Rogers** – Saturday, April 25th

**Persistent Picidaes with Lisa Myers** – Date TBD

**DeDucktions with Matthew Dodder** – Date TBD

**The Fledglings with Pati Rouzer** (for children ages 6-16) –  
Date TBD

**Other teams to be announced**

**Who will challenge the great ones? Want to lead a Big Day team? This is your year! Contact [executivedirector@scvas.org](mailto:executivedirector@scvas.org)**

### 5 Years and Counting - Join a Photographer's Birdathon!

*Eight pioneering photographers launched the Photographer's Birdathon in 2011. In 2012, Barry Langdon-Lasagne shattered the 24-hour record with 123 species captured and Julio Mulero took the 4-hour honors with 49 captures from a tugboat! Join us for year four of this photographer's challenge.*

Using the same time period, March 28th to April 26th, photographers can form their own teams, team up with a birder friend, or join a Big Day team to maximize their chances at photographing the most species. Photographers compete with other birders for the fundraising prizes.

*Dust off your lenses and clear your calendars.  
Photographers, time to join in the fun!*



*Most Artistic Bird Photographed  
in 2014:  
Great Blue Heron by Tom Grey*

## Rodenticides (cont'd from page 1)

with nature's own free rodent control. Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks and Skunks, which eat a steady diet of rodents, are similarly affected.

According to an EPA spokesperson, millions of households use mouse and rat poisons each year, and many are unaware that poisons climb the food chain. Following recent EPA rulings, the most toxic of the poisons, known as "second generation" anticoagulants touted to kill mice and rats in a single dose, are being taken off the shelf for household consumers. However, they will continue to be available through pest control companies and for agricultural use. Unfortunately, lower-dose rodenticides containing anticoagulants and neurotoxins will still be available to the public (see sidebar "Understanding Rodenticides").

**What are the alternatives?** The most effective defense from an infestation of mice and rats is to prevent them from entering the house in the first place. Seal all possible entry points to the house with ¼" by ¼" metal mesh. Keep areas around the house free of debris, trash, pet food, and fallen fruit. Bring bird feeders in at night, and make sure any edibles, such as birdseed or pet food are stored in metal cans with secure lids. Ivy that grows on or near the house provides an inviting nesting place for mice and rats and should be removed. Rats and mice inside the house can be trapped using old-fashioned snap traps. They are fast, humane, effective and can be closed in a plastic box away from pets or children. Glue traps should never be used. The adhesive plate causes the animal to die a long slow death and inflicts unnecessary suffering. These traps may also inadvertently trap birds, baby animals, lizards, and even pets.

If you have good habitat for any of the cavity-nesting owls, and *neither you nor your neighbors are using rodenticides*, consider installing a nesting box on your property. These beautiful creatures are efficient hunters and voracious eaters; a family of barn owls can consume more than 3000 mice in a single year. Details for building and installing owl boxes can be found on the SCVAS website.

**The bottom line:** Rodenticides cause far-reaching damage to local wildlife and pets. As alternative methods of pest control: remove mice and rats from your home by trapping instead; exclude them by sealing possible entry points; remove attractants from around your home; and allow the rodents' natural predators to keep their numbers in check.

**A Note From SCVAS' Executive Director:** Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society advocates for the adoption of policies that reduce threats posed by rodenticides on our native and imperiled species both County and Statewide.

.....  
Jackie Turner has been a wildlife rehabilitator for more than 10 years and currently volunteers at the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley. She also works with educational animals at the Palo Alto Junior Museum and Zoo and is a certified Master Gardener. The author acknowledges and thanks these sources: Raptors are the Solution, WildCare of San Rafael, American Bird Conservancy, Hungry Owl Project, and Safer Rodent Control Resource Center. Visit their websites for further information.

### Understanding Rodenticides

**Bromethalin** - Nerve toxin. Causes seizures and internal damage.

**Diphacinone** - Anticoagulant. Kills by thinning the blood and causing uncontrollable bleeding.

**Chlorophacinone** - Anticoagulant

**D-Con**, an anticoagulant, is the most popular brand of rat poison sold in the United States because of its low cost and effectiveness. It has higher toxicity than the older products.

The Environmental Protection Agency tried for years to ban the sale of this potent poison to consumers but had met with resistance from the manufacturer, Reckitt Benckiser of the UK. The EPA, in seeking its ban, pointed to the risk to eagles, foxes and other wildlife. Finally a truce was reached. The manufacturer will cease making the second-generation product at the end of 2015 but can sell its existing supplies to retailers until May 2015. Retailers may continue to sell the product until their stock runs out.

In July of 2014, the State of CA banned the sale of second-generation rodenticides to the general public, although professional exterminators are still allowed to use them. This ban has led many to believe that the first-generation rodenticides remaining on the market are safer. This is absolutely not the case. These remaining products contain the exact same poisons but at a lower concentration. Rodents may need to return to the bait station a number of times before they consume a lethal amount of poison, but meanwhile they are sluggish and debilitated and an easy target for wildlife and pets. make no mistake; "safer" rodenticides are far from safe.

## Cavity Nesters Recovery Program (CNRP) Activities

Get involved this spring - enjoy the beauty of nature, *and* help our local cavity nesting species!

Sat. 2/14; 1-4PM

**Orientation and Info Meeting & Hands-on Training for Monitors**

McClellan Ranch Preserve, Cupertino

We'll start the afternoon with a general information session for potential and/or new nest box monitors - or just-interested folks. This will provide some insight as to what's going on with our local cavity nesting bird populations, and how you can help stop their decline.

After our introductory session, we'll walk along the nest box trail



at McClellan Ranch Preserve and learn how to open nest boxes for monitoring, how to identify the different species, and how to troubleshoot. For all new monitors committed to the 2015 breeding season or any existing monitors who would like a refresher.

RSVP to 408-252-3740 or [programs@scvas.org](mailto:programs@scvas.org), or by using the online form at [www.scvas.org/cnrp](http://www.scvas.org/cnrp). **Note:** You do not have to attend both components, but new monitors should attend the intro session.

Sat. 3/7; 9AM-12PM (Date & Time TBC)  
**Off-Site Nest Box Training with David "Tex" Houston**

Arastradero OSP, Palo Alto.

Training *begins* at 9AM, but participants need not attend the full 3 hours if unable to do so. RSVP to [350co2now@gmail.com](mailto:350co2now@gmail.com).

**\*\*Current CNRP Monitors\*\***

**Don't forget to prepare for the 2015 breeding season by cleaning out your boxes by the end of February**

# Friends of SCVAS

*Gifts received between October 1st and November 30th, 2014*

## \$1,000 and up

Alan and Irene Adler  
Linda Brownrigg  
Robert Hirt  
Elizabeth Rizzi  
Annette Wheeler  
Stevens Creek Striders

## \$500-\$999

Constance Crawford  
Jeffrey and Marcia Keimer  
Kristine Kelly and Arthur Gleckler  
Kiwanis Club of West San Jose  
Enrique and Judy Klein  
Mary Lorey (in honor of Carter H. Bradshaw and Jack C. Kolda)  
Richard Mlynarik and Elizabeth Willey  
Stephen Robie

## \$250-\$499

Felix and Helen Charpentier  
Lynn and James Gibbons  
Jerry and Ginny Kaminski  
James Little  
Michael and Alma Rogers  
David Simon and Lynn Gordon  
Shripad and Shubha Tuljapurkar  
Cheryl Turner  
Robin and Don Watenpaugh

## \$100-\$249

Helen Armer  
Joyce Bartlett  
Patti Beck  
Benevity Community Impact Fund  
Penelope Bowen  
Phyllis Browning  
Ellyn Bush  
Dina Cheyette  
Dr. John Colwell  
Ann Davidson (in honor of Bob Power)  
Karen DeMello (in honor of Mary Wisnewski, Bill Walker and Mike Mammoser)  
Donald and Elaine Dvorak  
Judy Enos  
Barbara Francis  
Vernon and Ursula Gallichotte  
Deanna Gomby  
Fred and MaryHelen Greaves  
Brian and Syd Hackworth  
Anne Hammond  
Richard and Diane Horn  
Larry and Marcia Hulberg  
Richard Jeffers  
Marilyn Kupcho  
Rick Roberts and Laurie West Roberts  
Cindy Lockhart  
Lisa Miller  
George and Lilo Miller  
David Poeschel

Dorothy Rayner  
Kelly Rohlfs  
Walt and Teresa Ruzzo  
Jeffrey Segall  
Robert Sexton  
David and Julie Stevens  
Alan and Karen Thomas  
Robert and Helene Weil

## \$60-\$99

Prashee Aharwal  
Bonnie Bedford-White  
Patricia Boyle  
Doug and Gail Cheeseman  
Dr. Gilbert Chu  
Dr. and Mrs. Charles Coston  
Cecilia Craig  
Maryann Danielson  
Rosalie Lefkowitz  
Mary Murphy and George Schuttinger  
Mike and Darryl Ospring  
Don and Dee Price  
Gokul and Tamara Rajaram  
Annemarie Rosengreen  
Alice Smith  
Frank Vanslager

## Up to \$59

Cheryl Adams  
Joe Altimus and Molly Molloy  
Joanne Banko  
Jean Batryn  
Lynn Bowers  
Frank and Joan Brauch  
Richard and Marjorie Brody

Karen Burnson  
Bernice Camuso  
Bill Channell  
Joseph Chavez  
Rhonda Colcord  
Suzanne Conens  
Jan Deckman  
Pete Dunten  
Joyce Eden  
Charlotte Epstein  
Patricia Fausett  
Thomas and Pauline Ferrito  
Suzanne Francis  
Mark and Nancy Franich  
Ingrid Graeve  
Theresa Grieve  
Kathleen Haydel  
Klaus Hendig  
Beverly Hesse  
Christina Holloway  
Alice Kaufman  
John and Jane Kesselring  
Lena Kolesnikova  
Karen Korelitz  
Linda Liebermann  
Los Gatos Birdwatcher  
Jeanine Mattson  
Steve McHenry and Carolyn Straub  
Jennifer Moylan  
Julie Neider  
Anne and Samuel Ng  
Katy Obringer  
Ashish Pal  
Jean Palmeter

Margaret Parkes  
Jan Paull  
Patricia Prickett  
Nadine Redding  
Carol Rohwer-Patterson  
Marcia Ruotolo  
John Schaar  
Mary Smith  
Larry Spivak  
Sunnyvale Garden Club  
Debra Symons  
Clyde Taniguchi  
Marilyn Walthers  
Wayne Wang  
Carol Warner  
Noreen Williamson  
Betty Wyatt  
Matthew Wyatt  
David and Floy Zittin,

A special thank you to Carol Seeds for the donation of the book, *Bird Sense*, to the SCVAS library in honor of her sister Barbara Foster.

## Legacy Fund

J. Morse Cavender Trust

## Foundation Support

We would like to give a huge organizational thank you to the Michael Lee Environmental Foundation for their very generous 5 year commitment to Wildlife Education Day.



*Left: After a successful 50K run in September, Stevens Creek Striders Running Club presented SCVAS Executive Director, Stephanie Ellis, with a check for \$1500 to help support Education and Conservation. We would like to thank Steve Patt, the Stevens Creek Striders Board of Directors, Treasurer Hugo de Groot, and all who participated in this wonderful event.*



*Left: Michael Lee Environmental Foundation Executive Director, Ralph Schardt, presents SCVAS Board President, Bob Hirt, with a check to support Wildlife Education Day through 2019!*

Elephant Seal Breeding Season is here! Don't miss out on this amazing opportunity to see pups and breeding adults up close! *Groups with children get first priority for this activity.*

## SCVAS sponsored tours of Año Nuevo State Reserve

**Date:** Monday, February 16th\* (President's Day)

(\* We are reserving three tours - times still TBC as of this issue's printing)

**Cost/person:** \$7 for SCVAS members; \$9 for non-members. **Min. Age:** 7-years-old and up

**Go online - [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org) and click on "Kids' Corner" - or call (408) 252-3740 for specific times and more information. Please call or use the online sign-up to make reservations.**

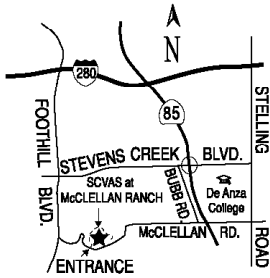
**Space is limited, so call early!**

**NOTE:** *There is a separate \$10/car vehicle fee collected at Park entrance. Carpooling is strongly encouraged as parking is limited, but must be arranged by participants. SCVAS can not coordinate rides.*

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

Phone: 408-252-3747  
 Fax: 408-252-2850  
 E-mail: [scvas@scvas.org](mailto:scvas@scvas.org)  
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## Your Input Is Needed!

Please help us shape the direction of future SCVAS Classes and Field Seminars by letting us know what YOU want to learn about, and where YOU want to go! We've set-up a short survey online to help us gather this information. Your feedback is extremely important to us!

Go to [www.scvas.org/classes](http://www.scvas.org/classes) and scroll down to the bottom.

### OFFICERS

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'13-'16

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

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#### Website

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### 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 Editors:** Toby Goldberg,  
 Cara Kuhn

## 2015 Volume 62, Number 1

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

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**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.