

THE AVOCET

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

July-August 2015

SCVAS Volunteers of the Year

by Toby Goldberg, SCVAS Programs Coordinator

The Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society was founded in 1926. Until relatively recently (as such things are measured) our chapter was an entirely volunteer-driven and volunteer-run organization. Although we've been fortunate to be able to support full-time staff for the last 20 years or so, it is still the volunteers who make it possible for us to participate in all of the many activities, projects, and programs that we are involved in.

One of the great pleasures that the SCVAS staff enjoy is the opportunity to highlight, and thank, a few of these extraordinary volunteers each year at our Annual June Membership Meeting. This year's honorees amply demonstrate the dedication our volunteers have to the SCVAS mission, and exemplify what make our volunteers such amazing people to work with:

Pete La Tourette: Au Revoir to our Retiring (but not Tiring) Board Treasurer

It was in the Fall of 2008 that we welcomed Pete La Tourette as our new Treasurer and member of the Board of Directors. Seems like just yesterday, but Pete saw us through amazing growth and progress. In addition to seeing our Legacy Fund double in size, stabilizing our investment portfolio, and inspiring the creation of the Advocacy program which has been so successful in protecting the birds and their habitat these last eight years, Pete provided the seasoned wisdom for our Chapter that was often required during this growth period. When a particularly controversial issue was on the table for our Chapter, we would always wait to hear from Pete. His experience and judgment and soft spoken demeanor would have us all listening intently. He fulfilled more than the Treasurer's role; he was a key voice on the Board.

Pete was also instrumental in coordinating the very popular Bay Area Bird Photographers group for many years, which meets at the Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center in Palo Alto each month. Organizing some spectacular presentations, Pete helped this club grow and thrive. Pete's own photography has also been a wonderful resource for this chapter, which he and other members of the BABP club have so graciously allowed us to use free of charge. We wish him the best as he focuses on home

and family, but we also believe we'll spot him occasionally in the field toting his famously large camera. We're sure more award-winning shots are ahead for Pete.



(continued on page 4)

SCVAS Launches Search for the Next Executive Director

The transition committee has been quite busy this spring clarifying the Chapter's leadership needs and enlisting input from the Board, staff, members and stakeholders. The full job description, and applications instructions can be found on our website at www.scvas.org.

The Board is seeking a collaborative leader with a personal or vocational understanding of the importance of native birds and their ecosystems. He or she should have a proven track record in attracting and sustaining public and private funding. Effective communication, community collaboration, and day-to-day nonprofit organizational management skills are also essential for this position.

Deadline for applications is July 24th.

Calling All Kids:

It's not too late to join us for a fabulous week of exploration! Summer Camp is still taking sign-ups!

-Page 2 (or online) for details

- ❖ *Updates from our Environmental Advocate*
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July-Aug '15 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

Wednesday July 1, 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, at (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.

Saturday July 11, 8:00 AM

Charleston Slough

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

Wednesday August 5, 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, at (408) 730-7545 with questions. See directions from July 1st.

Saturday August 8, 8:30 AM

Ano Nuevo State Reserve

Half day. **Leader:** Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527. **Directions:** The entrance is along Hwy 1 about 30 miles south of Half Moon Bay or 20 miles north of Santa Cruz. Meet at the far (south) end of the parking lot. **Highlights:** Possible birds include Bank Swallow, Marbled Murrelet and early returning shorebirds. **Difficulty Level:** Plan on a 3-4 mile walk (half of it in sand), fog, bright sun and wind. **Notes:** Bring a scope, lunch, liquids, and dress in layers. There is a \$10 per car parking fee. **LO**

Saturday August 15, 8:00 AM

Charleston Slough

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

Events Calendar:

Nature Journaling with John Muir Laws Wed. 7/15 & 8/12; 3-4:30PM

McClellan Ranch Preserve,
Cupertino

Free workshops for all ages!
No RSVP required, but
please be on time.

Note: For July, we will be joined by special
guest instructor Laurie Wigham.

Go to our website, www.scvas.org, for
more details.



Bird Sketch
© John Muir Laws

Young Audubon Program: Summer Adventure Series

Summer "Nature Adventures" Camp

Mon-Fri 7/20-24; 9:00AM-3:00PM

Co-Sponsored by SCVAS and MROSD

Fun days to get outside and explore!
Locations vary as we enjoy some of our
beautiful local open space areas. For
all children entering
grades 2-6.

**Deadline to register
extended to July 6th.**

Details at www.scvas.org/SummerCamp.



Bird Banding with SFBBO

Sat. 8/15; 8:00-
10:00AM

Coyote Creek Banding Station, Milpitas.

For families and children ages 7 and
up.

See www.scvas.org/KidsCalendar for
details



Counting Birds on Facebook's Roof

by Peter E. Hart, SCVAS Board Member

If you cruise by the intersection of Willow Road and Bayfront Expressway in Menlo Park, you can't help but be impressed by Facebook's Frank Gehry-designed new main building. With a design influenced, we believe, by many constructive comments from SCVAS and others, it's a marvel of ecologically sensitive, bird-friendly design.

The building is topped by a nine acre green roof with over 400 trees, some of them surprisingly substantial, and—increasingly—quite a few birds. How many birds, and what species?

Answering those questions was the goal of a small team of volunteers from SCVAS and Sequoia Audubon. In what's planned as the first of a year-long series of monthly bird counts—generously sponsored by Facebook—the group traversed the half-mile walking loop in a couple of hours, identifying and counting birds either on or above the building. The many shorebirds visible on the margins of the Bay were not included.

A total of 16 species were tabulated. You can see the checklist on eBird at [http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=\\$23794846](http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=$23794846). Future counts will reveal if this little oasis becomes popular with more species over time.



A view of the new Facebook
headquarter's roof.
Photo courtesy of Peter E. Hart

Conservation Corner

By Shani Kleinhaus, Environmental Advocate

Sunnyvale approves Burrowing Owl Plan

The City of Sunnyvale is moving forward with improvements for Burrowing Owl wetlands of Baylands Park. We thank the City for looking out for the owls.

The Fight for Panoche Valley Continues

In May, the Board of Supervisors of San Benito County (again) certified a revised Environmental Impact Report and re-approved the Panoche Valley Solar project. Panoche Valley is designated a Globally Important Bird Area because it provides habitat to a rich and unique constellation of resident and migratory bird species. It also hosts many other endangered and threatened species of wildlife. Undeveloped, the valley is likely to provide an important climate-change refuge. We do not agree with the EIR and strongly believe that the proposed solar development will cause irreversible harm to migratory birds and endangered species. We continue to advocate against placement of solar farms in Important Bird Areas, and to oppose this particular project as it moves through multiple permitting processes. SCVAS and the Sierra Club are (again) considering litigation.

Gilroy Master Plan Development

As the City of Gilroy drafts a new Master Plan, SCVAS is supporting limiting growth to the existing developed footprint. We wrote a Guest Opinion for the Gilroy Dispatch (see link below). Later, the City Council voted to keep 660 acres east of 101 in agricultural designation on the land use map. While we are happy with this decision, we are concerned that the council moved forward with residential designation of 770 acres further north towards San Martin – a proposal that is moving ahead prior to completion of the General Plan. See www.gilroydispatch.com/opinion/columnists/guest_columns/what-do-gilroyans-want-the-city-to-look-like-circa/article_c0d76e50-f275-11e4-be2a-e3cad319a431.html



Stanford / Searsville Dam:

SCVAS participated in the Searsville Alternatives Study Advisory Group, which helped Stanford University evaluate alternatives for the future of Searsville Dam and lake and the Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve. Of particular concern to SCVAS were the potential loss of open water at Searsville reservoir (at a great cost to bat species); potential loss of up to 200 acres of wetlands and wetland/riparian forest (at a great cost to migratory bird species); and unavoidable sedimentation of the creek downstream and the Bay (with potential impacts to several endangered species and increased flood risks).

Stanford determined that the best course of action is to create an opening at the bottom of the dam to drain the reservoir and flush out the fine sediment to allow fish passage and provide attenuation of peak flood flows. Some habitats will be restored under this plan, while others will be reduced, relocated or lost. A major advantage of this option is that it is reversible; if models of sediment impacts and risks of downstream flooding prove inaccurate, and adverse impacts become evident in the watershed, the opening in the dam can be closed.

We thank Stanford University for inviting us to participate in the Searsville Alternatives Study Advisory Group and thank the other stakeholders who made it such an engaging educational experience. We are glad the collective wisdom of this process has chosen a cautious path forward.

Our Guest Opinion on the process was published in the Menlo Park Herald and the Palo Alto Weekly, see: <http://www.paloaltoonline.com/print/story/2015/05/29/guest-opinion-keeping-searsville-dam-in-place-is-a-good-solution>.

As always, the SCVAS Environmental Advocacy team is engaged in conservation projects throughout our County (and beyond) – Please contact advocate@scvas.org to volunteer.

Changes Are Coming to the Avocet!

Over the next several issues, you'll see some changes taking place with your bi-monthly newsletter. Some will be big, some will be small, but all will, we hope, help us create a more modern, user-friendly experience.

If you have any feedback you'd like to provide about what you'd like to see more (or less...) of, please contact us at the SCVAS office - 408-252-3747. Or go to our website and take our User Survey.

Volunteer Ventures

by Toby Goldberg, Programs Coordinator

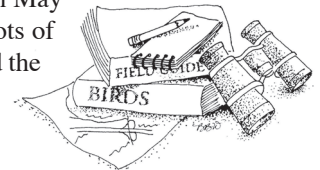
Although summer is often a quieter time around the SCVAS office, there are still plenty of activities, projects, and programs going on to keep everyone quite busy. If you have some free time and are looking for something to do this summer or fall, we'd love to talk with you! Here are some opportunities that might be of interest:

Egret Docents: Docents are needed to provide information to Google employees at the egret rookery on Shorebird Way in Mountain View. This opportunity starts in May and will run through mid-July. During lunchtime on Thursdays (and on occasional weekends), volunteers will provide Googlers with information about the egrets and SCVAS, and with opportunities to see the egrets up close and personal as they raise their young. Please contact advocate@scvas.org if you are available for at least two Thursdays in the next 6 weeks.

4th of July Burrowing Owl Guards at Shoreline: For anyone that might be around on the 4th of July, this is a fun opportunity to both see some great fireworks, and help protect the burrowing owls - win, win! Volunteers are needed to assist the City of Mountain View with crowd management during the 4th of July celebration and fireworks display at Shoreline Park, from about 6pm to 10:30pm (the fireworks run from about 9:30-10pm). Because of access and permitting requirements, **RSVPs are required**. Please contact advocate@scvas.org to sign up.

Office Project Assistants: A good way for someone with an irregular schedule, or who wants quiet projects to keep them active, to get involved. We're looking for a few helpers over the summer to assist with a variety of office projects - from data entry to binocular repair to basement organization. Volunteers should be good at following precise directions; comfort working with Apple computers a plus. Exact schedule will depend on availability and staff needs.

Palo Alto Bird Counts Coordinator: For anyone interested in birds, birding, citizen science, and working with a great group of dedicated birders, the Palo Alto Bird Counts is looking for you! The peak of the efforts are in May and November, and you'll have lots of support from veteran counters and the Christmas Bird Count compiler, Al Eisner. Contact the SCVAS office for more details if interested.



Of course, there are many more opportunities available to help out. Please check out our website or contact the Programs Coordinator at (408) 252-3740 or programs@scvas.org. We'd love to help you find the right match for your time, talents, and interests!

Volunteer Spotlight

(cont'd from page 1)

Christine Slocomb: Diving Right In!

It certainly isn't any surprise to us that Audubon attracts high-calibre volunteers (after all, we think *all* of our volunteers are pretty spectacular), but sometimes, even we are amazed at who comes knocking on our door. Christine is one of those phenomenal finds. A native of southern California, Christine received her B.A. from UC San Diego and her M.Sc. from St. Joseph's University with an emphasis on Animal Behavioral Ecology. In between the two degrees, she worked for the Institute for Conservation Research for 10 years where she conducted and ran research projects on a wide variety of native and endangered species.

For the last 18 months, Christine has been volunteering with SCVAS, where she has wasted no time in becoming an integral and crucial member of our conservation team. Thanks to both her scientific background and her willingness to work hard, nest box monitoring at McClellan Ranch Preserve has continued as a viable conservation

tool for our local cavity nesting species. Christine is also an active participant in our Environmental Action Committee, where she has helped write CEQA documents, attended City Council meetings to speak up about important bird issues, and conducted Burrowing Owl surveys. Christine was also instrumental in developing the weekly "egret office hours" at Google. This has become a popular program allowing the public to learn more about egret biology and the history of the rookery. We look forward to our continuing conservation strength because of Christine's efforts.

Clysta Seney Mclemore: An Inspiration in the Conservation World for Over Twenty Years

Articulate and soft spoken, Clysta has advocated for Burrowing Owls and their habitat, creeks and riparian ecosystems, Bay wetlands and open space for over two decades. She is the dreamer who in the City of Santa Clara envisioned a golf course transformed to native bird habitat, the lightning rod that electrified the Environmental Action Committee to act, and the poet who galvanized the community to bring Ulistac Natural Area to life. Serving on many commissions, committees, task forces and community advisory groups, Clysta has not abandoned the EAC: she continues to provide advice and guidance to our advocacy and conservation work, contributing the perspective and wisdom that are rooted in her deep knowledge of our valley's natural history. It is with great appreciation that we honor Clysta as one of our Volunteers of the Year.



Adult Education Classes - Summer 2015

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

Birds of the Farallones *with Alvaro's Adventures*

A summer trip to the Farallones conjures up images of Great White Sharks and Humpback whales. While we hope to encounter the entire breadth of ocean life the islands have to offer, we'll be going for nesting seabirds. The islands are teeming with nesting birds and our timing adds seabird migration to the mix. Join us for an unforgettable experience.

This is an approximately 10-hour trip, with a deep-water visit off the Continental Shelf on the return. For more details about this trip, see: <http://alvarosadventures.com/farallon-islands/>. **But please note that registration for this particular trip is through SCVAS.**

Guides: Al Jaramillo, Matthew Dodder, Bob Power.

Date: Sat. 8/1; 7:00AM to approx. 5:00PM. Location: Half Moon Bay (Princeton Harbor).

Fee: \$130 members; \$150 non-members.



Rhinoceros Auklets (left), Cassin's Auklets (center) and Tufted Puffins (right) are just some of the pelagic species sure to delight on this adventure to the Farallon Islands

Photos © Peter LaTourrette



Zodiac cruising in Larsen Harbour

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris, our biggest supporters and favorite eco-tourism company on the planet, has made a very generous offer to support our chapter by sharing the proceeds from their upcoming Antarctica trip.

Go to Antarctica, have a blast, have the trip of a lifetime AND support our work locally at the same time.



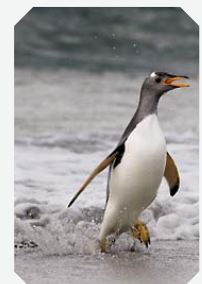
The expedition vessel, the Ortelius

South Georgia Island and the Falkland Islands Wildlife Spectacle in an Antarctic Paradise October 29 to November 17, 2015



Southern Elephant Seals cover the Beach

Join Cheesemans' on an Antarctic expedition, with eight landing days on South Georgia Island – observe vast King Penguin colonies, nearly fledged Wandering Albatross chicks, and cliff-nesting Gray-headed Albatross. Find male Southern Elephant Seals fighting to maintain control of their harem and mothers with new babies. Spend one day at Sea Lion Island on the Falkland Islands watching Gentoo, Magellanic, and Rockhopper penguins among many other bird species. Our priority is to give you maximum time ashore and Zodiac cruising to explore at your own pace during this 20-day expedition Oct-Nov 2015 aboard the 100-passenger ice-ship Ortelius.



Gentoo Penguin

For costs, more information or to reserve your space, go to http://www.cheesemans.com/sogeorgia_or_oct15.html

Field Notes

(April-May 2015)

by Pete Dunten

Geese through Phalaropes

A few geese have remained through the period, with a single **Greater White-Fronted Goose** at bayside locations on 13 Apr (RK) and 27 May (DPe) and two on 25 Apr (CLa, MDo). Two were at the Coyote Creek Golf Course on 11 Apr (ST), and one was at Parkway Lakes on 13 May (MMR). A solo **Cackling Goose** favored Charleston Slough and Shoreline Park 13 May through 30 May (AH, MDo, JL). A single **Ross's Goose** was also seen at Shoreline Park and nearby between 19 Apr and 25 May (RFu et al., m. ob.). **Common Loons** and **Red-throated Loons** are expected passage migrants in spring. Single **Common Loons** were on Salt pond A18 on 10 Apr (JStP, CJ), Coyote Lake from 11 Apr through 25 Apr (ST, CLa, LSp, MDo et al., LM et al., JBI), and Salt pond A14 from 28 Apr through 9 May (JStP, MMR, GZ). Two **Common Loons** flying NW over Loma Prieta on 11 Apr were unusual, given the location (AR, JGa, NK). A **Red-throated Loon** first noted 4 May on Lexington Reservoir (SP) remained through the period (m. ob.), and was joined by a second bird noted only on 10 May (EGo). **Red-necked Grebes** are not seen every year; they continued to delight observers this year with the bird at Coyote Lake acquiring breeding plumage and remaining through 13 Apr (CLa), and another bird gracing Lexington Reservoir from 3 May through 17 May (SP, m. ob.). Our first May record of a **Pelagic Cormorant** was an individual on the Alviso salt pond A10/A11 levee on the 30th (MDo). A **Broad-winged Hawk** on its way north passed over Loma Prieta on 19 Apr (DW). One member of a pair of **Swainson's Hawks** returning to breed in Coyote Valley was first noted on 1 Apr (RPh), and both birds were seen on 29 Apr (MMR). **Black Rails** at Alviso Marina, along Alviso Slough, and in the marsh at the SW corner of Salt pond A17 continued to be vocal through the period, with a high count of three calling at Alviso Marina on three dates (m. ob.). **Snowy Plover** numbers remained low, with a high count of three birds at Crittenden Marsh on 3 May (MMR), where one to two Plovers were reported from 1 Apr through 19 May (RFu, m. ob.). A pair was subsequently found at Pond A3N on 25 May (MMR, MJM). A remarkable sighting of a **Black Oystercatcher** on the Alviso salt pond A10/A11 levee on 14 Apr (JStP) was the first county record for the spring. The Oystercatcher was seen throughout the period, though not by all

who undertook the trek along the levee trails (m. ob.). Aply, a single **Solitary Sandpiper** was found this spring, at Llagas Creek along Old Oak Glen Road on 19 Apr (BH et al.). One **Sanderling** was reported in the impoundment east of Salt pond A12 at Alviso on Apr 11 (BW et al.), and four very late birds were on the Alviso salt pond A5/A7 levee on May 25 (MMR, MJM). The spring movement of phalaropes through the area concluded with reports of two **Wilson's Phalaropes** on Salt pond A13 on 3 May (MMR), seven **Red-necked Phalaropes** on Salt ponds A6 and A13 on 25 May (MMR, MJM), and one **Red-necked Phalarope** on Salt pond A12 on 28 May (WGB).

Charms of Calliope and Rufous Hummingbirds Highlighted This Year's Spring Migration

Gulls through Woodpeckers

A **Franklin's Gull** briefly visited Salt pond A16 on 21 May (EM), the first in the county since 2010. Two out-of-season **Elegant Terns** were over Salt pond A1 on 20 Apr (JStP, CJ, VH). They typically arrive in June from southern breeding grounds. **Black Skimmers** nest on small islets in the south bay; the high count for the period was 15 noted during a Snowy Plover census on 25 May (MMR, MJM). A nesting pair of **Greater Roadrunners** continued to be seen near the dam at Coyote Lake CP through 10 May (m. ob.). **Northern Saw-whet Owls** are often heard and seldom seen. A nice find was young Saw-whet Owls at Mt. Madonna CP, where the owls are nesting in old Pileated Woodpecker

cavities. Three owls were seen on both 24 Apr and 2 May (DPo et al.). The passage of **Black Swifts** peaks late in spring. One was over Loma Prieta on 10 May (GHa), and a flock of 20 were over Skyline Ridge OSP on 30 May (PKe et al.). The first returning **Vaux's Swifts** were single birds seen on 7 Apr at Almaden Lake Park and Guadalupe Oak Grove Park (both JPa). **Black-chinned Hummingbirds** were reported late in May along Coyote Creek (JPa, AVi), Los Gatos Creek (m. ob.), Calero Creek (DPe), and Uvas Creek (JS). Observations at the end of May in appropriate habitat suggest nesting is underway at those locations; breeding is known to have occurred in past years along Coyote and Los Gatos Creeks. The spring passage of **Calliope Hummingbirds** was well noted, beginning with single birds at Ed Levin CP on 11 Apr (PDU), Morgan Hill on 15 Apr (SCR), Pacheco SP on 16 Apr (PDU), and at feeders on the eastern slope of the Santa Cruz Mountains west of Gilroy on 17 Apr (JA, AA). A charm of seven came to feeders temporarily set up at Loma Prieta on 17 Apr (JGa, NK), two were at the feeders on 18 Apr (AR et al.), one was at Grant Ranch CP on 19 Apr (TO), and the last report was of five at Loma Prieta on 27 Apr (AR). The feeders set up at Loma Prieta attracted migrating **Rufous Hummingbirds** as well, with counts of 19 on 4 Apr (AR, JGa), 38 on 11 Apr (AR, JGa, NK), 20 on 17 Apr (JGa, NK), and 26 on 27 Apr (AR). The feeders attracted 59, 67, and 71 hummingbirds recorded as Rufous/Allen's on 4 Apr, 11 Apr, and 27 Apr, respectively. The latest **Lewis's Woodpeckers** wintering in and around Coyote Valley were one at Calero CP on 2 Apr (JPa), one along Hellyer Ave on 10 Apr (BJ), one at the end of Laguna Ave on 16 Apr (KO, EO), one along Felter Road on 3 May (VT), and one at Bel Gatos Park in Los Gatos on 17 May (LR). One to two were noted at Pacheco SP between 16 Apr and 9 May (PDU, MMR). Lewis's Woodpeckers breed in the San Antonio Valley east of the crest of the Diablo Range; four were seen there on 26 May (WGB).

Flycatchers through Phainopepla

The earliest arriving **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at Lake Ranch Reservoir in Sanborn-Skyline CP on 10 Apr (BM). A wave of migrants on 16 and 17 May included an Olive-sided Flycatcher stopping along the Stevens Creek Trail (JL), two at Charleston Road Marsh (JL, WGB), and another at Ulistac NA (AE). The first **Western Wood-Pewee** to return was along Old Oak Glen Road upstream from Chesbro Reservoir on 16 Apr (AVE). The northward movement of **Willow Flycatchers** occurs late in spring, and they are much harder to find during spring migration than in the fall. This year one was at the Gilroy SCRWA on 22 May (MMR). Migrant



Black Oystercatcher
©Peter LaTourrette

Field Notes *cont'd*

Hammond's Flycatchers are not uncommon in the Diablo range in the spring, and were found behind the Smith Creek Fire Station in J Grant CP on several dates from 3 Apr to 16 Apr (MMR, m. ob.). A migrant was also present along Los Gatos Creek near Meridian Ave from 21 to 23 May (BM, m. ob.). **Say's Phoebes** historically weren't known to nest on the Valley floor; in recent years their range in the county has expanded. Two or three pairs of Say's Phoebes were at Moffett Field throughout the period, with two nests noted (MMR). Two young birds were seen along Uvas Creek in Gilroy on 13 May (WGB), and a single bird was seen on 16 May in Coyote Valley along Palm Avenue (AVe, KH, RPa). The earliest **Ash-throated Flycatcher** was at Almaden Reservoir on 2 Apr (JPa). **Purple Martins** returned to the snags they prefer for nesting at Loma Prieta on 4 Apr, when nine birds were noted (AR, JGa, CK). The high count during the period was ten Martins on 20 Apr (AR). Martins were also found foraging over Calero Reservoir, with six counted on 27 May (OA) and four on 28 May (AVe). A single Martin was heard over Uvas Canyon CP on 30 May (BMa). A **Bank Swallow** perched on a wire together with Barn Swallows next to the Bay Trail at the western end of the Sunnyvale WPCP was a nice find on 16 May (JL). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were found at several locations in the Santa Cruz Mountains during the period. Lowland **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were noted on only two dates, one on 14 Apr in a Mountain View neighborhood (GZ) and another on 19 Apr at Charleston Road Marsh (RFu et al.). The nesting pair of **Canyon Wrens** at the Coyote Lake dam progressed to the stage of feeding young. One was seen carrying food on 10 May (MJM). The first Swainson's Thrush detected this spring was a migrant over San Jose on 26 Apr, identified by its nocturnal flight call (KO). **Phainopeplas** were not easily found. One was near the Milton Ranch pond in the San Antonio Valley on 12 Apr (RC et al.), and another was seen 16 May along Bear Mountain Road in Henry Coe SP (MMR, RJ).



Calliope Humminbird
©Tom Grey



Rufous Humminbird
©Peter LaTourrette

Warblers through Goldfinches

Nashville Warblers on their way north were found behind the Smith Creek Fire Station in J Grant CP between 3 Apr and 23 Apr, with five noted on 8 Apr (MMR, m. ob.). Single migrants were found within the same span of dates at Alum Rock Park, Monte Bello OSP, Coyote Lake CP, and along Canada Road (m. ob.). A **MacGillivray's Warbler** was along Smith Creek in J Grant CP on 16 Apr, 28 Apr, and 30 Apr (MA, CLa, RWR), one more was at Hidden Villa on 13 May (GHa), and a third was by Gate 5 in Monte Bello OSP on 15 May (GHa). The first **Yellow Warbler** of the spring was in Coyote Valley at the Laguna Ave bridge over Fisher Creek on 11 Apr (ST). The highlight among the warblers was unfortunately a one-day wonder, a **Chestnut-sided Warbler** in the Willow Glen neighborhood of San Jose on 26 May (BM). Most of our previous records have been in the fall or winter; this is the first for May. Migrant **Hermit Warblers** were noted to 20 May (m. ob.), with a high count of eight at Loma Prieta on 13 May (AR). **Yellow-breasted Chats** were not hard to find, with reports of one or two birds at the Gilroy SCRWA from 27 Apr through 14 May (RWR, m. ob.), another in Stevens Creek CP near the reservoir dam on 28 May through the end of the period (MJM, m. ob.), and birds noted on a single day only in J Grant CP on 9 May (GHa), along Uvas Creek in Gilroy on 13 May (WGB), and at Lexington Reservoir on 16 May (AIH). **Black-chinned Sparrows** returned to known haunts at Loma Prieta and along Bear Mountain Road in Henry Coe SP. At the Loma Prieta upper saddle one was singing on 14 Apr (KO) on the Santa Clara county side of the county line. On a survey in Henry Coe on 16 May, 11 Black-chinned Sparrows were tallied (MMR, RJ). **Bell's Sparrows** were found in the interior of Henry Coe SP and along Mines Road in the northeastern corner of the county. The 16 May survey in Henry Coe SP found 63 Bell's Sparrows; one to two were heard and sometimes seen along Mines Road from 9 May through the end of the period (MDo et al., m. ob.). One to two **Chipping Sparrows** were reported from ten locations in the period, with two reports at

the edge of the Santa Clara Valley floor and all others at higher elevations surrounding the Valley. The Chipping Sparrows near the Valley floor were one at Guadalupe Oak Grove Park on 30 Apr (KK) and a singing male on 16 May at Day and Watsonville Roads outside of Gilroy (SCR). A late-staying **Slate-colored Junco** was spotted in Los Gatos on 23 Apr (SCR). The last **White-throated Sparrows** to depart were both seen on 29 Apr. One was banded at the Coyote Creek Field Station (WH), and one visited feeders outside of Gilroy (JA, AA). The earliest arriving **Lazuli Bunting**, operating on a different schedule, was at Santa Teresa CP on 5 Apr (JPa). **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** made a stopover between 6 May and 14 May at the Gilroy SCRWA (MJM), with a high count of 11 on 8 May (RWR). Two more were found at J Grant CP on 11 May (PS). Single **Pine Siskins** were reported from lowland locations as late as 28 May (CF). Flocks of 100 - 300 Siskins were found at Mount Hamilton on 7 Apr (EGa) and at Monte Bello OSP on 14 Apr, 20 Apr, and 27 Apr (GHa). **Lawrence's Goldfinches** kept to the Diablo Range and its foothills, with small groups of no more than six found in many locations (m. ob.).

Observers: Mary Ann Allen (MA), Ozzie Altus (OA), Julie Avnit (JA), Amir Avnit (AA), Jeff Bleam (JBI), Bill Bousman (WGB), Richard Cimino (RC), Matthew Dodder (MDO), Pete Duntun (PDu), Al Eisner (AE), Craig Fosdick (CF), Rob Furrow (RFu), John Garrett (JGa), Elinor Gates (EGa), Eric Goodill (EGo), Garth Harwood (GHa), Victoria Heyse (VH), Bob Hirt (BH), Alfred Hochstaedter (AIH), Kirsten Holmquist (KH), William Hoppes (WH), Andy Howey (AH), Richard Jeffers (RJ), Cole Jower (CJ), Bob Juhl (BJ), Clay Kempf (CK), Pat Kenny (PKe), Kathy Kleinstieber (KK), Nicholas Kronick (NK), Caroline Lambert (CLa), Jason Liu (JL), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Bruce Mast (BMa), Brooke Miller (BM), Emily Moffitt (EM), Lisa Myers (LM), Tom Olson (TO), Eric Ongman (EO), Kurt Ongman (KO), Rich Page (RPa), Janna Pauser (JPa), Don Pendleton (DPe), Stephen Peterson (SP), Ryan Phillips (RPh), Dennis Porter (DPo), Rob Reiling (RWR), Alex Rinkert (AR), Laurie Roberts (LR), Mike Rogers (MMR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Peter Scott (PS), Larry Spivak (LSp), Jason St. Pierre (JStP), Jeff Stacey (JS), Vivek Tiwari (VT), Steve Tracey (ST), Ann Verdi (AVe), Alie Victorine (AVi), Bill Walker (BW), Dave Weber (DW), Gina Zolotar (GZ)

RARITIES: Please drop me a note:
Pete Duntun, pduntun@gmail.com

Helping California Birds Survive the Challenges of Global Warming

by the Audubon California Communications Team

(Editor's Note: Audubon California is planning a legislative push on several climate change bills. This article is one of a series provided by Audubon California that highlights some of the reasons why).

With the threat to birds and people from global warming becoming more apparent every day, Audubon California is supporting a broad swath of bills in the state's 2015 legislative session addressing the dangers of climate change.

Audubon Research:

Recent Audubon research shows that global warming caused by carbon pollution will threaten 170 California bird species in the coming decades. This includes iconic birds including: Brown Pelican, Golden Eagle, Allen's Hummingbird, and the Yellow-billed Magpie, to name a few.

Audubon analyzed more than 40 years of historical North American climate data and millions of historical bird records from the U.S. Geological Survey's North American Breeding Bird Survey and the Audubon Christmas Bird Count to understand the links between where birds live and the climatic conditions that support them. Of 588 bird species examined in the study, 314 species are considered at-risk. Hundreds of species not previously considered at risk will be challenged to survive in a climate-changed future.

Immediate Threat Of Air Pollution To Birds, Habitat, And People:

While air pollution in the form of greenhouse gas emissions is the leading cause of these changes in the environment, air pollution also poses an immediate threat to public health, as well as the health of our birds and environment. Audubon wants clean and healthy air for all Californians, so that they can continue to enjoy the wildlife and open spaces we all value so deeply.

- Air pollution harms birds and habitat – degrading the quality of our urban parks and open spaces.
- Air pollution also degrades some of California's most beautiful views – of valleys, mountains, and the ocean.
- Seventy percent of Californians (28 million residents) live in counties affected by unhealthy air.
- Eight California cities appeared among the top-ten most polluted metro areas in the nation for ozone and particle pollution. (Bakersfield, El Centro, Fresno, Hanford/Visalia, Los Angeles, Modesto-Merced, Sacramento, San Francisco Bay Area).
- All 8 San Joaquin Valley counties experienced higher numbers of unhealthy particle days, and received a failing grades.



The endemic Yellow-billed Magpie is just one of numerous species noted as "Climate Endangered" by National Audubon Society.

Photo courtesy of Brian Sullivan

- The Los Angeles metro area remains ranked among the five most polluted in the nation for ozone and short-term and annual particles. Parts of the Los Angeles region experience more than 100 unhealthy ozone days per year.
- Air pollution in the Central Valley not only harms humans and wildlife, but it may also reduce the economic value of agriculture.

We need to make investments in clean energy and nature that help birds and other wildlife maintain healthy populations while bolstering our state's economy.

Outdoor recreation and tourism are an important part of California's economy. According to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, birders spend more than \$40 billion on equipment and travel – and a large proportion of that is taking place in California.

California's communities, wildlife, and natural landscapes will change dramatically over the next several decades due to population growth and climate change. We need bold commitments now to be prepared.

To discuss how Audubon California and the Audubon network is engaging on climate issues, please contact Michael Lynes, Director of Public Policy, at (916) 737-5707 ext. 102 or mlynes@audubon.org.

Thanks To All Of Our Birdathon Teams And Their Many, Many Supporters For Another Fantastic Birdathon Year!

Cheeky Chickadees

Valerie Baldwin
Doug Benedict
Renate Birwe
Vincent and Muriel Brennan
Michael Browne
Doug and Gail Cheeseman
Janice Diesner
David Drake
Scott Eddowes
Carol Emerich
Lars Fabiunke
Michele Felt
Daisy and Rolando Gallardo
Thomas Grant
Deanna Griffin
Martha Hammond
Carl and Roberta Handen
James and Chrissy Hart
Howard Higley
Rory Ishida
Mark Joing
Jerry and Mary Kamprath
Michael and Brenda Kauf
John Kovach
Barbara Krna
Pete and Sue LaTourrette
Mary Mason
Diana Medina
Deana Mikami
Mariel Moore
Juan Mulero
Julio D. Mulero
Julio Mulero
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Renée Polizotto
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James Takasugi
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Charles and Jean Thompson
Steve and Debbie Thompson*
Drew Vranicar
Kim Williams
Jan Yamauchi
Madelyn Yeo

Cupertino Creek Cruisers

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Doug and Gail Cheeseman
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Carol Emerich
Rhonda Farrar
Lyn and Steve Faust
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Phillip Green
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Roland Kenner & Patricia Kenney
Lisa Killough
Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation
Richard Lowenthal
Anne and Samuel Ng

Steve Patt
Bruce Preville
Ralph Riddle
Elizabeth Rowan-Mitchell
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Gail Seeds
Clysta Seney
Ben Stein
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Colleen and Gary Cunningham
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Ruthann Dicembrino
Kevin Dixon
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Judith Gifford
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Robert and Janice McPeck
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Marcia Ruotolo
Michael and Amy Sanchez
Glen Shaffer
Curtis and Tate Snyder
Carolyn Straub
Judith Sullivan
Catherine Trejo
Marti Wright

Eagle Eyes

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Sally Cedarblade
Connie Cunningham
James Estes
Cindy Hayashi
Burt Zolotar
Jeff and Gena Zolotar*

Fledglings

Stephen and Ozzie Altus
Doug and Gail Cheeseman
Darya Chudova
Peter and Diane Hart
Anaya Khanzode
Mitali Khanzode
Pete and Sue LaTourrette
Janice Pang and Kieren Mackey
Sergey Pavlov
Pati Rouzer*
Bill Walker
Steven Zamek

Jack Sparrows

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Bass Angler Magazine
Kevin Cathey
Matthew Derstine
Dennis Farnden

Dennis Farnden
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Khanzode Family
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Pete and Sue LaTourrette
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Bill Walker & Mary Wisnewski

OhMyGodwits!

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Gail West

Persistent Picidae's

Joyce Bartlett
Barbara Boyington
Juliette Bryson
Doug and Gail Cheeseman



The Cupertino Creek Cruisers, one of our "home" teams, made sure to kick back and enjoy the beautiful day, while still doing their part to support this important fundraiser!

Photo courtesy of Steve Patt

continued on page 10

Birdathon Thanks

(cont'd)

Louis Cogliani
 Ellyn Corey
 Kathleen Finn
 Jean Fordis
 Harold Fukuma
 Shelly Gordon
 Ed Gustafson
 Patricia Hurtado
 Anna Jin
 Dale and Jane Jordan
 Marion Krause
 Kristine Long
 Jeanine Mattson
 Caroline Miyagishima
 Lisa Myers*
 Patricia Nassos
 Alice Smith
 Larry Spivak
 Annette Teng
 Charles Tu
 Loring Tu
 Samson Tu
 Lilly Yoshida

Plover Exposure

Raju Bhupatiraju
 Steven Tracey*

Raptors to Rails

Geraldine Brown
 Cathy Brown
 Matthew and Kelly Dodder
 Dawn Edgren
 Edwin Ehmke
 Eric Goodill
 Jeri Ann Hirsch
 Caroline Lambert*
 Kay Matthews
 Andrea Mazzoncini
 Andrew Melnick
 Stacey Santana
 Nathan and Priscilla Seely
 Emily Smith
 Sheila Warren
 John Wertzler

Rock Wrens

Joseph Amirkhas
 Dorsey and Katherine Bass
 Sally Cedarblade
 Doug and Gail Cheeseman
 Charles Conradi
 Morteza Danesh
 Pete Dunten
 Robert Hirt*
 James Hunter
 Pete and Sue LaTourrette
 Phil and Joan Leighton
 Calvin and Lucy Lou
 Bruce Mast
 David McIntyre
 Frank Montgomery
 Jerry and Katie Mugnolo
 George Peyton
 Don and Dee Price
 Susan Rowinski
 Dieter and Susan Walz
 Peter and Delores White

Snipe Hunters

Norma Abe
 Rebecca Akin
 Dianne Armer
 Rose Brown
 Doug and Gail Cheeseman
 Albert Chu
 Brenda Elwood
 Cheryl Fippen
 Marilynn Gallaway
 Richard Gaskill MD
 Lance Gidel
 Claudie Hester
 Sanborn Hodgkins
 William and Marilynn Host
 Patti Hughes
 Linda Sue Johnson
 Ron Kehl
 Lynette Key
 Jane and Donald Krejci
 Pete and Sue LaTourrette
 Melissa and David Laurice
 Donna Meyer
 Susan Mickiewicz
 Jennifer Miller
 John and Frances Morse
 Laurie Nardone

Our top earning team, the Rock Wrens, traveled far and wide to help make this another successful Birdathon year!

Photo courtesy of David McIntyre



Carol North
 Ann and Sam Orr
 Lois Porter
 Bob Power
 Ann Prescott
 Pamela Price
 Anna Richert
 Rick and Laurie Roberts*
 Edward and Janice Rooks
 Teresa Scagliotti
 Cindy Schlaefel
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 Genny Smith
 Ulf Stauber
 George Shuttinger
 Harold and Karen Svendsen
 James and Kristi Wiley

Varied Twitchers

Richard Jeffers
 Nateri Madavan
 Michael and Alma Rogers*

Wrong Terns

Stanley and Elaine Gould*
 Jerry and Ginny Kaminski
 Sharon Mathog
 Melanie and Tom O'Brien
 Allen Royer
 Lillian Simon

*Denotes Team Leader

This year's Birdathon raised over \$38,000 - funds that will help support our Education and Conservation Programs.

We are so grateful for all of the support and contributions that came in throughout the spring!



Our annual Birdathon wrap-up dinner at McClellan Ranch was enjoyed by all who attended. A big "Thank You!" to the Birdathon Committee for the delicious Italian food!

2015 Friends of SCVAS

Gifts received between April 1st, 2015 and May 31st, 2015

\$500-\$999

Thomas O'Brien

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Sally Cedarblade
Christine Yemoto

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Letizia Picchetti
Michael Popov
Mary Roberts
Pat Rovegno
Balaji Sampath
Jennie Shabel
Haruko Smith
Dr. Hans-Jürgen Stork
Bernard and Nancy Wood

If we have omitted any names, we apologize. Please let us know and we will correct this in the next issue.

Youth Artists Wanted!

Do you love to draw? Are you passionate about animals? Are you between the ages 5-18?

You are invited to participate in our Annual Wildlife Education Day Logo Contest and to help create the design that will get our event noticed!

The winning entry will be used on all event publicity, as well as displayed at Wildlife Education Day on October 17th. **First place winner will receive a certificate and an event T-shirt featuring their winning artwork.**

Deadline for submission: Sept 7th

Details available online - go to www.scvas.org/Wildlife Festival



4th grader Sierra Glassman provided last year's winning logo entry

Birds of McClellan Ranch

Here are just a few of the feathered friends we've been enjoying watching at the Ranch:



By the end of the spring, nesting behavior at the ranch shifted from nest tending to caring for recently fledged young. Everyone from our Western Bluebirds (left) to our Cooper's Hawks (right) was staying very busy.

Photos ©Keith Wandry

Notes from the SCVAS Nature Shop:

We have 2 new bird feeders in the shop:

A Mealworm Feeder that will feed Bluebirds, only \$10 (we also have Mealworms!).

And a 16 oz. Oriole Feeder that is irresistible to our Hooded and Bullock's migrants. \$22.95.



And our new stock of fun, bird-themed all-cotton T-Shirts has arrived - just in time for those summer outings! Only \$16

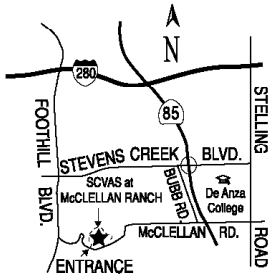


SCVAS Members receive 10% off new items!

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

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

Avocet Editor: Toby Goldberg

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

2015 Volume 62, Number 4

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 \$ _____

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*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.