



THE AVOCET

The Newsletter of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

July-August 2017

Photography Ethics and Concerns for Wildlife

by *Ralph Schardt, Executive Director*

Recently, a major disturbance was felt throughout the South Bay community of Milpitas when a pair of Bald Eagles built a nest in a redwood tree adjacent to a local elementary school. Suddenly there were TV cameras, interviews, and dozens of people showing up with camera lenses as large as their subject. Granted, enthusiasm for a pair of nesting Bald Eagles near a local school is something we are pleased to see and hope will continue. The turnout and interest in the birds was fantastic and clearly an incredible opportunity for students and adults alike. However, no matter how exciting an avian species experience can be, we must remember our manners!



Western Meadowlark by *Ralph Schardt*

The Audubon's Guide to Ethical Bird Photography stresses the following guidelines for non-invasive conduct and photography without harmful disturbance to birds and other wildlife:

- *“Avoid causing unnecessary disturbance or stress to birds [and other wildlife].*
- *Nesting birds are particularly vulnerable, and need special consideration.*
- *Luring birds [and other wildlife] closer for photography is often possible but should be done in a responsible way [or not at all].*
- *Show respect for private and public property, and consideration for other people.”*

Unfortunately, the excitement and curiosity for the new visitors in Milpitas was so intense that each one of these points, along with many others, was violated. In particular, the last one made it quite hard to manage for a small elementary school that was excited about the eagles, but still needed to maintain control over their campus.

cont'd on page 5

— V☀unteers Needed —

WETLANDS DISCOVERY PROGRAM DOCENTS

Volunteers are needed for the upcoming school year. You can participate in one or both components of this fun elementary school program. Training is provided for both.

- In-Class Programs: Assist students in a series of stations focused on wetland habitat, birds, and changes in the bay.
- Field Trips: Lead groups of students around Palo Alto Baylands or Alviso Marina County Park to bird and explore nature while discussing topics students learned in school.

FIELD TRIP LEADERS

Volunteers lead guided walks to teach adults and children about birds and nature in the outdoors. Field trip dates and locations are scheduled according to your availability and can last anywhere from a half hour to a half day. Feel free to shadow leaders of our current trips to become more comfortable leading your own! This is a great opportunity to get involved in a passionate and fun community and to share your own experiences with birding and nature!

For more information or to volunteer contact Kelly, our Outreach Coordinator, at outreach@scvas.org.

July-August Field Trips

(Full details are also available online at www.scvas.org)

Sunday July 2, 9:00 AM

Palo Alto Baylands

Half day. **Leader:** Allen Royer, (408) 288-7768. **Directions:** From

Hwy 101 in Palo Alto turn right onto Embarcadero Rd. At the stop sign (not light), go left and follow the road past the duck pond to the parking lot across from the building under construction (Lucy Evans Center). Meet at the poles/gate to San Francisquito Creek Trail (towards Lucy Evans Center).

Difficulty: For beginning birders but all are encouraged to attend. **Notes:** Bring your spotting scope and a friend. **RC**

Wednesday July 5, 12:00 PM

City of Sunnyvale Landfill

One hour. **Leader:** Allen Royer. No RSVP needed. Contact landfill coordinator, Silviana Ruiz, with questions at (408) 730-7545. **Directions:** Donald M. Somers Water Pollution Control Plant, junction of Borregas and Caribbean. Meet at trailhead at

north end. **Difficulty:** Birding geared toward beginners. **Notes:** Bring binoculars; loaners available. **RC**

Saturday July 8, 8:00 AM

Picchetti Ranch

Half day. **Leader:** Dave Zittin, (408) 515-7104. **Directions:** From I-280 in Cupertino take Foothill Blvd south 3.3 miles (becomes Stevens Canyon Rd). Turn right on Monte Bello Rd. and go about a mile, turn left past winery entrance into preserve parking lot.

Difficulty: Moderately strenuous walk past an old orchard, seasonal pond, and oak woodlands.

Saturday July 22, 8:00 AM

Charleston Slough

Half day. **Leader:** Nick Yatsko, (408) 891-3187. **Directions:** Meet at Terminal Way at the end of San Antonio Rd., north off Hwy 101 in Mountain View. **Notes:** All are encouraged to attend but birding will be geared towards beginners.

Please carpool if possible; bring binoculars, field guides, layered clothing. **LO** = Lunch optional; **RC** = Heavy rain cancels; **NF** = No facilities available

Sunday, July 23, 8:30 AM

Sanborn County Park

Half day. **Leader:** Ralph Schardt, (408) 624-7845. **Directions:** Either take Stevens Creek Canyon Rd, Hwy 85 S or Pierce Rd to get on Hwy 9. From Hwy 9 take Sanborn Rd, follow Sanborn Rd and meet in the large parking lot. On Google Maps, this lot is labeled Youth Science Institute. **Notes:** Entrance Fee or County Park Pass. **LO**

Wednesday Aug. 2, 12:00 PM

City of Sunnyvale Landfill

One hour. **Leader:** Allen Royer. See write-up from July 5th. **RC**

Sunday Aug. 6, 9:00 AM

Palo Alto Baylands

Half day. **Leader:** Allen Royer, (408) 288-7768. See write-up for July 2nd. **RC**

Saturday Aug. 12, 8:00 AM

Rancho San Antonio

Half day. **Leader:** Dave Zittin, (408) 515-7104. **Directions:** From

Hwy 280 take Foothill Expwy-Grant Rd. exit south onto Foothill Blvd. Go right on Cristo Rey Dr. and left into park. Turn left immediately after the entrance gate and go downhill to the parking lot closest to Gates of Heaven.

Difficulty: Some strenuous walking on hilly trails. **RC**

Saturday Aug. 19, 8:00 AM

Charleston Slough

Half day. **Leader:** Nick Yatsko, (408) 891-3187. See write-up for July 22nd.

Sunday, Aug. 20, 8:30 AM

Ed Levin County Park

Half day. **Leader:** Ralph Schardt, (408) 624-7845. **Directions:** Take Hwy 237 east, crossing I-880 and I-680 (237 becomes Calaveras), turn left on Downing Rd to park entrance. Meet in parking lot on far, northeast side of Sandy Wool Lake (near dog park). **Notes:** Entrance Fee or County Park Pass. **LO**

Save the Date!

Wildlife & Harvest Day 2017:

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21

If you are between the ages of 5-18 years old, we invite you to participate in our annual Wildlife & Harvest Day Logo Contest!

The winning entry will be used in publicity for Wildlife & Harvest Day. First place winner will receive a certificate and an event T-Shirt featuring their logo.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: SEPTEMBER 5

2016 Winner: Schuyler Lim, 8th grade
Details available online at www.scvas.org/wildlifeday





JOIN US FOR OUR FIRST EVER BIOBLITZ IN COYOTE VALLEY THIS SUMMER!

- + Learn about Coyote Valley's diverse animals and plants while sharing your own knowledge!
- + Help us learn about the valley by using iNaturalist and eBird Smartphone Apps to record observations!
- + This is a family friendly event.
- + No need to be an expert, but if you are, please let us know!

+ For more information and to RSVP, contact BioBlitzCA@gmail.com or visit <https://coyote-valley-bioblitz.eventbrite.com>

Adult Education Classes

Owling Series with Bill Pelletier and the "Sharpies" Team

Date: Wednesday, July 19th and August 9th

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: McClellan Ranch - Meet in McClellan Ranch Parking Lot.

Cost: Free

This is a two-part lesson held over two days. First we will cover the latest technology used to find, identify, and record species of birds. Then we'll test our new skills in the field. Our goal is to find at least one dozen owls on the first night and at least double that during the second! We will focus on our local owls: Great Horned, Barn, Western Screech, Burrowing, Northern Saw-whet, Northern Pygmy, and the elusive Short-eared.

The Avocet 2

Outdoor Photographer Refresher with Ralph Schardt

Date: Saturday, July 8th and August 5th

Time: 8:30-10:00AM

Location: McClellan Ranch - Meet at SCVAS

Cost: \$15 non-members/free for members

Register: Find the class on our website's calendar or call the office. Come explore outdoor photography opportunities at McClellan Ranch. Ralph will review photography equipment needed for outdoor conditions and how to take advantage of natural light. You'll learn to take better nature and landscape photos with a few easy examples. Rain cancels, with refund or credit for future classes. Wear layers and clothing appropriate for an easy hike on level, but unpaved trails.

Conservation Corner: What our Environmental Advocacy Team is working on...

by Shani Kleinhaus and Mackenzie Mousing

San Jose Recognizes SCVAS Advocacy

In May, Councilmember Raul Peralez, Mayor Sam Liccardo and the great City of San Jose presented Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society and Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter with a commendation for our advocacy work in engaging and encouraging the community to explore, enjoy, and protect our planet. It is gratifying to be appreciated for our many years of advocating for creeks and wetlands, parks and open space, migratory and resident birds, and wildlife habitat. We are thankful to Councilmember Peralez and District 3 Staff, Mayor Liccardo, and City Councilmembers for recognizing our work, and we congratulate our partners at Sierra Club, Loma Prieta Chapter.



Shani Kleinhaus accepting the award by District 3 Staff

Coyote Valley: Good News and Fun

The proposed “Panattoni Project” is no more – in June, Peninsula Open Space Trust acquired the disputed thirty acres in North Coyote Valley. We strongly opposed the Panattoni development due to potential habitat loss and harm to critical wildlife movement along Fisher Creek. Wins are rare, and we celebrate this one!

The long awaited vision for Coyote Valley emerged in June, when Open Space Authority (OSA) published the hope to purchase additional land and to preserve North Coyote Valley for its wildlife habitat and critical hydrological function. We look forward to continuing work with OSA and the community to preserve the valley. We are also looking to further scientific exploration of the valley. For that purpose:

- We recently published a comprehensive report, “The Birds of Coyote Valley,” to showcase the importance of the valley to resident and migratory birds. (www.scvas.org/pdf/Conservation/The_Birds_of_Coyote_Valley_012017.pdf)
- We are planning a Coyote Valley BioBlitz on August 19th. This event will focus on identifying species of animals, insects, and plants in designated sites across the valley. To participate, please email BioBlitzCA@gmail.com or RSVP at coyote-valley-bioblitz.eventbrite.com. See page 2 announcement for details.

Let’s keep the momentum going! Invite friends and neighbors to join our advocacy list and participate in BioBlitz. Please consider inviting SCVAS to speak about Coyote Valley at your San Jose neighborhood association meeting (email advocate@scvas.org)!

Protecting Birds from Collision with Glass: LinkedIn LinkedIn’s new redevelopment project (on Middlefield Road and Highway 237) would infill a sparse office campus with three additional six-story office buildings, two parking structures, and a four- to five-acre open area. Our concerns arose after reviewing architectural renderings that showed large walls of glass incorporated into the design. We asked the Mountain View City Council to require bird-safe design for the project and several Councilmembers expressed concern. LinkedIn representatives have since promised to incorporate bird-safe design in the new buildings. This campus will join North Bayshore campuses where Intuit, Google, and Microsoft are all building with birds in mind.

Electronic Billboards: What They Mean for Birds and Wildlife

The City of San Jose is looking to intensify electronic billboards for commercial advertising in downtown and North San Jose. These billboards contribute to light pollution and sky glow and are also disruptive to wildlife and cast light into nearby residences at night. During the migratory season birds can confuse bright light with the sun, often causing them to collide with building facades. Corridors along rivers, streams, and creeks provide habitat to many species and are especially sensitive to increases in light pollution. We have expressed our concerns to the City and will continue to advocate against intensification of electronic billboards, especially near sensitive wildlife habitat.

Advocating for Birds and Nature in Our Parks

SCVAS has long advocated for the inclusion of birds and nature in all parks in our region. When residents are asked to prioritize park amenities, they often ask for nature to be protected and enhanced even in urban parks. Residents also value access to nature and environmental education programs. SCVAS is currently engaged in several Parks Master Plan updates throughout the county, including:

- The Palo Alto Parks, Recreation, and Natural Open Space Master Plan is now complete and going through environmental review. SCVAS participated as a stakeholder and contributed to the plan’s goals, policies, and programs. We also commented on the Mitigated Negative Declaration.
- San Jose’s Greenprint is in the community outreach stage. We are on the Steering Committee for the plan and held an intercept event to gather input from residents.
- Cupertino is starting a City-Wide Parks Master Plan and Santa Clara County Parks is embarking on a new Strategic Plan. We continue to advocate for the inclusion of goals, policies, and programs that focus on preserving natural habitat and protecting birds.

The Egrets of Shorebird Way

The Egret Rookery on Google’s campus in Mountain View is bustling with activity. This year, the sycamore trees along Shorebird Way are supporting more than ninety nests, home to families of Great Egrets, Snowy Egrets, and Black-crowned Night Herons. Through our partnership with Google, SCVAS hosted Egret Office Hours every week in May and June to educate Google employees and the public about the rookery. The egrets are expected to stay through summer and we highly recommend a visit to Shorebird Way!

Volunteer Awards *by Kym Sugano, Education Specialist*

In 1926, Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society was a club founded by a group of friends (e.g. volunteers) who loved to bird. Their “little club” expanded to include the environment and 91 years later, SCVAS is still primarily volunteer-run.

Volunteers are the backbone of this organization and without them we would not be able to do what we do.

Following are the 2017 Volunteer Honorees, whose extraordinary efforts continue to inspire us.

Joanne Artis

Joanne started volunteering for the Wetlands Discovery Program about 5 years ago and she has been a needed help during our in-class program as well as a vital part of the field trips. She really goes out of her way to help students understand the material. Whether groups are large or small, Joanne is able to tackle any task we set before her and we are so thankful for her flexibility and consistency.



Mike Azevedo

Mike wears many hats for the sake of bird conservation. He first participated in Christmas Bird Count in 1986 with Sequoia Audubon, and after counting with SCVAS for over 20 years, he is now the San Jose Count Compiler yet still manages to wake up early enough to lead an eager group in search of owls on the morning of the count. Mike has also been monitoring nest boxes since 2005 and took on the role of California Bluebird Recovery Program/Cavity Nesters Recovery Program Nest Box Coordinator in 2009. His passion for birds is infectious and his dedication inspiring. We are honored to have Mike on our team.

Rick Herder

Rick is a long-time member of SCVAS and active volunteer. As his interests lay in birding, he quickly became a field trip leader and has been leading weekend trips for years! This year, you may have noticed Rick more during the weekdays. He really helped us out by increasing his number of field trips. It is his dedication to the field trip program that we appreciate so much. Thank you Rick, for leading and helping us with field trips!



Ada Marquez

With love for Burrowing Owls and dedication to their plight, Ada has been helping SCVAS protect and enhance Burrowing Owl habitat in Santa Clara Valley since 2010. Ada teaches CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) classes at San Jose State University and generously contributes her expertise to SCVAS by helping us review environmental documents for development projects. She also encourages her students to volunteer for Burrowing Owl habitat enhancement. Alongside her students, Ada rolls up her sleeves, dons gardening gloves, and helps plant and weed. She also boosts everyone’s spirits and energy by bringing snacks and drinks! Thank you, Ada – you are special!



Merav Vonshak

Merav Vonshak started working with us in early 2015 while doing a postdoctoral fellowship at Stanford. She is one of the strongest contributors to our Environmental Conservation and Advocacy program, working diligently to enhance our scientific understanding of open space habitats and creek ecosystems, especially in Coyote Valley. She supports comment letters and advocacy efforts with scientific research and expert opinion, and provides insight and wisdom to discussions of conservation-advocacy. You can even see some of Merav’s work on our website. In addition to everything Merav already does for us, she is currently organizing a bioblitz event in Coyote Valley AND created the iNaturalist Coyote Valley page! (www.inaturalist.org/projects/coyote-valley-san-jose) Thank you, Merav!

Volunteer Awards - Special Recognition

These are awards for exemplary volunteers that have “retired” from their volunteer positions.

Thank you so much for your support!



Margaret Hinebaugh

Margaret was a delight to work with in the Nature Shop and her vibrant energy was fun to be around. She helped Tracy immensely with all aspects of the office and shop at the start of Tracy’s position. She was especially helpful showing Tracy around Donor Snap and taught her some valuable tricks using Excel. She is missed in the shop and is irreplaceable. We are thankful to still have her as a loyal member of the EAC!

Kirsten Holmquist

Kirsten wore many hats for SCVAS, but she was most notable as a volunteer for the Christmas Bird Count. She “retired” last year, but she still leads weekend field trips. At the end of the 2015 Christmas Count dinner, I asked her how much work she still had to do and said that she still had about 100 hours of work left! We appreciate her dedication and we want to recognize her hard work this year. Thank you Kirsten!

Bob Reiling

Bob has been Field Trip Coordinator for the past decades? We lost count. He “retired” last year from his position, however we couldn’t let him go quite that easily! This year he has been more help than he knows. To put it simply, he drove our field trip program. Bob went above and beyond with the coordinator role, leading a majority of the trips himself and actively seeking new leaders and locations, determined to fill every week with trips. That passion is one-of-a-kind and we are honored to have had his help for so long. Thank you, Bob, for your many years of service to us!

Frank Vanslager

Frank is a long-time member, donor, and volunteer for SCVAS. Passionate about birds and eager to share his enthusiasm with others, Frank was often found leading field trips for SCVAS - sometimes several each month. It’s hard letting go of a dedicated volunteer, and especially one who took on so many trips, but that doesn’t mean you won’t see Frank on the very same trips he led. He is enjoying his “retirement” and attends every SCVAS field trip he can. Thank you, Frank, for the many wonderful trips! Happy birding!

Photography Ethics and Concerns for Wildlife cont’d from page 1

Western Meadowlark by *Ralph Schardt*



I will admit that as a photographer I am occasionally lured into wanting to get closer for that knockout photograph. Having the opportunity to work in several different locations with endangered, threatened, or nearly extinct species, I pay special attention to how I am impacting the land and wildlife. I am a published photographer who has the opportunity to work with biologists and experts who demand following proper protocol and doing so has made photography ethics almost habitual for me.

Feeling Déjà vu? The image above (also featured earlier in this article) was originally shot from a safe distance (outside of what I call “The Disturbance Zone”) using a 500mm telephoto lens. Here I have the image cropped tight (4x6) in post-process for a great, close-up photograph. Note the detail and correction of the composition. The take-away here is that modern technology allows photographers the unique opportunity to take up-close detailed shots without actually disturbing wildlife. By using this technology we not only achieve incredible photography, but we also protect the future of our hobby and our subjects.

For more information on ethical wildlife photography practices, read the full Audubon Guide to Ethical Bird Photography here: <http://www.audubon.org/get-outside/audubons-guide-ethical-bird-photography>. Another resource to keep in mind is the American Birding Association Code of Birding Ethics: <http://listing.aba.org/ethics/>.

Field Notes

(April-May 2017)

by Pete Dunten

Geese through Skimmers

A pair of **Greater White-fronted Geese** stayed near the Palo Alto Golf Course into April, with sightings on 2 Apr (WGB) and 21 Apr (DPe). **Cackling Geese** remained in the area about a week longer, with singles noted at Los Capitancillos Ponds on 28 Apr (STu), Almaden Lake on 29 Apr (MMR et al.), and Shoreline Lake on the same date (MMR et al.). A **Snow Goose** at the Palo Alto Golf Course on 1 Apr (RFu et al.) was the last to depart. A pair of **Northern Pintail** at New Chicago Marsh and two pair of **Redhead** at Alviso Salt Pond A16 were found on 22 May (both MJM). Paired Pintail and Redhead have been sighted into June (m. ob.). Both species have nested in previous years, though the tendency of Redhead to lay eggs in other duck's nests complicates tracking their success. The most surprising find among the ducks were two **Long-tailed Ducks** on Alviso Salt Pond A14 on 2 – 3 Apr (MMR, m. ob.). They prefer coastal waters and have not been spotted in the county since the winter of 2011. Rounding out the ducks, a survey of the bayside salt ponds on 29 May turned up three **Common Goldeneye** (including a pair), a **Bufflehead**, and a **Red-breasted Merganser** (MMR, MJM, RJ). A Bufflehead was also present at the Los Capitancillos Ponds as late as 23 May (GL). A **Common Loon**, apparently content to stay for the summer, arrived at the Los Capitancillos Ponds on 22 May (STu) and has stayed into June (m. ob.). A lone **Cattle Egret** visited the Gilroy SCRWA on 27 Apr (MJM) and stayed through 2 May (DN). **Swainson's Hawks** have nested in Coyote Valley since 2013, and two arrived at Coyote Valley OSP on 1 Apr (WP). Three Swainson's Hawks, likely migrants, were sighted further south along Gilroy Hot Springs Road and San Felipe Road on 22 Apr (MDo et al.). **Black Rails** continued their exploration of the South Bay, with one heard at Charleston Slough between 25 Mar (ChJ) and 20 Apr (m. ob.). A few **Semipalmated Plovers** have stayed in New Chicago Marsh as summer approaches, rather than migrate north. Two were seen on 29 May (RJ). Single migrant **Solitary Sandpipers** stopped at one of the SCVWD Ponds from 15 to 19 Apr (JPa, GL) and at Thompson Creek near Tully on 29 Apr (JPa,

KB). Spring migration also brought a **Ruddy Turnstone** to Alviso Salt Pond A16 on 3 May (DW), where it rested and refueled through 7 May (RJ) before moving on. No Wilson's Phalaropes were found this spring. They typically pass through on migration and are found during the spring in four years of every five. Gulls remaining in the area longer than expected included a **Mew Gull** at Don Edwards NWR on 29 Apr (MMR et al.) and a **Glaucous Gull** that moved between Alviso Salt Pond A16 and New Chicago Marsh as late as 6 May (MJM). The number of **Black Skimmers** in the South Bay increased to two on 1 Apr (SG), and two were seen at Charleston Slough on 6 Apr (GZ) and Shoreline Lake on 14 Apr (FV).

Nighthawks through Kingbirds

A **Nighthawk** at Ogier Ponds on 18 May (SCR) was intriguing. The heavy winter rains this year and subsequent high flow of water in Coyote Creek may have left gravel beds along the creek. Lesser Nighthawks are known to have nested on gravelly areas along Coyote Creek early in the last century. **Vaux's Swifts** returned on 7 Apr, when one was over Los Gatos Creek CP (JVs) and more arrived on 8 Apr,

pass over the Loma Prieta Saddle in April, with thirteen tallied on 20 Apr together with thirteen Rufous/Allen's Hummingbirds, and five counted on 29 Apr together with eighteen Rufous/Allen's (all AR, with NL on 29 Apr). A **Lewis's Woodpecker** at Casa de Fruta on 29 Apr was one of the few recent records outside the San Antonio Valley (SCR). The first arrivals of **Olive-sided Flycatcher** on 28 Apr (GL, WP, KON) and **Western Wood-Pewee** on 19 Apr (AA, JA) were both outside of Gilroy on the edge of the Santa Cruz Mountain Range. The second Olive-sided Flycatcher noted was in the Diablo Range east of Mount Hamilton on 3 May (MHo). The spring movement of **Willow Flycatchers** was marked by a single sighting at Monte Bello OSP on 29 May (GHa). Eight reports of **Hammond's Flycatchers** at six locations are about average with respect to the number of spring migrants. The first noted was at Gilroy Hot Springs and Canada Roads on 8 Apr (MJM) and the last was at Loma Prieta on 19 May (WBr, JVs). A **Say's Phoebe** at the end of Marsh Road on 23 Apr (BH et al.) was late for a wintering bird and may be one of the phoebes that stays to attempt nesting in the county. The first **Ash-**



Plumbeous Vireo by Richard Jeffers

when one was noted at Guadalupe Oak Grove Park (JPa) and one or more were at Calero Reservoir (LM et al.). **Black-chinned Hummingbirds** were not found until 21 Apr (WGB), when two males were seen along Los Gatos Creek upstream of Meridian Avenue. Loma Prieta was once again the most reliable spot to detect **Calliope Hummingbirds** on migration. Singles were there on 25 Apr (DN) and 29 Apr (AR, NL). Good numbers of **Rufous Hummingbirds** continued to

throated Flycatchers to return were one at Henry Coe SP on 4 Apr (BK) and another near Chesbro Reservoir on 5 Apr (JPa). **Cassin's Kingbirds** faithfully returned to their two known nesting locations in the South County. One was along San Felipe Road on 5 Apr (DN, RWR, MJM), two were there on 29 Apr (SCR), and two were along the entrance road to the Recology Pacheco Pass Landfill on 29 Apr (SCR).

Field Notes *cont'd*

Vireos through Blackbirds

The first eastern vagrant to arrive at the tail end of migration on 23 May was a **White-eyed Vireo** along the Lower Berryessa Creek Trail (AF). The vireo called attention to itself with its distinctive song. This county-first record was unfortunately a one-day wonder. Another rare vireo visited the county on 9 Apr (RJ, MJM) and also stayed for only a day. The **Plumbeous Vireo** at Overfelt Gardens was the eighth county record. A congress of 115 **Common Ravens** in Metcalf Canyon on 28 May was a noteworthy high count (MMR). Single **Red-breasted Nuthatches** in a Los Altos neighborhood on 18 May (PDu) and at Cuesta Park in Mountain View on 20 May (DZ) were interesting. Red-breasted Nuthatches are known to nest in the Santa Cruz Mountains but not elsewhere in the county. **Pygmy Nuthatches** were present in a Los Altos neighborhood through May as well, with a high count of two on several dates (JT). In addition to the regularly reported **Canyon Wrens** at the Coyote Lake Dam, one was heard singing at Alum Rock Park on 7 and 16 May (DWn, NT). The first **Swainson's Thrushes** were a single bird at Monte Bello OSP on 29 Apr (MMR et al.) and two along Llagas Creek near Bloomfield Avenue on 1 May (GZ). It is not hard to believe the **Northern Waterthrush** found at Ulistac NA on 4 May (ChJ) was the same individual seen this winter on 20 Jan (RJ), given the reclusive habits of the species. Most of our migrant **Nashville Warblers** were reported from eastern parts of the county. One was at Joseph Grant CP on 17 Apr (WGB), two were at Pacheco SP on 29 Apr (SCR), another at Henry Coe SP on 1 May (MJM), and two more were noted crossing a ridge east of Mount Hamilton on 3 May (MHo). Nashvilles at other locations included one at the Loma Prieta Saddle on 29 Apr (AR, NL) and one at Rancho Canada del Oro on 14 May (AW). Another reclusive warbler, **MacGillivray's**, returned on 27 Apr when one was heard singing along the Los Alamitos Creek Trail (SMi). Single MacGillivray's Warblers were also found at Pacheco SP on 29 Apr (SCR), Pichetti Ranch OSP on 3 May (MJM), a ridge east of Mount Hamilton on 3 May (MHo), Santa Clara University on 13 May (JVs), Rancho Canada del Oro on 14 May (AW), and along Llagas Creek near Monterey Avenue on 17 May (SCR). The first **Yellow Warbler** of

the spring was on territory in Coyote Valley at the Laguna Avenue Bridge over Fisher Creek on 5 Apr (JPa). The county's first spring arrival in 2015 was at the same location.

Valley along Palm Avenue from 4 - 7 Apr (GZ, DN, m. ob.), and single blackbirds were seen briefly flying over Casa de Fruta on 29 Apr (SCR) and Ulistac NA on 4 May (ChJ).



Indigo Bunting by Melissa Kung

Hermit Warblers occurred widely throughout the county on migration, with the first noted on 6 Apr at the SCVWD HQ (MMA). High counts occurred on 29 Apr when six were at the Loma Prieta Saddle (AR, NL), on 14 May when four were at Mount Hamilton (WBr, JVs), and on 20 May at Loma Prieta when five were tallied (WBr, JBr). **Yellow-breasted Chats** made themselves heard along Llagas Creek near Bloomfield on 1 May (GZ) and along Alamitos Creek Trail on 19 May (JPa). Neither Chat was heard again on subsequent dates. A **Grasshopper Sparrow** nest with four eggs near Santa Teresa CP on 6 Apr was a serendipitous find (SCR). The 6 Apr date is the earliest date we have for a nest containing eggs. A **Lazuli Bunting** brought a splash of color to Santa Teresa CP on 8 Apr (DN), the first sighting of the year. On 3 May, which must have been a favorable day for migration, 59 Lazuli Buntings passed a ridge east of Mount Hamilton (MHo). A male **Indigo Bunting** provided nice photo opportunities near Ed Levin CP on 28 May (MKu) and into June (RJ). Indigo Buntings occur about one year in every two during the late spring and summer. A male **Blue Grosbeak** found on 21 May (WBr) along the Pajaro River in the southernmost part of the county has also remained into June (DN). A **Yellow-headed Blackbird** passing through the county stopped in Coyote

Observers: Amir Avnit (AA), Julie Avnit (JA), Bill Bousman (WGB), Jim Brooks (JBr), Will Brooks (WBr), Karen Burnson (KB), Pete Dunten (PDu), Andrew Ford (AF), Rob Furrow (RFu), Sue Gragg (SG), Garth Harwood (GHa), Bob Hirt (BH), Marcel Holyoak (MHo), Richard Jeffers (RJ), Chris Johnson (ChJ), Bryan Kett (BK), Melissa Kung (MKu), Garrett Lau (GL), Nicholas Levandosky (NL), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Michael Martin (MMA), Steve Miller (SMi), Lisa Myers (LM), David Nickerson (DN), Kitty O'Neil (KON), William Pelletier (WP), Don Pendleton (DPe), Rob Reiling (RWR), Alex Rinkert (AR), Mike Rogers (MMR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Nancy Teater (NT), Jack Tomlin (JT), Steve Tucker (STu), Frank Vanslager (FV), Jason Vassallo (JVs), Dave Weber (DW), Dan Wenny (DWn), Andrea Wuenschel (AW), David Zittin (DZ), Gina Zolotar (GZ)

Please send notice of rarities to
Pete Dunten via email at
pdunten@gmail.com

Spring Birdathon 2017 Final Results

By Kelsey Frey, Birdathon Coordinator

Birdathon 2017 raised **over \$38,000** to support SCVAS education and conservation programs! 101 participants fearlessly embarked upon their Birdathon expeditions, comprising a total of 21 teams that consisted of 12 Private Teams and 9 Guided Public Teams.

Eleven participants raised over \$1000, with Bob Hirt, Barry Langdon-Lassagne, Steven Patt, Renée Polizotto, and David McIntyre placing in the top five fundraisers, respectively. Birdathon teams as a whole also raised large numbers of donations! The Rock Wrens, led by Bob Hirt, raised the most in the 24-hour team category: over \$8000! In the 4-hour team category, Insider's Guide to East Bay Birding, led by Glen Tepke from Golden Gate Audubon Society, took the lead with over \$4500.

The Varied Twitchers, led by Mike Rogers, saw the most species in the 24-hour category: 153. In the 4-hour category, The Fledglings, led by Rob Furrow, saw the most species at 94. The rarest bird seen throughout the fundraiser was the Black Rail, also by The Fledglings.

SCVAS is especially thankful to our generous prize sponsors who kindly donated prizes to entice individuals to raise more donations. We extend many thanks to our Golden Eagle Sponsors, who donated more than \$600 in prizes: Bob Hirt and Ralph Schardt; our Great Egret Sponsors, who donated between \$250 and \$599 in prizes: Cheese-

mans' Ecology Safaris, Hawaii Forest & Trail, Los Gatos Birdwatcher, Jack Cole, and Shoreline Golf Links; and our Western Bluebird Sponsors, who donated up to \$249 in prizes: Alfaro Family Vineyards & Winery, Beauregard Vineyards, Tracy & Bob Neher, ONEHOPE Wine, Children's Discovery Museum, Steven Patt, and Julio Mulero.



A Red-winged Blackbird by Barry Langdon-Lassagne.



A Western Meadowlark singing its beautiful song. Photo by Ralph Schardt of Tax-on-o-me.



Nuttall's Woodpecker by Glen Tepke of Insider's Guide to East Bay Birding.

I am grateful for the help and guidance provided by the Birdathon Committee: Renée Polizotto (Chairperson), Julio Mulero, Bob Hirt, Ralph Schardt, and Steven Patt. This event would not have been as successful without their input and tireless efforts!

Of course we are all so appreciative of our participants and sponsors. Birdathon would not be successful without all of you! Thank you all so very much for another great Birdathon and we can't wait to see you next year.

Spring Birdathon Prize Sponsors

SCVAS is pleased to promote our generous prize sponsors who helped make our Spring Birdathon so successful in raising money for our conservation and youth environmental education programs.

Please visit www.scvas.org/birdathon if you would like to learn more about Birdathon.

Golden Eagle Sponsors

(donated over \$600 in prizes or support)

Bob Hirt
Ralph Schardt



Great Egret Sponsors

(donated between \$250 and \$599 in prizes or support)

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris
Hawaii Forest & Trail
Los Gatos Birdwatcher
Jack Cole
Shoreline Golf Links

Western Bluebird Sponsors

(donated up to \$249 in prizes or support)

Alfaro Family Vineyards & Winery
Beauregard Vineyards
Tracy & Bob Neher
ONEHOPE Wine
Steven Patt
Julio Mulero
Children's Discovery Museum



ONEHOPE



Spring Birdathon 2017 Teams

Thank you all so much for your participation in Birdathon. We could not have done it without you!

See you next year!

Guided Public Teams



The Cupertino Creek Cruisers enjoyed a lovely day birding the Steven's Creek Trail. Photo courtesy of Deborah Jamison.

Cupertino Creek Cruisers

Gail Bower
Becky Gilstrom
Ann Hepenstal
Deborah Jamison* &
Steven Patt
Patricia Kenny

Freckled Face Flickers #2

Kevin Dankwardt
Rosie Medina
V. Sukumar
Annette Teng*



Glen Tepke from Golden Gate Audubon Society stepped up to lead Insider's Guide to East Bay Birding! Photo by Ralph Schardt.

Insider's Guide to East Bay Birding

Steve McHenry & Carolyn Straub
Julio Mulero & Renée Polizotto
Ralph Schardt
Glen Tepke*

Mean Green Birding Machines

Robert Furrow*
Winnifred Homer-Smith
Anaya, Leena & Vivek Khazode
Christopher O'Connell



Peninsula Plovers bird into the sunset. Photo by Robert Furrow.

Peninsula Plovers

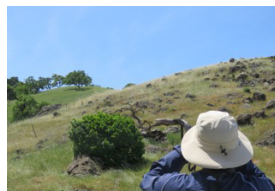
Douglas Brown
Jane Dixon
Adam Dudley
Kent Forward
Robert Furrow*
Winnifred Homer-Smith
Jacob Kirkland
Patricia Mahoney
Christian Naventi



The Persistent Picidae's persisted through the precipitation. Photo courtesy of Ralph Schardt.

Persistent Picidae's

Ozzie Altus
Steven Altus
Juliette Bryson
Harold Fukuma
Elizabeth Malmberg
Eve Meier
Cindy Morse
Greta Muller
Lisa Myers*
Ralph Schardt
Catherine Trejo
Janet Vassar



A fearless Rock Wren team member. Photo by Bob Hirt.

Rock Wrens

Peter Dunten
Robert Hirt*
David McIntyre
Steven Patt
Jennifer Rycenga



Northern Flicker as seen by Tax-on-o-me. Photo by Ralph Schardt.

Tax-on-o-me

Ralph Schardt*
Kymberly Sugano



The Varied Twitchers are treated to a lovely view. Photo by David Nickerson.

Varied Twitchers

Winnifred Homer-Smith
Richard Jeffers
David Nickerson
Mike Rogers*

Private Teams

A Flock of Avocets

Kelly Alfrey
Kelsey Frey
Mackenzie Mousing
Tracy Neher
Ralph Schardt*
Kymberly Sugano

Almaden Eagles

Janna Pauser
Ann Verdi*

Board Not Bored

Thomas Grey
Diane & Peter Hart
Robert Hirt*
Vivek Khazode
Joan & Phil Leighton
Marlene Macek

The Fledglings

Ozzie Altus
Nathaniel Joffe
Anaya, Mitali, Leena & Vivek Khazode
Kieran Mackey
Sergey Pavlov
Pati Rouzer*

Freckled Face

Flickers #1

Rene Bello
Jonathan Chang
Marilyn Etherington
Nancy Hines
Stephen Rentmeesters
Annette Teng*



One of the Bald Eagles at Curtner Elementary as seen by the Freckled Face Flickers. Photo by Annette Teng.

McDougall Family

Don McDougall* & family

Plover Exposure

Raju Bhupatiraju
Steven Tracey*



The Piratical Flycatchers representing SCVAS with their Birdathon hats! Photo by Barry Langdon-Lassagne.

The Piratical Flycatchers

Barry* & Virginia
Langdon-Lassagne

Saint Anthony Ranchers

Susan Dansker
Megan George
James & Kathy Johnson
Linda Sue Johnson
Jim Liskovec*
Joan Loney
Donna Meyer
Mary Murphy & George Schuttinger
Pamela Price
Marcella Stauber

The Sharpies

Kate Finn
Shelly Gordon
Garrett Lau
Patricia Lynch
Kitty O'Neil
William Pelletier*
Sergio Perez
Lia Schnipper

The Wandering Kestrels

Barry & Virginia Langdon-Lassagne
Melanie O'Brien*

Wrong Terns

Kelly Alfrey
Atul Chaudhari
Elaine Gould*
Diane & Peter Hart
Jerry & Ginny Kaminski
Jim Meikrantz
Allen Royer
Kymberly Sugano



Anna's Hummingbird as seen by the Wrong Terns. Photo by Atul Chaudhari of Travel Backyard.

* Denotes Team Leader

Do you have Birdathon photos that you would like to share? Please send them to scvasbirdathon@gmail.com and we'll put them on our website!

Friends of SCVAS

Gifts received April 1st, 2017 through May 31st, 2017

Gift (Up to \$99)

Kelly Alfrey
Sreedhara Alvattam
Roberta Baker
Christopher Basanese
Bass Angler Magazine
Angel Bejines
Rene Bello
Cynthia Berg
Erik Bergstrom
Raju Bhupatiraju
Renate Birwe
Lesley Boncich
Elham Boozarjomehri
Judith Borlase
John and Rebecca Bradley
Martha Breed
Rose Brown
Juliette Bryson
Jonathan Chang
Anurag Chaudhry
Children's Discovery
Museum
Charles Conrad
Irene Cortinaz
Kevin Dankwardt
Susan Dansker
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Lisa Deshpande
Kevin Dixon & Kimberly
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David Ewing
Charlotte Fainblatt
Anne Fleming
Leslie Flint
Ellexis Frantz
Kelsey Frey
Linda Grace Frost
Mary Beth Forrest
Megan George
Judith Gifford
Becky Gilstrom
Lucia Gonzalez
Shelly Gordon
Stanley & Elaine Gould
E.A. Gustafson
Joey Hagedorn
Janet Hall
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Melinda Joffe
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Patricia Kenny
Mary Kerr
Wendell Kerr
Ajit Khanzode
Melissa Kim
Airdrie Kincaid
Rebecca Kohn
Stuart Koretz
Balaji Krishnamoorthy
Garrett Lau
David Lewis
Kenneth & Sally Lillis
Joan Loney
Patricia Lynch
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Perry Maliuanag
Elizabeth Malmborg
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Jim Meikrantz
Susan Jane Mickiewicz
Candace Mindigo
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Luz M. Molina De Mulero
Julio Mulero
Greta Muller
Leslie Neft
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Martha Wright
Virginia Wright
Mikhail & Alice Zhuk
Tara Zodrow

Avocet Sponsor (\$100-\$249)

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Doug & Gail Cheeseman
Michael Duffy
Lindy Fung
Robert Furrow
James Hunter
Joan Leighton
CDR, USN RET William
McHenry
David McIntyre

Golden Eagle (1000+)

Blanche & Irving Laurie
Foundation
Thomas Grey
Bob Hirt
Johnson & Johnson
The Langdon Family
Charity Fund
Marlene Macek
Don McDougall
Steven Patt
Genny Smith

Monthly Speaker Series

There are NO Speaker Series for the months of
JULY and AUGUST.
We will return in September.

*Information on the September program will be available
in the next newsletter issue and also at www.scvas.org
during the month of August.*

SCVAS Events Calendar

Thurs. 8/10; 11:30AM-1:00PM

Nature Journaling with John Muir Laws

McClellan Ranch Preserve, Cupertino
Free workshops for all ages! No RSVP required;
please be on time. *See calendar at scvas.org for
more details.*

**Note: No class will be held in July.*

Nature Shop

Featured Items

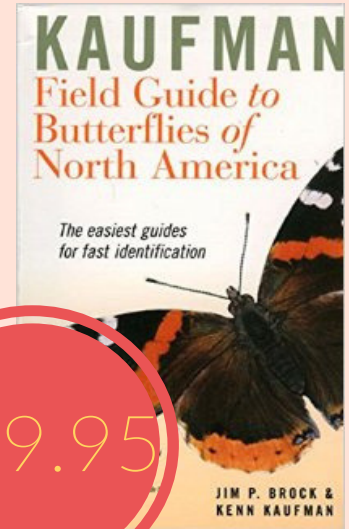


\$3.95



\$8.95

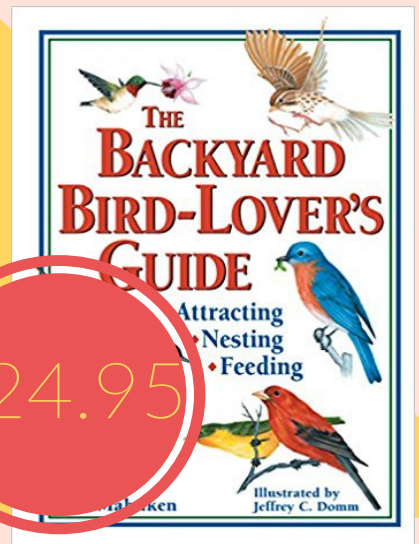
HOURS:
M-F 10AM-4PM
SAT 10AM-2PM



\$19.95

A note from our Office Manager, Tracy Neher:

June 8th marked my one year anniversary working as Office Manager for SCVAS and I would like to extend a big THANK YOU to my Saturday volunteers who all show up at their appointed day and time to do a superb job each week! This is such a relief for me to not have to worry that the Shop is covered. Thank you Jack Cole, Christine Wolfe, Colleen Cunningham, and Donna Shadowy. I would be nowhere without Dick Blaine and his help with Donor Snap. Thank you for your patience working with me. I would also like to acknowledge Margaret Hinebaugh for all her time and energy volunteering. Thanks for your help with many tasks, always with a great attitude!! You are missed!

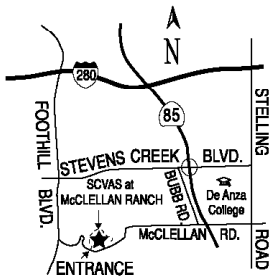


\$24.95

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 22221 McClellan Road
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 Fax: 408-252-2850
 E-mail: scvas@scvas.org
www.scvas.org

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2017 New Members of SCVAS

Those who joined April 1st - May 31st.

We look forward to a great year with your support!

Rosario Abano	Don McDougall
Erik Bergstrom	Robert McNamara
Martha Breed	Akshay Ramachandran
Anne Fleming	David Sparks
Ed & Gretchen Hillard	Richard True
David Jackson	Kumi Wang
Kathleen Kawakami	Nancy & Bart Westcott
Mary Kerr	Scottie Zimmerman

And thank you to those who renewed their membership!

Go Paperless!

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

- Save resources - eNewsletters save trees, postage, fuel (and more)!
- No waiting for the mail - get your newsletter up to 2 weeks sooner!
- Get a FREE SCVAS pin!

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

STAFF

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Environmental Advocacy Associate

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Birdathon Coordinator

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scvasbirdathon@gmail.com

Burrowing Owl Conservation

Sandra Menzel, sandmenzel@gmail.com
 (831) 431-3301

Office Fax (408) 252-2850
 Office E-mail scvas@scvas.org
 Website www.scvas.org

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

MONTHLY SPEAKER SERIES are held on the third Wednesday of each month except July, August and December and are open to the public.

Details available on the SCVAS website.

NATURE SHOP HOURS

Monday - Friday 10 AM - 4 PM
Saturday 10 AM - 2 PM

Please call (408) 252-3747 for special requests.

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

OFFICERS

President	Treasurer
Bob Hirt	Peter LaTourrette
Vice President	Secretary
Diane Hart	Joan Leighton

DIRECTORS

Peter Hart	'15-'18	Marlene Macek	'16-'18
Tom Grey	'15-'18	Mike Armer	'16-'18
Vivek Khanzode	'14-'17	Don McDougall	'16-'18
Gabrielle Feldman	'15-'17		