



## September-October Field Trips

(Full details 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, Sept. 2, 8:00AM 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. go about a mile, turn left past winery entrance into preserve parking lot. All birding levels welcome! **Difficulty:** Moderately strenuous walk past an old orchard, seasonal pond, and oak woodlands.

### Sunday, Sept. 3, 8:00AM Arastradero OSP

Half day. **Leader:** Rich Page, (408) 377-1092. **Directions:** From I-280 take Page Mill Rd. west; turn right on Arastradero Rd. and meet in the parking lot about a half-mile on the right. **Difficulty:** Moderately strenuous hiking. **RC**

### Wednesday, Sept. 6, 12:00PM 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, Sept. 9, 8:15AM Stevens Creek Park

Half day. **Leader:** Jim Johnson, (408) 996-3506. **Directions:** From I-280 in Cupertino take Foothill Expwy exit south 2.1 miles (becomes Stevens Canyon Rd). Turn left into first park entrance and meet in Chestnut Picnic Area parking lot. **Note:** Entrance fee required.

### Sunday, Sept. 10, 9:00AM Charleston Slough

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

### Tuesday, Sept. 12, 12:30PM Shoreline Riparian to Baylands

2.5 hours. **Leader:** Ralph Schardt, (408) 624-7845. **Directions:** From Hwy 101, take the Shoreline Exit and head for the Bay. Turn right on Stierlin Ct. and continue to the end of the road. Parking is available on the right, carpool if possible. This is an unused area along Stevens Creek that goes out to the Bay. **Highlights:** Riparian birds, raptors, and shoreline birds. **Difficulty:** Easy walk with places to stop on bridges over the creek for better access to birds and scoping. **RC, LO, RSVP Required:** Fill out the form by clicking on the trip on our website calendar or go to <https://goo.gl/forms/h9NPlxZY6f7a3uAM2>

### Wednesday, Sept. 13, 8:30AM Vasona Lake County Park

Half day. **Leader:** Janna Pauser, (408) 569-9264 or [jannapauser@gmail.com](mailto:jannapauser@gmail.com). **Directions:** From Hwy 17 exit Lark Ave, go west to University Ave. Turn left onto Blossom Hill Rd and use main entrance. Turn into first parking lot on left after kiosk. **Highlights:** We'll bird the south end of this popular Los Gatos park and should see Western Tanagers, migrating warblers, and some fall arrivals. **Difficulty:** Easy walking. **Notes:** Gate opens at 8:00AM. Entrance fee is \$6 without county park pass.

### Saturday, Sept. 16, 8:15AM Sunnyvale Baylands

Half day. **Leader:** Kirsten Holmquist, (408) 747-0988. **Directions:** Go north on Lawrence Expwy from Hwy 237. The turn for the park is about half a mile on the right. Meet in parking lot to the right of the entrance kiosk. **RC**

### Sunday, Sept. 17, 8:00AM Santa Theresa County Park

Half day. **Leader:** Steve Tracey, (408) 966-3860. **Directions:** From CA 85 South exit 1B (Bernal) or take Santa Teresa Blvd. and go south on Bernal. Follow Bernal uphill and turn left at entrance road. **Difficulty:** Approx. 2 miles, some hills. **Note:** \$6 day pass or county pass required; purchase at first parking lot. **LO, RC**

### Saturday, Sept. 23, 9:00AM 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. **Note:** Bring your spotting scope and a friend. **RC**

### Sunday, Sept. 24, 8:30AM San Luis Reservoir SRA San Luis Creek Area (O'Neill Forebay)

Half day. **Leader:** Pete Dunten, (650) 210-6764. **Directions:** From Hwy 101 take Hwy 152 east into Merced County; turn left into the park entrance before you reach the turnoff for Basalt Campground. Meet at the docks. **Highlights:**

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## Field Trips

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We'll see what's on the water and what's up in the trees along the Forebay. **Difficulty:** Approx. 3-mile hike. **Note:** \$10 fee required per vehicle.

### Saturday, Sept. 30, 8:00AM

#### Moss Landing & Vicinity

Half day. **Leader:** Norm Kikuchi, (831) 251-0666. **Directions:** Meet in Moss Landing next to Sea Harvest Restaurant in the big parking lot and boat launch ramp just north of Hwy 1's Elkhorn Slough Bridge. **Highlights:** Shorebirds, waterfowl, and other migrants. **Notes:** Weather conditions can be highly variable so dress in layers. Bring water. **RC**

### Sunday, Oct. 1, 9:00AM

#### Charleston Slough

Half day. **Leader:** Allen Royer, (408) 288-7768. See write-up for Sept. 10.

### Tuesday, Oct. 3, 12:30PM

#### Shoreline Riparian to Baylands

2.5 hours. **Leader:** Ralph Schardt. **Note:** RSVP required, see Sept. 12 write-up for RSVP form link.

### Wednesday, Oct. 4, 12:00PM

#### City of Sunnyvale Landfill

One hour. **Leader:** Allen Royer. See write-up for Sept. 6.

### Saturday, Oct. 7, 8:00AM

#### Natural Bridges State Park

Half day. **Leader:** Norm Kikuchi, (831) 251-0666. **Directions:** Take Hwy 17 to Santa Cruz and turn right on Mission St/Hwy 1 towards Half Moon Bay. Drive to the edge of town and turn left on Swift St then right on Delaware Ave. Meet at the back entrance to the park at the intersection of Delaware Ave and Natural Bridges Dr. **RC**

### Sunday, Oct. 8, 8:00AM

#### Oka Ponds

Half day. **Leader:** Rich Page, (408) 377-1092. **Directions:** Take 17 South to Lark Ave exit, go right onto Oka Rd, then turn left onto W. Mozart Ave, and turn right onto Oka Ln. We'll meet at the park entrance at the end of this road. Please be respectful in parking in and around the neighborhood.

### Wednesday, Oct. 11, 8:30AM

#### Coyote Creek Trail

Half day. **Leader:** Janna Pauser, (408) 569-9264, jannapauser@gmail.com.

**Directions:** From CA 85 South, take Blossom Hill Rd exit east (left) and continue 2.4 miles onto Silver Creek Valley Rd. Make a U-turn at Piercy Rd then immediate right into Silver Creek parking lot (meet here). **Difficulty:** Easy walking. **RC, For a map, go to [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org) and find the field trip on our calendar**

### Saturday, Oct. 14, 8:15AM

#### Alum Rock Park

Half day. **Leader:** Jim Johnson (408) 996-3506. **Directions:** From Hwy 101 or I-680 take McKee Rd northeast toward hills then left on Toyon Ave, right on Penitencia Creek Rd and continue into park. Pass under bridge and meet at far end of upper parking lot. **Difficulty:** Moderately strenuous 3-4-mile walk. **Note:** Vehicle entry fee required.

### Sunday, Oct. 15, 8:00AM

#### Stanford Campus

Half day. **Leaders:** Tom Grey & Bill Pelletier. **Directions:** Meet at Stanford Arboretum by the intersection of Campus Dr & Palm Dr. **Highlights:** We'll explore the arboretum and nearby neighborhoods for a chance to photograph local birds.

### Sunday, Oct. 22, 8:00AM

#### Grant Ranch

Half day. **Leader:** Steve Tracey, (408) 966-3860. **Directions:** From I-680 take Alum Rock Ave north-east, turn right on Hamilton Rd and go about 9 miles to the park. Or, take Quimby Rd off of Capitol Expwy to Mt. Hamilton Rd. Turn right on Mt. Hamilton Rd and go about 0.5 miles to the park. Meet at Grant Lake (aka Hall's Valley Lake) parking lot, first parking lot on left just past the main park entrance on the right (do not enter the main park entrance). **Highlights:** Local birds, lingering migrants. **Difficulty:** Moderately strenuous walk. **Note:** Park entrance fee required for last half of trip.

### Tuesday, Oct. 24, 12:30PM

#### Shoreline Riparian to Baylands

2.5 hours. **Leader:** Ralph Schardt. **Note:** RSVP required, see Sept. 12 write-up for RSVP form link.

### Saturday, Oct. 28, 8:00AM

#### Picchetti Ranch

Half day. **Leader:** Dave Zittin. See write-up for Sept. 2.

### Sunday, Oct. 29, 8:00AM

#### Windy Hills OSP

Half day. **Leader:** Kirsten Holmquist, (408) 747-0988. **Directions:** From I-280 in Portola Valley take Alpine Rd south (toward hills) about 2.9 miles to the first stop sign, turn right on Portola Rd, go 0.8 miles to the parking lot on the left just past The Sequoias. Meet in the parking lot at Sausal Pond edge of the preserve. **RC**



be mitigated without permanent significant impacts to biological resources. But the devastating impacts of the project on wildlife and endangered species were clear to us, and so we litigated again and again. Biological opinions from the State Department of Fish and Wildlife and from the US Fish and Wildlife Service loomed over the project, adding mitigation requirements and delaying construction.



Little Panoche Road, Fresno County by Debra Shearwater

### **What Was at Stake**

Panoche Valley is a designated Core Recovery Area for several endangered and threatened species, including the San Joaquin Kit Fox, Blunt-nosed Leopard Lizard, and Giant Kangaroo Rat. The valley also provides wintering grounds for Mountain Plovers, Mountain Bluebirds, and many raptors (including Ferruginous Hawks). Large flocks of sparrows, including Vesper Sparrows and Savannah Sparrows, winter in the valley. In spring and summer, Burrowing Owls nest here. The largest colony of the endangered Tri-colored Blackbird bred in Panoche Valley in recent years. This diverse constellation of rare and endangered bird species earned the valley its designation of “Important Bird Area” of global significance by National Audubon Society and Birdlife International: “This IBA consists of vast, grassy ranches that extend up over chaparral and oak-covered ridges, interspersed with dry washes with intermittent water. Riparian habitat is limited, but Little Panoche Creek supports a corridor of cottonwood-willow-sycamore woodland. The dry scrub springs to life in April with spectacular wildflower displays after wet winters...”

The rare and endangered species of Panoche Valley were once common throughout San Joaquin Valley, but urban and agricultural development have left only “fringe” populations in remote grassland valleys. Grassland birds are among the fastest declining birds in North America – 48% of species are of conservation concern and 55% show significant declines. So

while we support development of alternative energy in urban landscapes and in areas of little habitat value, we opposed the development of expansive solar farms on Panoche Valley - the last refuge available to so many species of birds, mammals, lizards, and even vernal pool species.

### **The Fight to Save the Valley**

Because the valley is so important to wildlife, we received unwavering support in our effort to save it. Monterey Audubon Society provided substantial financial support (litigation is costly!). Other Audubon chapters helped, along with many individual birders. Panoche Valley farmers and ranchers (“Save Panoche Valley”), Sierra Club, and Defenders of Wildlife joined us in litigation as we sued San Benito County over the inadequacy of the environmental review documents and then litigated against state and federal wildlife agencies over their permitting the project. Previous to litigation, the Center for Biodiversity, Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition, Amah Matsun Tribal Band, and other groups and individuals also joined our alliance, contributing comment letters and voicing concerns at every opportunity.

And so we wrote, pleaded, advocated, and litigated until recently when Con Edison took possession of the solar development and offered to modify the project and “move” some of the energy production to Southern California. We felt that the modified project was appropriately sized and adequately mitigated, and that the species that live in the valley or migrate through could continue to do so.

Over the years, we were occasionally asked why we oppose a solar farm. Our answer has always been that we must increase solar energy production in our built urban environment and build solar farms in areas where their construction will not result in the extinction of species. We should not allow the consumption of lands that provide critical habitat to rare or endangered species. We were also asked why we did not accept mitigation lands that were initially offered in the hills surrounding the valley. The answer is simple: the animals we were hoping to protect and save from extinction live on the valley floor. Providing habitat in the hills while developing the valley seemed futile. Panoche Valley is best preserved for its birds, wildlife and landscape. Preserving land in the hills alone could not have compensated for the loss of valley floor habitat and for the fragmentation of the landscape.

We have reached a compromise that works. It provides for production of solar energy (some in Panoche Valley, some in Southern California) and preserves 26,000 acres of land that will be managed to sustain migration stopover for birds, habitat linkages for wildlife, valley floor grasslands, hillside habitat, and riparian ecosystems. We thank our members and friends for the support you provided all these years!

# SCVAS Events Calendar

**Wed. 9/6 & 10/4; 7:30-9:00PM**  
**Bay Area Bird Photographers**  
Embarcadero Room, Rinconada Library  
1213 Newell Rd, Palo Alto, CA  
Topic 9/6: "BYOP - Bring Your Own Photos"  
Topic 10/4: "Birds of Taiwan" with Mike Danzenbaker and Lee Hung  
*See [scvas.org/babp](http://scvas.org/babp) for more details.*

**Tues. 9/12 & 10/10; 10:00AM**  
**Eve Case Bird Discussion Group**  
Meets at the home of Rosalind Roberts:  
100 Kathy Ct., Los Gatos. Call Rosalind  
with questions at (408) 395-6631.  
Topic 9/12: Ostrich  
Topic 10/10: Band-tailed Pigeon

**Thurs. 9/14; 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](http://scvas.org) for more details.*

**Thurs. 9/14 & 10/12; 12:00-1:00PM**  
**Birding Google Campus**  
We have partnered with Google to offer  
guided bird walks on the Mountain View  
campus. Googlers, Audubon members,  
and the general public are invited. Park  
anywhere on campus. Please carpool if  
possible. Contact Mackenzie Mossing  
with questions at (408) 394-0330 or  
[mackenzieSCVAS@gmail.com](mailto:mackenzieSCVAS@gmail.com).  
9/14: Meets at the intersection of  
Shorebird Way and Charleston Rd.  
10/12: Meets at the walking path on the  
north side of 1015 Joaquin Rd.  
*See calendar at [scvas.org](http://scvas.org) for more details.*

**Thurs. 9/14; 7:00-9:00PM**  
**Cavity Nesters Recovery Program**  
**End-of-Season Potluck**  
McClellan Ranch Preserve, Cupertino  
Current monitors and people interested  
in joining the program are invited to  
attend. *See page 10 for details.*

**Sat. 9/23; 10:00-11:00AM**  
**Family Nature Walk & Bioblitz**  
Overfelt Gardens Park, San Jose  
Volunteers are needed to help explore  
Overfelt Gardens with the local  
community. We'll be using iNaturalist  
to help raise awareness to the amazing  
flora and fauna of this San Jose gem.  
Contact Merav Vonshak at [bioblitzca@gmail.com](mailto:bioblitzca@gmail.com).

## Young Audubon Activities:

**Sat. 10/21; 10:00AM-3:00PM**  
**Wildlife & Harvest Day**  
Blackberry Farm  
21979 San Fernando Ave, Cupertino  
Join SCVAS and City of Cupertino for  
a fun, family-friendly event to celebrate  
wildlife and the harvest season!  
*See details below.*

Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society & City of Cupertino present:

# WILDLIFE & HARVEST DAY



- Free & family friendly!
- Live animals & presentations
- Arts & crafts
- Pumpkin patch
- Environmental organizations
- And so much more!!

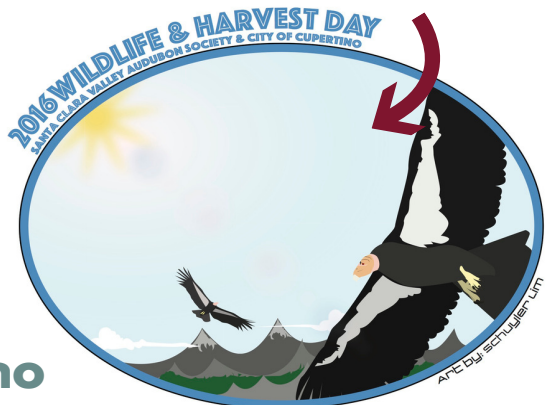
## Early Bird Shorebird Walk!

Join us in Charleston Slough at 8:00AM.  
RSVP at [www.scvas.org/WildlifeDay](http://www.scvas.org/WildlifeDay)

*Check out our logo from last year!  
Thanks, Schuyler Lim! (8th grade!)*

**Saturday, October 21, 2017**  
**10:00AM - 3:00PM**  
**Blackberry Farm in Cupertino**

*For more information, go to [www.scvas.org/WildlifeDay](http://www.scvas.org/WildlifeDay). See you there!*





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# Field Notes

(June-July 2017)

by Pete Dunten

## Ducks through Terns

**Redheads** were found on Alviso Salt Pond A16 from the beginning of June through the end of July, with a high count of twelve on 29 Jul (STu). On 25 Jun, pairs were noted at three locations, Salt Ponds A16, A10, and Crittenden Marsh (MJM, RJ, MMR). The **Common Loon** at Los Capitancillos Ponds since 22 May stayed through 3 Jun (m. ob.). Another on Salt Pond A3W was one of the highlights of the Palo Alto Summer Count on 3 Jun (MJM). On 12 Jun two were found at Los Gatos Creek CP (OA). Two remained through 21 Jun (m. ob.), and a single Loon was present until 3 Jul (SCR). Seven **Eared Grebe** nests in Crittenden Marsh on 12 Jul (FV) were unexpected; the Grebes

**Bar-tailed Godwit**, the county's fifth, briefly visited Alviso Salt Pond A17 on 23 Jul (WBr) and was not seen again. The subspecies nesting in far northwestern North America normally winters in Australia and New Zealand. A **Little Stint**, the county's third, also took a wrong turn on migration south and found itself in New Chicago Marsh on 30 Jul (WBr) instead of along the coast of south Asia or Africa. Its plumage was much more colorful than the county's second, present Apr - May 2016. The stint has remained at the same location into August. **Semipalmated Sandpipers** were moving south in July, with an immature found in New Chicago Marsh on 2 Jul (MJM) and an adult there from 20 - 24 Jul (RWR, m. ob.). The first **Pectoral Sandpiper** of the fall was a single in New Chicago Marsh on 31 Jul (DN). **Red Knots** were

(WBr). Numbers increased to sixty on one of the Sunnyvale WPCP ponds by 3 Jul (WP, KON). A group of three returning **Red-necked Phalaropes** arrived on 1 Jul at New Chicago Marsh (FV). Their numbers quickly increased as well, with 69 at the Sunnyvale WPCP on 7 Jul (DN). **Elegant Terns** arrived from the south on 12 Jul when one was at the Sunnyvale WPCP (RWR). The high count through the end of July was four seen at Salt Pond A2E on 14, 17, and 30 Jul (RWR, GL, MDo). The first **Common Tern** of the fall was with a group of 60 Forster's Terns at the Sunnyvale WPCP west pond on 20 Jul (PDU). Coming from a bit further north in SF Bay, **Least Terns** also arrived on 12 Jul, when two were at Salt Pond A2E (FV). Numbers increased to a high count of 34 at A2E on 23 Jul (WBr) and fifteen at Alviso Salt Pond A16 the same date (GL, WP).



Wood Thrush by Peter LaTourrette

have not nested in the county since 1993 (fide WGB). Though **Horned Grebes** are usually absent over the summer, one was on the Alviso Salt Ponds on 23 Jun (DY) and 9 Jul (WGB), and another was at Crittenden Marsh between 13 and 16 Jul (WGB, GL, ChJ). Two **White-faced Ibises** flew over New Chicago Marsh on 18 Jul (WBr). A

present in good numbers in June, with 59 tallied on a closed refuge pond during the Palo Alto Summer Count on 3 Jun (WGB) and sixteen on an adjacent closed refuge pond on 25 Jun (MMR, MJM, RJ). The first three **Wilson's Phalaropes** of the fall (and the year) arrived on 28 Jun at Don Edwards NWR

## Swifts through Goldfinches

Though June and July are thought of as the months when nesting activity peaks, a few birds are still headed north in early June. One such bird, a **Black Swift**, passed over Henry Coe SP on 4 Jun (WBr). Nesting by **Vaux's Swifts** was confirmed at five sites in Almaden Valley (JPa). Nuthatches continued to be found in Los Altos, with a **Red-breasted Nuthatch** noted on 3 Jun during the Palo Alto Summer Count (PDU), and a family of five **Pygmy Nuthatches** at a suet feeder in Los Altos on 12 Jun (JT). Pygmy Nuthatches nest in the Santa Cruz Mountains and occasionally at locations on the valley floor. One at Henry Coe SP on 4 Jun (WBr) was found at a location where there are few records. One was also noted at Cuesta Park in Mountain View on 5 and 7 Jun (GZ, DN). The hauntingly beautiful, flute-like song of a **Wood Thrush** was



## Field Notes *cont'd*

a treat along Old Oak Glen Road near Chesbro Reservoir on 1 Jun (MJM, m. ob.). The thrush, a vagrant from the east and a county first, did not stay longer than a day. Two **Cedar Waxwings** at Hellyer CP on 7 Jul were notable (AV), given their rarity at this time of year. Another vagrant from the east, a **Northern Parula**, turned up along the Alamitos Creek Trail

in late May was seen again on the first two days of June (BM, RJ) but not thereafter. The **Blue Grosbeak** found in the south county along the Pajaro River in May was present into July, and on 5 July a family of three Grosbeaks was seen at that location (RWR, FV). Blue Grosbeaks also nested successfully at the CCFS for the first time, with a pair banded on 28 Jun (JSc) and a young bird seen with the adult female on 27 Jul (AR).

found in a flock since May of 2015. A pair of **Lawrence's Goldfinches** was noted in late May at Rancho Canada del Oro (JPa), and on 6 Jul one was seen on a nest (EdG, JPa). As many as four Lawrence's Goldfinches were at the park on 13 Jul (JPa et al.), and the nest was still occupied on 16 Jul (GL, SPz). Three Lawrence's Goldfinches, including one immature, were spotted on IBM land along Bailey Ave on 1 Jun (RH). The high count for the period was 31 goldfinches along Mines and Del Puerto Canyon Roads in the eastern part of the county on 25 Jul (LKa, AC).

**Observers:** Ozzie Altus (OA), John Blakelock (JnB), Terry Blows (TB), Bill Bousman (WGB), Will Brooks (WBr), Anthony Ciancimino (AC), Matthew Dodder (MDo), Pete Dunten (PDu), Ed Gasiorowski (EdG), Rick Herder (RH), Richard Jeffers (RJ), Chris Johnson (ChJ), Logan Kahle (LKa), Garrett Lau (GL), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Brooke Miller (BM), David Nickerson (DN), Kitty O'Neil (KON), Janna Pauser (JPa), William Pelletier (WP), Sergio Perez (SPz), Rob Reiling (RWR), Alex Rinkert (AR), Mike Rogers (MMR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Josh Scullen (JSc), Mike Shafto (MSh), Jack Tomlin (JT), Steve Tucker (STu), Frank Vanslager (FV), Alie Victorine, (AVi), Denny Yang (DY), Gina Zolotar (GZ)



Blue Grosbeak by Peter LaTourrette

on 11 Jun (ChJ). The Parula, only the tenth county record, was also a one-day wonder. Three **Hermit Warblers** at Henry Coe SP on 4 Jun (WBr) were late for migrants. In the county they are known to nest in the Santa Cruz Mountains but not in the Diablo Range. A **White-crowned Sparrow** at the Don Edwards NWR EEC from 4 – 31 July (GL, TB, DN, JnB) was unexpected; there are only a handful of summer records. The **Indigo Bunting** that was first found singing near Ed Levin CP

Nine **Great-tailed Grackles** in the vicinity of the marsh bordered by the Yahoo Campus and Sunnyvale WPCP on 3 and 4 Jun were a high count for that location (MJM, MSh). A single **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was in a large flock of Red-winged Blackbirds, starlings, and cowbirds near Crittenden Marsh on 30 Jul (STu). Yellow-headed Blackbirds are typically found in higher numbers during spring migration than in the fall. No more than one or two have been

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

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

by Shani Kleinhaus and Mackenzie Mossing

### Fighting for Burrowing Owls in North San Jose

Burrowing Owl populations have plummeted in Santa Clara County due to the aggressive development of grasslands that historically supported hundreds of owls. Pushed to the brink of extirpation, Burrowing Owls rely heavily on sparse patches of remaining viable habitat, most of which lies along the bay north of Highway 237. Yet despite our best efforts to save the dwindling population and raise awareness, a flurry of new development projects threatens to pave over open space and Burrowing Owl habitat and eradicate them from the region for good.

The Habitat Agency levies fees on projects that impact Burrowing Owl habitat. Unfortunately, fees are only calculated within a half-mile radius of an active nest (defined as a nest that has been occupied in the past three years). The result of this condition is that as the Burrowing Owl population declines, fewer pairs nest in our area and thus most of the open space – even prime Burrowing Owl habitat – is exempt from paying fees.

Unmitigated loss of habitat is the focus of our advocacy efforts in North San Jose. We recently settled a lawsuit involving Burrowing Owl mitigation fees for the Topgolf project in Alviso. We also commented on a large-scale industrial development proposed on 64.5 acres of agricultural land north of Highway 237 between Zanker Road and Coyote Creek. The project includes infrastructure that will cut right through the bufferlands of the Regional Wastewater Facility – an area that supports the last viable population of Burrowing Owls in the South Bay Area. We will continue to follow this project and advocate for better mitigation.

### Private Home Development Threatens Critical Wildlife Corridor

A proposal to develop a McMansion on the cusp of North Coyote Valley attracted our attention due to potential impacts on a critical landscape linkage. The seventeen-acre project site is located along the Coyote-Alamitos Canal, on the southern edge of the Santa Teresa Foothills – a narrow ridge connecting Tulare Hill, Metcalf and the Hamilton Range. This is the only ridge connection for wildlife between the bay and Pacheco Pass south of Gil-

roy. The hills of this area are home to many wildlife species. Laguna Seca, south of the project site, is the county's largest natural freshwater wetland, where birds gather to quench their thirst and forage for food. While we are working diligently to protect North Coyote Valley, the ridge to its north is now threatened. It's a wack-a-mole game!

Deer, bobcats, skunks, raccoons, and coyotes use the Coyote Alamitos Canal to move between Tulare Hill and Santa

Teresa Park on a daily basis, and to cross safely under Santa Teresa Boulevard. Hawks, Barn Owls, turkeys, and quail have been seen flying and foraging in the canal during summer months.

The project proposal includes plans to develop an access road immediately adjacent to this canal and culvert, which may significantly impede wildlife movement and direct animals onto Santa Teresa Road, posing a risk to wildlife and drivers. In addition, we fear that fencing, pesticides, and human and pet behaviors might also cause conflicts with wildlife.

We are sad to see this beautiful, ecologically important area targeted for development, and hope the City realizes the value in protecting this piece of land. We will advocate for the protection of this critical landscape linkage and fight for the wildlife that rely so heavily on it.



Burrowing Owl by Keith Wandry

### Museum Place

San Jose Planning Commission recently approved a 24-story mixed-use project in the heart of downtown. We expressed concerns due to the large amounts of glass incorporated into the design, posing a potential collision threat to birds that migrate along the nearby Guadalupe River or live in the adjacent Plaza de Cesar Chavez Park (including a large colony of Acorn Woodpeckers).

After the Planning Commission meeting, we met with the architects to discuss elements of the development that may be hazardous to birds and offer suggestions. We are reassured to see that metal screening, shades, columns, and balcony balustrades may make the building a bit friendlier for birds. This is a small victory that bolsters our campaign to convince developers to build with birds in mind.



### San Jose's Plans for the Homeless

San Jose is moving forward with plans to construct "tiny home" communities for the homeless throughout the city. Many of the potential sites that were initially identified were along creek corridors and in parklands. While SCVAS is greatly concerned with the displacement/homelessness crisis in our region and is supportive of transitional housing, we believe that housing solutions should not consume our most sensitive environments. Our advocacy efforts have effected a change in the criteria that directs for site-selection to include 100-ft setbacks from creeks.

### Learn About the Birds of Facebook's Living Roof!

Our 18-month report discussing the results of our monthly bird surveys on Facebook's Living Roof in Menlo Park is now available. The roof supports a complex habitat that has attracted 36 local and migratory bird species. Read the report here:

[www.scvas.org/page.php?page\\_id=6765&name=Corporate](http://www.scvas.org/page.php?page_id=6765&name=Corporate)

*Interested in volunteering for conservation?  
Contact Shani Kleinhaus at [shani@scvas.org](mailto:shani@scvas.org).*

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## SCVAS Classes & Excursions

*We are pleased to offer the following excursions to our members and community. For more information, please call the SCVAS main office at (408) 252-3747 or visit our website at [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org) and click on the class in our calendar.*

### Outdoor Photographer Refresher with an Introduction to Digiscoping

**Dates:** Wednesday, September 20th or Saturday, October 7th

**Time:** 8:30-10:00AM

**Location:** McClellan Ranch - Meet at SCVAS

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

**Register:** <https://goo.gl/forms/fm5wkz14m5m2WiGt2> or find the event on our website calendar

**Note:** Rain cancels, with refund or credit for future classes.

**Description:** Explore outdoor photography opportunities at McClellan Ranch. We'll 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. A brief introduction to digiscoping will follow. Wear layers and clothing appropriate for an easy hike on level, but unpaved trails.

### Beginner's Bird and Plant Identification Walk Series

**Date:** Sunday, September 24th

**Time:** 9:00AM-12:00PM

**Location:** Lake Cunningham

**Cost:** Free! Parking fee is \$6

**Register:** Contact Arvind Kumar ([chhaprahiya@yahoo.com](mailto:chhaprahiya@yahoo.com)) to RSVP

**Note:** Bring a hat, water, bird and plant list, binoculars, and walking shoes.

*Co-sponsored by SCVAS, California Native Plant Society, and Open Space Authority*

#### **Session #3: First Day of Fall**

**Description:** Do you love being outdoors? Do you want to deepen your appreciation of nature by learning the names of birds and plants around you? At the onset of fall, join us for a beginner's bird and plant identification walk through Lake Cunningham Park - a major destination for waterfowl and migratory birds, and home to many resident birds. Vicki Silvas-Young will show you how to identify common local birds and the native plants they depend on for food, shelter, and nesting places. Trip distance is four miles round-trip on a level path.

### Bird Identification Workshops with Los Gatos Birdwatcher

**Dates:** Wednesday, October 25th and November 29th

**Time:** 7:30-8:30PM

**Location:** Los Gatos Birdwatcher, 792 Blossom Hill Road, Los Gatos

**Cost:** Free!

**Register:** <https://goo.gl/forms/e44ttvUzHlJ1saC3> or click on the event from our website calendar at [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org)

**Note:** Bring your field guide.

**Description:** Lisa Myers will be hosting bird identification (by sight and call) workshops at the Los Gatos Birdwatcher. These one-hour workshops will focus on five different bird species that we can expect to see and hear in our own backyards each month.

**Session #1 (October):** Yellow-rumped Warbler, White-crowned Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Red-breasted Sapsucker

**Session #2 (November):** Cedar Waxwing, Hermit Thrush, Varied Thrush, Fox Sparrow, Merlin

### San Luis National Wildlife Refuge Excursion

**Date:** Saturday, October 28th

**Time:** 8:00AM-5:00PM

**Location:** Meet at the Los Gatos Birdwatcher, 792 Blossom Hill Road, Los Gatos

**Cost:** \$25 non-members/free for members

**Register:** <https://goo.gl/forms/pr8iy4pWPtALUmZn1> or click on the event from our website calendar at [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org)

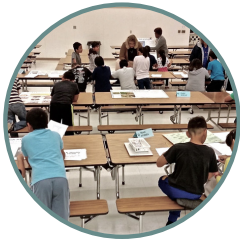
**Note:** Bring binoculars, cameras, layers, lunch, and water.

**Description:** The San Luis National Wildlife Refuge is one of several refuges that make up the San Luis NWR Complex, all located along the Pacific Flyway. Each refuge is home to incredible bird life, but the San Luis Refuge features three automobile tour routes and eight nature trails for the public to view and photograph wildlife in a natural setting. The refuge is also home to a large Tule Elk herd. We will also stop at the Visitor Center, which complements the wildlife refuges of San Joaquin Valley and provides a launching point to explore the entire Refuge Complex. Lisa Myers of Let's Go Birding and the Los Gatos Birdwatcher will lead this tour alongside SCVAS Executive Director, Ralph Schardt. Lisa has taught classes for SCVAS for decades and strives to get more people into birding.

# Wetlands Docent Training

Get kids excited about conservation!

Want to get more involved in your community? Become a Wetlands Discovery Program docent!



- Training Session 1: In-class Activities, McClellan Ranch Preserve  
Thursday, September 7, 1:00PM-3:00PM
- Training Session 2: Field Trip Component, Palo Alto Baylands  
Tuesday, September 19, 9:00AM-11:00AM



For more information, go to: [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org) and click on the Education tab, then "Become a Docent". Contact Kelsey Frey, the Education Programs Coordinator, at (408) 252-3740 or [programs@scvas.org](mailto:programs@scvas.org) with any questions!

## Calling All Cavity Nesters Recovery Program Monitors!

The end of the breeding season is upon us, so don't forget to submit your data! Our **End-of-Season Potluck** will take place at McClellan Ranch in Cupertino on **Thursday, September 14th** at 7:00PM. Please bring a dish of your choice and SCVAS will provide beverages and dessert. People outside of the program and interested in learning more are also welcome to attend!

This gathering will be more exciting and informative if you **have your data submitted by then** (a week prior would be best). Links to the database form and instructions for submitting can be found at [scvas.org/CNRP](http://scvas.org/CNRP). Your data is crucial - it contributes to a nationwide effort to monitor bird populations and helps us make decisions about CNRP as a whole. Thank you for your monitoring and data collection efforts!

*To RSVP to the potluck, go to [www.scvas.org/CNRP](http://www.scvas.org/CNRP). See you there!*

## Friends of SCVAS

*Gifts received June 1st, 2017 through July 31st, 2017*

### **Gift (Up to \$99)**

Ron Arps  
Diane Bartlett  
Diane Bates  
Rachelle Curry  
Travis and Frank Friedrich  
Tracy Hurt  
David Lewis  
Alice Martineau & Olivia Bartlett  
Dr. Loren Mendel  
Lisa Myers  
Nhan Nguyen  
April Pufahl

### **Avocet Sponsor (\$100-\$249)**

Jessica Sheu

### **Burrowing Owl (\$250-\$499)**

Benevity Community Impact Fund  
Julio Mulero & Renee Polizotto

### **Peregrine Falcon (\$500-\$999)**

Jack and Jan Tomlin

### **Golden Eagle (1000+)**

Patricia Brennan Foundation  
Dirk & Charlene Kabcenell Foundation  
David Simon & Lynn Gordon





# Nature Shop

## Featured Items



1



4



5



6



8



2

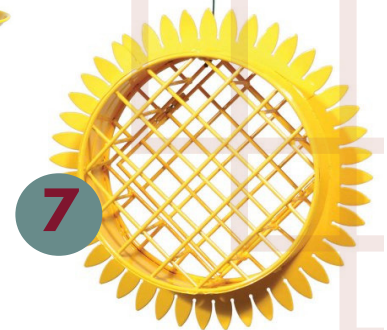


3

HOURS:

M-F 10AM-4PM

SAT 10AM-2PM



7

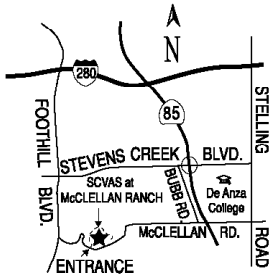
- 1** THE PROTECTOR \$27.00 Protective cage that discourages squirrels. All-metal construction. Holds 2# mixed seeds.
- 2** STOKES SCARLET HUMMINGBIRD FEEDER \$15.00 32 oz. capacity. Leak-resistant.
- 3** THE PANORAMA \$38.00 Two separate chambers holding a total of 4.5# seed. Bird-preferred with U-shaped perches and eight feeding ports.
- 4** AUDUBON MINI SEEDS 'N' MORE SEED & SUET FEEDER \$48.00 Easy-fill roof with no-waste seed baffle and two suet baskets. Holds 5# seed.
- 5** SNACK 'N' TREATS FEEDER \$12.00 Use for fruit, jelly, dried mealworms, and/or seed.
- 6** FINCH FEEDER \$34.95 All-metal. Feeds 10-15 birds at once. Holds thistle/nyger seed.
- 7** SUNFLOWER DESIGN SUET FEEDER \$17.00 All-metal attractive design.
- 8** FINCH MAGIC THISTLE SOCK \$6.00 Gold color attracts birds such as Pine Siskins & Mourning Doves.

...And more! Stop by and see which feeders work best for you and your birds! And remember, all SCVAS members get 10% off.

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)  
[www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org)

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 Permit No. 5869



## 2017 New Members of SCVAS

*Those who joined June 1st - July 31st.*

*We look forward to a great year with your support!*

Annie Chen	Stephen Peck
Rachelle Curry	Priya Pharate
Inge Duncan	April Pufahl
Travis and Frank Friedrich	Diana Rebman
Wei Huang	Linda Gail Thomason
Pamela Kirkbride	Xiaoju Wang
Ann Lam	Laura Warren
Deidre Lentz	Mary J Wilder
Mary Maxwell	Lauren Winters
Carol Murphy	Ron Wolf
Therese Nagi	

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](mailto:scvas@scvas.org) to start your paper-free membership today!

### STAFF

#### Executive Director

Ralph Schardt, [rschardt@scvas.org](mailto:rschardt@scvas.org)  
 (408) 252-3748

#### Office Manager

Tracy Neher, [scvas@scvas.org](mailto:scvas@scvas.org)  
 (408) 252-3747

#### Environmental Advocate

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#### Environmental Advocacy Associate

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#### Burrowing Owl Conservation

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#### Education and Outreach Manager

Kelly Alfrey, [outreach@scvas.org](mailto:outreach@scvas.org)  
 (408) 627-7172

#### Education Programs Coordinator

Kelsey Frey, [programs@scvas.org](mailto:programs@scvas.org)  
 (408) 252-3740

Office Fax (408) 252-2850  
 Office E-mail [scvas@scvas.org](mailto:scvas@scvas.org)  
 Website [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org)

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

#### NATURE SHOP HOURS

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

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

Details available on the SCVAS website.

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

<b>President</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
Diane Hart	Don McDougall
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
Gabrielle Feldman	Joan Leighton

#### DIRECTORS

Mike Armer	Vivek Khanzode
Tom Grey	Marlene Macek
Peter Hart	
Bob Hirt	