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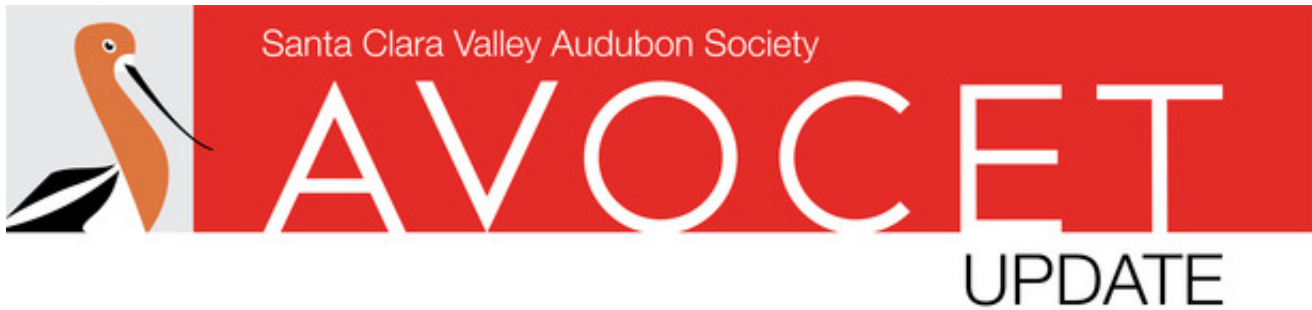


Photo: Dave Zittin

Welcome to the **Avocet Update** for **December 2020**. The holiday season is upon us and not a minute too soon! If you're like most people, you are wondering how to celebrate the close of the year during this strangest of all years... But whether you are staying home and zooming with your far-away family, or having a modest gathering with your house mates, the staff of SCVAS and all our wonderful volunteers are thinking of you. We wish you a happy and healthy holiday season and look forward to seeing you again soon. We are so grateful for your support during the pandemic, and thank you for your patience as we work to find safe and creative ways to resume our usual programs. All the very best to you and your loved ones.

~Matthew Dodder, Executive Director

**Only a few more days to enjoy the Wildlife & Harvest  
2020 Video Festival!**



## **October 24 - Thanksgiving**

If you're stuck at home over the weekend, there are a few more days to enjoy the many videos SCVAS assembled for the annual [Wildlife & Harvest Day](#). This year, of course, it had to evolve into a video festival and as a result many great organizations that had not participated before contributed footage to make it a huge success. Enjoy!!

## **Online Speaker Series**



**Sahas Barve**

**The Acorn Woodpecker Paradox**

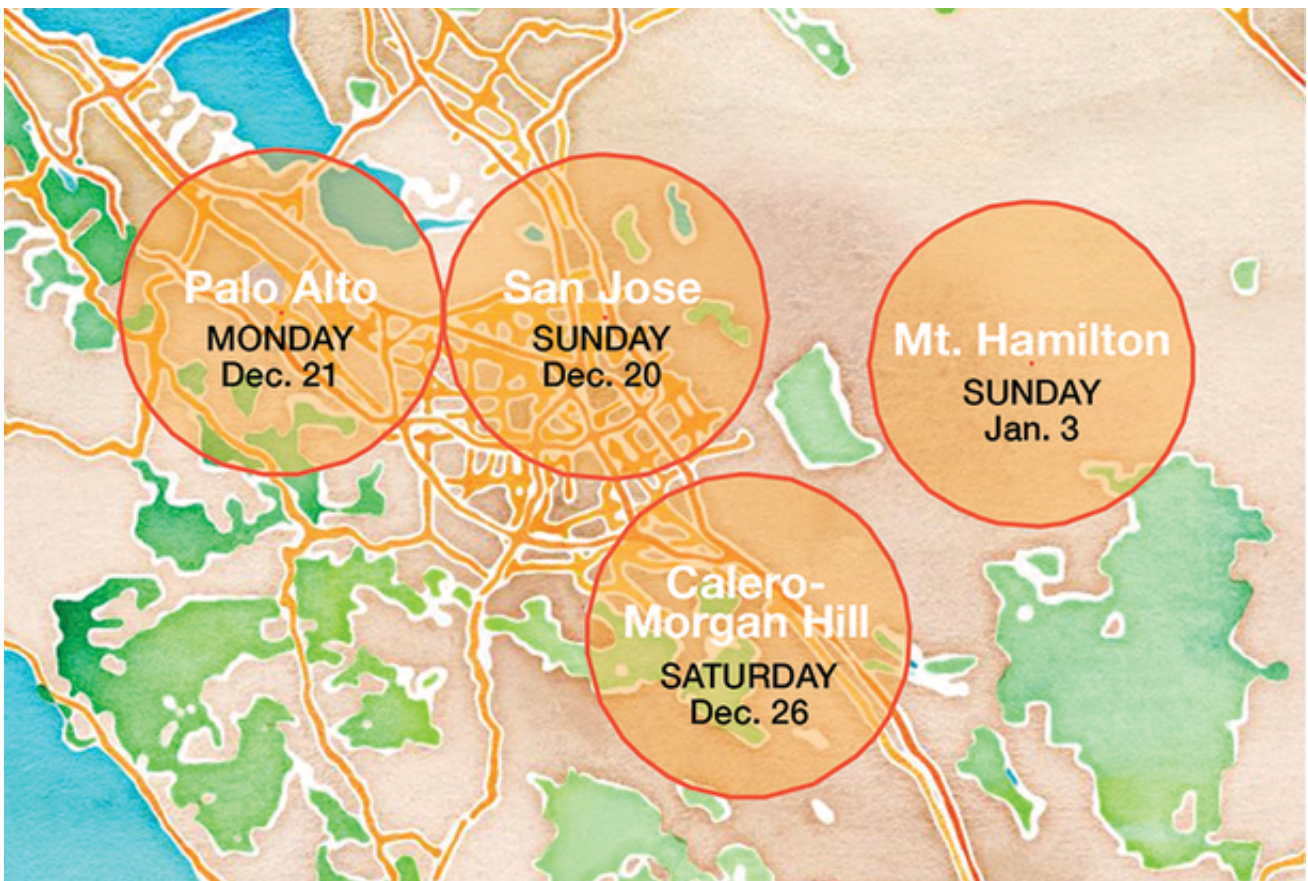
**January 20 (Wednesday)**

**7:00-8:30 PM via Zoom**

Do Acorn Woodpeckers make granaries or do granaries make Acorn Woodpeckers? We will plunge into their complicated social lives—how they build granaries and what they will do to win access to a big granary. Sahas is from Mumbai, India and is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

**SCVAS Christmas Bird Count 2020**



In 2020, we're preparing to hold a "Very Covid Christmas Bird Count (CBC)" where volunteers will conduct a bird census in a Covid-risk-reduced manner. SCVAS organizes four Count Circles: Palo Alto, San Jose, Mount Hamilton, and Calero-Morgan Hill.

Our [CBC website](#) will provide current information on CBC dates, plans, safety protocols and connect you to Count Circle leaders. Contact your Count Circle leaders to learn more!

## **Project FeederWatch**



Photo: Tom Grey

This winter, join FeederWatch and count birds at home for science!

FeederWatch, a citizen science project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, starts in November. **Count the birds you see outside your window** at times that work for you, and submit your counts online - it's fun, easy, and helps the birds! [Learn more and join here.](#)

### **BACKYARD BIRDS:**

The **Nuttall's Woodpecker** is our [Backyard Bird of the Month](#). Read Dave Zittin's article to learn more about this charismatic California bird.

Backyard birder Julie Amato says: "**Pine Siskins** are here!" Find out what birds to look for now in your yard in [Notes and Tips from a Backyard Birder](#).

Project FeederWatch has started! This winter, count birds at home for science. [Learn more and join here.](#)

Tell us what birds are in your yard! Send your notes, photos, and sound clips to [backyardbirds@scvas.org](mailto:backyardbirds@scvas.org). We'll feature your submittals on our website.

## **Self-guided Trips for December**



Photo: Matthew Dodder

Need help finding great birding spots and figuring out what to look for? Check out these self-guided field trips for December. The winter season is a great time to observe wintering ducks and geese at the bay or any of Santa Clara County's inland lakes and ponds. Or, head to the hills to enjoy the views and look for raptors at Sierra Vista and Rancho San Vicente. Try a leisurely walk along Calero Creek to look for woodpeckers and wintering songbirds. If you have a little more time, consider Merced National Wildlife Refuge to view the largest wintering concentration of Lesser Sandhill Cranes in the Pacific Flyway.

- **Bayfront:** [Coast Casey Forebay](#) by Mary Ann Robertson and Julie Amato
- **East Hills:** [Sierra Vista](#) by Chris Johnson
- **East Hills:** [Otoño e Invierno en el Parque del Condado de Coyote Lake, en el Área del Rancho Mendoza](#) por Michael Hawk; traducido por Carlos Marquez Garcia
- **Urban Area:** [Lake Cunningham](#) (Accessible) by Laura Coatney
- **Urban Area:** [Los Gatos Creek Park \(Oka Ponds\)](#) (Accessible) by Brooke Miller
- **Urban Area:** [Calero Creek](#) by Hugh McDevit
- **West Hills:** [Rancho San Vicente](#) by Eve Meier
- **Out of County:** [Merced NWR in Winter](#) by Matthew Dodder

Visit our webpage to see [past months' recommendations](#) or use our [index](#) to see all of our recommendations.

**SCVAS would like to hear from you!** Do you have a favorite place you love to bird that you would like to recommend to our members? Is there a place you would like to learn more about? If so, please email [scvasfieldtrips@gmail.com](mailto:scvasfieldtrips@gmail.com).

# Advocacy Update



Photo: Matthew Dodder

Advocating for birds and their habitats is always challenging, and we need your help to ensure that birds are included in planning efforts in our communities. City officials like to hear from their residents and need to hear from the birding community if we want them to consider avian species in planning for the future.

**Opportunities to engage** (please contact [shani@scvas.org](mailto:shani@scvas.org) if you have questions):

**Sunnyvale Workshop:** Sea level Rise (SLR) and Climate Change

**Monday, November 30, 2020. 4:00pm - 7:00pm**

The event will include a public meeting with presentations and round-table discussion on SLR/Flooding Hazards, Regional Climate Adaptation Strategies, and Moffett Park Strategies, followed by a City Council discussion. To learn more see

<https://www.moffettparksp.com/public-workshops>. We hope you can join and highlight the importance of Sunnyvale shoreline to migratory birds.

**Cupertino City Council:** Ask Council to Protect Birds and the Night Sky

**Tuesday, December 1**

Cupertino Staff has developed two ordinances that, if adopted by council, will reduce window strikes and protect the community from excessive and disruptive artificial light at night.

Please send an email to City Council ([citycouncil@cupertino.org](mailto:citycouncil@cupertino.org)) on November 27 and tell them that you appreciate local birds and the beauty of the night sky. Alternatively, join the city council to speak on this item. You can have a real impact!

**Palo Alto Seminar:** The Importance of the Natural Environment in Meeting Our Sustainability Goals

**December 8, 6:30pm - 7:30pm**

Register [here](#). Please join and use the comment feature to advocate for the urban forest, native trees and bird/pollinator pathways in the City, and for making sure that trail development does not disrupt migratory birds and endangered species such as the Ridgeway Rail by the Bay.

## Giving Tuesday and Employer Match Programs



Education, Advocacy, Birding. Santa Clara Valley Audubon seeks to spread the appreciation for birds and nature to our entire community, no matter who you are. This Giving Tuesday, December 1, help support our work in bringing nature to Santa Clara County by [donating](#). Check with your employer for matching opportunities so you can make your donation go further!





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