The Year of the Bird by Ralph Schardt, Executive Director

Earlier this year, National Audubon, National Geographic, BirdLife International, and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology joined together to declare 2018 to be the “Year of the Bird.” What is so significant about 2018 that makes it the Year of the Bird? It is the centennial of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)! Audubon and other groups are collectively promoting a variety of happenings that began in February and will continue throughout the year to celebrate the Act’s centennial. These concerted efforts will provide birders of all ages and skill levels ways to learn more about birds and the MBTA, while getting involved in activities to support bird conservation and continue the efforts started by MBTA 100 years ago.

In the last 100 years, we have made great strides to help protect birds and their habitats. However, we have much work left to do and some of our greatest achievements in bird conservation are at risk of being undone. The MBTA itself is in danger, as more species of birds are threatened and wildlife habitat is disappearing at an alarming rate. Now, more than ever, we need everyone to get involved. Help us celebrate the MBTA by spreading the word about bird conservation and the joy of birding. Whether you are attending a field trip, creating your own backyard bird habitat, or joining our Environmental Advocacy Team to help protect birds and their habitats, you are helping to make 2018 the Year of the Bird. Check out page 10 for links to our website with information on how you can get involved. I look forward to being out there with you and celebrating the Year of the Bird!

“Birds are indicators of the environment. If they are in trouble, we know we’ll soon be in trouble.”
~ Roger Tory Peterson

Monthly Speaker Series
Cubberley Community Center, Room H1, Palo Alto – Middlefield & Montrose Roads
Doors open 7:30PM; Program begins 8:00PM

Wednesday, March 21
"Papua New Guinea and Birds of Paradise" with Doug Cheeseman
Doug will present an energetic show discussing social behavior and other features of Papua New Guinea’s (PNG) birds, nature, and people. Using images from his trip this past July, Doug will explain PNG’s unique diversity and focus on action he observed while birding, attending sing-sings, and flying around the country. Doug has been leading trips around the world with Cheesemans’ Ecology Safaris after retiring from teaching zoology and ecology at De Anza College, and does not plan to slow down anytime soon!

Wednesday, April 18
"Living on The Edge" with Kim Steinhardt
California’s coast is one of the most fascinating and rapidly changing places in the world. Join environmental author and marine wildlife photographer Kim Steinhardt for an evening’s talk and photo journey exploring the past, present, and probable future of our coast – its shoreline, nature, and communities – with some legal, environmental, historical, and personal insights.
March-April Field Trips
(Full details are also available online at www.scvas.org)

**Please note: Online registration is now required for all field trips.**
This is a simple but necessary step to ensure our trips run as smoothly as possible. Please RSVP by going to scvas.org (look for Calendar, then Field Trips), then find your trip and follow the easy registration directions.

A confirmation email will follow. Thank you for your patience and understanding!
If you have any questions, please call Kelsey Frey at (408) 252-3740.

Saturday, March 3, 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

Sunday, March 4, 8:00AM
Grant Ranch County Park
Half day. Leader: Rich Page, (408) 377-1092. Directions: From I-680 take Alum Rock Ave northeast, turn right on Hamilton Rd and go about 9 miles to the park. Meet at Grant Lake (aka Hall’s Valley Lake) parking lot, the first one on the left (do not enter the main park entrance on the right). Highlights: Fresh water ducks, oak woodland birds, and possible Golden Eagle. Difficulty: Involves a moderately strenuous 2-mile walk. Notes: Park entrance fee required for last half of trip. RC, LO

Wednesday, March 7, 12:00PM
City of Sunnyvale Landfill
One hour. Leader: Allen Royer. Contact landfill coordinator, Silviana Ruiz, with questions at (408) 8730-7545. Directions: Donald M. Somers Water Pollution Control Plant, turn into Borregas and then turn left at the T intersection. Meet under the pepper tree across from the Portapotty. Difficulty: Birding geared toward beginners. Notes: Bring binoculars; loaners available. RC

Saturday, March 10, 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. RC

Sunday, March 11, 8:00AM
Ulistac Natural Area
Half day. Leader: Chris Johnson, (831) 601-8260. Directions: From Hwy 237 take Great America Pkwy south for about 0.8 miles, turn left on Tasman Dr for about one mile, right on Lick Mill Blvd, and meet at the south park entrance on the left. Highlights: We’ll look for migrants and local breeding birds in diverse habitats. RC

Wednesday, March 14, 8:30AM
Coyote Creek Trail; Silver Creek Valley Road
Half day. Leader: Eve Meier and Janna Pauser, (408) 569-9264. 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. Difficulty: Easy walking. RC

Thursday, March 15, 11:00AM
Shoreline Riparian to Baylands
2 hours. Leader: Ralph Schardt, (408) 624-7845. Directions: From Hwy 101 take Shoreline exit and head for the bay. Turn right on Crittenden Ln and continue to the end. Parking is available on the right in the nursery - look for Audubon Trip Leader to know where to park. Carpool if possible. We will hike along a trail that is next to Stevens Creek where it comes out to the bay. Highlights: Riparian birds as well as raptors and shoreline birds. Difficulty: Easy walk with places to stop on bridges over the creek for better access to birds and scouting. Notes: Bring binoculars and/or cameras. RC, LO

Saturday, March 17, 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, and turn left past winery entrance into preserve parking lot. Difficulty: Moderately strenuous walk past an old orchard, seasonal pond, and oak woodlands.

Saturday, March 31, 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.

Wednesday, April 4, 12:00PM
City of Sunnyvale Landfill
One hour. Leader: Allen Royer. Contact landfill coordinator, Silviana Ruiz, with questions at (408) 730-7545. See write-up for March 7.

Saturday, April 7, 8:15AM
Stevens Creek County Park
Half day. Leader: Pat Kenny, (408) 725-0468. Directions: From I-280 in Cupertino take Foothill Expy exit south and follow Foothill Blvd south (it becomes Stevens Canyon Rd) for 2.1 miles. Turn left into first park entrance and meet in the Chestnut Picnic
Area parking lot. **Difficulty:** Moderately strenuous walk looking for migrants and local breeding birds in riparian area. **Notes:** Vehicle entry fee required. **RC**

**Sunday, April 8, 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 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, April 11, 8:30AM**
**Santa Teresa County Park**
Half day. **Leader:** Janna Pauser, (408) 569-9264. **Directions:** From CA-85 S, exit 1B (Bernal), or take Santa Teresa Blvd and go south on Bernal. Follow Bernal uphill and turn left at entrance road. Use county pass or purchase $6 day pass at first parking lot. Meet at Pueblo Picnic Area near bath-rooms. **Difficulty:** Approx. 2-mile walk over possibly muddy or uneven trails. **Highlights:** Spring arrivals, wildflowers. **LO, RC**

**Saturday, April 14, 8:00AM**
**Rancho Cañada del Oro OSP**
Half day. **Leader:** Jim Johnson, (408) 996-3506. **Directions:** From Hwy 101 take Bailey Ave west and turn left on McKean Rd. After approx. 2.4 miles turn right on Casa Loma Rd (from Hwy 85 take Almaden Expwy south, turn right on Harry Rd, then immediately left on McKean Rd. After 6+ miles turn right on Casa Loma Rd). After approx. 1.6 miles, park in the lot on the left. **Highlights:** We’ll bird along the Serpentine trail to the Longwall trailhead and look for breeding birds on this level, open trail. **Difficulty:** Easy walking. **Notes:** Bring water, limited facilities. **RC**

**Sunday, April 15, 8:00AM**
**Arastradero OSP**
Half day. **Leader:** Kirsten Holmquist, (408) 747-0988. **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**

**Tuesday, April 17, 11:00AM**
**Shoreline Riparian to Baylands**
2 hours. **Leader:** Ralph Schardt, (408) 624-7845. See write-up for March 15. **RC, LO**

**Sunday, April 22, 8:30AM**
**Sanborn County Park**
Half day. **Leader:** Dave Zittin, (408) 515-7104. **Directions:** Either take Stevens Creek Canyon Rd, Hwy 85 S, or Pierce Rd to get on Hwy 9, then take Sanborn Rd. Follow the road and meet in the large parking lot. On Google Maps, this lot is labeled Youth Science Institute. **Notes:** Entrance fee required. **LO**

**Saturday, April 28, 8:00AM**
**Ulistac Natural Area**
Half day. **Leader:** Chris Johnson, (831) 601-8260. See write-up for March 11. **RC**

**Sunday, April 29, 8:00AM**
**Oka Ponds**
Half day. **Leader:** Rich Page, (408) 377-1092. **Directions:** Take Hwy 17 S to Lark Ave Exit, turn right onto Oka Rd, then turn left onto W Mozart Ave, and turn right onto Oka Ln. Meet at the park entrance at the end of this road. Please be respectful in parking in and around this neighborhood.

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**Young Audubon**

**Elephant Seal Walks at Año Nuevo**
**Saturday, April 7; walks begin at 10:00, 10:30, and 11:00AM for 2.5 hours each**

Register now for an unforgettable guided walk to see the Elephant Seals! Families with children ages 7 and older are welcome to attend. Space is limited, so sign up early!

**Conservation in Action: Bird Banding with SFBBO**
**Saturday, May 19; 7:30-10:00AM**

Join us at the peak of the spring migration for a special opportunity to witness live bird banding demonstrations by experts from San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory (SFBBO).

Cost: $25/family or $8/child*, $10/adult

*Children must be accompanied by an adult
Birdbathon is On! Join Now!

Get ready for our primary fundraiser of the year, complete with exciting prizes! Proceeds support SCVAS Conservation and Education programs and bringing nature back into Silicon Valley. Birders of ALL ages and skill levels are invited to compete! Sign up, read the rules, ask questions, and view prizes at scvas.org/birdathon.

It’s going to be a great year! We are starting things off right with a Kickoff Dinner and everyone is invited! Bring in sighting lists for the day to compete for prizes from the Nature Shop and get into the spirit of Birdbathon! For more information and to RSVP, check out our website.

Team Categories
- 24-hour Teams (any team over 4 hours)
- 4-hour Teams (4 hours of fast birding fun)
- Big-Sit 4-hour Teams (for those who want to relax)
- 24-hour Photography Teams
- 4-hour Photography Teams

Option 1: Join a Guided Team
Pick a team, leader, or intensity level that suits you (see below) and register online for a $50 donation.

Option 2: Form Your Own Team
Choose at least 2 team members, a date, team name, and location. Pick a category, register, go birding together, and record your total species and dollars raised. Note: You must register to qualify for prizes. Please raise at least $50 per team member - it’s for the birds!

Option 3: Donate!
Watch the feeders at home, instead. Let us know which team or birder you are sponsoring, and mail checks payable to “SCVAS” at 22221 McClellan Road, Cupertino, CA 95014 or donate online at scvas.org/birdathon.

Questions? Contact Carolyn Knight, Birdbathon Coordinator, at: scvasbirdathon@gmail.com.

Spring Classes & Excursions

We are pleased to offer the following classes to our members and community. For full descriptions and to register, please call the SCVAS office at (408) 252-3747 or visit our website at scvas.org and find the class in our calendar.

iNaturalist Workshops

- **Beginner’s Bird and Plant ID Walk Series**
  - **Date:** Sunday, March 18
  - **Time:** 9:00AM-12:00PM
  - **Location:** Lake Cunningham Park
  - **Cost:** Free! $6 Parking fee is required.
  - **Register:** RSVP through Meetup.com (“California Native Plant Society - Santa Clara Valley Chapter” or “Open Space Appreciation Hiking Enthusiasts”)
  - **Session #1:** First Day of Spring
  - **Topic:** Learn how to identify common local birds and the native plants they depend on for food, shelter, and nesting places. *Organized jointly by California Native Plant Society, SCVAS, and Open Space Authority*

- **Outdoor Photography with an Intro to Digiscoping**
  - **Dates:** Thursday, March 22 and April 26
  - **Time:** 9:00-10:30AM
  - **Location:** McClellan Ranch, Cupertino - Meet at SCVAS
  - **Cost:** Free! for members, $15 non-members
  - **Note:** Rain cancels, with refund or credit for future classes.
  - **Topic:** Explore outdoor photography technologies and opportunities and learn to take better nature photos, including digiscoping.
Conservation Corner: What Our Environmental Advocacy Team is Working On...
by Shani Kleinhaus and Mackenzie Mossing

Evergreen Initiative: A Threat to Coyote Valley
This June, San Jose residents will be asked to vote on a ballot measure that could transform the open space and wildlife habitat of Coyote Valley into sprawling subdivisions. The so-called “Evergreen Senior Homes Initiative” is a deceptive, misleading scheme that will rewrite San Jose’s General Plan to impose a “senior housing overlay” on all of San Jose’s “underutilized employment lands”. This includes North Coyote Valley, an area of ecological, hydrological, and cultural significance. The initiative is a blueprint for sprawl, and is not likely to help disadvantaged veterans and seniors - it actually reduces the City’s requirements for affordable housing. The initiative also circumvents environmental review and deprives the public from opportunities to participate in the review process - a process that SCVAS environmental advocates frequently engage in to protect birds and nature. Given the threat to Coyote Valley and lack of environmental review, we have joined other environmental groups and community leaders to defeat the initiative. Email MackenzieSCVAS@gmail.com or visit stopthedeception.com to learn more and click “take action” to endorse and volunteer to help.

Calling All Campbell Residents!
The City of Campbell is currently updating the “Envision Campbell” General Plan that will guide the growth of the city. This is an opportunity to advocate for a vision and policies that look to preserve and plant native trees, protect riparian habitats and open space, and require bird-safe design for buildings. The Los Gatos Creek corridor is being targeted for high-density development with no riparian setbacks. The birds and wildlife that rely on this important habitat need us to speak up for them! Please consider attending a community workshop on Monday, March 5, 6:30-8:30PM at the San Jose Christian School, and encourage the City to include nature and birds in the plan. If you are unable to attend the workshop but would like more details, please email Mackenzie at MackenzieSCVAS@gmail.com for more information and opportunities to participate.

Protecting the Ecosystems of Mountain View’s North Bayshore
Stretching between the bay and Highway 101, Mountain View’s North Bayshore is an area of significant ecological importance, and a focus of SCVAS’ advocacy for many years. The area is a birding hotspot, attracting migratory and resident birds seeking food and water in the Stevens Creek and Permanente Creek corridors, Charleston Road Marsh, and Shoreline Park. Hundreds of egrets congregate here each spring and summer to nest and raise their young along Shorebird Way. As Mountain View looks to transform the area with 9,000+ additional housing units, we engaged with our partners at the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter to advocate for the birds and wildlife that rely on the North Bayshore. Due to our efforts, the new North Bayshore Precise Plan mandates bird-safe design for all new construction, as well as setbacks from the retention basin and egret rookery. The new plan’s implementation document also includes district sustainability measures that aim to monitor biological indicators and sensitive habitats within the area.

Advocating for Birds in Cupertino
Situated next to Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve and Permanente Creek, the Forum Senior Community in Cupertino is looking to expand with additional villas and supportive care facilities. The 3,988-acre preserve is home to over 125 bird species, including several special-status species, and provides habitat for other native California wildlife. Considering the sensitive nature of the area, we provided comments on the Environmental Impact Report and asked for bird-safe design, the preservation of oaks, and mitigation for the loss of open space.

With More Planned Growth, Stanford Should Set Boundaries
As Stanford nears the completion of facilities and housing authorized by the 2000 General Use Permit, the University has applied for a new permit to add 2.275M square feet of academic and academic support (non-residential) space, 3,150 dwelling units or beds, and 40,000 square feet of additional building space to their campus between 2018 and 2035. Along with the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter, we sent comments asking for bird-safe design, protections for open space, and mitigations for light pollution.

Great Egret Chicks at Google by Mackenzie Mossing
Field Notes
(December 2017-January 2018)
by Pete Dunten

Geese through Bitterns
Greater White-fronted Geese were found at many sites near the bay, with a few at outlying locations. High counts were 24 on 17 Dec at the entrance to Don Edwards NWR (BrB et al.) and 34 at Don Edwards on 13 Jan (JVs). Other notable counts were twelve at Byxbee Park on 23 Jan (PL) and nine at Independence HS in San Jose on 17 Dec (AvC, RPa). High tallies of Cackling Geese were 67 flying over the entrance to Don Edwards NWR on 6 Jan (GL et al.), eleven along Bailey Ave in Coyote Valley on 12 Jan (DN), eleven at Shoreline Lake on 14 Jan (ErS), and ten at the Shoreline Park kite-flying area on 30 Jan (SPv, AS). One to two Snow Geese were found at several locations, with high counts of two along Laguna Ave in Coyote Valley on the morning of 13 Jan (DDi et al.), and two at Calero Reservoir in the afternoon of that date (BH, PL, SPz). The longest staying geese were a single at Los Capitancillos Ponds from 27 Dec to 7 Jan (m. ob.) and the geese in Coyote Valley between 30 Dec and 13 Jan. A single Ross’s Goose was found in Coyote Valley near Laguna Ave on 13 Dec (STu). It remained in the area of Laguna and Bailey Ave through 26 Jan (m. ob.). Eurasian Green-winged Teal were found at four locations. One was at San Tomas Aquino Creek on 6 Dec (JK), one continued at Charleston Slough through the period (m. ob.), one was on the North VTA Mitigation Pond on 3 Jan (RJ), and one was at the Palo Alto Baylands Duck Pond on 28 Jan (GL et al.). Astonishing numbers of Redhead have been in the ponds along the edge of the South Bay this winter. Thorough counts exceeded 1000 Redhead in December and January, with a high count of 3288 on 12 Jan (AR, VH). A male Barrow’s Goldeneye joined the Common Goldeneyes on Shoreline Lake beginning on 22 Dec (FV). It was seen through 21 Jan (m. ob.). A single female was on Alviso Salt Pond A16 on 10 Jan (AR). A young Common Loon frequented the Los Capitancillos Ponds between 25 Dec and 6 Jan (m. ob.). Careful scrutiny of the cormorants on Alviso Salt Pond A14 revealed a Pelagic Cormorant along with the usual Double-crested Cormorants (MMR, RJ). It was found again on 29 Jan on the A14/A11 Levee (FV). Single American Bittern were spotted at Alviso Slough on 14 Dec (WGB) and at the end of Terminal Way on 15 Dec (DZ). The Bittern at the latter location remained through 28 Jan (m. ob.).

Hawks through Sapsuckers
Ferruginous Hawks were widespread. A Ferruginous Hawk at the Stanford Dish on 11 Dec (DT) was further northwest in the county than is typical. The same individual may have been at Felt Lake on 18 Dec (AME, HM). Two were along Marsh Rd on 17 Dec (DZ, TO), and two were at Arastradero Preserve on 19 Jan (ABr). The high count in Coyote Valley, their traditional wintering grounds, was two (m. ob.). Three were counted over Coyote Ridge on 30 Dec (RH). In the south county, the two wintering along Jamieson Rd since the first week of November were seen again through 28 Jan (WP, KON, m. ob.). The Ruff present in New Chicago Marsh since the first week of November were seen through 7 Jan (m. ob.). The first Glaucous Gull of the winter was found on 30 Dec at the Kirby Canyon Landfill (SCR). Another was at Ongers Pond on 19 Jan (WBG). A Selasphorus Hummingbird was heard on the Stanford campus on 31 Jan (RFu). Although Allen’s Hummingbirds are expected to arrive in the county first as the earliest migrant of the year, this year Rufous Hummingbirds arrived at other locations around the bay in late January. The Lewis’s Woodpeckers at Chesbro Reservoir remained through the period, with a high count of four noted on 28 Jan (WP, KON). One was seen south of Coyote Valley OSP on 11 Jan (RPh, ABr). A Red-naped Sapsucker returned to Almaden Lake Park on 10 Dec (JPa) for its fourth winter and has stayed into February (m. ob.). Another was at Silver Creek Linear Park in San Jose on 30 Dec (PDu).

Flycatchers through Phainopepla
The highlight of the Audubon Christmas Bird Counts was a male Vermillion Flycatcher seen in Coyote Valley on 30 Dec (RPh) and enjoyed by many into February. It was the first county record. Wintering kingbirds of any species are exceptional, yet we had two sightings of Cassin’s Kingbirds at different locations this winter. One was photographed in a San Jose neighborhood on 16 Dec (DWh) and a second was further south at the Gilroy SCRWA on 2 Jan (WP, KON). Large numbers of Tree Swallows were found earlier in the winters of 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 than in previous years. Notable counts were sixty over Shoreline Lake on 12 Dec (GL), 25 at Lake Cunningham on 17 Dec (EvM, SL), and 110 over Guadalupe Slough on 18 Dec (MJM, JHa). By 15 Jan, a flock of 200 swallows, presumably composed of mostly Tree Swallows, was over New Chicago Marsh (WGB). Violet-green Swallows were not found in exceptional numbers this winter, with the high count being twenty at Monte Bello OSP on 8 Dec (GHa). An unseasonal Northern Rough-winged Swallow was along Silver Creek in San Jose on 16 Dec (WP, KON). Hardy Barn Swallows were seen on three occasions, with three over Charleston Slough on 13 Dec (JY, AL), one over Alviso Salt Pond A16 on 10 Jan (RPh), and four over the Bailey Ave Pond in Coyote Valley on 12 Jan (DN). The House Wren wintering at Ulistac NA was found again on 26 Jan (PW), and another was noted near the Emily Rengel Wetlands on 18 Dec during the Palo Alto CBC (RJ). This winter has been a banner winter for Blue-gray Gnatcatchers. The two Blue-gray Gnatcatch-
Field Notes cont’d

Warblers through Evening Grosbeak

One of the hardier warblers is the Yellow Warbler. During this period five were detected, one in an Alviso neighborhood on 17 Dec (MMR, SCR), one on 18 Dec at the Palo Alto WPCP (MMR), one on 5 Jan at Los Capitancillos Ponds (STu), one on 11 Jan along Coyote Creek near Silver Creek Valley Rd (JPa), and one at Coast Casey Forebay on 28 Jan (RC). One of the two Palm Warblers present in New Chicago Marsh since late October was resighted on 6 and 7 Dec (GL, WP). On 17 Dec one was nearby in Alviso Slough adjacent to the Yacht Club (MIM, DMc). Black-throated Gray Warblers and Wilson’s Warblers also occasionally stay for the winter. There were two sightings of Black-throated Grays in the well-covered Almaden Valley, one continuing along the Alamitos Creek Trail near Graystone Lane on 1 Dec and one along the Guadalupe Creek Trail above Camden on 4 Jan (both JPa). A third was along Stevens Creek below La Avenida on 18 Dec (MMR, StR). Single Wilson’s Warblers were at the Almaden Lake on 8 Dec (JTa), Lake Cunningham on 17 Dec (Pl, KON), and Guadalupe Creek near Los Capitancillos Ponds on 4 Jan (BM). The number of Chipping Sparrows at TJ Martin Park increased to seven by 7 Dec (DZ), and ten by 5 Jan (SPv). Two were found at nearby Guadalupe Oak Grove Park on 7 and 13 Dec (BrB, SPz). Another two were found at William St. Park in San Jose on 17 Dec (RJ). Grasshopper Sparrows have been found on nine out of the last twelve Calero-Morgan Reservoir on dates between 28 Dec and 1 Jan (DN, BM, SBy). The Phainopepla at Guadalupe Oak Grove Park stayed through the period (m. ob.), and another wintering bird was at the entrance to Almaden Quicksilver CP, first noted on 29 Dec (JPa). Hill CBCs, and this year one was tallied on Coyote Ridge on count day, 30 Dec (RH). A Slate-colored Fox Sparrow on 12 Jan along the Santa Teresa Canal Trail was a nice find (JPa). A wintering Song Sparrow that appeared to be from one of the Pacific Northwest groups was seen along the Guadalupe River Trail near Tasman on 17 Dec (NoA) and another was found at the Sunnyvale WPCP on 12 Jan (WGB). Swamp Sparrows turned up at three locations in December, with one at the San Jose/Santa Clara WPCP on 4 Dec (Prp), one at Stevens Creek below Crittenden on 18 Dec (MMR, StR), and one at Palo Alto Baylands on 18 Dec (MMR, NM). The Baylands sparrow remained through the period (m. ob.). Two Slate-colored Juncos graced the Moffett Golf Course on 18 Dec (MMR), and one was in New Almaden on 18 and 30 Dec (JPa). For the second winter in a row, a Summer Tanager visited Stanford campus (Prt). About a third of our records for Summer Tanager are wintering birds. Western Tanagers were reported from five locations, all single birds (m. ob.). A Bullcock’s Oriole was a nice surprise on 13 Jan, along Adobe Creek near Shoreline Park (JVs). Winter finches have been represented by widespread Pine Siskins and one to two Evening Grosbeaks in downtown Los Altos. A single Grosbeak was first found on 17 Dec (JL), and the latest report was from 5 Jan (MJM).

Observers: Noah Arthur (NoA), Bruce Barrett (BrB), Bill Bousman (WGB), Andrew Bradshaw (Ab), Sean Byrnes (SB), Reef Comer (RF), David Diller (DD), Pete Dunten (PD), Al Eisner (AME), Erin Fisher (EF), Janet Hanson (JH), Rick Herder (RH), Victoria Hayse (VB), Bob Hirt (BH), Richard Jeffers (RJ), John Karp (JK), Garrett Lau (GL), Amy Lauterbach (AL), Stephen Lester (SL), Jasen Liu (JL), Patricia Lynch (PL), Nateri Madavan (NM), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Hugh McDevitt (HM), David McIntyre (DMc), Eve Meier (EvM), Jim Meikrantz (JiM), Peter Metropulos (Pm), Brooke Miller (BM), David Nickerson (DN), Tom Olson (TO), Kitty O’Neil (KON), Rich Page (RPa), Janna Pauser (JPa), Sergey Pavlov (SPv), William Pelletier (WP), Sergio Perez (SPz), Ryan Phillips (RPh), Alex Rinkert (AR), Mike Rogers (MMR), Steven Rogers (StR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Allen Royer (ARY), Jennifer Ryceoga (JRY), Mike Shafto (MSH), Eric Storms (ErS), Aaron Sun (AS), Jenny Ta (JTa), David Tattoni (DT), Steve Tucker (STu), Frank Vanslager (JV), Jason Vassallo (JVs), Ann Verdi (AVe), Pingang Wang (PW), Dan Wenny (DWN), James Yurchenco (JY), David Zittin (DZ)

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

The Avocet 7
San Jose, Compiled and coordinated by Mike Azevedo
The San Jose CBC was held on December 17, 2017. It began very windy. The owling party at Alum Rock Park was lucky to hear calling Western Screech Owls and Great Horned Owls that must have been hanging onto waving tree branches for dear life. That wind continued in varying degrees for the rest of the day. Tree Swallows were recorded in several sections, totaling 260 in all. Violet-green Swallows and a Northern Rough-winged Swallow were also seen. Several parties saw Great-tailed Grackles, Cackling Geese, and Greater White-fronted Geese. A Wilson’s Warbler (Patricia Lynch and Kitty O’Neil) was spotted at Lake Cunningham. A Chipping Sparrow (Richard Jeffers, William Street Park), Snow Goose (Ann Verdi, Independence High School), Ferruginous Hawk (Tom Olson, David and Floy Zitten, Calaveras Reservoir), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (Pete Dunten, Calaveras Reservoir), Palm Warbler (Mike Mammosser, Alviso Slough), and Ruff (Mike Mammosser, Steve Tracey, Bruce Barret, New Chicago Marsh), were all observed during the day.

Palo Alto, Compiled and coordinated by Al Eisner
The weather for the Palo Alto CBC (December 18, 2017) was good everywhere, which paid off with a species count only two less than our highest ever. The only misses among species present (nearly) every recent year were Blue-winged Teal, Ring-necked Pheasant (which has been getting scarce), Common Gallinule, Black Skimmer, and Brown Pelican. We found all four regular owl species, and did well with passerines found on only 1/3 to 1/2 of recent counts, including Tree and Violet-green Swallows, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (fourth ever, but all recent), Evening Grosbeak, Pine Siskin, Swamp Sparrow (two), and Yellow and Black-throated Gray Warblers. The bird of the count was the Harris’s Sparrow found by Don Pendleton near Facebook in Menlo Park, our third ever, and first in over forty years. Great-tailed Grackle was also third ever, all in the past three years. Other most-notables were Bald Eagle (two, fourth year in a row), Ferruginous Hawk (first since 2000), and Lark Sparrow (eight).

Not only did we have a good variety, but many counts per species were strong. We set new highs by impressive margins for Tree Swallow (nearly three times the previous high, just a year earlier), White-breasted Nuthatch, Bewick’s Wren, and Fox Sparrow. But the prize goes to the astonishing count of Redhead, more than twelve times our previous high! Thanks to all who helped coordinate or participated.

Mount Hamilton, Compiled and coordinated by Bob Hirt
We had our count on January 2, 2017 and, for a change, welcomed mild weather throughout the day. Most of the smaller ponds were unfrozen and water birds were spread out more this year than last. We had very few access problems since roads were open and dry. The result was a complete count. We had an average species count of 97, with 8,010 individual birds. This was much better than last year but at that time the numbers were a ten-year low. As to individual species we had an average year for Lawrence’s Goldfinches with 128 tallied. One other target was Lewis’ Woodpecker and we counted 54 (double last year’s count). For the first time in eleven years we missed Golden Eagle and Common Merganser. The real shock was a miss for the first time in the count’s history: American Robin. We did find seven Varied Thrushes and one Townsend’s Solitaire! Mike Azevedo’s Mines Road team braved the pre-dawn chill and was rewarded by hearing four Northern Saw-whet Owls - the first report of these little guys in many years.

Thanks to leaders Bill Bousman, Mike Rogers, Mike Azevedo, Charles Coston, and especially Bob Power who (along with Petra Kinsman and Leighton Nakata) hiked the grueling Mule Trail, and also to Kirsten Holmquist, Rich Page, Sophia Christel, and Dale Stahlecker for the long hike on one of the ranches. Our deepest thanks to Elinor Gates for hosting a marvelous compilation feast and for helping count the birds at the top and stocking her house feeders.

Calero-Morgan Hill, Compiled and coordinated by Beth Hamel
The Calero-Morgan Hill CBC was held on December 30, 2017. The sunny and calm weather was well appreciated by the 86 counters. However, lack of rain so far this year was apparent in many very dry areas. Most species counts were low of average and the total species count was 146.

There is no doubt regarding the best bird found during this year’s count - the beautiful male Vermilion Flycatcher found by Ryan Phillips and team in Coyote Valley. This is a first Santa Clara County record, and the bird is continuing to delight birders daily. Will he overwinter here? Will he return next year? Other CBC highlights: Snow Geese and Cackling Geese in Coyote Valley, Burrowing Owl, Grasshopper Sparrow, Tree Swallows, and a Glaucous Gull found on Coyote Ridge. Tree Swallows were also found at the Ogier Ponds, a Greater Roadrunner at the Almaden Research Center, Phainopepla found at both Guadalupe Oak Grove Park and in Almaden Quicksilver Park, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers on the Stiles Ranch Trail and at the Calero Reservoir, the continuing Red-naped Sapsucker at Almaden Lake, and a total of four Lewis’s Woodpeckers were found at Las Animas Road and Chesbro Reservoir.
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Total Species: 188
Total Number of Birds: 89,280
87,711.0, 8,101.0, 35,475
Friends of SCVAS
Gifts received December 1st, 2017 through January 31st, 2018

Gift (Up to $99)
Judy Atterholt
Lisette Narragon
Keith & Atsuko Bennett
Christine Boll
Penelope Bowen
Winslow Briggs
Bert Bruggeman
Colin Campbell & Kelly Alfrey
Eric & Mimi Carlson
Brian Carr
Joe Cernac
Lyn Chambers
Charles Coston
Doug Cox
Shirley Davis
George & Debra Doeltz
James Eggers
Brendan Eich
David Fichtner
Ursula Gallichotte
Inman Gallogly
Mary Gill
Lucia Heldt
James & Margaret Hohenshelt
Richard Hopf, MD
John & Friedly Howell
Jill Jensen
Paul Johannessen
Chris & John Knight
Elisabeth & Robert Lennie
David Lewis
Jim & Sue Liskovec
Jing Liu
Donald & Nancy Lorenzen
Chris MacIntosh
Margaret Magne
Karen DeMello
Dinesh & Joy Desai
Allison Don
Charlotte Epstein
Kimberly Evernell
Suzanne Fellenz
Jean B Fordis
Deanna Gomby
Nicola & Gary Gordon
Waldo Griffin
Michael Guarino
Marge Haley
Ray & Elsa Heald
David Hinson
Kirsten Holmuqist
Sue Hunt
Barbara Fong Jones
Patricia Jordan
Mark & Petra Kinsman
Elaine Kitagawa
James & Judy Kuhl
Ann Lam
Jeff & Maureen LaTourrette
Tom Lipkis
Andy Lott
Bill Lundgren
Margaret MacNiven
Linda & Jerry Mar
Joseph & Dorian Martinka
Marlyn Kay Matthews
Hugh & Debbie McDevitt
Joanne & Doug McFarlin
George & Lilo Miller
John Moore
Jack & Mary Ellen Morton
Brian O’Connor
Tina Petigni
Richard Rairden
Siddharthan Ramachandramurthi
Robert Reese
Lenore Roberts
Donna Sadowy
Madeline Scheiman
Kandis Scott
Jeffrey Segall
Suzan Siltiaemni
David Sparks
Elinor Spellman
Kathryn Strachota
Jane Tatchell
Bruce W Tolley
Van den Berg-Fondefamily
Villages Hiking Club
Marilyn Waterman
William & Linda Wilson
David Wimpheime
Shirley Wodtke
Curt Wohlgemuth
Doug & Pam Wong
Nick & KC Yatsko
James Yurchenco
Gretchen Zane
Floy & Dave Zititin

Peregrine Falcon
($500-$999)
Felix & Helen Charpentier
Constance Crawford
James Heckenbach
Harriedt Hals
Barry & Ginger Langdon-Lassagne
Marlene Macek
Jim Meikrantz
Lisa Miller
Mary Murphy
Melanie O’Brien
Franklin & Susan Orr
April Pufahl
John Richardson
Golden Eagle
($1000+)
Benevity Community
Impact Fund
Thomas Grey
Bob Hirt
Wayne Krill
Steven Patt
J. Holley Taylor

SCVAS Events Calendar
Sat. 3/3; 10:00AM-1:00PM
Cavity Nesters Recovery Program
Orientation and Training
McClellan Ranch Preserve, Cupertino
See details at scvas.org/cnpr

Wed. 3/7 & 4/4; 7:30-9:00PM
Bay Area Bird Photographers
Embarcadero Room, Rinconada Library
1213 Newell Rd, Palo Alto, CA
Topic 3/7: “Uganda Wonderland”
with Mark Rauzon
Topic 4/4: “Madagascar’s Photogenic Wildlife” with Doug Cheeseman
See scvas.org/babp for more details.

Tues. 3/13 & 4/10; 10:00AM
Eye 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 3/13: Nightingales and Larks
Topic 4/10: Finches

Fri. 3/16 & 4/13; 12:30-2:00PM
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.

Sat. 4/21; 10:00AM-3:00PM
Rummage Sale!
McClellan Ranch Preserve, Cupertino
See details on page 11.

Make 2018 Your Year of the Bird!
Check out the links below for ways you can get involved.

• Join Birdathon! scvas.org/birdathon
• Attend a field trip! scvas.org/fieldtrips
• Volunteer! scvas.org/volunteer
• Donate to bird conservation and education! scvas.org/donate
• Sign up for Action Alerts! scvas.org/getinvolved
• Make your home safe for birds! scvas.org/athome
• Become a member! scvas.org/member
Nature Shop

Hours:
M 10:00AM–4:00PM
T-F 9:00AM–4:30PM
Sat 10:00AM–2:00PM

The Laws Field Guide to the
SIERRA NEVADA
$25

Sierra Birds
A Hiker's Guide
$20

The Laws Guide to
NATURE DRAWING
and JOURNALING
$10

$5.95

This month, we wanted to highlight the works of the instructor of one of our most popular courses: Nature Journaling with John Muir Laws! He also has some great books for sale in our Nature Shop – stop by today!

Rummage Sale!

Head over to the SCVAS office on Saturday, April 21 from 10AM-3PM to "rummage" through the items we have for sale! To donate, please stop by our office during operating hours. We can't wait to see you there!!!
New Members of SCVAS
We look forward to a great year with your support!


And thank you to those who renewed their membership!

Go Paperless!
Want to go green and feel great about it? Sign up to receive your newsletter via email and enjoy these benefits:

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

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

NEW OFFICERS

President
Diane Hart
Vice President
Gabrielle Feldman
Treasurer
Don McDougall
Secretary
Joan Leighton

NATURE SHOP HOURS
Monday 10:00AM - 4:00PM
Tuesday - Friday 10:00AM - 4:30PM
Saturday 10:00AM - 2:00PM

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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.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

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Vice President
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