Summer Nature Days 2014 was Fun in LOTS of Sun!

by Andrew Bradshaw
SCVAS Programs Assistant

Despite some warmer than usual temperatures, campers and counselors were undaunted by the heat and went about exploring the wonders of nature in many of our beautiful, local open spaces. Once again teamed up with Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District and Shoreline at Mountain View, we were able to put on a phenomenal summer camp giving young children the opportunity to learn about nature and begin developing a personal conservation ethic.

This year, camp began with a sunny day of exploration at Picchetti Ranch with an emphasis on exploration and increasing awareness of the natural world. Campers hit the trail with binoculars and self-made field guides as they looked for signs of animals and learned to identify local plant species.

We spent the second day of camp learning about the natural and cultural history of the wetlands around Shoreline. Campers were treated to a guided tour of the Rengstorff House by docents dressed in period-correct clothing followed by Victorian era games on the lawn. The highlight of the day for many was getting down-and-dirty in the mud while searching for macroinvertebrates and small crustaceans.

Birds were our primary focus on the third day of camp. Campers had a great time spotting and identifying many different bird species throughout McClellan Ranch. Campers were also able to peek inside some of the active nest boxes on the site. Our conservation-minded campers then helped the birds in their own backyards by building bird feeders and nest boxes to take home.

Day four demonstrated the fearlessness of our campers. They spent the day learning about, searching for, and even holding many different types of insects. Near the end of the day, everyone cooled off by checking out some pretty awesome insects and crawdads in Stevens Creek!

Our final day of camp was spent at the unique and inspiring Skyline Ridge.

(continued on page 8)

General Membership Meetings
Cubberley Community Center, Rm H1
Palo Alto - Middlefield & Montrose Rds
Doors open 7:30; program 8:00

Wednesday, September 17th
“Helping the Western Snowy Plover”
with Catherine Burns and Karine Tokatlian of SFBBO

Did you know there are only about 200 Western Snowy Plovers that still commonly breed in the Bay Area? Come hear about the status of this sensitive species, including research and habitat enhancement work that the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory is doing to increase plover numbers in the Bay Area.

Above Left: Western Snowy Plover
Photo ©Michael Kern

Above Right: Marie Read
Photo courtesy of the author

(Additional information and directions available at www.scvas.org or by calling 408-252-3747)
Sept - Oct '14 Field Trips

(Full details for all of our Field Trips are also available online at www.scvas.org)
Please carpool if possible; bring binoculars, field guides, layered clothing.
LO = Lunch optional; RC = Heavy rain cancels; NF = No facilities available

Wednesday Sept. 3, 12:00 PM
City of Sunnyvale Landfill
One hour. Leaders: Freddy Howell and Allen Royer. Contact organizer Silviana Ruiz (408) 730-7545 to attend. Directions: Donald M. Somers Water Pollution Control Plant, junction of Borregas and Caribbean. Meet at Trailhead at north end. Difficulty Level: Birding geared toward beginners. Notes: Bring binoculars; loaners also available. RC

Saturday Sept. 6, 8:15 AM
Arastradero Preserve
Half day. Leader: Rich Page (408) 377-1092. Directions: From I-280 take Page Mill Rd. west approx. ½ mile to Arastradero Rd. Turn right and meet at the parking lot located ½ mile on the right. Highlights: Woodland and grassland species as well as a good assortment of raptors are possible. Difficulty Level: Trip involves two plus miles of moderately strenuous walking. RC

Sunday Sept. 7, 8:00 AM
Ogier Ponds
Half day. Leader: Kirsten Holmquist (408) 747-0988. Directions: From Hwy 101 in San Jose, exit Tully Rd. Go east on Tully to Coleman Rd. and then right on Winfield Blvd. Difficulty Level: Expect about 3 miles of easy walking. Highlights: We will bird the lake and the trail upstream looking for waterfowl, raptors, and a wide variety of riparian birds. LO, RC

Sunday Sept. 14, 8:30 AM
Coyote Hills Regional Park
Half day. Leader: Frank Vanslager (650) 961-1505. Directions: Take Hwy 84 (Dumbarton Bridge) east to Newark. Exit right at Thornton, then go left on overpass, as Thornton becomes Paseo Padre turn left at Patterson Ranch/Commerce Rd. into park. Meet at far end of Quarry parking lot located on the left, 1/4 mile past park entrance. Notes: Entrance fee required. LO, RC

Saturday Sept. 20, 9:00 AM
Charleston Slough
Half day. Leader: Allen Royer (408) 288-7768. Directions: From Hwy 101 in Mt. View take San Antonio Rd. north to Terminal Way parking area. Meet at the entrance nearest San Antonio Rd. Difficulty Level: This trip recommended for beginning birders but all are encouraged to attend. Notes: Bring your spotting scope and a friend.

Sunday Sept. 21, 8:15 AM
Alum Rock Park
Half day. Leader: Jim Johnson (408) 966-3506. Directions: From Hwy 101 or I-680 take McKee Rd. northeast toward the hills then left on Toyon Ave. right on Penitencia Creek Rd. and continue on into the park. Drive under the bridge and meet at the far end of the parking lot. Notes: Entrance fee required. Difficulty Level: Trip is a moderately strenuous 3-4 mile walk. LO, RC

Saturday Sept. 27, 9:00 AM
Almaden Lake Park and Alamitos Creek
Half day. Leader: Steve Tracey (408) 966-3860. Meet at the bathrooms (blue building) near the east entrance to Almaden Lake Park. Notes: Parking is free on Winfield Blvd. Directions: From Hwy 85 take Almaden Expwy south, turn left on Coleman Rd. and then right on Winfield Blvd.

Sunday Sept. 28, 7:30 AM
Sunnyvale Baylands Park
Half Day. Leader: Pete Dunten (650) 210-6764. Directions: From Hwy 237 take the Lawrence Expwy/Caribbean Dr. exit toward Caribbean Dr. Turn right into the park at the first stoplight north of the freeway and meet in the first parking lot to the left of the entrance kiosk. Notes: a parking fee may be required. RC

Wednesday Oct. 1, 12:00 PM
City of Sunnyvale Landfill
One hour. Leaders: Freddy Howell and Allen Royer. Contact organizer Silviana Ruiz (408) 730-7545 to attend. See additional details from Sept 3rd.

Saturday Oct. 4, 8:00 AM
Oka Ponds
Half day: Leader: Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527. Directions: From Hwy 17 in Los Gatos take Lark Ave. exit west. Turn right on Oka Rd., left on Mozart Ave. and an immediate right on Oka Ln. Meet at gate. RC.

Sunday Oct. 5, 9:00 AM
Hawk Hill/Marin Headlands
Full day. Leader: Nick Yatsko (408) 891-3187. Directions: Going north on Hwy 101, after crossing the Golden Gate Bridge pass the Vista Point exit and then exit at Alexander, turn left and cross under Hwy 101, then turn right just before entrance back onto Hwy 101 south. Drive up hill to the highest point and park. Meet at the parking area or at the Hawk watch on top of the hill (arrive/depart the hill at any time). Highlights: Migrating raptors including the possibility of seeing a rare Broadwing Hawk. Notes: Weather conditions can be highly variable so dress in layers; bring lunch and liquids. This will be our only field trip to the Hawk Hill/Marin Headlands this fall. Heavy fog in the headlands will likely cancel the trip.

Wednesday Oct. 8, 8:30 AM
Lake Cunningham County Park
Half day Leader: Janna Pauser 408-569-9264. Directions: From Hwy 101 in San Jose, exit Tully Rd. Go east on Tully to entrance,.3 miles past Capitol Expwy. Turn

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Field Trips continued

left into park and left again at kiosk. Park in the marina parking lot. Notes: Possible entrance fee. LO, RC

Saturday Oct. 11, 8:00 AM
Moss Landing & vicinity
Half day. Leader: Todd Newberry, Santa Cruz Bird Club (831) 426-8741. Directions: Meet in Moss Landing next to the Sea Harvest Restaurant in the big parking lot and boat launch ramp just north of Highway 1’s Elkhorn Slough bridge. Notes: Weather conditions can be highly variable so dress in layers, bring lunch and liquids. Highlights: Shorebirds, waterfowl and other migrants.

Sunday Oct. 12, 8:00 AM
Ogier Ponds
Half day. Leader: Jim Johnson (408) 996-3506. For directions see the write-up for Sept 7. RC

Saturday Oct. 18, 7:30 AM
Local Hot Spots
Half day. Leader: Bob Reiling (408) 253-7527. We’ll meet at the Alviso Marina. Directions: From Hwy 237 in San Jose take Gold St. north to the end of the street, bear left on Elizabeth St. and then right on Hope St. to the Marina parking lot. Highlights: A chance to visit some of the local hot spots you hear about and, we hope, to see some “good” birds.

Sunday Oct. 19, 8:00 AM
Sunnyvale Water Treatment Facility
Half day. Leader: Frank Vanslager (650) 961-1505. Directions: From Hwy 101 take Hwy 237 east, exit North on Caribean Dr., turn right on Borregas Ave. then left to the parking area. Highlights: This is a great place to study ducks. Difficulty Level: Trip is fairly easy but a long walk is possible. Notes: Scopes are highly recommended. RC

Saturday Oct. 25, 9:00 AM
Charleston Slough
Half day. Leader: Allen Royer (408) 288-7768. For directions see the write-up for Sept 20th.

Sunday Oct. 26, 8:00 AM
Windy Hills OSP
Half day. Leader: Kirsten Holmquist (408) 747-0988. Meet in the parking lot at Sausal Pond edge of the preserve. 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. and go 0.8 miles to the parking lot on the left side of the road just past the entrance to The Sequoias. RC

Saturday Nov. 1, 8:00 AM
Moss Landing & vicinity
Half day. Leader: Norm Kikuchi (831) 459-9424. For directions see the write-up for Oct 11th.

Sunday Nov. 2, 8:30 AM
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 approximately 9 miles to the park. Meet at Grant Lake (aka Hall’s Valley Lake) parking lot, which is the first parking lot on the left side of the road (do not enter the Main Park Entrance on the right). Highlights: Fresh water ducks, oak woodland birds and possible Golden Eagle. Notes: A Park entrance fee will be required for the last half of the trip. Daylight Savings Time change, fall back or be an hour early for this trip. Difficulty Level: This will be a moderate 2 mile walk. LO, RC.

SCVAS Events Calendar:

Wed. 9/3 & 10/1, 7:30-9PM
Bay Area Bird Photographers Meeting
Lucy Evans Interpretive Cntr, Palo Alto
Topic 9/3: Annual “Bring Your Own Photos” program
Topic 10/1: “Bay Area Birds” with Davor Desancic
Go to www.scvas.org/babp for details

Tues. 9/9 & 10/14, 10:00AM
Eve Case Bird Discussion Group
Meets at the home of Pat Dubois - 17150 Buena Vista Ave., Los Gatos
(408) 395-4264
Topic 9/9: Penguins
Topic 10/14: Local Gulls

Wed. 9/10 & 10/15; 3-4:30PM
Nature Journaling with John Muir Laws
Location TBD: Check the SCVAS website after September 1st for details.
Free workshops for all ages! No RSVP required, but please be on time.

Thurs. 9/11, 7-9PM
Cavity Nesters Recovery Program (CNRP) End-of-Season Meeting
McClellan Ranch Preserve, Cupertino
All monitors are invited to attend. We’ll all introduce ourselves, talk about the season, get a chance to ask questions, look at the data that has been submitted and bring closure to the 2014 nest box season. Please remember to submit your data online before the 11th! See details on page 10.

Sat. 9/27; 7AM-4PM
Stevens Creek 50K/SCVAS Benefit Run
Runners and Volunteers are needed to participate in this fun event through the Santa Cruz Mountains. Runners are asked to donate a small registration fee, the proceeds of which go to benefit SCVAS’ education and conservation programs. Go to the event website - stevenscreekstriders.com/scsraces - for more details about the race, how to register as a runner, or how to help as an event volunteer.

Sat. 10/18, 10AM-3PM
Wildlife Education Day
Blackberry Farm, Cupertino
A fun event for the whole family! See page 9 for details
Conservation Corner
By Shani Kleinhaus, Environmental Advocate

Owls and Egrets Galore!

This spring and summer, we celebrated the birds of our long-term advocacy efforts. At the San Jose Regional Wastewater Facility, more than 20 burrowing owls chicks fledged from 7 nests. The City of San Jose proudly created a web page (San José gives a ‘hoot!’! www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?id=4384) and posts photograph and videos on a Flickr photostream (www.flickr.com/photos/123882326@N04/)

Meanwhile, the egret rookery of Shorebird Way is winding down after a long season where dozens of great egrets and snowy egrets raised their young in a noisy cacophony, attracting birders, photographers, and media attention (www.mercurynews.com/ci_26089661/effort-under-way-protect-egrets-at-google).

During the July 4th celebrations, SCVAS staff and volunteers protected burrowing owls at Shoreline Park and monitored egrets at both Almaden Lake and Shorebird Way during the fireworks displays.

Bird Friendly Building Design Advances in San Jose

The Rules and Open Government Committee voted unanimously to direct the City Manager to study the issue of bird safe building design, then come back to the Transportation and Environment Committee by September with recommendations on bird safety, and whether to proceed with Guidelines (recommendations) or with an Ordinance (law) for the City of San Jose. This is a large step forward in promoting the safety of birds in this city of a million people. We have been advocating for Bird Safe Design in cities along the Peninsula (Sunnyvale adopted guidelines earlier this year), and we are happy that the largest City in our region is looking at bird safety as an important issue.

We thank Council Members Sam Liccardo and Kansen Chu for their leadership, Council member Rocha and Kalra for their support, and the members of the committee - Mayor Reed, Vice Mayor Nguyen, and council members Pete Constant and Pierluigi Oliverio - for moving towards a bird-friendly city. We also thank the dozens of San Jose residents who participated in public meetings, wrote to Council members and Committees, or advocated with neighbors and friends. And finally, we thank the San Jose Mercury News for publishing our advocate's opinion (www.mercurynews.com/opinion/ci_26075983/birds-and-glass-san-joen-can-prevent-needless).

Parks Are for the Birds

Our advocates are currently engaged with Park Master Plans in Palo Alto (all parks; Byxbee park), San Jose (Shady Oaks) and the Water District Water Resources (and Creeks) Master Plans.

But All Is Not Rosy and Chirpy...

We continue to engage in Environmental Review processes for several projects in San Jose. The most significant is the planned development of Communication Hill - a project that proposes to flatten the hills and fill in wetlands, creeks and springs.

We also continue following the advance of the Panoche Valley solar project through a long permitting process. We fought hard for Panoche Valley. With the Sierra Club, we litedig over the approval of inadequate environmental review, and lost. We advocated with utilities, and hope our efforts may have helped PG&E make its wise decision to refused a Power Purchase Agreement with the Panoche Valley Project. Unfortunately, South CA Edison signed a Power Purchase Agreement with the project proponents, and the solar project continues to move forward. But our effort to save the valley is not over yet.

Volunteer Ventures
by Toby Goldberg, Programs Coordinator

As the days start to get shorter, and the weather starts to cool off (we hope), thoughts around the SCVAS office are turning to the new school year and the fall festival season. Which, of course, is where all our wonderful volunteers come in! If you enjoy working with children, or talking to people about what makes our chapter special, then we definitely have an activity for you! Consider some of these opportunities:

Wetlands Discovery Program Docents – One of our most visible, vital and volunteer-intensive activities, but one that is so worth it! This program shares the wonder and importance of wetland habitats with 3rd-6th graders throughout Santa Clara County. Volunteers guide students in exploring wetland wildlife and habitat both in the classroom and out in the field. This program is rewarding both for our volunteers and for the hundreds of South Bay children who participate (almost 1500 this past year!). No experience is necessary (though familiarity with local birds is definitely a plus), as we will provide training for both field and class sessions. All a potential docent needs is a love of nature and a desire to share it with children.

Community Outreach Volunteers - Each year, especially in the Spring and Fall, SCVAS is invited to participate in numerous community festivals and fairs. These fun events are a great chance for us to recruit new members, let people know about our upcoming events, and just share what it is we love about Audubon with those around us. Interested volunteers should be comfortable talking to people in an informal setting about SCVAS’ programs.

Wildlife Education Day Support – As our largest annual event, Wildlife Education Day has an abundance of opportunities to help out. With wonderful interactive booths, environmental organizations, educational presentations, live animals, an art contest, and much more, this fun-filled affair will require a lot of volunteer support weeks before the event as well as on the big day – Saturday, October 18 (see page 9 - or www.scvas.org/WildlifeFestival - for more details). Here’s how YOU can help:

Prior to the Event:
- Publicity
- Mailing Support/Handout Prep

Day of the Event:
- Set Up
- Registration
- Nature Arts & Crafts
- High School Volunteer Coordinator
- Nest Box Building Station
- Event Photographer
- Parking
- Clean Up
- And so much more!
SCVAS Classes and Field Seminars with Bob Power - 2014/2015

The SCVAS Staff and Board are always dreaming up, planning, and coordinating outdoor educational adventures that we think will captivate the birder in anyone. We are very excited, therefore, to be able to present our roster of Field Seminars for the coming year - we hope that you’ll join us for one (or more) of these adventures! Additional information is also available online at www.scvas.org - click on “Calendar.” Call the SCVAS office at 408-252-3747 to register.

“Raptors in Flight”

Raptors hold everyone’s attention. Their grace as they dominate the airways and their confidence as they survey the landscape are mesmerizing. The beauty and majesty of a raptor when they choose to allow us a prolonged look on a distant perch always makes a lasting impression. Identification challenges in the field are what we’ll focus on in three field trips to some of the bay area’s most productive raptor resource areas. Through observation and discussion Bob will help you improve your raptor identification skills while observing these thrilling birds in the wild. Note: We will not be studying owls in this class, and we will not be traveling to the Pinnacles to study Condors.

Dates, Times and Locations:
- Sun, 10/19 - Hawk Hill, Marin Headlands; 9:00AM-2:00PM
- Sun, 10/26 - Wavecrest Road, Half Moon Bay; 9:00AM-2:00PM;
- Sun, 11/02 - San Benito County; 8:00AM-4:00PM

Fee: $90 members; $125 non-members.

Looking Ahead: Spring and Summer 2015

Lower Klamath / Tule Lake Eagles
Thursday – Monday, Feb. 5th – 9th, 2015

The lower Klamath Basin is a magnet for Rough-legged Hawks, Ferruginous Hawks, Prairie Falcons, Golden Eagles, and of course, Bald Eagles in abundance. While we attempt to identify all birds seen on this trip, the focus is raptors. We see geese in phenomenal numbers, multiple duck species, and often see the first few north-bound Sandhill Cranes.

Verna’s Winema Lodge won’t last forever. Come experience a northern California classic. Participants make their own reservations. There are other accommodations in the area, but I’m not sure you’ll be able to beat the convenience, dining, price combo. The Winema Lodge is ideally situated and puts on a great dinner and breakfast.

Participants must be prepared to either drive or ride in a carpool on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. We will have a maximum of 3 vehicles, 4 guests per vehicle, as we wander around the backroads of the Lower Klamath and Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuges.

Fee: $175 members; $210 non-members. Trip limited to 11 participants.

Cooper’s Hawk in Flight: Photo courtesy of Ashok Khosla - seeingbirds.com

Cave Creek Canyon and The Chiricahua Mountains
May 19th – 26th

Cave Creek Canyon and the Chiricahua Mountains are famed for the presence of Elegant Trogon, Red-faced Warbler, Painted Redstart, Mexican Chickadee and the beauty of the sky islands of southeastern Arizona. From our base at the charming Cave Creek Ranch, we’ll explore the varied habitats surrounded by this enchanting mountain range. Join Bob to seek all of the area’s specialty birds at one of North America’s premier birding destinations. For an itinerary, e-mail bob@scvas.org.

Fees: $1795/person, double-occupancy. $450 single supplement. Deposit: $300 due at registration.

The Breeding Birds of Yuba Pass, Sierra Valley, and the Gold Lakes Region
Session 1: June 7th – 10th; Session 2: June 12th – 15th

The northern Sierra offers a spectacular array of nesting birds, from Blackbacked Woodpeckers and Hermit Warblers to Yellow-headed Blackbirds and Vesper Sparrows. We typically see 100+ species of birds during this workshop, few are species available to study in the south bay, and all are stunning. With a 4-day trip, we’re able to explore these unique habitats at leisure.

We organize carpools each morning and will have a maximum of 3 vehicles; please do not sign up for this workshop if you’re not prepared to carpool around the Yuba Pass / Sierra Valley region. Carpooling expenses are shared by the participants (typically $5/person/day). Transportation to Yuba Pass, lodging and meals are the responsibility of each participant. Detailed itinerary will be forwarded upon registration. Trip size is limited to 11.

Fee: $175 members; $210 non-members

(more trips in 2015: continued on page 8)

The Avocet
Field Notes  
(June-July 2014)  
by Bill Bousman

Geese through Shorebirds

The Greater White-fronted Goose mentioned in the last report was seen again on 7 Jun (MMR) and 19 Jun (MDo) and is likely oversummering. Another summering (or permanent) white-front was seen in the Morgan Hill Community Park on 21 June (SCR, JD). The only summer report of Blue-winged Teal was a pair in the Lockheed Martin channel on 24 Jun (BM). A pair of Redhead was found on 8 Jun (MMJ) in Pond A16 and remained there at least through 5 Jul (AME). The female-plumaged White-winged Scoter on closed refuge ponds was encountered again during surveys 29 Jun to 27 Jul (MMR, MJM, RGJ, JSJ). The only White-faced Ibis for the period was one at the south end of Calaveras Reservoir on 21 Jun (SCR, JD). The nesting pair of Swainson’s Hawks in Coyote Valley hatched one young and it fledged about 9 Jul (CL, RPh, v.ob.). A different pair of dark-morph Swainson’s were seen in the valley through 7Jun (SCR). A second-year light-morph Swainson’s was seen along Coyote Creek below Crittenden Lane on 7 Jun (MMR), the first record for the Palo Alto SBC. One or more Black Rails were heard along Alviso Slough during the period (v.ob.). Two were calling along Alviso Slough near Pond A12 on 2 Jul (WGB) and two were heard in the old marina on 8 Jul (PDu). Snowy Plovers appear to have had a successful breeding season in dried-out Crittenden Marsh and the unnamed panne to the north. Good numbers were seen throughout the period with 12 adults and 14 chicks in six broods tallied on 27 Jul (MIM, RGJ). Thirteen birds were counted on Pond A9 in Alviso on 29 Jun (MMR, MJM, RGJ) but were flooded out in July. Up to four birds have been seen in Pond A13 (v.ob.) and have been trying to nest. An adult Wandering Tattler in Pond A11 on 20 Jul (CJo, LAv) was a surprise, our first July record and only the second for the summer period. It has been another poor summer for Lesser Yellowlegs.

Breeding Swainson’s Hawks and Phainopepla Were the High Points of the Nesting Season. Other Rarities Included a Wandering Tattler and an Indigo Bunting.

with only one bird seen in New Chicago Marsh on 23 and 28 Jul (RWR, FV, WGB). An alternate Ruddy Turnstone was found on Pond A16 on 21 Jul and remained there two days (WGB, v.ob.). The first fall Red Knot showed up on 22 Jul (BM) with 10 on Pond A9 and at least four have been found there through the end of the period (v.ob.). Extraordinary numbers of adult Pectoral Sandpipers have shown up along the coast this summer, our token bird was seen in the New Chicago Marsh on 28 Jul (WGB). The passage of Wilson’s Phalaropes has been typical this summer with a peak count of 2700+ birds in New Chicago Marsh on 16 Jul (WGB). Although Red-necked Phalarope will not peak until August or September, the high summer count was at least 500 birds in Pond A12 on 23 Jul (WGB).

Terns through Falcons

The first of the fall-staging Least Tern were three on Pond A2E on 4 Jul (WGB). Sixteen the next day (MJM) was the high count for the period and they have remained there through the end of the period (v.ob.). Black Skimmers nested on closed refuge ponds this summer with both a fledgling and a precocial young seen on 29 Jun (MMR, MJM, RGJ). A single Greater Roadrunner was reported from the edge of Coyote Reservoir during June (v.ob.), sometimes calling. Vaux’s Swifts again nested in a chimney near the McAbee entrance to Almaden Quicksilver CP, nestlings were heard on 21 Jun (JPa). Summer resident Vaux’s were recorded from the Almaden Valley along the front of the Santa Cruz Mountains into southern San Mateo County. The high point of the period was 12 birds over Paso Los Cerritos near Meridian on 24 Jul (JPa).

Black-chinned Hummingbirds have continued to be found along the Los Gatos Creek Trail in Willow Glen, at nearby feeders, and along the Alamitos Creek Trail in the Almaden Valley (v.ob.). A fledgling was seen along the Alamitos Creek Trail near Graystone Lane on 4 Jul (LBA, RSTh) and a female on a nest was found nearby the next day (JPa). A fall passage adult male Rufous Hummingbird was a surprise at a Morgan Hill feeder 24 Jun to 6 Jul (SCR). Four Lewis’s Woodpeckers were seen in the San Antonio Valley where they are resident on 5 Jun (WGB). Two nestling Pileated Woodpeckers in the nest cavity in Sanborn-Skyline CP mentioned in the previous period fledged about 12 Jun (JJo). One or two fledgling Peregrine Falcons were observed in Larios Canyon on 1 Jun and two young fledged from a nest on a wind tunnel at Moffett Field on 11 Jun (both MMR).

Flycatchers through Swallows

Late spring migrant Willow Flycatchers were both singing, one in an Almaden Valley yard on 9 Jun (JPa) and one at the edge of the South County Regional WasteWater Authority treatment ponds in Gilroy on 13 Jun (MMR). Say’s Phoebes in the valley have continued to surprise this year. One was seen in Coyote Lake CP on 1 Jun (MMR) where they have nested in the past. A nest was found on a wind tunnel at Moffett Field on 7 Jun and fledged two young on 13 Jun (MMR). Birds were found in the vicinity of Moffett Field on 19 and 22 Jul (MMR, BM). A juvenile at the Sunnyvale Baylands Park on 29 Jul (WGB) may be one of these fledged young or from a different

The Avocet  6
Nuthatches through Goldfinches
Summer records or Red-breasted Nuthatch of the flatlands are sporadic so one-to-two birds in Mountain View on 29-30 Jul (GZ et al.) was interesting. A Canyon Wren was singing in Larios Canyon on 1 Jun (MMR), the only bird found this year. Three Golden-crowned Kinglets were found in the forest along Wrights Station and Morrill roads on 21 Jun (SCR, JD). At least three Cedar Waxwings were seen along the Alamitos Creek Trail on 12 Jul (JPa), a few birds are found irregularly during the summer. A pair of Phainopepla were seen in San Antonio Valley on 10 Jun (LRo, GHa), the female on a nest. A single bird was seen once again in Santa Teresa CP on 2-3 Jul (CEd). A Yellow-breasted Chat was singing at the upstream end of Coyote Reservoir on 22 Jun (SCR, JD). Chipping Sparrows have nested again in the Santa Cruz Mountains at the county border, their last holdout on the west side of the valley. An adult and three fledglings were seen on 21 Jun (SCR, JD) and an adult and two fledglings were there on 28 Jun (RGJ et al.). A white-bellied male Indigo Bunting at the Gate 5 pond in Monte Bello on 31 Jul (GHa) showed some possible hybrid characters. A sizeable colony of up to 350 pairs of Tricolored Blackbirds nested in the southeast corner of Calero Reservoir 7 to 24 Jun (SCR, v.ob.) with some fledged young. Breeding Great-tailed Grackles were successful at Lake Cunningham with at least 12 fledglings seen on 13 Jul (JPa). Small numbers of Lawrence’s Goldfinches were found in three locations in the Diablo Range (v.ob.) with a high count of six birds at Isabel Creek on 10 Jun (LRo, GHa). One to four birds continued in the flatlands along San Felipe Road 1-21 Jun (MMR, SCR, JD). Santa Cruz Mountain birds included at least two in Foothills Park on 7 Jun (JRY, DPO), more were found that day in San Mateo County. A pair was at Monte Bello on 9 Jul (GHa).
Fun in the Summer Camp Sun…

cont’d from page 1

Open Space Preserve where our campers spent the day hiking and exploring.

Led by volunteer docents from Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, our campers were able to experience the beautiful scenery and wildlife found in our wonderful open spaces.

It was a privilege to be a part of Summer Nature Days and we want to express tremendous thanks to all those who made it such a huge success! This year campers had the opportunity to learn from local organizations that generously offered their time and expertise: Rolling Hills 4-H treated us to an in-depth look into the world of bees where we learned about the process of making and extracting honey; the City of Cupertino’s Junior Nature Museum provided an up close look at some of the insects, reptiles and amphibians found in many of our local open spaces; and thanks to Los Gatos Birdwatcher, our campers took steps to becoming master trackers by learning to identify tracks and signs of local wildlife. We would also like to thank our primary sponsor, Google, for the financial support that allowed us to hire wonderful counselors, provide scholarships to camp participants and much more.

We are looking forward to seeing both familiar and new faces at another exciting and educational camp next summer!

SCVAS Classes and Field Seminars in 2015 cont’d from page 5

Mono Basin and the Eastern Sierra
Tuesday – Sunday, June 23rd – 28th

The east slope of the Sierra offers a spectacular array of breeding, post-breeding and migratory birds, from Williamson’s Sapsuckers and Clark’s Nutcrackers to Osprey and Green-tailed Towhees. With a six-day trip, we’re able to explore a number of unique habitats including the alpine zone surrounding Saddlebag Lake, the high desert sage grasslands of the historic ghost town of Bodie, the extraordinary tufa formations of Mono Lake and the basalt columns of Devils Postpile National Monument. We paddle with Phalaropes on Mono Lake and hang out with Rosy-finches at Virginia Lakes. This is the quintessential east-side birding adventure.

Class size is limited to 11. We organize carpools each morning on location and will have a maximum of 3 vehicles for our field trips. Please do not sign up for this workshop if you’re not prepared to carpool each day. Carpooling expenses are shared by the participants and are not part of the base fee; typically $5/person/day.

Fee: $275 members; $310 non-members. Fee covers: Kayaking, Bodie Entrance, Devil’s Postpile Entrance, and Saddlebag Ferry.

Important Notes:
Altitude: Lee Vining is our daily departure point at 7,000 ft in elevation. We venture off one day to Saddlebag Lake, at 10,000 ft. and above. It is not unusual for participants to feel the effects of the altitude and to need a couple of days to acclimate.
Physical Activity: Each day involves some hiking at altitude. While at a birder’s pace, it is still hiking at altitude. One morning is spent kayaking along the south shore of Mono Lake. Participants on this trip should be in reasonably good physical condition and should consult their doctor if altitude is a concern.

Bob Power has been teaching raptor identification in the classroom and in the field, as well as leading birding adventures in California, Alaska, Arizona, and the neotropics, for 10 years - introducing birders to extraordinary places and wonderful birds. He has also been a day leader for a Golden Gate Raptor Observatory Hawkwatch team for the past 11 years.

“Birds in Big Cities” with Stephanie Ellis, SCVAS Executive Director

November 13th; 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM
Peninsula Humane Society, 1450 Rollins Rd., Burlingame, CA

The Western Burrowing Owl - Reversing the Downward Trend
Learn about this pint-sized owl in peril. Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society has monitored and enhanced owl habitat on a designated Burrowing Owl preserve in San Jose, where we are finally beginning to see a reverse in the trend of their declining local populations. Learn the natural history of these beautiful owls of San Francisco Bay.

Bird-Safe Building Design – Safe Birds in Big Cities
It is estimated that hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of birds are killed annually in the United States due to collisions with reflective windows on buildings. Learn how Santa Clara Valley Audubon has been working with major cities and large corporations in the San Francisco Bay Area to encourage them to adopt bird-safe building alternatives. We’re working to ensure that a safe path is paved for birds in big cities with some impressive outcomes! Email Stephanie at executivedirector@scvas.org for further details.

The Avocet 8
Join the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society and local Nature and Environmental Organizations for a FREE event:

the 23rd Annual Wildlife Education Day!

Saturday, October 18, 2014
10am-3pm
Blackberry Farm * in Cupertino

Environmental Games, Demos and Info for all ages!

Live Animals - Birds of Prey, Snakes, Insects - even a Big Cat (and maybe a Shark, too)!

“Early Bird” Shorebird Walk
8:00 am @ Charleston Slough in Mountain View
RSVP Required for walk only

For more details or to make reservations for the Bird Walk, call (408) 252-3740, or visit www.scvas.org/WildlifeFestival

*Located at 21979 San Fernando Ave, Cupertino. Plenty of free parking!
Here’s Your Chance to Preserve Our Natural Heritage

By Stephanie Ellis, SCVAS Executive Director

The Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority (OSA) has an upcoming funding measure placed on the November ballot which SCVAS is excited to support. This measure would allocate a $24 per parcel tax for the next 15 years to fund OSA’s vision of preserving our region’s natural heritage. Through widespread protection of our scenic hillsides, open spaces, redwood forests, agricultural land, and reduction of pollution and toxins to our water supply through creek and stream preservation, this measure would ensure that lands we love in Santa Clara Valley are available for generations to come.

Preservation of our lands equals conservation of the wildlife that utilize them. Not only will this measure provide additional resources for our wild neighbors, it will also provide greater resources for environmental education programs – the gateway to our next leaders of environmental advocacy and conservation.

Many of the goals of the OSA measure are in alignment with SCVAS’ mission, and the funds raised by the measure are sorely needed. SCVAS has endorsed this measure, and we hope to help it pass the two-thirds vote threshold in November.

Read more: http://www.openspaceauthority.org/about/openspacefunding.html

SCVAS Education Intern Needed:

≈ Paid Internship Available ≈

Each fall, we search for an outstanding Education & Outreach Intern to help us deliver the many programs we offer to local schools, community groups, and neighborhoods.

If you or someone you know is outgoing, enjoys working with children, wants to learn more about the world of environmental education, and wants to help us continue to offer high-quality programs, give us a call! We are looking for an intern available weekdays (with occasional weekends) for about 10-15 hours per week. The exact schedule will be flexible, but Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings and some weekend availability will be required. Saturday, October 18th is also required. Some experience with environmental science, biology, education, or working with children is desirable, but we will train the right candidate. Bilingual candidates encouraged.

More information is available online at www.scvas.org - click on “About Us” or contact the Programs Coordinator, Toby, at 408-252-3740 or programs@scvas.org.

Calling All CNRP Monitors:

The end of the breeding season is upon us, so don’t forget to submit your data! Our end-of-the-season meeting, on Sept 11th at 7PM (see calendar for details), depends on having information to share, so please don’t procrastinate!

Your data is one of the main reasons for this program - this information helps us to plan future conservation programs, and make decisions about the Cavity Nesters Recovery program as a whole. Please help us continue this valuable conservation and research tool by submitting your data soon!

The online database is the preferred method for receiving year-end data – go to www.cbrp.org OR go the the SCVAS website (www.scvas.org/cnrp).

Contact Toby, the SCVAS Programs Coordinator, at programs@scvas.org with any questions.
$10,000
Charlene and Dirk Kabcenell

$1,000-$1500
Tiffany Choy and David Speer
Mr. and Mrs. Geoff Fox
Robert Lewis; Farallon Islands Foundation

$500-$999
Ken Schneider
Michael and Leslie Schroeder

$250-$499
Hugh and Debbie McDevitt

$100-249
Donna Aronson
Barbara Aulicino
Sigma Xi Society
Diane Baldwin
Sarah Bates
Bonnie Bedford-White
Dick and Sharon Blaine
Arthur Bryson
Lisa Buckley
Jeff and Betty Chase
John Colwell
David Cook and Barbara Hutchings
Jennifer Couperus
Peter and Arline Dehlinger
Mark Delaurentis and Jackie Turner
Richard and Diane Diane Horn
Ericsson Inc. Matching Gifts
Cheryl Foden
Linda Gagliani
Eric Goodill
Philip and Susan Hamner
Caroline Houston
Elizabeth Karren
Francis and Jeane Lewis
Los Gatos Birdwatcher
Mary Louise Moses
Bob and Debbie Nansen

Don and Cathy Priest
Laurose and Burton Richter
DavidSacarelos
Kay Schroer
Kendric and Marion Smith
Catherine Trejo and Marti Wright
Andrew West
Joan Zuckerman

Ralph and Marion Bridge
Byron and Kay Brown
Juliette Bryson
Lloyd Butcher
Margaret Capriles
Sally Cedarblade
Eda Coburn
Suzanne Conens
Lea Crisp
James and Marilyn Donahue
Melissa Donegan
Susan Ellis
Natalee Ernstrom
Michael and Lynne Fitzjarrell
John Fowler
Carolyn Genirberg
Morey Goldstein
Mrs. Gordon Poole
Rose Green
Nancy Hall
Donald Harbaugh
Joann Harrington
Walter and Kay Hays
Deborah Hill
Patty Hopkinson
Al Huber
Sue Hunt
Constance Hunter
Alan Johnson
Mary Jouard
Jaynie Kind
Lynn Klee
David Koffman
Rebecca Kohn
Lena Kolessnikova
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Betty MacDonald
Louisa Mak
May Manabe

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  • View the photographs in full color!
• No waiting for the mail - get your newsletter up to 2 weeks sooner!

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

Support Environmental Advocacy at SCVAS

Our Environmental Advocacy annual fundraiser is currently taking place. If you care about the advocacy program, and wish to help us continue to protect birds and their habitats, please consider sending us a tax-deductible donation and mark your check clearly: “Advocacy campaign”.

We appreciate your support.
We were saddened to hear of the passing of Gilroy resident, Susan Kruse. Until illness grounded her, she was an avid birdwatcher at the Uvas Creek Parkway, and her family has asked that donations be made in her name to SCVAS and the Friends of Gilroy Library.

Our thoughts go out to her family.

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Vice President Diane Hart
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Melanie O’Brien ‘13-’16
Morteza Danesh ‘14-’17
Peter Hart ‘12-’15
Tom Grey ‘12-’15
Vivek Khanzode ‘14-’17

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

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Office E-mail scvas@scvas.org
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OFFICE HOURS
Monday - Friday 10 AM - 5 PM
Saturday 10 AM - 2 PM

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

RARE BIRD ALERT: (415) 681-7422

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

Avocet Editors: Toby Goldberg and Cara Kuhn

2014 Volume 61, Number 5

Chapter Members in the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society (SCVAS) receive the SCVAS newsletter, The Avocet.

☐ $25 Song Sparrow (Student) ☐ $35 American Avocet (Individual)
☐ $250 White-tailed Kite ☐ $500 Peregrine Falcon
☐ $60 California Quail (Family) ☐ $100 Burrowing Owl
☐ $100 Golden Eagle ☐ Other_________

Membership $ + Donation $ = Total Enclosed $

Name______________________________________________________________
Address______________________________________________________________________
City State & Zip___________________________________________________________________

Phone_________________________________________Email__________________________

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Come by the office to pick up your free copy of Birding at the Bottom of the Bay, and our Breeding Bird Atlas (if joining at the Burrowing Owl level or above).

Please note: As an organizational policy, SCVAS does not share member information with other organizations.

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