

Los Gatos Birdwatcher



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Happy New Year One and All

2014 was an excellent year and the birds are eating seed again! We thank each and every one of you for enjoying the magic of birds. 2015 is going to be an exciting year as Lisa Myers takes on more responsibility and Freddy learns to let go. Lisa has all sorts of new ideas, some of which you will see in this newsletter. John is having a great time working on the design of our new house which will be built in Templeton, CA. Thank goodness he was a cost accountant in his previous life. *Stay Tuned!*

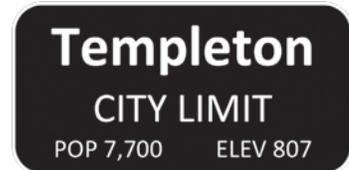


Photo Presentation – Birds of Ohio

Thursday, January 22, 6:30 – 7:30 PM at the Terraces



Cape May Warbler by Don Bauman

Don Bauman, Birds Of Ohio: This is a photographic presentation of nearly 100 birds that are commonly seen in Ohio, but are almost never seen in California. These include many warblers that are seen during the Spring and Fall migrations, as well as many species that are endemic to the East, such as Northern Cardinals, Blue Jays, and Eastern Screech-owls. A brief discussion will describe why northwestern Ohio is so important to the migration pattern of so many birds coming north from the Caribbean, and Central and South America.

No charge but call to reserve your seat.

Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Brian Sullivan Explains eBird



Brian Sullivan is the eBird Project Leader for the Cornell Lab of Ornithology headquartered in Ithaca, New York. We are privileged to have Brian coming here to talk about eBird on Thursday night, Feb. 5.

A real-time, online checklist program, eBird has revolutionized the way the birding community reports and accesses information about birds. This special event is free, but you'll need to reserve your seat.

What is eBird?

Come learn about eBird straight from the source. Mark your calendars for **Thursday night, Feb. 5** and call **408-358-9453** or email info@losgatosbirdwatcher.com to reserve your seat. This event is free. Doors open 6:30 PM, Brian's presentation is from 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM at the Campbell Community Center's Orchard City Hall located on Winchester Blvd. at Campbell Ave. *More details on page 2.*

What is eBird?

Launched in 2002 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, eBird's goal is to maximize the utility and accessibility of the vast numbers of bird observations made each year by recreational and professional bird watchers all over the globe. Millions of observations are entered into the eBird data system and these observations are shared and studied by a global community of educators, land managers, ornithologists and conservation biologists. In time, these data will become the foundation for a better understanding of bird distribution across the western hemisphere and beyond.

eBird



Visitor: The Yellow-Rumped Warbler, aka "Butter-Butt"

by Lisa Myers

While there are over 50 species of warblers found in North America throughout a year, we only have a handful that visit our west coast gardens. When the temperatures start to drop, most warblers fly south to warmer climates. However, that's the time of year the Yellow-rumped Warblers arrive in the bay area. Yellow-rumped Warblers spend the spring and summer in mature coniferous and mixed deciduous woodland habitats taking care of all the breeding activities from pair bonding to raising chicks, but once the seasons start to change the Yellow-rumped Warblers arrive to spend the winter.

Because we find them here in the winter, we do not typically get to see them in their brightly colored breeding plumage, instead they have molted into muted grey tones with bits of white and black, but no matter what time of year they will have the yellow rump, or "butter-butt" for which they were named.

There are two different types of Yellow-rumps, the "Audubon's" race which has

a yellow throat and the "Myrtle's" race which has a white throat. Here in California we usually get the Audubon's race. During this time of year the Yellow-rumped Warblers don't sing, but they do have a distinctive chip note. The chip note can be heard as the birds move about in the trees giving you a good clue that they are above. In fact, it is the chip note that often gets our attention long before we locate the bird.



Photo by staff member K.C. Harris

Most warblers eat a diet of insects, but it's the Yellow-rumped Warblers that have the most versatile diet of all. They eat flying insects literally plucking them out of the air. They'll eat insects they pick out of spider webs, or even off a pile of seaweed. But they can also be seen eating berries and they will even dine on the seed or suet you provide. So keep an eye out for our lovely winter warbler. They will be in the area through the end of March. Once spring arrives they will be molting back into their breeding plumage and will migrate away to breeding grounds outside of the Bay Area.

The "What Is" Bird Quiz?

We hope you are having fun with these "what bird is this" quiz. The answers are on page 8.

- 1 Shoots from ambush? _____
- 2 Is a tiny monarch? _____
- 3 Is a good time in a field? _____
- 4 Changes light intensity? _____
- 5 Is used to scoop up water? _____

Food Drive was a success!

Thanks for all the food donations for the 2nd Harvest Food Bank. Our collection barrel was overflowing!



Re-Cap of the Inaugural Bus Tour

Our first birding tour using the professional services of Corinthian Ground Transportation took place November 20, 2014 and it was a grand success. Our driver, Tom, arrived at the King's Court Shopping Center bright & early all ready for our group of twenty-seven with the "Bird-aloo" in tow. We were headed to the open spaces around Lodi where our target for the day was the Sandhill Crane. Having a professional driver take us all in one bus meant no need to carpool, we took up less room when we pulled over to view birds and we

burned far less fuel. Being able to ride together provided the chance to visit while en route. Lisa was able to share insights to all about our destination and the birds we planned to see including some natural history about Sandhill Cranes. We soon realized that riding in the bus gave us the advantage of sitting much higher than if we were in cars. This allowed for great views over the landscape and into the fields. At times, we all remained inside the bus and used it as a blind while we zeroed in on a fantastic sight outside in nature



including a Peregrine Falcon eating its prey. Our driver Tom had seen the falcon take off from the wire in pursuit of its prey. Thank you to all who signed up for our inaugural birding by bus tour! Our next birding bus tour is January 17 when we will bird the winter hot spot known as Panoche Valley.

How to Feed in the Rain *by Lisa Myers*

California has just experienced one of the worst droughts on record. We hope this winter brings with it the much needed rain. For many this is the first time you have experienced wet weather and feeding birds so we want to give you a few tips. Any seeds allowed to get wet and soggy will eventually get moldy. To prevent this, during our rainy season we suggest you fill your feeders half as much and fill them twice as often. This way your birds will eat the seed before it becomes unhealthy. When you fill your feeder be sure to empty out the remaining bits of shell or seed before you re-fill because you do not want to put fresh seed on top of old, partially eaten, damp seed. This will cause problems for your birds if ingested. Old wet seed can also clump together preventing the free flow of the seed above. "Feeder Fresh" is a product we carry. You add it to your seed feeders and it helps keep your seed dry because it absorbs excess moisture. Ask us about it the next time you are in the store.

If your seed of choice is "hulled" (no shell) you will have to take a little more time to monitor your feeders. The convenience of using seeds that have been shelled means you do not have to clean up the spent shells from under your feeders, but hulled seeds are more susceptible to becoming soggy since they no longer have an outer protective shell.

Suet and seeds with shells hold up longer in wet weather, but you still have to keep an eye on your feeders to make sure the seed has not sat for any length of time allowing it to absorb lots of rain water.

Another way to protect the seed from the rain is with a weather dome or squirrel baffle. Like an umbrella over your feeder, this will help keep your feeder and seed dry and the birds seem to like the added protection. Granted, if we experience a heavy storm with high winds the baffle will not be able to keep all the rain off your feeder.



Photo by Ellen Bateman

If you have a Nyjer/thistle feeder for your goldfinch, shake the seed up and down in the feeder on a daily basis when it's raining. This moves the seed around and gets air into the feeder. If you have attracted a large flock of goldfinch to your yard you may want to increase the number of Nyjer/thistle feeders. Because of their propensity to flock, they are susceptible to diseases like salmonella. By offering several feeders this will spread out your flock and this can reduce the spread of disease. Also, it is important to clean up any seed that accumulates under the feeder to prevent ground feeders like sparrows and dove from getting sick. We carry a product called "Seed & Hull Digester" which safely makes your discarded seeds and hulls disappear. And if you find your feeders are getting really dirty please remember that we clean feeders here in the store. After December's big storm we cleaned 22 feeders in one day (see Services page 4).

Thank You for Taking Our Survey

In the November/December newsletter we shared with you that our current lease expires next November 30 and we wanted to know how you felt about our current location. Using our survey, we asked for your input regarding our staying where we are now, or a possible future move. Thank you for taking the time to provide us with your very valuable feedback. Let us tell you a little about what we learned. We heard back from hundreds of you. While many like the King's Court Shopping Center, many only come to this location to visit our store. In fact, many of you travel to the store from miles away and depending on where you live you would welcome the store moving closer to you!

It also became very evident that you all appreciate the fine quality seed we provide and you depend on that quality when purchasing your seed from the Los Gatos Birdwatcher. With that in mind, the majority of you would be willing to travel to a new location just as long as you can continue to get the service and seed to which you have become accustomed. We are also a wonderful resource for quality bird feeders, gift ideas and garden décor. We also help you to ID your mystery backyard birds.



We then pulled one survey out of a bag and the winner was Alison who received a gift basket full of all kinds of fun items from the store including one of our new squirrel proof feeders. We will now consider all information you provided as we plan for the future. We will keep you updated.

Services Available from the Los Gatos Birdwatcher

- **Feeder Cleaning** – Drop off your feeders any day of the week. We clean on Mondays and Thursdays, asking only a donation to one of six charities (Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley, Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation Center, Nike Animal Rescue Foundation, Friends of San Martin Animal Shelter, Injured and Orphaned Wildlife, and Henry W. Coe State Park Bat Project.). If possible, please bring your feeders in early in the day. call you by closing for pickup.

- **Frequent Buyer Program**, buy 9 bags 20# or higher of the same seed and get the 10th one free. Coupons do not apply.

- **Children's nature programs** for pre-schools through 3rd grade. Also great for scout troops. For more information, ask for our new "Educational Programs Insiders Info" Sheet.

- **Outreach to community organizations** about birding. We have birding and "Show and Tell" programs ideal for gardening and other service groups.

- **Backyard Bird Consulting Program** - Freddy will come out and see what you have, what you want, and what might work. The consultation is about an hour and the cost is \$20, which will be applied to any purchase of new feeders, seed, baths, or hardware.

- **Birthday parties with Build a Seed Feeder workshop.** Bring 11 of your friends to the **Los Gatos Birdwatcher** (or at your desired location) and build a birdfeeder. Learn about the different birds that are likely to come to the small hopper feeder that you construct from a pre-cut wooden kit. (Includes a packet of seed, use of tools, and instruction.) **Cost: \$15 instructor fee + \$15/child.**

- We offer **Gift Certificates** and our popular "**Drop a Hint**" cards that allow you to choose a selection of gifts you would like (wish list) to be considered and when the gift giver comes in with the list, we know exactly what you want.



- Spend \$100 or more and receive our **reusable canvas tote** with royal blue handles – quite spiffy! The tote is also

for sale for \$4.99 and would make a good "wrapping" for a gift.

- 15% off one item Coupon is available every two months. You don't have to bring in the physical coupon, but you do have to let us know at the time of the sale that you would like to use it. We do not apply the coupon automatically. The coupon excludes optics, trips and sale items.

Coupon does not apply to Frequent Buy purchases.

The Great Backyard Bird Count

February 13–16, 2015



Chestnut-backed
Chickadee
Robin Lazzara

They are mesmerizing, fun to watch, entertaining and beautiful and that's why you enjoy the birds coming to your backyard. Have you considered taking a few minutes each day to count the birds coming to your yard? Get involved in this year's "Great Backyard Bird Count". It's just around the corner and occurs from February 13–16, 2015.

The Great Backyard Bird Count started in 1998 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society and was the first online citizen-science project that collected data about the wild birds coming to our yards. Since then over 100,000 people from all over the world have observed over 4,000 species.

This citizen-science program provides a valuable "snapshot" of the types of birds and in what numbers we are experiencing during the same February time frame year after year. The data collected is studied to better understand trends.

To get involved decide where you want to do your count. It can be in your yard, a local park or other natural area on any or all of the four count days. We recommend a half-hour, but you are asked to watch and count the birds for a minimum of 15 minutes. You will have to ID your birds and make your best estimate of the number of individuals you see per species and write down your

Species	Count	Species	Count
Canada Goose	_____	Oak Titmouse	_____
Mallard	_____	Bushtit	_____
California Quail	_____	Red-breasted Nuthatch	_____
Wild Turkey	_____	Pygmy Nuthatch	_____
Ring-necked Pheasant	_____	White-breasted Nuthatch	_____
Great Blue Heron	_____	Brown Creeper	_____
Great Egret	_____	Bewick's Wren	_____
Red-shouldered Hawk	_____	House Wren	_____
Red-tail Hawk	_____	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	_____
Turkey Vulture	_____	Western Bluebird	_____
Cooper's Hawk	_____	American Robin	_____
Sharp-shinned Hawk	_____	Hermit Thrush	_____
Killdeer	_____	Varied Thrush	_____
Rock Pigeon	_____	Wrentit	_____
Band Tailed Pigeon	_____	Northern Mockingbird	_____
Mourning Dove	_____	California Thrasher	_____
Eurasian Collared Dove	_____	European Starling	_____
Great Horned Owl	_____	Cedar Waxwing	_____
Barn Owl	_____	Yellow-rumped Warbler	_____
Western Screech Owl	_____	Townsend's Warbler	_____
Anna's Hummingbird	_____	Western Tanager	_____
White Throated Swift	_____	Spotted Towhee	_____
Belted Kingfisher	_____	California Towhee	_____
Red-breasted Sapsucker	_____	Song Sparrow	_____
Nuttall's Woodpecker	_____	White-crowned Sparrow	_____
Northern Flicker	_____	Golden-crowned Sparrow	_____
Acorn Woodpecker	_____	White-throated Sparrow	_____
Hairy Woodpecker	_____	Fox Sparrow	_____
Downy Woodpecker	_____	Lincoln's Sparrow	_____
Pileated Woodpecker	_____	Dark-eyed Junco	_____
American Kestrel	_____	Red-winged Blackbird	_____
Peregrine Falcon	_____	Brewer's Blackbird	_____
Merlin	_____	Brown-headed Cowbird	_____
Black Phoebe	_____	Western Meadowlark	_____
Hutton's Vireo	_____	House Finch	_____
Yellow-billed Magpie	_____	Purple Finch	_____
Western Scrub Jay	_____	Pine Siskin	_____
Steller's Jay	_____	Lesser Goldfinch	_____
American Crow	_____	American Goldfinch	_____
Common Raven	_____	Pine Siskin	_____
Tree Swallow	_____	House Sparrow	_____
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	_____	Other _____	_____

Day

Time

numbers. We have provided for you a taxonomic list of the most common backyard species found in our area. You then log onto www.birdcount.org and enter your numbers. If you're new to the count, first register online then enter your checklist. If you have already participated in another Cornell Lab citizen-science project, you can use your existing login. Good luck & have fun.



Delicate Necklaces and Earrings from artist Robin Goodfellow

– Iridescent beads.

Mixed Metal & Magnet Bracelets by artist Sergio Lub

– Pretty designs and each one has a story.



Birdhouses

– Made in America



Nectar Fortress

– New Ant deterrent uses cinnamon oil and ants hate it. Easy to apply.



New Squirrel proof feeder

– Sleek design, Holds 4 pounds, Has 4 ports.

Valentine's Day is for the Birds!

by Lisa Myers

With Valentine's Day just around the corner we wanted to talk about bird romance. There are almost 10,000 different species of birds in the world and there are many, many different ways that all these birds pair together. The most common way birds come together is **Monogamy**, essentially an exclusive pair with a single member of the opposite sex. Waterfowl, herons, raptors, doves, owls all fall into this group. If a pair is successful in raising young they will pair together season after season.

About 2% of the world's birds practice **Polygyny**. This is when one male pairs with two or more females and maintains an association with them

all as they mate and raise young. These birds include Wild Turkey, American Dippers, many of the blackbirds, Tree & Barn Swallows, just to name a few.

Then there is that 1% where the female pairs up with many males and is what we call **Polyandry**. For these birds the males incubate the eggs and care for the chicks. Phalaropes, Sanderlings, Spotted Sandpipers and Mountain Plover reproduce in this fashion.

Next are the birds that practice **Promiscuity**. This accounts for 6% of the bird population. These birds



have indiscriminate relations usually for a brief time and the males do little if any help in raising young. Hummingbirds fall into this group.

Polygamy is where 3% of the birds, both male & females have multiple mates. Finally we have the birds that raise young in a **Cooperative** fashion. Females will raise the young together and at times in the same nest while the males and non-breeding birds in the group help. It's like one big happy community. Acorn Woodpeckers, American Crows, Pygmy Nuthatch and Western Scrub Jays work together in this way.

Los Gatos Birdwatcher
King's Court Center
792 Blossom Hill Road
Los Gatos, CA 95032

#C0215

January / February 2015

Pay to the order of Our Loyal Customer
15% Off One Item

Memo: Expires Feb. 28, 2015

One Coupon per customer, please.
Excludes sale items, excursions and optics.
Not to be combined with any other offers

Field Trips & Outings

Saturday Morning Local Bird Walks

Join us most Saturday morning for an enjoyable meander looking for birds. Call the store Friday nights after 7pm to find out where we are going the next morning. Our local bird walks are from 8 to 10 am and we return to the store for bagels and shade grown coffee.



Some of the nearby places we go to are Oka Ponds, Guadalupe Oak Grove Park, BelGatos Park, Almaden Lake Park, Shoreline and Charleston Slough.

No Charge.

Sunnyvale Audubon walks

First Wednesday of the month January 7, February 4, March 4. Noon to 1pm.

Bring your binoculars (loaners are available) and meet Freddy at the Sunnyvale Pollution Control Plant where Borregas and Caribbean meet off of 237. After entering the plant turn left at the first stop sign and continue to the end of the parking area. We will see raptors, shorebirds, and lots of ducks.

No Charge.

Call soon for reservations. These trips fill up fast.
Fee: \$60 plus a tip to our driver. Fee includes gas and transportation via Corinthian Ground Transportation.

Let's Go Birding with Lisa Myers to Panoche Valley Saturday, January 17, 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Panoche Valley is a winter hot spot located south east of Hollister west of I-5, this area has been left almost untouched from developers allowing for great habitat in which to find birds we don't see in the highly populated bay area. Wintering raptors can be found in great numbers as they hunt the open areas for food. We'll also look for Mountain Plover, Mountain Bluebirds, Phainopeplas and Roadrunners.

Let's Go Birding with Lisa Myers to Lone Tree Road Saturday, April 18, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Lone Tree Road is a beautiful country road north/east of Hollister. Lone Tree winds its way up to 1200 feet in elevation and dead-ends 10 miles into the foothills. It's a great place for birding as the road travels through different habitats, fields, along streams and under woodland canopies. The breeding season will be underway and birds will be in returning from the south and singing. This location is ideal for Golden Eagles, Lazuli Bunting and much more.

Let's Go Birding with Lisa Myers to Mines Road Saturday, May 16, 8:00 AM – 5:30 PM

Mines Road is located on the eastern side of the Mount Hamilton Range is an annual event for birdwatchers. This long, rural road allows for many pull-outs as we spot Golden Eagles, Lewis's Woodleckers, Phainopepla, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Lark Sparrow and many more. We never know what to expect and that is one reason this day is always an adventure. Evergreens and Oak Trees cover the hillsides and our birding will be done along road side pull outs where we study the landscape and find our birds.

Los Gatos Birdwatcher



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Printed on
recycled paper

Adventures with Marley

*Seriously? I know we need the rain, but Mom,
you expect me to go out there and piddle?*



Dates to Remember

Closed New Years' Day Jan. 1	Valentine's Day Sat. Feb. 14
Martin Luther King Day/ National Service Day Mon. Jan. 19	President's Day Mon. Feb. 16
Groundhog Day Mon. Feb. 2	Daylight Savings Time Begins Sun. March 8

Store Hours

Monday – Saturday: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sunday: 12 noon to 5 p.m.



Answers to What is Bird Quiz.....? From page 2
1. Snipe 2. Kinglet 3. Meadowlark 4. Flicker 5. Dipper