

# Los Gatos Birdwatcher



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## Squirrel Wars!

### The Los Gatos Birdwatcher is here to help!

With all the rain in the last two years rodents of all stripes and tails have exploded in numbers. We are hearing of large families of squirrels taking over backyards. People who have lived "squirrel-free" for many years are now engaging in Squirrel Wars. Here are some tips from our Squirrel Wars brochure!

Eastern Grey squirrels are all over our area and love bird seed. In the Santa Cruz mountains, we have both Western and Eastern Greys, the Eastern Greys being more aggressive. They are very clever and very acrobatic and are able to leap 6-8 feet sideways, 4 feet from the ground and 9 feet from above. Squirrels also have a nasty habit of repetition. They will try and try and fail and fail, then they make it and never fail again.

#### Feeder Placement

Keep the squirrel's leaping ability in mind and place the feeders about eight feet away from tree trunks, fences, pergolas, shrubs, garden furniture – anything that a squirrel can use as a launch pad! The feeder is most protected from

a leaping squirrel if it is at least four feet from the ground. Sometimes five feet is better if you have a good jumper!

#### Baffles

Baffles can be used for hanging, pole-mounted, or post-mounted feeders. They resemble large disks, cans or upside down salad bowls. A diameter of 16" to 20" is the most effective in keeping squirrels at bay. The smaller ones work better as rain guards. For pole and post-mounted feeders, baffles should be placed at least four feet off the ground, below the feeder, so that the squirrel can't leap over it from the ground. For hanging feeders, baffles work best if suspended above the feeder by hook, wire, or chain. Avoid the use of nylon or cotton line due to the ease in which squirrels can chew through these materials. Protect the tree limb with a piece of plastic tubing (just ask, we have plenty).

#### Squirrel-proof Feeders

Many of the tube feeders available have metal perches and ports so that the squirrels can't destroy the feeder even if they can access them. These are considered "squirrel resistant." An excellent style of squirrel-proof feeders (meaning that even if they get on the feeder, they can't get at the seed) that are very attractive



to our perching birds is the "Squirrel Buster" series which closes off the seed when a squirrel comes from the top or bottom. Coming in Mini, Classic or Plus sizes, these feeders fit all situations. The "Selective" series by Duncraft prevent squirrels and larger birds such as jays and pigeons from hogging the seed by encasing the tube in a 1-1/2" x 1-1/2" mesh cage. The "All Weather Feeder with Cage" works well to keep squirrels and large birds out and also protects the seed from rain. The cage allows the smaller birds to get even closer to the seed.

#### Bribery and other tactics

Providing squirrels their own feeder with dried corn, peanuts, striped sunflower or Nature's Trail Mix has been shown in some instances to discourage squirrels from feeders.

Another product that works on the pole is called "Squirrel Slip" which is a soy-based product that prevents squirrels from getting a grip on the pole. Since it is soy-based, and not



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*"Squirrel Wars" Continued*

petroleum-based, it is safer for all concerned but it does have to be reapplied frequently.

"Squirrel Away" is capsicum pepper, that when mixed with bird seed, gives squirrels and other mammals temporary "hot mouth." "Squirrel Away" is not recommended when dogs or small children will be around the feeder.

The exclusive use of safflower or Nyjer, two seeds that squirrels are not terribly fond of, has also proven successful.

Generally, the most satisfying approach to squirrel problems is to combine the use of well placed baffle protected feeders or squirrel-proof feeders with diversion feeders made specifically for squirrels. Squirrels do perform a service by cleaning up seed spilled by the birds. If there is too much kick out from your mix, switch to a single seed. Although they can be aggravating, squirrels are also intelligent, inquisitive, energetic, and amusing to watch. Once you are able to effectively deal with them, their presence becomes just one more fascinating wildlife addition to your backyard.

**Baffle the Squirrel with Baffles**

**Pole-mounted Feeders**

Our can, disk, or cone-shaped baffles will keep squirrels from climbing up a pole to your feeder.

**Choose a spot that:**

- Has 6-8 feet of clearance on all sides
- Has bushes, shrubs, or trees 8-10 feet away to provide cover for our birds
- Can be seen easily and often from indoors

**Hanging Feeders**

Our disk or dome-shaped baffles will keep squirrels from a feeder hung 6-8 feet away from the tree trunk.

# Calling All Artists

## Show off your work at our 2nd Annual Artist Exhibition – Sunday, August 7!

Join other talented artists for our second annual Artist Exhibition. Last year, which was our inaugural exhibition for artwork of birds, we showed the works of sixteen local artists. A beautiful woodcut style chickadee by Lela Dowling went home with me. Works of art were in pastels, watercolors, pen & ink, and oils. If you have a talent for painting birds and would like other people to see your work, mark your calendars for Sunday, August 7 from 12pm to 4pm.

**Deadline to enter is Friday, July 29** and limited to the first 30 artists. Please call the store to get your name on the list. Details will be emailed.

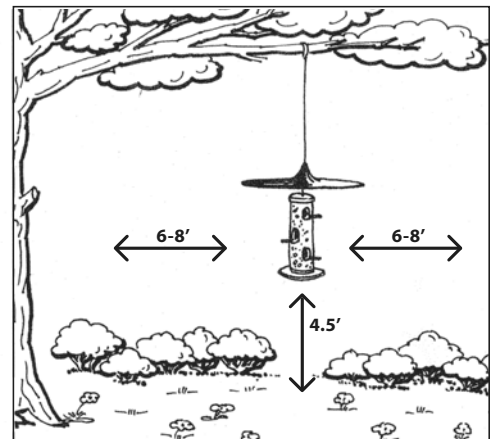
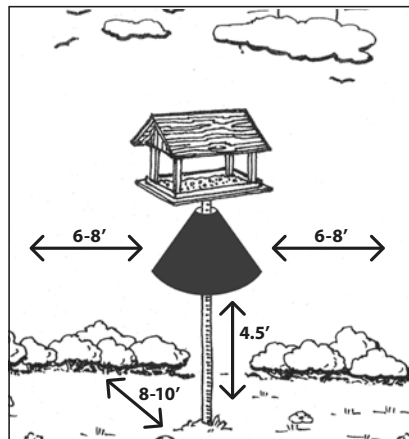
# Calling All Photographers

## Enter our 6th Annual Photo Exhibition – Sunday, August 21st!

Many of our customers are very talented nature photographers. For the sixth year we will be hosting an exhibition of their work. Have you taken nature photos that transport you back to when you took them? Now's the chance to share it with everyone.

We are soliciting photographs of birds that would you like to exhibit. So we can have more exhibitors than in years past, we are limiting the number of photographers to 30 and are asking you to submit one entry (maximum size 16 x 20 framed). First come, first served so call now to reserve your display space.

**Deadline to enter is Friday, August 12** and space is limited. The event will be Sunday, August 21, from 12:00pm to 4:00pm at the Los Gatos Birdwatcher. Refreshments will be served. We hope you will be able to be a part of this fun event. Please call the store and we will send you the entry form and information.



## 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 four charities (Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley, Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation Center, Nike Animal Rescue Foundation, and Friends of San Martin Animal Shelter). If possible, please bring your feeders in early in the day. We will 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.

- **Seed Delivery** in the local area, free for over \$40 total, \$4 charge for under \$40 total, available on Tuesdays and Fridays.

- **Monthly children's nature programs** and children's 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 + \$10/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 new **reusable canvas tote** with royal blue handles – quite spiffy and American made!

(One per customer, please) The tote is also for sale for \$3.99 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.

## King's Court Annual Summer Sidewalk Sale

Mark your Calendars! Watch your mailbox!  
Come for the music and the bargains!  
Saturday, July 9



We have been saving up the onesie, twosie things that are left from an order. We are running the "No Sale" report to see what has been gathering dust. We are cleaning feeders that are no longer used and have been donated by our wonderful customers for a special donation table that will benefit our two wildlife rehabilitation centers. We have also been cleaning out our storage unit and who knows what we will find!

**Check out the special mailing/newspaper insert where you will find a coupon for 15% off one item, excluding optics. Not valid on sale items.**

## New Seed Mix – Just Hearts



Pure Patio Mix is our best selling mix. It contains sunflower chips, peanut chips and hulled millet. Chickadees, titmice, finches, and woodpeckers love it, but a lot of the hulled millet gets tossed out and gets picked up by our local ground feeders, doves, juncos, and towhees. If things are out of balance and the kickout attracts rodents, we usually have suggested straight sunflower chips. Now you have a choice. Introducing Just Hearts, a 50/50 sunflower hearts and chips and peanut dices and hearts.



# Los Gatos Birdwatcher's Summer Nature Series

**Reservations Required Space is limited. \$10/child for each class  
Call (408) 358-9453 to register.**

## Tails

Thursday, June 16

For ages 3 to 5: 10:30-11:30 am

For ages 6 to 12: 1 to 2 pm

Come to **Los Gatos Birdwatcher** to discover the talents of animal tails. Bring a picture of a pet or favorite animal to share as we discover what those tails do. Hear a story and create your own clever lizard, too.



## T-Shirt Painting Workshop

Thursday, July 7

For ages 3 to 5: 10:30-11:15 am

For ages 6 to 12: 1-1:45 pm

Back by popular demand. Come to **Los Gatos Birdwatcher** for some painting fun. Bring your own t-shirt and use our stamps, stencils, leaves and feathers to paint your own one of a kind t-shirt. Wear your grubbies.

## Nature's Garden

Thursday, July 14

For ages 3 to 5: 10:30-11:30 am

For ages 6 to 12: 1-2 pm

Come to **BelGatos Park** to explore nature's garden. If you like, bring some washed fruits or vegetables to share from your garden as we discover how the wild soil is prepared, seeds are planted, and flowers are tended. Search for critters harvesting the summer crops and take home some seeds to plant.



## Rocks

Thursday, June 23

For ages 3 to 5: 10:30-11:30 am

For ages 6 to 12: 1 to 2 pm

Come to **Los Gatos Birdwatcher** to discover why rocks are important to the animals. Visit a LIVE salamander, turtle and birds visiting from **Sulphur Creek Nature Center**. Take home a special photo of yourself with one of the visiting animals.

## Teddy Bear Picnic

Thursday, June 30

For ages 3 to 9: 12-1:30 pm

(siblings under 3 free of charge)

Come to **BelGatos Park** with lunch, a blanket to sit on, and your favorite stuffed friend for some fun in the sun. Make a sun changing necklace and search for critters on the trail that like to soak up the sun.



## Dental Detectives

Thursday, July 21

For ages 3 to 5: 10:30-11:30 am

For ages 6 to 12: 1 to 2 pm

Come to **Los Gatos Birdwatcher** to investigate a variety of animal teeth and discover the different things that they are used for. Visit a LIVE furry friend, snake and bird visiting from **Sulphur Creek Nature Center** and make a toothbrush holder.



## Swift Swimmers

Thursday, July 28

For ages 3 to 5: 10:30-11:30 am

For ages 6 to 12: 1 to 2 pm

Hike with us along the **Los Gatos Creek Trail** in search of swift swimmers, big and small.

Come and see what helps these critters swim so well.

Make a boat to float when you go swimming.

Meet at the dam at

**Vasona Lake** on Garden Hill Drive.



## Summer Night Surprises

Thursday, August 4

For ages 3 to 5: 10:30-11:30 am

For ages 6 to 12: 1 to 2 pm

Come to **Los Gatos Birdwatcher** for fun activities to find out about special things you may find out on a warm summer night. Watch a puppet show, play games, dissect an owl pellet and make your own bat flying saucer.



## Summer Series Directions

### BelGatos Park

BelGatos Park is located at the south end of BelGatos Road. From the store go east on Blossom Hill Road. Just past Leigh Avenue, turn right on BelGatos Road and follow it to the parking lot at the end. Since the BelGatos Road Sign is small, look for the more noticeable green Mulberry School sign directly below it.

### Vasona Lake

We will meet at the gate by the dam on Garden Hill Drive. From Lark Avenue turn onto Garden Hill Drive (opposite the southbound 880 Lark Avenue Exit) then veer to the right at the fork in the road. Meet at the gate at the next bend in the road (before you get to the Santa Clara County Department of Recreation and Youth Science Institute buildings).

## It's Meal Worm Time Again

The store refrigerator is stocked with mealworms again!

We have switched to FEDEX shipping to get them

here faster. Last year most mealworm customers were

buying one 500 tub at a time. This

year that number is up to two and

three tubs of 500 at a time. To

cut down on the squabbling,

one customer has three dishes

out so that the two titmouse

families and the chickadee

family each have their own. We

have families of titmice and acorn

woodpeckers making fast work of

every offering. Many customers are

feeding Bewick's wrens, robins

and chickadees. While feeding

mealworms is usually connected to western bluebirds,

which unfortunately we don't have in great numbers or

in most backyards, there are many other birds that like

mealworms, especially this time of year. Even black-headed

grosbeaks, who mainly eat sunflower seeds, devour all the

mealworms we put out. Mealworms are small, one-inch

long, black beetle larva. They are sold in small plastic cups

with snap-on lids and plenty of air holes. The worms sit

in wheat bran and can be stored in a refrigerator for up to

two months with just a slice of carrot added every week or

so. We receive frequent deliveries from a vendor in Visalia.

When they arrive Kathleen takes great care to feed them

carrot and makes sure that the wheat bran is deep enough.

We give them a chance to feed after their long journey

before popping them in the fridge to slow them down. We

have been told by several customers that our mealworms

are the best cared for in the area which means less dead

worms when you buy them.

The easiest way to present mealworms is in a shallow

straight-sided dish. It can be one our domed feeders

(*Droll Yankee X-1 Seed Saver*) that can be adjusted to

keep out the larger birds or it can be the bottom part

of a saucer hummingbird feeder that you are no longer

using. Another popular feeder for mealworms is small

hanging or stake dishes that hold just enough. If you are

just trying it for the first time, a shallow Pyrex or glass

baking dish will also work (just something that won't

blow away in the wind). Try to keep whatever you use out

of the direct sun. Some customers have actually trained

the birds to come when they whistle or make a special

sound. The key is to whistle and put out the meal worms

at approximately the same time everyday. Early morning

and towards dusk are two opportune times.



Photo by:  
Laurie West-Roberts



**New 9x28 DCF LV  
Pentax binoculars**  
– Lightweight, Great  
Price, Great Image!



**Wild-Cards**  
– Surprise someone with a  
singing Wild-Card! Beautiful  
photography with accurate  
song when opened.



**New Burley  
Clay Birdbaths**  
– Made in America.  
Beautifully done.



**For the B-B-Q'er**  
– Ravenous apron, oven mit,  
towel, and potholder.



**Hats and Caps**  
– Protect yourself with a UPF50  
hat from Sunday Afternoon,  
Dorfman Pacific, and Wallaroo.  
– Raven Lunatic Caps



**Pouches**  
– New Pajaro pouch  
for field guides



**Mugs**  
– Thermal mugs and songbird  
coffee beans for the commuter



**Deal Me In**  
– Playing Cards with  
birds on them

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

#C0711

/ 2011

Pay to the order of Our Loyal Customer

**15% Off One Item**

Memo: Expires 07/31/11

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 every 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. Except for our once a month all-day field trips, we go on a local bird walk from 8 to 10 am and return 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 Saturday walk on July 2)

**No Charge.**

### Sunnyvale Audubon walks

First Wednesday of the month

July 6, August 3, and September 7 - 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.**

### Let's Go Birding to Pigeon Point Lighthouse and Gazos Creek Road

Saturday, July 16, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

Birding along the coast is a great way to avoid inland summer temperatures. Join Lisa Myers in birding the riparian habitat north of Santa Cruz along Gazos Creek Road and up along the western boundary of Butano State Park. This will be a great trip for enhancing your birding by ear as we'll be on the look out for Pacific Wren, MacGillvrey's Warblers, Pileated Woodpeckers and Swainson's Thrush. If time allows we'll stop at the Pigeon Point Lighthouse.

**Fee: \$25 + share of gas**

### Let's Go Birding along Skyline Blvd.

Saturday, August 20, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

The Midpeninsula Open Space District's purpose is to purchase lands and permanently protect and restore these lands for low-intensity recreation and environmental education. Because of their hard work we have many open spaces preserves within the Santa Cruz Mtns. along Skyline Blvd. This trip, with Lisa Myers, will take us to many of these preserves to look for the species that prefer these high altitude, open spaces. We'll plan our route according to what species have recently been reported. Possible destinations include Russian Ridge, Monte Bello, Los Trancos, Skyline Ridge and many more.

**Fee \$25 + share of gas**

# Los Gatos Birdwatcher



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King's Court Center  
792 Blossom Hill Road, Los Gatos, California 95032  
408/358-9453  
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website: [www.losgatosbirdwatcher.com](http://www.losgatosbirdwatcher.com)

## EMAIL ADDRESS UPDATE.

Use my email for newsletters and monthly notices:

Return Service Requested



Printed on  
recycled paper

## Sage Advice...

*Go for a walk with your Dad!*



## Dates to Remember

**Closed July 4th**

6/19 – Father's Day (*Say Thank You*)  
6/21 – Summer Solstice  
8/7 – Artist's Exhibition  
8/21 – Photography Exhibition

## Store Hours

Monday – Saturday: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Sunday: 12 noon to 5 p.m.

**Phone: 408-358-9453**

