

# Los Gatos Birdwatcher



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### Lisa Myers' Beginning Birding Workshop #3

**Class: Thursday, September 26, 6:30 – 8:00pm**

**Field Trip: Saturday, September 28, 9:00 – 11:00am**

Hawks, falcons and eagles, collectively known as Raptors, are a favorite bird group for many. This beginning workshop will focus on the different raptors that we can see here in the Bay Area from bald eagles to peregrine falcons. Fall is the perfect time to study them as this is the time of year when raptors migrate south for the winter. We'll break down the raptor groups so you can more easily identify one from another.

*Fee: \$20 per person – Reservations Required*



### Judy Bingman Discovers Mongolia –Photo Presentation

**October 17, 6:30 to 7:30 pm**

What do you think of when you think of Mongolia? You probably think it is all Gobi Desert. Judy discovered mountains, green valleys, lakes with ice in June and more of a Gobi Plain. Take a visit to camps where the illusive Mongolian Cuckoo woke her up and put her to bed, never to be seen. Around the camps she saw men hunting with golden eagles and vultures and found many "photogenic" yaks. It was so cold she bought a yak sweater. See her favorite Mongolian horsemen.

*No Charge – Reservations Required*



### Lisa Myers' Beginning Birding Workshop #4

**Class: Thursday, October 24, 6:30 – 8:00pm**

**Field Trip: Saturday, October 26, 9:00 – 11:00am**

This workshop series is focused on the beginning birder. While we include some of the fundamentals of birding and what to look for when trying to identify a bird, this workshop will focus on the family of birds known as the woodpeckers. This group of birds is often easy to spot as they bang on our roof tops, but can you identify all of them? You are welcome to sign-up for this workshop even if you have missed any of the previous Beginning Birding Workshops. We'll concentrate on how to identify the different woodpeckers that live here in Santa Clara County throughout the year and those you may find while visiting the Sierras.

*Fee: \$20 per person – Reservations Required*



### Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society present the 22nd Annual Wildlife Education Day!

**Saturday, October 26, 2013 from 10am-3pm at Blackberry Farm  
in Cupertino (note new location)**

There will be birdhouse building, nature arts and crafts, live animals, environmental groups from around the bay area, and the ever popular "early bird" shorebird walk at Charleston Slough (8am.) For details about the events and to find out about the annual wildlife poster contest, visit [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org).

# Fall is the Time to Plant Natives

Habitat is key to attracting the widest variety of birds to your backyard. Birds have four basic needs: food, water, shelter, habitat. You can offer food for seed eaters by presenting quality seed in a variety of specialty feeders, but not all birds eat seed. You can take care of more species of birds with a birdbath or water feature, but they need shelter to preen safely. You can provide shelter for cavity nesters by putting up a variety of houses with different hole diameters. However, many birds don't use cavities. If you also plant trees, shrubs and flowers that are attractive to a variety of birds, you will see much more activity in your yard.

## Why Gardening for Birds is Important

Increased development in our area has led to habitat reduction and fragmentation of habitat. Researchers have noticed a significant decline in numbers of migratory songbirds. The loss of habitat in breeding grounds, wintering areas and along migratory routes is devastating both migrant and resident songbirds. Since there are fewer large undisturbed forest tracts, smaller wood lots in individual yards become increasingly important to songbirds. Many areas have also been planted with exotic (non-native) plants which are not always adopted by birds. Native planting can reduce water usage, reduce maintenance, and reduce the need for chemical fertilizers. By planning your habitat to include the trees of your neighbor's, you can develop a larger connecting habitat for the birds.

Cover is very important for several reasons. First and foremost it provides protection from predators (raptors, cats, and humans.) Cover also provides shelter from inclement

weather and places for some birds to build nests without being seen. Cover can take the form of trees, shrubs, dense tall grasses, vines, rock piles, and brush piles. If you have many deciduous trees, consider adding some evergreen plants for cover during the winter.

In new development, with little vegetation, consider creating "instant cover" by using your discarded Christmas tree to create a brush pile. Potted plants or container gardens with annuals and perennials for hummingbirds is quick and easy. Plant a line of sunflowers along the fence and watch the show as goldfinch strip the leaves while waiting for the flowers to turn to seed.

Plantings are not only important for cover but also provide habitat for other bird behavior. By having both large trees for canopy and a leafy subcanopy allows some birds to sing and feed in one, nest in the other. A variety of plantings will also allow for display areas and singing posts. Consider planting vegetation that flowers and produces fruit in succession through the seasons (i.e. high fat fruit ripens in the fall just in time for the migratory birds). Leaf litter is important for scratchers like towhees and California thrasher.

Bringing birds to your yard is beneficial for several other reasons. They bring lots of enjoyment with them as well as performing insect control and plant pollination duties. By reducing or eliminating the use of pesticides, you can foster a healthy environment enjoyed by the birds, your children and pets.

## Plant Possibilities

The list below is by no means inclusive. There are many

more native and non-native species that work well for birds, butterflies and other wildlife.

- Native Oaks (jays, woodpeckers, chickadees, titmouse, hummingbirds)
- Madrone (band-tailed pigeons, cedar waxwings, pine siskins)
- Manzanita (hummingbirds, butterflies)
- Toyon (flicker, robin, mocking-bird, cedar waxwing, deer)
- Ceanothus (towhee, white crowned sparrow, western bluebird)
- Elderberry (towhee, cedar waxwings, robin, western bluebird)
- Willow (hummingbirds, butterflies)



## Hummingbird and Butterfly Favorites

- Lantana
- Sages
- California Fuchsia
- Penstemon
- Sticky Monkey Flower
- Western Columbine (*Aquilegia formosa*)
- Hound's Tongue (*Cynoglossum grande*)
- Red Larkspur (*Delphinium cardinale*)
- Island Bush Snapdragon (*Galvezia speciosa*)
- Bladder Pod (*Isomeris arborea*)
- Twinberry (*Native honeysuckle*)
- Wild Gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*)
- Woolly blue curls (*Trichostemma lanatum*)
- Quail Bush (*Atriplex lentiformis*)

## Plants to Avoid

According to the "Don't plant a pest!" brochure published by the California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC), "over half of the plants currently damaging California's wildlands were originally introduced for

landscaping purposes. Garden escapes like pampas grass and Scotch broom may have desirable characteristics in a garden setting, but outside the garden these plants displace native species and alter natural processes."



"Some of these plants show weedy tendencies in the garden as well. For example, English ivy can take over a yard and damage buildings and fences. Likewise, when birds drop seeds near a stream, English ivy can

take over native vegetation and degrade wildlife habitat."

"Invasive plants are by nature a regional problem. A plant that jumps out of the garden in one climate and habitat type may behave perfectly in another."

The brochure lists twelve local problem plants, the reasons they are problems, alternative suggestions, and what kind of growing conditions are required. For example: Don't plant: periwinkle (*Vinca major*) This aggressive grower has trailing stems that root wherever they touch the soil. This ability to resprout from

stem fragments enables periwinkle to spread rapidly in shady creeks and drainages, smothering the native plant community. Instead try; pachysandra (*Pachysandra terminalis*), Serbian bellflower (*Campanula poscharskyana*), ivory star jasmine (*Trachelospermum asiaticum*), wild ginger (*Asarum caudatum*), or bear's foot hellebore (*Helleborus foetidus*).

For a complete listing of the twelve problem plants and their alternatives, ask us for a copy of "Don't Plant a Pest!" or visit Cal-IPC's website at [www.cal-ipc.org](http://www.cal-ipc.org) or call them at 510/843-3902.

## 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 (northern route, e.g. Los Altos, Sunnyvale, Mountain View, Cupertino, Saratoga) and Fridays (southern and eastern route, e.g. San Jose, Campbell, Santa Clara.) Los Gatos delivery can be done either day.

- **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 "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 **reusable canvas tote** with royal blue handles – quite spiffy! 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.

# Predator vs. Prey

On a recent morning, a man walking his dog in the center banged on our door and appeared in distress. When I answered the door, he said that two birds were on the ground near Sportisimo and that they looked “poisoned.” I dashed out to see what the situation was and found a house sparrow and a hawk on the ground within eight inches of each other. The hawk had obviously chased the sparrow and both had hit the window, hard! John and I got towels and a bag for the sparrow and a box for the hawk. When John approached the hawk, it had other ideas and flew, very shakily, over to Shangri’la’s window. It had one wing spread out and was flat on it’s tummy. Luckily it’s head was up and it’s eyes open but it was panting.



John went back to the sparrow, put it in a paper bag and set it aside to see if it would recover. Initially I thought that the hawk was a Cooper’s Hawk rather than a sharp-shinned hawk because of the time of year, but as I looked at it on the ground with its tail splayed out, I realized that it had to be a “sharpie.” The tail was straight across, rather than rounded and its head was round rather than flat. I called Lisa Myers, our resident expert, and she said that sharp-shinneds are known to nest in the outskirts of Santa Clara Valley and that all the field marks are pointing to a “sharpie.”

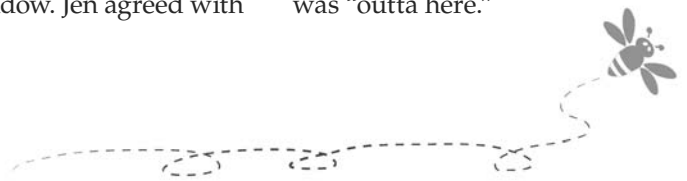
Then I called Jen at the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley to get some guidance and moral support. By now our friend had stopped panting but was still in the same position. It was now fifteen minutes after it had hit the window. Jen agreed with



us that it was best to let it be and see if it recovered on its own rather than to stress it out and make it fly before it was able to. She said that we should wait another twenty-five to thirty minutes and see how it was. About ten minutes later, the wing went back to its normal position next to the body. About ten minutes after that, it stood up. It was a bit shaky and it showed us the red breast of an adult. It moved a bit and its wings went out to steady itself. About five minutes later, off it flew – twenty-five minutes on the nose.

After trying to keep people from walking by and keeping an eye on our hawk had taken up our attention, we now realized that the sparrow was making all sorts of “Let me otta here” noises. We took him outside, opened the bag and he was “outta here.”

# How to treat a Bee Sting



Judy Bingman was stung by a bee during her last Hummingbird Workshop. She had an adverse reaction and had to go to the Emergency Room. Upon discharge, her doctor gave her some instructions that she thought would be good to put in the newsletter as a follow-up to our de-skunking recipe.

- With bee stings, a small sac of poison is left in the wound. Brushing across this with something such as a credit card will help remove this and decrease the amount of the reaction.
- Apply a cold compress for 10 to 20 minutes every hour for one or two days, depending on severity, to reduce swelling and itching.
- To lessen pain, a paste made of water and baking soda may be rubbed on the bite or sting and left on for 5 minutes.
- To relieve itching and swelling, you may use:  
Hydrocortisone cream may be applied lightly four times per day for a couple of days.  
Calamine lotion or anti-itch spray with diphenhydramine may be used lightly on the bite four times per day for itching.
- If you have an adverse reaction or none of the above helps in 2 to 3 days, seek medical help.





LOOK WHAT  
FREDDY FOUND!



**New metal turkey and heron figures**

– Add some fun fall décor to your yard. We also have male, female and chick metal quail from the same manufacturer.



**Covered Platform Feeder**

– A 9”x9” hanging platform feeder with a clear plexiglass lid/baffle that allows little birds to feed but keeps the band-tailed pigeons at bay.



**More Embroidered Shirts from Guatemala**

– Also in the “jacket” style.



**New Fine Art Socks**

– I studied art history in college and like many of the masters. Now you can wear Mona Lisa, Botticelli’s Venus, Van Gogh’s sunflowers and starry night (a personal favorite) and Raphael’s cherubs in two colors.



**Squirrel Solutions Feeder**

– New, lifetime warranty, keeps squirrels off the feeders, cleans easily, includes a funnel and is well priced! Come Check it out!



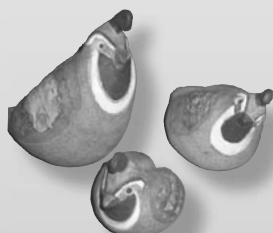
**Garden Joy**

– Beyond Borders, our supplier for whimsical Haitian steel drum wall art, has come out with new garden stakes. Flowers and wonderful, vibrant dancers that make you want to spin!



**More bags, ...lunch bags**

– More bags, coin purses, pencil cases and lunch bags – owls, birds, Dick and Jane. Fun, cheerful and very useful.



**Handmade pottery quail**

– New sizes! Small, medium and large and in both male and female. Debra Yavercovski creates these wonderful quail at Blossom Hill Crafts.

## Got Crow Woes?

So many people come in complaining about the huge numbers of crows in their neighborhoods. The main complaints are noise, poop and the lack of other birds when they are around. Several people have complained about roosting crows where several hundred birds come into a group of trees at dusk and stay until morning. Until they settle down, the noise is deafening.

Some people like the crows because they are very smart and their antics are quite entertaining. Some people feed them peanuts, but if you want other birds to be in your yard for feeding and nesting, feeding crows is at cross purposes.

They are very adaptable and are truly omnivorous. They eat everything that we throw away. They eat eggs and baby songbirds in your yard. They are very social within their flock and their babies will stay around the following year to help raise the current years offspring.

A while back we read somewhere that if you put a fake crow on its back out in your yard at night (so the crows don't see you) they will react to the "death" by circling their fallen comrade and then they will leave the area. We have suggested this to customers and have had positive feed back. Full size artificial crows that don't cost the earth are really hard to find, but we were finally successful. The size, 18" x 9", is perfect. It is made of black feathers over a plastic body and looks quite realistic. KC, our enthusiastic and clever employee, came up with the idea of renting the crow. So we have some for sale at \$35.99 for people who have lots of crows and rental crows for \$10/7days.



## Kid's Corner

Call 358-9453 to reserve your space.

Reservation Required

### Welcome Fall

For ages 3 to 9

Fee: \$8/child

Thursday, September 19, 2013, 4-5pm

Fall will officially begin on Sunday, September 22nd. Come to Los Gatos Birdwatcher and celebrate with us as we discover what the animals are busy doing as the season changes. Join us for some delightful stories, play a game, meet a very special live spider and create your own flying bat.

### Animal Disguises

For ages 3 to 9

Fee: \$8/child

Thursday, October 17, 2013 4-5pm

At this time of year, many are preparing their Halloween disguises. Come to Los Gatos Birdwatcher to discover all sorts of clever ways that animals disguise themselves. Make your own animal disguise too.

## Field Trips & Outings

### Saturday Morning Local Bird Walks

No Saturday walks on September 28 and October 7 – We are in Costa Rica!

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



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

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/ 2013

Pay to the order of *Our Loyal Customer*

*15% Off One Item*

Memo: *Expires October 31, 2013*

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

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**

**Sept 4, Oct. 2, Nov. 6**

**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 with Lisa Myers to the California Raptor Center and the Putah Creek Riparian Reserve at UC Davis.**

**Saturday, September 21, 8:00am – 5:00pm**

The California Raptor Center is committed to preserving and perpetuating the health of all raptor species with special emphasis on those native to California and the West. We'll have the opportunity to get up close to many of these beautiful birds. We'll also bird the 640 acre riparian reserve located on the main campus.

**Fee: \$30 + share of gas. Reservations Required**

### **Let's Go Birding with Lisa Myers to the San Mateo Coast.**

**Saturday, October 19, 8:00am – 4:00pm**

We'll spend our day birding between Half Moon Bay and Santa Cruz. One minute we'll scope the Pacific Ocean while in the next we'll be checking out fields and tall evergreens. We'll take time to study the species that inhabit the coastal cliffs, Wavecrest, Gazos Creek Road and more. With the fall migration underway, there is no telling what we might find hiding under cover!

**Fee: \$30 + share of gas. Reservations Required**

### **Let's Go Birding with Lisa Myers to see the Sandhill Cranes.**

**Saturday, November 16, 8:00am – 6:00pm**


We'll spend the day visiting ideal birding habitats outside and around Lodi in search of wintering Sandhill Cranes. As we search, we'll also find Tundra Swans and waterfowl as they arrive by the millions to spend the winter in the farmlands found here. As the date nears, we'll finalize our exact route after the reports start coming in and we know where all the action is. Sandhill cranes are a Let's Go Birding favorite species! This trip always fills up fast, so check your calendars and reserve your spot.

**Fee: \$30 + share of gas. Reservations Required**

# Los Gatos Birdwatcher

King's Court Center  
792 Blossom Hill Road, Los Gatos, California 95032  
408/358-9453  
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## Guest Greeter

*Linda Davidge's Bailee knows where the toys are. And she knows who is the biggest sucker to give her treats!*



## Dates to Remember

Closed Labor Day, September 2

9/22	Autumnal Equinox
9/26 – 10/7	Freddy and John in Costa Rica
10/14	Columbus Day
10/31	Halloween
11/2	Dia de los Muertos

## Store Hours

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

