

Los Gatos Birdwatcher

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Count Down to Hanukkah and Christmas

What is important this holiday season? Great Selection! Unique Gifts! Saving Money!



December 1-7
- All Jewelry 15% off



December 8-14
- All Clothing 15% off



December 15-21
- All Birdfeeders 15% off



December 22-24
- All Holiday Items
and Calendars 20% off

Costa Rica Photo Presentation

Visit Costa Rica through the lens of professional photographer, Judy Bingman
Thursday, January 19, 2012, 6-7pm

Judy has taken two trips to the Central American country of Costa Rica. Both trips were photography workshops with toucans and



hummingbirds as the target species. However, in Costa Rica, while you are looking for toucans and hummingbirds, you will also see flowers, butterflies, iguanas, frogs, and lots of other birds. In addition to her wonderful photos Judy will share some of the special techniques for photographing hummingbirds she learned at these workshops.

No Charge
-Call to reserve your place.
408/358-9453

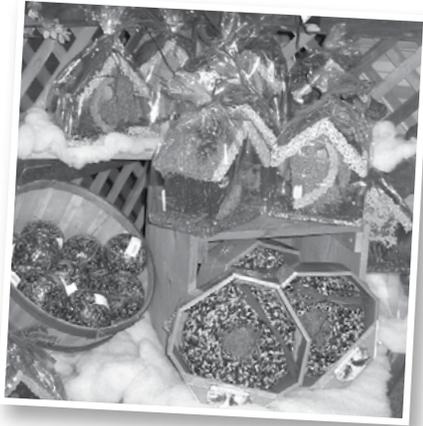
Edible Ornaments and Seed Birdhouses

Dress up your yard and feed the wildlife. Colorful seed ornament garlands, seed covered birdhouses, and ornament balls. New this year – Sugar pine cone suet feeder kits.



*See next
page...*

Edible Ornaments for Birds and other Wildlife



During the winter, it is a challenge for birds and other wildlife to find sufficient food to survive because natural food sources are limited. During the holiday season you can decorate outdoor trees with natural ornaments for the birds and critters as a fun family project. Here are a few ideas that are easy for children, with adult supervision, to create:

Seed and Suet (or Peanut Butter) Pine Cones

- Collect as many pinecones as you want to hang on a bush or tree.
- For the hanger, fasten twine, ribbon, or wire to the pointy end of the pinecone.
- If using pure suet cakes, divide the cake into quarters and put a quarter at a time into a paper cup. Soften in the microwave for 20-second intervals and stir after each time. Try to avoid melting the suet because it is very hot and takes awhile to re-solidify.
- With a spoon or blunt knife work the peanut butter or softened suet into the openings on the pinecone.
- Put a few handfuls of Black Oil Sunflower, Birder's Choice, or Songbird Select seed mix into a plastic bag.
- Drop in the pinecones one at a time and shake or roll so that the seed sticks to the peanut butter or suet.

- Repeat until all the pinecones are complete and then go outside and hang them on your chosen tree or bush.

Whole Peanut and Cranberry Garland

- Tapestry needles, which take a large thread but have a dull point, work best for this and can be purchased at most craft centers.
- Cut 3-foot lengths of twine or string. Thread into eye of the needle.
- Make a loop for hanging onto the tree on one end and leave the other end plain.
- Take a whole peanut and poke the needle between the two kernels.
- If you want to put a gap between the peanuts, tie a knot in the twine before threading another peanut. Add cranberries as desired.
- When you come to the end of the string, tie another loop and hang.
- Make as many garlands as will fit on the tree.

Bread Cookie Cutter Ornaments

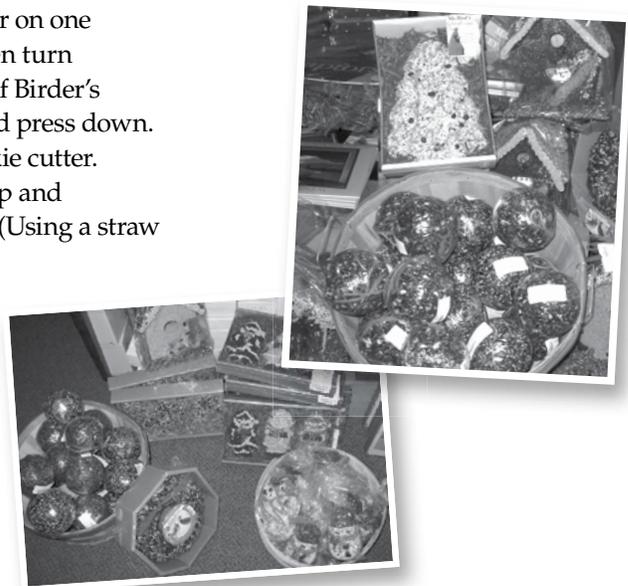
- Choose a fairly dense bread such as whole grain or pumpernickel.
- Choose holiday cookie cutters or our nature-themed *Ann Clark* cookie cutters.
- Spread peanut butter on one side of the bread then turn it over onto a plate of Birder's Choice Mix seed and press down.
- Cut shape with cookie cutter.
- Poke a hole in the top and tie string or ribbon. (Using a straw to make the hole works well.)

Seed Ornaments

- Caution: These do not stand up in rainy weather!
- Put Birder's Choice seed mix in a bowl and add one egg white per pound of seed. Stir to blend together.
- On a paper plate, pat seed into a mold or cookie cutter.
- Gently remove the mold or cookie cutter and put paper plate, with ornament, into the microwave for 1-2 minutes until firm.
- Let it cool.
- With glue gun, attach ribbon or twine for hanging.

Black Oil Sunflower Heads and Millet Sprays

- Dried sunflower heads are available at Los Gatos Birdwatcher in various sizes. They are very festive when tied with colorful ribbon and hung where they can be seen as they are devoured by the local birds and critters.
- Millet sprays come in bags of 5 sprays. Tie bright ribbons on each stem and tie to the tree.
- Chickadees and titmice love the sunflower and the "crowned" sparrows love the millet.



“Seven Ways to Help Birds” from my Songbirds Planner 2011

1. Keep cats indoors – Scientists estimate that free-roaming cats kill hundreds of millions of birds and other small animals each year. Cat predation is an added stress to wildlife populations already struggling to survive habitat loss, pollution, pesticides, and other human impacts. For more information visit the website (www.abcbirds.org/abcprograms/policy/cats/index.html)

2. Make your windows safer for birds – Current estimates are that windows kill as many a billion birds every year in the US alone. Songbirds migrating at night are killed at lighted windows in high rises, and at any time or day they may collide with windows of our homes. If birds strike a particular window, place at least two UV coated decals (WindowAlert) on the outside of the window to minimize future strikes.

3. Maintain feeders to provide the greatest benefit to birds with the least

harm to them – Never allow seed to become moldy; rake the ground beneath feeders regularly; never set out bread, which attracts rodents, pigeons and invasive species. Close down your feeding station temporarily and clean your feeders if you notice any sign of sick birds.

4. Conserve water – Fresh water in lakes, rivers, and streams is growing scarcer and more polluted in many areas. Using rainwater for watering lawns, gardens, and houseplants, taking briefer showers, filling the bathtub less deeply and fixing dripping faucets all ensure that wild birds and we have clean water well into the future.

5. Participate in citizen science projects – The more information scientists have about bird populations, the more wisely we can conserve them. See “Citizen Science Projects” on the Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s website (www.feederwatch.org) and “Bird Counts” on the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society’s website (www.scvas.org).

6. Buy a Duck Stamp – Revenue from the stamp available for anyone to purchase and required by all American waterfowl hunters provides critical habitat. A full \$14.70 for every \$15 stamp goes directly to acquiring habitat for national wildlife refuges. This benefits not just game species, but also a wide variety of nesting birds, and provides islands of excellent habitat – something becoming harder and harder for birds to find as more and more natural habitat is developed or put into crop production.

7. Drink certified “Bird Friendly” coffee – Typical high-yield coffee plantations require heavy use of fertilizers and pesticides, and are monocultures comparable to cornfields; few birds live on them. (We have a small section of bird friendly coffee from Thanksgiving Coffee Company.)



The new 2012 Songbird Planner is now available along with a wide selection of many nature-themed calendars.

Two Friends to remember well

Last issue we announced in the Sage Advice column that our dearest Sage had died on September 14. She stopped eating on Saturday, was diagnosed with three types of cancer in three organs on Tuesday, and told us on Wednesday morning that it was time to go. It was with many tears and much heartache that we said good-bye to our loyal, loving, and oh so accommodating member of our family and store team. The vets and techs at Los Gatos Dog and Cat Hospital took such wonderful care of all of us and she had a peaceful final journey.

A week later we received a phone call at home from our friend and former employee, Jared Lockhart, who is now a nurse in Bakersfield. His dear Sun Conyer, Cherry, had passed away suddenly and very unexpectedly. Cherry was the store bird on Sundays for many years and had a huge following. Her playful antics such as taking a bath in a paper cup and walking down my arm to get to my palmful of safflower will always be in our hearts.

Please remember both of these wonderful creatures who made so many so happy.



Wet and Cold Season Feeding

Serving suet, seeds with shells, and adding baffles/rain guards will help keep the birds well fed during the cold and wet season and reduce the waste of seed due to mold. If you have tube feeders, only fill them half as full so they rotate through the seed quicker, and fill them twice as often and the birds will thank you. When you do refill the feeder, be sure to empty out the leftovers in the bottom. Moldy seed can cause problems if ingested and also clumps together preventing the free flow of the seed above. A product that can help keep the seed dry is called "Feeder Fresh." Put a little at both the top and bottom of the feeder and it will absorb excess moisture and is not harmful to the birds if eaten. Monitoring the seed is especially important if you use any of our "hulled" seed or mixes. Since the seed doesn't have a shell covering, it is very susceptible to absorbing moisture.

Another way to protect the seed from the rain is with a weather dome or squirrel baffle. Granted this only works when there isn't any wind with the rain, but the birds like the protection.

With mesh Nyjer/thistle feeders, 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. Another tip for Nyjer/thistle feeders is to increase the number of feeders to spread the birds out. Our American and Lesser Goldfinches and Pine Siskins that flock onto the Nyjer/thistle feeders are quite numerous this time of year. Because of this flockiness, they are susceptible to diseases like salmonella. By spreading them out to several feeders you can reduce the spread of disease. Also, it is important to clean up any seed that accumulates under the feeder to prevent ground feeders from getting sick. We now carry a new product, "Seed & Hull Digester" – new from Care-Free Enzymes, that makes all the discarded seed and hulls disappear. Remember, we clean feeders (see Services.)

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! 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.

SCVAS Christmas Bird Counts for 2011

The Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society (SCVAS), in conjunction with the National Audubon Society, is conducting four local Christmas Bird Counts (CBC). CBC's have been taking place throughout the country since 1900. These bird counts add to the body of bird research and knowledge about birds across the country through time at a specific time during the year. "It's also that time of year when supposedly mature adults scramble around madly counting birds for fun and glory," according to Kirsten Holmquist, compiler of the San Jose Count. It truly is fun and exciting and only costs \$5 to join. Details are on the SCVAS website (www.svas.org)

All experience levels are welcome and needed. Bird identification skills are great but other skills are important too, such as spotter and tallier. The habitats are varied within the counts so talk to the compilers and see where you would be most comfortable. You can choose to count birds for a few hours or the entire day.

San Jose Bird Count – Sunday, December 18
(Contact Kirsten before 12/10/11 at 408/747-0988
or kirsten.holmquist@comcast.net.)

Palo Alto Count – Monday, December 19
(Contact Jack Cole at 408/996-0434 or snoyowl@yahoo.com)

Calero-Morgan Hill Count – Friday, December 30
(Contact Ann Verdi at wodu10@aol.com)

Mt. Hamilton Count – Monday, January 2
(Contact Bob Hirt at 408/821-2732)

Young Audubon Adventures

offered by Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

Winter Whale Watching in Monterey Bay – MLK weekend, Monday, January 16th and **Elephant Seal Walks** at Ano Nuevo State Park – President's Day weekend, Monday, February 20th. For details, times, and to sign up, call Toby Goldberg at SCVAS 408/252-3740.

Festival of Trees



The 2011 Festival of Trees at King's Court kicks off on Saturday, December 10th with entertainment and other festivities. Every year selected local schools and community organizations vie for cash prizes by decorating trees at the shopping center. All the organizations will be attending the festival kick-off and will be able to answer questions about their missions. The winners are determined by your votes. Until December 18th you can support these local organizations by voting for your favorite tree at the Los Gatos Birdwatcher and all the other retailers in the center. One vote per person, please. The Peoples' Choice awards will be announced on December 22nd.

Kid's Corner

Call 358-9453 to
reserve your space.

Reservation
Required

Cavity Nesters

Thursday, January 12, 4-5pm

For ages 3-9 \$8/child

Come to Los Gatos Birdwatcher to learn about the cavity nesting birds in your neighborhood. We have been given some gourds that will make the perfect bird houses for our cavity nesting friends. Decorate one to take home to put in your yard.

Critter Search

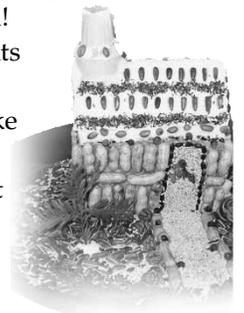
Thursday, February 16, 4-5pm at
Belgatos Park

For ages 3 to 10 \$8/child

Come explore the trails of Belgatos Park in search of critters great and small. Listen carefully and follow signs to discover what the critters are up to on this wonderful winters day. Make a small boat to float in the creek. Rain or shine. Bring rain gear just in case.

Ginger Seed House Kits

Ginger Seed House kits will be available to take and make on your own on November 21st. A sample will be available in the store to provide inspiration. For \$25 we provide all the basics; seed block for the foundation of the house, matzo for the roof, ice cream cone for the chimney and lots of different seeds for the decoration. All you do is supply a cookie sheet, the peanut butter and your imagination! Ginger Seed House kits make great gifts for families. (We can make special "no peanut" kits upon request, just call to order.)





**LOOK WHAT
FREDDY FOUND!**
FOR THE HOLIDAYS



Hostess Gifts – Christmas table top items such as teapots and pitchers. Mug and napkin gift sets.



Goldfinches – These lovely little birds look like lemon drops on your feeder. Give a gift that will brighten up their day!

Cute Birdhouses – Colorful, functional, and just right to attract chickadees and other small cavity nesters.



St. Francis – Several styles of lovely statues with birds, bunnies, and wolves.



Stake Feeders – New florals will brighten your yard and bring in the birds.



Snowman Feeder – Fill this happy fellow with black oil sunflower seed and watch the party!



Secret Santa – Dish towels are always a hit. Many designs to choose from.



Sculptures – Gorgeous hand carved birds by Gordon Stennett. New birds in stock.

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

#C0112

/ 2012

Pay to the order of *Our Loyal Customer*

15% Off One Item

Memo: *Expires 01/31/12*

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 Charge.

Sunnyvale Audubon walks

First Wednesday of the month

Dec 7, Jan 4, Feb 1 - 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.

Panoche Valley

Saturday, January 28 8am – 6pm

Let's Go Birding with Lisa Myers to the Panoche Valley which is a winter hot spot so close to the bay area. This high desert habitat is a must for any birder. Located between Los Banos and the coastal communities south of Hollister, this area has been left almost untouched by developers allowing for great habitat in which to find birds we don't often get in the highly populated bay area. Wintering raptors, Mountain Plover, Mountain Bluebirds, resident Phainopeplas, owls and roadrunners are just some of the birds we'll be looking for.

Fee \$25 + share of gas.

Salinas River National Wildlife Refuge

Saturday, February 11 8am – 6pm

Let's Go Birding with Lisa Myers to this refuge where the Salinas River enters the sea. At just 367 acres, the Salinas River National Wildlife Refuge includes coastal dunes, beaches, salt marshes, saline ponds, grasslands, and riparian habitats. It is an important location for migrating birds along the Pacific Flyway. Our time here will include a slow walk along the trail and sand dunes as we look for the different families of birds found in this diverse habitat. if time allows, we'll also stop at Watsonville's Harkins Slough.

Fee: \$25 + share of gas

Los Gatos Birdwatcher

King's Court Center
792 Blossom Hill Road, Los Gatos, California 95032
408/358-9453
email: info@losgatosbirdwatcher.com
website: www.losgatosbirdwatcher.com

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PERMIT NO. 43

Return Service Requested



Printed on
recycled paper

Part-time Canine Greeters

Lucy and Augie are Bat Terriers



Dates to Remember

Closed Christmas Day and New Years Day
Closing early 4:00 PM Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve

Holiday Hours:

December 12 – 23 Monday through Friday open until 7PM
December 19 – 24 Open at 9AM

12/21 Hanukkah 12/21 Winter Solstice 12/25 Christmas

Store Hours

Monday – Saturday: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Sunday: 12 noon to 5 p.m.

Phone: 408-358-9453

