



Los Gatos Birdwatcher

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Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation Center Fundraiser

Saturday, April 9 from 11am – 2pm

Come on down to the store, volunteers will be here with many of the non-releasable animals now serving as ambassadors for WERC, you can meet these animals and learn their story. Please bring whatever donation you can to help this great organization continue caring for injured and orphaned native birds and wildlife.



Alaska from the Sea Wolf – Patty Biasca and Bob Anderson

Thursday March 17, 7:00 – 8:00 PM at the Terraces



On a converted WWII wooden mine sweeper (now called the Sea Wolf) Patty Biasca and Bob Anderson explored Alaska's Inside Passage from Juneau to Ketchikan encountering orcas, humpback whales, bears, and other Alaskan wildlife. The trip format, which used kayaks and a skiff to leave the boat daily, allowed intimate views of nooks and crannies not seen by the average cruise ship passenger. Patty and Bob have been enjoying outdoor adventures for most of their adult lives, the last 25 or so years exploring together through backpacking, river rafting, kayaking, and hiking in some of the world's most beautiful and out-of-the-way places.

Amazon Jungle Treasure with Joan Sparks

Thursday, April 21, 7:00 – 8:00 PM at the Terraces

Joan began her photographic journey with an insatiable appetite of capturing athletes in motion. After shooting several hundred thousand images of athletes, she has moved into the challenges of nature photography. Joan will take us on an adventure to the Amazon Jungle so we can experience through her photography a cornucopia of wildlife inhabiting this South American environment.



SCVAS Spring Birdathon March 28 – April 26

Each spring our local Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society holds their most important fundraiser known as the Spring Birdathon. To participate you can form your own Self-Guided



Santa Clara Valley
Audubon Society

team or join one of the already prearranged Guided Teams. The goal of a Birdathon is for you to get folks to support your efforts and gather pledges ahead of time and then you go out and count or photograph bird species within the Spring Birdathon window from March 28 – April 26. You can count up to four hours. or go out the entire day. You can even join the Big-sit competition where you sit in one spot and count all the birds around you for up to four hours. Our own Lisa Myers has been leading team "Persistent Picidae" for many years. You are welcome to join the Picidae on April 24, or one of the many other teams. (www.scvas.org).

Take Notice Spring Migration is Underway!

It is amazing how quickly a year zips past when you know the comings and goings of the birds in your neighborhood. Many of the species you have been enjoying all winter will be leaving soon, and the birds that migrated south many months ago are now returning from Central & South America.

They are flying hundreds, if not thousands of miles to come back here to find a mate and raise chicks before returning again to the tropics to spend their winter. So keep an eye out for your visiting spring arrivals!

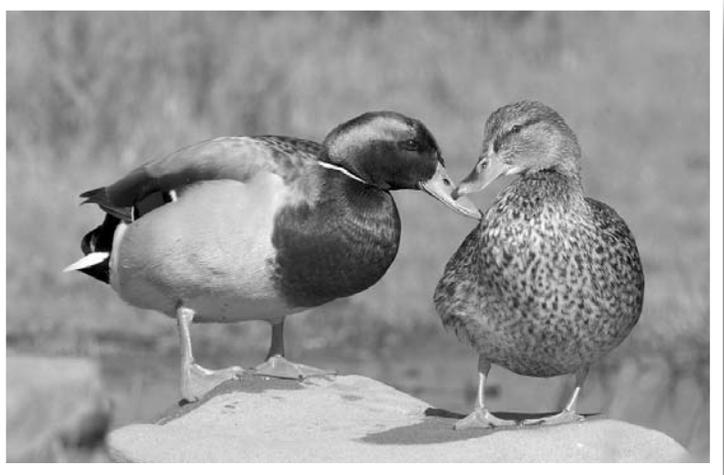


Photo of male and female Mallard – by Tom Grey

How They Mate

The breeding season is starting and the birds in your yard will start to sing, look for mates, build nests and molt into breeding plumage. It's a very active time in the bird world. Did you know that different species of birds pair up in different ways? Below is a break-down of how birds pick a mate.

Monogamy – Predominant System: mono = single + games = marriage

Essentially an exclusive pair with a single member of the opposite sex
Waterfowl, Loons, Grebes, Cormorants & Pelicans, Herons, Raptors, Doves, Owls, Most Woodpeckers
Most all the songbirds (passerines)

Polygyny – 2% of all birds: poly = many + myna = woman

A male pairs with two or more females and sustains an association with them all.
Wild Turkey, American Bittern, Tree & Barn Swallow, Pacific & Marsh Wren, American Dipper, Wilson's Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Lazuli Bunting, Red-Winged Blackbird, Tri-Color Blackbird, Yellow-Headed Blackbird, Brown Headed Cowbird, Western Meadowlark, House Finch

Polyandry – fewer than 1% of all birds: poly = many + andros = man

A female pairs with many males. Each male tends to a clutch of eggs. Sometimes successive & other times sequential. *Spotted Sandpiper, Sanderling, Phalaropes, Mountain Plover*

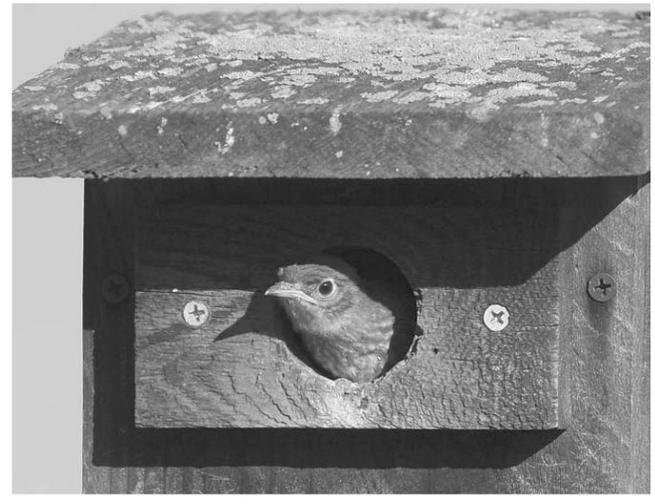
Cooperative – Two females rear broods simultaneously in the same nest and/or non-breeding birds help raise the chicks from the breeding pairs. *Acorn Woodpecker, Common Gallinule, Western Scrub Jay, American Crow, Pygmy Nuthatch*

How you can help nesting birds in your yard.

- Before you trim shrubs or trees, make sure there are no active nests hidden within
- Keep cats inside
- Be careful not to use pesticides near nest or on a potential food source
- Keep water and food sources clean

Western Bluebirds In Your Area

Many people come into the store and report seeing what they think are bluebirds in their neighborhood. They are surprised and delighted, and they are correct. Western Bluebirds numbers are on the rise because of the efforts made by many volunteers throughout the area; and the West.



box, placing it in the right location with available insect food sources is a great start to getting Western Bluebirds to nest near you.

To learn more about California Bluebird Recovery Programs we have provided the links below. We also have Western Bluebird boxes available in the store. Now is the time to get your nest boxes cleaned out and available for occupancy!

Lee Pauser gave a wonderful workshop for the Los Gatos Birdwatcher last January and we all learned how building nest boxes and monitoring them has helped increase bluebird populations. Because of the detailed records each bluebird box monitor maintains, Lee knows he alone has helped over 10,000 bluebirds fledge in the fourteen years he has been involved in the program! Providing the right sized nest

Photo of bluebird chick – Garrett Lau

- www.cbrp.org
- www.nabluebirdsociety.org
- www.socalbluebirds.org
- www.sialis.org



So Why Do You Watch Birds?

People come into the store and share with us wonderful stories about the birds in their yards. They share why they love to watch them and the antics they enjoy. We want to know why you watch birds. Please use the form below and share with us one of the reasons you enjoy watching birds.



Bring your answer into the store by **April 15, 2016** and you will go into a drawing for a \$50 gift certificate.

One of the reasons I watch birds: _____

Name _____ Phone number _____

If You Find A Baby Bird



If you find what you think is an orphaned baby bird on the ground, we encourage you to leave it alone and watch from a distance to see if its parents come down to feed it. Several different species of birds actually leave the nest a few days before they can fly. Their parents will come down to feed and care for them until they can fly. If you have determined your baby bird is in danger and is too young to fend for itself it is OK to pick up the bird, place it in a box and then call a rescue organization for assistance.

Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley (408)929-9453

Serving Cupertino, Sunnyvale, Campbell, Saratoga, Santa Clara, or San Jose.

Peninsula Humane Society (650)340-7022, extension 314

Serving San Mateo County and Palo Alto. They have recently merged with Wildlife Rescue in Palo Alto.

Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation Center (408)779-9372

Serving Santa Clara County south of San Jose, or in San Benito County.

Injured and Orphaned Wildlife 408-578-9145

Serving the South Bay.

Services Available from the Los Gatos Birdwatcher

- **Feeder Cleaning** – We want to help you maintain a healthy environment for your backyard birds. That is why we offer this service to clean feeders on Mondays and Thursdays. Bring your feeder into the store in the morning and we'll have it ready before closing. While we clean feeders for free we do ask that you consider making a minimum donation of \$5 per feeder to one of the Bay Area charities we support. You'll find collection boxes at the store.
- **Outreach to community organizations** about birding. We have educational programs about birds and birding, ideal for gardening and other service groups. We can also do "show & tell" of the many items we carry in the store.
- **Backyard Bird Consulting Program** – We will come out to your home and talk about what you can do to attract more birds to your yard. What species you can attract, where to set-up feeders, bird baths and nest boxes are just some of the topics we'll cover. There is a \$25 consultation fee per visit. With your visit you'll receive a \$10 Los Gatos Birdwatcher gift certificate.
- We offer **Gift Certificates** and **complimentary gift wrapping**.
- **15% off one item – Newsletter 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. One coupon per household. We do not apply the coupon automatically. The coupon excludes optics, trips and sale items.
Coupon does not apply to frequent buyer program purchases.

A Yellow Bird

A small bird

The Yellow-rumped Warbler

Visits my porch from time to time

On his yearly migration.

His arrival is heralded

By his low flat “chep”

And a flash of his yellow rump.

Hence his nickname Butter-butt.

He sits at the water bowl

Enjoying his refreshment.

No hurry.

Time is on his side.

I hope he spends the winter.

I'll keep the water bowl filled.

His departure is as his arrival.

A low flat “chep”.

And I bid his butter butt goodbye.

Susan Griep

12/2015



We wanted to share this beautiful poem that a customer wrote about the Yellow-rumped Warbler. This insect eating passerine arrives each Fall and stays for the Winter. They will soon be leaving the Bay Area, but you'll be able to find them in the Sierras this Spring and Summer.

Yellow-rumped Warbler
photo by Patty McGann

Earth Day!

Earth Day was founded in 1970 when Gaylord Nelson wanted to increase the nation's environmental awareness. Millions of Americans observed that first Earth Day in April 1970 via one of the largest demonstrations in US history. That first Earth Day led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Acts. Earth Day continues to grow as people take time out to celebrate nature.



All of us at the Los Gatos Birdwatcher encourage you take time out this year to enjoy a bit of nature and celebrate Earth Day. Get outside, take a walk, have a picnic, go birding or just remember to look up!

Hit Hard by Salmonella

It was a tough winter for Pine Siskins due to the disease known as Salmonella. Many of you came into the store asking for help and sharing your stories. We never know when Pine Siskins will come to the Bay Area, but when they do, they often bring Salmonella with them and thus, many get sick and die. There is no difference between using shelled or unshelled seed when it comes



Siskin photo by Tony Woo

to Salmonella. The seed you supply is not the source of this infection. The infection is bacterial and spread through the bird's feces. The disease is found in the wild and can affect many different species of birds, but the siskin are vulnerable to the disease, and because they are so gregarious, and hang out in flocks, they spread it and we experience it. Even if you are very efficient about keeping your feeders and area clean, Salmonella may be brought in from surrounding wild areas. Keeping feeders clean is important, but, that alone will not prevent the spread of this disease. The bacteria can survive for many months on uncleaned feeders, on the ground, on plants or on other surfaces and it is recommended that feeders be cleaned with a 10% bleach solution, proper rinsing off of the bleach and then drying before you use them. If you handle a sick or dead bird, or touch feeders where sick siskins have been eating, be sure to wash your hands thoroughly. This form of Salmonella can be transmitted to humans and is the most common type of “food poisoning.” Some of you have decided to stop feeding until the Pine Siskins migrate out of the area. We will keep you posted on their movements. One of the services we provide is to clean feeders at the store on Monday's and Thursday's. All we ask is for you to donate to one of our partner charities. We commend all of you on trying to do the right thing for the birds in your yard.



- Birds of North America poster. Beautiful graphic drawings from Pop Chart out of San Francisco



- Several new books from Dawn Publications. All about teaching children about nature



- New spring clothing is arriving



- We continue to increase our men's sock selection



- We have several different styles and sizes of totes and bags



- We've got dried mealworms! For the insect eating birds in your yard



- Its time to put up your nest boxes. We have some that include predator guards.

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

#C0416

March / April 2016

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

Memo: Expires April 31, 2016

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

Saturday Morning Local Bird Walks

Dates and locations of our bird walks will now be listed in the newsletter and on our web page. A reminder to our location will also be found on the store's phone message. Join us most Saturday mornings for an enjoyable bird walk. You can meet at the Los Gatos Birdwatcher at 8:00 AM and drive over together, or meet at the trip location by 8:30 am. Walks end by 10:00AM. These two hour Saturday walks are open to all who are interested in birding. If the forecast says 80 – 100% chance of rain in Los Gatos, the trip cancels. **No Charge.**



March 5 – Vasona County Park, meet off University at the Pepper Tree Lane entrance

March 12 – No local morning walk as we will be birding Panoche Valley

March 19 – Guadalupe Oak Grove Park – Entrance off Thornton, San Jose

March 26 – West Valley Junior College, meet in front of Fox Theatre off of Fruitvale, Saratoga

April 2 – Vasona County Park, dam side, meet off Garden Lane

April 9 – Geng Road in Palo Alto off the Embarcadero
- Meet at the Bayland's Athletic Center

April 16 – no local morning bird walk as we will be birding Natural Bridges

April 23 – Walk without Lisa. Meet-up Belgatos Park in Los Gatos

April 30 – Santa Clara Valley Audubon's McClellan Ranch, Cupertino

May 7 – Rinconada Park in Los Gatos - this will be a "Big Sit." So bring a comfortable folding chair and we will sit and observe as many birds as we can from our comfortable location. This will be a great morning for those new to birding.

Let's Go Birding Tours

Panoche Valley

Sat. March 12, 8:00 AM – 5:30 PM

Lisa will be joined by Wildlife Biologist Ryan Phillips as we bird the hot spot known as Panoche Valley. Spring migration will be underway so we will encounter both newly arriving spring migrants and those species that are just now leaving from their winter stay. Call the store to save your seat.

Fee: \$60 Includes transportation.

Natural Bridges Coastal Birding

April 16, 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Lisa will be joined by Wildlife Biologist Ryan Phillips as we head to the coast. We'll bird Santa Cruz and the areas around Natural Bridges. We'll take time to bird the shore looking for species that make the ocean their home. Although the trails are relatively level, there will be walking as we bird on this day. Call the store to save your seat. **Fee: \$60 Includes transportation.**

Raptor Workshop with Biologist Ryan Phillips

Saturday, May 21, 8:00 AM to 12 noon

- Deli picnic lunch included

You will meet in the south San Jose birding hot spot known as Coyote Valley where we will concentrate on the spring time activities of Northern California's breeding raptors. Carpooling will be encouraged. Ryan will discuss the different raptor families - eagles, buteos, accipiters, harriers and falcons. We will be on the look out for Golden & Bald Eagles, nesting Swanson's, Red-shouldered and Red-tail Hawks plus the opportunity for accipiter and falcon valley occupants. Call the store to reserve your spot. **Fee: \$30 per person, fills at 20.**

Los Gatos Birdwatcher



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Dates to Remember

Daylight Savings Time

– Begins Sunday March 13

St. Patrick's Day – Friday, March 17

First Day of Spring – Sunday March 20

Closed Easter Sunday March 27

Earth Day – Friday, April 22

Mother's Day – Sunday May 8

Store Hours

Monday – Saturday: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Sunday: 12 noon to 5 p.m.

