



LOS GATOS Birdwatcher

SPRING NEWSLETTER | APRIL-JUNE 2024

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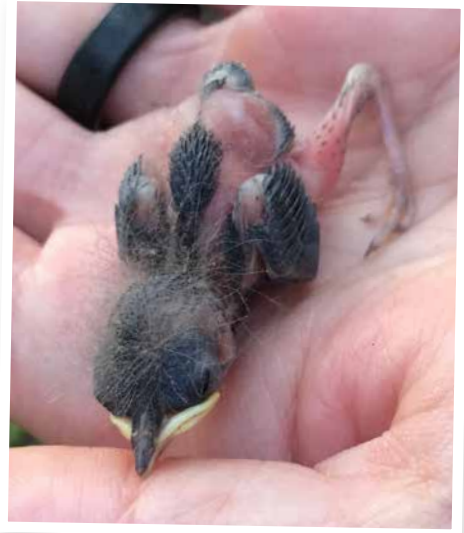
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Springtime is Baby Time

by Jessica Guenther

Spring is baby bird season! If you find a baby bird on the ground, stand back and observe to see if its parents are near. Several different species of birds actually leave the nest a few days before they can fly. The young birds will hide in the cover of our garden plants and their bird parents will keep feeding them while they are on the ground. These species include American Robins, Northern Mockingbirds, and Great-horned Owls. However, if you see chicks, with little to no feathers, and too young to walk or fly, or you suspect it fell from the nest, look up and around to see if you can find its nest nearby.

The best chance at survival is putting it back in the nest. If you can locate the nest, gently pick up the baby bird and place it back in the nest. It is an old wife's tale that if you touch a baby bird, the parents will reject it. This myth of baby birds having a scent that humans would affect was created likely to prevent people from disturbing wildlife. After your observation, if you have determined your baby bird is in danger and is too young to fend for itself, it is OK to pick it up, place it in a box, and then call a rescue organization for assistance. You can refer to our home page for rescue organizations.



Baby bird too young to be out of the nest

Things You Can Do To Help Breeding Birds



Store employee Lisa V. keeps dogs leashed while hiking to protect ground nesting birds

When out on nature trails please keep your dogs on leash.

During the breeding season, some birds nest on the ground. A dog running through a field may destroy a nest.



Store employee Kathleen's kitties birdwatch through the screen door

Keep your cats indoors.

It's hard enough for adult birds to survive outdoor cats, young birds seldom escape from a hunting house cat.

Look before you trim your garden.

You can inadvertently destroy an entire nesting family! And do not hedge trim away the blooms. Insects, hummingbirds, and nesting birds all benefit from your blooms. Please talk to your gardeners.



Haikubox Birdsong Identifier: A New Way to Learn About Birds

We are placing a special introductory order for our customers.



We are very excited to be able to offer our bird-loving community the Haikubox Birding Identifier. Haikubox is a smart device that continuously and automatically listens for, identifies, records, and shares information about the birds visiting your yard. You can set it up to provide real-time alerts when new or favorite birds visit. The Haikubox also offers loads of data about your birds' visits. You can view spectrograms of each song and listen to and share recordings of your birds.

The makers of Haikubox also have a research partnership with the K. Lisa Yang Center for Conservation Bioacoustics at the Cornell

Lab of Ornithology and plan to use Haikubox data for scientific discovery about bird behavior and the effects of climate change. We have waited patiently for the opportunity to offer this product, in fact, store owner Lisa is thrilled to be setting up her own Haikubox for her yard. She'll now find out which birds are visiting her yard when she is at the store, in addition to birds that may be flying over at night.

There are different models of this product. We are featuring the model that sells for \$249 and includes a one-year membership. You can check out birds being identified by Haikuboxes right now by creating a free account through the Haikubox mobile app or the Listen website: listen.haikubox.com



Earth Day –April 22, 2024

Earth Day is an annual event held globally on 22 April to promote environmental protection and climate action. This year's theme is Our Planet vs. Plastic. [EARTHDAY.ORG](https://earthday.org) is aiming to raise awareness about plastic's harm to humans and biodiversity.

The Los Gatos Birdwatcher tries to find new ways to reduce the use of plastic from packaging our bird seed in paper bags to offering products like reusable ZWraps to cover your leftover foods. We encourage you to look for events throughout the Bay Area celebrating Earth Day.



Haikubox Birding Identifier

We are placing a special introductory order for our customers. If you pre-order before Earth Day April 22nd you'll receive

10% off your own Haikubox

Keep ‘Em Flying: Raptors Survive in the Human Environment

Special event with Craig Nikitas of Bay Raptor Rescue

Sunday, May 19, 3:30 – 5PM

Event will be held at the Los Gatos Birdwatcher

Registration is required, space is limited

Peet’s coffee & tea, sweet snacks provided

Fee: \$30

We are thrilled to announce this special presentation and Q&A with Craig Nikitas, a dynamic and passionate bird lover, here at the Los Gatos Birdwatcher. We first met Craig when he came to the aid of a Cooper’s Hawk that was stuck inside the Lucky’s grocery store on Camden Ave. in San Jose. Craig safely caught the hawk and took it outside to be released.

The assumption was that the Cooper's Hawk flew into the store in pursuit of a smaller bird trying to escape. After that first meeting, Craig has helped us at the store many times via his contacts and experience when we called for assistance. Here at the store, we added a donation box for Craig and Bay Raptor Rescue as an option for you to contribute to when using our feeder cleaning services.

As a thank you to the Los Gatos Birdwatcher Community, Craig created this special presentation featuring his nine years of raptor rescue work, the scope of issues necessitating intervention, rescue techniques, predatory species descriptions, and accounts of interesting rescues.



Craig giving a raptor presentation for the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory (GGRO)

and banding migratory and dispersive birds of prey for 30 years with the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory, and presenting talks on the natural history of corvids, diurnal raptors, and owls at schools, colleges, universities, the SF Naturalist Society, park associations, the Point Reyes Birding and Nature Festival, and to professional staff at CuriOdyssey, and the SF and Oakland Zoos.

In 2015 Craig founded Bay Raptor Rescue to provide a free service to aid predatory birds in distress. The work is done in compliance with a US Fish and Wildlife Permit and an MOU with the Cal Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Responses comprise trapping free-flighted birds in buildings, netting birds grounded by illness or injury, transporting those who need veterinary care to local rehabilitation facilities, as well as providing advice to reporting parties about appropriate intervention, especially during baby season. *“When a raptor’s in trouble we’re there on the double.”*



Craig helping a Peregrine Falcon

About Craig...

He is a retired urban planner and has been a wildlife volunteer working with raptors for over fifty years. His career has included caring for captive animals at the Randall Museum, Steinhart Aquarium, and San Francisco Zoo, tending birds in rehab at WildCare, trapping



Let's go Birding

Let's Go Birding is the tour division of the Los Gatos Birdwatcher.

Let's Go Birding tours get you out of your yard and into different habitats where you can experience a variety of species not found at home.

Saturday Morning Local Bird Walks



The Los Gatos Birdwatcher sponsors Saturday morning bird walks every month. Dates and locations are listed below and on our website. Unless it is a special workshop, these walks are free and open to all birding levels, but pre-registration is required.

Unless otherwise stated, walks start on-site at 8:30 AM and end around 10:00 AM. Space is limited. Please call the store to register at **408-358-9453**.

April 13 – Agnews Historic Park, Santa Clara

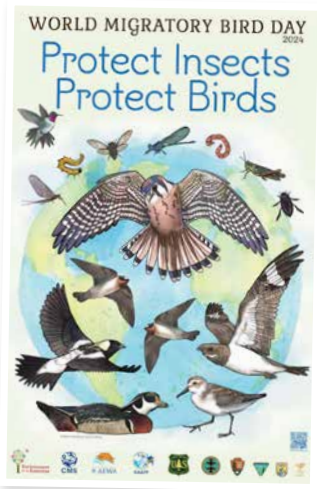
April 20 – Birdathon Fundraiser,
Birding Los Gatos Creek Trail

May 11 – Shannon Valley Open Space, Los Gatos
World Migratory Bird Day

May 25 – Morning Bird Banding with SFBBO in Milpitas

June 8 – Stanford Cactus Garden, Palo Alto

June 22 – *Wait to see where birds are being reported*



World Migratory Bird Day—May 11, 2024

World Migratory Bird Day is an annual event. 2024 focuses on insects and their importance to bird life, **“Protect Insects, Protect Birds”**. Insects are essential sources of energy for many migratory bird species, not only during the breeding seasons but also during their extensive journeys. Insect availability greatly affects the timing, duration, and overall success of bird migrations.

Along their migration routes, birds actively seek out insects in fields, forests, wetlands, and various habitats during stopovers. The timing of bird migration often coincides with peak insect abundance at stopover locations, supplying nourishment for birds to replenish their energy reserves before continuing their journeys. Check out our Let's Go Birding walk planned for May 11 where we will focus on insect-eating birds we find.

Bird ID Workshops

Open to all levels

Open to all levels these free workshops help customers learn how to identify four different species of birds found in the Bay Area per season. Workshops will take place at the Los Gatos Birdwatcher outside in our back parking lot from 5:30 – 6:30 PM. We'll go over each species and review behaviors, food and habitat preferences plus vocalizations.



Snowy Plover
– **Tony Woo**

4/30 Tuesday, April

- Yellow-rumped Warbler, Hermit Warbler, Yellow Warbler, MacGillivrays Warbler

5/14 Tuesday, May

- Spotted Sandpiper, Snowy Plover, Killdeer, Sanderling

6/18 Tuesday, June

- Swainson's Hawk, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk

We ask that you bring your own folding chair and field guide with you.

Workshop is limited to 30 people. Call the store to save your spot. **408-358-9453**.

Bird Banding with SFBBO

Saturday, May 25 • 8:00–11:00 AM
 Fee: \$30



This May we will have an outing to the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory (SFBBO) bird banding station. Banding birds is a way researchers can track bird movements, giving insights to age, breeding activities, and migration. To do this, nets are set up to catch birds gently. Trained volunteers then extract them from the nets. They are then brought in to be banded, where they are measured, weighed, examined, and released.

The banding station, located in Milpitas along the Coyote Creek Trail, has been in operation for decades providing valuable data to researchers. SFBBO volunteers operate the banding station three times a week, weather permitting. On this special morning, the Los Gatos Birdwatcher participants will meet out there and will be touring the area and observing how this process works. Exact directions will be provided closer to the date.

If we are lucky, we'll be able to release a bird! Spaces will fill fast so call soon to reserve your spot. Details will be provided after you register. A portion of this morning's proceeds will go back to SFBBO.



Banding a Ruby-crowned Kinglet

SCVAS Spring Birdathon

Saturday, April 20 • 8:00 AM–12:00 PM

Each spring our local Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society holds an important fundraiser known as the Spring Birdathon. To participate, you can form your own team or join a pre-arranged team. **Lisa Myers will once again lead the team "Los Gatos Birdwatcher."** Birders of all levels are welcome, even if this is your first birdathon. For new

birders, it is a fabulous and fun way to see new birds. We'll spend our morning birding Los Gatos habitats along the Los Gatos Creek Trail looking for a variety of species from warblers and herons to ducks and raptors. We will be walking throughout this birdathon on well-maintained trails.

The exact Los Gatos meeting location will be confirmed closer to the date. If you cannot join us, we welcome your support, as this is a fundraiser! We have a SCVAS Spring Birdathon donation box at the store through May 5, 2024.

This is a fundraiser: Participants are expected to donate and/or fundraise at least \$50 to participate in this team.

Birdathon

March 25 – May 5, 2024

New shirt for the new year! Pre-order now.
 Support the SCVAS Education Program by joining or sponsoring a team. Start your own team...

scvas.org/birdathon

Oology—A Hobby No More

By Lisa Myers

Going out into the wild and collecting bird eggs from wild birds was quite the hobby in England back in the early 20th century. It was done more so by young men and it became a great challenge to find nests. They would go to extreme lengths to get eggs from species not yet in their collection.

Unfortunately, getting the eggs from a rare bird was quite the coveted feat. It was in the 1940s when the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds denounced egg collecting and it eventually became illegal in most jurisdictions.

We are in contact with a customer who 70 years ago inherited a collection of British bird eggs. He has several trays of these eggs and wishes to donate the collection. If you are interested or you know of a university or museum that may be interested in this rare collection please email the store at info@losgatosbirdwatcher.com.



Services Available from the Los Gatos Birdwatcher

- **Help you to ID your birds** – We can help you ID that mystery bird in your yard. Just take a photo using your cell phone and email it to info@losgatosbirdwatcher.com, or drop by the store and show your photo to our staff.
- **Backyard Bird Consulting Program** – We will come out to your home (15-mile radius) 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 \$50 consultation fee per visit. With your visit, you'll receive a \$25 Los Gatos Birdwatcher gift certificate.
- **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. 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. We clean feeders on Thursday and recommend dropping your feeder off by Wednesday. Please no more than two at a time.
- **Frequent Buyer Program** – Buy 10 of the same seed bags of 20# or higher at full price and get the 11th bag free. Coupons do not apply.



Are You Ready?



Mother's Day is May 12 followed by **Father's Day on June 16**
We have all kinds of unique and thoughtful gift items for both, from jewelry to field guides, binoculars, and garden stones. We encourage you to buy local. It's convenient and supports our local neighborhoods. We're here to help, answer your questions, and wrap your gifts!

Products that Welcome Spring

Choose from a huge selection of season inspired gift items



Brighten up your spring wardrobe



Beach design garden wall art



Studio-M is retiring. Last chance to get your Art Pole!

**Travel Plans?
We have
compression
socks for both
men & women**



Serving dishes with a colorful flower theme



Spring Migration: In Formation

by Jessica Guenther

Spring migration is here! Some of the species that wintered in California are leaving for breeding grounds in the north, while other species are just now returning and will stay until the fall. Millions of ducks, geese, and swans (waterfowl) have spent the winter in and around the Bay Area. They are now on their migration north to be timed with the melting of snow and ice. You may see evidence of waterfowl migration if you look to the sky and see “V” formations.



Snow Geese and moon
– Tony Woo

Not all species fly in formation, but larger species like waterfowl do. Why do some species form a “V”? When species travel in a “V”, each bird flies behind and to the side of the one in front.

This reduces wind resistance and drag benefitting the one behind, helping the birds save energy as they fly. The front or head individuals have to expend more energy and once they tire, they will shift and go to the back of the “V”. Birds that fly in a formation can also reduce energy expenditure by gliding more often. Saving energy as they fly helps them with long-distance migrations and they can keep track of one another when in formation.



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

Find us on Facebook
and Instagram



Dates to Remember

- Apr 13 – Saturday Bird Walk
- April 20 – SCVAS Birdathon
- April 22 – Earth Day
- April 30 – ID workshop
- May 11 – Saturday Bird Walk, WMBD
- May 12 – Mother's Day
- May 14 – ID Workshop
- May 19 – Bay Raptor Rescue Special Event
- May 25 – ½ Day SFBBO bird banding
- May 27 – Memorial Day (store closed)
- June 8 – Saturday Bird Walk
- June 16 – Father's Day
- June 18 – ID Workshop

Loyal Customer Spring Discounts

Loyal customers are those entered into our data base.

Mention this coupon & take... **15% off one item**

One Coupon per customer, please. Excludes consignment items, Haikobox, sales items, excursions, and optics. Not to be combined with any other offers. #JUNE2024

Spring Coupon

Mention this coupon and take...

15% off one item Excludes bird seed & chicken feed, consignment items, Haikobox, sales items, excursions, and optics. Not to be combined with any other offers. #SPRING2024



Coupons Expire June 30, 2024

Store Hours

Monday – Saturday • 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Tuesday until 7:00 PM • Closed Sundays

