

Los Gatos Birdwatcher



IN THIS ISSUE	PAGE
Photo Presentations	1
Gifts for Mom and Dad	1
Trip Report	2
Summer Nature Series	5
Kid's Corner	6
Artist & Photo Exhibit	7
Welcome K.C.	7
New Amenity	7
Look What Freddy Found	8
Field Trips	9
Sage Advice	10



Polar Bears and Grizzlies Photo Presentation

Thursday, May 17 – 6:30 to 7:30pm

Join photographer, world traveler, and our employee Judy Bingman on more of her adventures. This time she takes us to both the land of the Polar Bears and the land of the Grizzlies. Find out how different and similar they are from each other.
No Charge but call to reserve your space.



Travel to Africa: On Safari in Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda Photo Presentation

Thursday, June 21 – 6:30 to 7:30pm

In 2011, professional photographer, Meggi Raedder, traveled to East Africa where she spent several weeks on safari photographing elephants, lions, hippos, cheetah, many birds, and ending with the mountain gorillas of Rwanda.
No Charge but call to reserve your space.



Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation Center (WERC) visits Los Gatos Birdwatcher for annual fundraiser

Saturday, May 26 11:00am to 1:00pm

Break into your piggy banks. Dig deep into your pockets. Bring what you can to help this great organization continue caring for injured and orphaned birds and wildlife. Amy Yee and friends will bring several of WERC's educational ambassadors for you to meet. Last year's guests included the Peregrine Falcon, Screech Owl, and, Clarabell, the Acorn Woodpecker.

Mother, Mom, Mum, Mama, Madre
– so many names!

Show her your love with something SPECIAL and save some money in the process on **Saturday, May 5 through Saturday, May 12. Save 15% on all jewelry and clothing.**

Father, Dad, Daddy, Pappa, Padre
– so many names!

Show him your love with something SPECIAL and save some money in the process on **Saturday, June 9 through Saturday, June 16. Save 15% on all feeders and books.**

Birding the Mayan Ruins of the Yucatan – Trip Report

Have you ever had a vacation where you had to come home to rest? Eight ruins and 224 species equals a lot of work. Our tour group of 14 that included our long time customer, Richard Casserley, had a great time and enjoyed each other’s company. Juan was our “Archeological Zone” guide and Alex was our birding guide. While Juan was knowledgeable about Mayan history, organized, and very kind, we struck gold with Alex. Alex has been obsessed with birds since childhood and has studied at various colleges in the US and is now employed in the science of birds as the tourism of birds.



Chicen Itza photo by John Howell

Our first day was a combination of birding at a botanical garden at Puerto Morales and a long drive to our hotel just outside of Chichen Itza. Alex made sure that we knew what the target birds were for each area. At the garden, we found Yucatan Vireo, green jay, brown jay, white eyed vireo, groove-billed ani, boat-billed flycatcher, dusky-capped flycatcher, black-throated green warbler, golden-fronted woodpecker, and a black-headed trogon. Flying overhead was a zone-tailed hawk. When we arrived at the Mayaland Hotel next to the Chichen Itza ruins Alex led us on a walk that foretold the wondrous things to come. This

was the first time he imitated the pygmy owl and we all had great looks at two of them trying hard to find out where the newcomer was. That evening we had masked tityra, black-cowled, hooded, orchard, orange, and Altimira orioles.

The next day was an amazing ride - 6am departure, 6pm return, but oh, what birds we saw in between. We drove from our hotel at Chichen

Izta north to the coast and a wildlife preserve called Rio Lagartos. On the way we saw Yucatan Woodpecker and both tropical and Couch’s kingbird while at a rest stop. We had breakfast while watching magnificent frigate birds, brown and white pelicans, ruddy turnstones and more fly, swim, and look for food around the fishing boats.

On our way to our next stop, we took a side road where the target bird was the Yucatan Wren which, after much calling, we all saw. We also saw the first of many vermilion flycatchers.



Black skimmers photo by Richard Casserley

sharp tail. We also took a ride out to the salt mines that, while highly industrialized now, date back to the time of the original Maya people in the area. It looked a lot like the

Cargill ponds on our Bay except here they had Pink Flamingos! On our return to the river we had a real treat and the whole group got into three boats and birded from the river estuary. On one snag we saw a common black hawk who knew the boatman’s whistle and knew that there would be a fish thrown for him to catch. A performing hawk! Our boats took us on an up close and personal look at a boat-billed heron, a Caribbean plumed osprey (much more white on its wings), and a wharf full of black skimmers, some of whom were lying with their heads down like dogs.

After a delicious seafood lunch we headed back to our hotel via a road that went right through a series of wetlands. Six soras were running around on the lily pads, a least grebe was swimming in and out of the reeds, black-bellied whistling ducks sitting so still they look like decoys, and blue-winged teals that are usually up in the Bay Area at this time.

We birded the hotel grounds in the early morning fog and saw two types of trogons – violeicious and black-headed, two types of mot-mots – turquoise-browed and blue-crowned, white-fronted parrots, clay-colored thrush, and Ridgeway’s northern rough-winged swallow that has two white dots above the eyes that differentiates it from the standard northern rough-winged swallow. On the patio at breakfast we continued our birding with a yellow-throated warbler. After breakfast, we visited Chichen Itza, our first ruin which was very impressive, extensively restored and overrun by street vendors all trying to sell the same stuff. We visited the sacred cenote, a collapsed limestone cavity that is

part of the underground river system where sacrificial human and animal offerings were made to the gods of the underworld.

Before dinner, Alex gave an interesting and sobering presentation on the bird science being done in the Yucatan and how bird migrations are changing. He, his wife and his brother are teaching children the science of birds and conservation through their NGO

(Non-governmental Organization) **Niños y Crias** that, along with several other organizations, conduct counts of bird in their home town of Celestun. While we were on the trip, a flock of red knots landed in Celestun for the first time ever. Word went out and within hours the kids and scientists were mobilized and counted 45,000 birds.

The conservation activists use the count information to track various migrations in relation to weather and natural phenomena. Alex works with the American Birding Association (ABA) and their Birder's Exchange that provides used optics to groups learning about birds. The problem is that the Mexican customs officials think that all optics will be used by the drug traffickers and therefore confiscate them. If anyone from the Mexican groups go to the US, the ABA ships two pairs to them in the US for transport back.

Next stop, Uxmal! An amazing site where one highly decorated plaza called the nunnery had all four sides restored. Cave swallows were swooping, nesting, and roosting, all the while chirping to check in

with their neighbor, much like our cliff swallows but without the white triangle on the head. Uxmal had many restored buildings, several partially restored, and some still under dirt but we saw just how huge and far encompassing the site was.

After Uxmal we drove to Campeche, an ancient walled city on the Gulf of Mexico. A group of us did a walk-about that took us through parts of the old walled city that went past colorful houses and ancient walls and gates. A few of us stayed for the Carnival Parade. Everyone performed, from the littlest kids to adults.



Squirrel cuckoo
photo by Richard Casserley

The next morning we both got up early for the dawn birding right at the coast. Ruddy turnstones and least sandpipers were the first we found in the dark. As it got lighter we saw lots of laughing gulls, a few Royal terns,

brown pelicans, and double crested cormorants. As the sky turned pink a far off flock of white ibis banked and the sun caught their whiteness and turned them all pale pink. One lone white pelican received the same treatment. A Sandwich Tern also gave us good views.

On to Edzna which, as a ruin, was less decorated but excelled at trees with birds looking for shade. As many birders know, some the best birds are seen in the parking lot and John's target bird, the squirrel cuckoo, made an appearance there and gave everyone great views while he bounced around the tree like a squirrel. Both masked and black-capped tityra, a stunning roadside hawk, flitty Tennessee warblers,

yellow warblers, blue gray tanager, juvenile male summer tanager and some American redstarts. We also saw an Eastern Wood peewee eat a butterfly for lunch.

Next morning after coffee and fruit in the parking lot, we birded in the fog but the birds didn't seem to care. A red-throated ant tanager careened back and forth over the driveway and finally stayed still long enough for everyone to see. Other early risers were yellow olive flycatcher, red-billed pigeon, Yucatan flycatcher, buff-bellied hummingbird, and long-billed gnatwren.

The Calakmol ruin is 37 miles from the gate into the biosphere reserve. Once we reached the museum, which is about 3 miles from the ruin itself, we had another chance to bird and Alex was so excited to find a rose-throated becard. Once we reached the parking lot of the ruin we had magnificent views of a bat falcon and a King vulture flying over. The walk (death march according to John) was almost 1.5 miles and yielded olivecious woodcreeper, black and white warbler, Magnolia Warbler, and ivory-billed woodcreeper. On our drive out of Calakmol we stopped for a displaying oscillated turkey and a 30+ member troupe of coati (a raccoon like animal).

Another early morning birdwalk in the fog gave us great views of courting Yucatan woodpeckers. While we were gone, John had a great sitting birding experience. In the tree in front of our two-story cottage, he saw two dozen Yucatan jays, two hooded orioles, golden-fronted woodpecker, and a chachalaca. After breakfast we headed to Becan where we saw boat-billed flycatcher, bright-rumped Attila, yellow-throated euphonia, and a crab spider in a

Continued next page

triangular web. There was another temple to climb and this one had identifiable rooms, staircases, stucco masks, and twin towers.

During the 3-1/2 hour trip to Palanque we saw laughing falcon, ringed kingfisher, scissor tailed flycatcher, and white tailed hawk. Since there are very few pull-outs along the roads, we just stopped the van in the middle of the road and got out in front so that we would be protected from passing traffic. Don't do this at home! We were rewarded with the Heron tree – tri-colored heron, little blue heron, great blue heron, yellow-crowned night heron, great egret, bare-throated tiger heron, and snowy egret all in one tree.

Before going to the ruins of Palanque, we visited a wildlife park called Las Aluxes where Alex does a lot of his research. It is both a rehabilitation center and an educational facility. During our walk along the well defined paths we saw spot-breasted wren, which we had only heard previously, Amazon kingfisher, white-tailed emerald, wild muscovy duck, roseate spoonbill, rufous-tailed hummingbird, Northern water thrush, keel-billed toucan, long-billed hermit, white collared seedeater, crimson collared tanager, and the spectacular barred antshrike. It is black with white stripes on the wings, white with black stripes on the chest and a black and white crest.

The ruins of Palanque were quite large and crowded with school children there on a field trip. The Temple of Inscriptions was not open to the public but we were able

to climb the three temples further up the hill. Temple of the Sun, Cross, and Foliated Cross all had interesting carvings seen only after you'd climbed the very steep steps. The Palace had rooms, corridors, an early (700 A.D.) flushing latrine, and a three story tower that looked like Chinese architecture.

The Lakandon people control our next stop in Bonampak so we stopped to get tickets and transferred to their bus transportation to the site. The ruin's claim to fame are the colorful and descriptive murals found in the highest building at the site. Prior to the mural's discovery, the Mayan people were considered peaceful people and afterwards their self sacrifice, warrior games, and torture of captives changed opinions. The fact that the colors were still very vivid after being closed and undiscovered for 1,100 years.



Rufous-tailed jacamar
photo by Richard Casserley

and a little hermit behind the bathrooms. On the pathway to the ruins we found another ivory-billed woodcreeper, American redstart, and an elusive green backed sparrow. In the central plaza, many trees had grown up over the years and



Happy Travelers

blooming bromeliads covered the upper branches with long slender red and yellow flowers. We saw several long-billed starthroats (type of hummer) sipping the nectar.

Then came the excitement when Alex heard a rufous-tailed jacamar. These birds look like a cross between a hummingbird and a kingfisher. Rusty belly and under tail with a green head and white necklace for the male. The female who came over to check out the new male in town (Alex's iPhone) was just as pretty with buffy patches on her head. The male sat there for some time singing his own tune. What a great show! To top that, Alex found a juvenile slatey-tailed trogon that has a bright red tummy and a beautiful blue green iridescent back.

Our last day took us northwest to bird a long marshy road where we saw Northern jacana by the dozens interspersed with Tiger Herons, great blues and wood storks. Then a gorgeous black-collared hawk flew and perched quite close by. On our left were two fork-tailed flycatchers that swooshed their tails through the grasses, maybe to knock the bugs into flying.

Our final bus ride took us to Villahermosa and departure the next day. After hearing Alex's horror story about bringing optics into the country John, Richard, and I decided to donate our binoculars and the scope with tripod to his NGO that helps kids understand the importance of preserving habitat and the major part that birds play in their ecosystem. In return we will receive a photo of the child that receives them as well as follow up progress.



Los Gatos Birdwatcher's Summer Nature Series

Reservations Required Space is limited. \$10/child for each class

Register by Saturday June 9 and receive a 15% discount when paying in advance. Sorry, no refunds.

Call (408) 358-9453 to register.

Fun Feet

Thursday, June 21

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

For ages 6 to 12: 1 to 2 pm

Come to Los Gatos

Birdwatcher to find out about all sorts of animal feet. Participate in fun activities to discover what they are specially designed for. Learn to recognize common tracks. Create a beautiful bird too. Wear shoes that you don't mind getting wet.



Fantastic Fishers

Thursday, July 12

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

For ages 6 to 12: 1 to 2 pm

Meet us at Oka Ponds to search for fantastic fishers. Discover different strategies to catch fish as we explore the trail in search of fishing animals. Create your own fishing game to take home.



Creatures of the Night

Thursday, July 19

For ages 3 to 5: 11 am to 12 noon

For ages 6 to 12: 1 to 2 pm

Come to **Los Gatos Birdwatcher** for a very special visit with LIVE nocturnal animals visiting from Sulphur Creek Nature Center. Don't miss this unique opportunity to see a skunk, bat, owl, and tarantula up close. Make a craft to remember them by.



Growing up Wild

Thursday, June 28

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

For ages 6 to 12: 1 to 2 pm

Meet us at BelGatos Park to find out about the young wild critters in our neighborhood. Learn about how they are growing and changing. Explore the trails in search of hiding places for baby animals. Make your own baby bird feeding game.

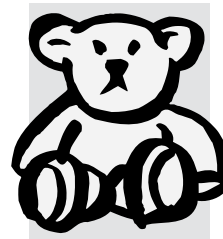


Teddy Bear Picnic

Thursday, July 26

For ages 2 to 9: 12 to 1:30 pm
(siblings under 1 free of charge)

Bring your favorite stuffed friend, lunch and a blanket to sit on to BelGatos Park for our annual picnic. Hear a funny story, adventure with your stuffed friend at the playground and on the trail, and create a boat to float in the creek.



Continued next page

Feathered Friends

Thursday, August 2

For ages 3 to 5: 11 am to 12 noon

For ages 6 to 12: 1 to 2 pm

Come to Los Gatos Birdwatcher to visit LIVE birds visiting from Sulphur Creek Nature Center. Inspect their beaks and discover what they are perfectly designed for. Craft your own feathered friend to take home.



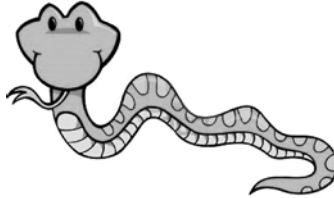
Terrific Tongues

Thursday, August 9

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

For ages 6 to 12: 1 to 2 pm

Adventure with us at Vasona Lake as we investigate the special things animal tongues can do. Meet a LIVE snake visiting from Sulphur Creek Nature Center. Explore the trails in search of animal tongues in action. Make a fun frog too.



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.

Oka Ponds

We will meet at the gate at the end of Oka Lane. Take Lark Avenue to Oka Road and follow it under Highway 85 to the end. Turn left on Mozart and take an immediate right on Oka Lane. Go to the end of the road and park along the street.

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).

Kid's Corner

Reservation Required

Call 358-9453 to reserve your space.

Spring Migration at Vasona Lake

Thursday, May 10th, 4 to 5pm

at Vasona Lake Park

For ages 3 to 10

\$8/child

Adventure with us along the trails at Vasona Lake as we search for birds who have traveled far to spend the spring and summer with us. Search for swallows, terns, and more as we find out about their journey here. Discover how they build their nests and create a colorful bird. Rain or Shine.

See Summer Series directions to Vasona Lake.



Photo by Larry Stroud

Yellow-rumped Warbler drinks for spigot hummingbird feeder. We've heard of woodpeckers and chickadees drinking out of hummingbird feeders but this is a first for a yellow-rumped and a first for the spigot kind of feeder.

Artist and Photographer Exhibits

Calling all artists

- Show off your work at our 3rd Annual Artist Exhibition
- Sunday, August 12!

Join other talented artists for our third annual Artist Exhibition. The artists work 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 12 from 12pm to 4pm. Deadline to enter is Friday, August 3** and limited to the first 30 artists. Please call the store to get your name on the list. Details will be emailed.

Here's your chance to shine

- Enter our 7th Annual Photo Exhibition
- Sunday, August 19!

Many of our customers are very talented nature photographers. For the seventh 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. Our participants have varied and grown over the years. The photographs are amazing. 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 10 and space is limited. The event will be **Sunday, August 19, 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.



WERC's Clarabell
by: Kris Crane



Allen's Hummingbird
by: Gary Aspenall



Northern Harrier
by: Gary Aspenall

Welcome K.C. (Kirsten) Harris



This is not the first time that we have hired a customer who asked "Do you need any help?" Sometimes the timing doesn't work out but this time it was just right. K.C. had worked in retail before and was very enthusiastic about sharing her love of birds and her excitement about all the neat things she found at the store. K.C. is a raptor and owl lover and has adopted our barn owl boxes and their placement in the valley as a personal crusade. She is also a "Freecycle" proponent and has found some great display pieces that fit perfectly for some of our new items.

New Amenity On Our Field Trips

One of the major challenges in doing field trips on far flung roads is the scarcity of bathrooms or the scheduling of 23 people in one or two bathrooms. Now, that is no longer a worry. Our fearless leader, Lisa Myers and her wonderful partner, Al Lowder, purchased the best of the used CalTrans porta potty trailers and totally refurbished it. **Los Gatos Birdwatcher** is part owner and thrilled with the whole idea. We had our inaugural run on our Sunol field trip. What a delight to drink water (good for you) and not have to worry about the consequences. Sign up for our next trips and enjoy on-the-way amenities.





New Hummingbird tops

– Styling for summer Sibley puts his art on T-shirts – of course, you need new t-shirts



Mum's flowers

– Gone 20 years now, my Mum was instrumental in these potted flowers being in the store.



Outdoor Pillows and Outdoor Art

– plenty to choose from and will hold up outside



Boiled Wool Birdhouses

– Not sure if birds will use them, but they can't hurt the birds and they are so fun!!!



Kitchen Papers

– pads of 50 paper placemats that will make you laugh!



Kid's Watches (Fits most adults!)

– birds, cats, dogs, frogs, bugs, nature – all in great colors

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

#C0612

/ 2012

Pay to the order of Our Loyal Customer

15% Off One Item

Memo: Expires 6/30/12

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

May 2, June 6, None in July - 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 Mines Road

Saturday, May 19, 2012 - 8:00am-6:00pm

Join Lisa Myers in a springtime birding event to the eastern side of the Mount Hamilton Range. Mines Road is a long, rural road which allows for many pull-outs as we spot Golden Eagles, Lewis's Woodpeckers, Phainopepla, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Lark Sparrow and many more. Evergreens and Oak trees cover the hillsides and our birding will be done along road side pull outs where we will study the landscape and find our birds. **Fee: \$30 + share of gas**

Let's Go Birding to Arrowhead Marsh and Hayward's Martin Luther King Jr. Shoreline Park

Saturday, June 23, 2012 - 8:00am to 4:00pm

Spend the day birding with Lisa Myers in this area that includes over 700 acres of walking and hiking trails and is home to Arrowhead Marsh, a popular East Bay birding hot spot. We'll spend time looking for the resident Clapper Rails and many other coastal shorebirds and marsh land species. **Fee: \$30 + share of gas.**

Let's Go Birding to Burleigh Murray State Park

- Near Half Moon Bay.

Saturday, July 21, 2012 - 8:00am to 4:00pm

Lisa Myers will guide us to the coast for a summer's birding trip at Burleigh Murray State Park, a former ranch. The park's only active trail consists of the old ranch road, which runs from the parking lot up to the ranger residence. The trail then continues to the old barn, and on for about another mile before becoming overgrown and impassable. The habitats include mature eucalyptus groves, grassy valleys, and an extensive riparian corridor along the ranch road. It is a pleasingly birdy hike of just over a mile from the parking lot to the barn, with nearly constant activity and bird sounds. On our way back we will bird along Swanton Road. **Fee: \$30 + 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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Sage Advice...

Anna joined Sage at the Rainbow Bridge on 4/13/12. Please forget-me-not.



Photo by Anna's Mom, Judy Bingman.

Store will be closed 5/28 for Memorial Day

Dates to Remember

5/5 Cinco de Mayo	6/14 Flag Day
5/13 Mother's Day	6/17 Father's Day
5/28 Memorial Day	6/20 Summer Solstice
6/1 Go Barefoot Day	

Store Hours

Monday – Saturday: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sunday: 12 noon to 5 p.m.
Phone: 408-358-9453

