


# Los Gatos Birdwatcher



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## Photo Presentations

### The Antarctic and South Georgia Island

Thursday, July 16, 6:30 – 7:30 PM at the Los Gatos Birdwatcher



Please join Doug Cheeseman, founder of Cheeseman's Ecology Safaris as he gives a presentation on South Georgia Island. The presentation coincides with their upcoming 20 day expedition set for **Oct. 29 – Nov. 17, 2015** when they will charter their own ship to explore

the Antarctic. There is still room on their upcoming tour so this is a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the expedition. Besides being a teacher and expedition leader, Doug is an exceptional photographer and will have beautiful photographs to share. *No charge but call to reserve your seat.*

### Songbirds, Where Do They Go for the Summer?

Thursday, July 30, 6:30 – 7:30 at the Los Gatos Birdwatcher



Have you ever wondered where the birds in your yard go every spring? Every spring up to 3 billion birds migrate north to their breeding grounds in the boreal forests of Canada. Please join Emily Upham-Mills and learn about the boreal forest habitat, what the habitat looks like, what birds are found here in the spring and

summer and how biologists monitor the boreal songbird populations. Emily has her Bachelors of Science in Wildlife Biology and has completed three field seasons working with songbirds in the boreal forests of northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories. *No charge but call to reserve your seat.*

### Bucket-List African Adventure

Thursday, August 20, 6:30 – 7:30 PM at The Terraces



Join Chris Kruger and Denise Doetsch as they share their African experience. The adventure begins in Zambia, home to Victoria Falls, and includes a visit to a local village. From there the journey crosses the border into Botswana. After several days in the hot Kalahari Desert the journey continues to

bustling Capetown complete with its own "Wonders of Nature", Table Mountain. The presentation ends with a final stop in Kruger National Park for one more visit with the amazing wildlife. *No charge but call to reserve your seat.*

## 6th Annual Artist Exhibit

Sunday, August 2, Noon – 4:00 PM



*Nuttall's Woodpecker*  
– Leena Saoji

There are many talented artists amongst our customers and this is a chance to see their work, talk about their technique and meet other artists. Past art

has been in oils, acrylics, watercolors and pastels. Refreshments will be served. If you would like to show off some of your artwork, call the store for more information.

## 10th Annual Photo Exhibit

Sunday, August 23, Noon – 4:00pm



*Saw-whet Owl*  
– Beth Hamel

Come join us for an exhibit of bird photography by our talented photographer customers. Photos include birds found in their backyards to

those experienced from around the globe. Many photographers bring greeting cards and photos available for purchase. Come talk to other photographers about the equipment they use and how they got the shot! Refreshments will be served. Exhibitor space is still available, call the store for more information.

# Got Mice? Don't Poison Their Natural Predators

by Jackie Turner

Photo -Barn Owl in flight, by Linda Abbey

Many of us have had the unpleasant experience of finding mice inside the house. Our first reaction is usually to rush to the hardware store in search of battle tools or to call in a rodent-control service. But as you form your plan of attack, take a few minutes to consider the most humane, effective, safe, and ecologically sound way to rid yourself of these unwanted guests and most importantly, don't inadvertently poison their natural predators by using rodenticides (rat poisons) you purchase at the store.



This is how rat poisons work. You place rodenticides in an area your unwanted rats can find and eat them. Rodenticides contain anticoagulants which kill by preventing clotting and this causes internal bleeding. It is a slow and painful way to die. What many people do not realize is that a dying or dead animal killed by the poison you put out then becomes toxic to any other animal that eats it. As the poisoned animal sickens and slows its pace over the days it takes to die, it becomes an easy target for a hungry predator (hawks, owls, bobcats...) or even your pet dog or cat, which upon eating it, will in turn, be poisoned.

## The Impact of Rodenticides

From August 2013 through May 2014, WildCare in Marin County conducted a research study to determine the prevalence of anticoagulant rodenticide exposure in wildlife patients brought to their Wildlife Hospital. The study revealed that 82 of 95 predatory animal patients whose blood was tested at

UC Davis showed exposure to rat poisons. That's 86% and it's shocking. According to WildCare's data, great horned owls, barn owls, raccoons, and gray foxes are the most affected, and ironically it is these animals that are the most adept at catching mice and rats, providing us with nature's own free rodent control. By poisoning the food source of the predators, we are sickening and killing the predators themselves, enabling mice and rats to multiply.

State law makers are also being asked to understand the facts behind this type of poisoning. The state of California banned the sale of second-generation rodenticides to the general public in July 2014, although professional exterminators are still allowed to use them. This ban has led many to believe that the first-generation rodenticides remaining on the market are safer. This is absolutely not the case. These remaining products contain the exact same poisons but at a lower concentration. Rodents that eat the bait become sluggish and debilitated and are an easy target for wildlife and pets. Additionally, rodents may create stashes of the poisoned bait which may be found by pets and children. Make no mistake; "safer" rodenticides are far from safe.

## What are the alternatives?

The most effective defense from an infestation of mice and rats is to prevent them from entering the house in the first place. Seal all possible entry points to the house with 1/4" by 1/4" metal mesh. Keep areas around the house free of debris, trash, pet food, and fallen fruit. Bring bird feeders in at night, and make sure any edibles, such as birdseed or pet food are stored in metal cans with secure



lids. Ivy that grows on or near the house provides an inviting nesting place for mice and rats and should be removed.

There are also several different types of snaps available for mice and rats. Snap traps are the oldest type of trap. The spring loaded bar kills the animal on contact. It is fast, humane, and effective. Newer models of snap traps are enclosed inside a plastic box to prevent accidental injury to pets or children. Battery-powered electronic traps zap the animal with an electric shock upon entering.

Glue traps should never be used. The adhesive plate causes the animal to die a long slow death. These traps may also inadvertently trap birds, baby animals, lizards, and even pets. If you have a good habitat for any of the cavity-nesting owls, such as barn owls or screech owls, consider installing a nesting box on your property. These beautiful creatures are efficient hunters and voracious eaters. **A family of barn owls can consume more than 3000 mice in a single year.** It is critical, however, that neither you nor your neighbors are using rodenticides before luring owls to your yard.

## The bottom line

Rodenticides cause far-reaching damage to local wildlife and pets. Remove mice and rats from your home by trapping; exclude them by sealing possible entry points; remove attractants from around your home; and allow the rodents' natural predators to keep their numbers in check.

Jackie Turner has been a wildlife rehabilitator for more than 10 years.

# Transition Update

## New Location?

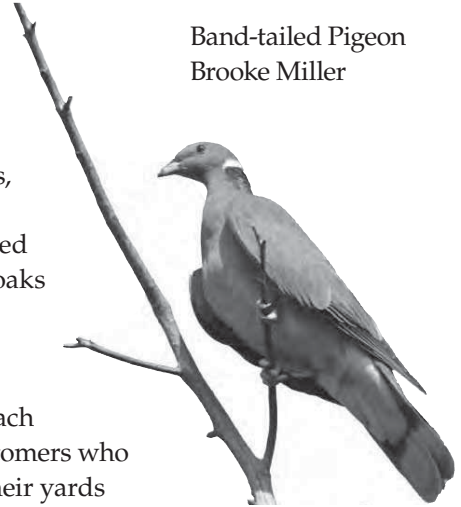
Everyday people come into the store asking all kinds of questions about the transition so we wanted to update everyone. Freddy & John's official retirement date is set for Nov. 30, 2015 which is also the end of the current lease. Between now and then you will find them both in the store working as hard as ever! And even after Nov. 30, Freddy said she'd be willing to help throughout the holiday season. (Thank you, Freddy).

As far as the store's location, with the current lease about to end, we are currently re-negotiating to stay at the King's Court Shopping Center, but, because we do not know what will happen, we are looking at other possible locations within a three mile radius. The goal is to provide you with easy access, ideal parking and convenience. Many of you drop by the store on a weekly basis and we want to make your visit as smooth as possible. We will continue to keep you posted as the months pass and we thank you for your support as we go through this transition.



# Important to Keep Your Water Sources & Feeders Clean

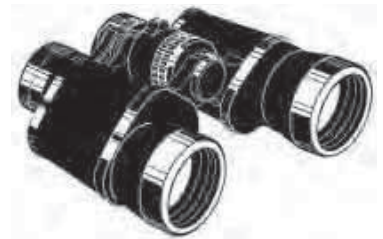
Over the last several months many of you learned about the deadly parasite known as *Trichomonas gallinae*. This parasite was impacting our native Band-tailed Pigeons populations. Researchers do not know why this parasite appears when it does, but they think it may be connected to the drought and habitat loss. Band-tailed Pigeons have fewer native plants and oaks from which to feed and they end up congregating at the limited water resources they can find and then unfortunately pass the disease on to each other. We want to thank all of our customers who have Band-tailed Pigeons coming to their yards and have taken great precautions with their backyard feeding to help diminish the spread of this deadly parasite. Ornithologists still have more to learn about *Trichomonas gallinae* and how other species may be affected. We have recently learned that some finch species are now being impacted by the same deadly parasite. So we want to remind everyone that your backyard bird feeders need to be cleaned often and water sources must be cleaned daily to stop the spread. Many of you have shared with us what extra care you are taking in your gardens and bird baths and we thank you and encourage you to keep up the good work.



Band-tailed Pigeon  
Brooke Miller

# Do You Have Old Binoculars You'd Like to Donate?

One of our customers is developing a program for budding birders at Natural Bridges in Santa Cruz. Natural Bridges is a wonderful open space that provides needed habitat for resident birds and it's also a migration hot spot. Every year a rare bird is spotted as it spends a few days at Natural Bridges resting and refueling during migration. For this new program they will be doing bird walks for people who are either beginning birders or totally new to birdwatching. Here is where you come in! Because most beginners do not have binoculars, they are calling out to everyone to see if you have old binoculars you'd be willing to donate. They will find a new life helping initiate people into the joys and discoveries that come from watching birds. Your old donated optics means everyone can have optics to use during the bird walks. If you can help, please contact Carol at 831-234-3097. Thank you!



# Los Gatos Birdwatcher's Summer Nature Series

2015



**Reservations Required Space is limited. \$8/child for each class**  
**Call (408) 358-9453 to register.**

## Teddy Bear Picnic

Thursday, July 9, 11-12:30

For ages 2 - 9



Bring your favorite stuffed friend, lunch, and a blanket to sit on to **Belgatos Park** to discover why animals love the trees. Hear a story, make a fun bat to play with, and investigate the trees in search of animals and clues that they leave.

## Tool Time

Thursday, July 30

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

For ages 6 to 12: 1-2 pm

Come to **Belgatos Park** to discover the tools that different animals have. Use some tools yourself as we investigate their work. Go exploring on the trails in search of the animals projects, and make your own bee sipper.



## Kids' Photography Hike

Thursday, July 9

For ages 6 to 12: 1:30 to 2:30 pm



Meet us at **Vasona Lake** to go adventuring on the trails taking nature photos. Our trip there last year was such fun, we will return and explore other trails this time. Bring any camera that you like and learn some simple tips to help you get great pictures. Make a frame for one of your favorite photos

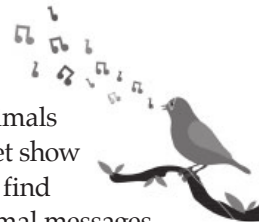
## Animal Instant Messaging

Thursday, August 6

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

For ages 6 to 12: 1-2 pm

Come to **Los Gatos Birdwatcher** to discover different ways that animals communicate. Watch a silly puppet show and participate in fun activities to find out about all sorts of different animal messages including pee-mail, woodpecker drumming, rabbit thumping, and the poop scoop.



## Radical Reptiles

Thursday, July 16

For ages 3 to 5: 11 am to 12 noon

For ages 6 to 12: 12:15 to 1:15 pm  
or 1:30 to 2:30 pm

Come to **Los Gatos Birdwatcher** to visit some live reptiles visiting from Sulphur Creek Nature Center. Come see and touch a lizard, snake and turtle too. Discover why they love a hot, summer day, and create your own clever lizard.



## 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.

### 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.)

## Unbeatable Beaks

Thursday, July 23

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

For ages 6 to 12: 1-2 pm

Come to **Vasona Lake** to investigate all sorts of beaks. Participate in activities to discover what they are designed for. Make a duck bill visor to shade your eyes as we explore the trails in search of beaks of all sizes and shapes.



# Call for Artists and Photographers

## Calling All Artists!

– Show off your work at our sixth Annual Artist Exhibition on **Sunday, August 2**.



California Quail by:  
Robin Lazzara

Join other talented artists for our sixth 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 2 from 12 – 4pm**. The deadline to enter your artwork is **Friday, July 24** and is *limited to the first 30 artists*. Please call the store to get your name on the list. Details will be emailed. Refreshments will be served. We hope you will be able to be a part of this fun event.

## Calling All Photographers!

– Here's your chance to shine! Enter our tenth Annual Photo Exhibition on **Sunday, August 23**.

Many of our customers are very talented nature photographers. For the tenth year we will be hosting an exhibition of their work. Have you taken a nature photo that transports you back to when you took it?

Now is 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 you would like to exhibit. We are *limiting the number of photographers to 30* and are asking you to submit only one entry. First come first served so call now to reserve your display space. The deadline to enter your photograph is **Friday, August 14** and *space is limited*. The event will be held on **Sunday, August 23, from 12 – 4:00pm at the Los Gatos Birdwatcher**.



Keel-Billed Toucan  
by: Judy Bingman

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.

# Black Phoebe

The Black Phoebe is a bird that is almost always seen on a birding trip and can also be found in our backyards. They are a species only found in the west and down to South America. They are a sweet bird that has learned to live in close proximity to people and are eager to use man-made buildings to nest, and as a result their numbers have increased. You may have a phoebe nest in the eaves of your roof or tucked away under a protected overhang.



They prefer habitat near a water source and many homeowners with pools report seeing a phoebe sitting on the diving board. Black Phoebe's will use the diving board as an ideal

vantage point to look for flying insects. When the Black Phoebe sees a potential meal it will sally out, snatch the unsuspecting insect right out of the air and return to its perch to eat it. They are adept at doing this because they belong to the flycatcher family. Their goal is to get a meal while ridding us of unwanted, pesky bugs! They eat all kinds of insects including bees, wasps, flies, beetles, grasshoppers, damselflies, dragonflies, termites, and spiders. Because they are an insect eater they will not use seed feeders, but they are attracted to a bird bath or fountain, especially during a drought year.

Even though they do not congregate in flocks, they aren't hard to find as they can often be heard making a repeated call which lets us know one is near. Usually found solo, each spring Black Phoebes once again find a mate and raise young. In fact, many pairs are monogamous and return to each other year after year. We cannot tell the males from the females because both look the same with an almost all black upper body and head, and a white lower belly. They also have the distinctive habit of pumping their tails which makes them easier to find. If you have one living in your yard rejoice in the fact that you have your own personal organic, pesticide free insect eater looking after your families best interest.

*Photo: Black Phoebe feasting on termites, Vasona Park in Los Gatos – Brooke Miller*



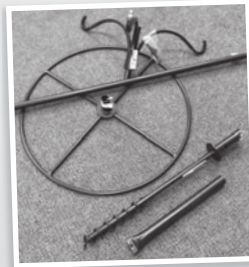
**Easy to Clean Hummingbird and Oriole feeders**

-We always tell people to be sure to buy hummingbird and oriole feeders that are easy to clean, and we have several new styles that have just arrived.



**Fruit and Nut Mix**

-Woodpeckers seem to be drawn to fruit. Our new mix includes Papaya and Cranberries along with their other favorites: sunflower, peanuts, tree nuts and safflower. Available in **20 pound (\$29.99)** and **5 pound (\$7.99)**.



**Pet Memorial Section**

-Need the perfect thing to remember a special pet? All our pet memorials are now in one place. Check out the 20" art pole. Marley has one in our back meadow where she loved to romp.

**"So where are you going to hang your new feeder?"**

-Our hardware department has many different solutions to that question. There are hooks to hang feeders from trees, brackets to attach to decks and fences, and shepherd's hooks to put in the ground. The pole system pictured has many possibilities for ground installation, different number of hooks and different heights for the pole.

**Which ID Chart Should I Choose?** *By Freddy Howell*

Many beginning birders feel intimidated by the large field guides; after all, they only want to know what's in their yard. Other folks want something small and easy to take with them on a hike and not necessarily on their phone. There are several new Identification Charts that are fold out and give lots of information.

*New this year, Yard and Garden Birds of the San Francisco Bay Area* by artist, John Muir Laws, is perfect for those bird watchers who are sitting at their breakfast table watching the birds in their yard. They don't want to have to look through pages and pages. This chart is 20" x 15", made of plasticized paper and folds up like a map. Birds are broken down by color, male and female, adult and juvenile. Mr. Laws has used the Peterson method of the arrow pointing to significant field marks.

*Local Birds-San Francisco Bay Area* is the original local bird chart for this area and has been revised to include over 200 popular species of the backyard-trail-shore and water birds. This chart uses paintings of all males in breeding plumage. Closed, this guide is 4"x5-1/2" and open

it is 26"x11" and it is laminated.

David Allen Sibley, renowned author of *Sibley Guide to Birds*, has produced a group of laminated field ID Charts with his lovely art work. His topics include Hummingbirds, Raptors, Owls and Ducks, and include range maps. The hummingbird chart shows the different display dances of the various species.



*Quick Reference Guides* has introduced a full series of waterproof folding guides by photographer and author, Greg R. Homel. This is the only ID chart, using photographs, which adds a different dimension to identification. These guides include a glossary of terms, field marks and information on where the bird can be found. Topics in this series include Shorebirds, waterfowl, Hummingbirds, and Birds of Central and Northern California. If you happen to be going on a trip to Mexico or Central America, the hummingbird chart would be very helpful. I wish I had had it on our last trip to Costa Rica.

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

#C0815

July / August 2015

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

Memo: Expires 8/31/15

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 most 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. Our local bird walks are from 8 to 10 am and we return to the store for bagels and shade grown coffee. Some of the nearby places we go to are Guadalupe Oak Grove Park, BelGatos Park, Almaden Lake Park, Shoreline and Charleston Slough. No Charge.

### Sunnyvale Audubon walks First Wednesday of the month July 1, August 5, Sept. 2

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 Big Sur for Condors

Saturday, July 18, 8:00 AM – 5:30 PM

Wait list. Fee: \$60 Bus and Birdaloo

### Let's Go Birding with Lisa Myers to San Bruno Mountain

Saturday, Sept. 19, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

San Bruno Mountain is located at the northern end of the Santa Cruz Mountains and is the 1300' foot peak visible from throughout the San Francisco peninsula. The mountain is home to a 2,378 acre park with 360 degree panoramic views of the entire Bay Area. This high mountain habitat is also a great place to look for fall migration activity. As the birds work their way south for the winter they often take refuge in this open space high above the heavily populated cities below. This day will include some walking as we bird from several of the trails found in the park. Fee: \$60 Includes transportaion.

### Let's Go Birding Weekend Adventure

Sat. & Sun., Oct. 10 & 11, 2015 details provided

This is a new Let's Go Birding weekend adventure and we are headed to the coast! All birding levels are welcome. The fall migration will be underway and we'll be on the look-out for species returning to the area to spend the winter and for those migrating through on their journey south. We'll bird areas along the coast from Santa Cruz to Half Moon Bay. As the trip nears we'll narrow down our route depending on where species are being reported. Areas we'll review include Santa Cruz's Lighthouse Field, Natural Bridges, Antonelli Pond, Gazos Creek Road, Pescadero Marsh, Wavecrest, Princeton Harbor, Pillar Point and Fitzgerald Marine Reserve. We'll also be scanning the Pacific Ocean and its shoreline for species that seldom come ashore. We'll spend the night in Half Moon Bay at the Coastside Inn. Rain does not cancel the weekend. Trip fee includes Corinthian Transportation Services, hotel fees, snacks, water & coffee, continental breakfast and final trip report. **Single person with their own room \$365, a couple sharing a room \$395, two single people sharing a room \$197 per person.** (Tip to driver & dinner not included.) Email [lisa@letsjobirding.com](mailto:lisa@letsjobirding.com) for more information or to reserve your spot.

# Los Gatos Birdwatcher

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



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## Look What We Found!



On a recent Saturday morning bird walk at Rinconada Park in Los Gatos, our group came across this adult Hutton's Vireo busily feeding a fledgling.

*Photo by Ellen Bateman*

### Dates to Remember

Independence Day - Sat. July 4th Closed  
Sixth Annual artists exhibit - Sat. August 2  
10th Annual Photography exhibit - Sat. August 23  
Labor Day - Monday, Sept. 7

### Store Hours

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

