



**Store Location**  
**King's Court Center**  
792 Blossom Hill Road  
Los Gatos, CA 95032  
408-358-9453  
info@losgatosbirdwatcher.com  
www.losgatosbirdwatcher.com

**Store Hours** Mon-Sat • 10 AM-5 PM | Tues • 10 AM-7 PM | Closed Sundays

## Big Thank You to You

By Lisa Myers

We kick off 2025 with gratitude for our wonderful customers. Some have been shopping with us since we opened in 1995—can you believe it? Such support and enthusiasm are the reasons we continue to thrive.

Over the years, we've had the pleasure of meeting spouses, children, and even the grandchildren who come in to pick out special gifts for holidays and birthdays. And, of course, there are the dogs. Many we know by name. Some have mastered the route behind the counter where treats await with their sit, shake, and roll-over tricks. The joy of feeding birds inspires our customers to keep their feeders filled. They share stories of how watching birds has brought comfort and healing during times of recovery or illness. These heartfelt experiences have taught us about resilience and the challenges when facing cancer, chemo, Parkinson's, dementia, or a stroke.

For some, maintaining bird feeders keeps the memory of a loved one alive. For others, the daily activity of birdwatching provides a connection to nature that brightens one's day and uplifts the spirit—truly a prescription for optimal mental health and well-being. You tell us that the bird store is your "happy place". We are honored. As we enter 2025, we look forward to continuing this journey together.

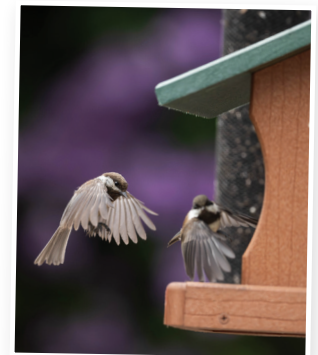
*This is our*  
**HAPPY**  
*Place*

## Feeding Wild Birds At Home

In a store that makes a living selling high quality bird seed to the backyard birder, the topic of feeding wildlife comes up on a regular basis. Customers ask, what are the rules, are there laws, and is it illegal? While there are laws about feeding wildlife (bear, raccoons, fox, ducks, deer...) out in open spaces, national parks and public lands, it gets tricky when it comes to feeding birds in our own yard, plus, different states, counties and communities can declare different guidelines. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife states that people should not interfere with wildlife or "disrupt" a wild animal's normal behavior. One could ask if providing food to a bird in your yard disrupts normal behavior.

In Silicon Valley contractors are building faster than ever and in fact, the state has mandated more and more housing; more people, more roads, more concrete, more high-rises. We've paved paradise, moved in, polluted local water ways and changed the natural landscape all around us. Talk about disrupting. Here are just a few things people do everyday that interferes and disrupts wild animals:

- Pesticides kill birds directly or minimize insects as a food source
- Windows and buildings kill birds inadvertently
- Dead and dying trees provide food and nesting cavities, but in suburbia, we remove them
- Solar Panels are good for energy, but when they cover acres, they kill wildlife
- Wind turbines kill wildlife with the turn of their blades
- Roads, cars, trains, and planes all kill wildlife upon impact



Chestnut-backed Chickadees  
at platform feeder  
– Gina Dias

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## LOS GATOS BIRDWATCHER

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- Fences keep nature out and separate populations
- Power lines electrocute birds
- Introduced outside house cats kill wildlife to the point of extinction
- We remove native plants and replace with lawns, non-natives, pools and plastic grass all of which offer no value to nature

I am not trying to make everyone sad, but we say we all want to help Mother Earth while actions we make often interferes with wildlife and greatly disturbs their existence. While a growing suburbia has taken away so much open space, placing some fresh seed outside to help wild birds get through a season, feed their young or survive their annual migrations has shown to stabilize many songbird populations.

Cornell's Lab Of Ornithology writes, "feeding birds brings these spectacular animals into our backyards, allowing us to connect with them and helping us to appreciate nature. Wild birds generally don't need the "free" food that we provide at bird feeders, in fact, studies show that the bulk of a birds' diet comes from natural sources even where feeders provide plenty of food. But birds do need us to protect habitats." Cornell adds that making your yard or neighborhood more attractive to birds is a first step to helping wildlife and giving them a safe habitat.

Feeding birds in your own garden is allowed, but it's important to practice good care by regularly cleaning your bird feeders and bird baths to prevent the spread of disease. And find a balance of the right amount of food for your situation. If you have questions please ask our staff. If we can get more people to take a moment to enjoy nature we feel nature and wildlife will stand a better chance to be here for generations to come. People protect the things they care about. We want to help you care about the birds.

Source: Originally published in the December 2015 newsletter by Lisa Myers.

## Bird Houses – It's Time to Get Ready

For the many songbirds that live in our gardens, the breeding season is only a few months away. This means your birds will soon start to look for the ideal place to nest. If you do not have any nest boxes in your yard, plan on visiting us at the store. We have a nice selection of easy to clean bird houses designed for the cavity nesting birds we have in the area from Western Bluebirds to Bewick's Wrens. We can help you to decide where to place your nest box. And if you already have a nest box in your yard this is a good time to clean it out and make it ready for a new family.

**Tip** - If you have a box that has been previously ignored you may want to move it to a different location.



Western Bluebird  
guarding his nest box  
– Gina Dias

## Preparing the Bay Area for Sea Level Rise

Through the store we reach environmentally interested people everyday and we wanted to make you aware of the Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan (RSAP) that is happening throughout the Bay Area. This monumental achievement is a transformative step toward protecting San Francisco Bay's ecosystems and communities in the face of sea level rise.

In partnership with the Sierra Club's Bay Alive committee, they are looking for people from around the Bay to help keep track and coordinate, educate and advocate to save the Bay. You can learn more about their goals and how you can help by visiting their website. [www.bayadapt.org/regional-shoreline-adaptation-plan](http://www.bayadapt.org/regional-shoreline-adaptation-plan)



Tour Division of the Los Gatos Birdwatcher sponsors weekend bird walks. 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. **Please refer to our website for details** per adventure and then call the store to register at **408-358-9453**.

<b>Jan. 18</b>	Day to see the cranes. Lodi, CA – \$45 Details at <a href="http://losgatosbirdwatcher.com/events">losgatosbirdwatcher.com/events</a>
<b>Jan. 26</b>	Coyote Valley – Looking for raptors
<b>Feb. 8</b>	Los Capitancillos Ponds, San Jose
<b>Feb. 22</b>	Going on a duck hunt – Location TBD
<b>Mar. 15</b>	Martial Cottle Park
<b>Mar. 22</b>	Bird Song at Joseph Grant County Park – \$25 Details at <a href="http://losgatosbirdwatcher.com/events">losgatosbirdwatcher.com/events</a>



Sandhill Cranes  
-Tony Woo

## Presentation at The Terraces An African Adventure

Photographer & Biologist Jessica Guenther-Dang

Tuesday, March 18 • 7:00 PM Free

Join us for an evening with photographer, biologist, and store staff member, Jessica Guenther-Dang, as she shares her incredible experiences on safari in Africa. Having traveled to both Zambia and South Africa, Jessica will take you on a journey through diverse landscapes and showcase the unique wildlife she's encountered. Discover what it's like to be on safari, what to expect, and how to capture the beauty of Africa through a lens. Don't miss this exciting adventure!



Elephants  
-Jessica Guenther-Dang

## Enjoy the Season

- No Leaves On The Trees Makes Birding Easier

This is a great time to go birding. Many species of birds come to the Bay Area to spend their winter which means wherever you look you can find bird life. From hawks in the air to ducks in the water to songbirds in the trees. And with the leaves off the trees we can often get great views of species like woodpeckers, and American Robins and even Cedar Waxwings! This is also the time to get the hard pruning completed BEFORE the breeding season begins in March.



Cedar Waxwing  
-Tom Grey



## One-stop Shopping for Your Valentine

Valentine's Day is February 14 – We're here to help

If you need ideas for what to get your special Valentines, we'd be happy to help. We have all kinds of great gifts for the garden in addition to jewelry, scarves and much more. Giving a bag of bird seed might just be the perfect way to say I love you!

## Avian Influenza "Bird Flu" and Backyard Bird feeding

People are asking if they should take down their feeders because of the Avian Flu crisis. We are not the experts on diseases, so we refer to the people who are. Things are changing all the time, but according to the California Department of Public Health CDPH at the time of this writing the risk of the public catching the Avian Flu remains low. Those who have been infected are those working in close contact with farm animals like cows and poultry. And people that prefer to drink "raw" milk which has not undergone pasteurization have also been infected.



When it comes to the birds, the species that gather together or form large flocks like raptors, waterfowl and cranes can come in contact with the disease and then spread it to the others in a flock. But so far the songbirds that come to backyard feeders are not showing signs of the disease or a propensity to spread it amongst people or other birds coming to feeders. So unless you notice dead birds in your own yard or simply feel uncomfortable feeding the birds we feel it is OK to keep your feeders up. We understand that things will change and we'll continue to monitor the situation. You too can check with the CDPH, and be vigilant in observing your backyard habitat and clean your feeders on a regular basis.

### Suet – An Easy Way to Offer Food

Suet "sue-it" is technically defined as the hard fat around the kidneys and loins in beef and mutton, but in common usage, most kinds of beef fat are also called suet and can safely be fed to birds. Wild birds would find this resource when they came upon an animal like a deer or moose that had died in nature. This animal fat is easily digested and metabolized by many birds; it's a high-energy food, especially valuable in cold weather. Birds will also take advantage of suet during the breeding season when they are feeding young.



White-breasted Nuthatch at suet feeder – Teresa Cheung

Suet is particularly attractive to woodpeckers, nuthatches, chickadees, jays, and starlings. Wrens, creepers, kinglets, and even some warblers occasionally visit suet feeders too. Feeding suet it a great option for people that want to feed birds but do not have the space or time for loose seed and feeders. Suet comes in many flavors and forms and does not melt under high outside temperatures. Ask us about suet the next time you are in the store.

### DID YOU KNOW?



During the winter our gardens are rather quiet as most birds are not singing. Birds sing to attract a mate and declare territory, but during the winter the goal is to conserve energy, find food and survive the elements. Finding a mate will become more important as spring approaches, and the birds will find their voice.



### Loyal Customer Discounts

Loyal Customers are in our store's database and receive: one email per month, our seasonal newsletter, two 15% off coupons each quarter, and enrollment in our frequent buyer program.

**15% Off Seed**

Loyal Customers mention this coupon and get 15% off one item. Excludes consignment items, Haikubox, sales items, excursions, optics.

**15% Off One Item (not seed)**

Loyal Customers mention this coupon and get 15% off one item. Excludes bird seed & chicken feed, consignment and sale items, Haikubox, excursions, and optics.

**Frequent Buyer Program:** Buy 10 bags of the same seed 20 lbs or higher at full price and get the 11th bag free.

One coupon per customer. Not to be combined with other offers. Coupons Expires March 31, 2025.