

Phainopepla



Published by the
San Fernando Valley Audubon Society
A Chapter of the National Audubon Society



Aug/Sept 2009 Volume 60 No. 7

PROGRAM NOTES

Olga Clarke to speak at Thursday, September 24, SFVAS General Membership Meeting. 7:30 p.m.

TOPIC: Olga will present the birds and wildlife of Cabo San Lucas

Olga Clarke, will share with us her love of nature, especially birds. A world traveler and accomplished photographer, Olga receives requests for pictures from publications all over the world. Olga has organized and led natural history tours to Central and South America, Africa, India, Borneo and Southeast Asia, Australia, Hawaii, and Alaska. With her late husband, Herb, they served as guest lecturers on cruise ships, even going to Antarctica. ♪



Donna Timlin, SFVAS, freeing Great Blue Heron at Sepulveda Basin



Flashlight Walk August 23, 2009

Back by popular demand! A Family Flashlight Nature Walk at the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve will be held this summer, on Sunday, August 23 at 6:45 p.m. San Fernando Valley Audubon and the Los Angeles City Park Rangers will co-sponsor the walk.

The flashlight walk is designed for experienced birdwatchers, families with kids, and adults new to bird watching. We will visit the Wildlife Area at dusk, when birds are settling in for the evening. With luck, we may see bats or an owl.

The walk will last about one and a half hours. Be sure to bring a flashlight. We will loan binoculars to those who do not have their own. Insect repellent and a light wrap are recommended.

For more information contact Muriel Kotin at (310) 457-5796.

NO General Membership Meetings in August.
Have a great summer. See you September 24!



Birdathon by Rose Leibowitz

A big thank you to all the generous members who donated to our Birdathon this year. At the time of going to press we made over \$8,000 which is almost the same as last year and exceeded my expectations!

We had eight birding events this year: Five were part of the regular scheduled walks:

Team Ohlenkamp at Sepulveda Wildlife Area spotted 62 species, while Dick Barth led his monthly trip to Big Morongo and Joshua Tree, where they saw 63. Team Herron Knode at Descanso Gardens found 39 species and Carolyn Oppenheimer's team at O'Melveny Park saw 34. Art Langton found a total of 43 species, both at Chatsworth Reservoir and on a second trip.

Three leaders created their own "big days." Jim Moore, as he reported in last month's newsletter, led a group who spotted a total of 123 species, Allan and Muriel Kotin traveled widely into Orange County and totaled 112, while John and Andrew Willis found 59 in their area. Thank you to all the leaders and participants for your time and keen eyes!

The following people contributed to our total:

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Aurelio Albaisa | Tracy Elliott | Allan & Muriel Kotin | G.B. Roberts |
| Ellen Alkon | Claire Englund | Kathy Kusner | Janice & Stuart Ross |
| Paul Almond | Ms. Nikki Erickson | Marilyn & Raiford Langford | Judith Rothman |
| Richard & Pat Avery | Fred & Doris Ferguson | Arthur Langton | Gertrude Rothschild |
| Theresa Baker | Sharon Ford | Rosemary Leibowitz | Frank & Lynn Ruger |
| Krystine Baker Chaparro | Lee Frank | Ant & Verve Leps | Sherrie & Leslie Schlom |
| Marcia Balbus | Leonard & Patty Garland | Frederick Leseman | Joyce F. Schumann |
| William Jr & Margaret Barbour | Frank & Susan Gilliland | Margaret Levine | Jerilyn Shimandle |
| Mr. & Mrs. Forrest Barker | Clare Given | Rebecca LeVine | Dave Short |
| Richard Barth | Michael & Judith Golub | Kay Levy | Seth Shteir |
| Edmund & Joyce Batten | Dennis & Heather Hagen-Smith | Robert & Carlyn Lofrano | Mel Sigman |
| Dave & Jill Bennet | Jim Hardesty | Lynn Maddox | Christine Smith |
| Patricia Bennett | Susan (Susi) Haugland | Margie Maseda | Ed & Jane Strauss |
| Bettina Bennewitz | William & Bernhild Heckman | Halli Mason | Paul Sundmark |
| Vern & Linda Bernhart | Nancy Herron Knode | Roger & Judy McClure | Betsy Swallow |
| Roger & Patricia Blount | Fleurette & Jerry Hershman | Joanne McLaughlin | Christine Taylor |
| Joyce Bobo | George & Elaine Hoffman | John & Nancy McTigue | Eugene & Audrey Taylor |
| Anna Marie Bovill Lea | Lynne & Bob Hopkins & Cousins | Heather Medvitz | Meredith & Robert Taylor |
| Helen & Emmett Boyd | Martha Horton | Marilyn Molinari | Bob & Carol Thille |
| Robert & Martha Brewer | Judy Howell | Marilyn Molnar | Donna Timlin |
| Paul Butler | Sara Huang | Alvy Moore | Charlene Tokuyama |
| Peter & Tracy Carpenter | Pam & Bob Huffman | Jim Moore | Fran Toll |
| Fred & Karen Carrington | Ann Hyden | Karen & Joseph Morgan | Karl & Christine Trinkley |
| Marilyn Casey | Harlene Hyman | Darrell & Jean Morse | Chris & Jim Van Beveren |
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| Mary Ellen Dittmore | Diana Keeney | Hank & Karen Piorek | Ruth Weiss |
| Richard & Shirley Docter | Jo Kitz | Ann Pirone | Andrew & Amber Willis |
| Richard & Theo Doyle | Priscilla (Pixie) Klemic | Sigrid Pittman | Jack & Janet Willis |
| Debbie Drews | Rose Kline | Jeanne Polak-Recht | John Willis |
| Merle Dvorak | Celia F. Knight | Octavia Radu | Paulette Zemlicka |
| Dottie Ecker | Jeanne Kolasz | Cynthia Reich | F. Zepnick |



PART 3: A LIFETIME OF RECOLLECTIONS CONCERNING NATIVE BIRDS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

By Don Mullally, with some editing by Art Langton

This portion of the paper will feature birds seen in wilderness locations in the County by the author between 1937 and 2007. Information is provided concerning the former location, habitats, habits, and abundance past and present within large open spaces on the edges of suburban areas or in true wilderness.

During 1937 or 1938 a neighbor visited a friend living a mile or so south of Jeffrey's Barn in the San Fernando Valley, probably Burbank. At the time Jeffrey was a champion prize fighter. The friend's home bordered a seemingly abandoned vineyard of short, low vines. In boredom Joel, my friend, and I wandered into the vineyard, and to our amazement encountered a couple of Burrowing Owls. The owls were not afraid of us but flew off a couple of hundred feet when approached too closely. Other owls soon materialized. We had owls flying in all directions with most headed towards Jeffrey's Barn, a professional boxing ring. The sandy soil was home to numerous side-blotch lizards which took cover in rodent holes. I now realize the lizards and small rodents were a major food source for the owls.

On a family visit to once popular but now extinct Pop's Willow Lake in back of Hansen Dam a hunter emerged from the shrubby flat landscape displaying a dead Burrowing Owl he had shot. I wanted that owl alive, not dead. The next and last time I saw this owl in the San Fernando Valley was in 1990 at the entrance to O'Melveny City Park. The bird had been killed by a car. Though I thoroughly explored the 730 acres of foothills composing the park and the adjacent Santa Susana Mountain Range, no additional Burrowing Owls were observed. Burrowing Owls apparently don't inhabit steep slopes, forest, and woodlands, or grasslands

dominated by dense non-native grasses, oats or black mustard.

Between 1980 and 1990 Roadrunners were frequently seen in O'Melveny Park along the edges of brush beside large grass-covered lawns. During 2008 no Roadrunners were seen in the Park. In fact I haven't seen Roadrunners at this location for many years. During this time period robins also nested in trees on the lawn. Nesting robins have become quite scarce as nesting birds in the lowlands of Los Angeles.

During 1988 a pair of Turkey Vultures nested on a rocky ledge high above Bee Canyon Creek in O'Melveny City Park. North of the cliff is the Browning-Ferris land-fill. Since this sighting additional nests have not been detected. Up to 1944 groups of six or more vultures were seen feasting on large dead farm animals lying in a ranch south of Ventura Boulevard and west of Tarzana.

In the 1980s a mature Long-eared Owl was found roosting in the grapefruit orchard of O'Melveny Park. While in East Canyon, south of the City of Santa Clarita, a Long-eared Owl was repeatedly frightened off a low perch in a dense oak tree. A dozen castings were found on the ground beneath its perch. The species probably continues to survive in the East Canyon-O'Melveny Park area. In the late 1980's Christmas bird counters located, saw and heard Southern Spotted Owls in the dense oak and fir forest on the north slope of the same area.

In about 1990 a covey of Mountain Quail was observed in the oak woodlands north of Orcutt Ranch. This species hasn't been noted by me elsewhere in the Santa Susana or Santa Monica Mountains. The ranch is located on the crest of the Santa Susana Mountains above and north of the underground gas field of the Southern California Gas Company. Some of the best forests in the Santa Susana Mountains occur on the north slopes of this undeveloped ranch. Although a part of the County Significant Ecological Area, a draft copy of a County General Plan now being written indicates subdivision as a likely probability. ♪

Audubon-at-Home Mailbox by Alan Pollack

In this now and then column, Alan Pollack, our Audubon-at-Home Chair, will answer your questions about gardening for wildlife and sustainable gardening practices. Alan Pollack would love to hear from you. Please e-mail him with any questions you have regarding creating a wildlife-friendly garden that can be used for publication. Alan also offers free consultation/landscape design to help you make your yard wildlife friendly. He also gives a free, PowerPoint slide show/lecture to community groups, high school, and college classes on attracting wildlife to your garden and sustainable gardening practices. He can be reached at alpat62@aol.com or (818) 340-2347 or at alan.pollack@sfaudubon.org.

*Alan,
For a few years we attracted Lesser Goldfinches to our garden with a feeder filled with niger seed. We stopped partly because we became concerned that this seed, not being native to this country, is not a natural food for the finches and also because it had become quite expensive. We miss watching the finches, and I would like to know what native plants to put in my garden that would bring them back. Thank you, Ruth Bromund*

*Hi Ruth,
Ah, yes....the cost of niger discourages many people from offering it to our feathered friends. One option is to mix some niger in with much less expensive "finch food" one can purchase in 50 lb bags and the other option is the one you have suggested, - planting natives that will attract goldfinches. Some of those are the sages (salvia), bunch grasses (nasella), fescue grasses (festuca), and buckwheats (erigonum). If you have the space and proper sunlight, you might consider creating a meadow with a mix of some or all of the above. Let us know if you are successful in bringing them back. — Alan ♪*



Calendar of Events

Saturday, August 1. Castaic Lake Bird Walk. 8:00–10:00 a.m. Directions: Take closest freeway to I-5 North and exit at Parker Road. Turn right and proceed to stop sign (Castaic Road), proceed to next stop sign (Lake Hughes Road), proceed to next stop sign (Castaic Lake Drive) and turn right. Entrance to the park is on the right. Parking is in Lot 4, so make a right turn after the kiosk, then an immediate left turn into the lot, parking to the left. Leader: Roger McClure. For information, contact the staff of LA Co Parks at (661) 257-4050.

Sunday, August 2. Sepulveda Basin Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m. Directions: Exit the San Diego Freeway (I-405) on Burbank Blvd. Go west about one-half mile to Woodley Avenue and turn right (north). Travel about one-half mile to the second possible right turn (at sign for the Water Reclamation Plant and Japanese Garden). Turn right and go east about one-half mile to Wildlife Area parking at the end of the road. Leader: Kris Ohlenkamp. For more information contact him at (818) 986-7785 or kris.ohlenkamp@sfvaudubon.org.

Saturday, August 8. Placerita Canyon Nature Center Docents' Bird Walk. 9:00 a.m. Directions: Take the 405 or 5 Freeway north to the 14 Freeway. Exit the 14 at Placerita Canyon. Turn right at the end of the off ramp and continue about 1.5 miles to the park entrance. Turn right and park at the Nature Center. Leader: Bob Fischer. For more information, call the Nature Center at (661) 259-7721.

Sunday, August 9. Descanso Gardens Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m. Meet at the first wide place after entering the gardens. Admission is free for early birders. Located at 1418 Descanso Drive, La Cañada. Leader: Karen Johnson or Nancy Herron Knode. For more information, contact Karen at Karen.Johnson@sfvaudubon.org or (818) 790-1687.

Saturday, August 15. Monthly Field Trip to Chilao. 7:30 a.m. Birding the San Gabriel Mountains along the Angeles Crest. Meet at the Chilao Visitor Center at 7:30 a.m. We will look for Hairy and White-headed Woodpeckers, Mountain Chickadee, Pygmy Nuthatch and many other montane species. Bring lunch and water. Directions: Take the 210 Fwy. east to Angeles Crest Highway (Hwy 2). Go north for about 45 minutes, look for the Chilao Campground signs and take the second entrance road to the Visitor Center. Your vehicle must exhibit a National Forest Adventure Pass or Golden Age pass. Leader: Richard Barth, (310) 276-0342.

Saturday, August 15. Santa Monica Mts. Conservancy Bird Walk at Towsley Canyon. 8:00–10:00 a.m. Directions: Go north on I-5 through Santa Clarita, exit Calgrove and turn west (left) under the freeway and then left again on the Old Road. Watch for the sign, "Ed Davis Park at Towsley Canyon." Turn right and park in the back lot. Meet at the kiosk. Leader: Roger McClure. For further information, call (661) 255-3606.

Sunday, August 16. Malibu Creek State Park Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m. Meet at the second (lower) day-use parking lot. Entrance to the park is on the west side of Las Virgenes Road, just south of Mulholland Hwy. Entrance fee is \$10 per car. Leader(s): Muriel Kotin, (310) 457-5796, muriel.kotin@sfvaudubon.org and/or Art Langton, (818) 887-0973.

Tuesday, August 18. O'Melveny Weekday Walk at O'Melveny Park, Granada Hills. 8:30 a.m. Directions: Take the 118/Ronald Reagan Freeway and exit at Balboa Blvd. Turn north, driving two miles to Sesnon, turn left going west .6 mile, turn right at park entrance. Meet in the parking lot. RAIN CANCELS. Contact Carolyn Oppenheimer at, (818) 885-7493, with any questions (before 7 p.m., please) or carolyn.oppenheimer@sfvaudubon.org.

Sunday, August 23. Sepulveda Basin Flashlight Walk. Meet at the Wildlife Reserve Amphitheater at 6:45 p.m. for a 1 1/2-hour sunset program and walk led by SFVAS and City park rangers. Look for birds, bats and owls. Designed for families and adults. Bring flashlights, insect repellent, light wrap. Directions: Go north _ mile from Burbank Blvd. on Woodley Ave. Turn east (right) at the sign for the Japanese Garden. Bear right at the fork in the road and continue _ mile to the Wildlife Area parking. For more info, call Muriel Kotin at (310) 457-5796.

Sunday, August 23. Descanso Gardens Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m. See August 9 for details.

NO General Membership Meeting in August. Have a great summer. See you September 24!

September

Tuesday, September 1. Antelope Valley Audubon's General Meeting and Lecture. 6:30 p.m. The Prime Desert Woodland Preserve in the Elyze Clifford Interpretive Center, at 43201 35th Street, Lancaster. Contact Bob or Bonnie Weatherman at (661) 269-2051. Program posted on www.avaudubon.com.

Saturday, September 5. Castaic Lake Bird Walk. 8:00–10:00 a.m. See August 1 for details.

Sunday, September 6. Sepulveda Basin Bird Walk. See August 2 for details.

Saturday, September 12. Placerita Canyon Nature Center Docents' Bird Walk. 9:00 a.m. See August 8 for details.

Saturday, September 12. LA River Shorebirding. 8:00 a.m. Get back into the swing of Fall birding in the presence of thousands of migrating shorebirds and other winged critters along the Lower Los Angeles River. We'll begin at



8:00 AM at DeForest Park, 6255 DeForest Avenue in Long Beach. Meet in the parking lot by the tennis courts, between Poppy St and Harding St. Binoculars are a must and spotting scopes are highly recommended. For those wishing to carpool, which we strongly encourage, meet at the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area parking lot at 7:15 a.m., where we'll reduce the number of vehicles and arrive at the river site by 8 a.m. We may visit several sites, depending on what has been recently spotted. We'll plan to leave around 11 a.m., returning to the parking lot about noon. Reservations are not needed. For more information, contact Jim Hardesty at Jim.Hardesty@sfaudubon.org.

Sunday, September 13. Descanso Gardens Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m. See August 9 for details.

Tuesday, September 15. O'Melveny Weekday Walk at O'Melveny Park, Granada Hills. 8:30 a.m. Directions: Take the 118/Ronald Reagan Freeway and exit at Balboa Blvd. Turn north, driving two miles to Sesnon, turn left going west .6 mile, turn right at park entrance. Meet in the parking lot. RAIN CANCELS. Contact Carolyn Oppenheimer at, (818) 885-7493, with any questions (before 7 p.m., please) or carolyn.oppenheimer@sfaudubon.org.

Saturday, September 19. Monthly Field Trip to Huntington Central Park and Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve (in Huntington Beach). 7:30 a.m. Meet at the Slater Avenue parking lot at 7:30 a.m. Directions from the San Fernando Valley: Take the San Diego Freeway (405) south and exit at Golden West. Go south approximately three miles on

Golden West to Slater. Turn left on Slater to the parking lot on the right. Bring lunch. We will picnic at the park and afterwards caravan to Bolsa Chica. Leader: Richard Barth, (310) 276-0342.

Saturday, September 19. Santa Monica Mts. Conservancy Bird Walk at Towsley Canyon. 8:00-10:00 a.m. See August 15 for details.

Sunday, September 20. Malibu Creek State Park Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m. See August 16 for details.

Thursday, September 24. General Membership Meeting. 7:00 p.m. Encino Community Center, 4935 Balboa Blvd., Encino. Located between Moorpark and Ventura Blvd., on the west side of Balboa, just south of the Presbyterian Church. Come early for social hour. Welcome back. Hope you had a great summer! Our speaker will be Olga Clarke who will speak about the birds and wildlife of Cabo San Lucas. See "Program Notes" on page one.

Sunday, September 27. Descanso Gardens Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m. See August 9 for details.

Monday, September 28. SFVAS Board Meeting. 7:00 p.m. Balboa Mission Town Hall, 16916 San Fernando Mission Blvd., at Balboa (southeast corner) in Granada Hills.

Future Field Trips: (Details later)
October 17. El Dorado Park (Long Beach)
November 21. Ventura Harbor and Water Treatment Ponds

Monthly Field Trip Report

by Richard Barth

May 9 found us in Placerita Canyon, birding Walker Ranch and Placerita Canyon Park.

There were unusually large numbers of Black-headed Grosbeaks, Swainson's Thrushes, Phainopeplas and Ash-throated Flycatchers in the canyon this year. Our group saw numerous Swainson's Thrushes along the regular routes, then Jim Moore and I made a late pass through the picnic area at Placerita Canyon Park and had more than a dozen in that one location.

Lazuli Bunting, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Western Wood-Pewee, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, Say's Phoebe, White-breasted Nuthatch, Western Tanager, Bullock's Oriole and Steller's Jay were obligingly present (no Costa's Hummingbird this trip). Our warblers were Black-throated Gray, Yellow, Townsend's, Orange-crowned and Wilson's. We did very well with Warbling Vireo but failed to find a Hutton's. We found a Willow Flycatcher, a late migrant species typically not seen moving through until mid May.

Always reliable here are Oak Titmouse, Acorn Woodpecker, Western Bluebird, House Wren (many, many) and Spotted Towhee. We heard California Quail, Wrentit

and Northern Flicker. White-tailed Kite headed our raptor list. Surprising in this wilderness canyon was an escapee Budgerigar, a good distance from any residential community.

On June 13 we traveled to Rancho Sierra Vista Preserve in southeastern Ventura County.

Grasshopper Sparrow is always at the top of our wish list here, and this year we had a bit of luck. Thanks to the alertness of Jim Moore we got nice looks at one bird, a juvenile, in a general area that had been suggested to us. We also heard singing but could not locate any adults.

A Yellow-breasted Chat vocalizing from atop shrubs and small trees near the nursery was the first one seen on this trip over the years. We did exceptionally well with Blue Grosbeak, but almost struck out on Lazuli Bunting (Jim Hardesty saw one). White-tailed Kite, American Kestrel, Cooper's Hawk and Red-tailed Hawk made up our raptor list. A Roadrunner family was roaming the hillsides. We had close studies of Black-chinned Hummingbirds. The swallows on hand were Cliff, Northern Rough-winged and Violet-green. Other species of note were California Thrasher, Black-headed Grosbeak, Say's Phoebe, Bullock's Oriole, Oak Titmouse, Spotted Towhee, Song Sparrow and Common Yellowthroat. It was interesting to see House Wrens nesting in one of the Cliff Swallow mud nests under the eaves of the restroom building. ♪



Chautauqua Birding Festival

by Alan Pollack

On the first leg of my trip north to Mono Lake for the Chautauqua Birding Festival, I spent the afternoon and night in Lone Pine, a tiny village along the eastern slope of the Sierras, just a few miles from the base of Mt. Whitney, the tallest peak in the lower 48 states. It's been a while since I'd seen the Sierras, and was again awestruck by their majestic, snow covered, cloud capped majesty.

I drove to a campsite at the foot of the mountain—through hills of rock that looked more like twisted coils of dough than rock. The campsite had a large, rushing stream thundering through a riparian habitat of willows, aspen and cottonwoods. It was magnificent.

The next morning, before starting out I looked again at the printout I'd made describing the Tioga Lodge, the motel I would be staying at while at the festival. The reservation had been made for me by the Chautauqua Committee. I had only glanced at it previously and what I read stunned me. It said: "...if you are looking for the luxury of modern day, in room amenities (TV, telephone and air conditioning), you may be disappointed." I then went online and found a site that reviewed various lodgings and what some of the reviewers said was very disheartening: "a horrible place...a rip-off," etc. I sat for an hour wondering what I should do—maybe stay in Lone Pine until I had to check out? Finally, remembering my wife's favorite response to adversity ("It will be an adventure"), I set out for Lee Vining/Mono Lake.

When I got to the Tioga Lodge, I was stunned again! The place is charming! It is set at the bottom of a hillside a few miles from town, facing the lake. My assigned room was the only second story room in one of several buildings and was reached via a very narrow, almost vertical staircase. It not only lacked all of the above amenities, but also lacked a radio, a fridge...not even a clock! But the large picture window in front looked over the lake and the window in the bathroom gave a view of the hillside covered with tall grasses, wild mustard, and wild flowers, making up for the lack of amenities. It had that old home smell that reminded me of the old, Victorian house we stayed in at a cattle ranch we had vacationed at near Lake Tahoe many years ago. Right next to the structure, ran a small, but full, rushing stream and I spent several hours sitting beside it. Willows and cottonwoods flanked the stream and fields of grass and wildflowers extended just beyond. Western tiger swallow-



tail butterflies flittered about and puffy cottonwood seeds floated by like snowflakes in June (now I know why they are called cottonwoods!)

My talk on Friday afternoon went well, except for some mis-

haps with a never-used-before remote control. It looked like about 20 people in the audience, which was a little disappointing considering there were over 200 attendees to the festival and the distance I had traveled to get there (340 miles).

There were many activities at the festival to choose from. I went on two of the scheduled bird walks. Friday morning's walk was at the north end of the lake. I had always thought of Mono Lake as an uninteresting environment, but I was amazed at the amount of bird life. The group spotted 31 species in two hours. The lake, having no outlet, has no fish, but is home to enormous quantities of brine shrimp and alkali flies, which many bird species gorge on, either for their young or to tank up before a long migration. I also saw two deer near the lake.

Saturday morning's walk was at Lundy Canyon, about ten miles from town and into the mountains. We parked cars beside Lundy Lake and then walked up a dirt road into the mountain—along side the large stream which fed the lake. Upstream, we came to a much smaller lake—more like a wetland area that beavers had created. Beavers are not indigenous to the area, but had been imported by settlers for their hides. The group heard the calls of dozens of species of birds, but with my hearing loss, I only heard a few. It was harder to see them because the area was more wooded with lots of aspen, willow, and pines. One striking bird seen all over the lake basin is the Violet-green Swallow and on the walk we watched them darting in and out of their nesting cavities in trees, feeding their young. Another interesting sight was the patterns of damage to tree bark made by sapsuckers: it looked like a craftsman had carefully laid out a pattern and carefully carved it out. (The damaged areas oozed sap which the bird would eat and also attracted bugs, which are also eaten.)

The trip home was uneventful and I was sure glad to be home again. Although I saw some interesting and beautiful stuff, living on the road is not one of my favorite things and for me, "there's no place like home..." ♪

Audubon-at-Home by Alan Pollack

I have wonderful news to report—wonderful, that is, if you are interested in conserving water and conserving wildlife (not to mention our own lives.) According to an article in the LA Times on June 3, DWP is offering cash incentives to those who replace their grass lawns with drought tolerant plants: "The Residential Drought Resistant Landscape Incentive Program" will credit single family residential customers \$1 for each square foot of turf removed and replaced with drought-tolerant plants, mulch and water permeable hardscapes. New landscaping plans must be approved by the DWP before they are implemented and evidence of installation must be provided to receive the rebate..."

As my readers are aware, I have been on a crusade to reduce or eliminate sod lawns in our community for years now. I am currently writing to a DWP Board Commissioner and urging the city/county to pass an ordinance banning the installation of new sod lawns.



JOIN THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY AUDUBON
 To get started with your membership,
 use the following form and mail to:
 SFV Audubon Society
 Attn: Membership
 P.O. Box 7769
 Van Nuys, CA 91409
 Make all checks payable to SFV Audubon.

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The PHAINOPEPLA, published ten times a year, is the newsletter of the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society, P.O. Box 7769, Van Nuys, CA 91409, 818-347-3205. San Fernando Valley Audubon Society is a chapter of the National Audubon Society, a non-profit conservation/education organization, and is dedicated to "the conservation of wildlife and natural resources."

Articles, letters, drawings, and photographs concerning conservation, the science and ecology, birding, chapter activities, and articles of interest to the membership are welcome for publication in the PHAINOPEPLA.

Material from other newsletters or newspaper should include the source and date. Copy for the PHAINOPEPLA should be in the hands of the editor by the 3rd of the month to be included in the following month's newsletter.

An introductory membership to the National Audubon Society is \$20 and should be sent separately to:
 National Audubon Society, Membership Data Center
 P.O. Box 52529, Boulder, CO 80322. Be sure to write "C12" on the form to assure assignment to our chapter. For renewals, use the form in the National Audubon magazine, "Audubon".

If you have any questions about membership, renewals, change of address or any other membership concerns, please contact Rose Leibowitz at (818) 990-5405 or e-mail her at rose.leibowitz@sfvaudubon.org.

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

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| 2nd Vice President: | Margie Maseda | (818) 880-2002 |
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| Recording Sec'y: | Donna Timlin | (818) 341-9354 |
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| Christmas Bird Count: | Art Langton | (818) 887-0973 |
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| Conservation: | Kris Ohlenkamp | (818) 986-7785 |
| Coordinating Council Rep: | Jim Hardesty | (818) 346-6712 |
| Descanso Bird Station: | Dottie Ecker | (818) 790-0659 |
| Descanso Bird Walks: | Nancy Herron Knode | unpublished |
| Descanso Bird Walks: | Karen Johnson | (818) 790-1687 |
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Phainopepla

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Dated Material

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Membership

SFVAS is pleased to welcome the following new members. We hope you will get involved with our many field trips and activities. Please contact Rose Leibowitz, Membership Chair, with any questions.

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| New Local Members: | Miriam Berney | Ruth Allen Gore | Reveline Llactahuaman | Alan Sandler |
| Lauren Carter | Margaret Bickmore | Ramona Greenstein | Ann Moroney | Zeb Smith |
| Doreen Cease | Alicia Bien | Robert Hadel | H.L. Myman | Janine Smylie |
| Margo DeGrosse | Kay Brown | Fred Hamer | Cliff O'Connell | Martha Spring |
| Melissa DeGrosse | Katherine Carrillo | Judy Holloway | Paul Owczarczak | Melanie Stoner |
| New National Members: | Christine Cohn | Victoria Howard | Graham Owen | Katherine Talbot |
| Yvonne Angel | Greg Cook | Alex Karras | Loknath Persaud | |
| Daniel Auakian | Betty Dodson | Janice Kash | Laura Pratt | |
| Daniela Avakian | David Fox | Adele Katz | Diane Raber | |
| Katherine Ayer | Ken Gilliland | Jeff Lamont | Dorothy Raven | |
| | Larry Gotleib | Jill Lewia | Keith Richman | |



EGG COUNT

–Submitted by Linda Jones
Sure, eggs are expensive--that's a whole day's work for somebody! This is Sandra Tsing Loh with "The Loh

Down on Science." With the question: Why do some birds lay more eggs than others?

Enter biologist Walter Jetz from the University of California at San Diego. He gathered information on over five thousand bird species. These included habitat, diet, body mass, and number of eggs laid at once, or "clutch size." Then he hunted for connections.

Certain factors were obvious. For example, in species living where resources are scarce, or whose hatchlings

can't fend for themselves, fewer hungry mouths per nest is better. But the principal predictor of clutch size, Jetz discovered, was. . . latitude. Cold-weather species pop out more babies because fewer will survive. Number two predictor: nesting habits. A woodpecker can guard 'way' more chicks, because its nest is hidden in a hollow tree.

Each species, facing its own particular challenges, has evolved the perfect clutch size. But if global changes smash that fragile balance...? It's an oldie but a goodie. Don't count your chickens before they--you know what ...

* "The Loh Down on Science" (<http://lohdown.caltech.edu/>) on NPR read by Sandra Tsing Loh written by Cal Tech Media Relations and sponsored by TIAA-CREF.