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For Nature Education and the Conservation of Wildlife

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February / March 2019

General Membership Meetings

San Fernando Valley Arts & Cultural Center
18312 Oxnard Street, Tarzana
(818) 697-5525

SFVAS General Membership Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month (*except July, August, November, and December.*)

EVERYONE IS WELCOME to join us at 7:00 p.m. for refreshments; program begins at 7:20 p.m. See Calendar of Events, pages 7–8, for directions.

SFVAS Awards Luncheon

You Are Invited
to the
Annual Awards Luncheon at Franklin Canyon Park
Saturday, March 2, 2019
1:00–3:00 p.m.

Join us as we honor Conservation Award Recipient: **Larry W. Allen**
and
Service Awardee: **Dave Weeshoff.**
[Order Tickets Here](#)

Monthly Programs

General Membership Meetings

Where: San Fernando Valley Arts & Cultural Center, 18312 Oxnard Street, Tarzana

Thursday, February 28, 2019, 7:00 p.m.

Speaker: Denys Hemen

Topic: California Wildlife Center

For our February 28, 2019 SFV Audubon meeting, Denys Hemen will give us a presentation on the California Wildlife Center and its care of wildlife patients and orphans. Denys is the hospital manager for the group and has worked at the center since 2007. He began as a volunteer and took on various jobs there such as in the marine animal rescue team, a hospital technician, and as facilities manager. His passions at work are working with songbirds and enhancing/repairing their enclosures. He is originally from Alabama where he attended Auburn University and attained a bachelor's degree in Zoology. Outside of work he enjoys being a dad to his 1 1/2-year-old son.

The presentation will be an overview of what they do at the California Wildlife Center, what they do when an animal patient comes in, and how they enhance their stay. Denys will include many pictures of past and present patients.

Thursday, March 28, 2019, 7:00 p.m.

Speaker: Nora Livingston

Topic: Mono Lake

The March 28, 2019 SFV Audubon meeting welcomes the Mono Lake Committee's Lead Naturalist Guide, Nora Livingston as the presenter. She is a passionate naturalist who got her interpretive start as a Mono Lake Intern in 2008 and went on to do seven years of seasonal ornithological work in the most beautiful corners of California. Her studies included the Island Scrub Jay on Santa Cruz Island, migratory songbirds on the Farallon Islands, the California Gull colony at Mono Lake, and bird life in the Eastern Sierra.

At the Mono Lake Committee, she leads natural history field seminars and custom birding and ecology trips, as well as co-organizes the Mono Basin Bird Chautauqua, and leads many popular birding field trips for the festival as well. It is her utmost joy to share her love of birds and nature with anyone and everyone to help foster a deeper respect for Mono Lake and this unique planet we live on.

She will talk about Mono Lake, the bird populations there, and what is presently happening with the lake.

CONSERVATION AWARDS LUNCHEON 2019

Mark Your Calendar! You are invited to our Annual Conservation Awards Luncheon on Saturday, March 2, at Franklin Canyon Park. This year the Conservation Award recognizes Larry W. Allen, principal author of the *Los Angeles Country Breeding Birds Atlas* (co-authors are Kimball Garrett and Mark Wimer). Published by Los Angeles Audubon and supported by SFVAS, the Atlas is the culmination of nearly 20 years of work by the authors and 28,000 records provided by 300 volunteers covering 228 species as well as historical and island breeders. A truly significant work, the Atlas puts a spotlight on the county's avian diversity and provides a baseline for future researchers. An avid birder and citizen scientist, Larry W. Allen leads parrot walks in Pasadena and is an expert on gull identification.



We honor Dave Weeshoff with the San Fernando Valley Audubon Service Award. When Dave retired from IBM in 2004 he didn't know a mourning dove from a hummingbird, or so he says. A few months later he came across an article about cleaning oil off of birds and drove down to the International Bird Rescue in San Pedro to volunteer. He doesn't know if it was something in the feathers, but a new calling emerged. In addition to the ongoing work in San Pedro, Dave is a member of Heal the Bay's Speakers Bureau, works with 5 Gyres, the Climate Reality Project, and Algalita. He has served on the SFVAS board for 10 years including a stint as President. Today he leads our Conservation Committee. We are incredibly lucky to have a man with such energy, vision, and commitment working with us. Franklin Canyon is a beautiful place for a bird walk and lunch. We hope you will join us in celebrating the accomplishments of these two men.

The luncheon starts at 1:00 p.m. in the event room next to the Sooky Goldman Visitors Center. Harvest Moon Catering returns to Franklin Canyon with their signature sandwiches, salads, deserts, and lemonades. Pat Bates will provide an ongoing slideshow of her photography. There will be music performed by Steve McCroskey, and we will have the traditional basket raffle featuring the popular and inventive creations of Carolyn Oppenheimer. There will also be a silent auction of this year's centerpieces.

There will be two optional bird walks around Franklin Canyon Park before lunch. Experienced birders meet with Dick Barth at 11:00 am and beginners join Muriel Kotin at 11:30 am. Meet up in the parking lot.

Signs will be posted to guide you to the venue, Handicapped parking will be available as well as drop off areas for attendees as needed. Please contact Becky Arntzen to reserve a handicapped space at beckyarntzen@mac.com (Please mark HANDICAPPED PARKING in the subject line). For directions access our website at www.sfvaudubon.org.

The cost is \$35.00 for adults and \$15.00 for children under 15. Because we are an organization staffed entirely by volunteers we would greatly appreciate if you would reserve and pay for your tickets on our secure website at <http://www.sfvaudubon.org/event/luncheon/>. However, if you cannot pay online, a check can be mailed to SFVAS, P.O. Box 7769, Van Nuys, CA 91409. Please RSVP by February 25. Casual Attire. —By Becky Arntzen

BirdFest—Submitted by Rose Leibowitz

As we all know, the Santa Monica Mountains BirdFest 2018 was cancelled because of the Woolsey Fire. The heart of King Gillette Ranch, site of our BirdFest activities, was unscathed although the area around it was devastated. That sadly includes both Paramount Ranch and Peter Strauss Ranch where many public events and concerts take place.

The BirdFest committee met to discuss planning for the next festival. We decided to plan for the 5th Festival to take place in November 2020 rather than in 2019. This will allow more time for the area and habitat to recover from the ravages of the fire.

We also took other factors into consideration, notably the pressure on National Park and other agency staff to rebuild, the backlog of work on NPS lands after the shutdown, and the demand on the reduced number of facilities in the Mountains during rebuilding. Planning for events must start months ahead of time and we are at this time unable to speak to National Park personnel.

We are sorry to miss two years, but we hope to welcome you to a stronger and better BirdFest 2020!

The BirdFest of the Santa Monica Mountains is a free cooperative event sponsored by San Fernando Valley Audubon Society, Western National Parks Association, the National Park Service, Conejo Valley Audubon Society, and Santa Monica Bay Audubon Society.

2018 Christmas Bird Count (CBC) by Jim Moore

Most people who live in the San Fernando Valley can't imagine there are many birds here, except perhaps Rock Pigeons, European Starlings, House Finches, and House Sparrows. After all, the entire valley is nothing but a grid of cross streets, with little open space except for a few soccer parks. It's hard to imagine, even for experienced birders that around 130 species can be seen here, particularly in late December.

The fact is, we still have some open space, particularly Hansen Dam, Sepulveda Basin, and Chatsworth Nature Reserve, as well as relatively undeveloped mountain habitat on both the north side of the circle, plus some very birdy parks—O'Melveny, El Cariso, and Veteran's Memorial Park come to mind.

If birding under ideal weather conditions is beneficial, our 2018 count couldn't have been better. We counted 128 species, which equals our 20 year average. But, by contrast, we saw only 12,000 individuals, far below our 20-year average of 15,268 individuals. Perhaps a sign that urbanization is further eroding some bird habitat.

Applying the rules of National Audubon, we added ten additional species during count week, observed by our counters or by eBird reports of others who did not participate in the count, bringing our total for the week to 138. Count week includes the three days before and after count day, December 22.

The primary objective of the Christmas Bird Count is to assess the health of the bird population by comparing the total number of individuals of all species seen in a count circle with earlier counts. However, diversity is also an important factor, comparing the total number of species seen with past years. This is National Audubon's 119th count and much to our credit, our 62nd successive CBC, which started in 1957.

Some observations.

Waterfowl numbers continue a downward trend compared with past counts. Habitat hasn't changed that much, but many species have continually declined or gone missing.

- **Cackling Goose**, seen almost every year since the species was split from Canada Goose has virtually left the territory. We counted 26 in 2010 and 25 in 2011. Only one this year.
- **Wood Duck**, seen on 37 previous counts, but not since 2015.
- **Cinnamon Teal**, seen on 35 counts hasn't been seen since 2011 (although some were seen on count week).
- **Northern Pintail**, seen on 42 previous counts, but only three times since 2000.
- **Canvasback**, seen on 51 counts, hasn't been seen since 2013.
- **Common Merganser**, seen on 27 previous counts, but virtually out of sight since the early 90s.

Also missing or seen in unusually low numbers:

- **Spotted Dove**, seen on 43 previous counts, but not since 2002. They've virtually disappeared from southern California. Sometimes non-native species when introduced explode in numbers and then peter out.
- **Western Sandpiper**, seen on 40 previous counts. Some were seen during count week, but none on count day since 2013.
- **White-tailed Kite**, seen on 39 previous counts, but not since 2013.
- **Long-billed Dowitcher**, seen on 30 previous counts, but only once since 2005.
- **Northern Harrier**. We're not seeing them much anymore although we counted one this count. They have been seen on 55 of 62 counts, but now, sporadically in decreasing numbers.
- **American Kestrel** numbers are declining. We counted only four, the lowest number in count history.
- **Horned Lark**. Used to be here, seen 28 times, but not seen since 1997. These are not birds in trouble. Thousands can be seen in the Antelope Valley during winter, but the San Fernando Valley no longer represents suitable habitat.

But, some species are flourishing.

- **Eurasian Collared-Dove**, first recorded in 2008 and continuously since 2011. It will be interesting to see if their population is sustained over the next 40 years.
- **Allen's Hummingbird**, first recorded in 1992 with numbers trending upwards.
- **American White Pelican**, not recorded until 1971, then continuously since 1996.
- **Turkey Vulture**, seen sporadically until the 1980s, with numbers trending upward since.

- **Parrots and Parakeets**, started showing up around 2000 with only a couple of sightings earlier. Now we’re seeing them every year. There are probably too many to be restricted to the San Gabriel Valley.
- **European Starling**, they have been around in big numbers for a long time, but none was recorded until 1963, when one was seen. Since then, they have been counted in triple digits.
- **Great-tailed Grackle**, not recorded until 1993 and since then in double-digit quantities, however this count recorded only 11 individuals, the lowest number since they invaded the count circle.

And some are irruptive.

- **Mountain Chickadee**. We recorded nine this count, after a five year hiatus. Perhaps they can predict weather and are escaping a hard winter in the mountains this season.

This year’s winner for the highest count was American Coot with 1452 individuals. Honorable mention goes to Canada Goose (670), American Wigeon (525), Mallard (496), Rock Pigeon (761), Mourning Dove (574), House finch (659), and Yellow-rumped Warbler (807).

We didn’t lose any of the 34 species that have been recorded on all 62 counts. These include Canada Goose, American Wigeon, Mallard, Pied-billed Grebe, Mourning Dove, Anna’s Hummingbird, American Coot, Killdeer, Ring-billed Gull, Cooper’s Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Northern Flicker, American Kestrel, Black Phoebe, Say’s Phoebe, California Scrub-Jay, American Crow, Oak Titmouse, Bushtit, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Northern Mockingbird, American Pipit, House Finch, Lesser Goldfinch, Lark Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, White-crowned Sparrow, Song Sparrow, California Towhee, Spotted Towhee, Western Meadowlark, Brewer’s Blackbird, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and House Sparrow.

Sepulveda Basin won the award for the most species and most individuals. Kris Ohlenkamp, who has led this sector continuously since 1982, reported 85 species with 3041 individuals, including 12 unique species not seen in any other sector. Kimball Garrett counted 80 species with 1451 individuals, including five unique species at Hansen Dam. And, once again this year we were granted access by the Department of Water & Power to count the Chatsworth Nature Preserve. This area, led by Art Langton and Mark Osokow yielded 50 species with 941 individuals, including two unique species.

The importance of covering all birding areas in the circle is confirmed by the number of locations where sighting a unique bird not seen elsewhere in the territory. This year was exceptional with nine such locations.

Unique Birds Seen	Location	Sector leader
Greater White-fronted Goose	Reseda Park	Pat Bates
Cackling Goose	Sepulveda Basin	Kris Ohlenkamp
Mute Swan	Sepulveda Basin	Kris Ohlenkamp
Redhead	Hansen Dam	Kimball Garrett
Western Grebe	Sepulveda Basin	Kris Ohlenkamp
Clark’s Grebe	Lake Balboa	eBird report on count day
Greater Roadrunner	Wilson Canyon	Judy Matsuoka
Black-necked Stilt	Sepulveda Basin	Kris Ohlenkamp
Wilson Snipe	Sepulveda Basin	Kris Ohlenkamp
Spotted Sandpiper	Hansen Dam golf course	Lynda Fenneman
Green Heron	Sepulveda Basin	Kris Ohlenkamp
Osprey	Sepulveda Basin	Kris Ohlenkamp
Northern Harrier	Sepulveda Basin	Kris Ohlenkamp
Barn Owl	Weldon Mountainway	Brian Biefelt
Williamson’s Sapsucker	Veteran’s Park	Scott Logan
Yellow-shafted (Northern) Flicker	Veteran’s Park	Scott Logan
Peregrine Falcon	Sepulveda Basin	Kris Ohlenkamp
Yellow-chevroned Parakeet	Sepulveda Basin	Kris Ohlenkamp
Black-fronted (Nanday) Parakeet	Caballero Canyon	Muriel and Alan Kotin
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Sepulveda Basin	Kris Ohlenkamp

Brown Creeper	Veteran's Park	Scott Logan
Canyon Wren	Chatsworth Nature Reserve	Art Langton & Mark Osokow
Marsh Wren	Hansen Dam	Kimball Garrett
Phainopepla	Caballero Canyon	Muriel and Alan Kotin
Slate-colored Junco (Dark-eyed)	Veteran's Park	Scott Logan
Vesper Sparrow	Chatsworth Nature Reserve	Art Langton & Mark Osokow
Swamp Sparrow	Valley College	Dick Barth
Myrtle's Warbler (Yellow-rumped)	Sepulveda Basin	Kris Ohlenkamp
Black-throated Gray Warbler	Hansen Dam	Kimball Garrett

For bird nerds who would like to see more detail, Excel spreadsheets of this year's count and our historical count are on the chapter's website.

Thanks to the sector leaders and counters who gave several hours of their holiday season to participate.

2018 Count Participants

Danny Alvarez	Lynda Fenneman (I)	Rose Leibowitz (I)	Wendy Morgan
Dick Barth (I)	Neysa Frenchette	Brett LeVine	Mark Osokow (I)
David Barton (I)	Kimball Garrett (I)	Rebecca LeVine	Ned Riches
Kathy Barton (I)	Wendy Gladstone	Scott Logan (I)	Dolores Ruzicka
Pat Bates (I)	Ron Gibson	Judy Matsuoka (I)	Ed Stonik (I)
Brian Biefelt (I)	Emma Hanna	Becky McDonald	Don White (I)
Carla Bollinger	Marylou Hanna	Dan McDonald	Alonso Wickers
Robert Brown	Benny Jacobs-Swartz	Heather Medvitz (I)	
Yvonne Burch-Hartley	Taylor Kerby	Jim Moore (I) (c)	(I) = Sector leader
Alexander deBarros	Allan Kotin	Dick Norton (I)	(c) = Compiler
Debbie Drews	Muriel Kotin (I)	Kris Ohlenkamp (I)	
Nicole Durtschi	Art Langton (I)	John Oliver	
Cliff Fenneman	Steve Langton	Justine Morgan	

Additional Counts

In addition to our San Fernando Valley Christmas Bird Count, we assist in other counts in our area. We cover a large area from Calabasas to Glendale and from Mulholland Drive to Frazier Park. The Santa Clarita Count was held on Saturday, December 29, and nine of our chapter members contributed. The nine-mile circle covered a range of habitats from city parks through desert and mountains. Totals include 121 species with two more count week, 9043 individuals overall. Highlights include: Varied Thrush at Placerita, Golden Eagle at Placerita, Western Screech-owl at Los Pinetos and Haskell Canyon, Lewis' Woodpecker at Towsley, Ferruginous Hawk at Newhall Ranch, Common Loon at Castaic, American White Pelican at Castaic, Vermilion Flycatcher at Castaic Lagoon and Aquatic Center, and Lawrence's Goldfinch at Lake Hughes Road.

Part of the circle counted by Los Angeles Audubon Society is in the South east of the San Fernando Valley and seven of our members helped with the count on Wednesday, January 2. One group counted Weddington Park and the other explored the Studio City trail beside Valleyheart Drive, where (very close to the bustle of Ventura Blvd) was a Belted Kingfisher, Cedar Waxwings and a large number of other birds.

The Christmas Bird Count is an important way to keep a tally on bird populations and to discern trends over time. Maybe next year, if you are not available for our chapter CBC, you might like to help on one of the other ones in our area.—By Rose Leibowitz

**The Great Backyard Bird Count is
February 15-18, 2019**

Bird watchers of all ages count birds to create
a real-time snapshot of where birds are.

[Count birds anytime, anywhere, with eBird »](#)



2018 Christmas Bird Count Summary

1	Ross' Goose	17	Great Blue Heron	2	Canyon Wren
	Greater White-fronted				
1	Goose	27	Great Egret	3	House Wren
1	Cackling Goose	31	Snowy Egret	3	Marsh Wren
670	Canada Goose	1	Green Heron	45	Bewick's Wren
2	Mute Swan	17	Great Blue Heron	17	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
26	Egyptian Goose	45	Black-crowned Night-Heron	62	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
cw	Cinnamon Teal	33	Turkey Vulture	42	Wrentit
37	Northern Shoveler	3	Osprey	61	Western Bluebird
2	Gadwall	1	Northern Harrier	19	Hermit Thrush
525	American Wigeon	3	Sharp-shinned Hawk	35	American Robin
496	Mallard	14	Cooper's Hawk	18	California Thrasher
cw	Northern Pintail	1	Sharp-shinned/Cooper's Hawk	65	Northern Mockingbird
5	Green-winged Teal	4	Red-shouldered Hawk	227	European Starling
3	Redhead	45	Red-tailed Hawk	122	American Pipit
45	Ring-necked Duck	1	Barn Owl	114	Cedar Waxwing
30	Lesser Scaup	6	Great Horned Owl	1	Phainopepla
6	Bufflehead	3	Belted Kingfisher	659	House Finch
21	Hooded Merganser	1	Williamson's Sapsucker	119	Lesser Goldfinch
55	Ruddy Duck	cw	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	45	American Goldfinch
72	California Quail	1	Red-naped Sapsucker	138	Chipping Sparrow
34	Pied-billed Grebe	11	Red-breasted Sapsucker	240	Lark Sparrow
cw	Eared Grebe	108	Acorn Woodpecker	11	Fox Sparrow
2	Western Grebe	2	Downey Woodpecker	352	Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon)
2	Clark's Grebe	41	Nuttall's Woodpecker	1	Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored)
761	Rock Pigeon	2	Hairy Woodpecker	408	White-crowned Sparrow
37	Band-tailed Pigeon	57	Northern Flicker (red-shafted)	21	Golden-crowned Sparrow
34	Eurasian Collared-Dove	1	Northern Flicker (yel-shafted)	7	Vesper Sparrow
574	Mourning Dove	4	American Kestrel	79	Savannah Sparrow
1	Greater Roadrunner	4	Merlin	35	Song Sparrow
5	White Throated Swift	1	Peregrine Falcon	14	Lincoln's Sparrow
144	Anna's Hummingbird	cw	Prairie Falcon	1	Swamp Sparrow
65	Allen's Hummingbird	40	Yellow-chevroned Parakeet	133	California Towhee
16	Hummingbird species	24	Red-crowned Parrots	7	Rufous-crowned Sparrow
cw	Sora	2	Nanday Parakeet	28	Spotted Towhee
1452	American Coot	185	Black Phoebe	198	Western Meadowlark
11	Black-necked Stilt	39	Say's Phoebe	79	Red-winged Blackbird
57	Killdeer	31	Cassin's Kingbird	12	Brown-headed Cowbird
52	Least Sandpiper	4	Loggerhead Shrike	139	Brewer's Blackbird
cw	Western Sandpiper	8	Hutton's Vireo	11	Great-tailed Grackle
5	Wilson's Snipe	cw	Plumbeous Vireo	17	Orange-crowned Warbler
4	Spotted Sandpiper	134	California Scrub-Jay	12	Common Yellowthroat
7	Greater Yellowlegs	202	American Crow	807	Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audbn)
31	Ring-billed Gull	283	Common Raven	2	Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle)
27	Western Gull	3	N. Rough-winged Swallow	1	Black-throated Gray Warbler
18	California Gull	9	Mountain Chickadee	11	Townsend's Warbler
115	Double-crested Cormorant	36	Oak Titmouse	cw	Summer Tanager
43	American White Pelican	368	Bushtit	156	House Sparrow
				138	Total Species
				12000	Individuals

Calendar of Events

February

Sunday, February 3. Sepulveda Basin Bird Walk. 8:00—11:00 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. Contact him at kris.ohlenkamp@sfvaudubon.org or (805) 727-5007.

Saturday, February 9. Nature Walk. 9:00—11:00 a.m. Join us on San Fernando Valley Audubon's renowned birds-and-nature walks for families and beginners. Stroll through the lovely Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve with a guide, enjoying its trails and wildlife lake. Many kinds of birds are found here, along with lizards, cottontail rabbits, butterflies, fish and more. Learn about the plants and birds and see them up close. Learn why this is a special place. Wear sturdy shoes and layered clothing. A cap or hat with a brim is suggested. Binoculars are available for loan. Directions: Driving on Woodley Ave. north from Burbank or south from Victory Blvd., go ½ mile and turn east at the sign for the Japanese Garden. Continue straight (don't turn into the garden) and drive past the Cricket Fields and around the tree in the middle of the road, on to the parking lot at the end of the road. Meet at amphitheater. GPS coordinates to parking: 34.179942,-118.472595. Leader(s): Muriel Kotin, (310) 457-5796 or Diana Keeney, (818) 998-3216. Reservations are not needed except for large groups. Heavy rain cancels. For more information, visit our website, www.sfvaudubon.org.

Saturday, February 9. Placerita Canyon Nature Center Docents' Bird Walk. 8:00 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. Various leaders. For more information, call the Nature Center at (661) 259-7721.

Sunday, February 10. Wildwood Canyon Bird Walk, Burbank. 9:00—11:00 a.m. Directions: From the I-5/Golden State Fwy. N: Take Exit 146A toward Olive Ave., merge onto E. Angeleno Ave. and turn left onto S. 1st Street, then take the first right onto E. Olive Ave.

From I-5/Golden State Fwy. S: Take EXIT 146A toward Verdugo Ave. Turn left onto S. Front Street, which will become E. Verdugo Ave. Turn left at the first light onto S. 1st Street then take the 3rd right onto E. Olive Ave.

Continue 1.3 miles on E. Olive through downtown Burbank and up the hill. Turn left onto N. Sunset Canyon Dr. Go 0.5 miles and turn right onto E. Harvard. Drive .4 miles skirting the golf course and meet at the entry kiosk area. Extra binoculars are available. Leader: Mike Mc Horney, (818) 845-0166.

Friday, February 15—Monday, February 18. Great Backyard Bird Count. Join in counting the birds you see for as little as 15 minutes, in your neighborhood or anywhere in the world! Submit your sightings to <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/>

Saturday, February 16. Monthly Field Trip. Ventura County Game Preserve in Oxnard. Meeting Time 7:45 a.m. An excellent spot at which to observe a wide variety of birds including waterfowl, wetland birds and raptors. We will be birding the preserve entirely on foot. Covering the circuit will probably require 4+ hours. We will leave our cars on the left (north) side of the paved road outside the preserve compound. Directions: From the 101 Freeway take the Las Posas Road exit south (left), then Hueneme Road west (right) to Casper Road. Turn south (left) on Casper Road and continue to where the road eventually turns left through a large entrance gate and leads to the compound. We'll meet at the entrance gate at 7:45 a.m. and wait for the preserve manager to open up for us at approximately 8:00; we'll then drive to the compound. Bring lunch and drinking water. Allow one hour and fifteen minutes driving time from the Valley. Leader is Richard Barth (310) 276-0342.

Saturday, February 16. 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 front lot. Meet at the kiosk. Leader: Roger McClure. For further information, call (661) 252-6187.

Sunday, February 17. Malibu Creek State Park Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m. Restarted. 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 \$12 per car. Leaders: Kathy Barton (818) 929-2516 and David Barton (310) 990-6896.

Tuesday, February 19. Weekday Walk at O'Melveny Park, Granada Hills. 9:00—11:00 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 0.6 miles, turn right at park entrance. Meet in the parking lot. RAIN CANCELS. Contact Carolyn Oppenheimer at (818) 885-7493 (before 7 p.m.), or carolyn.oppenheimer@sfvaudubon.org.

Saturday, February 23. Hansen Dam Bird Walk. 8:00—10:00 a.m. We will walk along a dirt road at the base of the dam—exploring promising sites along the way and sometimes go in a different direction to the lake. Meet at the lower parking lot, Dronfield Entrance. Directions: Take Osborne exit from Golden State (5) Freeway. Go northeast about two miles passing Glenoaks Blvd. Turn right on Dronfield to enter the park. Turn right at the end of Dronfield and then take a quick left and proceed downhill to the large parking lot. Alternate directions: Exit Osborne from the eastbound Foothill Freeway (210). At the off ramp, turn right onto Foothill. After a short distance, turn left on Osborne and then left on Dronfield. Follow above directions to the lower parking lot. Rain cancels. Leader: Pat Bates (818) 425-0962, pat.bates@sfvaudubon.org.

Saturday, February 23. Young Birders Group Bird Walk: Franklin Canyon Park. 9:00 a.m. 2600 Franklin Canyon Dr., Beverly Hills. The Young Birders Group walks are for young birders who are serious about birding, know some birds, and are willing to learn. All are welcome to join! Directions: From the San Fernando Valley, take the Ventura Freeway (101) or Ventura Boulevard to Coldwater Canyon Boulevard. Head south to the intersection of Coldwater Canyon and Mulholland Drive. Make a 90-degree right turn onto Franklin Canon Drive. (This means crossing Mulholland) Road signs read "Road Closed 800 Feet" "Sunset to Sunrise"; this is the park entrance. Meet in the parking lot on the left. Allow some extra time, as Coldwater Canyon can be a slow road. Leader(s) Alexander and/or Olivia. For more information on meeting location please e-mail Rose Leibowitz at roselbirds@gmail.com, or call (818) 579-4976.

Thursday, February 28. SFVAS General Membership Meeting. 7:00 p.m. Speaker: Denys Hemen. Topic: California Wildlife Center. Join us as we learn more about the California Wildlife Center. For more information, see Monthly Programs, page one. **Location:** San Fernando Valley Arts & Cultural Center, 18312 Oxnard Street, Tarzana, CA. (818) 697-5525. **Directions:** Located between White Oak and Reseda Blvd. In order to park, it is recommended to go on Etiwanda Avenue and turn into the parking area up the alley behind the center. **ALL are welcome!**

March

Saturday, March 2. SFVAS Awards Luncheon. Franklin Canyon Park. 1:00—3:00 p.m. Join us as we honor our **Conservation Award Recipient: Larry W. Allen** and our **Service Honoree: Dave Weeshoff**. Experienced birders are invited to join Dick Barth for a bird walk at 11:00 a.m. and beginners can join Muriel Kotin at 11:30 a.m. Location: In the event room next to the Sooky Goldman Nature Center at Franklin Canyon Park. 2600 Franklin Canyon, Beverly Hills, 90210. Order tickets at <https://www.sfvaudubon.org/event/luncheon/>.

Sunday, March 3. Sepulveda Basin Bird Walk. 8:00–11:00 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. Contact him at kris.ohlenkamp@sfvaudubon.org or (805) 727-5007.

Saturday, March 9. Nature Walk. 9:00–11:00 a.m. Join us for the LAST of the season birds-and-nature walk for families and beginners. Stroll through the lovely Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve with a guide, enjoying its trails and wildlife lake. Many kinds of birds are found here, along with lizards, cottontail rabbits, butterflies, fish and more. Learn about the plants and birds and see them up close. Learn why this is a special place. Wear sturdy shoes and layered clothing. A cap or hat with a brim is suggested. Binoculars are available for loan. Directions: Driving on Woodley Ave. north from Burbank or south from Victory Blvd., go ½ mile and turn east at the sign for the Japanese Garden. Continue straight (don't turn into the garden) and drive past the Cricket Fields and around the tree in the middle of the road, on to the parking lot at the end of the road. Meet at amphitheater. GPS coordinates to parking: 34.179942,-118.472595. Leader(s): Muriel Kotin, (310) 457-5796 or Diana Keeney, (818) 998-3216. Reservations are not needed except for large groups. Heavy rain cancels. Please see page eight for more information, or visit our website, www.sfvaudubon.org.

Saturday, March 9. Placerita Canyon Bird Walk. 8:00 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: Roger McClure. For more information, call the Nature Center at (661) 259-7721.

Sunday, March 10. Wildwood Canyon Bird Walk, Burbank. 9:00–11:00 a.m. Directions: From the I-5/Golden State Fwy. N: Take Exit 146A toward Olive Ave., merge onto E. Angeleno Ave. and turn left onto S. 1st Street, then take the first right onto E. Olive Ave.

From I-5/Golden State Fwy. S: Take EXIT 146A toward Verdugo Ave. Turn left onto S. Front Street, which will become E. Verdugo Ave. Turn left at the first light onto S. 1st Street then take the 3rd right onto E. Olive Ave.

Continue 1.3 miles on E. Olive through downtown Burbank and up the hill. Turn left onto N. Sunset Canyon Dr. Go 0.5 miles and turn right onto E. Harvard. Drive .4 miles skirting the golf course and meet at the entry kiosk area. Extra binoculars are available. Leader: Mike Mc Horney, (818) 845-0166.

Saturday–Sunday, March 16–17. Monthly Field Trip: Morro Bay Weekend! The first day, **Saturday, March 16**, we will meet at 8:00 a.m. on the near (inland) side of Morro Rock. Park along the main road just before it swings around the side of the Rock. The second day, **Sunday, March 17**, we will meet at the Montana de Oro State Park Headquarters/Visitor Center at 8:00 a.m. Our species tally is usually very high on this trip. Pigeon Guillemot and Chestnut-backed Chickadee are expected. Directions from the San Fernando Valley: Take the 101 Freeway to San Luis Obispo and then follow Route 1 north to the town of Morro Bay. Allow at least four hours driving time from the Valley. Bring lunch and drinks. Be prepared for possible inclement weather, and remember that the central coast can be quite chilly in the mornings. Make camping or motel reservations as soon as possible. Leader: Richard Barth, (310) 276-0342.

Saturday, March 16. 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 front lot. Meet at the kiosk. Leader: Roger McClure. For further information, call (661) 252-6187.

Sunday, March 17. 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 \$12 per car. Leaders: Kathy Barton (818) 929-2516 and David Barton (310) 990-6896.

Tuesday, March 19. Weekday Walk at O'Melveny Park, Granada Hills. 9:00–11:00 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 0.6 miles, turn right at park entrance. Meet in the parking lot. RAIN CANCELS. Contact Carolyn Oppenheimer at (818) 885-7493 (before 7 p.m.), or carolyn.oppenheimer@sfvaudubon.org.

Saturday, March 23. SFVAS Hansen Dam Bird Walk. 8:00–10:00 a.m. We will walk along a dirt road at the base of the dam—exploring promising sites along the way and sometimes go in a different direction to the lake. Meet at the lower parking lot, Dronfield Entrance. Directions: Take Osborne exit from Golden State (5) Freeway. Go northeast about two miles passing Glenoaks Blvd. Turn right on Dronfield to enter the park. Turn right at the end of Dronfield and then take a quick left and proceed downhill to the large parking lot. Alternate directions: Exit Osborne from the eastbound Foothill Freeway (210). At the off ramp, turn right onto Foothill. After a short distance, turn left on Osborne and then left on Dronfield. Follow above directions to the lower parking lot. Rain cancels. Leader: Pat Bates (818) 425-0962, pat.bates@sfvaudubon.org.

Monday, March 25. SFVAS Board Meeting. 7:00 p.m. San Fernando Valley Arts & Cultural Center, 18323 Oxnard St., Tarzana.

Thursday, March 28. SFVAS General Membership Meeting. 7:00 p.m. **Speaker: Nora Livingston. Topic: Mono Lake.** Join us as we learn about the bird populations of Mono Lake. For more information, see Monthly Programs, page one. **Location:** San Fernando Valley Arts & Cultural Center, 18312 Oxnard Street, Tarzana, CA. (818) 697-5525. **Directions:** Located between White Oak and Reseda Blvd. In order to park, it is recommended to go on Etiwanda Avenue and turn into the parking area up the alley behind the center. **ALL are welcome!**

Saturday, March 30. Young Birders Group Bird Walk: Sepulveda Basin. 9:00 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(s) Alexander and/or Olivia. For more information on meeting location please e-mail Rose Leibowitz at roselbirds@gmail.com, or call (818) 579-4976.

Future Field Trips (details later):

April 20. Morongo Valley

May 11. L.A. River (Willow Street) and DeForest Park 🐦

Audubon-at-Home by Alan Pollack

E-mail Alan Pollack, our Audubon-at-Home Chair, with any questions you have with regard to creating a wildlife-friendly garden that can be used for publication. Alan 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 contacted at (818) 340-2347 or at alan.pollack@sfvaudubon.org. 🐦

Padres Pioneros Culmination Event



On Saturday, December 1, 2018 our chapter was honored to host the culminating event “The Good Heart Project,” at the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. The organization, whose mission is “to cultivate students as empowered scientists,” for the “benefit of their communities humanity and the Earth,” had participated in the Heal the Bay clean-up at the Sepulveda Basin. There we were introduced to Alonso Garcia and Rosa RiVera Furumoto, who is the project director. At the event Paula Orlovich invited the group to stage their event at the Basin so that we could lead the third grade students and their families on an educational nature walk that would incorporate the concepts they had learned over the past six weeks.



Our board member, Barbara Heidemann, took over the daunting task, of organizing the walks of over 150 participants. The students were from Dyer, San Fernando, O’Melveny, Sharp, Pacoima, and Telfair Elementary Schools. Our walk leaders Benny Jacob-Schwarz, Lynn Hopkins, Rose Leibowitz, Barbara Heidemann, and Paula Orlovich arrived early to set up our canopy and equipment. Carolyn Oppenheimer kept track of the binoculars and answered questions about our walks while handing out brochures. Cal State Northridge students volunteered as Spanish language translators for all of the walks.

As the students viewed the lake their exclamations of delight upon seeing the wildlife was all the gratitude we needed to confirm that this was an amazing opportunity. Thank you to all for a job well done and especially Barbara who was committed to creating a positive experience for the organization. —By Paula Orlovich 🐦



Report on November Monthly Field Trip by Richard Barth

On November 17 we visited Ventura Harbor and the adjacent Water Treatment Ponds. Weather conditions were perfect. At the ponds a previously-reported juvenile Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was a terrific sighting for us, but we topped that by finding and getting good views of a striking adult. Always among our target species at the harbor is Wandering Tattler—we spotted two individuals this year. Black Turnstone, Ruddy Turnstone, Black-bellied Plover, Spotted Sandpiper, Sanderling and Marbled Godwit made our list but we missed Surfbird. A Black Oystercatcher and a hybrid Black X American Oystercatcher were cooperative on a jetty close by. There were many Western Grebes, Double-crested Cormorants and Brown Pelicans at the harbor. Our gulls were Western, Heermann’s and Ring-billed. Duck species at the ponds included Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, Lesser Scaup, Cinnamon Teal, Ruddy Duck, Ring-necked, Bufflehead and Red-breasted Merganser. The ponds also produced Common Gallinule, White-faced Ibis, American White Pelican, Belted Kingfisher, Eared and Pied-billed Grebes, Sora (heard only), Black-crowned Night-Heron and the three other large herons. Warblers were Orange-crowned, Townsend’s, Yellow-rumped and Common Yellowthroat. Other species to be mentioned for the day were Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Say’s Phoebe, Red-winged Blackbird, Savannah Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow and Tree Swallow. 🐦

BIRD FEARED EXTINCT REDISCOVERED IN THE BAHAMAS

The Bahama Nuthatch, feared extinct from the catastrophic effects of Hurricane Matthew to Grand Bahama in 2016, has been rediscovered. The species is restricted to the native pine forests of the island. Surviving numbers are unknown, but recent sightings indicate there are at least five, including a juvenile. (Originally described at <https://abcbirds.org/article/bird-feared-extinct-rediscovered-in-the-bahamas/>) —Submitted by Mark Osokow.

Conservation Corner

As I write this on December 31, 2018, I'm looking forward to 2019 and to "moving the needle" on avian conservation opportunities in our Chapter territory and indeed, the entire state of California.

Regarding our San Fernando Valley, the focus will continue to be on the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area, Santa Susana Field Laboratory, and Chatsworth Nature Preserve as well as protection of other important wildlife areas and corridors. As appropriate in each of these important avian habitats we will also be addressing Climate Change and plastic pollution - serious threats to our local birds, in fact, to birds worldwide. Under the leadership of Board Member Mark Osokow, we will also establish a set of protocols and a study team to understand how wildlife and plants recover from the recent, devastating Woolsey Fire.

Regarding our state of California, the larger picture, I'll quote Sarah Rose, Executive Director, Audubon California:

"There are about four hundred bird species that regularly occur in California. This incredible diversity – from the tiny Calliope Hummingbird to the massive California Condor – is a treasure, and a responsibility. All too many of these birds face challenges such as habitat loss, pollution, climate change, and more. And it's up to us to protect them.

"In 2018, we [Audubon] put the Tricolored Blackbird on the state Endangered Species List. When the Trump Administration turned its back on migratory birds, we found a way to ensure their protection.

Together we can make progress for birds in 2019 by:

- Defending the Endangered Species and Migratory Bird Treaty Acts
- Fighting proposals for new offshore oil drilling
- Working with farmers to save tens of thousands of rare Tricolored Blackbirds at risk
- Ensuring minimum critical water is delivered to vital wildlife refuges and other habitats

There's nothing we can't do when we all pull together."

San Fernando Valley Audubon will be contributing to these important initiatives to the limits of our resources. Our organization's Mission Statement, which includes "To preserve and enhance the natural habitat within our territory" encourages us to do so.

Please call me at (818) 618-1652 or e-mail at Dave.weeshoff@sfvaudubon.org with questions, comments, or to enlist in our conservation activities on behalf of our feathered friends.

BIRDTHON 2019

Our annual Birdathon will take place in April and May of 2019. Birdathon is our primary fundraising event of the year. It includes activities that focus on spotting as many species of birds as possible and collecting donations from our generous donors. Funds raised by Birdathon enable SFVAS to host more than 2000 school children in the Sepulveda Basin Environmental Education Program (SBEEP), allow us to contribute to efforts to conserve habitat and to continue our mission of increasing public awareness and appreciation of wildlife and the natural environment.

Birdathon activities include many of our regularly scheduled monthly bird walks in addition to several once-a-year events, known as "Big Days." Birdathon leaders compete with each other and with themselves to improve their previous years' tallies. Everyone wins when SFVAS has funding to continue its important work. Look for details in the April/May *Phainopepla*. Please join in one or more Birdathon events!! Rather than a separate mailing, all information, sponsor forms, and donation envelopes will be included in the April/May newsletter and on our Website at www.sfvaudubon.org. —By Becky Arntzen

Photo of the Month

Do you have an interesting photo of a bird taken in/near the San Fernando Valley? Please submit your photos to Kathy.Barton@sfvaudubon.org. Or you can post to our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/sfvaudubon. Please include location, date, camera and lens info, a short account of how the photo was taken, and a profile of the photographer.

Nominating Committee by Muriel Kotin

The Nominating Committee (Diana Keeney, Rose Leibowitz, Carolyn Oppenheimer, and Muriel Kotin) is looking for volunteers who are interested in participating on our board of directors or committees for the coming SFVAS year, July 1, 2019—June 30, 2020. Most board members start their service as chairs of a committee or as elected board members at large. Serving on a committee can also be a great way to become more involved with and contribute to SFVAS.

Newcomers to the board are important! We are volunteers, so you don't have to have prior experience. It is a wonderful opportunity to expand your knowledge and expertise while helping SFVAS work to fulfill our mission: to preserve and enhance the natural habitat within our territory, to increase the public's awareness and appreciation of bird life and the natural environment, and to create a social environment that encourages individual development and participation. Please contact any committee member if you are interested in serving in any capacity. Please phone me at: (310) 457-5796 or e-mail at mkotin@adkotin.com.

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

President: Paula Orlovich (818) 481-5605
 1st Vice President: Teri Carnesciali (818) 892-5029
 2nd Vice President: Becky Arntzen (818) 761-6692
 Treasurer: Jim Houghton (818) 784-4077
 Corresponding Secretary: Lynn Maddox (818) 845-4688
 Recording Secretary: Kathy Barton (818) 929-2516

DIRECTORS

Felipe Lepe (818) 536-2069
 Diana Keeney (818) 998-3216
 Barbara Heidemann unpublished
 Joanne Millius (818) 335-5331
 Bonnie Flamer (818) 990-8877
 Benny Jacobs-Schwarz (818) 939-9913

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Bird Boxes: Carolyn Oppenheimer (818) 885-7493
 Bird Observatory: Mark Osokow unpublished
 Community Outreach: Sharon Ford (818) 780-5816
 Conservation: Dave Weeshoff (818) 618-1652
 Editor *Phainopepla*: Rebecca LeVine (818) 776-0881
 Finance: Pat Avery (626) 840-8226
 Youth Activities: Muriel Kotin (310) 457-5796

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Audubon-at-Home: Alan Pollack (818) 340-2347
 BirdFest: Rose Leibowitz (818) 579-4976
 Birdathon: Becky Arntzen (818) 761-6692
 Christmas Bird Count: Jim Moore (661) 298-1130
 Conservation Banquet: Becky Arntzen (818) 761-6692
 Paula Orlovich (818) 728-9838
 Education Classroom: Dave Weeshoff (818) 618-1652
 Education-SBEEP: Paula Orlovich (818) 728-9838
 Field Trips: Richard Barth (310) 276-0342
 Hansen Dam Rep: Dave Weeshoff (818) 618-1652
 Hansen Dam Walks: Pat Bates (818) 425-0962
 Hospitality: Teri Carnesciali (818) 892-5029
 Malibu Creek Bird Walk: Dave Barton (310) 990-6896
 Kathy Barton (818) 929-2516
 Lynn Maddox (818) 845-4688
 Membership: Lynn Maddox (818) 845-4688
 O'Melveny Bird Walk: Carolyn Oppenheimer (818) 885-7493
 OneWaterLA Group Rep.: Mark Osokow unpublished
 Photo of the Month: Kathy Barton (818) 929-2516
 Programs: Joanne Millius (818) 335-5331
 Sales & Service: Diana Keeney (818) 998-3216
 Scholarships and Grants: Jim Houghton (818) 784-4077
 Sepulveda Basin Steering: Muriel Kotin (310) 457-5796
 Sepulveda Bird Walks: Kris Ohlenkamp (805) 727-5007
 Social Media: Jim Houghton (818) 784-4077
 SSFL Special Representative: Mark Osokow unpublished
 Web Coordinator: Jim Houghton (818) 784-4077
 Young Birders Group: Rose Leibowitz (818) 579-4976

**TO BECOME A MEMBER AND/OR RENEW
 ONLINE GO TO
<https://www.sfvaudubon.org/membership/>
 It's fast, secure, and saves time and paper!**

Or mail this form and include a check made payable to:

SFV Audubon Society
 Attn: Membership
 P.O. Box 7769
 Van Nuys, CA 91409

Regular 1-yr Chapter Membership...\$25	\$ _____
1-yr Online Chapter Membership (No paper copy of <i>Phainopepla</i>).....\$20	\$ _____
Student 1-yr Chapter Membership...\$10	\$ _____
Tax Deductible Contribution to SFVAS	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

New Member Renewal School

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Phone _____

E-mail (PLEASE INCLUDE):

How did you learn about SFVAS?

The *PHAINOPEPLA*, published six times a year, is the newsletter of the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society, P.O. Box 7769, Van Nuys, CA 91409. 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, ecology, birding, chapter activities, and articles of interest to the membership are welcome for publication in the *PHAINOPEPLA*.

Material from other newsletters or newspapers 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.

Membership to National Audubon is separate and can be initiated on the website www.Audubon.org.

If you have any questions about membership, renewals, change of address or any other membership concerns, please contact Lynn Maddox at (818) 845-4688 or e-mail her at Lynn.Maddox@sfvaudubon.org.

For Chapter leaders' e-mail addresses, see our website:

www.SFVAudubon.org

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 Like

Found an injured animal? Call Wildlife Rescue Center at (818) 222-2658

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Phainopepla

San Fernando Valley Audubon Society
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SFVAS Bird Walks at Malibu Creek State Park to Re-Start in 2019

A team of SFVAS members visited Malibu Creek State Park, newly-reopened following the Woolsey Fire, on December 30, 2018. Their mission: to evaluate the park's condition and determine whether, and how soon, SFVAS's monthly bird walks could be re-commenced. SFVAS bird walks at the park were suspended in November after the park was closed as a result of damage due to the Woolsey Fire.



The visit provided SFVAS members Kathy and David Barton and Muriel and Allan Kotin with an opportunity to observe first-hand the extensive damage to the park wrought by the recent catastrophic fire. But despite the loss of certain park structures (including the employee residences, the historic Sepulveda Adobe, Red House, Hope Ranch and Reagan Ranch), the parking area restrooms continue to be operational, the Visitor's Center, as well as most of picnic tables, remain undamaged, and most of the footpaths customarily used in the bird walks have been cleared of debris and appear safe to use.

Prospects for the avifauna of the park appear hopeful. While tall grasses, willows, and chaparral were wiped out in many areas, such vegetation is likely to grow back quickly. Furthermore, many of the park's larger oaks, sycamores and other mature trees remain standing and appear likely to survive. Due to the recent rains, a carpet of fresh green grass has already sprouted over much of the ground, and seedlings of unidentified herbaceous plants raised hopes for wildflowers next spring. In their three-and-a-half hour visit, covering three miles of the park's trails, the SFVAS team counted over 21 species of birds, including Red-breasted Sapsucker, White-breasted Nuthatch, Hermit Thrush, and Lark Sparrow. Also seen were three healthy-looking foraging mule deer.



SFVAS's regular monthly bird walks at Malibu Creek State Park have re-commenced at 8:00 a.m. on the third Sunday of each calendar month, beginning January 20, 2019. The January 20 bird walk was led by Muriel and Allan Kotin and provided a good opportunity to acquaint visitors with the "new" Malibu Creek State Park. Subsequent walks will be led by Kathy and David Barton and should last until approximately 11 or 11:30 a.m. Contact Kathy Barton at (818) 929-2516 or David Barton at (310) 990-6896 for further details. *Photos by David Barton*

