



Phainopepla

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Monthly Programs

General Membership Meetings

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

Thursday, February 23, 2017, 7:00–9:00 p.m.

BIRDS & THEIR NAMES
AVES, OISEAUX, NDEGE,
VÖGEL, PÁSSARO, BRIDD

Thomas J. Hinnebusch
Prof. Emeritus of Linguistics and African Langs.
Dept. of Linguistics, UCLA



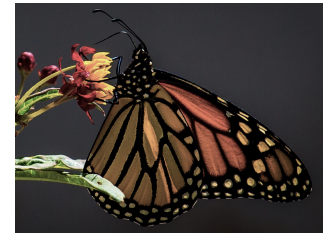
A bird by any other name...Have you ever wondered why a Three-wattled Bellbird is so named, or why an American Robin is not a "Rusty-breasted Thrush," or why in the world there are names like buzzard, bustard, ptarmigan, seedsnipe, bulbul, Phainopepla, Phalarope, or Sputzy? Tom is the author of a national "bestseller," *Swahili: A Foundation for Speaking, Reading and Writing*. He spent three years in Tanzania, over a year in Kenya, and in addition, studied languages in other African countries.

Now you might ask, what is Tom's connection to birding? Tom has been interested in birds since the sixth grade. He always travelled with binoculars and began to learn more and more about the birds in the areas he studied and lived. He is a member of the Santa Monica Bay Audubon Society and the South West Bird Study Club.

SFVAS General Membership Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month (except July, August, and November). EVERYONE IS WELCOME to join us at 7:00 p.m. for refreshments; program begins at 7:20 p.m. We meet at the San Fernando Valley Arts & Cultural Center. See Calendar of Events, pages 6–8, for directions.

Thursday, March 23, 2017, 7:00–9:00 p.m.
Topic: Saving Monarchs while Creating a Butterfly Friendly Garden

Lynne Godin and Rick Krause are the owners of *This is a Monarchy*. They both grew up in sunny Southern California. A few years back, Rick saw an ad in the local paper that simply stated, "Got Milkweed?" They both reminisced about growing up where wild native milkweed and butterflies were abundant and agreed they hadn't seen any butterflies around in years. Out of curiosity, they called the number on the ad and, after a very heartwarming discussion about how Monarchs are threatened and could eventually become extinct, they brought home seven plants and three caterpillars. The rest is history. That is how *"This is a Monarchy"* began. They have housed thousands of caterpillars in their backyard and since becoming a **Monarch Way Station** in 2011, have proudly released over 3,000 Monarchs.



They offer YOU the information to get involved in saving this magnificent butterfly. They help to create butterfly gardens, educate children and adults alike at their butterfly encounters, local schools, and garden clubs. *This is a Monarchy* raises and sells many different varieties of host and nectar plants so you can start your own butterfly gardens at home. Come and learn about this amazing butterfly!

Rustic Awards Luncheon - You Are Invited!

Exciting News! Our Annual Conservation Awards Luncheon will be held on March 4, at Franklin Canyon Park in the event room next to the Visitor Center. Our honoree, former **Congressman Anthony C. Beilenson** will speak, following the presentation of the award for his dedication to the Santa Monica Mountains and Balboa Park.

In lieu of a Service Award this year, we will be celebrating our wonderful Angelfest Committee which worked tirelessly to prevent a music festival from being held next to the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve. We will be thanking **Sharon Ford, Jim Houghton, Muriel Kotin, Kris Ohlenkamp, Mark Osokow, Dave Weeshoff, and Jackie Wollner.**

The luncheon will be held at 1:00 p.m. There will be an optional bird walk led by Muriel Kotin, meeting at the Visitors Center at 11:30 for early birders!

The luncheon, catered by Harvest Moon, will feature delicious sandwiches, savory salads, and scrumptious deserts. We will have our traditional basket raffle along with silent auction of the lovely native plant centerpieces.


To facilitate access to the venue, signage will be placed from the junction of Coldwater Canyon and Franklin Canyon Roads (from the SFV, turn right at the junction onto Franklin Canyon Road). Handicapped parking will be available as well as drop off areas for attendees as needed. Please contact Paula Orlovich to reserve a handicapped parking space at paulaorlovich@yahoo.com. For directions, Google Sooky Goldman Nature Center or use GPS.

The cost is \$35.00. Payment may be made on our website or by check mailed to P.O. Box 7769, Van Nuys CA, 91409. RSVP by February 25. Casual Attire! *Photo by Rose Leibowitz, Wood Ducks, Franklin Canyon.*



Anthony C. Beilenson, 2017 Conservation Award Recipient



Join us as we honor former Congressman, and long-time environmentalist, Anthony "Tony" C. Beilenson, with the 2017 Conservation Award. In 1978 Mr. Beilenson introduced legislation creating the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA). In 1998, in tribute to his long career of community and government service to California, Lake Balboa Park in Van Nuys was renamed the "Anthony C. Beilenson Park." The park, which is located along Balboa Boulevard in Van Nuys, is an 80-acre recreation facility, with Balboa Lake at its center. In 2012 the New Visitor Center at the King Gillette Ranch was named after him. This is where SFVAS hosts its annual BirdFest. 

The Great Backyard Bird Count What is the GBBC?

The 2017 GBBC will take place Friday, February 17, through Monday, February 20. Please join us for the 20th annual count!

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are.


GBBC checklists can be accepted from anywhere in the world!

Everyone is welcome—from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds.

Participants tally the number of individual birds of each species they see during their count period. They enter these numbers on the GBBC website, <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/howto.html>. (Printable bird lists for your area are available).

New participants must set up a free GBBC account to submit their checklists or use login information from an existing account for any other Cornell Lab citizen-science project.

As the count progresses, anyone with Internet access can explore what is being reported. Participants may also send in photographs of the birds they see for the GBBC photo contest. Go to: <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/howto.html> to sign up.

The Great Backyard Bird Count is led by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, with partner Bird Studies Canada and sponsorship from Wild Birds Unlimited. 



2016 Christmas Bird Count (CBC) By Jim Moore, *Photos by Jim Hanley*

We escaped Thursday's rain and woke up to clear, cool skies on Saturday morning, December 17, making perfect conditions to count birds. This year, we did a little better than last year. Forty-three counters covered 35 locations, netting 121 species and 13,265 individuals. Results better than last year, but still well below our 20 year average of 127 species and 15,500 individuals.

Applying the rules of National Audubon, we added 14 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 135. Count week includes the three days before and after count day. So, the birds are still there, but hard to find—likely because we don't have enough counters and need broader coverage of the circle, as some were seen in areas we did not count. We counted in the large parks and well know birding areas including Sepulveda Basin, Chatsworth Nature Preserve and Hansen Dam as well as some smaller parks, but clearly missed some productive areas.

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 117th count and much to our credit, our 60th successive CBC, which started in 1957.

There were some highlights, including two new species never before recorded in the count circle. This is exceptional, considering we've been at it so long. A **Blackburnian Warbler** was spotted at Hansen Dam by Kimball Garrett and a **Hammond's Flycatcher** at Valley Plaza Park by Dick Barth. The warbler a summer resident of eastern North America is rarely seen in southern California, even during the fall migration. The Hammond's flycatcher is probably an over wintering bird as most of the population migrates south in the fall.

Also, Kris Ohlenkamp was excited to find a **Long-eared Owl** in the LA River near Balboa Park. We used to see them with some regularity in the northern slope of the Santa Monica mountains near the Encino Reservoir. It is now closed to public access making it difficult to count birds in the area.

And Mark Osokow and Amy Worell had good looks at a **Grasshopper Sparrow** at the Chatsworth Nature Reserve. It is only the second time it has been seen in our count circle.



Other uncommon bird sightings include:

- A **Cackling Goose** seen in a flock of Canada Geese at Woodley golf course.
- Six **Blue-winged Teal** seen at the Pacoima Spreading Grounds. Only the 14th time in our 60-year history.
- A **Williamson's Sapsucker** seen during count week at Veterans Park.
- A **Pacific-slope Flycatcher** seen during count week at Hansen Dam by birders trying to relocate the Blackburnian Warbler. It has yet to be recorded in our circle on count day.
- **Plumbeous Vireo** was seen during count week by Dick Barth at Valley Plaza Park, but was not refound during the count.
- A **Yellow Warbler** seen at Los Encino's State Historical Park. Only the third time it has been seen in count circle on count day.
- A **Hooded Oriole** was seen near Valley College on count week. This species has only been recorded four times in our circle, although it seems more are now wintering in the area.

Where have the ducks, raptors, and shorebirds gone? Habitat hasn't changed that much, but many have gone missing, some for some time now.

- **Greater White-fronted Goose**, seen on 24 previous counts, including every year from 2006 to 2014.
- **Cinnamon Teal**, seen on 35 previous counts, but not since 2011.
- **Common Merganser**, seen on 27 previous counts, but virtually out of sight since the early 90s.
- **White-tailed Kite**, seen on 39 previous counts, but not since 2013
- **Northern Harrier**, wow, seen in all but six counts, but not in 2014 or this year.
- **Sora**, seen on 26 previous counts.
- **Spotted Sandpiper**, another mystery, seen on 55 of our 60 counts, but not this year.
- **Western Sandpiper**, seen on 40 previous counts.
- **Long-billed Dowitcher**, seen on 30 previous counts.
- **Wilson's Snipe**, seen on 47 previous counts. These birds are real good at hiding, but we haven't seen as many in the past few years. In 1993, 48 were counted.

Also missing are:

- **Spotted Dove**, seen on 43 previous counts, but not since 2002. Blame Cooper's Hawks and Eurasian Collared-Doves for their disappearance. But they didn't belong here in the first place.

(Continued next page)

- **Costa's Hummingbird**, seen on 26 previous counts. They may be undercounted, misidentified as Anna's instead.
- **Horned Lark**, it used to be here, seen 28 times, but only in small numbers since the early 80s.
- **Mountain Chickadee**, seen 32 times, but only off and on the last few years. We recorded 41 back in 1987.
- **Marsh Wren**, recorded 36 times, but not much and only in low numbers recently.
- **Purple Finch**, recorded 45 times, but not much recently. They are probably undercounted.

And, we missed some common birds on count day which were reported on eBird during count week including Snow Goose, Northern Pintail, Canvasback, and Redhead.

Loggerhead Shrike numbers remain low. Six were seen this count, an encouraging blip in a continuing downward trend. Seventy were counted in 2000 and they have been recorded in the teens before then.

The same can be said for Horned Larks. They have not been recorded since 1997, but seen on 28 earlier counts including 570 individuals in 1970. 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.

This year's winner for the highest count was American Crow with 2035 individuals, most seen at dusk at Hansen Dam, returning from their feeding grounds, a common occurrence, in big numbers in many locations in southern California. American Coot, the usual winner took second place this year with 1096 individuals. Honorable mention goes to Canada Geese (551), American Wigeon (524), Mallard (655), Double-crested Cormorant (576), Rock Pigeon (528), Mourning Dove (451), European Starling (418), Yellow-rumped Warbler (714), White-crowned Sparrows (892) and an unusual number of Western Meadowlarks (456).

This year however, for the second year in a row we didn't count any bird with the highest ever number of individuals and strangely enough none with the lowest ever count. When comparing species count totals over the past 20 years, Canada Goose and Brewers Blackbird were at their lowest count and American Crow at its highest.

Of interest are the species that have been recorded on all 60 counts. These include Canada Goose, American Wigeon, Mallard, Pied-billed Grebe, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Coot, Killdeer, Ring-billed Gull, Mourning Dove, Anna's Hummingbird, Northern Flicker, American Kestrel, Black Phoebe, Say's Phoebe, California Scrub-Jay, American Crow, Oak Titmouse, Bushtit, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Northern Mockingbird, American Pipit, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Spotted Towhee, California Towhee, Lark Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Western Meadowlark, Brewer's Blackbird, House Finch, Lesser Goldfinch, and House Sparrow.

Sepulveda Basin won the award for the most species. Kris Ohlenkamp, who has led this sector continuously since 1982, reported 88 species with 2943 individuals, with nine unique species, including Cackling Goose, Green-winged Teal, Greater Yellowlegs, Least Sandpiper, Herring Gull, Long-eared Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Yellow-chevroned Parakeet, and Black-throated Gray Warbler.

Award for the most individuals goes to Hansen Dam, where Kimball Garrett counted 77 species and 3331 individuals. Unique species include Hairy Woodpecker and Blackburnian Warbler

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 52 species with 1716 individuals, including Grasshopper and Vesper Sparrows not seen anywhere else in the circle.

Other unique sightings included Blue-winged Teal, seen by Heather Medvitz at the Pacoima spreading grounds, Hammond's Flycatcher seen by Dick Barth at Valley Plaza Park, a Yellow Warbler seen by Pat Bates at Encino State Historical Park, a Slate-colored Junco seen during the Wild Wings field trip led by Scott Logan at Veteran's Park and a Phainopepla was also seen by Scott in Caballero Canyon, near his home.

Other unique species recorded in eBird on count day included Black-necked Stilts at Sepulveda basin. 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 group leaders and counters who gave several hours of their holiday season to participate.

Dick Barth (l)	Mark Collis	Jim Hanley	Brett LeVine	Justine Morgan
David Barton	Alexander deBarros	Jim Hardesty (l)	Rebecca LeVine	Dick Norton (l)
Kathy Barton	Mary Ellen Dittmore	Diana Hibberman	Scott Logan (l)	Ann Ohlenkamp
Angelique Bash	Tracy Drake (l)	Kathleen Hood	Judy Matsuoka (l)	Kris Ohlenkamp (l)
Pat Bates (l)	Debbie Drews	Judy Howell	Becky McDonald	Mark Osokow (l)
Debbie Beckett	Barbara Gaitley	Allan Kotin	Dan McDonald	Clyde Singleton
Brian Bielfelt	Kimball Garrett (l)	Muriel Kotin (l)	Heather Medvitz (l)	Amy Worell
Carla Bollinger	Wendi Gladstone	Art Langton (l)	Richard Medvitz	(l) leader
Teri Carnesciali	Eve Haberfield	Rose Leibowitz (l)	Jim Moore (l) (c)	(c) compiler

2016 Christmas Bird Count Summary

cw Snow Goose	8	Herring Gull	9	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
2 Ross' Goose	62	Gull species	57	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
1 Cackling Goose	528	Rock Pigeon	24	Wrentit
551 Canada Goose	35	Band-tailed Pigeon	20	Western Bluebird
4 Mute Swan	39	Eurasian Collared-Dove	13	Hermit Thrush
cw Wood Duck	451	Mourning Dove	37	American Robin
11 Gadwall	2	Greater Roadrunner	18	California Thrasher
524 American Wigeon	3	Great Horned Owl	48	Northern Mockingbird
655 Mallard	1	Long-eared Owl	418	European Starling
6 Blue-winged Teal	107	White Throated Swift	53	American Pipit
153 Northern Shoveler	87	Anna's Hummingbird	34	Cedar Waxwing
cw Northern Pintail	38	Allen's Hummingbird	1	Phainopepla
6 Green-winged Teal	3	Hummingbird species	6	Orange-crowned Warbler
cw Canvasback	3	Belted Kingfisher	10	Common Yellowthroat
cw Redhead	53	Acorn Woodpecker	1	Blackburnian Warbler
49 Ring-necked Duck	cw	Williamson's Sapsucker	1	Yellow Warbler
15 Lesser Scaup	7	Red-breasted Sapsucker	714	Yellow-rumped Warbler
20 Bufflehead	30	Nuttall's Woodpecker	1	Black-throated Gray Warbler
11 Hooded Merganser	5	Downey Woodpecker	4	Townsend's Warbler
75 Ruddy Duck	1	Hairy Woodpecker	39	Spotted Towhee
26 California Quail	25	Northern Flicker (red-shafted)	6	Rufous-crowned Sparrow
41 Pied-billed Grebe	8	American Kestrel	112	California Towhee
2 Eared Grebe	4	Merlin	61	Chipping Sparrow
19 Western Grebe	3	Peregrine Falcon	1	Grasshopper Sparrow
cw Clark's Grebe	2	Yellow-chevron Parakeet	9	Vesper Sparrow
576 Double-crested Cormorant	cw	Pacific-slope Flycatcher	203	Lark Sparrow
91 American White Pelican	1	Hammond's Flycatcher	63	Savannah Sparrow
24 Great Blue Heron	138	Black Phoebe	5	Fox Sparrow
24 Great Egret	28	Say's Phoebe	59	Song Sparrow
8 Snowy Egret	30	Cassin's Kingbird	8	Lincoln's Sparrow
4 Green Heron	6	Loggerhead Shrike	892	White-crowned Sparrow
13 Black-crowned Night-Heron	cw	Plumbeous Vireo	17	Golden-crowned Sparrow
47 Turkey Vulture	3	Hutton's Vireo	151	Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon)
4 Osprey	111	California Scrub-Jay	1	Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored)
3 Sharp-shinned Hawk	2035	American Crow	2	Sparrow species
8 Cooper's Hawk	148	Common Raven	cw	Western Tanager
4 Red-shouldered Hawk	cw	Northern Rough-wing Swallow	48	Red-winged Blackbird
47 Red-tailed Hawk	4	Tree Swallow	cw	Tricolored Blackbird
1096 American Coot	cw	Barn Swallow	456	Western Meadowlark
9 Black-necked Stilt	22	Oak Titmouse	98	Brewer's Blackbird
13 Killdeer	224	Bushtit	109	Great-tailed Grackle
2 Greater Yellowlegs	10	White-breasted Nuthatch	27	Brown-headed Cowbird
40 Least Sandpiper	17	Rock Wren	311	House Finch
70 Ring-billed Gull	3	Canyon Wren	140	Lesser Goldfinch
50 Western Gull	3	House Wren	62	American Goldfinch
215 California Gull	29	Bewick's Wren	80	House Sparrows
			135	Total Species
			13,265	Individuals

February

Calendar of Events

Thursday, February 2 & Saturday,

February 4. Special Workshop on Shorebirds. On Thursday, at the San Fernando Valley Arts and Cultural Center, 18313 Oxnard St., Tarzana, from 7:00—9:00 p.m., Art Langton will present an overview of the birds likely to be seen at Malibu Lagoon, followed by a field trip to Malibu Lagoon on Saturday, February 4, from 8:00—11:00 a.m.

Numbers will be limited to 20 and priority will be given to Local Members of our Chapter. National Members of our Chapter and non-members will be charged a \$10 fee to cover rental of the gallery. Please contact Rose Leibowitz at roselbirds@gmail.com, or call (818) 990-5405 to reserve your spot.

Saturday, February 4. Castaic Lake Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m.–12:00 p.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 at (661) 257-4050.

Sunday, February 5. 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. Contact him at kris.ohlenkamp@sfsaudubon.org or (747) 444-9683.

Saturday, February 11. Beginners and Family Bird Walk. 9:00–11:00 a.m. Come on out for a fun bird walk at Sepulveda Basin! These popular walks are designed for beginning birders and school-age children. Binoculars are available for loan. 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. Meet across the road from the parking lot at the low buildings. Leader(s): Muriel Kotin, (310) 457-5796 or Diana Keeney, (818) 998-3216. Reservations are not needed except for large groups. **Rain cancels.** Visit our website, www.sfsaudubon.org.

Saturday, February 11. 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 12. 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 17—Monday, February 20. 20th Annual 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, and submit your sightings to <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/howto.html>. For more information, see page 5.

Saturday, February 18. 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 18. 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) 252-6187.

Sunday, February 19. 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.

Leader(s): Muriel Kotin (310) 457-5796 and/or Art Langton, (818) 887-0973.

Tuesday, February 21. Weekday Walk at O'Melveny Park, Granada Hills. 9:00 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@sfgvaudubon.org.

Thursday, February, 23. SFVAS General Membership Meeting. Topic: Birds and Their Names. Presenter: Thomas Hinnebusch. 7:00 p.m. For more information, see Monthly Programs, page one. **Location: San Fernando Valley Arts & Cultural Center, 18312 Oxnard Street, Tarzana, CA. (818) 697-5525.** Enjoy the gallery and shop our sales table. **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. Everyone is welcome!

Saturday, February 25. Hansen Dam Bird Walk. 9:00 a.m. Time to see some cactus wrens. The walks will start at the Gabrieleno Equestrian Park, 11126 Orcas Avenue, Lake View Terrace, California 91342. Directions: From the 118 Eastbound to the 210 Freeway, Exit at Osborne. Turn left, you will be on Foothill, follow Foothill Blvd. to Orcas and turn right, continue straight into park. From CA 210 in Pasadena go West on I-210. Exit at Wheatland and go right to Foothill Blvd., go left to Orcas, and then left on Orcas into Park. Follow driveway curving left to furthest (dirt) parking area. In the event of mud, park in the furthest paved lot. Rain may cancel—please contact Leader Pat Bates, (818) 425-0962 or pat.bates@sfgvaudubon.org if conditions are questionable.

Saturday, February 25. Young Birders Group Bird Walk. O'Melveny Park. 17300 Sesnon Boulevard, Granada Hills, CA 91344. 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: 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. Leader(s) Alexander and/or Olivia. For more information, please e-mail Rose Leibowitz at roselbirds@gmail.com, or call (818) 990-5405.

March

Saturday, March 4. Annual Conservation Awards Luncheon. 1:00 p.m. Join us as we honor our **Conservation Award Recipient: Former U.S. Congressman Anthony C. Beilenson**, and pay tribute to our **AngelFest Committee: Sharon Ford, Jim Houghton, Muriel Kotin, Kris Ohlenkamp, Mark Osokow, Dave Weeshoff, and Jackie Wollner.** Muriel Kotin will lead a bird walk at 11:30 a.m. for early

birders. Location: Sooky Goldman Nature Center at Franklin Canyon Park. 2600 Franklin Canyon, Beverly Hills, 90210.

Saturday, March 4. Castaic Lake Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m.–12:00 p.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 at (661) 257-4050.

Sunday, March 5. 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. Contact him at kris.ohlenkamp@sfgvaudubon.org or (747) 444-9683.

Saturday, March 11. FINAL Beginners and Family Bird Walk OF THE SEASON!. 9:00–11:00 a.m. Come on out for a fun bird walk at Sepulveda Basin! These popular walks, designed for beginning birders and school-age children. Binoculars are available for loan. 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. Meet across the road from the parking lot at the low buildings. Leader(s): Muriel Kotin, (310) 457-5796 or Diana Keeney, (818) 998-3216. Reservations are not needed except for large groups. **Rain cancels.** Please visit our website www.sfgvaudubon.org.

Saturday, March 11. 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, March 12. Wildwood Canyon Bird Walk, Burbank. 9:00–11:00 a.m. See Sunday, February 12 for directions. Leader: Mike Mc Horney, (818) 845-0166.

Saturday, March 18-19. Monthly Field Trip: Morro Bay Weekend! The first day, **Saturday, March 18**, 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 19**, 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 18. 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) 252-6187.

Sunday, March 19. 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. Leader(s): Muriel Kotin (310) 457-5796 and/or Art Langton, (818) 887-0973.

Tuesday, March 21. Weekday Walk at O'Melveny Park, Granada Hills. 9:00 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@sfvadubon.org.

Thursday, March, 23. SFVAS General Membership Meeting. Topic: *This is a Monarchy!* Presenters: Lynne Godin and Rick Krause. 7:30 p.m. For more information, see Monthly Programs, page one. **Location: San Fernando Valley Arts & Cultural Center, 18312 Oxnard Street, Tarzana, CA. (818) 697-5525.** Enjoy the gallery and shop our sales table. **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. Everyone is welcome!

Saturday, March 25. Hansen Dam Bird Walk. 9:00 a.m. Time to see some cactus wrens. The walks will start at the Gabrieleno Equestrian Park, 11126 Orcas Avenue, Lake View Terrace, California 91342. Directions: From the 118 Eastbound to the 210 Freeway, Exit at Osborne. Turn left, you will be on Foothill, follow Foothill Blvd. to Orcas and turn right, continue straight into park. From CA 210 in Pasadena go West on I-210. Exit at Wheatland and go right to Foothill Blvd., go left to Orcas, and then left on Orcas into Park. Follow driveway curving left to furthest (dirt) parking area. In the event of mud, park in the furthest paved lot. Rain may cancel—please contact Leader Pat Bates, (818) 425-0962 or pat.bates@sfvadubon.org if conditions are questionable.

Saturday, March 25. 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 Canyon 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) 990-5405.

Monday, March 27. SFVAS Board Meeting. 7:30 p.m. NOTE LATER START TIME. San Fernando Valley Arts & Cultural Center, 18312 Oxnard St., Tarzana. It is located between White Oak & Reseda. Parking area up the alley behind the center.

Future Field Trips (details later):

April 22. Morongo Valley

May 13. To be announced...possibly Walker Ranch, depending on accessibility and conditions there.

November Field Trip Report *by Richard Barth*

November 19 marked our field trip to Ventura Harbor and Water Treatment Ponds. An enthusiastic group of participants enjoyed mild, clear weather. Shorebirds on the rocky harbor jetties included Black Turnstone, Ruddy Turnstone, Black Oystercatcher, a hybrid Black X American Oystercatcher, Willet and Spotted Sandpiper---we unfortunately missed Surf-bird and Wandering Tattler. The waterfowl of interest for the day were Cinnamon Teal, Northern Shoveler, Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Duck, Red-breasted Merganser, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead and Surf Scoter. Pied-billed, Eared, Western and Clark's Grebe were present as were Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Black-crowned Night-Heron and Green Heron. We saw both Brown and American White Pelican. Bonaparte's and Heermann's topped the list of gulls on hand. Western Meadowlark was well represented and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher has become a reliable find in the habitat around the treatment ponds. Warblers were in short supply but we tallied Yellow-rumped, Orange-crowned (heard) and Common Yellowthroat. Other species on our day list included Belted Kingfisher, Bewick's Wren, Caspian Tern, Ruby-crowned Kinglet and the three expected cormorants. Say's Phoebe and Common Loon were seen after the walk had concluded. 🐦

Conservation Committee Report

We have heard some unsettling things about federal conservation policy since the election that will have significant implications for birds and nature in all of California and beyond. The incoming administration has made it clear that it will act to push many of our most imperiled birds and habitats closer to the brink. This administration intends to open our coastlines to unlimited oil drilling, divert water from wildlife refuges, undo the Endangered Species Act, sell off public lands to private interests, halt any action to address climate change, and abandon renewable energy in favor of fracking and coal mining. And this is just the beginning.

We may have to fight to retain all our past victories—including protecting endangered species such as the California Condor, the Western Snowy Plover, and the Coastal California Gnatcatcher. Only this time the odds will be stacked decidedly against us.

To do so, we will embrace in all our local, state and national activities the very communities that this administration seeks to marginalize. We reaffirm our commitment to welcome all people to our centers, sanctuaries, preserves, events, and workshops—to learn with us, to be inspired with us, and to work alongside us. Just as we value our diversity in birds, we also value the richness and diversity in our society—and we will draw upon this strength as we face the challenges ahead.

We need your help. Please continue to speak loudly on behalf of birds—in your community, in California, and at the national level. Please call Dave Weeshoff at (818) 618-1652 for more information and to learn how you can help with the crucial tasks at hand. 🐦

Nominating Committee by Muriel Kotin

The Nominating Committee (Kathy Barton, Felipe Lepe, and I) is looking for volunteers who are interested in participating on our board of directors or committees. 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.

Please contact me if you are interested in becoming a member of the team, whether as an elected board member, committee chair, or committee member. 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 phone me at my home: (310) 457-5796 or email me at akotin@earthlink.net. 🐦

Audubon-at-Home by Alan Pollack

For those who are just now receiving/reading the Phainopepla, my series of articles focused on gardening for wildlife is now on our SFVAudubon.org Website. Click on the Conservation page and then on Alan's blog.

For those of you who have troubles with wildlife in your garden and wish the critters would go away, do the opposite of what I have encouraged wildlife lovers to do—eliminate all sources of food, water, shelter, and places to raise young ones.

I was asked what my advice is regarding water features in this time of terrible drought. Birdbaths require very little water

replenishment. Ponds, more so, but if you don't have a pool in your yard, I think it's worth installing. If you do have a pool, then no—it already takes quite a bit of water to maintain.

Please e-mail Alan Pollack, our Audubon-at-Home Chair, with any questions you have regarding 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@sfaudubon.org.

Phainopepla Photo of the Month

Black-crowned Night-Heron (Nycticorax nycticorax)

Gary Park

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, 5/3/2015

NIKON D7200 with an AF-S Nikkor 80-400mm, at f/4.5-5.6G ED VR, at 1/3200, ISO:400



This issue's photo of the month features the Black-crowned Night-Heron, a familiar sight for visitors to the wildlife lake. Our bird's scientific name means "night crow" (actually, "night crow night crow" but who's counting), and was purportedly bestowed by Linnaeus

for its raucous squawk. You can likely spot several of these elegant birds, crouching quietly at the lake's edge, hunting for fish or other prey. The photographer, Gary Park, is a retired computer programmer who has done photography as a hobby since the age of 16. "I have always appreciated birds as a photographic subject, but only started "birding" in 2008. I now find it far more rewarding when I know what I have in the lens." You can check out more of Gary's photos on his website: <http://www.garyparktookthese.com/>.

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. 🐦

Birdathon 2017 by Pat Avery

Our annual Birdathon will place during April and May of 2017. Birdathon, our primary fundraising event of the year, involves many activities, that all focus on spotting as many species of birds as possible and collecting donations from generous sponsors.

Funds generated by Birdathon enable SFVAS to host over 2,000 school children in the Sepulveda Basin Environmental Education Program, 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 will include many of our regularly scheduled monthly bird walks in addition to several once-

a-year marathon events, known as "Big Days." Birdathon leaders will compete with each other and with themselves, trying to improve previous years' tallies! And everyone wins when SFVAS has funding to continue its important functions! Two Birdathon events begun recently will continue in 2017: The Children's Birdathon and The Big Sit. The Children's Birdathon is for junior birders who tally bird species with their families on a specified day. The Big Sit is an event for anyone who enjoys sitting still and letting the birds come to them. Watch for details in the April/May Phainopepla. Please plan to participate in one or more Birdathon events! Instead of a separate mailing, all information, sponsor forms, and donation envelopes will be included in the newsletter and on our Website at www.sfvaudubon.org.

National Audubon President, David Yarnold, presents the State of Our Audubon Union

Date: Friday, March 17, 2017

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: Mile Square Park Banquet Center, Fountain Valley, CA

Please join Sea and Sage Audubon Society at our March Annual Dinner—speaker is our National Audubon President, David Yarnold—coming to us from his home in New York. He is an outspoken and eloquent advocate for birds and the environment. Mr. Yarnold became Audubon's 10th president in 2010, charged with leading a turnaround that would expand Audubon's effectiveness while building on the organization's strong conservation legacy. With 463 local Chapters, 22 state offices and 44 Audubon Centers across the country, Audubon connects nearly four million people using science, advocacy and education. "We are all Audubon," Yarnold says. "No other organization has our wingspan when it comes to being able to drive conservation action, whether in individual backyards or in Congress."

Please check our website www.seaandsageaudubon.org for information about reservations and pricing. We will also have a great silent auction. See you there!

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

President:	Rose Leibowitz	(818) 990-5405
1 st Vice President:	Paula Orlovich	(818) 728-9838
2 nd Vice President:	Diana Keeney	(818) 998-3216
Treasurer:	Pat Bates	(818) 425-0962
Corresponding Secretary:	Lynn Maddox	(818) 845-4688
Recording Secretary:	Becky Arntzen	(818) 761-6692

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Jim Houghton	(818) 784-4077
Jeanne Kolasz	(818) 421-9807
Teri Carnesciali	(818) 892-5029
Kathy Barton	(818) 929-2516
Felipe Lepe	(818) 536-2060

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Audubon-at-Home:	Alan Pollack	(818) 340-2347
Bird Observatory:	Mark Osokow	unpublished
Birdathon:	Pat Avery	(626) 840-8226
Christmas Bird Count:	Jim Moore	(661) 298-1130
College Conservation:	Carolyn Oppenheimer	(818) 885-7493
Community Outreach:	Sharon Ford	(818) 780-5816
Conservation:	Dave Weeshoff	(818) 618-1652
Descanso Bird Station:	Dottie Ecker	(818) 790-0659
Education Classroom:	Dave Weeshoff	(818) 618-1652
Education-SBEEP:	Paula Orlovich	(818) 728-9838
Field Trips:	Richard Barth	(310) 276-0342
Finance:	Jim Houghton	(818) 784-4077
Hospitality:	Helene White	(818) 816-7933
Membership:	Lynn Maddox	(818) 845-4688
Phainopepla Editor:	Rebecca LeVine	(818) 776-0881
Programs:	Heather Medvitz	(818) 222-4430
Publicity:	OPEN	
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Sepulveda Basin Steering:	Muriel Kotin	(310) 457-5796
Social Media:	Jackie Wollner	(818) 989-4543
Web Coordinator:	Jim Houghton	(818) 784-4077
Youth Activities:	Muriel Kotin	(310) 457-5796

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Conservation Banquet:	Paula Orlovich	(818) 728-9838
Hansen Dam Rep:	Dave Weeshoff	(818) 618-1652
Hansen Dam Walks:	Pat Bates	(818) 425-0962
Malibu Creek Bird Walk:	Muriel Kotin	(310) 457-5796
	Art Langton	(818) 887-0973
O'Melveny Bird Walk:	Carolyn Oppenheimer	(818) 885-7493
Photo of the Month:	Kathy Barton	(818) 929-2516
Recycled Water Advisory Grp:	Mark Osokow	unpublished
Sepulveda Bird Walks:	Kris Ohlenkamp	(747) 444-9683
SSFL Public Participation Grp	Mark Osokow	unpublished
Young Birders Group:	Rose Leibowitz	(818) 990-5405

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

www.SFVAudubon.org

Follow us on  Instagram and  **Twitter**
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 You can become a member and/or renew online at
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 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	\$ _____
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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, 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 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.

Phainopepla

San Fernando Valley Audubon Society
PO Box 7769
Van Nuys, CA 91409-7769

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San Fernando Valley Audubon Society Conservation Awards Luncheon

Saturday, March 4, 2017

1:00 p.m.

Location: Franklin Canyon Sooky Goldman Visitor Center
2600 Franklin Canyon Drive, Beverly Hills, 90210

Conservation Award Recipient: Former U.S. Congressman, Anthony C. Beilenson

Also honoring our AngelFest Committee: **Sharon Ford, Jim Houghton, Muriel Kotin, Kris Ohlenkamp,
Mark Osokow, Dave Weeshoff, and Jackie Wollner**

Special Bird Walk, 11:30 a.m., led by: Muriel Kotin

Cost: \$35.00 (including tax/tip)

Guest Name(s) _____

E-mail _____ Phone _____

Enclosed is my check for _____ payable to "San Fernando Valley Audubon Society"

Please mail to SFVAS, PO Box 7769, Van Nuys, CA 91409-7769 (Attn: Luncheon) **OR**

Pay online via PayPal at our Website (www.SFVAudubon.org). Click on the **SUPPORT SFVAS** button.

RSVP by February 25, 2017