



Phainopepla

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For Nature Education and the Conservation of Wildlife

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Online speaker presentations for SFVAS

As the pandemic has forced us to move most of our activities online, speaker presentations have become a prominent part of our monthly SFVAS meetings. We hope you did not miss the November talk about Wild Turkeys in California presented by Katherine Miller from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. If you lose the e-mail invitation for any of our talks, a replicate announcement is always sent out the day before the presentation. Just search your e-mails for the word "REMINDER" and that should give you the direct Zoom link to attend the talk.

General Membership Meetings: – Zoom Presentations –

Thursday, December 17, 2020

7:00—8:00 p.m.

Guest Speaker: Amie MacDonald



General Membership Meetings

For the foreseeable future, our in-person General Membership Meetings have been placed on hold. Please join us for our online presentations from the comfort of your home!

We look forward to the day we can gather safely together and share our love of birds.

Become a NEW member
Your first year is FREE!
Go to SFVAudubon.org

Stay Safe
&
Happy Holidays!



Although we normally do not have a December meeting, this year we have an exciting presentation by Amie MacDonald from Birds Canada. Her talk, **Motus: A Worldwide Collaboration to Track Bird Migration** will be presented Thursday, December 17, at 7:00p.m.

The Motus system consists of a large number of receiving-towers strategically placed all over the world. When a tagged bird (or butterfly) passes within range of a tower, its presence is recorded and incorporated into a database accessible to interested investigators wherever they may be. (And, yes, the system has also been used to track butterfly migration.) The network is rapidly expanding as more and more ornithologists and researchers seek to determine the limits and constraints on bird migration and what can be done to conserve and enhance survival for these beautiful animals. If you're interested in joining this

Zoom meeting please [click here](#) and enter your information. We will send you a link. The link will not be active until a few minutes before the start of the meeting. See you there!

Thursday, January 28, 2020

7:00—8:00 p.m.

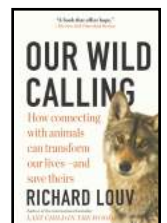
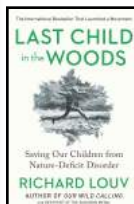
Guest Speaker: Richard Louv, Bestselling Author



As members of Audubon, we all know we love birds but, in January's presentation we will hear more about why we need birds. On January 28, at 7:00p.m., Richard Louv will present **PLANET HOPE: Species Loneliness, Nature-Deficit Disorder, and the Future of Life on Earth**. Best known for his 2005 book, *Last Child in the Woods*, Richard Louv will present the accumulating evidence that exposure to nature is vital to our mental and physical well-being. The thought that lack of exposure to nature is detrimental to our health is incorporated in his concept of Nature-Deficit Disorder which posits that failure to experience nature is connected with diminished use of the senses, attention difficulties, higher rates of physical and emotional illnesses, a rising rate of myopia, child and adult obesity, Vitamin D deficiency, and other maladies. Today, the Children & Nature Network offers abstracts for more than 1,000 studies that validate these connections. Recognizing this, some physicians now write prescriptions for nature time. Animal-assisted therapy is among the fastest-growing trends in health care. We see a rapid increase in the number of nature-based preschools. And, increasingly, biophilic

architects are weaving natural elements into workplaces, homes, neighborhoods, and cities. Biophilic design links nature connection to higher human productivity and creativity.

In his new book, *Our Wild Calling*, he makes the case that strengthening the bond between humans and other animals can transform our lives—and help save theirs. To join this meeting please [click here](#) and enter your information. We will send you a link.



2020 Christmas Bird Count *By Alexander DeBarros*

Birders Needed!

Once again this year, the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society will join chapters across the country and in North and South America, Hawaii, and the Caribbean to take part in the National Audubon Society's 121st Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC).

The initial San Fernando Valley CBC was held in 1957 making this our 64th successive CBC. Over the years there have been some interesting changes in bird populations in the count circle as the valley has transitioned into a more developed area.

Last year we counted 133 species and 18,874 individuals, somewhat higher than our average since 2000, 128 species and 15,512 individuals. This uptick is likely a result of increased coverage compared to previous years, highlighting the importance of counting every park.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the CBC will be operating very differently this year. To reduce the risk of transmitting the virus, count teams will not be open to the public or listed in the *Phainopepla* or on the website, and sector leaders will be doing their counts either alone or with a small, handpicked team (although counting alone is encouraged). To ensure everyone's safety, COVID Safety Guidelines have been published [HERE](#) and **must be followed by all counters**.

If you are not a designated sector leader or picked for a team, it is still possible to participate in the count:

- If you live within the San Fernando Valley CBC circle, a 7 ½ mile radius from the intersection of Balboa Blvd & Nordhoff St. (Click [HERE](#) for a map of the CBC zone). Within this area, you can count birds in your yard, or you can walk over to a nearby park or school and count what you see there. Remember, every bird counts, be it a Golden Eagle or a Yellow-rumped Warbler.
- Like last year, we will be conducting a pre-count during the three days before the count (December 16-18). The purpose of the pre-count is to try and find rare birds at very small parks that are not covered on count day because they have few birds there to begin with. It may seem like a fool's errand, but it has shown some success. Last year, the pre-count yielded four unusual species, including our CBC's first ever Pin-tailed Whydah, and it directly contributed to our second-highest count of Red-breasted Nuthatches.
- This year, we will also be organizing nocturnal owling missions, which are done by car.
- We will also need backup sector leaders, to lead a count sector in the event that the sector leader has to drop out unexpectedly. Backup leader positions will be selected on a first come, first served basis.

*note, if you sign up as a backup leader, you probably won't know which sector you will be covering until the last second, and the majority of backup leaders will end up doing yard counts.

- If you would like to serve as a backup leader, participate in an owling mission, or in the pre-count please e-mail Alexander deBarros (info below) before December 13.

Extensive birding experience is not a prerequisite, just a willingness to go out and bird, and an ability to follow the COVID-19 Safety Guidelines. Regardless of how you end up counting, please e-mail a list that includes all the birds you see (species and individuals) and the amount of time you spent looking to **Alexander deBarros**, alexanderdebarros@yahoo.com, no later than January 4, 2021. eBird lists are encouraged; a paper checklist can be downloaded for printing by clicking [HERE](#)

These are difficult times for everybody. We all must do what we can to stay safe and work together to make it through this pandemic. Difficult situations often require difficult solutions. 🐦



Calendar of Events

December 2020—January 2021

Saturday, December 5. Placerita Canyon Nature Center Docents' Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m. *Please call the Nature Center to confirm if walk will take place.* 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.

Tuesday, December 15. O'Melveny Park Bird Walk. 9:00–11:00a.m. **PLEASE NOTE:** Until further notice, this walk is by reservation only. This is to control group size and to make sure everyone has been informed of the "rules of the road" that pertain to all who will attend. Please e-mail Carolyn Oppenheimer at c.oppenheimer@sfvadubon.org to reserve a space. 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. Come birding!

Thursday, December 17. Zoom General Membership Meeting. 7:00—8:00 p.m. Join us online for a talk, "Motus: A Worldwide Collaboration to Track Bird Migration" with Amie MacDonald. If you are interested in joining our Zoom, please [click here](#) and enter your information. We'll send you a link to the meeting. See page one for more details. See you there!



Saturday, December 19. 121st Annual Christmas Bird Count. Birders Needed! If you are not a designated sector leader or picked for a team, it is still possible to participate in the count:

- If you live within the San Fernando Valley CBC circle, a 7 ½ mile radius from the intersection of Balboa Blvd & Nordhoff St. (Click [HERE](#) for a map of the CBC zone). Within this area, you can count birds in your yard, or you can walk over to a nearby park or school and count what you see there. E-mail your results to Alexander, below.
- We will be conducting a pre-count (December 16-18). The purpose of the pre-count is to try and find rare birds at very small parks that are not covered on count day.
- This year, we will also be organizing nocturnal owling missions, which are done by car.
- We will also need backup sector leaders, to lead a count sector in the event that the sector leader has to drop out unexpectedly.

If you would like to serve as a backup leader, participate in an owling mission, or in the pre-count please e-mail Alexander deBarros at alexanderdebarros@yahoo.com before December 13. See page two for more information.


Saturday, January 2. Placerita Canyon Nature Center Docents' Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m. *Please call the Nature Center to confirm if walk will take place.* 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


Tuesday, January 19. O'Melveny Park Bird Walk. 9:00—11:00 a.m. **PLEASE NOTE:** Until further notice, this walk is by reservation only. This is to control group size and to make sure everyone has been informed of the "rules of the road" that pertain to all who will attend. Please e-mail Carolyn Oppenheimer at c.oppenheimer@sfvadubon.org to reserve a space. 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.


Monday, January 25. Zoom Board Meeting. 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, January 28. Zoom General Membership Meeting. 7:00—8:00 p.m. Richard Louv will present "PLANET HOPE: Species Loneliness, Nature-Deficit Disorder and the Future of Life on Earth." If you are interested in joining our Zoom, [click here](#) and enter your information. We'll send you a link to the meeting. See page one for more details. 🐦



San Fernando Valley
Audubon Society
For Nature Education and the Conservation of Wildlife





Are you interested in nature?
Wildlife conservation?
Are you excited about birds and want to know more about them?
Have we got an offer for you!


For a limited time, we are offering new members a
FREE one-year trial membership
in the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society.

At the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society, our focus is birds, nature and conservation, and having fun! Under the current circumstances, most of our group activities are virtual, with Zoom general meetings featuring educational and entertaining speakers, and virtual bird walks. Next month, our regular bird walks will resume (check our monthly event schedule for details).

In "normal" times, we also host a variety of fun events and meaningful activities, including teaching school kids about ecology and wildlife at the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve, and holding classes on beginning birdwatching, backyard bird projects, and citizen science programs. And we make time for social get-togethers and lectures. We also sponsor a bluebird nest box program and perform community-service projects such as L.A. River clean-ups, along with other environmental organizations working to help save the planet.

JOIN US NOW!

Go to www.sfvadubon.org to sign up!



San Fernando Valley Audubon Society Announces Scholarship Results

by Marianne Davis

The San Fernando Valley Audubon Society (SFVAS), affiliated with the National Audubon Society, is pleased to announce three new scholarships awarded this year to promising college students who are involved in the study of conservation or ornithology. Originally the scholarships were to support their participation in our national conferences, but since the pandemic hit SFVAS pivoted to helping students with their academic expenses instead.



Natalie Beckman-Smith is a senior at CSUN, studying ecology and evolutionary biology. She is particularly interested in bird taxidermy, and will do a Zoom presentation on this subject later this year for SFVAS with her professor, Dr. James Hogue. Natalie also has been helping with bird banding and nestbox management for Western Bluebirds, which are endangered. She has a natural instinct when it comes to working with animals, and is very focused on our local species.



Richard Rachman is pursuing his Masters degree in Ecology and Evolution at CSUN, minoring in Geospatial Information Systems (GIS). He uses GIS to study vegetation mapping in our region. He is also focused on what is happening in our local environment, as wildfires, climate change and development impact our ecology. He is particularly interested in our oak tree woodland, and his thesis will explore mapping these giant trees how they have been impacted, critical to insuring their survival. In the meantime he is very busy surveying animal and plant life on campus and in all the regions of California.



Elliot Bloom is fascinated by penguins, and his thesis at CSUN is about Magellanic and Humboldt penguins, which co-exist off the coast of Central Chile. Both birds have the same body sizes and diet compositions, but somehow they overlap territory and survive. Elliot is examining how this works, and how the dropping food supply will affect them. He's been studying how their special build works to help them feed and move through the water. Penguins are such a popular representative of the bird community, he hopes to foster interest for their conservation, as well as the marine environs they need. 🐧

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. 🐦

Conservation Corner by Dave Weeshoff, Conservation Chair

Our “Happy Places”

For certain, the year 2020 will be viewed by historians as one of pandemic, social unrest, climate catastrophes, and political turmoil. We’re living this now, and many of us are trying to find ways to cope with the uncertainties and trials of our current situations.

What works for me is to sit quietly and remember the “Happy Places” that I’ve enjoyed in my life. They include the neighborhood park while growing up in Glendale, Bermuda on our honeymoon, local vacation sites while building a career and family, and, most recently, the Arctic, Antarctic, and many places in between.

What all my “Happy Places” have in common is the opportunity to reflect in awe at the variety of Planet Earth’s habitats and the amazing species of flora and fauna that have evolved, along with our species, over the millennia. My favorite destinations allowed for the enjoyment of, for example, Ivory Gulls (and Polar Bears) in the Arctic, King Penguins (and Leopard Seals) in the Antarctic, Flightless Cormorants (and Marine Iguanas) in the Galapagos, Laysan Albatross (and Hawaiian Green Turtles) on Midway Atoll, Western Bluebirds (and Squirrels) in my local park, Heermann’s Gulls (and Gray Whales) off our coast, and Red-necked Grebes (and Brown Bears) in Alaska.

But then, in my reverie, my mind wanders into notions of how fragile are these habitats, and the critters that live there, and the damage inflicted when we humans expand our range (and consumptive behaviors) into these natural, pristine places. It is then I consider our descendants and if they will also have natural “Happy Places” to reflect upon to assuage their fears and uncertainties. That is why conservation of Earth’s natural resources is my passion—not only for our avian friends, but for the progeny of all species.

As we approach the end of 2020, a most turbulent year, let’s consider how we, as individuals and as groups, can preserve our “Happy Places” by contributing, in dollars and deeds, to worthy non-profit organizations who share our values of species and habitat preservation—locally, nationally, and internationally. And, perhaps, let’s make a New Year’s commitment to actively participate in conservation activities in our neighborhoods and elsewhere. Those activities could be as simple as joining habitat clean-ups, writing our policy makers, and as important as reducing our “Carbon Footprint” to mitigate the effects of Anthropogenic Climate Change.

As usual, please call me at (818) 618-1652 or email Dave.Weeshoff@SFVAudubon.org with questions, comments, criticism, or to enlist in our conservation activities on behalf of our feathered friends. 🐦

UPDATE ON THE CHAPTER’S BIRD COLLECTION AND USE IN EDUCATION

by Arthur Langton, past president

About 2012, then president Dave Weeshoff gave permission to use the Chapter’s USFWS “salvage” permit to have a California Quail and Barn Owl mounted by a competent taxidermist and used for Chapter educational purposes. Dave even provided the name of a prize-winning, museum quality taxidermist, Igor Caragodin, formally of Long Beach and now doing business in Dripping Springs, TX. The results were excellent and life-like. Some observers, especially children, ask whether the birds are alive. There’s taxidermy and then there is good taxidermy. For more on Igor and his work, see the [Los Angeles Times](#), February 11, 2015, Column One.

Thus encouraged, other specimens of common, local birds have since crept into the collection and additions continue to be made into the present day. Sources include Chapter members, those who have

interacted with the collection in some way, local bird rehab centers including International Bird Rescue, California Wildlife Center, and Wetland and Wildlife Care Center. Causes of death are rarely known but likely possibilities must include rodenticides, collisions with cars and windows, and avian diseases. Birds which do not survive the best efforts of rehab centers are destined for the freezer, museum collections, university studies, or some other permitted institutions. Those not picked up are eventually incinerated. The ones the Chapter has been fortunate enough to acquire are resurrected by mounting for a new role as tools for promoting bird conservation and identification, habitat preservation and rehabilitation, and yes, even membership in Audubon, particularly the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society.

Bird Collection Update, continued next page

Bird Collection Update, continued from previous page

To date the collection is up to over fifty exhibits (see list at end), including a small number of duplicates, and has provided displays at Birdfest, Earth Day at Chatsworth Preserve, outreach enhancement, Springfest at Shadow Hills Park, RCD teacher and naturalist training, Santa Susanna Mountain Park Association membership meetings as well as docent training classes plus introductory Audubon birding ID classes. The birds attract attention and help initiate conversations on bird identification, morphology, natural history, as well as introducing current conservation issues. Other uses include classification, compare and contrast, and form vs. function exercises and activities. Except for some recent acquisitions, all have been on display at pre-pandemic Chapter membership meetings at one time or another.

Portions of the collection are on loan to the nature centers of two camps operated by the local Western Los Angeles County Council, BSA: Camp Emerald Bay and Camp Whitsett. The former and its oceanographic program provided initial incentive to the expansion of the collection. My nephew, Ryan Langton, was on the staff of the Pennington Marine Science Center, then a newly created marine science center featuring a scuba diving school, several aquarium tanks, and plankton lab with microscopes and TV monitors, the envy of any secondary science teacher. On a visit I noticed and commented that the lab neglected any mention or display on seabirds, part of many if not most marine food chains. The director, Dave Chan, promptly challenged me with, "And what are you going to do about it?" As past Chapter president I could hardly decline the offer and opportunity. I had become initiated into birding through scouting as well as Audubon. Deceased frozen specimens started coming from Catalina, some common sea birds as well as common land birds. Birds from Catalina have gone back to Catalina. The story of the initial shipment of birds, their acquisition and subsequent transport to Emerald Bay was described in a *Phainopepla* article, June/July 2012.

Presently the Emerald Bay collection totals about 16 birds. The advantage of this to Audubon and the Chapter is that the USFWS

permit requires the name of the permit holder, SFVAS, to be attached to and accompany each bird. Past president Dave Weeshoff also insisted that this be done. In a normal year of operation, not 2020, during a nine month season, Emerald Bay will host approximately 30,000 staff, campers, visitors giving the Chapter and Audubon a lot of name exposure and recognition. A smaller number of exhibits are also on display at the nature center in the Council's Camp Whitsett located upstream from Kernville in the southern Sierra. During a two month season there attendance will approach 3,000. Again more exposure for Audubon and an enriched and enhanced camp experience for attendees.

As everyone is well aware, the Covid-19 pandemic with its restrictions has modified or drastically changed, cancelled, or curtailed once routine activities of schools, camps, and Audubon chapters. Yet the portions of the collection still serve an educational role, particularly those exhibits on display at Emerald Bay. The Emerald Bay Outdoor Academy, in partnership with the Los Angeles Unified School District and other STEM focused organizations, is developing six forty-five minute virtual/distance lessons centered on the 5th grade core curriculum. One of these lessons is on island biodiversity and resource management protection and will feature some of the birds in the Emerald Bay collection. Such usage is most certainly in line with and furthers the Chapter's goals and reputation as an environmental educational institution. Whether or not credits are assigned and listed in online virtual education presentations is not known, but this is Hollywood.

Many individuals and organizations have contributed to and made the collection a reality. Hopefully, in the not too distant future, people and birds, whether alive or mounted, will be able to again come together in person to study and learn about birds, other wild creatures, the environment we all share and chart new courses leading to solutions of the current environmental challenges. Great things can be accomplished through the collaboration of skilled and talented individuals and organizations.

A partial list of birds in the collection:

California Quail (male)	Western Grebe*	Sooty Shearwater*	Brown Pelican*
Black-vented Shearwater*	Brant's Cormorant*	Great Blue Heron*	Snowy Egret
Green Heron	Black-crowned Night Heron*	Cooper's Hawk (adult)	American Kestrel*
Cooper's Hawk (juvenile)	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Red-shouldered Hawk	Red-tailed Hawk**
Red-tailed Hawk	Sora	Black-necked Stilt	Sanderling
Western Sandpiper	Red-necked Phalarope	Bonaparte's Gull	Heermann's Gull
Ring-billed Gull	Western Gull (2)*	Black Skimmer	Common Murre*
Scripp's Murrelet*	Rhinoceros Auklet*	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Barn Owl
Burrowing Owl	Western Screech Owl	Common Poorwill	Allen's Hummingbird
Belted Kingfisher	Acorn Woodpecker (2)**	Acorn Woodpecker *	Acorn Woodpecker
Red-shafted Flicker**	Red-shafted Flicker	Western Bluebird	Mountain Bluebird
Hermit Thrush	Swainson's Thrush	Cedar Waxwing	Mockingbird*
Black-headed Grosbeak (2)**	Black-headed Grosbeak	Western Tanager (male)*	Western Tanager**
Western Meadowlark	Orange-crowned Warbler*	Yellow-rumped Warbler	California Towhee (2)

* Emerald Bay collection

** Camp Whitsett collection



SAN FERNANDO VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

President:	Paula Orlovich	(818) 399-1994
1 st Vice President:	Teri Carnesciali	(818) 892-5029
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Recording Secretary:	Kathy Barton	(818) 929-2516

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Finance:	Dave Weeshoff	(818) 618-1652
Programs:	Joanne Millius	(818) 335-5331
Youth Activities:	Muriel Kotin	(310) 457-5796

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

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BirdFest:	Rose Leibowitz	(818) 579-4976
Birdathon:	Richard Davis	(310) 529-8865
Christmas Bird Count:	Alexander deBarros	(818) 919-3425
Community Outreach:	OPEN	
Conservation Banquet:	OPEN	
Education Classroom:	Dave Weeshoff	(818) 618-1652
Education-SBEEP:	Paula Orlovich	(818) 399-1994
Field Trips:	Richard Barth	(310) 276-0342
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O'Melveny Bird Walk:	Carolyn Oppenheimer	(818) 885-7493
OneWaterLA Group Rep.:	Mark Osokow	unpublished
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Scholarships and Grants:	Marianne Davis	(310) 529-8871
Sepulveda Basin Steering:	Muriel Kotin	(310) 457-5796
Sepulveda Bird Walks:	Kris Ohlenkamp	(818) 521-8799
Social Media:	Jim Houghton	(818) 388-7207
SSFL Special Representative:	Mark Osokow	unpublished
Web Coordinator:	Jim Houghton	(818) 388-7207
Young Birders Group:	Alexander deBarros	(818) 919-3425

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

www.SFVAudubon.org

Follow us on:



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

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 *Phainopepla*)
.....**FREE** for a limited time for new members \$ _____

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?

If you want to join or renew by check, please be sure to include your email address if you want to receive an acknowledgment. We can no longer thank you by regular mail. If you do not have an email address, please know how much we appreciate your involvement with, and support of, 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.

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Phainopepla

San Fernando Valley Audubon Society
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RECOMMENDED READING

McBride, Abby

“Making Magic on Seabird Islands in Mexico”

LIVINGBIRD

Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Summer 2020, Volume 39, Number 3

pp. 56-60

This article on the successful seabird recolonization of former nesting sites is well worth a read for several reasons including the fact that the islands mentioned are off the coast of northwestern Mexico and are breeding sites or potential breeding sites for frequently seen seabirds along the Southern California coast. The project describes breeding habitat restoration work on Los Coronados, Guadalupe, San Martin, and San Benitos islands as well as Isla Raza, one of the mid-rift islands in the Gulf of California and the principal nesting place for Heermann’s Gulls and Elegant Terns.

Numbers of seabirds throughout the world have been in steep decline usually due to the arrival and incidental introduction of nonnative terrestrial mammals such as rats, cats, and goats which destroy not only native vegetation but also prey on adult breeding birds, their eggs, and nestlings. In a collaborative effort of international proportions between Audubon, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the US and Mexican governments, Grupo de Ecologica y Conservacion, and experts from New Zealand, Australia, the Galapagos, and Hawaii these islands off Mexico’s Pacific coast have been and continue to be cleared of feral mammals with positive and encouraging results. Seabirds are returning to and using former nesting sites including some new species not previously recorded for the area like Blue-footed Boobies and Laysan Albatross as a result of these efforts. Encouraging the return to previously abandon nesting locations are the employment of seabird decoys, sound recordings, and artificial nesting burrows. Not only are the restored islands good for the birds but the resulting increase in enriched guano production, plus removal of goats, has also been good for the health and growth of native island flora.

This is a story with a sad, tragic beginning, but hopefully a happy, positive ending for the murrelets, auklets, shearwaters, petrels, terns, and gulls that use these islands for nesting and for those of us who enjoy watching and studying seabirds where ever they are found. Additional details regarding this project affecting locals birds are available from the article cited above at <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/living-bird-summer-2020-table-of-contents/>. — Submitted by Art Langton