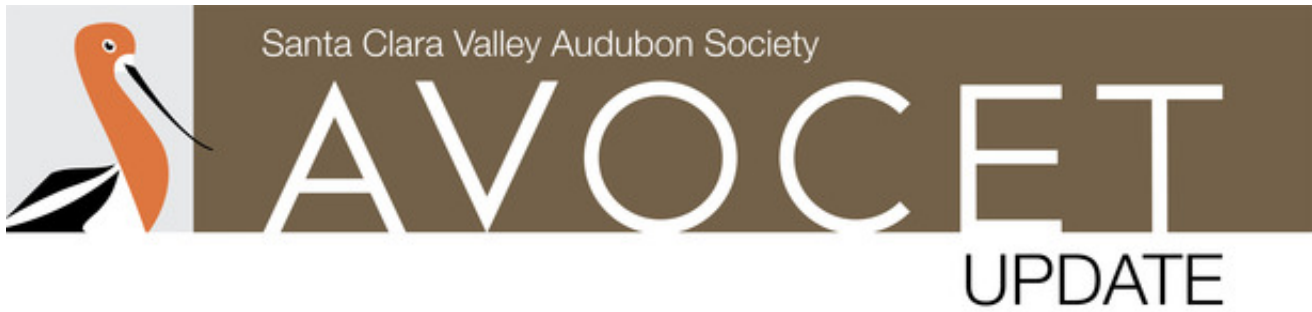


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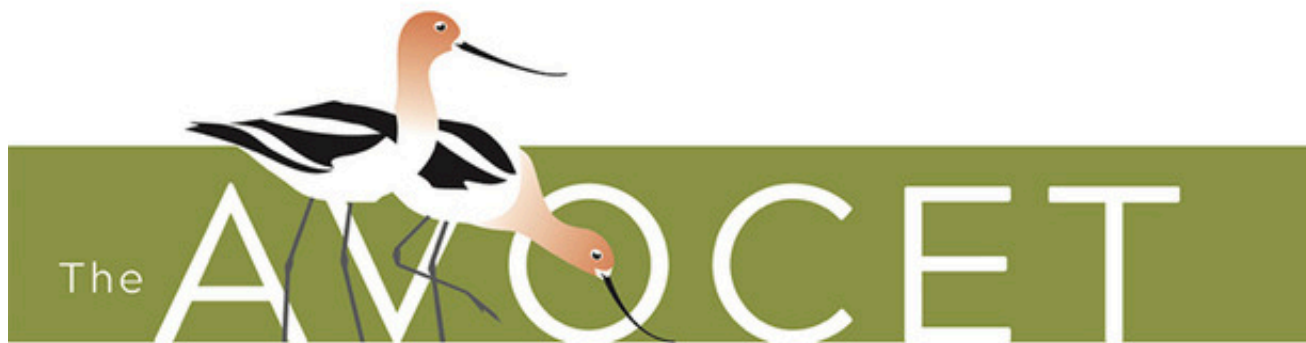


Say's Phoebe: Gena Zolotar

Welcome to the **Avocet Update** for March 2021. There's a lot to be excited about this month—new AVOCET, new Self-Guided Trips, a new salt pond map, and another fantastic installment of Backyard Birds. Spring is definitely in the air! Perhaps you've even noticed some birds are exploring possible nest sites around town. We had a White-breasted Nuthatch exploring a nest box in our back yard earlier this week, for example! I wonder if they'll nest... Meanwhile, our Birdathon Committee is busy planning for another successful event, which will start online with zoom-style kickoff. See all the details below.

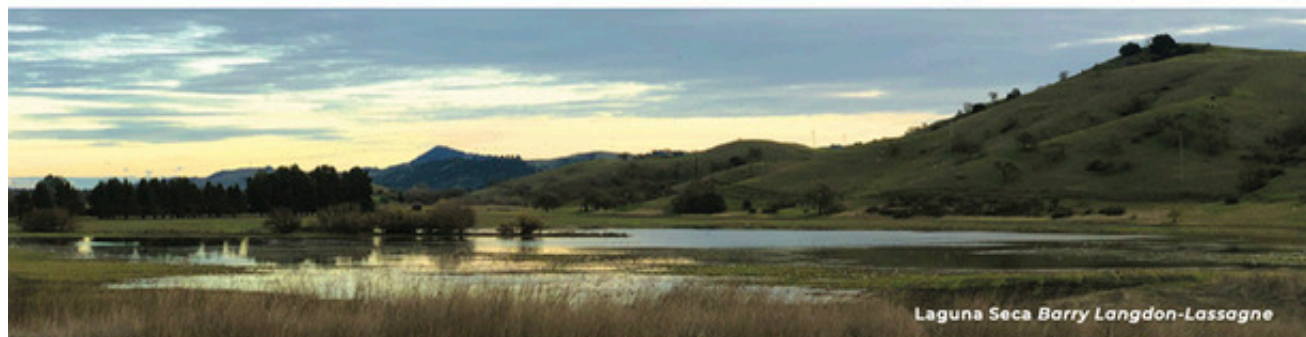
~Matthew Dodder, Executive Director

Spring AVOCET is now available!



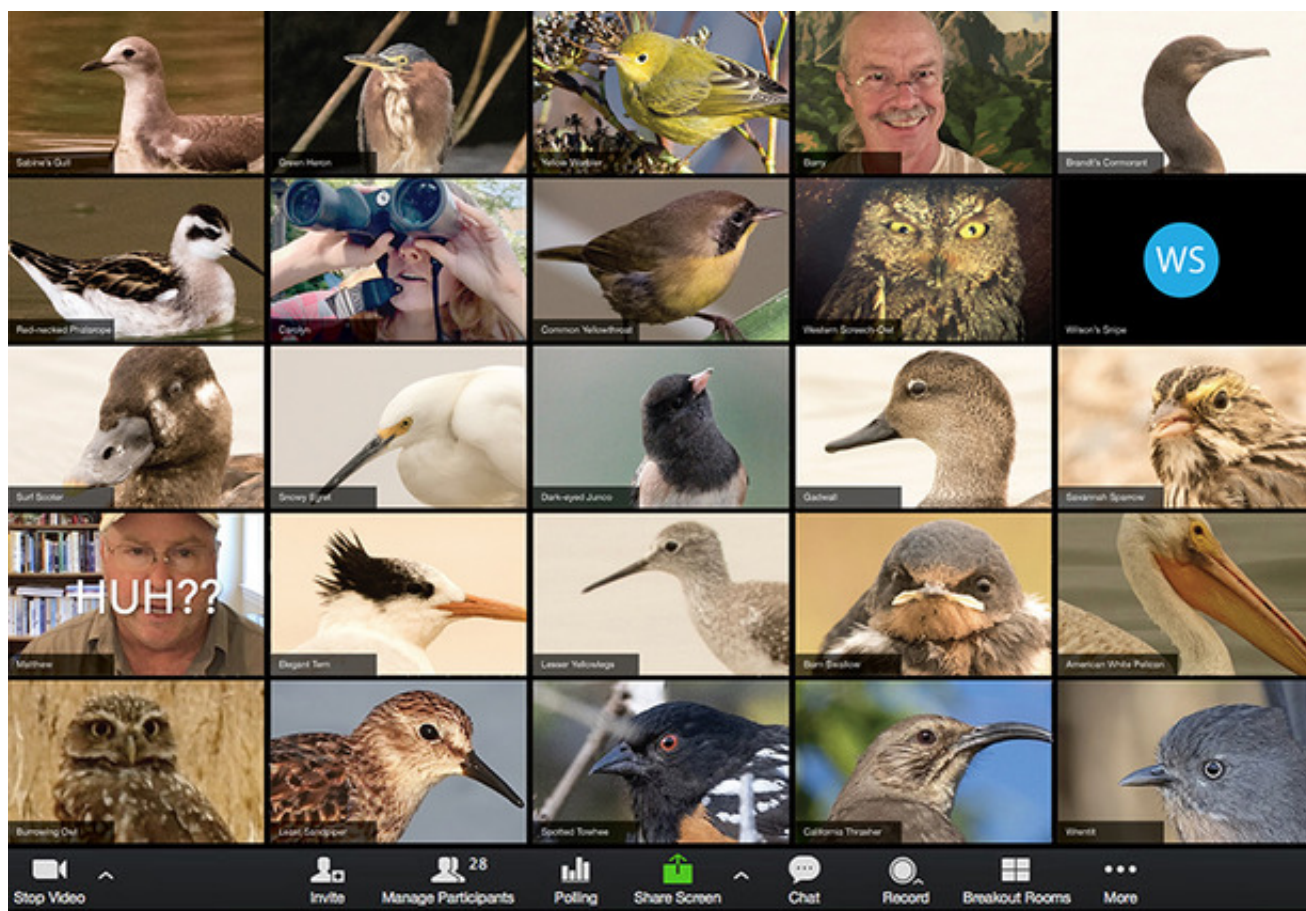
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

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Laguna Seca Barry Langdon-Lassagne

Birdathon Kickoff



Typical zoom meeting... There's always someone with their camera turned off.

We're getting ready for the annual Spring Birdathon which is set to run March 27 – May 9. We will hold our kick off event on Wednesday, March 17 (Saint Patrick's Day) via zoom.

Kickoff Event:
March 17 (Wednesday)
7:00 - 8:30 PM via Zoom

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Flycatcher Class



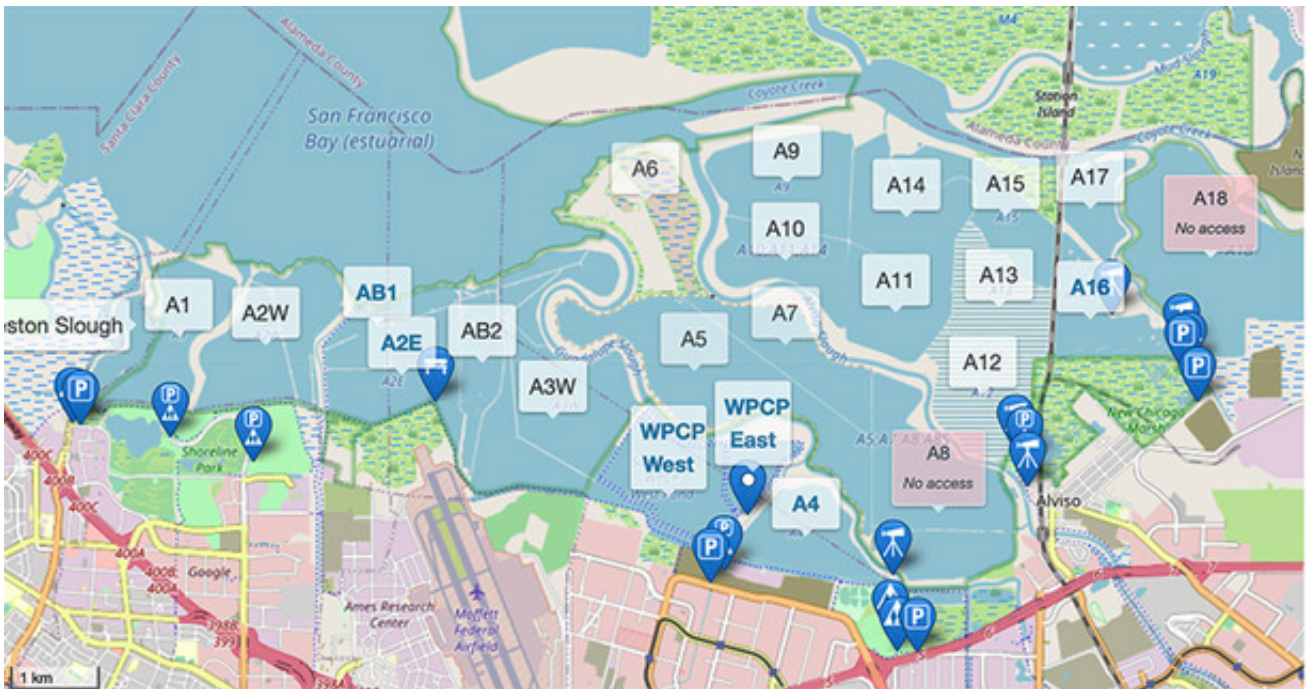
Judy Woodruff enjoying a lively debate with two representatives.

If your eyes glaze over at the sight of an Empidonax, or you just can't keep your Kingbirds straight... we've got something for you! SCVAS is offering a two-part online class (beginning/intermediate-level) on one of our most confusing groups—the Flycatchers! It's scheduled just before the Birdathon so you'll be ready to identify those bug-eaters in the field. Hear their side of the tangled story and learn how to tell one from another. Once registered, class members will gain access to our private discussion group where you can pose questions or photos. Sign up and join the fun!

Matthew Dodder, instructor
March 15 and 22 (Mondays)
7:00 - 8:30 PM via Zoom

[Register Here](#)

NEW Salt Pond Map



I can never remember the names of all those ponds... thank goodness there's a map!

The Salt Ponds of the South Bay are some of the best birding sites in our county. They host migrants, rarities, and provide some awesome open space for us to enjoy. They're also massive and can be a real challenge to navigate because most maps don't label them. So if you're looking to practice your gulls, trying to find A16, or just want to be sure your birding report is as accurate as it can be, we hope you check out our fully labeled Salt Pond Map, with links to self-guided field trips, the locations of parking and facilities, and as much birding-related content as we've been able to curate! [Salt Pond Map](#)

Self-Guided Field Trips



Clark's Grebes photo by Brooke Miller

Celebrate the start of spring with these March trips!

- [Guadalupe Oak Grove Park: Springtime in the Oaks](#) (Accessible) by Eve Meier and Janna Pauser
- [Parkway Lakes and the Coyote Creek Trail in South San Jose](#) by Dani Christensen
- [Calero Reservoir: Dancing Western and Clark's Grebes](#) by Brooke A Miller
- [Alviso Marina and Salt Pond A12](#) by John Hurley
- [Almaden Lake Park: Nesting Birds and "What is a Species?"](#) (Youth-Centered Trip) by Ginger Langdon-Lassagne
- [Stanford's Arizona Garden and Mausoleum: Cacophony Amongst the Cacti](#) (Accessible) by Diane McCoy
- [Live Oak Group Area in Anderson County Park: Picnic with the Wood Ducks](#) (Accessible) by Eve Meier
- [Estanques de recarga de agua subterránea McClellan: ¡Mergos, Patos Mojas, Patos de Pico anillado!](#) por Diana Mccoy; traducido por Carlos Marquez Garcia

Visit our webpage to see [past months' recommendations](#) or use our [index](#) to see all of our recommendations.

SCVAS would like to hear from you! Do you have a favorite place you love to bird that you would like to recommend to our members? Is there a place you would like to learn more about? If so, please email fieldtrips@scvas.org.

Backyard Birds



Bewick's Wren by Suresh Thirumalai

The seasons are changing! **Review your winter birds**, and **look for signs of spring**, with our Backyard Birder in [Change Is In The Air](#). What birds have been keeping you company, and how do they tell us that spring is coming?

Meet the Bewick's Wren, our March Backyard [Bird of the Month](#). This tiny, bold bird inspects buildings and fences, looking for insects, and is a loud and varied singer. Listen for it in your yard!

You've spotted all sorts of birds near your homes lately. In this month's [All Around Town](#), **read stories and see photos of what our members and friends have observed** in their yards.

What birds are in your yard or neighborhood? Send your notes and photos to backyardbirds@scvas.org and we'll feature them in the next [All Around Town](#).



Pine Siskin photo by Julie Amato

Avian Disease Update: There is a **serious outbreak of salmonellosis** right now among Pine Siskins. This is a deadly, highly-contagious disease transmitted through contaminated feces. **It is observed almost exclusively at bird feeders and baths**, places where birds congregate in close proximity. Sick birds often appear puffy and lethargic; some may have swollen, partly-closed eyes. Birds can be asymptomatic and still pass on the disease. Other species, like Lesser Goldfinches and American Goldfinches, also contract salmonellosis.



Sick Pine Siskin by Julie Amato

[The California Department of Fish and Wildlife recommends removing bird feeders and baths](#) for the time being, in order to curb the spread of the disease. **SCVAS endorses this recommendation.**

For more information about the disease and what backyard birders can do to help, see this **[FAQ about salmonellosis and bird feeding](#)**.

Great Backyard Bird Count Results



Ring-necked Pheasant... not a backyard bird, but seemed to fit the sentiment of this section.

A big thank you to everyone who took part in the Great Backyard Bird Count and our friendly count competition! It was a great opportunity to see what birds our members have visiting their yards, and even more encouraging to see you all taking part in this global citizen science effort.

Our urban category of this competition garnered fierce competition, with LC Boros and Connie Cunningham tying for first place with 18 species each coming to visit their yards during the four day count period. Emma Jane Shelton came in second with 17 species sighted in her yard, and Deborah Jamison and Steve Patt came in third with 16 species visiting their home.

In the open spaces, Carol Ann Graves came in first with 35 species recorded in her visit to Shoreline Lake, with Barry and Ginger Langdon-Lassagne coming in second with 28 species found at the Emily Renzel Marsh, and Laura Coatney came in third with 25 species found along the Stevens Creek Trail between McClellan Ranch and Blackberry Farm.

Special Event with KCCB

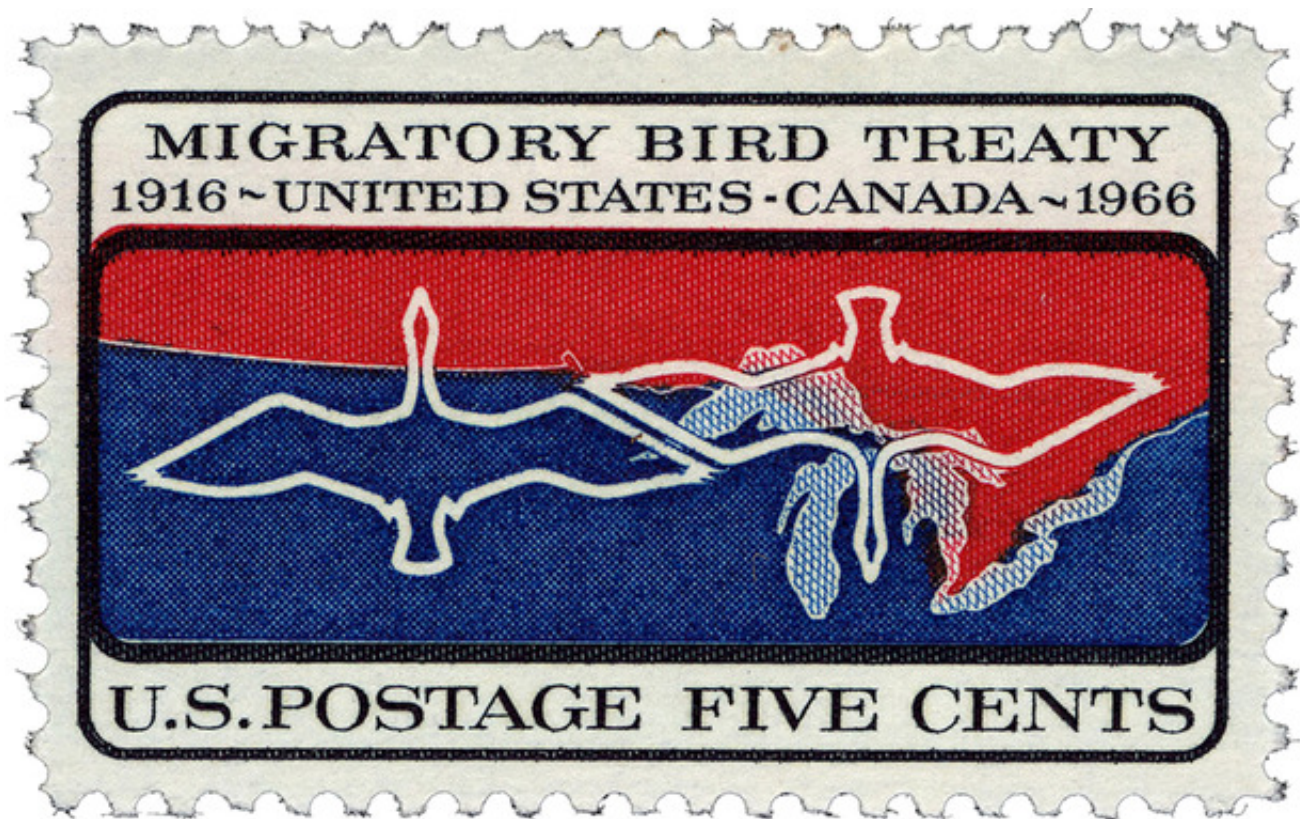


Northern Mockingbird along Coyote Creek: Carolyn Knight

Join SCVAS and our friends from Keep Coyote Creek Beautiful as we explore our local ecosystems in the Coyote Creek Watershed Tour program! Twice a month we'll be visiting a new location along Coyote Creek and speaking to local naturalists and environmentalists to learn more about the watershed and the organisms that depend on it.

This March we'll be exploring the [Birds of the Bay](#) on **March 3**, and the [Verdant Coyote Valley](#) on **March 17**. Program takes place on the first and third Wednesday at **10AM**. Zoom links are provided following registration. This event is free to the public.

Conservation Corner



The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)

Our nation's most important bird-protection law, was targeted and weakened by our former president. We are happy to report that the Biden Administration halted the implementation of bird-killing regulations, re-opening the issue to public comment. Stay tuned!

Help Birds in Your Community

Sunnyvale residents - Please participate in a [zoom workshop](#) on "Land use, housing, open space and market conditions" at Moffett Park on [Tuesday, March 2, 4 - 7PM](#). Please join and ask the councilmembers to incentivize the preservation and expansion of the Lockheed wetlands. Ask for Community Benefits that include ecological enhancement both within and outside of the plan's boundary. Strong requirements to protect the night sky and migratory birds are also important in this area by the bay.

Cupertino residents - Please write to [Mayor Paul and city council](#) and ask for **strong protections for birds** and the dark sky in Cupertino - a few words from residents go a long way!!! Protections for birds and the dark sky will be heard by council March 16th, and if you can participate in the meeting we'd greatly appreciate it.

Mountain View residents - please fill a [comment](#) card or [zoom into a workshop](#) (Saturday, Feb. 27 from 9 - 11AM) to participate in the City's **new Strategic Planning and Visioning** process. **Envision** a city where endangered and common bird species thrive and people enjoy their beauty and their song! Ask the City to **prioritize** protection and expansion of open space and urban habitat, expand green spaces in the city, and rewild our urban forest!

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