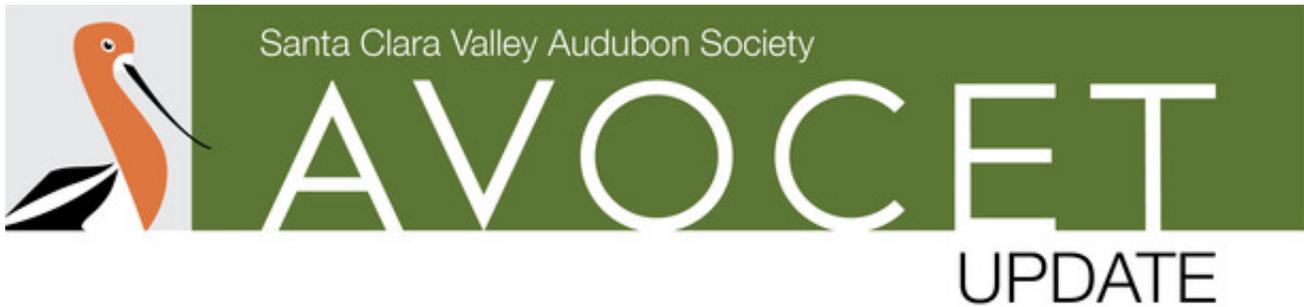


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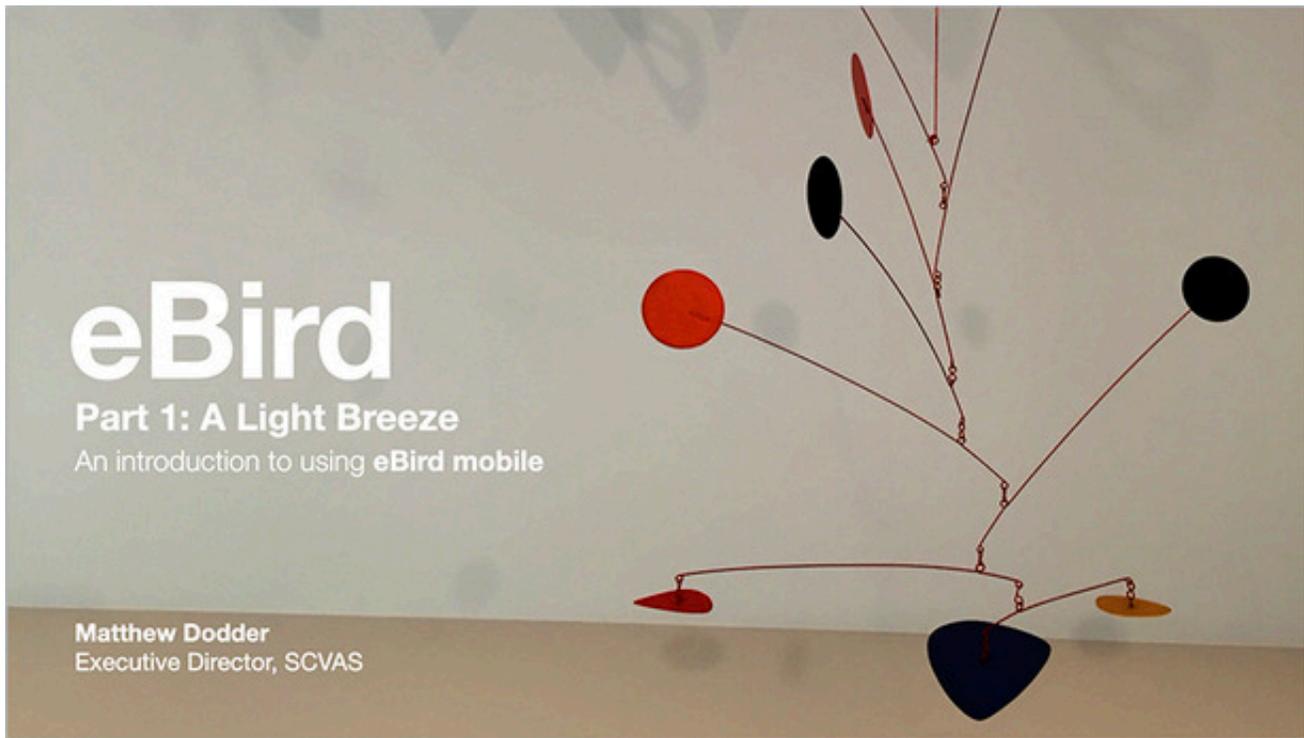


Fox Sparrow by Chris Johnson

AVOCET Update for October, 2021

My wife and I heard an interesting sound in our back yard a few nights ago. It was a muffled barking, almost like laughter that turned out to be a pair of Western Screech-Owls—a species we haven't recorded at the house for more than a decade. As Cricket and I stood by the open window, listening intently for the matching bouncing-ball sounds, we realized there was a chill in the air. It was getting to be that time we close the windows for the fall... The following morning as I pulled into the Ranch, I wondered why I hadn't worn a jacket. It was now clearly the time to dress for the season. The weather is changing and the pages on our calendars have turned—things are moving—birds especially. Those two Owls probably fledged this past spring. They have not been heard since, because they've moved on—perhaps in search of more permanent accommodations now that they're free of the nest. Fall is a season of change, look for it in the trees, in the browning plants, in our programs as we resume our Wetlands Discovery Program, as we launch a new eBird class, and as our Speaker Series picks up again. The one thing that hasn't changed (and won't) is our dedication to help educate the public about the importance and beauty of birds, as well as our eagerness to introduce new audiences to our Chapter. As always, we've saved a bench seat for you near our feeders so you can help us find the chocolate brown Fox Sparrow in the bushes outside our door.

~Matthew Dodder, Executive Director



eBird

Part 1: A Light Breeze

An introduction to using eBird mobile

Matthew Dodder
Executive Director, SCVAS

Calder exhibit at SFMOMA. Photo by Matthew Dodder

New Class Registration

eBird Part 1: An Introduction to eBird Mobile

This FREE-FOR-MEMBERS workshop offers a ground-level beginner's guide to using eBird mobile on your smartphone. An online orientation (via zoom) will demonstrate how to download the app, set up an account and configure your phone's settings so you can upload your checklists from the field—anywhere!

One-of-three identical **on-site guided demonstrations** will feature eBird power-users Barry, Carolyn, and Matthew who will guide you step-by-step as you enter your sightings and submit an actual checklist from our headquarters at **McClellan Ranch in Cupertino**.

Future sessions will describe how eBird can be used to add photos and audio to your checklists, research species and hotspots, plan your birding trips and even generate custom checklists for any area you're curious about. Stay tuned for these exciting follow-up sessions in the coming months.

NOTE: To use the eBird Mobile app, you must have a smart phone (iPhone or Android) that is wifi equipped. A "data plan" is highly recommended to get the most out of eBird performance.

Choose one of three FREE-FOR-MEMBERS sessions:

Option 1:

Online orientation: **Monday October 4** (7:00-8:00 PM) via zoom

McClellan Ranch demo: **Tuesday, October 5** (10:00-11:00 AM)

Option 2:

Online orientation: **Monday October 4** (7:00-8:00 PM) via zoom

McClellan Ranch demo: **Wednesday, October 6** (10:00-11:00 AM)

Option 3:

Online orientation: **Monday October 4** (7:00-8:00 PM) via zoom
McClellan Ranch demo: **Thursday, October 7** (10:00-11:00 AM)

Zoom link will be sent out on participant's tickets. Please check your spam folder if you do not receive tickets. Registration is required.

[Register Here](#)



October In-person Field Trips

Our field trip leaders are so excited to start leading trips again! Some of our September trips include Ulistac Natural Area, Vasona County Park, Charleston Slough and Palo Alto Baylands. Visit our [Field Trips page](#) to see our schedule, read our trip policies and reserve your spot!



Boronda Lake docks at Foothills Park by Diane McCoy.

Self-guided Field Trips for September

Fall migration continues and the weather has begun to cool! Bird New Chicago Marsh to check out Avocets through Willets or head to the foothills for sparrows and other songbirds. Looking for an easy, paved choice? Try out Blackberry Farm.

- NEW! [Blackberry Farm](#) (Cupertino, Accessible) by Barry Langdon-Lassagne
- NEW! [Foothills Nature Preserve](#) (Palo Alto, Accessible) by Diane McCoy and Eve Meier
- [Shorebird Spectacle at New Chicago Marsh](#) (Alviso) by Mike Ambrose
- [A Walk Around Sandy Wool Lake at Ed R. Levin County Park](#) (San Jose/Accessible) by Laura Coatney
- [Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve](#) (Morgan Hill) by Dani Christensen

Visit our [self-guided field trip page](#) for more recommendations.



Spotted Towhee by Gail West

Backyard Birding

Check out the latest All Around Town, our monthly round-up of backyard bird sightings - we've got reports of molting jays, a range of raptors, and a new hummingbird species!

What birds are you seeing in your yard or neighborhood? Write to us at backyardbirds@scvas.org and we'll publish your observations in the next All Around Town.

Learn about the **Spotted Towhee**, our October [Backyard Bird of the Month](#) in Dave Zittin's new article.

Join **Project FeederWatch** and **count birds in your yard for science this winter** (and despite the name, you don't need to have feeders!).

FeederWatch, a community science project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, is a great way to enjoy backyard birding. The count season **starts on November 13** - be an early bird and [sign up now!](#)

For more information, visit feederwatch.org and read SCVAS's [interview with Dr. Emma Greig](#), the U.S. FeederWatch project leader.



Educators Needed: Wetlands Discovery Program Docents

Are you passionate about the environment? Do you have an interest in introducing students to nature? Join the Wetlands Discovery Program and help SCVAS bring elementary students to the fascinating ecosystems of our local wetlands! Volunteers must pass fingerprinting and a DOJ background check. Events take place weekdays, 8AM-12PM.

Training sessions will take place October 11 and 12. Contact programs@scvas.org with interest.



North Coyote Valley Conservation Area by Matthew Dodder

Conservation Corner

Our CALL FOR ACTION focuses on surveys (a few minutes of your time can make a difference!)

Mountain View Residents and Community Members (3 minutes)

As part of the Shorebird Master Plan, Google has released its first of several surveys to gather public opinion on what community members enjoy and would like more of within North Bayshore. Please fill out this survey to highlight our love for birds, wetlands, Shoreline Park, and natural open spaces in North Bayshore (in [English](#), [Spanish](#) or [Mandarin](#))!

San Jose's Annual Trail Use Survey (3 minutes)

San Jose's annual trail use survey is available through October 13th! This survey helps the city better maintain multi-use trails. Please highlight protection of our natural environment (note that the survey focuses on cyclists) [Survey Here](#)

Share Your Opinions on Sunnyvale's Plans for Moffett Park

As Sunnyvale plans the future of Moffett park, the Sierra Club has published a survey of residents' opinion of the types of open spaces they would like to see. Please respond to the survey and emphasize the importance of birds, habitat and ecology in all open space planning! [Survey Here](#)

Coyote Valley

Please join **Creating a Brighter, Greener Future Together: Thursday, September 30, at 11:00am**. Learn what to expect from the Coyote Valley Conservation Areas Master Plan process over the next few years. Please speak up to emphasize the critical importance of bird and wildlife habitat in the valley. Please speak for wetlands and bird-friendly agricultural practices!

San Jose Update

We are disappointed with the City of San Jose's decision to advance the massive Almaden Office Project which encroaches into the Riparian Corridor of the Guadalupe River and dwarfs the river and its riparian forest. City officials recognized that the project, cumulatively with other projects along the bank of the Guadalupe river, will cause significant harm to the river, yet voted unanimously to approve the project. Further downstream, Urban Confluence continues to promote a tower of light pollution and recently, San Jose initiated a process for a new parking lot at the bank of the river with no buffer zone whatsoever! Please keep supporting us as we continue to fight for rivers, creeks and riparian ecosystems in San Jose and throughout our county.



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