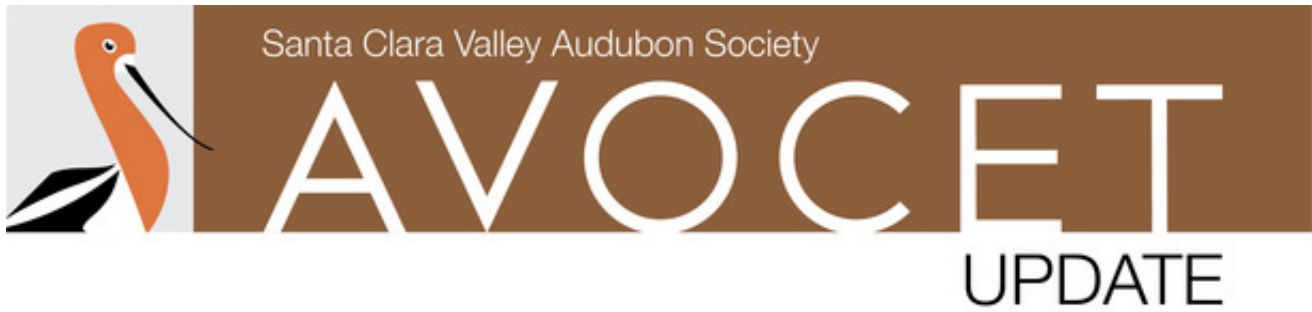


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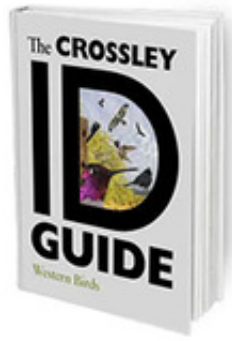


Lincoln's Sparrow: Tom Grey

November 2022

We love this time of year at the Ranch! The winter Sparrows have arrived and are crowding the feeders, Yellow-rumped Warblers can be heard every time you step outside, and flocks of Cedar Waxwings fly whistling over our heads. The weekends have been occupied with chasing any of the local rarities that have shown up such as the Painted Redstart or Pacific Golden-Plover. It really is my favorite time of year and culminates near the end of the month with family dinners and so much wonderful food. Check out this month's field trips, self-guided trips and of course Backyard Birds and Conservation Corner. And just in case you've forgotten to sign up to meet Richard Crossley this Friday night, there's still time, but hurry!

~Matthew Dodder, Executive Director



Special Event this week!

An Evening with Richard Crossley: Learning to Look

Friday, October 28, 5:30-8:00PM

McClellan Ranch Environmental Education Center

Join us for an informal outdoor session with world famous photographer, adventurer, and author. Richard will describe his life on three continents and his unique field guide series as well as how you can become a better observer and birder. Afterward, he will sign books which will be available for purchase. We will be seated outside the Environmental Education Center beside the SCVAS headquarters at McClellan Ranch.

[Register Here](#)



Field Trips

In-person field trips for November post on **October 28**. Locations covered include Merced NWR, Little Uvas, Stanford Arboretum, and a variety of trips along the bay. We also have two photowalks! Visit [field trips](#) for more information and to sign-up.

NEW! To help more people have a chance at getting a spot on our very popular field trips, **please limit your sign-ups to 2 trips per month.**

Trips filled-up? Check a day or two before your trip of interest goes out. Sometimes we have cancellations.



Hermit Thrush: Raechel Lee

Self-Guided Field Trips

Bring on the ducks with a visit to the bay, one of our many inland lakes and ponds, or Merced NWR. It's also a great time for raptors and sparrows which you can enjoy at Coyote Valley or Sierra Vista. Or try out our new guide to a recently extended urban trail in south San Jose.

- NEW! [Bernal-Gulnac-Joice Ranch: Birding While Enjoying History](#): south San Jose
- [Merced NWR: A Crane and Waterfowl Wonderland!](#): Merced
- [Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant: Ducks for Days](#): Sunnyvale
- [Los Capitancillos Ponds: Going on a Snipe Hunt](#): San Jose
- [Alta Mesa Memorial Park](#): Palo Alto
- [Sierra Vista OSP](#): eastern foothills of San Jose
- [Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve](#): Morgan Hill

See all of our [fall trips](#) or visit our [complete collection of guides](#).

If you would like to write a guide for a location that you love to bird, please contact Eve Meier at fieldtrips@scvas.org.



Acorn Woodpecker: Jennifer Oliver

All Around Town

In our [latest backyard bird report](#), Acorn Woodpeckers visit, White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows are back, and a rare bird passes through town on its way south for the winter. Find out what birds our members and friends have seen lately in their yards and neighborhoods.

What birds have you observed near your home lately? Send your notes, lists, and photos to backyardbirds@scvas.org and we'll publish them in the next All Around Town. We are curious about all birds, so don't feel that you need to wait for a special sighting before writing in.

Project Feeder Watch

FeederWatch starts on **November 1** - join this community science project and count birds this winter!

Despite the name, you don't need feeders, and you don't need to count at home either - pick a convenient spot, and follow a schedule that you decide. If you enjoy watching birds from your window, this project is a good match for you, and it helps birds.

Learn more about FeederWatch in our [Avocet article](#) and [sign up here](#). FeederWatch is a project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Birds Canada.



Yellow-rumped Warbler: Chris Johnson

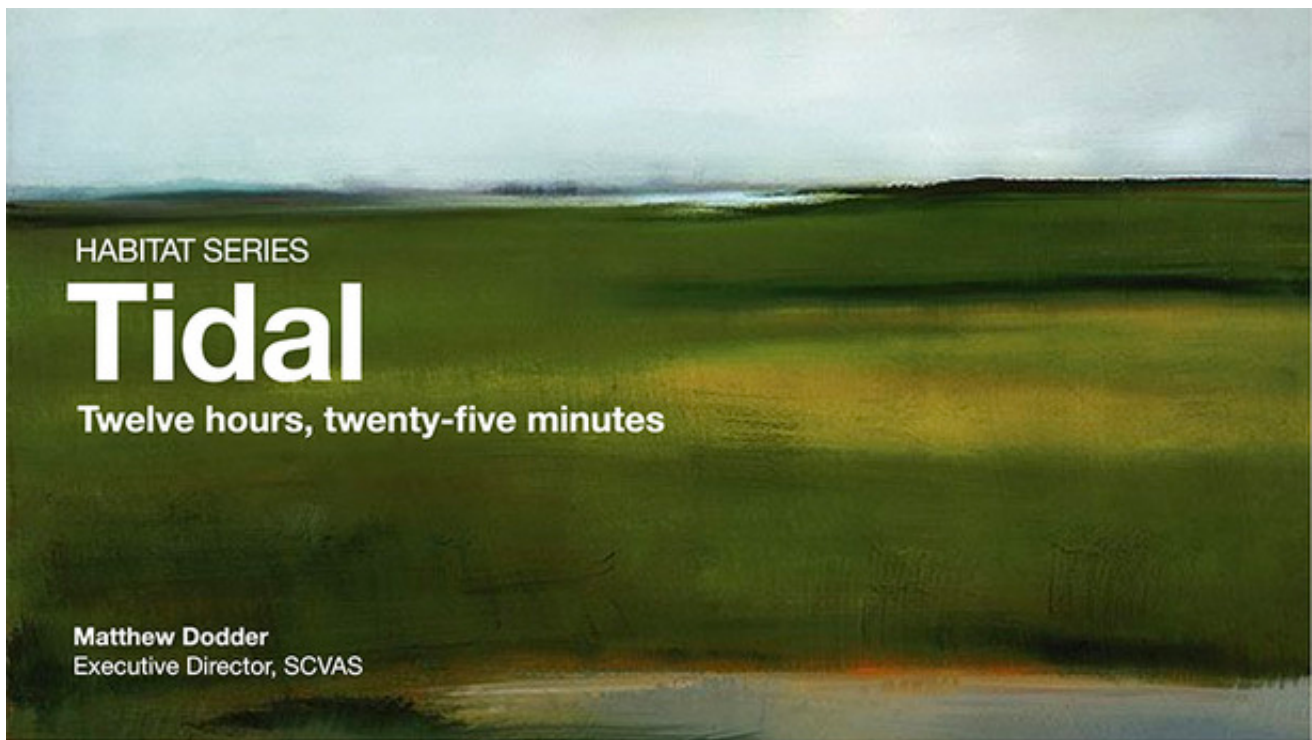
Backyard Bird of the Month

The [Yellow-rumped Warbler](#) is our featured backyard bird for November.

Often found in yards and residential neighborhoods, these birds are our most abundant winter warbler. Gray and white with bright buttery-yellow splashes on the throat, rump, and flanks, Yellow-rumped Warblers flit through the foliage, looking for insects and fruit. You'll often hear them before you see them. Listen for their sharp "chep!" call, which they may repeat periodically. These birds will sometimes visit suet and seed feeders.

Yellow-rumped Warblers are found throughout North America and vary geographically. The most common subspecies in our area is called the "Audubon's."

For more about backyard birds, see our [Backyard Bird Grid](#), with links to ID tips and fun facts about common bird species in Santa Clara County.



HABITAT SERIES

Tidal

Twelve hours, twenty-five minutes

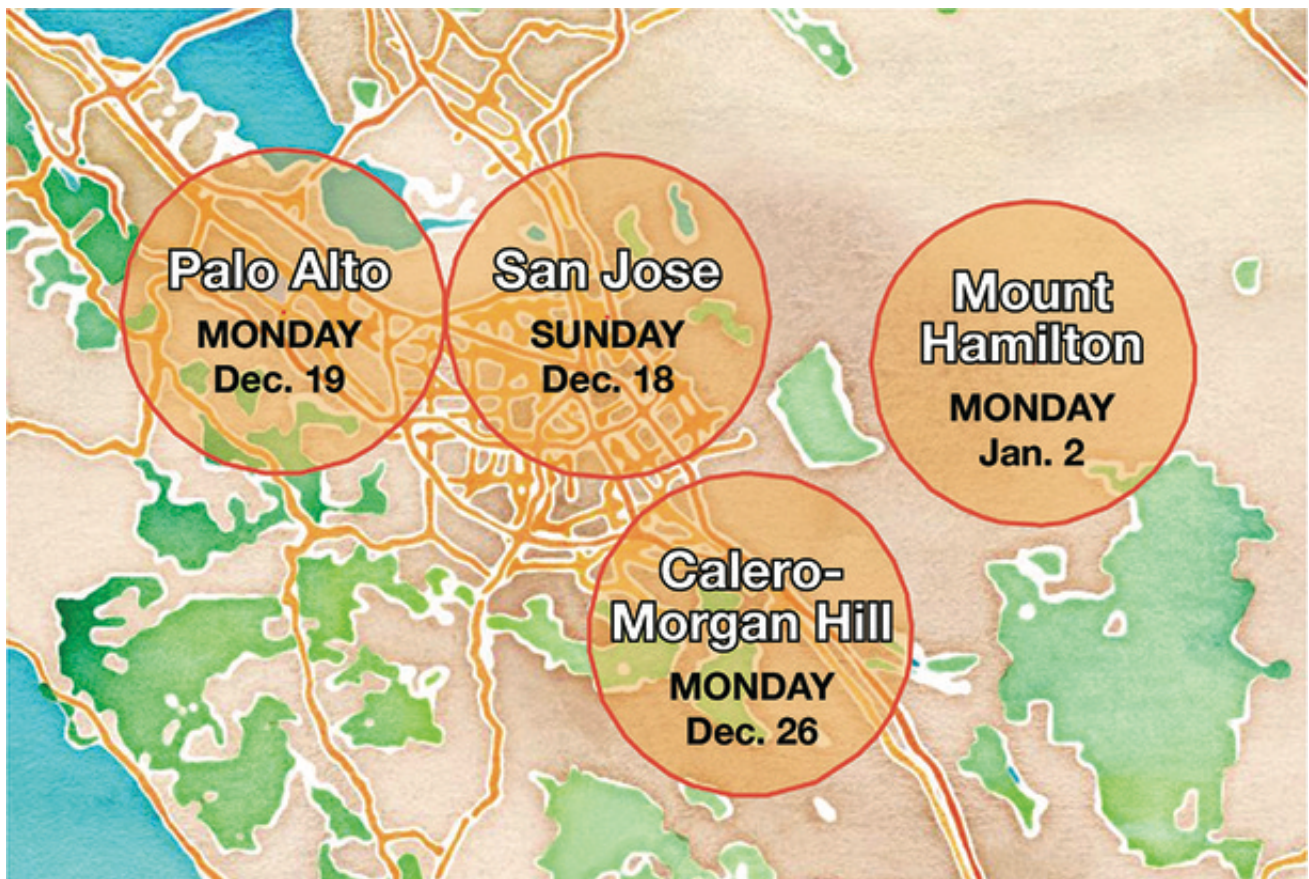
Matthew Dodder
Executive Director, SCVAS

Tidal

Habitat Series Part 1

The tide period is the time between peak tides, exactly 12 hours, 25 minutes. During that time, the Bayfront habitat undergoes some pretty dramatic changes. At one moment it can be completely submerged and then several hours later, entirely exposed. What happens deep in the marsh, below the surface or around the edges is truly amazing. The plants and animals that call this unusual dynamic habitat home have adapted unique strategies to survive and thrive. This presentation will focus on the birds and their interactions with this ever-changing watery environment, where and when to visit the tidal wetlands, and what to look for.

Tentatively scheduled for 7:00 PM, December 12 (via zoom).



Christmas Bird Count

This annual bird survey is a great time to get out birding and gather data on the number of individual birds seen for each species you find. Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society sponsors 4 "Count Circles" for the Christmas Bird Count (CBC). Typically participants go out in a small group (between 2 to 6 people) to cover an assigned territory. They report their data to the Count Compiler, and at the "countdown," get to hear about all the great birds that were found!

If you've joined the CBC in the past, please save the date, and contact your team leader or coordinator now to let them know that you want to join the 2022 CBC. If you're new to the count, contact the coordinator for the one you wish to join (note: while beginner birders may be able to help with CBC activities, this is not a teaching opportunity). Read more about the Christmas Bird Count and data from past counts on the SCVAS website [here](#), with information about the 2022 CBC "coming soon."

2022 Christmas Bird Count Dates and Contacts:

- **December 18** (Sunday): San Jose Count Circle - Mike Azevedo, geochelone@aol.com
 - **December 19** (Monday): Palo Alto Count Circle - coordinator Ann Hepenstal, paloaltocbc@gmail.com (compiler, Al Eisner)
 - **December 26** (Monday): Calero-Morgan Hill Count Circle - Rick Herder, rick.herder@gmail.com
 - **January 2** (Monday): Mount Hamilton Count Circle - Bob Hirt, hirttax@gmail.com
-



San Jose night sky from Sierra Road: Matthew Dodder

Conservation Corner

Dark Sky Symposium - The Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter, and the Sierra Club Bay Alive Campaign invite you to our symposium on dark skies and bird-safe building and lighting design. The use of LED technology and energy saving lighting fixtures are bringing with them an unintended, yet pervasive and harmful effect: the over-lighting of our nights. Learn about the biological and physical effects of light at night and strategies that can guard our health and environment while providing safe and practical lighting solutions.

Please join us on the afternoon of Wednesday, November 16, for our symposium – Light at Night: A Glowing Hazard. For more information, see [here](#) and register [here](#).

Santa Clara County Wants to Hear Your Personal Experiences With Lehigh Cement Plant – The Lehigh Cement Plant and Quarry has been destroying the Cupertino hillside and polluting the air and water with numerous local, state, and federally recorded violations for a hundred years. In February, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to consider options for the acquisition of the property. As part of ongoing investigations into their operations, the County is looking for public input—whether positive, negative, or neutral—to determine whether there is evidence that operation of the Lehigh Cement Plant has created a public health or safety nuisance. A direct personal experience can include, for example, your personal experience of any impacts from the Lehigh Cement Plant to the environment at or near your address, including with respect to air quality, noise, water, traffic, health, or safety.

To share your experiences, please [fill out this form](#) by 5:00 pm on Friday, October 28, 2022.

We Won! - For several years, we have persistently (and vocally) opposed the proposal by the **San Jose Light Tower** (AKA Breeze of Innovation) to build a monumental light pollution generator at Arena Green park, the confluence of the Guadalupe River and Los Gatos Creek in downtown San Jose. We learned that due to “environmental concerns with the riparian corridor, regulatory challenges, and air traffic noise,” the proponents of the project are no longer seeking to place it in Arena Green and are now hoping to build their “Breeze of Innovation” at Plaza de Cesar Chavez instead. We are greatly relieved and will continue to follow the project to ensure that future lighting does not harm the environment.

SCVAS endorsement of [San Benito County Measure Q](#) – If passed by voters, this ballot measure will protect agriculture and range land in the county from development and sprawl.

Cupertino Updates

- **Speak up for native habitat at a new park** – The City is building a new park that will run along Saratoga Creek, [Lawrence-Mitty Park](#), and is asking for public feedback. Although there are three designs, the designers will look at the most popular features of each. Of note, the second design (Concept B: Story Trail) has the most natural habitat of the three. Unfortunately, the designers stated that, while the immediate areas next to the creek will have native vegetation, they plan to use non-native trees in other areas. Please take the survey by **Monday, October 31**, with the following suggested responses.
 - Question 5: Choose “B – Story Trail” as the preferred concept
 - Question 7: Choose “As much sound wall as possible.” (The other choices will reduce the amount of habitat.)
 - Question 8: Ask the City to plant all native plants and trees that have high habitat value.
 - **No illuminated signs** – A new storage facility recently proposed adding two enormous illuminated signs on their buildings that would face the 280 freeway. This not only would have added to the overall light pollution of the city, but it would also have distracted motorists violating the city’s design criteria and harm the scenic corridor along the freeway. We spoke up, and the Planning Commission rejected the freeway-facing signs.
 - **Wildlife protections in golf course maintenance contract** – The City Council was asked to sign off on a renewal of the maintenance contract of Blackberry Farm Golf Course, which is located next to Stevens Creek and McClellan Ranch. Out of curiosity, we looked at the over 700 page document that the City Staff prepared and noticed that the new contract did not include many of the wildlife and creek protections that the previous contract had. For example, the new contract did not require workers to conduct bird nest surveys before tree maintenance during nesting season. We spoke up, and the City acknowledged the omissions and are adding our recommendations to the new contract.
-



Nature Shop Volunteers Needed

SCVAS is looking for reliable volunteers to help run the nature shop on an as-needed basis. Volunteers are responsible for answering basic birding and wildlife related questions for the public over the phone and in person, entering sales in the Nature Shop, filling and cleaning the feeders and bird baths, and helping with the occasional mailing.

Contact April Austin at scvas@scvas.org for further information.



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