

# El Tecolote

Newsletter of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc.  
Volume 41, Issue 5 April/May 2003



## Allen's Hummingbird Nests Successfully in Montecito

By Jim Greaves



On January 3, 2003, the day before and in time to be counted on the **SBAS** annual Christmas Bird Count, **Joan Lentz** reported that **Brad Hines** had found a female Allen's Hummingbird and her nest (high up in pines) near the railroad tracks north of the Biltmore Hotel in Montecito.

Near the end of January, I observed her for the first time, feeding young in the nest. Because of the early date of this nest, I had been asked to try to get photos or other evidence to determine which of 2 races she might be, sedentary or migratory. The migratory race is expected along our coast, while the other has been known to breed, until now, only on the Channel Islands and close to the coast south of Oxnard. During the ensuing 2 weeks, I visited the nest 5 times to monitor its progress and to try to get photos of the female at the nest or perched nearby.

On February 16, accompanied by **Lark Chadwick**, I checked the nest for the last time, expecting it to have fledged the day before. We were rewarded with the chance to watch as the young fledged about a half hour apart, and I was able to get a few more photos, including of the female feeding one chick a

*Continued on Page 6*

## SB Audubon Society's 40th Anniversary Celebration!

By Lee Moldaver

Lordy, Lordy, look who's 40! The **Santa Barbara Audubon Society** celebrates it's 40th with a gala lunch program, Saturday, May 17, 11 am–2 pm at the Leni Fe Bland Forum on City College's West Campus. Full festivities, including a sumptuous lunch, are only \$25. Or, if you don't want to attend the lunch, bring a picnic and feel free to attend the programs without cost.

The celebration will include:

- Proclamations and official tributes, with lofty dignitaries. Salutes to **SBAS's** founding Chapter members. **Joy Parkinson** briefly reviewing our glorious Chapter history. Recollections of the Chapter's golden age of birding offered by invited guests **Ray Webster** and **Paul Lehman**. **Jan Hamber** sharing a brief history of our fight to save the California Condor from extinction. Chapter awards presentations. Recognition of the **Snowy Plover Docent Program**, **Eyes In The Sky** and special habitat restoration projects. Plus humorous highlights from our nationally famous Holiday Bird Counts and more. (11 am–12:15 pm)

- A catered lunch overlooking the beautiful Pacific with all the fixin's—appetizers, salads, vegetables, bread, dessert and the choice of a chicken, fish or vegetarian entree. (12:15 pm–1 pm)

- A Keynote presentation with splendid audio-visuals that will highlight the Central Coast's amazing fauna, flora and avian diversity. Q&A with the Keynote Speaker, followed by licentious ribaldry, last announcements and then home (in time for more birding). (1 pm–2 pm)

*Continued on Page 2*

## Earth Day Every Day

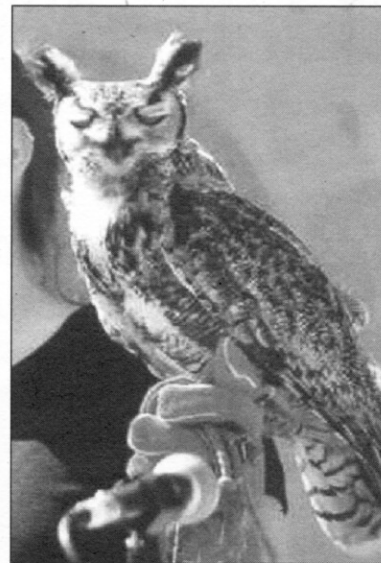


## Earth Day 2003

### "Water for Life"

By Catherine Graham

- Sunday, April 27, 10 am to 5:15 pm
- Santa Barbara Court House Sunken Gardens
- Volunteers are needed to "talk bird" with **SBAS** booth visitors. Please help out on this delightful day. Please decide which times work best for you and then contact **Lisa Sobczak** at 683-2009 or asobczak@ix.netcom.com.
- Family Time is from 10 am to 12. Our "**Eyes In The Sky**" live bird ambassadors will be on stage at 10:45 to 11 am and at the **SBAS** booth at 11 am. Come and meet **Max**, our Great Horned Owl, and bird friends under the redwoods. Youth and adult's heights will be compared to those of local large birds. A children's table will include supervised drawing of wildlife, surprises and questions and answers. Come and bring your youthful friends!



*Max at Earth Day 2002*

*Photo by Catherine Graham*

*Continued from Page 1*

City College's West Campus is located on the Mesa, ocean side of Cliff Drive, just west of Loma Alta Drive. The Fe Bland Forum is on the left at the end of the Entry drive. Parking is free. A drop-off circle is in front of the Fe Bland Forum which is handicapped accessible. Lunch will be served in the adjacent café area.

To **RSVP** please fill out the attached form, indicating your choice of entree. Remember to enclose your check of \$25 per person made out to **Santa Barbara Audubon Society** and return to:

**Santa Barbara Audubon Society**

5679 Hollister Avenue, Suite 5B

Goleta, CA 93117

For any questions please call the **SBAS** office at 964-1468.



*Snowy Plover Chick*

*By Beth Price*

thanks for the great job Beth did at the Christmas Bird Count potluck! As an environmental photographer, Beth has also provided us with some wonderful photos—especially her Snowy Plover chick photos! We will miss Beth, and wish her well in her new adventures in Michigan.

## Thank You Beth!

By Darlene Chirman

**Beth Price** has served as Treasurer for almost two years. This is a demanding job with the many active programs and grants of our chapter, and we are very appreciative of all the effort Beth has put in on behalf of conservation of local wildlife and habitats, and education on these issues. Also a special

Fortunately, board member **Ginny Turner** has agreed to move from Secretary to Treasurer to complete this term, and to be on the slate for next year as Treasurer. **Susan Lentz** has been appointed to complete the Secretary position. Welcome aboard, Susan. And thanks to both Ginny and Susan for their assistance in this transition. We still have vacancies on the Board for the new term, which begins in July, so please contact me at 692-2008 if you'd consider joining our dynamic board.

## SBAS's 40th Anniversary Celebration

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Number Attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Lunch Entree: Chicken \_\_\_\_\_ Fish \_\_\_\_\_ Vegetarian \_\_\_\_\_



# Santa Barbara Audubon Programs

*All programs, unless otherwise noted, will take place at Farrand Hall, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, Mission Canyon, Santa Barbara. Free on-site parking. All programs, unless otherwise noted, will begin at 7:30 pm, doors open at 7:00 pm, and are free to the public. SBAS members are encouraged to bring guests.*

## The Ellwood Coast—A Dream Coming True

**Craig Wakamyia & Kevin Barthel, Speakers**

**Wednesday, April 23**

Even casual hikers who walk the Ellwood Coast from Sandpiper to Coal Oil Point get the idea—this area was meant to be planned for and maintained as one entity, not as three or four separate parcels with disparate agendas. With its abundance of bird life, plants, trees, vernal ponds, wetlands, trails and sweeping views, it is a microcosm of all the unique treasures of the Central California Coast. Friends of the Ellwood Coast (FOTEC) has had this vision for years, and now the pieces are coming together.

Please join **Craig** and **Kevin** of FOTEC for a slide program/lecture showing the challenges, natural wealth, and possibilities of this unique area. It will make your next walk to Ellwood more exciting and enriching. **Carla Frisk** of the Trust for Public Lands will also be attending and will discuss the campaign to preserve the Ellwood Coast.



## How To Attract "Working Birds" To Your Garden

**A Presentation of the SB Organic Garden Club**

**Cosponsored by SBAS**

**Wednesday, May 21, 7:00 pm**

(please note special place and time)

**Location:** Community Environmental Council Gildea Center, 930 Miramonte Drive, Santa Barbara

**Directions:** From downtown Santa Barbara take Carrillo up the hill towards the Mesa. At the top of the hill turn left onto Miramonte Dr. Continue for approximately 1/2 mile and watch for the sign for the Gildea Center on the left. Park on Miramonte Dr. and walk down the short driveway to the Center.

**Leaders:** Mardena Waller & Claudia Armann

Birds are the organic gardener's best friends. Hummingbirds, for example, love to munch on those pesky white flies. Our speakers at this free presentation will be bird enthusiast **Mardena Waller** and wildlife rescue group volunteer **Claudia Armann**.

Mardena will discuss how to attract these "working birds" to our organic gardens. She will teach us how to provide backyard bird habitat; including protection, food, water and nesting. Bird foods and feeders will be displayed, plus a barn owl nesting box and a screech/owl nesting box. Claudia will discuss the impacts of free-roaming cats on the wild birds of Santa Barbara. She will teach us about local laws and strategies to protect our "working birds" from outdoor cats that prey on wildlife.

For more information please call 563-2089.



## Santa Barbara Audubon Field Trips

*Everyone is welcome! These trips are fun for both beginning and expert bird lovers. Binoculars are useful for enjoyment of birds, but if you don't have a pair please call the trip leader and we'll lend you a spare. Trips are free unless noted.*

### Lake Los Carneros County Park, Goleta

Saturday, April 26, 5:00 pm

**Target Birds:** Spring songbirds

**Leader:** Karen Bridgers, 964-1316, kbridgers@msn.com

Take the Los Carneros exit from 101 north on Los Carneros Rd to Stow House parking lot next to fire station. We will first bird Stow House then work our way towards the dam slowly circling the lake counterclockwise. Finish before sunset (7:35 pm). Please feel free to leave early or to catch up with us if you come late.

Please join us for this popular trip when the birds of spring are at their prettiest and in full song.



Jim Greaves

*Nesting Least Bell's Vireo - photo by Jim Greaves*

### Valley View Ranch

near Santa Paula

Saturday, May 24, 7:30 am

(at carpool place)

(drivers may appreciate gas money)

**Target Birds:** Breeding White-tailed Kite, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Least Bell's Vireo, Yellow Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Blue Grosbeak

**Leader:** Jim Greaves, 563-2905

We will carpool from the Andree Clark Bird Refuge parking lot. From the east take 101 north to Cabrillo Blvd (left lane exit just past town of Montecito). Turn left on Cabrillo and turn right onto Los Patos Way. Parking on the left. From the

west take 101 south to Los Patos off ramp (after Milpas exit) and turn right into parking lot. If you want to meet us at the ranch at about 8:30 am take 101 to Ventura and exit on 126 east. In Santa Paula, take the 10th St exit. Go under the freeway then right on Harvard Blvd to 12th St and turn right at light where becomes South Mountain Rd. Go 3.7 mi, past 20089 and then left at next driveway, with green gate immediately after recently cleared orchard. Follow road through groves about ½ mi to parking area. Jim will be waiting for us at the ranch.

Please join Jim, an environmental consultant with two decades of experience monitoring Least Bell's Vireo populations in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, for a morning of viewing and learning about our common and endangered breeding woodland and streamside birds. Bring water and insect repellent. Dress in layers and wear long pants and walking shoes. Scopes not recommended. We should be back at the Bird Refuge before noon.

### More Great Field Trips/Events

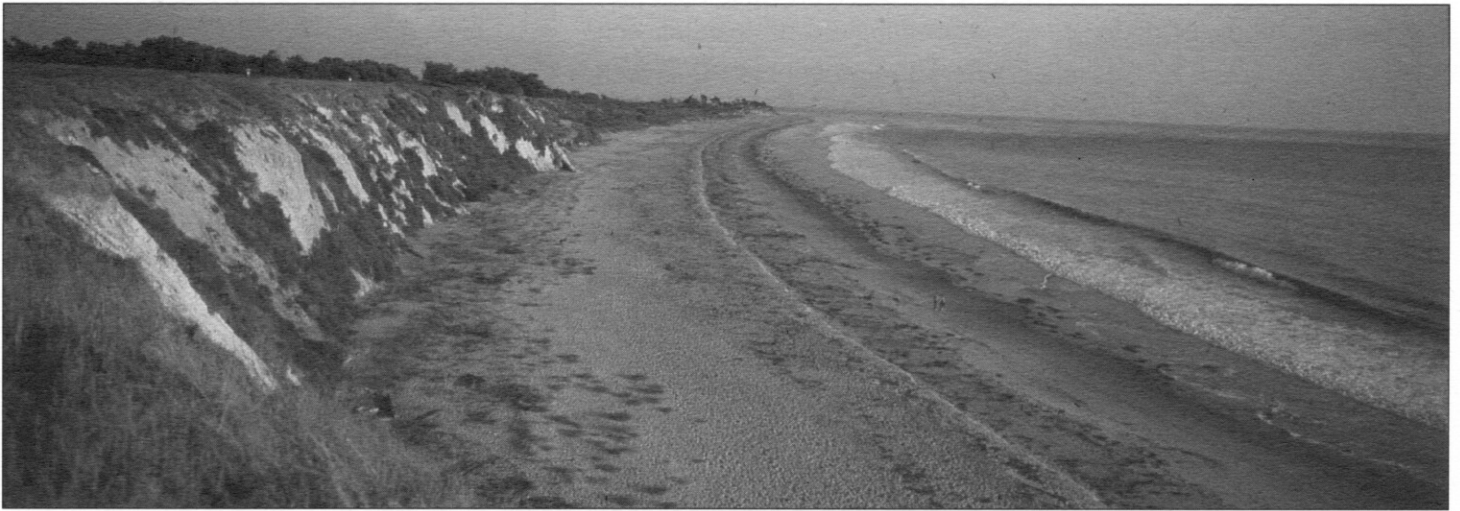
Other Audubon chapters offer interesting field trips and events too! Visit this site to schedule birding trips and participate in events all over California:

<http://audubon.org/chapter/ca/>



## Audubon Votes Challenge Grant to Save Ellwood Mesa

### "Saving the Gaviota Coast, one Parcel at a Time"



*Photo by Rich Reid*

The Trust for Public Land, along with its local partner, Friends of the Ellwood Coast (FOTEC), is leading the campaign to acquire the Ellwood Mesa for conservation and public open space. The City of Goleta is participating by exchanging a portion of Santa Barbara Shores Park close to Hollister Avenue and existing development, so that residential housing long proposed for the mesa will be built on a less environmentally-sensitive site.

**SBAS** has sought protection of the Ellwood bluffs and mesa for more than a decade, to protect the Monarch butterfly grove, the White-tailed Kites and other birds-of prey, vernal pools and native grasslands. We support the acquisition of the Ellwood Mesa and the land exchange.

At its last meeting, the **SBAS** Board of Directors voted to offer members a challenge grant—to match member donations up to \$2,000 total. In addition, the Goleta Valley Land Trust (GVLТ) is offering a \$500,000 challenge grant to the community. Therefore, if you contribute by June 30, 2003, your donation can be matched not only by the chapter, but also by the GVLТ as well, thus leveraging your donation twice. Again, we strongly encourage our members to contribute to the local fundraising campaign to raise the initial \$6 million—of a total of \$20.4 million needed.

Take a stroll on Ellwood Mesa, watch the birds or a sunset, and see what this community can preserve! This property is part of the Gaviota Coast, and its preservation will be one piece of the puzzle of protecting the largest stretch of remaining coastal open space in Southern California. If you have questions, you may call **Carla Frisk** at 350-3811 or **SBAS** President **Darlene Chirman** at 692-2008. Please send in your donation with the form below.

### Campaign to Save Ellwood Mesa



*Photo by Rich Reid*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

*Make check payable to:*

The Trust for Public Lands—Ellwood Mesa Campaign

*Mail your donation to:*

The Trust for Public Land—Ellwood Mesa Campaign  
 P. O. Box 1244, Goleta, CA 93116

*Continued from Page 1*

few yards from the nest. This crowned a day that included sighting a Thick-billed Kingbird on private land in Ventura County, where one had eluded me for 3 winters. And, during this and a previous visit, Lark had found a couple of active Anna's Hummingbird nests in adjacent pines!

Because of the early nesting date of this Allen's female, it is very likely she is from the sedentary race (or subspecies), *Selasphorus sasin sedentarius*—or a hybrid of the two known races (the other is *S. s. sasin*). Potentially corroborating this is an important characteristic that was only observed on this female with the aid of a spotting scope (which doubled as telephoto lens in order to “zoom in on” the 18 foot high nest at an angle allowing relatively decent, close photos): green feathers which appear as tiny “flecks” in the rufous color of the flanks, and to lesser extent across the breast and abdomen, of the sedentary race, absent from the migratory one. This characteristic is consistent among sedentary females, and to varying degrees among the offspring of hybrids of the two races, but is not noted in males of either race.

If it is possible to determine her race—that she is a purely sedentary female—from the many photos I made, this would be a very significant breeding range expansion for this subspecies—the closest known location is south of Oxnard! We will provide an update of that possibility, when and if it can ever be conclusively determined. This could be a wonderful thesis topic for a biology major at SBCC, UCSB or elsewhere... Meanwhile, good birding and Happy Trails!



Photos by Jim Greaves

Allen's hummingbird near Biltmore Hotel  
Montecito, Santa Barbara County, California  
Photo by Jim Greaves 09 February 2003

## Early Spring on the Carrizo Plain

By Elaine Uomini



Baby Blue Eyes on the Carrizo Plain, photo by Bill Uomini

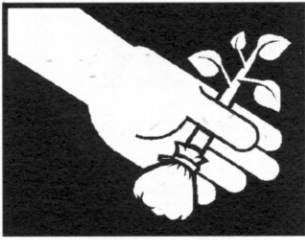
Reviewing my Life List revealed that there are a number of birds in this region that I have somehow missed. So began my New Year's Resolution – to find one Life Bird per week. In January, the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker posed exactly as reported in a pepper tree on the grounds of Goleta Valley Junior High. The White-winged Doves were easy to spot, but the Rusty Blackbird took three tries to find in the Costco parking lot. I began to fall behind in my resolution.

Then on March 10 Bill and I visited the Carrizo Plain and we saw five Life Birds in one day! As exciting as that is, the Carrizo Plain itself is far more interesting. There are wide open spaces, wildflowers as far as the eye can see, and incredible soul-filling solitude. And, get this: you can stop anywhere, right in the middle of the road (we only saw 5 other cars the whole day) to look at a bird - just like you always want to, but of course never can. That's how we saw the Prairie Falcon. He was perched in a tree and posed long enough to let us stop and get our binoculars on him before giving us a show, flying over the plain and disappearing behind a hill. Earlier in the day we had seen Sage Sparrows in the Salt Bushes down by Soda Lake. We were too late for the Sandhill Cranes, but further up the road we saw our target bird, the Tri-colored Blackbird, near the Nature Center. Brilliantly plumaged Mountain Bluebirds flitted about in great numbers, and while we were stopping to admire them, we saw two Rough-legged Hawks circling in the distance. In addition to these Life Birds, we saw two Golden Eagles, one at either end of the Plain, and entire flocks of Lawrence's Goldfinches. We usually see one or two per year in our yard, so seeing great numbers of them was a surprise. There were also American Pipits, Red-winged Blackbirds, Western Meadowlarks, Ravens, Prong-horned Antelope and deer. Altogether the Carrizo Plain is a magical place.



Singing Meadowlark by Steven D Amato

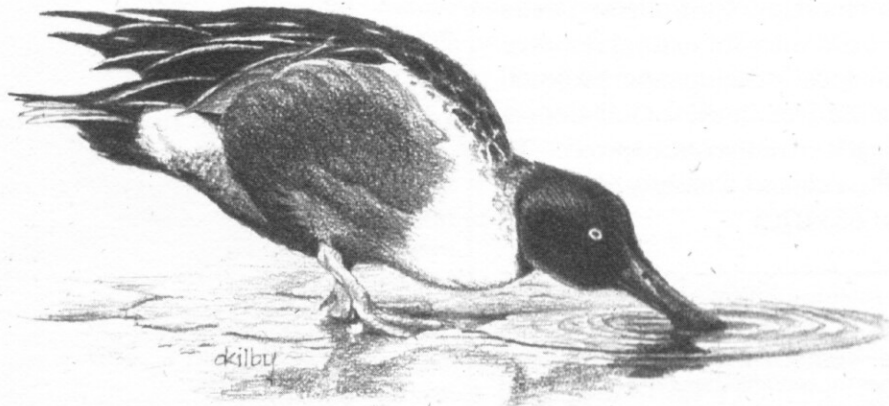




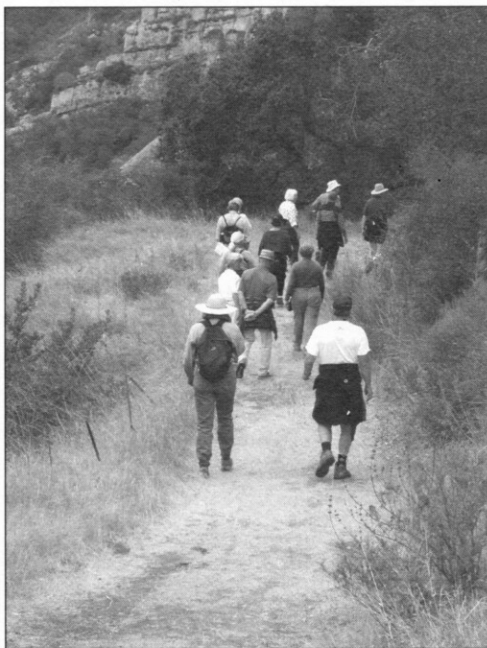
## Volunteer Restoration Opportunities For April & May

Come help restore our wildlife habitats at Coal Oil Point Reserve or Arroyo Hondo Preserve. To volunteer at Coal Oil Point Reserve contact **SBAS** Restoration Volunteer Coordinator **Ken Owen** at [islands@rain.org](mailto:islands@rain.org) or 568-1507; or contact Project Manager **Darlene Chirman** at [dchirman@rain.org](mailto:dchirman@rain.org) or 692-2008; or check our **SBAS** website at [www.rain.org/~audubon](http://www.rain.org/~audubon). If you would like to volunteer at the Arroyo Hondo Preserve please RSVP the Land Trust Volunteer Coordinator **Jane Murray** at [ltvolunteer@yahoo.com](mailto:ltvolunteer@yahoo.com) or 684-4405.

Date	Time	Place	Contact
Sun, Apr 6	9 am-12:30	Arroyo Hondo Preserve, bring a lunch, hike afterwards if you like	Jane Murray
Sun, Apr 13	9 am-12:30	Coal Oil Point Reserve, north shore, meet Storke Rd & Whittier Dr	Ken Owen
Sun, May 4	9 am-12:30	Arroyo Hondo Preserve, bring a lunch, hike afterwards if you like	Jane Murray
Sat, May 10	9 am-12:30	Coal Oil Point Reserve, north shore, meet Storke Rd & Whittier Dr	Ken Owen



*Northern Shoveler by Daniel S. Kilby*



*Photo by Elaine Uomini*

## Hike and Bird The Arroyo Hondo Preserve

Don't miss the beauty of the "jewel of the Gaviota Coast." The Land Trust for Santa Barbara County's Arroyo Hondo Preserve and historic adobe are open for visitors on the first and third weekends of each month from 10-3. Birding is excellent along this pristine riparian corridor. Free hiking, picnicking and docent tours are offered by advanced reservation.

This picturesque canyon offers visitors beautiful streamside trails extending from the ocean to the mountains. For the adventurous there are trails that take you to the ridge tops with breathtaking views of the canyon and the Gaviota Coast. The visitor's center in the historic adobe is a place to learn more about the early history of this historic ranch.

If you would like to volunteer with the habitat restoration or trail maintenance groups, which meet one morning a month, please call **Jane Murray** 684-4405. For reservations for free hiking and docent tours please call the Preserve at 567-1115.

## Calendar of Events

Apr 23 Program: The Ellwood Coast  
 Apr 26 Field Trip: Lake Los Carneros  
 Apr 27 Earth Day  
 May 17 40th Anniversary Celebration  
 May 21 Program: Birds in the Garden  
 May 24 Field Trip: Valley View Ranch

## Protect Birds, Wildlife and their Habitats

**S**BAS is seeking volunteers to serve on the Board of Directors. The positions are for a one-year term and begin in July of 2003. Please contact President **Darlene Chirman** at 692-2008 for more information.

The Conservation Committee needs monitors to be the voice for natural resource protection for local development projects. Examples are the Dos Pueblos Golf Course and Goleta Beach erosion control project. To learn more please contact Conservation Chair **Dave Wass** at 683-0705.

El Tecolote is published 6 times a year by the **Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc.** Members are invited to send announcements, letters, articles, photos and drawings for consideration to:

**SBAS**, Bill and Elaine Uomini, Editors  
 5679 Hollister Avenue, Suite 5B  
 Goleta, CA 93117

or e-mail: [eltecote@cox.net](mailto:eltecote@cox.net)

Submission deadline is the 10th of the month.

## SBAS - July 2002/June 2003

(805) 964-1468, [audubon@rain.org](mailto:audubon@rain.org)  
[www.rain.org/~audubon](http://www.rain.org/~audubon)

### OFFICERS

<i>President:</i> Darlene Chirman	692-2008	<a href="mailto:dchirman@rain.org">dchirman@rain.org</a>
<i>Vice-President:</i> Open		
<i>Secretary:</i> Susan Lentz	968-6011	
<i>Treasurer:</i> Ginny Turner		<a href="mailto:vtf7@juno.com">vtf7@juno.com</a>

### BOARD MEMBERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

<i>Field Trips:</i> Paul Keller	968-7804	<a href="mailto:wrentit@verizon.net">wrentit@verizon.net</a>
<i>Programs Co-Chair:</i> Sylvia Curtis	962-9554	<a href="mailto:sylviaorg@yahoo.com">sylviaorg@yahoo.com</a>
<i>Programs Co-Chair:</i> Open		
<i>Conservation:</i> Dave Wass	683-0705	<a href="mailto:david.wass@cox.net">david.wass@cox.net</a>
<i>Education:</i> Lisa Sobczak	683-2009	<a href="mailto:asobczak@ix.netcom.com">asobczak@ix.netcom.com</a>
<i>Science:</i> Kendy Radasky	961-9378	<a href="mailto:kradasky@aol.com">kradasky@aol.com</a>
<i>Membership Chair:</i> Lee Moldaver		<a href="mailto:audubon@rain.org">audubon@rain.org</a>
<i>Newsletter:</i> Bill & Elaine Uomini	964-9401	<a href="mailto:eltecote@cox.net">eltecote@cox.net</a>
<i>Publicity:</i> Natasha Carr	967-1383	<a href="mailto:tahi4@cox.net">tahi4@cox.net</a>
<i>At Large-Outreach:</i> Christine Cowles	957-0086	<a href="mailto:ccowles@sblandtrust.org">ccowles@sblandtrust.org</a>
<i>At Large-Outreach:</i> Anna Nicholas	681-9141	<a href="mailto:ripacityfilms@earthlink.net">ripacityfilms@earthlink.net</a>
<i>At Large-Outreach:</i> Victoria Harvey	962-2009	<a href="mailto:mwright@silcom.com">mwright@silcom.com</a>

### APPOINTED POSITIONS

<i>Membership data:</i> Patrick McNulty	967-9900	<a href="mailto:mcnulty@gte.net">mcnulty@gte.net</a>
<i>Webmaster:</i> Bobbie Offen	684-0160	<a href="mailto:bobbieo@earthlink.net">bobbieo@earthlink.net</a>
<i>Nominating Committee:</i> Sally Walker	569-5388	<a href="mailto:walker160@cox.net">walker160@cox.net</a>
<i>Eyes In The Sky:</i> Gabriele Drozdowski	898-0347	<a href="mailto:pelican7@cox.net">pelican7@cox.net</a>
<i>Hospitality:</i> Don & Florence Stivers	967-3690	
<i>Report Rare Birds:</i> Karen Bridgers	964-1316	<a href="mailto:kbridgers@msn.com">kbridgers@msn.com</a>
<i>Hear Rare Bird Report</i>	964-8240	

Officers and Chairs meet the 2nd Wednesday of the month. Members are welcomed to attend. Call **SBAS** office to verify dates and times. FAX: 967-7718. Cover art by **Daryl Harrison**.

### El Tecolote

Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc.  
 5679 Hollister Avenue, Suite 5B  
 Goleta, CA 93117

Dated material, please expedite  
 April 2003

Non-profit Organization  
 U.S. Postage PAID  
 Santa Barbara, CA  
 Permit Number 125



Allen's Hummingbird  
 Photo by Jim Greaves

or current resident

**In This Issue... Saturday, May 17 – SBAS's 40th Anniversary Celebration!**