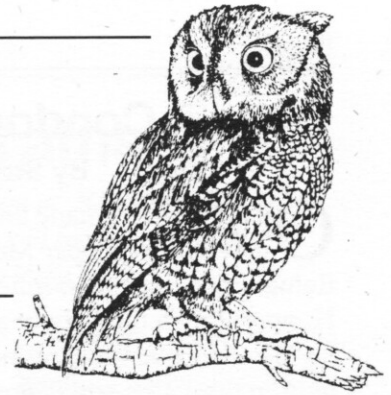

El Tecolote

Newsletter of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc.
Volume 43, Issue 1 August / September 2004



Gaviota Fire

By Darlene Chirman and Gabriele Drozdowski

The Gaviota Fire swept through almost 7500 acres in early June causing damage but rejuvenating the chaparral and coastal sage plant communities. 280 acres of the 782-acre Arroyo Hondo Preserve burned, but all structures survived the fire. Already the regrowth is in evidence, with no rain to stimulate plant growth. Habitat restoration activities continue, now including post-fire monitoring. Young bay trees and oak trees singed by the heat of the fire are putting out new leaves; many burned shrubs are stump-sprouting new leaves. Very few restoration plantings were lost. Almost all the fire was on the west side of the Preserve, and most of the restoration sites are east of the creek.

Wildlife was affected by the fire. More quail than usual were observed recently during restoration efforts. The week after the fire, Turkey Vultures were feasting on a dead doe on the hillside. Predators are observed more often, such as the bobcat photographed by **David Kisner** on the Gaviota Coast. A family of Red-tailed Hawks left their nest in the large Eucalyptus trees west of the Preserve abode as the fire scorched the trunk and part of the foliage, but returned the next day.



Bobcat, photo by David Kisner

One fledgling/juvenile Red-tailed Hawk was rescued by **James Walker** and **Gabriele Drozdowski** and treated for burns on his feet by **Dr. Christine Sellers** at the Cat and Bird Clinic. His feet have healed well, and he is finishing his rehabilitation in a large flight aviary at the Ojai Raptor Center, where he can practice hunting live prey (rats and mice) prior to his release back into the Arroyo Hondo area.

Many of you had the chance to see the Arroyo Hondo Preserve, the blackened slopes, and the initial post-fire recovery at the Audubon Annual Potluck, held July 18th as planned. The Hollister Meadow is no longer filled with exhausted firefighters, and has resumed its peaceful character.



Northern Pygmy-Owl Rescued

By Gabriele Drozdowski

This little gem was found on the grounds of La Casa De Maria after being hit by a car. Fortunately his stunned disposition was temporary and no serious injuries resulted. Quite young, it may very well have been his first flight. Welcome to the world, little one. This rare little "daytime" owl will receive more flight and hunting practice before being released back into the wild.

Young Northern Pygmy-Owl, photo by James Walker

Condor Watch!

By Steve Ferry

On July 2 – 3 I made another trip to observe a condor nest at the Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge. The rugged 16-mile drive from Fillmore to the Hopper Ranch took about an hour!

The Hopper Ranch is an old cattle ranch that was built in the 1930s and is pretty rustic. The staff at the ranch consisted of four college-age interns and one regular US Fish and Wildlife employee. Talk about dedication! These people work incredible hours under extremely difficult conditions and love what they do. At dark they jumped on their ATVs and moved a bunch of smelly calf carcasses from one condor feeding site to another. Slipping and sliding around in the dark on steep slopes with rotting meat would not be most people's idea of fun, but these folks went to it with enthusiasm!

There are three condor nests in the Hopper area this year; two others in addition to the one I saw. All three nests have healthy chicks at this time.

On Saturday morning the USFWS guy, **Richard Posey**, took me to the trailhead for the '04 nest site. The "trail" goes directly down the ridge for about 1.4 miles to the observation post. This entire area had burned in last fall's fire. Most of the brush was burned off, but the trees, although severely singed, looked like they'd survive. A good crop of grass had grown up this spring and poison oak and other chaparral bushes were sprouting up here and there.

The nest is across Hopper canyon from the observation post in a small cave. Just as I arrived I spotted a condor flying into the nest. The condor went

quickly into the cave and stayed a short time. In the early afternoon there was a flurry of activity. None of the condors had fed for three days – apparently they didn't like the new feeding site that the USFWS had picked out. Once the food was moved back to the old site they began feeding again. Finally one of the adults came flying in to the nest with a full crop. Shortly after the adult landed the chick appeared at the mouth of the cave. The chick was much bigger than I expected – about half grown. It was flapping its small wings excitedly when the parent approached the cave. The parent then

apparently fed it – I couldn't see exactly because the parent's body was blocking my view. Then the parent entered the cave, ushering the chick ahead of it. The parent stayed in the cave for several minutes, and then flew off. Less than an hour later the other adult arrived at the nest and went right into the cave. It appeared to have a full crop also, and I believe that it also fed the chick. Soon this adult also flew down the canyon.



Photo by Steve Ferry

In the late afternoon I packed up my gear and began the trudge out. The trail isn't too bad – fairly easy to follow – although I did use my GPS to good advantage on one or two occasions. The elevation gain to the trailhead is almost 1200 feet – I was definitely glad that the weather was cool! On the way I passed a roost tree that had 9 condors. To my surprise, the condors didn't flush when I walked by, even though I was only about 50 yards away! It was really cool to see so many condors up close!

This was an enjoyable trip (for a birdwatcher who doesn't mind slogging through the underbrush and sitting for hours tormented by flies)! Anyone else crazy enough to do this?

Condor Field Trip

Saturday, August 28, 8:00 am (at carpool place)

SBAS members only - reservations required!

SBAS will have a field trip to see the endangered California Condor at the Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge near Fillmore. Meet at the Santa Barbara Bird Refuge on Los Patos Way at 8:00 am for carpooling. Bring a lunch and plenty of water. We will return to Santa Barbara by mid-afternoon.

We will be led by US Fish & Wildlife personnel and have a good chance to see the condors soaring and feeding. The trip is limited to **SBAS** members and reservations are required. The first four 6-passenger vans and 20 riders to sign up will go on the trip. The last 12 miles of the journey from Fillmore are on a steep, rough, twisty, partially-paved mountain road. Four-wheel drive is not required. Not much walking will be necessary as some of the condors' favorite spots can be seen from the road.

Please call **Jack Sanford** at 566-2191 to make a reservation.

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.

Birds of Ventura County

Don DesJardin, Speaker

Wednesday, September 22

For the last 15 years, **Don DesJardin** has been birding and photographing birds in what he calls his "local patch", Ventura County. Even though Don's primary passion was the 35mm camera, he had always wanted to explore the world of capturing birds on video.

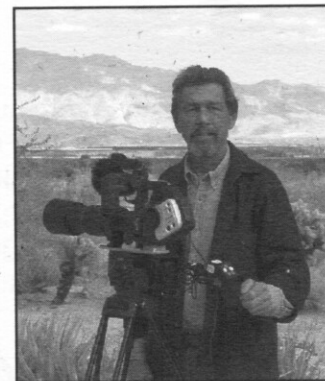


California Quail

After much research, he decided to take the plunge into the video world by purchasing a Canon XL1 Mini DV video camera in April of 2000. This is an awesome camera, and with a 3CCD chip, and being a digital format, it approaches near broadcast video quality. Since then he has acquired an extensive collection of local and migratory Ventura County birds; shorebirds being one of his favorite groups. Don's program is a 60-minute video that he has produced called "Birds of Ventura County". This is not a bird identification video, but what he calls "bird eye candy", that will show over 285 separate video clips covering over 130 species and shows just how diverse the bird life is for Ventura County, even though it represents only a small portion of the total bird species ever recorded for the county.

After Don presents his video, he will be available to answer general birding questions as well as technical questions about the process of photographing and taking videos. And be sure to check out his website:

<http://jabiru.org/birdsdesjardin/index.jsp>



Black-crowned Night Heron
Photos by Don DesJardin



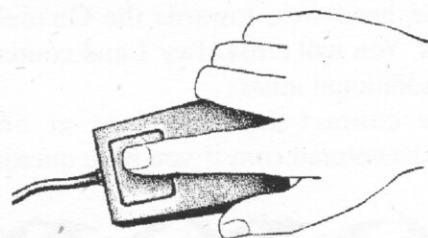
But it's for you, dear.

Wooing Least Terns, photo by Roger Millikan

Web Site!

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-ca.org>





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.

New! Friday Bird Walks New!

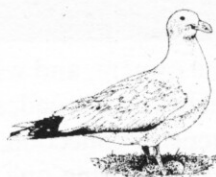
Beginning on Friday Aug 6 there will be a local **SBAS** bird walk twice a month through Sept. If enough volunteers can be recruited the Friday bird walks will be continued after Sept. Here is the Aug and Sept schedule:

Friday, Aug 6, 8:30 am - 10:30 am: Lake Los Carneros (Los Carneros Rd)

Friday, Aug 20, 8:30 am - 10:30 am: Hidden Valley Park (Modoc Road to Calle De Los Amigos)

Friday, Sept 3, 8:30 am - 10:30 am: Atascadero Creek (South on Patterson Ave)

Friday, Sept 17, 8:30 am - 10:30 am: Ennisbrook Nature Trail (San Leandro Lane, Montecito)



Contact Field Trip Chair **Jack Sanford** at 566-2191 or jacksanford@hotmail.com if you have questions. In addition, please contact Jack if you would be interested in leading a field trip to your favorite birding place on any day.

Rancho Guadalupe Dunes

Birding along the Beach

Saturday, August 7, 8:00 am
(at carpool place)

Target Birds: Shorebirds

Trip Leader: Dunes Center Docent Naturalist **Willie Richerson**

Cost: Voluntary \$3:00 donation per car

We will be joining Guadalupe Dunes Center Naturalist **Willie Richerson** for a leisurely half-mile stroll at Rancho Guadalupe Dunes Preserve from 10:00 am to 12 noon. We will view shorebirds along the beach and the Santa Maria River Estuary. Dress in layers. Bring water and food if you like.

We will meet at the Kmart parking lot in Goleta at 8:00 am and carpool to the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes Preserve. If you would like to meet us there at 10:00 am take Hwy 101 north to Hwy 166 (Main St exit in Santa Maria) and head west towards the Guadalupe Dunes parking lot. You will cross Hwy 1 and continue on Hwy 166 for 5 additional miles.

Please contact **Jack Sanford** at 566-2191 or jacksanford@hotmail.com if you have questions.



Oso Flaco Lake

San Luis Obispo County

Sunday, September 19, 7:00 am
(at carpool place)

Target Birds: Water birds and shorebirds

Trip Leader: Dunes Center Docent **Ken Wolf**

Cost: Parking fee at Natural Area

We will be joining Guadalupe Dunes Center Docent **Ken Wolf** for a walk at Oso Flaco Lake Natural Area from 9:00 am to 11 am. This will be a leisurely 2 mile jaunt that includes a raised boardwalk that allows hikers to walk across the freshwater lake. Learn about this rare and unique ecosystem while birding too. Dress in layers. Bring water and food if you like.

We will meet at the Kmart parking lot in Goleta at 7:00 am and carpool to Oso Flaco Lake. If you would like to meet us there at 9:00 am take Hwy 101 north to Hwy 166 (Main St exit in Santa Maria) and head west towards Guadalupe. At the Hwy 1 intersection turn north (right) on Hwy 1 and travel 3 miles north of Guadalupe to Oso Flaco Road. Turn west (left) on Oso Flaco Road and proceed 3 miles to the parking lot.

Please contact **Jack Sanford** at 566-2191 or jacksanford@hotmail.com if you have questions.



August & September Volunteer Restoration Opportunities

Audubon helps recruit volunteers for habitat restoration for the Coal Oil Point Reserve and the Arroyo Hondo Preserve, as well as for the project we manage at Coal Oil Point Reserve. Come help restore our local natural areas. To volunteer at Coal Oil Point Reserve contact **Julie Love** at jmlove818@hotmail.com or 453-4840 or **Darlene Chirman** at dchirman@rain.org or 692-2008; or check our **SBAS** website at www.rain.org/~audubon. To volunteer at the Arroyo Hondo Preserve please RSVP the Land Trust Volunteer Coordinator **Jane Murray** at ltvolunteer@yahoo.com or 684-4405.

Date	Time	Place	Contact
Sun, Aug 8	9am-12:30pm	Arroyo Hondo Preserve, bring a lunch, hike afterwards if you like	Jane Murray
Sat, Aug 28	9am-noon	Coal Oil Point Reserve, contact for site	Julie/Darlene
Sun, Sept 5	9am-12:30pm	Arroyo Hondo Preserve, bring a lunch, hike afterwards if you like	Jane Murray
Sat, Sept 25	9am-noon	Coal Oil Point Reserve, contact for site	Julie/Darlene

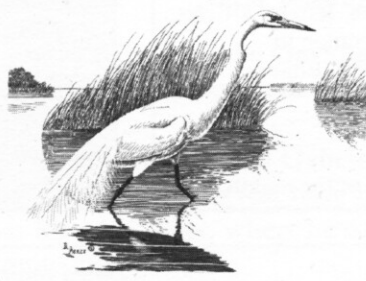
Carpinteria Salt Marsh (Sandyland) Field Trip Report

By Jack Sanford, Trip Leader

Friday June 25 was a great day and, although we did not spot anything unusual, we did see a nice variety of birds. Twenty birders participated in this restricted-access wetlands bird walk and, because of the many eyes, the spotting was great! Our group included people with a wide range of birding abilities. Whether the spotter was a beginner or an expert, someone was able to identify the bird. Thus we all learn and became better birders. As an example of spotting ability **Debby** from Carpinteria saw a bird so far in the distance that it was just a hovering speck, but with binoculars the group was able to identify it as a White-tailed Kite. That's what makes these field trips so special. Plus they are free! So whatever your birding ability why not join us on our next field trip. We saw:

American Crow
Anna's Hummingbird
Black Phoebe
Black-bellied Plover
Black-crowned Night Heron
Brown Pelican
Cliff Swallow
Double-crested Cormorant

Forster's Tern
Great Egret
Great Blue Heron
House Finch
Loggerhead Shrike
Mourning Dove
Northern Mockingbird
Osprey



Great Egret

Red-shouldered Hawk
Savannah Sparrow
Snowy Egret
Turkey Vulture
Western Gull
White-tailed Kite

National Audubon Society Membership Application

(new members only)

Includes membership in **National Audubon & Santa Barbara Audubon Society (C13 7XCH)**
and subscriptions to **Audubon** magazine & **El Tecolote**, the **SBAS** newsletter

☐ \$20 Introductory Membership

☐ \$15 Senior (62+) or Student

Make check payable to:

National Audubon Society

Mail to:

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

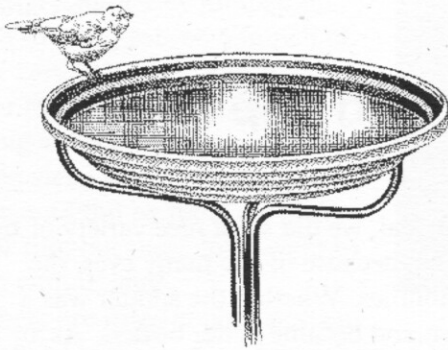
State/Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Calendar of Events

Aug 6 Bird Walk: Lake Los Carneros
 Aug 7 Field Trip: Guadalupe Dunes
 Aug 20 Bird Walk: Hidden Valley Park
 Sept 3 Bird Walk: Atascadero Creek
 Sept 17 Bird Walk: Ennisbrook Trail
 Sept 19 Field Trip: Oso Flaco Lake
 Sept 22 Program: Birds of Ventura
Check our website for any changes or late additions to our Bird Walks, Field Trips or Programs:
<http://www.rain.org/~audubon/>



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: eltecolote@cox.net
 Submission deadline is the 10th of the month.

SBAS - July 2004/June 2005

(805) 964-1468, audubon@rain.org
<http://www.rain.org/~audubon/>

OFFICERS

<i>President:</i> Darlene Chirman	692-2008	dchirman@rain.org
<i>Vice-President:</i> Lee Moldaver	964-1468	audubon@rain.org
<i>Secretary:</i> Susan Lentz	968-6011	salentz@cox.net
<i>Treasurer:</i> Ginny Turner	964-6384	vtuner10@cox.net

BOARD MEMBERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

<i>Field Trips:</i> Jack Sanford	566-2191	jacksanford@hotmail.com
<i>Programs:</i> John O'Brien & Marsha MacDonald	962-7799	mlbm@cox.net
<i>Conservation:</i> Julie Love	453-4840	jmlove818@hotmail.com
<i>Education:</i> Mary Thompson	965-9995	marydee2@earthlink.net
<i>Science:</i> David Kisner	252-5036	d_kisner@cox.net
<i>Membership:</i> Steve Ferry	967-5162	sjferry@cox.net
<i>Newsletter:</i> Bill & Elaine Uomini	964-9401	eltecolote@cox.net
<i>Publicity:</i> Ben Shalant	448-4447	Kagawaben@aol.com
<i>At Large-Outreach:</i> Julie Kummel	964-9444	jkummel@rain.org
<i>At Large-Outreach:</i> John Walker	562-9911	johnskyw@hotmail.com
<i>At Large-Outreach:</i> Natasha Carr	967-1383	tahi4@cox.net

APPOINTED POSITIONS

<i>Webmaster:</i> Bobbie Offen	684-0160	bobbieo@cox.net
<i>Eyes In The Sky:</i> Gabriele Drozdowski	898-0347	pelican7@cox.net
<i>Snowy Plover Docent Prog:</i> Jennifer Stroh	880-1195	stroh@lifesci.ucsb.edu
<i>Hospitality:</i> Don & Florence Stivers	967-3690	
<i>Report Rare Birds:</i> Karen Bridgers	964-1316	kbridgers@msn.com
<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

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Great Blue Heron on Nest
 By Steven D Amato

or current resident

In This Issue... A Gaviota Fire Story