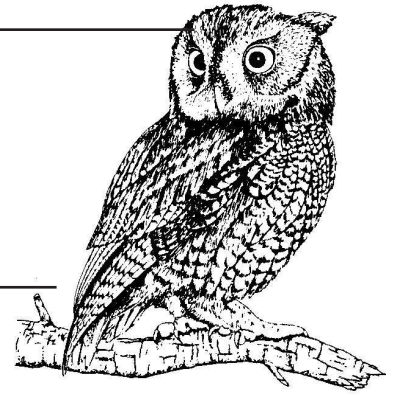


El Tecolote

Newsletter of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc.

Volume 47, Issue 2

October—November 2008



2008 Plover Update

By Jennifer Stroh



Plover Chick

Photo by Dave Forseth

In An Egg Shell

Seven years ago I started volunteering for SB Audubon when I became aware of their concern for a small wintering population of Western Snowy Plover at Coal Oil Point. Little did I know then that I would dedicate nearly a decade of my life to help lead the effort to protect this threatened shorebird and its coastal habitat.

Working at Coal Oil Point Reserve (COPR) has been tremendously rewarding. Anyone who has worked with volunteers and wildlife conservation would understand. I find plover conservation unique because, in addition to the research, the preservation of this species relies heavily on the direct participation and support of the public. The participation comes from people who serve as Snowy Plover Docents. Plover Docents act as ambassadors of the beach. They provide a positive connection with people who visit the beach — people who might not otherwise notice or care about the precious resources found there. Helping to save a species from extinction while working

alongside the dedicated people of our Santa Barbara community continues to be a very satisfying experience.

How do Docents actually help snowy plovers?

Trained and committed volunteers staff the beach nearly all daylight hours, interacting with an average of 3 beach visitors per 2 hour shift. Of those interactions, 80% are positive. The contacts made by Plover Docents are the foundation for connecting people with nature.

Docents have provided the support to keep Sands Beach at Coal Oil Point open to the public and their leashed pets while maintaining suitable habitat for wintering and nesting plovers. Ultimately, Docents have made it possible for plovers to nest successfully while people recreate on the beach. Year after year, I think that is absolutely amazing!

Nesting Plovers 2008

This year the first plover nest was found on March 22 and the season came to a wrap mid-August. Throughout the spring and summer, the plovers were monitored three times per week



Plover parent and chicks.

Photo by Callie Bowdish.

Santa Barbara Audubon has a new website address:

www.SantaBarbaraAudubon.org

by COPR's Director, Dr. Cristina Sandoval; long-time Plover Docent and skilled birder, Pat Walker; and me, Program Coordinator, Jennifer Stroh.

If you have followed a bird's nest before, you might agree that it can be more stressful for the observer than the birds! You can experience first hand the suspense, heartbreak, and joy as you witness the threats, failures and successes of a nesting pair. They have very clear goals: hatch the eggs, rear the chicks, and get them out of the nest. If only it was that easy!

As for monitoring, it's always exciting to find plover nests at the beginning of the season, but the drama increases if there are high levels of predation. It was dreadful to find meandering skunk tracks over plundered plover nests and shell fragments where oval, speckled eggs used to sit.

After the challenges this year, I'm proud that our population fledged nearly 40 chicks. For the third consecutive year the plovers' major threat was the striped skunk. Eighteen of 57 nests were depredated by skunks in 2008.

Egg Replacement

Skunk predation was so intense that, after losing every nest found in the first month, we chose to replace the real eggs on the beach with wooden eggs. The real eggs were incubated in our Plover Nursery. When the eggs were ready to hatch they were returned to the beach in the nests that they came from. This way they could be reared naturally by their biological parents.

The egg replacement reduced the risk to the eggs by keeping them safe for 3 of the 4 weeks that they needed to be incubated. Even then, there were days before and after the replacement when threats were high, and it was unlikely that we found every nest.

But plovers don't waste time. Despite the heavy predation by skunks, the birds quickly re-nested. Most pairs laid three clutches of eggs over the summer before hatching any chicks. The most enjoyable part of the season was toward the end: counting and observing the last batch of chicks that hatched successfully and were able to fledge.

Odd Happenings & Highlights

The Gap fire may have created a challenge because we temporarily lost power to the incubator, but it was a benefit to the plovers when it caused the City of Goleta's 4th of July Firework Show to be rescheduled. A firework show is a very destructive event for all birds. It can be fatal for newly hatched chicks and eggs that are abandoned by their parents because

the adults are recklessly flying from the blazes, bright lights, and deafening booms.

Chick Nursery

Other exciting news is that our Chick Rearing Nursery was active again this year. We fed and released 4 chicks with the help of several volunteers under the direction of the Nursery Coordinator, Nicole Cerra.

Conclusion & Hope for 2009

As in most nesting seasons, the plovers were faced with many challenges, but definitely had another exciting year. A great deal of time and effort went into skunk prevention at COPR. **Pat Walker** and **Steve Ferry** spent countless hours installing and repairing mesh netting to keep the small mammals from coming to the beach from the interior part of the Reserve. We also stopped the skunks from using the main entrance by closing a skunk-proof gate at night. Another large effort, undertaken by Shorelines & Watersheds (S&W) and Docents **Linda Hill** and **Ellen Hamilton**, was directed at curtailing the over-population of skunks in our community. S&W created an outreach campaign to educate residents that live near Coal Oil Point about blocking off potential den sites at their homes, securing lids over trash cans, and keeping pet food indoors. This effort will hopefully make a long term impact.



*If you'd like to help, there are several ways to get involved. To register for one of the Docent Trainings, contact **Jennifer Stroh**, 805-893-3703, stroh@lifesci.ucsb.edu. The next trainings sessions are scheduled on October 11 and November 8. They take place from 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at the Cliff House, Coal Oil Point Reserve.*

CREEK WEEK

2008

October 2-12

Creek Week is an annual community event celebrating our local creeks and the ocean with many community groups sponsoring events to help build awareness and stewardship of the natural treasures of Santa Barbara.

For complete descriptions of all activities visit:



www.sbcreeks.com

www.sbprojectcleanwater.org

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, Andy Lentz, Editor

5679 Hollister Avenue, Suite 5B

Goleta, CA 93117

or email: newsletter@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org

Submissions deadline is the 10th of the month before publication.

2008 Annual Picnic



Board members.



Glendessary Jam.



Buffet line.



Darlene Chirman.



EITS representative

The annual picnic was held July 26 at Toro Canyon Park in the Carpinteria foothills. The new Board of Directors for 2008-2009 were presented and elected. (See the back page for the current Board.) Retiring Board Members **Callie Bowdish**, **Patty Malone**, **Kris Burnell**, and **Ben Shalant** were honored for their service, and all the various type of volunteers who work on the SBAS's many projects were recognized for their efforts.

Once the business was completed everyone rushed to the pot luck table to sample the array of tasty dishes. *Glendessary Jam* provided the music and seemed to enjoy playing as much as the audience enjoyed the performance.

TECOLOTE CIRCLE DONOR APPRECIATION EVENT Saturday, October 25 10:00 - Noon



If you are a member of Tecolote Circle, please put this date on your calendar! You will receive an invitation in the mail. We are holding this event to honor donors of \$1000 or more to the Endowment Fund of Santa Barbara Audubon Society. SBAS members **Peter** and **Linda Beuret** will host this "thank-you" brunch at their home at the highest point on the Mesa with spectacular views of the ocean and Hidden Valley Park.

If you'd like to become a Tecolote Circle member before the October 25 event, please contact **Julie Kummel** at 403-3203. Gifts can be cash, securities, or a planned gift—a bequest or gift annuity.

If you would like to make an endowment gift, please note that with your donation.

Please notify us if you have included Santa Barbara Audubon Society in your estate plans; we would like to thank you and invite you to our special events.

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 p.m. and are free to the public. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. SBAS members are encouraged to bring guests.

The Night Shift, Bats of Santa Barbara

Mary Wenzel

Wednesday, October 22, 2008

Most people are surprised to learn that Santa Barbara has over a dozen different bat species. Join us for an intimate look at “the night shift”—the bug catchers who take over after the last bird has roosted. The talk will include photos, videos, sounds and little-known details about the fascinating natural histories of our local flying mammals. Mary will also share the latest tips from the Bat House Research Project for those who would like to welcome bats to their backyard.

Mary is a programmer at UCSB with a passion for bats. She has been caring for local injured and orphaned bats since attending Bat World Boot Camp in Mineral Wells, Texas in 2001. She has done bat survey work in California, Borneo and Australia. She spent November 2003 and 2004 in Queensland, Australia, caring for orphaned spectacled flying foxes. She



Brown Bat.

Photo by Mary Wenzel

created and maintains a web site that allows bat researchers and enthusiasts to exchange bat sounds (www.batcalls.org). Her latest bat project involves producing and distributing bat videos to help show people the fascinating world of these highly beneficial and often misunderstood animals.

Cowbirds: Why are they so maligned and so interesting to biologists?

Stephen Rothstein

Wednesday, December 3, 2008

Steve will give a brief overview of parasitic birds and the special opportunities they offer for studies of evolution, followed by a summary of his research on song dialects and song development in cowbirds. Cowbirds require a great bit of learning to develop their vocal repertoires yet they learn only from other cowbirds even though they are always raised by other species. Steve will then address the issue of cowbirds as a threat to other songbirds. While cowbirds are a serious threat to a small number of endangered passerines and, therefore, must be controlled in some circumstances, cowbirds have been demonized to a large extent and blamed for far more damage than they have caused. This demonization has resulted in the excessive use of cowbird control, which deflects attention and funding from the most important threat to endangered songbirds, namely the habitat destruction we have inflicted on ecosystems, especially in riparian areas of the West. Making cowbirds into scapegoats ignores the facts that they have been in North America for at least a million years and are a natural component of its biodiversity.



Hooded Oriole and Cowbird fledglings.

Photo by: Steve Rothstein

Steve grew up in New York City, went to Yale University for his PhD dealing with the behavior, ecology and evolution of birds and had a 2 year postdoctoral position at the Smithsonian Institution before coming to UCSB in 1972. He teaches courses in vertebrate biology, animal behavior and evolution and conducts research on the co-evolution between parasitic birds and their hosts, song development and function in songbirds and conservation issues related to riparian bird species and cowbirds.

Special Program: Tejon Ranch Conservation Agreement Good for Nature? Wednesday, October 29

The Tejon Ranch Conservation Agreement announced in May 2008 secures 375 square miles of California's largest contiguous land holding. The ranch is at the crossroads of four distinct ecological regions, and home to innumerable rare species including California Condor, San Joaquin Kit Fox, Spotted Owl, and many more.

Audubon California, the Sierra Club, and three other environmental groups have agreed not to oppose three development projects on 10 percent of the Tejon Ranch (about 20,000 acres). These developments will still be subject to public review and applicable federal and state environmental protection laws.

Sierra Club's Bill Corcoran and Audubon California's Graham Chisholm will discuss the details of the agreement, as well as the many issues at play during negotiations with the Tejon Ranch Company.

For more information contact: <http://lospadres.sierraclub.org/santabarbara>



Oaks of the Tejon Ranch.

Santa Barbara Audubon Field Trips

*Everyone is welcome! These trips are fun for both beginning and expert bird watchers. 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. Please contact **Jack Sanford** (805) 566-2191 jacksanford@hotmail.com for details or questions.*

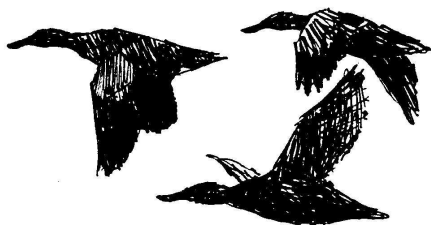
Devereux Slough
UCSB West Campus, Goleta
Saturday, October 25
7:30 a.m. - 11:00

Target Birds: Shorebirds, water birds and wintering songbirds.

Trip Leader: Robert Lindsay, 684-5373 capnbob@sbceo.org

Directions: Take Hwy. 101 to the Glen Annie/Storke Rd. exit. Proceed south (towards the ocean) on Storke Rd. Turn left on El Colegio Rd., right on Camino Corto Lane, and right on Del Playa Drive. Park and meet at the end of Del Playa.

We will bird a loop trail along the beach past the Snowy Plover reserve, by the pond below the storage tanks, around the top and east side of the slough, and back to the cars.



Ducks in flight.
by Kirsten Munson

Las Cruzitas Ranch
(near Santa Ynez)
Saturday, November 8
9:15 a.m.-2 or 3 p.m.
(8 a.m. at car pool location)

Target Birds: Goldfinches, Buntings, Rufous-crowned Sparrows, Phainopepla, Yellow-billed Magpies, Prairie Falcons, Nuthatches, Hummingbirds and maybe a Golden Eagle.

Trip Leader: Cruz Phillips, 688-8233, cruzitas@aol.com

Cost: \$8.00 gas money to car pool drivers

Directions: Car pooling is recommended as parking is limited. We will meet at the Five Points Shopping Center (Carl's Jr) at 8 a.m. To meet us at the ranch, take Hwy. 154 to Armour Ranch Rd. which is 3.3 miles west of Bradbury Dam (Lake Cachuma). Go north on Armour Ranch Rd. 1.4 miles, and turn right on Happy Canyon Rd. At 2.4 miles turn right on Alisos Ave. At 0.7 miles the pavement ends at a cattle guard. Continue 2.6 miles straight past 2 more cattle guards to the barn and ranch.

We will arrive around 9:15 a.m. and bird near the ranch house for about 2 hours where there are a large number of feeders and bird habitat. Then we will take an easy walk around the general area and perhaps a tour of a canyon. Bring water and a snack and/or lunch.

Friday Bird Walks

*Join us on the second and fourth Fridays of each month at 8:30-10:30 a.m. Please call Bird Walk leader **Jack Sanford** 566-2191 or email at jacksanford@hotmail.com if you are interested in leading a future bird walk to your favorite birding location or have any questions.*

Bonus Afternoon Bird Walk during Creek Week

(Sponsored by the Santa Barbara City Creeks Division and County Project Clean Water)

Santa Barbara Harbor

Thursday Oct. 9, 5- 6:30 p.m.

Leader: David Eldridge

Target Birds: Waterfowl, shorebirds, Peregrine Falcons, songbirds

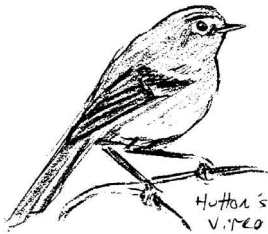
Directions: Coming from the north on Hwy. 101, take the Castillo St. off ramp to Cabrillo Blvd. Coming from the south on Hwy. 101 take the Cabrillo Blvd. off ramp. Park on Bath or Mason St. (no time limit) or in the 90 minute parking on Cabrillo Blvd. We will meet on the sidewalk next to the Sea Landing Sport Fishing Building (301 W. Cabrillo Blvd.)

Hidden Valley Park

Friday, Oct. 10

Target Birds: Black-headed Grosbeaks, Towhees, Mockingbirds, Woodpeckers

Directions: Take Modoc Rd. to Calle De Los Amigos. Park is on the corner of Calle De Los Amigos and Torino Drive. Park on street.



Hutton's Vireo
by Kirsten Munson

Rocky Nook Park

Friday, Oct. 24

Target Birds: Blackbirds, Bushtits, Woodpeckers, Phoebe, Vireos, Warblers, Wrens

Directions: From Hwy. 101 take Mission St. past the Mission. The road becomes Mission Canyon Rd. Rocky Nook Park is on the right as you head towards the mountains.

Stevens Park

Friday, Nov. 14

Target Birds: Raptors, Woodpeckers, Warblers, Phoebe, Wrens, Kinglets, Towhees

Directions: Take Hwy. 101 to Las Positas Rd. off ramp. Turn towards the mountains. Follow Las Positas Rd. until it becomes San Roque Rd. Follow San Roque Rd. Turn left on Calle Fresno and right on Canon Drive. Stevens Park is on your right.

Winchester Canyon

Friday, Nov. 28

Target Birds: Kingbirds, Kinglets, Siskins, Woodpeckers, Titmice, Towhees, raptors

Directions: Take Hwy. 101 to Winchester Canyon Rd. exit. Turn Right at the stop sign. Cross Cathedral Oaks Rd. Turn right on Winchester Rd. and left on Rio Vista Drive. Park near the open area on your left.

Field Trips/Bird Walks

Do you have an idea?

We are always looking for suggestion for places to visit on our monthly field trips. If you have an idea and are not sure where or what to do next, or are interested in helping coordinate a field trip contact **Jack Sanford** (805) 566-2191.

Welcome!

SBAS extends a warm welcome to our newest members.

We look forward to seeing you at our programs and field trips. Thanks for joining!

Jane M. Gray
Margaret Chase
Nate Petersen
Hyun Yu

Elizabeth Gietz
Margo G. Walker
Sarah Munro
Grace Polly Vincent

William Berry
Adam Lewis
Madelyn Cole

OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer Habitat Restoration

*Audubon helps recruit volunteers for habitat restoration at the Coal Oil Point Reserve and the Arroyo Hondo Preserve. Come help to restore a creek or estuary while spending a morning in a beautiful bird habitat. Contact the Land Trust, Arroyo Hondo Preserve Volunteer Coordinator **Jane Murray** at ltvolunteer@yahoo.com or 684-4405. For Coal Oil Point Reserve, contact **Tara Longwell** at longwell@lifesci.ucsb.edu or 252-4903, or **Darlene Chirman** at dchirman@starband.net or 692-2008.*

ARROYO HONDO

Contact: **Jane Murray**

Sunday October 5	9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Creek Week	
Tour	9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Restoration	11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Sunday November 2	9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

COAL OIL POINT RESERVE

Contact: **Tara Longwell**

Saturday October 4	9 a.m.-12 noon
Creek Week	
Tour	9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Restoration	11 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Saturday November 15	9 a.m.-12 noon

SBAS Needs Your E-mail Address

To be added to the **SBAS** e-mail list, just send an e-mail message with the subject line, "Add + your name" to jdawson@silcom.com. The **SBAS** e-mail list will only be used for **SBAS** business and will not be sold or shared with any other group.

Plover Project Docent Training

Training takes place at the Cliff House at Coal Oil Point Reserve, from 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

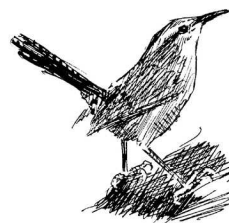
Training dates:

October 11
November 8

Training Schedule:

Tour is 9-11 a.m.
Training is 11 a.m. -1:30 p.m.

Those interested should call **Jennifer Stroh** to register at 880-1195.



Wren by Kirsten Munson

SBAS NEEDS YOU!

The Santa Barbara/Goleta area faces many challenges from development, including Naples, City of Goleta, Veneco oil development, UCSB Long Range Development Plan, and many others. In order to ensure that development proceeds in the most environmentally friendly way, Santa Barbara Audubon Society reviews developments and makes suggestions for improvement. The SBAS Conservation Committee is looking for volunteers to help us in this effort. Please contact our chair, **Steve Ferry**, at Conservation@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org if you'd like to help.

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 _____

☐ Do Not Share My Name With Other Organizations.

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

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Santa Barbara Audubon Society July 2008/June 2009
(805) 964-1468, Info@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org
<http://www.SantaBarbaraAudubon.org>

OFFICERS

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Vice-President	Lee Moldaver	964-6477	VP@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org
Secretary	Susan Lentz	968-6011	Secretary@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org
Treasurer	Bobbie Offen	684-0160	Treasurer@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org

BOARD MEMBERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Field Trips Chair	Jack Sanford	566-2191	FieldTrips@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org
Programs Chair	John O'Brien	962-7799	Programs@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org
Conservation Chair	Steve Ferry	967-5162	Conservation@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org
Education Chair	OPEN		
Science Chair	OPEN		
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Newsletter Chair	Judy Hogan	969-0907	Newsletter@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org
Publicity Chair	Adam Lewis	967-7213	Publicity@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org
At Large—Outreach	Julie Kummel	403-3203	Development-2@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org
At-Large—Outreach	Dolores Pollock	681-8661	Development-1@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org
At Large—Outreach	Margo Kenney	963-3011	Development-3@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Webmaster:	Bobbie Offen	684-0160	Treasurer@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org
Eyes In The Sky:			
	Gabriele Drozdowski	898-0347	EITS@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org
Snowy Plover Docent			
	Prog: Jennifer Stroh	880-1195	Plovers@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org
Hospitality:	Sylvelin Edgerton	964-1658	Hospitality-1@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org
	Nancy Rohrer	687-7587	Hospitality-2@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org
Report Rare Birds:	Karen Bridgers	964-1316	RareBirds@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org

Hear Rare Bird Report 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.

Calendar of Events

Check our website for any changes or late additions to our Bird Walks, Field Trips or Programs:

<http://www.SantaBarbaraAudubon.org>

Oct. 2-12	Creek Week 2008
Oct. 4	Restore Coal Oil Point Reserve
Oct. 5	Restore Arroyo Hondo
Oct. 9	Santa Barbara Harbor Bird Walk
Oct. 10	Hidden Valley Bird Walk
Oct. 11	Plover Training
Oct. 22	Program: Bats of Santa Barbara
Oct. 24	Rocky Nook Park Bird Walk
Oct. 25	Devereux Slough Field Trip
Oct. 25	Tecolote Circle Appreciation Event
Oct. 29	Special Program: Tejon Ranch
Nov. 2	Restore Arroyo Hondo
Nov. 8	Las Cruzitas Ranch Field Trip
Nov. 8	Plover Training
Nov. 14	Steven's Creek Bird Walk
Nov. 15	Restore Coal Oil Point Reserve
Nov. 28	Winchester Canyon Bird Walk
Dec. 3	Program: Cowbirds

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