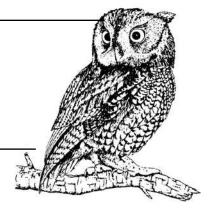
El Tecolote

Newsletter of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc.
Volume 48, Issue 1

August-September 2009



Audubon's Birds Of Prey Campaign Needs You!

by Lee Moldaver and Dolores Pollock



Darlene Chirman, President of SBAS and Dr. Karl Hutterer, Executive Director of the SB Museum of Natural History, at the Kick-off Event for the Birds of Prey Campaign Photo Adam Lewis

Help us build the Audubon aviary at the Natural History Museum!

Design plans are complete. The project is moving forward. Initial funding toward the \$150,000 Birds of Prey project is already committed. NOW is the time to meet the remaining capital funding need, so contractors can be put to work and science education opportunities at the Museum can be expanded. Audubon leaders and a family foundation have contributed over \$82,000. Now we are appealing to you, our members. We need you! Please use the enclosed envelope and be as generous as you can!

If we receive a single donation of \$10,000 or a group of donations totaling \$25,000—by Labor Day—a generous, anonymous Audubon member will give us \$10,000. This could make the difference. We want to build the aviary this fall, and if we reach our goal, we will do just that.

The Birds of Prey project is an exciting collaboration between the Santa Barbara Audubon Society and the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. Years in the planning and design, Birds of Prey will allow Max and other "rescued raptors" to live on the Museum's Mission Canyon grounds, in

Continued on page 2

Tree Swallow Nest Box Projects in Santa Barbara

Opportunities to Learn Nesting Biology While Improving Our Environment By Don Schroeder and Dave Eldridge

Introduction

In October, 2004, the Santa Barbara Audubon Society (SBAS) hosted a presentation by Jan Wasserman on the Tree Swallow nest box projects at sites around Ventura. She shared her experience with setting up and conducting these projects. She and a small band of volunteers have been able to establish nesting sites for this species which had previously dropped to the status of being a rare breeder in Ventura and SB Counties. The tremendously exciting result was that, in a period of about 12 years, over 10,000 young swallows have been fledged from nest boxes around Ventura. It seems very fitting that humans can be such a driving force towards restoring a bird population that had been forced into a steep decline due to human activities such as agriculture and housing development. The Ventura projects are well described on websites (see web addresses at the end of this article). Jan's talk spurred interest within SBAS of initiating a Tree Swallow nest box project locally.

The Tree Swallow naturally nests in tree cavities (often made by woodpeckers). Human development often removes many trees, and those that remain are often groomed in a way that minimizes dead branches most appropriate for cavity nests.

SBAS Nest Box Projects

Past

Over the past five years, SBAS volunteers have built and set out about 35 nest boxes at two sites, Coal Oil Point Reserve (COPR) and Lake Los Carneros (LLC). Initially, most of the boxes were not used even though Tree Swallows were seen in these areas. Several of the unused boxes were repositioned into more open areas and onto higher ground. Additionally, several boxes were modified by lengthening their support poles ("up"grading) and/or by adding heat shields to prevent their internal temperatures from getting too high during hot summer periods. Some of these moved/modified boxes started getting tenants: Tree Swallows and Western Bluebirds. Other

Continued on page 3

Birds of Prey continued from page 1

safe, properly designed, reasonably priced housing, available for study or observation year round. The kick-off event at the Museum on July 11 celebrated reaching the halfway mark in our fundraising for Max's new home.

Karl Hutterer, Executive Director of the Museum of Natural History, enthusiastically supports the addition of a living bird display to the Museum: "For years, Eyes in the Sky volunteers have come to the Museum to show off their feathered friends and teach, inspire, and delight our visitors. Responding to a long-term urgent need and recognizing a strong common mission, the Museum of Natural History has partnered with Santa Barbara Audubon to create a permanent home for these raptors. The Museum will provide space on its campus for Audubon to construct an aviary to house six injured birds. Audubon is raising the funds to pay for the construction and the Eyes in the Sky volunteers of Audubon will continue to care for the birds and provide demonstration programs at the Museum on a regular basis.

"Your donation will support the mission of two great organizations in our community and, more importantly, contribute to our common efforts to understand, protect, and sustain the splendors of our natural world."

At a time when classroom science education resources are so stressed and fewer students spend time outdoors encountering nature, exciting, free programs like Eyes in the Sky are more important than ever. As Thoreau said, "...in Wildness is the preservation of the World." Don't let that part of Thoreau's world be lost to young Californians. Let's build this home for rehabilitated raptors now, so they can help develop a profound and lasting appreciation of nature and wildlife.

Our goal is \$150,000 which will build the aviary and support Audubon's educational programs.

For more information, please go to santabarbaraaudubon.org You might also contact Darlene Chirman at 692-2008 or President@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org and Dolores Pollock at 681-8661 or Development-1@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org We would be happy to answer your questions.

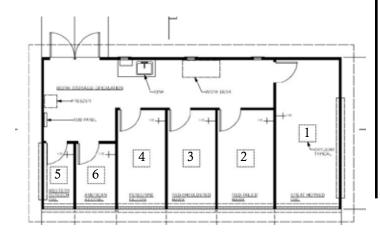
BIRDS OF PREY CAMPAIGN NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

Underwrite a significant portion of the new Audubon Aviary, in your name, your family's name, or in honor or memory of a loved one.

\$50,000 Name the Building \$25,000 The Max Enclosure (1) \$15,000 Hawk/Falcon Enclosures (2-4) \$10,000 Kestrel/Screech Owl Enclosures (5-6)

Your name will appear on a Donor Wall and on a plaque attached to the named enclosure and, we will be extremely grateful!

Contact Darlene Chirman at 692-2008 or email at President@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org



Eyes in the Sky Business Partner Sponsorship Program

Eyes in the Sky (EITS) has developed a business sponsorship program that encourages local businesses to support EITS' ongoing programs through annual sponsorships. Several levels are available, and offer various benefits in return: a sponsorship certificate, photos, public recognition in this newsletter, a live bird program for an employee event, an owl/kestrel nest box, or an invitation to SBAS' annual Donor-appreciation event, etc.) depending on the sponsorship level.

	AMERICAN KESTREL \$100 - \$499	WESTERN SCREECH OWL \$500 - \$999	RED-TAILED HAWK \$1,000 - \$2,499	PEREGRINE FALCON \$2,500 - \$4,999	GREAT HORNED OWL \$5,000+
Certificate for 1-year sponsorship and 8X10 Photo of one of our birds	х	х	х	х	х
One-time Recognition in El Tecolote Newsletter	х	х	х	х	х
Subscription to quarterly EITS Newsletter	х	х	х	х	х
Eyes in the Sky t-shirt		х	х	х	х
On-site live bird presentation at your business for your employees			х	х	х
Invitation to Annual Sponsor Appreciation Event				х	х
Owl/Kestrel Nestbox					х

We thank and welcome **Café del Sol** as our first sponsor. To find out more, please call Gabriele at 898-0347, or email eyesin-the-sky@cox.net.

Tree Swallow Project continued from page 1



Dave Eldridge checking a Tree Swallow nest box at Devereux

cavity nesters, Bewick's Wrens and Oak Titmice, were observed to use a few of the boxes. The strategy of moving/modifying boxes that don't get used for a few years has afforded a steady increase in overall nesting activity and the desired result of nests producing fledglings. Most fledglings have been produced at COPR, but both sites have had success. During 2008, 27 young were fledged from nest boxes. Volunteer Dave Eldridge has been an instrumental force in changing the project from being barely successful into one now showing moderate success. His careful field observations and ideas for positive changes have been significant.

Present

The 2009 nesting season is still in progress. Observations thus far suggest that nest box activity and fledging rates will be similar to 2008. There is still a significant subset of nest boxes that are not used. Further relocations and/or modifications will be considered.

Future

There now exist many opportunities for volunteers to support nest box projects in our area:

- Continue to maintain and monitor existing nest boxes
- Improve current boxes by adding heat shields and/or moving unused boxes to situations that swallows may favor more
- Expand the project by putting boxes in new areas
- Develop an analysis of known/suspected nest box failures in an attempt to increase future success

• Initiate putting leg bands on both nestling and breeding adult Tree Swallows which may afford a better understanding of dispersal of young, survival, and degree of faithfulness to nest sites and to mates.

What is the value of a local nest box project?

There is an obvious value in the project to Tree Swallows and Western Bluebirds and to us. These species are not only beautiful but afford beneficial insect control. It is likely that individuals that use nest boxes would probably not have attempted breeding if the boxes had not been available. Therefore, all nest boxes which fledge young add individuals that might not exist otherwise. Consider the tremendous capacity of production of swallows seen in the Ventura nest box projects. Even if we can't realize such a large project in the Santa Barbara area, we can still provide a positive impact on our local Tree Swallow and Western Bluebird populations.

But there is another great value to participants in the project. You can learn by experience from one of the best teachers around: the birds themselves. You can observe firsthand nest building, the egg-laying schedule, incubation, the hatching schedule, nestling care, nestling growth, and fledging. You can learn how to check and record nest status, determine the expected hatch date for eggs, judge the age of nestlings and their expected date to leave the nest. You may be able to assist with banding nestlings and adults. Tree Swallows are very tolerant of nest inspections and even of capture and banding. They readily resume normal activities soon after brief human disturbance. There is only a short period, the few days before nestlings are ready to leave the nest, when it is critical that nests not be disturbed. Mortality during nesting is a reality of nature, associated with both natural nests and nest boxes. Some failures are expected, and it is important to document such and try to determine their cause. If we suspect a humanly-controllable cause of failure, we can try to adjust future situations so as to minimize failures. For example, it appeared that certain nest boxes in past years may have suffered mortality by getting too hot during certain weather patterns. One of our volunteers has added heat shields to such boxes, and we will be monitoring their future outcomes.

Of course there will be persons already experienced with the project that can help you get started. If there is enough interest in banding birds and tracking them across years, a federally permitted bander will be available to work with you in banding efforts.

Who can participate? What is required?

Continued on page 4

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. The mission of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society is to help conserve and restore the earth's natural ecosystems and improve its biological diversity, principally in the Santa Barbara area, and to connect people with birds and nature through education, science-based projects and advocacy.

Santa Barbara Audubon Programs

All programs will take place at Farrand Hall, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, Mission Canyon, Santa Barbara. Free on-site parking. All programs 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.



Antarctica and the South Georgia Islands A mind-blowing wildlife extravaganza

Kathleen Whitney Wednesday, September 23, 2009

In January 2009, Kathleen ventured into the "deep south" on a VENT nature tour originating in Tierra del Fuego. From there, she visited the Falkland Islands, South Georgia Islands and the Antarctic Peninsula on an amazing 4-week ocean voyage. She will share photographs of this perpetual winter wonderland and its unique wildlife and recount tales of her visit to this relatively unexplored and truly spectacular birding destination. Birders won't want to miss the close-up shots of difficult-to-ID southern seabirds and some really amazing bird photography by amateur naturalist and birder extraordinaire, Doug Hanna.

Kathleen Whitney is a wildlife biologist, world traveler and longtime resident of Santa Barbara. When she is not on the road, armed with a camera and her old faithful Swarovskis, she teaches Biology and Parasitology at Santa Barbara City College and UCSB and assists with bird preparation at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. She currently divides her time between Santa Barbara and Bigfork, Montana.



Tree Swallow Project continued from page 3

There are no particular skills that are required to be a participant in a nest box project. You just need to be able to spend some regular time checking nests. It generally takes only two hours to check 16-17 nest boxes (longer if banding is planned). Nest checks only need to be about once a week during the nesting season, which is approximately April through early July. If you don't think you can deal with field checks every week, maybe you can be part of a small group so that particular individuals can stagger their times in the field.

Interested children should be encouraged to participate with adults. What a wonderful opportunity to let kids learn about nature and help the environment.

What Next?

If you are interested in learning more about SBAS nest box projects (or other science projects) and may want to participate, please contact either Don Schroeder, Science Advisor, or Niels Johnson-Lameijer, Science Chair. Contact information is on the last page of this newsletter. We will let you know when we can meet in person (possibly at one of the nest box sites) to tell you more about this project and answer questions.

Even though regular activities of nest box monitoring

need not start until next nesting season, late March or April, there are some sporadic activities that should happen while the birds are not breeding. Help is needed to build and repair boxes, evaluate situations where boxes have not been used, move selected boxes as necessary, and plan strategies



for improving nesting success during the next breeding cycle.

Web Addresses for Further Information

Tree Swallows Return to Ventura: http://www.californiareport.org/archive/R906051630/b

[Ventura] Tree Swallow Nesting Projects, Inc.: http://www.treeswallows.org/history.htm

An extensive resource on Tree Swallow nest box projects: http://www.treeswallowprojects.com/

Santa Barbara Audubon Field Trips

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.

Oso Flaco Lake "Lake to the Ocean"

Sunday August 16, 2009 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m. (6:45 a.m. car pool time)

Target Birds: Fresh water and salt water birds plus Northern

Harriers and Wrens **Trip Leader**: Jack Sanford

Cost: \$8.00 to car pool drivers and \$5.00 entrance fee per car

(unless you have a State Park Pass)

We will be taking a leisurely 2-mile walk across the Oso Flaco Lake bridge and following the boardwalk trail to the ocean. We will view this rare and unique ecosystem while spotting birds and enjoying the beauty of the area.

We will meet at the 5 Points Shopping Center (Carl's Jr) at 6:45 a.m. and at the Kmart parking lot in Goleta at 7:00 a.m. and car pool to the Oso Flaco Lake parking area. If you would like to meet us at the lake at 9 a.m., take Hwy. 101 to Hwy. 166 (Main Street exit in Santa Maria) and head west towards the town of Guadalupe. Turn right at the Hwy. 1 intersection, and go thru the town of Guadalupe. Travel 3 miles to the Oso Flaco Road, and turn left. Proceed 3 miles to the parking lot. Dress in layers and bring water and a snack.



Piping Plover Artist Daniel S. Kilby

Rancho Guadalupe Dunes "Wonder of the Sand Dunes"

Saturday, September 12, 2009

9 a.m.-11 a.m.

(6:45 a.m. car pool time)

Target Birds: Shorebirds
Trip Leader: Jack Sanford
Cost: \$8.00 to car pool drivers

We will enjoy a leisurely stroll at the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes Preserve. We will view both migratory and resident shorebirds along the beach and the Santa Maria River Estuary. Dress in layers and bring water and a snack.

We will meet at the 5 Points Shopping Center (Carl's Jr) at 6:45 a.m. and at the Kmart parking lot in Goleta at 7:00 a.m. and car pool to the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes Preserve. If you would like to meet us at the dunes at 9 a.m., take Hwy. 101 north to Hwy. 166 (Main St. exit in Santa Maria) and head west towards the Guadalupe Dunes. Cross Hwy. 1 and continue on Hwy. 166 for 7 more miles to the parking lot. (Possible added attraction: a visit to the Dunes Center.)

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!

Jesse Alexander
Vera Bates
Robert A. Cannon
Peter Karoff
Jack Christensen
Barbara Kranz
John M Cohan
Phoebe Lenha
Dr. Howard Cooperman MD
Harry A. Dodds
Warren Elliott
Ms. Lydia S. M
Warren Green
John Mitchell

Joan Hayward

Gary & Hilary Tomczik Doris A. Mooney Ken & Kathy Hughes Charles Russi Erica Savage Barbara Kranz William & Judy Slager Phoebe Lenhart James Stanley Annette Lindeman R. Stepkowski Patricia Turner Ms. Lydia S. Matthews Terry McQueen Wallace Umber Patricia Zaffuto Debra Mood

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.

Lake Los Carneros Friday August 14

Target Birds: Water birds, songbirds

Directions: From Hwy. 101 take Los Carneros off ramp and head towards the mountains. (Stow House is on the right.) Turn into the driveway by the fire station. We will meet in the parking lot behind the fire station.

Carpinteria Salt Marsh Nature Park Friday August 28

Target Birds: Curlews, ducks, Teals, Egrets, Godwits, Gulls, Herons, Killdeer, raptors

Directions: From the north on Hwy. 101 take Linden Ave. off ramp. From the south on Hwy. 101 take Casitas Pass Rd. off ramp, turn right on Carpinteria Ave., and left on Linden Ave. Follow Linden Ave towards the ocean and turn right on Sandyland Rd. Go to the end, and the Nature Park entrance is dead ahead.



Long-billed Curlew Artist Daniel S. Kilby

Toro Canyon Park Friday September 11

Target Birds: Songbirds, raptors

Directions: From Hwy. 101 take exit #90 (Padero Lane off ramp coming from the north and Summerland off ramp from the south). Turn towards the mountains and turn right on Via Real. Turn left on Toro Canyon Road (2nd road on your left). Proceed on Toro Canyon until you reach the park sign on your right. Turn right and follow the road to the park. Enter the park and follow the park road to the last parking lot where we will meet. We will bird the loop trail (1 mile slightly uphill) and then in the park.

Honda Valley Open Space Friday September 25

Target Birds: Woodpeckers, Towhees, Jays, Mockingbirds, raptors

Directions: From Hwy. 101 take the Carrillo Street exit. Turn toward the south (away from downtown). Turn left onto Miramonte Drive. (It is only on the left and almost at the top of the hill.) We will park on the street and meet just a short distance from the first road on your right. From there we will bird a loop trail around the open space.

Bonus Afternoon Bird Walk during Creek Week

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

Santa Barbara Harbor Wednesday September 23, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Leader: Jack Sanford

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. We will meet on the sidewalk next to the Sea Landing Sport Fishing Building (301 W. Cabrillo Blvd.) All birders should park on Bath Street or Mason Street (where there is no time limit) or use paid, city lot parking. We will bird the S.B. Harbor and Sterns Wharf area.





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 Itvolunteer@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 August 2 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m Sunday September 6 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

COAL OIL POINT RESERVE

9 a.m.-12 noon

9 a.m.-12 noon.

Contact: Tara Longwell

Saturday August 22 Saturday September 19

Coast Clean-Up Day

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:

Training Schedule:

Tour 9-11 a.m.

Those interested should call to register at (805) 893 3703



Snowy Plover chicks and other sites at Coal Oil Point Reserve Photo Callie Bowdish

Audubon Society Membership Application



Local Chapter-only Membership

This is a full membership to the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, with all funds put to work locally.

Includes:

- * a subscription to the local newsletter, El Tecolote
- 9 new enrollments current through June 30, 2010
- * subsequent membership dues on a July June cycle
- Does Not Include:
- * National magazine, Audubon,
- distribution of your name to any other organization.
 The cost is \$25 annually.
 - ☐ This is my choice of membership! Make check payable to: Santa Barbara Audubon Society

II.	National and Local Membershi	þ		
20	Santa Barbara Code: C9ZC130Z			

This is the traditional membership offered by the National organization. Includes:

- * membership on both the local and national levels
- * most of membership dues applied to national issues and advocacy
- * both the national magazine, Audubon, and the local El Tecolote
- * renewal notices from National organization
- * your name may be distributed to third party advertisers

The cost for this introductory membership is \$20, or \$15 for senior 62+ or student.

(NAS subsequent-year memberships are currently \$35/year.)

- ☐ This is my choice of membership!
- □ This is a Senior/Student membership.
- Please do NOT share my contact information.

Make check payable to: National Audubon Society

Name:	My special interests:
Address:	
City: State: Zip:	
E-mail:	Amount Enclosed:

Mail to: Santa Barbara Audubon Society, 5679 Hollister Ave, Suite 5B, Goleta CA 93117

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http://www.SantaBarbaraAudubon.org

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Treasurer	Bobbie Offen	684-0160	Treasurer@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org	
	BOARD MEN	IBERS & C	OMMITTEE CHAIRS	
Field Trips	Jack Sanford	566-2191	FieldTrips@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org	
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Hospitality:	Nancy Rohrer	687-7587	Hospitality-2@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org	
Science Advisor Don Schroeder		403-2090	ScienceAdvisor@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org	
Report Rare Birds: Karen Bridgers 9		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 the SBAS office to verify dates and times. FAX: 967-7718. Cover art by Daryl Harrison.

Calendar of EventsCheck our website for any changes or late additions to our Bird Walks, Field Trips or Programs: http://www.SantaBarbaraAudubon.org

August 2 Restore Arroyo Hondo

Lake Los Carneros Bird Walk

Aug.

Aug.

Aug.	15	Plover Training
Aug.	16	Oso Flaco Lake Field Trip
Aug.	22	Restore Coal Oil Point Reserve
Aug.	28	Carpinteria Salt Marsh Bird Walk
		September
Sept.	6	Restore Arroyo Hondo
Sept.	11	Toro Canyon Park Bird Walk
Sept.	12	Guadalupe Dunes Field Trip
Sept.	19	Restore Coal Oil Point Reserve
Sept.	23	Santa Barbara Harbor
		Creek Week Bonus Bird Walk
Sept.	23	Program: South Georgia Islands



Sept. 25 Honda Valley Bird Walk