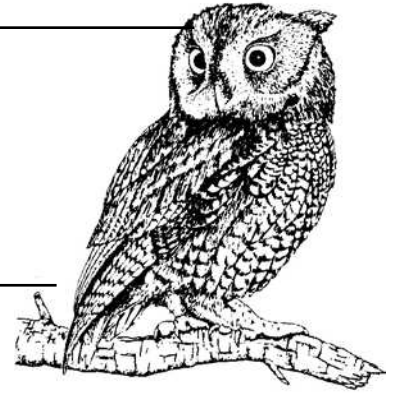


# El Tecolote

Newsletter of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc.  
Volume 50, Issue 2

October–November 2011



## Plovers at Coal Oil Point Reserve by Cristina Sandoval Director of Coal Oil Point Reserve



*Snowy Plover with chicks.*  
*Photo courtesy of Callie Bowdish*

Santa Barbara Audubon Society has partnered with Coal Oil Point Reserve (COPR) for the last ten years. Our chapter developed the curriculum and raised the funds to start the Snowy Plover Education Program.

This year COPR celebrates the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the **Snowy Plover Education Program** and 10 years of plover recovery since breeding resumed at COPR. A new position of Conservation Coordinator has been created at COPR and should be filled soon. Thank you to Jennifer Stroh for 10 years as the Plover Docent Coordinator! Audubon wishes Jen well in her new endeavors.

On October 19 there will be special COPR tours at 10 a.m., noon and 4 p.m. to celebrate the anniversary and the dedication of the new self-guided tour with signage and podcasts that can be downloaded. See the COPR website for details: [coaloilpoint.ucnrs.org/](http://coaloilpoint.ucnrs.org/) Training sessions for new Snowy Plover Docents will be held October 8 and November 5.

—Darlene Chirman

The 2011 Western Snowy Plover breeding season at Coal Oil Point Reserve (COPR) started with the largest number of breeding pairs so far: 24. Eighty-four nests were laid throughout the season, and, despite the initial loss of nests from the strong winds (10), big waves (11), and flooding (3), the hatching was good. Thirty-four nests had hatchings. Typically we would expect at least half of the chicks from a three-egg nest to fledge, which would be around 40. However, we encountered a new chick predator this year, the Great Horned Owl.

It took us a long time to discover what was eating the chicks. The chicks would simply vanish in the first few days after hatching and we could not find any footprints of potential predators where they were. The strong wind didn't help because it would erase the footprints. After careful surveys in the morning and evenings, we determined that the plover chicks were disappearing at night. We then started looking for clues early in the morning. We finally found owl footprints on the sand. We contracted United States Department of Agriculture to trap and relocate Great Horned Owls in the nesting area. In one month we trapped four Great Horned Owls and one Barn Owl. The survival of chicks increased dramatically after each owl removal but unfortunately this was already at the end of the nesting season.

Despite the poor fledgling success this year, I think that this was a good year because we've gained new information about threats to plover chicks, and we can work on solving this problem. Finding quick solutions for the proximate cause, like trapping and removing owls, may help in the short-term, but the survival of a threatened species needs solutions that are sustainable in the long-term. I always like to think about the ultimate cause of a problem. By watching owl and hawk behaviors, I think that the problem of extreme raptor predation at the Reserve comes from the alteration of the dune and surrounding habitat. Large non-native trees were planted in this area years ago, and they are attractants to raptors. They provide a perches for birds of prey and give them an unfair advantage over the other birds on the beach and slough. From the trees, an

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.

owl can easily see the plovers and strike from a short distance. Without the trees, the owls would need to search for the plovers while flying, and the plovers would have a better chance to use their natural freeze and hide defenses.

Unfortunately, the solution to this problem is complex and not easy. These trees are now used by other birds, including the raptors, for nesting and feeding. Birders come to the reserve to watch the hummingbirds and orioles feeding on the Eucalyptus flowers. People like the way the trees look. All of those functions need to be considered. There are perhaps ways to reduce the attraction of raptors by pruning some trees, topping off the trees closest to the nesting area, etc. At least we now know that future development in this area should use only short trees for landscaping. And perhaps, trees chosen that are food sources for other birds—with nectar, fruits or seeds, to mitigate for any tree removal we may need to do to improve the survival of the plovers.

In 2011 we celebrate 10 years of the Snowy Plover Program at Coal Oil Point Reserve and 10 years of collaboration with the Santa Barbara Audubon Society. It has been a very rewarding and successful project. In 10 years, we had 500 nests. Many of those contributed new plovers to the fragile 1,500 plovers

remaining in the U.S. Pacific population. Also important, we, as a collaborative team, have educated uncountable numbers of people. We also continue to learn each year about the very complex ecology of the beach habitat. We can celebrate our success!



*Typical Snowy Plover nest.  
Photo courtesy of Callie Bowdish*

## HABITAT RESTORATION FUNDED AT COAL OIL POINT RESERVE

By Darlene Chirman

**S**anta Barbara Audubon Society has been awarded a grant by the Goleta Valley Land Trust for habitat restoration at the Coal Oil Point Reserve. Cape Ivy, an invasive vine from South Africa, will be removed, and we will enhance a population of Coastal Poppy overgrown with invasive weeds such as thistles. This is a variety of the California Poppy, our state flower. The grant is \$38,355 for a two year project.

The project has its official start on the United Way Day of Caring, which is also Coastal Clean-Up Day, September 17. So by the time you read this, there should be less Cape Ivy interfering with habitat for ground-nesting birds such as California Quail. We did find a nest of Mourning Doves on a workday with Citrix Online volunteers in July. (see photo.)

If you would like to help improve bird and native plant habitat at Coal Oil Point Reserve, contact Darlene Chirman at [President@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org](mailto:President@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org) or 692-2008. There will be COPR workdays on a trails project and Audubon workdays focused on Cape Ivy removal, Coastal Poppy enhancement, and maintenance of the pond overlook.



*Restoration volunteers from Citrix Online helped remove Cape ivy in June 2011 at Coal Oil Point Preserve*

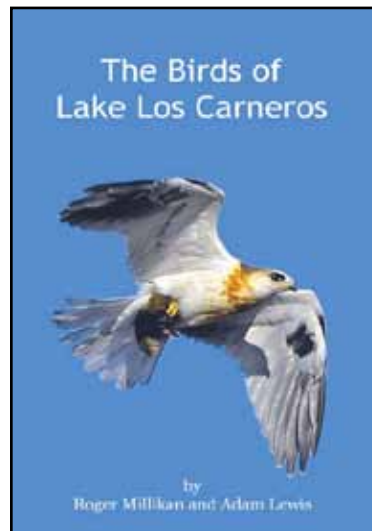
## Roger Millikan: Connecting People to Birds by Adam Lewis

On August 28<sup>th</sup> Audubon Society member Roger Millikan gave a talk sponsored by the Goleta Valley Historical Society (GVHS) entitled “Bird Photography in one of Goleta’s Hotspots: Lake Los Carneros”. The presentation drew a full house at the old barn on Stow House grounds, part of the Lake Los Carneros park. By way of introducing the digital camera Roger started with a few slides showing the importance of pixels and pixel count (i.e., resolution), how digital cameras have evolved, current camera choices and how the information added by the colors aids in bird identification. The last half of the hour was devoted to showing his bird photos, some with bird calls, selected from the book *The Birds of Lake Los Carneros* which he co-wrote with Adam Lewis.

At the end the enthusiastic audience applause made it evident they appreciated his excellent presentation of photography and birds. A few copies of the book were sold from the stash owned by the GVHS.

This event was the latest in Roger’s string of presentations triggered by publication of the book in March 2011. He has presented talks at the Natural History Museum, the Goleta Public Library, the Channel City Camera Club, and at various luncheon groups.

These events contribute to the mission of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society since they ‘connect people to birds and nature through education’. Well done, Roger!



*Book cover and photo of Roger Millikan by Adam Lewis.*

### Eyes-in-the-Sky-Program Donor Appreciation

#### Many Thanks to:

- **Citrix OnLine** for donating 3-years of GoToMyPC software (valued at \$750) which networks the computers at SBAS’s Aviary/Volunteer Headquarters on the grounds of the SB Museum of Natural History and the computer in the home office of the Eyes-in-the-Sky Program Director.

- **Afar Communications Inc.** for donating internet radio equipment (valued at \$3,500) which connects SBAS Aviary/Volunteer Headquarters with Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History’s internet.

### Attention Birders! SAVE the DATE

Mark your calendars now for another great Christmas Bird Count here in Santa Barbara!

Yes, that is NEW YEAR’S EVE DAY December 31<sup>st</sup>, but what better way to celebrate another year than to go birding with friends and share a potluck with all of us at the Museum that evening?

To sign up for this year’s Count, please e-mail Joan Murdoch at:

**casbcbc@gmail.com**

We invite you to join us for one of the most fun and challenging birding events of the year!

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, Marlene Mills Newsletter Chair  
5679 Hollister Avenue, Suite 5B  
Goleta, CA 93117  
or email: [newsletter@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org](mailto:newsletter@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org)  
Submissions deadline is the 10th of the month before publication.



## 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.

### Tejon Ranch Conservancy

Thomas H. Maloney

Executive Director

October 26

Tom Maloney, Executive Director of the Tejon Ranch Conservancy, will speak about the historic Tejon Ranch Conservation and Land Use Agreement of 2008 and the formation of the Tejon Ranch Conservancy. Tom’s talk will focus on the ecological significance of Tejon Ranch and all that the Conservancy is doing to plan for the stewardship of and public access to the 240,000 acres of conserved lands on the Ranch.

Tejon Ranch is the largest contiguous private property in California and sits at the confluence of four major ecological regions. Each of these ecoregions is represented on the Ranch and the configuration of the Ranch creates conservation linkages of continental significance. This significance led to the signing of a visionary agreement in June 2008. The Conservancy started immediately fulfilling its mission. Tom will update us on the active programs the Conservancy has in place.



Tom became the Tejon Ranch Conservancy’s first Executive Director in February 2009 with 15 years of experience as a conservationist, environmental advocate, natural resource planner and ecologist. Most recently Tom served as the North and Central Coast Ecoregional Director for The Nature Conservancy where his focus was conservation planning for the Carrizo Plain National Monument and land conservation in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties. Tom holds a BA in Economics from Boston University and a MS in Resource Management from Antioch New England. Since 1997, Tom has also served as a natural history tour guide on three continents. As a dedicated birder and naturalist, Tom is thrilled to have the opportunity to discover the tremendous ecological resources of the Tejon Ranch.

### “The Curious Mr. Catesby,”

Linda Miller

Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

December 7



A film by Cynthia Neal and David Elliot documenting the life and work of Mark Catesby (1683-1749), the 18th century naturalist, scientist, and artist, on his exploration of the New World will be shown.

Following the one-hour film, Linda Miller of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History will lead audience members through an exhibit of Mark Catesby’s original drawings on display in the John and Peggy Maximus Gallery.

## 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 or [jacksanford@hotmail.com](mailto:jacksanford@hotmail.com) for details or questions.*

### Devereux Slough UCSB West Campus, Goleta Saturday, October 22, 8:00-11:00 a.m.

**Target Birds:** Shorebirds, water birds and wintering songbirds.

**Trip Leader:** Robert Lindsay, [capnbob@sbceo.org](mailto:capnbob@sbceo.org)

**Directions:** Take Hwy. 101 to the Glen Annie/Storke Road exit. Proceed south (towards the ocean) on Storke. Turn left on El Collegio Road, 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.



*Hummingbird perched  
Artist Kirsten Munson*

### Las Cruzitas Ranch near Santa Ynez

Saturday November 19, 9 a.m.-1 or 2 p.m.  
(7:45 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](mailto: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 7:45 a.m. To meet us at the ranch, take Hwy. 154 to Armour Ranch Road which is 3.3 miles west of Bradbury Dam (Lake Cachuma). Go north on Armour Ranch Road 1.4 miles, and turn right on Happy Canyon Road. At 2.4 miles turn right on Alisos Avenue. 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 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.

## Join us at "Family Nature Day" at the SB Museum of Natural History

Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History and Santa Barbara Audubon Society are jointly sponsoring a free "Family Nature Day" with Eyes in the Sky.

**Sunday October 16  
10 a.m.—5 p.m.**

- Meet and learn about birds of prey.
- Watch raptor feeding and exercise demonstrations throughout the day.
- A flight presentation with Max, the Great horned owl and Kachina, our American kestrel at 2 p.m.
- Enjoy other fun activities as we celebrate these amazing animals and our partnership with the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History.



*Kachina & Kisa  
Photo by Gabriele Drozdowski*

## Friday Bird Walks

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

### Hidden Valley Park

October 14

**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.

### Rocky Nook Park

October 28

**Target Birds:** Blackbirds, Bushtits, Woodpeckers, Phoebes, 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

November 18 (Note: This is the 3rd Friday.)

**Target Birds:** Raptors, Woodpeckers, Warblers, Phoebes, Wrens, Kinglets, Towhees.

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

### Winchester Canyon

November 25

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

**Directions:** Take Hwy. 101 to Winchester Canyon Road exit. Take Winchester Canyon; cross Cathedral Oaks Road. Turn right on Winchester Road and left on Rio Vista Drive. Park near the open space area on your left.

## 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!

Geraldine Atkinson  
Christopher Beirn\*  
Ronald Buckley  
Clifford A. Bunton  
Eileen Clark\*  
Kenneth Duncan  
Louise Dunn  
Betty J. Eliason  
Marlene Fletcher  
Marie Foley

Renate Franquet  
Barbara Greene\*  
Millie Higgins  
Nedra Ireland  
Margaret Kelly  
Kay Libby  
Nita Longanecker  
Beverly McLaughlin  
Paul Melonda  
Tomasita Miller

Linda Schmidt  
Anitra Sheen  
Bonnie M. Smith  
Rose Smith  
Jacqueline Stevens  
Barbara Thurber  
Margie Wells  
Daryl West

\*Chapter Only Membership

## 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**.

# OPPORTUNITIES

## Volunteer Habitat Restoration

*Audubon helps recruit volunteers for habitat restoration; come help to restore a creek or estuary while spending a morning in a beautiful bird habitat. We now have a new Audubon-managed project at Coal Oil Point Reserve as well. Contact Darlene Chirman at President@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org or 692-2008. Contact Coal Oil Point Reserve: Reserve Steward Tara Longwell at tara.longwell@lifesci.ucsb.edu or 893-5092. Contact the Land Trust for Arroyo Hondo Preserve: Volunteer Coordinator Sally Isaacson at 260-2252 or volunteer@sblandtrust.org*

### ARROYO HONDO

Contact: **Sally Isaacson**  
 Sunday October 2 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.  
 Sunday November 6 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

### COAL OIL POINT RESERVE

Saturday, 9 a.m.-noon

Date	Restoration	Contact
October 15	Invasive removal	Darlene Chirman
October 22	Trails	Tara Longwell
November 5	Trails	Tara Longwell
November 19	Invasive removal	Darlene Chirman

### CHANNEL ISLANDS RESTORATION

Contact: Volunteer Coordinator **Araceli Dominquez** at volunteer@cirweb.org or (323) 497-3578  
 Please consult their website or Araceli on restoration projects including San Marcos Foothills, Santa Barbara Zoo, Carpinteria Creek, Anacapa Island and others.  
 Their website is: www.cirweb.org

## AUDUBON VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Would you like to help Santa Barbara Audubon?  
 Here are several opportunities:

### Eyes in the Sky

Ongoing opportunities for new volunteers to work with our birds of prey.  
 Must be available during daytime hours. Call Gabriele (805) 898-0347.

### Science Chair

We are seeking a replacement for our Board Science Chair, for appointment by the board to complete the term of our Science Chair, Niels Johnson-Lameijer. Niels is now working & living 1/2 time in Los Angeles and can't devote the time to oversee the citizen science projects: Snowy Plover Docent program, White-tailed monitoring, and Tree Swallow nest box program. Contact Darlene Chirman at President@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org or 692-2008 or the Nominating Committee Chair Lee Moldaver at the office at 964-1468 or VP@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org if you might be interested and wish to know more.

## Plover Project Docent Training

Training takes place at Coal Oil Point Reserve

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

### Training dates:

October . . . . . 8  
 November . . . . . 5  
 No Training in December due to holidays

### Training Schedule:

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

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

## 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 Membership@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org  
 The **SBAS** e-mail list will only be used for SBAS business and will not be sold or shared with any other group.

## Audubon Society Membership Application

### Option 1: Local Chapter-only Membership

- This is my choice of membership!  
 Cost: \$25 Annually  
 Make check payable to: Santa Barbara Audubon Society

### Option 2: National and Local Membership Santa Barbara Code: COZC130Z

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

**Introductory \$20, or \$15 for senior/student; \$35 annually thereafter.**  
 Make check payable to: **National Audubon Society**  
 For more information on these options please go to our website at: www.SantaBarbaraAudubon.org or call (805) 964-1468

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 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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 Goleta, CA 93117

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<http://www.SantaBarbaraAudubon.org>

**OFFICERS**

President	Darlene Chirman	692-2008	<a href="mailto:President@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">President@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
Vice-President	Lee Moldaver	964-1468	<a href="mailto:VP@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">VP@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
Secretary	Liz Muraoka	743-3314	<a href="mailto:Secretary@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">Secretary@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
Treasurer	Bobbie Offen	220-6522	<a href="mailto:Treasurer@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">Treasurer@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>

**BOARD MEMBERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Field Trips	Jack Sanford	566-2191	<a href="mailto:FieldTrips@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">FieldTrips@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
Programs	Susan Vaughn	403-7046	<a href="mailto:Programs@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">Programs@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
Conservation	Steve Ferry	967-5162	<a href="mailto:Conservation@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">Conservation@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
Education	Maggie Sherriffs	682-4711x131	<a href="mailto:Education@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">Education@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
Science	Niels Johnson-Lameijer	617-3513	<a href="mailto:Science@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">Science@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
Membership	Julia Kosowitz	450-5392	<a href="mailto:Membership@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">Membership@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
Comunicatons	Marlene Mills	964-8525	<a href="mailto:Newsletter@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">Newsletter@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
Publicity	Adam Lewis	967-7213	<a href="mailto:Publicity@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">Publicity@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
Development	Dolores Pollock	681-8661	<a href="mailto:Development-1@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">Development-1@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
Development	Julie Kummel	403-3203	<a href="mailto:Development-2@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">Development-2@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
Development	Margo Kenney	963-3011	<a href="mailto:Development-3@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">Development-3@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>

**APPOINTED POSITIONS**

Webmaster:	David Levasheff	967-8767	<a href="mailto:Treasurer@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">Treasurer@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
Eyes In The Sky:	Gabriele Drozdowski	898-0347	<a href="mailto:EITS@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">EITS@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
Hospitality:	Nancy Rohrer	687-7587	<a href="mailto:Hospitality@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">Hospitality@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
Science Advisor	Don Schroeder	403-2090	<a href="mailto:ScienceAdvisor@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">ScienceAdvisor@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>
ET Editor	Andy Lentz	968-6011	<a href="mailto:NewsLayout@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org">NewsLayout@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org</a>

**Rare Birds sbcobirding** <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sbcobirding>

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 Events**

Check our website for any changes or late additions to our Bird Walks, Field Trips or Programs: <http://www.SantaBarbaraAudubon.org>

**August**

Oct.	2	Restore Arroyo Hondo
Oct.	8	Plover Training
Oct.	14	Hidden Valley Park Bird Walk
Oct.	15	Restore Coal Oil Pont Reserve
Oct.	16	Family Nature Day
Oct.	19	Plover 10th Anniversary
Oct.	22	Field Trip: Devereux Slough
Oct.	22	Restore Coal Oil Point Reserve
Oct.	26	Program: Tejon Ranch
Oct.	28	Rocky Nook Park Bird Walk

**November**

Nov.	5	Restore Coal Oil Point Reserve
Nov.	5	Plover Training
Nov.	6	Restore Arroyo Hondo
Nov.	18	Stevens Park Bird Walk
Nov.	19	Field Trip: Las Cruzitas Ranch
Nov.	19	Restore Coal Oil Point Reserve
Nov.	25	Winchester Canyon Bird Walk

**December**

Dec.	7	Program: Curious Mr. Catesby
Dec.	31	Christmas Bird Count

Printed on recycled paper.

