

El Tecolote



Santa Barbara Audubon Society
Fall 2025





From the desk of Katherine Emery, Executive Director

Through our Education and Conservation/Science Committees, Santa Barbara Audubon Society (SBAS) is actively working on several initiatives. This update provides an overview of selected current projects, goals, and opportunities for member engagement.



This summer, I was honored to mark my six-year anniversary as Executive Director of SBAS. Summer provided time for introspection and planning of upcoming programs, reminding me of the powers of our community. Working as a community to protect area birdlife and habitat and connect people with birds through education, conservation, and science is at the heart of everything SBAS does.

In July, the SBAS Board, staff, and Eyes in the Sky (EITS) volunteers celebrated Hannah Atkinson for her work as EITS Director. I worked with Hannah through significant growth of our outreach programs. I am grateful for her dedication and excited for her next adventure at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

SBAS welcomes Mary Zolkoski as our new EITS Director. With her veterinary background as a 26-year surgical nurse technician, hands-on training as Aviary Assistant, and volunteer experience at EITS and Ojai Raptor Center, Mary is a natural match to lead EITS.

Mary's interest in wildlife began at age three or so. Her father, a renowned falconer, was avid about ornithology and worked with raptor recovery, including rehabilitation in their garage. She keeps his bells on her gloves at EITS. Asked about her new role as EITS Director, Mary

said, "The focus on our being an education-first program is at the heart and center of my interest: sharing our birds, their importance to conservation in a world that is only seeming to get smaller is of great value to me." Mary commends EITS volunteers' commitments and is honored to continue the program's legacy. Mary's passions include bird watching and bird walks, especially the Friday Audubon Bird Walks.

Moving into fall, I'm excited to reconnect with our broader community, embracing renewal and a fresh start for the upcoming year. SBAS offers many ways to connect with birds and birdy friends. We invite you to join us for Bird Walks, Field Trips, and Evening Programs; at Trivia Night, zoo, retirement community, and library events; and as a volunteer with our Conservation/Science Committee or Eyes in the Sky education program. To connect, please see our website for program details or contact me or Janice Levasheff.

Thank you for your support. If you haven't yet, please take a moment to **Renew Your Membership** today.

Katherine Emery, PhD
Executive Director, Santa Barbara Audubon Society

Thank You to:

- Betsy Mooney for taking photos of and writing about our annual membership meeting/picnic.
- National Audubon, Lynn Scarlett, and Roman Baratiak for their efforts in making Elizabeth Gray's visit to Santa Barbara a rousing success.
- Isaac Hernandez for taking photos at Elizabeth Gray's reception and program, and recording her program.
- Kris Mainland White and Gayle Hackamack for co-chairing the CBC Compilation Dinner.
- Hugh Ranson for his years of writing the Santa Barbara Birding column in *The Santa Barbara Independent*.
- Sue Ehrlich for volunteering for the Winter Bird Count for Kids Committee.
- Members of our Conservation/Science Committee for their constant advocacy for birds and habitat on local and regional issues.
- Mark Holmgren, Adrian O'Loughlen, Ryan Clark, and David Levasheff for their work on the Breeding Bird Study.
- Glenn Kincaid and Julia Kelly for initiating the Nojoqui Falls Park Purple Martin signage effort.
- The anonymous donor who supports the costs to print this ET in color.
- Lynn Scarlett and Dennis Power for their skill and expertise on this lovely issue of ET.
- The field trips team of Karl Weis, Dane St. George, Nick Lethaby, Rob Lindsay, Guy Tingos, Jeff Hanson, and Peggy Kearns for putting together another year of great birding events.
- Our Eyes in the Sky volunteers for their dedication to our key outreach program.
- Our talented staff: Katherine Emery, Mary Zolkoski, Wendy Kanter, Hilary Peattie, and Theo Patterson.
- Kerry Methner at VOICE Magazine for running the lovely Bird of the Month column, Rebecca Coulter for writing it, and to all the photographers who allow us to use your photos!
- The Simpson House Inn for sponsoring accommodations for our monthly program speakers.
- The Santa Barbara Botanic Garden for sponsoring our annual retreat at the Pritzlaff Conservation Center and collaborating with us on May Bird Month.
- Luke Swetland and team at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. It's an honor to be part of your flock!
- Hannah Atkinson for her skilled leadership of our Eyes in the Sky program for over six years. By the time you read this, she has begun another chapter in her life. We wish her the best!
- A special thank you to our generous donors, grantors and members.
- All of you—volunteers, members, donors, and contributors to articles for this ET! You are the heart of Santa Barbara Audubon. We couldn't do as much without your support!

SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Tierrablanca

The Board meets the second Wednesday of the month September through June. Members are welcome to attend.

Santa Barbara County Birding:

sbcobirding.groups.io/g/main

El Tecolote

The magazine of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society

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On the cover: Lazuli Bunting (photo by Pam Viale)

MEMBERSHIP



Join, Renew Your Membership, and/or Donate to Santa Barbara Audubon Society

Please donate online, scan the QR code, or mail this form with your check to **SBAS** (address below).

I'll be a Chapter-Supporting Member! ☐ New ☐ Renewing

☐ \$26 Feathered Friends ☐ \$50 Plover Protector ☐ \$100 Songbird Stewards

☐ \$500 Heron Heroes ☐ \$1,000 Great Horned Owl Guardians

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Chapter memberships are separate from National Audubon memberships. 100% of your chapter dues stay local and strong and sustainable, so we can protect birds and their habitat now and into the future.

Name

Street Address

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Mail membership form or donation with check to:
SBAS, P.O. Box 6737, Santa Barbara, CA 93160
Or join or donate at: SantaBarbaraAudubon.org/join-sbas

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Visit our website to receive your newsletter electronically and/or to gift a membership to someone. SBAS does not share personal information with other organizations. Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, EIN 23-7051362.

SBAS Annual Membership Meeting and Celebration 2025

by Betsy Mooney

Once again, sunlight patterned through the latticework above the picnic tables at Stow Grove Park's Area 3 as Santa Barbara Audubon members gathered for the 2025 Annual Membership Meeting and Celebration held on Saturday, June 14. Food was abundant, and music from Glendessary Jam flowed among friendly conversations.

After sharing good food contributed by members, the official business was to elect the board slate for FY25-26, which was approved by all members in attendance. New board members include Lauren Clark (Membership), Marina Suh (At-Large), and Jose Tierrablanca (Student Representative).

President Janice Levasheff reviewed SBAS's accomplishments from this past year, including exceeding grant expectations, a Christmas Bird Count recording 214 species(!), and a successful Winter Bird Count for Kids with 91 kids attending. Our *El Tecolote* newsletter received high praise from National Audubon representatives, and anonymous donors have agreed to continue to cover the color printing process for the coming year.

Our wonderful Jan Hamber was honored for her efforts helping all birds and contributing to conservation. At age 90, Jan is still an inspiration to us all. As a female scientist in the 1980s, she was a pioneer at a time when women were not expected to be in the field. Jan continues to be a role model, especially for young women scientists today. Along with a card, Jan was presented with a live plant in an owl planter and a WBC4Kids T-shirt designed by Lucy London, a former student rep and budding scientist in her own right. Jan was accompanied by her son Bob. Jan also won a raffle prize!



Jan Hamber (photo by Betsy Mooney).

Hannah Atkinson, director of our Eyes in the Sky (EITS) program until July 25, gave her farewell speech and was presented with a bouquet of roses. We will miss Hannah, who is moving to Ithaca, New York. Assuring continuity of excellent bird care for our EITS birds, Hannah announced that Mary Zolkoski would be taking the reins, or should we say jesses, as Eyes in the Sky Director. Welcome, Mary!



Executive Director Katherine Emery (right) shares Hannah's accomplishments at a special gathering (photo by Janice Levasheff).

For all her hard work as President of SBAS, Janice Levasheff was presented a bouquet of pink tulips by CEO Katherine Emery.

Roman Baratiak kept us entertained as he presented a variety of raffle items and announced the winning ticket numbers. Bird books, SBAS mugs, and bird art were among the prizes taken home. Smiles lit up Stow Grove as evening approached, and we celebrated the end of another great year for Santa Barbara Audubon Society.

Meet Your New Board Members

Lauren Clark – Membership

Lauren is a program manager at a leading healthcare company, where she specializes in operations, systems strategy, and patient-centered care. Outside of her full-time professional role, she works as an advocate at Standing Together to End Sexual Assault (STESA) in Santa Barbara and is deeply involved in wildlife rehabilitation at the Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network—particularly the care of orphaned, sick, and injured native songbirds. Lauren serves on the board of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, bringing her background in nonprofit work, community advocacy, and research to support native bird conservation.



Lauren Clark (photo by Megan Jean).

Marina Suh – Board Member At-Large

Having grown up in Santa Barbara, I'm honored to be joining the Santa Barbara Audubon Society (SBAS) community and board this year. My love for birds began three years ago, when I picked up my first camera and started photographing the hummingbirds that flitted through my college campus. On the morning before a particularly challenging final, I watched a pair of Dark-eyed Juncos hopping around my feet. I found so much peace in sharing their presence. So, I joined the birding club, took a field trip to see some California Condors, and haven't stopped looking up at the skies since.

As a relatively new (but no less avid) birder, I want to bring as much passion and enthusiasm as I can to this amazing community and support SBAS's vital work. I graduated from UCLA with a degree in computer science and linguistics. I bring a perspective shaped by work in technology, communications, and public service. In my free time, I enjoy playing classical guitar, reading, and taking bird photos (or all three with a picnic blanket in a park). I'm so grateful for this opportunity to contribute to SBAS and excited for the year to come!



Marina Suh (left) with Dr. Elizabeth Gray
(photo by Isaac Hernandez).

Save These Dates!

The Santa Barbara Christmas Bird Count (CBC) will be held on January 3, 2026—and the CBC Compilation Dinner returns to Fleischmann Auditorium that evening! We will provide details closer to the end of the year.

Our 12th Annual Winter Bird Count for Kids returns to Stow House/Lake Los Carneros on the morning of January 24, 2026. Share the joy of birding with kids ages 8 through 16! If you are interested in helping at this event, either that day or even in advance, we eagerly welcome you! Please go to <https://SantaBarbaraAudubon.org/events/wbc4k/>, select the Volunteer tab, and follow the instructions. We will be reaching out to all volunteers in the coming months. Thank you!

Audubon CEO meets SBAS members

by Steve Ferry

Many SBAS members attended the evening with National Audubon CEO Elizabeth Gray on May 28 at the Fleischmann Auditorium. Dr. Gray gave thoughtful and inspiring remarks and answered many questions from SBAS members and the public.

That same evening, ahead of her Fleischmann lecture, Dr. Gray attended a meet-and-greet with SBAS members and community environmental leaders at the Community Environmental Council's "The Hub" on State Street. For many of us, it was our first visit to The Hub. What a valuable resource for the Santa Barbara environmental community!

Many friends of SBAS attended the gathering, including Dr. Cristina Sandoval, Director of the Coal Oil Point Reserve; her husband Dr. Kevin Lafferty, US Geological Survey scientist; Dr. Lisa Stratton, Director of the North Campus Open Space; Charles Hopper, President & Chief Executive Officer of the Santa Barbara Zoo; Sigrid Wright,

CEO of the Community Environmental Council (CEC); Andrea Jones, Interim Executive Director of Audubon California; Dr. Steve Windhager, CEO of the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden; Luke Swetland, CEO of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History; Kim Stroud with Ojai Raptor Center; Peter Schuyler, Board member of the CEC; and many others.

Besides the social interaction among like-minded environmentalists, the attendees enjoyed brief remarks by Dr. Gray and by SBAS President Janice Levasheff. Mayors Pro-Tem of the cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta, Eric Friedman and Stuart Kasdin, respectively, each presented Dr. Gray with their city's proclamation celebrating the 120th anniversary of the National Audubon Society. The proclamations gratefully acknowledged National Audubon's 120 years of science, education, and community action to protect birds and inspire conservation.



Dr. Elizabeth Gray receiving recognition from Goleta Mayor Pro Tem Stuart Kasdin (photo by Isaac Hernandez).

“The Power of Birds” – An Evening with Dr. Elizabeth Gray, National Audubon CEO

by Libby Patten

The May 28 program combined a compelling presentation by Dr. Elizabeth Gray, CEO of the National Audubon Society, and discussion with Gray’s longtime friend and colleague Lynn Scarlett, SBAS member and another titan of the global conservation community. Noting this year’s 120th anniversary of the National Audubon Society, Gray emphasized the power of community as a driving force for conservation inspired by the desire to protect birds. Indeed, the formation of the Audubon Society itself grew out of community action by women appalled by the plume trade for fashion. As Gray put it, “impact doesn’t start on Capitol Hill, but in living rooms... by people who care enough to act.” She commended Santa Barbara for hosting the first-ever Christmas Bird Count in California (1903), as well as for our high species count and participation level at four times the national average on the latest CBC.

As many know, three billion birds have been lost since 1970. Gray described how the Audubon Society is committed to “bending the bird curve,” or halting and reversing the decline in birds across the Americas. To guide this work, Audubon has created a strategic plan called “Flight Plan,” an ambitious roadmap to protect and restore key areas so birds continue to thrive. These areas are the “hotels and restaurants” that birds need, from their wintering grounds up to their breeding grounds. Involving 11 countries, this work is well underway toward

creating a 300-million-acre corridor of climate-resilient habitat across the Americas from migratory flyways to coastlines. Again and again, she emphasized that this is bigger than birds: when we protect birds, we are also building a healthy and more resilient future for all of us. Flight Plan is based on cutting-edge science to identify where birds face the biggest threats and where we can make the biggest impacts. Through respect, lots of listening, and conversation, Gray stressed that Audubon carefully builds relationships with diverse partners for the most workable collaborative solutions involving indigenous leaders, community members, ranchers, and policy makers.

While many assume working in conservation can be depressing, Dr. Gray countered that we can all make positive impacts. She described examples of how important conservation achievements can result from simple steps. Examples include a rope fence to create a safe place for Snowy Plover breeding, painting some wind energy turbine blades black, and getting companies to turn off turbines during peak migration. Excellent questions from the audience spurred Gray and Scarlett to encourage everyone to keep working in their various conservation fields and activities, to stay optimistic, and remember that birds are resilient! To watch a recording of this fascinating program, please visit SantaBarbaraAudubon.org/additional-resources.



Dr. Gray (right) and Lynn Scarlett at the Museum of Natural History event (photo by Isaac Hernandez)

A Visit to the Snowy Plover Reserve

by Lynn Scarlett

When National Audubon Society CEO Elizabeth Gray agreed to speak at a Santa Barbara Audubon evening event, I asked if she might like to see the Snowy Plover hatchlings the morning of the event. The response—an unequivocal “yes!” An ornithologist, Dr. Gray studied shorebirds in the Great Basin, so a visit to our coast to see the plovers was a special treat.

Our Snowy Plover reserve did not disappoint. Dr. Cris Sandoval, who oversees plover restoration at the reserve, joined us, along with Dr. Connor Philson, executive director of the UC Santa Barbara Reserve System. Just seeing the wee hatchlings scurry around warms the heart, but learning from Cris the saga of securing a place for these tiny birds inspires commitments to conservation.

Protecting the plovers is not easy. Their habitat has contracted dramatically over the years. Dangers abound—from predating wild creatures like crows to human action along the beach. Even climate change looms as a threat, as sea levels rise.



Susie Clothier, Dr. Cris Sandoval, Lynn Scarlett, Dr. Connor Philson, Dr. Gray at Snowy Plover Reserve.

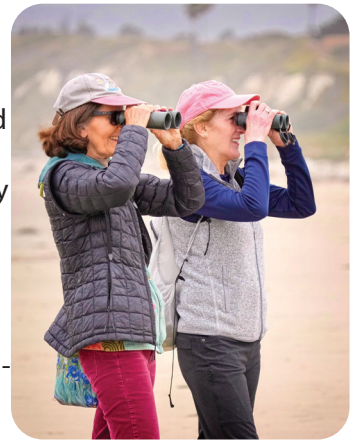
We learned that Cris began working at Coal Oil Point, home of the Snowy Plovers, in 1997, first as a volunteer and later as an employee. By 1999, the Pacific Coast Snowy Plover population had dropped to fewer than 1,500 birds, and the Coal Oil Point population had altogether disappeared.

In launching the location as a reserve, its future success in restoring breeding plover populations was uncertain. Past research had suggested the birds would not nest in places where people walk. Thus, the very first

challenge, on a beach widely visited by UC Santa Barbara students and others, was how to keep an untrammelled place for the plovers, while enabling beachgoers to enjoy the beach.

Cris explained to Dr. Gray and others a journey of trial and adjustment—signage, fencing, docents, some predator controls, and even careful collection of eggs that had lost their brooding adult and were transferred to the zoo for incubation, hatching, and release back to the Reserve. Now several hundred snowy plovers call Coal Oil Point and Sands Beach home, with 59 breeding adults and 84 nests reported in 2024. From zero, the chick population now may exceed 30. This achievement is the first location to revive a breeding population after having had no breeding for decades!

We all love seeing the tiny plover chicks, able to forage almost immediately after hatching and run around on outsized toothpick legs as “papa” plover keeps watch. The spectacle is entertaining; it is also encouraging that conservation efforts can make a difference through a combination of science, partnerships, communication, and commitment. I am reminded of the words of Cuban biologist Geraldo Alayon, who once wrote that conservation resides at the intersection of science and magic. The science helps us understand the world around us; the magic is the spirit of conservation that motivates action.



Lynn Scarlett and Dr. Gray at the Snowy Plover Reserve (photo by Susie Clothier).



Snowy Plover hatchling (photo by Lynn Scarlett).

Attending the National Leadership Conference

by Conor McMahon

Every year, the National Audubon Society hosts a Leadership Conference, bringing together people from across the network of university campus chapters (e.g., my organization, Goleta Coast Audubon at UCSB), local chapters (Santa Barbara Audubon), state chapters (California Audubon), and the overarching national program. In 2025, the conference was in Montreal, Quebec, as part of a new initiative to build cross-hemisphere partnerships along the migratory flight path of North American birds. A scholarship program fully funds travel expenses for student leaders from the campus chapter network. This year, I was honored to attend as a representative from Goleta Coast Audubon!

The conference includes a mix of workshops, presentations, field trips, and networking opportunities. Topics included planting native plants for birds; building a MOTUS tower to track migrating birds with radio-telemetry; setting up a new Christmas Bird Count circle; and

building connections with local communities. I especially enjoyed roundtable discussions among student leaders from across the country. Since the conference, we've started planning collaborative, cross-campus events in Southern California! But my favorite moments overall were between events, sitting on buses and at dinner tables with random other Audubon leaders from across the country. I had interesting conversations with people from all levels of the organization, both near and far.

The conference was so much fun—and that's not even mentioning the birds! My favorite was a fledgling Chestnut-sided Warbler seen during a five a.m. walk by myself before the "official" conference activities on Sunday. I plan to transfer some of my excitement to our local chapters with ideas inspired by what I learned. I hope to return to the conference again one day even after I graduate, as a local chapter leader in whatever region I eventually settle.



Canadian Senator Michèle Audette addresses the conference (photo by Conor McMahon).



Campus, local, and state chapter leaders from California (photo by Rachel Bailey, National Audubon Society).

The 2025 Joy Parkinson Award Recipients

by Page Hiller-Adams

This year's Santa Barbara County Science Fair, held in March, produced two excellent projects considered worthy of Santa Barbara Audubon's Joy Parkinson Award for student research relevant to our local birds or other wildlife, or to habitat conservation or restoration. This is the first time the award has been given to two recipients in one year.

Lily Wallace presented the results of her experiments in the Life Sciences division as a junior at San Marcos High School in a report titled, "The Impact of Local Aquatic Environmental Conditions and Surface Area-to-Volume Ratio on the Biodegradation of PHB Plastics." PHB, or more formally polyhydroxybutyrate, is a plastic that can be degraded naturally by aquatic bacteria, a desirable quality when most plastics that end up in oceans or lakes degrade into ever smaller, extremely long-lasting and environmentally deleterious microplastics. Lily measured the degradation rates of flat and round PHB samples, the flat samples having a greater surface area for bacterial action, in fresh and salt water, with and without naturally included sediments. Her results show clearly that flatter pieces, with their higher surface area, and the presence of sediments speed up natural degradation. Going forward, Lily has continuing interests in chemistry, biology, and environmental science.

Lucas Zhang, as a sophomore at Cate School,

presented a project in the Physical Sciences and Engineering division with the title, "A Self-Sustaining Drone System for Wildlife Observation Leveraging Biomimicry and Solar Energy." He designed and built a prototype drone with sun-tracking solar cells for rechargeable power, a high-quality digital camera, onboard memory, and claw-like and suction cup devices to allow the drone to "roost" on trees and branches. He plans eventually to have an inflatable float for water landings and aquatic photography. The drone is intended for remotely controlled bird photography and, Lucas hopes, ultimately for long-term monitoring of wildlife in natural habitats. Lucas also enjoys photographing birds locally and outside his home city of Beijing.

In addition to their poster presentations with other participants at the County Science Fair, Lily and Lucas enthusiastically and clearly presented their projects to the Santa Barbara Audubon board at the May meeting. Our congratulations to them both!

The Joy Parkinson Award was established by Jan Hamber, a founding member of our Society and herself a biologist and field scientist. She named the award to honor fellow founding member and very active multi-term president of the Society, Joy Parkinson. The award is funded jointly now by Ms. Hamber and the Santa Barbara Audubon Society.



Lucas Zhang (l) and Lily Wallace (r), recipients of the Joy Parkinson Award (photo by Page Hiller-Adams).

Education

Page Hiller-Adams, Education Chair

My name is **Jose Manuel Tierrablanca**. I'm 16 and am the student representative for Santa Barbara Audubon Society. I was always interested in wildlife. A few years ago, I picked up a camera for the first time. For me, birds were the most accessible animals to photograph from home. I've taken thousands of photos over the years, but my bird photos are my favorites. I love going out to the beach before sunrise to photograph shore birds. I became interested in Santa Barbara Audubon at the zoo when they advertised the Winter Bird Count for Kids at Lake Los Carneros. At the bird count, I was introduced to Janice Levasheff. She asked about the bird photos I took that day and asked if I was interested in being the student representative. I accepted and have been the student rep since. Through my time as student representative, I have seen that there's more that I can do with my photos, including learning more about what I can do for local birds. I'm excited to see where it'll take me next.



Jose Manuel Tierrablanca (photo by Claudia Marquez).



Four SBAS chapter leaders attended the Environmental Defense Center's 2025 Green & Blue that honored Dr. Lisa Stratton as an Environmental Hero. In photo, from left: Dane St. George, Page Hiller-Adams, Lynn Scarlett, EDC honoree Dr. Lisa Stratton, and Karl Weis. Special thanks to Darlene Chirman for her SBAS sponsorship.

BirdTalk: Hands-Free eBirding for the Modern Birder

by John Callender

You're always staring at your phone," my wife would say when we birded together. I'm a big fan of eBird and have more than 2,500 consecutive days in my checklist streak. It feels good to be part of the eBird citizen science project, contributing complete, accurate counts of the birds I see. But she was right. All that time entering data in eBird checklists was taking me away from actual birding.

That all changed when I started using BirdTalk. What is BirdTalk? BirdTalk is an innovative iPhone app developed by Santa Barbara birder and programmer Steve Colwell that allows me to create eBird checklists hands-free using voice commands. With BirdTalk, I keep my phone in my pocket and my eyes on the birds, updating my checklist simply by speaking quietly into a Bluetooth headset.

The BirdTalk Experience

The beauty of BirdTalk lies in its simplicity and how it transforms the birding experience. Instead of the constant phone-checking ritual, I simply speak naturally. When I spot a bird, I just say what I see: "Three mockingbirds" or "Red-tailed Hawk." BirdTalk confirms each entry by speaking back to me, so I know it understood correctly.

Need to make a correction? I just say "No, towhee" or "No, three" to fix the last entry. Want to add notes? I say "Memo singing from oak tree," and it's done—all while keeping my eyes on the birds and my hands free for binoculars or camera.



California Towhee (photo by John Callender).

How to Use BirdTalk

Getting started with BirdTalk was straightforward. All I needed was:

- An iPhone with iOS 15 or above
- My eBird account
- A Bluetooth headset (I use the OpenComm2 Bone Conduction headset, which leaves my ears unobstructed for birding by ear)
- The TestFlight app (for beta testing)

When I'm finished birding, uploading to eBird is straightforward. The app guides me through the process with clear instructions, and my complete checklist—with all species, counts, and notes—is transferred to my eBird account with just a few taps.



Steve Colwell using BirdTalk in the field (photo by Sue Cook).

3:12

LTE

Stop

?

BirdTalk

Stakeout Painted Bunting (Carpinteria Sanitary District, 2023-2)

15:08 +1

Yellow-rumped Warbler

15:08 +4 =4

European Starlings

15:08 +1 =1

Cassin's Kingbird

15:08 +1 =1

Anna's Hummingbird

15:09 +1 =1

California Scrub-Jay

15:09 +2 =3

Yellow-rumped Warblers

15:10 +1 =1

Northern Mockingbird

15:10 +1 =1

Allen's Hummingbird

15:11 +1 =1

Ruby-crowned Kinglet

BirdTalk screen showing bird observations.



Group of gulls (photo by John Callender).

BirdTalk in Action

BirdTalk truly shines in challenging birding scenarios:

- **Mixed Flocks:** When I encountered a large group of gulls at the beach, censusing them went from a mental juggling act to a smooth operation. "Four Western Gulls... six California Gulls... Western Gull... two more..." BirdTalk kept perfect running totals while I kept my binoculars up and my eyes on the birds.



Song Sparrow singing (photo by John Callender).

- **Rapid Observations:** When arriving at a busy location with multiple species visible and audible, I could now record them all without missing a beat. I hear a Song Sparrow singing while I'm watching a Black Phoebe? No problem. I can enter both without looking away.

- **Rare Bird Documentation:** The "memo" command is perfect for documenting rarities: Me: "One Solitary Sandpiper." BirdTalk: "Solitary Sandpiper, rare here and now." Me: "Memo, feeding in the lagoon near coordinates. Photos to come."

The app automatically replaced "coordinates" with my exact GPS location—invaluable for rare bird documentation.

Getting Access to BirdTalk

BirdTalk is currently available as a beta test. To request access, email Steve at stevebt@membot.com. For those still hesitant about trying BirdTalk, I understand. I was there, too. But if you're serious about using eBird to document your birding, this tool will revolutionize your field experience. It's not just about convenience; it's about rediscovering the joy of birding, unencumbered by the mechanics of record-keeping.

John Callender is a birder based in Santa Barbara County, California. He has maintained a daily eBird checklist streak since 2018 and has been using BirdTalk since its beta release.

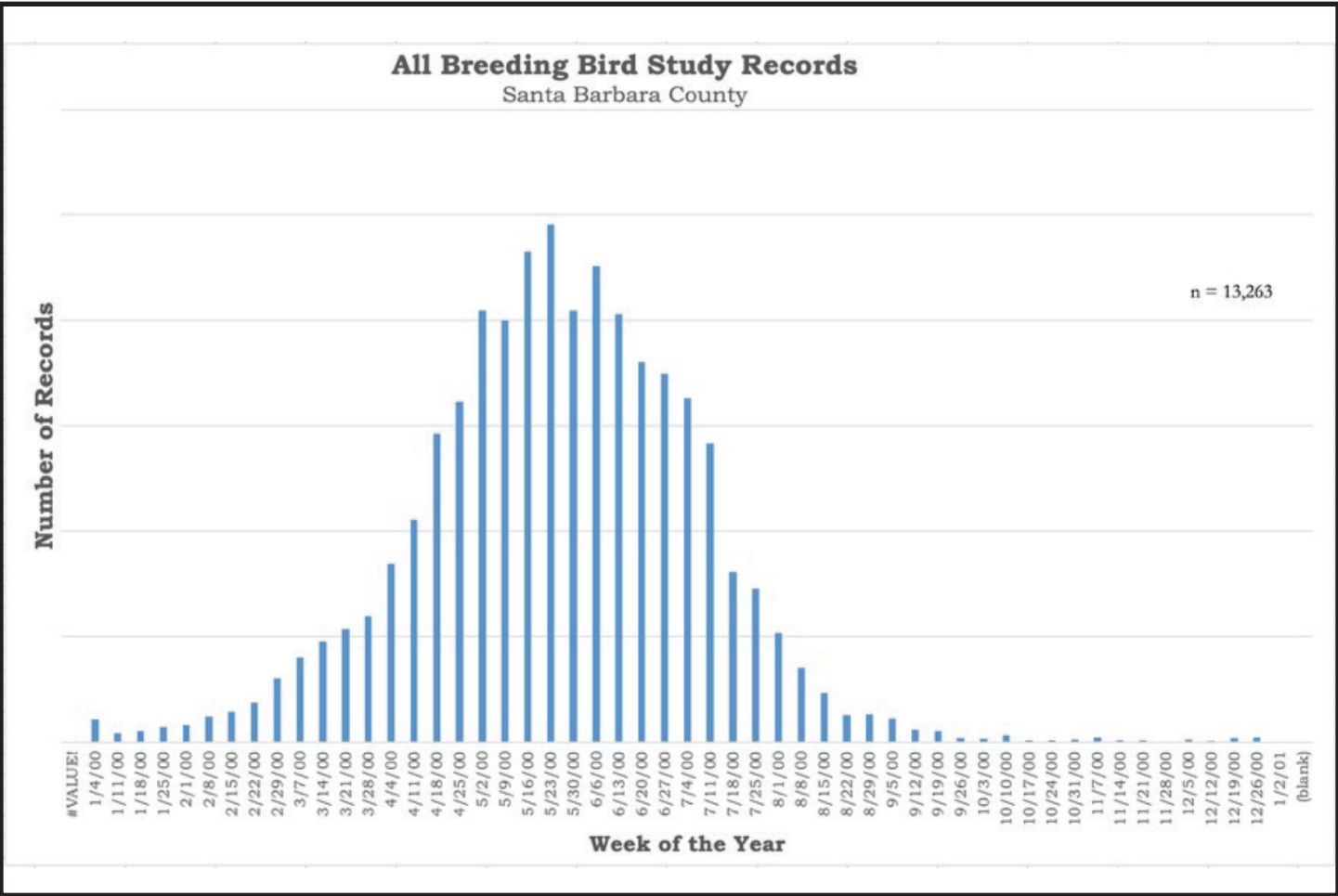
Insights from the Breeding Bird Study

by Mark Holmgren

We begin a new regular item in *El Tecolote* that shows the breadth of applications of the Santa Barbara County Breeding Bird Study, supported by SB Audubon and the Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration (CCBER) at UCSB. Your inputs to the BBS have yielded more than 13,600 breeding bird records, an average of 70 records of each of the approximately 194 species currently known to breed in the county. This depth of information allows explorations that can inform conservation, land use planning, land management, research, and education at several levels, as well as curious birders.

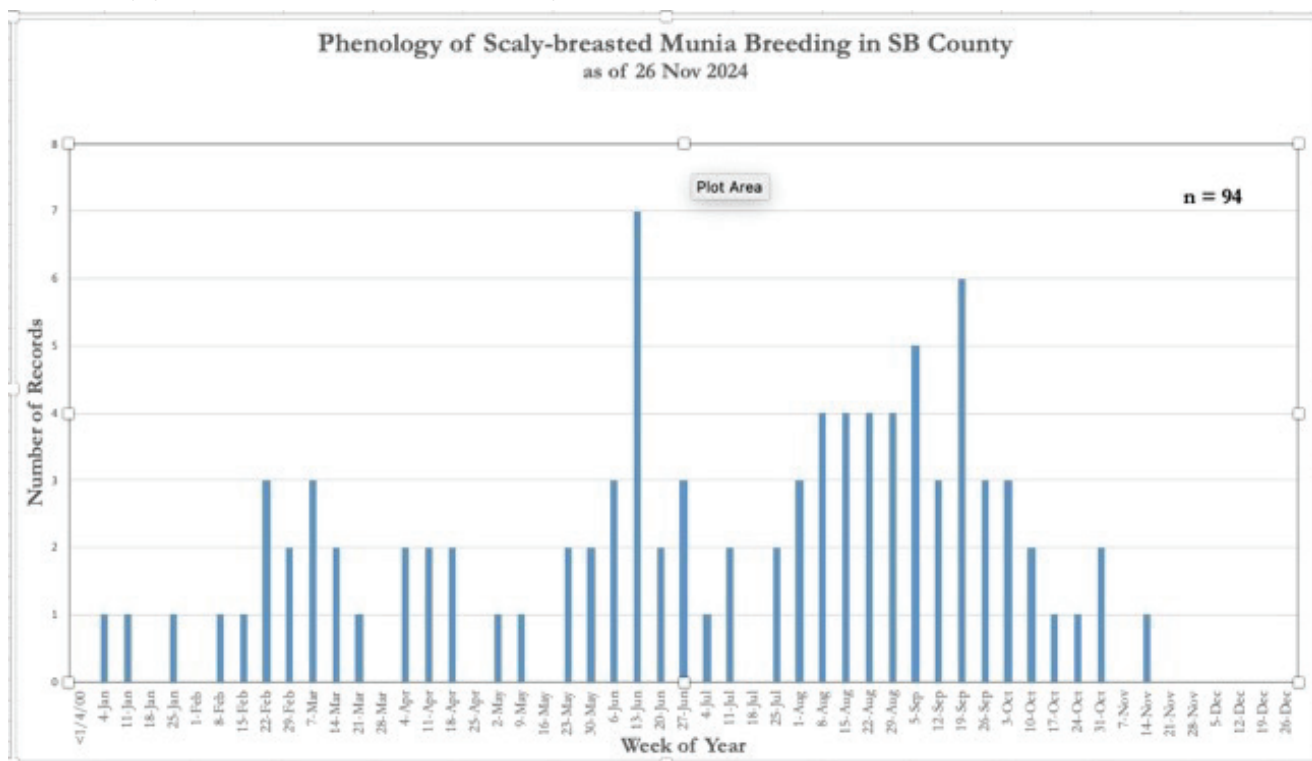
We start this series not at the beginning but at the stage of the breeding period we are likely to see from now till the end of the year.

The chart below shows the weekly distribution of all records submitted for all species. The peak of submissions is the third week of May, which roughly corresponds to the time of greatest breeding bird activity. Using BirdView, let's look at the [breeding records between September 15 and November 30](#). Exotic species and grebes account for most fall breeding. Grebes rely on receding water that exposes the base of shrubs to which they attach their nest. Receding water typically happens in fall.



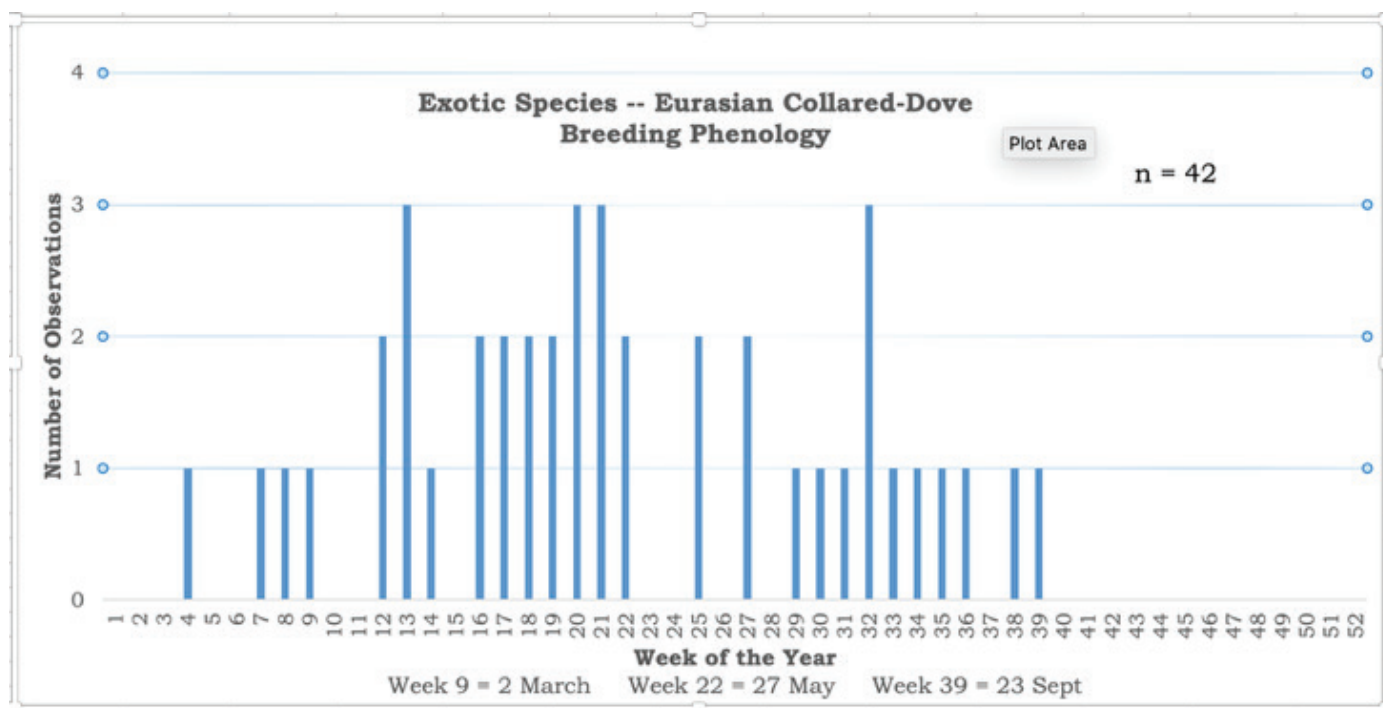
Scaly-breasted Munia are recent colonists from South and South-East Asia, as well as Indonesia and the Philippines. There, they breed year-round. In the future, will we see them conform to the northern hemisphere breeding pattern? Having gathered more than 100 breeding obser-

ventions of Munia, in the future, we can look for changes in the times they breed. Though with fewer records, another non-native colonist, Eurasian Collared-Dove, shows a similar deviation from the typical time of breeding.



The timing of breeding is chaotic compared to that of all species. See the breeding phenology of two other immigrant species: [House Sparrow](#) and [Rock Pigeon](#).

For more information on the Breeding Bird Study, see <https://santabarbaraaudubon.org/santa-barbara-county-breeding-bird-study/>.



A Short History of *The Birds of Santa Barbara County, California*

by Paul Lehman (lehman.paul@verizon.net)

The current online version of *The Birds of Santa Barbara County, California* (<http://www.sbcobirding.com/lehmanbosbc.html>) is the result of a series of progressive iterations: from a Master's thesis, to a published book, through to its present, periodically updated online home. The first version began in 1980, while I was a graduate student in the Geography Department at UC Santa Barbara (UCSB). I had moved to Santa Barbara as a freshman in 1974, at which time the only published source specifically on the birdlife of the county was the already somewhat out-of-date, limited-scope, 1972 booklet *Birds of the Santa Barbara Region* by T. Nelson Metcalf, published by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. This publication appeared right about the time that the Santa Barbara County and overall California birding scenes were entering the "modern era." Many new birding sites were discovered, rarity occurrences found to be routine at the proper place and time, and so on. The remainder of the 1970s saw an explosion in this sort of birding, which largely emphasized the searching for migrants and wintering species, including rarities, and discovering many additional new local birding locations, mostly coastal. The resultant burgeoning data that decade coming out of Santa Barbara County, as well as from neighboring Ventura County, resulted in a new book with bar graphs and short, individual species annotations: *The Birds of Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, California* (1980). Authored by Richard Webster, myself, and Louis Bevier, it was published by the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. Due to its small size, there was limited detail.

At that time, I was becoming convinced that a much more thorough work on the birdlife of Santa Barbara County was needed. Concurrently, I needed a Master's thesis topic. Voila! Such a work on the status and distribution of the birds of a region was a good fit for the biogeography arm of the major. So, I started the long process of accumulating all the existing data from which I would write the individual species accounts. Back then, such raw data were written on 3x5 index cards and filed taxonomically.

The main sources of data covering the ornithological history of Santa Barbara County from the late 1800s to the then-present included a few major works on the birdlife of California or Southern California, with limited data dealing specifically with Santa Barbara County. Foremost

were George Willett's *Revised List of the Birds of Southwestern California* (1933), Joseph Grinnell and Alden H. Miller's *The Distribution of the Birds of California* (1944), and Kimball Garrett and Jon Dunn's *Birds of Southern California: Status and Distribution* (1981). Also appearing during the early 1900s were many short notes published in the journal *The Condor*, which mentioned unusual occurrences and other interesting observations. Such records from the field are no longer found in much of today's ornithological literature, a reflection of a by-gone era. These short distributional notes had a home, however, beginning in the 1910s in the journal *Bird-Lore*, soon to become *Audubon Field Notes*, then *American Birds*, then *National Audubon Society Field Notes*, and ultimately *North American Birds*. This journal provided the major source of my research.

Another very important source of information for the thesis included the bird specimen collection and egg data stored at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. I also made visits to other museum collections in California, such as UCSB's former "Vertebrate Museum," the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at UC Berkeley, the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco, the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology in Camarillo, the Los Angeles County Museum, and the San Diego Natural History Museum. And I mined the field notes and carried out interviews with all the active birders present in Santa Barbara County at that time (fewer than today!). I finished the first version of *The Birds of Santa Barbara County, California* in 1982, completing the requirements of my Master's degree. When I dutifully submitted my two copies to the UCSB librarian, as required, she congratulated me as the winner of the "By Far the Longest Master's Thesis Ever Submitted at UCSB" award, weighing in at 365 pages.



Paul Lehman (photo by Barbara Wise).

Moving ahead to the early 1990s, it was time for an update and to convert the thesis into a book for the public. With photo and art contributions from Shawneen Finnegan, and fundraising and publishing assistance from Mark Holmgren, then curator at the former UCSB Vertebrate Museum, the widely available book form of *The Birds of Santa Barbara County, California* was published in early summer 1994. A few months later, I moved away from Santa Barbara.

I moved back to California in 2008, although this time to San Diego, and in 2010 I began updating the 1994 manuscript, now as an online resource. Most data to the early 2000s were obtained from the quarterly seasonal reports in *North American Birds* (NAB) magazine. Better still were the much more complete seasonal county reports submitted to the NAB regional editors from a single Santa Barbara County “coordinator.” This role—to accumulate, organize, and edit records of interest generated by the county’s many birders into a single seasonal summary, four times per year—was first established in the late 1970s and taken on by me until the time I moved away

in 1994. Joan Lentz then became the county coordinator from 1994–2000, and Dave Compton filled this role from 2000–2024+. Before 2000, information in these reports came mostly via direct discussion with field observers and from information posted on the local Rare Bird Alerts. Since the early 2000s, such information has more and more been gathered from eBird reports. Additional data were gleaned from the published literature, from museum specimens, and from other online sources such as breeding bird atlases.

One piece of interesting trivia is the progression of the Santa Barbara County bird list (not counting the Channel Islands) in each subsequent version of the book. The 1982 Master’s thesis: 412 species. The 1994 book: 454 species. The current online version as of 1 July 2025: 506 species.

The plan is to keep the freely accessible online version of *Birds of Santa Barbara County, California* updated on a regular basis. Comments, suggestions, and corrections (no matter how minor) are always welcome.

White Rump

by Lynn Scarlett

Sometimes, strolling along enjoying birds and a vigorous walk, one hits the jackpot—an unexpected bird! June gloom shaded the Pond Trail landscape along Devereux Slough. Still, I could see a couple dozen Semipalmated Plovers foraging in the mudflats. Dutifully, I figured I had better count them for an accurate ebird entry, so I brought up my zoom lens camera to take a close look. “Wait a minute,” I thought. “There’s a sandpiper among those plovers.” I took a closer look, nixing all the expected birds—not a Western Sandpiper, not a Least, not a Pectoral. I noticed wing feathers extending beyond the tail; I saw some black streaking along the flanks. “Gee,” I thought, “it sure looks like a White-rumped Sandpiper,” a bird I had occasionally seen while living on the East Coast. If a white-rump, it was way out of range as it breeds far north in Alaska and the Canadian Arctic, then traverses the central and eastern part of the United States on its way to South America.

My next step—check with the experts. I sent photos off to Linus Blomquist, Mark Holmgren, and Adrian



White-rumped Sandpiper (photo by Steve Colwell).

O’Loughlen. “Could this be a White-rumped Sandpiper?” I inquired. I quickly added that I knew they were not found here. Next thing I knew, I got the thumbs up. Yes, this was, indeed, a White-rumped Sandpiper, the first recorded sighting of one for Santa Barbara County. “Wow! Cool!” Adrian and Linus both posted the information and my photo on Slack.

Thankfully, the bird actually stayed around for a couple of days, so lots and lots of people were able to see it. I confess that I love every bird I see, whether for the first time, or after countless observations. But it is still rather thrilling to see something unexpected. I thank ebird for disciplining me to look closely and count carefully, as that effort revealed this surprise bird!

Drama at the Juniper Tree

by Karen Dorfman

After a lovely spring day, I was getting ready to watch Masterpiece Theater's finale of *Marie Antoinette*. I knew the historic end and was filled with trepidation. It was 10 p.m. As I closed my living room curtains, I thought about the busy mockingbird nest in the juniper tree beside my balcony. As much as I love baby birds, "peace at last" was my thought. The parents had been dutifully feeding their young for the past couple weeks to a growing cacophony of raspy squeals that had grown louder each day, sunrise to sunset. A nearby male mockingbird had been singing his heart out every night. Are birders allowed to get a little annoyed by mockingbirds? The babies should be ready to fledge soon, I thought.

I curled up on the couch and turned on the TV. Suddenly there was a terrible screeching outside. I jumped off the couch and ran outside onto my balcony. Below the juniper scattered everywhere were shrieking baby mockingbirds running in circles on the ground. Although partly feathered, none could fly. Then I saw the culprit. A tabby cat glanced at me and dashed away. He had raided the nest. "Go away!" I shouted while clapping and chasing him away. Two babies made it into a thick bougainvillea nearby and disappeared. Two other babies hopped frantically in that direction and disappeared under some ivy. I pondered what to do next. The tabby had returned, so I shooed it off again. It wasn't giving up. After a few more rounds of chasing it off, I went inside and prepared a shoebox in case the young needed protection. "Warm Dark Quiet" I remembered from volunteering at a wildlife crisis hotline years ago.

The cat and baby birds now nowhere in sight, I went inside, hoping the young would survive the night and reunite with their parents by morning. It had been a warm day but had cooled off sharply. I worried that the sprinklers might come on. Partly feathered babies are vulnerable to hypothermia outside the nest. I remembered they were always placed inside an incubator at the wildlife care center. All I could do now was hope for the best. I returned to *Marie Antoinette*.

About 15 minutes later, I heard a terrible shrieking. A bird was being killed. I ran outside but saw nothing. The waning cries crushed my spirit. The question of whether I should have intervened more aggressively haunted me. I checked the shoebox I had prepared with tissues and air holes and went inside with a heavy heart.

About 10 minutes later, I heard shrieks again. I ran outside. There was a baby running in circles on the ground, the tabby trying to catch it. That's it! I ran downstairs yelling at the tabby to get away. It was time to intervene. I gently scooped up the baby and saw he looked terrified. I held him near the juniper branches and he stopped screeching. Then I walked upstairs to the height of his former nest, and its racing heart seemed to calm. I placed it inside the box I had prepared and sat with the box on my warm lap. His

flitting about in the box stopped. "I've killed it," I worried. I slipped a few fragrant juniper sprigs inside the box and developed a plan. I would keep the box inside my bathroom overnight and listen for its parents at the crack of dawn. If they returned, I would quickly put the box outside in a large planter on my balcony beside the juniper. If the parents had been killed by the cat or didn't return in the morning, I would take the baby to the nearby wildlife care center. *Marie Antoinette* was long over. I went to bed but hardly slept.

At 5:30 a.m., I heard the familiar clucking from both mockingbird parents looking for their young. The parents had survived. I dashed and got the box and placed it in the planter on my balcony beside the juniper. Then I carefully slid the lid open a couple inches and peeked inside. The baby was tucked in the corner, breathing! It had survived. I dashed inside to wait and watch.

Within minutes, when the baby heard his mother's clucking, it let out a giant "feed me!" squawk. Both parents flew promptly to my balcony, looking relentlessly for their surviving young. The back and forth calls continued. The parents cocked their heads, unsure where exactly the baby was but determined to find it. Soon the mother hopped closer, berry in mouth, and found the baby! She popped the berry in its mouth and flew off to get another morsel. The dad had missed this but kept looking until seeing the mother return with a fat moth. As the day progressed, the mother kept feeding the baby. Her body slid the shoebox lid open wider with each feeding, eventually making it wide enough for her to hop inside the box. She did this for all additional feedings. Between feedings, both parents searched and clucked relentlessly for their other young throughout the day. Sadly, no others seemed to have survived the night. Both parents put all their remaining effort into feeding their only surviving young.

It was unusually quiet that next day after the nest had been raided, matching my somber mood. The usual symphony of nearby house finches, wrens, and titmice had gone silent. The male mockingbird was no longer singing. It was as if they all had heard and been affected by the prior night's drama. A day of silence ensued.

By dusk, I noticed the box was empty. The baby mockingbird had hopped or flown back into the juniper tree. Its mother was close by in the tree, cooing to it repeatedly as the sun set.

The following day was bright and sunny. The symphony of spring singing had resumed. Now mother and fledgling mockingbird were in the olive tree on the other side of my building. And a male mockingbird was singing directly above them.

Author's note:

- Although always better not to handle young birds, it's a myth that parents will reject their young if touched by a human.
- Please make wonderful "catios" and keep your cats indoors.

Fall 2025 Programs



Many thanks to our hotel sponsor,
Simpson House Inn.

Nathan Pieplow

The Language of Birds

Wednesday, September 17 | Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, Fleischmann Auditorium | 7:00 p.m. | FREE

Presented by the Santa Barbara Audubon Society and the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

All around us, birds are constantly telling us who they are and what they are doing. In this fascinating illustrated talk, Nathan Pieplow unlocks the secrets of their language. We'll listen in on the pillow talk of a pair of Red-winged Blackbirds and learn the secret signals that Cliff Swallows use when they have found food. We'll learn how one bird sound can have many meanings, and how one meaning can have many sounds—and how, sometimes, the meaning isn't in the sounds at all. This talk from the author of the *Peterson Field Guide to Bird Sounds* is an accessible, entertaining introduction to a fascinating topic.

Nathan Pieplow is the author of the *Peterson Field Guide to Bird Sounds*, published in two volumes, one for Eastern and one for Western North America. An avid bird sound recordist and videographer, he is the author of the bird sound blog *Earbirding.com*, a board member of the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, an author of the *Colorado Birding Trail*, and former editor of the journal *Colorado Birds*. He teaches writing and rhetoric at the University of Colorado, Boulder.



(Photo by Will Anderson).

John Callender and Sophie Cameron

Birds in Focus: An Evening with Two Santa Barbara County Bird Photographers

Tuesday, October 7 | Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, Fleischmann Auditorium | 7:00 p.m. | FREE
Presented by the Santa Barbara Audubon Society and the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

Join us for this special event featuring two 30-minute illustrated presentations by Santa Barbara County-based photographers—John Callender and Sophie Cameron—followed by audience questions. We are fortunate to have a number of exceptional bird photographers in our community and plan on presenting events with many of them in future Birds in Focus programs.

John will explore how birding led him to photography, driven by the desire to document sightings, study the finer points of identification, and get feedback from experts about challenging species. He'll discuss how digital photography has transformed his own birding, including examples of his own photos, the evolution of his gear and techniques, and lessons he's learned along the way.

Sophie will show a selection of bird and wildlife photos she's taken over the past seven years and talk about her work as a bird ambassador and naturalist. We'll also learn about unique birding destinations within Santa Barbara County and the special habitats and species of birds that can be found there.



Northern Parula (photo by John Callender).



Five-striped Sparrow (photo by Sophie Cameron).

John Callender has been birding casually since his childhood in the 1960s. Around 2018, some encounters with experienced birders got him excited about taking his birding to the next level. The fun of low-key competition via eBird rankings motivated him to chase species he'd largely ignored until then, which led to a deeper engagement with other local birders. He's grateful to be part of the enthusiastic and welcoming Santa Barbara birding community, including the Santa Barbara Audubon Society and the local Christmas Bird Counts. He's co-founder of Carpinteria Birdwatchers, which holds monthly meetings and outings in the Carpinteria area.



Sophie Cameron grew up in Santa Barbara exploring the outdoors and fostering a curiosity for all things nature. She attended UCSB to study Biological Sciences and now works as a naturalist. She also researches bird migration and teaches a field course on birding through the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. She loves spreading the joy that birds bring her with everyone she meets and cherishes all of the adventures that being a birder and wildlife photographer have provided.

Michael DiGiorgio

A Brief History of Bird Illustration and Painting

Tuesday, November 25 | Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, Fleischmann Auditorium | 7:00 p.m. | FREE

Presented by the Santa Barbara Audubon Society and the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

This informative presentation will survey the art of painting birds since the 19th century, both as fine art and as illustrations for field guides. The talk will begin by covering artists like John Gould and John James Audubon and their contributions to the field of ornithology, then will show the evolution from early avian artists to more modern painters like Louis Fuertes, Don Eckelberry, Roger Tory Peterson, Albert Gilbert, and Guy Tudor. The talk will also include a personal history of Michael DiGiorgio's own life as a bird artist and the methods he uses to create vibrant paintings and assure accurate illustrations.



(Photo by Kate Davis)

Michael DiGiorgio is a nationally recognized artist whose paintings and drawings have appeared in nature books and journals, such as: *Birds of Brazil*, vols. 1 & 2, *Birds of Honduras*, *Breeding Bird Atlas of Connecticut*, *New York State Breeding Bird Atlas*, and *The Narrow Edge* by Deborah Cramer. From 2007 to 2012, DiGiorgio was contracted to completely revise all of the birds of Hawaii for an updated edition of the *Peterson Field Guide to Birds*.

Committed to painting from life, DiGiorgio has traveled extensively to create field sketches of birds, plants, and habitat from Central and South America, the West Indies, Trinidad, and the Outer Islands of Britain. In addition, his numerous trips to the western United States and various national parks have allowed him to record a full range of American birdlife.

In 2005, DiGiorgio received the first ever Eckelberry Endowment Award from the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia in recognition of his bird illustration work. His paintings have been exhibited at the Roger Tory Peterson Institute, the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, and the Mall Gallery in London.



American Kestrel (by M. DiGiorgio).

BIRD WALKS

Please check the SBAS website before attending an event, as details may change.

Note: Due to registration requirements for some of our December birding events, their information, along with our early December bird walk, is presented in this issue. Information on our later December birding events will be in the Winter issue of *El Tecolote*, as usual.

All Friday Bird Walks are 8:30-10:30 a.m. Free and open to all; no reservation needed.

Details at SantaBarbaraAudubon.org/activities

September 5: Goleta Beach Park/Atascadero Estuary

September 26: Elings Park

October 10: Rocky Nook Park

October 24: Toro Canyon

November 7: Ellwood Mesa

November 28: Ennisbrook Trail

December 5: Santa Barbara Harbor

SATURDAY FIELD TRIPS

Free and open to all; no reservation needed.

Coal Oil Point Reserve Shorebirds

Saturday, September 20, 8:00 a.m.

Leader: Rob Lindsay

Coordinator/Contact: Dane St. George, danestgeorge@gmail.com.

Details: The meeting and starting point will be the beach access stairs at the south end of Camino Majorca in Isla Vista. We will start at the end of Camino Majorca and walk west along the beach to just west of the mouth of Devereux Slough. We will be focusing on migrant shorebirds and how to age and identify them, as well as looking for less common species like Ruddy Turnstone and Red Knot.

Santa Barbara Harbor and Andrée Clark Bird Refuge

Saturday, October 18, 8:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Leader: Rob Lindsay

Coordinator/Contact: Dane St. George, danestgeorge@gmail.com

Details: We will start at the base of the breakwater at the Santa Barbara Harbor to bird that area. From there, we will drive to the Andrée Clark Bird Refuge to explore this freshwater ecosystem. Many migrant and resident seabirds and waterbirds are expected.

MEMBER FIELD TRIPS

WARBLERS

Saturday, September 13, 8:00 a.m. TENTATIVE

Leader: Nick Lethaby

Reservation required (no cost): SBAS members only. Limit of 12.

Coordinator/Contact: Email Dane St. George, danestgeorge@gmail.com, and include the name, email, and phone number of each person requesting a spot.

Details: Directions will be provided upon completion of registration. Emphasis will be on how to separate species like Yellow and Wilson's Warblers when one can only see their undersides. At this time of year, there is a moderate chance of seeing rarer species.



Roadrunner at Kern NWR (photo by Lynn Scarlett)

REMINDER

Please watch our website and e-newsletters for updates.

MEMBER FIELD TRIPS (continued)

WARBLERS

Saturday, October 4, 8:00 a.m. TENTATIVE

Leader: Nick Lethaby

Reservation required (no cost): SBAS members only. Limit of 12.

Coordinator/Contact: Email Dane St. George, danestgeorge@gmail.com, and include the name, email, and phone number of each person requesting a spot.

Details: Directions will be provided upon completion of registration. Emphasis will be on how to separate species like Yellow and Wilson's Warblers when one can only see their undersides. At this time of year, there is a moderate chance of seeing rarer species.

SANTA YNEZ RIVER MOUTH

Friday, November 21, 11:00 a.m. at Ocean Park

Leader: Nick Lethaby

Reservation required (no cost): SBAS members only. No limit on number of participants.

Coordinator/Contact: Email Dane St. George, danestgeorge@gmail.com, and include the name, email, and phone number of each person requesting a spot.

Details: We will meet in the parking lot at Ocean Park. Although the variety and number of birds vary considerably with conditions in the estuary, the Santa Ynez River mouth is usually a good location for waterfowl and gulls. At this time of year, Iceland and Herring Gulls are often present if there is a large gull flock, and there are sometimes rarer ducks such as Common Goldeneye, Long-tailed Duck, and Eurasian Wigeon. Western, Clark's, and Eared Grebes can also be expected, as can Northern Harriers.

Note: it is helpful to have a telescope at this location. The leader will have a telescope that will be shared with the group, but if you have your own, please bring it.

CRUZ PHILLIPS RANCH, SANTA YNEZ

Saturday, November 22, 8:45 a.m. - Noon

Leader: Rob Lindsay

Reservation required (no cost): SBAS members only. Limit of 25.

Coordinator/Contact: Email Dane St. George, danestgeorge@gmail.com, and include the name, email, and phone number of each person requesting a spot.

Details: We will meet at the corner of Happy Canyon Road and Alisos Road at 8:45 a.m. (directions on the SBAS website) and quickly scan the surrounding fields for winter specialties (Mountain Bluebird, Longspurs, and more.) After that, we will caravan to the ranch and meet our host and ranch owner, Cruz Phillips.

POINT MUGU NAVAL AIR STATION

Friday, December 12, 7:45 a.m. - Noon

This area is so rich in wildlife that the half-day trip typically counts 80 species, including waders, rails, songbirds, waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, and more. Marsh, coastal wetlands, riparian areas, and grasslands provide a stopover for migrating birds and habitat for seven endangered species of birds.

Leaders: Jeff Hanson, Peggy Kearns, and base biologist Martin Ruane.

Reservation required (no cost): SBAS or GCAS members only. Limit of 14.

Priority for first-time visitors. This field trip is on an active Navy base. **NO CAMERAS allowed on base. Participants must be U.S. citizens and complete the Navy's required Access Pass by November 12.** Find instructions at SantaBarbaraAudubon.org/activities.

Coordinator/Contact: Jeff Hanson, jlh749@cox.net or 805-964-8854.

HOLLISTER RANCH

Saturday, December 13, 8:45 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Leaders: Rob Lindsay, Guy Tingos

Reservation required (no cost): SBAS members only. Limit of 17.

Coordinator/Contact: Email Dane St. George, danestgeorge@gmail.com, and include the name, email, and phone number of each person requesting a spot.

Details: Directions will be provided upon completion of registration.

GET MORE INVOLVED WITH AUDUBON

Our active chapter depends on leadership by members who step up to work at the Board level. Many of you have done that over the years. We thank you and salute you. Right now, we have Board openings for Development Chair and Vice-President. Additionally, each of our Board chairs could always use help, so you could be part of a committee to help with various activities and events. For example, if you have graphic design experience, you could help with our campaign letters and flyers. You could be part of the excitement at one of our educational outreach events. Know your way around a website? **Let's plug you in!**

If you're interested and/or have skills in other areas that you wish to share with us, please contact Janice Levasheff at janice@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org or Katherine Emery at katherine@SantaBarbaraAudubon.org. Any assistance, no matter the size of the task, will help Santa Barbara Audubon grow even stronger. YOU can make a difference for our local birds.



GIVE BIRDS A CHANCE

Trim trees in months ending with "BER"

January – August is when most birds breed and baby birds are vulnerable. Schedule your tree trimming during the non-nesting months of **September, October, November, and December.**



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AUDUBON SOCIETY**
SantaBarbaraAudubon.org



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Graphic by Melanie Bélanger



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Great Egret (photo by Jeffrey Sipress).