



# Phainopepla

Published by the  
San Fernando Valley Audubon Society  
*A Chapter of the National Audubon Society*

Vol. 64 No. 1

February / March 2013

## Monthly Program

### General Membership Meeting

Thursday, February 28, 2013

7:00 p.m. Social time; 7:30 p.m. Meeting

**TOPIC: The California Condor Recovery Program of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service**

**Presenter: Josh Felch**

Josh has worked as a Biological Science Technician for the USFWS California Condor Recovery Program at Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge Complex for the past 15 months. He will cover a history of the program, its current operations, with an emphasis on the southern California Condor population and the future of the California Condor.

Josh Felch holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Wildlife Science from Virginia Tech and is finishing up a Master of Science degree in Forestry at the University of Kentucky. His thesis is focused on the detectability and occupancy of Common Ravens in the southern Appalachians. Josh has worked on many avian projects over the years, including a life history of passerines in northern Arizona, clutch size research of inland and coastal Swamp Sparrows in Maryland and Delaware, and raptor migration banding projects in New Jersey, and Virginia. He has done extensive monitoring of and management of Bald Eagles, Black Vulture, and marsh birds with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. All of these experiences have led him to his current position and have magnified his passion for birds and their conservation.

Condor photo by Angela Woodside



## General Membership Meeting

Thursday, March 28, 2013

**Speaker: Don DesJardin**

**Presents: "More Birds & Other Natural Things Volume 5"**

Don DesJardin has been part of the birding scene in Ventura County since 1989. During that time, he has spent countless hours capturing birds on both film and video. Although he has traveled to many exotic places around the world to see new birds and places, he always returns to what he calls his "local patch".

"More Birds & Other Natural Things Volume 5" is the latest in a series of one hour "More Birds" videos which feature birds of Southern California, along with a sprinkling of other critters that are part of our natural world. The first 45 minutes are just birds which are annotated with their common species names at the end of each clip, so you can test your ID skills. The last 15 minutes is a short video "Dawn to Dusk at the Salton Sea" filmed



in the winter when thousands of Ross's and Snow Geese, along with hundreds of Sandhill Cranes leave their night roost at dawn and head out for their feeding areas, and then return at dusk. This video is

rated "GB" (Good Birds), and is suited for Audubon audiences that can't get enough of them.

You can visit Don's website at <http://birdsdesjardin.com> to see video samples and the quality that were included in some of the previous "More Birds" series. *Sandpiper photo by Don DesJardin*

**SFVAS General Membership Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month (except July, August, and November). ALL ARE WELCOME to join us at 7:00 p.m. for refreshments and view our sales table; program begins at 7:30 p.m. We meet at the Encino Community Center, 4935 Balboa Blvd. Encino. See Calendar of Events, pages 6-7, for directions.**

## **Sepulveda Basin Destruction** by Kris Ohlenkamp

By now, I assume that everyone has heard about what the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers did in the Sepulveda Basin in December 2012. Here is a brief synopsis of what has occurred to date. In August the Corps published a proposed Vegetation Management Project and FONSI (Finding Of No Significant Impact). They posted these on their website but neglected to notify any of the public constituents who had requested to be notified of such actions and whom have worked closely with them in the past.

The published Project was sloppily prepared with numerous misspellings, contradictions, omissions, errors and misrepresentations of the facts (too numerous to detail here). We found out about the Project after the comment period, voiced our concerns, and offered our expertise in monitoring the implementation of the Project. Our offers were dismissed and we were assured that nothing significant would take place in the near future. The next week the Corps totally razed 43 of the 48 acres in what was formerly a designated Wildlife Reserve.



We did not discover their actions until the Christmas Bird Count party entered the area on December 22, 2012. We were all devastated. The next day we began a public relations campaign to bring attention to this travesty. We wrote a letter to Congressman Brad Sherman and copied it to numerous people in the Corps. As of this date (12-29-12) we have received coverage from two television stations, at least five radio channels, and more than ten newspapers.

We got the attention of the Corps and, to their credit, they agreed to stop all activities on the Project until they can meet with us. This meeting has probably already taken place by the time you read this article. Brad Sherman also expressed interest in meeting with us ASAP.

We want to thank all of our members, and others, who have written, contributed, and otherwise assisted with our efforts to stop this outrageous violation and to implement changes

that will preclude this from ever happening again—anywhere that the Corps has a mandate to be a good steward of the environment.

Please check out our website [sfvaudubon.org](http://sfvaudubon.org) and the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Steering Committee's website [sepulvedabasinwildlife.org](http://sepulvedabasinwildlife.org) for more information and updates. *Photo by Mathew Tekulsky*



## **Birdathon 2013** by Diana Keeney

Plans are underway for the annual Birdathon which will take place during April and May of 2013. The Birdathon is our main fundraising event of the year and involves many activities, all aimed at sighting as many species of birds as possible and collecting donations from generous sponsors. The funds generated by the Birdathon enable SFVAS to host 2,000 school children in the Sepulveda Basin Environmental Education Program, (SBEEP) contribute to habitat conservation efforts, and continue the mission to increase public awareness and broaden appreciation of wildlife and the natural environment.

Birdathon activities include many of the regularly scheduled monthly bird-walks as well as several once-a-year marathon, or "Big Day," events. The Birdathon leaders compete with each other and with themselves, trying to improve on last year's tallies! But everyone's a winner when the donations are received and SFVAS has funding to continue its important functions! Two Birdathon events begun in recent years will continue in 2013: The Children's Birdathon and The Big Sit. The Children's Birdathon is for junior birders who will participate with their families on a special day, while the Big Sit is for anyone who likes to sit still and let the birds come to them!

Watch for details in the April/May *Phainopepla* and plan to participate in one or more events! In lieu of a separate mailing, all information, sponsor forms, and donation envelopes will be included in the newsletter and at our website [www.sfvaudubon.org](http://www.sfvaudubon.org).



## **Thank you Clean-up Volunteers!**

*By Carolyn Oppenheimer*

Many thanks to the students from local colleges who braved the chance of getting caught in the rain on Saturday, December 1, to help San Fernando Valley Audubon clean and beautify the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area. Fifty-six students volunteered their time to help plant 40 pots of native plants, including California Wild Rose, California Wild Grape, and Hummingbird Sage. They also sowed packages of wildflower seeds. We hope that the California Poppies, Showy Penstemon and various other types of wildflowers will grow and bloom. After the planting was done the students finished up the morning by searching out and collecting any trash that was spoiling the natural beauty of the Wildlife Area. Special thanks should go to the pledges from Omega Phi fraternity from California State University, Northridge for sending a large contingent of volunteers and also to the many students who volunteered from Enrique Aniceto's biology class at Los Angeles Trade Tech College. Also thanks to the volunteers from San Fernando Valley Audubon who helped with the organization of the event. They are Kris and Ann Ohlenkamp, Muriel Kotin, Heather Medvitz, Diana Keeney, Alan Pollack, Rose Leibowitz, and Carolyn Oppenheimer. —*Photo by Rose Leibowitz*

## 2012 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT



The results are in. We counted 140 species plus two additional races, comprising a total of 14,157 individual birds. Compared to last year's count of 136 species and 16,346 birds, we saw fewer birds but more species, including a number of uncommon or rare birds. This year we were treated to good weather sandwiched between rain the previous day and drizzle later in the evening of count day—too late to affect the count.

This year, after a one year hiatus we were granted access by the Department of Water & Power to count the Chatsworth Nature Preserve. This accounted for six species not seen anywhere else in the circle, hence the reason for the increased species count. We also had 38 counters, in nine groups plus four who reported sightings at their home feeders.

Most disappointing was the discovery of the destruction of the southern section of the Sepulveda Wildlife Basin by the Army Corp of Engineers. Under the guise of converting the area to native grasslands to improve security in the area they bulldozed down trees, both native and exotic, signs and pathways, all without input from the public. No doubt, the area, had it not been destroyed would have yielded more species to the count. News of this destruction was broadcast on television and radio and reported in the *Encino Patch*, *Valley News*, and the *L.A. Times*.

Uncommon bird sightings included a White-throated Sparrow at Wanda Dameron's feeders, a Pacific Wren and Varied Thrush in Wilson Canyon, a Long-eared Owl and Vesper Sparrow at the Chatsworth Nature Preserve, a Slate-colored Junco at Art Langton's house and the resident but seldom seen Northern Cardinal at the Sepulveda Basin. Unexpected misses included Wood Duck, Cinnamon Teal, and Northern Pintail.

This year's winner for the highest count was the Audubon's subspecies of the Yellow-rumped Warbler of which 992 were recorded. Four of its uncommon cousin, the Myrtle subspecies was also seen. These used to be separate species and judging from taxonomic trends, I expect will be again sometime in the near future.

The presence of water always increases bird diversity, so as expected, Hansen Dam and the Sepulveda Basin produced the highest bird count thanks to the added

sightings of Kimball Garrett who also birded the area on count day. Hansen Dam accounted for 92 species or 97 when adding in the birds seen at the Hansen Dam golf course. It also produced the only sightings of Greater White-fronted Goose, Cackling Goose, Canvasback, Redhead, Lesser Scaup, Clark's Grebe and Northern Rough-winged and Violet-green Swallows.

Sepulveda Basin, including Lake Balboa, and the Los Angeles River produced 79 species including the only sightings of Ross's Goose, Mute Swan, Eared Grebe, Western and Least Sandpipers, Black-throated Gray and Wilson's Warblers and the Northern Cardinal.

Chatsworth Nature Preserve produced 57 birds. Art Langton reports that the DWP is no longer replenishing water in the ecology pond. With the lack of water, about half of the bare bottom of the former pond was visible and many of the expected species were not present with a total lack of fish-eating birds, no herons or egrets, no diving ducks, no Pied-billed Grebes. None-the-less the area produced some good birds, including the only sightings of White-tailed Kite, Sora, Wilson's Snipe, Long-eared Owl, Marsh Wren and Vesper Sparrow.



*Canyon Wren taken by Tracy Drake at O'Melveny Park*

Doug Martin birded Veteran's and El Cariso parks in the northeast section of the circle as well as Wilson's Canyon, where he hit the jackpot, finding both Varied Thrush and the bird of the day, a Pacific Wren, a bird seldom seen in southern California. Also, the area produced the only sightings of Barn Owl and Red-crowned and Lilac-crowned Parrots.

Ron Melin and his son Steve Melin did their annual pre-dawn owl watch in the trail above O'Melveny park and came up with two Western-screech Owls and seven Great-horned Owls. *(continued next page)*



(Continued from previous page) They also had the only sighting of Canyon Wren at the park.

As is shown each year, it's important to cover as much of the circle as possible. Thirty-four species, an amazing 25 percent of all species recorded were observed at only one location. Robert Packard had the only sighting of Snow Goose and Tri-colored Blackbird plus 389 Canada Geese, the most in the circle at Pierce College. Scott Logan had the only Downy Woodpecker at Serania Park.

And one never knows where an uncommon bird will show up. Sightings at home feeders produced two this year, Wanda Dameron's White-throated Sparrow and Art Langton's Slate-colored Junco.



Photo: Varied Thrush, by Doug Martin at Wilson Canyon

Greater Roadrunner, always an exciting sighting was seen at two locations this year. Jim Hardesty found one at Brown's Creek Park and Art Langton, Sharon Singhai, and Mark Osokow saw two at the Chatsworth Nature Preserve.

Comparing the results of our count circle from 2000 through this year we recorded 140 species, the most seen. The previous high was 137. However the number of individuals was low, only two years since 2000 had lower counts.

This marks the 113<sup>th</sup> Audubon Christmas Bird Count. The San Fernando Valley has counted in 57 of those years. This year we had the highest ever counts of Eurasian Collard Dove, an expanding species, Allen's Hummingbird, Red-crowned Parrot, Steller's Jay, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Phainopepla.

Unique sightings include first ever sightings of Lilac-crowned Parrot, and Pacific Wren and only the second sighting of Northern Cardinal. The Varied Thrush has not been recorded since 2000. Misses, recorded in most previous counts were only the Wood Duck, Cinnamon Teal, and Northern Pintail. There were several common species with the highest count since 2000. These included Northern Shoveler, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Mountain Chickadee, Bushtit, Wrentit, Hermit Thrush, Phainopepla, Spotted Towhee, Golden-crowned Sparrow and American Goldfinch. And, there were common species with the lowest count since 2000. These included American Coot, Ring-billed Gull, California Gull, and Great-tailed Grackle. All species that attract little interest from birders.

Of interest, there are nine species that have been recorded on all 57 counts, including Cooper's Hawk, Pied-billed Grebe, Killdeer, Anna's Hummingbird, Black Phoebe, Say's Phoebe, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Yellow-rumped Warbler and Western Meadowlark.

Thanks to the group leaders and counters who gave several hours of their holiday season to participate in this fun event. 🐦

---

### Thanks to all 2012 count participants

Jim Abernathy  
Dick Barth  
Pat Bates  
Jean Brandt  
Wanda Dameron  
Janet Donnan  
Tracey Drake  
Debbie Drews  
Jim Estes  
Pam Folgert  
Kimball Garrett

Steve Hartman  
Barbara Heidemann  
Barbara Johnson  
Allan Kotin  
Art Langton  
Rose Leibowitz  
John Lobel  
Scott Logan  
Becky MacDonald  
Dan MacDonald  
Ricky Mac Donald

Doug Martin  
Judy Matsuoka  
Ron Melin  
Steve Melin  
Jim Moore  
Laura Moser  
Dick Norton  
Ann Ohlenkamp  
Kris Ohlenkamp  
Carolyn Oppenheimer  
Mark Osokow

Robert Packard  
Brenda Pfaff  
Judy Rothman  
Sharon Shingai  
Matt Tekulsky  
Donna Timlin  
Don White 🐦

**2012 Christmas Bird Count Summary**

1	Greater White-fronted Goose	23	California Gull	95	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
2	Snow Goose	42	Gull Sp.	69	Wrentit
1	Ross' Goose	577	Rock Pigeon	67	Western Bluebird
1	Cackling Goose	41	Band-tailed Pigeon	40	Hermit Thrush
786	Canada Goose	20	Eurasian Collared-Dove	135	American Robin
2	Mute Swan	516	Mourning Dove	1	Varied Thrush
70	Gadwall	1	Barn Owl	63	Northern Mockingbird
662	American Wigeon	2	Western Screech-Owl	36	California Thrasher
208	Mallard	17	Great Horned Owl	774	European Starling
205	Northern Shoveler	1	Long-eared Owl	82	American Pipit
28	Green-winged Teal	3	Greater Roadrunner	145	Cedar Waxwing
8	Canvasback	134	White Throated Swift	8	Phainopepla
3	Redhead	217	Anna's Hummingbird	2	Orange-crowned Warbler
64	Ring-necked Duck	81	Allen's Hummingbird	24	Common Yellowthroat
				992	Audubon's Yellow-rumped Warbler
12	Lesser Scaup	6	Belted Kingfisher		
21	Bufflehead	87	Acorn Woodpecker	4	Myrtle Yellow-rumped Warbler
52	Hooded Merganser	9	Red-breasted Sapsucker	1	Black-throated Gray Warbler
98	Ruddy Duck	32	Nuttall's Woodpecker	3	Townsend's Warbler
63	California Quail	1	Downey Woodpecker	1	Wilson's Warbler
88	Pied-billed Grebe	67	Northern Flicker (red-shafted)	66	Spotted Towhee
6	Eared Grebe	28	American Kestrel	11	Rufous-crowned Sparrow
19	Western Grebe	7	Merlin	141	California Towhee
1	Clark's Grebe	3	Peregrine Falcon	29	Chipping Sparrow
179	Double-crested Cormorant	10	Yellow-chevron Parakeet	5	Vesper Sparrow
72	American White Pelican	25	Red-crowned Parrot	203	Lark Sparrow
22	Great Blue Heron	1	Lilac-crowned Parrot	122	Savannah Sparrow
28	Great Egret	144	Black Phoebe	5	Fox Sparrow
37	Snowy Egret	31	Say's Phoebe	73	Song Sparrow
3	Green Heron	37	Cassin's Kingbird	9	Lincoln's Sparrow
32	Black-crowned Night-Heron	2	Hutton's Vireo	1	White-throated Sparrow
16	Turkey Vulture	8	Steller's Jay	561	White-crowned Sparrow
2	Osprey	178	Western Scrub-Jay	67	Golden-crowned Sparrow
5	White-tailed Kite	337	American Crow	239	Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon)
5	Northern Harrier	143	Common Raven	1	Dark-eyed Junco (slate colored)
3	Sharp-shinned Hawk	3	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	1	Northern Cardinal
19	Cooper's Hawk	6	Tree Swallow	215	Red-winged Blackbird
8	Red-shouldered Hawk	2	Violet-green Swallow	4	Tricolored Blackbird
76	Red-tailed Hawk	11	Mountain Chickadee	394	Western Meadowlark
1	Sora	54	Oak Titmouse	430	Brewer's Blackbird
694	American Coot	687	Bushtit	30	Great-tailed Grackle
26	Killdeer	32	White-breasted Nuthatch	16	Brown-headed Cowbird
2	Spotted Sandpiper	10	Rock Wren	740	House Finch
4	Greater Yellowlegs	2	Canyon Wren	6	Pine Siskin
2	Western Sandpiper	13	House Wren	301	Lesser Goldfinch
2	Least Sandpiper	1	Pacific Wren	420	American Goldfinch
2	Wilson's Snipe	1	Marsh Wren	135	House Sparrow
52	Ring-billed Gull	49	Bewick's Wren		
2	Western Gull	10	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher		
				<b>140</b>	<b>Total Species</b>
				<b>14157</b>	<b>Individual Birds</b>

## Calendar of Events

### February

**Saturday, February 2. Castaic Lake Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.**

Directions: Take closest freeway to I-5 North and exit at Parker Road. Turn right and proceed to stop sign (Castaic Road), proceed to next stop sign (Lake Hughes Road), proceed to next stop sign (Castaic Lake Drive) and turn right. Entrance to the park is on the right. Parking is in Lot 4, so make a right turn after the kiosk, then an immediate left turn into the lot, parking to the left. Leader: Roger McClure. For information, contact the staff at (661) 257-4050.

**Sunday, February 3. Sepulveda Basin Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m.** Directions: Exit the San Diego Freeway (I-405) on Burbank Blvd. Go west about one-half mile to Woodley Avenue and turn right (north). Travel about one-half mile to the second possible right turn (at sign for the Water Reclamation Plant and Japanese Garden). Turn right and go east about one-half mile to Wildlife Area parking at the end of the road. Leader: Kris Ohlenkamp. Contact him at [kris.ohlenkamp@sfvaudubon.org](mailto:kris.ohlenkamp@sfvaudubon.org) or (747) 444-9683.

**Saturday, February 9. Beginners and Family Bird Walk. 9:00–11:00 a.m.** Come on out for a fun bird walk at Sepulveda Basin! These popular walks, designed for beginning birders and school-age children, are resuming for the current cool season. Directions: Exit the San Diego Freeway (I-405) on Burbank Blvd. Go west about one-half mile to Woodley Avenue and turn right (north). Travel about one-half mile to the second possible right turn (at sign for the Water Reclamation Plant and Japanese Garden). Turn right and go east about one-half mile to Wildlife Area parking at the end of the road. Meet across the road from the parking lot at the low buildings. Leader(s): Muriel Kotin, (310) 457-5796 or Diana Keeney, (818) 998-3216. Reservations are not needed except for large groups. **Rain cancels.** Please visit our website [www.sfvaudubon.org](http://www.sfvaudubon.org).

**Saturday, February 9. Placerita Canyon Nature Center Docents' Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m.** Directions: Take the 405 or 5 Freeway north to the 14 Freeway. Exit the 14 at Placerita Canyon. Turn right at the end of the off ramp and continue about 1.5 miles to the park entrance. Turn right and park at the Nature Center. Various leaders. For more information, call the Nature Center at (661) 259-7721.

**Friday, February 15—Monday, February 18. Great Backyard Bird Count.** [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org). See page 8.

**Saturday, February 16, Monthly Field Trip: Ventura County Game Preserve, Oxnard.** An excellent spot at which to observe a wide variety of birds including waterfowl, wetland birds and raptors. **IMPORTANT**---We will be birding the preserve entirely on foot, as vehicles are not allowed out on the habitat roads. Covering the circuit will probably require 4+ hours. Also, no parking is allowed inside the preserve compound....our cars must be parked on the left (north) side of the paved road outside the compound. Directions: From the 101 Freeway take the Las Posas Road exit south (left), then Hueneme Road west (right) to Casper Road. Turn south (left) on Casper Road and continue to where the road eventually turns left through a large entrance gate and leads to the preserve compound. We will meet at the compound at 8:00 a.m. Bring lunch and drinking water. Allow one hour and fifteen minutes driving time from the Valley. Leader is Richard Barth, (310) 276-0342.

**Saturday, February 16. Santa Monica Mts. Conservancy Bird Walk at Towsley Canyon. 8:00–10:00 a.m.** Directions: Go north on I-5 through Santa Clarita, exit Calgrove and turn west (left) under the freeway and then left again on the Old Road. Watch for the sign, "Ed Davis Park at Towsley Canyon." Turn right and park in the back lot. Meet at the kiosk. Leader: Roger McClure. For further information, call (661) 252-6187.

**Sunday, February 17. Malibu Creek State Park Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m.** Meet at the second (lower) day-use parking lot. Entrance to the park is on the west side of Las Virgenes Road, just south of Mulholland Hwy. Entrance fee is \$12 per car. Leader(s): Muriel Kotin, (310) 457-5796 and/or Art Langton.

**Tuesday, February 19. O'Melveny Weekday Walk at O'Melveny Park, Granada Hills. 9:00 a.m.** Directions: Take the 118/Ronald Reagan Freeway and exit at Balboa Blvd. Turn north, driving two miles to Sesnon, turn left going west 0.6 miles, turn right at park entrance. Meet in the parking lot. **RAIN CANCELS.** Contact Carolyn Oppenheimer at (818) 885-7493 (before 7 p.m.), or [carolyn.oppenheimer@sfvaudubon.org](mailto:carolyn.oppenheimer@sfvaudubon.org).

**Thursday, February 28. SFVAS General Membership Meeting. 7:00 p.m.** Encino Community Center, 4935 Balboa Blvd., Encino. Located between Moorpark and

Ventura Blvd., on the west side of Balboa, just south of the Presbyterian Church. **TOPIC: California Condor Recovery Program of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service PRESENTER: Josh Felch.** For more information see Monthly Program, page one.

## March

**Saturday, March 2. Castaic Lake Bird Walk. 8:00–12:00 a.m.** See February 2 for details.

**Sunday, March 3. Sepulveda Basin Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m.** See February 3 for details.

**Tuesday, March 5. Antelope Valley**

**Saturday, March 9. LAST Beginners and Family Bird Walk of the Season! 9:00–11:00 a.m.** See February 9 for details.

**Saturday, March 9. Placerita Canyon Nature Center Docents' Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m.** See February 9 for details.

**Saturday, Sunday, March 16–17. Monthly Field Trip: Morro Bay Weekend!** The first day, Saturday, March 16, we will meet in the parking lot on the near (inland) side of Morro Rock at 8:00 a.m. The second day, Sunday, March 17, we will meet at the Montana de Oro State Park Headquarters/Visitor Center at 8:00 a.m. Our species tally is usually very high on this trip. Pigeon Guillemot and Chestnut-backed Chickadee are expected. Directions from the San Fernando Valley: Take the 101 Freeway to San Luis Obispo and then follow Route 1 north to the town of Morro Bay. Allow at least four hours

driving time from the Valley. Bring lunch and drinks. Be prepared for possible inclement weather, and remember that the central coast can be quite chilly in the mornings. Make camping or motel reservations as soon as possible. Leader is Richard Barth, (310) 276-0342.

**Saturday, March 16. Santa Monica Mts. Conservancy Bird Walk at Towsley Canyon. 8:00–10:00 a.m.** See February 16 for details.

**Sunday, March 17. Malibu Creek State Park Bird Walk. 8:00 a.m.** See February 17 for more details.

**Tuesday, March 19. O'Melveny Weekday Walk at O'Melveny Park, Granada Hills. 9:00 a.m.** See February 19 for details.

**Monday, March 25. SFVAS Board Meeting. 7:00 p.m.** Balboa Mission Town Hall, 16916 San Fernando Mission Blvd., at Balboa (southeast corner) in Granada Hills.

**Thursday, March 28. SFVAS General Membership Meeting. 7:00 p.m.** Encino Community Center, 4935 Balboa Blvd., Encino. Located between Moorpark and Ventura Blvd., on the west side of Balboa, just south of the Presbyterian Church. **TOPIC: "More Birds & Other Natural Things Volume 5". PRESENTER: Don DesJardin.** For more information see Monthly Program, page one.

**Future Field Trips (details later):**

**April 27. Morongo Valley**

**May 11. Walker Ranch and Whitney Canyon** 🐦

---

## Phainopepla Photo of the Month by Richard Medvitz



Our photo this month is a Hermit Thrush from member Richard Medvitz. On a Saturday morning SFVAS walk last month led by Greg Homel at San Vicente Mountain Park, Richard used a Canon 5D Mark II camera with 100-400 zoom lens, 1/400/ f 5/6, 375 focal length. Thanks, Richard!

Please submit your photos to [Lynn.Maddox@sfaudubon.org](mailto:Lynn.Maddox@sfaudubon.org). Only one picture per photographer per month please! Ideally, the picture will be taken within our area and the information will include the location and the date it was taken, what camera and lens was used, a short account of how the picture was taken, and profile of the photographer. Good shooting! Thanks, Lynn. 🐦



## eBird Your Way to the Phainopepla Club



Don't forget to record your Los Angeles County bird sightings from July 2012 to June 2013 on **eBird** ([www.eBird.org](http://www.eBird.org)) and progress to the **Phainopepla Club**!

The first 50 species you record on eBird puts you at Swallow level. Reaching 100 species is Finch level, 150 is Vireo level, 200 is Avocet, and 250 is Phainopepla Club! The upcoming spring migration and the Birdathon events in April and May are sure to put you over the top—or at least into the next higher category! Phainopepla Club awards will be given at the June General Membership meeting. 🐦

---

### Nominations Committee

The board appointed a nominations committee for the elected positions on the July 2013–June 2014 board of directors. They are Pat Bates, Dottie Ecker and Muriel Kotin (Chair). Please contact them if you are interested in serving or have a suggestion. 🐦

---

### Audubon-at-Home by Alan Pollack

Please e-mail Alan Pollack, our Audubon-at-Home Chair, with any questions you have with regard to creating a wildlife-friendly garden that can be used for publication. Alan offers **FREE** consultation/landscape design to help you make your yard wildlife friendly. He also gives a **FREE**, PowerPoint slide show/lecture to community groups, high school, and college classes on attracting wildlife to your garden and sustainable gardening practices. He can be contacted at (818) 340-2347 or at [alan.pollack@sfaudubon.org](mailto:alan.pollack@sfaudubon.org). 🐦

---

### Monthly Field Trip Reports by Richard Barth

A forecast of rain discouraged attendance on our November 17 field trip to Ventura Harbor and the Ventura Water Treatment Ponds. I was the only participant. Frequent showers made things difficult, but a few good birds were found. A Red-throated Loon foraged in the harbor. Shorebird species on hand included Black Oystercatcher, Surfbird, Black Turnstone, Marbled Godwit, Willet, Whimbrel and Sanderling. The expected cormorants, herons and most of the expected gulls were seen. White-faced Ibis was a bit of a surprise at the treatment ponds. Waterfowl were in short supply, with Cinnamon Teal the most interesting. Townsend's, Orange-crowned, Yellow-rumped and Common Yellowthroat were the only warbler species found. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Savannah Sparrow, Say's Phoebe, Caspian Tern, Forster's Tern and of course Brown Pelican should be mentioned. Among the misses this trip: Common Gallinule and Mew Gull. (No field trip in December due to Christmas Count.) 🐦

---

### Great Backyard Bird Count Goes Global in 2013

#### *Bird watchers worldwide can take part for the first time*



After 15 years of success in North America, the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) will open up to the **entire world** for the first time in 2013. Anyone, from anywhere on earth, can participate by visiting [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org) and reporting the kinds and numbers of birds they see during the 16<sup>th</sup> annual count, February 15–18, 2013.



A joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, with partner Bird Studies Canada, the four-day count typically receives sightings from tens of thousands of people reporting more than 600 bird species in the United States and Canada alone. During the 2012 count, participants reported 17.4 million bird observations on 104,000 checklists.

Participating is easy. Simply watch birds for at least 15 minutes at the location of your choice on one or more of the count days. Estimate the number of birds you see for each species you can identify. You'll select your location on a map, answer a few questions, enter your tallies, and then submit your data to share your sightings with others around the world.

The global capacity for the count will be powered by eBird, an online checklist program for all of the world's 10,240 bird species. Participants will be able to view what others are seeing on interactive maps, keep their own records, and have their tallies recorded for perpetuity. The Great Backyard Bird Count is sponsored in part by [Wild Birds Unlimited](http://www.wildbirds.org). 🐦





## A Lucky White Pelican by Muriel Kotin

Day 1, Wednesday, October 24, 2012: An American White Pelican in distress was noticed by San Fernando Valley Audubon member Judy Rothman at the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve's Lake. The pelican appeared to have a plastic bottle attached to one of its feet, probably attached to the bird by fishing line. Illegal fishermen ignore the No Fishing signs at the Wildlife Lake. Many of them improvise their equipment, and wrap fishing line around bottles so the line doesn't cut into their hands. Many of them are heedless and leave their fishing line and hooks and foam worm containers behind.

Judy phoned me for advice on how to get help for the bird. Around sunset she phoned the Los Angeles City West San Fernando Valley Animal Services (818-756-9325). The staffers took a detailed report, indicating help would go to the scene sometime the next day. That evening I posted a message to the LACoBirds Yahoo group, suggesting birders who see the distressed pelican communicate either with the Animal Services Department or with each other through the Yahoo group.

Day 2, Thursday, October 25: Jim Hanlon, a wildlife photographer who had read my posting on LACoBird, reported that Animal Rescue tried to capture the pelican but just barely missed. Jim reported that the Specialized Mobile Animal Rescue Team (SMART) team had a man on a boogie board trying to coax the bird onto land where two other team members were hiding with big nets. He had the bird right up against a bank, but when he reached to get his net from his back, the pelican scooted away. It appeared the bird's hind leg was tied up and he didn't seem to be able to fly, but otherwise the pelican appeared very healthy. "They need to get to it sooner than later so the leg doesn't atrophy. They will try again tomorrow morning at around 9AM. Let's hope tomorrow is a success."

Day 3, Friday, October 26: Jim Hanlon reported:

I have good news that SMART was able to net the tied-up and slightly injured Peli at around noontime. It was a fairly quick and clean capture as our bird went back to his nestling area ..., and actually hopped up on land at the bank. Annette Ramirez paddled out in [a] recently purchased Kayak and blocked him at his perch. The netters then quickly swooped in. They removed the fishing line and I think the leg looks pretty good, however, his/her wing is a little cut....



But my hat goes off to the rescue team for doing such a good job.... Armando ran out to Big 5 and paid \$100 out of his pocket to purchase the kayak this morning.... (T)he best moment for me was just after Annette Ramirez (rescue woman on kayak and the one checking the wing) finished her last check of the wing, she then softly petted the animal's wings twice with love as the final move before transferring the White Peli back to the truck for transport....

After brief stops at the East Valley Animal Shelter and the California Wildlife Center, the pelican was taken to the International Bird Rescue (IBR) center ([www.birdrescue.org](http://www.birdrescue.org)) in San Pedro for treatment and rehabilitation. He spent over a month at the IBR, receiving veterinary care, TLC, and eating over five pounds of fish a day.

Five and a Half Weeks After Discovery, Saturday, December 1: The lucky White Pelican was released around 11:00 AM by the International Bird Rescue into the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Lake at the most northerly viewing area, along with a second white pelican that had been rescued in Long Beach with a broken bill and was also rehabilitated by IBR. The two White Pelicans had become pals during their convalescence at the IBR.

On hand for the happy occasion were IBR's board president Dave Weeshoff and the manager of IBR's San Pedro wildlife center Julie Skoglund; two officers from the City of Los Angeles SMART team; a troop of Boy Scouts who carried the pelicans in their cages from the IBR vehicle; members of San Fernando Valley Audubon, photographers, visitors to the Wildlife Reserve, and some volunteers from the SFVAS College Committee restoration project earlier that morning. Around 55 college students from a variety of local colleges had planted California native plants such as California Rose, California Grape, and Hummingbird Sage, scattered California wildflower seed, and picked up litter. The pelican release was a wonderful finale.

When the gates of the two cages holding the pelicans were opened simultaneously, the two birds wasted little time in jumping out and walking with great dignity to the edge of the lake. They looked at each other briefly, then jumped into the water and swam out of sight. Those who walked to the next viewing area along the lake saw them join a flock of other White Pelicans, indistinguishable from the others. A very fine rain began.



Photos by Jim Hanlon except where noted



Photo by Dave Weeshoff

## 2013 San Diego Bird Festival February 28—March 3



John Fitzpatrick and Bill Thompson will be the main speakers. They will also be co-leading a bird trip and conducting a workshop.

**John Fitzpatrick** is the director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.



**Bill Thompson** is the editor of *Bird Watcher's Digest*. To register go to:

<http://www.sandiegoaudubon.org/index.php/events/bird-festival>

---

## 2013 Audubon Convention / July 12-15

Skamania Lodge, Stevenson, Washington

For more information and to receive email updates visit [www.audubon.org/2013convention](http://www.audubon.org/2013convention)

---

Four hundred seventy-seven members receive notification by e-mail when the *Phainopepla* is online, 108 have selected to get it only online and 201 are following us on Facebook! If you wish to do so, please e-mail us at [sfvaudubonsociety@gmail.com](mailto:sfvaudubonsociety@gmail.com).

---

## A Wildlife Habitat Steward's Lament

The burrowing owl lifts its head,  
Peering at the bulldozed earth,  
Now made homeless and hungry,  
by the Army of man.

The sheltering woods  
Gone in a flash.  
No place to breed.  
No place to hunt.

The hand of man gives.  
The hand of man takes away  
With no thought given  
To our suffering wild friends.

Let us shed our tears,  
And raise our voice.  
And speak for those  
Who cannot be heard.  
-Alan Pollack

---

## Amazing Wildlife Sounds For All Ears

*World's largest natural sound archive goes digital*

Ithaca, N.Y.—"In terms of speed and the breadth of material now accessible to anyone in the world, this is really revolutionary," says audio curator Greg Budney, describing a major milestone just achieved by the Macaulay Library archive at the [Cornell Lab of Ornithology](http://www.CornellLabofOrnithology.org). All archived analog recordings in the collection, going back to 1929, have now been digitized and can be heard at [www.MacaulayLibrary.org](http://www.MacaulayLibrary.org). "This is one of the greatest research and conservation resources at the Cornell Lab," said Budney, "and through its digitization we've swung the doors open on it in a way that wasn't possible 10 or 20 years ago."

It took archivists a dozen years to complete the monumental task. The collection contains nearly 150,000 digital audio recordings equaling more than ten terabytes of data with a total run time of 7,513 hours. About 9,000 species are represented. There's an emphasis on birds but the collection also includes sounds of whales, elephants, frogs, primates, and more.

"Our audio collection is the largest and the oldest in the world," explained Macaulay Library director Mike Webster. "Now, it's also the most accessible. We're working to improve search functions and create tools people can use to collect recordings and upload them directly to the archive. Our goal is to make the Macaulay Library as useful as possible for the broadest audience possible." 🐦

---

**Want to get involved?** Contact [Dave.Weeshoff@sfvaudubon.org](mailto:Dave.Weeshoff@sfvaudubon.org)

- **Alan Pollack, Audubon-at-Home chair**, would like interested parties who are interested in learning about designing gardens that are wildlife friendly to contact him. He can be reached at (818) 340-2347 or at [alan.pollack@sfvaudubon.org](mailto:alan.pollack@sfvaudubon.org).



## SAN FERNANDO VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

### EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

President:	Dave Weeshoff	(818) 618-1652
1st Vice President:	OPEN	
2nd Vice President:	Rose Leibowitz	(818) 990-5405
Treasurer:	Ann Ohlenkamp	(747) 444-9683
Recording Sec'y:	Heather Medvitz	(818) 222-4430
Corresponding Sec'y:	Diana Keeney	(818) 998-3216

### DIRECTORS

Aurelio Albaisa	(818) 716-8096
Lynn Maddox	(818) 845-4688
Mark Osokow	unpublished
Mathew Tekulsky	(310) 962-5653
Pat Bates	(818) 425-0962
Scott Logan	(818) 995-0022

### COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Antelope Valley Co-Chairs:	Linda Edwards & Vern Benhart	(661) 948-3524
Audubon-at-Home:	Alan Pollack	(818) 340-2347
Bird Observatory:	Mark Osokow	unpublished
Birdathon:	Diana Keeney	(818) 998-3216
Christmas Bird Count:	Jim Moore	(661) 298-1130
College Conservation:	Carolyn Oppenheimer	(818) 885-7493
Communications:	OPEN	
Community Outreach:	Sharon Ford	(818) 780-5816
Conservation:	Kris Ohlenkamp	(747) 444-9683
Descanso Bird Station:	Dottie Ecker	(818) 790-0659
Education Classroom:	Dave Weeshoff	(818) 618-1652
Education-Sepulveda Basin:	Carolyn Oppenheimer	(818) 885-7493
Field Trips:	Richard Barth	(310) 276-0342
Finance:	Jim Moore	(661) 298-1130
Hospitality:	Diana Keeney	(818) 998-3216
Malibu Creek Bird Walk:	Muriel Kotin	(310) 457-5796
	Art Langton	(818) 887-9073
Membership:	Rose Leibowitz	(818) 990-5405
O'Melveny Bird Walk:	Carolyn Oppenheimer	(818) 885-7493
Phainopepla Editor:	Rebecca LeVine	(818) 776-0881
Programs:	Heather Medvitz	(818) 222-4430
Publicity:	OPEN	
Sales & Service:	Ann Ohlenkamp	(747) 444-9683
Sepulveda Bird Walks:	Kris Ohlenkamp	(747) 444-9683
Sep. Basin Steering Comm.	Muriel Kotin	(310) 457-5796
Web Coordinator:	Barbara Heidemann	Unpublished
Youth Activities:	Muriel Kotin	(310) 457-5796

For Chapter leaders' e-mail addresses, see our Website:

**www.SFVAudubon.org**



PHAINOPEPLA is copyrighted ©2013 by the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society. All rights reserved. All photographs used in the PHAINOPEPLA are used by permission and are copyrighted material of the credited photographers.

Become a member of the  
SAN FERNANDO VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

Mail the form below, and include a check made payable to SFV Audubon Society:

SFV Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 7769  
Van Nuys, CA 91409  
Attn: Membership

### SFVAS MEMBERSHIP

Regular 1-yr Chapter Membership...\$20 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Student 1-yr Chapter Membership...\$10 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Optional First-Class Postage.....\$5 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Tax Deductable Contribution to SFVAS \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

New Member \_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

How did you learn about SFVAS?

☐ **Save a tree! I DO NOT** wish to receive a hardcopy of the *Phainopepla*; I'll get my news online.

The *PHAINOPEPLA*, published six times a year, is the newsletter of the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society, P.O. Box 7769, Van Nuys, CA 91409. San Fernando Valley Audubon Society is a chapter of the National Audubon Society, a non-profit conservation/education organization, and is dedicated to "the conservation of wildlife and natural resources."

Articles, letters, drawings, and photographs concerning conservation, the science and ecology, birding, chapter activities, and articles of interest to the membership are welcome for publication in the *PHAINOPEPLA*.

Material from other newsletters or newspapers should include the source and date. Copy for the *PHAINOPEPLA* should be in the hands of the editor by the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the month to be included in the following month's newsletter.

An introductory membership to the National Audubon Society is \$20 and should be sent separately to:

National Audubon Society  
Membership Data Center  
P.O. Box 422250  
Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250

Be sure to write "C1ZC120Z" on the form to assure assignment to our chapter. For renewals, use the form in the National Audubon magazine, "Audubon."

If you have any questions about membership, renewals, change of address or any other membership concerns, please contact Rose Leibowitz at (818) 990-5405 or e-mail her at [rose.leibowitz@sfvaudubon.org](mailto:rose.leibowitz@sfvaudubon.org).



## Phainopepla

San Fernando Valley Audubon Society  
PO Box 7769  
Van Nuys, CA 91409-7769

Dated Material

Please visit our Website  
to see this issue in full color!  
[www.sfvaudubon.org](http://www.sfvaudubon.org)

PRESORTED  
STANDARD U.S.  
POSTAGE PAID  
CANOGA PARK, CA  
PERMIT NO. 608

### INSIDE THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

Sepulveda Basin Destruction-pg. 2  
Birdathon, Clean-up-pg. 2  
Christmas Bird Count-pgs. 3-5  
Calendar of Events-pgs. 6-7  
Photo of the Month-pg. 7  
Audubon-at-Home-pg. 8  
Monthly Field Trip Report-pg. 8  
Great Backyard Bird Count-pg. 8  
A Lucky White Pelican-pg. 9  
Upcoming Festivals-pg. 10  
A Wildlife Stewarts Lament-pg. 10  
SFVAS Chapter Information-pg. 11

**Membership** SFVAS is pleased to welcome the following new members. We hope you will get involved with our many field trips and activities. Please contact Rose Leibowitz, Membership Chair, with any questions at [rose.leibowitz@sfvaudubon.org](mailto:rose.leibowitz@sfvaudubon.org).

#### Local:

Gordon Haines  
Joan Keller  
**National:**  
Charles Abe  
Marilyn Adams  
Teresa Aguirre  
Carmen Alejandro  
Adrienne Alitowski  
Vincent & Marjorie Anicich  
Sybil Armen  
Banner Air Conditioning Co.  
Sophia Barr  
Sharon Bart  
Judith Benson  
Evelyn Besbris  
Steven Billington  
Suzanne Bornstein  
Clay Boss  
John Bostrom  
Diane Bowers-Parr  
Richard Braun  
Gina Bryant  
Hal Bryman  
Fred M. Buchanan  
Barbara Burns  
Traci Caddy  
Judith Carter  
Peter Manning Chanhalis  
Romo Chernoff

Frederique S. Claire  
Susan N. Clark  
Jill Cohen  
Howard Culler  
Jerry Davidson  
Alexander Debarros  
Alice S. Demirjian  
Shannon Doshier  
Sandra Drogichen  
Doug Eggleton  
Marjorie Engel  
Heather Evans  
Gloria Farruggia  
Deborah Feldman  
Phyllis Fitzgerald  
Ruth Forman  
Spart Galiati PHD  
Maureen Gerwig  
Sedik Ghahremanian  
Aggie Gilbert  
Leah Goldstein  
Galina Golovin  
Suzanne Grayson  
Patricia Greenlee  
Donna Haas  
Heather Hanunian  
Bernice B. Harrington  
Patricia Hartman  
Melanie Haug  
Sheila Helfond

Marcia Henry  
Pat Hickey  
Greg Homel  
Paul Huguen  
Thelma & Jennifer Hunter  
Kent M. Hymel  
Kelly Ingalls  
Joyce S. Johnson  
Marie Jordan  
Kathleen Juracek  
Don Kates  
J. Kellenberger  
Andrew Keresztes  
Lucinda Knapp  
Sandy Konow  
Raymond W. Kosten  
Yolanda Leaird  
Sienna Kai Lessa  
Israel Levy  
Studio C Library  
Bonnie Lipton  
M. Loree  
Maya Lorenzini  
Jeanette Luettjohann  
Robert S. MacDonald  
Kathleen Mahurin  
Bob Malone  
Joanne F. Mandeville  
Rebecca Martin  
Christine Masters

Marc & Marsha Maupin  
Donna Mautz  
Jan McKinney  
Michael McIlvery  
Ruby Messner  
Jacob Miller  
Clint Mitchell  
Barbara H. Moreno  
John Moroney  
David R. Morris  
Mulverhill Family  
Lee F. Munio  
Penny Nep  
Cathryn Novak  
Margarite S. Noviks  
Aris Ohanian  
Evan M. Osler  
Jiten Pandya  
Judy Parnes  
James Pavik  
Elizabeth Perry  
Trisha Pitsch  
Mike Post  
Kathryn Rairden  
Sue Redman  
Karen Reed  
Lynda Robbins  
Shirley Rosenberg  
May Routh  
David Sanchez

Don Scardino  
Elaine Scarry  
Lynne Shulim  
Edward Shuster  
Kenneth Silk  
Karen Silvas  
Marione Silverman  
Wan Siu Fan  
Michele Smolen  
Jay St. John  
Patricia Standring  
Maria F. Sturcke  
Marjory Taylor  
Francesca Tibbs  
Barry Torgerson  
Dave Trax  
Elizabeth Trybus  
Ayako Tsuru  
Anita Turner  
Evelyne Vadenais  
Patricia Van Hartesveldt  
Alicia Vargas  
Philip Walsh  
Samuel Whatley Vassallo  
Drake Wills  
Vanessa Ynda  
David Zuccaro