



# Phainopepla

Published by the  
**San Fernando Valley Audubon Society**  
A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization  
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

*For Nature Education and the Conservation of Wildlife*

Vol. 73 No. 5

October / November 2022

## Online General Membership Zoom Programs

We hope you will join us for our informative Zoom programs. [Click here](#), to signup and receive a link prior to all events.

Reminder: No General Program in November.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17**  
**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT**

Become a **NEW** member  
Your first year is **FREE!**  
Go to [SFVAudubon.org](http://SFVAudubon.org)



**CORRECTION:**  
CHAPTER PHONE NUMBER  
**(747) 237-3720**

TO REACH A BOARD MEMBER OR EVENT LEADER YOU MAY NOW CALL OUR FORWARDING MESSAGE SERVICE AT  
**(747) 237-3720**



## FALL INTO BIRDING PICNIC

**You are invited** to join other birders in a “bring your own” picnic, **Sunday, October 2, 2022**, at the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve (approximately 10:30 a.m.) after Kris Ohlenkamp’s 8:00 a.m. birding event. Pack your own chair and a cooler with your lunch to leave in your car for this casual post-birding get-together. Or if you cannot make it to the birding event just show up for the picnic and hear all about the birds you missed seeing. We will have an area picked out with a chapter

banner visible for you to find the picnic spot. If you do not see us, look for a flyer posted on the Education Storage Room door (just to the right of the bathrooms) with directions to the site. We hope to meet some of you who are new to birding as well as those who are old hands at it.

Directions to both the Birdwalk and Fall into Birding Picnic: Take Burbank Blvd., to Woodley Ave. Turn North. Travel about 0.4 miles on Woodley to the first possible right turn. It is a park road that may have signage for the Cricket Fields. This road will lead to a parking lot. Turn left and drive through the parking lot. At the end of the parking lot turn right onto the park access road (Wildlife Way). Drive about 0.4 miles to the paved parking lot on the left at the road’s end. Meet on the other side of the building for the 8:00 a.m. birding event. For the picnic, look for our banner.

## Online Zoom Program

**Thursday, October 27, 2022**

**7:00—8:30 p.m.**

**Speaker: Dr. Allison Shultz**

**Topic: Evolution of Feather Color**

**J**oin Assistant Curator of Ornithology at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Dr. Allison Shultz, as she talks about the evolution of feather color in the largest family of birds - the tanagers. She will talk about why she is careful to use a bird’s visual perspective to study this important signaling trait, and how natural and sexual selection have shaped plumage color in males and females. She will end her talk by describing some of her current work on the mechanisms underlying the great diversity of colors in birds.



Dr. Allison Shultz is Assistant Curator of the Ornithology Department at NHMLAC. With her research, she seeks to understand the evolution of bird diversity, focusing on two major areas: how birds are responding to human-caused environmental changes, and how and why bird colors evolve. In addition to her research, Dr. Shultz is passionate about increasing diversity, inclusion, access and equity in the sciences, and inspiring a love of nature in everyone.

[Click here](#), to signup and receive a link prior to all events.

## Goldfinch Feeder Care, and What to do if you Find a Dead Bird

SFVAS received these very good questions below. Alexander deBarros, CBC Chair, answered them and we felt they should be shared because others may be wondering the same thing.

*"We have a couple of bird feeders in our yard and quite enjoy observing all the different birds that visit them. We also have a few water dishes out and make sure that they are always full of fresh water. We see a lot of the Lesser Goldfinches at all times of the day.*

*On Monday, there was a Lesser Goldfinch on the ground that seemed unable to fly, although it was an adult and did not seem injured. One-half hour after I first saw it, it was dead.*

*Yesterday morning, at 4 am, there was another one sitting on my fence, all puffed up and obviously not well. It was on the ground, dead, two hours later.*

*I wrapped both birds in paper towels, put them in ziplock backs and put them in my waste bins.*

*From what I've been able to find online I should, and did, take down my feeders - although it was sad to see the little birds come during the day and look for the food.*

*The questions I have are,*

*Should I also remove the water dishes?*

*How long do I have to wait before putting the feeders back up?*

*Is this something to be very worried about?*

*Should I report the dead birds to someone?*

*If I see another, should I save it somehow or send it somewhere?"*

Alexander deBarros' reply:

The birds are definitely dealing with some sort of infection, and the most likely ones that came up in our discussion were salmonella, fungus, and avian flu. Salmonella is the most likely, as it primarily affects finches, and gets transmitted by feces that get mixed into seeds that have fallen on the ground.

Feeders that use nyjer seeds (which I assume you have, as they are known for attracting Goldfinches) are also prone to fungal buildups, as both empty hulls & edible seeds fall to the ground, and get decomposed by mold. Since birds will go to the ground to search for edible seeds, they can ingest the mold by accident.

While there is currently an avian flu outbreak, this virus tends to infect chickens, ducks, and other flocking waterbirds, and infections in songbirds are very rare.

Regardless of which disease it is, I am happy to say that the solution to all of them is the same. Take your feeder down for at least two weeks, and wash it thoroughly with soap & water. In addition, clean up all the fallen seed underneath feeder, and dump it in either compost bin or a green waste bin, and do the same with any seed that was in the feeder (to eliminate risk of contamination).

The water dish should also be cleaned with a solution of 1/4 tsp vinegar mixed with 1 cup water, again to eliminate risk of contamination. Let it dry for a day before putting it back out.

Going forward, I'd recommend cleaning up the fallen seed weekly, and washing the feeder whenever you refill it. You may also want to get a spare feeder, so you can swap them out whenever it's cleaning time.

According to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/what-do-i-do-if-i-find-a-sick-injured-or-dead-bird/>), dead birds should be reported at <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Laboratories/Wildlife-Health/Monitoring/Mortality-Report>, so cause of death can be investigated and confirmed.

In cases where the cause of death is known, dead birds can be donated to San Fernando Audubon's educational specimen collection. Wrap it in a paper towel, place it in a clear plastic bag, store it in the freezer, and contact Art Langton (who manages our collection) at [wrentit@att.net](mailto:wrentit@att.net). 🐦

## Calendar of Events

PLEASE REMEMBER TO CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION ON OUR BIRD OUTINGS. WE CONTINUE TO FOLLOW CDC GUIDELINES.

### October 2022

TO REACH AN EVENT LEADER YOU MAY NOW CALL OUR FORWARDING MESSAGE SERVICE AT [\(747\) 237-3720](tel:7472373720)

**Sunday, October 2. Sepulveda Basin Walk. 8:00 a.m. and FALL INTO BIRDING PICNIC 10:30 a.m. Directions to Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve During Detour on Access Road:** Take Burbank Boulevard to



Woodley Avenue. Turn north. Travel around 0.4 miles on Woodley to the first possible right turn, a park road. The park road will end at a parking lot. Turn left and drive through the parking lot. Turn right

onto the park access road ("Wildlife Way") and drive around 0.4 miles to the paved parking lot on the left at road's end. Park in the lot and walk past the low, rock-faced buildings to our meeting place on the other side of the buildings. Leader: Kris Ohlenkamp. Contact him at [kris.ohlenkamp@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kris.ohlenkamp@sbcglobal.net). **Immediately following, all are invited to join us for a "Fall Into Birding Picnic" get-together where you can relax, picnic, and meet other birders. See page 1 for more details.**

**Saturday, October 8. FREE Guided Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve Tour. 9:00—10:30 a.m.** This tour is perfect for families with school-age children, beginning or first-time birders, and people who want to learn more about the Wildlife Reserve. **Directions to Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve During Detour on Access Road:** Take Burbank Boulevard to Woodley Avenue. Turn north. Travel around 0.4 miles on Woodley to the first possible right turn, a park road. The park road will end at a parking lot. Turn left and drive through the parking lot. Turn right onto the park access road ("Wildlife Way") and drive around 0.4 miles to the paved parking lot on the left at road's end. Park in the lot and walk past the low, rock-faced buildings. Meet at the amphitheater. This tour will meet on 2nd Saturday's of the month, October—March. Leader: Muriel Kotin. Heavy rain cancels.

**Sunday, October 9. Franklin Canyon Park. 8:00 a.m.** 2600 Franklin Canyon Dr., Beverly Hills. Directions: From the San Fernando Valley, take the Ventura Freeway (101) or Ventura Blvd. to Coldwater Canyon Blvd. Head south to the intersection of Coldwater Canyon and Mulholland Drive. Make a 90-degree right turn onto Franklin Canyon Drive. Leader: Paula Orlovich.

**Thursday, October 13. A Bird Sit with Nature Journaling, O'Melveny Park. 10:00—11:30 a.m.** If you would like to mindfully connect with birds and all of nature, join us on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at O'Melveny Park—at the picnic tables near the bathrooms. (Rain cancels and moves it to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday.) What to bring: a cushion or a comfortable chair, a beverage/snack, binoculars, a journal, and something to write/draw with. This event is limited to 10 people. To reserve a spot, contact Diana Keeney at [diana.keeney@sfsaudubon.org](mailto:diana.keeney@sfsaudubon.org) or Teri Carnesciali at [teri.carnesciali@sfsaudubon.org](mailto:teri.carnesciali@sfsaudubon.org).

**Sunday, October 16. Malibu Creek State Park. 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. Leaders: Kathy Barton and David Barton.



**Tuesday, October 18. Weekday Wander at O'Melveny Park, Granada Hills. 9:00—11:00 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 [carolyn.oppenheimer@sfsaudubon.org](mailto:carolyn.oppenheimer@sfsaudubon.org).

**Saturday, October 22. Hansen Dam. 11640 Foothill Blvd., Sylmar, 8:15 a.m.** We will travel along a dirt road at the base of the dam—exploring promising sites along the way. Directions: From the 210 Freeway eastbound, exit at Osborne, go right on Foothill, then left (about 0.15 mile) into the Hansen Dam Soccer Fields parking lot. Meet in the dirt lot on the east side of the parking lot. Leader: Pat Bates, [batesbird@gmail.com](mailto:batesbird@gmail.com).

**Thursday, October 27. General Membership Program. 7:00—8:30 p.m. Guest Speaker: Dr. Allison Shultz. Topic: Evolution of Feather Color.** See page one for more information. [Click here](#) to sign up and we will send you the link. If you've signed up for a previous Zoom event, no need—you're already on our list!

**Sunday, October 30. Young Birders Group. Note: Now meeting on the LAST Sunday of the month.** Location TBD. Please check our website for updates. Interested in joining us? E-mail Luisa and/or Rebecca at [YoungBirders@sfsaudubon.org](mailto:YoungBirders@sfsaudubon.org) for more information and we can add you to our e-mail list.

### November 2022

**Sunday, November 6. Sepulveda Basin. 8:00—11:00 a.m. Directions to Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve During Detour on Access Road:** Take Burbank Boulevard to Woodley Avenue. Turn north. Travel around 0.4 miles on Woodley to the first possible right turn, a park road. The park road will end at a parking lot. Turn left and drive through the parking lot. Turn right onto the park access road ("Wildlife Way") and drive around 0.4 miles to the paved parking lot on the left at road's end. Park in the lot and walk past the low, rock-faced buildings to our meeting place on the other side of the buildings. Leader: Kris Ohlenkamp. Contact him at [kris.ohlenkamp@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kris.ohlenkamp@sbcglobal.net).

**Thursday, November 10. A Bird Sit with Nature Journaling, O'Melveny Park. 10:00—11:30 a.m.** If you would like to mindfully connect with birds and all of nature, join us on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at O'Melveny Park—at the picnic tables near the bathrooms. (Rain cancels and moves it to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday.) What to bring: a cushion or a comfortable chair, a beverage/snack, binoculars, a journal, and something to write/draw with. This event is limited to 10 people. To reserve a spot, contact Diana Keeney at [diana.keeney@sfsaudubon.org](mailto:diana.keeney@sfsaudubon.org) or Teri Carnesciali at [teri.carnesciali@sfsaudubon.org](mailto:teri.carnesciali@sfsaudubon.org).



**Saturday, November 12. FREE Guided Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve Tour. 9:00—10:30 a.m.** This tour is perfect for families with school-age children, beginning or first-time birders, and people who want to learn more about the Wildlife Reserve. **Directions to Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve During Detour on Access Road:** Take Burbank Boulevard to Woodley Avenue. Turn north. Travel around 0.4 miles on Woodley to the first possible right turn, a park road. The park road will end at a parking lot. Turn left and drive through the parking lot. Turn right onto the park access road ("Wildlife Way") and drive around 0.4 miles to the paved parking lot on the left at road's end. Meet at the amphitheater. This tour will meet on 2nd Saturday's of the month, October—March. Leader: Muriel Kotin. Heavy rain cancels.

**Sunday, November 13. Franklin Canyon Park. 8:00 a.m.** 2600 Franklin Canyon Dr., Beverly Hills. Directions: From the San Fernando Valley, take the Ventura Freeway (101) or Ventura Blvd. to Coldwater Canyon Blvd. Head south to the intersection of Coldwater Canyon and Mulholland Drive. Make a 90-degree right turn onto Franklin Canyon Drive. Leader: Paula Orlovich.

**Tuesday, November 15. Weekday Wander at O'Melveny Park, Granada Hills. 9:00—11:00 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 [carolyn.oppenheimer@sfvaudubon.org](mailto:carolyn.oppenheimer@sfvaudubon.org).

**Sunday, November 20. Malibu Creek State Park. 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. Leaders: Kathy Barton and David Barton.

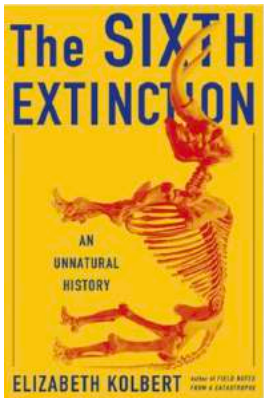
**No General Membership Meeting in November. Happy Thanksgiving!**



**Saturday, November 26. Hansen Dam. 11640 Foothill Blvd., Sylmar, 8:00 a.m.** We will travel along a dirt road at the base of the dam—exploring promising sites along the way. Directions: From the 210 Freeway eastbound, exit at Osborne, go right on Foothill, then left (about 0.15 mile) into the Hansen Dam Soccer Fields parking lot. Meet in the dirt lot on the east side of the parking lot. Leader: Pat Bates, [batesbird@gmail.com](mailto:batesbird@gmail.com).

**Sunday, November 27. Young Birders Group.** Location TBD. Please check our website for updates. Interested in joining us? E-mail Luisa and/or Rebecca at [YoungBirders@sfvaudubon.org](mailto:YoungBirders@sfvaudubon.org) for more information and we can add you to our e-mail list. 🐦

## Book Report: The Sixth Extinction, an Unnatural History, by Elizabeth Kolbert



This one was hard to pick up. It's like the medicine you know you need to take, but it tastes bad and you don't want to face it. This reader put on her big girl panties and got it done, but it wasn't easy. Kolbert starts out in 1806, telling the story of how George Curvier (French) figured out that there had been an extinction of "a world previous to ours." This was further demonstrated when farm hands dug up what looked to be a mastodon in an English field, and the circus was on to see who would acquire it (WE did....it went to Peale, Philadelphia Natural History Museum). A "mammoth" craze was begun, including making a mammoth cheese (1,230 pounds), mammoth bread, a mammoth parsnip, ad nauseam. Curvier in the meantime published a 4-volume work on fossilized animals. Fossil-hunting in earnest became popular. Curvier, oddly, wasn't an advocate for evolution...he ridiculed it. He had no explanation. But he didn't care, he was all about the demise, not how it all came to be. The mastodon, of course, was part of the megafauna extinction, which happens to have come along with the arrival of humans. Hmmm.

Darwin's chapter starts next, with him finding that life does change, unlike Charles Lyell, who also believed that everything changed, but not lifeforms. And a good discussion evolves about adaptation...how anything could survive a meteor impact that wiped out dinosaurs and most life, gets to be pretty moot. The rules of the survival game change drastically, and everything is up for grabs. We smoothly adapt to be better, big change happens, and old strategies die. That horrible, no-good day at the end of the Cretaceous busted up Curvier, Lyell, and even Darwin's theories. Conditions on earth change slowly, until they don't. Which brings us to the Anthropocene.

What comes next for the rest of the book is a litany of what marvelous things have disappeared...and how ocean acidification will probably take most everything out. It's sort of whether you take a month to go through a six-pack, or an hour, it makes a big difference to your chemistry. Same with the ocean. We are now putting so much carbon in the air and in the ocean, it's not running history forward...it's at warp speed. Papers on corals conclude that our current emissions will kill off all corals, the sea's nursery, and they will start to dissolve, within 50 years. Our kid's lifetimes...not ours, but theirs.

What's clear is that, although there might have been a time that man lived in harmony with nature, we probably never really did. We are the invasive species. Right now animals on the edge of extinction are having cells collected by entities like "The Frozen ZOO", where cell lines are preserved. The locations are sometimes kept secret, sometimes not...the Cincinnati Zoo, locally at San Diego, and the University of Nottingham are now running "frozen Arks." Kolbert ends the book hopefully, counting on human ingenuity to save the planet. You must make your own conclusions and do what you can. 🐦

—Submitted by Marianne Davis

### Audubon-at-Home by Alan Pollack

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) 425-0962 or at [alan.pollack@sfvaudubon.org](mailto:alan.pollack@sfvaudubon.org). 🐦



## Bird Sit Bulletin



"We humans are social creatures and love doing things together. Working with a supportive circle of colleagues will help you improve. Use the opportunity to take away ideas about observing and recording." —John Muir Laws



One of our participants shared this reflection:

"When I first began bird watching I was overwhelmed by all there was to learn. When I draw a bird, I can remember so much more. So, the Bird Sit helps me in that way, but I come more for the tranquil and relaxing nature of the Bird Sit. I love that I don't feel rushed. I love that there are no rules about how you spend your journaling time or what you have to accomplish or how you have to accomplish it; the experience is yours to own. Lastly, I love how we end each session by sharing our experiences either verbally or via our "journal-gallery-picnic-table-walk-about" where those who choose to can share one of their journal pages." —Patty Ryan

For details on how to join Diana Keeney and Teri Carnesciali for *Bird Sit with Nature Journaling*, please see the Calendar of Events.



### Bird Migration Explorer

Check out this revolutionary new tool, [Bird Migration Explorer](#). It allows anyone to follow hundreds of species on their epic journeys and discover challenges they face along the way. This new digital platform from Audubon covers the journeys of 458 avian species that breed in the United States and Canada.

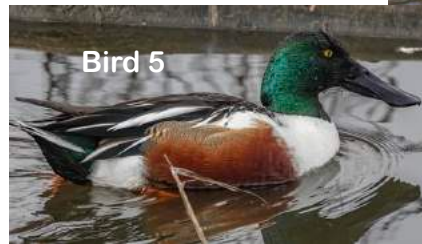
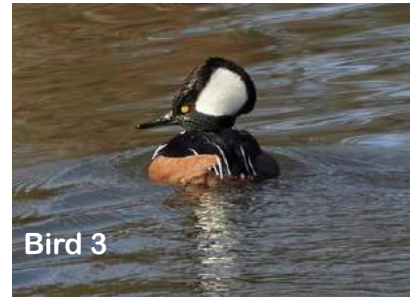
### Warning About Trimming Trees with Nests

If you see a tree trimmer cutting a tree with a bird's nest in it, it's illegal. You can report it at 1-888-334-CALTIP (1-888-334-2258), and USFW will follow up.

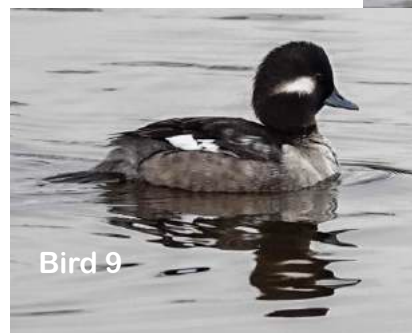
Some excellent tips for arborists can be found at [www.treecareforbirds.com](http://www.treecareforbirds.com)

## Duck Review Including the Woodies and the Hoodies

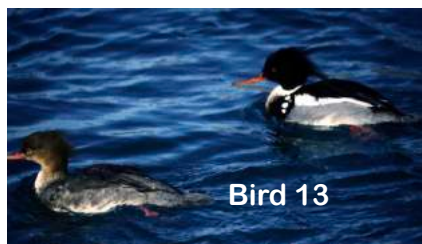
Photos courtesy of Stephen Miller, Don Shoemaker, Richard and Marianne Davis



—Compiled by—  
Art Langton



—Answers—  
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**SAN FERNANDO VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY**  
NEW CHAPTER PHONE NUMBER

TO REACH A BOARD MEMBER OR EVENT LEADER  
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Bird Sit with Journaling: Diana Keeney  
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Young Birders Group: Luisa Bergeron  
Rebecca Marschall

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GO TO**

<https://www.sfvaudubon.org/membership/>  
**It's fast, secure, saves time, and paper!**

Or mail this form and include a check made payable to:  
SFV Audubon Society  
Attn: Membership  
P.O. Box 7769  
Van Nuys, CA 91409

Regular 1-yr Chapter Membership.....\$25     \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
1-yr Online Chapter Membership  
(No paper copy of *Phainopepla*)  
.....**FREE** for a limited time for new members \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Student 1-yr Chapter Membership.....\$10     \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Tax Deductible Contribution to SFVAS     \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**Total**     \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

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How did you learn about SFVAS?  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you want to join or renew by check, please be sure to include your e-mail address if you want to receive an acknowledgment. We can no longer thank you by regular mail. If you do not have an e-mail address, please know how much we appreciate your involvement with, and support of, SFVAS.

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 non-profit chapter of the National Audubon Society, and is dedicated to "Nature Education and the Conservation of Wildlife."

Articles, letters, drawings, and photographs concerning conservation, 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.

**Membership to National Audubon is separate and can be initiated on the website [www.Audubon.org](http://www.Audubon.org).**

If you have any questions about membership, renewals, change of address or any other membership concerns, please contact Lynn Maddox at (818) 425-0962 or e-mail her at [Lynn.Maddox@sfvaudubon.org](mailto:Lynn.Maddox@sfvaudubon.org).

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For Chapter leaders' e-mail addresses, see our Website: [www.SFVAudubon.org](http://www.SFVAudubon.org)

Follow us on:



@sfvaudubon, #sfvaudubon

Found an injured animal? Call Wildlife Rescue Center at (818) 222-2658



## Phainopepla

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

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## Loggerhead Shrike

August 27 promised to be a fortuitous day for me as Kathy Barton, chapter president of SFVA, was hosting a mid-morning get together to introduce me and new board member Charlie Wilkin to the other officers. Since it was one of the cooler days of the week, I figured I'd do a loop around the Sepulveda Basin first to see who was fluttering about. On the east side of the lake I snapped a picture of a bird I knew I would need an app to identify. Merlin reported it as a Loggerhead Shrike but I knew I had never seen one and a quick check of e-Bird didn't show any recent sightings at the Basin so I was reluctant to submit an e-Bird list. But I was about to break bread with some of the best birders in the Valley and, sure enough, they enthusiastically confirmed the ID and congratulated me! What a great morning, a new bird on my list and a new group of generous colleagues to work with in service to this impactful organization.

—Submitted by Patricia A. Turner



### Duck Review Answers from page 6:

1. Wood Duck
2. Hooded Merganser, female
3. Hooded Merganser, male
4. Pintail

5. Shoveler
6. Green-winged Teal
7. Gadwalls
8. Ring-necked Duck
9. Bufflehead, female

10. Bufflehead, male
11. Mallard
12. Scaup, species, probably Lesser
13. Red-breasted Mergansers
14. American Wigeon