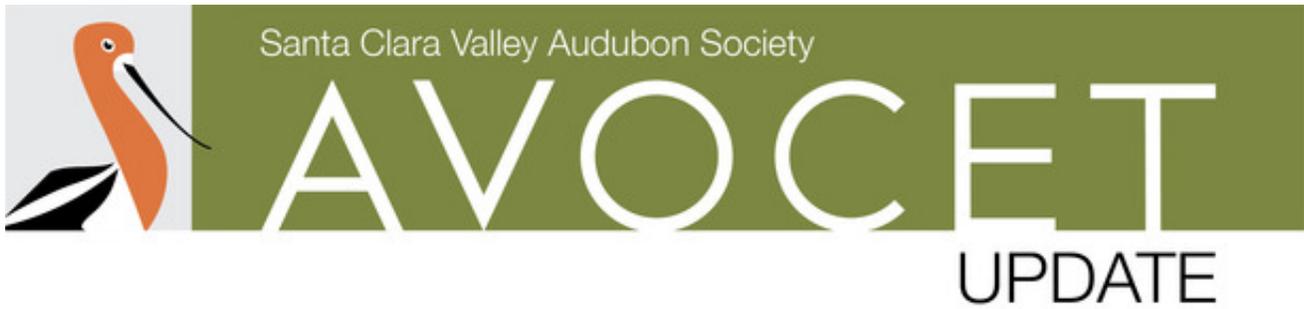


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Snowy Plover by Bill Walker

Welcome to the **Avocet Update** for August 2021. Summer is finally here and its going to get hot! Our migrant songbirds may have slowed their performances, offering only an occasional encore from their spring hits. They will be leaving soon, and as they go, other birds from the north will follow—passing thought and confusing us with their fresh and unfamiliar colors. Shorebirds have already started to arrive though, and there are sure to be rare hidden surprises among the throngs of common Sandpipers that assemble in the marsh. To satisfy birders wanting a refresher on those late summer Sandpipers, we're offering another 3-part online class. Dr. Lauryn Benedict will be our Speaker Series guest this month with an account of her work with female bird songs. It's an exciting time indeed! Read on, and enjoy.

~Matthew Dodder, Executive Director



SCVAS Speaker Series Welcomes

Lauryn Benedict

Wednesday, August 18

7:00-8:00 PM ([via Zoom](#))

She sings too! Female Bird Songs in North American and Beyond

Do female birds sing? They certainly do. Female bird song is more common and widespread than is generally appreciated. This presentation will offer an overview of the diversity of female songs, including many from North America and a few used in spectacular partner duets. It will discuss what can be learned from studying the songs of female birds, and explain how community scientists can help advance the field by looking for singing females in their own backyards.

Lauryn Benedict is fascinated by the social lives of birds. She has spent 20+ years watching and researching birds to figure out how they use sounds to signal meaning and coordinate

behaviors. She conducts research on nesting behavior, mating behavior, vocal duetting, and song form and function. Her recent work examines the evolution of song in both male and female songbirds. Lauryn is a Professor of Biological Sciences at the University of Northern Colorado, where she teaches about ornithology, animal behavior, and animal diversity.

[Register Here](#)



Shorebird Identification Class Registration

Each summer, millions of Arctic breeding Shorebirds leave their northern nesting grounds and make their way toward southern wintering grounds. In Santa Clara County, we have many locations where dense clouds of these magnificent birds can be seen and admired as they arrive for the season. Others simply pass through on their way further south. Each species is truly unique yet identifying them can often be a challenge especially when they shed their colorful breeding plumage. Join **SCVAS Executive Director, Matthew Dodder** for an online class focusing on Santa Clara County's diverse Shorebirds. Learn how to differentiate between the confusing "Peeps" and how to spot juvenile birds within the crowded flocks. We will dive first into the common species found here, and then move on to the rarer visitors and the challenges they present to birders.

Registrants will gain access to a secure chat room where they can ask questions or share images of Shorebirds they have found. Classes are recorded for participants to rewatch. An optional field trip to a local area will be offered so class members can practice some of the techniques presented during the online sessions. Several notable Shorebird field guides will be randomly awarded to members of the class.

Session 1: 8/9, The Long Voyage

Session 2: 8/16, Wayward Travelers

Session 3: 8/23, Trial and Error

Field Trip: 8/20, location TBA

[Register Here](#)



Oak Titmouse by John Richardson

Backyard Birding

“Chick-a-dee-dee!” The familiar call floats through your window on a summer day. Of course, it’s a...titmouse. (Wait. What?)

Yes, the Oak Titmouse can sound an awful lot like a chickadee! Learn all about how to identify this bird, and its backyard habits, in our August [Backyard Bird of the Month](#) article.

Young orioles, hungry hummingbirds, and a new and unusual feeder visitor! Find out what **birds our members and friends have seen lately** in [All Around Town](#), our monthly round-up of backyard bird sightings.

What birds are in your yard or neighborhood now? Send your notes and photos to backyardbirds@scvas.org and we’ll feature them in our next [All Around Town](#).

Conservation Corner



Photo by Matthew Dodder

Conservation Corner

Action Alerts!

New Vision for Coyote Valley

SCVAS has been vocally and actively working to protect Coyote Valley for over 40 years. Now that thousands of acres are protected, new opportunities arise. What will the valley look like in the future? How will the landscape change?

Please join our partner Green Foothills [New Vision for Coyote Valley](#) event on Wednesday, August 4 from 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. to engage with guest speakers on what might be the future of bird and wildlife habitat, farming, parks and indigenous stewardship in Coyote Valley.

Stop the San Jose Light Tower

Arena Green Park, the confluence of the Guadalupe River and Los Gatos Creek, in downtown San Jose is a beloved community gathering place, offering space for both families and wildlife to gather. San Jose Light Tower Corporation plans on jeopardizing the health of this habitat with the construction of a 200-foot tall illuminated tower. [Check out the new campaign website](#) and then take action by [signing this petition](#) to say "No Thanks" to this preposterous "gift" of light pollution to the City of San Jose.

Save Newark Wetlands

One of the last significant unprotected wetland areas in San Francisco Bay is at risk of being lost to development, fish and wildlife species and millions of migratory birds. Developers are seeking to fill 500 acres of baylands in Newark to construct 469 "executive houses" (Newark Area 4).

SCVAS has joined over a dozen conservation and climate organizations in supporting the Save Newark Wetlands campaign in seeking to stop this development -- and instead secure the permanent protection, restoration, and inclusion of Newark Area 4 in the Don Edwards SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

[Watch this newly-released 4-minute video](#) featuring prominent Bay scientists and climate adaptation experts, and then [Take Action by signing the petition to Save Newark Wetlands](#).

Tideline Protest

Tideline Marine Group, a private commercial ferry operator, filed an application with the California Utilities Commission seeking approval for unlimited Uber-like boat service throughout the Bay and its navigable rivers and tributaries. Together with the Sierra Club and with the Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge, SCVAS filed a formal protest arguing that this new service can have impacts to the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge and on wetlands and estuaries all around the Bay. We asked for an Environmental Impact Report prior to approval of the project.



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