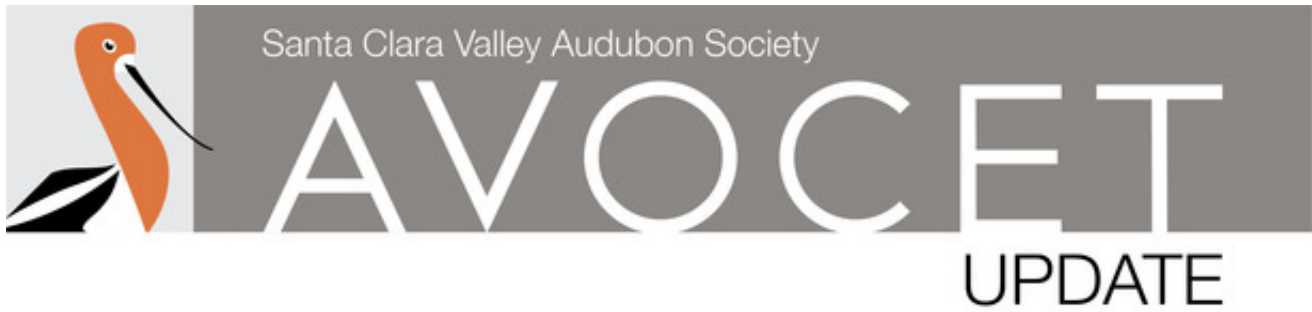


[Click to view this email in a browser](#)



Common Mergansers. Photo by Raechel Lee

Welcome to the **AVOCET Update** for July, 2021. Contrary to what we often think, July is a really busy time at the Ranch. Staff has returned to our offices after a year of working at home, we have two excellent speakers this month, the Nature Shop is fully open and filled with exciting books, shirts and feeders, young birds are everywhere and we're gearing up for an exciting year of field trips and education programs. Read on...

~Matthew Dodder, Executive Director

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## Speaker Series



## **Kaeli Swift**

### **The World of Crows, Ravens, and other Corvids**

Wednesday, July 7, 7:00 PM ([via Zoom](#))

All over the world, crows, ravens, and other corvids have infiltrated nearly every part of our lives. Join us as we host Dr. Kaeli Swift as she answers some of the most common questions about these birds and discusses of what makes them so uniquely captivating

Dr. Swift earned her PhD from the University of Washington where she studied American crow behavior, with a special emphasis on behaviors around death. She is currently a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Washington, where she is studying the breeding ecology of the Tinian monarch. You can read her popular science articles on her blog, [corvidresearch.blog](#). You can also find her on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook at the [@corvidresearch](#) handle. Video, audio, and print reports of her research have been featured by: National Geographic, PBS, the New York Times, The Atlantic, Ologies podcast, Science Friday and many others.

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## **Speaker Series**



## **Rosemary Mosco**

### **Bird and Moon: Science and Nature Cartoons**

Wednesday, July 21, 7:00 PM ([via Zoom](#))

Birds can be funny - and that humor can help conserve them! Cartoons, humor, and art are unexpectedly important tools in the fight against biodiversity loss, climate change, and other threats to birds. Cartoonist and science author Rosemary Mosco, creator of Bird and Moon comics, will explain why science needs humor and art, talk about the path that led her to her work, and share examples of her comics.

Rosemary makes books and cartoons that connect people with the natural world. Her Bird and Moon nature comics were the subject of an award-winning museum exhibit and are collected in a book that's a 2019 ALA Great Graphic Novel for Teens. She co-wrote The Atlas Obscura Explorer's Guide for the World's Most Adventurous Kid, a NYT Best Seller. She speaks at birding festivals and writes for Audubon and the PBS kids' show Elinor Wonders Why. Her next book is called A Pocket Guide to Pigeon Watching. Her favorite glacial landform is the esker.

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**Help birds this summer by providing water**





American Robin by Hita Bambhania-Modha

Summer's here and it's hot! High temperatures are difficult for birds, just as they are for us.

Please **consider putting out water for birds in your yard**. Birds will drink the water you provide, and bathe in it to cool themselves as well as to freshen and maintain their feathers. You don't need to provide food - water alone is a big attraction - and as an added bonus, you'll get to enjoy some great bird sightings!

Although you can buy a bird bath if you'd like, you can **make a bath from simple materials** around your home. Put the bath in a cool, safe place, then add water and see who visits! Be sure to **change the water daily** and **clean the bath several times a week** to reduce the possibility of disease transmission.

For information about **how to make a bath, how deep the water should be, and how to properly clean it**, read the [How to provide water to birds](#) section of our latest Backyard Birder post.

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**Backyard Birds**



Northern Mockingbirds by Julie MacKinnon

Devoted parents, sparring rivals, and lots of splashing in the bath - summer's here! Watch **summer bird behavior**, and get **tips for providing water to birds**, in [Love, War, and Water](#), our Backyard Birder's newest piece.

Did you know that the **Chestnut-backed Chickadee** is a "nuclear species"? Find out what that means, and how to attract chickadees to your yard, in our July [Backyard Bird of the Month](#) article.

You've seen so many baby birds lately - wrens, bushtits, woodpeckers, and more! Find out what **birds our members and friends** are seeing in their yards and neighborhoods in the latest edition of [All Around Town](#), our monthly round-up of backyard bird sightings.

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

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## Self-Guided Field Trips - July





American Dipper by Brooke Miller

- NEW! [American Dippers](#) (Los Gatos) by Lisa Myers
- [Joseph D. Grant](#) (San Jose) by Bill Pelletier and Kitty O'Neil
- [Terns and Black Skimmers on Pond A16 at Don Edwards](#) (Alviso) by Eve Meier
- [Phalaropes at Sunnyvale WPCP](#) (Sunnyvale) by Eve Meier

Visit our webpage to see [past months' recommendations](#) or use our [index](#) to see all of our recommendations.

**SCVAS would like to hear from you!** Do you have a favorite place you love to bird that you would like to recommend to our members? Is there a place you would like to learn more about? If so, please email [fieldtrips@scvas.org](mailto:fieldtrips@scvas.org).

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## Nature Shop News



We're open! Come visit us at McClellan Ranch for your local honey, seed, and to check out our new stock of birding T-shirts and books for your library! We're looking forward to seeing you!

**Hours:**

10:00AM - 4:30PM, Monday-Friday

## Upcoming Classes



Get ready for fall migration! SCVAS will be offering two new online classes with Matthew Dodder beginning in August with 3 hour-long sessions on **Shorebirds: Migration & Identification**. In September there will be 3 sessions on **Warblers: Our Fall Wonders**. Sign-ups will begin soon for these timely classes.



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## Conservation Corner



Permanente Ridge. Photo by [Schmiebel](#)

### **Success (for now): Protecting the Ridgeline**

For decades, Lehigh/Permanente Quarry has been mining the foothills on the outskirts of Cupertino. In 1972 Lehigh granted Santa Clara County an easement with the purpose of protecting the ridgeline and the surrounding environment and viewshed. However, Lehigh has consistently violated this agreement. Mining activities have resulted in landslides that eroded the ridgeline, degraded waterways, harmed surrounding wildlife habitat and damaged the viewshed of Rancho San Antonio Park.

We thank everyone who emailed the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. The supervisors voted unanimously to study the potential for joint enforcement authority with Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) over the environmental easement. The results of the study will come back to the Supervisors on August 17th of this year and we will keep you updated. We hope the negotiations are successful and MROSD can help protect the ridgeline. For a bird's eye view of the Lehigh Quarry and Cement Plant, watch [this video](#).

### **Action needed (Los Gatos residents):**

The Town of Los Gatos is updating its General Plan to guide the community and shape development for the next 20 years. Let's ensure that birds and nature are included in the plan! Please join the town's virtual [Community Meeting](#) to learn more about the draft plan and share your questions and comments. This is an important opportunity to show support for our birds, natural environment, responsible development, and protection of our riparian corridors and hillsides.

Please attend this virtual [Community Meeting](#) on Tuesday, June 29th at 6:00pm to show



support for included Bird Safe Building Design and Dark Sky Policies and provide stronger protections for our riparian corridors, specifically along Los Gatos Creek. To help reduce pervasive light pollution, ask for Town lighting to include dimmers, motion sensors, and timers and for LED lights to be at a warm color correlated temperature.

### **Google support for Monarch Butterflies**

Last year, California recorded only 2,000 monarch butterflies during the winter. Now Google is looking to [support monarch butterflies](#) and pollinator habitats in the state! Visitors to the Google campus in North Bayshore, Mountain View can already see monarchs, swallowtail and other butterflies in areas where Google planted California native gardens, but the effort to help the monarchs will now expand in California to include Google's campuses as well as Coyote Valley.

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## **Help SCVAS Enter its Second Century**



As SCVAS approaches the start of its second hundred years, we are looking for individuals who want to help us shape the future of our chapter. We would love to have your ideas, your input and your involvement. We want to expand our Board of Directors, and have openings on our committees. We seek people who have a passion for birds and the preservation of their habitat as well as wildlife education for kids and adults.

If you have a background in education, environmental law, finance, fundraising and/or management, we offer fun and interesting opportunities for you to make a difference and to help move SCVAS forward into its next century. We are committed to diversity; all are welcome regardless of age, gender, race or religion. Contact Matthew Dodder if you are interested or have any questions at [director@scvas.org](mailto:director@scvas.org).

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