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Newsletter of the Coyote Creek Riparian Station

Volume 10, No. 4

The Saratoga Creek Project —an “evolving” program

by Dave Johnston

Most community projects are narrow in scope. A problem is established and a one-track solution is proposed and implemented if all goes well. Not so for the Saratoga Creek Project. This project is the most multifaceted project I've experienced. Last year I began working with the Saratoga Union School District to develop a multidisciplinary school program on creeks using computer technology. My involvement started when I met Saratoga Union School District superintendent, Mary Gardiner, at a back-to-school coffee. I explained to Mary that as a youngster living along the creek, I could remember going to bed in the spring with a chorus of tree frogs and waking up with the melodious songs of California thrashers. My five-year-old hears neither of these sounds on the same creek today. I suggested to Mary that we develop an educational creek program so that youngsters learn about creeks and take ownership of this important and beautiful resource. Since then the Saratoga Union School District has received 64K in grants to develop a Saratoga Creek Education program. Students have a different lesson for each of the grades K through 8, and the data they collect is entered on the same database through a computer network for all the schools. Our hope is to connect each of the schools along the creek watershed. Saratoga High School, St. Andrews School, and Sutter School have also joined the project, and several more schools in Santa Clara Unified School District have expressed interest.

Thanks to Mike Rigney, CCRS also received funding to work on Saratoga Creek. CCRS received a 45K contract from BASMAA (Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association) and a 40K contract through the Santa Clara Valley Water District to collectively provide a stream inventory through the Community Creek Watch program, the StreamKeepers program, and a Watershed festival in celebration of the entire Saratoga Creek Watershed. Chris Fischer, Charles Preuss and Jill Bernhard have mobilized community volunteers for inventorying the creek and Karen Cotter with Steve Morris are mobilizing community members for the StreamKeepers program. Chris Fischer is developing much needed protocols for citizens monitoring of benthic macroinvertebrates in the creek as a model for intermittent streams of California. Many of us at the station are quite excited by the opportunity to establish this blue print for future invertebrate monitoring.

In many ways the creek is more attractive today with larger trees and deeper pools than when I was in elementary school, but there are still some things that aren't right about it. There is a history of finger pointing in Saratoga for the high coliform bacterial counts in the creek as well as the “general condition” of the creek. There are dippers foraging for caddisfly and stonefly larvae, but the native frogs and turtles have all but disappeared. As local citizens of this watershed become involved with Streamkeepers, the Community

Headed For High Ground

Chris Fischer

Throughout the Guadalupe River Watershed, stream inventory teams are nearing the top of the watershed and the completion of their monumental task. Over 40 linear miles of riparian habitat have received painstaking attention by censusers, mappers, typers and other specialists. These staunch volunteers have documented current conditions within the watershed, including the habitat for fish and amphibians, the height, diameter and



species composition of trees, the use of the area by birds, areas impacted by pollution, and many other important factors.

Three of the main tributaries of the Guadalupe River—Los Alamitos, Los Gatos, and Guadalupe Creeks—have been completed! Ross, Calero, Santa Teresa and the River itself are well under way, and we are projecting completion of the project in March of 1996. It's not too late to get involved—“Vegetation” and “Mapping” teams are working in the upper watershed, “Fisheries” will jump into Calero Creek January through March, and “Reptiles and Amphibians” will be out in force on Calero and Santa Teresa in the early spring.

There are also plenty of opportunities to help staff with data entry, so we can get this great information into the hands of those who can use it! Database integration has already begun with the Santa Clara Valley Water

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Director's Report

by Dave Johnston, Managing Director

When we begin in life, we start with the little pieces. We learn a piece here and there, and only when we are older, can we put the pieces together so things are in perspective. With great honor, I have accepted the Director's position here at the station. My years at Youth Science Institute trained me as an educator and administrator, but I also wanted to develop more scientific skills. I entered a Ph.D. program in Biology at York University in Toronto with a three-year scholarship under Brock Fenton, a world player in bat biology. Now three and a half years later I am emphatically pleased I took that bold move. I learned a great deal in Toronto and I am scheduled to finish my degree this coming summer. I plan to continue developing my scientific acumen, in the hope I can provide skilled, scientific leadership to the station in the ensuing years. I have lived along a creek all my life, and so the station feels like a natural way in which I can tie all my pieces—education, administration, and now research—together as a whole program.

Mike Rigney, former Director, will be deeply missed. Not only did he provide farsighted vision for the station, he also was skilled at developing funding resources. He will be a difficult act to follow, so my greatest desire is that all of you will help me in filling the gap made by his departure.

CCRS has grown several-fold over the last few years and like most start-ups, this plethora of growth needs to be balanced by some structure. With the help of our new administrative assistant, Cyndi Franks, the rest of the staff, and with the support of Board members and volunteers, we can build an efficient administration to handle the continued growth of the CCRS community. Only in this way can we continue as a leader in bird and watershed research, monitoring, and education. Much of our success will also be dependent upon alliances we develop with other scientific institutions.

Once some of the structure is in place, and with increased funding for the station, insects and bats will be added as important taxa in riparian surveying and monitoring. By the fall of 1996, we will begin surveying bats in urban-riparian habitats. I look forward to expanding the Avian Research Program through the Corridor Width Study, the continued growth of the SteamKeepers and the Community Creek Watch Programs, and the development of schools' creek monitoring curricula with networked data bases. In the long term, we should develop a more permanent site with better facilities for research and educational programs. We need your continued help and support, so e-mail me at Djohnston8@AOL.com or give me a call at the station, before our next Board planning session in Spring, to let me know what you think about our future directions.

Band-A-Thon-A-Success!

by Lisa Brown

September was an exceptionally good month for the Avian Research Program at CCRS. In addition to a healthy catch of sparrows, flycatchers and thrushes, the bird banding program sponsored its first ever 24-hour Band-A-Thon on September 23rd and 24th. The program netted over \$1,500.

The Band-A-Thon began at 2:00 p.m. on Friday. The decision was made early in the event to spend time experimenting with different capture methods rather than try for serious data collection. The overall goal was to band as many different species as possible in a twenty-four hour period. The first representative of any species caught was banded, and all other birds of the same species were released at the net. Another group of banders spent Friday afternoon driving around the sludge ponds of our neighbor, the San Jose Wastewater Treatment Plant, trying to catch hawks with Bal-chatri traps. Several red-tailed hawks watched the proceedings with interest, however none were foolish enough to go for the bait.

Evening brought hopes for species unusual to the banding program such as bats and owls. There was some debate as to whether

bats could be counted toward the total species goal. Four rows of nets were opened in the northern net lanes. Banders walked these nets slowly, listening to bats with an ultrasonic translator. Since neither owls nor bats were heard, seen or caught, the species goal debate became a moot point. However the intrepid banders continued to check the nets every hour, catching one surprised hermit thrush at 1 a.m.

Dawn brought new expectations, more birds and new methods to try. The Bal-chatri traps were put out again and were finally successful, capturing one scrub jay early in the morning. Nets on the water bird ponds were not as successful. The birds on the pond gave the nets wide berth. A canoe was launched with plans to encourage the birds closer to the nets. An estimated depth of only five inches in the pond probably contributed to the failure of this endeavor. The canoe was used with more ease later in the day to service a net strung across the creek. Butterfly nets were put to



Chris Fischer and Rhylin Arkinstall watch as Michael Tel removes a Common Yellowthroat from a net set up between Coyote Creek and the waterbird pond.

use midday on Saturday. Ten species of butterflies were caught, however they did not contribute to the total species count.

By 2 p.m. Saturday, it was clear that the event could be deemed a success. A total of 23 species were caught with no casualties, lots of junk food had been consumed, campfire stories had been shared, and the tough had survived. Most importantly it was a fun way to raise much needed money for the Avian Research Program.

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The Birds of Santa Clara County

by Bill Bousman
(Copyright December 1995)

Vultures and Raptors, Part 1

Part 1 covers our local raptors from Turkey Vulture through Bald Eagle. The distribution over a year's time of these five species, based largely on records submitted to me over the last 15 years, is shown in Figure 1.

Turkey Vultures are a common, widespread, year around resident in the county although there appear to have been some fairly recent changes in their wintering population. I compare Christmas Bird Count (CBC) data for the Palo Alto and San Jose counts in Figure 2 where I show five-year averages of the birds/party-hour for each count circle. It is interesting to note that the wintering population in the Palo Alto circle has not changed greatly in the last 30 or 35 years, but there has been a significant population increase in the San Jose circle starting in the mid-1970s and, today, this species is more common on the San Jose CBC than the Palo Alto CBC. Comparing winter and summer numbers for the Palo Alto CBC and Summer Bird Count (SBC) data, little difference is seen: 0.25 ± 0.10 birds/party-hour in the winter and 0.32 ± 0.12 birds/party-hour in the summer. (When comparing Palo Alto CBC and SBC data I show the mean \pm one standard deviation. These statistics are based on 26 years of data for the CBC and 14 years for the SBC.)

Van Denburg (1899) noted that "buzzards may be seen at any season of the year, sometimes in large companies." He did not describe how common this species was before the turn of the century, but his description is not much different from one that I would use today. Grinnell and Miller (1944) noted

that more northerly and higher altitude populations moved south or out of the state in October so that the species is absent in winter in portions of the state. Sibley (1952), who focused on birds of the South Bay, considered this species a summer resident with birds leaving in October and returning in March. It is possible that Santa Clara County has always been near the border of resident and migrant populations so that the recent increases in San Jose are just a result of minor changes in the conditions that affect this species, or perhaps we've augmented their food resources with our own population increase. This may have come about by increased road kills or scavenging opportunities at our local landfills. If the latter food resource is important then we may see some decline in this wintering population in the next few decades as the last of these landfills close. Regardless of its status in the Santa Clara Valley, winter conditions in the Diablo Range are largely unsuitable for this bird and it is recorded on fewer than half of the Mt. Hamilton CBCs.

During the breeding bird atlas years from 1987 to 1993 this wide-ranging species was observed in nearly every block in the county. Despite extensive field work, however, only five instances of confirmed breeding were found: nestlings were found in two locations in the Diablo Range as well as two spots in the Santa Cruz Mountains and another nestling was apparently washed out of a road culvert by a late-season storm and found near Hellyer County Park. These were indeed rare sights (and smells) for the atlas. At this time I have details of only two nest sites: one was a small cave and the other a rock outcropping. In the past they have used hollow tree trunks and eroded gullies for nesting in the county.

The California Condor is the first of the species I have written about that has been extirpated from the county. Until the with-

drawal of this magnificent vulture from its habitat to support a captive breeding program, the Diablo Range and the Santa Clara Valley were considered to be the most northwesterly extent of this species' range (Wilbur *et al.*, 1972). Wilbur's summary of records through the

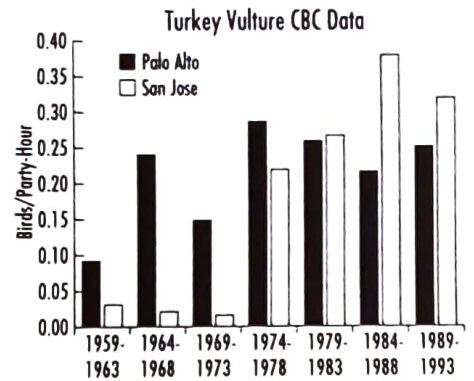


Figure 2. Turkey Vulture winter distribution using 5-year averages from Palo Alto and San Jose CBC data (1959-1994).

early 1970s (Wilbur, 1978) lists four records in the county from the period of the 1960s and five from the 1970s. Six of the nine records were of birds seen over South San Jose by Don McLean. The most famous of the 1970s' records is probably the sub-adult found by Dave DeSante and his ornithology class at Stanford on Jan 10, 1971. This bird, apparently grounded by a winter storm, was seen by many observers through Jan 12, 1971 (AB 25:621). Perhaps the last record of this species in the county was of two adults seen flying south from County Line Road in Henry Coe State Park on Sep 13, 1981 (AB 36:213). These birds, seen by Barry Breckling, the Coe ranger then as now, showed white on the underwing, widest at the axillaries and no white in the tail. The two birds were clearly different from the many immature Golden Eagles seen by Barry on his frequent patrols in the park.

Ospreys, although rare visitors to the county, are recorded in every month of the year. I show the distribution of records over the last fifteen years in Figure 3 and these data suggest that there is a migratory component for the species with the largest number of records in March and September. The fewest records are in June and July and probably represent nonbreeding birds from populations to the north.

Grinnell and Miller (1944) considered this species to be much reduced from former numbers where it nested over the entire breadth of the state, near mouths of larger streams and, in the interior, on the larger rivers and also the northeastern part of the state. They noted nesting near Green Valley in Santa Cruz County in the 1930s, but no other records locally. In the 1960s, Don

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	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Turkey Vulture**	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
California Condor	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Osprey	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
White-tailed Kite**	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bald Eagle	—	—	—	—	—	●	—	—	—	—	—	—

Figure 1. Distribution of vultures and raptors in Santa Clara County, Part 1. A thick line means a species is common, a medium weight line indicates fairly common, a thin line means a species is uncommon, a dashed line is rare, and a dotted line is very rare. A filled circle shows a record of vagrancy. Regular breeding within the county is indicated by a double asterisk after the species' name.

The Birds of Santa Clara County

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McLean reported that "A pair nested at Calaveras Dam, Santa Clara Co. for a number of years, but Golden Eagles drove them out and took over their nest." (AFN 23:690). Calaveras Reservoir would seem a suitable nesting location (except for the problem of eagles), but the dam itself is in Alameda County and this record remains ambiguous. Today, Osprey is a regular breeding species north of San Francisco Bay (Shuford 1993, Burridge 1995), but I am not aware of recent breeding records south of the bay.

Osprey

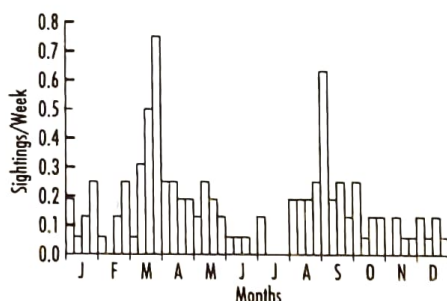


Figure 3. Osprey yearly distribution of sightings/week (1980-1994).

White-tailed Kites are a fairly common resident in portions of Santa Clara County although fewer are seen in the summer than winter: 0.05 ± 0.05 birds/party-hour on the Palo Alto SBC and 0.12 ± 0.06 birds/party-hour in the winter. This may partly result from a tendency of this species to form communal roosts in the winter so that they are more visible.

We found this species breeding widely in the county during the atlas. Birds were attracted to two different habitats, either salt marsh and riparian edge on the valley floor or oak savannah and grassland in the foothills. This segregation in habitat choice for nesting was also noted by Grinnell and Miller (1944). We observed nest construction as early as Feb 26 below Mt. Madonna County Park (David Suddjian) and young birds, nearly fledged, as late as Sep 30 along Matadero Creek (Mike Mammoser). Some pairs are clearly double-brooded, but how commonly this occurs is uncertain.

Life at the top of the food chain has its ups and downs and White-tailed Kites have had a difficult time in the past century. Van Denburgh (1899) considered it to be common in the Palo Alto area, but Grinnell and Miller (1944) described its California status, "Formerly, prior to 1895, common and widespread in valley and lower foothill territory,

but now rare or entirely gone from many sections." Martin (Condor 41:125) considered a single bird near Palo Alto that "hovered over a grain field, south of the lower Embarcadero" on Jun 2, 1937 to be notable. Since that time there had been a relatively steady increase and Sibley (1952) estimated a total South Bay population of 100 birds. Eisenmann (1971) discusses the decline and recovery of this species in some detail and speculates that the primary cause of its decline was persecution by man. It is a conspicuous bird and doesn't show a particular fear of man and must have been a tempting target for people with guns who thought hawks were harmful and must be destroyed.

Bald Eagles are rare visitors to Santa Clara County and, nearly every winter, one or more birds are resident on Calaveras and Isabel reservoirs. Although not nearly as regular, one or more birds are sometimes found on other reservoirs such as Coyote or Calero. The distribution of species based on records over the last 15 years is shown in Figure 4. The earliest arrival date I have is of an adult at Coyote Reservoir on Oct 11, 1991 (John McKean) while the latest departure is a sub-adult over the Sunnyvale Baylands on Apr 14, 1989 (Mike Feighner). Most unusual is a summer record of an adult over Casa de Fruta on Jun 18, 1993 (Steve Rottenborn, Mike Rogers). Presumably, this was a nonbreeding bird, but might a reservoir the size of San Luis on the other side of Pacheco Pass or one of our county reservoirs ever attract a breeding pair?

The maximum size of our present wintering population is difficult to estimate. Eight

Bald Eagle

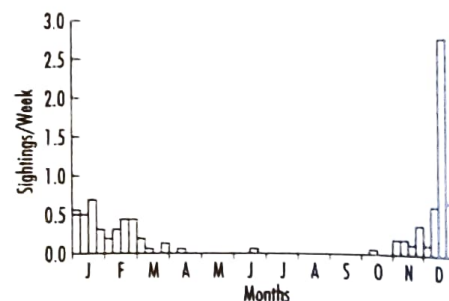



Figure 4. Bald Eagle yearly distribution of sightings/week (1980-1994).

birds were reported from Calaveras Reservoir on Feb 4, 1968 (Ted and Zoe Chandik, Joel Greenberg; AFN 22:474). Last winter we may have had as many as eleven birds locally as two adults and an imm. were seen on the Isabel Reservoir on Dec 21, 1994 (Mike Mammoser, Grant Hoyt), 2 adults and 3 imm. were on Coyote Reservoir on Jan 2, 1995 (Emilie Curtis *et al.*), and 3 imm. birds were on Calaveras Reservoir on Jan 12, 1995 (Mike Rogers).

Grinnell and Miller (1944) considered this species primarily a permanent resident in California with some augmentation in numbers from wintering birds. By the time they wrote their account the resident California population was largely reduced to birds on the Modoc Plateau and the Channel Islands. Sibley (1952) cited only two Santa Clara County records and noted that in the South Bay "one or two seen nearly every year." They appear to be more common now in the county as a wintering bird. This change in status is due in part, probably, to the construction of reservoirs in the county. 

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The 1995 Summer Season

by Bill Bousman

The station operated 20 days in June and 22 in July which is a little higher than in the last few years. The information that follows is from the Summary Board in the Banding Lab and is based on new captures unless otherwise noted. There is no normalization of the data so comments on population trends is speculative.

In the summer months of June and July we band mostly resident birds that are nesting along the creek, but we also get a smattering of late spring migrants, a few dispersing birds, and the excitement of an occasional vagrant. However, for those species which breed in very small numbers along the creek or not at all in some years, it is not always possible to know for certain whether we are banding a local breeder, a late migrant, or a dispersing bird.

Numbers of **Black-chinned** and **Anna's hummingbirds** were down this summer with only four Black-chins and nine Anna's banded. In 1994 we banded 15 and 49 of these species respectively. This reduction is probably related to removal of tree tobacco last winter. Tree tobacco, an alien species in California, is much beloved of hummingbirds for its copious nectar. However, **Allen's Hummingbird**, which also breeds along the creek, showed slightly more typical numbers so perhaps the situation is not as clear as I have indicated.

A **Willow Flycatcher** on Jun 14 was a late spring migrant. The status of **Pacific-slope Flycatchers** along the creek is less clear. We band a few birds in nearly every week throughout the summer. The birds we capture in the first week or two of June are After Hatching Year (AHY) birds and are probably late migrants. Towards the end of July we start to net more and more Hatching Year (HY) birds and these are probably dispersing from nearby areas. But the status of AHY birds in between these times is unclear—are they floaters, failed breeders or are they nesting along the creek somewhere? From Jun 4 to 21 we banded five **Ash-throated Flycatchers**, far more than we usually see. Are they starting to move into this area? Will they nest here in the future?



In July we started to encounter **House Wrens**, banding four during the month. These are undoubtedly dispersing birds and showed a pattern similar to last year when we banded eight birds during July. In prior years we rarely caught more than one or two dispersing birds.

There are a number of species that breed further up Coyote Creek but their status below Hwy 237 is unclear and, even when they do nest this may not be a regular pattern. We captured **Swainson's Thrushes** in June with the last bird banded on Jun 21 and it appears that these birds were all migrants. A single **Warbling Vireo** on Jul 19 and an **Orange-crowned Warbler** on Jul 1 probably were dispersing birds or failed nesters although both may breed along the creek in some years. However, we netted six **Yellow Warblers** this summer and on Jun 29 Steve Rottenborn documented breeding by two different pairs north of the trailers.

Three **Wilson's Warblers** banded between Jun 21 and Jul 2 may indicate the possibility of local breeding. The uncertainty in this species' breeding status locally is very similar to that of Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo, and Orange-crowned Warbler. Of considerable interest was the re-capture of a male **Yellow-breasted Chat** on Jun 14 that was first banded on May 24. When first captured there was no sign of a cloacal protuberance on this bird, but upon re-capture the protuberance was scored a two. Rita Colwell heard this bird singing nearby on Jun 28. When Alviso was all salt marsh and willow thicket at the turn of the century, this species probably bred locally, but there are no recent records of this species nesting along riparian areas near the bay.

Some of our typical residents were banded in reasonably normal numbers: **Common Yellowthroat**, **Black-headed Grosbeak**, **Song Sparrow**, and **Bullock's Oriole**. A single **Dark-eyed Junco** banded on Jul 9 is of interest as this species is not typically found in riparian habitats along the valley floor. Finally, a family party of three **Hooded Orioles** were captured together on Jul 28.

An **Ovenbird** captured on Jun 25 was our only summer vagrant. Misoriented spring birds often wind up in California in June and this capture is our second spring record for this species for the county (out of a total of seven records throughout the year). ✨

Band-A-Thon-A-Success!

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CCRS would like to thank the following organizations and people for their donations for prizes for the Band-A-Thon: **Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society Nature Shop** for birdfeeders and wild bird seed, **Brentano's Books of Santa Clara** for their gift certificate, and **Lisa Brown** for donated artwork. ✨

Publications Available

Riparian Planting Guide

Coyote Creek Riparian Station, in cooperation with the San Francisquito Watershed Coordinated Resource Management Plan, is distributing a *Streamside Planting Guide for San Mateo and Santa Clara County Streams Flowing to the Bay*. This planting guide on landscaping with native riparian plants gives information on how to enhance the creek corridor and its wildlife by planting native trees and shrubs. This guide was written in conjunction with the California Native Plant Society and the Habitat Restoration Group. Creekside residents of San Francisquito Creek will be getting their copy free thanks to a generous contribution from the If Not Now, When Foundation. For your copy, please send \$5.00 to cover postage and handling, to Coyote Creek Riparian Station, P.O. Box 1027, Alviso, CA 95002, attention Elsie.

Volunteer Opportunities

Native Planting

Elinor Spellman and her small band of gardeners will be putting in more native plants, such as cottonwood and willows, out here at the Station. Won't you join them this Spring, to plant and learn more about restoration work using native riparian trees? Call Elinor at (408) 354-1775.

Join the Stream Inventory

There are still many opportunities to come aboard and join the Stream Inventory on the Creeks in Santa Clara County! New teams are needed for Saratoga and Coyote Creeks. We are testing water quality, looking at fisheries habitat, vegetation, mapping pollution and habitats, listening and looking for birds, and scouting for reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates using **GPS** and **GIS**. Sign up for a creek near you by calling Chris Fischer at (408) 262-9204.

Data Entry

Come into the office on weekdays, weekends, week nights, whenever! Learn Paradox! We need your nimble fingers to put data into the computer before our data pile gets hauled away as a fire hazard by the Alviso Fire Brigade! A short commitment is all we ask. You should have previous knowledge of PC's and Windows. Call Chris Otahal to volunteer for bird data entry and Charles Preuss for stream inventory data entry at (408) 262-9204.

Volunteer Thank You's

Thanks to our volunteer software pro, **Irene Beardsley**, the data Community Creek Watch volunteers generate actually gets fed into our computers into an easy-to-use database. Irene has designed the data entry sheets for all the stream inventory protocols and has been invaluable as our Paradox troubleshooting expert. Irene also designed our Membership Data Base and has been refining it to accommodate the needs of the entire CCRS staff. Wow, thanks Irene!

Thanks go to our Volunteer Finance Committee, **Don Price**, **Elinor Spellman**, **Mike Rogers**, and **Chris Lonowski**, who are working with CCRS staff to develop our 1996 budget, so that we all have an understanding of the Big Picture.

Thank you to **Lisa Brown** and the many other hard working volunteers who made September 1995's Band-A-Thon such a success. Due to their hard work, we raised **\$1500** for the Avian Research Program at CCRS.

How can people be in two places at once? People who volunteer for two activities on the same day, that's who! Thanks to **Mark Sutherland** and **Carrie Helton** who attended both the California Coastal Cleanup Day and the Band-A-Thon. Whew, hard work! Thanks too, to another CCRS volunteer who came and cleaned up at the creek, **Richard Steward** of San Jose. Thanks so much.

Thank you so much to **Pat Schielle** and the Palo Alto law firm, **Wilson, Sonsini, Goodrich & Rosati** for donating 130 three-ring binders to CCRS. Most of the binders will be used for storing the data generated from the Stream Inventory.

Community Creek Watch volunteers have already splashed into Saratoga Creek. The Invertebrate team has begun their survey and the Habitat Mapping team has already completed the first stretch of creek, within Saratoga's City limits.

Saratoga Habitat Mapping Team

Bill Bilobran	Jenny Kranz
Cynthia Brinkhurst	Linda Littrell
Joshua Fairbanks	Jonathan Olds
Mary Farrington	Mary Small
Carol Hankermeyer	Reid Watkins
Diane Kodama	

Saratoga Invertebrates Team

Bill Bilobran	Kate Macneale
Ron Bjork	Theresa Metz
Cynthia Brinkhurst	Craig Miller
Joshua Faribanks	Rob Moncrieff
Arleen Feng	Shannon Newby
Marcia Guzzetta	Jonathan Olds
Douglas Herman	Pamela Peterson
Revital Katznelson	Michael Tel
Diane Kodama	Richard Wetzig
Jenny Kranz	

The following Community Creek Watch volunteers have completed their surveys on the following creeks.

Guadalupe Creek Habitat/Pollution Mapping

Lyle Adams	Sue Crick
Sarah Beebe	Danielle DeRome
Jill Bernhard	Arleen Feng
Ron Bjork	Carrie Helton
Lisa Brown	Ulrike Keyssner
Shelly Buranek	Doug Sanders
Aiden Casey	Jamie Swain
Catherine Casey	Michael Tel

Las Gatas Creek Habitat/Pollution Mapping

Jill Bernhard	Susan Sandstrom
Sue Crick	Barbara Springer
Jeff Mourox	Jamie Swain
Doug Sanders	

Ross Creek Habitat/Pollution Mapping

Sarah Beebe	Eric Olson
Jill Bernhard	Doug Sanders
Carrie Helton	Barbara Springer
Shalese Huang	Mark Sutherland
Nina Kogut	Jamie Swain

Stevens Creek Habitat/Pollution Mapping

Jill Bernhard	Kathy Korataj
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Shelly Burane	Jamie Swain
Ken Davies	Michael Tel
Carrie Helton	

Thank you so much everybody!

Donations Needed!

Companies often have corporate giving programs where they donate used equipment. Ask your company if they have such a program. We are in need of copiers, printers, computers, digitizers, etc.

Sitting on top of the river levee between Coyote Creek and the waste water treatment plant's sludge ponds gives us some unique views, but unfortunately brings vast amounts of fine dust into the office. Hard drives and desk tops get covered. The janitorial service, a.k.a. the staff, would like to get a new **vacuum cleaner**, preferably an industrial strength, ear-splitting, giant sucking machine. Call Cyndi at (408) 262-9204.

Steve Morris, brand new StreamKeeper Program Assistant, lacks his own computer, others of us in the office are working on out-of-date computers. We would love to receive donations of **386 or 486 (or better) IBM-compatible computers**. A donated second hand one would be perfect, however, we could pay up to \$500. Call Karen or Charles at (408) 262-9204.

We need a **copy machine** that can copy on both sides as well as sort. We would also love to have a **color copier** so that we can make inexpensive copies from our donated color printer.

We could also use another **PC printer** for the office. One that can withstand large printing jobs, do duplex printing, and has high dpi would be heaven.

Continued on facing page 

Volunteer Opportunities

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The Invertebrate Stream Inventory team is in dire need of a good **dissecting scope**.

Artists to donate line **drawings** of riparian scenes, plant and wildlife. We could use sketches of salmon, steelhead, insects, amphibians, reptiles, a cross-section of a creek, creek scenes, volunteers, land plants and aquatic plants, and of course our creek-side birds. Call Karen at (408) 262-9204 if you would like to donate any artwork or could work with CCRS staff on specific projects. ✨

Headed for Higher Ground

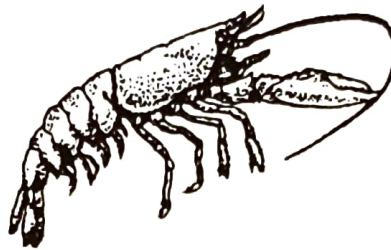
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District environmental staff. Soon information collected through the Community Creek Watch program will be actively assisting agency staff members in their efforts to better plan for and protect riparian resources in Santa Clara County! The completion of the Guadalupe River Watershed will be a milestone marked by agencies and organizations throughout the State. Certainly an event worthy of a celebration! CCRS staff are hoping to put together a gathering in late spring of '96...let us know your ideas! ✨

High Tides Drive California Coastal Cleanup Day Inland

The City of Sunnyvale's Environmental Education Program organized cleanup activities at over eight creeks and Shoreline Park for the eleventh annual California Coastal Cleanup Day, on September 23, 1995. Coyote Creek Riparian Station's StreamKeepers Program, organized the Coyote Creek/Kelly Park cleanup site. Volunteers hauled out over 1,000 pounds of trash including 18 tires and a couple of shopping carts. The hardest thing to pull out was the over 1,000,000 (just an estimate) pieces of broken styrofoam bits that had gone from fast food restaurants, into the hands of the general public, into the creek.

All in all, the Santa Clara County-wide cleanup event picked up over 25,000 pounds of trash. Thanks to everyone! We look forward to being out on the creek again, on Earth Day 1996 in April! ✨



Clean Creek Tips

Tires are often placed in lakes to provide habitat for fish but when dumped in our small creeks they cause a multitude of problems. They can cause severe bank erosion, trap migrating fish, cause flooding problems, and trap water during low flow season which mosquitoes can then breed in.

The easiest way to get rid of your tires is to turn them in when you get new ones. However, if you have been accumulating them and now want to get rid of them here is a list of places where you can go.

San Jose residents can recycle their old tires at the City of San Jose Environmental Services Department's Free Tire Drop-off Day, February 24th at a local school. Call Recycle Plus, customer service, at 277-2700 after the first of February for complete details. Only passenger automobile and truck tires will be accepted and they must be

off the rim. They will not accept tires that have been filled with foam. You will be asked to show proof of San Jose residency (ID card with San Jose address, or an ID card and Recycle Plus Billing Statement).

Non-San Jose residents can dispose of their tires by paying a nominal Hazardous Disposal Fee at the following places:

Tires Plus in Mountain View, 345 Castro Way, 415-967-3725. Tires Plus will take up to 2 tires at a time and charges \$5 per tire. Used Tire Warehouse in Santa Clara, 805 Comstock, (408) 970-8733 takes up to six tires at a time and charges \$3 per tire. Call for hours, additional information and to let them know you're coming.

Source: The California Recycling Hotline at 1-800-553-2962. Call for all your recycling needs. ✨

Aquatic Invertebrate Sampling Begins

The Community Creek Watch program has been pioneering citizens' monitoring techniques in California since its inception in 1992. This fall the program has taken the lead again, this time by agreeing to field-test aquatic invertebrate sampling protocols recently developed by the California Department of Fish and Game. For the next year, Creek Watch staff and volunteers will be donning our hip waders and getting up close and personal with the rich, writhing foundation of the riparian food web. The organisms we collect will be identified in the new invertebrate lab at McClellan Ranch (thanks to the generosity of Barbara Banfield and the City of Cupertino Parks and Rec. Dept.) in order to learn the community composition and perhaps begin to evaluate the health of the system. The samples will be permanently archived at the Dr. Gordon Edwards Entomology Museum at San Jose State University.

We also hope to determine whether the new State protocol is appropriate for use by volunteers in our local urban streams. Many of the new citizens' monitoring groups around the Bay are looking forward to seeing our results!

Volunteers interested in devoting the next year to learning sampling and identification techniques in the field or in the lab should contact Chris Fischer at (408) 262-9204. Previous experience helpful, but not necessary! ✨

Saratoga Creek Project

 Continued from page 1

Creek Watch inventorying, the school programs, and the Saratoga Creek Watershed Festival, a rekindled community stewardship of the creek shall be born. ✨

Calendar of Events

"Tuesday" Talks Now on Thursday!

The format and schedule of the "Tuesday Talks" is being changed for 1996! In order to encourage greater attendance and allow a more in-depth exploration of our topics, the following changes will be instituted immediately:

- These events will now be held on Thursdays.
- Speakers will be scheduled quarterly rather than monthly.
- Each event will be preceded by a full length article by the speaker in the *RipariaNews*.
- The event will be held at the Cupertino Library Community Room at 10400 Torre Ave. in order to allow a larger audience.
- A \$5.00 donation will be requested.

Despite these changes, we hope the Thursday Talks will remain a friendly, informal forum in which we discuss topics of interest to the membership and the public.

Spring: The Importance of Riparian Habitat in Santa Clara County May 2, 1996 7 to 9 pm

As the warblers and thrushes return and frog song fills the evening air, we are reminded yet again of the incredible changes spring brings to our landscape. What role do riparian areas play in the grand scheme of things? Steve Rottenborn will give us a glimpse of these beautiful, vital places as he discusses his work on Coyote Creek.

Summer: An Evening in the World of Bats July 11, 1996 7 to 9 pm

Mosquitoes driving you crazy? Many bats eat half their weight a night in insects! Join Dave Johnston with a slide show featuring our local bug zappers in their native habitats. Discover the amazing relationships (even electronic warfare!) between bats and their prey.

• **Ecological Restoration**, a ten-session course, is being offered by UC Santa Cruz Extension's Environmental Science Department from February 14 through April 3, 1996. The course will be held in Santa Clara on Wednesday evenings with at least one Saturday or Sunday field trip to be arranged. Call Verna Jigour, restoration biologist, at (408) 246-4425, or Deborah Amshoff, Santa Clara Valley Water District's environmental planner and landscape architect at (408) 265-2607 x 2694, for a copy of the course outline, or UC Santa Cruz Extension at (408) 748-7380 for registration information.

• The **R3 (Restoration, Recreation, Roadtrip) Naturalists** invite you to join them April 27 and 28 for a trip to the Nature Conservancy Kern River Preserve near Bakersfield. The R3 will help the Nature Conservancy set up for their annual Kern Valley Festival. Informal potluck, camping, and wildflower walks are the weekend's themes. Contact Cindy Roessler at the Water District (408) 265-2607, x2692.

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Life	\$600*
Patron	\$3,000*

* Life and Patron categories can be single payments or 4 quarterly installments.

Life membership payments and 10% of all other membership payments and general contributions go toward long-term support of CCRS activities. We acknowledge memorial contributions in *RipariaNews*. We welcome bequests including those of real property.

Coyote Creek Riparian Station (CCRS) is a nonprofit California membership corporation with United States and California tax exempt status. CCRS is dedicated to research on and the restoration of riparian and wetland habitats.

CCRS operates in cooperation with the Santa Clara Valley Water District, San Jose/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, and the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

RipariaNews is published quarterly for the information of our CCRS membership; the personnel of the several cooperating federal, state, and local agencies; and other organizations and individuals concerned with the flora and fauna of riparian and wetland habitats.

You can reach us at: Coyote Creek Riparian Station, P.O. Box 1027, Alviso-Milpitas Road, Alviso, CA 95002; (408) 262-9204; email address ccrs@best.com.

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