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RipariaNews

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Newsletter of the Coyote Creek Riparian Station

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Bats in our Riparian Corridors

by Dave Johnston

Seldom seen and rarely heard, bats roost and forage in our riparian corridors. While many of us are either sleeping or watching the David Letterman Show, bats are roosting under bridges after an evening of dining on mosquitoes, beetles, moths or even scorpions and centipedes. As it is with many other Californian wildlife, riparian habitat is home and an important foraging area for several species of bats.

These often misunderstood mammals are now gaining more attention as we realize their populations are declining world-wide. The bats' story of diminishing numbers is all too familiar with habitat loss one of the principal reasons. Although bats can make use of man-made structures, they are often evicted because they are feared or viewed as pests. Bats live from 10 to 30 years, so bioaccumulation of pesticides could also be a serious problem although few studies have documented this. If these problems aren't enough, western culture fosters many misconceptions about bats also contributing to their decline in numbers. Instead of debunking myths about bats like most popular articles, I will introduce you to a few species with affinities to our local riparian systems.

Yuma bats, *Myotis yumanensis*, are probably more closely associated with water than any other North American species of bat. These bats have wingspans of about 9 inches

and are often confused with other *Myotis* such as California bats or Little brown bats. Early in the evening, Yuma bats fly up and down our creeks, 3 to 6 feet above the water, foraging on mosquitoes, midges, mayflies, and other small flying insects. In our lower watersheds these bats forage above slow waters among large cottonwoods, while in our upper watersheds they forage above fast moving



Pallid Bats, *Antrozous pallidus*, often use riparian trees as an evening roost.

streams among maple and alder trees or above mountain lakes and ponds. Nearby buildings (especially churches) and bridges may house large nursery colonies. Like many other bat species, Yuma bats do not tolerate disturbance and often abandon their nursery colony after even a single human visit. These bats give birth to a single young in May or early June.

Western red bats, *Lasiurus blossevillii*, are solitary bats occurring in the heavily wooded riparian areas of the South Bay. Red bats are one of our most attractive mammals with thick, bright orange to rusty-red colored fur that extends on the dorsal surface of the wing membrane between the hind feet and tail. Males tend to be more brightly colored and many individuals have a frosting of white-

tipped fur on the nape and back. Red bats wrap themselves in their furred tail membrane as they roost in foliage during the day. I once located a red bat by investigating what scrub jays were mobbing about twenty-five feet high in a live oak tree. These bats have also startled more than one fruit picker mistaking the bat for a slightly oblong, but ripe-looking, peach! Red bats are one of a very few bat species that give birth to twins or triplets. Normally, the mother leaves her young in a tree when she forages, although she will move her young if she decides to change her roosting site. Red bats forage primarily on larger moths and fly up to 40 miles per hour.

I've observed **Hoary Bats**, *Lasiurus cinereus*, in both upper and lower watershed riparian areas in the south bay. With a wingspan of 15 to 16 inches, this is our largest local bat associated within creek side habitat. Hoary bats are also solitary and roost on trees or tall shrubs like toyon. The name hoary comes from the appearance of the white tipped hairs against the overall dark fur. Like red bats, hoary bats usually have twins and leave their young at a roost during foraging. Hoary bats are the most widespread bat species in North America, breeding primarily in Canada and north central United States. Little is known about the migration of this species, but some evidence suggests they migrate in waves of large groups and for long distances. Migrating hoary bats have been found on South Farallon Island, some 30 miles off our coast, in the late summer. Last August, I caught a Hoary bat in Death Valley, many miles from trees. These bats feed primarily on large beetles, moths, and smaller vertebrates including other bats.

Big brown bats, pallid bats, Mexican free-

Join Dave Johnston on Thursday, August 8 from 7 to 9 pm for a talk and slide show on bats. See Calendar of Events, back page for more information.

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Notes from the Board

by Mike Rodgers

Scott Terrill, Steve Rottenborn, and Mike Rodgers, members of CCRS's Board of Directors, recently completed a Bird-A-Thon fundraiser focusing on the birds found within Coyote Creek. Scott, Steve, and Mike followed Coyote Creek from its mouth at the Bay to its headwaters in Henry Coe State Park. All are expert birders with diverse backgrounds. Steve is a Ph.D. candidate in Biology at Stanford University and is studying the impact of urban areas on bird species. Scott Terrill, Project Manager with H.T. Harvey and Associates, did his Ph.D. thesis on the mechanism of bird migration and orientation. Mike, the author of this article, has a doctorate in Physics and works at the Ames Research Center, studying turbulence.

Their short story of birding on Coyote Creek underscores the diversity of birdlife that can be found in our riparian areas!

We assembled at the CCRS trailers before midnight on the 22nd of April to await the clock striking midnight. A **Song Sparrow** sang briefly but quieted down before claiming the first spot on our list. At midnight we were off in Scott's Ford Explorer with Scott behind the wheel, leaving Steve to find the birds and Mike to write them down. At the waterbird pond our list started out with **American Avocet**, followed shortly by **Killdeer** and **Marsh Wren**, all easily recognized by their vocalizations. After checking over the waterbird pond we worked our way out to the old Coyote Creek delta. By using a Q-beam flashlight we were able to sift through numerous shorebirds, including garnering the day's only **Dunlins**. A few gulls sparked much debate, with all of us wondering just how the Q-Beam would affect our impression of color. As the battery pack on the Q-Beam flashlight gave out we switched to using the car's headlights, adding the day's only **Black-bellied Plover** and a **Striped Skunk** to our list.

Shortly after 2:00 am we left CCRS and headed to a nearby 7-11 to gas up the car and load up on caffeine - the initial excitement had worn off and we were starting to feel the fact that our bodies had been cheated out of a night's sleep. Nevertheless we already had 23 species to show for our efforts, two of which we would not see again later in the day.

Owling near the Riverside golf course, which began at 3:00 am, added a **Barn Owl** and along Gilroy Hot Springs Road we added a **Great Horned** and **Western Screech Owls** but couldn't hear any **Poorwills** (4:00 am). Before dawn we hiked part way into Henry Coe State Park, the furthest upstream point on the creek we covered. A **Pacific-slope Flycatcher** got the day going at 4:53 am. This was followed by several **Wild Turkeys** and by 5:20 am many of the local breeders, especially **Black-headed Grosbeaks**, were in full song. The walk back to Gilroy Hot Springs Road quickly doubled our day's species list producing many recently arrived migrants such as **Lazuli Buntings**, **Western Tanagers**, and **Western Woodpeewees**, as well as lingering winter birds such as **Hermit Thrush**, **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**, **Yellow-rumped Warbler**, and both **White-crowned** and **Golden-crowned Sparrows**. However, true migrants that were just passing through were quite scarce. Eventually, nearing Coyote Reservoir, Scott's highly trained warbler ear added both **Nashville Warbler** and **Black-throated Gray Warbler** to our list. We never did find many of the hoped for species such as **Townsend's**, **Hermit**, and **MacGillivray's Warblers**, or **Hammond's Flycatcher** and only had two **Wilson's Warblers**. As anticipated, this location yielded both **Wood Ducks** and **Common**

Mergansers. Several **Greater Yellowlegs** just upstream of Coyote Reservoir were our only ones of the day.

The drive along Coyote Reservoir was not too productive, although a family of **Wild Boar** was seen. The dam added **Rock Wren** and **Rufous-crowned Sparrow**. Fly-over pairs of **Lawrence's Goldfinch** and **White-throated Swift** were a nice surprise. While

Steve walked back to the car for his scope he heard the only **Cedar Waxwing** of the day! Anderson Dam and the park below it added little of interest other than **California Thrasher**.

Back to CCRS for low tide, we had to work hard for shorebirds, which were in low numbers compared to the night hours. We added **Western**, **Herring**, **Glaucous-winged**, and (finally!) a single **Ring-billed Gull**. An adult **Golden Eagle** between the



Golden-crowned Sparrow

waterbird pond and the delta, and a **Clark's Grebe** in Coyote Slough were nice additions. The waterbird pond still had the male **Blue-winged Teal**, but all dowitchers were apparently **Long-billed**. A single **Lincoln's Sparrow** between the waterbird pond and the creek was a good find.

Back down by the trailers by 2:00 pm, we added the male **Black-chinned Hummingbird** at net 9385 and Steve's relentless bushwhacking eventually yielded a late **Fox Sparrow**. We finally located an **Allen's Hummingbird** in the overflow channel near the southern net lanes. We then battled the evening commuter traffic down to Hellyer Park.

Having seen a huge construction-related backup on southbound I-880 on the way up to CCRS we elected to head all the way over to I-680 before heading south. This was indeed a good decision, but it was already 4:00 pm when we scanned the lake at Hellyer Park, which had no interesting birds other than a small race **Canada Goose**. We walked a long chunk of the creek from upstream of the park all the way to Shady Oaks Park before finally hearing a **White-breasted Nuthatch**. The park also brought us a nice male **Rufous Hummingbird**.

Arriving at the Ogier ponds just after 5:30 pm we were eager to speed up the pace. The creek decided otherwise. It had washed out the road to our staked out Tricolored Blackbird colony! Becoming one with the creek we earned its cooperation and in the next half hour added not only **Tricolored Blackbirds**, but also a surprise basic-plumaged **Common Loon**, an always rare and secretive **Yellow-breasted Chat**, and a lingering female **Common Goldeneye**! Two **Eared Grebes** and a single late **Savannah Sparrow** here were also good finds. A female **Bufflehead** out on a gravel pit pond was unfortunately farther than 100 meters from the creek.

Knowing that we needed another species to reach 140, we headed north to Silicon Valley Boulevard, stopping at Parkway Lakes briefly without reward. On the way Steve's sharp eye finally found us a **Western Meadowlark** that was within 100 meters of the creek. In the fading light (7:30 pm) at the marsh south of Silicon Valley

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The Birds of Santa Clara County

Bill Bousman
(Copyright June 1996)

Vultures and Raptors, Part 2

Part 2 covers our local raptors from Northern Harrier through Northern Goshawk. The distribution over a year's time of these four species, based largely on records submitted to me over the last 15 years, is shown in Figure 1.

The **Northern Harrier** is a fairly common winter visitor in the county and, at these times, it is fairly widespread in its use of both marshlands and foothill grasslands. A portion of the population is resident but fewer birds are present during the summer and, therefore, the species is considered uncommon at that time. Within the Palo Alto count circle 0.05 (0.03 birds/party-hour) are recorded in the summer and 0.14 (0.06 birds/party-hour in the winter).

I don't have systematic census data that properly characterize the fall arrival of wintering birds or their departure in the spring. Some records of note that refer to either migrating or dispersing birds include a bird near Mt. Stakes on the Stanislaus County border on 27 Jul 92 (Clark Blake) and four birds passing over Mt. Hamilton on 2 Oct 94 in a six-hour time period (Steve and Heather Rottenborn).

Breeding Northern Harriers are largely confined to the edges of the South Bay and the southern Santa Clara Valley in the area called the Bolsa de San Felipe. Fledged young found at the south edge of Calaveras Reservoir at an elevation of 740 feet on 25 Jun 92 (Mike Rogers) represent the only breeding observed away from the valley floor during the atlas years of 1987 through 1993. Nest construction was observed as early 27 Mar 93 (Steve Rottenborn) during the atlas period and the feeding of young as late as 23 Aug 89 (David Suddjian).

Van Denburgh (1899), based on his observations in Los Gatos and Palo Alto, did not include the Northern Harrier on his list of known land birds. Barlow (1900) augmented Van Denburgh's list and noted that Rollo Beck had recorded this hawk nesting in the Alviso marshes. Grinnell and Miller (1944) considered the Northern Harrier a widespread winter visitant in California and noted that the summer numbers were relatively small and reduced from historical times because of habitat loss. Sibley (1952) judged it a common winter visitor in the South Bay, but a rare nest-

ing species. As a ground nester the Northern Harrier is more susceptible to disturbance by man or feral animals and its habitat needs are more restricted than the White-tailed Kite. It is important that nesting refugia in the South Bay that are under public stewardship remain closed to public visitation during the nesting season.

The **Sharp-shinned Hawk**, the small-

abundant in the state. Sibley (1952) also described this species as a common winter visitant.

Cooper's Hawk is a fairly common resident as shown in Figure 1. Birds are more widespread in the winter being found away from known breeding areas and there may be some augmentation of birds from northern or montane popula-

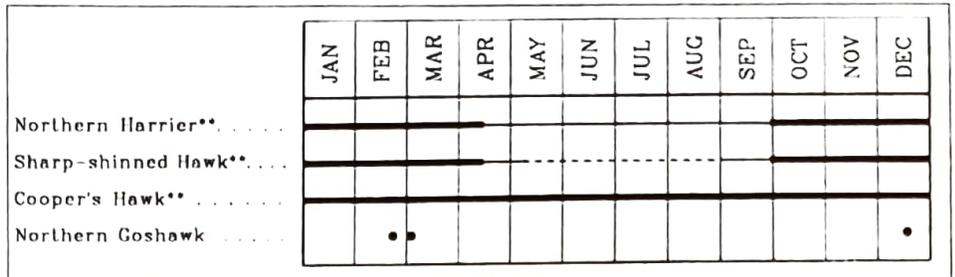


Figure 1. Distribution of vultures and raptors in Santa Clara County, Part 2. A thick line means a species is common, a medium weight line indicates fairly common, a thin line means a species is uncommon, a dashed line is rare, and a dotted line is very rare. A filled circle shows a record of vagrancy. Regular breeding within the county is indicated by a double asterisk after the species' name

est of our accipiters, is primarily a winter resident, as shown in Figure 1, although a small portion of the population nests within the county. Sharpies normally show up towards the middle of September and by the end of the month they are fairly common anywhere in the county. It appears that most wintering birds leave in April and, by the beginning of May, the few birds we encounter are resident.

Sharp-shinned Hawks are one of our rarest breeding raptors. We found proof of breeding in six blocks in the county during the atlas period from 1987 to 1993. Five of these blocks were in the Diablo Range and one was in the Santa Cruz Mountains. However, birds were observed in 33 other blocks and this species is probably more widespread than shown by the atlas confirmations. Where this small accipiter did nest it used a variety of forest types.

Van Denburgh (1899) judged the Sharp-shinned Hawk to be abundant in winter but he had no observations of summer birds in either Los Gatos or Palo Alto. Grinnell and Miller (1944) considered this hawk a rare or uncommon breeding species in Northern California south to Alameda and Monterey counties. They cite a record of nest and eggs at Stanford on 22 Apr 1889 and it seems likely that this species has always been a rare local resident. In the winter, however, they considered the Sharp-shin to be common, if not

tions. Data from the Palo Alto count circle, however, show no difference in the summer and winter numbers: 0.05 (0.03 birds/party-hour).

Cooper's is a widespread breeding species in the county and, surprisingly, in urban areas as well as the Diablo Range and the Santa Cruz Mountains. We first noted breeding urban Cooper's in 1989 when a pair raised three young in the Willow Glen area of San Jose (Noreen Feuss, Roy Cameron). Continuing atlas work showed that this was not an isolated incident as we found Cooper's Hawks nesting in many urban spots with suitably mature trees. By the end of the atlas period we had recorded nesting in 16 different urban locations from Menlo Park to San Jose. It appears that this phenomenon is of fairly recent or local occurrence. Breeding atlases of Marin, Monterey, and Sonoma counties have all characterized the Cooper's Hawk as a breeder of more remote areas of their respective counties (Shuford 1993, Roberson and Tenney 1993, Burridge 1995).

Van Denburgh had only two records of Cooper's Hawk in his fourteen years in Los Gatos and Palo Alto, both in autumn. There is no indication in either Grinnell and Miller (1944) or Sibley (1952) that this species has become more common but, today, Cooper's and Sharp-shinned

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The 1995-96 Winter Season

by Bill Bousman

We banded 11 days in December, 11 in January, and 10 in February which continues the slow decline of winter banding days of recent years (We banded on 70 days in the winter of 1990 and 1991). The variation in effort for this season makes comparisons between years risky, but looking at the temporal distributions taken from the Summary Board it appears that our recruitment of Anna's Hummingbird, which is largely resident was typical as was the number of new captures for such winter resident species as Hermit Thrush, Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler, and Fox, Golden-crowned, White-crowned (Puget Sound), and White-crowned (Gambel's) sparrows.

New captures of Ruby-crowned Kinglets were down with only three banded compared to a typical capture rate of about 13



for the season. Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warblers were banded at a typical winter rate early in the season, but the spring push of these birds, which normally starts in early March, was well underway by the second week in February. The numbers star of the winter season was Lincoln's Sparrow which we banded at about twice the standard rate

with 45 new captures during the season compare to an expected rate of about 25 based on previous years.

Those of you who participate in Cornell University's FeederWatch Program may be aware of the two-year cycle in Varied Thrush numbers that they have reported. For unknown reasons the number of birds recorded at bird feeders oscillates strongly on a two-year basis. One year birds are quite common while the next they are rare. We see similar behavior at the station when we combine the winter season numbers with the fall and spring banding reports. However, here we sometimes see a three-year cycle where we have two years of lows followed by a high. This occurred in the winters of 1991-92 and 1992-93, which were both low years, and we had a high count in 1994-95. This season was clearly another low with only a single bird banded for the entire fall-winter-spring period. ✨

Notes from the Board

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Boulevard we were treated to a Virginia Rail to reach our final tally of 141 species.

Returning to the CCRS trailers after 8:30 pm we were treated to a **Barn Owl**, nicely closing the circle on a day of birding that had turned up this species in the wee hours

of the morning. Despite thorough coverage of Coyote Creek all day we were not the ones to find the most unusual species to be recorded along the creek. Chris Otahol had spent a leisurely time an hour earlier enjoying a **Lesser Nighthawk** outside the trailers. We had explicitly looked/hoped for this bird along Gilroy Hot Springs Road (where one was seen last year at this time) and around

the Ogier Ponds (near their historical breeding areas) without success, but it was nice to know that our hopes had not been that outrageous after all! After 21 hours of birding we headed for home.

In just 21 hours of continuous birding, Steve, Mike and Scott encountered 141 species of birds, of which only 60 are listed here, all within 100 meters of Coyote Creek. ✨

Transitions

Bruce Katano, dedicated CCRS employee for over ten years and the Station's very first employee, has left the Station in order to expand his horizons. Bruce was in charge of many aspects of the Avian Research Program, including monitoring the return of deer mice, voles and other rodents into the revegetation sites, assessing the vegetation at the sites, monitoring the pond around Avocet Island, and writing the Wildlife Monitoring annual reports to the Santa Clara Valley Water District. And of course many of you know Bruce personally through his work with the Banding Program, including identifying and banding birds, clearing out the net lanes, and putting up new nets. Bruce also did much of the less desirable maintenance activities around the office including helping with the garbage, vacuuming, and personally teaching every one of us how to clean out the compost toilet. Something I know I won't ever forget - as hard as I try. Bruce would also give us something interesting to talk about during lunch. Topics ranged from Global Warming to in-depth

descriptions of human diseases, to American-Asian international relationships. Our lunch time talks are less global since Bruce has moved on. Best of luck to you Bruce.

Diane Kodama, volunteer with Community Creek Watch and office intern, is spending her summer in the Anza Borrego Desert on a Flat-tailed Horned Lizard project. She is hiking ten miles every day in 100°F plus temperatures in order to capture and band these lizards. We're sooo jealous.

We bid a warm farewell to Jenny Kranz, our retiring Banding Biologist. Jenny has decided to move on and do some banding in the Sierra this summer and then will join a research project in Hawaii. We thank her for her commitment to the Banding Program and will miss her unending enthusiasm and energy. Good luck, Jenny on your new adventures.

Meet Al Jaramillo

Al Jaramillo, CCRS's new Avian Research Associate, was born in Santiago, Chile, but grew up in Canada where he became interested in birds at a young age. After years of birding in the Toronto area he decided to expand his horizons by taking trips to South America

where new birds were easier to come by. His obsession with birds led him back to the University of Toronto where he obtained a degree in Zoology. In an effort to get a free trip to South America, he decided to get a Masters studying egg mimicry in Argentine cowbirds. The gauchos (cowboys) of the Argentine pampas grasslands didn't think that Al's bird watching was a very macho activity; in addition he lacked another macho trait, the ability to ride a horse. However, they were quite impressed by his lack of fear of snakes and big bugs, an attribute that restored his status in their eyes.

Having realized that research was a good way to see the world he took on other projects in distant lands. These included studying the endangered White-breasted Guinea fowl in Côte d'Ivoire, Africa and leaf-cutter ants in Amazonian Ecuador. Most recently, he settled in Half Moon Bay with his spouse, and has been writing a book on New World Blackbirds and leading periodic birding tours to Canada.

For more information on blackbirds and bird identification, "surf" Al's home page (<http://www.quake.net/~alvaro/index.html>). ✨

Saratoga Creek Watershed Festival

- a first for Santa Clara County

by Dave Johnston

Heavy rains pummeled the Bay Area in mid-May and the morning's weather forecast for the day of the Saratoga Festival, May 19, predicted more rain that morning, midday, and evening. I thought to myself, "okay, its Plan B - squeeze the choir, bands, puppet show and slide shows into a one-tract schedule and add the exhibitors at the other end of our 200-man army tent. Just maybe a few hardy souls will turn out." By nine in the morning, sun streaked through billowing thunderheads and Bill Giannini started charcoals for his, soon to be famous, barbecued trout sandwiches. Barbara Dutra set up for cold drinks and Barbara Lulu, Victor and Kathleen set up the International Roasting Company Coffee station. By ten o'clock, the sun filled Wildwood Park as birds celebrated in chorus above the sound of the bubbling creek and exhibitors were settling into their tables. Mary Gardner from the Saratoga Union School District sold the Saratoga Creek Watershed Festival T-shirts with our Georges Seurat - like logo, Barbara Lulu organized the new point-a-list painting of Saratoga Creek and Garth Bacon organized creek science investigations for children. The day began with an opening statement by the Mayor of Saratoga, Paul Jacobs and then Nick Massei took over as M.C. for our musical program including the



Barbara Lulu enlists the help of Saratoga Schools' students with her next creek painting.

Argonaut School 5th grade Choir, the Redwood School Band, the San Jose Children's Musical Theater, Greg Burger on guitar and fiddle, Les Landin and his Skillet Band, and a Puppet Show by Kathy Machado. As if that wasn't enough, under the big tent, talks were given on: pollution impacts on riparian life, a GPS and GIS computer demo, and accessing web sites for creek and natural resource information.

We would like to thank all the exhibitors, and the people who staffed them, including the Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra club, California Native Plant Society, Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department, Santa Clara Valley Water District, City of Saratoga, The Habitat Restoration Group, Santa Clara Audubon Society, Saratoga Union School District, CCRS StreamKeepers program, and CCRS's Community Creek Watch program. Thanks also to funding from the Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association, our primary funders, the Santa Clara Valley Water District, and the Saratoga Rotary Club Foundation. Thanks also to the Key Club of Saratoga Rotary Club, Saratoga Springs, and Saratoga Chamber of Commerce. My very special thanks to Mary Gardner, Superintendent of Saratoga Union School District and her staff who helped make this event a real success. It was a gorgeous day and about 650 visitors turned out for the festivities. ✨

Bats in our Riparian Corridors

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tailed bats, and sometimes western pipestrelles use bridges over urban creeks as evening roosts, however, these species generally forage outside riparian areas. Concrete bridges particularly those with black asphalt, warm up during the heat of the day and remain warm well into the evening. This creates warm pockets underneath the bridge that bats find attractive as evening roosts.

On warm evenings, I've observed big brown bats use valley oaks and pallid bats use willow trees near creeks as temporary evening roosts. I expect large cottonwoods, oaks, and redwoods with tree holes or cavities also provide hibernaculas, nurseries, and day roosts for our local species.

During this twentieth century, we collectively witnessed huge decreases in bat populations. Bat habitat was lost as enormous

regions of wildlands succumbed to agribusiness and urban sprawl. In the late twentieth century, conservationists turned their attention to purchasing specific critical habitats to ensure biodiversity and to remake other habitats. Some metropolitan areas have successfully integrated bat populations in urban development. Witness the half-million Mexican free-tailed bats roosting under the Congress Avenue bridge in Austin, Texas; here residents appreciate the fact that "their" bats feed on millions of insects every night. Farmers in southern Oregon and grape growers in Napa help increase bat populations on their farms and ranches in hopes of reducing insect populations eating their crops. Now that many people recognize the benefits of having bats in our ecosystem, we need to explore ways that can integrate them into human-dominated environments. We need to live together with these and other species in one community. ✨

The Birds of Santa Clara County

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Hawks are equally common as wintering birds. For the Palo Alto CBC the number of Sharp-shins per party hour is 0.04 (0.02) and for Cooper's the equivalent number is identical. For the San Jose CBC, based on the same 26 years of data, the Sharp-shinned birds/party hour are 0.05 (0.02, while for Cooper's the equivalent number is 0.04(0.03).

Northern Goshawk is an extremely rare winter visitor to central California. These birds come either from California's montane areas or more northern populations. It appears that at least two specimens of this large accipiter have been obtained in the county (Sibley 1952). A bird was shot in October 1927 near Morgan Hill and another bird was taken somewhere in the hills on the east side of the Santa Clara Valley on March 4, year unknown. I don't know if either specimen still exists. A number of sight records exist as well, but none have suitable documentation. A single bird was reported on the Mt. Hamilton CBC on 20 Dec 78 (Don Schmoltdt) but was questioned by the California editor (AB 33:658). An adult female was observed over Hwy 35 southeast of Mt. Bielawski on 21 Feb 89 on the border of Santa Clara and Santa Cruz counties (David Suddjian). The separation of immature goshawks from immature female Cooper's Hawks remains a challenge and there are a number of additional reports that have not adequately eliminated this possibility.

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Creek News

Saratoga Creek Watershed Brochure

A brand new brochure on the Saratoga Creek Watershed is now available. Modeled after the San Francisquito brochure, it contains information on the important physical, biological, and historical features of the Saratoga watershed.

Development of materials highlighting the unique or important physical, biological, and historical features of a watershed is an excellent means of helping watershed residents recognize the many ways their actions affect the health of the system. The first such brochure focused on San Francisquito Creek and was designed by a team led by Janet Cox and the Peninsula Conservation Center in Palo Alto. Their hard work paved way for future groups to design similar brochures on other streams; the flexible, attractive format has proven to be an excellent template.

If you would like to receive or help distribute free copies of the Saratoga Creek Brochure, or if you would like more information on creating materials for your own stream, please contact Chris Fischer at (408) 262-9204.

Saratoga Creek Watershed Festival T-shirts

You can still purchase "In Celebration of Saratoga Creek" tshirts by calling the Saratoga School District at (408) 867-3424 ext. 203 and speak with Kathy Devich. Your donation supports the Saratoga Union School District. \$12 for adult sizes small, large and X-large, and \$10 for Youth medium.

Our Creeks Are Just A Little Cleaner

On Saturday, April 20th, Earth Day - 1996, 563 volunteers joined in and removed almost 23,000 pounds of trash from creeks in Santa Clara County. Volunteers worked at twelve sites in the County ranging from San Francisquito Creek in Palo Alto down to Llagas Creek in Gilroy. This county-wide effort was made possible through the united efforts of many organizations including the Santa Clara Valley Water District, City of San Jose, Santa Clara County Parks, and Coyote Creek Riparian Station. These organizations and several surrounding cities are forming a group venture called the Creek Connections Action Group. They intend to *organize creek clean-ups at least twice yearly*, until our creeks sparkle. Expect to see

announcements in September for the California Coastal Clean-up Day and again every April for Earth Day.

We would like to thank those volunteers who helped out on our creeks. With your help, the creeks are now just a little cleaner. You removed 22,927 pounds of garbage including 71 shopping carts, 32 tires and various other auto parts, 4 sofas, 8 mattresses, carpeting, and six Christmas trees. Volunteers also planted oak trees, spread goldenrod seeds, and cleared out invasive vegetation along several creeks.

Hydrology Studies Beginning on Coyote Creek

This summer, Community Creek Watch staff will be working with world-renown hydrologist Luna Leopold to chart the history of rainfall and runoff within the Coyote Creek Drainage for the last 50 years. The charts we develop could give us important insight into how Coyote Creek hydrology may differ from other major drainages in the region, and how it interacts with San Francisco Bay.

Data will be taken from USGS flow and rain gauges throughout the watershed, and we hope to bolster this information with citizen-derived information as well. Do you know anyone who has kept a journal of rainfall using a backyard rain gauge? We sure would like to see your data! Call Chris Fischer or Charles Preuss at the office and watch for results in future issues.

Red-Legged Frog

A common amphibian in our area, the California red-legged frog has just been listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act on May 20th.. To save the frog, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be promoting simple conservation practices that ranchers can use while cattle grazing, vineyards can use in pesticide application, and local water districts can employ in managing reservoirs.

International Migratory Bird Day

Thanks to the combined efforts of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge and Coyote Creek Riparian Station, a tremendously successful International Migratory Bird Day was held May 11th. Over two hundred participants visited the station and enjoyed the many bird walks, banding

demonstrations, revegetation walks, children's events, and native plant sale. This event provided an opportunity to educate the public about the conservation efforts being carried out by the participating organizations as well as generating funds for CCRS's Avian Research Program. Thanks goes out to the many volunteers who made all this possible.

CCRS joins the Human Race!

On Saturday, May 11, Coyote Creek Riparian Station participated in the third annual Human Race fundraising event. Led by Cyndi Brinkhurst, seven CCRS representatives walked, ran and strolled with 1000 other folks representing 126 non-profits all raising funds for their organizations. In total, the Human Race raised \$150,000 for the participating organizations. To date CCRS has collected \$1330, for which we receive 75% and the Volunteer Exchange of Santa Clara, the organizing sponsor, gets the other 25%. More money is expected to be turned in. If you haven't done so, please mail those pledges today! Many thanks to all those participated in the Race and especially to all those who donated money and/or collected pledges.

Donations Needed!

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The lawn mover from Kay Whitlock was a great start, but we could still use more garden tools. Shovels, trowels, clippers, pruning shears, pruning saws, and loppers are just some of the tools that we could use to maintain our revegetation plots. Bring your donated items to the station or call Elinor Spellman at (408) 279-1884 if you would like her to pick them up.

Since Karen has been bringing the StreamKeeper program into schools lately, she is finding that she is now hauling tremendous amounts of stuff around. She could use large canvas bags, the kind Safeway sells to reduce the use of plastic or paper. If you have extras around the house, please give Karen a call at the office at (408) 262-9204 or mail them to her.

Pro-bono artists are needed to create line drawings of creek themes. We could use sketches of fish, insects, amphibians, reptiles, creek scenes, riparian birds, and people enjoying the creek. Call Karen at (408) 262-9204 if you would like to donate any artwork or could work with CCRS staff on specific projects. 

Volunteering Has Its Rewards

Volunteer Opportunities

Native Planting

Join **Elinor Spellman** and her restoration team in planting and maintaining native riparian trees out here at the station. Give Elinor a call at (408) 279-1884.

Become a Coyote Creek StreamKeeper

StreamKeeper is doing outreach within the Coyote Creek Watershed. If you know a homeowner, business owner, or school teacher who would like StreamKeeper to come out and present our slide show and talk on creek pollution, give Karen or Steve a call at the office.

Data Entry

The Stream Inventory Program could still use your help putting their data into the Paradox Data Base. Give Charles a call at (408) 262-9204 if you would like to volunteer days, evenings or even weekends.

Volunteer Thank yous

Kurt Specht, a student intern from the Environmental Studies Department at San Jose State University, has been working at the Station this spring on the native plant restoration project. Kurt has been gathering and propagating cuttings and grass plugs onsite, building basins for planting, watering, weeding and tending potted plants. He also built a platform to hold potted plants inside the greenhouse.

Kurt previously worked with Community Creek Watch's vegetation survey team on Ross Creek and the Guadalupe River. He was responsible for the collection of weekly data, equipment maintenance, and provided training and supervision of volunteers. He assisted with quality assurance /quality control events, and he helped Technical Coordinator Charles Preuss with data entry. Not least, Kurt recruited additional volunteers from his classes at San Jose State.

All of this and more was done and done extremely well, 12 hours every week. We were fortunate to have Kurt at the Station and feel sure he will go on to make solid contributions in environmental work. Thank you for all your help, Kurt.

Victor Bravo and **Paul Robertson** have finished the redwood deck and walk-way

between the main and bird banding trailers. Having a walk way between the trailers will help minimize the mud we carry into the trailers during the winter rains. Plus, the staff can use the deck to put on deep-dark tans during the summer. Thank you Victor and Paul.

Cyndi Brinkhurst is putting in lots of hours updating our new CCRS brochure. Helping Cyndi with her work is **Bert Pearl** who is doing the layout on his computer. The brochure will have new photos and up-to-date information on our programs. Thanks, to both Cyndi and Bert.

Without such dedicated and talented volunteers, CCRS staff would be "up a creek".

Donation Thank yous

Kay Whitlock, Assistant General Manager of the Santa Clara Valley Water District has come to our rescue with a donation of a heavy duty lawn mower. Kay, you will be happy to know that our bird banders are having an easier time of it negotiating the net lanes and trails now that they are neatly mowed.

StreamKeeper transferred our slide show, *Creeks: Life Lines for Wildlife*, into video tape complete with narration, through a generous donation by Hewlett-Packard. **Rebecca Maddex** of HP's Environmental Services Department arranged the transfer for us and showed the tape at their Earth Day festivities and will be showing it again as part of their creek clean-up project this summer. HP also paid for multiple copies so if an organization would like to borrow the tape, please call Karen or Steve at the office to make arrangements.

Thank you to **Freddie and John Howell**, owners of the **Wild Bird Store** in Los Gatos, who donated 50 one-pound bags of wild bird seeds. The wild bird seed was used as a give-away to the hard working volunteers who hauled garbage out of the Guadalupe Creek on Earth Day and to Migration Bird Day volunteers.

CCRS received yet another car load of office supplies from the Palo Alto Law Firm of **Wilson, Sonsini, Goodrich & Rosati**. Employee **Pat Schielie** works hard combing the law firm for out of date supplies that we can use. In June we received several boxes of three-ring binders, legal pads, fold-

ers, pens and other office supplies. CCRS thanks WSG & R.

Trish Kasper donated a large canvas bag to the StreamKeeper Schools program. In addition, Trish has been helping out in the White Trailer for several months. She has been a phenomenon doing data entry and error checking on Community Creek Watch's bird data base. Thank you, Trish.

Safety is always on our minds when we do creek clean-ups. For that reason, we bring with us containers to safely disposal of used hypodermic needles. The following companies and their employees donated "sharps" containers for all twelve Earth Day creek clean-up sites: **Sheila Yuter** of **San Jose's O'Connor Hospital**, **Zane Lednik** of the **Community Hospital of Los Gatos**, **Frankie Valent** of the **Good Samaritan Health System** in San Jose, **Mark Silverman** of **Stevens Creek Medical** in Cupertino, and **Kevin Dolan** of the **American Medical Response West Company** in Fremont. Thanks to all of you for keeping us safe. Just to let you know, only two needles were recovered from all 12 sites.

Donations Needed!

The Company you work for may have a corporate giving program where they donate used office equipment. Ask your company if they would like to donate a **copier, computers, digitizers, printers, or even old binders and office supplies** to CCRS. In particular we are looking for a **386 or 486 (or better) IBM compatible computer and a PC printer** that can withstand large printing jobs, can do duplex printing, and has a high dpi. We also need a **copy machine** that can copy on both sides as well as sort. And of course, a color copier would be even more lovely.

Is space curved? Well our **paper cutter** is. If you have a straight paper cutter that you don't need anymore, please donate it to CCRS.

It might be easier on the eyes of the Invertebrate Stream Inventory team if they could get their hands on a **good dissecting scope**. Do you have one lying around the house that you don't need any more or do you know a company or school that would like to donate one?

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Calendar of Events

Quarterly Thursdays Talks

Our quarterly Thursday talks are held at the Cupertino Library Community Room at 10400 Torre Avenue in Cupertino. A \$5.00 donation is requested.

Summer Talk: An Evening in the World of Bats August 8, 7 to 9 pm

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

Fall Talk: Red-legged Frogs in Santa Clara County November 7, 7 to 9 pm

Join herpetologist Mike Westphal for a tour of the life and times of our largest native frog. What are the implications of its recent listing as "threatened" under the Federal Endangered Species Act?

September 1 - 30 Band-A-Thon

Following in the footsteps of last year's band-a-thon, Coyote Creek's second Annual Band-A-Thon will take place once again this September. The Band-A-Thon is modeled after bird-a-thon events where volunteers seek pledges for the number of birds seen in a given

period of time. The twist to CCRS's event is that pledges are sought for the number of bird species banded during a given period of time. Last year we had a special 24-hour banding effort to capture as many species of birds as we could in a single day. This year, we will not have one special banding day, but rather we will be collecting pledges for the number of bird species banded during the entire month of September during our regular banding efforts. This event will culminate with our Annual Meeting on October 5th when prizes will be awarded to the volunteers generating the most pledges. If you are interested in being a sponsor or in collecting pledges, please give Chris Otahal a call at 262-9204.

Saturday, September 21 California Coastal Clean-up Day on the Creeks

Save this date! Creek clean-ups are being planned throughout the county to celebrate Coastal Clean-up Day. Sites are being scouted out now. If you know of a site that needs cleaning, or would like to volunteer, give Karen or Steve a call.

Saturday, September 21 Tire Amnesty Day

San Jose residents can get rid of their unwanted tires, up to ten tires per vehicle, free!

On September 21, bring your tires to the parking lot at George Mann School, 5030 First Street in Alviso, from 8 am to noon. Tires must be rimless and have had no inflating foam. Must show proof of residency. For more info call Joanne at 277-5533.

Saturday, Oct. 5 9 am to 2 pm Annual Membership Meeting and Picnic

Join volunteers, board members and staff for a day of fun and adventure at CCRS. This pot-luck event is a great time to introduce friends and family to all the exciting work we do at the Station. Station business, including an official introduction of new board and staff members, will commence at 9 am, followed by birding, a walk through the riparian forest, visiting and finally a BBQ and awards to our many hard working volunteers.

The following is a suggested Pot-luck menu:
Main Dishes: CCRS staff will be grilling turkey and veggie burgers.
Salads: Last names starting with A through H.
Side Dishes/Hors d'oeuvres: I through Q.
Desserts: R through Z.
Cold soft drinks can be purchased on site for 75 cents.

Please RSVP at the station 408-262-9204.

Board of Directors

David Blau, President
Elinor Spellman, Treasurer
Elsie Richey, Secretary
Craig Edgerton, Member
Dr. Michael Rogers, Member
Dr. Scott Terrill, Member, ARC Advisor
Steve Rottenborn, Member
Meg Caldwell, Member
Irene Beardsley, Member

Staff

Mike Rigney, Associate Director
Christopher Otahal, Avian Research Director
Alvaro Jaramillo, Avian Research Associate
Chris Fischer, Community Creek Watch Director
Charles Preuss, Technical Coordinator
Jill Bernhard, Program Associate
Karen Cotter, StreamKeeper Director,
RipariaNews Editor
Steve Morris, StreamKeeper Associate
Mike Westphal, Herpetology Coordinator
Rich Seymour, Herpetology Research Associate
Cyndi Brinkhurst, Riparian Outreach Specialist

Office Interns

Joshua Fairbanks
Larry Gonzales

New Members

David Bise
Kay Brown
Alan and Betsy Carpenter
Enid Fox
David and Jana Kahn
Carol Layton
Rebecca Maddex
Lisa Kay Meyer
Sam Mitchell
Daniel Russell
Florence Silverman
Mark Swearingen
Zenon Valin
Janis Waggener

CCRS Membership

Member	\$25 annually
Senior or Student	\$15 annually
Family	\$35 annually
Supporting	\$50 annually
Sustaining	\$100 annually
Corporate	\$500 annually
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.