

# El Tecolote

Newsletter of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc.  
Volume 42, Issue 1 August / September 2003



## Watershed Restoration Update

By Darlene Chirman

Interns and volunteers have completed the first season of planting native plants at SBAS's restoration site on the north shore of Devereux Slough. This project helps in the restoration of Coal Oil Point Reserve.

The Tecolotito Creek Restoration Project is officially completed. Take a walk from Goleta Beach Park, on the bike path under the 217 bridge, with great views of Goleta Slough. All along the slough margin before and after the bike bridge is the restoration area of high marsh and transitional plant communities. We will occasionally return to this site for some plant maintenance—weeding of non-native plants to ensure establishment of native vegetation.

SBAS also helps recruit volunteers for the Arroyo Hondo Preserve. This incredible site, the "jewel of the Gaviota Coast," is managed by the Land Trust of Santa Barbara County as a nature and historical preserve. It contains hiking trails and Arroyo Hondo Creek, which is home to sensitive birds and creek inhabitants—including Steelhead Trout, Southwest Pond Turtles and Tidewater Gobies.

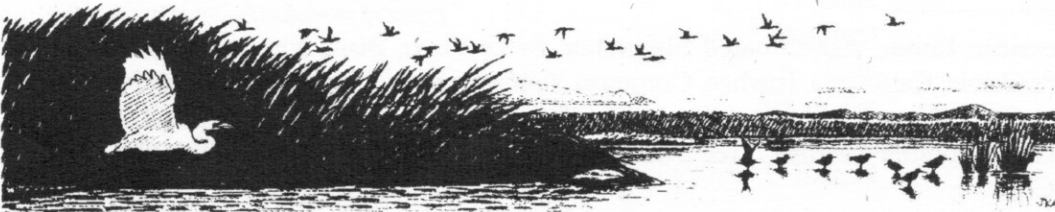
Stewardship makes a tremendous difference in the ecological health of our creeks and coastal wetlands. Especially in urban areas, with public use and surrounded by weed sources, "letting nature take its course" is allowing further degradation. It is also rewarding to be outdoors, watching the wildlife. As an example, the last week of April restoration volunteers watched Cliff Swallows gathering mud from the edge of Goleta Slough for nest-building under the bike bridge.



*Tecolotito Creek Restoration Project dedication, March 2003. Project Manager Darlene Chirman, Project Assistant & Volunteer Coordinator Ken Owen, & Restoration Intern Lisa Oliveri pose with interpretive sign.*

You may have wondered about my role in the restoration and the rest of the chapter activities. As President and member of the Conservation Committee, I volunteer for Board meetings, attend public hearings to testify, write comment letters on local policies and development projects to protect local natural resources. In addition, I am hired and paid as an independent contractor when I work for SBAS as Project Manager for habitat restoration projects—and paid only with grants with specific budget allocations for a biologist to plan and oversee these restoration projects. The Board and Conservation Committee select projects that will support our chapter mission of enhancing wildlife habitat. I also work for other non-profits such as the Land Trust and Community Environmental Council as a professional Habitat Restoration Ecologist, restoring natural areas around Santa Barbara, Goleta, and the Gaviota Coast.

Come out to a Community Restoration Workday sometime and see what we do! See upcoming Volunteer Restoration Opportunities on page 5.





*American Robin by Steven D Amato*

## Fall Birds at the Arroyo Hondo Preserve

Saturday, October 4, 8 am to noon

**Target birds:** Fall migrants and eastern vagrant warblers

**Leader:** Jim Hodgson

The Land Trust for Santa Barbara County would like to offer a field trip for **SBAS** members in gratitude for your contributions to the acquisition of the picturesque Arroyo Hondo Preserve. The trip is limited to 20 **SBAS** members. Please call **Jane Murray** at 684-4405 or e-mail [ltvolunteer@yahoo.com](mailto:ltvolunteer@yahoo.com) for reservations and directions. If you do reserve a place and your plans change, please call so someone else may take your place. You are welcome to bring a sack lunch and explore on your own in the afternoon. The Preserve closes at 3 pm.

The 782 acre Preserve, now managed by the Land Trust for Santa Barbara County, encompasses rich birding habitats, particularly along the riparian corridor from the beach to the mountains.

If you cannot make the field trip you might enjoy birding on your own. The Preserve is open the first and third weekends of each month at no charge, but you must make a reservation by calling 567-1115.

Docent trainees are needed for the Preserve. Training begins September 8. If you enjoy nature, history, hiking and sharing your love of the natural world with children and adults please call Jane at 684-4405 or e-mail [ltvolunteer@yahoo.com](mailto:ltvolunteer@yahoo.com).

## Valley View Ranch Field Trip Report

By Jack Sanford

The May 24 field trip to Valley View Ranch, located near Santa Paula, was well attended by approximately 25 birders and we were not disappointed! I personally viewed 27 species of birds including my first Blue Grosbeak plus one large gopher snake. Other birders saw and heard many more species. We hiked and birded a nature preserve that is controlled by the Santa Clara River Preserve. It is a wonderful area for birds because it is very diverse. It has water and both tree and large scrub bush habitats plus orchards and open fields. Avid birders have placed many nesting boxes in this area and they are used by a variety of species including Tree Swallows, Ash-throated Flycatchers and Oak Titmice. We also saw two Bullock's Oriole nests and a Bell's Vireo nest with three eggs in it.



*Photo by Jack Sanford*

We were treated to viewing a Brown-headed Cowbird trap. Since the cowbird does not build its own nest but lays its eggs in the nest of other birds this results in the other birds either losing all or part of its brood. **Jim Greaves**, our tour leader, reported that when the Cowbirds are trapped the other bird's offspring are increased by as much as 20%. Cowbirds are not native to California and they, along with the European Starling, although a part of nature, are considered pests. The Cowbird cage trap was very similar in theory to insect and bee traps but at a much larger scale. The birds can get in but cannot (in most cases) figure out how to get out again. A few female cowbirds are placed in the trap to lure other cowbirds in. The trap is inspected everyday and, because there is food and water, many other birds species enter the trap but they are released.

The half-day session ended by returning to our cars just in time to view two White-tailed Kites perched together on a utility pole. Another great day birding!

Birds seen: American Crow, American Robin, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Bell's Vireo, Black Phoebe, Blue Grosbeak, Brown-headed Cowbird, Bullock's Oriole, California Towhee, Common Yellowthroat, Cooper's Hawk, European Starling, House Finch, Hummingbird (?), Killdeer, Lesser Goldfinch, Mourning Dove, Northern Flicker, Oak Titmouse, Purple Finch, Red-winged Blackbird, Spotted Towhee, Tree Swallow, Western Scrub-Jay, White-tailed Kite, White-throated Swift, Yellow-breasted Chat



# Santa Barbara Audubon Programs

*All programs, unless otherwise noted, will take place at Farrand Hall, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, Mission Canyon, Santa Barbara. Free on-site parking. All programs, unless otherwise noted, will begin at 7:30 pm, doors open at 7:00 pm, and are free to the public. SBAS members are encouraged to bring guests.*



*Photo by Elizabeth Price*

## South Coast Watershed Resource Center

### Program Updates

**Karen Feeney, Speaker**

**Wednesday, September 24, 5:00 pm**

***At South Coast Watershed Resource Center, Arroyo Burro Beach  
(Please note special time and place)***

The South Coast has approximately 50 short, steep watersheds that start in the Santa Ynez Mountains, flow through the foothills and coastal plain, and ultimately empty into the Pacific. When it rains, large volumes of water quickly move through our watersheds—flushing pollutants and threatening to flood the people living in the natural flood plains. Managing these watersheds to assure high water quality is an issue of primary concern to South Coast residents.

The SCWRC was built at the request of the County in response to this concern.

It makes the connection between healthy watersheds and each of our own personal habits. Features include a native plant area, an ocean view deck, a wetlab for testing water samples and a special area for the building a tomol—the traditional redwood plank canoe used by the Chumash.

Come join us at the SCWRC. **Karen Feeney**, Community Program Director, will give us a tour and update on current conservation and education programs. After Karen's talk we will tour the estuary and surrounding area. **Darlene Chirman** will point out the restoration and bios wale projects installed and planned, and **Mary Thompson** will help us identify the local birdlife.

The doors will open at 5:00 pm for snacks and informal viewing of the SCWRC. The program will start at 5:30 pm, and a tour of the restoration area and the bird walk at 6:15 pm.

## Central Coast Birding Rally, October 3 to 5

**By John Ayres, Rally Chairman, La Purisima Audubon Society**

A non-competitive Hobby Class Rally has been added this year. It is friendly, fun and caters to all levels of experience. And it is free! Participants will bird 3 Central Coast Birding Trail sites to add to the composite rally bird list, while at the same time looking for a targeted specialty bird at each site: a Heerman's Gull at Ocean Park, an Oak Titmouse at Miguelito Park and a Wrentit at La Purisima Mission. All 3 species must be seen and members of all teams that see all 3 will receive a prize.

A rally reception with *hors d'oeuvres* and a raffle will be held Friday evening. The rally itself will be Saturday morning with the Hobby Class in the Lompoc Valley and the Open Class in the Santa Maria Valley. In the afternoon a Santa Maria style bar-b-cue with an auction of birding related items will be held at Los Alamos County Park. On Sunday a Big Site will take place at Nojoqui Falls County Park with a beverage and grilled hot dogs being served around noon. All of these events are free.

The Rally is part of La Purisima Audubon's effort to promote the northern Santa Barbara County portion of the Central Coast Birding Trail. For more information go to <http://lpas.westhost.com/rally/>. Also check the Central Coast Birding Trail website at <http://lpas.westhost.com/CCBT/>. While still a work in progress, we hope to eventually make it the most informative trail website in the country. We welcome your comments and ideas for future additions.



# Santa Barbara Audubon Field Trips

*Everyone is welcome! These trips are fun for both beginning and expert bird lovers. Binoculars are useful for enjoyment of birds, but if you don't have a pair please call the trip leader and we'll lend you a spare. Trips are free unless noted.*



*Least Tern by Steven D Amato*

## Rancho Guadalupe Dunes Preserve

Santa Maria River mouth, west of Santa Maria

Saturday, August 16, 7:30 am

(at carpool place - drivers may appreciate gas money)

**Target birds:** Fall shorebirds, gulls, terns and seabirds

**Trip leader:** Dave Compton, 965-3153, davcompton@earthlink.net

**T**ake 101 to the Storke/Glen Annie exit in Goleta. Proceed south on Storke Rd to the parking area just east of the Jack-in-the-Box that is located near the southeast corner of Storke and Hollister. Car pool from here. Or meet us at the Preserve at 9:00 am. To get to the Preserve take 101 north to Santa Maria and exit on 166 and go west to the river mouth. Proceed through the Preserve entrance and continue on to the beach parking lot.

Wear boots or shoes for sand, soft mud and water. Dress in warm layers for chilly foggy breeze. Scopes very useful. Back by about 1:30 so bring water and maybe a snack for lunch.

We are birding an area normally off limits during this, the Snowy Plover breeding season, so take advantage of this unique situation and join us.



## Coal Oil Point Reserve

UCSB West Campus, Goleta

Saturday, September 27, 5:00 pm

**Target birds:** Snowy Plovers, shore birds, fall migrants

**Trip Leader:** Paul Keller, 968-7804, wrentit@verizon.net

**T**ake 101 to the Glen Annie/Storke exit. Proceed south on Storke Rd to its end and turn right onto Slough Rd. Go 0.1 mile and turn left onto West Campus Lane. Go 0.1 mile to the Orfalea Family Children's Center and park between the Center and the horse stable.

If time permits we'll walk around the slough first going to the beach. Wear shoes for walking on trails, sand and maybe tar. If you're not up for a long walk, join us anyway and turn back whenever you've reach half your limit. Bring water if it's warm. Scopes are useful if you don't mind carrying them for this long walk. I'll bring mine. Trip over by 7:30.

Show your appreciation for the people who cleaned this area last Saturday as part of the Coastal Clean-Up Day by joining us for this sunset bird walk. The last few years the birding was so good we barely made it to the beach.



*Great Blue Heron, photo by Elizabeth Price*



*Belted Kingfisher*  
By Steven D Amato

## California Coastal Clean-Up Day

**Coal Oil Point, UCSB West Campus**  
**Saturday, September 20, 9 am to noon**

**S**BAS again will host a Coastal Clean-Up Day, again at Coal Oil Point, UCSB West Campus. Gloves, bags and inventory sheets will be provided for all volunteers. There will be free parking permits and special prizes for volunteers. **SBAS** members are more than welcome to bring friends and family. Most years, we're done well before noon. For more information please call the office at 964-1468.

To get to Coal Oil Point take 101 to the Glen Annie/Storke exit. Proceed south on Storke Rd to its end and turn right onto Slough Rd and proceed to the end, where you will find the Coal Oil Point parking lot. **SBAS** will have parking permits here. It is about a 150 yard walk from the parking lot to Coal Oil Point and the beach.

### Least Bittern

The magnificent photo of the Least Bittern on page 6 was taken by **Bob MacLeod** at one of the newly restored ponds on the UCSB campus. In spite of very little cover in which to hide, the Least Bittern managed to be quite elusive. Look for an upcoming Audubon Program by this incredible photographer and his wife **Pam Stickland**.



## August & September Volunteer Restoration Opportunities

**C**ome help restore our wildlife habitats at the Coal Oil Point Reserve or Arroyo Hondo Preserve. To volunteer at Coal Oil Point Reserve contact **SBAS** Restoration Volunteer Coordinator **Ken Owen** at [islands@rain.org](mailto:islands@rain.org) or 568-1507; or contact Project Manager **Darlene Chirman** at [dchirman@rain.org](mailto:dchirman@rain.org) or 692-2008; or check our **SBAS** website at [www.rain.org/~audubon](http://www.rain.org/~audubon). To volunteer at the Arroyo Hondo Preserve please RSVP the Land Trust Volunteer Coordinator **Jane Murray** at [ltvolunteer@yahoo.com](mailto:ltvolunteer@yahoo.com) or 684-4405.

| Date         | Time       | Place   | Contact     |
|--------------|------------|---|-------------|
| Sun, Aug 3   | 9 am-12:30 | Arroyo Hondo Preserve, bring a lunch, hike afterwards if you like | Jane Murray |
| Sat, Aug 16  | 9 am-12:30 | Coal Oil Point Reserve, north shore, meet Storke Rd & Whittier Dr | Ken Owen    |
| Sun, Sept 7  | 9 am-12:30 | Arroyo Hondo Preserve, bring a lunch, hike afterwards if you like | Jane Murray |
| Sat, Sept 13 | 9 am-12:30 | Coal Oil Point Reserve, north shore, meet Storke Rd & Whittier Dr | Ken Owen    |

### National Audubon Society Membership Application

(new members only)

Includes membership in **National Audubon & Santa Barbara Audubon Society** (C13 7XCH) and subscriptions to **Audubon** magazine & **El Tecolote**, the **SBAS** newsletter

- \$20 Introductory Membership       \$15 Senior (62+) or Student

Make check payable to:

National Audubon Society

Mail to:

National Audubon Society

Membership Data Center

P. O. Box 52529

Boulder, CO 80322-2529

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_



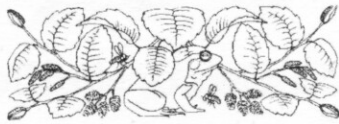
## Calendar of Events

- Aug 16 Field Trip: Rancho Guadalupe Dunes Preserve
- Sep 20 Coastal Clean-Up Day
- Sep 24 Program: South Coast Watershed Resource Center
- Sep 27 Field Trip: Coal Oil Point
- Oct 3-5 Central Coast Birding Rally
- Oct 4 Field Trip: Arroyo Hondo

## New Web Site!

Other Audubon chapters offer interesting field trips and events too! Visit this site to schedule birding trips and participate in events all over California:

<http://audubon-ca.org>



Artwork by Rosemary Gilbert Bell

**El Tecolote** is published 6 times a year by the **Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc.** Members are invited to send announcements, letters, articles, photos and drawings for consideration to:

**SBAS**, Bill and Elaine Uomini, Editors  
5679 Hollister Avenue, Suite 5B  
Goleta, CA 93117

or e-mail: [eltecote@cox.net](mailto:eltecote@cox.net)

Submission deadline is the 10th of the month.

## SBAS - July 2003/June 2004

(805) 964-1468, [audubon@rain.org](mailto:audubon@rain.org)  
[www.rain.org/~audubon](http://www.rain.org/~audubon)

### OFFICERS

|                                     |          |  |
|-------------------------------------|----------|--|
| <i>President:</i> Darlene Chirman   | 692-2008 | <a href="mailto:dchirman@rain.org">dchirman@rain.org</a> |
| <i>Vice-President:</i> Lee Moldaver | 964-1468 | <a href="mailto:audubon@rain.org">audubon@rain.org</a>   |
| <i>Secretary:</i> Susan Lentz       | 968-6011 | <a href="mailto:salentz@cox.net">salentz@cox.net</a>     |
| <i>Treasurer:</i> Ginny Turner      |          | <a href="mailto:vtf7@juno.com">vtf7@juno.com</a>         |

### BOARD MEMBERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

|  |          |  |
|--|----------|--|
| <i>Field Trips:</i> Paul Keller            | 968-7804 | <a href="mailto:wrentit@verizon.net">wrentit@verizon.net</a>         |
| <i>Programs Chair:</i> Mary Thompson       | 566-6557 | <a href="mailto:marydee2@earthlink.net">marydee2@earthlink.net</a>   |
| <i>Conservation:</i> Dave Wass             | 683-0705 | <a href="mailto:david.wass@cox.net">david.wass@cox.net</a>           |
| <i>Education:</i> Lisa Sobczak             | 683-2009 | <a href="mailto:asobczak@ix.netcom.com">asobczak@ix.netcom.com</a>   |
| <i>Science:</i> Kendy Radasky              | 961-9378 | <a href="mailto:kradasky@aol.com">kradasky@aol.com</a>               |
| <i>Membership Chair:</i> Steve Ferry       | 967-5162 | <a href="mailto:sjferry@cox.net">sjferry@cox.net</a>                 |
| <i>Newsletter:</i> Bill & Elaine Uomini    | 964-9401 | <a href="mailto:eltecote@cox.net">eltecote@cox.net</a>               |
| <i>Publicity:</i> Natasha Carr             | 967-1383 | <a href="mailto:tahi4@cox.net">tahi4@cox.net</a>                     |
| <i>At Large-Outreach:</i> Christine Cowles | 957-0086 | <a href="mailto:ccowles@sblandtrust.org">ccowles@sblandtrust.org</a> |
| <i>At Large-Outreach:</i> Open             |          |  |
| <i>At Large-Outreach:</i> Open             |          |  |

### APPOINTED POSITIONS

|  |          |  |
|--|----------|--|
| <i>Webmaster:</i> Bobbie Offen                 | 684-0160 | <a href="mailto:bobbieo@earthlink.net">bobbieo@earthlink.net</a>   |
| <i>Nominating Committee:</i> Sally Walker      | 569-5388 | <a href="mailto:walker160@cox.net">walker160@cox.net</a>           |
| <i>Eyes In The Sky:</i> Gabriele Drozdowski    | 898-0347 | <a href="mailto:pelican7@cox.net">pelican7@cox.net</a>             |
| <i>Snowy Plover Docent Prg:</i> Jennifer Stroh | 448-5943 | <a href="mailto:fivefive55@hotmail.com">fivefive55@hotmail.com</a> |
| <i>Hospitality:</i> Don & Florence Stivers     | 967-3690 |  |
| <i>Report Rare Birds:</i> Karen Bridgers       | 964-1316 | <a href="mailto:kbridgers@msn.com">kbridgers@msn.com</a>           |
| <i>Hear Rare Bird Report</i>                   | 964-8240 |  |

*Officers and Chairs meet the 2nd Wednesday of the month. Members are welcomed to attend. Call SBAS office to verify dates and times. FAX: 967-7718. Cover art by Daryl Harrison.*

### El Tecolote

Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc.  
5679 Hollister Avenue, Suite 5B  
Goleta, CA 93117

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Non-profit Organization  
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Santa Barbara, CA  
Permit Number 125



Where did Bob MacLeod photograph this Least Bittern? (Answer on Page 5)

*or current resident*

**In This Issue... Watershed Restoration Update**