

# Los Gatos Birdwatcher



IN THIS ISSUE	PAGE
Special Events	1
Welcome Marley	2
Winter Feeding Tips	3
Birdwatching For Cats	4
Look What Freddy Found	5
New Model in the Optics Case	6
Services Available	6
Field Trips	6-7
Adventures with Marley	8



## Photo Presentation – The Cheesemans go to the Serengeti

Thursday, January 16, 2014 6:00 – 7:00

Doug and Gail Cheeseman have been leading African wildlife safaris since 1978 with the majority of their 60 safaris to Tanzania and Kenya. Until his 1998 retirement from DeAnza College, Doug taught zoology, molecular biology and ecology for biology majors. Doug will present a running dialog of wildlife behaviors that he has observed watching the many mammals and birds in East Africa.

*No charge – Reservations Required*



## Photo Presentation – Birding Southern Costa Rica

Thursday, February 20, 2014 6:00-7:00pm

Now that you've read the trip report about Freddy and John's trip to Costa Rica last September, come see the wonderful photographs of the amazing birds we saw through the lens of fellow traveler, Don Bauman.

*No charge – Reservations Required*

## Lisa Myers' Beginning Birding Workshop – Ducks

**Class:** Thursday, February 27, 6:30 – 8:00pm

**Field Trip:** Saturday, March 1, 8:00 – 10:00am

This beginning birding workshop will focus on the ducks that visit the bay area each winter and those that stay with us all year. If you are new to birding, ducks are a fantastic group to study as they live around us in city ponds and reservoirs. The different species have bold, easy to observe field marks, are larger and don't move as fast as songbirds.

*Fee: \$20 per person – Reservations Required*



## Lisa Myers' Beginning Birding Workshop – Hummingbirds

**Class:** Thursday, March 27, 6:30 – 8:00pm

**Field Trip:** Saturday, March 29, 8:00 – 10:00am

This workshop series started eighteen months ago with Hummingbirds and we have been asked to repeat this popular program. Hummingbirds are only found in the new world. While we can get roughly seven different species in the bay area in a year, there are over 325 species between Alaska and the tip of South America. They are a beautiful and feisty little species and many of us enjoy feeding them in our own backyards.

*Fee: \$20 per person – Reservations Required*



## Preparation for Valentine's Day

Tweet your Valentine to something special for her garden!

From Friday, February 7 through Friday, February 14 all garden products, including wind chimes, statuary, garden art and flags will be **15% off**.

# Welcome, Marley



Ah, yes, the best laid plans of mice and men! We had maintained a list of qualities that we wanted in our next store dog and because of some very adoring brown eyes, chose a dog that was that list's antithesis. Meet Marley! We found her at Doggie Protective Services Rescue who had rescued her from a shelter in Lancaster near Los Angeles. By all accounts she is between ten months and a year old. We said we didn't do puppy. She is a chocolate cocker spaniel which is a color we'd never seen before and weighs under twenty pounds. We had said we wanted thirty to forty pounds. She is full of life and loves to play with all the toys that she inherited from Choca and Sage. She has played more with all these toys in the last month than Choca and Sage did in their combined lifetimes.

We do have some challenges though. She is an escape artist which we didn't know at the time of adoption. Within a half hour of being in the store, she saw a customer go out the door and was off like a shot. Customers and employee K.C. were off in hot pursuit as was Freddy, when she realized what was happening. Marley has a very strong sniffer and was onto something. Luckily she decided to go "shopping" in CVS so while K.C. stayed at the door, Freddy ran after Marley and corralled her in Aisle 1. On Day 4 we discovered some accidents in the back bedroom and in the confusion, the door was opened. Out she shot, down the stairs, down the driveway and up the road with John on arthritic knees following at full speed. Now it was a game. Freddy went back to fetch a leash and a squeaky toy in hopes that might bring her back. Oh, she was having the best time romping through the leaves and flushing sleeping juncos out of the bushes. Luckily the squeaky did its job and John was able to scoop her up. So "our" training begins. For now she is on a leash in the store but we are working hard to train her in the important store boundaries and she is enrolled in obedience class.

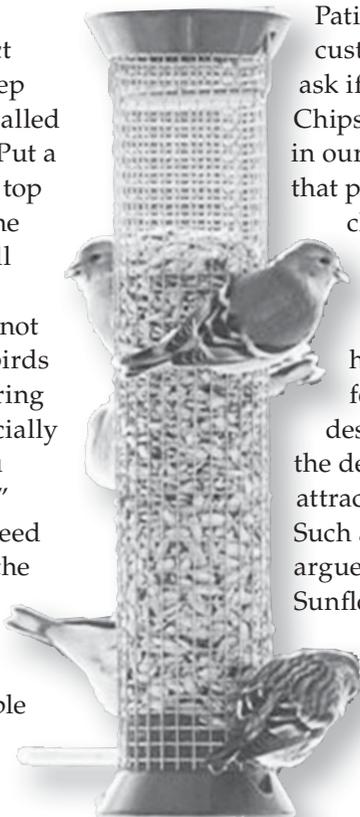
The qualities on our list that we did get was good with dogs, cats and kids and loves to greet people. Many people have asked if she resembles the Marley in the book "Marley and Me" and I have to answer probably from what I've heard. However, we are going to go with some of the reasons we chose her to be that Freddy's cousin's husband's last name is Marley. They have a cocker named McKenzie whom we adore. Our next door neighbors, Aimee and Nick, have two cockers named Rumi and Bella whom we also adore. Finally, our friend Susan sent us a Jacquie Lawson ecard for Thanksgiving and instead of the usual black lab, this card featured a cocker spaniel.

So Marley has joined Rumi and Bella for play dates and grooming at Aimee's so that she has shorter hair that doesn't pick up every leaf, burr, twig and foxtail on the mountain. She is settling down and into a routine and we are all learning fast. She is a sweet girl and will be delighted to meet you when you visit the store. Not to worry, Augie, the West Highland terrier belonging to our wonderful neighbor, Karen, who has been a doggie placeholder for over two years, will be a standard Monday fixture as he is teaching Marley many things about being a store dog.

# Winter Feeding Tips

By November most of the natural grasses and berries have been eaten. If it is cold, most insects have gone to ground. Now is a time that feeding birds takes on a more life supporting role. During the fall and into winter, feeding birds takes a little more thought, especially if we get rain this season.

*Here are some tips:* Serve suet with peanuts or insects, switch to seeds with shells, and add baffles/rain guards to help keep the birds well fed during the cold and wet season and reduce the waste of seed due to mold. If you have tube feeders, only fill them half as full so the birds rotate through the seed quicker, and fill them twice as often and the birds will thank you. When you do refill the feeder, be sure to empty out the leftovers in the bottom. Moldy seed can cause problems if ingested and also clumps together preventing the free flow of the seed above. A product that can help keep the seed dry is called "Feeder Fresh". Put a little at both the top and bottom of the feeder and it will absorb excess moisture and is not harmful to the birds if eaten. Monitoring the seed is especially important if you use any "hulled" (without shell) seed or mixes. Since the seed doesn't have a shell covering, it is very susceptible to absorbing moisture.



Another way to protect the seed from the rain is with a weather dome or squirrel baffle. Granted, this only works when there isn't any wind with the rain, but the birds like the protection. Baffles also prevent the build up of droppings.

In September, we noticed that goldfinches and other birds weren't coming to the Nyjer/thistle feeders in normal numbers. We knew that the "super flight" year of the Pine Siskins would not repeat itself from last year but we didn't realize that the American and Lesser Goldfinches would be displaced or pushed into other areas. I will admit that every fall we see a drop off in nyjer feeding when the birds go to natural seed but instead of the customary two to three weeks, this drop off lasted well into December. We also noticed that the goldfinches that were hanging around were going to the hulled sunflower, Patio and Just Hearts mix. A customer called recently to ask if we sold "Fine Sunflower Chips." We sell it as an ingredient in our "Premium Finch Blend" that pairs Nyjer/Thistle with fine chips, but not on its own.

Our customer mentioned that she had found that by feeding fine chips in her mesh and spiral nyjer feeder, she attracted the desired goldfinches, reduced the debris and reduced the Nyjer attractiveness to the rodents. Such a win, win, win is hard to argue with. We now have Fine Sunflower Chips in 20 pound and 5 pound bags. Squirrels will be interested, so squirrel proofing your feed will be important.

If you are seeing goldfinches at your mesh Nyjer/thistle feeders, shake the seed up and down in the feeder on a daily basis when it's raining. This moves the seed around and gets air into the feeder. Another tip for Nyjer/thistle feeders is to increase the number of feeders to spread the birds out. Our American and Lesser Goldfinches that flock onto the Nyjer/thistle feeders during the winter are quite numerous. Because of this flockiness, they are susceptible to diseases like salmonella. By spreading them out to several feeders you can reduce the spread of disease. Also, it is important to clean up any seed that accumulates under the feeder to prevent ground feeders from getting sick. "Seed & Hull Digester", a product from Care-Free Enzymes, makes all the discarded seed and hulls disappear.



Hummingbirds are still here during the winter but they have spread out a bit and some have gone south where it is a bit warmer. Change the nectar (four parts water, one part sugar) and clean your feeder every five to seven days. If rain dilutes the nectar, it will turn cloudy and you will know it is time to change it. A baffle will help keep the rain out and protect the birds as they feed.

Remember, Los Gatos Birdwatcher cleans feeders Mondays and Thursdays only asking a donation to any of the five local rehab and rescue organizations we support.

# Birdwatching for Cats

Indoor cats have it good – lounging inside all day on comfy cushions, their own private commode, no worries about coyotes or bobcats, no neighborhood bully cat fights, no cars to avoid – but it’s boring! Why not give your cat a “catbird” seat to all the goings-on outside. By placing a bird feeder five to ten feet away from a favorite window perch, you give your cat great entertainment, and it is safe



Photo by: *Karen Wallace*

for all concerned. Add a birdbath and your cat will be mesmerized for hours. Add a hummingbird feeder close to the window and you might even hear a concert of mewing.

Even a well-fed cat with a hunting instinct can kill thousands of songbirds, small mammals and reptiles over its lifetime. Multiply that by all the cats that roam free and you are into the billions – annually. European immigrants brought domestic cats to North America and now we, collectively, have a responsibility to both the cats and to the wild animals they may affect. Not only do cats prey on many small mammals and birds, but they can outnumber and compete with native predators. Construction in our area has already reduced hawk, fox and bobcat habitat dramatically. If you subtract natural prey that is eaten or killed by domestic cats, these native species have an even harder time surviving.

Outside cats are far more susceptible to rabies, feline distemper or feline immunodeficiency virus. There are also stories of cats that get lost, stolen or poisoned and who suffer during severe weather conditions. Free-roaming and feral cats also pose a health hazard to humans from the spread of diseases such as rabies and toxoplasmosis.

Recently we have had several calls from customers who have rescued a bird from the mouth of a cat. Since the bird doesn’t look injured they call to find out what to do. Our advice is to take it to your local wildlife rehabilitation center immediately. Cats have a bacteria in their mouths that is highly toxic to birds.

If you feed birds and have cats stalking them, here are a few tips that will increase the chance of the birds’ survival. Trim up bushes where cats like to hide. Put rosebush trimmings on the ground near the feeders. Place

one or two concentric circles of garden edge fencing under the feeder. The birds have a chance of escaping as the cat leaps over the fence. If cats are getting birds at your bird bath, consider the aforementioned edging or purchase a piece of plexi-glass cut in a circle that is about six to eight inches wider in diameter than the bowl. Put a hole in the center to go over the post in the bird bath base and put the bowl on top.

People don’t see it and neither do the cats, so when they jump, they hit the plexi.

What can you do to help? Keep only as many pet cats as you can feed and care for indoors. Controlling reproductions and keeping cats vaccinated contributes to longer lived and healthier cats. A customer told me about a great product called the Birds Be Safe Collar. It looks like a ruff, is in bright colors and your cat’s collar threads through it. Because of the bright colors, the birds are more likely to see the cat coming. Our customer’s cat is quite the hunter but has brought nothing back since wearing the collar. Check out their website [www.birdsbesafe.com](http://www.birdsbesafe.com)

## Local wildlife rehabilitation centers:

Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley (San Jose)  
408/929-9453 | [www.wcsv.org](http://www.wcsv.org)

Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation Center (Morgan Hill)  
408/779-9372 | [www.werc-ca.org](http://www.werc-ca.org)

Injured & Orphaned Wildlife (San Jose)  
408/559-7379

Wild Care, Peninsula Humane Society (Burlingame)  
650/340-7022 | [www.peninsulahumanesociety.org](http://www.peninsulahumanesociety.org)

Native Animal Rescue (Santa Cruz)  
831/462-0726 | [www.nativeanimalrescue.org](http://www.nativeanimalrescue.org)

For more information on the Cats Indoors campaign, visit the American Bird Conservancy website at [www.abcbirds.org](http://www.abcbirds.org)



LOOK WHAT  
FREDDY FOUND!

VALENTINE'S DAY



**Nesting Woolies**  
for the birds - cute too.



**Valentine's Day Flags**  
- both garden and regular sizes



**New Baths and  
Mosaic Gazing Balls**



**Valentine's Day Socks**  
- lots of designs



**Spring Floor Mats** - spiff things up



**New T-Shirts**  
- good colors and designs

## New Model in the Optics Case

In the last issue of Cornell's Living Bird magazine there was an in-depth review of various binoculars by price point. In the \$400 - \$699 price range the Viper HDs were rated very highly. In looking at our overall binocular selection, we have made the decision to keep our high end at about \$700. With the new technologies we feel that our customers can purchase binoculars with good clarity and color contrast and still not break the bank. In addition to the Cornell review, we have had many customers inquire if we had Vortex's Viper HDs so the Vipers joined the Opticron Veranos, which were also highly rated by Cornell, as our top of the line binoculars in the Los Gatos Birdwatcher Optics Case.



According to Vortex's website, "the Viper delivers bright, crisp details with impressive resolution and color fidelity. Rugged, compact and lightweight – one of the lightest full-size binoculars available. 5.1 close focus, 24.2 ounces 347 ft FOV HD (high density) extra-low dispersion glass delivers impressive resolution and color fidelity, resulting in High Definition images. XR fully multi-coated proprietary coatings increase light transmission with multiple anti-reflective coatings on all air to glass surfaces. Dielectric Prism Coatings, multi-layer prism coatings, provide bright, clear, color-accurate images. Phase correction coating on roof prism models enhances resolution and contrast. Adjustable eyecups twist up and down to precise, intermediate settings to maximize custom fit for comfortable viewing with or without eyeglasses."

## Services Available from the Los Gatos Birdwatcher

- **Feeder Cleaning** – Drop off your feeders any day of the week. We clean on Mondays and Thursdays, asking only a donation to one of four charities (Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley, Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation Center, Nike Animal Rescue Foundation, and Friends of San Martin Animal Shelter). If possible, please bring your feeders in early in the day. We will call you by closing for pickup.

- **Frequent Buyer Program**, buy 9 bags 20# or higher of the same seed and get the 10th one free. Coupons do not apply.

- **Children's programs** for pre-schools through 3rd grade. Also great for scout troops. For more information, ask for our "Educational Programs Insiders Info" Sheet.

- **Outreach to community organizations** about birding. We have birding and "Show and Tell" programs ideal for gardening and other service groups.

- **Backyard Bird Consulting Program** - Freddy will come out and see what you have, what you want, and what might work. The consultation is about an hour and the cost is \$20, which will be applied to any purchase of new feeders, seed, baths, or hardware.

- **Birthday parties with Build a Seed Feeder workshop.** Bring 11 of your friends to the **Los Gatos Birdwatcher** (or at your desired location) and build a birdfeeder. Learn about the different birds that are likely to come to the small hopper feeder that you construct from a pre-cut wooden kit. (Includes a packet of seed, use of tools, and instruction.) **Cost:** \$15 instructor fee + \$10/child.



- We offer **Gift Certificates** and our popular "**Drop a Hint**" cards that allow you to choose a selection of gifts you would like (wish list) to be considered and when the gift giver comes in with the list, we know exactly what you want.

- Spend \$100 or more and receive our **reusable canvas tote** with royal blue handles – quite spiffy! The tote is also for sale for \$3.99 and would make a good "wrapping" for a gift.

- **15% off one item** Coupon is available every two months. You don't have to bring in the physical coupon, but you do have to let us know at the time of the sale that you would like to use it. We do not apply the coupon automatically. The coupon excludes optics, trips and sale items. Coupon does not apply to Frequent Buy purchases.

*Los Gatos Birdwatcher  
King's Court Center  
792 Blossom Hill Road  
Los Gatos, CA 95032*

#C0214

/ 2014

Pay to the order of *Our Loyal Customer*

*15% Off One Item*

Memo: *Expires 2/28/14*

One Coupon per customer, please.  
Excludes sale items, excursions and optics.  
Not to be combined with any other offers

## Field Trips & Outings

### Saturday Morning Local Bird Walks

Join us every Saturday morning for an enjoyable meander looking for birds. Call the store Friday nights after 7pm to find out where we are going the next morning. Except for our once a month all-day field trips, we go on a local bird walk from 8 to 10 am and return for bagels and shade grown coffee. Some of the nearby places we go to are Oka Ponds, Guadalupe Oak Grove Park, BelGatos Park, Almaden Lake Park, Shoreline and Charleston Slough.

**No Charge.**



### Let's Go Birding with Lisa Myers to Stinson Beach & Bolinas Lagoon

Saturday, February 15, 8:00am to 4:00pm

Winter is an ideal time to bird areas in and around Bolinas and Stinson Beach. We'll scan the ocean looking for species off shore and along the beach (loons, shorebirds, pelicans, grebes) and we'll bird the Bolinas Lagoon looking for an assortment of wintering water birds, herons and raptors. There is also a birdy fire road where we will look for nuthatch, Pacific wren, hermit thrush and more.

**Fee: \$30 + share of gas**

### Let's Go Birding with Lisa Myers to San Francisco Bay – San Mateo County

Saturday, March 15, 8:00am to 4:00pm

There are several special open spaces including tidal marsh, freshwater ponds, grasslands and more that are tucked among all the people living around the San Francisco Bay. On this day we will concentrate on birding the bay side of San Mateo County from Palo Alto to So. San Francisco. There will be some walking over flat trails. Possible stops include Redwood Shores, Radio Road, Seal Point, Bay Front Park, and Cooley Landing. **Fee: \$30 + share of gas.**

# Los Gatos Birdwatcher

PRESORT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
SAN JOSE, CA  
PERMIT NO. 10

King's Court Center  
792 Blossom Hill Road, Los Gatos, California 95032  
408/358-9453  
email: info@losgatosbirdwatcher.com  
website: www.losgatosbirdwatcher.com

Return Service Requested



Printed on  
recycled paper

## Adventures with Marley

*"I'm so happy  
to be part  
of Los Gatos  
Birdwatcher"*



### Dates to Remember

- 1/20 Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday – Day of Service
- 1/31 Chinese New Year
- 2/2 Groundhog Day
- 2/14 Valentine's Day
- 2/17 President's Day

### Store Hours

Monday – Saturday: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Sunday: 12 noon to 5 p.m.

