


# Los Gatos Birdwatcher



IN THIS ISSUE	PAGE
Up Coming Events	1 & 4
Happy New Year and Thank You	2
Backyard Bird Feeding	3
Great Backyard Bird Count	3
A New Bird at Your Feeder	4
Staff Transition	5
Los Gatos Birdwatcher Services	5
Special Book Signing	6
Let's Go Birding Field Trips	6
Coupon / New Products	7

## Happy New Year! Look What's Planned in Jan.!

### Fourteen Seasons of Nest Box Monitoring Workshop – January 13th

Wednesday night, January 13, 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM. Presented by Lee Pauser at the Los Gatos Birdwatcher.



After Lee retired from IBM he got involved in Citizen Science and the re-introduction of the Western Bluebird to Bay Area habitats. Starting with twelve bluebird boxes in 2002, Lee now monitors over 400 nest boxes! The breeding season is fast approaching and Lee will share with us the impact providing man-made nest boxes has had on the species and include experiences he has had with the many other species that try and make the Bluebird boxes their home. He'll offer his expertise on the ideal locations you can put up your own nest box. *The workshop is free, but space is limited so please call to reserve your seat 408-358-9453.*

### A Look Back at Five Years of Los Gatos Birdwatcher Birding Tours – Lisa Myers

**New Time** Thursday Jan. 21, 7:00 – 8:00 PM at the Terraces



The Los Gatos Birdwatcher has offered customers birding tours for the past 20 years. New owner Lisa Myers partnered with Freddy five years ago to provide folks with exciting adventures throughout California's birding hot spots. Lisa will look back in time and present images, memories and highlights taken from over 60 adventures organized through the store. From Big Sur to Point Reyes, Stockton to Panoche Valley and all the places in between. *The event is free, but space is limited so please call to reserve your seat 408-358-9453.*

*For more upcoming events see page 4*

## Birdwatcher Customers Are The Best – Lisa Myers

As the new owner of the Los Gatos Birdwatcher, I just wanted to thank all of you for helping us have a very successful holiday season. It's sure not easy to take on a successful retail store like the Birdwatcher during the holidays, but with the help of my staff we made it! Each day the store was filled with customers looking for special gifts and buying seed. You may also have noticed some new staff members as they too were working hard learning products, wrapping presents and providing the customer service you have grown accustomed to receiving.



Although I sure tried, I did not always have an answer to all your questions, but you were all gracious and I thank you. Freddy & John were helping too and you may have run into Freddy as she was in the store several days helping to answer questions and keep things moving forward. Now you all can look forward to some exciting new products that will arrive with the New Year. We will continue to add Let's Go Birding adventures on the calendar too. I have also signed a five year lease and will remain at the King's Court Center through to 2019.

# It Is OK To Feed Birds in My Yard!

By Lisa Myers

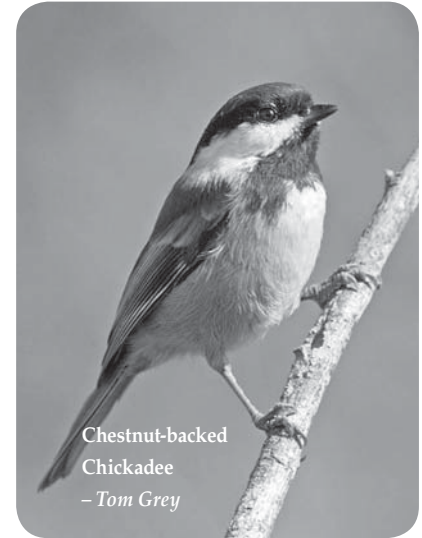
In a store that makes a living selling high quality bird seed to the backyard birder, the topic of feeding wildlife comes up on a regular basis. Customers ask, what are the rules, are there laws, and is it illegal?

While there are laws about feeding wildlife out in open spaces, national parks and public lands, it gets tricky when it comes to feeding birds in our own yard, plus, different states have different laws. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife state that people should not interfere with wildlife or “disrupt” a wild animal’s normal behavior. So one could ask, if providing thistle to a goldfinch is disrupting normal behavior? Or, is providing clean drinking water interfering with the natural course of events? We are not here to argue the point, but we felt we should share on this topic. In Silicon Valley contractors are building faster than ever. We’ve paved paradise, moved in and changed the natural landscape all around us. Talk about disrupting, we have been disputing nature since the gold rush.

## Here are just a few things people do everyday that interferes and disrupts wild animals.

- Pesticides kill birds directly or are used to minimize insect populations, an important bird food source
- Windows throughout our homes, and man-made buildings kill birds inadvertently every day
- In nature, dead and dying trees provide food and nesting cavities, but in suburbia, we remove them
- Solar Panels are good for energy, but when they un-naturally cover many acres, they kill wildlife
- Wind turbines used to create power, kill wildlife with the turn of their blades
- City landfills, parks, school yards attract Gulls and Crows by the thousands
- Roads, cars, trains and planes all kill wildlife upon impact of by separating habitat
- Power lines crossing miles of land electrocute raptors and cranes
- Our love of the domestic cat, allowed to roam freely, kills more birds than everything else combined

I am not trying to make everyone sad in writing this, but everything we have done has greatly interfered with wildlife and greatly disturbed their existence. While a growing suburbia has taken away so much open space, placing some fresh seed outside to help wild birds get through a season or migration has shown to stabilize many songbird populations.



Chestnut-backed  
Chickadee  
– Tom Grey

Cornell’s Lab Of Ornithology writes, “*feeding birds brings these spectacular animals into our backyards, allowing us to connect with them and helping us to appreciate nature. Feeding birds is also fun—who can resist watching the antics of a chickadee? And attracting a colorful goldfinch or an oriole to your yard can brighten even the most gloomy day. Wild birds generally don’t need the “free” food that we provide at bird feeders, in fact, studies show that the bulk of a birds’ diet comes from natural sources even where feeders provide plenty of food. But birds do need us to protect habitats.*” Cornell adds that making your yard or neighborhood more attractive to birds is a first step to helping wildlife.

If we can get more people to take a moment to look out their window, or up from their computers and appreciate nature than we feel nature and wildlife will stand a better chance to be here for generations to come because people protect the things that they care about. We want to help you care about nature and birds.

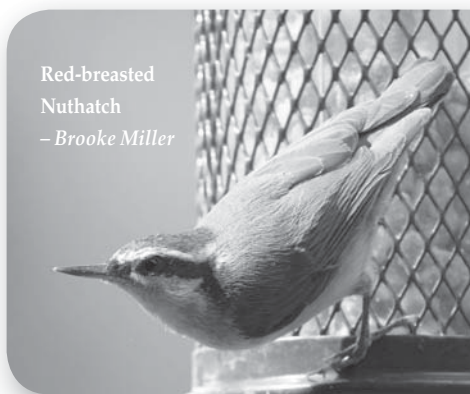
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*Feeding birds brings these spectacular animals into our backyards, allowing us to connect with them and helping us to appreciate nature.*

–Cornell’s Lab Of Ornithology

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# The 19th Annual GBBC Friday, Feb. 12, through Monday, Feb. 15, 2016



Red-breasted Nuthatch  
– Brooke Miller

They are mesmerizing, fun to watch, entertaining and beautiful and that's why you enjoy the birds coming to your backyard. Have you considered taking a few minutes each day to count the birds coming to your yard? Get involved in this year's "Great Backyard Bird Count". It's just around the corner and occurs from February 12–15, 2016.

In 2015, Great Backyard Bird Count participants in more than 100 countries counted 5,090 species of birds on more than 147,000 checklists! Scientists use information from the Great Backyard Bird Count, along with observations from other citizen-science projects, such as the Christmas Bird Count, Project FeederWatch, and eBird, to get the "big picture" about what is happening to bird populations.

This citizen-science program provides a valuable "snapshot" of the types of birds and in what numbers we are experiencing during the same February time frame year after year. The data collected is studied to better understand trends.

To get involved decide where you want to do your count. It can be in your yard, a local park or other natural area on any or all of the four count days. We recommend a half-hour, but you are asked to watch and count the birds for a minimum of 15 minutes. You will have to ID your birds and make your best estimate of the number of individuals you see per

Species	Count	Species	Count
Canada Goose	_____	Oak Titmouse	_____
Mallard	_____	Bushtit	_____
California Quail	_____	Red-breasted Nuthatch	_____
Wild Turkey	_____	Pygmy Nuthatch	_____
Ring-necked Pheasant	_____	White-breasted Nuthatch	_____
Great Blue Heron	_____	Brown Creeper	_____
Great Egret	_____	Bewick's Wren	_____
Red-shouldered Hawk	_____	House Wren	_____
Red-tail Hawk	_____	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	_____
Turkey Vulture	_____	Western Bluebird	_____
Cooper's Hawk	_____	American Robin	_____
Sharp-shinned Hawk	_____	Hermit Thrush	_____
Killdeer	_____	Varied Thrush	_____
Rock Pigeon	_____	Wrentit	_____
Band Tailed Pigeon	_____	Northern Mockingbird	_____
Mourning Dove	_____	California Thrasher	_____
Eurasian Collared Dove	_____	European Starling	_____
Great Horned Owl	_____	Cedar Waxwing	_____
Barn Owl	_____	Yellow-rumped Warbler	_____
Western Screech Owl	_____	Townsend's Warbler	_____
Anna's Hummingbird	_____	Western Tanager	_____
White Throated Swift	_____	Spotted Towhee	_____
Belted Kingfisher	_____	California Towhee	_____
Red-breasted Sapsucker	_____	Song Sparrow	_____
Nuttall's Woodpecker	_____	White-crowned Sparrow	_____
Northern Flicker	_____	Golden-crowned Sparrow	_____
Acorn Woodpecker	_____	White-throated Sparrow	_____
Hairy Woodpecker	_____	Fox Sparrow	_____
Downy Woodpecker	_____	Lincoln's Sparrow	_____
Pileated Woodpecker	_____	Dark-eyed Junco	_____
American Kestrel	_____	Red-winged Blackbird	_____
Peregrine Falcon	_____	Brewer's Blackbird	_____
Merlin	_____	Brown-headed Cowbird	_____
Black Phoebe	_____	Western Meadowlark	_____
Hutton's Vireo	_____	House Finch	_____
Yellow-billed Magpie	_____	Purple Finch	_____
Western Scrub Jay	_____	Pine Siskin	_____
Steller's Jay	_____	Lesser Goldfinch	_____
American Crow	_____	American Goldfinch	_____
Common Raven	_____	Pine Siskin	_____
Tree Swallow	_____	House Sparrow	_____
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	_____	Other _____	_____

Day

Time

species and write down your numbers. We have provided for you a taxonomic list of the most common backyard species found in our area. You then log onto [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org) and enter your numbers. If you're new to the count, first register online then enter your checklist. If you have already participated in another Cornell Lab citizen-science project, you can use your existing login. Good luck & have fun.



## Upcoming Events Continued

*These events are free, but space is limited so please call to reserve your seat 408-358-9453.*

### Wildlife of the American West – Brent Paull

**New Time** Thursday Feb. 18, 7:00 – 8:00 PM at the Terraces



“From the bears and elk of Yellowstone to the Vermilion Flycatchers of Morongo Valley, from the bobcats and kit fox of the San Joaquin Valley to the snow geese of Bosque del Apache and the northern harriers of Utah - we live in a wildlife mecca that gives us access to some of the greatest, most beautiful creatures that walk, fly, or crawl across this globe.” This has been the photographic view of Brent Paull for 32 years.” Once a freelance photographer, Brent now leads photographic safari tours. He will share with us some of his wildlife photography from throughout the country.

### Alaska from the Sea Wolf – Patty Biasca and Bob Anderson

**New Time** Thursday March 17, 7:00 – 8:00 PM at the Terraces



On a converted WWII wooden mine sweeper (now called the Sea Wolf) Patty Biasca and Bob Anderson explored Alaska’s Inside Passage from Juneau to Ketchikan encountering orcas, humpback whales, bears, and other Alaskan wildlife. The trip format, which used kayaks and a skiff to leave the boat daily, allowed intimate views of nooks and crannies not seen by the average cruise ship passenger. This talk will give some of the fascinating history of the Sea Wolf and share pictures and experiences encountered along the way. Patty and

Bob have been enjoying outdoor adventures for most of their adult lives, the last 25 or so years exploring together through backpacking, river rafting, kayaking, and hiking in some of the world’s most beautiful and out-of-the-way places.

## A New Bird at Your Feeder?

You are all wondering what that little bird is with all the brown stripes. A flock arrived in your yard and is competing with your goldfinch at the thistle feeder. Well, those little streaked birds are Pine Siskins. Siskins are a species that we may not see for years and then they appear in force. They are related to the goldfinch, and they show up in the winter together in large flocks. At times aggressive, they can cause squabbles with the Lesser and American Goldfinch that are the usual birds you see clinging to your thistle feeders. Since Pine Siskins are related to goldfinch, they share the same appetite for thistle. While the more familiar goldfinch have yellow, gold and green tones to their plumage, the Pine Siskins are predominately covered in brown streaks.



*Siskin photo by Tony Woo*

Their gold feathers are hidden within the fold of their wings and tail feathers. You can see their gold feathers as they fly away or over your head. Adult males and females look alike. Large flocks will travel together throughout the winter. Residents living in the Santa Cruz Mountains may see Pine Siskins each winter, but for the rest of us living on the valley floor, we never know when and if they will pass through our yards. If you do have goldfinch and siskins coming to your feeders, just make sure you keep your feeders clean and provide quality food. Just like school kids, when many come together in large groups they can pass diseases on to each other.

Keeping your feeders and bird baths clean is good for the birds and all the wildlife that visits your yard. If you do have Pine Siskins, enjoy them for this season because before you know it, they will migrate out of the area and we never know when they may return.

# Thank You, Kathleen!

By *Freddy Howell*

Almost twenty years ago, Kathleen and her two little girls walked into the store. She was really interested in feeding birds, especially hummingbirds, and was excited that we were going to do kid's programs during the summer.

Leslie and Jill were in our first "Summer Nature Series" class and I vividly remember dissecting owl pellets in the store before we opened. Six little folks sitting on big chairs around the table trying to figure out what the different bones were.

Kathleen became a regular customer and we became friends. In September, 2004 she came in and asked if she could work at the store and we just happened to need someone. Thus began an eleven year partnership. Most customers know Kathleen as the "go to" hummingbird expert. She has seven feeders at her home and observes all the different behaviors which she willingly shares with customers and employees alike.

Through her observations of the goldfinches in her yard, she came up with the idea to only fill a new seed feeder half way so the birds know that there is something to investigate in this new "tube thing" in their territory.

Kathleen's background is in quality control and she is eagle-eyed when processing all the inventory we receive each week. She is fast, organized and focused with an amazing work ethic. Her other responsibilities include ordering cards and jewelry. She is the reason our card selection is so varied, interesting, fun and well stocked. In addition, Kathleen helped me by preparing most of the supplies for the various school programs we have done through the years. I couldn't have done them without her!

Shakespeare is another of Kathleen's passions which I am very happy to join her. For the last five years, we have attended six to eight performances



each season from Santa Cruz to Saratoga to Los Gatos. The photo shows Kathleen, customer Linda Mandel (another Shakespeare fan) and me ready for a show at Oak Meadow Park by Festival Theatre Ensemble this past summer.

Kathleen has decided this is a good time for her to cut back her hours. She looks forward to spending more time with family and friends. She plans to help Lisa until the new store software system is in place. Kathleen knows all the products carried in the store and will continue as a "buyer" working behind the scenes. She will be missed out on the front lines, but we know she will be back for bird seed!

## Services Available from the Los Gatos Birdwatcher

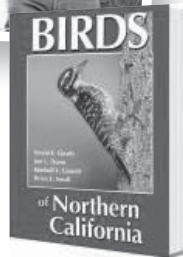
- **Feeder Cleaning** – Drop off your feeders any day of the week. We clean on Mondays and Thursdays, asking only a donation to one of our charities (Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley, Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation Center, Nike Animal Rescue Foundation, Friends of San Martin Animal Shelter, Injured and Orphaned Wildlife, and Henry W. Coe State Park Bat Project). We will call you by closing for pickup.
- **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** - We 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.
- **Frequent Buyer Program**, buy 9 bags 20# or higher of the same seed and get the 10th one free. Coupons do not apply.
- 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.
- 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.*

## Special Booking Signing Event

Friday February 12 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM



Mark your calendars, we have a special book signing planned for you here in the store. **Dave Quady** is an expert on the birds of Northern California. He's led trips and taught classes for Golden Gate Audubon, as well as led the Oakland Christmas Bird Count for the last 13 years. Although he enjoys all birds he specializes in the family of owls and is President of Western Field Ornithologists. Dave will share stories about what it took to create his new Northern California field guide. Books will be available for purchase and Dave will be happy to sign your copy. We'll have sweets to eat, tea and decaffeinated coffee. *The workshop is free, but space is limited so please call to reserve your seat 408-358-9453.*



## Let's Go Birding Tours

– **Central Valley Raptor Tour**

Sat. Jan. 16, 2016

8:00 AM – 5:00 PM **Wait List**

We are excited to have Wildlife Biologist and raptor expert Ryan Phillips coleading the first tour of 2016. *Fee: \$60 Includes transportation.*

– **Lodi, 2nd Crane tour added**

Sat. Feb. 6, 2016 8:00 – 5:30 PM

The Sandhill Cranes arrived in the fall and will soon be leaving for their northern breeding grounds. This trip will take us to the crane habitats around Lodi as we bird Staten Island Road. We will also be on the look-out for Tundra Swans, Cackling and Greater White Fronted Geese and the many raptors that share this habitat. *Fee: \$60 includes transportation.*

## Field Trips & Outings

### Saturday Morning Local Bird Walks

Dates and locations of our bird walks will now be listed in the newsletter and on our web page. A reminder to our location will also be found on the store's phone message. Join us most Saturday mornings for an enjoyable bird walk. You can meet at the Los Gatos Birdwatcher at 8:00 AM and drive over together, or meet at the trip location by 8:30 am. Walks end by 10:00AM. These two hour Saturday walks are open to all who are interested in birding. If the forecast says 80 – 100% chance of rain in Los Gatos, the trip cancels. **No Charge.**



**Jan. 2** – Charleston Slough, meet off Terminal Blvd. in Mountain View.

**Jan. 9** – Coyote Valley, So San Jose, meet at Spina Farms at the corner of Bailey and Santa Teresa Ave.

**Jan. 16** – No local morning walk as we will be birding the Central Valley all day.

**Jan. 23** – Almaden Lake Park, San Jose, meet near the Bocce Ball court off Winfield Blvd.

**Jan. 30** – Belgatos Park in Los Gatos. Meet in the parking lot.

**Feb. 6** – No local morning walk as we will be birding the Lodi Area.

**Feb. 13** – La Rinchonada Park, Los Gatos. Meet near the Tennis Courts.

**Feb. 20** – Palo Alto Baylands, meet near the Ranger Station.

**Feb. 27** – Oka Percolation Ponds, meet at the Oka entrance.

**Mar. 5** – Vasona County Park, meet off University at the Pepper Tree Lane entrance.

### Sunnyvale Audubon walks

First Wednesday of the month Jan 6, Feb. 3, Mar. 2; Noon to 1pm

Freddy will continue to lead this walk for Santa Clara Valley Audubon on the First Wednesday of the month. Birding walks are listed at [www.scvas.org](http://www.scvas.org). Bring your binoculars (loaners are available) and meet Freddy at the Sunnyvale Pollution Control Plant where Borregas and Caribbean meet off of 237. After entering the plant turn left at the first stop sign and continue to the end of the parking area. **No Charge.**



### Visit the International Crane Foundation headquarters in Baraboo, WI

Let's Go Birding is planning a 5 day tour in the 2016 May time frame to visit the International Crane Foundation headquarters in Baraboo, WI. This is the only place on Earth where one can see all fifteen species of the world's cranes. We will tour the facility, learn about the world's cranes and spend time birding the many trails and habitats found here. We will also visit other hot spots of the area looking for species not found in the west. This tour coincides with the spring migration. If you would like to learn more please call the store or email [info@letsjobirding.com](mailto:info@letsjobirding.com).



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

##C0216

January / February 2016

Pay to the order of Our Loyal Customer  
**15% Off One Item**

Memo: Expires 02/29/16

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



### WALL HANGERS

– Wall hangings are a great way to add beauty to your home or garden



### RAIN GAUGES

– Rain Gauges are popular again and we have several styles



### NEST BOXES

– Now's the time to put up your nest boxes



### SWEET DREAMS

– Eye Pillows & Heat Wraps are a wonderful gift to yourself or someone special



### KRISTIN FORD DESIGNS

– One new line of jewelry from designer Kristin Ford features gemstones from around the world

# 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](mailto:info@losgatosbirdwatcher.com)  
website: [www.losgatosbirdwatcher.com](http://www.losgatosbirdwatcher.com)



Return Service Requested



Printed on  
recycled paper

## Meet Sawyer!



One of the first things John & Freddy did in retirement was to get a new dog. Please meet Sawyer, a two year old Cocker Spaniel mix, who is helping them through the transition.

### Dates to Remember

Closed New Years' Day | January 1  
Martin Luther King Day/ National Service Day | January 18  
Groundhog Day | February 2  
Valentine's Day | February 14  
President's Day | February 15  
Daylight Savings Time Begins | March 13

### Store Hours

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

