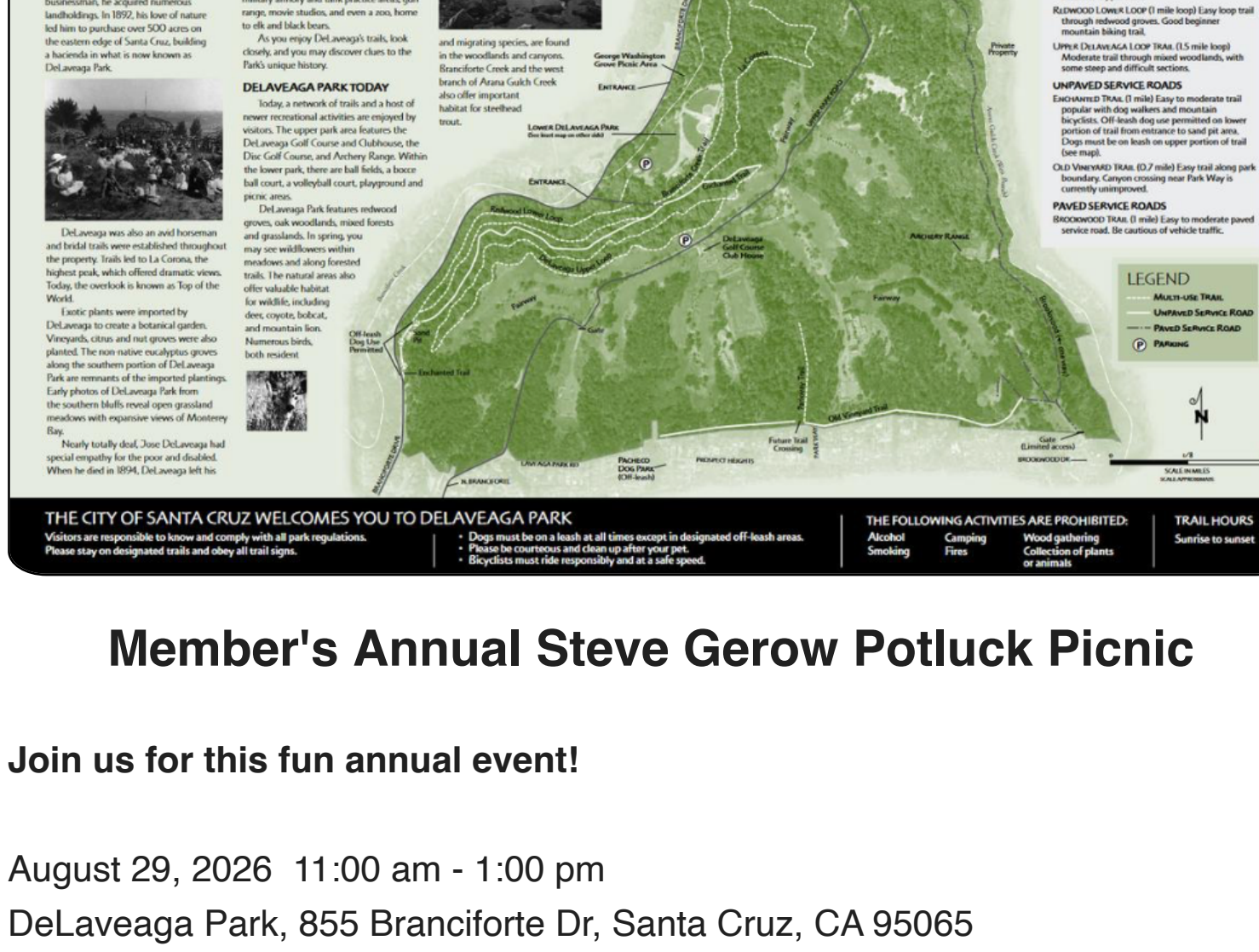




Santa Cruz Bird Club Newsletter Vol. 70 No. 8 August 2026

Welcome to The Albatross! A monthly eNewsletter that can be viewed directly from your email on a computer or mobile device. You can also download a pdf version from our [website](#). We hope that you enjoy it and encourage your feedback and recommendations.



Member's Annual Steve Gerow Potluck Picnic

Join us for this fun annual event!

August 29, 2026 11:00 am - 1:00 pm
DeLaveaga Park, 855 Branciforte Dr, Santa Cruz, CA 95065
Twisted Tree Picnic area

The picnic is a potluck affair and the club will provide water. All are welcome so bring your significant other and friends. Please bring a food item to share and your own reusable dishes.

Pre-picnic bird walk

August 29, 2026 8:00 am - 10:30 am
DeLaveaga Park (Park Way)

In addition to resident forest species (probably several types of woodpeckers, lots of Pygmy Nuthatches, Brown Creepers, etc.) summer residents will be present, including Olive-sided Flycatchers, Western Wood-Pewees, Swainson's Thrush, Wilson's and Orange-crowned Warblers, and others.

Directions: Meet at 8:00 AM at the trail head at the north end of Park Way (the section to the north of Highway 1), off Prospect Heights. Note that parking is limited in this area. There are a few parking spaces in a dirt lot by the park entrance, but these can be difficult for low-clearance vehicles. There is usually some on-street parking on Prospect Heights and nearby side streets.

Leader: Phil Brown



Bush-tit emerging from nest photo courtesy of Tom Hambleton

SCBC August Field Trips

August 4th - 8:30 am - Quail Hollow County Park

August 14th - 8:30 am - Zayante Trail

August 15th - 1:30 pm - Raptor & Wildlife Rehabilitation Center at Blue Apple Farm - **Members Only - Registration Required**

August 29th - 8:00 am - Delaveaga Park - pre-picnic bird walk

[Get More Details Here](#)

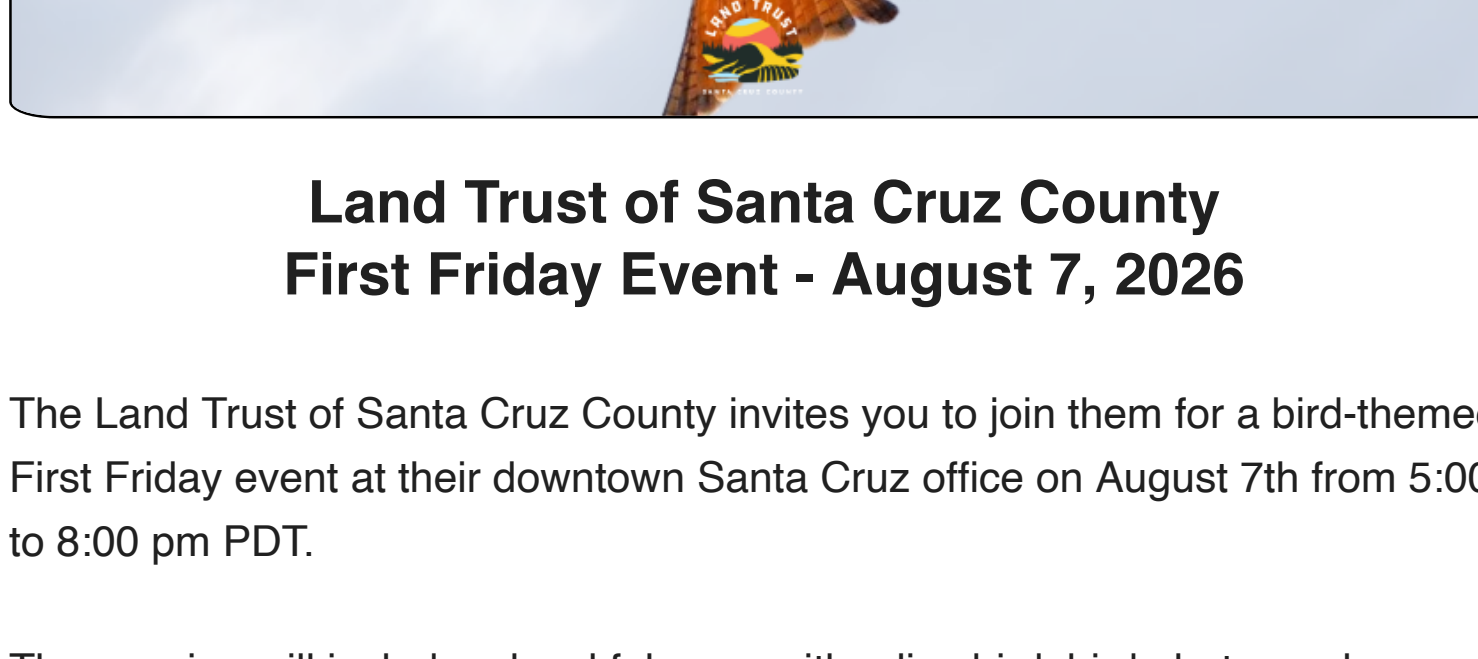


2026 Monterey Bay Festival of Birds October 9th through 11th 2026

The Bird School Project is excited to celebrate the birds of the Monterey Bay with the Festival of Birds during the second weekend in October! With lots of field trips and workshops to sign up for, there will be birding activities for everyone.

Tickets go on sale August 1st!

[Get More Info Here](#)



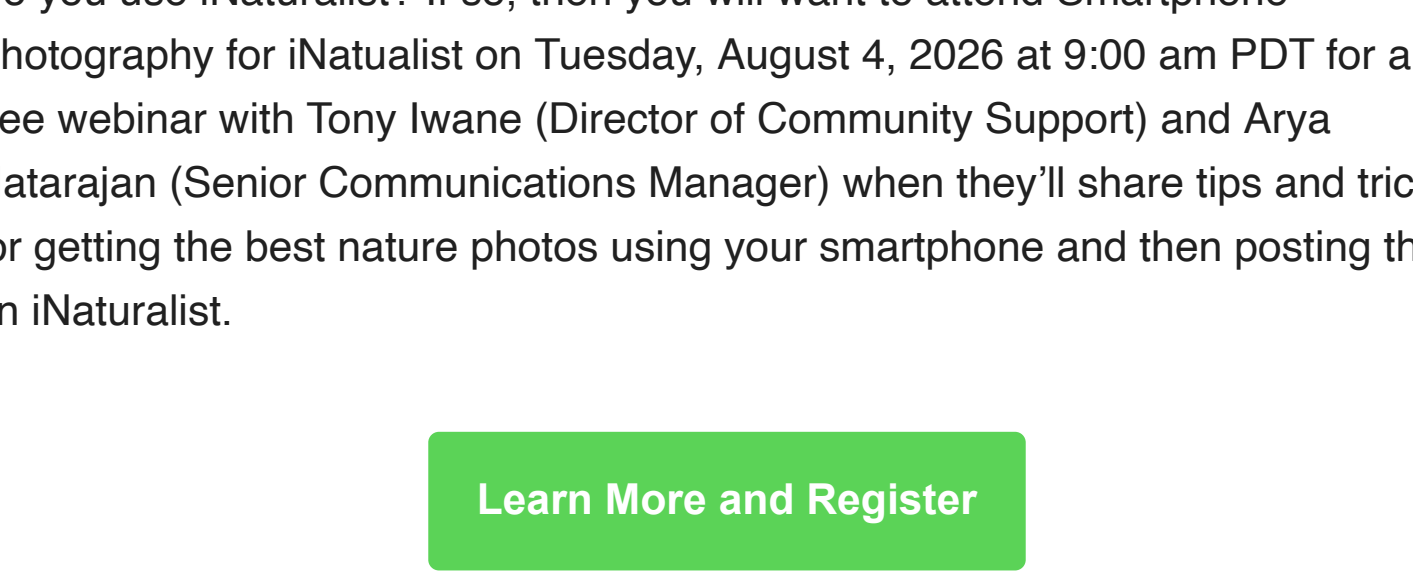
Land Trust of Santa Cruz County First Friday Event - August 7, 2026

The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County invites you to join them for a bird-themed First Friday event at their downtown Santa Cruz office on August 7th from 5:00 to 8:00 pm PDT.

The evening will include a local falconer with a live bird, bird photography, native plants from the UCSC Arboretum, insect and nature specimens, the Bird School Project, and a local author presenting and signing her book, *Birds of Santa Cruz*.

It's free for all ages and open-house style.

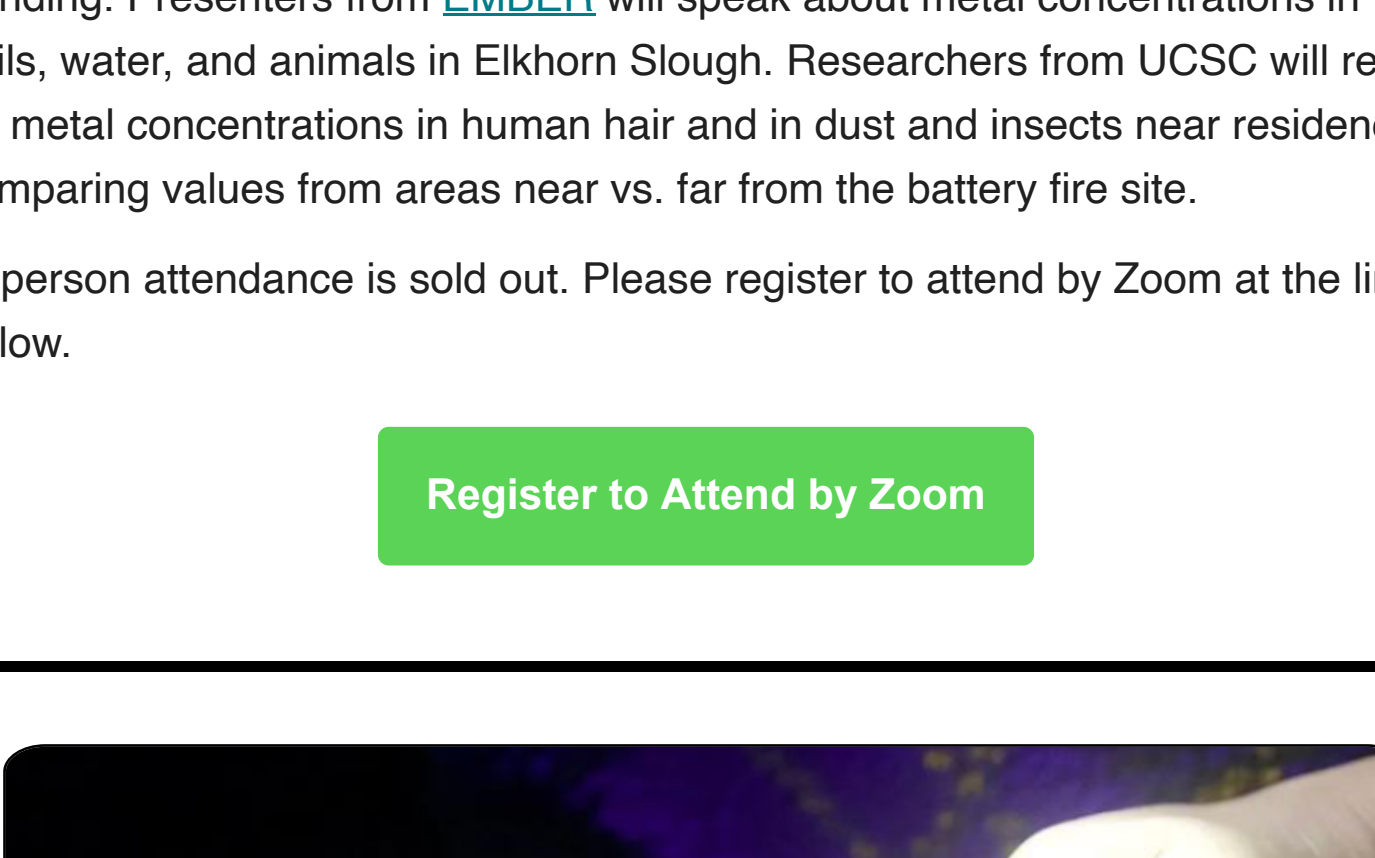
[Learn More Here](#)



Smartphone Photography for iNaturalist Webinar - Tuesday, August 4, 2026

Do you use iNaturalist? If so, then you will want to attend Smartphone Photography for iNaturalist on Tuesday, August 4, 2026 at 9:00 am PDT for a free webinar with Tony Iwane (Director of Community Support) and Arya Natarajan (Senior Communications Manager) when they'll share tips and tricks for getting the best nature photos using your smartphone and then posting them on iNaturalist.

[Learn More and Register](#)

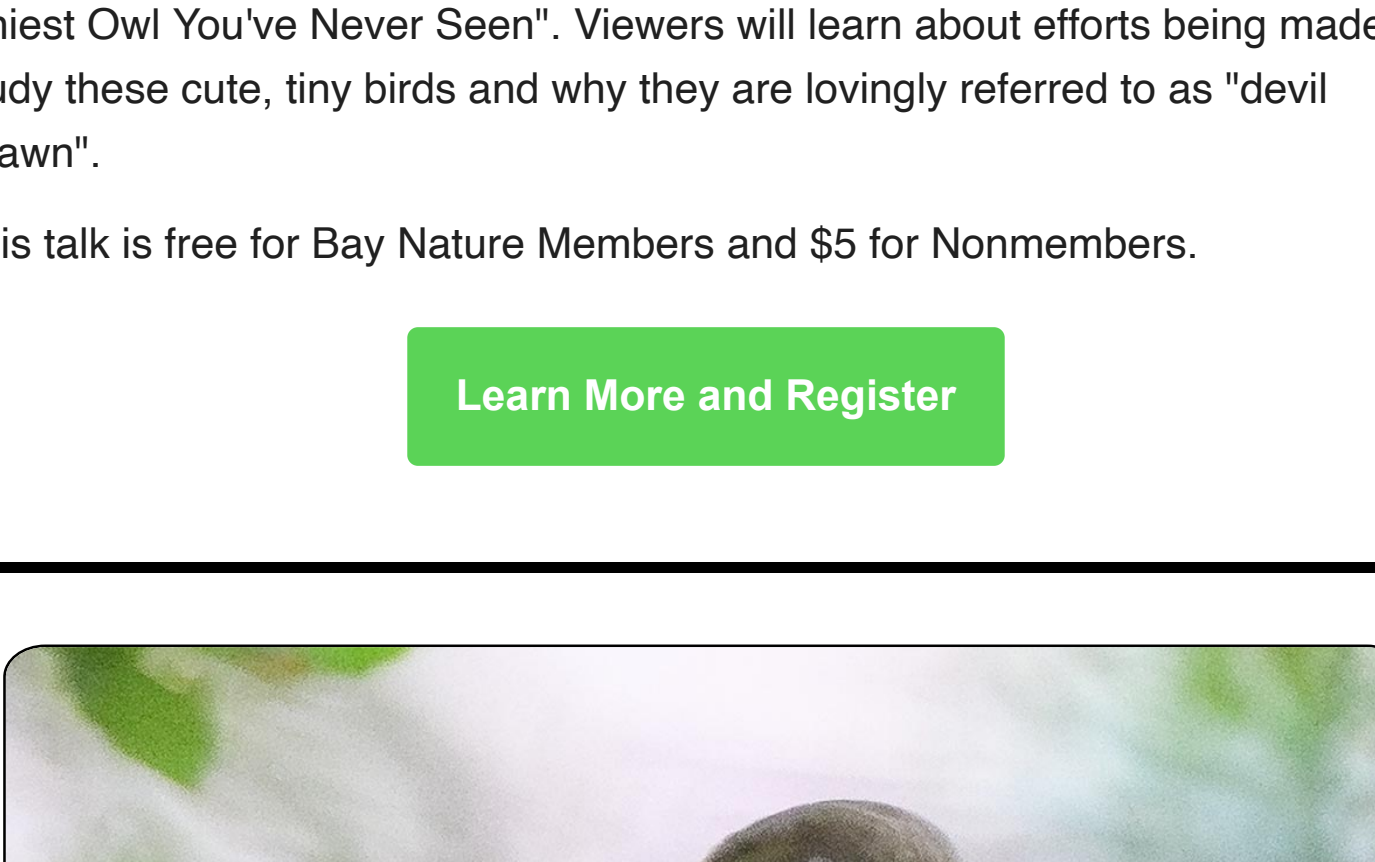


Moss Landing Battery Fire Science Symposium August 7, 2026 • 9 am to 4 pm PDT

Join us for a public symposium with presentations from scientists studying the impacts of the 2025 fire at the Vistra battery storage facility in Moss Landing. Presenters from **EMBER** will speak about metal concentrations in soils, water, and animals in Elkhorn Slough. Researchers from UCSC will report on metal concentrations in human hair and in dust and insects near residences, comparing values from areas near vs. far from the battery fire site.

In-person attendance is sold out. Please register to attend by Zoom at the link below.

[Register to Attend by Zoom](#)



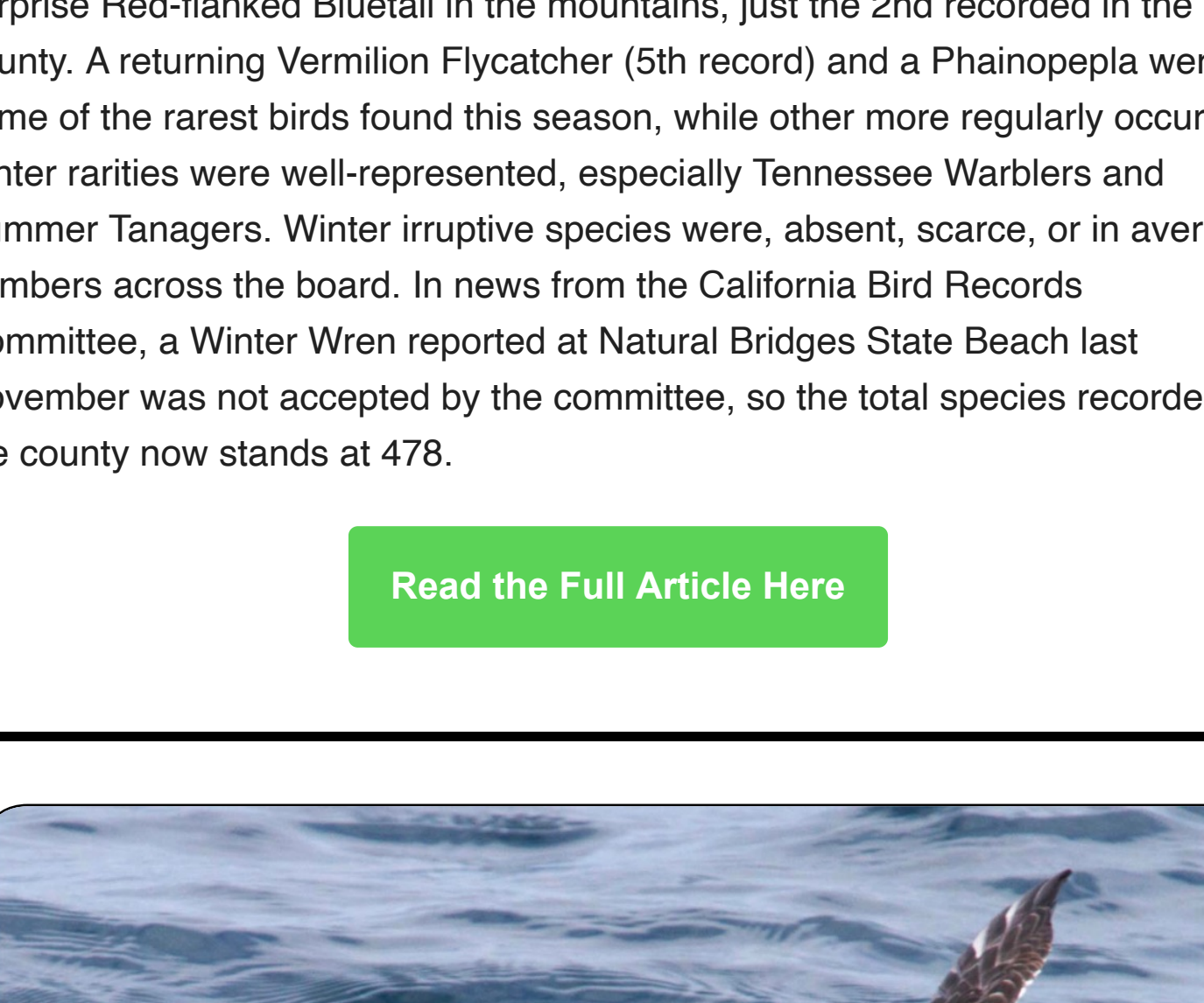
Saw-whet Owl Photo Courtesy of Duttu Gupta

Bay Nature Talk: Saw-whet Owls with Julie Woodruff Wednesday, August 26, 2026

Join Bay Nature and Julie Woodruff for a virtual talk about Saw-whet Owls on Wednesday, August 26 from 12pm - 1pm. Tune in to hear from Julie Woodruff about her efforts to band and study one of our most elusive local residents. This talk will take a deep dive into the project that inspired our winter story, "The Tiniest Owl You've Never Seen". Viewers will learn about efforts being made to study these cute, tiny birds and why they are lovingly referred to as "devil spawn".

This talk is free for Bay Nature Members and \$5 for Nonmembers.

[Learn More and Register](#)



Red-flanked Bluetail photo courtesy of Josh Greenfield

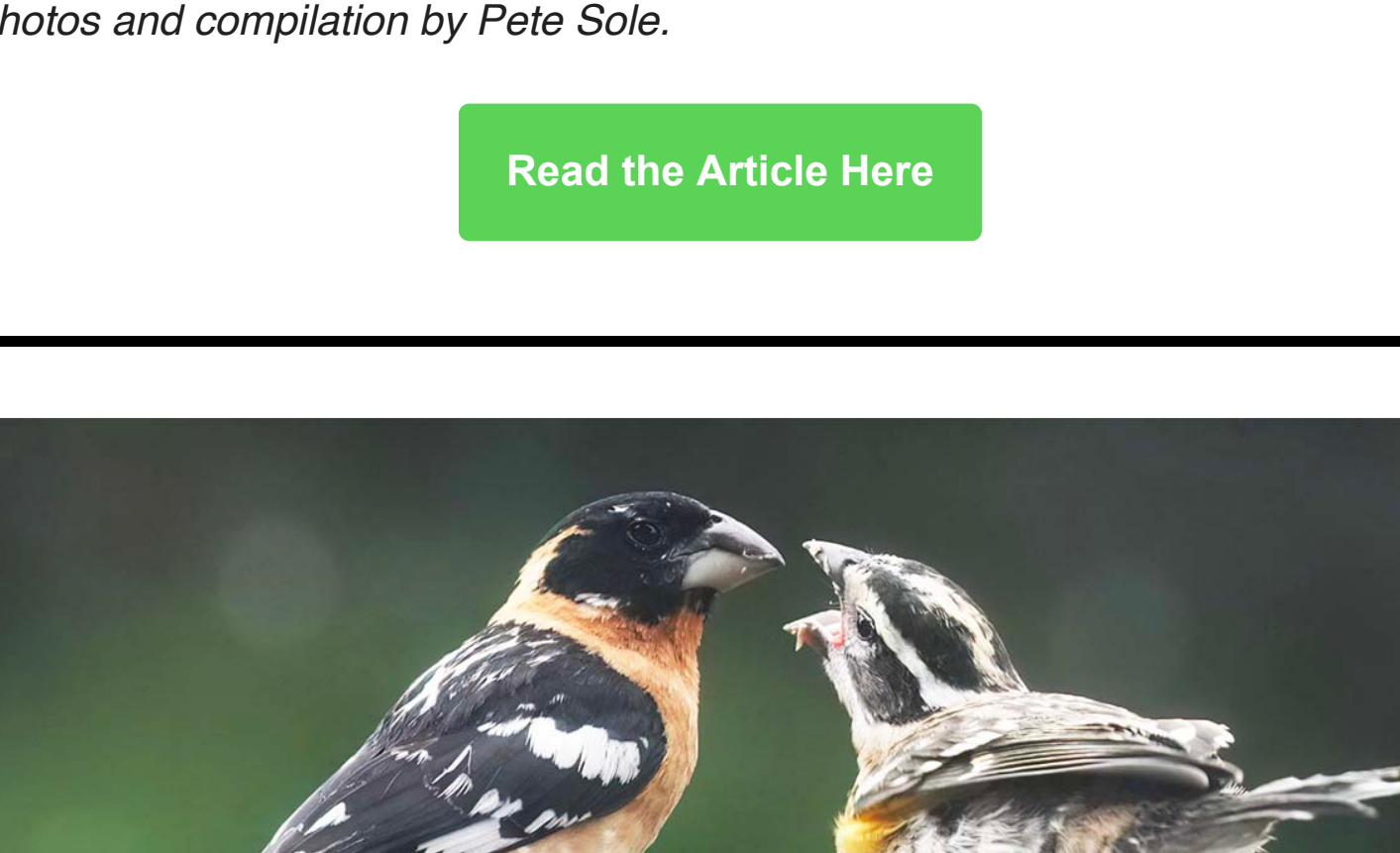
Santa Cruz Birds

By Alex Rinkert

Including reports from December 1, 2025 to February 28, 2026

This was a rather slow winter for unusual birds but one that is headlined by a surprise Red-flanked Bluetail in the mountains, just the 2nd recorded in the county. A returning Vermilion Flycatcher (5th record) and a Phainopepla were some of the rarest birds found this season, while other more regularly occurring winter rarities were well-represented, especially Tennessee Warblers and Summer Tanagers. Winter irruptive species were, absent, scarce, or in average numbers across the board. In news from the California Bird Records Committee, a Winter Wren reported at Natural Bridges State Beach last November was not accepted by the committee, so the total species recorded in the county now stands at 478.

[Read the Full Article Here](#)



Pink-footed Shearwater photo courtesy of Pete Sole

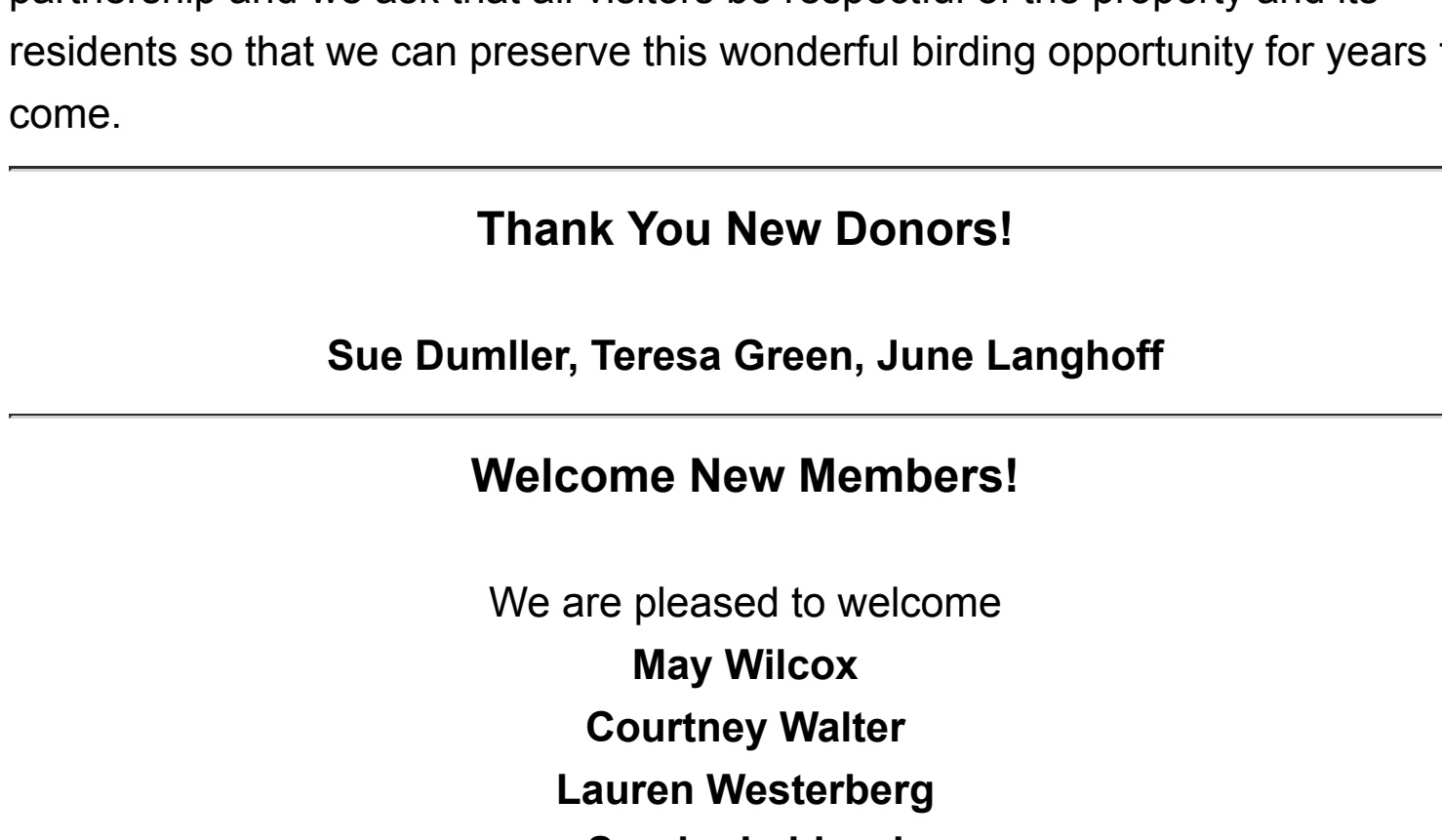
Be On The Lookout for These Birds in August

It's already August, and although it still seems like the middle of summer, many of the breeding birds in our area will be leaving and winter species arriving by the end of the month as fall migration picks up. Many rarities have turned up in Santa Cruz County through the years during the month of August.

There are many birds described in the full article available by clicking on the button below.

These articles are archived on the Santa Cruz Bird Club website from previous years and provide an informal list of birds that are leaving and those arriving as well as the most likely places to see them. The text is by Randy Wardle and the photos and compilation by Pete Sole.

[Read the Article Here](#)



Black-headed Grosbeak photo courtesy of Pete Sole

Important Club Announcements

THE NEWS YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR! Pajaro Dunes Reopened for Santa Cruz Bird Club Members!

We are delighted to share the great news that the Santa Cruz Bird Club and Pajaro Dunes Management have reached an agreement to once again welcome birders to this very special private property beginning in September 2026.

Santa Cruz Bird Club Members must apply for Access no later than August 15, 2026 by [CLICKING HERE](#).

After you complete your application and your membership status has been verified, you will be notified after August 15th of your status. Be sure to take your signed access agreement with you on your first visit.

We are grateful to the Pajaro Dunes Management for their continued partnership and we ask that all visitors be respectful of the property and its residents so that we can preserve this wonderful birding opportunity for years to come.

Thank You New Donors!

Sue Dumler, Teresa Green, June Langhoff

Welcome New Members!

We are pleased to welcome

May Wilcox
Courtney Walter

Lauren Westerberg
Sandra Labhard

Michael McNulty
Jonah Svensson

Gerald Marthe
Teresa Rein

It's Renewal time for your Santa Cruz Bird Club membership

If you haven't yet renewed then please do so to keep your membership current.

Dues are \$25 Individual, \$35 Family, Life Membership just \$400.

You can pay online, using PayPal. Just go to the website and follow the links: www.santacruzbirdclub.org. Or you can mail us a check, payable to 'Santa Cruz Bird Club' and mail to PO Box 1304, Santa Cruz, CA 95061

[Join or Renew Your Membership, or Donate Here](#)

Want To Contribute To The Albatross?

We would love to share your articles, photos and illustrations. We also welcome comments and recommendations on what you would like to see covered in the Albatross going forward.

Please send <mailto:scbirdclubeditor@gmail.com>

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PO Box 1304
Santa Cruz, CA 95061

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