

# East Bay NATURE

1270A Newell Avenue  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596  
(925) 407-1333

7186 Regional Street  
Dublin, CA 94568  
(925) 479-0044

www.eastbaynature.com



The Walnut Creek store is now 22 years old and the Dublin store is 3! Our wonderful employees, Terri, Tracy, Anne, Sam, Trevor, Nathan, Mitch and Chris keep the doors open and the seed bags full, but if it wasn't for our customers we wouldn't be here. And, for that I am especially grateful. My sincerest thanks to customers and my employees...

**We wish you, your family and your backyard friends the most joyous of holidays.**

**Happy, happy everything** - Joanie, Annie, Terri, Anne, Tracy (plus little Grace and Grant!), Sam, Trevor, Nathan, Mitch, Chris and Zippy, the unusually large goldfish



Winter, 2017

Pay To The Order of Our Loyal Customer

**20% off any single item of your choice**

(Please use by 2/28/2018. One coupon per customer, please.)

- Joanie Smith, Owner

Excludes optics and sale items. Not to be combined with any other offers.

## 2018 Bird Walk Schedule

Check our website (www.eastbaynature.com) for the 2018 schedule of dates and places. The fabulous Michael Massey will be leading our bird walks. We meet the first Saturday of every month (except February) at 7:45am at the Walnut Creek store and carpool. We return at 10am or later for coffee and donuts. All is free and no reservations are required.

## February Seed & Suet Sale!!!

If you're getting low on seed when February rolls around there will be another chance to stock up! All seed and suet will be 15% off for the entire month of February.



We will be closed for  
**Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day**  
We'll close at 3 PM Christmas and New Year's Eve

### East Bay Nature Locations

1270A Newell Avenue  
Walnut Creek, CA  
94596

Phone (925) 407-1333  
Fax (925) 937-6291

7186 Regional Street  
Dublin, CA  
94568

Phone (925) 479-0044  
Fax (925) 479-0037

#### Store Hours

10:00 AM - 6:00 PM  
(Mon. thru Sat.)  
11:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
(Sunday)

#### Web

www.eastbaynature.com  
www.twitter.com/eastbaynature

#### Owner

Joanie Smith  
joanie@eastbaynature.com

# East Bay NATURE NEWS

Winter 2017

## A Conversation with a Bat...

If you're lucky enough to be outside at dusk on a reasonably warm evening you might see something darting through the air at seemingly nothing. It could be a moth, maybe a bird out late, but most likely, a bat.

I was out at twilight trying to get my bird baths filled for the following day when I thought I saw something zip past out of the corner of my eye. I stood still and waited for movement. There it was again. I tried to track it, but it was moving too fast. "What the heck are you?" I said out loud.

"What do you mean?" came a little voice. I looked around trying to find out where the voice was coming from and finally found a little brown doo-hickey clinging to the stucco on the side of my house. "Was that your voice I heard?" I asked. "Well, let's see," it said, its furry head looking around. "I don't see anyone else here."

"Are you a...a...bat?" I asked, moving back a few steps. "Yes, specifically a Mexican free-tailed bat," she said. "Name's Pam. And, why did you take a few steps back just then?" "Well," I whispered. "I didn't want you to get caught in my hair." "Get caught...in your hair?" she said incredulously. "What the hell is that supposed to mean?" "I'm sorry, Pam," I said apologetically. "I'd heard that bats can fly into your hair." She shook her fuzzy little brown head. "Let me tell you something about us bats."

"First of all, we're mammals, same as you," she said in an instructor tone of voice. "We Mexican free-tailed bats are the most common bats in our area. There are also pallid bats, little brown bats and big brown bats, to name a few." "Don't the little brown bats and big brown bats have actual names?" I said jokingly. "Those ARE their real names," she said annoyed. "I didn't name them. Don't judge." "Okay, sorry about that," I said cautiously. "Bats are myth-understood," she said with a chuckle. "There are more myths about us than any other animal, and frankly," she said, the smile disappearing from her face. "I'm

getting a little weary of it. What's wrong with you hairless mammals anyway?" "Well," I said. "We're not really hairless. I may have less hair than I used to, but there's no need to be insulting." "That's not what I meant," she interrupted. "Compared to the rest of the mammals in the world, you're hairless." "Now, where was I?" she said with her claw on her chin looking skyward. "Oh, yeah, we're also the only mammal that can truly fly. There are more than 900 species of us in the world. Between 12 to 16 bat species in the Bay Area alone. Almost one-quarter of the world's 4,400 species of mammals are bats."

"Our young are born live and feed on milk that we produce. We have one pup at a time that we care for in maternal colonies. We can distinguish the call of our own pup out of thousands of others. Some of us are solitary, some species form colonies of up to a million individuals. The most famous colony lives in a cave near San Antonio, Texas, with a population of 20,000,000 individuals. We eat loads of insects and are some of the best pollinators in the world. Our tail is almost half our total length and stretches beyond the membrane between our legs, giving us the name "free-tailed" bats. To avoid harsh winters some bats migrate, others hibernate and some of us go into a torpor to save energy and keep warm. That would be me." "How's your eyesight?" I asked, regretting it the moment I said it. "I was really hoping the "blind as a bat" thing had died a natural death," she said. "Just so you know, the California leaf-nosed bat has night vision far superior to the best man-made night scope. Our need for echolocation is not because we're blind, but to help us find prey in the dark."

"So," I said, super carefully this time. "What exactly do you...uh, eat?" "Oh," she said her eyes narrowing. "I can see where you're going with this. You think we drink blood, don't

you?" "No, no, no!" I said quickly. She looked at me sadly. "Only vampire bats drink blood, Joanie. Vampires live in South America, Central



America and parts of Mexico and generally feed on livestock. I prefer flying insects, mainly

mosquitos. There is a very low density of skeeters in this area, consequently, there are less bats. The mosquitos here are downright skimpy, but we can "see" them using echolocation for navigation. And, THIS part is really cool, so pay attention. We can emit ultrasonic vocalizations which have the effect of jamming the echolocation calls of a rival bat species hunting moths. The "jamming" call leads to an increased chance of our rival missing its prey, which we are then able to eat ourselves." Pam laughed so hard I thought she was going to fall off the side of the house.

But then, suddenly, Pam became very quiet. Her ears twitched as she stared intently right at me. I'm not sure I'd seen a mammal so focused. "Pam," I said nervously. "Wha...what's the matter? What are you looking at?" I began to slowly step backward. Pam suddenly launched herself off the side of the house heading straight towards me. I instantly forgot everything she told me about bats instead reverting to scary childhood myths about hair and vampires. I put my hands up in front of my face with my fingers in the shape of a cross. I don't know why. I think I saw it in an old Steve Martin movie way back in the late seventies. But, did it work? I don't remember. Wait, how old am I anyway? Oh well, I was desperate. With teeth bared she headed straight towards my face, snatched something off my nose and veered away. "Hoo!" said Pam. "THAT was the biggest mosquito I've ever had!"

Bless the Bats~

Joanie and Annie



# Anniversary Celebration - 20% Off!

**Dublin - Saturday, 12/2 Walnut Creek - Saturday, 12/9**

This is a one-day only sale! All merchandise (except optics) will be **20% off**, no limits! That includes seed, suet, feeders, houses, hardware, baths, gifts, etc. No rain checks, though. We'll have stuff to eat and drink, too.

## Corvid Connection

Our wonderful guests from the Corvid Connection will visit us again this year. Elaine Friedman will bring a variety of her birds to visit

- Indy--the Western Scrub Jay**
- Jimmy--the American Crow**
- Gus--the Western Screech Owl**
- Kody--her new Black-billed Magpie**
- Sabrina--the Caique Parrot**

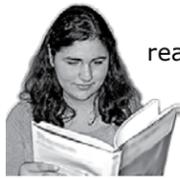
They will make their special appearances from noon-3pm.

## Banjo Entertainment

Along with good food and drink have a seat and enjoy Banjos by the SF Bay, starring **Deb Hodson**, a longtime customer and super talented banjo player along with her equally talented band from noon-2pm.

## Annie's Reading Corner...

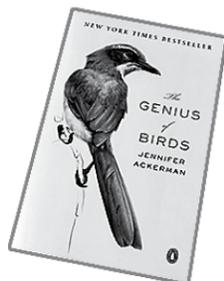
### The Genius of Birds by Jennifer Ackerman



Okay, it might have been me and not Annie that read the book this time around. I have to say I really loved this book. Birds are amazingly intelligent, which I knew already, but new research shows that birds rival primates and even humans in their extraordinary forms of intelligence. This book also delves deeply into the bird brain itself.

The New Caledonian Crows actually use tools that they form themselves incorporating a curved hook. How much can you possibly do with just a beak and two claws? If you throw in a slightly larger than normal brain, you can do a lot apparently. And then, in a category all their own, are the bowerbirds of New Guinea and Australia--those astounding birds that build complex, highly decorative structures just to attract a female. The section on these birds alone is worth the price of the book. Even our chickadees, known for their friendliness and clever antics at the bird feeder have a slightly larger brain (in relation to their body size) than other birds. You really should read this book if you want to be totally amazed at the capabilities of birds.

**Cool fact:** Thomas Jefferson had a pet mockingbird named Dick. It followed him around the White House and perched on the couch when the president napped. It would serenade him with both human and bird tunes.



## Bird Houses by Heartwood

I've always wanted to bring in these beautiful bird houses. Some customers have asked for houses with more architectural design and I think they will love these. My favorite is called the Birdiwampus. It's whimsical and fun just to look at. I would buy all the houses in the catalog if I could. Of course, they are completely functional and dimensionally suited to the birds in our area. Made in the USA of reclaimed cypress wood and some models of PVC. Prices range from \$36.95 to \$199.00.

## Nail File Tree Ornaments by Truebrite

You read that right. These are actual nail files with birds on them, just like our regular nail files except these are shaped like bird houses. The front is a medium grit nail file and the back is a mirror. They can be hung on a Christmas tree, given as a small gift, attached to a wrapped gift or, what the heck, used as a luggage tag! It comes in a clear plastic enclosure with a variety of bird species to choose from...\$2.99.



## Hummer Rings by Backyard Essentials

You may have seen our Nectar Dots. A tiny feeder that you can hold in your hand to feed the hummers. Now, there are hummingbird rings that you wear on your finger like an actual ring only it contains nectar. You can train hummingbirds to feed from your hummer ring by first taking down your feeder, then rest your hand on something close by and wait. You fill your hummer ring yourself with the nectar you normally use. It holds 10 milliliters of nectar (itty bitty!) Remember, patience is a virtue. These are lots of fun! Only \$4.99 each.



## Feeders by Lone Wolf



These small feeders are ceramic and hand-painted with a dark green vine and leaf design on a tan or light blue background. They're fairly small and can hold water, seed or mealworms. One style hangs by a chain, another on a wrought iron hanger with a leaf design and the third is mounted on a stake...\$17.99 to \$39.99. Made in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

## Coffee Mugs by Paper Products Design

We have two new coffee mug designs in from PPD. "Brigitte" is a very colorful sweet little dog (I'm not sure of the breed, but I think pug) with flowers. "Melvin" is a Border Collie puppy with a red bandana. The nice thing about these mugs is not just the mug itself, but the beautiful box that comes with it. Believe me, you won't want to throw away these boxes. Both mugs are made of bone china and hold 13.5 ounces of liquid...\$15.95.



## Holiday Gift Ideas...

### Armored Wallets by Fig Designs



Take a look at the new cat designs! These armored wallets prevent some not-so-nice folks from reading your credit card numbers through your purse and wallet with a special device. We still carry the attractive art designs as well as birds, butterflies, and just plain wallet designs. These wallets can hold six or more credit cards (driver license, health card or East Bay Nature coupon ☐)...\$9.99. If you'd rather not carry the wallet you can get just a sleeve that holds one card. They have a design on them now, too...\$8.99 for a set of four.

### Jonah Whale Hook and Nesting Quail Garden Sculpture by SPI

The whale hook is really cute and the nesting quail garden sculpture is very elegant (anything quail is always great, I think). Both are made of metal. The sturdy whale hook is about 4" long in a verdigris color...\$7.95. The nesting quail is about a foot in diameter, 9" high in a gold/bronze color. The quail is standing in its nest over three eggs. It can be placed either indoors or outdoors. You could probably use it as a bird feeder, too, now that I think about it...\$68.95.



### Acrylic Hummingbirds, Dragons, Butterflies and Dolphins by Ganz

There seems to be no end to these popular acrylic designs! The latest acrylic "crystal" ornaments would be pretty as an ornament in a tree or hanging in a window to catch the sunlight. The new hummers, dragonflies and butterflies come in a multitude of colors, the dolphins in clear or light blue. They are made to resemble cut crystal...\$5.70 to \$10.95. Great stocking stuffers!



### Dead Crows by Autograph Foliages

Do you have problems with crows hanging around your yard scaring off the little birds and eating all the food? We have fake crows made of chicken feathers dyed black that are roughly the size of an adult crow. If you hang the crow or lay it on the ground, the real crows will gather around and check it out for a while. Then, they will leave your yard. Period. They seem to be wary of this "dead" crow and don't want to hang around, apparently. It sounds a little strange, I know, but it does seem to work. I haven't tried it myself since I don't have crows, but testimonials from customers claim it works wonderfully...\$29.95.

## Big Gulp Hummingbird Feeder by Classic Brands



We've got a new hummer feeder for those needing more capacity. It can hold 40 oz. of nectar, has a built-in ant moat on top, glass bottle and plastic base with six yellow flowers. The base comes apart for easy cleaning...\$22.95.

## 2018 California Calendar by Ramona Lowe

Ramona Lowe makes those unique dog, cat and wildlife cards that we have sold for many years. She now has a calendar of scenic California. It's beautiful with images of her original art--Golden Gate Bridge, California Redwoods, California Poppy, California Quail, California Condor and more. It is printed on high quality, heavy weight paper roughly 9.5" x 7". Each image can be easily removed and framed...\$25.00. Made in Monterey, California.



## Feather Stationery by Crane Creek Graphics

Crane Creek has pretty feather stationery in both singles and boxes of eight cards. The feather designs include Northern Cardinal, Steller's Jay, Barred Owl, Red-tailed Hawk and Downy Woodpecker. Made in the USA...\$2.99 each and \$16.95 for box of eight.



## Droplet Hummingbird Feeder by Parasol

These "droplets" are made out of recycled glass in Mexico. They are only about 3.5 inches in diameter with a red flower glass tube to drink from and includes a black "S" hook hanger. They come in a variety of colors and designs. I'm not sure how much nectar they hold exactly, but I'm guessing about 4 ounces...\$18.20.

