

# WESTERN TANAGER



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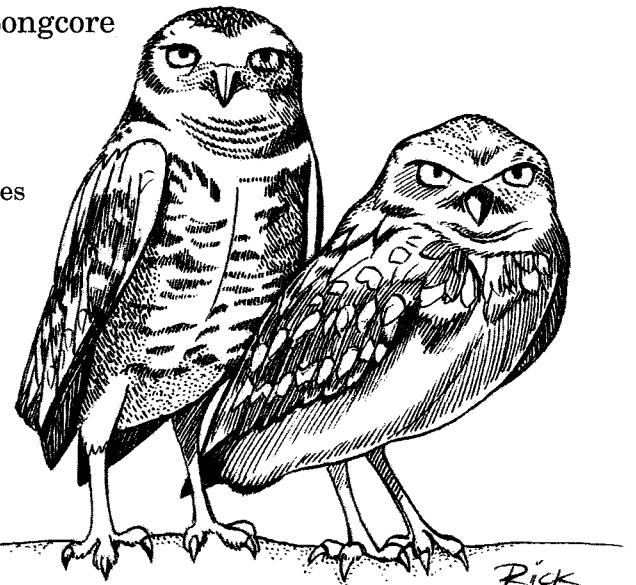
## The Endangered Delhi Sand Dunes

by Travis Longcore

Sometimes one finds the unique and wonderful in the least expected places. Such is the case with the Delhi sand dunes. Picture yourself driving west on Interstate 10 from Los Angeles. Remember the flag on the remains of a mountain to the south as you drive through Rialto and Colton? That pile of granite is the remnant of Slover Mountain, which has been mined for limestone by California Portland Cement for over 100 years. Just to the south, past the rail yard and the giant trucks hauling Slover Mountain away bit by bit, and surrounded by junkyards and tank farms, is the largest remaining expanse of the only inland sand dune system in the Los Angeles basin, the Delhi sand dunes.

The dunes were created over time as the Santa Ana winds blew down over the Cajon Pass, picked up the sand in Lytle Creek and other smaller tributaries and deposited it over approximately 35,000 acres. The dunes extended from the creeks to the Santa Ana River and Jurupa Hills to the south and then west across the Ontario plain into Loma Linda.

Appreciation of the dunes is an acquired taste. One has to block out the distractions that surround the approximately 330-acre fragment, ignore the landfill and sewage treatment plant operating to the south, ignore the house-sized dump trucks hauling limestone, and ignore the junkyard. Then, one starts to notice the Western Meadowlarks singing and the extravagant flowering of the spring annuals. One sees the Burrowing Owls near their nest not 20 yards from the thundering trucks. If you are lucky enough to be in the company of a mammalogist, the nighttime reveals a diverse and thriving small mammal population. Harvest mice and deer mice abound, but one can also find the Los Angeles pocket mouse, a tiny buff-colored creature that fits easily in the palm of your hand, cheeks stuffed with oatmeal from the live trap. The coastal race of the pocket mouse is already listed as endangered, and the Los Angeles pocket mouse is equally imperiled.



The vegetation is sparse, and open sand blow-outs are common. After the winter rains, the annual wildflowers carpet the dunes with the yellow and blue of goldfields, gillas, primrose, phacelias and woolly-stars. Later, the scrubby wild buckwheat blooms and comes alive with butterflies, including the flashy Bernardino blue and an undescribed subspecies of Mormon metalmark. An occasional grizzled, old cholla or ceanothus or buckthorn are the larger shrubs scattered across the more pristine areas. As the summer progresses, the spring annuals die out but the

straight stalks and yellow flowers of telegraph weed shoot up to add color. Pringle's monardella, a wild-flower found only on the dunes, has gone extinct.

Perhaps the most famous resident of the Delhi sands comes out in the heat of summer. Cruising the buckwheat flowers for nectar in July and August is the Delhi sands flower-loving fly. This large fly, which can hover like a hummingbird as it nectars with its long proboscis, is found only on the Delhi sands. Another race formerly found on the El Segundo dunes is now extinct. Adults emerge from underground, where they lived their larval stage and pupated, to mate and lay eggs in the sweltering dog days of summer. Like all of the residents of the Delhi sands, the fly has suffered an enormous loss of habitat as European settlers first developed the sands for citrus and grape agriculture, then later urban development converted much of the land to industrial and residential use. Only 2% of the historic extent of the sands remains as open land, and a small fraction of that is undisturbed. Having been faced with such loss in habitat and population size, and with remaining portions of the dunes subject to imminent development, the Delhi sands flower-loving fly was listed in 1993 as an endangered species.

Needless to say, a fly does not make a charismatic endangered species. To the contrary, it has become a *cause célèbre* for forces who would weaken or dismantle the Endangered Species Act. But what seems to be lost in the polemical discussions about "Flies Over People" is that through protection of the fly, it may be possible to save the remaining portion of the Delhi sands and the abundant life that they support. As an indicator of ecological health, the fly is no less important than the Meadowlarks or the Burrowing Owls, both of which have also witnessed declines as their habitats have been developed for urban uses. Without the fly, these species would be incrementally diminished as the Delhi sands

are destroyed. It is for this reason that conservation biologists refer to species such as the fly as "umbrella species" — they protect other species under their habitat umbrella.

Unfortunately, the fly's umbrella may be closing under political pressure. Only about 7.5 acres of the 330-acre contiguous fragment of the Delhi sands are protected. Other scattered, isolated fragments free from future development pressure amount to under 20 acres. The city of Colton, within whose boundaries the largest contiguous remnant of the Delhi sands is found, proposes to develop — of all things — a paper recycling complex on about 150 acres of the remaining Delhi sands, fragmenting the remaining areas from one another. The city has offered to protect 85 acres in exchange for this habitat destruction. Whether this proposal is successful or not, the development pressures will remain and grow because of the perception that it is "just a fly" that lives on the Delhi sands. But the Delhi sands are home to more than flies. As UCLA lecturer Dr. Rudi Mattoni put it in a newspaper account of the fly controversy, "It's the

habitat, stupid!"

There are some rays of hope. The volunteer group Rhapsody in Green has been restoring a four-acre Southern California Edison right-of-way under the direction of Dr. Mattoni. Their efforts include volunteers from Los Angeles as well as many local families and energetic high schoolers. The project serves both to restore the habitat and to educate about its unique fauna. Hopefully, government agencies and elected officials will work toward saving and restoring the remaining Delhi sands, rather than presiding over the destruction of this unique and wonderful habitat. ■

*For more information about Rhapsody in Green's volunteer opportunities on restoration projects in the Delhi sands and in Los Angeles, please call 213-654-5821. Families are welcome.*



Rick Rogers, an accomplished natural history illustrator and entomologist, donated the original pen and ink sketch on the cover.

## Audubon Acquires Kern River Preserve

**Audubon's** system of sanctuaries grew to eight this spring with the transfer of the Kern River Preserve from The Nature Conservancy to Audubon-California. Preserve Manager Reed Tollefson will continue on as Audubon staff. Reed successfully initiated an ambitious riparian restoration program that he will continue to lead. He will also develop public education and outreach programs. The Kern River was first identified as critically important bird habitat by Audubon leaders over 20 years ago, so it is fitting that the Preserve has found its way to Audubon for protection and management into the future. ■

## Fee Implemented for National Forests

**T**he U.S. Forest Service recently established a program that requires users of the Angeles, Cleveland, Los Padres and San Bernardino National Forests to display a pass on vehicles parked in the forest. A one-day "National Forest Adventure Pass" costs \$5 and a one-year pass is \$30. At least 80% of the funds collected will be kept in the local forest to maintain and improve recreation sites and facilities, and to protect the forest resources and habitat. Although *Tanager* readers may not all agree with the implementation of this fee, ignoring it is not recommended; failure to display the pass may result in a \$100 fine. For more information, call the Forest Service at 909-620-6208. ■



# CONSERVATION CONVERSATION

by Sandy Wohlgemuth

**T**rudging along oversized rocks, through wind-blown sand for a rugged mile along the creek, we reached a point where our botanist leader stopped us with "think we may have something here." We had come upon two tiny plants, no more than two inches high, that ordinarily would not have attracted a second glance. For most of us this was our first encounter with the near-mythical slender-horned spineflower. The minute flowers hang their heads and can only be properly seen with a magnifying lens that reveals a perfect white blossom with a dark line on each petal. So this was *Dodecahema leptoceras*, the big bad monster that ate the proposed golf course in Big Tujunga Wash in 1993! At a recent hearing on a new attempt to revive the golf course project, a Chamber of Commerce person said, "It's such an ugly plant; if I found one in my yard I'd dig it up and throw it away." Yet it is listed "Endangered" by both state and federal wildlife agencies because it prefers this very rare alluvial scrub habitat. (Winning a beauty contest is not a requisite for listing a species.)

Labeled an unsightly, trash-strewn dump by its vocal detractors, we found the Wash an intriguing revelation. Not only is it a desert environment with yucca, tall century plant, prickly pear cactus and cholla, but an unexpected mixture of colorful chaparral plants. Bright flowers were in bloom: violet yerba santa, blue phacelia, yellow bladderpod and deerweed, purple brodiaea and pink wishbone bush. This is indeed a unique ecosystem

— neither desert nor chaparral. It is inconceivable that it might be destroyed. As this is written, the black hats are ahead. After the public hearing last October, the City Planning Commission voted unanimously to allow the golf course to go ahead. Opponents of the project were not surprised as all the members of the Commission were appointed by our multimillionaire mayor who has yet to show concern for environmental matters. Opposing groups, including LAAS and San Fernando Valley Audubon, filed appeals to the decision. Before the full City Council considers the matter, the Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee must make its recommendation. So we all suddenly became lobbyists, meeting with the chief deputies of Committee members.

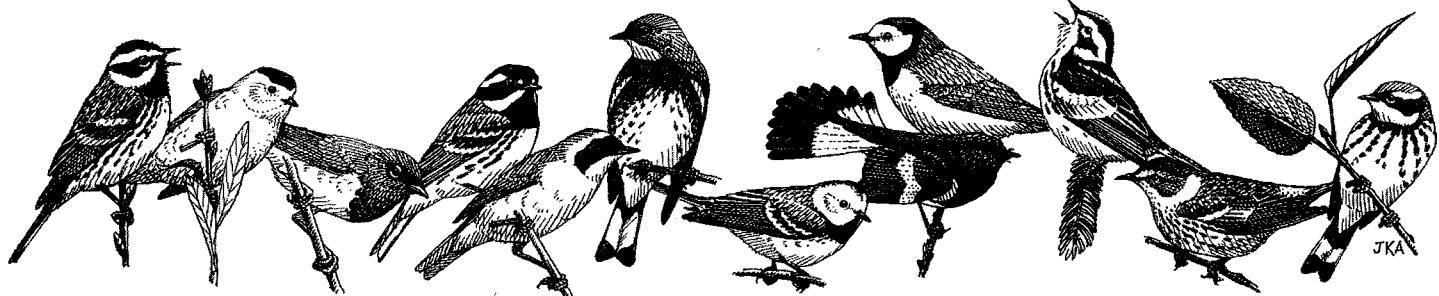
At the hearing in City Hall, high-powered attorneys on both sides talked vigorously across the table to the two PLUM Committee members, followed by citizens in the substantial audience who had asked to be heard at two minutes apiece. Our arguments, of course, were faultless. The spineflower and other plant and animal species were at risk if the golf course and its pesticides entered the Wash; the Army Corps of Engineers had said that even a moderate storm would wipe out several holes of the course. A huge flood (as in 1969 and 1978 that wiped out bridges) would destroy the course completely, with the precious golf course and 500,000 cubic yards of introduced fill falling into the creek.

As usual, the developers with dollar signs in their eyes hire the

expensive "suits" to make their case. They promise to avoid spineflowers — even establish a protective reserve for them, restrict the amount of pesticides and herbicides used, establish horse trails and bicycle paths, swear they won't sue the city if a flood injures the golf course or ask for taxpayer-funded disaster relief. They'll even clean up the Wash. Since they own a piece of the Wash, one wonders why they must have a golf course to pick up the trash they complain about. The sizable number of neighbors of the Wash who testified think that the golf course will improve the area, increasing jobs, encouraging new businesses, beautifying a miserable eyesore and increasing their property values.

At the Committee hearing, Joel Wachs, councilman for the district, listened well and said he hadn't yet made up his mind. In the 1993 attempt he strongly opposed the golf course. If he says he will vote for it this time, it will be bad for our side because councilmembers tend to defer to the wishes of the local representative. The decision of the PLUM Committee and the final word from the full Council has been postponed for a couple of weeks.

There is an outside chance that the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy may be able to buy the 350 acres. Converting the golf course site to public property would solve the problem, but today (May 21) the lawyers for the project said it was not for sale. Negotiations may produce a miracle. We would love to be able to say in the future that the owner read the handwriting on the wall and took it to heart: "NO BUILDING IN FLOODPLAINS!"



# BIRDS OF THE SEASON

by Kimball L. Garrett

**L**ate summer is synonymous with shorebird migration in southern California. Adult shorebirds of many species are moving southward in large numbers by the beginning of July, and the year's crop of juveniles follows a few weeks later. No serious birder will fail to check out the region's best shorebird localities during July and August — from coastal estuaries such as Bolsa Chica to interior sites such as Piute Ponds. Even local river channels and flood control basins — depending on water levels — can be extremely productive. In recent years the lower Los Angeles River channel through northern Long Beach has been the most productive late summer shorebird site in Los Angeles County, but current construction work by the Army Corps of Engineers (continuing their philosophy of treating the river as nothing but a concrete plumbing system) will likely have an adverse impact on shorebirds in that area.

Fewer birders realize that late summer also represents the peak of southbound migration for many of our songbirds as well. As I write this at the beginning of June, Orange-crowned Warblers and other early nesters have already dispersed well away (usually uphill) from their nesting areas, and the main "fall" movement of Allen's Hummingbirds will begin in only a couple of weeks. There are significant movements of many of our western passerines through the deserts and mountains throughout July, with the floodgates opening in August. Because birders seem to be trained from their birding infancy to only look for migrants late in the

season, when the coveted "vagrants" are most likely to be found, they miss some of the most interesting aspects of western bird migration. So as atlasing efforts wind down in late July and August, migration will be in full swing to fill the void.

The fate of winter "invaders" (see May/June *Tanager*) through the late spring is of extreme interest. As predicted, **Red Crossbills** have lingered, launched into full song, and even nested in a few local areas (e.g., streaked juveniles found in Hopkins Wilderness Park in Redondo Beach on 16 May by Mitch Heindel, above Castaic Lake by Ron Beck, and on the Kern desert on 26 May by Matt Heindel). By the end of May there were singing crossbills in native coniferous forests along the Angeles Crest Highway east of Buckhorn, suggesting at least a partial shift away from planted aleppo pines and other non-natives. **Red-breasted Nut-hatches** were still present in the lowlands at the end of the season (e.g., a calling bird in La Crescenta on 4 June by KLG); nesting of this species away from high elevation conifer forests would also not be unprecedented (nesting records exist for Malibu and the Palos Verdes Peninsula). Most surprising was the lingering of **Lewis' Woodpeckers** into early summer. Dan Guthrie reports one present along the Baldy Village Road on 1 June, and Gayle Hightower continues to monitor the presence of one bird along Foothill Blvd. in La Cañada Flintridge as of this writing (4 June); a second bird at the same La Cañada locality has not been seen since mid-May. There are nest-

ing records of this species in the San Bernardino Mtns., but birds have often lingered through May (but rarely if ever into June) after previous winter invasions.

**T**he Los Angeles County Breeding Bird Atlas continues to produce new and interesting data. Daniel Cooper's work (for the Atlas and for his graduate work at UC Riverside) in the Whittier and Puente Hills has turned up a number of sparrow surprises: numerous singing **Grasshopper Sparrows**, fledged young "**Bell's**" **Sage Sparrows**, and a singing **Savannah Sparrow** (of the continental *nevadensis* subspecies) at the end of May. Dan also suspects nesting of **Northern Harrier** in this area, which would be unique in recent years on the coastal slope of the county. **Sage Sparrows** of the dark, coastal-slope *belli* subspecies and the paler desert *canescens* subspecies are now known to breed close to each other in the Acton area of N Los Angeles Co.; Bell's, for example, are readily found in Aliso Canyon (running between the Soledad Canyon wash and the Angeles Forest Highway), and the uppermost pairs of *canescens* ("Saltbush") Sparrow occur along the Mt. Emma road less than three miles to the north. Song differences between the two groups (species?) can readily be studied in this region. A pair of **Bell's Vireos** and an additional singing bird were present in the Hansen Dam Basin through the spring (Peter Barnes).

Continued monitoring of naturalized non-native species is an important component of the Breeding Bird Atlas. Nesting of **Mitred**

**Parakeet** was documented in Sierra Madre in May (Nan Lillith). Scott Smithson continued to monitor **Nutmeg Mannikins** at Huntington Beach Central Park in Orange County (and at other localities). Peter Barnes found one mannikin carrying nesting material at Peck Pit ("Peck Road Water Conservation District Park") in N El Monte on 6 April. Of interest was one Nutmeg Mannikin as far afield as Wiley Canyon (next to Towsley Canyon in Santa Clarita) on 29 April (Sandy Wohlgemuth).

**Least Terns** staged an unprecedented invasion over the southern California deserts this spring. A few show up every May and June at the Salton Sea, but this year's movement also brought several to Kern Co., E San Bernardino Co., and even S Inyo Co.; perhaps a first for the Antelope Valley was a group of three birds at the Lancaster Sewage Ponds on 31 May (Andrew Howe).

A migrant **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was seen by Ted Nordhagen (who was visiting from NE Montana) on 3 June along the Lightning Ridge Nature Trail west of Big Pines; at 7,000' in the San Gabriel Mtns., this was possibly an altitudinal record for this scarce species in S California.

The list of vagrants on the deserts in late May was impressive, as expected, with the highlight being a **Cerulean Warbler** north of Bishop on 23 May (Tom and Jo Heindel). This species is notable among the "eastern" wood-warblers in having actually declined in its frequency as a vagrant to California (even with ever-increasing observer coverage and awareness), undoubtedly reflecting sharp overall population declines. This is one of the few "Neotropical migrants" (an inaccurate term which has unfortunately been ingrained in our lexicon) for which long-term studies like the Breeding Bird Survey have demonstrated a significant population decline. The BBS data show much more precipitous declines of many grassland bird species, but the powers that be decided years ago that

the hoopla should be centered around the "Neotrops," perhaps so we could attempt to place the "blame" on countries other than our own. One interesting local vagrant was a **Yellow-throated Warbler** at Crystal L. at 5,700' in the San Gabriel Mtns. on 26 May (Jon Fisher). Other vagrants in the Los Angeles area included a **Yellow-throated Vireo** at Hopkins Wilderness Park in Redondo Beach in late May (Irene Horiuchi) and a **Gray Vireo** there on 11 May (Mitch Heindel); the latter species is unprecedented as a coastal spring migrant (there are a few September records for our coast).

**S**o, was it a good spring for the birds? Do the numbers of migrants tell us anything about population trends? Simply put, who knows? The glaring truth remains that it is very difficult to count birds. We know that there were impressive numbers of migrants through the Kern County desert: Matt Heindel estimates a record 1,400 migrants passing through Butterbredit Spring on Sunday, 25 May. Most of these were our typical late spring migrants, including Willow and Pacific-slope flycatchers, Western Wood-Pewee, Swainson's Thrush, Yellow and Wilson's warblers, and Western Tanagers. However, monitoring bird populations through perceived migration trends can be misleading: there are simply too many factors which combine to determine how many migrants will be found at a given locality on a given date. I recall reading dire conclusions last spring on the Internet that, despite "ideal" fallout conditions, the number of migrants recorded on the Upper Texas Coast was tragically low, "proving" that the demise of Neotropical migrants was at hand. The same Internet babble-avenues this spring heralded the "fallout of the century," with unprecedented numbers of migrants on that same Upper Texas Coast. Conclusion? Except for certain carefully controlled monitoring schemes, we really have no clue how one year's migration compares to

another's, in timing or in magnitude!

On a final note, birding during the late spring and early summer reminds us of the impressive waterbird colonies we have in southern California. Besides our Channel Islands seabird colonies, there is the astonishing and readily visible tern colony at Bolsa Chica, once again visited by a **Sandwich Tern** and a **Sooty Tern** this spring (the added brief appearance of both **Reddish Egret** and **Little Blue Heron** at Bolsa Chica in early May rounded out the excellent birding there). The Salton Sea was teeming with colonial waterbirds this spring, although, unfortunately, the huge herony at Ramer Lake continues to be increasingly dominated by **Cattle Egrets**. Large colonies of **Caspian Terns** (established only recently) continue to grow at the Sea, overshadowing the smaller colonies of **Gull-billed Terns** and **Black Skimmers**. Over 2,000 pairs of Caspians nested at the south end of the Salton Sea this year, although the large colony at Mullet Island partially failed, perhaps through disturbance by fishermen or possibly in connection with the as-yet-undetermined disease that killed hundreds of Double-crested Cormorants in that area. A small colony of **California Gulls** at the south end of the Sea in May and June was unprecedented (Kathy Molina). Numbers of migrant **Franklin's Gulls** at the Sea were impressive, with 59 at the northwest corner on 26 May (Michael Patten); a **Little Gull** was at the south end on 31 May (Guy McCaskie). 

**R**ecords of rare and unusual bird sightings reported in this column should be considered tentative pending review by the **NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY FIELD NOTES** Regional Editors or, if appropriate, by the California Bird Records Committee. Send your bird observations with as many details as possible to:

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Los Angeles, CA 90007  
E-mail: [garrett@bcf.usc.edu](mailto:garrett@bcf.usc.edu)  
Or call **Jon Fisher** at 818-544-5009.

LAAS Bird Tape: 213-874-1318

# BOOKSTORE NEWS

The LAAS Bookstore is taking backorders for *A Guide to the Birds of Wallacea: Sulawesi, The Moluccas and Lesser Sunda Islands, Indonesia* by Brian J. Coats and K. David Bishop. This is the first ornithological field guide to this remarkable group of tropical islands. All of the 697 species of birds reliably recorded in Wallacea up to July 1996 are described. More than 700 species are illustrated in 64 color plates. Copies ordered now should be available by September or October. 536 pages, \$55.

Also available is the *American Bird Conservancy's Field Guide to All the Birds of North America*. Based on feeding behaviors and field-recognizable features, this new guide features plates by Jonathan Alderfer, whose artwork also graces the *Western Tanager*. \$19.95.

Visit the Bookstore 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., Tuesday through Saturday in Plummer Park in West Hollywood or call 213-876-0202. Visa/MasterCard accepted. Other new titles below.

*Shrubs and Trees of Southern California Coastal Region and Mountains and Shrubs and Trees of Southern California Deserts*; I.D. manuals with drawings and key; Dole, 1996 ..... 14.95 ea

*Southern California and Baja Seasonal Guide to the Natural Year*; a monthly guide to natural events, with maps; Wade, 1997 ..... 16.95

*Bird Songs of Alaska*; 2 CDs; Cornell Labs, 1996 ..... 30.00

*Pocket Guide to Hawaii's Birds*; color photographs of most species, also a guide for avian habitats of the islands; Pratt, 1996 ..... 8.95

*Guide to Bird-watching in Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands*; 484 pages, 120 sites in detail, 75 maps, contacts; Best, 1996 ..... 37.50

*Gosney Guides* for (1) *Southern Portugal*, (2) *Eastern Austria*, (3) *Poland*, (4) *Greece* and (5) *Northern Spain*; the best sites, detailed maps ..... 13.95 ea

*Sasol Larger Illustrated Guide to Birds of Southern Africa*; the most comprehensively illustrated guide to the region's birds; Sinclair, 1996 ..... 38.95

*Australia's Wet Tropics Rainforest Life*; spectacular photos of flora and fauna with extensive text and range maps; Frith, 1995 ..... 16.95

*Photographic Guide to Birds of China Including Hong Kong*; 252 species illustrated in color, compact; MacKinnon, 1996 ..... 15.95

*Birdsongs of (1) Gambia, (2) Fiji, New Zealand, Western Samoa, New Caledonia, (3) Sulawesi, Lesser Sundas and Sabah, and (4) Irian Jaya and Halmahera*; Thomas, 1994 ..... 13.95 ea

## WESTERN TANAGER

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*Western Tanager* subscription rates for nonmembers are \$9 per year for third class delivery or \$15 per year for first class delivery. LAAS members may receive first class delivery by paying an additional \$5. Make check payable to Los Angeles Audubon Society.

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## WARBLER WORKSHOP

Jon Dunn and Kimball Garrett

October 5, 3:00-9:00 P.M.

4½ hours of discussion addressing identification of western species and eastern vagrants, touching on habitat and conservation issues, vocalizations, phylogeny and Q&A

\$25 fee — see Field Trips for details

## FIELD TRIPS

Continued from page 8

ing is risky; it may not drop below 90°F. Meet at 6:00 A.M. in Brawley, and bird until 1:00 P.M. or so.

### Saturday, September 6 — Ventura Shorebirds, etc.

Co-leaders **Steven Tucker** and **Irwin Woldman**. Meet at the Hueneme sod fields to look over the plovers, then look for shorebirds and songbirds, depending on what's hot. Windbreaks on the plain for warblers and other songbirds, and Mugu estuary or Saticoy settling ponds are all possibilities. One or more vagrants usually seen here about this time. From the 101 W, take Las Posas Rd. S to Hueneme Rd. W. Meet at 8:00 A.M. on the S side of Hueneme Rd. just before Casper Rd. and about 1.5 miles W of PCH. Bird until 2:00 P.M. or until we see all the birds. Scopes helpful.

### Sunday, September 7 —

**Topanga State Park.** Leader **Gerry Haigh**. Meet at 8:00 A.M. See July 6 write-up for details.

### Sunday, October 5 — Warbler Workshop. **Jon Dunn** and **Kimball Garrett**.

Fresh from their latest collaboration — *A Field Guide to Warblers of North America* (The Peterson Field Guide Series, 49) — these two masters of field I.D. will make identification and appreciation of this large group of stunning birds easier. Material will be balanced to address some technical topics without alienating intermediate birders. Location: Braun Auditorium, Huntington Memorial Hospital, 100 W. California Blvd., Pasadena. Lecture 3:00–5:30 P.M.; dinner break 5:30–7:00 P.M.; lecture continues 7:00–9:00 P.M. \$25 fee. Send SASE to LAAS for details. ■

Insufficient response to reservations cancels trips two Wednesdays prior to the scheduled date (four weeks for pelagics); you will be notified and your fee returned. Your cancellation after that time will bring a refund only if there is a paid replacement. Millie Newton is available at Audubon House on Wednesdays from noon to 4:00 P.M. to provide information about field trips. Office staff is also available Tuesday through Saturday for most reservation services.

### Reservation and Fee Events (Limited Participation) Policies and Procedures

Reservations will be accepted ONLY if ALL the following information is supplied:

- 1) Trip desired
- 2) Names of people in your party
- 3) Phone numbers (a) usual and (b) evening before event, in case of emergency cancellation
- 4) Separate check (no cash please) to LAAS for exact amount for each trip
- 5) Self-addressed stamped envelope for confirmation and associated trip information. Send to:

LAAS Reservations  
7377 Santa Monica Blvd.  
West Hollywood, CA 90046-6694

## PELAGIC TRIPS



**P**elagic species often seen are Pink-footed, Sooty, Short-tailed and Black-vented shearwaters, Red Phalarope, Black Oystercatcher, Wandering Tattler, Surfbird, Pomarine Jaeger, Arctic Tern, Common Murre, Pigeon Guillemot, Xantus' Murrelet, Cassin's and Rhinoceros auklets. Rarities include: Black-legged Kittiwake, South Polar Skua, Tufted or Horned puffins. Mammals include: Gray Whale, Dall's Porpoise, Pacific Bottlenosed Common and Risso's dolphins. Marine mammal expert Linda Lewis will be one of our leaders when her schedule permits.

**Saturday, September 13 — San Miguel Island with wet landing.** 17-hour trip departs from Ventura. Hike features beautiful island flora and fauna as well as several races of birds and migrants. More uncommon birds seen on the way to the island include Buller's and Flesh-

footed shearwaters and Sabine's Gull. \$95 includes dinner.

**Saturday, September 27 — Palos Verdes Escarpment to Redondo Canyon.** 8-hour trip departs from San Pedro. Birds of interest include Northern Fulmar, cormorants, phalaropes and rocky shorebirds. \$28, no galley.

**Sunday, October 19 — Channel Islands.** 12-hour trip departs from Ventura, visits Anacapa, Santa Rosa and Santa Cruz islands. Birds of interest may include Black, Least and Ashy storm-petrels, up to 3 cormorants, up to 10 gulls, up to 5 rocky shorebird species and Craveri's Murrelet. \$65, galley.

**Friday and Saturday, October 24 and 25 — Continental Shelf.** 24-hour trip departs from Santa Barbara. Rarities could include Laysan Albatross, Red-tailed

Tropicbird, Red-footed Booby and Cook's Petrel. \$160 for single bunk and three meals.

**Sunday, November 16 — Santa Barbara Island and Osborne Banks.** 12-hour trip departs from San Pedro. \$44, no galley. ■

### REFUND POLICY FOR 24-HOUR CONDOR TRIPS

If a participant cancels 31 days or more prior to departure, a \$5 service charge will be deducted from the refund. There is no participant refund if requested less than 30 days before departure, unless there is a paid replacement available. Call LAAS for a possible replacement. Please do not offer the trip to a friend as it would be unfair to those on the waiting list.

# F I E L D T R I P S

**B**efore setting out on any field trip, please call the Audubon bird tape at 213-874-1318 for special instructions or possible cancellations that may have occurred by the Thursday before the trip.

**Sunday, July 6 — Topanga State Park.** **Gerry Haigh** will lead participants through this diverse coastal mountain area. An ideal trip for a beginning birder or someone new in the area. A botanist is usually present. From Ventura Blvd. in the Valley, take Topanga Canyon Blvd. 7 miles S, then turn E (uphill) on Entrada Rd. (1 mile N of Topanga Village). Follow the signs and turn left into the park. Meet at 8:00 A.M. in the parking lot of Trippet Ranch. \$5 parking fee.

**Sunday, July 13 — Franklin Canyon.** This morning walk will be led by **Steven Saffier**. Franklin Canyon is located between Sherman Oaks and Beverly Hills. Wood Ducks bred in the lake last year. Chaparral, lakeside and oak/pine woodland habitat. From the 101 Fwy, take Coldwater Canyon Ave. S into the hills. Immediately after Mulholland Dr. merges from the west with Coldwater Canyon, make a 90° right turn onto Franklin Canyon Dr. and continue to the Nature Center. Meet at 7:30 A.M. in the parking lot past a gated drive on the left.

**Sunday, July 13 — Whittier Narrows Regional Park.** Join ranger **Ray Jillson** to view colorful resident and breeding birds including Northern Cardinals. Take Peck Dr. exit S off the 60 Fwy in South El Monte. Follow the offramp onto Durfee Ave. heading W (right) and turn left into the Nature Center, 1000 Durfee Ave. Meet at 8:00 A.M. \$2 voluntary donation suggested by the park.

**Sunday, July 20 — Big Bear Lake Vicinity.** Leaders **Nick and Mary Freeman**. Target birds include Williamson's Sapsucker, Caliope and Rufous Hummingbirds, mountain finches and White-headed Woodpecker. Take Hwy 18 or 38 to Big Bear Lake. Proceed about halfway along the south side of the lake on Hwy 18 and turn S on Tulip Lane. Meet at 8:00 A.M. in the Aspen Glen Picnic Area parking lot on the SW side of this short street. It should be warm and there may be bugs, so come prepared. Bring lunch.

**Saturday, August 2 — Dawson Saddle Bird Hike.** **Mike San Miguel** will take us well off the highway (6 miles RT) and up to nearly 9,000 feet on the Mt. Baden-Powell trail approaching via Throop Peak. Elevation gain will be 1,000 feet. The trail is good, although the first mile is moderately difficult.

Los Angeles Audubon Society  
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Mike has spent much of his life studying the birds of the San Gabriels. Bring a light jacket, insect repellent, lunch, sunblock, hat, fluids and a day pack. Mountain breeders such as Cassin's Finch, Townsend's Solitaire, Williamson's Sapsucker, Dusky Flycatcher, White-headed Woodpecker and Clark's Nutcracker should be encountered. Drive an hour or more up Angeles Crest Hwy out of La Cañada to the marked parking lot for the Mt. Baden-Powell trailhead near Dawson Saddle at about 7,900 feet to meet at 7:30 A.M.

**Sunday, August 3 — Topanga State Park.** Leader **Gerry Haigh**. Meet at 8:00 A.M. See July 6 write-up for details.

**Sunday, August 10 — Whittier Narrows.** Leader **Ray Jillson**. Meet at 8:00 A.M. See July 13 write-up for details.

**Sunday, August 17 — Sweltering Salton Sea.** **Nick Freeman** is too nice to dump this trip on another leader. Anticipate 95–115°F, sewer stench and dust-a-plenty. Don't show up without lots of water (one gallon each), good health and a reliable car with AC. This is the gauntlet of SoCal car birding. So why come? We should see Yellow-footed and Laughing gulls, Wood Stork, Fulvous Whistling-Duck, Black Tern, Lesser Nighthawk, Abert's Towhee, Gila Woodpecker, and possibly Least Bittern and Stilt Sandpiper. Perhaps most exciting is the possibility for real rarities such as Brown and Blue-footed boobies, Magnificent Frigatebird and even stranger stuff that has popped up in August. Limit 8 paid cars with two or more passengers each. Singles will be wait-listed until they can carpool. Send \$5 per vehicle to Audubon House to reserve and for the mailer with general, lodging and meeting details. Camp-

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