

WESTERN TANAGER



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Los Angeles Audubon Society

Beetles inhabit nearly every biological niche, from the narrow fringes of the polar ice caps to the broad, unexplored expanse of rainforest canopy. They are the personification of biodiversity, representing one quarter of all living organisms and one third of all animals, with approximately 350,000 species of beetles described since 1758. Their study has helped to answer broader biological questions concerning adaptation, behavior, distribution, and physiology. Understanding the reasons for the success of beetles might shed light on our own evolutionary track. Yet the catastrophic loss of beetle diversity, or the threat thereof, does not seem to be a cause embraced in public forums.

The lack of public awareness of beetles, and all invertebrates for that matter, is directly attributable to the simple fact that they just do not arouse our feelings of sympathy elicited by the charismatic megafauna to which we seem to be inherently drawn. It is this lack of an emotional connection with beetles that hampers our ability to develop any sort of ethical or moral responsibility toward them as expressed by efforts to conserve them. Nevertheless, as we begin to appreciate the essential role of beetles in our environment, their inclusion in conservation issues and environmental management plans seems inevitable.

The Xerces Society, named after the extinct blue butterfly whose existence was erased from the San

Conserving the Silent Majority

by Arthur V. Evans



The striped June beetle is just one of 350,000 species of beetles known to science.

Francisco Bay area, and the passage of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1973 helped to galvanize invertebrate conservation in the United States. The Lacey Act and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) are also instrumental in protecting beetles in the United States and from around the world.

As of 1997, ten species of beetles are afforded protection by the ESA:

the American burying beetle, Coffin Cave mold beetle, delta green ground beetle, Hungerford's crawling water beetle, Kretschmarr Cave mold beetle, northeastern beach tiger beetle, puritan tiger beetle, Tooth Cave ground beetle, Mount Hermon June beetle, and Valley elderberry beetle. Of these species, the American burying beetle is probably one of the best documented.

The American burying beetle is the largest carrion beetle in the United States, measuring 25–35mm in length. Burying beetles are excellent subjects for investigating behavior,

sociobiology and coevolution, as they exhibit one of the highest degrees of parental care known in beetles. By burying and preparing carcasses of birds and small mammals, burying beetles not only play an important role in nutrient recycling, their activities may directly lead to the control of populations of pestiferous flies and ants which depend upon exposed carcasses for food and oviposition sites.

A faunal study of the carrion beetles of Illinois in 1975 revealed that the American burying beetle had not been collected in the state for more than 30 years. Several entomologists in the early 1980s published field observations, literature records and collection surveys suggesting that the American burying beetle was becoming more localized in its distribution, confirming suspicions that it had disappeared from the historical range of the northeastern deciduous forests. As of 1988, it was thought that American burying beetles occurred only in two widely separated populations located off the coast of Rhode Island and eastern Oklahoma. In 1989 the American burying beetle was listed as an endangered species by the United States Department of Interior. The American burying beetle population is thought to have been dramatically reduced by deforestation and the subsequent decline of suitable animal carcasses.

A recovery plan for the American burying beetle, designed by the Rhode Island division of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, is part of an effort to increase the range and population and secure its future. In addition, a protocol for rearing American burying beetles in the laboratory has been developed, detailing such techniques as sexing beetles, specific materials needed to encourage successful copulations, methods of establishing broods and, for sequestering adults, enabling universities and zoos to breed these animals in captivity for their subsequent release in the wild.

Effective legislation to protect beetles and other organisms must be based on an understanding of the roles they play in the environment and include provisions for habitat preservation and research. For example, two European organizations actively promote the conservation of beetles on the basis of their ecological roles. The Water Beetle Specialist Group, part of the Species Survival Commission of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), recognizes the im-

portance of aquatic beetles as bioindicators in wetlands management in Europe and southeast Asia. The Saproxylic Invertebrates Project focuses on selected groups of invertebrates that are dependent, during some part of their life cycle, upon standing or fallen trees or wood-inhabiting fungi. The project strives to conserve and/or re-establish saproxylic organisms by establishing forest reserves, conducting surveys, restricting removal of downed wood, and improving forest management practices, such as controlled burning and development of habitat to increase the availability of dead wood.

Habitat loss is the primary threat to survival of all beetles. Their populations are reduced, sometimes drastically so, by fire, urbanization, acid rain, electric lights (including "bug zappers"), overgrazing, agricultural expansion, water impoundment, pollution, deforestation, soil erosion, persistent adverse weather, off-road recreational vehicles, and logging, to name a few. The grazing of cattle on public lands has been shown to have disastrous effects on butterfly populations, yet we are absolutely ignorant as to the effects grazing has on soil-dwelling beetles. The effects of pesticide drift, the po-

tential impact of pesticide applications on nontarget species, and competition from exotic organisms must have an enormous impact on beetle populations, yet these effects are poorly documented. Even the use of biological control agents, such as parasites and pathogens, promoted as environmentally friendly and economical to use, are self-dispersing and may produce unpredictable and irreversible effects on some beetle populations.

The challenge lies in our ability to recognize beetles as biological treasures, for each species embodies the sum total of their evolutionary history and potential. It is essential that we preserve as much habitat as possible, if for nothing else, to ensure that beetles continue to exist so that they can be studied by future generations of scientists who will undoubtedly be better equipped to unravel the details of their lives. The presence or absence of beetles will stand as a significant measure of how we are doing in protecting and preserving the biosphere. ■



Dr. Arthur V. Evans is the Insect Zoo Director at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County and has recently started birding.

Christmas Bird Counts

LANCASTER SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1997

Join a select few intrepid birders who brave the infamous Antelope Valley wind and cold to find such high desert specialties as Mountain Plover, Le Conte's Thrasher and Mountain Bluebird. This is the count where some of the more familiar birds such as American Crow and Western Scrub Jay are considered the rarities. Call Fred Heath at (805) 389-3203.

MALIBU SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1997

This count, situated along the coast, includes many diverse habitats and consistently logs one of the highest species totals for any CBC within the greater Los Angeles area. If you would like to take part in this fun and exciting count, call Larry Allen at (213) 221-2022.

LOS ANGELES SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1997

This count still needs a coordinator. If you would like to lead, coordinate or participate, call Audubon House at (213) 876-0202 and leave your name and number.



CONSERVATION CONVERSATION

by Sandy Wohlgemuth

Pierce College in Woodland Hills is one of the many two-year community colleges in California that offer a transition from high school to universities and four-year colleges. They occupy an important part of the state's much admired system of higher education.

Pierce is unique among our community colleges. In addition to the wide spectrum of academic courses that characterize community colleges, Pierce has agricultural, pre-veterinary and horticultural science departments. To serve these outdoor-oriented programs, a farm has been created with orchards, vineyards, cultivated gardens and a plant nursery. Sheep, pigs and chickens are raised in special units; cows and horses browse the fields. In the recent past, a student farm store sold fresh eggs, fruit and vegetables to neighbors. Valley residents would bring their small children there to see real live animals which they may only have met in their picture books.

The farm rests on several gentle hills, and in season the green fields and pastures with grazing cattle make a stunning bucolic panorama. In fall and winter the farm attracts hundreds of Canada Geese, flying into the fields in V-formation, honking as they go. Even non-birders stop and look up in admiration and pleasure. This taste of wildness in a city of three million is a rare and wonderful experience.

But all is not well in this urban utopia. Pierce is broke. There was a time when the school was a cash cow for the college district, and money was siphoned off to feed other less affluent schools. And there is the catastrophic Prop 13

that cut education money to the bone in property taxes and still impoverishes all schools in the state. The bombshell that has aroused the farm's supporters is the conviction that the administration is about to lease ten acres of the property for a golf driving range. A spokesman for the college says they are simply exploring their options. However, parcels of the farm have already been sold off as has some of the livestock. The Coalition to Save the Farm has been in existence for some ten years and points out that words and actions of the administration in the past few years indicate that it is determined to eliminate the farm and with it the agricultural and animal programs. The Coalition has made a serious study of all facets of the farm's difficulties and has an impressive list of possible solutions, but the administration refuses to sit down and talk.

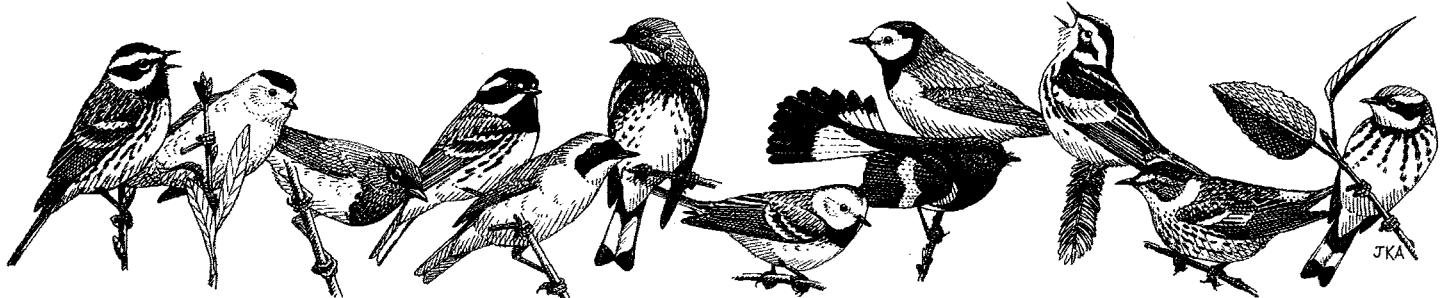
Valley residents would bring their small children there to see real live animals which they may only have met in their picture books.

There is a growing number of supporters of the farm: the Los Angeles County Farm Bureau, the Rotary Club, homeowners associations, the Sierra Club, the California Native Plant Society, San Fernando Valley Audubon, Los Angeles Audubon, the Resource Conservation District of the Santa

Monica Mountains and the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area Committee. And of course the Coalition and organized students. All the groups are concerned about losing a unique attractive feature of the Valley — the beautiful farm, the programs it supports, the green land that affords relief from the glass and steel of Warner Center.

The environmental organizations have an additional interest in Pierce. The steady loss of open space in Los Angeles is reducing essential habitat for wildlife. The Canada Geese are the most visible and exciting life-forms in the West Valley, and Pierce offers them the best forage. Chatsworth Reservoir and the Wildlife Preserve in the Sepulveda Basin are the only other major areas left, and they cannot compare with the grasslands of Pierce. And the sad fact is that the Goose Project's numbers for the last five years have shown a relentless downward curve. If the farm goes, the geese will go.

It is a bitter irony that in mid-September Pierce celebrated the 50th anniversary of its dedication as an agricultural school. But opposition to the driving range is growing. Legislators are being contacted by strategic meetings and letters defending the farm. Valley office-holders are meeting with the college president, asking for a thorough discussion of Pierce's problems and the formation of a diverse body of citizens that can speak openly with the administration. All is not lost. Perhaps isolated bureaucrats will get the message that they are the employees of a public that wants to hold on to some of its traditional countrified open space.



BIRDS OF THE SEASON

by Kimball L. Garrett

Much of the August and September period in southern California was dominated by talk of El Niño and its potential impacts on the region's weather and birdlife. Because the 1997 El Niño/Southern Oscillation didn't pick up steam until after most of the region's seabirds had nested, any deleterious effects on these populations are likely to begin with reduced overwinter survival of this year's young (and possibly adults) and continue into next year's breeding season. Dire predictions of record-setting rains this coming winter have mobilized the Army Corps of Engineers and local Flood Control Districts in their quest to rid our bird-rich local river channels and flood control basins of vegetation. It may well be that the greatest negative effect of El Niño on our birdlife will be this agency-led denuding of riparian vegetation! By mid-winter we should know if the rainfall predictions were correct, but it is certainly unfortunate that we've modified our rivers to the point where they have to be treated as plumbing and subject to the plungers and scrub-brushes of agencies who have little regard for wildlife and habitat.

One indirect effect of this year's El Niño and its associated warm waters has been the relatively northeastward track of a couple of eastern Pacific Ocean hurricanes. Massive Hurricane Linda stayed typically far to the southwest of California, but did spin off a lot of clouds. Late September's Hurricane (then Tropical Storm) Nora, in contrast, took a rare path across the central Baja California peninsula,

then across the upper Gulf of California, finally dissipating (with heavy rains) over Arizona. Internet reports of Nora's fallout indicated that a **Black-vented Shearwater** and numbers of **Least** and **Black storm-petrels** were found on Lake Havasu along the Colorado River a couple of days after her passage. A few Least and Black storm-petrels were also reported from the south end of the Salton Sea. A **Red-billed Tropicbird** was picked up live by a CalTrans biologist near Palo Verde in northeastern Imperial County on 27 September; it subsequently died and will be an enduring testimony to Nora's powers in the collections of the San Diego Natural History Museum. A **Blue-footed Booby** at the north end of the Salton Sea on 28 September (Bob McKernan, Chet McGaugh) might also have been related to the storm's passage. Nora's fallout brings back memories of 1976's Tropical Storm Kathleen, the only other southern storm to deposit significant numbers of Mexican seabirds into our deserts.

The most talked-about individual bird during the August-September period was the basic-plumaged adult **Band-tailed** ("**Belcher's**") **Gull** that frequented the mouth of the Tijuana River in Imperial Beach, San Diego Co., off and on since its 3 August discovery by Bob Brandriff and Doug Shaw. Normally found along the cold-water coasts of Peru and northern Chile, this species has nevertheless strayed (or was artificially transported?) to Florida two or three times and to California's San Nicolas Island once (although the identification of the last bird was

not accepted by the California Bird Records Committee). Did the Band-tailed Gull get to Imperial Beach naturally? We're at the mercy of the collective wisdom (= educated guesswork) of the California Bird Records Committee on this one, but it is worth pointing out a dual pattern. First, many seabirds normally thought to be confined to the cold southern oceans have been recorded along our California coast in the past couple of decades with no evidence of artificial transport — the list includes Band-tailed and Swallow-tailed gulls, Light-mantled and Shy albatrosses, Great-winged Petrel, and (this September 11th) an unidentified **giant petrel** (*Macronectes*, sp.?) seen west of the Farallon Is. by Steve Rottenborn! Second, it is clear that seabirds sometimes are transported artificially — witness Black-footed Penguins in California, a Silver Gull along the East Coast, and numerous records of Laysan Albatrosses aboard freighters entering Los Angeles Harbor and the San Francisco Bay. As birders, all we can do is keep compiling and documenting the records and see what kind of pattern they form.

One of the largest recent gatherings of birders and bird biologists in southern California took place 21–24 August in the Imperial Valley as some 120 people attended the annual meeting of the Western Field Ornithologists. The collective bird list for the meeting included such things as **Reddish Egret**, **Ruff**, **Little Gull**, and **Elegant Tern** as well as all the regular Salton Sea

"specialties." For those who like to plan in advance, the 1998 meeting of the WFO will be held October 1–4 in Arcata, Humboldt County.

Aside from the Band-tailed Gull, the most significant rarity of the fall was an adult **Purple Gallinule** discovered by Jon Dunn at Furnace Creek Ranch, Death Valley, on 22 September. This species of the Neotropics and southeastern North America has occurred surprisingly widely through the United States, the Atlantic Ocean islands, and even Europe and Africa; the two previous California records involved immatures. The gallinule remained in a small pond at Furnace Creek until at least 15 October. Also at Furnace Creek from 5 to 15 October was a **Smith's Longspur** (Tom and Jo Heindel *et al.*).

Scarce migrants of interest closer to Los Angeles included the following. A **Flesh-footed Shearwater** was seen on the LAAS boat trip in the San Pedro Channel on 27 September. A **White-winged Dove** was on Pt. Dume on 6 September (Kimball Garrett). A **Lesser Nighthawk** died after being trapped in machinery in Santa Fe Springs on 25 August (Billie Sheaffer). An **Eastern Kingbird** was at Malibu Lagoon on 9 September (Mike San Miguel). A **Blue-headed Vireo** was in Peck Park, San Pedro, from 27 to 29 September (Mitch Heindel). A **Virginia's Warbler** was in Hawaiian Gardens on 17 September (Brian Daniels). A **Lucy's Warbler** remained in Bob Pann's West Los Angeles yard from 19 September to at least 2 October, an exceptionally long stay for a fall migrant (and perhaps indicating a potential wintering bird). **Black-poll Warblers** were in Peck Park, San Pedro, on 21 September (Tom Wurster) and in Exposition Park, Los Angeles, on 28 September (Mary and Nick Freeman).

Northern Waterthrush records included one along lower Zuma Creek in Malibu on 6 September (Kimball Garrett) and one in Sand Dune Park, Manhattan Beach, 20–21 September (Kevin Larson). A male **Prothonotary Warbler** was

in Peck Park on 5 October (Mitch Heindel). A very cooperative immature **Mourning Warbler** was in Exposition Park 24 to 28 September (Kimball Garrett and numerous other observers), and a "probable" Mourning was in the courtyard of the Marriott Hotel near the L.A. International Airport on 14 September (David Yee). There is only one previous record of this species for Los Angeles County.

Shorebirding in Los Angeles County was disappointing this fall, with Piute Ponds on Edwards Air Force Base containing too much water to attract many birds. Shorebird habitat on the coastal slope is virtually limited to the channels of the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers; several thousand shorebirds (mostly **Western Sandpipers** and **Black-necked Stilts**) were along the lower Los Angeles River from July through early September. As expected, a scattering of juvenal **Semipalmented Sandpipers**, **Baird's Sandpipers** and **Pectoral Sandpipers** were found among these concentrations of peeps. Inland **Sanderlings** were at the Lancaster Sewage Ponds on 30 August and 21 September (Kimball Garrett).

As usual, the birding grass was a bit greener outside of hopelessly urbanized Los Angeles County. A few highlights from surrounding counties included: a **Gray Catbird** and a **Dickcissel** at Lake Tamarisk, Desert Center, in late September (Michael Patten); a **Blackburnian Warbler** at the Rubidoux Nature Center, Riverside Co., on 21 September to 2 October (Daniel Cooper); **Yellow-green Vireos** on the Oxnard Plain, Ventura Co., and Pt. Loma, San Diego Co.; a **Philadelphia Vireo** along Carpinteria Creek, Santa Barbara Co.; and a **Dusky Warbler** at a private ranch in Kern County on 4–5 October.

Red-crowned Parrots had a banner nesting season in the San Gabriel Valley this summer, with dozens of juveniles attended by adults at pre-roosting aggregations in Temple City in August and early

September (Karen Mabb); Karen also documented nesting in **Lilac-crowned** and **Red-lored parrots**, and KG found an adult **Blue-fronted Parrot** attending a begging juvenile in Temple City on 7 September.

November and December continue the fall period of high bird diversity in southern California. Although most migratory species have reached their wintering grounds, there is a great deal of "slop" at the tail end of migration, and stragglers will be widespread at least in the coastal regions. Do these November and December warblers and other migratory species qualify as "late migrants" or "birds attempting to winter"? The answer to this question is only meaningful if there is truly such a thing as a migration season followed by a season of winter residency. We know that most of these birds won't be present through the whole winter, but is this because they fail to survive outside their "normal" wintering range or because they simply move elsewhere? Many studies show that certain species (the Yellow-rumped Warbler is a good example) are " facultative migrants" — their migrations are not dictated strictly by annual clocks, but instead are adjustable, depending on food availability. One way we can help answer this puzzle is to continue to monitor unusual late fall warblers, vireos, flycatchers and other "migrants" to see how long they stick around. Too often the first and last day an odd wintering bird is found is Christmas Count Day! 

Records 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:

Kimball Garrett
L.A. County Museum of Natural History
900 Exposition Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90007
E-mail: garrett@bcf.usc.edu
Or call **Jon Fisher** at 818-544-5009.

LAAS Bird Tape: 213-874-1318

BOOKSTORE NEWS

For those planning trips to Asia this coming year, several new titles will help in the planning. First, *Fielding's Birding Indonesia* (\$19.95) gives all the practicalities of birding in the archipelago that is home to 17% of the world's bird species. In-depth information, photography and maps will help you plan ahead and in the field. The *Atlas of Birds of China* (\$66) has text in Chinese, but the common names are in English and the excellent color illustrations and range maps need no translation. For South Asia, *The Book of Indian Birds* (\$24.95) by Sálim Ali is now in its 12th edition. The 64 color plates cover over 500 species and longer accounts include details of voice, nesting, habitat and distribution. Finally, *Coral Reef Fishes: Caribbean, Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean Including the Red Sea* (\$35) will help anyone who includes snorkeling in his or her travel plans. Over 2,500 color illustrations aid in identification of 2,074 species of fish and their major forms.

For your ornithological reference library, three new titles are available. *Seabirds of the World: The Complete Reference* (\$49.95) includes nearly 300 species listings and photographs, which feature many invaluable flight shots by some of the world's leading bird photographers. *Skuas and Jaegers: A Guide to the Skuas and Jaegers of the World* (\$35) provides a guide to

the seven species of skuas (also known as jaegers), with special attention to the individual plumage variation found in the group. Its 12 color plates and numerous black and white photographs complement the text to enable species identification and correct aging of almost any skua encountered. Another new volume treats the single genus commonly known as munias and mannikins. Titled simply *Munias and Mannikins* (\$59.95), the book presents detailed descriptions and illustrations of the 41 species of *Lonchura*.

Two new audio offerings are on the shelves. *Voices of the Swamp* (CD \$15.95) is filled with pure nature sounds of the southern swamps and pine woods. Some of the featured animals are: Barred Owl, Sandhill Crane, Chuck-will's-widow, Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Carolina Wren and a variety of frogs. *Wild Sounds of the Northwoods* (cassette \$12.95, CD \$16.95) identifies species by name, followed by examples of their calls. Includes 100 species of frogs, mammals, insects and birds.

The holidays are coming, so plan ahead. Now in stock are *Audubon Bluebirds and Other Backyard Songbirds Calendar for 1998* (\$9.95) and *Audubon 365 Birds Calendar* (\$10.95), a page-a-day color calendar. The perfect gift for the birder or nature lover on your list is at the LAAS Bookstore. ■

International Birding Tours

LAAS is sponsoring a new series of its popular international birding and natural history tours:

- May/June, 1998 — Galapagos and Ecuador, South America
- November, 1998 — Kenya and Northern Tanzania, East Africa

Mark these tours on your calendar, as past tours have filled rapidly. Exact dates, itinerary and prices will be announced later. For further information, contact Olga Clarke, Travel Director, 2027 El Arbolita Drive, Glendale, CA 91208, (818) 249-9511.

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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F I E L D T R I P S

Continued from page 8

Saturday, November 22 —

Mojave Narrows and Vicinity.

Field biologist and amiable guy **Daniel Cooper** leads to this high desert wet spot. Eagles, Merlin, other raptors, Vesper Sparrow, waterfowl and Mountain Bluebird all possible. Take Hwy 15 N toward Victorville. Take the Bear Valley cutoff E for about 4 miles. Meet at 8:00 A.M. alongside the road on the left before the entrance booth to the parking lot. Entrance fee (\$3-5 per vehicle?).

Sunday, November 30 —

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

Sunday, December 7 — Point Mugu. **Bart Lane** and a base biologist will lead in this limited access area. Peregrine Falcon and White-winged Scoter often seen. Rare birds such as Tropical Kingbird, Oldsquaw, Black Scoter and Masked Booby seen in recent years. Must be at least 16 years old. No cameras. *Date tentative pending approval. Call to confirm date before mailing required early sign-up by November 25.* Include SASE and, for each person in your request, include citizenship status, phone number, Social Security Number and \$5 deposit (refunded at the gate). Take the 101 Fwy W to Las Posas Rd. S to PCH N onto Wood Rd. heading W. Head S on the frontage road to the lot at the main (#2) gate. Meet at 7:45 A.M.

Sunday, December 7 — Topanga State Park.

Leader **Gerry Haigh**. Meet at 8:00 A.M. See November 2 write-up for details.

Sunday, December 14 —

Whittier Narrows. Leader **Ray Jillson**. Meet at 8:00 A.M. See November 9 write-up for details.

Saturday, December 20 —

Lancaster Christmas Count.

Call compiler **Fred Heath** at (805) 389-3203 to sign up or to be hooked up with a team. Birders of every level come out to support these counts and hobnob at lunch.

Sunday, December 21 — Malibu Christmas Count.

Call compiler **Larry Allen** at (213) 221-2022 to participate.

Sunday, December 28 — Los Angeles Christmas Count.

Call Audubon House at (213) 876-0202 to lead, coordinate or participate.

Sunday, January 4 — Topanga State Park.

Leader **Gerry Haigh**. Meet at 8:00 A.M. See November 2 write-up for details.

Saturday and Sunday, January 10 and 11 — Carrizo Plain.

Leader **Roy Van de Hoek** has done considerable field research on the Plain. Good hawks, falcons, eagles. Mountain Plover always! Sandhill Cranes, elk and pronghorn hopeful. Meet at 8:00 A.M. in Maricopa. If possible, please carpool or avail your vehicle to others. \$10 per person, \$5 surcharge for 1-person vehicles. 10 car limit. Your phone number will be released for carpooling unless you request otherwise. Sign-up with Audubon House for exact directions and information. Reserve accommodations in Buttonwillow for Saturday night (Motel 6 is there).

Sunday, January 11 — Whittier

Narrows. Leader **Ray Jillson**.

Meet at 8:00 A.M. See November 9 write-up for details.

Sunday, January 18 — Orange County Rarities.

Leader **Roy Poucher** will follow up Christmas Count leads on wintering vagrants. Least Flycatcher, Thick-billed Kingbird, Ancient Murrelet, etc. Take the 405 Fwy S, head S on Golden West, E on Slater, and take a quick right into the lot. Meet at 8:00 A.M. at Huntington Central Park by the bridge S of the lot. Bring lunch.

Sunday, January 18 — Ballona Wetlands.

Leader **Bob Shanman**. Meet at 8:00 A.M. See November 16 write-up for details.

Friday, February 6 — Gull Lecture.

Larry Allen. Meet at 7:30 P.M. at Audubon House in West Hollywood. Fee: \$5 for lecture and field trip (see listing below). Reservations required. Participation limited. More details in next *Tanager*.

Sunday, February 8 — Gull Study Field Trip.

Larry Allen. Meet at 8:00 A.M. at the **Malibu Lagoon** parking lot kiosk. Fee: \$3 for field trip only. Walk-ons O.K. for field trip only. 

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

EVENING MEETINGS

All members and guests from the general public are invited to enjoy LAAS' monthly presentations. Meetings begin at 7:30 P.M. in the public meeting room of Plummer Park in West Hollywood. Access from Santa Monica Blvd. or Fountain Ave. west of La Brea Ave. Refreshments are served afterward at the LAAS Bookstore.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1997

Dr. Arthur Evans will present a lavishly illustrated introduction to the beautiful world of beetles, based on his new book, *An Inordinate Fondness for Beetles*. Art has a gift for communicating with children, so bring them along to this special presentation and book signing.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1997

Albert Gasser will narrate his own film of the *Life and Behavior of the European Kingfisher*. Shot near Zug, Switzerland, the film shows the life-cycle of the European Kingfisher, including mating rituals, nest-building and development of the young.

FIELD TRIPS

Before 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, November 2 — 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 further S, then turn E uphill on Entrada Rd.

(1 mile N of Topanga Village). Follow the signs and make a left into the park. Meet at 8:00 A.M. in the parking lot of Trippet Ranch. \$5 parking fee.

Sunday, November 9 — Whittier Narrows Regional Park. Join ranger Ray Jillson to view colorful resident and wintering birds including Northern Cardinal. 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.

Saturday, November 15 — Newport Back Bay. Join leader Mary Freeman to look for rails flushed out by the 6.7' high tide, as well as Royal Tern and California Gnatcatcher. Take the 405 Fwy S to Jamboree Blvd., drive S over the channel past San Joaquin Hills Rd. to Back Bay Dr. on your right. If you hit PCH you've gone too far. Continue to the first pullout hugging the bay along Back Bay Dr., 1/2 mile off Jamboree Rd. Meet at 8:00 A.M. for a full day in the area.

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

Sunday, November 16 — Ballona Wetlands. Bob Shanman will lead this trip to our nearest wetland. Shorebird, loon and sea duck numbers should be swelling. The jetty is the best place in L.A. to see Surfbird. Take Marina Fwy (90 West) to Culver Blvd., turn left for about a mile, then right on Pacific Ave. Meet at 8:00 A.M. at the Del Rey Lagoon parking lot on the right. Three hour walk. Scopes helpful.

Los Angeles Audubon Society
7377 Santa Monica Boulevard
West Hollywood, CA 90046-6694

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