

# WESTERN TANAGER



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Los Angeles Audubon Society

## BUTTERFLY WATCHING

by Fred Heath

### Important Vote Notice Proposed By-Laws Changes

Your Board of Directors is proposing several revisions to the LAAS by-laws. These revisions will be available at the November meeting and on our website:

[www.LAAudubon.org](http://www.LAAudubon.org)

We will vote on these revisions at the December meeting.

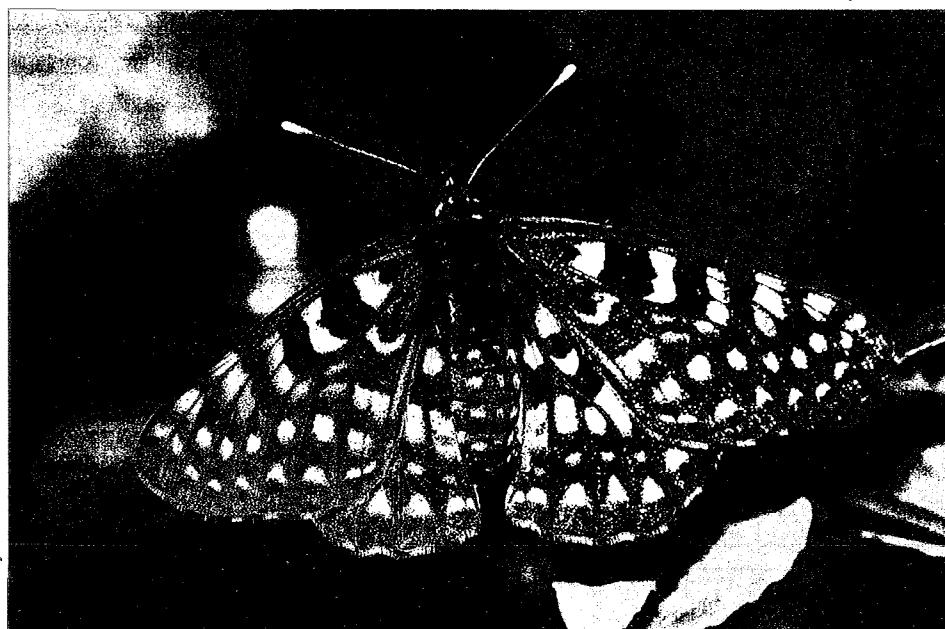
Current by-laws require that the announcement of revisions and the date of the vote are published in *Western Tanager* and the proposed changes are read at the meeting before the vote. It is important that members read and understand the revisions before the vote at the December meeting.

Please plan to attend this important meeting.

The world of butterfly watching in southern California and the west has just become a whole lot easier with the recent publication of *Butterflies Through Binoculars – The West* by Jeff Glassberg. Southern California has been blessed with a number of books, which can help in the identification of local butterflies. However, using this new book alone will allow anyone to quickly identify just about any southern California butterfly including those difficult skippers. I believe that the publication of this field guide will attract a whole new wave of folks, especially birders, to butterflying. Further on in this

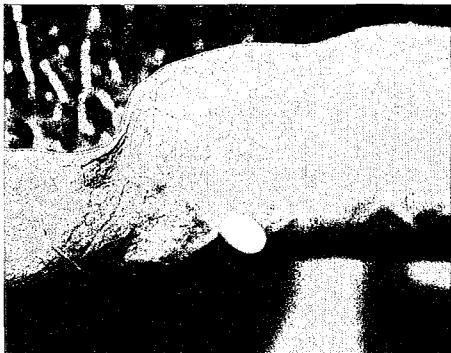
article we will discuss the various publications including the Glassberg book which are helpful to the beginning buterflier.

Butterflies are classified as insects in the order Lepidoptera (the Greek translation is scale wing). Both moths and butterflies belong to this order. The true butterflies and skippers form their own suborder. Probably one of the most asked questions is, what is the difference between a butterfly and moth? Of course we all know that butterflies fly in the daytime, while moths generally fly at night. There are a number of day-flying moths, some of which rival butterflies



Photos by Herb Clarke

Variable Checkerspot



Gulf Fritillary egg

with their bright colors and striking patterns. The main obvious difference is that a butterfly has clubbed antennae while moths have either simple straight or complex feathery antennae. In addition, moth flight is usually more stiff than butterflies because their forewings and hindwings are coupled by a mechanism called the frenulum.

Skippers, with their generally heavy bodies, shorter wings, and mostly drab colors look more like moths at first glance, but their clubbed antennae (which usually have a little hook) give them away. Skippers are named for their bouncing, skipping-like flight.

Butterfly watching is going through the same transition which birding went through early in the last century. Before Roger Tory Peterson's field guide, identification by sight was not considered completely reliable. Much the same held true with butterflies only ten years ago. Many collectors felt that the only way to identify some species with certainty is from the head of a pin and even that is not enough for some species where examination of the genitalia is felt to be necessary. A group of skippers known as Duskywings have the reputation for being notoriously difficult, but butte-fliers have managed to ferret out the field marks which can reliably be used to separate out our six local species without genitalia dissection. It wasn't too many years ago that Peterson himself was saying that you couldn't distinguish our *Empidonax* flycatchers unless they sang.

Although a knowledge of bird distribution is important in bird identification, it is of even more importance with butterflies. The North American Butterfly Association's (NABA) *Checklist & English Names of North American Butterflies* lists more than 700 found in North America north of Mexico. This is some-

what comparable to the number of bird species in North America. However, whereas California boasts a list of more than 600 species of birds, there are less than 250 species of butterflies found in the state. For southern California, the number of butterfly species drops to about 170. Contrast this to the almost 500 bird species which have been recorded in Los Angeles County alone.

Part of the reason is that there is not as much vagrancy in butterflies, as there is with birds. Like birds, butterflies can fly, but they are generally less mobile than birds. With some exceptions (such as the Monarch and Painted Lady), butterflies are a sedentary group, not venturing very far from where they hatched as cater-



Gulf Fritillary caterpillar

pillars. A major reason for this is that many are tied to a specific food plant. The food plant, by the way, is the plant the caterpillar (or larvae stage) eats. The caterpillar is the eating (and growing) part of the butterfly life cycle. The butterfly itself is the mating part of the life cycle and except for sipping a little nectar now and then for energy, doesn't really eat. Many butterflies will nectar on a wide variety of flowers, but can be very particular about where they lay their eggs. The El Segundo Blue (an endangered subspecies of the Square-Spotted Blue) both nectars and feeds on the local Sea Cliff Buckwheat and thus has a very limited distribution on the few coastal

back dunes where the plant grows thickly.

While you might find a Pine or Magnolia Warbler at a remote desert oasis many miles from the nearest pine or magnolia tree, you would never expect to see a Pine White or a Mountain Mahogany Hairstreak more than a few hundred yards from the nearest pine or Mountain Mahogany tree.

At any one location, the number of butterfly species which you might have to sort through to make an ID is limited by the ecosystem which you are in and the particular plants found there. This works the other way as well. When you are looking for a particular butterfly, many times it is helpful to find the food plant first.

Aside from geographical clues, another key to butterfly identification is the time of year. Many butterflies are only found during a few months of the year. The El Segundo Blue, because its caterpillars eat only the flower heads of the Sea Cliff Buckwheat, will be out only from late June to early July when these flowers are just beginning to appear. When trying to identify a butterfly, many similar butterflies can be eliminated simply by knowing their flight times.

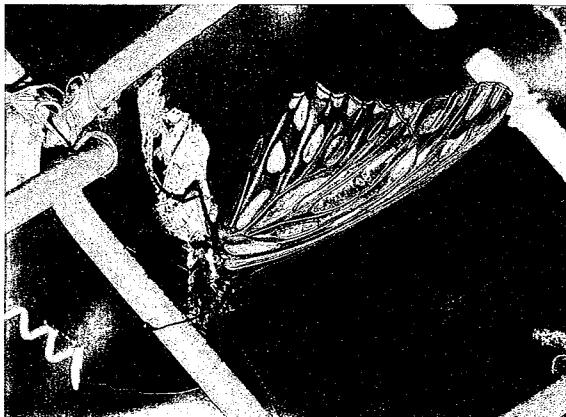
Thus in going afield looking for butterflies, it always helps to be prepared by knowing which butterflies might be flying in that type of habitat at that time of year. We are quite lucky here in southern California in having a number of books which can provide us excellent distribution information, both geographical and temporal, as well as good identification



Gulf Fritillary pupa

help, and they are all available at the LAAS Bookstore.

One of the sources that I've found most helpful for beginner butterfly watchers in the Los Angeles area is actually a wall chart which is fan-folded into a handy road-map sized document. It is



Gulf Fritillary eclosing

entitled *Butterflies of the Greater Los Angeles* by Rudi Mattoni and has 106 butterfly species (a few are actually subspecies or extinct forms) found in the Santa Monica Mountains and the L.A. Basin up to about 2,500 feet elevation. Each species is depicted with a full color photo, in most cases of the male, female and undersides (usually very similar for males and females). In many species, especially the Lycaenidae (Hairstreaks, Coppers and Blues), the undersides are extremely important for field identification since these butterflies will normally land with their wings closed. Many of the older butterfly guides would only picture the upperside which is easy to see on a collected butterfly. Aside from the pictures of each species, this wall chart has information on each species as to its habitat preference, food plant, and timing of its life cycle. Like everything else in life, it is not perfect. The pictures of the five species of Duskywings are too dark to be useful, and a mistake in layout removed the white hindwing edges of the two species (Mournful and Funereal Duskywing) which have this feature.

We are extremely fortunate to have one of the very best local books on butterfly distribution in *The Butterflies of Southern California* by Thomas and John Emmel. Since this book was designed to be strictly distributional in nature, it contains almost no ID information *per se*. It does however have ten color plates

which are photographs of specimens of each species and subspecies found in southern California. With so many butterflies and only ten plates, the individual images are about half-life size. This is a definite drawback for the smaller species. However, the fact that it shows our local subspecies and does contain excellent information as to where and when to find the local butterflies, makes it a valuable resource.

As mentioned at the beginning of this article, the recently published *Butterflies Through Binoculars – The West* by Jeff Glassberg is without a doubt the best thing that ever happened to butterfly watching in California. This book, the fourth of the evolving *Butterfly through Binoculars* (BTB) series (the Northeast was the first, followed by the East, and then Florida), is clearly the best of the lot as the author has learned. In common with the other BTB books, this book was designed for butterfly watchers and is filled with large photographs of live butterflies in natural poses. Many species have both upper and undersides pictured with excellent comparisons with like species. The maps and species write-ups are on facing pages with the diagnostic field marks boldfaced in the text. This makes for ease and quickness of use in the field. For species with many different looking subspecies, there are multiple photographs showing the range of variation. The well-named Variable Checkerspot, for example, is depicted in no less than 11 photos. To make things even clearer concerning the geography of these morphs, a list showing where and when each photo was taken is also included in the back of the book. This is the one book to have, if one is really serious about identifying every butterfly they see in southern California or elsewhere in the west. I even found it invaluable on a recent trip to Sonora, Mexico a couple of hundred miles south of the border!

There are a number of other books which can be helpful for the southern California butterfly watcher. A wealth of information is in *Searching for Butterflies in Southern California*, from Wanda Dameron's Flutterby Press which also provides butterfly lists and materials for the western U.S. and the neotropics. *Butterflies of California* by Garth and Tilden contains 20 color (and four black and white) plates with good paintings of dead butterflies. Although the various subspecies are covered in the text, not all are pictured. However the distribution information is excellent, especially if one wants to extend their butterfly watching in California to the north. The new edition (1999) of the Peterson Series, *A Field Guide to Western Butterflies* by Paul Opler has 44 painted color plates of butterflies in natural poses. However the details on many of the butterflies, especially the smaller ones are not shown well and make the plates difficult to use. More frustrating is that the author chose to use some taxonomy which is not generally accepted today and thus has a number of species named which don't match with other recently published books. There are however lots of good field marks mentioned which are of value to the butterfly watcher. If it weren't for the new BTB – *The West* which covers the same ground, but better, this might be a



Gulf Fritillary

good book to have in your library.

Before the BTB book, the *National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Butterflies* by Robert Pyle was the only book with photos of live butterflies in natural poses. However because of the large geographic coverage of this book, with only one or two photos of each species, there is no room to show the subspecies variation. Like the similar Audubon bird guides, they are nice to have mainly because of the excellent large image photographs.

One major problem with using different books is that many of the English names are different from book to book. Various local subspecies have names which may be different from a commonly accepted species name. Even the scientific names can vary from authority to authority. There is no organization, such as the AOU for birds, which determines what constitutes a species and what its scientific and English name should be. The attitude of many of the old guard is "Who cares what the English name is? Use the scientific name!" The people at NABA felt, in order to make butterflies more accessible, that a standardized list of English names had to be generated. They did this in 1995 with the publication of the *Checklist & English Names of North American Butterflies*. The second edition was published this year. This 60 page booklet has each of the 722 species found in North America north of Mexico with an English and scientific name, and a place to note the first sighting of each species. In addition, there is a section which describes some of the taxonomic and nomenclature questions and why NABA's list used the species and names which it did. The great majority of the butterfly books being published in North America are using the names in this checklist. So we should see a lot more consistency going forward.

You have your field guides (which should probably include some decent plant field guides) and you are finally ready to go out and look at butterflies. Where do you start? It is always helpful to have a close focusing (less than six feet) binocular. This will allow you to get a nice large image of even the smallest butterfly. This will also be helpful in making sure you don't back off a cliff in attempt to get a butterfly in focus. Because butterflies, as well as most people, like nice weather, it

doesn't make sense to look for butterflies unless the temperature is at least 60° F and it is mostly sunny. Another benefit of butterfly watching over birding is that you can sleep in, since butterfly activity is usually best in the late morning from 9:00 A.M. until noon. If, however, you still want to focus on birds, you can get an early start for the birds and still have time to watch butterflies as the birding activity slows down later in the morning.

One can find butterflies anywhere that has an abundance of flowers for nectar and some open area where the sun can shine in. A stream running through an area is always a plus. Local flowers which are especially attractive to butterflies include California Buckwheat, thistles, wallflowers, sunflowers and asters,

and Borrego Palm Canyons in the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park on the edge of the Colorado Desert all can be excellent at the right time of year.

There are two local chapters of NABA in southern California, both of which have a number of field trips throughout the year. The LA Chapter (LANABA) is contacted at: [www.naba.org/chapters/nabaLA/index.htm](http://www.naba.org/chapters/nabaLA/index.htm) or through the president, Margaret Huffman, (310) 454-4279. The Orange County Chapter is contacted at [www.naba.org/chapters/nabaoc/index.html](http://www.naba.org/chapters/nabaoc/index.html) or Larry Shaw, the chapter president, at (714) 971-2421.

A final warning about butterfly watching. Once you start, you may find yourself hooked and also begin to



*Painted Lady*

and the non-native lantana. A number of butterflies go to local high points or ridges to search out mates. This behavior is called hilltopping. The climb to the top of some hill or the other is good exercise and can be quite rewarding butterfly-wise.

Some of the local places which are favorites of mine are La Jolla Canyon, Charmlee Park, Malibu Creek State Park, the Angeles Forest Highway, and Big Dalton Canyon. A little further afield, Bluff Lake Meadow in the San Bernardino Mountains, Bob's Gap on the edge of the Mojave Desert, and Plum, Sentenac,

become a lot more aware of the natural world. In checking flowers for butterflies, you can't help but notice the bees and wasps, beetles, spiders, and even flies which also use these floral resources. There is no telling what you might get into next. I, myself, have just started to watch dragonflies more seriously this year. And now with two new books having hit the bookstores recently, *Common Dragonflies of California* by Kathy Biggs and *Dragonflies Through Binoculars* by Sidney Dunkle, who knows where this interest will lead! Maybe an article on dragonfly watching next year?

## Book Review: *Butterflies through Binoculars – The West*

Written by Jeffrey Glassberg.  
Oxford University Press, 2001  
ISBN:0-19-510669-5 – Softbound  
374 pgs. 127 plates  
\$19.95 from the LAAS Bookstore

*Butterflies through Binoculars – The West* introduces butterflies in a manner that is extremely user-friendly allowing immediate identification of most species. The format is similar to National Geographic's *Birds of North America*, with text and distribution maps left of facing plates. Each group is introduced with general characteristics. Each species has a distributional map, with text on habitat, abundance, flight period, caterpillar foodplant, and other helpful information, and key identification hints in bold print.

Forty preliminary pages contain a chart of physical parts and an overview of using binoculars, netting, photographing, gardening, conservation, where and how to find butterflies, and how to behave – unlike birding, since butterflies can't hear, talking is o.k., but approaching very slowly and smoothly, while preventing your shadow crossing their path, is necessary.

Birders may hotly debate preference of photographs or artistic impressions, while most butterflies prefer field photographs. Though a tremendous amount of research went into assimilating considerable previously unknown information, the 1136 great photographs provide the basis for this incredible book, 95% of which were taken by the author. Views are positioned in the same direction to allow easy comparison with both upper and under surfaces typical, including dimorphic genders, plus lines pointing to key markings. All species on a page and sometimes entire sections, are in relative size, with smallest species pictured 2fi times life-size, scale noted at the top of the page.

Is it perfect? Probably nothing is; however it has certainly set a new and elevated standard for butterfly field-guides.

"BTB-West" had a major challenge, particularly with a number of California

species quite different by area due to disjointed habitats. This diversity is portrayed, i.e. 10 photographs for the Variable Checkerspot. A separate section notes the date and location of each picture, plus the photographer if other than the author.

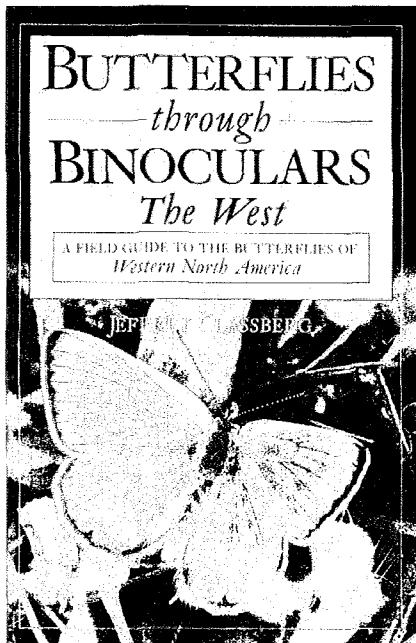
In comparing "BTB-West" with my homemade field guides, there are a few slight differences for southern California butterflies as a few of the local Hair-streaks undersides are slightly different than those pictured: our Mt. Mahogany has only half a line on the hindwing with a layer of lighter scaling along the lower portion; the underside basal 2/3 of Hedgerow is darker than the outer portion with markings less distinct; our Gold-Hunter's has a midline marking

local Callippe and Coronis fritillaries are pictured. I'm particularly pleased to report after a Sierra trip that with some effort those also may be sorted out with a fair degree of comfort.

Like all hard copy material, "BTB-West" was out-dated at publication. It went to press before the NABA Names Committee completed its first name revision, plus publication of related scientific papers. One of the few changes is Common Checkered-Skipper that has since been split into White and Common Checkered-Skippers. So far, unlike depictions and maps, the two species are not visually separable. Dr. John Burns study of over 4200 genitalia, finds only the White Checkered-Skipper likely in southern California.

As birders, we take for granted a standardized list of scientific and common names with periodic changes by the AOU and ABA as well-respected and accepted authorities. There had not been a lepidoptera counterpart or even a standardized butterfly list which allowed authors to bestow their favorite names, and many different names for the same bug. This obviously made butterfly study a distinct challenge! This has changed in the 10 years since Mr. Glassberg established NABA (the North American Butterfly Association – patterned somewhat after ABA), with the goal of popularizing butterflying to expand conservation awareness. Early on, he brought lepidoptera experts together to standardize nomenclature which is currently used for the annual 4th-of-July Butterfly Counts, U.S. Government Endangered Species Lists and newer books. This book completes his goal of publishing field guides allowing easy identification of most U.S. species.

For birders to butterfly is a natural addition of utilizing the same skills and as morning bird activity diminishes, butterflies become active for much of the day, allowing us to have another excuse to commune with nature and/or do some tickling! Though there are some minor disparities for local bugs, IF you have ANY interest in butterflies, you will want to obtain this incredible field guide ASAP!



similar to the dusky Hedgerow while maintaining an even lighter color; and our Goldens are marked very lightly, if at all, and look like golden drops in the sun, flying out from high in the oaks.

My one surprise was that a female Gabb's Checkerspot was neither included or its distinctive markings noted (lighter checkered mid-line of upperside wings). The Blues are somewhat comparable to the peeps – tedious at first, but careful observation makes them sortable and quite enjoyable.

Fritillaries, the most difficult group, are the empsids of the butterfly world – though certainly more beautiful! The

Review by: Wanda Dameron



# CONSERVATION CONVERSATION

by Sandy Wohlgemuth

## Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve Faces Change

The federal Environmental Protection Agency has determined that many of our urban rivers are too polluted for our health and the well being of the animal life the rivers support. The Los Angeles River, in its concrete channel, flows 51 miles from the west San Fernando Valley, picking up all manners of pollutants on its way to the ocean. The Tillman Water Reclamation Plant in the Sepulveda Basin collects a great amount of wastewater from residences, businesses, and other sources in the Valley. Tillman sends the solid wastes through a sewer system to the Hyperion plant on the coast and treats the water to remove the undesirable nitrates. This water is used to fill Lake Balboa and the wildlife lake. Lake water is in continuous flow from the plant so 65 to 80 million gallons of water per day enters the river.

The Bureau of Sanitation of the city is faced with the problem of meeting the EPA standard for nitrates. Nitrates occur in fertilizers that are washed by rain into rivers, lakes and, aquifers. Municipal sewage is an especially flagrant source of nitrates. They encourage the growth of algae and bacteria which use up the dissolved oxygen in the water, making it uninhabitable for fish in the river and in the ocean. To build an up-to-date unit in Tillman that will meet the lower concentration of nitrates will cost \$100 million which Sanitation considers too expensive. The Bureau has introduced a plan to develop artificial wetlands in the basin that it claims will remove the excessive nitrates, "create significant habitat for

wildlife, and provide recreational and environmental education opportunities for area residents." (Draft Report of Wetland Feasibility Study, City of Los Angeles).

The Feasibility Study proposes six areas in the basin that would accommodate "emergent wetlands" to receive effluent directly from the Tillman plant. Each wetland would contain several cells with water ranging in depth from one foot to four feet. Cells will provide a medium of soil, decomposing vegetation, and bacteria in the shallow portion that will convert the nitrates into less harmful forms of nitrogen. Moving from the shallow area of the cell, the water receives further treatment from small water-loving native plants and larger bulrushes and cattails growing in deeper water. The plants absorb nitrogen to synthesize essential protein and so reduce the nitrate content of the effluent. At the proper time the cells release their treated water to the river. The wetlands also contain areas of deep open water that could be used by ducks, geese and large waders. The shallow portions of the cells might be habitat for shorebirds which the wildlife lake does not provide. Proponents of the plan believe that floodwater can be controlled by the wetlands and may even reuse it.

The media report of Sanitation's Feasibility Study produced considerable controversy. Nearby homeowners objected to the creation of an obnoxious "swamp" near their homes. Desecration of the wildlife area and recreation facilities was deplored. There seemed to be

little favorable response. The Bureau said it was interested in reaching the public to explain and clarify their plan. The July meeting of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Areas Committee was entirely given up to the plan. (The committee has been in existence for eight or nine years and works closely with the city Recreation and Parks Department. It has been a fruitful partnership of environmentalists and a caring agency.) At the meeting the Sanitation people gave an impressive, professional account of their wetlands project. Discussion was animated with some of us strongly against it and others favorable but somewhat ambivalent. Most of us were taken aback by the size of the total area designated for wetlands. According to the Draft Report map, the 11 acre wildlife lake will be boxed in by two wetlands that would cut off access to the lake. The wetland on the east side of the lake seems to eliminate the large grassy area that provides forage for hundreds of Canada Geese in the winter. The study document shows over 500 acres of the basin would be used for wetlands, later reduced to 300 acres. The L.A. Times article quotes a park official as saying 300 acres was too much. Sanitation says they want to build a demonstration wetland of 50 acres before any further work is attempted. Some committee members thought that if only one or two demonstration sites were constructed that would be acceptable and could provide additional habitat for wildlife. But there is concern that once the first wetlands arrive in the basin and they turned out to

be inadequate to meet the new nitrate standards there would be calls for more.

The 50 acre demonstration wetland is estimated to cost \$20 million to \$30 million with the full project costing \$50 million more. The full price of the entire wetlands would be \$70 to \$80 million. If these figures are close to reality, the \$100 million for an additional Tillman plant that will solve the nitrate problem may not be "too expensive" after all. The new standard for nitrate pollution will have been achieved without the intrusion into the basin. And a lot of people will be smiling.

Someone said that the Sepulveda Basin was for flood control, recreation and wildlife and not for sewage treatment. The members of the wildlife committee have been passionately involved with the wildlife area for many years and are delighted to see the beautiful place it has become. It is not only birders or native plant enthusiasts who appreciate it. People walk the trails under the cottonwoods enjoying the lake and the

greenery. It's almost like hiking through a national forest, leaving the noise and bustle of the city behind. And it's just around the corner.

At this writing, Sanitation people are seeking out other groups to present their message. Baseball teams, model plane enthusiasts, hikers, joggers, cricket players: all who will be affected by the project. Their toughest audience will be their neighbors, many who have been strongly opposed to the plan. Sanitation spokesmen have said from the start that if the response to their plan is negative they will not pursue the wetlands project. They will undoubtedly be held to this promise.

Update: This article had already been submitted to the editor when the following meeting took place:

On 13 September 2001, all members of the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area Committee met at 7 A.M. with three experts from the Bureau of Sanitation at the site of their future wetland in the

basin. This is a 50 to 75 acre section south of the Los Angeles River currently in agriculture that is rarely visited by the public. We were told that there were important changes in their plans for the introduction of wetlands in the basin. Because of the negative input from people who live near the basin and groups like our committee, the model airplane folks and others, this area we were viewing would be the only wetland they would ask for. The Bureau would look for other places in the Valley for the necessary additional wetlands to reach the mandated reduction of nitrates. The committee was surprised and gratified at this news. The location of this wetland would not impinge on the wildlife area or recreation facilities. The Sanitation people promised emphatically that there would be no additional wetlands in the Sepulveda Basin. A committee member will be included in future planning sessions of the Bureau. Democracy works! 

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## Audubon California Strategic Vision Roll Out

Dan Taylor, Executive Director  
Audubon-California

In May of this year the State Board of Audubon-California approved a five-year strategic plan to guide the work of the Audubon organization statewide. Stemming from the most rigorous review of our organizational strengths and weaknesses that we have ever undertaken we looked at both the opportunities we face as Audubon conservationists and the sizeable threats that confront the environment in our state.

The plan firmly establishes Audubon as a conservation organization that engages people, and emphasizes the power and importance of education in accomplishing our environmental goals. We will remain firmly rooted in birds and the educational opportunities they

afford, and the conservation needs they desperately need in a state of 34 million people. We will take the long view – focusing less on the conservation needs twenty *days* from now and more on the conservation needs of California twenty *years* from now. We seek to build an Audubon that becomes more intentional and proactive in its work and less opportunistic and reactive. The work that we do must truly "add up to something," and the something we envision is profound. We see an Audubon-California that in five years will:

Establish a place-based nature education program leading to the siting and development of up to 20 Audubon Centers in strategic locations around California;

Lead key regional and statewide efforts to conserve and restore 500,000 acres of habitat in California, focused on important bird habitats;

Reach, through a combination of communications strategies, one-third of California's population on a regular basis

with a science-based message that advances our conservation goals and overall environmental literacy;

Triple our statewide membership to at least 180,000 members that more accurately represents California's diverse population; and,

Develop collaborative workplans with our chapters in order to increase programmatic alignment, build local effectiveness and contribute to the strategic goals of Audubon in the state.

Many Audubon chapters in the state participated in the plan by attending workshops, commenting on draft plans, and evaluating what Audubon does well today. We thank all of our chapter leaders who took the time to reflect on where we are and where we want to go as an organization. It will take a great deal of work to translate our plan into a remarkable reality. We look forward to working with you and our other Audubon partners to secure a better Audubon and a better California.



# OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

## Birding Eastern Los Angeles County in Winter

by Michael J. San Miguel, Jr.

The eastern fringes of Los Angeles County are like a trip to the dentist for many Los Angeles County birders. We all have excuses for not going. Most people don't bother because it is out of the way and has no well known birding areas and therefore is grossly underbirded, especially in winter! Hopefully this article will change the minds of many birders in the Los Angeles area and will show that eastern Los Angeles County is rich in habitat and birding opportunities. Most of these places were discovered by simply looking at a map and finding an area that looked "green". I highly recommend being adventuresome and going out and finding spots such as these in your own neck of the woods.

### Cal Poly Pomona

The campus of Cal Poly Pomona, best known for a returning wintering Thick-billed Kingbird, is loaded with wintering birding potential. The slopes around parking lot J have Rufous-crowned Sparrow, California Towhee, California Thrasher, White-crowned and Golden-crowned sparrows, Cassin's Kingbird, Cedar Waxwing, and Red-tailed Hawk. But, please bird *only* from the parking lots. The campus itself is loaded with sycamore trees and should be explored. An early morning can produce Townsend's Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler (rare), Orange-crowned Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and American Robin among other things. The pig pens usually have large numbers of Brewer's, Red-winged and Tricolored blackbirds.

Cal Poly Pomona can be accessed from the Temple Ave. exit off of the 57 freeway, just south of I-10. Follow the signs.

### Bonelli Regional Park, San Dimas

Otherwise known as Puddingstone Reservoir, Bonelli Park is arguably one of the most diverse places to bird in Los Angeles County during the winter period. A productive morning, December through March, can easily produce 60 or more species of birds. This well wooded park offers a variety of habitats including riparian areas, planted coniferous groves, coastal sage scrub, and a large lake which supports large numbers of wintering waterfowl, and gulls. The park itself has many great areas to bird and I suggest stopping your car at any of the parking lots and exploring on your own. I will recommend a few areas that seem to be the most productive. The two main entrances to the park are from Via Verde to the west, and Puddingstone Drive from the north. If you decide to park on the Via Verde side, park in the lot just past the entrance kiosk, and work the planted pines and pepper trees for Golden-crowned Kinglet, Red-naped and Red-breasted sapsuckers, and possibly Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. During the winter of 1999-2000 a Hepatic Tanager and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker spent the winter in these trees! There are usually large flocks of juncos which typically have Slate-colored and an occasional Pink-sided. Western Bluebird, Cedar Waxwing, and American Robin are often seen eating camphor berries along the fringes of the open picnic area. Be sure to check the edges of the main road for stuff like Spotted Towhee and Fox Sparrow. Keep an ear open when you walk by the slopes for Cactus Wren, California Gnatcatcher, and Rufous-crowned Sparrow.

The lake is a great spot to check for a wintering loon, there are lots of Clark's and Western grebes (which makes for a good study), loads of waterfowl including scaup, Ring-necked Duck, Cinnamon Teal, and Bufflehead. There are usually Caspian and Forster's terns, California, Ring-billed, and an occasional Herring gull. Be sure to scan the shoreline for shorebirds. There are several riparian inlets to the lake, which are always worth checking.

Bonelli Regional Park (fee) is accessed off of the 210 Freeway at Via Verde. There are signs directing you to the park all over the place. If you decide to bird the north end of the lake, exit at Arrow Highway and follow the signs toward Raging Waters. Drive about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile past the Raging Water entrance and look for the second entrance kiosk, not the boat landing. Park anywhere and start birding!

### Oak Park Cemetery, Claremont

This is a small cemetery located at the south end of the Claremont College Campus and can hold large numbers of birds in the infested eucalyptus, live oaks, and sycamore trees. There are always large numbers of Yellow-rumped Warblers, usually a few Orange-crowned Warblers, and the occasional Black-throated Gray and Townsend's warbler. The north edge of the cemetery holds good numbers of White-crowned and Golden-crowned sparrows, and should be checked carefully for something unusual. The eastern edge of the cemetery, which just happens to be the border of San Bernardino County, has a line of eucalyptus that should be checked for a rarity,

and the lawns usually hold a flock of juncos and Chipping Sparrows and should always be thoroughly checked. I should not have to tell people that this is a cemetery and one should act appropriately.

The cemetery is located just north of I-10 at Indian Hill. Drive north on Indian Hill to San Jose Drive and follow the signs to the cemetery.

#### **Creekside Park, Walnut**

This small suburban park in the hills is a great example of how good birding can be in a residential park. The main portion of the park is usually heavily used during the weekend, so it should be checked either during the week or early in the morning on the weekends. There is always a large flock of *spizella* which occasionally holds a Clay-colored Sparrow (winter 1998-1999 two Clay-coloreds were present!). This flock, when found, should be thoroughly checked. There are usually Western Bluebirds, Say's Phoebes, and Cassin's Kingbirds perched near the baseball dia-

monds. On the eastern edge of the park is a small grove of pepper trees, which usually has a Red-breasted Sapsucker. The large hill with native vegetation in the center of the park holds California Gnatcatcher, Cactus Wren, and Lesser Goldfinch. At the eastern edge of the park is a nature trail that winds its way down through a riparian area that has wintering accipiters, Red-tailed Hawk, Fox Sparrow, and Purple Finch. This trail can be very productive and is worth exploring. Look in the large stands of cape honeysuckle along the roads for hummingbirds.

The park is best reached from the Temple Avenue exit of the 57 Freeway. Drive west about four miles, past Mt. San Antonio College to Creekside Drive and turn left. The park is on your left and parking is available at the southeast corner of the park, or you can park on the street.

#### **Wingate Park, Covina**

This small park is sandwiched between an industrial park and a residen-

tial area. By far the best feature of this park is the extensive riparian area that has been relatively untouched by developers. Although species diversity is low, there is always the chance of finding something unusual. During January of 1999, a Magnolia Warbler and Dusky Flycatcher were seen in the park showing the potential of this very small urban park during the wintertime. The creek flows to the west and should be checked for rarities such as Swamp Sparrow and Winter Wren, which have been seen in the past.

The park is best reached from the Grand Avenue exit of I-10. Drive north for about three miles just past San Bernardino Road, and the park is on the left-hand side across from McDonalds. 

## **UCLA Winter Birding Class**

Owing to its tremendous geological diversity and mild climate, southern California boasts a wide array of both resident and migratory bird species. However, due to historical and current population pressures, the region also is faced with many conservation issues.

Join Audubon Society biologist Daniel Cooper as he conducts ecological investigations into the region's constantly changing bird communities. Whether censusing the massive shorebird migration along the concrete-lined Los Angeles River or monitoring the free-flying parrot colonies of the San Gabriel Valley, students in this field-oriented course learn bird-identification skills and how to collect and analyze data.

Instructor: Daniel Cooper, MS  
Biologist, National Audubon Society

UCLA: 6201 Math Sciences  
Thursday, 7:30-9:30 P.M.  
January 31 – February 21, 6 meetings

Includes two Saturday morning field trips on 2 February and 9 February and one weekend field trip: 23 - 24 February; locations to be announced in class.

Call: (310) 825-9971 to enroll.

## **LAAS TOURS**

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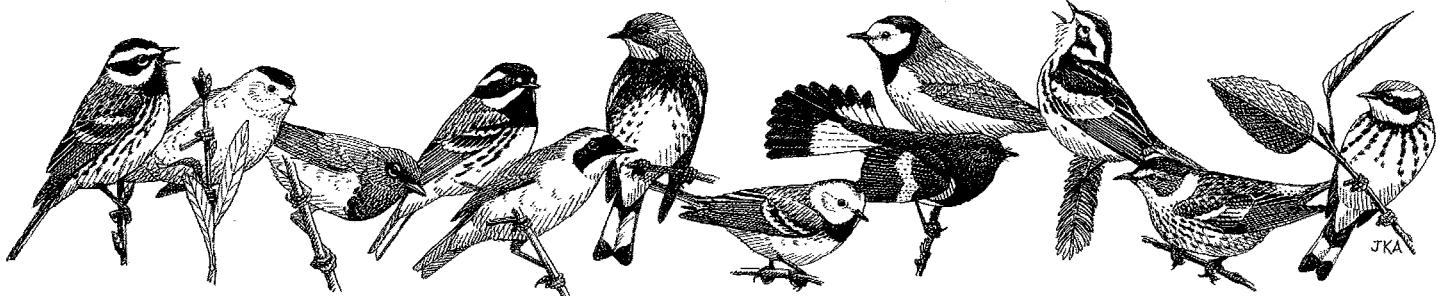
Wing your way to these stunningly beautiful countries with expert birder, author, and lecturer Derek Solomon. Optional 6-day post extension to Malawi, returning August 30, 2002.

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The best of birding and wildlife viewing in South Africa and Namibia, with renowned naturalist/birder and co-author, Professor Phil Hockey.

FOR ITINERARIES and MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Olga Clarke, Travel Director  
LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY  
2027 El Arbolita Drive  
Glendale, CA 91208-1805 USA  
phone/fax (818) 249-9511  
oclarktravel@earthlink.net



# BIRDS OF THE SEASON

by Daniel S. Cooper

**F**all is living up to its reputation as the most exciting time of year for birders in southern California. As anyone who keeps field notes or follows bird distribution knows, the fall season for birds begins back in mid-summer, as young disperse from their natal territories and scatter across the landscape. Starting in July, flycatchers, tanagers, grosbeaks, and buntings descend from the mountains and foothills and turn up in residential areas in the basin, often startling birders who are expecting only House Finches and mockingbirds. During this time of year, wholesale movement by entire species is limited to a handful of groups, including shorebirds, hummingbirds, and swallows. By August, practically everything is on the move, with numbers still building into September.

As we learn more about local movements within the general "fall migration" period, we encounter exceptions to some birding generalizations, yet have others confirmed each season. For example, sparrows are thought of as late migrants, probably because the push of super-abundant species like White- and Golden-crowned sparrows doesn't occur until the end of September or later. In actuality, Chipping and Savannah sparrows are actually migrating in decent numbers by August, and even the odd White-crowned Sparrow can turn up in early September, particularly on the desert slope. For most individuals of a given species, however, schedules are practically set in stone. One can say with near-certainty that any bluebird in lowland southern California before October will be a Western and not a Mountain, or that any small, dark swift seen here before mid-August will be a Chimney and not a Vaux's. Indeed, exceptions to these rules are in many cases much rarer than sightings of

species we tend to think of as "rarities" or "vagrants". For example, American Redstart is a pretty rare bird in southern California, but you have a vastly greater chance of encountering one in the LA Basin during any month of the year than you have of seeing a Yellow-rumped Warbler here between early June and the first week of September – even though Yellow-rumps breed less than 20 miles from downtown Los Angeles and red-starts more than 1000. One is prone to

**R**ecords of rare and unusual birds reported in this column should be considered tentative pending review by the regional editors of *North American Birds* or, if appropriate, by the California Birds Records Committee.

Send observations with details to:

#### *Birds of the Season*

Daniel S. Cooper  
The Audubon Center  
6042 Monte Vista St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90042  
Phone: (323) 254-0252  
Email: dcooper1@pacbell.net

#### *North American Birds*, Los Angeles County

Kimball L. Garrett  
Ornithology Collections Manager  
Natural History Museum of L.A. County  
900 Exposition Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90007  
e-mail: kgarrett@nhm.org

#### *California Bird Records Committee*

Guy McCaskie  
P.O. Box 275  
Imperial Beach, CA 91933-0275  
e-mail: guymcc@pacbell.net

#### To report birds for the tape, call:

Raymond Schep (323) 874-1318  
e-mail: yoohooray@cs.com

wandering – the other isn't. After years of birding, reading, and taking notes, you get the feel of what to expect and when.

But before launching into migration, there are a few nesting notes to report. Few Los Angeles observers are as tireless as Mitch Heindel, who for years has been meticulously birding the Palos Verdes Peninsula area. This August, he reported a freshly-fledged juvenile **Orange-crowned Warbler** (with feather sheaths) of the *sordida*, race endemic to the Channel Islands and Palos Verdes Peninsula, being attended by two adult birds at Banning Park in Wilmington. What's amazing is the nesting site must be in the highly-manicured trees of the park (e.g. Carobs and Chinese Elms), quite different from the native island scrub where this race evolved. He reports this is not unprecedented even for this site, and it is likely that the dense, interlocking crowns of these trees fit the bill. Another scarce southern California nester to watch for is **Pelagic Cormorant**. Unrecorded breeding on our mainland coast in modern times, a concentration of 20 birds, including apparent young-of-the-year with fresh, buff-tipped feathers, was on the rocks at Pt. Fermin on the Palos Verdes Peninsula on 24 August (MH). Whether these birds were locally-produced or arrived from nesting grounds on the Channel Islands is unknown.

Fall migration, which in mid-September is in full swing, has already produced some interesting sightings. The highlight in terms of rarity was undoubtedly a well-described **Curlew Sandpiper**, found 24 July by Mike San Miguel at the "South Base Sewer Ponds" on Edward's Air Force Base in the Kern County portion of the Antelope Valley. Nearly unknown in the U.S. a few

decades ago, a handful of these asian strays are found every year in the pacific states. It seems to move south earlier than many shorebirds, with many records of these striking, brick-red birds in July and early August.

Two other rare migrants that occur in very small numbers in our area were found. A **Ruff** along the lower Los Angeles River in Long Beach was found by Richard Barth, Kevin Larson and Carol Selvey on 1 September and remaining to 9 September (m. ob.). And a **Blackburnian Warbler**, one of the rarer eastern vagrants, was reported on 7 September by Pomona College student Josh Engel at Oak Park Cemetery in Claremont.

One of the rarest birds was one that could not be conclusively identified: a small, black and white shearwater with white under-tail coverts, suggestive of a Manx Shearwater, seen off Leo Carrillo Beach near the Ventura/Los Angeles County line on 14 July (Kimball Garrett). Yes, it happens, even to Kimball.

Other "rarities" are rare-but-regular, expected in low numbers at specific times of year. Shorebirds include two **Semipalmated Sandpipers** identified on 11 August along the lower Los Angeles River in Long Beach, the most reliable site in the county for this species (Andrew Lee). **Sabine's Gull**, which can be fairly common well offshore in September, moves through the interior in very low numbers at the same time of year, and Mike San Miguel caught up with a juvenile at Edward's Air Force Base on 8 September. Other rare-but-regular migrants include a **Cassin's Vireo** in a small wave of migrants at Peck Pit Park in El Monte on 30 August (Dan Cooper), a **Virginia's Warbler** at Banning Park on 25 August (MH) and an **American Redstart** on 9 September at Sand Dune Park in Manhattan Beach (Lori Conrad). Records of **Indigo Bunting** include a male at Hansen Dam on 15 July (KG); two on 29 July: a male at Eaton Canyon (Jon Feenstra) and a pair along the lower Los Angeles River (KL); and a female-type along the San Gabriel River in Whittier on 1 September (Larry Schmahl). Four **Summer Tanagers** were reported, including two at O'Melveny Park in the north San Fernando Valley on 17 July (Jim Hardesty) and singles in Pacific Palisades on

16 July (RB) and at Banning Park in Wilmington on 2 September (Ed Stonick). The subspecies of these birds was not determined, but observers are encouraged to note vocalizations and degree of orange/buff tone in coastal Summer Tanagers.

Very small numbers of desert/interior species engage in coastward movements during fall that are likely unrelated to "normal" north-south fall migrations. Mitch Heindel turned up several of these on and around the Palos Verdes Peninsula, including a **White-winged Dove** in Torrance on 10 September and a **Costa's Hummingbird** there on 22-23 August, the latter having come either from the desert or from the remnant coastal sage scrub band along the northern Los Angeles Basin. A **Sage Thrasher** was at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park in Wilmington on 9 September (Irwin Woldman). Two coastward **Scott's Orioles** were reported from the Palos Verdes Peninsula, one early on 27 July at the end of Forrester Dr. (Cin-Ty Lee) and another in San Pedro at Angel's Gate Park (MH). A lone "**Large-billed**" **Savannah Sparrow**, the race that breeds in the Gulf of California, dispersed northward, represented by what is likely a returning individual at Playa del Rey on 15 August (RB).

Several species were found out of range this season, such as a mid-summer **Common Murre** in alternate plumage off Leo Carrillo State Beach on 14 July (KG). Most records for our area are in winter, and well-offshore. A female **Hooded Merganser** was seen with three **Wood Ducks** along Triunfo Creek in the Santa Monica Mountains on 22 August (Brian Daniels). Though Wood Duck is known to breed in very small numbers in these drainages (*fide* Susan Hutson); the merganser was far south of its normal summer range. **White-faced Ibis** normally migrates through the interior, and an immature from July continued along the lower Los Angeles River through the period, with two more apparent "first-years" discovered along the San Gabriel River in Whittier on 2 September (Larry Schmahl). **Black Tern** follows a similar inland migration route, so a first-year bird 21-28 August along the lower Los Angeles River (RB) was a treat.

**Cattle Egret** movements away from agricultural areas of California are rather poorly understood, so the discovery of a

group of 23 along the lower Los Angeles River on 21 August (RB) suggests that they may still engage in some fall migration through our area. Normally strictly coastal, **Brown Pelicans** were found well inland along the San Gabriel River in Whittier, one on 29 July (LS) and closer to the coast along the lower Los Angeles River near the 405 Freeway (27) on 28 August (RB). Slightly out of range shorebirds include a single **Snowy Plover** along the lower Los Angeles River in north Long Beach on 21 August (KL), one of a handful of records for the site, and a **Lesser Yellowlegs** in marginal habitat at Hansen Dam on 15 July (KG). Several **Red Knots**, possibly increasing in our region, were reported this year, with one at Edward's Air Force Base on 29 July (MSM), three along the lower Los Angeles River on 25 August and another on 1 September (KL), and three at Playa del Rey on 2 September (KL). A **Chimney Swift** over Irwindale on 13 July (CTL) was unusual since this species is rarely found away from traditional summering areas in downtown Los Angeles. Another dispersing **California Gnatcatcher** was found, this time closer to home than last season's Pasadena bird, in a fennel patch at Angel's Gate Park in San Pedro on 24 August (MH). Finally, a singing **Purple Finch** along the lower Arroyo Seco near the Los Angeles/Pasadena border on 6 August is difficult to interpret, since it breeds in the foothills north of here but normally waits until October to descend into the lowlands.

Late and early birds are always exciting, and this fall they included eight **Greater White-fronted Geese** at Edward's Air Force Base on 8 September (MSM), a Black-legged Kittiwake (probably lingering from last winter!) at Playa del Rey on 2 September (KL), and an early **Wilson's Warbler** along the lower Arroyo Seco in Pasadena on 27 July (Dan Cooper). The first group of **Cedar Waxwings** was reported by Larry Schmahl in Pacific Palisades on 7 September.

Finally, some "common" birds worth noting include a concentration of 220 **Long-billed Curlew** and 340 **White-faced Ibis** in flooded agricultural fields north of Lancaster on 29 July (MSM). This area remains the last reliable site for large numbers of these two in the county, and it is encouraging to know they're still around. 

## Book Review:

### *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life & Behavior*

Edited by:

Chris Elphick, John B. Dunning, Jr., and David Allen Sibley

Illustrations by David Allen Sibley

Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2001

608 pgs. hard cover.

\$45.00

The goal of *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life & Behavior*, a companion work to the very popular *Sibley Guide to Birds*, is to provide birders at any level of skill with a concise, general reference on the biology of the birds of North America. It is envisioned as the source to which birdwatchers first turn to satisfy their ornithological curiosity. To achieve this end, the book is divided into two major parts. The first 120 pages are organized like a typical ornithology text and are devoted to a variety of topics ranging from bird form and function to conservation. The first chapter highlights the major morphological, physiological, and sensory adaptations of birds. Following this is an excellent discussion of the evolution and taxonomy of birds, including an up-to-date treatment of species concepts. Subsequent chapters consider bird habitats and distributions, and feeding, breeding, social, and learning behavior. This first part of the book concludes with a number of topics that address population issues and conservation concerns, including a short discussion on one of the newest topics in avian biology: emerging diseases.

In the larger second section, the volume takes the novel, systematic approach of presenting information on a family-by-family basis, with abundant specific examples derived from the species found in North America. Numerous authors or teams of authors were recruited to contribute their respective expertise to the brief, but informative familial accounts. Each of the 80 family treatments includes a discussion of taxonomy, food and foraging, breeding, and conservation. Where appropriate for particular families, discussions on specialized habitat, patterns or modes of flight, migratory movements, and the occur-

rence of accidental species are also included. Each family account also contains a boxed inset that provides a synopsis of taxonomic, ecological, and demographic information for members of the family worldwide. A useful glossary appears at the back of the book along with a North American species checklist; the single index includes subjects as well as English and scientific names.

In its emphasis on diversity and comparative biology at the family level, *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life & Behavior* differs in its approach from two previous popular guides, Kenn Kaufman's *Lives of North American Birds* and Paul Ehrlich et al.'s *The Birder's Handbook*, which are primarily organized as a series of species accounts.

To attract and best serve the birder, the publisher and editors emphasize their desire to provide succinct, readable text. To this end, they have kept the introductory chapters and family accounts unpunctuated by references and citations; only a few major reference sources are described in the introduction, and a list of references for the family accounts will be available on the Internet at [www.sibleyart.com](http://www.sibleyart.com). That the "Guide to Bird Life and Behavior" lacks such a set of references incorporated directly within the book, I feel, is a major drawback and detracts from the volume's ultimate usefulness. Considering the vagaries of life in the cyberworld, a list of references available on a website is not a viable substitute for a published list. I, for one, would have happily forgone the species checklist in this volume for a list of suggested readings in its stead.

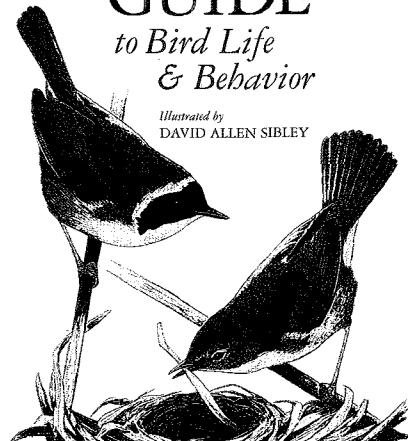
Intended as a birder's first reference to the biology of birds, this volume admirably succeeds in condensing vast amounts of technical literature into succinct topical discussions. The text is enhanced throughout with a generous infusion of strategically employed illustrations by David Sibley; these are at once informative and charming as they depict various aspects of bird diversity, form and behavior. Despite its few shortcomings, *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life & Behavior* is handsomely produced, solidly bound and well edited. It will be a welcome addition to any birder's library.

*Review by: Kathy C. Molina*

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

### *The SIBLEY GUIDE to Bird Life & Behavior*

Illustrated by  
DAVID ALLEN SIBLEY



### David Sibley! Book Signing



The author of the renowned *The Sibley Guide to Birds* (see *Western Tanager*, v. 67 (3): 6-7 for review) and the recently published *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior* will join us to sign his books.

#### Saturday, November 10

David Sibley will be at the Los Angeles Audubon Bookstore from 3-5:30 P.M. signing his new landmark book *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior*. Then he will travel to our Gull Workshop to sign books at the conclusion of the program. (Gull workshop attendees please note, books must be ordered in advance through the bookstore.) This book will be the birding gift of the season. Please call ahead to reserve your copies.

# Christmas Bird Counts

## Saturday, December 15 –

**Lancaster** – Compiler: **Nick Freeman**.

Christmas Counts are a 102-year-old tradition that serves as the perfect excuse to get together with the birds and birders that we enjoy, and meet or re-familiarize ourselves with a few of each. The Lancaster count is in its 22nd year. Sign-up for a team, and start when you want. We all get together at 12:30 P.M., and again after the count, to review sightings and swap stories. Finish counting or chase after lunch. \$5 fee. Sign-up with the compiler Nick Freeman, to learn more details. (818) 247-6172 until 10 P.M., or mnfreeman@earthlink.net.

## Sunday, December 16 –

**Malibu** – Compiler: **Larry Allen**.

Christmas Bird Counts not only provide an enjoyable day of birding and camaraderie, but also contribute in many ways to knowledge of our bird populations. The yearly monitoring of birds and habitats in the count circle can make us aware of environmental changes that might otherwise be overlooked in the day-to-day reportage of development controversies in the Santa Monica Mountains. Compilations of CBC results on regional and continental scales can provide trend data to assess the health of avian populations wintering in North America. The detection of rarities can provide insights on patterns of vagrancy for the species involved. And your county's Breeding Bird Atlas is analyzing data from all county CBCs in an attempt to assess population trends for our local resident species. Complete coverage of the count circle is important, so please join us on the 16th. Call (323) 221-2022 or e-mail larryallen@earlymusicla.org for information and a count package.

## Saturday, December 29 –

**Los Angeles** – Compiler: **Mari Johnson**.

Birdwatchers of all ages and abilities are welcome. Special opportunities include rare access to locked reservoirs. Be part of the most important citizen science project in the country. Call or email Mari Johnson. (818) 893-9100 or marijohns@earthlink.net

## Give a Special Gift Audubon Membership

As a special membership promotion, until December 31st LAAS will receive the \$15 gift membership dues for each gift you purchase.

Send your check for \$15 per membership to:  
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Please include name and address of recipient and who the gift is from.

Los Angeles Audubon appreciates your support, and the gift recipient will love the gift!

## Get Outdoors Get Involved!

Saturdays: November 3 and December 1

The first Saturday of each month Los Angeles Audubon will be sponsoring a work project at Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area in Baldwin Hills.

The park manager will arrange to have projects ready for us, with any equipment needed. Park staff will do the heavy work ahead of time but they can really use our help on a variety of projects so please come join in!

Check in at the parking kiosk about 8:00 A.M. The attendant will give you directions to the current month project, and the \$3.00 parking fee will be waived.

Hope to see you there!

## Gulls

## Gulls

# Gulls

## Saturday, November 10, 2001 –

**Gull Workshop** with **Jon Dunn** and **Kimball Garrett**, this workshop on the identification of North American gulls, will cover plumage, structure, behavior, distribution, and hybridization.

1 to 7 P.M., with a snack break.

Send \$30 and a SASE to:

LA Audubon Society

c/o Millie

7377 Santa Monica Blvd.

West Hollywood, CA 90046

(323) 876-0202

Event location: Eaton Canyon Nature Center, Pasadena. Limit: 100 signups.

## Sunday, November 11, 2001 –

**Gull Workshop Field Trip**. **Jon Dunn** and **Kimball Garrett**. Doheny State Beach in Orange County. Meet at 8 A.M. This location often boasts the largest concentration of gulls in the coastal southland. Detailed directions at the workshop. Jon and Kimball will address similar aspects of gull identification and biology as those covered in lecture. Finish by 1 P.M. Participation in the Saturday workshop is a prerequisite to for this trip. Limit: 25. Send \$35 each to LAAS with SASE as above.

## Saturday, November 17, 2001 –

**Budget Gull Field Trip**. **Nick and Mary Freeman** will lead at Doheny State Beach at 8 A.M. This trip is priced to allow budget birders to polish their new skills under quality leadership. Finish by 1 P.M. Send \$10 and a SASE to LAAS as above for directions. All welcome. Limits: max: 20, min: 5.

## Sunday, November 18, 2001 –

**Budget Gull Field Trip**.

Leader: **Larry Allen**.

Details same as Nov. 17 trip.

# WESTERN TANAGER

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## Holiday Hours at the Bookstore

For your added convenience, we will be open:  
10 A.M. to 7 P.M.  
Tuesday, November 27  
Tuesdays, December 4, 11, 18

The bookstore will be closed:

Thanksgiving, Thursday, November 22  
Christmas Day, Tuesday, December 25  
New Year's Day, Tuesday, January 1

We will be open regular hours - 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.  
Friday, November 23  
Saturday, November 24

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www.morro-bay.net/birds, which is  
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(800) 231-0592. Registration deadline is  
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encouraged as the most popular events  
fill up quickly.

The Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival  
limits field trip group sizes to maximize  
spotting and identification opportunities.  
The Festival also offers workshops aimed  
at sharpening your birding skills as well  
as outstanding evening programs. This  
year's evening programs will feature  
Sheri Williamson and Tom Wood from  
Bisbee, Arizona, both founders and  
directors of the Southeastern Arizona  
Bird Observatory. On Saturday night,  
Sheri will present "Everything You  
Always Wanted to Know About Hum-  
mingbirds (But Didn't Know Who to  
Ask)", a talk that will no doubt draw  
strongly upon the hummingbird field  
guide she is planning to release in  
December, 2001. On Sunday evening,  
Tom will turn his raptor expertise to the  
topic of the "Veracruz River of Raptors"  
phenomenon.

## FIELD TRIPS

continued from page 16

La Cienega Blvd. between Rodeo Rd. and Stocker St. After passing the entrance kiosk (\$3 parking fee), turn left (leading to the "Olympic Forest") and park in the first available spaces. Meet at 8:00 A.M.

### Sunday, November 18 –

**Ballona Wetlands.** **Bob Shanman** will be leading this trip to our nearest wetland. Meet at the Del Rey Lagoon parking lot. Take the Marina Fwy (90 W) to Culver Blvd. and turn left for a mile, turn right on Pacific Ave. The lot is on the right. Lot or street parking is usually not a problem. Three-hour walk. Telescopes helpful. Meet at 8:00 A.M.

### Saturday, December 1 –

**Baldwin Hills Clean-up.** See page 13 for details.

### Sunday, December 2 –

**Topanga State Park.** See November 4 for details.

### Sunday, December 9 –

**Whittier Narrows.** See Nov. 11 for details.

### Saturday, December 15 – **Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area in Baldwin Hills.**

See Nov. 17 for details.

### Saturday, December 15 – **Lancaster Christmas Count.**

See page 13 for details.

### Sunday, December 16 – **Malibu Christmas Count.**

See page 13 for details.

### Saturday, December 29 – **Los Angeles Christmas Count.**

See page 13 for details.

### Saturday and Sunday, January 12 and 13 –

**Salton Sea.** Leader **Nick Freeman**. For Sandhill Cranes and White-faced Ibis, meet Nick at Cattle Call Park south of Brawley to depart at 3:30 P.M. Saturday. Take Hwy 111 south to Brawley, head W through town on Main Street, then continue S on Hwy 86 (First St.) to a fairly quick right on Cattle Call Dr., continuing straight to the bottom of the hill. Sunday morning, we will meet at Carl's Jr. at Main and First Streets in Brawley, leaving there at 7:00 A.M. A good trip for Canada, Snow, and Ross' geese,

Burrowing Owl, Gila Woodpecker, and Ground- and Inca doves. Yellow-footed Gulls are possible. Anticipate mud. Bring lunch, 'scopes, and warm clothes. Registration fee \$5 to LAAS or \$7 at the Sea. No limit.

#### Reservation and Fee Events (Limited Participation) Policy and Procedure

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

If there is insufficient response, the trip will be cancelled two Wednesdays prior to the scheduled date (four weeks for pelagics). You will be so 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 answer questions about field trips. Our office staff is also available Tuesday through Saturday for most reservation services.

## PELAGIC TRIPS

### Saturday, November 17 –

**San Pedro Channel along the coastal escarpment.** This eight-hour trip departs from San Pedro at 7:30 A.M. on the R/V Vantuna. Birds seen on prior trips: Northern Fulmar; Black-vented, Sooty and Pink-footed shearwaters; Black Storm-Petrel; Pomarine Jaeger; rocky shorebirds (up to 5); Cassin's and Rhinoceros auklets. Occasionally: Common Murre; Xantus's Murrelet; Flesh-footed and Buller's shearwaters.

Leaders: **Kimball Garrett** and **Mitch Heindel**.

\$35 – tea and coffee, no galley.

### Saturday, February 23 –

**Palos Verdes Escarpment to the Redondo Canyon.** This eight-hour trip departs from San Pedro at 7:30 A.M. on the R/V Vantuna. Birds seen on prior trips: Northern

Fulmar; Short-tailed, Black-vented, Sooty and Pink-footed shearwaters; Pomarine Jaeger; rocky shorebirds (up to 5); Xantus's Murrelet, Cassin's and Rhinoceros auklets. Gray Whales are usually seen. Leaders: **Mitch Heindel** and **TBA**. \$45 – tea and coffee, no galley.

### Sunday, May 4 –

**Marina del Rey and out to sea.**

This twelve-hour trip departs from Marina del Rey at 6:00 A.M. on the R/V UCLA Seaworld. Birds seen on prior trips: Northern Fulmar, Black-vented, Sooty and Pink-footed shearwaters; Pomarine Jaeger; Sabine's Gull; rocky shorebirds (up to 5); Common Murre; Pigeon Guillemot; Xantus's Murrelet; Cassin's and Rhinoceros auklets. Leaders: **Mitch Heindel** and **TBA**. \$55 (with \$5 student discount), no galley.

#### REFUND POLICY FOR PELAGIC 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 fewer 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.

*All pelagic trips must be filled 35 days prior to sailing.  
Please reserve early.*

# EVENING MEETINGS

**Tuesday, November 13, 2001**

**"OKAVANGO – Birding Paradise"**

**Raymond Schep**

Ray will share his adventure in the unspoiled and stunningly beautiful Okavango Delta in northern Botswana.

**Meet at 7:30 P.M. in Plummer Park.**

**Los Angeles Audubon Society**

**7377 Santa Monica Boulevard**

**West Hollywood, CA 90046-6694**

**Meeting Raffle**

To increase your chances of winning, visit the LAAS Bookstore and Headquarters either on meeting day or the Saturday immediately preceding the monthly meeting and receive an extra raffle ticket to submit at the meeting.

**Tuesday, December 11, 2001**

**"The Birds of Peru"**

**Dr. James Clements**

Peru's Manu National Park with more than 1,000 species of birds will be the prime focus. From the altiplano at 14,000 feet to the lowland rainforest on the east side of the Andes at 600 feet, with dazzling displays of tanagers, cotingas, parrots, and toucans. Nine species of primates, and rare mammals such as Spectacled Bear and Jaguar can be seen.

Dr. Clements will sign copies of his newly released book, *The Birds of Peru*. This field guide includes over 1,800 species of birds with 127 color plates.

Please call the bookstore to reserve your copy today!

## F I E L D T R I P S

*Before setting out on any field trip, please call the LAAS bird tape at (323) 874-1318 for special instructions or possible cancellations that may have occurred by the Thursday before the trip.*

**Saturday, November 3 –  
Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area  
in Baldwin Hills Clean-up.**

See page 13 for details.

**Sunday, November 4 –  
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 biologist is often present. From Ventura Blvd., take Topanga Canyon Blvd. 7 miles S, turn E uphill on Entrada Rd. Follow signs and turn left into Trippet Ranch parking lot. \$2 parking fee or park on the road outside the park. Meet at 8:00 A.M.

**Sunday, November 4 –  
Huntington Central Park and Bolsa Chica.** Join leader Irwin Woldman to view vagrants and winter migrants, both

on land and water. Meet at Huntington Central Park at 8:00 A.M. Take 405 S and exit on Golden West St. Go south about 3 miles to Slater Ave. And turn left. Make an immediate right into the parking lot. Then on to Bolsa Chica. Bring lunch and fluids.

**November 10-11 and 17-18 –  
Gull Workshop.** See page 13 for details.

**Sunday, November 11 –  
Whittier Narrows.** Leader: **Ray Jillson**. View colorful resident and migrating birds, including the introduced Northern Cardinal. Take Peck Dr. off the 60 Fwy in South El Monte (just west of the 605 Fwy). Take the off ramp onto Durfee Ave. heading W (right) and turn left into the Nature Center, 1000 Durfee Ave. \$2 donation. Meet at 8:00 A.M.

**Saturday, November 17 –  
Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area  
in Baldwin Hills.** Leader: **Pat Nelson**. Trips covering landscaped parklands and natural coastal scrub habitats are designed for beginning birder's and members of the community. The park entrance is off

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

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*continued on page 15*