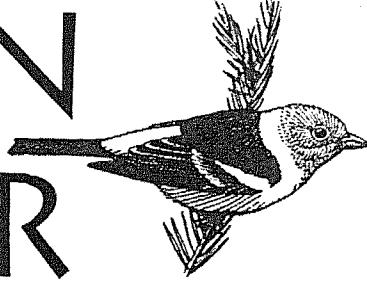


WESTERN TANAGER



Volume 70 Number 2 November/December 2003

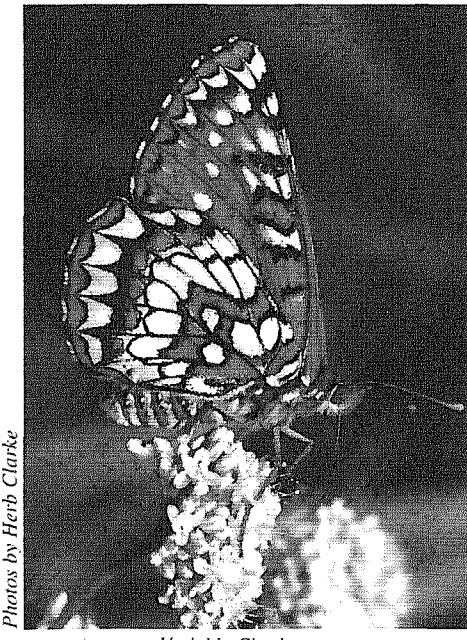
Los Angeles Audubon Society

OTHER WINGED THINGS

by Fred A. Heath

Those of you who have enjoyed watching birds (birding) over the years can't help but be aware of the increasing number of birders who have started to actively observe, identify, and photograph butterflies and dragonflies. Many of the bird festivals which have sprung up all over the country in the last dozen or so years, now have programs and field trips for butterflies and dragonflies. In addition, many museums, zoos, and private organizations have opened walk-through butterfly gardens with free-flying butterflies imported from all over the world. Even people that have no interest in natural history have noticed butterflies and dragonflies turning up on jewelry, clothing, toys, furnishing, and in advertising.

A couple of years ago I wrote an article which appeared in the *Western Tanager* (Nov/Dec 2001 Vol 68 #2) about butterfly watching. The publication of *Butterflies Through Binoculars – The West* by Jeff Glassberg a few months before had finally provided potential southern California butterflyers as well as butterflyers throughout the west with an excellent source to identify most species with relative ease. At the end of that article, I mentioned that dragonfly watching wasn't far behind. Well, a short two years later, I can report that at least in southern California, enjoyment and identification of both butterflies and dragonflies has been made even easier by a few new books which have been (or about to be) published this year.



Butterflies

The most important new book for butterfly identification is *Butterflies of North America* by Jim Brock and Kenn Kaufman (2003, Houghton Mifflin). This is the second of the Kenn Kaufman Focus Guides (the first being *Birds of North America*) and again Kenn has collaborated with Nick and Nora Bowers to digitally edit photographs of live butterflies. Since Houghton Mifflin already has relatively recent new Peterson Field Guides to eastern and western butterflies, you have to believe that they feel there is good market for butterfly field guides. This book conveniently puts the text with a range map on the page facing the pictures.

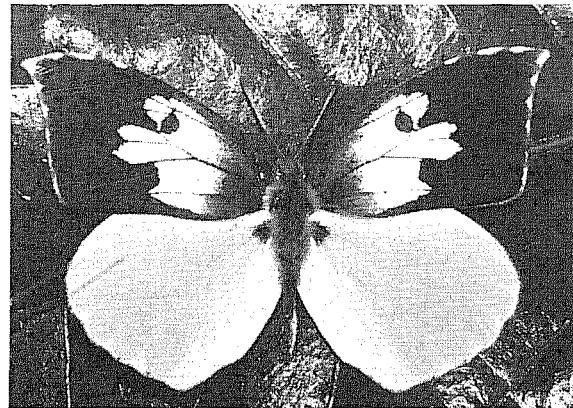
This doesn't give room for much text, but it manages to do an excellent job in conveying the salient identification points, in some cases noting significant behavior clues. Food plants (what the caterpillar eats) are also given for each species. A positive difference in this book as compared to the Glassberg *Butterflies through Binoculars* books is that the top sides of sulphurs and hairstreaks are shown. Although these butterflies generally land with wings closed (showing only the lower wing surfaces) which makes it hard to photograph the top, in life, glimpses of the top can sometimes clinch an identification. Again, probably to do with space considerations, the images are smaller than in the Glassberg books. However, they aren't too small and clearly show enough detail to identify the species.

My only criticism concerns the color reproduction. It isn't clear if the problem is in the printing or the digital editing process, but many of the butterflies are just too dull. This is especially true of those which are typically bright orange such as the American Copper or to take a local example, the Coronis Fritillary. The top surfaces of the blues such as our Acmon Blue also appear dingy compared to the real thing. If the problem is in the printing, I expect that will be fixed in future editions. At any rate, using either this book or the Glassberg book (using both is better), most butterflies encountered in southern California can be identified with no trouble.

One of the problems with starting out to identify butterflies using either of these books is that their wide coverage means the books have many butterflies which are not found in southern California. Thus one has to flip through too many pages to find your butterfly, even though the range maps in each book help make the task quicker. For a beginner, who is still not clear on the difference between a checkerspot and a crescent (or a Mormon Metalmark for that matter), it means going through many pages and species to find a few likely candidates before the butterfly takes off.

An Introduction to Southern California Butterflies, with text by Fred Heath and photography by Herb Clarke (2003, Mountain Press) which will be available about the time you receive this issue of the *Western Tanager*, should be just the thing to solve this problem. Of the roughly 160 species which occur in southern California, this book has photographs of over 100. Most of these 100 species are ones commonly encountered in southern California. Although there is a lot of good information on identification of many of our more frequently seen local species, the main thrust of the book is to introduce the fascinating world of butterflies with an emphasis on southern California. So aside from the detailed species accounts, there is lots of information on such things as butterfly life cycles, behavior, predation, as well as general information how, when, and where to watch butterflies in southern California. In addition to being an excellent starting point for butterfly watching in southern California, it also can easily be useful for the more casual observer who just wants to put a name to the butterfly which they saw along the trail or in their garden.

One of the unique features of this book is the many photographs of the butterfly food plants. As mentioned before, this is the plant eaten by the caterpillar.



California Dogface

Some butterfly species have specific food plant requirements and only use one species of plant or several closely related plants, while others can use plants from many different families. The latter species are usually more common and widespread. Knowing and recognizing a

butterfly's food plant can be a big help to finding and/or identifying a particular butterfly.

As birders, many of us tend to wander to areas outside of southern California in

our quest to add new species to our all important life lists. The same is true for the butterfly enthusiast. Southeast Arizona being relatively close and having many species of birds and butterflies which can be found no where else in the U.S. is an ideal destination. With the recent publication of *Butterflies of Arizona, A Photographic Guide* by Bob Stewart, Priscilla Brodkin and Hank Brodkin (2001, West Coast Lady Press), butterflying, in the hot afternoons when the birding slows down, is now painless. Large living images of all of the butterflies in Arizona make this book an indispensable resource anywhere in the state.

Because many of the butterflies from Mexico which rarely turn up in Arizona have been included, this book is invaluable if you are interested in observing

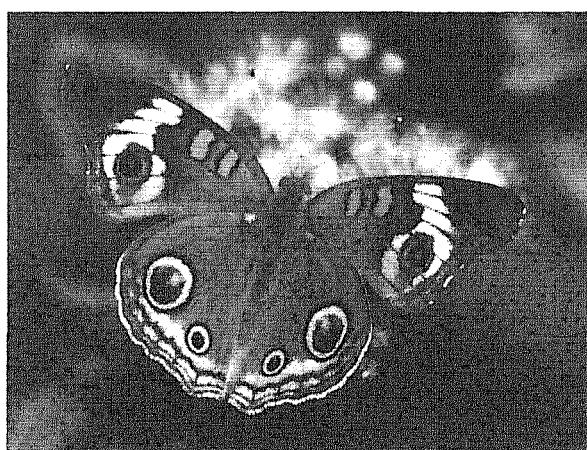
butterflies in the state of Sonora, Mexico. Since two-thirds of the true butterflies (not including skippers) in this book also occur in California, it is quite useful here as well.

The Butterflies of Cascadia, by Robert Michael Pyle (2002, Seattle Audubon Society) which covers Washington and Oregon and is useful in northern California as well, is an excellent book to add to one's library. In my opinion, it is one of the best ever local field guides. In addition to photographs of live butterflies with each species account, there are 11 color plates of butterfly specimens to help sort out the distinguishing features of similar species. A 12th plate of moths which can be mistaken for butterflies is a unique feature of this book. Although Pyle covers the normal stuff for each species such as identification and variation, brief life history with food plant, and distribution (both temporal and geographic), my favorite part is Pyle's remarks paragraphs on each species, where in his rich prose he tells something special about each butterfly. In his words, the remarks can be:

"Ecology, behavior, conservation, status, personal experience, etymology, history, aesthetics, lore, and/or anything else that I want you to know about the species."

Unlike any other field guide, the remarks section can be wonderful to just sit down and read.

A bit further afield but of interest especially to many birders who visit south Texas and Florida and want to be able to identify the butterflies, there are two books which can be helpful: *The Illustrated Checklist of Lepidoptera of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, Part 1: Butterflies*, by Charles Bordelon and Ed Knudson (2003, Texas Lepidoptera Survey) with 19 plates of large image specimens, a plate with day flying moth specimens and one plate of live butterflies is useful, although there is no identification information.



Common Buckeye

Butterflies through Binoculars – Florida, by Jeffery Glassberg, Marc C. Minno, and John V. Calhoun (2000, Oxford University Press) is an ideal guide for this state's many butterflies.

Dragonflies

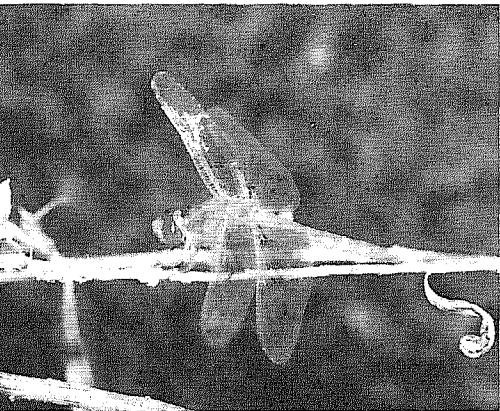
Relative to butterflies, there are very few books for dragonflies and damselflies which might be helpful to the relative novice. One problem is that dragonfly specimens tend to have their body colors fade quickly after they die. While most of the identification of butterflies is done from wing colors and patterns which don't fade as readily, the dragonfly body colors and patterns are generally the most important in identification. Thus pictures of dead dragonflies can't be used to illustrate field guides. Therefore to have a decent field guide one must have photos of live dragonflies. In general, I believe dragonflies are harder to photograph and so not as many people have gone to the trouble. Also publishers seeing much a smaller market for dragonfly books have been reluctant to publish such. A couple of early exceptions were the *Dragonflies of the Florida Peninsula, Bermuda and the Bahamas* and *Damselflies of Florida, Bermuda and the Bahamas*, both by Sidney Dunkle in 1989 and 1990 respectively (Scientific Publishers) which contain large photographs of living odonates (collective term for both dragonflies and damselflies), both males and females with authoritative and excellent text. Although a number of these dragonflies occur in California, the books are of limited use here locally.

Dragonfly identification in California took a quantum leap forward in the year 2000 with the publication of two books. *Dragonflies Through Binoculars* by Sidney Dunkle (Oxford University Press) used the familiar "Through Binoculars" format with living dragonflies found throughout North America. Although this book in theory would allow a person to identify any California dragonfly, it is quite difficult for the novice to use. The photos are smaller than one would like and the details sometimes difficult to discern. And with 307 species in North America and less than 70 in California, I would

often zip by a photo of a dragonfly I was attempting to identify because the photo didn't show well the points I had noticed. The text is excellent, so once you've got your dragonfly narrowed down to a few species, the descriptions usually can help make the final identification.

Also in 2000, *Common Dragonflies of California* by Kathy Biggs (Azalea Creek Publishing), a small pocket guide with both dragonflies and

damselflies, became available. The photographs in this book were a little larger (except for the inserts of females, which in some cases were close to useless) with helpful but very abbreviated text. I found that for the dragonflies, I would always go to this book first to find the species or one close and then back to *Dragonflies Through Binoculars* to confirm an identification. Between the two books, dragonflies in California were covered moderately well. With no other book



Flame Skimmer

existing locally, the common damselflies are covered pretty well in this book and at least you can come close to making an identification of either the exact damselfly or a species quite close. Unfortunately, many times there would be the ominous, "almost identical to this or that damselfly – told apart by appendages." Of course

in the small format of this book, the appendage details could not be discussed.

With these books in hand, assuming you were near some body of water, when the birding and/or butterflying slowed down, there were always odonates to amuse oneself. However, this year, the

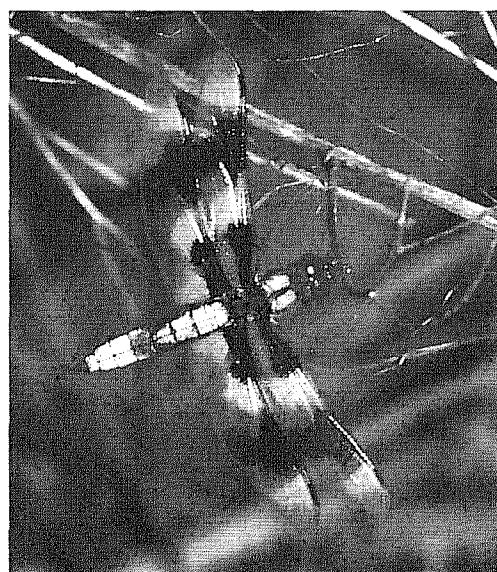
wonderful *Dragonflies and Damselflies of California* by Tim Manolis (University of California Press) was published. Better known as a bird artist, Manolis took a step backward and instead of using photographs,

painted the all the odonates of California. These renditions are beyond excellent. Not only do they show the detail necessary to completely identify any odonate in California, but the 40 plates are each works of art.

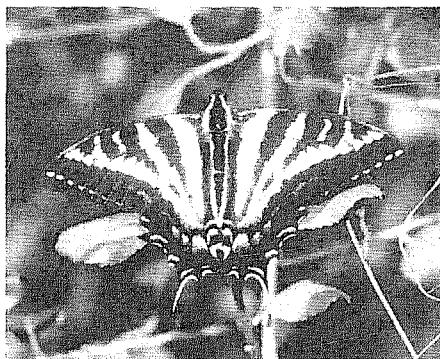
The text is also excellent, making

this one of the best field guides (of any subject) ever. He even has large detailed drawings of those diagnostic appendages mentioned prominently in the Biggs book. This is the good news. The bad news is even with close focusing binoculars, making out these minute differences in appendages is almost impossible in many of the similar damselfly species. Even really good photographs of these damselflies, by some of local expert photographers, do not give enough detail to distinguish species in many cases. So if you want to become a serious damselfly lister, I believe a net and a good hand lens (10X) are essential. Unfortunately, I look really dumb swinging a net (butterflies have been heard to snicker at my efforts in the distant past), so I'm not sure I will be among the serious listers.

Odonate identification has one more little difficulty and that is the tendency for individuals to have different colors depending on age and temperature. A dragonfly which has just gone through metamorphosis from the water living larva stage, emerges to become an adult. These newly emerged adults are called tenerals and are very dull and may stay that way for several days. Even when they attain fully adult coloration, they can change drastically with temperature, especially the blue damselflies. On warm days or during the warm part of a day, the colors can be quite bright (and more reflective), but when temperatures drop, the creature can fade to a much duller color making distinctive patterning very difficult to see.



Eight-spotted Skimmer



Pale Swallowtail

For all the difficulties, the rewards that come from learning about these fascinating creatures are well worth it. For example, with damselflies you quickly learn to tell the difference between dancers and bluets, both of which are usually some combination of bright blue with black markings. The dancer holds its wings above its body and will more likely rest on the ground or a rock, while the bluet holds its wings alongside its body and perches on vegetation. Or on a hot sunny day you might notice a dragonfly in an almost vertical position seemingly doing handstands. This is the obelisk position that minimizes body surface exposed to the sun, which helps it stay cool.

Although there are many commonalities to observing both birds and insects such as butterflies and dragonflies, it is very difficult to do both simultaneously. Your search focus for insects is usually closer and lower than for birds. If you are an avid birder and might be interested in testing the waters of butterfly or dragonfly watching, my advice to get started is pick a time, say 10 in the morning when the birding has slowed down and switch over entirely to butterflies and/or dragonflies. Once you start looking at these insects, you can't help but notice other life forms such as flies, bees, wasps, and beetles, spiders and flowers and other plants where these animals may nectar, hide or lay their eggs. I have become much more aware of the total habitat and the interconnections between plants and animals since I started watching butterflies. It has added immensely to my enjoyment of the outdoors. The one big problem now is – so many winged things, so little time . . .

Condor Killer Fined

Britton Cole Lewis, 29, the Kern County hunter who cannot tell the difference between a California Condor and a pig, was fined \$20,000, given five years probation, and ordered to hand over the gun and scope used in his February, 2003 shooting of AC-8, a 30 year old condor. Originally captured in 1986, she had been released in April 2000 as part of the Condor Recovery program and was expected to mentor the younger, captivity-bred condors released in the wild. RIP, AC-8.

Birding Symposium

The Central Valley Bird Club will host the Seventh Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium November 20-23, 2003 at the Radisson Hotel in Stockton, CA. There will be field trips, workshops, a Birding Nature Fair and Art Show with over 25 vendors selling nature related items. Workshops will include Sparrow ID with Jon Dunn and Hummingbird ID by Steve Howell, and Kimball Garrett will tell us *Why Birders Should Care About Subspecies*.

The Keynote Speakers are: Ed Harper – *A Passion for Birds*, Keith Hansen – *The Farallons*, and John Hendrickson – *California Raptors*.

Go to www.cvbs.org or contact Frances Oliver at (209) 369-2010 for schedule, registration form, etc.

Audubon Applauds Bipartisan Salton Sea Action

Audubon praised California's Legislature for legislation to restore the Salton Sea, California's largest lake and host to more than 400 bird species. After more than a year of intense negotiations, water agencies, environmental groups, Native Americans, and local communities reached a historic agreement to include Salton Sea restoration in the water transfer agreement. The bills passed September 11, with strong bipartisan support.

"Governor Davis and the Legislature deserve tremendous praise for making Salton Sea restoration a centerpiece of this agreement," said Executive Director of Audubon California Gerald Secundy. "The Salton Sea is internationally significant, providing homes for migratory birds from throughout the Americas, as well as species unique to the lower Colorado River ecosystem. Protecting the great natural heritage embodied by the Sea is all the more critical since California has lost most of the birds' traditional habitat."

Southern California's Audubon Chapters have played a critical role in raising public awareness of the Salton Sea's habitat value, and have championed protection of what has become a vitally important resource.

For the full story, www.audubon.org

Records of rare and unusual birds reported for *Birds of the Season* 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:

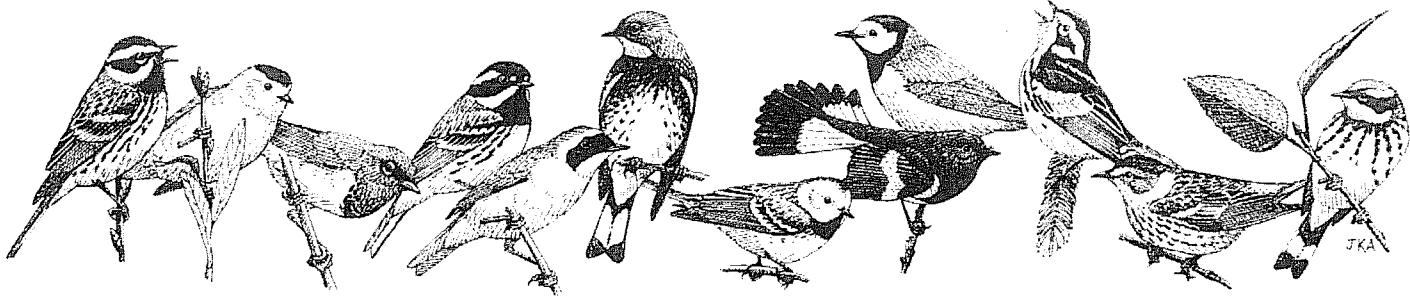
North American Birds, L.A. Co.
Kimball L. Garrett
Ornithology Collections Manager
Natural History Museum of L.A. County
900 Exposition Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90007
e-mail: kgarrett@nhm.org

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:

Jon Fisher: (818) 544-5009 (work)
e-mail: Jon.L.Fisher@disney.com



BIRDS OF THE SEASON

This is a compilation of Los Angeles County bird reports taken from the LAAS Rare Bird Alert that is recorded weekly by Jon Fisher. The birds mentioned were seen during the week indicated.

July 24

The Piute Ponds on Edwards Air Force Base were productive on June 19. A **Reeve**, a **Solitary Sandpiper**, and several **Bank Swallows** were among the birds present. All were on or near the Ducks Unlimited Ponds. Remember that Edwards Air Force Base is government property and a letter of permission is required for entry at all times.

Another **Solitary Sandpiper** on July 22 and a **Least Bittern** on July 24, were at the Ballona Freshwater Marsh.

Two **Black Swifts** were seen June 20 near Blue Ridge in the San Gabriel Mtns.

July 30

Two **Least Bitterns** continued at the Ballona Freshwater marsh in Playa Vista. **Black Swifts** continued to be reported near Blue Ridge.

On July 27 an **Indigo Bunting** was seen at Eaton Canyon in Pasadena.

August 7

A **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was found on the L.A. River south of the 405 Freeway crossing.

Two **Lucy's Warblers** were at Harbor Regional Park in Wilmington August 2 and a **Baltimore Oriole** was at Hansen Dam.

August 14

In southeastern Ventura County at Mugu Lagoon, a **Reddish Egret** was seen from the Highway 1 overlook on August 14. The **Semipalmated Sandpiper** continued through August 9 on the L.A. River. A **Pectoral Sandpiper** was present on August 10.

August 28

A **Reddish Egret** was at Ormond Beach near Port Hueneme on August 23. The bird was apparently in the area since at least August 19.

Two **Baird's Sandpipers** and a **Solitary Sandpiper** were at McGrath on August 27. A **Virginia's Warbler** was at El Dorado Park in Long Beach on August 23. An immature **Northern Parula** was at McGrath in Ventura on August 24.

September 4

In Ventura County, a **Reddish Egret** continued at Ormond Beach near Port Hueneme on August 31. Another **Reddish Egret** was at Point Mugu near the rifle range the same day.

A **Stilt Sandpiper** was at the Santa Clara River Estuary (aka McGrath) over the weekend. An exciting find at the estuary was a **White Wagtail** seen on Monday September 1. Up to four **Baird's Sandpipers** were seen here as well.

At a water retention basin in the Antelope Valley along Avenue G, a variety of shorebirds were seen from Saturday through Monday. These included a **Solitary**, a **Baird's**, and two **Stilt** sandpipers.

A **Stilt**, a **Solitary**, and three **Baird's Sandpipers** were along the L.A. River north of Rosecrans on September 4. On August 30, there were two **Lucy's Warblers** along the L.A. River. One **Pygmy Nuthatch** was out of place at Sand Dune Park in Manhattan Beach on August 31.

September 12

Three **Hooded Mergansers** were at Lake Hollywood on September 8. Single **Stilt Sandpipers** were seen above both Willow Street and Rosecrans along the L.A. River.

A **Semipalmated**, two **Stilt**, and three **Pectoral** sandpipers were among a variety of shorebirds still present through September 7, at a water retention basin along Avenue G, in the Antelope Valley. Single **White-Winged Doves** were in Monterey Park on Sunday and at Madrona Marsh in Torrance on September 9. A **Black-backed Wagtail** was found and observed briefly on the L.A. River near the Compton Street crossing on September 10. Unfortunately the bird disappeared soon after being found, but was refound in late September. **Pectoral**, **Baird's** and **Semiplamated** sandpipers were present along the river just south of Compton.

September 18

A **Northern Parula** was reported on September 14 at Torrance Park in Torrance. A **Reddish Egret** continues at Mugu Lagoon in southeastern Ventura County. On September 16, there were three **Pectoral** and seven **Baird's** sandpipers along the L.A. River south of Artesia Blvd. Two additional **Pectoral Sandpipers** were seen north of Compton Blvd. A **Black-and-white Warbler** was at Big Sycamore Canyon in Ventura County on September 17.

Bird Tape

(323) 874-1318

Jon Fisher records the Bird Tape. Please report interesting bird sightings to him at:

Jon Fisher
(818) 544-5009 (work)
JonF60@hotmail.com

NEWS FROM THE BOARD . . .

Board members, past-President Richard Epps, Executive Secretary Garry George, 2nd VP Pat Heirs, and member Cheryl Epps, attended the National Audubon Society Board meeting in Los Angeles the weekend of September 6-7, as guests of National Audubon. The NAS Board meets three times a year and it was the first meeting in L.A. in a decade.

Saturday morning was a bird walk at restored Ballona Wetlands for National Board members led by California Audubon biologist Dan Cooper. Dan distributed a handout on the history and importance of this 500 acre natural wetlands in Los Angeles County. The handout gave the history of the National Audubon Society Education Center program at the wetlands which has served 32,000 children in educational field trips over the last fourteen years. The program was developed by National Audubon's Melanie Ingalls, Dan Kahane (both formerly with Los Angeles Audubon), and with L.A. Audubon's then Education Chair Pat Little, and funded yearly by Los Angeles Audubon (from an endowment from Johnny Mercer Foundation) and Santa Monica Bay Audubon, among others. We were

inspired by the extraordinary work of these past Board members of Los Angeles Audubon and those accomplishments renewed our support of our new Education program in development by VP and Education Chair Dexter Kelly and brand new Education Coordinator Robin Gose. National Audubon Board members got their inspiration from a new bird for their life lists: a male Orange Bishop perched in the wetlands (introduced but established)! Also, by the three Soras that walked out of the reeds in plain view.

Saturday's open Committee meetings included Education/Centers, Science, State and Chapter Programs, and Public Policy.

The Science Committee presented reports by scientists leading restoration projects in agricultural fields in the San Joaquin Valley and on California islands. Scientist Daniel Klem, Jr. reported that over one billion songbirds are lost per year to bird-glass collisions. Mr. Klem, who has been researching this conservation issue for 30 years at Mulhernberg College in Pennsylvania reported that simply moving your bird feeder to within three feet of your windows or beyond 36 feet would reduce bird strike considerably.

The State and Chapters Program Committee programs presented a review of National Audubon conservation real estate projects including the purchase of 2,440-acre Sprague Ranch in Kern River Preserve, the Paul Wattis Sanctuary in the Sacramento Valley, and the donation of China Camp State Park near San Rafael, all in California. Other properties were in South Carolina, Connecticut, and Texas, and all purchases were approved by the Board of Directors in the meeting the next day. New California Audubon Director Jerry Secundy presented a program on work throughout California. Lynn Tennefoss, VP of Chapter Services, gave an overview of the communications networks between Chapters, National, and State offices.

Education/Centers Committee focused on the new Audubon Center at Debs Park in Los Angeles and the outreach to the Latino community. The reports were given by Debs Park staff Elsa Lopez, Darryl Ramos-Young, and Melanie Ingalls.

Public Policy Committee reported on increased efforts in Washington, D.C.

The afternoon Board Forum included a presentation by the Chapters Ad Hoc

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TAKE BACK AUDUBON – SEEKS PROXIES

As many Auduboners are aware, the National Audubon Society has made changes in its relationship with local Chapters that have significantly impacted Chapter finances, and the role of the Audubon grassroots in our organization.

In 2000, the NAS Board of Directors changed the long-standing policy of sharing membership dues with Chapters. Under the new policy that will be fully implemented this year, the dues share will drop to near zero for most Chapters. This loss of revenue has forced Chapters to cut back on newsletters and to reduce their conservation and education activities – the most effective activism in all of Audubon.

In 2001, the NAS Board enacted a new Chapter Policy over the written objections of 74 Chapters and over 88 Chapter leaders who signed on to a letter urging the Board to reconsider this policy. The letter asked NAS to engage in a true dia-

logue over this document and to seek a policy "that meets the needs of ALL of Audubon, including Chapters".

At the 2002 Annual Meeting, the NAS leadership voted down resolutions brought by Chapter members to reform the governance of NAS by providing for access to information, competitive elections, and a greater voice for Audubon members and Chapters.

In addition, National Audubon has embarked on a major effort to establish hundreds of Audubon Centers, which many Chapter leaders fear will ultimately replace Chapters by draining funds and volunteers from local conservation work. A number of Chapters have already had serious conflicts with NAS over this issue.

In response to these actions by NAS, a grassroots organization, Take Back Audubon (TBA), has sprung up, whose mission is "to restore a true partnership

between the independent Chapters and the National Audubon Society through a real voice in the NAS organization and in all decisions that affect Chapters". To date, 37 Audubon Chapters and over 100 Chapter leaders have endorsed Take Back Audubon.

Presently, TBA is engaged in an effort to elect an alternate slate of candidates to the NAS Board of Directors at this year's Annual Meeting, December 6, 2003. They are seeking proxies from Audubon members to bring to the meeting to vote for this slate, and to support resolutions that will be presented to democratize Audubon and to restore the Chapter dues share.

The slate is made up of Chapter leaders that will give Audubon members a choice, by offering candidates that will stand up for the interests of local Chapters.

continued on next page

The TBA candidates are:

Charles Bragg, Santa Monica Bay Audubon Society
(CA); (310) 454-9662; cgbbraggjr@worldnet.att.net
Marsha Cannon, Madison Audubon Society
(WI); (608) 251-1276; mpeannon@charter.net
John Gallagher, Clark County Audubon Society
(OH); (937) 323-0782; jfg4@msn.com
Andrew Mason, Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society
(NY); (607) 652-2162; AndyMason@earthling.net
Cary Meister, Yuma Audubon Society
(AZ); (928) 782-3552; cwm4@mindspring.com
Pat Rasmussen, Leavenworth Audubon Adopt-a-Forest
(WA); (509) 548-7640; patr@crcwnet.com
Tony Wagner, Buffalo Audubon Society
(NY); (716) 754-4231; twagner@adelphia.net
Darrel Whipple, Willapa Hills Audubon Society
(OR); (503) 556-9838; dwhipple@columbia-center.org
Jennifer Wilson-Pines, North Shore Audubon Society
(NY); (516) 767-3454; jwpines@juno.com

In addition, TBA is endorsing this year's regionally-nominated Chapter candidates:

Ione Werthman, Audubon Society of Omaha (NE)
John Whittle, Golden Triangle Audubon Society (TX)
Steven Zimmerman, Juneau Audubon Society (AK)

Biographies of the candidates, copies of the proposed resolutions, and background information on Take Back Audubon can be found at www.smbas.org/tba.

To support this Audubon Chapter effort, complete the proxy and return it by November 30, 2003 to:

John F. Gallagher
121 Larchmont Road
Springfield, Ohio 45503

Members are also asked to not return the NAS proxy that will be arriving in a few weeks.

For further information, please visit the TBA web site (above), or contact any of the TBA candidates.

Photo copy the Proxy to preserve your *Western Tanager*.

PROXY

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS, that I, the undersigned, a member of NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC., do hereby constitute and appoint Marsha Cannon, John F. Gallagher, Andrew L. Mason, and Darrel K. Whipple, and each of them, with full power of substitution, my attorneys and agents for me and in my name, place and stead, to vote as my proxy the number of votes I should be able to cast if then personally present at the Annual Meeting of NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC., to be held in Cincinnati, Ohio, on Saturday, December 6, 2003, or at such other place and time as said Annual Meeting may be held, and at any adjourned meeting thereof as follows:

(a.) For the election of directors for the terms expiring in 2006, or until their successors are elected; and

(b.) In their discretion, for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this _____ day of _____ Two Thousand and Three.

Signed _____
(must be signed to be valid)

Address _____

Name _____
(please print name)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING PROXY

1. Insert date of signing.
2. Print name exactly as membership is carried and shown on your magazine label.
You must be a National Audubon Society member in good standing, as of October 17, 2003 in order to vote.
3. Proxy to be signed by person in whose name membership is carried.
If carried in two names or as Mr. & Mrs., either party can sign.
4. Show current address and zip code.
5. SIGN ONLY ONE PROXY FORM. DO NOT SIGN ANY OTHER PROXY FORM YOU MIGHT RECEIVE.
HOWEVER, IF YOU HAVE ALREADY SIGNED A PROXY FORM,
THIS FORM WILL SUPERSEDE ANY EARLIER FORM.
6. Return signed proxy form by NOVEMBER 30 to: John F. Gallagher, 121 Larchmont Road, Springfield, Ohio 45503.

Committee study of Chapter feedback identifying the most important priorities as: 1) communication and 2) financial support. This was disputed by other Regional Directors elected by Chapters who felt that financial support was by and far the most important issue. The Committee revealed the policy by National to phase out dues share entirely in 2005 and initiate financial support by a process of competitive, matching grants for Chapters for specific conservation projects. Some Regional Directors objected that Chapters run by volunteers are disadvantaged in this process because they could not hire grant writers. Financial support to Chapters and Chapter input into National policy continues to be the most controversial issue for all of Audubon.

Sunday morning, NAS Board members took a bird walk at Harbor Park where National Audubon and Palos Verdes Audubon are in the process of partnering in a park center.

Committee meetings on Sunday morning included a Regional Directors Meeting where financial support again was the number one controversial issue. The nine Regional Directors are elected by the Chapters to serve on the 34 member Board of NAS. Charles Kahle, President of Seattle Audubon, is the Western Regional Director.

Sunday's open NAS Board meeting was held in a large hall with the NAS Board seated at microphones in a large U with the center of the U filled with Chairman Donal O'Brien, President John Flicker, and incoming Chairperson Carol Browner with their backs to the guests. A six-month report by the Ad Hoc Committee on Partnership with BirdLife International recommended further study priming the most heated outburst of the two days by Science Committee Chairman Jerry Bertrand. He chastised the Board for their lack of support for international programs in light of the fact that migrating songbirds only spend three months of the year in the U.S. and nine months in other countries, and warned that Audubon's relationship with neo-tropical migrant top scientists such as Robert Ridgely was at stake. His impassioned speech brought the audience to the only cheers of the two days.

Regional Director Dave Tylka from the Midwest left the Board in frustration

at the lack of progress by the Ad Hoc Chapters Committee but declined to give a speech when prompted by the Chairman. Western Regional Director Charles F. Kahle reported that 10% of the Audubon Chapters in the Western Region now support Take Back Audubon. TBA's leader and Santa Monica Bay Audubon Board member Charles Bragg handed written materials to the Board of resolutions and candidates proposed by TBA for the NAS Board meeting where new Board members will be elected.

Following the Board meetings, some Board members of National and California Audubons left for a two day birding trip to Salton Sea, a major project of NAS.

I was energized and impressed with the presentations of conservation and restoration work by National and State Audubons. I was especially pleased to spend some personal time with National and California Audubon staff and Boards and appreciated the opportunity to put a face and personality to a name, and to talk about birding and conservation issues. It was a relief not to focus entirely on the divisive issue of financial support to Chapters and see a bigger picture. The next NAS Board meeting is in Cincinnati in December.

The By-Laws Committee consisting of Garry George (Chair), Jean Brandt, Dexter Kelly, and Pat Heirs completed two months work writing updates to the By-Laws. These updates were emailed to the Board for review two weeks in advance of the September Board meeting, and suggestions by the Board were incorporated in the final draft. By unanimous vote, the Board approved and recommends the By-laws updates to the Members. The vote on the By-laws updates, which are available at Chapter Headquarters in Audubon House and on the website www.laadubon.org under ABOUT US, BY-LAWS, PROPOSED BY-LAWS, is at the meeting Tuesday, October 14 and will be reported in the next issue of *Western Tanager*.

Be sure and check the website for front page news of L.A. Audubon field trips, travel, and the NEWS sections for events and alerts from other organizations.

Garry George
Executive Secretary

WESTERN TANAGER

Published by
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Annual membership in both societies is \$35 per year and \$20 for new members for their first year. Members receive the *Western Tanager* newsletter and *Audubon* magazine, a national publication. Chapter Only memberships are \$20, \$35, \$50, \$100, and \$250. Call Audubon House for details.

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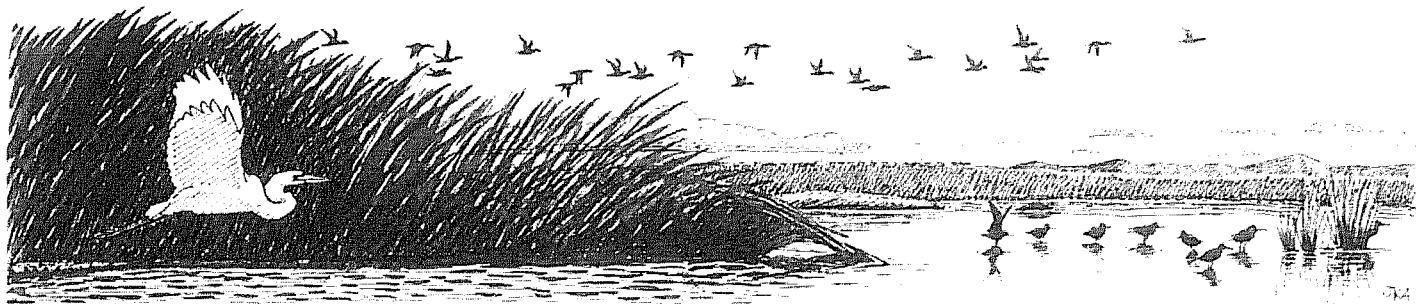
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CONSERVATION CONVERSATION

by Sandy Wohlgemuth

NOTES:

THE NAVY LOSES ONE: In one of the most exciting environmental victories of the year, a federal judge has denied the U.S. Navy's plan to deploy its high intensity LFA sonar system throughout most of the world's oceans. The use of sonar to detect the presence of submarines unfortunately can destroy the hearing of marine mammals and sea turtles, affecting their orientation so that they may leave the water and perish. NRDC, the 550,000-member Natural Resources Defense Council, brought the Navy to court and Judge LaPorte ordered the Navy to negotiate with NRDC on a possible plan to test the system in a limited area. A significant victory, but hardly the end of the road. The Navy may appeal the ruling and the Bush administration is always looking for opportunities to get exemptions from environmental laws for the Defense Department. (Los Angeles Audubon for many years has been an enthusiastic supporter of NRDC.)

IS THIS A WINNER? International Paper Company (IP) is the largest private landowner in the United States. Nature-Serve is an alliance of non-profit scientific research groups. IP and NS have just signed an agreement. NatureServe will be doing ecological inventories of the land and helping IP develop plans to harvest trees without harming fragile species and ecosystems. NS says this is "a historic step in a growing movement of private landowners to protect their forests, in many cases more vigorously than the Endangered Species Act would require." IP said they "chose to make such a sweeping agreement and allow conservation

biologists full access to their land and information because they believe it is what the public and their buyers want."

ENDANGERED PROTECTION

AFFIRMED: A federal appeals court has decided that the U.S. Forest Service has the authority to protect endangered Chinook salmon and other fish at risk by maintaining water supply in irrigation ditches that would dry up otherwise. This is a major defeat for the Pacific Legal Foundation which has been opposing the right of federal agencies to protect species listed under the Endangered Species Act. The Foundation was a creature of James Watt, Interior Secretary under Ronald Reagan. Watt is responsible for Gale Norton's education as our current Interior Secretary, who, if memory serves, has put in time with the Legal Foundation.

LOGGING WILL DOUBLE WITH

SETTLEMENT: Timber giants and their buddy, George Bush, for many years have been upset with environmentalists taking the corporations to court or organizing pickets at the scene of the clear-cut along with the undesirable reports in the media. Recently the administration has doubled the permissible take in public forests west of the Cascades, including old-growth trees. Earthjustice says that the new ground rules will "go back in time and ignore the legal decisions and body of science that brought us to this point and will spark a new round of logging protests and activist lawsuits." (Earthjustice, a powerful and highly successful group of environmental lawyers, is supported yearly by LAAS.)

SWAINSON'S HABITAT COST SOARS:

Sacramento County has tripled the fees that developers must pay as mitigation for destroying habitat for threatened Swainson's Hawks. The vote to raise the mitigation fee from \$750 to \$2,833 for every acre destroyed came after the Nature Conservancy said that "it would no longer administer the habitat conservation program if the fee was not raised." Soaring land prices had rendered the old fee, which had not changed in five years, "grossly inadequate." (Sacramento Bee, 8-20)

SNOWMOBILES AGAIN?

When we last discussed snowmobiles in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, Congress had thrown a grenade into the efforts of our big environmental organizations by approving the administration's goal of permitting 66,000 vehicles to zoom through the snow, fouling the air and scaring the wildlife. The rationale for the Bush bureaucrats was the promise of the manufacturers to upgrade the motors of their machines so that all the bad features would magically disappear. The L.A. Times (9/4) sported a big headline in the first section of the paper, **NEW SNOWMOBILES EMIT MORE POLLUTION IN TESTS.** So the two companies that build the majority of the toys were unable to meet the tests – conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency! A National Park Department leader is quoted as saying, "The important truth is that when you believe you have an administration captive to your economic interest, you will press your advantage."

FIELD TRIPS

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.

Sunday, November 2 –

Topanga State Park. Ken Wheeland and Chris Tosdevin will lead participants through this diverse coastal mountain area. An ideal trip for a beginning birder or someone new in the area. From Ventura Blvd., take Topanga Canyon Blvd. 7 miles S, turn E uphill on Entrada Rd. Follow the signs and turn left into Trippet Ranch parking lot. From PCH, take Topanga Cyn. Blvd. 5 miles to Entrada Rd. Parking \$2. Meet at 8:00 AM.

Saturday, November 8 –

Ventura Marina toward and past **San Miguel Island** on the fast catamaran M/V Islander. Nine hour trip departs from Ventura at 8:00 AM and returns by 5:00 PM. After dropping off campers on Santa Cruz Island, we have the boat to ourselves, and head toward the 1000 fathom water about 10 miles from San Miguel Island. Birds seen this time of year: Northern Fulmar; Black-vented, Sooty, and Pink-footed shearwaters; Leach's Storm-Petrel; South Polar Skua; Pomarine and Parasitic jaegers; rocky shorebirds (up to five); Common Murre; Cassin's and Rhinoceros auklets. Occasionally: Craveri's Murrelet. Rarities: Flesh-footed and Buller's shearwaters; Black-footed Albatross.

Leaders: **Kimball Garrett, David Pereksta, Michael J. San Miguel, Bernardo Alps.**

\$95 – Limited snack type galley on board.

Sunday, November 9 –

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 8:15 AM.

Saturday, November 15 –

Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area. Leaders: **Eric and Ann Brooks.** This trip covers landscaped parkland and natural coastal scrub habitats, and is paced for beginning birders and members of the Baldwin Hills community. The park entrance is off of 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 AM.

Sunday, November 16 –

Bonelli Regional Park. Leader **Rod Higbie.** A pleasant walk through lakeside, coastal sage, mixed woodland, and riparian habitats. Birds regularly seen include California Gnatcatcher, Cactus Wren, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Golden Eagle, Hooded Merganser, Lawrence's Goldfinch, and 200 other species are also possible. From L.A., take 10 or 210 Fwy east towards San Dimas onto the stretch of the 210 that curves south. Proceed N from the 10, or S along the 210 to the Via Verde exit just N of the 10/57/210 interchange (at the bottom of Kellogg Hill). If coming from the S, be alert that it comes up fast. Proceed right off the ramp onto Via Verde to the "Park and Ride" lot. We will meet here at 8:00 AM to carpool since there is a \$6.00/car park entrance fee. Rod will continue after lunch, if there is interest. There are picnic tables and facilities. Bring lunch, if you plan to bird into the afternoon.

Sunday, November 23 –

Newport Back Bay. Leader: **Mary Freeman.** We'll look for rails flushed out by the 6.8 foot high tide, as well as Royal Tern and California Gnatcatcher. Take the 405 Fwy S to Jamboree Blvd. going SW toward the ocean. Turn right on Bristol St., then take a left on Irvine Ave. Turn left on a small street called University Drive. Park at the end, walk down the hill, over the bridge, and to the end of the boardwalk. Meet here at 7:30 AM (high tide) for a full day in the area. Bring lunch. 'Scopes helpful.

Saturday, November 29 –

West Antelope Valley. Leader: **Jean Brandt.** Always popular, with possible winter raptors including Ferruginous, Rough-legged, and multi-flavored Red-tailed hawks, Prairie Falcon and Merlin, as well as Mountain Bluebird and Mountain Plover all possible. Take Hwy 14 N to Avenue S (next to Lake Palmdale). Drive into the Park-and-Ride just to the east. Meet at 8:00 AM at the W end of the lot. Bring lunch for a full day of fun in the fields. Finish at Quail Lake, and return to L.A. via the 5 Fwy. No fee, no reservation. 'Scopes and FRS radios helpful.

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 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 PM. to answer questions about field trips. Our office staff is also available Tuesday through Saturday for most reservation services.

REFUND POLICY FOR PELAGIC TRIPS

If a participant cancels 31 days or more prior to departure, a \$4 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.*

Sunday, December 7 –

Topanga State Park. Leaders: Ken Wheeland and Chris Tosdevin. Meet at 8:00 AM. See November 2 listing for details.

Sunday, December 14 –

Whittier Narrows. Leader: Ray Jillson. Meet at 8:15 AM. See November 9 listing for details.

Sunday, December 14 –

Malibu Christmas Count. Contact compiler **Larry Allen** to participate in this well-attended and impressively productive count. Included in count blocks are oak and sycamore-lined canyons and shoreline. Contact Larry at: (323) 221-2022 or larry.w.allen@californialink.net.

Saturday, December 20 –

Lancaster Christmas Count. Contact compiler **Nick Freeman** if you want a chance to see Rough-legged Hawk, longspurs, Mountain Plover, Common Raven (somewhat more likely) in this fairly agricultural corner of the county. Network and reacquaint at lunch, and chase or visit Piute Ponds afterwards, as time permits. Contact Nick at: (818) 247-6172 or mmfreeman@earthlink.net.

Sunday, January 4 –

Topanga State Park. Leaders: Ken Wheeland and Chris Tosdevin. Meet at 8:00 AM. See November 2 listing for details.

Saturday, January 10 –

East Antelope Valley. Leaders: Jerry Dunn and Scott Harris. Beyond 50th Street East is uncharted territory for all but a few birders. However, Scott has DFG oversight of this area, and Jerry lives here; so they know that Mountain Plover, LeConte's Thrasher, raptors, and other Antelope Valley specialties are often easier to find in the far eastern reaches of the Valley. Take Hwy 14 N to Avenue S (next to Lake Palmdale). Drive into the Park-and-Ride just to the east. Meet at 8:00 AM at the W end of the lot. Bring lunch for a full day of fun in the field. No fee, no reservation. 'Scopes and FRS radios helpful.

Saturday, January 17 –

Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area. Leaders: Ann and Eric Brooks. Meet at 8:00 AM. \$3 entry fee. See November 15 listing for details.

Sunday, January 18 –

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area. Leader: **Kris Ohlenkamp**. "Freeway close" morning of birding. Kris has led this walk on-and-off for 20 years, noting 200 species, and averaging 60-65 per walk. Take the 405 Fwy N into the San Fernando Valley, turn W on Burbank Blvd. and N on Woodley Ave. to the second right, which is marked "Wildlife Area". Turn here and park in the lot at the end. Meet at 8:00 AM, and bird until about 11:30 AM.

Sunday, January 18 –

Ballona Wetlands. **Bob Shanman** will be leading this trip to our nearest wetland and adjacent rocky jetty. Good spot for Surfbird, Black Oystercatcher, gulls and hopefully Large-billed Savannah Sparrow. 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. 'Scopes helpful. Meet at 8:00 AM.

Saturday and Sunday,

January 24 and 25 – Salton Sea. Leader: **Nick Freeman**. Yellow-footed Gull, Ruddy Ground-Dove, Stilt Sandpiper all possible. Fee: \$5. No Limit, but sign up with SASE for more details. Meet at 9:30 AM Saturday. More details in January *Western Tanager*.

Christmas Counts

Once again, it is time to count and be counted. Each bird can only be counted once, but that needn't limit you. L.A. Audubon provides three opportunities for you to band together and count every feathered thing in sight! Many of you will find waking up early for multiple counts easier in 2003, because the Malibu and Lancaster Counts fall on different weekends:

Malibu CBC –

Sunday, December 14

Compiler: **Larry Allen** (323) 221-2022 larry.allen@genesis1st.com

Lancaster CBC –

Saturday, December 20

Compiler: **Nick & Mary Freeman**, (818) 247-6172 mnfreeman@earthlink.net

Los Angeles CBC –

Date TBA - check the website

Compiler: **Raymond Schep**, (310) 278-6244 yoohooray@yahoo.com

If you doubt your birding skills, we'll find you a buddy. If you've got a team, we'll assign you an area. The birding is great fun and with everyone there so is lunch; get reacquainted with old friends and meet new ones!

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- For itinerary, contact:
- Olga Clarke, Travel Director, Los Angeles Audubon Society
- Ph/Fax: (818) 249-9511 e-mail: oclarketravel@earthlink.net

EVENING MEETINGS

Meet at 7:30 PM in Plummer Park
7377 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, CA 90046-6694

Tuesday, November 11

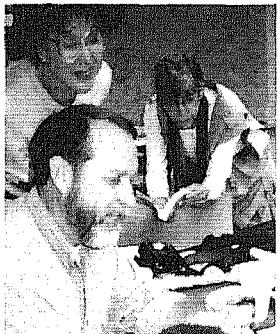
Bernardo Alps
Baja Adventures



Bernardo Alps is staff photographer for the San Gabriel Valley Newspaper Group and serves as naturalist on natural history trips for the American Cetacean Society, the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium, Condor Cruises, and the Los Angeles Audubon Society. Come and join Bernardo as he explores the Baja California peninsula in a slightly different manner – he will travel by boat. This will give us an opportunity to look for some of the ocean creatures that are difficult to see from shore, like albatrosses and murrelets. He will also visit some of the islands with unique flora and fauna where you can walk among elephant seals, explore a mangrove estuary, and touch gray whales from a boat.

Tuesday, December 9

Mickey Long
A Bird With A Band is Worth . . .



Beginning at Eaton Canyon, Pasadena in 1985, Mickey Long has conducted a bird banding program at several of the Los Angeles County natural area parks. Using slides of birds in the hand and the banding process, Mickey will discuss some of the knowledge that can result from bird banding projects, especially if they are continued for years at specific localities.

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