

WESTERN TANAGER



Volume 73 Number 2 November/December 2006

Los Angeles Audubon Society

Sanford "Sandy" Wohlgemuth 1916 - 2006 The Conscience of Audubon

by Dexter Kelly

Sandy Wohlgemuth has passed on. But his presence in our Society is as strong as ever. His vigorous and articulate advocacy put conservation at the top of our agenda. He never let us ignore or forget the constant threats our natural environment faces, and he told us what we have to do to defend it. As an activist, he showed by example how to fight for nature in our own neighborhoods. He was, and remains, the conscience of the Los Angeles Audubon Society.

Sandy was enticed into birding by a Western Tanager - a bird, not the newsletter. But it took a while. Born and raised in Brooklyn NY, he showed little interest in birds while growing up in the city. He became a pharmacist even before his service in World War II. When the Wohlge-muths (including Marge and their three sons) settled in the San Fernando Valley, they soon discovered California's outdoor attractions, and spent may weekends and vacations camping out. One day in 1963, Sandy was seated at a

table in Buckhorn campground when a male Western Tanager alighted on the table within arm's length and proceeded to eat a shoe-string potato. Sandy was transfixed, and got hooked on birding.

Marge and Sandy joined L.A. Audubon in 1964, and both became volunteers. In 1970, Sandy became the compiler of the Los Angeles Christmas Bird Count, and wrote vivid accounts of it for the next six

years. He also fought to protect his favorite birding spot, showing up at public hearings to protest the installation of a sewage treatment plant next to Tapia Park. Sandy got on the Board of Directors in 1973. By then, Marge was volunteering at Audubon House, where she worked for almost two decades as assistant bookstore manager, house chair, and executive secretary, before illness kept her at home. She died in 1994.

Sandy became the president of LAAS in July 1976, and for the next three years he was occupied with the administrative duties of running the Society. He had few opportunities to write, but was actively involved in environmental issues, in particular the development of the new ponds and natural area in the Whittier Narrows. This resulted from a victorious lawsuit brought by LAAS, and concluded by a favorable judgment from Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas. By 1979, when Sandy concluded his presidential term, he described us thus: "We're birders, conservationists, lovers of the outdoors, and optimists".

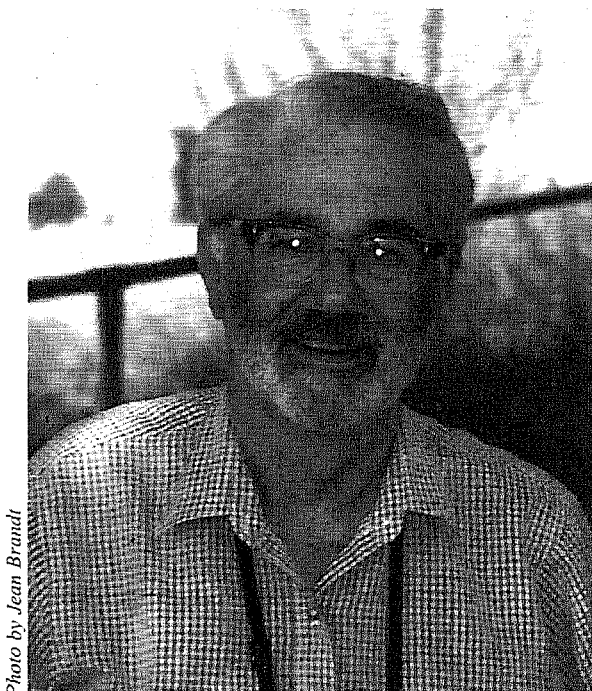


Photo by Jean Brandt

Sandy Wohlgemuth

That year, Jean Brandt assumed the presidency, and Sandy published his first *Conservation Conversation* in the September Tanager. It was a clear and comprehensive description of the threat to Mono Lake. This marked the beginning of a long struggle to halt the water diversions that were starving the lake. This issue was soon joined by others; saving the Ballona Wetlands from development, the Malibu Lagoon from neglect and pollution, and, at the national level, the ascension of Reagan and James Watt and their war on the environment.

Throughout all these hard times, Sandy's columns kept us informed in detail about the threats and what we could do about them. He had a knack for putting the problem in the big picture context, national and historical, before zeroing in on the sordid details and showing what we had to do to fight back. He combined solid scientific knowledge with a keen sense of the socio-economic and political ramifications of environmental issues. And he could write, with great force and clarity, and a knack for English rhetoric. Gifted as he was as a writer, Sandy obviously put in much hard work in research and analysis for his articles. The quality of his work attracted the attention of the Los Angeles Times, which published several op-ed pieces by him. This brought him to a wider audience, and made him a major regional force in Southern California environmentalism.

Sandy's columns and articles are as relevant and exciting to read today as when they were first published. They should not be laid aside and forgotten. (Maybe we should collect and republish them in a book!)


While he was inspiring us with his writing, Sandy was still active in the public arena, organizing Audubon members to write letters and attend public meetings to make their feelings known. He himself was a tireless public speaker and gadfly, adept at keeping politicians' and officials' feet to the fire on many issues local and national. Perhaps his greatest single success was achieved in his own back yard, in the Sepulveda Flood Control Basin.

Much of this last open space in the San Fernando Valley was wanted for such facilities as a racetrack, an Olympic Stadium and rowing course (along the LA River), a polo field, and a multi-building Theatre and Arts complex. These massive developments were fought off by a coalition of environmentalists (including Sandy) and irate local residents (also including Sandy). The Army Corps of Engineers, which owns the Sepulveda Basin, had set aside a couple of parcels on the west side of the basin as a wildlife area, but for a long time it was just a barren vacant lot with a scooped-out hole that occasionally filled with water and attracted birds. When the state

finally approved a grant that would provide for a permanent pond with some planting, Sandy helped organize a consortium of environmental groups that included two Audubon Societies (LAAS and SFV) and the California Native Plant Society, to help keep the area clean and monitor the birds and wildlife. Soon he found out about an \$85,000 judgment against a Basin polluter that was to be awarded to environmental organizations. In only one day, with the help of Bill Principe and Hartmut Walter, Sandy put together a proposal that formed the basis of the Sepulveda Consortium endowment, to fund restoration and improvement of the habitat, including the Hummingbird Hill native plant area. Another polluter's judgment award was obtained to endow an educational program for elementary school students, which has brought environmental science education to thousands of children since 1993. The funding also provided signage, trails, and more planting and restoration of native habitat.

When you explore the Sepulveda Wildlife area today, admiring its birds and plants, keep in mind that without Sandy Wohlgemuth's initiative and leadership, it would probably still be a degraded wasteland - or a polo field. And no children would learn anything from it.

Sandy was an exceptionally talented and energetic man, but he can still serve as an example for all of us. Like most of us, he had a busy career and raised a family, with all the stress and responsibility that such a life entails. He enjoyed birding in his spare time and in retirement. But he also put time aside to do whatever he could to protect and restore the nature we all love.

And thus he used his life to make his earth a better place when he left it. 

Los Angeles Audubon Society has established the *Sandy Wohlgemuth Conservation Fund*, as a restricted allocation to support conservation efforts in Southern California.

Kimball Garrett, has donated the honorarium for his September 2006 meeting program, and Board members have pledged at least \$2500 for the fund.

We invite all LAAS members to join us in remembrance of Sandy.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY LAUNCHES 3 MONTH MEMBERSHIP DRIVE AND CONTEST

Los Angeles Audubon Society relies on monetary and volunteer support to provide the programs and activities that help us enjoy birding and nature in the Los Angeles area.

Because of generous support from members and donors in the last year, we've been able to:

- * Help fund an increase in the size of the Kern River Preserve.
- * Protect heron nests at Silverlake Reservoir.
- * Advocate for habitat in the Los Angeles River Revitalization plan.
- * Fund education programs at Ballona saltwater marsh and Sepulveda Basin.
- * Increase outreach in the Baldwin Hills.
- * Participate in creating statewide guidelines for wind developers.
- * Apply litigation pressure on wind developers to do appropriate avian studies near Butterbrecht Springs.
- * Provide ongoing services to members through the Western Tanager and our website.
- * Lead field trips throughout Southern California almost every weekend.
- * Maintain a world-famous pelagic program.
- * Hold monthly programs and special workshops for enthusiasts interested in birds and conservation.
- * Form the Urban Wildlife Task Force to protect birds, most notably nesting terns in Long Beach and the heron rookery in Marina Del Rey.

And the list goes on. We're quite proud of our accomplishments, but we want to do more. And with your help, we can. In order to accomplish our goals, we need to expand our membership to have a bigger voice in the community and to provide the necessary helping hands. We're already taking steps to increase our membership, but we need your help.

Supporting members make the best spokespeople. If you have been on field trips, to general meetings, or at other functions, you know how fun and informative we can be. And with all the challenges facing the local birds and wildlife, you know how important it is that we continue to lead in the areas of habitat conservation and restoration.

We are holding a membership drive and we need you to spread the word and encourage people to join Los Angeles Audubon Society.



Here's how it works: for every person you refer that becomes a member from October 1 to December 31 of this year, you'll get one Tanager Point. The person with the most Tanager Points at the end of the drive will receive a gift. Even if you do not get the most Tanager Points, you will still have a chance to win something. For each Tanager Point you get, you will receive a ticket good for a raffle to be held in January.

The best way for new members to sign up will be by submitting a membership envelope, or on the Los Angeles Audubon Society website:

www.laaudubon.org

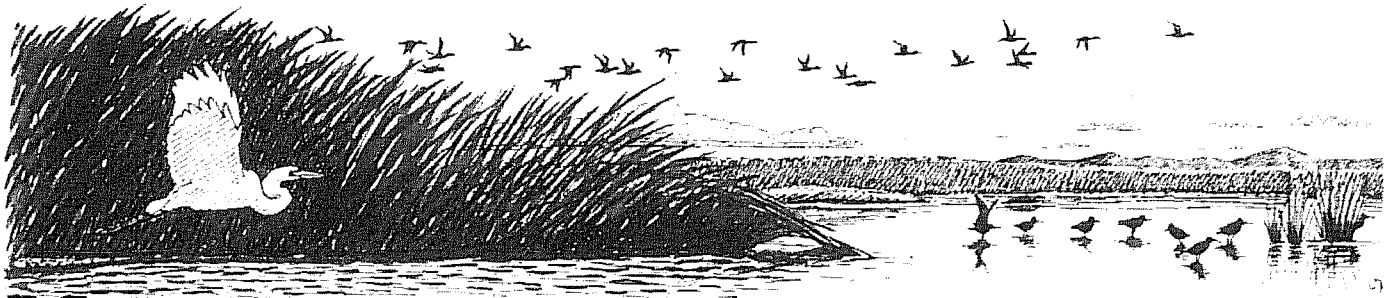
Membership envelopes will be available at the bookstore and at general meetings. Write your name on the front bottom left part of each envelope you hand out so we can track your referrals. Make sure your name is printed clearly on the envelope, or we will not be able to give you that Tanager Point. If joining on the website, have the person joining mention your name on the form. And make sure your referral gets their envelope in before the end of the year.

Talk to your friends, family, neighbors, coworkers...anyone you think might be interested in joining. Even people you don't know. Sometimes it is the person you would least expect who shows interest. With your help, we can make Los Angeles Audubon Society better than ever!

If you have any questions about this membership drive, please feel free to call the bookstore or email:

Membership Chair - Jason Stuck
jasonstuck@laaudubon.org or
Executive Director - Garry George
garrygeorge@laaudubon.org

Good luck and thanks for participating!



CONSERVATION CONVERSATION

by Garry George

The Case of the Urban Rookery

The call came in to headquarters at 3:40 pm on July 26, 2006. It was a woman named Bette (name changed to protect her identity). Her voice was young and husky, and she sounded like she just woke up from a nightmare, scared. "They are planning to cut down the heron nests in Marina del Rey. There's a meeting for residents tonight. Could someone please come from Audubon? Don't tell them I called you." Bette hung up, we got the address, and the new LA Audubon Urban Wildlife Task Force went into action.

Day 1. At 6:00 pm that night Task Force member Lisa Fimiani (aka Brenda Starr) shows up at the Marina Harbor tenant's meeting on Bora Bora Way in Marina del Rey. The owner talks about plans to renovate the building, displaying lobby cards in the courtyard of how the buildings and grounds will look. The owner says all the trees will be cut down around the complex, which prompts Lisa to ask during a question and answer period. "What about the large trees around building A." The owner responds hastily, "some trees will be saved" but does not specify which trees. Other tenants also ask about the large trees where herons and egrets currently roost at night (and used to nest before the trees were trimmed), some of them expressing their fondness of the birds and their desire that they be taken care of. Again the owner responds, "Yes, we will take care of the birds."

Day 2. Lisa goes back to the apartment complex at dusk and photographs the birds flying into the trees. It's a magnificent sight, close to thirty birds crowd



Photo by Lisa Fimiani

Great Blue Herons over Marina Del Rey

into one tree, oblivious to the tenants walking or driving underneath or sitting on their balconies on the building nearby. There were Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets, Snowy Egrets and Black-crowned Night Herons on the same tree limbs, huddled close together, practically standing on top of one another.

Day 3. Lisa blows up a picture of one of the lobby cards with the landscape architects on it, googles the name, calls their number and leaves a message for them to call back. A few days later one of the landscape architects for the project calls Lisa back and cannot say exactly which trees will be saved, but states that some will.

Day 6. Task Force member Garry George contacts the County Planning

Commission to ask about the status of permits for the buildings in Marina del Rey. After half a days work on the phone he lands at the County's Beaches and Harbor division, a separate division which handles permitting for coastal development. Garry actually gets a name, and finds out there had been a Design Control Board hearing on July 20 to discuss the re-development of Marina Harbor as well as Villa Venetia, both apartment complexes strategically situated on either side of the mouth of the harbor and both with mature non-native trees actively being used by herons and egrets for nesting and roosting. He also finds out that the LCP, Local Coastal Program review for Marina del Rey was coming up at the next Coastal Commission public hearing in a few days.

Day 8. Garry contacts the Coastal Commission to see if they have permitted the project and to ask about the possibility of special protections for the heron and egret rookery. The Commission recommends an appearance at a hearing. Task Force member Dexter Kelly agrees to go to the hearing on August 10 and make a statement asking for special protection for the birds and their habitat. The topic is moved to the October agenda. Nevertheless, Dexter gives his public comments anyway. It is the first time that Los Angeles Audubon has commented publicly at a Coastal Commission hearing in decades.

Day 16. Task Force member Jason Stuck tours Villa Venetia and takes photographs on August 19 of Great Blue Heron nests and the fledglings. His photos are high tech, and include GPS position coordinates imbedded in the photographs. Jason gives these photos to Task Force member David DeLange who lives in the Marina and who plans to make public comments at the Design Control Board hearing.

Day 27. Lisa speaks publicly on the record at the Marina del Rey Design Control Board meeting on August 30, 2006 about the nest and roost sites of the herons and egrets at Marina Harbor, and presents three letters from three sources: The Friends of Ballona Wetlands, Audubon California, and independent

biologist Dan Cooper. The letters verify that Marina del Rey, as part of the Ballona Wetlands, has been named as an IBA (Important Bird Area) by Audubon because of the heron and egret rookeries.

Day 28. In part 2 of the Marina del Rey Design Control board hearings, UCLA biologist John Hodder comments on the work of the developer's biologist and reads an email exchange between himself and the developer's biologist that reveals possible inadequacies in his report on herons and egrets in the Marina. David DeLange presents Jason's photos with GPS imbedded in them that contradict the report and conclusions of the developer's biologists. The meeting ends with the developer's biologist asking for a chance to revise his report. This is a rare victory for those concerned about birds, and the first successful effort by the Urban Wildlife Task Force.

STAY TUNED FOR THE SEQUEL AS THE TASK FORCE asks for special protections from the Coastal Commission for the birds of the Marina del Rey and works to provide nest sites for terns on barges in Long Beach harbor to prevent a repeat of the loss of over 300 terns last summer.



Notify, join or donate to the Urban Wildlife Task Force at www.laaudubon.org or email: taskforce@laaudubon.org

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Great Blue Herons

Photo by Jason Stuck

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BIG YEAR BIRDATHON

Here's the challenge. Can birders see 400 species of wild birds in Los Angeles County and Los Angeles County waters between midnight December 31, 2006 and midnight December 31, 2007.

This would beat Todd McGrath's record of 367, only this time it would be a fund raiser Birdathon for Los Angeles Audubon Society to use for conservation and education.

Sightings will be verified by a Los Angeles Audubon Society panel. Documentation/photos or expert verification may be required for extremely rare and unusual species.

Two prizes will be awarded at the monthly meeting in January, 2008.

* \$250 Los Angeles Audubon Society gift certificate for the most species seen by an individual.

* \$250 Los Angeles Audubon Society gift certificate for the most funds raised by an individual.

Birders will seek to get corporate and private sponsors to sponsor them for each species seen. If the interest warrants it, special LA County waters winter and summer pelagic trips may be arranged.

Will you and your team take the **Big Year Birdathon** challenge?

To sign up or sponsor
Big Year Birders, contact
Ray Schep: rayoohoo@yahoo.com

LAAS Bookstore goes online!

Watch for the debut of our online bookstore in early November (fingers crossed).

If you want to be notified when we go online go to www.laaudubon.org, click Email Reminders under MAIN MENU, choose BOOKSTORE NEWS and sign on!

SILVER LAKE RESERVOIR AND LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

Plans have begun for Silver Lake Reservoir to become a city park with Los Angeles Audubon Society's participation in the form of advocating for wildlife, education programs, and possibly a nature center. Executive Director Garry George attended a stakeholders meeting on September 16 hosted by the Save the Silverlake Reservoir Committee with City council members Eric Garcetti, Tom La Bonge, urban landscape designer Mia Lehrer, LA City Recs & Parks Directors and citizens of Silverlake. One idea that Los Angeles Audubon Society supports is the creation of an island in the middle of the reservoir for wildlife to feel protected while viewers watch from across the reservoir. We also recommended killing the lawn in the meadow and replacing it with native grasses. Great Blue Herons nest at the reservoir. The park will begin to come online in phase one in 2009.

SCHREIBER GRANTS

Schreiber grants are awarded yearly in May to college students for research on birds. The grants are in memory of Dr. Ralph Schreiber. Application deadline is December 1, 2006 for 2007 grants.

By mail:
Grant Committee, LA Audubon Society
PO Box 931057
Los Angeles CA 90093-1057

To support the Ralph Schreiber grant fund donate online at www.laaudubon.org or by mail to:
LA Audubon Society, PO Box 931057, Los Angeles CA 90093-1057

L.A. AUDUBON SOCIETY ATTENDS WEST HOLLYWOOD BOOK FAIR

Bookstore Manager Martha Balkan, Bookstore Assistant Susan Castor, President Dexter Kelly and International Travel Director Olga Clarke, spread the word about Los Angeles Audubon Society, at the West Hollywood Book Fair on Sunday, September 17. Especially popular were the activities for kids including making peanut butter bird feeders. The bookstore racked up over \$400 in sales and donations at this event.

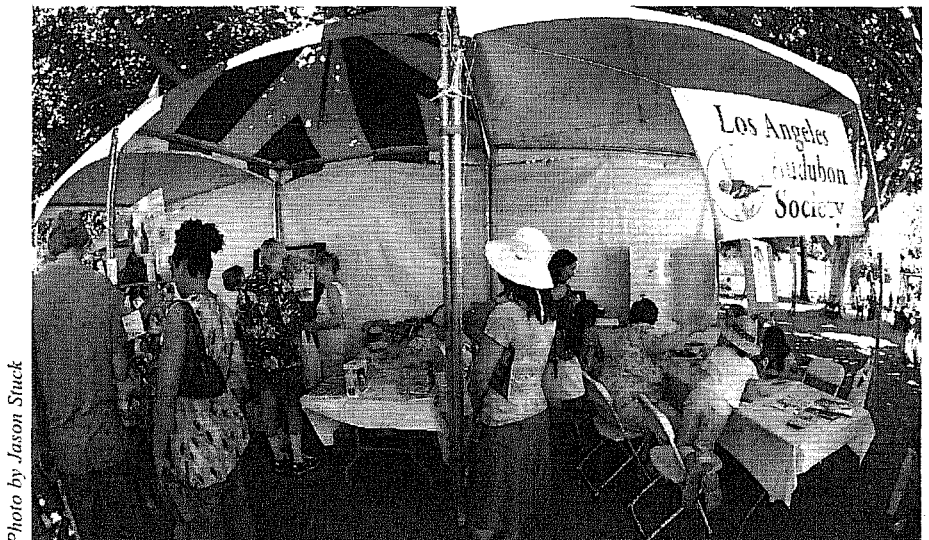


Photo by Jason Stuck

Los Angeles Audubon Society booth at West Hollywood Book Fair 2006

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WE WILL BE CLOSED:

Thursday, November 23, 2006

Monday, December 25, 2006

Monday, January 1, 2007

WE WILL BE OPEN THESE ADDITIONAL DAYS IN DECEMBER:

Sunday, December 3 from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Saturday, December 9 from 10:00AM to 3:00 PM

Saturday, December 16 from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

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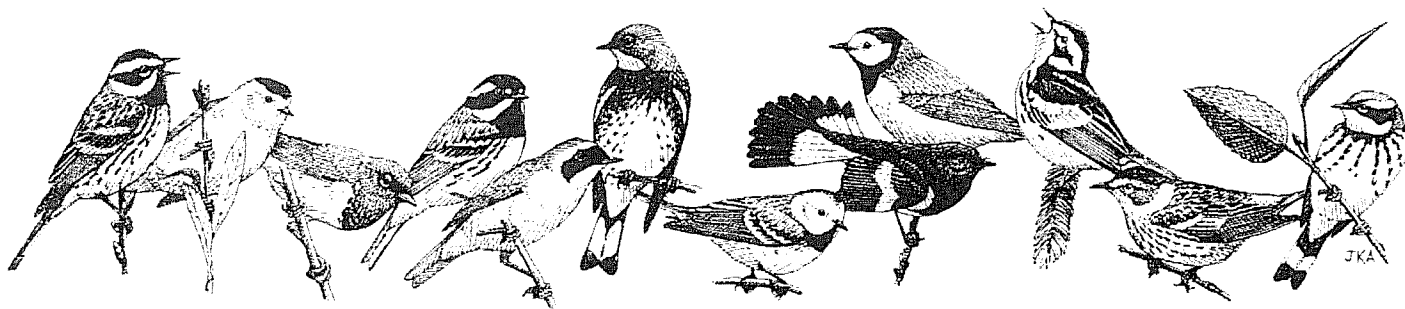
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BIRDS OF THE SEASON

by Jon Fisher

The Western Tanager was instrumental in opening my eyes to the world of birds and birding. And as I take over this column from Jon Feenstra, I recall my introduction to "Birds of the Season". When I first joined Audubon 30 years ago, Shum Suffel was writing the column. Shum was always generous with his time and knowledge and responsible in no small way for nurturing my early interest in birds and birding. I looked forward to each issue of WT and especially to "Birds of the Season" with its summary of noteworthy sightings, especially because in those days such information was not so easy to come by as it is today.

A number of other authors have taken the long running "Birds of the Season" under their wing since then. I've certainly enjoyed reading it over the years and though I never would have expected it, I find myself on the other side of the pen. In this issue, we cover the tail end of spring migration, the summer period and roughly the first half of fall migration.

As Jon Feenstra noted in his final column, bird migration in southern California is very nearly a year-round event. Even the short interlude between 'fall' and 'spring' is occupied with preparing for and participating in Christmas Bird Counts and scouring local parks for odd wintering birds. For me, it's difficult to find an excuse to not be in the field, though out of necessity work and family obligations often take precedence.

We had a warm June followed by a July that produced one of the most brutal waves of heat and humidity in memory. Fortunately much of the

summer was either at or pleasantly below normal temperatures. Here's a look what turned up in the bird world.

While a few individuals are expected coastally in summer, a **Brant** at Peck Pit in Arcadia on August 8 was at an unusual inland location (Andrew Lee). Another individual spent the summer at Malibu Lagoon with a bit of leg band research indicating that this bird hatched in western Alaska in 1993 (fide Kimball Garrett). One must conclude then that this bird made over a dozen trips to Alaska and back and it's amazing to try to envision those journeys.

An extraordinary find was a **Dark-rumped Petrel** seen from Point Dume on August 12 (Kimball Garrett). This bird, either a Hawaiian or Galapagos Petrel (these species are indistinguishable in the field) was initially seen sitting on the water before it flew west up the coast. Rare enough well offshore, a sighting from the mainland was truly remarkable.

Two immature **Blue-footed Boobies** were found at the Whitewater River Delta at NESS on August 5 (Curtis Marantz, Mike San Miguel). At least one of the birds was seen through the end of the period.

A **Magnificent Frigatebird** at Pt. Fermin in San Pedro on August 8 (fide Bernardo Alps) was the only one reported.

A **Least Bittern** was spotted at Sepulveda Basin's Wildlife Lake on August 6 (Bob Pann, Alan Dunn) and again on September 2. This species is likely regular here, but difficult to find due to its secretive nature.

Very unusual was the report of a **White Ibis** at NESS on August 5 (fide

Guy McCaskie). Not to be outdone, the south end of the sea produced a Roseate Spoonbill on September 1 (David Vander Pluym, Oscar Johnson).

A **Broad-winged Hawk**, quite rare in LA County, was seen in transit over the foothills above Arcadia on September 3 (Michael San Miguel, Mike San Miguel).

As birders, it's hard to think of summer without our thoughts turning to shorebird migration. For a piece of land with a glaringly apparent lack of suitable habitat, Los Angeles County produces a surprising number of good shorebirds. A big reason for this is the existence of the lower Los Angeles River... well, as we all know, it's a concrete channel, but Angelinos like to call it a river nonetheless. The few miles of the riverbed from Rosecrans to Willow Street arguably offer the best shorebirding in the county and here's the proof.

A stunning alternate plumaged **Pacific Golden-Plover** was discovered along the river in Long Beach on July 8 (Kevin Larson). Another individual was at nearly the exact same spot on August 27, and a third bird, differentiated by a deformed leg, turned up on August 31 and was still present through September 6 (both Richard Barth).

Several **Solitary Sandpipers** were found, with the first being a pair at Piute Ponds on Edwards Air Force Base on August 3 (Mike San Miguel) followed by one on the LA River in Bell Gardens on August 21 (Richard Barth). Another was along the San Gabriel River near Valley on September 2 (Mike San Miguel) and the last reports for the period were from the LA River

on September 4 and September 7 (Richard Barth).

An adult **Stilt Sandpiper** was in Long Beach along the LA River on July 25 (Richard Barth).

A juvenile **Ruff** turned up along the LA River in Long Beach on August 23 (Richard Barth). The same or another individual was seen from September 2-6 (Bill Sauer, Richard Barth).

The first of over a dozen **Semi-palmated Sandpipers** along the LA River turned up on July 23 (Kevin Larson).

The earliest **Baird's Sandpiper** showed up in mid July with one along the LA River in Long Beach on July 16 (Kevin Larson). The remainder of the season produced a quite a few more, with most along the lower LA River. Also of note was one at Piute Ponds on September 5 (Mike San Miguel). Numbers peaked in the first week of September with no fewer than six present on a single day (Richard Barth).

One **Pectoral Sandpiper** was in Long Beach on August 19 (Richard Barth) and a handful of others were reported later in the period, with almost all of them on the LA River.

Far a field, but worthy of mention, was a **Piping Plover** at Red Hill Marina at the SESS discovered on August 7 (Oscar Johnson). With declines throughout its breeding range, the odds of vagrants reaching California have become even slimmer than they were in the past; and they were pretty slim then. The plover was reported through September 3.

One other standout shorebird this spring was an **Upland Sandpiper** discovered on June 4 at Galileo Hill in Kern County (Ryan Terrill). The bird lingered on the green lawns there until June 8 giving many birders a chance to see it.

The Piute Ponds produced a juvenile **Sabine's Gull** on September 5 along with sixteen Black Terns (Mike San Miguel).

A number of alcids turned up close to the coast in a brief mid-August flurry. The first of these was a **Xantus's Murrelet** near the Ballona Creek mouth on August 10 (Kevin Larson, Carol Selvey). At Point Vicente, two **Craveri's Murrelets** and two **Cassin's Auklets** were present on August 12 (Mike San Miguel, Brian Daniels, Kevin Larson). **Cassin's Auklets** and

two **Xantus's/Craveri's Murrelets** were off Point Dume on August 12 (Kimball Garrett).

A **White-winged Dove** was in Carson on July 30 (Kevin Larson). Two more were in Rancho Palos Verdes at White Point Nature Preserve on August 19 (Ed Griffin), and up to four were on Pt. Dume in late August and early September (Mike San Miguel).

Within the 'season', but a whopping 29 years ago, was a **Green Violet-ear** at Mt. Pinos on July 30, 1977. The record is notable as it was just accepted by the CBRC when a misplaced photo turned up to provide supporting documentation. This is the first accepted record of this species for California. An early **Tropical Kingbird** was at Malibu Lagoon on August 22 (Jim Hardesty)

About 35 **Purple Martins** were at Lost Lake near Wrightwood on July 26 (Todd McGrath, Mike San Miguel). The fact that many of the birds were immatures strongly suggests that breeding persists in the San Gabriel Mountains. The only other report was of a lone migrant seen from Point Dume on August 12 (Kimball Garrett).

Out of our area, but a rarity anywhere in California, was a tailless **Wood Thrush** at Crystal Springs in extreme southern Inyo County on August 20 (Bill Deppe). The bird was still present into September raising suspicion that it spent the summer at this location.

Out of season was a very early **Hermit Thrush** at DeForest Park in Long Beach on September 2 (Kevin Larson).

A **Loggerhead Shrike** at Sepulveda Basin in Van Nuys on September 4 (Jim Hardesty) was likely an early migrant as none were known to be present there over the summer. The decline of this bird in coastal LA County both as a breeder and winter visitor has been near catastrophic over the last two decades.

A few odd warblers showed up, with the bulk of vagrants still to come. A **Lucy's Warbler** was at DeForest Park in Long Beach on September 2. Later that same day, a Tennessee Warbler was found at the same location (both Kevin Larson).

A large part of the fascination we have with birding comes from the surprises each season brings. One of those sur-

prises this year was the discovery of an apparent hybridizing **Yellow Warbler** and **American Redstart** in Bel Air (Jared Diamond). These two birds, in different genera, raised young earlier this summer.

A **Hermit Warbler** at DeForest Park in Long Beach on July 30 (Kevin Larson) was ahead of the normal window for this species.

A **Black-and-White Warbler** was at Hahamongna Watershed Park- formerly Oak Grove Park- in Pasadena on August 30 (Lance Benner). Flocks of **Evening Grosbeaks** numbering in the hundreds at Mt. Pinos in April were out of the ordinary, but two lingering birds there on July 2 (Lori Conrad) were even more so, though not unprecedented. Some earlier flight years have also seen a few birds lingering into the summer.

From Agua Dulce came a report of a female **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** at a feeder on July 31 (Jim Moore). What may become California's first accepted **Yellow Grosbeak** was a male that appeared at a feeder at Keough Hot Springs in Inyo County on July 31 (Tom & Jo Heindel). The bird remained through August 2. Debate continues as to the origin of this bird. Though this species is a likely vagrant to California, the Inyo County bird showed bill and plumage abnormalities that might or might not be indicative of prior captivity.

As this issue arrives much of fall migration will be over and droves of **White-crowned Sparrows** and **Yellow-rumped Warblers** and many others will have moved in. With them will come the crisp mornings and mild days that make the southern California fall and winter so enjoyable. The regularity with which rarities continue to be found throughout this period never fails to surprise me. It certainly keeps the season interesting. Last year we were flush with **Painted Redstarts**, a few **Dusky-capped Flycatchers** and a **Fulvous Whistling-Duck**, but if we know one thing, it's that this year will not be a carbon copy of the last one.



In Their Own Words

Schreiber Grant 2006

Progress Reports

Recipient: Michael J. Kuehn, University of California Santa Barbara

Research: Predicting the Rate at which host defenses are lost in the absence of parasitism by Brown-headed Cowbirds



Michael J. Kuehn

Previous research has demonstrated that behavioral adaptations, such as snake-specific alarm calls in ground squirrels and the tendency of some birds to remove the eggs of brood parasites from their nests, can be retained as "relic behaviors" for thousands of years when they are no longer needed. One explanation for their maintenance is that they are neither beneficial nor costly to possess if they are never expressed. Since many defenses against brood parasitic birds are behavioral in nature and their expression is elicited by the stimulus of an adult parasite or parasitic egg, hosts may retain these defenses during periods in which they become free from brood parasites.

Yellow Warblers (*Dendroica petechia*) are commonly parasitized by the brood parasitic Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) and show several behavioral defenses against cowbirds in areas where their ranges overlap. Warblers breeding in northern Canada and in Alaska are well beyond the northern limit of the cowbird's range, and have probably bred apart from cowbirds there for at least 8,000 years, since the retreat of the Wisconsin Glaciation allowed birds to re-settle this northern region.

In 2000-2002 I presented nesting warblers in Alaska with models of adult cowbirds and I placed model eggs

in warbler nests. Alaska warblers responded with cowbird-specific defenses, even though they had never observed cowbirds or their eggs on their breeding grounds before! However, Alaska warblers gave these responses much less frequently than warblers breeding with cowbirds in western Montana.

The lower expression of defenses in Alaska could reflect genetic differences between warblers in Montana and Alaska; for example, genes for these behaviors may be lost when the defenses are no longer needed. Alternatively, the lower expression in Alaska may be due to a lack of experience with adult cowbirds if the traits require some "practice" before they can be expressed completely.

To determine if experience with cowbirds is required to fully express these defenses I studied a third warbler population in the summers of 2005 and 2006. With financial assistance from the Los Angeles Audubon Society, I replicated my experiments on warblers in eastern Idaho that are locally free from cowbirds, but breed only 80 km from the western Montana population. These birds are expected to be genetically identical to Montana warblers, but they have no experience with cowbirds.

My preliminary results from Idaho suggest that there is a strong learned component to these behavioral defenses because warblers in Idaho (lacking cowbird experience) expressed them less often than warblers in Montana (with cowbird experience). In fact, the expression of these defenses was similar in Idaho and Alaska, providing indirect evidence that the lower expression in Alaska (compared to Montana) is due to a lack of experience with cowbirds and not to genetic deterioration of these defenses.

My research provides additional evidence that behaviors can be retained for very long periods when they are no longer needed, and emphasizes the importance of understanding how the expression of such behaviors is influenced by learning. Also important, in light of the cowbird's northward range expansion, my research suggests that Yellow Warblers in Alaska are prepared to defend themselves against cowbird parasitism should this species eventually expand its range into this region.

-Michael J. Kuehn

Los Angeles
Audubon Society

Cordially invites you to its
2nd annual

Holiday Open House

Sunday, December 3, 2006
2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Join us for an afternoon of
friendship, light refreshments.

Visit with our board of directors,
members, volunteers, and staff.

Meet the
rescued Raptors,

"Kringle the Kestrel" and

"Santa Claws the Owl".

Browse our nature store for that
"something unique and special
for the Holidays.



Kestrel



PELAGIC TRIPS

EARLY 2007 SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24

Palos Verde Escarpment and Redondo Canyon.

This 8 hour trip departs from **Marina del Rey** at 7:30 a.m. on the *r/v UCLA Sea World*. Birds seen on prior trips: Northern Fulmar; Short-tailed, Black-vented, Sooty and Pink-footed shearwaters; jaegers; rocky shorebirds (up to 5); Xantus's Murrelet; Cassin's and Rhinoceros auklets. Rare: Manx Shearwater. Occasionally: Ancient Murrelet. We often see Gray Whales and several species of dolphins. **\$79** - Save \$5 with an early sign-up 60 days prior to departure. There is no galley, but coffee and hot water are available.

SATURDAY, APRIL 21

Deep water trip toward Rodriguez Dome and the San Juan Seamount

This trip will depart from the **Santa Barbara Harbor** on the **Condor Express** at 7:00 a.m. and returns approximately by 8:00 p.m. This is a **One Day Murphy Petrel Search!** We will cruise along the deep water shelf by the San Juan Seamount. Birds previously seen are: Laysan and Black-footed albatross; Northern Fulmar, Sooty, Pink-footed shearwaters; Parasitic, Pomarine and Long-tailed jaegers; Leach's and Fork-tailed storm-petrels; Cassin's Auklet; Xantus's Murrelet and Tufted Puffin.. Rare possibilities are Cook's Petrel and Red-billed Tropicbird. **\$198** - Save \$5.00 with an early sign-up 60 days prior to departure. There is a complete galley that serves breakfast, lunch and dinner.

SATURDAY, JUNE 9

Landing on Santa Cruz Island for the Scrub-Jay, then out to sea.

This 9 hour trip departs from **Island Packer's Oxnard** dock in the **Oxnard Harbor** at 8:00 a.m. on the *m/v Vanguard*. We will land on Santa Cruz Island, for about an hour, at Prisoners Cove where the endemic Island Scrub-Jay is easily seen. Then we will go out to sea for pelagic birding, returning by Anacapa Island. Birds seen on prior trips: Northern Fulmar; Sooty and Pink-footed shearwaters; South Polar Skua; Parasitic and Pomarine jaegers; Sabine's Gull, rocky shorebirds (up to 5); Pigeon Guillemot; Xantus's Murrelet. Rarities; Flesh-footed Shearwater. A Tufted Puffin was seen in 2002. **\$96** - or you can save \$5 with an early sign-up 60 days prior to departure. A box lunch can be ordered from the adjoining dock-side deli, or bring a picnic lunch and drinks.

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.*

NOTE: Destinations may be changed in order to maximize bird sightings, or minimize rough seas. In order to meet unexpected increases in fuel costs, there can be a \$5 to \$10 energy surcharge per person.

In Their Own Words

Schreiber Grant 2006
Progress Reports

Recipient: William M. Mauck III, San Diego State University
Research: Molecular Phylogenetics & Evolution of Flower-piercers



William M. Mauck III

Currently, I am working on the phylogeny, feeding behavior evolution, and biogeography of a group of nectar adapted tanagers known as flower-piercers (Diglossa). Flowerpiercers are found at high elevations from central Mexico to Argentina. Each species within this group possess a slender bill with a hook at the tip which varies in size among species. The hook is used to hold the corolla of a flower while the mandible pokes or slices a hole in the base of the flower to obtain the nectar.

I am sequencing two mitochondrial genes to construct the phylogenetic relationship of flowerpiercers. Measurements of body size, bill size, and bill shape will be used to quantify the variation among species and will be mapped onto the phylogeny to determine how nectar feeding has evolved. Furthermore, the phylogeny and current distributions of each species will be used to investigate the flower-piercers biogeographic origin. -
William M. Mauck III

FIELD TRIPS & BIRD WALKS

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 5

Newport Back Bay.

Leader: Mary Freeman. Meet on the boardwalk along the NW bay at the "Sharp-tailed Sparrow Spot" accessible from the end of University Drive (small street) at 8:00 AM for the 6.9' high tide, and a full day of birding in the area. High tide at the mouth is 8:04, but may not peak in the back bay until 9:00 AM. Rails, Swamp Sparrow, California Gnatcatcher, and Bittern will be target birds. Eurasian Wigeon and Blue-winged Teal expected. Take the 405 Fwy S to the 73 Toll Road (free this far) to the Campus Dr. exit, which becomes Bristol St. Turn right on Irvine Ave., drive 1.4 miles, then 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. Bring lunch. 'Scopes helpful.

Sunday, November 5

Topanga State Park

Ken Wheeland & Chris Tosdevin will lead participants through this beautiful and diverse coastal mountain area. This is 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 18

Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area

Leader: Ann & Eric 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 (\$4 parking fee), turn left (leading to the "Olympic Forest") and park in the first available spaces. Meet at 8:00 AM.

Sunday, November 19

Lake Perris area.

Leader: Howard King. The Little Gulls, Ruddy Ground Dove, and Least and Vermilion flycatchers of past years may not be back, but surely something will take their places! Take the 10 or 60 Fwy E to the 215 Fwy S, exit E onto Ramona Expressway, continue E just past Perris Blvd., and meet at the Farmer Boys Restaurant on the S side of the road. Leave from here at 8:00 AM. Bring lunch, warm clothing and footwear for possible mud. No trip fee, but possible entrance fee.

Sunday, November 19

Ballona Wetlands.

Bob Shanman will be leading this trip to our nearest wetland and adjacent rocky jetty. Shorebirds should be moving in. 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, November 25

Whittier Narrows.

Leader: Ray Jillson. View colorful resident and migrating birds, possibly 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. Meet at 8:15 AM.

Sunday, December 3

Malibu Lagoon.

Leader: Irwin Woldman. There should be plenty of gulls, shorebirds, and scoters, with a few rails and raptors. Irwin may also visit Coral Canyon or Pt.

Dume, as this morning of birding allows. Find a stake-out bird for the Christmas Count! Scopes useful. No sign-up or fee. Take Hwy 1 NW, and turn right on Cross Creek Road just W of the bridge. Park here and walk across the Hwy. Meet at the first footbridge by the lagoon kiosk.

Sunday, December 3

Topanga State Park.

Leaders: Ken Wheeland & Chris Tosdevin. Meet at 8:00 AM.

See November 5 listing for details.

Saturday, December 9

West Antelope Valley Raptors and Other Wintering Birds.

Jean Brandt will lead us from Quail Lake east across the Antelope Valley. Ferruginous Hawk and Prairie Falcon likely. Wear warm clothing, bring lunch, and have a full tank of gas. Meet at Denny's at 6:45 A.M. to carpool. Take 405N to Roxford in Sylmar. Turn right, then right into the Denny's parking lot. Trip leaves at 7:00 A.M. sharp. 'Scopes and FRS radios helpful.

Saturday, December 16

Lancaster Christmas Count.

Contact compiler **Nick Freeman** at: (818) 247-6172 or mnfreeman@earthlink.net, to be placed on a team or be given an area.

Sunday, December 17

Malibu Christmas Count.

Contact compiler **Larry Allen** at: (626) 288-2701 or larry.w.allen@dslextreme.co, to participate.

Sunday, December 17

Ballona Wetlands.

Leader Bob Shanman. Meet at 8:00 AM. See November 19 listing for details.

Saturday, December 23

Whittier Narrows.

Leader: Ray Jillson. Meet at 8:15 AM. See November 26 listing for details.

FIELD TRIPS & BIRD WALKS

Saturday, January 6

Los Angeles Christmas Bird Count
Contact compiler Ray Schep at:
(323) 773-6441 X106, or
rayoohoo@yahoo.com, (or meet in
Franklin Canyon main parking lot at 7
am.

Sunday, January 7

Topanga State Park.
Leaders: **Ken Wheeland & Chris Tosdevin.** Meet at 8:00 AM.
See September 3 listing for details.

Sat. & Sun., January 13 & 14 **Salton Sea.**

Leader: **Nick Freeman.** Yellow-footed Gull, Ruddy Ground-Dove, Stilt Sandpiper all hopeful. Fee: \$10. No Limit. **Send SASE with phone number, e-mail and \$10 fee to Los Angeles Audubon Society, PO Box 931057, Los Angeles CA 90093-1057** for more details. Meet at 7:00 A.M. Saturday. More details in January newsletter and in SASE flyer.

Saturday, January 20

East Antelope Valley.
Leaders: **Scott Harris and Stan Gray.** Beyond 50th Street East is uncharted territory for many birders. However, Scott has DFG oversight of the area, and Stan birds the area extensively; so they know that Mountain Plover, raptors, LeConte's Thrasher and other AV specialties are sometimes easiest 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 of the off ramp. Meet at 8:00 AM at the W end of the main lot. Bring lunch and a full tank of gas for a full day of fun in the field. No fee, no reservation. 'Scopes and FRS radios helpful.

Fri. & Sun., February 9 & 11

Gull ID Lecture and Fieldtrip with Larry Allen.
Mark on your calendars, see next newsletter for further details. Meet at Audubon House, 7-10 PM for lecture portion, with handout, skins, and one break. Field trip Sunday to Doheny State Beach in Orange County. 20 maximum. \$15 fee with **SASE mailed to Los Angeles Audubon Society, PO Box 931057, Los Angeles CA 90093-1057** covers lecture & field trip. Lecture AND field trip only.

Sat. thru Tues., February 17 **thru 20**

Winter SE Arizona.
Meet 9AM at Wilcox Playa. \$50 entitles you to follow Nick & Mary Freeman around, as they ogle and pish their way through the sparrows, hawks, thrashers, cranes, plovers and others of this scenic corner of the southwest. **Send check, e-mail, phone number and SASE to Los Angeles Audubon Society, PO Box 931057, Los Angeles CA 90093-1057.** Maximum 10, minimum 6 participants. You reserve & pay for car, food, rooms, etc. Hotel names provided. We will try to arrange carpooling. Anticipate breakfast and dinner restaurant options, and lunches on the road. More details in January.

Sat. and Sun., March 17 and 18 **Anza Borrego Birds, Butterflies and Beyond with Fred Heath.**

Suggested accommodations: Tamarisk Grove Campground (reserve through www.reserveamerica.com), or Stanlund Motel in Borrego Springs (760) 767-5501. Anticipate a busy weekend, and reserve camping and motels very early. Limit 20 people. **Send SASE with phone number, e-mail and \$5 fee to Los Angeles Audubon Society, PO Box 931057, Los Angeles CA 90093-1057** to learn 7:00 AM meeting place and more details. Pleasant to warm days, cool to cold nights.

Christmas Counts

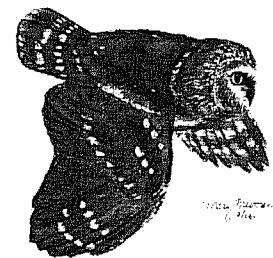
Once again, it is time to count and be counted. Each bird can only be counted once, but that needn't limit you. LA Audubon provides three opportunities for you to band together and count every feathered thing in sight!

Lancaster CBC-Saturday, December 16
Compiler: Nick & Mary Freeman
(818) 247-6172
mnfreeman@earthlink.net

Malibu CBC - Sunday, December 17
Compiler: Larry Allen
(323) 221-2022
larry.w.allen@dslextreame.com

Los Angeles CBC - Saturday, January 6
Compiler: Ray Schep
(323) 773-6441 X106,
rayoohoo@yahoo.com
(or meet in Franklin Canyon main parking lot at 7am)

If you don't think you're sharp enough, we'll find you a buddy. If you've got a team, we'll assign you an area. The birding is great fun, but lunch is the best! And everyone is there!



Drawing by Mary Freeman

Mary Freeman talks about Saw-whet Owls on Tues, Dec. 12. See back page for details

INTERNATIONAL BIRDING TOURS

THAILAND BIRDING ADVENTURE

January 11-28, 2007

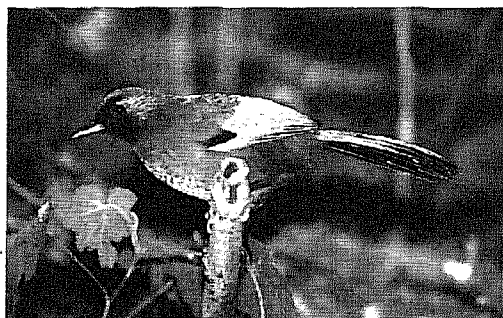
Southern Extension:

January 27-February 2, 2007

Our tour takes us from Bangkok to Kaeng Krachan National Park in the east, Khao Yai National Park in the west, and Chiang Mai in the north, all hosting unusual and diverse oriental avifauna. Several species of the massive hornbills, colorful malkohas, trogons, barbets, broadbills, minivets, leafbirds, laughingthrushes, sunbirds, and numerous others are likely to be seen. This is an ideal introduction to Southeast Asia's biological riches.

Following the main tour, and after a short flight to Phuket, we'll visit some of the unique birding areas straddling the mountain ridges separating the Thai Peninsula's east and west coast, and you'll see the famous limestone karst formations, some up to 1,000 ft high, formed about 12,000 years ago. We'll look for unusual species such as the rare Gurney's Pitta, Hooded, Banded, and Giant Pittas, Green Broadbill, spiderhunters, and different hornbills. In the nearby coastal mangroves, Mangrove Pitta and Ruddy Kingfisher are possibilities. The mudflats should produce many migrant waders and shorebirds.

Space is limited.



Chestnut-crowned Laughingthrush

Photo by Herb Clarke

For information and itinerary, contact:

Olga Clarke, Travel Director, Los Angeles Audubon Society

2027 El Arbolita Dr., Glendale, CA 91208

Ph/Fax: 818-249-9511 e-mail: oclarketravel@earthlink.net

KENYA BIRDING AND WILDLIFE SAFARI

November 2-14, 2007

Eastern Extension:

November 13-21, 2007

Kenya, one of the great birding and wildlife destinations in the world, offers an opportunity for you to experience much of East Africa within a short period of time. Over 1100 bird species have been recorded in Kenya, and many are easily seen. Besides its incredible birdlife, Kenya has become synonymous with the historic great wildlife of Africa, and Kenya may be the very best place to see large numbers of wildlife, namely the "Big Five", elephant, rhinoceros, leopard, lion and buffalo. In addition, the variety of wildlife, often at the same time you are viewing fascinating birds, is difficult to believe. From Nairobi to Samburu, the slopes of Mt. Kenya, Lake Nakuru, and the great plains of the Masai Mara, this is sure to be your African trip of a lifetime.

After the main program, we plan to travel from Nairobi to the Tsavo West National Park and Mzima

Springs, to the first lodge ever to be built in a Kenyan National Park, superbly situated in the lee of Mount Kilimanjaro. Then on to Shimba Hills National Reserve, just a short distance from the Indian Ocean, and the last remaining breeding population in Kenya of the rare and endangered, indigenous Sable Antelope. Birding stops will be made all along the way. We'll spend three nights in the Malindi, Gede, Arabuko-Sokoke Forest areas, and nestled in the white sands of Watamu, south of Malindi, ending our trip at the famous Hemingway Resort. Experience for yourself the wonders of East Africa on this Los Angeles Audubon Safari. Space is limited.



Hippo

Photo by Herb Clarke

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON SOCIETY

ENDORCES PROP 84, OPPOSES PROP 90

PROP 84 is the \$5.4 billion conservation and water quality bond on the November ballot. The initiative is funded in part by Audubon California, who state:

Prop 84 is critical to renew funding for the Wildlife Conservation Board, the Coastal Conservancy, numerous regional conservancies, and other important restoration and acquisition programs. Without Prop 84, many of the State's conservation dollars will dry up within the next one to two years, a risk we cannot afford to take.

Prop 84 authorizes the State of California to borrow up to \$5.4 billion dollars for water quality and supplies, habitat restoration and acquisition, parks, sustainable communities, and other important conservation issues. The particular categories are:

\$928 million for Protection of Rivers, Lakes and Streams

\$450 million for Wildlife and Forest Conservation

\$540 million for Beaches, Bays and coastal Protection

\$500 million for Parks and Nature Education Centers

\$580 million for Sustainable Communities

\$240 million for Safe Drinking Water

\$1.285 billion for Integrated Water Management and Water Quality

\$800 million for Flood Control
\$65 million for Statewide Water Planning and Design

In addition to the general funding categories, Prop 84 includes specific amounts for many Audubon priorities, including the Salton Sea area; San Francisco, Santa Monica and Monterey Bays; the Los Angeles, San Gabriel and Santa Ana Rivers; Lake Tahoe and the Sierra Nevada; the Delta and San Joaquin River; and farmland and working landscapes.

PROP 90 is the so-called "Protect Our Homes Act".

The initiative would make it impossible for cities or counties to seize land in order to eventually transfer the property to a different private owner, such as a shopping mall developer. But, it would also require public agencies to compensate property owners for "regulatory takings" -- times when a government decision prevents a property owner from developing or using land.

This could happen, for example, when a city puts land off-limits to developers in order to protect the environment. Prop 90 includes several very dangerous provisions that would drastically cut back on the State's, local governments' and even voters' ability to protect the environment, local communities, and farmland.

The most damaging provisions would make it nearly impossible to implement many resource protection laws or to acquire private property to protect wildlife habitat. It would also make pollution a private property right so that the government would have to pay to regulate or reduce pollution. Prop 90 would not only impact environmental protection, but also consumer protection, historic preservation, hunting regulation, and many other laws that protect our quality of life, communities and environment. Conservation organizations, labor, public safety organizations, local governments and the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce oppose Prop 90.

L.A. Audubon urges you to
vote in November!

Find out more about these
propositions and what they mean
for conservation of birds and
habitats.

(Note: Non-profits may not
support candidates,
but can support legislation or
bond measures).

PROGRAMS & EVENING MEETINGS

Meet at 7:30 at Audubon House in Plummer Park
7377 Santa Monica Blvd (at Martel between La Brea and Fairfax)
323-876-0202

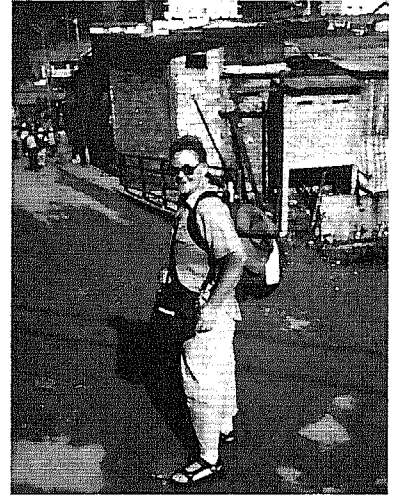
Tuesday, November 14, 2006

Kiwi Donovan presents:

All in the Family of Birds

Carol "Kiwi" Donovan, an independent budget birder, has recently achieved her birding goal of seeing all the bird families listed in The Clements Checklist of Birds of the World, 5th Edition & updates. Having survived extreme heat, medical emergencies, political unrest, danger and discomfort, she has thankfully lived to tell the tale. Come and join "Kiwi" as she takes us on a journey around the world, introducing us to bird families outside the Americas, and giving us an insight to life on the road as a budget birder.

Carol was the Bookstore Manager for the Los Angeles Audubon Society from 1995-99. During this time, she also was a volunteer ranger at the Chilao Visitor Center in the Angeles National Forest. She is currently working part-time at Wild Birds Unlimited in Torrance.



Carol "Kiwi" Donovan

Tuesday, December 12, 2006

Mary Freeman presents:

The Northern Saw-whet Owls of the Crest

During the five years of the Los Angeles County Breeding Bird Atlas survey, data on this owl species was sorely lacking. In response, Mary set out over the past six years to study the status and distribution of this little understood owl in the San Gabriel mountains. Come and listen as Mary gives an overview of her findings relating to Saw-whets, other owls and wildlife encountered during the project. She has the first photo documentation of Saw-whet breeding success in Los Angeles County.

Mary is a native of Los Angeles and has been a member of Los Angeles Audubon Society since high school. She has led trips for the society since the late '70s, and has held a few board positions as well. She likes

to bird by ear, has a BA in art design, illustrates birds, designs jewelry, and has searched out owls throughout the Americas. But her greatest passion is surveying Saw-whets in our local mountains.



Mary Freeman

Photo by Nick Freeman

Los Angeles Audubon Society
P.O. Box 931057
Los Angeles, CA 90093-1057

*DATED MATERIAL
Please Expedite*

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, December 3

**Visit rescued raptors,
"Kringle the Kestrel" and
"Santa Claws the Owl"**

**SHOP FOR GIFTS &
OPTICS**