

# WESTERN TANAGER



A PUBLICATION OF LOS ANGELES AUDUBON

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## *The State of the Condor*

*by Jesse Grantham*

### Inside this issue

- 4 My Patch
- 6 Conservation Conversation
- 8 Letter from Eleanor Osgood
- 9 Welcome New Members
- 10 Birds of the Season
- 14 Bird Walks
- 15 Field Trips
- 17 Reservation Policy
- 18 Pelagic Trips 2007
- 19 International Birding
- 20 Member Meetings
- 20 Adobe Photoshop Workshop

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**B**ack in October of 1979, Lloyd Kiff, then curator of the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, and Mike Cunningham, Curator of Birds at the Los Angeles Zoo, wrote two excellent articles on the California Condor in this newsletter. These articles were both written at a time when there was significant controversy over a proposal by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and National Audubon Society to begin a last ditch effort to try and save the California Condor from almost certain extinction. The proposal advocated captive breeding, radio telemetry, and increased research.

Despite all of the attempts to derail this program in the early 1980's, and setbacks in the program from unexpected condor deaths in the mid-80's, the research and recovery program inched forward. It was a valiant effort by US Fish and Wildlife Service and Audubon biologists to try and save the species in the wild. The population, however, continued to decline, and on April 19, 1987 the last California Condor was removed from the wild. The long and sometimes convoluted history of this recovery effort has been well documented in newsletters, newspaper articles, journals, scientific papers, and books over the past 25 years. There is no need to take valuable time and space to review that history here. The key piece of knowledge to come out of all of this was that condors are highly susceptible to lead poisoning, with three out of four birds dying of lead poisoning during the 1980's. It was probably the major cause for the species decline, and yet was a significantly overlooked factor in all previous studies on the species.

The bottom line is that the species was saved from extinction. Captive breeding was a knockout success, radio telemetry revealed previously unknown facts about the birds range, breeding behavior, and causes of mortality, and we discovered that this is not a shy, wary bird, but a highly adaptive, curious, intelligent animal. Original wild birds brought into captivity adapted easily, and pairs were breeding successfully as quickly as two years after being taken captive. First eggs began to appear in captivity in 1988, and the first releases of captive reared birds back into the wild occurred in 1992. Since 1992 135 captive reared condors have been released in California.

Releasing captive reared condors back into their historical range without an existing population of wild birds to act as mentors turned out to be a significant challenge. The habitat had become significantly degraded with human development, not something the species had to cope with even 30-40 years earlier. For a species that is highly curious, extremely mobile, and generally fearless, these young naïve condors were soon getting into all sorts of trouble, and mortality became a significant factor. On any given day a flock of newly released birds could and would go in any direction; there were no guidelines established by years of careful honing to protect them. Mortality rates soared as young birds collided with powerlines, starved to death, disappeared, and, worst of all, ingested lead bullet fragments from animal carcasses shot by hunters. To date 49 birds have died in California as part of the reintroduction effort and a number have been returned to permanent captivity. As some of the first released birds that survived have become older, they have established habits and behaviors that are less hazardous, and mortality rates have decreased, at least in California.

There are now three disjunct populations of California condors in the wild. Release sites in California have included Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge above Fillmore, Bittercreek National Wildlife Refuge west of Mt. Pinos (near the famous condor observation area of the 1980's

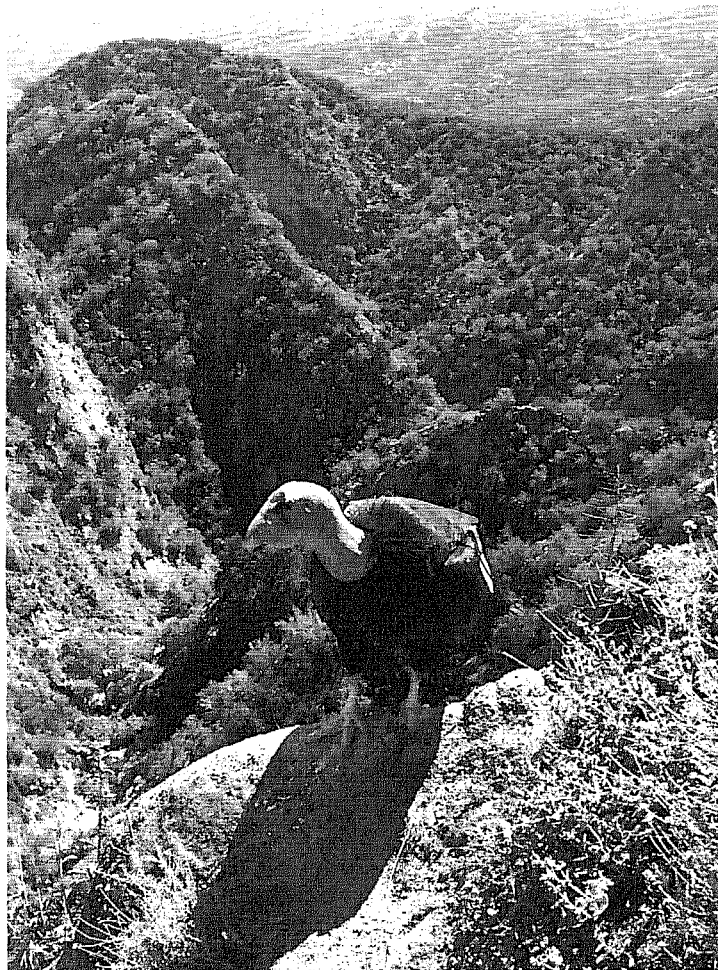
Other release sites include the Grand Canyon in Arizona, and the Sierra San Pedro Martir Mountains in Baja, Mexico.

Today there are 283 condors in the world population, up from the all-time low of 22 in 1982. There are 148 birds in the captive population

and 135 birds flying free in California, Arizona, and Baja Mexico. The California population of free-flying birds now stands at 66, scattered between southern California, the central California coast, and Pinnacles National Monument. Today 57 birds can be found in northern Arizona, and 11 birds are flying free in Baja.

In the early 2000's, birds from the central California coast population would frequently fly south and join up with the southern California birds, a distance of almost 180 miles. Birds from Pinnacles National Monument discovered the central coast birds in the summer of 2006, and now spend a great deal of their time con-

sorting with those birds on the coast. Occasionally central coast birds will visit Pinnacles National Monument. As of this writing, no Pinnacles birds have made it to southern California, but we know that is just a matter of time.



*AC-9, one of the original wild condors hatched in 1980 and subsequently taken into captivity as a breeder, is shown back at his historical nesting area after his release back into the wild in 2003*

known as the "Forest Service Sign" on Cerro Noreste Road), the Sierra Madre Mountains above the Cuyama Valley, the Big Sur area on the central California coast south of Monterey, and Pinnacles National Monument on the east side of the Salinas Valley.

The leading cause of mortality and debilitation in free flying birds in all release areas is still lead poisoning. Despite the fact that birds are provided contaminant free carcasses, they still find animal carcasses tainted with lead from ammunition. All evidence now strongly supports the ammunition/lead toxicosis connection in condors. The Peregrine Fund has conducted extensive research on lead ammunition and how it gets to condors. Radiographs of shot animal carcasses, radiographs of condors with lead fragments in their digestive tracts, lead isotope signature analysis of both lead in animal carcasses and lead in condors confirms the lead is one and the same. The University of California at Santa Cruz has been a leader in the latter work.

Based on this sound evidence a strong movement among conservationists, hunters, sportsman's groups, human health activists, and even politicians are advocating a change from lead-based ammunition to a solid copper-based ammunition. Ballistically the copper bullet is equal or superior to the lead ammunition, it may cost a few dollars more per box, and it may require more searching to locate suitable supplies, but this is a small price to pay. Recently the Tejon Ranch, a 270,000-acre ranch known for its long relationship with the condor because the ranch contains important feeding grounds for the birds, announced it would now require all individuals hunting on the ranch to use non-lead ammunition as of January 2008. Last month Camp Roberts and Fort Hunter-Liggett in the central California population both announced they

would require non-lead ammunition in their hunting programs beginning in July of 2007. It is hoped other large public and private landowners will also soon follow suit. At the same time the California Game Commission is considering requiring non-lead ammunition be used in all hunting programs for large game within the range of the condor within the year.

Certainly the pendulum is swinging away from the continued use of lead ammunition. Strong scientific evidence now supports the previously suspected hazards of lead to wildlife, and reinforces the danger to humans. It doesn't appear as if this issue will go away quietly without being resolved. The momentum is now too great. With lead out of the environment, condors have a much greater chance of success in reestablishing self-sustaining populations in western North America.

As of this writing there are six condor chicks in nests in California (four in southern California, two in central California), and one in Baja Mexico. This is our best breeding season ever. Biologists with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Ventana Wildlife Society, and the San Diego Zoo are watching these nests closely on an almost daily basis. We are ready to intervene at a moment's notice to do everything possible to maximize success of these nests.

For those of us involved in the field program, we feel as if we are three-quarters of the way to accomplishing our goals. We still have some major issues to

resolve, like lead, and the ingestion of micro-trash by free-flying birds, West Nile Virus, avian influenza, increasing human populations in southern California, possible organochlorine exposure from birds feeding on marine mammals on the central coast, collisions with powerlines, and random shooting. But while that all still sounds quite daunting, we feel we can get through it, step by step.

There is one thing for sure, condors are flying in the skies of California again, they are breeding on the cliff faces in the same pot-holes their ancestors used thousands of years ago. They are using the same roost trees wild birds used in the 1980's, and people are still being awed by this magnificent bird as it soars overhead. It can now safely be said the condor has been saved from extinction. Returning it back to the wild with all the traditions and culture under which it evolved is the next challenge.

*(Jesse Grantham is the California Condor Coordinator for the US Fish and Wildlife Service. He was one of a half-dozen biologists that joined the expanded effort to save the species in 1980, working for National Audubon Society. He remained with the Society for 24 years and was a speaker at several of our chapter meetings over the years. He retired from Audubon in 2003 and went to work for the USFWS Service. He can be contacted at 805-644-5185, or email: Jesse\_Grantham@fws.gov.)*

# MY PATCH

by Garry George

## MY LAWN

**T**welve years ago I followed my own advice and killed my lawn, a murder I chronicled in the *Western Tanager* (see Vol. 69, No. 1) I brought in big rocks from Arizona and Utah and plopped them down here and there towards the back fence where birds might hide. I put in a three-tiered recycling stream and protected it with tiered bushes and shrubs native to California such as ceonothus and ironwood. I planted some California native plants to attract birds. Toyon, mahonia and pyracantha (non-native) were planted to lure fruit eaters such as thrushes, Cedar Waxwings and

Northern Mockingbirds. I planted lavatera (island mallow), ceonothus (wild lilac), and laurel sumac to attract insects and provide secure spots for perching and foraging for insect eaters such as warblers, vireos, flycatchers, and Bushtits. I put in buckwheat and milkweed to attract butterflies, and epilobium (California fuschia), Manzanita, fairyduster, and ribes (also fuschia) to attract hummingbirds. Grasses and buckwheats were intended to attract seedeaters.

My habitat is mature now, and year by year I've studiously watched the increase in life, especially bird life. It's now my

favorite place to bird; it's "my patch," quite literally.

It took a while for my patch to assert itself, as the plants grew and began to compete for the small space in my yard. It also took a while for me to stop trying to control my patch, and let leaves fall where they may, let the fallen lavatera grow along the ground in a tangle, let the island chickory, ribes, and buckwheat turn brown and appear dead. Some did die, and that took me a while to accept. But at some point, around

year three or four, suddenly my front and back yards looked and smelled like the places I love to bird. It is a garden, so I planted what I liked. I didn't need to feel as though I were trying to restore a patch of the Los Angeles basin, as if I would know what was native to the Los Angeles basin near the La Brea tar pits. I didn't want to attract saber tooth tigers, just birds. So my patch looks like a cross between Santa Cruz Island, the Mojave Desert, and the Santa Monica Mountains— all concentrated in a small lot.

But I built it and they came. Almost eighty species so far, if you count the weird ones.

Like the he Sulphur-crested Cockatoo I'm sure was not on migration from Australia. Or the noisy Blue and Yellow Macaws followed by their noisy owner trying to tempt them with a bowl of sunflower seeds, calling them by their Russian names. Or the Purplish-backed Jay whose call I recognized and ran out the back door only to discover a beautiful jay but with a very ragged tail indicating it had escaped from a cage recently. I know it's politically incorrect, but I've loved seeing those diverse birds in my patch: urban avian entertainment.

I've really gotten to know the regulars, and over the years the number of visitors has increased and increased. I'm sorry I didn't put up mist nets or get a base line to

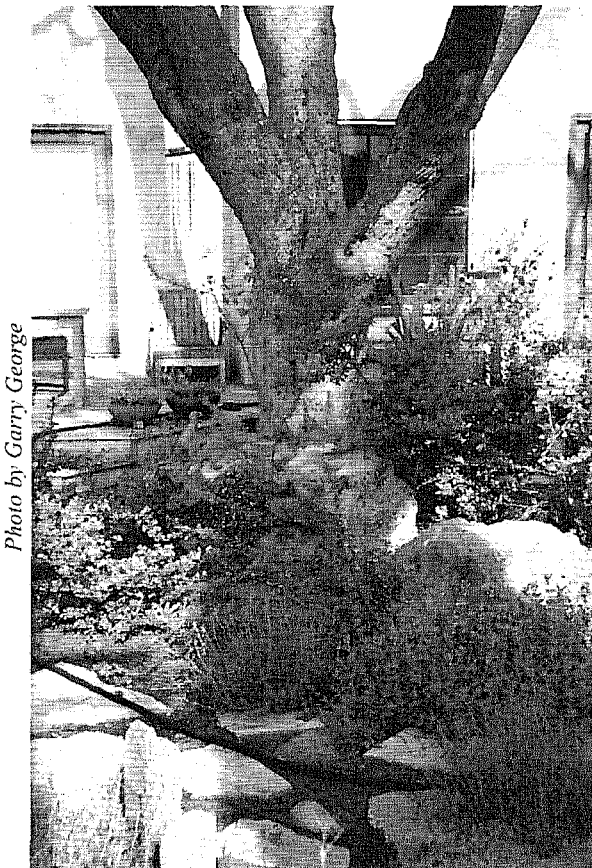
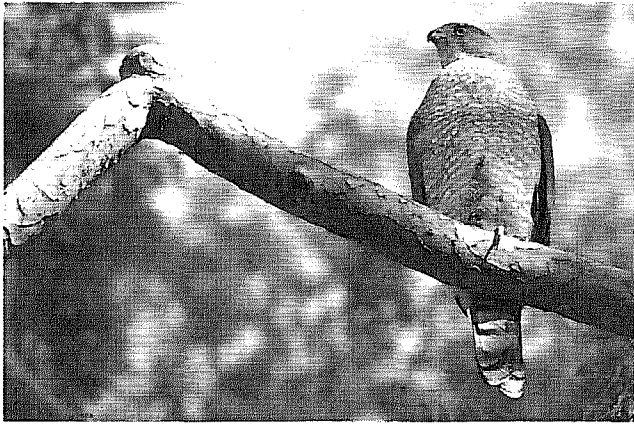


Photo by Garry George

Garry's Patch



*Cooper's Hawk*

track the increase from re-vegetating with native plants. There is so much life in my patch now that I am constantly presented with interesting puzzles to solve or speculate on. I can barely get out the door and down the walk without some movement catching my attention.

Migration is surprising in my patch. I suddenly discover a Willow Flycatcher in the acacia, or a Bell's Vireo plopping into the stream for a few seconds, or a Lesser Nighthawk lurching back and forth down my street. On May 4 the jacaranda tree blooms typically begin to attract insects to the sticky nectar. That's always when the Yellow Warblers appear, usually not a day before, not a day after; except this year they didn't show up until May 12. Very unusual.

Five years ago the first wintering flock stuck around for months. Almost every day a Hermit Thrush would streak through the yard and disappear behind a rock at the slightest movement, best viewed through the bedroom doors as if from a hide. The thrush hops on the rocks at the top of the stream, tilting its head as it

inspects with one eye for a moment. It looks around for predators, hops, hops, hops down the rocks to the water, looks around, takes a quick bath, and then zip, it's gone. I am reminded of South American

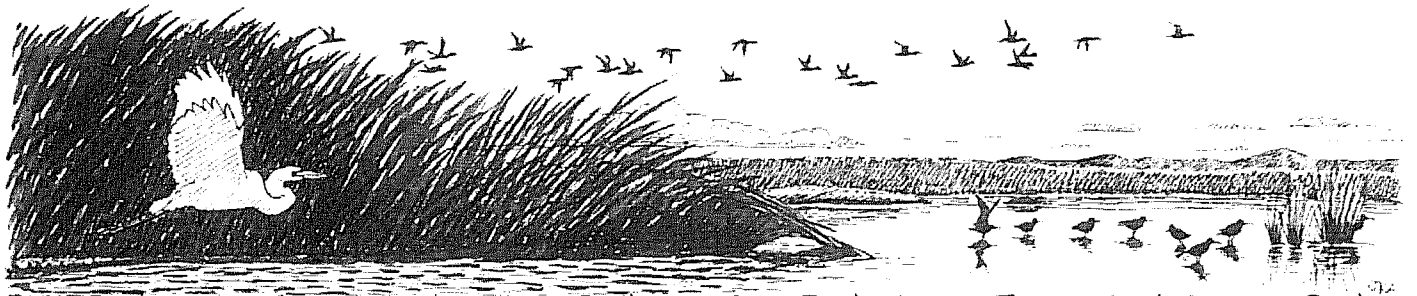
antpittas, which to me are thrushes without tails in morphology and behavior. The Hermit Thrush in my patch takes me back to Ecuador.

Along with Hermit Thrush a wintering flock of Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Orange-crowned Warblers (*lutescens* ssp), Black-throated Gray Warblers, and Yellow-rumped Warblers come in and out of the yard joining regulars Bushtits, Western Scrub-Jays, Northern Mockingbirds, and Black Phoebes. For two winters a male Common Yellowthroat roosted in the front yard. Every day he secretly worked his way down the side of the house through the bladderpod, skulking up and over the fence through the grapevines, and then down to the water through the lemonadeberry and galvezia (island snapdragon) in a protected route, chucking and chattering all the way. For two winters, a House Wren sang every day up in the Phoenix palm, and during the second winter another wren joined the chorus. Every morning they sang for about twenty minutes, one across the street and one in my yard, and then silently skulked around. A scuffling sound in the leaves could be the wren, and a few times I caught him with my binoculars, or discovered it was one of the family of western alligator lizards that have taken up residence.

Conflicts are inevitable, and the biggest decision for me was the introduction of niger seed feeders to attract goldfinches. For five years, I could hear them in nearby yards, but they just wouldn't make the short flight into my yard. Impatient, I put up the feeder, and voila, tons of Lesser and American Goldfinches. The spilt seed is a feast for Mourning Doves, up to seven at a time, and well-nourished Mourning Doves sure get promiscuous. Quite a hotbed out there in my patch. It didn't take long for a Cooper's Hawk to discover the smorgasbord I had created. I watched out the window as the doves and goldfinches scattered in a flurry of wings and silence, then, a disappointed juvenile Cooper's Hawk perched on my deck chair with that intense focus. But this young male was developing his skills, and soon there was a pile of feathers in the yard, next I saw him take a Mourning Dove and eat it by the pond. I had mixed emotions.

I tell myself I'm making a contribution to reducing global warming with my patch. My birding is emission free since I walk to my patch, or rather just look out at it. No mowers or blowers spit carbon dioxide, and the shade I've created cools my patch and sequesters carbon.

I love my patch. My ears are always hanging out the window. I carry binoculars to get the paper in the morning. Three pairs of bins sit around the house, two in back and one in front. If I ask you to hold in the middle of a phone call, it might be because something moved in the back yard and I need to look closer at it. Please don't take it personally. It's my patch!



# CONSERVATION CONVERSATION

by Garry George

## Bolsa Chica redux

On May 8 the California Coastal Commission heard from Shea Properties and other proponents of a 350-unit single residence development on the mesa above Bolsa Chica wetlands, and from opponents including Bolsa Chica Land Trust, CLEAN, Sierra Club, Sea & Sage Audubon, and Los Angeles Audubon. We emphasized the importance of the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve, which includes the mesa and the eucalyptus groves on the west end of the mesa, identified as an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area by the Commission because of the seven species of raptors that roost, perch and nest there. Audubon California has identified Bolsa Chica as an Important Bird Area for conservation priority. Los Angeles Audubon is the only chapter in the State of California that does not have an Important Bird Area in its zip code service area, so we've been partnering with our neighbors whenever possible and adopting IBAs in Los Angeles, Orange, and Ventura Counties. At the Coastal Commission hearing, we marched to the podium one by one. Biologist Pete Bloom spoke of the importance of the eucalyptus groves to

a pair of White-tailed Kites that breed there, and reminded the entire room of the serious declines in Southern California of this sensitive species not only through loss of habitat, but a dramatic rise in nest failure. Pete promised to write for the *Western Tanager* on the status of this species in Southern California in the near future.

When it came time to vote, one Commissioner made a motion to declare that there were no wetlands on the mesa property opening it to development. This in spite of testimony and photographic evidence of wetlands plants and pooling water as far back as the sixties, and photos of illegal land fills by prior owners and Shea. No other Commissioner seconded that motion. This was a good sign! But as the vote started, it was interrupted by a motion to continue the vote in July when all opponents and proponents must meet again.

## Eruv, Schmeruv

The Coastal Commission also heard an appeal for the revocation of the permit granted to Pacific Jewish Center in Venice to create a six mile long twenty-foot high "eruv" along the beaches of Santa

Monica, Venice, and Marina del Rey, near Ballona wetlands and the Venice Least Tern colony, using monofilament fishing line. The "eruv" defines a boundary within which orthodox congregants could be exempt on the Sabbath from laws banning exertions such as the carrying of keys or the pushing of strollers. But the permit was issued on the condition that the "eruv" would have to be accompanied by a monitoring program to detect bird strike. The permit further mandated that the monitoring program be approved by the Commission before construction could begin. In its determination the Commission required the Pacific Jewish Center to consult with Audubon, which never happened. May's Los Angeles Audubon board meeting heard appeals for support from Marina del Rey homeowners Association and CLEAN, two local groups opposing the "eruv" with litigation. The Board voted unanimously to support the citizen groups with a letter to the Coastal Commission for the May 8 hearing. The Commission decided to consider the revocation and chided the Pacific Jewish Center for not being in touch with Audubon to plan the monitoring program. We heard from Rabbi Geiger a week



later, and we will meet with him on August 29 and report in the next *Western Tanager* on the results of that meeting. We do not support and have serious concerns about the impacts of the "eruv" on birds that are protected by federal, state, and local laws. The Ballona Valley, including the Least Tern colony, is another Important Bird Area of Audubon California, and is a conservation priority.

### Least Terns

They're back! And they are laying eggs on Venice Beach. Los Angeles and Santa Monica Bay Audubon are once again collaborating on a volunteer program to monitor the nests. As of this writing, three eggs have been pinched by crows, but efforts to protect the birds and their eggs have been doubled. Our own Endangered Species Program Intern Stacey Vigallon is working with Tom Ryan on this colony. If you want to help, email Stacey at [tern@laaudubon.org](mailto:tern@laaudubon.org).

### Audubon adapts to global warming

Audubon held a global warming summit in Park City, Utah in May to workshop its entry into the world of global warming. Los Angeles Audubon attended at the

invitation of Audubon. The summit included an emotional speech by Audubon President John Flicker on the importance of Audubon addressing global warming; presentations by communications experts on how to shape the Audubon message and communicate it; workshops on policy, adaptive management at IBAs, citizen science, and education; and distribution of a draft Powerpoint presentation on global warming's potential impacts on birds and wildlife created by Audubon and National Wildlife Federation that can be configured for any local presentation by a chapter or center. Dinner speakers included Stanford climatologist Dr. Stephen Schneider (see <http://stephenschneider.stanford.edu/>), author of *Wildlife Responses to Climate Change*, and former California EPA Secretary and current Audubon California Board member Winston Hickox on his advisory role to Governor Schwarzenegger on developing a carbon cap and trade financial market. It looks like the global warming message on the potential impacts on birds and habitat will filter through all Audubon activities and programs soon, and will be the theme of the Audubon California Assembly of chapters at Asilomar October 7 – 9, 2007.



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# LETTER FROM ELEANOR OSGOOD

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Dear Intermediate and Advanced Birders,

Think back with me to what it was like to be a beginning birder. Visualize picking up a pair of binoculars and your first field guide and setting out to identify birds. Were you on a hike? Hanging out at a campsite? Or in your backyard? Do you remember the satisfaction of identifying your first bird? Do you recall the pride you took as your bird list grew? Have you ever looked back over the first year or two of your personal bird list and laughed out loud at a Black-chinned Sparrow seen in your backyard, when you now know that the bird must have been a House Sparrow? Do you remember going on guided birdwalks where seasoned birders were calling out obscure colors that you couldn't see because your optics weren't bringing in enough light? Or how about the time you and friends or family made plans to return to a location in June that months before had been teeming with birds, and when you arrived there were no birds to be seen, because you did not then appreciate migration. Can you remember ever standing in awe of a seasoned birder who looked out in the distance at a silhouette of a flying bird, and called the bird by name?

Ah, yes, that's what it is like to be a beginner.

And can you recall life prior to being an environmentalist? Can you remember how your dedication evolved? How much of your commitment to conservation and habitat protection stemmed directly from your passion for birds? Perhaps the more you learned about birds, the more you wanted to learn about plants, insects, reptiles and mammals. Did your commitment increase after realizing that most birds require specialized habitats or after your birding hobby led you to hidden

*I firmly believe that having a passion for birds leads to becoming a good steward of the Earth. And we need more people to join the ranks of stewards.*

places of unbelievable beauty? Perhaps your environmental activism was jumpstarted by the disappearance of one of your favorite birding places.

How many of us gained a whole new understanding of what environmental protection meant once we became passionate about birds?

The Los Angeles Audubon mission encourages our members to enjoy birds and birdwatching. However, our mission also requires that we reach out to oth-

ers so that they may share our enjoyment of birds and join us in protecting birds and their habitat.

The newspaper and magazines say that birdwatching has become one of America's favorite past-times. If that is true, then why doesn't Los Angeles Audubon have thousands of members? If there are so many birders around, why are their collective voices not being heard loud enough to prevent continued loss of critical habitat and open space, including our natural waterways and our wetlands?

I firmly believe that having a passion for birds leads to becoming a good steward of the Earth. And we need more people to join the ranks of stewards.

Given our mission, Los Angeles Audubon has launched two outreach programs throughout the Los Angeles Metropolitan area, and we urgently need you to join us in carrying them out. You have read about these projects already in previous editions of the *Western Tanager*. One project is expanding the number of beginning birdwalks in local parks. Another is presenting "Introduction to Bird Watching" classes at community colleges, parks, adult schools, and venues where birding entwines with other interests (Sierra Club Chapters; Garden Clubs, among others).

In order to make this endeavor successful, we need an army of



# MEMBERSHIP

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people willing to lead or teach at least one walk or class a year. The Outreach Committee will offer mentoring. We already have a PowerPoint presentation for the "Intro to Bird Watching" class with accompanying hand-outs. We will meet with volunteers to go over the presentation, and volunteers are welcome to team-teach with people who are presently giving classes as part of their training. People who have never led a bird walk are welcome to co-lead until they feel comfortable on their own.

If everyone is willing to do one or two events a year, just think of all the people we can bring into Audubon and into the environmental/conservation community!

I ask all of you to remember your journey from beginning bird watcher to seasoned birder, growing from someone who simply had a passion for outdoor activities to a passionate advocate for habitat protection.

And secondly, and most importantly, I am asking you to reach out to others who are just awakening to the birds around them and help them make the same journey that you made.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Eleanor Osgood  
Volunteer Coordinator  
Volunteer@laudubon.org

## THANK YOU!

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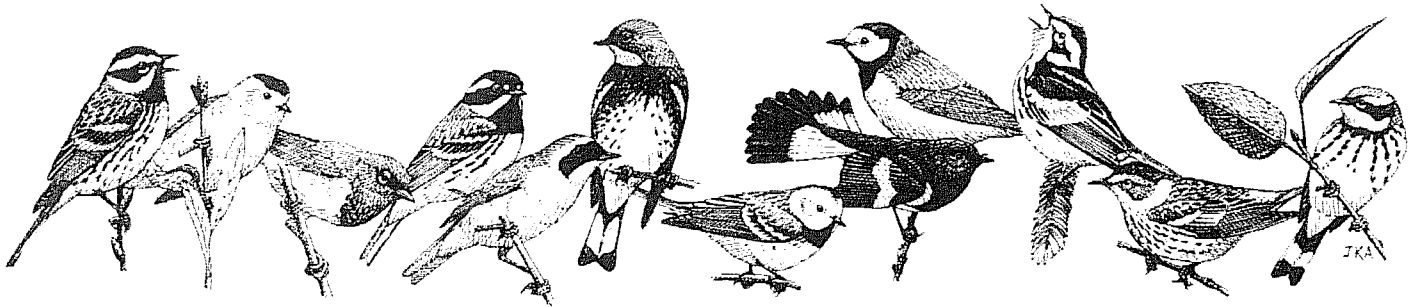
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## BIRDS OF THE SEASON

---

by Jon Fisher

**W**ith countless birds streaming northward over land and sea, as well as the hustle and bustle of breeding activity locally, the onset of spring always seems contagious with excitement. Though diminished compared to migrations of decades ago, the passage of such a large number and variety of birds remains impressive. Thus even though the majority of our vagrants turn up in fall, spring maintains its own appeal.

Whether or not a direct result of the extremely dry conditions this year, migration seemed strong through early May. A theory is that migrants in dry years are forced to concentrate in the greener patches that offer more food, water and cover. In turn birders tend to frequent those places. In any case, there were a number of reports of above average counts and good numbers of migrants throughout the period.

Two birding events highlighted LA County this spring. First, the Big Day team of Mike San

Miguel, Jon Feenstra, Michael San Miguel, Jr. and Todd McGrath—aka Team Fecal Sac—recorded an amazing 224 species on April 29. Very impressive. In their quest for the Big Day record, the team drove a total of 520 miles... and that was a shorter distance than on their previous record run in 2005. As important as seeing the birds is in the 24 hour period, it's in the planning where any Big Day count is won or lost.

This mother of all LA County Big Days took place on the same weekend as our ABC (America's Birdiest County) competition. The ABC, involving dozens of observers and covering April 27-29, produced another record: 272 species were observed over the three-day event. To add some perspective, the Big Day run by a single team produced just 18% fewer species than the entire ABC. It is stating the obvious to say that they've set the bar high for any would-be challengers.

In addition to these achievements, there was quite a lot happening in the bird world this spring. Here's a look at what was found during the period...

While flocks of **Brants** are a common sight in spring as they head north along the coast, a congregation of forty-three at Legg Lake in South El Monte on April 29 was an unusual concentration inland (Mickey Long). Also reported was a rather late **Snow Goose** was at Piute Ponds on April 14 (Mike San Miguel).

Few other waterfowl were reported. Just one **White-winged Scoter** was present during the period, that one at Ballona Creek mouth on April 22 (Kevin Larson). Likewise, a **Long-tailed Duck** present off Dockweiler State Beach in El Segundo from March 15-April 29 (Jim Pike) was the only one found. Rather late was a **Canvasback** at the Lancaster Sewer Ponds on May 14. (Mike San Miguel)

Something of a surprise well

away from the coast, or for that matter anywhere in wetland-challenged LA County, was an adult **Little Blue Heron** at Hansen Dam on May 9 (Kimball Garrett).

A few **Swainson's Hawks** trickling through the county in early March were followed by some good-sized flocks. Thirty were over Pasadena on the morning of March 20 (Lance Benner), and another flock of 40 birds were above Cal Tech later the same day (Brendan Crill). These groups were eclipsed by a hundred birds over Altadena the following day (Lance Benner). The last reported flock of any significant size was one of 26 over Pasadena on April 3 (Frank Gilliland).

The only other raptor of note was a lingering **Ferruginous Hawk** east of Quail Lake on April 24 (Bobby Walsh).

Among many reports of Black Oystercatchers along the coast, there was a single **American x Black Oystercatcher** at Dockweiler State Beach on March 16 (Jim Pike).

**Solitary Sandpipers**, rare but regular spring transients, were at Malibu Lagoon on April 8 (Jon Fisher) and at the Piute Ponds on Edwards AFB on April 14 (Mike San Miguel) and April 29 (Team Fecal Sac). Less expected was a **Baird's Sandpiper** at Piute Ponds on

April 4 (Mike San Miguel).

The dikes and breakwater at the Ballona Creek mouth are always a good spot for rock-loving shorebirds. Good numbers of **Surfbirds** began congregating here in March and over several weeks increased to a remarkable count of 800 on April 8 (Kevin Larson). In addition, after a gap in reports, the **Rock Sandpiper** discovered last November resurfaced here on April 23-24 in colorful alternate plumage (Richard Barth). Unfortunately, the bird was missed on the ABC weekend and may have headed north by then.

A **Franklin's Gull** on April 24 was the first to be reported from the Lancaster Sewer Ponds (Richard Barth), and that number had increased to 17 by May 2 (Mike San Miguel). Two more Franklin's were at Castaic Lagoon on May 12, while eight were still in Lancaster on May 14 and another seven were at Piute Ponds the same day (all Mike San Miguel). The **Glaucous Gull** that wintered along the lower LA River was last seen on March 24 (Kevin Larson).

An interesting gull eventually judged to be a **Thayer's x Iceland Gull** was at Malibu Lagoon on March 14 (Brian Ivon Jones). These two species are considered conspecific by many and the range of variation between the two forms

may simply represent hybridization, a clinal range or a combination of the two.

**Black Terns** were present in numbers in early May at the Lancaster Sewer Ponds with the first report of large numbers was 45 on May 2 (Mike San Miguel). On the following day 200 were at the same location (Tom Miko). Another group was at Piute Ponds on May 14 (Mike San Miguel).

A **Horned Puffin** reported on May 12 at Point Dume could not be refound, though this sighting fits the May-June pattern of previous records for this species (Kris Ohlenkamp).

**Burrowing Owls** are scarce migrants on the coastal plain, but when they do appear it is often in the oddest of locations. One was on the roof of the Long Beach Public Library on March 22 (Rich Sonnenberg). Another was at the newly opened Rio de Los Angeles Park along the LA River in April (Jon Cox).

Several **Lesser Nighthawks** at lower Tujunga Wash on April 4 were a welcome sign of continued breeding in this area despite persistent and continuing habitat degradation (Kimball Garrett).

A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was present until March 21 (Don Sterba) at the often productive Village Green Condo-

miniums in Los Angeles.

Two **Calliope Hummingbirds** at Eaton Canyon on April 2 (Tom Miko) were the first of a wave of reports that continued through the end of the month. Calliopes, normally scarce as spring migrants, were widely reported on the coastal slope and made their debut on many yard lists as they turned up at a number of feeders.

A couple of flycatchers were of interest during the period. The Old Zoo area at Griffith Park held a **Greater Pewee** from April 6-15 (Dan Cooper). As most will recall, this was the exact location where one was found on April 17 of last year. Naturally this bird should be looked for at the same time- or earlier- next year. One wonders why this bird it appeared at this location in April for two consecutive years, although it may have wintered in the area and gone undetected until it began calling in spring. A **Tropical Kingbird** that spent the winter at El Dorado Park in Long Beach remained through May 2 (Karen Gilbert).

Though now fairly common but very local as a breeder, a singing **Bell's Vireo** at El Dorado Park in Long Beach on May 3 (Karen Gilbert) was at a location where rarely recorded. Though they have never been recorded breeding at this location, this report suggests that possibility.

Historically much more numerous, **Purple Martins** are now rare but regular migrants on the coastal plain. Two birds at the South Coast Botanic Garden on April 8 (Kevin Larson, Carol Selvey) and another in East Los Angeles on May 7 (Tom Miko) were thus noteworthy. While very small numbers may persist as breeders in the San Gabriel Mountains, locating them is difficult. A single **Bank Swallow**, another species that has been reduced to a rare migrant in the county, was along LA River Bette Davis Park in Glendale on April 15 (Mike San Miguel). Several more were at Bonelli Regional Park in San Dimas on April 21 (Rod Higbie) and two were at Hansen Dam on April 27 (Kimball Garrett).

A belated report of a **California Gnatcatcher** found at Santa Fe Dam on February 24 (Mickey Long) was followed soon after by the sighting of a pair there (John Griffith). This raises the possibility of breeding at this locale and certainly the alluvial scrub habitat suits this species' requirements. The closest known populations are near Bonelli Park in San Dimas and in the Montebello Hills.

Though still a bit early in the season, a few odd parulids were found. In the Old Zoo area at Griffith Park, a **Northern Parula** was reported on April 15 (Dan Williams). A

**Black-and-white Warbler** was at Sycamore Canyon in Whittier on April 27 (Larry Schmah) and a female **American Redstart** was at Whittier Narrows in South El Monte on May 5 (Rob Fowler). Rarer in spring than in fall were two **Northern Waterthrushes**. One was along the Santa Clara River near I-5 on May 4 (Doug Willick) and another was at El Dorado Park in Long Beach on May 7 (Karen Gilbert). Thus far, the warbler highlight of the spring was the discovery of a singing **Yellow-throated Warbler** at Hansen Dam on May 12-13 (Kimball Garrett).

Following reports of a number of birds this past winter, several new **Summer Tanagers** were found. One was at the LA National Cemetery on April 10 (Richard Barth), another was at Soledad Canyon near Agua Dulce on May 11 with a pair there on May 17 (Jim Moore), and a third was at Hansen Dam on May 12 (Kimball Garrett). Breeding should be looked for in the Soledad Canyon and nearby cottonwood riparian areas.

A **Lazuli Bunting** at Hansen Dam on March 25 was very early (Kimball Garrett). This was a full two weeks ahead of this species normal arrival date. This record was followed by one at the Arboretum just two days later (Will and Lois Fulmer), also obviously very early.

The **Harris's Sparrow** wintering at El Dorado Park Long Beach remained through March 18 (Laura Nordin). Just one **Vesper Sparrow** was reported during the period, that one at Santa Fe Dam on March 24 (Andrew Lee).

A **Grasshopper Sparrow**, very rare as a migrant in the county, was at Kenneth Hahn Park in Baldwin Hills on April 15 (Richard Barth).

Two **Clay-colored Sparrows** were just north of the Wildlife Area at the Sepulveda Basin. First, a single bird was found on April 11 (Jon Feenstra), and two were there on April 22 (Jim Royer). Another Clay-colored was found at Kenneth Hahn Recreation Area on May 6 (Richard Barth). A few **Brewer's Sparrows**, rare spring migrants away from the deserts, included one at Hansen Dam on April 21 and two there on April 27 (Kimball Garrett).

Two wintering orioles, an **Orchard Oriole** and **Baltimore Oriole**, were at South Coast Botanic Garden through April 21 (Kevin Larson). A spate of **Yellow-headed Blackbird** reports began with one at the La Brea Tar Pits on April 4 (Dan Cooper). Singles or small groups were at a number of other locations in April, and then 85 turned up at Hansen Dam on April 27 (Kimball Garrett) and another 38 were along

the SGR near Beverly on April 29 (Larry Schmahl).

By the middle of May, the bulk of spring migrants have passed through the county, but that doesn't mean migration is over by any means. There are still smaller numbers of many passerines moving through into the first part of June, and for species like Willow Flycatcher, migration is just gearing up rather than waning in mid-May.

Most of us can't resist some form of vagrant chasing at this point in the migration period. This is an undeniably exciting part of birding. Something of a guilty pleasure to be sure, but it's always good to have a few of those. Don't forget to check your local 'patch' as well as those desert hotspots; surprises often turn up when and where we don't expect them.

Before the last of the spring landbirds have passed through heading north, southbound Short-billed Dowitchers, Western Sandpipers and Wilson's Phalaropes will be appearing in June. By July, the lower LA River and other suitable locations will be teeming with shorebirds, and no doubt there will be some notable finds among them. One of the great things about birding is that there's always something happening and always something to look forward to right around the corner...



## NATURE SHOP

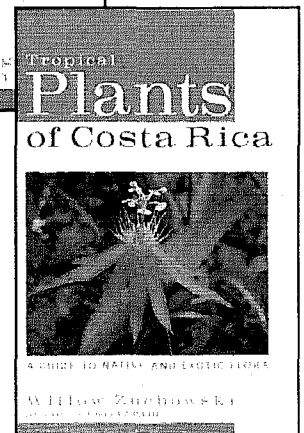
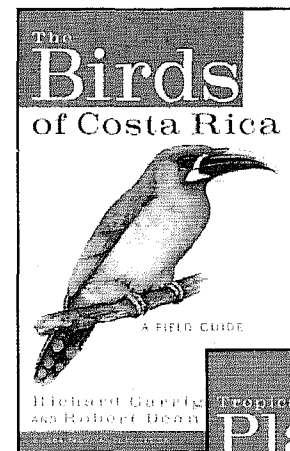
### NEW TITLES

#### **The Birds of Costa Rica, A Field Guide**

by *Richard Garrigues and  
Robert Dean*

This book features descriptions and illustrations of more than 820 resident and neotropical migrant species found in Costa Rica.

N12345 \$29.95



#### **Tropical Plants of Costa Rica**

by *Willow Zuchowski*,  
Photographs by *Turid Forsyth*

This book is beautifully illustrated with more than 540 full-color photographs taken in the field. Instructive pen-and-ink drawings of botanical details also accompany many of the accounts.

N12317 \$35.00

# BIRD WALKS

Bird walks are geared for the beginner / intermediate looking for an introduction or less strenuous excursion. Bird walks DO NOT require sign-ups.

Field trips often require more time or effort, and delve more deeply into identification, natural histories and interactions observed in the field.

All are welcome on either type of trip. Reserve Field Trips per directions in the gray box posted elsewhere.

## Sunday, July 1

**Topanga State Park Bird Walk.** Ken Wheeland and Chris Tosdevin will lead participants through this beautiful and 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, July 7

**Debs Park Audubon Center Birdwalk.** Join Dexter Kelly for a leisurely morning walk through the diverse natural areas that surround the Audubon Center at Debs Park. A wide variety of birds of riparian, walnut woodland, and chaparral habitats can be found, including raptors. Meet at 9:00 AM. The Center is located on Griffin Avenue on the west side of the park. From the south, take the Pasadena Fwy north to the Avenue 43 exit. Bear right on Ave. 43 up the hill to Griffin Ave. Turn left on Griffin Ave., and go about a quarter mile to the Center's driveway, which goes steeply uphill on the right. From the north, exit the Pasadena Freeway southbound at Avenue 52. Turn left on Ave. 52, and follow it across the freeway to where it becomes Griffin Ave. The driveway is a quarter mile on the left.

## Saturday, July 28

**Whittier Narrows Birdwalk.** 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 Cen-

ter, 1000 Durfee Ave. Meet at 8:15 AM.

## Sunday, August 5

**Topanga State Park Birdwalk.** Leaders: Ken Wheeland and Chris Tosdevin. Meet at 8:00 AM. See July 1 listing for details.

## Sunday, August 19

**Ballona Wetlands Birdwalk.** Bob Shanman leads this trip to our nearest wetland and adjacent rocky jetty. Migrating shorebirds and terns should be coming through. 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.

## Sunday, September 9

**Upper Franklin Canyon Birdwalk.** Docent Paul Cooley will be escorting us around this local bird haven, with Wood Ducks, migrating songbirds, and resident chaparral species expected. Franklin Canyon is located between Sherman Oaks and Beverly Hills. Meet in the parking lot at 8:00 AM, and bird for a few hours. From the 101 Fwy, take Coldwater Cyn. Ave. S into the hills. Immediately after Mulholland Dr. merges from the W with Coldwater Cyn. Ave., make a 90-degree right turn onto Franklin Cyn. Dr. and continue west to the Sooky Goldberg Nature Center. The lot is through a gated drive on the left. Please check the September Tanager or our website for changes in trip status.

## Saturday, September 15

**Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area Birdwalk.** Leader: Eleanor Osgood. 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, September 16

**Ballona Wetlands Birdwalk.** 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.

## Sunday, August 7

### Echo Park Lake's 3rd Annual Summer Bird Walk

During recent years, Echo Park Lake Birders have identified more than 60 birds that call Echo Park their home for all or part of the year. Summer birds at the lake include Mallards, great-tailed grackles, robins, American coots, sparrows, finches, great egrets, black-crowned night herons, green herons, blackbirds, hawks and various gulls and doves. This is a fun walk, and beginning birders are encouraged to participate. Parents are encouraged to bring their children. And it's free! Take your binoculars, and a bird guide, if you have one. Sign-up by phone: (323)-663-6767 or email jayebea@earthlink.net. Subject line "summer bird walk".



# FIELD TRIPS

Before setting out on any field trip, please call the  
**LAAS bird tape, 323-874-1318** (Events & Announcements, #4).  
Special instructions or possible cancellations that may have occurred  
by the Thursday before the trip will be announced at that number.

## **Saturday, June 30**

**Night Owling Field Trip.** Leader: **Raymond Schep.** Target birds include Northern Pygmy-Owl, Flammulated Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Western Screech-Owl (easier), and Common Poorwill (easy to hear). Until dark we will bird for mountain specialties such as Cassin's finch and White-headed Woodpecker. We will take a gentle hike into a canyon looking for Spotted Owl. They're all up there, but no promises! Leave promptly at 5:30 PM from where the 210 Fwy and Angeles Crest Highway intersect in La Canada. Exit the 210 at Angeles Crest Hwy N. About one block up is a frontage road on the right, where we will park and carpool. Finish around midnight. Bring a warm jacket, a full stomach, snacks, and a Forest Service Adventure Pass. Send \$5, phone number, e-mail address (if you have it) and a SASE to Audubon House to sign up. Limit 10.

## **Sunday, July 8 (revised date!)**

**Big Bear Lake Vicinity Field Trip.** Leaders: **Nick and Mary Freeman.** Meet in the Aspen Glen Picnic Area parking lot in Big Bear at 7:30 AM. Take Hwy 18 or 38 to Big Bear Lake, then proceed about half way along the south side of the lake on Hwy 18 and turn south on Tulip Lane. The lot will be on the SW side of this short street. Target birds include Wm. Sapsucker, Calliope and Rufous Hummers, mountain finches and White-headed

Woodpecker. We may go to Arrastre Creek (east) or Upper Santa Ana River (south). It should be warm and there may be bugs, so come prepared. Bring lunch for a full day, and a Forest Service Adventure Pass.

## **Saturday, July 14**

### **Mount Abel Area Field Trip.**

Leader: **Jean Brandt.** We will start the morning near the "Shirley's Seep," watching as birds and mammals are drawn to a nearby spring. Bring a chair, snacks, thermos of hot drinks, and be prepared for any kind of weather. Possible birds include Calliope Hummingbird and White-headed Woodpecker. After we have exhausted the birds and mammals that come to the seep, we will bird our way up to Mount Abel. Picnic lunch in campground near the top of Mt. Abel. Rain cancels. Anticipate the elements, and bring a lunch and a Forest Service Adventure Pass.

Meet at Denny's parking lot off Roxford and I 405 in Sylmar at 7:00 AM for carpooling to Mt. Abel.

## **Sunday, August 5 (Rescheduled to July 8, see above)**

**Big Bear Lake Vicinity Field Trip.** Leaders: **Nick and Mary Freeman.**

## **Sunday, August 12**

**Bolsa Chica Wetlands Field Trip.** Leader **Irwin Woldman.** The Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve wetlands were recently opened to increased tidal flow, dredged in the back channel for more wetland habitat, and the walkways were elevated for improved wildlife viewing. Flocks of shorebirds should be heading south, with leftover terns, early gulls, herons, and resident Belding's Savannah Sparrow. Bring a lunch and go to San Joaquin Marsh, Huntington Central Park or Newport Backbay afterwards. Meet at 7:30 AM in the wetlands parking lot inland of PCH between Warner Ave. and Golden West St. in Huntington Beach.



Photo by Mary Freeman

*Belding's Savannah Sparrow*

# FIELD TRIPS

**Sunday, August 19**

**Sweltering Salton Sea Field Trip.** Nick and Mary Freeman lead.

Anticipate 95-115°F, sewer stench and dust-a-plenty. Don't show up without lots of water (1 gallon each per day), good health, and a reliable car with AC. This is the gauntlet of SoCal car birding. So why come? We should see Yellow-footed and Laughing gulls, Wood Stork, Black Tern, Lesser Nighthawk, Abert's Towhee, Gila Woodpecker, and possible Least Bittern, Fulvous Whistling-Duck and Stilt Sandpiper. Perhaps most exciting is the slim but real possibility for real rarities such as Brown and Blue-footed boobies, Frigatebird and even stranger stuff that has popped up in August. Limit 8 paid cars with two or more each. Find a friend, as singles are discouraged, and will be wait-listed until they can carpool. Send \$10 per person with a SASE per vehicle to Audubon House to reserve, and for the mailer with general, lodging and meeting details. Camping is risky; it may not drop to 90°F. Meet near Brawley at Cattle Call

Park at 5:30AM, and bird until 1-2 PM. Scopes and FRS radios helpful. Discounted lodging at Calipatria Inn under "Birder Discount". AM.

**Sunday, August 26**

**LA River Shorebird Migration Field Trip.** Larry Allen will help us identify and age the small sandpipers of the genus *Calidris*. This is prime time for Baird's and Semipalmated sandpipers, although identifying the latter from the concrete river bank is a challenge. Take the 710 Fwy S to the Willow Street offramp, head E over the LA River, and take the first left on Golden Ave, the first left on 26th, straight past the pumping station, and follow this around onto DeForest Ave. Park near the river access by the Willow Street bridge, meet along the river at 7:30AM, and bird until noonish. No fee, no sign-up. Spotting scopes very helpful, although we will share. Lots of walking, and it will get hot.

**September 15 & 16 Weekend Galileo Hills and Beyond Field**

**Trip.** Leaders: Nick and Mary Freeman. This is arguably the best fall migrant trap in the state. Western warblers and flycatchers should headline. Reptiles may be encountered!

For those who stick around for Sunday, we may return to Galileo Hills and California City, or venture farther afield (did I hear Zzyzx?), as dictated by our rambling hearts and bird reports. This will be a combined trip for LAAS and Pasadena AS. Take Hwy 14 about 4 miles past Mojave, then turn right on California City Blvd. Drive through town about a mile past the shops, turn left past the golf course on Randsburg-Mojave Rd., and veer right on 20 Mule Team Rd. Turn left on Rutgers Rd. at the Galileo Hills sign before the hill, take your first paved right, your first right again, into the Silver Saddle Country Club, followed by two paved lefts into the lot. Park by the first pond. About 2 hrs driving time from L.A. LA Audubon House phone sign-up mandatory. 12 max. Bring lunches, sun block. Reserve rooms for both nights in Mojave. Meet at 7:00 AM Saturday, finish up 3-4ish Sunday.

**Saturday, September 22**

**San Diego Area Field Trip.** Nick Freeman and Drew Palette will lead. A good portion of the morning will certainly be spent at Pt. Loma. Some odd birds have been known to pop up here during late migration. Other possible areas include the Tijuana River marsh and nearby farm fields. Take the 5 Fwy S about three miles past Route 52 to the Clairemont Drive offramp and head W into the small lot adjacent to the Mission Bay Information Center. Meet E of the kiosk at 8:00 AM. Bring a lunch. Send \$5 fee to LAAS.

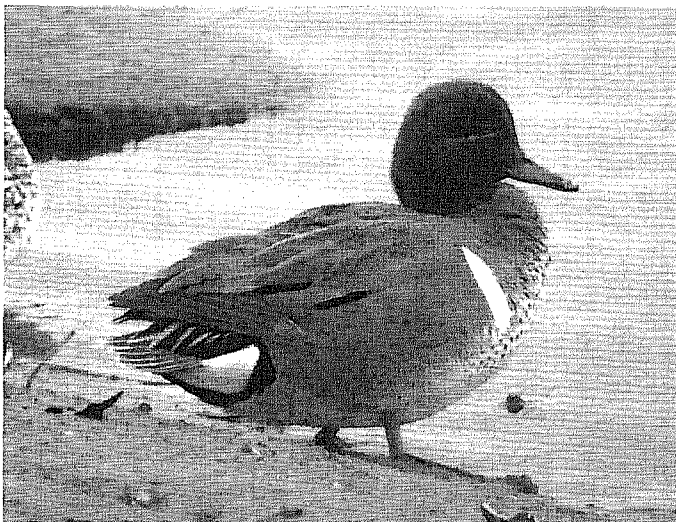


Photo by Mary Freeman

Green-winged Teal

# FIELD TRIPS

**Sunday, September 30**

**Piute Ponds.** Leader **Irwin Woldman**. A good mix of shorebirds, waterfowl and songbirds, with a chance at LeConte's Thrasher and Pectoral Sandpiper. Possible extension to Lancaster sewage ponds or Apollo Park afterwards. Carpool at Denny's (Roxford & I-5), leaving at 7 AM, or meet at McDonald's (Rosamond Blvd. about 1/4 mile west of the 14 Freeway) at 7:45AM. Bring lunch, water and sunblock. Expect hot weather, and afternoon wind. To reserve with LAAS, call Audubon House before September 25 with name, phone number, and e-mail address (optional). Limited sign-up of 15. No drop-ins. High clearance vehicles may be a plus. No cameras on base!

**Saturday, October 6**

**Malibu to McGrath Field Trip.** Leader **Dexter Kelly**. Late passerines and shorebirds should be moving through coastal migration spots, mixed with early wintering birds. Possibly 100 species. Take PCH N over the bridge in Malibu, and turn right on Cross Creek Road for parking (and Starbucks). Cross PCH, and meet at the kiosk by the lagoon at 7:30 AM for a full day of birding. There may be one or two access fees at McGrath, elsewhere. No sign-up or fee for the trip.

## RESERVATION AND FEE EVENTS

(Limited Participation)

Policy and Procedure

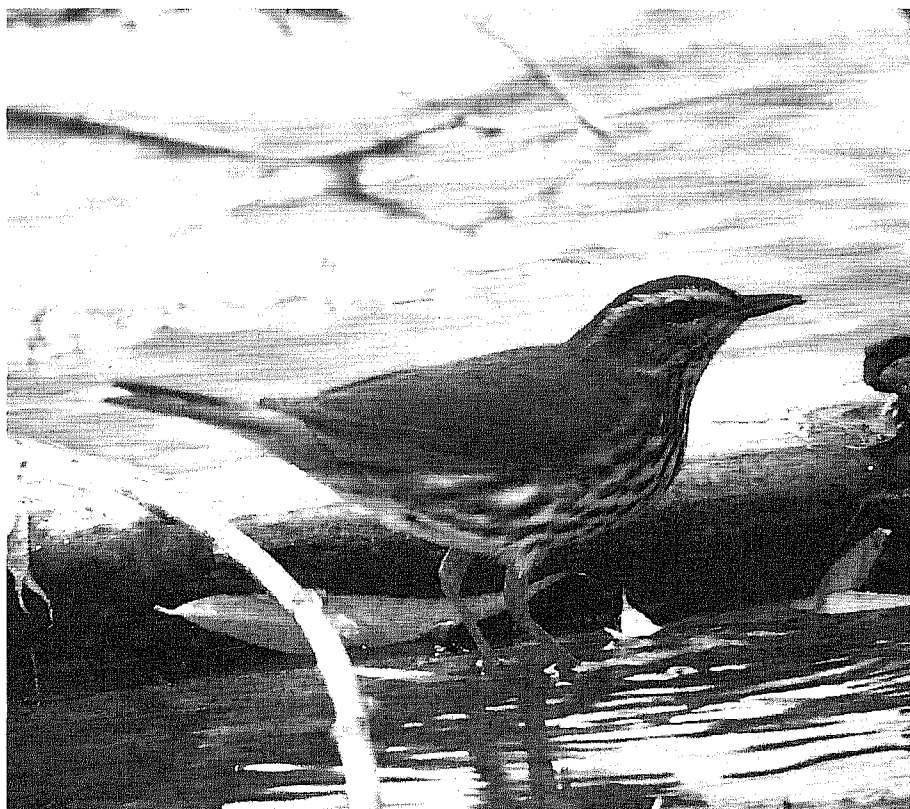
Reservations will be accepted ONLY if ALL the following information is supplied:

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

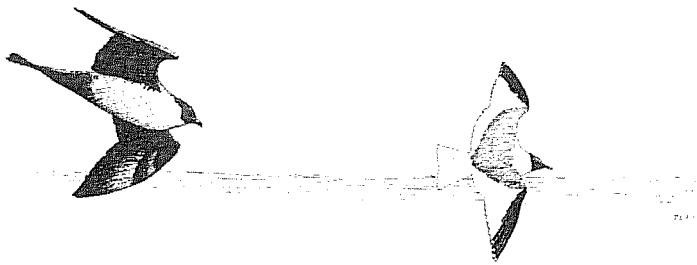
Send to:

LAAS Reservations  
P.O. Box 931057  
Los Angeles, CA 90093-1057

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 Pelagic trips. Our office staff is also available Monday through Thursday for most reservation services.



*Northern Waterthrush by Mary Freeman*



# PELAGIC TRIPS 2007

## SATURDAY, JULY 21

**A deep water trip towards the San Juan Seamount.** This trip departs from the Santa Barbara Harbor on the fast catamaran Condor Express at 7:00 a.m. and will return approximately by 8:00 p.m. We will cruise along the deep water shelf by the San Juan Seamount. This time of year Cook's Petrels and Red-billed Tropicbirds are seen in this area, and this is an ideal time to look for mega-rarities such as Dark-rumped and Stejneger's petrels; as well as Wedge-rumped Storm-petrel. Birds expected: Pink-footed and Sooty shearwaters; Leach's, Ashy and Black storm-petrels; Cormorants (3); Red-necked and Red phalaropes; South Polar Skua; Pomarine Jaeger; Pigeon Guillemot; Common Murre; Xantus's and Craveri's murrelets; Cassin's Auklet. **Leaders: Dave Compton, Jon Feenstra, Kimball Garrett, Todd McGrath, David Pereksta and Wes Fritz. \$198** If there is insufficient response 35 days prior to the departure, the trip will be cancelled. There is a complete galley that serves breakfast, lunch and dinner.

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

**A deep water trip to Cherry, Tanner and Cortez Banks.** This trip departs from the Santa Barbara Harbor at 7:00 a.m. on the fast

catamaran Condor Express, and returns approximately at 8:00 p.m. This is our **Red-billed Tropicbird trip.** We are far offshore in 3 counties: Santa Barbara, Ventura and Los Angeles. Birds expected: Black, Least, Ashy and Leach's storm-petrels; South Polar Skua; Parasitic, Pomarine and Long-tailed jaegers; Sabine's Gull; Arctic Tern. Rarities: Black-footed Albatross; Buller's Shearwater; Craveri's Murrelet. Blue, Fin and Minke whales as well as several species of dolphins are usually seen. **Leaders: Jon Feenstra, Kimball Garrett, Todd McGrath, David Pereksta and Wes Fritz. \$198** The trip will be cancelled if there is insufficient response 35 days prior to departure. There is a complete galley that serves breakfast, lunch and dinner.

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20

**A trip around the Northern Channel Islands Monument.** This 8 hour trip departs from the Island Packer's dock in the Ventura Harbor at 8:00 a.m. on the fast catamaran Islander. After dropping off campers on Santa Cruz Island, we will have the boat to ourselves and cruise around Santa Cruz Island to the Santa Cruz passage by Santa Rosa Island and along the Santa Rosa Flats to the deeper water near San Nicolas Island. We will return by Arch Rock at Anaca-

pa Island. Birds seen on prior trips: Northern Fulmar; Sooty, Pink-footed and Black-vented shearwaters; Leach's, Least and Ashy storm-petrels; cormorants (3); Parasitic and Pomarine jaegers; Sabine's Gull; rocky shorebirds (up to 5); Common Murre, Xantus's Murrelet; Cassin's Auklet. Rarities: Buller's and Flesh-footed shearwaters; South Polar Skua; Long-tailed Jaeger. In 2002 a Streaked Shearwater, and in 2003 a Brown Booby and 2 Manx Shearwaters were seen. Blue, Fin and Humpback whales have been seen on this trip.

**Leaders: Jon Feenstra, Todd McGrath and David Pereksta.**

**\$120** There is a snack galley with beverages, bring your own lunch.

Save \$5.00 with an early sign-up  
60 days prior to the trip departure.

### 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.

# INTERNATIONAL BIRDING TOURS

## THE BEST OF COSTA RICA *February 5-17, 2008*

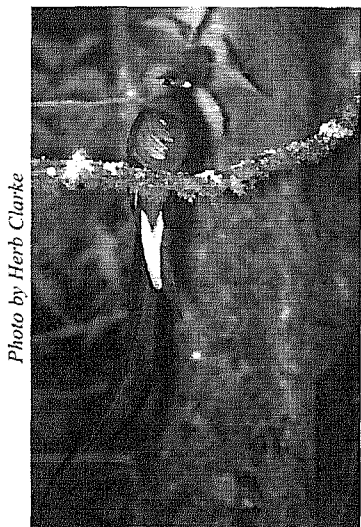


Photo by Herb Clarke

*Resplendent Quetzal*

Costa Rica, with its well deserved reputation as a country sincerely interested in conserving its natural resources, is one that is invariably on all birder's lists to visit. Its tropical forests harbor howler monkeys, Resplendent Quetzals, poison-dart frogs, giant morpho butterflies, over 830 species of birds, and the beauty of thousands of plant species. We will visit six of the major locations that are distinctive, each offering a marvelous profusion of tropical birds.

Habitats encountered will range from semiarid ranch land, to misty cloud forest, the transition zone between the dry and moist forests of the Pacific lowlands, the treeless paramo, and what may well be the highlight of our trip, a visit to La Selva, a lowland rainforest where nearly 400 birds have been recorded. As part of a small group, enjoy some of the best tropical birding in Costa Rica., where you will be accompanied by outstanding leaders throughout. **Space is limited.**

## MOROCCO: FROM THE ATLAS MOUNTAINS TO THE SAHARA *April 19 - May 5, 2008* Post-Extension Tangier to Fes *May 5-10, 2008*

The thought of Morocco brings visions of casbahs, deserts, minarets, camels, and Arabian nights. These sights, coupled with shopping excursions in Marrakech and Fes, will frame your experience, but the primary purpose of this trip is Morocco's birds. With its coasts, islands, wadis, plains, forests, mountains and deserts, Morocco is a birding wonderland-quite distinct from European habitats to the north.

From the moment you arrive in Casablanca, you'll be on your way to look for the over 460 bird species that have been recorded in this country. We will visit numerous habitats to search for species such as Crested Lark, Fan-tailed and Sardinian Warblers, and migrants such as Olivaceous Warbler, Barbary Partridge, the rare Bald Ibis and the difficult-to-find Double-spurred Francolin, to name only a few. From a birder's point of view, we will be in Morocco at probably the most interesting time of year. After the winter and early spring rains, hundreds of dayas (temporary ponds) form, and an abundance of flowers and lush green forests resound with birdsong. Beyond birds many natural wonders will be encountered: minerals from the Middle and High Atlas Mountains, fossils, orchids, mammals, herps and insects. Accommodations are outstanding, and the cuisine excellent. We will be accompanied by expert birding guides. **Space is limited.**

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

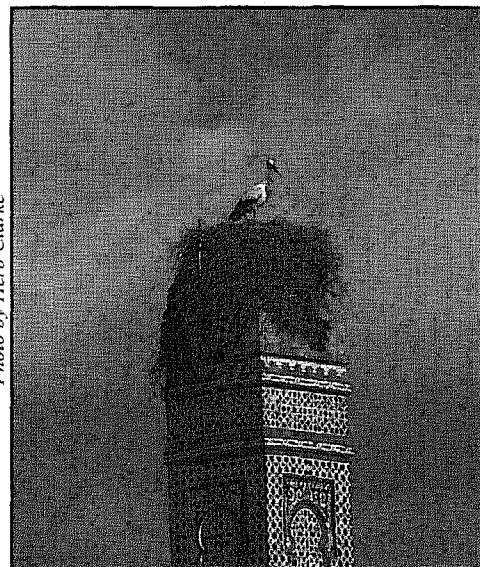


Photo by Herb Clarke

*White Stork nesting on top of minaret.*

# PROGRAMS & EVENING MEETINGS

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

## **NO MEETINGS IN SUMMER**

## **WATCH FOR UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Wednesday, September 12, 2007**

**Tom Ryan** returns for discussion on the recent Burrowing Owl survey.

**Wednesday, October 10, 2007**

**Martin Byhower** gives a discussion on who the "good guys" and "bad guys" really are, in terms of invasive species of plants and animals (which, next to habitat loss, are the greatest threat to biodiversity).

**Saturday, October 20, 2007**

## **Adobe Photoshop Workshop**

**Speaker: Tom Stephenson**

Back by popular demand. A laptop is optimal, but VERY OPTIONAL!  
For anyone who owns a digital camera and Photoshop (or comparable) software.

Eaton Canyon Nature Center/1750 N. Altadena Dr./Pasadena

Fee: \$25 (LAAS fundraiser). Maximum: 45.

Sign-up by SASE mail to LAAS, including names, phone and e-mail.

12:00 Noon - 5:00 PM, with a break.

Read further details in next newsletter.

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

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