

# WESTERN TANAGER



*Feb. 12th Monthly Program— The Wonderful Life of a Dying Tree*



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*The Western Tanager* is the chapter newsletter of the Los Angeles Audubon Society, published online bi-monthly in PDF format, Sept/Oct, Nov/Dec, Jan/Feb, Mar/Apr, May/June, July/Aug. Articles, letters drawings and photographs concerning conservation, birding, chapter activities, and articles of interest to the membership are welcome for submission. Please send copy as Microsoft Word, RTF documents, or plain text files to [westernanager@laaudubon.org](mailto:westernanager@laaudubon.org). Photos should be high resolution (300ppi) .jpg or .tif files. **Submissions are due the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month to be included in the following issue.** All rights reserved. All photographs are used by permission and are copyrighted material of the credited photographers.

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### SCHEDULES

Field Trips and Bird Walks

## PUBLIC LECTURES

**Wed., Jan. 8** — Studying L.A.'s  
 Backyard Bats: A Community  
 Effort | Presented by Miguel  
 Ordeñana

**Wed., Feb. 12** — The Wonderful  
 Life of a Dying Tree | Presented  
 by Gillian Martin

### TIME

7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

### LOCATION

Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook  
 6300 Hetzler Rd  
 Culver City, CA 90232  
 (310) 558-5547

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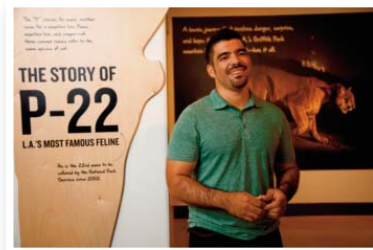
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## Studying L.A.'s Backyard Bats: A Community Effort Miguel Ordeñana



**DATE:** Wednesday, December 11

**TIME:** 7:30 PM 8:30 PM

**WHERE:** Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook Visitor Center, 6300 Hetzler Rd, Culver City 90232

The Backyard Bats Study at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County represents an important opportunity to broaden awareness and interest in conserving species found in urban areas and to inspire more city dwellers to become stewards of the environments in which they live. Most bat species are intolerant of urbanization, though 19 known bat species are found to have persisted in Los Angeles County. Previous studies have focused only on large urban parks and little is currently known about bats in the urban core. The lack of urban biodiversity research is in large part due to the difficulties of accessing private property and conducting biological surveys in developed landscapes. *Miguel* will be focusing his talk on a bat acoustic monitoring project called the Backyard Bat Study. The Backyard Bat Study is a new community science project that aims to classify bat species richness, activity levels, and develop a larger community of bat advocates through community outreach initiatives. Further, the project will attempt to identify relationships between bat habitat specialists and various habitat variables within L.A.'s urban landscape. *Miguel* will be discussing what inspired this project, initial trends, challenges, opportunities, and next steps.

## The Wonderful Life of a Dying Tree Gillian Martin



**DATE:** Wednesday, February 12

**TIME:** 7:30 PM 8:30 PM

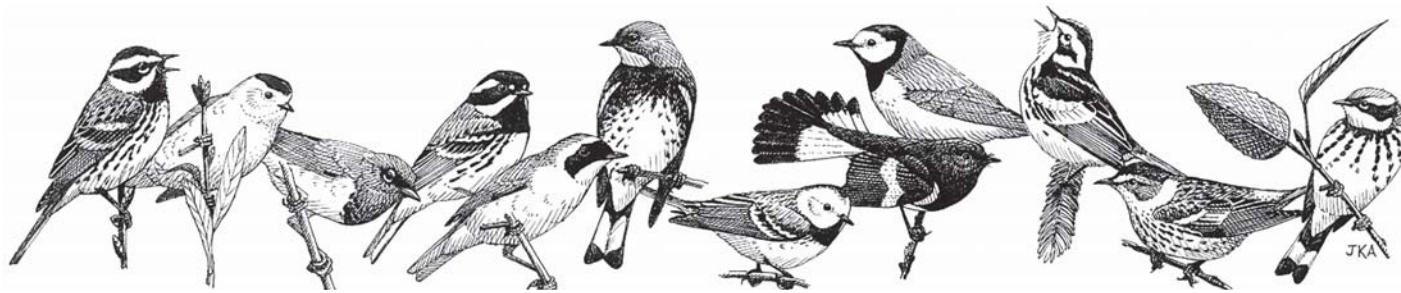
**WHERE:** Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook Visitor Center  
6300 Hetzler Rd, Culver City 90232

A dying tree has a commendable destiny. Gillian Martin, Director of the Cavity Conservation Initiative, is passionate about this often overlooked fact. She will discuss its habitat value and reveal ways it can be safely left in place to benefit wildlife.

*Meetings are held in visitor center theater room — drive all the way up Hetzler Road to the top of hill. Parking — free parking in upper lot adjacent to the visitors center*

*We hope to see you at this free event.*

*Learn more about Los Angeles Audubon programs and ways to support local species conservation and environmental education at <https://www.laaudubon.org/give>*



## BIRDS OF THE SEASON — December 2019 | By Jon Fisher

**W**ho claims we don't have seasons in southern California? Though admittedly they are not as pronounced as they are elsewhere in the country, they are nonetheless distinct and the changes in avifauna that accompany them are significant. Aside from normal seasonal transformations, climate change is effecting and altering habitats and ecosystems.

The average mean temperature in Los Angeles has risen about three degrees since the 1950s. This seems like a paltry amount, yet it's more than enough to impact birds. While observer bias and levels of coverage must be taken into account, the temperature increase surely accounts for at least some of the many neotropical migrants that winter on the coastal slope. It also may be one reason for the increasing success of so many non-native species; various parrots and parakeets, bishops, whydahs and munias.

The period from late October through December is not as dynamic as late summer and early fall, yet it still offers plenty of activity. For all intents and purposes passerine migration was over by the end of October, though to be sure the usual few odds and ends continued to turn up; either late migrants or birds that will end up spending the winter locally. As earlier in the fall, there was minimal evidence of irruptive species, although above average numbers of Red-breasted Nuthatches were present.

A number of local Christmas Bird Counts have already been completed and all will have concluded by January 5. Thus far these have turned up fewer new rare birds than is typical. One of the things birding teaches us, is that while some things are pretty predictable, others are not. Each year is different.

Here's a look at what was around over the last two months...

A **Tundra Swan** was at Piute Ponds on Edwards AFB from December 7-14 with second one joining it as of December 12 (Mickey Dyke, Sonia Conlin, Joseph Dunn).

A few **White-winged Scoters** and **Black Scoters** were off Dockweiler State Beach in El Segundo and nearby Playa del Rey Beach from October 30-December 17 (Richard Barth).

Also at Piute Ponds was a **Long-tailed Duck** on November 12 (Mickey Dyke, Becky Kitto).

A **Red-necked Grebe** at Cabrillo Beach from November 18-December 11 (Elsa Toskey, Alejandro Santillana) was the only one reported.

Rare but regular visitors, **White-winged Doves** were in Redondo Beach from October 23-December 21

(Lynne Sands), continuing at the Ballona Freshwater Marsh through November 3, at Sunnyside Cemetery in Long Beach from December 5-14 (Tom Miko) and at Culver City Park on December 20 (Walter Lamb).

Twenty-two **Vaux's Swifts** were over Silver Lake on December 1 (Andrew Birch). This species was once more regular in winter more regular on the coastal slope.

Quite rare in the county were four **Sandhill Cranes** at the Piute Ponds on Edwards AFB on November 8 (Jack Wickel) and two just southeast of there on November 16.

Single **American Oystercatchers** continued to be reported at Royal Palms Beach near San Pedro through December 1 and at the Ballona Creek mouth off and on through December 12.

A long-staying **Pacific Golden-Plover** first reported on August 30- remained along lower Ballona Creek in Playa del Rey through December 8. A single **Mountain Plover** was in the east Antelope Valley at 110<sup>th</sup> Street East and Ave. I from November 16-17 (Judy Matsuoka, Jim Moore). This species has declined significantly as a wintering bird in the county due to the decreased availability of water and resulting decline of agricultural activity in the valley. Add to that the

eighty percent decline in their population overall and it should be no surprise that numbers are down.

A **Laughing Gull** was at Cabrillo Beach in San Pedro on November 9 (David Ellsworth) and a **Heermann's Gull**- quite rare inland- was on the LA Aqueduct at 82<sup>nd</sup> Street East on November 27 (Kimball Garrett). Cabrillo Beach in San Pedro hosted an **Arctic Tern** from October 21-25 (Bobby Trusela). This species is rare in the county anywhere away from offshore waters.

Inland **Pacific Loons** were at Quail Lake near Gorman on October 27-November 18 (Brad Rumble) and at Lake Palmdale on November 7 (Kimball Garrett).

A **Neotropic Cormorant** continued at Lake Lindero in Westlake Village through December 15.

Very rare was a **Nazca Booby** off Cabrillo Beach from November 17-19 (Naresh Satyan). Though the populations of all booby species are declining, dispersions due to food shortages and changing ocean conditions may continue to generate increasing records in California waters.

An **American Bittern** at the Dominguez Gap Wetlands in Long Beach on December 1 was probably the same bird reported there last summer (Jeff Boyd).

Quite scarce in the county these days, **Cattle Egrets** were at Malibu Lagoon on October 30 (Phred Benham) and at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park in Harbor City on November 9 (John Ivanov).

**Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** continued at the Balona Freshwater Marsh through November 22, with up to three being reported there on October 29.

A late **Swainson's Hawk** was at Bonelli Regional Park in San Dimas on November 24 (Mickey Long) and a rare **Broad-winged Hawk** was at the South Coast Botanic Gardens on November 29 (Mike Miller).

Late or wintering **Ash-throated Flycatchers** were at Madrona Marsh in Torrance on from November 4-December 5 (Lisa & Scott Sutton), in Glendale on November 23 (John O'Donnell) and at Esperanza Middle School in Los Angeles on December 6 (Brad Rumble). Much less expected was an apparent **Brown-crested Flycatcher** found at the South Coast Botanic Garden in Rolling Hills Estates on December 13 (Rafa Ramirez).

A **Tropical Kingbird** was at Madrona Marsh in Torrance on October 25 (Melissa Loebl, David Moody) while others continued at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park in Harbor City through November 30 and at Entradero Park in Torrance through December 12. Late was a **Western Kingbird** at Madrona Marsh from November 3-23 (Linda LeRoy).

Returning for another winter to Rustic Canyon in Pacific Palisades was a **Greater Pewee** first found on October 25 (Chris Dean). It was seen or at least heard there through October 27, but there were no subsequent reports.

Late was a **Hammond's Flycatcher** at Domenic Massari Park in Palmdale on November 11 (Kimball Garrett), and very late or wintering birds were at Hopkins Wilderness Park in Redondo Beach from December 9-16 and at the Virginia Country Club in Long Beach on December 15 (Merryl Edelstein). Four **Gray Flycatchers** during the period was about typical, this being our most common wintering *Empidonax*, though still rare at that time.

**Pacific-slope Flycatchers** were at San Fernando Recreation Park in San Fernando on December 10 (Heather Medvitz) at Hansen Dam on the San Fer-

nando CBC on December 14 (Brian Bielfelt) and along the LA River in Atwater Village from November 5-December 21 (Andrew Birch).

**Eastern Phoebes** were at the Bette Davis Picnic Area in Glendale from November 23- December 20), at Apollo Park near Lancaster from November 29-December 17 (Becky Kitto, Mario Cordoba, Mickey Dyke) and in Sycamore Canyon in Whittier on December 14 (Larry Schmahl).

**Cassin's Vireos** are regular migrants, but rarer in winter than the closely related Plumbeous Vireo, with five being recorded after October. By contrast, over two dozen Plumbeous turned up over the same time frame.

For the second year in a row on the Santa Clarita CBC, a **Verdin** was along the Santa Clara River on December 21 (Becky Kitto). There have been a few other records of this desert species in that general area recently; presumably the river channel provides a convenient pathway for individuals that are prone to wandering. One wonders what a thorough survey of the entire watercourse might produce.

**Pacific Wrens** were at Bonelli Regional Park in San Dimas on December 5 (William Test) and in Santa Anita Canyon above Arcadia from December 6-14 (Javier Vazquez).

**Red-throated Pipits** were along the LA River in Long Beach on October 22 (Bobby Trusela), on San Clemente Island from October 28-31 (Justyn Stahl, Nicole Desnoyers), and at Sorensen Park in Lake Los Angeles from November 3-5 (Kimball Garrett).

An **Evening Grosbeak** heard flying over Occidental College in Eagle Rock on November 29 (Ryan Terrill, Jessica Oswald). How many others might have passed through and escaped detection?

**Lapland Longspurs** were on San Clemente Island on October 31 (Justyn Stahl) and again from November 16-18 (Justyn Stahl, Nicole Desnoyers) and in the east Antelope Valley on November 9 (Kimball Garrett). A **McCown's Longspur** was on San Clemente Island on November 17 (Justyn Stahl, Nicole Desnoyers).

**Green-tailed Towhees** are common summer residents in the higher San Gabriel Mountains and expected as migrants on the deserts, but they are rare and reportable on the coastal slope in fall and winter. One was at Deane Dana Friendship Park in San Pedro on December 16 (John Tomlinson).

A **Clay-colored Sparrow** continued at Exposition Park in Los Angeles through November 1 and others were at Madrona Marsh in Torrance from November 3-10 (Bruce Aird) and at Madrona Marsh in Torrance from December 14-17 (Dinuk Magamma) and in Long Beach on November 30 (Robert Hamilton).

A **Grasshopper Sparrow** continued at the DeForest Wetlands in Long Beach through October 31 and one was at Madrona Marsh in Torrance from October 31-November 3 (Mark Rubke).

Five **White-throated Sparrows** was a rather low number for this species, while rare was a **Harris's Sparrow** on the Palos Verdes Peninsula from November 5-December 17 (Jim Aichele, Cathy Nichols). It was presumably this same bird overserved at the same spot in 2016.

A **Dark-eyed "Gray-headed" Junco** had returned for another winter to Hahamongna Watershed Park in Pasadena, being reported there from November 17-December 21 (Dessi Sieburth). Others were at Jackie Robinson Park near Palmdale on November 17 (Kimball Garrett) and at St Andrew's Priory near Valyermo on November 16 (Frank Gilliland, Chris Dean).

A **Bobolink** was at Madrona Marsh in Torrance from

October 24-November 10 (Adam Johnson, David Moody, Mark Rubke). Remarkably this was the only one recorded on the mainland this fall, although two were found on San Clemente Island. Good years can easily produce double-digit counts of this species on the coastal slope. Not helping the situation is the fact that, as with so many bird species, numbers are declining.

A **Hooded Oriole** was at the Huntington Gardens in San Marino on December 20 where they are scarce but regular in winter (Kellen Apuna).

**Rusty Blackbirds**- at one time removed from the CBRC review list but now returned to it because of a decline in numbers, and thus records- were at Lake Balboa in the San Fernando Valley on November 21 (Mike Stensvold) and on San Clemente Island on November 26 (Justyn Stahl, Nicole Desnoyers).

Eight **Black-and-white Warblers** were present during the period, with two of these being continuing birds. Late and potentially wintering **Nashville Warblers** were at Peck Road Park in Arcadia on November 24 (Dessi Sieburth) and at Willow Springs Park in Long Beach on December 1 (Ryan Terrill).

Quite rare at this time of year was a **MacGillivray's Warbler** in Alhambra on November 9 (Tom Cassoro). There are but four post-October county records of this species in the last decade. **American Redstarts** were at MacArthur Park in Los Angeles on November 8 (Kimball Garrett) and behind the Starbucks in Calabasas on December 15 (Mary & Nick Freeman). One can never drop their guard when looking for good birds.

**Palm Warblers** were at the DeForest Wetlands in Long Beach on October 27 (Mark & Janet Scheel) and along the LA River in the Sepulveda Basin from November 16-December 1 (Daniel Tinoco, Mike Stensvold). This is a rather low number for this relatively common eastern vagrant. A **Painted Redstart** was at Inglewood Park Cemetery from October 26-

December 16 (Kevin Lapp).

On the rare end of the spectrum in the county were **Scarlet Tanagers** at Madrona Marsh in Torrance on October 24 (Adam Johnson, David Moody, Mark Rubke), in North Hollywood on October 22 and on San Clemente Island on November 18 (Justyn Stahl, Nicole Desnoyers).

Much more expected were **Summer Tanagers** at Wardlow Park from November 11-December 20 (Jeff Moore), at Heartwell Park in Long Beach on November 12 (Kim Moore) and at Live Oak Cemetery in Monrovia on November 17 (Luke Tiller) and in Rustic Canyon from December 6-December 20 (Kathleen Waldron).

The rarest of our tanagers, a **Hepatic Tanager**, was at Willow Springs Park in Long Beach from November 30-December 2 (Brad Dawson).

Wrapping things up was a late **Black-headed Grosbeak** in Beverly Hills on November 10 (Scott Logan) and a rare **Painted Bunting** at Madrona Marsh in Torrance from November 5-14 (Javier Vazquez).

As good as birding can be in LA County in any month of the year, for most birders it's migration that holds the most appeal. Good news then; though it seems winter has just begun, the first northbound birds will be making their way through the region in January.

While we enjoy the spectacle of steadily increasing migrants, winter birds will continue in varying numbers into May. A few wintering and wandering rarities remain to be found and early breeding species will be working to produce another crop of offspring as early as January. It may be true that you can't have it all, but spring manages to come pretty close. 🐦

# ESPERANZA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL- COMMUNITY AND HABITAT BUILDING IN THE HEART OF LOS ANGELES

By Emily Cobar, Arely Mendia-Perez and Carol Babeli

**I**n October and November 2016, staff and Baldwin Hills Greenhouse Program students from the Los Angeles Audubon Society (LAAS) installed a schoolyard habitat at Esperanza Elementary School with the help of students and parents. This habitat is filled with California native shrubs and trees including, California Sagebrush, Black Walnut, White Sage, Gum Plant, and more.

There are many benefits to installing this habitat including, but not limited to:

- **Educational Resource** – Teachers can use it as an outdoor classroom and cover many topics including the water cycle, plant adaptations, habitat, ecosystems and many more.
- **Decreases Water Runoff** – Permeable surfaces in the habitat allows rainwater to infiltrate the soil, providing water for the plants. This reduces pollutants to be carried away to the ocean.
- **Increase in Native Wildlife** – Esperanza is listed as a hotspot in eBird with 66 species and counting. Many migratory bird species use the habitat as a stopover site including the Yellow-rump Warbler, Burrowing Owl, and White-crowned Sparrow. In addition, other wildlife are found in this habitat including butterflies, praying mantis, ladybird beetles, native bees species, etc.
- **A Greenspace in the City** – Los Angeles is highly urbanized, especially near Downtown LA. The younger students are surrounded by asphalt, but this small green space allows for exploration and wonder.
- **A sense of community** – The surrounding community is brought together for planting and bird-watching.



## Community Bird Walks

This past November [2019] LA Audubon staff member, Emily Cobar, concluded two grant projects with the SOUTH BAY/PALOS VERDES AUDUBON (SB/PV) and the NORTH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION (NAAEE) EE360 COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP and the Esperanza Elementary School community.

In past *Western Tanager* newsletters (September/October 2018 and September/October 2019 issues) – Emily covered how she was a recipient of the SB/PV Audubon mini-grant to lead community bird walks and to create calendars for the nature walk participants that included their own artwork and photographs; and how the EE360 opportunity offered her an incredible fellowship that provided professional development and leadership training. Through the fellowship, she also received a grant to provide stipends to college students and/or recent college graduates who lead the nature walks, scientific illustration workshops, and other environmental education activities at Esperanza. In the conservation and education field, there are a myriad of unpaid internships or volunteer programs, so stipends were significant to reward their time commitment and their meaningful work to the community.

The nature walks started with coffee and breakfast for the participants. Then, Esperanza Elementary School principal, Brad Rumble, led a bird walk on campus while the EE360 interns assisted. After the bird walk, the EE360 interns, led a discussion about bird migration and introduced the migration game (an education resource created by Environment for the Americas). The students loved this game as they got to be a bird and go through a migration journey.

After the migration game, we talked about watershed and water runoff. The students conducted an experiment where they pour water on asphalt and then pour water in the habitat. The students got to hypothesize, observe, and draw conclusions on the experiment.

The day had a lot of content, but it was fun and very engaging. A week after the event, one of the young participants said that they wanted to recreate the migration game– which was very meaningful to hear that a simple game can make a big impact.

Is this the end though?

No. Community building is not a one event type of deal. In 2020 and beyond, Emily and LAAS staff and interns hope to continue this bond of community and nature whether through nature walks or habitat restoration.



*Ee360 intern, Angela, pours water on the permeable surface of the native habitat as students observe*



## Habitat Restoration and Collaboration

On December 7, 2019, Los Angeles Audubon staff, community volunteers, along with students and their parents, helped to expand Esperanza's schoolyard habitat. Two areas were planted with native species: the large courtyard at Esperanza Elementary School, and the area along Wilshire Blvd. Students of Esperanza spread out along the campus photographing everyone hard at work and also photographing birds out and about. Rain held out just long enough for a group of hardworking volunteers from Fulbright and from the Westwood Presbyterian Church, as well as students with their families to plant toyon, ceanothus, penstemon, buckwheat and other native plants to attract birds and pollinators. Many of the species were chosen to tolerate shady conditions because the courtyard area is often in part to full shade during the year. Principal Brad Rumble and his students led the group on a campus tour at the end of the planting to view the original schoolyard habitat, planted by the school community and Los Angeles Audubon in 2017 that is thriving with the recent rains.

As the event came to an end, every single person was given the chance to disperse native plant seeds of California Poppies and other perennials onto the habitat area they weeded from invasive plants. The event was supported by US Fish and Wildlife and Westwood Presbyterian Church.



*Younger students playing the migration game, a free resource created by ENVIRONMENTAL FOR THE AMERICAS.*



*Los Angeles Audubon staff and EE360 interns after an interactive day of birding and leading activities.*



*EE360 interns, Charzetta and Dakyra, lead the migration discussion and game on a beautiful Saturday afternoon.*

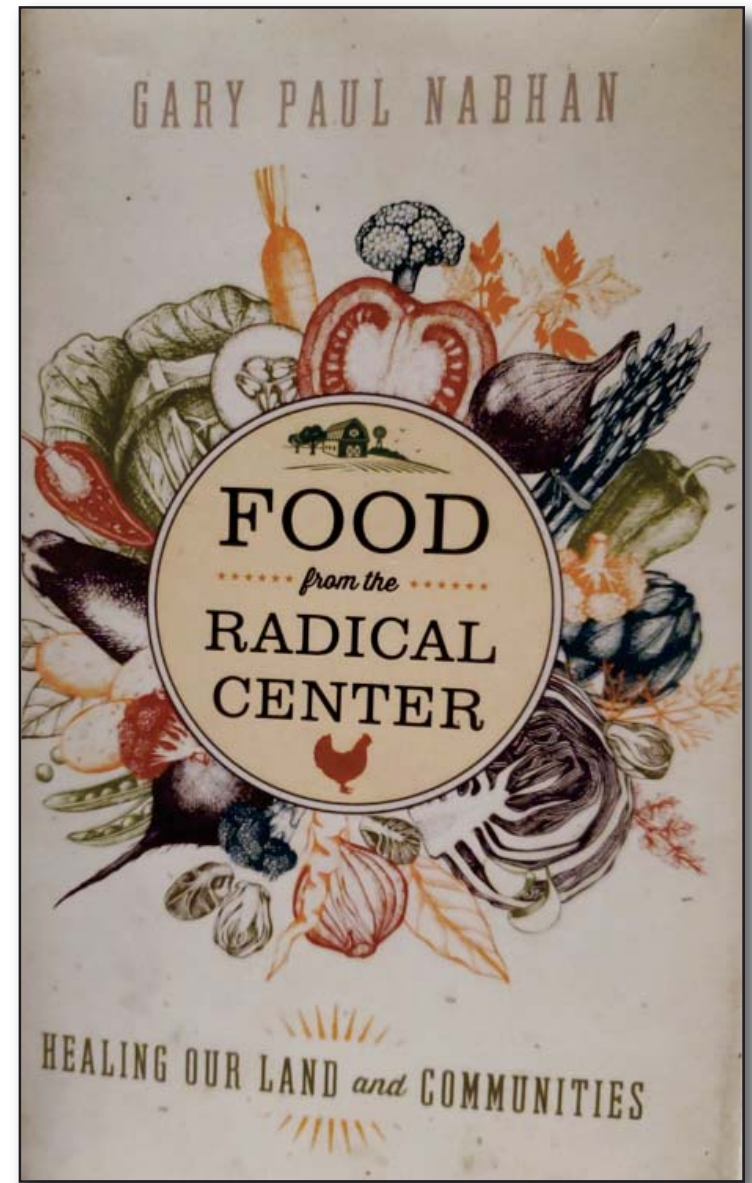
# INTERPRETING NATURE

By Arely Media Perez, Greenhouse Coordinator

## Book Recommendation to Start You New Year: *Food from the Radical Center*

One of the many privileges Mother Nature allows us is the miracle of growing our own food. Feeling the soil through our fingertips and under fingernails as we gently place a small fruit tree or strong-scented herb into the ground, joined with friends, family, or even strangers, helps us build a community of people who care about the earth and one another. *Food from the Radical Center* by Gary Paul Nabhan is a fascinating book about restoring the natural world and our food systems and connecting with each other as a community. Nabhan, an agricultural ecologist and ethnobotanist, is considered the groundbreaker of the local food movement and the heirloom seed saving movement. He speaks directly to readers about how “America has never felt more divided” but despite the hostility, we still manage to have people of many cultures and diversity come together to restore the land.

I connected with this book: it brought me back to the first time I planted a Coast live oak tree at the Kenneth Hahn Recreational Area during an Earth Day event during my high school years. When I realized I was contributing to my community and the Earth by caring for the life form I had placed into the ground with my own two hands, I felt incredibly great. I was surrounded by classmates, Los Angeles Audubon staff members, and volunteers who I had never met before, as we all worked carefully to add these important life forms back into the earth. I thought to myself, and still think, that nothing could possibly be better than this. Nabhan reminds his readers about the importance of community participation and empowerment: inclusion and diversity are key components to strong communities. Sharing his stories of the many influential individuals he spent time with farming, bringing back the Bison, and restoring an abundance of water to recover fish populations, Nabhan shows us that we too can have these experiences and enjoy the “conservation you can taste”.



“Food From The Radical Center”, Book Cover

## FIELD TRIPS

By Nick and Mary Freeman



Los Angeles Audubon's field trips often require driving to more distant destinations and more time spent in the field than do LAAS's local bird walks. No pets. No children under 12, without permission from leader please. *We do not sell, trade, or re-use contact information; cell and email simply improve our chances of contacting you at home and in the field.*

When you sign-up please provide complete contact information as stated in the write-up. Name, Address, City/Zip Code, Email address, Day-of-Event/Cell number, and an *optional/alternate* phone number— I.C.E., In Case of Emergency (home, work or friend.)

We confirm reservations and provide supplemental trip information by email reply. If you do not have convenient email, you may mail the reservation request (and fee if applicable); include a SASE; we will mail your confirmation.

### CARPOOLING

For ride sharing purposes, your contact information will be shared with the other confirmed participants unless you specify otherwise at sign-up.

### FEE REQUIRED RESERVATIONS

**Make checks fees payable to Los Angeles Audubon** (separate checks per trip)

#### Mail to:

Los Angeles Audubon

PO Box 411301

Los Angeles CA 90041-8301

### MORE INFORMATION

**Email:** [membership@laaudubon.org](mailto:membership@laaudubon.org) | (323) 876-0202

**F**ield trips often require more driving and time in the field than do our bird walks. If you do not have convenient e-mail to reserve a trip, you may always substitute a Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope (SASE) and provide your daytime phone number. We do not sell, trade, or re-use contact information; cell and email simply improve our chances of contacting you at home and in the field. No pets or unapproved small children (under 12), please. Bird walks are better-suited for most children. Contact information WILL BE released to others inquiring about carpooling unless requested otherwise. Envelopes for donations to support Los Angeles Audubon and its field trips will be distributed on some non-fee trips. Please support your LAAS field trips. Mail reservation fees to: L.A. Audubon-Field Trips, PO Box 411301, Los

Angeles CA 90041. Send email reservation requests to: [membership@laaudubon.org](mailto:membership@laaudubon.org). For more information about LAAS field trips call: (323) 876-0202, and leave a voice message if there is no answer. When carpooling, remember to offer compensation for gas to your driver.

#### **Sunday, January 5, 2020**

#### **Los Angeles Christmas Bird Count**

Contact compiler *Daniel Cooper* at: [dan@cooperecological.com](mailto:dan@cooperecological.com) to be matched up with a team or a survey area. This CBC is often on a weekday, so if you have been waiting for a weekend opportunity to do an LA CBC, this is it!

#### **Sunday, January 12, 2020**

#### **Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge**

LIMITED SIGN-UP REQUIRED, NO FEE  
A **Refuge Manager** (assisted by head cat-

wrangler *Nick Freeman*) will guide. We should have base vehicles. Throngs of wintering shorebirds and numerous raptors will be seen. Nelson's (Sharp-tailed) Sparrow, Peregrine Falcon and Pacific Golden-Plover are usually sighted. The refuge is part of the Naval Weapons Station. Please send ZIP Code, first, middle-initial & last names, DOB, e-mail and home phone number, cell ph# optional but helpful; by January 6. Only LAAS-confirmed individuals of U.S. citizenship with photo ID allowed on base. No weapons, camera OK. Meet at the main public lot at 800 Seal Beach Blvd. at 8:00 a.m., and bird until about noon. Take Seal Beach Blvd. S from the 405 Fwy, pass Westminster Blvd., turn left onto the base at the Forrestal Lane light, and left again into the lot. Spotting scopes and FRS radios helpful.

## **Saturday, January 18**

### **East Antelope Valley**

NO FEE, 20 MAX SIGN UP BY JAN. 15

Leaders: *Mary* and *Nick Freeman*. Fair chance of seeing LeConte's Thrasher, Prairie Falcon, and Mountain Plover. We GUARANTEE close studies of the Common Raven and Eurasian Collared-Dove and some of the finest desert birding in LA County! There is a lot of raptors who visit the Valley this time of year which is can be a spectacle this time of the year! We should hit 110<sup>th</sup> St. E, Apollo Park and elsewhere in our travels. Meet at the Palmdale Ave. S Park N Ride at 8:00 a.m. To get here, take Hwy 14 N to Avenue S, head E and take the first (or second) Rt. Turn into the Park N Ride, and meet in the SW corner by Lake Palmdale. Bring lunch, sunblock and lots of water. Possible afternoon winds. Call LAAS to sign up.

## **Saturday, January 25, 2020**

### **Chasing Parrots in Pasadena**

PLEASE SIGN-UP, NO FEE

Leader: *Larry Allen*. The famous "Temple City" parrots are ever elusive, but always around! Join Larry as we follow the evening flock as it gathers members and moves to roosting sites in the suburbs. Possible Red-crowned, Lilac-crowned, Red-lored, and Yellow-headed Parrots and perhaps other parrot and parakeet species as well. Bring scopes if you have them. We will meet at 5:00 p.m. and bird until fully dark (about 6:30 p.m.), at a San Gabriel Valley meeting location dependent upon the scouted location of the main parrot roost. Contact Susan Caster with cell phone number and e-mail for 1 or 2 day-before directions from Larry, and last minute frantic communications with any

changes. Depending on the location of the roosts, we will either walk or drive from the parrot / birder staging site to the roosting area.

## **February 1 & 2 Weekend**

### **Carrizo Plain**

FEE: \$20, LIMIT: 18

Leaders: *Mary* and *Nick Freeman*. Meet at 8 a.m. in Maricopa. Spectacular scenery. We will see many Ferruginous Hawks and Golden Eagles, always see Prairie Falcon and LeConte's Thrasher; and should see Merlin and Sage Thrasher; with possible Rough-legged Hawk, Mountain Plover, Pronghorn, and Elk. Carrizo Plain is a designated National Monument. We will meet in Maricopa (vacant lot at 800 Stanislaus St., west of Shell station on south side of Hwy 166), drive around the Plain all weekend, then leave the Plain heading north via Bitterwater Road on Sunday before we away to LA. If possible, please carpool or avail your vehicle to others when you reserve. Your phone number will be released for carpooling unless you request otherwise. Please register with Susan at membership@laadubon.org, providing name(s), cell phone number, and e-mail address for exact directions and further information; and mail a check for \$20 each. Net profits go to the Schreiber Grant Fund. Reserve your own room in Buttonwillow for Saturday night. Motel 6 is one option here. FRS radios & 'scopes helpful. Limit: 16.

## **Sunday, February 9**

### **Newport Back Bay**

NO SIGN-UP, NO FEE

Leaders: *Mary* and *Nick Freeman*. Meet at 8:00 a.m. for the 6.7' high tide. Ridgway's Rail, Sora, American Bittern, Peregrine Falcon, Blue-winged Teal and California Gnatcatcher are expected. Short-eared Owl

is rare. High tide force the rails out of their hiding places in the pickleweed and we will watch and count the rails basking in the small vegetation islands just above the high tide. We will have lunch and finish up at San Joaquin Marsh, upstream. Take the 405 Fwy S to the 73 Toll Road (free this far) to the Campus Dr. exit. Turn right on Irvine Ave., and left on University Drive. Park beyond the Preserve HQ (2301 University Dr., Newport Beach 92660), and walk down the trail and over the bridge to the boardwalk to meet.

## **Saturday, February 15**

### **Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Area**

NO FEE, NO SIGN-UP

Leader: *Kris Ohlenkamp*. "Freeway close" morning of birding. Kris has led this walk on-and-off for over 30 years, noting 240 species, and averaging 60-65 per walk. Recent fires may have actually improved habitat for some bird species - let's get out there and find out! Osprey and White Pelican likely, Peregrine Falcon and Least Bittern rarely but occasionally seen. Take the 405 Fwy N into the San Fernando Valley, turn W on Burbank Blvd. and N (Rt.) on Woodley Ave. to the second Rt., which is marked "Wildlife Reserve". Turn here and park in the lot at the end. Meet at 8:00 a.m., and bird until about 11:30 a.m.

## **Saturday, February 22**

### **Salton Sea South**

FEE: \$10, SIGN-UP REQUIRED

Leaders *Nick* and *Mary Freeman*. Large to huge flocks of Snow & Ross' geese, White-faced Ibis and Sandhill Cranes. Stilt Sandpiper, Lesser Black-backed Gull and Gila Woodpecker all possible to certain. Although late summer is more reliable, this is the only place in the U.S. to see the impressive Yellow-footed Gull, which we might see! No limit, but sign up by

phone, and send e-mail and cell ph# for more details. Come and experience this jewel during the winter. Meet at 7:30 a.m. Saturday at Cattle Call Park south of Brawley (just downhill from 550 Cattle Call Drive, Brawley). Brawley Inn 760/344-1199, Calipatria Inn 800/830-1113, and Americas Best Value Inn in Westmorland 760/351-7100 are recommended. Arrive fed with full tanks, and bring lunches and snacks. Those who wish to will eat together Saturday night. Please register with Susan at membership@laaudubon.org, providing name(s), cell phone number, and e-mail address for exact directions and further information; and mail a check for \$10 each. FRS radios & 'scopes helpful.

### **Saturday, February 29**

#### **Ventura County Game Preserve**

NO FEE, SIGN-UP, LIMIT OF 15

Leaders: *Cayenne Sweeney* and *Louis Tucker*.

Cayenne is a quality, up-and-coming, local birder that has been making waves in the birding community. Louis is especially enamored with raptors, and makes waves wherever he goes (in a good way). This private duck hunting club in Ventura has a long history of producing the kinds of birds that only well-conserved, well-birded and disappearing habitats can lay claim to; including Virginia rail, American Bittern, occasional Ruff, Solitary Sandpiper, and single Lesser Sand-Plover and Wood Sandpiper records. Emphasis on this date will be late raptors and waterfowl, with shorebirds starting to move through. Get to the meeting site by taking the 101 Fwy W to Rice Avenue S, following the Rice Ave. prompts to the T-intersection terminus, then take Hueneme Rd. west (Rt.), and meet across from the first left turn at Casper Rd. at 8:00 a.m. Signed-up individuals will carpool through the gate to the barn (6500 Casper Road, Oxnard). Sign up by e-

mail with Susan Castor, membership@laaudubon.org, giving city of residence. We will walk the property, so good hiking/mud shoes with energetic legs inside a plus. We may have one car. Scopes & FRS radios helpful.

### **March 21 & 22 Weekend**

#### **Anza-Borrego State Park**

\$20 LAAS MEMBER FEE / \$40 FOR NON-LAAS MEMBERS, LIMITED SIGN-UP OF 20

Leader: *Kurt Leuschner*. Peak time for both wildflowers and Swainson's Hawk migration! Caravan through the State Park from the Colorado Desert up to Julian, with short forays to take in the sights and the wildlife. Kurt is a professor of desert ecology, and knows all of our deserts very well. Reserve your accommodations at Hacienda del Sol, Stanlund Motel or others in Borrego Springs months early, as this is wildflower season too! Meet at the Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association (652 Palm Canyon Drive, Borrego Springs) at 7:15 a.m. both days. Please register with Susan at membership@laaudubon.org providing name(s), cell phone number, and e-mail address; and mail a check for \$20 LAAS member / \$40 non-LAAS fee. More details later.

### **Friday, April 17**

#### **Small Owls of the San Gabriels #1**

NO FEE, LIMITED SIGN-UP (10 MAX.), PLEASE REGISTER FOR ONE OWL DATE ONLY  
Leaders *Mary* and *Nick Freeman*. We will be looking for Northern Saw-whet, Western Screech-Owl, possibly Spotted Owl, (or the vanguard of Flammulated Owl migration?). Sign up, and meet at 6:00 p.m. on the frontage road for Angeles Crest Hwy (ACH) just north of the 210 Fwy in La Canada. Turn

N on ACH, take the second right (Milmada Dr.), and a quick left onto the ACH Frontage Road (signed: Flanders Rd.) and meet along the first 50-yard stretch before the first right turn (940 Chehalem Rd, La Canada Flintridge, CA 91011). Come fed and gassed up, and we will carpool from here. Bring quiet clothing for possible very cold weather (no nylon if possible), a small walking flashlight, binoculars, powerful flashlight optional. Photo ops possible.

**SIGN-UP:** Email sign-up mandatory. Send email to: membership@laaudubon.org. Provide name(s) email addresses, & cell phone #s and wait for email confirmation. (10 max.) Please allow others to attend this popular series by signing up for one date only. (Other dates: Friday, **May 8**, Friday, **June 19**) For more information call (323) 876-0202, leave voice message if no answer.

### **April 25 and 26 Weekend**

#### **Owens Valley Grouse Trip**

FEE: \$55, LIMITED SIGN-UP OF 20

**Mary Freeman** leads. Sage Grouse on the lek, Sooty Grouse in the trees, truly breathtaking scenery, raptor-rich valleys, and early shorebirds heading north. And yes, we have special arrangement to observe the Sage Grouse from the edge of the lek, which is only possible at this fairly late date. We will try for Black-backed Woodpecker. Meet early Saturday and Sunday mornings in Bishop. Sign up by e-mail at membership@laaudubon.org with names and cell phone #; and send \$55 (Schreiber Grant Fund Raiser), in a SASE to LAAS. More details in the Jan/Feb issue and in a confirmation mailer. Reserve rooms and trip early, for this perennially popular trip. Bring a friend to share the considerable driving! Motel 6, Mountain View Inn, Bishop Elms are some of many hotels in Bishop.

# BIRD WALKS

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON'S bird walks are for those interested in reducing their carbon footprint by birding relatively close to home. Perfect for the birder looking for an introduction to local birds and habitat.

Bird Walks are geared for the beginner/intermediate birders looking for an introduction to local birds or a less strenuous excursion. Appropriate for young bird watchers age 6 years and older. Carpooling is encouraged. Binoculars are provided on some walks as noted below. *For further information contact Eleanor Osgood at [birdwalks@laudubon.org](mailto:birdwalks@laudubon.org) or call (310) 839-5420.*

## **1st Saturday of the month Open Wetlands at Ballona**

*Jan. 4 & Feb. 1*

The first Saturday of every month (EXCEPT AUGUST), from 9 a.m. to noon, Los Angeles Audubon Society hosts the "Open Wetlands" event at the Ballona Salt Marsh. Binoculars will be available to borrow, and volunteers will help visitors view aquatic invertebrates through microscopes, learn about the unique ecosystems found at Ballona, and view birds through powerful spotting scopes along Ballona Creek. Please drop-in!

Enter through the gate located in the northeast corner of the parking lot behind Alkawater/Gordon's Market, in the 300 block of Culver Blvd. in Playa del Rey.

No baby strollers please.

Please contact Cindy Hardin at [cindyhardin@laudubon.org](mailto:cindyhardin@laudubon.org) or call (310) 301-0050 if you have any questions.

## **Topanga State Park Birdwalk 1st Sunday of every month**

*January 5 & February 2*

*Time: 8:00 a.m.*

Leaders: Ken Wheeland and Chris Tosdevin

Ken and Chris will lead participants through this beautiful and diverse coastal mountain area. An ideal trip for a beginning birder or someone

new to 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 Pacific Coast Hwy, take Topanga Canyon Blvd. 5 miles to Entrada Rd. Parking fee.

Contacts: Ken: (310) 455-1401, [ksafarri@aol.com](mailto:ksafarri@aol.com); Chris: (310) 455-1270

## **Upper Franklin Canyon Sooky Goldman Nature Center) (2600 Franklin Canyon Dr., Beverly Hills 90210)**

### **Second Sunday of the month**

*January 12 & February 9, 2020*

*Time: 8:30-12:00*

Leader: Eleanor Osgood

Join us as we take a casual walk around the ponds and trails of this urban oak woodland nature preserve. We are likely to see the resident Wood Ducks and as well as chaparral bird species such as California Quail, Spotted and California Towhees and California Thrasher. Winter birds have arrived; we will look for Ring-billed Duck, Hooded Mergansers, Sharp-shinned Hawk, White-crowned Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow and Fox Sparrow among others. Directions: From the 101 Freeway, follow Coldwater Canyon Blvd. south for several miles to the intersection of Coldwater Canyon and Mulholland

Drive (traffic signal). Make a 90 degree right turn onto Franklin Canyon Drive. There is no sign indicating the entrance to the park; the turn at Franklin Canyon Road reads "Road Closed 800 Feet" and "Sunrise to Sunset"-- this is the park entrance; do not make a U-turn as this will take you onto Mulholland Drive instead of Franklin Canyon. Take Franklin Canyon Dr down to park entrance, turn at first left into the parking lot. From Sunset Blvd: go north on N. Beverly Drive to Coldwater Canyon Dr to Mulholland Dr. Veer left on Mulholland Drive. At the next traffic signal, make a left turn onto Franklin Canyon Dr. continue to first parking lot on the left. Binoculars provided.

## **Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area**

**(4100 S. La Cienega Blvd, Los Angeles 90056)**

### **3rd Saturday of the month (no walks in July or August)**

*January 18 & February 15*

*Time: 8:00-12:00*

Leaders: *Eric and Ann Brooks, Eleanor Osgood*

This trip covers landscaped parkland, a man-made lake and natural coastal scrub habitats within the Baldwin Hills. We are likely to see many of the resident birds such as Black Phoebe, Cassin's Kingbird, California

and Spotted Towhee, Red-tailed Hawk, Cooper's Hawk. We will also look for wintering birds such as Merlin, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Rufous-crowned, White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrow, Western Meadowlark, Ring-billed Duck and American Wigeon among others. The park entrance is off of La Cienega Blvd. between Rodeo Rd. and Stocker St. After passing the entrance kiosk (\$6.00 parking fee) turn left (leading to the "Olympic Forest") and park in the first available spaces. . Binoculars provided.

## **Ballona Wetlands Bird Walk 3rd Sunday of the month with the exception of December**

*January 19 & February 16*

*Time: 8:00 a.m.*

Leaders: *Bob Shanman and Friends*  
Join us for a walk through L.A.'s only remaining saltwater marsh and the adjacent rocky jetty. Meet at the Del Rey Lagoon parking lot. Take the Marina Fwy (90) 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.

Contact: Bob (310) 326-2473; [wbutorance@gmail.com](mailto:wbutorance@gmail.com)