

# WESTERN Tanager

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*Giant Sequoia, Photo by Mary Freeman*



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# Owls in the Southern Sierra Nevada

By Mary Freeman

Since 2003, LA Audubon has led trips to experience owls in the southwest Sierra Nevada mountain range, around Camp Nelson and Ponderosa.

Each year we have had memorable participants and birds, including — of course — owls. Our target owls are the beautiful and small (did I say “cute”?) Northern Saw-whet Owl, the fascinating yet smaller Flammulated Owl, the tiny Northern Pygmy Owl, and the impressive California Spotted Owl.

Nick and I have visited this mountain range many times over the years including participating in Flammulated Owl nest box building and surveys. We were participants on many LAAS trips where Bob Barnes was the leader. This led to my curiosity of the owl species of these mountains. We thank our friend Margo DeGrosse, who guided us to a foothold at Camp Nelson, a small mountain town where the residents seem to all know each other. We began renting summer homes for what has become a tradition over the past 16 years, with an emphasis of leading trips to finding owls in the Giant Sequoia groves.

Nick and I have learned about the densities of the various species of owls in this mountain range. We have found few families of Northern Saw-whet Owls, which is perhaps our biggest treat — seeing the little “chocolate teddy bears”. Nick has said if you want to get the very best Saw-whet Owl as your lifer, find a juvenile! Some years we have found high numbers of Flammulated Owls and it made us wonder if there are other owl species in the mountains!

Last year in 2018, we found seven Northern Saw-whet Owls that included a family: one adult and three juveniles. I was ecstatic that night when I first heard the chick's calls, an insect-like “sst sst”. When we drive up the mountain slopes in the Sequoia groves, we try for the poster-child of old growth forests, the Spotted Owl.

Many years ago, a generous biologist lead us to sites where these owls have set up territories. She imitated a call of a Spotted Owl she named “Elvis”, who showed up right on cue. One year I recorded a pair of raucous Spotted Owls; carrying on with barks, hoots, squeals. It was so entertaining that I found it hard to hold back my giggles in the recording. Last year I imitated the call of a Flammulated Owl. It flew in right overhead into a conifer tree and booped away. Then we watched two owls fly out of the same tree as they turned and twisted after a tasty-looking (in their eyes) moth.

It was a memorable experience for all who watched these tiny owls foraging in mid-air. During the day, when we are not feasting on great food brought in by the participants or LAAS, we head out in search for daytime birding. We came cross a Northern Pygmy Owl as we made our way to a refreshing creek. Near the Trail of 100 Giants, Pileated Woodpeckers have made appearances. Lincoln Sparrows populate the grassy meadows, and the tiny and elusive Pacific Wren show in boggy creek tangles.

But entering the Giant Sequoia forest at night with the Milky Way shining down on us, has always been a humbling and profound treat for all who have attended these trips. We plan on leading another Sierran owl prowl in 2020 so look for the announcement in next year's May newsletter.



Photos by Mary Freeman

## Green Feather Award at LitFest Pasadena

*Los Angeles Audubon once again sponsored the GREEN FEATHER AWARD for eco-themed science fiction as part of THE TOMORROW PRIZE which challenges Los Angeles County teens to explore social, scientific, and environmental issues of today through science fiction short story writing. In all, more than 180 stories were submitted for 2019. In May at LitFest Pasadena, celebrity guests dramatically read the top stories on stage, followed by awards presented to the winners and recognition of the finalists and honorable mentions.*

*Los Angeles Audubon wishes to thank the judges of the Green Feather Award: Alice Hsieh, Jane Beseda, Arely Mendia, and Michael Lawson. And special thanks to Rosalind Helfand, organizer of the event.*

*Congratulations to all of the students writers who participated.*



### Green Feather Award at LitFest Pasadena

Molly Hill is a Sophomore at Polytechnic School in Pasadena. A young birder, Molly is passionate about ecology and conservation. She helps study urban raptors with the Griffith Park Raptor Survey and jay speciation with the Moore Lab, and she tends habitat and nest boxes for native birds and insects in her backyard.

#### **HONORABLE MENTIONS**

*Desiree Eshragi — Honorable Mention (& HM for second story she submitted)*

Desiree Eshragi is a Junior at Grover Cleveland High School. She's always had a fondness for reading and literature. In her freshman year she founded her school's Book Club and has been President ever since. So in love with books, she jumped at the chance to write her own stories for THE TOMORROW PRIZE!

*Yvonne Kuo — Honorable Mention*

Yvonne Kuo is a Senior at Cerritos High School and a prospective college student majoring in Computer Science at Duke University. She enjoys baking Japanese French fusion desserts, exploring the streets of new cities a night, and petting every dog she sees. Spontaneous, passionate, and adventurous, she plans to travel the world one country at a time.

*Jaide Lin — Honorable Mention*

As an avid hiker and food adventurer, Jaide Lin is a Senior at Cerritos High School who has spent part of her life in the bustling city of Hangzhou, China and the quiet suburban city of Cerritos, California. Outside of reading and writing, Jaide spends her time going on exhausting yet rewarding nature trail runs and painting abstract portraits of her beagle dog, Lucy.

*Ksenia Pylnev — Honorable Mention*

Ksenia Pylnev is a Sophomore at High Tech Los Angeles who is interested in biochemistry and politics. Additionally, she enjoys playing the violin and reading non-fiction.

*Ailun Shi — Honorable Mention (also finalist for a second story she submitted)*

Ailun Shi is a Junior at Palos Verdes Peninsula High School. She is an avid writer and novelist whose work has been nationally recognized by the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards and published in Bridge Ink, Germ Magazine, and more. When she isn't busy finishing procrastinated homework assignments, she's dreaming up new fantasy worlds.

*Veronica Stanek — Honorable Mention*

Veronica "Jazmine" Stanek is a Sophomore at Glen A. Wilson High School. She enjoys reading, drawing, and playing puzzle games.

Following is the Green Feather award-winning story, "WASTE LAND AWAKENING," by Molly Hill.

## **Waste Land Awakening**

**By Molly Hill**

I stepped out from the bus into a clear and blustery day, sucking in a breath at the unexpected cold. I was last to leave the vehicle, having claimed the window seat in the very back. I joined my classmates who huddled around the door of the bus, clutching at their coats. We had parked at the end of a dirt road, for the bus could go no farther over the steep mountain. Surrounded on all sides by grass-covered peaks, we looked down onto a complex of buildings, which nestled on the level floor of a small valley. We set off down the slope, following our teacher like a line of gangly-limbed ducklings.

Unaccustomed to walking through windy mountain air and over wild, unpaved ground, we took twenty minutes to finish the quarter-mile walk.

We wended our way down slowly, terrified of crushing the delicate, scrubby plants beneath our feet or slipping down the hill.

We reached the bottom, all of us panting and runny-nosed from the chilly sixty-five degree weather. Here we paused; ahead stood the buildings we had come for, tucked bunker-like between the peaks. But it was the mountains rising above us that drew our eyes. From down in the valley, the mountains looked as they must have looked two hundred years ago: golden and infinite and alive. The cloudless sky above them seemed impossibly blue. The complex, despite being the reason for our journey, looked forlorn and small against those great mountains, a desolate and gray ghost of humanity alone in the dry and grassy wild. The buildings were, in fact, the only buildings for hundreds of square miles; no one lived in all that space except for the workers at the complex. The land around it was pale and soft and utterly silent, empty of human and animal presence, entirely different from the gray, hard-edged city we had left. I admit it was strange, even a bit disconcerting, for me to be in a place so empty.

None of us, after all, had ever been in a place so devoid of human presence. We had grown up in a world of endless cities, where farms were the closest most people ever came to nature, and the only birds that flew overhead were ubiquitous feral pigeons. This land, despite its silence,

seemed impossibly foreign and wild to us, who had of course learned the word “wild” in school.

“It started with the mosquitos,” our teachers told us. “That’s when it really went downhill.” It started in 2070 (fifty years ago), when increasing global temperatures allowed mosquitos - and malaria - to rapidly spread north. Genetic scientists, flush with the newfound power of their technology, attempted to engineer malaria-resistant mosquitoes. But changing the mosquitoes’ immune systems made them resistant to other parasites, viruses, and bacteria, thus changing their microbiomes and the microbiomes of the bats that preyed on them. Plagues began to sweep across bat populations, left vulnerable without certain key bacteria necessary to their immune systems. Soon the diseases spread to other mammals while causing a surge of insects.

Our ancestors watched as the world was thrown into imbalance. They blamed it on those genetic scientists. But I think, perhaps, it started earlier when corporations and consumers disregarded scientists’ dire warnings of climate change; perhaps it started with the handy invention of disposable plastics; perhaps it started with the first, mostly-accidental

extinctions of thylacines and atlas bears and million-strong flocks of passenger pigeons.

By 2090, Earth was radically different: the only truly wild things were the hardy little creatures who could survive the new normal of hot temperatures and constant human pressures. But that was not the end of everything because our ancestors discovered, to their general surprise, that an unhealthy Earth led to unhealthy people. Climate change and sea level rise led to wars and millions of climate and political refugees, finally forcing our ancestors to act just when it might have been too late. While governments busied themselves with restoring peace and order to the people of the world, scientists and activists focused on restoring order to the world's environments. Nature, they learned, was resilient; twenty years had not destroyed it completely. Our ancestors established vast parks like this one, and in them built buildings like these, all with the hope that someday things would be better.

We approached the structures, which were surprisingly large up close. A woman, wearing shorts despite the cold, strode out to greet us. "I'm glad you could come."



I followed my classmates with some trepidation. Inside was a sight to behold. Entire ecosystems – forest and salt marsh and prairie and desert – had been constructed here, each supported by countless machines and purifiers and pumps to make them, paradoxically, as natural as possible.

These mock-habitats were populated by animals, real animals, their gene pool kept healthy by a frozen gene bank which a few foresighted biologists had collected many decades earlier. Here, sheltered in their bunkers, beneath an empty mountain range, there were bald eagles; beaver and ringtail; tule elk herds and gray wolf packs; cougars and jackrabbits; waxwings and scrub-jays; rattlesnakes and ground squirrels; nests of bumble bees and colonies of black ants; newts and bullfrogs; mockingbirds and towhees; red-winged blackbirds and red-eyed vireos; grasshoppers and mourning cloak butterflies; hummingbirds and yellow jackets; wolverines and raccoons; hawks and glossy-eyed falcons who longed to soar in the open air.

I stared with avid fascination; here were the creatures I had read about and imagined for years. Each of them moved with a quality I had never seen before, an intensity that humans lacked: the quality of wildness.

Yet they were familiar, half-remembered from a time long before I was born. They were beautiful.

My class was the first to arrive that morning. Workers led us through the buildings enthusiastically, pointing out all the species and ecosystems.

We passed habitats in miniature, each capped by a window-studded ceiling which could open to rain and close to the fierce summer sun; we walked through the one lifeless building, with its massive compost pile and gray water purifiers powered by solar panels lining its roof; we saw the greenhouse that grew food for the animal and human residents, its plants fed by the compost and fertilized by countless winged pollinators that hummed contentedly in the warm, moist air; we toured nursery rooms where young animals were fed through gloves, so they would remain as untamed as possible in this wild but not-wild place. When we came to the largest building, filled with the flora and fauna native to these very mountains, a man carefully handed me a small, cloth-covered box. I knew what was inside, so I cradled it as if it would crumble at the slightest jostling.

Eventually, other students joined us, as eager and windblown as we were. Each of them was also entrusted with a box like mine. Soon, adult

citizens began arriving as well, many on solar-paneled public trams from cities much farther away than ours: no one wanted to miss today.

Noon had come and gone by the time all the newcomers had arrived. At that point, everyone who was not clutching a cloth-covered box collected a plant from the greenhouses. Together, we flowed out of the buildings, as hundreds of people from all over the world were also doing on that April afternoon.

Across the world, we gathered on riverbanks and mountains, in deserts and valleys and empty fields where there were once trees. For years, these places had been untouched, letting the land be reclaimed by grass and spiders, readying it for this April, this afternoon, this moment, Earth Day 2120. At the feet of those dead and hopeful mountains, I crouched with my classmates and gently set the box on the dusty ground before opening it, releasing the five California quail inside.

The birds hesitated; the four little ones crouched behind their mother. Like all young animals, their eyes were huge with wonder at the vastness of the world. Finally, the mother stepped out onto the sand and paused, her body perfectly soft and still. A moment later, all five raced away. Beside me, the other students were releasing more; hundreds of animals

were soon flocking away to the scrubs and dry grasses and sand of their new landscape. Everyone else was planting seedlings: sycamore, oak, globe mallow, and lilac-flowered sage, which would regrow the forests and meadows. Above us wove a pair of peregrine falcons, the descendants of generations of wild and captive-bred birds, who were screaming and reveling in their new freedom. In the weeks that followed, I would stay in that little valley with the biologists and other students, carefully monitoring the released animals and steadily releasing more. As I watched the dancing peregrines, I delighted in their flight; like my fellow students, I was ready to spend weeks, months, years helping them reclaim the world. But for that afternoon, we simply remained outside.

# INTERPRETING NATURE

## ***Baldwin Hills Greenhouse Program Research Projects, 2018-2019 school year***

Authors: Stacey Vigallon and Baldwin Hills Greenhouse Program Interns

*On May 19, 2019, the Baldwin Hills Greenhouse Program wrapped up its 11th school year. Greenhouse Interns collectively invest hundreds of hours in the research process: crafting a proposal, collecting and analyzing data, designing a research poster, and presenting their work to the public. Each year, we publish the research abstracts in an effort to share the knowledge gained with a broader audience and to acknowledge the interns' hard work and commitment. This year's projects include both qualitative and quantitative approaches to better understanding humans and nature in our city.*

### **Natan Euol**

#### *Documenting Mammal Activity at Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook State Park*

My project involved mapping mammal activity at Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook State Park (BHSO). From November 2018 until April 2019, I collected and analyzed observations from surveys along with multiple camera trap placements around BHSO. The results accumulated from both sources of data were categorized by mammal species and the context behind how their presence was noticed, which was visual sightings, scat, tracks, or camera trap images. A total of 10 mammal species were detected. My hypothesis that I would observe signs of mammal presence more often than I would observe mammals themselves was made evident by my data: I directly observed only 4 species but captured by camera or observed signs of 8 species. Due to human activity within these areas, I originally hypothesized that I would not observe signs of mammals on park trails and roads; however, I did

observe tracks, scat, and mammals themselves on these high-use human trails. The importance of my project lies in its potential to show the effects of human activity on mammals at BHSO.

### **Savannah House**

#### *The Germination and Transplant Survival Rate of Native Plants in Potting Soil versus Site-Specific Soil*

The Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook is an important area to restore because native habitats are important to the ecology of the area and to human beings, psychologically and physically. My research tested the germination rates of California Black Walnuts, White Sage, Toyon, Bladder Pod, and Deer Grass in site-specific versus potting soil, as well as the transplant survival rate of the California Black Walnuts germinated in either soil type last year (2017-2018). I hypothesized that native plants would germinate equally well in site-specific and potting soil, however Deer Grass, Toyon, and White Sage all had a somewhat higher germination rate in potting soil (9%, 55%, 4% respectively) than in site-specific soil (8%, 23%, 2% respectively). Deer Grass germinated in site-specific soil had a higher survival rate. Rodent activity impeded completion of California Black Walnut and Bladder Pod germination experiments. I also predicted that walnut saplings germinated in site-specific soil would have a higher transplant survival rate, given that they were germinated in the same soil type. However, there was a 100% survival rate for both soil types. Future research should focus on transplanting the germinated native plants as well as deterring rodents from Bladder Pods and California Black Walnuts.



*Images from Natan's camera traps to detect mammals at Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook*

## Mohamad Lorenzani

### *Perceptions of Park Safety*

Access to parks and nature is important for both physical and mental wellness of communities. I formulated a 17-question survey revolving around the perception of park safety during the fall 2018 semester and administered the surveys to four groups of individuals over the spring 2019 semester. These four groups were Culver City High School students, Dorsey High School students, Greenhouse Program students (Culver and Dorsey students distinct from those in the previous groups), and adult employees at one of my other internship sites. My hypothesis that there would be no difference in answers between genders was mainly supported by my data. Although I also predicted that high school students go to parks more frequently than adults, there was also no notable disparity between the frequencies of visitation among the age groups. However, the contrast of respondent perceptions between the two high schools was notable: Dorsey students consistently indicated that they felt parks in LA were unsafe, while Culver City students had considerably more positive perceptions about park safety. This finding has implications for public health and access to resources.



*Axel constructed three different types of compost bins to test decomposition of non-native plants.*

## Axel Maya

### *Comparing Compost Bin Types for Invasive Plant Composting*

From January to March 2019, I initiated the first year of an invasive plant composting project at Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook State Park. Knowing an effective

method for composting leaves a smaller carbon footprint and gives you another way of eliminating invasive species. I compared 3 types of compost bins (trashcan, open wire, and pallet box), using the same mixture of invasive grass for all of them. My hypothesis that the trashcan compost would take less time was wrong at this initial stage of the project. The compost height for all three types of bins was reduced to 1/3 of its original height at the start of the project. At this point, the type of compost bins did not have a major difference on the height of the compost. Compared to the other two bins, the trashcan compost had a strong smell within the first few weeks that eventually went away. The trashcan compost also felt moist and hotter compared to the other bins. This is a 2-year project: next year, I will compare the compost more in depth, in terms of quality of decomposition and invertebrates present.

## Brandon Kim

### *Analysis of Nature Interpretations Based on Student Literary Samples*

Human modification of the environment has led to a significant human-nature disconnect; my project investigates this disconnect by examining different interpretations of nature and thus its impacts on people living in an increasingly urbanized world. These interpretations were collected in the form of literary samples created (1) by students mainly in the Baldwin Hills Greenhouse Program; (2) my own responses to personal nature-related prompts, and (3) samples gathered during an all-ages youth summit event. The most important samples were six-word stories and an emotional reflection on nature. Though differing in certain respects, common trends mostly did emerge from these samples, helping to show people's level of exposure to and disconnect with nature. One trend was a view of nature as an escape from a stressful urban environment, which suggests humans have become severely entrenched in urban environments and have little exposure to nature. Nature was also found to have psychological benefits by way of its emotionally calming effect and the reflective, introspective mindset it induced in students. Knowledge of these benefits and disconnect from nature can aid in people's management of their urban lives and how frequently they decide to spend time in natural spaces.

**Julia Adler***Mapping Toyon and Cacti at Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook*

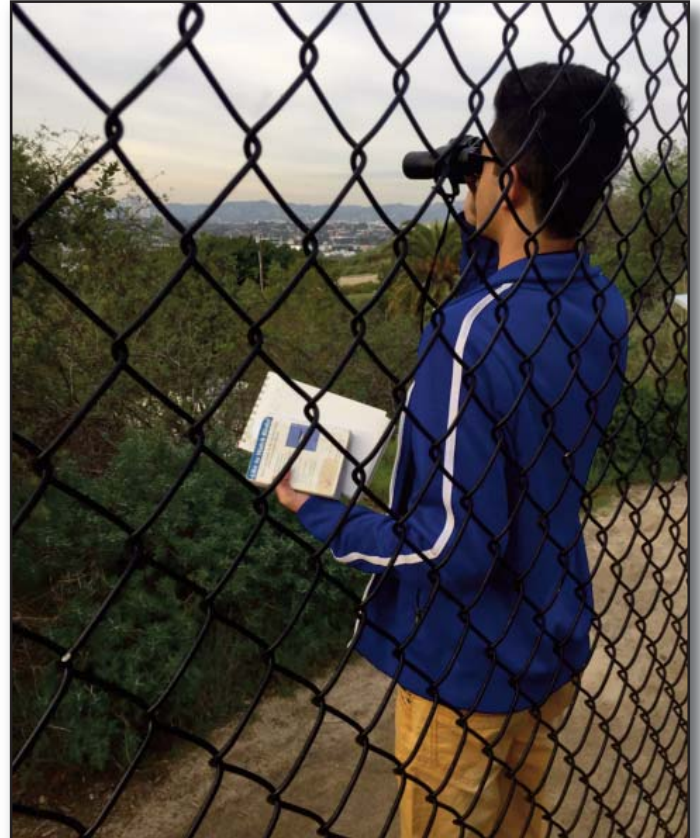
The fire cycle, a natural process that has been altered by urbanization and climate change, is an integral part of natural habitats. Many native plants in Southern California have developed adaptations and even a reliance upon fire. Even with this tolerance, more frequent and intense fires can cause a proliferation of invasive grasses and nonnative plants. For my project I mapped two native species, Toyon and Prickly Pear Cacti, at Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook to document their presence and distribution. In the event of a fire, these maps can help make restoration more efficient. The majority of Toyon clusters were found on north-facing slopes, which was consistent with my hypothesis. However, some clusters were found close to the stairs or to paths, possibly for recreational landscaping reasons. Cacti, on the other hand, were found mostly within 5 meters of a trail, and absent from the north-facing slope, which aligned with my hypothesis as well. Cacti were planted in some areas to keep people from deviating from the path.

**Ahmad Rizwan***Bird and Trash Presence at Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook & Ballona Creek*

It is crucial to acknowledge the ecological importance of Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook (BHSO) for native wildlife. I predicted that there would be more plastic trash than paper trash present along my Ballona Creek survey route, and the number and types of birds would be different along Ballona Creek than at BHSO. Supporting my hypothesis, I observed, on average, more species and individual birds at BHSO (18 species detected; 9.1 individuals per survey) than along my Ballona Creek survey route (8 species detected; 3.5 individuals per survey). I found that both types of trash were present at both BHSO and Ballona Creek; but, I did not count individual pieces of trash. For this reason, I could not conclude whether or not plastic was more prevalent than paper trash in these areas. Thus, for future research, I would recommend using a survey strategy to count individual pieces and types of trash present in BHSO and Ballona. In addition, I would also observe how birds react to various types of trash at BHSO and Ballona Creek, because observing their behavior with trash could indicate the dangers urbanization imposes on the natural environment.

**John Recendez***First Steps for a Greenhouse Business Plan*

My long-term project is a business plan focused on selling plants to the public at the Baldwin Hills Greenhouse Program. The purpose behind it is to help educate the community on the importance of native plants and their impact on the native ecology. The majority of my time this year was spent conducting marketing research and organizing the things to expect in the future of working on this project. The research was primarily a survey given to all Greenhouse Program students that asked about their living situation, things relating to their families' relationship with native plants, and how their outdoor garden spaces were managed. This information helped to understand my future customers and helped me plan my next steps. The business should focus more on informing people rather than advertising. The next steps in my project will be to contact California State Parks about tax issues, research California taxation laws to implement into the business plan, and formulate the base of the business plan itself.



*Ahmad conducts a bird survey at Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook.*

### Samuel De Riseis

#### *The Effect of Three Root Stimulant Treatments on Elderberry and Laurel Sumac Cuttings*

Seed germination rates for some native plants tend to be low; hence, for restoration purposes, it may be worth attempting to propagate some species through cuttings. My project concerns optimizing this process - propagation via cuttings - by treating Laurel Sumac and Elderberry cuttings with either willow water, chemical rooting stimulant, or honey water. I hypothesized that there would be no difference in root presence between Laurel Sumac and Elderberry cuttings and between the different treatment groups. Contrary to my hypothesis, the Elderberry control group (no treatment applied) produced roots more than did the other groups (42.8%), possibly because the control replicated the natural soil chemistry the Elderberry is accustomed to. Future propagation of Elderberry cuttings can therefore be chemical-free. Both honey treatment groups did not root (Elderberry) or display new growth (Laurel Sumac), possibly because the concentration of honey in the solution was too high, promoting bacterial and mold growth and rotting the cutting. I recommend further testing with a honey solution of lower concentration and a larger sample to affirm or reject my findings.



*Laurel sumac and elderberry cuttings in the greenhouse as part of Sam's research project.*

### Aaron Rivas

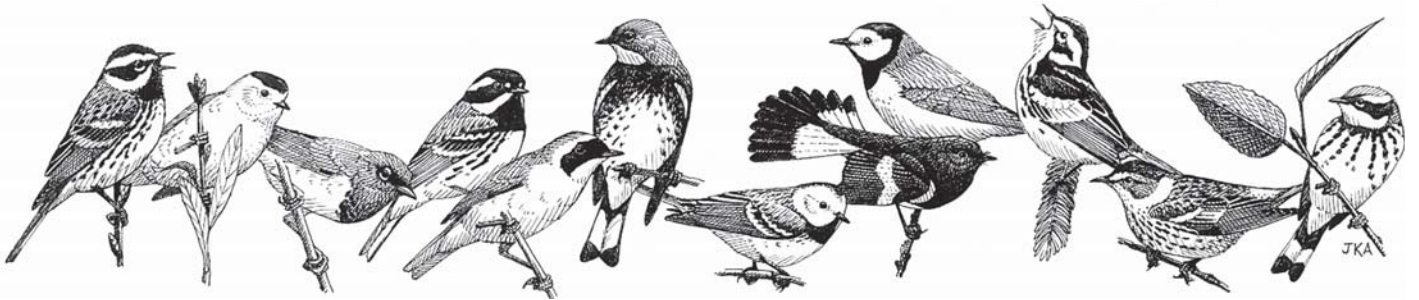
#### *Irrigation Systems and Native Plant Survival*

Due to Los Angeles's Mediterranean climate and our state's frequent droughts, irrigation systems have become a necessity for plants that do not receive adequate water, including the many native plants being restored as habitat for animal species at the Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook (BHSO). For my project, I divided the traffic circle at the entrance to the BHSO into two sections, one with drip irrigation and one with ring irrigation. Native plants were added into both these systems to test my hypothesis that drip irrigation would result in a higher survival rate of native plants than would ring irrigation. A staff member, fellow Greenhouse Program students, and I finished installing both irrigation systems and planted all the native plants on March 8, 2019. This project developed into a 2-year project due to high rainfall during the winter. Staff will use the irrigation system from the summer through fall of 2019, and then I will collect data on plant survival once the next school year starts to test my hypothesis.



*Students at work on the hillside adjacent to the greenhouse at Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook.*





## BIRDS OF THE SEASON — June 2019, by Jon Fisher

It was a long and fairly cool spring, with the benefits of a wet winter being obvious through the season and throughout the county. Several waves of a major migration of Painted Ladies, originating on the deserts of Mexico, added another dimension and splash of color. Many of these butterflies ended up as extra food for migrating birds as did countless other insects.

Beginning in January, even the lengthy five months of spring migration seemed to pass far too quickly. Thankfully there were plenty of regular migrants and a host of rare birds to focus the attention of birders.

The last of our regular migrants had passed through by early June, but late or lost vagrants kept turning up throughout the month. Though numbers of spring vagrants on the mainland were not overwhelming, some truly excellent birds were found. There was an obvious push of vagrants in early June, as amply demonstrated by a number of reports from San Clemente Island.

Our America's Birdiest County event, held for Los Angeles County at the end of April, netted 257 species in three days. Quite respectable, but still well below our high of 277 in 2011 and below the counts of many other years as well.

It's unlikely this was due to a lack of effort or coverage however.

Here's a look at the highlights from late April through June.

Waterfowl of interest included a sizeable flock of fifty **Brant** at Bonelli Regional Park in San Dimas on May 11 (Chuck Burt). A potentially summering **Long-tailed Duck** was at Cabrillo Beach from June 13–18 (Eva Cicoria).

A **Hooded Merganser** at the Ballona Freshwater Marsh through May 11 was later than normal for this species. Likewise were **Common Mergansers** at Quail Lake near Gorman on May 11 (Brad Rumble) and along the LA River in Glendale on June 16 (Jon Fisher). A **Red-breasted Merganser** at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park in Harbor City on May 5 (Ed Griffin, David Quadhamer).

A **Horned Grebe** near the Ballona Creek Mouth in Playa del Rey on June 8 was rather late (Jonathan Coffin).

At least one **Inca Dove** continued at Lake Los Angeles through April 26, and a **Common Ground-Dove** was at the reliable spot along the San Gabriel River in Bellflower from April 27–May 4 (Becky Turley).

**White-winged Doves** were along

the Santa Clara River in Valencia on May 11 (Dan Maxwell), at Peck Road Water Conservation Park in Arcadia on May 18 (Jon Fisher), at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park in Harbor City on May 25 (Bob Schallmann) and at Madrona Marsh in Torrance on June 2 (Calvin Bonn).

**American Oystercatchers** are being increasingly reported of late, though it can be difficult to tell how many of these records represent the same bird or birds moving from one coastal location to another. One was at White Point on the Palos Verdes Peninsula between May 3 and May 19 (James Bland), with two there on June 18 (Becky Turley) and at another was at the Cabrillo Beach Fishing Pier on May 25 (Bob Schallmann).

The Piute Ponds on Edwards AFB produced a **Whimbrel** on June 4 (Jon Feenstra) and a rare **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** from May 29–30 (Jon Feenstra). Also of interest was a **Pectoral Sandpiper** observed there from April 26–May 2 (Frank & Susan Gilliland).

A **Laughing Gull** was south of Long Beach on May 18 (Bernardo Alps) and a **Franklin's Gull** was at Malibu Lagoon from May 19–20 (Tom Miko). Quite unusual inland was a **Black Skimmer** at Bonelli Regional Park in San Dimas on May 14 (Rod Higbie).

Late inland **Common Loons** were at the Piute Ponds on May 10–June 6 (Chris Dean, Joe Lepisto, Jim Moore) and at Bonelli Regional Park in San Dimas from May 13–20 (Chuck Burt).

Three **Red-billed Tropicbirds** were off San Clemente Island on June 8 and another was recorded there on June 9 (Justyn Stahl).

Increasingly recorded in southern California waters, **Cook's Petrels** included one southeast of Catalina Island on May 19 (Robert McNab) and three off San Clemente Island on June 8 (Justyn Stahl).

The **Neotropic Cormorant** at MacArthur Park in Los Angeles was seen through April 22. Other sightings were at Bonelli Regional Park in San Dimas from May 22–29 (Chuck Burt), with two there on May 27 (Catherine McFadden), and one on the LA River in Glendale as of June 21 (Andrew Birch).

The waters over Redondo Canyon northwest of the Palos Verdes Peninsula produced a **Brown Booby** on April 23 (Jon Feenstra).

A lone **American White Pelican** was lingering late along the LA River in Long Beach on June 15 (Merryl Edelstein).

Definitely increasing in the county, **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** were at Sims Bio Pond in Long Beach through June 14—with two there from June 15–16—and at Alamitos Bay in Long Beach on May 23 and from June 4–6 (Cindy Crawford). One to two were seen off and on at the Ballona Freshwater Marsh near Playa Vista from June 3–21 (Chris Lory, Neysa Frechette), and what were likely the same birds were reported from nearby Ballona Creek and Del Rey Lagoon.

A **California Condor** was over the

I-5 near Gorman on June 15 (Alexander DeBarrios).

Late **Northern Harriers** were at the Ballona Wetlands on May 26 (David Haake) and at Colorado Lagoon in Long Beach on May 27 (Angie Trumbo).

Rare in fall but more so in spring, a **Broad-winged Hawk** was at the Sepulveda Basin in the San Fernando Valley on May 7 (Mike Stensvold). The **Zone-tailed Hawk** that spent much of the winter and spring near Grand Park in Monrovia continued there through April 23.

A **Flammulated Owl** at Kratka Ridge in the San Gabriel Mountains on April 19 was rather early (Nick & Mary Freeman) and a very rarely encountered spring migrant Flammulated Owl got stuck inside a house in Manhattan Beach on June 4. It was taken to South Bay Wildlife Rehab to be released at a later date.

A highly probable **Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher** was at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park in Harbor City on May 13 (Bobby Trusela). The description of this bird essentially rules out all other similar species. There are only a couple of June records of this species for the entire state, with most coming in September and October.

A **Tropical Kingbird** remained at Entradero Park in Torrance through May 10 and another wintering bird stuck around at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park in Harbor City through May 27. An **Eastern Kingbird** was detected on San Clemente Island on June 22 (Justyn Stahl).

**Plumbeous Vireos** were along Big Rock Creek Road on June 2 (Lance Benner) and at Big Rock Campground on June 9 (Kimball Garrett). Breeding has been documented

here in the past and evidence should be watched for. Also of note was a **Red-eyed Vireo** on San Clemente Island on June 6 (Vincent Weber).

Five **Purple Martins** were at the Piute Ponds on May 10 (Chris Dean, John Birsner) and one was reported there on June 6 (Chris Dean).

A handful of **Red Crossbills** were found in the San Gabriel Mountains in June (Norm Vargas, Lance Benner). This species is erratic in occurrence and complex in its distribution in our local mountains.

A **Cassin's Sparrow** was on San Clemente Island on April 30 (Vincent Weber). Given the reports of this species in the eastern Mojave Desert this spring following a favorable wetter than average season, it's not surprising that at one or two would reach coastal California or adjacent islands.

**Clay-colored Sparrows** were at the West San Gabriel River Parkway Nature Trail in Lakewood on April 27 (Brian Daniels), at Hahamonga Watershed Park in Pasadena on May 10 (Darren Dowell) and at the Kenneth Hahn SRA in Baldwin Hills on May 29 (Bobby Trusela).

A **White-throated Sparrow** was at the Ohara Nursery in Carson on April 28 (Vincent Lloyd). The **Harris's Sparrow** that spent the winter at Hahamonga Watershed Park in Pasadena was seen through April 25 and an injured **White-crowned Sparrow** was at UCLA on June 2 (Samuel Bressler).

**Baltimore Orioles** were at Wardlow Park in Long Beach on April 29 (Mark Scheel), at the Piute Ponds on May 1 (Chris Dean) and on San Clemente Island from May 3–4 (Justyn Stahl, Nicole Desnoyers).

It was a decent spring for warblers and some truly rare species were found. **Ovenbirds** were at the West San Gabriel River Parkway Nature Trail on May 25 (Joyce Brady) and on San Clemente Island on June 6 (Vincent Weber).

**Black-and-white Warblers** included a continuing bird at DeForest Park in Long Beach through April 22, one on San Clemente Island on June 5 (Justyn Stahl, Nicole Desnoyers) with another there on June 22 (Justyn Stahl) and one at Veteran's Park in Bell Gardens on June 22 (Richard Barth).

A nice find was a **Prothonotary Warbler** at Sand Dune Park in Manhattan Beach from May 3–7 (Mike Coulson). San Clemente Island held a **Tennessee Warbler** from June 17–18 (Justyn Stahl, Nicole Desnoyers).

An **American Redstart** was on San Clemente Island from June 4–6 and another was at Wardlow Park in Long Beach on June 19 (Kim Moore, Becky Turley). A very rare **Cape May Warbler** was on San Clemente Island on June 4 (both Nicole Desnoyers). This is the third Cape May recorded there in as many years.

**Northern Parulas** were at Banning Park in Wilmington on May 23 (Bobby Trusela) and on San Clemente Island from June 7–9 (Justyn Stahl).

**Magnolia Warblers** were on San Clemente Island on May 31 (Richard Hepner) and from June 5–6 (Justyn Stahl). **Chestnut-sided Warblers** were there on June 6 (Vincent Weber) and at the Piute Ponds on June 11 (Jon Feenstra). A wintering **Palm Warbler** continued at Entradero Park in Torrance through April 23.

**Grace's Warblers**— still a CBRC re-

view species— were at the Chilao Visitor's Center in the San Gabriel Mountains from April 23–30 (Tomoe Maness) and at nearby Charlton Flat from April 30–June 14 (David Coates).

Quite late was a **Townsend's Warbler** at Valhalla Memorial Park in North Hollywood on June 9 (Andrew Birch).

Wardlow Park in Long Beach produced a very rare **Red-faced Warbler** that many birders ticked on its two day stay from April 27–28 (Kim Moore, Becky Turley). This very scarce warbler is recorded less than annually in the state, though it is fairly common in the mountains Arizona, not all that far away.

**Summer Tanagers** were at DeForest Park in Long Beach on May 11 (Dick Barth, Merryl Edelstein), at Madrona Marsh in Torrance on May 17, at Bear Divide in the western San Gabriel Mountains on May 20 (Ryan Terrill), at Sycamore Flat Campground near Valyermo from May 27–June 9 (Kimball Garrett) and at Hopkins Wilderness Park in Redondo Beach from June 4–7.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** were at Hopkins Wilderness Park in Redondo Beach from May 10–12 (Mark Rubke), on San Clemente Island on May 28 (Vincent Weber) and again from June 6–9 and on June 19 (Justyn Stahl, Nicole Desnoyers), at El Dorado Park in Long Beach on June 1 (Brian Daniels) and at the Piute Ponds on June 10 (Chris Dean). An **Indigo Bunting** on San Clemente Island on June 5 was the only one reported (Vincent Weber).

July marks the first month that southbound shorebirds start passing through the region in numbers. July and August are a great time to be out birding and we're fortunate to have some excellent spots in the

county for shorebirds. The Piute Ponds, LA River and Malibu Lagoon are among the best and tend to attract good numbers of regular as well as most of the rarer species. But shorebirds can be found in any number of other places with suitable habitat and there are plenty of lesser known locales worth checking.

August will see migrant passerines appear. Any good patch of grass and weeds on the coastal slope can produce numbers of seedeaters. Flood control basins and river channels typically provide the most suitable habitat for these birds.

The mountains can be excellent as well. Though breeding activity will be winding down, the San Gabriels are heavily used by passerine migrants in August and September. There are perhaps a half dozen or so well-known and well covered mountain birding spots, but much of this area receives virtually no attention. The opportunity for exploration and discovery is substantial.

As always, LA County's extensive coastline has potential. Any number of pelagic birds can and do occasionally wander close to shore, though patience and persistence is often required to spot them. Yet even with a very respectable number of active local birders, we barely scratch the surface of this aspect of birding.

Autumn offers the potential not only for more expected vagrants, but also for remarkable rarities from Asia and elsewhere. A few reverse migrants from Mexico and Arizona should also make an appearance. I'd argue that fall migration, with all of its variety and the chance for the unexpected, is the most intriguing part of the bird year. 🐦

## PRESS RELEASE

### Southeast Arizona Birding Festival Showcases the Region's Natural Wonders Participants from around the country flock to see rare birds, learn about the Sonoran Desert, and revel in scenic beauty

Metro Tucson, June 11, 2019

Tucson Audubon Society's 9th annual Southeast Arizona Birding Festival, presented by Carl Zeiss Sports Optics, takes place August 7–11. Hosted at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel near Reid Park, this event is the region's premier birding experience. Visitors have the chance at seeing over 200 species of wild birds while enjoying the unique landscapes of our Sky Island region. Check out kids' activities and live animals, and learn about bird biology, bird photography, bats, conservation, insects, and more at over 40 nature talks and workshops at the free to enter Nature Expo. Find nature books, jewelry, bird feeders, optics, and original art at the adjoining vendor fair—an excellent way for locals and visitors to escape the summer heat while shopping locally.

Southeast Arizona is one of the top birdwatching destinations in the country with many species found here and nowhere else in the U.S. The Festival features expert-led field trips to many of the region's best sites, such as Madera Canyon and the Chiricahuas, allowing more than 400 participants the unique opportunity to view these special birds.

"The month of August typically brings the most species at one time. Specifically, hummingbird species reach peak numbers in August, with over 13 different species that can be seen. This variety of hummingbirds is greater than any other place in the United States." —Jennie MacFarland, Bird Conservation Biologist, Tucson Audubon Society

Attendees to the Nature Expo and vendor fair can enjoy casual, morning bird walks around the venue, and peruse 36 booths of great nature-themed items. Nature Expo hours are: Thursday and Friday, August 8 & 9 from 12–6 pm, Saturday, August 10 from 10 am–6 pm, and Sunday, August 11 from 10 am–2 pm.

Two evening presentations feature bird experts Kevin Karlson (Friday) and Laura Erickson (Saturday).

Registration for the 2019 Southeast Arizona Birding Festival, presented by Carl Zeiss Sports Optics, is now open. Please visit [www.tucsonaudubon.org/festival](http://www.tucsonaudubon.org/festival) for more information.

EXPERIENCE SOUTHEAST ARIZONA'S SECOND SPRING!

# SOUTHEAST ARIZONA BIRDING FESTIVAL

AUGUST 7-11, 2019

Guest speakers **Laura Erickson and Kevin Karlson**

Half, full-day and overnight excursions, and evening owling trips to southeast Arizona's best birding sites

Photography workshops and trips, and a FREE Nature Expo featuring nature presentations, live animals, kids' activities, and vendor fair

**ZEISS** **TUCSON AUDUBON SOCIETY**

Find Your Life Birds  
REGISTRATION AT: [TUCSONAUDUBON.ORG/FESTIVAL](http://TUCSONAUDUBON.ORG/FESTIVAL)

# BIRD WALKS — JULY–AUGUST 2019

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 [volunteer@laaudubon.org](mailto:volunteer@laaudubon.org) or call (310) 839-5420.*

## OPEN WETLANDS AT BALLONA

1st Sat. of each month, (*Except August*)

July 6

Time 9 a.m. – Noon

The first Saturday of every month, 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. The buckwheat is in bloom and lots of butterflies to see. Please drop-in!

Contact: *Cindy Hardin*,  
[cindyhardin@laaudubon.org](mailto:cindyhardin@laaudubon.org),  
(310) 301-0050

## ALL ABOUT NATURE

### STONEVIEW NATURE CENTER

Every Thursday morning

9:00 a.m.–10:45 a.m.

Come explore the wildlife of the Baldwin Hills. Our walks will focus on the plants and animals (birds included) of the Coastal Sage Scrub habit. During our walks on the trails and streets that connect three nearby parks we will document what we find with the goal of increasing our awareness, appreciation and overall knowledge of the wildlife with which we share our urban space. All knowledge levels welcome. Children age 6 and older also welcome. Binoculars provided. Smart phones, cameras, field guides and field note books encouraged.

**Directions:** The park is in the small residential community of Blair Hills. Access roads are off of LA CIENEGA south of OBAMA RD (aka RODEO RD.) or off of JEFFERSON/OBAMA just west of LA CIENEGA.

**Contact info:** Stoneview Nature Center (310) 202-3002. The Center opens at 8:00 a.m.

## UPPER FRANKLIN CANYON

### SOOKY GOLDMAN NATURE CENTER

2nd Sunday of the month

July 14 & August 11

Time: 8:30–11:30

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 chaparral bird species such as California Quail, Common Raven, Red-shouldered Hawk, Spotted and California Towhees, Song Sparrows and California Thrasher; Nesting season is coming to an end in the low lands; we will look for adults feeding nestlings and fledglings.

Meet in the main parking lot for the Sooky Goldman Nature Center. (2600 Franklin Canyon Dr., Beverly Hills 90210) *Binoculars provided.*

**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.

## TOPANGA STATE PARK BIRDWALK

1st Sunday of every month

July 7 & August 4

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.  
**Directions:** 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

## BALLONA WETLANDS BIRD WALK

3rd Sunday of the month with the exception of December

July 21 & August 18

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, [wbutorrance@gmail.com](mailto:wbutorrance@gmail.com)

**Reminder: NO Kenneth Hahn Park (walks resume in September)**



# FIELD TRIPS



*Nick & Mary  
Freeman,*

*LAAS Field  
Trip  
Leaders*

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 prior permission from leader please.

SIGN-UP BY EMAIL SENT TO:

*membership@laaudubon.org*

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

*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.*

We confirm reservations and provide supplemental trip information by email reply.

## FIELD TRIPS AND 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

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

*membership@laaudubon.org* | (323) 876-0202

## Thursday thru Sunday, July 4–7

**OWLS & OTHER BIRDS OF THE SOUTHERN SIERRA**  
\$140 FEE, LIMITED SIGN-UP: MAX 10, MIN 6.  
*(Trip is sold-out, but you may be added to a wait-list.)*

Leaders: **Mary and Nick Freeman.** We will be renting a different summer home this year, which should be just as nice as last years'. Flammulated and Spotted Owls have been seen in multiples almost every year. Saw-whet (adult & juv.) and Pygmy Owl are less reliable, but we will look hard! Saw-whet was very obliging last year! During days, we will search out Pileated Woodpecker, Pacific Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and perhaps Goshawk, Dipper or Evening Grosbeak! Meeting time and location in Ponderosa is still being firmed up. Couples will probably be prioritized, and singles in sleeping bags will be wait-listed. Once confirmed, please coordinate your contribution for the Thursday potluck with Mary (mnfreeman@earthlink.net). LAAS will provide a weenie roast one other night, and we always have plenty of leftovers for a third dinner! For more information email: *(membership@laaudubon.org)* or call (323) 876-0202, and leave a voice message if no answer.

## Saturday, July 20

### BIG BEAR AREA

NO FEE, LIMITED SIGN-UP FOR DAY BIRDING AND / OR NIGHT OWLING

Leaders: **Mary and Nick Freeman.** Get a hotel room for July 20 (or wake up really early), and a room for July 21 if you plan to dine and owl with the Freemans. Target birds include Williamson's and Red-breasted Sapsuckers, Calliope and Rufous Hummers, mountain finches, Dusky Flycatcher, White-headed Woodpecker, and Mountain Quail. MEET in the Aspen Glen Picnic Area parking lot in Big Bear at 7:30 a.m. DIRECTIONS: Take Hwy 18 or 38 to Big Bear Lake, then proceed about half way along the south side of the lake on Hwy 18 (Big Bear Blvd.) and turn south on Tulip Lane. The lot will be on the south side of this short street. Bring lunch for a full day, and a Forest Service Adventure Pass. Email sign-up mandatory. Send email to: *(membership@laaudubon.org.)* Provide • name(s) • email addresses, & • cell phone #s and wait for email confirmation.

**Sunday, July 28****LOWER LA RIVER SHOREBIRD MIGRATION**

NO FEE, NO SIGN-UP

Leader: **Larry Allen**. Shorebirds frequently stage in droves on this stretch of the river, with some exciting finds here in the past. Do you want to find out how to tell Least from Western Sandpipers? Or help Larry in his annual quest for a Semipalmated Sandpiper (yes, they turn up somewhere every year!)

DIRECTIONS: Take the 710 (Long Beach) 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, and follow this past the pump station onto DeForest Ave. Park near the river access by the bridge, meet along the river at 8:00 a.m., and bird until noon.

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**Saturday, August 17****SAN GABRIEL MOUNTAINS / MT. WILSON OBSERVATORY**

TOUR FEE: \$15/head (\$12 over 62) payable at Mt. Wilson, SIGN-UP MAX: 16

Leaders: **Mary and Nick Freeman**. We will bird the morning away up in the conifers, buy lunch at Newcomb's Ranch (the Biker Bar) and end up at Mount Wilson Observatory after noon, to take the 1 p.m. guided 2-hour tour around the grounds and facility, including the 100-inch telescope. The one-mile walking tour is unsuitable for individuals with respiratory and heart problems or with limited mobility. It will be hot, but not as hot as L.A! Please visit the observatory website at [www.mtwilson.edu](http://www.mtwilson.edu) for more exciting and cautionary details before the trip. Forest Service Adventure Pass is required (\$5/day or \$30/yr. at sporting goods stores). MEET at 7:00 a.m. along the frontage road for Angeles Crest Hwy just north of the 210 Fwy in La Canada. Turn N on ACH, take the second right (Milmada Dr.), and a quick left (Flanders Rd.). Meet along the first 50-yard stretch, fed and gassed up, and we will carpool from here. Plan to stay out until 3 or 4 p.m.

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**August 21–25****WESTERN FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
Albuquerque, New Mexico this year!**

A great way to hear about the latest in regional ornithology from the most active and knowledgeable in the field! Whether you are a beginner birder or field biologist, this event and the many field trips / workshops / lectures / quiz sessions are not to be missed. This is where birders of a feather find each other! <https://www.westernfieldornithologists.org/conference.php>

**Saturday, August 31****PIUTE PONDS, EDWARDS AFB**NO FEE, 20 MAX SIGN UP, PERSONAL EAFB PASS REQUIRED, (*register with base before Aug. 15th!*)

Leader: **Jim Moore**. A good mix of shorebirds, with a chance at LeConte's Thrasher, and Pectoral and Baird's sandpipers. Some of the finest desert birding in LA County! Some amazing birds have been seen here over the years, including a pair of Hudsonian Godwits and a Little Stint just five years ago, and an adult (unheard of!) Sharp-tailed Sandpiper this May!!

**REGISTER WITH THE BASE**

Talk with EAFB base biologist Misty Hailstone by phone at (661) 275-2435 between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. *before Aug. 15* to register with the base. Tell Misty your personal information (•legal name, •driver's license number and state issued, •social security number, •date of birth, •email address, and •phone number). If you must e-mail your information, send it in a password-protected document to: ([misty.hailstone.1@US.AF.MIL](mailto:misty.hailstone.1@US.AF.MIL))

After you have registered with Misty, send an email to LAAS at: ([membership@laudubon.org](mailto:membership@laudubon.org).) We need •names, •email address, •cell phone #, & •Zip Code. LA Audubon will request access permission for all registered/signed-up participants a few days before the trip. Participants will pick up passes at 7:30 a.m. on Aug. 31, at the Rosamond Base entrance at the West Gate Building, NOT the nearby Visitor Control Center.

**TO GET HERE:** Take Hwy 14 N past Lancaster to Rosamond, and head east for 10.3 miles on Rosamond Blvd. to the West Gate Building at 1004 Rosamond Blvd, Edwards AFB. Jim will NOT be here, just pick-up your pass. Retrace your path back 8.1 miles towards Rosamond with pass in hand, and head south on the dirt road following the big power lines. This is Division St., which starts at 34°51'52.2"N, 118°07'53.1"W. Proceed to the first dike on the left (Ave. C), and take this left (E) to the Port-a-Potty, where Jim will be waiting with open arms! If you wish to call Jim on your approach, his cell is (661) 317-1600. Lunch and finish at Apollo Park, so bring lunch, sunblock, 'scopes and lots of water. Likely hot weather and high clearance vehicles may be a plus.

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## Sunday, September 8

### SALTON SEA

\$15 FEE, SIGN-UP REQUIRED, 8 CARS LIMIT

Leaders: **Nick and Mary Freeman**. Anticipate 95-105°F, and bring plenty of water. We will see Yellow-footed (only place in the U.S.) and Laughing gulls, Black Tern, Abert's Towhee, and Gila Woodpecker. We may also see Lesser Nighthawk, Vermilion Flycatcher and Stilt Sandpiper. The up side of visiting in August, is a slight but real possibility of mind-numbing rarities like Mag. Frigatebird, Boobies, Piping Plover, Ross' Gull, etc., etc., etc.!! Lots of driving, so come with a friend, as singles will be bumped if we fill up the trip.

**Signup:** by email sent to:

([membership@laudubon.org](mailto:membership@laudubon.org)) Provide, •cell phone # and •your address. Mail reservation fee check for \$15 to: Los Angeles Audubon Society, PO Box 411301, Los Angeles CA 90041-8301.

**Where to stay:** Brawley Inn - (760) 344-1199 offers a better continental breakfast, \$80, and there is a decent restaurant next door. America's Best Value Inn in Westmorland (760) 351-7100 is \$70. Ask for AAA discount. Continental breakfast.

Meet at Cattle Call Park at 5:30 a.m., and bird until about 3 p.m. Bring lunch, FRS radios, scope, sunblock, minimum 1 gallon of water each, and a big hat. Those wishing to dine with leaders Saturday, contact leaders to coordinate meeting at Christine's in Brawley. Other lodging suggestions and dinner contact information in confirmation emailer/flyer.

## Sunday, September 22

### BOLSA CHICA WETLANDS AND HARRIET WEIDER PARK

NO FEE, NO SIGN-UP

Leader: **Irwin Woldman**. At Bolsa Chica, flocks of shorebirds should be heading south, mixing with post-breeding terns and Skimmers, and a chance for American Bittern and Ridgeway's Rail. We will caravan to nearby Harriet Weider Park next, for passerines, flycatchers and such. For those wishing to picnic lunch, we will do so afterwards at the tables near the library about 1.5 miles north on PCH and one block toward the ocean. MEET at 8:00 a.m. in the Bolsa Chica parking lot on the north side of PCH, a block southeast of Warner Avenue. Bring a scope if you have one!

## Sunday, September 29

### CALIFORNIA CITY & GALILEO HILLS

SIGN-UP REQUIRED, NO FEE, 10 MAX

Leaders: **Nick and Mary Freeman**. Yes, birding groups are once again welcome at Galileo Hills on the weekend!! Mind-boggling birds have shown up here at all seasons, and late fall is the best time for both south-bound migrants and California rarities at these prime migrant traps. Painted Bunting, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Golden-winged, Red-faced, Mourning Warblers and many others extremely rare (individually), but all have been seen by your leaders! Western and eastern warblers and other songbirds, as well as flycatchers, should headline. Reptiles may be encountered! Nick will try to spot herps for show and tell.

Dine out (then herp?) with leaders Saturday evening if you wish at Gloria's, 7027 CA City Blvd, 93505. Contact leaders if you plan to dine. Bird California City after Galileo Hills.

**To meet**, 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 into the golf course parking lot past the huge, fenced driving range. Meet here at 7:30 a.m.

**To reserve** with LA Audubon, email ([membership@laudubon.org](mailto:membership@laudubon.org)), or call (323) 876-0202. Provide •name(s), •cell phone #, and •email address (for confirmation).

Reserve a room at Motel 6 or other in Mojave, or the Best Western in CA City (across the street from the meeting spot). Bring lunches, FRS radios, and sunblock, bird and reptile books.

## Saturday, October 5

### COASTAL SANTA MONICA HOT SPOTS

NO SIGN-UP, NO FEE

Leaders: Local docents and LAAS members, **Read Howarth** and **Ella Pennington**. Late passerines and shorebirds should be moving through coastal migration spots, mixed with early wintering birds. This is a window of great vagrant possibilities; there's a Red-eyed Vireo along this stretch as we go to press, and fall is typically better! Possibly 80 species. **Directions:** Take PCH N over the bridge in Malibu to the stoplight, and park on PCH, or turn left into the fee lot, or turn right onto Cross Creek Road for free parking along the road adjacent to Starbucks. Cross PCH, and meet at the kiosk by the lagoon at 8 a.m. for a full day of birding. Possible stops include Malibu Creek State Park, Bonsall Drive and areas around Zuma Beach. There may be an access fee at Sycamore Canyon or elsewhere. Bring lunch, FRS radios, and a scope if you've got one.



**Saturday, October 13****SAN DIEGO**

NO SIGN-UP, NO FEE

Leaders: local hotshots **Mark & Camille Stratton**, and **Mary & Nick Freeman**. We will be sizing up migrating shorebirds and passerines, and chasing after myriad rarity reports that typically burn up the San Diego listservs this time of year. A good portion of the morning may be spent at Pt. Loma. Other possible areas include Sunset Cliffs, Mission Bay, lower San Diego Bay and Tijuana River marshland. Bring lunch for a full day of birding. **Directions:** Take the 5 Fwy S about three miles past Route 52 to the Clairemont Drive off-ramp and head W into the small lot adjacent to the Mission Bay Information Center. Meet E of the kiosk at 8:00 AM. (On GPS, punch in: 2688 E. Mission Bay Dr. 92109). Join the group for dinner in the area. It's a great way to meet and greet fellow birders, and swap tall birding tales!

**Sunday, October 20****OXNARD PLAIN**

NO SIGN-UP, NO FEE

Leaders: **Nick and Mary Freeman**. Meet at the Hueneme agriculture fields at 8:00 a.m. to look for Red-throated Pipit, Golden-Plovers and longspurs. Later, we'll try to shake some late-migrating passerines - as well as a few eastern vagrants - out of nearby windbreaks. The tamarisks and eucalyptus rows on the Plain often concentrate migrants in the fall. **Directions:** From the 101 N, drive S on Rice Avenue, following the Rice Avenue prompts to the end, then turn Rt. on Hueneme Rd. Meet on the N (Rt) side of Hueneme Rd. a couple of blocks west of this turn, just after the first building and just before Casper Rd. On GPS, punch in: 276 Hueneme Rd. 93033.

**Saturday, October 26****CONDORS AT BITTER CREEK NWR***(tentative, may change)**Please, no sign-ups until August 1.*

\$10 DONATION (OR MORE) SUGGESTED,  
SIGN-UP REQUIRED, LIMIT 20

Joseph Brandt, California Condor biologist, will probably be leading this trip to view the reintroduction program of the California Condor. We should get good looks at California Condors, possibly Golden Eagles, and a number of other species, from Cerro Noroeste Rd. and possibly a hillside near the hacking pen. Joseph will give us an overview of the program, show us how radio telemetry and GPS tracking units are helping to save the bird, and talk about the future of the species in California and elsewhere. We will be west of Mt. Pinos, not too far from Maricopa. All new releases of condors into the wild SoCal population occur here, and all 43 condors in our wild local population visit this area.

**DIRECTIONS:** Take Interstate 5 north to Frazier Park exit. At the stop sign make a left and go under I-5. MEET in the parking lot of the "Flying J" gas station at 8:30 a.m. Finish at 3 or 4:00 p.m. Bring drinks, lunch, and FRS radio and a scope if you have them. No fee, but \$10 donations accepted to the Condor Survival Fund.

**RESERVE** your place by email to: ([membership@laadubon.org](mailto:membership@laadubon.org)), or phone: (323) 876-0202. Provide your • Name • cell phone #, • e-mail address, • whether you have a *high clearance vehicle* that can accommodate at least 4 people total (priority) or if you plan to ride with someone else at the meet location. Call or email LAAS in August, or check Sep./Oct. *Western Tanager*, for trip date confirmation.



*California Condor at Bitter Creek National Wildlife Area*