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WESTERN TANAGER

May–June 2015 | Volume 81, Number 5



Beginning in March 2015, Los Angeles Audubon is putting the entire archive of *The Western Tanager* online. At this time, Volumes 1, 2 and 3 from 1934–1937 have been published. Head on over and poke around the early days of L.A. Audubon.

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American Wigeon, Photo by Tony Bianchi



The mission of Los Angeles Audubon Society is to promote the enjoyment and protection of birds and other wildlife through recreation, education, conservation and restoration.

Los Angeles Audubon Society is non-profit organization and a certified chapter of the National Audubon Society.

Los Angeles Audubon Society
 P.O. Box 411301
 Los Angeles, CA 90041-8301
www.losangelesaudubon.org
 (323) 876-0202 Voice/Messages
LAAS@laaudubon.org General email

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Staff

<i>Director of Communications and Development</i>	Carol Babeli	carolbabeli@laaudubon.org
<i>Director of Outdoor Education</i>	Cindy Hardin	cindyhardin@laaudubon.org
<i>Director of Environmental Education</i>	Stacey Vigallon	tern@laaudubon.org
<i>Volunteer Coordinator</i>	Cindy Hardin	cindyhardin@laaudubon.org
<i>Administrator</i>	Martha Balkan	books@laaudubon.org
<i>Member Services & Website Liason</i>	Susan Castor	membership@laaudubon.org

The *Western Tanager* is the chapter newsletter of the Los Angeles Audubon Society, published online bi-monthly in PDF format.

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 westerntananger@laaudubon.org. Photos should be high resolution (300ppi) .jpg or .tif files. Submissions are due the 1st 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.

Editor Linda Oberholtzer, westerntananger@laaudubon.org
Design/Layout Susan Castor, susancastor@laaudubon.org
Scientific Advisor Kimball Garrett, kgarrett@nhm.org

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The birds of Los Angeles need you.

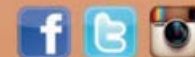
Become a member of the Los Angeles Audubon Society to directly help the birds of our region. Your membership supports the organization's efforts in the following areas:

- **RECREATION** Join other members of the local birding community on field trips, bird walks and trips for the beginning to advanced birder. Join us at the beach, the mountains and places in between.
- **EDUCATION** Our outdoor education program has become a national model. Thousands of urban youth gain valuable insight into local ecosystems, including the Ballona Wetlands, the Baldwin Hills and their own school yard habitats. Our research grants support university students in biology and environmental sciences. Our lectures, workshops and acclaimed *Western Tanager* newsletter serve nature lovers throughout Los Angeles.
- **CONSERVATION** Los Angeles Audubon Society leads Los Angeles County in citizen science to monitor and protect habitat for birds and other wildlife through federal, state and local policy, programs and partnerships. We help resolve conflicts between urban populations and wildlife via education, advocacy and action.
- **RESTORATION** Our revitalization projects are transforming urban wastelands, parklands and school yards into prime habitat for birds and wildlife. Our Audubon at Home program helps Angelenos create native plant gardens which attract and support birds.

The mission of Los Angeles Audubon is to promote the enjoyment and protection of birds and other wildlife through recreation, education, conservation and restoration.



Individual membership only \$25 per year. Join today at laaudubon.org



Interpreting Nature

By Stacey Vigallon, Director of Environmental Education

Congratulations to Dorsey High School – California Green Ribbon School Award Winner!

We are extremely pleased to announce that one of our long-time partner schools, Dorsey High School, has been recognized as a Green Ribbon School in the state of California. They have also been nominated by State Superintendent Tom Torlakson to compete at the national level in the US. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools program. The program aims to honor schools that reduce environmental impact and costs, improve health and wellness, and provide environmental education.

Much of the work that helped earn Dorsey Green Ribbon status was spear-headed by teacher Robert Jeffers, a 2011 LAUSD Teacher of the Year and finalist for California Teacher of the Year. A strong believer in community partnerships, Robert Jeffers has facilitated on- and off-campus projects with Los Angeles Audubon, UC Master Gardeners, Disney, ABC Family, Victorious Green, and FOX Studios. He now also serves on the Los Angeles Audubon Board of Directors.

Over the past seven years students in the Baldwin Hills Greenhouse Program have played a key role in assisting with these projects. We were thrilled that the members of the student team selected to accept the award at the Green Ribbon ceremony last month were all from the Greenhouse Program!

For more information about the Green Ribbon Schools Award Program, visit the California Department of Education:
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/fa/si/greenribbonprog.asp>



A Greenhouse intern is interviewed about the work that Dorsey High School has done to achieve Green Ribbon School status.



Students in Garden (summer meeting) Greenhouse Program students work in the Dorsey High School garden. The garden emphasizes cultivation of both edible plants as well as California native plants. UC Master Gardeners and Victorious Green were key partners in on-campus garden work.



Teacher Robert Jeffers and a team of Greenhouse Program students accept the California Green Ribbon School Award for Dorsey High School. Also pictured are Dorsey Principal Reginald Sample and State Superintendent Tom Torlakson.

FIELD TRIP REPORT

Anza-Borrego State Park

Birds, Wildflowers, Insects, and More, March 2015

By Kurt Leuschner

Wow, what a weekend—we did and saw so much!

82 bird species at least, and that does not include the Golden Eagle that Irene saw on the way home, plus the Scott's Oriole at my cabin Sunday afternoon (and another Bighorn sheep sighting on Hwy. 74 by Maureen and Irene) ...

See the following list of birds and wildlife seen on the Los Angeles Audubon field trip to the Anza-Borrego State Park on March 21 & 22, 2015. A quality list of birds for sure!

Our thanks to the participants who submitted these stunning photos from the weekend. Enjoy!

Happy Birding!
Kurt Leuschner



White-lined Sphinx Moth Caterpillars, Photo by Tjtie Poo



Desert Flower, Photo by Tjtie Poo



Cactus Flower, Photo by Tjtie Poo



Cactus Flower, Photo by Tjtie Poo

**Birds and Other Wildlife seen,
March 20-22, 2015 LAAS Anza-Borrego
State Park Field Trip**

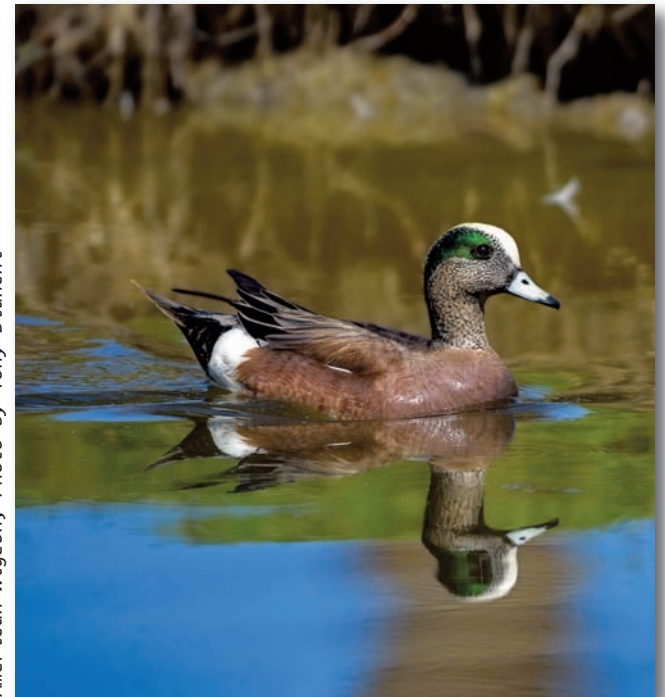
82 Bird Species

American White Pelican – LH
 Gadwall – Borrego Sewage Pond (4)
 Mallard – Club Circle Resort
 American Wigeon – Club Circle Resort
 Wild Turkey – Julian
 Western Grebe – Lake Henshaw, many
 Double-crested Cormorant – Lake Henshaw (1)
 Great Blue Heron – Lake Henshaw (2)
 Black-crowned Night-Heron – Club Circle Resort
 Turkey Vulture – BS, LH
 White-tailed Kite – seen outside of Julian along high-
 way (1)
 Bald Eagle – LH
 Red-shouldered Hawk – Julian (heard)
 Red-tailed Hawk – Sentenac Canyon Birding Trail
 Swainson’s Hawk – BS (Hundreds!)
 American Kestrel – Julian, BS
 Gambel’s Quail – BS
 California Quail – Heard at Sentenac
 American Coot – CCR, LH
 Killdeer – Borrego Sewage Pond
 Bonaparte’s Gull – LH (small flock)
 Band-tailed Pigeon – Barrel Spring, Ranchita (many)
 White-winged Dove – BS
 Common Ground-Dove – CCR (1)
 Mourning Dove – BS
 Eurasian Collared-Dove – BS
 Greater Roadrunner – BS
 Great Horned Owl – BS heard
 Common Poorwill – Indian Head (BS) – two seen Fri-
 day night
 White-throated Swift – one seen Tamarisk Grove
 Costa’s Hummingbird – BS
 Lewis’s Woodpecker – Ranchita
 Acorn Woodpecker – Julian
 Ladder-backed Woodpecker – TG
 Northern Flicker – Julian
 Black Phoebe – BS

Say’s Phoebe – BS
 Western Kingbird – TG
 Loggerhead Shrike –
 BS
 (Least) Bell’s Vireo –
 two heard near Scis-
 sors Crossing
 Western Scrub-Jay –
 Julian, Barrel Spring
 Common Raven – BS
 American Crow – Ju-
 lian
 Horned Lark – Old
 Springs Road
 Violet-green Swallow –
 LH
 Northern Rough-
 winged Swallow – CCR
 (3)
 Oak Titmouse –
 Wynola Rd, Julian
 (heard)
 Mountain Chickadee – Wynola Rd, Julian (heard)
 Verdin – BS
 Bushtit – SCBT
 Bewick’s Wren – TG
 Cactus Wren – TG
 House Wren– one heard near Scissor’s Crossing
 Rock Wren – Surprise Canyon
 Black-tailed Gnatcatcher – TG heard
 Western Bluebird – Julian
 Northern Mockingbird – BS
 Sage Thrasher – Old Springs Rd.
 European Starling – BS
 Phainopepla – TG, BS
 Yellow-rumped Warbler – TG
 Wilson’s Warbler – Borrego Sewage
 Common Yellowthroat – Borrego Sewage
 California Towhee – Julian
 Black-throated Sparrow – Surprise Canyon (heard)
 Savannah Sparrow – one at Borrego Sewage Pond
 Rufous-crowned Sparrow – one heard LH
 Chipping Sparrow – heard at LH
 Brewer’s Sparrow – many singing Old Springs Rd.
 White-crowned Sparrow – TG



Anza-Borrego Birding Group, Photo by Jenny Cole



American Wigeon, Photo by Tony Bianchi

Dark-eyed Junco – Julian
 Western Meadowlark – LH
 Red-winged Blackbird – CCR, Julian
 Great-tailed Grackle – BS
 Brewer's Blackbird – CCR
 Brown-headed Cowbird – CCR
 Hooded Oriole – one male CCR
 Bullock's Oriole – two males, LH
 House Finch – BS
 Lesser Goldfinch – TG etc ...
 Pine Siskin – Julian
 House Sparrow – BS

Some butterflies:

Becker's White
 Painted Lady
 Western Pygmy Blue
 Sleepy Orange
 Cloudless Sulphur
 Tiny Checkerspot
 Funereal Duskywing

Some mammals:

Coyote
 Peninsular Bighorn Sheep – seen Friday on Montezuma Grade
 Black-tailed Hare

Other:

Darkling Beetles
 Spider Beetles
 Sidewinder tracks
 White-lined Sphinx Moth Caterpillars

Some Wildflowers:

Scarlet Bugler
 Cryptantha or Forget-me-Not
 Checker Fiddleneck
 California Primrose
 California Evening Primrose
 Dune Primrose
 Ceanothus blooming
 Daffodils
 Wild Heliotrope

Fremont or Desert Pincushion
 Milkvetch or Locoweed
 Bajada Lupine
 Brittlebush
 Bigelow Monkeyflower (one)
 Desert Marigold
 Dune Sunflower
 Desert Sunflower
 Desert Chicory
 Lax Flower
 Whispering Bells
 Purplemat
 Chia
 White Sage
 Sand Verbena



Swainson's Hawk, By Tjie Poo

Brewer's Sparrow, Photo by Tjie Poo



California Towhee, Photo by Tjie Poo





Disney Wildlife Conservation Representative Visits L.A. Audubon

On April 10th, Los Angeles Audubon hosted a visitor from the Disney Conservation Fund, Leslie Wells, Strategic Philanthropy Representative from Disney Corporate Citizenship. Leslie met with Stacey Vigallon, the project biologist for Los Angeles Audubon at the Least Tern Colony on Venice Beach, and with Carol Babeli, LA Audubon Development Director.

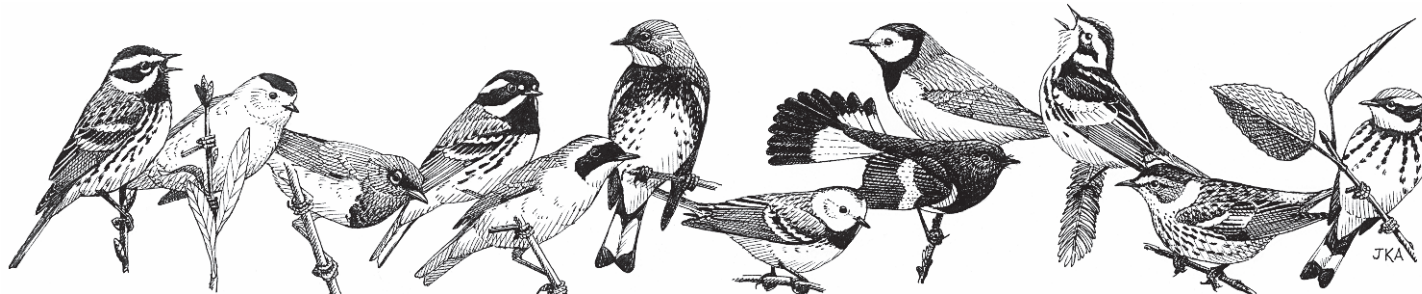
Disney has provided funding that helps to support Los Angeles Audubon's established Least Tern and Snowy Plover conservation programs that combine Federally Listed species monitoring and community education, aimed at protecting/preserving habitat for Least Tern and Snowy Plovers.

Leslie toured the perimeter of the colony area and took part in viewing and identifying birds that can be observed at our beaches: Curlews, Double-crested Cormorants, and Killdeer were spotted. The Terns have not yet migrated to the area, but Stacey is preparing her group of volunteers for their arrival, at which time daily monitoring of Tern activity will begin.

Carol accompanied Leslie on a quick tour of the Ballona Wetlands saltmarsh where many redwinged blackbirds were spotted. Then a trip up to the Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook where Leslie took in the wide view of the Ballona Creek Watershed and learned more about LA Audubon's environmental education programs and our students contributions to conservation in LA.



*Lt., Stacey Vigallon, Los Angeles Audubon Project Biologist – Least Tern Colony on Venice Beach
Rt., Leslie Wells, Strategic Philanthropy Representative – Disney Corporate Citizenship*



Birds of the Season — April 2015, By Jon Fisher

Spring allows us a remarkable window into the avian world. Without even leaving the county, we're able to observe dozens of species from a score of different families as they make their way north to breed. For some of these birds, southern California will be the final destination. Many more are merely passing through on their way to more northerly latitudes.

Though a wide variety of birds pass through in spring, passerines are often the first group that comes to mind. While their migration occurs almost entirely from mid-March through May, the mix of birds present over that window of time is far from uniform. Even those new to birding are generally familiar with the fact that species such as Western Kingbirds and Bullock's Orioles arrive early—in the middle of March, while Swainson's Thrushes don't appear until late April and Willow Flycatchers rarely arrive before May.

The differences are attributable to a number of factors including what they eat, where they're coming from, where

they're going and how tolerant of inclement weather they are. Arriving on breeding grounds too early and either freezing to death or not finding sufficient food is not a sound survival strategy.

Thus no two species share the exact same timing. By late May when Wilson's and Yellow Warblers are still streaming through in numbers, our most common wintering songbirds—Yellow-rumped Warblers and White-crowned Sparrows—are nearly absent.

Western Wood-Pewees winter in northern South America and some of them undertake a phenomenal 6,000 mile journey to reach breeding grounds as far north as Alaska. Other species are far less ambitious: often because they lack the need to move great distances to either find food or a survivable climate. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, depending on where they breed, either migrate short or long distances, or not at all.

All of these birds create an intriguing pattern of movements through southern

California that make spring a time of constant change. It's also an excellent opportunity to learn the details of each species' distribution and abundance. Given that, and the generally pleasant weather, it's a time of year that leaves most of us wishing we could spend more days in the field.

Though the period was initially marked by a number of continuing rarities, as migration unfolded a number of new vagrants appeared and a couple of quite unexpected spring birds were recorded.

The **Tundra Swan** in Pico Rivera lingered through March 12 at the San Gabriel Coastal Basin Spreading Grounds as did the **Eurasian Green-winged Teal** through February 20. Even when only partially filled with water, these basins are a magnet for waterbirds and are often capable of producing something unusual. This can also be a great inland location to study gulls.

The only other dabbling duck of note was a **Eurasian Wigeon** at Hansen Dam on April 15 (Kimball Garrett).

A lone **Black Scoter** continued off Dockweiler State Beach in El Segundo through March 18, while a **Surf Scoter** was unusual inland at Lake Balboa in the San Fernando Valley on February 22 (Daniel Tinoco). Also generally scarce inland was a **Red-breasted Merganser** at Peck Road Water Conservation Park in Arcadia from February 14-21 (Mario Pineda). Conversely more common inland but scarce on the immediate coast was a **Common Merganser** at Malibu Lagoon on March 28 (Rick Fisher).

The only **Red-necked Grebe** reported was a continuing bird at Castaic Lagoon that remained through March 15. Two **Horned Grebes**, typically associated with deeper water bodies of water, were at an unusual inland locale—on the San Gabriel River in Pico Rivera—on April 3 (Larry Schmahl).

A **Brown Booby** continued near the Los Angeles Harbor mouth through February 19, with possibly the same bird southwest of San Pedro on April 5 (Jon Feenstra). Up to three were on San Clemente Island through February 23 (Mark Billings, Ben Sandstrom) and three more were about ten miles off Long Beach on April 5 (Jon Feenstra).

Not always easy to find in the county was a **Cattle Egret** at Legacy Park in Malibu on March 12 (Kathleen Waldron).

Quite rare for the county was a "**Harlan's**" **Red-tailed Hawk** back for its second winter at the Ballona Wetlands where it stayed through at least March 4.

Scarce but regular in spring were two **Solitary Sandpipers** at the Piute Ponds on March 21 (Mark & Janet Scheel) and one there on April 12 (David Bell). Unusual at this desert location were two **Marbled Godwits** on February 15 (Mark & Janet Scheel).

Cabrillo Beach is not known as a shorebird hotspot, but a **Ruff** was present on the sandy beach there from March 30–April 12 (Bernardo Alps). This species is a scarce but regular fall transient, but very unusual in spring.

The very few **Gull-billed Tern** records in the county have been characterized by visits that were quite brief. The same appears to be the case for two observed at the Ballona Wetlands on April 11 (Jonathan Coffin). However these birds were unique in providing the first photographic documentation for LA County.

White-winged Doves were represented by a bird in Pico Rivera on February 20 and one flying over Claremont on February 22 (Tom Miko).

A few **Inca Doves** continued to be reported at Leo H. Washington Park in Los Angeles, where a small population was first discovered a little over a year ago. Up to three **Common Ground-Doves** continued in Bellflower along the San Gabriel River from March 25-29 (Becky Turley, David Bell). This is about the only location in the county where they can now be regularly found.

Very rare in winter was a **Black-chinned Hummingbird** at the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens in Rolling Hills Estates on February 15 (Neil Gilbert). An influx of **Calliope Hummingbirds** in southern California this spring were represented by just a few birds—mostly at feeders—through mid-April.

Though largely absent this winter, a few **Lewis's Woodpeckers** eventually turned up. One was at Brackett Field in La Verne on February 16 (Mark & Janet Scheel) and up to three were in Monrovia from January 28–April 4 (Scott Warwick, et al).

A returning wintering **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** remained at Veteran's Park in Sylmar through February 18. Also present through February 16 were two **Red-naped Sapsuckers** and at least two **Williamson's Sapsuckers**.

Continuing pure **Northern "Yellow-shafted" Flickers** were at El Dorado Park in Long Beach on February 15 (Brian Clements) and at the Village Green Condominiums in Los Angeles through March 4. A new discovery was a bird was at Legg Lake in South El Monte on April 4 (Larry Schmahl).

The intermediate *columbarius* subspecies of **Merlin** is far and away the expected subspecies in the county, thus one of the pale "Prairie" subspecies *richardsoni* spotted at Castaic Lagoon on March 8 was noteworthy (Tom Benson).

Adding to the fairly lengthy list of previously discovered wintering **Western/Pacific-slope Flycatchers** was one at Loyola Marymount University on February 15 (Russell Stone).

Three **Vermilion Flycatchers** persisted at Oakdale Memorial Park in Glendora through March 23, while presumed migrants were at Vina Vieja Park in Pasadena on March 11 (Luke Tiller), at Hansen Dam near Lakeview Terrace on March 14 (Kimball Garrett) and at Garvey Ranch Park in Monterey Park on April 10 (Phil Richardson).

Wintering **Ash-throated Flycatchers** continued at Peck Road Water Conservation Park in Arcadia through February 16 and at Madrona Marsh in Torrance through March 3. Another was found at El Dorado Golf Course on March 6 (Becky Turley).

A **Tropical Kingbird**, presumably the same bird that spent last winter, was at Harbor Regional Park in Harbor City on February 14 (Martin Byhower, Manuel Duran). The park is currently closed but birders have had some success looking in from the perimeter fence. Continuing birds were at El Dorado Park in Long Beach through April 9 and at Legg Lake in South El Monte through April 12.

A **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**, a kingbird by genus if not by its common name, was at the Ballona Freshwater Marsh on April 16 (Dean Schaff). In spring this species is more regularly recorded in California in May and June.

In addition to a small number of wintering **Plumbeous Vireos**, new birds were found at Mayfair Park in Lakewood on March 9 (Richard Barth), at Vina Vieja Park in Pasadena from March 15–April 1 (Luke Tiller) and at Fremont Park in Glendale on April 11 (Nick & Mary Freeman).

Common as a spring transient on the deserts but rarely wandering to the coastal slope, a **Sage Thrasher** was at Madrona Marsh in Torrance on March 18 (Manuel Duran).

The remarkable and often observed **Worm-eating Warbler** persisted at the Village Green Condominiums in Los Angeles through March 30. It was searched for but never seen again after that date.

Black-and-white Warblers continued at Legg Lake in South El Monte through April 4 and at the Earvin Magic Johnson Recreation Area in Willowbrook through March 25. New birds, likely spring migrants, were at Cheviot Hills Park on April 12 (Kris Ohlenkamp) and along the San Gabriel River in South El Monte on April 16 (Jon Feenstra).

Likewise continuing was the **American Redstart** at the San Gabriel Coastal Basin Spreading Grounds in Pico Rivera continued through February 20. Another **American Redstart** was discovered singing along the San Gabriel River in South El Monte on April 10 (Jim Pike).

A **Northern Parula** was found along the LA River near Glendale on March 12 (Kimball Garrett), and another continued at

Castaic Lagoon through February 25. A stunning male **Blackburnian Warbler** was at Wardlow Park in Long Beach from April 4–6 (Richard Barth). This long distance migrant normally keeps to the eastern half of North America during its travels to and from northern South America and is also far more often recorded in fall than in spring in California.

Palm Warblers included continuing birds at the San Gabriel Coastal Basin Spreading Grounds in Pico Rivera through February 23 and in along Compton Creek in Compton through April 11. New birds turned up at Harbor Regional Park in Harbor City on March 15 (Ed Griffin), at Legg Lake in South El Monte on April 12 (Mickey & Jan Long) in West Long Beach (Richard Barth) and at the Ballona Freshwater Marsh (Don Sterba) on April 16.

The reliable **Painted Redstart** wintering at Oakdale Memorial Park in Glendora was reported mostly in the same large Cork Oak tree through March 20.

Rare in winter was a **Green-tailed Towhee** continuing at the West San Gabriel Parkway Nature Trail in Lakewood through March 1.

First found on January 11, then not seen for nearly six weeks, an **American Tree Sparrow** was rediscovered at Castaic Lagoon on February 20 where it remained through March 12 during which time many observers got the chance to see it.

Others sparrows of interest included a **Clay-colored Sparrow** continuing at Santa Fe Dam in Irwindale through March 2, a **Red Fox Sparrow** at Alta Vicente Park on February 27 (David Moody) and **Swamp Sparrows** at Madrona Marsh in Torrance on February 14 (Dinuk Magamma) and continuing at Legg Lake in South El Monte through March 16.

Hard to come by in the county—and the first found since 2011—was a **Harris's Sparrow** at White Point Nature Preserve on the Palos Verdes Peninsula from March 18–April 15 (Juan Antonio, Philip Carnehl). It's interesting that both of these recent birds turned up on the Palos Verdes Peninsula.

Rounding out the sparrows was the typical handful of continuing and a few newly discovered **White-throated Sparrows** present on the coastal slope.

A **Black-headed Grosbeak** at Madrona Marsh in Torrance on the early date of February 14 was certainly wintering rather than an early spring migrant (Tracy Drake).

Very rare in the county was a **Painted Bunting** discovered at a residence in La Cañada on March 24 and present through April 4 (Mark Hunter). This species will be problematic for the foreseeable future, as escapees coupled with changes in distribution of naturally occurring birds more often than not make it difficult to determine their origin. For what it's worth however, this individ-

ual was a female type bird—and thus far less likely to be kept in captivity—and also showed no obvious signs of having been caged.


A flock of 2000 **Tricolored Blackbirds** at Holiday Lake in the west Antelope Valley on March 7 (Alex Coffey, Bhashar Krishnamachari) illustrates the importance of being at the right place at the right time, often called being just plain lucky.

Hooded Orioles included a continuing bird in Granada Hills through February 15, and one at Sand Dune Park in Manhattan Beach on February 16 that could have been an early migrant (David Moody). An **Orchard Oriole** that may have wintered was in Cheviot Hills from March 22–April 5 (Bob Pann) and **Baltimore Orioles** were at Cheviot Hills Park on April 11 (Dick Norton) and near the Rio Hondo in Rosemead on April 15 (Robb Hamilton).

Numerically, most of spring migration will have ended by mid-May, but even so there will still be plenty of migrants. Slowly declining numbers will be present through early June, along with an increasing chance for wayward strays. Migrant hotspots, especially those on the desert, will be worth checking for these errant birds as well as regular ones. As soon as spring migration is over, fall migration for some shorebirds is about to commence and *Selasphorus* hummingbirds will be poised to start their southbound journey.

In late spring and early summer, there will be plenty of breeding activity continuing in the lowlands and throughout the San Gabriel Mountains. Vagrant warblers are always a possibility here, though rarely recorded in the last few years. Persisting dry conditions will undoubtedly suppress bird numbers and breeding activity in the mountains—and elsewhere for that matter, and may be responsible for the recent dearth of vagrants. Nonetheless, Williamson's Sapsuckers, Clark's Nutcracker's, Green-tailed Towhees and Cassin's Finches and many others will draw birders to higher elevations.

The San Gabriels are indeed a popular spot at this time of year, yet there's no need to restrict birding to areas we know to be most productive or appealing. Often, unexpected finds are made when birding outside the box. Visiting overlooked places or seasonal hotspots at off times of year can be rewarding and also helps fill in gaps in the record.

Regardless of where you go, May and June in southern California will offer an abundance of birds and birding opportunities, as it does with every season. 

Beginning in March 2015, Los Angeles Audubon is putting the entire archive of *The Western Tanager* online. At this time, Volumes 1, 2 and 3 from 1934–1937 have been published. Head on over and poke around the early days of L.A. Audubon.

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The ABA Young Birder of the Year Contest 2015: Protecting our Local Birds

By Dessi Sieburth

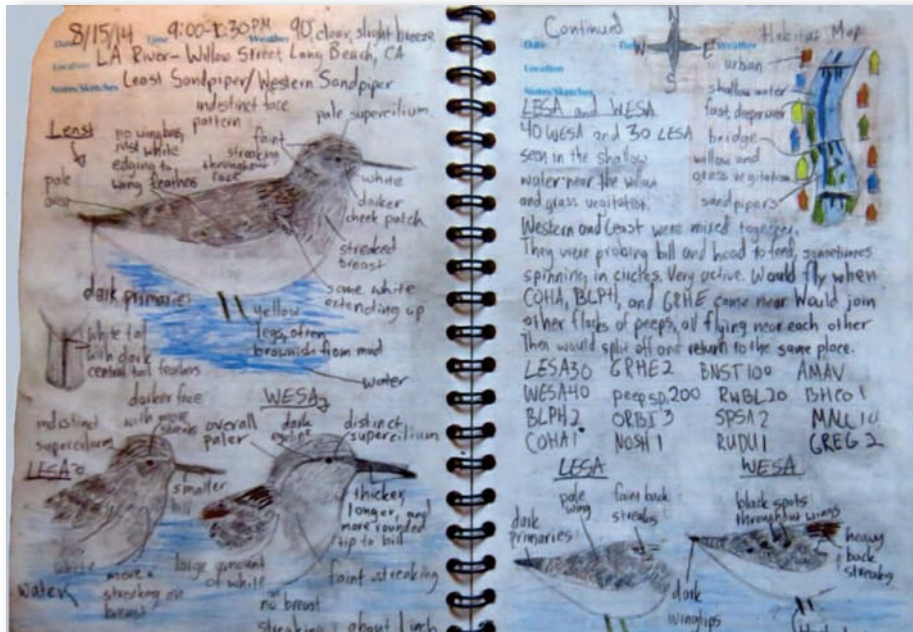
I was surprised when I got a call from Bill Stewart, the organizer of the contest, and Jeff Gordon, the President of the American Birding Association, to let me know that I had won the overall ABA Young Birder of the Year contest. I had placed first in conservation and sketching categories. The contest was hard work and a lot of fun. The prize that I received was a pair of Leica Binoculars, and they are awesome!

I especially liked the conservation project when I went out to photograph as many species as possible in a single day to raise money for habitat conservation. I photographed 84 species and raised \$255. I also enjoyed the project where I did a photo exhibition at a local coffee shop. I showed my photos of Western Bluebird juveniles and wrote an article about what people can do to help birds such as trimming trees in the fall and planting natives. Another project I did was my Western Bluebird Nest Box project. I monitored 18 bluebird nest boxes and got 73 fledglings. I was surprised to find a pair of White-breasted Nuthatches nesting in one of the boxes. I sent the results to the California Bluebird Recovery Program. I also did a project about the endangered California Condor. I went on the LA Audubon fieldtrip at a California Condor wildlife refuge at Hopper Mountain. This fieldtrip was organized by Nick and Mary Freeman. There, I interviewed a biologist about the threats that California Condors face today. I found that condors get sick or die from micro trash and lead poisoning. I published the interview in the LA Audubon newsletter. I also led bird walks for young birders and thought them about birds.

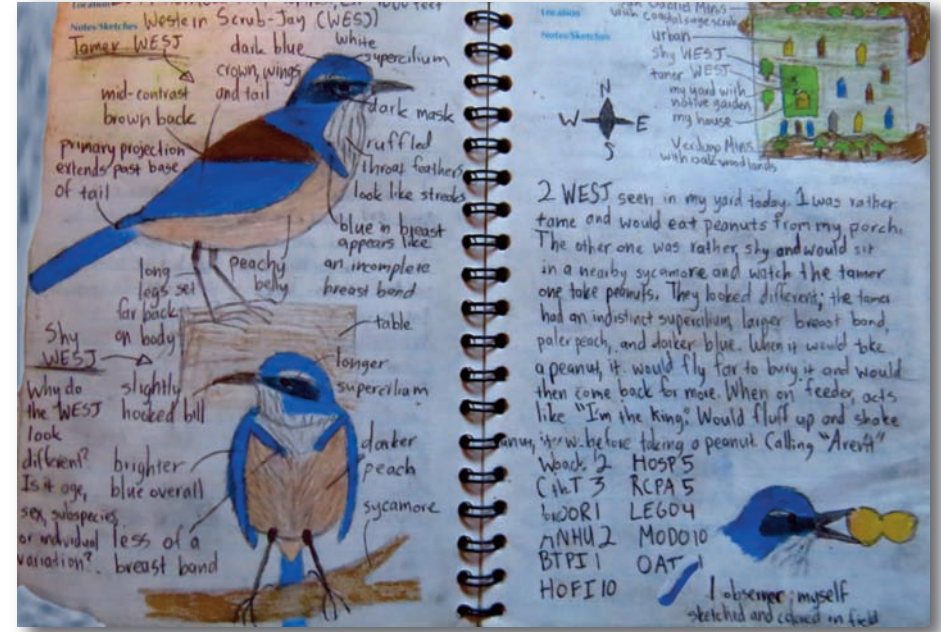


This photo of a juvenile Western Bluebird was exhibited at a local coffee shop.

The challenge in the conservation category was to find ways to teach the community about the importance of protecting our local birds. Luckily, our local newspaper published my article on what people can do at home to help birds. Millions of birds get killed by outdoor cats, and many owls die by eating poisoned rats. I wrote about leaving cats indoors and not to use rat poison. The sketching category was also challenging and very fun. Every week, for several hours, I went out sketching. While sketching I studied the bird, its plumage and behavior. I captured the overall shape of the bird but I also focused on the small details. I enjoyed sketching comparison species, like Least and Western Sandpipers.



This sketch shows a comparison between two similar species: Least and Western Sandpiper.



This is another page out of my sketchbook (of a Western Scrub-Jay)

I learned a lot from participating in the ABA young birder contest. Field sketching improved my overall birding skills, as sketching forced me to look at small details in plumage and behavior that I wouldn't have noticed otherwise. I learned that small conservation projects can make a big difference. For example, my article in the local newspaper about what people can do to help the birds in our neighborhood reached over 6000 readers. I learned that giving presentations is another effective way to teach many people about conservation. I gave a talk about my projects to LA Audubon at Debs Park. My goal is to keep educating the public about the threats birds are facing and giving people ideas what they can do to help. I hope to inspire more kids and adults to protect the birds. Thanks to LA Audubon for the support!

Dessi Sieburth, a 12 year-old birder and conservationist, lives in Montrose, California with his parents. He has been birding and drawing birds since he was eight-years old. This year, Dessi participated in the ABA Young Birder of the Year contest. He also received a scholarship to attend the Western Field Ornithology conference in San Diego, California this October. He regularly participates in field trips with Los Angeles Audubon. At Dessi's young age, his life list is currently at 460 species!

LOS ANGELES AUDUBON'S "OPEN WETLANDS" AT BALLONA

Los Angeles Audubon Society hosts the ongoing 1st Sat. of the month "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 or call (310) 301-0050 if you have any questions.



Field Trip Listings

Nick Freeman, Field Trip Chair

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 may be shared with 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

'NO FEE' RESERVATIONS / MORE INFORMATION

Email: membership@laaudubon.org
Phone: (323) 876-0202

Please leave voice message if no answer.

Saturday, May 2, 8 AM

South Bay Parks

NO SIGN-UP, NO FEE

Leader *Ron Melin* visits many of the South Bay parks regularly, including Madrona Marsh, Alondra Park, Sand Dune Park, and Wilderness Park if time allows. Colorful warblers and other passerines should headline. Start and finish at Madrona Marsh Preserve, for carpoolers, and visit the parks listed as time allows. To get here, get yourself from the 405 Fwy to Prairie Ave. (becomes Madrona Ave.) heading south. Pass Carson Street, and turn left (E) at Plaza del Amo, and into the parking lot on the left. Meet at 8:00 a.m. Bring lunch, especially if you might carpool, as we may bird until 3:00 p.m., if enthusiasm warrants.

Sunday, May 3, 7:30 AM

Orcas Park & Big Tujunga Wash

NO SIGN-UP, NO FEE

Kimball Garrett will lead us on a morning of birding at these oft-overlooked step sisters to nearby big sister Hansen Dam. We'll cover park, foothill riparian, and alluvial scrub habitats; looking for specialties such as Yellow-breasted Chat, Swainson's Thrush, Hutton's Vireo, Cactus Wren, and Hairy Woodpecker along with a variety of migrants. Expect to walk up to two miles, sometimes over slightly uneven terrain. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the parking lot at the far (south) end of Orcas Park in Lake View Terrace. Coming from the east: exit the 210 Fwy at Wheatland Ave.; go one short block north to Foothill Blvd. and then 0.9 mi. west to Orcas Ave. Turn left, entering Orcas Park after about 0.2 miles, then continue another

0.2 mi. to the parking lots closest to Big Tujunga Creek. If you're coming from the west, exit the 210 Fwy at the Osborne/Lake View Terrace exit, turn left to go east on Foothill Blvd., turn right on Orcas Ave., then follow the directions above. We should finish up around 11:00 a.m.

Sunday, May 10

Mojave Area

SIGN-UP REQUIRED, NO FEE, 12 MAX

Leaders: *Nick Freeman and Don White*. Western warblers and flycatchers should headline. Reptiles may be encountered! Veer right heading north out of Mojave, take Hwy 14 for about 20 miles, just over the riverbed, and take Jawbone Canyon Road on the left. Meet right at the turnoff at the ranger station parking lot at 6:00 a.m. (restroom). 6:00 a.m.??? Birds start shooting up this canyon at first light, so even this will get us into Butterbredt a tad late, but if we happen to hit migration on the nose, it will be magical! We will carpool to Butterbredt Springs, back-track to California City environs for lunch and more birds, and possibly finish the day at Apollo Park.

LAAS sign-up with your cell phone # & email address is mandatory. 12 max. Bring lunches, sun block, FRS radios. Reserve rooms (Motel 6 or other) in Mojave, or Best Western in CA City.

To sign-up call LAAS (323) 876-0202 or email membership@laaudubon.org.

Sunday, May 17, 7 AM

Santa Anita Canyon

NO FEE, NO SIGN-UP

Leader: *David Bell*. Take the 210 Fwy toward Arcadia, and take Santa Anita Avenue N to the parking lot at the very end of the road. Meet at the Gabrielino Trail trailhead at the bottom of the lot. 4 mile moderately strenuous walk through oak and chaparral canyons. Good selection of breeding birds including warblers, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Western Tanager, and Band-tailed Pigeon. Pack in a lunch and plenty of water. Meeting time 7:00 a.m. *A Forest Service Adventure Pass is necessary.*

Friday, June 5, 5 PM

(As of Apr. 9, **FULLY BOOKED**)

Small Owls of the San Gabriels #2

NO FEE, LIMITED SIGN-UP, 10 MAX.

Leaders: *Mary and Nick Freeman*. We will be looking for Flammulated, Saw-whet, Northern Pygmy and Western Screech-Owls. Sign up, and meet at 5:00 p.m. on the frontage road for Angeles Forest 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. Bring quiet cold weather gear (no nylon if possible), a small walking flashlight, binoculars, powerful flashlight optional. Photo ops possible. **LAAS telephone / email sign-up mandatory. 10 max.**

To sign-up call LAAS (323) 876-0202 or email membership@laaudubon.org.

June 12-15 Long Weekend

Birds of the Southern Sierra and Kern River Valley

SIGN-UP REQUIRED, FEE (SEE BELOW)

LIMITED: 8 MIN / 12 MAX

Leaders:

Fri. & Sat.—*Bob Barnes*

Sun. & Mon.—*Jon Schmitt*

John's skill as a field trip leader is top-of-the-chart as he has fascinating bird and overall natural history anecdotes readily gobbled up by trip participants. He has worked as a field biologist for both the Peregrine Falcon and California Condor recovery programs. John knows the haunts of Greenhorn Mountain birds better than anyone. *Bob Barnes* has led over 300 formal birding field trips to the Kern River Valley, Southern Sierra, and Kern County Mojave desert oases for Audubon groups, bird clubs as the local guide for two WINGS Kern River Valley and Southern Sierra Nevada trips led by Jon Dunn.

BASIC "NO FRILLS" ITINERARY

Fri., 6/12 Sierra Nevada East Side Birding with *Bob Barnes*

Sat., 6/13 Kern River Valley & Southern Sierra Birding with *Bob Barnes*

Sun., 6/14 Kern River Valley & Southern Sierra Birding with *John Schmitt*

Mon., 6/15 Greenhorn Mountains Transect Birding with *John Schmitt*, including early morning owling and +/- 2 p.m. trip conclusion.

As part of the carpooling process at the beginning of each day, participants will be expected to vie for the honor and privilege of chauffeuring the leader hither and yon, enjoying a personal play-by-play of the Sierra, devoid of dust; gas expenses absorbed by the lucky and dutiful driver.

Min. 8 participants, max. 12 participants. Sat. & Sun. \$35 ea., Fri. & Mon. \$25 ea. (i.e. F–M is \$120

ea.). Bring FRS Radios if you've got 'em. Meet early each day (a little after 5 a.m.?), and pack lunches each day.

MAIL RESERVATION FEES TO:

Los Angeles Audubon

P.O. Box 411301

Los Angeles CA 90041-8301

Wait for acknowledgement that your fee was received. More details will be provided in the email-flyer sent as your participation confirmation.

July 3 thru 6 Long Weekend

(As of Feb. 25, **FULLY BOOKED**)

Ponderosa Cabin Owling

LIMITED SIGN-UP (6 MIN / 10 MAX)

\$100 – BUDGET PRICED!

(3 NIGHTS CABIN, 1 HOT DOG BBQ DINNER, & OWLS INCLUDED)

Leaders: *Mary and Nick Freeman*. Ponderosa is above Porterville in the southwest Sierra. Owling by night, bird walks by day! Must be a night owl (1 - 2 a.m.?). We always see (yes, see) Flammulated and Spotted owls, and almost always see Saw-whet. Last year we had Pygmy Owl as well! Days wandering in the Sequoias are delightful. Pacific Wren, Pileated Woodpecker and Goshawk all possible. We have presently arranged for a nice big cabin. Our first dinner will be potluck, others provided or eat out. Tentatively meet Friday 3:00 p.m. at the cabin (directions pending), finally leaving the mountains late Monday morning. 10 sign-ups maximum, including leaders. The leaders pay too, to bring this price to you! No small children or pets, please. And please plan to stay around for the Monday clean-up!

TO RESERVE: Mail \$100 check for cabin, and provide your email address and cell phone number.

Saturday, July 11, 7:30 AM

Big Bear Lake Vicinity Field Trip

NO FEE, NO SIGN-UP

Leaders: *Nick and Mary Freeman*. Meet in the Aspen Glen Picnic Area parking lot in Big Bear at 7:30 a.m. 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. Target birds include Williamson's?and Red-breasted Sapsuckers, Calliope and Rufous Hummers, mountain finches and White-headed Woodpecker. Later, we may go to Arrastre Creek (east) or Upper Santa Ana River (south). It should be warm and there may be bugs, so come prepared. Bring lunch for a full day, and a Forest Service Adventure Pass. Those wishing to go owling with Mary in the evening (probably near Bluff Lake or Hart Bar Campground), plan to eat with us, and get a room for Saturday night as well.

Saturday, July 18, 8 AM

Mt. Pinos

NO FEE, NO SIGN-UP

Leader: *Matthew Page*. Likely White-headed Woodpecker, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Hermit Warbler, Townsend's Solitaire. Hopeful Calliope Hummingbird and Mountain Quail. Anticipate the elements, and bring a lunch. Take Hwy 5 N past Tejon Pass to the Frazier Park offramp, turn left, and follow Frazier Mountain Park Rd. bearing right onto Cuddy Valley Rd. Meet promptly at the "Y" formed by the junction of Cuddy Valley Rd. and Mil Potrero Hwy at 8:00 a.m., and park in the obvious dirt clearing. If time permits, we will also visit Mt. Cerro Noroeste (aka Mt. Abel).

Saturday, August 1, 7 AM

San Gabriel Mountains / Mt. Wilson Observatory

SIGN-UP REQUIRED BY JULY 28TH

LIMITED SIGN-UP, 16 MAX

TOUR FEE: \$10/head (\$8 over 62) payable at Mt. Wilson

Leader: *Mary Freeman*. Meet at 7:00 a.m. on the frontage road for Angeles Forest Hwy just north of the 210 Fwy in La Canada. We will bird the morning away up in the conifers, then end up at Mount Wilson Observatory around noon, eat there at the Cosmic Café, and take the 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. Please visit the observatory website at www.mtwilson.edu for more exciting and cautionary details before the trip. *A Forest Service Adventure Pass is required.*

Sign-up by July 28th. To sign-up call LAAS (323) 876-0202 or email membership@laaudubon.org. Provide your name, phone number and email address and *await confirmation.*

TOUR FEE: \$10/head (\$8 over 62) payable at Mt. Wilson. *No sign-ups without tour, please.* More details in July–Aug. *Western Tanager.*

Sunday, August 2, 8 AM

Lower LA River Shorebird Migration

NO FEE, NO SIGN-UP

Leader: *Larry Allen*. 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.

Sunday, August 9

Sweltering Salton Sea

\$15 FEE, SIGN-UP 8 CARS LIMIT

Leaders: *Nick and Mary Freeman*. Anticipate 95-110°F. This is the gauntlet of SoCal birding. We will see Yellow-footed (only place in the U.S.) and Laughing gulls, Black Tern, Abert's Towhee, Gila Woodpecker. Find a friend, as singles will be bumped if we fill up the trip. Mail \$15, your cell phone #, and email address to reserve. Meet at Cattle Call Park at 5:30 a.m., and bird until 2–3 p.m. Bring lunch, and gallons of water. Lodging suggestions and information in July–Aug. *Western Tanager* and in emailer flyer sent to confirm. TO RESERVE: mail fee and wait for acknowledgement that your fee was received. More details will be provided in the flyer sent by email as your confirmation.

MAIL RESERVATION FEE TO:

Los Angeles Audubon
PO Box 411301
Los Angeles CA 90041-8301

Saturday, August 22

Piute Ponds, Edwards AFB

SIGN-UP REQUIRED, NO FEE

20 MAX SIGN UP

Leaders: *Jim Moore and Wanda Deal*. Base biologist Wanda will be our ticket to the finest desert birding in LA County during fall shorebird migration. Meet at the Avenue C gate at 7:30 a.m. To get here, take Hwy 14 N to Avenue D, head E to Sierra Hwy, head N to Avenue C, and go a block E to the gate at the end. Lunch and finish at Apollo Park. High clearance vehicles may be a plus. Cameras O.K. More details in July. Call LAAS (323) 876-0202 to sign up or email membership@laaudubon.org

Bird Walk Listings

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.

All are welcome, but no pets or small children please. These walks are appropriate for young bird watchers age 6 years and older. Binoculars are provided on some walks as noted. Bird walks DO NOT require advance sign-up, just show up at the specified meeting time and place. Read our FIELD TRIPS LISTINGS section for birding destinations a bit further afield.

Topanga State Park Birdwalk

1st Sunday of every month

May 3 & June 7

Time: 8:00–11:30 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 Chris: (310) 455-1270

Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area

4100 S. La Cienega Blvd, Los Angeles 90056

3rd Saturday of the month (Except for July and August)

May 16 & June 20

Time: 8:00–noon

Leader: *Dick Barth*. 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 Nuttall's Woodpecker, Black and Say's Phoebes, Cassin Kingbirds, California and Spotted Towhee, Red-tailed Hawk, and Cooper's Hawk engaging in nesting activities. Besides looking for spring migrants, we will search for summer visitors that nest in the park such as: Bullock's and Hooded Orioles, Barn Swallow, Western Kingbird and Western Bluebird.

Directions: 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.

KHSRA, 4100 S LA CIENEGA BLVD, LOS ANGELES 90056 | **Binoculars provided.**

CARPPOOLING IS ENCOURAGED!

To provide your information to join the LAAS CARPOOL DATABASE membership@laaudubon.org or call (323) 876-0202 leave a message. We will attempt to connect you with other birders interested in sharing a ride to our events.

Upper Franklin Canyon Sooky Goldman Nature Center

2nd Sunday of the month

May 10 & June 14

Time: 8:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m.

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, Spotted and California Towhees and California Thrasher. We will look for migrants such as flycatchers, vireos, warblers and orioles; some of which will be staying in Franklin Canyon to nest. Many resident birds began nesting in early spring giving us the opportunity—if we are lucky—to see the fledgling. Meet in the main parking lot for the Sooky Goldman Nature Center.

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 Dr. to Coldwater Canyon Dr. to Mulholland Dr. Veer left on Mulholland Dr. At the next traffic signal, make a left turn onto Franklin Canyon Dr. continue to first parking lot on the left. MEET in the main parking lot for the SOOKY GOLDMAN NATURE CENTER, 2600 FRANKLIN CANYON DR, BEVERLY HILLS 90210. **Binoculars provided.**

Ballona Wetlands Bird Walk

3rd Sunday of the month (Except December)

May 17 & June 21

Time: 8:00 a.m.–noon

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.

Directions: 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

More information on birdwalks contact Eleanor Osgood at
birdwalks@laaudubon.org or (310) 839-5420.



Thursday, May 14

Predicting How California Birds Will Be Impacted by Global Warming

Presented by Andrea Jones



Long-billed Curlew | Photo by John Van de Graff

Andrea Jones will discuss the research recently released by National Audubon describing how North American birds are predicted to be impacted by climate change. Specifically, she will discuss the science and how Audubon scientists created models to predict future ranges of almost 600 species of North American birds and how they will fare in the future under predicted global warming scenarios. Andrea will focus on California birds and in particular birds in the Los Angeles Basin. She will discuss how Audubon will use this research to help guide its conservation work going forward and how local people can help ensure that birds have a chance for survival as conditions change.

Andrea Jones is the Director of Bird Conservation for Audubon California. Andrea leads our coastal programs and works with staff and the network of Audubon chapters across the state to implement conservation projects at high priority Important Bird Areas (IBAs). She oversees our efforts in priority bird species and serves as a spokeswoman for bird conservation across California. Prior to California, Andrea worked at Massachusetts Audubon where she served as the Director of the Coastal Waterbird Program. Andrea received her M.S. in Wildlife Conservation/Ornithology and her B.S. in Wildlife Biology and Management from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She is a past board member and continues to volunteer for her local Audubon chapter, Morro Coast Audubon Society.

LOCATION: AUDUBON CENTER AT DEBS PARK | 4700 N Griffin Ave | Los Angeles 90031 | 323-221-2255 | <http://debspark.audubon.org>
Meetings start at 7:30 p.m. and are over at 9:30 p.m.

Please visit our website at www.laaudubon.org for the announcement about the June 2015 Program Presentation, topic and speaker to be determined soon.