

# WESTERN TANAGER





Los Angeles Audubon Society  
 P.O. Box 411301  
 Los Angeles, CA 90041-8301  
[www.losangelesaudubon.org](http://www.losangelesaudubon.org)  
 (323) 876-0202  
[LAAS@laudubon.org](mailto:LAAS@laudubon.org)

**BOARD OFFICERS & DIRECTORS**

President	Margot Griswold	<a href="mailto:mgriswold@landiq.com">mgriswold@landiq.com</a>
Past President	Travis Longcore	<a href="mailto:travislongcore@laudubon.org">travislongcore@laudubon.org</a>
Treasurer	Robert Jeffers	<a href="mailto:jeffers@laudubon.org">jeffers@laudubon.org</a>
Secretary	Nicole Lannoy Lawson	<a href="mailto:nicolelawson@laudubon.org">nicolelawson@laudubon.org</a>
Directors at Large	Catherine Rich	Not Published

**COMMITTEES**

Conservation	Travis Longcore	<a href="mailto:travislongcore@laudubon.org">travislongcore@laudubon.org</a>
Education	Margot Griswold	<a href="mailto:mgriswold@landiq.com">mgriswold@landiq.com</a>
Membership	Position Open	<a href="mailto:membership@laudubon.org">membership@laudubon.org</a>

**PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES**

Field Trips	Nick Freeman	<a href="mailto:mufreeman@earthlink.net">mufreeman@earthlink.net</a>
Bird Walks	Eleanor Osgood	<a href="mailto:gardenbird1@att.net">gardenbird1@att.net</a>
Monthly Programs	Travis Longcore	<a href="mailto:travislongcore@laudubon.org">travislongcore@laudubon.org</a>
Rare Bird Alert	Jon Fisher	<a href="mailto:JonF60@hotmail.com">JonF60@hotmail.com</a>
Schreiber Grant Program	Ryan Harigan	<a href="mailto:ryanharrigan@laudubon.org">ryanharrigan@laudubon.org</a>

**STAFF**

Director of Communications & Development	Carol Babeli	<a href="mailto:carolbabeli@laudubon.org">carolbabeli@laudubon.org</a>
Director of Outdoor Education	Cindy Hardin	<a href="mailto:cindyhardin@laudubon.org">cindyhardin@laudubon.org</a>
Director of Environmental Education	Stacey Vigallon	<a href="mailto:tem@laudubon.org">tem@laudubon.org</a>
Volunteer Coordinator	Cindy Hardin	<a href="mailto:cindyhardin@laudubon.org">cindyhardin@laudubon.org</a>
Member Services	Susan Castor	<a href="mailto:membership@laudubon.org">membership@laudubon.org</a>
Website Liason	Nicole Lawson	<a href="mailto:nicolelawson@laudubon.org">nicolelawson@laudubon.org</a>

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

Editor	Linda Oberholtzer	<a href="mailto:westemanager@laudubon.org">westemanager@laudubon.org</a>
Design & Layout	Susan Castor	<a href="mailto:susancastor@laudubon.org">susancastor@laudubon.org</a>
Scientific Advisor	Kimball Garrett	<a href="mailto:kgarrett@nhm.org">kgarrett@nhm.org</a>

© 2019 Los Angeles Audubon Society

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Majestic Malaysia
- Why We Pull Weeds
- INTERPRETING NATURE:  
Community Birding in the  
Heart of Los Angeles
- BIRDS OF THE SEASON
- POEM: Affair of the Air

### SCHEDULES

Field Trips, Bird Walks, Monthly  
Speaker Series

## PUBLIC LECTURES

**Wed., Sept. 18** — Chucanti:  
Preserving a Cloud Forest - Guido  
Berguido

**Wed., Oct. 9** — Urban Nature:  
Life and Death in the Wilds of LA  
– Louis Sahagun

### TIME

7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

### LOCATION

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

## 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 | • EDUCATION | • CONSERVATION | • RESTORATION

Individual membership only \$25 per year.

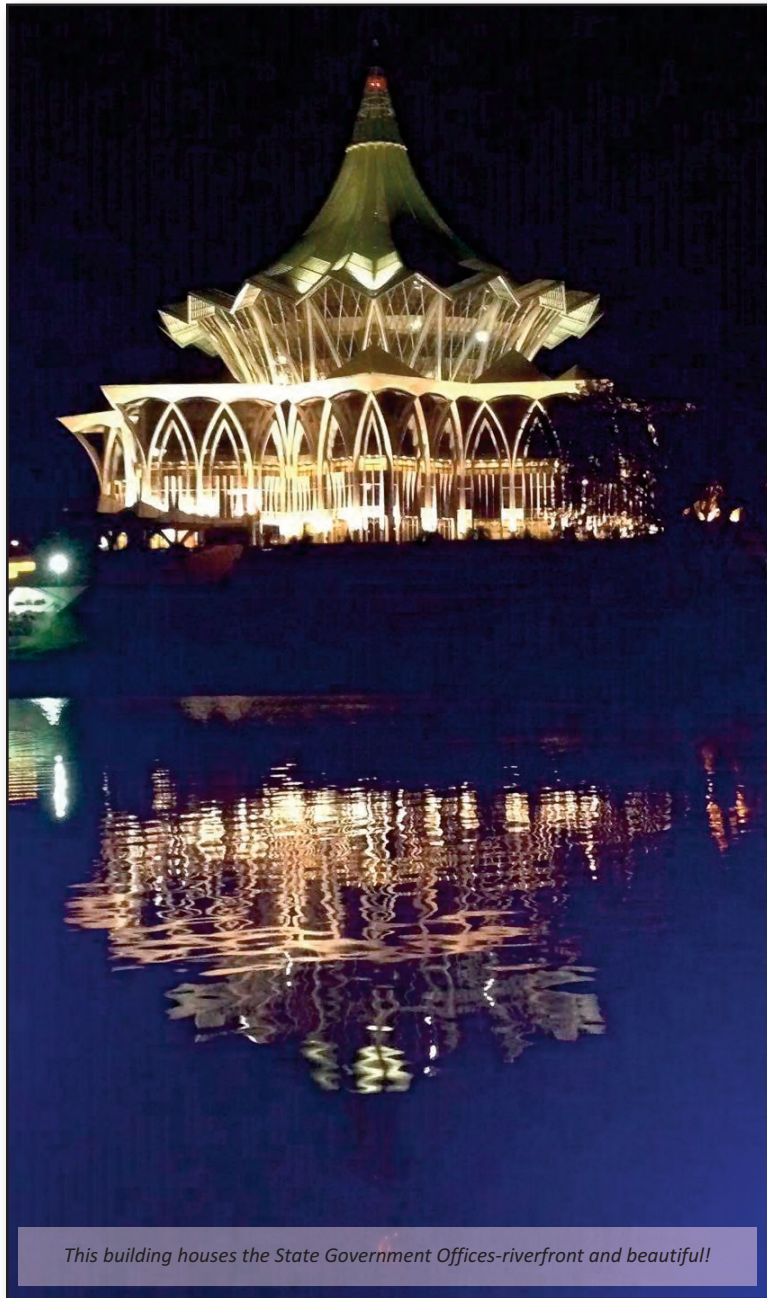
Join today at: <https://www.laudubon.org/membership>

**Mailing Address:** PO Box 411301, Los Angeles CA 90041-8301

**Phone:** (323) 876-0202

# MAJESTIC MALAYSIA

By Cindy Rosene Hardin, LA Audubon Director of Outdoor Education

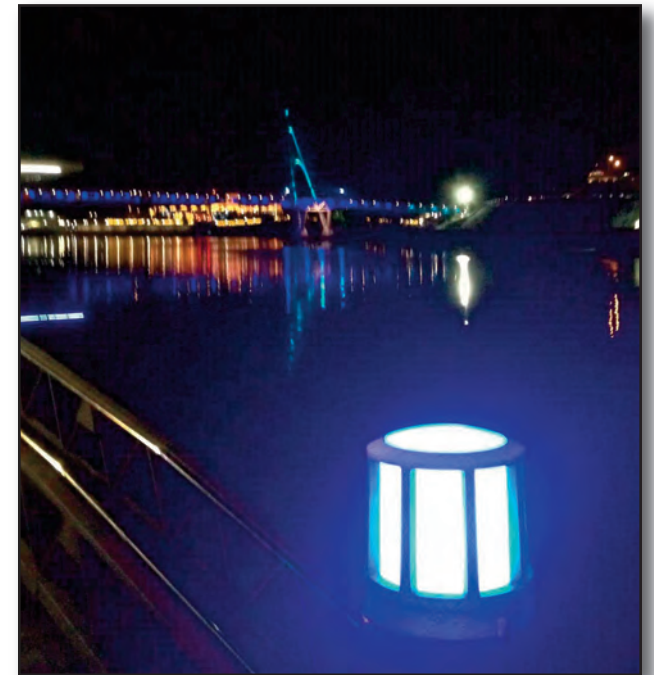


*This building houses the State Government Offices-riverfront and beautiful!*

I am a huge fan of California and its natural beauty, particularly that of the Southern Region. I consider myself very fortunate to live in this part of the world. However, like most people, I sometimes get swept up with workaday duties, and find that my focus narrows to the immediate, rather than the bigger picture. While this facilitates accomplishing many tasks, it can inhibit creativity and awareness that there is life beyond my tiny little corner!

Several factors created a condition of preoccupation this winter. As Director of Outdoor Education for Los Angeles Audubon, much of my work is done, as the title implies, outdoors. The wonderful rains that we received during the winter of 2018-2019 were great for California. But, as one can imagine, the weather wreaked havoc with the scheduling of our environmental education programs at Kenneth Hahn and the Ballona Wetlands. The teachers' strike that took place in early 2019 further complicated the situation. By the end of February I was constantly toggling between phone calls to teachers, bus companies, etc. and hoping that the rain would at least hold off till after daily tours were completed. My brain was clogged with minutiae! In a fit of procrastination, while at the computer, I googled flights to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. And lo and behold, an extremely reasonable fare popped up for some dates in June-the time when school is no longer in session and things slow down a bit for our program.

Why Malaysia? I had spent two days in Kuala Lumpur on a layover many years ago, and was quite taken by this city. When flying in, one is overwhelmed by the lush greenery of the country below-rain forest abounds in Malaysia. Jungles, orangutans, tropical beaches, coral reefs, and wild rivers are all found in this part of the world. Hitting "purchase" seemed like an obvious choice.



*The River Promenade by night in Kuching*



*Some of the catch of the day!*



*As mentioned, the food was fabulous. This is a huge food court, specializing in seafood, located on the top level of a parking garage!*

Lonely Planet guide in hand, I began to make plans for the trip. Two nights in Kuala Lumpur allowed a little time to recover from jet lag, and explore the city a bit. The population of 1.6 million people is incredibly diverse, and with it comes ethnic enclaves like Chinatown and Little India, hawker food stands on narrow streets, and a lively street life. Historical buildings left from the British Colonial era are now museums, and best of all for me, a 27 acre park of relatively intact rainforest is located in the middle of the city. The KL Forest Eco Park has hiking trails, an elevated walkway through the tree canopy, and is free to the public. The park is sometimes called “the lungs of Kuala Lumpur”.

After walking off some of the 17 hour flight (!) it was time to take a look at the Klang River, which runs through town. Kuala Lumpur was founded at the confluence of the Klang and Gombak Rivers. Chinese prospectors came to this location in search of tin, and Kuala Lumpur means “muddy confluence”. The Klang

River is still muddy, due to sediments washed down from the mountains during almost daily rain storms. But, like Los Angeles, KL is in the midst of revitalizing their urban river, creating public walkways, and installing benches and educational signage along its banks. It has been dubbed “The River of Life”, a brilliant piece of marketing in my mind. Signs with this moniker are found all along the waterway, inspiring people to remember that water is essential to life, and even an urban river is more than muddy matter flowing through a concrete lined course. Efforts are being made to clean up the river itself, and the aim is to bring the Klang from the current Class III and Class IV (not suitable for body contact) to Class IIb (suitable for body contact and recreational usage) by 2020. The industries that drive the economy of Malaysia, like petroleum and palm oil, are definitely not compatible with healthy ecosystems. There is a growing awareness in Malaysia of the health of the natural environment, and new policies and projects are being undertaken by the

government for its enhancement. The importance of the country’s natural features to the tourism industry is not lost on the government. This was apparent as my trip continued during my visits to several National Parks and coral reef fringed beaches. And even in the midst of the capitol city, the walk along the Klang is designed to connect people to the idea of nature. Imagine what the LA River would be like if it was cleaned up to the point of being a true recreational option—a river swim downtown would be quite something!

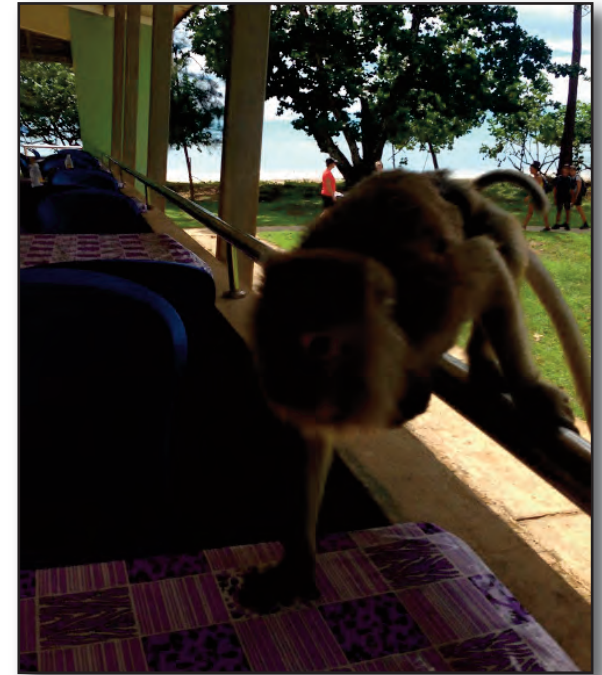
Between the Rain Forest Eco Park and the revitalized river, by Day Two the trip had already accomplished one of my main goals for going. I was reminded that there are other beautiful places in the world, and that good things are happening for the health of the planet on an international level. As I continued my travels, I saw lots more evidence of attempts to change human habits and perceptions for the better of the environment.



*This elevated boardwalk trail passes through the mangrove forest at Bako.*



*Follow me!*



*Silver Leafed Monkey, in action just before she stole a piece of watermelon from my lunch plate.*

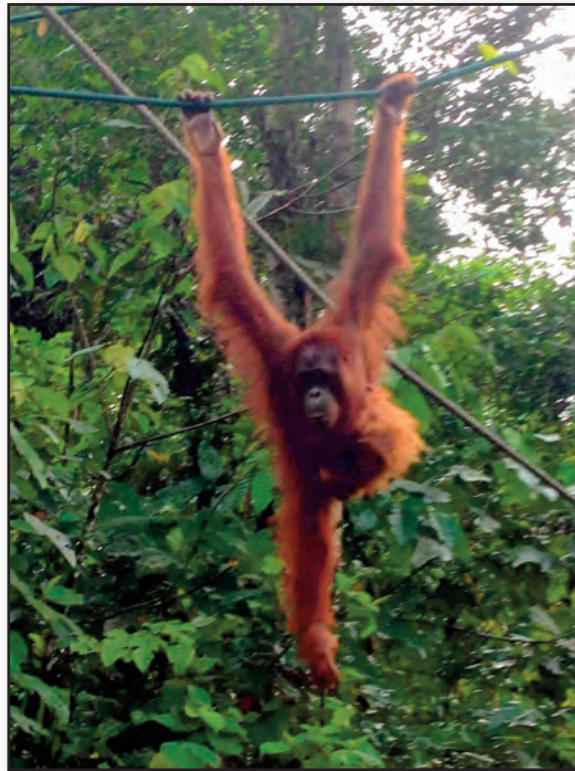
The next stop after Kuala Lumpur was the state of Sarawak, located in Borneo. Borneo is a large island; the northern part of the island is Malaysia, the other half is Indonesia. Wedged between the two Malaysian states of Sarawak and Sabah is the Sultanate of Brunei. Like the rest of this part of the world, tropical rainforest is the natural habitat, and many rivers transverse the land. One of Borneo's most famous inhabitants is the endangered Orangutan, a creature that I have always wanted to see in the wild. My destination was Kuching, a city of 600,000 that is the capitol of Sarawak state.

Kuching is a lovely city that features a public promenade along the Kuching River. Several national parks are within a 40 minute drive from the city, which allows ample opportunity to hike by day and dine on a fabulous variety of Malaysian food by night. Evening strolls

along the river finish off perfect days of wildlife viewing and immersion in Malaysian culture and nature. In addition, buildings left from its colonial past now house museums, restaurants and cafes, giving the visitor ample opportunity to learn about the history of Borneo.

First stop was Bako National Park, the oldest National Park in Malaysia. Lots of biodiversity in this park, from mangrove swamps to beaches to dipterocarp and heath forests. What is a dipterocarp forest? Any forest that is dominated by flora of the Dipterocarpaceae family, of which there are over 700 species. Some in this family are huge trees of over 80 feet tall. These are probably the type of trees that come to mind when one envisions a rain forest. Their origin can be traced back to the Supercontinent of Gondwana. When Gond-

wana broke apart, the dipterocarp forests drifted all over the globe, which is why they can be found in South America, Africa and Asia. While hiking up and over the ridge at Bako there was much stepping over the massive root system of these trees. Though impressive, lots of interesting things were to be seen at ground level as well, like the carnivorous Pitcher Plant, lizards and fantastical mushrooms in rainbow colors. The National Park System has a very low cost, low impact system of designating trails and guiding hikers. Brochures available at headquarters show the myriad routes in different colors. As you hike there is a dab of paint that corresponds to the color of your chosen trail on the trunks of trees, about every 200 hundred feet. No signs to haul in or to maintain, and regular reassurance that you have not lost your way!



*In the Malay language, "Orangutan" means "Man of the Forest". Orangutans share 95% of our genetic material!*

*Wild Bearded Pigs make their home at Bako too!*

Bako is famous for its Proboscis Monkeys, and one appeared almost immediately upon our arrival. Silver Leafed Monkeys, Bearded Pigs and Macaques also call Bako their home. My trip to the park was just for the day, but all of the National Parks that I visited had forest lodgings that are available for overnight stays. This would be a wonderful way to spend time in the wilderness, as one would be able to see wildlife that appears in the evenings and early mornings. Next time!

Of course, seeing Orangutans is probably on the list of any visitor to Borneo, and in Sarawak this can be done most easily by visiting semi-

wild Orangutans at the Semenggoh Orangutan Reserve. The Orangutans here are mostly animals that have been rescued from the pet trade or confiscated at Customs. They have an area of around 1700 acres to roam, but there are twice daily feedings by park staff. Some of the Orangutans regularly show up for the feedings, especially after fruiting season is over in the forest. Interestingly though, one in particular, named Renah, only showed up to be fed 8 times in 2018 (detailed records are kept by park staff). Even more interesting is the fact that all of her three offspring also seem to disdain the ready-made meal, which indicates that Renah is teaching her progeny to forage in the wild. During my visit,

several Orangutans did appear to be fed, and they are just as charismatic as one would expect-I went a little snap happy with the camera at this spot! Semenggoh is also a Botanical Research Center and has a seed bank-more great stewardship in action!

Nearby is a Kuba, another National Park with a network of trails and overnight accommodations. My impression was that the government policies really encourage visiting, experiencing and learning about the natural world-it is valued. This is a good counterbalance to a history of logging the rainforest and the petroleum industry that sustains much of the economy.



*Giant tree of the Dipterocarpaceae family. This specimen was about 80 feet tall-note the huge roots!*



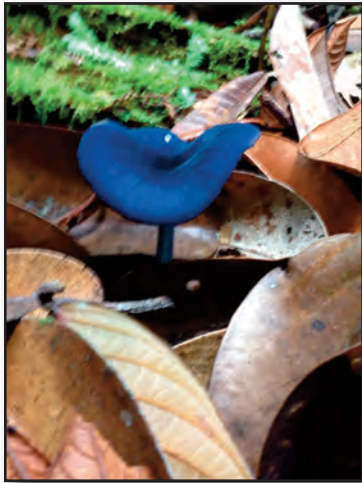
*Another fascinating tropical species: The Carnivorous Pitcher Plant.*

In fact, there seemed to be a sizable awareness amongst the people with whom I spoke about the environmental health of the planet. My hotel in Kuching had a water purifier in the lobby, so I was able to avoid buying bottles of water; I just re-filled my re-usable bottle throughout the day. Bathroom products, like shampoo and lotion, were in beautiful, re-fillable ceramic vessels, available for purchase in the lobby. No tiny plastic bottles! I soon found out that their Minister of Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change came into office last year, and has been making some significant changes. Her name is Yeo Bin Yin, and she is 36 years old. She is a young leader who is making a difference! She is intent on getting rid of single use plastic on a *national* level, and is also the driving force behind Malaysia's relatively new policy of refusing recyclables from other nations. And to include "Climate Change" as part of the Ministry-obi-

ously we could learn a thing or two from this model in our own country! Yeo Bin Yin is receiving international acclaim for her efforts-she was recently included in a list of "25 Climate Leaders Shaping 2019" by *The Ecologist*, a British Environmental Journal. She is at the forefront of a new generation attempting to mitigate the mindset and damages done to the environment by those that preceded.

It was difficult to leave Borneo-so much more to see! But it was time to go onward to the final destination: The Perhentian Islands, located off the east coast of mainland Malaysia. There are two islands, Besar and Kecil; I chose to visit the larger of the two, Besar. Both are only reachable by boat, and there are no roads or cars on these islands. Jungle runs right down to the sand, and huge coral reefs lie just off many of the beaches. While there is development

that caters to the tourist trade, it is confined to specific parts of the coastal areas, and the interior of the islands is untouched. There are a few narrow, steep and slippery footpaths that allow one to explore the jungle, but the majority of movement around the island is done by boat. This means that you can be standing on the beach and look up and see monkeys! When visiting coral reefs around the world I always mentally prepare myself for degradation of this very fragile ecosystem. Global warming, pollution and the fishing industry has taken a terrible toll on coral everywhere; I have actually seen this decline with my own eyes in the 30 plus years that I have been snorkeling. Happily, the reefs on Perhentian were in remarkably good shape. There was a high diversity of coral and fish species, and the water was crystal clear, with a visibility of 40 to 50 feet at each location visited. Of course, plastic pollution is a concern, and



*Fantastic Fungi along the trails*

I encountered scientists during my travels that were doing microplastic surveys, using 10 centimeter transects on the sand. The news was not good-microplastic was found in virtually every transect on the day that I observed the researchers. It is everywhere. I also observed volunteers collecting plastic debris on the beach; I did my own part by gathering and disposing what I came across on my daily beach forays. This does give question to the idea of “disposing”. Sadly, I was under no illusion that I was solving the problem, just transferring it from an ecologically sensitive spot to a landfill (that was probably built upon a spot that was also once “ecologically sensitive”). However, I was encouraged by the fact that once again a water purifier was available in the lobby/restaurant of my lodging, so I was able to keep myself hydrated without contributing to the plastic bottle problem. In addition, the most beautiful beach with the most extensive reef, although a mere 15 minute stroll from the hotel, was not publicized by my guide book nor by the proprietors of the hotel. Most of my fellow tourists chose to stay close to the comfy lounge chairs provided on-site; the beach I visited daily was virtually empty. There was no mention of this beach in my guidebook, either. Leaving it up to the more intrepid traveler to find this spot helps to keep pressure off the reef,

*Western Tanager* September-October 2019 Vol. 86 No. 1

which is a passive way to protect this delicate ecosystem.

Malaysia was one of the most beautiful places that I have ever seen, and I constantly marveled that such a place existed, and that I was able to visit! The trip did volumes to broaden my focus and awareness (which, as I first mentioned, had become pathetically narrow during the rainy winter of 2018-2019), and inspire me! Although the country has a history of exploitation of natural resources (logging, extraction industries, palm oil plantations, destruction of mangrove swamps for aquaculture, etc.) that rivals our own, steps are being taken to mitigate some of the damage and encourage a more “green economy”. For example, I saw lots of solar panels on the roofs of newly constructed homes. And the efforts of Yeo Bin Yin and her Ministry are not to be underestimated. I encourage anyone who has the opportunity and/or wherewithal to visit.

I did not use my cell phone, nor did I look at a computer during the entire two weeks that I was in Malaysia. All information gleaned initially came from the trusty Lonely Planet guidebook, and was amplified upon arrival by talking to Malaysians, and visiting

museums and Visitors Centers. I made very few plans in advance, other than booking flights to the various destinations I visited. Once on the ground was when I began the actual choosing of activities, and I did not consult Trip Advisor or any similar online resource. The people with whom I did speak were a wealth of information, and eager to share things about their country, and make recommendations about dining, lodging and activities. I find this to be true in all of the places that I have visited throughout the world-locals have pride of place, and want you to see what they love! Choosing to plan and travel on your own, without a tour group, provides much more opportunity to actually engage with the local population. Even getting lost can be a chance to meet residents of the country. More than once this floundering tourist has been guided to her destination by a helpful citizen; it happened on this trip, too, while in Kuala Lumpur.

Internet connectivity notwithstanding, the world is still a huge and hugely interesting place. Making the effort to see at least part of it in person reminded me of that fact, and I hope this little essay might inspire some of you to do a little exploring.





14-17) Gorgeous creatures, both large and small, are to be found in Malaysia.



The beaches of the Perhentian Islands. Palm fringed, tropical with beautiful coral reefs just below the surface. The reef was so colorful; it was like snorkeling in a giant dish of candy.

# WHY WE PULL WEEDS

By Eleanor Osgood & Alan Starbuck

**W**e both volunteer to weed in our public lands as part of a habitat restoration team which is coordinated by Eleanor. But we come to this unusual habit, obsession almost, with different impetuses: for Eleanor, bird watching; for Alan, hiking. We'd like to share with you our answers to the often-asked questions "You pull weeds? Really? Why?" in the hope that it will inspire you to join us, whatever your impetus may be. Here are our stories:

## ELEANOR OSGOOD

I am passionate about wild birds. I identified myself with the birding community—which means I became "a birder" in 1988, the year I realized that I couldn't identify a European Starling or name that little brown bird with the black bib hopping around my back yard.

I am also an almost native Angeleno (those first nine months in Chicago don't really count, do they?), and have lived in Los Angeles most of my life. But for my first seven or eight birding years, most of my destinations were outside of Los Angeles County, many of them outside of the country. I assumed that most places "birdy" were somewhere else. But over the years I have learned I was wrong. Los Angeles County is birdy! Super birdy! We have about 560 species, 200 of which live here year-round! Historically, Los Angeles was even "birdier." Check out the descriptions of California naturalists from the late 1800's and early 1900's; they write about seeing flocks of birds numbering in the hundreds of thousands.

Los Angeles County is special in many other ways. We have 10 climate zones. This number is pretty impressive for an urbanized space of our size! We also have plants and animals found nowhere else in the United States, and for that matter, in the world. We are what is called a "Global Hotspot," one of 36 world-wide. With this title, we have the honor of being recognized as supporting a significantly high-level of biodiversity that is found nowhere else in the world (primarily plant life). But the flip side of that honor includes recognition of having among the highest number of species on the verge of extinction.

Over time I've developed appreciation for the uniqueness of Southern California's natural spaces and the abundance of wildlife that these areas support. I'm determined to contribute to their protection because it leads directly to protecting the creatures that so deeply engage me.

These days, much of my birding is done while weeding (aka habitat restoration) in Kenneth Hahn State Park within the Baldwin Hills, which is comprised of large remnant patches of Coastal Sage Scrub Habitat—a rare and unique habitat. Multiple volunteers and organizations have been working at habitat restoration within the Baldwin Hills for over 20 years, including Los Angeles Audubon Society, Sierra Club, and Mujeres de la Tierra. As a Los Angeles Audubon Society member, I have weeded and birded there for about 10 years.

In addition to the satisfaction of being outdoors with the birds I love, I've discovered other rewards. I find the rhythm of scraping or digging or pulling to be both invigorating and relaxing. Throughout the few hours I am weeding, I hear the birds singing; I

look up if I don't recognize the song but otherwise, I'm focused on the ground and excited by the new things I see there. Perhaps most rewarding of all is experiencing the process of regeneration that occurs as I pull up the blanket of weeds and more sunlight reaches the soil year after year. I thrill at the sight of emerging native plants, new species that I see for the first time. I'm impressed by these new (and true) natives. The way they have persevered through the recent drought years, the resilience of their seeds just waiting in the ground for the sunlight and moisture that our weeding provides them. Knowing I'm helping make their resurgence possible is very, very satisfying.

## ALAN STARBUCK

I always had a love of nature and wilderness. Growing up with family camping trips, I enjoyed the great outdoors and getting away from the city. To me, nature and wilderness were always beyond the city borders. And it was out there where the battle for the environment took place. A battle I figured was already lost in this urban landscape. But that was black and white thinking. Nature and wilderness don't stop just because they hit the city limit.

My understanding of nature in the city began to change when I was living in Hollywood and got myself a dog. With my new companion, I got back into hiking. I lived less than a mile from Griffith Park and its chaparral-covered hillsides. Hiking up the park's fire roads past the manicured grassy parks, the city quickly dropped away and a natural landscape emerged despite being surrounded by millions of people.

More hikes in the Verdugo Hills above Burbank and on the trails of the Angeles Forest made me realize that despite the huge metropolises dominating coastal Southern California, the original ecosystem still existed within and around the city.

That wilderness didn't just stay in the parks. Living just off Hollywood Boulevard I would encounter skunks and raccoons living among the apartment complexes. One day I was walking near USC. A crash against a chain-linked fence caught my attention. Looking, I saw by the base of the fence a red-tailed hawk, a pigeon in its talons. The hawk stared me down with fierce yellow eyes, making it clear that here, by downtown Los Angeles, was wilderness.

Then I began gardening with native plants at the house my wife and I bought in the Baldwin Hills. From gardening with native plants I learned the names of the plants I encounter on my hikes. I also started recognizing what didn't belong. Classes taken at Theodore Payne Foundation showed me the native plants I was growing were doing more than reducing my water usage and making my yard look more natural. I was actually expanding Southern California's original ecosystem back into the city.

No longer close to Griffith Park or the Angeles Forest, I began hiking with my dog up in Kenneth Hahn Park. Here was another patch of nature within the city. But it was badly degraded. Between native patches of toyon, scrub oak, holly-leaf cherry, black sage, and California sagebrush were even larger patches of non-native grasses, wild mustard, tree tobacco, castor bean. My mind started wondering what the park would be like without these invasive plants and how Kenneth Hahn Park could be a nature preserve in a part of Los Angeles where little of the original habitat remains. I decided to see how I could get involved with habitat restoration.

I found several avenues for volunteering with habitat restoration in Los Angeles, but none for Kenneth Hahn Park. With Kenneth Hahn being my home park, it was here that I wanted to put my efforts. After multiple on-line searches, I was able to find Eleanor's habitat restoration group.

While the term 'habitat restoration' sounds like we're sowing wildflowers, planting trees and releasing happy bunnies into the wild, the real work is more mundane and less glamorous. We weed. A lot.

It can be hot and dirty, but nevertheless, I keep coming back. It is satisfying work. 'Freeing' the native plants bring me the most gratification. Literally being smothered by weeds, some of the native plants we come upon are mostly bare branches with a few leaves, barely alive. By clearing out the invasive plants, more resources - soil, water, sun - become available to the native. Branches covered by the weeds can now leaf out and blossom. The following year when working in the same area, the freed plants are healthier and more robust.

We also see seedlings of native plants that are able to take root because of the weeds we cleared out. In the end, that is why I keep weeding, to see a natural environment come back to life, to let a little wilderness to come back in the city.

---

When the weather cools, we will be back weeding 2 or more times a week. Our schedules are flexible. Perhaps our stories have inspired some of you to join us. We welcome you whether you are a birder, a hiker, a botanist, a backyard gardener or just a nature lover. Eleanor can be reached by email: [gardenbird1@att.net](mailto:gardenbird1@att.net). 

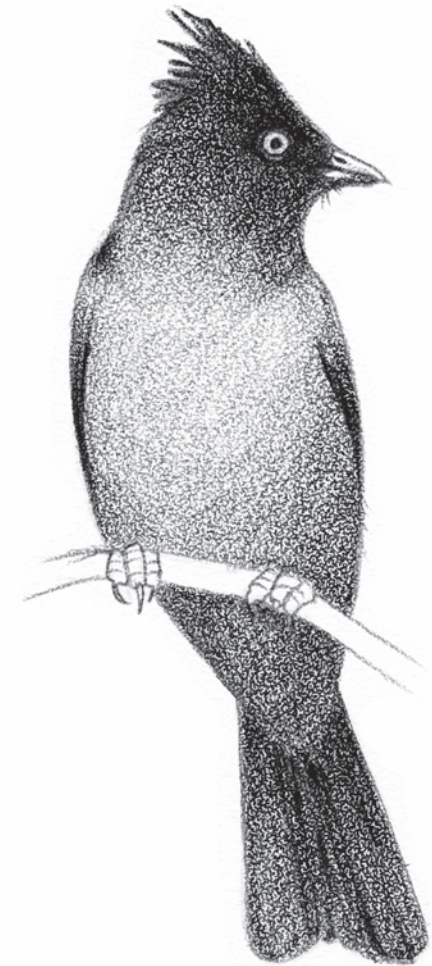


Illustration by Stacey Vigallon

# INTERPRETING NATURE

## *Community Birding in the Heart of Los Angeles*

By Emily Cobar, Community Program Manager



*Parents and younger students observing the family of Egyptian Geese at MacArthur Park while one student looks for them in the Kaufmans field guide*

Last year, junior staff of Los Angeles Audubon Society applied and received a scientific/research and community based grant by the Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon Grant Program. Thanks to their generous funding, LA Audubon was able to produce 100 calendars filled with photographs and artwork made by the community including the schools' principal, students, and their parents/guardians. In this project; staff, Baldwin Hills Greenhouse Program students and ee360 Fellowship interns led the Esperanza Elementary community in bilingual nature walks that bridged research, community engagement and art with non-scientists and non-researchers- a concept of community science.

### COMMUNITY BASED SCIENCE

We did our nature walks in two locations: Esperanza Elementary School and MacArthur Park, both in the Westlake area- 2 miles West of Downtown LA. Although the landscape around these two locations are very urbanized surrounded with buildings, residential houses/apartments and stores, it is important to note that both the school and the park are enriched with wildlife. These areas are popular hotspots on eBird- an online database platform where people of all levels of birding report their bird observations.

The nature walks serve to talk about wildlife, plants and animals- in Los Angeles and to collect data for eBird. While we had younger students, parents and the principal spotting the birds and taking pictures, we had either staff, interns, or high school students collecting data on a clipboard. We had a team of great bird spotters for the Christmas Bird Count we did in early January, it was then that one parent spotted (and was later identified by the principal) a Plumbeous Vireo and another parent had spotted the Black-throated gray warbler at MacArthur Park.

### Intergenerational Learning

The best part of the nature walks is that it was not only lead by LA Audubon staff, but led by a team of multiple people, including high school students of the Baldwin Hills Greenhouse Program, interns from my ee360 Fellowship project and college students from our Baldwin Hills Parklands Conservation Certificate Program. The older students gained mentorship skills while we hope the younger students spark interest in the conservation field and/or spark interest in becoming part of our Greenhouse Program once they are in high school.

## SCIENTIFIC ILLUSTRATION IN THE NATIVE HABITAT

Along with photographs that participants took along the nature walks, we added a scientific illustration workshop which the younger students worked on in the native habitat. We emphasized that scientific illustration is not about having perfect drawing skills, but it is all about observation and focusing on detail. We know that drawing wildlife can be difficult as wildlife is always on the move so we used invertebrates encased in resin that may be found in the native habitat as the first part of the workshop. These invertebrates included: orb weavers, harvester ants, monarch butterfly, bee, and more. The second part of the scientific illustration workshop, the students went to the habitat to observe and draw the things that are always in place: California native plants. Students drew plants in the habitat such as California bush sunflower and Lupine species.

## BREAKFAST AND BIRDING

As a big thank you to the participants, we planned a breakfast and bird walk. We served coffee, fruit, black beans, and chuchitos (a traditional Guatemalan-style tamales) cooked by my mom-thanks mom! On that day we handed out the calendars which all participants in the walks received for free. Students were excited to see their artwork publish on it. Afterwards, we went bird and wildlife watching at the habitat. We saw birds like Parakeets and Cooper's Hawk-which a younger student tracked in her bird list and we saw many pollinators including a Gulf Fritillary. We used tools like iNaturalist and ebird to report our findings and spend the last half hour as playtime in the habitat.



*ee360 intern, Joanna Ruacho and Greenhouse student, Kevin Mendizibal, engage with the younger students at Esperanza Elementary*



*During the Scientific Illustration workshop students drew native plants that are found in the habitat. One student in particular, drew the Yellow Rumped-Warbler, a yearly visitor at Esperanza*



*After eating coffee and chuchitos, a traditional Guatemalan-style tamales, families and students explored the native habitat*



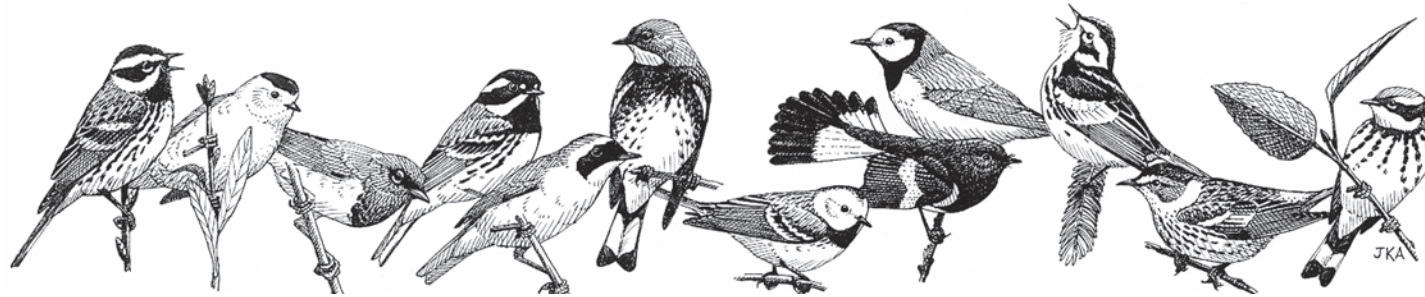
*Esperanza families, the principal, Brad Rumble, ee360 interns and students pose in front of DTLA after receiving their calendars.*

#### THANK YOU TO FUNDERS

This was a very special project to me, not only because I got a chance to go bird-watching with the community within the busy city, but because this is my first experience in grant writing and grant reporting. Thank you to the Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon for the funding for the calendars and the NAAEE ee360 for the funding to provide stipends for the college interns for participating in this project (Check out the September/October 2018 Western Tanager for more information)

#### MUCHÍSIMAS GRACIAS A LA COMUNIDAD (A BIG THANKS TO THE COMMUNITY)

Gracias a todos que participaron a los paseos de la naturaleza guiados por nosotros de Los Angeles Audubon con la ayuda de Mr. Rumble. Espero que ustedes y sus hijas e hijos disfrutaron como nosotros disfrutamos estos días especiales de comunidad y ciencia. Hasta el próximo paseo! 🐦



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

Though late June and early July tend to be a slower time of year compared to the major rush of spring migration and the great variety that autumn provides, there were nonetheless a number of notable birds recorded in the county. As July progressed into August, plenty of southbound shorebirds and a handful of passerines were already passing through.

The lack of rain at this time of year was no surprise, but a wet winter ensured that habitats stayed in good shape well into the summer. As always, local birders were active. The Piute Ponds received their fair share of attention and produced a number of noteworthy sightings. Coastal spots and offshore waters offered some interesting water and seabirds.

The only waterfowl of note were summering **Common Mergansers** on the LA River in Glendale from July 4-7 (Jon Fisher) and at Quail Lake near Gorman from July 9-17 (Brad Rumble).

A **White-winged Dove** at the Ballona Freshwater Marsh near Playa del Rey from August 7-18 was the only one reported (Jonathan Nakai).

Just a bit lost was a **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** at the Piute Ponds from July 3-5 (Chris Dean).

Up to three **Black Swifts** were near Claremont Wilderness Park from June 29-August 18 (Tom Miko). They are best observed here from Cobal Canyon Road in the late afternoon when they are heading back to their roosting sites and presumably their nests. However none have recently been documented as breeding locally.

Two **American Oystercatchers** continued at Royal Palms beach from June 22-August 7 (Dave Weber).

Oddly scarce in the county, a **Red Knot** was at Malibu Lagoon from August 8-10 (Chris Dean). A very early **Dunlin** was at the Piute Ponds on Edwards AFB from July 31-August 5 (Chris Dean) and four **Wilson's Snipes** at the Piute Ponds on August 4 were early arrivals (Kimball Garrett).

**Semipalmated Sandpipers** were at the Piute Ponds on July 6 (Mark & Janet Scheel) and again on July 31 (Chris Dean), on the LA River in Glendale from July 24-26 (Andrew Birch) and on the lower LA River in Long Beach from August 3-7 (Nancy Salem, Ira Blitz) and in Cudahy on August 19 (Richard Barth).

**Glaucous-winged Gulls**, scarce in summer, were

on the LA River in South Gate from August 14-19 (Richard Barth) and at Malibu Lagoon from August 2-15 (Jon Fisher).

Very rare in LA County waters, a few San Clemente Island records earlier this year notwithstanding, was a **Red-billed Tropicbird** off San Clemente Island on July 4 (Justyn Stahl).

There have been a spate of booby sightings in LA County waters in recent years, and this summer offered up three species. **Masked Boobies** included one off the Palos Verdes Peninsula on July 19 (Gregg Gentry) and two in that general area- one off Long Beach Harbor and one off Los Angeles Harbor- on July 25 (Matt West). What may have been one of the same birds was at Dockweiler State Beach in El Segundo on August 9 (Dean Schaff). Also very rare was a **Red-footed Booby** near Avalon on Santa Catalina Island on July 14 (Justyn Stahl). Comparatively more common- though still rare- was a **Brown Booby** near San Clemente Island on August 17 (Tom Benson).

**Neotropic Cormorants** have been appearing in the county and elsewhere in southern California with greater regularity. One was at Malibu Lagoon from June 29-30 (Mark Scheel) and another was in

Long Beach on the LA River from June 23-July 16 (Chris Dean). Two were at the spreading ponds just south of Hansen Dam from July 8-August 20 (Brad Rumble), with three there on July 18 when copulation was observed. This is a first record of breeding activity for the county and we should expect more to follow. Lastly, two more were below the 5 Freeway in Glendale on July 16 (Joyce Brady).

Unusual inland was a **Brown Pelican** at Lake Balboa in the San Fernando Valley from July 16-August 9 (Mike Stensvold). Two **American White Pelicans** were out of season on the LA River in Long Beach from July 28-29 (Ryan Terrill).

Rare even in winter, but much less expected in summer was an **American Bittern** at the Dominguez Gap Wetlands in Long Beach on July 12 (Jeff Boyd).

A **Reddish Egret** turned up at Malibu Lagoon on August 12 (Andrea Call). This species' occurrences in the county have been typically been ephemeral. They appear visit only briefly as they traverse the coastline between Orange and Ventura Counties where they are more regular.

Also increasing in the county, two **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** continued to be reported regularly at the Ballona Freshwater Marsh through August 12. Two others were at Sims Bio Pond in Long Beach on July 1 with one continuing there through August 19.

Passerine vagrants continued to be found through most of the period. One of these was a **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** at the Sepulveda Basin on July 14 (Jon Fisher).

A **Willow Flycatcher** at the Piute Ponds on June 21 was a late spring migrant, but one there on July 6 was between expected dates for both spring and fall migrants (Mark & Janet Scheel, Curtis Marantz). Very early for a fall migrant was a **Hammond's Flycatcher** at Big Rock Creek on the north side of the San Gabriel Mountains on July 28 (Kimball Garrett). They do not breed in southern California, where the very similar Dusky Flycatcher is the predominant *Empidonax* in the mountains in summer.

A **Plumbeous Vireo** was at Big Rock Creek on the north side of the San Gabriel Mountains on July 28 (Kimball Garrett). This species has nested here in the past and breeding behavior should be watched for. Also of note was a **Red-eyed Vireo** at the Piute Ponds on July 6 (Mark & Janet Scheel).

Three **Purple Martins** were at the Piute Ponds on July 3 where migrants are somewhat regular (Chris Dean), though overall this species is quite scarce in the county.

A **Hermit Thrush** at Big Rock Creek on the north side of the San Gabriel Mountains on July 28 (Kimball Garrett) was not far from known breeding areas high in the San Gabriels, yet this was a low elevation record for this time of year. Four more- perhaps dispersing breeders from higher in the San Gabriels, or potentially local breeding birds- were near Big Santa Anita Canyon and Winter Creek above Arcadia on July 19. At least one was still in that area on August 16 (Darren Dowell). This species is known to breed in limited numbers usually above 8,000 feet in the county, but additional field work may prove their range is not so restricted.

Fall migrant **Lucy's Warblers** were at Madrona Marsh in Torrance from July 18-25, at Hahamongna Watershed Park in Pasadena from July

21-August 9 (Darren Dowell) and on Edwards AFB on July 23 (Jon Feenstra).

A **Chestnut-sided Warbler** was at Madrona Marsh in Torrance from July 22-27 (Christine Jacobs). The Sepulveda Basin produced a **Yellow-rumped "Audubon's" Warbler** on July 4 (Mike Stensvold). This species is very unusual in the lowlands at this time of year, not being expected until mid-September.

**Summer Tanagers** were at the Sepulveda Basin from June 26-July 7 (Mike Stensvold), at King Gillette Ranch near Calabasas on July 6 (Marie Barnidge-McIntyre).

Seed eaters were poorly represented thus far- but expect that to change soon- by single **Indigo Buntings** along the San Gabriel River in Pico Rivera from July 14-August 4 (Larry Schmah) and on San Clemente Island on July 25 (Vincent Weber). Hopefully September will rectify that deficiency.

Now that breeding has essentially ended and fall migration is well underway for many species, there is much in the offing for birders. The end of summer signals shorter days and also brings increasing numbers of songbirds and a greater chance for passerine and other vagrants, from the merely scarce to the ultra-rare. Early waterfowl will be arriving soon and shorebirds will continue to be plentiful.

Los Angeles County has more than its share of birders, and they continue to expand our base of knowledge of patterns of occurrence, distribution and breeding. And yes they also find a lot of vagrants. With any luck the next couple of months will be very productive in that regard. 🐦



# BIRD WALKS

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

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

## OPEN WETLANDS AT BALLONA

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

Sep. 7 & Oct. 5  
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@laudubon.org](mailto:cindyhardin@laudubon.org), (310) 301-0050

## TOPANGA STATE PARK BIRDWALK

1st Sunday of every month

Sep. 7 & Oct. 5  
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. This is an ideal trip for a beginning birder or someone new to the area. From Ventura Blvd, take Topanga Canyon Blvd 7 miles S. Turn E uphill on Entrada Rd. Follow the signs and turn left into Trippet Ranch parking lot. From Pacific Coast Hwy, take Topanga Canyon Blvd. 5 miles to Entrada Rd. Parking fee.  
Contacts: *Ken: (310) 455-1401, [ksafarri@aol.com](mailto:ksafarri@aol.com); Chris: (310) 455-1270*

## UPPER FRANKLIN CANYON / SOOKY GOLDMAN NATURE CENTER

2nd Sunday of the month

Sep. 1 & Oct. 6  
Time: 8:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m.

Leader: *Eleanor Osgood*  
Join us as we take a casual walk around the ponds and trails of this urban mixed oak woodland and chaparral nature preserve. It is spring and we are likely to see the resident Wood Ducks and as well California Quail, Spotted and California Towhees and California Thrasher and Wrentit engaging in nesting activities. Some other resident birds include 3 species of hawks, Common Raven, Nuttall's Woodpecker, 2 species of wrens. We will look for migrants such as flycatchers, vireos, warblers and orioles some of which will be staying in Franklin Canyon to nest. *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 until you have crossed the intersection; the turn at Franklin Canyon Road reads "Road Closed 800 Feet" and "Sunrise to Sunset"-- this is the park entrance; do not make a U-turn as this will take you onto Mulholland Drive instead of Franklin Canyon. Take Franklin Canyon Dr down to park entrance, turn at first left into the parking lot. **From Sunset Blvd:** go north on N. Beverly Drive to Coldwater Canyon Dr to Mulholland Dr. Veer left on Mulholland Drive. At the next traffic signal, make a left turn onto Franklin Canyon Dr. continue to first parking lot on the left. BINOCULARS PROVIDED.

Contact Info: *Eleanor (310) 839-5420*

**KENNETH HAHN STATE RECREATION AREA**  
(4100 S. La Cienega Blvd, Los Angeles 90056)  
3rd Saturday of the month  
(no walks in July or August)

Sep. 21 & Oct. 19  
Leader **Dick Barth**  
Time: 8:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Leaders: *Eric and Ann Brooks, Eleanor Osgood*  
This trip covers landscaped parkland, a man-made lake and natural coastal scrub habitats within the Baldwin Hills. We are likely to see the resident birds (a total of 26 species) such as Nuttall's Woodpecker, Black

Phoebe, Cassin Kingbirds, Song Sparrow, California Scrub-jay, California and Spotted Towhee, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Great Horned Owl engaging in nesting activities. We will search for summer visitors that nest in the park such as Hooded and Bullock's Oriole, Barn Swallow, Western Kingbird and Western Bluebird.

**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 into the first parking lot on the right leading to the lake. BINOCULARS PROVIDED.

**BALLONA WETLANDS BIRD WALK**  
3rd Sunday of the month  
(with the exception of December)

Sep. 15 & Oct. 20  
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)*



# FIELD TRIPS



Nick & Mary Freeman  
Field Trip Chairperson  
& 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 permission from leader please. *We do not sell, trade, or re-use contact information; cell and email simply improve our chances of contacting you at home and in the field.*

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

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

## CARPOOLING

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

## FEE REQUIRED RESERVATIONS

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

### Mail to:

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

## MORE INFORMATION

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

## Sunday, September 8

### SALTON SEA

#### \$15 FEE, SIGN-UP 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. Reserve by e-mail; and mail \$15, cell# and address. 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, call us to coordinate meeting at Christine's in Brawley. Other lodging suggestions and dinner contact information in e-mailer.

## 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, either call or e-mail Audubon with name(s), cell number, and e-mail 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, 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. 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**

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. 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. 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 (confirmed)**  
**Condors at Bitter Creek NWR**  
**\$10 DONATION (OR MORE)**  
**SUGGESTED, SIGN-UP REQUIRED,**  
**LIMIT 20**

A California Condor biologist, will 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. We will be presented with 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 condors in our wild local population (about 43) visit this area. 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. Reserve your place with LAAS by phone, stating cell phone # and e-mail address, whether you have a high clearance vehicle that can accommodate at least 4 people total (priority) or you hope to ride with someone else. Bring drinks, lunch, and FRS radio and a scope if you have them. No fee, but \$10 donations accepted to the Condor Survival Fund.

**Saturday, November 16**  
**BETTE DAVIS PARK, AND NEARBY LA RIVER,**  
**AND GRIFFITH PARK**  
**NO SIGN UP, NO FEE**

Leaders are bird artists / local birders Andy Birch and Mary Freeman. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Bette Davis Park, parking along the SW side of Riverside Drive where it turns SE (beyond Victory, at 34.1583, -118.2963). Possible Neotropical Cormorant, among resident birds and a good compliment of wintering birds. Bring snacks to bird until about 1:00 p.m.

**Sunday, December 1**  
**SAN JACINTO WILDLIFE AREA AND LAKEVIEW**  
**AREA**  
**NO SIGN-UP, NO FEE**

Leaders: *Nick and Mary Freeman*. Little Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gulls (2!), Short-eared Owls (2!) seen on past trips may not be back this year; but surely something will take their places, such as the kumleini Iceland Gull and Gyrfalcon seen here in recent years (but not on our trip)! Take the 10 or 60 Fwy E to the 215

Fwy S, exit E at Ramona Expressway, continue E just past Perris Blvd., and meet at the Farmer Boys Restaurant on the S side of the road (145A Ramona Expressway, Perris). Leave from here at 8:00 a.m. Bring lunch, warm clothing and footwear for (hopeful) mud. We will try to carpool to defray the \$10 entrance fee for Lake Perris, if we go there.

## CHRISTMAS COUNT TEASERS:

**Saturday, December 14, 2019**

### LANCASTER CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Contact compilers Nick and Mary Freeman at: (818) 636-4361 or [mnfreeman@earthlink.net](mailto:mnfreeman@earthlink.net) to be placed on a team or be given an area. Prairie Falcon, Mountain Bluebird, Greater Roadrunner, LeConte's Thrasher, and Burrowing and Long-eared owls usually reported by someone!

**Sunday, December 15, 2019**

### MALIBU CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Contact compiler Dick Norton at: (310) 455-1138 or [richardjnorton@gmail.com](mailto:richardjnorton@gmail.com) to be matched up with a team or a survey area. Historically, our best-attended count!

**Sunday, January 5, 2020**

### LOS ANGELES CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

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

**Sunday, January 12, 2020 (confirmed)**

### SEAL BEACH NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE LIMITED SIGN-UP REQUIRED, NO FEE

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

**Sunday, February 9, 2020**

### NEWPORT BACK BAY

#### NO SIGN-UP, NO FEE

Leaders: *Mary and Nick Freeman*. Meet at 8:00 a.m. for the 6.7' high tide. Ridgway's Rail, Sora, American Bittern, Peregrine Falcon, Blue-winged Teal and California Gnatcatcher are expected. Short-eared Owl is rare. We will have lunch and finish up at San Joaquin Marsh, upstream. Take the 405 Fwy S to the 73 Toll Road (free this far) to the Campus Dr. exit. Turn right on Irvine Ave., and left on University Drive. Park beyond the Preserve HQ (2301 University Dr., Newport Beach 92660), and walk down the trail and over the bridge to the boardwalk to meet. More details in November. 🐦

## Affair of the Air

Feathered forms  
who weather the storms  
that nature adorns  
and imbues  
from the perch  
of an aerial view  
where they lurk  
far above the hub  
of our human zoo  
as they loom in pursuit  
of their birthright  
towards a worm site  
to service their appetites  
until they once again ascend  
to assume flight  
totally in tune  
with the dizzying heights  
as they pirouette with Lear jets  
and neck with scenic sunsets  
via a supreme winged fling  
they soar and swerve  
But don't try this at home  
I would strongly urge  
for this affair of the air  
is strictly for the birds

By Carl Hall