



THE WRENTIT

Founded 1904

Pasadena Audubon Society
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

Volume 57 — No. 5

To bring the excitement of birds to our community through birding, November - December 2009
education and the conservation of bird habitats.

November Program

eBird! Learn What It Is and How to Use It

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

Kimball Garrett

You've probably been hearing a lot about eBird (www.ebird.org) lately, the website and online birding tool that is changing the face of modern birding. eBird is an internet-based checklist program built for birders by birders, whose goal is to harness the power of both birding and science. It allows you to keep track of your bird records online and share them with the birding community, while making them available for science and conservation efforts. eBird allows birders to post sightings, keep life lists, and manage their personal records. This program will show you what eBird is and why it's important that you contribute, show you what it can do for you as a birder, and teach you how to get started. Join Los Angeles eBird Coordinator Kimball Garrett for a look at this remarkable tool, and get empowered to make *your* observations count!

December Program

Christmas Bird Count Dinner

Saturday, December 19, 2009

6:00 pm — 9:00 pm

A delicious catered dinner and complimentary beverages are only \$10 per person! Join your friends and colleagues for good food and interesting stories.

RSVP by December 7th. Mail a check payable to PAS to the address shown on page 7. Add "CBC" to the memo line of the check. Questions: contact Mary Jane Macy at (626) 355-7678 or mjmacy@aol.com

Don't forget the **pre-count meeting December 16!**
See page 7 for more information.

January Program

Chaparral, Wrentits, and Grizzlies

Wednesday, January 20, 2010

Richard W. Halsey

Of all the distinct, natural communities in California, only one is found throughout and only one can be said to represent the state's most characteristic wilderness: the chaparral. Join us as we explore the chaparral's unique natural history, discuss its highly territorial bird populations, reveal the truth concerning its many myths and surprising mysteries, investigate how it will recover from the recent wildfire, and why it represents such a vital link to nature for all Californians.

Richard W. Halsey is a chaparral ecologist, writer, and director of The California Chaparral Field Institute.

General Meetings Held At

Eaton Canyon Nature Center

1750 N Altadena Drive

Pasadena CA

Social 7:00 pm, Program 7:30 pm

President's Perch

The huge forest fires are over and some valuable habitat was lost. It will be a while before we know the effect on migrating birds. Lois is keeping our bird feeders well stocked – every little bit helps and we have seen a few new birds in our yard!

The 110th Christmas Bird Count is coming up, on Saturday, 12/19/09. The CBC is one of the best-known annual inventories of birds in North America. When I tell people that I am a birder they often say "Do

you participate in that annual count-all-the-birds thing?" Yes, even non-birders know about the CBC. PAS did a good job last year; 42 participants reported 160 bird species and we finished with a dinner together that night at Eaton Canyon. This year we hope to beat the 160 species count and our Hospitality Committee is planning a delicious dinner for us to celebrate – see the details on page 7 of *The Wrentit*.

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Conservation and Education

Arroyo Seco Gets Funding at Last!

(From the Pasadena Star News, October 2, 2009)

Washington, D.C. - Federal funding of \$224,000 for a study of watershed management in the Arroyo Seco was approved by Congress on Thursday as part of the Energy and Water Appropriations Act.

"Restoration and conservation of our scarce open spaces is vitally important to ensuring a good quality of life," Rep. Adam Schiff said in a statement. "This funding will help ensure that the Arroyo Seco returns to its natural state - an environmental gem. Once it's restored, it will provide enjoyable open space and recreation areas for generations to come."

The funds requested by Schiff for the Arroyo Seco are allocated for the Army Corps of Engineers to complete a Watershed Management Plan Feasibility Study.

The focus of the study is to address flood and stream management, habitat, water resources, and ecosystem restoration issues within this Arroyo Seco.

The funds will allow the Corps to conduct technical assessments of ecosystem restoration and watershed management programs to identify projects which will improve the management and conditions of the watershed, a statement from Schiff's office said.

The Arroyo Seco Watershed Management Plan is a project supported and coordinated by the County of Los Angeles to develop a comprehensive, environmentally friendly approach to manage the Arroyo Seco Watershed. The project is supported by the Pasadena-based Arroyo Seco Foundation, North East Trees, the California Coastal Conservancy, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, and the cities in the watershed.

Note from Conservation Chair: What this means is that the ACE is looking for ways to remove the concrete from the channel in the Arroyo Seco without compromising watershed management and protection from storm runoff. Good news!

Laura Garrett

Good News for Rubio Canyon

In September, the newly expanded Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy (formerly Altadena Foothills Conservancy) (AFC) finalized acquisition of a pristine, historic 20 acre land parcel of natural open space in Rubio Canyon, on the eastern side of Altadena, CA. Thankfully, this now protected open space escaped damage from the Station Fire.

The parcel contains important trails and is the main hiking access point for Rubio Canyon, one of the most beautiful areas of the local foothills and home to the historic Mount Lowe Railway and Great Incline.

Preservation of the parcel is significant for several reasons. The land is directly adjacent to Angeles National Forest, so preservation extends the protected areas and allows access. Many hikers use this parcel regularly to enjoy the mountains and Rubio Canyon waterfalls. The location is also home to the historic Mount Lowe Railway, which provided an amazing mountain experience from 1893 until 1938, and had the distinction of being the only scenic mountain overhead electric trolley railroad ever built in the United States. The railway climbed Lake Avenue and crossed into Rubio Canyon. At Rubio Pavilion passengers transferred to a cable car funicular which climbed the Great Incline to the top of Echo Mountain.

AFC focuses its work in the San Gabriel foothills and arroyos extending from the environs of Eaton Canyon to the western Verdugo Mountains. It works with property owners, governments, land trusts, and other stakeholders to acquire, restore, protect, and maintain these natural areas.

To support this important work, please visit www.arroyosfoothills.org.

Update on the Cobb Estate Signs

As regular readers of the Wrentit will know, PAS has been working on finding a solution to the graffiti problem on our signs at the Cobb Estate.

On September 15th, Will Fulmer and Laura Garrett met with representatives from the U.S. Forest Service, LA County Sheriffs, and Outward Bound. Together, we came up with some possible solutions to this ongoing problem. PAS, thanks to Ron Cyger, has found a company that will clean the signs and then coat them with a product that makes them easy to clean. We will also organize teams of people to go up the Cobb Estate to clean the signs regularly. The Sheriffs assured us that while they do not send frequent patrols to the Cobb Estate, they do respond to all calls that they receive regarding disturbances there. They also have a group of volunteers who do patrol the area, and they will ask for more patrols at the Cobb Estate. Outward Bound said they could have their kids volunteer at the Cobb Estate more often, including cleaning the signs once they have been restored. The Forest Service said they will look into fixing the road into the Cobb Estate to make it easier for the sheriffs to patrol, and they will increase their presence there as well. We are hoping they that they will also give the sheriffs a Letter of Agency so that the Sheriffs can arrest people who are up there after hours.

So what can you do? If you live near the Cobb Estate and you hear noises coming from it late at night, please call the sheriffs to report this. Also, we need people who are willing to be on a team to clean the signs. Several of you have already signed up (MANY THANKS!!!), but we will need many more people if we want to reduce the amount of work for each team. We are hoping to have a team up there once a week, with teams working once every six to eight weeks. If you are willing to help with this, please email Laura Garrett at purplecow@jps.net or call at (626) 564-1890. Thank you!

Laura Garrett

Trip Reports

The Station Fire

Ventura County September 27, 2009

We started the day at Leo Carrillo State Beach (actually in L.A. County) with thousands of Black-vented Shearwaters streaming by, Brandt's and Pelagic Cormorants on the rocks, and two flyover Black-hooded Parakeets. As we were about to leave, we found a Wandering Tattler, a life bird for some of the group.

On to Ventura County proper: in Sycamore Canyon the California Thrashers won the contest for rights to a water drip (House Finches and Wrentits came in second and third). A few Vaux's Swifts flew overhead, and everyone had great looks at a few dozen California Quail. Mugu Lagoon held the usual variety of shorebirds, including Dunlin and Long-billed Curlew. A stop at Laguna Road yielded great looks at a roosting Barn Owl, but the tamarisks were mostly empty: the only warblers were Hermit and Townsend's.

We forgot about our bad warbler luck on the Arnold Rd. Sod Farms: we pulled over, and the first bird we saw was a Pacific Golden-Plover! It was so close we were worried about getting out of the cars; it trotted about on the sod with Black-bellied Plovers, offering great comparisons. At the end of Arnold Rd. we found two Peregrine Falcons in aerial combat (courtship?), two White-faced Ibis, and a Northern Harrier.

Our final stop was McGrath State Beach, where we found another rarity: a female-type Vermilion Flycatcher was trying to blend in with the Say's Phoebes. Also at McGrath we had close looks at a perched Cooper's Hawk, and our first-of-fall Merlin zipped overhead and never looked back. We ended with 87 species for the day, including 8 species of raptors.

Mark and Janet Scheel

Right: At the Santa Clara River estuary, an unusual Heerman's Gull shows jaeger-like white primary covers. Photo by Mark Scheel



August 29th: a DC-10 drops retardant just north of JPL. Photo by Lance Benner

During...

Editor's note: this message was originally posted in September, soon after the Station Fire ravaged Millard Canyon in the Angeles National Forest above Altadena.

By a heroic and multi-day effort, my cabin and home of 24 years was saved this past weekend.. By saving me, the crews also saved Millard Campground and at least five cabins in that vicinity. Thanks go actually to two ravens I raised and released here, Robert and Sally, and a red-tailed hawk (Fred, for F-Red Baron) who has come to be a

...continued on page 6



...and After

Editor's note: Lance Benner posted this to the Pasadena Audubon mailing list soon after the fire crossed the Arroyo Seco and moved to the east.

On September 12th John Thompson and I rode our mountain bikes up the Arroyo Seco along 2N70 to the ranger's house and then up 2N65 to the top on the west flank of Brown Mountain. We reached the edge of the burn area about 200 yards above the ranger's house near the bottom of El Prieto Canyon. From there to the top (~5 miles) we encountered a very stark landscape that had burned extensively. Most of the vegetation is gone except deep in canyon bottoms and in some draws, where many of the oaks are still standing, albeit with leaves that are mostly brown.

We were curious to see what the area looked like and to survey any birds that might be present. Despite the desolation, we still heard and/or saw

...continued on page 6

Field Trips

North Slope San Gabriels

Saturday, November 14, 2009

7:30 am – early afternoon

We will explore areas on the northern slope of the San Gabriel Mountains, such as Grassy Hollow Visitors Center, Jackson Lake, and locations in Valyermo. We will search for high-altitude species as well as wintering raptors. Unusual species (e.g. Lewis's Woodpecker, Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker, Swamp Sparrow) have been found in some years. Time permitting, we may look for Mountain Plovers or longspurs in the Antelope Valley.

It may be cold, especially at higher elevations, so bring warm clothes.

We will meet at the Park & Ride on Ave. S in Palmdale, just east of the 14 Freeway.

Mark and Janet Scheel

Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve

Saturday, November 21, 2009

7:30 am — noon

Sepulveda Basin and adjacent areas offer a good variety of both land and water birds. Expect waterfowl, herons and egrets. Miscellaneous wintering warblers, sparrows and flycatchers will also be present. We should also see a variety of raptors

including Osprey and perhaps Peregrine Falcon. There is a small introduced population of Northern Cardinals here and along the LA River there are usually a few shorebirds and often an Orange Bishop or two.

From the 405 Freeway, take Burbank Blvd. west, then turn right (north) on Woodley Ave. Make a right turn by the water treatment plant and continue past the soccer fields to the dirt parking area on your left. We will meet at 7:30 am. A spotting scope is useful but not required.

Jon Fisher

Legg Lake & Peck Road Park

Saturday, December 5, 2009

7:30 am – 11:30 am

This trip will cover several consistently good lake and park birding areas. Legg Lake has lots of water and scattered trees and has produced good waterfowl numbers and varieties as well as an impressive list of migrants and wintering birds. Peck Road Park contains a huge hourglass-shaped lake that often hosts a wide variety of water birds, including grebes, ducks, gulls, terns, egrets, and shorebirds. Time permitting; we'll include the Livingstone/Graham Reservoir, which usually contains hundreds of ducks

and gulls. There are almost always one or two Ospreys present. Other raptors are often seen at all these locations.

Meet in the Santa Anita Ave. parking lot, closest to the 60 freeway. Take the Santa Anita exit and turn south from the off-ramp (going south). The lake and parking lot will be on your right.

Ed Stonick

Parrot Chase

Saturday, December 12, 2009

4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Parrots and parakeets have become common sights in the San Gabriel Valley, and several Temple City locations provide roost sites for thousands of birds of eight or more species. We will meet at Temple Park, which sometimes provides a staging area for parakeets. We will then attempt to follow the calling birds to their roost. The sonic experience is not to be missed. *[Editor's note: True that!]*

Temple Park is on the north side of Las Tunas Dr. between Kaufman and Golden West Aves., a few blocks east of Rosemead Blvd. A parking lot is accessible from Kaufman Ave.

Larry Allen

Bolsa Chica

Saturday, January 16, 2010

See January Wrentit for details

Eaton Canyon Monthly Walk

Sunday, November 15, 2009

Sunday, December 20, 2009

Sunday, January 17, 2010

8:00 am – 11:00 am

Pasadena Audubon and Eaton Canyon Nature Center are cosponsoring monthly walks at Eaton Canyon. The walks are led by Hill Penfold, who has been leading them at ECNC for many years. Hill is wonderful with birders of all levels and Eaton Canyon is one of the best locations to learn the birds of the Pasadena area.

The walks are held on the third Sunday of each month. Meet at the flagpole: bring water, binoculars, hats, but no dogs.

Hill Penfold

Hahamongna Monthly Walk

Saturday, November 7, 2009

Saturday, January 2, 2010

(December walk is at Legg Lake)

7:30 am – noon

This monthly bird walk is for birders of all ages and experience. A good variety of birds should be in residence. Bring binoculars, birding guide, water and wear walking shoes. No dogs.

Exit the north 210 at Berkshire and make a right, then a left at Oak Grove. The Hahamongna Watershed Park entrance is on the right at the next stop light. Take the first left after entering Hahagmongna, and park by the ballfield.

Ron Cyger

Huntington Library Monthly Walk

Sunday, November 22, 2009

Sunday, December 27, 2009

Sunday, January 24, 2010

8:00 am – 11:00 am

A special benefit for Pasadena Audubon Society members is the chance to bird the Huntington Library grounds. Attendance is by reservation only and limited to 15 participants. Members may bring one non-member guest, space permitting. We thank our member and Huntington curator, Dan Lewis, for making these trips possible.

Contact Elaine by email (preferred), putting "Huntington" in the subject line to avoid inadvertent deletion or by phone.

Elaine MacPherson

Calendar

Submit material for the next Wrentit by December 1st

November 2009

Date	Day	Time	Event	Location	Leader*
4	Wed	7:30 pm	Board Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Will Fulmer
7	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Hahamongna Watershed Park	Ron Cyger
14	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	North Slope San Gabriels	Mark & Janet Scheel
15	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
17	Tue	9:00 am	Magpie Study Group	San Dimas Park	Madeline West & Sid Heyman
18	Wed	7:00 pm	General Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Program: eBird, What & How
21	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Sepulveda Basin	Jon Fisher
22	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Huntington Library Gardens	Elaine MacPherson

(PAS members only)

December 2009

2	Wed	7:30 pm	Board Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Will Fulmer
5	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Legg Lake/PeckRoad	Ed Stonick
12	Sat	4:00 pm	Field Trip	Parrot Chase	Larry Allen
15	Tue	9:00 am	Magpie Study Group	L.A. County Arboretum	Madeline West & Sid Heyman
16	Wed	7:00 pm	Christmas Bird Count prep	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Jon Fisher
19	Sat	All day	Christmas Bird Count	15-mile count circle	Jon Fisher
19	Sat	6:00 pm	Christmas bird count dinner!	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Mary Jane Macy
20	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
27	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Huntington Library Gardens	Elaine MacPherson

(PAS members only)

January 2010

2	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Hahamongna Watershed Park	Ron Cyger
6	Wed	7:30 pm	Board Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Will Fulmer
16	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	Bolsa Chica	Mark & Janet Scheel
17	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
19	Tue	9:00 am	Magpie Study Group	To be determined	Madeline West & Sid Heyman
20	Wed	7:00 pm	General Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Program: Chaparral Surprises
24	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Huntington Library Gardens	Elaine MacPherson

(PAS members only)

* Trip Leader Information

Mark Scheel (Chair)	(626) 355-8707	SCHEEL@TAPIR.CALTECH.EDU
Larry Allen	(323) 288-2701	LARRYALLEN@EARLYMUSICLA.ORG
Lance Benner	(626) 791-1187	LBENNER@CHARTER.NET
Ron Cyger	(626) 449-3625 <i>(before 9 pm)</i>	RON@CYGER.ORG <i>(preferred)</i>
Kathi Ellsworth	(626) 564-0652	PANDIONSKY@YAHOO.COM
Jon Feenstra	(626) 792-4346	FEENSTRA@ALUMNI.CALTECH.EDU
Jon Fisher	(818) 800-2776	JONF60@HOTMAIL.COM
Nick & Mary Freeman	(818) 247-6172	MNFREEMAN@EARTHLINK.NET
Sid Heyman	(626) 571-5991	
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Elaine MacPherson	(626) 355-9412	BIRDERGRRL@AOL.COM
Hill Penfold	(626) 352-4954	HPENFOLD@GMAIL.COM
Mike San Miguel	(626) 355-5058	SANMIGBIRD@AOL.COM
Ed Stonick	(626) 796-0595	STONICKS@EARTHLINK.NET
Madeline West	(626) 574-0429	WEST266@ADELPHIA.NET

During, continued

friend up here. For when I came back in here illegally that Sunday morning and ran up to the cabin with fire crews chasing me and telling me to stop, they soon saw that my cabin was a real home, and a unique wildlife sanctuary at that. I am a satellite rehabber, licensed with DFG, and have raised every wild mammal up here except a black bear.

But that day, all three of those birds — Robert, Sally, and Fred — buzzed the fire crew captain and me as we stood on the deck. Robert and Sally perched on the old telephone pole right next to my deck, not 10 feet from us, and started talking to me nonstop, clearly demanding to know what I was doing about this, or something like that. That was enough to make the captain decide this was a place that had to be saved, and he promptly called in 40 hand crew as backup, with two engines, had hand pumps carried up to put in the stream below me, and brought in almost 3/4 mile of hose line. The crew worked here for two solid days and nights to protect it, and kept the fire from heading toward the houses on Chaney Trail.

Now I am the only oasis of green for many miles northwest to northeast and east of me. And the number of wild birds around my place has quadrupled, at least. There were no fewer than 12 woodpeckers gathered together on one of my oaks yesterday, and the ravens are back, the jays, all the wrens and juncos and whatever else all the rest are called, I know their individual personalities but don't pay much attention to their species names.

Please consider helping by hauling up bird feed, and other animal feed (e.g., alfalfa for deer and other browsers) to my cabin and helping me set up a few more bird feeders. And maybe nail up some nice wooden bird nest houses in various trees around here. I had the fire crew leave as many "wildlife trees" as possible when they were clearing with their chainsaws. I have ladders and can loan hammers and nails.

*Bonny Schumaker
Cabin 18, Millard Canyon
bonny.schumaker@gmail.com*

After, continued

almost 20 species between 6:00 and 9:00 pm.

In the areas that burned most extensively, the most common birds were California Towhees (largely on the ground) and Western Scrub Jays. The largest numbers of birds were among the oaks in canyon bottoms where the fire didn't completely wipe out the vegetation.

Overall, numbers of birds were *way* down relative to what was present before the fire, as expected, but the number of species we encountered still exceeded our expectations.

Here's the master list and totals for the trip:

- 1 Cooper's Hawk
- 1 Accipiter species
- 1 Mourning Dove
- 2 Western Screech Owl
- 1 Great Horned Owl
- 1 Common Poorwill
- 1 Allen's Hummingbird
- 5 Acorn Woodpecker
- 1 Nuttall's Woodpecker
- 3 Northern Flicker
- 10 Western Scrub-Jay
- 5 Common Raven
- 2 Bewick's Wren
- 2 Wrentit
- 2 Northern Mockingbird
- 3 California Thrasher
- 1 Spotted Towhee
- 15 California Towhee
- 2 House Finch

The only woodpeckers in extensively burned areas were flickers. The other species were in the canyon bottoms among oaks.

The spotted towhee, Bewick's wren, and wrentit were only in areas where vegetation survived.

We did not find a number of species that were formerly common: titmice, Band-tailed Pigeons, juncos, quail, goldfinches, Anna's Hummingbirds, Rufous-crowned and Song sparrows, or Black Phoebes.

We were delighted to see the poorwill and hear the owls. The poorwill was on the road about a mile south of the top. The screech owls were in thick oaks just west of the junction between 2N65 and 2N66 (aka Brown mountain saddle). The great horned owl was in a canyon

bottom roughly midway between the ranger's house and the saddle and was vocalizing about 10 minutes before sunset.

Along the road we saw numerous dead rabbits, rats, and a couple of mice. The rabbits were badly decomposed and/or eaten by scavengers and only a few of the animals looked burned. We also found three *live* vertebrates on the ground: two alligator lizards (one adult and one juvenile) and one mouse.

At the top, we noticed that crickets are still quite vocal, but when we passed back into the unburned area at the bottom on our way down (at about 9:00 pm) the volume of crickets and other insects increased significantly and seemed like a deafening roar in comparison with what we heard above.

On the night of Aug. 27, when the fire swept over the east end of Mt. Lukens and down toward La Canada, I biked most of the way up this same route to Pine Ridge where I looked across the Arroyo Seco and could see flames very close to the fire station that gave the fire its name. Even by 9:30 pm that night the flames had crossed east of the Angeles Crest Highway and started to creep east down into the Arroyo Seco north of Gould Campground. That night I heard four great horned owls and (in Millard Canyon by the parking lot) one western screech owl. We were delighted to hear that some of the birds apparently survived. On the other hand, the fate of the five scorpions I saw on the night of Aug. 27 is unclear: we didn't see any last night.

The road itself has already sustained numerous rockslides and sand cones that have partially blocked it in several places, but there was only one stretch in the upper portion where we had to dismount and walk our bikes across.

More generally, and according to a colleague of mine at JPL who went running in this area on the previous day, significant portions along the bottom of the Arroyo Seco as far upstream as Oakwilde survived relatively intact.

It's our intention to monitor the area regularly in the aftermath of the fire, particularly as things grow back, and we have already begun to enter our observations into eBird.

Lance Benner

Christmas Bird Count

The Christmas Bird Count is a major annual event for Pasadena Audubon and our own Pasadena/San Gabriel Valley count traces its origin to the mid 1940s. Obviously we've already got quite a bit of history to build upon. We hope you'll join us for the 2009 count which will be held on December 19.

Anyone from beginner to expert can take part in this process of learning and discovery. To be honest, it's a lot of fun too. In addition, the data we gather is one piece of the puzzle helping to monitor bird populations across the county.

Inevitably a few unexpected birds are found each year on the count, which keeps things interesting. The heart of the count though is the data we gather on regularly occurring species.

Pre-count meeting 12/16

A pre-count meeting will be held at the Eaton Canyon Nature Center on Wednesday, December 16 at 7:00 pm. At the pre-count meeting we will hand out count materials and checklists, review procedures and assign count areas to participants. If you can't be at the pre-count meeting it's easy to sign up for an area or group to count with via e-mail or phone.

We will hold the usual post-count dinner and wrap-up on count night. It's always fun to find out who saw what, what was missed, and what surprises turned up.

Jon Fisher

New Members, continued

PeterWalker; Winnie Washburn; Charles Wong; **ROSEMEAD:** Virginia McCoy; **SAN MARINO:** Marcia Baldeschwieler; Phoebe Kon; **SAN PEDRO:** Neil Multack; **SOUTH PASADENA:** K.M. Elson; **TEMPLE CITY:** Trudy Barker; Jane Mills

Thank You for Your Donations to PAS

These PAS members have recently made donations to our chapter: Shirley Butterworth, Margaret Fulmer and Dorothy Tyson. Thank you!

The Bird Clock, continued

especially by hormonal changes triggered by day length or photoperiod changes. This steady astronomical measure is a better cue to hang your hat on than the ever variable weather. Every year the first White-crowned Sparrows return to the San Gabriel Valley right about the third week of September on our human calendar. First dates that were written on paper over the years, but lost in a fire, still stick in my mind. September 17th one year; the 18th, 21st or 22nd other years. Yellow-rumped Warblers follow the same pattern. The juncos, like the one above, are often a little later.

As I write, during the first week of October, a White-crowned Sparrow and a couple of yellow-rumps are visible out the north window of my office in the still-new Nature Center. They've been here a while, of course. Though someone has let me know of a junco in their local yard, I'll be watching for the first one here. The young juncos will have to hear about the big fire from their great, great grandparents.

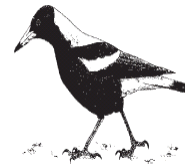
Mickey Long

Become a Chapter-only Member of PAS

Local chapters of the National Audubon Society, such as Pasadena Audubon, receive only a small share of NAS membership dues. In order to finance our programs and services, including publication of The Wrentit, PAS offers Chapter-only memberships.

When it's time to renew your National Audubon membership, we invite you to instead become a Chapter-only Member of the Pasadena Audubon Society, or make a donation to our Chapter to support our programs. Chapter-only dues are \$20 per year or \$15 for seniors and students, all of which remains with our local chapter to fund our programs. We thank you all for your support!

Magpie Bird Study Group



The group meets the third Tuesday of each month. We bird 9:00 am to about 11:30 am, have a sack lunch, and have a short business meeting. All PAS members welcome!

Tuesday, November 17, 2009

San Dimas Park, San Dimas
Meet in the lower meadow

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Note change of date!
County Arboretum, Arcadia
Meet in the parking lot

Tuesday, January 19, 2010

(To Be Announced)

Chapter-only Membership Application

Name Phone
Address
City State ZIP
Email

If this is a gift, please also provide donor's information below:

Name Phone
Address
City State ZIP

Yearly dues:

- \$20 (regular) \$15 (senior, or full-time student)
- \$35 (T-shirt or Birding Guide, plus a PAS pin)
- \$_____ (donation)

Make checks payable to, and mail to:

Pasadena Audubon, 1750 N Altadena Dr, Pasadena, CA 91107

Pasadena Audubon Society Board

President Will Fulmer (626) 798-1606
 Vice-President Norm Arnheim (626) 405-0844
 Secretary Kathi Ellsworth (626) 524-0652
 Treasurer Tori Collender (626) 799-7652

Members at large: Bev McKenzie, John Garrett, Susan Gilliland, Peggy

Ogata
 Auditor Eileen Burton (626) 585-9076
 Conservation Laura Garrett (626) 564-1890
 Field Trips Mark Scheel (626) 355-8707
 Hospitality Mary Jane Macy (626) 355-7678
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 Magpie Bird Study Group Madeline West (626) 574-0429
 Sid Heyman (626) 571-5991
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 Education (open)

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The Bird Clock

Editor's note: John's Corner yields, this issue only, to this earlier fire story first published in 1998 in Pawprints, the newsletter of the Eaton Canyon Nature Center. It's a reminder that after loss comes renewal.

I remember, still quite clearly, a cool morning on or about October 29, 1993. Eaton Canyon was quiet. I was walking all alone in the Park, because it was closed for the first time in many years. The most common color around me was black . . . ashes. Tiny plumes of white smoke still rose from smoldering debris. The characteristic smell of a brushfire filled the air. The big fire had passed through Eaton

Canyon just two days before and was still burning a couple of miles to the east. The quiet was broken occasionally as water-drop planes still headed over to extinguish the last flames.

As I walked, I tried to find signs of positive in the aftermath of fire; even a fire that destroyed the building in which I had worked for over a decade. Out of the quiet, a small movement off to my left revealed an adult male Oregon Junco probing through the ashes on the ground, searching for unburned seed. Hope welled up inside me, and I'm sure a smile came to my face. The bird seemed oblivious to the destruction; what choice did it have? The

junco, the first I'd seen for the season, was back right on schedule for its winter visit. While all was not well in my world, some things carried on, like clockwork, and I felt some weight lift from my shoulders. The junco was back doing junco things and I could get on with my work. I still had to believe that this junco, soaring southbound high over the San Gabriel Mountains and dropping down into the Pasadena foothills, had a thought like "what the heck?...", and just maybe a follow-up thought like "crazy humans!"

The bird clock brings migrants back to us on a natural schedule, driven

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New Members

PAS is pleased to welcome the following new members. We hope you will get involved in our many activities.

ALHAMBRA: Tim Bruck; Paul Yeo;
ALTADENA: Hugh Bowles; Suzette

Kendericks; Terri Mathis; Elizabeth Thomas; **ARCADIA:** Clarice Benson; Katarina Butenschoen; Sue Hargrave; Martin Huld; Cathy Krings; **DUARTE:** Rae Hamasaki; Anthony Ortega; **LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE:** Mary Cumming; Wendy Nicoli; Nancy Reitherman; Diane Seidel; Joanne Weigel; **MONROVIA:** Marni Anderson;

David Comings; **MONTEREY PARK:** Theodore Oye; **MONTROSE:** Christine Hastings; **PASADENA:** Matt Akuginow; Shirley Burt; Miriam Collup; Sharon Cutler; Mary Froede; Cynthia Hall; Richard Henry; Keith Lots; Theresa Mazich; Lisa Miklush; Paul Plesson; Marcella Pope; Laura Scott Sellers;
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