



Drawing by
Guy Coheleach

THE WRENTIT

Founded 1904

Pasadena Audubon Society
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

Volume 54 – No. 5

*To bring the excitement of birds to our community through birding, education
and the conservation of bird habitats.*

November-December 2006

November Program

Urban Tropicana: The Parrots of Southern California

November 15, 2006
Larry Allen

When you think of parrots, do you envision steaming tropical jungles? A pirate with a macaw on his shoulder? Well, how about Southern California suburbia? In fact, the Southland is home to more than a dozen naturalized species of parrots and parakeets. Larry will discuss origins of the local flocks, the biological factors that help them succeed here, and the identification of our locally breeding species. A handout will supplement the lecture. There will be a Parrot-viewing Field Trip on the Saturday following this presentation.

Larry Allen is Project Coordinator for the Los Angeles County Breeding Bird Atlas and a member of the California Parrot Project. He conducts annual gull workshops for the Los Angeles Audubon Society and the Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival. His research interests include gulls, psittacids, and desert birds.

General Meetings held at:

Eaton Canyon Nature Center
1750 N. Altadena Drive, Pasadena
7:00 pm Social
7:30 pm Program

President's Perch

As I write this, it's early October and the Amigrating birds are coming through our neighborhood. I especially like to see the colorful warblers. There are ten warbler species we normally see! You can check on which migrants are in the area by dialing (323) 874-1318 and listening to Jon Fisher's recording of current bird sightings.

I want to welcome Janet Scheel as our new Webmistress starting October 1st. Janet will be taking over from Jane Strong,

December Program

CHRISTMAS COUNT DINNER

When:
6:00 pm
Saturday, December 16, 2006

Where:
Matt Denny's Restaurant & Pub
145 E. Huntington Drive
Arcadia, CA
(626) 446-1077

Parking:
Ample parking in rear off
Wheeler Street

*Details and Reservations
See Page 4*

Teaser from Panama

Mark Scheel saw 17 life birds without leaving the hotel. The next day he picked up another 54 life birds, and watched 15,000 Broad-winged Hawks fly over within a half an hour. Mark sends this photo of a Chestnut-mandibled Toucan. [Note: A full report of the Panama trip will be in the January Wrentit.]



who has faithfully maintained our website for a number of years. Our sincere thanks to Jane for the creative design work put into the PAS website to make it a communication and information center. Please visit our website at WWW.PASADENAAUDUBON.ORG.

Will

January Program

The Arroyo: Past, Present and Future

January 17, 2007
Jeff Chapman

The Arroyo Seco has drawn wildlife and people to the region for thousands of years. It is a canyon, a watershed, an urban natural refuge, a water source, and home to thousands of people. How can these competing uses be reconciled?

Jeff will talk about the natural and social history of the Arroyo, what is happening to improve it, and the forces that are shaping its future. He will also highlight ways we can participate in protecting, restoring, and conserving the Arroyo. The Arroyo Seco Foundation balances the conflicting needs of nature and people in the Arroyo.

Jeff Chapman has been working with ASF for two years as watershed coordinator, focusing on water quality, water conservation, and bringing together organizations interested in improving the Arroyo. Previously, he worked for the Audubon Center at Debs Park and the Catalina Island Conservancy.

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Conservation

Proposition 84

The Clean Water, Parks and Coastal Protection Act

Audubon California urges all Audubon members to vote yes on Proposition 84 on November 7. California is facing enormous population growth in the coming years, with 25 million new residents expected by 2040. But our investment in infrastructure is not keeping pace with our population growth. Current funding for natural resources and environmental protection programs is critically low. In fact, funding for resources makes up less than 1% of the overall state budget.

Proposition 84 makes the investments needed to ensure that all Californians will have:

- Access to safe drinking water
- Better protection from floods
- Opportunities to enjoy parks, natural landscapes and our rivers, lakes, beaches, bays and coastline.

A broad coalition of interests – water districts, conservation and environmental groups, local government entities, business organizations, museum and park interests, elected officials, and civic groups – has formed to support Proposition 84. At the very least, Audubon California urges you to read the proposition very carefully before voting on this critical issue.

Prop 90

The Taxpayer Trap

This November, Californians will vote on one of the worst environmental measures in state history — one that threatens protections for our wildlife, coastline, open space, farmland, and other natural resources. Proposition 90 is a “takings” initiative. Backed by out-of-state property rights extremists, it’s really a hidden “taxpayer trap.” Under Prop. 90, developers and corporations could demand huge payouts from local taxpayers. All they have to do is claim that a law has harmed the value of their property or business — no matter how important the law or how far-fetched the claim. In fact, this “trap” could prevent the state from protecting our most imperiled animals, such as sea otters and condors.

Audubon California has made defeating Prop. 90 a priority and we are hoping you will do the same. Prop. 90 is an extreme measure that will cost taxpayers billions of dollars, hurt our ability to protect the environment and our communities and result in thousands of frivolous lawsuits.

Prop. 90 is one of the most far-reaching measures on our ballot in decades. It is opposed by diverse groups

representing conservationists, farmers, teachers, taxpayers, businesses, labor organizations, seniors, public safety officials, homeowners and many others.

We know that the more voters learn about Prop. 90, the more they are inclined to reject it. Please take a few minutes to learn more about Prop. 90 and the serious threat it poses to our environment.

Victory for Lake Teshekpuk

Some of you will remember that at our September meeting, you signed a postcard asking the Department of the Interior to protect wilderness in Alaska from being leased for oil development. Good news! According to Jeannette J. Lee of The Associated Press, federal judge James K. Singleton has halted the sale of this land. This land on the North Slope is a haven for migratory birds and calving caribou, and a 600,000-acre section of the reserve at Teshekpuk Lake contains some of the most important wetlands in the Arctic.

In his decision, Singleton wrote that Government environmental studies were too narrow in scope because they did not consider how leasing in the northeastern part of the reserve would affect land and wildlife in the northwestern section of the 23-million acre National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska.

The ruling expressly forbids the government from selling leases to tracts on the northeast section of the reserve. But the government is consulting with its lawyers to see whether the decision leaves room for sales in the northwest section, according to Danielle Allen, a bureau spokeswoman.

The government plans to redo its environmental impact studies and attempt the sale again, a process that could take more than a year, Allen said. If and when that happens, we will be ready with our postcards once again! Thank you for your efforts.

Fall Planting Time!

Now that the days are getting shorter and cooler, it is time to think about planting in Southern California. If you want to attract birds into your garden, but don't like the mess and expense of putting seed out, then you are in luck! Do yourself and the birds a favor and try planting some native plants. I learned how well this worked when I set aside a corner of my garden just for native plants, like currants, sage and Monkey Flower. One day, I noticed that in the non-native section of my garden, I saw plenty of the regulars like House Finches and House Sparrows, but in the native section of my garden, I saw Dark-eyed Juncos, a House Wren, many hummingbirds and White-crowned Sparrows.

Guess what I decided to do then? You got it; whenever a plant dies or isn't pulling its weight, I replace it with a native.

To attract seed-eaters like doves, goldfinches or juncos, try penstemon, Hooker's Evening Primrose, yarrow or salvia, which also attracts hummingbirds when it flowers. For fruit eaters like Robins, Northern Mockingbirds or Cedar Waxwings, plant currants, coffeeberry or manzanita bushes. Besides salvia, penstemon and monkey flower, hummingbirds love coral bells and many native succulents like Dudleya.

The good news is that it keeps getting easier to find and care for native plants. Of course, Theodore Payne in Sun Valley has the very best selection, but Burkard's and even Armstrong's carry some natives. If you are like most birders and you love books, then you should know that several books exist to help you with your native plants. Try *California Native Plants for the Garden* by Carol Bornstein, Daniel Fross and Bart O'Brien, or *Growing California Native Plants* by Marjorie Schmidt. Or if you're like me and you need a LOT of help, get your hands on the recently published *Care and Maintenance of Southern California Native Plant Gardens* by Bart O'Brien, Betsy Landis and Ellen Mackey. This new book gives comprehensive instructions for planting and caring for natives. And, of course, if you want to learn even more, you can always join the California Native Plant Society!

For more information, check out [HTTP://WWW.THEODOREPAYNE.ORG](http://www.theodorepayne.org). Happy planting!

Pairing Up: Goldfinch and Hooker's Evening Primrose

I like to tell people that don't know any better that I've worked months and months to train my birds to hang upside down like that.

Goldfinches are quite conspicuous. You often see several pairs of these very sociable birds together at the same time. Known for their exuberance both in flight and song, Goldfinches fly with a characteristic indirect, undulating wave motion in a wide open flock, twittering as they go.

Goldfinches are interesting to observe while they eat. In contrast to other seed-eaters like sparrows, finches consume seeds that are still attached to plants. They have great balance and can perch on any stem while twisting their bodies to get to seeds or fruit. The stalks fall over from the collective weight of all of these seed-eaters. Lesser Goldfinches feed eagerly on the seeds of weedy composites and other plants, like evening primrose, that prolifer-

(see *Pairing Up*, page 4)



PASADENA AUDUBON SOCIETY

Founded April 1904

1750 N. Altadena Drive
Pasadena, CA 91107
WWW.PASADENAAUDUBON.ORG

November 2006

Dear Supporters of the Pasadena Audubon Society,

It's time to start thinking about your end-of-the-year tax-deductible contributions, so before you finish writing your checks, please consider what the Pasadena Audubon Society offers you. Unlike many other organizations, you can see your contribution in action. The past year-and-a-half has seen these PAS-sponsored programs and activities:

- We present eight nature-oriented programs a year, free to the community. Subjects have included conservation, bird identification and behavior, and adventure.
- We offer over 35 field trips a year to local and more distant locations, led by knowledgeable and enthusiastic birder/naturalists.
- We publish our newsletter five times a year. The *Wren* is jam-packed with information on conservation, activities, education and, yes, birding.
- We maintain an active website (WWW.PASADENAAUDUBON.ORG) and listserv (groups.yahoo.com/group/PasadenaAudubon).
- We initiated the *Pasadena Birdfest* in Fall 2005 and *Birding: Basics & Beyond* in Fall 2006. These two-day events offered a variety of classes and field trips for beginning, intermediate and advanced birders in our community.
- We have established ties with the Debs Park Audubon Center, and will continue to actively support some of their educational programs for children and youth.
- We are involved in conservation issues such as Hahamongna Watershed Park and the Salton Sea.
- We published the *Birding Guide to the Greater Pasadena Area* in Fall 2005.
- We sponsored a birding trip to Panama's Canopy Tower in Fall 2006.
- We are in the final stages of completing the Cobb Estate project: the improvement of a nature trail and placement of interpretive signs in this area administered by the Angeles National Forest above Altadena.

Please consider how the Pasadena Audubon Society helps to enrich your life and improve your community. Most of the funding for our activities comes from you, our members and friends.

Please send your tax-deductible contribution to:
Pasadena Audubon Society
1750 N. Altadena Drive
Pasadena, CA 91107

Thank you for your support.

Will Fulmer, President
Pasadena Audubon Society

Pasadena-San Gabriel Valley Christmas Count 2006

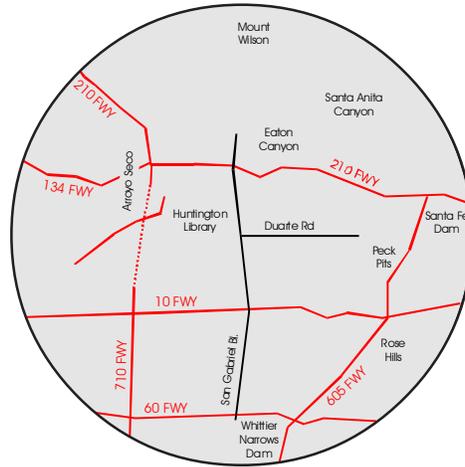
As always, the year has gone by much too fast and we're right on top of the next Christmas Bird Count. This annual event has been running for sixty years and is a cornerstone of Pasadena Audubon as well as an important and long-running count in Los Angeles County. The Count creates a snapshot of the winter bird life of the San Gabriel Valley area each year.

We have a great variety of habitats within the count circle. Lakes, streams, marshes, montane woodland, oak woodland, chaparral, riparian, coastal sage and exotic plantings all occur. In combination with Southern California's mild climate, these habitats create a strong diversity of bird life.

Our count circle is fifteen miles in diameter, as are all CBCs'. The center of the circle is located at the intersection of San Gabriel Boulevard and Duarte Road. The area it encompasses includes such interesting and productive birding spots as Santa Fe Dam, Big Santa Anita Canyon, Whittier Narrows, Peck Pit, Eaton Canyon, the Huntington Gardens and the L.A. County Arboretum. The circle also just reaches Mount Wilson, offering the possibility of high mountain birds such as Clark's Nutcracker and Williamson's Sapsucker, both very rare on the count.

The Pasadena/San Gabriel Valley count traces its origins to the mid-1940's and it's only too obvious that tremendous changes have taken place since then. Wetland and open habitats in particular have been greatly diminished. Still, we

find close to 150 species each year. In fact, that's far more than were found on the early counts when much more natural habitat existed. In part this is because the evolution of the count has paralleled our



increasing knowledge of birds and birding over these past six decades. Our improved ability to identify birds has dramatically grown and has made the count both more accurate and more productive in terms of number of species.

New and rare birds are still added to the count list on a regular basis. Last year the count's first Fulvous Whistling-Duck was discovered on the San Gabriel River and our first Painted Redstart was in Monrovia Canyon. What unexpected birds will be found this year? I think that not knowing what will turn up is half the fun.

Whatever your birding level, be sure to join us for this event and be a part of the process of learning and discovery. It's a great chance to learn about local birds and it's also worthwhile because it contributes to our knowledge of bird distribution and population trends.

This year's Pasadena/San Gabriel Valley Christmas Count will take place on Saturday, December 16th. A brief pre-count meeting will be held at the Eaton Canyon Nature Center on Wednesday, December 13th 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, don't worry—it's just as easy to sign up for an area to count via e-mail or phone. A fee of \$5.00 for compiling and distributing count results is payable to the coordinator, Jon Fisher.

As usual, we will hold a post-count dinner and wrap-up at 6:00 pm on count night. This year we'll again meet at Matt Denny's restaurant in Arcadia.

For additional information, please contact count coordinator Jon Fisher at 818-800-2776 or at JONF60@HOTMAIL.COM
Jon Fisher

Dinner After The Count Good Food, Rest, Relaxation

Join us at Matt Denny's in Arcadia. We have four great meals to offer you. Please indicate your choice(s) clip out and return with your check.

Name:	_____
Preference	# Meals
BBQ'd Tri-Tip Sandwich	_____
BBQ'd Chicken Sandwich	_____
Grilled Vegetable Sandwich	_____
<i>Served on a roll with your choice of fresh fruit or French fries</i>	
Tostada Salad	_____
(vegetarian or chicken)	
Soft drink or coffee included in all meals	
\$15.00/person (including tax & tip.)	

To expedite food service and simplify bookkeeping, payment in advance is appreciated. See Will Fulmer at the November General Meeting, the Pre-count Meeting December 14 or mail your reservation to arrive by December 16 to PAS' address on page 8. Mark envelope "Count Dinner" and include above information.

Free parking available behind the restaurant off Wheeler Street.

If you have questions or need directions, contact Bev McKenzie (626) 355-9842 or LBMAC2@EARTHLINK.NET.

Pairing Up (continued)

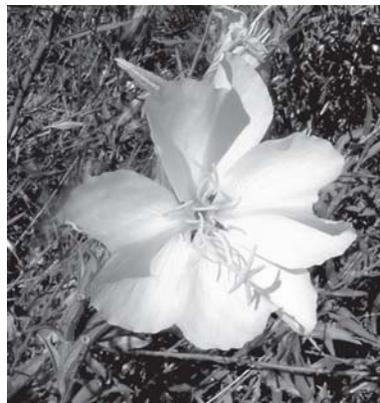
ate in disturbed soil such as road edges.



Hooker's evening primrose, *Oenothera helata ssp. hookeri*, likes wet places and clay soils. It begins growth in the springtime as a flat rosette of large wavy-edged leaves. Next the flower stalk pushes up, sometimes reaching six feet tall. The flowers are produced along the stalks, on side branches and in a terminal spike. The flowers are four-petaled, yellow, large and delicately fragrant. They usually open late

afternoon or early evening, hence the name of evening primrose. The uppermost flowers appear in June. The stalks continually increase in height, producing a constant succession of flowers till late autumn. The tiny seeds ripen from August to October, in pods that are sized just right for Goldfinch beaks.

Jane Strong



Field Trips

Hahamongna Monthly Walk

Saturday, November 4, 2006

Saturday, January 6, 2007

8:00 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 northbound 210 Freeway at Berkshire and make a right, then a left at the light. The park entrance is on the right at the next stop light. Take the first left after entering Hahamongna Watershed Park and park by the ballfield.

Ron Cyger

Eaton Canyon Monthly Walk

Sunday, November 19, 2006

Sunday, December 17, 2006

Sunday, January 21, 2007

8:00 am – noon

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

Huntington Library

Birdwalks (PAS Members only)

Sunday, November 26, 2006

Sunday, December 24, 2006

Sunday, January 28, 2007

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. We have enjoyed the family of Great Horned Owls in the non-public area we are allowed to visit. We thank our member and Huntington curator, Dan Lewis, for making these trips possible. As his schedule allows, Dan will join Elaine MacPherson as co-leader. If you are lucky enough to be on those trips, you can expect some interesting Huntington lore along with the birding and the botany.

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

Elaine MacPherson & Dan Lewis

North Slope of the San Gabriel Mountains

Saturday, Nov 11, 2006

7:30 am – 2:00 pm

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 longspurs in the Antelope Valley.

It may be cold and windy, especially at higher elevations, so bring warm clothes. We will meet at the Park & Ride on Avenue S in Palmdale, just east of the 14 freeway.

Mark Scheel

Parrot-viewing Field Trip

Saturday, November 18, 2006

2:00 pm to dusk (around 5:00 pm).

We will be searching for up to ten species of naturalized parrots and parakeets in the San Gabriel Valley. Travel to the 110 (Pasadena) Freeway and exit at Orange Grove Blvd. Turn south, and park on the west side of this residential street just beyond the offramp.

Larry Allen

Legg Lake, Peck Pit, et al

Saturday, December 2, 2006

Saturday, February 3, 2007

7:30 am – 1:00 pm

This trip will cover several consistently good lake and river 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. We'll then make a quick stop at the San Gabriel River just below Peck Rd. This is where a Fulvous Whistling-Duck showed up this past winter (on Christmas Count day!). Peck Road Park contains a huge lake that often hosts a wide variety of water birds, including grebes, ducks, gulls, terns, egrets, and shorebirds. The Livingstone-Graham Reservoir 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.

The parking lot at Legg Lake is accessed from Durfee Avenue between Rosemead Boulevard and Santa Anita Avenue. The 60 Freeway exits for Rosemead, Santa Anita, and Peck Rd. all lead south to Durfee.

Ed Stonick

Bolsa Chica

Saturday, January 13, 2007

8:00 am – noon

Bolsa Chica Reserve is a coastal estuary that has great birding any time of year! In winter the reserve is filled with waterfowl, herons, and shorebirds. This area has recently undergone a large habitat restoration project and expansion, and new trails have opened up.

Bolsa Chica Reserve is located in Orange County, on the Pacific Coast Highway (Highway 1) between Warner Ave. and Seapoint Ave. Exit the 405 freeway south on Golden West. Take Golden West south all the way to the ocean, and turn right (northwest) on Highway 1, Pacific Coast Highway. Continue past Seapoint Ave, and there will be a traffic light at an entrance to beach parking. Just after the traffic light, turn right (away from the beach) into a small (free) parking lot.

Mark Scheel

Carrizo Plain

Sat-Sun, January 27-28, 2007

8:00 am Saturday – noon Sunday

In this huge and unique basin we can look forward to possible Sandhill Cranes, Mountain Plover, Mountain Bluebird, lots of raptors (including Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks) and definite close-up looks at the San Andreas Fault.

We'll probably meet Saturday morning in Taft, and hope to spend Saturday night on the Plain, but the details are yet to be worked out. Save the date and check the January *Wrentit* for final details.

Leader: TBA

Organizer: Judy Bass

(626) 798-7442 before 9:00pm

email (preferred) judybass@earthlink.net

Salton Sea

Sat-Sun, TBD Early Spring

All day Saturday and until Noon on Sunday

[Note: This trip has been delayed by the Carrizo Plain trip. It will be rescheduled for early spring]

The trip has been a traditional way for PAS members to begin their year list! We usually find over 100 species for the weekend and over the years we have seen the following numbers of species: 27 geese & ducks, 13 hawks, 15 waders, 8 gulls, 6 terns, 11 flycatchers, 10 warblers, and 16 sparrows. This is one of the premier birding spots on the continent! We will bird all day Saturday and half a day on Sunday, heading home after lunch.

This trip is only for Pasadena Audubon members and is limited to 12.

Ron Cyger

Calendar

Submit material for the next Wrentit by December 1st

November 2006

Date	Day	Time	Event	Location	Leader*
4	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	Hahamongna Watershed Park	Ron Cyger
8	Wed	7:30 pm	Board Meeting	Pasadena Presbyterian Church	585 E. Colorado (at Madison)
11	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	North Slope of the San Gabriels	Mark Scheel
15	Wed	7:00 pm	General Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Program: Urban Parrots
18	Sat	2:00 pm	Field Trip	Parrot Viewing: South Pasadena	Larry Allen
19	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
21	Tue	9:00 am	Magpie Group	Whittier Narrows Nature Center	Sid Heyman & Madeline West
26	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Huntington Library Gardens	Elaine MacPherson & Dan Lewis

(PAS Members Only)

December 2006

2	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Legg Lake/Peck Pit	Ed Stonick
13	Wed	7:00 pm	Bird Count Pre-meet	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Jon Fisher
16	Sat	All Day	Christmas Bird Count	Count Area	Everyone
		6:00 pm	Count Dinner	Matt Denny's Restaurant 145 E. Huntington Dr., Arcadia (626) 446-1077	Bev McKenzie (626) 355-9842
17	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
24	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Huntington Library Gardens	Elaine MacPherson & Dan Lewis

(PAS Members Only)

January 2007

6	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	Hahamongna Watershed Park	Ron Cyger
10	Wed	7:30 pm	Board Meeting	Pasadena Presbyterian Church	585 E. Colorado (at Madison)
13	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	Bolsa Chica	Mark Scheel
17	Wed	7:00 pm	General Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Program: The Arroyo: Past, Present and Future
21	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
24	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Huntington Library Gardens	Elaine MacPherson & Dan Lewis
27-28	S-S	7:30 am	Field Trip	Carrizo Plain	TBA

(PAS Members Only)

February 2007

3	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	Legg Lake/Peck Pit	Ed Stonick
11	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	San Jacinto Wildlife Area	Lance Benner
14	Wed	7:30 pm	Board Meeting	Pasadena Presbyterian Church	585 E. Colorado (at Madison)
18	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
21	Wed	7:00 pm	General Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Program: TBA
24	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	Santa Fe Dam	Mickey Long
25	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Huntington Library Gardens	Elaine MacPherson & Dan Lewis

(PAS Members Only)

***Trip Leader Information**

Mark Scheel (Chair)	(818) 366-7343	scheel@tapir.caltech.edu
Larry Allen	(626) 288-2701	larryallen@earlymusicla.org
Lance Benner	(626) 791-1187	lbenner@charter.net
Ron Cyger	(626) 449-3625 (before 9 pm)	ron@cyger.org (preferred)
Jon Feenstra	(626) 792-4346	feenstra@its.caltech.edu
Nick & Mary Freeman	(818) 247-6172	mnfreeman@earthlink.net
Sid Heyman	(626) 571-5991	
Dan Lewis	(626) 398-4805	danolewis@earthlink.net
Mickey Long	(626) 398-5442	mlongbird@charter.net
Elaine MacPherson	(626) 355-9412	birdergrrl@aol.com
Hill Penfold	(818) 352-4954	hpenfold@bigfoot.com
Ed Stonick	(626) 796-0595	edstonick@earthlink.net
Madeline West	(626) 574-0429	west226@adelphia.net

Field Trip Reports

Hahamongna

Sept. 2, 2006

For those who missed the first Hahamongna walk of the season, you missed a lot. Here are highlights only – we had a total of 47 species.

Nashville, Yellow, Wilson's, and Orange-crowned Warblers; Mountain Chickadees; White-breasted Nuthatches; Western Bluebirds; Green Heron (popped up near the dam, after the walk there were Black-crowned Night Herons, Great-Blue Heron and even a Spotted Sandpiper!); Western Tanager; and Hooded Oriole.

We also had great views of Nutmeg Manikins for you NNA's (Non-native Aficionados) and four species of butterflies.

Ron Cyger

Galileo Hills

September 16, 2006

Although sparsely attended, the September 16th field trip to Galileo Hills, beyond Mojave, came through as advertised. Western migrants including warblers, vireos, sparrows and flycatchers were present in good numbers, allowing us to review some of our usual fall identification quandaries; eastern vagrants were on everyone's minds. Our first encounter with the unusual was a colorful little sparrow that, on close scrutiny, met all the criteria for a Pink-sided Junco. We all got good scope views. A little later, we ran off to chase a reliable FRS radio report of a Least Flycatcher by the lake, but no one refound this elusive Empid all day. Just as we threw in the towel on this bird, a call came over of a Mourning Warbler up above the petting zoo! We got there in time for a quick glimpse, before the bird led us on an hour-long chase, after which it was actually very cooperative, but extremely active. As luck would have it, the bird was likely a first-year female; much like a young MacGillivray's Warbler, but with a more slender, slightly broken eye ring, and a slightly hooded look with a yellow wash down the middle

of the throat. After lunch, we poked around a bit more, locating a bright Vermilion Flycatcher that has summered there, and convincing ourselves of some young Lazuli Buntings both at Galileo Hills and California City Park.

Nick Freeman

Shorebird ID

September 23, 2006

Following the PAS monthly meeting which focused on the identification of shorebirds, all attendees were encouraged to be there for the Saturday field trip to the lower Los Angeles River. There we would put into practice some of the tips and ID techniques presented during the meeting and just have fun watching shorebirds. The dozen or so birders who took to the field on this pleasant fall morning were rewarded beyond all expectations.

For nearly two hours, we patiently scoped through the flocks of dowitchers (mostly Long-billed, with a few Short-billed), Western and Least Sandpipers, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plovers and many others.

As the group strung out along the edge of the riverbank while working our way upriver, Mickey Long and Larry Schmahl (who was coincidentally attending a Whittier Audubon trip at the same location) spotted an unusual looking shorebird that flew up onto the 'pipe bridge' just north of Willow Street. It immediately flew off, but Mickey and Larry quickly alerted us to what they were certain was an Upland Sandpiper.

We quickly refound the bird, and as we stood there in shock and awe, we watched Los Angeles County's very first Upland Sandpiper casually stroll along the top of the opposite bank of the river. This is a great place to find many shorebirds, but an unexpected location for an Upland, which as its name suggests favors drier habitats.

Needless to say, this was the highlight of the trip, indeed of any field trip I've ever been on. For most, this was a life bird as well as a first county record. The Upland Sandpiper was refound and photographed by a few other observers through Sunday, September 24th.

Two other hoped-for species, Pectoral and Baird's Sandpipers, were also observed during the morning. When learning the shorebirds there's no substitute for field experience, and while on the river we got to examine hundreds of shorebirds of a variety of species, with the bonus of a super rarity. As a side note, get down there and enjoy this habitat while it's still attractive to the birds. Once we get significant rain, they will move elsewhere.

Jon Fisher and Mickey Long

Birding On Our Summer Vacation

The nice thing about birding is that no matter where you go, you'll see birds. Will and I enjoy traveling, and our binoculars always go with us. This summer our trips included Turkey and Greece, the eastern Sierras and Yosemite, and a whirlwind tour of Bryce, Zion and the north rim of the Grand Canyon, where we spotted a few new birds and several birds that we don't get to see that often.

At Ephesus we saw a nesting White Stork and a Syrian Woodpecker. We watched Cory's and Levantine Shearwaters swoop over the Aegean Sea. We were introduced to Pete the Pelican (Great White Pelican) on Mykonos. Blue Rock Thrush and Rock Nuthatch flew around the ruins at Mycenae.

Fifty Pinyon Jays flocked at Toll House Springs near Big Pine. A Bald Eagle watched over June Lake. Thousands of Red-necked Phalaropes and a few Wilson's were spinning in the waters of Mono Lake. In Yosemite Red Crossbills flocked at Soda Springs in Tuolumne Meadows and several MacGillivray's Warblers were at Happy Isles.

We sighted a Northern Goshawk at the Grand Canyon, and many wild turkeys in the nearby grasslands. We had our first look at the gray-headed race of Dark-eyed Juncos at both Bryce and the Grand Canyon, and our first Broad-tailed Hummingbird at the Grand Canyon and Zion.

It was a pretty good summer, bird-wise.

Lois & Will Fulmer

Wrentit Editor Overreacts to Shortage of Material

Oct. 10, 2006

Mark Hunter, editor of the *Wrentit*, concerned that he didn't have enough articles for the fast-approaching November issue, decided to take matters into his own hands. Glancing out his office window, he observed and photographed a Ruddy Ground-Dove (adult male), a bird which has been seen rarely in Califor-

nia and never before in Los Angeles County. The bird has now been seen by other experienced birders and has been submitted to the CBRC as the first county record.

When asked about his motivation for this over-the-top sighting, Hunter responded that he was still a little miffed about missing that Shorebird ID trip where they spotted the Upland Sandpiper.



Ruddy Ground-Dove

A Weekend For the Birds...and the Birders

More than 40 birders participated in the fall 2006 birding event, "Birding: The Basics and Beyond", on Saturday, September 30th and Sunday, October 1st. The event was co-sponsored by the Pasadena Audubon Society, the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation and the Eaton Canyon Nature Center.

More than half the people who registered for the workshops identified themselves as novice birders and attended the Basics of Birding workshop. Participants got a jumpstart on bird identification, field guides, optical equipment, bird habits, habitat, status and distribution. The workshop was presented by two of our

capable members, Ron Cyger (program chair) and Mark Scheel (field trip chair). More advanced birders had the opportunity to hone their ID skills for those



difficult tricky species. Expert birders Jon Fisher and Mickey Long were on hand to shed some light on many of those difficult, and often frustrating, identification

encounters.

More than twenty participants now have a lot more knowledge about bird behavior, thanks to the afternoon workshop. Judy Bass found the perfect combination of teaching everything there is to know about bird behavior, including territory, courting, mating, food sources and migration, and weaving in humor. Speaking of humor, participants enjoyed a lunch on the patio with entertainment provided by PAS members with a "birding fashion show". A fun raffle topped off the day.

Bird walks were held on Sunday, October 1 at Eaton Canyon Nature Center, Legg Lakes and Whittier Narrows Recreation Area. As a result of this outreach event, we now have six new members of PAS who are looking forward to more fun and excitement through birding.

Susan Gilliland

They're Back!

(Winter Edition)

As I write this in late September, a Lincoln's Sparrow kicks around in the leaf litter below my office window. It's the first one I've seen this fall. I've only ever seen one here, and I'm suspicious that this is exactly the same bird that spent the winter here last year. I've had a White-throated Sparrow wintering at the other end of my yard for several years now. Two years ago it brought a younger one with it, and last year only the younger one returned. By the time this article sees print I'll know if a WTSP is spending another winter with me.

We know that birds migrate and from general areas. But how often do birds migrate to pinpoint locations like a specific yard, year after year? Are your birds really your birds? Short of banding yard birds and recapturing them a year later, it's hard to be certain. But White-throated Sparrows are in pretty short supply in Los Angeles County, so I suspect that my bird is the same bird each year.

Fortunately, there's some better science in existence to back up this suspicion. The Huntsman Marine Science Center in New Brunswick has been banding birds since 1989. Black-and-white Warblers are among their most common captures, and one of those first

caught in 1991 was caught again in 1992, 1994, 1995, and 1998. Pretty pinpoint navigation, indeed, for a bird that winters in the Caribbean. Eight years is their record for individuals being recaptured. Canadian songbirds lead short, intense lives.

Some recaptures are more exciting than others. From Israel in 2004, birders reported "At Tel Saharon, for the third year in succession a Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) returned to its territory. As in previous years, it was caught in the net with another member of the same species, probably while defending its territory."

Purple Martins are particularly noted for "site fidelity", the tendency to return to exactly the same nest site each year. So are Purple Finches. But all of this discussion is related to summer behavior—what about site fidelity in the winter? A banding program at Hilton Pond in York, South Carolina ran from 1982 to 1990 and saw 26 Purple Finches banded during winter of those years returning in the winter of 1989-1990, including 15 birds over 5 years old. However, this is out of about 2000 birds banded. Other species do better. Researchers studying Swamp Sparrows in central Florida banded two of them in December 2000 and recaptured both, one year later to the day, within 10 meters of the original capture location. German

researchers also found some winter site fidelity in Goldeneye males. European researchers running a large banding operation in Gambia in the winter found that most of the species they captured exhibited winter site fidelity, defined in this case as recapture within 100 meters in a subsequent winter.

Somewhat closer to home, intern work at the Big Sur Ornithological Laboratory showed that Hermit Thrushes often return to the same sites each winter. Sanderlings also show strong winter site fidelity in California. And much closer to home, the Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon chapter reported winter site fidelity in a Lesser Yellowlegs in the Dominguez Channel every year from 1990 through 1998. So perhaps it has become more justifiable, from a scientific viewpoint, to give pet names to your yard birds. Just don't start dressing them up in cute little outfits.

By the way, if you've never attended a bird banding session, there's a very good illustrated description of it in the September 18th entry of a web log at WWW.BOOTSTRAP-ANALYSIS.COM/FIELD_WORK, by an academic author who chooses to remain anonymous. Pretty interesting!

[Editor's Note: At 8:45 am on October 11th, the White-throated Sparrow returned.]

Mark Hunter

Hospitality Chair Needed!

You could be the new Hospitality Chair for Pasadena Audubon — maybe you and a friend! There's been some job shifting over the summer, and our previous Hospitality person, Laura Garrett, is now our Conservation Chair.

We now need a person or persons to set up refreshments for our general meetings. It's not hard, but you do need to be able to get to Eaton Canyon by about 6:30 pm on third Wednesdays (September through May, except December). PAS pays for coffee and tea, and volunteers sign up to bring cookies and such.

The Hospitality Chair also makes arrangements for our Christmas Count and End-of-Year Dinners.

Does this sound like a job you could take on? Laura will be happy to provide training, supplies and help.

If you're interested, please contact either Will or Laura:

Will Fulmer at 626-798-1606 or

WILLO2001@EARTHLINK.NET

Laura Garrett at 626-564-1890 or

PURPLECOW@JPS.NET

Holiday Gifts (or Treat Yourself!)

The holidays are coming, and we have just the thing for your birding buddies and/or significant others. T-shirts, sweatshirts and hats with the PAS Wrentit logo are on sale at our general meetings on the third Wednesday of the month.

Adult tees come in light tan, dark tan or pale green; sweatshirts are pale green. Youth tees and sweatshirts are gray. The T-shirts are \$15, and the sweatshirts are \$25.

Our hats come in two styles — the ever-popular adjustable billed caps, as well as several sizes of "bucket" style hats. Both are embroidered with our Wrentit logo on the front and "Pasadena Audubon Society" on the back. The cost is just \$20. We also have colorful Wrentit patches that can be sewn on to any clothing; they are \$5.

Profits from clothing sales help fund our day-to-day expenses.

Magpie Bird Study Group



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

**Tuesday, November 21, 2006
Whittier Narrows**

Meet at the Nature Center

**Tuesday, December 12, 2006
Arboretum in Arcadia**

Meet outside the entrance

**Tuesday, January 16, 2007
San Dimas Canyon**

Meet at the Nature Center

**Tuesday, February 20, 2007
Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area**

Take 210 freeway east to Irwindale Ave. Right (south) on Irwindale and go just over 1 mile to Arrow Highway. Go Right (west) on Arrow Highway about .5 mile to Azusa Canyon Road, turn right. We will meet about a block up on Azusa Canyon Road, before you enter the park.

Sid Heyman
Madeline West

PAS on the WEB

Website

HTTP://WWW.PASADENA AUDUBON.ORG

ListServe

HTTP://GROUPS.YAHOO.COM/GROUP/PASADENA AUDUBON/

Become a Chapter-only Member of PAS

Policy changes by the National Audubon Society have severely reduced the share of NAS membership dues returned to local chapters, funds which Pasadena Audubon has used to finance its programs and services. To make up for the loss of funds from National Audubon, Pasadena Audubon, like many other National Audubon chapters, now 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, including publication of *The Wrentit*.

We thank you all for your support!

Membership Application

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 Address _____
 City _____
 State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone _____
 Email _____

Donor's address for gift membership:

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Yearly Membership for Individual or Family

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* Plus Chapter Pin and Tee Shirt or PAS Birding Guide

[] \$15 Senior/Full-time Student

Donation [] _____

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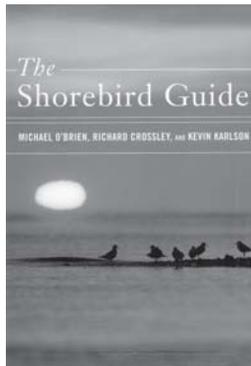
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Kid's Corner

Book Reviews: Shorebirds

Two important North American guides to shorebirds have recently been published: *Shorebirds of North America*, by Dennis Paulson, and *The Shorebird Guide*, by Michael O'Brien, Richard Crossley, and Kevin Karlson. Both are photographic, both are very valuable and useful, yet other than this, they are two very different books.

At 476 pages, *The Shorebird Guide* is a very large book, about the size of *The Sibley Guide to Birds*. That's not exactly what one would want to haul around on a hot sticky day at the L.A. River in late August. Note that it is called *The Shorebird Guide*, and not *The Shorebird Field Guide*. However, it can be helpful at the Salton Sea when

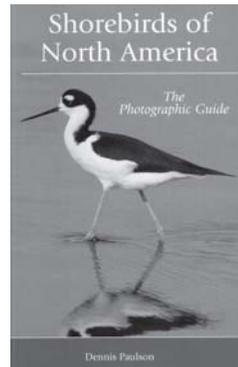


birding from the car. It also serves very well at home when studying before going in the field, and as a reference in the car. It teaches more about GISS (General

Impression of Size and Shape) birding, unlike other field guides, and uses shape and structure for identification clues. A reason this book is not particularly helpful in the field is that the images and the main text are separate, so one would constantly have to be flipping through the pages.

In *Shorebirds of North America*, the text and pictures are all together, making it much easier to use in the field. But when it comes to the amount of information, *The Shorebird Guide* has more.

Being only slightly larger than the *National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America*, *Shorebirds of North America* is certainly more of a 'Field' Guide. One interesting detail about it is that its range includes Mexico and Central America, helpful for those traveling south of the border. Another big plus is that on the front flap is a taxonomic list of all the species covered with page numbers, so you don't have to be constantly flipping to the index.



So which one to get? I bought both, but put together they're over \$55, which might be more than you're willing to spend. If you want one to use in the field, get *Shorebirds of North America*, if you want one with more information, get *The Shorebird Guide*.

John F. Garrett

New Members

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

ALHAMBRA: Ivana Gomez, Donna Ragsdale; **ALTADENA:** Steve Chung, Gladys Cotton, Connie Houser, Helen Parker, Judith Sullivan, John Tuddenham, Maria Claudia Zerda; **ARCADIA:** Diana Loomis, Barbara McDaniel, William

Roberts, Jerry Solis, Lynda White; **AZUSA:** Allison Carver; **GLENDALE:** Gail Nelson; **LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE:** James & Helen Knight, Patricia Michel; **LA CRESCENTA:** Julia Ray; **MONROVIA:** Susan Milliken; **MONTEREY PARK:** Betty Thrasher; **PASADENA:** Alison Abernathy, Joyce Breslin, Ralph Bullington, Brian Cabot, Martha Jane Dowds, Lynn Fairbanks, Allyn Heck, Holly Horton, Philip Ibach, Nadine Ishizu, Hugh Langford, Shirley

Marneus, Cynthia Marugg, Phoebe Ozuna, Eugene & Geraldine Peterson, Robert Senger, Robin Shectman, C. Stevenson, Helen Tuttle, Barbara Uyeda, Merle Welch; **ROSEMead:** Margaret Cuenod; **SAN GABRIEL:** Gary Kinsley, Tom Wang, Linda Wennbo; **SIERRA MADRE:** Mari Glaze, Deanne Larsen, Frances Powell; **SOUTH PASADENA:** John Baum, Angela Koenigsberg, Ellen Paigle, Judith Trout; **TEMPLE CITY:** Jack Roberts

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