

Drawing by  
Guy Coheleach

# THE WRENTIT

Founded 1904

**Pasadena Audubon Society**  
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

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

February - March 2020

## Mourning Dove – The Coo of the Dawn

Have you ever woken up to the sound of owls hooting right outside your window? Maybe you laughed and wondered why they had not gone to sleep yet. Maybe you groaned and rolled over and willed them to call just a little more quietly and give you just a little more time to sleep before starting your day. Maybe you even felt a little sad at how sorrowful the owls sounded, but you were not really hearing an owl at all! Instead, the mournful little “hooting” you heard is likely actually the cooing of a relative of mine... My name is Coo, and this month, PAS’s very own Wrentit has asked me to share with you a little bit about myself and my species, the Mourning Dove!

Mourning Doves are brown, medium-sized Columbidae with black spots on our wings and backs. And contrary to what you might think, on account of our sound and name, we Mourning Doves do not coo out of sadness. Instead, male doves use such vocalizations as part of a courtship ritual that can be readily described as a “bow-coo” or “perch coo.” They stand as tall as they can, puff out their necks, and bow to their intended mates while making their distinctive coo-ooo-oo-oo-oo. We hens then get to decide if their coo is impressive enough to become their mate but, more often than not, we make them work for it a little first. Can’t be too easily won over, we do mate for life after all!

Once the males of our species have succeeded in finding females interested in being their mates, the males then show their hens potential places to begin building their nest together, usually in shrubs or trees with dense foliage to provide coverage. The females get the final say, of course, and once we find a spot we like, our mates then bring us twigs for us to weave into a beautiful nest. Other birds may say that Mourning Dove nests appear “flimsy” or “haphazard” or “evidence mother nature likes Mourning Doves in particular because by all logic they should have gone extinct by now – their nest building skills are that terrible,” but we like our nests just the way they are, thank you very much! They hold our two perfect white eggs, and the helpless pink squabs that emerge from them fourteen days later are ready to earn their spots and confuse the neighbors once more with their hopeful coos!



Juvenile Mourning Doves

© Sam Carter

*Story and photo by Sam Carter*

## President’s Perch

Look up! Seriously, LOOK UP! If you don’t, you might miss a really cool bird. This was driven home to me yet again on the last day of 2019. I was walking to my car when something caught my eye, so I looked up and saw a glorious Swainson’s Hawk, lazily circling northward, and so low that I could easily see the long, slender wings with the distinctive markings on the underside. Stunning! Only a week or so before that, I had seen a flock of American White Pelicans flying overhead. So graceful and lovely! And for both of these sightings, I was not at Bonelli or Santa Fe Dam. I was at home in Pasadena. But I looked up! For me, the lesson is to pay attention if you want to see cool birds, a lesson I am always re-learning.

Look down! Not only do some of my favorite birds like thrashers and quail mostly hang out on the ground, but also it’s a good way to see what’s growing around us. If we want to help birds, we need to plant and protect the plants that help birds. So please wait until the autumn to trim your trees and shrubs. Plant native plants that feed the birds and that feed the insects that feed the birds. An added bonus is that planting native plants is an excellent way to attract birds into your garden. It worked for me! I had at least four species breed in my garden last year (Northern Mockingbird, Bewick’s Wren, Dark-eyed Junco and California Towhee), and I credit the many native plants that are hosts to caterpillars. Looking down grounds us (see what I did there?) and helps us see the big picture for birds.

Look out! Not only does this mean to pay attention when you’re birding along the LA River so that a cyclist doesn’t hit you, it also means to be aware of what’s going on. Paying attention is rule #1 in my book for birding, and it works on many levels. Look out for those tiny movements in the trees. They may signal a warbler! Look out for changes in the seasons as they may indicate migrating birds. And look out for the birds themselves. They face many threats from habitat loss to pesticides, from outdoor cats to glass skyscrapers, from tree-trimming to climate crisis. So, in 2020, find ways that you can look out for birds while you’re looking for birds.

We’re Pasadena Audubon, and we are looking up, down and out for birds!

*Laura Solomon*

## MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETINGS: UPCOMING PROGRAMS

### Birding Alaska

Wednesday, February 19, 2020

7:30 pm - 9:00 pm

**Presenter: Dessi Sieburth**

Join PAS member and 2015 ABA Young Birder of the Year Dessi Sieburth as he recounts his adventures across Alaska in 2015 and 2016, all illustrated by his own photos. From Denali with its Gyrfalcons, Northern Hawk Owls and Willow Ptarmigans we'll head on towards Seward to find seabirds at Resurrection Bay. After that it's on to Homer Spit where rare Rock Sandpipers and a variety of pelagic birds including endangered Kittlitz's Murrelet can be found. Onwards to Saint Paul Island, where an astonishing variety of seabirds reside including nesting Horned and Tufted Puffins, Thick-billed and Common Murres as well as rare Red-legged Kittiwakes. Our adventure ends in Nome, where singing and displaying Bluethroats and Arctic Warblers dazzle and enchant. Come experience an evening of Alaska's amazing birds and landscapes through Dessi's eyes and lens.



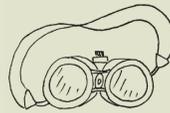
### The Journey of Birds Across Space and Time

Wednesday, March 18, 2020

7:30 pm - 9:00 pm

**Presenter: Dr. Morgan Tingley**

The Carolina Parakeet, the Heath Hen, the Passenger Pigeon—when we contemplate how our country's bird life has changed, we often focus on the handful of species we have lost entirely. But while we have yet to lose a single bird species to our rapidly changing climate, the birds around us have been adapting and changing in a multitude of ways. Join Dr. Tingley on a journey across our nation and through the last century, walking in the footsteps of past zoologists to compare their world to the one we see today, to learn how climate change has already dramatically changed the lives of birds.



### Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons: Restoring Raptors to the Channel Islands.

Wednesday, April 15th, 2020

7:30 pm - 9:00 pm

**Presenter: Annie Little**

Channel Island Bald Eagles were a core constituent of Southern California's Bald Eagle population and these nesting birds were equally an important element of the ecosystem of the islands. By the 1960s, however, the eagles had disappeared due to the combined effects of DDT, egg collection and human persecution. Similarly, Peregrine Falcons suffered the same dramatic declines mid-century and like the eagles were also extirpated within that same time frame.

Come join biologist Annie Little from the NPS to discover how, despite the challenges, these majestic species were eventually brought back to their ancestral homes. This is a story almost forty years in the making and includes innovative programs involving multiple agencies.

*Monthly chapter meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month at Eaton Canyon Nature Center (1750 N. Altadena Drive in Pasadena). Refreshments and socializing begin at 7:00 pm and programs are presented from 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm. Programs for youth begin at 6:45 pm*

## CONSERVATION

### Win Some, Lose Some

On January 8, a female Bald Eagle laid her first egg in a nest adjacent to Big Bear Lake. They start early and endure cold weather! Eggs will hatch a couple of weeks after you read this.

Hawaiian Petrels are critically endangered and their nesting sites on Kauai are closely monitored. Recent camera footage revealed a feral cat entering a burrow and killing and eating a Hawaiian Petrel chick. Feral cats kill hundreds of other seabird chicks on the island, too. Scientists have not yet found an effective means of predator control. Please take this terrible news as a reminder to keep your cats inside.

The current administration's next environmental outrage is to weaken the regulations of the National Environmental Policy Act, which for decades has required thorough environmental review of major projects like pipelines and highways. Such projects will now happen faster and with less oversight.

The nickel and dime recycling fees on beverage containers that you buy are failing, according to a recent article in the Los Angeles Times. Many recycling centers have closed, and many merchants that sell those containers are not offering refunds, leaving you no recourse. Proposed legislation in the Assembly will provide some fundamental reforms to this broken system.

The candidates for Mayor of Pasadena attended a forum on environmental issues at the Central Library on January 14, 2020.

*Mark Hunter, Chair, Conservation Committee*

## A BIRD FROM AFAR

### Our New Neighbors

Last August we moved to Chile for a sabbatical year. For the first six weeks of the trip we traveled the country, from San Pedro de Atacama in the north and to Valdivia in the south, before settling in the lake town of Pucón, located at the base of the continent's most active volcano, Villarica. Now that we live in Pucón, we have become acquainted with three prominent avian noisemakers in the neighborhood.

The first of these is the Chimango Caracara, known in Spanish as El Tiuque. Our reference book for this year, "Birds of Chile" by Álvaro Jaramillo, describes these rather plain-looking raptors as the crows of South America. Like crows, they are opportunistic feeders and are common in a variety of habitats. More than once we've seen dozens together in the same pasture eating worms. Chimango Caracaras are territorial birds and will harass each other with acrobatic dive-bombing to win prized perches. Their call is a typical raptorial descending screech, easily as loud as a Red-shouldered Hawk.

Black-faced Ibises (Badurrias in Spanish) also flourish here. We like to say these birds are real jokesters because, though they make mechanical honks in flight, their perching call sounds a lot like laughter. Black-faced Ibises are slightly larger than their White-faced cousins, and with a very different color scheme: Black around the eye and rostrum, buff on the neck and breast, russet from the crown to the dorsum, with a black chevron across their chest similar to Western Meadowlarks. They can often be seen foraging methodically for insects, worms and amphibians, and they can often be heard in groves of tall trees "laughing" up a storm.

Last but not loudest, Southern Lapwings are large plovers that dwell in wetland habitats and open flat fields, where they dine on small fish, worms and insects. Known in Chile as the Queltehue or Tero, these are pretty birds, with wings of iridescent green turning russet at the shoulders, blazing red eyes, a black wispy crest and a black stripe running down their face, widening to cover the breast. Males have pink wing spurs, which they use in battles for mates. The vocalizations of Southern Lapwings have been variously described as "grating", "yappy", "shrill", "cackling", "raucous", "harsh" and "penetrating". They squawk at passing humans, dogs or anything else they feel threatened by. They are some of the best watchdogs or "watchbirds" we have ever encountered, possibly because they nest out in the open on the ground. They are on duty full-time, and sometimes make their alarming calls deep into the night, depriving us of sleep. We enjoy having them around anyway.



A Southern Lapwing  
in a (thankfully) peaceful moment

Ever since arriving in Pucón these three rowdy birds have provided a soundtrack to our daily lives. When we return home, the cacophonous parrots of Pasadena will seem subtle by comparison!

*Story and photo by Wolfgang, Learden, and Carl Matthies*

Readers, if there's a Bird from Afar that you saw and loved, we'd love to hear about it. Send your text and photos to the Editor at [pas.wrentit@gmail.com](mailto:pas.wrentit@gmail.com).

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS TO PAS

**IVORY BILLED WOODPECKER (\$2000 +):** Marsha Fowler

**GOLDEN EAGLE (\$500-\$999):** Susan & Frank Gilliland

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## FIELD TRIPS & MONTHLY BIRD WALKS

### Ventura County Game Preserve

**Sunday, February 9, 2020, 7:45 am - noon**

The Ventura County Game Preserve in Oxnard, California, is an excellent spot at which to observe a wide variety of birds including waterfowl, wetland birds and raptors. We will be birding the preserve entirely on foot. Covering the circuit will probably require 4+ hours. We will leave our cars on the left (north) side of the paved road outside the preserve compound. Bring lunch and drinking water. Allow one hour and fifteen minutes driving time from Pasadena. Contact the leader Doug Farr, 818-957-0845 home, 818-437-8806 cell, [doug@dmfarr.com](mailto:doug@dmfarr.com), for directions to the preserve.

*Doug Farr*

### Chasing Parrots in Pasadena

**Saturday February 15, 2020, 4:30 pm until dark**

Those PAS members who joined the chase last year were disappointed that so few were observed at our Pasadena stake-out location. It turns out that the flock had been gathering in Temple City after several years hiatus. This year I am asking folks to reserve the date but be flexible as to where we are to gather – we'll find these birds yet! Meanwhile, study and compare the looks (and vocalizations if you can) of Red-crowned, Lilac-crowned, Red-lored and Yellow-headed Parrots; there may be other parrot and parakeet species as well. Birders of all ages and non-members welcome. Bring scopes if you have them.

Go to our website after Thursday, February 13th, for the meeting location.

*Larry Allen*

### Quail Lake and Vicinity

**Saturday, Feb 22, 2020, 7:30 am -- 2:00 pm**

Join us for a trip to the extreme northwest corner of LA County, where we will look for waterbirds, raptors and other winter visitors that are hard to find elsewhere in the county. Both Scaup species are usually present, along with Common Goldeneye and Common Merganser. Bald and Golden Eagles are also possible, as are Ferruginous Hawk and Prairie Falcon. Past rarities seen on this trip include Barrow's Goldeneye, California Condor, Long-tailed Duck and White-winged Scoter. We will bird Quail Lake and then move to other hot spots in the area. If people are especially enthusiastic, we can bird past 2pm.

Meet in the parking lot at the west end of Quail Lake at 7:30 am. To get there, take the I-5 Freeway north, then take the Hwy 138 off-ramp east for about two miles. Quail Lake is on your left. Bring food and water, and a scope and an FRS radio if you have them. Note that we will be walking the entire length of Quail Lake, which is slightly more than a mile each way on level gravel. It can be cold and windy, so don't forget warm clothes. It takes about 1.25 hours to get to Quail Lake from Pasadena, so please don't drive alone. Also keep in mind that there are no gas stations in the area.

*Mark and Janet Scheel*

### Winter Pelagic

**Saturday, February 29, 7:30 - noon**

Join us for a fun and family-friendly Pelagic! In addition to some exciting pelagic birds like Shearwaters, Auklets and Jaegers, we usually see dolphins, sea lions and often whales. We have a bigger boat than some previous years to accommodate more people, go farther offshore and hopefully see more. The cost will be \$35 per person paid in advance. We will have our own excellent field trip leaders on board to help call out species and make sure everyone has a great time. To RSVP and pay for your tickets, please go to the Special Events tab in the Events drop down menu on our website.

### Bitter Creek, Maricopa and the Cuyama Valley

**Saturday, March 7, 2020, all day**

An all new PAS trip for 2020 that will focus on looking for some sought-after birds to be found north of Los Angeles County across the border into Kern and Santa Barbara Counties. We'll bird mountain peaks, rolling grasslands and desert scrub for specialties including California Condor, Yellow-billed Magpie, LeConte's Thrasher and Bell's Sparrow. Email Luke Tiller for details and to reserve your spot: [luke.tiller@gmail.com](mailto:luke.tiller@gmail.com)

*Luke Tiller*

### West Fork San Gabriel River: Birding by Bicycle

**Sunday, April 5, 7:30 am - noon**

The West Fork of the San Gabriel River features a 7-mile paved road that's closed to automobile traffic. This trip takes place by bicycle: a gentle uphill ride, with frequent stops, to Glenn Campground and a relaxing glide back. The road follows the canyon floor of the West Fork the entire way, making for gorgeous scenery. We will look for American Dipper and other riparian resident bird species, early migrants, late wintering birds and western pond turtles.

Drive about 12 miles north on Hwy. 39 from the 210 freeway in Azusa past two reservoirs, East Fork Road, and an off-road vehicle area. Continue and park in the large lot on the left just after Hwy. 39 crosses the West Fork (look for the West Fork and Cogswell Dam signs); a Forest Adventure Pass is required. Walk your bike across the footbridge to the south bank of the river. Bring snacks, water, binoculars and a bike helmet. A mountain bike is not needed for this trip, and just about any bike can handle the paved road. A limited number of loaner bikes may be available, first come first served —contact the trip leaders in advance. After the bike ride, we will look for nesting Bald Eagles along the San Gabriel River downstream from the West Fork.

Rain cancels the trip

*Lance Benner*

## FIELD TRIPS &amp; MONTHLY BIRD WALKS

## Tejon Ranch

**Saturday April 11, 2020, 8:00 am - 3:30 pm**

At 422 square miles, or 270,000 acres, Tejon Ranch Conservancy has access to the 240,000 conserved acres. The Ranch is the largest private contiguous parcel in CA. Tejon Ranch is a hotspot of biological diversity and lies at the confluence of four major biogeographic regions and birds and wildlife abound.

This trip is limited to PAS members (it's easy to become a member on our website). Tejon Ranch requires a \$20 fee. For more information or to make reservations, please email Susan at gililandsusan@gmail.com.

*Susan and Frank Gilliland*

## Legg Lake

**First Saturday, January and February, 2020**

**8:00 am to 1:00 pm**

These trips will cover several consistently good lake and river birding areas. Legg Lake has lots of water and wintering birds. From there, we'll head for either the Pico Rivera Spreading Grounds or Peck Road Park, depending on water levels and bird reports. Both often host a wide variety of water birds, including grebes, ducks, gulls, terns, egrets and shorebirds.

Driving directions (from Pasadena): Take the 210 freeway east to the 605 south to the Pomona (60) freeway going west. Exit at Santa Anita Avenue. Turn left and take Santa Anita south (about one-half mile) and enter the first parking lot on your right.

*Ed Stonick*

## Hahamongna Watershed Park

**First Saturday of the month, March - June**

**7:00 am - 10:00 am**

Hahamongna is an excellent place to become familiar with Pasadena-area birds and spring migrants. The walk visits oak woodland, riparian and open park habitat, and we'll search the hotspots within the changing landscape. Bring binoculars, water, walking shoes, but no dogs. Enter the park at Oak Grove and Foothill Blvd. Take the first left and park by the ball field.

*Darren Dowell*

## L.A. County Arboretum

**Second Saturday of every month 8:00 am - 10:00 am**

This easy walk is for birders of all ages and experience levels. Meet on the steps leading to the entrance of the Arboretum. Admission is \$5 – free for members of the Arboretum or Audubon, and free for children under twelve.

*Katy Mann*



*Hooded Merganser*

© Ira Blitz

## Magpie Group

**Third Tuesday of most months**

**9:00 am until about noon**

The Magpie Birding Group has a long tradition as a part of Pasadena Audubon's field trip offerings. Many thanks and much appreciation to Sid Heyman and Julia Ray for their many years of service and leadership. The Magpie Birding Group will continue to have field trips on the third Tuesday of each month, except for July and August. Field trips will begin at 9 a.m. and generally conclude by 12 noon. The new leaders are Ed Stonick, Debbie Chaiboonma and Ginny Heringer.

Our excursions have many advantages. Most locations are close and convenient to the general Pasadena area. Most are fairly flat and do not involve hiking or a great deal of walking, and many are also wheelchair accessible. We start a bit later, go at a relaxed pace and focus on areas that can be covered in a couple of hours. All are welcome to attend.

**Tuesday, Feb. 18, 2020:** Frank G. Bonelli Regional Park

We'll meet at a pull-off area just to the right of the park entrance.

**Tuesday, Mar. 17, 2020:** Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area

We will meet in the parking lot for Starbuck's on Arrow Highway just past Azusa Canyon Rd. at 9:00 a.m. to carpool, as there is a \$10 entrance fee per vehicle to the recreation area.

**Tuesday, Apr. 21, 2020:** Hansen Dam

We will meet in the parking lot near the south end of the dam. Enter from Dronefield Rd. and drive to the last parking lot near the flood control area. This is a great area for migrants and some species which are difficult to find elsewhere, such as Bell's Vireo, Blue Grosbeak and Yellow-breasted Chat.

## Eaton Canyon

**Third Sunday of every month**

**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 Eaton Canyon for many years. This is a wonderful walk for birders of all levels. 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

**Fourth Sunday of every month, except for July and August**

**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 nonmember guest, space permitting. We thank our member and Huntington curator, Dan Lewis, for making these trips possible.

To reserve contact Mark at

mark.hunter@pasadenaaudubon.org

*Mark Hunter*

## CALENDAR

## February 2020

1	Sat 8:00 am	Field trip	WC	Legg Lake	Ed Stonick
1-2	Sat/Sun All day	Field trip		Salton Sea	Ron Cyger
5	Wed 7:30 pm	Board meeting		Eaton Canyon	Laura Solomon
8	Sat 8:00 am	Field trip	WC	County Arboretum	Katy Mann
9	Sun 7:45 am	Field Trip		Ventura Game Preserve	Doug Farr
12	Wed 5:00 pm	Birds 'n Beers	WC	Lucky Baldwins Trappiste	L. Tiller, C. Hamilton, D. Bell
15	Sat 4:30 pm	Field trip	WC	Parrott Chase Pasadena	Larry Allen
16	Sun 8:00 am	Field trip	WC	Eaton Canyon	Hill Penfold
18	Tue 9:00 am	Magpie Group	WC	Frank Bonelli Park	E. Stonick, Debbie C., G. Heringer
19	Wed. 7:30 pm	General meeting		Eaton Canyon	Dessi Sieburth
22	Sat 7:30 am	Field trip	WC	Quail Lake	Mark and Janet Scheel
23	Sun 8:00 am	Field trip	WC	Huntington Library	Mark Hunter
29	Sat 7:30-noon	Field trip	WC	Winter Pelagic	Lance Benner, Mark Scheel

## March 2020

4	Wed 7:30 pm	Board meeting		Eaton Canyon	Laura Solomon
7	Sat 7:00 am	Field trip	WC	Hahamongna Watershed Park	Darren Dowell
7	Sat all day	Field trip		Maricopa/Cuyama Valley	Luke Tiller
11	Wed 5:00 pm	Birds 'n Beers		Lucky Baldwins Trappiste	L. Tiller, C. Hamilton, D. Bell
14	Sat 8:00 am	Field trip	WC	L.A. County Arboretum	Katy Mann
15	Sun 8:00 am	Field trip	WC	Eaton Canyon	Hill Penfold
17	Tues 9:00 am	Magpie Group	WC	Santa Fe Dam	E. Stonick, Debbie C., G. Heringer
18	Wed 7:30 pm	General Meeting	WC	Eaton Canyon	Dr. Morgan Tingley
21	Sat 8:00 am	Cleanup	WC	Peck Rd. Water Conserv. Park	Lois Brunet
22	Sun 8:00 am	Field trip	WC	Huntington Library	Mark Hunter

## April 2020

1	Wed 7:30 pm	Board meeting		Eaton Canyon	Laura Solomon
4	Sat 7:00 am	Field trip	WC	Hahamongna Watershed Park	Darren Dowell
5	Sun 7:30 am	Field trip	WC	West Fork San Gabriel River	Lance Benner
8	Wed 5:00 pm	Birds 'n Beers		Lucky Baldwins Trappiste	L. Tiller, C. Hamilton, D. Bell
11	Sat 8:00 am	Field trip	WC	Tejon Ranch	Susan and Frank Gilliland
11	Sat 8:00 am	Field trip	WC	L.A. County Arboretum	Katy Mann
15	Wed. 7:30 pm	General Meeting		Eaton Canyon	Annie Little
19	Sun 8:00 am	Field Trip	WC	Eaton Canyon	Hill Penfold
26	Sun 8:00 am	Field trip	WC	Huntington Library	Mark Hunter
26	Sun 7:30 am	Field trip	WC	Bob's Gap	Lance Benner, Kathi Ellsworth

## WC Wrentit Club

The Wrentit Club is a special distinction for members who've seen 250 birds or more in L.A. County within the calendar year. The field trips designated WC are within

L.A. County. Any birds seen on these trips count towards the Wrentit Club distinction. See our website for a listing of current and past members. Good birding!



## FIELD TRIP REPORT

**North Slope San Gabriels – Sat. Nov 16, 2019**

Thirty-one of us met at Pearblossom Park for a day of birding among blue skies, almost no wind, and beautiful fall colors. It was a mix of birders old and young, beginner and expert, and we found some highly sought-after birds at every location we went. In addition to the more common residents of Pearblossom Park like Phainopepla, a Merlin flew by as we were doing introductions in the parking lot, as I jokingly told everyone not to ignore “funny-looking Great Blue Herons standing in a field” that might be Sandhill Cranes (rare and unexpected in LA county). We found a cooperative Red-naped Sapsucker that posed for photos. Lance found an almost completely-hidden roosting Barn Owl, after the rest of us had walked under the same tree and concluded nothing was there.

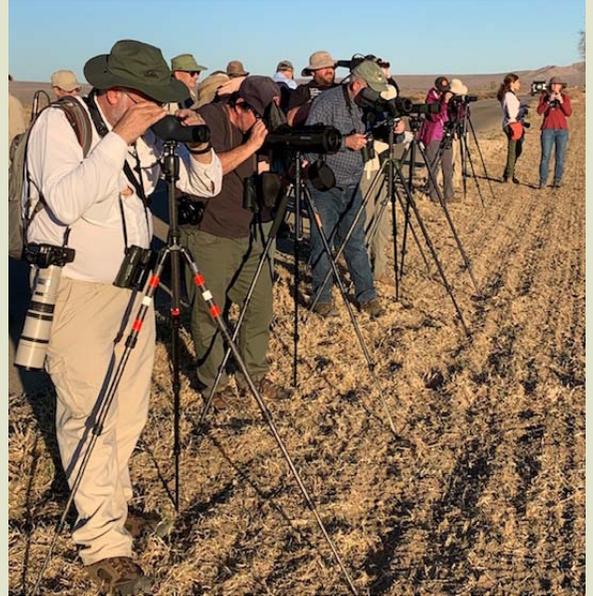
Our second destination was St. Andrew’s Abbey, where we found Red-breasted Sapsuckers, a mix of goldfinches with a Pine Siskin and several sparrow flocks. The highlight there was the Dark-eyed Junco flock, which held not only the expected “Oregon” variety, but also a Gray-headed, a Slate-colored and an individual that may have been of the cismontanus subspecies, or possibly some hybrid combination. These all have been considered separate species at one time.

To higher elevation we went: Jackson Lake, where the California Scrub-Jays were replaced by Stellar’s Jays. There were Purple and Cassin’s Finches there, and the small lake held a female Hooded Merganser. But the highlight was a small flock of Lewis’s Woodpeckers, a few of which came very close and posed for photos. One Lewis’s was pounding acorns into an Acorn Woodpecker granary.

Grassy Hollow was the highest elevation of the trip; there we had close looks at White-headed Woodpeckers and Pygmy Nuthatches. The two main highlights at Grassy Hollow were a male Red Crossbill perched in the open and singing and a quartet of Golden-crowned Kinglets that decided to forego their usual place at the treetops and descend low enough for everyone to have good looks at their crowns.

We then descended to the agricultural fields in the Antelope Valley, where we ended the day looking for raptors. The area we chose held 7 Ferruginous Hawks, a Prairie Falcon, a Merlin, male and female Northern Harriers, and a few Red-tailed Hawks and American Kestrels. But the first highlight of the evening came when an imposter showed up in a flock of Killdeer: a Mountain Plover that allowed good scope looks. The second highlight came after we decided to stick around until dark in hopes of finding Short-eared or Long-eared Owls hunting the fields. There were no owls (but great scope looks at Jupiter’s moons and Saturn’s rings); but about 10 minutes after sunset Dessi yelled “Cranes!”, and pointed to two Sandhill Cranes flying by heading north in the fading light.

*Mark Scheel*



*Looking at Mountain Plover*

*© Susan Gilliland*

## CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS

**Birding 101**

Sponsored by Pasadena Audubon Society and Eaton Canyon Nature Center

Birding provides enjoyment and challenge throughout life, getting you outdoors on your street or around the world, and it’s a great cocktail party topic! This is a great opportunity to explore the world of Birding in a structured, classroom environment.

This class is designed for beginners, but all are welcome. We will cover the basics of identification (sight, sound, behavior), optics, field guides, habitats, birding ethics and many other topics. Our goals are to help class participants gain ID skills, become familiar with local birds and to be comfortable on birding field trips. Class size is limited so don’t delay!

Information:

Classroom sessions: Tuesdays, March 10, 17, and 24, 2020, beginning at 7:00 p.m. Field trips: Sunday March 15 and Saturday March 21, 2020, early morning to about noon. Participants need to attend all classes and field trips.

Location of the class and field trips will be sent to the class participants. Sorry, no walk-ins.

Cost: \$75 for Pasadena Audubon members, \$100 for non-members (but, will include membership in Pasadena Audubon Society). This fee will cover all three classes and two field trips. Payment is payable to “Pasadena Audubon Society” and is due at the first class session (scholarships are available for Young Birders Club members who are accompanied by a paying parent/responsible adult).

*Leaders: Ron Cyger and Mark Scheel*

## CHAPTER ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Community Comes Together for Planting Day at New Bird-Friendly School Garden

The November 16 Planting Day celebration at the new native plant and pollinator garden at Washington Elementary STEM Magnet (WSEM) was a big success due to the mighty efforts of volunteers, teachers, school children and their parents. Over 80 members of the community joined in for a morning of planting, learning about So. Cal. plants and the power of teaming up, nature-themed activities and a congratulatory meal. Volunteers at the event included Principal Karrone Meeks, STEM Specialist Jodie West and Pasadena Vice Mayor Tyron Hampton, who also spoke to the crowd gathered for the occasion. The celebration continued through the week, providing 225 students additional opportunities to learn about and add plants to their new learning space.

The garden at WSEM in Pasadena features California native plants that attract birds and pollinators, an outdoor classroom and a rainwater garden with bioswales, which slow the flow of rain through the space and allow for it to drain naturally into the earth. The garden fills a large courtyard at the school and now contains favorites such as Hummingbird Sage, Lupine, California Poppy and Milkweed, as well as chaparral species such as Laurel Sumac and Coffeeberry. The garden will provide students with outdoor learning opportunities and provide a habitat for native species of birds, bees and butterflies.



“We’ve been trying to bring an outdoor schoolyard program to fruition for more than eight years and it’s wonderful to see it becoming a reality, with even more opportunities for kids to learn,” said Jodie West.

Pasadena Audubon took on creating a garden for WSEM as an extension of their innovative Bird Science Program with the goal of getting students excited about the environment, conservation and bird watching. A native plant and pollinator garden brings to life the lessons of the Bird Science Program for the students at WSEM with features intended to recreate local ecosystems. The WSEM garden effort was organized by PAS Program Director Lois Brunet, who used a Burke Grant from National Audubon to lay the groundwork. The garden was designed by Jesse Chang of Catalyst SGV who volunteered his time. Pasadena Water and Power also sponsored the project, providing signage and drip irrigation. The project brought together 80 volunteers from seven different organizations who contributed more than 600 hours of effort.

There isn’t enough room in this article to list all of the people who made this project happen, but to everyone, we offer our sincere gratitude and congratulations.

CHAPTER ANNOUNCEMENTS



To learn more, visit the Washington Garden page from the Conservation dropdown menu on our website



*Darren Dowell*

*- Photos by Mako Koiwai*



CHAPTER ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Cleanup at Peck Road Water Conservation Park

**Saturday, March 21, 8:00 am - noon**

Join us for our now traditional spring cleanup of beloved Peck Park, field trip destination for the Bird Science Program and one of the best birding spots around. We'll start with a bird walk at 8 am. At 10 am we'll roll up our sleeves and see how much trash we can remove.

Finally at noon, we'll enjoy some pizza together under the trees. Wear closed toed shoes, hats, and bring a reusable water bottle, gloves, buckets and pickers if you have them. We want to make this a zero-waste event.

Hope to see you there.

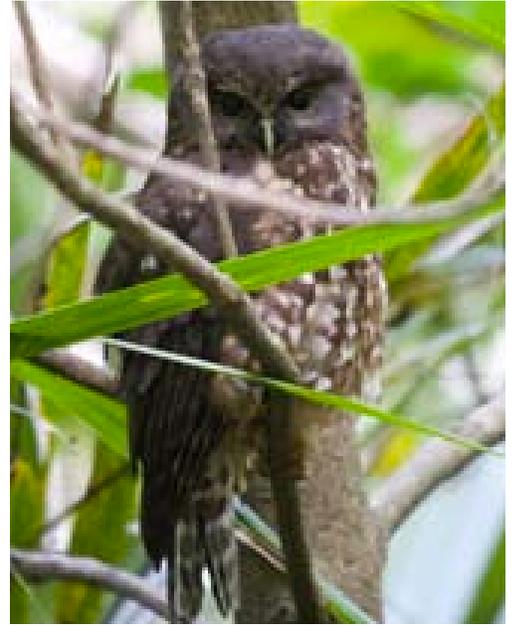
*Lois Brunet*

## YOUNG BIRDERS

## What Do Young Birders Do on Winter Break?

### Go Birding, Of Course!

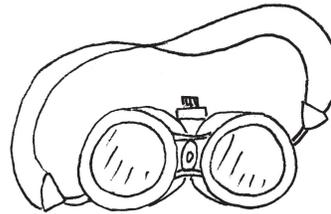
Young Birder Aaron, age 13, and his family are fortunate to have family in New Zealand and during their winter visit, Aaron spotted and photographed this beautiful New Zealand Morepork.



New Zealand Morepork © Aaron, 13, Young Birder



Calvin, age 13, went skiing in Utah with his family over winter break. While skiing was super fun, Calvin looked for birds, too. He was rewarded with beautiful close-up views of Gray-crowned Rosy Finches.



Check out more young birder adventures on the Young Birder webpage:

<http://www.pasadenaudubon.org/youngbirders>

## The Young Birder Club

Young people interested in birds, birding, natural history and conservation are welcome to join the Young Birders Club. It's a great way to learn more about birds, get out birding and socialize with your friends. Throughout the year, we have experienced birders leading us on field trips. Additionally, there are opportunities for youth to lead and co-lead field trips for their peers. Kids 6 years + and their parents/guardian are welcome to attend. Meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month, September through May, at 6:45 PM at Eaton Canyon Nature Center. It's free. Contact Susan for more information. [gillilandsusan@gmail.com](mailto:gillilandsusan@gmail.com) You can learn more on our webpage.



**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Larry Johnson: A Remembrance**

I am very sad to report that Larry Johnson, a past president of Pasadena Audubon Society, passed away on December 27, 2019. He was 78. Larry was president of Pasadena Audubon Society during its 75th anniversary. Professionally, he was a big part of Los Angeles County's health services until he retired. He then went on to lead Pasadena's Union Station. During all this time he maintained his own private counseling practice. He loved to continue his education and loved to travel. Often, birding was a primary purpose of both!

I got to know Larry after his tenure as president. He was always enthusiastic about birding and helping others to bird. On field trips, he would not only help everyone with ID, but would explain habits or migration and would invite others to help enhance the experience for everyone. He led many field trips and taught many birding classes. He really did bring the joy of birding to his community.

Larry understood the importance of maintaining connections with the past; that connection maintained meaning for him and for the organizations he led. Most importantly Larry helped PAS members find birds in their binoculars and their hearts.

A memorial will be held February 15 at Eaton Canyon Nature Center at 1:00 pm.

Ron Cyger

**Birds 'n Beers**

Change of Venue (until further notice)

Good food, good beverages and good bird talk at this casual monthly gathering led by Luke Tiller, Catherine Hamilton and David Bell. Everyone is welcome! 5:00 pm to about 8:00 pm, the second Wednesday of each month, at Lucky Baldwins Trappiste 1770 E Colorado Blvd, Pasadena, CA 91106.



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Luke Tiller		<a href="mailto:luketiller@gmail.com">luketiller@gmail.com</a>

**PAS Coffee Club**

The American Redstart (the Light Roast bird) is the latest addition to the Birds & Beans roster of products. It was chosen because it was the 2017 Migratory Bird of the Year, the year B&B introduced the Light Roast. The American Redstart, *Setophaga ruticilla*, is the original representative of that warbler genus in the US. Since most all the Dendroica's have recently been reclassified as Setophaga, the ruticilla now has lots of company. It nests generally in the eastern half of the US, but we Southern Californians get to see it once in a while during the winter season, as we live in the northernmost part of its winter range. PAS boasts some exceedingly expert experts who can give you information on your chances of seeing an American Redstart in the San Gabriel Valley area.

If you like Light Roast, maybe you'll be inspired to give B&B's American Redstart a try this month. Remember, shipping is free through the Coffee Club and the deadline to order is always the last day of the month for delivery at the next meeting.

Kathy Linowski  
Manager, PAS Coffee Club



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**Join the Pasadena Audubon Society**

Pasadena Audubon Society Chapter-only Membership provides important support for our conservation, education and outreach efforts. You'll also be the first to hear about our programs and field trips, and you'll receive a one-year subscription to our newsletter, *The Wrentit*.

Membership dues: \$25 for individuals, \$30 for families, \$15 for seniors/senior family/student. Lifetime membership with a \$2,000 donation.

Your information is never shared.

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Or join online at [pasadenaaudubon.org](http://pasadenaaudubon.org).

If you'd like to provide a gift membership, please contact our membership chair, Lois Fulmer, at [willo2001@earthlink.net](mailto:willo2001@earthlink.net).

***We thank you for your support!***

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You'll receive an email and link to the newsletter when each issue comes out. You'll also have our gratitude, as this will allow us to reduce our paper use and printing expenses. Plus, photos will be in living color, just like the birds we love!

## PAS Gear Now Available at Zazzle.com

Let the world know you're with Pasadena Audubon. Go to [www.zazzle.com/pasadena\\_audubon](http://www.zazzle.com/pasadena_audubon) for T-shirts, water bottles, luggage tags and more, all featuring our lovely wrentit logo.



*Killdeer*

© Adriana Kleiman

## Welcome to our New Members

**Alhambra:** Beverly Coe, Min Lam, Leslie Parry; **Altadena:** Colleen Boye, Willard Cole, Diane Jimenez, Robin Kaufman, Deborah Lennon, Lara Lund, Cynthia Parenti, Sarah Sherman, Diana Wilbur; **Arcadia:** Linda Crawford, Susan Tockgo, Alice Wong; **Azusa:** Joseph Sedlacek; **Duarte:** Jean Voznick; **La Canada Flintridge:** Joy Chung, Susan Haleblan, Gay & James Hill, Nancy Thurston, Marjorie Cates; **Los Angeles:** Joel Moser, Susan Sholley; **Monrovia:** Ralph Burgess, Hans Nepf; **Monterey Park:** David Almada, Francisco Alonso, Jesse Chang, Patricia Joe, Yisun Wei; **Palm Desert:** Darrell Cozen; **Pasadena:** Melissa Agnello, James Bray, Lauren Ivy Chiong, Carol Clements, Gilbert Conn, Cheryl Davis, Tom Hicklin, Pam Holaday, Betty Koshalek, Betina Kyle, Philip Lefcourt, Jane Levy, Carole Madland, Frank Malinowski, Aline Mayer, Sharon Plotkin, Sally & Skip Prusia, Janice Rock, Heidi Rusina, David Seager, Norman Thomas, James Ukropina, Melanie Ware; **North Hollywood:** Karen Minkowski; **San Gabriel:** Edie Moore, Linda Wennbo; **San Marino:** Dhruba Boseroy, Patience Fisher, Cesar Larriva, Julie Nava, Thomas Waterman; **Santa Clarita:** Benjamin Oswald; **Sierra Madre:** William Patzert, Christine Prentice, Claire Sweetland; **South Pasadena:** Molly Aboud, Gerald Craft, Sarah Loverme, Michael Oran, Philip Southam, Chieko Tamura; **Studio City:** Julie Kelly DiMaggio; **Temple City:** Xiomara Castillo; **Whittier:** Jocelyn McFaul