



Drawing by  
Guy Coheleach

# THE WRENTIT

Founded 1904

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

Volume 53 – No. 4

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

September-October 2005

## September Program

### ID Challenges

Mickey Long & Jon Fisher

Wednesday, September 21, 2005

**W**hat was that drab yellowish warbler? Was that greenish bird a kinglet or a Hutton's Vireo? With fall migration well under way, what better time to take a closer look at some ID challenges? Many birds are now in their drab fall or winter plumage. When you add the influx of migrants, birding takes on a new dimension. Beyond this, there are species that can pose identification problems throughout the year.

There's no substitute for repeated study to make identifying birds easier, be it in the field, through books, or at workshops. To that end, we're going to tackle ID problems from the relatively simple to the fairly difficult. The birds will be an assortment of different species. Mickey and Jon will discuss field marks, voice, behavior, habitat, distribution and abundance as aids to identification.

### General Meetings held at:

**Eaton Canyon Nature Center**

**1750 N. Altadena Drive, Pasadena**

7:00 pm Social

7:30 pm Program

## October Program

### Hooked on Hummingbirds

Tom Kaminski

Wednesday, October 19, 2005

The widely acclaimed video "Hooked on Hummingbirds" features spectacular, close-up footage in slow motion, stop motion, and real time of hummers flying, feeding, fighting and nesting as you've never before seen them. And you'll also watch the incredibly delicate task of placing a band on one of the world's tiniest avian "ankles." Shot in the U.S. and Costa Rica, this documentary on hummingbirds' natural history and ecology shows 20 species, as well the American Kestrel, Red-naped Sapsucker, Greater Roadrunner and others.

Tom Kaminski's interest in birds was kindled in 1996 by visits to Costa Rica and the Galapagos Islands. He began specializing in hummingbirds in 2001 after a brief stay near Ramsey Canyon in Southeastern Arizona.



*See registration insert in this issue.*

## November Program

### Oiled Bird Rehabilitation

Susan Kaveggia

Wednesday, November 16, 2005

Contamination from petroleum and petroleum products can result in immediate and severe destruction to local populations of wildlife. In the City of San Pedro, International Bird Rescue Research Center (IBRRC) is the second of two Centers in California operated by IBRRC and overseen by the Oiled Wildlife Care Network.

Susan Kaveggia is on the International Bird Rescue Research Center's oil spill response team. She also is a current board member of California Council for Wildlife Rehabilitators. She will discuss some history and background of oil spills, rehabilitation of oiled birds, and some challenges of rehabilitating a few species, such as loons and grebes. Her first oil spill experience was two separate spills in one day in late 1998. Aside from wildlife rehabilitation, Susan is an avid bird-watcher with a fondness for pelagic birds.

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*Will*

### President's Perch

**H**i! I'm Will Fulmer, and I will be your President during 2005-2006.

No, Ron hasn't quit the Board; he's now our full-time Program Chairman! Look for good things this coming year.

On July 23, I called an informal meeting of the people who are taking an active part in PAS, to review what we're doing now and what we should consider doing over the next couple of years. I'm happy to report that the consensus was "...we are doing most things right, now." It was agreed that our core activity is Birding, but that we must be proactive in

Education and Conservation to fulfill our mission. We listed a few dozen ideas, mostly in the areas of Education and Conservation, for the Board to consider.

If you have a good idea that you would like the Board to consider, write it down and send it to me at 1750 N. Altadena Drive, Pasadena 91107 – or hand it to me at our monthly meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 21. I'll see you there!

## Conservation

### Native Plant Program: The Quarter Challenge

#### *The Reason*

Inspired by Los Angeles Audubon, the Pasadena Audubon Society is introducing a native plant program, geared to birders who have an interest in helping the birds living in or passing through our community.

California has one of the largest numbers of endemic plant species – over 2100 – of any state in America. The flora community is so unique that it has its own name, the California Floristic Province, largely confined to our state. From the antique redwoods, sequoias and bristlecone pines to the plethora of sages, the shrubs, conifers, grasses and flowering plants of California have inspired many for over two centuries.

There are historical, medical and scientific reasons for preserving this diversity. Each species is like a work of art: unique, of interest to many, and irreplaceable. From the perspective of bird population conservation, native plant communities serve an important ecological function. Each supports and interacts with a unique blend of animals. The canopy of a redwood tree may support small pools, aquatic salamanders and roosting seabirds. Some species of insects, especially butterflies and moths, but also more peculiar sorts like walking-sticks, have only a few native plants that they are commonly found on, will pollinate or use for larval food.

The well-being of the local and transient bird populations is dependent on the community of flora they inhabit or visit, for roosting, feeding, breeding and nesting. The Nature Conservancy has found, for instance, that critical bird communities recover more quickly in areas that have been replanted with native vegetation, compared to those without. In addition, the diversity of bird species increased.

While nature preserves – wilderness areas, refuges, parks and private conservancies – provide a sanctuary for natural populations of animals, the area of land they occupy – roughly 5% – may be too little to preserve the Earth's diversity. Some scientists estimate that at least 10% of the Earth's land area would need to be set aside to protect, for example, all the world's mammals. Yet approximately 95% of the Earth's land area is either converted to agriculture or represents ecosystems disturbed by human activity. To assist in the protection and recovery of these populations, private landowners will have

to become increasingly involved.

The Los Angeles Basin has seen a dramatic reduction in the extent of its native vegetation. The grasses, which presumably once covered the region, are basically gone. This loss of vegetation is largely blamed for the decline of insect populations, especially butterflies, once commonly found in the basin, but now largely restricted to the canyons of the Santa Monica or San Gabriel Mountains. This loss presents an opportunity.

#### *The Opportunity*

Almost every house has a lawn that is ready to be converted to a native garden. In addition to its benefit to wildlife, a native garden is also practical. It requires less maintenance and watering; species preferring sun may only need one or two waterings per month during the summer. Water conservation will be a huge issue in the near future. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power estimates that in the next 25 years, Southern California is going to need 40% more water, most of it going to landscaping.

Many of the native plants are quite beautiful, displaying a multitude of colors; shades of maroon and green that we had never seen before. Some plants, such as buckwheat, can be quite intricate. Several species of sage bushes, each with its own pleasant fragrance, are found here. Such a melody of vegetation is a stark contrast to the blanket of common green grass found in front of most houses, which John Muir described as having “that painful, licked, snipped, repressed appearance...lying flat and motionless, matted together like a dead green cloth...”

#### *The Challenge*

Participants begin by removing **one quarter (1/4)** of their lawn and replacing it with native plants. October and November are the best time to plant. This will allow time for the plant to develop a root system large enough to manage the stress of the summer drought. Also, when selecting from a group of plants, don't select the largest or smallest – select a medium-sized individual. Plants native to the Southern California region will fare better than those from other locations.

When selecting species, plan to have an upper-story of either trees or tall shrubs, a mid-story composed of medium sized shrubs, and an under-story of flowers or groundcover. Ample shrubbery provides a microhabitat for birds, such as wrens, sparrows and wrentits, to perch or hide.

Send us (see below) the number of

plants and the kind of species planted. At the November General Meeting, we will offer prizes, determined by a secret formula that averages trees, shrubs and flowers differently. Prizes will also be offered to those who remove a quarter of their lawn.

Those who don't have a garden can contribute by participating in a native plant planting event at Eaton Canyon or the Cobb Estate.

Check out the PAS website for more information.

*Michael Graesser, Priyanka Kumar  
AUBERGINEPRODUCTIONS@HOTMAIL.COM*

### Endangered Species and National Environment Protection Acts

Beginning in September, Congress is expected to consider bills that would modify these two important laws.

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) was enacted in 1973 to prevent species from becoming extinct. The new legislation will make it more difficult for species to become listed, reduce critical habitat areas, and repeal the act by 2015. While there are many issues and trade-offs concerning how the ESA should best be managed to achieve its biological objectives, scientists and the general public agree that it is effective and valued. It is also underfunded.

The 1969 National Environment Protection Act (NEPA) is less known but equally significant and broad in its jurisdiction. This law requires that federal agencies consider and disclose the “cumulative impacts” of any federal action on the environment and “to promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere”. For any proposed action the government agencies must produce an Environmental Impact Statement which the public can comment on. The proposed legislation could restrict or remove any of these provisions.

For more information on the issues surrounding the ESA, visit our website. To read NEPA, visit [HTTP://CEQ.EH.DOE.GOV/NEPA/REGS/NEPA/NEPAEQIA.HTM](http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/NEPA/REGS/NEPA/NEPAEQIA.HTM)

### PAS on the WEB

**Website**  
[HTTP://WWW.PASADENAAUDUBON.ORG](http://www.pasadenaaudubon.org)

**ListServe**  
[HTTP://GROUPS.YAHOO.COM/GROUP/PASADENAAUDUBON/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/pasadenaaudubon/)

## An Ecuador Adventure



West Peruvian Screech Owl

California has over 600 bird species on its bird list. The ABA area stands at over 900. So why would a birder want to bird in the tropics? Aren't there enough species in North America? Well, if listing is a priority for you, tiny Ecuador, about the size of Colorado, has over 1600 species! It didn't take much convincing that this was a trip I couldn't miss.

I arrived in Quito on Friday night, April 15th. The streets were crowded with people waving flags and flying streamers from passing cars. I thought it was a celebration! From what I could understand from the cab driver, it had something to do with the president, so I assumed everyone was celebrating a new election. Boy, was I wrong. I later found out that these were protests. The president had fired the Supreme Court and taken other steps to consolidate power. He had declared a nighttime curfew, which explained why everyone was on the streets at 10:30 p.m. This was Ecuador, after all!

During the nine days there, I birded the high Andes at 14,000 feet, stayed in the famous Tandayapa Valley, traveled to the Loja region in the south of the country, spent a night in the Machalilla area on the arid coast, and traveled back up to Quito. Altogether I covered most of the western Ecuador along the Trans-America Highway.

On my first day I nearly sprinted out of the hotel to find some exotics. My first bird was the Rock Pigeon. Okay, I had to work harder. While getting used to the elevation I got Eared Dove, White-collared Swift, Band-tailed Seedeater, Great Thrush, and Rufous-collared Sparrow; all common birds. While that



Sword-billed Hummingbird



Black-chinned Mountain-Tanager

day was exciting, I would not have such a slow species day the rest of the trip.

I averaged 80 – 90 species a day. During the first days I got a like number of lifers (minus a couple of pigeons, a couple of vultures and most of the shorebirds encountered). The most prolific family found was the hummingbirds. I encountered 50 species, most repeatedly. Of those found, the Sword-billed Hummingbird had the longest bill, up to four inches long. The longest tail was that of the Black-tailed Trainbearer, trailing over five inches below its body. It looked like it had a ribbon taped to its back. The Violet-tailed Sylph had nearly as long a tail, but one that shined with a beautiful violet color. There were cute Booted Racket-tails and stunning Velvet-purple Coronets.

Then there were the Andeans. Those were the birds whose common name begins with "Andean." I found Coot, Duck, Emerald (hummingbird), Guan, Gull, Lapwing, Pygmy-Owl, Solitaire, and of course, Condor. The Andean Condor was probably my greatest desire, only because it was so well known to me. The Andean Duck was by far the cutest, working a river like a dipper.

I also had a couple of opposites, birds that are "opposite" of our Northern Hemisphere birds. Ever wonder why our common swallow is called a Northern Rough-winged Swallow? I ran into the



Violet-tailed Sylph

Southern Rough-winged Swallow everywhere! There also were Black-faced Ibises at Antisana Reserve.

The bird I should have had in North America, but traveled all the way to Ecuador to find, is the Sedge Wren. I had been in its habitat numerous times when birding this side of the border but never found it.

"Ant" is a common prefix for many bird names in the tropics and you learn your ants quickly. I found antbirds, antwrens, antthrushes, antshrikes, and antpittas. The suffixes, or second names, prize goes again to the hummers. I found Brilliants, Coronets, Emeralds, Fairies, Hermits, Hillstars, Incas, Jacobins, Lancebills, Metaltails, Plumeleteers, Pufflegs, Sapphires, Sapphirewings, Sunbeams, Starfrontlets, Starthroats, Sunangels, Sylphs, Thronbills, Thorntails, Trainbearers, Velvetbreasts, Violet-ears, Whitetips, Woodnymphs and Woodstars. All are hummingbirds of one name or another.

This trip only managed to whet my appetite for more tropical birding. But as in the Northern Hemisphere, poisons, development and plain stupidity are threatening the habitats down south. So we need to do two things: bird as much of it as possible and, in the meantime, work to save the habitats needed to maintain our diversity and our planet.

Ron Cyger

## Summer Birding at Hahamongna

Even before I started birding a couple of years ago, I was a regular at Hahamongna Watershed Park, jogging with my dog or bringing my kids to play in the boulder fields or streambeds. So I've had a chance to see the park wear many garments over the years. The chaparral and scrub were fairly diverse a few years ago. Then, after rains washed out much vegetation, a monoculture of cockleburs took over the southern section. Hardly any other plant could be found.

But the biggest change took place this year. The huge storms of January rewrote the map in the central part of the park, laying down several feet of brand-new soil in the stretch between the main parking lot and the softball field on the east side. The stream has since dwindled to an ordinary brook (still rare for August), but one of the large ponds created during the storms has refused to dry up. I think there must be a lot of underground water feeding it.

All one need do is walk a minute or two east from the parking lot and a different world presents itself. All the classic Hahamongna birds are present: Acorn Woodpeckers on the power poles, Brewer's Blackbirds at the parking lot, House Finches everywhere, Nuttall's Woodpeckers calling, Bewick's Wrens fussing and scuttling in the brush. But down where the trail dust used to be as fine as flour, there's a big pond with Mallards loafing and dabbling, and Black Phoebe arguing and chasing each other low over the water, flying so close to each other that I can hear their wings brushing together. Common Yellownothroat lurks nearby. A Yellow Warbler perches silent and elegant in the top of a low tree next to the water. One-inch toads scatter out of the way as I walk. Papyrus is starting up in many spots, as well as rushes! - in what used to be mulefat territory. Minnows, probably mosquito fish, as big as my little finger and fat, pock the surface. Tiger Swallowtail butterflies rest on the wet mud. An Ash-throated Flycatcher catches and gulps a reddish dragonfly, the gauzy wings sticking out crazily from the bird's mouth before folding and sliding down its throat. A Red-Shouldered Hawk moves restlessly around a tall dead snag in the new no-man's-land formed when the stream changed course and cut the old trails.

It's a genuine phenomenon – an un-engineered wetland thriving and growing more diverse every day, in a dry Southern California summer.

*Mark Hunter*



## The Annual Dinner/Birdathon Awards

Our annual dinner/awards bash in June was, once again, a resounding success. Lots of people turned out for good music and good food and drink. To top it all off, Jon Feenstra's program about how he accomplished his "Big Year" was as interesting as it was funny. He received PAS' first Annual Crow Award, a stuffed crow, which was the subject of much laughter and applause (and a caw-caw or two)!

Once again, John Garrett walked away with first prize for generating the most money for the Birdathon. While both Ron Cyger and Mark Scheel listed more birds (179 to John's 123), John solicited sponsors who contributed \$2,043 to our grand total of \$2,947.

Our thanks to everyone who donated

gifts for this year's Silent Auction. Among those contributing to its success: Amadeus Spa, Frits Clasee of The Alter Ego, Laura Garrett, John Garrett, La Nueva Posada, Carol Kauper, Martin Kauper, Luciano's Ristorante, your PAS Board of Directors and many others.



Norm Arnheim awards John Garrett his prize for raising the most money.



Ron Cyger welcomes Will Fulmer as PAS President for 2005-6.



Laura Garrett enjoys giving Jon Feenstra the Crow Award.

## PAS Election Results

Results of the Officer Elections were announced. We were sad to say farewell to our President of over five years, Ron Cyger. PAS has come a long way under his guidance. Thanks, Ron!! Will Fulmer was elected to succeed Ron as President in 2005-2006 along with Norm Arnheim, Vice President; Peggy Ogata, Treasurer; and Jean O'Hagan, Secretary. Congratulations to all of you!

## Field Trips

### **Hahamonga Monthly Walk**

**Saturday, September 3, 2005**

**Saturday, October 1, 2005**

**8:00 am – noon**

This is monthly bird walk is for birders of all ages and experience. A good variety of birds should be in residence.

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 Hahamonga Watershed Park and park by the ballfield.

*Ron Cyger*

### **California City & Galileo Hills**

**Saturday, September 17, 2005**

**8:00 am — ?**

We will be looking for songbirds, flycatchers and other migrants. Meet at the back of the main lot by the pond at the Silver Saddle Country Club in Galileo Hills. About 2 hours driving time from L.A. or stay at the Mojave Motel 6 or elsewhere. Sign-up strictly limited to 15 by arrangement with owners.

To register, leave name, contact info and party size at (818) 247-6172 or [MNFREEMAN@EARTHLINK.NET](mailto:MNFREEMAN@EARTHLINK.NET) and wait for a favorable response and directions. *Those showing up without confirmation cannot be accommodated.* Bring lunch, sun block, bird & herb books.

*Nick & Mary Freeman*

### **Eaton Canyon Monthly Walk**

**Sunday, September 18, 2006**

**Sunday, October 16, 2005**

**Sunday, November 20, 2005**

**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 Beach Central Park**

**September 24, 2005**

**7:30 am – ?**

This trip offers a chance to see a wide variety of land and water birds, from migrant warblers and flycatchers, to exotics (no, not that kind) and residents such as mannikins, herons, egrets, terns, plovers and sandpipers. Mid-September is

a great time to be in the field.

Take the 405 Freeway south to Goldenwest and exit here, heading south. At Slater, make a left and then a quick right into the parking area on the north side of Central Park.

*Ron Cyger*

### **Huntington Library**

#### **Birdwalks (PAS Members only)**

**Sunday, September 25, 2005**

**Sunday, October 23, 2005**

**Sunday, November 27, 2005**

**8:00 am – 11:00 am**

A new bonus for Pasadena Audubon Society members is the chance to sign up for birdwalks on the beautiful Huntington Library grounds. Your membership is current, isn't it? If not see the Application Form on Page 9 or on our website.

Thanks to the persistent efforts of several members, and especially Huntington curator Dan Lewis, we are scheduling walks for the fourth Sunday of the month. Attendance is by reservation only and limited to 15 PAS members. There will be chances to see some of the "back country" areas.

Contact Elaine MacPherson by email (preferred) or phone. Please put Huntington in your subject line so you don't get deleted! We know that many of you will want to come, so don't delay and be understanding as we start this new project.

Note: Reservations will be taken only for the month you call or write. No advance reservations. Elaine and Dan will co-lead and other leaders may also participate.

*Elaine MacPherson & Dan Lewis*

### **Ventura County**

**Saturday, October 8, 2005**

**7:00 am – early afternoon**

We're going to start off by scoping for seabirds from an excellent coastal promontory. The morning will continue as we head into Ventura County and bird through some of the well-known migrant traps. We'll hit Sycamore Canyon, the sod farms, and a few other places that will give us a good day of birding.

Bring a scope and meet in the beach parking lot of Leo Carrillo State Beach at 7:00 am. We'll finish in the early afternoon. Admission to Leo Carrillo is \$5.

*Jon Feenstra*

### **Legg Lake, Peck Road Park, Livingstone-Graham Reservoir**

**Saturday, October 29, 2005**

**7:30 am—1:00 pm**

Join us for a mid-autumn trek to a trio of consistently good, water-enhanced birding spots. 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 lake that often hosts a wide variety of water birds, including grebes, ducks, gulls, tern, egrets, and shorebirds. The Livingstone-Graham Reservoir usually contains hundreds of ducks and gulls. There are almost always one or two Ospreys present, and one October trip produced breeding Clark's Grebes. Raptors are often seen at all three locations.

Contact leader for meeting place and directions.

*Ed Stonick*

### **North Slope of the San Gabriels**

**Sunday, November 20, 2005**

**7:45 am – all day**

On this trip we're going to visit some infrequently birded locations along the northern slope of the San Gabriel Mountains. In winter, the North Slope is excellent for finding birds that retreat from higher elevations. Additionally, this area collects birds that wander in from the north and rarely occur in the L.A. Basin. On last year's trip we saw Tundra Swan, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Swamp Sparrow, and a Scott's Oriole. If we have time we'll head out into the Antelope Valley to look for wintering raptors and longspurs.

Meet at 7:45 am at the Park & Ride on Ave S in Palmdale. Dress warm and be prepared for a full day of birding.

*Jon Feenstra*

### **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, September 20, 2005**  
**San Dimas Nature Center**

**Tuesday, October 18, 2005**  
**Eaton Canyon Nature Center**

Contact leaders if you need directions.

*Sid Heyman (626) 571-5991  
Madeline West (626) 574-0429*

## Calendar

*Submit material for the next Wrentit by October 1st*

### **September 2005**

Date	Day	Time	Event	Location	Leader *
3	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	Hahamonga Watershed Park	Ron Cyger
14	Wed	7:30 pm	Board Meeting	Pasadena Presbyterian Church	585 E. Colorado Bl. (at Madison)
17	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	California City & Galileo Hills	Nick & Mary Freeman
18	Sun	<b>8:00 am</b>	Field Trip	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
20	Tu	9:00 am	Magpie Group	San Dimas Nature Center	Sid Heyman & Madeline West
21	Wed	7:00 pm	General Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Program: ID Challenges
24	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Huntington Beach Central Park	Ron Cyger
25	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Huntington Library Gardens <i>(PAS Members Only)</i>	Elaine MacPherson & Dan Lewis

### **October 2005**

1	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	Hahamonga Watershed Park	Ron Cyger
		<b>10:00 am</b>	<b>Water Fest 2005</b>	<b>Arcadia County Park</b>	<b>Bev McKenzie/Lois Fulmer</b>
8	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	Ventura County	Jon Feenstra
12	Wed	7:30 pm	Board Meeting	Pasadena Presbyterian Church	585 E. Colorado Bl. (at Madison)
16	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
18	Tu	9:00 am	Magpie Group	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Sid Heyman & Madeline West
19	Wed	7:00 pm	General Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Program: Hooked on Hummingbirds
23	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Huntington Library Gardens <i>(PAS Members Only)</i>	Elaine MacPherson & Dan Lewis
29	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Legg Lake & Peck Road Park	Ed Stonick

### **November 2005**

<b>5/6 Sat/Sun All Day</b>	<b>Birdfest</b>	<b>Eaton Canyon Nature Center</b>	<b>Presented by</b>
			<b>Pasadena Audubon Society &amp; Eaton Canyon Nature Center</b>
9	Wed	7:30 pm	585 E. Colorado Bl. (at Madison)
15	Tu	9:00 am	Sid Heyman & Madeline West
16	Wed	7:00 pm	Program: Oiled Bird Rehabilitation
20	Sun	8:00 am	Hill Penfold
		7:45 am	Jon Feenstra
27	Sun	8:00 am	Elaine MacPherson & Dan Lewis <i>(PAS Members Only)</i>

### **\*Trip Leader Information**

<b>Jon Feenstra (Chair)</b>	<b>(626) 792-4346</b>	<b>FEENSTRA@ITS.CALTECH.EDU</b>
Larry Allen	(323) 221-2022	LARRYALLEN@EARLYMUSICLA.ORG
Lance Benner	(626) 791-1187	LBENNER@CHARTER.NET
Ron Cyger	(626) 449-3625 (before 9 pm)	RON@CYGER.ORG ( <i>preferred</i> )
Nick & Mary Freeman	(818) 247-6172	MNFREEMAN@EARTHLINK.NET
Sid Heyman	(626) 571-5991	
Dan Lewis	(626) 398-4805	DANOLEWIS@EARTHLINK.NET
Elaine MacPherson	(626) 355-9412	BIDERGRRL@AOL.COM
Hill Penfold	(626) 352-4954	HPENFOLD@BIGFOOT.COM
Mark Scheel	(626) 355-3938	SCHEEL@TAPIR.CALTECH.EDU
Ed Stonick	(626) 796-0595	STONICKS@EARTHLINK.NET
Madeline West	(626) 574-0429	MADEBILL@EARTHLINK.NET

## Field Trip Reports

### Huntington Library Monthly Walk

Sunday, May 22, 2005

*Editor's Note: This was posted on our Yahoo Group. For those of you who didn't get to read it, here's a report on this monthly walk from someone who isn't a Trip Leader.*

Hello everyone. Had the opportunity to do two of my passions today at the same time (snap photos...of birds!).

The Pasadena Audubon Society had its monthly bird walk today at the Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens with eight people. Coleaders Dan Lewis and Elaine MacPherson led the way to the Yellow-headed Parrots, Red-whiskered Bulbuls, Pacific-slope Flycatchers, Band-tailed Pigeons, Yellow-chevroned Parakeets, Hooded Orioles, Acorn Woodpeckers, California Towhees, Allen's and Anna's Hummingbirds, Mockingbirds, Brown-headed Cowbirds, California Quail (heard), Song Sparrow, House Finches and a few others.

Although somewhat hot, the trails had plenty of shade to keep cool under. I must say that this was quite a treat because of the birds seen and the people who came along.

A well-deserved THANK YOU to Dan (Lewis) and Elaine (MacPherson) for their professionalism and relaxed manner of leading the walk.

Photos will be in the Pasadena Star-News Monday edition. (See article below)

Raul Roa



### Eye on the birds

Huntington Gardens reveals the exotic in birdland

Members of the Pasadena Audubon Society recently took a field trip to the Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens in San Marino. They were able to see many different types of birds, including several species of parrots, as well as many other exotic birds from around the world.



### Santa Barbara County

June 18, 2005

We had a beautiful day of birding in Santa Barbara County on Saturday, and did especially well with land birds, including a few that are not (or are seldom) found near Pasadena.

We began at Lake Los Carneros near Goleta, where we had flyover White-tailed Kites from the parking lot. There were many orioles (both Hooded and Bullocks), and a great opportunity to study the song difference between Purple and House Finches. At the lake, a Least Bittern was calling nearby the entire time we were there, but remained hidden in the reeds. On the way back to the parking lot, we had great looks at two tiny juvenile Warbling Vireos; one looked like it couldn't have been out of the nest for long. Several of us got good pictures.

We moved on to Nojoqui Falls Park, where we heard a singing male Northern Parula at the park entrance before we got out of the cars; we followed it around across the road near the group picnic area and everyone got reasonable looks. At Nojoqui we also had fantastic looks at many Purple Martins that are nesting in the large Sycamores at the east end of the park. In the field just east of the park, a Yellow-billed Magpie posed for us on a fence and in the middle of the road, while Martins still circled overhead.

We then went to the coast for the afternoon. A Bonaparte's Gull at Goleta Beach was a bit unusual for this time of year. Also at Goleta Beach were nesting Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets, and a juvenile Belted Kingfisher and parents.

We ended the day at Coal Oil Point in Goleta, where we saw nesting Snowy Plovers and a handful of Whimbrels and Long-billed Curlews. Jon scoped a distant Pink-footed Shearwater and many even more distant Shearwaters that were most likely Sootys.

At around 4:00 pm we were excited for a few seconds by several individuals of "Sternia antillarum bogotensis", an extremely sedentary subspecies of Least Tern that spends all its time sitting on the beach and not moving. They are made of wood (or was it plastic?), and presumably put out to encourage real Least Terns (which we did not see) to nest in the area. At that point, we decided we were all tired and we quit for the day, with a total of 78 species. Good Birding,

Mark Scheel

### Buckhorn Campground, San Gabriel Mountains

Saturday, July 9, 2005

An announcement of our Buckhorn trip in the *Outdoor Section* of the Los

Angeles Times added several first-time birders with Pasadena Audubon to our complement of regulars for a total attendance of 24! The weather, as usual, was very pleasant, and the birding, while slow, turned out to be equally pleasant.

The parking lot and nearby stream seemed fairly devoid of birds at first, so we strolled through the campground and exit roadway. There were the usual Violet-green Swallows flitting through the trees, and the Steller's Jays and occasional Raven announcing their presence. Juvenile Juncos and Bluebirds were seen here and there. Soon we were serenaded by a treetop Fox Sparrow. We saw several Western Wood-Peewees, including one on a nest just off the Burkhart Trail. A couple of Dusky Flycatchers were seen in the trees along the exit road. These were joined by several Pine Siskins and a Brown Creeper, two birds which aren't always present here in the breeding season. A few Purple Finches sang, and after a time they were joined by a MacGillivray's Warbler, which was cooperative enough to give everyone a goodlook. Woodpecker numbers were down, but we finally got a nice look at a Red-breasted Sapsucker. We initially missed the Green-tailed Towhee but got close-up views of a pair near the conclusion on the trip. We ended the morning with about 33 species.

Ed Stonick

### Piute Ponds

Saturday, August 6, 2005

Fifteen people joined Jon Feenstra on another hot summer day in the Antelope Valley to go find some fall migrant shorebirds. As we entered Edwards Air Force Base we discovered an adult and a juvenile Peregrine Falcon surveying the situation from the crossbeams of power line poles. A worthy start. We made a few brief stops for things like Yellow-headed Blackbird and Loggerhead Shrike but began our first real birding once we reached the water. Kathleen Principe asked nicely if we'd be able to connect with her curse bird – Semipalmented Sandpiper. She had hardly finished the sentence when we were watching a juvenile poke around in the mud on the side of the road. We bumped into that bird several more times throughout the morning. We picked up a Long-billed Curlew, both Short-billed and Long-billed Dowitchers, and some disappointingly distant Black Terns. At least one Bank Swallow was winging around, too. The deeper northern ponds were, in their usual fashion, a bustling metropolis of Eared Grebes, Ruddy Ducks and Redhead. In the brush

(see Field Trips Reports, page 9)

## Birdfest Presenters

*Note: at press time, we didn't have biographical information available on all the presenters and field trip leaders. Here is a partial list:*

**Larry Allen** has done extensive work on the status and distribution of the birds in Los Angeles County. He's perhaps best known for helping legions of frustrated birders try to sort out the gulls. During the Birdfest, Larry will speak on the progress, discoveries, and surprises of the Los Angeles Breeding Bird Atlas. In addition, Larry will lead a workshop and a follow-up field trip on the birds that bring more questions than any other – the wild parrots of the San Gabriel Valley.

**Lance Benner** is an astronomer at JPL, specializing in radar imaging of near-Earth asteroids. His research involves frequent trips to the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico, where he often hears the gentle trilling and maniacal “laughter” of Puerto Rican Screech Owls.

Eleven species of owls have been recorded in Los Angeles County and nine of them breed locally. Lance will present an overview of owl biology, the amazing adaptations that enable them to survive, and descriptions, images, and recordings of each species. He will describe the geographic distribution of each species using results from The Los Angeles Breeding Bird Atlas (to which he contributed owl observations) and give specific locations where each species has been recorded.

**Jon Feenstra** is an outstanding birder and the Field Trip Chair of Pasadena Audubon Society. Jon set the record for most species seen in LA County in one year and recently was part of a team that broke the record for the number of species in 24 hours! Jon obviously enjoys a birding challenge – so join the fun and try to stump him and his colleagues on Saturday evening during the expert panel and quiz of challenging bird identification slides.

**Jon Fisher's** interest in birding started in 1976 with the sight of a flock of Band-tailed Pigeons. Since then, he has spent thousands of hours birding his native southern California and elsewhere. His specific areas of interest are field identification and the status & distribution of southern California birds. Jon has presented and co-presented a number of programs on bird ID for Pasadena Audubon. He compiles the weekly Los Angeles Rare Bird Alert and has been the co-coordinator & compiler for the Pasadena/San Gabriel Valley Christmas Bird Count for the past 15 years.

**Mary Freeman** has been birding since she was eight years old, and leading trips for local Audubon Chapters since 1979. She

holds a BA degree in Art Design, and illustrates birds and designs jewelry when she has the time. She has enjoyed birding in Central and South America, Alaska and all four corners of the lower 48 states. She is currently working on a study of the Northern Saw-whet Owl in our local mountains.

Birds can be very hard to see well, and nobody has eyes in the back of their head, so good birders let their ears do most of the work! This workshop will provide you with some basic skills and techniques to hone, and some practice implementing them. During the Sunday morning walk around Eaton Canyon (separate registration required) Mary will be pointing out some of the telling differences that separate our local chaparral species. Her motto in learning bird songs and calls is “leave no chip unturned”!

Bring a field guide and a notebook to take notes during Saturday's lecture.

**Kimball Garrett** has been the Ornithology Collections Manager at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County since 1982. A lifelong Californian, he has banded actively in the state for over thirty years and has also traveled widely. He and Jon Dunn co-authored “Birds of Southern California: Status and Distribution” in 1981; they have also produced several works on bird identification, including the Peterson Field Guide to Warblers of North America. Kimball is a long-serving member of the California Bird Records Committee and a recent past member of the American Birding Association’s Checklist Committee. He has also served as president of Western Field Ornithologists. Among his research interests are the patterns of establishment and ecology of naturalized populations of non-native (“exotic”) birds in urban California and various aspects of the field identification, status, distribution, and geographical variation of the birds of California and adjacent regions.

**Trude E. Hurd** is a marine biologist with an interest in local birds and wetlands. She grew up in Downey, California along a concrete riverbed, and credits climbing her backyard Sycamore tree to watch Red-tailed Hawks as sparking an early, life-long interest in nature. She is an experienced environmental educator from her ten years at CSU Fullerton, five years with the Amigos de Bolsa Chica, and the last fourteen years with Sea & Sage Audubon at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary. Also dedicated to field research, she has volunteered with local bat research, NABA butterfly censuses, and MAPS stations.

She has taught basic feather identification workshops for both adults and children, using hands-on activities to help them to understand feather biology and to identify feathers found in local parks and wilderness areas. Participants even learn to determine

whether a pile of feathers is natural or a crime scene!

**Michael Klein** is a biologist working with a small business in San Diego. He has been involved with butterflies for more than forty years and has a hopelessly infectious passion for them. He also enjoys watching other insects, especially pollinators and how they interact with the rest of Nature. One of his favorite phrases is, “BUGS is not a dirty four letter word.”

**Gabi and Cliff McLean** are long-time docent-naturalists at the Eaton Canyon Nature Center. They have focused much of their attention on the native plants of the San Gabriel Mountains. Cliff and Gabi are active in the California Native Plant Society and the Sierra Club-Natural Science Section. They created a unique and very popular natural history resource *Common Plants of Eaton Canyon and the San Gabriel Foothills: Field Guide on CD*, which is sold at nature centers, botanic gardens, and bookstores around the region.

Five years ago, the McLeans took out their front and back lawns and replaced them with local native plants, in part to provide habitat for birds and butterflies. Their yard is now a small representation of the coastal sage scrub environment that they regularly hike in. They have shared their experiences with their native plant garden with several groups in southern California, and as far away as Humboldt County. You can find out more at their website: [WWW.NATUREATHAND.COM](http://WWW.NATUREATHAND.COM).

**Mike San Miguel** is a native of the San Gabriel Valley, and has been birding for over 40 years. He is immediate past president of Western Field Ornithologists and just finished a second term on the California Bird Records Committee. For many years he was a master bird bander and has served as President of the Western Bird Banding Association. Mike was on the team that set the Los Angeles County big day record of 215 species in April of this year.

He has traveled extensively through Central and South America and if not birding in his beloved California you will likely find him somewhere in Mexico. His favorite family of birds is shorebirds but any birds will do as long as he is out somewhere with a pair of binoculars hanging around his neck.

**Jane Strong** writes about the natural history of the San Gabriel Mountains. She likes roaming the local mountains observing and sharing her knowledge of birds, butterflies and plants. Jane likes to work behind the scenes. She's well-known to many of us as the webmistress of many local web sites, including our own PAS site.

## Field Trip Reports *(continued)*

around ponds we saw a few fall migrant landbirds – Yellow Warblers, a Western Tanager, and a Black-headed Grosbeak.

A few minutes on the road brought us to the always-enjoyable and often fragrant Lancaster Sewage Ponds. Although few peeps were present, we were treated to multiple Snowy Plovers and a flock of several hundred Wilson's and Red-necked Phalaropes. Perhaps the oddest bird of the trip was spotted by Frank Gilliland – “What’s that white bird?” It turned out to be a nearly albino Eared Grebe, dubbed the “Weird” Grebe by one raucous birder. It was completely white except for its dark bill and truly a sight to behold. We finished the day up at about 1:00 pm at the flood control basin on the side of the 14 Freeway. We checked out a few more peeps and retreated back over the mountains into the comfortable double-digit temperatures with 71 species tallied.

*Jon Feenstra*

## Donations Update

As of July 31, 2005, PAS has received \$1,718 in donations. We want to thank the following donors who contributed during between April and July:

Dottie Ecker

Ellen Griffin (by Betty Garoutte)  
Suzanne Martin  
Karen Mateer  
Robert Meade  
Camille Rutkowski

## 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..*

Currently, we have about 150 chapter-only members as well as several generous donors. We thank you all for your support!

## Eat a Cookie, Help a Condor

### Roots & Shoots Fourth Annual Lemonade/Bake Sale for Birds

Sunday, October 9, 2:00P ??– 4:00

pm

711 S. Mentor Avenue  
Pasadena (near Lake and California)

Delicious baked goods, fresh coffee  
and tasty lemonade

All proceeds go to  
Peregrine Fund  
Operation Migration  
The Nature Conservancy

Questions?  
Contact Laura Garrett  
(626) 564-1890 or  
PURPLECOW@JPS.NET

## Water Fest 2005

Pasadena Audubon is taking part in Water Fest 2005, a day of fun and information sponsored by the Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District. The theme is *Water Wise Gardens* and featuring native plant demonstration gardens and workshops by the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden. Birders will find this particularly interesting because native plant gardens are one of the best ways to attract birds.

### FREE EVENT

**Saturday, October 1, 2005**

**10:00 am until 2:00 pm**

**Arcadia County Park**

**Huntington Dr. at Santa Anita Ave.  
Arcadia**

Aquarium on Wheels

Wild Animals Native to  
San Gabriel River Watershed

FREE food/snacks/treats/drinks

Contests

Free raffle tickets on a high efficiency clothes washer and other water-efficient items

PAS will have an information booth to hand out brochures and answer questions. *Can you give an hour of your time to help us staff the booth? If you can, contact*

Bev McKenzie (626) 355-9842 or  
Lois Fulmer (626) 7989-1606

## PLEASE!! Prune NOW!!

Before the nesting season! Because we love our birds and trees!

The urban environment we enjoy is unique and very important to our feathered friends. Birds nest in the bushes and trees in our yards between February and August. Your trees will appreciate a moderate pruning (when needed)

*Sea and Sage Audubon*

## Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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### Donor's address for gift membership:

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### Yearly Membership for Individual or Family

PAS Chapter Only       \$20  \$35\*  Other \_\_\_\_\_

\* Plus Chapter Pin and Tee Shirt (not Centennial shirt)

\$15 Senior/Full-time Student

Donation       \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable and mail to:

**Pasadena Audubon Society, 1750 N. Altadena Drive, Pasadena, CA 91107**

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**Kid's Corner**

# How to Have a Successful Birdathon

**B**y now, you probably have heard about how my family and I once again raised over \$2,000 for Birdathon this year. Perhaps, some readers have wondered how we do it.

Our most important strategy is collecting as many sponsors as possible. We ask practically everybody that we know and tell them that no amount is too small. To encourage people to pledge more, we offer those who pledge \$0.25 or more per species a homemade bookmark. Those who pledge \$0.50 or more per species receive a bookmark and one of my drawings or photographs. We usually end up with over 90 sponsors, which is good

## New Members

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

**Alhambra:** Canon Hultgren, Jennifer Leung, John Ritchie, J. Ruggles, Joshua Yu; **Altadena:** Chris Bowns, Kathy Cady, Christoph Considine, Joanne Gram, Robert Hilton, Marjorie Jackson, Jim & Jan Manolis, J. McKibben, C.J. McLaughlin, Melva Newman, Lee Starke, Joyce Thoeni, Sheila Woodson; **Arcadia:** Elbert Anderson, Amy Beckstrom, Virginia Callan, Les Carnahan, Arthur Cohen, Richard Davis, Roberta Firth, N. Frear, Randy Frye, Gwen Makowski, M. Meason, Jon Medina, H. Norundzayan, Bruce Patnou; **Azusa:**

## Pasadena Audubon Society Board

President	Will Fulmer	(626) 798-1606
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Membership	Lois Fulmer	(626) 798-1606

Pasadena Audubon Society

1750 N. Altadena Drive  
Pasadena, CA 91107

because one or two of them won't remember to pay. That's okay because usually a few of the really nice sponsors even pay extra.

Each member of my family contributes to our successful Birdathon day. While we all discuss where to go, when to go and what species we should see, it's my dad who does most of the actual planning for the day. My sister, although not exactly a serious birder, has very good eyes and often finds camouflaged birds. My mom is the main one in charge of money, but she also helps to identify some of the species, and, more importantly, keeps a list for the day. I, though, am the crazy one. I'm the one who will put up with any smell or any insect just to identify some bird that's half

a mile away, or sit up all night on a rock and wait for that Common Poorwill to call (while the others sit in the car eating snacks or dozing off), or strain my eyes to scan all the gulls and shorebirds to get one bird, no matter what the temperature.

Each of us has a part to play, and all four of us contribute to our Birdathon success. This year, we found 122 species in eight locations: our house, Piute Ponds, Apollo Park, Placerita Canyon, Sepulveda Basin, Balboa Lake, Malibu Lagoon, and the San Gabriel Mountains. And now that you know some of our secrets, maybe I'll have some fundraising competition at the next Birdathon, other than, of course, Ron's empty challenges.

John F. Garrett

Gloria Herrera, Charles Peacock; **Duarte**:  
Angela Fontes, Melissa Rankin, Renee  
Smith; **La Cañada Flintridge**: Anthony  
Portantino, Liang Wen; **Marina Del Rey**:  
David DeLange; **Monrovia**: Roger  
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*The Wrentit* is published by the Pasadena Audubon Society  
1750 N. Altadena Dr., Pasadena, CA. 91107

Editor	Beverly McKenzie	(626) 355-9842
Assistant Editor	Mark Hunter	(818) 957-5044
Desktop Publishing	Donald G. Rogers	(626) 286-2546
Printing	Pasadena Print Stop	(626) 577-0510
Wrentit Mailing	Alex Strong	(626) 799-3364

Pasadena Audubon Society Chapter only-\$20. *Wrentit* subscription only-1 year \$10. National Audubon Society membership fees--\$35. National members receive *Audubon* magazine and *The Wrentit*. Messages or queries for Pasadena Audubon may be left at (626) 355-9412. For change of NAS address call: (800) 274-4201.

DATED MATERIAL

Non-profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
No. 1880  
Pasadena, CA



*Printed on  
50% recycled paper*