



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.*

June–September 2016

Common Yellowthroat

Hello, fellow birdwatchers. Out there, in the reeds, is a small and hard-to-spot warbler called the Common Yellowthroat. These warblers are only 5 inches long with an 8-inch wingspan. The males of these pretty little birds have a gorgeous yellow throat and chest, but there are many geographical differences, and the ones in Southern California are a bit brighter and have yellow underparts, too. They also have a brownish yellow wash across their flanks and a large black mask across their face with a white eyebrow above it. The females actually prefer the males with bigger black masks. They have an olive/brown back, and radiant green wings which are short and rounded, typical of a short distance migrant. The males are almost unmistakable. The females are more drab but still have the yellow throat and chest, but not as bright. The immature male has a more faded mask and is just a bit duller, and the immature female is almost completely brown. The song is a loud wichey, wichey, wichey, so listen for that in wet areas. Being warblers, they are incredibly energetic and constantly defend their territory from other males or possible threats. The males are usually monogamous but sometimes polygamous. Their diet consists of mostly insects, spiders, caterpillars, and sometimes seeds. They also like to hover-glean bugs out of the air.



Photo: Royal Young

They make their nests in reeds, weeds, cattails, or a small shrub, located less than 3 feet off the ground. They have learned to build roofs on top (so the nests seem to be turned on their side). Nests are made out of dried grasses, dried leaves, stems, bark chips, and sedges, and are lined with fine grasses, hair and bark fibers. The nest is built by the female, and she has 3 to 6 creamy white eggs which are speckled with black, gray, or brown, and more color is usually on the larger end. They are oval or short oval shaped. The female incubates the eggs for 12 days. The young are altricial and are brooded by the female. The babies stay in the nest 8 to 10 days and are fed by both sexes. These birds have two broods per year with one female, but will have more if polygamous.

I love these birds a lot, and feel lucky when I see one. Even though they are considered one of the most numerous warblers they still face threats to their survival, including habitat destruction, stream channelization, cowbird parasitism, wetland drainage, and predators. In addition, an audible bird call should

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President's Perch

May Gray giving way to June Gloom is one of the ways I know summer isn't too far off. For as long as I can remember PAS hasn't really done too many organized activities over the summer months but 2016 will be different. We will have a few Young Birder activities, a Birding 101 class, a fun movie night at Eaton Canyon, and a tour of the labs at The Natural History Museum led by Kimball Garrett. I hope you can join us for one or all of these events — dates aren't finalized for NHM and the movie, so please check the web site and your email for details. Summer really is for the birds!

Don't forget to put Saturday, June 18th on your calendar for our annual year-end dinner held at Eaton Canyon. We will award the Crow Cup to a member who has made a big difference to PAS and it is always a big surprise to see who will win. The food is good and everyone has the floor for 5 minutes to share the photos they took over the past year.

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June Dinner

That's a Wrap

Saturday, June 18, 2016
6:00 pm—9:00 pm

The PAS fiscal year starts July 1 and ends June 30 each year. Come celebrate another very successful year of our chapter reaching out to the community, defending our local habitat, and supporting outstanding birders. The dinner features delicious catered food from Stonefire Grill, beer and wine, great conversations, prize drawings, and a chance to meet newly elected officers for the 2016-2017 year. Bring your bird photos on a USB drive (limit: 5 minutes' worth) for viewing by your fellow members. It's a good deal at \$20 per person. **You must RSVP; to reserve your spots**, mail a check to PAS, attention June Dinner, at the address shown on the back cover of the newsletter.

Summer Events

PAS goes on a reduced schedule of events during the months of July and August. Note, however, that this July there will be a Birding 101 session – see the announcement on page 3. This is an invaluable class for beginning birders. Monthly trips for the Huntington Library and Hahamongna are suspended, but will resume in September. The other monthly trips, to the Arboretum, to Eaton Canyon, and to Chilao, continue through the summer, as do a few other field trips.



A Motley, but dedicated, Crew in Rubio Canyon on May 14. See page 3.

September Program

Building ID Skills

Wednesday, September 16, 2015
7:30 pm—9:00 pm

Jon Fisher and Mickey Long

In birding there's perhaps nothing more frustrating than being unable to identify what you are looking at. Many species are simple IDs, but others can confuse us and challenge us. It's perplexing, but interesting.

In this program we'll take a look at a number of these similar species and discuss how to tell them apart. We'll also cover the vocalizations, seasonal status and behavior that often offer clues to identification. Almost all birders strive to maintain "clean" lists and to make accurate eBird entries. To that end, it's always helpful to review field marks and perhaps learn some new ones.

This time, we'll use **your actual photos** as examples during the talk. Email your confusing photos to mlongbird@gmail.com by September 7 or sooner.

General meetings are held at Eaton Canyon Nature Center (address on back cover). Refreshments and socializing begin at 7:00 pm and programs are presented from 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm. Occasionally programs for youth begin at 6:45 pm; check the announcements.

Conservation

Polystyrene Ban Update

Birders! We did it! May 9, the Pasadena City Council voted unanimously to ban polystyrene takeout containers, cups, and single-use ice chests. Hip hip hooray!

Thank you for all you do!
 Good birding,

Laura Garrett

PAS Habitat Restoration

PAS hosted our first big community event on April 16 with a cleanup of Peck Pit. About 40 adventurous birders, students, and community members came together to help protect and preserve a beautiful birding spot.

Disintegrating Styrofoam, plastic cups, fishing line, cigarette butts, bottle caps...the north beach at Peck Road Water Conservation Park was not in good shape when we arrived. Not only is the litter unsightly, but it can be dangerous for our bird friends. Grebes, coots, stilts, and egrets feed in the water or along the shores, risking entanglement and accidental ingestion. Warblers, sparrows, and finches that nest and live in the nearby brush can pick up toxins from foraging in the trash or become tangled in discarded string or floss.

Volunteers braved the precarious scramble down to the

beach, or stayed on the service road to scour for microtrash. Two hours later, the hard work had definitely paid off, and the area looked so much better. Some top finds for the day included a playground slide, a port-a-potty door, and several small mammal skulls and turtle shells.

Finally, after a job well done, everyone relaxed in the



Continued on page 3

History

Pasadena Audubon's First Bird Walk

Pasadena Audubon (PAS) was founded as a reaction to the wholesale slaughtering of birds by hunters. Conservation of bird-life and interesting children in bird studies was the focus. Meetings, usually in someone's home, consisted of a lecture or study about a particular bird together with refreshments and music.

The modern concept of birding was not part of the picture. In fact, although founded in 1904, PAS did not even have a meeting outdoors until April 17, 1909. This occurred in the Arroyo Seco. 22 bird species were seen, the most notable of which was the russet-backed (Swainson's) thrush.

With the development in the early 20th century of binoculars suitable for birding, and of appropriate pocketable guidebooks, birding as a pleasurable pursuit became possible.

On May 26, 1911, PAS had its first actual bird-walk – 7 years after it was founded. PAS member Mrs. H. W. Myers invited all interested to join her in a bird "ramble" (i.e. a walk taken for pleasure). 35 people went on this trip. No record of where this took place or of birds found is known to exist, possibly due to the loss of PAS records in the 1993 Eaton Canyon fire. However, we have Laura B. Daniels, PAS member and Curator of the Pasadena Historical Society, to thank for what information we have. In 1938 she made a summary of the first 25 years of PAS which she read to the Society on August 25, 1938. Also thanks to the estate of the late Don Rogers for saving this summary for us.

Ira Blitz

Education

Birding 101

Birding provides enjoyment and challenge throughout life. Birding gets you outdoors in your neighborhood or around the world. Birding increases your ability to observe and appreciate the world around you. And finally, Birding is just gosh darn fun! So, why would you put off learning how to be a better birder any longer?

This class is designed for beginners, but all are welcome. We will cover identification, optics, field guides, note-taking, habitats, birding ethics, and many other topics. Class size is limited so don't delay!

Classroom sessions: July 12, 19, and 26 at 7:00 pm.

Field trips: July 16 and 23, from early morning to early afternoon. Location of the class and field trips will be sent to the class participants.

Cost: \$50 for Pasadena Audubon members, \$70 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.

Leaders: Ron Cyger and Mark Scheel

For questions or to make reservations, contact Mark and Ron at birding101@pasadenaaudubon.org.

Habitat Restoration, continued

shade with pizza and drinks...and of course, a little more birding.

We want to say a big THANK YOU to everyone who helped out with the Peck clean up, with special thanks to our friends from Cal State and the Sierra Club. We hope to see you again at future conservation events! The next event at Peck will likely happen in the fall.



Rubio Canyon

On May 14, PAS hosted a bird walk and habitat restoration project with the Arroyos and Foothills Conservancy. The morning was cool and cloudy and, while the bird count was a little low, we did get some great views of a Lazuli Bunting, California Thrasher, and a close encounter with some Allen's Hummingbirds being chased around by an Anna's near the native plant garden.



Following the bird walk volunteers enthusiastically removed mustard, oat grass, and tree tobacco from around the entrance to the Rubio trailhead. It requires consistent removal of these plants before they seed to allow the native plants a chance to get established. Those who stuck around to the end also got a short native plant hike and talk by Tim Martinez featuring the identification and uses of plants like golden yarrow, California everlasting, and white sage.

PAS members have been doing surveys on the AFC property in Rubio Canyon this spring, with the current species count up to 77 species! AFC has been doing a great job restoring the native habitat that supports the birds, and we were happy to help with this big task.

Kym Buzdygon

Birdathon Reports

This year's fundraiser brought in \$3300 for good causes! Here are some stories from the field.

Team Early Bird

My dad and I started a little before 5:00 am on Saturday - that's why our team is called "Team Early Bird." We went to Malaga Cove early in the morning, and got Peacocks and a Great Horned Owl. Then we went to Madrona Marsh, and saw a few nice birds, with their babies, including Killdeer and Black-crowned Night Heron. We saw Tracy Drake, who steered us to a Swainson's Thrush. That was the first of three life birds. After Madrona Marsh, we went to Ballona, and visited both the fresh- and salt-water marshes. We saw Black Oystercatcher and all the California coastal tern species. We saw life bird #2 - Least Tern, as well as the beautiful Eared Grebe, and a Pacific Loon, both species in full breeding plumage. We heard some Vireos, but had to wait until later to lay eyes on them. In the freshwater marsh, we picked up life bird #3, the appropriately named "Cinnamon Teal".

After a quick lunch, accompanied by some lurking Great-tailed Grackles, we headed down to the South Bay Botanic Garden, and saw some great Lego models, and a Pacific-slope Flycatcher. Our final stop was George F Canyon, where we found Wilson's Warbler, House Wren, Warbling Vireo, and Spotted Towhee. It was a lot of fun! We saw 86 species, including three life birds, and we raised \$166 for the PAS Birdathon fundraiser!

Calvin Bonn

Calvin recently turned 10 years old, and has been birding a little under two years. He got interested in birds through some books he found at the library. One morning, while taking the dog to the dog park, Calvin and dad ran into two folks birding. They joined them at the next opportunity, and he has been out as often as possible ever since. His favorite bird is the Harris' Hawk, although he has never seen one in the wild.

Irritable Owl Syndrome

On May 1, team "Irritable Owl Syndrome" covered the vast oceans, damp marshes, grassy parks, majestic mountains, windy deserts, and urban streets of Los Angeles County on a 21-hour birdathon. Our mission: to identify (by sight or sound) as many species of birds as possible in a single day, in Los Angeles County.

We met early enough to be in the mountains at midnight to look for owls, and continued on a route designed to take us through a large number of different habitats in the smallest amount of time, in order to maximize the bird diversity we would encounter. It was a tight, packed schedule. Most stops lasted only a few minutes, and sometimes even less (like our drive-by Burrowing Owls), but we stopped longer at key locations like Piute Ponds. We had only one stop that wasn't for birds: a gas station fillup at mid-day. On this mad quest we drove a total of 528 miles, which isn't exactly green, but at least we were in a Prius.

Team "Irritable Owl Syndrome" was Jon Feenstra, Dan Maxwell, Janet Scheel, and myself. We ended with 205 ABA species, plus 3 non-ABA birds (Lilac-crowned Parrot, Yellow-chevrons Parakeet, and Egyptian Goose), for a total of 208 species. Highlights included Solitary Sandpiper, Spotted Owl,

Northern Saw-whet Owl, Lewis's Woodpecker, Least Bittern, Greater Roadrunner, and Clark's Nutcracker. And Scaly-breasted Munia was a first for us on Birdathon. Although it is a common species, a leucistic Northern Mockingbird that was almost completely snow-white prompted the only appearance of a camera all day. But the best bird of the day was a sheep: at one point a Desert Bighorn Sheep came walking toward us down an impossible slope, and headed straight for a bush that it had picked out for lunch. This was a life sheep subspecies for two of our team members.

Lowlights included an unplanned locked gate, an unusually birdless Apollo Park that had been vacated by the hordes of migrants present the previous day, and the "erase and factory reset" that I somehow triggered on my cellphone while it was in my pocket.

And inevitably here it is, the "list of shame": every year there are a few "easy" birds that we unexpectedly miss because of haste, running out of time, or just plain bad luck. This year our most embarrassing miss was Townsend's Warbler, which we have never missed before on Birdathon, followed closely by Nashville Warbler and Warbling Vireo.

We thank our sponsors very much, and we had a great time doing it!

Mark Scheel

Team Big Sit

We had a splendidly successful day. We gathered at our meeting spot near restroom #7 at Legg Lake, with the fearless leader only 20 minutes late this time. Not bad! Some team members were already there, while others came later. Team members included Elizabeth Cordero, Mark Hunter, Jan and Mickey Long, Elaine MacPherson, Carol Smith, Eileen Burton, Ira Blitz, Kym Buzdygon, Sylvia Stachura, and yours truly.

While other teams were racing all over LA County, we were sitting, standing, and strolling around the lakes, enjoying the lovely cool morning and counting birds.

We got most of the usual suspects, like swarms of Vaux's Swifts and Tree Swallows, nesting Great Blue Herons and Double-crested Cormorants, and Canada Geese with goslings. Warbler numbers were low, and we missed Wilson's, Townsend's, and Nashville. But we were delighted to see Warbling, Cassin's, and Hutton's Vireos, along with Bullock's and Hooded Orioles, and large flocks of Cedar Waxwings. We were delighted to see a flock of Whimbrels fly overhead, a Whittier Narrows first for us. We were also delighted to see two Eared Grebes in full breeding plumage, and mesmerized by a Peregrine Falcon diving to catch a Rock Pigeon. The falcon failed. Lucky pigeon! Disturbing was the never-ending stream of Great-tailed Grackles, each one carrying a fecal sac. We think they were disposing of them in the lake. Ew.

In the end, we counted 66 species, a record for the Big Sit. It's not too late to donate! We welcome your money, and it's all for two good causes: education programs at the Audubon Center at Debs Park and youth scholarships for the WFO conference. Thank you!

Laura Garrett

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Field Trips

Buckhorn Campground

Saturday, June 4, 2016

7:00 am — noon

Buckhorn Campground comprises some of the most lush, scenic and easily accessible mountain habitat in the San Gabriel Mountains. The high elevation forest with a running stream (I hope...) is a great place to find the typical breeding birds of the mountains. Species like White-headed Woodpecker, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Dusky Flycatcher, Brown Creeper, MacGillvray's Warbler, Green-tailed Towhee, and Thick-billed Fox Sparrow are regular. Golden-crowned Kinglet, American Dipper, Hermit Warbler, and Cassin's Finch are sometimes present, as well. We'll start at the Burkhart Trailhead below the campground and bird our way up through the campground and along the access roads. We may also do some exploring in the area stopping at Islip Saddle and Cortleyou Springs or perhaps some highway turnouts in the vicinity.

Meet in the parking area for the Burkhart Trailhead at 7:00 am. The lot is reached by driving through the campground and following the signs. A National Forest Adventure Pass is required or you may receive a \$5 ticket.

Jon Feenstra

Throop Peak

Saturday, June 11, 2016

7:30am—1:00 pm

Join us as we explore one of the highest altitude trails in the San Gabriel Mountains during the peak time of year for montane birds. We'll hike at a leisurely pace to the summit of Throop Peak (elevation: about 9100 feet) as we search for Williamson's Sapsucker, White-headed Woodpecker, Dusky Flycatcher, Clark's Nutcracker, Townsend's Solitaire, Red Crossbill, and other montane species.

Meet at Dawson Saddle at mile 69.6 on the Angeles Crest

Highway, about 45 miles from I-210 in La Canada. Bring plenty of water, lunch, sunscreen, bug repellent, sturdy shoes, a hat, a coat, and an Adventure Pass. The hike is about five miles round-trip with possible snow patches; a few sections are steep, and all of it is at altitudes in excess of 7900 feet. Please carpool and plan for about 90 minutes to drive up from Pasadena.

Lance Benner

Lower L.A. River

Saturday, August 6, 2016

8:00 am — noon

August is about the peak of shorebird migration as wintering birds return and transients pass through. Be prepared for anything, but if your shorebird ID skills are rusty we will spend as much time as necessary on the more common species to get everyone comfortable with them.

Take the 710 (Long Beach) Fwy south to the Willow Street offramp, head east across the L.A. River, and take the first left on Golden Ave, the first left again on 26th, and follow 26th past the pump station onto DeForest Ave. Park near the river access by the bridge and meet the group along the river at 8:00. We will bird until noon and may visit the Dominguez Gap Wetlands if time permits.

Larry Allen

Field trips continue on page 8!

Eaton Canyon Monthly Walk

Sunday, June 19, 2016

Sunday, July 17, 2016

Sunday, August 21, 2016

8:00 am — 11:00 am

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

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

Hill Penfold



Hahamongna Monthly Walk

Saturday, September 3, 2016

7:30 am — 11:30 am

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

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

Darren Dowell



Huntington Library Monthly Walk

Sunday, September 25, 2016

8:00 am — 11:00 am

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

For reservations contact me (see bottom of calendar page) by email (preferred), or by phone.

Mark Hunter



 = Wrentit Club!

Calendar
 Submit material for the next Wrentit by August 1

 = Wrentit Club
 Count Circle!

June 2016

4	Sat	7:00 am	Field Trip		Buckhorn Campground	Jon Feenstra
8	Wed	5:00 pm	Birds 'n Beers		1770 E. Colorado Blvd.	See page 9
11	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip		County Arboretum	Julia Ray
11	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip		Throop Peak	Lance Benner
12	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip		Chilao Visitor Center	Hill Penfold
18	Sat	6:00 pm	Annual Dinner!		Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Everybody! See page 2
19	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip		Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
21	Tue	9:00 am	Magpie Study Group		Descanso Gardens	Julia Ray, Sid Heyman

Summer 2016

7/9	Sat	Evening	Field Trip		Black Swift Hunt	Luke Tiller (page 8)
7/9	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip		County Arboretum	Julia Ray
7/10	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip		Chilao Visitor Center	Hill Penfold
7/13	Wed	5:00 pm	Birds 'n Beers		1770 E. Colorado Blvd.	See page 9
7/17	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip		Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
8/6	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip		Lower L.A. River	Larry Allen
8/10	Wed	5:00 pm	Birds 'n Beers		1770 E. Colorado Blvd.	See page 9
8/13	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip		County Arboretum	Julia Ray
8/14	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip		Chilao Visitor Center	Hill Penfold
8/21	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip		Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold

September 2016

3	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip		Hahamongna	Darren Dowell
10	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip		County Arboretum	Julia Ray
10	Sat	6:30 am	Field Trip*		Piute Ponds & vicinity	Mark & Janet Scheel
11	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip		Chilao Visitor Center	Hill Penfold
14	Wed	5:00 pm	Birds 'n Beers		1770 E. Colorado Blvd.	See page 9
18	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip		Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
20	Tue	9:00 am	Magpie Study Group		Legg Lakes	Julia Ray, Sid Heyman
21	Wed	6:00 pm	General Meeting		Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Bird ID Workshop
25	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip*		Huntington Botanical Garden	Mark Hunter

* - reservations required, PAS members only

* Trip Leader Information

Mark Scheel (chair), (626) 765-5408, scheel@tapir.caltech.edu	Frank & Susan Gilliland, (626) 441-8487, gillilandsusan@gmail.com
Larry Allen, (626) 797-1810, larryallen@earlymusicla.org	Mark Hunter, (626) 344-8428, mark.hunter@pasadenaudubon.org
Lance Benner, (626) 791-1187, lbenner@charter.net	Mickey Long, (626) 285-8878, mstrongbird@charter.net
Ron Cyger, (626) 840-2566, ron@cyger.org (preferred)	Hill Penfold, (818) 352-4954, hpenfold@gmail.com
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Jon Fisher, (818) 800-2776, jonf60@hotmail.com	

Los Angeles County Breeding Bird Atlas

Long-Awaited Reference Book is Welcomed

The Los Angeles County Breeding Bird Atlas, to which many Pasadena Audubon members have contributed much time, many breeding bird sightings, and considerable financial support, is ready for the press.

This 660-page hardcover compendium addresses the 228 species found with evidence of breeding during the 1995–1999 Atlas survey period plus 18 additional historical, island-breeding, and post-Atlas breeding species. Our Atlas findings are based on over 28,000 records provided by over 300 volunteer observers contributing more than 10,000 hours of field effort.

The authors have supplemented this information by consulting extensive ornithological and paleontological literature, data from over 5600 egg-set records, and trend data

where to view the species in the county as well as information on seasonality and migration timing. Also included are paragraphs addressing the subspecies present here and conservation notes and threat assessments. Appendices include a list of all species recorded in the county as of spring 2015 and a list of Los Angeles County Sensitive Bird Species.

The Atlas introductory material includes a discussion of the county's geology, climate, habitats, and fire ecology; information on human impacts from pre-European contact until the present; the history of avian studies in the county; and a delightful essay on Pleistocene avifauna by Dr. Daniel A. Guthrie. The Foreword to the Atlas was written by our own Michael C. Long.

The Atlas was authored by Larry W. Allen and Kimball L. Garrett with maps by Mark C. Wimer. Jonathan Feenstra and Dexter Kelly furnished additional text and Ryan J. Harrigan furnished additional maps. The Atlas volume itself will be

Long-tailed Tits and Bushtits – Family Aegthalidae

BUSHTIT
Psaltriparus minimus
Species Sponsor: For Shirley Webster

Highly gregarious in the nonbreeding season, Bushtits forage in flocks of up to 40 at that time, maintaining flock cohesion by near-constant repetition of their *rar* or *grr* contact calls. Breeding birds in our area consist of pairs; in other parts of the range nest helpers (often unpaired males) may be common. The mating system of birds with nest helpers is unknown (Sloane 2001). The pendulous nest of this bird generally contains 6 to 10 eggs (wrvz records), although one exceptional nest with 15 eggs was collected in "del Rey" by Howsley (1935).

This species is resident in much of the Pacific and Great Basin west and in montane regions of the American Southwest, Mexico, and Guatemala. Birds in southern populations often exhibit a black cheek patch, and were formerly considered a distinct species: the "Black-eared Bushtit," *P. melanotis*. It is now known that this plumage is merely a color polymorphism with no taxonomical significance (Sloane 2001).

SEASONAL OCCURRENCE
Bushtit is a year-round resident. It is an irregular wanderer into the lowlands of the Antelope Valley in fall and winter.

SUBSPECIES
Los Angeles County appears to be in an area between the ranges of moderately pale nominate birds of the central California coast: the paler *californicus* of the inner Coast Ranges, Central Valley and western Sierra Nevada foothills south to Kern County; and darker *P. = melanotis* of northwestern Baja California and the San Diego region. Much study is needed to determine whether our birds represent two or more of these subspecies or whether they are an intermediate swarm.

HABITAT REQUIREMENTS
Year-round habitat. Range-wide, the habitat preferences of this species vary from montane forest to arid scrubland, with elevations in the interior ranging from ca. 180 to 3500 m. It is generally a bird of open woodland, concentrating in pinyon-juniper, pine-oak, and juniper-pine-oak associations, but will occupy open riparian growth in arid environments (Sloane 2001). Coastal California birds range down to sea level, and occupy dry chaparral and coastal sage scrub when intermixed with taller growth, oak and mixed-oak woodland, and pinyon-juniper woodland. This species has also adapted to residential plantings in suburban environments (Garrett 1995, Garrett and Dunn 1981, Grinnell and Miller 1944).

Nest placement. This bird builds its long, pendulous nest in a variety of trees and shrubs, depending upon the vegetative mix of the local environment. Nest heights can range

Breeding Evidence Summary
Reported from 300 of 400 blocks (75%); 534 records

Block confidence level	Confirmed	Probable	Possible
CO: 243 70%	NY: 19 3%	C: 11 2%	
PR: 36 12%	NE: 2 <1%	T: 11 2%	
PV: 65 20%	SE: 65 20%	P: 65 20%	
FS: 1 <1%	A: 2 <1%		
FL: 60 20%	M: 15 3%		
OR: 53 18%	Possible		
UN: 8 1%	S: 1 <1%		
NB: 146 47%	E: 88 16%		
PE: 2 <1%			

from 1 to 30 m, and nests may be placed near the trunk or in the outer vegetation of the supporting tree (Sloane 2001). California nests are said to be most typically in live oak, scrub oak, or ceanothus, but birds will also place nests in vines, willows, low-growing conifers, citrus trees in groves, and other ornamental trees and shrubs (Grinnell and Miller 1944). In the county, a strong preference for oak is evident, both in Atlas-period (14 of 38, 37%) and historical egg-set (50 of 95, 53%) data. Historically, willow also provided important substrate, with over a quarter (25, 26%) of county egg sets collected from nests in that tree. Additional nests have been recorded from a total of 19 named plant species in the county. The mean height reported for 87 county nests is 2.9 ± 1.2 m (s.d.c.m., wrvz records, BMS files).

Nonbreeding season. In winter, occasional vagrants (possibly young of the year) are found in desert lowlands, but there is little habitat information (Garrett and Dunn 1981, Sloane 2001).

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION
This species was documented in almost every block south of the Antelope Valley. It may be truly absent from

Long-tailed Tits and Bushtits – Family Aegthalidae

Bushtit

the highest portions of the San Gabriels (although elsewhere it nests at comparable elevations—ca. 3000 m), but it was undoubtedly overlooked in coastal slope blocks where it was not reported. A small population on Santa Catalina Island has not been recorded since 1905, and is believed extirpated (Jones and Collins in prep.).

ABUNDANCE
Atlas data: A substantial proportion of Atlas blocks (44%) were thought to contain more than 100 breeding pairs—in some cases substantially more. We think that an estimate near the midpoint of the range imputed from atlas estimates may be justified: about 60,000 to 80,000 pairs. OTHER DATA: Reports from areas sampled by eight mainland CBCs averaged over 3730 individuals per year during the five years period with the 100th count (BirdSource 2002).

Abundance Estimates

Code	Blocks
W (1–9)	21 (7%)
X (10–99)	151 (46%)
Y (100+)	137 (39%)

Found in 300 of 400 blocks (75%); implicit range of estimates (rounded): 15,200–152,000 breeding pairs

PHENOLOGY
Bushtit appears to exhibit a wide interannual variation in nesting, at least in certain populations. One Arizona study revealed a one-month difference from late March to late April in clutch initiation over a three-year period, and a one-and-a-half-month difference (from late May to early July) in latest nestings during that same period (Sloane 2001). The county's nesting period is more extensive than the early-March to mid-July egg-date period presented by Sloane (2001), ranging from a record of nest building on 23 January to a report of an occupied nest on 10 August. Historical county egg sets were taken between 5 March and 18 July (mean 18 April ± 23 days, n = 115) (Grinnell 1898, Howsley 1936, Peyton 1910, mvz, sbcm, wrvz data).

Breeding Chronology
From the Handbook: breeds Mar to Jul. Safe dates all year.

Breeding Stage	Reports	Earliest	Mean ± 1 s.d. dev.	Latest
Nest building	140	20 Jan	15 Apr ±34 days	9 Jul
Occupied nest	64	1 Mar	3 May ±31 days	30 Aug
Evidence of young	120	12 Mar	27 May ±28 days	30 Jul

Bushtit. Breeding span for selected portions of the breeding cycle. See *Phenology* paragraph in Chapter 6, **CONTENTS OF THE SECRETS ACCOUNTS** for additional explanation.

SAMPLING BIASES
This species proved easy to detect and easy to confirm. We think that it was clearly overlooked in six blocks south and west of the highest of the San Gabriel Mountains, but

with those exceptions, we deem the map to fairly represent Bushtit's breeding range in the county.

POPULATION TRENDS
Historical record in the county. The oldest known egg set from the county was taken in 1891 (wrvz records). Grinnell (1898) noted Bushtit to be an "abundant resident in wooded and brushy regions, especially in the foot-hills (sic)." Willett (1912) stated that this bird was an "abundant resident from the willow thickets of the lowlands up to more than 3000 feet (1500 m) in the mountains." Writing later, Garrett and Dunn (1981) would add the desert slopes of the coastal mountains to its breeding range, and consider it "common" in southern California.

Trends. Bushtit seems to be declining in rural habitats, but may be stable in urban areas of the county. Quantitative trend data could be analyzed for five county BBS routes (USGS 2001). Two estimating methodologies each revealed statistically significant declines (≥ 5.0% per annum) in the meta-analytic trends in detections. Trend estimates using combined CBC data (BirdSource 2002) showed small, nonsignificant increases in reports. Habitat differences in the areas covered by the BBS and CBC may underlie the somewhat differing trend estimates.

Study & Methodology	Study Years	Average annual percentage changes	P-value	
MAINTAIN	Range	Area Trend		
BBS (5 routes)	15–22	+6.2, -13.0	-5.7	0.002
EEC	15–20	-1.0, -10.5	-6.0	<0.001
CBC (No. of circles)	20	na	+1.0	0.098
LSR (7)	14	na	+1.2	0.257

Bushtit. Statistical estimates of trends in detections; percent per annum. Data from BirdSource (2002), Sauer et al. (2001), and USGS (2001).

CONSERVATION
Trends. This bird can occupy a wide variety of habitats, including well-planted suburban areas, and would not seem to be at risk. Causes underlying the decline of this species on the county's BBS routes are unknown, and thus worrisome. CBC results, although nonsignificant, are indicative of at least stability in near-urban environments. Extensive wildfire poses a risk to this species. It is a relatively weak flyer, and this trait seems to have inhibited the recolonization of recovered habitat burned in the 133 km² Pines Fire in San Diego County (Unitt 2006). Cowbird parasitism seems not to be a risk; it is only a "rare" cowbird host (Ehrlich et al. 1988).

Conservation listings. None.
Recommended actions: None at the present time.

VIEWING THE SPECIES
This abundant species is tolerant of urbanization and can be found in almost any park or well-planted residential area in the coastal lowlands. Bushtits especially favor habitat mosaics of oak woodland and riparian scrub.

from eight county BBS routes and eight county CBC circles in the attempt to provide as comprehensive a picture of our county's breeding avifauna as possible.

The typical species account includes maps of distribution and abundance; a county-wide abundance estimate; details of habitats, nesting sites, and nesting chronology; the historical distribution where known; population trend estimates where data warrants; and county fossil records, if any. Many of these subjects are informed by historical county records and data from elsewhere in the range.

Of particular interest to birders may be suggestions on

hardcover with sewn binding and printed on archival paper. It is published by Los Angeles Audubon Society.

Order now! The low list price of \$49.95 is in part made possible by your donations. In addition, a 20% pre-publication discount price of \$39.96 (plus tax and shipping/handling) is available if you order by 15 July 2016. Place your order at www.losangelesaudubon.org or at 323-876-0202.

Larry Allen

Birdathon, continued

Team Verdin

Back again this year was Dessi Sieburth with his binoculars in one hand and his camera in the other. Last year Dessi photographed 118 species. Could he break his own record? Starting before the crack of dawn on April 30th, Team Verdin was on a mission to leave the Antelope Valley with 100 species. Apollo Park, Piute Ponds, Bob's Gap (where we ran into a couple of scouters from the Irritable Owl Syndrome who had just left Grassy Hollow where it was 32 degrees and snowing! Brrrr...), the Abbey and Fort Tejon Road. Heading down in the valley with 101 species! Onward to Hansen Dam, Sepulveda, Malibu Lagoon and a major traffic jam going to Ballona slowed the team down - but not their spirits! By the end of the day, Dessi successfully photographed 134 species! Way to go Team Verdin!

Beatrix Schwarz

Field Trips, continued

Piute Ponds and vicinity

Saturday, September 10, 2016

6:30 am — early afternoon



By September, southbound migration will be in full swing. Join us at the Piute Ponds, a wetland oasis in the desert, where every year thousands of sandpipers and plovers stage on their way south. We should find over a dozen shorebird species, and we may see Baird's or Pectoral Sandpipers. We will also look for desert birds such as Bell's Sparrow and we have a chance for LeConte's Thrasher. After Piute Ponds, we will visit nearby Apollo Park, where we will look for migrating songbirds such as warblers and flycatchers. Bring a spotting scope if you have one.

Note: Piute Ponds are located on Edwards Air Force Base, which has restricted entry, so space is limited. Please email Mark Scheel if you would like to attend. We will be meeting in the northern Antelope Valley at dawn (6:30 am); the meeting place will be arranged.

Mark and Janet Scheel

Chilao Visitor Center

Second Sunday of every month

8:00 am — 10:00 am



The Chilao Visitor Center walks continue each month, weather and roads permitting. (If things look rainy, snowy or brush fire-y, check first.)

Chilao, 26.5 miles north of I-210 on Angeles Crest (State Hwy 2), is a good place to see woodpeckers and we often see four or more species on a walk. Mountain Quail are somewhat elusive but still seen or heard about half the time. You can also expect Purple Finches, Steller's Jays, Dark-eyed Juncos and several species of nuthatches and others totaling about 30 species during the 2-hour walk.

Hill Penfold

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 12.

Julia Ray

Black Swift Hunt

Saturday, July 9, 2016

Late afternoon — evening



Black Swift; so enigmatic was this species that up until 2012 ornithologists still had no idea where the birds wintered. We will seek out these aerial acrobats at Claremont Wilderness Park, the only reliable spot in Los Angeles County to find this most mysterious of birds. The swifts are best looked for late in the day and so we will spend a couple of pre-dusk hours seeking them out. As well as our target species we will also work on identifying any other swifts and swallows in the aerial melee and look out for other denizens of Cobal Canyon.

Please email the leader at streatham2003@aol.com to reserve a spot and to receive directions on where and when to meet.

Luke Tiller

Work With Us

Volunteering with Pasadena Audubon is rewarding and fun! Pasadena Audubon Society is growing, and we need your help. Whether your passion is birding, education, or conservation, we have a role for you. If you are interested in being involved, but you don't see anything in the descriptions that fits you, let us know. We can figure out the best way to get you involved.

Please contact Kym Buzdygon at kym.buzdygon@pasadenaaudubon.org or at 301-305-2467

Volunteer Roles:

Outreach Committee: Are you passionate about birds? Want to share your enthusiasm with the community? Consider joining the outreach committee! Outreach volunteers will help out with tabling events at Eaton Canyon and at other community events like Earth Day and Bird LA Day.

Archivist: Are historical documents and organization more your thing? We are looking for someone to fill the role of Archivist, and help us organize a half of a century's worth of PAS material into the correct format so that our archives can be made available to the public at the Pasadena Museum of History.

Bilingual Volunteers: Are you fluent in another language? We are looking for volunteers to help us translate some of our outreach materials. We are also interested in the possibility of volunteers who would be willing to translate at general meetings and on field trips.



My friends and I have been watching this eagle and an older one in the San Gabriel Mountains since about January. We were surprised and pleased to find out that they were mates and had had an eaglet. This day a pair of Bullock's Orioles were harassing what we believe to be the female Bald Eagle. It was quite a sight to see!

Susan Colosimo

Page 1 Bird, continued

never be played during breeding season. It can distract both the male and female from the nest and/or babies, and cause them unnecessary distress.

Common Yellowthroats are bursting with energy. They are lively and entertaining to watch. They are easy to hear, but not so easy to see. Always keep an eye out in the reeds, shrubs, and undergrowth, and if you catch a glimpse of something yellow, you may get lucky and see something beautiful.

Royal Young

Royal, one of Pasadena Audubon's Young Birders, is 12 years old, has been birding about 2 years, and goes to school at Rio Hondo Prep.

Perch, continued

Thank you all for giving me the honor to serve as PAS president. We are gaining momentum, growing, and spreading our wings out into the community. I look forward to serving again as we keep PAS moving forward in the name of education, conservation, and birding.

Happy Birding,
Deni Sinnott

Announcements

Elections

The roster on the back page looks awfully familiar! At the chapter elections during the May general meeting the 2015-2016 officers won re-election for the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

Welcome to the Board!

In our upcoming fiscal year, we welcome Liz Cordero to the board as Hospitality Chair and Carla Alvarado as Publicity Chair. We appreciate their contributions and their willingness to serve! Current Hospitality Chair, Nina Clark, will remain on the board as a member-at-large.

Birds 'n Beers

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 8:00 pm, the second Wednesday of each month, at Lucky Baldwin's at 1770 E. Colorado Blvd. in Pasadena.

Become a Chapter-only Member of PAS

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

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

Chapter-only Membership Application

Name Phone
 Address
 City State ZIP
 Email

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

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Yearly dues:

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

Make checks payable to, and mail to:

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

Magpie Bird Study Group



We meet the third Tuesday of most months. We bird 9:00 am to 11:30 am and have a sack lunch and a short meeting. All PAS members welcome!

Tuesday, June 21, 2016
Descanso Gardens

Tuesday, September 20, 2016

Legg Lakes
Santa Anita Ave parking lot

Trip leaders: Julia Ray, Sid Heyman

Pasadena Audubon Society Board

President	Deni Sinnott	(626) 233-4128
Vice-President	Mickey Long	(626) 285-8878
Secretary	Ira Blitz	(818) 802-5943
Treasurer	Eileen Burton	(626) 585-9076
Conservation	Laura Garrett	(626) 564-1890
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Programs	Luke Tiller	(203) 981-9924
Membership	Lois Fulmer	(626) 798-1606
Education	Ron Cyger	(626) 449-3625
Publicity	Jared Knickmeyer	(310) 343-3580
Hospitality Chair	Nina Clark	(626) 355-1296
Members at large:	Norm Arnheim (Grant Program), Susan Gilliland,	
Lance Benner, Grace Wong, Kathy Degner, 1 open Website	Janet Scheel	(626) 817-6322

Hospitality Committee	Joanne Weigel	(818)790-4347
	Lynne Osborne	(626) 403-9451
Magpie Bird Study Group	Julia Ray	(818) 314-5127
	Sid Heyman	(626) 571-5991

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New Members

Unclutter, Help a Young Birder

Hey, remember that **older birding guide** that you never use anymore? The PAS Young Birder program could put that to good use! Ditto for **binoculars** and **spotting scopes**. Help this thriving program be even better, and get a tax deduction for your donations! Contact Susan Gilliland (gillilandsusan@gmail.com).

DONATIONS TO PAS

These PAS members and friends have recently made donations to our chapter: Lance Benner, Denise Castillo, Patricia Duarte-Pocock & Thomas Pocock, Lew Hastings, Christine Hessler, Judy Howell, Cynthia Morgan, Joan Probst, Catharyn Strub, Donna Lee Ubertalli, Marie Whelan, Linda Zinn. Special appreciation goes to all the supporters of our 2016 PAS Birdathon. Thank you all!

ALTADENA: Steven Akers, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Allen, Marsha Fowler, Judith McCord, Julie Parker, John Sheehan, Joseph & Roslyn Witt; **ARCADIA:** Robert Bagwell; **AZUSA:** Barbara Busse; **DUARTE:** Richard Walker & Anna Armstrong; **EL MONTE:** Ray Jillson; **GRANADA HILLS:** Marie-Angelique Bash; **LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE:** Olga Lane, Lawrence Wood, Robert Woodburn, Jane Wunderlich; **LOS ANGELES:** Yolanda Adra, Robert Weissenberg; **MONROVIA:** Pola Bouton, Janet Dunbar, Carl Reggiardo, Eleanor Torres, Ondrea Tye; **MONTEREY PARK:** Mario Espinoza, Judy Tung; **MONTROSE:** Keiko Evangelisti; **PACIFIC PALISADES:** Read Howarth; **PASADENA:** Jared Burton, Jane Caughey, Grace Chang, Nancy Culp, Allan Fedora, Bre Galloway, Marilyn Garcia, Sharon Hopkins, Nicolas Kamei, Barbara McMahon, Diana Menkes, Jerry Pedrotti, Mindy Pfeiffer, Adelina Punzalan, Ayesha Randall, Shirley Sanders, Marilyn Symons, Lydia Urbina, Phyllis Wallace, Jennifer Ward, John Wickel, Alexandria Wiercigroch, John Wills, Thea Winner; **POMONA:** Cynthia Morgan; **SAN GABRIEL:** Michele Bender, Martha Galassi, Jerome Gaw, Sarah Loughheed; **SAN MARINO:** Berthold Sempell; **SIERRA MADRE:** Edward Takemori, Elaine Holmgren; **SOUTH PASADENA:** Marianna Adams, Elizabeth Cavanaugh, Johnny Jung, Janice Nichols, Susan Pastorek, Marita Pinkel, Ann Sundin; **STUDIO CITY:** Rita Rothman; **TEMPLE CITY:** Donald Doepke, James Weirick; **THOUSAND OAKS:** Frank, Teodelina, Justin & Juan Isidro Martelli & Vicky Moreno