



Drawing by
Guy Coheleach

THE WRENTIT

Founded 1904

Pasadena Audubon Society
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

Volume 58 — No. 4

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

September-October 2010

September Program

Adding Depth to Your Birding

Wednesday, September 15, 2010
Jon Fisher and Mickey Long

You would like to find a Clay-colored Sparrow but you don't know where to look. Even if you did know their preferred habitat, could you distinguish it from a Chipping Sparrow or a Brewer's Sparrow? Oh, it's mid-September, the middle of autumn migration, and the alternate plumages are fast disappearing, plus there is an influx of juvenile birds.

Don't fear! "Adding Depth To Your Birding" will go beyond just pure identification. It will cover habitats, seasonality and the subtle timing of migrants, as well as where to look for specific species. Come hone your ID skills!



October Program

What Audubon is Doing in Sacramento

Wednesday, October 20, 2010
Dan Taylor

Though never glamorous and often underappreciated, fighting in Sacramento for preservation and improvement of habitat and environmentally friendly ways to direct California's future growth is one of the most important things that can be done to ensure a bird-friendly future for our state.

Spanning a more than 30 year career with Audubon, Dan Taylor has been the organization's face for many of its most important environmental victories in the West. He has defended old growth forests from clear cutting, helped bring attention to the plight of the Spotted Owl and Marbled Murrelet, and was at the heart of National Audubon's campaign to save Mono Lake by stopping decades of harmful water diversion.

Black-footed Albatross: photo by Ron Cyger

November Program

25 Years of Birding the Western Antelope Valley

Wednesday, November 17, 2010
Dr. Callyn Yorke

Join us to listen to Callyn give an in-depth history on seasonal occurrences and abundances of birds in the Antelope Valley. He has been a professor of biology at Antelope Valley College since 1984. As most of you know, the Antelope Valley provides a great diversity of species and numbers of birds throughout the year and often provides some great rarities for Los Angeles County. What better way to put it all into perspective than to have him share his observations for the past 25 years. Talk about list-keeping!

**General Meetings Held At
Eaton Canyon Nature Center
1750 N Altadena Drive
Pasadena CA
Social 7:00 pm, Program 7:30 pm**

President's Perch

When Lois & I returned from a vacation in Yosemite in July we were shocked by the news that our fellow member of PAS, Mike San Miguel, died from a fall while conducting a Spotted Owl survey in our local mountains. Mike was a popular field trip leader and a recognized birding authority. Mike was also instrumental in developing the Western Field Ornithologists organization. PAS will establish a "Mike San Miguel Scholarship" fund at WFO in

his memory.

Also in July, PAS received a prepayment \$400,000 from the remainder of a large trust fund left to PAS by a non-member who was interested in supporting our educational and habitat restoration projects. We plan to use the income from this bequest to fund our future projects.

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Conservation and Education

Opportunity in Rubio Canyon

If you, like many others, are concerned about the increasing development in our local foothills, I have wonderful news. We have an opportunity to preserve one of our true local treasures: Rubio Canyon. The Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy (AFC) is working to buy 21 acres at the mouth of Rubio Canyon. Combined with the 20 acres they purchased in 2009, this would protect and preserve all of Rubio Canyon from the Angeles National Forest to residential streets. (*Full disclosure—I am the newest member of the Board of the AFC. LG*). Just west of Eaton Canyon, Rubio Canyon is a gem in the Altadena foothills, with a stream that runs year-round, several waterfalls, and diverse habitats including old-growth oak trees, chaparral, and coastal sage scrub, as well as streamside and warm freshwater wetlands. Pockets of southern sycamore, a sensitive plant species, can also be found in the canyon. Needless to say, the Canyon also supports an abundance of birds, including Wrentit and Canyon Wren.

Rubio Canyon is also a key acquisition because it represents one of four gaps along the Altadena Crest Trail, a system that runs along the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains from Hahamongna Watershed Park in the west to Eaton Canyon in the east. Once these 20 acres are acquired, the Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy plans to restore the Altadena Crest Trail across Rubio Canyon, as well as trails up into the Canyon, linking foothill trails and greatly expanding the possibilities for hikers and birders.

Of course, acquiring this land is not free. The Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy is working to raise \$1.3 million by the end of 2010, which will purchase the land, renovate and create trails, and restore habitat. If you can contribute to this cause, please visit www.altadenafoothills.org to make a secure online donation, or send a check to: Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy P.O. Box 3 Altadena, CA 91003.

All donations are tax-deductible, and you will be a part of saving a local treasure.

*Laura Garrett and Sean Howell
AFC Publicity*

Hahamongna Drama Continues

The City of Pasadena is going ahead with its plan to install one athletic field and a parking lot in Hahamongna Watershed Park, which is the open space below JPL. This despite the fact that at July 12th's Pasadena City Council meeting, 40 people spoke out against building any soccer fields in Hahamongna Watershed Park, while not one person spoke out in favor of the fields, and despite all of the scientific evidence that indicates it's a foolish plan. The City did decide not to build a second field in what is currently a small lake, and three Council Members now question the wisdom of building any fields in a watershed and in the middle of what's left of our wilderness in Pasadena. In favor of rethinking the installation of athletic fields were Mayor Bogaard and Council Members Holden, McAustin, and Tornek. Against this rethinking and anxious to get the field built were Council Members Gordo, Haderlein, Madison, and Robinson. Send your letters and emails accordingly.

And so, the war is not over. The City must complete an EIR for this field, and they face an uphill battle. Plus, it is now clear that we have at least two Council Members who will examine the EIR very closely, and not simply sign off on it. Also, the grant funding for this field must be completely spent by June 2012. Because the Station Fire has significantly changed the topography of the area, it is doubtful that the funding would be sufficient, even if the City could spend it in time.

Some members of the City Council lost faith with the public over this issue. After Council Members Haderlein and Gordo repeatedly assured everyone present that there were no other possible options for building any athletic fields anywhere in the City, that they had been looking for years, and no such sites existed, the City Manager pulled a miracle out of ... somewhere and found another site the very moment it became clear that they could not build a second field in the small lake. A few days later, Council Member Haderlein did not help his public image when

he referred to all of us who spoke out on July 12th as "pigs at a smorgasbord." Huh?

So what can you do? Please write the Mayor or a Councilmember a letter, even if you do not live in Pasadena. Visit the PAS website to see my letter as an example. Come to a City Council meeting when they are discussing the EIR, even if you do not live in Pasadena. Visit www.savehahamongna.org and sign the petition, and then send the link to your friends and ask them to sign it too. PAS stands ready to do its part, but it will take all of us to save Hahamongna. Be on the right side of history!

The address for Pasadena City Hall is 100 N. Garfield Ave., Room S228, Pasadena, CA 91109. Or, to email the City Council or Mayor, go to www.ci.pasadena.ca.us

We must do all that we can to save this treasure. The birds are counting on you.

Laura Garrett

Pasadena Audubon Supports Proposition 21

This November, voters will have the opportunity to vote on a big win for the people of California: Proposition 21, or the State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund. This proposition will add \$18 to the car registration fee. That's the bad news. The great news is that all of that money will go into a trust fund dedicated to funding the State Parks in California AND California vehicles will get a free pass to all of California's incredible State Parks. Our parks are suffering from a lack of consistent funding, and have millions of dollars worth of repairs and deferred maintenance. Many parks have been threatened with closures in recent years. This solution will provide resources not only to make those repairs and prevent these closures, but also to upgrade our parks so that more people can have access to them and enjoy them.

Because the State Parks are so vital to the well-being of California's birds, and because environmental education and conservation are at the center of our mission, the Pasadena Audubon Society is proud to endorse the State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund. Vote YES on Proposition 21 on November 2nd! For more information, visit www.yesforstateparks.com/.

Laura Garrett

Trip Reports

San Diego Pelagic

August 16–18, 2010

I took my first pelagic trip in years out of San Diego, and it began with a bang, literally! One of the birders fainted while walking up the gangplank to the boat (motion sickness medication). Everyone was a bit stunned and he was very banged up. As the paramedics carted him off, we put out to sea.

The boat had birders from all over the country on board. The leaders included our own Jon Feenstra along with Paul Lehman, Steve Howell and others to help him out.

For those who haven't experienced pelagic birding, it's a very bi-polar experience. There are long periods of boredom punctuated by moments of high excitement.

Some of those exciting moments included: A South Polar Skua sitting on seaweed. It would stretch its wings so we could



see the distinctive bold white stripe at the base of the primaries; several Black-footed Albatross that would fly by to check us out; and a Red-billed Tropicbird that sat cooperatively on the water, then flew over the boat while shutters snapped!

The mammal highlight was a pair of Blue Whales putting on quite a show before

diving.

The metallic highlight was an F-18 that came screaming out of the sky, circled the boat at top speed, launched itself into the clouds, and then flew off. I think it left everyone's heart pounding and I'm glad it was on our side.

Details of this trip and future pelagic trips can be found at www.socalbirding.com.

Ron Cyger

Piute Ponds

August 14, 2010

With ten doughty birders we struck out across the Antelope Valley from Lake Palmdale to the lush wetlands of the Piute Ponds on Edwards Air Force Base. Under the blazing sun we managed 73 species at the ponds. In the Ave C tamarisks we got a Barn Owl (that nearly got a few of us...) and a few trees over a pair of Great Horned Owls were confiding if a little skulky. At the main ponds a few Black Terns winging around were a nice treat since this species can hardly be called reliable anywhere else in LA County.

Conditions at the southern Ducks Unlimited Ponds were excellent for shorebirds with muddy edges and good visibility. It didn't take us long to find a few juvenile Baird's Sandpipers and a Solitary Sandpiper popped up a little later. We also enjoyed quality comparisons between adult and juvenile

Western and Least Sandpipers.

Southbound migrant shorebirds weren't the only sign of fall. We found a few landbirds moving through with Willow Flycatchers, Warbling Vireo, Bank Swallows, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Yellow Warblers, and a Black-headed Grosbeak rounding out a good morning.

After feeling good about the Piute Ponds we made the short drive to the Lancaster Sewage Ponds, checked out a juvenile California Gull, a few Snowy Plovers, and some Long-billed Curlews, and toasted to the birds and the heat with a frosty cold beer. Same time next year?

Jon Feenstra

Urban Birding Is... Different



It's not all Bonaparte's Gulls and Semipalmated Sandpipers out there, people. As uncaring Pasadena Audubon members scope out the Los Angeles River on their way to 57 species, one enormous, despondent teddy bear decides to end it all.

Photo by Ron Cyger

John's Corner

With fall migration well underway, I thought it would be appropriate to mention some of my favorite spots for migrants and other locally interesting birds around where I live in Pasadena. While I don't recommend coming to these places hoping for mega-rarities, these places can be fun to bike around in a single day and still see some interesting birds.

Lacy Park: I've already written an article in The Wrentit about this little park in San Marino. In summer, it can hold some interesting birds—this year, Dark-eyed Juncos bred. Its climax, however, is in fall and winter. Good numbers of migrants—including Hermit Warblers—pass through, and last year a Gray Flycatcher, two species of sapsuckers and multiple Golden-crowned Kinglets and Brown Creepers wintered here.

Kewen/Canon Dr: This intersection, as well as adjacent Encino Drive, has most of the same birds as Lacy Park. Formerly a riparian area, its main differences from the park are that it has fewer people, more trees, and it's free on weekends (the park is \$4 per non-resident on weekends). Mountain

Chickadees nested here this summer, Hutton's Vireos are common residents, and in spring it often has a particularly rich supply of Swainson's Thrushes and Nashville Warblers.

Tournament Park: Like most places in Pasadena, this spot is most productive in late fall and early winter. Over a few years, I've seen Plumbeous Vireo, Red-breasted and Red-naped Sapsuckers. Typically a Black-throated Gray Warbler or two will winter here. CalTech (to which this park belongs) can also make good birding. For one thing, good sized parrot flocks roost here—mostly Red-crowned Parrots, but with numbers of Yellow-headed, hybrids of the two, and others. Red-masked Parakeets are also common.

San Gabriel Country Club: While illegal for most people to enter, interesting birds can still be found around the borders of the golf course. Last winter, a widely seen Lewis's Woodpecker stayed here. It's also a good place to find many of the birds at Lacy Park, and last winter hosted a Merlin, a Red-breasted Sapsucker or two, and lots of White-breasted Nuthatches.

Rancho Mangana Road: A good-sized flood basin just southwest of the corner of

Huntington Dr and Muscatel Ave, this area is also technically illegal to enter; however I've never had any difficulty birding it from the fence. Big flocks of ducks come here in winter, namely Ring-necked and Ruddy Ducks. Several Hooded Mergansers and Lesser Scaup come here as well, and I once had an 'Aleutian' Cackling Goose here in a flock of Canadas. Non-Killdeer shorebirds here are generally scarce, but both species of yellowlegs have occurred. Check the telephone poles for raptors, too—three species of falcons are regular.

During migration, particularly fall, many birders travel to the same, generally distant birding hotspots, e.g., Point Loma or Galileo Hill. I find that birding locally and finding your own interesting birds and places to look for birds is much more rewarding. Rare birds can indeed be found almost anywhere (such as last winter's Black-throated Green Warbler on Foothill Blvd), and I suspect Pasadena neighborhoods have a good number that go undetected. Birding locally will also make you a better birder by enhancing your understanding of local bird distribution and by reducing your carbon footprint.

John Garrett

Pasadena Audubon Society
 Financial Report for the Fiscal Year
 June 30, 2009 - July 1, 2010 (unaudited)

INCOME

NAS Chapter Dues Share	\$2,751.50
PAS Dues	\$4,045.00
Grants/Contributions/Donations	\$1,513.65
Fundraising Events - Birdathon, Annual Dinner/Silent Auction	\$4,536.04
Interest Income - Checking/Savings Accounts	\$1.74
Sales - PAS Pins & T-Shirts/Hats	\$83.00
Birding Guides	\$65.00
Other - Christmas Bird Count Dinner	\$500.00

Total \$13,495.93

EXPENSE

Administration - Telephone, Postage	\$687.21
Newsletter/Postage/Mailing	\$3,966.44
Education Programs & Events - Honorariums	\$500.00
Fundraising - Birdathon, Annual Dinner	\$1,069.68
Grants and Contributions	\$6,515.00
Other - Rent, Insurance, Programs, Misc.	\$1,614.02
Christmas Bird Count Dinner, Board Dinner	\$2,096.84

Total \$16,449.19

NET INCOME (OR DEFICIT) IN OPERATING FUNDS -\$2,953.26

ASSETS HELD as of 6/30/2010

Bank Balances (Checking & Savings)	<u>\$7,955.45</u>
Funds invested with Fidelity Investments (Jackson Endowment, etc)	<u><u>\$224,945.66</u></u>

Field Trips

Galileo Hills

Saturday, September 25, 2010

Dawn — ?

Galileo Hills is the home of Silver Saddle Resort, a small green patch of trees, ponds, and lawns surrounded by miles of desert. During spring and fall, migrating passerines are attracted to this oasis, often in large numbers. Eastern species such as Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, and others will sometimes join the western migrants; this is arguably the best inland location in California for eastern vagrants. You never know what will show up—40 species of wood warbler have been recorded here, and various mega-rarities (like Arctic Warbler and Eyebrowed Thrush) have occurred. We'll just see what we can find.

Galileo Hills is about a 2.5-hour drive from Pasadena, so we will be carpooling. Please email Mark Scheel for further information if you wish to attend.

Mark and Janet Scheel

Ballona Freshwater Marsh

Saturday, October 23, 2010

7:30 am — 11:30 am



The Ballona Freshwater Marsh was officially protected in 2003. Since then, the marsh has blossomed with wildlife! We will cover the public and more sensitive areas of the marsh. Along the way we'll see returning ducks and other wintering species along with the usual marsh-avian suspects. And who knows, maybe some surprises, too!

The Ballona FWM is at the corner of Lincoln and Jefferson in Playa Vista. From Pasadena, get to the 90 west (towards Marina del Rey) from the 405. Get off at Culver Boulevard and turn LEFT. Drive past Lincoln, and when you get to Jefferson Boulevard, take a sharp LEFT. As you head back to Lincoln, the marsh will be on your right. Park along Jefferson at the first curb-side area that is allowed on your right (near the Porta-Potty and the beginning of the walking path for the marsh).

Ron Cyger

Newport Back Bay Kayaks

Sunday, November 7, 2010

9:00 am — noon

This is a peaceful, happy outing in a rich bird habitat with wintering waterfowl, a wide variety of shorebirds, several species of gulls and terns, Belted Kingfisher, Osprey, and (visible!) Marsh Wren. Clouds of "peeps" sometimes sweep over us while we're on the water, and shorebirds are very approachable by slow-moving kayaks.

Early November is usually warm, but take extra clothing layers in water-resistant bags. Wear old shoes or sandals that won't be bothered by salt water and mud. Bring sunscreen, snacks and drinking water. The trip leader may have a couple of kayaks to lend — otherwise kayaks are readily available for rent by the hour at the launch site, Newport Aquatic Center. Be prompt!

Group size is limited. fishingyak@yahoo.com or (818) 957-5044 for info and reservations.

Mark Hunter

...more trips on pages 8 & 9

Morro Bay Weekend

Saturday and Sunday, November 20-21, 2010

Morro Bay is an important stopover on the Pacific Flyway and a critical winter home to numerous bird species. The bay and its 48,000-acre watershed rank perennially among the top sites in the nation during the Audubon Christmas Bird Count. Morro Bay is located halfway between Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Join us for a weekend trip that will include Morro Bay, Montana de Oro, and possibly the north end of the Carrizo Plain.

Please contact Kathi Ellsworth at (626) 524-0652 or pandionsky@yahoo.com if you are interested. We will be staying at Morro Bay on Friday and Saturday night at the Tradewinds Motel, (805) 772-7376. If you plan to be with us, you should make your reservation as soon as possible. We will meet Saturday at 7:30 am in the parking lot of the Tradewinds, 225 Beach Street.

Kathi Ellsworth

Eaton Canyon Monthly Walk



Sunday, September 19, 2010

Sunday, October 17, 2010

Sunday, November 21, 2010

8:00 am — 11:00 am

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

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

Hill Penfold

Hahamongna Monthly Walk



Saturday, September 4, 2010

Saturday, October 2, 2010

(November is Legg Lake; see pg.9)

7:30 am — noon

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

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

Ron Cyger

Huntington Library Monthly Walk



Sunday, September 26, 2010

Sunday, October 24, 2010

Sunday, November 28, 2010

8:00 am — 11:00 am

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

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

Elaine MacPherson

Calendar

Submit material for the next Wrentit by October 1st



= Wrentit Club!

September 2010

Date	Day	Time	Event	Location	Leader*
1	Wed	7:30 pm	Board Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	
4	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Hahamongna Watershed Park	Ron Cyger
11	Sat	7:00 am	Field Trip	Pt. Vicente Sea Watch	Jon Feenstra
15	Wed	7:00 pm	General Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Program: In-Depth Birding
19	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
21	Tue	9:00 am	Magpie Study Group	Frank Bonelli Park	Madeline West & Sid Heyman
25	Sat	Dawn	Field Trip	Galileo Hills	Mark & Janet Scheel
26	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Huntington Library Gardens	Elaine MacPherson

(PAS members only)

October 2010

2	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Hahamongna Watershed Park	Ron Cyger
6	Wed	7:30 pm	Board Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	
17	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
19	Tue	9:00 am	Magpie Study Group	TBD	Madeline West & Sid Heyman
20	Wed	7:00 pm	General Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Audubon in Sacramento
23	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Ballona Freshwater Marsh	Ron Cyger
24	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Huntington Library Gardens	Elaine MacPherson
			<i>(PAS members only)</i>		
27	Wed	7:00 pm	Birding 101	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	See pg 7
30	Sat	TBD	Field Trip	Birding 101	See pg 7

November 2010

2	Tue	7:00 pm	Birding 101	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	See pg 7
3	Wed	7:30 pm	Board Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	
6	Sat	TBD	Field Trip	Birding 101	See pg 7
6	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Legg Lake/Peck Road	Ed Stonick
7	Sun	9:00 am	Field Trip	Newport Back Bay	Mark Hunter
10	Wed	7:00 pm	Birding 101	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	See pg 7
16	Tue	9:00 am	Magpie Study Group	TBD	Madeline West & Sid Heyman
17	Wed	7:00 pm	General Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	25 Years in Antelope Valley
20-21	Sat-Sun	All day	Field Trip	Morro Bay	Kathi Ellsworth
21	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
28	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Huntington Library Gardens	Elaine MacPherson

(PAS members only)

* Trip Leader Information

Mark Scheel (chair)	(626) 355-8707	scheel@tapir.caltech.edu
Larry Allen	(323) 288-2701	larryallen@earlymusicla.org
Lance Benner	(626) 791-1187	lbenner@charter.net
Ron Cyger	(626) 449-3625 (before 9:00 pm)	ron@cyger.org (preferred)
Kathi Ellsworth	(626) 564-0652	pandionsky@yahoo.com
Jon Feenstra	(626) 792-4346	feenstra@alumna.caltech.edu
Jon Fisher	(818) 800-2776	jonf60@hotmail.com
Nick & Mary Freeman	(818) 247-6172	mnfreeman@earthlink.net
Sid Heyman	(626) 571-5991	
Mark Hunter	(818) 957-5044	fishingyak@yahoo.com
Mickey Long	(626) 398-5420	mlongbird@charter.net
Elaine MacPherson	(626) 355-9412	birdergrrl@aol.com
Hill Penfold	(818) 352-4954	hpenfold@gmail.com
Ed Stonick	(626) 796-0595	stonicks@earthlink.net
Madeline West	(626) 574-0429	west266@adelphia.net

Getting the Word Out

Helping Your Chapter Reach the Community

Many of our members have wondered how they can get more involved in Audubon outside of bird walks and monthly meetings. Our goal is to attend community events that will extend our reach in the community. We will be manning tables, giving out information about bird watching, extending our educational reach and supporting conservation of the environment.

Last year PAS members attended the Family Water Fair for the Arroyo Seco Foundation in June and a few outreach events for the Open Space Conservation Element for the City of Pasadena. This upcoming year we would like to make sure we have a presence at Earth Day festivals for Pasadena and Eaton Canyon, as well as other environmental fairs in the area.

All are welcome to participate, even if you have never

done this sort of thing before! I will be making sure everyone is fully prepared with tips and training on how to have a successful experience at the events *and* have some fun at the same time. How can you pass that up?

My goal is for PAS to get involved in at least three or four events this year. If you have any event recommendations please send them along to me. More important, however, is the goal to increase involvement in our outreach as we go out to meet and greet the public, extend our good name, and build camaraderie among our members. I am sure many of you would enjoy participating, so please keep watch for upcoming announcements as we move into the fall. Please email me at denisinnott25@gmail.com or call (626) 799-1079 for more information.

*Deni Sinnott
Publicity Chair*

Understanding and Describing Bird Sounds

Sylvia Gallagher

Sunday, November 14, 2010

Check-in 8:30 am; Workshop 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Eaton Canyon Nature Center

Learning bird sounds is often hampered by your inability to write down what you hear. In this workshop you'll receive a checklist of characteristics of bird sounds and practice describing sounds using them. Raven Lite, free sonogram-making software from Cornell Lab. of Ornithology, will be demonstrated. You'll learn how to "read" sonograms, powerful visual tools for learning and describing sounds. Birds produce sounds differently from mammals, and you'll learn what an amazing organ the syrinx is.

Sylvia Gallagher has conducted beginning and advanced Birding Skills Workshops for Sea and Sage Audubon in Orange County since 1980. She started recording bird sounds in 1984

and has been teaching various Learning Bird Sounds workshops since 1992. These sounds workshops are also available as self-study learning packages, containing worksheets and CDs of introductory and practice sounds (available from seaandsagesudubon.org). She was also the Director of the Orange County Breeding Bird Atlas and is Bird Information Chairman for Sea and Sage Audubon.

This is an all-day workshop that will include lunch.

Price: \$25 until 10/31/10 (postmark). \$30 beginning 11/1/10

Send check payable to PAS to reserve your space (sorry, no refunds):

Bird Sounds
Pasadena Audubon Society
c/o Eaton Canyon Nature Center
1750 N Altadena Dr
Pasadena, CA 91107

(Walk-ins are welcome, but may be disappointed – space is limited.)

Birding 101

October and November 2010

Sponsored by Pasadena Audubon Society and Eaton Canyon Nature Center

Birding provides enjoyment and a challenge throughout life. It gets you outdoors on your street or around the world, increases your appreciation of nature and observation skills, and it's darn fun. So, why put off learning how to bird any longer?

Join us to learn the sights and sounds of our local birds.

We will cover identification, optics, field guides, note-taking, habitats, birding ethics, and many other topics.

We expect all participants to attend all class sessions and field trips. The class size is limited to about a dozen people, so

don't delay signing up!

Class-room sessions: 7:00 – 9:00 pm at Eaton Canyon Nature Center on October 27, 2010 (Wednesday), November 2, 2010 (Tuesday), and November 10, 2010 (Wednesday).

Field trips are on October 30 and November 6, 2010.

Time and location will be announced at the first class

Cost: \$50 covers all three classes and two field trips.

Checks are payable to "Pasadena Audubon Society" and are 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.

...continued from page 10

many of them and enjoying trips all over California to chase them. His experience and talent earned him a place for several years on the California Bird Records Committee, and he was one of the best ambassadors the Committee ever had. He served Western Field Ornithologists in many important capacities, culminating in a several year stint as President during which the organization gained new vibrancy and scope. He had an important role in the production of the CBRC's book "Rare Birds of California" and published several papers in WFO's journal *Western Birds*. He embraced eBird with unbridled enthusiasm (...he did so much with unbridled enthusiasm) and has entered more eBird data from California (4245 checklists) than almost any other individual as well as editing submissions from several counties. He did a heroic amount of field work and paperwork for the Los Angeles Breeding Bird Atlas and other large-scale data gathering projects. In short, Mike was not only about the most active birder I have ever known, but he was also the most enthusiastic birder - he loved being in the field whether alone or with his many friends, and he enjoyed learning something new every outing.

But I can hardly think about Mike the birder right now, because birding was only his second passion. Mike was the consummate family man, and the love he and Gayle showed so openly and generously for each other was nothing short of inspirational. His son Michael (also one of California's most accomplished birders) and daughter Lisa were everything to Mike, and if he wasn't the world's greatest grandfather he was certainly in the running for that title. Many birders don't realize that Mike virtually stopped birding for many years to be the best possible father to his growing children, and even after he resumed birding with more zeal and passion than ever he was always talking about his children and, eventually, grandchildren.

Those who knew Mike well, and a great many who didn't, were keenly aware of Mike's tireless work for bird and wildlife habitat conservation. We all try to be good conservationists, and we're all keenly aware of the problems birds and their habitats face. On my countless wonderful trips in the field with Mike the conversation would inevitably turn, and pretty quickly, to the inexorable loss of bird habitats as urban areas continued to grow and consume the places we enjoyed going. I would gripe and curse and feel generally pessimistic about everything, but Mike had a different and much more effective approach - he got involved. If he enjoyed birding in an area, he felt it was his responsibility to work as hard as he could to make sure it was preserved or restored for birds and birders. His career working in environmental work for Southern California Edison no doubt had a positive impact on southern California habitats. His efforts for bird habitat at Piute Ponds, the San Gabriel River, and so many other areas we take for granted have been heroic. His battles with agencies that were damaging habitat were fought with fervor but also with grace - even the Army Corps of Engineers must have had great respect for Mike. When Mike had a conservation mission he was almost unstoppable, and the world is much better for that passion of his.

I knew Mike for forty years, and I've rarely enjoyed anybody's company as much as his. Mike loved so many good things in life - as well as good people - that I'll be reminded of him constantly. Watching the hummingbirds in my yard, following the annual demise of the Dodgers, hearing about that next rare bird, seeing the trees and shrubs he has nurtured in so many places mature and thrive, enjoying a meal. How could I not think of Mike. And right now, Mike's passion for really good wine seems like an appropriate way to honor him - I think I'll open a good one from Paso Robles and toast one of the most generous and enjoyable people I have ever met. I'll miss you, Mike!

Did Mike Give You a Plant or Tree?

Mike San Miguel planted or distributed hundreds of California native plants, especially seedlings from his Englemann Oak. If you got one, please contact the Wrentit and tell us what it was and where it's growing. We're going to publish a map of Mike's plant legacy in a future issue. Email: pas.wrentit@gmail.com, or phone: (818) 957-5044. Thanks!

Quintessential Mike

Mike was a tall fellow, and this photo by Mary Freeman reminded me of two things about him:

Unquenchable enthusiasm, seen here as he pursues Hudsonian Godwits at Piute Ponds (those little dots near the far shore); and that ridiculously tall tripod that always kept the scope's eyepiece out of range for folks of ordinary stature, such as myself. Generous, friendly, talented, devoted... what a magnificent guy. We'll not soon see his like again.

Mark Hunter



Pt. Vicente Sea Watch

Saturday, September 11, 2010

7:00 am — mid-morning



This is a trip originally organized by Mike San Miguel and now held in his honor. In September there are large and sometimes impressive numbers of seabirds moving along the coast of Southern California. When conditions are good these birds can be moving close to shore at places like Point Vicente. Bring a chair, your favorite cup of coffee, and join me for a casual morning of birding. We should be able to observe shearwaters, gulls, terns and possibly a few jaegers and alcids. Frequently, there are also whales and dolphins feeding just offshore. We will also bird the Bluff Trail from the parking lot out to Long Point for California Gnatcatcher and more.

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New Members, continued

Lord, Michael Maloney, Hope McLaughlin, Judy Melton, Susan Paulsen, Eileen Ritchie, Sue Scranton, Louise Stivers, Jane Thomas, Tracy Turner, Donald Watson, Ed Webb, Mary Belle Wright, Arlene Yang, Stephen Zurek; **ROSEMEAD:** Jaime Monroy; **SAN GABRIEL:** Cheryl Cabot, Norm Vargas, Robert Wick; **SAN MARINO:** Sergio Santino, Scott & Jill Wilcott, William Woods; **SANTA MONICA:** Judith Rechter; **SIERRA MADRE:** Kim Clark, Teresa Price; **SOUTH PASADENA:** Julia Bailey, Carol Barone, Parmelee Benz, Randy Campbell, Susan Drozdowski, Carla Eide, Byron Gamarro, Venessa Johnson, Rimma Markarian, Malcolm Mounger, Robert Roybal, Patty Sollenberg, Robert Summers; **TEMPLE CITY:** Joanne Beckwith, Linda Canzoneri, Dorothy Lape, Catherine Lear, Cynthia McNamara, L.J. Slykhuis

Field Trips, continued

Legg Lake & Peck Road Park

**Saturday, November 6, 2010
7:30 am — 11:30 am**

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

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

Ed Stonick

Sea Watch, continued

From San Pedro take Palos Verdes Drive South in a westward direction to the entrance of the Point Vicente Interpretive Center, then make a U-turn back for 0.3 miles to the parking lot.

Meet at the Public Fishing Access Parking Lot at Long Point. A spotting scope is a necessity.

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, have a sack lunch, and have a short business meeting. *All PAS members welcome!*

Tuesday, September 21, 2010
Frank Bonelli Park
Meet at ranger station at entrance

Tuesday, October 19, 2010
To be determined

Tuesday, November 16, 2010
To be determined



Red-billed Tropicbird: photo by Ron Cyger

Donations to PAS

These PAS members and friends have recently made donations to our chapter: Denise Castillo, Paul & Gloria Kilian, Chrystal Watson, George & Grace Wong, and The Capital Group Companies Charitable Foundation in memory of William Cox. **Thank you!**

Become a Chapter-only Member of PAS

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

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

Chapter-only Membership Application

Name Phone

Address

City State ZIP

Email

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

Name Phone

Address

City State ZIP

Yearly dues:

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

Make checks payable to, and mail to:

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Photo by Paul Keller

Mike San Miguel
1939-2010

On the night of July 14th, 2010, while conducting a Spotted Owl survey in the San Gabriel Mountains, Mike San Miguel fell down a steep ravine and died of his injuries. In the shock and grief the next day, it became clear what a huge loss had befallen us. Here are remembrances of Mike written that day by Kimball Garrett, a long-time friend and colleague.

This is incredibly difficult to write, because I'm writing about the loss of a good friend as well as a beloved fixture in the birding community. The very early call from Jon Feenstra should have been about a really good bird, but instead it brought devastating news. And somehow it isn't any comfort to know that Mike died working hard doing one of the things he loved most - birding with a purpose.

Most of you are familiar with Mike's accomplishments in the world of field ornithology. He was a long-time bird bander with a bug for gathering good bird data. He was an extraordinary connoisseur of rare birds, finding a great

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New Members

ALHAMBRA: Carol Crouse, Elsie Ernst, M. Good, Herbert Kanigher, Evelyn La Vars, Cecila Miranda Sanchez;
ALTADENA: Joan Bowdoin, G.M. Fernandez, Susan Hamm, Sheryn Scott;
ARCADIA: Doris Atkins, Don Boobyer, Richard Brunner, Mary Gerke, Yen

Richardson, Ingeborg Rothschild, Steve Turner, Randall Weissbuch; **AZUSA:** Tom Allen; **DOWNEY:** Elizabeth Cordero; **DUARTE:** Joseph Najbauer; **LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE:** Miranda Dimasi-Nording, Vivian Jones, Joel Kimble, Hsiao Lin, Charles Plowman; **LA CRESCENTA:** Ruth Herbst, Julia Ray; **LOS ANGELES:** David Robinson; **MONROVIA:** Teresa Briones, Sylvia

Hatfield, Hoku Janbazian, Ted Stecheson, Sue Wheeler-Ayres; **PASADENA:** Doris Brown, Marilyn Burke, Susan Campisi, Gregory Chapman, Jose De Juan, Cornelia Fuller, Y. Gibbon, Marsha Grieco, Kenyon Harbison, Mary Ann Heidsman, Clayton Hollopeter, Ariel Hudgins, F.D. Johnson, Carol Lamour, Evelyn Lewis, Elizabeth

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