



Drawing by  
Guy Coleleach

# THE WRENTIT

Founded 1904

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

Volume 61 — No. 1

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

February-March 2013



**Looks even better in color! Check  
out [www.pasadenaudubon.org](http://www.pasadenaudubon.org)**

## Commonowly

Northern saw-whet owls are one of the most widespread small owls in North America. On the west coast, their range extends from southern Alaska into northern Baja California. Despite their widespread distribution, many aspects of their biology are still poorly known.

Once thought to be rare in southern California, they are now known to be relatively common in appropriate habitat at higher elevations in the local mountains in areas with live oaks and conifers. Breeding in the San Gabriel Mountains was confirmed only in the mid 1980s, but broods of fledglings have been found on numerous occasions in recent years. Northern saw-whet owls feed primarily on mice and voles but will take other prey such as small birds. Male saw-whet owls vocalize extensively during the late winter and spring to attract mates and can be heard calling ad nauseam for hours. Nesting in the San Gabriel Mountains occurs from February to July.

Over most of their range, females and hatch-year northern saw-whet owls are highly migratory but most adult males are not, apparently because they stay on territory throughout the winter. In our area the extent to which they migrate is unknown, but their tendency to turn up occasionally in desert oases (where they don't breed) in fall and winter hints that some birds in our area may migrate. They occur year-round in the San Gabriels, primarily at elevations above 4000 feet, but down to sea level on Santa Catalina and Santa Cruz islands.

*Lance Benner*

## President's Perch

I believe *birding* is one of the more rewarding outdoor activities available in the greater LA area!. Birds are fascinating creatures with their beautiful feathers and their astounding ability to fly! Luckily for us bird watchers, a bird's body is ultra light (fat free) and he must eat often to keep up his "wing-power," so I always look for birds where their food is available. At home, we put out feeders of seed and suet in the yard. It's a bit messy but we do see a lot of birds that way.

At PAS, we offer free field trips led by experienced birders to many of the good birding locations in our area. It is a good way learn how to find and ID our local birds and become an expert birder yourself, but I warn you it takes a lot of research and birding practice to be an expert. It is really difficult to positively identify some of the many bird species that look and sound alike. I am still very cautious when identifying a bird when on a field trip, but enjoy the challenge of comparing the identifying "field marks" with my fellow birders. The birding experience is the best part of being a member of the Pasadena Audubon Society, in my humble opinion!

Good Birding!

## In This Issue

<b>Programs</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Conservation</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Reports &amp; Sightings</b>	<b>3, 6</b>
<b>Field Trips</b>	<b>4, 6</b>
<b>Calendar</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Announcements</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>New Members</b>	<b>8</b>

*Will*

## February Program

### The Feathery Tribe

Wednesday, February 20, 2013  
7:30 pm—9:00 pm

If you consider yourself an amateur birdwatcher, you owe a debt to one of the first professional birders, Robert Ridgway (1850-1929), the Smithsonian's first curator of birds. "Ridgway was at the center of a rich circle of naturalists and scientists," says **Daniel Lewis**, The Huntington Library's Dibner Senior Curator of the History of Science, Medicine, and Technology. "But Ridgway's lively correspondences with his counterparts at the Museum of Contemporary Zoology at Harvard and the American Museum of Natural History are now either relegated to brief footnotes or not known at all."

Lewis hopes his new book, *The Feathery Tribe: Robert Ridgway and the Modern Study of Birds*, will help restore the once-famed Ridgway to his rightful place among the great American naturalists of the 19th and 20th centuries.

*General meetings are held at Eaton Canyon Nature Center (address on back cover). Socializing begins at 7:00 pm and programs are presented from 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm.*

## March Program

### Golden State Wildlife

Wednesday, March 20, 2013  
7:30 pm—9:00 pm

Guy Commeau

Guy is a long-time birder and photographer who has presented many programs over the years. His topics have ranged from New Zealand to Nepal and Alaska, but he recently admitted that California is the best single place to be for nature lovers. The variety of habitats and wildlife are as good as anywhere on earth.

In 1991 Guy wrote "Mammals and Countries of the World," a checklist which organized the mammals of the world much as the famous Clements checklist did for birds.

Guy is now retired from the restaurant business and is a docent at the L.A. Zoo (26 years) when he is not on the road.

You will depart the evening with an appreciation of the broad diversity of flora and fauna California has to offer.

## April Program

### Saving Foothill Canyons

Wednesday, April 17, 2013  
7:30 pm—9:00 pm

John Howell & Mickey Long

In December, 2011 the Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy ("AFC") saved 13 remarkable acres in lower Millard Canyon from development. AFC's Executive Director and General Counsel, John Howell, will briefly share how they raised the money, including the critical role that Pasadena Audubon and other local conservation-minded organizations played in this wonderful accomplishment.

Mickey Long will show us why Millard is extraordinarily habitat. He will discuss PAS' crucial bird surveys last spring, and he'll illustrate the riparian richness of the canyon with some amphibians and plants. We can expect to learn a little history and something about trail access to Millard. We'll also hear about AFC hopes and plans for the entire lower canyon, and how PAS can participate.

## Conservation

### Destruction in Sepulveda Basin

In December the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) bulldozed 43 acres of mature woodlands and wetlands in the portion of the Sepulveda Basin south of Balboa Boulevard. This area had been a designated wildlife preserve for 30 years and was the location of many of the rare bird sightings that are often reported from the Basin. As seen in the photos, the area is now bare dirt and debris fields.

Local conservationists were surprised and shocked at the scale of destruction. The ACOE had declared the area a "vegetation management zone" with an eventual goal to replace existing habitat with native grasses to improve access to the area and reduce the area's ability to shelter illegal activity. But no one anticipated complete eradication of the habitat, and ACOE did not communicate its real intentions at all. In those 30 years local volunteers had planted hundreds of native trees and shrubs, which thrived until they were all destroyed by the ACOE. According to the Los Angeles Times, the ACOE "declared that an environmental impact report on the effort was not necessary because it would not significantly disturb wildlife and habitat." That declaration seems deceitful in light of their actions.

Initial outrage came from Kris Ohlenkamp, Conservation chair of San Fernando Valley Audubon, and the circles of concern and outrage continue to widen even as we go to press. The ACOE is being asked for answers by a laundry list of legislators and regulatory agencies. All have protested the lack of notice from the ACOE before commencing the project, and some are looking into violations of law.

San Fernando Valley Audubon continues to closely track this issue. Get updates by checking their web site at [www.sfvaudubon.org](http://www.sfvaudubon.org).

Mark Hunter



A "pothole pond" in the affected area, shown in 2010, sheltered migrating waterfowl.



The same location today. Photos courtesy of SFV Audubon.



## Trip Reports & Sightings

### 2012 Christmas Bird Count Results

Once again, Pasadena and other local birders took to the field for the Pasadena/San Gabriel Valley Christmas Bird Count in mid-December. Our species total — 155 this year — didn't reach the rarefied air of the 2011 count with its remarkable 167 species, but the weather cooperated and participants covered all our regular count areas with very respectable results.

While breaking the barrier of 150 is always a goal for us, it's about more than how many species we record. Documenting the numbers of increasing and decreasing species is also a key feature of the CBC data.

Counts of irregular and irruptive species also provide good information. Birds such as Golden-crowned Kinglet, Brown Creeper and Red-breasted Nuthatch — all present in the region in greater than normal numbers this fall and winter, and all represented on the count — give us insight into conditions (generally a lack of food sources) in the areas where these birds originate.

There were more than a few highlights this year, including a number of continuing rare birds and some new discoveries made on count day. As usual, the Whittier Narrows area including Legg Lake and the San Gabriel River produced many of our good birds, but other locales produced their share of good birds as well.

Waterbirds included a Cackling Goose along the San Gabriel River among the numerous Canada Geese and a Horned Grebe — scarce inland on the coastal slope — at Legg Lake.

Raptors of note were a welcome count week Golden Eagle as well as a White-tailed Kite at Hahamongna Watershed Park, though no kites were at Santa Fe Dam where we typically expect to get them.

The Livingston-Graham gravel pits produced four Herring Gulls and the San Gabriel River provided another one, but the usually productive gull spot along the river just below Valley was essentially devoid of birds on count day. Thus likely species such as Thayer's and Mew Gulls were missed.

Night birding turned up a handful of Great Horned and Western Screech-Owls as well as single Barn Owl. Less regular was a Northern Pygmy-Owl in Santa Anita Canyon on count day and a Spotted Owl at Chantry Flat on count week.

Rare for the count was a continuing Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Legg Lake. A returning Tropical Kingbird was also at Legg Lake; one of a number of continuing good birds there. Increasing but still quite rare in winter was a Western Kingbird among the Cassin's at Santa Fe Dam.

Loggerhead Shrike — increasingly hard to find in the count circle — and American Dipper were missed on count day but both were recorded for count week.

Swallows were represented by five Tree Swallows at Legg Lake but N. Rough-winged and Barn — both somewhat regular on the count — were absent. Steller's Jays away from their usual haunts in our foothill canyons and higher in the San Gabriels included two at Hahamongna Watershed Park and one

at Lower Arroyo Park.

A hike to Henninger Flat provided us with three Pygmy Nuthatches, a species that is far from regular on the count. Also rare for the count was a Pacific Wren (which as most probably know was recently split from the eastern Winter Wren) in Santa Anita Canyon.

A Townsend's Solitaire turned up along Sunset Ridge Trail near Millard Canyon on count day by a birder not officially participating in our count, but yes the bird still counts just the same. A similar situation occurred with 2005's Fulvous Whistling-Duck along the San Gabriel River. We will of course take them any way we can get them.

A California Gnatcatcher conveniently continued near the Whittier Narrows Nature Center, eliminating the need to try and find this species in the Montebello Hills where they are resident.

The trio of rare wintering warblers at Legg Lake — Black-and-white Warbler, Northern Parula and Chestnut-sided Warbler — were all spotted on count day. Also recorded in the circle were about a half dozen Wilson's Warblers. Two Yellow Warblers were along the San Gabriel River where regular in small numbers in winter. Rounding out the warblers was an excellent count bird — the continuing Painted Redstart at Lacy Park in San Marino.

Wrapping things up were sparrows — a White-throated Sparrow was at Eaton Canyon, a Swamp Sparrow was along the San Gabriel River and a Vesper Sparrow was in the Whittier Narrows area.

In spite of falling well short of last year's remarkable record, we really did quite well. 155 species and a nice variety of vagrants made for an entertaining count in 2012. Out of curiosity I took a look back at the earliest Pasadena count results available online: the year is 1956. While a few of the entries are certainly incorrect — Swainson's Hawk and Black-chinned Hummingbird for example — some of the numbers are rather startling.

Try to imagine in that year participants counted 216 Spotted Doves, 35 Loggerhead Shrikes, 300 Horned Larks and 537 Western Meadowlarks! We still get a few meadowlarks with regularity, but the other three species have been virtually eliminated within the count circle and on the coastal slope in general. Talk about significant changes...

While other factors have been involved in the Spotted Dove decline, it's the loss of open space that is the single major cause in the decline of larks, shrikes and meadowlarks. In their place new birds such as Allen's Hummingbirds, Great-tailed Grackles and Eurasian Collared-Doves have become established.

These are exactly the kinds of changes in avifauna that your efforts and those of other enthusiastic birders like you in earlier years have enabled the CBC to track over the decades. While eBird has taken us a huge step forward in terms of recording and making information on bird distribution available to all, there's nothing like an organized single day count such as the CBC to get a snapshot of the avifauna of a particular area

**Continued on page 6**

## Field Trips

### Legg Lake & San Gabriel River

**Saturday, February 2, 2013**

**7:30 am — 11:30 am**



These trips will cover some 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. Time permitting we'll include the Pico Rivera spreading grounds or some other river locations, based on what's around. An excellent trip for beginning and young birders.

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*

### Bolsa Chica

**Sunday, March 10, 2013**

**7:30 am — noon**

Bolsa Chica is quite possibly the most accessible salt marsh estuary habitat in Southern California. No doubt you've seen some great photographs taken there! It is also one of the last local holdouts of Belding's Savannah Sparrow and a major stop-over and wintering area for migrant shorebirds and waterfowl. In addition to seeing numbers of a great diversity of species, Bolsa Chica is an excellent venue for studying difficult identification problems: shorebirds in winter plumage, female ducks, and gulls of various ages... and maybe finding a vagrant. Bring a scope if you've got one.

Meet in the main Pacific Coast Highway parking lot of Bolsa Chica at 7:30AM and we'll start from there.

*Jon Feenstra*

**Field trips continue on page 6!**

### Eaton Canyon Monthly Walk



**Sunday, February 17, 2013**

**Sunday, March 17, 2013**

**Sunday, April 21, 2013**

**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, March 2, 2013**

**Saturday, April 6, 2013**

**7:30 am — 11:30 am**

*(no walk in February - Legg Lake instead)*

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*

### Quail Lake and Vicinity



**Saturday, February 23, 2013**

**7:30 am — 2:00 pm**

Join us for a trip to the extreme northwest corner of L.A. County, where we will look for waterbirds, raptors, and other winter visitors that are scarce elsewhere. Both Scaup species are usually present, along with Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser, and occasionally White-winged Scoter. Both Bald and Golden Eagles are possible, as are Ferruginous Hawk and Prairie Falcon. Sometimes Mountain Bluebirds are seen as well. We will bird Quail Lake and other hot spots in the area.

Meet in the parking lot at the west end of Quail Lake at 7:30 am. To get there, take the I-5 Freeway north, then take the Hwy 138 off-ramp east for about a mile. Quail Lake is on your left. Bring food and water along with your optics (scopes are recommended if you have one). It can be cold, so don't forget warm clothes. It takes about 1.25 hours to get to Quail Lake from Pasadena, so please don't drive alone. Also keep in mind that there are very few gas stations in the area.

*Mark and Janet Scheel*

### Palos Verdes Sea Watch



**Saturday, March 23, 2013**

**7:30 am — noon**

Enjoy a pleasant morning of scoping the ocean for moving seabirds from one of the best seawatching promontories in Southern California. Scoters, loons, cormorants are likely and such pelagic birds as shearwaters, jaegers and alcids are possible, as are Gray Whales and dolphin. We might take some time after our seawatch to check out some gulls at Cabrillo Beach. Bring a scope and a folding chair if you've got one.

Meet at the Point Vincente Fishing Access parking lot (east of the lighthouse).

*Jon Feenstra*

### Huntington Library Monthly Walk



**Sunday, February 24, 2013**

**Sunday, March 24, 2013**

**Sunday, April 28, 2013**

**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 March 1



= Wrentit Club!

### February 2013

Date	Day	Time	Event	Location	Leader
2	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Legg Lake	Ed Stonick
2	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Seal Beach (trip full)	Susan Gilliland
6	Wed	7:00 pm	Board Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Will Fulmer
17	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
19	Tue	9:00 am	Magpie Study Group	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Julia Ray & Sid Heyman
20	Wed	7:00 pm	General Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	The Feathery Tribe
23	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Quail Lake	Mark & Janet Scheel
24	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip (PAS members only)	Huntington Library & Gardens	Elaine MacPherson

### March 2013

2	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Hahamongna	Ron Cyger
5	Tue	7:00 pm	Birding 101 begins	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	See page 6
10	Sun	7:30 am	Field Trip	Bolsa Chica	Jon Feenstra
17	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
19	Tue	9:00 am	Magpie Study Group	San Dimas Canyon Park	Julia Ray & Sid Heyman
20	Wed	7:30 pm	General Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Golden State Wildlife
23	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Palos Verdes Sea Watch	Jon Feenstra
24	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip (PAS members only)	Huntington Library & Gardens	Elaine MacPherson
30	Sat	6:00 pm	Field Trip	San Gabriels Owling	Lance Benner

### April 2013

3	Wed	7:00 pm	Board Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Will Fulmer
6	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Hahamongna	Darren Dowell
6	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	Tejon Ranch	Ron Cyger
16	Tue	9:00 am	Magpie Study Group	Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden	Julia Ray & Sid Heyman
17	Wed	7:00 pm	General Meeting	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Saving Foothill Canyons
21	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Hill Penfold
27	Sat	All day	<b>Birdathon!!</b>	All of L.A. County	Ron Cyger
28	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip (PAS members only)	Huntington Library & Gardens	Elaine MacPherson

#### \* Trip Leader Information

Mark Scheel (chair)	(626) 765-5408	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)
Darren Dowell	(626) 344-4003	dowell.darren@yahoo.com
Kathi Ellsworth	(626) 564-0652	pandionsky@yahoo.com
Jon Feenstra	(626) 319-4723	feenstra@alumni.caltech.edu
Jon Fisher	(818) 800-2776	jonf60@hotmail.com
Nick & Mary Freeman	(818) 247-6172	mnfreeman@earthlink.net
Frank & Susan Gilliland	(626) 441-8487	gillilandsusan@gmail.com
Sid Heyman	(626) 571-5991	sidheyman@sbcglobal.net
Mark Hunter	(818) 369-6627	fishingyak@yahoo.com
Mickey Long	(626) 285-8878	mlongbird@charter.net
Elaine MacPherson	(626) 355-9412	birdergrrl@aol.com
Hill Penfold	(818) 352-4954	hpenfold@gmail.com
Julia Ray	(818) 314-5127	jraymusic@att.net
Ed Stonick	(626) 796-0595	edstonick@earthlink.net



**CBC, continued**

and also to track it over many years.

We're quite fortunate to have a great group of birders who generally count the same areas each year. This consistency — along with a greatly increased knowledge of bird distribution — is critical to achieve good results. Familiarity with an area translates directly into more species being found, and the count data clearly reflects that principle with the species count having steadily risen over the years. I suspect that the current range of about 155 to 165 species may represent close to the upper limits of what the circle can produce under current conditions, but you never know... there's always next year.

*Jon Fisher*

**Field Trips, continued****C'est Chouette: Owls in the San Gabriels**

**Saturday, March 30, 2013**

**6:00 pm—midnight**

**C**ome join us for an evening of owling in the San Gabriel Mountains.

We'll concentrate on locations below about 6000 feet where up to seven owl species were found in 2012. We'll start shortly before sunset when we'll look for Northern Pygmy Owl, mountain quail, and other diurnal montane species, and then after dark we'll look for Northern Saw-whet, Spotted, Western Screech, and Great Horned Owls. We may also find Common Poorwill, and if we're really lucky, we might encounter barn owl and long-eared owl, which both occurred in this area in 2012.

Limited to 10 people. Please email or call the trip leader to reserve a spot and for directions on where and when to meet. If the weather is bad we'll postpone the trip to April 6.

*Lance Benner*

**Tejon Ranch**

**Saturday, April 6, 2013**

**Early morning — Midafternoon**

**T**he Tejon Ranch is 422 contiguous square miles and is the largest piece of privately held property in California. The Ranch came to an agreement with major environmental organizations (including the National Audubon Society) regarding conservation and development. You can visit [www.TejonRanch.com](http://www.TejonRanch.com) for more information. Part of that agreement was to expand its access to natural areas.

Last year we had Scott's Oriole, Burrowing Owl, many raptors, many sparrows, and incredible scenery!

The Ranch is private property and is only open for visits by reservation. If you would like to visit the Ranch on this trip, please contact the trip leader (email preferred) with the following information for each person: Name, address, telephone number, and email address. I will then send further information on meeting place, time, etc.

Trip size is limited and is open to Pasadena Audubon members only. Hope to see you at the Ranch!

*Ron Cyger*

**Education****Birding 101**

**Sponsored by Pasadena Audubon Society and Eaton Canyon Nature Center**

**B**irding 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: March 5, 12, and 19, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.

Field trips: March 9 and 16, 2013 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.

For questions or to make reservations, contact leaders Ron Cyger and Mark Scheel at [Birding101@pasadenaaudubon.org](mailto:Birding101@pasadenaaudubon.org).

**Trip Report****Bonelli Park**

**January 19, 2013**

**T**wenty-two birders assembled for a PAS field trip at Bonelli Regional Park. (Special mention goes to a sharp and eager birder from West L.A. who traveled by a combination of bike, bus, and carpool to arrive by the 7:30 start!) Given the rarities reported in the north part of the park this winter, we started our search there and were not disappointed, re-finding the Black-and-White Warbler, Hammond's Flycatcher (thanks Lance!), and Brown Creeper. Janet and Mark Scheel efficiently took turns with their scope, re-finding a Pink-Sided and Slate-Colored Junco in an Oregon flock, and discovered a White-Throated Sparrow amongst White-Crowned's. Next, we visited the coastal scrub on the east side of the park to look for a few Bonelli specialties. Both the rising temperature and lack of cooperative birds were making the trip leaders sweat, but by the lunch hour we had turned up a few Cactus Wrens and California Gnatcatchers. Add a little scoping of birds on the lake, and we ended up with 76 species for the day. Nice work everyone!

*Darren Dowell, Frank Gilliland, Susan Gilliland*

### Falcons and...Parrots?

Modern genetics is providing much new information on the relationships of different orders and families of birds. The taxonomy experts of various ornithological committees try to keep up with the changes and carefully define the sequence of the orders, families, genera, and species to reflect current thinking about their evolutionary origins. In general, nearest relatives appear next to each other on the lists (such as eBird lists; changes are already in place) and, sooner or later, in upcoming editions of your field guides.

In 2012, there were several significant changes to watch for including:

Parrots (Psittaciformes) and Falcons & Caracaras (Falconiformes) are now believed to be each others' closest relatives, and sister to Passeriformes. Believe it or not, hawks (Accipitriformes) are not closely related to falcons, despite the apparent similarity.

The sequences within hawks (Accipitriformes), Ovenbirds (Furnariidae), and Wrens (Troglodytidae), have been significantly reshuffled. In North America the various ornithological committees have yet to adopt many changes within the Hawk family, so the Hawk section of eBird will seem out of order to North American birders who are used to the sequence of hawks in their field guides.

Laura Moser

### PAS Awards Four Grants

The Board of Directors of Pasadena Audubon, during their November 2012 meeting, voted to award funding to four grant proposals. Here are the four winners:

Catherine Yi, a graduate student at California State University San Jose, is studying the effects that age and breeding experience have on offspring quality and breeding success, focusing on a population of Tree Swallows at Elkhorn Slough.

Lesley Handa is using geospatial modeling to study the current distribution of breeding piscivorous seabirds in the San Diego area, preparing a baseline that

will be used to analyze those birds' response to changes in climate and other ecological factors.

The Southern California Bluebird Club is beginning a program to educate land owners and decision-makers about the importance of conserving trees with cavities, since many species use cavities for nesting. Young people will be trained to advocate for this program through attendance in an educational seminar held in an outdoor day-camp setting.

PAS members Beatrix and Dessi Schwarz, Derek Sieburth, and Norm Vargas are starting a project to construct nest boxes, some of which will be available to PAS members at discounted prices. The boxes are designed to host bluebirds and owls.

### 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, February 19, 2013  
Eaton Canyon Park**

**Tuesday, March 19, 2013  
San Dimas Canyon Park**

**Tuesday, April 16, 2013  
Rancho Santa Ana**

*Trip leaders: Sid Heyman and Julia Ray*

### DONATIONS TO PAS

These PAS members and friends have recently made donations to our chapter: Margaret Adams & Joel Edstrom, Harlean Carroll, Edwina Berg, Denise Castro, Hannah Dvorak-Carbone, Don & Scarlett Hibner, Val Howard, Beverly McKenzie, John Odell & Margaret Gonder-Odell, Julie Parker, E.J. Remson, Joan Roach, Elena Seto, Neal Turner, Norm Vargas, Chrystal Watson, Amy Williamson. Thank you for your generosity!

### 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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**Make Your Own "Suet"**

Last summer Will and I went on a birding trip to Southeast Arizona. One of our stops was Ash Canyon Bed & Breakfast, which caters to birders. The owner, Mary Jo, shared her recipe for "suet." I made some and hung it in a suet feeder next to my seed feeders. It sat there for a couple of weeks, and then I was rewarded by visits from scrub jays, chickadees, a nuthatch, white-crowned sparrows and an orange-crowned warbler. They all seem to like it a lot. Here's the recipe:

Melt on low heat, and stir to blend: *2 cups chunky peanut butter and 2 cups lard.*

Turn off heat. Add dry ingredients, one at a time, mixing well after each addition: *2 cups flour, 4 cups corn meal, 4 cups quick or regular oatmeal.*

Blend thoroughly. Press into 9x13-inch pan. Cool and cut into 8 squares. Chill. Wrap squares in plastic wrap and store in freezer or refrigerator.

Remove as needed and place in suet baskets.

*Lois Fulmer*

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