



THE WRENTIT

Founded 1904

Pasadena Audubon Society
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

Volume 72 — No. 2

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

November 2023- January 2024

PAS Has New Address, Programs Coordinator

For nearly all of its 119-year history, the Pasadena Audubon Society hasn't really had a physical address. It's true that Eaton Canyon Nature Center has been its meeting location, mailing address, and storage locker since the early 1970s, and prior to that the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce, the Pasadena Library, and private homes served those purposes. But never before has PAS had an honest-to-goodness office. That finally changed last summer, when the Board approved Executive Director Lois Brunet to sign the lease agreement and move PAS into the Western Justice Center. The center is located next door to the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals on South Grand Avenue, and it's really something to crow about!

On August 20th, the day Hurricane Hilary brought a rare sultry storm to the area and blew at least one hapless Magnificent Frigatebird up to Big Bear Lake, the PAS Board held its first meeting in the building's tastefully appointed conference room. But the new venue's big debut came almost two months later, on October 19th, when PAS hosted an Open House attended by nearly two hundred of the organization's members and friends, who got an opportunity to mingle at our cozy aerie high above the Arroyo Seco.

Guests got to browse PAS merchandise on offer in the conference room and inspect the second floor office, freshly furnished thanks to a grant from Pasadena Community Foundation. The move itself, and the celebration, were made possible by generous donors, community partners, dedicated volunteers, and diligent staff without whom none of it would have happened. Both Lois Brunet and Vice President Dave Weeshoff acknowledged as much in their remarks to those in attendance. The Fall campaign reached the ambitious goal of raising \$25,000 to advance the organization's work.

continued on page 5



Clockwise from top: The "nest site" of Pasadena Audubon Society, 75 South Grand Avenue; Volunteers Gesna Clarke, Kathy Degner, and Michaela Shue have a pre-game huddle around the swag table in the conference room; Elizabeth Younce (the artist currently known as mustardbeetle) and husband Jonah Primiano enjoying an agreeable autumn afternoon on the back patio; Phil Swan, Kristan Swan, and Edie Tyebkhan bask in the warm glow of another PAS milestone. © Sean Doorly



CALENDAR

The Future of the Salton Sea

November 15th, 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Andrea Jones, Audubon California

Note: Eaton Canyon Nature Center only

The Salton Sea is a place like no other... this huge improbable lake at the southern end of California is important to more than 400 species of birds. But the future of the lake, and its effect on all that wildlife, is very much uncertain. Join us as Andrea Jones from Audubon California explains what's being done to preserve this unique resource.

Andrea Jones is Director of Bird Conservation for Audubon California. For the past 5 years, she has worked with staff and the network of Audubon chapters across the state to implement conservation projects at high priority Important Bird Areas. In particular, she has focused on leading Audubon's conservation efforts along the coast and in estuaries, focusing on restoration, advocacy and engagement. Her work has also included providing science expertise and negotiating conservation agreements at saline lakes, including Owens Lake and the Salton Sea. Prior to California, Andrea worked at Massachusetts Audubon where she

served as the Director of the Coastal Waterbird and Grassland Bird Programs.



The Salton Sea gets many unusual visitors, such as this White Wagtail back in June of 2021.

© Matthew Grube, Macaulay Library
ML346931221

77th Annual PAS Christmas Bird Count Orientation

December 13th, 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm

Jon Fisher

Note: This is a Zoom meeting only

Not program *per se*, but we're joined once again by ace birder and San Gabriel Valley Christmas Bird Count Compiler Jon Fisher, who will give us some background on this oldest of citizen science events and coordinate coverage of the count circle.

77th Annual PAS Christmas Bird Count Recap & Dinner

December 16th, 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Note: Eaton Canyon Nature Center only

Come for the victuals, stay for the drama. In accordance with custom, the Christmas Bird Count ends with a dinner followed by a spellbinding official species tally that is guaranteed to keep you in...suspense! We don't know who's catering yet, but like the tally, the food is usually impressive.



PAS Members react to the news that Lance Benner has once again found a Northern Pygmy Owl in our count circle. © Shutterstock

Upcoming PAS Board Meetings

November 14th, 2023

December 12th, 2023

January 9th, 2024

The PAS Board is now meeting 7:00pm-8:30pm on the second **Tuesday** of the month, between September and June. Contact Jamie Cho at jamiiec.pas@gmail.com if you would like the Zoom link to attend.



CONSERVATION & ADVOCACY

Polar Bears and Penguins

The more I learn about global climate change and its consequences, the more I become truly bi-polar.

When discussing our dramatically changing climate, advocates often use charismatic megafauna such as Polar Bears to drive home the disastrous effects on endangered species populations. As temperatures rise due to the accumulation of green-house gasses (carbon dioxide, methane, etc.) resulting from our burning fossil fuels, Arctic sea ice has declined to a level where Polar Bears cannot find the seals essential to their survival.

Now, an important report has revealed the tragic effects of climate change on Emperor Penguins: Iconic, charismatic Antarctic birds and heroes of the popular 2005 documentary film, *March*

of the Penguins. Of the five breeding sites in the Bellinghausen Sea Region, all but one recorded a low sea ice extent that persisted throughout the year. Four colonies therefore experienced total breeding failure, a massive loss of life. This is the first recorded incident of a widespread breeding failure of Emperor Penguins that is clearly linked with large-scale contractions in sea ice extent.

Emperor Penguins rely on stable sea ice attached to land for nesting and raising their chicks. Eggs are laid from May to June and after they hatch, the chicks develop their characteristic, waterproof feathers and become independent around December and January. This cycle has developed and been repeated over hundreds of thousands of years.

continued on page 4

PAGE THREE BIRD

Red-Breasted Nuthatch

This autumn, local birders have been enjoying the sight and sound of a delightful little forest-dweller more than usual! Only a smattering of Red-breasted Nuthatch observations were recorded in the Los Angeles Basin last fall, but recently they've been showing up at most of our favorite haunts and even in some of our yards.

Red-breasted Nuthatches have a distinctive appearance and call. Like the Mountain Chickadees they sometimes pal around with, they have dark crowns –black in males, slate gray in females– and black masks on an otherwise white face. But that's where the similarities end. Red-breasted Nuthatches are even smaller than Mountain Chickadees, who have a black bib and at most buffy flanks, contrasting with the former's white throat and a breast that is actually closer to rufous on males and tawny on females.

If a child's toy truck were OSHA compliant, beeping whenever it went in reverse, it might sound a lot like a Red-breasted Nuthatch. The call is a cute, repetitive nasal honk I first heard while camping in the Sierra Nevadas one summer some thirty years ago. As with its appearance, you're not likely to confuse its vocalization for someone else.



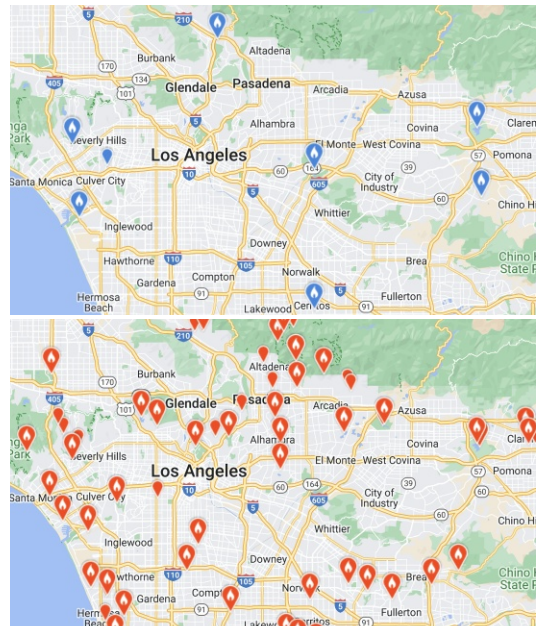
An inquisitive (or is he slightly miffed?) Red-breasted Nuthatch at El Dorado Park in Long Beach stares down the camera. Note the sharply hooked claw on the hallux. © Robert Hamilton, Macaulay Laboratory ML 609084218

The foraging behavior of the Red-breasted Nuthatch and its congeners is remarkable as well. While treecreepers and woodpeckers are often observed ascending tree trunks, nuthatches descend tree trunks to glean insects or cached snacks from the bark, a gravity-defying act made possible by modified feet. Their backward-facing toe, called the *hallux*, has a more strongly recurved claw than most perching birds, allowing them to really hook into the bark. It's been suggested that foraging in the opposite direction gives nuthatches a different perspective. One might even argue they occupy a distinct ecological niche, snatching and caching food items overlooked by climbing bark gleaners.

In winter bugs are scarce, and nuthatches become granivores. They hammer away at pine cones and nuts with their long, sturdy bills to "hatch" the seeds therein, hence the common name for members of the family Sittidae. With their dependence on nut trees and conifers as food sources, one might assume they would be confined the world's Temperate Zones. Some are, but surprisingly (to me at least),

the Asian tropics are quite rich in nuthatch species as well, including Thailand's Giant Nuthatch, the world's largest, which is about the size of Phainopepla.

Red-breasted Nuthatches are the most widespread of the four North American nuthatches, the others being the resident White-breasted Nuthatch, the Pygmy Nuthatch, seldom seen in the lowlands but quite common in the San Gabriel Mountains, and the Brown-headed Nuthatch, whose range is confined to the Southeastern U.S. Their propensity to *irrupt*, or disperse from the breeding range when food is in short supply, partway explains why Red-breasted Nuthatches can be found in every state but Hawaii and is the reason they have descended on Pasadena in numbers this autumn. It may also explain why there are no recognized subspecies of Red-breasted Nuthatch, whereas each of the other North American species has three or more subspecies. Irruption apparently reshuffles the population genetics deck for this species.



Ebird maps of L.A. area Red-breasted Nuthatch sightings for August through November of 2022 (top) and August to September 25th, 2023 (bottom) show a marked increase in observations due to an irruption. © Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology

As if all that weren't enough to make the Red-breasted Nuthatch a pretty extraordinary Page Three Bird, there's more! Although all nuthatches are cavity nesters, only the Red-breasted Nuthatch painstakingly excavates its own tree cavity, with both male and female taking shifts. The process can take over two weeks. After constructing a nest of moss, grass, and twigs in the cavity, the pair smears tree resin around the entrance to discourage would-be invaders. Sometimes a twig is used to apply the resin, a rare instance of avian tool use. The nuthatches avoid getting sticky themselves by nimbly flying straight in and out of the hole without touching the sides! It's a cartoonish stunt befitting such a funny, animated little bird.

Carl Matthies

CONSERVATION (CONTINUED)

But in 2022, the sea ice broke up much earlier, with some parts of the region seeing a total loss of sea ice by November. When sea ice breaks up earlier, immature chicks can fall into the water and drown, or float out to sea on floes away from the parents who feed them. Previously, these sorts of breeding failures have been more isolated and occurred at lower incidence across the continent. This year's catastrophic breeding failure has ornithologists making grim predictions that more than 90% of Emperor Penguin colonies will be "quasi-extinct" by the year 2100.



An Emperor Penguin family on the the Snow Hill Island Colony in Antarctica. © 2018, Noah Stryker, Macaulay Lab ML127144651

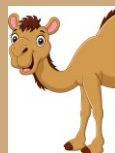
So, from the North Pole to the South Pole and everywhere in between, our daily actions are threatening, in one way or another, all life on our planet. You and I must "reduce our carbon footprint", stand up and be counted on Climate Change issues, and vote for representatives at all political levels who demonstrate they take these issues seriously. We owe it to the polar bears, the Emperor penguins, and ourselves.

Dave Weeshoff



DeB Jokes

Birders know how essential it is to drink water while out on in the field, especially here in sunny Southern California, so many are using BackPacks with Built-in hydration systems. But the importance of using tubes and siphons that are compatible with the brand cannot be over-emphasized. Otherwise, you may be wielding the straw that breaks the CamelBak®!



Volunteer Hahamongna Habitat Restoration Project Takes Off

Saturday, October 28th, dawned partly cloudy, cool, and calm — a perfect day for birding! But instead of doing that, eighteen volunteers assembled at Hahamongna Watershed Park to battle some invasive plant species that have been spreading in the natural area there. We worked at a site away from the usual park activity, outside where L.A. County has been carrying out a large restoration program of their own, and on a slope that hosts native chaparral and riparian plants but has become infested with Giant reed (*Arundo donax*, native to the Mediterranean but a serious threat to riparian habitat in California) and Lanceleaf nightshade (*Solanum lanceolatum*, native to South America). This was more than a weed pull, and in fact these plants had grown up to fifteen feet tall, crowding any attempt from the native plants to reclaim their space.

Our team had people of all experience levels, and we greatly benefited by having volunteers and expertise from PAS, Arroyo Seco Foundation, California Native Plant Society, JPL Green Club, and other conservation allies. As we cut down the invasive species and hauled the *Arundo* out for eventual disposal, we walked by the native plants that we hope to make room for, including Elderberry, Mulefat, California buckwheat, and California sagebrush. These are all important plants for the resident birds of Hahamongna, and they will do well in this recovered space.

By the end of the morning, due to hard work and on-the-fly improvement of our methods, we had removed the entire giant stand of *Arundo* and greatly diminished the presence of the Lanceleaf nightshade. I am amazed with how much was done, and truly thankful for the effort of the team. While the most important next steps will be done by nature, we will be monitoring and returning to this site, to attend to the inevitable emergence of remnants of the invasive species. While this is a high-priority patch for us to work in, where we can make a significant difference with a volunteer team, it is not the only such patch in Hahamongna. I intend to organize future work sessions in Hahamongna, a few times per year, and despite a little exhaustion from the morning of work, others expressed interest as well. If you'd like to join us, please contact me. Great job, team!

Darren Dowell



On the last Saturday in October, a group of volunteers labored to remove a vast swath of invasive Giant Reed and Lanceleaf Nightshade to allow Elderberry, Mulefat, and other native plants to fill in at Hahamongna Watershed. The local avifauna seemed to approve of their efforts. In any event, their hard work was rewarded with pizza!
© Darren Dowell

CHAPTER NEWS

continued from page 1

The new office can accommodate two employees, and there's a reason for that: We're pleased to announce that Jamie Cho moved from a board role to the newly created staff position of Programs Coordinator in August. If you've been following us on Instagram, you know that Jamie is a talent in the communications department. She's also very good at organizing and has been a key contributor to our chapter events for many months.

Since making the switch, Jamie has been busy learning our systems and getting to know PAS volunteers and programs. She attended the Bird Science Program Docent Training class as well as several birding classes. Jamie will continue to manage our social media presence and email outreach. She's now the key point person for outreach activities and volunteer engagement. Jamie is also the staff liaison to the Advocacy Committee which she has been a member of for about a year and has a keen interest in.

As a former Social Worker, Jamie brings a thoughtful collaborative approach to her work. And as a relatively new birder, she brings a lot of passion to the job. We're lucky to have her!



Wrenitit
Left: New Programs Coordinator Jamie Cho poised to greet Open House guests out in front of the first ever official PAS headquarters.
© Sean Doorly



Right: Executive Director Lois Brunet and Pam Dong on the back patio of the Western Justice Center.
© Sean Doorly



Left: Mickey Long regales Larry Allen and Anne Mello with detailed descriptions of all the poisonous plants in the nearby Arroyo Seco.
© Sean Doorly

Spanish Language Pasadena Birding Guide Released!

In a metropolitan area where nearly 40 percent of the population are *hispanohablantes*, PAS leadership imagined a Spanish language version of our Birding Guide would be a way to reach out to this community. Less than a year later, we are thrilled to have the *Guía de Pajareo del Valle y Sierra de San Gabriel* in print!

Researching these common names of hundreds of species of birds and other fauna and flora, I appreciated how this guide is not only a useful resource to birding but a valuable text that preserves language and culture. In this manner, the guide honors the cultural wealth and knowledge of generations of people who have named and cared for these beings and their habitat. Indeed, names vary across communities and change over time. With the intention of making it easy for beginners to use online resources, we reference the common names listed in Mexican Spanish in the Merlin Bird ID app by The Cornell Lab, which consults the database by the Mexican federal agency CONABIO (National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity).

As I learned their names, I enjoyed identifying various birds on our walks with my mother in our native tongue: *el Zumbador (colibrí) de Allen, el Carpintero Bellotero, el Rascador Moteado, el Cenzontle Norteño, el Papamoscas Negro, el Aguililla Cola Roja, el Bulbul Orfeo*, among many others. One day after spotting *Calandrias Dorso Negro Menor* near the Arroyo Seco, my mother shared with me remembering these brightly colored Hooded Orioles as a child at her father's ranch in western Mexico—a place she holds dearly. That moment was special: We connected with the urban wildlife, and also felt closer to home and to each other.

After all, while the guide is written for a particular place—the Greater Pasadena Area—birds help us see how distant places and diverse communities are all interrelated. As the Board envisioned, I am excited to see how this guide can help PAS foster a greater sense of belonging among many Angelenos in the region and make our community stronger, while appreciating the wonder of our local birds.



For Mayra Sánchez and her mother, the *Guía de Pajareo* has already brought back fond memories, and created new ones. © Mayra Sánchez

Mayra Sánchez

PROFILES IN BIRDING

Condors & Allies, Part I: Mike Clark of the Los Angeles Zoo

When Mike Clark was a boy growing up in Thousand Oaks, Ventura County, his father called him into the backyard to see something in the sky. "Look at this! You probably will never see another one again!"

He was pointing to a California Condor, an imposing black bird with white feathers underside and a pink bald head. They are the largest bird in North America, with a wingspan of up to 9.5 feet.

His father was half right: The condor became extinct in the wild in 1987, when the remaining 22 free birds were taken into captivity. But little could he know that, decades later, his son would become an expert in the recovery of the species.

For 34 years, Clark has worked at the Los Angeles Zoo. He cares for about forty California condors, including eleven chicks reared last spring, with help from staff members Chandra David, Deborah Sears, and Rhiann Ogata.

Each pair of condors lives in an outdoor enclosure measuring roughly 100' x 50' x 40' tall. None of them are on display for visitors (unless you visit the Bird Show, where California Condor ambassador Hope sometimes makes an appearance among a bald eagle, macaws and even an Andean condor, all flying free over the audience's heads).

"When I started at the zoo, in 1989, there were only 30 California condors left. That's it. That's all we had to work with," said Clark in the control room where he and his crew monitor the condors on a bank of high-resolution screens.

Today there are more than 500 birds. The tally includes around 300 that fly free in California, Baja California (Mexico), Arizona and Utah. The comeback is the result of the California Condor Recovery Program started in 1979 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).



From inside the monitoring station, Mike Clark points out the blue, red, and purple coloration of Squapuni's head and neck, signs of condor contentment. Squapuni is exceptionally easygoing, and she has successfully mated with two partners to produce over twenty offspring. © Fernanda Ezabella

The program is operated by an eclectic network of public and private entities: zoos, wildlife refuges and parks in five states, as well as the Yurok Tribe and a duo living isolated in the mountains of Baja (more about them in the next issue).

This immense effort went into high alert in March when 21 wild condors from the Southwest flock of just 116 died from highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). In a matter of weeks, the outbreak undid a decade of work.

The USFWS won emergency approval to use a vaccine created for commercial chickens. After testing on black vultures, it was given to 20 condors in three zoos (eight of them in L.A.). They are all doing well, with more condors to be vaccinated soon.

Ashleigh Blackford, USFWS Program Coordinator, sees hope in the vaccine, although the HPAI threat is still real. It shows up in cycles with migratory birds in spring and autumn, and there is no way to prevent exposure.

"Condors are social, they gather at carcasses, they gather when they sleep. We need to be strategic and react more quickly," Blackford said.

Back at the L.A. Zoo, good news came this spring when the eleven pairs of the breeding program yielded a record twenty eggs, with eleven successfully hatching. The eggs are artificially incubated, and the chicks are raised by the adult birds and released in one or two years.

"The last of the eleven chicks has finally fledged just about a week ago," said Clark on October 28th. "They are not really flying, just wandering around and getting up on perches."

Condors start courtship displays around December, and eggs could be laid as early as January and as late as May. Then, it takes about 55 days to hatch.

Clark believes there are enough birds today to avoid extinction, but there is still a lot of work. "The worst is over. Now we need



"You...complete me." Mike Clark shares a special bond with Dolly, as he does with all the condors and other raptors he has cared for over the years. An injury to Dolly's wing keeps her grounded and thus a permanent resident of the zoo. © Fernanda Ezabella

continued on page 9

WINGBEAT (OR RATHER, LACK THEREOF)

On The Gobsmacking Grandeur of Albatrosses

You poor land-bound wretches, you know nothing of this planet. Stuck on the dry ground, most of you rarely glimpsing - never mind really interacting with - the ocean that makes up two thirds of the world. It's a tragic situation to be in (don't worry, I'm in it too, growing up in oceanless Pennsylvania, now living in California, but an hour's drive away from the ocean). So, out of some combination of awe and bottomless envy, take a few minutes to think about albatrosses.

Albatrosses are sea birds, the biggest flying creatures on earth. How big? Stretch your arms straight out as wide as you can. The distance between your fingertips is a bit less than the length of just one wing of a Wandering Albatross. At a glance it's obvious that albatrosses are designed to fly vast distances with great efficiency. And, boy, do they ever. Albatrosses are the most efficient travelers of all vertebrates on the planet. It's nothing for an albatross to travel 10,000 miles in a single journey. Add up a lifetime of journeys and an albatross can travel five million miles. And remarkably, in all that distance, they almost never flap their wings. Albatrosses use a flying technique called dynamic soaring, taking advantage of the subtle difference in wind speed and direction between the breeze near the water and the breeze several feet higher up. An albatross will angle into the wind and let the breeze lift it up higher, the way a breeze lifts a kite. Then it will turn and glide downwind, letting the tail wind and the astonishingly efficient airfoil shape of its wings carry it long distances before it repeats the process. Rapid movement (albatrosses routinely hit speeds of 50 to 90 miles per hour) along vast ocean distances, all the while doing virtually no work. Albatrosses even have a special arrangement of the bones and tendons in their wings that allows them to stay fully open with out having to use any muscular force.

It's no surprise that an animal so beautiful and graceful is a favorite of nature documentaries, but for some reason -- jealousy perhaps -- albatrosses are inevitably shown at their most embarrassing, when they're on land. (All birds, even albatrosses, must come onto land to lay and incubate their eggs). Sometimes it's a scene showing an albatross attempting to get airborne on a calm day by frantically running along the beach...big silly webbed feet smacking against the sand, big silly ungainly wings flapping away, often while big silly music plays in the background. Or conversely, they're shown coming in for a landing, and then either face-planting or tumbling ass over teakettle across the ground. How unfair to show creatures who spend the vast majority of their lives in the air during those occasional few seconds when they are attempting to navigate the boundary between earth and sky. I hope that in some parallel cosmos albatrosses watch nature documentaries about humans, and laugh their asses off at how comically ungainly those humans are as they flail in the air after they've just fallen off a cliff.

Ask someone who knows nothing about birds what they know about the albatross and they'll often reply that it's bad luck to kill one. To find the origin of that axiom you need to go all the way back to September, 1719, off the coast of Tierra del Fuego. A privateer called the *Speedwell* was struggling to round Cape Horn when an albatross began hovering and swooping around the ship. It stayed there in the sky around the ship, day in and day out, as the ship was slammed by high waves and opposing winds and got not one inch closer to making it around the Cape. The captain of the *Speedwell*, George Shelvocke, recalled the incident in a book he wrote about the voyage:

"We all observed, that we had not the sight of one fish of any kind, since we were come to the Southward of the streights of le Maire, nor one sea-bird, except ...a disconsolate black Albitross, who accompanied us for several days, hovering about us as if he had lost himself, till Hatley, (my second Captain) observing, in one of his melancholy fits, that this bird was always hovering near us, imagin'd from his colour, that it might be some ill omen. That which, I suppose, induced him the more to encourage his superstition, was the continued series of contrary tempestuous winds, which had oppress'd us ever since we had got into this sea. But be that as it would, he, after some fruitless attempts, at length, shot the Albitross, not doubting (perhaps) that we should have a fair wind after it."

More than half a century later William Wordsworth read that passage, and on a walk with his friend, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, mentioned the incident. At the time Coleridge just happened to be working on an epic poem about the sea and the spirits that punish a man for taking innocent life. He went on to make the shooting of an albatross, and the killer subsequently being forced to wear the dead albatross around his neck as a sign of penance, the central event of his epic poem, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*:

*And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averred, I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!*



No, the wings are not photo-shopped, and this is a relatively small Black-footed Albatross.
© Chris Spurgeon

continued on page 8

MEMBERSHIP

PAS Membership- Why Join?

Pasadena Audubon appreciates our members – we are all about birds and community. Some people wonder, why join PAS? Or, they are members of National Audubon Society and want to know why they aren't automatic PAS members. Or you wonder what benefits you get for joining. Let me try to answer these questions, as the Membership Chair for PAS.

Q: If I'm a National Audubon Society (NAS) member, does that make me a Pasadena Audubon Society (PAS) member?

In a word, no. You could say that joining NAS is thinking globally, while joining PAS is acting locally! Supporting NAS means you are contributing to all of National's work in conservation and education, and this is a great organization to which to donate. Local chapters such as PAS get only a small amount of funding from National, as well as mailing lists of local NAS members; that may be why you are reading this Wrentit! However, for our Chapter to do all of its work and offer all of our activities, we need local support from our members. That's why we ask you to join PAS. You can do that from our website. We'll send you an annual reminder when your next year's dues are up for renewal, or better yet, you can sign up for autorenewal and you won't get any pesky reminders from me!

Q: What do I get in return for my membership dues? You get the satisfaction of knowing that you are helping PAS achieve its mission locally, as well as making possible all of our programming which includes field trips, social and educational activities, and conservation. Some of our field trips are open only to members (Arboretum & Huntington), or members are given priority during registration (e.g. Pelagic). For classes with fees (such as Botany for Birders and Language of Birds), members get a discount. For other field trips, we use a lottery system which does not prioritize members; and still other trips do not have size limits so anyone can sign up. Members can even check out books from our Bird Library!

Q: Does the chapter run just on membership dues? No, we have also been awarded a number of grants, which has helped us grow our capacity. We also benefit from private donations and bequests from our members and supporters, which add to our capacity to meet our mission. We conduct fundraising campaigns each year to ensure we can meet our budget. If you'd like to be a regular monthly donor, we encourage you to sign up for our Dawn Chorus, which means you commit to an automatic monthly gift (of any size). This helps us with cash flow as we know how much will be coming in every month.

Q: If I make a donation, does my membership automatically renew? Not necessarily, as membership dues and donations are categorized separately in our books. We greatly appreciate your annual contributions and your generous responses to our fundraising campaigns. Unless you tell us specifically that a part of your contribution is also meant to renew your membership, we usually catalog it as a donation, not a membership renewal. If your check says membership that will make it clear, or if your online transaction is clearly a

membership renewal that's how we record it. An exception is that Dawn Chorus members (setup as automatic monthly donors) have their membership renewed each year that they continue as Dawn Chorus members. We print a list of Dawn Chorus members in our Wrentit every issue.

Q: How do I get involved as a member? There are so many ways you can get involved with the PAS community! We have multiple field trips every month, including the upcoming Christmas Bird Count. There are monthly meetings at Eaton Canyon Nature Center or sometimes on Zoom, and monthly social gatherings at the Wild Parrot Brewery – a great way to meet fellow birders and play bird games. We also have many opportunities for volunteers – you can become a Bird Science docent, work in our native garden at Washington Elementary school, table at local conservation events, or remove invasive species in our local habitats. We have monthly meetings for new and seasoned volunteers. Check out our e-blasts and Instagram to see what's happening!

Q: Should I join or renew as a Pasadena Audubon member? YES! We want you as a member of our PAS community. It's a great way to strengthen your ties to nature and to your fellow denizens of Pasadena, the San Gabriel Valley, and beyond. So please, join us! pasadenaaudubon.org/join

Emily Allen

WINGBEAT (CONTINUED)

This concept, that creatures were innocent and that harming them was a sin against God and nature, was wholly against the general opinion of the day. Albatrosses were routinely killed by South Sea sailors. One passenger described the taste of fresh roasted sooty albatross "like beavertail soup."

So far, in my almost entirely land-bound life, I've seen albatrosses three times, each occasion requiring me to take a boat at least twenty miles out into the Pacific Ocean. And that was just to see a Black-footed Albatross (*Phoebastria nigripes*), which is a bit of an exception in the albatross family. They're chocolate brown instead of the typical white, not as large as some other albatross species, and one of the very few albatross species that go slumming near the California coast.

But there's no such thing as a "lesser" albatross the first time you see one. My first glimpse was twenty-five miles off the coast of Monterey, on an overcast day with a fresh breeze, and rough and confused six to ten foot swells. The bird, huge with impossibly long and skinny wings, seemed to explode skyward out of the trough between two waves. Then, at the top of its climb it wheeled over and dropped down between the waves again. It repeated this for the ten minutes, gliding and swooping all around the boat, until it lost interest and glided away. All the while, it didn't flap its wings even once.

Chris Spurgeon

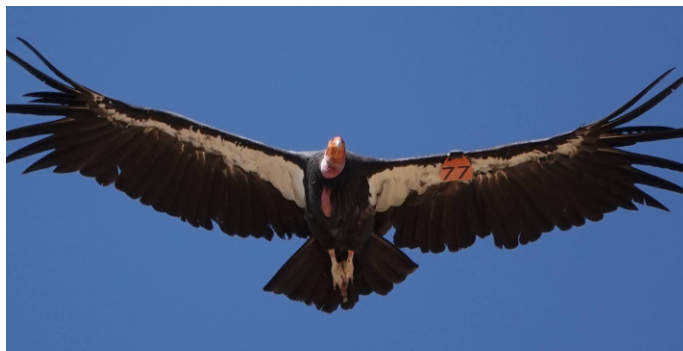
PROFILES IN BIRDING (CONTINUED)

to make the wild population self-sufficient. And it won't happen anytime soon."

Poisoning remains the main threat, causing 50% of deaths since 1992, when the birds were reintroduced into the wild. As scavengers, part of the vulture family, condors get poisoned when they eat the carcasses of animals killed by lead bullets.

"We need a change in the hunting culture," he said, explaining that California's 2019 ban on the sale of lead bullets has not yet had effect. "That's going to take a few generations."

Fernanda Ezabella



Haku, a 31 year-old female, glides right over the author's head during a visit to Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge. Haku is one of about 300 California Condors hatched at the LA Zoo and subsequently released into the wild.

© Fernanda Ezabella

OUR MAGNIFICENT, MUNIFICENT DONORS

Your generous support of our Nesting Campaign humbles us, inspires us, and helps our community continue to thrive.

CALIFORNIA CONDOR (\$2000-\$5000): Elliott Mazur, Carol Watson & Greg Kunert

GOLDEN EAGLE (\$1000-\$1999): Harlan Irvine, Deborah Tammeauru

GREAT HORNED OWL (\$500-\$999): Larry Allen, Norm & Anna Arnheim, Gary Breaux, Lois & Pascal Brunet, Dawn Burkhardt, Doug Farr, Walter Fidler, Carl Matthies

ACORN WOODPECKER (\$250-\$499): Mike Abrams, Emily L. Allen, Ann Horton, Christine Hessler, Lisa Nasser, Janet Owens, Deni Sinnott & Mako Koiwai, Michael Stangl, Sok Tng

CALIFORNIA THRASHER (\$100-\$249): Jack & Susan Kosar Beery, Ira Blitz, Ashok Boghani, Jane Bork, Tom Brady, Tom Cheyney, Betty Cleland, Stephen DeKeater, Anne Dove, Darren Dowell, Jane & Robert Ettinger, Fernanda Ezabella, Lynzie Flynn, Jane Glicksman & Morrow Fleet, Katherine Hoff & Max-Joseph Montel, Eloise B. Kaeck, Iona Linden, Patricia Lindsay, Susan McCurdy, Kenn & Hwei-Li Miller, Jeff Moore, Katie Ng, Cynthia Null, Nathan & Lynne Osborne, Wendy & Anthony Price, Richard Ramos, George Reich, Louise & Robert Ritchie, Janet Rose, Vicki Salmon, Danielle Salomon, Donna Schulman, Loretta Selinger, Anne Shapiro, Michael Sovich, Richard Spradling, Phillip A. Swan, Yvonne Tsai, David T. Woodley, Linda Zinn

WRENTIT (\$5-\$99): James Aguiar & Randi Burke-Aguiar, Francisco Alonso, Laurel Asher, Annabelle Aylmer, Mitch Barnhart & Amado Sierras II, Sally Beer, Marcielle Brandler, Kristy Brauch, Cynthia Cannady, Jamie Cho & Christopher Patocka, Aaron Cobas, Elizabeth Cordero, Roxanne Correa, Brendan Crill, Diane Dennis, Tricia Desmarais, Nicole Diaz-Ordaz, Edward & Marianne Fisher, Mary Freeman, Linda Fuller, Marnie & Marc Gaede, Mary Glazer, Michael Gottlieb, Kurt Grelak, Marcia Grieco, Alan W. Harris, Nadine Ishizu, Susan Josenhans, Charles Kohlhasse, Daniel Legaspi, Victor D. Levine, Kristen McCall, Beatrice Miller, Francisco Mondragon, Joan Morris, Linda Othenin-Girard, Olga Palo, James Pelling, Brando Pozzi, Phillip Regan, Victoria Rimac, Grace Sakaguchi, Mayra Sanchez, Christina Sansone, Diane Sipieter & Tracy Turner, Jim & Lulu Smith, Harry Spilman, Sylvia Stachura, Suzanne Swedo, Luke Tiller, Cheryl Walling, Kerri & Matthew Walsh, Winnie Wear, Roberta & Ronald White, Heather Wilson, Tai-Ling Wong;

DAWN CHORUS: Emily L. Allen, Martin Bern, Ava Bise, Hannah Carbone, Gesna Clarke, Kathy Degner, Gail Gibson & Connie Pearson, Karin Hanson, Sarah Hilbert, Jared Knickmeyer & Lynda Elkin, Rachel Knight, Alice Lewin, Mario Mariotta IV, Kristen Ochoa & Shana Pallotta, Taylor Paez, Susan Reedy, Laura & Gavin Solomon, Chris Spurgeon, Elaine Tietjen, Patrick & Cheryl Walling, Dave Weeshoff

MEMORIAL & HONORARY GIFTS:

Mary Angel donated in memory of Ralph Angel
Lisa & Phil Carlson, Gayle Glauz, Mary Hornbuckle, and Rayma R. Harrison donated in memory of Wilbur Dong
Paula Haddad donated in memory of Paula Mutis-Beane
Lisa Nasser donated in memory of Cleo

Kathy Degner, Mickey Long, and Dave Weeshoff donated in honor of retiring Executive Director Lois Brunet
Carolyn Ellis donated in honor of Laura Solomon
Blair Miller donated in honor of Rena Wertzer

A Warm Welcome to Our Newest Members!

ALTADENA: Hannah MacLaren; **DURANGO**: Martha Kiefer; **EAGLE ROCK**: Mario Olmos; **FREDERICTON**: Maxwell Francioni; **LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE**: Deborah Saxe; **LOS ANGELES**: Melissa Avila, Denaly Chen, Joan Dy, Min Flo, Lisa Freeman, Rob Woodworth; **MONROVIA**: Rebecca Butler; **PASADENA**: Caley Cannon, Alec Fredericks, Claudia Keith & David Lorenzana, Sandra Mader, Christine M. Olsen, Linnea Peterson & John Corman, Tanya & Frank Reader, Noah Rosenthal & Nicole Porche; David & Cara Rubin, Elizabeth Tatum, David Yamaoka, Jieyu Zheng; **SHERMAN OAKS**: Jay Blake, John Witemberg; **SIGNAL HILL**: Rebecca Marine; **SOUTH PASADENA**: Kristina Dang & Eric Vince, Carla Obert, Mona Rosenthal, Yi Zhang; Elizabeth Paredes

Become a Part of the Dawn Chorus

Consider joining our monthly donor program to provide ongoing support for all our programs and events. Sign up at pasadenaudubon.org/donate. Dawn Chorus donors receive a beautiful enamel pin designed by PAS' own Patrick Walling and Graham Hamby!



Pasadena Audubon Society Board

Lois Brunet	Executive Director	loisb.pas@gmail.com
Luke Tiller	President	luke.tiller@gmail.com
Dave Weeshoff	Vice President	weeshoff@sbcglobal.net
Mayra Sánchez Barba	Secretary	mgsanchez@ucdavis.edu
Gary Breau	Treasurer	gbreaux@gmail.com
Chris Spurgeon	Programs	ces@pasadenaaudubon.org
Emily Allen	Membership	elallen54@gmail.com
Darren Dowell	Field Trips	dowell.darren@yahoo.com
Carl Matthies	Wrentit Editor	pas.wrentit@gmail.com
Sok Tng	Development	sokktng@gmail.com
Ashwin Sivakumar	Conservation	ahs.birder@gmail.com
Deborah Tammearu	Member at Large	revdeb.tammearu8@gmail.com

The Wrentit is published by the Pasadena Audubon Society
75 S Grand Avenue, Pasadena CA 91105

Editor: Carl Matthies, pas.wrentit@gmail.com
Printing by Marina Graphic Center (310) 970-1777

Messages or queries for Pasadena Audubon may be left at (626) 410-7506.
For change of NAS address call: (800) 274-4201.

Pasadena Audubon Society
75 S. Grand Ave.
Pasadena, CA 91105

DATED MATERIAL

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



Printed on
10% recycled paper
FSC Certified

¡Qué Buena Noticia!

MÁS DE 30 SITIOS LOCALES
Patrones de estacionalidad
Aves locales y exóticas

Nuestro *Guía de Pajareo* ya está disponible para compra! Se puede encontrarlo en **Vivero Hahamongna**, el sitio web buteobooks.com, y otros librerías locales.*

* Hay una lista entera de vendedores en nuestro sitio web, pasadenaaudubon.org