



CHAPARRAL NATURALIST

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Pomona Valley Audubon Society

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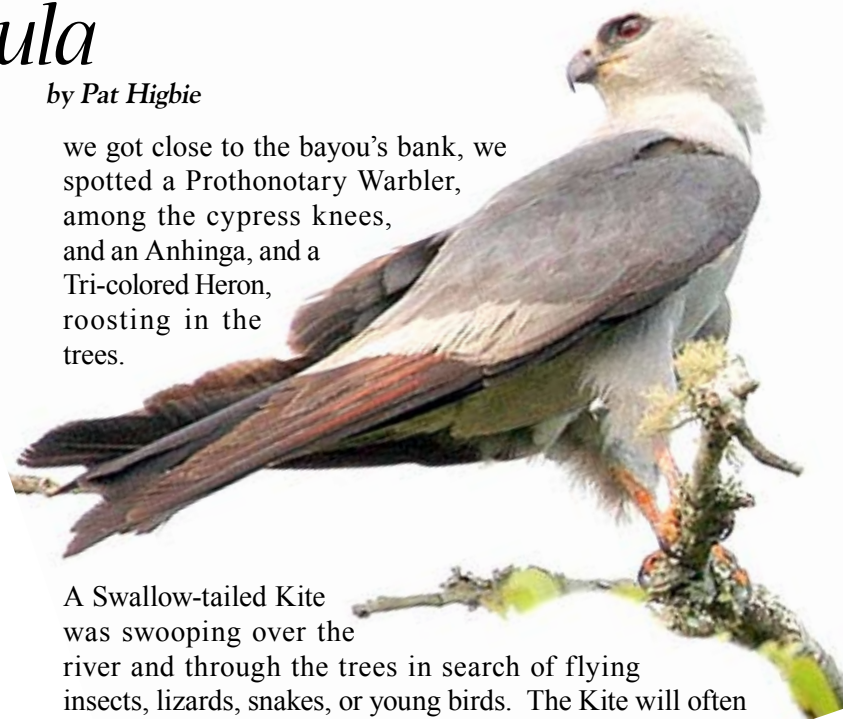
Afternoon on the Pascagoula

by Pat Higbie

On our way to the Florida Keys, Rod and I spent two days birding in the Ocean Springs and Moss Point, Mississippi area, hoping to add more birds to our list for that state. While riding along Interstate 10 on April 19, we saw a sign advertising the Pascagoula River Birding Festival at the Audubon Center. Although we missed the Festival days, we followed the sign's directions to the Pascagoula River Audubon Center. Here, we met a friendly naturalist, who showed us around the verdant grounds, situated alongside the river. The Center was established in 2006, to promote conservation and educate visitors on the importance of a healthy watershed, and how everyone can help protect it for wildlife and humans. An old house on the grounds serves as an office, and research facility. A backroom has aquariums and terrariums with native fish and amphibians. There is an outdoor classroom, a stadium-style viewing area by a drip fountain, a tower, built to attract nesting Chimney Swifts, and demonstration gardens, using native plants.

Adjacent to the Center, boat trips are available through McCoy's River and Marsh Tours. The naturalist told us a college class was coming for a tour soon, and said we should ask the boat captain, if he could take two more passengers. We were able to board for the two hour float trip, as Captain Benny McCoy took us all through the river's marshes and bayous. He explained that the river is one of the last free-flowing river systems in the lower 48 states. He was telling us about the different marsh grasses, when he slowed the boat, and cut a blade of Sawgrass for us to examine. Named for its sharp, serrated edges, a Sawgrass marsh is not suitable for most wildlife, but is used as an alligator nesting area. Further along the river channel, we saw a cypress snag with an active Osprey nest; we would encounter two more before entering the swampy bayou. We observed downed cypress trees, and beached house boats, devastated by Hurricane Katrina. As

we got close to the bayou's bank, we spotted a Prothonotary Warbler, among the cypress knees, and an Anhinga, and a Tri-colored Heron, roosting in the trees.



A Swallow-tailed Kite was swooping over the river and through the trees in search of flying insects, lizards, snakes, or young birds. The Kite will often eat its prey in flight. We watched this graceful bird with the deeply forked tail, as it flew down and skimmed the water for a drink. Enthralled by all the sights and sounds in the bayou, time passed quickly, and Captain Benny picked up speed for the return trip to the Audubon Center. The boat's spray was cooling us in the warm afternoon's sunshine, when he reduced speed to view a female alligator near her nest in the marsh.

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Afternoon on the Pascagoula

(Cont'd. from page 1)

The Captain said he had been observing her in the same area for years. Overhead we watched a Mississippi Kite, flying toward the swamp. It, also, preys on flying insects, and will eat its prey in flight. The Mississippi Kite is distinguished by its dark back and black tail, and is smaller than the White-tailed Kite.

At the landing, Rod and I shook Captain Benny's hand and thanked him for an informative and memorable tour, then thanked the naturalist for his hospitality, and said our goodbyes.

If you are ever driving east on Interstate 10, through Mississippi, this Center is certainly well worth a visit.

The Pascagoula River Audubon Center is located less than 0.5 miles north of Interstate 10 at exit 68 (Moss Point, Mississippi). It is open 8:00 a.m.-4:00 pm., Tuesday thru Saturday, closed holidays. Telephone 228-475-0825 Fax 228-475-0826.

Admission is free, but donations are welcome.



More on Squirrels...

by Dan Guthrie

One of our members recently sent me a copy of the Big Bear newspaper which contained an article on gray squirrels. It seems that the squirrels in the mountains are becoming sick and dying from mange, a skin disease caused by mites. Mange can be transmitted from squirrel to squirrel and high populations of squirrels in the Big Bear area, in part due to people feeding them, has helped maintain the outbreak.

Mange causes hair loss and itching, and if a squirrel or other animal has mange, its appearance looks very bad. So far in our valley, all the squirrels I have seen have nice smooth coats with no sign of hair loss. However, keep an eye on your squirrels! I would be interested if any show the 'run-down' appearance caused by mange.

Welcome New Members

We extend a warm welcome to all new members. Subscribers to Audubon Magazine from our area are automatically enrolled in our chapter and receive the Chaparral Naturalist at no additional charge. You are welcome to all our events.

Alta Loma: Elaine Jobin

Chino: David Donk, Amy Latta, Anthony Medina

Claremont: T. Alexander, Lovelle Beaman, David & Valerie Cressy, Janice Keber, Lois Keith, Amelia Sorensen-Ellison

Corona: Marian Baxter, Elizabeth Bolen,

Covina: D.S. Fitch, Duane Villines

Etiwanda: Gale Steele

La Verne: Manjut Kaur, Sarah Svob, David Vosburg

Ontario: Judy Watkins,

Pomona: Steve Keber, Anita Laemoa

Rancho Cucamonga: Barbara Foster

Upland: Valoy Cavanugh, Barry Leach, Kevin Sea

West Covina: Donald Backofen

Dan Gregory - 2011 PVAS Flock Leader Award

by Karlene Campo



Every year, Pomona Valley Audubon presents The Flock Leader Award to a person who personifies the attribute of the award: outstanding service towards the growth, well-being and furtherance of PVAS. This year, we are proud to announce that Dan Gregory is our Flock Leader of 2011.

Dan has led many popular mid-week field trips for PVAS for several years. His trips range from the LA Arboretum to Santa Fe Dam to Big Morongo to the Living Desert in Palm Desert. He is a knowledgeable and patient trip leader whose enthusiasm inspires beginner & experienced participants alike to be better birders. Dan strives to have everyone see the birds and have fun doing so, making for some very satisfied birders at the conclusion of each trip. He is always willing to share interesting facts about the birds and participants can learn a great deal on his fieldtrips.

He has taken part in the Christmas Bird Count for many years, starting out with the Bonelli Park group, and now leading a team that birds many northern canyons in our area, including Marshall Canyon. In 2010, Dan found the "bird of the count"; a gorgeous male Scott's Oriole, a species never reported before on our CBC.

In the past, Dan has served as PVAS Field Trip Chairperson, lining up leaders and organizing all the trips for the year. He has volunteered his time to work our annual Claremont Village Venture booth, greeting the public and answering questions about Audubon and birds. Dan also contributes articles to our chapter newsletter, the Chaparral Naturalist. Just last month, he wrote an article about the North Etiwanda Preserve, one of his favorite local birding hotspots.

There are several things that set this year's Flock Leader apart from past honorees. He is considerably younger, is not retired, and is currently busy raising a young family. We are fortunate that Dan contributes so much to PVAS and we have benefited from his knowledge, enthusiasm and personality, which together define what a Flock Leader should be. We are proud to have him as a member!

Local Memberships Due!

If you are a member of National Audubon and live within our area (zip codes assigned to us) you automatically become a member of our Pomona Valley Chapter. However, if you are not a member of National OR belong to another chapter, you can join locally for only \$20/ year. Local members are added to our mailing list and are mailed a copy of our bi-monthly newsletter, the Chaparral Naturalist.

Payments are due in the fall of each year and may be mailed (see page 7) or submitted in-person to our treasurer, Neil Gilbert, at the September general meeting.



Audubon Board Activities

by Dan Guthrie

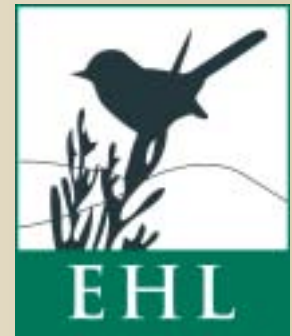
Each summer our Board of Directors sends funds to worthwhile organizations for their conservation and education work. Among the organization we support are two of which you should be aware.



Wild Wings recently took over the care of this Cooper's Hawk fledgling.

Wild Wings of California www.wildwings.org is a non-profit wildlife rehabilitation program run by Judy Everett in San Dimas and associated with the San Dimas Canyon Park. They primarily deal with raptorial birds, including lots of baby barn owls knocked out of their nests by tree-trimming. However, they also take a variety of other birds. Judy has released 18 baby hummingbirds back to the wild this summer. Feeding hummingbirds does not cost much except for time as they must be fed regularly and often. Owls are another matter. Raptorial birds need food with bone and skin to maintain their proper diet and mice are costly. We contribute all the door prize money from our meetings to Wild Wings as well as make a summer donation. You, too, can donate directly

The Endangered Habitats League www.ehleague.org is a major player in conservation activities in southern California. Locally, they negotiated a settlement to litigation with the City of Ontario that will eventually dedicate \$20 million in mitigation for conservation in the Prado Basin, a large complex of wetlands and uplands. Anchored by federal land to the south, most of the rest of the Basin has transitioned from dairies to development. Following discussions with EHL, the City of Chino built open space protections and a mitigation program into its own General Plan, contributing to the Prado Basin effort.



Do take a look at the web pages of these organizations and support them.



See Pacific Gray Whales at San Ignacio Lagoon!

Pacific gray whales return to San Ignacio Lagoon each year to mate and give birth. During this nine-day excursion we will spend three exciting days anchored in San Ignacio Lagoon where friendly gray whales and their curious calves swim within arm's length of the skiffs.

For fans of our feathered friends this is a chance to see albatrosses, osprey, black and American oystercatchers, frigate birds, a wide variety of herons and egrets, not to mention all the birds that hang out in the mangroves found in San Ignacio. The trip also includes naturalist-led visits to uninhabited desert islands where passengers will have the chance to see even more birds, unique habitats, and tons of other wildlife.

To learn more visit: CMA Baja Adventure website: <https://sites.google.com/site/cmabajaadventure/> or contact Carolyn Kraft at (310) 548-7562. Cabrillo Marine Aquarium is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and engages all visitors in education, recreation and research to promote knowledge, appreciation and conservation of the marine life of Southern California. Cabrillo has been hosting the Baja trip for 38 years.

Field Trips

Pomona Valley Audubon field trips are open to all individuals. Please call trip leader if you plan to attend and for starting time & meeting location. Sunday Beginning Bird Walks meet at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden. Bonelli Park trips meet at park headquarters on Via Verde, just off the 57 freeway. It is recommended to bring a snack (lunch if recommended), plenty of water, sun protection, and bug spray to all trips.

Sunday, September 4, 2011

Beginner's Bird Walk

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden

Join us for our monthly (September-June) bird walk. Family friendly, the walk is flat and lasts approx. two hours. (Bring binoculars if you have them) Meets 8:00 a.m. at the front entry gate (north end of College Ave. above Foothill Blvd. 1500 N. College Ave.) **Leader: Fraser Pemberton 909-624-6451.**

Wednesday, September 7, 2011

Midweek Trip to Glen Helen Park

A half day trip to look for fall migrants. Bring snacks and plenty of water. Meets at 7:00 a.m. at Memorial Park. **Leader: Dan Guthrie 909-607-2836.**

Sunday, September 25, 2011

Bonelli Park Monthly Bird Walk

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Bonelli Park headquarters on Via Verde near the 57 Fwy. for our monthly walk (4th Sunday, about 2 hours) at Bonelli Park. **Leader: Rod Highbie 909-599-6526**

Saturday, September 17, 2011

Bolsa Chica & Huntington Central Park

A trip for returning shorebirds, migrants. Trip will go to early afternoon - bring a lunch. **Leader: Pamela Kling 909-240-7604. Call for meeting time and location.**

Sunday, October 2, 2011

Beginner's Bird Walk

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden

Join us for our monthly (September-June) bird walk. Family friendly, the walk is flat and lasts approx. two hours. (Bring binoculars if you have them) Meets 8:00 a.m. at the front entry gate (north end of College Ave. above Foothill Blvd. 1500 N. College Ave.) **Leader: Fraser Pemberton 909-624-6451.**

Saturday, October 8, 2011

Quail Lake/Holiday Lake/Apollo Park

A trip to the western Antelope Valley for migrant birds and collection of owl pellets for our educational programs. Meet at Memorial Park at 7:00 a.m., bring a lunch. **Leader: Dan Guthrie 909-607-2836.**

Wednesday, October 12, 2011

Prado Regional Park

A half-day trip for water birds, vermilion flycatchers and wintering raptors. Bring a lunch for snacking. Meets at 7:00 a.m. at Memorial Park. **Leader: Dan Gregory 909-944-2259.**

Saturday, October 15, 2011

Galileo Hill and Piute Ponds

Two hours north is one of the best desert oasis for migrant birds and possible eastern vagrants. Return via Rte. 14, and Piute Ponds. Last year we had excellent looks at Pectoral and Baird's sandpipers and phalaropes. Meet at Memorial Park at 6:00 a.m. Bring lunch, snacks, and plenty of water. A hat and sunscreen is strongly recommended. **Leader: Dan Guthrie 909-607-2836.**

Saturday, October 22, 2011

Village Venture

Plan to visit our booth on First Street!

Sunday, October 23, 2011

Bonelli Park Monthly Bird Walk

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Bonelli Park headquarters on Via Verde near the 57 Fwy. for our monthly walk (4th Sunday, about 2 hours) at Bonelli Park. **Leader: Rod Highbie 909-599-6526**

Sunday, November 6, 2011

Beginner's Bird Walk

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden

Join us for our monthly (September-June) bird walk. Family friendly, the walk is flat and lasts approx. two hours. (Bring binoculars if you have them) Meets 8:00 a.m. at the front entry gate (north end of College Ave. above Foothill Blvd. 1500 N. College Ave.) **Leader: Fraser Pemberton 909-624-6451.**

Wednesday, November 9, 2011

Mt. Baldy Village and Vicinity

A trip to Mt. Baldy for migrants. Meets at 7:00 a.m. at Memorial Park. **Leader: Dan Gregory 909-944-2259.**

**Saturday & Sunday,
November 19-20, 2011**

Morro Bay Field Trip

A trip for vagrant species along the coast. This is the best high tide of the year for wintering shorebirds. Saturday we'll visit Morro Bay, Montana del Oro, and Cambria for elephant seals. On Sunday we'll scout Oceano, Oso Flacco Lake, and possibly Santa Barbara for vagrants. Meet at the base of Morro Rock at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday. **Leader: Dan Guthrie 909-607-2836.**

Sunday, November 27, 2011

Bonelli Park Monthly Bird Walk

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Bonelli Park headquarters on Via Verde near the 57 Fwy. for our monthly walk (4th Sunday, about 2 hours) at Bonelli Park. **Leader: Rod Highbie 909-599-6526**

PVAS 2011-12 FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER

Sunday, September 4 - Beginner's Bird Walk Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden 8 a.m.

Wednesday, September 7 - Mid-week trip to Glen Helen Park, 8 a.m. Leader: Dan Guthrie

Saturday, September 17 - Bolsa Chica/Huntington Central Park Leader: Pam Kling

Sunday, September 25 - Bonelli Park Bird Walk 8 a.m. Leader: Rod Higbie

OCTOBER

Sunday, October 2 - Beginner's Bird Walk Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden 8 a.m.

Saturday, October 8 - Holiday Lake and Apollo Park Owl pellet and birding trip 7 a.m. Leader: Dan Guthrie

Wednesday, October 12 - Prado Regional Park 7 a.m. Leader: Dan Gregory

Saturday, October 15 - Piute Ponds and Antelope Valley, 7 a.m. Leader: Dan Guthrie

Saturday, October 22 - Village Venture, Claremont, Come visit our booth on First Street!

Sunday, October 23 - Bonelli Park Bird Walk 8 a.m. Leader: Rod Higbie

NOVEMBER

Sunday, November 6 - Beginner's Bird Walk Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden 8 a.m.

Wednesday, November 9 - Mt. Baldy Village and Vicinity 7:30 a.m. Leader: Dan Gregory

Saturday & Sunday, November 19-20 - Morro Bay Field Trip Leader: Dan Guthrie

Sunday, November 27 - Bonelli Park Bird Walk 8 a.m. Leader: Rod Higbie

DECEMBER

Sunday, December 4 - Beginner's Bird Walk Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden 8 a.m.

Saturday, December 10 - Coastal Orange County 7 a.m. Leader: Dan Guthrie

Wednesday, December 14 - Bonelli Park Pre-Christmas Trip Leaders: Strangs

Thursday, December 15 - Claremont Parks Pre-Christmas Trip Leader: Dan Guthrie

Saturday, December 17 - Annual Christmas Census

JANUARY, 2011

Saturday, January 7 - Orange County Big Day Trip 7 a.m. Leader: Dan Guthrie

Wednesday, January 11 - Santa Fe Dam 8 a.m. Leader: Dan Gregory

Sunday, January 22 - Bonelli Park Bird Walk 8 a.m. Leader: Rod Higbie

Pomona Valley Audubon field trips are open to all individuals. Please call trip leader if you plan to attend and for starting time & meeting location. Sunday Beginning Bird Walks meet at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden. Bonelli Park trips meet at park headquarters on Via Verde, just off the 57 freeway. It is recommended to bring a snack (lunch if recommended), plenty of water, sun protection, and bug spray to all trips.



Tricolored Blackbird Survey Results *by Dan Guthrie*

Several of us participated in a state-wide tricolored blackbird survey last April. The results are now in. One hundred thirty-eight colonies were found, containing 259,322 tricolored redwings. The biggest colonies were in the San Joachin Valley and the Tulare Basin. Southern California only was home to 5,965 birds, 3000 of which were in a single colony south of Lake Perris. No tricolors were found in San Bernardino County, and 1066 were found in Los Angeles County, mostly in the Antelope Valley.

This survey is conducted every three years. Keep an eye out for tricolors and report them so we know where to look next time.

Each winter there are also periodic surveys of burrowing owls, mountain plover and long-billed curlews. We will keep you informed about the dates and how to participate.

Closer to home, I would be very interested in finding barn owl roosts, as a way of censusing our barn owl population. Barn owls are fairly good about finding a roost and staying in it. The result is a pile of mouse and gopher bones at the base of their roost. In our suburban areas many barn owls favor the untrimmed fronds of palm trees, Owls have roosted in Palms at the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden for several years.. If you are out walking and see a palm tree with the fronds still attached, check underneath for rodent bones, and give me a call as to its location. Dan Guthrie 909-621-4000 or dguthrie@jcd.claremont.edu.



Roleder Title Now Available as Kindle ebook on Amazon!

Yes, that's correct. You can now download George Roleder's popular title on Amazon for your Kindle. These humorous short stories are for the lighter side of birding.

They reflect bird life if it copied human activities. So the author imagines birds publishing their own newspaper to record current events and social problem. These include boycotting migration because of rising travel costs. They receive advice from counselors when faced with fear of flying, racial discrimination, marital discord, etc. Ornithologists will appreciate the grains of bird biology in the stories. Most readers will be content to enjoy the humorous tales.

George Roleder uses his experience as a birder, college professor, marriage and family counselor and parish minister to create these humorous stories. He taught at Mt. San Antonio College in Walnut, California for over thirty years. His degrees are an M.A. in psychology from Claremont Graduate School, a Ph.D. in Higher Education from USC, and an M.Div. from Wartburg Theological Seminary.

PVAS OFFICERS 2011-12

President.....	Dan Guthrie	909-607-2836
Vice-President.....	Bruce Strang	626-332-2354
Secretary	Pam Kling	909-240-7604
Treasurer.....	Neil Gilbert	909-626-0334
Board Member	Ken Burgdorff	626-962-9702
Board Member	Jim Herman.....	909-240-8547
Board Member	Pat Higbie.....	909-599-6526
Board Member	Rod Higbie	909-599-6526
Board Member	Nancy Strang	626-332-2354

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Conservation	Available
Education.....	Dan Guthrie
Field Trips	Dan Guthrie
Membership	Dan Guthrie
Publications	Neil Gilbert
Publicity	Shirley Harris.....
Door Prizes	Karlene Campo..
Hospitality.....	
	Gloria Slosberg/Ed Babcock....
Website	Mike Klein.....

CHAPARRAL NATURALIST

Editor..... Pam Kling

The **Chaparral Naturalist** is published bimonthly, except July and August by the Pomona Valley Audubon Society. Copy deadline is the last Thursday of the month. Articles may be reprinted without permission, but please give credit to the author and the **Chaparral Naturalist**. We encourage members to submit articles and photos by email at pamtone@verizon.net. Acceptable file formats are jpg, Word and Excel.

Chapter only memberships with subscriptions to the newsletter are available for \$20 per year. **Make checks payable to PVAS and mail to W. M. Keck Science Center, 925 N. Mills Ave., Claremont, CA 91711.**

National Audubon Membership / Membership Information Update

Annual membership in the National Audubon Society is \$30 per year. **New membership dues are \$20.** Members receive the Audubon Magazine and Chaparral Naturalist newsletter. Renewals of membership are computerized by National Audubon and should not be sent to PVAS. However, a new membership may be sent directly to PVAS. Checks should be made payable to National Audubon Society. Mail payment with membership form below and mail to: **PVAS, W. M. Keck Science Center, 925 N. Mills Ave., Claremont, CA 91711.** (Please note chapter code **COZC080Z** on your check.)

Information such as mailing address, email address and telephone numbers are used for sending email notifications, electronic versions of the newsletter, and are published in our membership directory. Membership information may be updated by filling out this form and turning it in to any board member. This information will be distributed only to members and will not be sold to other organizations.

- Yes**, Please sign me up as a new member! **Yes**, I am renewing my membership.
 Please send me the Chaparral Naturalist electronically. **Do not** publish my information in the chapter directory.

Name _____ **Chapter Code COZC080Z**
 Address _____ Telephone _____
 City, State, Zip _____ Mobile _____
 Email _____

Membership Meetings

Thursday, September 1, 2011

Chuck and Lillian Almdale
**"Papua New Guinea:
Birds and People"**

Papua New Guinea is a land of huge diversity, in terrain, birds and people. Almost half of its 750 avian species are endemic. Of its 830 indigenous languages, half have fewer than 1,000 speakers. In 2008, the Almdales visited six locales in three weeks. Their multi-media presentation features many endemic birds especially the birds-of-paradise as well as the fascinating people of New Guinea, including the Huli Wigmen of the central highlands and the Yukoim cannibal-headhunters of Konmei Village on the Karawiri River in the east Sepik lowlands. Come and remind yourself why you really want to go there.



Chuck & Lillian Almdale have been active on the Board of Santa Monica Bay Audubon for over 20 years. When not birding internationally, they lead local field trips, maintain records of Malibu Lagoon birds, census Snowy Plovers, comment on local and national bird blogs and chatlines. They both are retired accountants.

Monthly meetings are held in Bauer Forum of Claremont McKenna College. Evenings begin with a bird identification session at 7:00 p.m., followed by refreshments, a short business meeting, and our evening program.

Thursday, October 6, 2011

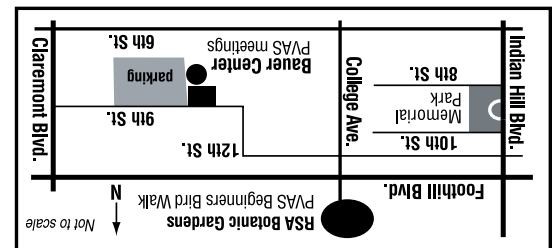
Elise Ferree
**"Consequences of "Hanky-Panky"
in Bluebirds"**

Elise a new faculty member at the Claremont Colleges has been conducting research on western bluebirds, especially extra-pair mating; some bluebirds copulate with birds in addition to their social mate while otherwise maintaining what appears to be monogamy. This presentation will examine the characteristics of individuals who have extra-pair mates and how infidelity influences their reproductive success in terms of the number and quality of young they produce

Thursday, November 3, 2011

Kathy Molina
"Black Skimmers in the West"

Kathy Molina, a research associate at the Los Angeles Museum of Natural History and wildlife biologist will report on the status of skimmers in southern California. First sighted in California in 1962, skimmers started nesting at the Salton Sea in 1968. Kathy has monitors this population, banding young to determine their population size, reproductive success, and movements. This should be a great introduction to one of our most fascinating species.



Pomona Valley Audubon Society
W.M. Keck Science Center
925 North Mills Avenue
Claremont, CA 91711

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