



# CHAPARRAL NATURALIST

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Pomona Valley Audubon Society

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## *One Week on Prudence Island – August 11-18, 2012*

Article and photo by Beryl Williams

There is a place where time stands still. Prudence Island's only connection to the mainland of Rhode Island is a ferry that runs several times each day. Reservations must be obtained weeks, or even months, in advance (if you're bringing a vehicle). Car capacity is limited to twelve. Walk-on passengers are easily accommodated at any time. There is one general store and no restaurants nor shops. There is a farm at the north end of the island that sells home-grown produce and dairy products. Life revolves around swimming, kayaking, sailing, biking, hiking, snorkeling, fishing, clamming and birding! Double-crested Cormorants are seen daily, perched on the highest struts of the dock, with wings spread. Herring Gulls and Great Black-backed Gulls are evident flying over Narragansett Bay, in the intertidal zone as well as on the dock; everywhere that water meets the land. *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior* states that the Great Black-backed Gull takes adult Atlantic Puffins as well as eggs and chicks of other species, which can be devastating for certain terns and shorebirds that nest in exposed settings. Gulls usually swallow chicks whole, sometimes later ejecting a pellet of feathers and bone from the mouth, much as an owl might do. They also catch passerines when they can, swallowing them whole. Great Black-backed Gulls can swallow prey as large as a Boat-tailed Grackle head-first, bill and all. We saw such

pellets each morning on the dock rails as gulls perch there for hours each day. Red-tailed Hawks are seen soaring high above the Bay and a solitary Least Sandpiper was a welcome sight during one early morning walk. He walked slowly and methodically as he dined on insects, crustaceans, mollusks, worms, etc. in the intertidal zone. These birds winter from the southern United States to Brazil. Killdeer are delightful with their strident call and dramatic double black breastband. We've rarely encountered Royal Terns and they were found in large numbers flying around the T-Wharf. Their black and white coloration is striking as are their deeply forked tails. *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior* states that terns are more vulnerable than most gulls in their nesting situations. Many tern populations are in decline. Tern feathers, unlike those of gulls, were used extensively in the fashion industry at the turn of the last century, and their eggs were harvested as well. Many tern colonies on the east coast vanished over

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## Join us for the 113th Christmas Bird Count

By Neil Gilbert

December 15, 2012 is the date for the 113<sup>th</sup> annual Christmas Bird Count. For Pomona Valley Audubon, it will be our 41<sup>st</sup> count, having held our first one in 1972. Since the Christmas Bird Count began over a century ago, it has relied on the dedication and commitment of volunteer citizen scientists. In other words, it depends on you!

The Christmas Bird Count season goes from December 14 through January 5 each year. Each local count is held on one day during that period. The PVAS count will be held on Saturday, December 15th.

Counts take place in "Count Circles" 15 miles in diameter, which do not change from year to year. The PVAS circle has its center approximately at the intersection of Mills Avenue and Mt. Baldy Road in northern Claremont.

Each circle is led by a Count Compiler who is responsible for the accuracy of the data that are reported. Dan Guthrie is the PVAS compiler.

Anyone can help with the Christmas Bird Count; counters do not have to be master birders. If you are a novice birder, you will be able to join a group that includes at least one experienced birder. The more eyes and ears we have in the field, the more birds we find. Or if you are not interested in going out with a group, and your home is within the boundaries of our Count Circle, then you can stay home and report the birds that visit your feeder or the local park or neighborhood. To be a feeder watcher or to do your local area, contact Neil Gilbert at [neil.gilbert@verizon.net](mailto:neil.gilbert@verizon.net) or 909-240-8547.

This year, for the first time, there is no fee to participate in the CBC.

If you have never been on a CBC before, your first step is to contact Neil Gilbert to find out how you can volunteer. If you have taken part in the past, contact Neil or one of the other Team Leaders.

If you are willing to help out with this very important project, let us know. Hand me a note at the monthly meeting; send me a note by mail (Neil Gilbert, 183 E. Miramar Ave., Claremont, CA 91711); or (preferred) send an e-mail to: [Neil.Gilbert@verizon.net](mailto:Neil.Gilbert@verizon.net)

## Invasion Winter??

By Dan Guthrie

About one year out of 10 we experience a major invasion of mountain birds in our southern California lowlands. This winter may be such a year! Already members have seen Mountain Chickadees at their yard



feeders. Usually the chickadee only comes down the mountain when there is severe cold and snow on our local mountains. The chickadees we are seeing may be from our local mountains, trying to avoid dry conditions and a lack of insects. Also this year Red-Breasted Nuthatches have shown up in large numbers. I recently visited an oasis in the Antelope Valley and found 20+ nuthatches there, probably down from the Sierras. Another mountain bird being seen is Red Crossbill. During or last invasion winter the nuthatches and crossbills appeared in pine trees and pepper trees on the college campuses and local cemeteries as did sapsuckers and even a Golden-Crowned Kinglet. Keep an eye on your feeders and report any of these birds that you find locally. They would be great additions for our Christmas Census list.

## 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:** Tony Ruiz, Kim Wallace

**Baldwin Park:** Tao Chu, Lourdes Lena

**Chino:** Ronald Carroll

**Chino Hills:** Linda Fernandez

**Claremont:** Olen Daugherty, Austen Nelson

**Covina:** Jennifer Brum, Dora Herzog

**Etiwanda:** Julie Zurek

**Glendora:** Robyn Dipietra, Helen Dziuk, Jeanne Miller, Warren Paap

**La Verne:** Ray Sandecki

**Mira Loma:** Gary Bohman

**Ontario:** Frances Calaitif

**Pomona:** David Delapp

**Rancho Cucamonga:** Gregory Doonan, Sheila Hyatt, Zachary Taylor, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Wilhelm

**San Dimas:** Sylvia Barber, Karol Curtis, Deann Erks, Susan Flippen

**Upland:** Thomas Burke, Marta Herrman, Stella Sasing

**West Covina:** Judith Brady

## Wild Wings – Another Successful Season!

by Judy Everett

Wild Wings of California is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the rehabilitation of orphaned, injured, and sick native wild birds, and to their release back into the wild. We also conduct public outreach programs in order to foster awareness that a balanced environment is necessary for the survival of us all.

I wish to thank the members of the Pomona Valley Audubon Society for your ongoing financial and outreach support. We couldn't accomplish nearly as much without you.

It's hard to believe the 2012 nesting season is over. We just released the last two Great Horned Owl juveniles, and only have a Barn Owl remaining to release. A total of 137 nestlings have been released this year. We wish them success. Not included in this count are those that, for a myriad of reasons, didn't survive. Most from gunshots and secondary poisoning. A good way to help us is to talk to friends and neighbors about the careless use of pesticides and the hazards of pellet guns. Starting now and for the next 4 or 5 months is the time to prune your shrubs and trees, while no nesting activity is occurring.

In conclusion, I would like to say that Wild Wings is only as effective as the funds it has to work with. Feeding natural diets is very costly. Thank you Pomona Valley Audubon for your generous support.



Turkey Vulture fledgling with a full crop

## Beginner' Bird Class - Spring 2013

By Dan Guthrie

Our Fall beginner's bird class was a great success, with about 16 participants. The course consisted of 4 Wednesday evening meetings (7-9) and four Saturday half day field trips. The evening meetings covered some basic bird biology including taxonomy, behavior, physiology and conservation. The field trips visited shore, mountains and local lakes and wildlife refuges. The course was so successful that we are offering it again this coming Spring. It will meet from Wednesday, April 24 to May 15. This is the best time of the year for migrants and birds in breeding plumage. If interested in joining the class (fee \$45 plus help pay drivers for gas when car pooling) contact Dan Guthrie at dguthrie@jsd.claremont.edu or 909 239 5124.



Photo by K14 from Flickr

## 2012-13 PVAS CALENDAR

### NOVEMBER

**Thursday, November 1 - Monthly Meeting @ Hughes Center - Birding off Southern California** (Dave Pereksta)

**Sunday, November 4 - First Sunday Bird Walk.** Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden 8 a.m.

**Sat-Sun, November 10-11: Morro Bay Field Trip.** Leader: Dan Guthrie - call if you plan to attend

**Thursday, November 15 - Mt. Baldy Village and Vicinity.** Leader: Dan Gregory 7:30 am

**Sunday, November 25 - Bonelli Park Monthly Bird Walk.** Meet at Bonelli Park HQ at 8 a.m. Leader: Rod Higbie

### DECEMBER

**Sunday, December 2 - First Sunday Bird Walk.** Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden 8 a.m.

**Thursday, December 6 - Monthly Meeting @ Hughes Center - Birding Alaska's Other Arctic** (Brian Elliott) 7 p.m.

**Wednesday, December 12 - Bonelli Park Pre-Christmas Bird Walk.** Leader: Strangs 8 a.m.

**Thursday, December 13 - Bonelli Park Pre-Christmas Bird Walk.** 8 a.m. Leader: Judy Sugden

**Saturday, December 15 - Annual Christmas Census.** (See article on page 2)

**Sunday, December 23 - Bonelli Park Bird Walk.** 8 a.m. Rod Higbie

### JANUARY

**Thursday, January 3 - Monthly Meeting @ Hughes Center - Geolocators** (Tom Ryan) 7 p.m.

**Sunday, January 6 - First Sunday Bird Walk.** Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden 8 a.m.

**Saturday, January 12, 2012 - Big Day Trip to Orange County.** 7 a.m. Dan Guthrie

Pomona Valley Audubon field trips are open to all individuals. Please call trip leader to verify starting time, meeting location and to let them know you plan to attend. 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 on all trips.

# 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 Monthly 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, November 4, 2012**

## **First Sunday Bird Walk**

### **Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden**

Join us for our monthly (September-June) bird walk. Family friendly, the walk is slow paced 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/Sunday, November, 10-11, 2012**

## **Morro Bay Field Trip**

This is our annual trip north for Morro Bay and Central Coast specialties. We should find brant, chestnut-backed chickadee, peregrine, and rocky coast shorebirds and alcids as well as resident turkeys! We will meet at the base of Morro Rock at 8 am on Saturday and spend the day birding the Morro Bay area and up the coast to see the elephant seals. Sunday will be making stops on the way home at Oceano and Oso Flacco lake for bitterns and rails. **Call Dan Guthrie (909) 239-5124 if you plan to go and for motel suggestions.**

**Thursday, November 15, 2012**

## **Mt. Baldy Village and Vicinity**

A half day trip to our local mountain for wintering mountain birds. We should find dippers and some good birds at the feeders in Mt. Baldy village. Meet at Memorial Park at 7:30 and bring a Forest Pass if you have one. **Leader: Dan Gregory (909) 944-2259**

**Sunday, November 25, 2012**

## **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 Higbie (909) 599-6526**

**Sunday, December 2, 2012**

## **First Sunday Bird Walk**

### **Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden**

Join us for our monthly (September-June) bird walk. Family friendly, the walk is slow paced 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, December 12, 2012**

## **Bonelli Park Pre-Christmas Trip**

Meet near Restroom 8 off Via Verde in Picnic Valley for a morning search for goodies prior to our Christmas Census 8 a.m. **Leaders: Bruce and Nancy Strang (626) 339-6984**

**Thursday, December 13, 2012**

## **Claremont Parks Pre-Christmas Trip**

Meet at Memorial Park at 8 am for a morning visit to the Moreno Ponds and various parks and cemeteries in the Claremont-Pomona area searching for goodies for our Christmas Census. **Leader: Judy Sugden Cell (951) 201-2344.**

**Saturday, December 15, 2012**

## **Annual Christmas Census**

**See article in this issue, and please join us!**

**Sunday, December 23, 2012**

## **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 Higbie (909) 599-6526**

**Sunday, January 6, 2013**

## **First Sunday Bird Walk**

### **Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden**

Join us for our monthly (September-June) bird walk. Family friendly, the walk is slow paced 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, January 12, 2012**

## **Big Day Trip to Orange County**

Every year some good birds turn up along our coast and stay through the winter, hopefully to be found on the Orange County Christmas bird counts. This trip will search for these birds, which in the past have included some good eastern warblers and flycatchers. We should also find a good collection of water birds and shorebirds. Meet at Memorial Park at 7 am and bring a lunch. We should return about 2-3 pm. **Leader: Dan Guthrie (909) 239-5124**

a short period toward the end of the 19th century. Overfishing of inshore waters may affect terns more than gulls because terns are less able than gulls to exploit by-catch and discarded fish. Loss of habitat is particularly disastrous for terns; many remote spits that once teemed with terns are now used for human recreation.

Moving inland, the bird population changed dramatically. American Goldfinches are seen by the dozen as they feed in roadside bushes. A White-breasted Nuthatch creeping headfirst down tree trunks entertained us when we walked. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are not found in California. Here they are found close to roads and present a striking appearance with glowing fiery-red throat, iridescent green back and a forked tail. It is the only Hummingbird species to breed through-out the entire eastern U.S.A. Gray Catbirds are evident, as are countless Northern Mockingbirds. I spent the first few days looking for a cat that I thought was making the "catlike mewing" that I heard repeatedly.

Canada Goose, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Wild Turkey, Eastern Kingbird, American Robin, Cedar Waxwing, House Finch and Chipping Sparrow sightings complete our list. We highly recommend a week on Prudence Island in order to decompress from the fast pace of life in 21st century America. A bonus is the fantastic clamming! We enjoyed two clam dinners with clams that had been dug from the sand under Narragansett Bay scant hours before by the younger members in our party.

**PVAS OFFICERS 2012-13**

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
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Board Member .....	Jim Herman.....	626-335-8327
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 .....	909-607-2836
Field Trips .....	Dan Guthrie .....	909-607-2836
Membership .....	Dan Guthrie .....	909-607-2836
Publications.....	Neil Gilbert .....	909-626-0334
Publicity .....	Shirley Harris.....	909-982-9727
Door Prizes .....	Karlene Campo..	909-627-8191
Hospitality.....		
	Gloria Slosberg/Ed Babcock....	909-626-4754
Website.....	Mike Klein.....	909-625-5510

**CHAPARRAL NATURALIST**

Editor..... Pam Kling .....

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Chapter only memberships with subscriptions to the newsletter are available for \$20 per year. **Make checks payable to PVAS and mail to:**

**Pomona Valley Audubon**  
2058 N Mills Ave., PMB426  
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 **C2ZC080Z** 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.

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# Membership Meetings



**Thursday, November 1, 2012**  
**David Pereksta – *Birding off Southern California***

Dave Pereksta is an avian biologist with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management will present a program entitled “**Birding off Southern California: What You See When You Go to Sea.**” David has spent over 100 days off our shores pelagic birding and is a regular leader for Los Angeles Audubon and Shearwater Journeys. Come learn about offshore residents, migrants and vagrants as well as our local marine mammals. No Dramamine needed for this pelagic trip!.



**Thursday, December 6, 2012**  
**Brian Elliott – *Birding Alaska’s Other Arctic***

Member Brian Elliott, along with three friends, canoed 420 miles this past summer on the Colville River on Alaska’s north slope. The river, in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, flows through some of the most remote wilderness in North America and is renowned for its high density of nesting raptors. Brian will share his photos of his trip and advocate for the region’s protection.

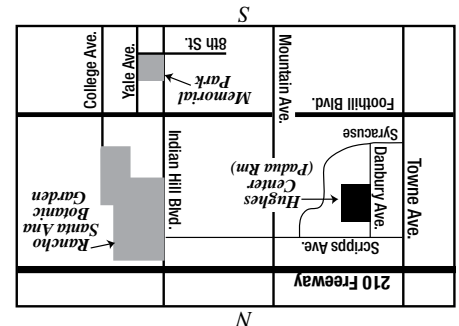
**Thursday, January 3, 2013**

**Tom Ryan – *Geolocators***

Avian biologist **Tom Ryan** will present a program on these are lightweight devices that can be attached to animals to give an indication of their movements. They have revolutionized the study of bird migration, and Tom will bring us up to date on some of the information we have learned from their use.

**Join us at our new meeting location!**

The meeting will be held in **Hughes Center on Danbury Drive**. Take Mountain or Towne Aves north of Foothill and turn onto Scripps Drive. Turn south on Danbury to Hughes. The evening will begin with a bird identification session at 7 p.m. followed by refreshments, a short business meeting, and our evening program.



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