



Chaparral Naturalist

A Publication of
Pomona Valley Audubon Society

www.pomonavalleyaudubon.org

WINTER 2018-19 | DECEMBER - FEBRUARY

119th Annual Christmas Bird Count - CBC

- **Saturday, December 15th is our count date. Mark your calendars now so you don't forget!**
- **EVERYONE can help. Teams will be assigned to counting birds throughout our circle, BUT we can always use more eyes and ears. You can drive, walk or even sit!**

Our PVAS teams cover only a small percentage of the count circle. They visit most of our proven "hot spots" but much of the circle is not explored, especially in more urban areas. You can volunteer to count the birds in your back yard, local

park or while walking your dog in the neighborhood. Consider joining a team and watch for the whole day, for half of the day, or even just one hour. Our species count goes up with the number of participants.

Remember, it's NOT about being a great birder, it's about having more eyes watching and ears listening. If you join a team, you'll be partnered with more experienced birders so you don't have to know all the species names. Don't let your worries about not being "good enough" stop you from participating.

COMING SOON!

family BIRD festival

at the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden

**Sunday
February 17, 2019
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

See page 6 for details

PVAS – Our CBC History

CBC counting circles are 15 miles in diameter and they're selected by each Audubon chapter or other counting group. Our counting circle dates-back to 1972, long before the 210 freeway, and is centered approximately at the intersection of Mills and Mt. Baldy Roads. The circle was originally selected to provide the most varied and accessible habitats in our area with the goal of counting the widest variety of birds. In those days much of the eastern part of the valley north of Foothill Blvd. was citrus groves, grape vineyards and native sage scrub and chaparral. It was easy to find Cactus and Rock Wren, Mountain Bluebird, Barn and Burrowing Owl, Ground Dove, Greater Road Runner and many others. The southeastern quadrant of dairy pasture and ponds yielded Prairie Falcon, Ferruginous Hawk, cowbirds, shorebirds and lots of ducks. Most of those birds are gone from our counting circle but in the "good old days" Cattle Egrets, Allen's

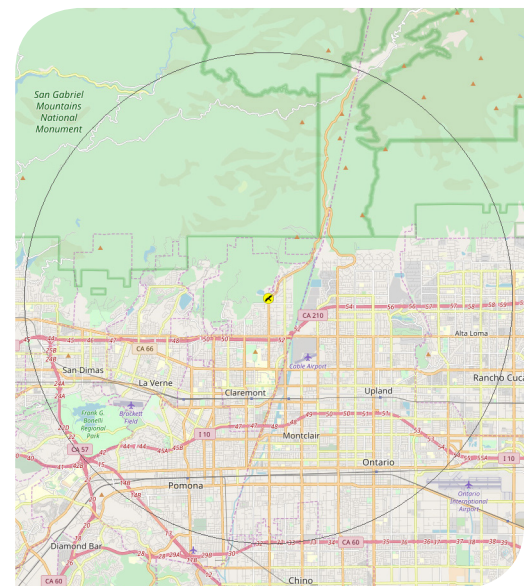
Hummingbirds and Eurasian Collared-Doves were not as common as they are now.

Each year we hope to find uncommon species in our area, such as American Dipper, Northern Pygmy Owl, White-throated Sparrow or Yellow-breasted Sapsucker (all seen in the last four years). We also hope for eruptive species such as Red-breasted Nuthatch, Lewis Woodpecker, Pine Siskin and Red Crossbill. Part of the fun is never knowing what we'll see.

Last year 142 species were found, including a Northern Parula! Who knows what possibilities may be lurking in your local park or even your backyard!

Please help us with this important citizen science count and PVAS 46th annual birding tradition.

Please join us by calling Dan Guthrie at (909) 239-5124.



This PVAS (Claremont) Count Circle map is from the National Audubon interactive map site. You can view more detail at: <https://www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count> and click on the map view link.

BURROWING OWL QUIZ

How much do you know about Burrowing Owls?

Quiz and photo by Suzanne Thompson



- Where do Burrowing Owls occur?
 - Just North America, south of the Canadian border
 - North and South America
 - All of North America
 - North and South America and some parts of Africa
- Which of the following do Burrowing Owls use to decorate the entrance to their nests?
 - Feathers
 - Bits of trash
 - Cow dung
 - All of the above
- What is the preferred habitat for Burrowing Owls?
 - Mountain chaparral
 - Short grass open fields
 - Long grass prairie
 - Woodlands
- Which of the following is a name that has NOT been used for Burrowing Owls?
 - Billy owl
 - Long-legged owl
 - Little owl
 - Prairie dog owl
- Who incubates Burrowing Owl eggs?
 - Just the female
 - Just the male
 - Male and female take turns
- What do young owlets do when frightened?
 - Freeze and not move
 - Call out for their parents
 - Spit up a foul-smelling liquid
 - Make a noise like a rattlesnake
- Which of the following terms is used to describe Burrowing Owls?
 - Miniature Roadrunner
 - Spotted clown
 - Fudgesicle on 2 sticks
 - Little orange eyes

Answers on page 6.

Field Trip Basics

Pomona Valley Audubon Field Trips are offered at no cost (unless otherwise specified) and are open to all. ALWAYS call the trip leader if you plan to attend and to verify time, location and trip status. In case of rain, call the trip leader the night before. For your comfort and enjoyment, participants should plan to bring the following suggested items:

- Binoculars/spotting scope/camera (as desired)
- Water
- Snacks/Lunch
- Appropriate clothing (Dress in layers and be ready for unexpected weather changes.)
- Walking/Hiking shoes
- Sunscreen/Repellant
- Hat
- Full tank of gas

PVAS Field Trip Difficulty Levels – Trips rated Easy through Strenuous involve walking and standing for several hours.

Minimal – Little or no walking, option to exit car and walk short distances over relatively level terrain. Example: Birding By Car series.

Easy - Walking on relatively level terrain, paved or maintained dirt roads (many locations wheelchair accessible.) Example: Artificial wetlands and botanic gardens.

Moderate – Some elevation change, stairs, walking on sloped grass, rolling hills, open fields or groomed hiking trails with mild trip hazards (tree roots, rocks, etc.) Example: Regional Parks with lakes and hiking trails.

Strenuous – Irregular or rocky terrain, > 500ft. elevation change, some off trail walking. Example: Natural areas and preserves (North Etiwanda Preserve.)

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Pomona Valley Audubon Society

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Local PVAS phone number: (909) 625-5510



Field Trips

Chaparral Naturalist

www.pomonavalleyaudubon.org

December 12, 2018 – Wednesday

Pre-CBC Scouting Trip at Bonelli Regional Park

120 Via Verde Ave., San Dimas, CA

Difficulty: Easy to Moderate (walking approx. 2 mi.) Est. driving 16 mi.

A morning search for goodies prior to our Christmas Bird Count. Bring water and snacks. Contact trip leader for meeting instructions and time.

Trip Leader: Rod Higbie (909) 599-6526 or warblerod@verizon.net

December 13, 2018 – Thursday

BBC Pre-CBC Scouting Trip to Parks & Ponds

Difficulty: Minimal. Est. driving 35 mi.

This is a Birding By Car trip with very little, if any, walking and radio communication between the cars. Depart Memorial Park in Claremont at 8 a.m. and return by noon. A visit to various parks, settling ponds and other hot spots in the Claremont-Pomona area looking for wintering ducks, gulls, sparrows and other goodies before our Christmas census.

Trip Leaders: Dan Guthrie and Judy Sugden (909) 239-5124

December 15, 2018 – Saturday

Annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC)

EVERYONE can help! The more eyes and ears, the better.

You can count from home, your local park or other nearby birding spot. Or you can be added to a team to count at specific locations within our counting circle.

To join our 2018 census, contact CBC Coordinator Dan Guthrie. (909) 239-5124

2019

January 5, 2019 – Saturday

Orange County Big Day (multiple locations)

Difficulty: Moderate (walking up to 5 mi.) Est. driving 175 mi.

Start your new year off with a big list from a tour of multiple coastal migrant traps and hot spots for wintering specialties. Possible sites include Bolsa Chica, the San Joaquin Marsh, Dana Point Harbor, and more. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at Memorial Park in Claremont. Bring snacks, water, and lunch for a full day trip.

Contact Leader: Eric Smith (909) 477-7976 or bird4life28@yahoo.com

January 12, 2019 – Saturday

Whittier Narrows Regional Park

750 S. Santa Anita Ave., South El Monte, CA 91733 and the

San Gabriel River Spreading Grounds

Off Mines Avenue, Pico Rivera, CA

Difficulty: Easy to Moderate (up to 4 miles.) Est. driving 70 mi.

Dan will lead us in search of wintering waterfowl, sparrows, flycatchers and more. Both locations are great places to find winter vagrants. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at Memorial Park in Claremont. Bring snacks, water, and lunch for a full day trip.

Trip Leader: Dan Gregory (909) 456-4994 or DanRCRenee@verizon.net



January 17, 2019 – Thursday

BBC Bonelli Regional Park

120 Via Verde Ave., San Dimas, CA

Difficulty: Minimal. Est. driving 20 mi.

This is a Birding By Car trip with very little, if any, walking and radio communication between the cars. Depart Memorial Park in Claremont at 8 a.m. and return by noon. A trip for wintering waterfowl and other Bonelli Park favorites.

Trip Leaders: Dan Guthrie and Judy Sugden (909) 239-5124

February 14, 2019 – Thursday

Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area

15501 E. Arrow Highway, Irwindale, CA 91706

Difficulty: Moderate (walking up to 3 mi.) Est. driving 31 mi.

Ken will lead us on this mid-week trip for year-round as well as over-wintering species. Carpool from Memorial Park in Claremont at 7:00 a.m. or meet in the first parking lot at the SFDR near the restrooms at 7:45 a.m. Bring snacks, water, and a lunch if you'd like to stay in the park to eat after birding. No vehicle entry fee on weekdays this time of year.

Trip Leader: Ken Damon (909) 263-1875 or spsanah@yahoo.com

February 16, 2019 – Saturday

Lake Perris and San Jacinto Wildlife Area

Lake Perris 17801 Lake Perris Dr., Perris, CA 92571

Difficulty: Easy to Moderate (walking up to 3 mi.) Est. driving 110 mi.

We'll take a walk at Lake Perris and a drive at San Jacinto for wintering waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls, sparrows and raptors including Peregrine Falcon and Bald and Golden Eagle. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at Memorial Park in Claremont. Bring snacks, water, and lunch. There is a \$10 vehicle entry fee (\$9 if 62+) at Lake Perris State Recreation Area.

Trip Leader: Dan Gregory (909) 456-4994 or DanRCRenee@verizon.net



February 21, 2019 – Thursday

BBC San Jacinto Wildlife Area

17050 Davis St., Lakeview, (Perris) CA 92567

Difficulty: Minimal. Est. driving 108 mi.

This is a Birding By Car trip with very little, if any, walking and radio communication between the cars. Depart Memorial Park in Claremont at 8 a.m. and return by noon. A good trip for wintering waterfowl, shorebirds and raptors.

Trip Leaders: Dan Guthrie and Judy Sugden (909) 239-5124



Thursday, December 6, 2018

Catherine Hamilton - Amur Falcon: Living on the Edge

The Amur Falcon makes a spectacular migration from Siberia to southern Africa each year and hundreds of thousands of them congregate in northeast India in the fall creating what is believed to be the largest concentration of falcons anywhere on earth. Through her photos and artwork, world-renowned artist, Catherine Hamilton, will tell us about these falcons, the threats they face and the amazing conservation efforts to save them. Catherine's talk will present her recent adventures in Nagaland, a region of India so remote it has only recently been opened to western visitors. There, in just the last few years, a conservation crisis and conservation miracle seem to have unfolded. Catherine Hamilton was born in Altadena, California, with a pencil in hand. She began birding at an early age with her father, developing a keen interest in both natural history and art, and started her first ornithological notebook at seven. She birds and paints internationally and is the Ambassador for Birding for Zeiss Optics. Join us December 6th and discover the world of the amazing Amur Falcon.



Thursday, January 10, 2019 *Note Date Change

Second Thursday NOT First due to closure of the Hughes Community Center.

Daniel Lewis - Author: Belonging on an Island - Birds, Extinction, and Evolution in Hawai'i

We'll go on a thousand-year journey exploring the beautiful birds of the Hawaiian Islands focusing on their extinction, evolution, survival, conservationists and their work, and, most significantly, the concept of belonging. Author Daniel Lewis, an award-winning historian and globe-traveling amateur birder, will share his tale based on the stories of four species—the Stumbling Moa-Nalo, the Kaua'i 'O'o, the Palila, and the Japanese White-Eye. Daniel Lewis is Dibner Senior Curator for the History of Science and Technology at the Huntington Library in San Marino. He is also a lecturer in environmental history at the California Institute of Technology, and an associate research professor at Claremont Graduate University. Dan will sign copies of his book at the meeting.



Thursday, February 7, 2019

Cathy McFadden and Paul Clarke - From Shoebills to Broadbills: Birding the African Rift

From Lake Victoria to the Virunga volcanoes, the small, land-locked country of Uganda hosts more species of birds for its size than anywhere else in Africa. These include spectacular oddities such as the enormous Shoebill, as well as a number of extremely rare endemics found only in the mountainous Albertine Rift along the Congolese border. In addition to >500 species of birds, a good variety of iconic large mammals can easily be seen in Uganda's national parks, including mountain gorillas and chimpanzees. PVAS members Cathy McFadden and Paul Clarke will give a multimedia presentation on their recent trip to Uganda, highlighting some of the 555 species of birds and 46 mammals they saw during a three-week trip.

Bird Walks

First Sunday Family Friendly Bird Walk

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden
1500 N. College Ave. Claremont,
CA 91711

Meet at the entrance at 8:00 a.m. for free admission. This family-friendly bird walk is approximately 2 hours long and is perfect for beginners and experienced birders alike. No binoculars? No worries! Loaner binoculars are available (first come first served.) You will receive instructions on their use as well. PVAS volunteers will lead the walk.

December 2

January 6

February 3

Fourth Sunday Nature Walk

Bonelli Regional Park
120 E. Via Verde Dr., San Dimas,
CA 91773

New Meeting Instructions for Bonelli Park

Effective with the September 2018 Bonelli Park bird walk we will meet at the Equestrian Staging Area on the west side of the park. To reach this area take the 57 freeway north or south exiting at the Via Verde exit. At the end of the ramps turn left toward the park. At the first stop sign, turn left on Raging Waters Drive (Do not enter the park at this point). After you turn onto Raging Waters Drive (disregard the "Raging Waters Traffic Only" sign

since they are not operating when we are there) continue on Raging Waters Drive to the first stop sign (do *not* cross the dam even if the gate is open). At this point turn left and follow the paved road down the hill to the large parking lot. We will meet at the parking lot between 7:30 am and 8 am and caravan into the park for the walk.

Trip leader: Rod Higbie,
warblerod@verizon.net, (909) 599-6526

December 23

January 27

February 24

Last Sightings

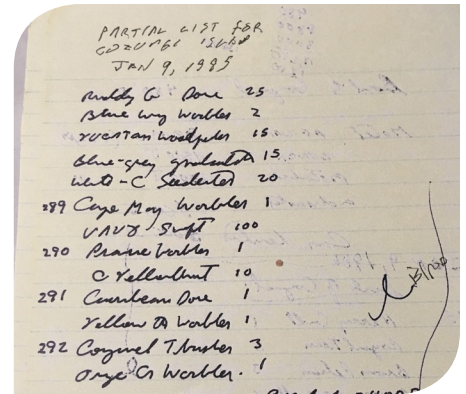
By Dan Guthrie

Some years ago I read an article in one of the birding magazines about future birding. People were listing how many "last sightings" they had on their life lists. One person had the last sighting of the extinct Wilson's Warbler! This article appeared before our concern about climate change which, according to Audubon, will seriously affect over a third of our species.

I had my own personal "last sighting" episode recently. I was using eBird to record my 1985 sightings on Cozumel Island off Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula and could not find the Cozumel thrasher

on the list. Finally, by looking at everyone's sightings, I discovered that the last one was seen in 2004! It is thought they went extinct due to habitat loss and possibly a couple of hurricanes. So, I didn't see the very last Cozumel thrasher, but close to it.

This got me thinking of other "lasts" I might have seen. In my yard, which borders on the Bernard Field Station, I have seen Cactus Wren, Greater Roadrunner, long-tailed weasel, horned lizard and ring-necked snake. My record keeping isn't that great, so I can't say exactly when I saw these species but know it has been at least 20 years since I did so. Habitat loss, cars, cats, dogs and coyotes probably caused the loss of these mostly ground dwelling species.



Dan's notes from his 1985 trip to Cozumel.

I currently have four quail visiting my bird feeders, two adults and two young. At the beginning of the summer there were eight young. I hope I don't lose my quail also.



PHOTO BY JIM BRAKE

Getting the whole family involved, especially the kids, is our goal.

Walkers On Thompson Creek Trail "MEET THE BIRDS"

By Suzanne Thompson

Saturday, October 6, was a beautiful sunny day and a perfect time to help trail users get more acquainted with our local birds. The PVAS Meet the Birds crew set up a station at our Bird Oasis on the Thompson Creek Trail, complete with spotting scopes, loaner binoculars, and bird ID books. This was our second Meet the Birds event at the oasis and this time people were waiting for us to arrive! A steady stream of walkers, hikers, and families with children of all ages stopped by to see Jim the Bird Man toss peanuts and attract his usual assortment of peanut-loving birds, including California Scrubjays, Acorn Woodpeckers, and California Towhees. Kids enjoyed using the binoculars and looking through the scope during the event which ran from 9 to 11 A.M. Both a Cooper's Hawk and a Red-Shouldered Hawk flew into the trees above the oasis and stayed long enough to give everyone a good look. White-crowned Sparrows, House Finches, Mourning Doves, and Anna's Hummingbirds were easily seen. We all had a good time and hope that we sparked an interest in birds that will endure, especially with the children.

What Did I See and Where Did I See It?

By Dan Guthrie

Not taking foreign trips recently has allowed me time to try to enter sightings from my past trips into e-Bird. These historical sightings help provide critical data for research, conservation and education which in turn contribute to hundreds of conservation decisions. All very motivating reasons, but I ran into a couple of problems.

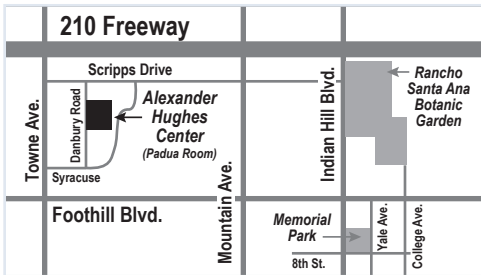
First, and hardest to solve, is trying to figure out just where I was! Even if I wrote down a locality name, lots of small towns in China, Russia etc. are hard to find on a map, especially the computer maps which seem geared towards places that tourist frequent. Places with cathedrals or castles, not little out-of-the-way places frequented by birders often with no town, not even a little one. And the names I wrote down in my notes were not in the local language.

The second problem is that the bird names have changed. eBird is pretty good at providing current names for old ones, but a lot has changed. With PVAS recently receiving a 1934 first edition

of Roger Tory Peterson's *A Field Guide to the Birds*, I decided to look at my own 1941 copy of Peterson's guide to western birds and I found a lot of different names. Want a challenge? See if you recognize any of the names from this sampling: (answers on page 6)

- 1 _____ Aleutian Sandpiper
- 2 _____ Cooper's Tanager
- 3 _____ Russet-backed Thrush
- 4 _____ Willow Thrush
- 5 _____ Short-billed Gull
- 6 _____ Richardson's Owl (and 3 of my favorites)
- 7 _____ Pileolated warbler
- 8 _____ Sennett's warbler
- 9 _____ Calaveras warbler

So how old is your field guide?



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General meetings

Time: 7:00 p.m.
Room: Padua Room
Address: Alexander Hughes Center
 1700 Danbury Drive
 Claremont, Ca 91711

Directions: From Foothill Blvd., head north on Mountain Ave. or Towne Ave. and turn onto Scripps Drive. Turn south on Danbury, the Alexander Hughes Center will be on the east side.

Meetings begin with a bird identification session, followed by refreshments, a short business meeting, and our evening program.

PVAS CHAPARRAL NATURALIST | WINTER 2018-19



Family Bird Festival at the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden

Sunday
February 17, 2019
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Flock to the Garden for a fun-filled day celebrating our feathered friends! This educational celebration of all things birds was attended by nearly 600 people last year. Ideal for families, kids will have a chance to take the Migration Challenge, make avian art, and much more. Volunteers are needed to handle the birds from Wild Wings of California and staff our station (contact Tina Stoner at tinastoner@earthlink.net.) This event is sponsored by Wild Birds Unlimited and PVAS.

Answers to What Did I See and Where Did I See It?:

1. Rock Sandpiper
2. Summer Tanager
3. Swainson's Thrush
4. Veery
5. Mew gull
6. Boreal Owl
7. Wilson's Warbler
8. Tropical Parula
9. Nashville Warbler

Answers to Burrowing Owl Quiz:

1. b; 2. d; 3. b; 4. c; 5. a; 6. d; 7. c.

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY (NAS) AND POMONA VALLEY AUDUBON (PVAS) MEMBERSHIP

We invite you to become a member of both NAS and PVAS. You also have the option of joining just PVAS. For either option, a yearly individual or family membership is \$20.

Check one:

- JOIN** Join both NAS and PVAS ONLINE. On the PVAS website, click on "Membership" and then on link to NAS. Make a \$20 donation to NAS. Check Chapter Code: C08
- Join both NAS and PVAS BY CHECK. Make out a \$20 check to NAS. Mail to PVAS with address slip below.
- Join PVAS only, not NAS. Make \$20 check to PVAS and send to PVAS with address slip below.

- RENEW** Renew your joint membership in NAS and PVAS ONLINE. . . Use the renewal notice you receive from NAS or make a \$20 donation to NAS on the NAS website. *Use the same name as your membership.
- Renew your joint membership in NAS and PVAS BY CHECK. Make \$20 check to NAS and send to NAS with address slip below.
- Renew your PVAS only membership. Make \$20 check to PVAS and send to PVAS with address slip below.

NAS mailing address: **NAS, PO Box 97194, Washington DC 20090**

PVAS mailing address: **PVAS, 2058 N. Mills, PMB246, Claremont, CA 91711**

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Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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