



HUMMIN'

PALOS VERDES/SOUTH BAY AUDUBON SOCIETY OCT/NOV 2004 Vol. XXVI No.5

NATURAL COMMUNITIES CONSERVATION PLAN APPROVED BY RPV

On August 31st, the Rancho Palos Verdes City Council approved the final Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP), an associated environmental impact review, and a draft NCCP implementing agreement. Although there is still much to be done before the Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve becomes a reality as part of the greater NCCP habitat reserve, approval of these documents brings us a big step closer.

Of the several NCCP reserves so far developed in southern California as part of the state/federal NCCP program, the one here has perhaps the greatest chance of preserving in perpetuity the highest proportion of remaining open space.

The reserve is intended to maximize the chances of maintaining local populations of thirteen "target species", including cactus wren and California gnatcatcher. It is hoped that by working to protect these target species and their habitats that the great majority of local biodiversity also can be preserved. Besides conserving selected habitat, the NCCP specifies areas where compatible development can be allowed.

In assembling the local reserve, funds will be obtained for purchasing land now held by two local developers. Much of this funding will come from state and federal money tied to the NCCP program. The PVP Land Conservancy, which will manage the reserve, has pledged several million dollars for these purchases and the City will also put up substantial funding of its own. Both the City and PVP Land Conservancy will contribute to covering annual upkeep and habitat restoration costs. Every Audubon chapter member is urged to contribute toward the success of this program, either financially or through volunteering on NCCP habitat restoration efforts.

Long-time Audubon members will be familiar with the NCCP from the extensive coverage in *Hummin'* from 1991 on. Newer members and the general public will find many

Proposition O Needs Your Vote

The November ballot of the City of Los Angeles will give area voters a chance to begin reversing decades of neglect of local waters. Proposition O will provide \$500 million for water quality and habitat restoration in the city. The proposition is a general obligation bond measure whose passage requires two-thirds of the votes cast in favor.

As reported in the last issue of *Hummin'*, the City Council unanimously called for presentation of the measure to the voters. Rather than continuing a wasteful and losing battle in the courts, the City Council decided to get about the business of complying with decades-old requirements of the Clean Water Act to protect public health and wildlife from water pollution.

Passage of the bond measure would greatly benefit the Chapter's efforts to restore the habitats of Machado Lake at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park. Besides providing a home or resting spot for hundreds of species of birds, the lake filters water flowing from the surrounding lands before they enter nearby beach waters.

The proposition would provide \$60 million to \$70 million for improving water quality in four city lakes, include Lake Machado. Bond funds would also be used to divert bacterial runoff at Ballona Creek and the Los Angeles River, to install screens, covers, and deflective devices to control trash and sediment, and to restore wetlands.

Financing the bond will cost owners of a \$350,000 home about \$56 per year for the next 20 years.

For more information, consult:

<http://www.smartvoter.org/2004/11/02/ca/la/meas/O/>.

And more than anything else: VOTE!

And when you do, remember that you are voting the future.

Continued on page 7

VICE PRESIDENTS' CORNER

By Frances Spivy-Weber

Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon Board of Directors has another very exciting year, 2004/05, in store for chapter members, YES! students, and friends. In reading this column, if you see something that you would like to join in on, call me!

This year monthly membership programs will be outside, not inside. Each month, the chapter welcomes its members and friends on the following birding and nature walks: Martin Byhower is at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park each second Sunday, Ollie Coker and Georgene Foster are at South Coast Botanic Garden on the first Sunday and third Wednesday respectively, and Bob Shanman is at Madrona Marsh on the second Wednesday of the month. All begin at 8:00 a.m. We are looking for volunteers at the walks who will help the leaders—birding knowledge NOT required.

Board meetings on the first Wednesday of October, December, February, April, and June will be the best place to come to discuss and plan for the environmental challenges and opportunities in the South Bay and on the Peninsula. Everyone is welcome, and the meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. in the Whole Foods community room at PCH and Crenshaw.

Watch Hummin's Calendar section for special lectures and outings. A regular feature are the bird classes and field trips organized for many years by Ann and Eric Brooks. The first class this fall starts Wednesday October 6 at the South Coast Botanic Garden; the first field trip is to Huntington Beach Central Park on Saturday, October 10. They are also considering trips to Bosque del Apache, New Mexico, and to the San Francisco Bay. Call or email them for details: 323-295-6688, motmots@aol.com.

Audubon YES! for over a decade has been providing a monthly roster of service and environmental activities in the South Bay to high school, middle school, and college age youth. Students who volunteer fifty hours or more receive an Audubon YES! award. We know that students do a lot more community work for the environment if there is chapter liaison with each school. The time commitment is modest; the reward is unmeasurable. You can contact Jess Morton for details: 310-832-5601; jmorton@igc.apc.org.

In 2005, the Audubon YES! and PV/South Bay Audubon Awards will be held at Cabrillo Marine



Cactus Wren

Aquarium on Earth Day weekend, April 23. **HOLD THE DATE.**

Our Audubon chapter is filled with educators and science experts on many issues in addition to birds and butterflies. For example, Michael, our newsletter editor, spends his working hours on ocean and fish issues; Martin presents programs on exotic plant species and West Nile virus. We will spend more of this year and next at our neighborhood and local city councils, sharing knowledge and learning from others.

Martin Byhower and Julie Greer will serve on the Harbor Park Advisory Board; Jess Morton and Julie are active in the Dominguez Watershed Council.

At Harbor Park, the Board identified six tasks: see that a trailer is installed at the Park for Los Angeles City personnel and volunteers; get functional restrooms set up; find funding for Park benches; work with Los Angeles on a vegetation control program that protects both park users and wildlife; call for full funding of a day-labor program in the area; and support Proposition O on the Los Angeles November ballot. To achieve these tasks, we need your help with writing letters, attending meetings, and joining with others for occasional work parties at the Park.

We look forward to seeing you this year on the walks, at the Board meetings, at Harbor Park, and in the community. Let me know where you want to put your time—310-316-0041 (frances@monolake.org).

BIRDING OPTICS WORKSHOP

Sea & Sage Audubon is sponsoring the Southern California Birding Optics Field Days on October 23-24, 2004. These workshops will be held at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary in Irvine, California. We offer birders the opportunity to try out and use new birding optics in a field-type setting.

The event is open to the public and everyone is welcome to attend. We have a full schedule of activities including 14 excellent free workshops taught by leaders in birding and optics. Representatives of major optical manufacturers will be on hand to show their equipment and answer your questions.

A pancake breakfast will be held Saturday morning as well as the sale of used natural history books. Morning bird walks are scheduled to view the abundant bird life at the ponds in the sanctuary.

Full information on this event can be found on the Sea & Sage Audubon website at <http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org>. For for information, contact Nancy Kenyon at 949-786-3160, kenyon@exo.com, or Cat Waters at 562-869-6718, robcatwaters@earthlink.net.

UCLA EXTENSION OFFERS BIRDING CLASS

UCLA Extension is sponsoring the course *Field Studies of California Birds* (Biology x401.19, 3 units) during the month of October. This course presents an introduction to the observation, identification, and ecology of birds in the field. It is designed for students who desire an initiation into the world of bird watching as well as amateur birders who want to improve their skills and knowledge.

Four Tuesday lectures and four Saturday field trips between October 5 and October 30 emphasize the natural history of birds, the techniques and equipment used to study them, and the importance of remnant bird habitats in the Los Angeles area. *Enrollment limited. Students must provide their own binoculars and transportation (carpools may be arranged at first class). No one under 16 may enroll without instructor's consent. Course fee: \$245.*

To register call (310) 825-9971 or visit www.uclaextension.edu. For more information call (310) 825-7093 or visit www.uclaextension.edu.

AUDUBON CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLY

For those who can get away in the middle of the week, Audubon has a treat in store for you—an Audubon California Assembly on Wednesday and Thursday, November 17 and 18, at the Radisson Hotel in Stockton.

Who should be there? Anyone and everyone who wants to strengthen Audubon's programs in California. Anyone and everyone who enjoys birding—sandhill cranes at sunset on Wednesday and the Central Valley Birding Symposium, immediately following the Assembly.

Here is the program:

Wednesday, November 17

10:00 am: Conference Registration

11:30 am: Luncheon, with Glenn Olson giving an overview of Audubon California, and Julia Levin laying out policy options.

12:45 pm: Three workshop options: Political action; IBAs, Fundraising

2:45 pm: Field trip to view sandhill cranes at sunset

7:15 pm.: Banquet focused on restoring landscapes.

Thursday, November 18

7:15 am: President's Breakfast with Glenn Olson

8:30 am: Three workshop options: Activism, Bird Monitoring, and NAS recommendations.

10:00 am: Three workshop options: Membership, Native landscaping, and Salton Sea

1:00 pm: Audubon Luncheon on Conservation Priorities for 2005

3:00 pm: Regional Audubon Council caucus time

For more information, contact Jill Shirley, 530-795-0550 or email jshirley@audubon.org.



Collared Flycatcher

BIRDS OF THE PENINSULA

July and August 2004

by Kevin Larson

Not long after the end of spring migration, large numbers of fall migrant shorebirds began arriving. For example, 2,960 adult Western Sandpipers were counted along the L. A. River channel 10-11 July. A large number of adult shorebirds arriving early raises suspicion of breeding failure; however, very good waves of juveniles arrived at the L. A. River during August. A remarkable number of the rare but regular sandpiper species (i.e., Solitary, Semipalmated, and Baird's) was seen. A few fall migrant land birds were trickling in from late July on; numbers increased during a few minor waves after mid-August. A fall vagrant Lucy's Warbler found on 10 July was record-early. A Virginia's Warbler and an Indigo Bunting were other passerine vagrants found before the end of August.

The weather during July and August was mild and uneventful. Temperatures were generally below normal. A cooling marine layer was present on more than two-thirds of the mornings. A slight increase in humidity and the presence of mid-level clouds on a few occasions were the only effects of the interior's monsoonal flow on our coastal weather.

A fall migrant male Wood Duck was in good condition when first discovered at Alondra Park (AP) on 4 Aug (David Moody-DM). Unfortunately, the bird was seen with a drooping wing on 9 Aug; it was possibly injured by a fisherman's line. It was present through 5 Sep and will undoubtedly remain for some time. Sightings of single Redheads at the L. A. River (LAR) on 14 Aug (Kevin Larson-KL), at the Dominguez Channel in Carson on 16 Aug (Suzanne Carota), along with one last year at Harbor Park (HP) on 13 Aug (Mitch Heindel) demonstrate how early this fall migrant can arrive in our area. A female Red-breasted Merganser at Ballona Lagoon 7 Jul-1 Aug was summering (Richard Barth-RB).

Two Northern Fulmars seen from Pt. Vicente (PtV) on 3 Jul (KL), and one seen from the bluffs in Rancho Palos Verdes on 28 Jul (Sav Saville) were late lingerers from this winter's invasion. Counts of Black-vented Shearwaters included 185 off PtV on 3 Jul, 1700+ between PtV and Pt. Fermin on 10 Jul; and 350+ off PtV

on 8 Aug (KL). Rare inland, a Brown Pelican was seen over HP on 1 Jul (Martin Byhower-MB).

A Least Bittern was seen at the Ballona Freshwater Marsh (BFM) 1-5 Aug (Daniel S. Cooper-DSC). Thought to be a post-breeding transient, the timing coincides with sightings of up to two individuals at this location 24 Jul-5 Aug 2003. One Cattle Egret was at HP on 2 Jul (MB); four were at LAR on 20 Aug (KL); and nine flew by the Redondo Beach pier on 31 Aug (DM). Counts of one to four White-faced Ibises were frequently recorded at LAR through July and August; fourteen there on 8 Aug was a high count (RB). Five adult White-faced Ibises were at BFM on 17 Aug (KL). A few White-tailed Kites returned to the Ballona area at the beginning of July. Up to two were there 2-5 July; sightings continued through August. One seen there on 18 Apr was the only record at this location between mid-January and early July this year.

At least eleven pairs of American Avocets raised young at LAR this year; the last successfully raised brood hatched in mid-July. **A remarkable number** of Solitary Sandpipers was found locally before the end of August; most, if not all, were juveniles. It appears that **twelve or thirteen** were found at LAR 13-31 Aug (RB, Andrew Lee-AL, KL, Sandy Koonce-SK, Jon Feenstra-JF), including a high single day count of **six** north of Willow St. on 28 Aug (AL). Five Solitary Sandpipers were in the flooded (due to a water main break) lower wetland at HP on 22 Aug (KL), and three were at BFM on 19 Aug (DSC). A Wandering Tattler in basic plumage at the mouth of Marina del Rey harbor 23 Jun-7 Jul was



Western Sandpiper

undoubtedly summering (RB). Eight Red Knots on the beach in Playa del Rey south of Ballona Creek on 20 Aug was a high count (Barbara G. Johnson). A nearly all-white (leucistic) Western Sandpiper at LAR 5-7 Aug (AL) was a rare find; the last white individual found there was in the fall of 1994. Three juvenile Semipalmated Sandpipers on 31 Jul constituted the first wave of this species at LAR (KL, RB); two of these birds remained on 3 Aug. After none were found 5-8 Aug, another wave brought an estimated **ten** juvenile Semipalmated Sandpipers to LAR 14-22 Aug. Based on the locations of the sightings, nine were present 14-15 Aug; seven of these birds were seen on 15 Aug alone (JF, Mike San Miguel, KL, RB). An additional juvenile was at LAR 31 Aug-4 Sep (SK). Rarely found locally away from LAR, one juvenile Semipalmated Sandpiper was at Del Rey Lagoon on 28 Aug (KL). The first juvenile Baird's Sandpiper at LAR came early on 31 Jul (RB). An estimated 21-22 juvenile Baird's were seen along the river channel 31 Jul-31 Aug; high single-day counts included seven or eight on 22 Aug (RB, Tom Wurster-TW), and seven on 29 Aug (RB). Another two Baird's Sandpipers were at BFM on 21 Aug (DSC). The first Pectoral Sandpiper was a juvenile at LAR 23-24 Aug (John Green); up to three juveniles were there 29-31 Aug (RB).

Twenty-five Pomarine Jaegers seen from PtV on 8 Aug represented a notable early push of migrants; this fall's first was seen there on 31 Jul (KL). A Royal Tern reported inland in Torrance at Madrona Marsh (MM) on 10 Jul (DM) was very unusual. A Black Skimmer at LAR north of Willow St. on 28 Aug was inland, where rare (AL). A Cassin's Auklet flew north past PtV on 3 Jul (KL); six were spotted on 15 Aug (JF), and another six were counted there on 28 Aug (KL). A singing Eurasian Collared-Dove in Torrance near the intersection of Carson St. and Anza Ave. on 14 Jul (KL) is one of several nonnative species that should be monitored. A White-winged Dove was at MM on 21 Aug (DM). Liz Kennedy saw a Barn Owl along Western Ave. in San Pedro near the entrance of Friendship Park on the evening of 2 Jul.

A Say's Phoebe at Victoria Park in Carson on 9 Jul is a rare summer record (Tracy Drake). The summering Bell's Vireo present at HP since 8 May was still singing when last seen on 22 Aug (MB, KL). Another Bell's Vireo was singing in willow habitat at the south end of Deforest Park (DP) 7 Aug-4 Sep (KL). Single migrant Bell's Vireos were recorded at Sand Dune Park (SDP)



Savannah Sparrow

24-27 Aug and adjacent to LAR near Wardlow Rd. on 29 Aug (KL). A migrant Hutton's Vireo was at HP on 28 Aug (KL).

Remarkably, a migrant female Purple Martin was seen on four dates from 20 Aug to 4 Sep in the vicinity of DP (KL et al). Single Bank Swallows were sighted on 4 Aug at BFM (DSC); on 19 Aug (JF) and 28-29 Aug (AL) at LAR; and on 22 Aug (Carol Selvey) and 28 Aug (KL) at HP. In early August, the Western Bluebird pair in Rancho Palos Verdes was feeding the young of their second brood at the nest (Sam Bloom). One fledgling from this second brood and two juveniles from the first nesting were seen circa 19 Aug. The resident California Thrasher in the Forrestal Quarry area of Rancho Palos Verdes was seen on 4 Jul (KL). A migrant Phainopepla at MM 21-23 Aug is only the second record at this location (DM).

A Virginia's Warbler was at SDP on 27 Aug (KL). A Lucy's Warbler at HP on **10 Jul** illustrates how early this fall transient can arrive along the coast of Southern California (KL); a similarly early individual was in Palos Verdes Estates on 13 Jul 2003. Northern Parulas **summered** at the north end of HP. A male singing on territory from 12 Jun until at least 29 Aug was seen with a female on 10 Jul (KL). A ratty-looking parula with a "bob-tailed" appearance seen there on 28 Aug was probably the adult female in molt since the breast pattern was similar. However, I was unable to gather enough details to eliminate the possibility that it was a young male.

A Brewer's Sparrow at MM 21-23 Aug establishes our earliest fall record (DM, KL); another was adjacent to LAR in Long Beach on 29 Aug (KL). Migrant Lark Sparrows arrived right on time; up to three were at MM 21-23 Aug (DM, KL), and two were at HP on 22 Aug

Continued on page 8

CONSERVATION CORNER

by Lillian Light

On Tuesday, September 7th, the Reuters News Agency published a most alarming prediction. Professor Mike Pilling, who teaches Physical Chemistry at Leeds University in Northern England, told reporters that millions of people across the globe are set to die early due to extreme weather events such as heat waves and floods from heavy rainfall caused by global warming. At the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, he stated that, "There are predictions of a ten-fold increase in heat waves. The biggest issue is climate change. We have got to control it."

In January, the European Union will impose mandatory caps on carbon dioxide and other gases that act like a greenhouse over the earth contributing to rising temperatures. The European Union also will begin a market-based system for buying and selling the right to emit carbon. By the end of the year, Russia may ratify the Kyoto Protocol, which makes carbon dioxide reductions mandatory among the 124 countries that have already accepted the accord.

Leaping even further ahead, Britain has vowed to slash emissions by 60% by 2050. The chief science adviser to Prime Minister Tony Blair has argued that climate change is a greater threat to the world than terrorism and has said, "Delaying action for a decade, or even just years, is not a serious option."

In 2001 a report from the nonpartisan National Academy of Sciences concluded that carbon dioxide and other gases spewed from factories, power plants, and motor vehicle exhaust pipes were being trapped in the atmosphere and were causing global warming. Greenhouse gases stay in the atmosphere for a century or longer, making the need to reduce emissions particularly urgent. This study warned that global temperatures could rise anywhere from 3 to 10 degrees Fahrenheit over the coming century risking catastrophic damage around the globe.

In his recently published book *Boiling Point*, Ross Gelbspan states that climate change is the overriding threat facing human civilization in the twenty-first century, and is on the verge of spinning out of control. Many scientists fear that the current buildup of greenhouse gases could flip a global switch causing abrupt climate change. If this should happen consequences would be severe. In some scenarios, the ice on Greenland

could eventually melt, causing sea levels to rise 18 feet. If the West Arctic ice sheet melts as well, sea levels could jump another 18 feet. Shrinking glaciers are already threatening water supplies for farmers and cities.

There is other evidence of global warming. In Alaska, the average temperature has risen by a startling seven degrees over the past 30 years. According to NASA's Goddard Institute, the 1990s were the warmest decade in a thousand years, and 2001 and 2002 were two of the warmest years since the 1800s. High temperatures are devastating biologically vital ecosystems like coral reefs. A paper in the July 16th issue of *Science* suggests that increasing carbon dioxide levels in the oceans could affect the growth of marine life, with dire consequences for the ocean food chain. A most compelling impact is the 10% decreasing yield of corn in the Midwest per degree of warming.

There is a growing consensus among scientists and governments that we can and must do something. Taking action brings a host of ancillary benefits. The main way to cut polluting emissions is simply to burn less fossil fuel. Making cars and factories more energy-efficient and using alternative sources would make America less dependent on oil from the Persian Gulf. Renewable energy, not counting hydropower, now produces only 2% of the nation's electricity. But some states—along with presidential candidate John Kerry—are proposing that this be increased to as much as 20%. Dozens of utilities are turning to alternative fuels, from wind to biomass. Many companies that have discovered that cutting emissions saves money and spurs development of innovative technologies. Even more important is the need to protect our children from the air pollution that can shorten their lives by permanently reducing their ability to breathe!

Continued on page 8



Adelie Penguins on melting Antarctic ice

BLOCKING BUSH WETLAND LOSSES

Audubon California and many Audubon Chapters are sponsoring a major clean water and wetlands bill to fill in a huge gap created recently in the federal Clean Water Act. Senate Bill 1477, authored by Senator Byron Sher (D- Palo Alto), will require the State Water Resources Control Board to regulate fill and discharges into non-navigable, intrastate waters that are no longer federally protected. Those waters include California's seasonal rivers, streams and lakes, vernal pools, more than half of the state's wetlands, many of the streams and lakes in the Sierras, and the drinking water sources for more than half of all Californians.

Following a very narrowly worded Supreme Court decision in 2001, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency issued a "guidance" to its field offices that virtually eliminates federal protection for almost 20 million acres of sensitive wetlands and thousands of miles of streams. In response to overwhelming public and state opposition, the EPA dropped its formal rulemaking process to codify the change, but did not withdraw the "guidance" to its field offices to eliminate protection of these waters, in effect leaving the enormous and very dangerous loophole in place. Several states, including New York, Wisconsin and Ohio, have introduced legislation to fill in the gap.

As part of Audubon's efforts to pass SB 1477 (Sher), a California legislative measure to protect wetlands, Julie Greer met with Assemblymember Jennie Oropeza to discuss the matter. Julie laid out the issues clearly, showing how the measure was necessary to defend habitat and water quality. Oropeza, expressed her concerns that we need to protect the state's remaining waters and wetlands, and offered her support for the bill.



Local Assemblywoman Jenny Oropeza meets with the Chapter's Julie Greer.

This bill was top priority for Audubon~California this year because of its implications for birds, wildlife and their habitats. The measure became essential when the Bush Administration removed protection under the Clean Water Act for wetlands not directly connected to navigable waterways. This administrative stroke threatens water quality in large parts of the nation, with serious potential consequences for flood control, human health, outdoor recreation, and wildlife habitat. Several states have moved to remedy this unwise action by providing equivalent statewide coverage.

California's effort, SB 1477, has been championed by Audubon and its 53 state chapters. Julie attended a July advocacy workshop at Audubon's Debs Park Center to prepare our chapter's presentation of the issues. In the accompanying photo, it's clear that Julie and Jennie Oropeza are both pleased at the outcome of the meeting.

PV/South Bay Audubon Annual Meeting & Holiday Party

Everyone, please join old and new Board members on Wednesday, December 1, 2004 at 7:00 PM

Whole Foods
Community Room
2655 Pacific Coast Highway
Torrance, CA

RSVP: frances@monolake.org, 310-316-0041

NCCP Approved, continued from page 1

of these articles on the Audubon chapter website at www.lmconsult.com/pv/audubon. There is probably no more comprehensive contemporaneous documentation available anywhere. For the complete documentation on the plan itself, visit the City Planning Department website at <http://www.palosverdes.com/rpv/planning/>.

The NCCP began in 1991, and the working group for the local plan was formed in the mid-1990's. Led by Joel Rojas, now RPV's Planning Director, consultant Pat Mock and, most recently, the PVP Land Conservancy's Barbara Dye, the group developed a set of preserve designs from which the final choice was made. Fortunately for all, the adopted design preserves virtually all of the remaining open space in RPV. Everyone who worked on this project is to be congratulated on the splendid result.

Birds of the Peninsula, continued from page 4

(KL). Sightings of single Savannah Sparrows appearing to be the *P. s. nevadensis* or similar type (i.e., not the nearby resident *beldingi*) at BFM on 2 Jul (RB) and 1 Aug (DSC, KL) could be of one summering individual, or of exceptionally early fall migrants. One at LAR on 14 Aug fits the established pattern of our earliest arrivals (KL). A molting male Indigo Bunting was at HP on 29 Aug (KL). An adult male Painted Bunting was seen in lower George F Canyon on 25 Jul (Anke Raue); the timing suggests that it could be a genuine vagrant, though adult males are usually suspected of being escaped captives.

Following are the earliest dates on which these fall migrants were noted this year: Northern Shoveler—26 Aug BFM (RB); Northern Pintail—**19 Jul** LAR (RB); Redhead—**14 Aug** LAR (KL); Sora—4 Aug BFM (RB); adult Semipalmated Plover—19 Jul LAR (RB); juvenile Semipalmated Plover—7 Aug LAR (KL); juvenile Greater Yellowlegs—30 Jul LAR (RB); adult Lesser Yellowlegs—3 Jul LAR (KL); juvenile Lesser Yellowlegs—**3 Aug** LAR (KL); juvenile Western Sandpiper—27 Jul LAR (RB); juvenile Least Sandpiper—31 Jul LAR (KL); juvenile Short-billed Dowitcher—7 Aug LAR (KL); juvenile Wilson's Phalarope—23 Jul LAR (RB); juvenile Red-necked Phalarope—7 Aug LAR (KL); adult Pomarine Jaeger—31 Jul PtV (KL); adult Parasitic Jaeger—8 Aug PtV (KL); juvenile Ring-billed Gull—30 Jul LAR (RB); juvenile California Gull—30 Jul LAR (RB); juvenile Western Gull—31 Jul PtV (KL); Belted Kingfisher—**7 Jul** Ballona Lagoon (DSC); Olive-sided Flycatcher—**17 Aug** SDP (KL); Western Wood-Pewee—20 Aug SDP (KL); Willow Flycatcher—22 Aug SDP (KL); Warbling Vireo—**31 Jul** MM (DM); House Wren—4 Aug Playa del Rey (DSC); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher—**8 Aug** AP, HP and MM (DM, KL); Nashville Warbler—**7 Aug** DP (KL); Yellow Warbler—31 Jul LAR (KL); Townsend's Warbler—20 Aug DP (KL); Hermit Warbler—22 Aug DP (TW); MacGillivray's Warbler—28 Aug MM (KL); Western Tanager—31 Jul HP (KL); Chipping Sparrow—24 Aug SDP (KL); Lazuli Bunting—31 Jul HP (KL).

Thanks to all who reported sightings during the period. Please send your sightings to me at cbirdr@comcast.net for the Palos Verdes/South Bay and vicinity, including areas east to the L.A. River, north to about the 105 freeway, and along the coast up to Marina del Rey.

Conservation Corner, continued from page 6

What is the United States—the world's biggest polluter that accounts for approximately 25% of the world's greenhouse-producing gases—doing to reduce the chances of a global warming catastrophe? Fewer than 60 days into his presidency, President Bush declared that he was dropping his campaign pledge to cap carbon dioxide emissions. In March of 2001, he announced his decision to withdraw from the Kyoto Protocol, and to discontinue US participation in its future negotiations.

In the Senate, a bill to set up a trading scheme that would put a cap on emissions and allow emitters to buy and sell permits to release emissions was defeated last year. The Republican leadership in the Senate is blocking any reconsideration of the bill. In addition to resistance of the Bush administration and the fossil-fuel lobby, the failure of the press to cover the climate crisis has left the United States ten years behind the rest of the world in addressing this issue.

In California, because of a law passed by the state legislature under Gray Davis,

the state Air Resources Board is formulating regulations to achieve the "maximum feasible and cost effective reduction" of global warming pollution from motor vehicles. The Board's draft regulations would require automakers to reduce emissions from new cars and trucks starting in 2009. These regulations are now under attack, and we need to send a message to Governor Schwarzenegger and to Dr. Lloyd, Chairman of the ARB, to support these new strong regulations. Let's urge them to be leaders in improving our air quality and the health of our children! For more information on this issue consult <http://www.care2.com/go/z/16705>.

Please contact:

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
State Capitol Bldg
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-445-2841
governor@governor.ca.gov

Dr Alan Lloyd
100 I St
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-322-5840
alloyd@arb.ca.gov

AUDUBON YES! BEGINS SECOND DECADE

In the fall of 1994, our Audubon embarked on a new adventure: working with young people through a program called Audubon YES!, where “yes” stands for “youth environmental service”. It has been a grand success, with thousands of hours of community service done by YES! Students, more than 200 of whom have earned the Audubon YES! Award.

As we enter our second decade, the program is firmly established in schools throughout the South Bay. This year, we expect hundreds of students to take part, with services provided not only to Audubon, but also to other community groups such as the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium, the Friends of Madrona Marsh, and the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy. Farther afield, Audubon YES! is an active program with several Audubon chapters in southern California, and two enterprising program graduates have persuaded Houston and Massachusetts Audubons to undertake pilot programs.

There are three ways you too can become part of our innovative program. First, if you are a student, you can work on any of the projects listed in the monthly Audubon YES! Activities Calendar. After you have earned 100 YES! Credits (nominally, 50 hours of service), you will be eligible for the Audubon YES! Award and can become a member of the Audubon YES! Council. As a Council member, you can work with other student leaders to make YES! more readily available to fellow students.

Second, as an adult, if you have time to donate in working with high school students, you can become an Audubon Representative. Your role would be to visit a high school ecology club, service club or environmental science class about once a month to help coordinate student participation in YES! Third, if your time is limited, you can always donate to Audubon in support of the YES! program.

To learn more about Audubon YES!, visit the website at www.audubonyes.org where you will find listings of activities, award winners, participation forms and other information.

DO WE EVER LEARN?

By Michael Weber

One regrettable feature of our local environment is an enormous bed of marine sediment off the Palos Verdes Peninsula contaminated with DDT. The bed of toxic sediments hasn't grown much since the belated prohibition on the manufacture and discharge of DDT in the 1970s. But, the sediments continue poisoning fish and other wildlife.

You would think that we would have learned from that experience. You would think that since then, we would have been more careful about inventing, using, and discharging new chemicals into the environment.

Well, let me tell you something, brother. The evidence is that we haven't learned much.

On September 10, *Los Angeles Times* writer Marla Cone reported, “A fish-eating seabird in San Francisco Bay has the highest concentration of toxic flame retardants found in any wildlife in the world.”

Flame retardant in birds? Flame retardant in fish?

It turns out that the unfortunately toxic bird was a Forster's tern nesting south of San Leandro. And it wasn't the bird that was most toxic, but the bird's egg.

A toxic bird's egg? Maybe that's why Forster's terns are having such difficulty reproducing.

So add this to your lexicon of acronyms: PBDEs. These chemicals are “brominated compounds” used mostly as a flame retardant in furniture foam and plastic electronics parts.

Together with mercury, PCBs, and other pollutants, PBDEs wash off the land into the water and settle on sediments in nearshore waters. There, small fish end up incorporating the pollutants into their bodies. When a bird consumes one of these fish, it consumes a little toxic cocktail.

Two types of PBDE will be banned in California by 2008, but the most common type will continue to be unregulated. According to Cone, concentration's of PBDEs in the bodies of people and wildlife are doubling every two to five years, “the highest rate of contaminant in almost half a century.”

So, we clearly need a remedial lesson in controlling our cleverness with chemicals.

A good place to begin might be Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, published 42 years ago.

The chemicals have changed since then. But it appears that we haven't.

THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE ELECTION

While the war in Iraq and the state of economy dominate public concerns as the November 2nd elections approach, candidates' positions on environmental protection remain important to many voters. Indeed, while the candidates' positions on the war and the economy may seem to differ little, candidates' positions on environmental protection can be dramatically different.

For the past 30 years, the California League of Conservation Voters has evaluated the performance of state legislators and issued an annual Environmental Scorecard. The scorecard for the 2003 state legislative session showed that local legislators remained leaders in environmental efforts.

Both Assemblymen Alan Lowenthal, who is running for the Senate seat now held by Senator Betty Karnette, and George Nakano scored 100 percent. Local Assemblywoman Jenny Oropeza scored 95 percent. State Senators Debra Bowen and Betty Karnette scored 90 percent and 95 percent respectively. Senator Karnette is running for the Assembly seat being vacated by Mr. Lowenthal.

For the complete scorecard and additional information by and about the California League of Conservation Voters, go to <http://www.ecovote.org/scorecard/> or call 310-441-4162.

At the federal level, a different non-partisan organization, the League of Conservation Voters, conducts similar analyses. According to the League's environmental scorecard for 2003, Senator Barbara Boxer scored 96 percent, while Senator Dianne Feinstein scored 80 percent on environmental votes in the 107th Session of Congress. Local Congresswoman Jane Harman scored 91 percent.

The League of Conservation Voters also recently completed an assessment of the Bush Administration's environmental record. The *2003 Presidential Report Card* assesses the Bush Administration's performance on environmental issues up to the middle of his term in office. The League surveyed top environmental leaders and conducted an exhaustive review of President Bush's environmental actions. The report gave the President a failing grade. By comparison, Senator John Kerry's voting record during the 107th Congress earned a 92 percent score.

For the complete scorecard and additional information on the League of Conservation Voters, go to <http://www.lcv.org/>.



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Editor.....Michael Weber, 310-316-0599

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Meet Learn Enjoy Restore

Sunday, Oct. 3, 8:00 AM: **Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden**, 26300 Crenshaw Bl., Palos Verdes. Leader: Ollie Coker. Charge for nonmembers of the SCBG Foundation; you can join at the entrance. (Also Nov. 7)

Wednesday, Oct. 6, 7:00 PM: **Audubon Board meeting**, Whole Foods Community Room. Pacific Coast Highway and Crenshaw Blvd.

Wednesday, Oct. 6: **Bird Classes begin with Eric and Ann Brooks**, South Coast Botanic Garden. For information, call 323-295-6688 or motmots@aol.com.

Saturday, Oct. 9, 9:00 AM: **PVP Land Conservancy Walk at Chadwick Canyon**. For information, call 310-541-7613 or go to www.pvplc.com.

Sunday, Oct. 10, 8:00 AM: **Bird and Nature Walk at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park**. Leader: Martin Byhower. Meet in parking lot between Vermont and Anaheim St. above the boathouse, about 1 mile west of 110 Freeway on Anaheim St.

Sunday, Oct. 10: **Field Trip with Eric and Ann to Huntington Beach Central Park**. For more information, contact motmots@aol.com or 323-295-6688.

Sunday, Oct. 10, 9:00 AM: **Volunteer Weeding at Forrestal Nature Preserve** sponsored by the Palos Verdes Land Conservancy. Meet at the end of Forrestal Drive by the Ladera Linda parking lot. (Also, Nov. 14.)

Wednesday, Oct. 13, 8:00 AM: **Bird Walk at Madrona Marsh**. Leader: Bob Shanman. 3201 Plaza del Amo (west of Madrona Ave.) in Torrance.

Wednesday, Oct. 20, 8:00 AM: **Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden**. Leader: Georgene Foster. (See Oct. 3 for directions.)

Tuesday, Oct. 25: **NO AUDUBON PROGRAM MEETING.**

Saturday, Nov. 6, 10:00 AM: **Nature Walks through the Canyon**, George F Canyon Nature Center, Corner of Palos Verdes Drive North and PV Drive East in Rolling Hills Estates.

Sunday, Nov. 7, 8:00 AM: **Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden**. Leader: Ollie Coker. (See Oct. 3 for directions.)

Wednesday, Nov. 10, 8:00 AM: **Bird Walk at Madrona Marsh. Leader: Bob Shanman.** (See Oct. 13 for directions.)

Saturday, Nov. 13, 2:00 PM: **PVP Land Conservancy Walk at Royal Palms**. For information call 310-541-7613; www.pvplc.com.

Sunday, Nov. 14, 8:00 AM: **Bird and Nature Walk at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park**. Leader: Martin Byhower. (See Oct. 10.)

Wednesday, Nov. 17, 8:00 AM: **Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden**. Leader: Georgene Foster. (See Oct. 3 for directions.)

Wednesday/Thursday, Nov. 17-18: **AUDUBON ASSEMBLY** at the Radisson Hotel in Stockton. SAVE THE DATE.

Wednesday, December 1, 7:00 PM: **Members Annual meeting** and holiday party with the Board, Whole Foods Community Room. All are welcome!!!

SAVE March 19, 2005: Robert Ridgley, "The Changing Face of Conservation of Endemic and Endangered Species of Birds in the Neotropics." At the LA County Museum of Natural History. Tickets will go on sale soon.



CENTRAL VALLEY BIRDING SYMPOSIUM

The Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the Eighth Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium on November 18-21, 2004 at the Radisson Hotel in Stockton, CA. There will be field trips, workshops, and a Birding Nature Fair and Art Show with over 25 vendors selling nature-related items.

Keynote Speakers are TV nature-series host John Acorn, Graham Chisholm of the Nature Conservancy, and Ed Harper and his always impressive bird photos. Two of the many workshops are "Flycatcher ID" by Jon Dunn and "Owls Demystified" by Joe Morlan.

We have some new speakers and field trips this year, so those of you who have attended our festival in the past have new offerings to enjoy. If you've never attended before, come see what you've been missing!

The schedule, brochure, registration form, etc. are on the website: <http://cvbs.org> The non-computer inclined can contact Frances Oliver at (209) 369-2010.

CALENDAR

