



# HUMMIN'

PALOS VERDES/SOUTH BAY AUDUBON SOCIETY APR/MAY 2006 Vol. XXVIII No.2

## Prop O and Harbor Park

by Jess Morton

In 2004, Los Angeles residents overwhelmingly passed Proposition O, authorizing bonds for \$500 million to be spent for water quality improvement projects throughout the city. Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park (KMHRP) was one of two locations singled out in the ballot description as typical of places needing such funds. Now, a year and a half later, the process for awarding grants under Prop O has been more or less worked out, and the first round of projects have been nominated for funding. KMHRP, at long, long, long last appears about to receive its due.

On February 15<sup>th</sup>, a contingent of chapter folks, led by Martin Byhower, appeared before the Citizens' Oversight Advisory Committee (COAC), meeting in Griffith Park, to put forth the case for funding KMHRP projects. The COAC is charged with making recommendations to the city about which projects meet Prop O's water quality objectives and are therefore qualified to be funded. It's a big task, with 50 places from around the city proposed for one or more projects in the first funding cycle, alone.

Of these fifty, only two, KMHRP and Echo Lake, were considered ready for action at this time. That KMHRP was ready is due to a tremendous effort put forth by the 15<sup>th</sup> District Council Office, the Department of Recreation and Parks, and City Sanitation, meeting a very rushed Dec. 16, 2005, deadline with an outstanding proposal. Your Audubon Chapter can take great pride in having many of the projects it has been advocating for years incorporated as the basis for much of the final proposal.

Ordinarily, building a case for two of fifty programs might not seem a problem. However, decades of underfunding for parks and infrastructure mean that the funds necessary to meet all needs are far more that Prop O can provide by itself. The consequence of this is that the projects proposed to be done at KMHRP (\$61.6 million)

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### Celebrate Earth Day!

#### Audubon Conservation Awards Event

Join Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon members and friends on Saturday, April 22, at 3:30PM at Cabrillo Marine Aquarium in San Pedro for the 2006 Audubon Conservation Awards ceremony. Join us for referhments at no charge.

This year, the Audubon Conservation Award goes to Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy for their outstanding work in protecting habitat on the Palos Verdes Peninsula. Their most recent success was raising \$4 million to complete the acquisition of 422 acres for the Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve.

The Education Award is being awarded to Tracy Drake, the Naturalist Manager of the Madrona Marsh Preserve. Tracy is making Madrona Marsh a true education and community center for the South Bay.

Dave Moody is receiving the Conservation Biology Award for his special contributions to making the South Bay Christmas Bird Count bigger and better.

The Youth Conservation Award goes to Lynn Hiel, president of Audubon YES! and a graduating senior from Palos Verdes High School. Lynn launched her school's very successful solid waste recycling program.

The Environmental Journalism Award goes to Chris Boyd of the *Peninsula News* for his positive coverage of South Bay environmental news.

Audubon YES! students, who have contributed 50 or more hours of service to the community's environment will also be recognized. Parents and friends are welcome! RSVP "yes" to frances@monolake.org.

Earth Day activities at the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium start at 8:00AM with a beach clean up, and continue through the day with many family activities.

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Martin Byhower

America's birders are pretty wimpy; for that matter, so are our birds!

I mean, look at what the birds that migrate from Europe to Africa have to put up with compared to our neotropical migrants. To get to their lush, cushy neotropics, our guys can go over prairies, river basins, mountain foothills, or simply hug coastlines. Some have to do a short hop from the Gulf states to the Yucatan, but then they are basically home free. Sure, there are vast tracts of cleared or poisoned habitat, the occasional drought, storm, or headwind, feral cats as well as natural predators, not to mention windows and windmills to deal with, but hey, that's par for the course these days.



On the other hand/wing, the European migrants REALLY have it tough. I found this out on my trip to Hungary last summer. The Old World birds have all of our bird's challenges, plus a lot more. First of all, countries like Spain, France, Italy and Greece are full of folks who have a tradition of pointing their shotguns at any small passerine passing through. And imagine flying through the war zones of the Middle East!

But the real challenge is that there is no easy way to get from north to south and back again. Whether you try to cross them, or venture to take circuitous routes around the Mediterranean, you still end up having to deal with the truly vast deserts of North Africa. Crossing the Sahara and THEN the Sahel, the Nubian or Saudi Arabian Deserts is obligatory. There just isn't any easy way to get to the nice areas.

Maybe that's why European birds are so darned hard to watch. They need to be quick, wary, and resourceful. I mean, during my two weeks in central Europe, I NEVER got a good look at a European JAY for goodness sake, let alone a single look in the wild at some of the birds that were most abundant in the mist nets at the preserve/research station where I volunteered, southeast of Budapest.

You see a bird in the distance, you pick up your binoculars, and instantly, it takes off every time. It's ridiculous. The typical European bird makes our warblers seem like peafowl or pigeons by comparison. Which, I think, accounts for the fact that just about every European birder I meet blows me away with his or her keen observational skills. You gotta be good to have a life list over 20 in Europe.

OK, maybe there is a bit of hyperbole in the above, but my experience in Hungary last summer was one of the most eye-opening, emotionally impactful, and world-view-altering in my life. I am always the first to say "think globally, act locally", but now my personal world extends to a small but ecologically bountiful Pleistocene relict marsh in Hungary, and a part of me needs to remain connected and involved there.

Another time, perhaps at a chapter meeting, I can share with you the slides and videos, but now I am going to ask for your help in saving the remarkable migrant avifauna of Europe from extinction. Dr. Tibor Csogo is the premier "ringer" (bird bander) in central and eastern Europe, and a big portion of his funding has been cut off. Bird conservation in central and eastern Europe is a shoestring and ephemeral operation at best, and the conservationists there are as tough as the birds they are trying to save. They need help, and I don't see it coming from anywhere except those who have visited and seen the need.

Dr. Csogo has published 63 papers on the migratory birds, teaches and tests most of the conservation ornithologists of Eastern Europe, and has become one of the people in this world I admire most. When not teaching at the University of Budapest, every waking moment in his life is devoted to banding birds and collecting data, and it is a race against time to learn what is needed in order to save the declining populations of Europe-African migrants from extinction.

Which is why, for the first time ever, the money that my Birdathon Team collects this year will be spent non-locally. Years ago, when I learned of Greenpeace's (actually the Quakers') philosophy of "Bearing Witness," I vowed that it would become a guiding principle for me. Its premise is that if you see a wrong and don't work to change it, you are in fact abetting that wrong. In other words, you are either part of the problem or part of the solution.

Hungary's birds have touched my life, and if you have

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# PALOS VERDES/SOUTH BAY AUDUBON'S THREE BIRDATHONS

*Saturday, April 29*

You are invited to **join any or all of the teams as a birder**, to make a financial **pledge** yourself, and to **gather pledges** from family, friends, and your workplace for each species seen during a 24-hour period.

Here is how it works. A birding team goes out for one day to identify as many birds as possible. If you pledge \$1.00 per species, and the team see 100 species of birds, you will be sent a list of the birds that were seen and asked to send in a check for \$100.00. You may also just make a contribution of a fixed amount. All donations are tax-deductible.

Here is this year's line-up of teams:

- I. Martin Byhower and Kevin Larson: contact [avitropic@sbcglobal.net](mailto:avitropic@sbcglobal.net).
- II. Bob Shanman and Jess Morton: contact [jmorton@igc.org](mailto:jmorton@igc.org)
- III. Lillian Light and Ollie Coker: contact [lklight@verizon.net](mailto:lklight@verizon.net) or 310-545-1384

All proceeds from Birdathons II and III are used for Audubon programs—education, restoration of wildlife habitats in the region. See Martin's article for the beneficiary of his birdathon this year: Dr. Tibor Csogo of Hungary.

Birdathon is Audubon's largest annual fundraising event, and the world's largest bird-watching competition. Last year's nationwide Birdathon helped raise over \$1 million in support of Audubon's mission to *conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and habitat for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity*. We hope you'll join with thousands of others in communities across the country who helped make Birdathon a success.

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## Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon Birdathon Pledge Form

For Birdathons I and II, mail a fixed amount check or pledge to PV/SB Audubon, P.O. Box 2582, Palos Verdes, CA 90274, Attn: Birdathon OR sign up at Wild Birds Unlimited, 25416 Crenshaw Blvd., Torrance, 310-326-2473.

For Birdathon III, mail a fixed amount check or pledge to PV/SB Audubon, c/o Lillian and Ollie, 2807 Pine Ave., Manhattan Beach, CA 90266.

I pledge a fixed amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or

I pledge for each species seen \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please *circle* the group to get credit for your pledge:      I      II      III

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## BIRDS OF THE PENINSULA

January and February 2006

by Kevin Larson

A Thick-billed Kingbird continued in Wilmington. This Mexican species remained the most notable avian winterer in our area. With perseverance, several other interesting birds were found. Some of these birds were undoubtedly present, but undiscovered, at the time of the Christmas Bird Counts; others had just arrived. A Eurasian Wigeon was news since our area has been graced by very few. It was extraordinary that two Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and two Northern Parulas were found this winter. Two Sage Thrashers occurring near the coast was an eye-opener for local birders who may seek this early migrant locally in the future. A banner winter visitor was the Clay-colored Sparrow that appeared in January.

Our weather was generally dominated by high pressure during January and February. Dry conditions prevailed as rainy weather was generally pushed north of our area. After two inches of rain fell at LAX 31 Dec-2 Jan, only another 0.45 inches accumulated before 27-28 February, when a significant storm added 1.73 inches to the seasonal total. As a result, the rainfall total for the season (1 Jul-30 Jun) was running well below the normal value at the end of February. Periods of warm, dry offshore flow brought unseasonably high temperatures. High temperature records ranging from 80 to 87 degrees were set on five dates during January and February at LAX.

A one-day-only male **Eurasian Wigeon** at Ballona Lagoon on 6 Jan is one of very few area records, and the first known from the Ballona area (David Bell-DB). The Ballona Freshwater Marsh (BFM) hosted a good number of Redheads this winter (Richard Barth-RB); seven were generally present, and nine were counted 7-26 Feb. A male Long-tailed Duck was at Dockweiler State Beach 14-25 Feb (RB), and a female was at the mouth of Ballona Creek 5-20 Feb (Lucio Gomes). Up to four Hooded Mergansers were infrequently seen at BFM 5 Jan-4 Mar (RB et al). A female Hooded Merganser was at Alondra Park (AP) 11-28 Jan (David Moody-DM). A female Hooded Merganser at Madrona Marsh (MM) on 19 Feb was likely the same bird that wintered there the past two years, and likely the one that was at AP in January (DM).



**Red Phalarope**  
(Lee Karney, USFWS)

Northern Fulmar sightings at Pt. Vicente included two on 15 Jan and one on 18 Feb (Kevin Larson-KL); nine were counted on a Los Angeles Audubon Society (LAAS) pelagic trip on Santa Monica Bay waters south of Marina del Rey on 25 Feb. American White Pelicans are a rare sight in our area; twelve were at AP on 31 Jan (Roy van de Hoek), and up to four were at Earvin Magic Johnson Recreation Area (EMJRA) in Willowbrook 18-26 Feb (KL). An American Bittern was seen at BFM 3-10 Feb (RB). Up to two Cattle Egrets at EMJRA 14 Jan-26 Feb were the only ones reported (KL).

Wintering White-tailed Kites are known to depart early; the last one recorded in the Ballona area was on 12 Feb (Jonathan Coffin-JC). Rare in spring on any date, a migrant Lesser Yellowlegs at BFM on **24 Feb** was unusually early (KL). Two storm-blown Red Phalaropes at the Marina del Rey Harbor entrance on 3 Jan were the only ones found (DB). A Thayer's Gull at Ballona Creek on 19 Feb was the first I have seen in third-winter plumage locally. A first-winter **Glaucous Gull** about five miles west of Playa del Rey gave very satisfying views to all participants on the 25 Feb LAAS pelagic trip (Jon Feenstra). The Burrowing Owl found in the Ballona Wetland area on 29 Oct continued through at least 19 Feb (JC). Kimball Garrett spotted four Ancient Murrelets in the southern portion of Santa Monica Bay on the 25 Feb LAAS pelagic trip.

A female Costa's Hummingbird was at Cal State University Dominguez Hills in Carson on 29 Jan (KL). The Nuttall's Woodpecker found last fall at DeForest Park (DP) continued through at least 26 Feb (KL); it was the only one known to be in the area during the period. The **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** at Banning Park (BP) 10 Nov-17 Dec (KL) eluded us in late December

and early January, but reappeared 21 Jan-25 Feb (Martin Byhower-MB); surprisingly, another was found at Chadwick School on the hill on 27 Jan (MB). A male Red-naped Sapsucker was enjoyed by participants of MB's bird walk at Harbor Park (HP) on 18 Feb (Fred Niedermeyer, Eileen Byhower). Apparently pure "Yellow-shafted" Northern Flickers were at AP 19 Jan-19 Feb (DM), at MM 22 Jan-19 Feb (DM), and at Loyola Marymount University (LMU) in Westchester 21 Jan-25 Feb (Russell Stone).

A Gray Flycatcher continued along the L. A. River south of Wardlow Rd. 18 Dec-4 Feb (KL). A very elusive Dusky Flycatcher found at the South Coast Botanic Garden (SCBG) on 11 Dec was not seen again until 28 Jan (KL). A Western Flycatcher in Rolling Hills on 22 Jan (KL) may have been the individual found by Richard A. Bradley on the 26 Dec CBC; another at Sand Dune Park on 14 Feb had been present since at least 9 Nov (RB). Vermilion Flycatchers continued at Columbia Park in Torrance 28 Sep-10 Feb (DM), and at EMJRA 17 Oct-29 Jan (RB). The **Thick-billed Kingbird** found at BP on 10 Nov continued through at least 25 Feb (KL). Remarkable were Western Kingbird sightings just outside this article's coverage area during January; one was at Holy Cross Cemetery in Culver City on **13 Jan** (RB), and up to two were seen at well-worked El Dorado Park **29-30 Jan** (Thomas Miko, Karen Gilbert). A Bell's Vireo spending its third winter at DP was present 11 Oct-26 Feb (RB). A Plumbeous Vireo was at Recreation Park in El Segundo 3-7 Jan (RB). Four Hutton's Vireos counted in Rolling Hills on 22 Jan are believed to be part of a



**Tree Swallow**

(Donna Dewhurst, USFWS)

small resident population in this area (KL).

A few Tree, Northern Rough-winged and Barn swallows were seen in the area during January. Since these species were wintering in the area in small numbers, it is difficult to determine if any of these January swallows were migrants. Tree and Northern Rough-winged swallows seen at BFM 3-7 Feb and 7 Feb respectively were undoubtedly migrants. The first good wave of migrant swallows coincided with the passage of a low pressure system 18-19 Feb. Many individuals of five species were seen at this time in the area, including five Violet-green Swallows and the first Cliff Swallows. Since this was not an invasion winter for Red-breasted Nuthatches in the region, one in Rolling Hills on 22 Jan was likely a lingerer from the small resident population recently established in this area (KL); present since 21 Nov, the individual at Wilderness Park was seen through 14 Feb (DM).

Two Golden-crowned Kinglets were discovered at LMU 19-25 Feb (KL). The pair of resident Western Bluebirds was seen at Ridgecrest Intermediate School near Highridge Park 3 Jan-5 Feb (KL, Sam Bloom). A Varied Thrush at LMU on 22 Feb is the first known from the western Ballona Valley and is first found in this article's coverage area since November 2003 (RB). **Two Sage Thrashers** were totally unexpected. Singles at White's Point Nature Preserve in San Pedro on 30 Jan (DM) and at BFM 3-8 Feb (RB) occurred at a time coincident with this species' early northward movement through the deserts.

Astonishing was the discovery of a second **Northern Parula** in the Palos Verdes count circle this winter; after one was found at the Gardena Willows 26 Dec-5 Jan; another appeared at Charles Wilson Park in Torrance on 4 Feb (KL). Wintering Yellow Warblers were seen at EMJRA (KL), HP (MB), Ballona Lagoon (DB), and Del Rey Lagoon (KL) during the period. A Hermit Warbler in Rolling Hills on 22 Jan was the second found on the hill this winter (KL). Two Palm Warblers continued at MM 3 Jan-24 Feb (DM). An adult male Black-and-white Warbler at the El Segundo Library 3 Jan-14 Feb was undoubtedly a returning winterer since a young male was present the previous winter (RB). Barbara Courtois found another Black-and-white Warbler at Polliwog Park in Manhattan Beach on 18 Feb. One of the two Black-and-white Warblers found at HP on 26 Dec was seen again on 25 Feb (MB).

A female Summer Tanager was near the south entrance of LMU 14-15 Jan (KL). Seven Western Tanagers at

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## CONSERVATION CORNER

by Lillian Light

Yes, I have talked about Global Warming before, but recent developments are imparting a greater sense of urgency. Many reputable scientists around the world are arguing that global warming is a greater danger than any other that we are facing today or ever have faced. One of these scientists is James Lovelock who conceived the idea of Gaia, a name for the earth that keeps itself fit for life. In a profoundly pessimistic new assessment, published on January 16<sup>th</sup>, Professor Lovelock suggests that we are past the point of no return, that efforts to counter global warming cannot succeed, and that the countries of the world face total societal collapse. That is the bad news on this serious problem. The good news is that most climatologists and scientists do not agree with this view, and still recommend taking action that will reduce global warming.

In 1988, the United Nations created the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to find out why the planet was getting warmer. After research and a review of the scientific literature, the IPCC found that the heating of the planet was due to the buildup of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere, primarily carbon dioxide from our burning coal and oil.

For the last millennium, the amount of carbon has stayed below 290ppm. Now, in an industrialized world with the increased consumption of coal, gasoline, and other fossil fuels, the CO<sub>2</sub> levels in the air have climbed past 379ppm. With no action, those levels could jump to 800 or 1000ppm by the end of the century. The result would be catastrophic, as the world's atmosphere would then become between 3 and 10 degrees F warmer some time within the next 100 years.

The relentless rise of the global average temperature has had dire effects on our planet. The decade of the 1990s was the hottest on record. The year 1998 was the hottest year in human history, and 2002 was the second hottest year of all. In the Spring of 2003, 1,400 people



died from a heat wave in India and Pakistan, and during the summer a brutal heat wave in Europe killed as many as 11,000 people in a four-week period. In May of the same year, the United States experienced a record 562 tornadoes.

The effects of climate change are especially severe in the Arctic region, from the northward spread of spruce beetles in Canada to melting permafrost in Alaska and northern Russia. Researchers who have recently returned from Western Siberia reported that an area of permafrost spanning a million square kilometers – the size of France and Germany combined – has started to melt for the first time since it formed 11,000 years ago at the end of the last ice age.

California faces particularly serious problems as global temperatures increase. A predicted consequence, an 8 to 12 inch rise in sea level, will cause flooding in coastal cities and will add stress on the levees in the Sacramento- San Joaquin Delta. If warming is accompanied by increased drought, as is expected, agriculture would suffer and water intensive crops like grapes, cotton and alfalfa could decline or even disappear. Fires will be hotter, move more rapidly, and be more difficult to contain under future climate conditions. State water supplies will be at risk, since it is predicted that up to 89% of the Sierra snow-pack could be reduced.

Cars and trucks are responsible for over half of the California smog problem, and for approximately 40% of the heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere. This is one reason to give up gas-guzzling SUVs and purchase hybrid or electric vehicles. We need to pressure our government to raise efficiency standards for all vehicles, the so-called Corporate Average Fuel Economy standards. If these standards required that cars, SUVs, and trucks average 40 miles per gallon, it would help to curb global warming, and would make us less dependent on oil from the turbulent Persian Gulf area.

The Environmental Priorities Network is planning an Energy Fair to make information available on how to obtain cost-cutting federal and state rebates on solar panel installations. Exhibits and workshops, led by well-informed experts, will also provide information on energy saving home retrofits as well as energy-efficient appliances and transit vehicles, i.e. hybrid cars, plug-in hybrids, public transportation, light electric vehicles, and bicycles. This program will take place on May 20, 2006 from 8:30 AM to 1:00 PM, at the Pacific Unitarian Church, 5621 Montemalaga Drive in Rancho Palos Verdes. Visitors to the Fair will be encouraged to sign up

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## YOUR BACKYARD HABITAT

### Currants and Gooseberries

*Ribes species*

by Dr. Connie Vadheim

Springtime, when gardens are bursting with new life, is a good time to consider perennial shrubs for your backyard habitat. This is not the best time to plant – fall and winter are much better. But it's a great time to begin planning for the fall planting season.

Some of the best habitat plants serve multiple functions. Their spring blooms provide nectar for hummingbirds and insects, and a welcome spot of color in the garden. Birds and small animals find shelter in their foliage. And later in the year, fruits provide a tasty treat for you and our fruit-eating birds.

Among the best all-round native berry plants are the currants and gooseberries – plants in the genus *Ribes*. These shrubs bloom in late winter/early spring. Their edible berries ripen in late spring and summer. And they provide pleasant foliage the rest of the year. We are lucky to have several excellent *Ribes* species native to our area.

Among my personal favorites is the Golden Currant (*Ribes aureum*) with its clove-scented yellow flowers in spring. The flowers are a “bee magnet” and birds will fight you for the berries! White-flowered Currant (*Ribes indecorum*) and Chaparral Currant (*Ribes malvaceum*) have clusters of early pink-white flowers that attract hummingbirds and butterflies. Catalina Perfume (*Ribes viburnifolium*) has particularly attractive flowers and



foliage. None of the above have prickles, so you can plant them where they can be enjoyed. Horticultural cultivars (‘Montara Rose’, ‘Dancing Tassels’, ‘Ortega Ruby’) are available. The prickly-stemmed Canyon Gooseberry (*Ribes californicum*) and Fuschia-flowered Gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*) are very attractive and drought-tolerant. Just be sure to plant them where they have plenty of room!

In general *Ribes* require well-drained soil and a little summer water to retain their leaves in the dry months. Don't over-water, particularly after they're established, as they are quite drought tolerant. Most do best in partial shade and many grow well under trees or in the shade of buildings. They are quite adaptable.

*Ribes* can be trained and shaped to fit your needs, and most benefit from pruning every year or two. Most grow naturally to 4-6 feet, with a trailing growth habit. They are good for erosion control on banks and hillsides and do well in planters or along walls and fences.

Learn more about local native plants at our “Out of the Wilds and into Your Garden” series on the second Saturday of each month at Madrona Marsh Preserve. The May 13 class will cover native plants to attract hummingbirds to your garden, while the June 10 class will discuss native South Bay salvias. For more information, call 310-782-3989 or go to [www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com](http://www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com).

Plant Information Sheets are available for these and other species at the Madrona Marsh Nature Center.





*Birds of the Peninsula, continued from page 5*

SCBG on 8 Jan was a notable winter concentration (KL). Very rare in winter, a **Clay-colored Sparrow** was a surprising find at MM 18 Jan-25 Feb (DM). Up to eight Lark Sparrows were seen this winter at MM; six were still present on 19 Feb, and three were there on 24 Feb (DM). Janet Gardner saw two Lark Sparrows in Hawthorne on 13 Jan. Two White-throated Sparrows continued at MM through February (DM). Other White-throated Sparrows were found at DP on 5 Jan and at Ballona Lagoon on 7 Jan (KL). One Rose-breasted Grosbeak, first recorded on 30 Nov, was seen at Randy K. Harwood's feeder in Rolling Hills Estates through at least 28 Jan. An immature Baltimore Oriole found at SCBG on 11 Dec was not seen again until 5 Feb (KL). Up to three Bullock's Orioles were at SCBG 8 Jan-5 Feb (KL); one seen only on 8 Feb at MM was a winter wanderer (DM).

Thanks to all who reported sightings during the period. Please send your sightings to me at [cbirdr@comcast.net](mailto: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.

**Mono Basin Bird Chautauqua**

**5<sup>th</sup> Annual  
June 16-18, 2006**

“Not your ordinary bird festival”  
Birds, Science, Art, Music, Field Trips  
in the Chautauqua tradition

Online Registration Begins April 15, 2005  
Full Program and Schedule Update Online  
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Field & Workshop Leaders include:

Jon Dunn  
Sacha Heath  
Ann Howald  
David Lukas  
Chris McCreedy  
David Wimpfheimer  
Dave Shuford...and more

**Acronyms in Birds of the Peninsula**

AP: Alondra Park  
BFM: Ballona Freshwater Marsh  
BP: Banning Park  
DB: David Bell  
DM: David Moody  
DP: DeForest Park  
EMJRA: Earvin Magic Johnson Recreation Area  
HP: Harbor Park  
JC: Jonathan Coffin  
KL: Kevin Larson  
LAAS: Los Angeles Audubon Society  
LMU: Loyola Marymount University  
MB: Martin Byhower  
MM: Madrona Marsh  
RB: Richard Barth  
SCBG: South Coast Botanic Garden

*Conservation Corner, continued from page 7*

for a Solar Homes Tour being planned for June 10<sup>th</sup>. For more information about these events contact me at 310 – 545 1384 or at [lklight@verizon.net](mailto:lklight@verizon.net).

If you do not want to wait until May to take action for a safer, cleaner world, there is something that you can do right now! The bipartisan “Vehicle and Fuel Choices for American Security Act” has been introduced in both the House and the Senate in order to lower America's dependence on foreign oil, while also reducing America's production of greenhouse gases. It would impose a national oil savings requirement, provide federal incentives for the production of energy efficient vehicles, increase fuel choices in the transportation sector, and take other measures to promote energy independence. Please contact Senator Feinstein to urge her support for S 2025, and ask Congresswoman Jane Harman to support HR 4409. It is clear that we must act to save our economy, our children's future, and our planet!

Senator Dianne Feinstein  
331 Hart Office Bldg  
Washington, DC 20510  
310 – 914 -7300

Congresswoman Jane Harman  
229 Cannon House Office Bldg  
Washington, DC 20515  
310 – 643 3636



*President's Column, continued from page 2*

read this article, mine has now touched yours. So please, when you sponsor the PV/South Bay Audubon Birdathon this year, please support at least two teams: one working locally, and one globally. I believe the world is just big enough for us not to see how small it really is. On April 29, Kevin Larson and I (and our usual crew, I presume—they haven't been informed about it yet!) will try to set a new record for birds seen in his "article-circle" territory, and in the process, help Dr. Csogo replace his aging mist nets and set aside areas of unique natural habitat in perpetuity.

It's the least we spoiled birders and spoiled birds can do for our cousins-in-need overseas!



## Robins

It is a wintry day--  
dull skies and a bitter wind  
scattering the littering leaves  
as the dead straw stalks stir;  
shades of green grass and flower.

All day, wild flurries blow  
over the frigid landscape  
and into the skeletal trees;  
but not of snow, or rain--robins  
are traveling up the valley.

Bright robins, in their loose flocks,  
gust from the air, settle and go.  
Right now, alert in a terminal oak,  
a dozen passengers take ten,  
all of their tickets marked spring.

--Jess Morton

## THESE BOOKS ARE FOR THE BIRDS!

by Allen Franz

The University of California Press has come out with two new books that should be of direct interest to many Audubon members: *Introduction to California Birdlife*, by Jules Evens, and *Introduction to Birds of the Southern California Coast*, by Joan Easton Lentz.

*California Birdlife* takes an original approach to our state's birds. Instead of the usual catalog of species organized by taxonomic family and genus, Evens breaks the state into seven bioregions—the marine environment, shorelines, the Coast Ranges, the Central Valley and Delta, mountains and foothills, and deserts—and then describes birdlife within each bioregion. In the discussion he describes habitat types, critical features, edges and ecotones, and taxonomic issues. A number of interesting topics, such as the history and impact of the brown-headed cowbird, are addressed in special boxes in the text. The 382-page volume is illustrated with 150 color photographs, as well as several maps. Addenda include a checklist of California birds, a glossary of technical terms, references, and two indexes.

Of even greater potential interest locally, *Birds of the Southern California Coast* begins with a detailed overview of the ecology of the coastal strip and the coastal niches occupied by birds. It then describes bird species using the conventional taxonomic approach, beginning with water birds (ducks and geese, loons, grebes, etc.) and ending with terrestrial species (wood-warblers, sparrows, blackbirds and orioles, etc.). After enumerating the range of bird species, the book proceeds to a 45-page summary of birding sites along the coast, including maps and directions. The Southern Los Angeles County section includes descriptions of El Dorado Park and Nature Center, the Los Angeles River, Point Fermin Park, White Point, Ocean Trails, and Point Vicente. Addenda to the 316-page book include a helpful set of seasonal occurrence bar graphs, a shorebird sizing chart, guidelines for gull identification, suggested readings, and two indexes. The book is well-illustrated with color photographs, line drawings, and maps.

Both books are available in affordably priced soft-cover editions as additions to the UC Press' wonderful series of California Natural History Guides (numbers 83 and 84). For those who are patient, Kimball Garrett and Larry Allen's Los Angeles County Breeding Bird Atlas is scheduled to be published later this year!

# CHAPTER GET-TOGETHERS

In April and May, the Chapter is hosting two outstanding speakers in its Chapter Get-Togethers.

On April 25, Bill Brand, from the South Bay Parkland Conservancy, will discuss the ups and downs of organizing and planning a movement to acquire land and build a coastal wetland park at the old Edison power plant site in Redondo Beach. He will answer questions from the audience and take comments regarding the process of acquisition.

On May 23, Jess Morton, extraordinary naturalist familiar with all the flora and fauna native to the South Bay, will present the bugs and spiders of the area in colorful detail with insights on how to better observe the smallest wild creatures.

The coming months will bring other interesting speakers and events. Here is the line-up for the rest of the year:

- June:** Phil Barnes on Albatross, flying without flapping,
- July:** Lisa Fimiani on Ballona Wetlands
- August:** No meeting.
- September:** Bernardo Alps on sea birds of the South Bay,
- October:** Connie Vadheim on backyard native plants that attract birds and butterflies,
- November:** Kimball Garrett, subject to be determined,
- December:** Holiday Party!!

The Chapter Get-Togethers begin at 7:00PM at the Madrona Marsh Nature Center. Come and socialize with friends, enjoy the bird quiz, raffle, and prizes from Wild Birds Unlimited.

### *Prop O and Harbor Park, continued from page 1*

and Echo Lake (\$39 million) totaled one-fifth of all the money available! Strong arguments for KMHRP were going to be needed.

And strong arguments the COAC got! Perhaps the most persuasive of the arguments, aside from pointing out all of our park's needs, was the depth of involvement represented by those present to advocate for KMHRP. In addition to Martin and me, who have both served on the KMHRP public advisory board on and off for more than 20 years, Joanne Valle, with an equal tenure and presently executive director of the Harbor City/Harbor Gateway Chamber of Commerce, was there to speak for the park. Our own Julie Greer and Eileen Byhower also spoke well, as did a number of other proponents representing a diversity of backgrounds, including the Council Office, city neighborhood councils, the KMHRP Public Advisory Board and various city agencies.

Stay tuned!



*Hummin'* is published six times per year by the Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon Society. Authors' opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Society. Send articles and suggestions to MLeoWeber@aol.com.

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For back issues and chapter info, go to [www.LMconsult.com/pvaudubon](http://www.LMconsult.com/pvaudubon)

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## Meet Learn Enjoy Restore

*For directions and contact information, see  
Calendar Locations and Information Box below.*

Sunday, April 2, 8:00am: Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden, 26300 Crenshaw Bl., Palos Verdes. Leader: Stephanie Bryan, a NEW LEADER. (Ollie Coker is retiring, and looks forward to joining the group just as a "birder.") Charge for nonmembers of the SCBG Foundation, and you can join at the entrance.

Wednesday, April 5, 7:00pm: Spring Bird Class with Eric and Ann Brooks, at South Coast Botanic Garden.

Saturday, April 8, 9-11:30am: Nature Walk at Peacock Flat/Portuguese Bend, sponsored by the PVP Land Conservancy. Park along the street at the south end of Crenshaw Blvd., near Del Cerro Park in RPV.

Wednesday, April 12, 8:00am: Bird Walk at Madrona Marsh with Bob Shanman.

Saturday, April 15, 8:00am: Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park Walk with Martin Byhower.

Wednesday, April 19, 8:00am: Bird Walk at South

Coast Botanic Garden. Leader: Georgene Foster.

Saturday, April 22, 3:30pm: Audubon Earth Day Awards at Cabrillo Marine Aquarium. Supper will be served. See article on Earth Day Audubon Awards.

Tuesday, April 25, 7:00pm: Audubon Monthly Get-Togethers featuring **Bill Brand**, talking about plans for a new park at the Redondo Beach waterfront. Come and socialize with friends, enjoy the bird quiz, raffle and prizes from Wild Birds Unlimited. At Madrona Marsh.

Friday - Sunday, April 28 - 30: Field Trip to Salton Sea, Morongo, and Joshua Tree with Eric and Ann Brooks.

Saturday, April 29: The Chapter's three birdathons. (See Birdathon article for more.)

Sunday, May 7, 8:00am: Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden. Leader: Stephanie Bryan.

Wednesday, May 10, 8:00am: Bird Walk at Madrona Marsh.

Saturday, May 13, 9-11:30am: Nature Walk at White Point Preserve, sponsored by PVP Land Conservancy. Park on the preserve, enter through gate on Paseo del Mar between Western and Weymouth Ave. in San Pedro.

Saturday, May 13, 10am-noon: Habitat for Hummingbirds, native plants to attract hummingbirds to your garden. Class at Madrona Marsh. 310-782-3989.

Wednesday, May 17, 8:00am: Bird Walk At South Coast Botanic Garden. Leader: Georgene Foster.

Saturday, May 20, 7:30am: Birdwalk in Forrestal Canyon, via Pt. Vicente Fishing Access, and more... with Martin Byhower. Meet in the Pt. Vicente Fishing Access lot, accessible only from southbound PV Drive South just past the Pt. Vicente Interpretive Center and lighthouse.

Saturday, May 20, 8:30am-1:00pm: Energy Fair, Pacific Unitarian Church, sponsored by Environmental Priorities Network. For details, contact Lillian Light at 310-545-1384.

Tuesday, May 23, 7:00pm: Audubon Monthly Get-Togethers featuring **Jess Morton** with his fabulous photos of spiders and other critters in the South Bay. Come and socialize with friends, enjoy the bird quiz, raffle and prizes from Wild Birds Unlimited. At Madrona Marsh.

Saturday, June 10: EPN sponsored Solar Homes Tour. Sign up with Lillian Light, 310-545-1384, by May 20.

# CALENDAR

### MEETING LOCATIONS AND INFORMATION SOURCES

George F Canyon Preserve: 27305 Palos Verdes Drive East, Rolling Hills Estates. Southwest corner of Palos Verdes Drive East and Palos Verdes Drive North.

Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park: Harbor City, parking lot near the intersection of Anaheim St. and Vermont, west of the 110 Fwy.

Madrona Marsh Preserve: 3201 Plaza del Amo, Torrance. Between Maple and Madrona Avenues.

South Coast Botanic Garden: 26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes.

Eric and Ann Brooks organize birding classes in the South Bay and field trips throughout the region and statewide. Contact them directly for details: motmots@aol.com.

Martin Byhower also provides guided field trips. While Martin is redesigning his website at <http://birdingsocal.com>, contact him at [avitropic@sbcglobal.net](mailto:avitropic@sbcglobal.net).

Palos Verdes Land Conservancy sponsors walks and other activities on the peninsula. For information, consult their website at <http://www.pvplc.org/>, or contact them by email at [info@pvplc.org](mailto:info@pvplc.org) or by telephone at 310-541-7613.

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Programs: John Nieto.....544-2714

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**HELP NEEDED!**

**Audubon YES!:** Contacts with South Bay schools and teen youth groups are wanted. If you are a teacher looking for extra-credit opportunities for your students, or if you are an adult advisor to a teen group looking for volunteer activities, become an active part of Audubon YES!, our Youth Environmental Service program. Audubon wants to work with you and your kids! For more information, call Jess Morton at 310 832-5601 or visit us online at [www.AudubonYES.org](http://www.AudubonYES.org)

The Chapter also would welcome **two volunteers** to assist with membership and outreach for the Chapter. If this opportunity seems attractive to you, please contact Frances at [frances@monolake.org](mailto:frances@monolake.org).

Pick up postage-paid envelopes at Wild Birds Unlimited at PCH and Crenshaw to **recycle your HP or Lexmark Inkjet cartridges**. For each cartridge sent in these envelopes, \$2.50 is donated to our Chapter or to South Bay Wildlife Rehab. This is a great way to reduce waste and to support your favorite organizations.