



HUMMIN'

PALOS VERDES/SOUTH BAY AUDUBON SOCIETY

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PROPOSITION O PROMISES NEW LIFE FOR HARBOR PARK

By Martin Byhower

Local history was made on February 21 when the Los Angeles City Council unanimously approved a \$117 million package of water quality improvements and habitat restoration at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park and the Wilmington Drain. Remarkably, this is and will likely remain the largest project to be funded under \$500 million approved by voters for water quality improvement projects.

Your PV/South Bay Audubon Chapter is among the few who recognized the tremendous ecological, recreational, and educational potential of this long-neglected area years ago and has made its preservation and enhancement a top priority. This is undoubtedly the biggest day for Harbor Park since 1953 when, after five years of hard work and advocacy, Izaak Walton League activist and visionary Ken Malloy was rewarded to see the city of Los Angeles dedicate Bixby Slough as Harbor Regional Park. If Ken were around today, he would be equally pleased to see that the park that now bears his name is finally going to get the type of restoration, management and appreciation that he had in mind!

One critical feature of the proposed improvements is that they finally link Lake Machado (Harbor Lake) with the Wilmington Drain, the Lake's historic natural source of water. In addition, the improvements will improve and restore the sensitive willow-riparian habitat at the north end of the park and the degraded seasonal freshwater wetlands south of the lake. The quality of water in the Drain and Lake ecosystems will be improved even before it enters either, and additionally once it resides in and moves between them.

UPCOMING CHAPTER GET-TOGETHERS

The Chapter has organized Third Tuesday Get-Togethers for April 17, May 15, June 19, and July 16 at 7:00PM at the Madrona Marsh Preserve. Besides listening to the speakers, you can participate in a bird quiz and raffle, with prizes from Wild Birds Unlimited.

Our April speaker is Tony Baker, of water wise native plant gardening. Tony is a rare plant expert with the California Native Plant Society and an accomplished landscape designer who uses native plants in his color full designs. Tony designed the Native Plant Garden around the Madrona Marsh Nature Center, and is in charge of keeping the new native plant garden at the Point Vicente Interpretive Center looking wonderful.

In May, Chapter Co-President Martin Byhower will speak about Prop "O" and Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park. Martin will share with us the plans and designs for a new look for Machado Lake and the Wilmington Drain. Listen as Martin explores the possibilities of the next ten years of restoration of the South Bay's remnant of pre-historic wetlands that once stretched from Long Beach to Redondo Beach.

In June, Mary Freeman will detail the habitat and conditions that keep the Northern saw-whet owl of the Angeles Crest viable, and in July, Dr. Jon Feenstra will provide insights into the great birding in the Southern California Bight.

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Martin Byhower

“Tell me what you want, what you really, really want.”
-The Spice Girls

As Chapter Co-president Fran Spivy-Weber told me recently, we must be doing something right! Over 120 people attended a recent monthly chapter meeting and were enraptured by Kiwi Donovan's presentation. We have (at last count) four very well qualified new board nominees. You are about to check this newsletter to see if your membership has expired or, if you are not a member, how to join, and then do so! Our monthly trips have been smashing successes, whether it was viewing



Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows at the Seal Beach Naval Weapons Station, or a Winter Wren and Plumbeous Vireo at Harbor Park, or a Burrowing Owl at White Point on my recent trips, or great birds on our outhtr trip leaders' outings. We are now unleashing an exciting new Audubon at Home program, Our fearless leader Jess Morton has advanced to the National Board of Audubon,

and then...there is Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park! I will stop for a few minutes to savor the victory, but I will never become complacent about it.

If you have been reading Hummin' for a while, you might remember when I penned depressing articles like "Harbor Lake is Dying". You may have even started skipping over our Harbor Park articles—one month hopeful, then next full of dashed hopes and regrouped cheerleading. Certainly, there have been plenty of reasons to abandon the frustrating place over the years, and my own sometimes-quixotic efforts on behalf of the park have at times been met with everything from anger and annoyance to bemusement and annoyance. Even recently, there were those unhappy that I even suggested that a trans-continentially transported skunk not be dumped at the park. I was the guy who infuriated the DLL (Duck Lover's Lobby) by opposing the feeding of the feral ducks at the park, and you wouldn't believe the flak I took for suggesting that the presence (and now ironically, absence) of Reggie the Alligator might end up

doing more good than harm! My views opposing traditional mosquito abatement practices at the park made me a pariah with the GLACVCD (too long an acronym to even spell out). Hey, maybe I wasn't always right about these things, or at least I could have handled them better. But in my life on this planet, I think I have learned a thing or two about the value of presentation vs. content and, more importantly, timing.

Most people weren't ready or willing to listen to and act upon the issue of global warming when we were shouting about it 25 years ago, and now it is too late. It isn't even that we were shouting, it was how and what we were shouting. Fast forward: How, with a brief sound bite, do you inform people who love feeding ducks that at Polliwog Park, with re-circulating water and a concrete perimeter it may ok but at shallow eutrophic Harbor Park, it is ultimately deadly both for wildlife and the ducks you are feeding? How do you explain, when popular DJ's, politicians and Chamber of Commerce folks are gaining publicity and think they are serving wildlife by dumping a skunk at Harbor Park that it sends a terrible message, that skunks are overpopulated mesopredators and we already have a full house at the park, and that the poor animal has little chance of making it without disrupting wildlife or getting itself killed due to its disorientation in an unfamiliar setting?

So, where am I going with all this? Not, as you may expect, to rest on some 'I told you so' laurels. There is no joy in having been right when a wrong outcome is the result. That is why we need your support and participation in the upcoming Harbor Park effort. And you need to know what is going on if we are going to prevent the process from becoming bogged down in well intentioned but misinformed debate over what and how the Park should be.

One example: there is a proposal for a designated off-leash dog area in the public Wilmington Drain area, as part of the Prop O water quality projects. Already, I am hearing rumblings about the problems and irrelevance of a "dog park." What many don't realize is that, currently, local residents bring their dogs and allow them to run out of control, even into the existing channel. It isn't hard to figure out how dog feces contributes to impaired water quality downstream. Free running dogs would also disrupt any native plantings on the banks of the reconfigured channel or scare children using the play areas. Yet some of the locals will undoubtedly resent being told to leash their pets, or even worse, stop bringing them to their traditional recreation site.

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HAIRSTREAK

By Jess Morton

The summer sun had cleared the hills behind me. Filtered through morning's low clouds, the light was diffuse, almost dull. San Pedro's White Point Nature Preserve was glorious, though. The habitat restoration of the last few years has taken hold. Sagebrush, bladderpod, goldenbush and other native plants are thriving, foretelling the treasure house of natural open space White Point will become.

What struck me most about this scene, however, was the prevalence of triangular gray shapes scattered over the sagebrush. Two or three here, one there. And here, and here. A few plants with none at all, but all of the shapes standing erect above the feathery sinuosity of the sagebrush leaves. Petal like—but not flower parts at all. These were butterflies. Gray hairstreaks.

There must have been hundreds of them, taken together. Now that I realized what they were, I could make them out all across the field. A few perched on other plants, too, but the great majority was on sagebrush. Perhaps the gray-green coloration, broken texture and/or odd chemical property of the sagebrush's dry-tolerant summer leaves lent protection to the butterflies. And now, in the early light of morning, they had all emerged from their nighttime hides to begin warming up for the day's activities. For certainly, the hairstreaks would have to fly elsewhere to feed.

Gray hairstreaks are one of our most common and widespread butterflies. You will have them in your yard, regularly if you have plantings of buckwheat and mallows. They belong to the Lycaenidae, a family of butterflies that includes the blues, elfins and hairstreaks. They are perhaps an inch and a quarter from wingtip to wingtip, dark gray above and light gray below. At times, though, they can appear to be blue butterflies—given the right light. Gray hairstreaks have a variety of orange markings, too—at the tip of the antenna, top of the head, on the abdomen (in males), and in a long line parallel to the edge of the wing undersides.

Projecting backwards from the edge of the hind wing, there is a long filament, at the base of which is an orange "eye" spot. When perched, the gray hairstreak often rubs its hind wings against each other. It is generally claimed that this behavior calls a predator's attention to the wrong end of the butterfly while it is vulnerable. The "antenna" of the filament and "eye" spot make the end of the wing appear to be the head of the insect, a much better target



for a predator than the real head—at least from the butterfly's point of view.

I do wonder about this explanation, however. Why call attention to yourself at all by rubbing wings together? Surely, the false head will have its protective effect, even if the gray hairstreak doesn't give its, "Hey, folks! Over here," wing-rubbing display. Perhaps there is another more important function to this motion, say, for mating (there are several broods a year), or possibly even as a deterrent to attack by making it appear that the butterfly is paying attention, when it is busy doing something else.

Whatever the reason, the wing-rubbing is characteristic, making gray hairstreaks easily identifiable at a distance. True, other species also do this, but not so commonly, especially by the butterflies in your yard. In flight, hairstreaks move erratically and rapidly, making them hard for the eye to follow. But have patience. The butterfly will land and signal, "Over here."

The larvae feed on mallows (cheeseweed, hibiscus) and pea family plants, among others. They may even be a bit of a pest in bean fields, something long gone from the South Bay. But luckily for us, we still have the hairstreaks. And they will brighten your day, just as they did mine on that dull summer morning at White Point.

BIRDS OF THE PENINSULA

January and February 2007

by Kevin Larson

This winter was spectacular! Numerous rarities contributed to a diverse bird list. From the beginning of December through the end of February, we recorded an impressive 232 species in this article's coverage area, 213 of which were in the Palos Verdes Peninsula count circle. What went undiscovered in all those places that received little or no coverage? We did very well to root out an amazing number of winter birds by the end of 2006. Surprises included a Marbled Murrelet, a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, an Eastern Phoebe, a Townsend's Solitaire, and an American Redstart, which came in the New Year. Common Goldeneyes, Horned Grebes, Brown Creepers, Winter Wrens, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Western Bluebirds, and Varied Thrushes made a good showing this winter. On the down side, shore-bound observers training telescopes at sea found pelagic species such as shearwaters and alcids in less impressive variety and numbers than in recent winters. Our "winter" avifauna generally stays in place until March or April, but a few early northbound migrants—such as a Turkey Vulture over Lawndale on 24 Jan and a few Cinnamon Teals at Pt. Vicente on 27 Jan—come well before the word "spring" is in the mind of the local birder. Small numbers of migrant swallows were also on the move by the second week of February.

Very unusual weather during the first two months of 2007 included temperature extremes and a continuing paucity of rainfall. A few days after temperatures in the mid-eighties set record highs 8-9 Jan, a cold air mass brought record lows in the mid-thirties to LAX 13-14 Jan. A frozen pond at the South Coast Botanic Garden on 13 Jan, and snow in West Los Angeles and Malibu on 17 Jan were strange sights during mid-January's cold snap. High temperature records came again on 5 Feb and 17 Feb during offshore flow events, which recurred during the period. Rain came from several low-pressure systems, but in very small amounts. By the end of February, the 2.18 inches of rainfall for the season (1 Jul-30 Jun) at LAX was running at only twenty-two percent of the normal value of 9.80 inches.

Wood Duck sightings included a continuing female at Averill Park in San Pedro 13 Nov-13 Jan (Mary

Forgione), a female at Harbor Park (HP) on 27 Jan (Kevin Larson-KL), and a male at Alondra Park on 27 Jan (KL). A Black Scoter flew south past Pt. Vicente on 18 Feb (KL). Up to three Common Goldeneyes were in the Ballona area 26 Jan-2 Mar (Richard Barth-RB), and four continued at the L. A. River (LAR) in Long Beach 30 Dec-10 Feb (KL). A female Hooded Merganser was at Trump National Golf Club (TNGC) on 6 Jan (KL), and up to three continued at the Ballona Freshwater Marsh through at least 4 Mar. A female **Common Merganser** at HP 19 Jan-10 Feb (Rusty Scalf) may have been the same individual seen at the South Coast Botanic Garden (SCBG) 23-24 Dec. An American White Pelican was at Earvin Magic Johnson Recreation Area (EMJRA) on 13 Jan (Martin Byhower-MB).

An American Bittern along the dam at HP thrilled participants of MB's bird walk on 21 Jan; a second bird, separable by plumage, was at the north end of the lake on 27 Jan (MB, KL). Two White-faced Ibises were at the WALTERIA Sump on 23 Dec (Eric and Ann Brooks); one of the birds remained through at least 21 Jan, providing a rare winter record. A Black-legged Kittiwake flew north past Pt. Vicente on 20 Jan (KL) and another was on the jetty at the mouth of Ballona Creek on 23 Feb (Barbara G. Johnson). A **Marbled Murrelet** at Dockweiler State Beach 29-30 Jan is only the third area sighting in the past ten years (Jon Feenstra). Alcid species were hard to come by at Pt. Vicente, but single Rhinoceros Auklets were recorded on four dates during January and February (KL).

A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** at Polliwog Park 16-17 Feb was a great winter find (RB). A male Red-naped Sapsucker continued at Polliwog Park 17 Nov-21 Jan (RB), and a female was discovered at Ernie Howlett Park 4-11 Feb (KL). An adult male Rufous Hummingbird



Horned Grebe
(Bernardo Alps)



Brown Creeper
(Donna Dewhurst, USFWS)

at Bob Shanman's feeder in Manhattan Beach on **26 Jan** was evidently an early northbound migrant. An **Eastern Phoebe** photographed in the canyon below Peck Park in San Pedro 2-13 Jan (David Ellsworth) was likely the individual that spent two consecutive winters at this location after discovery on 25 Dec 2001. Plumbeous Vireo reports were of the continuing bird at HP 10 Dec-27 Jan (David Bell) and a newly-discovered individual at Alondra Park on 22 Jan (David Moody-DM).

A Red-breasted Nuthatch at Wilderness Park 20 Sep-16 Feb was a returning winterer (DM); three in Rolling Hills 7-20 Jan were continuing residents (KL). A remarkable movement of Brown Creepers into the lowlands this winter included singles in Rolling Hills 29 Dec-20 Jan (DM), at Peck Park on 13 Jan (Andrew Lee), at Angel's Gate Park 4-11 Feb (KL), and in Torrance on 5 Mar (Linda Gonzales). Winter Wrens were present in above average numbers again this winter, the first being recorded in Palos Verdes Estates on 23 Dec (Jim Pike); three different individuals were along the canyon bottoms of Rolling Hills 31 Dec-20 Jan (KL), one was at HP 19-21 Jan (Pat Heirs et al), and another turned up at TNGC in mid-January (Bob Beckler).

Western Bluebird sightings continue to increase in our area; observations included five flying over Torrance on 3 Jan (KL), one at Malaga Cove on 8 Jan (DM), eight near the Crest Road gate at the western edge of Rolling Hills on 28 Jan (MB), and four at Ernie Howlett Park on 4 Feb (KL). The pair of Mountain Bluebirds seen intermittently at Madrona Marsh in late December and early January was found to the east on an athletic field south of Wilson Park on 4 Feb (DM). A **Townsend's Solitaire** in Rolling Hills 20-28 Jan is only the third found

on the peninsula since 1984 (KL). Varied Thrushes were reported at Sand Dune Park, Alondra Park, SCBG, and in Rolling Hills during the period. Scarce in recent winters, a Phainopepla was in the canyon below Peck Park 6-13 Jan (KL).

A Nashville Warbler at SCBG on 11 Feb was the only one found this winter (KL). The male Yellow Warbler that spent the previous four winters at EMJRA did not return, but a female-type individual was discovered there on 13 Jan (KL); other winterers in the area included at least two at HP, and one along LAR at the PCH crossing. A Hermit Warbler at SCBG on 28 Jan was the third found in the PV count circle this winter (KL). Noted 6-13 Jan, a male Black-and-white Warbler at Peck Park had returned for its second winter (KL). An American Redstart was a surprising find at EMJRA 13 Jan-24 Feb (MB). One Summer Tanager continued at SCBG 9 Dec-21 Feb; possibly two were there on 21 Feb (MB, Stephanie Bryan). Up to two Summer Tanagers were at DeForest Park 4 Nov-14 Jan (KL, MB). A stunning male Lawrence's Goldfinch was at TNGC on 3 Feb (KL).

Following is a summary of continuing winterers found late in 2006. A number of these birds will remain into March or April. The last date may be extended with further observations, but observer coverage is normally insufficient to determine the length of every bird's stay. For more details, such as the finding observer, refer to the previous issue of Hummin'. Greater White-fronted Goose—25 Oct-13 Jan EMJRA; Ross's Goose—10 Dec-17 Feb Polliwog Park; Cattle Egret—up to three 27 Dec-24 Feb EMJRA; Northern Harrier—8 Nov-4 Mar

Continued on page 8



Golden-crowned Kinglet
(Donna Dewhurst, USFWS)

CONSERVATION CORNER

By Lillian Light

Once the decision has been made to reduce the most devastating consequences of climate change, reducing energy use is the fastest and most cost-effective way to control global warming pollution. The scientific community has concluded that burning fossil fuels – oil, coal, and natural gas – to power our cars, homes, and electrical generating plants is causing an



inexorable rise in the world's temperature. This warming of the planet by heat-trapping emissions poses a serious threat to our health, safety, and environment.

The Environmental Priorities Network is organizing its second annual Energy Fair to promote public awareness about the causes and

impacts of climate change, and to inform Palos Verdes and Beach Cities residents how to use less gasoline and electricity even while they save money and gain convenience. The fair will take place on May 5, 2007, at the Pacific Unitarian Church, 5621 Montemalaga Drive in Rancho Palos Verdes. Registration will start at 8:30AM, and at 9:00 AM, Jan Kidwell will speak about why saving energy must be every consumer's highest priority if we are to protect our world from the dire effects of greenhouse gas pollution. For several years Ms Kidwell has been working on air quality, global warming, and energy issues.

The panel discussion that follows will feature three speakers. Brad Bartz, who has been a solar installer since 2000, will discuss solar panel installations and the good rebates, tax writeoffs, and discounts that are now available. Marilyn Lyon, the director of the South Bay Energy Savings Center, will cover many quick and easy ways of saving energy ranging from appliances to light bulbs. You will be able to pick up a complementary compact fluorescent bulb at her booth. Dency Nelson, whose ecological home was a highlight of last year's Solar Homes Tour, will discuss hybrid and electric

vehicles, as well as energy saving alternative fuels. Workshops on some of these issues are also being planned, and visitors will be encouraged to sign up for the June 16th Solar Homes Tour.

From 10:30 AM to 3:00 PM, twenty-five or more suppliers of technology promoting ecology will display their wares, and will explain how they can help you to save energy and protect our planet. Vendors who have expressed interest include energy saving architects, builders of electric cars, electric motorbikes, biodiesel and vegetable oil vehicles as well as solar panel installers that produce electricity or hot water. Information about the ease and advantages of public transportation will be available, and cargo and commuter bicycles and gasoline scooters will be displayed. Lunch will be available for purchase on site from 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM.

The Pacific Unitarian Church Social Justice Committee, the South Coast Interfaith Council, and the South Bay Energy Center are cosponsors of this important event. A \$5.00 donation is very much appreciated, but no one will be turned away. For more information about the Energy Fair or the Solar Homes Tour on June 16th, please contact Lillian Light at 310 – 545 1384, lklight@verizon.net or David Dutra at 310 – 530 0846, dutra_david@hotmail.com. Much information is available on the EPN website: www.southbayenergyfair.com.

A Guide to the Birds of Harbor Park

Chapter Conservation Award Winner Mitch Heindel has produced a guide to the birds of Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park that avid birders will certainly want to carry with them as they explore the birdlife of the South Bay. In a little more than 40 pocket-sized pages, *The Birds of Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park* provides background on the park and efforts to save it, park habitats, a comprehensive bird list together with abundance and season codes. At \$5.75, the guide is a terrific bargain, especially given the author's extraordinary knowledge of one of California's great birding areas. The guide is available at Bob Shanman's Wild Birds Unlimited in Torrance, as well as on Mitch's website www.utopianature.com/kmhrp/birdsofkmhrpbk.html.

YOUR BACKYARD HABITAT

Small-flower Melic Grass (*Melica imperfecta*)

by Dr. Connie Vadheim



The notion of grasses as home habitat plants may surprise you. We're so used to mown lawns that we don't appreciate the natural life cycle of the grasses and their importance to other species. The recent interest in drought-resistant 'ornamental grasses' has focused primarily on grasses from other places. Our native perennial grasses are every bit as 'ornamental' while

providing better habitat for local insects, birds & other animals. They are also uniquely suited for our own South Bay climate.

Small-flowered Melic Grass (*Melica imperfecta*) is a personal favorite. Melic Grass, a perennial bunch-grass, is commonly found in dry, rocky-sandy places from northern California to Baja. It even grows on coastal dunes; so, sandy soils are not a problem. Like all grasses, Melic Grass provides cover for ground-utilizing species, seeds for food, leaves for nesting materials and food for the larva of Skipper butterflies. Plant this grass and enjoy watching the number of species it attracts!



Melica is a medium sized bunch grass, forming a mound one to two feet tall and wide. The leaves are dense, graceful and fine-textured. So, this grass looks fine in a more manicured garden. The color is grass-green during the growing season (fall through spring). You can give it occasional summer water to keep it green or let it turn a natural tawny gold in a summer-dry garden.

California's native bunch grasses are quite easy to garden with. They are happy in a range of local soils, from clays to sands. Melic Grass looks best in filtered sunlight or with afternoon shade, so it's useful for planting under trees. It does fine with occasional summer water—even once a week in sandy soils. You don't need to fertilize it; just cut back the dead leaves in fall every other year or so with hand clippers. Let Melic grass go to seed (the seeds are quite beautiful) to provide food for birds. Melic will reseed itself, but is not invasive.

Our native bunchgrasses are attractive additions to the home landscape. They make good groundcovers, even under trees, and add texture to mixed flower/shrub beds. Since Melic is a neat looking grass, it's useful for lining walkways, in narrow beds, or on a parking strip. It also does well on slopes and hillsides, where its roots stabilize the soil. You can even grow it in a container! So, why not give Melic Grass a try in your garden?

For more information on growing and purchasing this plant visit the Madrona Marsh Nature Center. You can also learn about local native plants at the "Out of the Wilds and into Your Garden" series on the first Saturday of each month at the Center.



Birds of the Peninsula, continued from 5

Ballona Wetland; Lesser Yellowlegs—25 Nov-6 Jan LAR Long Beach; Rock Sandpiper—22 Nov-6 Feb Playa del Rey; Glaucous Gull—21 Dec-14 Jan LAR Long Beach; Burrowing Owl—16 Nov-3 Feb Ballona Wetland; Western Flycatcher—17 Dec-14 Jan SCBG and 30 Dec-14 Jan DeForest Park; Vermilion Flycatcher—5 Oct-14 Jan EMJRA; Thick-billed Kingbird—4 Nov-3 Mar Banning Park; Bell's Vireo—24 Sep-18 Feb DeForest Park; Mountain Chickadee—two 23 Dec-20 Jan Rolling Hills; White-breasted Nuthatch—29 Dec-28 Jan Rolling Hills; Brown Thrasher—4 Nov-3 Mar Harbor Park; Northern Parula—7 Dec-18 Jan Wilson Park; Palm Warbler—1 Nov-18 Jan Madrona Marsh, 7 Dec-18 Feb King Harbor, and 24 Dec-21 Jan Walteria Sump; White-throated Sparrow—up to two 17 Nov-4 Jan Sand Dune Park and 29 Oct-14 Jan DeForest Park; Orchard Oriole—9 Dec-25 Feb SCBG; Baltimore Oriole—17 Dec-28 Jan SCBG.

Thanks to all who reported sightings during the period. Please send your sightings to me at cbirdr@ca.rr.com 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.

Acronyms in Birds of the Peninsula

DM: David Moody
 EMJRA: Earvin Magic Johnson Recreation Area
 HP: Harbor Park
 KL: Kevin Larson
 LAR: Los Angeles River
 MB: Martin Byhower
 RB: Richard Barth
 SCBG: South Coast Botanic Garden
 TNGC: Trump National Golf Club

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President's Column, continued from page 2

My experience tells me that humans tend to have entitlement issues and resist any change they perceive as inconvenient. As co-founder of the Redondo Beach Dog Park, I assure you that designated off leash areas are a great solution to street pollution while contributing to the happy socialization of a lot of dogs and people. Moreover, they build a self-enforcing culture of appropriate use.

Clearly, Lake Machado is not the place to dump unwanted pets or feed wild (or feral) animals, but I fear there will be voices saying otherwise. Some folks remember snack bars and commercial paddleboat operators renting boats lakeside. While fishing will become an acceptable public activity at the park, most boating will likely not. For one, it is unlikely that the required lifeguard services will occur at the park any time soon. Although water quality may improve, and canoeing or kayaking for the purpose of cleaning up trash or carefully and quietly observing wildlife may become a possibility, a commercial free-for-all circus of entertainment options at the park is not on the table. In fact, the existing proposals allow for ample, multiple uses at the park, but cool informed heads need to prevail, or the process could become bogged and we won't live to see the money spent at our park while it still has any adjusted-for-inflation value!

We need your voice in the upcoming months to help us achieve the most effective bang for the buck at the park in the least amount of time. There will certainly be serious planning issues to debate, but let's focus on the correct ones and have the conversation be productive. Come to our monthly meeting, our walks, our board meetings, or simply watch this space to see how you can become a part of the solution, for if you don't, you run the risk of having nothing but the empty pleasure of saying "I told you so."



Red-tailed Hawk
(Jess Morton)

Harbor Park, continued from page 1

Proposed projects include innovative trash capture methods, mechanical and biological pre-treatment of water entering the system, recirculation of water between some areas, an aeration system, "daylighting" of storm drain water sources and more. The goal is to allow natural processes to augment mechanical ones in purifying the water, most of which arrives after draining the 20-square-mile urban watershed surrounding the lake.

Dredging the lake will be the most costly project and will need to be monitored closely. Making the lake deeper will help oxygenate the water, preventing shallow water eutrophic ("fish kill") events, while restoring better circulation and water flow, thereby eliminating many of the mosquito-related issues at the Park. However, the presence of toxic substances in the lake bottom requires great caution. I believe that a wise approach in terms of costs, risks, and ecological impacts would be to plan to sequester dredged sediments in sausage-like encasements, then use these as the foundation for nesting islands in the lake.

Modification of the dammed area where water enters the park from the drain underneath Pacific Coast Highway as well as removal of non-native vegetation in the northern portion of the park will allow greater natural flow across the remnant "north end willows" habitat area. This area, currently plagued by trash, homeless encampments, feral animals and stagnant water, might once again become a haven both for endangered wildlife species and for those who wish to safely observe them. Residents adjacent to the Wilmington Drain, which is just north of the willows but which suffers many of the same problems, are likely to be thrilled to see reductions in trash and illegal use of the area, native plantings and picnic areas, and even perhaps a designated off-leash area for their pets.

The Wilmington Drain work has received additional funding under the statewide Proposition 50; as a consequence, work there is likely to begin in 2008. Work in the park is slated to begin in 2010, barring unforeseen delays.

There is something for everyone in the new projects. The Port of Los Angeles, not to mention local marine life, will benefit from significantly improved water. All appropriate recreational opportunities at the Park will be preserved and made safer and more pleasant, while many new areas will become accessible. .

Management of the Prop O projects will now shift from the LA Bureau of Sanitation to the Engineering division. The latter will hold a series of public meetings during the current pre-planning stages, and there will be opportunities for more public input during the planning stages.

A planned storm drain improvement project at the corner of Pacific Coast Highway and Vermont will lead to

removal of day labor center in the northwest portion of the park from park property. A new playground has been approved for the eastside lawn area, and the new building at the site of the old "boat house" will be opened whenever funding for telephone service is acquired. Two condominium projects are going in at the extreme southwest corner of the park. The Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Maintenance Department, under the leadership of Maintenance Supervisor Danny Hughes, has done a substantial trash and debris cleanup in the recent burn area. Thanks, Danny!

It is impossible to acknowledge all of the people who, over the years, have had the vision and determination to help us get to this point, but a few deserve mention here. These include:

- Frank O'Brien, former chair of the Harbor Park Advisory Board, who oversaw the first of many proposed Master Plans for the Park.
- Karen Bane with the California Coastal Conservancy, who coordinated revisions of the plans by various groups and got an impossibly large group of stakeholders in the same room, again and again.
- California Secretary of State Debra Bowen, who as our State Assemblywoman helped us obtain the first significant grant for studies and planning at the Park.
- Ken Malloy himself, for his vision of what the Park could and will one day be.
- The 15th Council District of the City of Los Angeles, particularly Janice Hahn's regional assistant Jacob Haik.
- The Los Angeles Recreation and Park Maintenance and Recreation Departments, who have been advocates for progress in the past but have shown a new and keen interest in making progress during recent times.
- The dedicated Los Angeles Park Rangers, who under supervisor Albert Torres have always made the best of limited resources and personnel.
- The City of Los Angeles employees who recognized the gem they managed, including David Attaway, Mike Shull, and particularly Deborah Deets, who successfully coordinated and advocated for the current proposals.
- The volunteer members of the oversight committee, who recommended that the Park and Drain receive a lion's share of Prop O monies.
- And our own long time visionaries and Park activists, Jess Morton and Mitch Heindel. To the latter two individuals, whose brilliance and dedication have inspired and informed my efforts on behalf of the Park, I humbly tip my hat and dedicate this report of very good news!

PALOS VERDES/SOUTH BAY AUDUBON DOES THREE BIRDATHONS

Please join any or all of the Chapter's birdathon teams, or make a pledge to one of the teams, and gather pledges for each species that your team(s) sees on their chosen birdathon day.

Here's how it works.

A birding team spends a day trying to identify as many species of birds as they can. If you pledge \$1.00 per species and the team sees 100 species of birds, you will be sent a list of the birds that the team saw and a request to send a check for \$100. If you wish, you can simply skip the list and encourage the team with a lump-sum check. All donations are tax deductible.

This year, the Chapter is fielding three veteran teams:

·Lillian Light and Ollie Coker will be out and about birding on **April 23**. Contact Lillian at lklight@verizon.net or 310-545-1484.

·Martin Byhower and Kevin Larson will be counting birds on **April 28**. For more information, or better yet, to pledge, contact Martin at avitropic@sbcglobal.net

·Bob Shanman and Jess Morton will be looking for more species on **May 5**. Contact Jess at jmorton@igc.org

All proceeds from the birdathon support Audubon programs for education and restoration of wildlife habitats in the region.

For Lillian and Ollie's team, please send your pledge or fixed-amount check to PV/SB Audubon, c/o Ollie and Lillian, 2807 Pine Avenue, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266.

AUDUBON AWARDS

PV/South Bay Audubon will give its annual awards this year on Saturday, April 21 at 4:00PM at Madrona Marsh Nature Preserve, 3201 Plaza del Amo in Torrance, between Maple and Madrona Aves. Please come and congratulate the following awardees:

·Conservation Award: Andrea Vona with the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy for her stellar work to restore White Point Nature Preserve.

·Education Award: Ron Libbrecht for his amazing ability to communicate with youth and adults through art.

·Youth Award: Kenny Matsui and Tyler Stock, outstanding restoration volunteers for five years at the Madrona Marsh Nature Preserve.

·Shirley Wells Lifetime Achievement Award: Jess Morton. There are no words to describe the contribution Jess has made to the South Bay environment, and now as a National Audubon Board member he will be spreading his talent nationwide.

For the other two teams, send your pledge or check to PV/SB Audubon, P.O. Box 2582, Palos Verdes, CA, Attn: Birdathon.

You may also sign up at Wild Birds Unlimited, 25416 Crenshaw Blvd., Torrance, 310-326-2473.

Thanks for your support!

GIFT & NEW MEMBER APPLICATION

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

MEMBERSHIP (*chapter only* or *national--circle one*).....\$25

(your contribution supports local programs)

and/or

GIFT\$20__\$50__\$100__Other__

TOTAL ENCLOSED..... _____

Please send me information on how to make a bequest to PV/SB Audubon.

MAKE CHECK TO: AUDUBON SOCIETY
MAIL TO: P.O. BOX 2582, PALOS VERDES, CA 90274

7XCH/C43

Meet Learn Enjoy Restore

Sunday, April 1, 8:00AM: Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden, 26300 Crenshaw Bl., Palos Verdes. Leader: Stephanie Bryan. Charge for nonmembers of the SCBG Foundation; you can join at the entrance.

Wednesday, April 11, 8:00AM: Bird Walk at Madrona Marsh with Bob Shanman.

Saturday, April 14, 9:00AM: Rattlesnake Trail on Portuguese Bend with PVP Land Conservancy. Park on street at the south end of Crenshaw Blvd. just before Del Cerro Park in RPV. Meet at pilasters west of Park.

Tuesday, April 17, 7:00PM: AUDUBON THIRD TUESDAY GET-TOGETHER: Tony Baker "Water Wise Gardening with Native Plants. Come to Madrona Marsh and socialize with friends, enjoy the bird quiz, raffle and prizes from Wild Birds Unlimited.

Wednesday, April 18, 8:00AM: Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden. Leader: Stephanie Bryan.

Saturday, April 21, 4:00PM: Audubon Awards at Madrona Marsh.

Saturday, April 21, all day: EARTH DAY Celebrations at Madrona Marsh (www.friendsofmadronamarsh.com), Cabrillo Marine Aquarium (www.cabrilloaq.org), and Pollywog Park in Manhattan Beach (call Kaye 310-9854861 for details).

MEETING LOCATIONS AND INFORMATION SOURCES

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. For updates and details on all trips, go to www.birdingsocal.com and click on "updated calendar of events."

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 or by telephone at 310-541-7613.

Sunday, April 22, 8:00AM: Del Rey Saltwater Lagoon, Marina del Rey Breakwater, and Ballona Freshwater Marsh with Martin Byhower. Travel tip—use mapquest. Imperial Hwy exit off the 405, travel along Imperial to the end, right on Vista del Mar for quite a while, angle left on Pacific Ave. at the fork where Vista del Mar crosses Culver, parking lot is 0.2 miles ahead. Bring money for meters.

Saturday, May 5, 8:30AM-3:00PM: Environmental Priorities Network South Bay Energy Fair at Pacific Unitarian Church, 5621 Montemalaga Drive, RPV. For more information contact Lillian Light at 310-545-1384 or www.southbayenergyfair.com.

Sunday, May 6, 8:00AM: Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden. Leader: Stephanie Bryan.

Wednesday, May 9, 8:00AM: Bird Walk at Madrona Marsh. Leader: Bob Shanman.

Saturday, May 12, 9:00AM: Malaga Dunes with the PVP Land Conservancy.

Park on the streets around Malaga Cove Plaza. Meet at the east end of the Via Tejon cul-de-sac.

Tuesday, May 15, 7:00PM: AUDUBON THIRD TUESDAY GET-TOGETHERS featuring Martin Byhower, "Eastern European Birding." Come and socialize with friends, enjoy the bird quiz, raffle and prizes from Wild Birds Unlimited. At Madrona Marsh Preserve.

Wednesday, May 16, 8:00AM: Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden. Leader: Stephanie Bryan.

Sunday, May 20, 8:00AM: La Canada de Los Palos Verdes (aka the Wilmington Drain) with Martin Byhower. Meet in Harbor City at the locked gate on the south side of Lomita Blvd. just east of Vermont Ave.

Sunday, June 3, 8:00AM: Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden. Leader: Stephanie Bryan.

Wednesday, June 6, 7:00PM: Audubon Board meeting at Madrona Marsh. All are welcome.

Saturday, June 9, 9:00AM: Klondike Canyon with the PVP Land Conservancy. Drive through the gate on Forrestral Drive and continue to the end. Park on the side of the road.

Wednesday, June 13, 7:00PM: PV/SoBay Audubon Board Meeting at Madrona Marsh. Members and friends are welcome to attend.

Saturday, June 16: Environmental Priorities Network Solar Homes Tour. Contact Lillian Light at 310-545-1384.

CALENDAR

PALOS VERDES/SOUTH BAY AUDUBON SOCIETY
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The Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon Society and the National Audubon Society, of which PV/SB Audubon is the local chapter, are dedicated to the understanding and preservation of our natural heritage.

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Frances Spivy-Weber, 316-0041

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Treasurer..... Jess Morton, 832-5601

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Birds & Habitat: Allen Franz.....832-1671
Conservation: Lillian Light.....545-1384
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Harbor Park: Martin Byhower.....539-0050
Programs: John Nieto.....544-2714
Membership: Vicki Peterson
Outreach: Candy Groat.....541-4932

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.Audubon YES.org

The Chapter also would welcome **two volunteers** to assist the outreach chair for the Chapter. If this opportunity seems attractive to you, please contact Frances at Frances.Weber@gmail.com.

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.