



# HUMMIN'

PALOS VERDES/SOUTH BAY AUDUBON SOCIETY JUN/JUL 2004 Vol. XXVI No.3

## Audubon Awards Achievements

Earth Day activities at the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium wound up in grand style with Audubon's Conservation Awards ceremony and reception. Bob Shanman served ably as emcee for the event, while Mike Weber provided most welcome and delicious refreshments.

This year, the Audubon Conservation Award went to Wilmington's Jesse Marquez, who has been doing outstanding work advocating for clean air and other environmental causes in the harbor region. Lillian Light made the presentation, giving a fine overview of Jesse's work, while Jesse riveted the audience with the tale of his evolution from citizen to Citizen Activist.

Assemblyman Alan Lowenthal and LA City Councilwoman Janice Hahn each received an Environmental Leadership Award for their active roles in cleaning up our environment. Lowenthal's innovative efforts to bring diesel emissions under control are especially praiseworthy, as is Hahn's championing of Harbor Park.

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*Audubon Award recipients Assemblyman Alan Lowenthal, community activist Jesse Marquez, and Councilwoman Janice Hahn.*

## MOSQUITO CONTROL

**By Martin Byhower**

*(The second of two articles.)*

Mosquitoes can be controlled at different stages of their life cycle by different methods. The use of adulticides, which are chemicals that kill adult mosquitoes, are the least effective and most hazardous and expensive method. They are generally used as a last resort. The aerial spraying of malathion in the 60's and 70's in order to control Mediterranean fruit flies by killing adult flies was a political disaster.

The use of DDT to kill adult mosquitoes was an ecological disaster as well. DDT is a hormone disruptor, which means it interferes with the reproductive system of most animal species. DDT worked well against mosquitoes at first, but their rapid reproduction time allowed mutations to occur that caused DDT-resistant mosquitoes to evolve and spread.

Since DDT is not biodegradable and is stored in the body of organisms that ingest it, it built up to toxic levels in spiders, amphibians and reptiles that ate mosquitoes. Further up the food chain, DDT had devastating effects on wildlife, especially in Southern California, which remains the most DDT-contaminated area in the world. The Los Angeles County West Vector Control District does not advocate the use of adulticides.

The least harmful way to control mosquitoes is to use *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *israelensis* (Bti) or methoprene (Altosid). Bti is a microbial agent formulated as crystalline bacterial spores. These spores are ingested by mosquito larvae and cause the cell walls of the larval digestive system to burst.

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## THE PRESIDENTS' CORNER

By Frances Spivy-Weber

As the third in PV/South Bay Audubon's trio of presidents this year, I want to thank my colleagues—Bob Shanman and Martin Byhower—the other members of the Board of Directors, and you who are seeking to appreciate and protect the environment here in the South Bay. Each of us is blessed to live in a place rich in wildlife and to be part of a culturally diverse community. These gifts shape Audubon's program.

Your chapter leaders are always interested in having more people involved. If you are interested in the chapter's program described below, please do not hesitate to contact me or anyone listed on the masthead on page 12.

Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park: Martin Byhower, Jess Morton, Kathleen Schwallie, and Kevin Larson. In the short term, the chapter is focused on keeping the Park as a high priority for the LA Department of Recreation and Parks. We raise funds, volunteer time to deal with major issues, such as West Nile virus abatement, maintain a current list of bird sightings that has been kept and published in the chapter newsletter for decades, and on the second Sunday of every month, lead public tours of the lake, wetlands and uplands. In the long term, the chapter plans to establish an Audubon Natural Heritage Center at the Park.

YES! (Youth in Environmental Service): Jess Morton, Linda Chilton, Dennis Weyrauch, Bob Shanman, Martin Byhower, Rainey Kreis, Debbie Baker. In the May 10 *Daily Breeze*, Swati Yanamadala, 13, of Palos Verdes Estates, won a first-place medal in the junior high school division of the Los Angeles County Science Fair for her research on water quality at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park. Swati is a member of Audubon's YES! program that connects students from South Bay junior high and high schools to conservation projects that need service time. (See page 1 for more information on YES! and the students who received Audubon recognition this year.)

Nature and Bird Walks: Martin Byhower, Bob Shanman, Ollie Coker, Georgene Foster, Eric and Ann Brooks. Audubon members lead monthly walks at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park, South Coast Botanic Garden, Madrona Marsh. We also publicize trips outside the South Bay with Eric and Ann Brooks. See calendar,

page 11, and contact Eric and Ann at [motmots@comcast.net](mailto:motmots@comcast.net) or 323-295-6688.

Restoration of South Bay Habitats: Jess Morton, Allen Franz, Julie Greer, Martin Byhower, Bob Carr, Bob Shanman, Bart Tendick, Linda Chilton, Liz Kennedy. While Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park is a high priority for the chapter, we ask YES! students and members to volunteer their time to help restore other important wildlife areas in the region, including Forrestal Nature Preserve, Palos Verdes Blue Butterfly habitat at the Defense Fuel Support Point in San Pedro, and Madrona Marsh.

Environmental Priorities Network (EPN): Lillian Light, Ollie Coker. Chapter members write a lot of letters to local, state, and federal government agencies and representatives about environmental protection priorities. Lillian Light, who chairs the chapter's conservation committee, has folded her Audubon work into EPN, an organization that mobilizes people, many from faith-based organizations in the South Bay, to take strong, public positions on issues that affect the environment.

Chapter Operations (newsletter, treasurer, fundraising, membership programs, events, publicity, board meetings): the Board of Directors, Michael Weber, John Small. It takes volunteer time to handle the nuts and bolts of an organization. A few years ago, we did a phone survey of members and discovered that most of you keep up with what is going on through the newsletter; some of you participate in membership programs; more participate in events. To communicate with you effectively, we depend on volunteers to write and lay out the newsletter, contact local media and post fliers on bulletin boards in the region, and plan special events like the Butterfly Count, July 17. We also need your financial support.

If you wish to make a special contribution to any one or all of these programs I have described, all of your donation will be used for the activity—no overhead. We hope to hear from you or see you this year, and you are more than welcome to join us as a more active volunteer.

*Awards, continued from page 1*

A new award, the Shirley Wells Memorial Lifetime Achievement Award, was presented to Mitch Heindel by Martin Byhower. Martin was also pleased to accept the award for Mitch, as Mitch was tied down in Utopia, and could not attend! Fear not, though. Martin and his wife Eileen will be off to Utopia, shortly, where they are planning to make the presentation in person. In case you are wondering, Utopia does exist—in west Texas, where the birding is great and the skies are not cloudy all day.

Linda Chilton was delighted to present the Audubon Youth Conservation Award to Katie Moore, a Senior at Peninsula High School. Katie, who has dedicated every spare minute to the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium for years now, is one of the brightest stars in the great constellation of young people Linda has nurtured and mentored at the Aquarium.

Seventeen Audubon YES! Awards were presented this year, bringing the ten-year total to more than 200! Jess Morton introduced the YES! program to the audience, then made the presentations. Six schools were represented, and grades ranged from 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>. The awardees were Wesley Allen, Jack Baumann, Spencer Bates, Jessica Cheng, Brad Davidson, Theodore and Vassilios Faturos, Graison Gill, Hazim Ghanim, Lynn Hiel, Catherine Kim, Lindsey Marinkovich, Andrew Nieto, Sana Tharadra, Kristina Wilson, Scott Wilson, and Swati Yanamadala.

In addition to the Audubon awards, gorgeous certificates were prepared for all winners by State Senators Debra Bowen and Betty Karnette, Assemblyman Lowenthal and Councilwoman Hahn.

Special thanks go to the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium and its staff, especially Linda Chilton and Rainey Kreis, without whom total chaos would have reigned, reined, rained. Many thanks also go to the San Pedro High Earth Club and to Elise Swanson for lending hands wherever and whenever needed. In addition to those mentioned above, Julie Greer, Fran Spivy-Weber and Dennis Weyrauch were part of the team that made the event such a success.

--Jess Morton



*Several YES! Award winners from Chadwick: Spencer Bates, Wesley Allen, Swati Yanamadala, and Jack Baumann. Chadwick teacher and Audubon board member Martin Byhower.*



*More YES! Award winners: Lynn Hiel, Lindsey Marinkovich, and Scott Wilson, holding sister Kristina's award.*



*YES! Award winners Catherine Kim (left) and Andrew Nieto (right) flank Youth Conservation Award winner Katie Moore, as Audubon board member Jess Morton beams.*

## BIRDS OF THE PENINSULA

*March and April 2004*

by Kevin Larson

Non-passerine spring migrants such as waterfowl and Turkey Vultures were already passing through the area before the beginning of March. Swallows were also moving through the area since early February. This year, the first spring migrant passerines other than swallows were seen on 14 March, when a few Western Kingbirds and Warbling Vireos were noted in the area. As these first spring migrants were arriving in mid-March, a few winter visitors such as a Green-tailed Towhee, a White-throated Sparrow and a Summer Tanager were first discovered in the area. Only a trickle of land birds was moving through the area prior to the first notable wave of migrants on 11 April. A remarkable wave of migrants—including multiple Gray and Dusky Flycatchers, Phainopeplas, and one very rare Yellow-throated Warbler—arrived during an offshore flow pattern 23-26 April.

Rainfall was very scarce during March and April; the only significant precipitation came 1-2 March and on 17 April. High pressure with an offshore flow brought record high temperatures to the area 7-8 March, 28-29 March, and 23-26 April. Otherwise, a pattern of recurrent night and morning marine layer dominated the weather.

The small Canada Goose of the race *minima* present at the El Segundo Golf Course pond since 16 Dec was last seen on 16 Apr (Kevin Larson-KL). For many years, the center of abundance of wintering Blue-winged Teal in the area has been in the vicinity of the Willow St. crossing at the L. A. River (LAR); fifty-two individuals

were seen there on 20 Mar (KL). The wintering Canvasback flock at Alondra Park (AP) peaked at fifty-six in number 11-18 Feb; this winter, individuals were present from 31 Oct until 18 Mar (David Moody-DM). A White-winged Scoter flew north past Pt Vicente (PtV) on 17 Apr (KL). Single Black Scoters flew north past PtV on 6 Mar and 27 Mar (KL). Two migrating Black Scoters were seen on a pelagic trip off the PV Peninsula on 14 Mar organized for a Cal State University-Northridge (CSUN) ornithology class (Kimball L. Garrett-KLG). Up to two migrant Common Goldeneyes were seen along Ballona Creek 2-6 Mar (Richard Barth-RB). Up to three Common Goldeneyes were seen at the Ballona Freshwater Marsh (BFM) 16-20 Mar (RB); a single bird seen there on 30 Mar (RB) was the last local sighting. The female Hooded Merganser found at Madrona Marsh (MM) on 6 Feb was last seen on 24 Apr (DM).

Surprisingly, a male and a female California Quail were found at BFM on 17 Apr (RB et al); the male was seen through at least 5 May. Northern Fulmar sightings continued through the period; from one to six individuals were recorded in our coastal waters on several dates from 5 Mar to 1 May. One Cattle Egret was in the Ballona Wetland area on 13 Mar (KL), and one was seen at BFM on 25 Apr (RB). Rare in spring, a White-faced Ibis was found just south of the Willow St. crossing at LAR on 27 Mar (KL); this bird was apparently a migrant since none were known to be wintering in the area. A White-tailed Kite was seen by Connie Day on 18 Apr just west of BFM; none had been seen in the Ballona area since January. A migrant Swainson's Hawk was over Del Amo Blvd. at LAR in Long Beach on 10 Apr (KL).

Daniel S. Cooper (DSC) spotted a Virginia Rail at BFM on 20 Apr. A Killdeer nest with three eggs was found at MM on the early date of 14 Mar (DM). Rare in spring, a Solitary Sandpiper was at MM on 28 Apr (John Ivanov-JI). An unusually early push of migrant Red-necked Phalaropes occurred along the So. Cal. coast at the beginning of April; three were seen at BFM on 2 Apr and fifteen were present in the Ballona area on 3 Apr (KL et al). One Red-necked Phalarope was also at Malibu Lagoon on 2 Apr (KLG), and several were seen in coastal Orange County 2-3 Apr.

A pair of Xantus's Murrelets flew north past PtV on 15 Apr (KL). A high total of **eight**, possibly **twelve**, Ancient Murrelets was seen on the CSUN pelagic trip on the waters off the PV Peninsula from the L. A. Harbor north to Redondo Canyon on 14 Mar (KLG). Also seen on this trip were two to three Cassin's Auklets and one



Rhinoceros Auklet. Twenty-five Rhinoceros Auklets—including one group of nineteen birds—were seen flying south past PtV on the morning of 6 Mar (KL).

Joe Fuhrmin saw a **Short-eared Owl** at BFM on 20 Mar (fide-Don Sterba). A spring migrant **Lesser Night-hawk** at BFM on 9 Apr was a rare find (RB). Rare in winter, four Vaux's Swifts were over AP on 2 Mar (DM). Two Vaux's Swifts at BFM on 2 Apr were undoubtedly early spring migrants (KL). A Rufous Hummingbird at the South Coast Botanic Garden (SCBG) on 28 Mar was the only one reported (KL). Two of the three Acorn Woodpeckers that were wintering at the Pacific Crest Cemetery in Redondo Beach since 2 Dec were still present on 25 Apr (DM). Two Acorn Woodpeckers made an appearance at Deforest Park (DP) on 26 Apr (RB).

A migrant Gray Flycatcher found in Playa del Rey (PdR) on 4 Apr (DSC) was notably early. Other sightings of this flycatcher included one at Sand Dune Park (SDP) on 11 Apr (Russell Stone, many observers), one at SDP on 23 Apr (KL), two at Paradise Park (PaP) in Torrance on 23 Apr (DM), one on the bluff along the north side of Loyola Marymount University (LMU) on 24 Apr (KL), and one at Banning Park (BP) on 26 Apr (RB). An unusually high number of Dusky Flycatchers was reported this spring: one—probably our earliest—was at SDP on 10 Apr (Mark Conrad); one was at BFM on 14 Apr (DSC); one was at SDP on 23 Apr (KL); two were at PaP on 23 Apr (DM); and one was in PdR on 24 Apr (KL). The Dusky Flycatcher has been recorded with some regularity during the fall season locally, but is not recorded in most springs; a high total of four was noted during the spring of 1994. A Say's Phoebe along the bluffs on the north side of LMU on 24 Apr was late (KL). The Vermilion Flycatcher that was first found by RB on 21 Dec was still present at Columbia Park on 6 Mar (Martin Byhower-MB).

A singing **Bell's Vireo** at DP in Long Beach on 21 Mar (KL) was a very rare occurrence of a spring migrant. Although there is a small amount of willow habitat—preferred by this species for nesting—at the south end of DP, this bird was seen in non-native trees at the north end of the park. Several birding visits to DP before and after 21 Mar appear to confirm this bird's status as a transient. The wintering Plumbeous Vireo at DP, first found by RB on 17 Oct, was still present on 10 Apr (KL). A Plumbeous Vireo found by RB at Recreation Park in El Segundo (RPES) on 12 Apr could have been a spring migrant, but since one was found by him at the nearby El Segundo Library (ESL) on 12 Nov, this sighting may



involve the same locally wintering individual. A pair of Black-billed Magpies—likely escaped or released captives—was seen building a nest at the Port of LA Least Tern nesting site on 2 Apr (Kathy Keane); these birds were first noted at this location on 17 Mar (Wally Ross).

Western Bluebirds have been present along the Rolling Hills Estates/Rancho Palos Verdes border in the vicinity of Highridge Park and Ridgecrest Intermediate School since last year. Based on the observations of Sam Bloom (SB), it is apparent that **our first ever nesting record** occurred in this area last year. The birds used a nesting box installed by SB that was intended to attract American Kestrels. SB observed twigs sticking out of the nest box, and circa May or June 2003, adult Western Bluebirds with fledged young were seen there. Returning later, he found that the tree holding the nest box had been cut down (is no tree ever sacred around here?), but recovered the nest box containing four eggs from a presumed second nesting attempt. This year, a pair was seen in this area from 20 Mar to at least 11 Apr (SB). A pair of Western Bluebirds was at Harbor Park (HP) 13 Mar-19 Apr (MB) and a male of this species was seen at DP on 26 Apr (RB). The first reports of Phainopeplas in the area this year were two males flying north over Rancho Palos Verdes on 23 Apr, one male in the park at SDP later the same day, and two males flying north over SDP on 24 Apr (KL).

A migrant Townsend's X Hermit Warbler hybrid was at SDP on 24 Apr (KL). A wintering Hermit War-

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*Birds of the Peninsula, continued from page 5*

bler that was first seen in the vicinity of SDP on 1 Jan (Steve Sosensky) was still present on 17 Mar (RB). A **Yellow-throated Warbler** at DP on 25 Apr (KL) is our third area record of this very rare vagrant; others were recorded at SCBG on 21 Oct 1972 and at El Nido Park in Torrance on 6 Jun 1993. The three spring migrant Palm Warblers recorded here last year seemed hard to top, yet **four** were reported this year: one was at DP 5-10 Apr (Rich Sonnenberg); one was at MM on 12 Apr (DM); one was at HP on 15 Apr (KL); and another was reported at BFM on 25 Apr (Jonathan Coffin). Two of the five locally wintering Black-and-white Warblers were seen during the period: the individual first found at RPES on 17 Nov was still present on 7 Apr (RB), and one found by Lori Conrad (LC) at SDP on 25 Sep was last seen on 10 Apr by the finding observer. Single Yellow-breasted Chats were at DP on 25 Apr (Mike San Miguel-MSM), at BFM on 29 Apr (DSC), at SDP on 1 May (Barbara G. Johnson-BGJ), at HP on 1 May (KL), and at AP on 2 May (DM).

A first-spring male Summer Tanager found by RB at ESL on 17 Mar was wintering locally. The wintering Summer Tanager at BP that was found by Andrew Lee on 8 Nov was last seen on 11 Apr (Dorothy and Russell Stone). A male Western Tanager at DP on 4 Apr (KL) was likely an early migrant since none were known to be wintering at this location.

A Green-tailed Towhee found by Holly Gray in Portuguese Bend 8-9 Mar was wintering locally. Up to three migrant Chipping Sparrows were at BFM on 6-10 Apr (RB) and one was at MM on 17 Apr (KL). It appears that status of a singing Lark Sparrow at the western edge of the Ballona Wetlands on 14 Mar (DSC) was of a spring migrant; this occurrence is notable in our area. The wintering Swamp Sparrow present at BFM since 30 Nov was last seen on 4 Mar (DSC). After many visits to SCBG this winter to keep track of wintering birds, I was surprised to find a White-throated Sparrow there on 14 Mar; this bird had likely changed its location after spending much of the winter nearby. Rarely found locally, a migrant black-lored White-crowned Sparrow (*Z. l. oriantha*) was at BFM 27-29 Apr (KL).

A female Northern Cardinal was photographed by Stephanie Bryan at her San Pedro bird feeder on 25 Mar; several years have passed since I have heard a report of this species in the area. Although the possibility exists that a Northern Cardinal could arrive here naturally from wild populations, all cardinals occurring in LA County have been regarded as released or escaped captives. The

first Yellow-headed Blackbird of the season was found by RB at BFM 6-10 Apr; another was at PtV on 11 Apr (Carol Selvey). A remarkable concentration of **200-300** migrant Yellow-headed Blackbirds was seen at BFM on the morning of 24 Apr (DSC, Don Sterba); none were seen at this location the day before or the day after. Another three Yellow-headed Blackbirds were at MM on 25 Apr (JI). The two wintering immature male Hooded Orioles and one female Bullock's Oriole were still present at SCBG on 14 Mar; this is about the time when spring migrants of these species begin arriving in our area.

Summarized here are some first arrival dates of spring migrants. Notably early dates are boldfaced: Red-necked Phalarope—**2 Apr** BFM (KL); Elegant Tern—14 Mar L. A. Harbor (KLG); Least Tern—**18 Apr** PtV (MSM); Vaux's Swift—**2 Apr** BFM (KL); Black-chinned Hummingbird—28 Mar DP (KL); Olive-sided Flycatcher—**11 Apr** LMU (BGJ and Geri Chambers); Western Wood-Pewee—20 Apr SDP (LC); Pacific-slope Flycatcher—18 Mar AP (DM); Ash-throated Flycatcher—28 Mar DP (KL); Western Kingbird—14 Mar PdR (DSC), SCBG (KL), and MM (DM); Warbling Vireo—14 Mar PdR (DSC); Nashville Warbler—**20 Mar** BP (MB); Yellow Warbler—11 Apr BP (KL); Hermit Warbler—23 Apr SDP (KL); MacGillivray's Warbler—10 Apr PdR (DSC); Wilson's Warbler—18 Mar Rolling Hills (KL); Black-headed Grosbeak—4 Apr DP (KL); Blue Grosbeak—**9 Apr** BFM (KL); Lazuli Bunting—**1 Apr** MM (described to DM by unknown observer); Hooded Oriole—20 Mar PtV (KL); Bullock's Oriole—18 Mar AP (DM).

Here are the latest dates that these migrants or winterers were noted: Greater Scaup—2 Apr BFM (KL); Horned Grebe—27 Apr BFM (RB); Sharp-shinned Hawk—21 Apr San Pedro (KL); Merlin—10 Apr HP (MB); Wilson's Snipe—17 Apr MM (Guy Ruckdaschel); Mew Gull (first-year)—27 Mar LAR (KL); Herring Gull (first-year)—17 Apr PtV (KL); Red-breasted Sapsucker—14 Mar HP (MB); Northern Flicker (Red-shafted)—11 Apr DP (KL); Hermit Thrush—25 Apr DP (KL); Fox Sparrow (Sooty group)—4 Apr SCBG (KL).

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.

*Mosquito Control, continued from page 1*

Methoprene is a synthetic insect growth regulator that mimics naturally occurring hormones in the mosquito's body. Methoprene disrupts the mosquito's normal life cycle causing the adult mosquito to fail to emerge from the pupae. Both of these chemicals are thought to be safe to the environment and only affect mosquitoes and not beneficial insects.

Other methods for controlling mosquitoes can damage the environment. Sometimes, if lots of pupae are present, a chemical called Agnique MMF is used. Agnique MMF is like an oil that floats on the surface of the water, suffocating the mosquito pupae and larvae. However, it also kills other species that breathe in a similar fashion. Since pupae do not feed, they are killed by suffocation in this manner.

Mosquitofish, or *Gambusia*, are a species of fish from South America that are frequently released into water bodies by the Los Angeles County West Vector Control District. These small, whitish to transparent fish, often mistakenly called minnows, guppies, or even tadpoles, are voracious consumers of any aquatic insects they can find. Although they are effective against mosquitoes, *Gambusia* out-compete native species of fish, newts, salamanders and frogs, and have drastically reduced population of all of these native species (many of which also eat mosquitoes). Interestingly, goldfish are better than mosquitofish at controlling mosquito larvae in small ponds.

***The Ecosystem Connection***

Mosquitoes will always be with us, but they and their ability to bite us can be controlled with a little common sense. Destroying or severely restricting aquatic vegetation in lakes and wetlands is one approach advocated by the Los Angeles County West Vector Control District. It is believed that reducing aquatic vegetation and adding mosquitofish is an easy and effective way to control mosquito populations. This is partly true, but removing aquatic vegetation also destroys most sensitive wildlife.

Local artificial lakes like those at Alondra Park, Earvin "Magic" Johnson Park and Polliwog Park are maintained in order to control the growth of tules (reeds), cattails or

other aquatic vegetation in the water or along the shoreline. Consequently, they support virtually no aquatic species dependent on vegetation, while being dominated by feral ducks and other overpopulated species seeking human handouts. These lakes, unlike the few natural bodies of water in arid Southern California, have continuously flowing, artificially supplied water, which discourages mosquitoes. How can we control mosquitoes and West Nile at our few natural lakes, such as Lake Machado at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park, which is among the last places where our native wetland species can survive?



Cutting back the vegetation to some degree, at times of year when birds are not nesting, can help provide access for *Gambusia* to stagnant and isolated areas where mosquitoes might breed. We do not need to rely solely on reducing vegetation, however, nor do we need to reduce tules at Machado Lake to tiny isolated islands, as the Los Angeles County West Vector Control District has proposed. This is a highly visible measure and might help reassure politicians and

uninformed individuals looking for a quick fix that major steps have been taken, but it won't stop West Nile and it will destroy rare and endangered wildlife.

***An Ounce of Prevention***

Five hundred mosquitoes can breed in a Styrofoam cup, and many thousands can breed in an illegally abandoned old tire. Cleaning up trash, non-native vegetation and non-productive dead vegetation, dredging areas of the lake to reduce sediments that trap stagnant water, finding ways to prevent trash from entering the lake, improving water quality by discouraging the feeding of ducks at the lake and finding sources of steady water flow would reduce mosquito populations without destroying valuable wildlife habitat.

Of course, not getting bitten is an option for avoiding the West Nile virus. Mosquitoes are attracted to humans because we exhale carbon dioxide, give off body heat, and exude odorous chemicals through our skin. There's not much we can do about these things!

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## CONSERVATION CORNER

by Lillian Light

If you have ever enjoyed a stroll along wooded forest trails, or if you want to preserve California's wild places for your children and grandchildren, it is imperative that you take action today! In the first week of March, the Bush administration released a plan to roll back protection for nearly 50 million acres of our national forests, including 4.4 million acres of the wildest pristine national forests in California.

Bush administration officials have indicated that they plan to allow governors to exempt their states from the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, signed into law by President Clinton in January of 2001. This Rule protects our remaining unspoiled forests, and helps to provide essential habitat for threatened and endangered species as well as water quality benefits and recreational opportunities.

Protecting roadless areas also reduces fire risk; the Forest Service has found that the number of large fires is much higher in areas with roads than in inventoried roadless areas.

It is very important that you contact Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and urge him to state publicly that he will not exempt California's forests from the Roadless Rule. Perhaps he can persuade President Bush to reverse course and offer some protection to our national forests.

### Contact Information:

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger  
State Capitol Bldg  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Sacramento office: 916-445-2841  
LA office: 213-897-0322  
governor@governor.ca.gov

In 2000, President Clinton issued a proclamation that created the Giant Sequoia National Monument. Recently, the Forest Service chose an ecologically damaging and costly management plan for the monument. The plan allows logging up of trees up to 30 inches in diameter, and larger, to prevent catastrophic fires. The alternative that would remove brush, lower branches, and small diameter trees was ignored, even though these are the most flammable materials in the forest and removing them would protect the large trees that are the essential elements of the old forest ecosystem. Trees

that have grown to a diameter of 30 inches are over a century old and ought to be preserved.

The Forest Service is proposing to construct new roads within the monument (contrary to the proclamation), although there is not enough money to maintain the 900 miles of existing roads. An estimated \$14 million of tax money will be needed to conduct logging projects in the Giant Sequoia National Monument.

To restore science-based management of this monument, we must request congressional action. It is clear that the Forest Service centered its plan around logging and cannot properly protect our monument and the rare and special trees within it. Please write to Senator Feinstein and to Congressperson Jane Harman and request that they support legislation that will turn control of our Monument over to the National Park Service, whose record in protecting National Monuments is far superior to that of the Forest Service.

While you contact our legislators, ask them to look into another administration forest protection rollback—the gutting of the Sierra Nevada Framework—which will lead to a doubling of logging levels and the loss of centuries-old trees in the national forests of the Sierra Nevada.

Senator Feinstein deserves our thanks and appreciation for her sponsorship of S 2067, the Los Padres National Forest Conservation Act, which would preserve areas proposed for oil and gas drilling by the U S Forest Service. This bill will save wild and roadless forest lands, and will protect the habitat of the California Condor and other endangered species.

Congresswoman Lois Capps is sponsoring a similar bill in the House. Please urge Congresswoman Harman to cosponsor of HR 3085.

Thank you for doing all that you can to protect our state's wild heritage!

### Contact Information:

Senator Diane Feinstein  
331 Hart Senate Office Bldg  
Washington, DC 20510  
Senator@feinstein.senate.gov  
Tel: 202-224-3841

Congresswoman Jane Harman  
229 Cannon House Office Bldg  
Washington, DC 20515  
janeharman@mail.house.gov  
Tel: 202-225-8220



## HELP AUDUBON PASS CLEAN WATER/WETLANDS LEGISLATION

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.

California has as much or more at stake than other states. Because California receives most of its rain and snow during the winter, many of its streams and lakes are dry for much of the year. Many others are simply not navigable. Many of these wetlands provide pollution protection and additional sources for some or all of the drinking water for more than twenty million Californians. These non-navigable waters are no longer provided the basic protections of the Federal Clean Water Act.

Clean water is essential to human health. It is also essential to California's economy. Many of these unprotected waters provide important flood and erosion control, water filtration, and habitat for fisheries, endangered species, and game species. In California alone, wildlife related activities add \$2.6 billion annually to the State's economy. The water filtration and flood control services provided by these unprotected waters save millions of dollars as well. And even the President's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) found recently that pollution

control laws save far more in public health dollars than they cost to implement.

Californians overwhelmingly support clean water protection and, not surprisingly, rank it as one of the State's biggest priorities. Eighty percent of all Californians are concerned about water pollution in California. 76 percent only drink bottled or filtered tap water. Water pollution, like most types of pollution, disproportionately affects low-income communities and California's most vulnerable populations: children, the elderly and those with impaired immune systems. But it affects us all.

Please help Audubon California and your Audubon Chapter to pass SB 1477 by contacting your state Senator and Assemblymember and urging them to support SB 1477. You can find out who your state legislators are by going to [www.vote-smart.org](http://www.vote-smart.org). To get their contact information go to [www.senate.ca.gov](http://www.senate.ca.gov) or [www.assembly.ca.gov](http://www.assembly.ca.gov) and click on "legislators."

For more information, background materials, and sample support letters, go to [www.audubon-ca.org](http://www.audubon-ca.org).

### *Flicker*

Now!

Falls the voice of a bird  
Calling from a sycamore.  
Below, the ravine's dry bed fills.  
Generous leaves briefly stirred  
By the discourse of his drumming bill,  
A riddle-tongued hunger  
Driven up trees.

Now!

Unwinds on the ribbon  
Of his flight. The wild loops dip  
And rise with rhythms of knots that tie  
Limb to limb with crimson bows  
Each time his spread wings touch the sky.

Watch his feathers release the trapped light  
And close!

—*Jess Morton*

# BUTTERFLY COUNT JULY 17

You don't have to be an expert to take part in the 24th annual Palos Verdes butterfly count! Held Saturday, July 17th., the count surveys the summer butterflies found within a 15-mile diameter circle centered at the PV reservoir. Meet in the parking lot at the Rolling Hills Estates City Hall (north corner of Crenshaw and PV Drive North) at 8:30 a.m. for group assignments.

This event is sponsored by the North American Butterfly Association, which is dedicated to increasing knowledge of butterflies throughout the country. The PV count has led us to a greatly increased understanding of our own butterfly populations and their distribution, and has introduced many to the wonders of butterflies.

A donation of \$5 per person is requested to help support Audubon and NABA in collecting and publishing the data. The fee will be waived for those who join Audubon on count day!

Call 832-5601 for information or e-mail [jmorton@igc.org](mailto:jmorton@igc.org) to take part.



### *Mosquito Control, continued from page 7*

Many supposedly effective mosquito repelling chemicals and devices exist, but little evidence suggest that they work. Ultrasonic emitters, lotions, etc. are marginally effective, partly because what works against one species of mosquito may not work against another.

The one substance that DOES work against mosquitoes is known by the chemical acronym DEET. There are concerns about the possible long term effects of DEET on humans. Some people get skin irritations from the substance, but one needs to weigh the tradeoffs against the discomfort and possible diseases that mosquitoes can transmit.

My favorite solutions are using screen doors, mosquito netting (there are even kinds that work great with sleeping bags) wind (keeping a fan on near your bed at night will keep mosquitoes away) and wearing long clothing. And of course, keeping ecosystems healthy is a good bet, since mosquitoes tend to thrive in unnaturally stagnant, polluted areas that lack native insectivorous species.

West Nile will inevitably join the list of endemic vector-borne diseases that we have learned to live with. Lets hope that our response to this newest threat is both effective and measured, so that we do not eliminate irreplaceable habitat and desirable species in the process!

*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](mailto:MLEoWeber@aol.com).

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

*Hummin'* subscriptions for non-PV/SB Audubon members are \$7.50 per year.

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

## GIFT & NEW MEMBER APPLICATION

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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

Saturday, June 5, 10-12:00: **Friendship Naturalists classes** for 6-13 year-olds at Deane Dana Friendship Park, San Pedro. \$10 per session. Call Connie Douglas, 310-519-6115.

Saturday, June 5, 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, June 6, 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 July 4.)

Sunday, June 6, 9:00-noon: **Restoration of PV Blue Habitat**, Defense Fuel Support Point, 3171 N. Gaffey, San Pedro. If you plan to attend, call or email Jess (310-832-5601, [jmorton@igc.org](mailto:jmorton@igc.org)). (Also, July 4.)

Wednesday, June 9, 8:00 AM: **Bird Walk at Madrona Marsh**. Leader: Bob Shanman. 3201 Plaza del Amo (west of Madrona Ave.) in Torrance.

Saturday, June 12, 8:00 AM: **Bird Walk at Deane Dana Friendship Park**, San Pedro. Meet at the Nature Center classroom. Contact: Connie Douglas (310-519-6115).

Sunday, June 13, 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, abt 1 mile west of 110 Freeway on Anaheim St.

SUNDAY, June 13, 10:00 AM-3:00 PM: **June Monthly Program**. Walking and Driving Tour of the Dominguez Watershed, following the Harbor Park Bird and Nature Walk; meet at the parking lot and bring a lunch. (See June 13 above.)

Sunday, June 13, 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, July 11.)

Wednesday, June 16, 8:00 AM: **Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden**. Leader: Georgene Foster. (See June 6 for directions.)

Saturday, June 19, 9-noon: **Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park Clean-up**. Leader: John Popoch (310-548-7728). (See June 13 for directions.)

Tuesday, June 29: **NO AUDUBON MEETING**. (See June 13).

Saturday, July 3, 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, July 4, 8:00 AM: Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden. Leader: Ollie Coker. (See June 6 for directions.)

Sunday, July 4, 9-noon: **Restoration of PV Blue Habitat**, Defense Fuel Support Point. (See June 6 for directions.)

Saturday, July 10, 8:00 AM: **Bird Walk at Deane Dana Friendship Park**, San Pedro. (See June 12 for directions.)

Sunday, July 11, 8:00 AM: **Bird and Nature Walk at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park**. Leader: Martin Byhower. (See June 13.)

Wednesday, July 14, 8:00 AM: **Bird Walk at Madrona Marsh**. Leader: Bob Shanman. (See June 9 for directions.)

Saturday, July 17, 8:30 AM: **ANNUAL BUTTERFLY COUNT**. Meet in the parking lot at the Rolling Hills Estates City Hall (north corner of Crenshaw and PV Drive North). A donation of \$5 per person is requested. Contact [jmorton@igc.org](mailto:jmorton@igc.org) or 310-832-5601.

Saturday, July 17, 9-12 AM: **Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park Clean-up**. Leader: John Popoch (310-548-7728). (See June 13 for directions.)

Wednesday, July 21, 8:00 AM: **Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden**. Leader: Georgene Foster. (See June 16 for directions.)

Tuesday, July 27 and August 31: **SUMMER VACATION**. No monthly programs.

CALENDAR

### ERRATA

In the April/May Hummin', the Calendar editor reversed the Wednesday Bird Walks at South Coast Botanic Garden and Madronna Marsh. The calendar dates above are correct.

### APOLOGIES

The editor apologizes for the late deliver of this and the previous newsletter. Vacations and delays of one sort or another caused us to miss our goal of getting the newsletter to you by the first of the month.

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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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**HELP NEEDED!**

**Restoration of South Bay Habitats:** We can use your energy and some more equipment! If you are prepared to dig and pull and plant, join PV/SB Audubon's restoration of PV Blue Habitat (every first or second Sunday, 9-noon, at the Defense fuel Support Point, 3171 N. Gaffey, San Pedro). See Calendar for details. Help clean up Harbor Park each third Saturday of the month, 9:00 am to noon. Some volunteers cruise the lake in canoes!

**Audubon YES!:** If you are already active with a school or youth group in the area, consider becoming a chapter liaison with Audubon YES! Audubon YES! students are the backbone of local restoration and education projects.

Your donation to the chapter of a new or used power-point projector is tax-deductible. We are doing a lot of outreach, and it is becoming harder to borrow such equipment.