



HUMMIN'

PALOS VERDES/SOUTH BAY AUDUBON SOCIETY

JUN/JUL 2007 Vol. XXIX No.3

CHAPTER HONORS SOUTH BAY CONSERVATIONISTS

On April 21, the Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon Society celebrated the accomplishments of local conservationists at its annual award ceremony at Madrona Marsh Nature Preserve. Besides a wonderful team of YES! students, the Chapter recognized the following outstanding South Bay conservationists:

• **Barbara Sattler** of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy received the Audubon Conservation Award for her patience and persistence in protecting the South Bay's natural environment.

• **Ron Libbrecht** received the Audubon Education Award for his amazing ability to communicate with youth and adults through art.

• **Andrea Vona** received the Audubon Restoration Award for her stellar work to restore the White Point Nature Reserve.

• **Kenny Matsui** and **Tyler Stock** received the Audubon Youth Award for outstanding volunteer restoration work at the Madrona Marsh Nature Preserve over the last five years.

• **Jess Morton** received the Shirley Wells Lifetime Achievement Award for his many years of contributions to the South Bay's environment.

The South Bay is blessed with a community of dedicated conservationists, and the Chapter congratulates this year's awardees.



Jess Morton receives the Shirley Wells Lifetime Achievement Award from Frances Spivy-Weber, recent Chapter Co-President.

UPCOMING CHAPTER GET-TOGETHERS

The Chapter has organized Third Tuesday Get-Togethers for 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.

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.

COMING FULL CIRCLE ON THE CHRISTMAS COUNT

by Chris Boyd

(with thanks to the *Peninsula News*)

I toss and turn, dreaming of multicolored creatures that are a cross between flying dinosaurs and species I've never seen in the wild but intently studied in my field guides. It's early morning on Dec. 23, and my mind is on one thing. Santa Claus? Christmas Eve dinner at my sister's house? No, I'm dreaming about birds, real and imagined. In a couple of hours, I'll head to Ken Malloy-Harbor Regional Park in Harbor City to take part in the 107th annual Christmas Bird Count. I was sick with the flu last year, so I missed out on the daylong affair in late December. This year, I hope to unwrap some new birds to add to my life list, a record of all birds sighted and identified by a birder. I'm somewhere near 270 species but hungry to get closer to 300.

Why count birds? Researchers use CBC data gathered by "citizen scientists" to determine how different species of bird are faring in the United States and around the world. Each year from mid-December to early January, the National Audubon Society holds the count. Thousands of folks from local chapters across the country traipse through mud, water, snow, thickets and even golf courses to count birds. The CBC was started at the turn of the century as an alternative to the annual Christmas Bird Hunt, when gun-toting Americans got together to blow away anything that flew.

Much has changed in 100-plus years. That's evident as I turn off my alarm clock, fire up an electric razor and prepare a breakfast of blueberry oatmeal in the microwave. It's cold this morning, and The Weather Channel puts the temperature somewhere in the low 40s. I tell myself that's nothing and I don't need a jacket. After all, I've spent six winters in Missouri and Washington, D.C. As I begin the walk to my car at about 6 a.m., however, I realize the folly of wearing only a T-shirt and flannel to keep my upper body warm. But it's too late to go back for more cover.

There are few drivers on a dark Pacific Coast Highway as I head to Harbor Park. Once there, I step gingerly out of the car into the bone-chilling air. I'm practically shivering as I arm myself with binoculars, the Sibley Guide to Birds of Western North America and a



American Bittern
(Jess Morton)

pen. I meet my partner for the day, Martin, at the boat-house that overlooks Machado Lake. His wife, Eileen, was going to help us count today, but she's at home sick with the flu. For a second I envy her position in bed in a warm house, but we've got work to do.

I begin the tedious task of taking down numbers with icy hands as Martin counts off the Northern shoveler, mallard, coot, teal, egret and heron that are feeding on and around the lake. There are hundreds of birds, and they're hungry because of the cold weather. When I get a break from my clerical duties, I take long looks at a great egret searching for crustaceans and small fish. The symbol of the National Audubon Society, one of the oldest conservation organizations in North America, the great egret is a stately bird. Its elegant white body, long black legs and feet and straight yellow bill make it stand out amongst the other critters. Once nearly hunted to extinction for their feathers, egrets now thrive where there is sufficient wetland habitat to sustain them.

I can't ponder the great egret for too long, however, as I'm responsible for putting pen to clipboard. This work is far from glamorous, but I'm happy to do it for Martin, who has a passion for nature. For the past 2 1/2 years, he has served as my birding Jedi master, teaching me the ins and outs of what some call a hobby and others label an obsession. Martin simply knows where the birds are and their patterns of behavior better than most. He can tell you that the farmers' market parking lot adjacent to Wilson Park is the best place to get a tricolored blackbird, or that the local dump is a terrific spot for Thayer's gulls. And he's willing to share his knowledge.

Continued on page 9

YELLOWTHROAT

By Jess Morton

The morning was gloomy. Being in a dentist’s office in downtown Long Beach did not help matters. Little color—other than the fish swimming in the tanks meant to soothe patients’ frayed nerves.

Idly, I glanced out the window, perhaps drawn by some small motion. The busy street was only partially masked by a small tree and a few low shrubs. Then a bird popped into the open, pausing on a branch. A yellowthroat!

As the right side of my brain gloried in this little guy’s gorgeous nature, my left side’s instant reaction was, “What’s that doing here?” For yellowthroats are creatures of marshlands, damp patches of reed and tall grasses, not birds to mix with hoi polloi of pigeons and house sparrows in urban cityscapes.

The books call this member of the warbler family of small insect-eating birds the Common Yellowthroat. While I admit this species is not short in numbers, there was nothing “common” about the brilliant yellow throat and white-bordered black face mask of the adult male I was seeing. Spectacular!

But warblers are nothing if not active birds, and with a leap my yellowthroat disappeared into the leaves above. For the next few minutes I would catch an occasional glimpse as the bird hunted through the vegetation for a bit to eat. Then, nothing. I did not see the yellowthroat go, but surely it had, continuing on from wherever it had come to wherever it might be headed.

Perhaps this was a migrant bird, though we have yellowthroats here all year round. Take a walk at the nearest marsh and you’ll be sure to hear (listen for the twanging rubber band!) if not see one. Sometimes seeing takes a bit of patience. However, it’s patience well rewarded.

I’ll never know if my Long Beach friend was resident or migrant, but at least a trip to the dentist will never be quite the same again!



Barbara Sattler of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy receives the Audubon Conservation Award from Martin Byhower, Chapter Co-President.



Andrea Vona receive the Audubon Restoration Award from John Nieto, the Chapter’s Program Director.

BIRDS OF THE PENINSULA

March and April 2007

by Kevin Larson

Kingbirds, warblers and buntings are everywhere—it's spring migration! The excitement of this year's spectacle increased steadily from March through the end of April. A Western Kingbird and a Hooded Oriole on 10 March were this year's first land bird migrants, and swallow counts soared into the hundreds the same day. Migration is virtually always exhilarating during the last week of April and first week of May. This year it was unusually good in early and mid-April as well, thanks to variable weather that included a number of passing low-pressure systems. Migrant Surfbirds made a remarkable showing in late March and early April. Numbers of migrant Calliope Hummingbirds and Purple Martins made a rare appearance in our area during April. Discovered in early March, an adult Little Gull and a singing Wren-tit in the Marina del Rey area were newsworthy. Reports of a Magnificent Frigatebird and a Northern Goshawk in early April were astonishing. A good number of rare wintering birds remained into the third or fourth week of April.

The recurring warm, dry offshore weather experienced this winter continued into the first half of March, and record high temperatures were again recorded on 12 Mar. The weather changed to a pattern dominated by low pressure from 20 Mar through late April. The many cold

fronts that passed through the area brought a lot of wind but negligible amounts of precipitation until a significant storm came on 20 Apr. The 0.50 inch of rain recorded in downtown Los Angeles made 20 Apr the wettest day of this very dry rainfall season, which began back on 1 Jul. The 3.21 inches of rain recorded in Los Angeles 1 Jul-30 Apr was nearly one foot below normal for this period. This will be the driest season on record if less than 1.21 inches is recorded 1 May-30 Jun. Drought conditions left the peninsula's hillsides brown when they would normally be green, and most plants of the coastal sage scrub community were desiccated and lacking any bloom.

An immature Greater White-fronted Goose found by Richard Barth (RB) at Earvin Magic Johnson Recreation Area (EMJRA) in Willowbrook on 25 Oct was still present on 28 Apr. A male Wood Duck at Alondra Park on 29 Mar (David Moody-DM) may have been the same bird seen there on 27 Jan (Kevin Larson-KL). A White-winged Scoter was at the mouth of Ballona Creek on 22 Apr (Martin Byhower-MB). The female Long-tailed Duck found at Dockweiler State Beach on 2 Dec was still present on 29 Apr (KL). Up to three wintering Hooded Mergansers at the Ballona Freshwater Marsh (BFM) were reported through at least 18 Mar (KL). DM heard a California Quail on 2 Apr at White Point Nature Preserve (WPNP), an area lacking recent reports.

A Northern Fulmar at Pt. Vicente (PtV) on 13 Apr was the first seen locally since 25 Aug; two were there on 29 Apr (KL). The first Pink-footed and Sooty shearwaters of the year were recorded at PtV on 27 Apr and 21 Apr respectively (KL). A few Black-vented Shearwaters were present through 29 Apr (KL). A report of a **Magnificent Frigatebird** flying north at PtV on 8 Apr was unusual since nearly all sightings in California are made in summer (Henry Jurgens). One of up to three Cattle Egrets seen over the winter at EMJRA was still present on 14 April (KL). Rare in spring locally, a White-faced Ibis was at BFM on 24 Apr (KL). A White-tailed Kite near BFM 24-28 Apr (KL) may have been the same lingering individual reported in the Ballona Wetland area through 31 Mar (Roy van de Hoek). The wintering Northern Harrier in the Ballona Wetland area was last reported on 31 Mar (Roy van de Hoek). Charlie Walker convincingly described an adult **Northern Goshawk** perched along the coastal area of San Pedro near its border with RPV on 3 Apr.



Western Kingbird
(Jess Morton)

Migrant Surfbirds made an extraordinary showing this spring. Along Ballona Creek, after small numbers of wintering birds had departed, evidenced by a count of zero on 4 Mar, a count of 130 came on 11 Mar. Numbers grew to 230 on 17 Mar, 404 on 30 Mar (KL), and Robb Hamilton estimated **520** individuals flying from Ballona Creek to roost on the outer breakwater at the end of the day on 1 Apr. An astonishingly high count of **800** was obtained on 8 Apr (KL). These migrants were seen feeding one to two miles upstream from the Ballona Creek mouth on low tides. In the Palos Verdes area, 88 Surfbirds were at White Point on 31 Mar (DM), and 120 were counted at Cabrillo Beach on 7 Apr (Bernardo Alps). Always a good find in our area, a Red Knot was at Cabrillo Beach on 7 Apr (Bernardo Alps). Presumably the same **Rock Sandpiper** observed on the jetties at the mouth of Ballona Creek 25 Nov-6 Feb reappeared in alternate plumage 22-24 Apr (MB). An estimated **10,000** Red-necked Phalaropes—most of which formed large rafts on the water—were seen from PtV on 27 Apr (KL); this remarkable concentration of migrants had moved on by the next day.

An adult **Little Gull** about 1.5 miles upstream from the mouth of Ballona Creek on 3 Mar flew off towards the sea less than an hour after discovery, conforming to this species' tendency to make brief appearances in our area (KL). The second-winter Glaucous Gull found at the Los Angeles River in Long Beach by Karen Gilbert and Jeff Boyd on 21 Dec was last seen on 24 Mar. Alcids sightings from PtV included single Common Murres flying north on 6 Apr and 13 Apr, a pair of Xantus' Murrelets flying north on 31 Mar, and single Rhinoceros Auklets on 31 Mar and 28 Apr (KL). Eight Eurasian Collared-Doves reported in the area 31 Mar-29 Apr was the highest count of this nonnative invader during a one-month period to date. The Burrowing Owl found at WPNP on 16 Oct was last seen on 10 Mar (DM). A **Common Poorwill** at Madrona Marsh (MM) on 14 Mar was a very rare local record of a spring migrant (Ron Melin).

An extraordinary appearance of **Calliope Hummingbirds** along the coast this spring included at least 12 individuals in our area 8-29 Apr (Carol Selvey, KL, DM, Tracy Drake). Rufous Hummingbirds made a better than average showing, especially during the middle two weeks of April. A male "Yellow-shafted" Northern Flicker at Loyola Marymount University (LMU) on 10 Mar was probably the individual present the past two winters (Russell Stone-RS). A Hammond's Flycatcher at LMU **17-21 Mar** was remarkably early (RS). Five

Hammond's Flycatchers at DeForest Park (DP) on 21 Apr was a high count (KL). Single Gray Flycatchers were at the El Segundo Library on 19 Apr (RB), at DP on 21 Apr (KL), and at MM on 25 Apr (DM). A Dusky Flycatcher was at Banning Park on 14 Apr (KL). Say's Phoebes nested for the third consecutive year in the eaves of the Madrona Marsh Nature Center; an adult was feeding nestlings on 29 Apr (DM). The Thick-billed Kingbird spending its second winter at Banning Park could not be found after 9 Mar; last year, it was recorded through the end of April (KL).

A Bell's Vireo spending its fourth winter at DP was present 24 Sep-17 Mar (RB). A Plumbeous Vireo at DP on 21 Apr was probably wintering locally (KL). A wintering Loggerhead Shrike in the Ballona Wetland area was last recorded on 2 Mar (Jonathan Coffin). Purple Martins made a remarkable showing: a pair was over the South Coast Botanic Garden (SCBG) on 8 Apr (KL); a female was over MM on 18 Apr (DM); a male was perched on a wire at WPNP during a rainstorm on 20 Apr (DM), and two males were over Trump National Golf Club on 22 Apr (Jon Feenstra). I saw only five Violet-green Swallows in the area this spring from 24 Feb to 20 Mar. A Bank Swallow over the Los Angeles River in Long Beach on 7 Apr was the only report (KL). A Red-breasted Nuthatch at well-worked Polliwog Park on 3 Apr was remarkable since it was evidently a spring migrant following a winter that lacked a regional lowland invasion (DM).

Our first and only known breeding, resident Western Bluebirds—in the vicinity of Ridgecrest Intermediate School and Highridge Park—were still present on 16 Apr

Continued on page 8



Common Yellowthroat Female
(Jess Morton)

**Creating atmosphere:
David Carle's
*Introduction to Air in California***

A Book Reivew by Allen Franz

We may take it for granted, since most of the time it's virtually invisible, but David Carle's new book, *Introduction to Air in California*, makes clear how our atmosphere was created, what's in it, and how it affects us. Along the way, Carle's latest contribution to the University of California's series of *California Natural History Guides* tells us how many gallons of air we breathe in a typical day (about 3,400), how the design of birds' wings provides lift and maneuverability, how smog impacts our lives (and other creatures'), and many more intriguing facts about the layer of gases that envelops our planet.

The 245-page book is organized in six sections. *The Thin Blanket: The Atmosphere* introduces the subject, summarizes the origins and composition of the atmosphere, and explains the dynamic natural cycles, e.g., the carbon cycle, the nitrogen cycle, which maintain the overall balance of atmospheric gases.

The section titled *Air Apparent: A Field Guide to the Sky* explains a variety of atmospheric patterns, from why the sky appears blue to wind circulation and the flight adaptations of birds, insects, and bats. *California Air Basins* provides brief sketches of the 15 regions into which the state's atmosphere has been divided for the purpose of air quality management; local readers should be aware that we live in the South Coast Air Quality Management District.

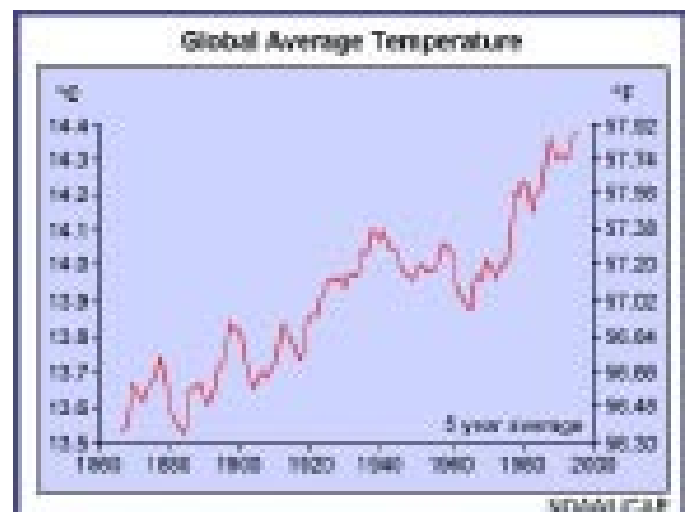
Footprints in the Air addresses air pollution issues, from the sources and types of air pollutants to their affects on us and other living creatures, including forests, agricultural crops, amphibians and other creatures. *Sharing Air with the Globe* shifts the focus to world-wide effects of human-induced atmospheric changes, including ozone depletion and climate change. The final section, *Breathing Easy*, summarizes public policy relating to air quality, in particular state efforts to regulate vehicular emissions, and concludes with some suggestions on how we can act to improve air quality. The book includes a helpful glossary, extensive references, and a thorough index.

The recent report of the U.N.-sponsored Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which concluded that

there is a 90% probability that humans are significant contributors to ongoing climate change, and the Bush administration's apparent acquiescence to the report's main conclusions both provide a powerful incentive for action on air quality standards. To take effective action, we need to educate ourselves about the workings of the atmosphere, how we affect it, and how it affects us. Carle points out that recent studies of children raised in heavily-polluted communities across the Los Angeles Basin have triple the rate of asthma compared to children elsewhere, and suffer a 20% loss of normal lung function from chronic exposure to airborne particulates and noxious gases.

The book, available in both hard cover and paperback editions, is generously illustrated with color photographs, maps, diagrams, and tables to supplement the text. One shortcoming, in terms of local interests, is the very brief coverage of the impact of port operations on regional air quality. Similarly, there is only passing mention of the \$700 million in annual crop losses due to low-level ozone alone, despite the fact that the state department of Agriculture has monitored the impact of air quality on agricultural productivity—and hence on the cost and quality of our food—for decades. Still, these are questions that can be explored in more detail elsewhere, and Carle deserves credit for writing a compelling introduction to the topic of California's air.

David Carle, a retired California state park ranger, has authored several other books, including *Introduction to Water in California*, another of the UC's *California Natural History Guides*.



JUST TWO QUESTIONS ABOUT GLOBAL WARMING

Is wildlife already being affected by global warming?

There is mounting scientific evidence that global warming is already having profound effects on birds, broader biodiversity, wildlife habitat, and ecosystems. Here are some of the ways that global warming is affecting wildlife:

Geographic range: The ranges of many plants and animals are moving toward the poles and toward higher elevations. For example, the ranges of many British breeding birds were, on average, more than 11 miles farther north in the period from 1988-91 than they were in the period from 1968-72, according to comparisons derived from breeding bird atlases. (British butterflies are also being found farther north.)

Reproduction timing: Egg-laying, flowering, and spawning are occurring earlier for many species, in some cases disrupting delicate cycles that ensure that insects and other food are available for young animals. For example, Tree Swallows across North America have advanced egg-laying by as many as nine days from 1959 to 1991.

Migration timing and patterns: Spring migration is occurring earlier and fall migration later in many species. For example, 25 migratory bird species are arriving in Manitoba, Canada, earlier than they did 63 years ago; only two are arriving later.

Frequency and intensity of pest outbreaks: Global warming increases droughts in some areas; and spruce budworm outbreaks frequently follow droughts, perhaps because dry weather increases the stress on host trees or allows more spruce budworm eggs to be laid. Spruce budworms can be lethal to spruce trees, and spruce-fir forests are a very important habitat type in the northern hemisphere for a wide variety of plants and animals.

What are some specific impacts on birds?

Under two scenarios of global climate change, there will be major shifts in the ranges and abundances of many of the 150 common bird species in the Eastern United States over the next 100 years or so; 50-52% of species will decrease in abundance by 25% or more, while 37-40% of species will exhibit range reductions of 25% or more.

Long-distance migrants may be more vulnerable to global warming than other species. As winter temperatures increased between 1980 and 1992 at Lake Constance in

Central Europe, the proportion of long-distance migrant bird species decreased while the number and proportion of residents and short-distance migrants increased. In North America, many of our favorite songbirds are long-distance migrants. Species such as Baltimore Oriole, Barn Swallow, Wood Thrush, and Scarlet Tanager could well be driven from the places where we expect to find them, more ominously, from the habitats to which they are best suited.

A 90% decline in Sooty Shearwaters (*Puffinus griseus*) off the California coast in just seven years (1987-1994) has been associated with warming of the California Current, which flows from southern British Columbia to Baja California.

All of the remaining marshland in the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (an Important Bird Area in Maryland that provides important habitat for many birds, including Black Rail and Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow, two of Audubon's Red WatchList species) is expected to disappear within 25 years as a result of both climate change and aquifer extraction.

Global warming and associated drought in the Prairie Potholes region (southeastern Alberta and northeastern Montana to southern Manitoba and western Minnesota) will lead to significant reductions in the populations of 14 species of migratory waterfowl; 30-50% fewer prairie ponds will hold water in spring by 2060, with an associated 40-50% decline in the numbers of ducks settling to breed in the area.

The ranges of many European and African birds are likely to shift by at least 600 miles, with a decline in species richness and reduction in average range sizes (based on simulations made for the impacts of a variety of late 21st century climate models on European and African birds).



Birds of the Peninsula, continued from page 5

(Sally Moite). This species may have taken up residence in Rolling Hills as well since small numbers reported over the winter were still being seen on 28 Apr (Marianne Wishner). A female Western Bluebird on the soccer fields below the Forrestal Nature Preserve on 8 Apr was not seen after (KL). A Townsend's Solitaire in Agua Amarga Canyon west of Hawthorne Blvd. in RPV on 6 Mar was the second found on the peninsula this winter (Paul Corneil). A small, gray-backed, and very lightly spotted Hermit Thrush at DP on 21 Apr was undoubtedly of the race *C. g. slevini* (KL). A Varied Thrush at DP on 10 Mar was one of several records in the area this winter (KL). Astounding was the discovery of a **Wrentit** singing in a scrap of coastal sage scrub along the north side of Ballona Creek west of Culver Blvd. in Marina del Rey 4 Mar-26 Apr (KL). This species was long considered sedentary, and was unrecorded in modern times in the Los Angeles Basin south of the Santa Monica Mountains, until one was found in the Baldwin Hills 18 Mar 2006-7 Apr 2007.

Unexpected in spring, a male **Tennessee Warbler** was at SCBG on 28 Apr (KL). A **Virginia's Warbler** in the willows behind BFM 10 Mar-1 Apr had returned for a second winter (KL). Spending its second winter at Charles Wilson Park in Torrance, a Northern Parula found on 7 Dec was still present on 19 Apr (KL). Single wintering Palm Warblers remained at MM 1 Nov-19 Apr, and at King Harbor 7 Dec-19 Apr (DM). A Palm Warbler at Harbor Park on 14 Apr was believed to be a migrant (Fred Niedermeyer et al). A Black-and-white Warbler at LMU 31 Mar-9 April was likely a returning winterer (RS); another at SCBG on 8 Apr (KL) was likely the same bird seen at a nearby residence on 31 Mar (Deanna Harwood). The wintering American Redstart found at EMJRA on 13 Jan was still present on 28 Apr (MB). A Yellow-breasted Chat at DP on 21 Apr was the only report (KL). A wintering Summer Tanager at DP since 4 Nov was last seen on 13 Apr (KL).

Exceptional were two migrant **Clay-colored Sparrows**, along with one Brewer's Sparrow, at BFM on 23 Apr; one of the Clay-colored was still present on 27 Apr (Daniel S. Cooper). A Song Sparrow with dark rusty streaking on its breast and a brown, sparsely streaked back at Harbor Park on 6 Apr fit the description of the subspecies *M. m. merrilli*, a migratory race which breeds in the interior west of the northern United States and southern Canada (KL). A White-throated Sparrow spending its second winter at DP was recorded 29 Oct-22 Apr (Carol Selvey); one of up to two at Sand Dune

Park since 17 Nov was still present on 15 Apr (RB). The Pink-sided Junco found by RB on 31 Oct at LMU was present through at least 4 Mar. Migrant Lazuli Buntings were everywhere in late April; more than 100 along the Playa Vista ponds at the base of the bluffs that border Westchester on 22 Apr was a high count (KL). Single Tricolored Blackbirds were at EMJRA and Harbor Park on 28 Apr (MB, DM). Small numbers of Yellow-headed Blackbirds in the Ballona area 11-28 Apr were expected, but **400** around BFM on 27 Apr were part of an exceptional wave of migrants (Daniel S. Cooper). The female Orchard Oriole at SCBG since 9 Dec was last seen on 21 Apr (KL). An immature male Baltimore Oriole at SCBG 17 Dec-21 Apr appeared nearly as an adult during the end of its stay (KL). The latest Purple Finches recorded were three at SCBG on 18 Mar (KL).

Following are the earliest dates on which these migrants were recorded in 2007: Elegant Tern—24 Mar PtV (KL); Vaux's Swift—6 Apr DP (KL); Black-chinned Hummingbird—31 Mar DP (KL); Western Kingbird—10 Mar WPNP (DM); Warbling Vireo—17 Mar BFM (KL); Swainson's Thrush—21 Apr DP (Carol Selvey); MacGillivray's Warbler—14 Apr DP (KL); Black-headed Grosbeak—31 Mar DP (KL); Lazuli Bunting—2 Apr Sand Dune Park (RB); Hooded Oriole—10 Mar WPNP (KL).

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.



Rock Wren
(Jess Morton)

Acronyms in Birds of the Peninsula

BFM: Ballona Freshwater Marsh
 DM: David Moody
 DP: DeForest Park
 EMJRA: Earvin Magic Johnson Recreation Area
 KL: Kevin Larson
 LMU: Loyola Marymount University
 MB: Martin Byhower
 MM: Madrona Marsh
 PtV: Point Vicente
 RB: Richard Barth
 RPV: Rancho Palos Verdes
 RS: Russell Stone
 SCBG: South Coast Botanic Garden
 WPNP: White Point Nature Preserve

Coming Full Circle, continued from page 2

Martin pauses at the Harbor Park dam. He looks hopefully at the dense reeds and plays recorded calls of American and least bitterns, reclusive, well-camouflaged birds that usually stay hidden behind vegetation. We stand there in the scattered predawn light waiting for a reply. Nothing. The cold has seeped through every layer of my clothing and grips my skin like a vise. I'm glad when we begin walking again as my blood circulates faster and provides some warmth.

We count a few more ducks on the south end and begin heading toward the north side, where songbirds like warblers scour the trees for food. Then it happens. A post-solstice sun begins creeping above the eastern horizon to light up a clear blue sky. I breathe deeply, trying to take in every bit of heat. My body, tense from the cold, begins to relax as the sun climbs higher. We sit for a moment and watch a pair of downy woodpeckers forage for food on a pair of branches. Dawn is an amazing time, when birdsong fills the air and there is a strong sense of renewal and rebirth.

We will count nearly 90 species of bird that day — not bad for 11 hours of work. But our finest moment comes near sunset. A pair of white-tailed kites, red-eyed birds with long white tails and gray backs and wings, lock talons and spin to the ground in some ancient ritual I've never seen. Then, to top things off, we hear those elusive bitterns calling as the last light of day fades. We've come full circle on this Christmas Count.

SOLAR HOMES TOUR

The Environmental Priorities Network is sponsoring its second annual Solar Homes Tour in the Palos Verdes/South Bay area on June 16, 2007 from 8:30AM to 4:00PM. Attending this tour or any home included in it will open up a new world of technologies to help you to participate in a sustainable energy economy. The homes on the tour have many other environmental features like solar hot water heating, double pane windows, low voltage lighting, off-peak timed appliances, and native and drought-tolerant plantings. This is a great opportunity to find out more about conservation, renewable energy, and energy efficiency.

You may come to the Pacific Unitarian Church, 5621 Montemalaga Drive in Rancho Palos Verdes on June 16th from 8:30 AM to 9:30AM to pick up the Tour Flyer at no cost, or you may contact the EPNers listed below to receive it.

Each home will be open to visitors for two hours, starting with the first one from 9:00AM to 11:00AM. The next home will be open from 10:00AM to noon. The last home can be visited from 3:00PM to 5:00 PM. At one home, you may view the control panel showing the meter running backwards, and at another you may inspect the electric car in the garage. You are requested to present the flyer to the host or hostess of each home that you visit.

Cosponsors of this event are the Pacific Unitarian Church Social Justice Committee and the South Coast Interfaith Council. For more information about this exciting Solar Homes Tour, please contact Jane Affonso at 310- 372 7202 or jgaffonso@gmail.com or David Dutra at 310 – 617 1395 or dtofuboy@yahoo.com.

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For back issues and chapter info, go to www.LMconsult.com/pvaudubon



Audubon Youth Award winner Kenny Matsui (West High School) with Tracy Drake. Not shown: Audubon Youth Award Winner Tyler Stock (West High School).



YES! Award winner Arsi Qajar (Vistamar High School) with former teacher Martin Byhower.



Chadwick Audubon YES! Award winners, left to right: James Calhoun, Alex Kinitz, Marc-Lloyd Ramniceanu, Lisa Kwon, and Jerry Lin.

GIFT & NEW MEMBER APPLICATION

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

PHONE

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 request to PV/SB Audubon.

7XCH/C43

Meet Learn Enjoy Restore

Sunday, June 3, 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, June 6, 7:00PM: **PV/SoBay Audubon Board Meeting** at Madrona Marsh. All Audubon members and friends are welcome to attend.

Saturday, June 9, 9:00PM: **PVP Land Conservancy Nature Walk at Klondike Canyon**. Drive through the gate on Forrestal Dr. and continue to the end. Park on the side of the road.

Sunday, June 10, 8:00PM: **Second Sunday Walk at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park**. Join Audubon to explore this important natural area in the South Bay. See meeting location below.

Wednesday, June 13, 8:00AM: **Bird Walk at Madrona Marsh** with Bob Shanman.

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

Sunday, June 17, 7:30AM: **Upper (NOT LOWER) George F Canyon, Purple Canyon and Willow Creek Trail Loop** with Martin Byhower. Meet at Martingale trailhead; take Bronco Dr. west from PV Drive East until it

turns into Martingale, then watch for trailhead sign on right. Bring water.

Tuesday, June 19, 7:00PM: **AUDUBON THIRD TUESDAY GET-TOGETHER:** Mary Freeman, Northern Saw-whet Owl of the Angeles Crest. Come to Madrona Marsh and socialize with friends, enjoy the bird quiz, raffle and prizes from Wild Birds Unlimited.

Wednesday, June 20, 8:00AM: **Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden**. Leader: Stephanie Bryan.

Sunday, July 1, 8:00AM: **Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden**. Leader: Stephanie Bryan.

Sunday, July 8, 8:00AM: **Second Sunday Walk at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park**.

Wednesday, July 11, 8:00AM: **Bird Walk at Madrona Marsh**. Leader: Bob Shanman.

Saturday, July 14, 9:00AM: **PVP Land Conservancy Shoreline Park Bluff walk**. From the south end of Anchovy Ave. in San Pedro, turn right and park along W. Paseo del Mar. Walk south on Stargazer St., then north (right) on Warmouth St. and meet at the end of the street.

Tuesday, July 17, 7:00PM: **AUDUBON THIRD TUESDAY GET-TOGETHERS** featuring Jon Feenstra, PhD, "Pelagic Birding in the California Bight." Come and socialize with friends, enjoy the bird quiz, raffle and prizes from Wild Birds Unlimited. At Madrona Marsh Preserve.

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

Sunday, July 22, 7:30AM: **"Best of the South Bay" PV/SoBay Audubon birding/natural history tour of LA River Shorebird Preserve**, featuring migration and rarities. Leader: Martin Byhower. From the 405, go north on the 710 Freeway about 4 miles to Del Amo St. Take the east exit across the river to the first right at Oregon Ave. and try to find a shady spot to park in the residential area across from the school. If you have or can borrow a scope, bring it.

Sunday, Aug. 5, 8:00AM: **Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden**. Leader: Stephanie Bryan.

Wednesday, Aug. 8, 8:00AM: **Bird Walk at Madrona Marsh**. Leader: Bob Shanman.

CALENDAR

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 <http://www.pvplc.org/>, or contact them by email at info@pvplc.org or by telephone at 310-541-7611.

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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!

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.