



HUMMIN'

PALOS VERDES/SOUTH BAY AUDUBON SOCIETY

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MORTON TO JOIN NATIONAL BOARD

The National Audubon Society's Board of Directors decided several decades ago to have chapter-elected Board members help make the organization's decisions. Jess Morton was one of three people in our region (California, Hawaii, and Guam) who ran for this office this Spring, and when the votes were counted at the end of June, Jess had won! He will begin to serve in December 2006, but as you can imagine, he is already well down the track with plans, ideas, and enthusiasm that will make Audubon a much better organization now and in the future.

Here are Jesse's initial thoughts on this new role.



At the beginning of 2007, my life's work with Audubon will enter a new phase. I will be joining the Board of Directors of the National Audubon Society. I will become one of the 36 environmental activists who set policy for NAS. My role will be to represent the 52 chapters and their members that make up the Western Region—California, Hawaii and Guam. It's a position I have

worked toward actively for more than a decade, and one for which my experience as a chapter leader for nearly 30 years will prove crucial.

It will be work. It will be enriching. It will be a new direction for me. And it will be fun.

Our own co-president Fran tells me that of all the boards

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UPCOMING CHAPTER GET-TOGETHERS

Are you interested in learning more about the sea birds of the South Bay? Or in using native plants in your garden to attract birds and butterflies? Well, come to the Chapter Third Tuesday Get-Togethers on September 19 and October 17 at 7:00PM at the Madrona Marsh Preserve. Besides listening to fascinating talks, you will be able to test your bird knowledge in a bird quiz, and test your luck with a raffle, with prizes from Wild Birds Unlimited.

On September 19, the Chapter is hosting Bernardo Alps, who will share his knowledge of the South Bay's sea birds. Bernardo is a professional photographer and has accumulated thousands of marine mammal and bird photos through the years. He is president of the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Cetacean Society and has led field trips to the Gray Whale birthing lagoons in Baja California as well as marine mammal and birding trips up and down the California coast. Each year, he teaches classes on birds and marine habitats for the Whale Watch Naturalist Course cosponsored by the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium.

On October 17, Dr. Connie Vadheim will describe the use of native plants that can attract birds and butterflies to your backyard. Dr. Vadheim is a plant

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

by Martin Byhower

The Wild Bunch, the Word Botchers, and the BushWhackers are all humbled and grateful to you. Your three Birdathon 2006 teams saw a great number of birds and raised significant funds for our important conservation and education endeavors this spring. Luck was with the BushWhackers, in particular, for we picked the "perfect day" and set a record for number of bird species seen in our chosen count area (150!) by a team adhering to our self-imposed "rules." *(For a species-by-species account, check my website at birdingsocal.com or birdingsocal.org, depending upon which of my URL's is functioning by the time you read this!)*



I had intended this column to be a summary of highlights from each count. Instead, I want to tell you why I think it is important that we do these crazy things. By crazy, I mean, spending hours to days on advance planning, combing through all the relevant books, bird alert sites, tapes, references (such as the wonderfully indexed list of bird sightings from our regular bird column on the PV Audubon website at <http://www.lmconsult.com/pvaudubon/birdsearch.html>), recent weather maps, and more. We must harass our possibly soon-to-be former friends for sponsorships yet again, then try to get them to pay up. A lot of bookkeeping is involved. There are a few trips to Trader Joe's to stock up on energy supplies for the day, some prayers for good weather and some cajoling to convince some teammates that yes, we do need to start our non-stop day at 4:30 AM to check for owls. Finally, we get to a frantic and tense but deliriously exciting and exhausting day of chasing birds, second guessing our plans, constantly having to tear ourselves away from an almost seen or poorly seen species in order to get to the next spot...you get the idea.

But why, aside from the fun, though slightly masochistic part, and the money we raise for important causes, should we bother with Birdathons? Please,

PLEASE, if you haven't done so yet, go see Al Gore's documentary film, *An Inconvenient Truth*, and you will begin to understand.

What bothers me most about global climate change is that the scientists and environmentalists I find most credible paint a particularly disturbing picture of loss of biodiversity. One oft-cited piece of evidence of the potential ecological harm from climate change is the decline in numbers of migratory bird species caused by a change in the timing of the availability of their prey.

Innate "biological clocks" dictate activities in species as diverse as bacteria and humans. However, these clocks are calibrated by and tied to a variety of different, often unrelated natural cluing factors. If, say, temperature influences plant germination and insect metamorphosis, but photoperiod (day length) dictates bird migration, then increasing temperatures at high latitudes can cause the plants and their caterpillar grazers to have completed their seasonal cycle before the migratory birds arrive. Lacking sufficient protein to feed their developing young, neo-tropical migrants can experience near-total reproductive failure, and we are beginning to see this process play out.

Birds are extremely sensitive to habitat disruption; yet, in some respects, migratory species might have a survival edge when it comes to climate change. Indeed, a widely accepted explanation for the origin of bird migration is the need for species to adapt to past periods of climate change, such as those that occurred during Pleistocene and perhaps earlier interglacial periods. If winters get too cold or summers too hot, then moving up or down latitudes or altitudes might be advantageous, and if you have wings, it is quite feasible.

Birds often learn the fine details of their migration routes through experience, but the fundamentals of migration are mostly innate. Many species are programmed from birth to "look for" and memorize a spot in the sky that remains relatively motionless. In the northern hemisphere, this spot is currently Polaris, the North Star.

During their first migration, many species are guided solely by this built-in urge to fly at night while maintaining a certain orientation with respect to the stationary spot in the sky they memorized from the first moment they could focus their eyes upon it. Eventually, if they fly enough nights and in the right direction, they will run into suitable habitat occupied by others of their own kind.

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RE-IMAGINING CALIFORNIA'S WILDERNESS

A Book Review

By Allen Franz

What was California like before the arrival of Western Civilization? Were its indigenous inhabitants wise stewards of the land, or a predatory scourge? *Tending the Wild: Native American Knowledge and the Management of California's Natural Resources* (University of California Press, 2005), by M. Kat Anderson, provides both a well-documented picture of indigenous Californians' understanding of their environment, and a challenge to romantics who imagine pre-Columbian California as a pristine wilderness unscathed by human impacts. Of equal importance, the book offers guidelines for natural resource restoration and management in an age of increasing environmental change.

Building on earlier studies such as Robert Heizer and Albert Elsasser's *The Natural World of the California Indians*, Anderson combines her years of ethno-ecological fieldwork among native elders (mostly in Northern and Central California) with a survey of the archaeological and historical literature. The result is a very readable text, supplemented by detailed notes, bibliographic references and a very thorough index.

Perhaps the most striking message that Anderson has drawn from her fieldwork with native elders is that plants and animals in California—and elsewhere—have co-evolved with humans, to the point that humans and their ecosystems became mutually interdependent, at least until Spanish, Mexican, and American colonization.

In making her case, Anderson expands on the work of earlier researchers. In the early 20th century, in an age when it seemed common sense to eradicate wolves and mountain lions, Forest Service pioneer Aldo Leopold argued that forest health depended on wolves and other carnivores to control herbivore populations, so that forests weren't grazed and browsed to death—ultimately destroying the forests, starving the herbivores and carnivores, and even accelerating weathering and wasting of the soils and rocks. Leopold vigorously opposed the Forest Service's policy of exterminating large carnivores, a counter-intuitive position later paralleled by Harold Biswell's crusade against the government's policy of wildfire suppression. Biswell documented the harmful effects of wildfire suppression, most notably the decline in biological diversity as large,

perennial plant species displaced annuals and smaller species and promoted the accumulation of fuel materials until wildfires exploded into catastrophic firestorms. Based in part on the record of Native American burning practices, Biswell advocated prescribed burns both to maintain biological diversity and to reduce the risk of firestorms.

Anderson argues in *Tending the Wild* that people are not an inherently destructive force in "natural" ecosystems, and in fact that people can play a central role in optimizing the vitality of their environments even as they use it, as long as they understand the ecosystem and their impacts.

Tending the Wild describes California at the time of contact, including the impacts of human gathering, hunting, and fishing, then summarizes the impact of European contact and the loss of local knowledge of, and connection to, the landscape. The bulk of the book is an account of indigenous resource management practices and the ecological philosophies underlying them, from fisheries, game animals and plant foods to basketry materials and fire.

In the Coda to the volume, Anderson lists five principles that she believes are essential to restoring a healthy world:

- The ecological history of the land matters for management today, and indigenous practices are at the roots of this history.
- Humans can use natural resources to meet their needs without destroying those resources.
- Human prehistory is more complex than the simple dichotomy between hunter-gatherer and agriculturalist would indicate.
- Achieving sustainable use of the earth's resources will involve cultural changes as much as advances in knowledge and transformation of economies.
- Establishing more intimate relationships with nature and rooting ourselves in a place foster self-fulfillment and a more responsible stance toward the natural world.

In an age of unrestrained consumerism, where virtually anything can be had for a price, and in which we are despoiling and depleting natural resources from clean air and water and minerals to the biological riches of the lands and waters, it is sobering to pause and ask how long we can keep this up. Are we leaving our children and grandchildren a better world? *Tending the Wild* does not address these issues in any great detail, but it provides ample material for a reasoned discussion of sustainable lifestyles.

M. Kat Anderson holds a doctorate in Wildlands Resource Science from UC Berkeley and is on the faculty at UC Davis and on the staff of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Center.

BIRDS OF THE PENINSULA

May and June 2006

by Kevin Larson

All was well in early May. April's impressive stream of migrant land birds continued. Early spring rarities such as a Palm Warbler and a Northern Waterthrush in the first week of May seemed to mark the onset of another great spring vagrant season. But it was not to be. Perhaps we were spoiled by last year's impressive assortment of warblers and other passerines rarely recorded in migration west of the Great Divide. One or two areas in southern California—invariably, either along coastal sections or in oases of the desert interior—generally record the lion's share of rarities during the late May and June season, but reports indicated very low vagrant numbers in all areas. Compared to other areas, a Laughing Gull, an Eastern Kingbird, a Red-eyed Vireo, and a number of lesser rarities found locally represented a fairly good showing. Local birding is not all about vagrants. Unusual records of species that are early, late, summering, or breeding are exciting to obtain, and further our knowledge of the status of local birds. As usual, a few fall migrants—especially shorebirds—were recorded before the end of June. What will this fall's migration bring? Get your binoculars out.

The most notable weather event during May and June was an unusually late Pacific storm 21-22 May. Rainfall accumulation was enough to break records for both dates at LAX, and for 22 May in Downtown Los Angeles. "May gray" was the weatherman's buzzword; marine layer clouds were present during the first twenty days of the month, and more came later. The marine layer was a significant weather feature during June, but it was less pervasive compared to May. A monsoonal flow brought warm, moist air from the southeast during the last week of June, including a few thunderstorms in the L. A. Basin on 26 Jun, and a record high temperature of 94 degrees at LAX on 27 Jun.

Hanging on as a local breeder, a family of California Quail was at the Forrestal Nature Preserve (FNP) on 25 Jun (Kevin Larson-KL). A female Northern Pintail summering at Del Rey Lagoon was seen with a second female on 30 Jun; a male at the L. A. River (LAR) near Willow St. was seen one day only on 11 Jun (KL). Completely unexpected in summer was a female Buffle-



Laughing Gull
(Lee Karney, USFWS)

head at the Ballona Freshwater Marsh (BFM) on 20 Jun (Richard Barth-RB). Single Clark's Grebes at Harbor Park (HP) on 10 Jun (KL) and at the mouth of Ballona Creek 24 Jun-6 Jul (RB) were unusual summer records.

Single Northern Fulmars at Pt. Vicente (PtV) on 26 May and 9 Jun were stragglers (KL). A **Black Storm-Petrel** seen from PtV on 9 Jun is the first storm-petrel of any species reported from shore locally this decade (KL). Storm-petrels were seen in a number of years from shore during the 1990's. Single Cattle Egrets were in the Ballona Wetland area 11-14 May (Bob Shanman-BS), and at HP on 21 May (KL). White-faced Ibis sightings included one along Ballona Creek on 14 May (Jonathan Coffin-JC), and five over DeForest Park (DP) on 31 May (Jeff Boyd-JB). White-tailed Kites depart early and return early; singles at HP on 10 Jun (KL), and in the Ballona Wetland area on 17 Jun (BS) were the first seen locally since 12 Feb.

After weeks of incubation, many Black-necked Stilt and American Avocet nests at LAR were washed away during the late-season rains of 21-22 May. They recovered quickly, and nest numbers were up to pre-storm levels by mid-June. Infrequent monsoonal storms in summer can still be a threat to these nesting species. The threat I fear the most in future years is from man. Only a small increase in water flow from urban runoff or a decrease from possible future water reclamation projects would be disastrous for these nesting species, and the many thousands of shorebirds that depend on the river's food resource during fall migration. A Black Turnstone at Cabrillo Beach (CB) on 20 Jun (Bernardo Alps-BA), and two Surfbirds at Playa del Rey on 24 Jun

(KL) were present at times earlier than fall migrants are expected.

An immature **Laughing Gull** at CB on 6 Jun was an outstanding find (BA). One Elegant Tern and two Black Skimmers at LAR near Willow St. on 24 Jun were inland, where rare (JB, KL). A Pigeon Guillemot in breeding plumage flew north past PtV on 18 Jun (KL). This continues a trend of adults sighted at PtV each year in June or July since 2003. Since this species is not known to nest along the coast south of Santa Barbara County, these sightings may represent a post-breeding dispersal. Single Cassin's Auklets were seen from PtV on 7 May and 26 May (KL). A Eurasian Collared-Dove flying north over PtV on 7 May (KL) added to a few area sightings in April. It seems inevitable that the incessant westward colonization of this Old World species, introduced in the Bahamas and moving to Florida some years ago, will someday make it a common resident in our area. An adult male Rufous Hummingbird at a feeder in Palos Verdes Estates on **18 Jun** was evidently an early fall migrant (Jim and Michelle Gabelich).

Single Dusky Flycatchers were along LAR south of Willow St. on 7 May (David Bell-DB), at Sand Dune Park (SDP) on 9 May (RB), and at Madrona Marsh (MM) on 22 May (David Moody-DM). Two pairs of nesting Say's Phoebes in our area last year represented our first known breeding records. These two pairs were successful in using the same nest sites again this year. The pair at MM fledged three young by 22 May and the pair nesting under the railroad bridge south of Del Amo Blvd. along LAR fledged at least two young by 11 Jun (JB). One pair each of Cassin's and Western kingbirds bred at Banning Park (BP) during June (KL). This is



Black Turnstone on Nest
(Terry Hall, USFWS)



Bufflehead Drake
(Donna Dewhurst, USFWS)

the first nesting of either species I know of at the park. Another pair of Western Kingbirds was nesting in the eastern (as yet undeveloped) Playa Vista area, where they bred in 2004 (KL). Cassin's Kingbirds nest annually in our area in low numbers. Western Kingbirds have nested locally four times now since 2003, following a long period without known breeding records. An **Eastern Kingbird** at MM on 30 May was among the few very good rarities found this spring (Barbara Courtois).

A Bell's Vireo was singing in the willows of the Nature Trail section of DP 28-29 May, but was not found after (KL). A singing Hutton's Vireo in upper George F Canyon in Rolling Hills on 28 May, and four individuals seen there on 4 Jul add to evidence of a resident breeding population in this area (KL). Saving our vagrant season in the final hour was a singing **Red-eyed Vireo** at DP on 18 Jun (KL). A pair of Tree Swallows feeding nestlings at a nest box along the edge of the lake at HP on 17 Jun is only the second nesting attempt in the PV Count Circle in modern times (KL). It is unclear whether a nest-building pair there in 2003 ever hatched young. Tree Swallows have taken well to the nest boxes at BFM, breeding there for the third year in a row. Up to two Bank Swallows were at BFM 12-13 May (KL, Tom Ryan). A family of House Wrens near a nest box at the Chandler Preserve in Rolling Hills Estates on 25 Jun adds another peninsula breeding record (KL). House Wrens bred for the third consecutive year at DP; the young were out of the nest by 1 Jul (KL).

Eight Blue-gray Gnatcatchers recorded in the area after the first of May was very unusual since migrants generally depart before mid-April; the latest reports were

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AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH

Al Gore's Movie—A Review

By Jess Morton

Mostly, I don't do movies. I rarely go to them. I do not rent them. I turn away from ads for them. They lack socially redeeming qualities. Mostly. But *An Inconvenient Truth*, which summarizes the evidence for global warming and its consequences, is an exception. And it's a film not to be missed. At last, the real Al Gore has stood up.

An Inconvenient Truth is exactly that. It is the real world no one has wanted to acknowledge for decades, and few enough will talk about now. The truth about global warming was too inconvenient for Ronald Reagan and the Me Decade crowd who might have stemmed the consequences had the truth not required clear thought, sensible planning and less greed.

It was too inconvenient for the first Bush or Bill Clinton, even if they were willing to admit the truth of the matter to themselves. Who knows what they might have done, if the political will had been there.

It was too inconvenient for the politician in Al Gore six years ago. He hid from it, and with it, hid the real man from the American public.

Humankind has paid a stiff price for these failures of judgment.

Al Gore's movie, *An Inconvenient Truth*, lays out the reality of global warming for everyone to see. The arguments and data are presented clearly, sometimes simplified for ease of presentation, sometimes done with humor, and sometimes with pathos that reaches the heart. But never with condescension. The viewer is always treated as a sentient, caring being. Only flat-earthers will deny the message: soaring human popula-

tions and hugely expanding economies based on fossil fuels are changing our world. We do not know what the impacts on resources—water, food and forests, among them—will be, but they will be outside the experience of any human beings, past or present.

An Inconvenient Truth is also a personal story, a documentary on the life of Al Gore and his journey toward this all-so-inconvenient truth. The death by lung cancer of the older sister he dearly loved illustrates the cost of not heeding an inconvenient truth. Tobacco was one of the Gore family farm's principal crops. When she died, the Gores lost their heart for growing tobacco. They could no longer ignore the Surgeon General's Report. It's simple truth that tobacco kills.

What makes this sequence so powerful is the way in which Gore shows the actions of the tobacco industry.

We hear the argumentativeness of tobacco's bought and paid-for Congressional representatives. We see the phony reports, the distorted science the industry offered up, the consultants' memos that tell the lobbyists that the public will not insist on action if it can be made to seem that there is debate in the scientific community on the issue.

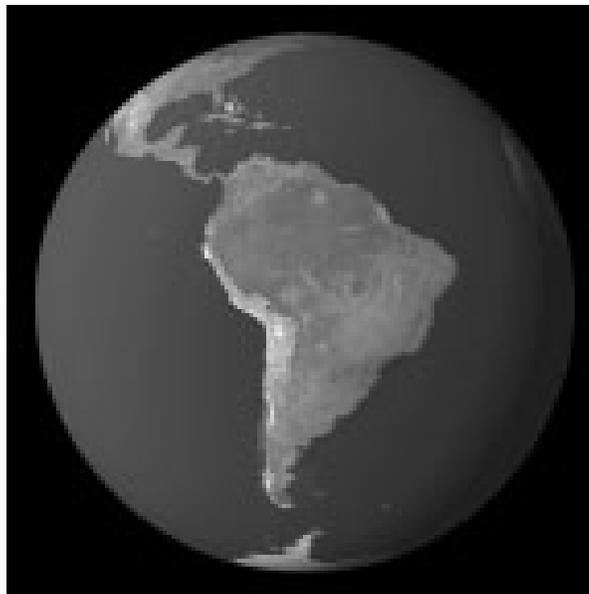
Then we see the travesty replayed. But today's liars and distorters of truth are the fossil fuel lobbies. The extraction companies. Their political hacks.

There is more in this film. The fragile beauty of a stream. The self-discovery of what really matters in life. A presentation of

fact that will edify even the expert. It is all worth seeing, something I surprise myself saying. Perhaps *An Inconvenient Truth* does not go far enough for my taste. But then, I first became aware of growing atmospheric CO₂ concentrations in 1960. And I have been an environmental activist for half the time since. Yet I didn't make this superb documentary. Al Gore did. *An Inconvenient Truth* lays it

on the line.

This is truth we all must comprehend—and act on.



YOUR BACKYARD HABITAT

Ashy-leaf Buckwheat (*Eriogonum cinereum*)

by Dr. Connie Vadheim

There never seems to be enough space for all the plants I'd like to include in my garden, so those that serve multiple purposes are high on my list of desirable garden plants. Our native Buckweats (*Eriogonum*s) have lovely flowers and interesting foliage; in addition they are great habitat plants for insects and birds. One of my personal favorites is the Ashy-leaf Buckwheat, a native of our South Bay dunes, bluffs and coastal sage scrub. This plant does well even under local seaside conditions.



Ashy-leaf Buckwheat grows as a mounded perennial shrub 2-3 ft. tall and up to 5 ft. in diameter. (Don't worry – you can prune it to keep it manageable). It is prized for its unique and

attractive foliage, which is many-branched and gray-green to nearly white. The leaves are larger than most of our local buckweats.

Ashy-leaf Buckwheat has a long flowering period, usually from June through October. Buckweats are important nectar plants for many insects including bees, wasps and butterflies. One reason is the sheer number of flowers. The tiny pink-white flowers are clustered in dense flowering heads and each plant produces many heads. So



buckweats are not only good insect habitat, but are also attractive additions to the summer.

Buckweats are easy to grow, given the right garden conditions. They do best in full sun but will tolerate afternoon shade in hot gardens. They do require well-drained soils. They are very drought tolerant once established, but will lose their leaves with no summer water. Ashy-leaf Buckwheat tolerates a little summer water and benefits from an organic mulch. Do not fertilize. Prune every few years in fall to control growth. This plant can be cut back almost to the base.



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 second Saturday of each month at the Center.

Birds of the Peninsula, continued from page 5

one at MM on 22 May (DM), one at SDP 26-28 May (KL), and one at the South Coast Botanic Garden (SCBG) on **4 Jun** (Jess Morton). The pair of Western Bluebirds found at BP on 22 Apr was last seen on 6 May (Martin Byhower-MB). For the fourth consecutive year, our only resident pair of Western Bluebirds bred in the vicinity of Ridgecrest Intermediate School in RPV. Three fledglings were noted by early June, and the pair was incubating another set of eggs by the end of the month (Sam Bloom). Swainson's Thrushes, at locations where they have bred, were singing at HP 21 May-9 Jun (KL), and in upper George F Canyon 28 May-4 Jul (MB, KL). A Hermit Thrush at DP on **20 May** was very late (JB, KL). Its small size and very light spotting suggest the race *C. g. slevini*, a subspecies that likely occurs occasionally as a transient.

Transient Phainopeplas included one at FNP on 21

May (MB) and two at DP on 31 May (Karen Gilbert). Phainopeplas formerly bred in Rolling Hills, but several years have passed without nesting records. The discovery of a small colony in upper George F Canyon on 28 May was exciting news (MB). One of apparently three pairs present that day was building a nest. Surprising was the discovery of a singing **California Thrasher** along Ballona Creek in Marina del Rey 14 May-4 Jun (JC). A Palm Warbler at Alondra Park (AP) on 1 May was a good spring find (DM). A singing Black-and-white Warbler was at the north end of HP on 3 Jun (KL). The best warbler found this spring was a Northern Waterthrush at MM on 4 May (DM). A Yellow-breasted Chat was singing in a thicket of nonnative shrubs at SCBG from 29 May to 25 Jun (MB); it could not be found on 3 Jul. Another singing chat was along Ballona Creek in Marina del Rey on 4 Jun (KL).

An immature male Summer Tanager was at SCBG on 17 Jun (KL). Rare in spring along the coast, a Brewer's Sparrow at White's Point Nature Preserve on 3 May was the second found in the area this season (DM). Sally Moite saw a Black-chinned Sparrow along the dirt road below the south end of Crenshaw Blvd. in RPV on 12 May, not far from where up to two were present at FNP 23-29 Apr. A **Black-throated Sparrow** at DP on 14 May was an unexpected occurrence (Clarann Levakis). Since Dark-eyed Juncos have normally departed by early April, a male of the Oregon race at DP on **28 May** was an astonishingly late transient (JB). Single Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were found in Rolling Hills 15-16 May (Marianne Wishner), and at Ballona Lagoon on 19 May (DB). A female Indigo Bunting was a nice find at DP on 28 May (JB).

The only Tricolored Blackbirds reported were not at suitable nesting locations, but at known wintering sites: two were at AP on 20 May, and four were at Earvin Magic Johnson Recreation Area (EMJRA) in Willowbrook on 23 Jun (KL). A Western Meadowlark at Friendship Park in San Pedro on 25 Jun was present during the nesting season (KL). This species has declined drastically as a breeder in the Palos Verdes Count Circle; there are no recent nesting records. Three Yellow-headed Blackbirds at HP on 14 May were the last seen locally this spring (Carol Selvey-CS). A female Pine Siskin at DP on **20 May** was an unusually late record for the lowlands of southern California (KL).

Here are some late dates of migrants or winterers in 2006: American Wigeon (2)—12 May AP (DM); Green-winged Teal—**27 May** EMJRA (KL); Glaucous-winged

Acronyms in Birds of the Peninsula

AP: Alondra Park
 BA: Bernardo Alps
 BFM: Ballona Freshwater Marsh
 BP: Banning Park
 BS: Bob Shanman
 CB: Cabrillo Beach
 CS: Carol Selvey
 DB: David Bell
 DM: David Moody
 DP: DeForest Park
 EMJRA: Earvin Magic Johnson Recreation Area
 FNP: Forrestal Nature Preserve
 HP: Harbor Park
 JB: Jeff Boyd
 JC: Jonathan Coffin
 KL: Kevin Larson
 LAR: Los Angeles River
 MB: Martin Byhower
 MM: Madrona Marsh
 PtV: Pt. Vicente
 RB: Richard Barth
 SCBG: South Coast Botanic Garden
 SDP: Sand Dune Park

Gull—27 May Dockweiler State Beach (KL); Sora (3)—11 May MM (DM); Vaux's Swift—22 May MM (DM); Hammond's Flycatcher—**21 May** BP (KL); Hermit Thrush—**20 May** DP (JB); Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's)—14 May Wilmington Drain (KL); Hermit Warbler—29 May DP (KL); Fox Sparrow (subspecies group undetermined)—**5 May** BFM (DM); Golden-crowned Sparrow—7 May FNP (CS); Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon)—**28 May** DP (JB).

Following are the earliest dates on which these fall migrants were noted in 2006: Long-billed Curlew—21 Jun CB (BA); Western Sandpiper—30 Jun LAR (RB).

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



House Wren
(Dave Menke, USFWS)

DRAGONFLIES

Dragonflies fly up to 85 miles a day, according to researchers who attached tiny transmitters to 14 green damer dragonflies on the Atlantic coast of the U.S.

Between 25 and 50 species of dragonflies are thought to migrate, among the 5,200 known species of dragonflies.

The 14 tracked dragonflies followed paths similar to that of songbirds.

Each transmitter had one-third the weight of a paper clip.

President's Column, continued from page 2

Birdathons (and Christmas Counts) inevitably turn up what we call "Vagrants," but I am hoping that at least some of these may in fact prove to be "Vanguards" instead. Their presence may be telling us something important. Certainly, the data we have collected has proven critical in documenting climate-induced population declines and it is increasingly difficult for the government to deny that climate change is both real and caused by human activity.

The lesson is that data, mundane as it may be, is critical for any assessment of the state of the world's climate and its effect on species. And looking back, with this column I have now talked myself into committing to at least another year or two of the near-insanity that is a Birdathon, and perhaps I have rationalized a slightly more hopeful view of the perpetuation of post-climate change biodiversity.

Some Things You Can Do

While Government and Industry Get Real About Global Warming

- 1) Buy energy-saving appliances. Look for the "Energy Star" label when you shop. Visit www.energystar.gov for more information.
- 2) Lower the temperature in your hot-water tank to 120 degrees.
- 3) Insulate your home, hot-water heater, and all water pipes.
- 4) Recycle cans, bottles, paper, plastic, and newspapers to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. If your community doesn't offer recycling services, request them.
- 5) Buy products that are made of recycled material, including recycled paper for your printer.
- 6) Keep car tires inflated. This cuts down on fuel costs, unnecessary emissions, and lengthens the life of your tires.
- 7) Plant deciduous trees around your home to increase shade and to absorb carbon. Reforestation, even in your own backyard, is one of the best ways to balance out emissions of greenhouse gases from your activities.
- 8) Invest in "Green Power" for electricity in your home. See www.epa.gov/greenpower for more information.

Morton Joins National Board, continued from page 1

she knows, this is the one to be on. Easy it's not. But the work is so worthwhile, and the Board meets in so many great places. The birding is always wonderful!

There will be other travel, too. Over my three year term of office, I plan to visit as many of the region's chapters as possible. Where I can, I will present a program to the general membership, as well as meet with the board. In the past, I have given programs on butterflies, birds, wildlife and/or Audubon YES! for at least a dozen chapters. Now I will be able to do programs for the rest of the chapters. Marianas Audubon, here I come!

There are three basic ideas I want to pursue as NAS Board member. First is Audubon's future with young people. As with many organizations today, Audubon's membership is aging. Nor does it have the diversity it needs to if Audubon is to represent all Americans adequately. Audubon YES! offers a vehicle to help offset those weaknesses. I want to make YES! a truly national program.

Second is communications. The grass roots nature of Audubon cannot reach its full potential without exemplary communications. Fifteen years ago, when I proposed an all-purpose Audubon Information Clearinghouse, the technical capacity to make such a thing happen was still in its infancy. The Internet and the widespread use of personal computers have changed that. Audubon must act on this opportunity in a concerted way if it is to be as effective as it needs to be in protecting our environment.

Third, it is essential that NAS and chapters work together to reach common goals. This will be the most challenging of all the tasks that fall to me as NAS Board member and chapter representative for the Western Region. I see my job as striving to align the work of dozens of independent entities—NAS, chapters, state offices, and Audubon sanctuaries, centers and other

facilities. All are working for a better environment, each in their own way. But we will be far stronger, far more effective working seamlessly together. Talk about herding cats—with Audubon, I'm dealing with eagles!

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.

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

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

Chapter Get-Togethers, continued from page 1

ecologist with a particular interest in the native plants of the South Bay. She is an adjunct Professor of biology at CSU Dominguez Hills, where she teaches classes in plant physiology, environmental restoration and native plant propagation. She also teaches classes in native plant gardening at Madrona Marsh Preserve. Dr. Vadheim's current research focuses on the use of local native plants for environmental restoration and remediation. Her students are also studying the habitat value of native trees and shrubs in the urban landscape.

Note that there is no Get-Together in August. In November, Kimball Garrett of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles will talk about birding locally. In December, the Chapter will hold its holiday party. The year 2007 will begin with an update on Madrona Marsh and more from Tracy Drake, and in February Kiwi Donovan will describe her search for the ultimate life list.

GIFT & NEW MEMBER APPLICATION

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ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

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E-MAIL _____

MEMBERSHIP, circle one:

chapter only OR *national*.....\$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

(See Calendar Locations
and Information Box for directions.)

Sunday, Aug. 6, 8:00AM: **Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden.** Leader: Stephanie Bryan. Charge for nonmembers of the SCBG Foundation; you can join at the entrance.

Wednesday, Aug. 9, 8:00AM: **Bird Walk at Madrona Marsh** with Bob Shanman.

AUDUBON THIRD TUESDAY GET-TOGETHERS will not be held in August.

Saturday, Aug. 12, 4:00-6:00PM: **PV Peninsula Conservancy Nature Walk at Long Point Shoreline.** Park on Nantasket Drive (From PV Drive South in RPV, turn south onto Seawolf Dr., then right on Beachview Dr., and left on Nantasket.)

Wednesday, Aug. 16, 8:00AM: **Bird Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden.** Leader: Stephanie Bryan. (Georgene Foster has retired. Thank you, Georgene!)

Saturday, Aug. 26, 10:00AM-2:00PM: **Audubon Board and Chapter planning meeting at Madrona Marsh.** Lunch will be provided; everyone is welcome! RSVP to Fran: 310-316-0041.

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

Saturday, Sept. 9, 9-11:00AM: **PV Peninsula Conservancy Nature Walk at South Coast Botanic Garden.**

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

Saturday, Sept. 16, 9-11AM: **Annual Beach/Wetland Cleanup Day at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park.** Meet at the Anaheim St/Vermont lot. Bring gloves, hat, repellent/sunscreen and water, other materials provided. Call 539-0050 for more information.

Sunday, Sept. 17, 8-11AM: **"Best of the South Bay" PV/Audubon birding/natural history trip at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park.** Leader: Martin Byhower. Please email Martin (avitropic@sbcglobal.net) or visit his website (www.birdingsocal.net or www.birdingsocal.com) for a complete listing of upcoming walks.

Tuesday, Sept. 19, 7:00PM: **AUDUBON THIRD TUESDAY GET-TOGETHERS** featuring Bernardo Alps on "Sea Birds of the South Bay." Come and socialize with friends, enjoy the bird quiz, raffle and prizes from Wild Birds Unlimited. At Madrona Marsh Preserve.

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

Saturday, Sept. 23, 11AM-4PM: **Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park Celebration** with booths and event, arcade games, a race, a scavenger hunt, nature walks and more. Check with Julie Greer for details (julierg@mac.com).

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. While Martin is redesigning his website at <http://birdingsocal.com>, contact him at avitropic@sbcglobal.net.

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

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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.AudubonYES.org

The Chapter also would welcome **volunteers** to assist with Chapter programs. If this opportunity seems attractive to you, please contact Frances at frances@monolake.org.

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