

Drawing by  
Guy Coheleach

# THE WRENTIT

**Pasadena Audubon Society**  
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

Founded 1904

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*To bring the excitement of birds to our community through  
birding, education and the conservation of bird habitats.*

November 2018 - January 2019

## Spotted Sandpiper

Identifying shorebirds is always a puzzle: Is it a Least or a Western Sandpiper? A Long-billed or Short-billed Dowitcher? So I'm always grateful when I see a Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularius*). It's not the spots that set this one apart. Those are only seen when the bird is in breeding plumage, and the Spotted Sandpiper is seen most often in winter and during migration with few if any spots. What sets it apart is the way it constantly bobs its tail up and down. We don't yet know why the bird bobs so insistently, but we do know that Spotted Sandpiper chicks start bobbing as soon as they're up on their feet, which is right after hatching. So if the sandpiper is bobbing away, I know it's likely to be a Spotted Sandpiper.

We don't see Spotted Sandpipers in large flocks, like the smaller peeps. They're more often seen alone right at the shoreline, foraging for worms, crustaceans and aquatic and terrestrial insects. The slate-gray mantle and white eyeline make for a handsome bird, and at this time of year, there may be a smudge or two remaining on an otherwise clean white belly. If the bird takes off, look for the stiff, stuttering wingbeats. That flight pattern is another good indicator that you've got a Spotted Sandpiper.

The Spotted Sandpiper is also distinct because of its polyandrous breeding behavior. This means that a female will mate with several males and lay several clutches. The males will do most of the incubating and care for the young. Females arrive on breeding grounds before the males and will stake out a nesting area, defending it aggressively and even fighting with other females. The nest is a grassy cup placed on the ground close to water and concealed under grasses and broad-leaved plants. The Los Angeles County Breeding Bird Atlas<sup>1</sup> indicated a small nesting population of less than 100 pairs. The Spotted Sandpiper is the most abundant shorebird in North America. It is migratory and breeds across the entire continent from the southern edge of the Arctic to the southern states. Its wintering grounds extend south all the way to Argentina and Chile. Despite its relative abundance, this bird's population has declined by 51% since 1964. Loss of habitat and compromised water quality continue to be major threats to this handsome bird.



**Spotted Sandpiper**

**© Darren Dowell**

*Lois Brunet*

<sup>1</sup> Note: The Los Angeles County Breeding Bird Atlas, published by the Los Angeles Audubon Society, is written by PAS member Larry W. Allen and Kimball L. Garrett, with species distribution maps compiled by Mark C. Wimer.

## President's Perch

A few days ago, I was drinking my mid-morning coffee as I lazily gazed out the window that looks over my back garden. I was delighted to see my AFOF (First of Fall, for the uninitiated) Yellow-rumped Warbler. That perked me up because experience has taught me that when one warbler shows up in my garden, another is sure to follow. Sure enough, a few moments later I was treated to a flash of yellow and olive. I got my bins to investigate and was delighted to see a MacGillivray's Warbler hopping around the edge of the pond. What a wonderful sight!

As I continued my day, I could hear the MacGillivray's calling, its hard, thick chick punctuating my work. In fact, the bird was calling so much that I had to investigate. Surely, if you're a birder, one of the risks of working from home is fall migration! I wandered around my garden, trying to find the bird, and then I realized that she was in the somewhat scraggly buckwheat that I planted several years ago next to my driveway. It looks scraggly because the plant is too large for the space, but the bird didn't seem to mind. In fact, she seemed quite delighted with it and spent several hours in there, presumably gleaning bugs to get some energy for her long journey.

As I watched the warbler busily work the buckwheat, my curiosity got the better of me and I went to ebird to look up her range. I saw that MacGillivray's Warblers migrate from Canada and the northern U.S. to Mexico and Central America in the spring and back again in the fall. As always, I was humbled by the sheer effort of their journey, and I wondered what I could do to help this little bird on her way.

Then I realized that I already was helping her quite a bit: I have a small pond where she can get a drink, I have buckwheat and other native plants where she can get a meal, and I keep my garden pesticide-free so the bugs will feed the birds. And that coffee I was drinking when I first saw her? That was my delicious bird-friendly coffee that I buy through the Pasadena Audubon Society. How does the coffee help? It's sold by Bird and Beans, and it meets the highest standard of bird-friendly coffee: shade-grown, organic, Fair Trade, and promoting land conservation. The very birds that we love watching in fall and spring migration depend on habitat to be there in Mexico and Central and South America when they migrate south. This coffee helps save and even restore habitat for these tiny travelers.

So if you love birds and you want to help them, plant a native plant. Avoid pesticides. And join our coffee club. It's for the birds! We are Pasadena Audubon and we love birds, birders and bird-friendly coffee!

*Laura Garrett*

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**MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETINGS: UPCOMING PROGRAMS**


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## Panama: Birding on the Edge of a Continent

**November 21, 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm**  
**Luke Tiller**

Though Panama only covers an area the size of South Carolina, it boasts a bird list well north of 900 species, ranging from the majestic Harpy Eagle to one of the globe's smallest passerines, the Black-capped Pygmy-Tyrant.

The country, which sits between two continents, has something to offer birders of all levels. Some of the region's best birding is just a short ride from Panama City, and there are a wealth of accommodations from which to delve into the world of tropical birding. Panama also promises some interesting regional endemics for the more seasoned or adventurous birder. Join PAS Program Chair Luke Tiller to see some of the great places and birds that call this country home.



*Mourning Dove* © Mickey Long

## Christmas Bird Count Prep

**December 12, 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm**  
**Presenter, Jon Fisher**

Attention all citizen scientists! The annual Christmas Bird Count is coming soon. Learn how you can participate at this meeting. See Jon's article on page 10 as well.

If you're new to the count and want to join other participants on count day, this meeting is a great place to meet them and pick an area to count. If you can't make the meeting, don't worry, it's easy to coordinate an area assignment via email.

## CBC Dinner

**December 15, 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm**  
**Eaton Canyon Nature Center**

After the count, we join together to celebrate with a catered dinner and drinks. You'll also hear about what turned up and how it compares to past years. The dinner is \$15 per person. Please RSVP by December 10 by sending a check to our address (see back page) or making a PayPal payment on our website. Be sure to mention CBC.

## Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons: Restoring Raptors to the Channel Islands.

**January 16, 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm**  
**Annie Little, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**

Channel Island Bald Eagles were a core constituent of Southern California's Bald Eagle population, and these nesting birds were equally an important element of the ecosystem of the islands. By the 1960s, however, the eagles had disappeared due to the combined effects of DDT, egg collection and human persecution. Similarly, Peregrine Falcons suffered the same dramatic declines mid-century and like the eagles, were also extirpated within that same time frame.

Come join Annie Little from USFWS to discover how, despite the challenges, these majestic species were eventually brought back to their ancestral homes. This is a story almost forty years in the making and includes innovative programs involving multiple agencies.



Drawing by  
 Guy Coheleach

## PAS Outreach Events

PAS will be present at the following community events. We are always looking for volunteers to staff our table. It's a great opportunity to chat with non-birders about your passion. No particular expertise is required, just bring your bins and your enthusiasm. We find it's contagious!

Bird Festival of the Santa Monica Mountains  
 November 10, 9:00 am to 2:30 pm.

Science Night at Eliot Arts Academy,  
 January 25, 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm  
 To volunteer, email Lois at  
 lbrunet@pasadenaudubon.org.



*Snowy Egret*

© Adriana Kleiman

*Monthly chapter meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month at Eaton Canyon Nature Center (1750 N. Altadena Drive in Pasadena). Refreshments and socializing begin at 7:00 pm and programs are presented from 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm. Programs for youth begin at 6:45 pm*

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**CONSERVATION**


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**Update on the Hahamongna ‘Big Dig’**

By the time you read this, bulldozers will probably be rolling in Hahamongna Watershed Park. Although PAS participated in a lawsuit to stop excessive habitat destruction, and won some concessions, we are still facing the destruction of 71 acres in the heart of Hahamongna, including the willow forest that supports many species of birds. If you care about this loss, telephone Supervisor Kathryn Barger, (626) 356-5407, and let her know what you think of the County Public Works plan to destroy this biological and recreational jewel. Ask her to reduce the “footprint” of the dig to spare at least some of the habitat. If you live in Pasadena, call your City Council representative and let them know what’s at stake, too. Point your web browser to [www.savehahamongna.org](http://www.savehahamongna.org) for more information, or go to the “Save Hahamongna” group on Facebook.

**PAS Supports Land Purchase for Migratory Birds in the Eastern Sierras**

Pasadena Audubon is supporting California Audubon and the Trust for Public Land in its campaign to purchase several springs on the eastern side of the southern Sierra Nevada range. These “desert springs,” such as Butterbredt Spring in Kern County, are critical to migrating birds and other wildlife.

*Mark Hunter*

**Make Your Vote Count! California Audubon Endorses Prop 3**

Proposition 3, the \$8.9 billion water bond measure on the November ballot, will have multiple benefits, ensuring access to clean drinking water and allocating funds to benefit birds and habitats across the state. Some of the conservation priorities include:

- More than \$300 million to benefit wildlife in the Central Valley.
- \$295 million for conservancies in Southern California
- \$200 million for the Salton Sea

For more information, see the California Audubon press release here:

<http://ca.audubon.org/press-release/audubon-california-endorses-prop-3>

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**FALL CLEANUP REPORT**


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*PAS member Jerry Ewing equips volunteers with gloves and bags © Lois Brunet*

**Fall Cleanup Report**
**Coastal Cleanup Day**

We had a huge community turnout for Coastal Cleanup Day: 443 lbs of trash were removed from the Lower Arroyo Seco with the help of 241 volunteers from all over the San Gabriel Valley. That’s a lot of trash that won’t get to the beaches and out to sea. Shout-out to all of Bryan Wilbur’s students from PCC, students from La Verne, students from Arcadia High, and the Church of the Ascension group from Sierra Madre. Special thanks to our Pasadena Audubon and Tom Sawyer Camp volunteers who kept the site running: Debbie Chaiboonma, Carol Smith, Jerry Ewing, Susan Campisi, Kathy Degner and Sarah Horner Fish, an awesome team!

*Lois Brunet*

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**A BIRD FROM AFAR**


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**Greater Short-toed Lark**

**A**s a professional tour guide I've been lucky enough to have traveled to lots of weird and wonderful places and have seen a multitude of incredible birds, which makes picking a favorite from among them to illustrate "A Bird From Afar" particularly challenging.

This September I was excited to be invited, as part of a small group of raptor experts, to be part of the Batumi Raptor Festival in Georgia. When you mention that you are traveling to Georgia, most American minds tend to immediately envisage Atlanta rather than the shoreline of the Black Sea, which is where I was heading.

As an introduction, Georgia is a small country at the junction of Europe, the Middle East and Asia. Georgians are renowned for their fantastic food (stews, tandoor oven-cooked meat, cheese, delicious bread and amazing cheese stuffed bread!) as well as their wonderful hospitality. This hospitality seemed to mainly involve us regularly being offered more wine and chacha (the local firewater) than would fell a bear, and that was just during lunch-time.

Batumi is a well-known hotspot for bird migration, with the adjacent Black Sea creating a formidable barrier for migrant birds of all kinds (you could fit all the Great Lakes into it two times over). The hawkwatch is one of maybe only five counts in the world where one might hope to encounter over a million hawks over the season, and as a raptor fan, I have dreamed of visiting this place for many years.

There were many beautiful birds I could pick to highlight this wonderful trip, from decadently plumaged Golden Orioles and European Bee-eaters, to impressive and beautiful raptors such as the Booted Eagle. The bird I plumped for, however, might be one of the least glamorous of all the birds we saw: a "little brown job" called the Greater Short-toed Lark (*Calandrella brachydactyla*). These birds breed from North Africa through to Mongolia and winter in the Middle East south to Chad and Sudan. The species is gregarious in nature, usually in small flocks, though flocks may contain many thousands of individuals as they gather to migrate to wintering grounds.

One morning, as we sat at the raptor watch site above the Village of Sakhalvasho, a single Short-toed Lark came winging in from the Black Sea and dropped in exhausted among the gathered hawkwatchers. It sat quietly for a while, either too tired to move, terrified by the hordes of gathered humans or perhaps just impressed to be greeted on its arrival in Georgia by famed raptor authority Bill Clark and ornithologist and gull expert Klaus Malling Olsen.

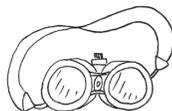
After a moment or two of assessing the situation it seemed to cotton on that these lumbering bipedal creatures wished it no harm, and was soon wandering the lawn pecking at the ground in search of some tasty seed or insect morsel. After half an hour of feeding, while becoming perhaps the most photographed Greater Short-toed Lark in history, it took off again into the skies of Georgia looking no doubt for a few friends and a safe place to spend the next day or two planning its next migratory adventure. It was amazing to have such a close encounter with this individual bird, and I felt honored to have been able to spend a little time in its company. Touched by this one little bird, it was hard not to reflect on where it would end up next and how one might help contribute to keeping our shared planet one that will continue to sustain that bird and its brethren in forthcoming years.

If there's a Bird from Afar that you saw and loved, we'd love to hear about it. Send your text and photos to the Editor at [pas.wrentit@gmail.com](mailto:pas.wrentit@gmail.com).



**Greater Short-toed Lark**

© Luke Tiller



Luke Tiller

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**FIELD TRIPS**


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## Morro Bay

**Saturday-Sunday, November 10 to 11, 7:00 am**

Come join us in Morro Bay, winter home to thousands of shorebirds and many species of raptors and passerines. We have planned a wonderful weekend of birding and exploration for you.

Saturday and Sunday we will meet early in order to have plenty of time to bird the local hot spots. We will look for shorebirds, do a little seabird watching and explore some very bird-rich riparian and woodland locations nearby. Target species include Nelson's Sparrow and Chestnut-backed Chickadee. Yellow-billed Magpies are possible as well.

After the trip on Saturday, please join us at one of the many dockside restaurants. We will finish our scheduled trip after lunch on Sunday.

We will meet at 7:00 am in the parking lot near Morro Rock. Motel information provided to trip members. Please reserve your space ASAP!

Trip is limited to 15 persons.

Please include the following information when you send in your reservation for this trip: name, phone number, email address, and whether or not you have a two-way radio.

*Kathi Ellsworth, pandionsky@yahoo.com*  
*Lance Benner, lbenner@charter.net*

## North Slope San Gabriels

**Saturday, November 17, 7:30 am to early afternoon**

We will explore areas on the northern slope of the San Gabriel Mountains, such as Grassy Hollow Visitor's Center, Jackson Lake and locations in Valyermo. We will search for high-altitude species as well as wintering raptors. Ferruginous Hawk, Prairie Falcon, and Golden Eagle are possible, as are Red-breasted and Red-naped Sapsuckers. Unusual species (e.g. Lewis's Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Swamp Sparrow) have been found in some years. Time permitting, we may look for Mountain Plovers or longspurs in the nearby Antelope Valley.

Although we will get to higher elevations, all locations on this trip are accessible by car, and there is no strenuous hiking involved. We will be out most of the day, but anyone who needs to leave early will be able to do so.

It may be cold, especially at higher elevations, so bring warm clothes. Also, bring lunch. We will meet at Pearblossom Park, which is at the corner of 121st St. East and East Avenue V14 in Pearblossom, just south of Hwy 138 (Pearblossom Highway).

*Mark & Janet Scheel*

## Fall Cleanup at Peck Road Water Conservation Park

**Saturday, November 17, 8:00 am to noon**

Join us for our annual Fall cleanup at Peck Road Water Conservation Park, Saturday, November 17th, from 8:00 am to noon.

We'll start with the birds, so don't forget your binoculars. Bird walk from 8:00 to 10:00 am, followed by the cleanup from 10 until noon. Please bring your old garden gloves, sturdy shoes, your reusable water bottle and a hat. If you have a bucket and trash picker, bring those too! We're trying to keep the trash that we generate to a minimum. Your hard work will be rewarded with a cleaner park and happier birds, and we'll also have pizza under the trees at noon. Hope you can join us!

*Lois Brunet*

## Big Santa Anita Canyon

**Sunday, December 2, 6:30 until noon**

Join us for a fall hike into Big Santa Anita Canyon as we search for American Dipper, Pacific Wren, Canyon Wren, Rufous-Crowned Sparrow and other lower montane species.

We're planning to hike past Sturtevant Falls as far as the Cascade picnic area for a total of about six miles. Parking at Chantry Flat is often crowded on weekends so please car-pool.

Bring sturdy shoes, plenty of water, some food, sunscreen, a hat, warm clothing, and an Adventure Pass for your car. Heavy rain cancels but drizzle does not.

*Lance Benner*

## The Urban Core

**Saturday, January 19, 7:30 am to 11:00 am**

Birding is not what most people associate with MacArthur Park, an urban park that lies right in the middle of the crushing hardscape of the city, yet it is quite possibly the best place in the County to observe gulls. Iceland Gull, formerly known as Thayer's, is a regular winter visitor, and various and mysterious hybrids are also often present. Further, since it is the only park in a very urban landscape, it attracts a surprising diversity of waterfowl and passerines.

The morning of birding will begin here then continue at Echo Park Lake, another urban refuge a few miles away, and maybe some scoping of Silverlake Reservoir, if we've still got time.

Meet at the Levitt Pavilion in the northwest corner of MacArthur Park. Metered parking there costs \$2 for two hours.

*Jon Feenstra*

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**FIELD TRIPS AND MONTHLY BIRD WALKS**


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## San Gabriel Spreading Grounds

**Saturday, January 26, 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm**

The San Gabriel Coastal Basin Spreading Grounds in Pico Rivera comprise one of the most interesting and most variable winter birding sites in the county.

Late risers rejoice: We'll start in the early afternoon to take advantage of good lighting and the habits of the area gulls.

We'll be following the water, like the birds, and those may include thousands of gulls and waterfowl, with some wintering shorebirds and passerines around the edge. Some of the rarest gulls and ducks in L.A. County were found here, and raptors regularly patrol the area.

Park at the east end of Mines Ave., one kilometer east of Rosemead, in Pico Rivera, and be prepared for some real-time adjustment of the route based on conditions. We may be walking up to three miles round trip on a paved surface, out in the open. Scopes are recommended since views across the basins are long.

*Darren Dowell, Janet Scheel, Mark Scheel*

## Salton Sea

**Saturday and Sunday February 2-3**

The Salton Sea Trip is a great way to get your year-list cookin'! (Even though it's not Wrentit Club countable.) The sea is one of the premier birding areas in North America, but is in major transition at this time. On the weekend we usually end up with over 100 species and a few surprises. We will bird all day on Saturday and through lunch on Sunday.

This trip is limited to 12 PAS members (it's easy to become a member on our website).

Preference is given to those who can do the entire weekend. Please email me for more information or to make reservations.

*Ron Cyger*  
*ron@cyger.org*

## Legg Lake

**First Saturday of each month, November to March  
Legg Lake and Beyond: 8:00 am to 1:00 pm**

These trips will cover several consistently good lake and river birding areas. Legg Lake has lots of water and scattered trees and has produced good waterfowl numbers and varieties as well as an impressive list of migrants and wintering birds. From there, we'll head for either the Pico Rivera Spreading Grounds or Peck Road Park, depending on water levels and bird reports. Both often host a wide variety of water birds, including grebes, ducks, gulls, terns, egrets and shorebirds.

Driving Directions (from Pasadena): Take the 210 freeway east to the 605 freeway. Go south on the 605 freeway to

the Pomona (60) freeway going west (towards Los Angeles). Exit at Santa Anita Ave. Turn left and take Santa Anita south (about one-half mile), and enter the first parking lot on your right.

*Ed Stonick*

## L.A. County Arboretum

**Second Saturday of every month  
8:00 am to 10:00 am**

This easy walk is for birders of all ages and experience levels. Meet on the steps leading to the entrance of the Arboretum. Admission is \$5 – free for members of the Arboretum or Audubon, and free for children under twelve.

*Katy Mann*

## Magpie Bird Study Group

**Third Tuesday of most months  
9:00 am until about noon**

November 20, Santa Fe Dam. Meet at the Nature Center. December 18, L.A. County Arboretum. Meet at the front entrance. January 15, San Gabriel Spreading Grounds. Meet at the Mines St. entrance, off Rosemead Blvd.

February 19, Bonelli Park. Meet in first parking lot, first left after the Via Verde Dr. entrance.

We bird until 11:30 and then have a sack lunch and a short meeting. All PAS members welcome!

*Julia Ray, Sid Heyman*

## Eaton Canyon

**Third Sunday of every month  
8:00 am to 11:00 am**

Pasadena Audubon and Eaton Canyon Nature Center are cosponsoring monthly walks at Eaton Canyon. The walks are led by Hill Penfold, who has been leading them at Eaton Canyon for many years. This is a wonderful walk for birders of all levels. Eaton Canyon is one of the best locations to learn the birds of the Pasadena area.

The walks are held on the third Sunday of each month. Meet at the flagpole: bring water, binoculars, hats, but no dogs.

*Hill Penfold*

## Huntington Library

**Fourth Sunday of every month  
8:00 am to 11:00 am**

A special benefit for Pasadena Audubon Society members is the chance to bird the Huntington Library grounds. Attendance is by reservation only and limited to 15 participants. Members may bring one nonmember guest, space permitting. We thank our member and Huntington curator, Dan Lewis, for making these trips possible.

To reserve contact Mark at  
[mark.hunter@pasadenaaudubon.org](mailto:mark.hunter@pasadenaaudubon.org).

*Mark Hunter*

## CALENDAR

## November 2018

3	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	WC	Legg Lake	Ed Stonick
7	Wed	7:30 pm	Board Meeting		Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Laura Garrett
10	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	WC	County Arboretum	Katy Mann
10/11	Sat-Sun		Field Trip		Morro Bay	Lance Benner, Kathi Ellsworth
14	Wed	5:00 pm	Birds 'n Beers		Sena on Myrtle, Monrovia	L. Tiller, C. Hamilton & D. Bell
17	Sat	7:30 am	Field Trip	WC	Northern Slope San Gabriels	Mark & Janet Scheel
17	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip & Cleanup	WC	Peck Road Conservation Park	
18	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	WC	Eaton Canyon	Hill Penfold
20	Tue	9:00 am	Magpie Study Group		Santa Fe Dam	Julia Ray, Sid Heyman
21	Wed	7:00 pm	General Meeting	WC	Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Luke Tiller
25	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip		Huntington Library	Mark Hunter
29	Thurs	7:00 pm	New Members Reception		Pasadena	

## December 2018

1	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	WC	Legg Lake	Ed Stonick
2	Sun	6:30 am	Field Trip	WC	Big Santa Anita Canyon	Lance Benner
5	Wed	7:30 pm	Board Meeting		Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Laura Garrett
8	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	WC	County Arboretum	Katy Mann
12	Wed	5:00 pm	Birds 'n Beers		Sena on Myrtle, Monrovia	L. Tiller, C. Hamilton & D. Bell
12	Wed	7:00 pm	CBC Prep		Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Jon Fisher
15	Sat	All Day	CBC Count	WC		Jon Fisher
15	Sat	6:00 pm	CBC Dinner		Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Jon Fisher
16	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	WC	Eaton Canyon	Hill Penfold
18	Tue	9:00 am	Magpie Study Group		County Arboretum	Julia Ray, Sid Heyman
23	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	WC	Huntington Library	Mark Hunter

## January 2019

2	Wed	7:30 pm	Board Meeting		Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Laura Garrett
5	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	WC	Legg Lake	Ed Stonick
9	Wed	5:00 pm	Birds 'n Beers		Sena on Myrtle, Monrovia	L. Tiller, C. Hamilton & D. Bell
12	Sat	8:00 am	Field Trip	WC	County Arboretum	Katy Mann
15	Tue	9:00 am	Magpie Study Group	WC	Spreading Grounds	Julia Ray, Sid Heyman
16	Wed	7:00 pm	General Meeting		Eaton Canyon Nature Center	Annie Little
19	Sat	9:00 am	Field Trip	WC	Urban Core	Jon Feenstra
20	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	WC	Eaton Canyon	Hill Penfold
26	Sat	1:00 pm	Field Trip	WC	San Gabriel Spreading Grounds	Janet & Mark Scheel, Darren Dowell
27	Sun	8:00 am	Field Trip	WC	Huntington Library	Mark Hunter

## Trip Leaders

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Julia Ray	(818) 314-5127	<a href="mailto:jraymusic@att.net">jraymusic@att.net</a>
Ed Stonick	(626) 796-0595	<a href="mailto:edstonick@att.net">edstonick@att.net</a>
Luke Tiller		<a href="mailto:luketiller@gmail.com">luketiller@gmail.com</a>



## WC Wrentit Club

The Wrentit Club is a special distinction for members who've seen 250 birds or more in L.A. County within the calendar year. The field trips designated WC are within L.A. County. Any birds seen on these trips count towards the Wrentit Club distinction. See our website for a listing of current and past members. Good birding!

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**PAS YOUNG BIRDERS ATTEND WFO CONFERENCE**


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Every year the Western Field Ornithologists (WFO) has a conference with field trips, workshops, scientific papers, sound identification panels, expert identification panels, a keynote speaker, book auction, membership meeting and a banquet. The 2018 meeting was held in Ventura, California, from the 26th to the 30th of September. Six young birders from Pasadena Audubon Society Young Birder Club attended the meeting, and for two young birders it was their very first time attending the meeting. Pictured, from left: Cayenee, Dessi, Justina, Calvin, Aaron and Teodelina.



*Photos courtesy of Justina, Vicky, and Susan.*

First-timers Aaron and Calvin, age 12, made a lot of new young birder friends. Here's what they had to say about their first WFO experience:

*"One special moment from the WFO conference was on the youth field trip to see bird banding in Zuma Canyon. After a bird was banded and measured and notes were taken, one of the young birders got to set it free. In my case it was a Yellow-rumped Warbler. I was shown how to hold it with its neck between my second and third fingers and my thumb to keep it in place. It was soft and warm to the touch. I then placed the bird in the palm of my hand and off it flew. There was something very special about seeing this tiny bird go from an animal held captive to being free." Aaron, age 12*



*"I thought that the WFO Conference was an awesome event. I enjoyed it because I met so many young birders from all different places. It is also very fun because there are a lot of field trips and workshops and I learned a lot. Also very interesting were the science programs, where a bunch of scientists presented on different research projects that they were doing. Overall, the WFO Conference is a great way to meet new people, learn a lot, and go birding!" Calvin, age 12*

Read more about their experiences here:

<http://www.pasadenaudubon.org/?q=youngbirders>

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**WORKSHOPS AND CLASSES**


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## Gull Identification Class

**Wednesday, January 9th, 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm (workshop session)**

**Saturday, January 12th, 8:00 to noon (field session)**

Of the roughly 57 species of gull (subfamily Larinae) found worldwide, more than half have been detected in North America. Identification as to species is challenging not only because of the substantial resemblance of many in their adult plumages (particularly the large “white headed” gulls), but also by the near-uniformity of their “juvinal” and “formative” plumages in their first year.

The workshop session will address the identification of the gulls that are to be expected in Southern California. The session will address not only identification of gulls in their adult, or “definitive,” plumages, but will also present a heuristic “model” of how gulls develop as they mature, so that participants will be able to distinguish the species at whatever age class, or “cycle,” they may encounter. If time permits, we will address the latest findings regarding gull taxonomy.

The field session will be devoted to testing the developmental model presented in the workshop. However, the identification of adult gulls, in flight as well as standing/swimming will not be ignored. Location will be determined by the location of gull flocks that week. Be prepared to go as far north as Zuma Beach or as far south as Doheny Beach (Orange County).

Price: \$45 Pasadena Audubon members, \$65 non-members

Please note: Priority will be given to members who have not taken a class in the past year.

To register for this class, please contact Lois at [lbrunet@pasadenaudubon.org](mailto:lbrunet@pasadenaudubon.org). You can pay through PayPal or check. Details are on our website.

*Larry W. Allen*

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## TRIP REPORTS

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### Hahamongna Watershed Park

The September and October field trips at Hahamongna Watershed Park were well attended, in part due to the excellent weather for walking the trails, and featured some interesting migrants as we watched late summer transition to fall. The basin was not particularly loaded with warblers for either trip, but between the two we saw nine warbler species total, with the star being a Northern Waterthrush discovered at the Altadena Drain by our group. Of three empidonax flycatcher species seen on the trips, the Gray Flycatcher on the October trip put on the best show, dipping its tail and calling as it fluttered from one perch to another just east of the sports field. The sports field itself, fenced off for maintenance in October, featured far fewer athletes and far more sparrows than usual, with the highlight being a Vesper Sparrow, conveniently adjacent to Savannahs. Also in October, a majestic Red-tailed Hawk had chosen a perch that allowed our close approach without feeling threatened. Many Gigabytes of photos ensued.



*Red-tailed Hawk*

© Kathy Degner



*Northern Waterthrush*

© Kathy Degner

Autumn feels like such a long time since the field trip in March, when we watched genuinely Orange-Crowned Warblers bathing in the rain; and April, when Ring-necked Ducks lingered in the lake by the dam; and May, when nesting activity was abundant. All told, since New Year’s Day, 155 species have been recorded at Hahamongna, and about 45 of those bred in the basin. It was another strong year for Yellow Warblers, with 25 vocal individuals tallied mid summer and undoubtedly some additional ones uncounted. Meanwhile, only we humans are filled with dread with the knowledge of what the future may hold for the basin, the willow forest, and the wildlife that uses them.

*Darren Dowell, Field trip leader*

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**CHAPTER ANNOUNCEMENTS**


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## Special Events

### Pasadena/San Gabriel Valley Christmas Count 2018

**Saturday, December 15**

As things calm down following another busy and productive fall migration period, thoughts inevitably turn to the holidays and assuming you're an active birder- to local Christmas Bird Counts. And for most of us, there is none more local than the Pasadena-San Gabriel Valley CBC. Initiated in 1946, this is a long running count with many dedicated local birders who have been instrumental in making the Pasadena count a successful one. This year marks our 72nd anniversary and my 27th year as coordinator and compiler.

The 2018 Christmas Bird Count will take place on Saturday, December 15. If you're new to birding or just new to Christmas Bird Counts, this is a great opportunity to learn more about the avifauna of the San Gabriel Valley area and to meet others who share the same interests. You'll also be participating in a very worthwhile citizen science project.

The center of our count is the intersection of San Gabriel Boulevard and Duarte Road. The count area extends seven and one half miles in every direction from that spot to cover the standard fifteen mile diameter count circle. There is a lot of habitat diversity in the count circle and this is a big reason why we regularly record 160 species or more.

As might be expected, some bird populations have remained stable, some have increased and others have declined. Introduced species, range expansion, habitat loss and predation are just a few of the factors behind these changes. If you're familiar with Eurasian Collared-Doves, Loggerhead Shrikes, Great-tailed Grackles, Scaly-breasted Munias and our many introduced parrots and parakeets you'll already be well aware of some of the population trends.

On count day we record every bird that can be identified by sight or sound within the circle and ultimately we're able document population changes over the years and decades. Our mid-December CBC produces a snapshot of early winter birdlife in the San Gabriel Valley and local foothills and over 280 different species have been recorded over the history of the count.

The traditional pre-count meeting will be held at the Eaton Canyon Nature Center on Wednesday, December 12, at 7:30pm. At the meeting there will be an introduction to the Christmas Bird Count, an overview of the count methods and procedures and checklists, and we'll distribute checklists and other count materials. Count areas will also be assigned.

If you're new to the count and want to join other participants on count day, this meeting is a great place to meet them and pick an area to count. Can't make the meeting? Don't worry, it's easy to coordinate an area assignment via email.

Also, be sure not to miss the post count dinner and wrap-up following the count. Not only will we have a good dinner after a long day in the field, but you'll also be among the first to find out what good birds were found. Check the Wrentit for details.

For additional information, contact count coordinator Jon Fisher at [JonF60@hotmail.com](mailto:JonF60@hotmail.com).

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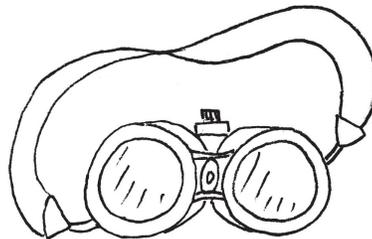
## The Young Birder Club

Young people interested in birds and nature are welcome to join the Young Birder Club with their parent.

Monthly meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month from September through May (though not December). Meeting convenes at 6:45 pm in Classroom 1 at Eaton Canyon Nature Center.

To learn more about the Club please contact Susan Gilliland at [gillilandsusan@gmail.com](mailto:gillilandsusan@gmail.com), and see our website:

<http://www.pasadenaaudubon.org/?q=youngbirders>



*Common Yellowthroat*

© Kathy Degner

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**New Member Reception**

**Thursday, November 29,**

**7:00 pm to 8:30 pm**



Did you join Pasadena Audubon in the last year? Then you're invited to our New Member Reception! Join us on Thursday, November 29, from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm, at Laura Garrett's home, 711 South Mentor Ave in Pasadena. Wine and light refreshments will be provided. Meet other members, new and old, and find out more about what Pasadena Audubon has to offer.

RSVP to Lois at [lbrunet@pasadenaaudubon.org](mailto:lbrunet@pasadenaaudubon.org). We look forward to seeing you then!

**Thanks to Our Generous Donors**

Our thanks go to these PAS members and friends who have recently made donations to our chapter.

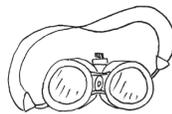
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**WANTED!**

For our fledgling school program:

- \*Used but serviceable binoculars and scopes
- \*Used field guides
- \*Birding magazines that you are finished with



For our Advocacy and Community Outreach & Education Committees:

Members who want to share their love of birds with the community. No prior experience required.

Contact Lois at [lbrunet@pasadenaaudubon.org](mailto:lbrunet@pasadenaaudubon.org)



*Northern Mockingbird*

© Lily age 15

**Birds 'n Beers—Change of Venue (until further notice)**

Good food, good beverages, and good bird talk at this casual monthly gathering led by Luke Tiller, Catherine Hamilton and David Bell. Everyone is welcome! 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm, the second Wednesday of each month, at Sena on Myrtle: 409 S. Myrtle Ave, Monrovia.



*Bald Eagle*

© Lily age 15

**Join the Pasadena Audubon Society**

Pasadena Audubon Society Chapter-only Membership provides important support for our conservation, education and outreach efforts. You'll also be the first to hear about our programs and field trips, and you'll receive a one-year subscription to our newsletter, *The Wrentit*.

Membership dues: \$20 for individuals or families, \$15 for seniors or students. Lifetime membership with a \$2,000 donation.

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If you'd like to provide a gift membership, please contact our membership chair, Lois Fulmer, at [willo2001@earthlink.net](mailto:willo2001@earthlink.net).

***We thank you for your support!***

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If you'd prefer to read *The Wrentit* online, let us know, by emailing your name and address to:

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You'll receive an email and link to the newsletter when each issue comes out. You'll also have our gratitude, as this will allow us to reduce our paper use and printing expenses. Plus, photos will be in living color, just like the birds we love!

**Welcome to our New Members**

ALHAMBRA: Pauline Bewernick, Steve Dykeman, Rodolfo Juarez, Lillian Noriega, Marshall Riedel, Jeffrey Watson;  
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