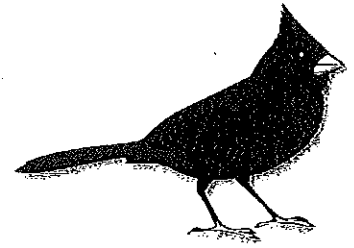


# THE OBSERVER



## Calendar

**October 11.** Beginner bird walk at Sycamore Canyon. Meet at the Sycamore Canyon trailhead at 7:00 AM. The trail is located adjacent to Rose Hills Cemetery gate 17, but note that the trail is *not* in the cemetery! The entrance to Sycamore Canyon is a driveway just southwest of the entrance to the cemetery. Linda Oberholtzer leads. Rain or recent rain cancels.

**October 16.** Monthly meeting and program 7:30 PM at the Whittier Community Center. Steve Kaye will present, "Why We Become Birders." See page 3 for details.

**October 18.** Field trip to Ballona Wetland. Meet at the Whittier Community Center at 7:00 AM for carpooling. Linda Oberholtzer leads; details on page 3.



## FIELD GUIDE TO THE FUTURE: NEARLY HALF OF NORTH AMERICA'S BIRDS AT RISK FROM GLOBAL WARMING

Nearly half of the bird species in the continental U.S. and Canada are threatened by global warming. Many of these species could go extinct without decisive action to protect their habitats and reduce the severity of global warming. That's the startling conclusion reached by Audubon scientists in a new study.

Here in Southern California, birds threatened by global warming include Brown Pelican, Allen's Hummingbird, Burrowing Owl, and Osprey.

Of 588 bird species examined in the study, 314 are at risk. Of those, 126 species are at risk of severe declines by 2050, and a further 188 species face the same fate by 2080, with numerous extinctions possible if global warming is allowed to erase the havens birds occupy today.

"The greatest threat our birds face today is global warming," said Audubon Chief Scientist Gary Langham, who led the investigation. "That's our unequivocal conclusion after seven years of painstakingly careful and thorough research. Global warming threatens the basic fabric of life on which birds – and the rest of us – depend, and we have to act quickly and decisively to avoid catastrophe for them and us."

To understand the links between where birds live and the climatic conditions that support them, Langham and other Audubon ornithologists analyzed 30 years of historical North American climate data and tens of thousands of historical bird records from the U.S. Geological Survey's North American Breeding Bird Survey and the Audubon Christmas Bird Count. Understanding those links then allowed scientists to project where birds are likely to be able to survive – and not survive – in the future.

The study also reveals areas that are likely to remain stable for birds even as climate changes, enabling Audubon to identify "stronghold" areas that birds will need to survive in the future.

The result is a roadmap for bird conservation in coming decades under a warming climate. The study provides a key entry point for Audubon's greater engagement on the urgent issue of global warming. Responding to the magnitude of the threat to our birds, Audubon is greatly expanding its climate initiative, aiming to engage a larger and more diverse set of voices in support of protecting birds.

Solutions will include personal choices to conserve energy and create backyard bird habitat, local action to create community climate action plans, state-based work to increase rooftop solar and energy efficiency, and our work in Important Bird Areas and other efforts to protect and expand bird habitats.

For more information, visit [Audubon.org/Climate](http://Audubon.org/Climate).

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

THE RESULTS OF AUDUBON'S RESEARCH INTO GLOBAL WARMING are disturbing to be sure. Here are some thoughts on what you can do to help (taken from Audubon's web site).

Audubon's new science sends a clear message about the serious dangers birds face in a warming world. Protecting them will require both redoubling conservation efforts to safeguard critical habitat and curbing greenhouse gas emissions. Here are a few important steps you can take:

**Take the Pledge:** Receive the latest findings, explore climate-related volunteer opportunities in your state or local area, and get information on how to enlist in Audubon's forthcoming citizen science project to help monitor birds and document how they respond to a changing climate by signing up at <http://climate.audubon.org/article/what-you-can-do-help-protect-birds>.

**Create a Bird-Friendly Yard:** Healthy birds will be better equipped to face the challenges of a warming world. Commit to creating safe spaces for birds in your home and community by using fewer pesticides, letting dead trees stand, installing bird baths, and converting lawns and gardens to native plants.

School grounds, parks, vacant lots, and common areas can all be "bird-scaped," too. Learn more at <http://athome.audubon.org/>.

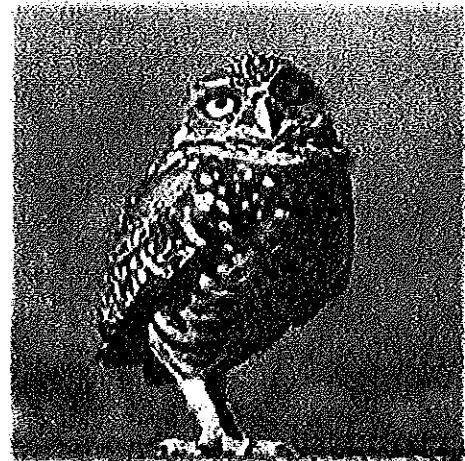
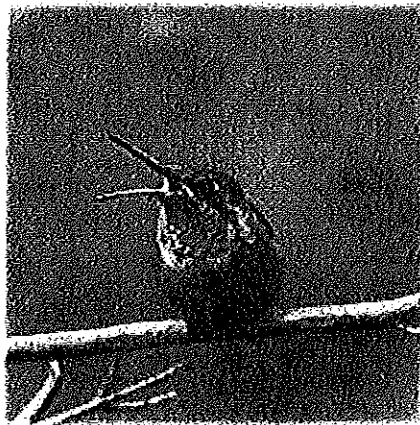
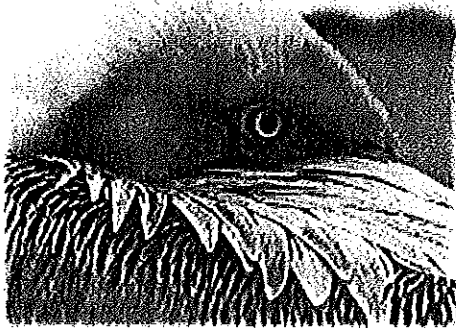
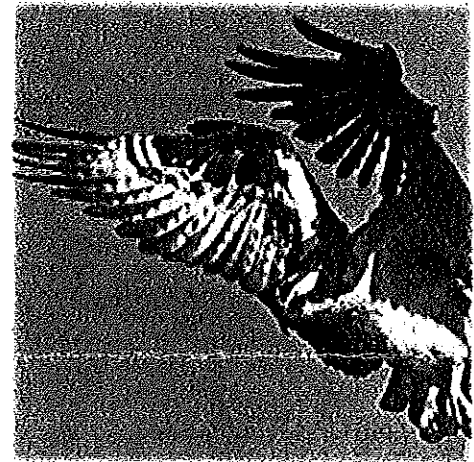
**Get Involved With Your Local Important Bird Area:** Protect the places birds need most today and in the future by pitching in with Audubon's IBA program, which identifies and conserves areas that are vital to birds and biodiversity. You can help with IBA restoration, cleanup, citizen science, and field trips.

**Put Birds on Your Community's Agenda:** Begin a conversation with your neighbors, colleagues, and local leaders about why it's important to you to protect your community's birds, and share what you're doing on behalf of birds. Reach more people by writing a letter to your newspaper, speaking at a community event, or visiting a local school.

**Meet With Local Decision Makers:** Share this science with state wildlife agencies, city parks departments, extension services, and other groups that manage our natural resources to illustrate how global warming imperils

birds, and ask decision makers how they are planning to address global warming. For more information on how to help decision makers use and integrate Audubon's science, email [climatescience@audubon.org](mailto:climatescience@audubon.org).

**Support Policies That Lower Emissions:** Urge leaders at the local, state, and national levels to enact policies that lower greenhouse gas emissions and support clean energy. Renewable portfolio standards, energy efficiency targets, and other proactive measures reduce emissions and will limit the effects of global warming on birds. Put these policies on your leaders' agendas, and publicly support efforts to make them stick.



## OCTOBER MEETING AND PROGRAM

BY LINDA OBERHOLTZER

"Why We Become Birders" will be the October 23, 2014, Whittier Area Audubon program presented by Nature photographer Steve Kaye. The meeting takes place at 7:30 p.m. at the Whittier Community Center, located at 7630 Washington Ave. (not be confused with Washington Blvd. on the corner of Mar Vista St. and Washington Ave., in the City of Whittier, across the street from the Whittier Public Library. The Community Center is next to a softball field. Mr. Kaye will show his photos of mostly local birds. He'll also tell stories behind the photos and offer practical tips on how to take better photos. Join us for an enjoyable photo tour of our amazing birds.

This is an excellent program for your friends who might be interested in watching birds. And it's a wonderful reminder of the extraordinary beauty that we have here, close to home. So bring a friend. And if you have yet to attend a meeting, this program is for you.

Steve started taking photos in 1965. Since late 2009, he has focused on bird photography. His photos are on sale in the Fullerton Arboretum, and he has conducted seminars on Nature Photography at the Fullerton Arboretum, the Mary Vagle Nature Center, and the Environmental Nature Center in Newport Beach. Find photos, articles, and more info at: [www.stevkayphoto.com](http://www.stevkayphoto.com).

Kaye started his interest in birding when he was a one-on-one tutor at an Apple Store. He met the Thedes there and they encouraged him with his interest in birds.

The program is free. Light refreshments will be served.

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## RESEARCH SHEDS NEW LIGHT ON PASSENGER PIGEON EXTINCTION

On September 1st, 1914, at 1 p.m., the last known Passenger Pigeon died in the Cincinnati Zoo. One hundred years later, recent research may shed new light on this most famous extinction in our history.

The back story is well known: in the early nineteenth century, there were literally billions of Passenger Pigeons across the Eastern forests of the United States. By 1900, there were none left in the wild. How did such a population collapse happen?

The new research used an ecological model to show that the number of wild Passenger Pigeons probably fluctuated naturally, as their primary foods—acorns and other nuts—also waxed and waned.

Analysis of DNA from Passenger Pigeons in museum collections also suggested that Passenger Pigeon numbers may have varied as much as a thousand-fold over time. Sometimes, there'd be a few million birds, sometimes the several billion seen by John James Audubon in the early 1800s.

So huge cycles in population size were normal for the Passenger Pigeon. And typically, over time they'd rebound. But the pressures of living alongside increasing numbers of humans made that impossible this time around. Hunting on a vast scale, disruption of nesting areas, and habitat loss meant that there was no way back.

And the last Passenger Pigeon became a symbol of how easily we can devastate a seemingly boundless natural population.

For more about the Passenger Pigeon, go to [BirdNote.org](http://BirdNote.org).

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## OCTOBER FIELD TRIP TO BALLONA WETLAND

The Whittier Area Audubon will have a field trip to the Ballona Wetlands, the last major salt marsh in Los Angeles, on Saturday October 18. Meet for carpooling at 7 a.m. at the Whittier Community Center parking lot at 7630 Washington Ave., Whittier, CA. We will also be visiting the Vista Del Lago Lagoon and Ballona Creek breakwater. Excellent looks at shorebirds. Bring binoculars, water, a snack and a scope if you have one. We will have a picnic lunch, so pack a lunch.

For further information, contact Linda Oberholtzer, fieldtrip leader at [lindaoberholtzer@gmail.com](mailto:lindaoberholtzer@gmail.com)

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Whittier Area Audubon's web site is located at <http://www.whittieraudubon.org>. Our Yahoo group is called whittieraudubon. And we're on Facebook...search for Whittier Area Audubon!



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## JOIN WHITTIER AREA AUDUBON SOCIETY!

EVERY MEMBERSHIP SUPPORTS AUDUBON'S VITAL EFFORTS to protect birds, wildlife, and natural habitats. For \$30 per year you can support Whittier Area Audubon, receive 10 issues of our chapter newsletter, *The Observer*, and support our local projects and events.

To join our local chapter, make your check payable to Whittier Area Audubon and send it to Whittier Area Audubon, P.O. Box 548, Whittier, CA 90608-0548.

To join National Audubon, make your check payable to Audubon and send to National Audubon Society, PO Box 42250, Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250. Please include a letter with your name, mailing address, and any other personal contact information you wish to share (e.g., email address, phone number) along with Whittier Area Audubon Society's code, C4ZC170Z. As a member of National Audubon, you will receive Audubon's bimonthly magazine and our Chapter's newsletter, *The Observer*.

You can find your membership expiration date on the mailing label on your *Observer*.

## BRING YOUR CANS!

Reminder: Bring your aluminum cans to our monthly meetings. We can raise funds by recycling your cans.