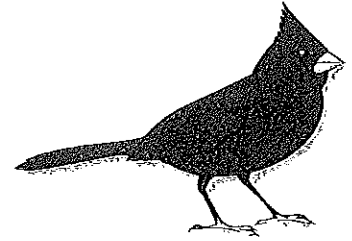


# THE OBSERVER

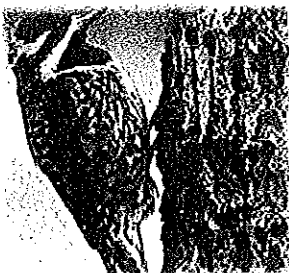


## Calendar

**November 8.** Beginner bird walk at Sycamore Canyon. Meet at the Sycamore Canyon trailhead at **8:00 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. Steve Huber leads. Rain or recent rain cancels.

**November 20.** Monthly meeting and program 7:30 PM at the Whittier Community Center. Program details are TBD at press time but it's sure to be interesting.

**November 22.** Field trip to Veterans Park in Sylmar. Meet at the Whittier Community Center at 7:00 AM for carpooling. Al Moreno and Linda LeRoy lead; details on page 3.



## SEPTEMBER FIELD TRIP REVIEW

BY LARRY SCHMAHL

McGrath State Beach to Malibu Lagoon

After suffering through some extreme heat the past few weeks, it was nice to spend a Saturday on the coast under a cool marine layer looking for fall migrants.

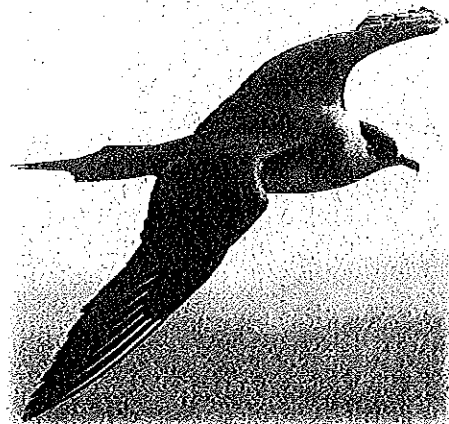
Fourteen of us arrived at Ventura Beach, just up the coast from the Santa Clara River Estuary, at about 8:15 AM. We were greeted with a feeding flock of Black-vented Shearwaters, Brandt's Cormorants, Brown pelicans and assorted gulls and terns just past the surf line. It's not often one can scan a feeding flock of a thousand pelagic birds from the sand.

The beach provided great views of Snowy Plovers, Semipalmated Plovers, Sanderlings, Willets and even a fly over of a Parasitic Jaeger.

At the estuary itself, we found Common Terns and were fortunate to see a quick flyby of a Purple Martin. Other fall migrants were moving through including Western Tanagers, Orange-crowned Warblers and an assortment of other swallows. For some in our group, the most memorable discovery was the desiccated remains of about three Sea Lions and a Dolphin at the high tide line. Why they were all together in one location we did not know. All in all we found about 52 different species of birds in our two and a half hours there.

Our next stop was a Tamarisk tree grove on Laguna Road east of Pleasant Valley Avenue. We were able to find migrating passerines in the trees but the birding was tough. A birder, not in our group, found a Magnolia Warbler but by the time he told us about it, it could not be relocated.

We headed to the coast and stopped at Magu Lagoon-East for about twenty five minutes. This lagoon is right off of Pacific Coast Highway and is easily viewed from the turnout. There were many of the same birds here as we had seen at the Santa Clara River Estuary but we did find a Loggerhead Shrike and a Reddish Egret.



After having lunch at the picnic area at Sycamore Canyon State Park, we headed down to Malibu Lagoon. Malibu Lagoon has changed considerably since the last time the chapter made a visit. Currently, it is much easier to view birds there than it was a few years ago. When the planted vegetation takes hold and grows I assume that will change. Malibu Lagoon had Black-bellied Plovers, Ruddy turnstones, a couple more Common Terns as well as pelicans, herons, egrets and sandpipers.

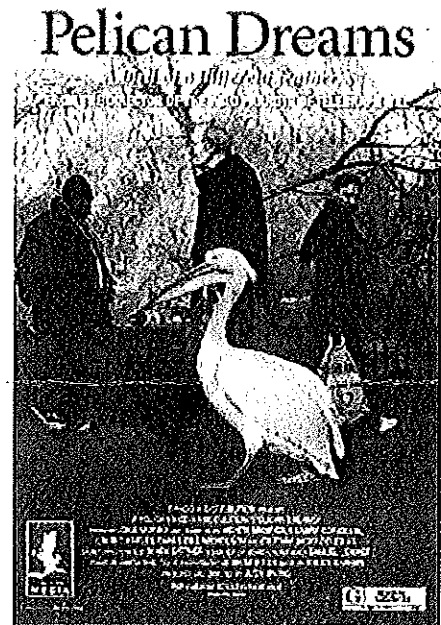
Our next field trip will be at the Ballona Wetlands and Playa del Rey/Ballona Creek. It's a little more local. It should provide close views of "rocky" shorebirds and there is no telling what else will turn up.

## PELICAN DREAMS

November will see the release of *Pelican Dreams*, a film by Judy Irving, who also brought us *The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill*. The movie focuses on the rehabilitation of a Brown Pelican found ailing on the Golden Gate Bridge, but also touches on the broader problems that this species is facing.

Brought to near-extinction by the pernicious effects of DDT on their eggs, Brown Pelicans rebounded after the pesticide was banned. But in recent years they have been experiencing significant breeding failures. Much of this trouble can be traced to the lack of sardines, their primary food fish, which is also affecting California Sea Lions.

Word at press time was that the film would be playing in West Los Angeles at the Royal Theater and in Pasadena at Laemmle Playhouse on Colorado Blvd, but check listings.

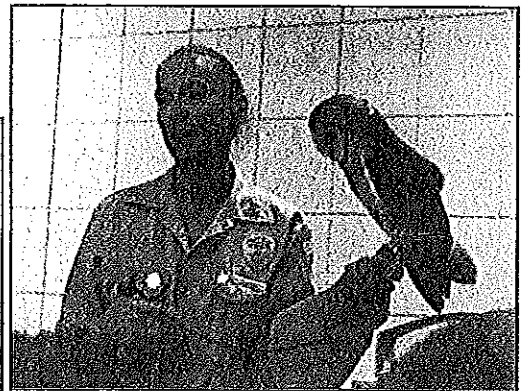


## PICTURE TIME

Some photos from a recent general meeting and field trip. Feel free to send interesting photos to your editor (contact information on the back page), or post them in our Facebook group!



Above — WAAS birders in action during the September field trip.



Above — a Barn Owl is a welcome visitor to our general meeting.

Left — chapter treasurer, birder, and photographer Caralie Scott.

## NOVEMBER MEETING AND PROGRAM

I was not able to confirm the program for the November meeting at "press time" for the Observer. We will have a speaker and program, so please plan on attending despite the dearth of details here. The meeting will take place on Thursday, November 20th, at 7:30 PM at the Whittier Community Center. The Community Center is 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, adjacent to the Whittier Public Library.

The program is free. Light refreshments will be served.

## THREATENED LISTING GOOD NEWS FOR WESTERN YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO

... [From the American Bird Conservancy]

American Bird Conservancy (ABC) applauds the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) decision to list the western population of the Yellow-billed Cuckoo as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. The listing, which will be published in the Federal Register tomorrow, is expected to bring about the necessary protections for the imperiled bird species whose numbers have plummeted in recent decades.

"The final rule recognizes that current environmental regulations are inadequate to eliminate the threats faced by the western Yellow-billed Cuckoo," said Steve Holmer, senior policy advisor with American Bird Conservancy. "Federal agencies must take responsibility for the water diversion and grazing policies that are harming the species. Today's listing tells federal managers to chart a new direction and develop a plan to restore riparian areas and regrow lost Yellow-billed Cuckoo habitat."

The final rule, which will become effective November 3, says that collisions with towers during migration is also a significant threat to the remaining western Yellow-billed Cuckoos. "ABC urges that a program be adopted to educate and provide financial incentives for tower owners within the species' range to adopt modern lighting known to reduce Yellow-billed Cuckoo deaths," said Holmer.



## NOVEMBER FIELD TRIP TO VETERANS PARK

Our November field trip will be to Veterans Park in Sylmar. Located at the base of the foothills, Veterans Park has many large mature trees and provides abundant habitat for many birds. Woodpeckers are a specialty here, and spotting five different woodpecker species would not be surprising. Previous WAAS trips have turned up Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, amongst other interesting birds.

The field trip will take place on Saturday, November 22nd. Meet for carpooling at 7:00 AM at the Whittier Community Center parking lot at 7630 Washington Ave., Whittier, CA. Bring binoculars, water, and a hat. We will have a picnic lunch, so pack a lunch.

Linda LeRoy and Al Moreno will lead.

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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!



**YAHOO!**

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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.