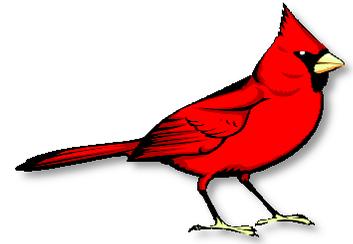


Final 4 Paper
Newsletters!

THE OBSERVER



Calendar

March 14. 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. Larry Schmahl leads. Rain or recent rain cancels.

March 19. Annual Conservation Dinner. 6:00 PM at the Hillcrest Congregational Church on West Road in La Habra Heights. Details at right.

March 21-22. Weekend field trip to Anza-Borrego. See page 3 for details.



whittieraudubon.org

MARY HANSEN TO BE HONORED AT ANNUAL CONSERVATION DINNER

The Whittier Area Audubon Chapter is pleased to announce Mary Hanson as the 2015 Conservation Award Honoree at the Whittier Audubon Annual Conservation Dinner on March 19, 2015. A long time conservationist, Mary Hansen has been instrumental in the open space preservation surrounding Whittier. Mary helped raise awareness and opposition to proposed development in the hills above Whittier. She is founder and first president of Friends of the Whittier Hills, a watchdog group formed to raise watchful awareness of potential development in our hills. Her dedication to conserving and protecting the environment for future generations is perhaps her most important legacy. Whittier Audubon is proud to honor and thank her.

The Whittier Audubon Annual Conservation Dinner will be held from 6pm to 9pm in Barwick Hall at the Hillcrest Congregational Church 2000 West Road La Habra, CA 90631, March 19, 2015. Dinner will include a live musical interlude and program presentation by professional photographer Steven Kaye.

Tickets are \$35 each and will support the Whittier Audubon Chapter in providing monthly bird walks in Sycamore Canyon, monthly meetings with educational programs and lectures in addition to other outdoor educational services to Whittier and surrounding communities. To make a dinner reservation or to donate, make checks payable to: Whittier Audubon and mail to the Whittier Area Audubon, P.O. Box 548, Whittier, CA, 90608-0548. For information, contact Susana Guerrero 562.652.5945 or visit www.whittieraudubon.org



END OF THE PAPER NEWSLETTER

Just a reminder that at the end of this chapter year in June we will cease sending out a paper newsletter unless you specifically request one. See the form on the back of this issue for instructions if you wish to continue receiving a paper Observer. Given our goal of being a conservation organization it is unconscionable for us to send out hundreds of paper newsletters each month. You can find the newsletter on our website at <http://whittieraudubon.org/newsletter/>. Note that we'll also save a bunch of money on printing and mailing, money that can be put to better use by the chapter.

THE NEW BIRDS OF WINTER

[From the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology web site]

For a variety of reasons—from changing habitats and a shifting climate to more people providing food at backyard feeders—some birds aren't flying as far south for the winter these days. Some species that once flew to the tropics are now only going as far as temperate areas in the U.S. Some that used to overwinter in the American South are staying farther north.

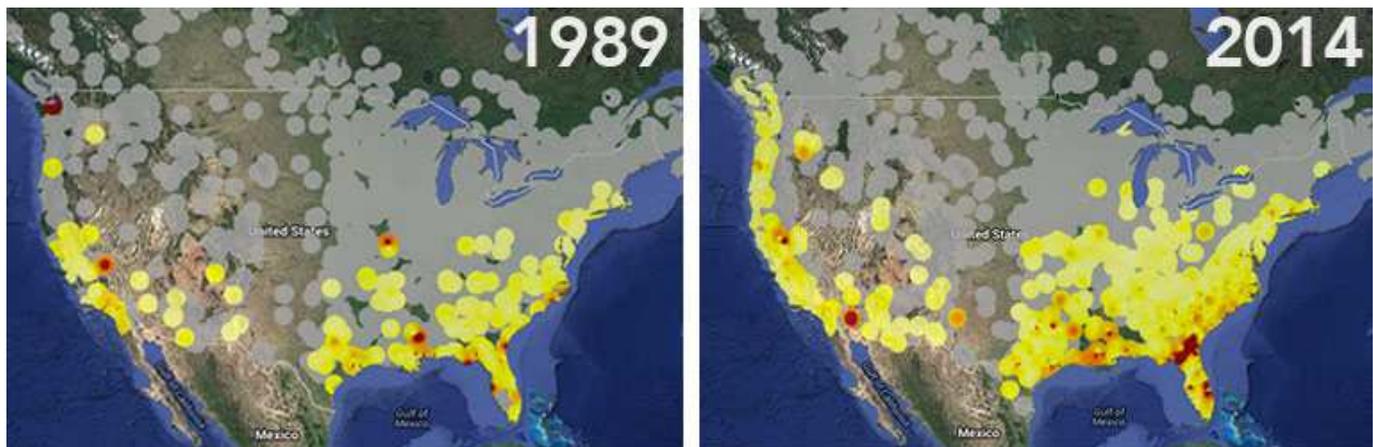
Citizen-science projects, like the Cornell Lab's Project FeederWatch and the Great Backyard Bird Count, provide thousands of data points that show how the winter ranges of some birds have changed significantly.

Bushtit

Project FeederWatch data show a steady increase in Bushtits reported at western bird feeders over the past couple decades, from around 10 percent of feeders in 1989 to about 30 percent in 2014. Feederwatch biologists aren't exactly sure why this is happening, but it's a mystery they hope to solve as they continue to analyze data this winter.

Yellow-rumped Warblers

Yellow-rumps are unique warblers in two respects. First, they're not strictly a Neotropical migrant, with many staying in the U.S. for the winter. And second, they show up at bird feeders, often picking at a suet station. According to Project FeederWatch, more Yellow-rumped Warblers are overwintering in southeastern states. In a triangle from the Carolinas to Florida to Texas, reports of yellow-rumps (based on percentage of participants reporting the species) have more than doubled, from 22 percent in 1989 to 47 percent in 2013. Even in the Pacific Northwest, where wintertime Yellow-rumped Warbler sightings were exceedingly rare in 1989, they were found at nearly 13 percent of feeders in 2013.



Project FeederWatch reporting locations for Yellow-rumped Warbler show how their range has increased from 1989 to 2014.

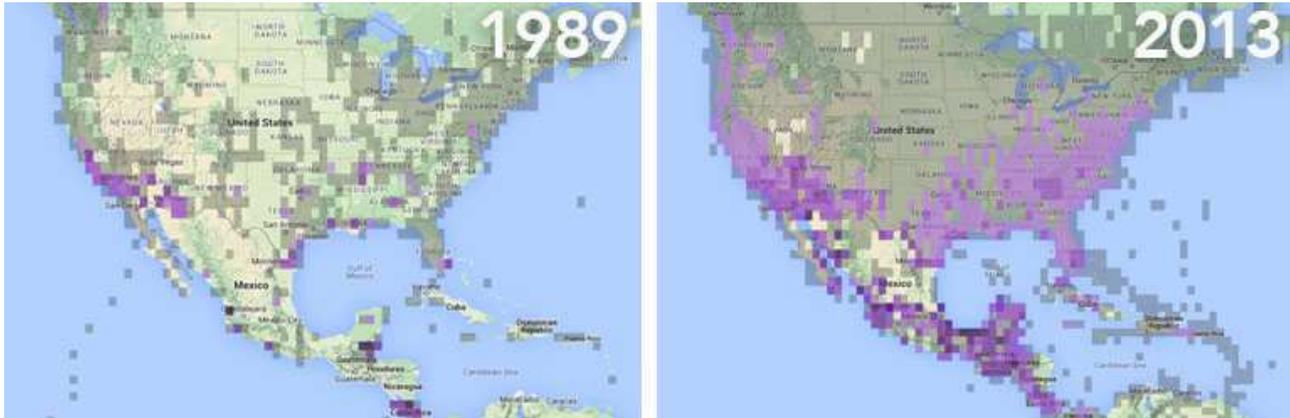
Northern Rough-winged Swallow

The Northern Rough-winged Swallow is a breeding bird of the United States that typically flies way south for the winter to Mexico and Central America. Since swallows feed almost exclusively on flying insects, they need to be in areas where they can find flies and bees. But in recent years they have overwintered in some surprisingly northern places. The Great Backyard Bird Count (which is held every year in February) has found these swallows in New Haven, Connecticut, and Philadelphia. Scientists think that more sewage plants in urban areas, perhaps in combination with overall warmer winters, are providing a steady source of insects that allow Northern Rough-winged Swallows to make a living even in wintry regions. Reports of other swallow species, and Purple Martins, have also steadily increased during win-

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

ter months in the North.



Sightings reported to eBird for Northern Rough-winged Swallow in the months of November-March.

MARCH FIELD TRIP TO ANZA-BORREGO

Anza Borrego State Park is a huge place. If we hit the Spring migration right, there are lots of desert oddities. One of our major goals is to catch sight of the Swainson's Hawks as they migrate through. They come in to feed on the bugs that happen during the Spring bloom. If we hit this right, the place will be covered in desert blooms.

The weather is the big variable. If we guessed right, the place will be covered in desert blooms. If not, it can be a "little warm" (Okay, more like a desert hellhole.) Over the years, I have been treated to Mountain Quail, Prairie Falcon, Swainson's Hawks, and Long-eared Owls. At this point in the season, it is too hard to predict.

There are lots of motels in Borrego Springs. Many of us stay at Stanlunds Resort Inn & Suites, 2771 Borrego Springs Road, Borrego Springs, CA 92004, 760-767-5501. We will probably meet there each morning. Watch the website for times (www.whittieraudubon.org).

Plan on arriving Friday evening. We will start bright and early Saturday morning. Bring water, sack lunches for Saturday and Sunday and your bird watching stuff.

Some of the places we will go to will be on dirt roads. The condition of those roads really depends on the winter weather. We will probably cram into SUV's for the Saturday places.

Rain Cancels. Because it always seems to rain on Friday night this time of year, there could be a very last minute cancellation. Please let me know if you are going, either by email or telephone my office (562-945-2838).



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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.

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

PLEASE CHECK OUT OUR NEW AND IMPROVED WEBSITE! WHITTIERAUDUBON.ORG

We are moving away from a dead trees newsletter with the launch of an electronic newsletter and a fresh, new website. The most recent newsletter will be placed on our website whittieraudubon.org every month, with previous newsletters saved and archived for your enjoyment. If you wish, we will email you a copy of the newsletter directly to you. Simply go to our website and click GIVE AND JOIN and select Email List.

Printing and mailing costs have steadily risen over the years, and as advocates for wise stewardship of our natural resources, we cannot in good conscience continue to send out paper newsletters.

IF YOU WISH TO CONTINUE RECEIVING A PAPER NEWSLETTER IN THE MAIL YOU WILL HAVE TO REQUEST IT WITH THIS FORM. Detach and mail to Whittier Audubon, PO Box 548, Whittier, CA 90608-0548.

YES, Please continue sending me a paper newsletter through the mail.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Beginning in June 2015 we will no longer send out paper newsletters unless you opt in by mail.