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Editor's note: KEEP THE DATE!

Our annual Conservation Dinner will be March 16, 2017. Join us as we honor Bob Henderson and his many years of dedication to Whittier and its environmental causes. Purchase online with Paypal. Check our website for ticket info. Proceeds are used to place Audubon Adventures into classrooms..

Jennifer Schmahl

Audubon Optimistic About Ryan Zinke's Plans for the Interior Department

WASHINGTON, DC—Representative Ryan Zinke (R-MT) testified before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources as part of his confirmation process to head the Department of the Interior. The National Audubon Society issued the following statement:

"Ryan Zinke aspires to follow in the footsteps of Theodore Roosevelt with regard to conservation. Those are big shoes to fill, but our public lands and the birds and people who depend on them deserve nothing less," said David Yarnold (@david_yarnold), Audubon's president and CEO.

"In his hearing, Congressman Zinke repeated a firm commitment to 'objective science' when it comes to making decisions, including acknowledging that humans play a role in a changing climate. He advocated for permanent authorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, opposed any sale or transfer of federal public lands, agreed that some natural areas are too beautiful to develop and supported improvements in water infrastructure in the West.

"As Interior Secretary, Ryan Zinke can certainly count on Audubon to help him achieve a conservation legacy that we can all be proud of. We will engage with him in good faith and look forward to together protecting birds and the places they need."

The National Audubon Society protects birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow, throughout the Americas using science, advocacy, education and on-the-ground conservation. Audubon's state programs, nature centers, chapters and partners have an unparalleled wingspan that reaches millions of people each year to inform, inspire and unite diverse communities in conservation action. Since 1905, Audubon's vision has been a world in which people and wildlife thrive. Audubon is a nonprofit conservation organization. Learn more at www.audubon.org and @audubonsociety.

WAAS Honors Councilman Bob Henderson with Conservation Award

March 16, 2017 is our next annual Conservation Dinner, at which we will present the WAAS Conservation Award to Whittier City Councilman Bob Henderson.

Please help us honor his work. Tickets are \$35 each and can be purchased through Paypal on our website (whittieraudubon.org) or by mailing a check to our address with a note telling us how many tickets and for whom.

Mailing address:

Whittier Area Audubon
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Whittier, CA 90608-0548



Audubon

We are a chapter of National Audubon

KIDS SPACE

For this month's Kid Space news, see our General Meeting description!

General Meeting for December

Birding Alaska: Young Birder of the Year 2015, Dessi Sieburth, presents his 2015 Alaska Birding trip

Alaskan birding will be the topic presented by ABA Young Birder of the 2015 year, Dessi Sieburth, age 14, on Thursday, February 16,

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- **Annual Conservation Award**
- **Kids Space: Teen Birding**
- **General meeting info**
- **Field trip schedule**
- **Past trip write-up**

2017 at 7:30 p.m. at the Whittier Community Center, 7630 Washington Ave., Whittier, CA. 90602

Dessi Sieburth is an outstanding photographer and illustrator. He has already birded in many states. Dessi went to Alaska twice, in 2015 and 2016 and these trips were for sure highlights among his birding trips in the U.S. Dessi will present photos and relate interesting facts learned about the birds he saw on his 2015 trip to Alaska. His goal was to see many specialty birds of Alaska such as: Gyrfalcon, Northern Hawk Owl and Ptarmigan. He started out his birding trip in Denali National park where he also got a chance to interview Carol McIntyre, a biologist who studies the reproductive success of Golden Eagles. Then, he traveled to Seward to find seabirds at Resurrection Bay. Black-legged Kittiwakes, Marbled Murrelet, Puffins, and Harlequin ducks were some highlights on his boat trip. After that, Dessi went to the Homer spit where he saw the Rock Sandpiper and more pelagic birds such as the Kittlitz's Murrelet. Dessi ended up with over 90 species including 23 lifers.



The Whittier Area Audubon Society meets on the third Thursday of each month from September through June at the Whittier Community Center, 7630 Washington Avenue, Whittier, California. (*Not to be confused with Washington Blvd.*), on the corner of Mar Vista St. and Washington Ave., in the City of Whittier. Meetings start at 7:30 pm

Admission is free and light refreshments will be served

Field Trip Schedule:

8:00am Sycamore Canyon Beginning Bird Walks, meet at the Sycamore Canyon Trailhead. Every second Saturday of the month (except July and August, rain or recent cancels). 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. **Jeff Allison leads. Rain cancels**

**Saturday February 18
Laguna Beach and Orange
County**

**Linda Oberholtzer takes us
birding in Orange County**

See our website for details.

January Field Trip to Salton Sea recap (Jan 21-22)

Salton Sea sang its siren song, luring us out to the sinkhole of California and its winter birding Mecca (FYI, some of us stopped in Mecca to look for an elusive Black Headed Gull, seen only by Linda LeRoy this weekend). Leader Jay Oberholter did an excellent job scouting the locale and keeping us out of the mud. I must add that I have never seen the area so clean and dust free. Joining us this weekend was the Huber clan and the Schmahl clan (mere, pere et fils) The Menendezes, Dr. Kathleen, Linda and "Screech" Al and Dear Leader. Our first early morning stop was to a seed processor on Carey Rd. that allowed Sandhill Cranes to roam the grounds. Along with the 4 foot prehistoric looking cranes, we also spotted Horned Larks, White Crowned Sparrows (a recurring species), Kestrels, White-faced Ibis, Northern Pintails (also out in force at several locations) Western Meadowlarks, Abert's Towhees, Northern Harrier, Snowy Egrets (along with Great and Cattle, Egrets were found every stop) Says Phoebe, and the usual suspects. Following Dear Leader along all paved roads (thank you) to Fig Lagoon, we saw Ruddy Ducks, Double-crested Cormorants, White Pelicans, Ring-billed



Gulls, a Western Grebe, Tree and Barn Swallows, Orange Crowned Warbler and a Verdin. Off to Sonny Bono Wildlife Refuge for lunch. We ended up in the middle of an area Planners Meeting. I'm not sure what the object of their field trip was, but they managed to move over 700 Snow Geese from the close field to the far field. We were treated to a moving swarms of mixed Blackbirds, Red-winged and Yellow Headed. It was similar to the murmeration of starlings, but Webster suggests that if it's not starlings, it's called "swarming" Sad! The highlight of that stop was a Harris Sparrow (seen by Larry and Matt Schmahl) and the view of a Northern Harrier eating a Pintail while still alive (horror alert). Other highlights include Long-billed Curlew, Dowitcher, White Tailed Kite, Black Bellied Plover, Logger-headed Shrike, Common Ground Dove, and Ducks galore. Gingerly making our way to Lack & Lindsey we added salt water species like Greater

Yellowlegs, Least Sandpiper, Herring Gulls, California Gulls, American Avocets, Black Necked Stilts, Willets, Killdeer, Shovelers, Pintails, Scaup and Ruddy Ducks. (With a short detour on Garst to catch a pair of Black Swans slumming from Down Under) Saturday ended on a berm overlooking a pond where the Sandhill Cranes almost landed. Other than lacking a table, wine and cheese were consumed and the sunset was spectacular. Sunday morning we headed to Cattle Call Park and found roosting Great Horned Owls and a family of Gila Woodpeckers. Gamble's Quail skulked around a palm mound that was feeding Northern Mockingbirds, while a Red Naped Sapsucker did his rounds. Four species of Dove—White Winged, Mourning, Common Ground and Eurasian Collared, Hawks—Copper's, Red-Tailed along with a couple of American Kestrels. A quick stop at Riverview Cemetery where the most notable bird was a female Vermillion Flycatcher and then we rounded out the trip at Unit 1. At the platform overlooking the water we spotted a Common Goldeneye, Buffleheads, Gadwall, American Widgeon, Hooded Mergansers, Mallards, Shovelers and Pintails. Floating in the distance were Eared and Pied Billed Grebes. We all heard a Sora and caught a Forester's Tern sailing by. The soundscape included a constant warbling of the Sandhill Cranes and the honking of Snow Geese (we found Blue and Ross' amongst the crowds) With the approach of lunch time, Dear Leader released us to make our way back through the deluge to home and hearth.