



THE OBSERVER

WHITTIER AREA AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Visit our website www.whittieraudubon.org



Is this issue of the newsletter coming to you late? Yes.

Summer was incredibly packed with fun stuff. Our family traveled to Denver, Tucson and Alaska since I last wrote you. Birds were seen, family was visited, adventures were had.

Elected officers for 2017-2018 President Chris Huber, First Vice President Larry Schmah, Second Vice President Linda Oberholtzer, Recording Secretary Steve Huber, Corresponding Secretary Joan Powell, Treasurer Liz Huber. Thanks to all for serving our chapter. Now on to a new year!

- **Editor's note: Summer fun**
- **Continued use of Sycamore Canyon**
- **eBird uses**
- **Kids Space: New Audubon Adventures**
- **Birding's Economic Impact**
- **General meeting info**
- **Field trip schedule**

The Habitat Authority Considers offering permitted use in Sycamore Canyon

Puente Hills Habitat Authority Citizen's Technical Advisory Committee met during the summer to address our request to continue offering Bird walks in Sycamore canyon, earlier than the newly authorized entrance hours. Several of our board members have attended the public meetings and presented a position paper and public comments in support of allowing Whittier Audubon to lead bird walks in the canyon before the new posted entrance times. The Advisory Committee has been generally supportive of our efforts, but there are a few sticking points, mainly having to do with liability and responsible charge issues.

We have pointed out that our members perform a valuable service as data gatherers for eBird. (I have further info on eBird later in the newsletter.)

We will keep the chapter informed on the matter, but any contact with our elected officials in favor of Whittier Audubon continuing to have access to Sycamore Canyon is appreciated.



Another use for eBird

Scientists are using the information collected by millions of amateur birders through eBird to determine the most effective dates to lease agricultural fields. Conservation groups are leasing fields from farmers and flooding them to provide short term habitat at a significant savings compared to outright purchase. So keep submitting those eBird checklists.

KIDS SPACE

Cathy Fricker is stepping up to replace Letty Brooks as our Education Chair. Thanks, Cathy!

Are you a teacher, administrator, teaching coach that can find teachers that would like to add Audubon Adventures to a classroom, afterschool or out of school program? Let us know!

Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis (FWS study from 2011)

In 2011, there were 47 million birdwatchers (birders), 16 years of age and older, in the United States – about 20 percent of the population. **The Forest Service expects the number of birders in America to increase 33% from 2008 to 2030.**

What is a birder? The National Survey uses a conservative definition. To be counted as a birder, an individual must have either taken a trip one mile or more from home for the primary purpose of observing birds and/or closely observed or tried to identify birds around the home. Thus, people who happened to notice birds while they were mowing the lawn or picnicking at the beach were not counted as birders. Trips to zoos and observing captive birds also did not count.

Backyard birding or watching birds around the home is the most common form of bird-watching. Eighty-eight percent (41 million) of birders are backyard birders. The more active form of birding, taking trips away from home, is less common with 38 percent (18 million) of birders partaking.

This is the "money" paragraph:

This report presented information on the participation and expenditure patterns of 47 million birders in 2011. Trip-related and equipment-related expenditures associated with birding generated **nearly \$107 billion in total industry output, 666,000 jobs, and \$13 billion in local, state, and federal tax revenue.** This impact was distributed across local, state, and national economies.

Birding in a Digital World

From: www.cnet.com/news/birdwatching-easier-in-digital-age-with-apps-and-cameras

"Birds are a great gateway drug to the rest of nature," Noah Strycker says. He spotted a record 6,042 bird species in a round-the-world tour in 2015.

There's no substitute for the thousands of hours he's spent watching birds since a teacher piqued his interest in the topic in the fifth grade. But there's good news for the rest of us: new technology is making it easier to join in on the fun.

"The digital age has completely transformed birding. It's made it more accessible to more people," Strycker says. "It's made it easier to get the information you need to identify birds and figure out where to find them."

How? Phone apps let you leave the bird book at home and, with their audio recordings, identify birds by their songs and not just their appearance. Online services track migrations and alert you when a rare bird has been spotted in your area. And you can peer at plumage as never before with new camera and scope technology.

The first apps repackaged bird books in electronic form. But **Merlin Bird ID**, a free Android and iOS app from the **Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology**, shows how birding apps can become more interactive. It helps identify birds after asking you a few simple questions or scrutinizing a bird photo.

Another new audio option is arriving now: Using your phone's microphone so an app can identify for you the bird that's singing. "When it works, it's this miracle," says Sherwood Snyder, director of product management at Wildlife Acoustics, maker of the Song Sleuth app for iPhones. Indeed, the first time I tried it, the app correctly pegged a brown-headed cowbird's liquid burble, helping me ID a bird I'd never seen before.

One app is very different from the rest: eBird. Using it helps all birders, not just you. eBird can keep your life list -- the record of all bird species you've seen -- but everybody's data also goes into a database that lets anyone find out where birds are and when, which are common and which are rare. It began as a website in 2002, but now more than half of bird checklists are submitted through the phone app, Cornell's Wood says. Birders can't get enough.

eBird tells scientists a story, too, aiding conservation, ecology, biology and other research. One example: The Nature Conservancy used eBird data to figure out when shorebirds migrate through California's once-marshy Central Valley. Based on that data, the conservancy paid rice farmers to time their field-flooding operations to help the birds, a cheaper conservation alternative than buying the land outright



General Meeting for September 21

The first meeting of the new chapter year will be September 21st. Our

speaker will be Steve Kay on **How to Photograph Hummingbirds**. Thursday, Sept 21, 2017 at the Whittier Community Center, 7630 Washington Ave., Whittier, CA. . The program is free. Light refreshments will be served.

Mailing address:

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Field Trip Schedule:

Sept 9, 2017 7:00am Sycamore Canyon Beginning Bird Walks, meet at the Sycamore Canyon Trailhead. Pending future governmental action, this might be the last time we bird Sycamore Canyon for our Beginning Bird Walk. Every second Saturday of the month (except July and August, rain or recent rain 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. **Linda Leroy and Al Moreno lead.**



Saturday September 23, 2017 Birding the Los Angeles River

Larry Schmahl leads

Migration is happening. Join us along the Los Angeles River to see what is moving through the Southland. We will stop along various access points to the River. Consider bringing a scope to share. Bring lunch and plenty of water. We will leave the Community Center parking lot at 7:00 am. We should be back in Whittier between 2:00 and 3:00.