



THE OBSERVER

WHITTIER AREA AUDUBON SOCIETY

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We are a chapter of National Audubon Society



Audubon

Visit our website www.whittieraudubon.org

National Audubon has issued guidance regarding activities and meetings during the Covid19 pandemic. Whittier Audubon will NOT be leading field trips or having in-person meetings or gatherings of any kind during the pandemic.

VIRTUAL MEETING AND PROGRAM

www.whittieraudubon.org

[November Program: Mountain Lions in Southern California](#)

**Thursday, November 19, 2020
7:30 PM 9:00 PM**

Dr. Winston Vickers will present *Mountain Lions in Southern California*



Dr. Vickers is a wildlife research veterinarian with the University of California-Davis Wildlife Health Center. He has been studying mountain lions and other wildlife for the past 19 years and directs the WHC's

I will be sending out an additional newsletter after Election Night. There are many issues of importance to Audubon and the birding world that will be affected by the results.

mountain lion (cougar, puma) study in Southern California, as well as collaborating with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife involved with research on bobcats, Channel Island foxes, Santa Cruz Island scrub jays and other terrestrial and avian species. He co-developed and directed a nine-part series of short documentaries as well as a one-hour film about California mountain lions.

Dr. Vickers will discuss findings from his research into mountain lions in southern California. Habitat loss and high mortality of mountain lions in our region are of major concern. but even more concerning is isolation by highways and development leading to genetic decline and inbreeding. Recent findings suggest that the potential for reduced reproductive success due to inbreeding depression, combined with high mortality rates, threaten the Santa Ana Mountains population with extirpation. He will also discuss what we can do to support the conservation of this iconic species in our area."

This will be a virtual event in Google Meet. Go to our website to RSVP and get a link emailed to you.

- **General Meeting: Virtual Meeting Mountain Lions in So Cal**
- **Field trips suggestions: San Gabriel River Spreading Basin, Veteran's Park, Sylmar**

Birds can't vote, but you can.

Dear Members

The best way to protect California's birds and the places they need is to vote. Join bird lovers across the country and Pledge to Vote For Birds on or before November 3rd.

This year, the presidential, state, and local elections will have an extraordinary impact. Elected decision makers will influence how wildlife, conservation, and environmental laws are written and enacted at every level of government. They will shape the future for billions of birds.

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Photo: Annie Lindsay

ODDITIES OF THE NATURAL WORLD

A rare bird has been found at Powdermill Nature Reserve in Westmoreland County.

The newly banded Rose-breasted Grosbeak is a gynandromorph, meaning that it is part male and part female. This particular Grosbeak is male on the right side and female on the left, making it a bilateral gynandromorph.

Researchers at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History said less than 10 bilateral gynandromorph birds have been documented in the reserve's 64-year bird banding history. The reserve's only other documented Rose-breasted Grosbeak bilateral gynandromorph was banded in 2005.

Annie Lindsay, Powdermill's bird banding program manager, said finding the gynandromorph is a "once-in-a-lifetime experience." "One [of the banding team members] described it as 'seeing a unicorn' and another described the adrenaline rush of seeing something so remarkable. They all are incredibly grateful to be part of such a noteworthy and interesting banding record," said Lindsay in a press release.

The fact the bird is a gynandromorph is discernable to the naked eye as it has physical traits of both male and female Grosbeaks. On the right, male side of its body, it has ruby wing pits and a ruby breast spot, along with black wing feathers. On the left it has yellow wing pits and a brownish, speckled wing.

Scientists said they're interested to see if the bird will produce offspring, believing it may be possible for the Grosbeak to either produce eggs or inseminate another bird. To father chicks the Grosbeak will likely have to be able to sing like a male to attract mates.

Suggested Field Trips



Beginning Bird Walk, San Gabriel River Spreading Basins

Every second Saturday of the month (except July and August,) **Nov 7, 2020 7:00am National Audubon is still asking local chapters to refrain from leading field trips or having any gatherings.** Therefore we are simply suggesting interesting places to go birding on your own that are appropriate for the season. Our suggested location is the San Gabriel River Spreading Grounds. A great location to park and begin your morning is at the eastern terminus of Mines on the west side of the spreading basin.



Photo Linda Leroy, Spreading Basin

Please check our website for further details.

SUGGESTED FIELD TRIP

October Birding

Recommendation: Veteran's Park, Sylmar Saturday Nov 21, 2020 7:00am



Photo: Jennifer Schmah, Veteran's Park

Nestled against the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains, Veterans' Park is comprised of clusters of pines, eucalyptus, olive and oak trees separated by lawns and picnic areas. An area of chaparral is just outside the north fence. This is a place where all the locally occurring sapsuckers have been seen (sometimes in one day) but it is also a good place for migratory birds.

Bring your birding stuff, junk food and a lunch

Suggested departure from the Whittier Civic Center at 7:00 a.m.