



# 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](http://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](http://www.whittieraudubon.org)

## Exploring Panama with Mac Walter

Thursday, February 18, 2021

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

In February of 2018, Mac Walter and his wife Kathy and traveled to Panama to do a guided birdwatching trip sponsored by Canopy Camps. The trip included all three Canopy Camps over 21 days. Each camp is set up to offer daily birding trips through a specific region. By going to all three camps, they were able to cover much of Panama. Each day included a morning and afternoon guided birding trip. The three camps were called, Canopy Tower, set near the center of the country near the Panama Canal;

**The incoming Biden/Harris administration has been busy reversing destructive orders from the previous administration, but there is a lot to keep track of.**

Pay attention to action alerts from National Audubon and Audubon California to see where citizen activists are needed.

Canopy Camp, set in Southeast near Darien; Canopy Lodge, the main camp set in the higher elevations northwest of the Panama Canal. Highlights included day trips to see the Harpy Eagle and the rare Crested Eagle. These were both all day events. Mac will show photographs from all three locations including birds, mammals and reptiles.

## Suggested Field Trips Beginning Bird Walk, San Gabriel River Spreading Basins

Every second Saturday of the month (except July and August,)

Feb 13, 2021 8:00am

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.

Please check our website for further details.

## SUGGESTED FIELD TRIP

- **General Meeting: Canopy Tour of Panama with Mac Walter**
- **Field trips suggestions: San Gabriel River Spreading Basin,**
- **Huntington Central Park**

If we could get together and share a field trip outing this month, we would be going to Huntington Central Park

A migrant/vagrant trap masquerading as a city park, 356-acre Huntington Central Park lies between two of Orange County's better-known hotspots: Bolsa Chica and Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserves. Depending on schedule and whim, my husband and I make the pilgrimage to the location with enthusiasm and regularity. Good birding can be had here nearly every day of the year, but winter, spring, and autumn are best.

A variety of landscape zones — mature trees, expanses of lawn, seasonal marshy areas, ponds, and thick shrubbery — attract an array of birds transiting the Pacific Flyway. California Towhee, Allen's and Anna's hummingbirds, and Red-shouldered and Cooper's Hawks are residents. Peregrine Falcon and Osprey are sighted regularly. Hundreds of Yellow-rumped Warblers, Orange-crowned Warblers, and a Townsend's or two call the park home during the winter.

Between January and May 2006, the park hosted a dazzling array of migrants and vagrants, including five over-wintering White-throated Sparrows and a Swamp Sparrow. Hooded Mergansers and Red Phalarope were seen swimming on the ponds. MacGillivray's Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Plumbeous Vireo, and Summer Tanager were also discovered. — *Catherine Waters*

If you can safely get out and travel, this winter birding spot is well worth your time.

## From Audubon California

Thursday, Jan. 28th,  
at 3pm PT

### [Native Plants for Birds: Q&A Webinar](#)

Do you want a thriving native plant garden that attract birds and pollinators?

Join us for a live Q&A webinar with Audubon's native plant experts to get your questions answered.

Get tips on selecting native plants for your area, creating the best growing conditions, and attracting your favorite birds.

**Native Plants Q&A Webinar**  
*Thursday, Jan. 28th*  
ZOOM Webinar  
**3pm - 4pm PST**  
Free  
**[REGISTER NOW](#)**

## From Cornell Lab of Ornithology

### The Great Backyard Bird Count



We are only days away from our 23rd annual 4-day global bird count – February 12-15, 2021. This year we've redesigned our webpages to help you quickly find resources to make your count a success!

Mailing Address:

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## The National Audubon Society

, joined by several other conservation organizations, \*\* [filed a federal lawsuit](#) in the Southern District of New York challenging the Trump Administration's weakening of the [Migratory Bird Treaty Act](#). This is not the first legal challenge to the rollback of the MBTA. In August of 2020, in response to a previous lawsuit filed by Audubon, other organizations, and states, the Southern District [ruled that the administration's](#) 2017 Solicitor's Opinion did not align with the intent and language of the 100-year-old law, and overturned the policy.

"This lawsuit is necessary to challenge a plainly illegal policy that will devastate our bird populations, said Sarah Greenberger, interim chief conservation officer, National Audubon Society. "With both the law and public opinion on our side, we intend to act not only in the courts but with the new administration and Congress to quickly reinstate and strengthen the decades-old precedent for protecting our nation's birds."

The 2017 policy change by the Trump administration ignored the intent and language of the law to protect and

conserve birds. Instead, it attempted to limit the MBTA's protection only to activities that purposefully kill birds, exempting all industrial hazards from enforcement. Any "incidental" death—no matter how inevitable, avoidable or devastating to birds—became immune from enforcement under the law. If the Trump administration's legal opinion had been in place in 2010, BP would have faced no consequences under the MBTA for the more than one million birds killed in the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

New science has revealed the loss of [3 billion birds](#) in North America since 1970 and that [two-thirds of those birds are at risk of extinction](#) due to climate change. In light of these alarming reports, the National Audubon Society is advocating for a multi-front approach to reinstate the longstanding and common sense interpretation this foundational law.

"We hope to see the Biden-Harris administration begin a process to reinstate MBTA protections and use the opportunity to add a reasonable permitting process to manage incidental take," said Greenberger. "We also hope to see Congress pass the Migratory Bird Protection Act to clarify these longstanding protections and authorize this common-sense approach."

The [Migratory Bird Protection Act](#) was passed out of the House Natural Resources Committee in the 116th Congress and had a bipartisan group of 90+ co-sponsors. The bill would secure protections for birds and direct the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to develop a permitting process for "incidental take" through which relevant businesses would implement best management practices and document compliance, further driving innovation in how to best prevent bird deaths.