



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

Audubon Starr Ranch Sanctuary: Protecting and Promoting Southern California Wildlands

Thursday, March 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.

"Audubon Starr Ranch Sanctuary: Protecting and Promoting Southern California Wildlands" will be the topic presented by Sandy DeSimone, Ph.D., Director, Research, Education and Land Management at the Whittier Area Audubon virtual meeting on March 18, 2021 at 7:30 p.m.

Sandy and her husband, Pete DeSimone, Manager at Starr Ranch, are beloved by our Chapter. We have often gone on bird walks and attended owl prowls in non-COVID times.

With the introduction of vaccines to prevent and lessen the effect of Covid19, we can start to look forward to life returning to normal. Until then, please stay safe and continue following social distancing recommendations. **We will see you soon.**

Starr Ranch Sanctuary is a 4,000 acres preserve owned and operated by the National Audubon Society. It is located in the foothills of the Santa Ana Mountains in the mild and semiarid Mediterranean climate of southeastern Orange County, approximately 60 miles southeast of Los Angeles. It lies in unincorporated Orange County and is bordered by the Cleveland National Forest on the north and east, the Ronald W. Caspers Regional Park on the south and the developments of Dove Canyon and Coto de Caza on the west. The larger community of Rancho Santa Margarita is three miles northwest of the Sanctuary, and the city of San Juan Capistrano is 10 miles to the southwest.

Sandy has a M.A. from Cal State Fullerton and a Ph.D. from U.C. Davis. She developed the "Starr Ranch Field Ecology Programs" an innovative approach that integrates ecological research into education. People of all ages participate in the program, taught by biologists and have a hands-on experience in simulated or actual field research. She also began five years of research on biology and non-chemical control of a priority non-native plant species, artichoke thistle.

Since 1997 and over a series of three experiments, they found a method that has reduced artichoke thistle cover by 95% on a work site after one season of treatment. Land managers from Ventura to San Diego Counties have visited Starr Ranch to hear about

- **General Meeting: Starr Ranch**
- **Field trips suggestions: San Gabriel River Spreading Basin,**
- **Santa Fe Dam and Peck Rd. Park**

their land management practices and visit the restoration sites.

Sandy's work has won a Certificate of Appreciation from USFWS for "Outstanding Contributions to the Nation's Fish and Wildlife," the CA Invasive Plant Council's Land Manager of the Year Award, and the Sea and Sage Conservation Award.

Please join us for this interesting and informative presentation.

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

If we could get together and share a field trip outing this month, we would be going to Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area. This park is nestled at the foot of the San Gabriel Mountains and is considered one of the many hidden jewels of Southern California. This 836-acre facility boasts a serene 70-acre lake. The facility is home to many protected native plants and animals.

AND Peck Road Water Conservation Park. For nearly 25 years, local have enjoyed this 5-acre neighborhood park. The Park offers residents the opportunity to enjoy outdoor activities in a serene



setting.

If you can safely get out and travel, this early Spring birding spot can be worth your time.

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From Audubon California

How Ranchers Can Save California's Grassland Birds

California is poised to change the fate of grassland birds.

Grassland bird species are the most imperiled in the United States, having declined 53 percent over the past 50 years.

We are proud to announce that Senator Jon Laird (D-Santa Cruz) and a number of Senate and Assembly coauthors recently introduced [Audubon-sponsored Senate Bill 322](#) which aims to protect and restore California's grasslands and birds.

This bill would offer incentives to ranchers to implement regenerative grazing practices, which restore grassland habitat, improve soil health, sequester carbon, and increase biodiversity.

Grassland birds that will benefit include the Western Meadowlark, Grasshopper Sparrow, American Kestrel, California Quail, Western Kingbird, Acorn Woodpecker, Red-tailed Hawk, and more.

The program encourages regenerative agricultural practices similar to those promoted by [Audubon's Conservation Ranching Initiative](#) (ACR).

Ranchers participating and certified through ACR can brand their meat with Audubon's "grazed on bird-friendly land" green seal. This allows you, as the consumer, to directly support their good work by purchasing bird-friendly products.

Working together, we can help California's ranchers support their families while providing exceptional habitat for grassland birds and contribute to our state's climate goals.

The National Audubon Society,

This year our conservation leaders, bird advocates, college students, ambassadors, volunteers, and scientists accomplished amazing things. Through early-December, more than 199,000 of us contacted decision-makers more than 783,700 times on behalf of birds. All of the accomplishments listed below come from the hard work

and dedication of our members, chapters, volunteers, and staff. We're very proud of what we have been able to accomplish together over the past 12 months.

California and Vermont passed and enacted bills to reinstate bird protections to backstop the federal rollbacks. Audubon was critical to the creation and passage of these bills; advocates in Vermont testifying on behalf of the bill

were instrumental in its success. **In early August, Atlantic seabirds got a big boost.** The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed to coordinate and manage fishery resources, voted unanimously to recognize the important role Atlantic menhaden play for birds, fish, and other wildlife on the Atlantic Coast, and the need to manage that fishery with an eye to overall ecosystem health. The vote sets the stage for not only healthier fisheries from Maine to Florida, but for fisheries that better support birds like Atlantic Puffin and Least Tern. Collaboration from all levels of Audubon, working together, made it possible.

Audubon helped save portions of the Tongass National Forest on Prince of Wales Island from logging interests after it and its partners won a lawsuit against the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Department of Justice declined to appeal the decision. Large old-growth trees and rich ecosystem of Prince of Wales Island contributes to the region's tourism, fishing, and recreation, and are critical habitats for wolves, deer, and birds like Queen Charlotte Goshawk and Prince of Wales Spruce Grouse.

You can find more good news at:

[Audubon News](#)