



Whittier Area Audubon Society



Audubon

Visit our website
www.whittieraudubon.org

- **General Meeting: Bob Henderson and Temple Expansion**
- **Bird Walk: Sycamore Canyon**
- **Field trips Chino**
- **Items of Concern:**
- **Field Trip Report: San Joaquin Marsh**

GENERAL MEETING

www.whittieraudubon.org

November Program: Bob Henderson discusses HsiLai Temple Expansion
Thursday, November 18, 2021

7:30 PM to 9:00 PM

Former Whittier Councilmember Bob Henderson will discuss concerns about the proposed expansion of the Temple

Our general meeting will take place at the Whittier Community Center, located at the corner of Washington Ave. and Mar Vista. 7630 Washington Ave. Whittier.

PLEASE WEAR A MASK

Field Trips

Beginning Bird Walk, Sycamore Canyon

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

November 13, 2021 8:00am

Our Winter residents are here. What are your favorites? Ducks? Peeps? Vagrants? Join one of our fieldtrips to see some of these "sunbirds"

Check our website for updates

(New time) We are back in Sycamore Canyon for our Beginning Bird Walks! The entrance is on Workman Mill Rd. just south of Rose Hills Gate 17. Be prompt as we are required to lock the gate behind us.

FIELD TRIP: Birding Chino

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2021

Join us for an urban birding experience in Chino. We will begin with a stop to look for Burrowing Owls. They are reliably seen in an open area just across from Ruben S. Ayala Park on College Park Avenue. Next, we will take a short drive to the Chino Creek Wetlands and Educational Park on El Prado Road. There are several ponds and trails to explore to look for ducks, herons and songbirds.

We will leave the Whittier Community Center at 7:00 AM, meeting at the Ayala Park parking lot about 7:45 AM. Bring your birding and photography equipment as well as water and lunch. Leaders: **Nathaniel and Steve Huber**. Bring a lunch and water and be prepared for hot and sunny weather.

Mailing Address:

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We are a chapter of National Audubon Society

Good News from CA Audubon

In California's Central Valley, gregarious Tricolored Blackbirds congregate in huge breeding colonies up to 35,000 birds! As 95% of wetlands have disappeared from the Central Valley, threatened Tricolored Blackbirds adapted by nesting in dairy forage fields.

California family dairy farmer Luciana Jonkman says, "the birds are attracted to the dairies because it's a safe environment for them to nest and there's an abundance of food for them to feed on."

However, there was an unforeseen danger to the birds. Tricolored Blackbird chicks often have not left the nest when farmers need to harvest their crop. If harvested, tens of thousands of nests and chicks can be lost in a single field. If we didn't take immediate action, the species' population could collapse.

To protect these chicks, Audubon established a conservation partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in 2015 to support dairies to delay harvests so chicks could successfully fledge. This program compensates dairies to help recover their losses from delaying harvests.

Starting in 2015, there were 67,000 Tricolored Blackbirds found on dairies. By 2021, more than 170,000 adult Tricolored Blackbirds were protected on 11 dairy farms across four counties



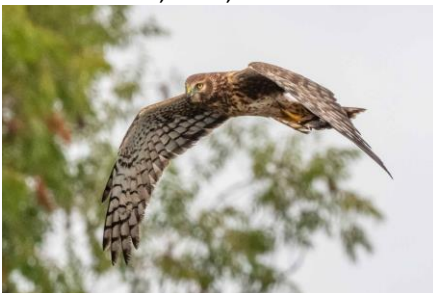
in the San Joaquin Valley. Similarly, the 2020 season saw an estimated total of 177,000 adult birds. These represent a record-high number of Tricolored Blackbirds being protected on dairy farms. *In just 6 years, dairies have helped to save more than 825,000 Tricolored Blackbirds.* "The fact that the birds return to nest on dairy farms year after year shows how important our forage fields are to the species' survival and to biodiversity as a whole," said Vander Woude, who owns and operates Vander Woude Dairy in Merced County

CHAPTER ACTION ITEMS

There are several ongoing situations in the Whittier Area that we feel require citizen

Report on Field Trip to Irvine Water District - San Joaquin Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary

October 23, 2021, Jim McNamara



Although there was a bit of rain on and off we were compensated with great birds. On our way to Pond 1, we were immediately side-tracked just past the Duck Club building. Say's and Black Phoebe, Song and Lincoln's Sparrows, California Towhee, a male Common Yellowthroat and a very worn Blue-gray Gnatcatcher that put on a fabulous display.

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awareness and perhaps citizen action. We plan to keep a close eye on these projects and we will be keeping our members informed.

Our most important current concern is the Dam Repair at Whittier Narrows.

UPDATE:

WAAS Board of Directors have sent a comment letter to the Corps, naming our biggest concerns with the Dam Safety Modification Plan and it's Habitat Restoration Plan. A copy of the letter will be posted on our website.

The US Army, Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District (Corps) is undertaking a major construction project at Whittier Narrows, known as the Dam Modification Plan (DMP). In the mandated consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife under the federal Endangered Species Act for the Least Bell's vireo and the Federal

About fifteen to twenty minutes later we arrived at the northeast lookout on Pond 1. From this small viewpoint we began to see and hear many birds, Song Sparrow, hummingbirds, Clark's and Western Grebes, first year Forster's terns, American White Pelicans, another Common Yellowthroat and distant views of the island with Redheads, Ring-necked Ducks, Mallards, a single American Avocet, and about twenty Black-necked Stilts. Soon we had a close Marsh Wren singing loudly enough for an audio recording. In another five minutes all present were absolutely stunned to see the little Virginia Rail do a mad dash from the reeds just east of the lookout point to the reeds on the west. The rail was visible about three seconds, all the while making excited sounding squawks. Surely this should be the highlight our little trip, but as we headed around Pond 1 we had another Marsh Wren singing and Nathan Huber alone saw a pair of California Thrashers and managed to get a photo.

Threatened California Gnatcatcher and its designated critical habitat, the Corps did determine that the DMP project is likely to adversely affect the Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*; LBVI or vireo), the federally threatened coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*; CAGN or gnatcatcher), and designated critical habitat for the gnatcatcher.

Homeless Encampments In The Narrows

Update: The WAAS Board of Directors has sent a letter to various agencies about the continuous fire danger the homeless encampments pose to any attempts at restoration/mitigation of bird habitats.



We continued to Pond C in a round-about-way touring Ponds A and 4, and we had four Eared Grebes in Pond C, a White-tailed Kite just west of Pond C, a juvenile Cooper's Hawk and then a female Northern Harrier that put on a great show of circling Pond C many times before perching on a pile of brambles near the shore. We had 57 bird species in our four-hour visit that made a lasting memory for all; good friends, good birds - life is good even even in the rain.