



Whittier Area Audubon Society

- **General Meeting: Dark Eyed Junco Adaptation**
- **Field Trip San Jacinto Marsh, 3/23/24**
- **Bird Walk:: Sycamore Canyon 3/9 , 8am**

We are a chapter of National Audubon Society



Visit our website
www.whittieraudubon.org

Our Chapter will begin our election process in March. More here or on the website

In person: the meeting will take place at the **Whittier Community Center, located at 7630 Washington Ave. Whittier.** Please wear a mask.

Online: [please RSVP here](#) and we will send you a link to the meeting.
The program is free and open to the public.
Visit our website or contact web@whittieraudubon.org for a link to the online meeting.

Mailing Address:

Whittier Area Audubon Society
P.O. Box 548
Whittier, CA 90608-0548

GENERAL MEETING

March Program

Dark-eyed Juncos!
Thursday, March 21, 2024

7:30 PM 9:00 PM

Whittier Community Center 7630 Washington Avenue Whittier, CA, 90602

"Dark-eyed Juncos: Adaptations to the Urban Environment" will be presented by Ellie Diamant and Samuel Bressler.

Ellie Diamant is a behavioral ecologist and evolutionary biologist interested in the interaction between human-caused environmental change and wildlife response, particularly birds in the built environment. She is currently a Zuckerman Postdoctoral Scholar at Ben Gurion University of the Negev. Previously she conducted her doctoral research at UCLA with Pamela Yeh. She explored how populations respond to multiple stressor interactions, with an emphasis on the pattern and process of behavioral and morphological adaptation in an urbanizing songbird, the Dark-eyed Junco, across Southern California cities.

Sam Bressler is a Biological Consultant with LSA Associates,

Inc. specializing in the birds of Southern California. He is also a long-time volunteer and former board member of Sea and Sage Audubon Society and compiles the organization's Puente-Chino Hills Christmas Bird Count.

Dark-eyed Juncos are a model species to study urban adaptation and response in California. Diamant and Bressler will discuss their six years of research into how juncos are being shaped by the urban environment and the patterns and processes underlying their adaptation to the urban environment . Dark -eyed Juncos exhibit differences and similarities in morphological evolution across Southern California , potentially in relation to behavioral innovation. Behaviorally, urban juncos have lower fearfulness across cities and nivel nesting behavior. The COVID-19 pandemic provided an opportunity to explore how these behaviors are shaped by human activity, demonstrating key insights on behavioral adaptations to city living.

Hybrid meeting - It is your preference: Join in person or online.

March Field Trips Beginning Bird Walk, Sycamore Canyon

Every second Saturday of the month (except July and August,) **March 9, 2024, 8:00am**

Join us 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.

San Jacinto March 23, 2024

**Saturday, March 23, 2024
7:00 AM to 5:00 PM**

This is, perhaps, the best place to see just about every kind of raptor there is for Southern California. Last year, a juvenile gyrfalcon had been seen making an early morning appearance starting in early January. Rough-legged Hawks, Kestrels, Harriers



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and Red-tails are everywhere. It seems like there is usually at least one of each duck and a fair bit of peeps. There will be plenty of birds.

We will be doing some driving and stopping.

Meet: We will convene in the parking lot of the Whittier Community Center and carpool/caravan, leaving at 7:00 AM sharp.

We should be back in Whittier between 4:00 and 5:00.

Bring: I recommend that everybody bring some folding chairs. As long as the weather cooperates, a clear sunny day is about all that is required. A sandwich, Coke and a folding chair are about as close to heaven as one gets in the Inland Empire.

Trip Leaders: Nathan Huber and Steve Huber

FIELD TRIP REPORT SAN DIEGO



Over the weekend of February 17 and 18 our chapter held an overnight field trip to San Diego. The field trip was planned and led by Jay Oberholtzer and included 12 participants..

Our first stop was at the San Diego River mudflats in the vicinity of Sea World and Robb Field. Lots of the expected ducks, herons, grebes and shorebirds were present including Long-

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billed Curlew, a Dunlin, Little Blue Herons, a dancing Reddish Egret and a nesting Osprey.

Next we went to the Sunset Cliffs area on the coast and were



surprised to see nearly fifty Brant just outside of the surf. We also had good looks at Brant's Cormorant, many in breeding plumage.

We drove down the Point Loma Peninsula to the Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery and the Cabrillo National Monument. The view of North Island and the San Diego Bay from the observation deck was marvelous. The rest of the day was spent at Famosa Slough for Hooded Merganser and Belted Kingfisher and the Tijuana River Estuary for Whimbrel, Marbled Godwit and Northern Harrier.



Sunday was spent at the Mission Hills Regional Park. A little drizzle did not deter us from seeing and hearing multiple singing Orange-crowned Warblers, House and Bewick's Wrens, three species of woodpeckers and assorted sparrows and towhees.

At the end of the weekend, the trip list stood at plus or minus one hundred species. It was a great trip and thank you to Jay and Cheryl for the pre-planning work and leadership that went into it.

From National Audubon

Our Conservation committee team of Steve Huber and Kathleen Barry got a very nice commendation from the Chapter Services rep at National Audubon. Steve and Kathleen have been keeping the Army Corps of Engineers on notice that Whittier Audubon is keeping track of their work on the Whittier Dam Modification. National Audubon approves:

"Your chapter's work on the USACE habitat restoration project as mitigation for the Whittier Narrows Dam Modification especially impressed me - knowing that chapters are sharing expertise like this and cultivating strong relationships and generating good will with decisionmakers was part of my motivation in revamping the chapter annual reports. It's so important to capture that terrific work across the United States and see how it adds up".-- **Kim Brand**
Interim Vice President for Network

Great work, Steve and Kathleen!