



Whittier Area Audubon Society

- **General Meeting: Earth Day**
- **Field Trip Bear Divide**
- **Bird Walk:: Sycamore Canyon**

GENERAL MEETING

April Program

Thursday, April 18, 2024

7:30 PM 9:00 PM

The Origins of Earth Day and how Whittier celebrated it.

John Beynon, past President of the Whittier Area Environmental Coalition (WAEC) will speak on the origins of Earth Day and how Whittier celebrates it. The talk will be presented live at the Whittier Community Center and you can join in person or online.

Beynon graduated with a degree in architecture from MIT in 1959. He worked for UNESCO for 32 years, stationed in Paris and Bangkok. He was the lead architect of an international team tasked to introduce low-cost innovations in school design. During his final six years with UNESCO, he served as director of development cooperation in Education. Tasks included leading multi-disciplinary teams to assess and plan national education systems including the Palestinian Authority and Bosnia Herzegovina.

Since retirement in 1996, he headed the United Nations Association Chapters in Boulder, Colorado and Whittier. With the Whittier Chapter, the Whittier

We are a chapter of National Audubon Society



Audubon

Visit our website

www.whittieraudubon.org

Area Environmental Coalition, WAEC was formed. WAEC is open to all Whittier Area organizations contributing to protect the environment. The Whittier Area Audubon Chapter is one of those organizations. The main event of the WAEC is the Earth Day event which will take place earlier in the week.

Admission is free.

It will be a hybrid meeting--It is your preference: Join in person or online.

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

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

April Field Trips Beginning Bird Walk, Sycamore Canyon

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

April 13, 2024, 7:00am

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.

BEAR DIVIDE

April 20, 2024

Saturday, April 20, 2024

5:30 AM to 12:00 PM

Bear Divide is a low, narrow, pass or saddle within the San Gabriel Mountains just above Soledad Canyon. It is home to amazing morning flights of migrating birds in the spring from March through May with the height of migration usually towards the end of April. Thousands of migrating birds have been known to funnel over the narrow divide daily, sometimes so close an observer feels the need to duck or dodge.

The Moore Lab of Zoology at Occidental College runs a regular count to quantify the numbers and identities of birds migrating through Bear Divide. As this is on public lands, the public is welcome to watch and participate. By 9 or 10 AM, the show is usually over. Clear days after a storm front are best, fog or winds in the wrong direction tend to shut migration down though.

Our field trip is timed to hopefully experience spectacle at the height of north bound migration.



THE OBSERVER

Meet: We will convene in the parking lot of the Whittier Community Center and carpool/caravan, leaving at 5:30 AM sharp.

We should be back in Whittier by 12:00 noon.

Bring: Be prepared for anything. Cold, wind, rain, heat. No need for a lunch as we will be done before then.

Trip Leader: Larry Schmahl

FIELD TRIP REPORT SAN JACINTO

Photo by Jim McNamara



Nine intrepid birders braved the blustery weather and joined the Hubers on the March field trip to the San Jacinto Wildlife Area. At the first stop on Bridge Street, we were greeted by singing Western Meadowlarks, Red-winged Blackbirds and Song Sparrows. Due to the rain this season, Mystic Lake has a lot of water and we were able to see several ducks and grebes using our scopes. At the next stop across from the dairy cattle feeding area at the end of Bridge Street, we were fortunate to find four species of blackbirds: Brewer's, Red-winged, Tricolored and Yellow-headed. Just before the entrance to the Wildlife Area, we stopped to get a great close look at a Great Horned Owl sitting on a nest and at the entrance area behind the office, we were

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treated to a pair of Loggerhead Shrikes catching Jerusalem Crickets and hanging them on the barbed wire



Photo by Nathan Huber

fence. Continuing through the wetlands we saw White-faced Ibis, Greater Yellowlegs, Common Yellowthroat, singing Marsh Wrens and several Cattle Egrets. At our last stop and walk around the wetlands, we saw Eared Grebes in breeding plumage, a Vermillion Flycatcher, a nice look at a Sora foraging, lots of Tree Swallows flying around and several Black-crowned Night Heron. Just before the end of our walk, it began to rain so we drove out to the covered picnic areas and had an enjoyable lunch before heading home.

From National Audubon



The

Northern Mockingbird is one of North America's most beloved mimics. The skilled singer has also become inextricable from American popular culture, providing inspiration for the fictional "[Mockingjay](#)" of the Hunger Games franchise to being a central theme in the iconic novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. John James Audubon was

a fan of the mocker as well. Here are some facts you might not have known about this American classic. There are a total of 16 avian species in the world with the name "mockingbird," but the Northern Mockingbird is the only one native to the United States. Other nearby species include the elusive Blue Mockingbird of Mexico and the island-dwelling Bahama Mockingbird, both of which can occasionally appear in the U.S.



The Northern Mockingbird is a year-round resident across much of the U.S., but an expansion into the northeast has been successful due in part to the multiflora rose, or rambler rose. Native to Asia, this invasive rosebush was introduced to the United States in the late 1700s as a root stock for ornamental roses. It makes an ideal nest site for mockingbirds because of its tasty berries and thick tangle of branches.

The mockingbird's latin name is *Mimus polyglottos*, which literally translates to "many-tongued mimic." A polyglot is a person who speaks many languages, referencing the bird's ability to imitate sounds from its environment.

A study [released](#) in October 2019 found that, in addition to mimicking the calls of other birds and manmade noises like music and machinery, Northern Mockingbirds have been known to imitate at least 12 different species of North American frogs and toads. In fact, John James Audubon was so in awe of this bird's singing ability, he [wrote](#) of the Northern Mockingbird in *Birds of America*, "There is probably no bird in the world that possesses all the musical qualifications of this king of song, who has derived all from Nature's self."