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Published by the
San Fernando Valley Audubon Society
A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

For Nature Education and the Conservation of Wildlife

Vol. 73 No. 3

June / July 2022

Online General Membership Zoom Meetings

We hope you will join us for our informative Zoom meetings. [Click here](#), to signup and receive a link prior to all events.

Reminder: No General Meetings June-August. See you in September!

Have a great summer

Become a NEW member
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Go to SFVAudubon.org

Birdathon

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO DONATE!

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Thank you for your support!



Awards Luncheon - You are invited!

Saturday, June 4, 2022

Franklin Canyon Sooky Goldman Visitor Center
2600 Franklin Canyon Drive, Beverly Hills

Birdwalk 10:00 a.m.

Luncheon - Noon



Join us as we honor, in person, our 2020 award recipients.
Conservation Award recipient: Pat Bates, and Service Award recipient: Rose Leibowitz.



Pat Bates

The luncheon will take place in the events room next to the Sooky Goldman Visitors Center. Harvest Moon Catering will provide us with their signature sandwiches, salads, and desserts. There will be music performed by Steve McCroskey, and we will have the traditional raffle of baskets filled with exceptional merchandise. You will also have the opportunity to purchase this year's native plant centerpieces via a silent auction.

There will an optional bird walk around Franklin Canyon Park before lunch. Muriel Kotin will lead the walk beginning at at 10:00 a.m. Meet up in the parking lot.

If you previously paid for the canceled luncheon in 2020 there will be no additional cost to attend this year. If you are making a new reservation the cost is \$35.00 for adults and \$15.00 for children under 15. We would greatly appreciate if you would reserve and pay for your tickets on our website www.sfvaudubon.org. Casual Attire.

To get there from the San Fernando Valley, take the Ventura Freeway (101) or Ventura Boulevard to Coldwater Canyon Boulevard. Head south to the intersection of Coldwater Canyon and Mulholland Drive. Make a 90-degree right turn onto Franklin Canyon Drive. (This means crossing Mulholland) Road signs read "Road Closed 800 Feet" "Sunset to Sunrise"; this is the park entrance. Allow some extra time, as Coldwater Canyon can be a slow road. Signage will be posted to facilitate access to the venue. Handicapped parking is available as well as drop off areas for attendees as needed. Handicapped parking is available in back of the Nature Center signage will indicate location.



Rose Leibowitz

Photo by Rose Leibowitz, Wood Ducks, Franklin Canyon

♥ ♥ **A BIG BIRDATHON THANK YOU** ♥ ♥



Richard Davis – Email: Birdathon@sfvaudubon.org

Birdathon, our major annual fundraising event for the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society runs from April 1 to May 31 so, we are almost done for this year. The list of Birdathon outings is shown in the table including the team leaders and number of species they spotted.

| Leader | Species Spotted | Location |
|---|-----------------|---|
| Pat Bates standing in for Kris Ohlenkamp | 56 | Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve |
| Paula Orlovich | 29 | Franklin Canyon |
| Carolyn Oppenheimer | 31 | O'Melveny Park |
| Pat Bates | 44 | Hansen Dam |
| Luisa Bergeron & Rebecca Marschall | 25 | Orcutt Ranch |
| Kathy and Dave Barton | 46 | Malibu Creek State Park |
| Art Langton | 83 | Highway 33: From the Ocean to the Mountains |
| Allan and Muriel Kotin | 65 | Malibu and Nearby |
| John and Andrew Willis Lori Willis Memorial Fund | 28 | South Coast Botanical Gardens |

A big thanks to all these team leaders who donate their efforts year after year. And of course, we want to thank all of you who have given your generous support in response to this campaign.

If you haven't yet given, it is not too late.

Make your Pledge or Donate Now by clicking [HERE](#) or scanning the QR code

[\(www.sfvaudubon.org/thank-you-for-supporting-birdathon/\)](http://www.sfvaudubon.org/thank-you-for-supporting-birdathon/)



Calendar of Events

PLEASE REMEMBER TO CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION ON OUR BIRD OUTINGS. WE CONTINUE TO FOLLOW CDC GUIDELINES.

June 2022

Saturday, June 4. Annual Conservation Awards Luncheon. Noon. Sooky Goldman Nature Center, Franklin Canyon, 2600 Franklin Canyon Dr., Beverly Hills. Join us as we honor, in person, our 2020 award recipients. Conservation Award recipient: **Pat Bates**, and Service Award recipient: **Rose Leibowitz**. **Muriel Kotin will lead an optional bird walk at 10:00 a.m.** please meet her in the parking lot. See page 1 for more information and directions.

Sunday, June 5. Sepulveda Basin. 8:00–11:00 a.m. Directions to Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve During Detour on Access Road: Take Burbank Boulevard to Woodley Avenue. Turn north. Travel around 0.4 miles on Woodley to the first possible right turn, a park road. The park road will end at a parking lot. Turn left and drive through the parking lot. Turn right onto the park access road ("Wildlife Way") and drive around 0.4 miles to the paved parking lot on the left at road's end. Park in the lot and walk past the low, rock-faced buildings to our meeting place on the other side of the buildings. Leader: Kris Ohlenkamp. Contact him at kris.ohlenkamp@sbcglobal.net.



Thursday, June 9. A Bird Sit with Nature Journaling, O'Melveny Park. 10:00–11:30 a.m. If you would like to mindfully connect with birds and all of nature, join us on the 2nd Thursday of each month at O'Melveny Park—at the picnic tables near the bathrooms. (Rain cancels and moves it to the 3rd Thursday.) What to bring: a cushion or a comfortable chair, a beverage/snack, binoculars, a journal, and something to write/draw with. This event is limited to 10 people. To reserve a spot, contact Diana Keeney at diana.keeney@sfsaudubon.org or Teri Carnesciali at teri.carnesciali@sfsaudubon.org.



Sunday, June 12. Franklin Canyon Park. 8:00 a.m. 2600 Franklin Canyon Dr., Beverly Hills. Directions: From the San Fernando Valley, take the Ventura Freeway (101) or Ventura Blvd. to Coldwater Canyon Blvd. Head south to the intersection of Coldwater Canyon and Mulholland Drive. Make a 90-degree right turn onto Franklin Canyon Drive. Leader: Paula Orlovich. See website sfsaudubon.org under Events to reserve a spot.



Sunday, June 19. Malibu Creek State Park. 8:00 a.m. Meet at the second (lower) day-use parking lot. Entrance to the park is on the west side of Las Virgenes Road, just south of Mulholland Hwy. Entrance fee is \$12 per car. Leaders: Kathy Barton (818) 929-2516 and David Barton (310) 990-6896.

Monday, June 20. SFVAS ZOOM Board Meeting. 7:00 p.m.

No General Membership Meetings June-August.
Have a great summer!

Saturday, June 25. Hansen Dam. 11640 Foothill Blvd., Sylmar, 8:15 a.m. We will travel along a dirt road at the base of the dam—exploring promising sites along the way. Directions: From the 210 Freeway eastbound, exit at Osborne, go right on Foothill, then left (about 0.15 mile) into the Hansen Dam Soccer Fields parking lot. Meet in the dirt lot on the east side of the parking lot. Leader: Pat Bates, (818) 425-0962, batesbird@gmail.com.

Saturday, June 25. Young Birders Group. Veterans Park (13000 Sayre Street, Sylmar) 9:00–11:00 a.m. Join us for a fun and interactive bird outing! All ages are welcome but this event will be geared towards K-12 students. The locations vary monthly. As this is an outdoor activity face masks are not required, but strongly encouraged to keep our younger and high-risk attendees safe. Directions: From park entrance on Sayre Street, turn left on park road. Drive past the office for frisbee golf and drive straight into the large parking lot at the end of the road. We have a limited supply of binoculars so please bring your own if possible. Interested in joining us? Just show up, or e-mail Luisa and/or Rebecca at YoungBirders@sfsaudubon.org for more information.



July 2022

Sunday, July 3. Sepulveda Basin. 8:00–11:00 a.m. Directions to Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve During Detour on Access Road: Take Burbank Boulevard to Woodley Avenue. Turn north. Travel around 0.4 miles on Woodley to the first possible right turn, a park road. The park road will end at a parking lot. Turn left and drive through the parking lot. Turn right onto the park access road ("Wildlife Way") and drive around 0.4 miles to the paved parking lot on the left at road's end. Park in the lot and walk past the low, rock-faced buildings to our meeting place on the other side of the buildings. Leader: Kris Ohlenkamp. Contact him at kris.ohlenkamp@sbcglobal.net.

Sunday, July 10. Franklin Canyon Park. 8:00 a.m. 2600 Franklin Canyon Dr., Beverly Hills. Directions: From the San Fernando Valley, take the Ventura Freeway (101) or Ventura Blvd. to Coldwater Canyon Blvd. Head south to the intersection of Coldwater Canyon and Mulholland Drive. Make a 90-degree right turn onto Franklin Canyon Drive. Leader: Paula Orlovich. See website sfsaudubon.org under Events to reserve a spot.

Sunday, July 17. Malibu Creek State Park. 8:00 a.m. Meet at the second (lower) day-use parking lot. Entrance to the park is on the west side of Las Virgenes Road, just south of Mulholland Hwy. Entrance fee is \$12 per car. Leaders: Kathy Barton (818) 929-2516 and David Barton (310) 990-6896.

Saturday, July 23. Hansen Dam. 11640 Foothill Blvd., Sylmar, 8:00 a.m.

We will travel along a dirt road at the base of the dam—exploring promising sites along the way. Directions: From the 210 Freeway eastbound, exit at Osborne, go right on Foothill, then left (about 0.15 mile) into the Hansen Dam Soccer Fields parking lot. Meet in the dirt lot on the east side of the parking lot. Leader: Pat Bates, (818) 425-0962, batesbird@gmail.com.



Saturday, July 30. Young Birders Group. Location TBD. Please check our website for updates. Interested in joining us? E-mail Luisa and/or Rebecca at YoungBirders@sfsaudubon.org for more information and we can add you to our e-mail list. 🐦

There's a New Kid in Town!

In November of 2021 a new activity appeared on the SFVAS Events Calendar: A Bird Sit with Nature Journaling. Led by Diana Keeney and Teri Carnesciali, it is a monthly event (September—June) held on the 2nd Thursday at O'Melveny Park.

A bird **walk** involves one or more people walking along a path watching and listening for birds, and keeping a list of all the species seen or heard.

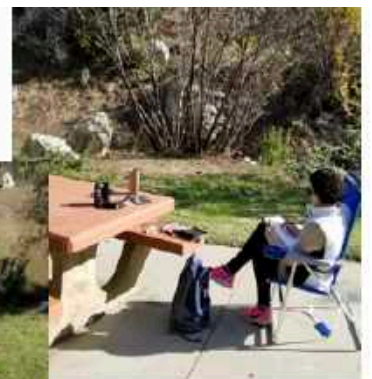
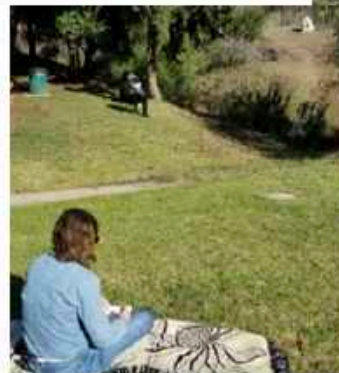
A bird **sit**, on the other hand, is the age-old practice of sitting in one place and letting the birds come to you. The SFVAS Bird Sits with Nature Journaling involve each participant finding his/her/their own private "sit spot" to watch and listen for birds and other elements of nature. A journal and something to write with are used to record words, numbers, diagrams, meta data, and/or pictures in order to remember, learn more about, or make a connection to the natural world.

During the SFVAS Bird Sits with Nature Journaling, the following protocols are usually followed:

- I. The participants begin by sharing any homework projects they engaged with since their previous "sit." (Homework and sharing are always voluntary!)



- II. Then, participants find their personal "sit spots" and spend about one hour watching, listening, drawing, and/or writing about their encounters with birds or other aspects of nature. (See next page for a poem and drawing inspired by a bird seen at Paula's sit-spot.)



- III. Finally, participants reconvene to share and discuss their avian encounters. Since we get ideas and learn from others, they ultimately place their journals at the edge of a picnic table for a "walk-around," which is a chance to see journal practices used by others that enhance learning, memory, and self-expression.



The Devoted One

The ultimate mimic agitates hummingbirds
 Singing a cappella on hillside snag
 The contender with fierce eye, curved beak scorning the mockingbirds
 Repetitive refrain, weary of that reframe
 Continues to elaborate on its' theme drawing from improvised repertoire
 The brown plumage has fooled none
 The humble camouflage
 All is revealed in volume and variation by the devoted one
 —Paula Orlovich



We'd love to have you join us!

Audubon-at-Home by Alan Pollack

E-mail Alan Pollack, our Audubon-at-Home Chair, with any questions you have with regard to creating a wildlife-friendly garden that can be used for publication. Alan offers FREE consultation/landscape design to help you make your yard wildlife friendly. He also gives a FREE, PowerPoint slide show/lecture to community groups, high school, and college classes on attracting wildlife to your garden and sustainable gardening practices. He can be contacted at (818) 340-2347 or at alan.pollack@sfv Audubon.org.

Allan and Muriel Kotin's 2022 Malibu Birdathon Birding in Almost Normal Times Tuesday, April 19

Background: A Birdathon is a 24-hour search for as many species of birds as you can find and identify. Ours is dedicated to raising money for San Fernando Valley Audubon's Sepulveda Basin Environmental Education Program (SBEEP). Just as our 2021 Birdathon was informed by the Covid Pandemic but less constrained than 2020's, our 2022 Birdathon was much more relaxed. We continued our pandemic approach of staying close to home, but mainly as a matter of saving our energy. Not only was Covid a much less intrusive element, so was the aftermath of 2019's Woolsey Fire. This was, in part, because we did not visit the Malibu Park neighborhood which still has many homes under construction. However, some of the replacement homes in that neighborhood have been completed. During our bird search this year we did see some trees that were fatally burned, but the main evidence of fire damage among the trees and shrubs was blackened trunks and branches surrounded by vibrant green regrowth.

Earlyish Start: Allan and I got up to the chorus of iPad alarms. Almost keeping up with the times, we now prefer those to using our alarm clocks. At breakfast at 6:27 we watched a **Dark-eyed Junco (#1)** fly above the patio doors of our kitchen to gather something from the place where the balcony ceiling meets the wall of our unit. Likely it was something yummy gathered from an old spiderweb. We were to see many of these charming sparrow-like birds which are apparently thriving and nesting now in Southern California, including in our townhome development. Soon Allan spotted a **Mourning Dove (#2)** on the roof of a neighboring building. We were to see these many times through the day as well.



Mourning Dove on Wire



Allen's Hummingbird, as Pugnacious as He Looks

Leaving at 6:47, we soon drove along Westward Beach. A **Western Gull (#3)** stood on the roof of a lifeguard stand and an **American Crow (#4)** hunted for treasure on the sand. Taking Birdview Avenue up from the beach and then along residences on Point Dume, we spotted an **Allen's Hummingbird (#5)**, **California Towhee (#6)** on someone's lawn, and **House Finch (#7)**.

7:03 AM, Pt. Dume Headland: We had such a wonderful stop at the headland last year that we got there early enough to grab the one open parking space (of only nine plus two handicapped ones) on Cliffside Drive. It is shameful that this is the only public or street parking within half a mile of this wonderful small State Nature Preserve at the northwest end of Santa Monica Bay. A small flock of **Red-crowned Parrots (#8)** flew into a tree on the inland (residential) side of the road. The point's giant coreopsis flowers were entirely spent, probably done in by the recent heatwave. Bush sunflowers were all that was in bloom.



California Towhee Posing in a Valley Oak Tree in the Plain Brown Bird's Most Elegant Moment Ever

We walked to the top of the cliff overlooking Santa Monica Bay, finding only one female **Anna's Hummingbird (#9)** on land. Looking down at the ocean and beach from a new viewing platform, we watched six **Brown Pelicans (#10)** fly in and land on the water beyond a pair of surfers. A **Pelagic Cormorant (#11)** flew low over the ocean, its head lower than its body, continuing downcoast and out of sight. Everything was quiet otherwise, except where heavy earthmoving equipment was operating at the edge of the preserve. Time to leave. Driving, we spotted a **Western Bluebird (#12)** on Cliffside Drive and a **Red-tailed Hawk (#13)** shortly after turning onto PCH.



Ash-throated Flycatcher

8:07 AM, Malibu Creek State Park: Judy Howell was waiting for us at the parking lot. It was great to have her company and help. We watched **Cliff Swallows (#14)** chase insects overhead. There was no sign of the Lewis's Woodpeckers we saw above the parking kiosk and next to the lot on Sunday's birdwalk. Walking toward the Braille Trail we found the first of the noisy **Acorn Woodpeckers (#15)** that think they own the oak woodlands of Southern California. A **Great Blue Heron (#16)** flew off, very high in the sky. It returned and landed on the field next to the trail to hunt for rodents, lizards or other land-based prey.



Great Blue Heron, Not a Snake in the Grass

The first of several **Ash-throated Flycatchers (#17)** landed on a low oak branch, sounding its police-whistle call. A female **Nuttall's Woodpecker (#18)** landed against the main trunk of another oak. We knew she was a she because she lacked a red cap on her head. We were convinced we were hearing **Oak Titmice (#19)** in the huge oak near the road and finally got a good look at one. A **Spotted Towhee (#20)** (continued)



Black Phoebe

showed its stunning black, white, and orange colors and a more understated **Black Phoebe (#21)** appeared in its black tux with white shirt showing at its belly. The Ash-throated Flycatcher and Black Phoebe are both “flycatchers,” but the slightly larger Ash-throated is seen here only in nesting season, while the Black Phoebe is resident throughout the year.

A typically noisy small flock of **Nanday Parakeets (#22)** landed in a tree (“oak” is becoming repetitive). A stunningly colored **Lazuli Bunting (#23)** posed on a branch of a small tree. These tiny birds arrive almost reliably at MCSP for nesting season every spring, especially near this trail. Eventually a **Red-shouldered Hawk (#24)** whose “teer-teer” cry we had been hearing allowed us some quick looks. I managed some brief looks at a pale yellow bird in a huge Valley Oak tree while Judy and Allan were ahead of me on the path. I was pretty sure it was a **Warbling Vireo (#25)** and reached for my phone to check on a birding app. No phone!!! At this point I was eager to get back to my car to be sure I had left it there, rather than losing it along the trail. Despite my concern, we saw a **House Wren (#26)** and a plain brown female **Brown Cowbird (#27)** posing in separate trees, while a **California Scrub-Jay (#28)** flitted between treetops. Keen-eyed and -eared Judy found us a **Pacific-slope Flycatcher (#29)** on a twig in good

view. This slightly flycatcher which is smaller than a Black Phoebe, visits here only for the nesting season. A **Blue Grosbeak (#30)** posed fetchingly on a shrub in the open field. A **Turkey Vulture (#31)** soared high over the field along the trail.

Back at the car, I looked for my phone in the cupholder where it normally stays while I’m driving. I couldn’t see it there or on either of the front seats. Worry or not, I headed to the restrooms. When I emerged, a smiling Allan was signaling me to hurry back to the car. He said I had looked from the wrong car door. I looked from the passenger door and didn’t see any phone. It turned out to be “hiding” under a bird list pamphlet I had put on top of it. Out of sight, out of mind was the reason I had left the phone in the car. Whew! How reliant we’ve become on our mobile phones! Now I could continue to enjoy the birding.

We drove north on Las Virgenes, following Judy’s car. We turned west on Mulholland and found a **Lewis’s Woodpecker (#32)** on willow trees next to the south side of the bridge crossing Las Virgenes Creek. After a quick U-turn, we headed up to the shopping center just south of the 101. A **European Starling (#33)** flew from the wires at the side of the road as we drove toward a Starbucks. But first came our purpose in picking this particular location.

10:18 AM, we arrived at the northern section of the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority’s (MRCA’s) **Las Virgenes Creek Restoration Project** which is tucked between the 101 and Agoura Road, behind and below the Starbucks. You can learn much more about it from a video

at https://calabasas.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=21&clip_id=1727. It is a lovely little riparian area, densely planted with California natives like Cottonwood, Sycamore, and Willow trees and shrubs. A **Great Egret (#34)** flew overhead, perhaps heading for the other part of the restoration south of Agoura Road. A **Song Sparrow (#35)**, presumably a youngster, fluttered its wings, begging an invisible parent to feed it. A solo **Bushtit (#36)** gathered food from a cottonwood, probably to feed its babies. A solo bushtit is a sign of nesting season. The rest of the year these tiny birds stay in flocks of 25 – 40, ravenously gleaning tiny insects from leaves and twigs. **Barn and Northern Rough-winged Swallows (#s 37 and 38)** swooped overhead for a while, chasing flying insects. A few **Common Ravens (#39)** made croaking calls and moved around the tops of street lamps edging the parking lot above the restoration.

Time for some refreshing coffee, you know where. After lingering with lattes, Judy headed home and Allan and I headed toward the coast.

We drove through the roads of **King Gillette Ranch**, across Las Virgenes from MCSP. It was around noon and birds were not much in evidence, not even in the pond or one stream that held water. We decided not to

park but did spy one **Canada Goose (#40)** lounging on a lawn.

As we turned back onto Las Virgenes, Allan saw a **Lewis’s Woodpecker** had landed on a willow very close to the road. We pulled onto the shoulder and he got a photo of this woodpecker. They look like crows if you’re not paying close attention to the fact that they fly in an undulating fashion like a woodpecker and that their underparts are dark pink, faces red, and necks white.

12:30 PM OIlo for lunch. One of today’s few Covid accommodations was to eat on the patio. Our reward was to watch a brave **House Sparrow (#41)** that flew in through the generous gaps in the fencing to grab morsels of food from under a neighboring table, despite a pair of dogs napping there. We were amused at how much better behaved they were than the two small children having lunch with their mom at a table that was fortunately farther away from us.

1:25 PM, Malibu Lagoon: The water level was very low. The heavy rains of December had scoured a deep channel through the sandy beach and the intense, brief rain in March apparently helped to keep it open. Our first birds here were ducks: **Mallards (#42)** and a pair of **Green-winged Teal (#43)**. From the platform we were delighted to see a **Belted Kingfisher (#44)** fly in and hover before flying off. We enjoyed the spectacle (*continued*)



Male Blue Grosbeak’s Powerful Beak is for Cracking Seeds



Lewis’s Woodpecker



Tern Spectacle

of large flocks of **Double-crested Cormorants (#45)**, **Caspian, Elegant, and Royal Terns (#s 46-48)**, and **California Gulls (#49)** resting on exposed rocks and mud bars.



Whimbrels with Long Droopy Bills for Digging

Grace and Larry, birders and photographers we know from pre-Covid birdwalks at the lagoon, joined us on the platform. We enjoyed chatting with them and showed them the kingfisher. They were at the lagoon to survey the endangered Snowy Plover. These tiny shorebirds hang out on beaches and need undisturbed beach habitat to nest successfully. Grace kindly emailed us photos they took of the Snowy Plovers they found on the beach later after we left. It was the first time they ever saw snowys pulling out and eating worms from the sand.



Snowy Plover Pulling Worm from Sand

We also saw several **American Coots (#50)**, **Heermann's, and Ring-billed Gulls (#s 51-52)**, and some **Whimbrels (#53)** before heading toward the beach.



Gadwalls, Male on left, Female Straining Mud (Yum?)

Gadwalls (#54) walked along the water's edge, straining food from the mud.

As we walked toward the beach, we found **Marbled Godwits, and Willets (#s 55 - 56)**, large sandpipers, like the Whimbrel is. A **Great-tailed Grackle (#57)** screeched at us from above Malibu Colony. We found a large mixed flock of small sandpipers, **Western and Least Sandpipers (#s 58-59)** with a goodly number of **Semipalmated Plovers (#60)** along the near shore below the path. Finding nothing new nearby on the beach, we decided to head back to our car.



Nuptial Plumes of a Great Egret on Nest in Parking Lot Tree

We drove into the parking lot of **Malibu Country Mart** on the downcoast side of Cross Creek Road to check for nesting herons and egrets in the trees. We found a **Feral Rock Pigeon (#61)** and a beautiful sight in a parking lot tree.



Begging Coot and Mallards



Less Beautiful Sight, Car Parked Under Nest Tree

We also found a **Brewer's Blackbird (#62)** hopping around the parked cars, including the "decorated" car, left. These tough little birds know well that they can nab human leftovers near where people eat out of doors.

3:45 PM, Legacy Park: The "natural" park was green and inviting, with plenty of water in the stream and pond, but quiet. We walked to the ocean side of the little pond, seeing only crows, starlings, and house finches. We sat on the first bench we came to and immediately attracted begging coots, mallards, and pigeons.



Black-Crowned Night Heron

Finally a male **Red-winged Blackbird (#63)** appeared before we decided to move to the next bench.

The second bench was even more comfortable, so we held it down patiently, which paid off. A **Black-crowned Night Heron (#64)** flew in and posed.



Male Red-winged Blackbird on Tules

At long last, a **Snowy Egret (#65)** flew into view. It had seemed odd that we were entirely missing these fairly common water birds today.

We headed home at 4:25. It took until **5:05 PM** to drive less than eight miles because a lane closure to repave a stretch of PCH caused a long slowdown. Our plan was to go out again for a brief walk near the entrance to Zuma Canyon, but we could not find the energy to go out again. We probably didn't miss finding any additional species, based on what we didn't see there a few days later.

Our travel statistics for the day were 41 miles driven and three miles walked. We found more species with less effort than last year, although we were surprised to miss some of the bird species we found at almost the same date a year ago.

All photos taken by Allan on Birdathon day, except the Blue Grosbeak taken two days earlier at MCSP and the Snowy Plovers taken by Grace Murayama and Larry Loehner.

AUDUBON at CHATSWORTH PRESERVE by Arthur Langton

2022 Spring Bird Survey

The 2022 Chatsworth Preserve spring bird survey, conducted on April 16, produced a list of seventy species representing nearly a thousand individual birds. Aided by an enhanced group of sharp-eyed, sharp-eared participants, a lovely day, and a larger impoundment of water in the ecology ponds, these totals exceeded those of last year's spring survey and last December's Christmas bird count. Whether or not the extra water in the ponds is runoff from last December's rains or if a kind soul with a wrench from DWP briefly released some additional water from the local main is a matter of speculation. In any event, the ponds were sufficiently large to attract a smattering of ducks plus a single coot and five Pied-billed Grebes. The ponds were of a sufficient size to produce large numbers of juvenile Western Toads trying their best to make the transition from the aquatic world of their birth to the terrestrial home of their future. Despite the presence of toads and an expanded shoreline, no egrets, herons, or other types of wading birds were recorded.

Half of the sightings were of resident, nesting species found in and about the Preserve throughout the year, and included such birds as Red-tailed Hawks, Cassin's Kingbird, Say's and Black Phoebes, California Quail, California Towhees, Mourning Doves, and many others. Another quarter of the count was of over-wintering species having not yet begun their migration to summer nesting grounds. This group included several duck species, White-crowned Sparrows, Cedar Waxwings, Yellow-rumped Warblers, plus others. Replacing them and composing eleven percent of the recorded species were several summer migrants arriving to nest in the Preserve. This included such birds as the Western Kingbird, Cliff Swallow, Phainopepla, Hooded and Bullock's Orioles, Ash-throated Flycatcher. Migrants passing through the Preserve accounted for 16% of the count species and included such birds as a Western Tanager, several different swallows, Vaux's Swift, and Wilson's Warbler. Whether or not these percentages are similar to or typical of other counts taken this time of year is a subject requiring additional time, study, and investigation. Nevertheless, the survey suggests the Preserve is an important bird nursery serving as nesting territory for many year-round residents as well as summer visiting species.

Other highlights of the day included conspicuous flocks of Lawrence's Goldfinches, several Lewis's Woodpeckers, and the detection of a Bell's Vireo by Alexander deBarros who found, identified, and photographed the bird. While the SFVAS has sixty years of bird record keeping from Christmas Bird Counts, field trips, and other assorted surveys, this first-time sighting makes all current and previous Preserve checklists obsolete. Whether the presence of this bird represents an expansion of its breeding territory or was just a bird passing through to a more established, traditional breeding area can only be a matter for speculation requiring further study and observation.

The continuing presence of several Lewis's Woodpeckers from last December's Christmas Bird Count to the present was a sighting of interest. Only rarely are they present in such numbers this late in April. This has happened before, but again only rarely. This woodpecker is not listed in the [Los Angeles County Breeding Bird Atlas](#) although fossil remains from the La Brea tar pits indicate it once did nest in the Los Angeles Basin during the Pleistocene.^[1] Historical breeding sites outside of but nearest to the county include Fort Tejon, Big Bear Lake, Owens Valley, and the southern, upper, end of the Salinas Valley.^[2] Just how long these birds will hang around in the Preserve will be of interest to note.

A big thanks to the following for the giving of their time and talent to make this survey a reality: Luisa Bergeron, Alexander deBarros, Roz Gibson, Wendi Gladstone, Arthur Langton, Rose Leibowitz, Mark Osokow, Molly Pena, and Eric Shephran. Thanks and appreciation must also be extended to the LA Department of Water and Power for granting access to the Preserve for this activity. For those who may be interested, a full and complete copy of the survey can be obtained from Arthur Langton at arthurlangton@gmail.com.

^[1] Allen, Larry W., Kimball L. Garrett, and Mark Wimer
[Los Angeles County Breeding Bird Atlas](#)
Los Angeles Audubon Society
2016
pp. 20-21

^[2] Garrett, Kimbell L., and Jon Dunn
[Birds of Southern California – Status and Distribution](#)
Los Angeles Audubon Society
1981
p. 232



Remembrance: Linda Jones

Elementary Education

Linda Jones, eldest child of Red and Annie Jones, grew up in Waxahachie, Texas, where her father was a cattle auctioneer and owned a butcher shop. She had two brothers and attended the local schools, graduating from Waxahachie High School. She earned her B.S. in Medical Technology from North Texas State University in 1954, and her M.A. in Bacteriology from the University of Texas-Austin in 1959. Linda then moved to San Francisco where she was employed as a medical technician at the U. S. Naval Base. From 1962-1965 she was an early volunteer in the Peace Corps, a member of the first group in Ethiopia. There she served as a medical technician and taught medical health in the hospitals to nurses and volunteers from the community.

During her time in the Peace Corps Linda had discovered a love for teaching, and so she returned to UT-Austin where she completed a Ph. D. in Science Education in 1970. That same year, Linda took a

faculty position in the Department of Elementary Education at CSU Northridge. She was a valued science education specialist and an involved member of the department until her retirement in 2008. Linda loved to travel and was fortunate to journey throughout the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, as well as in Central and South America, Europe, and, of course, Africa. An active member of AF after her retirement, Linda especially enjoyed the bird watching group, making forays into areas where a particular bird had been sighted or day trips with Christine Smith and others to participate in bird census counts. She began the ARF book club and served as its chair. Linda was also active in the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society; among other leadership roles, she was Editor of the *Phainopepla* newsletter for ten years for which she received the SFVAS Conservation Award. Linda's work ethic and her dedication to conservation were greatly admired by her peers, who also appreciated her calmness, dry wit, and persistent (if softened) Texas drawl.

Linda was born November 9, 1932, and passed away peacefully on March 29, 2022, in Riverside, CA. She is survived by her brother R.M. (Bob Mac) Jones of Rancho Cucamonga, as well as nephew Andrew and his family in Riverside and niece Joanna and her family in So. St. Paul, MN. Linda will be greatly missed by family and friends.

—Submitted by Bonnie Ericson and Christine C. Smith

River Cleanup -Join Friends of the LA River (FoLAR) for their annual series of River CleanUps in the Sepulveda Basin in June 2022. Visit folar.org/cleanup for more information and to register and reserve your spot early!



Condor Comeback - Audubon California

"The majestic California Condor is the largest bird of North America and literally the stuff of legends. This incredible bird's journey hasn't been easy – in the 80s, the California Condor's population fell to just 22 birds. Thankfully, due to the work of trailblazing scientists like [Jan Hamber](#), one of our Women's History Month heroines, the Condor's population has been steadily improving. Today, there are more than 300 California Condors." *(Jan Hamber is a former SFVAS member. Click the link to learn about her amazing story)*



TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE TO SEPULVEDA BASIN WILDLIFE RESERVE



They are raising the berm that protects the Tillman Plant (TWRP) from flooding and have closed the section of Wildlife Way (our access road) that runs along TWRP. The closure is suspected to be in effect for a considerable time.

Directions to Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Reserve During Detour on Access Road:

Take Burbank Boulevard to Woodley Avenue. Turn north. Travel around 0.4 miles on Woodley to the first possible right turn, a park road. The park road will end at a parking lot. Turn left and drive through the parking lot. Turn right onto the park access road ("Wildlife Way") and drive around 0.4 miles to the paved parking lot on the left at road's end. Park in the lot and walk past the low, rock-faced buildings to our meeting place on the other side of the buildings.

Many thanks to Marilyn Brody French for the map and photo. —Submitted by Muriel Kotin

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The *PHAINOPEPLA*, published six times a year, is the newsletter of the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society, P.O. Box 7769, Van Nuys, CA 91409. San Fernando Valley Audubon Society is a non-profit chapter of the National Audubon Society, and is dedicated to "Nature Education and the Conservation of Wildlife."

Articles, letters, drawings, and photographs concerning conservation, ecology, birding, chapter activities, and articles of interest to the membership are welcome for publication in the *PHAINOPEPLA*.

Material from other newsletters or newspapers should include the source and date. Copy for the *PHAINOPEPLA* should be in the hands of the editor by the 3rd of the month to be included in the following month's newsletter.

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Phainopepla

San Fernando Valley Audubon Society
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Chatsworth Nature Preserve Open House

In celebration of Earth Day, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power opened the Chatsworth Preserve for the annual visit and tour by the general public. An estimated 3000 visitors took advantage of this opportunity to learn and exchange information from nearly fifty exhibitors, take guided tours around the “ecology pond,” and enjoy the varied offerings of the several food trucks present.

Organizing and sponsoring the Open House, in addition to the LA DWP, were the officers and members of the Herp Connection, Sky Line Volunteers, and the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association. Councilman John Lee’s office and staff provided shuttle service to ease local traffic and parking congestion. Native American leaders performed ceremonies and provided instruction and education on their customs, traditions, and beliefs. LA DWP provided security and water as well as canopies, tables, and chairs for the exhibitors. Daniel Cooper from the RCD staffed the bird observation station identifying birds utilizing the water runoff in the “ecology ponds.” Representing the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society were Alan Pollack and his Audubon-at-Home booth and Arthur Langton with his birds of the Preserve display.

Other exhibitors included Friends of the Island Fox, Friends of the California Condor, Tree People, National Park Service, California Wildlife Center, Placerita Canyon Nature Center, West Valley Garden Club, and others.

Hopefully, the Preserve Open House will become and remain an annual event, circumstances and Covid-19 permitting, and an opportunity for various environmental groups and their leaders to meet and exchange ideas with the general public as well as environmentally concerned citizens.

For the curious, yes, the Lewis’s Woodpeckers were still present and performing on April 23 as they had been the week before on April 16 and the 2021 Christmas Bird Count.

—Art Langton

