



San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society

WESTERN MEADOWLARK

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Hummingbirds! Beauty and the Beast

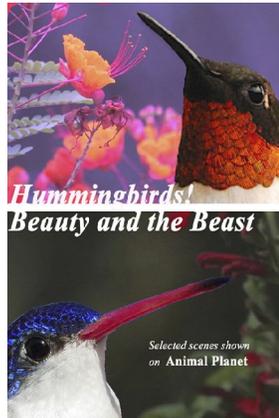
January 21, 2009 7:30P.M.

“Hummingbirds! Beauty and the Beast” features 57 hummer species, including all 16 that breed in the US. This beautifully-filmed, humorously-narrated program shows that hummers are:

- Little beasts that live by the Law of the Jungle...
- Single moms, deadbeat dads and teenage chicks...
- Warriors with specific Rules of Engagement...
- Connoisseurs that put flower taste ahead of color...
- Carriers of competitors that ride in their nostrils...
- And more.

Also shown: 13 other bird species, including the 3-wattled Bellbird, Roseate Spoonbill, Crested Caracara, and White-tailed Kite.

Avian Video Center’s Tom Kaminski draws on his background in broadcast journalism, college teaching, aerospace communications, and nature/travel video production to create uniquely entertaining and educational birding videos. He began specializing in hummingbird productions in 2002. His “Hooked on Hummingbirds” in 2004 was termed by Kenn Kaufman “a fantastic video!” Kaminski also produced 2006’s “Hooked on Galapagos Birds,” described by Audubon Naturalist News as “stunning,” and 2008’s “Hummingbirds! A Natural History” for classrooms. His work has been shown on “Animal Planet” and elsewhere. He is based in Rolling Hills Estates, CA, where he also owns and operates Nature Video Classroom.



A Solstice Appeal

The last few weeks I’ve had the pleasure of watching a Black Phoebe in my yard. He’s been a reliable visitor, often making both a morning and evening visit. Sometimes he flies off in surprise if I leave my habitat and enter his, but other times, he sits, politely watching me, flashing his tail as if to signal that dark days are coming and we should all get to work. Those times, he has found a particularly unique and singular perch—a vent pipe, a street light, or the top of a bird house. Once he even perched on the top of the chimney, where his loud *pee-teer* call echoed through the living room as if amplified.

As I’ve watched this companionable little visitor and his flashy aerodynamics, I’ve started thinking how little things often remind us of big things and about the importance of SBVAS. Our local chapter provides the education to appreciate this bird, the support of conservation to keep him in my neighborhood, and a venue of friends with whom to share conversation about his backyard flights.

As we enter this solstice period — and what better name for a time when seasonal changes are so subtle, yet changes in light are quite obvious—it’s a good time to reflect on what Audubon means to you. Also give some consideration to the dark economic times we are in. If this negative economy affects you, you can be sure its effects are compounded for non-profit organizations.

SBVAS supports research, education, and conservation in response to your membership. If you close this year wondering how you can help, please consider donating to your local Audubon. A check in the mail, or something dropped in the “bird house” at a meeting will help your organization continue the valuable work it does to support birds.

Your generous support will be rewarded through continued quality programs, support for birds and the birding community, and a forum to share your enthusiasm for nature. Perhaps another “little birdie” will thank you for your extra support.

by Linda Stitt



What Is To Be Done? Conservation In An Era of Climate Change?

By Char Miller

Program will be presented February 18, 2009, 7:30 P.M. What do we have to believe to believe in climate change? What scientific arguments must we embrace? What political assessments and social analyses must we adopt? What are the environmental, economic, technological, and legal concerns we must acknowledge? And how can we channel these different forms of knowledge and perspective so that we can reduce a changing climate’s impact on the places we call home?

A report by the Union of Concerned Scientists in 2007 predicts great variability in flora and fauna in the years ahead.

(continued, conservation, page 4)

Would you like to get the Western Meadowlark days earlier and save SBVAS the cost of printing and postage? If so, email Membership Chair Crispin Rendon at crisrendon@earthlink.net and tell him you want the Western Meadowlark delivered by email

Birds of the Season: Fall 2008

by Tom Benson

Fall migration was particularly exciting this year, with an unusually high number of eastern passerine vagrants being found in the oases of the Mojave Desert. Shorebirds also passed through in good numbers as they made their long trek from the arctic back to their winter homes to the south. Following are some of the notable observations from fall migration (Aug 1-Oct 31) in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, with some pictorial highlights.

Twenty-seven GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE were noted making a stopover at Primm Valley Sep 13, while a lone bird was at the Daggett Airport ponds Oct 22 and 5 were in Blythe Oct 26. Two WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS were seen at Lake Havasu Oct 25. Also at Lake Havasu 1-2 PACIFIC LOONS were present in Sep-Oct, and a high count of 128 COMMON LOONS there Oct 27 was exceptional. In the raptor department, a BROAD-WINGED HAWK was an excellent find at Big Morongo Canyon Preserve Sep 12, and 10 SWAINSON'S HAWKS were reported from various locations in the deserts throughout the period.

Uncommon shorebirds made a particularly good showing this fall at the few desert locations with open water. Notable were at least 2 SOLITARY SANDPIPERS in Baker in Aug-Sep, 1 RUDDY TURNSTONE at Daggett Sep 18, 1 RED KNOT at Newberry Springs Aug 28, and 6 SANDERLINGS were at various locations between Aug 17 and Sep 8. One SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER was seen at the San Jacinto Wildlife Area Aug 8, and 2 more were seen in Newberry Springs between Sep 7 and Oct 1. A minimum of 20 BAIRD'S and PECTORAL SANDPIPERS were seen at various locations throughout the period, with high counts of 10 BAIRD'S SANDPIPERS at Newberry Springs Sep 7 and 10 PECTORAL SANDPIPERS in Barstow Oct 1. A single STILT SANDPIPER in Barstow Sep 20, 1 RUFF in Blythe Aug 22-23 and another in the Prado Basin Aug 28-Sep 2, and 1 SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER in Baker Oct 4 round out the shorebird sightings for fall.

A FRANKLIN'S GULL was found in Daggett/Barstow Oct 20. One and two HEERMANN'S GULLS were in Victorville Oct 20 and 29, respectively. Lake Havasu was quite productive this fall, hosting at least 6 SABINE'S GULLS between Sep 6 and Oct 8, 1 each of POMARINE and PARASITIC JAEGERs Sep 29-30, and 1 LONG-TAILED JAEGER Sep 24-Oct 8. In the tern department, 3 COMMON TERNS were in Daggett Sep 7-8 and 6 more were in Baker Sep 20, and 1 BLACK TERN was seen in Baker around Aug 24.

Moving on to passerines, a YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER was a one-day wonder at Horsethief Springs Sep 27, and single LEAST FLYCATCHERS visited Zzyzx Sep 17 and Horsethief Springs Sep 19-20. BANK SWALLOWS were seen in Baker Aug 24 and Sep 20, while Zzyzx hosted a WINTER WREN Oct 20-21 and a GRAY CATBIRD Sep 28-Oct 18. A VARIED THRUSH stopped off at a Newberry Springs rest area Oct 25. San Bernardino County did exceptionally well with pipits, including a first county record RED-THROATED PIPIT in Baker Sep 20 and a SPRAGUE'S PIPIT at Fenner Sep 28-Oct 1.

A number of notable eastern warblers were seen this fall as well. A NORTHERN PARULA was at Beck Spring Oct 9, a CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER was in Baker Sep 13, single MAGNOLIA WARBLERS were at Glen Helen Sep 26 and Oct 19, Zzyzx Oct 4, Baker Oct 6, and Kramer Jct. Oct 19, while single BLACKPOLL WARBLERS at Horsethief Springs Sep 16 Nipton Sep 20, Baker Oct 18, and Glen Helen Oct 19. A BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER recuperated at the VA Hospital Oct 19. A PROTHONOTARY WARBLER was at Covington Park Aug 30-Sep7, and another was in Baker Sep 28. A WORM-EATING WARBLER was an excellent find in Baker Oct 4-11, as was a second WORM-EATING WARBLER in Daggett Oct 22. Individual OVENBIRDS were found at Fenner and Horsethief Springs Sep 28. At least 6 AMERICAN REDSTARTS and 8 NORTHERN WATERTHRUSHES seen at scattered locations Aug-Oct round out the warbler sightings.

At the bottom of the taxonomic order, a CLAY-COLORED SPARROW was seen at Zzyzx Sep 21, a second at Fenner Sep 28, and a third at Glen Helen Oct 30. A lone WHITE-THROATED SPARROW was at Kramer Jct. Oct 19, while a SWAMP SPARROW visited a rest stop in Ludlow Oct 28. Five ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAKS were seen in the east Mojave in Sep-Oct, while 4 DICKCISSELS were found in the same region during early Oct. A BOBLINK was seen in Baker Oct 9 and an ORCHARD ORIOLE was seen at Zzyzx Sep 19. Finally, an EVENING GROSBEAK was away from its normal haunts at Glen Helen Oct 29.

This article was compiled primarily from the weekly southeastern California rare bird alert summaries. If you are interested in receiving timely reports of rare birds in the area, you should subscribe to inlandcountybirds by visiting <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/inlandcountybirds/>. For locations of and directions to sites listed in this summary, please visit <http://www.sbvas.org/maps.htm>. If you have good photos of rare birds that you would like to submit for inclusion in this summary, please email them to tbenson@csusb.edu.



Sprague's Pipit - Fenner, SBE, 28 Sep 2008
©Tom Benson



Red-throated Pipit - Baker, SBE, 21 Sep 2008
©Steve Myers



Chestnut-sided Warbler - Baker, SBE, 13 Sep 2008
©Tom Benson



Worm-eating Warbler - Baker, SBE, 06 Oct 2008
©Tom Benson



Northern Waterthrush - Fenner, SBE, 28 Sep 2008
©Tom Benson



Dickcissel - near Newberry Springs, SBE, 01 Oct 2008
©Bill Deppe

(conservation, cont.)

One of the worst-case scenarios has New Hampshire warming to such an extent that it would resemble contemporary Virginia. We are not the first generation to face dramatic change that threatened lives and livelihoods. Those who experienced the nineteenth-century industrial revolution, for instance, were justly afraid that, notwithstanding the material wealth it produced, it also had unleashed market forces that were destroying the land and the people it sustained.

Vermont native George Perkins Marsh, in his seminal text, **Man and Nature: Earth as Modified by Human Action** (1864), gave voice to those escalating fears and spoke to the apocalyptic consequences of an industrializing America. Yet rather than accept this wrenching fate, Marsh challenged his readers to see in this environmental trauma and social disarray an opportunity to alter their behavior; to stop their relentless consumption and unthinking exploitation of natural resources, and instead commit themselves to being careful stewards of the environment. Doing so would “thus help us become, more emphatically, a well-ordered and stable commonwealth, and not less conspicuously, a people of progress.” In saving the Earth, we would save ourselves.

His inspired argument jumpstarted a conservation movement that over the next half century established national parks and forests, reserved wildlife habitat and created refuges, enacted legislation to clean air and water and promoted public health. These initiatives were sponsored by innumerable grassroots organizations and local, state, and federal agencies; energetic reformers did much to blunt the industrialization’s excesses. That same principled activism will be essential if we hope to live sustainably in an unpredictable climate of change.



Char Miller is Visiting Professor of Environmental Analysis at Pomona College and author of the award-winning Gifford Pinchot and the Making of Modern Environmentalism and Ground Work: conservation in American Culture.

A first-ever county record for Dusky-capped Flycatcher poses on a mesquite branch in Zzyzx....



....and all the participants at Gene’s Newberry Springs field trip on Dec. 6 get a soul-satisfying look.

Wilderness on the Wing By David Sibley

People watch birds for all kinds of reasons, and most of us never really pause to think about why we do it. It just feels right. Something instinctive gives us an urge to watch and understand the natural world, and with birds we are able to see a little bit of untamed nature anywhere we go.

The details of our ancestors’ relationship with birds are very different from ours. Just a few generations ago, when more people lived in rural areas and got most of their food from their own land, an intimate and substantive connection to birds was essential. Some were good to eat, some helped by eating insect pests, some ate the food we cultivated for ourselves, some marked the passing of seasons or changes in weather, and some just kept us company in the garden or heralded the dawn. There was little need for a hobby called bird-watching; people watched birds as part of their everyday life, just as they studied the weather, the properties of different types of wood or soil, or the growth of plants.

We’ve gone beyond that now. Our food comes from a store; our houses insulate us from the weather. With no particular need to pay attention to birds, the watching of them has become a hobby.

But even though our lifestyle sets us apart, we remain just another species living on the Earth, and I think we enjoy seeing birds because it reassures us that natural cycles continue: that fall goes into winter with the promise of spring, that an abundance of seeds will always attract hungry sparrows, that fly-catchers still find enough flies to eat and still migrate on their ancestral paths. It’s a way to reconnect with the natural world even in the midst of a city.

The Junco at your winter bird feeder could have come from the trackless expanse of the boreal forest in Canada or Alaska. The world’s population of Buff-breasted sandpipers depends on protected land like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Birdwatching is an intimate hobby carried out in tiny places—a single tree, the corner of a field, etc.—but it relies on big places and big natural systems to keep the birds flying.

No matter how small or unnatural a yard or park may be, it will still be visited by wild birds. No matter how much we alter the flora and fauna, and even the physical contours of the land, as long as there is natural habitat somewhere, the wild birds travel past us.

In the old days it was people seeking fortune and adventure who were drawn beyond the boundaries of civilization and into the untamed wilderness and other places marked by uncertainties. The motivation for visiting wilderness areas today is very different. Like the changing motivation for birdwatching, the impulse to enter wilderness reflects an appreciation of nature’s wonders. Such a trip is rarely an act of survival. Most people who visit wilderness areas today do so by choice to step away from modern civilization and experience the rhythms of nature in a place that has not been overwhelmed by humans.

Even though few people will ever have a chance to visit the Bob Marshall Wilderness or the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, it is enough to know that they are there. And everyone has an opportunity to see the birds that come from wilderness

areas. The Scarlett Tanagers and Broad-winged Hawks that migrate through the cities of the Northeast are a reminder of the wilderness that was once there, and a connection to the wilderness that still exists in northern New England and Canada, where those birds nest.

In a sense, birds are wilderness—a bit of nature that has never been tamed, a constant reminder that there is still wilderness out there, and that we all need it.

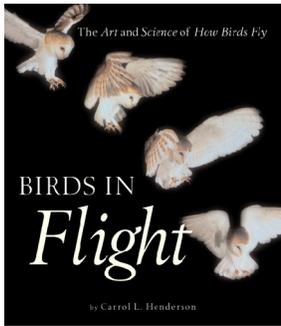
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Book Review:

Birds In Flight: The Art and Science of How Birds Fly

by Carrol L. Henderson

Published by Voyageur Press



We all come to the enjoyment of birding for many reasons, sometimes chief among them the fascination with and enjoyment of birds' ability to fly. This book not only records those flights that make our hearts and spirits soar, but also provides an in-depth analysis of all the things that make flight possible.

At first glance, this book looks like the perfect “coffee table” book.. It has a beautiful cover of a barn owl taking flight. But, with just one page turn, you’re greeted with an amazing photo close-up of an adult peregrine. You’ll soon feel like a kid who just got the new Christmas toy catalog, and you’ll want to look at each and every page to discover all the new pictures. And the pictures, done by the author, are all stunning. They show a passion and intensity for both the art of bird photography and the science of flight. The close up of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird shows each decorated feather in his gorget, and the picture of Trumpeter Swans stretching their wings on a misty morning could make even the most jaded soul believe in angels.

The exquisite photography isn’t the only draw to this book, though. Once you get beyond the pictures, you realize it also details every aspect of flight from aerodynamic principals to the art of landing. Scientific explanations are supported with detailed diagrams, providing even more in depth reasons to claim we enjoy “birding”.

About the author:

Carrol L. Henderson is a nature photographer, writer, and wildlife biologist with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. His bird photography has appeared in the New York Times, Audubon, Birder’s World, and the World Book Encyclopedia Yearbook of Science. Henderson and his wife have been leading international birdwatching trips since 1987. They have traveled throughout Central and South America, New Zealand, Kenya, and Tanzania. He is an enthusiastic nature photographer who has photographed over a thousand species of birds and has a collection of over 70,000 wildlife and nature photos from around the world.

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CALENDAR

- January 7,2009 Board Meeting
 - January 21, 2009 General Meeting
 - February 4, 2009 Board Meeting
 - February 18, 2009 General Meeting
- All meetings are in the San Bernardino County Museum, 2024 Orange Tree Lane, Redlands. Board meetings are the first Wednesday of the month, and General Membership meetings are on the third Wednesday of the month. To reach the museum, take the California St. exit off I-10, go north one block to Orange Tree Lane and turn right. The museum will be on your left. Meetings, except potlucks, start at 7:30 and doors open at 7. Potlucks begin at 6:30.**

Field Trip Schedule

BEGINNING BIRD WALK, SAN JACINTO WILDLIFE

AREA

SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, 2009 8:00-10:00A.M.

LEADERS: JENNIFER AND MICHELLE TOBIN

Visiting the wildlife area in winter allows great opportunities to view waterfowl, shorebirds and raptors. For those of you who are just beginning the wonderful pastime of bird watching, please join us for a fun, slow-paced morning of birding in one of our local wildlife habitats. Our goal will be to teach you enough basic birding techniques and identification skills so that you will feel comfortable birding on your own or joining our longer birding trips throughout the year. We will introduce you to some of our local bird species You may be surprised at what wonderful birds can be seen! Wear comfortable walking shoes, hats and sunscreen and bring water and binoculars. The walk is free and no reservations are needed.

We will meet at the main parking lot at the wildlife headquarters. From Riverside go south on 215 then east on Ramona Expressway. Turn north (left) on Davis Road which soon becomes dirt. The entrance to the wildlife area is approximately 3 miles down Davis Rd. on the right. Turn here and the parking area will be on your left. Please contact Cathy Tobin (951) 684-9613 for further information. Rain or other conditions may cause last minute changes. You may call ahead to confirm location and time.

SALTON SEA

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 2009

LEADERS: CHET MCGAUGH AND JOHN GREEN

This trip has been called the “waterfowl trip”, the “goose trip,” and “a wonderful field trip.” It is all of that, and more. Perhaps a glimpse of last year’s list will help stoke the fires of desire. American White Pelicans, White-faced Ibis, Snow Goose (thousands), Ross’ Goose (hundreds), Surf Scoter, White-winged Dove, Peregrine Falcon, twenty species of waterfowl, and we didn’t have to count individuals.

We will meet at the Wister Unit of the Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge at 7:00a.m. Wister is on Hwy 111, east side of the Sea, several miles before Niland. The turn-off is Davis Rd.

We will bird around the southern end of the Sea, then go south into ag lands to look for raptors, mountain plovers, and the always entertaining sandhill cranes.

WEEKEND IN SANTA BARBARA

FEBRUARY 7 AND 8, 2009

LEADERS: STEVE MYERS AND JOHN GREEN

This is a nice time of year to visit the Santa Barbara area. The full contingent of wintering regulars and rarities should be present and accounted for. Our coastal target birds will include a lot of gulls, including Glaucous-winged, Thayer’s, and Mew, Royal terns, lots of shorebirds including Snowy Plover, Black Oystercatcher, Whimbrel, both Turnstones, and Wandering Tattler, Wood Ducks, Surf Scoter, Pacific, Common, and Red-throated Loons, Brandt’s and Pelagic Cormorants, and much more. We’ll expect plenty of land birds along the way, too. We’re starting further north this year, so will have an opportunity to see Chestnut-backed Chickadee and Yellow-billed Magpie as well.

The Santa Barbara area always has some fine rarities as well. We can’t be sure what will be on hand, but last year at this time, rarities in the area included Cackling, Ross’s and Snow Geese, Fulvous Whistling-Duck, Long-tailed Duck, Eurasian Wigeon, Laughing Gull, Zone-tailed Hawk, Dusky-capped Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Tropical Kingbird, Winter Wren, Brown Thrasher, Palm, Lucy’s, Black-and-white, and Grace’s Warbler, White-throated Sparrow, and Baltimore Oriole. We’ll plan on getting 100 or more species during the weekend.

This year’s field trip will start at the northwest corner of Santa Barbara County on Saturday. We will meet at 8:00a.m. at the Santa Maria River Estuary (Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Preserve.) Exit Hwy 101 at Main St. (Hwy 166) in Santa Maria and drive west 11 miles to the entrance of the Guadalupe Nipomo Dunes Preserve. Continue past the kiosk 2 miles to the parking lot. We will bird there, then work our way south birding until everyone has had enough, or until it is dark, whichever comes first.

On Sunday, we will start in Santa Barbara at the Andree Clark Bird Refuge. Coming from the north, exit Hwy 101 on the left at Cabrillo Blvd (exit 94B) toward Coast Village Rd./ Hot Springs Rd. Make a sharp right onto East Cabrillo Blvd/ Ca.225. Turn right on Los Patos, then left into the parking area at the edge of the lake. Coming from the south, exit Hwy101 on the left at Cabrillo Blvd. (exit 94C). Turn left onto East Cabrillo Blvd, then right on Los Patos as above. We’ll bird there then head out. Our route will be determined by where our target birds are and where other birds of interest are being seen. If you are coming on Sunday only, call John’s cell: (951) 751-0733 on Saturday evening to find out where and when we will start on Sunday.

You will need to arrange your own accommodations for Friday and Saturday nights. Friday would be best in Santa Maria, Saturday in Santa Barbara. There are plenty of motels and a few campgrounds in the area, but reservations are a good idea.

You can prepare for your visit in advance by reviewing checklists, seasonal distribution, and links to other resources at the Santa Barbara County Birding Pages at <http://mysite.verizon.net/res0dlyz>.

Field Trip Checklist

Comfortable shoes or hiking boots, hat, sunscreen, insect repellent..

A good Road Map,

Full fuel tank, drinking water, snacks and lunch, binoculars and or a scope, field guide

Come and Enjoy. Call Field Trip Leader for last minute cancellations,

questions or changes... 

SAN JACINTO WILDLIFE AREA

February 21, 2009

LEADERS TBA

We will meet at the San Jacinto Wildlife Area headquarters. This day will be about waterfowl—ducks, geese, ibis and other birds that make the beautiful San Jacinto Valley their winter home. Plan on staying all day (bring a lunch and water/drinks, or just come for part of the morning. From Riverside go south on 215, east on Ramona, then north on Davis Rd. 3 miles to the parking lot. From Hemet, go west on Ramona to Davis Rd. From Redlands, go south on Redlands Blvd., east on Hwy60, east on Gilman Springs, south on Bridge St. west on Ramona and north on Davis Rd. This one is not recommended if there have been recent rains. Everyone is always welcome and this is an especially good day for new birders and families. The weather could be cool, so dress accordingly. For further information, contact Gene Cardiff (909) 875-5358 or ECARDIFF@Worldnet, att, net

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| Calendar for Field Trips for 2008/2009 |
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January 4: Beginning Bird Walk, San Jacinto Wildlife Area—Doug Karalun

January 10: Salton Sea Goose and Crane Trip—Chet McGaugh and John Green

February 1: Beginning Bird Walk, San Jacinto—Jennifer and Michelle Tobin

February 7 and 8: Weekend in Santa Barbara—Steve Myers and John Green

February 21: San Jacinto Wildlife Area—leader TBA

March 1: Beginning Bird Walk, Hidden Valley—Jennifer and Michelle Tobin

March 7: Bolsa Chica—Dori Myers

March 14: Torres-Martinez Ponds/Salton Sea—Dave Goodward

April 5: Beginning Bird Walk, Rubidoux Nature Center—Jennifer and Michelle Tobin

April 11 and 12: Grouse Trip—Gene Cardiff

April 26: Mojave Narrows—Steve Myers

May 2: Big Morongo—Chet McGaugh

May 3: Beginning Bird Walk, Fairmount Park—Doug Karalun

May 3: Box Springs—John Green

May 9: White Water Canyon—Steve Myers

May 16: Baby Birds at Bear Paw—Cin Grayraven

June 6: Wrightwood—Gene Cardiff

July 11: Greenhorns—Steve Myers (this date is tentative)

August 22: Insane Jaunt/Salton Sea—John Green

Audubon Wins Major Court Victory

On October 31, 2008 the state's 4th District Appeals Court affirmed a lower court decision that the County of San Bernardino violated state law in approving a controversial Lake Arrowhead subdivision in November 2005.

Three appellate justices upheld Superior Court Judge John P. Wade's ruling that the County General Plan was "unambiguous" in requiring that an evacuation route be completed before approval could be granted. The appeal further ruled that the County violated its own development code as well as state environmental law by failing to have an adequate water source for the project. The county also failed to do an accurate analysis of biological impacts.

"After three huge fires in the mountains in four years, hopefully the Supervisors will now recognize that public safety must take precedence over development," said Drew Feldmann, president of SBVAS.

"The public has every right to expect County officials to ensure basic evacuation capacity in mountain communities," said Steve Farrell, vice-chair of the Sierra Club Mountains Group, a partner in the lawsuit.

The sub-division project, known as Blue Ridge Estates, or the Hawarden Development, was planned near Cedar Glen, an area considered hazardous for wildfire that was largely burned by the catastrophic Old Fire in 2003.

"Fires are a fact of life in southern California forests, but overdevelopment in highly fire-prone areas, such as the Hawarden site, impedes the natural cycles and greatly compounds the problem," said Adam Keats, an attorney for the Center for Biological Diversity, one of the litigants.

Failure of County Supervisors

The Hawarden Project was the first significant mountain development proposal to follow after the devastating Old Fire. By ignoring key public safety and fire protection guidelines as well as critical open-space policies and water shortages, the project aroused intense controversy.

"The public fully expected the Board of Supervisors to be particularly strict in implementing vital safety and open-space policies, after such an alarming wildfire where 80,000 people were evacuated (that's the entire mountain population)," said a spokesman of the Save Our Forest Association, and the fourth litigant. "Instead, we were shocked by the stubborn disregard for sensible planning."

"The appellate court decision is a strong endorsement for responsible planning taking precedent over cutting corners for developers," he said. "Ironically, many of these same points were noted by professional planners and agency personnel at earlier stages, but became reversed at the insistence of the developer. One example was the fire department downgrading the fire hazard level from 'extreme' as mandated for steep wildland slopes, to 'level two' as intended for flat land, despite the on-site discrepancy, due to developer lobbying."

The appellate court vigorously upheld the importance of a proper Environmental Impact Report, or EIR, as part of the California Environmental Quality Act. The EIR had deceptively discounted critical wildlife habitat and altogether circumvented the serious lack of a reliable water supply.

Drew Feldmann said the EIR consultants and county politicians "... apparently presumed that ordinary citizens wouldn't have the time, money or endurance to challenge these transgressions."

A magnificent Ferruginous Hawk perched on a pole on Valley Center Drive in Newberry Springs was spotted by those who attended Gene's field trip to that area on December 6.



All meetings in the San Bernardino County Museum 2024 Orange Tree Lane, Redlands

Board Meetings are the 1st Wed.
General meetings are the 3rd Wed.
SBVAS Membership currently at 1,743



To reach the Museum, take the California Street exit off the 10 Freeway and go north 1 block to Orange Tree Lane—turn right. The museum will be on your left...

Everyone is always welcome
 Program Chair Dori Myers

UCR Extension: A Field Study of Birds: Fall

Course: Bio X405

An introduction to the wintering birds of Southern California with special emphasis on identification and natural history of waterfowl, gulls and birds of prey. Many of the prime wintering areas are visited on the field trips. **Note:** This course may be taken twice for credit toward the Specialized Study Program in Field Ornithology. Visitors are not permitted. Enrollment is limited. Vertebrate course for Certificate in Field Ecology Elective for Specialized Study Program in Field Ornithology.

Instructor: Eugene A. Cardiff, B.A., retired Curator of Natural History, San Bernardino County Museum, Redlands. Cardiff is Extension's longest-standing instructor. He has taught over 100 ornithology classes since 1968

Credit: 2 units

Dates/Times: Tues., 7:30-9:30 p.m., Jan. 13. Field trips all day Sat. Jan. 17, 24, 31, Feb. 14 and 28. (6 meetings)

Location: SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY MUSEUM

Text: "Field Guide to the Birds of North America," 5th edition, Jon L. Dunn and Jonathan K. Alderfer ISBN 0792253140

Fee: \$219/\$199 each for couples and family members/ \$185 each with PINE discount

Reg #: 083-SCF-F23



Bearpaw Ranch is SBVAS's 70 acre nature sanctuary, operated by the San Bernardino Audubon Society and may be visited 7 days a week from dawn 'til dusk by members of Audubon and their guests. Bearpaw Ranch is nestled on the north slope of scenic Mill Creek Canyon at 4,500 feet elevation, surrounded by the towering peaks of the San Bernardino National Forest. To reach Bearpaw Ranch, take Highway 38 to the Forest Falls turnoff. Go only a few car lengths on Valley of the Falls Dr. and look for our small wooden sign on the right. We have a new paved road, the entry is easy for almost all normal passenger cars. There is an electronically operated entry gate. Members who wish to visit the Sanctuary should call ahead for the security code. Access to the code may be had by calling—Bearpaw at (909) 794-0509. Bearpaw Sanctuary, 38801 Valley of the Falls Drive P.O. Box 88; Forest Falls, CA

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SBVAS Chapter
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 May 2008

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