



HUMMIN'

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Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon Society Vol. XLIII #6 November/December 2021

2021 PALOS VERDES CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The 56th annual Palos Verdes Peninsula Christmas Bird Count is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, December 26 this year. Our count area is a circle, 15 miles in diameter, centered on the intersection of PV Drive North and PV Drive East — an area that extends from the L.A. River to Santa Monica Bay and from Alondra Park to the Catalina Channel. It is one of over 2500 CBCs in North America, South America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. For more about our CBC, see the article on page 7.



November 16th at 7 via Zoom

IBR at 50

Rescuing Waterbirds

International Bird Rescue, IBR for short, inspires people to learn more about the natural world by rescuing waterbirds that are in crisis. JD Bergeron, CEO of IBR, will present an introduction to aquatic bird rescue and rehabilitation, including a picture-filled tour of the



species with which IBR works and the role it has played for 50 years through response, rehabilitation, research, education, and innovation.

A lifelong lover of nature, JD Bergeron has blended his passion for birds with 20 years of non-profit leadership at IBR. An unconventional problem solver, he has redirected Bird Rescue's efforts, building on its impressive track record of having dealt with 230 oil spills, to take on the challenges wild waterbirds face today.



Conservation Concerns 30 X 30

By Paul Blieden

Simply stated, 30 by 30 means that 30 per cent of international land and coastal seacoasts should be retained in its natural state by the year 2030.

Why and how did this statement come about?

One should look at the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of September 2015 which established certain goals, one of which is to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. This could be called the document that was the basis for the following actions:

1) On October 20, 2020 Governor Newsom signed an executive order stating in part:

“Harnessing the innovative spirit of California, Governor Gavin Newsom today advanced an executive order enlisting California’s vast network of natural and working lands – forests, rangelands, farms, wetlands, coast, deserts and urban greenspaces – in the fight against climate change. A core pillar of Governor Newsom’s climate agenda, these novel

approaches will help clean the air and water for communities throughout the state and support California’s unique biodiversity.”

See Audubon’s review of Governor Newsom’s executive order here:

<https://ca.audubon.org/press-release/governor-newsom-issues-ground-breaking-30-x-30-executive-order>

2) An Executive Order from the White House on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad, issued January 27, 2021 stated in part:



“The Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, through the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality shall, as appropriate, solicit input from State, local, Tribal, and territorial officials, agricultural and forest landowners, fishermen, and other key stakeholders in identifying

strategies that will encourage broad participation in the goal of conserving 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030.”

For scientific background on 30 by 2030 go to this website: www.campaignfornature.org/home

3) In January 2021, a group of scientists from around the world issued a stark warning: (<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fcosc.2020.615419/full>)

“Humanity is causing a rapid loss of biodiversity, and, with it, Earth’s ability to support complex life.” Viewed alongside other research, including the landmark 2019 IPBES report, the paper reinforces the urgency for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to approve an ambitious and transformative strategy to curb global biodiversity loss.

This document is intended to support Parties participating in the CBD negotiations by compiling, linking to, and summarizing some of the most relevant scientific, economic, rights-based and other expert analyses regarding biodiversity loss and climate change. It focuses in particular on research that relates to protected areas and the proposal to protect or conserve at least 30% of the planet by 2030 (30x30).

BIRDS OF THE PENINSULA

August / September 2021

By Vincent Lloyd

The **Manx Shearwater** was the outstanding rarity during August and September this year. Old timers may remember when our local

and Massachusetts. In the 1990s, the Atlantic species started appearing rarely but annually off the Pacific Coast from California to Alaska, with breeding suspected in British Columbia. Most of the sightings have been north of Point Conception. None had been seen in Los Angeles waters since 2013, until

seabirds that might otherwise have grabbed the headlines: the **Black-footed Albatross** seen by Andy Birch in the Catalina Channel on August 15 and the **Red-footed Booby** that was found perched on a boat at 22nd Street Landing in San Pedro on Sept. 24.

Meanwhile, the fall migration of shorebirds got into full swing in August. The Los Angeles River was a hotbed of activity. Jeff Boyd and Dick Barth came upon a **Semipalmated Sandpiper** on Aug. 13 and a **Solitary Sandpiper** on Aug. 17. A **Dunlin** was seen by many at Willow Street on Aug. 22. David Bell found a **Common Tern** on Aug. 29. Meryl Edelstein scoped out a **Pectoral Sandpiper** on Aug. 31. Linda LeRoy found a **Red Knot** at Willow Street on Sept. 8. Mark Scheel spotted a **Stilt Sandpiper** on Sept. 9. Dick Barth found an unusual **Baird's Sandpiper** on Sept. 20. Steve Turley found an out-of-place **Sabine's Gull** on Sept. 5, possibly the same bird that was seen by Jeff Boyd on Sept. 25. Lee Pace came upon a rare **Little Blue Heron** on Sept. 18 that lingered into October. Meanwhile, the **Neotropical Cormorant** that had appeared in May continued along the river until Sept. 4.

David Ellsworth was surprised by a couple of early **Northern Pintails** at Cabrillo Salt Marsh on Aug. 24.

(Birds continued on page 6)



Manx Shearwater

Photo: Bernardo Alps

species, the **Black-vented Shearwater**, was considered a subspecies of the Manx Shearwater, before that was split into several local species. The term “Manx Shearwater” was retained for the North Atlantic species, which breeds mainly in the British Isles (the word “Manx” refers to the Isle of Man in the Irish Sea). Half of the world’s breeding population breeds on Skomer Island, an islet off the coast of Wales. In North America, small breeding colonies occur on islets off the coasts of Newfoundland

and keen-sighted Bernardo Alps spotted one a couple miles off Palos Verdes on September 18 among a group of thousands of Black-vented Shearwaters feeding along the Palos Verdes Escarpment. Subsequently the flock was found at Redondo Canyon off Redondo Beach, where the Manx was seen as late as October 2. The Manx Shearwater closely resembles the Black-vented Shearwater; one difference is that its vent, if you can see it clearly, is white rather than black. The Manx eclipsed two other unusual

All That Jaz

By Jazmin Rios



October 2021

It has been a busy couple of months, with in-person events starting up again. I know I have really enjoyed finally meeting some of our members in person during our bird walks. So far we have had two very successful walks and hope you can join us for a future bird walk. We still have spots for November 7th! But in case you cannot make it to the next one, bird walks occur every first Sunday of the month at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park. You can reserve a spot by using our sign-up form under the Bird Walks page on our website.



Saltbush control at Madrona Marsh

Now that local middle and high schools have finished their first quarter, I have started to hear back from teachers and schools about partnerships and programs for their students. One of the schools I have been working with is Rolling Hills Prep School, where I am planning to resume the Palos Verdes Blue Butterfly project to create butterfly and bird habitat. I have been in touch with their new Science and Design STEM Coordinator, James DeMoss. We will meet soon to scope out potential locations for restoration work.

I attended a recent Southern California Audubon Chapter meeting at which I learned about opportunities for funding. Since then, I've been in touch with Diana Braithwaite, National Audubon Program Manager, to talk about potential partnerships and funding for our local youth programs.

Our chapter does have an opening for an Audubon Youth Board Member. The position is open to a recent graduate, or college or high school student interested in environmental and conservation work. We are looking for an individual who is passionate about the environment. In return, he or she would get to help plan local Audubon events through participation on our chapter's Board of Directors. If you are,

or know, someone who would be interested, please get in touch with me or a board member.

Thanks to our partnership with Madrona Marsh Preserve and Nature Center, we have resumed for our Audubon YES! program there with restoration days at the marsh and bird walks for youth. Our first restoration day was at the marsh in October, at which we got to meet some of the resident wildlife in the Nature Center before doing restoration work at the marsh by cutting down saltbush that had gotten out of control. We were accompanied by North High School students, who did a great job clearing it out.

Afterwards, I discussed plans for future events at the Marsh with both Steve Ash, Acting Manager, and Jessica Mercado, Volunteers and Program Coordinator, including the next youth bird walk and for Madrona's Make a Difference Day. The first walk, open only for our youth and their families, was held in October. Monthly youth walks are now scheduled at the Marsh for the fourth Saturday of each month. Feel free to contact me at mjazminrios@pvsb-audubon.org or reserve your spot online under our YES News and Updates page. Space is limited for the bird walks, for both the safety and enjoyment of the group. Please reserve your spot as soon as possible. I hope to meet you all soon on one of the walks.

Fall Colors – New Hampshire

By Jess Morton

The loons were calling as the sky over Highland Lake lightened. Dawn was coming. The deluge of last night had abated, leaving mist to drift over the lily pads now emerging from darkness.

The flight from LAX the day before had been one of those in which everything goes wrong—delayed departure to begin, then a return to the gate to fix something, and then a detour almost to Atlanta to avoid bad weather. Hours late. I won't even begin to talk about the food. Then it was another two-hour drive from Logan to get to the lake, my New Hampshire destination, with the sky opening up a welcoming downpour a scant ten minutes before I pulled



into the driveway, all too close to midnight. In all, a yesterday to be filed under do not repeat.

Listen! The eerie cry has come from further away, now. A pulsing yodel, partially muffled by mist and distance.

I stepped outside. A chickadee called and a robin flew from the little meadow

between me and the lake. I could not see the loon. Pale orange patches in the grass betrayed toadstools, A woodpecker drummed off to my left, somewhere high up in the pine-oak-birch woodland crowding down to the lake shore. The birding this week would be fabulous, I thought. I might even get to see some great fall colors, though I knew it was a few weeks early for that.

All of which just goes to show, one should never underestimate nature's ability to astonish with something completely unexpected. My week at the lake is one I will never forget. The birds were good, of course, and a few of the smaller maples burst into cool flame before I left. What amazed, though, was that I had found myself in a mycophile's dream world, as if an ancient papyrus on mushrooms, fungi

(Colors continued on page 10)



(Birds continued from page 5)

White-winged Doves popped up at Ports o' Call in San Pedro as well as DeForest Park and the River. Indefatigable Tom Miko spotted a group of three **Chimney Swifts** at DeForest Park on Sept. 28. An out-of-season **Northern Harrier** was in several locations from Aug. 15 to Sept. 3. Leslie Loomis saw an early **Merlin** at El Segundo Beach on Sept. 17. On Oct.

Park in Manhattan Beach on Sept. 21. A **Phainopepla** wandered along Shoshonean Road in San Pedro on Aug. 25 (D.E.). Last winter's **Green-tailed Towhee** returned to Rolling Hills on Sept. 2 (Jim and Cathy). Johnny Ivanov found a **Clay-colored Sparrow** at Wilmington Drain on Sept. 19. A **Painted Bunting**, a bird of the Southeast, visited Madrona Marsh on Sept. 7. Another eastern vagrant, the

Banning Park on Sept. 12. On the 15th an **Ovenbird** was spotted in the Abalone Cove area of P.V. Jonathan Nakai and Naresh Satyan came across a **Virginia's Warber** in Agua Amarga Canyon on Sept. 17; Adrian Vilca found a **Lucy's Warbler** at the same location on Sept. 20. **Blackpoll Warblers** popped up at Lunada Bay on Sept. 18 (J.N.) and DeForest Park on Sept. 25. **Tennessee Warblers** were spotted at DeForest Park on Sept. 19 (Christine Jacobs) and Perras Middle School in Redondo Beach on Sept. 25. **American Redstarts** enlivened Sand Dune Park on Sept. 21 (J.H.) and Harbor Park on Sept. 27 (Sara Boscoe). A **Northern Waterthrush** made a rest stop at Harbor Park on Sept. 25. Meanwhile, our winter visitors are settling in for the season. The first wintering **White-crowned Sparrow** returned to Madrona Marsh on Sept. 16; the first **Yellow-rumped Warbler** on Sept. 29.



Blackpoll Warbler (Lunada Bay)
Photo: Kiera Carvalho

4 Charlie Keller was pleased to see the **Tropical Kingbird** returning to Entradero Park for the fourth winter, even as another Kingbird returned to Harbor Park for at least the fourth winter on Sept. 17. Tracy Drake found another along the River on Sept. 25. Jim Hecht had a **Hammond's Flycatcher** at Sand Dune

Rose-breasted Grosbeak, dropped by Entradero Park on Sept. 18 (Andrew Underwood).

The well-known **Black-and-White Warbler** returned to Madrona Marsh for yet another winter on Sept. 21. Calvin Bonn came across another at Victoria Park on Sept. 26. The Scheels found a **Northern Parula** in



CBC - A Year-end Tradition

by Vincent Lloyd

The Christmas Count, known to its devotees as the CBC, provides a long-running census of winter bird populations counted using consistent protocols going back to the first CBC in 1900. The first Palos Verdes CBC took place on December 31, 1966, when 22 hard-working observers tallied 166 species. Over the years, the average number of species seen is 162; the maximum was the 187 species seen in 1994.

Last year, when the count was conducted in the midst of the third wave, a respectable 167 species were spotted. Included in this total was a Little Blue Heron, the first seen on the Count. Other recent rarities were the Northern Waterthrushes in 2011 and 2014, the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker in 2012, the Manx Shearwater and the Blue-headed Vireo in 2013, the Black-throated Green Warbler in 2014, the Brown Booby in 2015, the Eurasian Wigeon in 2015 and 2016, the Northern Cardinal in 2016, the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in 2017, the White-faced Ibis in

2018, and the Harris's Sparrows in 2017 and 2019. Over the years, species have come and gone. The Ring-necked Pheasant, once a regular resident, was last recorded in 1993; the last Horned Lark was seen in 1994, the last California Quail in 2013, the last Spotted Dove in 2014. Other species, once never seen, have become regulars: the Northern Red Bishop first appeared in 2001, the Eurasian Collared Dove and Swinhoe's White-eye in 2008. The Canada Goose occurred only in small numbers until 2010; since then the population has exploded.

Whether you are an experienced birder or a beginner, we can use your help. Participants can either count on their own, or join an established group. Interested birders can contact Vincent Lloyd (stephenvincentlloyd@gmail.com) to participate.

Because of the ongoing pandemic, participants are requested to wear masks or maintain social distancing when outdoors and carpool only with family or your regular "pod". A final decision to go ahead with the count this year will be made after November 15, based on the state of the epidemic.



Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
Photo: Jess Morton



Bird on a Bench

By Evi Meyer

Trips to the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary in Irvine are always full of anticipation and surprises. One never knows what may show up in that corner of the world. A recent trip there, in August, topped any expectation I could have had.

I knew Greater Roadrunners lived there and had photographed them many times before, usually running from one bushy hide to another. On this morning, though, I had just gotten out of my car and was walking towards pond B, when I saw a Roadrunner standing – posing is a better word, actually - on the back part of a bench. It seemed to scream “Take a picture of me!” It stayed there as I slowly approached. This bird loved to be seen. It finally flew across the path to the top of a Tree Swallow nesting box, where it again posed. Not much running for this Roadrunner!

What a remarkable and exhilarating experience this was for me. Perhaps for the bird as well. It just goes to show that birding can indeed be full of surprises when we invest something of ourselves, and then are lucky to be in the right place at the right time..

What’s in a Bird?

Imagination;

a flock of bright birds wheeling

with our inner wings

Reflections

By Paul Blieden

This is not an unusual bird but the interesting thing is that I was able to get so close to this beautiful white pelican at the water reclamation plant in Irvine. There were about twenty white pelicans at the complex but this one was by itself and so close. Most of the birds were on an island in the middle of the pond. And I love the reflection !!



Marauders

By Jess Morton

Most of the birds we see are predators, attractive and benign though they often appear when we get our binoculars on them. Oh, sometimes we do see them in action. A kingfisher dives, emerges with some small fish and flies off. A hawk sails above us, holding a snake. But, for the most part, the serious business of eating takes place at speeds we cannot comprehend, involves prey too small to see, or is hidden deep in the vegetation. Two of my favorite photos go a little way toward bringing the reality of what a bird is to light.



American Bitterns are notoriously hard to see, but this one at Harbor Park some years ago left no doubt in my mind what it was thinking about, nor how it spends much of its day, prowling deep in reed beds.

This photo, taken at 1/3200th of a second, caught a Barn Swallow outdoing any human contortionist. Its body was hurtling forward, while flaring wings and tail were organizing a turn. The bird's head seemed at an impossible angle, rotated 180 degrees, while a gaping mouth would snatch a kelp fly from the air an instant later. To me, it just looked as if the swallow had done a slight jink as it flew along the beach.



(Colors continued from page 5)

and lichens were un-scrolling around me wherever I went.

I had had no idea how many colors and shapes this



vital part of our world exhibits. It is not as if I were completely new to it, either. I have looked at and photographed mushrooms and lichens for years. I own and have perused books about them. But books are no substitute for being up close, in person.

The variety here that confronted me over the next few days was overwhelming: corals, edible and inedible shelf fungi, earth tongues, slippery jacks and half a dozen other



boletes, destroying angels, ghost pipes and wax caps, to name a few of the ones I saw. They came in white, grays, yellows, purples, reds and black. It was beyond rainbows, though I missed seeing the deep blue ones. I have no idea of how many dozen other kinds were tucked away just out of view, or in parts of the forest I did not visit.

A local forester told me that there had been heavy late summer rains this year. Fall, normally pretty dry, had brought forth an astonishing fungal feast. He could not remember its like, which



from someone who has been paying attention to what goes on around him for decades, is saying a great deal. I was in luck and completely enthralled.

New England lived up to its reputation for fall color this year. But not in the way I ever expected. True, I had returned home before the rest of the maples and birches



blazed against the browns of the turning oak leaves, all under blue skies and billowing clouds. But I had seen such splendors many times before, having grown up in a similar East Coast habitat. For me, the color spectacle this year was neither that nor the bright birds around me in the trees. It lay close to the ground. Clothed in its spectrum of vivid colors draped over a barely-credible variety of shapes, for me this will forever have been my pilgrimage to the mecca of mushrooms.



MEET, LEARN, RESTORE, ENJOY

Chapter Calendar

All events are subject to any pandemic restrictions in place.

Bird walks and other in person events are limited to people who have been vaccinated and have registered to attend.

On-line attendance forms and Zoom links for programs can be found on our website at pvsb-audubon.org

Sunday, Nov. 7, at 8 AM: Bird walk at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park. Meet in the parking lot between Vermont and Anaheim above the ranger station.

Tuesday, Nov. 16, at 7, via Zoom. Meeting and elections for the coming year. Our program is "IBR at 50," presented by JD Bergeron. See page 1 for program details. Current chapter officers and board members have been nominated to serve again in 2022.

Tentative. Check website for confirmation. Sunday, Dec. 5, at 8 AM: Bird walk at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park. Meet in the parking lot between Vermont and Anaheim above the ranger station.

Sunday, Dec. 26, all day: CBC. See page one for details and to take part.

The Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon Society and the National Audubon Society, of which PV/SB Audubon is the local chapter, are dedicated to the understanding and preservation of our natural heritage. Within the framework of National Audubon Society policies, we seek and implement ways to preserve indigenous flora and fauna, especially that of our local area, and provide educational services to the region's communities with respect to birds, wildlife, ecology and conservation.

Executive Officers and Staff

- President: David Quadhamer, 310 833-3095
- Vice-Pres.: Ann Dalkey
- Treasurer: Jess Morton, jmorton@igc.org
- Secretary: Vincent Lloyd, vincent@sabik.org
- Directors: Paul Blieden, Tracy Drake
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Committees:

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- Christmas Bird Count and
- Field Trips: Ann and Eric Brooks, motmots@aol.com
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THIRD TUESDAY PROGRAMS

7 PM VIA ZOOM



On November 16th, at 7 via Zoom, JD Bergeron, Executive Director of International Bird Rescue, presents “IBR at 50,” an introduction to bird rescue and rehabilitation. Based on the West Coast, with a facility

at Angels Gate, in San Pedro, IBR’s main activities center around marine birds. IBR took the lead to avert a disaster for the local Elegant Tern population, pulling fifteen hundred chicks from the water in Long Beach Harbor, rehabbing and releasing them back into the wild. Visit our website at pvsb-audubon.org for the Zoom link.



Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon Society
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AVIANTICS

By Sara Courtneidge

