HUMMIN'

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Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon Society Vol. XLVIII #6 Nov. - Dec. 2026

State of the World's Birds

By Evi Meyer

BirdLife International recently published the newest edition of State of the World's Birds. It is well worth reading in full, and you can find the report at sowb.birdlife.org.

Birds are powerful indicators of environmental health. This year's report focuses in particular on migratory species and the flyways they depend on—routes that span entire oceans and continents.

Because these flyways cross national borders, the conservation of migratory birds and their ecosystems is a shared responsibility. In December 2022, 196 countries came together to adopt the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, pledging to conserve 30% of the planet by 2030. The United States was not among the countries that adopted the

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Monthly Meeting Programs



"**Things with Wings**" takes to the air in **Jess Morton's** November 17th presentation at Madrona Marsh Nature Center, at 7 PM. Birds and butterflies play a central part in the ecology of the peninsula, but so do the host of "lesser" winged organisms whose importance is far greater than is commonly recognized. In this program, Jess will use his photos, poetry and stories to introduce a few of these creatures, from hummingbirds to hover flies. All have tales to tell of why they matter, both to themselves and to us. We live in a rich world. Let's keep it so.

Meetings at 7 PM at Madrona Marsh can be joined remotely via the Zoom link on our website.



From the President
By Julian Chasin



With this, the last Hummin' issue of the year, I'd like to give thanks to everyone who has made this a wonderful year for the chapter, despite the challenges. First, to the many chapter members who showed up to participate in our bird walks, outings, counts, advocacy and monthly meetings and to all the presenters who took the time to educate (and entertain) us. Next, a thousand thanks go to Ann Dalkey, who served the chapter as president for five years with both wit and wisdom until her retirement mid-year. To my fellow board members, thanks for continuing with the effort to make improvements in our procedures and, indeed, for just keeping up with the many changes.

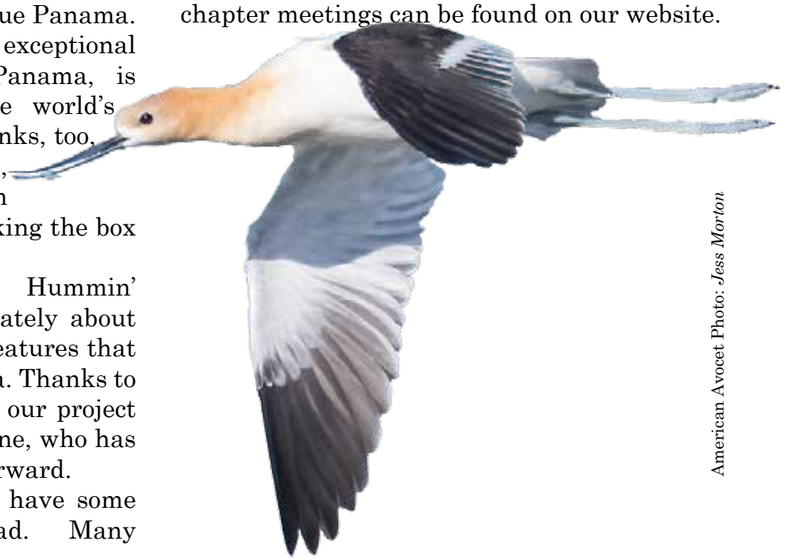
To our members and donors, thank you for digging deep during our Birdathon to help with our finances and with support for our international partner, Adopta Bosque Panama. Adopta, in addition to their exceptional conservation work throughout Panama, is drawing attention to one of the world's premier migratory hawk sites. Thanks, too, to our monthly subscription donors, now only a handful, but you can help turn that around by just checking the box on our donor page.

Nor should we forget our Hummin' contributors who write so passionately about the birds, butterflies and all the creatures that are found in our corner of California. Thanks to all of them and to Keith Haney(!), our project and program manager rolled into one, who has driven so many of our initiatives forward.

While grateful for all of that, I have some trepidation about the year ahead. Many non-profits like ours are facing headwinds as funding sources become harder to tap, volunteers age out, and work-life challenges mount. Our chapter's board has added much strength over the last two years, but is not yet filled out. We still have officer and committee positions to be filled. There is so much potential to do more than we currently have time for. I know the talents needed are within our membership, so I ask you - reach out to us and offer some of your time and your skills - as much or as little as you can spare. WE can only make a difference if YOU participate.

Every year we ask you to renew your commitment to Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon in the year-end fundraising letter we send asking for your financial assistance. Please keep a lookout and plan to send us back your voluntary, tax-deductible contribution. Our revenue is not keeping up with expenses and we'd like to turn that equation around with your help.

With this edition of Hummin' my tenure as interim president has ended. I will carry on as your Treasurer, and a new chapter president will fill this editorial spot in the next issue. May your holiday season be fulfilling, along with thoughts and prayers for our fellow creatures. And remember recordings of the monthly chapter meetings can be found on our website.



American Avocet Photo: *Jess Morton*

Growing the Future
By Keith Haney



The "most wonderful time of the year" fast approaches and I have so much to be thankful for, and to look forward to, thanks to all of you in our Audubon chapter flock!

Our fall Wishlistr© campaign to obtain the tools we needed for kicking off the habitat restoration season was a great success. Your outpouring of $1,115 in monetary and in-kind donations provides the tools we need to remove exotic invasive weeds (sea lavender continues to be our primary target) and install native plants this season at the Blue Butterfly reserve in San Pedro. This is definitely the most wonderful time for restoration work – cooler temperatures make weed removal easier, winter rains eliminate the need for irrigating newly planted natives, and the race to get as much done before the endangered Palos Verdes blue butterflies begin emerging from their pupae in February all add to the gratification. Please let me know if you'd like to join the fun!

Hopefully, you were able to attend our August chapter meeting either in person or online to see some of our Youth Environmental Stewards (YES) program participants share updates on their stewardship activities. We even had the pleasure to present YES awards to Brighton Lipson and Seif Hassanin for surpassing 50 hours each of environmental service in our community. We're abundantly grateful for our young superstars contributing their time and talents to our bird walks (Brighton), surveys (Seif), habitat restoration (Alynna), social media (Tania), public education (Sammy) and the ways our newest member (Sophia) will surprise us! If you know a middle or high school student that enjoys nature and would like to earn service hours while doing so, please reach out. There are many ways for them to help both us and the environment that align with their talents and interests.



Looking forward, on December 26th we will participate in Audubon's 127th Christmas Bird Count. More than a bird survey, this is one of the world's longest-running community science projects which has grown to over 85,000 participants spanning the Western Hemisphere. Locally, we invite everyone to participate in

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YES Awards: above, Keith and Seif (left), Keith and Brighton (right); below, left to right, Nina Su'a, Tania, Sammy, Brighton and Keith.

Birds of the Peninsula
August - September 2026
By Vincent Lloyd

It was a Caribbean summer. In late August, a warm, humid air mass pushed up from the south, perhaps a by-product of the coming El Niño. The high temperature at Torrance Airport, 91 on Aug. 28, was not in itself so extraordinary, but the high humidity made the heat a miserable affair. A sign of the humid air was the unusually high daily low temperature of 74 on Aug. 27. Later the night-time temperature dipped to 60 on Sep.. 2 and 29. There was 1.79 inch of rain during the period August to September, most of it on Sep. 6, when southern California was clobbered by the fringes of Hurricane Marie. Remarkably, another unseasonably hot spell moved into the area in early October. All this while the fall migration moved into high gear.

September saw an irruption of mountain birds in the South Bay. Just outside our area, Nancy Salem came across a lost **White-headed Woodpecker** in Wardlow Park in Long Beach on Oct. 6, perhaps the first sighting in the area since the legendary fall of 1972. Now White-headed Woodpeckers are common in the San Gabriel Mountains; **Clark's Nutcracker** not so much. So it's astonishing that a Clark's Nutcracker, a bird of the high mountains, turned up in Hopkins Wilderness Park in Redondo Beach on Sep. 24. It turns out that there were reports of errant nutcrackers all over the state in September. (Interestingly, five nutcrackers were seen in San Pedro in the fall of 1972.) Meanwhile, **Red-breasted Nuthatches** appeared all over the South Bay (including my back yard).


White-headed Woodpecker
Photo: *Kim Moore*

A **White-tailed Kite** was seen along the Los Angeles River on Sep. 19 during the L.A. Survey. Adrian Vilca happened to spot an unusual **Swainson's Hawk** while driving past Point Vicente on Aug. 30. Randy Harwood came upon a **Red-breasted Sapsucker** on the Rolling Hills Estates Landfill Loop on Sep. 23. Melody Haughton had a unusual **Acorn Woodpecker** at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park on Sep. 12, while one or two Acorns continued in the neighborhood near the Willow Street crossing of the LA River. Adam Johnson found the season's first **Merlin** at Wilderness Park on Sep. 14; another was at Madrona Marsh on Oct. 1.


Tropical Kingbird
Photo: *Manuel Duran*

Every fall one or two **Tropical Kingbirds** take up residence for the winter in the South


Black-throated Sparrow
Photo: *Kim Moore*


Clay-colored Sparrow
Photo: *Kim Moore*

Bay (as well as many others up and down the coast). This species is widespread from Mexico to Argentina, but breeds in the United States only in southeast Arizona and the Rio Grande Valley. This year a Tropical Kingbird, probably from last year, returned to Golden Shores on Sep. 20; another appeared at Harbor Park the same day; a third returned to Polliwog Park on Oct 1. The **Grey Flycatcher** that popped up at Wilderness Park on Sep. 21 may also be a returnee from last year. A **Bell's Vireo**, probably getting ready to migrate south for the winter, was at the Willow Street crossing during the first week of September (Jeff Boyd, Tracy Drake). Joyce Brady found a **White-breasted Nuthatch** at Willow Street on the last day of August. A **Mountain Chickadee** tittered at Willow Street on Sep. 20 (Meryl Edelstein, Becky Turley); another visited Signal Hill on Sep. 24 (Brad Dawson). **Cactus Wrens** were seen at Alta Vicente through Aug. 12.

A **California Thrasher** was reported at Point Fermin on Sep 20. A **Phainopepla** wandered to Wilderness Park on Sep. 5 (AJ). A single **Pine Siskin** popped up at Wilderness Park on Sep. 14 (AJ), while a single **Lawrence's Goldfinch** was at Harbor Park on Sep. 24 (Dotan Leshem). **Vesper Sparrows** were at Point Vicente, the Willow Street crossing, and Signal Hill — all on Sep. 20. Kim Moore photographed a **Clay-colored Sparrow** in her back yard on Sep.17. Jeff Boyd came upon a **Black-throated Sparrow** at Willow Street the next day. A **Yellow-breasted Chat** dropped by Wilderness Park on Sep, 21, while 1 to 4 **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** hung out at the Willow Street crossing from Aug, 8 to Sep, 20.

Randy and Deanna Harwood had a **Summer Tanager** in their neighborhood from the end of August into October. Chris Dean found another at Banning Park on Sep. 18. **Lazuli Buntings** were seen in several spots, from Wilderness Park to Willow Springs Park. A **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** visited Signal Hill on Sep. 11 (Loren Wright). **Blue Grosbeaks** hung out along the Los Angeles River from August to late September

A nice variety of migrating warblers moved through the South Bay. The lone **Black-and-White Warbler** seen during the period was at Wilson Park on Sep. 21 (Jeremy Louis). An unusual **Tennessee Warbler** stopped by Signal Hill on Sep. 20 (Vincent Baker); another was at little Cesar Chávez Park in Long Beach on Sep. 22 (Chef Ito, Jodhan Fine). Unlike the Tennessee Warbler, the **Nashville Warbler** is a regular migrant through our area. Nashvilles were spotted at Sand Dune Park, Willow Springs Park, and 22nd Street Park in September. A rare **Hooded Warbler** was a DeForest Wetlands on Aug. 22 (Kim Moore, Meryl Edelstein, Christine Jacobs). Kim found

(**Birds of the Peninsula** *continued on page 8)*

This Unknown Peninsula: Mint Moths

By Jess Morton

Gotcha, I thought to myself! A flake of sun-bright had flitted up out the shrub I was passing, zigzagged madly for a second or two and then disappeared into a bush a few feet ahead. But I'd followed the flight—moth, for sure. For once, I would get a good look at it if I was cautious enough. I didn't know exactly where it was, but the moth knew exactly where I was.

When not flying, moths prefer hiding away, on the underside of a leaf, perhaps, or with wings spread and pressed tightly against a stem as if part of the plant itself. Although inert, they are intensely aware. If threatened, they are off in yet another wild, twisting dash and dive into the undergrowth. Just like this one did as I began looking for it. Off again!

I was ready though, and saw it land. This time in the open and visible. That is, if you knew how to see it. A casual glance might dismiss it as a small flower or bud. My moth (as if I owned it?) was one of the mint moths, with wings a pastel confection of rose and gold, *Pyrausta laticlavia*, in Lepidopteran, AKA Southern Purple Mint Moth.

Mint moth caterpillars feed internally on various parts of plants, so are rarely found. This species will use rosemary, a contributing factor in making it one of our two most common mint moths. Still, you won't notice either unless you look for them. Until then, they will simply be sudden, brief and bright, erratic flashes of wing in the sun. Zip. Zip. Then gone.

Other exquisite small moths commonly found in local shrubbery



Volupial Mint Moth



Figleaf Skeletonizer



Jalisco Petrophila



Everlasting Tebenna Moth

(**Birds of the Peninsula** *continued from page 5)*

a **Northern Parula Warbler** on Signal Hill on Sep. 26. At the opposite end of our area, James Wagner came across a **Lucy's Warbler** at Agua



Lucy's Warbler
Photo: *James Wagner*

Amarga on Sep. 21. **Grey-headed Orange-crowned Warblers** were at Signal Hill (VB) and Sunnyglen Park in Torrance (Janine Choi, Gary Clayton). Brian Mason came across a **Myrtle Warbler** (the Eastern subspecies of the Yellow-rumped Warbler) at Madrona Marsh on Sep. 22.

Turning to the non-passerines, Johnny Ivanov spotted three **Redheads** in the lake at Harbor Park on Sep. 2. Many saw the **White-winged Dove** at the Willow Street crossing on Aug. 22; Lee Pace had another at Polliwog Park on Oct. 3. The **Greater Roadrunner** that ran around the Wrigley Greenbelt this past summer was last seen on Aug. 24. A **Dunlin** visited the Willow Street crossing from Sep. 18 to Sep. 25 (KM). A **Semipalmated Sandpiper** hung out there all through August and as late as Sep. 26; another was at DeForest Park on Sep. 20 (David Bell, Janet & Mark Scheel). A single **Long-tailed Jaeger** hunted the San Pedro (Catalina) Channel on Sep. 13 (Jodhan Fine, Omar Alui, Carl Matthies). A **Common Tern** was spotted in the Channel on Sep. 8, while a **Black Tern** was seen from the Catalina Ferry on Sep. 18 (Dessi Sieburth, Adrian Hinkle). Grigory Heaton picked out a **Manx Shearwater** among the many **Black-vented Shearwaters** in the Channel on Sep. 27. Many saw the **Least Storm Petrel** on Sep. 8.

Jon Fisher spotted an out-of-place **Red-footed Booby** at the Willow Street crossing on Sep. 19. Meanwhile, there was a minor invasion of boobies in the San Pedro Channel. Four different **Cocos Boobies** were seen: one in Redondo Canyon, one at the Palos Verdes Escarpment, and two outside the breakwater at Queen's Gate. The Cocos Booby was recently split from the **Brown Booby**. Kevin Fistanics spotted an immature **Masked Booby** in the Channel on Sep. 7, while a **Nazca Booby** hung out at Queen's Gate all through September. Chef Ito saw the same or another Nazca Booby on Hermosa Beach on Sep. 4.

After a two-month's absence, a couple of **Neotropic Cormorants** re-appeared at the Willow Street crossing on Aug. 18, staying to late September. **Yellow-crowned Night Herons** popped up at AES Redondo Wetland, Redondo Pier, Point Vicente, and Golden Shores. Rare in our area was the **Reddish Egret** at the Willow Street crossing on Sep. 19. **White-faced Ibises** continued at Willow Street to late September; three were at Harbor Park during the last week of September (MH).

Elsewhere in Los Angeles County, a **Yellow-green Vireo**, a Mexican species, was found just outside our area at Loyola Marymount College on Sep 25; another popped up in Avalon on Sep. 18, one of a large number of vagrants found on Catalina Island in September. Elsewhere in California, the **Purple Gallinule** found at San Joaquin Marsh in Orange County on Aug 18 attracted many birders. A wandering **Roseate Spoonbill** made a surprise appearance at San Joaquin National Wildlife Refuge in Stanislaus County on Sep. 28. Elsewhere in North America, **Piratic Flycatchers** (a tropical species) appeared at Stalker Lake (Colorado), Phoenix, and Saint Petersburg (Florida),all on Sep. 20.

Vincent welcomes reports from readers about unusual birds found in the South Bay area (west of the Los Angeles River and south of I-105.) Send reports to: stephenvincentlloyd@gmail.com.

(**Birds of the World** *continued from page 1)*

framework. However, shortly after taking office, President Biden signed an executive order establishing a goal of conserving at least 30% of U.S. lands and waters by 2030, aligning the country with the broader 30x30 conservation initiative.

That commitment has since been reversed by the current administration. The consequences extend beyond our borders: conservation is a global effort, and the United States has an important role to play. We need to change course.

The State of the World's Birds report contains an enormous amount of data, but two numbers in particular stayed with me: **54% of migratory shorebird species are in decline, and 11% of migratory bird species are threatened with extinction worldwide.**

The threats driving these declines are, unfortunately, familiar. They include habitat destruction and fragmentation, pesticide use and pollution, invasive species and disease, and, increasingly, climate change. We know what is happening. We also know many of the solutions. What we need now is the political will and collective action to put those solutions into practice.

BirdLife International has 120 partners around the world—including Audubon—working on different approaches to bird and habitat conservation. But NGOs cannot do this work alone. They need the support of governments and public agencies willing to protect the ecosystems on which birds and people depend.

And this is where we come in. Governments are elected by the people, which means we have a voice in determining the priorities of our elected leaders.

So, when you go to the ballot box on November 3, consider where the candidates stand on environmental issues and conservation. Ask how their policies would affect the land, water, wildlife, and ecosystems we all depend on.

Because what's good for birds is good for people. Protecting bird habitats and healthy ecosystems supports human health, agriculture, clean water, and environmental stability.

It really is a no-brainer: when we protect birds and the places they depend on, we protect ourselves, too!

PV/SB Audubon is a California Bird Atlas Sponsor

PV/South Bay Audubon has joined dozens of other Audubon chapters in support of California's first comprehensive bird atlas. While many states and California counties have assembled the data necessary to describe regional avian activity, from breeding, to migration to accidental appearance into an atlas format, ours, the birdiest state in the union has lacked one until now. Beginning in 2026 and extending through 2030, birders across the state and beyond are recording our birds. Coordinated through eBird, the results will be published soon after. We are proud to be a sponsor of this effort!

California Bird Atlas

(**Gratitude** *continued from page 3)*

counting the birds they see on the 26th within our 15-mile diameter circle, whether in your own yard, nearby park or with a team at a local reserve. In addition to the joy of being a part of this long-standing tradition, you'll be collecting real-world data about bird populations which will inform research about changes in the abundance or distribution of species, and which advocacy groups or government agencies can use to justify environmental protections. Let me know if you'd like to participate and I can share further details with you.

Speaking of bird counts, we'll kickoff the new year by surveying threatened Western Snowy Plovers overwintering on our local beaches in January. Federally listed as threatened in 1993, population surveys have been conducted since 2007 on Los Angeles County beaches with oversight by L.A. Audubon. Many thanks to the team of 21 volunteers which performed this year's surveys, but our team always welcomes additional help – you'll receive training and no experience is required.

Consider celebrating the season by joining one or more of the activities above, or by enjoying one of our two monthly bird walks (see Calendar for details). We'd also love to see you at one of our upcoming monthly chapter meetings – the presentation never disappoints. If you've been financially blessed this year, a one-time or monthly donation to support our programs would be very much appreciated, and a planned gift to honor your passion for birds or a loved one would be tremendously helpful.

Season's greetings to you and yours! Keith: ProgramManager@PVSBAudubon.org





Photo at right: Keith Haney and volunteers clearing out non-native vegetation at the PV Blue restoration site, left to right, Elise Harrison-Smith, Keith, Jiovanny Celis and Tommy Lacy.

Chapter Calendar

Sunday, Nov. 1st, 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, November 17th, at 7 PM, at Madrona Marsh. Monthly meeting. "**Things with Wings**" is **Jess Morton's** topic for the evening.

Sunday November 22nd, at 8:30 AM. Birding trip to Playa Del Rey and Ballona wetlands. For meeting information, email Ann and Eric Brooks at Motmots @aol.com.

Saturday, November 28th, at 9 AM. Meet the Birds! at Madrona Marsh. Birding for all ages and levels of knowledge in a biologically blessed place. Come on out!

Sunday, December 6th, at 8 AM: Bird walk at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park. Meet in the parking lot between Vermont and Anaheim above the ranger station.

Saturday December 26th, all day: 61st PV Christmas Bird Count. Birding teams scour the PV/South Bay region for winter birds, possibly with potluck and count tally at Madrona Marsh to follow. For information, email Keith Haney at progammanager@pvsbaudubon.org.



Garden Tortrix Photo: *Jess Morton*

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:	Julian Chasin (Interim)
Vice-Pres.:	Nina Su'a
Treasurer:	Julian Chasin
Secretary:	
Project Manager:	Keith Haney progammanager@pvsbaudubon.org
Directors:	Dianna Kim, Ryan Kusch, Shari Morrow, Jess Morton, Ellen O'Loughlin-Villa, Ciara Stewart, Malia Jade Young; Tracy Drake (Special advisor)

Committees:

CBC:	Keith Haney (for email, see above)
Events	Malia Young, Events@pvsbaudubon.org
Field Trips:	Ann and Eric Brooks, motmots@aol.com
Hospitality	Shari Morrow
Hummin':	Jess Morton, jmorton@igc.org
Membership	
Social Media:	Nina Su'a, Tania Ralhan (intern)
Webmaster:	Dianna Kim

YES (Youth Environmental Stewards) : Nina Su'a

Photos by the author unless stated otherwise.

Audubon Membership

To **join or renew** PV/SB Audubon membership, go to **Audubon.org** and select the link to Membership & Giving. Members receive Audubon Magazine and Hummin', your chapter's newsletter.

To get Hummin' by email (and /or print), send your preference to **info@pvsbaudubon.org**.

PV/SB Audubon Chapter Support

Support your local chapter's work with checks made to PV/SB Audubon and mailed to: PO Box 2582, Palos Verdes, CA 90274 or give on line at pvsbaudubon.org/donate.

THIRD TUESDAY PROGRAMS 7 PM AT MADRONA MARSH 3201 PLAZA DEL AMO, TORRANCE



"**Things with Wings**" takes to the air in **Jess Morton's** November 17th presentation. Birds and butterflies play a central part in the ecology of the peninsula, but so do the host of "lesser" winged organisms whose importance is far greater than is commonly recognized. In this program, Jess will use his photos, poetry and stories to introduce a few of these creatures, from hummingbirds to hover flies. All have tales to tell of why they matter, both to themselves and to us. We live in a rich world. Let's keep it so.





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P.O. Box 2582
Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274

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