



Whittier Area Audubon Society

- **General Meeting: Hybrid Virtual Presentation.**
Joanna Wu: Overlooked Female Birds
- **Bird Walk:: Sycamore Canyon**
- **Field trip: Bulmer Memorial Walk**
- **Items of Concern: Hsi Lai Temple, Whittier Narrows Dam Modification**

We have some opportunities for action to protect our local environment. See Page 2 for Chapter Action Items. Check our website for updates

Visit our website
www.whittieraudubon.org



We are a chapter of National Audubon Society

Field Trips

Beginning Bird Walk, Sycamore Canyon

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

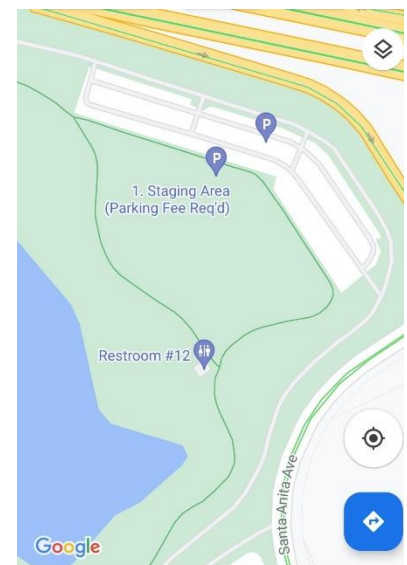
December 11, 2021 8:00am

We are back in Sycamore Canyon for our Beginning Bird Walks! The entrance is on Workman Mill Rd. just south of Rose Hills Gate 17. Be prompt as we are required to lock the gate behind us.

FIELD TRIP: Bulmer Memorial Bird Walk

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2021, 8:00 A.M.

Steve Huber, our Chapter's President, will lead our yearly **Bulmer Bird Walk** through Whittier Narrow's Legg Lake. This tradition began with an invitation to a local journalist, the late Bill Bell, from his neighbor, the late Thelma Bulmer, a past chapter president, as a way to show our city that yes, indeed, Whittier has wild birds. Let's see who is in town for the winter. Meet at the parking lot on Santa Anita, just south of the Pomona Freeway.



GENERAL MEETING

www.whittieraudubon.org

**December Program:
Overlooked Birds:
Females by Joanna Wu
Thursday, December 18,
2021 HYBRID MEETING**

7:30 PM to 9:00 PM

Joanna Wu will give a presentation, "The Most Overlooked Birds in America: Females" for the Whittier Area Audubon Society on Thursday, December 16, 2021 at 7:30p.m. at the Whittier Community Center, 7630 Washington Ave., Whittier, CA. 90602. The presentation will be also online virtually. **Go to our website to get the link.**

Joanna Wu is a Ph.D. student studying female birds in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at UCLA. She previously worked at the Los Angeles Audubon Society in the Important Bird Areas program.

This talk explores the history of focus on male birds, female vocalizations, conservation implications of overlooking female birds, and female bird identification tips.



Female birds are frequently more drab and inconspicuous than males, leading to an unconscious bias towards male birds in birdwatching.

The program is open to the public and is free.

Our general meeting will take place at the Whittier Community Center, located at the corner of Washington Ave. and Mar Vista. 7630 Washington Ave. Whittier.

PLEASE WEAR A MASK



Antelope Valley Hawk Watch Field Trip,

Saturday, January 9, 2020 Larry Schmahl will lead our annual Hawk Watch to the Antelope Valley. An all-day drive around Antelope Valley in search of winter hawks. Expect cold and winds.

Mailing Address:

Whittier Area Audubon Society
P.O. Box 548
Whittier, CA 90608-0548

News from CA Audubon

The Community Bird Count, also known as the Christmas Bird Count, happens from December 14 to January 5 every year. The data collected by observers over the past century allow Audubon researchers, conservation biologists, and wildlife agencies to study the long-term health and status of bird populations across North America. You can add to a century of community science by joining a count near you. Contact Linda Oberholtzer for more info.



Photo by Jim McNamara, Ayala Park, Chino

CHAPTER ACTION ITEMS

There are several ongoing situations in the Whittier Area that we feel require citizen awareness and perhaps citizen

action. We plan to keep a close eye on these projects and we will be keeping our members informed.

Homeless Encampments In The Narrows

Update: The WAAS Board of Directors has sent a letter to various agencies about the continuous fire danger the homeless encampments pose to any attempts at restoration/mitigation of bird habitats.

We have a remote meeting with representatives from the Army Corps of Engineers scheduled this week to discuss what their plan is.

Our most important concern is the Dam Repair at Whittier Narrows.

UPDATE: WAAS Board of Directors have sent a comment letter to the Corps, naming our biggest concerns with the Dam Safety Modification Plan and its Habitat Restoration Plan. A copy of the letter will be posted on our website.

The US Army, Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District (Corps) is undertaking a major construction project at Whittier Narrows, known as the Dam Modification Plan (DMP). In the mandated consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife under the federal Endangered Species Act for the Least Bell's vireo and the Federal Threatened California Gnatcatcher and its designated critical habitat, the Corps did determine that the DMP project is likely to adversely affect the Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*; LBVI or vireo), the federally threatened coastal California gnatcatcher (*Poliioptila californica californica*; CAGN or gnatcatcher), and designated critical habitat for the gnatcatcher.

Hsi Lai Temple Expansion

At our Chapters November's General Meeting, Bob Henderson presented some of the community's concerns about the proposed expansion of the Temple. The Temple is proposing a 143,671 square foot expansion on a parcel across Hacienda Blvd. from the current location. They want to add 17 buildings (dormitories, residential buildings, programming space and a 7-level underground parking garage.

In order to fit the project on the parcel, half of the hill will have to be removed and graded. This would destroy the existing adjacent part of Schabarum Trail. To re-route the trail, a large number of existing native oak trees (planted as mitigation for other development) would likely be removed. Existing Cactus Wren and California Gnatcatcher habitat would be removed or seriously degraded. The current wildlife corridor would be squeezed out of existence at what is now a rather constricted chokepoint.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife reviewed the proposed work and responded to the County Regional Planning Department and laid out multiple areas of concern about potential harmful impacts on animals, plants, and drainage. We will keep our attention on this matter and keep the chapter posted.



Photo by Jim McNamara, Ayala Park