



Audubon CALIFORNIA

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER COUNCIL

MEETING AGENDA

Hosted by Buena Vista Audubon Society & Audubon California

Saturday, May 13, 9:00 A.M.

Buena Vista Audubon Nature Center
2202 S. Coast Hwy,
Oceanside, CA 92054

PREPARATION FOR MEETING:

- Optional bird walk with Buena Vista Audubon from 8am to 9am. Meet at Nature Center. Come early to attend!
- Light breakfast, refreshments and lunch (pizza) provided.

Attendees:

1. Natalie Shapiro, Buena Vista Audubon Society
2. Bruce Aird, Sea and Sage Audubon Society
3. Denise Riddle, Buena Vista Audubon Society
4. Doug Lithgow, Sea and Sage Audubon Society
5. Vic Leipzig, Sea and Sage Audubon Society
6. Tina Stoner, Pomona Valley Audubon Society
7. Kym Buzdygon, Pasadena Audubon Society
8. Sandy McMullen, Buena Vista Audubon Society
9. Jonathan Appelbaum, San Diego Audubon Society
10. Andrew Mauro, Buena Vista Audubon Society
11. Natasha Khanna, Audubon California

Notes:

TOUR OF NATURE CENTER BY BUENA VISTA AUDUBON

Natalie Shapiro, President of Buena Vista Audubon welcomed everyone to their nature center. Members of Buena Vista Audubon spoke about various programs offered by their center and the challenges and successes around land acquisition and conserving the local habitat for birds and wildlife.

INTRODUCTIONS AND FINALIZATION OF AGENDA

Natasha Khanna called the meeting to order and welcomed council members. The agenda was finalized with input from attendees.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- All National Monuments designated within the past 21 years are under review. Chapter members are encouraged to submit comments to the U.S. Department of Interior from May 11 to May 26. Natasha will send out information on how to submit comments.
- Audubon Convention, July 14-17, 2017. Scholarships still available. \$600 scholarships for chapter leaders and \$1000 scholarships for young leaders (35 and under). More info at <http://www.audubonconvention.org/>

RESOURCES FOR CHAPTERS

Tina Stoner asked if Audubon California has any resources to offer chapter leaders on nonprofit management, specifically around liability insurance, 501c3 status, and training for treasurers.

After the meeting, Natasha looked into resources and found the following:

Capacity building resources: Audubon California held a series of capacity building workshop from 2015 to 2016. These workshops were documented and uploaded onto [Audubon Works](#) and can be found under “Capacity Building”. Here is the link to the capacity building resources: <https://works.audubon.org/resources/capacity-building-resources-audubon-chapters> . It is recommended that chapter leaders check out these resources that are specifically designed for Audubon chapters before checking outside resources. Topics covered include:

- Fundraising
- Planning tools for chapters
- Board recruitment
- Draft job description for Audubon chapter boards
- Governance self-assessment
- Millennial impact research
- Potential board member matrix
- Ten basic responsibilities of nonprofit boards

- What is the best size for your board?
- Audubon partnering 2016
- Center for Nonprofit Management- SoCal: This is a membership based organization that requires organizations to pay dues to access most of their resources. However, they do have a [news section](#) with a lot of interesting articles and an [FAQ page](#) that has a finance and board & governance section. Homepage: <https://cnmsocal.org/>
- The Grantsmanship Center: Check out their resource page for all things related to grants and funding. Homepage: <https://www.tgci.com/>
- The Annenberg Alchemy program: This program is a free capacity building and leadership program designed to assist small to midsize nonprofit organizations and their leaders in the Greater Los Angeles area. Website: <https://www.annenberg.org/what-we-do/alchemy/alchemy-overview>

SCHEDULING UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETINGS

We will be scheduling the next four council meetings. Let us know if your chapter is interested in hosting.

It was suggested that chapters who have never hosted a council meeting be considered be considered. These chapters include: Santa Monica, Antelope Valley, Pomona, Whittier, Palomar, and San Diego. The following tentative schedule was suggested:

- First meeting to be held in September. Potential host: Audubon California Starr Ranch
- Second meeting to be held in November/December. Potential host: Antelope Valley AS
- Third meeting to be held in February/March. Potential host: Pomona Valley AS
- Fourth meeting to be held in late May/early June. Potential host: San Diego AS

Natasha will follow up and confirm with potential hosts.

LOBBY DAY AND ADDRESSING ISSUES AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL

Audubon California's Lobby Day is on June 8th, 2017 . General members are encouraged to come up to Sacramento and participate in advocacy to protect birds and the environment.

There have been a number of concerning issues that have come out of Washington DC recently, like the review of the national monuments, offshore drilling, the border wall and other issues. Audubon California is trying to figure out how to respond to all these issues and engage the network of chapters. Let's discuss what this would mean for chapters. Do you feel your chapter has room for all this, or are you worried about overextending? What's the best way for us to interact with you? Do you have any thoughts on how we should prioritize this work? Do

chapters have the capacity for comment letters, local advocacy, meetings, action alerts – and probably other things we can't even predict right now.

- Members provided feedback based on previous Advocacy Day experiences. Members suggested that the groups be kept to a small size with no more than 4 to 5 people and to schedule meetings farther apart from each other so that participants are not rushing to their appointments.
- Tina commented that while many of the chapter members understand the importance of Advocacy Day, it is difficult to get members to participate in policy advocacy.
- Chapter leaders affirmed that they like how Audubon California sends out letter templates that they can send to public offices and agencies.
- Jonathan suggested that chapters take initiative to write opinion editorials and letters to the editors and asked if Audubon California could provide guidelines on how to get their pieces published in local newspapers. Perhaps Audubon California could provide guidelines for the top three newspapers in the state.
- Kym suggested that chapters identify a tech savvy person who can disseminate advocacy related information on social media.

POLYPHAGOUS SHOT HOLE BORER:

- Andy led a conversation about how this insect is spreading throughout California and infecting native plants. State of California is involved through the UC Davis Cooperative Extension. Currently the state is involved in research but are not funding any programs to get deal with this pest.
- Jonathan informed the Council that in San Diego County, the sandbag environmental mitigation program has reconvened land manager groups so that they can be educated about that and address the issue.
- Sea and Sage Audubon members commented on how it has a terrible impact in Orange County. UC Irvine has already lost hundreds of trees. No one seems to know what to do about it. They don't know what plants to put in place of the dead trees. We are waiting to see what mother nature is going to do and expecting the worst. They are still looking for a natural remedy/enemy to combat the bug.
- Andy explained that another issue is tracking its movement. It is a pest that affects the urban environment and not just agricultural areas. They spread and attack everything.
- Pasadena: doing a tree trimming workshop and see how you can trim your trees.
- Cavity Conservation Initiative was started by Jillian Martin a former South Bay/ South Bay Palos Verdes Audubon member. Their program educates arborists about treating dead trees without cutting them. Link to their website: <http://cavityconservation.com/>
- The council suggesting finding a platform to network at the state level with bird/tree interest groups. Another suggestion was to see if John Kabashima, a UCI extension researcher could give a presentation.

SALTON SEA PROGRAM

Natasha introduced Frank Ruiz who was recently hired as the Director for the Salton Sea program.

- Check out Audubon California's El Salton Sea facebook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/AudubonCaliforniaElSaltonSea/>
- Frank gave updates on the Salton Sea and spoke about the potential of organizing a trip to the Salton Sea in early December. Frank asked the council for ideas on how to connect Audubon chapters to the communities that lived around the Salton Sea. The council discussed the possibility of having a two-day trip which would have one full day of birding and another day to connect with the local Salton Sea community.
- Council members commented on how birding chapters are more likely to go out to the Salton Sea just for birding.
- It was suggested to have mini local events accommodating Audubon chapter Salton Sea trips that happen throughout the year. Maybe create a calendar with a list of chapter field trips to the Salton Sea.
- Frank suggested serving native foods at the event.

PLANTS FOR BIRDS PROGRAM LAUNCHED BY NATIONAL

Natasha will give a brief overview of the Plants for Birds Program which is meant to be a tool that chapters can use when engaging the community on restoration projects. Feel free to check the Plants for Birds website here at: <http://www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds> and the Plants for Birds toolkit at <https://works.audubon.org/home> . If your chapter has any restoration projects that it is working on, please come prepared to share about this.

This item is tabled to be discussed at a future council meeting.

LUNCH AND CONTINUED DISCUSSIONS

Thank you Buena Vista Audubon for providing lunch.

Chapter Conservation and Education Reports

Please be prepared to connect to the Network for input on a challenge, invite partnership, highlight and share one smart move and connect with each other via the Network. For the purposes of time, please don't report on every field trip or meeting or issue, but provide an overview of your assessment of your chapter. This is a great time to ask for support for local

conservation issues in Southern California and to talk about your priorities and how they might be supported by state and national Audubon.

- Report from Audubon California: As a board member for Audubon California, Vic reported that Brigid has left Audubon California to work for another environmental organization that focuses just on Climate. She was greatly respected and has been at the helm of Audubon Cali for five years. Audubon California has appointed to two interim co-directors: Gaylon who works out of the San Francisco office and Meghan Hertel who works out of Sacramento. Brigid was assigned the head of the Pacific Flyaway network. Those Pacific Flyaway responsibilities are now being taken over by David O’Neil.
- Sea and Sage: Vic reported that Doug is slated to be elected as the new President. S&S has almost completed a revision to our chapter strategic plan. It will probably be a benefit to our chapter but it has been a real struggle to accomplish. Vic suggested that other chapters think about how important it is to your chapter in take on such a large endeavor considering how much effort and work it takes. We have an Archive & Records committee that has scanned and uploaded all of our old newsletters and minutes to their drop box. We are also trying to compile a better record of our history since we are going to have our 60th anniversary. We had our annual dinner in March with guest speaker David Yarnold. Prior to dinner, we had a roundtable discussion. We are pushing for the Dog Beach at the Santa Ana River mouth to enforce their leash ordinance. There is a Snowy Plover roosting and a Least Tern colony. Laguna Hills Audubon Society is dissolving. Their chapter members will be absorbed into Sea and Sage.
- San Diego Audubon: Jonathan reported that ReWild Mission Bay Wetland, which is funded by coastal conservancy is entering the home stretch now (<https://rewildmissionbay.org/>). Jonathan reported on the various monitoring points for Least Tern colonies around the bay. San Diego Audubon had a very successful bird festival in the spring called the San Diego Bird Festival. The chapter organized many field trips and had Ken Kaufman as the keynote. Dates for next year will be in February and everyone is welcome to come. Make sure not to host a council meeting on that weekend.
- Pomona Valley Audubon: Tina reported on the chapter’s education conservation project. We created a bird oasis on the Thompson Creek Trail. We are working with Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Garden and the City of Claremont on the installation. We are losing four board members and haven’t found replacements.
- Pasadena Audubon: Kym reported that Pasadena Audubon partook in a number of Earth Day events in April. We also did a cleanup at Peck Park. During that event we had a bird trip for 2 hours and a trash cleanup for 2 hours, followed by pizza. We partnered with the Skip the Straw Campaign. The chapter has been involved with a lawsuit over the

Hahamongna Watershed. The judge has issued a stay on it and that they have to consider the cumulative impacts of project of Eaton Canyon and Hahamongna and need to issue a new EIR that takes that into consideration. Kym announced that the chapter has a bilingual brochure in Spanish and Mandarin. Kym gave some feedback on strategic planning and explained that professional facilitation would have been very valuable when working with an board who doesn't have much experience with strategic planning. Kym asked if the chapter could get a discount or an introduction to a consulting group that can help Pasadena Audubon with the process.

- Buena Vista Audubon: Natalie gave an update on some other funding issues and the need for a dependable source of funding. Natalie talked about land acquisition and endowments.

ADJOURN
