

Quarterly News

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

What All Residents Should Know About the New 2022 Composting Law

By Vanessa Jorgensen



Trash bins lining residential streets ready to be emptied.
Photo Courtesy by CalRecycle.

California is making huge strides in their sustainability goals by requiring that all jurisdictions provide organic waste collection services to any and all residential and commercial generators beginning January 1, 2022. This means that residents and businesses will be required to properly separate their organic, biodegradable waste products into their green waste trash bins. Two Orange County waste and recycling companies, [Waste Management](#) and [CR&R](#), have outlined their compliance policies online.

The coming years will also see a change in roadside bin colors for some in an effort to standardize color codes in California. Bins will now be marked as black for trash, blue for recycling, and green for organics. For the time being, however, residents should continue to use their bins as they are labeled until the bins are replaced.

Through this program, all food waste is acceptable. This includes fruits, vegetables, cheese, bread, rice, pasta, coffee grounds (and filters), tea bags, cooked meat, bones, fish, soup, small amounts of grease, eggshells, and food-soiled paper. These food waste products can be placed with other green waste such as yard clippings.

It is important to note however that some of these materials cannot be composted by a residential composter and is only possible due to the [anaerobic digesters](#) that will break this material down. Anaerobic digesters are oxygen-free tanks that contain microorganisms which in this case break down organic waste. These tanks are professionally monitored and thus employ a much more controlled and sophisticated process than home composting bins which allows them to break down items like meat and bones that home composts

Species Spotlight

Bald Eagle Recovery— The Success Story



Bald Eagles. Photo Courtesy by CJ Oliver | Creative Commons.

By Sanjay Das

The Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), our national symbol since 1782, was in danger of extinction throughout most of its range forty years ago. It wasn't until the 1960s and 1970s that Bald Eagles became an emblem of the environmental movement. Their numbers dropped because of habitat destruction, degradation, illegal shooting, and the contamination of its food source due to pesticide dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT). After the banning of DDT in 1972 and protecting the species under the fledgling Endangered Species Act in 1978, conservation actions taken by the American public helped Bald Eagles make a remarkable recovery.

When the US adopted the Bald Eagle as the national symbol, the country may have had as many as 100,000 nesting eagles. The first significant decline of the species began in the mid to late 1800s due to encroachment, development, and even hunting. In 1940, after learning of the declining numbers of the species, Congress passed the Bald Eagle Protection Act, which prohibited killing, selling, or possession of the species. However, in 1962, after the amendment of the Bald Eagle Protection Act, in order to include golden eagles, the law became the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

After World War II, DDT was hailed as a new pesticide to control mosquitoes and other insects. As the saying goes, 'everything comes with a price', DDT and residues washed into adjacent water sources where aquatic plants and fish absorbed it, resulting in poisoning Bald Eagles when they ate the contaminated fish. The poisoning affected the species' ability to produce strong eggshells which often broke during incubation or failed to hatch. In addition to the impacts of DDT, some Bald Eagles died from lead poisoning after feeding on waterfowl containing lead shots due to hunting. By 1963, the species was in danger of extinction, with only 487 nesting pairs of Bald Eagles remaining.

In 1972, the US banned DDT, and listed the Bald Eagles as endangered under the Endangered Species Act. In addition to the DDT ban and the Endangered Species Act protections improved

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cannot.



Photo Courtesy by Martin Sanitary Service.

Jurisdictions that fail to provide organic waste collection services to residents may be fined up to \$10,000 per day. Furthermore, failure to comply with this law could result in fines for residents of up to \$500 per day. It is important to note however that these penalties will not go into effect until after 2024. Waste Management, one of the waste and recycling service providers in California, has indicated that they will audit trash to look for contamination. If any contamination is found, Waste Management will work with the resident that is not in compliance and provide them with training and educational materials to help address any misunderstandings of the program. The program will be monitored and enforced by CalRecycle, a branch of the California Environmental Protection Agency. More information about CalRecycle's program can be found under their [Frequently Asked Questions](#) section.

The reason for this change? Methane.

Methane is a very potent greenhouse gas, about 25 times more effective at trapping heat in the atmosphere, and made up about 10% of the United States' total greenhouse gas emissions in 2019 according to the [EPA](#). Methane stays in this harmful form in the atmosphere for about ten years, much shorter than carbon dioxide. Greenhouse gasses are necessary for life on Earth as they trap some heat in the atmosphere, keeping temperatures in an adequate range. However, in too high of quantities, greenhouse gasses trap much more heat raising temperatures and leading to global warming.

As organic waste decomposes at landfills, methane is emitted. Separating organic material from other waste will help substantially reduce the amount of methane emitted at landfills. Instead of the waste decomposing in landfills, causing large amounts of methane to be released into the atmosphere, the state instead wants to redirect this organic material to composting centers or anaerobic digestion facilities. Here the waste products can go through a process in which the organic material breaks down and produces biogas in the form of methane and carbon dioxide as well as digestate. The biogases can be captured and used for activities like powering garbage trucks while the digestate can be used

habitat, protected nest sites, and, most importantly, introducing captive eagles to the areas they had previously been extirpated (locally extinct). These actions helped to bring the Bald Eagles back from the brink of extinction. In 2007, the Bald Eagles were delisted from the Endangered Species Act. After being delisted, Bald Eagles are now only protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Based on a technical update published by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service in 2021, there are a total of 316,700 individuals, which included 71,467 breeding pairs of Bald Eagles.

Taking the Bald Eagles off the Endangered Species list didn't mean an end to federal regulations concerning the management of the species. It just meant their management was once again governed solely by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Although Bald Eagles are rebounding, they are still well below their historic numbers. Now that Bald Eagles are off the endangered species list, we need to closely watch how they're being managed and conserved. However, the recent discovery of 500,000 barrels of DDT that Montrose Chemical Corp. dumped into the Pacific Ocean off Southern California (near Santa Catalina Island) from 1947 through 1961 raises new challenges for the recovered species. We need to better understand how this DDT is circulating through our coastal ecosystems to protect wildlife from future harm.



Bald Eagle pair in flight. Photo Courtesy by Justin Russ | Shutterstock.

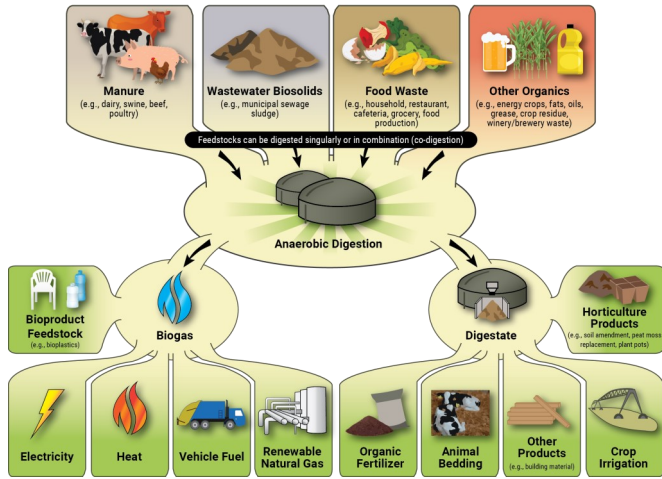
Although the future is impossible to predict, Bald Eagles advocates are optimistic about their recovery and success in future too. That said, it is crucial to support the Bald Eagles conservation efforts. The stakeholders such as agencies, nonprofits, researchers, institutions, communities and individuals are collectively working for the conservation of the species. You can also be a part of the conservation efforts by helping restore their habitats and reporting issues to the proper authorities. Bald Eagles are susceptible to harm by disturbances so you can help to conserve this species by remaining at distance from the species and not disturbing their nest sites. If you are local to Orange County and you are interested to see this majestic species, then we have some good news. In Spring 2019, there were 10 Bald Eagles confirmed in Orange County, with two confirmed pairs of Bald Eagles nesting. The best chance to spot Bald Eagles is Irvine Lake in Orange County. For more information on Bald Eagles in Orange County, visit the Orange County Birds of Prey website, <https://www.ocbpc.org/>.



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as a fertilizer.



The process by which anaerobic digestion can break down organic waste into energy and materials. Diagram Courtesy by the EPA.

To combat this problem, California enacted Senate Bill 1383. This bill's purpose is to reduce the emissions of short-lived greenhouse gases like methane. Around 20% of the methane emitted in California comes from landfills. By 2025, California's long-term goal is to reduce the organic waste entering landfills by 75% of 2014 levels, which equates to about a drop from 23 million tons to 5.7 million tons per year. This does however mean that refuse collection rates may increase due to the fees incurred by the increased use of anaerobic digestion plants.

Some residents are concerned about how to store their organic waste during the week before waste and recycling companies collect them. It is suggested that households keep a kitchen pail or compost bin that they frequently empty and clean. This method will help reduce any possible odors. Furthermore, freezing food scraps in a reusable container or layering the scraps with yard trimmings will limit odor. It is also important to know that residents are being asked not to clean out their roadside containers with water as it is a very water wasteful practice and will cause problems with runoff pollution. If worried about roadside cans getting dirty, it is suggested that cans are lined with any lawn trimmings or food-soiled paper since biodegradable trash bags are not being accepted in the program, as they take too long to break down at the facilities.

While this will help substantially reduce the amount of methane emitted in California, alternative methods can be employed by residents as well. At-home composting is another great way to reduce the methane emissions from landfills and it provides nutrients that can be used to enrich the soil and produce fruits and vegetables grown in home gardens. If pursuing at-home composting, it is important to remember what can and cannot be composted. While many of the same food waste products that are accepted in the CalRecycle program can be composted at home, items such as dairy,

Volunteers of the Quarter



Sanjay Das is from Nepal, has earned his bachelor's and masters in Environmental Science, and has previously worked at the World Wildlife Fund. In 2017, he and his wife moved to the United States, where Sanjay is currently furthering his education as a master's student at UCI and working on getting his Master's in Conservation and Restoration Science (MCRS). Sanjay joined OC Habitats in August of 2021 as an intern with the intent of learning about the natural habitats and the species living within Orange County, California. From the beginning, it was clear that he was motivated and eager to absorb any knowledge that we throw at him. As an intern, Sanjay has been an outstanding restoration lead; always sending out emails to the crew on time, coordinating with our restoration partners, leading our volunteers, and mentoring others within our team. In addition, he has helped OC Habitats a great deal by writing blogs, leading hikes, fundraising, and habitat monitoring. We are very grateful to have such a hard-working and enthusiastic person on our team and we are thankful that we have found each other.



Wendy Berube came to OC Habitats with an inspiring amount of enthusiasm and great experience in teaching. For the past 18 years, Wendy has been putting her bachelors in Marine Biology to use as a teacher, as well as, volunteering for the Pacific Marine Mammal Center, and working for the Ocean Institute in Dana Point. Currently, she is working on pursuing her master's in Biology to become a wildlife biologist, where we believe



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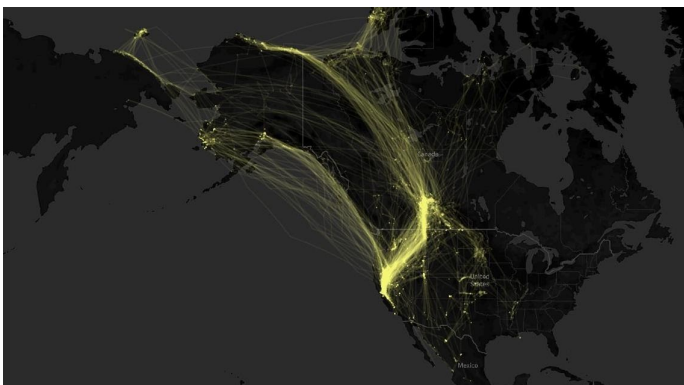
grease, meat, fish, and bones cannot. Organizations such as the EPA have composed online [guidelines for home composting](#).

An even better way for households to reduce their environmental impact is by decreasing food waste in general. Shopping more mindfully and frequently can help lessen the volume of food that is ultimately not used and subsequently thrown away. Having a “leftovers” or “soon to spoil” shelf in a very visible area of your refrigerator can act as a reminder of what food should be used or eaten first, ultimately reducing food spoilage and waste.

Gearing Up for Fall Migration

By Stacey Chartier-Grable

Although we are still in the middle of summer, many bird species are already gearing up or even heading towards their wintering grounds along the Pacific Flyway (PF). The Pacific Flyway is one of four major migratory flyways in North America that at least [one billion birds](#) and over 325 bird species use to traverse to and from their non-breeding (winter) and breeding (spring/summer) grounds from Alaska to Patagonia. The PF is 4,000 miles long and 1,000 miles wide with a portion of the flyway in Canada and the rest in the US includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, New Mexico, Nevada, Montana, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. The PF has many [important layover areas](#) that birds rely on for a short layover (just a few days) to refuel and rest or stay the rest of the season.



Pacific Flyway Routes. Photo Courtesy by Alexandra (Allie) M. Weill

Why do birds migrate?

Let's first be clear that not all birds migrate, those that stay in one location year-round are called permanent residents. Those that do migrate are generally moving from low or decreasing resources to areas with more abundant resources and are also searching for nesting locations. Other driving forces may be warmer climates, avoidance of predators, and historic and genetic cues that drive their migratory urges.

Of the migrating birds, there can be short, medium,

she will excel, since she goes above and beyond in all of her work! As an intern, Wendy's background and experience in education has assisted OC Habitats tremendously in helping us develop and create our educational curriculum. She has also written several blogs, recently hosted a Coffee & Conservation on sand movement, and assisted in multiple educational opportunities with students and the Girl Scouts of Orange County. We believe that with Wendy's amazing people skills and motivational passion in the environment, she will be able to strive in whatever she puts her mind to.

What's New

NEW STAFF MEMBER



Kim Yumul is currently working on getting her bachelor's degree in biological science with a concentration in marine biology at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF). She is a member of the CSUF Zacherl Laboratory, where she studies the effects of *Watersipora* spp. on the recruitment and settlement of our native Olympia oysters at Upper Newport Bay. She joined OC Habitats as an intern in January 2021 and has been an active intern, volunteer, and now staff member ever since. She is interested in the form and function of organisms as a biology major, so being a part of OCH events such as habitat restorations and bird monitoring surveys have helped her to build on these important concepts in science. As a staff member, she will have a variety of responsibilities in restoration, monitoring, education, and as well as other OCH projects. Her ultimate goal is to help restore and conserve our natural habitats and the organisms in these areas for future generations.

INTERNS

During late winter, we welcomed two new interns to our team: Vanessa Jorgensen (UCI) and Kim Yumul (CSUF). Interns that have wrapped up their internships are Sanjay Das (UCI) and Gaby. Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication!



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or long-distance migrants. Generally, birds fly south for the winter (non-breeding) and north for the spring/summer (breeding). The migratory period for the spring ranges from February through April and for Fall, September through December. With weather patterns changing, studies are showing some migratory patterns are changing with species leaving earlier or later than recorded in the past from both wintering and breeding grounds. The [length of day](#) is believed to be the primary trigger or cue for migration to begin. The [migratory routes](#) are not often a straight line but can alter course during both north and south routes. Some species may also take one route to their breeding grounds and another to their non-breeding grounds, possibly following more abundant resources along the way to ensure their needs are adequately met.

There are so many unique and interesting details of each species but, in this series, we will highlight a few of our locals that are in Orange County over the coming weeks.



A Sanderling waiting for the waves to recede in search of food.
Photo Courtesy by Bill Halladay.

The [Sanderling](#), *Calidris alba*, travel between 1,800 and 6,000 miles each year traveling north to Alaska for breeding and back to Orange County in winter. This little shorebird darling is small enough to fit in the palm of your hand and will generally only be seen in Orange County in the winter months. In the winter, it tends toward a whiter hue with light gray accents, often getting mistaken for our listed Western Snowy Plover. It does have a distinctive shoulder patch that sets it apart from its look-alike friends. During breeding season, like many bird species, Sanderlings get colorful by adding browns, blacks, and even a hint of yellow with stronger mottling on their back and wings. Their feeding habits are to eat invertebrates just below the surface of the sand and will chase the waves all day in search of a meal.

To continue our discussion on migration, migration hotspots are important locations for our migratory birds. They are where a large number of migratory species layover due to its abundant resources or its convenient placement along the coast for rest (such as peninsulas, estuaries, and islands).

ONGOING RESTORATION PROJECTS

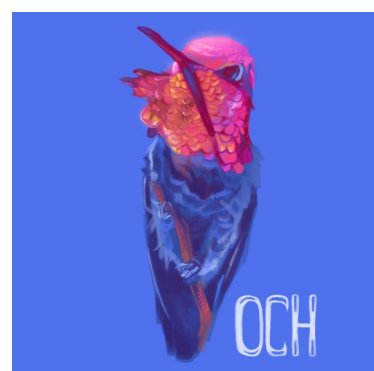


Restoration at the Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy is held on every third Saturday of the month where OC Habitats continue our restoration projects in the salt marsh habitat. At the Upper Newport Back Bay, restoration is held every second Saturday of the month, in which we restore the ecological reserve's riparian and salt marsh habitats. OCH is looking for committed restoration volunteers. Interested? Contact volunteer@ochabitats.org.

HIKING PROGRAM



OCH currently has the goal of doing at least one hike per month at different locations. One of our hikes include a 2.5-mile MPA hike along Little Corona del Mar beach to learn about the habitat and the different species living therein. We are always developing and expanding our hiking program to include new nature hikes, such as hikes along the Santiago Oaks Regional Park Trail, Dripping Cave Trail, San Joaquin Marsh Hike, and more, where you can learn about the various species living in the area and how to leave no trace. If you're interested in joining us on our hikes, space is limited, so register through [EventBrite!](#)





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Huntington Beach Wetlands, a great resting stop for migratory birds to eat, sleep, and relax. Photo Courtesy by OC Coastkeeper | OC Weekly.

Orange County, which is right in the middle of the PF, acts as a layover for many birds in locations as small as backyards and as large as our local wetlands. As long as there is food, water, shelter, and low predation they will stop. The best places to view the large variety of species coming and going throughout the year are the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve, the Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserve, as well as Huntington Central Park in Huntington Beach. These are all public places with great opportunities to view the species stopping over or staying for the season.



Hooded Orioles can sometimes be found hanging upside down while foraging for food. Photo Courtesy by Jerry Ting | AllAboutBirds.

Next in our migratory bird spotlight series is the Hooded Oriole, *Icterus cucullatus*. Our Hooded Orioles spend its breeding season along the entire coast of California and even more predominantly in Southern California. Most of them migrate toward Mexico for the winter but they can also be found in Arizona, Texas and Mexico. Its beautiful coloring makes it a stand-out among birds with its bright yellow or orange cap and black throat but it does tend to stay hidden while foraging. Its big give away is its distinctive chatter often gives it away even while hidden. Hooded Orioles like a good bird feeder or ripe fruit.

OCH COFFEE & CONVERSATION (C&C)

Join Us Saturday, January 22nd | 10 - 11 AM

The Story of Sand

An OCH Coffee & Conversation hosted by Wendy

Meeting ID: 818 2347 8065
Passcode: 760979



OC Habitats began hosting live streams on Google Meet or Zoom during the pandemic in an effort to connect and engage with the public. These events are typically hosted on Saturday morning where we go over many different topics regarding our organization, environmentalism, and sustainability. [Check out our previous live streams](#) and join our email list to know when the next live stream is scheduled!

MARCH: WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

During Women's History Month, we would like to give a shout out to all of the women at OC Habitats who comes from a variety of educational and cultural backgrounds. We appreciate the hard work that they do to keep our mission of restoring, educating, and monitoring the habitats of OC. We are thankful for all of their contributions to OCH in their own way to show their passion for the environment, such as attending the restorations, writing a blog post, and just being a jack of all trades. We are proud and thankful for volunteering your time to support this predominantly women-run non-profit organization.

Melody Aminian
Evie Andrade
Lenyss Bahena
Judy Berman
Wendy Berube
Stacey Chartier-Grable
Michaela Coats
Sierra Dey
Cheryl Dyas
Kimi Garcia
Ginny Gregurek
Isabel Johnson
Vanessa Jorgensen
Melissa King

Vanessa Lau
Michelle Lee
Alyssa Majony
Danna Mehtar
Dominique Murillo
Elisabeth Neely
Haruka Noda
Keeley Rasich
Cristina Robinson
Lis Roche
Gina Thompson
Joyce Vu
Kim Yumul

Upcoming Events & Opportunities

April 2022

- April 9th, 8:30 - 11:30 AM: UNB Restoration
- April 16th, 9 - 12 PM: HBWC Restoration

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Light pollution causes disorientation in birds, increasing their use in energy while flying. Photo Courtesy by Audubon.

We can only imagine the effort involved in migration, especially the medium to long-distance individuals. They must have physical endurance, good health, adequate food resources, be able to avoid predation, handle unpredictable weather, and avoid human-caused obstacles such as communication towers, tall buildings, reflected light from buildings, power lines, wind turbines, and night lights within urban areas. The latter, night lights, can cause all sorts of problems for migratory birds as many birds fly day and night. Artificial lighting and skyglow (light pollution) can cause birds to become disoriented and collide with buildings and windows wrestling in serious injury or death. The night light issue has the greatest impact on birds' energy resources being depleted as birds go off their normal flight path, calling out to others in the flock, or going around these strongly lit areas.



Cliff Swallow nests can be found in clusters built on horizontal overhangs. Photo Courtesy by Bill Halladay.

Our next spotlight species, the Cliff Swallow, *Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*, is a quick and agile bird that can be seen all around Orange County during breeding season. These small birds can be found anywhere there is a body of water, bridges or overpasses nearby. They, along with some of their

May 2022

- May 7th, 8 - 10:30 AM: Buck Gully Nature Hike
- May 14th, 8:30 - 11:30 AM: UNB Restoration
- May 21st, 9 - 12 PM: HBWC Restoration

June 2022

- June 11th, 8:30 - 11:30 AM: UNB Restoration
- June 18th, 7:30 - 10 AM: MPA Hike
- June 18th, 9 - 12 PM: HBWC Restoration
- June 25th, 10 - 11 AM: Coffee & Conservation

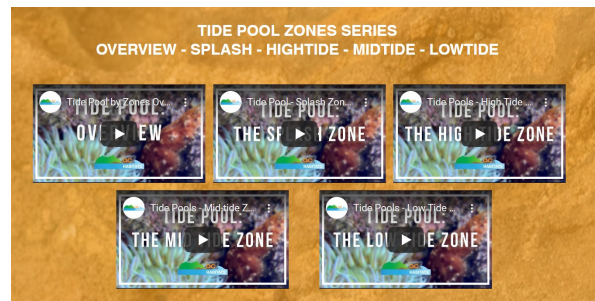
*Please check our website or your email for updated event information.

**We are currently trying to plan a grunion run event this spring or summer, stay tuned for more information.

For new and upcoming events, join our mailing list.

[Join our Mailing List](#)

OCH HABITAT VIDEO SERIES



We have several habitat video series projects in the works that discuss the specific habitats and the species living therein. We are currently finalizing our riparian and oak woodlands video, with the hope of finishing the series by the end of 2022. There is also an in-depth look into the tide pool habitat that explores the successes and struggles that various tide pool animals experience in the microhabitats of each zonation. Our videos are also currently being used by the Water District for their upcoming water festival. Keep your eyes open for a notification about these videos about our habitats of Orange County.

THE NATIVE HABITATS OF ORANGE COUNTY

ORANGE COUNTY HABITATS OVERVIEW

COASTAL DUNES

TIDE POOLS

WETLANDS

closest relatives, build mud nests along vertical walls, under bridges, under residential eaves and more. These speedy flyers come up from Eastern South American, Central America, and Mexico for breeding in California, many other states of the US, and parts of Canada. They have a distinctive white patch of feathers on their forehead that starts to show even before leaving the nest as a fledgling. Cliff Swallows nest in colonies, with colonies reaching up to 3,700 nests in one location. Their diet includes flying insects such as beetles, flies, winged ants, bees, wasps, mayflies, lacewings and some ground dwellers such as grasshoppers and some spiders. They will even eat berries on occasion.



Western Grebe cruising through the waters.
Photo Courtesy by Matt Davis | AllAboutBirds.

Last on our spotlight species is the Western Grebe, *Aechmophorus occidentalis*, and ways you can help migratory birds. Western Grebes are waterbirds that migrate to Orange County after breeding in more inland and freshwater locations within the US. Western Grebes won't likely be seen flying as they migrate at night and rarely fly outside of migration. The average Orange County citizen can locate these unique night birds in the open ocean in large floating flocks. This bird is built for the water with its legs being set further back on its body allowing it to propel quickly underwater in search of food. It has distinct black and white plumage with its black cap acting as a mask over its red eyes. It has a sharp yellow bill with black markings. (Hint: don't try to handle this bird without expert help as they will go for your eyes with their sharp bills). They are known, along with their close relative the Clark's Grebe, to have quite the graceful courtship display where both males and females appear to walk or dance on the water's surface in sync with each other.

This unbelievable migration happens twice a year, every year, and is something to see. Important habitats including coastal dunes, salt and freshwater wetlands, and more are such a crucial part of this flyway and they are dwindling at a record pace due to human encroachment, reduced habitat, water

Partnership Update

How did the vaquita conservation fundraiser go?! Together, Drift Ocean Designs & Plastic Me Not were able to raise \$586 towards vaquita conservation efforts! We are absolutely amazed at your support & am so grateful for this collaboration and that we were able to contribute in helping to save our most endangered marine mammal! Keep reading to learn who received donations & WHY!

All proceeds were donated to the amazing Vaquita CPR & Earth League International! Vaquita CPR have been directing donations to the Earth League International, an innovative NGO that focuses on intelligence collection & investigation of wildlife trafficking. They're tackling the vaquita efforts through Operation Fake Gold to gather data & investigate on-site in Mexico, China, and the US by evaluating information with their crime analysts & intelligence experts to produce both public & confidential reports for government & law enforcement authorities in all 3 countries. Vaquita CPR also hosts Project Esperanza that does photo ID, acoustic monitoring, sustainable development, and gillnet removal in vaquita habitat.

Due to the summer 2021 announcement of the Mexican government's decision to lift the fishing ban in the vaquita habitat, Vaquita CPR has allocated all support to the Earth League International's efforts to combat the wildlife crime & ongoing acoustic monitoring— which some of the criminals involved with the illegal fishing are destroying, most likely hide evidence about vaquita research.

These conservation initiatives have been recommended by CIRVA (International Committee for the Recovery of the Vaquita) & enforced by the scientific committee of the IWC (International Whaling Committee). For more information on solutions, please visit www.vaquitacpr.org/the-solutions/.

Thank you all again for your generous support!

*Note: We had a general blog giving information on the vaquitas, while posting the fundraising information on our social media separately.





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diversion, and pollution.



Long-billed Dowitchers foraging in the pond at Huntington Beach Central Park. Photo Courtesy by Stacey Chartier-Grable.

In order to protect these habitats and species, we must all become aware of the importance of each habitat, the role it plays, and ways in which we can help conserve, preserve, and protect them. You have already taken the first step to becoming more aware by visiting the OC Habitats website and blog and learning about migration. Viewing this migration and the unique creatures that are a part of it is another fun and important step to making a difference in protecting the species that migrate. To get really involved you can volunteer at your local non-profits that support bird species like OC Habitats, Sea and Sage Audubon, Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve, or Newport Bay Conservancy. You can speak up to your local, regional, state, and federal government officials about [ensuring protection for migratory species](#) and the habitats they rely on. And you can turn off your outdoor lights at night to help birds navigate the night sky. [Join the Lights Out movement](#) and become part of the solution.

Join the OCH Crew!



OCH is looking for people who want to share their talents and time to improve their local environment and habitats. We have many opportunities to get involved and some are listed below.

Volunteer:

- Become a Habitat Monitor
- Join our Habitat Education Team
- Help with Administrative Tasks
- Help with Outreach and Marketing
- Become a Nature Hike Guide
- Work on OCH's Social Media Outreach
- Help with ongoing Restoration Projects
- Work with our Grant Writing Team to secure funding for our organization, programs, and projects.

Internships:

- College Level Students earn credit through CSUF, UCI, Saddleback, CSULB, and more.
- Gain experience in the conservation field, a grassroots nonprofit, business administration, public speaking, education, and more.
- Become a film or art intern for OCH.

We look forward to hearing from you!

[Join Our Crew](#)

Volunteers of the Year

2017



Tom Gee

2018



Bianca Borja

2019



Crystal Ryan & Trevor Stocking

2020



Ross Griswold

2021



Cheryl Dyas & Michelle Lee