From the President
Marla White, Volunteer President

“I woke up this morning, Smiled at the rising sun, Three little birds, Sat on my doorstep, Singing sweet songs”

–Bob Marley

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in earnest and people were following the stay-at-home orders, did you notice the quiet sprinkled with bird song? Traffic was down to a minimum and cold mornings carried the trilling and warbling of feathered friends through the air. Since that time, I have invested in some squirrel-proof feeders and three water features. The sweet chubby Black Phoebe, squawking Scrub Jay, and splashing wrens make a cheery start to my day. My Siamese is not interested in watching with me but my border collie/springer spaniel mix can hardly contain herself from chasing off the visitors. None is more disdained as the red squirrel who has been relegated to foraging on the fallen sunflower seeds.

The Community areas of CalBG often offer solitary opportunities for birding and learning what is passing through our area. What is it that keeps calling “Chi-ca-go” when I wander there? More than 600 species of birds are found in California. As a Garden Guide we shared with students a few ways to ID birds based on size, silhouette, color, habitat, and calls. I may enhance my new hobby with the eBird app that allows you to track the birds you encounter.

Here are a few sites and apps to download on your Smartphone that focus on birds. It is too easy to go “down the rabbit hole” on the Internet trying to guess a bird.

Phone Apps: Merlin Bird ID, iBird, Peterson Birds, National Geographic Birds, Audobon Birds, BirdSong ID (like Shazam for Birdsong) and iNaturalist for flora and fauna.

Facebook Groups: Backyard Birds of the Inland Empire https://www.facebook.com/groups/276411019369793
Audobon California https://www.facebook.com/audubonca
Sites: Pomona Valley Audubon Society http://pomonavalleyaudubon.org
All About Birds, Cornell Ornithology Lab, where you can get information and instant bird ID https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news

Bird Fest is on hiatus this year, but Kristen Barker (Community Education) has planned activities and classes for February. Consult the website for up-to-date information. I look forward to the return this spring of Bird Walks with the Audubon Society and Wild Wings, once the Garden returns to group activities.

President’s Challenge: Find a location in the Garden and become an observer at various times of day over the course of the seasons. Become a nature journalist and see the subtle changes over time in the flora and fauna. Consider writing it up for an upcoming Oak Notes or create a work of poetry based on your observations. April is Poetry Month and we are seeking your contributions. The Oak Notes deadline is March 15 for the April issue.

Stay well. Stay safe. See you soon around our Garden.

—Marla

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Lucinda McDade, CalBG Executive Director

Hello Volunteers!

Please please take very good care of yourselves as we await the vaccine. I know that some of you have had the first shot and I am very glad! Hopefully, for those of us who live in LA County, the log jam will be broken soon and they will be able to move on from health care workers to others in the at-risk categories—perhaps by the time you get this issue of Oak Notes, most of you will have gotten at least one vaccination shot: I hope so!

As noted in my recent email to you, we are about to have some ‘at home’ volunteer opportunities. I hope that some of you will be able to help out and that the tasks will be a pleasant diversion! Thanks in advance!

The Forest Pavilion work continues—the sprinkler system for fire safety has gone into the support building and both the plumbers and the electricians are at work there. On the Pavilion itself, workers are staining the beautiful planks that will form the ceiling. Step-by-step we are getting there!

Bird

It was passed from one bird to another, the whole gift of the day. The day went from flute to flute, went dressed in vegetation, in flights which opened a tunnel through the wind would pass to where birds were breaking open the dense blue air - and there, night came in.

When I returned from so many journeys, I stayed suspended and green between sun and geography - I saw how wings worked, how perfumes are transmitted by feathery telegraph, and from above I saw the path, the springs and the roof tiles, the fishermen at their trades, the trousers of the foam; I saw it all from my green sky. I had no more alphabet than the swallows in their courses, the tiny, shining water of the small bird on fire which dances out of the pollen.

The Essential Neruda: Selected Poems

—Pablo Neruda
Late breaking news is that the Foothill and College Avenue corner is about to be planted. By the time you get this, the landscaping should be installed. This step was preceded by installation of a modern irrigation system. We have just a bit of retro-work near the Garden’s main gate to move the corner’s water supply off of the old irrigation system (which we are still struggling to turn off!). I am very (VERY!) excited that we will have a beautifully landscaped garden there to support our sign and demonstrate for guests and passersby year-round that there is beauty up College Avenue!

I understand that this issue of Oak Notes is significantly about birds. Although we are a botanic garden, I won’t complain! I’ve always been thrilled that we provide safe haven for so many birds and I am personally happy every time I see a species I’ve not seen here before. That happened to me twice recently: California thrasher and kinglet.

In my research work, I’ve done a lot with hummingbird-pollinated plants and have spent a lot of time observing hummingbirds visiting flowers—something that I never get tired of! I also have one bona fide bird publication to my credit. When I was a graduate student living at a field station in the Central American tropics, my friend Tom Sherry and I did a terrifically fun study on prey handling by nunbirds (google it—you will understand where the common name comes from!). The birds were part of a mixed species flock that would visit a relatively open area (the arboretum) at about the same time each afternoon.

We got the birds trained to look for us by offering them delectable treats (e.g., katydids, grasshoppers, roaches). Once the birds could be counted upon as study participants, we would collect prey of various sorts the night before, measure and weigh them, and store them in a small cage overnight. Next day in the arboretum, once we had the attention of a nunbird or two (they would come and perch on a low branch perhaps as close as 10 feet to us), I would take prey out of the cage one at a time, hold the item up to show to the bird(s) and then toss it into the air for the bird(s) to catch. They rarely missed.

It was then Tom’s duty to take data on how long it took the bird to handle the prey item and to take notes on how it did so. He had the hard job, as it sometimes involved charging about the arboretum to follow the bird with the prey item if it chose to land a distance from where I was standing. We also found out what they did not like—which included large nasty ants (bullet ants, *Paraponera*), insects with red and black warning coloration, and poison dart frogs (don’t worry: no frogs were harmed).

One of my favorite parts of the study was observing the nunbirds as the rest of their flock was leaving. It was hard not to anthropomorphize! They wanted to stay and be fed tasty katydids—but they did not want their flock to leave without them. Finally, after visibly squirming a bit, they would fly off. Tom and I published a very nice paper on the study in the journal *Ecology*. Let me know if you’d like a copy of it!

And speaking of birds—my husband and I are in the middle of watching *The Good Lord Bird* about abolitionist John Brown. Quite entertaining—Ethan Hawke playing John Brown is remarkable! If you have watched it or do watch it, do you agree that the bird in question is the pileated woodpecker? I have been lucky enough to see a small number of that remarkable bird.

Onward into the rest of winter and then spring, with fingers firmly crossed for rain and vaccinations!

“*You better cut the pizza in four pieces because I’m not hungry enough to eat six.*

—Yogi Berra

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Kristen Barker, Coordinator

Hello All!

January has been a very productive month for Community Education! The virtual pruning workshop, led by Grounds Manager Ashlee Armstrong, sold out fast and extra spots were added for others who wanted to join. If you weren’t able to make the class, you can watch the recording on the Digital Content page of the CalBG website.
The Nature Sketch and Watercolor class, taught by artist Aleta Jacobson, also sold out! Aleta will be back again in spring to teach a meditative drawing class. We are also very close to having worksheets available on our website for pre-K through fifth-grade students.

**Ways You Can Help Our Garden**

**Chipotle Fund Raiser:** On February 10, 2021 from 4–8 p.m., order a couple meals to go using the Chipotle App or ordering online at Chipotle.com. Please follow the directions given on the last two pages of Oak Notes. They are located in Sycamore Hills Plaza, Baseline and the 210, near Whole Foods. Please use the code THCN6NG, which is specific to this date and location. A completely safe “no contact” drive through opportunity to help our Garden.

**Designate CalBG with your Amazon account:** To support CalBG, simply shop at smile.amazon.com and the Garden will receive a small portion of your purchase price.

**January Stimulus Check:** If you haven’t spent all of the second round of your Federal Economic Impactayment, please consider a donation to CalBG. [https://www.calbg.org/support/donate](https://www.calbg.org/support/donate)

**Purchase Memberships:** These are good for friends and family for birthdays, anniversaries, or just because! [https://www.calbg.org/support/membership](https://www.calbg.org/support/membership)

**Poppy Shop Merchandise:** Many items are for sale on our Shopify site, which benefits CalBG [https://california-botanic-garden.myshopify.com](https://california-botanic-garden.myshopify.com)

These worksheets follow the Next Generation Science Standards and are accompanied by some at-home crafting activities.

February is Bird Month here at CalBG! In lieu of an in-person Family Bird Festival, we will offer lots of fun bird-related activities throughout the month! We start with a virtual class by Pomona Valley Audubon Society President, Tina Stoner, called Introduction to Birding. Don’t forget to take part in the socially distanced Great Backyard Bird Count, February 12 through 15. At the end of the month, our very own Chip Grubbs will teach a virtual class called Habitat Gardening for Birds and Other Pollinators. For all you puzzlers out there, come visit the Garden and solve the riddles in our Bird Scavenger Hunt! The scavenger hunt will be up for the whole month and available online and at the Admission’s Kiosk. There will also be an iNaturalist contest for those of you with a keen eye for observing and identifying birds. All you will need is a camera or your smartphone. Keep an eye out for details on the website!

As we move forward into spring, stay tuned for details about the Pressed Plant workshop with Mare Nazaire, a photography class with Keir Morse, and more topics in horticulture! Hope you will be able to join us virtually! Take care everyone!

Resources for information about birds [https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/) or the Audubon website at [https://www.audubon.org](https://www.audubon.org)

**Volunteer Enrichment**

**Yvonne Wilson, Enrichment Committee**

**Volunteer Enrichment:** Monday, February 22, 2021, Noon–1 p.m.

**Speaker:** Rachel Poutasse, CalBG Library Archivist

**Title:** Preparing for the future by preserving the past.

Please click the link below to join the webinar: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84030689818?pwd=UVp0NjAzT0RKcTdKSVRieGJiaDJ3dz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84030689818?pwd=UVp0NjAzT0RKcTdKSVRieGJiaDJ3dz09)

Webinar ID: 840 3068 9818

Passcode: 662248

Have you ever had to deal with “preserving” old photographs, scrapbooks, and other personal collections? Then you won’t want to miss the
February Volunteer Enrichment presented by CalBG Archivist Rachel Poutasse. After a brief overview of the archival collections in the CalBG library, she will review some basic principles of preservation and give us some tips and tricks for handling papers, photographs, artwork, audiovisual material, and more.

Rachel Poutasse joined the Garden in 2013 as a curatorial assistant in the Herbarium and later became workroom manager. In 2015, she worked with CalBG librarian Irene Holiman and volunteer John Bradley on the Marcus E. Jones archive and curated an exhibition on his life and achievements as a late-nineteenth-century botanist. Rachel left the Garden in 2017 to attend UCLA, where she obtained a Masters in Library and Information Science with a specialization in Archival Studies. Since that time, she has applied her arts as an intern in the archives of the Museum of Northern Arizona and the Getty Research Institute. She returned to the Garden in October 2020 and is currently working with Irene to survey and catalog the archives and develop guidelines for processing and preserving the collections.

Hibernation
Fred Brooks, Garden Guide
Photo by Debbie Woo

I’ve heard that turtles haven’t been seen in Benjamin Pond lately. Did they die, move to another pond, or are they hibernating? Didn’t Hamlet say, “To sleep, perchance to survive”?

Hibernation is a state of inactivity that many warm-blooded animals (endotherms) undergo to survive adverse conditions, such as cold weather or a lack of food. Hibernating animals are lethargic, have a lowered metabolism, slower heart rate, and decreased body temperature. Some animals, like ground squirrels and bats, are true hibernators. Interestingly, bears are not, as their body temperature stays near constant. Some animals will “awaken” briefly, eat or drink if necessary, and then return to hibernation.

Brumation is a term sometimes applied to cold-blooded animals (ectotherms), which cannot regulate their body temperature. These include snakes, lizards, and turtles. When the weather becomes colder and the days shorter, ectotherms usually seek shelter in crevices or underground. Aquatic turtles often survive colder temperatures by burrowing into mud that contains little or no oxygen. Turtles, like those in Benjamin Pond, have a unique ability to survive brumation under these conditions. Unlike true hibernators, however, they must briefly stop brumating during warm periods and drink water.

Estivation (aestivation) is an inactive state used by many organisms to endure extreme heat or drought. These include reptiles, amphibians, and
even some snails and worms. The desert tortoise is an ectomorph, so in the heat of summer will find a sheltered place to keep its body temperature and water needs low. During estivation, breathing, heart, and metabolic rates are reduced.

So, what term do you use to describe an animal’s survival method: hibernation, brumation, or estivation? If you are a “splitter,” turtles brumate; if you are a “lumper,” turtles hibernate. Another word that encompasses all these conditions is dormancy. Regardless of which definition you choose, watch for the turtles to return in warmer days.

**Book of the Month**

Joan Sweeney, Volunteer Library Committee

![The Scent of Violets](image)

The Scent of Violets by Susanna Bryant Dakin, Designed and Printed by Lawton and Alfred Kennedy, San Francisco, California 1968

Susanna Bixby Bryant and her daughter –summer 1905

This 72-page book is a collection of memories by Susanna Bryant Dakin. She was the daughter of Dr. Earnest A. Bryant (1869–1933) and Susanna Bixby Bryant (1880–1946), who was the founder of Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, now California Botanic Garden. The author was born in Los Angeles in 1905 and wrote vivid, funny stories about her early childhood and her family.

In recounting stories about her mother and grandparents, she quoted from Adobe Days, a memoir written by her mother’s cousin, Sarah Bixby Smith. Two Bixby brothers who came to California in the 1850s married Hathaway sisters. Susanna’s father, John W. Bixby, a cousin almost 20 years younger than those brothers, married the youngest Hathaway sister, Susan. He died in 1887 at the age of 39 from appendicitis. His widow “withdrew from society” and dressed in mourning for the rest of her life. The family moved from Rancho Los Alamitos to Berkeley when Susanna’s older brother, Fred, entered the University of California. Susanna then went to a finishing school in Boston, traveled, and even bought an apartment for herself in San Francisco.

On a brief visit to Los Angeles, Susanna met Dr. Earnest Bryant. He was 35 when they met and had a successful medical practice. He “saw a vision in Sue Bixby. Willowy…. Clear blue eyes, naturally wavy brown hair, a magnolia complexion, the fragrance of violets [surrounded her]….” They were married three months later.

According to her daughter, beneath her “Gibson Girl façade” Susanna Bixby Bryant had “a superior mind and executive powers.” She found “a lifelong outlet for them” in 1911 when she decided to actively manage land she had inherited in Santa Ana Canyon. First, she developed citrus, almond, and other fruit orchards. Later she turned some of the remaining pastureland into “a preserve of California flora, forcing reluctant ones to grow through the sheer strength of her will, creating the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden in memory of her father.”

Susanna Bryant Dakin was a wife, mother, community leader, and writer. Two biographies she wrote about nineteenth-century California figures were published by university presses. The Scent of Violets was privately published in 1968 after her death. In December of 1966, she and members of her family were on board a small plane that crashed into the ocean off Baja California. Susanna Bryant Dakin, her husband Richard, their son Roger and his wife Joan, four of Roger and Joan’s five children, and the pilot, all perished.
Bird Fest
Photos by Marla White

Mallard Ducks
(female foreground, male, background

California Scrub Jay

Black Phoebe

California Quail
(male)

Mourning Dove
DO GOOD WITH BURRITOS

Join us at our restaurant for a fundraiser to support California Botanic Garden Volunteer Organization. Just come in to the Chipotle at 2057 W Baseline Rd in Upland on Wednesday, February 10th from 4:00pm to 8:00pm. Bring in this flyer, show it on your smartphone or tell the cashier you’re supporting the cause to make sure that 33% of the proceeds will be donated to California Botanic Garden Volunteer Organization.

NEW! ORDER ONLINE FOR PICKUP

Use code THCN6NG before checkout in ‘promo’ field. Orders placed on Chipotle.com or through the Chipotle app for pickup using this unique code will be counted towards the fundraiser.

All online orders must be placed for pickup at the same time/location of the fundraiser. Delivery cannot be counted at this time. Gift card purchases during fundraisers do not count towards total donated sales, but purchases made with an existing gift card will count. $150 minimum event sales required to receive any donation.
ONLINE FUNDRAISERS

Congratulations on your upcoming Chipotle fundraiser! Below are details on how to participate in your fundraiser online through the Chipotle App or Chipotle.com.

Please note all online orders for your fundraiser must be within your scheduled hours and only at the restaurant hosting your event.

1. Access the Chipotle app or order on our website.

2. Choose “Pickup” and select the location of the restaurant which is hosting your fundraiser.
   Delivery orders or orders placed through other apps will not be counted towards your fundraiser.

3. Build your order with all your faves.

4. Once you’re ready to place your order, input your unique online fundraiser code in the “Enter a Promo Code” section. Don’t forget to click “Apply.”

5. Provide payment information and submit your order for pickup (not delivery). Reminder, pickup must be within the hours of your scheduled fundraiser.

If you or your supporters forget to input and apply the code at checkout, please email us your order information at fundraisers@chipotle.com.

HELPFUL TIP

Once you apply your fundraiser code, your cart will show “Fundraiser” and an amount of -$0.01. Don’t panic — this is totally normal and how we track the code in our system.