



# Least Bell's Vireo's Voice

Whittier Narrows Nature Center Association Newsletter

April 2017



## Guaje:

**A traditional water carrier  
Used by a modern  
renaissance man.**

*Photos and article by Gloria*

**GUAJE - A GOURD**



On this day, March 4, 2017, Armando the artist and naturalist, carried a traditional water carrier on his nature hike. It was out of the way and his hands were free as he conveniently strapped it onto his shoulder and across his chest with rustic jute twine. He was complimented and received several questions about the guaje's origin. Not only did he make it, but he grew it! He got the seed from his

uncle, planted it, and provided a climbing structure for the vine to grow on.

When the fruit matures, it looks like a squash but is not edible. In the Americas people have edible gardens, medicinal gardens, and technology gardens. The *guaje* is from the technology garden. It fills an important role as a water carrier. When the Tarahumara, Indians from northern Mexico, travel and run their long distances, they carry a *guaje* strapped to their body. They carry only corn powder, *pinole*. On the road, when they come to a river, they take a bit of *pinole* and put it in their *guaje*, add water, and drink it as their nutritional source.

Armando harvested his guaje, and put it aside to naturally dry for about two years. Then when he shakes it, the seeds are audible as they are tossed to and fro. He cut off the top near the stem which would provide the drinking point. He poured in water with some rocks to loosen the seeds and fibers. After shaking it about 5 times, he poured the water and rocks out, and the seeds and fibers poured out with it. Then he let it dry some more. Now, it is functional as a container for his water when he goes on his nature hikes at Whittier Narrows Natural Area.

OUR WEBSITE ACCESS:

[www.wnnca.org](http://www.wnnca.org)

Our email: [wnnca@att.net](mailto:wnnca@att.net)

## This month:

**April 1.** 8:00 AM. Bird walk. Docent led.

**ALSO: 11:00 AM.** First annual "Nature Sketchbook" Art exhibit.

**April 4:** 9:00 AM. School tour. 66 Kindergarteners, 9 adults.

**April 8:** 8:00 AM. Nature walk. Docent led.

**ALSO: 10:00 AM. Continuing Ed.** Lou's Birds of Costa Rica photo presentation.

**April 11.** School tour. 9:30 AM. 40 third graders.

**April 12.** School tour. 9:30 AM. 40 third graders.

**April 13.** School tour. 9:30 AM. 40 third graders.

**April 15.** 8:00 AM. Bird walk. Docent led.

**ALSO: 10:00 AM. Executive Board meeting.**

**April 22.** 8:00 Nature walk. Docent led.

**April 25.** 9:45 AM. School tour. 62 fourth graders, 4 adults.

**April 26.** 4:00 PM. After School program.

**April 29:** TBA field trip

## Water Squad Investigators Program:

April 5. 12:00 noon

April 6. 12:00 noon

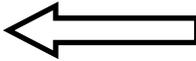
April 7. 12:00 noon

April 14. 12:00 noon

# EXCITING SIGHTINGS



Photo courtesy of Jeff Bray



Last Saturday, after hearing about the appearance of a rare least flycatcher, the group decided to move the Saturday birdwatching to the Whittier Narrows dam on the Rio Hondo end. Jessica was kind enough to drive a few of us to the part of the Whittier barrows dam next to the Rio Hondo bike trail. Others drove. There, in spite of dedicated efforts, Jeff was the only one able to capture this little migrant on film. Jeff had traveled from Irvine, but was rewarded with a great shot.

This little guy is common in the East, but rare migrant through the West. Our avid photographers are still trying to photograph this small but agile flyer, but so far, only able to hear its song.



A handsome,  well developed eucalyptus



How did that branch get there?



A wise one wondering what we are up to.

Dam portals



## Nesting eagles in the San Gabriel dam.



Nesting Eagles have doubled last years' success. Using the same nest, this pioneer nesters in L.A. County, are raising two eaglets this year, instead of one last year.

As we were leaving, Dad showed up with a fish for the family.



# UPCOMING EVENTS



Nature Sketchbook  
First annual Youth Exhibit  
WNNCA  
April 1  
11: am to 3:00 pm

Family event  
Include art making activities and nature crafts

## **DAY AT THE ROCKS**

**April 22, 2017**

**10:00 am to 3:00 pm**

**Vasquez Rocks Nature Center**

RANGER BIRD DEMONSTRATION  
INTERPRETIVE CENTER DISPLAYS, GIFT SHOP

Children activities:

Rock Painting, archeology digs, crayon art

Lunch and refreshments for purchase



## **Advanced Notice National Owl Day**

Celebrate at  
Whittier Narrows Nature Center  
August 5, 2017  
From 10:00 am to 2:00pm  
Come join us to learn about these  
nocturnal birds.

Admission and parking are **FREE**  
**Save the date**

## **GRAND OPENING STONEVIEW NATURE CENTER**

5924 Stone View Dr.  
Culver City, CA 90232  
April 8, 2017

**Join the fun. Join the Whittier Narrows Nature Center Associates.  
Membership includes out monthly newsletter and a 10% discount in our gift shop.**

The Whittier Narrows Nature Center Associates is a volunteer 501(c)3 nonprofit organization actively looking for new members. WNNCA is a chapter of the Nature Center Associates, a nonprofit support organization of the natural area park system of Los Angeles County.

We were founded to help enrich educational and scientific knowledge in the community. Our primary mission is to help foster an appreciation of the natural world in children and adults and to help preserve the Whittier Narrows Natural Area and the county's other natural areas for future generations.

Our activities include leading school group tours, answering visitors' questions, arranging and leading classes, planting and maintaining plants around the nature center, helping in the nature center museum and in the gift shop, performing light office work and answering phones, and more.

**Membership application**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual membership levels** (circle one)

- \$30 - Individual      \$15 - Senior (Over 62)
- \$45 - Family        \$15 - Student
- \$75 - Friend Associate
- \$100 - Patron Associate
- \$250 - Supporting Associate
- \$1,000 - Golden Oak Associate

**Send with check, payable to the address below.**

The Whittier Narrows Natural Area and Nature Center are located within the unincorporated area of Los Angeles County in the Supervisory District of Hilda Solis. The natural area and nature center are operated by the County of Los Angeles, Department of Parks and Recreation, in partnership with the Whittier Narrows Nature Center Associates.



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