



# Least Bell's Vireo's Voice

Whittier Narrows Nature Center Associates Newsletter

December 2021



## WNNCA ANNUAL POTLUCK IS BACK!!!



**December 18, 2021  
After Regular Meeting  
(More or less)**



**Please email Charlie with your intended  
contribution for a better menu**

### **Coming Attractions**

Saturday Nature Walks

8:00 am

Open to all



Wreath Making

December 4-5

(see flier on p. 2



Holiday Annual Luncheon

Potluck

December 18

After Regular Meeting



NCA Meeting  
January 11, 2022

Web site access:

**WNNCA.org**

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

**JANUARY  
BIRD  
OF THE MONTH**

**CALIFORNIA TRASHER  
(Toxostoma revivivum)**



WHITTIER NARROWS NATURE CENTER

# HOLIDAY WREATH MAKING EVENT

**\$25.00 Donation**

*Make a Wreath  
on site with us*

Or

*Take  
a Kit  
Home*

DECEMBER 4TH & 5TH, 2021  
10:00AM-2:00 PM  
1000 DURFEE AVE  
SOUTH EL MONTE, CA 91733  
QUESTIONS? (909)228-3900





# Grace's

## Wisdom Corner

(Featuring a special plant every month)

### Coyote Bush

(*Baccharis pilularis*)

Coyote bush is an evergreen bush, also known as coyote brush or chaparral broom. It grows in California, Oregon and Baja California. There are two subspecies according to locale, which can also influence the size it can obtain, from two to fifteen feet tall and just as wide. The leaves are small and sticky, egg shaped and waxy to conserve moisture, and the roots are designed to facilitate water absorption.

It blooms in early winter according to some sources, or all year according to others.

The flowers are whitish and not showy, but one interesting detail is that there are separate male and female plants, and the flowers are somewhat different. When the female flowers are pollinated, they grow fine hairs that facilitate air dispersion.

Coyote bush plants are frequently used in habitat restoration for its stable nature and fairly quick growth to control erosion, and it is also said to be fire resistant.

It attracts a wide variety of insects and is much used to make galls especially at the end of branches. Native uses include heated leaves to reduce pain and swelling, teas for stomach issues, and very importantly to make arrow shafts.

It would be interesting to know why it has been named Coyote Bush. Please enlighten us if you discover how the name came about.



**Male flowers**



**Female flowers**



# Community Spirit at Work

*The Nature Center is such a special place because it's generously supported by our community. Chris and Amanda Phillips, owners of the brand new Grocery Outlet in Arcadia are good examples of that spirit.*

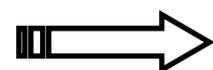
*They work hard to keep their store welcoming, clean and stocked with quality products at reasonable prices. Chris and Amanda are so busy at the store that they haven't had time to bring their three school-aged children to visit the Nature Center but hope to soon.*

*Nonetheless, their positive impact is felt daily at WNNC, at every animal meal time. Amanda insists on keeping the produce bins filled with only the freshest fruits and vegetables for her customers. So they generously donate anything less than perfect to our Nature Center, a couple of area churches, Our Savior Center food bank and sometimes directly to families in need. Chris feels fortunate "we have that connection to the people in the community."*

*So, if you've seen our tortoises dining on their gourmet salads and wished you had a fork, you've witnessed Chris and Amanda's community spirit first hand. They've been donating produce to the Nature Center for over six months. Their Grand Opening was February 18th of this year and Chris is grateful for their success. "The neighborhood has really embraced us. A lot of our employees can walk to work, they're all local."*



Continued next page





In this photo, the family with a grateful WNNC Superintendent

***Chris proudly says their three children, Andrew, Caitlin and Mia are “part of the store as well,” lending a hand in produce, price tagging or checkout. They’re learning community spirit first hand. Their family’s donations to the Nature Center mean so much to us, freeing up funds for things like habitat restoration and programs. If you’re looking for a great place to shop, their store will wow you. We hope you’ll stop by and say thank you on behalf of our community.***

Photos and article by Lydia



**Gift Shop Open**  
**Saturdays and Sundays**  
**Still 40% off**  
**Lots of Christmas items**  
**Honey available (Discount does not apply)**

# ***December Bird of the Month***

## ***Spotted Towhee*** ***(Pipilo maculatus)***



The Spotted Towhee is small but colorful bird. It is in the sparrow family, about 6 to 8 inches long and as nimble as a sparrow

Lots of black with rufous sides, and white spots varying in patterns according to geographical location. A pleasure to detect.

The Spotted towhee and the Eastern towhee were considered one species, called Rufous-sided towhees, perhaps for obvious reasons, but now they are considered separate species.

Spotted towhees like to hop over the ground and low branches searching for insects and fruits. They have a distinctive ground scratching pattern, fun to watch. Males can be very vocal in breeding seasons, singing up to 90% of their time, then much less. The female builds a small nest on the ground or near it, lays a clutch of two to six eggs and incubates them for 12 to 13 days. Nesting period lasts from 10 to 12 days. They make short slow flights although they are capable of flying long distances.



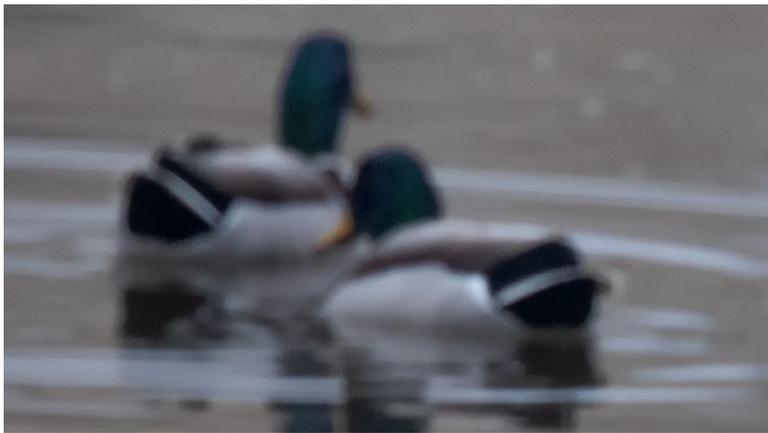
***Photos***  
***by***  
***Lou***



## Field trip to Peck Road Water Conservation Park

Whenever a fifth Saturday occurs in any month, WNNCA takes the opportunity to do a field trip to a different natural area. This time the visit was to the Peck Road Water Conservation Park.

This park is located at 5401 Peck Road in Arcadia and it always offers many sightings, including birds associated with its waters.



Northern shovelers in close proximity to mallards. We at WNNC miss not seen water birds in the river, which is so often dry.

*Photos by Tom*

Undoubtedly the highlight of the day, Jesse captured this bald eagle in flight. He declares this to be a lucky shot, but he is an excellent photographer, perhaps with perhaps a little luck. Nevertheless, an exciting moment for all present.

*Photo by Jesse*

