



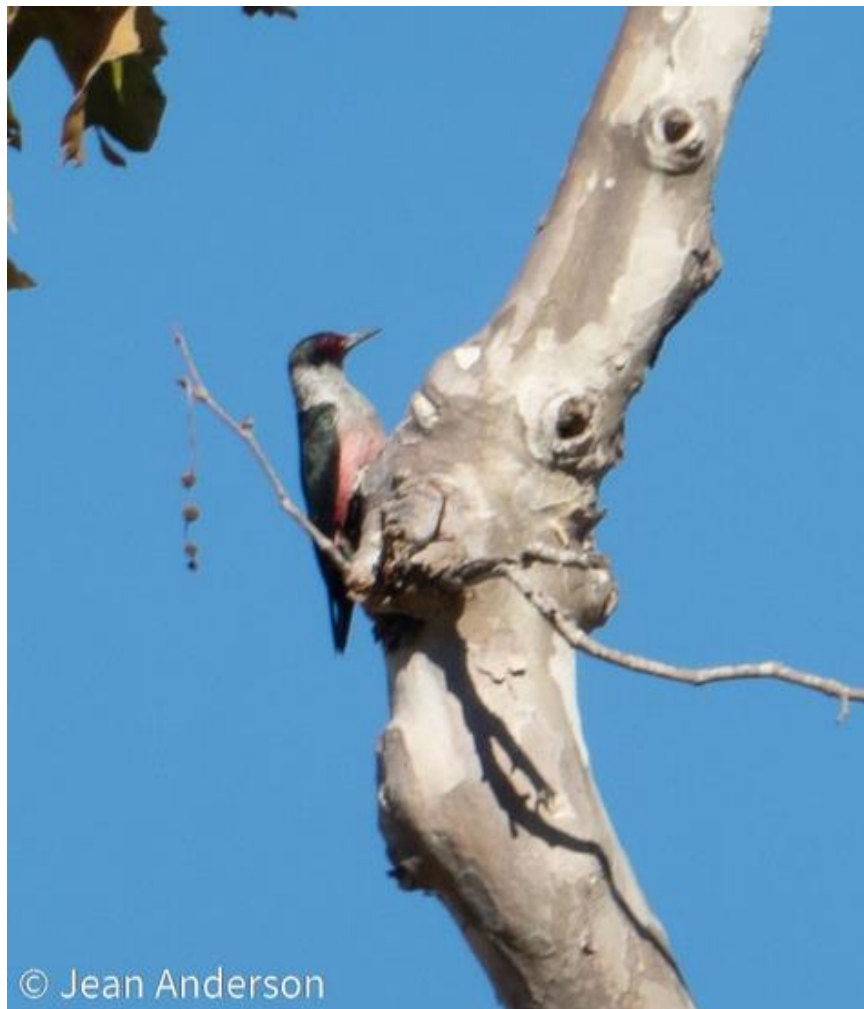
FRIENDS OF
LOS PEÑASQUITOS
CANYON PRESERVE

Winter 2022

Lewis's Woodpecker in the Preserve

Guided Hike Report by Jeanie Anderson

Our Preserve is currently graced by a beautiful feathered visitor from the Pacific Northwest...the Lewis's Woodpecker. Named for Meriwether Lewis of Lewis and Clark, the Lewis's Woodpecker was reported on Nov. 24th on eBird. When I was preparing my bird hike for Sat., Nov. 27th, I found the report and planned our outing around finding this rare bird



© Jean Anderson

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Death of a Giant: History of GSOB in PQ Preserve

By Les Braund and Mike Kelly

Back in 2018, Stacy McCline of the Del Dios Habitat Protection League, a group we have worked closely with – who was familiar with Gold Spotted Oak Borers (GSOB) – was hiking in the canyon and reported to us that we might have the beetles and should survey for them. A short time later, the City Parks Dept. confirmed this finding. After learning that GSOB was killing tens of thousands of mature Coast live oaks in the Julian area, concern for our oak trees increased.



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Christmas in Los Peñasquitos Canyon

Dr. Elberta Fleming

In celebration of the holiday season, the preserve’s Christmas “holly” is resplendent with clusters of brilliant red berries. This is the Toyon, or California Christmas Berry (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), a chaparral bush that dots the hills of Southern California.

[This article, minus the Latin scientific names, was first printed in the September 1987 issue of our newsletter. The drawings are by Dr. Fleming. The later Dr. Elberta Fleming was a co-founder of the Friends back in 1984 and the soul of our organization until her untimely death.]



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Golden Crowned Sparrow Has Close Call

By: Mike Kelly

Les Braund shared these photos of a cutie, the Golden crowned sparrow with me and I just had to share them with you all.

A few days ago he was near his patio which has a bird feeder on it. He heard a thud as a Cooper's hawk flew by. They often hunt other birds around bird feeders as well as in our Peñasquitos Preserve. The thud was this sparrow – that just missed being caught and eaten by the hawk – zigging while the hawk was zagging and the sparrow collided with Les' patio glass. I've had this happen at my house too.

The bird was obviously stunned or it wouldn't have let Les pick it up! He cuddled it for a few moments, took these pictures, then released it when it began to stir and seem alert. It took off very ably! This is the first time Les has had this species of sparrow at his feeder.



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Identifying Common Grasses During a Drought

By Les Braund

Everyone recognizes grasses, but few of us can identify even the most common of grasses. Grasses are important in everyday life. Of all the plants on earth grasses are the most useful to humankind. Grasses include corn, barley, wheat, and rye.

Grasses are well represented in the canyon There are native and non-native species. Among the more common native species are those from the *Stipa*, *Leymus*, and *Festuca* genera. Among non-natives are some highly invasive species like *Arundo donax* (Giant reed), *Cortaderia ssp.* (Pampas grass), *Cyondon* (Burmuda grass), and Bromes. These invasive grasses now dominate the grasslands in the canyon.

In spite of the drought there are some grasses that can be easily identified, both native and not-native at this time of the year.



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Kisok Restoration Project

Marilyn Teague, Project Coordinator

We are pleased to announce that the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve kiosk restoration project is moving forward and we're asking for your help with kiosk repairs and funding for materials. The pandemic has brought additional visitors to our San Diego open space preserves (and to most natural areas nationally), some of them uninformed or indifferent to the impacts they are creating. The Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizen Advisory Committee recognize the importance of trailhead kiosks as a key component in educating visitors and communicating safety and conservation messages. It's more important than ever that Preserve visitors be educated and trailhead kiosks are restored to communicate critical trail etiquette expectations.



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Spittle Bugs

By Will Bowen, PhD

If you have been walking in the canyon lately you might have noticed what looks like gobs of spit on some of the plants along the trail. It's not really spit, but rather a foamy bug hideout created by the nymph or larva of a local leaf hopped insect that goes by the Latin name of *Clastoptera bruennei*.



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