



Victoria Avenue Forever



November, 2016

Volume 24—No. 4

The Birds of Victoria Avenue—by Jenny Rechel

Victoria Avenue and its many small gardens (Dr. Lewis, Hal Snyder, Lorraine Small and Dammers’) are excellent areas to do some birdwatching in Riverside. Victoria Avenue is a habitat for many birds because it has so many different species of trees. The greater the number of different trees and shrubs, the more species of birds will be found. For example, *Eucalyptus* trees, with their high canopies, harbor spiders and insects in the canopy leaves and in the peeling bark on their trunks. These spiders and insects subsequently attract insect eating birds. The goal of this article is to introduce some birds commonly seen on Victoria Avenue and then provide additional resources for those who want to expand their knowledge.

While summer may seem to be the best season to see birds on Victoria Avenue, winter is actually better because the Riverside area has a mild winter climate that supports many insect species for the birds to feed on. Birds that eat primarily insects are called insectivores. However, Victoria Avenue also has many birds, like sparrows, that feed on the ground and eat seeds. A common winter sparrow is the White-crowned sparrow (Fig. 1). In their breeding habitat, high in the Rocky Mountains and Sierra Nevada, these sparrows are very secretive. But, they may seem tame when seen in your backyards or in the Victoria Avenue gardens, feeding on the ground. They are also fond of dried meal worms.



Figure 1—White crowned sparrow. Photo from www.birds.cornell.edu.

Another common winter bird on Victoria Avenue is the —[cont. pg 3](#)

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Victoria Avenue Tour for the Poly High School Class of 1976 Reunion—by Darleen DeMason

One of the silent auction items that the Victoria Avenue Forever Board contributed to the Regatta Sailing program fundraising event last June was a private tour of Victoria Avenue for a group. This tour was purchased by Linda Lawyer who helped organize the Poly High School Class of 1976’s 40th reunion in October. She requested that we give this tour on Saturday morning, October 15th on the weekend of the reunion.

Board members, Darleen DeMason, Doug Whitley, Jenny Rechel, Lori Yates and Marilyn Harris conducted the tour. This tour started at Poly High School and ended at Jane Street in the Dr. Lewis Garden with 9 total stops to look at various trees and historic sights along the way. Eight members of the Poly High School Class of 1976 participated. Everyone met in the Poly Parking lot at 9AM and Linda brought coffee for all. We started with a history of VAF and our mission and then of Victoria Avenue and Mathew Gage.—[cont. on page 2](#)

President's Corner

The year is off to a roaring start. Your Board elected new officers for the year. I will continue for one more year as President, Lanny Coon will be VP/CFO and Susan will add the Secretary duties to her Treasurer duties. We still have three open Board positions available. Please see back page for our "wish list" skills for new Board members.

On October 22, we had a successful rose planting event. With the 34 volunteers who showed up we planted 350 Ragged Robin Roses in the medians between Harrison and Van Buren. We thank Public Works who purchased the roses and City employees, Robert Filiar and Maria Kostecki, who arrived at 7AM to place the roses and worked along with us the whole morning. Our volunteer calendar for the remainder of the 2016-17 year can be found on the back page. Please pass the info along to your friends and neighbors.

VAF is collaborating with three community groups in the Casa Blanca neighborhood (Casa Blanca Home of

Neighborhoodly Services, Villegas Park Advisory Council and the Casa Blanca Community Action Group) to apply for state funding for planting trees. With funding, we hope to add irrigation to the blocks between Washington and St. Lawrence on Victoria Avenue so that 88 missing Eucalyptus trees can be replaced; add trees to the parkway adjacent to the Villegas Park Community Center; and plant fruit trees at the Casa Blanca House. This funding will really make a difference on Victoria Avenue. Keep your fingers crossed for us!

We had a watering catastrophe in the Dr. Lewis Garden at Jane St. in October. Someone turned the backflow off on the Avenue and the garden was deprived of water for at least 2 weeks of hot weather before it was discovered. We will have to do some removal and replanting there.

Finally, as I always do each fall, I have enclosed a donation form. If you want to make an end-of-year donation to VAF, please pick a contribution or project to support us.

—cont. from page 1— Tour

The first stop of the tour was Laramie St. with a discussion of palms and the 4 palm species present. We then walked on to see Italian Cypresses, Canary Island Pines and naturally "skirted" California fan palms at Arlington Ave., talked about the history of the 'Ragged Robin' roses, the Rosanna Scott Bicycle Trail, and Silk Oaks at Anna, the history of citrus in Riverside and on the Avenue, Eucalyptus trees and our "Save the Eucalypts" project at Horace St. At that corner we met Board member Jenny Rechel who talked about the common birds that can be seen on the Avenue. Much of her talk is covered in an article in this newsletter (see page 1).



We continued walking on the Avenue and stopped at 6475 Victoria Avenue, the historic home at Hartree Grove. We stopped at the corner of Maude street to compare the Avenue with wires back towards the east with that towards the west where the last of the undergrounding took place due to a collaboration

between the group who called themselves Victoria Avenue Historic Restoration Project and the City. We stopped to see the many navel orange trees on the parkways planted by the City during the Renaissance in 2008-9 when hundreds of these trees were added to the Avenue. We stopped to look at the first information kiosk constructed by VAF with 10 new panels describing the history of the navel orange industry, Victoria Avenue and its gardens. We finally ended in the —cont. pg 5



Discussion and observations of the 4 palm species on parkways and medians near Poly High School



Jenny discusses birds seen on the Avenue.

—cont. from page 1-Birds

Yellow-rumped warbler (Fig. 2). Both males and females have a very distinct yellow rump patch. They are very common in parking lot trees in shopping centers and around back yards. They eat insects and spiders. They usually do not sing during the winter, but they have a very 'hard chip' sound.



Figure 2. Yellow-rumped warbler.

Photo from www.birds.cornell.edu.

The Anna's hummingbird can be heard and seen year-round in Victoria Avenue gardens along with the Black-chinned hummingbird and occasionally the Allen's hummingbird. The Black-chinned hummingbird is a migratory bird but is common on Victoria Avenue during the spring and summer months.

Other common birds on Victoria Avenue are the Western Bluebird, the American Robin, the Black Phoebe (Fig. 3), and the Lesser Goldfinch (Fig. 3)(sometimes mistakenly identified as a canary). This small, bright yellow goldfinch has a very high pitched call and song and feeds on small seeds, especially black thistle or nyjer seeds. The Black Phoebe is a black and white flycatcher that catches insects in flight. This flycatcher is a resident of Riverside and of Victoria Avenue, but is a migrant in other parts of the southwest.



Figure 3. Lesser Goldfinch (left) and Black Phoebe (right). Photos from www.birds.cornell.edu.

A common, large bird on Victoria Avenue is the Western (or California) Scrub Jay (Fig. 4) that is mistakenly

called a blue jay. The Scrub Jay has a bright blue back and an ivory colored breast and is an aggressive, noisy bird that steals the food of other birds. In the spring, it eats the eggs of other birds. The Scrub Jay is related to the Stellar's Jay (a large dark blue bird with a crown) that is very common in our local mountains, especially near camp-grounds, where it can be seen and heard trying to scavenge food from campers.



Figure 4. Western Scrub Jay. Photo from www.birds.cornell.edu.

The California towhee is a large brown sparrow-like bird that hops around on the ground searching for seeds. This plain bird is common in backyards and can be seen and heard in the Victoria Avenue gardens. This towhee is known to steal cat and dog food from residents' patios.



Figure 5. California towhee. Photo from www.birds.cornell.edu.

The Red-shouldered hawk also has a territory that includes Victoria Avenue. This medium sized hawk has a dark reddish breast and survives well in urban areas where it can move easily through the trees, although it is often seen and heard soaring overhead. These birds mate for life and keep the same territory for 15-20 years. If one of the pair dies, then a new male or female takes its place in the already established territory. Red-shouldered hawks feed on small rabbits, other small rodents, and small snakes. They nest in a variety of urban habitats including high in palm trees in parking lots where they can be seen and heard —cont on page 4

from page 3—Birds

calling to their mates and bringing food to their young.



Red-shouldered Hawk
Buteo lineatus

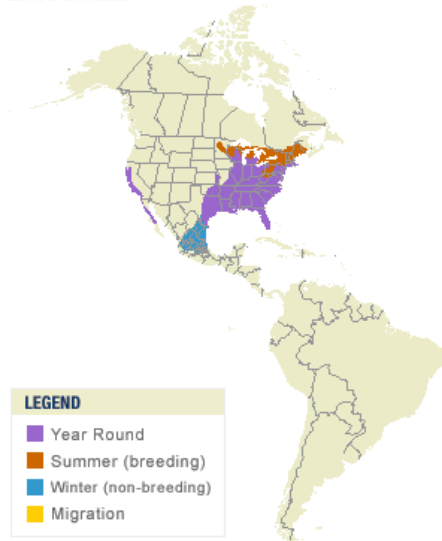


Figure 6. Red shouldered hawk (above) and its range (right). Photos from www.birds.cornell.edu.

Sometimes, even a roosting Great Horned Owl can be heard hooting at night and just before sunrise. These large owls prefer older trees with mostly thick canopy and large branches. They feed on small mammals.

Only a few visits to the Victoria Avenue gardens would be necessary to see these birds. These gardens attract birds due to the presence of diverse plant species, especially native plant species, like Palo Verde, Red Yucca and sages (Cleveland, Germander, Mexican and Autumn). With continued preservation and care of the trees, shrubs, and herbaceous perennials, these gardens and the Avenue will remain beneficial to and attract birds.



Figure 7. Great Horned Owl. Photo from www.birds.cornell.edu.

There are several books on the birds of Riverside and the Inland Empire. A nice guide is the *Backyard Birds of the Inland Empire* by Sheila Kee. Internet resources include the National Geographic Society (www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/birds). This site has bird guides, smartphone apps, and lots of information on bird habitat. The UCR Botanic Gardens promotes its Avifauna Project on their website for people to post bird lists and pictures (<https://ucrbirds.wordpress.com>). The Cornell Lab of Ornithology has a smartphone identification app called 'Merlin' that can be downloaded at: www.birds.cornell.edu or www.allaboutbirds.org. Range maps and recordings of bird songs can be found online at these sites.

A local nature store, Wild Birds Unlimited (www.wbu.com) on Magnolia Avenue, near the Galleria at Tyler is an excellent store to purchase bird seed, bird books, bird feeders, hummingbird nectar, and many other bird related items.

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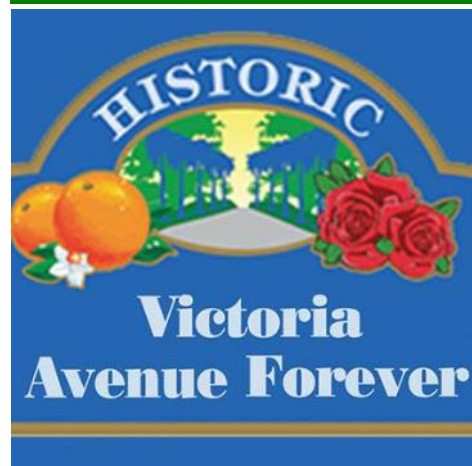
Robert Filiar

Victoria AveNews is published quarterly each year. The VAF Board meets at 6:30 PM on the 2nd Wednesday of each month (except August) website:

www.victoriaavenueforever.org

Follow us on Facebook

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(951) 286-1036



Happy Birding!!!

Contributions

August - October 2016

Thank you to all who contributed to *Victoria Avenue Forever*. Your gifts will be used to help protect and care for Riverside's living legacy – Victoria Avenue. We want to make sure to acknowledge every one!

General Contributions and for trees/upkeep

A special thanks to Councilman Chris MacArthur for large contributions from his Regatta ticket sales and from his Constituents BBQ!!!!

Save the Eucalypts

Rosalie Silverglate

Memorial Contributions

Recently there has been an outpouring of donations in memory of **Clinton Marr**: Alfred & Betty Jo Bonnett, Rusty & Janet Clarke, Ms L. Cobble, Tad & Marilyn Dunagan, Margaret Fletcher, Ms G.H. Ihli, Betty Kelly, Pollyanna Miller, David & Barbara Moore, Elaine Muir, Basil & Barbara Pafe, Walter & Elizabeth Parks, Rosemarie Richardson, Mary Thomas, and Donna Whitson.

Richard & Rosie Francisco	In Memory of Berenice Wilson
Gerry Marr	In Memory of Patrick Wood
Basil & Barbara Pafe	In Memory of Berenice Wilson
Rosemarie Richardson	In Memory of Rodolfo Riubal
Mary Thomas	In Memory of Berenice Wilson
Mary Thomas	In Memory of Barbara Blunden

Commemorative Tree Donations

The Birthday Club	In Memory of Jon & Maggie Schlarb
The Bridge Club	In Memory of Jim Corbitt
Jerry & Kathy Hicks	In Memory of Clinton Marr
Los Amigos HOA	In Memory of Clinton Marr
The Ritz Girls	In Memory of MaryAnn Ottman

**If you own a business, or know a business, that would like to be a sponsor of Victoria Avenue Forever,
Please let us know!!!!**



Clinton Marr
*September 28, 1925
to September 5, 2016*

He was a noted Riverside Architect and is survived by his wife of 71 years, Gerry McMahan-Marr, two children, 6 grand children and 15 great-grand children. The

Marrs have been long-time members of *VAF* and have donated regularly in the form of dues, memorial contributions and for commemorative trees. They were also strong supporters of and major donors to *Victoria Avenue Historic Restoration Project* that was dedicated to undergrounding wires on Victoria Avenue. During the time that this non-profit was active, Gerry and Dan Hays regularly attended *VAF* Board meetings.

In addition, Clinton Marr was a member of Kiwanis, the Victoria Club, the Wine and Food Society, the Men's Breakfast Forum, the UCR Citizens Committee and the First Methodist Church.

We thank everyone who donated to us in his memory.

from pg 2—Tour

Dr. Lewis Garden at Jane Street. Here Board member, Lori Yates described the history of this water wise garden that *VAF* created and the trees, shrubs and groundcover perennials that provide a diversity of color, texture and fragrances that characterize it. There were many birds and butterflies present as the fog dissipated and the sun came out. It was a lovely day for a walk on the Avenue.

If you have a group that would like a personal tour of Victoria Avenue, please give us a call or send us an e-mail. This tour was so much fun that we would be willing to extend the opportunity to other groups, for a donation to our mission.





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Dedicated to the preservation of Victoria Avenue, Riverside, California with tax-deductible financial contributions from: Membership, Memorial Donations and Tree Commemorations.

Non-Profit Org.
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

<p align="center"><i>VAF 2017 Volunteer Calendar</i></p>	<p>If you are interested in an <u>end of year tax donation</u>, please find a Donation Form enclosed!</p>
<p>Rose Planting in Lorraine Small Rose Garden January 21, 2017 at 9AM Meet at Myrtle and Victoria</p>	<p>We are searching for new VAF Board Members, especially those with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • computer skills, • landscape/gardening/irrigation experience, or, • Spanish fluency.
<p>Tree Planting February 25, 2017 at 9AM Meet at Adams and Victoria</p>	<p>If you are interested, please contact us by e-mail, phone or in writing. Thank you!</p>
<p>California Arbor Week Tree Planting March 11, 2017 at 9AM Meet at Jane and Victoria</p>	
<p>Great American Cleanup with KRCB May 13, 2017 at 9AM Meet at Jane and Victoria</p>	