

**BEST OF 2019**

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# HB Tree Society Bird-a-Thon identifies 300 birds

By **Chris MacDonald** - September 28, 2022

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*Birders Lena Hayashi and Betty Kanne. Photo by Chris MacDonald*

More than 300 individual birds were identified in the first three hours of the inaugural Huntington Beach Tree Society Bird-a-Thon at the Urban Forest and Central Park West, Sept. 22-25. Organized by Betty Kanne, who has been counting birds at the Urban Forest since 2000, the new annual event attracted birders from around Southern California, who brought their binoculars, cameras, notepads and enthusiasm.

Lena's Legion Bird Team saw 318 individual birds, represented by 43 unique species, in less than three hours on Thursday. Each participant in the Bird-a-Thon was given a handmade Bluebird Medallion created by Laura Klepfer. Ray Calloway, a local woodworker and Urban Forest year-round volunteer, made hand-carved Western Bluebirds presented to James Kendall, a bird photographer from Long Beach and Sheila Holliday of Huntington Beach, the event promoter, for all the work they did to make it so successful.

"The Urban Forest area is on the Pacific Flyway and gets migrating birds on their way from Upper Canada and Alaska to the Southern Hemisphere," said Jean Nagy, President of the Huntington Beach Tree Society, who also announced that the Western Bluebird will be the Urban Forest's new mascot. Nagy, who helped create the Urban Forest, brought her 26-year-old talking African Gray Parrot, Violet, to the festivity.

"This is such a wonderful event because it encourages more people to closely examine the extraordinary high flying creatures that are in our daily lives."

Some of the birds spotted were Rock Pigeons, 34, Mourning Doves, 20, Anna's Hummingbird, 10, Turkey Vulture, 1, Cooper's Hawks, 2, Red-shouldered Hawk, 1, Downy Woodpecker, 1, Peregrine Falcon, 1, Western Wood-Pewee, 1, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, 3, Black Phoebe, 6, and Warbling Vireo, 1.

"Everyone had a great time scanning the sky, trees, and shrubs calling out birds and directing others to see them," said Lena Hayashi, a Tree Society member. "Our goal is to raise money for the Urban Forest to provide more native habitats, especially with California Sagebrush, *Artemisia californica*, to entice the endangered California Gnatcatcher to reside in the Urban Forest."

"We hope this inaugural Bird-a-Thon will be the first of many, not only for birding experts, but for anyone who appreciates nature and wants to get out and learn a bit about birding," said Sheila Holliday. "We're pleased to present an event that brings the community together to discover one of Huntington Beach's best wellness walks and best-kept secrets."

If you would like to come to the Urban Forest, it is located at 6681 Ellis Avenue In Huntington Beach. Tax Deductible Donations can be made by mailing checks to HB Tree Society, P.O. Box 1269 Sunset Beach, CA 90742. Learn more at: <http://www.hbtrees.org> .