

DEL MESA BIRD & NATURE NEWSLETTER

JULY 2021

BATTLING FOR AIR SPACE: At the Bolsa Chica Conservancy in Huntington Beach its happening more and more that as people start to flock to the outdoors during resurgence of opening they are bringing their drones with them for recreation. With this being nesting season for birds, the staff noticed that when the drones crash-landed nearby the process of recovery by humans often results in adult bird abandonment of their eggs.

CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING: An estimated 400,000 diving birds drown each year when they get entangled in vertically-oriented gill nets that hang down between floats or buoys. In a effort to reduce deaths, a research team led by Yann Rousel at the BirdLife International Marine Programme in Glasgow, UK, has developed and tested a method of turning buoys into marine scarecrows by outfitting them with cartoon-like large eyes to act in a similar way(startle0 to ward off the birds at sea!

OAKS-AT-RISK! Sixteen(16) native species in the US are at the “threat of Extinction “status. These trees provide Mangrove support to thousands of songbirds, mammals, insects, moss, fungi, lichens, using the trees for food sources and shelter.

GOOD READ: The library as a resource...June-July NATIONAL WILDLIFE a great article “BEES” “The Truth About Honey Bees”....Honey bees and native bees are explored and the variation in lives and issues faced are fascinating. Too many to cover here!

GOOD SIGHTINGS: Notice...dark feather around the peregrine falcon’s eyes? Scientists have long speculated they seem to help their ability, in bright sun light, to target fast moving prey like pigeons and doves. Now research suggests that these markings have evolved over time and climate change to show the sunnier the habitat the larger and darker are the ‘sunshade’ feathers

WHAT'S IN A NAME? Not only are statues coming down, but buildings, signs, colleges, programs and parks are checking their heritage as evidenced now by the North American Classification Committee under The Ornithological Society in August 2020 changed the name of a common longspur, the Mc Cowen's, to thick-billed longspur for "racist eponym." The action took shape as the 'Black Lives Matter' issues were evolving. Now some are asking to remove all names that function as celebrating a person of questionable repute. An op ed by Jon Brown in August 2020, a breakdown at w.w.w.dailywire.com/news/ornithology ...had much more for referencing the concerns. Also noted was there are some 148 names of North American species that could be so targeted for name corrections.

OLDEST KNOWN PET CEMETARY: In Egypt in 2011 excavation of an ancient Roman site uncovered and located deceased cats and dogs numbering about 600. Some wearing colors, others with marked pottery pieces, some wearing collars, others with textile pieces. The specimens showed that they lived long with serious illnesses with the assumption then they must have been treated as pets.

SWIFTS A NAME WELL DESERVED: In the bird world they are known as some of the fastest small migrating species. The common swift when not breeding stays in the air most of the time often traveling up to 570 kilometers a day. In one study recorders noted that they traveled 830 kilometers(500 miles per day over an 8 day period).

SPARROW STORY: In 1958 China under Mao, he decided it was to destroy 'THE KILLER OF CHINA'S AGRICULTURE', *the sparrow!* So it is estimated that around 1 billion sparrows were dispatched in very short order all over the country. The outcome? Without the sparrows, the insect pests of rice and other food staples, caused massive crop failures. And insect infections and starvation caused the deaths of an estimated 35 million Chinese! In 1960 Mao declared "sparrows were to be conserved in the nation!"

GIRAFFE FODDER: Did you know that because of their unique structure all of them are hypertensive? Stranger still, they only sleep about 40 minutes a day in 2-3 min. naps!