

Mission Trails Regional Park News

Volume 24, Number 3

-- A Publication of the Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation --

Summer 2013

Solving the Mystery of Female Hummingbirds

By Trail Guide Millie Basden

Photos by Trail Guide Peter R. Thomas

Finding a hummingbird on a nest in Mission Trails is always an exciting event. In most cases, only female hummingbirds build nests, incubate the eggs, and attend the young. With no brightly-colored male to help, identifying the species at a nest can be a challenge. The females of the three species most likely to nest in the Park are all fairly drab with plumage in shades of green, gray, black and white. Even experienced birders have a hard time separating female Anna's, Costa's and black-chinned hummingbirds on

the basis of plumage. There are some distinctions, with Anna's having dirty gray underparts, compared to the whitish underparts of Costa's and the intermediate whitish-gray of black-chinned females. Other features can be hard to discern in fleeting glimpses of a busy bird: the length of wings compared to the length of tails, the shape of tail feathers and their pattern of white, black and green, the width of inner primaries. If the bird vocalizes, with practice the species can be identified by

Hummers, continued on p. 4

Twenty-First Annual Photo Contest Winners

The 21st Annual MTRP Foundation's Amateur Photo Contest winners were announced in the Mission Trails Visitor Center Theater on May 26.

The Leonard Buttermann Best of Show Award was presented to Brian Baxter for his "Burst of Nature" photograph. The People's Choice Award was also presented to Brian Baxter.

Other Winners include - Black and White:

James D. Klein, 1st place; David Cooksy, 2nd place; Patrick Riley, 3rd place; Terri Thompson, Honorable Mention.

Youth Division:

Blake Bever, 1st place; Brooke Bever, 2nd place; Blake Bever, 3rd place; Brooke Bever, Honorable Mention.

Color - People, Flora and Fauna:

David D. Cooksy, 1st place; Roberta Niederjohn, 2nd place; Michell Treske, 3rd place; Valerie Barlett, Honorable Mention.

Color - Scenic View:

Brian Baxter, 1st place; Brian Baxter, 2nd place; Alicia B. Warwick, 3rd place; James D. Klein, Honorable Mention.

A special thank you to Joe Morse, President of the MTRP Foundation Board of Directors, for serving as master of ceremonies, and the SANDIEGAN.COM for sponsoring this year's photo contest reception awards presentation.



Mission Trails Hummingbird Garden, photo by Roland Roberge



*You're Invited for an Evening of
fine art, fine wine, fine cheese and fine chocolates*



Art-in-the-Park Fundraiser

The second annual MTRP Foundation "Art in the Park" fundraiser on October 5, 6:00 - 9:00 pm, will feature a variety of art for sale including: acrylic, ceramic, colored pencil, encaustic, fabric, oil, photographs, sculpture, Sumi-e, and woodcarving. Go to mtrp.org to purchase tickets at \$25 per person that includes entrance to the Visitor Center, fine wine, cheese, and chocolate. There will also be a silent and live auction. If you have a product or service you would like to donate for this fundraising event, email Jay Wilson at jwilson@mtrp.org.

Summer Twilight Walks

Join MTRP Trail Guides this summer for free Saturday evening guided walks in the park and learn about changes that occur after sundown. These walks last for approximately 1.5 hours and meet by the kiosk in the dirt parking lot across from the entrance to Kumeyaay Lake Campground.

June 15th at 7:15 p.m.

July 20th at 7:15 p.m.

August 17th at 7:30 p.m. (Owl Prowl)

September 21st at 6:00 p.m.

Please be sure to bring along a flashlight!

More info at 619-668-3279 or www.mtrp.org

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Kumeyaay Baskets in the Gift Shop

Native American artists are known for integrating natural materials and forms into their artwork. Kumeyaay (Pai Pai) artisans learned to use the fibers from native Palm leaves, pine needles, and occasionally juncus rush leaves to create intricately coiled baskets with striking patterns. Their baskets are beautifully made and also environmentally friendly.

The Kumeyaay do not cut basketry materials, but rather collect them from the ground. Only dry or dropped leaves are used, so no plants or trees are damaged. The willow baskets are

crafted while the willow is still slightly green and are then fully dried. However, because of the nature of the willow itself they are all a bit “untidy” and never do stop shedding tiny bits of dried willow.

The pine needles are much more difficult to work. They are also woven much tighter and are a much better representation of what the best of the basket makers were capable of creating, with every basket being unique. They are by definition smaller and more sophisticated.

Many of the artisans we first dealt with when the Park was new are no longer making baskets either because of the passage of time or the lure of other non-traditional employment for



Photo by Gerald Tietje

the younger generation. Most of our pottery and basketry now comes from Central Baja and the Pai Pai people who have remained artisans instead of seeking other employment. They are still Kumeyaay though, as they have never paid much attention to International Borders as we define them and still identify with the greater Kumeyaay population.

First Place: Scenic View and People's Choice



Sunset in Mission Trails by Brian Baxter

Best of Show



Burst of Nature by Brian Baxter

Hummers, continued from p. 1

voice. But voice and plumage are not the only clues to identity. You can narrow the possibilities by considering other clues and may even be able to solve the mystery of female hummingbird identity.

One clue is habitat. Anna's hummingbird is the generalist. She can be found pretty much everywhere, so the habitat does not help rule out Anna's. Costa's hummingbird tends to favor arid environments, but usually nests near water in a fairly open site. Black-chinned hummingbirds are often found along watercourses or in canyons, and in San Diego, they are particularly likely to be found where there are sycamore trees.

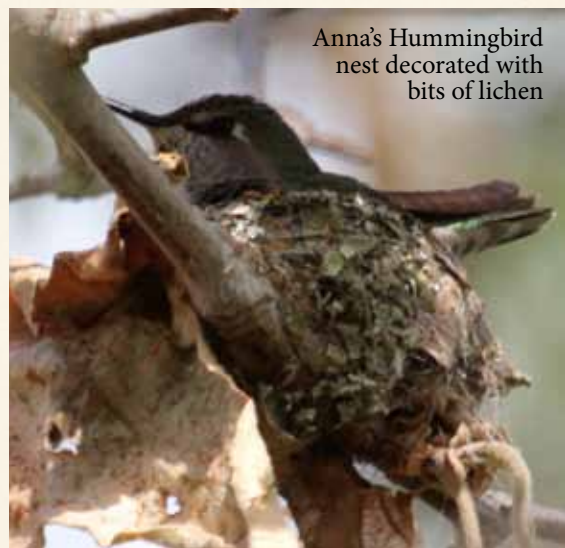
The plant chosen for the nest site is another clue. A favorite nest site for Costa's hummingbird is an old yucca bloom: the dried fruit provides a favored support for the nest. But you can also find a Costa's nest in other plants, like lemonadeberry, coast live oak, or

even on a tall weed. Black-chinned hummingbirds favor sycamore trees for their nests, but other plants are also used. Anna's hummingbird remains the generalist and may even build her nest on a fence or other manmade surface.

Hummers, continued on p. 5



Female Anna's hummingbird carrying nesting material in January



Anna's Hummingbird nest decorated with bits of lichen

Hummers, continued from p. 4

The structure of the nest itself is a clue. Spider webs are used by all three to bind other materials together and affix the nest to its support. An Anna's hummingbird nest is made of various plant materials and is usually decorated on the outside with lichens, or even with bits of paint and plastic. Costa's hummingbirds use downy fibers, tree flowers, bud scales and other plant materials to build their nests. They also tend to decorate their nests with bits of lichens and other materials, but the nest typically has an overall gray color. A nest in Mission Trails that looks like a tiny orange sponge likely belongs to



a black-chinned hummingbird. Black-chinned hummingbirds often build their nests using orange-colored fuzz (above) taken from leaves and petioles

of sycamores and they tend to leave their nests bare. Although a classic nest of a black-chinned hummingbird has an orangish color, the birds won't allow things to be too simple for us humans, and sometimes a black-chinned nest will be grayish-white (below) because the bird has used the fuzz from willows or cottonwood trees instead.



First Place - Color, People, Flora and Fauna



Sashimi by David D. Cooksey

Another clue to identity is how high off the ground the nest is placed. Anna's and black-chinned nests may be found high and low. Costa's are usually low, within six feet of the ground. So if you find a hummingbird nest high up, you can conclude that it is probably not a Costa's nest.

Keep in mind that Anna's hummingbirds nest early, with some on the nest as early as December, and many nesting in February. Black-chinned hummingbirds begin to nest in late April and may still be on the nest in July. Costa's typically nest a little earlier, beginning in mid-April, and ending in mid-June. So if you see a nesting hummingbird earlier than April, it is likely an Anna's, and if it is after June, it is likely a black-chinned. From April through June, it could be any of the three.

During spring in the Park, hummingbirds are busy building and attending their nests. If you find a nest, consider the time of year and the habitat, and look closely at the structure and placement of the nest. With those clues, you may be able to solve the mystery of female hummingbird identity.

Upcoming 2013 Art Exhibits

July 27 – August 23

Solo Artist - Photography
Jim Schwert

August 24 – September 20

Group Show

Wilma Lopez – Encaustic
Jerry Vande Berg – Acrylic
Denise Strahm – Photography
Deb Gargula – Colored Pencil
Terry Kvitky - Acrylic
Jim Otto - Photography

September 21 – October 18

“Art in the Park” Fund Raiser

Reception: October 5, 6:00 – 9:00 pm

See page 2 for more information

Notable Donations

April 1 – June 30, 2013

Sponsor – \$10,000-\$25000

Rick Hatch

Steward – \$5,000 – \$9,999

Republic Services, Inc
City of San Diego Special
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Patron – \$2,500 – \$4,999

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Elizabeth Ojeda
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First Place – Black and White



Old Oak on the Stream by James D. Klein

Mission Trails Regional Park Donor Opportunities

By donating to Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, you are preserving the past and investing in the future.

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation provides opportunities for individuals, businesses, community organizations, and foundations to support a variety of programs and projects within the park. Community support is important to ensure adequate funding to maintain the award winning Mission Trails Regional Park Visitor and Interpretive Center and the multiple amenities the park has to offer.

Special event and project sponsorship are also available. Sponsorships for Explore Mission Trails Day, an annual event held each May, range from \$500 to \$5,000. Exhibit sponsorships begin at \$2,500. Bench and table sponsorships range from \$1,500 to \$4,000 depending upon the item and its location in the park. Contact Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation at 619-668-3280 or mtrp@mtrp.org for additional information.

Names of contributors of \$1,000 or more will be engraved on the donor board displayed at the Visitor and Interpretive Center. Yearly donations of \$100 or more are accumulated from year-to-year for donor recognition purposes.

Become a Business Friend of Mission Trails

Business Donors making contributions of \$100 to \$500 are eligible for a web site link from the Mission Trails web site for a period of six months. Business Donors making contributions of \$500 and above are eligible for a period of one year.

Our Funds ... You may designate your donation for one or more of the following funds.

Friends of Mission Trails - General support for all Park programs.

Trail Maintenance

Tree and Habitat Maintenance

Education Programs

Library Books and Supplies

Lake Murray

Endowment Funds

General Endowment Fund

Library Endowment Fund

Other ways you may donate ...

Memorial or In Honor Of gifts - Honor a friend or family member with a donation.

Matching funds - Identify Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP) Foundation for a matching funds contribution if your employer has a policy of matching charitable gifts.

Gifts of Securities - To allow donors to realize full tax deductions for appreciated stock, MTRP Foundation accepts gifts of stock. Contact us at 619-668-3280 or mtrp@mtrp.org for further details.

Wills - Remember MTRP Foundation in your will.

Charitable Remainder Trusts - With a CRT, highly appreciated assets are placed in an irrevocable trust. Those asset proceeds provide income to the donor and/or the donor's beneficiaries for life. Contact your financial advisor for information.

Mission Trails Regional Park Foundation, Inc.

One Father Junipero Serra Trail, San Diego, CA 92119-1008

Name _____ Business Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Email _____

You may designate your donation for one or more of the following funds. Please indicate the amount.

Friends of Mission Trails - General support for all Mission Trails programs and projects. \$ _____

MTRP Foundation Endowment Fund - Earnings used for programs and projects..... _____

Special Funds

Education Program Fund - Funds used for education program..... _____

Library Fund - Books and supplies for the library..... _____

Library Endowment Fund - Earnings used for library books and supplies..... _____

Trail Maintenance - Trail maintenance and improvement projects..... _____

Tree and Habitat Maintenance - To help maintain the park's habitat..... _____

Lake Murray - Special projects at Lake Murray..... _____

Total Donation - Make check payable to MTRP Foundation and mail to address above.... _____

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**Mission Trails
Regional Park Foundation**

One Father Junipero Serra Trail
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Roland Roberge, Editor

Gerald Tietje, Masthead Photo

A COPY OF THIS AND PAST NEWSLETTERS ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE: mtrp.org/newsletter.asp

First Place - Youth Division



Cave of Trees by Blake Bever