

Tree Care for Birds and Other Wildlife

CHARTER

The arboriculture and wildlife communities in southern California are working together to develop ways to enhance habitat through tree care practices. Meetings were held in July and October 2015 and February 2016 to outline a strategic approach and to start drafting Best Management Practices (BMPs). The BMPs will focus on tree care to protect birds and other wildlife during and beyond nesting season, and enhance habitat for birds and other urban wildlife. The three-year project will also develop training and certification for tree care workers, and public education materials.

Project objectives. Five objectives are guiding the project:

1. Compile knowledge about impacts and benefits of tree care practices on nesting birds and other wildlife
2. Understand issues relating to tree-wildlife conflicts, regulations, public safety risks, and liabilities
3. Explore how to minimize impacts to nesting birds while acknowledging financial and logistic implications to the tree care industry
4. Develop Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect birds and other wildlife and enhance habitats during tree care
5. Set criteria and develop some materials for training and education programs to protect birds and other wildlife and enhance habitats during tree care
6. Establish relationships among agencies, cities, utilities, arborists, birders, and other wildlife advocates

Scope. The project was initially focused on southern California. As most urban habitats extend throughout the state, and the same laws and regulations apply, it was extended to apply to the entire state.

Audiences. There are three primary audiences for the project. The general public and property owners are secondary audiences.

- Tree care industries, including arborists and landscapers
- Public and private managers of urban trees (municipalities, maintenance assessment districts, homeowners associations, property managers)
- Wildlife advocacy groups and wildlife professionals

Project Leadership. The project is led by Gillian Martin, Program Director, Cavity Conservation Initiative, and Andy Trotter, Vice President, West Coast Arborists. Project participants include experts in bird nesting biology and habitats, wildlife regulations, arboriculture, and urban forestry. Work groups have been established, and quarterly workshops are held to review and finalize the project's work. Administrative and technical support is provided by Anne S. Fege, Ph.D., urban forestry consultant. Grant funding has been provided by California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) and Pomona Valley Audubon, Sea and Sage Audubon, West Coast Arborists and the Cavity Conservation Initiative.

Project Sponsors. The logos of the organizations who have reviewed this charter, and officially agreed to be project sponsors, are shown on the next page and will be displayed on the project website, www.treecarebirds.org.

Contact Gillian Martin, gm99oliver@cox.net and Andy Trotter, atrotter@wcainc.com

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