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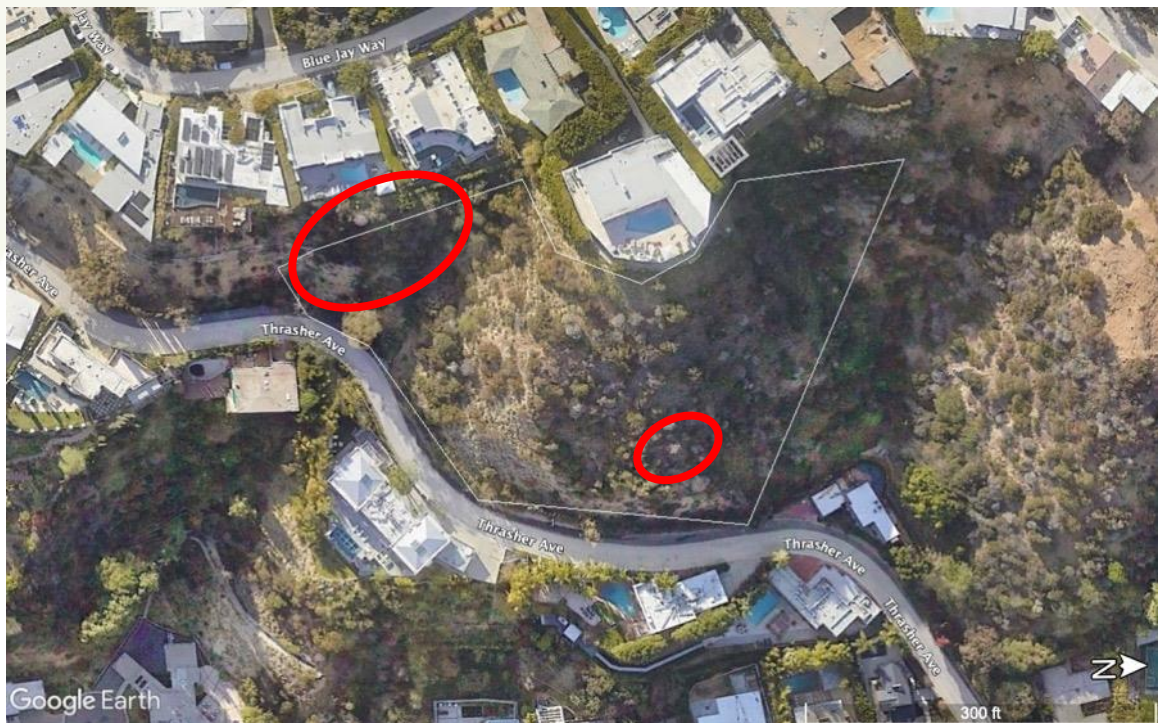
June 30, 2022

**8875 Thrasher Avenue (Los Angeles) Biological Information**

**Prepared by:** Daniel S. Cooper, Ph.D.

**Background**

The following information pertains to a steep, undeveloped lot at 8875 Thrasher Ave. in the “Bird Streets” neighborhood of Los Angeles, east of Beverly Hills. The lot is c. 2 acres in size, and is currently (2022) proposed for a large (16,000 s.f.) single-family-home development across two parcels at its southern end (referred to as “subject property” below; **Figure 1**). I (Cooper) visited examined the edges of this property on 15 June 2022, and took notes and photographs of conditions as legal and safe access allowed.



**Figure 1.** Aerial view of subject property (white outline), with important tree/shrub areas referred to below shown in red outline. Note rotated orientation of map, such that the upper left = southwest, and the lower right = northeast.

## Ecological Setting

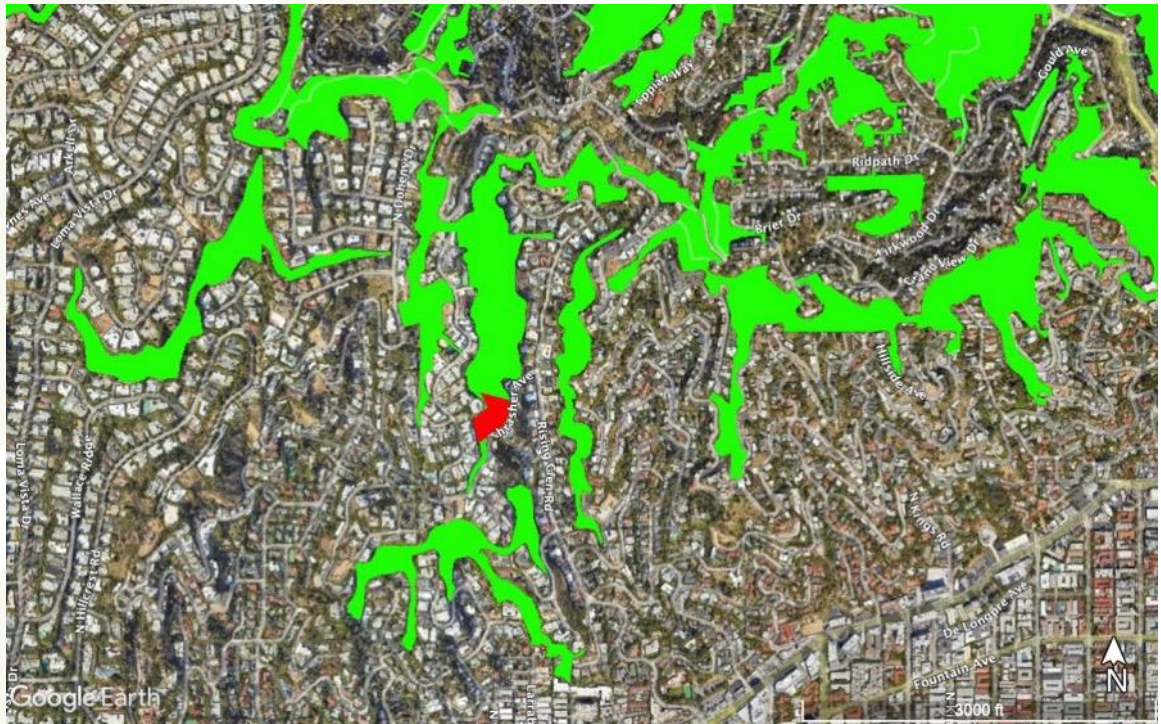
This subject property is located on an east-facing slope in the “Bird Streets” neighborhood of Los Angeles, a hilly area located between Beverly Hills and West Hollywood. It is bounded by Blue Jay Way to the west, Thrasher Ave. to the south, and Rising Glen Rd. to the east. It is situated within a large bowl-like canyon reached by Sunset Plaza Drive. The vicinity of the subject property is characterized by winding streets and single-family homes, with slivers of open/undeveloped land on the steepest slopes (**Figure 2a**). The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy/Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority protects most of this slope as public land via easements, and has identified this slope as “habitat block” #62, one of 95 important habitat blocks in the eastern Santa Monica Mountains (**Figure 2b**)<sup>1</sup>. Most of the open space in the south slope of the Santa Monica Mountains in the area between Coldwater Canyon Dr. and Laurel Canyon Blvd. is privately-owned, and thus vulnerable to continued development and degradation. Habitat block #62 is contiguous with other blocks in the area to the north (i.e., 53, 58, 61 and 66), and thus would allow passage of wildlife south into the “Bird Streets” area from Laurel Canyon. While block #62 is separated from those to the south (63, 64) by residential development, they are (currently) fairly close; further development such as that proposed would expand the distance between these southerly patches, permanently.

A storm drain originating along Blue Jay Way (to the west) apparently passes through the lot (toward Thrasher Ave.), underground.

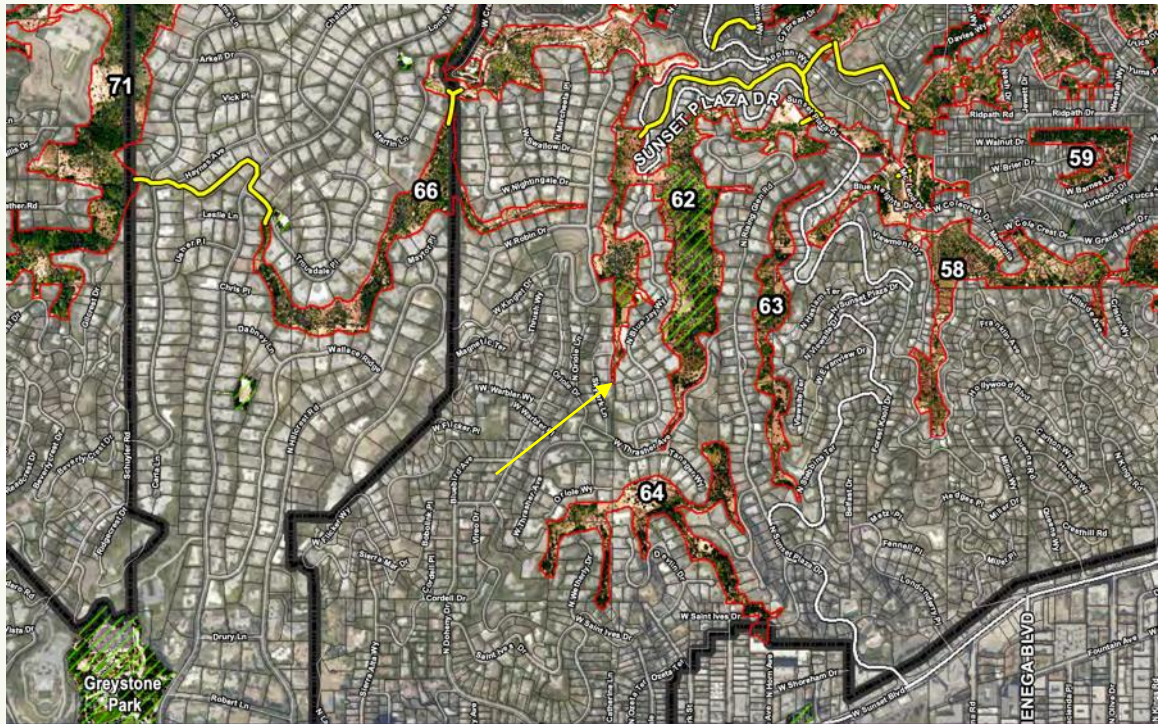
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<sup>1</sup> From “Eastern Santa Monica Mountains Natural Resource Protection Plan. Adopted by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, State of California, Dec. 13, 2021.





**Figure 2a.** Setting of the Thrasher Ave. property (red) relative to other patches of open space (green) some of which are public parcels owned by SMMC/MRCA.



**Figure 2b.** Numbered open space blocks in the vicinity of the subject property (yellow arrow). Green cross-hatching denotes public open space (the majority of the open space block that contains subject property is public open space).

## Vegetation

The vegetation in the area is a mix of oak and oak-walnut woodland on north-facing slopes, and mixed chaparral with patches of coastal sage scrub vegetation on south-facing slopes. The subject property is strongly dominated by native vegetation, and contains elements of chaparral, coastal sage scrub, and walnut woodland.

On 15 June, I observed at least 10 mature southern California black walnut (*Juglans californica*), a plant considered Rare by the California Native Plant Society (Rank 4.2), and a “protected tree” in the city of Los Angeles if the trunk exceeds 4” DBH<sup>2</sup>, at the southwestern corner of the property (upper left area of **Figure 1**) and on the adjacent slope. Due to the steepness of the slope, and time constraints, it was not possible to determine which trees were on or off the subject property; *this would*

<sup>2</sup> Refer to [https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2013/13-1339\\_ORD\\_186873\\_02-04-2021.pdf](https://clkrep.lacity.org/online/docs/2013/13-1339_ORD_186873_02-04-2021.pdf)



*require a comprehensive tree study and report conducted by a qualified arborist, as directed by the Los Angeles Planning Department. **Figure 3a** shows an example of these trees. Given the density of these trees, this area of the property could qualify as a “California Walnut Woodland”, a rare natural community, according to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.*

I also observed two large, multi-trunk walnuts at the far northeastern corner of the lot (**Figure 3b**; lower right area of **Figure 1**).

In addition, I observed at least five very large/old individuals of sugarbush (*Rhus ovata*) that appeared to also fit the definition “protected trees” based its being a native shrub with a sufficiently large size/DBH (**Figure 3c**), though sugarbush is not listed as one of the protected species in the current version of the protected tree ordinance (elsewhere in Los Angeles County, such as the Santa Monica Mountains Coastal Zone, *all* native trees and shrubs of sufficient size are protected).



**Figure 3a.** Large black walnut (protected tree) at the southwestern corner of subject property, with additional walnuts in the background appearing to form a woodland. The exact location (inside vs. outside the subject property) was difficult to determine.



**Figure 3b.** Multi-trunked southern California black walnut at northeastern corner of property (red arrow).

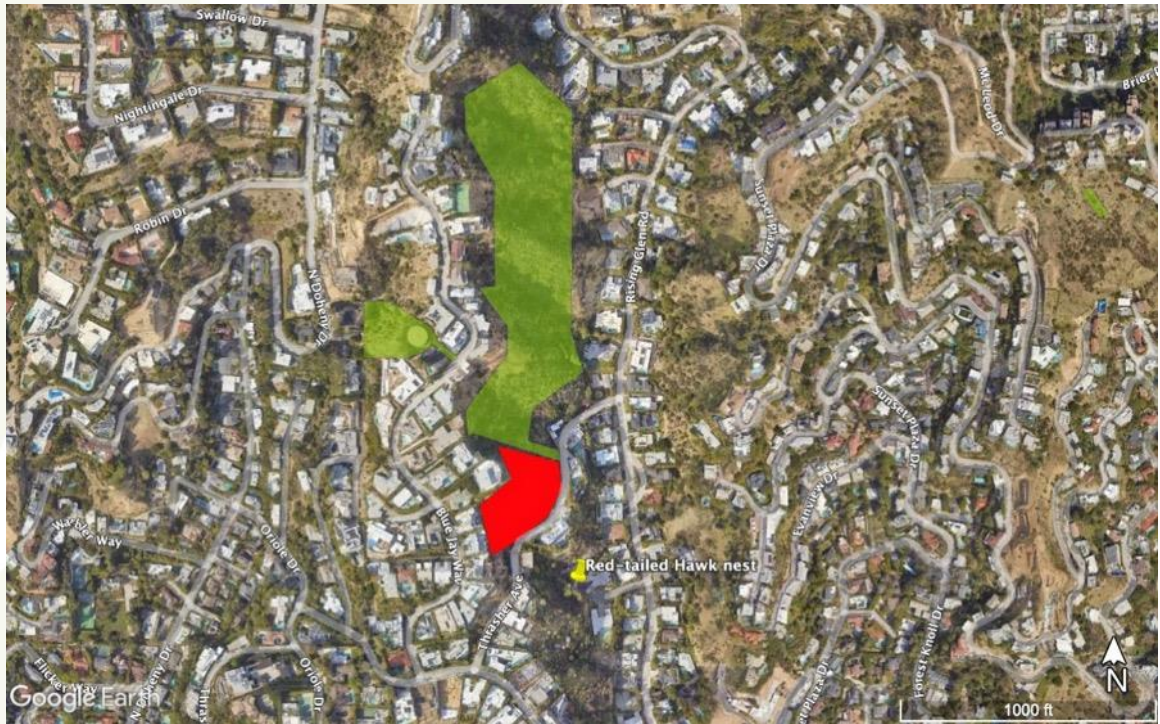




**Figure 3c.** Large sugarbush (*Rhus ovata*) with trunk size large enough to qualify as a “protected tree” by the city of Los Angeles, though the species is not listed in the current list of tree species protected by the city of Los Angeles.

### Wildlife

Notably, an active Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) nest is located c. 300’ southeast of the subject property (at Rising Glen Pl.), and likely forages heavily on the slope that contains the subject property (**Figure 4**). This neighborhood also sees frequent visits by mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), based on photos from local Ring cameras and other observations. As the area develops with additional houses, and open space shrinks to smaller patches, these species will use the habitat less.



**Figure 4.** Subject property (red) is located on the southern part of a slope of open space; most of the open space is comprised of public land owned by SMMC/MRCA. Note the proximity of an active Red-tailed Hawk nest to the subject property (yellow pin).

### Summary

Further development of the subject lot/block 62 would not only reduce its size, but would widen the distance separating it from other open space on ridges and slopes in the area. Habitat patches such as the subject property, while largely surrounded by roads, nonetheless support abundant local wildlife, including large mammals such as mule deer, and characteristic California-endemic scrubland birds such as California Thrasher (*Toxostoma redivivum*) and Wrentit (*Chamaea fasciata*) ([www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)).

Based on the design of the proposed house, development could severely impact existing walnut woodland, which includes very large individual sugarbush, in addition to protected southern California black walnuts.



It could also impact an active Red-tailed Hawk nest, one of a handful of raptor nests in the Beverly Hills – Laurel Canyon area of Los Angeles (Los Angeles Raptor Study, unpubl. data).

I hereby certify that the information herein is correct.



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Resource Conservation District – Santa Monica Mountains

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### EDUCATION

**University of California, Los Angeles**, Ph.D. 2020 (Biology)  
**University of California, Riverside**, M.Sc. 1999 (Biogeography)  
**Harvard University**, A.B. 1995 (Biology)

### EXPERIENCE

**Cooper Ecological Monitoring, Inc.** Los Angeles, CA. 2005 - present  
*President.* An independent ecological consulting firm specializing in land use, wildlife and biodiversity issues, we provide expertise in study design & analysis, ecological assessment, and management recommendations.

- Manage projects in the \$1,000 - \$100,000 range for up to 20 clients per year in the Los Angeles area.
- Past clients include municipalities (Los Angeles, Torrance), non-profit groups (The Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Land), agencies (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Coastal Conservancy), and various private firms and individuals.
- Hire and supervise up to five subcontractors per year.

**National Audubon Society** Los Angeles, CA. 2001 - 2005  
*Director of Bird Conservation, Audubon California.*

- Member of senior management team for Audubon California, worked with national staff and partner organizations to shape bird conservation agenda in California.
- Organized donor cultivation activities, and assisted development staff in grant writing.
- Wrote and published a landmark reference guide (Important Bird Areas of California; findings later incorporated into state legislation).
- Helped draft Audubon California's strategic plan (2003-04).
- Visited and evaluated sites for new Audubon nature centers; wrote staff training manuals for existing centers and programs.

*Biologist, Audubon Center at Debs Park* 1999 - 2001

- Member of core team charged with developing an urban nature education center at a large city park in urban Los Angeles (Debs Park); drafted and implemented habitat management plan.
- Organized neighborhood focus groups for parents and teachers in northeast Los Angeles to assess public perception of nature and conservation organizations.
- Initiated baseline natural history research in surrounding region for development of educational materials and programs for new Audubon Center.

### APPOINTMENTS/BOARDS

Research Associate, Dept. of Ornithology, Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 2020 – present  
IUCN World Protected Areas, 2017 – present  
Associate Editor, Western Birds 2014 – present  
Southern California Academy of Sciences 2013 – 2015  
SEATAC (Los Angeles Co. Dept. of Regional Planning) 2009 – 2013  
Los Angeles Dept. of Recreation and Parks - Griffith Park Postfire Recovery Team, 2007 – 2008  
California Dept. of Water Resources - Salton Sea Restoration Advisory Committee 2003 – 2005  
Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture – Management Board 2002 – 2005  
California Partners-in-Flight - Executive Steering Committee 2003 – 2005  
Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers and Mountains Conservancy - Technical Advisory Board 2002 – 2005  
Friends of the Los Angeles River - Technical Advisory Board 1989 – 2001