

ART

Emily Arthur: Endangered
March 2 - April 9
Weingart Gallery
Occidental College, Los Angeles

Indigenous Perspectives

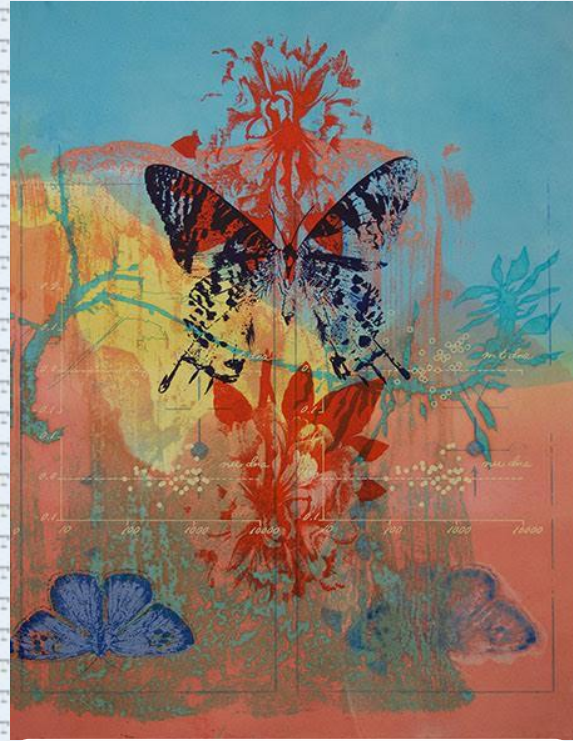
Emily Arthur is a descendent of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

Many American Indian cultures view humans, animals, and their environment as highly interconnected. Arthur often integrates birds, butterflies, and landscapes into the composition and meaning of her work.

In *Endangered*, Arthur combines screen print, paper dyeing, and painting to create one-of-a-kind works on paper that reflect the unique ecosystem, wildlife, and controversy that inspire her work.

"I see nature as an interdependent living force rather than as the backdrop for human events. Land is living matter that holds specific meaning to a place. This is the nature-based perspective through which I conduct my research."

– Emily Arthur, 2012



Emily Arthur
West Coast Botanicals
2015, screen print on paper, 15 x 11.5 inches

Sound

The sound element of this show was created by artist **Jon Almaraz**. As a growing field of art, **sound art** can be presented alone as a unique form of expression, or audio may be paired with visuals to engage more senses and enhance a viewer's experience.

In this piece, entitled, *As Heard By The California Gnatcatcher*, Almaraz combines bird calls with oceanic sounds to auditorily simulate the Coastal Sage Scrub habitat of the California Gnatcatcher.

Transport yourself to the California Coastal Sage Scrub:

Try listening to the sound piece and describing the thoughts and emotions inspiring the work. Does this piece influence how you view the Coastal California Gnatcatcher and its endangered habitat? Can you connect your own feelings to the controversies examined on the SCIENCE side of this brochure?

Installation

Indirect Take is defined in biology as a species' mortality and permanent loss of habitat, which occurs as a secondary result of development and direct destruction, or "take," of an ecosystem.

Arthur's installation, *Indirect Take*, features:

- Silk organza fabric pinned to resemble specimen bags. They are printed with images of the Coastal California Gnatcatchers' DNA sequences and California Sage plants.
- Songbird models cast in resin containing soil samples from Palos Verdes Coastal Sage Scrub.
- Within the exhibit case, bird specimen labels featuring Coastal California Gnatcatcher DNA sequences.

Special thanks to Occidental College's Moore Lab of Zoology for providing real bird specimens in the exhibit case, the birds used to create casts for the resin models, as well as regional geographic maps, DNA marker maps, and DNA sequences incorporated throughout *Endangered*.

SCIENCE

*Emily Arthur: Endangered
March 2 - April 9
Weingart Gallery
Occidental College, Los Angeles*



Environmental Impact

The **Coastal California Gnatcatcher** (pictured left) is **endemic** to the California Coastal Sage Scrub ecosystem. This means the species is native to, and found only in this region.

As a **biodiversity hotspot**, this region is home to over 1,500 endemic plants, and less than 30% of the original ecosystem exists today.

The Coastal California Gnatcatcher is an **umbrella species** for the California Coastal Sage Scrub. This means protection of Coastal California Gnatcatcher would ensure conservation of all flora and fauna within the California Coastal Sage Scrub ecosystem.

Political Controversy

The Coastal California Gnatcatcher is currently listed as threatened under the **Endangered Species Act**.

If **delisted** the estimated 2,500 remaining Coastal California Gnatcatchers will lose their protected land to developers who plan to pave over the approximately 197,000 acres of their California Coastal Sage Scrub habitat.

Developers filed a petition last summer to remove the Coastal California Gnatcatcher from the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Endangered Species List, in hopes of gaining access to commercially valuable coastal land. The official decision on this petition should be released within the next few weeks.

Moore Lab of Zoology

The Moore Lab of Zoology (MLZ) contains 62,382 bird specimens and 2,158 mammal specimens.

Oxy professors **John McCormack** and **James Maley** maintain, curate, and teach classes about the collection. McCormack and Maley brought attention to the potential delisting of the Coastal California Gnatcatcher by exposing reports funded by developers, denying the subspecies classification of the Coastal California Gnatcatcher.

In addition to publishing papers, the MLZ works year round to research bird **speciation** by examining the processes and differences separating species. The MLZ aims to identify and split under-split subspecies, prompting increased conservation efforts.

Many specimens are required to produce strong science and study variation within populations and subspecies. In *Indirect Take*, Arthur responds to the scientific collecting of specimens to understand biodiversity and create lasting conservation.