

The **SKIMMER**



Volume 40, Number 12—December 2013

SDFO NEWS

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, December 10, at 6:00 p.m., in the Hoffman Room of the San Diego Foundation Building, 2508 Historic Decatur Road. **Note that this is a week earlier than normal!** Going south on Rosecrans St. in the Midway area of town, turn left on Roosevelt Rd. into Liberty Station and proceed a couple of blocks to Decatur. Turn right and find parking in the large lot to the left or on the street.

Program: Our annual Holiday Party. Come celebrate your favorite December Holiday (we'll even throw in Hanukkah, since it fell early this year) with your birding friends. SDFO will supply the food and beverage. Plan on lots of bird pictures, a quiz or two and recap of the 2013 birding year.

Next month's meeting: Tuesday, January 21, 2014, same time, same place. Program: noted Southern California ornithologist Jonathan Feenstra will discuss birding in the Middle East. Look forward to tales of wheatears and warblers of the Old World variety.

2014 Dues Now Payable

It's that time again! See Membership Chair Mike Goldhamer at the party, or send your check by mail to Mike at 1231 Myrtle Ave., San Diego, CA 92103. See the back page for details.

New Year's Day Pelagic Trip

Sign up now for SDFO's annual trip to sea. \$28 gets you a ticket for an adventure on the *Grande* leaving the pier at 8:00 a.m. and returning at 1:00 p.m. Great time to get your first seabirds of the New Year. Call Point Loma Sportfishing (619) 223-1627 for your reservation. The price will go up to \$35 on December 12th, so call now—remember last year we sold out.

Christmas Bird Counts

Here is a list of this year's Christmas Bird Counts in the county:

Saturday, Dec. 14	San Diego	Steve Ritt Chris Smith	stevenmritt@gmail.com stlbirdman64@yahoo.com
Sunday, Dec. 15	Borrego	Bob Theriault	roberttheriault@juno.com
Monday, Dec. 16	Lake Henshaw	Gretchen Cummings	gretchen.bc@sbcglobal.net
Saturday, Dec. 21	Oceanside	Tim Burr Andy Mauro	tburr@san.rr.com akamauro@cox.net
Saturday, Dec. 28	Escondido	Kenneth Weaver	gnatcatcher@sbcglobal.net
Saturday, Jan. 4	Rancho Santa Fe	Robert Patton	rpatton@san.rr.com

SAN DIEGO COUNTY BIRD OBSERVATIONS, NOVEMBER 2013

Compiled by Guy McCaskie

An immature Tundra Swan was first seen flying northward over La Jolla, then a short time later on the pond at the Pump Station in Sorrento Valley on 26 Nov (WC, TG), but has eluded all who looked for it there after—Tundra Swan is very rare in San Diego County with most of the few records being in December and January (Unitt 2004). White-winged and Black Scoters appeared slightly more numerous than in recent years, with six White-wingeds and ten Blacks reported this month. A Long-tailed Duck was found in a residential area near south San Diego Bay on 9 Nov (RW—Project Wildlife) and another was seen flying south with Surf Scoters at Pt. La Jolla in La Jolla on 16 Nov (BM).

A Flesh-footed Shearwater at the 9-Mile Bank off San Diego on 9 Nov (PAG) was likely the same bird found here in October. Not totally unexpected considering the number reported locally in September and early October was a Blue-footed Booby photographed on the water at the entrance to San Diego Bay on 2 Nov (JP). Single Brown Boobies, now somewhat regular in San Diego County waters, were at the 9-Mile Bank off San Diego on 9 Nov (GMcC) and at the Tijuana River mouth on 22 Nov (EC). Two Zone-tailed Hawks were reported this month, one over the Normal Heights area of San Diego on 10 Nov (PEL) and the other over Vista on 17 Nov (PT)—did the one at the San Diego Wild Animal Park fail to return this winter? The wintering Pacific Golden-Plover in Del Mar was still present on 20 Nov (NC). Totally unexpected was a hatch-year Black-legged Kittiwake at Pt. La Jolla on 16 Nov (PEL) since virtually none are being reported from elsewhere along the coast to the north of

us. A Mew Gull at Point La Jolla on 23 Nov (DDiT) was the earliest locally this fall/winter.

An adult male Broad-billed Hummingbird frequented a feeder at a private residence in Borrego Springs 15-28 Nov (*fide* BT). A Western Wood-Pewee in Jacumba on 8 Nov (EGK) was later than the latest (30 Oct) listed by Unitt (2004)—when encountering such late wood-pewees one should consider the possibility of Eastern Wood-Pewee, as the only CBRC-endorsed fall records of that species were in Inyo County 22-26 Oct 2011 and in Orange County 31 Oct-6 Nov 1996 (California Bird Records Committee 2007 and the Supplement). Single Tropical Kingbirds were at the Dairy Mart Ponds in the Tijuana River Valley 11-25 Nov (RA), along the northern edge of Mission Bay 12 Nov (MSa) and a third returning for a 2nd winter to the Polo Field in Del Mar 24 Nov (SES). The wintering Thick-billed Kingbird in Chula Vista was still present at the end of the month (RN), and the one at the Polo Field in Del Mar last winter had returned 18 Nov (DB). Two elusive Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were found, with one photographed at the Dairy Mart Ponds 17 Nov (SW) and the other at the Manchester Preserve in Encinitas on 28 Nov (GN).

A Blue-headed Vireo in the residential area on the east side of Pt. Loma 16-22 Nov (JK, BLC) was undoubtedly the same bird present here during the winters of 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 but overlooked last winter, and a second was found in a residential area of Solana Beach on 29 Nov (PEL). The Gray Catbird found at a private residence in Borrego Springs on 31 Oct remained through 10 Nov (BT). Up to four Lapland Longspurs remained with the Horned Larks at Fiesta Island on Mission Bay from the end of October

through 24 Nov (PEL), single birds were on the playing field at Mar Vista School in Imperial Beach on 6 Nov (PEL) and at the AG Sod Farm in the Tijuana River Valley on 17 Nov (JB), and two were seen with Horned Larks at Ream Field in Imperial Beach on 19 Nov (PEL).



Bay-breasted Warbler in University City.
Photo by Tom Blackman.

Wood-warblers were much in evidence. Four Northern Waterthrushes, six Black-and-white Warblers and an American Redstart, all three now found locally every winter, were at various places along the coast. Far from expected was a Mourning Warbler at a residential area in Tierrasanta on 3 Nov (PEL, BLC)—there are only six previous records for this species in San Diego County (California Bird Records Committee 2007), and this is one of the latest for a fall vagrant in the State. The Northern Parula found at Rohr Park in Bonita on 27 Oct was still present on 24 Nov (RN) with two there on 4 Nov (EAE). A Bay-breasted Warbler found foraging in ornamental plantings in the area of the Westfield University Town Center shopping/business area of University City on 28 Nov (PEL) remained through the month's end so could winter locally. A rather late vagrant Blackpoll Warbler was on

Country Club Lane in Coronado 3-4 Nov (PEL). A female Black-throated Blue Warbler spending its 2nd winter at a private residence in the San Carlos area of San Diego was still present at the end of the month (JRM). The only Palm Warblers known this month were one at Ft. Rosecrans National Cemetery on Pt.

Loma on 9 Nov (JTS) and another in San Diego's Greenwood Cemetery 13-26 Nov (MSa, MSanM Jr). A Pine Warbler in Greenwood Cemetery 16-26 Nov (MSt, PEL) is the same drab-colored female present here last winter, and the brightly-colored Grace's Warbler at the same location 6 Oct-30 Nov (TRS) is the same bird present through the last two winters. A Black-throated Green Warbler in Greenwood Cemetery 13-30 Nov (MSa) could be wintering locally.

Single Green-tailed Towhees at a private residence in Imperial Beach 27 Oct-30 Nov + (SY) and another at Lake Murray 27 Oct-28 Nov (SW, JRM) appear settled for the winter. A Swamp Sparrow at Lin-

do Lake in Lakeside 14-30 Nov (SS) is the only one reported in the county this fall/winter. The 31 Oct White-throated Sparrow on Pt. Loma was followed by single birds at the Point Loma Nazarene University 18 Nov (PEL), near the Westfield University Town Center shopping/business area of University City 28-30 Nov + (PEL) and at Lake O'Neil on Camp Pendleton 28 Nov (SB).

The presence of about 15 Summer Tanagers in and around San Diego this month comes as no surprise as these sorts of numbers now regularly winter here. The male Hepatic Tanager that spent the past two winters in the area of the Marston House in Balboa Park had returned 23 Nov (CA), but the one that spent 7 winters in Imperial Beach was not detected until after the month's end. Four Scarlet Tanagers were found this

month, with single birds at the west side of Balboa Park 8-10 Nov (PEL), in Coronado 11 Nov (PEL), in San Diego's Greenwood Cemetery 12-21 Nov (JZ) and in the residential area on the east side of Pt. Loma 20 Nov (BLC). A female Orchard Oriole was frequenting ornamental plantings at the west side of Mission Bay 12-15 Nov (MSa), and an adult male was seen in a residential area of Encinitas 25 Nov (DB). Unlike in recent winters when multiple Baltimore Orioles were known present, a female frequenting ornamental plantings at the west side of Mission Bay 12-15 Nov (PEL) was the only one reported.



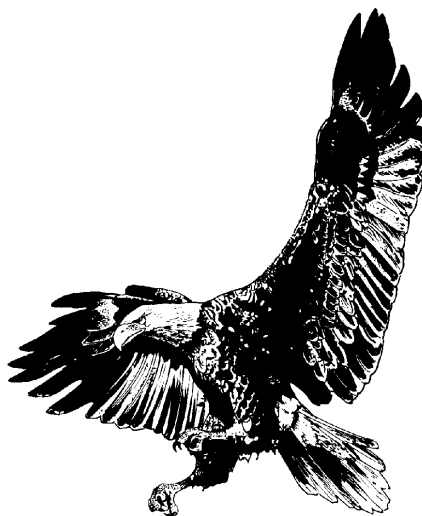
Black-throated Blue Warbler in San Carlos.
Photo by Jim Morris.

Listed observers: Ryan Andrews, Jennifer Baldwin, Dave Batzler, David Billings, Steve Brad, Barbara L. Carlson, Nancy Christensen, Elizabeth Copper, Ward Cummings, Dean DiTommaso, Elias A. Elias, Peter A. Ginsburg, Tito Gonzales, Eric G. Kallen, Jay Keller, Paul E. Lehman, Guy McCaskie, James R. Morris, Brennan Mulrooney, Richard Norgaard, Gretchen Nell, Jim Pea, Matt Sadowski (MSa), Trent R. Stanley, Susan E. Smith, Mark Stratton (MSt), Paula Theobald, Bob Theriault, Roxane Williams, Michael San Miguel Jr., Stephen Shunk, Susan Work, Susan Yamagata, Jim Zimmer.

Literature Cited:

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Unitt, Philip. 2004. San Diego County Bird Atlas. *Proc. San Diego Soc. Nat. Hist.* 39. San Diego Nat. Hist. Mus., San Diego.



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Your contributions to *The Skimmer* are appreciated. Submit articles and notices by the first of the month of publication by mail to John Walters, 5552 Horse Ridge Way, Bonita, CA 91902, or by e-mail to johnfwalters5552@gmail.com

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