

The **SKIMMER**



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SDFO NEWS

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, October 21, at 6:00 p.m., in the Hoffman Room of the San Diego Foundation Building, 2508 Historic Decatur Road. 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. Parking is available on the street or in the adjacent parking lots.

Program: San Clemente Island Wildlife Biologist Melissa Booker will discuss “San Clemente Island Sensitive Avian Species Recovery and Resiliency.”

San Clemente Island (SCI) has one of the highest number of ESA listed species on a continental U.S. military installation. It also supports the only U.S. live fire ship-to-shore/air-to-ground range, hosts one of the highest concentrations of Naval Special Warfare training, and is part of the most heavily used Navy range complex in the eastern Pacific. In concert with all this military training, the Navy has made remarkable progress toward recovery of ESA listed species, including downlisting of two plants species, delisting of the Island Night Lizard, and significant population recoveries for two listed birds. The San Clemente Loggerhead Shrike was once considered one of the rarest birds in North America. Under Navy natural resources management, the San Clemente Loggerhead Shrike has rebounded from only 14 wild individuals in 1998 to maintaining over 50 pairs in the wild since 2009. The San Clemente Bell’s Sparrow (formerly the San Clemente Sage Sparrow) was previous confined to a limited portion of SCI, but new monitoring has documented extensive range and population expansion, with new population estimates 5 times higher than previous estimates. Expanded monitoring for nesting seabirds has led to the discovery of new breeding areas and confirmation of storm petrels and murrelets breeding as well as a number of surface-nesting seabirds. California Brown Pelicans even bred for a single year on SCI. Lastly, Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons have both re-established as breeders on SCI in recent years. The recovery of the Channel Island marine ecosystem and terrestrial habitats on SCI is bringing back our breeding birds, creating better migratory bird habitat, and making SCI more valuable than ever. The Navy’s natural resource management at SCI aims to continue ecosystem recovery and the creation of resilient endemic populations.



Next month’s meeting: Tuesday, November 18, same time, same place. Program: “Birds of Northern and Western India,” by Ed Henry, President of the San Diego Audubon Society.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY BIRD OBSERVATIONS, SEPTEMBER 2014

Compiled by Sara Baase Mayers

Four A-rated rare species were reported in September: Masked Booby, Blue-footed Booby, Inca Dove, and Kentucky Warbler. A sub-adult Masked Booby found on a Coronado beach 21 Sep was taken for care to Project Wildlife. The Blue-footed Boobies were likely second-year birds—some of those that arrived in the area last September and that remained at Los Coronados Islands. They were seen from Imperial Beach, foraging. There were three 5 Sep (GMcC), one 6 Sep (GMcC), one 18 Sep (MSa), one 20 Sep (SW), and one 28 Sep (GMcC). The Inca Dove at the Roadrunner Club in Borrego Springs, found on the Christmas Bird Count 15 Dec (PEL), continues at least through 22 Sep (RT). A Kentucky Warbler turned up at the sewer ponds in Borrego Springs 24 Sep (RT). Of the prior records, all but two (one in the mountains in 1992 and one in the desert last September) were close to the coast.

As in August, large numbers of Brown Boobies were seen from Imperial Beach. The big days were 5 Sep (15, SB), 6 Sep (22, GMcC), 7 Sep (15, GMcC), 18 Sep (30, MSa), and 28 Sep (15-20, GMcC). One was a mile off Pt. Loma 21 Sep (JTS). Up to two adult Reddish Egrets were at south San Diego Bay 3 Jun-13 Sep (GMcC); another adult remained at the Tijuana River mouth 21 Jun-28 Sep (MSa, GMcC). An adult Zone-tailed Hawk was over Encinitas 27 Sep (SB).

Up to eight Black Oystercatchers and one hybrid American x Black Oystercatcher were seen around the edges of Pt. Loma 5 Aug-21 Sep (GJ, DP)—at the tide pools in Cabrillo National Monument, on Zuniga Jetty, and at Ballast Point. A Pacific Golden-Plover in Del Mar 31 Aug-20 Sep (AS, RA) is presumably the same one at that location the past three winters. One Solitary Sandpiper was at the Dairy Mart Ponds in the Tijuana River Valley 19-25 Sep (JBr, MSa). As in

August, a few Baird's Sandpipers were seen: up to three juveniles at the salt ponds in San Diego Bay 6-27 Sep (MSa, RTP) and two at the sod farm on Dairy Mart Rd. in the Tijuana River Valley 18-22 Sep (MSa, JBr). One Semipalmated Sandpiper, a juvenile, was at the salt ponds 31 Aug-5 Sep (MSa, RTP). Three Pectoral Sandpipers were reported: one at the Dairy Mart Ponds 22-25 Sep (JBr, MSa), one at Lindo Lake in Santee 24 Sep (*fide* RA), and one at the salt ponds 24 Sep (MSa).

Two rare pelagic species normally far from land were seen from Pt. La Jolla in La Jolla: a juvenile Long-tailed Jaeger 11 Sep (GNu) and up to 12 Craveri's Murrelets 13-14 Sep (GMcC, SW). Two Craveri's Murrelets were at the 9-Mile Bank 21 Sep (JTS). Sabine's Gulls also are rarely seen from shore, but one (a juvenile) flew over the Chula Vista Wildlife Reserve in south San Diego Bay 9 Sep (RTP). A Laughing Gull was at the San Diego River mouth 27 Sep (JTS), and a Franklin's Gull at the San Luis Rey River mouth in Oceanside 12 Sep (JC). Black Tern migration, heavier than it has been in recent years, continued with two at Lake Murray 9 Sep (JRM) and one at the San Luis Rey River mouth 12 Sep (PAG). A Common Tern photographed at Lake Murray 9-10 Sep (JRM) was unusually far inland. The migration of small numbers of White-winged Doves along the coast continued into September with one at Ft. Rosecrans National Cemetery (FRNC) on Pt. Loma 15 Sep (MSa) and one at Hollister and Sunset in the Tijuana River Valley 20 Sep (GMcC). Black Swifts are very infrequent fall migrants in San Diego; one was photographed flying over FRNC 8 Sep (GNu). Acorn Woodpeckers do not migrate and rarely leave their breeding range, but occasionally some appear on Pt. Loma. Two were at FRNC 20-22 Sep (GNu, MSa);

another was in Encinitas 26 Sep-1 Oct (SC), closer to the coast than the breeding areas.

A Least Flycatcher at FRNC 20 Sep (GNu) delighted viewers by traveling all along the zigzagging fence line in the southwest section, often in the open providing good views and photos. A

Gray Flycatcher was at Point Loma Nazarene University 6-7 Sep (SES, CZ). Three Tropical Kingbirds were present, one in Presidio Park in San Diego 25 Sep-3 Oct (CA, PEL), one near Pump Station 65 in Sorrento Valley 29-30 Sep (TG), and one at the main Dairy Mart Pond 30 Sep-7 Oct (JP, JMCM). With perhaps only half a dozen reports of Eastern Kingbirds since 1981, three photographed this month were a surprise. One was in a Pt. Loma residential neighborhood 2-6 Sep (KM, SBM), one was at FRNC 13 Sep (PAG), and one in Presidio Park 21-25 Sep (ME, CA).

A Yellow-green Vireo was at FRNC 9-10 Sep (JBo, CAM). Another, at Presidio Park 20-22

Sep (EA, ME), generated its own Patagonia Picnic Table effect: birders who came to look for it found an Eastern Kingbird, Tropical Kingbird, and Ovenbird in the park in the next few days. Sage Thrashers are rare in September and rare along the coast; one was at FRNC 13 Sep (GNu). Up to four Red-throated Pipits were at the AG sod farm on Dairy Mart Rd. 20 Sep-5 Oct (SW, LS, GMcC).

Good numbers of vagrant warblers came through in September. One Ovenbird was at FRNC 14-15 Sep (SSo, CKS), another in Presidio Park 24 Sep (MM). Six Northern Waterthrushes were reported: one at FRNC 1 Sep (RN), one at the southmost of the Dairy Mart Ponds (the "stick pond") 9 Sep (MSa), one in

Mission Valley 11 Sep (JMCM), and up to three at the main Dairy Mart Pond 18-30 Sep (MSa, GMcC). Single Black-and-white Warblers appeared in six places: Lake Murray 16 Sep (JRM), Silvergate Ave. & Dupont St. in Pt. Loma 16 Sep (SES), the San Diego



Eastern Kingbird at Presidio Park, 22 Sep 14.

Photo by Mike Evans.

Botanic Garden in Encinitas 18-26 Sep (SES, GNe), Nestor Park 24 Sep (DP), Jacumba 27 Sep (EGK), and FRNC 27 Sep (GNe). There were three Tennessee Warblers: two at FRNC, one 3-10 Sep (MSa, CAM) and one 15-20 Sep (JMCM, GNu), and one in La Mesa 16 Sep (JD). All but one of the American Redstarts reported were at FRNC: one 1-7 Sep (GNu, FC); one 15-23 Sep (MSa), with two on 21 Sep (MSa) and a male on 23 Sep (MSa); and one 27 Sep (GNe). The outlier was in El Cajon 14 Sep (CKS). A Magnolia Warbler was at FRNC 13-14 Sep (GNu, MSt). A Blackburnian Warbler was in Friendship Park in Chu-

la Vista 21-22 Sep (MB, MSa). FRNC had a Black-poll Warbler 14 Sep (GMcC), a Prairie Warbler 1-4 Sep (GNu, AA), and a Grace's Warbler 6-10 Sep (RA, CAM).

A Clay-colored Sparrow was at FRNC 21 Sep (MSa), and a Brewer's Sparrow was there 1-3 Sep (GNu, MSa). An immature male Summer Tanager was in Villa La Jolla Park in La Jolla 4-17 Sep (TG); the earliest date for a fall migrant noted in the *San Diego County Bird Atlas* is 9 Sep. In the Tijuana River Valley, the Bird & Butterfly Garden had a male Rose-breasted Grosbeak 25 Sep (GNu), and Susie's Farm had a Bobolink 13 Sep (LS).

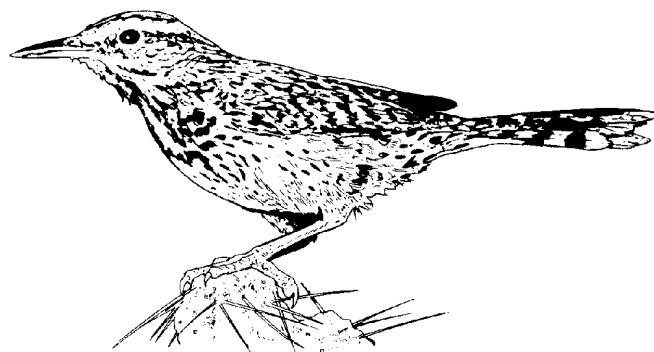
Early arrivals of migrating and winter birds include a Ferruginous Hawk at the AG sod farm 28 Sep (PJ), not only somewhat early but unusual on the coast; a Dunlin at south San Diego Bay 5 Sep (MSa)—a very early date; and an early Merlin at south San Diego Bay 5 Sep (MSa). The Atlas says Mew Gulls are here generally from late November through March, so a juvenile photographed at the San Luis Rey River mouth in Oceanside 13 Sep (SB) was exceptionally early. A Ruby-crowned Kinglet at Point Loma Nazarene University 6 Sep (SES) matched the earliest fall date noted in the Atlas. An American Pipit arrived at the sod farm 27 Sep (BLC). The season's first reported Yellow-rumped Warbler was at south San Diego Bay 7 Sep (MSa). A thick-billed Fox Sparrow was at FRNC 21 Sep (GNu). A White-crowned Sparrow at

FRNC 8 Sep (JBr) almost matched the earliest arrival date of 7 Sep; they usually come the third week in September.

Observers: Alex Abela, Christopher Adler, Eitan Altman, Ryan Andrews, Mark Billings, Johnny Bovee (JBo), Steve Brad, John Bruin (JBr), Steve Cameron, Barbara L. Carlson, Joan Comito, Frances Cummings, Jean Dittmyer, Mike Evans, Peter A. Ginsburg, Tito Gonzalez, Pete Janzen, Ginger Johnson, Eric G. Kallen, Paul E. Lehman, Curtis A. Marantz, Marcie Mason, Keith Mayers, Sara Baase Mayers, Guy McCaskie, Jimmy McMorran, James R. Morris, Gretchen Nell (GNe), Richard Norgaard, Gary Nunn (GNu), Robert T. Patton, Jim Pea, Dave Povey, Matt Sadowski (MSa), Chris K. Smith, Susan E. Smith, Steve Sosensky (SSo), Lea Squires, Justyn T. Stahl, Annie Stockley, Mark Stratton (MSt), Robert Theriault, Stan Walens, Catherine Zinsky.

Reference: Philip Unitt, *San Diego County Bird Atlas*, San Diego Natural History Museum, 2004.

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