

The **SKIMMER**



Volume 40, Number 7—July 2013

SDFO NEWS

Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, July 17, 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. Park in the lot to the left or find street parking. **Note the changed date!**

Program: Ed Pandolfino will discuss “Birds of the Sierra Nevada.” Ed will take us on a virtual transect of the range from the oak savanna in the west, through serene conifer forests of the west side, up into the majestic alpine regions, and down the steep eastern escarpment to the pinyon/juniper woodlands and open steppes of the Great Basin. Along the way we'll see and hear the stunning diversity of birds that make the Sierra their home. We'll look at population trends and range changes over the past few decades in the Sierra. We'll also address some mysteries surrounding some of those species (*e.g.*, the exact range limits of White-breasted Nuthatch subspecies, unexplained local extirpations of Swainson's Thrush) and discuss how your field observations can help to address them.

Ed is co-author with Ted Beedy of a new book, *Birds of the Sierra Nevada: Their Natural History, Status, and Distribution*, illustrated by Keith Hansen and published by U.C. Press. Ed is President of Western Field Ornithologists, a Regional Editor for Northern California for the *North American Birds*, and has published more than two dozen articles on status and distribution of western birds.

Next month's meeting: Tuesday, August 20, same time, same place. We will hear from local U.S. Geological Survey researcher Kelly Barr about his research on local Cactus Wren and California Gnat-catcher populations.

A New Warbler Guide

Pete Ginsberg supplied the following URL to a review of a nifty new field guide to parulid warblers by Tom Stephenson and Scott Whittle, *The Warbler Guide*:

<http://10000birds.com/the-warbler-guide-a-book-review-by-a-warbler-challenged-birder.htm>

SAN DIEGO COUNTY BIRD OBSERVATIONS, JUNE 2013

Compiled by Sara Baase Mayers and Guy McCaskie

Two highlights this month: A first-year Masked/Nazca Booby dove for fish beyond the kelp at Pt. La Jolla and returned the next day, 18–19 June (PEL, BLC). A Dusky-capped Flycatcher at Upper Otay Lake 1 June (KH) was the first recorded spring vagrant for this species in California.

Virtually no scoters and loons are summering; reports included perhaps only 5 Surf Scoters and 2 Pacific loons after early June. Summering shorebirds included a high count of **70** Semipalmated Plovers at J St. in Chula Vista 14 Jun (PEL) and 5 Western Sandpipers. “Fall” shorebird arrivals included alternate-plumaged Willets on 20 June (MSa), increased numbers of Long billed Curlews and Marbled Godwits, 60 alternate-plumaged Western Sandpipers, and 12 Wilson’s Phalaropes on south San Diego Bay 21 June (PEL).

The Greater White-fronted Goose at Lindo Lake since 2007 remains as of 29 June (JK, PEL), and the Cackling Goose at the Scripps Ranch Library pond since 2008 continued as of 15 June (GG, PEL). A pair of Blue-winged Teal at the Sorrento Valley Pump Station 1-17 June (GG, JK) suggests possible nesting. A male at San Dieguito Lagoon 23 June (PEL) might have been from this pair.

A small group of birders on a 1 June boat trip saw a Black-footed Albatross 30 miles off Pt. Loma (MSa), a Brown Booby at the 30-Mile Bank (DP), and 10 Ashy Storm-Petrels (DP). The highlight of a 12-hour pelagic trip on 16 June was a Buller’s Shearwater 14 nautical miles west of the tip of Pt. Loma (MSa). This is exceptionally early for California, the previous earliest arrival for San Diego waters being late July. Oregon had its first June record of Buller’s Shearwater earlier this month (PEL), so it may be worth watching

for more this year. One Black-vented Shearwater seen from the 16 June boat (CAM) and up to 40 seen from Pt. La Jolla 19–30 June (SW, PEL) were quite early, suggesting failed nesting to the south. The 16 June pelagic trip also included a sub-adult Brown Booby (JMcM), 4 Ashy Storm-Petrels, and a Common Murre (PEL). Another Common Murre was seen from Pt. La Jolla 29 June (MSa).

The American Bittern at Dairy Mart Pond in the Tijuana River Valley continued 8 May–2 June (BJS, JK); two more were at Buena Vista Lagoon in Carlsbad 8 June (PW). Reddish Egrets were seen 30 May–30 June (PEL, MSa, DP, GMcC) at the Tijuana River mouth and south San Diego Bay, with 4 distinct birds on 23 June (DP). Two pairs of Yellow-crowned Night-Herons each attended a nest at the Imperial Beach Sports Park 30 Mar–30 June 2013; each pair produced three young (GMcC). Yellow-crowned Night-Herons have nested there regularly since a pair arrived in 2005.

Harris’s Hawks continue in Jacumba since early 2011, with two on 23 June (EGK). A flock of at least 28 Swainson’s Hawks near Lake Henshaw 1 June (PU) was unusual for summer. A Zone-tailed Hawk (adult), unusual on the coast in summer, was near the I-5 rest stop on Camp Pendleton 21 June (KW).

A Black Oystercatcher was at the Children’s Pool in La Jolla 22 June (MSt). Semipalmated Sandpipers are regular though rare fall migrants in San Diego, mostly in August, and there is only one record for spring. Thus one at the salt works on south San Diego Bay 19 June (MSa) could have been a very early fall migrant, an exceptional and very late spring migrant, or a summer wanderer. The alternate-plumaged Dunlin at south San Diego Bay beginning 27 June (MSa, PEL) is another puzzle; they are very rare in summer, and

fall migrants are not expected before mid-September.

A first-summer Mew Gull was in Oceanside 23–29 June (JK, NC). Two one-year-old Common Terns on the ocean west of Pt. Loma 16 June (PEL) were late for spring migrants, usually gone by early June, or early for fall migrants that begin appearing in mid-July. A Black Skimmer at Lindo Lake in Lakeside 23 June (BD) was unusually far inland. Pigeon Guillemots flew past Pt. La Jolla just outside the kelp line on a few days between 11 June and 25 June (BLC, BJS).

A White-winged Dove near Lake Henshaw 18 May–1 June (KC, LH, PU) was well away from its mostly-desert habitat and found a perch atop an incense-cedar tree. A male Rufous Hummingbird at Lake Hodges 21 June (EH) was exceptionally early for a fall migrant. A pair of Mountain Chickadees fed recently fledged young in Encinitas 7 June (GCH), adding to the very small number breeding at low elevations. A Tennessee Warbler was at the San Diego Mission 1 June (JK). An American Redstart continued at Cottonwood Creek Park in Encinitas 22 May–2 June (PEL, JMcM), and another (a male) was seen from a boat 10 miles off San Diego 1 June (MSa). A Large-billed Savannah Sparrow at the Tijuana River mouth 20 June (MSa) was well outside the August-to-February schedule for this species; it could be an early arrival or, as suggested by the fact that it was in heavy molt, it could be summering locally. The Tijuana River Valley was an unusual location for a Summer Tanager 7 June (JTS). A male Western

Tanager at the San Diego Mission 12 June (PEL), away from the mountain breeding areas, was likely a late spring migrant. Two male Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were seen on 2 June, one at San Felipe Creek at Scissors Crossing in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park (JK) and one at a residence in Carlsbad (JMcM). An Indigo Bunting at Kitchen Creek 8–15 June (MB, JK) was only the second reported this season, both males. The displaying Bronzed Cowbird at the Roadrunner Club in Borrego Springs continued to delight observers 19 May–8 June (PEL, FO).

A few potentially unusual sightings were too short or distant to be pinned down to species, for example, a *Brachyramphus* sp. murrelet 27 June (BM).

Observers: Matt Boone, Barbara L. Carlson, Nancy Christensen, Kevin Clark, Bill Denton, Gary Grantham, Ed Hall, Kevin Hamm, Lori Hargrove, Gjon C. Hazzard, Eric G. Kallen, Jay Keller, Paul E. Lehman, Curtis A. Marantz, Guy McCaskie, Jimmy McMorrان, Brennan Mulrooney, Frances Oliver, David Povey, Matt Sadowski, BJ Stacey, Justyn T. Stahl, Mark Stratton, Philip Unitt, Stan Walens, Ken Weaver, Phil White.

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

The authors thank Paul Lehman for his helpful comments.



SAN DIEGO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

President	Tom Blackman (619) 222-2630 obeach@cox.net
Vice-president	Gary Nunn (650) 305-0029 garybnunn@gmail.com
Secretary	Ann Hannon (760) 602-0030 afhannon@sbcglobal.net
Treasurer	Rich Breisch (858) 278-6280 rsbreisch@san.rr.com
Program Chair	Gary Nunn (650) 305-0029 garybnunn@gmail.com
Membership Chair	BJ Stacey (619) 596-8133 finaticphoto@gmail.com
Skimmer Publishing Editor	John Walters (619) 267-1821 john-walters@cox.net Herb Young (858) 622-0337 coulterpine@juno.com BJ Stacey (619) 596-8133 finaticphoto@gmail.com

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 john-walters@cox.net

JOIN SDFO

Dues for Calendar year: \$25.00, including all renewals. Add \$10.00 for each additional member in same household. **MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO SDFO** and mail or give check to Membership Chair: BJ Stacey, 9407 Domer Rd., Santee, CA 92071. For membership information, call BJ at (619) 596-8133.

Visit our website at

www.sandiegofieldornithologists.org

or on Facebook at

tinyurl.com/3rrpm76

San Diego Field Ornithologists
c/o BJ Stacey
9407 Domer Rd.
Santee, CA 92071

