

The **SKIMMER**



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SDFO NEWS

Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, September 19, 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.

Program: Dr. Rebecca Lewison will discuss “Seabirds as Indicators of our Ocean's Health.” Seabirds, as long-lived animals, provide a powerful means to measure the environment in which we live. In this talk, Dr. Lewison will discuss the research in her lab on the types of processes we can measure using seabirds, focusing particularly on the seabird communities in the San Diego Bay ecosystem.

Dr. Rebecca Lewison is a conservation ecologist and is an Associate Professor at San Diego State University. She also serves as Director for the Institute for Ecological Management and Monitoring, a multi-disciplinary research institute at SDSU. Using innovative field, quantitative and lab-based approaches, Dr. Lewison studies vulnerable wildlife populations that live in both terrestrial and aquatic environments and face pressing conservation issues, e.g. habitat loss and fragmentation, harvest and incidental mortality, disease and other disturbances. Over the past decade, she has been spearheading integrative research in conservation ecology, policy and resource use, with expertise and experience across a wide taxonomic range of organisms. Dr. Lewison is at the forefront of fisheries bycatch research, leading research initiatives designed to develop new tools and methodological approaches to understand the magnitude and extent, the population-level and the community level effects of fisheries and associated bycatch worldwide. Dr. Lewison serves on the Editorial Boards of *Conservation Biology*, *Marine Biology* and *Endangered Species Research*.

Next month's meeting: still up in the air. See next month's *Skimmer* for details.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY BIRD OBSERVATIONS, AUGUST 2012

Compiled by Guy McCaskie

A Brown Booby 10.8 nm west of Pt. Loma 13 Aug (WTF) was most likely a bird foraging from the colony on the Los Coronados Islands. Up to five Brown Pelicans were well inland on Lake Morena 11-25 Aug (BJS, JK)—Brown Pelicans dispersing northward from the Gulf of California after nesting were reported throughout much of interior Southern California in July of this year, with individuals found as far north as Bakersfield in Kern County and Big Pine in Inyo County. An American Bittern at Dairy Mart Pond in the Tijuana River Valley 19 Aug (GN) may have been the same bird reported here in June, and if so, clearly spent the summer. At least three Reddish Egrets, two adults and a hatch-year bird, were on south San Diego Bay (JK, GMcC)—Reddish Egret was formerly an accidental straggler to California (Grinnell and Miller 1944), but now has clearly expanded its range northward to include coastal San Diego and Orange Counties. At least two adult Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were still present in Imperial Beach at the end of August (GMcC), but this species went unrecorded around the San Diego River mouth. A first-summer **Mississippi Kite** was around Dairy Mart Pond in the Tijuana River Valley 1-2 Aug (PM) providing the 7th record for San Diego County. Three Harris's Hawks remained around Jacumba through most of August, but with one found dead there 31 Aug (EGK). A hatch-year Swainson's Hawk over the Tijuana River Valley 19 Aug (PEL) was a surprise—Swainson's Hawk is quite rare on the immediate coast, especially so in fall.

With the continuing elimination of shorebird habitat in San Diego County, the less common migrants are being reported in diminishing numbers. The only Solitary Sandpiper was a "fly-by" at Dairy Mart Pond in the Tijuana River Valley on 2 Aug (GMcC). A juve-

nile Semipalmated Sandpiper was within the south San Diego Bay saltworks 19-24 Aug (RTP) and another was in Del Mar 25 Aug (JMCM). Up to three Baird's Sandpipers were found at Lake Henshaw 5-10 Aug (TC), one was in Imperial Beach 11 Aug (JP) and at least six in a day were present within the south San Diego Bay saltworks 8-24 Aug (RTP). The only Pectoral Sandpiper was an adult within the south San Diego Bay saltworks 22 Aug (RTP).

Five adult Sabine's Gulls flying south past Pt. La Jolla in La Jolla 10 Aug (PEL) were unusually close to shore, and the earliest juvenile this year was only 2.5 nm west of Pt. Loma 13 Aug (JLD). Black Terns are now somewhat rare in coastal San Diego County, so up to three in Imperial Beach 1-5 Aug (SBM, TRS), two within the south San Diego Bay saltworks 18-22 Aug (KG, RTP), and three seen at Pt. La Jolla on 10 Aug (PEL) and 30 Aug (ST) were more than expected. A Scripps's Murrelet was close to shore at Pt. La Jolla 6 Aug (SW) and two more were there 30 Aug (ST). The presence of a juvenile Rhinoceros Auklet at the 30-Mile Bank off San Diego 15 Aug (PEL) suggests one at Pt. La Jolla on 23 Aug (JK) may have been a fall migrant rather than having summered in this general area—however, numbers present in Southern California waters in summer have been increasing in recent years.

Two White-winged Doves were in Imperial Beach 19 Aug (PEL), one in the Tijuana River Valley 19 Aug (CA) and a fourth was in La Jolla 25 Aug (NB)—small numbers regularly stray west to the coast every fall. The **White-eyed Vireo** found on 19 Jul proved not to be a "one-day wonder" when found again on 15 Aug, and known present through the end of the month

(GN)—this is the 10th to be found in San Diego County, and the 4th believed to have summered, including one which paired with a Bell's Vireo and fledged at least one young on the San Luis Rey River in 2010 (Blundell and Kus 2011). Since Bank Swallows are scarce in this county, two in Del Mar 18 Aug (PEL), one at Dairy Mart Pond 19 Aug (GN) and a fourth in Imperial Beach 22 Aug (JL) were of note. A Hermit Warbler at Viewpoint Park in Encinitas, a location where one has spent the past three winters, on 12 Aug (EGK) was either a returning wintering bird or an early fall migrant--the earliest ever in the County was one on 19 July (Unitt 2003). A Yellow-headed Blackbird, a scarce fall wanderer to the coast, was in the Tijuana River Valley 19 Aug (GN).

Listed observers: Christopher Adler, Nick Basinski, Tim Cooper, Jon L. Dunn, Wes T. Fritz, Kate Goode-nough, Eric G. Kallen, Jay Keller, Paul E. Lehman,

John Luther, Paul Marvin, Guy McCaskie, Jimmy McMorran, Sara B. Mayers, Gary Nunn, Robert T. Patton, James Pawlicki, BJ Stacy, Trent R. Stanley, Steve Tucker and Stanley Walens.

Literature Cited:

Blundell, M. A., and Kus, B. E. 2011. First record of interspecific breeding of Least Bell's Vireo and White-eyed Vireo. *Wilson J. Ornithol.* 123:628-631.

Grinnell, J., and Miller, A. H. 1944. The distribution of the birds of California. *Pac. Coast Avif.* 27.

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



SAN DIEGO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

President	Tom Blackman (619) 222-2630 obeach@cox.net
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Program Chair	Gary Nunn garynunn@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

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

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