The SKIMMER

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SDFO NEWS

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, October 18, at 6:00 p.m. This will be a virtual meeting, using the Zoom app, which you can download beforehand. Members will receive an email invitation with directions to click on a link, which will open a window in the Zoom app, and you can join the meeting. If you have never used Zoom before, you will be asked to download the application for Zoom. You do NOT need to "sign up" for Zoom, just download the application. It is best to use a desktop or laptop computer, as their larger screen is preferable to a phone or notepad device.

Program: Dave and Tammy McQuade will present "Birding Hawaii: The Extinction Capital of the World."

Join Dave and Tammy McQuade as they share their birding photos and experiences on the Hawaiian Islands. Hawaii's small land mass, long history of extreme isolation, climate change and rapid pace of development have left its many indigenous species vulnerable to predators and diseas es. Dave and Tammy have been fortunate enough to bird this beautiful and rapidly changing environment twice in recent years. Join us as they share their love for this beauty ful place and its incredible birds!

Next month's meeting: Tuesday, November 15, same time, same place. Ryan Terrill will describe "A new migration spectacle: Spring land birds at Bear divide, Los Angeles County, CA."

SAN DIEGO COUNTY BIRD OBSERVATIONS, SEPTEMBER 2022

Compiled by Paul E. Lehman

One of the most unexpected finds of the year was a Red-footed Booby seen flying over Leo Carrillo Ranch Historic Park in eastern Carlsbad on 29 Sep (PLa), some 4-1/2 miles inland. There is only one previous record inland, away from salt water, in the state—from Sonoma County earlier this month. The only other U.S. inland records hail from Florida and Louisiana. Dense fog along the coast that morning may have disoriented the bird, or perhaps it simply wandered.

A startling occurrence some 4-1/2 miles inland, this Red-footed Booby was flying over Leo Carrillo Ranch Historic Park in Carlsbad on 29 Sep. *Photo by Patti Langen*

The 11 Sep pelagic trip was a huge success, highlighted by the county's third record of Wedge-tailed Shearwater in the San Diego Trough, 21.3 to 21.8 miles west of Pt. Loma (GN, BVAS). The previous two records were of birds seen from shore at La Jolla. Preceding the shearwater by just a few minutes was a Blue-footed Booby, a casual visitor. Also seen on the trip was a Red-billed Tropicbird 3.8 miles off Pt. Loma, a total of four Nazca Boobies, one Masked/Nazca Booby, and one Red-footed Booby (BVAS). And as the boat returned to the dock at Mission Bay, an adult male Magnificent Frigatebird was sighted (BVAS). The frigatebird was part of an incursion of at least seven to as many as a dozen individuals seen between 9-12 Sep, between Imperial Beach and Carlsbad (m.obs), associated with the close passage of the remnants of Hurricane/Tropical Storm Kay. Also associat-

Two views of the Wedge-tailed Shearwater in the San Diego Trough on 11 Sep, the third record for San Diego County waters and one of only a small number for the U.S. West Coast. Note the species' similarity to Pink-footed Shearwater, but for its wedge tail, dark bill, and different wing shape. *Photos by Andrew Newmark (left) and Victor Stoll (right)*

Preceding the Wedge-tailed Shearwater by only several minutes, this casual Blue-footed Booby in the San Diego Trough was another clear highlight of the 11 Sep pelagic trip. *Photo by Nick Barber*

This immature Nazca Booby some seven miles off Mission Bay on 11 Sep shows important identification criteria including a dark nape, whitish central tail feathers, and bright yellow bill. *Photo by Jimmy McMorran*

ed with the storm was the appearance of substantial numbers of Least Storm-Petrels close to shore. Approximately 40+ birds were tallied *from* shore between Imperial Beach and Carlsbad between 9-12 Sep (m.obs), one was reported *onshore* at the South San Diego Bay Salt Works on 10 Sep (v.obs), and up to 18 were reported from *inside* San Diego Bay as viewed from Harbor Island on 10-11 Sep (RY-M). Larger than normal numbers were also seen up to a dozen miles offshore. Also likely associated with Kay's inclement weather was the passage of low-flying Black Swifts, with a total of six birds seen on 9 Sep in Chula Vista (AN), Hillcrest (NF), and Pacific Beach (GN). A Laughing Gull inland at Sweetwater Reservoir on 10 Sep (PEL), and two Black Terns at Lower Otay Lake on 9 Sep (V&RS) and up to two in Imperial Beach from 9-11 Sep (MS), also might have been associated with Kay.

The remnants of Hurricane Kay brought more than seven Magnificent Frigatebirds to coastal San Diego County between 9-12 Sep. This young bird (above) was at La Jolla on 10 Sep and the adult male (right) was in the Mission Bay area from 10-12 Sep. *Photos by Beth Fife (above) and Rodney Gast (right)*

A different Red-billed Tropicbird was photographed off Mission Bay on 6 Sep (NSL), and another Least Storm-Petrel was seen from shore at La Jolla on 5 Sep (GN). The rare booby-fest continued, with sightings of a Masked at "The Corner" on 4 Sep (v.obs); single Masked/Nazcas at Torrey Pines on 10 Sep (DAK), at the mouth of Mission Bay on 11 Sep (JTS), and perched on Sunset Cliffs on 12 Sep (fide BM); two Nazca Boobies at the Nine-Mile Bank on 25

Sep (KL); and single Red-footed Boobies off Pt. Loma on 4 Sep (AN) and perched on the Imperial Beach Pier from 29 Sep-1 Oct (JMa), the latter found dead on 2 Oct (*SDNHM). Some six Black-footed Albatrosses between the Nine-Mile and 30-Mile Banks on 5 Sep (*Searcher*) was a high count, and a Manx Shearwater the same day at the Nine-Mile Bank (*Searcher*) could well be the same individual present in that area all summer.

Substantial numbers of Least Storm-Petrels were seen from or close to shore following the passage of Kay, including this bird only a mile off Mission Bay on 11 Sep. Note the short, wedge-shaped tail and proportionately large, broad-based wings. *Photo by Nancy Christensen*

After going AWOL for about six weeks, the Mexican Duck at Lower Otay Lake reappeared on 22-23 Sep (JSp). The summering Brant in the desert at Borrego Springs was still present 4 Oct (RT), and the summering Cackling Goose at Lake Murray also made forays to nearby Chollas Reservoir (BW).

Shorebirds figured prominently this month. The hybrid American X Black Oystercatcher at Cabrillo National Monument since spring was still present 20 Sep, and the Little Stint back at the Salt Works for its fifth winter was still present at the end of the month (MS). A juvenile Semipalmated Sandpiper was in Del Mar on 4-5 Sep (SB), and one at the Salt Works on 13 Sep (MS) was getting late. This is primarily an August species in California. It was an excellent month for Baird's, Pectoral, and Solitary Sandpipers. A total of at least 45 Baird's were found countywide (m.obs), with 20+ of these at the Salt Works (RTP, MS), the perennial county hotspot. A total of 23 Pectoral Sandpipers (m.obs) was also excellent and included several individuals well inland. The 12+ Solitary Sandpipers (m.obs) were also well above average. Two or three returning Pacific Golden-Plovers continued at the Tijuana R. mouth (RTP).

One of two Yellow-green Vireos found this month was this individual at Whelan Lake on 23 Sep. *Photo by Tito Gonzalez*

Other waterbirds of note included a Sabine's Gull from shore at La Jolla on 11 Sep (SW) and a record-early Lesser Black-backed Gull on Lower Otay Lake on 9 Sep (MS).

The summering Prothonotary Warbler in residential Encinitas was last seen 15 Sep (NG). A Grace's Warbler in the Laguna Mts. along upper Kitchen Creek Rd. on 10 Sep (KG) was a real surprise. Other landbird rarities were led by single Yellow-green Vireos in a Rancho Penasquitos yard on 22 Sep (DP) and at Whelan Lake on 23 Sep (TG), an Eastern Kingbird in Tecolote Cyn. on 13 Sep (JB), and a Lark Bunting at the San Diego Botanic Garden in Encinitas on 28 Sep (EMa). Warblers included an Ovenbird at Ft. Rosecrans National Cemetery (hereafter FRNC) from 25 Sep-3 Oct (K&SM); single Prairie

This Ovenbird delighted a substantial number of observers at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery from 25 Sep-3 Oct. *Photo by Marcie Mason*

This Black-throated Green Warbler was also present at Ft. Rosecrans National Cemetery, from 25-26 Sep. *Photo by Gary Nunn*

Warblers at Robb Field from 19-23 Sep (MG) and in La Jolla on 29 Sep (BS); a Black-throated Green Warbler at FRNC on 25-26 Sep (GN); a Canada Warbler at UCSD in La Jolla on 25 Sep (ED); a Painted Bunting in Rancho Santa Fe on 3 Sep (PEL); and single Dickcissels in Rancho Santa Fe on 4-5 Sep (DAK), 16 Sep (DAK), and 24-28 Sep (SB), and at the Tijuana River Valley Community Gardens on 7 Sep (PEL). A casual migrant Black-chinned Sparrow in tipu trees in La Jolla on 9 Sep (AA) must have seemed very out of place.

Coastal Black-throated Sparrows were in Santee on 1 Sep (JSt), in Oceanside on 1 Sep (PLa), and at Robb Field from 5-10 Sep (BT). A slightly early Bobolink was in Rancho Santa Fe on 4 Sep (DAK), up to three were there from 25 Sep-2 Oct (PEL), one was at FRNC on 17 Sep (PEL), and another was at the Salt Works on 29 Sep (RTP). Single Orchard Orioles were at FRNC on 8 Sep (PEL) and inland at Jacumba on 15 Sep (PEL), and two Baltimore Orioles were at FRNC on 17 Sep (PEL). The month's sole Virginia's Warbler was at Robb Field on 9 Sep (JA), the lone Northern Parula was in La Mesa from 24-26 Sep (MS), and the single Blackburnian Warbler was in University City on 18 Sep (BS). The Blackpoll Warbler at Robb Field on 26 Sep (AL) was the only one found. Single Magnolia Warblers were at FRNC on 25 Sep (K&SM) and 29 Sep-2 Oct (DB); and five separate Chestnut-sided Warblers were at NAS North Island 20 Sep (JTS), in North Park 21 Sep (JTS), in residential Pt. Loma 23 Sep (SM), at Lake O'Neill on Camp Pendleton 30 Sep (PAG), and at FRNC 30 Sep-4 Oct (GN). Single Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were in

This juvenile Semipalmated Sandpiper (with two Westerns) at the South San Diego Bay Salt Works on 13 Sep was getting late. *Photo by Matt Sadowski*

Scripps Ranch on 25 Sep (LTP) and at Lake Murray from 26 Sep-5 Oct (MS).

September totals for some of our more regular rare migrant and vagrant species included eleven coastal-slope White-winged Doves, ten Tropical Kingbirds, including an early bird in residential Pt. Loma on 2 Sep (AS), just one coastal Gray Flycatcher, five Plumbeous Vireos, nine Bank Swallows, six Purple Martins, two Clay-colored Sparrows, six coastal Brewer's Sparrows, seven Green-tailed Towhees, three Northern Waterthrushes, three Black-and-white Warblers, two Palm Warblers, and six Summer Tanagers. The six Tennessee Warblers were above average in recent decades and included one in the mountains at Agua Dulce, an especially unusual location, on 4 Sep (LR), and the five American Redstarts also included an individual in the mountains at Agua Dulce, on 6 Sep (JD).

It was an excellent season for juvenile Baird's Sandpipers countywide, including several very cooperative birds that remained near the Tijuana R. mouth from 6-12 Sep. *Photo by Aedyn Loefke*

There are now at least several records of hybrid Townsend's X Yellow-rumped Warblers in southern California. This bird appears to involve an "Audubon's" Yellow-rumped. It was at Kate O. Sessions Park on 23 Sep. *Photo by Nick Thorpe*

Early-arriving species included a very rare coastal Ferruginous Hawk in the Tijuana River Valley on 19 Sep (PEL), a Red-breasted Sapsucker near Mira Mesa on 14 Sep (EMo), a Ruby-crowned Kinglet at Agua Dulce on 7 Sep (NC), a Townsend's Solitaire there on 17 Sep (EL), three Cedar Waxwings in residential Pt. Loma on 3 Sep (MH), and an American Pipit at the Tijuana R. mouth on 15 Sep (MS). In contrast, late-lingering species at known breeding sites included two Brown-crested Flycatchers in Borrego Springs on 4 Sep (CD) and, most surprising, a Gray Vireo along Kitchen Creek Rd. on 10 Sep (MK, EL). Black-chinned Hummingbirds remained in surprisingly large numbers at various feeders countywide until the end of September, highlighted by a very late adult male in Tierrasanta on 27 Sep (PEL).

Miscellanea included up to five lingering Harris's Hawks at both Shelter Valley (NC) and Jacumba (PEL) and a continuing Zone-tailed Hawk in Poway through 11 Sep+ (DS). Up to three wayward White-breasted Nuthatches continued through the month at Jacumba (PEL) and another was in residential Rolando Park on 13 Sep (BW). A hybrid Townsend's X Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler at Kate O. Sessions Park on 23 Sep (NT) was one of only a small number of this hybrid combination ever found in southern California.

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Cited observers: Observers listed are limited to those finding, identifying, and/or last reporting each species. Some sightings reported to *eBird* are included without specific attribution. Alex Abela, Joe Alsadi, John Bruin, Sean Buchanan, Dean Budd, Buena Vista Audubon Society sponsored pelagic trip (BVAS), Nancy Christensen, Emily Davis, Chris Dean, John Dumlao, Nathan French, Kurt Gaskill, Peter A. Ginsburg, Neal Glasgow, Tito Gonzalez, Mike Greenfelder, Michelle Haglund, Dan A. King, Max Kirsch, Ethan Lai, Patti Langen (PLa), Kevin Lapp, Paul E. Lehman, Aedyn Loefke, Eve Martin (EMa), John Martin (JMa), Keith & Sara Mayers, Elizabeth Morgan (EMo), Brennan Mulrooney, Jane Mygatt, Andrew Newmark, Gary Nunn, Robert T. Patton, LaTresa Pearson, Deborah Porter, Lisa Ruby, Matt Sadowski, Allen Schenck, *Searcher* pelagic trip, Bridget Spencer, Jonny Sperling (JSp), Justyn T. Stahl (JTS), Dan Steussy, Newton StLoe, Jeremiah Stock (JSt), Victor & Ruben Stoll, Robert Theriault, Nick Thorpe, Bill Tweet, Stan Walens, Barbara Wise, Rowan Young-McMurchie.

m.obs = many observers

v.obs = various observers

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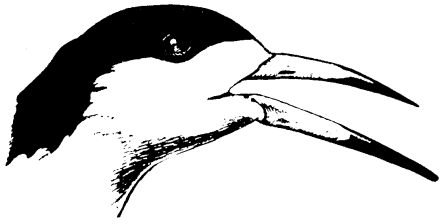

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