

The **SKIMMER**



Volume 32, Number 11—November 05

SDFO NEWS

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, November 15, at 7:00 p.m., at the Tecolote Nature Center, at the east end of Tecolote Road, off I-5.

Program: Mary Beth Stowe, “Bird ID: Wintering Sparrows in San Diego County.” This program will provide useful and fun information to simplify sparrow identification. Examples of locally occurring sparrow species will be illustrated with a program of digital slides.

Next month’s meeting: Tuesday, December 20, same time, same place. Our annual Holiday Potluck. Bring your favorite goodie and celebrate your favorite December holiday with your fellow birders. Program: “Exotic Aves,” presented by Ken Fink. What do the following birds have in common: Kagu, Sunbittern, Shoebill Stork, Hammerhead Stork or Hamerkop, and Limpkin? Ken will give the answer.

Ramona Hawk Watch Coming This Winter

Make a Mental Note Department: Our September speaker, Jeff Lincer, announced that the Wildlife Research Institute in Ramona sponsors a Hawk Watch in January and February, Saturday mornings from 9:00 AM to noon. A reminder and more details will be published in the December and January issues of *The Skimmer*.

Membership Update

New member
John Mitchell
2448 Victoria Ct.
Alpine, CA 91901
(619) 445-3503
chloedad@cox.net

E-mail correction
Paul & Barbara Zepf
pbzopf@juno.com
(note change in first two letters)

Christmas Bird Count Schedule

Saturday, December 17: San Diego
Compiler: Dick Hodges (619) 283-0818 rrhodes1@cox.net

Sunday, December 18: Anza-Borrego
Compiler: Bob Theriault (760) 767-3312 roberttheriault@juno.com

[continued on p. 2]

Christmas Bird Count Schedule *[continued from p.1]*

Monday, December 19: Lake Henshaw
Compiler: Gretchen Cummings (760) 789-5938 (home) gretchen.bc@sbcglobal.net

Thursday, December 22
 Compiler: Robert Patton (858) 560-0923 rpatton@san.rr.com

Wednesday, December 28: Oceanside
 Compiler: Dennis Wysong (760) 754-1264 dwysong1@cox.net

Saturday, December 31: Escondido
 Compiler: Ken Weaver (760) 723-2448 gmatcatcher@sbcglobal.net

THE BIG JAY DAY

by Carlo Giovanella, Surrey, British Columbia

[Ed. Note—Submitted by Herb Young with permission of the author. “Carlo was my very generous guide during my visit to coastal British Columbia in January 2001. In return, Carlo was my guest for five days of birding in San Diego and Imperial County in the first week of September. He is a skillful and determined birder and a great companion, and I made him do all of the driving.”]

The circumstance of having TWO rather rare (to southwestern BC) species of jays wintering over in the Lower Mainland presented an extraordinary opportunity of ticking an unprecedented number of corvids in a single day. If the two coastal rarities could be located without undue delay, then a quick run to the interior could net a possible total of NINE species!

To this end, a dedicated group of four intrepid Lower Mainland birders (alternatively described as “raven’ idiots” by their spouses) set out on Sunday morning, March 28, 2004 for the “Big Jay Day”. Assembling at the site of the rarest target in Ladner, the odyssey began at 05:53 hours. Success was not at all certain, as the jay had been keeping

quiet and reclusive of late and had not been reported for several days. If the bird did not show in good time, we would have to scrub the mission, and there would be nothing to crow about. Weather was another factor, but the dawn opened with patches of blue showing through the gray skies. As it turned out, we could not have a better day, but without a stellar performance by all team members, we would not crack or even equal a score of eight species.

At precisely 06:08 the Western Scrub-Jay was sighted: **Number 1**. A quick drive to south Richmond, where Northwestern Crows were observed frolicking on the dike: **Number 2**. Within six minutes the Blue Jay was heard, then observed by all at 06:33: **Number 3**. From there eastward through Vancouver to Highway 1, with sightings of Common Raven, **Number 4**, on the Port Mann Bridge (numerous other sightings during the day). At Exit 232 the crew coalesced into a single vehicle for the

[continued on p.5]

trip inland, but not before a Steller's Jay was sighted at 07:37 for **Number 5**. Arriving at Manning Park Lodge at 09:30, we found the parking lot empty of the “needed” corvid species, bringing on the first twinges of

SAN DIEGO RARE BIRD ALERT REPORT, OCTOBER 2005

Compiled by Mike Evans

COMMON NAME	NO	PLUM	OBS DATE	LOCATION	REPORTER
Reddish Egret	1	Juv	10/5,20,27/05	San Diego Bay, S Bay NWR (salt works),	Turko, D., Altman, E.
Reddish Egret	3		10/15/05	San Diego Bay, S Bay NWR (salt works), from N end of 7th St., Imperial Beach	Barr, J.
Yellow-crowned Night Heron	2	Imm	10/8,10/05	Tijuana Slough NWR, channel at McCoy trail, S from visitor's center	Karalun, D., Theriault, R.
Roseate Spoonbill	1	Subad	10/14/05	San Diego Bay, S Bay NWR (salt works), from N end 7th St., Imperial Beach	Mercieca, A.
*Egyptian Goose	4		10/19/05	San Diego Bay-S Bay NWR (salt works), from N-end 7th St., Imperial Beach; also adjacent beach on W side of Silver Strand	Sadowski, M., Shanyell, G.
Eurasian Wigeon	1	M	10/21,27/05	San Diego Bay-S Bay NWR (salt works), from N-end 7th St, Imperial Beach	Palette, D., Altman, E.
Swainson's Hawk	1, 32, 279		10/20,21,25/05	Borrego Valley, from Borrego Valley Rd., 1.5 mi. N of Palm Canyon Dr.	Jorgensen, P.
Swainson's Hawk	24+		10/21/05	Julian area, Pine Hills peak	Doyle, W.
Sandhill Crane	40		10/23/05	IMP: Salton Sea, E of Vandell Rd., near Sonny Bono Unit 1	Claypool, M.
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	Ad	10/15/05	Tijuana R. Valley, new sod farm, Hollister St. @ Sunset, E end	Goldhammer, M.
Pacific Golden-Plover	1-3		10/5,12,20,26/05	Tijuana Estuary, S end, barrier dune	Patton, R., Altman, E.
Pacific Golden-Plover	1	Juv	10/9,15/05	Tijuana R. Valley, Dairy Mart rd sod farm	Sadowski, M., Palette, D.
*Eurasian Collared-Dove	1		10/8/05	Tijuana R. Valley, Sunset & Hollister	Karalun, D.
White-winged Dove	1		10/8/05	Tijuana R. Valley Regional Park, Bird & Butterfly Garden	Matson, M.
White-winged Dove	1		10/8/05	Tijuana R. Valley, Sunset & Hollister	Karalun, D.
*Lilac-crowned Parrot	1		10/28/05	Jamul, Lyons Valley Rd.	Martin, J.
*Yellow-headed Parrot	1		10/28/05	Jamul, Lyons Valley Rd.	Martin, J.
Eastern Phoebe	1		10/29/05	La Jolla Cove area, below La Jolla Cave store	Bauman, D.
Vermilion Flycatcher	1	M/1st fall	10/9/05	Tijuana R. Valley, Dairy Mart Rd. sod farm, NE corner	Doyle, W.
Vermilion Flycatcher	1		10/31/05	Lindo Lake Park, Lakeside	Stanley, T. R.
Tropical Kingbird	1		10/15/05	Ft. Rosecrans NC, E side, extreme SE corner	Rogers, G.
Eastern Kingbird	1	Ad	10/6/05	Teacolote Canyon private back yard, between golf course & Mesa College	Plunkett, T.

Varied Thrush	1		10/15-18/05	Ft. Rosecrans NC, W side, along N fence line	McCausland, W., 2 other birders
Wood Thrush?	1		10/29/05	Ft. Rosecrans NC, E .side, Sec O, near fresh grove	Stanley, T. R.
Gray Catbird	1		10/26-30/05	Cabrillo NM, Myoporum grove, dripping faucet	Adams, D., 2 other birders
Brown Thrasher	1		10/29,30/05	Cabrillo NM, Myoporum grove, dripping faucet	Palette, D., Ginsburg, P.
Red-throated Pipit	1		10/9,10/05	Tijuana R. Valley, new sod farm, NE corner Hollister St. @ Sunset	Billings, M., McCaskie, G.
*Nutmeg Mannikin	2		10/7/05	La Jolla, Muirlands Dr., in yard	Owen, A.
Savannah Sparrow (Large-billed)	1-2		10/5,12/05	Tijuana Estuary, beach S of Seacoast Dr.	Patton, R.
Clay-colored Sparrow	1		10/5,6/05	Cabrillo NM, Myoporum grove, dripping faucet	Murayama, V., Plunkett, T.
Clay-colored Sparrow	1-2		10/9,15/05	Tijuana R. Valley Regional Park, community garden, Hollister St.	Billings, M.
Clay-colored Sparrow	1		10/29/05	Cabrillo NM, Myoporum grove, dripping faucet	Grantham, G.
Tennessee Warbler	1	1st fall	10/30/05	Pt. Loma residential area, alley S of Dupont St.	Ginsburg, P.
Lucy's Warbler	1		10/26/05	Famosa Slough, W side, S of W. Point Loma Blvd.	Puschock, J.
Chestnut-sided Warbler	1	1st wint	10/1,3/05	Pt. Loma residential area, alley between Dupont & Pio Pico Sts.	Billings, M., Smith, S.
Chestnut-sided Warbler	1	Ad/Bas	10/1,2/05	Pt. Loma residential area, alley between Dupont & Pio Pico Sts.	Hunefeld, T., Norton, L.
Magnolia Warbler	1	1st fall	10/9/05	Ft. Rosecrans NC, E side, S fenceline	Desgrosellier, J.
Black-throated Green Warbler	1		10/1/05	Pt. Loma residential area, alley between Dupont & Pio Pico Sts.	Ginsburg, P.
Grace's Warbler	1	M	10/5,15,16/05	Ft. Rosecrans NC, W side	Sweeney, J., 2 other birders
Grace's Warbler	2		10/21/05	Ft. Rosecrans NC, W side, NW corner	Martin, J.
Palm Warbler	1		10/24,25/05	Cabrillo NM, Myoporum grove, dripping faucet	Worley, J., Myers, T.
Palm Warbler	1		10/27/05	Famosa Slough, end of Mentone St	Puschock, J.
Black-and-white Warbler	1	M/1st fall	10/19/05	Ft Rosecrans NC, W-side, Sec U	Ginsburg, P.
Black-and-white Warbler	1	F	10/30/05	Pt. Loma residential area, Silvergate, between Dupont & Warner	Myers, T.
American Redstart	1	F	10/1,2,6,22/05	Tijuana R. Valley Regional Park, Bird and Butterfly Garden, off Hollister St.	Sadowski, M., Hunefeld, T.
American Redstart	1	M	10/9,10/05	Tijuana R. Valley Regional Park, Bird and Butterfly Garden, off Hollister St.	Billings, M., Therfault, R.
American Redstart	1	F/Imm	10/12/05	Cabrillo NM, Myoporum grove, dripping faucet	Ginsburg, P.
Hooded Warbler	1	F	10/8,15/05	Tijuana R. Valley Regional Park, Bird & Butterfly Garden, tamarisks, N of garden	Karalun, D., Barr, J.
Canada Warbler	1		10/1/05	Tijuana R Valley, Smuggler Gulch	Sadowski, M.

Painted Redstart	1	M	10/4,5,8/05	Greenwood Memorial Park, 4300 Imperial Ave.	Altman, E., 2 other birders
Painted Redstart	1	M	10/7-30/05	San Diego Zoo, S of Hunte Amphitheater, in bamboo	Stanley, T., several other birders
Painted Redstart	1		10/23,24/05	Ocean Beach yard (4664 Orchard Ave)	Fraser, N.
Painted Redstart	1	M/alt	10/25/05	Torrey Pines golf course driving range behind National Univ. N of building	Nowacki, C.
Summer Tanager	1-2	M+F	10/1,3/05	Pt. Loma residential area, alley between Dupont & Pio Pico Sts.	Rogers, G., Mayers, S. B.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1	F	10/2/05	Pt. Loma residential area, alley between Dupont & Pio Pico Sts.	Sadowski, M.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1	M/1st fall	10/16,18/05	Encinitas private feeder, near Neptune St.	Hunefeld, T., Brad, S.
*Painted Bunting	1	F/Imm	10/12/05	Cabrillo NM, Myoporum grove, dripping faucet	Ginsburg, P.
Baltimore Oriole	1	M/Ad	10/26,29,30/05	Santee Lakes, NW corner, between Lake 3 & 4	Zepf, P., 2 other birders
Yellow-headed Blackbird	1	M	10/10/05	Robb Field, Ocean Beach	Martin, J.

The Big Jay Day *[continued from p.2]*

doubt. At Lightning Lake a single Gray Jay was coaxed in by a tape of a woodpecker in dire distress, **Number 6** at 09:52. A second unaided Gray Jay was at the Gibson's Pass Ski Area, but nutcrackers were nowhere in evidence.

Onward to Princeton with increasing concern. After logging **Number 7**, American Crow, at 11:55, we obtained advice that nutcrackers were regularly coming to feeders at a particular property, but on arrival there we found a very large and noisy machine busily altering the landscape, and again no sign of the elusive 'crackers. On to a second recommended locality along the Osprey Lake Road, all the while scanning the hillsides for magpies and 'crackers to no avail. Then, just as despair was settling in, at 13:34 a solitary American Magpie appeared beside the road at Wayne Lake, **Number 8**. And just a few minutes later, close looks at several Clark's Nutcrackers! Species **Number 9**, and mission accomplished at 13:38. Retiring to a Princeton oasis for a celebratory brew, the final tick of the day was picked from a team member's nape at about 15:45, and summari-

ly dispatched between thumbnail and table top.

Nine species of corvids in a day must surely qualify as a northwestern and Canadian record, and probably also an American record. Could it possibly be even a World record?? If anyone anywhere has firm information that our score had been previously bettered or equaled, we would certainly like to hear about it, and would then respectfully rescind our claims.

The Team:

George Clulow, Burnaby
Carlo Giovanella, Surrey
Rob Lyske, North Vancouver
Brian Scott, Fort Langley