

The **SKIMMER**



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SDFO NEWS

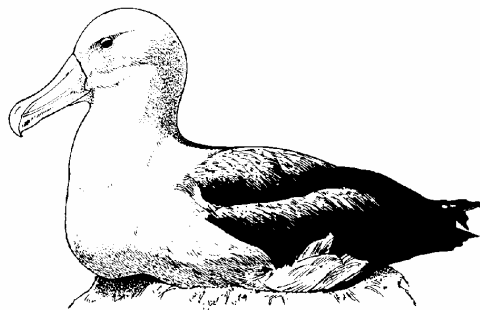
Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, October 18, at 7:00 p.m., at the Tecolote Nature Center, at the east end of Tecolote Road, off I-5.

Program: Lori Hargrove will describe the “Centennial Resurvey of the San Jacinto Mountains: Recent Highlights.”

Lori joined the San Diego Natural History Museum as a volunteer in 1995. She recently completed her Ph.D. in Biology at the University of California, Riverside, with advisor John Rotenberry. The topic of her dissertation research was: *Limits to Species’ Distributions: Spatial Structure and Dynamics of Breeding Bird Populations Along an Ecological Gradient*. One focus of her research has been on elevational shifts of bird species and the mechanisms involved, including response to fire and climate change. She has been the recipient of numerous research awards including a Biological Impacts of Climate Change Research Grant from the state of California and Point Reyes Bird Observatory. She is currently a postdoctoral researcher with the San Diego Natural History Museum, primarily working on the Centennial Resurvey of the San Jacinto Mountains with Phil Unitt. This project is examining biogeographic changes of vertebrates over a 100-year period in the San Jacinto Mountains by replicating a thorough survey by Joseph Grinnell and team in 1908.

Next month’s meeting: Tuesday, November 15, same time, same place. Program to be announced.



SAN DIEGO COUNTY BIRD OBSERVATIONS, SEPTEMBER 2011

Compiled by Guy McCaskie

The long-staying Greater White-fronted Goose at Lake Miramar, and the equally long-staying Cackling Goose at the nearby Scripps Ranch Library were both still associating with domestic waterfowl at these locations at the end of September (JK). In addition the Greater White-fronted Goose at Lindo Lake in Lakeside since 2007 was also present at the end of the month (BJS). A Red-throated Loon in summer-plumage flew south past Pt. La Jolla in La Jolla on the exceptionally date of 11 Sep (JLD)—Unitt (2004) lists 25 October as the earliest known date for a fall migrant. Three Brown Pelicans were well inland, where considered rare, at Lake Morena 3-10 Sep (JK). Two Reddish Egrets that remained on south San Diego Bay through September (PEL) were the only ones known in the County. The latest staying of the four Yellow-crowned Night-Herons in the area of Famosa Slough/Sea World was photographed near Famosa Slough 19 Sep (JPe): unlike the two or three resident in Imperial Beach, the Famosa Slough/Sea World birds "disappear" each winter.

The young Harris's Hawk that left the nest near Jacumba 1 Aug (PK) was still accompanying its parents in that general area at the end of September (JK, PEL). The earliest of the fall migrant Swainson's Hawks was at Borrego Springs 24 Sep (PJ). The adult Zone-tailed Hawk that arrived at the San Diego Wild Animal Park near Escondido 22 Jul was still there 13 Sep (KR), and likely to remain through the winter. What was most likely the same Crested Caracara that frequented the east part of the Tijuana River Valley sporadically 9 Sep 2006-14 Nov 2009 returned 25-30 Sep (GN, MSt).

Unfortunately the photos of a golden-plover at the Tijuana River mouth 15 Sep (JK) are such that the specific species remains in question. Six oystercatchers photographed at the tip of Pt. Loma 24 Sep (MSt) included three Black Oystercatchers, one easily identified as an American x Black Oystercatcher hybrid, and two likely American Oystercatchers—probably the same two present at near by Ballast Point 7-15 August. As stated by Jehl (1985), there is much hybridization between these two species along the northern Pacific coast of the Baja California Peninsula. The latest of the few Solitary Sandpipers in the County this fall were single birds at the Sorrento Valley Pump Station 13 Sep (SES), Lindo Lake in Lakeside 5 Sep (JS) and at Dairy Mart Ponds in the Tijuana River Valley 18 Sep (BJS). A juvenile Semipalmated Sandpiper on south San Diego Bay in Imperial Beach on 24 Sep (GN) was unusually late—most have moved through California by late August, and there are only one or two reports for October. Up to seven juvenile Baird's Sandpipers were found within the saltworks area at south San Diego Bay 1-19 Sep (RTP), one was near the Tijuana River mouth 3 Sep (JPa) and another was on San Elijo Lagoon 10 Sep (JMcM). Seven Pectoral Sandpipers were reported with single birds at south San Diego Bay 10-11 Sep (GN, RTP), the Sorrento Valley Pump Station 17-19 Sep (JPe), in the Tijuana River valley 20-22 Sep (DWA) and at the San Diego River mouth 25 Sep (DT), along with three together at south San Diego Bay 24 Sep (GN). Three juvenile Stilt Sandpipers, rare anywhere in California away from the Salton Sea, remained on south San Diego Bay in

Imperial Beach 10-13 Sep (GN).

A Black Tern, now rare on the coast of Southern California, was at the Tijuana River mouth 18-19 Sep (JK, RTP). Noteworthy was an Arctic Tern on the beach at the Tijuana River mouth 14 Sep (JPa)—this tern normally remains well offshore when migrating both north and south off California, and most found on beaches have varying amounts of oil on their feathers.

The number and variety of migrant passerines on the coast was disappointing. However one or two "goodies" were to be found by those looking. Only a few observers were able to see the Least Flycatcher at Ft. Rosecrans National Cemetery (FRNC) on Pt. Loma 16 Sep (BM), but a much more obliging Gray Flycatcher remained there 28-30 Sep (SBM, MSa). A Tropical Kingbird at the tide pools on Pt. Loma 23-24 Sep (CGE) may have been one of the up to three at nearby Ft. Rosecrans National Cemetery 27-30 Sep (EGK, SBM, GMcC).

A well studied Plumbeous Vireo on Point Loma (FRNC) 28-30 Sep (SBM) was the only one reported. Intriguing were reports of Pinyon Jays being heard twice in the McCain Valley in September (EE) and one seen at Cibbets Flat Campground in the Laguna Mountains 28 Sep (MSa)—could small numbers be wandering into the County? A Mountain Chickadee in the Tijuana River valley 14 Sep (CGE) and an Oak Titmouse on Pt. Loma (FRNC) 17-30 Sep (GN, SES) suggest a slight movement of mountain species to the coast.

Reports of wood warblers seen by multiple observers included a Tennessee Warbler on Pt. Loma (FRNC) 26 Sep (JK); three Chestnut-sided Warblers, with single birds on Pt. Loma (FRNC) 27-30 Sep (EGK) and 29 Sep (JW), and a third at nearby Liberty Station 30 Sep (DP); two Magnolia Warblers on Pt. Loma (FRNC), with one 16-17 Sep (BM, GMcC) and the other 26-27 Sep (EA, SBM); three Blackpoll Warblers, with

the first in Del Mar 26 Sep (SES) followed by single birds on Pt. Loma (FRNC) on 28 Sep (SBM) and 29 Sep (SES); single Black-and-white Warblers on Pt. Loma (FRNC) 17-18 Sep (GN, SES) and 24 Sep (HI); multiple American Redstarts, with one in the Tijuana River valley (Bird & Butterfly Garden) 7 Sep (EC), at least eight at scattered locations on Pt. Loma between 15 and 30 Sep (TAB, JZ, BM, EGK) and another at Famosa Slough 17 Sep (EGK); two Northern Waterthrushes, with one hitting a window at the San Diego Wild Animal Park near Escondido 13 Sep (KR *SDNHM) and a most cooperative bird at Famosa Slough 16-18 Sep (CA, EGK). A **Kentucky Warbler** photographed on Pt. Loma (FRNC) 25 Sep (DT, TRS) was no doubt the most unusual, there being less than twenty documented records for the County. A Palm Warbler at FRNC 26 Sep (JK), an Ovenbird at Cabrillo National Monument 28 Sep (MB) and a Hooded Warbler in Jacumba 24 Sep (JK) were unfortunately seen only by the reporting observers—there is a reluctance by some to endorse such "single observer" records lacking documentation.

A Clay-colored Sparrow was in Encinitas (Botanical Garden) 15 Sep (SES), and single birds were with Chipping Sparrows on Pt. Loma (FRNC) 24-30 Sep (GMcC, MSa) and 29 Sep (SES)—small numbers of this *Spizella* are found along the coast each fall. The only Summer Tanager reported was a "female type" on Pt. Loma (FRNC) 30 Sep (MSa). Two Bobolinks were found in the Tijuana River Valley 25 Sep (GN)—this species formerly occurred in small flocks in the Tijuana River Valley each fall, but is now only a casual visitor to the area. As expected, a few Yellow-headed Blackbirds continue to be found along the coast, as evident by single birds at south San Diego Bay 19 Sep (RTP), on Pt. Loma (FRNC) 10 and 23 Sep (AS, JZ), in the Tijuana River valley 10 Sep (DWA) and at Fairbanks Ranch in Del Mar 15 Sep (SES).

Listed observers: Christopher Adler, Douglas W. Aguillard, Eitan Altman, Michael Beeve, Thomas A. Blackman, Elizabeth Copper, Jon L. Dunn, Claude G. Edwards, Elias Elias, Hank Ingersoll, Paul Jorgensen, Eric G. Kallen, Jay Keller, Paul Konrad, Jim Kopitzke, Paul E. Lehman, Guy McCaskie, Jimmy McMorrان, Brennan Mulrooney, Sara B. Myers, Gary Nunn, Robert T. Patton, Dennis Parker, Jim Pawlicki, Jim Pea, Kim Roth, Matt Sadowski, Adam Searcy, Susan E. Smith, BJ Stacy, Trent R. Stanley, Jeremiah Stock, Mark Stratton, David Tris-
sel, Joseph Worley, Jim Zimmer.

San Diego Natural History Museum (SDNHM).

Literature Cited:

Jehl, J. R. Jr. 1985. Hybridization and evolution of oystercatchers on the Pacific coast of Baja California. *Ornithol. Monogr.* 36:484-504.

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

MEET A MEMBER: BARBARA CARLSON



Short Bio: I was born and raised in California. After teaching elementary school for a while, I changed careers to become a chiropractor. I still love it after many years! Immediate family consists of wonderful birder person Paul and wooly, wily, sweet

dog Roxie. I have always loved to travel, and birding certainly enhances this experience.

How long have you been birding?

I started birding in October 2003. I saw a cute little black and white bird while walking

Roxie. Wondering what its name was, I thumbed through a Peterson field guide and discovered I had just seen a Black Phoebe. After borrowing a co-worker's binoculars, I next identified a Yellow-rumped Warbler. I was hooked!

Do you have a favorite birding experience that you would like to share?

One that comes first to my mind is the rainy February day friends and I saw two tough county birds. First, after hours of searching, we saw Pinyon Jays on private property near Palomar Mountain. We then continued on to find an American Dipper. I should put "we" in parentheses because both of these birds were seen due to the perseverance of Mark J. Billings. Rain or no rain, while we were huddled in a cabin or in the weir, he persevered!

Do you have a favorite bird species? If so, what is it? Why?

My latest favorite is the White-tailed Tropicbird. But wait a while and it will change!

Are you a lister?? If so, care to share your numbers?

Yes, I am a lister, through and through. I keep an ABA area list, state and provincial lists, and county lists in California. One goal is to reach 500 California birds by the end of this year; I am very, very close.

What is your favorite San Diego birding location and why?

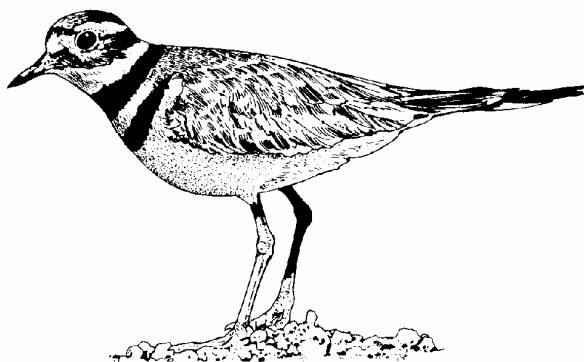
I do not have one. I like variety. Everything from Anza Borrego to the mountains to cemeteries to the ocean, I like them all. Seasons brings changes as to where to bird.

What is the best advice that you can give to a beginning birder?

Bird with people who know a lot, and go birding a lot!

What is the craziest thing that you have done to see a bird?

I worked until 6 p.m. on a Friday, came home and "slept" for a couple of hours, then left at 10 p.m. for Gilbert Water Ranch near Phoenix, Arizona, for a Baikal Teal, a state bird for me and a lifer for Paul. We arrived at 5 a.m., birded there for a couple of hours, and then returned home. Crazy but worth it!



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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

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