The SKIMMER

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SDFO NEWS

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, October 17, 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: Russell Campbell will discuss "3-D Bird Imaging."

"The digitization of specimen data has become completely integral to the field of museum science. It allows museums to maintain the longevity and accuracy of information tied to specimens, and it provides researchers with instant access to data from collections across the globe. Thanks to recent developments in 3-D modeling techniques, it is now possible to digitize the specimens themselves, further improving access to natural history collections. Throughout my career in zoological research, I've been involved with projects that aim to use and produce digital 3-D specimens for the analysis of their morphological characteristics. Currently, I'm leading the oBird project at the Moore Lab of Zoology. The oBird project is an effort to digitize bird specimens and the exterior morphological data they possess. Using a technique called photogrammetry we combine hundreds of photos of specimens to create 3D digital models that we will share on open access data repositories. We have two main objectives with oBird: to model a wide array of genera across all bird life, and to model a selection of bird species in ultraviolet (UV) light to study the occurrence of UV reflectance in birds."

Russell explores his love of animals through a wide variety of lab and field experiences, participating in projects focused on ichthyology, herpetology, mammalogy, and ornithology. During his free time he prefers to be outside searching for wildlife with friends and practicing his photography. After graduating from Oregon State University, Russell joined the Moore Lab oBird project under a NSF REPS grant where he contributes to the increased accessibility of museum specimens.

SDFO News *[cont.]*

Next month's meeting: Tuesday, November 21, same time same place. Program to be announced; see next month's newsletter for details.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY BIRD OBSERVATIONS, SEPTEMBER 2023

Compiled by Paul E. Lehman

San Diego County's fourth Yellow-bellied Flycatcher in the La Jolla Farms neighborhood from 19-21 Sep (AA, PEL) was enjoyed by many observers. A male Golden-winged Warbler at Hilleary Park in Poway on 25-26 Sep (LR) established approximately the sixth county record. An amazing *four* Broad-billed Hummingbirds were discovered, a male and female at the same feeders in Warner Springs on 22 Sep (HP), a male at flowering Desert Willows at Yaqui Well the same day (KC), and one at feeders in Pacific Beach on 23-24 Sep (GN). Other top-shelf vagrants included a Least Flycatcher at Pt. Loma on 9 Sep (LS), a Blue-headed Vireo at Buddy Todd Park on 21 Sep (PK, EMo), a Red-eyed Vireo at Ft. Rosecrans National Cemetery (hereafter FRNC) from 17-22 Sep (DH) and another at San Dieguito County Park on 22 Sep (PEL), and an early Gray Catbird at FRNC on 9-10 Sep (LS) followed by another there on 22 Sep (GN). A Lark Bunting at Carmel Valley Community Park on 19-20 Sep (DT) was followed by a second individual nearby at Torrey Hills Park on 22 Sep (SB). Single Prothonotary Warblers were at Lake Murray from 18-22 Sep (MSa), in residential La Costa on 22-23 Sep (KO, JA), and in Borrego Springs on 23 Sep (JP); and up to two Grace's Warblers were at FRNC on 16-17 Sep (NB).

Establishing only the fourth San Diego County record, this Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was at La Jolla Farms from 19-21 Sep. *Photo by Alex Abela*

Slightly more expected rarities included a Stilt Sandpiper in Del Mar on 3 Sep (PEL); single Eastern Kingbirds near Batiquitos Lagoon from 10-12 Sep (TG) and at the Dairy Mart Oibds on 11 Sep (PEL); up to two Bobolinks in the Tijuana River Valley on 27-28 Sep (DT); single Orchard Orioles at Holy Cross Cemetery on 15 Sep (PEL), at FRNC from 15 Sep-2 Oct (BFi), and in the Tijuana River Valley on 18 Sep (PEL); Baltimore Orioles at NAS North Island on 18 Sep (BFl) and in Balboa Park on 29 Sep (JTS); and an early Rose-breasted Grosbeak in Pacific Beach on 1-2 Sep (GN), with another on the more typical date of 23 Sep in Chula Vista (JK). Warblers included Virginia's in Del Mar 6-9 Sep (DAK), Pacific Beach 10-13 Sep (GN), and Carlsbad 18-19 Sep (DT); Northern Parula inland in Fallbrook on 29 Sep (SS); Magnolia in Carlsbad 17-18 Sep (PGN); Blackburnians at Carmel Valley Community Park 15 Sep (DAK), Point Loma Nazarene University 17-19 Sep (LC), Villa La Jolla Park

A male Golden-winged Warbler in Poway on 25-26 Sep established approximately the sixth county record. *Photo by Joshua Joun*

Four different Broad-billed Hummingbirds were discovered in San Diego County during September, including a male (above) and female (below) at the same feeders in Warner Springs on 22 Sep. *Photos by Hans Petermann (above) and Sally Veach (below)*

23-25 Sep (BSt), Whelan Lake 29 Sep-1 Oct (TG), and FRNC 29 Sep (PLa, SV); Chestnut-sideds in Carlsbad 13 Sep (TG), residential Pt. Loma 18 Sep (S&KM), Encinitas 19 Sep (BSw), and Villa La Jolla Park 23 Sep-1 Oct (JD); and a Prairie at the Bird & Butterfly Garden 2 Sep (JP). A Bell's Vireo at Chollas Reservoir on 10 Sep (BW) was away from known breeding areas and thus either a true migrant or a shorter-distance disperser. Single adult Zone-tailed Hawks at Warner Springs on 22 Sep (HP), at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park on 26 Sep (ebird), and over Los Huecos Road on 27 Sep (MSe) could all well be returning birds.

This month hosted a bumper crop of Tennessee Warblers, Lucy's Warblers, Painted Redstarts, and Painted Buntings. Tennessee Warblers totaled approximately 16 individuals (m.obs), all found near the coast. Lucy's totaled seven, with up to two for lengthy stays at both the Nobel Athletic Area in University City from 3 Sep-1 Oct Sep (PEL) and at Carmel Valley Community Park from 14 Sep-2 Oct (DAK), these birds perhaps performing a molt migration. Single Lucy's were in Normal Heights from 7-15 Sep (BSt), at the Dairy Mart Ponds on 7 Sep (M&PT), and at FRNC on 16 Sep (AN). Painted Redstarts totaled *six*, whereas

A tale of two Lark Buntings: Carmel Valley Community Park on 19-20 Sep (left) and nearby Torrey Hills Park on 22 Sep (right). *Photos by Haim Weizman (left) and Sean Buchanan (right)*

This Prothonotary Warbler at Lake Murray from 18-22 Sep proved elusive but was still enjoyed by many observers. *Photo by Matt Sadowski*

a good fall typically produces a single migrant, with up to two birds at FRNC from 16-18 Sep (NF), and singles at Point Loma Nazarene University on 20 Sep (GN), at Doyle Park in University City also on 20 Sep (SV), at Villa La Jolla Park on 23 Sep (PM), and at Town Centre in University City on 24 Sep (JD). Painted Buntings were not only in record numbers but were also widespread. Following two individuals in late August, September produced *six* additional singles, at Lake Murray 1-2 Sep (MSa), Nobel Athletic Area 7-8 Sep (PM), Jacumba 8 Sep (PEL), Carmel Valley Community Park 13-19 Sep (AA), FRNC 15-20 Sep (BM, AH, RW), and Normal Heights 24 Sep (BSt).

Totals for some of our more regular-occurring scarce and vagrant landbirds included three Tropical Kingbirds, one Plumbeous Vireo, ten Bank Swallows, four Purple Martins, two Clay-colored Sparrows, four Northern Waterthrushes, ten Black-and-white Warblers (including one inland in Rancho Bernardo 29 Sep [AA]), ten American Redstarts, five Blackpoll Warblers (including one farther inland than usual in Poway 20 Sep [DP]), one Palm Warbler, and five Summer Tanagers (including individuals well inland in Escondido 16 Sep [eBird] and at Jacumba 26 Sep [PEL]).

Offshore highlights included an impressive *five* Nazca Boobies and two Nazca/Masked Boobies during the pelagic trip on 10 Sep between six miles off Mission Bay and the 30-Mile Bank (BVAS). Additional (?) Nazca/Masked Boobies were off Mission Bay on 6 Sep (SG) and at the Nine-Mile Bank on 30 Sep (BVAS), an adult Nazca was at the San Diego Trough on 24 Sep (DJ), a Red-billed Tropicbird was only three miles southwest of Pt. Loma on 1 Sep (Searcher), and a reasonable total of 300 Least Storm-Petrels were at the 30-Mile Bank on 30 Sep (BVAS).

Continuing from previous months, Lake Murray's summering White-eyed Vireo since 27 May was still present 27 Sep (MSa) and the failed-nesting male Yellow-throated Vireo at Champagne Lakes north of Escondido continued from 7 Jun through 12 Sep (AJ).

Stilt Sandpiper (right) averages one or two per year, and the county's second this fall was in Del Mar on 3 Sep, here with a Pectoral Sandpiper (left). *Photo by Dean Budd*

This well-watched Eastern Kingbird was present near Batiquitos Lagoon in Carlsbad from 10-12 Sep (here 10 Sep). *Photo by Tito Gonzalez*

A fine total of five Blackburnian Warblers included this individual at Whelan Lake from 29 Sep-1 Oct. *Photo by Tito Gonzalez*

Prairie Warbler averages about one or two records per fall. This individual was at the Bird & Butterfly Garden on 2 Sep. *Photo by Nick Thorpe*

The juvenile American Oystercatcher at La Jolla was still present 2 Oct (m.obs) and the hybrid adult at Cabrillo National Monument was reported through 1 Sep (v.obs). Up to two Neotropic Cormorants remained at Lake Murray through 29 Sep (MSa), two birds in the San Diego River mouth area were last seen 9 Sep (m.obs), two "new" birds at Sweetwater Reservoir from 2 Sep-1 Oct Sep (PEL) may have been defectors from Lake Murray, and a new individual was in the mountains at Lake Cuyamaca on 2 Sep (GH). Up to four Harris's Hawks remained at Jacumba 29 Sep+ (PEL), but only a single bird remained at Shelter Valley 5 Sep (NC).

The tame Cackling Goose, formerly of Lake Murray, was still at Lindo Lake through 1 Oct (MD), and the summering Ring-necked Duck at Sweetwater Reservoir was still present 11 Sep (PEL). Forty Blue-winged Teal at the San Diego River mouth on 20 Sep (PEL) was a good count. Scarce-but-regular September shorebirds included the continuing Pacific Golden-Plover at the Silver Strand/South San Diego Bay Salt Works from 10 Aug-28 Sep (PEL, NB) and a presumed returning individual to the Tijuana River mouth area from 24 Aug-9 Sep (MSa); at least nine Baird's Sandpipers on South San Diego Bay during the month (MS, RTP, SL) and one at Borrego Springs on 12 Sep (RT); at least 11 Pectoral Sandpipers along the coast

The *six* Painted Redstarts found during September set a new seasonal record. This bird was at Villa La Jolla Park on 23 Sep. *Photo by Braxton Landsman*

A record number of Painted Buntings included this individual at Carmel Valley Community Park from 13-19 Sep (here 13 Sep). *Photo by Alex Abela*

(SB, PEL, NF); and a high total of 17 Solitary Sandpipers county-wide (SB, PEL, DJ, RT, MG). A flock of 137 Whimbrels at J St. in Chula Vista on 14 Sep (DJ) and 27 Lesser Yellowlegs at the Tijuana Estuary the same day (MSa) were both very good counts. Common Terns continued in good numbers since August, with highs of 64 at the San Diego River mouth on 3 Sep (NF) and 36 at Crown Pt. on Mission Bay the same day (JD), as well as 115 offshore on 10 Sep (BVAS). Following a very good August for Black Terns, the month of September was lackluster, with singles at the Salt Works 12 Sep (JTS) and at the San Diego River mouth 16-19 Sep (DB).

Unusual inland, an adult Common Tern was at Sweetwater Reservoir on 17-18 Sep (RB), an Elegant Tern was there on 2 Sep (PEL), and a continuing Brown Pelican was on Lake Cuyamaca through 5 Sep (TH). A Swainson's Hawk at nearby Stonewall Mine on 3 Sep (EMa) was rare.

West of normal, an Acorn Woodpecker was at Lake Murray 2 Sep (BW) and a Black-throated Sparrow was near Ramona 9 Sep (BM). Several each White-winged Doves, Brewer's Sparrows, and Yellow-headed Blackbirds were found near the coast (m.obs), where rare but annual in small numbers. A coastal-slope Gray Flycatcher in Rancho Santa Fe on 5 Sep (JC) was somewhat early, as was a Swainson's Thrush at the Bird & Butterfly Garden from 2-4 Sep (NT) and an adult "Oregon" Dark-eyed Junco well away from nesting areas in the Tijuana River Valley from 18 Sep+ (PEL). A flock of eight Cackling Geese over NAS North Island on 30 Sep (BFl) set a new all-time early arrival date. In contrast, a juvenile Least Tern at the San Diego River mouth from 18-20 Sep (HZ) was quite late. So were a Black-chinned Sparrow and Hooded Oriole at Jacumba on 26 Sep (PEL). It is uncertain whether the sparrow was a very rarely detected stealth-migrant or was from a close-by breeding population.

Red-breasted Nuthatches were clearly on the move, with many sightings of single birds and small groups, and with a high count of a dozen at FRNC on 17 Sep (v.obs). Two made it to the lower desert at Agua Caliente County Park on 29 Sep (eBird).

Acknowledgments: Many thanks to Sara B. Mayers and Guy McCaskie for their careful review.

Cited observers: Observers listed are limited to those finding and identifying each species. Some sightings reported to *eBird* are included without specific attribution. Alex Abela, Jenna Asperslag, Ruslan Balagansky, Nick Barber, Sean Buchanan, Dean Budd, Buena Vista Audubon Society pelagic trip, Nancy Christensen, Luca Cinus, Jeff Clingan, Keith Condon, Mark Dayton, Jay Desgrosellier, Beth Fife (BFi), Brian Flick (BFl), Nathan French, Steven Glynn, Tito Gonzalez, Matt Gould, Dan Hayes, Gjon Hazard, Alison Hiers, Terry Hurst, Dan Jehl, Angela Johnson, Dan A. King, John Knox, Patti Koger, Patti

Langen (PLa), Paul E. Lehman, Steven Lima, Eve Martin (EMa), Sara & Keith Mayers, Ethan Monk (EMo), Paul Mulholland, Brennan Mulrooney, Jane Mygatt, P. Gretchen Nell, Andrew Newmark, Gary Nunn, Kasia Obrzut, Robert T. Patton, Jim Pawlicki, Hans Petermann, Deborah Porter, Lisa Ruby, Matt Sadowski (MSa), Mel Senac (MSe), Justyn T. Stahl, Lucas Stephenson, Steven Sutton, Brandon Stidum (BSt), Barbara Swanson (BSw), Robert Theriault, Millie & Peter Thomas, Nick Thorpe, David Trissel, Sally Veach, Ron Wilson, Barbara Wise, and Hanna Zhao.

m.obs = many observers

v.obs = various observers

Following a very good August for Black Terns, September produced only two individuals, including this bird at the South San Diego Bay Salt Works on 12 Sep. *Photo by Justyn T. Stahl*

SAN DIEGO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

President Nancy Christensen (760) 415-1744
president@sandiegofieldornithologists.org
Vice-president Rick Grove (661) 609-7910
vicepresident@sandiegofieldornithologists.org
Secretary Charlene Glacy (619) 851-1917
secretary@sandiegofieldornithologists.org
Treasurer Conny Jamison (619) 269-3264
treasurer@sandiegofieldornithologists.org
Program Chair Rick Grove (661) 609-7910
vicepresident@sandiegofieldornithologists.org
Membership Chair Eve Martin
membership@sandiegofieldornithologists.org

Publishing
Skimmer Editor John Walters (619) 267-1821
johnfwalters5552@gmail.com
Webmaster Russ Christensen (858) 344-2290
webmaster@sandiegofieldornithologists.org

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 **johnfwalters5552@gmail.com**

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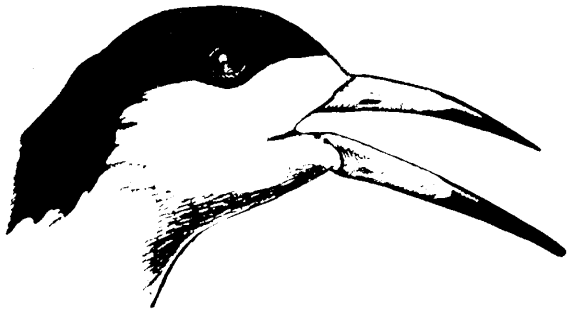
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