



# Band Tales

Palomar Audubon Society  
A Chapter of the  
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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July-August  
2010

Editor  
Arne Christiansen

## Birdwatching and Conservation

**B**irdwatchers are usually also conservationists, since our hobby is generally most enjoyable and most productive in areas protected in some way (as State Parks, National Forests, Open Space Preserves and the likes). So while birdwatching often benefits from conservation, the reverse is seldom the case. One of these rare occasions, however, is available now and locally – you can go birdwatching and help preserve a natural area!

I am talking about Poway's Rattlesnake Canyon, a suburban gem much less disturbed than most city canyons in the San Diego area, and maintained by a grass-root effort to remove invasive plants and to complete a biological inventory, which will support a proposal to the City of Poway to permanently protect the site as an Open Space Preserve.

While the canyon is popular with hikers and wildflower enthusiasts, the local birding community does not seem to have discovered it yet, which is unfortunately reflected in its short bird list of little more than 50 species observed during a few casual visits (Our yard list stands at almost 80, and we live only a couple of miles away.). Based on the diverse habitat from riparian forest along the intermittent stream to sagebrush, chaparral and grassland you can expect much more from Rattlesnake Canyon during any season. Summer residents should for instance include Oak Titmouse and Blue Grosbeak (seen near-by, but not yet recorded in the canyon), winter visitors Dark-eyed Junco and Mountain Chickadee (ditto), and during spring and fall migration almost anything is possible (We have had Least Bell's Vireo, Nashville and Tennessee Warblers, Allen's and Rufous Hummingbirds and other unexpected guests on our property). But even if you did not see anything new to the canyon, observing some of our uncommon natives would provide you with a few pleasant hours – or when did you last encounter Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Willow Flycatcher, Canyon Wren, American Redstart, Black-throated Gray Warbler and Lazuli Bunting that close to home?

So here is the challenge: Find any new addition to the canyon's present bird list (available by e-mail per request), or rediscover one of the species not seen for years (Golden Eagle, California Gnatcatcher and Yellow-breasted Chat come to mind; the latter has recently been heard but not seen). And after you have had a good day pursuing your favorite hobby, send me a list of your

observations in support of protecting the canyon (Part of it has already been approved for residential development).

Directions to Rattlesnake Canyon: From I-15, take the Camino del Norte exit East and follow Twin Peaks Road almost to its end. After crossing Espola Road, turn right on Range Park Road; the trailhead is on your left. (Thomas Guide p. 1190 H1&2)

Once you are on the trail, you have several options to explore, including hiking up to Tooth Rock, one of Poway's landmarks, on your left, and a side canyon on your right leading to a little mine and beyond.

W. Jürgen Schrenk  
[wjschrenk@att.net](mailto:wjschrenk@att.net)

## PICNIC PICS

**O**n Sunday, June 13<sup>th</sup> nearly fifty PAS members and guests enjoyed a great "old-fashioned" picnic at the Palomares House in Fallbrook. Below are a couple of photos, courtesy Marj Freda, of the event:



*Cheers, podner!*

*... which reminds  
me of the time  
when ...*



## Inside this Band Tales

*A Birds-Eye View* ..... page 2  
*Conservation Notes* ..... page 3  
*Field Trips*..... pages 4,5  
*Programs* ..... page 5

## A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

*Doug Nail*

**W**ell, where do I start? How about that picnic! We had a great day for a picnic here in Fallbrook at the Palomares House, which is owned by the Fallbrook Land Conservancy and we had a great crowd of Palomar Audubon folks present. The food was good and with a little wait... it got even better. The raffle netted Palomar Audubon about \$650.00 and we will use that money to help us further our plans to work more with local groups who share our interests and goals. I want to thank all of you who brought raffle items and hors d'oeuvres.... they really made a difference. Those who helped set up and take down were a BIG help as well.... **THANK YOU!**

I feel a little guilty having won one of the two big raffle items, along with John Walker, but to be honest I really wanted to win one of those trips to assist the Wildlife Research Team when they band, tag and affix the satellite transmitter to a Golden Eagle here in San Diego County. We will get our pictures taken with the eagle. We will also get to name the eagle and receive an annual tracking report on where our eagle has spent it's time. So you can see how excited I am! I will keep you all posted on the upcoming event.

Through your contributions and work we have been able to donate \$5,000 to the Wildlife Research Institute so they can continue their important work on behalf of the raptors on the West Coast and particularly those that are found here in our PAS area either as migrants (Ferruginous Hawks, Bald Eagles and some Golden Eagles) or as full time residents.

We were also pleased to donate \$1000 each to the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy and the Escondido Creek Conservancy. As budgets get cut both of these organizations are finding it harder to do their important work, so know that your dollars are going to organizations who help create and/or manage habitat for our wildlife to continue to live.

We've been turning our birding focus to the mountains as many of our coastal birds have migrated north to breed. We've had great looks at our spring and summer migrants and the temperatures make birding a lot easier in the mountains. Jim Beckman has organized some great trips to find mountain birds such as; Mountain Quail, Mountain Chickadees, Brown Creepers, White-breasted Nuthatches, Pygmy Nuthatches, Steller's Jays and the like. So please join us when you can...it's free! I know we'll have some great fall trips as well. Plan on joining us.

Our trips outside of our area have been doing very well. The Arizona Trip in August is filled and we have a waiting list. Hal and Dianne Benham have already put together a great trip to Trinidad and Tobago for January 6-15, 2011. We have room (as of this writing) and this trip looks very doable for any of us. We will only have two venues once we arrive at the Asa Wright Nature Center, so there won't be a lot of packing and unpacking and there won't be a lot of hiking. So, if you want to see a lot of new birds in a great setting, this is sure a wonderful place to do it. Read about the trip on our website: [PalomarAudubon.org](http://PalomarAudubon.org). You can download a form to join us there as well.

Good birding!



## TRINIDAD-TOBAGO, HERE WE COME!

**T**his coming January, PAS members will be traveling to Trinidad & Tobago for an exciting birding experience. The trip will run from January 6-15 and is described in detail on the PAS website at <http://palomaraudubon.org/news.html>.

Trinidad and Tobago is a small island in the southern Caribbean northeast of Venezuela. It hosts over 450 species of birds, including all the families of South America. Highlight birds include scarlet ibis, oilbird, bell birds, boobies, manakins and an array of hummers. The group will spend 5 days at the Asa Wright Nature Center, in the mountains of Trinidad's northern range. The center has been recognized by Audubon Magazine as one of "the world's ultimate outposts." Covering 1500 acres in the Arim and Aripo Valleys includes excellent accommodations and birding opportunities. We will transfer by air to Tobago where we will stay at the Blue Waters Inn tucked away in it's own secluded bay on 46 acres of lush tropical grounds. All the rooms face the ocean and feature a balcony or porch for relaxing.

The trip is limited to 12 participants and will be filled on a first-come-first-served basis. Drop an email to Hal or Dianne Benham at [davinci@san.rr.com](mailto:davinci@san.rr.com) if you have questions.



## CONSERVATION NOTES

*Char Glacy*

It is difficult for me to talk about local conservation efforts when everyday I look at the environmental disaster in the Gulf. Is there a lesson here, probably many? But as long as we are dependent on oil there will be drilling and I can only hope the lessons learned provide greater safety factors and regulation oversight.

Audubon has been on the frontlines from the very beginning and was one of the first rapid responders to have volunteers on the ground when U.S. Fish & Wildlife needed them, and the volunteer response effort continues to grow. So many people want to help. A new national Volunteer Response Center was created by The National Audubon Society to channel the energies of a growing force of volunteers seeking to help birds, wildlife, and habitat. They opened the new facility in Moss Point, Mississippi and organizers are being deployed to affected areas in three other coastal states to contact, coordinate and mobilize more than 22,000 volunteers who have signed up with Audubon and that number continues to grow.

Early in the crisis, Audubon teams responded to urgent requests from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Louisiana, recruiting and scheduling scores of volunteers to work dockside shifts to assist federal and state wildlife agencies in their recovery and transport of oiled and injured birds. Volunteers are now serving as "Wildlife Transport Facilitators" 7 days/week at four sites. Across the Gulf Coast, volunteers screened for special skills are helping to identify and mark fragile coastal areas to protect habitats and nesting areas from damage as clean-up operations become necessary. This remains an important part of their spill response.

**While it is not possible for all of us to head to the Gulf Coast to volunteer**, there are ways that we all can make a difference right here right now. One way is your continued membership in Palomar Audubon. Your contributions have supported the conservation efforts of three local organizations. This year we gave \$5000 to the Wildlife Research Institute for their Golden Eagle Program (photo on page 5); \$1000 to the Escondido Creek Conservancy; and another \$1000 to the San Dieguito River Park. By financially supporting organizations that share our mission, members of Palomar Audubon are helping to preserve and protect important bird habitat.

**Other ways to help are by participating in habitat restoration projects and bird surveys.** The San Dieguito River Park is working to improve the area for two very vulnerable bird species -- the coastal cactus wren and the California gnatcatchers, still recovering from the 2007 fires. They provide tools, training, and

water and snacks. On the third Saturday of each month San Dieguito River Park Volunteers work together on various Habitat Restoration projects.

Another opportunity to help is with the The San Dieguito Lagoon/River Valley monthly bird survey. This new monthly bird count was organized to monitor the San Dieguito Lagoon/River Valley. Ed Mirsky, Jayne Lesley, Mona Baumgartel and Sue Smith are hoping to get a group of committed birders to help with counting on a regular basis. It is now in its sixth month and a total of 153 species has been seen in the five count areas which range from the ocean to Fairbanks Ranch Village. The Sunday, June 6th count observed 85 species including 5 new species: Swainson's Hawk, Common Moorhen, Allen's Hummingbird, Ash-throated Flycatcher, and Phainopepla.

The group meets at the south (dead) end of San Andres Drive. It's on the east side of the Albertson's shopping center across from Flower Hill. Exit Via de la Valle from I- 5, go east and you'll see Albertson's on the south side. Dates for the next three monthly counts are: July 11, August 8, and Sept 5. All counts are on Sunday morning beginning at 7:30 AM. They tally the species seen at 11:30 A.M. Bring a lunch. Beginners are welcome and don't forget your binoculars.

Char Glacy

## THANKS!

Dear Palomar Audubon Members,

Thank you so much for the flowers! They are beautiful and are in the middle of my dining room table:)

The surgery went very well. Actually, it followed the best case scenario. I am recovering quickly. I can get out and walk. I still have some pain; however, that is to be expected for several more weeks. It is nothing that can't be handled with ibuprofen by day and a pain pill by night.

For those of you who may not know, I had a lung biopsy. They removed a section of a cancerous tumor that was about the size of a marble. This was done in order to do genetic testing on the tumor. I should hear in a week or so if I have the gene that will allow me to enter the clinical trial.

Once again, thank you to the club for the gorgeous flowers. I smile whenever I look at them.

Love, Michelle Matson



## PROGRAMS

*Programs are suspended during the summer months, but check the September-October issue of **Band Tales** for those we have scheduled for the fall. They promise to be great!*

## FIELD TRIPS

*Jim Beckman*

Whether a seasoned birder or a beginner, you are welcome to join us. For more information call the trip leader shown below. Heavy rain cancels trips. Locations in Thomas Guide Coordinates are shown in parenthesis as (Page-Column Row). Ratings: 1=easy, suitable for all levels, 2=moderate, a bit more walking and possibly some hilly terrain, 3=challenging, longer hikes and may involve some steep terrain.

**Please Note: Summer birding can be very warm so be sure to bring sufficient water on walks.**

Saturday, July 3rd

**No Trip – Holiday Weekend**

Saturday, July 10, 8:00 a.m.

**Lindo Lake**

Lakeside, CA

**(1232 B-3) Rating: 2**

From North County, take I-15 south to Highway 52, east to Mission Gorge Road. Continue east on Mission Gorge Road to Woodside Avenue. Go under the Highway 67 overpass staying on Woodside Avenue (into Lakeside) to the end of the road, with the parking lot on the left. From San Diego, take I-8 east to Highway 67 north, and take the Riverford Road exit. After exiting, turn left on Woodside Avenue (into Lakeside) and continue to the end of the road, with the parking lot on the left.

Leader: Penny Hernandez

760-746-8315

Saturday, July 17, 8:00 a.m.

**Tijuana Estuary/7<sup>th</sup> Street**

Imperial Beach

**(1349-F1) Rating: 2**

Travel south on I-5 from San Diego and exit west on Coronado Avenue, which becomes Imperial Beach Boulevard. Turn left on 3rd Street to Caspian Way, turn left and then right to the Tijuana Estuary Visitor Center parking lot.

Leader: Sally Sanderson

760-749-6995

Saturday, July 24, 8:00 a.m.

**Torrey Pines State Reserve**

San Diego/Del Mar

**(1207 J1&H3) Rating: 2**

Since there is a \$10/vehicle parking fee, carpooling is suggested. We will meet at a nearby Park & Ride and carpool from there. From I-5, take the Carmel Valley Road exit and drive west to the first stoplight @ Pointe Del Mar Road. Turn left into the parking lot. Initially, we will bird along the road south to the wastewater pump station. Later, returning to our cars, we will drive west to the Reserve entrance on Carmel Valley Road, and then later, continue on to the Reserve entrance on South

Camino Del Mar (Coast Highway.) Here we will bird on the top of the bluffs overlooking the ocean. Torrey Pines State Reserve is located within the San Diego city limits and yet remains one of the wildest stretches of land on our Southern California coast. Its 2,000 acres of land are as they were before San Diego was developed with the chaparral plant community, the rare and elegant Torrey Pine trees, miles of unspoiled beaches, and a lagoon that is vital to migrating seabirds.

Leader: Jack Friery

619-218-7342

Saturday, July 31, 8:00 a.m.

**Guajome Regional Park**

Oceanside

**(1067-D7) Rating: 2**

From Highway 78 in Oceanside, exit north on College Boulevard curving left and drive 4.4 miles to Highway 76. Make a right turn and continue east about ½ mile to Lake Guajome Road. Turn right (south) and drive up the hill past the park entrance. We usually convene on this road beyond the park entrance since we gather well before the park opens.

Leader: David Mathis

760-754-5215

Saturday, August 7, 8:00 a.m.

**Robb Field/San Diego River Floodway**

San Diego

**(1267-J5) Rating: 1**

We will visit two locations along the San Diego River Floodway to look for early migrant and returning shorebirds, often still in breeding plumage, and post-breeding dispersal Elegant Terns. From North County take Highway 163S to I-8W and drive toward Ocean Beach. Make a slight left at Sunset Cliffs Blvd. and then stay in the right lane. Turn right onto West Point Loma Boulevard and then right at Bacon Street. Drive straight ahead to the Robb Field parking area near the tennis courts at the east end. Bring a scope if you have one. We will also visit the nearby San Diego River Flood Control Channel and/or Famosa Slough.

Leader: Jim Kerr

858-442-4726

Saturday, August 14, 8:00 a.m.

**San Elijo Lagoon**

Solana Beach

**(1167-E6) Rating: 2**

This is a good spot to find early fall migrants. Take I-5 to Lomas Santa Fe Drive. Go west to North Rios Avenue. Turn right (north) and go all the way to the end of North Rios Avenue. Park and meet at the end of the street near

# **B**FIELD TRIPS, from Page 4

the barricade. Bring a scope, if you have one, and water and plan for warm weather.

Leader: Jim Beckman

858-792-5526

Saturday, August 21, 8:00 a.m.

## **Santee Lakes**

Santee, CA

**(1231-A5) Rating: 2**

From I-15 go east on Highway 52. Exit at Mast Boulevard. Continue east on Mast Boulevard to Fanita Parkway. Turn right at Fanita Parkway. The entrance to Santee Lakes is on the right. Car entry fee is \$4. Meet in the parking lot between lakes 4 and 5.

Leader: Jeff Ebright

858-484-3932

Saturday, August 28, 8:00 a.m.

## **Dairy Mart Pond/Tijuana River Valley**

San Diego

**(1350 -D5) Rating: 2**

From North County, take I-15 south and merge with the I-5 south to the Dairy Mart Road Exit. Turn right on Dairy Mart Road (south.) Meet just past the concrete bridge next to the large pond on the west side of Dairy Mart Road. We will also caravan a short distance to the TJRV Park Headquarters (public restroom and bird feeders) and then visit the nearby Bird & Butterfly Gardens where we might see the elusive Black-throated Magpie Jay.

Leader: Jim Beckman 858-792-5526

Saturday, September 4, 8:00 a.m.

## **Kit Carson Park**

Escondido

**(1150- C1) Rating: 1**

From I-15 in Escondido, exit east on Via Rancho Parkway and drive about one mile northeast to the Park Road entrance at the stop light. Turn left, and proceed on Park Road about ¾ mile to the Amphitheater parking lot on the right. Woodland, riparian, and open-area habitats will usually get us a nice list of resident birds.

Leader: Sunny Christiansen

858-487-0731



Jeff Ebright, PAS Treasurer, presents a check for \$5,000 to Dave Bitner of Wildlife Research Institute

## **Palomar Audubon Society Chapter-only Membership**

*Mail your application to:*

**Palomar Audubon Society**

**P. O. Box 2483**

**Escondido, CA 92033-2483**

Membership in the Palomar Audubon Society includes a subscription to **Band Tales**, Palomar Audubon's bi-monthly newsletter, and an invitation to our monthly programs and weekly field trips.

☐ *New Member - \$20* ☐ *Renewal - \$20*

☐ *New Family Member - \$25* ☐ *Renewal - \$25*

*(payable to Palomar Audubon Society)*

☐ *Contribution* \_\_\_\_\_

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**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

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*100% of Chapter Membership dues supports projects locally.*

☐ **Please check here if you are interested in National Audubon Society membership.**

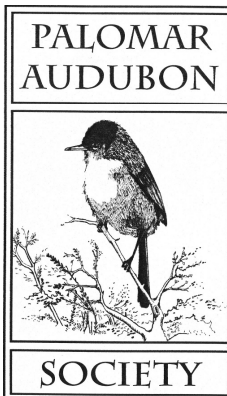
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*(Chapter Affiliation)*

# Band Tales

## July-August, 2010

The **Band Tales** is an official publication of the Palomar Audubon Society; it is issued bi-monthly and sent to all members as a part of their National Audubon Society membership or Palomar Audubon Society Chapter-only membership.



### Band Tales

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**P.O. Box 2483**  
**Escondido, CA 92033-2483**

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## NO BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETINGS DURING JULY AND AUGUST

*No General Meetings are scheduled either for the months of  
 July and August. Meetings resume in September.  
 See the September-October issue of **Band Tales** for details.*

*Note: Terrific Bird Walks are scheduled all summer. Join us for the fun..*

## QUICK CALENDAR

*July 3*  
*July 10*  
*July 17*  
*July 24*  
*July 31*  
*August 7*  
*August 14*  
*August 21*  
*August 28*  
*September 4*

### No Trip – Holiday Weekend

**Lindo Lake Walk**

**Tijuana Estuary/7<sup>th</sup> Street Walk**

**Torrey Pines State Reserve Walk**

**Guajome Regional Park Walk**

**Robb Field/San Diego River Floodway Walk**

**San Elijo Lagoon Walk**

**Santee Lakes Walk**

**Dairy Mart Pond/Tijuana River Valley Walk**

**Kit Carson Park Walk**