



# Band Tales

Palomar Audubon Society  
A Chapter of the  
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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July-August  
2012

Editor  
Arne Christiansen

## MAGEE MARSH TRIP REPORT

*Hal and Dianne Benham*

On May 16th, seven happy birders from PAS met our guide, Adrian Binns, at the Detroit Airport for what was to be an amazing, fast-paced week of birding. Those lucky seven were Beverly Warburton, Joan Comito, Lyn and Malinda Gamelson, Gary Grantham and Dianne and Hal Benham. Adrian believes in keeping the limit to seven participants plus the driver, so that everyone will be comfortable in the van, and so that he can give individualized attention to every participant. We all felt that it was a perfect sized group, and Adrian Binns was the perfect guide. We all got along well and had a wonderful time.

We were on the famous 1-mile boardwalk at Magee Marsh, for at least part of the day, five out of seven days. Magee Marsh, on the south shore of Lake Erie in northwestern Ohio, has been described as “the Warbler Capital of the World”. The boardwalk winds its way through a 7-acre woodlot that is strategically positioned between Lake Erie and marshes of Ottawa NWR. As large numbers of warblers, vireos, orioles, thrushes and swallows make their journey north, this migrant hotspot provided excellent opportunities for all of us to see them up close---often right at eye level! One day we found 23 species of warblers, 4 vireos, 6 thrushes, various flycatchers, and orioles all in a single day! Imagine Blue-headed Vireos, brilliantly colorful Canada, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Bay-breasted and Blackburnian Warblers, Indigo Buntings and Scarlet Tanagers all at close range! We also got good, long looks at the specialty birds we had come to see: The Connecticut Warbler and the Mourning Warbler. These secretive birds scurry along the ground and low-lying branches, like little mice. We all cheered and celebrated when we finally found the Connecticut Warbler on our last day on the boardwalk!

During the week we visited a number of other hotspots, including Ottawa NWR, Maumee Bay SP and Metzger Marsh WA. One evening we had a dusk outing to watch the American Woodcock display near the Black Swamp Bird Observatory. This amazing display left us in awe, and was voted AMONG the highlights of the trip!

We finished our week in central Michigan with an early morning forest service tour of the Jack Pine WA where the endangered Kirtland’s Warbler breeds. We not only got incredible views of this rare and beautiful bird, but

photographs too! This was a life bird for all seven participants, and was a fabulous way to end a very memorable trip!

All of us highly recommend this trip; it is definitely one that should be added to any birder’s bucket list!



*(Our group for the Magee Marsh trip)*

*(Guide, Adrian Binns, pointing out birds)*



*(Searching for birds on the Magee Marsh Boardwalk)*



*(The endangered Kirtland's Warbler)*



*(Kirtland's Warbler, singing)*



*(American Woodcock)*



## Inside this Band Tales

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## A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

*Jeff Ebright*

While our fabulous picnic is fresh in my mind, I wish to give a special thanks to Penny Hernandez and Sunny Christiansen for putting the picnic together. They started the planning back at the start of year. They found a great location for the picnic and did a great job of organizing the volunteers to pull it all together for a fun time by all. They put in a lot of time and effort for this party. I also wish to thank all the many volunteers who worked to make the picnic a success (see photos on page 3.)



At the end of my first year as your president, I want to thank the Board and the volunteers who have worked to keep the organization functioning well. I feel we were successful this year in improving communication and strengthening our ties to local conservation organizations. I hope that you have found the new PAS blog, articles available at the website, photo gallery, and bird identification classes informative. Those that went on our trips to Salton Sea and Magee Marsh have told me how much they enjoyed them.

Next year we will face several challenges as we work to align our efforts with Audubon's new strategic plan, work to prevent harmful development in the Ramona Grassland Preserve, continue improvement to our website, fill key volunteer positions, and continue to grow our affiliation with local conservation groups.

As always, I would like to hear your thoughts. Feel free to talk to me at one of our events or send an email to [palomaraudubon@gmail.com](mailto:palomaraudubon@gmail.com).

Good Birding!

### NOTE: NEW SPECIES NAMES

Bert and Sharon Kersey just returned from a three-month motor home trip to the south and met author Bill Thompson (editor of Bird Watcher's Digest) at the Santee Birding Festival in Santee, South Carolina.

Bill kept everyone laughing on field trips and talks to groups. He mentioned how bird species get renamed from time to time. For example, the Common Moorhen is now officially the "Common Gallinule." He also reported that the ubiquitous House Sparrow has a new name too — it's now called the "Burger Kinglet."

Later that evening, he played his guitar and had the group singing "Mamas Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up to be Cowbirds."

## CONSERVATION NOTES

*Doug Nail*

I have been spending some time recently reviewing the new "Audubon Strategic Plan for 2012-2015" and thought I would put my spin on what seems go be a new focus for National Audubon and thus the state and local chapters. This new focus (read resources - time, money and manpower) will now be on the five major migratory flyways from the Pacific Flyway to the Atlantic Flyway. All Audubon Chapters will fall within one or more of these traditional flyways. There will be strategic alliances with others in the Western Hemisphere that share our issues and concerns.

The key conservation strategies to be employed across the flyways will vary in emphasis based on the needs within the respective flyway. These strategies are:

1. **Putting working lands to work for birds and people:** Essentially partnering with landowners to enhance the value of their lands for birds and people. For example, farmers have and will be encouraged to improve their farming practices to habitats for migratory species.
2. **Sharing our seas and shores:** Working to maintain and improve and expand our successful coastal stewardship programs.
3. **Saving Important Bird Areas:** The focus within the Pacific Flyway will be primarily on the Arctic Slope.
4. **Shaping a healthy climate and clean energy future:** Focus on improving energy planning and siting to minimize the impact on birds and landscapes.
5. **Creating bird-friendly communities:** Be a voice for birds by helping both rural and urban communities understand how they can contribute to enhancing areas for birds.

This is a boiled-down version of what I understand. What we as Palomar Audubon Society will need to do now is focus on our geographies and see how we can enhance these strategies so we can implement plans within the limited resources of our organization.



# FUN PHOTOS FROM THE TEA PARTY

*(Photos courtesy Kristin Bergford)*



## MAD HATS! AND THE WINNERS WERE:

- Best Women's Hat - Ruth Talle
- Best Men's Hat - John Sanderson
- Funniest Hat - Otto Talle
- Zaniest Hat - Paul Bergford



Did you really want to see all the hats that won these categories? If so, bring your camera to next year's picnic. Kristen Bergford was kind enough to share the shots she took with her phone. Congrats to the winners and all those of us who wore head covers. The Mad Hatter would have been proud of us!



## 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 7, 8:00 a.m.

### Lake Murray

La Mesa

**(1250 E-6) Rating: 1-2**

Take I-8 east to the Lake Murray Boulevard exit and proceed 1 mile north (right turn) to Baltimore Drive. Turn left and drive about 1 mile to Jackson Drive. Turn left again, proceed ¼ mile and make another left turn onto Golfcrest Drive. Continue about 1 mile on Golfcrest Drive to the Mission Trails Regional park entrance on the left. Meet in the parking lot near the softball field bleachers. This location is at the northwest end of Lake Murray.

Leader: Jim Beckman  
858-205-2819

Saturday, July 14, 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 21, 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 at the parking lot, 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 2000 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 28, 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 4, 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 Hwy. 163S to I-8W and drive toward Ocean Beach. Make a slight left at Sunset Cliffs Boulevard, and then stay in the right lane. Turn right onto W. 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: Jeff Ebright  
858-484-3932

Saturday, August 11, 8:00 a.m.

### San Elijo Lagoon

Solana Beach

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

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

Leader: Doug Nail  
760-451-9370

*see FIELD TRIPS, Page 5*

**FIELD TRIPS**, from Page 4

Saturday, August 18, 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 and the entrance to Santee Lakes is on the right. Car entry fee is \$5. OR from Mast Boulevard, turn left on Fanita Parkway and continue north to Lake Canyon Dr. Turn right, park, and walk in the open gate for FREE. Meet in the parking lot by the General Store between lakes 4 and 5.

Leader: Penny Hernandez  
760-746-8315

Saturday, August 25, 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 "TJRV Park" sign and 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: Michael Beeve  
209-247-5237

Saturday, September 1, 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 stoplight. 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



(Friends of  
Wilderness Gardens)



(Escondido Creek  
Conservancy)



(San Dieguito River  
Valley Conservancy)

## PROGRAMS

*Please join us for our interesting monthly program and refreshments at the Remington Club, 16916 Hierba Drive, Rancho Bernardo. There is a social period beginning at 7:00 pm with the meeting and program getting under way promptly at 7:30 pm.*

**NO PROGRAMS ARE SCHEDULED FOR JULY OR AUGUST. FIELD TRIPS WILL CONTINUE, BUT NOTICE THE REVISED SUMMER START TIMES. REGULARLY SCHEDULED PROGRAMS WILL RESUME IN SEPTEMBER.**

**HAVE A GREAT SUMMER WITH GREAT BIRDING!**

## \$4,000 GIVEN TO SUPPORT LOCAL CONSERVATION

*By Jeff Ebright*

This year PAS was able to support several local conservation groups that share PAS' goals.

At our May program I presented a check for \$1,000 to Lynne Baker, Executive Director of San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy. Lynne then presented an update on their current projects. The San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy is a non-profit, citizen-based organization helping to implement the San Dieguito River Park and its Coast-to-Crest Trail stretching 55 miles from Volcan Mountain near Julian to the ocean between Del Mar and Solana Beach.

At the same program, I presented a check for \$250 to Yolanda Fleet of the Friends of Wilderness Gardens. They plan to use the money for planting native oak trees.

I gave a check for \$1,000 to Tom Trowbridge, Board Member of Wildlife Research Institute. WRI will use the donation to prepare a comprehensive Golden Eagle Survey of the Ramona Grasslands.

Doug Nail, Conservation Chairman of Palomar Audubon Society presented a check for \$1,000 to Jeff Swenerton, Vice-President of the Escondido Creek Conservancy. TECC will use the money for the preservation, restoration and protection of the natural open space within the Escondido Creek watershed.

PAS gave \$500 to the successful pledge drive by the Friends of Palomar Mountain State Park. The park was slated to close July 1<sup>st</sup>, but they were able to reach agreement with the State to keep park open for 3 years.

PAS donated \$250 to Whelan Lake Preserve. We are the first organization to make a donation to them.



## FROM PAS INBOX

*Jeff Ebright*

**Q** - A group of owls is either a parliament of owls, or a wisdom of owls, but what is a group of baby or very young owls called? A nest of owlets?

**A** - A group of owl young would be a clutch. Other owl group names at <http://www.owlpages.com/index.php?file=faq>

**Q** - I'm looking for an easy to use resources to help me identify some of the back yard birds that I'm less familiar with. Also, most of our property remains in its natural condition. What does the Audubon Society recommend for habitat improvement?

**A** - A good starting point would be the book, "Birds of San Diego". It should be available in the local bookstore and is available on Amazon. There are several good guides available; here is a link to a recent article: <http://www.nationalparkstraveler.com/2012/05/birding-national-parks-grab-field-guide-there-are-many9877>. On our web page under Resources/articles are some documents on a healthy back yard that you can download. San Diego Audubon has some additional information, including native plants at their website.

**Q** - Had a question on bird nest boxes that would attract insect eating birds to combat gnats at an Escondido organic farm.

**A** - Two birds in our local area that eat insects and use bird boxes are the Western Bluebird and Tree Swallow. The Western Bluebirds mostly eat ground insects, so may not be the best solution for gnats. For more information I would suggest contacting the Southern California Bluebird Club. Here is their website: <http://bluebirdssc.wordpress.com/>. Tree Swallows eat flying insects, so would be a good choice for gnat control. There are Tree Swallows in good numbers at Lake Hodges, so they are in the neighborhood. Here is a website with instructions for building their nest boxes:

<http://www.treeswallowprojects.com/buildbox.html>. Finally, on our website are some pamphlets from Audubon for a Healthy Yard that attracts birds.



## Audubon's Strategic Plan

*By Jeff Ebright*

In 2012, Audubon adopted a new strategic plan with the goal of focusing and aligning the Audubon network to meet today's unprecedented environmental challenges. Reflecting the expertise and input of staff, Chapters, board members, and other volunteers and partners, this "Roadmap for Hemispheric Conservation" will enable Audubon to deliver conservation impact at scale.

Audubon's Strategic Plan brings new focus and discipline to our work. It clarifies our goals, and harnesses all of the parts of the unsurpassed Audubon Network - staff, Chapters, Centers, partners to achieve them. It identifies the priority bird species of greatest conservation needs, and the projects that will foster a healthy and sustainable future for them.

### Conservation Strategies

Audubon will maximize our conservation results by focusing on five strategies critical for birds:

- Putting working lands to work for birds & people
- Sharing our seas and shores
- Saving Important Bird Areas
- Shaping a healthy climate and clean energy future
- Creating bird-friendly communities.

### How we work

#### Flyways Alignment

We will align our work along the four flyways of the Americas—Atlantic, Mississippi, Central and Pacific. By connecting the Audubon network all along each of these migratory pathways for birds, we can weave a seamless web of conservation for both migratory and non-migratory species. And by coordinating resources and expertise, we can increase our efficiency across the network.

#### Broader Engagement

By engaging a broader and more diverse audience in our work, Audubon will meet the complex challenges facing birds. No other conservation organization has our wingspan, from the grassroots to the grasstops.

To learn more, the complete plan is available on PAS website under Resources / Articles..





# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## 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.*

## RAMONA GRASSLAND PRESERVE THREATENED

*By Jeff Ebright*

The Wildlife Research Institute (WRI) asked for PAS support concerning planned development in the Ramona Grasslands Preserve by the San Diego County Parks and Recreation. The planned development includes a trail extension that would be placed in an area that most likely would cause one of the most successful breeding pairs of Golden Eagles left in San Diego County to abandon their nest in Bandy Canyon. There are plans to place a road between a ridge the Golden Eagles use to spot prey and the grasslands. A parking lot / horse staging area would be placed next to a lake used by Bald Eagles to hunt. There are alternatives that would mitigate these impacts, but the County has refused to work with WRI. PAS wrote a letter to the County expressing our concerns and did not receive a response. At PAS request, San Diego and Buena Vista Audubon have agreed to support WRI.

The next step is for WRI to do a survey of the Golden Eagles that nest in Bandy Canyon. The resulting report will detail the impacts to the preserve by the planned development. PAS has contributed \$1,000 to defray the cost of this study. The study will be sent to the County Board of Supervisors, State Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and local conservation groups. If all goes well, we will prevent the current plan for development from starting in September. It would be tragic if this preserve, which was acquired with conservation money with the express purpose to protect critical grassland habitat for raptors, was to lose one of few remaining breeding Golden Eagle pair in the County.



**REMINDER:  
DEADLINE FOR THE  
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER ISSUE IS  
AUGUST 15<sup>TH</sup>.  
SUBMIT COPY TO  
[arnec@juno.com](mailto:arnec@juno.com)**

# Band Tales

## July-August, 2012

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.



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**Board of Director's Meeting**  
**The Board will not meet during the months of July and August.**  
**Meetings resume in September.**  
**Have a great summer with continued walks!**

### QUICK CALENDAR

<b>July</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Lake Murray Walk</b>
<b>July</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Tijuana Estuary &amp; 7<sup>th</sup> Street Walk</b>
<b>July</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>Torrey Pines State Reserve Walk</b>
<b>July</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>Guajome Regional Park Walk</b>
<b>August</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Robb Field/San Diego River Floodway Walk</b>
<b>August</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>San Elijo Lagoon Walk</b>
<b>August</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>Santee Lakes Walk</b>
<b>August</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>Dairy Mart Pond/Tijuana River Valley Walk</b>
<b>September</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Kit Carson Park Walk</b>