



# Band Tales

Palomar Audubon Society  
A Chapter of the  
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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2011

Editor  
Arne Christiansen

## What Birds Teach Us: Don't Take Them -- or the Future -- for Granted

*David Yarnold, President,  
National Audubon Society*

The bird you heard singing or saw overhead today? It's pretty easy to take it for granted, but in fact, it might have traveled thousands of miles to get to your house. It might have been to places where you'd need a passport and vaccinations to visit. Those ducks that show up every winter in your local park? It's likely they were hatched in the Arctic tundra. When you stop to think about it, birds are the last connection to the wild for many of us. And the arrival and departure of birds -- particularly during their heroic migrations -- is a link to nature's rhythms. But that bond can be broken. We are seeing fewer and fewer migratory birds, even many so-called common species. That's because they depend on a chain of food and rest stops, whether they travel up the Mississippi River or along the Atlantic or Pacific coasts. Break enough links in the chain, and birds die -- or are never born.

The Eastern Meadowlark's four-note call (it sounds like we'll SEE you) is a classic spring birdsong. Like a super-hero's costume, the meadowlark has a brilliant yellow breast emblazoned with a black "V". But the meadowlark is no super-hero. In fact, it is in mortal danger. Four decades ago, there were an estimated 24 million Eastern Meadowlarks in the wild. Today that number has fallen to fewer than 7 million. The meadowlark is an indirect victim of American dependence on foreign oil. As oil prices have skyrocketed, farmers have switched over their fields to grow corn for ethanol. Cornfields make poor meadowlark habitats. The chain is broken.

On the West Coast, the Rufous Hummingbird faces similar threats. The Rufous is a tiny, almost all cinnamon-colored bird (males have a red throat), found wherever flowers are near, from dense forests to sunny gardens in southern Alaska to northern California. Tiny and mighty, Rufous Hummingbirds migrate thousands of miles down the West Coast, to spend the winter in Mexico. The Rufous Hummingbird breeds in Alaska and in the Pacific Northwest, where logging and urban sprawl have degraded its habitat. Current estimates suggest its numbers are crashing: having fallen by nearly 60 percent over the past four decades.

In all, my colleagues at National Audubon Society have identified more than 20 birds, once common, whose numbers have plummeted since the mid-1960s. They are victims of a growing list of threats, including disruption in our climate, conversion of pastures and meadows to farmland, urban sprawl, pollution, logging, and other human causes.

Why should you care about that bird pecking in your front yard or about the Rufous or the meadowlark? Because thriving birds equals thriving ecosystems. And thriving ecosystems equals clean air, clean water, abundant food and great habitat. And those are places where people thrive, too. This isn't just about doing what's best for birds; it's about doing what's best for our kids and the generations to follow.



*(Jeff Ebright giving our Palomar Audubon check to Steve Barker of The Escondido Creek Conservancy [TECC.]  
Story on page 2, "A Bird's Eye View". )*

### Inside this Band Tales

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## A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

*Jeff Ebright*

As I write this column, I'm preparing for my first Palomar Audubon Board meeting as President. Our first order of business will be to create a strategic plan for our chapter to guide our goals and projects for the coming year. I recently participated in a presentation of National Audubon's draft of their strategic plan that will take shape over the next few months. They are changing the way projects get identified and funded. They are looking to focus their plans and projects on the migratory flyways and rest stops. They look to initiate large projects which attract large donors. They also plan to partner more with conservation groups in South America. This will change the way projects are currently identified at the chapter level. The chapters will still have a large role to play in the success of these projects.



Our Board of Directors also needs to develop a strategic plan to guide us for the next 3-4 years. Part of this planning will require us to take a hard look at both what we are doing well and where we are falling short. I see that we are very strong in bird walks and have a core group of volunteers that keep our organization going. I also see that we are a small chapter with small ambitions. I'm worried that we are not meeting the desires of the majority of our members or fully achieving our mission. I think that we can do a better job of engaging our members, increasing volunteers, communicating, doing more in conservation by partnering with larger organizations, expanding our education outreach, and growing the membership. I do not believe for one moment that I have the solution to these problems, but I believe our chapter is able to take on these challenges successfully. Our Board of Directors would like your input. What do think would improve our chapter? Also let us know where we are meeting your needs. Please send your comments to [palomaras@hotmail.com](mailto:palomaras@hotmail.com).

Recently, Doug Nail and I met with Escondido Creek Conservancy to present a PAS donation of \$1,000 for land acquisition (picture on page 1.) They have donors who have pledged matching donations, so it will increase the impact of the \$1,000. We also are in discussion on ways to partner our organizations to achieve common goals. Following are some of the areas we are discussing: create a birding checklist for their trails, have joint bird walks on their property including areas not open to general public, assist with their Visitor Center at Elfin Woods, work together on a project to assist migrating birds, and coordinate education and communication projects.

For those that saw the Curlew Sandpiper during its brief visit to Imperial Beach, I'm envious of you.

Good Birding!

## CONSERVATION NOTES

*Doug Nail*

Having had the great opportunity to travel throughout much of the world, I am convinced that habitat conservation is one of the most important issues we and subsequent generations will face globally. Some folks would say, "Master of the Obvious, Doug!" But, you know, it doesn't seem to be too obvious to too many folks around the world. Or at least it isn't high on their priority list. So what do you do? Well, some would say, "There is nothing we can do about it, it's just too big an issue to deal with". Others would say, "You have to let those who have the problem deal with it". I must admit, at times, I have been in favor of both of these responses. Now, I am at a point where I think it is incumbent on all of us to try as best we can to help. Someone once said to me when they were giving me a project (which to me looked much more complex than it did to them), "Doug, it's kind of like eating an elephant. You have to do it one bite at a time." At that time, I thought it was a trite statement but I'm convinced it is appropriate here. None of us have the resources (time, money and manpower) nor the power to make significant changes but we do have "some" resources and a little power to effect change on a local level.

So...what can we do? One thing is to agree that we can do something. Another is to make things happen. Many of you have made donations to Palomar Audubon just for this reason. None of those donations, in and of themselves, can achieve much but together they can make some things happen. So, this really becomes an objective of mine as your new Conservation Chairman. I am well aware that objectives and strategies are very important but one must implement and execute to assure that things actually get accomplished. And that, too, becomes my responsibility and I look forward to helping Palomar Audubon achieve our objectives and strategies with sound implementation. We will be continuing our work with the Wildlife Research Institute(WRI), The Escondido Creek Conservancy(TECC) as well as the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy to help these groups purchase, restore and manage habitat necessary to sustain our wildlife for us and generations to follow. You will be hearing more from me in the future...one bite at a time!

## FROM PAS INBOX

Jeff Ebricht

Last Band Tales, I asked the question, "How long have you been bird watching and what got you started?". Following are two wonderful replies; I hope to receive more:

**From Barbara Dunn:**

"Seven summers ago my friend Claire loaned me a book she thought I'd enjoy called The Big Year. I had always been interested in birds but this book gave me the idea of trying to identify my backyard birds and keeping a list of those I saw. That led to buying binoculars, joining SDBirds, going out to nearby San Elijo lagoon to find more birds for my list, getting a digital camera to help with identification, etc. A year ago I found PAS online and thought it would be great fun to learn more from other birders. My first trip was to Guajome Park, and I was welcomed by so many friendly people that I felt right at home. I have learned so much this past year and am honored to have been asked to serve on the board. Four years ago yesterday my friend Claire passed away from breast cancer. I think of her with love and wish she could have realized just what a gift she gave me in introducing me to the joys of birding."

**From Dianne Benham:**

"My husband, Hal, has been a birder since the age of 16, when a highly respected biology teacher turned several generations of graduates of Shortridge High School, Indianapolis, Indiana into life-long birding enthusiasts.

When Hal and I married, in 1980, we spent our honeymoon camping in Yosemite National Park. There he introduced me to the magnificent world of birds, as we walked the trails in the high Sierras. When I got a long, close look at a Western Tanager, I thought I had seen the most beautiful bird in the world. I was "hooked" from that moment on, and the Western Tanager is still the bird I call my "favorite".

Although we belonged to the National Audubon Society, we did not actively participate with a group until we joined Palomar Audubon in 2003, the year we retired from teaching. We have been enjoying the walks, the trips, the birds and the friendships ever since!"

Margaret Marlow forwarded an e-mail containing a group of beautiful photos of Birds In Action. I will be glad to forward this e-mail to you.

**Had a question on what to do with an injured Mourning Dove.** The Project Wildlife website, <http://www.projectwildlife.org> has information on hotline you can call and locations of rescue centers. Also has information on local birds.

Send your questions and information you would like to share with the other members to:

[palomaras@hotmail.com](mailto:palomaras@hotmail.com).

## 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.

Thursday, September 22

**Doug Nail**

**"Birding Colorado for Chickens, Grouse and other birds...."**

Doug Nail will tell you about his productive birding trip to Colorado last April to see the Prairie Chickens of the Great Plains and the Grouse of the Rockies. Doug will detail his trip so if anyone wants to revisit the trip themselves you'll have a good idea of how and when to do it.

Thursday, October 27

**John Walker**

**"Birding the Galapagos"**

John Walker will talk about his trip to the Galapagos Islands in July of this year. Ever increasing regulation of this fascinating place is restricting where people can go but this will illustrate some of the wildlife that can be seen on these, Darwin's Enchanted Isles - Birds, reptiles and fish.



(Black Skimmer - Torrey Pines - 7-23-11)



(Black-necked Stilt - Lindo Lake - 7-9-11)



(Great Blue Heron - Lindo Lake - 7-9-11)



(Greater White-fronted Goose - Lindo Lake - 7-9-11)

(All photos courtesy Jeff Ebricht)

# 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, September 3, 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

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

## **Penasquitos Canyon Preserve**

Rancho Penasquitos

**(1189-C7) Rating: 2**

We will meet at the Rancho de los Penasquitos Adobe Ranch House parking lot and explore trails through grasslands and riparian woodland. Take I-15 and exit at Mercy Road going west. Turn right onto Black Mountain Road and drive a short distance to Canyonside Park Drive (first stop light). Turn left and continue west to the Adobe Ranch House parking lot.

Leader: Jeff Ebright

858-484-3932

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

## **Bataquitos Lagoon**

Carlsbad

**(1127-A7) Rating: 1**

From I-5 in Carlsbad, exit east on Poinsettia Lane. Turn right on Bataquitos Drive, drive about ½ mile to Gabbiano Lane, turn right and continue to the end. We will look for ducks, waterfowl, and riparian birds.

Leader: Penny Hernandez

760-746-8315



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

## **Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve & Huntington Central Park**

Huntington Beach, Orange County

<http://www.huntingtonbeachevents.com/conserv.html>

**(O.C. 857-C3) Rating: 1**

Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve is the largest coastal salt marsh preserve in the Los Angeles/Orange County metropolitan region. Its 300 acres are a vital oasis for resident shorebirds and millions of migrating birds traveling between the Arctic and South America along the Pacific Flyway. At Huntington Central Park we will see locals and possibly vagrant migrants. We will bird at the Reserve first and then drive to Huntington Central Park. Directions: Take I-5 north past San Juan Capistrano and then take Hwy 73 (toll road), north to I-405. (Or continue on I-5 to I-405). Take I-405 north (towards Long Beach). Exit on Warner Avenue. West. Continue west approximately 6 miles to Pacific Coast Highway. Turn left (south) and drive about 1 mile to the Reserve parking lot on the left. It's about 70 miles from Oceanside and should take about 75 minutes. Meet at the boardwalk entrance. Bring a picnic lunch to enjoy at the Park picnic tables.

Leader: Doug Nail

760-451-9370

Saturday, October 1, 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 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to Caspian Way, turn left and then right to the Tijuana Estuary Visitor Center parking lot.

Leader: Jim Beckman

858-205-2819

Saturday, October 8, 8:00 a.m.

## **Whelan Lake Bird Sanctuary**

Oceanside

<http://www.bvaudubon.org/whelan.htm>

**(1066-F7) Rating: 2**

From I-15 take Highway 78 west and exit north on El Camino Real and continue to Douglas Drive. From I-5 exit east on Highway 76 and continue to the Douglas Drive exit. Take Douglas Drive north approximately 1 mile and turn left on North River Road to the entrance gate at the end. Continue west on the dirt road to the caretaker's house and the parking lot.

Leader: David Mathis

760-754-5215





**FIELD TRIPS, from Page 4**

Saturday, October 15, 8:00 a.m.

**Lake Hodges**

Del Dios

**(1149-E2) Rating: 2**

From I-15 in Escondido exit at Via Rancho Parkway and drive west to Lake Drive. Turn left and drive about 1/2 mile. Meet at Del Dios Park across the street from the Country Store. We should see waterfowl, shorebirds and a whole host of local residents.

Leader: Jeff Ebright  
858-484-3932

Saturday, October 22, 8:00 a.m.

**La Jolla Coastline**

La Jolla

**(1227-E6) Rating: 1**

From Hwy 52 driving west exit at La Jolla Blvd. West (formerly Ardath Road). Continue on this road, which will merge with Torrey Pines Rd for about 3/4 mile, then turn right on Prospect. Continue on Prospect to Coast Boulevard. Meet in front of the Bridge Club and restrooms. Parking is all along Coast Boulevard and adjacent residential streets. Arrive early for the best parking spots. We will be looking for shorebirds, gulls, and seabirds.

Leader: Jack Friery  
619-218-7342

Saturday, October 29, 8:30 a.m.

**(Note Fall/Winter Start Time)**

**Daley Ranch**

Escondido

**(1110-C3) Rating: 2**

From I-15 in Escondido exit at El Norte Parkway and drive east approximately 3 miles. Look for the "Daley Ranch" sign and turn left (north) on La Honda Drive. Continue toward Dixon Lake and on to the Daley Ranch parking area on your left. Meet at the trailhead kiosk.

Leader: Jim Beckman  
858-205-2819

Saturday, November 5, 8:30 a.m.

**Mission Bay Flood Control Channel & Famosa Slough**

San Diego

**(1268-C4) Rating: 1**

Take I-15 south to I-8. Go west on I-8 and exit north on I-5. Take the first off-ramp, Sea World Drive west to South Shores Park Drive (stop light). Turn left and proceed to our meeting place along the frontage road adjacent to the Flood Control Channel. We will be looking for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds in the channel and bay areas and then drive to Famosa Slough.

Leader: Doug Nail  
760-451-9370

**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.*

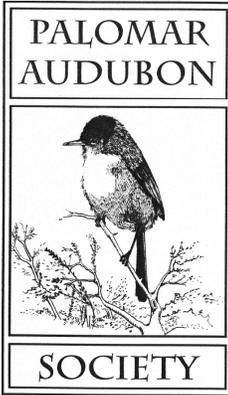


**DEADLINE FOR THE  
NOVEMBER-DECEMBER ISSUE IS  
OCTOBER 15<sup>TH</sup>.  
SUBMIT COPY TO  
[arnec@juno.com](mailto:arnec@juno.com)**

# Band Tales

## September-October, 2011

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**  
*Wednesdays, August 31 & October 5<sup>th</sup>.*  
 7:00 p.m. at the Remington Club  
 16916 Hierba Drive  
 Rancho Bernardo

*Note: All Palomar Audubon Society members are welcome at Chapter Board meetings.*

<b>QUICK CALENDAR</b>	
<i>September</i>	<b>3</b>
<i>September</i>	<b>10</b>
<i>September</i>	<b>17</b>
<i>September</i>	<b>22</b>
<i>September</i>	<b>24</b>
<i>October</i>	<b>1</b>
<i>October</i>	<b>5</b>
<i>October</i>	<b>8</b>
<i>October</i>	<b>15</b>
<i>October</i>	<b>22</b>
<i>October</i>	<b>27</b>
<i>October</i>	<b>29</b>
<i>November</i>	<b>5</b>

- Kit Carson Park Walk**
- Penasquitos Canyon Preserve Walk**
- Bataquitos Lagoon Walk**
- General Meeting - "Birding Colorado . . ."**
- Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve & Huntington Central Park Walk**
- Tijuana Estuary/7<sup>th</sup> Street Walk**
- Board Meeting**
- Whelan Lake Bird Sanctuary Walk**
- Lake Hodges Walk**
- La Jolla Coastline Walk**
- General Meeting - "Birding the Galapagos"**
- Daley Ranch Walk**
- Mission Bay Flood Control Channel & Famosa Slough Walk**