



Band Tales

Palomar Audubon Society
A Chapter of the
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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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.

BIRD BARS

(courtesy Mickey Nail)

- 1 cup peanut butter, (crunchy OK!)
- 1 cup lard

Melt these together and stir in:

- 2 cups quick-cooking oatmeal
- 2 cups cornmeal
- 1 cup flour
- 1/3 cup sugar

You can also add any old raisins, nuts, or grits too!

Pour into an 8" pan lined with plastic wrap. Cool and cut into size needed for feeder. This will not melt during the summer months.



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A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

Jeff Ebright

I find it very difficult to get started on writing the column for this issue of Band Tales. The heat and humidity dulls my mind and hinders desire to do any work. So excuse me if climate change is foremost in my thoughts. I was locked into my summer vacation plans made many months in advance, so I ended up going to Fort Collins, Colorado, during their record wildfire, drought, and heat wave. Our guide did the best he could to find different locations to bird and make us comfortable, but the trip did not come close to what we had hoped for when booking the trip. I lived in Colorado for five years back in the late seventies, so I was shocked at what I saw at the Trail Ridge Visitor Center in Rocky Mountain National Park. At over 12,500 feet, visitors were in shorts, the glacier was 90% gone, 60-70% of the pine trees were brown due to a pine beetle infestation, and we saw a Western Gull! Our guide did his best to find us birds, but could not hide his frustration and alarm at the decline in birds from past years.

Change in the climate is making it tough for all life. Audubon is helping to make a difference in the survival of birds and other wildlife. Following are some of the recent successes:

- Passage of the Restore act which dedicates 80% of Clean Water Act penalties from the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster to Gulf Coast restoration.
- New guidelines for wind turbines to reduce bird kills.
- Lobbied Interior Department to quickly divert water to the Klamath Basin to save thousands of migrating birds at risk.
- Development of successful model for protecting grasslands used by Grouse.
- Development of cooperative program with farmers to protect nesting Tri-colored Blackbirds.

Audubon is actively working on the following conservation efforts:

- Filing lawsuit to stop efforts by Shell to drill in the seabed off Alaska's Arctic coast without adequate safety plans or capability to respond to a major oil spill.
- Lobbying for State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program to be funded at a level that ensures the effectiveness of the program.
- Lobbying for support of EPA efforts to regulate carbon emissions to stem global warming and thereby provide critically needed protection for birds and biodiversity.



- Lobbying to protect Teshekpuk Lake, on the coastal plain of the Reserve in Alaska from oil exploration that would endanger millions of nesting birds.
- Working to protect Mt. St. Helens National Monument from mining threats.
- Opposes move to weaken the rule for Eagle Take Permits

At a local level, Palomar Audubon is working with Wildlife Research Institute to protect a Golden Eagle nest site being threatened by a proposed trail extension in the Ramona Grassland Preserve. We financially support conservation organizations that work to protect local habitat. By signing on to National Audubon lobby letters we add local support to national level efforts. It is an effective way to show broad support of efforts and show our San Diego representatives how their constituencies want them to vote.

You can easily add your support to Audubon's efforts by going to audubon.org and selecting the "Take Action" button. Sign up for "Action Alerts". In the Palomar Audubon blog, I post notices from Audubon partner organizations when they are requesting help in their lobby efforts. They make it easy to send a message to our government of the importance of protecting nature.

When I see all that is happening to the environment, I often feel hopeless and want to bury my head in the sand. I'm not the type to join protest movements. Audubon is a good fit for me. By giving my support to Audubon and joining a larger community of people that share my values, I can see that my voice can make a difference in defense of nature.

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.

Good Birding!

FROM PAS INBOX

Jeff Ebright

Q - A Boy Scout contacted us about conservation projects he could help with to earn a badge.

A - I referred him to our partner, The San Dieguito River Park because they have a comprehensive Scout program that helps guide scouts to complete projects that provide a real lasting benefit to the community and a solid learning experience for the scout.

At our next Board of Director's meeting on September 5th, we will be discussing goals for the coming year. Send your ideas to palomaraudubon@gmail.com.

CONSERVATION NOTES

Doug Nail

I was sitting here in the kitchen watching birds out the window, well that's what I do! Especially when it is so darned hot outside. It reminded me of an article I had just seen by Catherine Griffin on the California Audubon website. I thought she shared some great information on how birds keep their cool in an ever-warming world.



"As temperatures bake much of the United States and the nationwide drought continues, crops wither and fish die. But they aren't the only ones suffering from the blazing summer. Birds are also trying to keep their cool. But they don't sweat like humans, or even pant like dogs; instead, they have a variety of unique adaptations to help beat the heat."

In a study conducted on marsh sparrows in 2011, scientists found that bill size correlates to outside temperatures. For example, marsh sparrows with larger bills live in warmer climates. The study noted that the tropical toucan also possesses a large bill, and has the ability to increase or decrease blood flow to its beak to either promote or prevent heat loss.

Laura Erickson of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, however, points out that the size of a bird's bill isn't the only factor that keeps it cool.

"In the case of the raven, the further north you go the bigger their bills are," says Erickson. "But they need the bigger bill to chip into frozen carcasses in the winter." Instead, some birds rely on a variety of behavioral adaptations in order to regulate their body temperatures.

Some birds, like the great blue herons that star on the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's nest cam, will open up their wings on a hot day, allowing air to circulate across their bodies and sweep away the excess heat.

"We've watched the adults move their bodies to shade the chicks," says Erickson. Great blue herons will also "droop" their wings in addition to opening them to protect their nestlings from the sun. But researchers can tell that the posture does more than just keep chicks cool, because the birds also do it when they're off the nest.

These are only a couple of behaviors that birds use. When it's hot, some species will also resort to gular fluttering. The bird will open its mouth and "flutter" its neck muscles, promoting heat loss (think of it as the avian version of panting).

"If you think about a dog panting, their tongue isn't only allowing evaporation, but is losing a lot of body fluid," says Erickson. "Birds are much more efficient about water and water loss."

Even so, birds still need to replenish fluids on a hot day. Installing a birdbath can provide feathered friends with a place to cool their heels in the summer, and get a drink. The water level shouldn't be too high - only about an inch deep - and the bottom of the birdbath shouldn't be too slippery. Replenish the water once every two or three days. Otherwise, the stagnant water can play host to algae and mosquito larvae, which can carry the West Nile virus as adults.

Almost as important as water is shade. Temperatures can be far cooler under trees or bushes, and birds often seek out these microclimates. Since a bird's body temperature is much higher than that of humans - a golden crowned kinglet was once found to have a body temperature of 111 degrees Fahrenheit - it's doubly important for them to cool off in a hurry. Proteins that shuttle vital information to a bird's organs begin to break apart at temperatures that are only slightly higher.

Climate change is expected to make droughts more frequent and extreme temperatures more common. And some bird populations are already being affected by the consequences of global warming. A study published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* reported that tree swallows laid their eggs up to nine days earlier because of warmer temperatures in the spring. Several populations of birds, most notably warblers, have also shifted their home ranges northward, and migration patterns are changing to accommodate the change in climate.

Together, these shifts indicate that birds are learning how to adapt to springs that feel like summers, and summers that feel like scorchers."

Stay Cool!

PALOMAR AUDUBON SOCIETY THANKS THESE RECENT DONORS:

Jim Hall

Larkwire

James Hawkins in memory of Robert A. Hoff

AND WE WELCOME THESE NEW AND RENEWING CHAPTER-ONLY MEMBERS:

Trudy Florence

Lyn and Malinda Gamelson

Jack and Helen Borchelt

Otto and Ruth Talle

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 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 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. Expect warm weather.

Leader: Sunny Christiansen
858-487-0731

Saturday, September 8, 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. Expect warm weather.

Leader: Jim Beckman
858-205-2819

Saturday, September 15, 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 22, 8:00 a.m.

Kumeyaay Lake (New Location!)

Mission Trails Regional Park, Santee

(1230-G6) (32.838987,-117.032139) Rating: 2

While City of San Diego budget restrictions have closed Kumeyaay Lake Campground to overnight use, the

wooded lake and campground site remain open for Day Use free of charge. From North County, take I-15 south to CA-52 east. Take exit 13 (Mast Boulevard) and turn left on to Mast. Take the first right onto West Hills Parkway. Take another right onto Mission Gorge Road and then make a very slight right onto Father Junipero Serra Trail. At the 4-way stop-sign, make a right onto Bushy Hill Drive, and turn right just past the campground entry kiosk into the free Day Use parking area. We'll meet in the parking lot, start with a ¾-mile round-trip on the Kumeyaay Nature Trail, then take a 1-mile round-trip walk around Kumeyaay Lake. Park Restrooms will be available, and we're welcome to use the picnic tables (but no fires or BBQs). Expect warm weather.

Leader: Phil White
760-637-5197

Saturday, September 29, 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. Or from I-5 north, exit east on Highway 76 and continue to Douglas Drive. Take Douglas Drive north approximately 1 mile and turn left on North River Road. Continue to the entrance gate at the end.

NOTE: Arrive no later than 7:45 a.m. Park and we will wait for the caretaker to open the locked gate. We will then enter the Bird Sanctuary as a group. If the gate is already open when you arrive, continue west on the dirt road to the caretaker's house and parking lot.

Leader: David Mathis
760-754-5215

Saturday, October 6, 8 a.m.

Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve & Huntington

Central Park

Huntington Beach, Orange County

(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 Highway 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



see FIELD TRIPS, Page 5

 **FIELD TRIPS**, from Page 4

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 13, 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 ½ 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 20, 8:00 a.m.

La Jolla Coastline

La Jolla

(1227-E6) Rating: 1

From Highway 52 driving west exit at La Jolla Boulevard West (formerly Ardath Road). Continue on this road, which will merge with Torrey Pines Road for about ¾ 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 27, 8:30 a.m.

(Note Fall/Winter Start Time)

Daley Ranch

Escondido

(1110-C3) Rating: 2-3

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 free parking area on your left. Meet at the trailhead kiosk.

Leader: Sally Sanderson
760-749-6995

Saturday, November 3, 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

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 27th

Neil Solomon**"Hummingbirds"**

Well-known local bird photographer, Neil Solomon, will share with us his fantastic photos of some of the hummingbirds found in North and South America. Neil will also discuss the lives of hummingbirds and will briefly talk about the ways in which hummingbirds can be photographed. This is Neil's fourth PAS presentation, and, like his previous programs, you can count on it being very interesting and informative.

Thursday, October 25th

Doug Nail**"Birding \ Peru"**

Doug Nail will present a program on Palomar Audubon Society's recent birding trip to Peru. The group visited many of the great birding places in southern Peru and will share where they went and the birds they saw.

Don't miss this! Remember it's free...bring a friend.

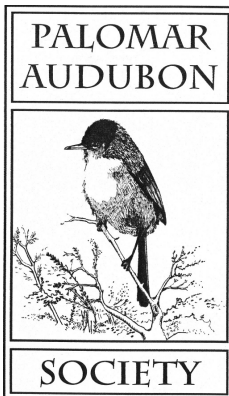


**REMINDER:
DEADLINE FOR THE
NOVEMBER-DECEMBER ISSUE IS
OCTOBER 15th.
SUBMIT COPY TO
arnec@juno.com**

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September-October, 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

Wednesdays, September 5th & October 3rd

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.

QUICK CALENDAR

<i>September</i>	<i>1</i>	Kit Carson Park Walk
<i>September</i>	<i>5</i>	Board Meeting
<i>September</i>	<i>8</i>	Penasquitos Canyon Preserve Walk
<i>September</i>	<i>15</i>	Bataquitos Lagoon Walk
<i>September</i>	<i>22</i>	Kumeyaay Lake Walk (New Location!)
<i>September</i>	<i>27</i>	General Meeting: - "Hummingbirds"
<i>September</i>	<i>29</i>	Whelan Lake Bird Sanctuary Walk
<i>October</i>	<i>3</i>	Board Meeting
<i>October</i>	<i>6</i>	Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve & Huntington Central Park Walk
<i>October</i>	<i>13</i>	Lake Hodges Walk
<i>October</i>	<i>20</i>	La Jolla Coastline Walk
<i>October</i>	<i>25</i>	General Meeting - "Birding in Southern Peru"
<i>October</i>	<i>27</i>	Daley Ranch Walk (Note Fall/Winter Start Time)
<i>November</i>	<i>3</i>	Mission Bay Flood Control Channel & Famosa Slough Walk