



Band Tales

Palomar Audubon Society
A Chapter of the
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Volume XXVIII
No. 5

March-April
2014

Editor
Arne Christiansen

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jeff Ebright

Once again we are making our annual request for financial support. Most of our members have National Audubon memberships. Palomar Audubon receives less than \$3 a member from National which does not even cover the cost of printing and mailing this newsletter. Please read the appeal letter in this newsletter and use the enclosed envelope to mail in a contribution to support us. Your contributions are 100% tax deductible.

We are including in this newsletter the column I wrote for the previous issue of Band Tales, which did not make it into the mailed issue.

The Board has initiated a strategic plan to improve our efforts in conservation. One of the planned projects is to partner with The Escondido Creek Conservancy to do bird surveys within their park to assist their work in preserving the Escondido Creek watershed. We hope that you will consider volunteering your time to assist in the planned surveys. Also, we would like to build up the Conservation Committee. Right now, Richard Fowler is carrying the full load. We need more participants to help guide the Board in improving our conservation efforts.

Jim Beckman is starting up the Nominating Committee for the upcoming election of Officers and Directors. Please consider if you would be willing to help guide and direct Palomar Audubon's charitable efforts. Please contact Jim or any Board member if you are interested in serving.

BURROWING OWL NAMED AUDUBON CALIFORNIA'S 2013 BIRD OF THE YEAR

One of California's most beloved owls today was named the 2013 Audubon California Bird of the Year. The Burrowing Owl - which nests in underground in burrows rather than trees - received the designation after receiving more than 48 percent of votes cast during an online poll this fall. The long-legged owl just missed being named Bird of the Year in 2012, but it was overtaken in voting in the last week by the Sandhill Crane. The Burrowing Owl finds its home in dry open

See OWL on Page 6

Annual Picnic a Go for June!

Mark Sunday, June 8th, on your calendars for this year's PAS Picnic. All the details will be in the April-May issue of **Band Tales**.

Anybody willing to volunteer their home for the Picnic please call Sunny Christiansen at 858-487-0731 or Penny Hernandez at 760-746-8315. We will do all the work; we just need a friendly location at which to have the event.



2014 PAS Scholarship Award

Palomar Audubon Society has a multifaceted mission, including a community outreach program with several special initiatives. One of these initiatives is our scholarship program. This year we will provide two 100% scholarship awards for a week long educational summer camp on birding conducted by the American Birding Association at Colorado Springs, Colorado. The recipients of these Young Birder scholarships are Ryan Andrews and Trysten Loefer. Both boys are 14 yrs. old and are regular PAS field trip participants. They are excellent birders. Congratulations Ryan and Trysten!



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A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

Jeff Ebricht

(editor's note: this column was originally intended to be in the January-February issue of Band Tales but was inadvertently omitted. My apologies to Jeff.)



I recently watched "PBS Nature: My Life as a Turkey" on Netflix. It was about a naturalist who became "mother" to six wild turkeys. He spent the next 18 months with them. Spending all his time with the wild turkeys, he started to see the world through their eyes. He discovered that he felt happier by living in the moment like the turkeys. He theorized that humans spend so much time being distracted by past and future events that they miss beauty around them. I think that expresses why I love bird watching. It leads to discovery of the beauty surrounding you.

Anyway, back to business. The "Friends of Kit Carson Park" brought to Palomar's attention a proposed BMX track at Kit Carson Park. The PAS Board reviewed the proposal and felt that the development would erode the environment at the park for birds. The park is already overused and the habitat degraded. Penny Hernandez noted how Western Meadowlarks and American Kestrels used to be common in the park, but have not been seen in years. This park is home to critically endangered California Gnatcatchers and Least Bell's Vireos. The Board voted to oppose this development in Kit Carson Park. Penny attended a meeting before the Escondido Community Services commission to represent PAS on December 9th. The commission voted to turn down the proposal to build the BMX track at Kit Carson Park, but supported it being built at a different location. The Escondido City Council has the final say, so we are keeping a close eye on this proposal.

San Bernardino Valley Audubon chapter (SBVAS) initiated a review of the area their chapter represented. The map created showed that the north portion of Palomar's region was an island surrounded by their territory. We negotiated a swap of some of our areas to resolve this anomaly. PAS area defined by ZIP codes 92587 (Quail Valley), 92595 (Wildomar) & 92584 (Menifee) would be transferred to SBVAS, and their area defined by 92590, 92591 & 92563 (Temecula) would be transferred to PAS. Our Board and theirs voted to accept this swap proposal. The next step is for both Chapter's Presidents to submit paperwork to National Audubon to make the change. I have no estimate on when his change will be completed.

Hope your holidays brought you much happiness.

CONSERVATION NOTES

Richard Fowler

PROTECTING THE EAGLES

The data is in. At least 85 Bald and Golden Eagles have died at wind energy facilities between 1997 and 2012. This is the conclusion of a study by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that was published this past September in the Journal of Raptor Research. The deaths were usually the result of eagles flying into the blades of the wind turbines. They were distributed over six western states with the most in Wyoming (29) followed by California with 27. However, the study excluded the California Altamont Pass area which by some reports account for the most Eagle deaths in the state.



In 2009 the federal government began allowing wind farms to obtain five year permits which allowed the wind farms "inadvertent" eagle deaths as long as there were adequate efforts to protect the birds. However, a new federal rule, announced in December 2013, allows 30 year permits. This sparked a strong response from National Audubon and other environmental groups. David Yarnold, Audubon's president, reported in Politico, that the change in policy was "a blank check for the wind industry." The new permit rule continues to require U.S. Fish and Wildlife to review wind farms every five years, however, Yarnold does not believe that the agency will have the resources to meet this requirement.

Regardless of the permit issue, the wind industry has motivation to use the best technology and site locations to minimize bird deaths. Duke energy recently paid a \$1,000,000 fine, the first such fine, after it was charged by the U.S. Justice department with violating the Migratory Bird Act because of bird deaths at a wind farm in Wyoming. In addition, Audubon and other environmental agencies will continue to work with the wind power industry to minimize bird losses as well as monitor the health of bird populations. Nonetheless, we all need to remain vigilant to threats against the Bald and Golden Eagles and other fauna. The extirpation of such magnificent creatures in California would be a somber lesson for us all.



**PALOMAR AUDUBON SOCIETY
WELCOMES THESE
NEW AND RENEWING
CHAPTER-ONLY
MEMBERS:**

Linda Newsum and Bill Bothamky
Sunny and Arne Christiansen
David Cowan
Elinor Foulke
Edward Hall
Edward and Gayle Hanson
Mary Harper
Penny Hernandez
Nancy and Reid Hoover
Anna Marie Bovill Lea
Clark Mahrtdt
Lyn and Luke Mardesich
Linda Martino
Will and Susan Murray
Doug and Mickey Nail
Diane Naydan
Lydia Ozuna
Janet Peyton
S.R. and Eileen Sampson
Steve Brad and Annie Stockley
Ed and Linda Summerhill
Andrew and Dora Truban
Diane and Doug Walkley
Pattie and Steve Warnick
Paul and Barbara Zepf

**AND WE APPRECIATE OUR
DONORS VERY MUCH!**

Edward Hall
Mary Harper

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, March 27 “Ordinary Extraordinary Junco”

A new ground-breaking science film!

The Junco Project does a superb job of converting a common and widespread backyard bird into a lively textbook about evolution, animal behavior, genetics, and even our own biological makeup. We will travel to habitats all over North America and learn how much a rapidly evolving bird can teach us. You will not want to miss this one!



Thursday, April 24 Char Glacy

“Midway Atoll: A Little History and What it's like to count a half a million Albatross”

Local birder and PAS member, Char Glacy, recently spent several weeks out in the middle of the Pacific Ocean as a citizen volunteer counting albatross, boobies, and other interesting pelagic birds. Come join us as Char tells all about the Midway Atoll and the unique wildlife found in that part of the world. It should be fun to hear her story!



**REMINDER:
DEADLINE FOR THE
MARCH-APRIL ISSUE IS
FEBRUARY 15TH.
SUBMIT COPY TO arnec@juno.com**





Palomar Audubon Society

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

Dear Members and Friends,

This has been a great year for Palomar Audubon Society! **What has made it great is the support of our members and friends.** We look forward to an even more successful year in 2014. For this, **we need your continuing help.** As an organization, we would like to encompass additional events, projects and people. The best way to do this is to present programs that will appeal to the interests of a wide variety of members.

Some of our accomplishments in 2013 and plans for 2014 are:

BIRD WALKS – We had 48 Saturday bird walks with over 900 participants. On average over 50 bird species were observed on each walk and all areas of San Diego County were visited. We continue to look for new areas to bird and to develop new walk leaders. Palomar Audubon is building a positive reputation for the variety, quality, friendliness and encouragement of new birders on its bird walks.

PROGRAMS – We had 7 programs on a variety of subjects presented at monthly membership meetings. Presenters ranged from experts in their field to PAS members.

SCHOLARSHIP - Trysten Loefer and Ryan Andrews are the recipients of the PAS 2014 Scholarship Awards. They will attend a week-long ABA Young Birders' Conference in Northern Colorado in July. Both of these 14 years old boys are excellent birders and very desiring of the scholarship.

BIRD COUNTS - We participated in the Escondido Christmas Bird Count to gather yearly census information. PAS provided lunch for all the participants. We work to promote participation in The Great Backyard Bird Count and the recording of bird sightings in eBirds. We are working on projects to do bird count for several scientific studies.

PUBLICATIONS - We continue to publish "Band Tales", our newsletter, which keeps our membership informed of our meetings, programs, weekly bird walks and items of environmental interest. We are now providing an online color copy of "Band Tales" at our website. We completely redesigned our website this and plan to add additional features this year.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT - We donated to the following organizations in 2013: San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy, The Escondido Creek Conservancy (TECC) and Wilderness Gardens. We have provided stuffed birds for display at the Elfin Forest Visitor Center. We plan to continue to support these organizations in 2014. .

BIRDING TRIPS OUTSIDE COUNTY – We plan to continue offering these birding trips to our members. We had a very successful trip to Salton Sea in February.

We are successful as an organization only with your help. The **MAJOR** support for all of our programs and activities comes through your generous donations. If each one of our members donates only \$15, we would meet our financial goals and be able to continue to provide a vibrant and interesting organization for your enjoyment. We hope we have made our case and you will respond using the enclosed envelope. Please make your check to Palomar Audubon Society. We are a 501(c)3 organization, so your gift qualifies as a charitable donation.

Thank you for your support.

The Board of Directors, Palomar Audubon Society

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.

Saturday, March 1

San Diego Bird Festival – No Field Trip

Saturday, March 8, 8:30 a.m.

Santee Lakes

Santee

(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 and continue south to the entrance to Santee Lakes on your right. Car entry fee is \$5. **OR** from Mast Boulevard, turn left on Fanita Parkway, and continue north to Lake Canyon Drive. Turn right, park and walk in the open gate for **free**. Meet in the parking lot by the General Store between lakes 4 & 5.

Leader: Penny Hernandez

760-746-8315

Saturday, March 15, 8:30 a.m.

San Jacinto Wildlife Area

Riverside County

(RC 749-B4) Rating: 2

From San Diego County take I-15 north to I-215. Exit at the Ramona Expressway right (east). Continue east to Lakeview (a small town.) At the stoplight, turn left (north) on Davis Road. Proceed on the asphalt and gravel road for two miles to the SJWA headquarters parking lot on the right. From Escondido allow 75 minutes drive time. Always a PAS favorite!

Leader: Sally Sanderson

760-749-6995

Saturday, March 22, 8:30 a.m.

Whelan Lake Bird Sanctuary

Oceanside

(1066-F7) Rating: 2

From Highway 78 west, exit north on El Camino Real and continue to Douglas Drive. From I-5 north 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.

NOTE: Arrive no later than 8:15 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 open, proceed to the Sanctuary. Disregard the “No Trespassing” Signs. Don’t be late!

Leader: Doug Walkley

310-387-8190

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

Lake Hodges

Del Dios

(1149-E4) Rating: 2

From I-15 in Escondido exit at Via Rancho Parkway and drive west to Lake Drive. Turn left and drive south about ½ mile. Meet at Del Dios Park across from the Country Store. We should see waterfowl, shorebirds and a whole host of local residents.

Leader: Jeff Ebright

858-484-3932

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

San Pasqual Agricultural Trail

Escondido

(1151-B1) Rating: 2

Meet at the Ysabel Creek Road trailhead at the intersection Ysabel Creek Road & Bandy Canyon Road. This intersection can be reached from Highland Valley Road east off of Pomerado Rd & I-15, or from Highway 78 east of the Wild Animal (Safari) Park. We hope to see local residents, which include Cactus Wren, Greater Roadrunner, and a few raptors, possibly the Zone-tailed Hawk. Leader: Jim Beckman

858-205-2819

Saturday, April 12, 8:30 a.m.

Old Mission Dam

San Diego

<http://www.mtrp.org/park.asp>

(1230-F6) Rating: 2

Take Highway 52 east to the Mast Boulevard. exit in Santee. Turn north/east onto Mast Boulevard. and then right at the 1st traffic signal (West Hills Parkway). Take West Hills Parkway to Mission Gorge Road and turn right. Take Mission Gorge Road 0.2 miles and merge right onto Father Junipero Serra Trail. Proceed 0.7 miles down Father Juniper Serra Trail to the Old Mission Dam parking lot, located on the right. This should be prime time for spring migrants.

Leader: Jack Friery

619-218-7342

Saturday, April 19, 8:30 a.m.

Dairy Mart Pond/Tijuana River Valley

San Diego

(1350 – D5) Rating: 2

From North County, take the 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 County Park” sign and the pond on the west side of Dairy Mart Road. We will also drive a short distance to the TJRV Park Headquarters

FIELD TRIPS, from Page 5

(public restroom and bird feeders) and then visit the nearby Bird & Butterfly Garden where there is a chance of seeing the elusive Black-throated Magpie Jay.

Leader: Michael Beeve

209-247-5237

Saturday, April 26, 8:30 a.m.

Big Morongo Canyon Preserve

Morongo Valley, San Bernardino County

<http://www.bigmorongo.org/>

(SB 616-J5) Rating: 1

From Escondido, proceed north on I-15 for approximately 36 miles to the I-15/I-215 split in Murrieta. Change to I-215 north and continue about 30 miles to Highway 60 east. Take Highway 60 east then continuing east on I-10 to Highway 62, approximately 40 miles. Go north on Highway 62 about 12 miles to Morongo Valley (a small town). About a mile or two into town, look for signs for Big Morongo Canyon Preserve. Turn right (south) on East Drive, a dirt road, to the Preserve. The parking lot is just beyond the caretaker's house. Picnic tables and restrooms are available. In the caretaker's yard, several hummingbird and seed feeders will attract many birds for your enjoyment. This location is always a spring hot spot and favorite PAS field trip. Bring a lunch for an after birding picnic at the bird feeders. Allow 2 hours travel time from Escondido.

Leader: Jim Beckman

858-205-2819

Saturday, May 3, 8:00 a.m. (Note new Spring/Summer 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/Dixon Lake" signs and turn left on La Honda Drive. Continue north toward Dixon Lake and on to the **free** Daley Ranch parking area on your left. Meet at the trailhead kiosk.

Leader: Sally Sanderson

760-749-6995

**IN MEMORIAM**

Yolanda Allen Fleet was a well-known animal advocate, both domestic and wild. She was also a protector of the environment and a longtime member of Palomar Audubon Society. She was an elegant lady who lived in a beautiful forest of her own in Escondido. She will be greatly missed but her work will be carried on.

Wayne Pray was President of Palomar Audubon Society from 1999 though 2003. He died at age 81 on January 22, 2014.

Some of the many accomplishments made during Wayne's years as President include the following:

Two local sites, Lake Hodges and Santa Margarita River Valley, have been internationally recognized as Globally Important Bird Areas

During 2002 PAS partnered in two crucial land acquisitions in the Lake Hodges area. The 292 -acre parcel of Slope of Bernardo Mountain and 345-acre county park linking Elfin Forest Recreational Preserve with the Olivenhain Reservoir.

The Chapter was also active in the Adopt-a-Highway program during his tenure.

Wayne was a remarkable president and person who will be deeply missed by those of us who knew him.

areas with low vegetation, sometimes in vacant properties along the urban and suburban edges where bird enthusiasts delight in watching them. However, it is exactly this type of habitat is often targeted for development, putting the Burrowing Owl in a precarious position.

"All of the nominated birds are great, but I'm not surprised that the Burrowing Owl got so many votes," said Brigid McCormack, executive director of Audubon California. "It's an extremely popular bird, one that thrives in tough environments, and prompts a lot of people to rally around its protection."

Burrowing Owls breed from Canada's southern prairie provinces south throughout western United States to southern California and Mexico. They can also be found in Florida, Cuba and South America. Burrowing Owls are 9" tall, and have short tails and long legs.

The Burrowing Owl has been designated a Species of Special Concern in California, mostly due to threats to habitat from agriculture and development. A number of local populations of Burrowing Owls have declined in recent years, mostly due to the conversion of their habitat to other uses. While a number of Audubon chapters are working to protect Burrowing Owls in their local areas, Audubon California has been directly involved in safeguarding their habitat as the state maps out zones for solar power development in the southwestern part of California.

To read Band Tales IN COLOR visit
<http://www.palomaraudubon.org>



HELP PREVENT 500 YEARS OF TOXIC POLLUTION

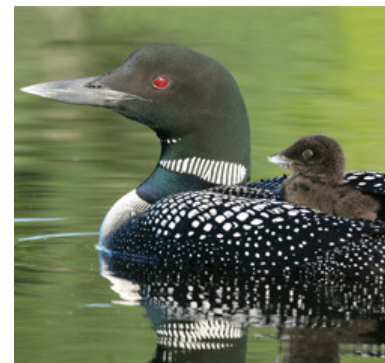
I need your help. It's urgent.

Unless we act quickly, a mining company will begin toxic mining operations that could pollute sensitive Minnesota waters for 500 years.

The proposed PolyMet mine project poses a major threat to some of northern Minnesota's most cherished bird species—and to precious natural resources like Lake Superior!

[Take action! Tell the Environmental Protection Agency to halt this misguided project before it's too late.](http://www.audubonaction.org/site/Advocacy?id=1593) (www.audubonaction.org/site/Advocacy?id=1593)

It is impossible to prevent toxic pollution as a byproduct of the sort of open pit copper-nickel sulfide mine that has been proposed.



TAKE ACTION ›

By the mining company's own admission, the mining operation would ooze toxins into the region's waterways for as long as 500 years. The mining site would require constant and expensive water treatment for that entire period.

More than 300 bird species spend at least part of their year in Minnesota and three Important Bird Areas would be especially vulnerable. These include winter habitats for Great Gray Owls and breeding habitat for dozens of neotropical songbird species. At particular risk are water-dependent bird species, including Belted Kingfisher, Common Loon, Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, Hooded Merganser, Common Tern, American Bittern, and Least Bittern.

In addition, one of the major investors in the mine, Swiss-owned Glencore, has a notorious track record for environmental, labor, and human rights abuses around the world. Questions have been raised whether PolyMet's operators would have the resources to manage the destruction from a major spill or accident should one occur.

The ecological consequences of a mining disaster in this region would be nothing short of catastrophic.

This mine cannot begin operations without EPA approval. Until the many serious environmental questions are answered, the EPA should stop this disaster before it starts.

[It's not too late to take action. Urge the EPA to put the brakes on the PolyMet mine.](http://www.audubonaction.org/site/Advocacy?id=1593)



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Yarnold".

David Yarnold

President & CEO, National Audubon Society

P.S. Even if you've already taken local action on this issue, you can still take make your voice count!

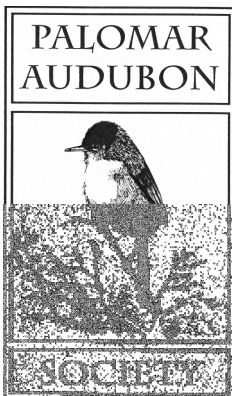
[Take national action today and urge the EPA to stop the mine before it's too late.](http://www.audubonaction.org/site/Advocacy?id=1593)

(www.audubonaction.org/site/Advocacy?id=1593)

Band Tales

March-April, 2014

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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Field Trips Jim Beckman 858-205-2819

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Programs Committee xxx-xxx-xxxx

Publicity Open xxx-xxx-xxxx

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Webmaster: Jeff Ebricht: 858-484-3932
palomaraudubon@gmail.com

Board of Director's Meeting

Thursday, March 6th

Thursday, April 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

March	1	San Diego Bird Festival - No Field Trip
March	6	Board of Directors' Meeting
March	15	San Jacinto Wildlife Area Walk
March	22	Whelan Lake Bird Sanctuary Walk
March	27	General Meeting: "Ordinary Extraordinary Junco"
March	29	Lake Hodges Walk
April	5	San Pasqual Agricultural Trail Walk
April	12	Old Mission Dam Walk
April	19	Dairy Mart Pond/Tijuana River Valley Walk
April	24	General Meeting: "Count Half a Million Albatross"
April	26	Big Morongo Canyon Preserve Walk
May	3	Daley Ranch Walk