



Band Tales

Palomar Audubon Society
A Chapter of the
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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No. 5

January-February
2016

Editor
Arne Christiansen



Celebrate Our Wins for the Birds in 2015

Despite some tough challenges, 2015 has a lot to celebrate when it comes to birds and conservation. Here's a quick wrap up of the good news stories from 2015 that are worth celebrating.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act Survives Attack

Congressman Jeff Duncan (R-SC), the sponsor of legislation aimed at dramatically weakening the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), soon backed off that destructive course when our hard-hitting campaign turned the spotlight on it. Audubon also outed Duke Energy for its efforts to weaken the law. Thousands of outraged emails from Auduboners like you sealed the deal and saved MBTA!

Greater Sage-Grouse Gets Its Second Chance

Members of Congress intent on derailing efforts to protect the dwindling Greater Sage-Grouse lost their leverage when Interior decided not to list the bird under the Endangered Species Act. Building on an impressive 10-year campaign by Audubon, an unprecedented collaboration among all stakeholders put in place a broad set of conservation plans to protect 173 million acres of core habitat for the grouse, and in the process improving habitat for more than 300 additional species of birds and wildlife. Win-Win!

Arctic Sea Still Pristine

After many blunders and missteps that would have been comical had the stakes not been so high, Shell Oil announced it will abandon attempts to drill in the Chukchi Sea, citing less oil than expected under those icy waters. Audubon strenuously opposed drilling in these rich and pristine waters. Audubon joined in the lawsuit to stop the drilling and our members sent thousands of emails to the White House urging the president to reconsider this ill-conceived scheme to top off our effort. The Chukchi Sea contains five globally important bird areas, and is home to whales, polar bears, walrus, and more. The conditions are dangerous, and an oil spill would be devastating.

Gulf Coast Gets Restoration Help

This year marked important advances in restoring the Gulf of Mexico from the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster of 2010. In July a settlement for \$18.7 billion was announced between BP, the Department of Justice, and the five states along the Gulf. This is the largest fine ever

paid for an environmental disaster in US history. The funding will help to restore the damaged marshes, coastline, and other habitat. In addition, the RESTORE Council agreed on a list of restoration projects on December 9. These priorities represent huge strides in helping the region recover.

Arctic Refuge Gets Wilderness Recommendation

Earlier this year, after years of study, and a process that included thousands of comments, the US Fish and Wildlife Service recommended wilderness status for the coastal plain of the Refuge, the "biological heart" of this incredibly important refuge for birds and wildlife. Congress has introduced bills that would give the Refuge the wilderness status it deserves—and keep it in place forever.

Clean Power Plan Goes Final

Hailed as the single most important step America has taken to curb dangerous climate pollution, the Clean Power Plan is final and most states are working on plans to implement their piece of it. Opportunities exist to reduce energy consumption through efficiency, create regional plans to lower the cost of compliance, and a recent report shows that consumers would pay less for energy when the Clean Power Plan is realized in states across the country.

Keystone Pipeline Denied

Another blow to curb climate change landed with the announcement by President Obama to deny a permit to build the Keystone pipeline, which would carry viscous, toxic tar sands from the boreal forests of Alberta to the coast for export. Not only does this keep us closer to the path of clean, renewable energy to fight climate change, but it helps save thousands of acres of boreal forests, summer home to many of our songbirds.



Inside this Band Tales

<i>A Birds-Eye View</i>	page 2
<i>Conservation Notes</i>	page 2
<i>Programs</i>	page 3
<i>Field Trips</i>	pages 4,5

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

Penny Hernandez, President

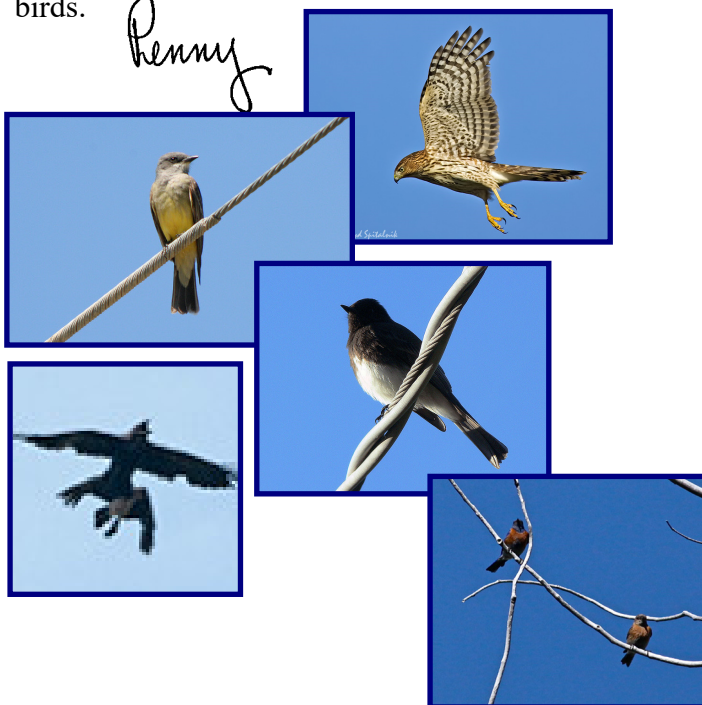
The best thing ever is waking up to birds singing. It was Sunday morning a little after first light, I'm lying in bed under a ton of warm blankets and I hear a Cassin's Kingbird. Then I hear the Crows going crazy. I bet they are harassing the poor Cooper's Hawk again. Wait, was that a Black Phoebe I'm hearing? I wonder if they will build a mud nest outside my bedroom window again this spring. Now there is a soft twitter that I'm not sure about. Being a true birder, I get myself out of my warm bed and look out the window. Oh, it's a pair of Western Blue Birds.



I have never been more thankful, that my sister, Sunny, got me started on this lifelong hobby. It's a new year and maybe you know someone who could benefit from having a great hobby. A hobby where you are outside, seeing beautiful San Diego County, and learning about nature, birds, plants, and sometime other wild animals. You can bird anywhere. I've birded in beautiful places outside the U.S. and in store parking lots. The birds are everywhere.

If you are a new birder or have a sister you want to get interested in birding with you, talk to Richard Fowler about doing another birding class this spring, or just come on our field trips every Saturday. Our wonderful members are always willing to help others identify the birds and bird songs, so you too can lie in bed and listen to the birds.

Penny

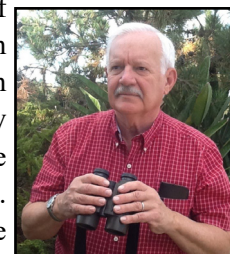


CONSERVATION NOTES

Richard Fowler, Conservation Chair

PAS CONSERVATION IN 2016

As we trudged along the trail running on the north side of Lake Hodges, avoiding the occasional biker as well as rocky stretches, I was pondering better alternatives to accessing this stretch of the Lake and Felicita Creek, when Jess Norton, our guide from San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy (SDRVC), spoke up with the possibility of renting a 4X4 vehicle. This idea was greeted with immediate support from the three stalwarts of the PAS-SDRVC bird counts: Tom Trowbridge, Paul Jeffs, and myself. We had completed counts at the River Parks Sycamore Creek headquarters for 2015 earlier in December and were now scouting out our project for 2016: quarterly counts on Bernardo Mountain. Recognizing our age-related limitations we were not planning hiking to the top of Bernardo Mountain, however, we did not anticipate the time and effort just to get to the base of the mountain. So it goes with PAS conservation projects, improvisation is a necessity.



On the way home from Lake Hodges I passed a crew cutting down a huge dead eucalyptus tree near the entrance to the lake off Lake drive. Removing alien trees from the area around Hodges was began by volunteers several years ago. It has now progressed with public support to contracts with professionals. According to Stacy McCline, who has joined us for bird walks at the Lake in the recent pass, thousands of Eucalyptus and other alien trees have already been removed. The goal is a Lake surrounded by native trees such as willows, oaks, and sycamores. The planting of these native trees has begun. Although there is widespread support for this project among environmental organizations such as the SDRVC and is led by environmental professionals, there has been local blow-back by resident opposed to the removal of the large trees and some who are concerned about water quality and the use of Glyphosate to kill trees.

Glyphosate in the Lake is being monitored on a regular basis and has yet to be detected. In addition, birders can be reassured that trees with active nests will not be cut down. This project will continue on throughout 2016 and beyond. It deserves the support of PAS members.

Perhaps the largest environmental concern in Southern

California for PAS members is the status of the Salton Sea. Although the Sea currently supports over 420 species of resident and migratory birds, this is in jeopardy after 2017. Contracted water from the Imperial Irrigation District for the Sea will end at that time. This could have devastating effects on the habitats supporting bird life. There has been considerable activity at the State and environmental level to mitigate this outcome. However, there is skepticism that the State will come up with the funds to support this mitigation. The issue is a very complicated one, but PAS conservation will work to keep the membership informed as to the status of the Sea in the coming year.

In the year ahead Palomar will again sponsor a bird class. Our class last September exceeded our expectations and we were not able to accept all applicants for the class. Finally, we will monitor development projects in north San Diego County. We partnered with Escondido Neighbors United in opposing the Oak Creek project this past year. We continue to be confronted with ill-suited projects for the North County, so further action on this front is likely.

The past year has been an active year for your conservation chair and 2016 will require continued effort.

Richard



An egregious amendment that would have prevented enforcement of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act has been withdrawn.

(Trumpeter Swans. Photo: Andy Byerl)

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 January 28, 2016 “The Raptors of San Diego County” Live Birds!

This program will be a special presentation about local raptors, and will include the opportunity to view some live birds up close. The educational team from the Raptor Institute will be bringing a few native raptor species to the program. We hoping for a visit from Buster, the Red-tailed Hawk, Violet, the American Kestrel, and/or Hart, the Barn Owl. We will learn about the habitats, conservation, and natural history of the various raptor species that can be found in San Diego County. You don't want to miss this one!

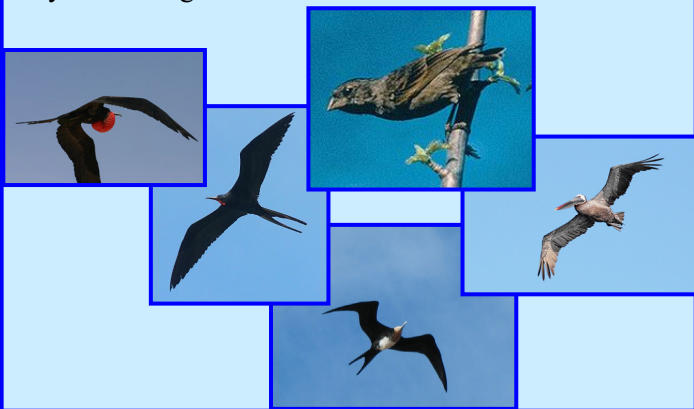


Thursday, February 25 Neil Solomon

“The Birds of the Galapagos Islands”

Well-known local bird photographer, Neil Solomon will share with us his fantastic photos of some of the birds found on the Galapagos Islands. Neil will also discuss the lives of these birds and the techniques he used to photograph them.

Neil Solomon has been photographing birds for the last fifteen years or so. He is a long time resident of San Diego and a member of the Photo Naturalist Camera Club. Neil enjoys photographing birds wherever he can find them but particularly enjoys traveling to out-of-the-way places. This is Neil's seventh PAS presentation, and like his previous programs you can count on it being very interesting and informative.



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, January 2, 2016

Escondido Christmas Bird Count

Organizer: Ken Weaver gnatcatcher@sbcglobal.net 760-723-2448

Saturday, January 9, 8:30 a.m.

Dixon Lake

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/Dixon Lake" signs and turn left (north) on La Honda Drive. Continue toward Dixon Lake and the Daley Ranch free parking area on your left. Meet at the east end of this parking lot, adjacent the Dixon Lake entrance.

Leader: Sally Sanderson
760-749-6995

Saturday, January 16, 8:30 a.m.

Sweetwater River/Bonita

National City

(1310-C4) Rating: 2

Take I-15 south to I-805 south and take the Sweetwater Road exit in National City. Turn right at Sweetwater Road and then right at Plaza Bonita Road. You will see the Plaza Bonita Shopping Center parking area on the left. Meet at the far west corner of the parking lot near the Outback Steakhouse. Our walk will be along the Sweetwater River where we should see a good variety of waterfowl and other birds.

Leader: Jeff Ebright
858-484-3932

Saturday, January 23, 8:30 a.m.

Dos Picos County Park & Rangeland Rd.

Ramona

(1171-H5) Rating: 2

From I-15 in Rancho Bernardo go east on Rancho Bernardo Road, which turns into Espola Road (S5), and continue to Poway Road (S4). Turn left and drive east to Highway 67. Head north on Highway 67 and just before you reach Ramona, make a hard right on Mussey Grade Road (heading southwest). Continue on Dos Picos Park Road ½ mile to the park entrance on the left. There is a San Diego County Park parking fee, but free with a County senior pass.

Leader: Hal Benham
858-679-7904

Saturday, January 30 – Sunday, January 31

Salton Sea Weekend

No Local Field Trip

Saturday, February 6, 8:30 a.m.

Guajome Regional Park

Oceanside

(1067-D7) Rating: 2

From Highway 78 in Oceanside, exit north on College Boulevard, and drive 4.4 miles north to Highway 76. Make a right turn on Highway 76 and continue east about ½ mile to Lake Guajome Road. Turn right (south) and drive up the hill past the park entrance, which does not open until later, and park on the street.

Leader: Doug Walkley
310-387-8190

Saturday, February 13, 8:30 a.m.

Oak Hill Memorial Park

Escondido

(1130-F1) Rating: 1

From I-15 exit east on Via Rancho Parkway, which becomes Bear Valley Parkway, and drive 5 miles north to Glen Ridge road at Orange Glen High School. Turn right on Glen Ridge Road and proceed approximately 1 mile east to the cemetery gate. Turn left to parking area.

Leader: Jim Beckman
858-205-2819

Saturday, February 20, 8:30 a.m.

San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary

5 Riparian View, Irvine, CA 92612

(Thomas Guide to Orange County, page 859 J-7)

Rating: 2

Take I-5 north to the San Diego Freeway I-405, then exit on Culver and turn left. At the first signal, which is Michelson, turn right. Continue west on Michelson and then turn left on Harvard. Continue south on Harvard and then turn right on University Drive. Continue on University to Campus Dr. and turn right again. Stay in the far right lane and immediately turn right on to Riparian View which will enter the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary. (There is a dark green sign by the turnoff, identifying this as the route into the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary) At the end of the road, you will make a sharp left turn down a steep driveway and into the parking lot. The first building you see will be the Sea & Sage Audubon House. Beyond the Audubon House are the ponds of the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary and many trails for us to explore. Allow 50 minutes from Oceanside.

Leader: Jim Beckman
858-205-2819

Saturday, February 27, 8:30 a.m.

Santee Lakes

Santee

(1231-A5) Rating: 2

From I-15 go east on Highway 52. Exit at Mast Blvd. 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 Blvd, 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: Tom Trowbridge
760-743-1052

Saturday, March 5

San Diego Bird Festival – No Scheduled Field Trip



Dear Audubon Members,

On behalf of Altacal Audubon, we invite you to the 17th Annual Snow Goose Festival of the Pacific Flyway, which will be held January 27-31, 2016 in Chico, CA. We are offering over seventy exciting field trips, workshops, specialty tours and presentations over five days, including many free events and activities for all to enjoy especially kids. Our special guest and keynote speaker for the Gathering of Wings Banquet this year is George D. Lepp, outdoor and nature photographer, teacher and author.

Online registration is now open and we would appreciate if you could help us spread the word! Attached are two Snow Goose Festival promotional buttons (great for websites and blogs) and our postcard file (great for emails.) Please use this information in your newsletter and for your meeting announcements. Any postings can be linked directly to www.snowgoosefestival.org.

We would love to see all you birders here to join us in this great adventure. Thanks for your support!

Regards,

Billie Sommerfeld, SGF Media Assistant

For more information contact:

Jennifer Patten, Festival Coordinator

PO Box 1063

Chico, CA 95927

(530) 345-1865

info@snowgoosefestival.org



Bird Festival General Information

2016 BIRD FESTIVAL REGISTRATION

How do I register?

Online.

We prefer you register online. Secure registration is available online at:

www.sandiegoaudubon.org.

You may find it useful to do your planning first by using the Registration Worksheet posted here or in the center of the brochure. There is a registration fee of \$10 per party. Registered participants receive a tote bag and a Bird Festival water bottle. The deadline for online registrations is March 1, 2016.

By Mail.

If you are unable to register online, you may register by mail using the worksheet insert found in the center of the festival brochure. Please add \$15 per party for processing if mailing in your registration. Please note that many field trips will fill by November 1, 2015. If you decide to use the mail in option, consider registering as early as possible. The deadline for mail-in registrations is January 1, 2016.

Drop in.

While online registration is the preferred method of registration, you may register for any available event at the festival registration/check-in table. Please note that most trips fill quickly, but there is usually space in our workshops.

**(FLASH NEWS FROM THE EDITOR:
THE SALTON SEA TRIP IS SOLD OUT, WITH
A WAITING LIST!)**



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



Audubon CALIFORNIA

Thank you for your support in this year's climate campaign. Here is an update on what you have accomplished this year.

The legislative climate proposals introduced this session were ambitious. Lawmakers sought to substantially reduce our use of petroleum, expand our use of alternative energy, increase energy conservation measures, close the last remaining loopholes allowing offshore oil drilling, set up a special council to coordinate the state's climate adaptation, make it state policy to protect wildlife corridors, and a lot more.

The flagship bills of the 2015 legislative season were SB 32 and SB 350, which would have expanded California's already progressive climate laws and set ambitious goals to reduce our reliance on polluting fuels. Not surprising, these bills faced staunch opposition from the oil industry, resulting in SB 32 being held back for further work in the 2016 season, and removing the requirement to reduce fuels from SB 350. After the fuel goal was removed, SB 350 was passed and signed by the Governor on October 7.



We were disappointed that SB 788, which would have closed one of the last remaining loopholes that could allow new offshore oil drilling leases in California waters, did not pass. However, the Legislature did approve two bills that will greatly improve oil pipeline safety and the state's ability to effectively respond to oil spills. We're making progress in this area, and Audubon California will continue to push until birds are free from the threat of oil spills.

Audubon California was greatly pleased that two bills that move the state forward on climate change adaptation were also passed and signed by the Governor on October 8. AB 498, which we co-sponsored, will make it state policy to protect wildlife corridors that birds and other wildlife will need to survive in a changed environment. Already, we are seeing an increased awareness of the importance of wildlife corridors among legislators and agency personnel, including a new provision to use transportation funds to protect and create wildlife corridors adjacent to highway projects. AB 1482, which we also co-sponsored, will greatly improve the coordination of and accountability for climate adaptation efforts across all state agencies.

Another great achievement of this session was the unprecedented involvement of the larger Audubon network of chapters and members who met with their local lawmakers, made phone calls, and sent countless letters and emails to raise awareness about the importance of the climate legislation to birds and nature.

Many chapter members met with their local representatives and staff to share their views on the climate change bills. The meeting between San Bernardino Valley Audubon and staffers of Assembly member Cheryl Brown (D-47th Dist-San Bernardino) was particularly memorable, as Dave Woodward, Conservation Chair of San Bernardino Valley Audubon, was greeted enthusiastically by a former student, who screamed in delight: "Mr. Woodward. You were my favorite teacher." The staffer told Dave how he had changed her life and talked about his class. The San Bernardino Valley Audubon members had a very productive conversation with Assembly member Brown's District Director and Field Representative, discussing SB 32 and SB 350, and some of the other issues in the district.

Three other chapters also met with their legislators or staff, through in-district meetings or at other events, like coffee clubs or town hall meetings, advocating for greater protection for birds through progressive climate change legislation and habitat preservation.

We greatly appreciate all you have done to be the voice for birds this legislative session. We look forward to strengthening our relationships with our representatives in the next session, and achieving even more.

Best,
Desiree Loggins, Travis Abeyta, Garry George, and
Ariana Rickard Your Chapter Network Team

(Photo across the page: Allen's Hummingbird, our unofficial climate campaign mascot, stonebird.

Photo below: Members from San Bernardino Valley Audubon and Audubon California pose for a photo with Assembly member Cheryl Brown's staff)



Audubon California
220 Montgomery Street, Suite 1000
San Francisco, CA 94104
www.ca.audubon.org



Olympic Peninsula BirdFest 2016
Come bird with us!

April 15-17, 2016
For more information:
www.olympicbirdfest.org
info@olympicbirdfest.org
or 360-681-4076

Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society

Olympic BirdFest 2016

Come Bird With Us

Sequim, Washington, April 15-17,
2016

Grab your binoculars and join the 12th annual **Olympic BirdFest 2016** celebration at the Dungeness River Audubon Center, April 15-17, 2016.

The stage is set...quiet bays and estuaries, sandy beaches, a five-mile-long sand spit, and a protected island bird sanctuary on the Strait of Juan de Fuca; wetlands, tide pools, rainforests, and lush river valleys. The players are ready ... Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, Harlequin Ducks, Black Oystercatchers, Peregrine Falcons, Barred and Pygmy owls will be sporting their finest spring plumage for this celebration. Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours; and a gala banquet. Our featured speaker this year is noted artist Tony Angell, "Revealing the Secret Lives of Owls".

Come bird with us and experience with others the spectacular landscapes of the Olympic Peninsula ...you just might go home with a new bird for your life list! Check out the offerings by going online:

(www.olympicbirdfest.org).

Precede your BirdFest weekend with a three-day, two night birding cruise of the spectacular **San Juan Islands** on April 12-14, 2016. Visit San Juan and Sucia Islands, and more. Stay at the historic Roche Harbor Resort. Get cruise information and register online at: www.pugetsoundexpress.com/audubon.

Extend your Birdfest weekend with the **Neah Bay post-trip**, April 17-19, 2016: two days exploring northwest coastal Washington, a region rarely seen by birders.

Contact us by phone, at 360-681-4076, E-mail us at info@olympicbirdfest.org,

Or write to us at:

Dungeness River Audubon Center P.O.

Box 2450

Sequim, WA 98382

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

Suzanne Anderson

Barbara Bury

Joan Comito

Joe Donner

Jo Daughtery

Elinor Foulke

Ron & Dee Grant

Sue Hunter

Albert & Sharon Kersey

Daniel Labeaune

Carol Levin

Donna Payton

William Pickens

Al & Donna Przech

AND WE APPRECIATE OUR DONORS VERY MUCH!

Suzanne Anderson

Carol Levin

Corrine Lines

William Pickens

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is for donor.

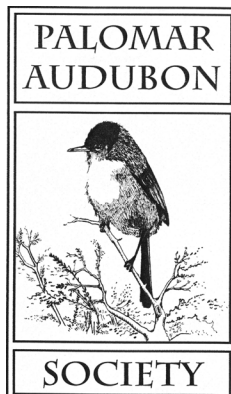
For future communications with Sunny and Arne Christiansen our new address and phone number are:

**26739 Red Ironbark Drive
Valley Center, CA 92082
760-297-3096**

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January-February, 2016

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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 Scholarship....Jim Beckman.....858-205-2819

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

Board of Director's Meeting

Thursday, January 7th

Thursday, February 4th

7:00 p.m. at the Remington Club

16916 Hierba Drive
 Rancho Bernardo

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

QUICK CALENDAR

January	2	Escondido Christmas Bird Count
January	7	Board of Directors' Meeting
January	9	Dixon Lake Walk
January	16	Sweetwater River/Bonita Walk
January	23	Dos Picos County Park & Rangeland Road Walk
January	28	General Meeting: "The Raptors of San Diego County"
January	30	Salton Sea Weekend (no local walk scheduled)
February	4	Board of Directors' Meeting
February	6	Guajome Regional Park Walk
February	13	Oak Hill Memorial Park Walk
February	20	San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary Walk
February	25	General Meeting: "The Birds of the Galapagos Islands"
February	27	Santee Lakes Walk
March	5	San Diego Bird Festival (no local walk scheduled)