



Band Tales

Palomar Audubon Society
A Chapter of the
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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January-February
2020

Editors
Jill & Fred Weber

HAPPY NEW YEAR



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A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

Penny Hernandez, President

Ho! Ho! Ho! Hope you all had a great Holiday. I am one of those people who gets excited about Christmas and I do all my shopping really early. Then what do I do to keep up the Christmas spirit? I went to the lovely luncheon that Diane and Doug Walkley served to the Saturday birding group. It was fun to meet new members and old friends and



talk about all the birds they saw that day. Then came the job of helping my dear sister decorate her beautiful home. We finished it in time to have a group up to stuff the mailers for raising money for the "Missing Lynx" project in conjunction with the Escondido Creek Conservancy. Jill Weber,

Diane Walkley, my other sister Merry, Sunny and I got those letters stuffed and labeled in time to have a wonderful salad bar and tomato soup lunch and of course brownies and ice cream. Even after Christmas the season continued. We volunteered to help at the Christmas Bird Count which is a much anticipated annual event. All of these events started me thinking about what got me interested in Palomar Audubon Society besides the birds that is. I really enjoyed meeting new people and doing something to improve the Chapter and the environment. We used to have a booth at the bird festival and folding parties for the newsletter. We do have other things now you can volunteer for. We have weekly birding at Sundance Elementary School. We do bird counts, have adult birding classes that can use volunteers for their field trips. We also are always looking for people to stuff and label special fundraising mailers. We need people who have ideas on what PAS needs to do and accomplish in the future. We need people who want to work on the Board. For instance, we are looking for a new Secretary. Are you interested? Think about what would happen to Palomar Audubon Society if we didn't have volunteers. Happy New Year and Good Birding!

Penny



**REMINDER:
DEADLINE FOR THE
MARCH-APRIL ISSUE IS
FEBRUARY 15th.
SUBMIT COPY TO
jillfred@cox.net**

CONSERVATION NOTES

PAS is thrilled to announce that DAVID HEKEL and TRYSTEN LOEFKE have kindly volunteered to co-chair our Conservation Committee. Both bring amazing talents with which to guide and inspire PAS conservation efforts.

DAVID HEKEL has been with the San Dieguito River park since 1999. He has been Senior Park Manager since 2006 and became Trails Manager in 2018. RANGER DAVE has dedicated many years of his life studying the impacts that users have on trail systems and the surrounding environment. His continuing goal is to provide wonderful places for people to experience nature while preserving it for generations to come. He is an avid mountain biker, hiker and rock climber.

Most of you already know TRYSTEN LOEFKE who had been an active PAS member since the age of 11. He has been one of our outstanding young birders and a well-deserved recipient of our young birders' scholarship program receiving trips to ABA Camp Colorado in 2014 and National Audubon's Hog Island Camp in 2017. Trysten also wrote an article on European Starlings that was published in ABA's BIRDING Magazine in 2017. Trysten has been in Scotland for the last 2 years serving as a missionary for his church (but we heard that he got a lot of birding in also). He returns on Jan 6 and plans on attending college majoring in conservation studies. Welcome home Trysten...we've missed you!

Talk about a dynamic duo! PAS wishes to thank Ranger Dave and Trysten for volunteering to chair this important committee and we look forward to their contributions.

Look Out !!!!



Please note that the Board of Directors meeting has been changed to January 9th at 7:00 PM.

PAS Salton Sea Trip January 24, 25, 26, 2020

Come join Palomar Audubon Society as we bird the Salton Sea and areas around the Sea and Imperial Valley on January 25 -26, 2020. Our trip two years ago was very successful and we are looking forward to another fun-filled birding weekend with friends.

Our field trip this year will again be led by our own Palomar members: Hal Benham and Doug Walkley, who will be joined in the endeavor by Steve Ellis and Jim Beckman. Our trip will include a full day of birding on Saturday, January 25th and a half-day on Sunday, January 26th to allow ample time to drive home in the afternoon daylight.

We are limiting the number of participants to 30 to maximize the birding experience for all. The trip is open to all members of Palomar Audubon Society. The cost of the trip is \$35 per person. Food and lodging will be the responsibility of the participant. Non-members who wish to participate must include a separate check in the amount of \$25 for membership. To secure your reservation, please send your \$35/person check, payable to "Palomar Audubon Society" to: Hal/Dianne Benham, 15946 Cumberland Dr., Poway, CA 92064. In addition to the \$35, please include the first and last name, email address, cell phone number and mailing address for each participant. If the trip fills we will begin a waiting list.



Hotel rooms (non-smoking) at the Brawley Inn, in Brawley, CA, will be held for Palomar Audubon Society at a special group rate for the nights of Friday, January 24th and Saturday, January 25th. You are responsible for calling the Brawley Inn to reserve one of these rooms. Their phone number is 855-877-0106. We will meet for dinner to discuss the logistics of the trip at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, January 24th. The restaurant is across the parking lot from our hotel.

The Palomar Audubon Society Salton Sea field trip is always a popular birding adventure. Don't delay making your reservation! Further information will be shared with trip participants closer to the date of the trip. If you have questions regarding this trip, you may contact Dianne or Hal Benham by email: diannebenham@me.com.



**25th Annual
GODWIT
DAYS**

SPRING MIGRATION
BIRD FESTIVAL

April 15-21
2020

Arcata, Humboldt County,
California

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

- Stuart Mackenzie
"Working Collaboratively
to Cover More Ground"
- Richard O. Prum, Ph.D.
"The Evolution of Beauty: How Darwin's
Forgotten Theory of Mate Choice
Shapes the Animal World – and Us."

www.godwitdays.org

A circular logo for Godwit Days. It features a detailed illustration of several Godwit birds in flight against a yellow background. The birds are shown in various stages of flight, with wings spread. The logo is set against a larger orange background that contains the event information.

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.

FIELD TRIPS

January - February 2020

Saturday, January 4, 8:30 am.

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. Seniors can also park free inside the adjacent Dixon Lake gate near the restrooms. Meet at the Daley Ranch trail-head kiosk.

Leader: Jim Beckman

858-205-2819

Saturday, January 11, 8:30 am.

Sweetwater River/Bonita

National City

(1310-C4) Rating: 2

From North County, 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 18, 8:30 am.

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 Mussey Grade Rd and turn right on Dos Picos Park Road and drive ½ mile to the park entrance on the left. There is a San Diego County Park parking fee (cash only), but free with a County Senior Pass.

Leader: Hal Benham

858-679-7904

Friday, January 24 – Sunday, January 26

Salton Sea Weekend

NO LOCAL FIELD TRIP

Saturday, February 1, 8:30 am.

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: Gerry Baade

858-231-9876

Saturday, February 8, 8:30 am.

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 Hwy 76 and continue east about ½ mile to Lake Guajome Rd. 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 15, 8:30 am.

San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary

5 Riparian View, Irvine, CA 92612

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

Leader: Jennifer Falconer

949-278-1630

Saturday, February 22, 8:30 am.

Santee Lakes

Santee

(1231-A5) Rating: 2

From I-15 go east on Hwy 52. Exit at Mast Blvd.

Continue east on Mast Blvd. 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 Dr. Turn right, park along the street, and walk through the open gate for FREE. Meet in the parking lot by the General Store between lakes 4 & 5.

Leader: Jack Friery

619-218-7342

Saturday, February 29
San Diego Bird Festival -- No Scheduled Field Trip

Saturday, March 7, 8:30 am.
San Jacinto Wildlife Area
Riverside County
(RC 749-B4) Rating: 2
From San Diego County take I-15 north through Temecula and take the I-215. Continue north on the I-215. At the town of Perris, exit right (east) at the Ramona Expressway. 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. Bring a lunch. Lots of birds. Always a PAS favorite!
Leader: Sally Sanderson
760-749-6995 vcwillow@aol.com

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

***Doug & Diane Walkley
Robert Farber/Eve Martin
Linda Vogt
Marilyn Schmitz
Jo Daughtery***

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

***Robert Farber/Eve Martin
John & Kathleen McHorney***

We all know how aggressive mockingbirds can be. **Joan Perron** reports a particularly noisy mocker that sits on her step railing while squawking and flapping its wings at her three cats as they nap on her patio. The cats have learned to just ignore the ruckus. Must be frustrating for that mockingbird to get no reaction from the napping cats!

Rarities Report By Alison Davies

Hello friends,

There are so many rare birds making their way through San Diego County that there just isn't enough room in the newsletter to include all of them. For this end-of-the-year issue, I had to choose the top 20 out of many dozens of rarities reported in just the past two months alone. Here they are:

American Redstart
Baltimore Oriole
Black Scoter
Crissal Thrasher
Evening Grosbeak
Golden-crowned Kinglet
Nelson's Sparrow
Neotropic Cormorant
Northern Parula
Painted Redstart
Plumbeous Vireo
Red Crossbill
Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Rusty Blackbird
Sagebrush Sparrow
Thick-billed Kingbird
Tropical Kingbird
White-throated Sparrow
White-winged Scoter
Yellow-headed Blackbird

In addition, pelagic birds continue streaming south off the coast of La Jolla. You can watch Pacific Loons passing by in stunning numbers—several hundred every hour—and many other species including Black-vented Shearwaters, an occasional Common or Red-throated Loon, and dozens of flocks of Surf Scoters. If you have a scope, you may be lucky enough to spot a Black Scoter or a White-winged Scoter in the mix. Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers have been spotted, as have Iceland (Thayer's), Glaucous-winged and Mew Gulls. What a glorious way to wrap up 2019!

Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Alison

Bird Bath Bliss

A couple of years ago, I followed a fellow birder's recommendation and put up a bird bath in my backyard. I live in La Mesa near downtown. The bird bath is a fountain style with two tiers, and its backdrop is a hedge of cape vine. I can observe the bird bath from my easy chair behind the glass patio door, 50 yards away. With binoculars, I can see details I would miss in the field.

The best birding is in fall and winter. The most common every-day visitors are Lesser Goldfinch, House Finch, Yellow-rumped Warbler. They come to take drink and maybe a splashy bath. They are often joined by White-crowned Sparrows—the most enthusiastic splashies. Sometimes, not every day but regularly, other flocks descend: lively Bushtits, as many as twelve crowding into the water; Scaly-breasted Munias, showing off their cinnamon-colored tops and white with black scaled breasts. Then there are more rare sightings: Orange-crowned Warbler, Townsend's Warbler, even a Black-and-white Warbler, and House Sparrow. In the shrubbery around the bird bath, I've seen Bewick's Wren with eye stripe and flicking tail. Occasionally A Western Scrub Jay alights, even grabbing a bee when the bees hang around. Northern Mocking birds are regulars, too. A California Towhee, usually feeding on the ground, hops up to the lower bowl to take a sip or a bath.

In the evenings, several Mourning Doves come to sit on the edges of the bird bath, seemingly enjoying the calm evening. Just once, a pair of Eurasian Collared Doves joined them, but then left and did not return.

During migration in the fall, a brilliant yellow bird visited—a Western Tanager? Where was the orange of its head? I looked it up; Western Tanagers do not show the orange in the fall, only in spring (courtesy of the San Diego Bird Atlas). Last year, there were several visits by Western Bluebirds, but I have not seen them this year. A single Hermit Thrush is one of my favorites, with its distinctive markings and longer legs it stands out against the smaller birds. A Pacific Slope Flycatcher turns up once in a while, as does a Black Phoebe. Anna's Hummingbirds are always around, and during migration Rufous Hummingbird. There was one dramatic visit by a Red-shouldered Hawk, probably more interested in the birds than the water.

So, thanks to all the help identifying birds on Audubon field trips and my trusty dog-eared Peterson Guide, I am enjoying watching the grey and yellow, the blue and the red, the brown and the speckled feathered friends.

Elizabeth Rose

Thursday, January 23

Neil Solomon

“SPRINGTIME IN SHETLAND AND THE WESTERN ISLES OF SCOTLAND”

From misty, treeless moorland to rugged shoreline cliffs, birds are everywhere in Scotland. Spring is a time of long days, changeable weather and the arrival of birds to begin their breeding activities. Join Neil for a glimpse of these birds in the most northern breeding habitats in the UK.

Neil has been photographing birds for the past nineteen years or so. He is a long-time resident of San Diego and a member of the Photo Naturalists 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 eleventh PAS presentation, and like his previous programs, you can count on it being very interesting and informative.

Mark your calendars. Don't miss this presentation!

SUNDANCE SAYS THANK YOU!

Many thanks to the Palomar Audubon Society members who answered my plea for Recess Birding volunteers for Sundance Elementary School. With your help, and that of several faithful Sundance parents, it is now possible for me to create a schedule and plan teams for weeks in advance. I truly appreciate your generous gift of time and birding expertise. Thank you, again. **Alice Holmes**

Thursday, February 27

Aedyn Loeffke

“My Summer Camp at Hog Island, Maine”

Palomar Audubon Society has a multifaceted mission, including a community outreach program with several special initiatives. One of these initiatives is our teen scholarship program. In June, we provided a 100% scholarship award for a week-long educational summer camp on birding conducted by the National Audubon Society at Hog Island, Maine. The recipient of our 2019 Young Birder Scholarship award was Aedyn Loeffke. The week was filled with birding, seabird research, bird banding, instructional lectures, and a great family atmosphere. He also learned about the famous Project Puffin, and got to see the actual Puffins in the field. Aedyn is excited to get to tell everyone about the camp, and how these camps aren't just for teens, but about all of the adult programs that Hog Island offers that PAS members could attend. Aedyn is an excellent birder and is very active on eBird. He is looking forward to sharing his good time and excellent photos with the generous members of PAS who support our scholarship programs!

Mark Your Calendars. Don't Miss This One!



BONUS PRESENTATION!

Thursday, February 27

Trysten Loeffke

“BIRDING COSTA RICA”

In 2017, Trysten Loeffke participated in an educational teenager birding camp conducted by the National Audubon Society's Tropical Teen Week at Camp Selva Verde in Costa Rica. This was a week spent in the jungles of Costa Rica tracking down our migratory warblers in their wintering grounds. Up-close and personal experiences discovering the unique ecology of Neotropical rainforests and innovative conservation efforts. Birds, frogs, sloths and more!



