



Band Tales

Palomar Audubon Society
A Chapter of the
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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2020

Editors
Jill & Fred Weber



Wood Stork photographed by Alison Davies Perris California July 30, 2020

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A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

Penny Hernandez, President

As we start this new chapter year, let's look for new ways to do what needs to be done to keep this chapter active. Any and all ideas are welcome. Ranger Dave, our Conservation Chair, suggested we could have our Board meeting by Zoom. Great idea if I were a little more savvy about computers. Just



the fact that you are still renewing your memberships, sending donations and we are getting new members is exciting to me. We do have a good future ahead of us.

I have enjoyed the little bit of birding I have done. At Sunny's home in Valley Center, we watch

Quail scooping up leftovers under the seed feeders. Sometimes we are lucky enough to see their babies. A Lazuli Bunting has appeared twice recently. What a beautiful bird!

A friend of mine, Sheri Daniels, took the pictures of the Bald Eagles that are on these pages. The one picture shows the two immature birds which hatched in Escondido – a rare event. The other shows the Eagle flying in with a fish for dinner. That is what I love about birding. It is so easy to get people interested. I started by answering Sheri's questions about the nesting Cooper's Hawks and telling her about the Bald Eagles at the lake in Escondido. She went out and took these great pictures of the juveniles (below) and the parent with a fish. (found on page 4) We talk every day about the birds, butterflies, and Covid-19.

Please keep in touch with the chapter news through this newsletter, webpage, and Facebook. If you have something to share, we would love to hear it. Please share.

Stay healthy, happy, birding and conserving.

Penny



CONSERVATION NOTES

Ranger Dave, Conservation Chair

In a year we least expected, a tern in the right direction!

It has to be tough being a California Least Tern and trying to raise your offspring in today's world. First you have the fact that the Least Tern is the smallest of the American Terns. Second their nesting sites are only found on sandy beaches and inlets along the California Coastline. Thirdly when they do happen to nest, they have no fewer than 31 predators vying for the chance to eat them, one of those being the Mexican Swimming Crab. Yeah, I had to look that one up myself.



The San Dieguito Lagoon State Marine Conservation Area was formed in 2010 and designated a marine protected area in 2012. The purpose along with 36 other sites along the California coastline was very simple, to protect the estuarine/ lagoon habitat and associated wildlife. The necessity for these areas stems from the loss of habitat along the coastlines due to development and other forms of encroachment. Keep in mind that the only viable habitat for these and other coastal birds at the moment amount to about 5% of California's coastline. So, what we end up with are fragmented pockets of ecosystems or "Wildlife Refuges". Because of this dwindling habitat and other key factors, the California Least Tern is currently listed as an "Endangered" species.

One of the key components included in the formation of the San Dieguito Lagoon State Marine Conservation Area included the construction of Least Tern nesting sites in hopes that these tiny little birds would nest there. And they did, early on in the program a couple of terns tried to nest only to be taken out or "departed" via predator. More measures were put in place including the edition of wooden decoy terns that were placed into the nesting area to entice the terns to nest and addressing the need for onsite predator control to monitor the sites during nesting season.



(Continued from page 2)



Years passed and no terns came but the rest of the lagoon flourished. Within a year of opening the lagoon back up to tidal waters and natural flushing of the wetlands hundreds of thousands of fish and other marine life came into the lagoon. This in turn brought a multitude of shorebirds and birds of prey like the Osprey into the area. The Osprey that ended up here have successfully had chicks every year for the last 6 years. The lagoons health continued to prosper but still no signs of the elusive California Least Tern.

Then in a year that most of us would soon rather forget and in the midst of an historic red tide and just as funding was suspended for the project during the start of the coronavirus pandemic it happened, one solitary egg was found on one of the sites. Within days funding was reestablished and monitors were put in place to help this one egg along. Though the chicks are capable of leaving the nest within a few days of hatching it takes another 3 weeks for them to fledge. Believe me 3 weeks is an eternity and everyone associated with the project was clearly holding their breath during this time, remember those 31 predators lying in wait. At the end of 3 weeks that one chick had indeed fledged and with that the site was now viable. Dur-

ing those 3 weeks the adjacent site also showed signs of nesting and soon more birds added to the excitement. As of now there are currently 15 nesting attempts. The first fledgling from the other site periodically visits the adjacent site but appears ready to migrate. Eight more chicks have hatched and progressed to fledgling status with two chicks are still on the ground.

With all conservation projects at one point they can become a waiting game or in some cases fail completely. It's important to not lose site of the fact that we can only make educated guesses at what if anything will happen in any given project but that we must also be diligent and prepared to respond if something does. When it does work, we can all breathe a little easier, at least until the next year. Hopefully the success from this year continues into the future and these birds continue to use these areas as a nesting site.



Osprey protecting its catch at Formosa Slough



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

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Ann Bernstein
Richard Blair
Cathie Canepa
Jo Casterline**

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Harold & Nancy Dunn
Bill & Myrna Eastwood
Michael & Judy Gendreau**

**Robert Haase
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Rustom Jamadar**

**Leslie Kuhn
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**Dan & Marilyn Perrin
Melvin Senac**

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

**Richard Blair
Linda Canada
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Harold & Nancy Dunn
Bill & Myrna Eastwood
Michael & Judy Gendreau
Patrick & Mary Jo Hayes
Rustom Jamadar
Constance Lee
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**Palomar Audubon Society
Chapter-only Membership**

Mail your application to:

**Palomar Audubon Society
P. O. Box 2483
Escondido, CA 92033-2483**

Membership in the Palomar Audubon Society includes a subscription to **Band Tales**, Palomar Audubon's bimonthly newsletter, and an invitation to our monthly programs and weekly field trips.

☐ **New Member - \$25** ☐ **Renewal - \$25**

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Name _____

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*100% of Chapter Membership dues supports
projects locally.*

RARITIES REPORT

Alison Davies

Hello friends,

I hope you're all in good health and staying cool! Are you feeling the excitement in the air? The time of year that we've been eagerly anticipating is now upon us – fall migration has begun! With that in mind, I'd like to acknowledge the frustration you may feel at times as you search for specific migrating birds and rarities, and inevitably miss some of them. Everyone has their own unique birding style – many birders take to the field simply to enjoy the experience, and whatever shows up is great. That's a wonderful, stress-free way to bird! On the flip side, birding can become an obsession for others who find themselves on a constant mission to continually add species to their county and life lists. To ease your stress and help you see the humor in what we're willing to endure in our ongoing quest to see, hear, and photograph as many birds as we can during our lifetime, I want to share this poem with you which was written by the late, great Luke Cole. It made me laugh out loud, and I hope it will do the same for you!

Do you, too, rue Smew?
Yes I do! Yes I do!
by Luke W. Cole

One bird, two bird, red bird, blue bird...

I do not like to wait all day
I do not like it, yet I stay
I do not like it in the rain
I do not like it on the plain
I do not like it by the trees
I do not like it while I freeze
I do not like it on a log
I do not like it by a bog
I do not like it on my feet
I do not like it by the street
I do not like to wait all day
For a bird that's gone astray
But I do it,
Yes I do,
Just to see
The little smew
In the rain,
On the plain,
By the trees
While I freeze,
On a log,
By a bog,
On my feet,
By the street
There I wait,
For that bird

"Seen here yesterday,"
So I've heard

Not seen Friday, when I looked
But there through Monday, while I'm booked
Not there Tuesday, when I'm back
There on Wednesday, to thrill the pack
Shouldn't I really be at work?
All those cases I must shirk
Just to spy something white
A little duck, quite a sight
In from Russia, or is it British?
All I know is, it's mighty skittish
I do not like to wait all day,
I do not like it,
Yet I stay
The crowd in the mud marks the place,
So I find a parking place
"We've been here since dawn!" they all howl
"Best bird yet is the Great Horned Owl!"

Each one drove for miles
Just to endure the locals' smiles
No bird, though, just loose lips
Talking about birds and a thousand trips
So I stand, on the bank
Listening to birders proclaim their rank:
"Nome Nome Barrow Attu Attu"
"Have you seen my falcon tattoo?"
"Peru, Ecuador, Costa Rica"
"But I've got the new birding sneaker!"
"Murphy's, Manx, Booby, Goose"
"Oh, someone must have let that loose"
"Warbler, Oriole, Bunting, Brambling"
And other inspired birders rambling...
"CALBIRD e-mail RBA"
"Oh, I was there that day!"
"Big Day, Big Year, County Lister"
"I saw the reeve -- oh, you missed her?"
This bird, that bird, the Blue Mocker
This is birding,
Everyone's a talker, and, I must say,
Though I snigger,
I too, play
Mine is bigger
"The albatross," I begin,
Watching for their chagrin...

"There! There! In the river!"
Each of us gives a shiver
Something white has just popped up!
Inevitably, a styrofoam cup
Back to banter, boast and tale,
And sometimes a bird -- "kestrel, male"
While we wait beside the slough
Nothing much better we can think to do
I do not like to wait all day,
I do not like it,
Yet I stay

I explore around the spot
Good birds there are, but Smew, not
Rough-leg, Ferruginous, Pipit, Lark,
Nuthatch, Magpie, before it's dark
Mountain Plover in the next county
But I still missed the day's big bounty
The next day at work,
I watch the screen
As CALBIRD tells me the Smew is seen
It would be another lifer
Something I should really try for
Something great, something new
Something awesome, that little Smew
Shall I go in the morning?
From the wife and boss, a warning:
Classes to teach, kids to feed,
And this is a job I need...
So I sit, here at home,
Writing down this silly poem
Cursing all I have to do
While my friends see the Smew...
I do not like to wait all day,
But I'd rather be there
than here today!

Special thanks to Don Roberson for granting permission to reprint this wonderful poem!

15 Fun Facts About Feathers

1. All birds, and only birds, have feathers, although a few species of dinosaurs had them.

2. Feathers are essential to flight; they provide insulation, sunblock, and waterproofing, and can be important in providing camouflage, social dominance, and reproductive success.

3. A bird's plumage usually weighs more than its skeleton.

4. Most adult birds molt—replace their feathers—at least once a year. For most songbirds, molting takes five to twelve weeks, shedding only a few feathers at a time. For hawks, a full molt can take several years.

5. After breeding season, most male duck species in North America replace all their flight feathers at once and are flightless for two to four weeks.

6. Birds that winter in cold areas can have 50 percent more feathers in the winter than they do in the summer.

7. Hummingbirds have roughly 1,000 feathers; swans have 25,000.

8. Penguins have more feathers than most birds: about 100 per square inch.

9. Woodpeckers have two stiff tail feathers they use as a prop to stabilize their head banging on tree trunks.

10. Late during the egg-laying process, most birds that incubate lose feathers from their abdomen to provide skin-to-egg warmth during incubation. Feathers are good insulation, after all, and those eggs need body heat! The bald spot is called a "brood patch," and lots of blood vessels there are very close to the surface. In species in which both parents incubate, such as white-eyed vireo, both male and female develop a brood patch, but if only one parent incubates, such as with most songbird species, only the female develops one. When the nestlings fledge, feathers regrow on the brood patch.

11. Owls can fly silently because the forward edge of the first feather on each wing is serrated, rather than smooth. This affects the flow of air over the wing and disrupts the vortex noise created by non-owl wingbeats.

12. The feathers on many owls' faces are shaped into a disk which helps them locate prey even in complete darkness. The concave shape channels sounds into the ears.

13. The color of most colorful feathers is caused by pigments, which are chemical compounds. Blue feathers, however, are not the result of pigment, but minute structural particles in the feather that scatter short wavelengths, making the feathers appear blue.

14. A flight feather contains a central vein (rachis), ending a quill; barbs extend off the rachis and branch into barbules, which end in tiny interlocking hooks, called barbicels.

15. Down feathers close to the bird's body have no interlocking barbules, making them soft, fluffy, and extra insulating.

Thanks to Jerry Martin, owner of the Poway Wild Birds Unlimited for this Fun Facts article.

Hi P A S Members,
If you are growing tired of looking at my photos as filler for the newsletter, or if you would just like to see something of yours in print, feel free to send us your favorite bird photo. It can be a



rare bird,



common
bird,



funny looking bird,

A bunch of birds,



etc.



and I will try to fit in as many as I have room for.
Also do you have a short story or antidote of
around 500 words about birds you would like to
share? If so, send your submission to
jillinfred@cox.net.

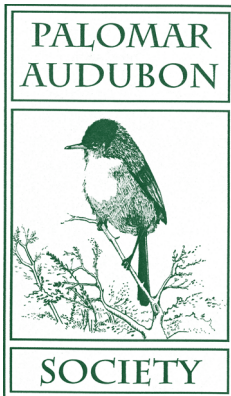


Don't leave us hanging

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Board of Director's Meeting

No Meetings for September-October

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

**NO MEETINGS OR WALKS
 SCHEDULED AT THIS TIME DUE TO
 COVID 19 RESTRICTIONS.**