

Band Tales

Palomar Audubon Society
A Chapter of the
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Volume XL
No. 4

July-August
2024

Editor
Jack Peterson

2024 Palomar Audubon Society Annual Picnic

Here are our Picnic Birders having a most delightful time!



The 2024 PAS Picnic was a success with nearly 60 people attending. A great big THANK YOU to Diane and Doug Walkley for hosting the picnic in their beautiful home and for Diane's spectacular raffle gifts which brought in nearly \$400.00.

Our Picnic Committee jointly planned and put on this affair without using a caterer. Penny Hernandez barbecued 30 pounds of ribs, Sunny Christiansen prepared 6 dozen chicken sliders, 5 pounds of coleslaw and gallons of Rum Punch! Dianne Benham cooked up 2 huge pots of Vegan Beans that were out of this world. Cindy also made a special Vegan dish that was much appreciated. Jack Peterson, Cindy Rippee and Diane Walkley provided spectacular desserts.



A special thanks to the many volunteers including our new President Beth Pearson, who washed dishes and cleaned up after this rather messy affair.

Until next year, Happy Birding!



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A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

Doug Walkley, President

My Swan Song

My two years have gone very quickly. There is a lot that pleased me during this time frame. But best is perhaps leaving this job in the capable hands of Beth Pearson.



We as a society have had many enjoyable moments, be it with Jim Beckman's Saturday walks or Dianne Benham's multitude of never ending adventures.

I would, however, like to speak to two areas where PAS, in the years to come, can focus and allow each member great pride and satisfaction. They are: youth and conservation. I feel I have done my share in the destruction of this upside-down world we have today and I know it is only through today's youth and their efforts in conservation can we save the environment as we used to know it. Only through their efforts can we bring back an environment without the Atmospheric Rivers, Floods, Excessive Heat Waves, Droughts, Hurricanes and Tornadoes that are growing all too familiar around the world.

YOUTH: Alice Holmes started our best chance for inspiring youth with birding experiences at an Elementary School. This is one initiative, of potentially many, that can generate individuals who can look beyond their comfortable but concrete jungles they live in. These are individuals who have a much greater probability of going into the world to help save it from its current path of destruction. It matters not which PAS committee advances this cause, but it is first and foremost on my list.

CONSERVATION: PAS is a small organization with limited finances. This does not mean, however, we cannot do big things. Through the Conservation Committee we have already put in place numerous initiatives to move forward with. Ideas from any of our some two-hundred members can always help. When any of you see a worthy cause please tell us. With this, I turn the gavel over to Beth.

**REMINDER:
DEADLINE FOR THE
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER ISSUE IS
JULY 15.
SUBMIT COPY TO:
Jackdpete@gmail.com**

And welcome to our new PAS President Beth Pearson! Beth was introduced as a new Director in our November-December newsletter and for those of you that did not see that issue here it is:

"I have been obsessed with all things nature since I was a child. My mom said I was always bent over staring at some bug or other creature. I also credit a deep respect for nature to a dedicated Girl Scout leader who started taking our troop into the woods camping and backpacking when I was 13. Birding came some time later after a degree in Biology with an emphasis in marine biology and peripheral exposure to birding. I'd say I was truly hooked after a day trip to the Salton Sea with two avid birders who were patient with my enthusiastic, bird-illiterate questions.

My interest in serving on the board for Palomar Audubon Society comes from a desire to pay forward a debt of service I owe to the Girl Scout leader who poured herself into her role and opened a world to me. I'm also inspired by my dad who was committed to serving his community in any way he could. So, after being a Girl Scout leader myself for 12 years, I am looking for other ways to serve my community and I hope to bring my enthusiasm (a little less Bird-illiterate now) perspective to the group."

Thank you Beth for saying Yes to serving as our new President of PAS!



PROGRAMS

*No programs are schedule during the months of July and August. General meetings will resume in September on the regularly scheduled fourth Thursday of each month. 'Until then—
HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!*

CONSERVATION NOTES

Leadership Update

We want to thank Trysten Loeffke for his service as our Conservation Chairperson. He has brought his youthful exuberance to this position and has done a wonderful job informing us of major issues and concerns in the world of conservation and birding. We wish him the best in his new endeavors. Thank you Trysten!



Our new Conservation Chairperson are actually two individuals who will share this position; Mary Jo Hayes (also a new Director, see below) and Tsaiwei Olee. We look forward to their contributions in the months to come.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBER

Mary Jo Hayes

I grew up in Escondido. At the time, my home was situated in a rural area with horse pastures close by, a dairy, a chicken ranch. There was quite a bit of open space. I remember my dad pointing out quail and pheasants and as time went by, I began to identify a few birds here and there on my own. My mom told me that the hummingbirds in the yard were Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. I don't know how long it was until I discovered that this wasn't the case, and I started to realize that identifying birds is oftentimes very, very difficult. Well, to this day, I still need to see that Ruby-throated Hummingbird for my life list, but my time will come. There were a few field guides around the house when I was young, one being a two volume Audubon Society set and a 1941 copyright Peterson guide. Maybe these books launched my curiosity with birds and nature in general. I'm not sure, but I have always been drawn towards biology. I've had a career in laboratory science and am now interested in habitat conservation, native

garden. I hope my conservation efforts will reward the environment somehow and maybe inspire others.



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 bi-monthly newsletter, and an invitation to our monthly programs and weekly field trips.

Membership, \$30
(payable to Palomar Audubon Society)

Contribution _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **ZIP** _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

100% of Chapter Membership dues supports projects locally.

FIELD TRIPS

Jim Beckman

Whether a seasoned birder or a beginner, you are welcome to join us. Our field trips are free and open to the public. For more information call the trip leader shown below. Heavy rain at the meet-up location 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.

July - August 2024 Field Trips

PLEASE NOTE: Summer birding can be very warm. So, be sure to bring sunscreen and sufficient water on walks.

Saturday, July 6, 8:00 am.

Lake Murray

La Mesa

(1250 E6) Rating: 1-2

Take I-8 east to Lake Murray Boulevard. Exit with right turn at light, and proceed 1 mile north to Baltimore Drive. Turn left and drive about 1 mile to Jackson Drive. Turn left again, proceed ¼ mile and make another left turn on Golfcrest Drive. Continue about 1 mile on Golfcrest Drive to the Mission Trails Regional Park entrance on the left. Meet in the parking lot near the softball field bleachers. This location is on the northwest end of Lake Murray. **Expect warm weather.**

Leader: Jim Beckman

858-205-2819

Saturday, July 13, 8:00 am.

Santee Lakes

Santee

(1231-A5) Rating: 2

From I-15 go east on Highway 52. Exit at Mast Blvd. Continue east on Mast Blvd. to Fanita Parkway. Turn right at Fanita Parkway and the entrance to Santee Lakes is on the right. Car entry fee is \$7. **OR** from Mast Blvd, turn north on Fanita Parkway and continue north to Lake Canyon Dr. Turn right, and park on the street, and then walk in the Santee Lakes open gate for **FREE!** Meet in the parking lot by the General Store between lakes 4 and 5. **Expect warm weather.**

Leader: Tom Trowbridge

760-522-8519

Saturday, July 20, 8:00 am.

Felicita County Park (New Location)

Escondido

(1149-J1) Rating: 1-2

From I-15 in Escondido, drive a short distance west on Via Rancho Parkway to Felicita Rd. (stoplight) and turn right. Heading north a short distance on Felicita Rd., turn right on Clarence Lane (stop sign) and head up the hill two blocks and turn left on Cita Avenue. Park along Cita Ave. Since the Felicita County Park main parking lot doesn't open until 9:30 am, we will park along Cita Ave, and walk into the Park as pedestrians. **Expect warm weather.**

Leader: Mary Jo Hayes

760-505-6675

Saturday, July 27, 8:00 am.

Guajome Regional Park

Oceanside

(1067-D7) Rating: 2

From Highway 78 in Oceanside, exit north on College Boulevard curving left and drive 4.4 miles to Highway 76. Make a right turn and continue east about ½ mile to Guajome Lake Rd. Turn right (south) and drive up the hill past the park entrance. We usually convene on this road beyond the park entrance since we gather well before the park opens. A favorite birding location! **Expect warm weather.**

Leader: Linda Baade

858-231-9500

Saturday, August 3, 8:00 am.

Robb Field/San Diego River Tidal Mud Flats

San Diego

(1267-J5) Rating: 1

We will visit two locations along the San Diego River Floodway to look for early migrant and returning shorebirds, often still in breeding plumage, and post-breeding dispersal Elegant Terns. From North County, take Hwy. 163S to I-8W and drive toward Ocean Beach. Make a slight left at Sunset Cliffs Blvd. and then stay in the right lane. Turn right onto W. Point Loma Blvd. and then right at Bacon St. Drive straight ahead and on to the Robb Field parking area near the tennis courts at the east end. Bring a scope if you have one. We will also visit the nearby Famosa Slough.

Leader: Beth Pearson

760-716-6804

Saturday, August 10, 8:00 am.

Stonewall Mine & Cuyamaca Lake (ALWAYS A BIRDER FAVORITE !)

Julian

(1176-E6) Rating: 2

From San Diego, take I-8 east and exit north on Hwy 79. Continue north approx. 15 miles along Hwy 79 to just north of the Paso Picacho Campground. From North County, take Hwy 78 (or Hwy 67) to Ramona, and then continue on Hwy 78 just past Julian, to Hwy 79. Take Hwy 79 south approx. 8 miles. The mine itself is off a small state park road that is well-signed in both directions and to the east of Hwy 79. **There is a California State Park day-use parking fee. Carpooling is recommended.** Meet in the parking lot. Bring a lunch for an after-walk picnic. **Expect warm weather.** We should see mountain birds as well as waterfowl at the lake.

Leader: Hal Benham

858-386-6911

Saturday, August 17, 8:00 am
Dairy Mart Pond/Tijuana River Valley
 San Diego
(1350-D5) Rating: 2

From North County, take 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 Park" sign and the large pond on the west side of Dairy Mart Road. We will also caravan a short distance to the TJRV Park Headquarters (public restroom and bird feeders) and then visit the nearby Bird & Butterfly Gardens where we might see the elusive Black-throated Magpie Jay.

Leader: Hal Benham
 858-386-6911

Saturday, August 24, 8:00 am.
Whelan Lake Bird Sanctuary
 Oceanside
(1066-F7) Rating: 2

From Hwy 78 west, exit north on El Camino Real and continue to Douglas Drive. From I-5 north exit east on Hwy 76 and continue to the Douglas Drive exit. Take Douglas Drive north approximately 1 mile and turn left on North River Road. Continue west on North River Rd. to the entrance gate at the end. **NOTE: The caretaker has again offered to have the gate open at 7:30 am for Early Birds and leave it open until 8:45 to accommodate latecomers. From the gate proceed straight ahead on the less traveled road to the Sanctuary. Disregard the "No Trespassing" Signs. For those interested in lunch, we will be dining at "The Pitstop", located beside the police station, at 3825 Mission Avenue, Oceanside 92058, just a couple of blocks west of Douglas Drive. It's loaded with 50's atmosphere, automobile memorabilia, and serves at least twenty different styles of sandwiches, all at reasonable prices.**

Leader: Denise Riddle
 760-815-6321

Saturday, August 31, 8:00 am.
Tijuana Estuary & Slough
 Imperial Beach
(1349-F1) Rating: 2

Travel south on I-5 from San Diego and exit west on Coronado Avenue, which becomes Imperial Beach Blvd. Continue west and turn left on 3rd Street to Caspian Way, turn left again and then turn right into the Tijuana Estuary Visitor Center parking lot.

Leader: Gerry Baade
 858-231-9876

Saturday, September 7, 8:00 am.
Los 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 & continue west to the Adobe Ranch House parking lot. Park close to the Ranch House area, near the large trees. **Expect warm weather.**

Leader: Jim Beckman
 858-205-2819

FIELD TRIP CHECKLIST

- ◆ Comfortable shoes or hiking boots
- ◆ Hat, sunscreen, insect repellent
- ◆ Road map, Full fuel tank
- ◆ Drinking water, snacks and lunch
- ◆ Binoculars/Scope, field guide and notebook
- ◆ Call leader for last minute cancellations or changes

FUN FACT

You've probably heard the phrase "sleep with one eye open," but it's not just a silly expression in the avian world. Some birds actually can sleep with one eye open, and some can even sleep in flight.

How do they do this? Well, birds don't sleep quite as deeply as humans do. They usually sleep for just brief spells until being startled awake by predators, other nearby birds or weather conditions, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology reports. Some birds are also capable of what is called unihemispheric slow-wave sleep, or USWS. This allows birds to quickly jump into action if they are threatened but also rest if conditions are safe. So effective is this form of sleep that it allows the birds to sleep with one eye open or even while flying.

The ability to sleep in flight is particularly useful for birds during long migratory flights. One long-distant migrant, the alpine swift, can even fly for 200 straight days because of its ability to catch some shut eye while flying, the Cornell Lab reports.

Thank you Palomar Audubon Society members. Your generous response to our solicitation for donations has been terrific. We will be working hard to find ways to spend this money locally to enhance our members' birding experiences. If you haven't yet donated and wish to do so there is still time to make a difference.

TRIP REPORT: The Eastern Sierra, May 2-6, 2024
Trip Leader/Guide: Steve Ellis
Trip Organizers: Dianne Benham, Hal Benham, Steve Ellis



Wow! What an amazing trip! PAS did it again! Although we've lost count of just how many times we've done this trip, we have done it several times—each one better than the last! This trip was no exception! We did hit a few hick-ups along the way, such as cars getting stuck in the sand, one member falling and needing first aid, a locked gate to the lek, a flat tire, and snow on the road where we didn't expect it. However, as Tom and Jack pointed out, the end result was always positive. All obstacles were overcome and everyone agreed that it was an absolutely fabulous trip!

We had more participants than ever before, with 25 members joining in the fun. We tried to consolidate into as few cars as possible for the caravan, but in the end, were only able to narrow it down to nine cars. However, everyone was cooperative, friendly and helpful---so we made it work!

Steve Ellis planned birding stops along the way from San Diego to Lone Pine, so the first day, which is often just a driving day, was a birding day as well for many. Perhaps most memorable of the birding stops was Short Canyon, where some of us were able to see FIVE LeConte's Thrashers and a Chukar flying across the road!

On our first full day of birding, we all got great looks at one of our target birds, the Sooty Grouse. One car, driven by Tzung Yang, made the trip up the mountain to Glacier Lodge three times, hoping for ever better looks at this incredible bird and perseverance paid off, Tzung got his picture.

Other highlights of the trip included target birds such as the Bell's Sparrow, Sagebrush Sparrow, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Green-tailed Towhee, Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch and of course, the Greater Sage Grouse on the lek! At the end of the trip, we had seen an amazing total of 141 species!

We made the drive up to Aspendell where, this time, we were rewarded with life looks at the Gray-crowned Rosy Finch, among others.

The focal point of the Eastern Sierra trip has always been the pre-dawn trip to the lek, where we hope to see the male Greater Sage Grouse doing his mating dance to attract a female. He puffs out the air sacs on his chest and fans open his tail, creating quite a display. Often there is competition, with several strutting males for one, plain female. We were fully expecting this year to be the same experience as previous years, but this year we ran into an obstacle. The gate, which we had arranged to be opened for us, was locked. After waiting a bit to see if someone would come to open it, we gave up and walked the 1 ½ or 2- mile gravel road to the lek. It was a long walk, and we were terribly afraid that we would be too late to see the birds. But in the end, luck was with us and we got to see 42 Greater Sage Grouse on the Crowley Lek!

On our last day we headed north, to Mono Lake, and encountered snow on the roads that we had not anticipated. Every day was a great birding day, and snow or no snow, we were happy birders!

On our last day, at Mono Lake County Park, we got good looks at a Wilson's snipe along the snow-covered boardwalk!

We had gorgeous scenery wherever we went.

UPCOMING EVENT

WHALE WATCHING/BIRD WATCHING TRIP TO BAJA CA, MEXICO MARCH 6-12, 2025

The PAS Travel Committee is pleased to announce an exciting new adventure! We will join Andiamo Travel to venture down the coast of Baja California, Mexico and get up close and personal with the magnificent Gray Whales and their newborn calves. This itinerary was designed especially for us, and will include stops for birding along the way. We will travel in a large, air-conditioned bus, and have a knowledgeable guide to share interesting facts and information with us as we travel. The minimum number of participants is 18, in order to get the price we've been offered; \$1,950 per person (double occupancy), 6 nights/7 days, including meals, lodging, transportation and guide. Please see the PAS website to view the PDF for further details! If you are interested in this trip, please contact Dianne Benham, diannebenham@me.com to reserve your spot! A \$300 deposit per person will be due in September.

Dianne Benham
PAS Travel Chairperson

PAS WELCOMES THESE NEW AND RENEWING CHAPTER-ONLY MEMBERS

Joyce Anderson, Curt & Barbara Asman
Gerry & Linda Baade, Jim Beckman
Dianne & Hal Benham, Kristin Bergford
Stacy Bermingham, Richard Blain
Allen Bond, Denise & Thomas Boren
Nancy Burnham, Barbara Bury
Margaret Burzynski, Brian Caldwell
Cathie Canepa, Tahsiang (Sean) Chao
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Luca Cinus, Deanna Clatworthy
Joan Comito, Maria Craft
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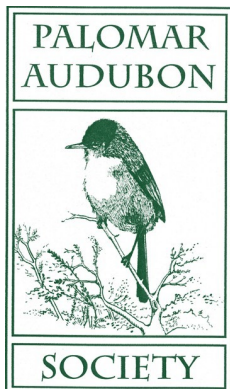
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Web Page <http://www.palomaraudubon.org>
palomaraudubon@gmail.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

*Saturday, July 20th at 11:45
 Following the Felicita County Park walk*

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

QUICK CALENDAR

- | | | |
|------------------|-----------|--|
| July | 6 | Lake Murray Walk |
| July | 13 | Santee Lakes Walk |
| July | 20 | Felicita County Park Walk |
| July | 27 | Guajome Regional Park Walk |
| August | 3 | Robb Field/San Diego River Tidal Mud Flats Walk |
| August | 10 | Stonewall Mine & Cuyamaca Lake Walk |
| August | 17 | Dairy Mart Pond/Tijuana River Valley Walk |
| August | 24 | Whelan Lake Bird Sanctuary Walk |
| August | 31 | Tijuana Estuary & Slough Walk |
| September | 7 | Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve Walk |