Band Tales

Palomar Audubon Society
A Chapter of the
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Volume XLII No. 6 | **November-December 2026** | **Editor Jack Peterson**

ESCONDIDO CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2026

Each year between December 14th and January 5th, thousands of birders and nature enthusiasts participate in one or more of the 2000+ Christmas Bird Counts held annually in the United States, Canada, and many other Western Hemisphere countries. This year will mark the 127th year for this event.

This holiday season, please join with the other birders for this important citizen science effort sponsored by the National Audubon Society. The one-day bird counts provide valuable data about the number of bird species and numbers of each species occurring within a set geographical area.

Palomar Audubon Society would like to extend an invitation to all birders to participate in the annual **Escondido Christmas Bird Count on Sunday, December 27, 2026.** The count circle incorporates mostly rural areas near Escondido, Valley Center, Ramona, and Poway. Fantastic birding skills are not a requirement – an extra pair of eyes is always helpful. All birding skill-levels are welcome!

The after-birding compilation meeting will be held again in the early afternoon at Kit Carson Park's covered picnic shelter. The highlight of the day will be the deli-style lunch provided, courtesy of Palomar Audubon Society.

After November 15, 2026, for additional information, and/ or for team assignments, contact the Escondido CBC senior compiler, Ken Weaver, by phone at (760) 723-2448 or by email at gnatcatcher@sbcglobal.net.

Again this year, Palomar Audubon Society is making a concerted effort to have more of it's members participate in this important event. Sign up after November 15, and join the fun!

What's Up at PAS

Events:

- No monthly Thursday night programs for November and December due to the Holidays.
- Salton Sea Birding Trip, January 29-31, 2027. Trip details are on page 8.
- Camp Surfbird for youth at the February 2027 San Diego Bird Festival.
- Mark your calendar for a Christmas Picnic in June 2027. We will have a Christmas ornament exchange. Bring an ornament and have fun picking one from the Xmas tree. Now is the time to buy your ornament and don't forget where you put it for the June gala event.

eBird:

Per eBird : The 2025 Taxonomy update at eBird is complete. eBird has now completed the process of updating records in eBird. This includes My eBird lists, range maps, bar charts, region and hotspot lists. Data entry should be behaving normally, but unexpected species may be noticed appearing on eBird Alerts as eBirders continue to learn the new taxonomy (this issue will diminish with time).

The 2025 update includes 40 species gained because of splits and 18 species lost through lumps, resulting in a net gain of 22 species and a new total of 11,167 species worldwide. With this update, the eBird taxonomy and the AviList taxonomy are in nearly full alignment; it is expected to have a complete alignment by October 2026. See the link below for more details.
ebird.org/news/2025-taxonomy-update

Inside this Band Tales

A Birds Eye View..... page 2
Conservation Notes ..... pages 2,3
Field Trips……..pages 4,5
Birds in Focus……...…… pages 6,9
Species in Profile..……..…… pages 7,9
Upcoming Trips….……..page 8

A Bird's Eye View

Beth Pearson, President

A Season of Arrivals and Departures

October brings a changing cast of birds to San Diego County, even when the weather still feels like summer. Birds that spent the breeding season farther north are moving south, some stopping briefly to rest and feed, while others will settle here for the winter. For birders, it is a good reason to revisit a favorite spot. The trees and trails may look much the same, but the birds can change from one week to the next.

We enjoyed a wonderful example on our September Palomar Mountain field trip, where we were treated to a "bouquet" of warblers. Three Nashville Warblers, a Hermit Warbler, several Black-throated Gray Warblers and Warbling Vireos gave us plenty to look for among the branches although it was a bit challenging to keep track of all of the small birds moving through the trees. These are the encounters that make fall birding so rewarding: a little movement in the foliage, a flash of color, and then everyone working together to get a good look.

For many of these birds, Southern California is one stop along a much longer journey. Nashville Warblers winter mainly in Mexico, while Hermit Warblers travel to mountain forests in Mexico and northern Central America. Watching them here gives us a brief connection to places far beyond our own county. It also reminds us that the birds we enjoy depend on suitable habitat throughout their travels.

Other arrivals will become stick around through our winter. White-crowned Sparrows and Yellow-rumped Warblers are among the birds to watch for as the winter birding season develops. Along the coast, lagoons and mudflats will offer opportunities to watch migrating shorebirds, while lakes and ponds are will be worth checking as the number of duck species increases. Our recent Batiquitos Lagoon outing already provided a taste of the season, with shorebirds among the sightings and an Osprey giving birders a chance to watch it hunt and eat a fish.

With all this movement, it is easy to focus on what is arriving or passing through. But our resident birds deserve attention, too. Acorn Woodpeckers and White-breasted Nuthatches, both enjoyed on our Live Oak County Park walk, are part of the continuing life of our oak woodlands. Spending time with familiar birds lets us notice more of their behavior and appreciate the habitats that support them throughout the year. A common bird can offer something new whenever we take the time to watch.

Whether birds stay for a few hours or a lifetime, our parks, woodlands, and wetlands matter. Keeping these places healthy is one of the most meaningful ways we can help ensure that future autumns bring the same opportunities for discovery.

Thank you to everyone who makes our field trips welcoming and enjoyable, and to those who share their sightings and photographs afterward. I hope you will join us this fall, bring a friend, and enjoy both the travelers passing through and the familiar birds that make this place home.

Happy Trails,
Beth Pearson
President, Palomar Audubon Society

REMINDER:
DEADLINE FOR THE
JANUARY –FEBRUARY ISSUE IS DEC. 15.
SUBMIT COPY TO:
Jack Peterson at jackdpete@gmail.com

Conservation Notes

Dottie Marron

Conservation Across Borders

The people in the Big Bend area of Texas recently won a temporary injunction to stop the border wall from being built through Big Bend National Park and Big Bend Ranch State Park. If finished, the wall will not just cut through the Texas parks, it will cut off the connecting areas between the parks in Texas and Maderas del Carmen Natural Reserve and the Cañón de Santa Elena in Mexico. It took a lot of teamwork and research on both sides of the proposed wall route to get the support and evidence needed to prove the wall will cause irreparable harm to the environment.

The effort to stop the wall was bi-national. Groups in the US and Mexico worked together to see it through. Some of the groups involved were:

- **The "No Al Muro" Coordinated Network**: In the Mexican border village of Boquillas del Carmen, community members and ecotourism guides have joined forces with Texas river outfitters. They have coordinated messaging, distributed binational "No Al Muro" (No Wall) merchandise, and used social media to amplify footage when bulldozers first began clearing land.

The Chihuahuan Desert Conservation Alliance: National and regional environmental groups on both sides of the border—including researchers from CONANP) and scientists from the *Borderlands Research Institute* in Texas—share data to support legal actions, proving that a physical barrier would cause irreversible damage to shared wildlife.

Corporate Land Conservancies: Mexican corporate allies, most notably the building materials giant Cemex

which owns the massive *El Carmen Nature* These entities work alongside Texas landowners to protect the cross-border migratory corridors of species like the Mexican black bear and desert bighorn sheep, which are highly vulnerable to being genetically isolated by a wall.

Mexico's federal protected areas agency (*Reserve* on the Mexican side of the Big Bend ecosystem), have heavily invested in transboundary conservation.

The variety of people and organizations involved in the fight show how important this area is to environmental groups, businesses, outdoor enthusiasts, and wildlife.

Bi-national conservation is not just happening in Texas. All along the border areas of the United States people are working on environmental projects, sharing information, and fighting to stop damage. Southern California and Baja California Norte are regions in this network.

Many of the projects focus on issues involving wildlife corridors, coastal ecosystems, the Tijuana River watershed, and cross-border species protection. As can be imagine, there are a great many resources working on water quality issues. In fact, the San Diego Union Tribune reported on October 7, 2026, that the San Diego Foundation has awarded nearly $1 million in grants to 10 binational projects aimed at tackling pollution, flooding and water quality problems tied to the Tijuana River sewage crisis.

The largest award, $145,000, went to 4 Walls International and Universidad Autónoma de Baja California to improve stormwater management and reduce flooding in the Tijuana River Valley through green infrastructure, sediment control and floodplain restoration.

Fundación La Puerta and the Tijuana Estuary Foundation received $99,980 to plan stormwater management projects in the watershed and improve a community wastewater treatment plant in Tecate.

The Institute of the Americas and Universidad Iberoamericana received $115,000 to study the costs and energy use of options to improve Tijuana's water supply, including reducing water loss, reusing treated water and turning seawater into drinking water.

San Diego State University Foundation received $49,926 for a yearlong education series for healthcare providers in both countries focused on health impacts connected to pollution in the river. San Diego Coastkeeper and Proyecto Fronterizo de Educación Ambiental AC received $100,000 to make Tijuana River water quality data easier for communities on both sides of the border to understand.

Water quality is not the only conservation issue being researched. Other organizations working across borders in the San Diego area are:

Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve (TRNERR). TRNERR is a U.S. federal/state reserve that works closely with Mexican agencies and NGOs on watershed restoration, sediment management, and habitat protection.

Wildcoast / Costasalvaje is a bi-national NGO with offices in San Diego and Baja California. They work on protecting marine areas, sea turtle conservation, gray whale habitat protection, coastal climate resilience, and cross-border wildlife corridor protection.

The Border Wildlife Conservation Network is a coalition of U.S. and Mexican scientists and NGOs working on cross-border wildlife movement, habitat fragmentation caused by border infrastructure, and species monitoring (mountain lions, bobcats, bighorn sheep). Their partners include U.S. universities, Mexican researchers, and agencies on both sides of the border.

The U.S.–Mexico Border 2025 Environmental Program is a federal partnership between the U.S. EPA, SEMARNAT (Mexico's environment ministry), and **l**ocal governments and NGOs in San Diego and Baja California. They focus on air and water quality, waste management, habitat restoration, and climate resilience.

Pronatura Noroeste is a major Mexican conservation NGO that frequently partners with San Diego groups on projects including wetland restoration, migratory bird habitat, marine protected areas, and Baja California coastal conservation.

These are only a few of the bi-national conservation groups in the San Diego/Baja California Norte region. Their research, projects, events and occasionally, lawsuits are preserving our extraordinarily diverse natural space.

The victory in Big Bend, Texas may be short-lived. The opponents of the Big Bend border wall won a preliminary injunction from a federal court that temporarily blocks the construction of a border wall, roads, and related infrastructure across the Big Bend region in West Texas, including Big Bend National Park. The lawsuit continues and the people of Texas, Chihuahua, and Coahuila will continue to work to protect the wild places of the Big Bend region. And in San Diego the quiet work to preserve our unique environment will be done by people on both sides of the border.

PAS THANKS OUR NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

AND OUR DONORS SO VERY MUCH!

Allison Alberts, Curt & Barbara Asman Thomas & Denise Boren, Brian Caldwell Bill & Myrna Eastwood, Rob Farber & Eve Martin, Terence Hoban, Alice Holmes, Nancy Iwamoto, Mark & Loretta LaBianca, Jack & Connie Lee, Jeremy Nechev, Teresa O'Malley, Pat Pawlowski, Chris & Donna Payton, Ana Prieto, Michael Reynolds, Dick Schroeder, Melody Wagner, Beverly Warburton, Lynnea Waters

Field Trips

Field Trip Committee (Jim Beckman, Linda Baade, Steve Ellis, Beth Pearson)

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. 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
November– December 2026

Saturday, November 7, 8:00 am.

Lake Murray

La Mesa

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.

Leader: Steve Ellis, 619-380-3981

Saturday, November 14, 8:00 am.

Guajome Regional Park

Oceanside

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!

Leader: Denise Riddle, 760-815-6321

Saturday, November 21, 8:00 am.

Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve

Rancho Penasquitos

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.

Leader: Leader: Mac West, 949-800-9243

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

Sunday, November 29, 8:00 am.

San Jacinto Wildlife Area

Riverside County

Rating: 2

PLEASE NOTE: THIS A SUNDAY FIELD TRIP.

From San Diego County take I-15 north to I-215. Continue north on the 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 rough gravel road for three miles to the SJWA headquarters parking lot on the right. From Escondido, allow 75 minutes drive time.

Bring a lunch for an after-walk picnic. Always a favorite field trip! Lots of nice Fall/Winter birds.

Leader: Sally Sanderson 760-638-9913

vcwillow@aol.com

Saturday, December 5, 8:00 am

Tijuana Estuary

Imperial Beach

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. This is great location to see Yellow-Crowned Night-Herons and the Ridgway's Rail.

Leader: Linda and Gerry Baade, 858-231-9876

Saturday, December 12, 8:00 am

Santa Margarita River Preserve

Fallbrook

Rating: 2

Meet in the parking area at **37329 De Luz Rd, Fallbrook, CA 92028**. From I-15, take the Mission Road exit and head west toward downtown Fallbrook. Turn right onto North Pico Avenue, which becomes De Luz Road. Continue downhill into the river valley to the preserve parking area near the junction with Sandia Creek Drive. We will walk along the Santa Margarita River, exploring the riparian woodland and surrounding scrub for resident and seasonal birds. Watch for woodpeckers, raptors, and birds feeding in the riverside vegetation. This scenic river corridor offers plenty of opportunities to stop, listen, and enjoy the birds. Wear sturdy walking shoes and bring drinking water, and sun protection. A portable restroom is available at the preserve

Leader: Beth Pearson, 760-716-6804

Saturday, December 19, 8:00 am.
San Elijo Lagoon
Solana Beach
Rating: 2
Take I-5 to Lomas Santa Fe Drive. Go west to North Rios Avenue. Turn right (north) and go all the way to the end of North Rios Avenue. Park and meet at the end of the street near the barricade. This is a good spot to view Fall and Wintering waterfowl and shorebirds. No restrooms here.
Leader: Steve Ellis, 619-380-3981

Note: No Bird Walk scheduled for December 26th.

Sunday, December 27
Escondido Christmas Bird Count
Palomar Audubon Society would like to extend an invitation to all birders to participate in the annual Escondido Christmas Bird Count on **Saturday**, December 27. The count circle incorporates mostly rural areas near Escondido, Valley Center, Ramona, and Poway. Fantastic birding skills are not a requirement – an extra pair of eyes is always helpful. The after-birding compilation meeting will be held in the early afternoon at Kit Carson Park's covered picnic shelter. The highlight of the day will be the deli-style lunch provided, courtesy of Palomar Audubon Society. For more information and/or team assignments, contact Ken Weaver (760)7232448 email gnatcatcher@sbcglobal.net. **Sign up now and join the fun!**

Saturday, January 2
San Joaquin Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary
5 Riparian View, Irvine, CA 92612
Take I-5 north to the San Diego Freeway I-405. Continue north on the I-405 a short distance and then take the Culver exit and turn left (south). 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 Dr. 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 Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary. (There is a dark green sign by the turnoff, identifying this as the route into the San Joaquin Marsh 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 Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary and many trails for us to explore. Allow 50 min. from Oceanside. Leader: Linda & Gerry Baade, 858-231-9876

Donations & Membership in Palomar Audubon Society (PAS)

All donations of $30 or more qualify for membership in PAS

Membership benefits include:

- Bi-monthly newsletter – Band Tales
- Monthly Programs and Presentations on birds around the world
- Invitation to Weekly Walks and Birding Trips outside our region, including International
- Invitation to Annual Summer Picnic and Christmas Bird Count Picnic
- Invitation to bird classes

Note that PAS membership is separate from membership in National Audubon, and we rely on donations from our members to offer the benefits.

Donation Levels: Member (includes spouses) $30
Supporter $60 Silver $125 Gold $250
Platinum $500 Legacy $1000

Palomar Audubon Society is a 501(c)(3) Nonprofit and an all-volunteer organization. Your donations are tax deductible.

Donations and/or Payments can be made using a check or by using Zelle.

Checks: When mailing a check, fill in your details below and send via USPS to:
Palomar Audubon Society, P.O. Box 2483,
Escondido, CA 92033

Donation amount: $_____

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

Email: _____

Tel: _____

Please indicate if you would prefer a paper copy of Band Tales: Yes___ or No___
(Band Tales is available on our website: www.palomaraudubon.org)

Zelle: Make your donation to palomaraudubon@gmail.com
In the memo line indicate: "Donation from *your name address, and email"*

Also indicate if you would prefer a paper copy of Band Tales: Yes or No

For Payments other than Donations such as trip costs or classes.

These can also be made via Zelle or USPS Mail as above. Please be sure to indicate the reason for the payment in the memo line of your check or Zelle submission.

BIRDS IN FOCUS

Linda Baade

Creative Bird Photography: Moving Beyond the Ordinary

While memorializing the birds we encounter can be deeply rewarding, especially when they're rarities or first-time sightings, there comes a point when thousands of perched birds and flight shots no longer feel like enough. We begin to crave something different, something expressive, something that transforms a record shot into an image that feels alive. This is where creative bird photography enters the picture. Creative photography takes many forms. It may highlight behavior, embrace wider scenic views, explore abstract close ups, or use dramatic light and shadow to evoke emotion. There are countless genres and approaches, and the key is discovering what resonates with you, your personal style. In this article, we'll explore a few foundational avenues of creative bird photography. These are not limits, but starting points. The possibilities for crafting artful images are endless.

DRAMA— The Art of Light and Color: Dramatic imagery begins with light. Light can create ambiance, reveal texture and guide the viewer's eye. In bird photography, dramatic lighting can take several forms. Golden Hour illumination uses warm, directional light at sunrise or sunset to transform even a common species into a visually exciting subject. High key imagery creates bright, airy images with minimal shadows. High key works well with white or pale birds, foggy mornings, or reflective water. The result is often clean, minimalist, and elegant. Low key imagery creates scenes where the subject emerges from the shadows. It is often dramatic, with intentional deepening of the shadows and selective highlights, bending conventional rules for proper exposure in order to achieve the desired effect. Regardless of how you choose to represent your subject, creating dramatic images requires planning and positioning yourself so the light enhances your subject.

CLOSE UPS— Composition as the Main Character: Close up bird photography shifts the focus from the whole bird to specific details, such as feather patterns, textures, and shapes. When you move in close, composition becomes paramount. Abstracts often employ tight framing to transform feathers, wings, or patterns into abstract art. Viewers may not immediately recognize the subject, which invites curiosity and a closer look. Use of negative space, the area around the subject, can also help create interesting compositions. Close up portraits can emphasize expression. A subtle gesture or an intense gaze captured as a close up can elevate a portrait.

The Western Gull is striking against the backdrop of the dramatic fire-colored sea at sunset.

BEHAVIOR— Capturing the Thrill of the Moment: Behavioral photography can be one of the most exciting and challenging genres. It requires patience, planning, and a bit of luck. Iconic examples include peregrine falcons exchanging prey midair or grebes performing their elaborate courtship dance. These moments, while in some instances predictable, happen exceedingly fast. Behavioral photography is a labor of love, and when that long-imagined shot finally comes together, it's unforgettable.

SCENICS— Birds in Their World: Scenic bird photography embraces the environment. Some examples include flocks at daybreak, silhouettes at sundown, backlit roosting birds, and wide habitat views. Interesting scenic images often rely on timing and weather. Fog, clouds, wind direction, and sun angle all influence the final result.

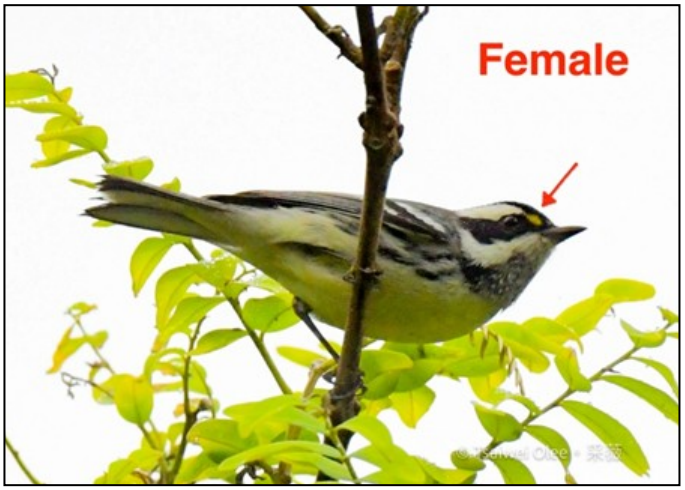
In this scenic the sailboats and lighting take center stage dwarfing the barely perceptible Western Grebe in this photograph.

(Article Continued on page 9)

SPECIES PROFILE: Black-throated Gray Warbler

Tsaiwei Olee

Key Features for Field Recognition: Look for the small bright yellow spot in front of the eye in both males and females. The gray area is on its back. The male has a black throat, while the female's throat is lighter, with blackness varying in intensity among individuals. The face is black-and-white with bold white supercilium. White underparts.



At the end of August, as blazing heat and high humidity lingered over the San Diego lowlands, Palomar Audubon's Saturday bird walk headed for higher ground in the Laguna Mountains. Our destination was a new birding trail for the group: Big Laguna Lake and Meadows.

Enjoying the pleasant temperatures and gentle breeze, we encountered the birds we had expected to find in the mountains. But the highlight of the day came at the very end of our walk. While resting under the trees near the trailhead, we spotted three warblers: one Black-throated Gray Warbler and two Hermit Warblers.

For me, this brief encounter was the most memorable moment of the day. Fall migration had just begun, and seeing the first migratory warblers of the season always feels special.

The Black-throated Gray Warbler is a western North American species. It breeds west of the Rocky Mountains, from northern Mexico north to British Columbia, and spends the winter primarily in Mexico. Although it is rarely seen far outside its usual range, occasional strays have been recorded as far east as the Atlantic Coast.

According to the San Diego Bird Atlas, the Black-throated Gray Warbler also breeds in several of San Diego County's higher-elevation areas, including Hot Springs Mountain, Palomar Mountain, Volcan Mountain, and the Laguna Mountains, as well as along the San Luis Rey River.

That local breeding distribution leaves me wondering about our August sighting. Was that Black-throated Gray Warbler we encountered a local breeder that had nested somewhere in the Laguna Mountains? Or was it already a migrant in the middle of its journey south to Mexico for the winter? I guess I will never find out.

Black-throated Gray Warbler is insectivorous; it mostly gleans foliage among juniper, pine, and mixed oak-pine forests.

The conservation status of this warbler is Least Concern.

(Article Continued on page 9)

PAS Trip to Salton Sea 2027

Come join Palomar Audubon Society as we bird the **Salton Sea** and surrounding areas in Imperial Valley on **January 29 – 31, 2027.** For those who haven't ventured to the Salton Sea, you are in for an absolutely thrilling experience, when at daybreak, we will watch thousands of Snow Geese and Sandhill Cranes rise up from local ponds to feed in surrounding fields. In less than a three-hour drive from anywhere in San Diego County, you can transcend into these wintering grounds. It is also one of the few places where the cutest owl on earth, the Burrowing Owl, can be seen as he

stands steadfastly in front of his underground burrow.

Our trip two years ago was highly successful and we are looking forward to another amazing birding trip together. Our field trip this year will be led by our own Palomar Audubon member, Steve Ellis. Our trip will include dinner together on Friday, January 29, a full day of birding and dinner together on Saturday, January 30^{t}, and a half-day of birding on Sunday, January 31, to allow ample time to drive home in the afternoon daylight. Each of us will pay for our own transportation, food and lodging.

Like last time, we will arrange a buffet dinner at Las Chabelas Restaurant for both Friday and Saturday nights. The cost to you will be just $20 per person, per night. The balance and the gratuity will be covered by PAS. This will need to be paid in cash on the night of the event, so please come prepared. You will also provide your own picnic lunch for Saturday, January 30, and we will enjoy eating together at the Sonny Bono Reserve picnic area.

We are limiting the number of participants to 30. Be prepared to share a car with others during the field trip, as it is important to keep our caravan as small as possible. You must be a current member of Palomar Audubon Society to participate. **This field trip is a fundraiser for Palomar Audubon Society.** The cost of the trip is $100 per person, which includes a donation to PAS. To secure your reservation, please send an email with your name, email address and phone number for each participant to Dianne Benham: diannebenham@me.com. Do NOT send any money at this time! If we have over 30 interested participants, we will hold a lottery. Be sure to let us know if you are traveling with another person, so your names can go on one ticket for the lottery. You will be notified by email (either way), if your name was chosen in the lottery. At that point you will have one week to mail your check for $100 to the PAS mailbox, or use the portal on our website to make your electronic payment. Remember, it is very important to identify the purpose of the payment with a notation.

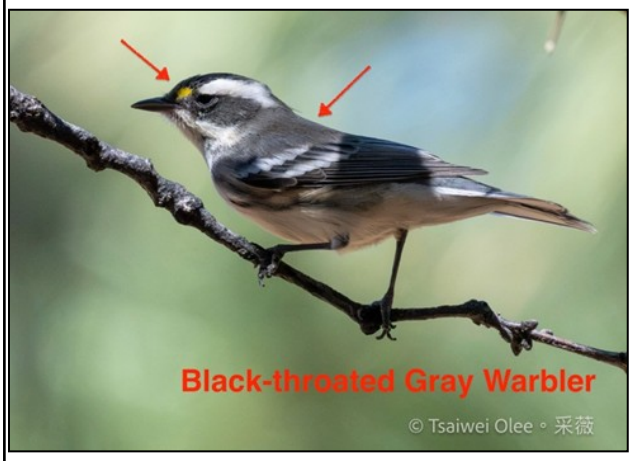
Hotel rooms (non-smoking) at the Brawley Inn will be held for Palomar Audubon Society at a special group rate for the nights of Friday, January 29 and Saturday, January 30. You are responsible for calling the Brawley Inn to reserve one of these rooms for one or both nights. Their phone number is 760-344-1199.

The Palomar Audubon Society Salton Sea field trip is always a popular birding adventure. Don't delay making your reservation! Hope to see you there!

SPECIES PROFILE: (CONT. FROM PG. 7) BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER

Tsaiwei Olee

Similar Species:



Black and White Warbler and Blackpoll Warbler look similar to Black-throated Gray. The back of the Black and White is streakier, without the gray patch on the back. The Blackpoll has a black cap and white cheeks. Both are eastern American warblers that rarely overlap with the Black-throated Gray. But stray rarities do occur. I took the Black-and-white Warbler photo shown here at San Elijo Lagoon last year during our walk.

BIRDS IN FOCUS (CONT. FROM PAGE 6)

Linda Baade

Discovering Your Own Style: Finding your creative voice is a journey, and inspiration can come from many places. Photography exhibitions can bring fresh perspective and motivation, and books and magazines can also be valuable sources. Online, countless images appear in photographic galleries, videos, social platforms, and websites dedicated to birds, conservation, and wildlife. When an image appeals to you, ask yourself why. Is it the light, the composition, the mood, the rare moment, the simplicity? Then experiment, push boundaries, allowing yourself to fail, learn, and refine. Over time, your preferences will reveal themselves, and your style will emerge naturally. Creative bird photography is not about perfection; it is all about expression.

Book Corner

Some books that you may find enjoyable if you have not already:

- Seabirds as Sentinels: Auklets, Puffins, Shearwaters, and the View from Destruction Island by Eric Wagner. This book is an easy, delightful read that will deepen one's appreciation of marine birds.
- A Bird's IQ: Innovation, Intelligence, and Problem Solving in the Avian World by Louise Le Febvre. This book discusses both birds modular intelligence and generalized intelligence and how they become in different bird groups. There are a lot great examples of avian intelligence and how scientists study it.
- The Story of Birds: A New History from Their Dinosaur Origins to the Present by Steve Brusatte. The story of how birds did not just evolve from dinosaurs, they are dinosaurs.
- The Kite and the Snail: An Endangered Bird, Its Unlikely Prey, and a Story of Hope in a Changing World.by Hilary Flower. A wonderful tale of how the Snail Kite has rebounded in Florida after a steep decline in numbers.

Band Tales

November-December, 2026

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 Palomar Audubon Society Chapter-only membership.

Palomar Audubon Society
Band Tales
P.O. Box 2483
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PALOMAR AUDUBON SOCIETY
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2026-2027

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Mac West

Note: Members may contact any of the PAS Officers or Directors at the email address below.
palomaraudubon@gmail.com
To learn more about our chapter, please see our website www.palomaraudubon.org".

Board of Directors Meeting

Saturday, December 12th at 12:00 PM
Location: Remington Club II Retirement Center
16916 Hierba Drive, Rancho Bernardo , CA 92128

Quick Calendar

November	**7**	**Lake Murray Walk**
November	**14**	**Guajome Park Walk**
November	**21**	**Los Penasquitos Walk**
November	**29**	**(Sunday) San Jacinto Wildlife Area Walk**
December	**5**	**Tijuana Estuary Walk**
December	**12**	**Board Meeting (see above)**
December	**12**	**San Margarita River Trail Walk**
December	**19**	**San Elijo Lagoon Walk**
December	**27**	**Escondido Christmas Bird Count**
January	**2**	**San Joaquin Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary Walk**