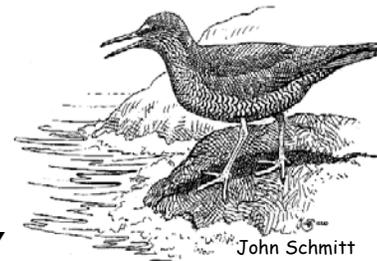


Wandering Tattler

April 2008
Volume 57, Number 7



The Voice of SEA AND SAGE AUDUBON, an Orange County Chapter of the National Audubon Society

What Is Going On?

by Al Baumann, President

How lucky we are! We live in beautiful southern California where the weather is perfect; where life is not as fast paced as in other parts of the country; and where we have access to the ocean, the mountains, the deserts, and the wonderful county and state parks. To sum it up: it's quiet and peaceful, and it is paradise!

Sounds pretty good, but what is going on? The peace and quiet have given way to constant sounds of Northern Mockingbirds singing day and night, owls calling, Red-tailed Hawks calling as they circle each other in the sky with their legs hanging down - songs come from everywhere. The sounds are deafening - what is going on?

IT IS SPRING!

Migration is in full swing. We are reacquainting ourselves with grosbeaks, warblers, flycatchers, tanagers, Lazuli Buntings, and many other birds. We live in paradise!

If you are like Janet and me, spring triggers something inside us that creates a need to see everything. Should we try to capture migration along the Texas coast in mid-April? Should we try to see warblers in Ohio at Crane Creek in early May? And how about going to Malheur NWR in Oregon during the middle of May? Birds are one issue, but what about the wildflowers? The displays may be spectacular after the rains. Spring creates this dilemma every year; but, keeping in mind that we live in paradise, we don't want to miss migration and the wildflowers right here at home. Such a dilemma! After hours of planning and thinking, we have only one "sure thing" planned: a couple of days in Yosemite around the beginning of April followed by a couple of days hoping to see, what is claimed to be, one of the "most spectacular wildflower displays in the world" located along Bear Valley Road west of Williams, California. Well, we'll see; but no matter what, it's spring and it will be beautiful!

What I'm trying to say is that there are many ways to enjoy spring migration. All we have to do is pick up our binoculars and get outside, whether it's in another state or right here in paradise. No matter if you go-it-alone or go as a participant on any or all of the many Sea and Sage field trips, the reward will be the same: a lifetime of memories of the spring of 2008.

General Meeting

Friday evening, April 18th

"Yellow Eyed Penguins of New Zealand"

presented by William Cooper

There are 17 species of penguins on Earth. The Yellow Eyed penguins are one of the rarest penguins in the world and live in the southern part of New Zealand and on some of the sounding islands. It is estimated that the total population is around 4,000 individuals. They are the third largest penguin. They breed once a year with the adults sharing both in the incubation of the eggs and feeding the young.

It has been estimated that they expend the equivalent energy of running a marathon each day to get food for themselves, and, when the chicks are in the nest, for them, as well. They live in loose colonies but nest beyond sight of another pair.

This talk will have video footage of the adults feeding 6-day old chicks and a power point presentation which will provide the back setting of the Otago Peninsula, South Island New Zealand.

William Cooper is a Professor at UCI in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, and is Director of the Urban Water Research Center. His areas of research include the study of surface water photochemistry, the application of radiation chemistry, and the application of ozone in controlling or eliminating invasive aquatic species in ships ballast water.

We hope you will join us for this interesting program. The doors open at 7:00 and the meeting starts at 7:30 pm. We will meet at the Irvine Ranch Water District Board Meeting Room at 15600 Sand Canyon Avenue in Irvine.

Jay and Marquita Miller, Program Co-Chairs

Our meetings are held in the Board Meeting Room of the Irvine Ranch Water District's main office on the east side of Sand Canyon Ave. at the intersection of Water Works and Sand Canyon, in the city of Irvine. If you are coming by freeway, Sand Canyon may be accessed from either Santa Ana Frwy (5) or San Diego Frwy (405); there are ramps from both the north and the south. (The Irvine Ranch Water District neither supports nor endorses the cause or activities of organizations which use the district's meeting rooms, which are made available as a public service.)

Audubon in Action

Toll Road Victory was Years in the Making



by Garrison Frost, Director of Marketing and Communications, Audubon California

When the California Coastal Commission voted in February that a proposed toll road extension through Orange County was inconsistent with the federal Coastal Zone Management Act, it was a major victory for Audubon California and other environmental groups. The 8-2 vote struck a possible death blow to a controversial plan that would have put at risk sensitive species of birds and wildlife, jeopardized thousands of acres of irreplaceable natural landscape, and wrecked a popular state park.

The victory was particularly sweet for Audubon California. Although certainly not one of the more visible of the many environmental groups lined up in opposition to the project, Audubon California played an important role from the very beginning, and would continue to do so right up to and during the vote itself.

The proposed extension to the Orange County Foothill-South (241) freeway provided an excellent opportunity for Audubon to show the multi-layered strength of its organization. By the time it was over, a local chapter, a nearby sanctuary, the state organization, and the national organization would strike mighty blows against the project.

And that doesn't even mention the part played by Audubon California Board Chair Steve Blank who, in his role as a California Coastal Commissioner, conducted a withering line of questioning to the head of the agency backing the toll road before casting a decisive vote against the project.

In his questioning of Transportation Corridor Agencies CEO Tom Margro, Blank undermined the agency's \$100 million park mitigation offer. He also undercut the agency's claim that the toll road would be a job builder, and called in to question whether it had legitimately considered other options, such as widening Interstate 5.

But it was the \$100 million offer that he particularly savaged. "Is there a price list for state parks?" he asked.

You can view Blank's entire line of questioning through the Audubon California website: http://ca.audubon.org/newsroom/blank_toll_hearing.php

Prior to the hearing, Blank had taken great pains to emphasize his neutrality on the issue, and it was

clear at the meeting that he had studied the project's documentation carefully.

"He was being a darn good Coastal Commissioner, giving the level of attention and service the public and the coast deserves," said Dan Taylor, director of public policy for Audubon California. "His was a masterful line of questioning that had nothing to do with what Audubon California had said in any of its prior comments. It really showed the breadth of his understanding of the issues at stake."

After the hearing, Blank told the San Diego Union-Tribune that "I think people will look back on this commission as a group of people who stood up for the people of California."

By the time Blank cast his vote at just before midnight, only about 800 of the 4,500 people who had been at the Del Mar Fairgrounds when the meeting began at 9 a.m. were still there. One of those was Pete DeSimone, the manager of the Audubon Starr Ranch Sanctuary in Southern Orange County, and someone who has been involved in the toll road issue for more than a decade.

"It felt like Woodstock all over again," DeSimone said of the proceedings. "When the vote came down, it was inspiring."

Back in the 1990s, the toll road issue was far removed from the front pages of the nation's major daily newspapers. But DeSimone was tracking the issue for Audubon, nonetheless, partnering with the likes of the Natural Resources Defense Counsel and other local groups to fight the first phase of the 241 freeway, and upon losing that battle, successfully negotiating a conservation easement to protect important habitat from construction on the southern end of the project.

"Back then the battle was the same. We were talking about the Gnatcatcher and Coastal Sage Scrub," said DeSimone. "Once the 241 got built, the issue of the southern extension just kind of stewed under the surface and it was important to pay attention to that."

DeSimone wasn't alone. Rather, he was part of a local network of Audubon conservation interests that included the local Sea & Sage chapter and the closely-aligned Endangered Habitats League.

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Audubon in Action

Toll Road Victory - continued



by Garrison Frost, Director of Marketing and Communications, Audubon California

Scott Thomas was also at the Coastal Commission meeting on Feb. 6. As Sea & Sage's director of conservation, he has been tracking the toll road issue since 2003. He first weighed in when the Transportation Corridor Agencies announced its first plans for the Foothill-South extension, and issued its first environmental impact report on the project.

"Sea & Sage has been following this for probably 25 years," Thomas said. "But 2003 was probably the beginning of the fight that we're seeing now."

Sea & Sage ultimately joined in a lawsuit that contested the initial EIR under the California Environmental Quality Act. That suit is still pending.

Both Thomas and DeSimone noted that the partnership between Audubon California, the National Audubon Society and Sea & Sage has created an effective uniform opposition to the toll road. This partnership has enabled the opposition to be nimble, yet still carry the full weight of the national organization.

"It has been a seamless Audubon involvement for more than 10 years," DeSimone explained.

DeSimone notes that it was sometime around 2003 and 2004 that other environmental groups began to take notice of the issue. "It wasn't any one thing that brought them all into the fight," he recalls. "It just evolved."

Groups that came into the fold at that time included Surfrider, which packed the room on Feb. 6 with people anxious to protect the famous Trestles surf spot and nearby San Onofre State Beach. Although the Sierra Club had always been involved, the group's involvement grew by leaps and bounds in the last several years. And the State Parks Foundation has been able to keep a tight focus on the horrible precedent that would be set if the freeway runs through park land.

"This coalition that was formed in the last four or so years has really become something formidable," said DeSimone. "You really saw it on Feb. 6."

Of those who came to the Del Mar Fairgrounds to speak out against the toll road, it was clear that most were surfers fighting to save Trestles. But many were Auduboners from throughout Southern California,

encouraged to come and voice their opinions through email campaigns from Audubon California and Sea & Sage.

Prior to the meeting, staff at Audubon California was working behind the scenes with local and state policymakers. It also sent out an email Action Alert to its constituents, generating nearly 3,000 emails opposing the toll road.

Even with all the groundwork, all the experts and all the behind-the-scenes discussions, the final vote was a mystery right up until the very end. In fact, there were many who did not expect the outcome to be favorable at all.

"We had no idea whether we'd win or lose," said Taylor. "There was some sense of resignation that big government was going to roll over Mother Nature."

Thomas said that many people he spoke to were hoping for five votes or, in other words, a tie. "Everything was really quiet when they called the vote, but when they got to six against the toll road, the crowd started to roar," he recalled. "At eight, it was just elation."

While the Coastal Commission vote was tremendous vindication for the Audubon staff who have been fighting the toll road for so many years, DeSimone, Thomas and others know that the struggle isn't over quite yet. The Transportation Corridors Agencies has appealed the commission's decision to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce.

But if the toll road proponents think that by leaving the state they can avoid Audubon, they are sorely mistaken. The National Audubon Society has plenty of resources in Washington, D.C. to bring to bear against the project.

"We will be vigilant and oppose this at any level," said Taylor. "That's one of the strengths of Audubon - we have influence at every level, be it local, state or national."

*Posted 2/27/08 on the Audubon California website.
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Chapter News & Announcements



For more information on Sea & Sage events & activities, check out our chapter webpage at: <http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org>

Audubon House Volunteers

We would like to thank the following people for helping to staff Audubon House in March and April: Sonia Appell, Donna & Mike Augustine, Pat & Dick Cabe, Constance Cassady, Barbara Chidester, Deana Collins, Carolyn Cooper, Pam Degarimore, Tom Drouet, Fresia Escalona, Judy Fritts, Peggy Goetz, Keats Hayden, Pat Heilig, Sarah Jayne, Steve Jelnick, Lois Jones, Nancy Kenyon, Tim Maas, Mary Martineau, Bobbie Miller, Joan McCauley, Eunice Morita, Betty Purdy, Barbara Reber, John Shaddy, Mary Shandy, Bev Spring, Betty Swift, Vic Westling.

Camp Scholarships

We are looking for chapter members who would be willing to make donations or sponsor a scholarship for a child who wants to attend our summer camp but needs financial assistance in order to do so. For questions or information about our camp and its scholarship program, please contact Grace McElhiney (714) 969-9617. See our chapter webpage for information about our summer camp program: <http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org/Education/NatureDayCamp2008.html>

An Invitation for Spring Brunch at the Marsh

Bring yourself and/or a friend(s) to a gourmet brunch and enjoy the sights, sounds and the smells of Spring at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary in Irvine. We will serve you a truly gourmet outdoor brunch and take you on a leisurely stroll through the marsh to see it at its most colorful best. We'll start at 10:00 and end about noon. This program is for adults only and requires a \$20 per person pre-paid reservation for one of the following dates:

Sat., April 12	Sun., April 27	Sat., May 10
Sun., May 25	Sunday, June 15	

A 48-hour cancellation notice is required for refund. Call Helen Nicholas at 949-726-0858 if you have questions.

Registration Form - Brunch 2008

1st choice _____ 2nd choice _____ 3rd choice _____
Today's date _____
Name (s) _____
Phone (_____) _____ # of persons _____

* RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED AND MUST BE PRE-PAID.
Make check payable to Sea & Sage Audubon and mail to:
Spring Brunch, c/o Helen Nicholas, 22 Cape Cod, Irvine CA 92620

The Sale of Plastic Bottled Water

After much deliberation, the Sea and Sage Board passed a resolution to phase out the sale of plastic bottled water at Audubon House. Why have we made this decision, when water is our beverage of choice after a bird walk in the marsh? Here are some of the reasons.

- * Water is provided free. At the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary there is a drinking fountain, available at all hours.
- * Using bottled water adds junk to the landfills.
- * Plastic is a petroleum product, made from fossil fuel, and in limited supply.
- * Plastic is recyclable - if it gets in the recycle bin! Even then, it's recyclable only to a point. Because plastic is permeable, it is not recycled into a food container and must be recycled into another type of product.
- * In the case of bottled water, as in many cases, it's a good environmental choice to cut off the problem at the point of source, rather than contribute to the problems of disposal.

Please join us in making an environmental statement, and taking another step along the road to reducing global warming, by avoiding the use of bottled water when possible. Get in the habit of carrying a reusable "canteen" that can be refilled at the tap and at public water fountains.

Tip: If you are going out to buy a reusable plastic "canteen", look for one made of #2 materials. Our research found that the #2 plastic has fewer of the worrisome-to-our-health compounds.

Kaaren Perry, Vice President
Susan Sheakley, Conservation Chair

Bookstore News

Rare Birds of California, edited by Robb Hamilton, Michael Patten, & Richard Erickson, is now in stock at our book store! This is an invaluable reference book for those of us who are interested in California rare birds. This publication is a work of the CA Bird Records Committee and was published by Western Field Ornithologists. (\$67.50)

Error in CDs: Learning California Bird Sounds

If you purchased your worksheets and CDs prior to Feb. 13, your CD labelled G is incorrect. Please bring it back to Audubon House and exchange it for the correct one. Sorry for the inconvenience.

Chapter News & Announcements



For more information on Sea & Sage events & activities, check out our chapter webpage at: <http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org>

NATIVE PLANT GARDEN TOUR

Saturday - May 3 - 10 am to 4 pm

Co-sponsored by Sea & Sage Audubon & the Orange County CA Native Plant Society

Gardens are always a work in progress. This year's gardens range from brand new to mature. Some are new to our tour, while those on last year's tour will show what a difference a year makes. In some, native plants are integrated into an established landscape. In others, the transition to drought-tolerant, mostly native plantings is complete. How to plant a steep hill? Two of the gardens offer some really good solutions - elbow grease required! Want to attract birds and butterflies? Several gardens were designed with that in mind. Along with the diversity of plants used, hardscape is an important feature in many of the gardens. All are great idea gardens.

Our gardens are clustered in south county and in north county. The gardens will be open from 10 AM to 4 PM, but it would definitely not be sensible to attempt to see them all. The descriptive brochure will help in selecting gardens of greatest personal interest. The brochure listing the gardens and their locations will be available after April 1. There are several ways to obtain a copy of the garden tour brochure:

✿ Send a written request with a self-addressed stamped envelope to OC CNPS, PO Box 54891, Irvine CA 92619-4891.

✿ Visit our website at www.seaandsageaudubon.org and click on the Garden Tour link. A copy of the brochure will be available after April 1st. The map will be posted on the website May 2nd and 3rd only.

✿ Pick up the brochure at our April chapter meeting, at Audubon House, or Tree of Life Nursery.

Our goal is to demonstrate to as many gardening folk as possible that natives can work in the home garden. To help defray our costs, we are requesting a voluntary \$10 donation, which may be left at any one of the gardens or mailed to the PO box along with your request for a brochure.

Volunteers are needed to help staff the welcome tables at each garden; contact Susan Sheakley if you would like to help. (949-552-5974)

Sarah Jayne, OC CNPS

Susan Sheakley, Sea & Sage Conservation Chair

SNOWY PLOVER & LEAST TERN

Monitoring Season Kick-off & Orientation
Wednesday evening - April 16 - 7:00 pm

Huntington State Beach Lifeguard Headquarters
(Enter off PCH at Magnolia)

This year's kick-off gathering and orientation will be highlighted by Peter Knapp, photographer of the natural world, and monitor of the Snowy Plovers and Least Terns at Bolsa Chica, showing his slide presentation about the breeding biology of both species. We will be in our fourth year of volunteer monitoring at the Huntington State Beach colony of California Least Terns and we appreciate any time you can give to help the birds. After volunteers attend an orientation, they become State Parks Volunteers and are given a badge that is used for identification and free parking at the site. At this colony, you have the opportunity to observe the tern nesting, chick rearing and fledging first hand and at the same time realize that you have helped these species survive. Please consider being an ambassador for these birds, they need our help.

If you are interested, or you are a returning monitor, please plan to attend. A brief orientation will be given by David Pryor, State Parks Environmental Scientist. A slide show of last year at the tern colony will be shown. And, you don't want to miss Peter's slide show — it is a "must see"!

Only one other orientation will be given. Contact: Cheryl Egger at dc.egger@verizon.net for more information.

Third Annual Spring Festival

Saturday, April 26 - 9 am to 2 pm

The Friends of Shipley Nature Center will host the Third Annual Spring Festival at the Shipley Nature Center on Saturday, April 26 from 9 am to 2 pm. Admission is free. The Center is located at 17829 Goldenwest Street in Huntington Beach's Central Park. The day's activities will begin at 9 am with a Continental Breakfast, a California Native Plant Sale and the opening of the nature friendly Information Fair. For further info, contact the Friends at: 714-842-4772 or by email at info@shipleynature.org

Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day at Starr Ranch Sanctuary on May 10th

This FREE event will be held Saturday, May 10th, 7:00 am - 2:00 pm (drop in). Relax and enjoy a family picnic, see birds up close in bird banding demonstrations, observe the birds of Starr Ranch on guided walks, receive a free Bird Day poster and more! RSVP by e-mail (preferred!) to jweir@audubon.org or call Justin at 949-858-3537. Please provide group size and contact info in your RSVP. You must RSVP to get directions to Starr Ranch (internet directions do not work).

Orange County Rarities

by Doug Willick



To report a RARE or UNUSUAL bird, or to receive the current RBA report for Orange County, call the OC RBA at (949) 487-6869. To find out how to access this information online and/or how to subscribe to the Orange County Rare Bird Alert by e-mail, visit our Sea and Sage website at: <http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org/BirdInfo/birdinforbas.htm>

Late winter is often the time of year when birders are content to either search out some of the previously reported rarities that continue to linger on through the season, or just count down the days until spring ushers in a new assortment of birds. Although February was relatively quiet compared to the previous winter months, there were a few new discoveries to add to the mix of winter highlights. The most significant of these include reports of two rare warblers that unfortunately have only been seen briefly by the original observers. A **Painted Redstart** was reported on private property in a Yorba Linda residential area, during late January (Stan Shiels). On Feb. 10, a **Prairie Warbler** was reported in Crescent Bay Park, by an out-of-state birder (Gary Rankin). The county has had five previous winter records for Painted Redstart, but only one winter record for Prairie Warbler. Other rarities not previously reported included a **Long-tailed Duck** and **Common Murre** off the Newport Pier on Feb. 9, along with a "white-bellied" oystercatcher that flew by the pier that morning (Brian Daniels). Unfortunately, the oystercatcher was not seen well enough to determine if it was a "clean" **American Oystercatcher** or a possible American/Black hybrid. A **Tropical Kingbird** was a nice discovery at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary (SJWS), Feb. 9 (Jim Roe), with the bird still being seen into March. Adding to the three **Hammond's Flycatchers** that were already assumed to be wintering in the county, three "new" birds were discovered in February (the six total this winter being two short of the county's record high count for the season). One Hammond's was found at SJWS, Feb. 9 (B. Daniels), one at Upper Newport Bay (UNB), also on Feb. 9 (Jim Pike), and one at Fairhaven Memorial Park, Feb. 26 (Doug Willick). Spring migrant Hammond's normally do not appear in southern California until early April. Although all *Empidonax* flycatcher species are rare in southern California during winter, until recent years "Western" and Gray flycatchers have been the most expected *Empidonax* species to be found at this season. A **Tropical Kingbird** near Harriet Weider Regional Park (HWRP), Feb. 17 (B. Daniels), was felt to likely be the same one known to be wintering at nearby Huntington Central Park (HCP).

Other new discoveries included several rare to uncommon waterfowl species: a male **Eurasian**

Wigeon at Tri-City Park, Mar. 1 (Neil Gilbert), and another at HCP, Feb. 23; small numbers of **Hooded Mergansers** in Irvine, Feb. 3 (Lucy Lee), in Laguna Woods, Feb. 11 (Paul Klahr), along Aliso Creek, Feb. 15-23 (Sarah Millspaugh), and in San Juan Capistrano, Feb. 23 (Robert McNab); up to three **Common Mergansers**, Feb. 15-19, in Laguna Woods (P. Klahr); and a female **White-winged Scoter** off Huntington Beach Pier, Feb. 26 (N. Gilbert). An adult male **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** at Santiago Oaks Regional Park (SORP), Mar. 1 (N. Gilbert, et.al.), was presumably a bird that had been discovered here earlier in the winter. Although a male had wintered four consecutive years (2002/2003 to 2005/2006) in the exact same location at SORP, none was reported here last winter.

Several of the county's winter season highlights continued to make appearances into February. The following is an accounting of several previously discovered rarities, with the date of their most recent observation: male **Eurasian Wigeons** at UNB, Feb. 28, and Village Pond Park, Feb. 17; **Hooded Mergansers** at several locations; a **Reddish Egret** at Bolsa Chica, Feb. 16; a **Lewis's Woodpecker** and **Red-naped Sapsucker** at Irvine Regional Park (IRP), Mar. 4; a "**Western Flycatcher**" at SJWS, Feb. 23; a **Hammond's Flycatcher** at HWRP, Feb. 10; an **Eastern Phoebe** at HCP, Feb. 4; a male **Vermilion Flycatcher** at Lake Forest Golf Center, Feb. 26; an adult male **American Redstart** at Laguna Niguel Regional Park, Feb. 29; a female type **American Redstart** near UNB, Feb. 9; a **Black-headed Grosbeak** in a Laguna Beach yard, Feb. 12; a **Summer Tanager** in a Laguna Niguel yard, Feb. 19; and a "**Red**" **Fox sparrow** at HWRP, Feb. 10. A "**white goose**" known to be at UNB since January (last reported Feb. 28), was presumably reported by the same individual responsible for reports of Ross's Goose, Snow Goose and a possible hybrid Snow/Ross's.

Birds presumed to be early migrants included an adult male **Hooded Oriole** at IRP, Feb. 29 (N. Gilbert), an adult male **Bullock's Oriole** in Yorba Linda, Feb. 28 (D. Willick). **Twenty Swainson's Hawks** flying north over Eisenhower Park, Mar. 2 (Nathan Babcock), was one of the largest flocks recorded in Orange County in recent history.

Birdathon, Sat, April 26, 2008

JOIN IN THE FUN!



When the word "Birdathon" is mentioned, does it bring up thoughts of 24-hour nonstop running around Orange County? Does it bring up visions of crawling into your home on all fours from exhaustion? Well, it means all of that to our organized teams. Their dedication to raising money for Sea and Sage and their competitive spirit raise the bar when it comes to having fun.

Unfortunately, my body just will not move like that. Janet and I still want to join in the fun, so what we have done is name ourselves the "Warbler Watching Starbucks Stoppers." We bird at our pace: we stop at Starbucks, we watch birds, we stop at Starbucks, we bird, we linger over every warbler, we stop for lunch, etc. We have fun, and we bird wherever we want. How does this help raise money for Birdathon? We turn in our bird list for the day; and, invariably, there are a couple of birds that can be added to the Chapter's official Birdathon list of species for the 24-hour period. We ask people to pledge an amount based on the Chapter's total number of bird species for the day.

My suggestion is for everyone to "join in the fun." Go birding with someone, and turn in your bird list for the day. You most likely will run into others who are joining the Birdathon fun, and that will add even more fun to your day - it can be a "party" in the field.

In summary:

1. GO BIRDING on April 26.
2. Turn in a copy of your bird list at Audubon House, Attn: Al Baumann.
3. Get pledges or outright donations based on your bird list or the Chapter's total number of species for the day. Send donations to Audubon House, Attn: Birdathon.
4. HAVE FUN!

Join us at the Summer Barbecue to recognize our official Birdathon teams; the #1 Team for total species, the #1 Team for total money raised, and the #1 Individual for total money raised will be recognized with special awards.

We will be looking for you in the field on April 26; I'll be the one with the silly mangled hat.

— Al Baumann

Birdathon Participation Form



I want to "join in the fun"; please help me find a team.

I will bird my yard or my favorite birding location(s).

I will sponsor this person or team: _____
by pledging \$____ per species or making an outright donation of \$_____.

I will sponsor the chapter by pledging \$____ per species for the Chapter's Official Birdathon list of species for the 24-hour period.

I will sponsor the chapter by making an outright donation of \$_____.

I will sponsor "the crazy guy in the mangled hat" by pledging \$_____
per species or making an outright donation of \$_____.

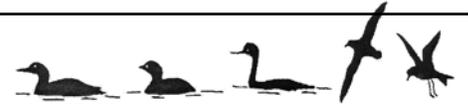
Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

If you would like to be a part of this year's Birdathon, please complete this form and mail it to:
Birdathon! Sea & Sage Audubon, PO Box 5447, Irvine CA 92616. For more information,
contact Al Baumann by phone at (949) 859-5081 or by email at <aljanetbaumann@aol.com>

April Field Trips



For trip updates & additional trip information, visit <http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org/FieldTrips/fieldtripscurrent.htm>
Trips marked with a ® require advance reservations. If you have any questions about the field trips or would like to make trip reservations, contact Field Trip Chair, Nancy Kenyon, at nancykenyon@cox.net or 949-786-3160.

Villa Park Flood Basin

Saturday, April 5th - 8:00 am

The Villa Park Flood Control Basin is situated in the east Orange foothills between the Villa Park Dam on the north and Irvine Regional Park on the south. We will explore the basin's fairly extensive riparian and freshwater marsh habitats, which are associated with the Santiago Creek drainage. Although the area has received minimal birding coverage during spring, it is known to provide breeding habitat for a wide variety of riparian and marsh birds, including several declining southern California breeders, such as Least Bell's Vireo, Yellow Warbler, Green Heron, White-tailed Kite, Virginia Rail, Pacific-slope Flycatcher Swainson's Thrush, California Gnatcatcher, Hutton's Vireo, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Blue Grosbeak. Depending on conditions during the time of the trip, we will be walking a loop trail of approximately 2 to 2 1/2 miles. The trails are unimproved, but of reasonably good condition. The walk should last less than four hours, although it should be noted that there are no restrooms, water, or other amenities once we leave the parking area

Directions: take Chapman Ave. east from the Newport Freeway, to Irvine Regional Park. Immediately after entering the park (just past the entrance booth), make a left turn at the first opportunity. After passing the first parking lot on the left side of this loop road, we will meet in the second parking along this road, which will be on the right-hand side. This is the closest parking lot to the Villa Park Flood Basin. We will meet at 8 am, and we should be returning to the cars by approximately 11:30.

Doug Willick, Leader

Santiago Oaks Regional Park

Sunday, April 6th - 7:30 a.m.

Join Linette Lina for a monthly bird walk at Santiago Oaks at 7:30 am. The mix of oak riparian and coastal sage scrub habitats make Santiago Oaks one of the best places in Orange County to find a variety of songbirds.

Directions: Take the 55 freeway to Katella Ave in Orange. Exit and drive east on Katella 3.2 miles to Windes Dr. Turn left on Windes Dr. and follow the signs to the park. OR, take Jamboree towards the mountains, all the way to its intersection with Santiago Cyn. Rd; turn left and follow Santiago to Windes Dr. Turn right on Windes and follow it to the park. Be prepared to pay the \$5 entrance fee if you don't own a county parks pass. Meet in the upper end of the parking lot.

Linette Lina, Leader

East Mojave weekend trip ®

Sat. & Sun. April 5 & 6 - (meeting time tba)

This spring desert trip will take place in the Mojave National Preserve, a desert area SE of Baker. The meeting location will depend on whether the majority of the group camps out

or stays in a motel in Baker; meeting area will probably be in the vicinity of Hole-in-the-Wall Campground. Trip leader, Steve Sosensky, is very familiar with the area. This is a great chance to explore new desert areas and see desert birds and other wildlife. (4-wheel drive vehicles or those with good road clearance are advised for this trip; those without can carpool.) Reservations are necessary; trip fee is \$20. Make check payable to Sea & Sage Audubon and mail to: East Mojave Trip, c/o Nancy Kenyon, 32 Almond Tree Ln, Irvine CA 92612. Additional trip information & a map will be posted on the chapter webpage at:

www.seaandsageaudubon.org/FieldTrips/fieldtripscurrent.htm

Steve Sosensky, Leader

Nancy Kenyon, Trip Coordinator

949-786-3160 nancykenyon@cox.net

Monthly Bird Walk at the SJWS

Sunday, April 13th - 8:00 a.m.

Join Chris Obaditch for a monthly bird walk around the ponds of the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary in Irvine at 8:00 am on the 2nd Sunday morning of each month. (See directions on page 11.) The walk, which is open to interested birders of all ages, will meet by the front door of Audubon House. Children under the age of 11 must be accompanied by an adult. *Chris Obaditch, Leader*

Laguna Niguel Regional Park

Wednesday, April 16th - 7:30 am

This park in the southern end of the county is a great place to see orioles and other spring migrants, as well as water birds on the lake. **Directions:** From the San Diego Fwy (1-5), exit at La Paz Rd and drive south towards Laguna Niguel. The park entrance is on the right shortly after crossing Aliso Creek Road. Entrance fee is \$3, or by annual pass. Meet at the first parking lot to the left of the entrance by Picnic Shelters #5 and #6. Bring binoculars, a scope if you have one, water and a snack. The field trip will end at noon. *Paul Klahr, Leader*

El Moro Canyon, Crystal Cove St. Park

Sunday, April 27th - 7:30 am

Crystal Cove State Park has several excellent birding areas and we plan to visit 2, maybe 3, important ones as time allows. **Directions:** Meet at 7:30 am at the Crystal Cove State Park headquarters parking area (\$10 fee) which is behind the El Moro school on Pacific Coast Hwy. just north of Laguna Beach. We will hike down into El Moro canyon and spend about 3 hours there. Then we'll drive north to the Los Trancos parking area (save your parking sticker) to bird the small canyon there where the many native plants attract many different species of birds. Time allowing, we'll walk to the beach to check for shorebirds and pelagic species. Bring binoculars, water, sunblock, hat and a snack. The trip will end at 1:00 pm. *Paul Klahr, Leader*

April & May Field Trips



For trip updates & additional trip information, visit the chapter webpage at <http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org> .
Trips marked with a @ require advance reservations. If you have any questions about the field trips or would like to make trip reservations, contact Field Trip Chair, Nancy Kenyon, at 949-786-3160, or nancykenyon@cox.net

Spring Pelagic Trip from Dana Point ® Saturday, May 10th at 6:30 a.m.

This spring pelagic trip takes the place of our winter trip that was cancelled due to a conflict with the annual maintenance schedule for the boat. We have scheduled the trip at this time in order to catch the spring migration of pelagic birds flying north. Our leader, Jerry Tolman, is an experienced pelagic birder and trip leader. We will be using the Sea Explorer, a 70 ft. research vessel belonging to the Ocean Institute of Dana Point. Advance reservations are necessary. Trip fee is \$35 per person, (payable to Sea & Sage Audubon). Mail to: Pelagic trip, c/o Nancy Kenyon, 32 Almond Tree Ln, Irvine CA 92612. Include your phone number & your email address or a self-addressed legal size envelope for trip confirmation and additional information.

Jerry Tolman, Leader

Kern River Valley weekend trip ® Sat/Sun, May 17 & 18 - 5:30 or 6:00 am

This special trip is one you won't want to miss! It is also one you need to plan ahead for because finding accommodations in the Kernville area in the spring can be tricky if done at the last minute. The trip will cover a variety of habitats: high desert, Great Basin, cottonwood/willow riparian, forest, redwood meadows, and mountains.

The trip will focus on late spring migration, nesting season species, and possible eastern vagrants in the Kern River Valley (Kern River Preserve, Canabrake Ecological Reserve), southern Sierra Nevada (accessible mountains), and at east Kern County desert oases. Each day will begin early in order to catch the "dawn chorus." Our leader, Bob Barnes, will diligently work with the group to learn and practice both sight and sound identification of the bird species we see, as well as pointing out behavioral traits. He will also cover status and distribution for several species. Trip Fee: is \$45 or 2 days or \$35 for those who can only be there for 1 day. To make trip reservations, make your check payable to SEA & SAGE AUDUBON & mail it to: Kern River FT, c/o Nancy Kenyon, 32 Almond Tree Ln, Irvine CA 92612. Be sure to include your phone number in case we need to contact you about last minute trip details, and your email or a self-addressed, stamped long envelope for trip confirmation & information. The trip will be limited to 15 people. For more info on the Kern River Preserve, visit these 2 websites:

<http://www.audubon.org/local/sanctuary/kernriver/krp.htm>
<http://valleywild.org/birding.htm>

Bob Barnes, Leader

Nancy Kenyon, Trip Coordinator
949-786-3160; nancykenyon@cox.net

Hawk & Owl Banding Trips ® Sun, April 27 and Sun, May 11

Come to Audubon California Starr Ranch Sanctuary and join Pete DeSimone and Scott Thomas on a tour of the ranch and have the unique opportunity to observe hawk and owl chicks right at their nests. These special Hawk and Owl Banding field trips are conducted as part of a long term study of raptors here in Orange County. Previously, the public attended these trips annually, but now these trips can occur less frequently due to recent weather patterns.

This is a wonderful opportunity to meet science and raptors up close and personal. Both Pete and Scott have been working with raptors for decades (longer than they like to admit); this is an opportunity to really learn about our Southern California hawks and owls. On each trip, Pete, Scott, and other biologists, will bring hawk and/or owl chicks (of the proper age) down from their nests to the group, where they will take their measurements and place identification bands on them, before returning them to their nests. Field trip participants will be able to help out and get right in the action with the young raptors. (This is also a great opportunity for those of you with cameras to photograph the young birds up close.)

The field trips, which fill up quickly, will take place in April when we expect owl and hawk chicks, and May when there may even be some Cooper's hawks. (The previously announced March trips have had to be cancelled because the owls weren't ready.) Each trip consists of about 20-25 people who are shuttled around in our special "people mover" open-bed truck and several SUVs. The trips include about 3-4 hrs. in the field and lunch, which is provided.

Morning trips run from 8 am to 1 pm and afternoon trips run from 12 pm to 5 pm. The overlap from 12 to 1 is lunch hour for both the morning and afternoon groups. Sandwiches, chips, fruit and drinks are included.

Trip fee is \$40 per person; full time students and children under 10 are \$25. Advanced reservations are necessary. Make checks payable to SEA & SAGE AUDUBON and mail to: Hawk & Owl Banding Trips, c/o Nancy Kenyon, 32 Almond Tree Ln, Irvine CA 92612. Be sure to include your phone number and your email address or a self-addressed, stamped envelope for trip confirmation & info.

Hawks & Owls: Sun. morning, April 27 — 8 am to 1 pm
Hawks & Owls: Sun. afternoon, April 27 — 12 pm to 5 pm

Hawks & Owls: Sun. morning, May 11 — 8 am to 1 pm
Hawks & Owls: Sun. afternoon, May 11 — 12 pm to 5 pm

Education Program News

For more information about our Education program, see our chapter webpage at — <http://www.seasageaudubon.org/Education/Education.html>



Greeting Spring at the Marsh Sunday, April 20th at 9:00 a.m.

Sea & Sage Audubon Society is pleased to announce its free public nature walk called “Greeting Spring at the Marsh.” Our Audubon naturalists will lead an easy two-hour walk, designed for all ages, at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary in Irvine on Sunday, April 20, at 9 a.m.

Participants will use binoculars, microscopes, and magnifiers to learn what goes on at the Marsh when Spring comes. They will be amazed by the variety of plants, birds and other wildlife that are easily seen around the ponds and meadow. We'll focus on how pollinators bring new life each Spring.

The goal of this special quarterly event is to help people discover the fascinating interrelationships in nature during each season at the wetlands. “Greeting Spring at the Marsh” is free but space is limited. Reservations are requested, so phone Audubon House at 949-261-7963 to reserve space for you and your family and friends.

— Rich Schilk

Letter of Appreciation —

The following is a letter of appreciation from one of the teachers whose class took part in our Outdoor Adventures Program for school children, grades 4-6, at the marsh this year. Mr. Duncan has been with our program since 1996.

*Dear Trude (& all the wonderful teachers at Sea & Sage),
Thanks for another great experience with nature and science. The students really enjoyed this opportunity. We're off to Outdoor Science School next week, and you helped prep them to be excellent observers.
See you next school year.*

*Sincerely,
Hans Duncan, 5th Grade Team Leader
John Adams Elementary Santa Ana, USD*

Camp Reunion

This year's Camp Reunion was held on March 2nd at the Duck Club for all the children who attended last summer's Nature Day Camp. Approximately 23 campers and 9 naturalists, including 3 of our 16 year old camp helpers, attended. It was a windy day but at least the sun was shining. The day's activities included a bird walk, crafts, and dinner. Our afternoon bird walk was successful with a total of 33 species seen by the 3 walk groups. The evening ended with a light dinner and delicious cupcakes made by Sheila Fitzgerald who is one of our camp mothers. This festive event was a great way for the campers and their parents to renew old friendships and become better acquainted with each other. Goodbyes were said and everyone promised to see each other again this summer.

— Grace McElhiney

Audubon Naturalists Program:

Each year, our volunteer naturalists share their love of nature with school children at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary. Many naturalists are retired teachers or principals. Some have been involved with boy scouts or girl scouts. Others work part-time and take two days off a month to lead tours. A few volunteer with other groups such as The Nature Conservancy, Upper Newport Bay, and Bower's Museum. Many have taken Sylvia Gallagher's birding skills workshops. They are people just like you. They believe that we should share our love of nature and pass it on to the next generation. If you believe in this and have some experience with children, now is the time to step forward. The next 2 workshops will be on Tues, April 29 and Tues., May 27 from 8:00 am -12:30 pm. For more information or to sign up, call Trude Hurd at 949-261-7963.

Taxidermy Birds Awaiting Sponsors

Sea & Sage Audubon maintains a wonderful taxidermy collection of local birds at the Audubon House. These specimens play an important role in our Education Project. Preparing these birds is costly, and we need your help. You can sponsor one of the following birds for \$170, and have a special sponsor plate with your name attached. Bird sponsorships are a great way to commemorate a birthday or anniversary or special person. Select from these birds:

White-crowned Sparrow
Black Phoebe
Western Meadowlark
MacGillivray's Warbler



If you are interested in sponsoring any of these taxidermy birds or any future taxidermy specimens, please contact Gretchen Mavrovouniotis at

< seasage_taxidermy@earthlink.net >

— Gretchen Mavrovouniotis

Our Summer Nature Day Camps

Sea & Sage will again be offering three special nature day camps this summer. These popular camps take place at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary in Irvine. They tend to fill up quickly so it's best to plan ahead. Pick up a brochure at Audubon House or from our chapter webpage.

Fledgling Camp (7-8 years) - June 23 to 27

Marsh Bird Camp (9-12 years) - July 7-11; July 14-18

Advanced Bird Camp (11 years & older) July 21-25 and July 28-Aug. 2

Sierra Nevada Field Campus Kern River Spring Festival

Directions to Audubon House

Receiving the Tattler

Sierra Nevada Field Campus

The Sierra Nevada Field Campus of San Francisco State University is located along side the scenic North Yuba River. Each year it offers a variety of unique courses in environmental science. This year's courses include: Bird Identification by Song, Birds of the Sierra Nevada (SN), Butterflies of the SN, Exploring SN Natural History, Drawing Master Class: Birds, Wildflowers. and their Habitat, The Naturalist's Notebook, Photographing Nature with Camera Traps, Sierra Field Journal: Botanical Illuminations. www.sfsu.edu/~sierra

Kern River Valley Spring Nature Festival

You are invited to the Kern River Valley Spring Nature Festival from April 30 - May 6 which is held annually at Audubon's Kern River Preserve in Weldon and Circle Park in Kernville! This festival celebrates the biodiversity of the Kern River Valley and Southern Sierra Nevada. Come visit the Southern Sierra Nevada; home to over 200 nesting species of birds, over 100 species of mammals, over 130 species of butterflies, and over 2000 species of plants.

<http://kern.audubon.org/bioregion.htm>

Directions to AUDUBON HOUSE and the SJWS

8:00 am - 4:00 pm daily
(949) 261-7963



From the San Diego Frwy. (405), exit on Jamboree south toward Newport Beach. At the 1st signal, Michelson, turn left. Continue on Michelson to the 4th signal which is Riparian View; turn right toward the Irvine Ranch Water District plant. Follow the signs directing you to Audubon and the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary. Continue down the road to a short hill into a parking lot. The first building you see will be Audubon House; parking is ample. Beyond Audubon House are the ponds and marsh mitigation areas of the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary which are open every day from dawn until dusk.

Tattler Subscriptions

Non-Audubon members, or members from other Audubon chapters, who wish to subscribe to our chapter newsletter, may do so for \$12.50 per year, for regular mailing. Those who wish to receive their newsletter faster, by 1st class postage, may do so for an additional \$6.00. Make check payable to: SEA and SAGE AUDUBON and mail to: Tattler Subscriptions, 32 Almond Tree Ln, Irvine CA 92612.



Tattler Delivery

Those of you who read the Tattler cover to cover know that Sea and Sage is trying to cut their expenses. We now post the Tattler on our chapter website. Members who wish to receive monthly e-mail notification that the latest issue of the tattler is online, should send an e-mail to nancykenyon@cox.net. This method of Tattler delivery not only helps cut costs and conserve resources, it also is much faster since the Tattler is posted immediately after it has been delivered to the printer

Membership Application

Membership: We invite you to become a member of the National Audubon Society and the Sea & Sage Audubon chapter. **To join:** *Please pay by check only; do not send cash.* Make your check payable to: NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, complete this form, and mail it along with your payment to: Sea & Sage Audubon, PO Box 5447, Irvine CA 92616-5447.

National Audubon Society Membership: Check one [v]

[] NEW MEMBERSHIP: \$20 - Individual or Family members [] RENEWAL: \$35 - Regular Membership
[] NEW MEMBERSHIP: \$15 - Senior Citizen or Student [] RENEWAL: \$15 - Senior Citizen or Student

Members receive: AUDUBON magazine as well as the WANDERING TATTLER newsletter.

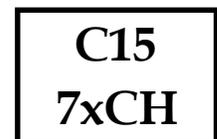
Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail address _____



April 2008

Sea and Sage Audubon Society

Chapter Mission Statement: Sea and Sage Audubon is a leader in creating an understanding of nature in Orange County, through conservation, research and environmental education programs for children and adults. This is accomplished with classes, field activities, publications and volunteer opportunities.



Sea & Sage Audubon Society
PO Box 5447, Irvine CA 92616

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BOARD MEMBERS

Executive Committee:

President.....	Al Baumann.....	949-859-5081
Vice President.....	Kaaren Perry.....	949-497-0884
Secretary.....	Gretchen McCausland.....	949-249-8258
Treasurer.....	Hal Sheakley.....	949-552-5974
Director 2008.....	Dick Newell.....	562-598-6836
Director 2008.....	Sandy DeSimone.....	949-858-0309
Director 2009.....	Mary Joseph.....	714-848-8362
Director 2009.....	Chuck Leavell.....	714-630-6497
Director 2010.....	John Avise.....	949-856-2215
Director 2010.....	Donelda Warhurst.....	714-473-3405
Past President.....	Tom Croom.....	714-692-9683

Committee Chairpersons:

Audubon House Volunteers.....	Judy Fritts.....	949-551-4513
Birdathon (interim).....	Al Baumann.....	949-859-5081
Bird Information.....	Sylvia Gallagher.....	714-962-8990
Christmas Bird Counts.....	Curtis Johnson.....	714-739-5373
Conservation.....	Susan Sheakley.....	949-552-5974
Counsel.....	Rick Derevan.....	714-427-7016
Development.....	Cheryl Thomas.....	949-294-2275
Education (interim).....	Kaaren Perry.....	949-497-0884
Exhibits.....		
Facilities.....	Neal Anderson.....	714-441-0491
Field Trips.....	Nancy Kenyon.....	949-786-3160
Finance.....		
Hospitality-General Mtgs.....	Merri Levy.....	949-495-9482
Membership.....	Phil Brobst.....	949-261-7963
Newsletter Editor.....	Nancy Kenyon.....	949-786-3160
Oak Cyn Nature Center.....	Cathy Glasgow.....	714-998-8380
Partners in Flight.....	Janet Baumann.....	949-859-5081
Program Co-Chairs.....	Jay & Marquita Miller.....	714-549-2912
Publicity.....		
Publishing.....	Sam Berry.....	949-646-1488
SJWS Liaison.....	Chris Obaditch.....	949-640-7234
Starr Ranch/Envir. Liaison.....	Pete DeSimone.....	949-858-0309
Webmaster.....	Nancy Kenyon.....	949-786-3160

Chapter Office (AUDUBON HOUSE)..... 949-261-7963

Marsh Education Project Director..	Trude Hurd	949-261-7963
Marsh Education Project Dir. Assist.....	Deborah Brin.....	
Conservation Director Orange Co..	Scott Thomas.....	949-293-2915
Administrative Aide.....	Rebecca Craft.....	949-261-7963
Sales Manager.....	Debby Thyssen.....	949-261-7963
Chapter Website.....	http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org	

Contacts:

Bluebird Information.....	Dick Purvis.....	714-776-8878
OC Rare Bird Alert Hotline.....	Joel Weintraub.....	949-487-6869
Slide Lending Library.....	Claudine Casey.....	714-968-3463

April

01	Tues	Holy Jim Canyon Natural History Walk (Full) ...	9:00 am
01	Tues	Conservation Committee meeting.....	6:30 pm
05	Sat	Villa Park Flood Basin FT.....	8:00 am
5/6	S/S	East Mojave weekend FT.....	tba
06	Sun	Santiago Oaks monthly bird walk FT.....	7:30 am
08	Tues	Board meeting.....	7:30 pm
13	Sun	SJWS monthly bird walk FT.....	8:00 am
16	Wed	Laguna Niguel Regional Park FT.....	7:30 am
16	Wed	UNB by small boat FT (Full)	8:15 am
16	Wed	Snowy Plover & Least Tern Kickoff.....	7:00 pm
18	Fri	GENERAL MEETING.....	7:30 pm
20	Sun	Greeting Spring at the Marsh.....	9:00 am
26	Sat	BIRDATHON.....	up to you
27	Sun	Crystal Cove / El Moro Canyon FT.....	7:30 am
27	Sun	Hawk Banding Trips at Starr Ranch.....	8 am & 1 pm

May

03	Sat	Native Plant Garden Tour.....	10:00 am
04	Sun	Santiago Oaks monthly bird walk FT.....	7:30 am
10	Sat	Huntington Central Park FT.....	8:00 am
10	Sat	Spring Pelagic Trip.....	6:30 am
11	Sun	SJWS monthly bird walk FT.....	8:00 am
11	Sun	Hawk Banding at Starr Ranch.....	8 am & 1 pm
14	Wed	Irvine Regional Park FT.....	7:30 am
17/18	S/S	Kern River Valley weekend trip.....	tba
21	Wed	UNB by small boat FT.....	8:15 am