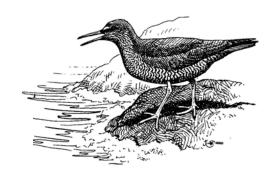
Wandering Tattler November 2024 Volume 74, Number 3



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

President's Message:Welcoming Fall and Winter Birding

Goodbye summer, and hello to fall, winter, and Christmas Bird Counts! While other parts of the country are bundling up for the cold, we are fortunate here in Orange County to experience some of the best birding opportunities of the year. Cooler days bring an influx of migratory species to our wetlands, coastlines, and parks, making this one of the most exciting times to be outdoors. Now is the perfect time to spot winter visitors and perhaps even catch a glimpse of rare vagrants like the Pacific Golden-Plover at Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve or Lewis's Woodpecker at Irvine Regional Park. Don't forget to check out the bird walk schedule on our website and join us for some fantastic birding adventures.

On a personal note, November is the time I catch up on neglected projects, like my overgrown backyard and replacing plants my tortoise has destroyed. Fall is the ideal season to plant native species. I'm excited to announce the formation of our new **California Native Plant Committee**, led by Catherine Steinberg. Keep an eye out for upcoming events where you can learn more about native plants that benefit both birds and bees. I plan to add some Woolly Bluecurls and Sticky Monkeyflower to my garden for the butterflies and birds to enjoy. Let's hope my tortoise spares them this time!

December will bring our annual **Christmas Bird Count**. This is the most important citizen science efforts that Sea & Sage participate in. We have helped track the bird population for over 70 years! We'll need all the eyes and ears we can get, so I encourage you to join us for this wonderful tradition and volunteer. For more details, please contact Darrell Wilson at darrellwilson@cox.net or visit our website.

Lastly, a reminder that while birds can't vote, we can! National Audubon encourages everyone to take the pledge "I Bird, I Vote" and make your voice heard by voting this November 5th.

-Jonathan Aguayo, President

General Meeting – Online Presentation

Friday, November 15 - 7:00 PM *Via Zoom*

"Preserving the Central Platte River Valley – a Critical Stopover Site for Migratory Cranes"

presented by Matt Fong



The non-profit Crane Trust utilizes research-based practices to preserve critical habitat for migrating North American cranes along the central Platte River Valley in Nebraska. Each spring, over 1 million Sandhill Cranes and nearly 200 endangered Whooping Cranes stop along the central Platte River Valley. The

migrating cranes require rest prior to their migration north to nest and raise their young. The number of cranes would decline without this essential stopover. The independent Crane Trust determines what the cranes need to survive and represents their long-term future. Learn about their year-round work to ensure this migration continues for generations to come! The central River Valley is a great location to see the cranes each year and welcomes guests from around the world.

Matt Fong is the Crane Trust's Director of Fundraising & Outreach. Growing up along the Platte River, he's always appreciated the area's beauty and importance for all wildlife. As an enthusiastic people person, Matt enjoys connecting people to the work of the Crane Trust. He lives in Hastings, Nebraska with his wife and young daughter.

Meeting room opens at 6:30 PM. <u>Join us at 6:45 pm for a pre-meeting activity: a reprisal of Jonathan Aguayo's famous bird quiz.</u> The talk starts at 7:00 PM.

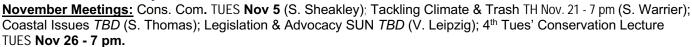
Here is the link you will need to join the meeting: Monthly: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84198423399

(If this link isn't working for you, try Meeting ID: 849 8405 5950) Need help? Email Melissa Rapp at reedjandm@cox.net

Melissa & Catherine, Program Co-Chairs

Conservation News

Susan Sheakley, Conservation Chair





Tuesday, November 26th – 7:00 pm **Zoom** Doors will open at 6:30 pm

"Engaging in Sea and Sage Bird Counts and Surveys"

Presented by Doug Lithgow, Darrell Wilson, Bettina Eastman & Samuel Bressler

~ Photos by Doug Lithgow ~

Sea and Sage Audubon (SASAS) engages in numerous bird counts and surveys throughout the year that



generates
valuable data
for avian
science and
bird
population
trends, and
provides
meaningful
information

for land management. Largely, these surveys take place in Orange County and occur on a weekly, monthly, or annual basis. Collectively, they generate thousands of volunteer hours and a trove of important information.

These surveys are predominantly run by SASAS, but we



also jointly team up with other conservation-minded organizations such as California State Parks, Bolsa Chica Conservancy, the Coastal Corridor Alliance, and the University of California, Irvine. This gives SASAS members

and the public a chance to use their birding skills while participating in meaningful scientific data collections.

Our presentation will give an overview of the numerous SASAS run surveys and we will highlight a few of these



surveys in depth. The Christmas Bird Count, which is an annual survey, is the world's longest running citizen

science-based project which started in 1900 and takes place throughout North America. Our weekly Bird Season's Phenology study strives to measure the

effects of climate change on bird populations and behaviors. Our monthly bird counts also contribute



valuable data about our local bird population. And each year we organize an Orange County Spring Count which runs for two months during the height of Spring migration.

These are just a few examples of the surveys that Sea & Sage is engaged in. It is not necessary to be a SASAS member to participate, although we welcome our members. All that is needed is a simple desire to contribute to the overall body of knowledge of our avian friends, and to have an enjoyable experience in the process.

We hope to see you at our **November 26** '4th Tues.'

Advance registration is required & will be available on our website under 'What's New' or 'Conservation'



Chapter News & Announcements

For more information about Sea & Sage activities, visit our chapter webpage at seaandsageaudubon.org

Audubon House Volunteers

We would like to thank the following people for helping



to staff Audubon House in October and November: Kathy Blackmarr, Leslie El-Sayad, Elisa Guzman, John Hargrove, Ann Harmer, Mary Harward, Sue Henry, Sarah Jayne, Mary Meister, Kelly Morgan, Michelle Olson, Barbara Reber, Jennifer

Reed, Paul Saiki, Dev Sellin, Susan Sheakley, Art Strauss, Pat Wells, Phil Westin, Irene Wotta.

Our volunteers greet visitors, answer the phone, sell merchandise, answer questions about birds, check out binoculars, etc. If you are interested in helping at Audubon House, please call Paula Monroe, 480-299-9885, or Dev Sellin, 714-943-3682.

Your Donation Supports Science and Reading for Santa Ana Elementary School Children

I love to read. As a child, I climbed the sycamore tree in our family backyard and sat on one of the main limbs while I read books about dogs and horses. Do you also



enjoy reading? When did you start? Studies show that our love of reading is promoted during our childhood. Did you know Sea and Sage is helping Santa Ana elementary school children to not only learn how to read but to enjoy reading? We provide 45 Santa Ana classes with 3 small nature newspapers on different topics from bird identification, migration, gardening for birds, and more. These Audubon Adventures

newspapers promote science and share stories about young people helping nature. Students discover the importance of conservation through daily actions at home and school and also by participating in local environmental projects. They learn reading is fun!

These 45 Santa Ana classes continue their reading experience by doing a research project about birds before they come on a field trip to the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary. They learn how to use the index in a bird field guide to find their bird, then read how to identify their bird by its field marks, and finally create a migration range map for their bird. The students are so excited when they arrive at the marsh because they want to see "their bird." All because of reading!

Holiday Boutique and Open House

Mark your calendars for the 4th annual Holiday Shopping Event on Sunday, December 8th, from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the Duck Club. Join us for a festive day of shopping and mingling! Find the perfect gifts for your bird-loving friends and family. Every Purchase includes complimentary eco-friendly gift wrapping. The Holiday Boutique, presented by the Sea & Sage Nature Store, where we feature thoughtfully curated products from vendors who are passionate about our planet. Our selection prioritizes locally sourced items from small businesses, ethically made products, and environmentally responsible manufacturing and shipping practices. What's more, many of our vendors support the conservation causes we care about. Bring your friends and enjoy holiday treats, cookies, hot chocolate. and mulled cider at this year's Holiday Boutique. Don't miss this opportunity to shop locally and discover meaningful gifts for your loved ones. All proceeds benefit Sea & Sage Audubon.

Your Donation Supports Reading - continued

If reading this makes you smile to know that our education team is helping children read and learn about science, then I hope you will send a donation to support our outreach. The cost of 3 Audubon Adventures for every child in one class is \$50. The cost of one school bus to bring the children to the marsh is \$10 per student or \$300 per bus. Write a check for any amount that speaks to your heart because we will use all amounts for these deserving children. Mail your check payable to "Sea and Sage Audubon, 5 Riparian View, Irvine, CA 92612.

If you have any questions, email Project Director Trude Hurd: <u>SeaAndSageEducation@gmail.com</u>. We appreciate your donation, and hope you will share your love of reading with a young person.

READING GROUP — Tues, Nov. 19 – 1:00 PM

Reading Group: *The Narrow Edge – by Devorah Cramer* Check our chapter webpage, <u>seaandsageaudubon.org</u> and look at the Reading Group calendar for the Zoom link to the meeting.

PROPOSITION 4 – I Bird I vote – Nov.5 Parks, Environment, Energy & Water Bond

The bond will generate close to \$10 billion to fund a wide array of environmental causes including the new Santa Ana River Conservancy and the West Coyote Hills. It's endorsed by Audubon California.

Orange County Rarities by Braxton Landsman



To report a RARE or UNUSUAL bird, or to receive reports from other birders about rare or unusual bird sightings here in Orange County, send an email to: OrangeCountyBirding+subscribe@groups.io

Photos by Don Hoechlin

In September, birders dropped everything to chase vagrant warblers. During this time, we saw a very nice variety of birds; migrant and vagrant passerines, shorebirds, winter arrivals, and pelagic birds as well.

Two **White-winged Doves** were present this month along with some pelagic species which included a **Red-billed Tropicbird** offshore on Sept. 22nd and a **Brown Booby** offshore on Sept. 15th. A **Blue-**



footed Booby was spotted from the Newport Pier on Sept.16th. Our famous Ruff was last seen on Sept. 14th. Four Baird's Sandpipers were in the county also, as well as

an impressive count of a dozen **Pectoral Sandpipers**.

Up to 15 **Neotropic Cormorants** on the upper Santa Ana River this month marked a continuation of the large numbers first noted in August. Elsewhere, one individual was observed at the San Joaquin Marsh. Both sites also hosted single **Western Cattle Egrets**, both one day wonders. At least 3 **Broad-winged Hawks** were a pleasant surprise at Arbor Park in Seal Beach on Sept. 26th and there were reports of large numbers of this migratory eastern raptor further north in the Bay

A **Tropical Kingbird** was at Tewinkle Park on Sept. 26. Five **Bank Swallows** were seen countywide, three in the latter stages of the month and two early in the month. Two **Plumbeous Vireos**



were found late in the month, one at Mile Square Park on Sept. 23rd and another in Huntington Central Park

on Sept. 27-28. A **Sage Thrasher** was at Bolsa Chica on Sept. 16th.

A good count of nine **Vesper Sparrows** was seen this month, and a **Clay-colored Sparrow** was at Mason Regional Park on the 16th. A juvenile **Black-throated Sparrow** at Silkwood Park in Irvine from Sept. 7th- 8th was very popular among birders. **Black-chinned Sparrows** are very rare migrants away from foothill chaparral, so one at Gilman Park in Fullerton on Sept.12th may have been driven coastward by the Airport Fire. Three **Green-tailed Towhees** were present, all in the middle of the month.

Yellow-headed Blackbirds continued at the Santa Ana River in Anaheim through Sept. 8th, while one



was found at the Los Alamitos Race Track on the 14th. The returning **Orchard Oriole** continued in residential Fountain Valley through the end of the month. A second bird was at Huntington Central Park on the 3rd. A **Baltimore Oriole** was at Pepperwood Park in Irvine on Sept. 22nd.

September proved a strong month for warblers in the county, with highlights including **Painted Redstarts** at Huntington Central Park on Sept. 22nd and at Mile Square Park from the 22nd – to the 24th, both arriving on the 22nd with one lingering to the 24th; a **Canada Warbler** at Gilman Park from the 22nd-25th, and a

Prothonotary
Warbler at Russell
Cook Park from
the 27th-30th. Other
warblers observed
included a Lucy's
Warbler at Veeh
Reservoir on the
24th, a Northern
Waterthrush at



Huntington Central Park from Sept. 8th-9th, and a **Tennessee Warbler** at Gilman Park Sept. 12th-17th. Three **Blackpoll Warblers**, two in Huntington Beach on the 15th and one at Veeh Reservoir from the 26th-27th, were notable. Rounding out the "common" rare fall warblers were three **Virginia's Warblers**, four **American Redstarts**, and five **Black-and-White Warblers**. Finally, one or more **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** were present at Huntington Central Park from Sept.15th-25th.

Education News by Project Director Trude Hurd

"This is the highlight of my life!" - Roosevelt Elementary School student.

Prior to their Outdoor Adventures field trip to the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary, Santa Ana elementary school children study six common marsh birds. These six birds have different beak shapes and foraging techniques in addition to having a variety of sizes, colors, patterns, gender dimorphism, sounds, behaviors and more. Because of their research, the children arrive at the marsh eager to see "their bird." As you can imagine, this puts pressure on our naturalists to FIND these six birds! One Thorpe Elementary student said at the end of their trip, "I was disappointed to not see a Killdeer, but it was still fun." We cannot guarantee seeing the six alive, but we do have all six as taxidermy! Hopefully, we'll hear the children say "I just saw my study bird in nature!" (Martin Elementary student).

The **Great Blue Heron** is the tallest bird of the marsh and frequently stands on the trails that we are using. If the children are quiet and don't stare, the resident heron may allow us to walk by without it squawking and flying off. Sometimes, we are lucky to see the heron catch a fish and try to swallow it. Thrilling!





The **Black-necked Stilt** is a long-billed shorebird that breeds in the shallow ponds and creek. In spring, pond E can be noisy because the superprotective parents shriek "kek, kek, kek" as they try to drive away anything that gets too close to their chicks. Did you know that you can tell the genders apart? Males have a glossy black back while females have a brownish-black back.





The **Killdeer** is a short-billed shorebird with large eyes and two black bands on its chest. In spring, it sometimes makes its well-camouflaged ground nest at the edge of the trail or even in the parking lot. When we hear its alarm call, we back up or take a different path to help protect the nest. "When the Killdeer flew by, it really does say killdeer!" said a Thorpe Elementary student.





The Northern Shoveler and Ruddy Duck are two ducks that feed in different ways. The shoveler has a large flat beak with fringes on the edges to help filter small plants, insects and crustaceans out of the water. It tips just its head underwater. But the Ruddy Duck (sometimes mistakenly called "rudi duck") dives completely underwater and disappears as it chases fish, water boatman, and other small prey. We tell the children to count how long this diving duck stays underwater and to point to where they think it will resurface...results are always surprising! When one Santiago Elementary student got to Pond 1, his first words were "That's a Northern Shoveler!" because he recognized it from his class study.





The American Kestrel is not usually seen during our field programs. It may sit on a pole next to the shallow ponds where it watches for small birds and dragonflies. It's easy to distinguish gender when kestrels fly: male has a solid orange-red tail while female has a barred tail.

If you enjoy hearing about children learning about birds in school and getting excited about seeing them in nature, you can make a donation to support our education program. We would love to hear more children like a Diamond Elementary student saying "I want to be a scientist".

Christmas Bird Counts - 2024

We hope you will join us this year on one or more of our Christmas Bird Counts. Sea & Sage now has four Count Circles: Northeastern (Inland CBC), San Juan Capistrano (South County CBC), Puente Chino-Hills (North County CBC), and the Coastal CBC. There will be more detailed info in the next Tattler.

Northeastern (Inland) CBC on Sunday,
December 15th. This count covers inland areas
in Irvine, Mission Viejo, Lake Forest, and parts of
Lemon Heights. If you are interested in this
count and have previously participated in it,
please contact the Area Leader with whom
you worked. Or you may contact Doug
Lithgow, the Organizer & Compiler for this
count circle.

Next up is the **South County CBC on Saturday, December 21**st. This count covers areas such as San Juan Capistrano, San Clemente, Dana Point, and Doheny State Beach to name a few. Please contact the Area Leader with whom you worked on previous counts. Or you may contact Darrell Wilson, who is also the Organizer & Compiler for this count circle.

Next up is the new Puente Chino-Hills CBC on Saturday, December 28th. This count covers areas of North Orange County. Please contact Samuel Bressler, who is also the Organizer & Compiler for this count circle.

Don't put your binoculars away just yet, because on **Saturday**, **January 4**th is our fourth and final count, **the Coastal CBC**. This count is our longest running Count Circle, having been around for over 40 years. Please contact the Area Leader with whom you worked on previous counts. Or you may contact Bettina Eastman, who is also the Organizer & Compiler for this count circle.

We hope you will help us continue this cherished tradition of Community Based Science this year by joining one or more of the Christmas Bird Counts with your important bird observations.



Northeastern (Inland) CBC:

Irvine Reg. Park, Irvine Lake & vicinity, Silverado Canyon, Black Star Canyon, Mountain Areas, Modjeska & Harding Canyons, O'Neil Reg. Park & Plano Trabuco, Lion Country & Areas south of the 405, Mission Viejo, Lake Forest, El Toro & foothills, Former El Toro Marine Base & foothills (?Great Park), Rattlesnake & Siphon Reservoirs, Peters Canyon Reg. Park, Lemon Heights. DMLithgow@aol.com

San Juan Capistrano (South County) CBC:

Laguna Niguel Reg. Park & vicinity, San Clemente, Caspers Wilderness Park, Pelagic Ares or Sea Watch, Saddleback College & vicinity, Prima Deshecha Landfill & vicinity, Upper San Juan Creek & vicinity, Aliso-Woods Canyon, San Clemente Hillside area, Dana Point: Doheny State Beach, Dana Point Harbor, Dana Point Headlands, Salt Creek Beach, Local Parks & Golf Course, Thomas F. Riley Wilderness Park.

DarrellWilson@cox.net

Puente Chino-Hills (North County) CBC:

Chino Hills State Park, Carbon Canyon Wilderness Park, Craig Reg. Park, Yorba Reg. Park, Santiago Oaks Reg. Park, West Coyote Hills, Gilman, Tri-City Yorba Linda Lakebed Parks, Weir Canyon Nature Reserve. pacificgoldenplover@gmail.com

Coastal CBC:

Westminster Mem. Park & Corner of Seal Beach NWR, HB Pier, Beach Areas north to edge of Sunset Beach, HCP west, Wintersburg Channel, Seapoint, Bolsa Chica, Mile Square Park, HB wetlands, Fairview Park, Talbert Preserve, Banning Ranch, SA River Mouth, Canyon Park, CM Golf Course, Fairview Development Center, OC Sanitation District, Older Areas within Santa Ana, Centennial Reg. Park, Windsor Park, Carl Thornton Park, Former MCAS Blimp Base, Marine Corp. Mem. Park, UNB west side, UNB east side, SJWS & UCI Marsh, Mason Reg. Park, UCI Campus & Foothills, Corona del Mar, Newport Harbor & Beaches, Pelagic Areas along the coast. bettinae24@gmail.com

The next Tattler will show the names & contact info of the leaders for the different areas of each count circle.

Directions and Membership

Sea and Sage Audubon Society's mission is to protect birds, other wildlife, and their habitats through education, citizen science, research, and public policy.



Tattler Subscriptions

Non-Audubon members or members from other Audubon chapters who wish to subscribe to our chapter newsletter, may do so for \$14.00 per year. Make check payable to "Sea and Sage Audubon" and mail to: Tattler Subscriptions, 14231 Clarissa Ln, Santa Ana CA 92705.

Go Paperless!

Sign up to receive your newsletter via email — get your issues faster, help save natural resources, reduce waste, and help our chapter save money! You can read it online or print out the pages you need to refer to more frequently. It is in pdf format and will look and print exactly like the original ones. Photos will be in color. Send an e-mail to nancykenyon@cox.net to start your paper-free Tattler delivery today! (offer good only for chapter members in good standing)

Remember Us in Your Will or Trust

Please remember to include "Sea and Sage Audubon Society" by name (tax ID#23-7003681) in your will or trust.

Directions

to the San Joaquin Wildlife
Sanctuary
(5 Riparian View, Irvine)
Our entrance is from
Campus Dr., not Michelson

From the San Diego Fwv (405): Exit on Jamboree, south toward Newport Beach. At the 1st signal, Michelson. turn left. Continue on Michelson (past the old entrance to the SJWS) to the 5th signal which is Harvard and turn right. Drive to University & turn right. Drive to Campus Drive & turn right. Stay in the far right lane and immediately turn right onto Riparian View which will enter the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary. The entrance road is marked by a large sign. If you miss the turn and reach Carlson, turn right and go around the block again to Harvard. The sanctuary is open every day from dawn until dusk.

Audubon House

AH is usually open daily from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The restrooms, trails, and parking lots are open daily from dawn until dusk. Call 949-261-7963 for information.

Your Membership Payment

Do you want to join National Audubon and Sea and Sage? Use the membership form at the bottom of this page. An Individual Membership or a Family Membership is only \$20. Sea & Sage receives 100% of a chapter generated new member's dues for the first year. Mail the form and your check - payable to National Audubon Society - to Audubon Membership, 14231 Clarissa Ln, Santa Ana CA 92705. If you want to use a credit card for your membership payment, go online to:

http://www.audubon.org/membership
For questions, please contact our
Membership Chair, Gail Richards, at
membership@seaandsageaudubon.org.

Temporarily Away or Moving?

Please notify Jim Kissinger of your new address if you are temporarily, or permanently, moving from your current address; or, let him know if you do not want to continue to receive the Tattler. This will save us postage.

Gail Richards, Membership Chair membership@seaandsageaudubon.org

Audubon Membership Application

We invite you to become a member of the National Audubon Society and the Sea and Sage Audubon chapter. Members receive the AUDUBON magazine as well as the WANDERING TATTLER newsletter.

NEW MEMBERSHIP is \$20 for an individual or for a family. (The membership is good for one year.)

<u>To join:</u> Complete the form below & mail it along with your payment to: Sea and Sage Audubon, PO Box 5447, Irvine CA 92616 *Make your check payable to:* NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY. *Please pay by check only; do not send cash.*Or, go online https://act.audubon.org/onlineactions/DH8fxTkoC0qHjXF9fZCtRw2?chapter=C15 (Our chapter code is C15)

To renew membership: renew directly with National Audubon by direct mail or online: https://act.audubon.org/a/renew?ms=s_src-2015_AUDHP_ftr- (Renewals are \$20 per year.)	
Name	
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OTHER CONTACTS

Wetlands & Wildlife Care Center – for injured or sick birds and other native wild animals in need of help (corner of Newland & PCH in HB) 714-374-5587. http://www.wwccoc.org/

SCHEDULE of CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

- (p) OC Parks card or pay park fee at entrance
- (R) Space limited; reservations necessary see webpage
- (\$) Pay in advance for trip see webpage writeup on trip

November 2024:

		** -*- **
02	Sat	OC Bird of Prey Center ® \$ 1:00 pm
05	Tues	Conservation Meeting via Zoom 6:45 pm
10	Sun	Monthly Bird Walk at the SJWS ® 8:00 am
12	Tues	Board Meeting via Zoom7:00 pm
15	Fri	GENERAL MEETING via Zoom 7:00 pm
17	Sun	Carbon Canyon Bi-Monthly Bird Walk 8:00 am
20	Wed	UNB by pontoon boat ® 8:15 am
21	Thurs	Bolsa Chica Bi-Monthly Bird Walk 8:00 am
24	Sun	Upper Newport Bay Monthly Bird Walk 8:00 am
26	Tues	'4th Tues' Conservation Lecture via Zoom 7:00 pm

December 2024:

80	Sun	Monthly Bird Walk at the SJWS ® 8:00 am
80	Sun	HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE 10:00 am
10	Tues	Quail Hill Open Space Preserve 7:00 am
15	Sun	Northeastern (Inland) CBC tba
18	Wed	UNB by pontoon boat ® 8:15 am
21	Sat	San Juan Capistrano CBC tba
28	Sat	Chino Puente-Hills CBC tba

January 2025

04 Sat Coastal CBC tba