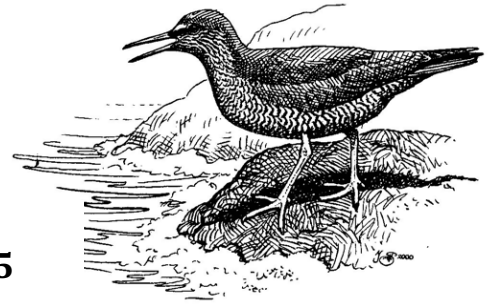


# Wandering Tattler

February 2024  
Volume 73 Number 5



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

## Message from the President

### Reflecting on 2023 and Charting the Course for 2024

*by Jonathan Aguayo, President*

Thank you for your recent donations in response to our Annual Appeal. Your generosity not only sustains our chapter but serves as a resounding endorsement of our shared commitment to the protection of birds and their habitats. With your support, our dedicated staff and volunteers can continue their pursuit of our ongoing goals, aiming to spread the joy of birding and actively engage our community. I am immensely proud of the tireless dedication demonstrated by our chapter in 2023, and I consider myself very fortunate to lead with the full support from our board.

We had a successful year. Our achievements are attributed to the outstanding efforts of our board members, committee members, chapter staff, and volunteers. As your President, my goal for 2024 is to infuse fresh ideas into our existing events and explore possibilities for field trips, workshops, and engagements. Looking ahead to 2024, Sea & Sage Audubon Society will continue offering enriching field trips and bird counts throughout Orange County, captivating presentations during our General Meetings and 4th Tuesday Conservation Lectures, and engaging events such as Volunteer Appreciation, Annual Dinner, Summer BBQ, Pancake Breakfast, and the Holiday Boutique and Open House. Sylvia Gallagher's classes and our exhibit tables throughout Orange County will continue to be vibrant hubs of learning and interaction. I am striving for new opportunities and expanded outreach, and I look forward to continuing new collaborations with other organizations. For a comprehensive overview of our Annual Accomplishments for 2023 and our Goals for 2024, in March, there will be a full list on our website under the "About Us" tab. I thank you for your continued support and look forward to another great year.

## General Meeting - Online Presentation

February 16, 2023 - 7:00 PM

**"Northern Jaguar Project"**

Presented by Roberto Wolf



The Northern Jaguar Project (NJP) is a binational non-profit organization that works in Sonora, Mexico to preserve and recover the world's northernmost breeding population of jaguars. The strengthening of this known breeding population in Mexico might allow the jaguars to recover its historic distribution range and re-establish a permanent population in the United States.

Roberto A. Wolf Webels has been dedicated to animal care since childhood. As Executive Director since 2021, Roberto continues the Northern Jaguar Project's work to create cooperative solutions for the conservation of jaguars.

Please join us for this fun filled program. Meeting room opens at 6:30 PM, join us to socialize prior to the 7:00 PM meeting. The link for the meeting is:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83610117074>  
(If this link isn't working for you, try Meeting ID: 836 1011 7074)  
Need help? Email Christine Kim at [chrislakim@gmail.com](mailto:chrislakim@gmail.com)

# Sea & Sage Annual Dinner

Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup> at Mile Square Park Banquet Center

Our Guest Speaker is Jon Feenstra

He will speak on “The Birds of Ecuador: A Lot in a Little Place”

Though only the size of the state of Arizona, the nation of Ecuador has more than 1600 species of birds within its borders. A combination of tropical latitude, a span of 20000 feet of elevation, coastline, varying habitat types, and plenty of rain make this one of the most bird-diverse places on earth. This talk will delve into the habitats and the birds within covering natural history and biology with lots of pretty bird photos.

The evening will also include a Silent Auction and the presentation of our chapter's Fern Zimmerman Conservation Award and Letters of Commendation. The Mile Square Park Banquet Center is located at the south end of Mile Square Park, at the intersection of Warner and Ward in Fountain Valley. Free parking is available. Below is the schedule for the evening:

**No Host Bar:** 6:00 p.m.

**Dinner:** 7:00 p.m.

**Program:** 8:00 p.m., sharp!

**Location:** Mile Square Park Banquet Center

**Tickets:** \$60 for all reservations received before March 1<sup>st</sup>

\$65 for reservations received on or after March 1<sup>st</sup>

**Entrees:** Mediterranean Chicken, Atlantic Salmon Filet, or Cauliflower

Steak. All dinners will include a salad, fresh vegetables, freshly baked rolls, coffee, iced tea, or decaf, and a brownie or mixed berries sorbet (by request) for dessert.



**MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS EARLY.** Seating will be assigned in the order the reservations are received. If you wish to sit with friends, be sure they make their reservations on the same day you do. **Reservations will be made through Eventbrite, not by check.** You will receive a confirmation email after your reservation has been made. *ALL RESERVATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THURSDAY, MARCH 7th* If you are unable to use Eventbrite to make your reservation, please phone or email Nancy Kenyon (949-892-9212; [nancykenyon@cox.net](mailto:nancykenyon@cox.net))

**The Registration link is:** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sea-and-sage-audubons-annual-dinner-2024-tickets-792238385337> . This link is accessible in What's New on our website.

## ~ Photography Showcase ~

Love photographing birds? Share your stunning bird photograph captured in southern California and let others revel in its beauty at our Annual Dinner! You must attend the Annual Dinner on March 15th to win a prize. Use this link to enter:

<https://mailchi.mp/seaandsageaudubon.org/photo-contest-2>

# Chapter News & Announcements



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

## Please Donate to the Silent Auction

**Silent Auction donations are needed for the Annual Dinner on March 15, 2024. The auction is a fun event for all and helps to raise funds for various chapter events. Please consider donating.**

**Ideas for items we are looking for consists of:**

- Gift baskets of your own making (no perishables)
- Vacation stays in your vacation property or timeshare.
- Bottles of wine (any flavor or variety)
- Bottles of interesting alcohol (craft distilleries)
- Tickets to events (plays, musicals, concerts, amusement parks)
- Music lessons – singing lessons – acting lessons.
- Handcrafted items
- Skeins of yarn
- Trips on a sail boat or motor boat (harbor cruise, whale watch , fishing)
- The ideas are endless. Contact Cheryl Thomas at [cthomas1313@cox.net](mailto:cthomas1313@cox.net) or 949-294-2275.

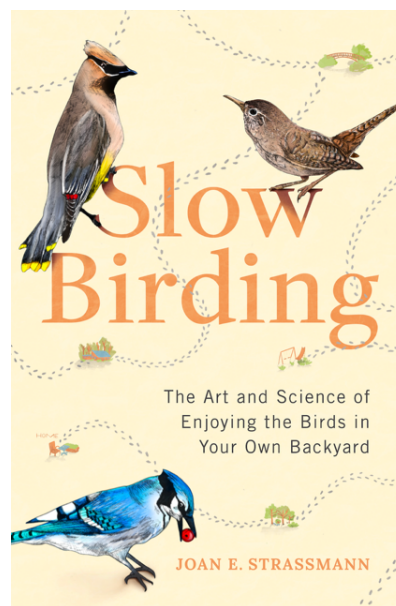
## Chapter Elections

The annual election of officers and directors of Sea and Sage will be held this year at the general meeting on Friday, May 17. Right now, a Nominating Committee is working to create a slate of candidates. Offices to be voted on are president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, who serve one-year terms, and two directors, who will serve three-year terms. Members are invited to suggest possible candidates to the Nominating Committee. Please email any suggestions to [vicleipzig@aol.com](mailto:vicleipzig@aol.com). Members may also directly nominate candidates, by submitting their names at the general meeting on Friday, March 15. To preclude frivolous nominations, the bylaws require that all nominations be accompanied by a signed statement from the nominee agreeing to the nomination.  
Vic Leipzig- Chair, Nominating Committee

## Nature Day Camps

Enrollment for our popular Nature Day Camps opens on February 1<sup>st</sup> on Eventbrite. Separate camps are for ages 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, and 13-16. Get an informational flyer on our chapter website or by email from Project Director Trude Hurd: [seaandsage@sbcglobal.net](mailto:seaandsage@sbcglobal.net).

## Nature Store



## Do You Enjoy Backyard Birding?

We have a great book recommendation we think you will really enjoy.

[Slow Birding - The Art and Science of Enjoying the Birds in your Own Backyard.](#) By Joan E. Strassmann

*Slow Birding* is the perfect guide for the birder looking to appreciate the beauty of the birds right in their own backyard, observing keenly how their behaviors change from day to day and season to season. This one-of-a-kind guide to birding locally encourages readers to slow down and notice the spectacular birds all around them.

Available in the Audubon House Bookstore

# Conservation News

Meetings in February - Join us!

Conservation Committee: **TU FEB 6** (Susan Sheakley, Chair); '4<sup>th</sup> Tues.' Program **TU FEB 27**

Tackling Climate & Trash **TH FEB 15** (Melissa Rapp, Co-Chair); Legislation & Advocacy **SU FEB 25** (Vic Leipzig, Chair)



Photo by Bill Halladay



Photo by Andrea Carpio

“4<sup>th</sup>Tues.”

## Conservation Lecture

Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup> – 7:00 pm

*Zoom* Doors will open at 6:30 pm

### “Looking out for the California Least Terns and the Western Snowy Plovers at Huntington State Beach”

*presented by*

*Lana Nguyen, Senior Environmental Scientist, and Brittany Poloni, Environmental Scientist*

Join Lana and Brittany to learn about two fascinating birds with very different lifestyles but both depend on the coastal environment.

We will learn how the volunteer docent program contributes to nesting success and public outreach, also how we can become a part of the docent program.

**Advance registration** is required for this meeting and will be available through our website starting by Feb. 1<sup>st</sup> under “Conservation” and “What’s New”.

## The California Least Tern and Western Snowy Plover State Parks Docent Program Overview

The docent program at Orange Coast District provides a unique opportunity for volunteers to participate in the protection of the endangered California least tern and threatened Western snowy plover. Docents are trained to provide public outreach and interpretation, in addition to informing park visitors of rules and guidelines to encourage voluntary compliance. Docents also participate in biological monitoring by collecting data that documents bird behavior, disturbance, and predation events. Docents partake in an informational meeting and field training, followed by signing up for weekly shifts during the breeding season in spring and summer.

Docents can choose to participate in either or both programs for the least terns and snowy plovers. The highest need for docents is during the months of May through August when park visitation is significant and public outreach is critical. Docents get to expand their awareness and appreciation for natural areas and wildlife, be a part of a dedicated conservation community, and spend some great days at the beach!

If interested please contact:

[Lana.Nguyen@parks.ca.gov](mailto:Lana.Nguyen@parks.ca.gov) , or

[Brittany.Poloni@parks.ca.gov](mailto:Brittany.Poloni@parks.ca.gov). The docent informational meeting will take place in April 2024. Details will be provided prior to the meeting.

## Marsh Education Project Annual Report 2023

*"Thank you for giving my kids a wonderful, exciting, eventful week in nature."*

With your support in 2023, our Audubon Naturalists shared the important message of protecting birds and their habitat with over 9,700 adults and children. From interactive science programs for elementary school children and week-long summer camps for youth to exciting night-time bat walks and special guided tours, our 58 adult and 9 teen education volunteers donated over 4,500 hours to help people experience nature at the beautiful San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary. We thank everyone who helped us positively impact lives: donors, naturalists, coordinators, generous Anonymous Foundation, and the awesome Irvine Ranch Water District.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Outdoor Adventures</b> 1,237 children in 50 classes</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">"This field trip awakens the appreciation and love of nature in young students. They feel they can make a difference by protecting nature." (teacher)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>New Naturalist Training</b> 10 adults</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">"I am always impressed by their passion for nature- it really carries over to the students." (teacher)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Nature Day Camps</b> 56 children in 4 summer camps</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">"All of (our children) participated in this wonderful program which is an amazing combination of learning and fun and a great time in nature." (parent)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Summer Bat Walks</b> 70 people on 6 events</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Junior Naturalists</b> 23 teens</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Community Outreach</b> 63 people on 7 tours</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">author Amy Tan (right)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Nature Discovery Kits</b> 4 loans</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Taxidermy Specimens</b> 7,914 people during 23 loans, Audubon House, camp, and tours</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Special Outreach</b> 216 people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bird Behaviors presentation at OC Wild's Docent Day event by Project Director Trude Hurd.</li> <li>• Wonderful World of Bats presentation to Irvine Ranch Conservancy's naturalists by Ellen Mansour.</li> <li>• Children's Story Walk at plein air event at the marsh in fall.</li> </ul>

# Orange County Rarities

## by Samuel Bressler



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](mailto:OrangeCountyBirding+subscribe@groups.io)

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*A remarkable number of vagrant raptors, flycatchers, sparrows, warblers, and other birds turned up in Orange County this December, many in small and under-birded parks and green spaces that were covered during the various Christmas Bird Counts. High numbers of vagrants have been recorded elsewhere in the county of late, potentially due to this winter's strong El Nino.*

This winter has proven to be a poor one for ducks thus far, with the only notable finds being **White-winged** and **Black Scoters** which were detected off Seal Beach and Huntington Beach Pier. **Horned Grebes** are regular offshore and in coastal estuaries, but one at Irvine Lake was unusually far inland. A **Common Ground-Dove** was found in the Great Park Wildlife Corridor. The **American Oystercatcher** first found in November in continued in Dana Point Harbor, while **Pacific Golden-Plovers** continued at their reliable wintering spot in the Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge; and at Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve. The Upper Santa Ana River continues to host small numbers of **Neotropic Cormorants**, in December they were found adjacent to Yorba Regional Park and at Anaheim Coves Park. A **Little Blue Heron** continued at Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve.

At least one **Zone-tailed Hawk** spent December over the open space in the sparsely birded eastern part of the county, with observations turning up in Round Canyon, El Toro Memorial Park, Serrano Creek Park, the Great Park Wildlife Corridor, and Rancho Santa Margarita. A **Short-eared Owl** was seen soaring over Bolsa Chica, while a **Long-eared Owl** was found dead in Laguna Niguel. Both of these species used to be regularly common in Orange County but are now very rarely encountered. After several years with essentially no confirmed sightings, at least two **Prairie Falcons** were found in December: one at Bolsa Chica, and a second bird at Great Park Wildlife Corridor.

A **Williamson's Sapsucker**, a montane resident extremely rare in Orange County, continued in Los Pinos Probation Camp, as did a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** at Harvard Community Park. The only **Lewis's Woodpeckers** for the month were in Limestone Canyon. **Gray Flycatchers** staged a minor incursion into the county this winter, with reports from Mason Regional Park, Riverdale Park, Huntington Central Park, and Villa Park Flood Control Basin. A smaller number of **Hammond's Flycatchers** also overwintered in the county, including one at Arovista Park and one at Laguna Lake Park. An **Ash-throated Flycatcher** was at Chrisanta Drive, while a **Tropical Kingbird** continued at San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary; a second bird was found at Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve.

A **Cassin's Vireo** continued at Gilman Park, while a second bird was at Westminster Memorial Park. It was a good month for **Plumbeous Vireos**, which were found in at least six locations across the county. A **Sage Thrasher** continued at Huntington Central Park, while a second bird was found at Panorama Nature Preserve. A **Varied Thrush** was at Irvine Regional Park. December brought large numbers of unusual and vagrant sparrows to much of the county. The rarest of these was the continuing **LeConte's Sparrow** at Quail Hill Preserve. **Grasshopper Sparrows** are exceedingly difficult to find in winter, nevertheless two were seen in December: at Quail Hill Preserve, and in Limestone Canyon. **Clay-colored Sparrows** were at Clark RP, Fullerton Sports Park, and at Fairview Park, while **White-throated Sparrows** were at a variety of locations, including Carbon Canyon Regional Park, Chino Hills State Park, Limestone Canyon, O'Neill Regional Park, and Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park. Similarly, **Green-tailed Towhees** turned up at Vista Park in Costa Mesa, Fremont Canyon, Chino Hills State Park, and Overlook Park in Huntington Beach.

# Orange County Rarities

## by Samuel Bressler



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](mailto:OrangeCountyBirding+subscribe@groups.io)

**Yellow-headed Blackbirds** were at the Los Alamitos Racecourse, while an **Orchard Oriole** continued in Fountain Valley. Several eastern warblers were found in the county in December, the most notable of which were a **Black-throated Green Warbler**, and a **Pine Warbler** at Mile Square RP. Other vagrant warblers included a **Northern Parula** and an **American Redstart** at Huntington CP, a **Palm Warbler** at Mason RP, **Tennessee Warblers** at Arovista Park and El Niguel Golf Course, and several **Black-and-white Warblers** throughout the county.

A **Hepatic Tanager**, Orange County's fourth, was found at Serrano Creek Park on the 20th, followed by a **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**. There are fewer than 10 wintering records of **Black-headed Grosbeaks** for the county, so the four that were found this winter, including one at Carbon Canyon Regional Park, one at Pelanconi Park, and two at Gilman Park, was a historically remarkable total.



### Hepatic Tanager

Photo by David Ornellas

## Join the Great Backyard Bird Count

The 26th Annual GBBC will be held Friday, February 17, through Monday, February 20, 2023. Please visit the official website at [birdcount.org](http://birdcount.org) for more information. The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is a free, fun, and easy event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the four-day event and report their sightings online at [birdcount.org](http://birdcount.org). Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from beginning bird watchers to experts, and you can participate from your backyard, or anywhere in the world. Each checklist submitted during the GBBC helps researchers at the [National Audubon Society](http://National Audubon Society), [Cornell Lab of Ornithology](http://Cornell Lab of Ornithology) and [Birds Canada](http://Birds Canada) learn more about how birds are doing, and how to protect them and the environment we share. snapshot of global bird populations ever recorded.

## Audubon House Volunteers

We would like to thank the following people for helping to staff Audubon House in December, January and February. Kathy Blackmarr, Susie Burgess, Julie Byers, Greg Figge, Judith Frant, Bridget Gardner, Bob Goldman, John Hargrove, Ann Harmer, Mary Harward, Sarah Jayne, Judy McInnis, Mary Meister, Paula Monroe, Dagmar Muthamia, Steve Munzinger, Joann Nothelfer, Barbara Reber, Paul Saiki, Dev Sellin, Susan Sheakley, Art Strauss, Isabel Totoda, Barb Wasbin, Pat Wells, and 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 Dev Sellin, 714-943-3682, or Paula Monroe, 480-299-9885. Please RSVP to [seaandsage@sbcglobal.net](mailto:seaandsage@sbcglobal.net). We welcome your ideas, questions, and spirit of adventure!

Sea and Sage Audubon  
PO Box 5447, Irvine CA 92616  
**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

Non-Profit Org  
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Santa Ana, CA  
Permit No. 164



## Plant Native Plants That Attract Birds

### BOARD MEMBERS

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Vice President .....Christine Kim .....714-296-9009  
Secretary .....Melissa Rapp.....949-351-2539  
Treasurer .....Chris Byrd.....714-639-0967  
Director 2024 .....Barbara Wasbin.....949-433-3889  
Director 2024 .....Catherine Steinberg .....  
Director 2025 .....Mary Ellen Wynn .....714-458-0778  
Director 2025 .....Sarah Baker .....917-673-9060  
Director 2026 .....Sudha Warriar .....908-917-7835  
Director 2026 .....Maia Nguyen .....714-333-5734  
Past President .....Gail Richards.....714-267-2420

#### Committee Chairpersons:

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Archives & Records .....Chris Byrd.....714-639-0967  
Audubon House .....Doug Lithgow .....714-962-4145  
Audubon House Volunteers Paula Monroe .....480-299-9885  
Audubon House Volunteers Dev Sellin .....714-943-3682  
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Bird Surveys .....Darrell Wilson .....714-401-7852  
By Laws & Related Documents ..Janet Baumann.....  
Conservation .....Susan Sheakley .....949-552-5974  
Counsel .....Sean Sherlock.....  
Education .....Ellyn Siskind.....657-289-1300  
Events & Exhibits .....Mary Joseph.....714-848-8362  
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Research Grants .....Amber Heredia .....714-812-2430  
SJWS Liaison .....Chris Obaditch .....949-640-7234  
Social Media .....Sandrine Biziaux-Scherson.....  
Starr Ranch/Envir. Liaison.Sandy DeSimone.....949-858-0309  
Webpage Design & Webmaster...Darrell Wilson...714-401-7852  
Webpage: <http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org>

### STAFF

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Marsh Education Project Director Trude Hurd..... 949-261-7964  
Education Assistant .....Diana Terreros..... 949-261-7964  
Sales Manager ..... Catherine Steinberg.....  
Administrative Aide ..... Sandrine Biziaux-Scherson .....

### 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

#### February 2024

06 Tues Conservation Committee Mtg via Zoom .....6:45 pm  
11 Sun Monthly bird walk at the SJWS .....8:00 am  
13 Tues Quail Hill Preserve Bird Walk .....8:00 am  
13 Tues Board Meeting via Zoom.....7:00 pm  
15 Fri General Meeting.....7:00 pm  
17 Sat San Jacinto Wildlife Area (\$).....8:00am  
18 Sun Anaheim Coves Park Bird walk.....8:00am  
21 Wed UNB by pontoon boat @.....8:15 am  
25 Sun Monthly Bird walk at UNB.....8:00am  
27 Tues Tues Conservation Lecture.....6:45pm

#### March 2024

05 Tues Conservation Committee Mtg. via Zoom.....6:45 pm  
10 Sun SJWS Bird Walk (R) .....8:00 am  
12 Tue Board Mtg. via Zoom.....7:00 pm  
15 Fri Caspers Wildernes Park(P).....8:00am  
17 Sun Carbon Canyon RP (P).....8:00pm  
20 Wed UNB by Pontoon Boat (\$).....8:15 am  
14 Thurs Bi-Monthly Bolsa Chica Bird Walk.....8:00 am  
15 Fri ANNUAL DINNER \$.....6:00 pm  
21 Thur Bolsa Chica ER.....8:00am  
31 Sun Monthly Bird Walk at UNB.....8:00am