Come to our Annual Dinner on Friday evening, March 18th.

* Socialize with friends and new acquaintances  
* Bid for some nifty items at our Silent Auction  
* Rub elbows with the recipients of this year’s Conservation Award and Letters of Commendation  
* Have fun browsing through our chapter displays  
* Eat a delicious dinner and enjoy Kimball Garrett’s program “But it Doesn’t Look Like the Picture in the Field Guide!”

Space is limited so get your reservations in now! See page 7 for full information about this special event.

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General Meeting

Friday evening, Feb. 18th - 7:30 PM

“Owens Lake - a Globally Significant Shorebird IBA in the Making”

Presented by Mike Prather

The birds have returned to Owens Lake, once a migration stopover for shorebirds and waterfowl that was lost 100 years ago. The lake was dry because of the water needs of Los Angeles, but now is receiving careful application of water to control dust storms. Roughly 40 square miles of the Owens Lake playa are covered with shallow ponds or sheet flooding resulting in thousands of acres of rich feeding area for sandpipers, Snowy Plovers, ducks and geese.

Mike Prather has been working actively on water issues of the Owens Valley for three decades. Formerly past president of Eastern Sierra Audubon and chapter chair of the Sierra Club Toiyabe Chapter, Mike has focused on Owens Lake as his primary conservation issue. Now working on enhancement and protection since the 2001 designation of Owens Lake as an Important Bird Area, Mike invites everyone to join in the fun. Mike and his wife Nancy live in Lone Pine and are retired (or “real tired”) from teaching. When they first came to California in 1972 they taught in a one-room schoolhouse in Death Valley. Mike will show Owens Lake to us, first in this program, and then in person, on the Sea and Sage Eastern Sierra field trip (April 16-18). Join us to hear about this beautiful place which is full of birds and now has the largest inland nesting site for Snowy Plovers in California.

Mike’s program will be held in the Duck Club at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary in Irvine. The doors open at 7 and the program begins at 7:30 pm. Remember that you must access Riparian Way from Campus Drive and bring a flashlight to light your way from the parking lot. See you there! (See page 11 for directions.)

—Pat and Dick Cabe, Program Co-Chairs
Snowy Plover/Least Tern Monitoring Project, Huntington State Beach

The Terns and Plovers need you, again!

This monitoring project will be in its 7th successful year, beginning mid-April 2011. In a partnership with California State Parks and Sea and Sage Audubon, our monitors spend two hours each week observing the Least Tern colony at the Natural Preserve at Huntington State Beach, located next to the mouth of the Santa Ana River. The 12 acre preserve was established in 1973 for the endangered Least Tern as a breeding site. The site provides protection from recreational activities at the beach and ground predators. However, the monitors are needed to watch for avian predators as well as to educate the public about the birds.

The Natural Preserve has consistently been one of the most successful breeding sites for Least Terns in California, especially since this monitoring program began. Last season there were 433 Least Tern nests at the preserve. You can’t get a closer, unobstructed view of their nesting, chicks, and fledglings in Orange County. Photographers are welcome!

The observations of the monitors are shared with California Fish and Game and US Fish and Wildlife to ensure that the endangered Least Tern populations are healthy and to learn what type of predators and dangers they face. Any observations of Snowy Plovers are also reported, as the river mouth was once their nesting area.

If you are interested in becoming a Snowy Plover/Least Tern monitor, please contact Cheryl Egger at dc.egger@verizon.net and I will answer any questions you may have about the program. You will then be contacted when our training sessions are scheduled. The monitoring ends about the end of July or mid-August when the last fledglings take off for their southern wintering grounds.

If you would like to read more about the project and see pictures and stats, please look at the Least Tern/Snowy Plover section on the chapter website at: www.seaandsageaudubon.org

Will you consider helping? You just may get hooked on terns and plovers, while taking a nice bird walk on the beach! Free entry to the beach for all monitors!!!

—Cheryl Egger

Update on Altamont Pass Wind Turbines

In cooperation with the California Attorney General’s Office, five Bay Area Audubon Society chapters (Golden Gate Audubon, Santa Clara Valley Audubon, Marin Audubon, Mt. Diablo Audubon, and Ohlone Audubon) and Californians for Renewable Energy (CaRE) have reached an agreement with wind energy operators owned by NextEra Energy Resources, LLC, to expedite the replacement of old wind turbines in the Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area with new, larger wind turbines that are less likely to harm birds. According to experts studying the Altamont Pass, the removal of the old turbines and replacement with properly-sited turbines may reduce impacts to birds by as much as 80%. Altamont Pass was heavily developed for wind power generation in the late 1970s and early 1980s, eventually including more than 5800 turbines covering a 56 mile area in eastern Contra Costa and Alameda Counties. These lands at one time provided ample habitat for birds and still serve as an important migratory corridor for Golden Eagles and other raptors. For much of the last decade, the Bay Area Audubon chapters and the operating wind companies have struggled to agree on ways to reduce impacts to birds, bats and other wildlife while fostering the environmental and economic benefits of wind energy generation in the Altamont Pass.

Bolsa Chica Monitoring Program

Come join us during nesting season at the Bolsa Chica Wetlands! A collaboration between the CA Department of Fish and Game and the Bolsa Chica Conservancy, this public education and outreach program incorporates wildlife observation and monitoring of the endangered California Least Tern and threatened Western Snowy Plover nest sites at the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve. Volunteers participate in active data collection and observations to gather valuable data for monitoring these species. Volunteers will focus on identification of Snowy Plovers and Least Terns, but knowledge on their predators and local birds is also required. Training will be provided in late January.

Program Dates: February through August, 2011
Commitment: At least 2 hours / week

For more information, please contact:
Kati Patonai at Kati@bolsachica.org
Bolsa Chica Conservancy, Program Coordinator
Phone: (714) 846-1114

—Kati Patonai
Orange County Rarities
by Jim Pike

To report a RARE or UNUSUAL bird, or to receive the current RBA report for Orange County, call the OrCoRBA at 949-487-6869, or join OrangeCountyBirding; website directions tell you how to join.

Go to:  http://groups.yahoo.com/group/OrangeCountyBirding/

Without a doubt, the bird of the season so far is the Curve-billed Thrasher that Brian Daniels found on Nov.14-Jan. 2 at Huntington Central Park (HCP). This first county record is clearly a part of a broader trend with this species, as birds have been showing up with greater frequency in the southern half of the state in the past few years.

An adult Curlew Sandpiper at Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge (SBNWR) Nov. 7 (Nick and Mary Freeman) was the fourth of this Siberian species to be seen in Orange County. Other birds of note at SBNWR Nov. 7-Dec. 6 include 3 Nelson’s Sparrows and 5 Pacific Golden-Plovers (both John Fitch). Two Reddish Egrets there Dec. 4-20 (Bob Schallman) may be from among the five that have been frequenting Bolsa Chica (BC) this winter. Single Pacific Golden-Plovers were at BC Nov. 14 (B Daniels) and Brookhurst Marsh Oct. 31 (Dick Cabe). The latter location also harbored another Reddish Egret Oct. 31-Dec. 2 (D. Cabe). An additional Nelson’s Sparrow was at the Newport Backbay Dec. 5 (Paul Weers).

The rarest warbler of the season is the Yellow-breasted Chat Dec. 23-Jan. 2 at Doheny State Beach (Robert McNab). This represents not only the first winter record for the county, but one of few wintering records for the state. Overall, rare warblers have been scarce this season, with the “best” being Chestnut-sided Warblers at Mason Regional Park (MRP) Nov. 10-Dec. 24 (Wayne Gochenour) and in a Huntington Beach yard Dec. 11-Jan. 3 (Steve Morris). Even better, that same yard hosted a late Red-eyed Vireo Oct. 30-Nov. 4 (S Morris). Two Palm Warblers were along the lower Santa Ana River in Huntington Beach Nov. 4-27+ (Jim Pike), with another at Edna Park in Santa Ana Dec. 25 (Jonathan Rowley).

American Redstarts were at Mile Square Regional Park (MSRP) (back for its third winter) Dec. 4-Jan. 2 (Doug Willick) and MRP Dec. 8-Jan. 2 (B Daniels), while Black-and-White Warblers were at Santiago Park in Santa Ana Nov. 9-16 (D. Willick), HCP Nov. 16 (D. Cabe), Fullerton Arboretum Dec. 4 (Garett Lepper), and Irvine Dec. 19 (Jerry Tolman).

As with warblers, rare flycatchers have been even rarer than usual, with the only detections of Empidonax species being a continuing Gray Flycatcher at MSRP and a new one at Santiago Oaks Regional Park Dec. 5 (Tjie Poo), and a Pacific-slope Flycatcher in Lemon Heights Dec. 19 (Neil Gilbert). Vermilion Flycatchers have been expanding their breeding range, so it wasn’t too surprising to find one at El Modena Park in Orange Nov. 27-Dec. 17 (D. Willick) and another at MRP Nov. 27-Dec. 4 (Jim Roe).

The latter bird is likely responsible for sightings during this same general time frame at nearby San Joaquin Marsh. Lastly, Eastern Phoebes were at MRP (a returnee) Nov. 13-Jan.2 (Steve and Marian Alter) and Disneyland Dec. 25 (Cliff Hawley).

Continuing with the theme of “where are they?”, sparrow numbers are down countywide. Fox Sparrows seem especially scarce, although a “Red” Fox Sparrow (presumably P. i. zaboria) was at MSRP Dec. 15 (J. Pike). An adult Harris’s Sparrow at HCP Nov. 24 (Curtis Marantz) was a very nice find. The only White-throated Sparrows were singles at Aliso-Woods Canyon Regional Park Dec. 18 (Gary Meredith) and Dec. 19 at Irvine Regional Park (Jeff Boyd).

Visiting birder Bruce Deuel spotted a Red-necked Grebe and a Green-tailed Towhee at BC Nov. 24. Another Green-tailed Towhee was in Orange Nov. 3-6 (Fred and Lorelyn Koehlers). Additional noteworthy birds at BC were a Lapland Longspur that made a brief appearance Nov. 11 (J. Pike) and a Ferruginous Hawk Nov. 27 (Trish Gussler). It’s hard to tell how many Zone-tailed Hawks may be wintering in the county, but sightings were made in Lake Forest Oct. 28 (Rich Schilk), Mission Viejo Nov. 17 (Joan Rubin), Yorba Linda Dec. 1-28 (D. Willick), and Rattlesnake Reservoir Dec. 19. Late (or wintering) Swainson’s Hawks were over UC-Irvine Nov. 17 (J. Pike) and El Toro (3) Dec. 9 (D. Willick). Two Bald Eagles were seen, with birds near IRP Nov. 25, and Yorba Linda Dec. 24 (Steve Rovell).

Numbers are up this season for Red-breasted Nuthatches, Brown creepers, and Greater White-fronted Geese, but down for Cackling Geese, Summer Tanagers, and Plumbeous Vireos. Cassin’s Vireo is the rarest of the western “Solitary” Vireos in winter, and the only one observed was at Santa Ana cemetery Oct. 12-Nov. 2 (D Willick). The only Varied Thrush was one at Carbon Canyon Regional Park Nov. 19+ (J. Roe). An adult male Orchard Oriole was back for at least its second winter in Costa Mesa Nov. 26 (J. Pike, D. Willick). A Brown Booby was on an offshore oil platform Nov. 29 (Peter Gaede). Lastly, different Black Scoters were off Huntington Pier Dec. 20 (Donna Henn) and Bolsa Chica State Beach Dec. 22 (N. Gilbert).

That’s it for this season. Doug will be back to pen the next rarities article. Think about adopting one of your favorite birding parks and letting park or city personnel know when actions such as excessive tree-trimming aren’t bird-friendly. It does make a difference to let them know what you think.
Chapter News & Announcements

For more information about Sea & Sage activities, check our Schedule of Chapter Activities on our chapter website (www.seaandsageaudubon.org). It lists the dates of meetings, field trips, special events such as the Annual Dinner, Summer BBQ, Pancake Breakfast, Summer Nature Day Camp, Spring Brunches, Summer Bat Walks, Natural History Walks, Owl Prowls, etc.

Audubon House Volunteers

We would like to thank the following people for helping to staff Audubon House in January and February: Sonia Appell, Pat & Dick Cabe, Deana Collins, Carolyn Cooper, Joanne Cull, Tom Drouet, Fresia Escalona, Judy Fritts, Lynne Hayes, Pat Heilig, Sarah Jayne, Steve Jelnick, Lois Jones, Nancy Kenyon, Donna Krebs, Loretta Kyle, Joan McCauley, Bobbie Miller, Eunice Morita, Betty Purdy, Roberta Ray, Barbara Reber, John Shaddy, Susan Sheakley, Bev Spring, Betty Swift, Beryl Vogel, and Vic Westling.

Audubon House is open daily from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. 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 Judy Fritts at 949-551-4513.

Barn Owl Live Webcam Update

Everyone has been watching the Barn Owl nest cavity at Starr Ranch by means of the live webcam set up by Starr Ranch Manager, Pete DeSimone. On Friday night, Jan. 7, she laid her first egg of the new year. Successive eggs were laid 1/9, 1/11, and 1/13. You can watch and hear her and her mate in the nest cavity by means of the live webcam. It’s also fun to read all the comments from the viewers and see their photos on the blog. Check it out! http://www.starr-ranch.org/blog/?page_id=2

Camp Scholarships Needed

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 nature day camp this year 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, or see our chapter webpage for information on our camp program.

Weed Warrior Extraordinaire

Sandy DeSimone was awarded the 2010 Land Manager of the Year Award from the CA Invasive Plant Council at their annual meeting in Ventura. Sandy is Director of Research and Education at Audubon Starr Ranch Sanctuary. The Golden Weed Wrench Award celebrates those who epitomize passion and triumph in the face of invasive plant species adversity. Sandy has been working for many years on the daunting task of eradicating artichoke thistle from Starr Ranch without the use of herbicides and has combined this project with top notch educational and research programs. Congratulations, Sandy!

Starr Ranch Adult Bird Research Camps

Audubon California’s Starr Ranch Sanctuary in southeast Orange County invites you to our annual spring bird research camp for adults. Join our staff ornithologist for a peaceful weekend at the beautiful 4000-acre sanctuary and experience nature hands-on as a wildlife researcher. Participants in the March 19-20 camp will learn how ornithologists study birds through the application of a variety of survey techniques including point counts, spot mapping, call playback, radio telemetry and bird banding. Learn how data from these surveys and those from your own birding adventures can make a valuable contribution to bird conservation by sharing your observations online. Join us in exploring the variety of birds, plants and other wildlife Starr Ranch has to offer. For more information, visit www.starr-ranch.org or call 949-858-0309.

YOU can make a contribution!

Cheryl Thomas and Cat Waters are coordinating this year’s silent auction. They are donating their time, energy and talents to coordinate the auction and they need you to help by donating unique items to benefit the Chapter’s programs. Email Cheryl cthomas1313@cox.net and cc: Cat Waters at cpannelwaters@yahoo.com with info about your contribution. They are looking for items such as:

- Lessons (instrumental music, voice, basket weaving, arts and crafts, sports oriented, yoga, tap dancing, etc.),
- Sporting Opportunities (horseback riding, mountain climbing, kayaking, scuba diving)
- Activities (picnics, dinners, evenings out, theatre tickets, opera tickets, symphony tickets, field trips)
- Gently used or new items you cannot use (the mountain bike your kids bought you, the GPS you’ve never used, the brand new wheel barrow for which you have no yard, etc.)
- Services (dental check up, hair cut, housekeeping, babysitting, field trip leading, etc.)

—Cat Waters

Raptor ID Workshops

There are still a few spots left in both of Bill Clark’s Raptor ID workshops. If you want to learn how to distinguish Merlins from Kestrels, Buteos from Accipiters, or are just interested in learning more about our California raptors, this is your chance! The Introductory Workshop will be Jan. 28-30 while the Advanced Workshop will be Feb. 4-6. For more information or to pick up an enrollment form, see the Dec. Tattler, Audubon House, or our website at www.seaandsageaudubon.org.
Thank you so much!

Sea and Sage depends on your financial contributions to support our conservation and education programs. Your donations help make us a strong chapter. The following is a list of the folks whose donations were received prior to the New Year. Those whose donations were received after December 31, 2010 will be added to the list in the next Tattler. It is not too late to add your name to the list. Once again, a heartfelt thank you.

—Jay Miller
The Great Backyard Bird Count

February 18 - 21

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It’s free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds.

Here’s what you do:

1. Count the birds in your backyard, local park, or other natural area on any or all of the four count days. For each species of bird that you see, record the highest number of individuals that you observe at any one time during your count. Don’t add a bird every time you see one at your feeder; you could be counting the same individual.

2. Watch the birds for at least 15 minutes on each day that you participate.

3. Write down your list for each day and check it over to be sure it is accurate.

4. If you have a computer with internet access, you can enter your count on-line at the Great Backyard Bird Count site. Go to the following site and follow the directions. http://www.birdcount.org View your results. After you’ve entered your count for the day, visit the Map-room and see results from across the continent.

5. If you do not have a computer or cannot log on to the internet, you can still participate! Mail your bird list to Nancy Kenyon or drop it off at Audubon House. Nancy will enter the data for you. BE SURE TO INCLUDE YOUR NAME, PHONE, EXACT LOCATION OF YOUR BIRD COUNT, THE DATE & TIME YOU DID YOUR COUNT. Turn in your bird list immediately after the count; if you wait too long, the count will be closed! Nancy must receive it no later than Feb. 25. Please print and be as legible as possible so that she can read it. Mail to: GBBC c/o Nancy Kenyon 32 Almond Tree Ln Irvine CA 92612

6. For questions or assistance, contact Nancy at 949-786-3160 or by e-mail nancykenyon@cox.net

Sea & Sage Summer Nature Day Camps

Sea and Sage Audubon day camps provide children with first-hand experience with nature through fun outdoor activities in the beautiful setting of the freshwater ponds and trails of the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary in Irvine.

Fledgling Camp
7 to 8 year olds
June 27 - July 1
Monday - Friday, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
Fee: $175/190* per camper

Campers will observe birds on daily nature walks and keep a birding journal. They will have fun playing games, learning songs, and doing crafts.

Marsh Bird Camp
9 to 12 year olds
Session 1: June 27 - July 1
Session 2: July 11 - July 15
Monday - Friday, 9:00 am to 3:30 pm
Fee: $185/200* per camper

Campers will explore all aspects of marsh bird life. They will also enjoy daily nature walks, see live hawks & owls from a rehabilitator, make a birdbath, keep a nature journal, do crafts, and much, much more.

Coastal Bird Camp
Marsh Camp Experience Required. This camp is new for 2011.
11 years and older
July 5 - July 8
Tuesday - Friday, 9:00 am to 3:30 pm
Fee: $175/190* per camper

This 4-day camp will cover all aspects of coastal shorebirds and their habitats, with 2 off-site days on Wednesday and Thursday.

Advanced Bird Camp
Marsh Camp Experience required.
11 years and older
Week 1: July 18 - July 22
Week 2: July 25 - July 30 (with Fri. night sleepover)
Monday - Friday, 9:00 am to 3:30 pm
Fee: $185/200* per camper for Week 1
Fee: $200/220* per camper for Week 2

Week 1: During the first week, campers will study seasonal Orange County warbler populations and paint a hand-carved wooden decoy of a warbler.

Week 2: will focus on the chaparral habitat. There will be a sleepover on Friday night.

Both weeks will include a daily nature walk, sketching, and an off-site trip.

* The lower price is for Audubon members.
Our Annual Dinner this year will be held at the Mile Square Park Banquet Center on Friday evening, March 18th. Our guest speaker, Kimball Garrett, is an authority on the field identification, status and distribution of California birds, especially those in southern California. He has been the Ornithology Collections Manager for the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum since 1982, he is a past president of the Western Field Ornithologists, and a long standing member of the California Bird Records Committee. Many of you know him as the co-author of the *Birds of Southern California Status and Distribution*, *Field Guide to the Warblers of North America*, (both of which he co-authored with Jon Dunn), and the author of *Birds of the Los Angeles Region*. He’s an excellent speaker and has a delightful sense of humor. The evening’s program will include the presentation of our chapter’s Fern Zimmerman Conservation Award and Letters of Commendation. We will also have a Silent Auction. The Mile Square Park Banquet Center is located at the south end of Mile Square Park, at the intersection of Warner & Ward. Free parking is available. Below is the schedule for the evening:

**No Host Bar:** 6:00 p.m.
**Dinner:** 7:15 p.m.
**Program:** 8:00 p.m., sharp!
**Location:** Mile Square Park Banquet Center
**Tickets:** $45 for all reservations received before March 1st
$50 for reservations received on or after March 1st
**Entrees:** Chicken or Vegetarian

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS EARLY. Seating will be assigned in the order the reservations are received. If you wish to sit with friends, make sure they send in their reservations on the same date you do. To reserve a seat, make your check payable to: Sea & Sage Audubon; include the name of each person for whom a reservation is made. If you wish group seating, please indicate that on the reservation form; each table will seat 10 people.

Mail your check and the reservation form to: Annual Dinner, c/o Nancy Kenyon, 32 Almond Tree Ln., Irvine CA 92612. A message confirming your reservation will be sent back to you along with directions and a map. Be sure to include your email address and phone number on the reservation form. All reservations must be received by 6:00 p.m. on Monday, March 14th.

**2011 Annual Dinner Reservation Form**

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With whom do you wish to sit?  __________________________________________________________

Email address for confirmation & map  __________________________________________________

Phone (in case we need to contact you quickly)  _________________________________________

**Entrees:** [C] Chicken  [V] Vegetarian. Detailed information about the menu will be available later. All dinners will include a salad, fresh vegetables, freshly baked rolls, coffee, tea, or decaf, and dessert.

**Mail your reservations to:** Annual Dinner, c/o Nancy Kenyon, 32 Almond Tree Ln., Irvine CA 92612
Upcoming Field Trips

For trip updates & additional trip information, check our chapter website at: www.seaandsageaudubon.org . Trips marked with an (R) require advance reservations. Questions about field trips? Contact Field Trip chair, Nancy Kenyon, at 949-786-3160 or by email at: nancykenyon@cox.net . Many trips fill up quickly, so don’t wait until the last minute to sign up for them!

Monthly Bird Walk at Santiago Oaks
1st Sunday - Feb. 6th & March 6th - 7:30 am
Join Linette Lina for a monthly bird walk at Santiago Oaks Regional Park at 7:30 am. 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. Be prepared to pay the $5 entrance fee if you don’t have a county parks pass. Bring binoculars, Meet in the upper end of the parking lot. (This park closes if there has been recent rain in the area.)
Leader: Linette Lina

Monthly Bird Walk at the SJWS
2nd Sunday - Feb. 13th & March 13th - 8:00 am
Join Chris Obaditch for a monthly bird walk around the ponds of the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary in Irvine at 8:00 am. (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.
Leader: Chris Obaditch

Upper Newport Bay by pontoon boat ®
3rd Wed - Feb. 16th & March 16th - 8:15 am
Join us for the rare chance of birding the Upper Newport Bay from the deck of a pontoon boat. Spotting birds from the water offers one a different perspective and the birds seem to view us differently also. Trip duration is about 2 ½ hours. Trip limited to 15 persons and there is a $10 trip fee. Directions will be provided to those with reservations.
Reservations: Nancy Kenyon, 949-786-3160; nancykenyon@cox.net

Field Natural History Walks ®
Thurs, Feb. 3rd - Laurel Canyon - 8:30 am
Thurs, Feb. 24th - Starr Ranch - 8:30 am
Thurs, Mar. 24th - Baker Canyon - 8:30 pm
Spend a delightful morning exploring and contemplating the beauty and mystery of nature with naturalist, Dick Newell. We will examine the geology, plant life, birds, herps, and other animals. The trips will take a little over 3 hours and will cover about 3 miles. Anyone who is reasonably fit should find the walk relatively easy to complete. Each trip is limited to 10 participants; advance reservations are required.
Leader: Dick Newell
Reservations: Nancy Kenyon, 949-786-3160; nancykenyon@cox.net

San Jacinto Wildlife Area
Saturday, Feb. 12th - 8:00 am
Don’t miss this field trip to the San Jacinto Wildlife Area in Riverside County! The wildlife area (SJWA) consists of a series of ponds which support an abundance of waterfowl and shorebirds. In addition to the ponds, there are grasslands where you may see foraging Golden Eagles and a variety of other raptors and songbirds. Directions to San Jacinto Wildlife Area, 17050 Davis Road, Lakeview. Telephone: (951) 928-0580. From Orange County, take the #55 Fwy. to the #91 Fwy. towards Riverside; in Riverside, #91 turns eastbound into #215 south/#60 east. Take the #215 south/#60 east towards Moreno Valley. Immediately before Moreno Valley, #215 SOUTH and #60 EAST diverge. From #215, exit on Ramona Expressway and go east past Lake Perris to Lakeview, then north on Davis Rd. 2.3 miles to the SJWA. Bring: binocs, a scope if you have one, warm layered clothes, water and your lunch. Restrooms are available at the headquarters. The trip may involve a lot of walking. Rain before the trip may make the dirt roads impassible. If in doubt, contact Nancy Kenyon, 949-786-3160 or nancykenyon@cox.net or call the SJWS at (951) 928-0580 during business hours.
Leader: John McKeever

Laguna Coast Wilderness Park
Nix Nature Center & Barbara’s Lake
Wednesday, Feb. 16th — 8:00 am
The Laguna Canyon Foundation was instrumental in preserving much of the native coastal sage scrub habitat in Laguna Canyon and this has been incorporated into the Orange County Regional Park system. Recently the Nix Nature Center at the park’s headquarters was opened and many hiking trails originate there.
Meet: at the parking lot at Nix($3.00 parking fee or by annual park pass). We’ll hike the short Mary’s Trail loop, check the trees in Little Sycamore Canyon, and then hike to Lake 1 and Barbara’s Lake, two of the only three natural lakes in Orange County, all of which are in Laguna Canyon. A surprising number of waterfowl winter on these small lakes.
Directions: The Nix Nature Center is on the west side of Laguna Canyon Rd south of the #405 freeway, 3 1/2 miles south of the 405/I-5 freeways on the west side of Laguna Canyon Rd (route 133)
Bring: binoculars and scopes. Rain may cancel so check with Nancy if in doubt (949-786-3160)
Leader: Paul Klahr
Salton Sea weekend trip
Sat, Feb. 19, 9:30 am & Sun, Feb. 20, 6:30 am
The Salton Sea area provides some of the best year round birding in Southern California. In species diversity alone, the area is one of the leading localities in the country; some 360 species have been sighted there. In the past, we’ve had woodpeckers, Verdins, Abert’s Towhees, Burrowing Owls, Bitterns, Sandhill Cranes, White-faced Ibis, and vast numbers of geese, pelicans, ducks, grebes, gulls, and shorebirds. (See webpage for a list of birds seen on last year’s trip.) Trip size is limited; advance reservations needed. Trip fee is $25. Make check payable to Sea & Sage Audubon and mail to: Salton Sea, c/o Nancy Kenyon, 32 Almond Tree Ln, Irvine CA 92612. Be sure to include your phone number & e-mail address, or a stamped, legal sized envelope for trip info & confirmation.

Leader: Nancy Kenyon

O’Neill Reg. Park Monthly Bird Walks
Sun, Feb. 20th - 8:00 am
Wed, Mar. 2nd & Sun, Mar. 20th - 8:00 am
Join Mike Clayton, Naturalist, on a bird walk and learn about Trabuco Canyon birds and nature. All levels of birders are welcome. Easy, level walk on mostly paved roads. Directions: From the 405 or 5 Fwy, exit on El Toro Rd & head inland toward the mountains. Turn right on Live Oak Canyon Rd. & follow it to O’Neill Park. After entering the park, take 1st right to parking lot. We will meet in the Nature Center which is on the left side of the parking lot. Be prepared to pay the entrance fee ($3 on weekdays; $5 on weekends) if you don’t have an county parks pass.

Leader: Mike Clayton

Owl Prowl at Starr Ranch ®
Saturday, Feb. 26th - 6:30 to 8:30 pm
Saturday, March 26th - 6:30 to 8:30 pm
The Owl Prowl is a short nighttime excursion into Starr Ranch Sanctuary in search of owls. The evening will begin with an indoor orientation where we will watch the live owl cam and learn about the owls which inhabit Starr Ranch. We will then board the big open bed truck for a short ride into Bell Canyon to search for some owls. Advance reservations required; trip size is limited due to space on the truck. Trip fee is $20. Make check payable to Sea and Sage Audubon and mail to: Owl Prowl, c/o Nancy Kenyon, 32 Almond Tree Ln, Irvine CA 92612. Be sure to include your phone number for last minute trip updates and your email address or a stamped self-addressed long envelope for trip confirmation & information.

Trip Leader: Pete DeSimone

Eastern Sierra trip & Owens Lake
Sat-Mon, April 16-18 - 7:30 am
This special 3-day trip will explore the Owens Valley, including the Owens Lake area, and will be led by Linda Oberholtzer and Mike Prather. A wide variety of birds will be seen on this trip along with spectacular scenery. See the webpage for trip information and reservations.

Leader: Mike Clayton

Cape May Trip - Sept. 19-25, 2011
A private WINGS birding tour for Sea & Sage members, led by Jon Feenstra
Cape May is the place to observe the spectacle of fall migration in North America. This sandy peninsula jutting out into the Atlantic Ocean funnels south-bound migrants to its narrow terminus. Renowned the world over for magnificent morning flights with more than 20 warbler species and daytime flights of nearly a dozen species of raptors, September in Cape May is as exciting as it gets for seeing a new suite of birds every day. Furthermore, nearby areas in coastal southern New Jersey and in adjacent Delaware hold staggering numbers of staging shorebirds and waterfowl. In addition to migrants, a number of uncommon and local species occur along the New Jersey coast and will be an additional focus of this trip.

Bird migration is highly dependent on the weather, so the details of this itinerary may change with the conditions.

Day 1: Tour begins this evening in Philadelphia.
Day 2: Two-hour drive from Philadelphia to Cape May with stops along the Delaware Bay shore for migrant waterbirds. At Cape May, check Higbee Beach or Hidden Valley for migrants & spend afternoon at Cape May Point State Park walking the beach for gulls & terns, checking the ponds for waterfowl, & watching for raptors from the famous hawk-watch platform. After dinner, sit outside our motel to listen for the flight calls of passing thrushes and warblers.
Day 3: Predawn visit to Higbee Beach, raptors at Rea Farm, South Cape May Meadows for roosting waterfowl, shorebirds and terns. Afternoon visit to Stone Harbor Point for American Oystercatchers & Piping Plovers and to Nummy Island for Tricolored, Little Blue & Yellow-crowned Night-Herons.
Day 4: Predawn visit to Cape May neighborhoods or south Cape May Meadows, then north to Brigantine unit of Forsyth NWR, a vast complex of tidal marshes & ponds.
Day 5: Take 1.5 hour ferry ride across Delaware Bay to Cape Henlopen for Brown-headed Nuthatches and to Bombay Hook’s extensive salt marshes.
Day 6: Take ferry back to New Jersey, check to see what’s flying at Cape May Point State Park, then work our way north, stopping frequently at the beaches and marshes along the Delaware Bay shore. We may spend dusk in a saltmarsh looking for migrant Common Nighthawks and owls.
Day 7: Tour concludes at Philadelphia Airport.

See webpage for additional trip information.
A Special Christmas Bird Count

Sunday morning dawned with one of the most beautiful sunrises I have ever seen in my 50+ years in Orange County. As I was driving toward the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary, I could only see it in my rearview mirror but I considered it a positive omen for the New Year. What could be better, I was on my way to the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) to meet 6 Junior Naturalists and their parents who would help count birds. When I arrived, I had the good fortune to meet these wonderful young people who represent the hope we all share for the future of our environment. Andrea, Matthew, Arielle, Jeremy, Rae and Kate, I want to thank you for your young eyes, ears, and enthusiasm that helped to make the CBC such a success. Your birding skills both visual and auditory are something you have obviously worked hard at and can be proud of. Was that a Spotted Towhee or a California Towhee we heard? That was a lively discussion! I would also like to thank their parents for supporting the interest of these dedicated young people. Our environmental future is obviously brighter for their involvement!

—Sara Bethunum, Audubon Naturalist

Spring Brunches at the Marsh

I know that spring is far from sprung, but it’s time to remind you that registration for our series of 5 gourmet spring brunches begins on Tuesday, March 1st. You can find a registration form on our website at seaandsageaudubon.org. The brunches are all held on a Saturday or Sunday morning from 10 am - Noon at the covered picnic area behind the Duck Club at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary. We serve you coffee, fruit and some pastry when you arrive, and after about half an hour of socializing, you go on a naturalist-guided tour of the marsh for about 45 minutes. Upon returning to the picnic area, an entrée salad, bread and beverages will be waiting for you, and we will finish with a delectable dessert. All in all, everyone who has attended in the past has enjoyed themselves, the food and the surroundings. Attendance is limited to 15 adults (no children) to make social interaction easy. There is no better place to have brunch in the County! So, sign yourself up or consider giving a gift of brunch to someone special. You will receive full value for the suggested donation of $24 per person. Spring Brunch 2011 dates are:

Sunday, April 3          Saturday, April 16     Sunday, May 1
Saturday, May 14         Saturday, May 21

Call Helen Nicholas at 949-726-0858 if you have any questions or if you have trouble downloading the registration form. Fill it out and return to me at your earliest convenience. Also, if anyone is interested in helping with the cooking for these brunches, please contact me.

—Helen Nicholas, Spring Brunch Coordinator

Summer Bat Walks

We have scheduled yet another summer season of Sea and Sage Audubon’s ever popular Bat Walks. A series of ten walks have been scheduled for adults-only and families. The adults-only (age 13 to adult) events are all scheduled for Thursday evenings: May 26, June 2, June 9, June 23 and August 11. Bat Walks for families are open to children (ages 7–12) and adults (age 13 to adult), and are scheduled for Friday evenings: May 27, June 3, June 10, June 24, and August 12. Program fees for children are $7.50 and adults $15.

All programs are scheduled to start at 7 PM. Registration for this popular program opens March 1. Registration forms can be found on our website at seaandsageaudubon.org. Submit your enrollment form as soon as possible as these programs tend to fill early.

—Helen Nicholas, Bat Walks Coordinator

Alumni Camp Reunion

Sea and Sage Audubon’s Camp Committee started off the year with an Alumni Camp Reunion on January 2nd. We had a wonderful group of 11 past campers and Junior Naturalists attend the afternoon and evening get together at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary. Also attending were Trude Hurd, Bev Spring, Grace McElhiney, Jay Miller, Constance Cassidy, Sally Menzel, Jan Wilson and my very helpful husband, Bob McElhiney.

There was quite a mix with some of our original Advanced Camp attendees like Amanda, Martin, Cassie, Caitlin, Trevor and Alex. Most of them started with us as 9 or 10 year olds and are now 21-24 (that sure makes us feel old). They have attended colleges in California, Texas and Massachusetts with diverse majors such as opera, history, sociology, English, environmental law, and biology. At the other end of the spectrum were Olivia and Kaitlin who are seniors in high school and just now applying to colleges. In between are Nora, Samantha and Alison who are in their first or second year of college.

We started off playing “Find Someone Who” so everyone would get to know each other. Unfortunately our bird walk was rained out, but we did get to show them the newly designed Audubon House where they met Nancy Kenyon (who used to grade their journals) and the Audubon Office with our two office rooms. They liked seeing all the various wooden bird decoys we’ve painted over the years.

 Afterwards, we played “Camp Jeopardy” which brought back some fond memories and many laughs. We presented each of them with an Advanced camp t-shirt. Amanda, Cassie and Caitlin told me that they still have their original Marsh Camp and Advanced Camp shirts.

The evening ended with a lovely dinner of pasta, chicken wings, salad and cookies, and we all lingered for more reminiscing. We are already talking about doing this again in another couple of years.

I want to formally thank Jan and Bob for warming our food and setting everything up so the rest of us could spend our time with our “KIDS”.

—Grace McElhiney, Camp Co-coordinator
Directions and Membership
Directions to Audubon House, Chapter Meetings, and the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary, Audubon Membership Form, Tattler subscriptions, and Remember Us in Your Will or Trust

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. They’re in pdf format and will look and print exactly like the original ones. 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)

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 or, for 1st class mailing, $17.50 per year. Make check payable to “Sea & Sage Audubon” and mail to: Tattler Subscriptions, 32 Almond Tree Ln, Irvine CA 92612.

Directions
Entrance from Campus Drive, not from Michelson
From the San Diego Fwy (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 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 green 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
Open daily from 8 am to 4 pm
949-261-7963
Stop by Audubon House for a trail map. Browse through our bookstore and gift shop. Look at our taxidermy birds and check out our library. Take a look at the bird board checklist on the Audubon House front porch to find out what exciting birds have been spotted recently. Our friendly Audubon House volunteers are there to help you and to answer your questions.

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.

Audubon 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.

National Audubon Society Membership: Check one [ ]
[ ] NEW MEMBERSHIP: $20 - Individual or Family members [ ] RENEWAL: $35 - Regular Membership
[ ] NEW MEMBERSHIP: $15 - Senior (62+ yrs) or Student [ ] RENEWAL: $15 - Senior or Student

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

Name ____________________________________________
Address __________________________________________
City, State, Zip __________________________________
Phone ___________________________________________
E-mail ___________________________________________
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.

BOARD MEMBERS

Executive Committee:
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Audubon House.............................................. 949-261-7963

CALENDAR OF CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

February 2011

01 Tues Conservation Committee Meeting .................. 6:30 pm
03 Thurs Laurel Canyon Natural History Walk ............. 8:30 am
06 Fri Salton Sea weekend field trip ...................... 9:30 am
13 Sun SJWS Monthly Bird Walk ............................ 8:00 am
14 Mon Seal Beach NWR field trip (full) ................. 7:30 am
16 Wed Nix Center & Barbara’s Lake field trip .......... 8:00 am
16 Wed Upper Newport Bay by pontoon boat .......... 8:15 am
18 Fri GENERAL MEETING .................................. 7:30 pm
18-21 F-M Great Backyard Bird Count ...................... It’s up to you
19-20 S-S Salton Sea weekend field trip .................. 9:30 am
20 Sun O’Neill Reg. Park Monthly Bird Walk ............. 8:00 am
24 Thurs Starr Ranch Natural History Walk ............. 8:30 am
26 Sat Owl Prowl at Starr Ranch ......................... 6:30 pm

March 2011

01 Tues Bat Walks & Spring Brunches registration opens
02 Wed O’Neill Reg. Park Monthly Bird Walk ............. 8:00 am
06 Sun Santiago Oaks Monthly Bird Walk ................. 7:30 am
13 Sun SJWS Monthly Bird Walk ........................... 8:00 am
14 Mon Riley Wilderness Park bird walk .................. 8:00 am
16 Wed Upper Newport Bay by pontoon boat ............. 8:15 am
18 Fri ANNUAL DINNER .................................... 6:00 pm
20 Sun O’Neill Reg. Park Monthly Bird Walk ............. 8:00 am
24 Thurs Baker Canyon Natural History Walk ........... 8:30 am
26 Sat Heise Park .......................................... 8:00 am
26 Sat Owl Prowl at Starr Ranch ......................... 6:30 pm
30 Wed Irvine Regional Park Bird Walk .................. 8:00 am