Volunteer Opportunities

by Vic Leipzig, president

Sea & Sage conducts so many different activities that there is something for everyone to participate in.

Our field trips are great opportunities to learn about birds and birding. But so, too, are our various bird survey programs. From one end of the county to the other, Sea & Sage organizes (or cooperates in) at least a half dozen bird censuses, mostly done once a month in order to monitor the health of our local bird populations. Most of these programs are happy to have the assistance of even novice birders, who will be teamed with more experienced birders. The data from these surveys is of tremendous value. And gathering that data is just as much fun as being on a field trip!

For those conservationists who would really like to make a difference in protecting bird habitat here in Orange County, joining the Sea & Sage Conservation Committee might be just the thing. Threats to habitat can be found everywhere in OC, from the saltmarshes of the shoreline to the upland habitats of the skyline. Learn more about what you can do. Attend a committee meeting the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM in the Learning Center.

The Audubon House is a wonderful place to spend the morning or afternoon, and a pleasant way to help visitors share the wonders of nature at the Marsh. Audubon House volunteers are the face and voice of the chapter as well as ambassadors to the Marsh. For more information on the Audubon House Volunteer duties, see page 6.

Want to share your understanding of nature with kids? The chapter has very successful education programs that are in heavy demand by schools. More volunteers are always needed to meet that demand and open the eyes of young people to the wonders of nature.

If you enjoy talking to people, you are needed to help Sea & Sage’s outreach at fun and exciting community events. The Exhibits Committee's outreach tables inform the public about the importance of birds, habitat, and Sea & Sage's conservation work to support the natural environment.

These are just a few of the ways that you could help our chapter fulfill its mission to connect people with the natural world. And I promise you'll have a good time doing it!

General Meeting

Friday evening, October 17 - 7:30 pm

“Animal Adventures of the Old World”

presented by Andee Burrell

Our October program will be presented by long time Sea and Sage member Andee Burrell. We will experience Rwandan Mountain Gorillas in the cloud forest, Borneo Orangutans and Proboscis monkeys, China’s Pandas, Nepal’s Indian grassland rhinos, Madagascar’s tropical lemurs and more. The ecosystems, their status and even the politics and culture will be explored in relation to the wildlife. Stops along the way examine our own involvement in perpetuating these natural wonders— including the Panda breeding center and the efforts in recovering the bamboo forest. Andee shares her impressions of what she saw on her recent trip of old world wildlife by National Geographic's private jet.

Andee comes to us with a wealth of varied experiences having had the privilege of visiting all continents including what some refer to as the 8th one—Madagascar. She has served as docent for the LA Zoo’s “Discovery Circle”, a naturalist for the Amigos de Bolsa Chica, and as an Orange County Whale Watch teacher for naturalist-training classes. In the past, she has presented a photographic workshop for tropical rain forests to Sea and Sage Audubon.

Andee has been birding for over 25 years and has been a Sea and Sage member for 20 years. Her passion and dedication to wildlife are evident in her presentations. She paints wildlife and Andee’s favorite anecdote is kissing a Gray whale in Baja. Maybe we can get her to share it for us and learn her secret at the end of her presentation!

Our program will be held in the Duck Club at the SJWS in Irvine. The doors open at 7:00 for refreshments and fellowship, and the meeting and program begin at 7:30 pm. We hope you will join us.

—Doug Lithgow
Programs Chair
“The Relationship Between Biodiversity and Ecosystem Function in a Coastal Wetland”

presented by Ms. Megan Fitzgerald

“Determining Ecosystem Functions of Brackish vs. Salt Marsh in the Huntington Beach Wetlands” presented by Ms. Sokanary Sun

We are pleased this month to have as our speakers two recipients of our chapter’s Bloom-Hays Research Grants, Ms Megan Fitzgerald and Ms. Sokanary Sun, masters students at California State University Long Beach, studying under Dr. Christine Whitcraft.

Ms. Fitzgerald writes: “The gradual loss of natural coastal wetlands in California has motivated research aimed at understanding the effects of habitat loss on the remaining wetland ecosystems. Biologists are studying how species diversity is affected by disturbances such as habitat loss/alteration and what impact such changes might have on ecosystem processes.”

“My study will manipulate local salt marsh plant diversity in multiple experimental plots to answer three specific hypotheses: (1) that increasing plant species diversity will result in increased primary productivity (i.e., photosynthesis) and increased resistance to invasion by exotic plants in experimental plots; (2) that observed species-specific variation in individual survival and growth will be correlated with variation in plot-level responses; (3) that variation in plant survival and growth and resulting ecosystem processes among treatment groups at a given level of species richness will be correlated with species-specific plant functional traits, as has been found in other systems.”

Ms. Sun writes: “Among their many important ecosystem functions and services, wetlands have been shown to exhibit high primary productivity and to play significant roles in the carbon cycle. In addition to providing food web support, the high productivity provides habitat for birds and other wildlife. Here in southern California, we have coastal wetlands that include a variety of habitat types including both brackish and salt marshes. Brackish marshes have salinities ranging in 0.5-15 ppt., while salt marshes range from 18-35 ppt in salinity. Brackish marshes are known to support higher soil nutrient content and higher plant diversity, when compared to their salt marsh counterparts. As restoration projects are undertaken throughout the region, it is important to consider how to manage wetlands where both brackish and salt marsh habitat occur. Many restoration plans include reintroduction of full tidal flow which eliminates the remnant brackish marsh habitat while creating additional salt marsh.”

“My study will help understand the contributions of each habitat type of overall carbon cycling with the wetland and thus help determine ecosystem function for inclusion into restoration planning. Working in several portions of the Huntington Beach Wetlands, the specific objectives of my study are (1) to compare vegetation composition, leaf litter decomposition, and carbon sequestration via gas flux in the currently un-restored brackish Newland Marsh with the un-restored salt Newland Marsh and the restored salt Brookhurst Marsh (control); (2) to determine the functional values of habitats with this information; and (3) to provide these data for future use in restoration processes when analyzing the costs and benefits of one habitat versus another. Brackish marshes offer denser and taller vegetation than salt marshes, thus suggesting more aboveground carbon storage and potential for increased nesting habitat and foraging cover for birds. Preliminary data on gas flux indicate that important differences in CO2 flux occur among the sites with potential connection to type of vegetation present. When combined together, these two pieces indicate that ecosystem function and value for brackish versus salt marshes differ significantly and should be factored into restoration design.”

Please join us on Tuesday, October 28 to meet grantees Fitzgerald and Sun and hear more about their studies of our local marshes. Doors open at 7:00 PM for refreshment and social. Program begins at 7:30.

CONSERVATION MATTERS

San Clemente. On August 21st, four members of the Sea and Sage Audubon Conservation Committee joined a local resident at the city of San Clemente’s first Public Workshop in their process of preparing a Local Coastal Plan, for review by California Coastal Commission. The Local Coastal Plan will consist of a Land Use Plan and an Implementation Plan. Once the Coastal Commission has approved the Local Coastal Plan, the city of San Clemente will be responsible for permitting the majority of projects within the Coastal Zone. The Coastal Commission will retain responsibility for certain permits within the Coastal Zone. As well, permits within certain areas are subject to appeal to the Coastal Commission.
Sea & Sage Audubon

Pancake Breakfast
Saturday, October 25th, from 7:30 to 10:30 a.m.
at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary in Irvine

Delicious Hot Pancake Breakfast
Enjoy hot pancakes right off the griddle, tasty sausages, fruits of the season, orange juice, hot coffee, and milk for the kids. Dine with family, friends, and fellow birders in the Duck Club. Reservations are a must so we know how much food to prepare.

Bargain Used Nature Books for Sale
Our book sale features a wide assortment of nature books appropriate for birders, teachers, students, and all nature lovers. Books are priced reasonably, from 50¢ and up. Come early for the best selection.

Bird Walks & Scope Stations Around the Ponds
We have scheduled 3 morning bird walks around the marsh and will also have several spotting scope stations at the ponds closest to Audubon House. This will give you a great opportunity to get a good look at the shorebirds and ducks, egrets, herons, and other birds which frequent the sanctuary.

Be Sure to Stop By Audubon House for a Visit!
Stop by Audubon House for a visit to check out our outstanding gift and bookstore, the beautiful wildlife photos taken at the sanctuary, and other displays. The volunteers at Audubon House will answer your questions about Sea & Sage, wild birds, and our chapter program.

For reservations, call Audubon House at 949-261-7963

$10 – Adults
$6 – Children 10 & under
Free – Children 3 & under

Make your reservations today or anytime before 1:00 pm, Friday, October 24. Call Audubon House, 949-261-7963. Questions? Call Mary Joseph 714-848-8362.

Join the fun & volunteer to help us out! It’s fun to work together & we hope you will join us! Copies of our Volunteer signup sheets are on our webpage, at Audubon House, at our September & October General Meetings, or just contact Mary Joseph. We need help with parking, food prep, leading bird walks, doing a scope station, book sales, refreshing condiments, and collecting tickets. I help out every year and wouldn’t miss it for anything! -Nancy Kenyon
This column tries to stay as current as possible in the recapping of noteworthy bird discoveries in the county. However, during this past summer we fell several months behind. Therefore, this month’s “OC Rarities” will resume where we left off, and like last month again play a little “catch-up” by covering a couple months (June and July). So with no further delay, we’ll just jump right in by starting with one of the biggest surprises of the summer, a Sooty Tern that appeared at the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve (BCER), July 4-5 (Roger Schoedl). Exceptionally rare anywhere in California, this ocean-dwelling species was approximately the county’s fifth record, all of which have occurred at BCER. Unfortunately, the Sooty Tern this summer probably put in the briefest appearance of any of the county’s previous records, which generally have involved individuals hanging around from a few weeks to a few months. The last Sooty Tern in OC occurred in 2011, when one made irregular appearances at BCER between late April and early August. Another big rarity (in more ways than one) for the county this summer was a Sandhill Crane seen and photographed flying over the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary (SJWS), at dusk on June 1 (Rodney Kimoto); unfortunately the bird was apparently on the move, as it was never seen again.

A Ross's Goose at the Garden Grove Community Center Park, July 26 (Becky Turley), was possibly one that had settled in and became resident at the nearby Twin Lakes Park (now the Haster Basin Recreation Area) back in the winter of 2004-2005. Unseasonal in summer waterfowl reports included Green-winged Teal and American Wigeon during June and July. A male and female Green-winged Teal was at the SJWS, July 3-13 (Ben Sandstrom, Michael Ryon, et al.), while another male was in east Anaheim (along the upper Santa Ana River (SAR), July 9-25 (Michael Huang). A single American Wigeon was at Burris Basin, Anaheim, on June 23 (M. Huang).

Single Northern Fulmars, including one encountered during a whale watch trip off Huntington Beach, June 28 (Tom Ford-Hutchinson, John Garrett, et al.), and another seen from Newport Pier, July 25 (Michael San Miguel) were unusual for this time of year. Several other seabird highlights were reported this summer as well. Exceptional were the number of Craveri's Murrelets observed in county offshore waters, especially considering the few county records overall. Five were recorded on June 28, off Huntington Beach (J. Garrett, T. Ford-Hutchinson, Darren Dowell, etc.), and four were tallied on the Sea & Sage pelagic trip out of Dana Harbor, July 12 (Tom Benson, Curtis Marantz, et al.). Although seen with more regularity off our coast, three of the very similar-appearing Scripps's Murrelet were nevertheless nice additions to the July 12 pelagic outing’s trip list. Two Pigeon Guillemots (another alcid species rarely seen in the county) were found off the Newport Pier, with a breeding-plumaged adult seen July 23 (M. San Miguel), and a juvenile present the next day (T. Ford-Hutchinson, R. Schoedl, Jeff Bray).

After breeding evidence for the endangered Ridgway's (formerly Clapper) Rail was documented for the first time at BCER this past spring, one of apparently two pairs now at BCER were photographed with another brood (four chicks) on July 19 (R. Schoedl). The shorebird highlight of the summer was the discovery of a Ruff in east Anaheim (upper SAR), July 23+ (M. Huang). Interestingly, this was an adult female in breeding plumage, only a few miles up-river from where an adult female was recorded in May 2013 and again for three weeks later that fall (2013). As the Ruff found this summer was still being seen up through Sept. 6 (now having molted into non-breeding plumage), it is suspected that these sightings along the upper SAR likely pertain to the same individual and may also indicate this bird may be attempting to winter, as it quite possibly may have done last year as well. Ruffs occasionally winter in southern California, and last year one was found wintering at BCER (the second winter record for OC). A Red-necked Phalarope reported and photographed at SJWS fairly regularly between June 1 and July 1 (Don Hoechlin, Charles Baker, Bill Crowe, et al.), was apparently summering there, although late spring migrants can occur into early June, and early “fall” migrants can appear as early as mid-July, this appears to be only the second record of an “over-summering” bird in the county. An adult Laughing Gull was a nice find at BCER, July 6 (Brad Dawson); although certainly a rarity in the county, this record was consistent with a fairly high percentage of the Laughing Gull records for OC (i.e., adults in mid-summer, all usually “one-day-wonders”).

An adult male Vermilion Flycatcher seen on the Mile Square Golf Course (MSGC), June 27 (D. Hoechlin), and another at the Irvine Valley College (IVC), July 19 (Phyllis Anderson), were at locations where either breeding has been previously suspected (MSGC), or confirmed (IVC, where a family group was seen in May of this year). A White-breasted Nuthatch at Huntington Central Park, July 29-31 (Jim Roe), was apparently an exceptionally early migrant or dispersing bird along the coast. Multiple singing Wilson's Warblers at Talbert Nature Preserve, June 11, and in Newport Beach (along Bonita Creek), June 13 (both R. Winkelman), were either exceptionally late migrants, or possibly indicative of local breeding or territorial birds; this species had not been known to breed in the county in modern times, although last year the first breeding record in probably well over 50 years was documented at SJWS.

continued on the next page
Although Dark-eyed Junco is known to breed regularly in the Santa Ana Mountains, lowland breeding has only very recently been documented in OC (a trend that has been seen more substantially in other coastal So Cal counties, especially to the north). After juncos were recorded nesting at two locations last month, a pair was seen carrying food to a nest site in Santa Ana (Fairhaven Memorial Park), July 29+ (Doug Willich). Chipping Sparrows are an extremely localized breeder in the county, being only known from two or three locations). Thus it was intriguing that four singing males were in east Irvine, June 18 (J. Bray, T. Ford-Hutchinson). A juvenile Black-throated Sparrow in a Garden Grove backyard, July 16 (Tom Wurster), was a very early (and rare) migrant along the coast. A male Tricolored Blackbird at Heritage Park, June 4-17 (J. Bray), was at a site where two were seen last summer; currently, no breeding populations are known for this species in the county, although there is potential for breeding colonies to still exist on private property in south county. A female Yellow-headed Blackbird coming to a Westminster feeder (near the Seal Beach Naval Weapons Station), May 29-June 3 (Mary Castillon), and a male at SJWS, June 14, (T. Ford-Hutchinson) were possibly late spring migrants; this species has been a very rare, irregular breeder in the county. A pair of Purple Finches in Rancho Santa Margarita (Arroyo Trabuco), July 12-14 (Mike Sander; Anthony Gioizzo), were possibly breeders well below more typical elevations in the Santa Ana Mountains where this species is known to be resident and a presumed breeder. A male Northern Cardinal in Dana Point, June 6-7 (Diane Etchison), would mostly likely be considered an escape or release from captivity; although a few Northern Cardinals occasionally turn up in OC (usually in urban parks and residential areas), these are not thought to represent birds from wild, naturally occurring populations. A small introduced population is found in Los Angeles County, and cardinals are one of a number of native North American species known to be illegally sold, and imported, from south of the border.

And lastly, a long list of exotic species were found in increasing numbers from around the county this summer (all considered escapes or releases from captivity). In addition to the long established species like Rock Pigeon, European Starling and House Sparrow, we have the newer, but fairly well-known escapes/introduced species, such as Eurasian Collared-Doves (still somewhat localized in OC, though rapidly expanding), many species of parrots (some with well-established populations locally), Scaly-breasted Munia (formerly Nutmeg Mannikin), Northern Red Bishop and Pin-tailed Whydah (the latter a very recent colonizer, but one that seems to be rapidly expanding in numbers and distribution). Some other less common, very local, or poorly known species that appear to be on the rise in OC include Japanese White-eye (localized population that seems to be established now, primarily in the Newport Beach/Costa Mesa area), Orange-cheeked Waxbill and Bronzed Mannikin. One fancy exotic that received a lot of attention from area birders and nature photographers was a very cooperative male Yellow-crowned Bishop, along San Diego Creek near the entrance to SJWS.

—Doug Willich

Orange County Snowy Plover Survey
September 21-27

Won’t you join the Orange County Snowy Plover Survey Team in looking for Snowy Plovers that have just arrived to spend the winter on our local beaches? Sea and Sage Audubon has again been chosen to host these important surveys for USFWS and CDFW to determine which beaches the plovers are using. Each segment takes approximately 1½ to 2 hrs to survey, with one or two surveyors per segment. Volunteer surveyors may choose their Orange County beach segment to survey right now, by choosing from the list of available beaches on our website and contacting our Outreach Coordinator, Cheryl Egger at ocsnpsurvey@gmail.com . Walk the beach of your choice and enjoy all the birds while helping “the cutest bird on the beach”, our Threatened Snowy Plover!

Seal Beach NWR field trip ®
Sat., November 22 – 7:30 am

This trip is still in the “tentative” category, but I am taking reservations for it anyway, hoping that I will be able to run the trip as scheduled. This 923-acre refuge contains an extensive unspoiled salt water marsh heavily vegetated with tidal channels throughout. The refuge supports a great variety of raptors, waterfowl, shorebirds, and songbirds. Trip size is limited to 20 persons and advance reservations are needed. Contact Nancy Kenyon at: nancykenyon@cox.net (preferable) or 949-786-3160 for trip reservations. Info needed for reservations: your first name, middle initial, last name, and your home phone number.

CAUTION - DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CAMERA GEAR IN YOUR CAR UNATTENDED AFTER LEAVING BOLSA CHICA!

Last month, two of our members lost all of their photographic gear after leaving Bolsa Chica! They had packed their gear carefully in the trunk of their car and driven off down the road, unaware that they were being followed by thieves who had watched them put away their gear. On their way home, they stopped at a hardware store for a few minutes to pick up something, and of course, locked their car leaving nothing in view. While they were in the store, thieves who had followed them from the Bolsa Chica parking lot, broke into their car by smashing a window, and stole all their photographic gear hidden away in their trunk. According to reports, others have had similar experiences lately. BE VERY CAREFUL! When you leave an area after taking pictures, take precautions so it does not happen to you!
Chapter News & Announcements

For more information about Sea & Sage activities, check our Calendar of Chapter Activities on our chapter webpage [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, Summer Bat Walks, Field Trips, Orange County Spring Count, Christmas Bird Counts, 4th Tuesday Conservation Lectures, Birding Skills Workshops, Snowy Plover Surveys, etc.

Audubon House Volunteers

We would like to thank the following people for helping to staff Audubon House in September and October: Sherry Bass, Deana Collins, Dick Cabe, Pat Cabe, Bettina Eastman, Fresia Escalona, Carol Freund, Beverly Hargrove, John Hargrove, Lynne Hayes, Pat Heilig, Patti Henshaw, Cindi Herrera, Sarah Jayne, Nancy Kenyon, Lauretta Kyle, Joanne Lemberger, Wanda McCargar, Joan McCauley, Bob McElhinney, Grace McElhinney, Bobbie Miller, Eunice Morita, Susan Munson, Helen Nicholas, Roberta Ray, Barbara Reber, Susan Sheakley, Bev Spring, Beryl Vogel, Marilyn Walter, and Pat Wells.

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 Bobbie Miller at 714-960-5724.

News from our Bookstore

Our bookstore inside Audubon House is open daily from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. We accept credit cards (Visa, Mastercard, and American Express) with a $10 minimum purchase. Just arrived: new award-winning children’s titles by Dawn Publications and CA Coast From the Air. Sibley wall and page-a-day calendars are in stock as well as a wide assortment of other calendars. Shop early for the best selection. On special this month are Kaufman’s Field Guide to Birds of North America (regular $18.50, now $15) and Birds of Southern CA (regular $19.75, now $17).

We Need Your Used Books!

Start your fall cleaning now! Take a look at your bookshelves and take down any unused books on birds and other animals, plants, natural history, cooking, birding, travel and gardening, to donate to Sea and Sage Audubon for our Annual Pancake Breakfast Used Book Sale. Proceeds from this sale will benefit our chapter programs, including Education and Conservation. All donations will be greatly appreciated, first by the chapter, and then by our fellow book lovers who will get the opportunity to buy and enjoy them. All books are sorted and priced by the Used Book Sale volunteers. Before being offered for sale, books that are suitable may be used in our Nature Library inside Audubon House or in our Conservation, Marsh Education, or Camp programs. Please deliver your donations to Audubon House by 3:30 PM on Thursday, October 23, to allow time for our volunteers to sort and price them.

It’s More Than Just Pancakes!

On Saturday morning, Oct. 25th, we will be hosting our Annual Pancake Breakfast at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary in Irvine. Breakfast of hot-off-the-griddle pancakes, sausages, fresh fruit, orange juice, hot coffee and milk for the kids will be served from 7:30 to 10:30 am. This event is more than just a pancake breakfast! Participants will also have the opportunity to browse through the intriguing selection of nature books at our famous Used Book Sale, spend some time in Audubon House checking out new items, wander out to the ponds for some bird watching where we’ll have scopes set up at strategic locations for your convenience, or go on a guided bird walk, chat with the people from Wild Birds Unlimited about bird feeding techniques, check out the latest birding optics on the Duck Club back porch with Optics4Birding staff, and visit our chapter exhibits inside the Duck Club and in Audubon House and get your raffle card stamped and turned in so that you can qualify for the chance to win a special prize (a gift certificate at our bookstore).

The price of the Pancake Breakfast is the same as last year: $10 for adults, $6 for children 10 and under, and free for children under 3. Reservations for the breakfast are a must so that we know how much food to buy and prepare. To make your reservations, call Audubon House at 949-261-7963. We will need your name and number of people in your party. Hope to see you there! If you want to receive a reminder notice about this event, please also provide your email address.

Conservation Matters: Local Coastal Plan continued from page 2

By the terms of the Coastal Protection Act, the LCP must address certain issues, including Land Use, Public Access, Water Quality Protection, Coastal Hazard and Shoreline Protection, Scenic, Historic and Cultural Resources, and Natural Habitats. The City of San Clemente is seeking public input on these issues. For further information, to make your comments, or to watch for notice of future public meetings in this 18-month to one-year process, go to LCP@San-Clement.org.
October Field Trips
Nancy Kenyon, Field Trip Chair
For trip updates & additional trip information, check our chapter webpage at: http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org. Trips marked with an® require advance reservations. Questions about field trips? Contact Nancy Kenyon, Field Trip Chair, at 949-786-3160 or nancykenyon@cox.net

Dragonflies & Damselflies at the SJWS
Fri, Sept. 26 & Oct. 24 - 10 am - 12:30 pm
Join Mike Clayton for a morning of exploring the delightful world of Dragonflies and Damsselflies at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary. We will meet in front of Audubon House at 10:00. Come prepared to pay the $5 entrance fee if you don’t have a county parks pass. Meet in the Old Corral day use area. Prepare to pay the $3 entrance fee if you don’t have a county parks pass. Meet in the Old Corral day use area. Leader: Mike Clayton

Black-Lighting for Insects at Caspers
Sat, evening, Sept. 27 – 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm
Join Bettina Eastman and Rich Schilk who will be black-lighting for insects at Caspers Wilderness Park on Sat. night. Don’t miss this special opportunity to look at some of the most interesting nighttime insects. We expect to see beautiful moths, beetles, and other flying insects which are attracted by the black-lights. Meet in the Old Corral area. Directions: Take the I-5 Fwy south to Ortega Hwy and turn left (toward the mts.). Drive 7.6 miles to Caspers Park, which will be on your left. Be prepared to pay the $3 entrance fee if you don’t have a county parks pass. At the entrance, tell them you are there for the Sea & Sage field trip. Bring: a folding chair, flashlight, and a jacket. Leaders: Bettina Eastman and Rich Schilk

Upper Newport Bay Bird Walk
Sunday, Sept. 28 & Oct. 26 - 8:00 am
Join Mark Kincheloe for a monthly bird walk in Upper Newport Bay to check out the seasonal shorebirds, ducks, grebes, herons & egrets, etc. that frequent the bay. Bring binoculars, a field guide, and a scope if you have one. Directions: We will meet in the Big Canyon parking lot in Newport Beach. This is easily reached from Jamboree. Take San Joaquin Hills Road west toward the bay where it intersects with Back Bay Drive. Turn right on Back Bay Drive & follow it to the Big Canyon parking lot on your left. Leaders: Mark Kincheloe

Caspers Wilderness Park Bird Walk
Wednesday, Oct. 1 - 8:00 am to 11:00 am
Join Diane Etchison for a bird walk at Caspers Wilderness Park. The park is home to an abundant number of native species of birds and mammals. The walk may meander through old grove Sycamores, Coast Live Oak, Riparian, or Coastal Sage Scrub habitats. Come prepared for a morning of exploring. Where? Caspers Wilderness Park, 33401 Ortega Hwy (#74), San Juan Capistrano. Directions: Take the I-5 Fwy south to Ortega Hwy and turn left (toward the mts.). Drive 7.6 miles to Caspers Park, which will be on your left. Be prepared to pay the $3 entrance fee if you don’t have a county parks pass. Meet in the Old Corral day use area. Leader: Diane Etchison

Wildlife Walk at the SJWS
Sat, Oct. 4: 9:00 to 10:30 am
We’ll be exploring the birds, plants, and creatures of the marsh on this wildlife walk at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary. Meet in front of Audubon House at 9:00 am for a 1½ hour nature walk. (See page 11 for directions.) Leaders: Audubon Naturalists

Bird Walk Laguna Niguel Reg. Park
Wednesday, Oct. 8 – 8:00 am to 11:00 am
Join Mike Clayton for a morning of birding at Laguna Niguel Regional Park. This park attracts a wide variety of birds with its meandering streams and a large lake which attracts waterfowl and shorebirds. Beginning and intermediate birders are welcome. Age limit is 10 years and above. This bi-monthly bird walk will be offered on the 2nd Wednesday of alternate months from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Directions: Take Santa Ana Fwy. (5) to La Paz Road off ramp. Head west 4 miles to the park entrance. Be prepared to pay the $3 entrance fee if you don’t have a county parks pass. Meet at Shelter #3 parking lot at the far end of the park where there is ample parking and a nearby restroom. Leaders: Mike Clayton

Fall Migration at Huntington Central Park
Friday, Oct. 10 - 8:00 am to 12:00
Huntington Central Park often has a fine show of birds during fall migration, and we hope to see a few of them on this trip. In past years, the park has produced several eastern warblers, as well as some interesting sparrows and shorebirds. Who knows what this year will bring! Meet us at the north end of the Huntington Beach Library parking lot above the bandstand. Directions on page 8.
Upcoming Field Trips
Nancy Kenyon, Field Trip Chair

For trip updates & additional trip information, check our chapter webpage at: http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org. Trips marked with an ® require advance reservations. Questions about field trips? Contact Nancy Kenyon, Field Trip Chair, at 949-786-3160 or nancykenyon@cox.net

Huntington Central Park trip - continued
Directions: Exit 405 or 22 freeways south past Slater. Turn in left at the Huntington Beach library sign (also known as Talbert). Drive forward to the far left corner of the parking lot.
Leaders: Pat and Dick Cabe

Bird Walk at the SJWS
Sunday, Oct. 12 - 8:00 am to 12 noon
Join Chris Obaditch for a monthly bird walk around the ponds of the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary in Irvine at 8:00 am. Many of the shorebirds and ducks are back. The walk, which is open to birders of all ages, will meet by the front porch of Audubon House. Children under the age of 11 must be accompanied by an adult.
Directions to the SJWS on page 11.
Leader: Chris Obaditch

Upper Newport Bay by pontoon boat
Wed, Dec. 17 & Jan. 21 - 8:15 am to 11®
Join us for the rare chance of birding the Upper Newport Bay from the deck of a pontoon boat. The Oct. and Nov. trips are already full, but there is room on the Dec. and Jan. trips. Spotting birds from the water offers one a different perspective and the birds seem to view us differently also. Trip duration is 2½ hrs. Trips are limited to 15 persons and there is a $10 trip fee per person payable in cash on the morning of the outing. Advance reservations are necessary; contact Nancy Kenyon to reserve a spot on the boat. Directions will be provided to those with reservations. Leader: Nancy Kenyon 949-786-3160; nancykenyon@cox.net

Pelagic Trips ® from Dana Point
For those of you who enjoy going on our 8 hour pelagic trips out of Dana Point, there are 4 more of these trips on the schedule beginning on Jan. 10 with limited room, and May 2, July 11, and Sept. 13 with plenty of room. Each costs $60, is an 8 hour trip, has 6 co-leaders including Jon Dunn, and meets at 6:30 am at the Ocean Institute in Dana Point. Check the chapter webpage for trip information & directions for signing up.
Reservations: Nancy Kenyon

Morro Bay Trip ®
Fri-Sun, Nov. 7-9 – starts Fri. afternoon
Come join us in Morro Bay, winter home to thousands and thousands of shorebirds, many species of raptors and passerines. We have planned a wonderful weekend of birding and exploration. Beginning on Friday afternoon, we will have a chance to take a leisurely harbor cruise to see some of the water birds up close and to learn a little about the area. That evening you may wish to dine at one of the many dockside restaurants in the town. The next two mornings, we will meet early in order to have plenty of time to bird the local hot spots. We will be looking for shorebirds, do a little sea watching, and bird some of the very bird rich riparian and woodland locations nearby. After lunch on Saturday and Sunday, you will be free to do a little exploring on your own. Perhaps you may wish to revisit some of the places we went as a group, maybe consult the San Luis Obispo County Birding Guide, compiled by Morro Coast Audubon (available online only) www.morrocoastaudubon.org/birdguide.htm or just spend a leisurely afternoon walking along the beach to enjoy the beauty of the area. (See our webpage for past trip lists and other trip information.) Advance reservations are needed; trip is limited to 15 persons.
Trip fee is $35 + $15 for the Friday harbor cruise. Make check payable SEA & SAGE AUDUBON and mail it to: Morro Bay Trip, c/o Nancy Kenyon, 32 Almond Tree Ln, Irvine CA 92612. Remember to include your email address OR a self-addressed long envelope for reservation confirmation and additional trip information.
Leader: Kaaren Perry
Reservations: Nancy Kenyon

Morro Rock and tidal pools
How and Why Do Birds Get Lost?  
Fog Plays a Role in Migration Errors  
by Dan Guthrie

This is one of two times of the year, when, for a few weeks, we have many migrants passing through and a chance to see something really rare—a vagrant—a bird not usually seen in our local area. Vagrants are migrants that are "lost." We don't know nearly as much about bird migration as we would like. For a few big species, such as Snow Geese and Sandhill Cranes, some individuals have been fitted with transmitters which allow tracking by satellite. This technique has shown us something about rates and routes of migration for these big species, but we still know relatively little about how small songbirds migrate. Bearing that in mind, here are a few observations and comments.

Bird migration is determined partly by weather and geography. For instance, Galileo Hill, near California City, is an excellent place to find migrants in September as it is straight south of the Sierras, and there are no barriers along the route. Galileo, the oasis, is a stopping place for many birds heading south out of the mountains for the winter. However, these birds tend not to fly over Mt. Baldy. Instead, they funnel around the mountains and through the passes, heading more toward Descanso Gardens, below Route 14, to the west of us and toward Glen Helen, below Cajon Pass, to the east of us rather than, for example, toward Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens.

Birds don't like to fly in fog. The result is that in October when our area is often socked in with coastal fog, birds that started out from the north in clear weather, arrive in our foggy basin and will not leave. Only when the fog lifts do all the migrants disappear. Along the coast, migrants may linger a while longer. Farther inland, where it is clear, they tend to keep moving.

The direction birds fly during migration seems to be determined by a combination of following routes based on past experience and, amazingly, on directions predetermined genetically. It has been shown that most songbirds, which migrate at night, use the North Star and the movement of constellations around it as a navigation tool. A bird may be programmed to fly southeast a certain number of degrees east of a north-south axis. Genes can mutate, however, and errors can occur. It seems that some birds suffer from "mirror image misorientation." Instead of flying a certain number of degrees east of a north-south axis, they fly the same number of degrees west of the axis. This explains why many eastern birds, flying south, end up on the California coast. Their flight path takes them over the Pacific Ocean. They usually fly at about 1000 feet and would not ordinarily fly out over the ocean if they could see it. However, when it is foggy, they cannot see the ocean and mistakenly fly out over it, coming down to the surface to land only at daybreak. Unexpectedly encountering a liquid landing strip, these birds struggle to find a place to land, ending up on offshore islands and even boats, or, exhausted, they make it back to land. This helps explain the good numbers of vagrants found along coastal areas such as Huntington Central Park, the tamarisk rows in Oxnard, Oceano Campground near Pismo Beach, and in places such as Pt. Reyes and Pt. Loma in San Diego . . . The Blackpoll is one of several species that fly out over the Atlantic. This seems like a bad idea, until you realize that the trade winds deflect their flight to the south, and the birds end up in Venezuela! They appear to congregate along the Atlantic Coast waiting for the right weather. Studies have shown that only birds with good fat supplies attempt to fly over the Atlantic in this way. Weaker birds fly along the coast, refusing to go out over the ocean. Think what would happen if these birds picked the wrong day to fly out over the Atlantic. If they even happened to encounter a hurricane, it could be disastrous for the species.

A second type of mistake may be "reverse misorientation." Instead of flying south, they fly north. This may account for California autumn sightings of what are normally Arizona birds, such as Grace's Warbler, Painting Bunting, and Painted Redstart. It is still not clear how much weather patterns play a role in migration in our western states. Storms in the north Pacific may shift birds that would normally fly south from Siberia into China and Malaysia, into Alaska, where they follow the coast south. We also know that hurricanes off Baja can send tropical birds north into our area, either carried by the winds or flying intentionally off course to avoid the weather. Birds migrate until the "urge" is over. If normal migration from Canada to Central America takes four weeks, they will continue trying to migrate for four weeks, even if they are going in the wrong direction. If, after four weeks, they are still on land, they will settle down and try to spend the winter. Unfortunately, they usually arrive here before the allotted time for migration has passed, and they usually move on after a few days. A Grace’s Warbler in Santa Barbara was an exception. The Grace’s Warbler spent one winter in Montecito and returned to the same tree several subsequent winters. It is thought that once a bird has successfully migrated and wintered, it remembers and follows the same route the next year and continues to return to the same place. Next time you are out during migration, marvel at the energy requirements and dangers these birds face twice a year. All the way from northern Canada to Claremont, only to be grabbed by a cat!

NOTE: This article by Dan Guthrie was reprinted from the "Chaparral Naturalist", a publication of the Pomona Valley Audubon Society, with permission from the author.
The Latest on Our New Taxidermy Birds & Beasts

Great news! A recent Tattler contained an appeal to cover the cost of 6 birds wanted for educational use, and happily ALL of them have “flown” off the wish list and will soon be added to our superb taxidermy collection.

Here are the folks we’re indebted to, starting with our first Sponsor, Kate Grabenstein who “adopted” the Anna’s Hummingbird male to honor her friend, Goldie Jean Linhart. Kate remembers her as “A good, gentle soul who loved to watch the hummers”.

Our thanks also go to Toni Brevillier who continues to love birds although birding is now restricted to watching her backyard hummers. For this enjoyment, Toni is Sponsor of a pair of Allen’s Hummingbirds. That really is wonderful.

The much sought-after specimen of a Least Tern is finally here, and Beverly Krassner-Bulas is delighted to be the Sponsor, as this is in loving memory of her mother, Eleanor, and father, Walter Bulas and all the happy times they spent on the East coast. Bev, we appreciate your kindness.

Diana and Doug Lithgow sponsored the Lesser Goldfinch male to honor the memory of Diana’s beloved mother, Helen Georges, who loved to bird watch. This beautiful little bird will allow her memory to live on.

Finally, our own Advanced Camp committee covered the cost of the study skin of a White-winged Dove. This summer, campers studied the desert habitat and enjoyed seeing taxidermy of this dove and a few other desert birds such as the Greater Roadrunner.

Now that all our birds have sponsors, we’re hoping that the mammal and reptile will be adopted. Our Bat Walk volunteers have been wonderful about supporting the Mexican Free-tailed Bat which will be used to promote bat appreciation, and we thank Phyllis Anderson and Jean Savage for their much appreciated donations. Special thanks to Kyra and Paul Schmidt, and Ellen Mansour for their generous support, bringing us close to the goal of paying for the bat.

The lovely Red-eared Slider Turtle is awaiting your help so that it can be used with our popular Reptiles & Amphibians Nature Kit for Loan to local educators. It is a beauty for a $380 donation. Tax deductible checks of any amount can be delivered to Project Director Trude Hurd at Audubon House, or mailed to: Pat Heilig, 19131 Sierra Majorca, Irvine, 92603. (Please make your check payable to Sea & Sage Audubon.) Thank you!

— Pat Heilig

It’s Not Too Late To Join the Naturalist Team!

It’s not too late to become a naturalist for Outdoor Adventures or Art Meets Science. Although the formal training classes were in September, we offer make-up dates. Training continues with new recruits mentoring with experienced naturalists during the field programs at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary throughout the school year. If you are a retired teacher or like working with elementary school children, please contact Project Director Trude Hurd at 949-261-7964 or email her at seaandsage@sbcglobal.net. You can make the difference in the life of a child; just ask us how!

Updating our Nature Kits for Loan

Now that we have added a beautiful new kit called The Wonderful Life of a Dying Tree to our Nature Discovery Kits for Loan, we realize that our existing five kits are a bit outdated. It’s time to give them a modern look! Would you like to help? If you have wanted to help our Education Project but were unable to in the past, maybe this is the project for you. Each kit consists of a teacher resource manual, children’s books, puppets, posters, audiovisuals, taxidermy specimens, and more. Topics are Bats, Butterflies, Owls, Reptiles & Amphibians, and Songbirds & Nests. The review and revision of each kit can be done at home on your own time schedule. The ideal volunteer will have experience with K-6 grade classes plus access to writing projects, art projects, and science projects for K-6 that we can use without copyright infringement. To learn more about this valuable volunteer project, contact Project Director Trude Hurd at 949-261-7964 or email at seaandsage@sbcglobal.net; see our chapter webpage for the Nature Kit contents.
Directions and Membership
Directions to Audubon House, our Chapter Meetings, and the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary, Audubon Membership Form, Tattler subscriptions & delivery, Remember Us in Your Will or Trust, and Who to Notify if you are going to be temporarily away from home or are moving.

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 & Sage Audubon” and mail to: Tattler Subscriptions, 32 Almond Tree Ln, Irvine CA 92612

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 Audubon House, our Chapter Meetings & the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary
Our entrance is now from Campus Dr., not 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 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 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: 8:00 am to 4:00 pm
949-261-7963

Your Membership Payment
If you are signing up as a new Audubon member, be sure and use the membership form below that has the code C4ZC150Z in the lower right hand corner. This tells National Audubon who to credit for your membership. Sea & Sage gets 100% of a new member's dues, even if you sign up for more than one year. If you are feeling generous at renewal time and you want Sea & Sage to benefit, you should send your renewal fee to National Audubon and a separate check to Sea & Sage for your donation to the chapter. If you have any questions, please contact Membership Chair, Chuck George, at cgeorge@george-sd.com

Temporarily Away or Moving?
Please notify Membership Chair, Chuck George, of your new address if you are temporarily, or permanently, moving from your current address. Let him know if you do not want to continue to receive the Tattler at your new address. This will save us from paying return postage fees.

Audubon Membership Application
We invite you to become a member of the National Audubon Society and the Sea & Sage Audubon chapter. NEW MEMBERSHIP is $20 for an Individual or for Family members. (The membership is good for one year.)

To join: Please pay by check only; do not send cash. Make your check payable to: NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, complete the form below, & mail it along with your payment to: Sea & Sage Audubon, PO Box 5447, Irvine CA 92616 Members receive the AUDUBON magazine as well as the WANDERING TATTLER newsletter.

Please renew your membership to National Audubon by direct mail, the magazine, or online - not through us.

[  ] Go Paperless! Get your newsletter faster, help save natural resources, and help our chapter save money!

Name ____________________________________________________________
Address __________________________________________________________
City, State, Zip ___________________________________________________
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C4ZC150Z
chapter code

Wandering Tattler
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Audubon House Volunteers Bobbie Miller (interim) ........ 714-960-5724
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Programs .................. Doug Lithgow .................. 714-962-4145
Raptor Research ............... Scott Thomas ........ 714-293-2915
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SJWS Liaison ........ Chris Obaditch .................. 949-640-7234
Starr Ranch/Envir. Liaison Pete DeSimone .................. 949-858-0309
Webmaster .................. Nancy Kenyon .................. 949-786-3160

Webpage: http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org

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Sales Manager ............... Debby Thyssen .................. 949-261-7963
Administrative Aide .......... Rebecca Craft .................. 949-261-7963

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/
Call Songbird Care & Education Center for injured or sick native songbirds. 714-964-0666. www.songbirdcareandeducation.org

CALENDAR OF CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

October 2014
01 Wed Caspers Park bird walk .................. 8:00 am
04 Sat Wildlife Walk at the SJWS ............ 9:00 am
07 Tues Conservation Com. Meeting ............ 6:30 pm
08 Wed Laguna Niguel RP bird walk for beginners .................. 8:00 am
10 Fri Fall Migration at Huntington Central Park .................. 8:00 am
12 Sun San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary bird walk .................. 8:00 am
14 Tues Board Meeting .................. 7:30 pm
15 Wed UNB by pontoon boat ® (Full) ............ 8:15 am
17 Fri GENERAL MEETING .................. 7:30 pm
24 Fri Dragonflies & Damselflies walk at SJWS .................. 10:00 am
25 Sat ANNUAL PANCAKE BREAKFAST .................. 7:30 am
26 Sun Upper Newport Bay bird walk .................. 8:00 am
28 Tues 4th Tues. Conservation Lecture .................. 7:30 pm

November 2014
01 Sat Wildlife Walk at the SJWS .................. 9:00 am
04 Tues Conservation Com. Meeting ............ 6:30 pm
05 Wed Dana Point Headlands & Harbor bird walk .................. 8:00 am
07 Fri Looking for Rarities at Huntington Central Park .................. 8:00 am
09 Sat San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary bird walk .................. 8:00 am
11 Tues Board Meeting .................. 7:30 pm
19 Wed UNB by pontoon boat ® (Full) ............ 8:15 am
20 Thurs Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve bird walk .................. 8:00 am
21 Fri GENERAL MEETING .................. 7:30 pm
22 Sat Seal Beach NWR field trip ® (tentative) .................. 7:30 am
30 Sun Upper Newport Bay bird walk .................. 8:00 am

December 2014
07 Sun 4th Tues. Conservation Lecture ............ to be announced

Come to our Pancake Breakfast on Saturday
Oct. 25 – 7:30-10:30 am