**Why Did You Do It?**

*by Jay Miller, president*

That is what a number of people have asked when they found out that I had agreed to be the next Sea and Sage President. The shortest and most honest answer is - someone has to and I was happy step up to the plate.

I had to consider if my background with Sea and Sage would enable me to do the job and I decided it would. I have been program co-chair (and therefore on the board) for six years. I am not only a naturalist but have also been on the education committee for some time. I have also been on the financial and budget committees for several years. My experience means that I am familiar with almost every issue the chapter has dealt with in the last few years. Hopefully, it also means, I will be in a good position to deal with any new challenges that might arise.

I also agreed because I know I will get a lot of help. First of all, we have a fantastic staff; thank you Trude, Deborah, Debby and Rebecca. We also have an experienced and dedicated board of directors and committee chairs. I know I will especially rely on the experience of Al Baumann, our former president, and Susan Sheakley, our vice-president. Susan has held almost every board position we have at Sea and Sage, several of them more than once.

And then there is our fantastic membership. Last year, more than 150 of you volunteered for various Sea and Sage functions. Whether it is serving on the board, cutting fruit for the pancake breakfast, helping with summer camp, leading a tour, or helping in the Audubon house, (and the list goes on) every volunteer is valued and appreciated. It is your volunteer spirit that makes Sea and Sage such a dynamic chapter.

Not only did you give us your time, you also opened your wallets. In response to last year's annual appeal, 281 of you sent a check. In addition, after we put just one article in the *Tattler* about our need to buy new binoculars for the school programs, you rallied to our request and with your generous financial support we could purchase them.

Last but not least, I have Marquita to edit what I write and act as a sounding board for my ideas.

That's why I did it.

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**General Meeting**

Friday evening, September 19

“Photography Showcase”

presented by —

*Jim Gallagher, Steve Metildi, Glenn Price*

Greetings and welcome back from summer vacations and relaxation. It's now time to resume one of our favorite pastimes, birding. We are going to kickoff this fall season with three great photographers - Jim Gallagher, Steve Metildi, and Glenn Price.

**Jim Gallagher**, who has been a bird photographer for many years, will show us photographs from his and Sylvia's most recent adventure called “Trip to Western States - 2008”. He will focus on birds from different areas in California, Arizona, and Utah. **Steve Metildi**, a native southern Californian, has been an avid photographer for over twenty-five years, since receiving his first camera. For this presentation Steve will focus on the birds and mammals of the arctic and sub-arctic. **Glenn Price** is a South African-born artist and photographer. He took up birding two years ago and has found photography a great way to combine his interests in birds and the visual arts. Glenn will be presenting "Winging It", a collection of photos taken in Southern California, and surrounding areas.

This promises to be a fun evening and just the ticket for a new season of birding!

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

*Marquita Miller, Program Chair*

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

by Susan Sheakley and Scott Thomas

Our regular Conservation Committee Meetings are held at 6:30 pm on the 1st Tuesday of the month at Audubon House. See our chapter webpage for the meeting agenda: http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org/Conservation/conservation.htm We hope you will join us! For additional information, please call Susan Sheakley at 949-552-5974.

Cactus Wren Data

Scott Thomas and Nancy Kenyon have devised a simple data sheet to be introduced for use at each Sea and Sage field trip beginning this fall. The primary purpose of the data sheet will be to catalog the presence or absence of Cactus Wrens at each field trip location. The information will be used in connection with future studies of the Cactus Wren in Orange County.

Coastal Clean Up Day

The 2008 International Coastal Clean Up Day will take place on Saturday, September 20, at 9:00 AM at several sites in Orange County. We hope you will participate. For more info, contact Susan Sheakley, go to the Conservation section on our website, or check the county or state websites.

Conservation & Science Committees Present the 4th Tuesday evening Conservation Lecture Series

The Conservation and Science Committees are pleased to announce the presentation of a series of lectures aimed at introducing science, natural history, and related conservation topics. The lectures will highlight conservation issues and combine biology with strategies that local environmental groups (including Sea and Sage Audubon), scientists, and activists use to address conservation challenges. The guest speakers will be local researchers, scientists, and environmentalists.

The plan is to provide ourselves and our members with the opportunity to become better informed about the environmental challenges facing us and to look at some possible solutions and actions we can take to make a difference. We hope to engage high school and college students and to attract members of other environmental groups, in addition to our own members, to the programs.

Our intent is to pair the lectures with related field trips. Some of the lectures will prepare participants and interested audience members for hands-on activities to take place during the field trips.

The first lecture will take place 7:00 PM at the Duck Club, Tuesday, September 23, with a presentation by Conservation Director, Scott Thomas, on the 2008 Science Committee, Orange County Raptor Research Project.

4th Tuesday Conservation Lecture: “2008 Orange County Raptor Research Project” & Owl Banding Workshop Preparations

September 23, 2008
7:00 pm at the IRWD Duck Club in the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary

The first in our 4th Tuesday Conservation Lecture series will be a presentation by Conservation Director Scott Thomas on the 2008 Science Committee – O.C. Raptor Research Project. In 2007 the Science Committee began a volunteer-based, county wide raptor research project. Scott Thomas and Pete Bloom enlisted the help of young scientists and students from U.C. Irvine, as well as a handful of Sea and Sage members to perform a variety of research tasks related to hawks, owls, and kites.

The September 23rd lecture will introduce the function of the Science Committee and the procedures utilized by the research team and present an overview of Orange County raptors and a discussion of some of the preliminary results from the first season. The lecture will also serve as a precursor to an Owl Banding Workshop to be held in October. The workshop will include introductions to raptor biology and field research methods, including mist netting and banding procedures. Successful and interested workshop participants will have the opportunity to participate in an ongoing raptor research project.

Owl Banding Workshop information and reservations will be available at the September 23rd lecture.
2008 Raptor Research Project
Preliminary Insights
by Scott Thomas

10 Science Committee volunteers logged over 500 hours in the first half of 2008, learning about raptor biology and performing research projects. Volunteers attended informational presentations, field training sessions, and most importantly got out into the field and observed raptors, gaining invaluable field experience.

Research tasks focused on locating and identifying previously banded Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks, identifying and locating breeding raptors, followed by monitoring nests sites. Additionally, many of the team members embarked on a county wide search for White-tailed Kite nests, monitored a pair of Peregrine Falcons and helped install satellite telemetry equipment on fledgling Red-tailed Hawks.

Preliminary results seem to support our previously held concerns that almost all the raptor species that breed in Orange County, are suffering poor reproductive success. Red-tailed Hawks, Red-shouldered Hawks, and Barn Owls, are all species that we expect to have good reproductive success even in difficult years. But all indications are that they have reproduced poorly for the last several years including 2008. Other more sensitive species such as White-tailed Kites appear to be struggling even more so.

There are many possible reasons for the difficulties. Habitat loss in southern California is always at the top of the suspect list when looking at possible bird declines. There may simply be too little open space remaining to sustain the numbers and diversity of raptors that we had just a few years ago. In addition to habitat loss, we can add a long list of other possible contributing factors, such as the lasting drought, prey availability, climate change, introduced species, pesticides, and diseases like West Nile Virus. It's really not surprising that we might be witnessing a notable decline in raptor numbers in much of the southland.

All this is very preliminary and quite difficult to quantify with a small volunteer program. And the results need to be checked against other research efforts. The likelihood that raptors are struggling is a concern in part because they are usually considered to be a very good indicator of the overall health of ecosystems. We will expand upon our findings at the September 23 Conservation Lecture, but early analysis strongly suggests that there is an urgent need for further research in 2009 and beyond.

On a better note, Cooper’s Hawks, as most people with backyard bird feeders can attest, are doing quite well in Orange County. The Raptor Research Team helped map many new nests and we look forward to learning more about Orange County raptor populations in the coming years.

Special Thanks to the 2008 Raptor Research Team:
Nate Babcock
Barry Nerhus
Cristina Czednik
Robert Holcomb
Jennifer Richardson
Elizabeth Hook
Tom Dixon
Melissa Scholtham
Molly Stalcup
Kelli Walters

A Fabulous August Excursion

Looking for something to do on a hot August day? I have an idea that will be both tons of fun and rewarding. This is how it works: load up as many cars as you can with binocular toting birding friends, drive to the nearest U.S. Post Office, everybody walks into the Post Office proudly wearing their binoculars and demands to purchase the 2008-09 Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (Duck Stamp) for $15. When everyone has made their purchase, load up the cars and head to the nearest air-conditioned restaurant and reward yourself for supporting OUR National Wildlife Refuge System. Remember, 98 cents of EVERY DOLLAR goes directly to the Wildlife Refuge System. It's the best investment we can make for wildlife. After lunch, go home proudly clutching your new treasure and take a nap, dreaming about showing your stamp and gaining free access to those refuges that charge admission.

—Al Baumann
Our Summer Barbecue

This year’s summer barbecue drew 200 guests and was the largest crowd we ever had for a BBQ. It was a beautiful summer evening complete with a flock of Canada Geese flying overhead on cue to start the evening program. Two bird walks were offered prior to the meal. In addition, attendees were able to take a tour of the two new buildings that Sea and Sage will be using for education and administration. After the meal Mary Freeman gave a talk about the adorable, but somewhat rare (for Orange County), Northern Saw-whet Owl. Mary demonstrated that one can be both intellectually and emotionally drawn to avian research.

After the talk, people were invited to go to one of the telescopes set up by the Orange County astronomers. Folks were able to see two moons and the rings of Jupiter and wonderful star clusters. Fourteen attendees went on a Marsh walk. It was dark so it was hard seeing the marsh birds, but with the help of sonar devises we were able to hear and see a number of bats as they came to feed over the ponds.

Neal Anderson agreed to chair this year’s barbecue. Nancy Kenyon took care of reservations and volunteers. Jan Gaffney and Gretchen McCausland headed up the kitchen, Steve Perry oversaw the BBQ chefs, and Scott Thomas was in charge of the video equipment. Once again Sheila Fitzgerald baked a fantastic looking and tasting cake. What really made the event special was the large number of volunteers (54) who gave their time to Sea and Sage. The following is a list of all the volunteers:


Orange County Astronomers: Tom Drouet, Walt Glowski, Doug Peltz, Don McClelland, Vital Badrithe

We want to give a big Thank You to all!

Audubon House Volunteers

We would like to thank the following people for helping to staff Audubon House in June, July, August & September: Sonia Appell, Donna & Mike Augustine, Charlie Austin, Dick & Pat Cabe, Deana Collins, Carolyn Cooper, Pam Degarimore, Tom Drouet, Judy Fritts, Peggy Goetz, Keats Hayden, Pat Heilig, Sarah Jayne, Steve Jelnick, Lois Jones, Nancy Kenyon, Donna Krebs, Lauretta Kyle, Marcia Marlowe, Mary Martineau, Joan McCauley, Sally Menzel, Bobbie Miller, Eunice Morita, Rosemary Price, Shirley Price, Betty Purdy, Roberta Ray, Barbara Reber, Gloria Schlaepfer, John Shaddy, Mary Shandy, Betty Swift, Vic Westling, Ann Zemer.

We Need Your Used Books

Attention members! Here is an easy way to support your chapter! Start your fall cleaning now! Clear out your bookshelves and take down those unused books on birds, natural history, travel & gardening to donate to Sea & Sage for our Annual Pancake Breakfast Used Book Sale. Proceeds from this sale will benefit our education & conservation projects. All donations will be greatly appreciated! Deliver them to Audubon House any time before Oct. 17th.

Photographers’ Meeting

The photographers meet three times a year at Jim Gallagher’s house in Huntington Beach to share photos and discuss various photographic techniques. The next Photo Meeting will be held on Monday evening, Sept. 15th at 7:30 pm. The limit is 30 photos per person. For information on these meetings and/or directions to Jim’s house, call Jim at 714-962-8990. If you will be bringing digital pictures, please follow the guidelines listed at: www.seaandsageaudubon.org/Meetings/meetings.htm

News from our Bookstore

The bookstore has a new look including lots of new, exciting items: new line of note cards, organic coffees and teas, Sea and Sage logo items (water bottles, mugs, tote bags, caps, pens, pencils). New arrivals include: Smithsonian FG to the Birds of NA (by Ted Floyd), Peterson’s FG: Birds of NA, The Inner Birds Anatomy and Evolution, On Feathered Wings, Geese of Beaver Bog (by Bernard Heinrich), Hey Mr. Green (Sierra Club), Nevada Barr series (mysteries in national parks) and Sierra Club Knowledge Cards: Birds.

— Jay Miller

— Debby Thyssen

Sea & Sage Audubon, Sept. 2008
Rarities in Orange County

by Doug Willick

To report a RARE or UNUSUAL bird, or to receive the current RBA report for Orange County, call the OrCoRBA at (949) 487-6869.

Due to the recent summer break, the last “Rarities” column to be written only covered reports of interesting bird sightings in the county through the first half of spring migration (early May). Therefore, we’ll start off this month’s column recapping the latter half of spring migration. In southern California, the more exciting migrants to be found in spring typically occur during the latter half of the period. This is typically the time when most of the “vagrants” (or migrants that have wandered “off-course”) appear. Although this past spring had relatively few surprises overall, two Yellow-throated Vireos were exceptional. The first was at Huntington Central Park (HCP), May 28-29 (Irene Horiuchi), with the other at Yorba Reg. Park, June 4 (Brian Daniels). Although both were singing birds, neither cooperated well for birders that later tried to renound them. A singing male Baltimore Oriole in an east Orange neighborhood, May 6 (Neil Gilbert), was a treat, as was a male Rose-breasted Grosbeak in Santa Ana, May 17 (Jeff Keene). Five alternate (breeding) plumaged Franklin’s Gulls at Seal Beach NWR, May 8 (Bob Schallmann), was a record high count for the county. Three Black Swifts over the Blue Jay Campground area, June 1 (Steve Glover), were noteworthy, but at a typical date for these relatively late spring migrants. A sick Yellow-billed Cuckoo was found in Newport Beach, June 28, and delivered to an animal rehab center. In recent decades, this species has become an extremely rare migrant and breeder in California.

“Rare but regular” spring migrants included a Gray Flycatcher at the Environmental Nature Center, May 10 (Doug Willick), and individual Summer Tanagers at Laguna Niguel Reg. Park (LRNP), May 6 (Robert McNab) and at HCP, May 25-26 (Jim Pike). A flock of up to 50 Yellow-headed Blackbirds in Irvine, May 7-12 (R. McNab), was one of the largest to be reported in the county in many years. Late migrants included a Yellow-rumped Warbler at HCP, May 24, and Warbling Vireo at San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary (SJWS), June 15 (B. Daniels), and a Townsend’s Warbler at Santiago Oaks Reg. Park, June 7 (N. Gilbert). Intriguing was a Vaux’s-type swift over LRNP, June 4 (R. McNab), which was quite late for this species. Chimney Swift has occurred as a very rare summer visitor to southern California, although typical viewing conditions are rarely adequate to positively separate these very similar appearing species.

Moving on to the rare summer visitors and breeders, one of the more noteworthy developments this summer has been the continuing observations of Gull-billed Terns. As reported in the last “Rarities” column, many as seven were present at Bolsa Chica (BC) in late April and May (these being only the fourth occurrence of the species in the county). Subsequently, one was reported from Upper Newport Bay, May 27 (Martin Meyers), one or two were again seen at BC, June 6 and July 12 (Leo Ohtsuki, B. Daniels), and 1-2 began frequenting the Santa Ana River mouth, July 13-20+ (John and Joan Avise). Other terns of note included varying numbers of Common Terns at BC (maximum of 25; L. Ohtsuki, B. Daniels), a Black Tern reported in Seal Beach, July 18 (Gary Meredith), and up to four pairs of Least Terns nesting inland again at the Burris Sandpit (in Anaheim); this species also successfully bred here in 2004 and 2007 (D. Willick). Other noteworthy species nesting at Burris this year included approximately 55 pairs of Forster’s Terns and at least two pairs of Black Skimmers.

As expected, Bolsa Chica received considerable birder attention this summer. An adult Little Blue Heron was present May 25-31 (Al Borodayko, Dick and Pat Cabe), while an adult Reddish Egret, possibly a returning bird, was found July 12 (B. Daniels, L. Ohtsuki). Rare to uncommon summering species for Orange County, also reported from Bolsa, included singles of Brant and Bonaparte’s Gull, small numbers of Red Knots, and a single Black Turnstone (B. Daniels, L. Ohtsuki). Elsewhere, a juvenile Reddish Egret was at the Santa Ana River mouth, July 20 (Elliott Harold). An American Bittern at SJWS, May 25 (E. Harold), was quite late and possibly summering here. Least Bitterns were again reported this summer from LRNP (several observers). Though typically more “numerous” in winter, a few Black Oystercatchers continued to be seen during the summer in the Laguna Beach area; in addition, three were seen flying by Newport Pier, July 5 (B. Daniels). Sixteen Brown Pelicans were about 15 miles inland, at the Burris Sandpit, July 19 (Shirley Hunt, D. Willick). Although this species occasionally wanders short distances inland in the county (e.g., SJWS and the adjacent San Diego Creek), few have wandered this far up the Santa Ana River, and all previous occurrences involved single birds.

An adult Bald Eagle over Irvine Reg. Park, June 17 (N. Gilbert), was quite unexpected for this time of year. Two Golden Eagles flying over the mouth Carbon Canyon, May 25 (Bettina Eastman), was west of the expansive Chino Hills State Park, where resident birds have been known in past years. A Summer Tanager at Mason Regional Park, July 20 (L. Ohtsuki), was possibly living up to its name (i.e., “summering”, which is actually when this species is least expected in the county). Lastly, a Northern Cardinal made a visit to an Anaheim residence, May 6 (Chuck Warner). This species sporadically appears in the county, usually in urban settings (urban parks or neighborhoods), although all are considered to be birds released or escaped from captivity. A small number appear to have taken up residency in the Talbert Nature Preserve since at least 2003.
Field Trip Schedule for 2008-2009

CLIP OUT THIS SCHEDULE & SAVE IT. Mark the trips you want to go on on your calendar. Be sure to check the current Tattler as well as the chapter webpage each month for up-to-date field trip information. For additional information, contact Nancy Kenyon, Field Trip Chair, at nancykenyon@cox.net or 949-786-3160. http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org/FieldTrips/fieldtrips.htm

September
07 Sun. Santiago Oaks Regional Park
13 Sat. San Elip Lagoon
14 Sun. San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary
17 Wed. Upper Newport Bay by boat (R1)
20 Sat. Fall Pelagic Trip out of Dana Point (R3)
28 Sun. Huntington Central Park (fall migration)

October
02 Thurs. Starr Ranch Natural History Walk (R2)
04 Sat. Fall Migration Spots (coastal) (R1)
05 Sun. Santiago Oaks Regional Park
12 Sun. San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary
15 Wed. Upper Newport Bay by boat (R1)
15 Wed. Crescent Bay rocky shore birds
19 Sun. Bolsa Chica

November
01 Sat. Owl Prowl at Starr Ranch (R4)
02 Sun. Santiago Oaks Regional Park
06 Thurs. Limestone Canyon Nat. Hist. Walk (R2)
08 Sat. Salt Marsh Birds & Ecology at UNB
09 Sun. San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary
19 Wed. Upper Newport Bay by boat (R1)
19 Wed. Gull Field Workshop at Doheny St. Beach

December
06 Sat. Seal Beach NWR (R1)
07 Sun. Santiago Oaks Regional Park
14 Sun. San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary
14 Sun. Northeastern O.C. (Inland) CBC
17 Wed. Upper Newport Bay by boat (R1)
20 Sat. San Juan Capistrano CBC
28 Sun. Coastal CBC

January
03 Sat. CBC Specialties Trip
04 Sun. Antelope Valley Hawk Banding Trip
04 Sun. Santiago Oaks Regional Park
10 Sat. Winter Pelagic Trip out of Dana Point (R3)
11 Sun. San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary
21 Wed. Upper Newport Bay by boat (R1)
24 Sat. Batiquitos Lagoon

February
01 Sun. Santiago Oaks Regional Park
05 Sun. Laurel Canyon Nat. Hist. Trip (R2)
07/8 S/S Salton Sea weekend trip (R5)
08 Sun. San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary
13-15 F-S Introductory Raptor ID Workshop (R7)
14 Sat. Prado Dam & Prado Regional Park
15 Mon. Seal Beach NWR (R1)
18 Wed. Upper Newport Bay by boat (R1)
21/22 S/S Advanced Raptor ID Workshop (R7)
26 Thurs. Barbara’s Lake (tentative)

March
01 Sun. Santiago Oaks Regional Park
05 Thurs. Santa Rosa Plateau Nat. Hist. Walk (R2)
08 Sun. San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary
10 Tues. Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park
12 Thurs. Riley Wilderness Park
18 Wed. Upper Newport Bay by boat (R1)
22 Sun. Oso Reservoir & vicinity
27 Fri. Irvine Regional Park
27 Fri. Heise Park 2-day trip - near Julian (R8)
29 Sun. Canyon Park & Vicinity

April
02 Thurs. Nat. History Walk, location tba (R2)
05 Sun. Santiago Oaks Regional Park
12 Sun. San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary
15 Wed. Upper Newport Bay by boat (R1)
16 Thurs. Laguna Niguel Regional Park
18/19 S/S Eastern Sierra weekend trip (tentative) (R6)
25 Sat. Spring Migration Spots (inland areas) (R9)
25 Sat. Chapter Birdathon
30 Thurs. El Moro Canyon, Crystal Cove St. Park

May
02 Sat. Native Plant Garden Tour in O.C.
03 Sun. Santiago Oaks Regional Park
09 Sat. Huntington Central Park (spring migration)
10 Sun. Big Morongo Preserve (desert birds)
11 Sun. San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary
16 Sat. Yorba Regional Park (nesting bluebirds)
20 Wed. Upper Newport Bay by boat (R1)

June
07 Sun. Santiago Oaks Regional Park
14 Sun. San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary
17 Wed. Upper Newport Bay by boat (R1)

July
05 Sun. Santiago Oaks Regional Park
11 Sat. Bolsa Chica
12 Sun. San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary
15 Wed. Upper Newport Bay by boat (R1)

How to Make Advance Reservations for Field Trips

(R) This symbol means advance reservations are necessary. If there is no symbol by the trip name, reservations are not necessary. Any trip listed here may be signed up for in advance.

Directions for making trip reservations are in the tattler, on the web page, and on this page. If there is a trip fee, make check payable to SEA & SAGE AUDUBON & mail it to: Nancy Kenyon, 32 Almond Tree Ln, Irvine CA 92612. Be sure to indicate the name & date of the trip AND your phone number and email address so that trip info & confirmation can be sent to you. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope only if you do not have email.

All trip participants will be required to sign a trip waiver releasing Sea & Sage from liability. A copy of the waiver is on our chapter webpage in the Field Trips section. Refunds for cancellations of fee trips will not be given less than 30 days prior to date of trip unless someone is found to fill the vacancy.

Remember to check the Sea & Sage website for up-to-date info on any trip you plan to go on. This section of the website is kept up to date!

The following field trips require advance reservations:
R1 & R2 – no trip fee; space limited. Contact Nancy.
R3 – Fall Pelagic trip $50; Winter Pelagic trip $35.
R4 – Owl Prowl trip $10
R5 – Salton Sea weekend trip $25
R6 – Eastern Sierra weekend trip $30
R7 – Bill Clark’s Raptor ID workshop (see Nov. Tattler)
R8 – Heise Park weekend trip (fee to be announced later)
R9 – Spring Migration Hot Spots (fee to be announced later)

Contact Nancy Kenyon for trip questions or reservations at nancykenyon@cox.net or (949) 786-3160.
September Field Trips

For trip updates & additional trip info, visit our webpage at http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org/FieldTrips/fieldtrips.htm

Trips marked with a ® require advance reservations. If you have any questions about the field trips or would like to make a trip reservation, contact Field Trip Chair, Nancy Kenyon at nancykenyon@cox.net or 949-786-3160.

Santiago Oaks Regional Park
Sunday, Sept. 7, Oct. 5, Nov. 2 — 7:30 a.m.

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

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

San Elijo Lagoon for Fall Shorebirds
Saturday, Sept. 13 — 8:00 a.m.

San Elijo Lagoon is located in San Diego county near Solano Beach and is one of the last remaining tidal lagoons unspoiled by development in southern California. The lagoon itself is large and has a variety of vegetation around it. There are 2 trails we may use to explore the area: one goes down to the shore of the lagoon to give us an up close view of the shorebirds and waterfowl; the other skirts the side of the lagoon, providing opportunities to search for gnatcatchers, raptors, flycatchers, and other species.

Directions: Drive south on the San Diego Fwy. past Carlsbad to Solano Beach; exit on Lomas Santa Fe. Drive west less than a mile to Rios Ave, and turn right. Go all the way to the end of the street & park along the side. We will meet at the end of the street. Bring binocs, a scope if you have one, and a snack. Trip will end at 12 noon. (Nearest restroom facilities are at the Solano Beach train station which you will drive past on your way to the trailhead.)

Leader: Steve Brad 760-633-1639

San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary
Sunday, Sept. 14, Oct. 12, Nov. 9 — 8:00 a.m.

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

Upper Newport Bay by small boat ®

Join us for the rare chance of birding the Upper Newport Bay from the deck of a small boat. Spotting birds from the water offers one a different perspective and the birds seem to view us differently also. Trip duration is about 3 hours. Participants may be asked to help count birds seen or heard from the boat. Space is limited because the boat is very small; advance reservations are mandatory. Contact Nancy Kenyon for trip reservations at 949-786-3160 or NancyKenyon@cox.net. Leader: Nancy Kenyon

Fall Pelagic Trip out of Dana Point ®
Saturday, Sept. 20 — 6:30 a.m.

Target Birds: Black-vented, Sooty & Pink-footed Shearwaters; Black & Least Storm-Petrels; Cassin’s & Rhinoceros Auklets; Parasitic & Pomarine Jaegers, a variety of shorebirds, terns, gulls, and possibly some whales & dolphins. Unlike past pelagic trips, this one will be out for 6 hours which will give us more time to get out to the 14 mile bank where the more interesting birds are. Our leader, Jerry Tolman, is an experienced leader and pelagic birder. We will be using the 70 ft. Sea Explorer, a research vessel belonging to the Ocean Institute of Dana Point. Advance reservations are necessary. Trip fee is $50 per person, (payable to Sea & Sage Audubon). Mail to: Pelagic trip, c/o Nancy Kenyon, 32 Almond Tree Ln, Irvine CA 92612. Include your phone number & your email address, or a self-addressed legal size envelope for trip confirmation and additional information.

Huntington Central Park, for fall migration
Sunday, Sept. 28 — 8:00 a.m.

Huntington Central Park is considered by many birders to be one of the best places in Orange County to find migratory birds. We hope you will join Pat & Dick Cabe for this morning trip to look for fall migrants. The trip will end at 12 noon. Directions: We will meet in the Slater Street parking lot of Huntington Central Park which is just east of the intersection of Slater and Golden West in Huntington Beach. From the #405 Fwy, take Golden West south to Slater and turn left; the park entrance will be on your right.

Natural History Walk at Starr Ranch ®
Thursday, Oct. 2 — 9:00 a.m.

This is the first of a series of field natural history walks with Dick Newell during the year. Participants will examine the geology, plant life, birds, herps, and other animals they encounter on the trip. Each trip in the series will take a little over 3 hours to complete and will cover about 3 miles and perhaps a 400’ elevation gain. Group size limited to 10; advance reservations necessary. Contact Nancy Kenyon, FT chair at nancykenyon@cox.net or 949-786-3160. Other trips: Nov. 6 (Limestone Cyn), Feb. 5 (Laurel Cyn), Mar. 5 (Santa Rosa Plateau), April 2 (location tba).
Native Gardening Workshop
How to Select, Plant and Care for California Native Plants in Your Garden

Offered twice:
Workshop I: Sunday, Oct. 12 & 19, & Saturday, Oct. 25, 9:00 am to noon
Workshop II: Sunday, Nov. 2 & 9, & Saturday, Nov. 15, 9:00 am to noon

The diversity, abundance and beauty of California’s flora provide an exciting opportunity for incorporating native plants into residential gardens. Because many California natives are adapted to our dry southern California climate and require less water than lawn and many nonnative plants, they can contribute substantial benefits to our environment. Natives planted in even small gardens can provide resting places and food sources for resident and migrating birds, butterflies and other insect pollinators.

This workshop will give you information on selecting appropriate native plants for the spaces in your garden. You will learn how and when to plant natives, as well as how to care for and prune them. Soil and watering requirements that enable these plants to thrive will also be discussed.

Each morning we will meet at a residential garden or other site where you can see natives growing. The workshop will take place at locations in Santa Ana, Claremont and San Juan Capistrano. A donation of $30 or more per person is requested if you can afford it. Enrollment is limited. Reserve your place now.

To reserve a place, send your $30 check payable to Sea and Sage Audubon and a self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE) to Diane Bonanno, 4611 Santa Fe St., Yorba Linda, CA 92886. State which workshop you wish to attend; if you are able to attend either workshop, indicate your first and second choices. Please include your e-mail address. Confirmations as well as directions to meeting locations and other material will be mailed to you on Sept. 24. No reservations will be taken by phone. If you have questions, you may call Diane at 714-572-9911.

Co-leaders: Diane Bonanno & Pat Overby, Landscape Designers Specializing in California Natives

Reunion: Learning CA Bird Sounds
Sept. 3 (7 pm) and Sept. 4 (9 am & 7 pm)
(Attend at the time of your regular workshop.) The reunion will feature the results of the survey, a special program about the Gallagher’s spring trip, and a potluck party. Sylvia says to come even if you didn’t send in your form or complete the workshop.

Birds of Southern CA Introductory birding skills workshop will be presented by Sylvia Gallagher this coming fall. The workshop will run from Nov. 11/12 to Feb. 11/12; registrations opens Oct. 13. Full information will be in the Oct. Tattler & will be posted on the webpage in September.

Whale Naturalist Class
Andee Burrell will be offering an 8 week Whalewatch Naturalist Training class this fall. It will be taught in Huntington Beach on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning September 30th. Students will learn about the various marine mammals that live off our local coast including varieties of baleen and toothed whales with special emphasis on the Pacific gray whale. Graduates will be certified by the American Cetacean Society as naturalists qualified to speak on local whalewatch boats and to schools and civic groups. For further information please contact Andee at (714) 842-1768 or ahburrell@gmail.com.

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology is embarking on a major redesign of their website and they’re looking for guidance from the experts — the site’s everyday users. You’re warmly invited to take part in their new blog, “Round Robin” at: http://redesign.birds.cornell.edu The Lab staff will float ideas, preview features as they’re developed, and most importantly, ask you what you think. The blog went live on June 2, so please check in, and come back often.

The Bushtit Brigade
In the late afternoon, as the shadows lengthen and the sunlight slants lower on the horizon, the Bushtits move in to make their nightly rounds in my garden. First I hear their tinkling calls and then watch as one by one, they descend from the nearby trees and perform their late afternoon ritual on each shrub and flower. They are so small that several of them spaced along a single delicate flower stalk barely weigh it down. Their delicate tinkling calls reverberate throughout the garden for about five minutes, and then, they vanish. Where do they go? I don’t know, but I hope there is another garden nearby to welcome them. -nk
Fledgling Camp was a Big Success!

During the last week of June our twelve intrepid Fledgling Campers set out every morning, blessed with good weather and better company, to see what we could see at the the marsh. The San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary spread its wonders before our eager eyes: butterflies, lizards, cottontails, and oh! the birds! Our favorite birds were the Great Blue Heron, Common Yellowthroat, Killdeer, Black Skimmer, Mallard ducklings, Green Heron and Osprey, just to name a few. But our most spectacular wildlife experience occurred at the end of our last bird walk on Friday. A mother bobcat sat serenely on guard while her three (someone said four) cubs cavorted in and out of the reeds on the edge of Pond D!

The adult and Junior Naturalists running the show were efficient, helpful, friendly, and made all our activities run smoothly. Everyone’s favorite craft was the delicious edible nest project dreamed up and implemented by Helen Nicholas. Bobbie Miller taught us six bird calls and most campers went on to impress their parents with their ability to “bird by ear”.

Our fourth Fledgling Summer Camp for 7-9 year olds was as big a success as the last three were. The campers had fun learning to identify birds and appreciate their habitats as important places on our planet. What a thrill to work with children so enthusiastic and smart that they give us hope for the future!

—Teresa Cullen

Join our Audubon Naturalist Team!

Each one of us should share what we love and pass it on to the next generation. If you think educating children about nature is vital and you love being around others who care about nature, then join our naturalist team. Anyone interested in becoming a part of this great program is invited to attend the one-day orientation training class on Friday, Sept. 26th at 9:00 am in the Duck Club. Please RSVP to Trude Hurd, Project Director of Education, at 949-261-7963.

Welcome! The Sea and Sage Education Steering Committee would like to welcome Susan Munson to our team. Susan worked for many years as a Spanish teacher for the Irvine Unified School District before becoming a volunteer naturalist for our Outdoor Adventurers Program. She is currently on the Sea and Sage Board serving as a Director. We are delighted to have Susan join our committee and look forward to her sharing her experience and giving assistance as we begin our 16th year of environmental programs for the young people of Orange County.

—Al Baumann, Frank Feller, Sandy DeSimone, Kaaren Perry - Chairperson

OCCF Awards Funding for Sea & Sage Science Discovery Program

Sea & Sage Audubon thanks the Orange County Community Foundation (OCCF), in association with Southern California Edison and an anonymous donor, for their generous donation of $15,000 to the Audubon Outdoor Adventures Science Discovery program for 2008-09. Outdoor Adventures is in its 17th consecutive year of providing elementary school children with outdoor, hands-on education opportunities at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary in Irvine. This funding from the Orange County Community Foundation is an important contribution toward our goal of increasing enrollment in the program, especially for underprivileged school children from the Santa Ana School District. With this gift, Sea & Sage Audubon will ensure students in our community have a personal and positive experience with nature that lasts beyond their time at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary. Sea & Sage Audubon has a special partnership with the Orange County Community Foundation which has supported our Outdoor Adventures and Art Meets Science programs for the past 4 years. It is with great pleasure and a deep appreciation that Sea & Sage Audubon accepts the continued support of the Orange County Community Foundation (www.oc-cf.org)

— Susie Anon

Thanks to Taxidermy Bird Sponsors

We wish to extend thanks to those who recently sponsored taxidermy Birds: Two Cedar Waxwings in honor of Virginia Gochenour, one Cedar Waxwing by Phyllis Anderson, Black Phoebe by Dan Trinidad, White-crowned Sparrow by Pat Vranicar, Western Meadowlark in memory of Trude Hurd’s mother, Carola, and Elegant Tern for Louis Bitsikokos.

The one remaining bird needing a sponsor is a MacGillivray's Warbler. If you are interested in sponsoring this bird or future taxidermy specimens, or would like to make a donation to the general taxidermy fund, please contact Gretchen Mavrovouniotis at seasage_taxidermy@earthlink.net or 949-552-8266.

—Gretchen Mavrovouniotis
Report from the Junior Naturalists

The Junior Naturalist program had fifteen teen participants during the past year. This year we placed a greater emphasis on conservation issues in our area. We visited Bolsa Chica and viewed the glass wall around the new housing development and wrote letters - and are still writing letters - protesting the 241 Toll Road extension. Many of the Junior Naturalists took on individual conservation projects such as monitoring the Least Tern Colony and Tree Swallow and Western Bluebird nesting boxes. They also continue to volunteer at the Summer Camps during the summer months.

These busy teens had some great field trips during the past year. Two of the most memorable were the trips to McGrath State Beach and the Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge. McGrath State Park was flooded, so we could view shorebirds right outside the tent. At Seal Beach, every Junior Naturalist had at least one life bird and we were able to view many raptors at close range. We are so grateful to Sally Menzel, Trude Hurd, Scott Thomas, John Fitch and the parents who helped with these field trips.

The Junior Naturalists will hold an organizational meeting on September 7th. Any new teens who are interested in participating, please give Kate Grabenstein a call: 714-540-6768. We are also looking for members of Sea and Sage Audubon to lead field trips for us. If you have a favorite birding spot that you would like to share with our teens, please give Kate a call.

— Kate Grabenstein

Field Ornithology Camp at Hog’s Island, Maine for teenagers and adults

From June 22 through June 28, I was on Hog’s Island, Maine, participating in a field ornithology camp for teenagers and adults. Every day we would get up at 5:30 a.m. to go on the morning bird walk. While yawning, other teens and I would listen to Northern Parula, Black-throated Green Warbler, American Redstart, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Winter Wren, Swainson’s Thrush, White-throated Sparrow and many other species. After the morning walk we would have breakfast in the dining hall with the adult field ornithology group, the counselors, and the guest teachers, which included Scott Wiedensaul and Greg Budney from Cornell Lab of Ornithology. After breakfast we

Hog’s Island continued —

would go on a morning trip to the mainland or to another island. We would be back on the Hog’s for lunch, and then back out after lunch on another trip. After dinner we would have a program presented by one of the teachers. We had talks such as “The History of Ornithology” by Scott Wiedensaul or “Neotropical Migration” by Sara Morris. After the program there was a meeting or astronomy lesson. Lights out were at 11:30 pm for the teens, so it was a very vigorous day. The counselors for the teens were Laurie McLaughin and Doug Wentzel, both of Pennsylvania State University. Part of the experience was learning from each other on the trip. The friends I met were mostly younger than me, but I learned a lot from them. I learned the songs for fifteen species of eastern warblers, and I’ve started to memorize scientific names for the birds. This is one of the most beautiful places on earth, and I would suggest any of these summer camps to anyone who is open to learning about nature and wildlife.

— Nora Papian

Nature Discovery Kit Helper Needed

Sea & Sage Audubon has five Nature Discovery Kits that we loan out to educators throughout Orange County: Bats Owls Butterflies & Moths Songbird Nests Reptiles & Amphibians

Information on what’s in each of the kits and how they can be checked out is posted on our chapter webpage at: http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org/Education/NatureDiscoveryKits.html

These kits are a valuable resource for nature lessons in schools, home schools, scout groups, and others.

Volunteer Coordinator, Joan Olafson, is looking for someone with 1-2 hours a month available who could assist her with checking the kits in and putting them away at Audubon House. Joan is frequently out of town and would appreciate another pair of hands for this light work. It’s fun, you will work with great people, and no heavy lifting is involved. If you are interested or want more information, contact Joan Olafson at 949-673-5480 or email her at joanoalf@earthlink.net
Your Membership Payment

If you are signing up as a new Audubon member be sure and use the application in the Tattler or on our website that has the C15 in the lower right hand corner. This tells National Audubon who to credit for your recruitment. Sea & Sage gets 100% of the first year’s dues of new members (even if you give more than the minimum membership fee). When renewing your membership and you pay more than the standard renewal fee ($35 for regular and $15 for senior/student membership), the extra you contribute goes to National Audubon; the chapter does not get any of the contribution back. So, if you are feeling generous at renewal time and you want Sea & Sage to benefit, you should send your renewal fee to National and a separate check with your donation to the chapter. If you have any questions please contact Phil Brobst at (949) 261-7963.

Directions to AUDUBON HOUSE and the SJWS
8:00 am - 4:00 pm daily
(949) 261-7963

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

Tattler Subscriptions

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

Tattler Delivery

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

Membership Application

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

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

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

Name
Address
City State Zip
Phone
E-mail address
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:
President............................Jay Miller...............714-549-2912
Vice President..............Susan Sheakley...............949-552-5974
Secretary...................Gretchen McCausland..949-249-8258
Treasurer................Betsy Flynn.................949-548-6432
Director 2009..........Mary Joseph...............714-848-8362
Director 2009........Chuck Leavell............714-630-6497
Director 2010...........John Avise...................949-856-2215
Director 2010........Donelda Warhurst.....714-473-3405
Director 2011...............Susan Munson...........949-497-3906
Director 2011........Joel Weintraub............949-248-8205
Past President............Al Baumann............949-859-5081

Committee Chairpersons:
Audubon House Volunteers. Judy Fritts..................949-551-4513
Birdathon (acting)............Al Baumann..........949-859-5081
Bird Information........Sylvia Gallagher........714-962-8990
Christmas Bird Counts........Curis Johnson..........714-739-5373
Conservation...............Susan Sheakley..........949-552-5974
Counsel..........................Rick Derevan.........714-427-7016
Development................Cheryl Thomas...........949-294-2275
Education..................Kaaren Perry..............949-497-0884
Exhibits........................Mary Joseph...........714-848-8362
Facilities................Neal Anderson...............714-441-0491
Field Trips................Nancy Kenyon...........949-786-3160
Finance..................Hal Sheakley................949-552-5974
Hospitality-General Mtgs..Merri Levy...............949-495-9482
Membership................Phil Brobst.............949-261-7963
Newsletter Editor..........Nancy Kenyon..........949-786-3160
Oak Cyn Nature Center....Cathy Glasgow...........714-760-5236
Partners in Flight..........Janet Baumann.........949-859-5081
Programs................Marquita Miller.........714-549-2912
Publicity..................Sheryl Blevins.............949-831-3639
Publishing................Sam Berry................949-646-1488
SJWS Liaison...............Chris Obaditch...........949-640-7234
Starr Ranch/Envir. Liaison..Pete DeSimone........949-858-0309
Webmaster................Nancy Kenyon.........949-786-3160

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

Contacts:
Bluebird Information........Dick Purvis...............714-776-8878
OrCoRBA Hotline........Joel Weintraub.........949-487-6869
Slide Lending Library........Clausde Casey.......714-968-3463

September
02 Tues Conservation Committee Meeting...........6:30 pm
03 Wed Bird Sounds Class Reunion...................7:00 pm
04 Thurs Bird Sounds Class Reunions.................9 am & 7 pm
07 Sun. Santiago Oaks monthly bird walk...............7:30 am
09 Tues. Board Meeting..................................7:30 pm
13 Sat. San Elijo Lagoon....................................8:00 am
14 Sun. SJWS monthly bird walk........................8:00 am
17 Wed UNB by small boat.................................8:15 am
19 Fri GENERAL MEETING..................................7:30 pm
20 Sat. Fall Pelaglic Trip.................................6:30 am
23 Tues. Conservation Lecture...........................7:00 pm
26 Fri Orientation for New Audubon Naturalists...........9:00 am
28 Sun. Huntington Central Park (fall migration)...........8:00 am

October
02 Thurs Natural History Walk at Starr Ranch...........9:00 am
04 Sat Fall Migration Spots (coastal areas)..............8:00 am
05 Sun. Santiago Oaks monthly bird walk................7:30 am
12 Sun SJWS monthly bird walk..........................8:00 am
15 Wed UNB by small boat..................................8:15 am
15 Wed Rocky shore birds at Crescent Bay.................8:00 am
16 Sun The Myth of Fall (Seasons of Nature)............9:00 am
19 Sun Native Plant Gardening Workshop.................9:00 am
19 Sun Bolsa Chica............................................8:00 am
25 Sat Pancake Breakfast..................................7:30 am

Sea and Sage Audubon, Sept. 2008