



San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society

WESTERN MEADOWLARK

Volume 67— Number 5

General Meeting
Wednesday, May 17, 2017

Birding Mexico-From Northern Baja to Southern Chiapas, A Traveler's Guide
Presented by Brad Singer

Mexico is enriched with a wonderful diversity of habitat that is home to over 1000 species of birds. Many are either endemic, resident, or migrate through. Being so accessible by both land and air makes it easy for Californian's to travel into these Mexican habitats at appreciably reduced costs. Brad will discuss not only the variety of birds to be seen but also provide travel tips, possible itineraries, and safety measures that could help to make your next trip to our southern neighbor very enjoyable.



Brad Singer
 Bare-throated Tiger Heron, Jonuta, Tabasco, Mexico -

Brad is a very active birder throughout San Bernardino County. He is president of San Bernardino Valley Audubon, moderator for Inland County Birds listserve, and one of the ebird editors for San Bernardino County. He and his wife Cherie reside in Lake Arrowhead.

There will be no General Meeting in June.

We meet at the San Bernardino County Museum, in Redlands. The doors open at 7:00 for refreshments and fellowship, and the meeting and program begin at 7:30 pm. Everyone is always welcome.

DON'T FORGET!

June 10, 2017

SBVAS Pelagic Trip – Dana Point

Join SBVAS for a 9-hour pelagic trip aboard the Ocean Institute's (Dana Point) R/V Sea Explorer in search of pelagic birds, marine mammals, and other oceanic wildlife. We expect to see Pink-footed and Sooty Shearwaters, Black Storm-Petrel, Cassin's Auklet, and Scripps's Murrelet. We have a reasonable chance of seeing Pomarine Jaeger, Sabine's Gull, and Red Phalarope, as well as marine mammals such as Common Dolphin, and Blue, Humpback, and Fin Whales. The cost for the trip is \$70. We will meet at the Ocean Institute in Dana Point at 6:30 AM. The trip departs promptly at 7:00 AM and will not be held for late arrivals; it returns at 4:00 PM. **To reserve a space on the trip, email Tom Benson (thomasabenson@aol.com) with your name and phone number, the number of spaces you want to reserve, and the names of those in your party.** For more details please see the trip description on the [SBVAS website](#).

Donate to SBVAS by shopping on Amazon.com!

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AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization. Of course, we want that to be us!

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Local Sightings: Winter-Spring 2017 by Tom Benson

This rather brief issue of local sightings covers the end of winter and the very start of spring migration, from mid February through mid April. The next installment, to be published in the next issue of the Western Meadowlark in September, will cover the bulk of spring migration and the summer season.

In San Bernardino County, the DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER at Cucamonga-Guasti Regional Park continued through at least Mar 29. The pair WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS at Lake Arrowhead were last seen Feb 25, while five were on Lake Havasu on Mar 22. A bird reported in the last issue as a Pacific Wren at Big Morongo Canyon Preserve turned out to be a WINTER WREN (Feb 12-Apr 6) providing just the third county record. A ZONE-TAILED HAWK (Apr 2) and a STELLER'S JAY (Feb 28), the latter rare away from the mountains, were seen in Morongo Valley. Up to two NEOTROPIC CORMORANTS were in Upland Apr 1-2, providing one of very few records for the county's coastal slope. San Timoteo Canyon hosted a wintering DUSKY FLYCATCHER Mar 12-Apr 2, and a flyover FRANKLIN'S GULL Apr 9. Finally, two SANDERLINGS were at Kramer Junction on Apr 9.



Tom Benson

Pacific Wren



Tom Benson

American Golden Plover

nesting on Apr 7, possibly the first documented breeding on the coastal slope of California. A RUFF, likely a returning individual wintering locally, was in the Prado Basin Mar 30-Apr 4. Finally, shorebird whisperer Tony Metcalf conjured up an AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER at the San Jacinto Wildlife Area that was present Apr 1-4.

In Imperial County, continuing wintering rarities included the HUTTON'S VIREO (through Mar 4) and BELL'S VIREO (through Feb 25) at Cattle Call Park, a BROWN THRASHER in El Centro through Mar 17, AMERICAN REDSTART at the IID Wetlands through Apr 3. A LAUGHING GULL, unusual in winter, was in Calipatria Mar 11, while a MEW GULL was seen near Brawley on the same date. Notable among waterfowl

Continuing wintering rarities in Riverside County included the BLACK-HEADED GULL (through Mar 3) and LAUGHING GULL in Oasis, and a PACIFIC WREN at Coachella Valley Preserve Thousand Palms Oasis through Apr 4. Two NEOTROPIC CORMORANTS were at the former location Feb 25-Mar 4, while the latter location had a GRAY CATBIRD Mar 24-Apr 9. Wintering warblers included an AMERICAN REDSTART at Lake Skinner Jan 4-Apr 8 and a Palm Warbler in Mira Loma first detected Apr 9. After a small flock wintered in the Box Springs Mountains, a pair of BLACK-THROATED SPARROWS was found



Tom Benson

Winter Wren

SCHEDULED 2017 FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, May 6, 2017 at 8 a.m.
Whitewater Canyon

Sunday, May 7, 2017 at 8 a.m.
Box Springs Mountain

Sunday, May 7, 2017 at 8 a.m.
Beginning Bird Walk
San Timoteo Canyon

Saturday, May 13, 2017 at 9 a.m.
Bearpaw Ranch

Saturday, May 20, 2017 05/20/17
San Jacinto Mountain Area

Saturday May 27, 2017
San Bernardino Mountains

Saturday, June 10, 2017 6:30 a.m.
Pelagic Trip - Dana Point

Saturday, June 17, 2017
Wrightwood Area

Saturday, June 24, 2017
Insane Jaunt - Salton Sea

MAY/JUNE 2017 FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, May 6
8:00 am
Whitewater Canyon
Steve Myers (951) 616-7578

Portions of Whitewater Canyon have long been more or less closed to public access, but the former trout farm is now the "Whitewater Canyon Preserve," managed by The Wildlands Conservancy. If you visited the trout farm in the past, you will not know the place now. Most of the facilities have been removed, and habitat restoration is under way. There are still a few ponds with trout, but riparian and desert scrub habitat should be teeming with birds on this trip. The canyon hosts nesting Summer Tanagers and Brown-crested Flycatchers, and migrants should be easy to find. In addition to the Preserve, we will visit Bonnie Bell, a small community in the canyon that contains excellent cottonwood and willow forest and woodland, somewhat reminiscent of Big Morongo. Meet at

the Whitewater Canyon Preserve at 8:00 am. To reach the Preserve, go east on I-10, past the turn-off for Highway 111, and take the Whitewater exit. Turn left, pass over I-10, and watch for Whitewater Canyon Road on your left. The Preserve is at the end of Whitewater Canyon Road, approximately 5 miles north of I-10. Bring sturdy footwear, water, lunch, and the usual essentials.

Sunday, May 7
8:00-10:00 am
Beginning Bird Walk at San Timoteo Canyon
Matt Grube (909) 253-3867

Our goal will be to teach you enough basic birding techniques and identification skills so that you will feel comfortable birding on your own or joining our longer birding trips throughout the year. We will meet at the dirt lot along San Timoteo Canyon Rd just south of Fern Ave at 8 am. The walk is free, and all are invited to join. Expect to walk 2-3 miles on level dirt paths as we look for spring migrants and summer nesting birds. Please contact Matt Grube by email at for questions.

Sunday, May 7
8:00 am
Box Springs Mountain
John Green (951) 686-2956

Our main target birds here will be Black-chinned, Rufous-crowned, and Bell's (Sage) Sparrows, which should be present and singing. We'll look for them and more while going on a hike through grassland, chaparral, and sage scrub and past a spring or two. A few of the other resident and/or breeding birds to be expected on the trip include Rock and Canyon Wrens, California Thrasher, and Phainopepla. We will, of course, also be hoping for a nice crop of migrants including flycatchers, vireos, warblers, buntings, grosbeaks, orioles, and ??? Over 180 species of birds have been recorded in the Box Springs, but 40 species is a more realistic goal for this trip. We should also see some wildflowers and shrubs in bloom, and a variety of butterflies, reptiles, mammals, etc. as well. The walk is all on official trails, but some are narrow. The usual hike is about 3.5 miles, with a couple of climbs, and a maximum elevation gain of about 650 feet. It is possible that we will cut the hike short if Bell's Sparrows are not present. They have become undependable in recent years. If so, the hike is about 1.5 miles and 450 foot elevation gain. This shortened hike is also an option for those wanting to leave early.

Continued on p.5

Continued from p. 4

Either way, expect to arrive back at the parking lot by lunchtime. If the hike has been cut short due to lack of Bell's Sparrows, those who are interested can follow me on a drive to another spot in the Box Springs where they are currently being found. We will meet at 7:30 am at the upper parking lot of Box Springs Mountain Reserve. From Highway 60 in Moreno Valley take the Pigeon Pass Road / Frederick Street exit. Take Pigeon Pass north and continue for about 4.2 miles. When Pigeon Pass makes a sharp turn to the right, you will continue straight on Box Springs Mountain Road for about 1.3 miles to the parking area. There is a \$2 per person parking fee box. We will do a lot of walking, so wear appropriate shoes and dress comfortably in layers. Some trails may be overgrown, long pants are advised. Carry water and snacks. There are picnic tables at the parking area, so bring a lunch if you'd like to eat after the hike. See you there!

Saturday, May 13

9:00 am

Baby Birds at Bearpaw Ranch

Cin Greyraven (909) 794-0509

Join us for a trip into the hidden world of nesting birds at Bearpaw Nature Sanctuary in Forest Falls. Biologist Cin Greyraven will lead the group in its search for evidence of breeding behavior in the common birds of the chaparral and forest. Since 1994, Bearpaw Sanctuary has been part of the National Nest Box Trail system, offering homes to Western Bluebirds, Oak Titmice, House Wrens, Mountain Chickadees, and Ash-throated Flycatchers. Learn what types of nest boxes work best and how monitoring data by average citizens across the continent can contribute to scientific research. Learn how to monitor a nest box without disturbing the nesting effort. Enjoy a peek inside the usually inaccessible world of cavity nesters, and learn to recognize different species by their nests, eggs, and chicks. Bring binoculars for long-distance viewing and cameras for close-up snapshots. Children are welcome. For additional information, call (909) 794-0509.

Saturday, May 20

8:00 am

San Jacinto Mountains

Gene Cardiff & Dori Myers (714) 779-2201

Meet in the parking lot across from Lake Fulmor just off highway 243 at 8:00 AM. We will bird the area for about an hour and then drive from there

stopping along the way. Eventually we will make it to Lake Hemet where we hope to be able to view Bald Eagles. We should find all the usual mountain species plus some. Pinyon Jay is one of our target birds. Dress in layers, bring snacks, water and your lunch. Please remember to fill your gas tank beforehand. A scope (if you have one) would be useful at the lakes.

Saturday, May 27

7:00 am

San Bernardino Mountains

Brad Singer (909) 838-7951

If you could not make the San Jacinto Mountains field trip or just enjoy montane birding, the San Bernardino's offer a wide variety of species within close proximity. We will meet in the parking lot in front of Starbuck's in Big Bear Lake at 7 am. Our travels during the day will take us through Pinyon pine/Juniper habitat in search of Gray Vireo, Scott's Oriole and Black-chinned Sparrow. From there we will head to beautiful Bluff Lake and look for Golden-crowned Kinglet, Williamson's Sapsucker, and hopefully find a Red Crossbill. We will finish in Green Canyon and listen for the Whip-poor-will and Common Poorwill. Plan on a long day, bring lunch, hiking shoes, and plenty of water. For those planning on staying for the Green Canyon jaunt, we will have dinner in town beforehand. Questions, either call Brad at the number above or email him at bcsinger@gmail.com.

Saturday June 10, Pelagic Trip 6:30 a.m.

Dana Point Harbor Ocean Institute

Join SBVAS for a 9-hour pelagic trip aboard the Ocean Institute's (Dana Point) R/V Sea Explorer in search of pelagic birds, marine mammals, and other oceanic wildlife. We expect to see Pink-footed and Sooty Shearwaters, Black Storm-Petrel, Cassin's Auklet, and Scripps's Murrelet. We have a reasonable chance of seeing Pomarine Jaeger, Sabine's Gull, and Red Phalarope, as well as marine mammals such as Common Dolphin, and Blue, Humpback, and Fin Whales. The cost for the trip is \$70. We will meet at the Ocean Institute in Dana Point at 6:30 AM. The trip departs promptly at 7:00 AM and will not be held for late arrivals; it returns at 4:00 PM. **To reserve a space on the trip, email Tom Benson (thomasabenson@aol.com) with your name and phone number, the number of spaces you want to reserve, and the names of those in your party.** For more details please see the trip description on the [SBVAS website](#).

**Saturday, June 17, 2017 - 7:30 am
Wrightwood & Blue Ridge
Gene Cardiff (909) 875-5358**

The San Gabriel Mountains trip will start at the California Department of Forestry Mormon Rocks Station on Highway 138 at 7:30 am (map). Take I-15 north from San Bernardino or south from the Victor Valley and turn toward Palmdale on Highway 138. The CDF Station is located 1.5 miles up Hwy 138 on the left side of the road, opposite the large sandstone formation called the Mormon Rocks. (There are no restrooms at the CDF Station, use the restrooms at the gas stations near the off ramp.) After birding that area for 30-45 minutes, we will proceed up Lone Pine Canyon Rd into Wrightwood to Big Pines and eventually wind up at 8000 feet and Blue Ridge Campground for lunch. Bring a lunch, liquids and a good pair of shoes. We will look for mountain birds such as the Fox Sparrow, Green-tailed Towhee, Dusky Flycatcher, and Williamson's Sapsucker. Please don't forget: you will need an Adventure Pass (we will stop at the ranger station).

**Saturday, June 24, 2017, 5:30 am
Insane Jaunt to the Salton Sea
Tom Benson**

How would you like to see birds like Neotropical Cormorant, Laughing and Yellow-footed Gulls, Black and Gull-billed Terns, Burrowing Owl, Gila Woodpecker, and Bronzed Cowbird? All those and more may be yours at the mere price of 100+ degree average daily highs in the pungent glory and spectacle of the Salton Sea in summertime. With luck, perhaps something like a Wood Stork, Glossy Ibis, or Magnificent Frigatebird will appear (or is it just the heat?). **DO NOT COME ON THE TRIP WITHOUT: LOTS OF WATER, a large ice chest, lots of ice and snacks, a hat and sunscreen, a working air conditioner, and a full tank of gas.**

Meet at the overlook at the south end of Fig Lagoon at the ridiculous hour of 5:30 AM. The easiest way to reach this location is to go south on Drew Road from I-8, turn west onto Diehl Road, and then north onto Derrick Road. We will stop for lunch in Brawley at some place with air conditioning. Our route will be determined by where the birds of interest are being seen. Motels are available in El Centro for those wishing to spend Friday night in the area.

CALENDAR

Board Meetings: No meeting in July. First Tuesday of the Month, September 6, 2016, 7 pm

General Meetings: September 21, 2016, 7:30 pm

All meetings are in the San Bernardino County Museum, 2024 Orange Tree Lane, Redlands. Board meetings are the first Wednesday of the month, and General Membership meetings are on the third Wednesday of the month. To reach the museum, take the California St. exit off I-10, go north one block to Orange Tree Lane and turn right. The museum will be on your left. General meetings, except potlucks, start at 7:30 and doors open at 7. Potlucks begin at 6:30.

**SBVAS Officers 2015/2016
www.sbvass.org**

President: Brad Singer (909) 838-7951
First Vice-President, Program Chair: Dori Myers (714) 779-2201
Second Vice President: Dave Woodward (909) 783-2417
Treasurer: Nancy Higbee (951) 780-9236
Secretary, Meadowlark Editor: Pam Quittmeyer (951) 212-2211

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Conservation Chair: Drew Feldmann (909) 881-6081
Field Trips: Gene Cardiff (909) 875-5358
Mountain Conservation Issues: Peter Jorris (909) 867-3536
Membership: Pete Clark (951) 212-2467
Anthony Metcalf (951) 242-7038
Cin Greyraven (909) 327-8795
Pat Cawunder (951) 687-9486

WESTERN MEADOWLARK: Editor:
Pam Quittmeyer duckypam@gmail.com (951)212-2211

SBVAS WEBMASTER: Brad Singer bcsinger@gmail.com

BEARPAW RANCH: Cin Greyraven (909) 794-0509
truthraven@verizon.net

RARE BIRD ALERT: Tom Benson (909)-648-0899 or (909)-537-3309 or tbenson@csusb.edu

SBVAS BOOKSTORE AND GIFT SHOP:
Nancy Manning (909) 337-9401

Bearpaw Ranch

Bearpaw Ranch is a 70 acre nature sanctuary, operated by the San Bernardino Audubon Society and may be visited 7 days a week from dawn 'til dusk by members of Audubon and their guests. Bearpaw Ranch is nestled on the north slope of scenic Mill Creek Canyon at 4,500 feet elevation, surrounded by the towering peaks of the San Bernardino National Forest. To reach Bearpaw Ranch, take Highway 38 to the Forest Falls turnoff. Go several car lengths on Valley of the Falls Dr. and look for our small wooden sign on the right. Our driveway is on the right, marked 38801. The driveway is paved and unpaved road that meanders across Mill Creek wash and up the bluff to an electronically operated entry gate. Members who wish to visit the Sanctuary should call any board member in advance to get the gate code. It is not a requirement that the caretaker is at home for you to visit. If the gate does not open because of mechanical failure, you are welcome to walk in or stop for birding along the creek bed. Bearpaw Sanctuary, 38801 Valley of the Falls Drive P.O. Box 88; Forest Falls, CA 923396 Bearpaw Sanctuary is on Facebook; message us with questions and comments. If you type "Bearpaw Sanctuary" into the SEARCH function, you'll find us. Bearpaw visitors are encouraged to report interesting wildlife sightings and share their favorite nature photos from their Bearpaw visits.

First America's Birdiest County Attempt for San Bernardino County

Written by Michael Woodruff

This year's 1st ever San Bernardino County attempt at the America's Birdiest County competition, inland county category, was all around a real success. We had birders off and on scattered over the United States' largest county for a 72-hour period from 1pm Friday (Apr 21) until 1pm Monday (Apr 24). In spite of being the first attempt, we managed to find nearly all of the expected species, thanks to the efforts of many observers. Several birders especially were fully invested and really filled in the gaps.

Rarities though were in short supply despite efforts to find them. As White Wagtail, Yellow-throated Vireo, and multiple eastern warbler species were landing in nearby counties, our best rarities only consisted of a long-staying Dusky-capped Flycatcher and 2 rogue Neotropical Cormorants. Luckily, efforts to cover every body of water paid off with 21 species of waterfowl found (every expected winter duck species was found except Hooded Merganser), one advantage to doing the count this weekend instead of next.

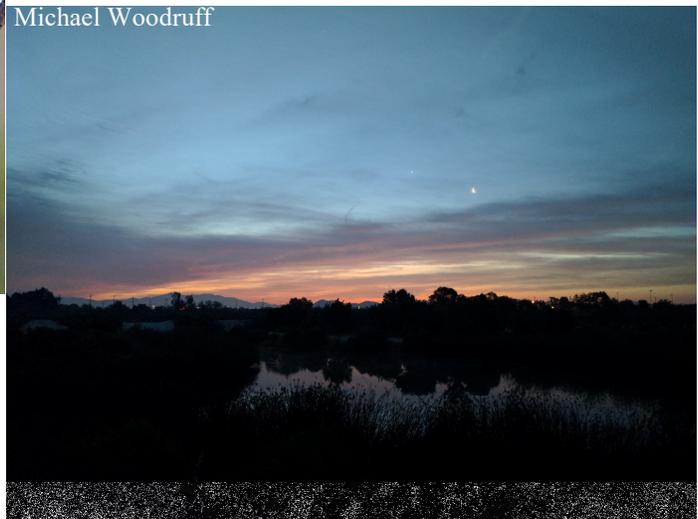


Michael Woodruff
Icehouse Canyon

found in April that decided not to land on our 3 or so shorebird "hotspots," not to mention rarer species that have no problem showing up in our neighbor counties. On Monday afternoon, 4 hours after the end of the competition, Dave Quady did have a Black-bellied Plover and a Dunlin at Harper Dry Lake, 2 species that we could have found but did not. Also missed Willet, Marbled Godwit, Whimbrel, Sanderling, and Wilson's Phalarope. Other misses include Chukar (seen 6 hours before start time), Olive-sided Flycatcher, Brown-crested Flycatcher.

Since we had very few unexpected species, and we missed a lot of shorebirds, I think a total of 236 is quite remarkable for San Bernardino County. This experiment speaks to the huge diversity that this county has even at baseline, without the rarities. For an inland county that does not have a place like Galileo and limited shorebirds/waterbird habitat, I'm pleased. I'm thankful for all the hard work of the birders of San Bernardino Co and others who came to help out.

Mill Creek Wetlands before sunrise
Michael Woodruff



Brad Singer
White-throated Sparrow

San Bernardino County needs all the help it can get when it comes to shorebirds! I feel this was the biggest failure this year but in a way there wasn't much that could be done. We located 15 species but there were 7 shorebird species that can easily be

May 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 SBVAS Board Meeting 7 a.m.	3	4	5	6 Whitewater Canyon Field Trip 8 a.m.
7 Box Springs Mountain and Beginning Bird Walk San Tim	8	9	10	11	12	13 Bearpaw Ranch 9 a.m. Field Trips
14	15	16	17 General Meeting 7:30 p.m.	18	19	20 San Jacinto Mountains Field Trip 8 a.m.
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 San Bernardino Mountains Field Trip 7 a.m.
28	29	30	31			

June 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Pelagic Trip Dana Point 6:30 a.m.
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 NO GENERAL MEETING IN JUNE	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Keep an eye out on our Website for word on SBVAS picnic in July 2017.

THE WESTERN MEADOWLARK

c/o San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society
P. O. Box 10973
San Bernardino, CA 92423-0973

Everyone is always welcome!

All meetings in the San Bernardino County Museum 2024 Orange Tree Lane, Redlands

Board Meetings
are the 1st Tuesday

General meetings
are the 3rd Wednesday



SBVAS Membership
currently at 1900

To reach the Museum, take the California Street exit off the 10 Freeway and go north 1 block to

Chapter Only Membership Application
San Bernardino Valley Audubon

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

__ SBVAS Membership @ \$20 a/year (includes subscription to *The Western Meadowlark*)

Email Address* _____

Please enclose a check payable to SBVAS

***We do not share your name, address or email address.**

Membership Application
National Audubon Society (NAS)

__ NAS Gift/New/Regular/Renewal Membership \$20 (includes 1 year of *Audubon* magazine)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please make check payable to National Audubon Society

SBVAS Chapter
C11

Please clip and mail all memberships to: SBVAS Membership Chair
P.O. Box 10973
San Bernardino, Ca. 92423-0973