

# EL TECOLOTE

*Newsletter of the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Incorporated*

Volume 35 Number 6

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## THROUGH FLUTTERING WINGS

BY GUY HAND

**I**t started with a notion that travel was the way to see the world. I built a career around it. And through my first decade of flight, I likened my movement to the migration of birds. That notion warmed the chill that came from always being somewhere else, always away, apart, alone; it gave my wanderings the ring of something near to natural. Another decade of travel has planed away that fiction. I knew nothing of birds.

My method of migration — jet travel — blurred all that wasn't moving at its own velocity: details of community, the ebb and flow of tides, the habits of birds, smeared across consciousness like bugs across the windshield. Motion weakened the meaning of distance, difference, and dialect.

So, I've been watching birds more closely. In turn, they've shown me a kind of travel not severed from place, but rather an expression of it: of flight in sync with seasons, with temperature, angle of light, and the availability of food. In my travel, I defied them. To track my movements would be to have followed the fluctuations of commerce and nothing more. I see now that birds are bound to land, through flight, as tightly as the farmer to his field. They follow the sun and the seasons like shadows, their "home place" simply migrating beneath them.

I've learned from birds that to truly see the world I have to reconnect myself to home, and to do that break my addiction to motion. I took time off. I bought binoculars. I followed birds into the nooks and crannies of Santa Barbara County — a home once hidden from me — into oak woodlands, wetlands, and tight-walled canyons. Along free-flowing rivers and vernal pools. Along secret paths. I knew this chunk of Southern California was more than beach, bikinis, and "Bay Watch"; but I didn't know it was half roadless and wild: Red-tailed hawks perch near sandstone cliffs etched with ripples from an Eocene sea. Hooded orioles hide among

sycamore leaves as wide as bear paws. Ruby-crowned kinglets flit through alders, and the tangled branches of chamise. A solitary ibis works among the reeds of a quiet coastal slough. And deep in the back country, above peaks cloaked in chaparral, condors fly. As birds reveal themselves, so does my home. So does the world.

Habituated, as I was, to the view from 35,000 feet and 500 miles an hour, the smallest woodland birds make the act of observation feel molecular. I move slowly, if at all. I try to drift through pools of brittle oak leaves (almost) as quietly as the juncos, to recognize detail among shadow, to step with deliberation, to inventory a patch of ground one branch at a time. I've learned to connect the fluttering of wings with temperature, angle of light, and the availability of food. To work toward the basic elements of locality.

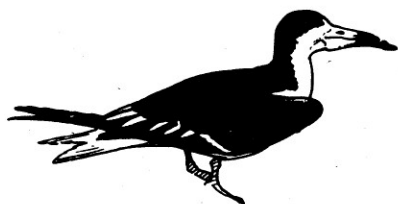
And, through those fluttering wings, I'm learning to trust myself to stillness.

*What little Guy Hand knows about birds he's learned by taking Fred Emerson's adult-ed bird classes for the last year and a half.*

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**MARCH PROGRAM  
IMPROVING YOUR BIRDING  
SKILLS:  
AN ILLUSTRATED WORKSHOP  
BY KIMBALL GARRETT**



Wednesday, March 26  
8:00 p.m. program; 7:30 p.m. refreshments  
Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History — Farrand  
Hall  
1226 Puesta del Sol  
Santa Barbara, CA 93105

For more details, call the Audubon Office at (805) 964-1468.

FOR THOSE OF US who find there is a need for a little room for improvement in our birding abilities, this month's slide-illustrated program will explore ways in which we can hone our field skills and apply them to important projects such as Breeding Bird Atlases and other surveys. Topics will include: the nature of bird identification, maximizing your time and efficiency afield, the importance of learning vocalizations, important birding literature (new and old), maintaining notes and submitting records, and applying your birding to conservation biology.

Kimball L. Garrett has been the Ornithology Collections Manager at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County since 1982. He and Jon Dunn authored *Birds of Southern California: Status and Distribution*, and their field guide to North American warblers will be published this June.

*El Tecolote* is published 8 times a year by the Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc. Non-member price for an annual subscription is \$10 per year. Audubon members are invited to send announcements, letters, articles, photos, and drawings for consideration to:

Janet Eastman, Editor  
525 Lorraine Ave.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93110  
(805) 964-6486 / (805) 969-4423 FAX  
jeastman@silcom.com  
Deadline for submissions is the 10th of the month.

## FIELD TRIPS

### GOLETA BEACH COUNTY PARK AND UCSB LAGOON

**Saturday, March 22, 7:30 a.m.**

Rob Lindsey: (805) 964-9514

Target: waterfowl, shorebirds

From the south take 101 north to 217 then turn off to Goleta Beach County Park. From the north take 101 south to Fairview Ave. Go south (right turn) and follow main road, which involves bearing right onto Fowler Rd. and left onto Moffet Rd. and follow signs to Goleta Beach. Meet at base of pier. Scopes useful. Trip over before lunch.

### VANDENBERG AIR FORCE BASE AND "McELIGOTT PONDS"

**Saturday, March 29, 6:00 a.m.**

Mark Holmgren, UCSB Vertebrate Museum of Systematics and Ecology

Target: birds of creeks, shore and serpentine outcrops; migratory waterfowl, Burrowing Owl, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Bell's Sage Sparrow

Drivers may appreciate gas money.

Take 101 to Storke/Glen Annie exit in Goleta. Go south on Storke Rd. to Jack-in-the-Box parking lot near corner of Storke Rd. and Hollister Ave. Car pool from here. Drivers must have auto insurance. To reserve space, call Paul Keller at (805) 968-7804 by Sunday, March 23. Let him know if you are not a U.S. citizen or if you want to meet the group at Vandenberg AFB. Trip lasts all day so bring lunch and water. Photo ID required.

### ANZA-BORREGO DESERT STATE PARK

**Saturday-Sunday, April 5,6**

Cathy Rose & David Kisner

Target: Long-eared Owls, LeConte's Thrashers, Lucy's Warblers, and other desert birds. Those who wish to meet to form carpools, please be at the Andree Clark Bird Refuge Friday, April 4 at 10:00 a.m. Participants will meet Cathy at Christmas Circle in Borrego Springs on Saturday, April 5 at 8:00 a.m. She will share her intimate knowledge of desert botany while David will help to identify

(Continued on page 3)

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birds. Call Paul Keller at (805) 968-7804 to reserve space (limited to 20) and for hotel and campground information. If after reserving a room you decide not to go, please call Paul before canceling your room reservation because there may be a waiting list. If enough people want to start Friday morning, Cathy will be available.

#### **TROUT CLUB, SANTA BARBARA**

**Sunday, April 13, 7:30 a.m.**

Rob Lindsey: (805) 964-9514

Target: spring foothill migrants, Northern Pygmy-Owl

Take 101 to La Cumbre exit in Santa Barbara. Go north on La Cumbre Rd. and turn left into Five Points Shopping Center and park at Carl's Jr. at 3925 State St. Car pool from here. Trip over before lunch. Bring snack and water. Trout Club residents Susanne and Carroll Barrymore will be our hosts for this normally off-limits area.

#### **LAKE LOS CARNEROS, GOLETA**

**Saturday, May 17, 8:00 a.m.**

Karen Bridgers: (805) 964-1316

Target: spring passerines

Take 101 to Los Carneros exit north on Los Carneros Rd. to Stow House parking lot next to fire station. Finish before noon.

#### **EAST CAMINO CIELO, SANTA BARBARA**

**Saturday, May 31, 7:30 a.m.**

Rob Lindsey: (805) 964-9514

Target: spring migrants, chaparral residents, Mountain Quail, Black-chinned

Sparrow, Bell's Sage Sparrow, Rufous-crowned Sparrow  
Drivers may appreciate gas money.

Take 101 to La Cumbre exit in Santa Barbara. Go north on La Cumbre Rd. and turn left into Five Points Shopping Center and park at Carl's Jr. at 3925 State St. Car pool from here. Trip over before lunch.

#### **INTERESTED IN A JUNE TRIP TO THE SIERRAS?**

Trip would be four days overall, led by a skilled montane bird observer with identification of dominant plants of various communities and limited to 12. Call Martin Kellogg at (805) 968-1418.

#### **CARPINTERIA SALT MARSH RESERVE**

**Friday, July 18, 6:00 p.m.**

Professor Wayne Ferren: (805) 893-2506

From Ventura take 101 north to Casitas Pass Rd. GTarget: Light-footed Clapper Rail, shore birds

o south and turn right on Carpinteria Ave. Drive west on Carpinteria Ave. to Estero Way (Apple St. on AAA map). Turn left and drive to gate. From Santa Barbara take 101 south to Carpinteria Ave. exit and take Carpinteria Ave. to Estero Way (1st right). Bring bag dinner if you like and perhaps insect repellent and join Wayne at picnic table at 6:00 p.m. or come later and join the group in the reserve. High tide is at dusk and may flush rails into view. Meanwhile, Wayne - the authority on the botany, natural history, and politics of the Carpinteria Salt Marsh, will share his knowledge. Those who wish to carpool may meet at the Andree Clarke Bird Refuge parking lot at 5:30 p.m.

*All field trips are open to the public. Unless otherwise noted, trips are free and reservations are not needed. If you need a loaner pair of binoculars for a trip, call the leader.*



☒ **YES!**

### **National Audubon Society Membership Application**

I want to join  
Audubon and help  
protect wildlife and  
wildlife habitats.

**Special new-member rate of \$20**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

*Make check payable to and send to:*

National Audubon Society  
Membership Data Center  
P.O. Box 5100  
Boulder, CO 80321-1000

*Local Chapter — Santa Barbara Audubon Society C13 7XCH*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Saturday, March 22	Goleta Beach County Park & UCSB Lagoon field trip
Wednesday, March 26	March Program <i>Improving Your Birding Skills</i>
Saturday, March 29	Vandenberg AFB field trip
Saturday-Sunday, April 5-6	Anza Borrego Desert field trip
Sunday, April 13	Trout Club field trip
Saturday, May 17	Lake Los Carneros field trip
Saturday, May 31	East Camino Cielo field trip
Friday, July 18	Carpinteria Salt Marsh Reserve field trip



## Rare Bird Alerts



Santa Barbara: (805) 964-8240  
 Los Angeles: (213) 874-1318  
 Monterey Bay: (408) 375-9122  
 San Francisco: (415) 528-0288  
 N. California: (415) 681-7422  
 Morro Bay: (805) 528-7182  
 Orange County: (714) 563-6516  
 Sacramento: (916) 481-0118  
 San Bernadino: (909) 793-5599  
 San Diego: (619) 479-3400

## SANTA BARBARA AUDUBON SOCIETY

Officers and Committee Chairs  
September 1996 - August 1997

### OFFICERS:

President: Lauren DeChant ..... 566-9314  
 Vice President: Lee Moldaver.... 682-2120  
 Secretary: Everett King..... 569-2307  
 Treasurer: Annette de Knijf..... 962-1325

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Conservation: Dave Wass..... 682-6962  
 Education: Elan Sutton..... 683-1143  
 Programs: Gage Ricard..... 967-3604  
 Field Trips: Paul Keller..... 968-7804  
 Membership: .....  
 Hospitality: Jay Bishop..... 565-2332  
 Publicity: .....

BIRD REFUGE: Rob Lindsay..... 964-9514

RARE BIRDS: Karen Bridgers..... 964-1316

### AT LARGE

Ron Hirst..... 967-0138  
 Rob Lindsay..... 964-9514  
 Sally Walker..... 569-5388

*Officers and Committee Chairs meet the second Thursday of each month. Members are welcome to attend. Please call the office to verify dates and times at (805) 964-1468.*

PEN & INK DRAWING ON COVER BY DARYL HARRISON

## EL TECOLOTE

Santa Barbara Audubon Society, Inc.  
 5679 Hollister Avenue — Suite B  
 Goleta, CA 93117

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