



DENHAM'S BUSTARD... Reginald Denham

It should be made quite clear to those who are unfamiliar with avian nomenclature that a bustard is a large bird. The word has no connection with illegitimate birth. The particular species named in the title lives on the African plains and happens to bear a Christian name that is my surname.

When I told people two months ago that I was going to East Africa on an ornithological safari with the express purpose of trying to find a Denham's Bustard, my lay friends cocked a jaundiced eye in my direction. They are aware that I work in the theater and regard everything I say as being tainted with unreality.

My theatrical friends also regard me with suspicion because I spend every spare moment—and there are plenty in a lifetime in the theatre—with a pair of binoculars glued to my eyes, searching for rare birds. They feel this is reprehensible. I should be sitting around arguing the pros and cons of the Living Theater and the Dying Theater, or thinking up ingenious tortures for dramatic critics.

As for my ornithological acquaintances, they likewise don't take me very seriously because of my questionable occupation of writing or directing plays for Broadway. They considered my statement regarding the bustard as being merely one of 'Denham's theatrical gestures.' Which it was, up to a point!

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DENHAM'S BUSTARD (continued)

A more accurate statement would have been that I was anxious to see as many species of East African birds as possible and that I hoped Denham's Bustard would be one of them.

Also, I was understandably curious to dig up what I could about this particular Mr. Denham after whom the bird was named. The fact that the bird's Latin name is *neotis denhami* indicates that he may have actually discovered it. Moreover, it is just possible that he could be some ancestor of mine because, when I started taking a precocious interest in birds at the age of ten, I recall my father saying to my mother, "the boy must take after his uncle somebody-or-other." He then went on to tell me that this relative was a great traveler and naturalist. I felt it would be fascinating to ferret out all the facts I could about him.

I duly left for Africa in early September of 1968 under the auspices of the Clara Laughlin organization. We were met at Entebbe on the shores of Lake Victoria by our leader, Donald Turner, who turned out to be a magnificent bird man with the eyes of a hawk. He also had what most of us did not have, the hide of a rhinoceros--an essential quality when you are bouncing over plains pock-marked with potholes and have to navigate the bumpiest roads on this planet.

Don told me that word had preceded me that I was eager to see a Denham's Bustard, and added the information that there was only one place where this ambition might be realized. We should be scouring that area on our third day. When that day arrived, three of us very nearly missed any possible chance of seeing either my bustard or any more birds at all.

We had stayed the previous night at a lodge perched on a declivity that overlooks the river Nile. A grass verge of about 30 feet separates the lodge from the edge of this incline. At dawn two other frenetic bird-watchers joined me, having been attracted like myself by the chorus of bird songs outside our windows. Ignoring a large WARNING: ELEPHANTS sign, we hurried across to the cliff's edge and skimmed the trees with our binoculars. There were Hooded Vultures, Fishing Eagles and Maribou Storks roosting on dead branches; several species of highly-colored sunbirds were probing flowers for nectar like overgrown hummingbirds; a shrike called a Gonolek with a startling tanager-scarlet breast made a noise like "tearing calico" and hippos wallowed below in the Nile.

We were completely absorbed. Suddenly there was a shout of "Watch out! Elephants!" from some of the other members of our party who were having breakfast on a terrace behind a four-foot wall. We turned and saw an elephant, presumably a female, with a baby at her heels, charging full tilt in our direction. Needless to say we forgot about nature and dashed for the terrace amid screams of derisive laughter. I think most of the derision was directed at me. I must have cut a ridiculous figure. Having broken both my legs in less dangerous circumstances birding on Long Island some years ago, I have not run one year for 15 years. My frantic attempts to do so during this emergency must have been something to watch. But I made it and to my own surprise, leapt over the wall with the agility of a Thomson's gazelle.

The elephant arrived in a foul temper a few seconds later. With a snort she thrust her trunk over the wall, grabbed a teapot and hurled it angrily toward the back of the terrace where we had retreated. A positively bitchy bitch-elephant!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Reginald Denham is a long-established New York director of plays and motion pictures. Among his many successes are "Ladies in Retirement," "The Two Mrs. Carrolls," "Wallflower," "The Bad Seed," "Dial 'M' For Murder," "Janus," and "Hostile Witness." He is also a noted playwright, and has written numerous articles on birds for ornithological journals. Reg has been chasing birds around the world for many years and makes his home in New York.

Later at breakfast, one of my still jittery companions suggested that we pour a little gin in our cereal to help us pull ourselves together. The waiter who served us this revolting concoction told us that the previous month this same elephant, finding no discarded food about the place, had dashed at the terrace in a fury and seized a carafe of white wine out of a lady tourist's hand. A matter of sour grapes, I presume!

About a half hour after we had downed our cream-of-wheat martini we headed out into wild country that bordered a lake. I was on the edge of my bumpy seat because it was Denham's Bustard day. It was a glorious morning and the air which smelled of Africa was as clear as highly polished glass. Every few yards new species of birds were added to our list. We saw six different kinds of plover, huge Goliath Herons standing motionless in the mud, Pink-backed

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AUDUBON CALENDAR

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1969 NOVEMBER 1969

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- November 6 THURSDAY EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING 8:00 p.m.
- November 8 SATURDAY FIELD TRIP. Santa Barbara area. Meet at the Bird Refuge at 8:30 a.m. As you enter Santa Barbara turn off highway 101 at Cabrillo Blvd. This is a left-hand off-ramp. Turn left at Cabrillo Blvd under the bridge and the Bird Refuge and parking lot will be on your right. Leader: OTTO WIDMANN 221-8973
- November 11 THURSDAY EVENING MEETING. 8:00 p.m. Great Hall, Plummer Park. Mr. Peter Alden of the Massachusetts Audubon Society will present his illustrated program "WILDLIFE AND CONSERVATION IN LATIN AMERICA." Mr. Alden, author of "Finding Birds in Western Mexico," has birded in many areas of the world. Formerly, he regularly led tours to Mexico and is currently a tour leader for the Massachusetts Audubon Society. His program will include photographs of wildlife in Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama and Venezuela and his subjects include sloths, anteaters, marmosets, monkeys, thick-knees, lapwings, Bearded Helmetcrest, five species of American vultures, Masked Duck, Whistling Heron, flamingoes, and Scarlet Ibis. Bring your copy of Mr. Alden's book to be autographed. Program chairman: ARNOLD SMALL
- November 23 SUNDAY FIELD TRIP. Eaton Canyon. Meet at 8:00 a.m. Take the Pasadena Freeway to Colorado Boulevard. Turn right and continue to Altadena Drive. Turn left and continue to intersection of Midwick and Roosevelt with Altadena Drive. We will look for foothill winter residents and migrants. Leader: PAULINE COLE 288-4604
- December 13 SATURDAY FIELD TRIP. Carrizo Plains. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in
 December 14 SUNDAY Maricopa at the junction of State 166 and U.S. 399. Take Interstate 5 north from Los Angeles to State 166, south of Bakersfield. Those planning to stay at the California Valley Lodge should write or call for reservations: California Valley, California 93453. Phone (805) 475-2272. Bring warm clothing for this trip! Mainly for the Sandhill Cranes (as many as 2,000 have been seen). We can usually count on Mountain Plover, LeConte Thrasher, Ferruginous Hawk and Golden Eagles on this trip. Leader: ARNOLD SMALL 837-9687

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Thirty-fourth Los Angeles Audubon Society Christmas Count, Sunday, December 28. Call LARRY SANSONE 870-6398, or Audubon House 876-0202 for assignments or details.

Fourth annual Palos Verdes Peninsula Count. Do your Christmas shopping early. Join us Monday, December 29. Contact Shirley Wells, 831-4-81, Grace Nixon, 271-.788 or Audubon House for particulars.

DENHAM'S BUSTARD (continued)

Pelicans diving for fish, Ground Hornbills clowning around in the grass like drunken legless turkeys. The great excitement, particularly to Don Turner, was a pair of Whale-headed Storks frogging among a sticky patch of papyrus. They are rather top-heavy looking birds, their heads being shaped more like safari boots than whale's heads.

Don explained that these were probably the last two Whale-headed Storks in East Africa. Once they had been common in this area but a year ago a naturalist had estimated that there were only four left. Now there were these two. A few pairs may still be seen in the Sudan but nowhere else. The species seems faced with certain extirpation--a forlorn fact confronting so many birds and animals, not to mention descendants of homo habilis, in this magnificent, sad, darker-than-ever continent.

Shortly after we had driven away from these doomed creatures there was a shout from Don's land-rover and I saw arms pointing to the track ahead. We drove up beside him, and there, standing a few yards away, was Denham's Bustard. Cameras clicked and the congratulations I received were so hearty that I was terrified the bird would be scared out of its wits.

But Denham's Bustard is a proud, imperturbable bird, as it should be with a name like that. Its feathers are not easily ruffled: it is seemingly fearless of man. It is one of the largest of the bustard group, standing nearly five feet tall. It has a stiff neck and thin, long legs which give it what the books call a "stately gait." In addition, it is the most beautiful of the seven kinds of bustards we saw during our safari, due mainly to its bright red-chestnut neck. At least, that is the opinion of homo reinaldo denhami.

Everybody wanted to see the bird fly so as to study the wing pattern. So I was elected to try and make it take wing, it being 'my bird.'

I got out of the car and walked towards it. It studied me with what I can only describe as complete disdain. Then, when I got within about three yards of it, it stalked off into the grass. I followed. It continued walking with long strides, holding its head high and turning back to glare at me from time to time. I quickened my pace. So did the bird. This went on for quite a while and I began to think that it would never take to the air.

Finally, for the second time that day, I broke into a run. I got nearer, bent forward and almost grasped its tail. Only then did it use its wings. By that time, of course, the bird and I were so far away from the cars that no one was able to study its wing pattern!

When I returned to the group there was a good deal of badinage, out of which grew the suggestion that this was an occasion for drinks all around before dinner (to be paid for by Denham). So when we returned to what I think of as "elephant walk lodge" drinks were consumed in not-so modest quantities. Indeed, my 'theatrical gesture' cost me a pretty penny...not that I resented it in the least. I had only myself to blame, I may add that nobody ordered cream-of-wheat martinis this time!

Were I able to talk to the animals like Rex Harrison, I would congratulate my bustards on their choice of habitat. It is one of the loveliest spots in the whole of Africa. With today's facility for travel it seems incredible that it was only 104 years ago that a white man first set eyes on this sublime waterscape. He was Sir Samuel Baker, the explorer, who was searching for the source of the Nile. When hungry, starving, fever-ridden and half dead, he stumbled upon the scene, he positively exploded into rhapsody. The beauty of the sheet of water which he described as "sea of quicksilver," the "blue mountains rising from the bosom of the lake," and the "boundless sea-horizon to the south" so overwhelmed him that he felt compelled to rush into the "gentle waves rolling on the white, pebbly beach." He ends his incomparable description by telling us that, with a heart full of gratitude, he sank down onto his knees and drank a deep draught from the sources of the Nile.

The body of water in his time was known by the natives as Luta Nzige. In a burst of patriotic fervor he renamed it on the spot, Lake Albert, after Queen Victoria's consort.

With the main part of my mission accomplished, I was able to wash my bustard out of my hair, as it were, and settle down to enjoy the astounding wealth of bird life we were to see during the rest of our safari. To give some idea of this embarrassment of riches, during the 20 days we were in Africa we saw seven short of 500 species. It was almost too much to take. Sometimes we would go from the sublime to the ridiculous. One moment we would be studying a tiny three-inch tail-less warbler called a Grombec, and on raising our heads, we'd find ourselves spellbound by the staggering seven-foot wingspread of some huge bird of prey, like the Crested Hawk-eagle.

As to the famed animals, though they were not our prime interest, one can hardly be indifferent to several hundred thousand zebras and gnus one sees when driving around in the Ngorongoro Crater. Nor can one ignore the black-maned lions sleeping in the trees at Lake Manyara, nor the great cat predators like the leopards

and the cheetahs to be seen on the Serengeti plain. Not that the leopard is easy to find these days. He, like the Whale-headed Stork, is on his way out, his fur having become too fashionable with the Jet Set.

Although I'd managed to put the bustard behind me after I'd found it, the identity of the individual after whom it was named continued to haunt me. I met quite a few naturalists at some of the lodges where we stayed but nobody was able to throw any light on the matter.

It was not until our last day, at Nairobi, where I was able to get access to some books, that I was able to glean one or two teasing details. Apparently the name of the bird first appeared on page 199 in a book published in 1826 called "Travels," the authors being Denham and Clapp. The place where it was first seen as Lake Chad. Recently a third Latin name has been added to *Neotis denhami*, namely *jacksoni*. The bird is now sometimes listed as Jackson's Bustard. We do know who Jackson was. He was a notable governor of Kenya and an excellent ornithologist. I presume the change in name was to honor his considerable contributions to ornithology. But as to who Denham of Denham and Clapp was, so far I have no clue nor have I been able to unearth the book itself. I suppose this means a visit one day to the British Museum reading room or the Library of Congress.

However, up until now I have avoided any further search. And for a certain reason. I remember being introduced in my teens to a famous antiquarian. On hearing my surname he suddenly became very excited. "Are you by any chance," he asked, "a descendent of the famous Sir John Denham who wrote a melodramatic tragedy called, 'The Sophy' in 1640?"

I replied that my mother had always believed this to be the case and that she blamed his bad blood for my desire for a career on the stage.

At this his excitement doubled. "We must go back to my house," he exclaimed, "and look up your ancestor in Dr. Johnson's 'Dictionary of Biography.'"

We did so. But when he read out the first sentence from the famous book, his enthusiasm evaporated and was replaced by acute embarrassment. It went like this. "Nothing can exceed the dullness of Denham!"

I don't think I care to face another phylogenetic letdown. It may be wiser not to attempt to disinter Denham of Denham and Clapp from the limbo of forgotten authors.

AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

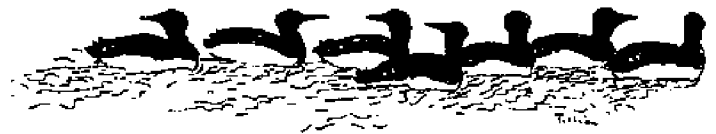
September 27-28 - TIAJUANA RIVERBOTTOM FIELD TRIP.

Some 50 members and guests met at Oscar's Restaurant in Imperial Beach at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday for the annual fall migration field trip, to the Tiajuana River-bottoms. The enthusiastic group carefully looked over all birds, especially migrants for the rare and unusual.

Weekend observations included an immature GOLDEN EAGLE soaring above the valley, a MARSH HAWK chasing a WHITE-TAILED KITE, and an OSPREY at Imperial Marsh. A grayish PRAIRIE FALCON, YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD, and nine BOBOLINKS discovered by Guy McCaskie the day before. Other birds seen but not by the main group included an immature FRANKLIN'S GULL, another 15 BOBOLINKS, one PRAIRIE and a single TENNESSEE WARBLER, and an adult plumaged CLAY-COLORED SPARROW.

Otto Widmann and Roy Fisk were the only members of the group on Sunday. A total of 103 species were counted.

Larry Sansone, trip leader



October 4 - MONTERREY. Joint trip with the Golden State Audubon Society.

The combined turnout for the annual fall pelagic trip off the Monterey coast drew a capacity crowd as usual. Three boats left the harbor right on time under the leadership of Val Dacosta. Kittiwakes were common birds in the harbor as we left. The weather was incomparable...clear skies, no wind, and balmy temperature...certainly not typical October Monterey weather. Each of the three boats got its share of SOOTY SHEARWATERS, PINK-FOOTED SHEARWATERS, COMMON MURRES, CASSIN'S AUKLET, RHINOCEROS AUKLET, but no ALBATROSS. The spectacle of the day were the rafts of PETRELS...literally thousands of ASHY, and lesser numbers of BLACK, with a handful of FORK-TAILED, and one LEAST...on Guy McCaskie's boat, would you believe! Other birds reported on the trip were a NEW ZEALAND SHEARWATER, SABINE'S GULL, and FULMAR. Two MARBLED MURRELETS were seen Sunday off the coast at Pacific Grove, and a BOBOLINK counted on the adjoining golf course.

Jim Clements

CONSERVATION CORNER...Joann Leonard

(This letter from Joann, who is vacationing in Puerto Rico, was received air mail special delivery just as the Tanager was about to go to press).

The following is a brief report on the conservation situation in the Caribbean area, particularly Puerto Rico. I didn't have the guide I had planned on or an opportunity to exchange views with anyone informed on the ecological and environmental problems of the area, so I must rely on my observations and comparisons with past visits. I do feel there are some things worth pointing up, particularly as they might compare with some of our problems here in Southern California. There is a calypso ditty which goes:

American city very pretty,
You will like it there.
Only two things you must not do...
Don't drink the water, and
Don't breathe the air!

This song always breaks everyone up, particularly the boys in the band. If there has always been one thing the people of the Caribbean have taken for granted it is their marvelous and self-renewing environment. For centuries these islands and surrounding waters have been farmed and fished. Wars and battles have been fought. Most of the native forest has met with the ax, to regrow in some cases, and in some cases not. But always the islands have seemed to retain or to regain a singular kind of freshness. Many of the smaller and more remote (if that word has any meaning today) still have that quality. In a few cases the remoteness has created hardship. On Anguilla for example, the year 1969 found most of the island without paved roads, electricity or piped water. The residents rebelled about this oversight (Anguilla is a British Colony) and they are now getting some of the benefits and facilities of the 20th century.

In Puerto Rico however, the 'good life' has arrived for a growing number of its citizens, and with the growing affluence... effluence. This year marked my ninth visit to Puerto Rico. I thoroughly enjoy the island and its people, but Puerto Rico's chief problem is too many people. The island is the most densely populated country on earth next to Java, and it may have outdistanced even Java at the latest count. Ironically Puerto Rico was one of the areas selected for the initial tests of 'the pill,' and the government claims that residents of Puerto Rico have the longest life expectancy of any country.

The island is well on its way to becoming a freeway connected to a shopping center connected to a subdivision, connected to a high rise apartment connected to a

luxury hotel, connected to a shopping center connected to a slum. Sound familiar? Rush hour on Avenida Ponce de Leon challenges anything Los Angeles can offer in frustration...and fumes. Industry has been welcomed with open arms, and one suspects perhaps too lenient an attitude. The industries present on the island seem to have few, if any, restrictions placed on them concerning air pollution. I saw stack after stack belching varicolored smoke and ash, which makes one wonder about what controls there are on industrial water pollution. San Juan is a city of well over one million people...and too few sewage treatment plants. Raw sewage is still being dumped into the sea near beaches backed by hotels where winter visitors pay up to \$100 a day for a room! On the south coast, near Ponce, a number of oil refineries are located, and a nuclear power plant is planned. Oil spills have occurred and the effects from some serious water pollution problems are making themselves felt. In an area such as the Caribbean probably the most potentially destructive water pollution problem is that of thermal pollution. In tropical seas the marine biota live at temperatures that are in many cases perilously close to the upper temperature range where beneficial marine life can exist and reproduce normally. Any abrupt or dramatic rise in sea temperature will not only change in some way the type of marine life present, but can completely destroy any desirable marine life.

The most disturbing aspect to all these problems is the general disregard of the local residents. It is more than apathy. In some cases it is ignorance, but in others it seems a firm belief that 'it can't happen here.' We've never had it so good, right? Right! So what is to worry?

There are, surprisingly, a number of bright spots. Despite the press of population there still remains a refreshing (although dwindling) amount of open space in Puerto Rico, crowned by El Yunque and its magnificent rain forest. There are miles of beaches, many completely undeveloped and some looking almost untouched. There is a surprising amount of marshland, much undrained, but plans are on those everpresent drawing boards. There is a good amount of bird life, which has been reported on by Betty Jenner in a past Tanager. There's not a great deal of variety, but there seems quite a lot of a few species. One of the nicest things that happened on the trip was standing on the wharf at Las Croabas on the eastern end of the island watching at least a dozen Magnificent Frigate Birds sedately gliding in widening and narrowing circles against a darkening stormy sky. For soaring they almost beat Condors. Their name is truly appropriate.

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The people of the Caribbean take their magnificent environment for granted. Now, particularly in Puerto Rico, it is threatened... by the same threats confronting Southern California... by the same threats confronting much of the world. The threats of "don't drink the water and don't breathe the air."

In Southern California perhaps we can be one up on the threats. Here at least we seem to be banishing apathy, our biggest threat, and if we can banish that, we can banish the others.

We regret the passing away of a long-time Los Angeles Audubon member, Walter Johnson.

His many Audubon friends will miss his willing heart and hands in Audubon activities.

CONDORS HOLDING OWN



The latest CALIFORNIA CONDOR census tallied 53 birds, according to the latest official figures. Despite early newspaper reports that over 200 condors were sighted, final reports showed that the 53 birds were almost exactly the same number as last year's count.

RARE BIRD ALERT IS BROKE!!!

Yes, it's true we're out of funds but with good reason. We've had five 'alerts' in two weeks, and they were very worthwhile with nearly everyone who tried finding the boobies and egrets at the Salton Sea, and the Sharp-tailed Sandpiper at Goleta.

We want everyone who is really interested to be able to participate, but we want to keep as small as possible. It is more efficient that way. Please send a dollar bill, along with name, address and telephone number to: SHUMWAY SUFFEL, 1105 North Holliston Avenue, Pasadena, California 91104.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BIRDS (cont.)

It has recently come to my attention that some birders are unconsciously (I hope) taking advantage of the active birders. When you call someone about a rare bird which that person knows about, please call back after looking for the bird with whatever results you might have. This will help keep the most current information available to the local "information center" for the next bird watcher who arrives to see the bird. Never leave a distant town without notifying the local people of exactly what you found, even if it was "nothing." It is very frustrating to learn several days later that a rare bird was seen by a visiting bird watcher in a park near your house. Remember that you greatly profit from what others have found; why not reciprocate and let them know if you found "their bird" where it was supposed to be or not. You can also benefit with rapid communications by learning that the bird was seen by another party "only 45 minutes ago at..." Many of these rare birds are seen for only one hour or less, and a quick phone call to the local birders is very much in order.

CONTRIBUTORS: Jon Atwood, Olga and Herb Clarke, Jean and Alan Craig, Julia Dembrowsky, Ralph Mancke, Guy McCaskie, Shum Suffel, Arnold Small and Shirley Wells.

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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BIRDS

(Jay M. Sheppard is writing this column in the absence of G. Shumway Suffell, who is off on a birding expedition to East Africa).

Another spectacular fall migration has greeted us in Southern California. The birds were here in excellent numbers and a wide variety of species with thousands of song-birds from the north, east and south of Southern California. Over the years about 70% of all North American species have been recorded in California. Many of these are recorded only during the fall migration (August to December). Some of the rarer species are 2,000 miles from their normal range. Birders often ask why there are so many rarities seen in California...particularly in migration periods. First, not all that many birds are actually seen by any birder any time. I would doubt if even one per 5,000 song birds is seen. However, birds far from their normal haunts apparently do concentrate in certain areas...usually for water and food and the stopping caused by some major geographical feature. These areas then become the favorite haunts of the active birders: Deep Springs, Furnace Creek Ranch, Morongo Valley, Salton Sea, Palos Verdes Peninsula, Point Loma, and Tijuana River Valley. Actually almost anywhere that is worked regularly (daily!) would produce a rarity or two each fall, if a careful check were made.

Most of these wanderers are just that, lost from the instinctive migration route and blindly continuing onward until stopped by the coast or pausing for water at a desert oasis. The reason for so many records is observer coverage during the past five to seven years. Much of this erratic movement has undoubtedly been going on slowly for the past 10,000 years or since the last glaciation. The only way species can move into new areas is to send "explorers" in all directions; those that survive by finding suitable nesting areas establish a new extension of range. Migration routes are probably founded on the same basis; those that find their way back may return over the same route each year. These migration routes must take many, many years to establish, perhaps thousands of generations.

As an example of the good numbers of uncommon species found this fall, nine AMERICAN REDSTARTS were seen in one day at San Diego. Prior to 1960 there were about that many records for the whole region. Twenty-four other species of warblers have been identified this fall in our area as well. The list of species is very incomplete at this writing so only a simple listing of the real oddities will be made here. Dates and observers are regretfully left out due to lack of both space and details on all these hundreds of observations.

SALTON SEA: 30 BLUE-FOOTED and 7 BROWN BOOBIES is the latest good count; most are at the Salton City Marina. LITTLE BLUE HERON, CATTLE and REDDISH EGRETS, and FRANKLIN'S and LAUGHING GULLS have been seen at the north and south ends in September and October.

SOUTH COAST: (Palos Verdes south to border): LITTLE BLUE and Several LOUISIANA HERONS, WOOD IBIS, ROYAL TERN (early), GOLDEN PLOVER, SOLITARY, BAIRD'S, and PECTORAL SANDPIPERS, and a BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD complete this partial list of non passerine birds. The song birds, as would be expected, form the larger list as follows: EASTERN and TROPICAL KINGBIRDS, VERMILLION FLYCATCHER, RED BREASTED NUTHATCHES (everywhere this fall), BENDIRE'S THRASHER, BOBOLINK (San Diego and Dana Point), BALTIMORE ORIOLE, ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK, INDIGO BUNTING (nearly a dozen total), and a CLAY-COLORED SPARROW. Some of the warblers have been PROTHONOTARY, BLACK-AND-WHITE, TENNESSEE, VIRGINIA'S, BLACKPOLL, (nearly 25 total!), MAGNOLIA, BLACK-THROATED BLUE AND GREEN, PALM, BLACKBURNIAN, CHESTNUT-SIDED, CANADA, BAY-BREASTED, and PRAIRIE.

Recent reports from the Fallaron Islands indicate two new species added to the California state list: BAIRD'S SPARROW AND CASSIN'S SPARROW. Fantastic!!! A trip out from Morro Bay in September yielded hundreds of petrels (LEAST, BLACK, ASHY, LEACH'S and one WILSON'S) and several TROPIC BIRDS. Not to mention a SKUA. The SHARP TAILED SANDPIPER was last reported at Goleta on September 21. As are most stragglers to this area, it was in fresh immature plumage, not breeding plumage as previously reported. (The breeding plumage of most sandpipers is obtained in the spring and lost after fall migration; thus it is worn and faded in September).

If you missed the fall migration of song birds this year, just wait until next year. Just as many species will turn up; the only problem will be your being at the right place at the right time. By now the waterfowl and winter visitors are starting to arrive in great numbers. A trip to the Salton Sea for seeing the thousands of DUCKS and GEESE would be most opportune after mid November. The SANDHILL CRANES might be back to the Carrizo Plains by Thanksgiving and perhaps a rare waterbird will appear in Upper Newport Bay. November holds many surprises as some of the northern species are forced south by the first real cold fronts. SPARROWS, FINCHES, LONG-SPURS, and WAXWINGS might move through inland, while along the coast the SCOTERS, GOLDEN-EYES, LOONS, GREBES, and pelagics move into the local waters.

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