

THE SANDERLING

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The Elephant & eBird – A Follow Up

In the Spring 2014 Sanderling edition, I wrote a story about a unique connection between ‘Christie’, an elephant in Salt Lake City, and eBird. Eric Peterson, the elephant manager at Hogle Zoo, came to Monterey on an eBirding visit where he and I met. A unique gift from Eric and Christie had Ame and me plan a future visit. In June of this year, we made it out to Yellowstone and on our way home we visited Hogle Zoo and had the best experience of our whole trip.

Hogle Zoo is a leader among zoos and their global conservation efforts are strong, ranging from Orangutans to Lions to Rhinos to Elephants. Eric and the Hogle Zoo recently made international headlines with their participation in a recent study on Elephants and cancer. They are also one of the few zoos that lead international trips where people can see animals in their native habitat, as well as experience first-hand conservation efforts. One of their biggest programs involves their African Elephants painting for conservation efforts. Revenue generated from the sales of Elephant painted products goes directly to Elephant conservation in Africa, where the funds are used to combat poaching, educate locals, help efforts in managing human vs. Elephant conflicts, upkeep conservancies and more.



Wine glasses and trunk print painted by Hogle Zoo elephants



Ame with George the Southern White Rhino

On our way back from Yellowstone, we were quite lucky to time a visit with Eric at the zoo. We met Christie, a beautiful and friendly African Elephant, and George, a puppy dog of a Southern White Rhino. We had experienced these species in the African wild, but to be close to them and touch them, enhanced the connection further with these animals and their plight in the wild. We never realized how stunning Elephant eyes are up close, how amazingly soft certain areas of a Rhino are, and how thick the lips of a Rhino can be.

Our experience only reinforced how small our planet is at times and how

connections and relationships with the natural world are so important to everyone. Experiencing these animals on the plains of Africa, then touching and interacting with them in Utah; a connection originating from Eric’s birding trip to Monterey. The end result is the inspiration to use and write about a program that tracks bird sightings and to educate readers on the other animals that share the world with birds. A link straight out of the imagination; Elephants to eBird. It has been an amazing story and another example of how one distant subject can impact another, just like this giant eco-system we call Earth.

-Chris Hartzell



Chris, Ame, and Eric with Christie the painting African Elephant

You can find out more at HogleZoo.org and see more pics from the trip at PhotoStrokes.net

Table of Contents

Pg 1: COVER STORY

Pg 3: FIELD TRIPS

MEETINGS & PROGRAMS

IN MEMORIAM

Pg 2: NEW SEAWATCH PROGRAM
SIGHTINGS

Pg 4: A TALE of a BIG DAY eBird story by Blake Matheson

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New Sea Watch Program

Monterey Audubon is proud to announce the sponsoring of a first ever sea watch program at one of the nation's most widely recognized single

most important land-based "sea watching" destination for birders in the West, Pt. Pinos, aka "The Point." It is the extreme Northwestern tip of Monterey Peninsula and offers 270° views of the bay. The birds passing by it are about to receive some long-overdue systematic attention in a ground-breaking initiative funded entirely by Monterey Audubon. Tony Leukering—one of the country's premier birders and "counting" authorities—will sea watch from the Point 6 days a week, for 6 weeks, beginning Nov. 1. Tony's count will coincide with the height of Pacific Loon migration and offer a unique opportunity to census that species during its peak movement. The eBird-driven log of his observations will create a much-needed "hard" dataset for nearshore seabird migration in the California Current and provide a baseline with which to compare future efforts. Those who are interested may stop by and sea watch with Tony and be a part of this new endeavor and maybe even see some interesting stuff too!



Laysan Albatross

-Chris Hartzell

Sightings

Recent reports of the more rare and unusual sightings from the Rare Bird Alert

Jul 1 – Oct 19, 2015

Long-tailed Duck 8/1 Pajaro R. mouth (RF+) **Laysan Albatross** 7/15 Monterey Bay (MBWW), 8/25 Pt. Pinos (BLS, CSc), 9/10&12 Monterey Bay (ShJ) ***Great Shearwater** 8/7 Moss Landing (K. Spencer) **Least Storm-Petrel** 9/27 Monterey Bay (2; ShJ) ***Brown Booby** 8/22 Asilomar SB (BLS), 9/10 Monterey Bay (ShJ), 9/20 Pt. Pinos (BLS+), 10/3 Monterey Bay (ShJ) **Broad-winged Hawk** 9/19 Jacks Peak (BTM), 10/10 Big Sur (BLS, CSc) **Swainson's Hawk** 9/4 Moonglow Dairy (BTM) **Solitary Sandpiper** 8/20 Crespi Pond (DR), 8/27 CRm (BTM) **Semipalmated Sandpiper** 7/26 Jetty Rd (P. Solé), 8/23-24 Moonglow Dairy (2, BTM; D. Weber) ***Laughing Gull** 9/20 BSRm (TEa, JCS, SRv) **Least Tern** 7/5 Pajaro R. mouth (A. Gabbe), 7/28 Pajaro R. mouth (J. Vargas) **Black Tern** 8/24 Roberts Lake (E. Becher +), 8/25 Pt. Pinos (3; BLS+), 8/26 Pt. Pinos (DR), 9/4 Salinas R. NWR (D. Bradford), 9/7 Roberts Lake (DGI), 9/9 Pajaro R. mouth (LGo), 9/10 Pt. Pinos (PFW, BHI) **Black Skimmer** 7/19 Pajaro R. mouth (D. & C. Ekdahl), 8/2 Jetty Rd (2; R. Horn), 8/9 Kirby Park (4; J. Walton) **White-winged Dove** 9/12 BSRm (BTM), 9/14 Moonglow Dairy (C. Nims), 9/14 Pt. Pinos (BTM), 9/26 Bolsa Knolls (D.M. Ferguson), 10/4 Moss Landing (DSy) **Chimney Swift** 9/12 BSRm (2; J. Luther) **Black-chinned Hummingbird** 8/17 Del Rey Oaks (CSc), 9/13 Monterey (MiR) **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** 10/7 BSRm (SBT+) **Gray Flycatcher** 9/10 BSRm (PFW, MiR) ***Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** 8/16 Ft. Ord NM (P. Fonken) **Tropical Kingbird** 9/11 BSRm (CRo, LRo), 9/22 BSRm (BTM), 9/26 CRm (MiR), 9/28 Laguna Grande (A. Munters), 10/5 Pt. Pinos (RC), 10/8 San Carlos Cemetery (RC), 10/14 Garrapata SP (CSc) ***Philadelphia Vireo** 9/9 BSRm (D. Gochfeld) **Red-eyed Vireo** 9/27 CRm (LRO, CRO), 9/29 Laguna Grande (DR) ***Yellow-green Vireo** 9/20 BSRm (TEa), 9/29 Laguna Grande (GaW+) **Sage Thrasher** 10/16 Palo Corona (RC) **Phainopepla** 9/24 El Carmelo Cemetery (MiR) **Chestnut-collared Longspur** 10/10 BSRm (BLS, CSc) ***Prothonotary Warbler** 10/8 BSRm (MiR) **Northern Waterthrush** 8/17 Carmel Valley (M. York), 9/7 Laguna Grande (V. Chomat), 9/20 BSRm (TEa), 10/15 Crespi Pond (DR) **Black-and-white Warbler** 9/25 BSRm (PFW), 9/26 CRm (MiR), 9/27 BSRm (T. Kurz), 10/7 BSRm (SBT+) **Tennessee Warbler** 8/22 BSRm (AMR), 9/19 El Carmelo Cemetery (BTM), 9/28 BSRm (T. Kurz), 10/18 Laguna Grande (BTM) **American Redstart** 9/15 Asilomar SB (MiR), 10/7 BSRm (SBT+) **Northern Parula** 9/20 BSRm (TEa) **Blackburnian Warbler** 9/30 Laguna Grande (RC+) **Chestnut-sided Warbler** 9/14 P.G. (BTM), 9/22 BSRm (MiR), 9/25 Moonglow Dairy (RRa, BRa +), 9/26 CRm (MiR), 9/28 CRm (PFW), 10/4 Pt. Pinos (SBT, LTer), 10/7 BSRm (SBT+) **Blackpoll Warbler** 9/15 Laguna Grande (C. Nims), 9/22 El Carmelo Cemetery (PFW), 9/29 Laguna Grande (BTM), 10/1 San Carlos Cemetery (BTM), 10/18 CRm (MiR) **Palm Warbler** 10/1 Laguna Grande (MiR), 10/2 San Carlos Cemetery (JfB), 10/17 CRm (DR) **Prairie Warbler** 9/18 Laguna Grande (BTM) ***American Tree Sparrow** 10/10 BSRm (MiR, RC), 10/16 CRm (BTM) **Clay-colored Sparrow** 9/21 BSRm (J. Luther), 10/10 BSRm (RC, MiR), 10/10 Pt. Lobos (H. Kochenderfer), 10/13 BSRm (DVP) **Brewer's Sparrow** 10/15 BSRm (LGo) **Vesper Sparrow** 9/24 Laguna Grande (PFW, MiR) **Green-tailed Towhee** 10/7 Moonglow Dairy (BTM) **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** 7/31 Carmel (JfB), 10/2 Monterey (MiR), 10/10 BSRm (MiR) **Blue Grosbeak** 9/5 Laguna Grande (MiR, H. Ceja) ***Painted Bunting** 9/12 P.G. (RC), 9/20 BSRm (TEa), 9/24 Frog Pond (V. Chomat) **Bobolink** 10/18 Zmudowski SB (DR, RC) ***Dickcissel** 9/21 CRm (J. Dobson) **Baltimore Oriole** 10/8 San Carlos Cemetery (RC) **Red Crossbill** 9/16 Pt. Pinos (7; BTM)

Cited Observers: Jeff Barnum, Rita Carratello, Todd Easterla, Paul Fenwick, Rick Fournier, Don Glasco, Lois Goldfrank, Chris Hartzell, Bill Hill, Sarah Lane, Blake T. Matheson, Monterey Bay Whale Watch, Robert & Bernadette Ramer, Michael Rieser, Alex M. Rinkert, Don Roberson,



Yellow-green Vireo

-Michael Rieser

Larry & Carole Rose, Steve Rovell, Cooper Scollan, Shearwater Journeys, John C. Sterling, David Styer, Brian L. Sullivan, Scott B. & Linda Terrill, David Vander Pluym, Gary Woods

* = very rare "+" = and others
BSRm = Big Sur River mouth
CRm = Carmel River mouth



American Tree Sparrow

-Blake Matheson

Field Trips

Field trips are free unless otherwise stated. Times are estimates. Please RSVP leaders at the contact info provided.

Sat. Nov. 14 – 7:30am-12:30pm: Andrew Molera State Park

Approximately 2.5 mile round trip on easily navigated trails, the walk will start in coastal scrub and quickly move into oak woodlands that gently slope toward the Big Sur River riparian habitat and end with panoramic views of the Pacific Coast that offers excellent sea watching opportunities. We can expect to see 50–80 species on this outing ranging from warblers to gulls. My focus for the trip will be basic bird identification as well as introducing you to a route that will provide the greatest opportunity to find that rarity. Meet: 7:30am behind Carmel Crossroads Starbucks. Please RSVP: Cooper Scollan, 831-241-1422 or scollancooper@yahoo.com Rain cancels.

Sat. Nov. 21 – 7:30am-11:00am: Carmel River mouth

One of the premier birding spots on the peninsula, Carmel River mouth is host to many species such as warblers, ducks, raptors and seabirds. The trip includes light hiking/walking through trails and then down to the beach to scan for seabirds. Meet: Behind the Carmel Starbucks (Crossroads) at 7:30am. Please RSVP: Paul Fenwick 831-262-0782 or paulwfenwick@gmail.com Rain cancels.

Sat. Nov. 28 – 8am-noon: Laguna Grande Park

This city lake area is one of our best locations for seeing a variety of birds, from vagrant warblers in the willow and eucalyptus trees to some of the marsh species like Sora. Join Chris as we explore the park, including going inside the recently opened up Virgin Ave. patch where new public access is being enhanced. Meet: 8am at the bridge below the Russian Orthodox Church. Rain cancels. Please RSVP: Chris Hartzell 831-375-9533 or c.hartzell@sbcglobal.net

Sunday December 20: Big Sur Christmas Bird Count

Join us for one of the most scenic and challenging Christmas Counts in the nation. Big territories, rugged country and special rarities predominate in Big Sur. **Contact:** Blake Matheson 831-324-4914 gypaetusbarbatus1@gmail.com

Sunday December 27: Monterey Peninsula Christmas Bird Count & Dinner

Steeped in tradition, our most popular Christmas Count! Join counters fanning across the beautiful Peninsula searching high and low for counts and rarities. **Contact:** Rita Carratello 831-375-0794 merops@montereybay.com

Meetings & Programs

Board meetings & Programs are open to the public and held at the Pacific Grove Museum the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Board meetings start at 6:00pm followed by educational & informational programs at 7:30pm, preceded by refreshments.

Nov 10: Preventing a California Extinction; Tricolored Blackbirds in the Sierra Foothills with Lowell Young

The Audubon California Tricolored Blackbird Team began about 12 years ago, when Lowell Young took on the responsibility for doing tricolored blackbird surveys in Merced County. In 2011, his team finally found the first colony of Tricoloreds ever seen in his survey area during the survey period, at least 60,000. During this period of time, he personally observed more tricolored blackbirds, though few in total numbers, in the foothills of the Sierra and grasslands adjacent to them than he had ever seen in the Central Valley. What happened to that colony of birds and several other events is the subject of his presentation.

In Memoriam



On September 17, 2015, Paul R. Eastman passed away at 91 years of age. A longtime resident of Carmel, Paul was born in Monrovia, CA, lived briefly in Bronxville, NY, then attended Duke University in NC. His college career was interrupted by two years in the Pacific with the Navy during WWII. Married in 1952, Paul and Lyn returned to California and to Carmel in 1982 where they ran a bed and breakfast for 20 years. Paul's career was in the residential construction industries but his passions were varied. An avid birder, he was rarely seen without a pair of binoculars and loved sharing his enthusiasm with others, especially up-and-coming birders like myself. Paul served on Audubon's board from Dec 1982 through Oct 1990. His positions on the board ranged from member at large, 2nd VP, 1st VP, President, past President and conservation. On a personal note, Paul was a family friend, taking care of my pet birds while my family traveled. He was one of the original "bird crew" I grew up with. He was well known as *master leader* of the Los Banos 2-day field trip, that my grandmother and Margaret Moody

took me on almost every year for almost a decade. I remember Paul specifically spending time teaching me about the area and how to lead the trip, half-joking that I would take it over from him one day. Decades later, I was honored when Paul invited me to co-lead the trip, and further honored the following year when he attended as a participant on my first time as leader. He will be remembered as someone whose cup was always more than half-full and who loved a good joke.

To read more about Paul: Walter Gourlay wrote an excellent in-depth story about him in the April 2004 Carmel Residents Association news that you can read here: carmelresidents.org/News0404.html

-Chris Hartzell

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MAS website: www.montereyaudubon.org

email: montereyaudubon@yahoo.com

Monterey Birds book \$5 at monthly programs

Monterey Bay Birders listserv:

www.santacruzbirdclub.org/Listservers.html

Don Roberson's site: creagrus.home.montereybay.com

Santa Cruz birders: www.santacruzbirdclub.org

DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!!! SUBMIT YOUR DUES FOR THE 2016 YEAR!

A Tale of a Big Day

by Blake Matheson

May 9, 2015 marked eBird's first annual global "Big Day." The wildly successful event inspired some 15,000 birders to fan out across the Planet and observe as many birds as they could. An astonishing 6013 species—60% of the world's birds—were logged in just 24 hours. Participation in the tropics, our planet's great bastion of biodiversity, was both impressive and encouraging and helps explain how such a staggering total was possible (more details can be found here: <http://ebird.org/content/ebird/news/gbd2015sum/>).

Here in Monterey County, the inaugural event mobilized Brian Sullivan, Paul Fenwick and myself to mount an effort. The County's longstanding Big Day record is an impressive total of 208 birds recorded May 1, 1999 by Scott Terrill, Steve Rovell and John Sterling. With the eBird event falling on May 9, the prospect of matching that venerable number was dubious. The first week in May sees the departure of a great many ducks and shorebirds here in Monterey County, while, at the same time, later-arriving migrants and breeders like Willow Flycatcher and Flammulated Owl have often not yet appeared. Nonetheless we mustered an energetic, if slipshod, effort in the name of citizen-science.

The day began at 3:30 AM in the Sullivan driveway of Townsend's Solitaire fame, at which point our fatigue was more palpable than any pretense to enthusiasm. The morning progressed auspiciously though, with a Long-eared Owl calling in the upper Carmel Valley and Lesser Nighthawks conspicuous on the San Lorenzo River east of King City. Yet, as the hours ticked by, we found ourselves working too hard and too long for too few birds to mount a serious challenge to the Rovell Record. For every triumph—Black-chinned Sparrows at Cone Peak, Blue Grosbeaks at Oasis Road, Burrowing Owl (presumably a breeder?) in the blackness of predawn—there were frustrating misses. With nary a night-heron and a dearth of ducks, it was clear by mid-afternoon at the Monterey Estero that our day would be no record breaker.

And by dusk, as the day wound down much as it had begun, in the Sullivan driveway, now laden with Pinot Noir and IPA in addition to an even more grinding fatigue, a kind of happy fatalism most birders would recognize washed over us. Birds are both habitual and ephemeral. It is their paradox and their charm. We had seen a great many beautiful things this day, which in the end is always "enough." So, with slurred speech and red-eyed musings we spoke of future efforts and finished Sullivan's wine. As we did, somewhere just up the dun slopes of Holman Ranch, our last bird of this Big Day, a lonely Tom Turkey, gobbled and thrashed in a thicket of live oak. He had doubtless been there all along.