

# CALIFORNIA SPECIALTIES

APRIL 27 - MAY 6, 2018

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*Southern California has long been regarded as one of the great birding areas in the country. This is due to a wide variety of habitats including deserts, mountains, shoreline, chaparral, grasslands and pelagic waters—all regions visited by the tour. It's no accident that some of the highest Christmas Count and Big Day Lists come from this region. As a further attraction, California is characterized by a high degree of endemism. Where else in the country would one go to look for Scripps's Murrelet, Allen's Hummingbird (two races), Nuttall's Woodpecker, Island Scrub-Jay, Yellow-billed Magpie, California Gnatcatcher, California Thrasher, California Towhee, and the recently split Oak Titmouse and California Scrub-Jay? This tour is planned in a manner to provide maximum opportunity to see all these specialties. Mountain Quail, White-headed Woodpecker, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, and Le Conte's Thrasher are best seen here, and we will attempt to find any wintering Yellow-footed Gulls, which may be lingering at the Salton Sea.*

*Our route takes us from coastal San Diego through the Anza-Borrego Desert, to the Salton Sea, to interior plains and mountains, and back to the coast at Santa Barbara, culminating in a boat trip to Santa Cruz Island for Island Scrub-Jay and pelagic birds along the way. The San Diego segment will focus on the California Gnatcatcher and associated chaparral birds such as California Thrasher and Bell's Sparrow, as well as Western and Clark's grebes at an adjacent lake. Birding the county's interior may yield Gray Vireo, Black-chinned Sparrow and - we hope - Lawrence's Goldfinch.*

*We'll travel to the Salton Sea via the starkly beautiful Anza-Borrego Desert, named after an early Spanish explorer and home to the rare desert bighorn sheep, which inhabit its rugged mountains. At over 600,000 acres, Anza-Borrego Desert State Park is the largest state park in the forty-eight contiguous states. Species we may encounter in this area include Greater Roadrunner, White-throated Swift, Costa's Hummingbird, Verdin, Black-throated Sparrow, Rock and Canyon wrens, Phainopepla, and western migrants in a desert oasis. We also have a chance to see the enigmatic Lawrence's Goldfinch in our travel this day.*

*An entire day will be devoted to birding the southern end of the Salton Sea, a unique body of water in a below-sea-level desert sink, whose only outlet is through evaporation. For this reason, its water is much saltier than the ocean and supports only three or four species of fish. Due to its unlikely location in the middle of a desert, however, the sea functions as a natural magnet for gulls and shorebirds. The waterbird spectacle here can be truly remarkable! Sometimes, a few Yellow-footed Gulls stay to overwinter and we will attempt to find one. These gulls are rare in the Salton Sea at this time of year, but this is the only place outside Mexico where they may be found. The desert scrub in the region holds Gambel's Quail, Burrowing Owl, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Crissal Thrasher, Common Ground-Dove, Inca Dove, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Gila Woodpecker, and Abert's Towhee, all of which we will endeavor to see first thing in the morning.*

*In the southwest corner of the San Joaquin Valley, our base in Taft provides close access to the habitat of the virtually mythical Le Conte's Thrasher. We'll try for this very local, difficult species in a location considered the best in California for seeing this phantom bird. Following our morning*

*thrasher quest, we will travel well up the slope on nearby Mount Pinos, whose summit exceeds 8,000 feet in altitude. The old-growth Jeffrey pine forests here are a delight, and birding in the cool, higher elevations should produce encounters with Band-tailed Pigeon, White-headed Woodpecker, Steller's Jay, Mountain Chickadee, Pygmy Nuthatch, Green-tailed Towhee, the thick-billed stephensi race of Fox Sparrow (a likely future split candidate), and Cassin's Finch. Mountain Quail, while difficult, are resident here.*

*The route through Cuyama Valley to Shell Beach will take us through classic oak savanna and chaparral habitats. Both Tricolored Blackbird and Lawrence's Goldfinch are possible - although these species are irruptive and unpredictable, with many occurring in some years while being totally absent in others.*

*Our motel in Pismo Beach sits atop a sea cliff complete with nearby Peregrine Falcon eyrie and nesting Pelagic Cormorants and Pigeon Guillemots. A morning watching Brandt's and Pelagic cormorants, Pigeon Guillemots, gulls and other shorebirds always proves interesting. Moving downcast toward Santa Barbara, we'll stop at a variety of good birding venues, looking for rocky shorebirds and woodland/savanna species, including the endemic Yellow-billed Magpie.*

*The last birding day of the tour combines the romance (although, hopefully, not the pain) of a pelagic trip with the opportunity to find one of North America's most restricted endemics, the Island Scrub-Jay of Santa Cruz Island. After leaving Ventura Harbor, we'll watch for both Sooty and Pink-footed shearwaters. Flocks of beautiful, breeding plumaged Pacific Loons fly swiftly up-channel on their way to their tundra breeding sites. We may be fortunate and see Pomarine and/or Parasitic jaegers as well. Nearing the island we hope to encounter Scripps's Murrelet, which breeds on the Channel Islands. The island itself should produce endemic races of Allen's Hummingbird (non-migratory), Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Orange-crowned Warbler, and Song Sparrow, as well as the occasionally difficult Island Scrub-Jay.*

**April 27, Day 1: Arrival in San Diego.** Participants should make arrangements to arrive at the San Diego (airport code SAN) Airport and transfer to our hotel today. We will meet in the hotel lobby at 6:00 p.m. for a short orientation session prior to dinner.

NIGHT: Quality Suites Mission Valley, San Diego



*Scaly-breasted Munia*

© Bill Adams in 2015

**April 28, Day 2: Mission Trails Regional Park, Santee Lakes Reserve, and San Diego Coast.** Our morning will begin at Mission Trails Regional Park searching for California Gnatcatcher, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Cassin's Kingbird, California Thrasher, Wrentit, Bell's Vireo, Spotted and California towhees, and hopefully many migrant species that move through this canyon. This is a good place to see Pacific-slope Flycatcher and migrant vireos and warblers. A quick trip to nearby Santee Lakes Reserve will be made to look for the resident, fantastic Wood Ducks that breed there, to see if there are any lingering winter visitor ducks, and to find the now countable Scaly-breasted Munia, formerly called Nutmeg Manakin.

NIGHT: Quality Suites Mission Valley, San Diego

**April 29, Day 3: Inland Oak Savannas; Anza-Borrego Desert.** Today begins with a drive to inland San Diego County to look for Gray Vireo, Black-chinned and Lark sparrows, Oak Titmouse, *belli* race of Bell's Sparrow, Rock Wren and Bullock's Oriole. We usually hear Mountain Quail, but seeing one is very difficult. In the border town of Jacumba we will search for Tricolored Blackbird. As we climb into the mountains, we will look for Mountain Chickadee and Acorn Woodpecker. Near Santa Isabel we will try for Lawrence's Goldfinch. In the Anza-Borrego Desert, we will look for such specialties as Costa's Hummingbird, Rock and Canyon wrens, Verdin, Cactus Wren, Scott's Oriole and Black-throated Sparrow. We will then drive to Brawley, our base for the Salton Sea.

NIGHT: Brawley Inn, Brawley

*Tricolored Blackbird*  
© Tom Wilberding in 2014



*Yellow-footed Gull*  
© Sue Taylor in 2013

**April 30, Day 4: Salton Sea.** Although difficult to find at this time of year, we'll try for any lingering, wintering Yellow-footed Gulls, but also search for Crissal Thrasher, Gila Woodpecker, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Cactus Wren, Abert's Towhee, Ridgway's Rail (a recent split from Clapper Rail) and the thousands of waders and gulls found this time of year. You will be amazed at the spectacle. Burrowing Owl is guaranteed with our record being 29 in one day. Finney Lake is our best bet for Common Ground-Dove, Inca Dove, and Least Bittern (rare) while Ramer Lake has hundreds of breeding birds, including rare Neotropic Cormorants and some residents mentioned above. Early returning Bronze Cowbirds are best looked for in residential areas in Brawley.

NIGHT: Brawley Inn, Brawley

**May 1, Day 5: Brawley to Salton City to Big Morongo.** Today we will check any areas around the south end of the Salton Sea that were missed on the previous day and work our way up to Salton City or instead drive along the eastern edge of the Salton Sea on our way to Big Morongo. There are many locations to check here, especially for Yellow-footed Gulls, which often have one individual somewhere in this vast shoreline. This seems to be the best place to also see Red Knots and White Pelicans. If time permits, we will make it to Big Morongo by late afternoon and have a chance to check this wonderful desert oasis for migrating and resident birds. The caretaker has chairs where we can relax while watching the birds that come to feed at his 12 bird feeders or bathe in the water drip area. Target birds here are both Hooded and Bullock's orioles, Brown-crested and Vermilion flycatchers, Lawrence's and Lesser goldfinches, and Summer Tanager.

NIGHT: Best Western Joshua Tree Hotel & Suites, Yucca Valley



*Lawrence's Goldfinch*  
© Mona Cavallero in 2012



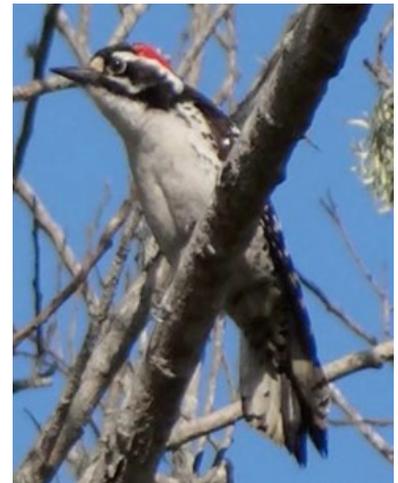
**May 2, Day 6: Big Morongo to Taft, Kern County.** We will get an early start today at Big Morongo, which will permit us to walk some of the trails as well as check the feeders again for any target birds we may have missed yesterday. Then we will start the drive to Taft in Kern County via the road that leads up to Mount Pinos. Here we often pick up White-headed Woodpecker, Mountain Chickadee, White-breasted and Pygmy nuthatches and Steller's Jay. If we arrive in sagebrush lowlands early enough, we will search the desert sagebrush vegetation between Taft and Maricopa for the elusive and shy Le Conte's Thrasher and also look for the recently split off Bell's Sparrow.

Night: Best Western Plus, Taft

*Le Conte's Thrasher*  
© Bill Adams in 2015

**May 3, Day 7: Taft to Mount Pinos to Pismo Beach.** The day will start early with a search for Le Conte's Thrasher and the *canescens* race of Sage Sparrow if we did not see them the previous evening. At nearby Mt. Pinos we'll look for Mountain Chickadees, White-headed and Nuttall's woodpeckers, Golden Eagle, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Green-tailed Towhee, Thick-billed or *stephensi* race of Fox Sparrow, Cassin's Finch, and possibly, Mountain Quail. California Condors are occasionally being seen here again so we will spend some time at three special lookout spots before heading across the Cayuma Valley to our final destination at the fancy Pismo Beach hotel where you will have balcony views of the Pacific. In some years, from their balconies, several participants watched bottlenose dolphins cavorting just offshore and last year we saw Gray Whales from the dinner table at the Ventana Grill.

NIGHT: Best Western Shore Cliff Lodge, Pismo Beach



*Nuttall's Woodpecker*  
© Sue Taylor in 2013



*Yellow-billed Magpie*  
© Billy Dowling in 2010

**May 4, Day 8: Sea Cliffs, Savannah, and Chaparral.** Today we will travel through country known for the California endemic, Yellow-billed Magpie whose populations have been vastly reduced by the West Nile virus and thus are more difficult to locate. Before breakfast we will stop at a rocky cliff overlook to scan for Black Oystercatcher and late-departing winter visitors like Wandering Tattler, Black Turnstone and Surfbird. Pigeon Guillemots nest here in large numbers and Sea Otters are usually seen. Traveling down the coast on our way to Santa Barbara, we will bird coastal southern San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties for western migrants and breeding species including Allen's Hummingbird, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Wrentit, California Thrasher, Spotted Towhee and Hutton's Vireo. Depending on our luck, we may have time to visit a few other locations on our way to Santa Barbara.

NIGHT: Best Western Pepper Tree Inn, Santa Barbara



**May 5, Day 9: Pelagic Trip; Santa Cruz Island.** Our catamaran departs at 9:00 a.m. for Santa Cruz Island from the Ventura Harbor. Pelagic birding to and from the island should produce Pacific Loon in breeding plumage, Sooty and maybe Pink-footed shearwater, possibly Pomarine and Parasitic jaeger, and a good chance of Scripps's Murrelet. Rhinoceros and Cassin's auklets and whales are sometimes seen on our way to and/or back from the island. Red-necked and Red phalaropes are also possible. Once we dock at Prisoner's Harbor, we will look for Island Scrub-Jay along with endemic subspecies of Allen's Hummingbird, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Orange-crowned Warbler, and Song Sparrow.

NIGHT: Best Western Pepper Tree Inn, Santa Barbara

*Island Scrub-Jay*  
© Jay Hunner in 2011

**May 6, Day 10: Departure for Home.** Participants may plan to depart for home from Santa Barbara (airport code SBA) any time today. Because Jeri has to drive the van back to San Diego, there is another option for you. You can accompany him if you are willing to stop in Ventura where he visits a college classmate that takes him out in a small boat in the Ventura Harbor. Plan for a late afternoon or early evening flight.

**EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS:** Should you wish to make arrangements to arrive early or extend your stay, please contact the VENT office at least two months prior to your departure date. We can very easily make hotel arrangements and often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

**TOUR SIZE:** This tour will be limited to 7 participants.

**TOUR LEADER: Jeri M. Langham**



**Jeri M. Langham** has a Ph.D. in plant ecology from Washington State University, and after 38 years as a professor of biological sciences at California State University in Sacramento, retired in May 2008. He received the first Outstanding Teacher Award from the newly formed College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics in 1997; the Outstanding Faculty Award from the Science Educational Equity and Minority Organization of Science Students organizations in 2005; and his University's third annual Lifetime Achievement Award for Community Service in 2006. Jeri has ardently birded all over North America, as well as Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama, Venezuela, Ecuador, the Galapagos Islands, Peru, Brazil, Argentina, Kenya, Borneo, and Australia. Born and raised in Venezuela, he speaks fluent Spanish. Known for his enthusiasm and boundless energy, Jeri thoroughly enjoys searching for birds and sharing

them with others. His passion for teaching and his natural teaching abilities soon become apparent as his tour participants enjoy learning more about the biological world around them. Jeri is a former member of the Bausch and Lomb Birding Council and the California Bird Records Committee. He is a Director for the Neotropical Grassland Conservancy.

**FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:** The fee for the tour is **\$3595** per person in double occupancy from San Diego (tour ends in Santa Barbara). This includes all meals beginning with dinner on Day 1 through dinner on Day 9, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, ground transportation during the tour, pelagic trip on Day 9, gratuities, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does not include airfare from your home to San Diego

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with return from Santa Barbara, airport departure taxes, alcoholic beverages, special gratuities, phone calls, laundry, or items of a personal nature.

The single supplement for this tour is **\$700**. You will be charged a single supplement if you desire single accommodations, or if you prefer to share but have no roommate and we cannot provide one for you.

**FUEL AND FUEL SURCHARGES:** In the uncertain, often volatile oil market of late, it is difficult – if not impossible – to predict fuel costs over the long term, and more specifically, at the time of operation of this departure. Our prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, if the fuel rates increase significantly, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

**REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT:** To register for this tour, please contact the VENT office. The initial deposit for this tour is **\$300** per person. If you would like to pay your initial deposit by check, money order, or bank transfer, your tour space will be held for 10 days to allow time for the VENT office to receive your deposit and completed registration form. If you prefer to pay the initial deposit using a credit card, your deposit must be made with MasterCard, Visa, or American Express at the time of registration. The VENT registration form (available from the VENT office or by download at [www.ventbird.com](http://www.ventbird.com)) should then be completed, signed, and returned to the VENT office.

**PAYMENTS:** Initial tour deposits may be made by MasterCard, Visa, American Express, check, money order, or bank transfer. All other tour payments, including second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc., must be made by check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days prior to the tour departure date.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** Refunds are made according to the following schedule: If cancellation is made 120 days or more before the tour departure date, a cancellation fee of **\$150** per person will be charged unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be **\$50** per person. If cancellation is made between 120 and 90 days before departure date, the deposit is not refundable, but any payments covering the balance of the fee will be refunded. If cancellation is made fewer than 90 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also applies to pre-trip and post-trip extensions. *We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance for your protection.*

<u>If you cancel:</u>	<u>Your refund will be:</u>
120 days or more before departure date	Your deposit minus \$150*
Between 120 and 90 days before departure	No refund of the deposit, but any payments on the balance will be refunded
Fewer than 90 days before departure date	No refund available

\*Unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be \$50 per person.

Upon cancellation of the transportation or travel services, where you, the customer, are not at fault and have not cancelled in violation of the terms and conditions of any of the contract for transportation or travel services, all sums paid to VENT for services not received by you will be promptly refunded by VENT to you unless you otherwise advise VENT in writing.

**Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.**

**TRIP CANCELLATION INSURANCE:** We strongly recommend that you purchase trip cancellation insurance as soon as possible to protect yourself against losses due to accidents or illness. VENT recommends *Travel Insured International* as our preferred insurance provider. Check with your insurance agent regarding coverage you may presently have via other insurance policies that may cover illness during your trip.

**Waiver for pre-existing conditions is available; however, stipulations apply, usually requiring the purchase of the insurance soon after registering.** Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as work-related cancellation, medical upgrade, and a “Cancel for Any Reason” clause among others. Contact *Travel Insured International* (800-243-3174 or [www.travelinsured.com](http://www.travelinsured.com)) prior to registration for details. Not all insurance providers provide the same levels of coverage. If you purchase insurance through a company other than *Travel Insured International*, please be advised that rules and stipulations may be different.

**AIR INFORMATION:** Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements.

**BAGGAGE AND TRANSPORTATION:** As space in the vehicle will be tight, we ask that you limit your luggage to one medium suitcase and a carry-on bag. As a precaution, we urge you to pack a change of clothes, your binoculars, medication, toiletries, walking shoes and other essentials in your carry-on bag for your airline flight. We will log approximately 1600 miles in the van during the tour. Although we will stop to bird many times, some days will be predominantly spent in transit.

**CLIMATE:** The weather in southern California is generally quite pleasant at this season. Daytime highs should range from the upper 50s to the low 80s, with 100 degrees possible in the desert. Nighttime lows should be in the 40s. Rain is not normally expected at this season; however, rain gear could prove useful. Altitudinal changes will vary from sea level to over 8,000 feet elevation. Most walks on this tour will be over short distances (a mile or less) and will be conducted at a moderate to leisurely pace. To take advantage of the best time for bird activity, we will usually begin birding during the dawn hours.

**CLOTHING:** Basic field clothing is appropriate for this tour. **PLEASE AVOID BRIGHT COLORS SUCH AS WHITE, YELLOW, ORANGE, PINK, RED and BABY BLUE** on clothes you will wear while we are birding. These colors are fine when not birding. A combination of long-sleeved and short-sleeved shirts may be useful, given the widely varying temperatures. Cool mornings will call for sweaters, light jackets, or possibly a heavier jacket if temperatures dip low enough. A warm jacket, gloves, and a warm hat (all water-proof) are recommended for the pelagic trip and for potentially cold mornings. Be sure to have a comfortable pair of light, ankle-high hiking boots for occasional rocky terrain and a second pair of lightweight shoes. Casual attire will be acceptable for all restaurants in which we dine. You may wish to bring a swim suit.

**EQUIPMENT:** You should pack a pair of binoculars that are in good condition, along with a belt pack or day pack (good for carrying books, sunscreen, extra digital storage media, film, etc.). As a precaution, it is a good idea to pack your binoculars, a change of clothing, toiletry items, medications, and travel documents in your airline carry-on bag. If you have a scope and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so. It will be useful when we scan mudflats and coastlines. Other items should include a flashlight or headlamp, sunglasses, lip ointment, gloves (for chilly mornings and the pelagic trip), tissue paper, alarm clock, and ear plugs (for unlikely noisy nights). For the pelagic trip, bring the motion sickness remedy of your choice, if applicable.

**HEALTH:** If you are taking prescription medication or over-the-counter medicine, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication. As standard travel precautions, you should always be up to date with tetanus shots, and strongly consider inoculations against Hepatitis types A and B.

**INSECT PROTECTION:** Mosquitoes and other biting insects may be a problem, but it is unlikely. If you wish to take precautions, we suggest one bottle of Cutter and a pump-spray bottle of OFF or any other product with 100% DEET. There are no chiggers to worry about.

**SUGGESTED READING:** A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) which has a wide selection; [www.buteobooks.com](http://www.buteobooks.com) and [www.nhbs.com](http://www.nhbs.com) which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com) for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

### ***Field Guides***

- Conant, Roger, Robert C Stebbins & Joseph T. Collins. *Peterson First Guides: Reptiles and Amphibians*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992.
- Dunn, Jon L. and Jonathan Alderfer, editors. *Field Guide to the Birds of Western North America*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2008. Excellent and easy to carry in the field.
- Elder, Tamara. *Mammals of California*. Lone Publishing International, 2005
- Farrand, John Jr. *The Audubon Society Master Guide to Birding*. Volumes 1, 2 and 3. New York: Chanticleer Press, Inc., 1983.
- Floyd, Ted. Smithsonian. *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*. 1st Edition. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008.
- Glassberg, Jeffrey. *Butterflies Through Binoculars: The West: A Field Guide to the Butterflies of Western North America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Jameson, E.W. Jr. and H.J. Peeters. *California Mammals*. California Natural History Guide Series. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.
- Kaufman, Kenn. *Birds of North America* (Kaufman Focus Guides). New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2000.
- National Geographic Society. *A Field Guide to the Birds of North America*. Sixth Edition. Washington, D.C. National Geographic Society, 2011. Be sure you get the newest (6th edition).
- Peterson, Roger T. *Peterson Field Guide to birds of North America*. 1st Edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2009.
- Pough, Richard H. *Audubon Western Bird Guide*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1975. Contains beautifully written, concise compilations of the habits of western specialties.
- Sibley, David Allen. *The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Western North America*. New York: Knopf, 2003. Excellent and easy to carry in the field.
- Sibley, David Allen. *The Sibley Guide to Birds*. 2nd Edition. New York: Knopf, 2014 Excellent, but large & heavy.

### ***General Reading & Reference***

- Garrett, Kimball and Jon Dunn. *Birds of Southern California: Status and Distribution*. Los Angeles: Artisan Press, 1981.
- Schram, Brad. *A Birder's Guide to Southern California*. 5th Edition. Colorado Springs: ABA Press, 2007.
- Small, Arnold. *California Birds: Their Status and Distribution*. Vista, CA: Ibis Publishing, 1994.
- Stallcup, Rich. *Ocean Birds of the Nearshore Pacific*. Stinson Beach, CA: Point Reyes Bird Observatory, 1990. Zimmer, Kevin J. *Birding in the American West: A Handbook*. Cornell University Press, 2000.

**TIPPING:** Tipping (restaurant staff, porters, drivers, local guides) is included on VENT tours. However, if you feel your VENT leader has given you exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that tips are not expected and are entirely optional. Tips should be given directly to your tour leader; they should not be sent to the VENT office.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc. (VENT) and/or its Agents act only as agents for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in

conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT and its agents can accept no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. The right is reserved to substitute hotels of similar category for those indicated and to make any changes in the itinerary where deemed necessary or caused by changes in air schedules. The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case full refund will constitute full settlement to the passenger. The right is reserved to substitute leaders on any tour. Where this is necessary, notification will be given to tour members. No refund will be made for any unused portion of the tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. The prices of the tours are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on June 28, 2017 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change therein. The right is reserved to decline to accept or to retain any person as a member of any tour. Baggage is at owner's risk entirely. The airlines concerned and their agents and affiliates are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their aircraft. The passenger ticket in use by said airlines, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the airlines and the purchaser of these tickets and/or passenger. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for these tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airline Reporting Corporation.

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