

Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii*

Breeding in the Arctic and wintering in South America, Baird's Sandpiper migrates principally along the east flank of the Rocky Mountains. As a result it is rare in San Diego County; almost all occurring here are juveniles in fall migration. Baird's Sandpiper prefers fresh or brackish water; it is not expected on tidal mudflats.

Migration: Baird's Sandpiper is seen most regularly at northern San Diego County's coastal lagoons and in the Tijuana River valley. High counts for these areas are four at the Santa Margarita River mouth (G4) 25 August 1998 (P. A. Ginsburg) and six at the sod farm in the Tijuana River valley (W11) 13 September 2001 (B. Foster). Though reports inland are fewer, the largest concentrations of Baird's Sandpipers recorded in San Diego County have been at Lake Henshaw (G17): by far the largest was of 92 on 2 September 1985 (R. Higson, AB 40:158, 1986). In the early 1980s, K. L. Weaver found Baird's Sandpiper almost annually at the east end of Lake Hodges (K11) with up to four on 22 September 1985. Regular surveys of inland reservoirs in fall (not part of the atlas study) might reveal Baird's Sandpiper to be more frequent there than along the coast.

The earliest fall record of Baird's Sandpiper in San Diego County is the only record of an adult, at Batiqitos



Photo by Jack C. Daynes

Lagoon (J7) 11–14 July 1982 (G. McCaskie, AB 36:1016, 1982). Juveniles begin to appear shortly after this date, however, their frequency peaking in late August and early September. The latest apparently valid date is 29 October (1964, one in the Tijuana River valley, AFN 19:79, 1965).

Conservation: Over the last quarter of the 20th century, muddy ponds, irrigated pastures, and temporary wetlands in coastal San Diego County have been reduced, eliminating many sites where Baird's Sandpiper formerly occurred.