

Franklin's Gull *Larus pipixcan*

On its commute between a breeding range in the intermountain basins and the Great Plains and a winter range off the Pacific coast of Central and South America, Franklin's Gull passes largely to the east of San Diego County. The species is a rare migrant here, with a few immature stragglers recorded in winter.

Migration: In spring, Franklin's Gull has been recorded in San Diego County only about 12 times, on dates from 11 April (1971, Oceanside, H5, AB 25:801, 1971) to 29 June (1998, Santee Lakes, P12, M. B. Mulrooney). The latter was unusual in also being the only inland record in spring or early summer. The only other observations during the atlas period were of one in the south San Diego Bay salt works (U10) 19 May 1999 (R. T. Patton) and three at the mouth of Las Flores Creek (E3) 30 May 1998 (R. and S. L. Breisch), the latter being the only spring sighting of more than a single bird.

In fall Franklin's Gull is more frequent than in spring, though its frequency has decreased since the 1970s. Fall records extend from 6 September (1963, one at the Santa Margarita River mouth, G4, McCaskie and Cardiff 1965), exceptionally 29 July (1951, same locality, AFN 5:308, 1951), to 8 December (1966, Lake Henshaw, G17, C. G. Edwards, NASFN 51:802, 1997). Fall records are mainly



Photo by Anthony Mercieca

coastal but include at least two from Lake Henshaw and one from Lake Hodges (K10; G. McCaskie).

Winter: Franklin's Gull has been noted in San Diego County seven times in winter. Unitt (1984) listed four records, including the only one inland, at Lake Hodges 10 November 1979–5 January 1980 (AB 34:306, 1980). Subsequently one was at the San Diego River mouth (R7) 29 December 1987–20 January 1988 (E. Lodge, AB 42:321, 1988), one was at Chula Vista (U10) 16 January–11 February 1990 (E. R. Lichtwardt, AB 44:329, 1990), and one was at Coronado (S9/T9) 18 February 1997 (E. Copper, NASFN 51:802, 1997).