

Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius*

Two species of oriole breed in eastern North America, the Baltimore and the Orchard. The Orchard is the less frequent as a vagrant to California but still reaches San Diego County in fall at the rate of about one every other year. There are about 20 records for winter and two for spring. Because the Orchard and Hooded Orioles are so similar in the female and immature plumages, the Orchard must be identified in southern California with caution.

Migration: San Diego County's fall records of the Orchard Oriole are all from the coastal lowland, except for one from Santa Ysabel (J18), of an adult male 10 October 1987 (W. McCausland, AB 42:139, 1988). Fall dates range from 28 August to 6 December (Unitt 1984) but are concentrated from mid September through late October. The maximum reported per fall is five in 1964 and 1982. During the atlas period 1997–2002, four Orchard Orioles were recorded from San Diego County in fall, all at Point Loma (S7).

Dates of birds known to have wintered range from 5 November (1983, San Diego, L. Zarins, AB 38:248, 966, 1984) to 21 April (1985, Point Loma, C. G. Edwards, AB 39:351, 1985). The two spring records are from Point Loma 22 May 1980 (AB 34:817, 1980) and near Rincon (F13) 30 April 1989 (F. S. Armstrong, AB 43:538, 1989).

Winter: San Diego County's winter records of the Orchard Oriole are largely from metropolitan San Diego,



Photo by Anthony Mercieca

though two have been found on Oceanside Christmas bird counts, 26 December 1982 and 22 December 1990. As with the Baltimore Oriole, the winter records are from ornamental trees in parks, cemeteries, and residential areas. February 1984 had three wintering Orchard Orioles (AB 38:359, 1984), but the five-year atlas period had only one, in Greenwood Cemetery (S10) 11–19 January 2002 (M. B. Mulrooney, NAB 56:225, 2002).

Taxonomy: All Orchard Orioles north of the Mexican border, including the single specimen from San Diego County (Tijuana River valley, 19 October 1962, SDNHM 30472), are nominate *I. s. spurius* (Linnaeus, 1766).