

Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus*

The Stilt Sandpiper migrates largely via central North America in spring, the Atlantic coast in fall, and is rare along the Pacific coast, occurring mainly in fall. In San Diego County, on average, one or two sightings are reported per year. The Salton Sea represents the northern tip of the Stilt Sandpiper's normal winter range, but there is only one winter record for San Diego County. The Stilt Sandpiper typically associates with dowitchers in shallow brackish or fresh water.

Migration: Though the Stilt Sandpiper has been reported from many of San Diego County's coastal wetlands, the locations where it is most frequent are Batiquitos Lagoon (J6/J7), San Elijo Lagoon (L7), and the Tijuana River valley. The sites farthest inland are Lake Hodges (K10/K11; up to two on 15 September 1985, K. L. Weaver) and Lower Otay Lake (U13/U14; 22 August 1974, AB 29:121, 1975). From 1997 to 2001 records were of one at the Santa Margarita River mouth (G4) 21–25 August 1998 (P. A. Ginsburg), one (the same?) at sewage ponds just inland of there (G5) 30 August 1998 (R. E. Fischer), two at San Elijo Lagoon 22 July 1998 (R. T. Patton), four



Photo by Kenneth Z. Kurland

there 30 September 2000 (E. C. Hall, NAB 55:103, 2001), and one at the northeast corner of Mission Bay (Q8) 31 October 2001 (J. C. Worley). The highest count ever was of up to six at San Elijo Lagoon 21 September–9 October 1992 (P. A. Ginsburg, AB 47:149, 1993). Stilt Sandpiper occurrences range from 22 July (1998, San Elijo Lagoon, R. T. Patton), to 20 November (1987, Chula Vista, C. G. Edwards, AB 42:135, 1988) and peak in September.

Winter: The one Stilt Sandpiper recorded in San Diego County in winter was at San Elijo Lagoon 21–22 February 1982 (T. Meyer, AB 36:331, 1982).