

Black-throated Blue Warbler *Dendroica caerulescens*

In spite of breeding only in eastern North America and wintering in the West Indies, the Black-throated Blue Warbler is a regular visitor to California. San Diego County gets the species nearly every year, with up to 12 in 1988. The species is dispropor-

tionately scarce in spring, when there are only three records for the county. It has been found three times in winter also.

Migration: As for most vagrant warblers, San Diego County records of the Black-throated Blue are concentrated along the coast. A few, though, are scattered farther

inland, as at Valley Center (G11; 11 November 1971, AB 26:123, 1972), Grable Ranch (M16; 29 September 1992, R. T. Patton), and 1.3 miles southwest of Iron Mountain (M13; struck the window of a house about 4 October 1998, SDNHM 50143). The species occurs rather late in the fall; dates range from 29 September to 6 December (1987, San Diego, P. D. Jorgensen, AB 42:323, 1988), with the winter records excluded.

The spring records are of one at Point Loma (S7) 18 May 1992 (M. B. Grossman, AB 46:482, 1992), one at Clark Dry Lake (E26) 4 June 1995 (M. L. Gabel, Massey 1998), and one in Cuyamaca Rancho State Park 9 June 1995 (J. Herried, NASFN 49:982, 1995).

Winter: San Diego County's three wintering Black-throated Blue Warblers were at Old Mission Dam (P11) 25 December 1974–5 January 1975 (AB 29:744, 1975), Oakzanita Springs (O20) 20 December 1995–1 January 1996 (at the unexpectedly high elevation of 3860 feet, D. W. Povey, NASFN 50:225, 1996), and Coronado (S9) December 1998–28 March 1999 (H. Weeks, NAB 53:210, 1999).



Photo by Anthony Mercieca

Taxonomy: The Black-throated Blue Warbler is often divided into two subspecies; only the more northern nominate *D. c. caerulescens* (Gmelin, 1789) is likely to reach California, and all of California's identifiable specimens are of it.