

### Cape May Warbler *Dendroica tigrina*

The Cape May Warbler commutes between a breeding range mainly in central and eastern Canada and a winter range mainly in the West Indies, so California is far from its normal migration route. Vagrants here were strongly concentrated from the mid 1970s to the mid 1980s, a period when the Cape May Warbler's principal summer prey, the spruce budworm, proliferated in eastern Canada, probably leading to a spike in the warbler's population (Patten and Burger 1998). There are about 28 records for San Diego County.

**Migration:** Fall records of the Cape May Warbler in San Diego County are all from Point Loma, the Tijuana River valley, or Otay Mesa, except for one at Carlsbad 23 November 1962 (AFN 17:71, 1963). Fall dates range from 14 September (1991, Point Loma, R. E. Webster, AB 46:151, 1992) to 23 November. San Diego County went without a single Cape May Warbler from 1993 to 2003, when one was at Point Loma 1–14 November (D. V. Blue). There are three spring records, all from Point Loma, of a female 1–3 June 1977, a male 9 June 1977 (AB 31:1048, 1977), and a male 30–31 May 1987 (B. Florand, AB 41:489, 1987).



Photo by Brian L. Sullivan

**Winter:** The Cape May Warbler is known to have wintered in San Diego County twice, with one at Point Loma 10 November 1979–6 January 1980 (AB 34:308, 1980) and another in the nearby neighborhood of Loma Portal (R8) 25 December 1986–16 February 1987 (G. McCaskie, AB 41:331, 1987). The latter foraged primarily in eucalyptus trees, toward the end of its stay becoming stained almost completely black with eucalyptus pitch.