

Mississippi Kite *Ictinia mississippiensis*

The Mississippi Kite breeds mainly in the southern Great Plains and southeastern United States; it is only a vagrant to California, where there are 29 well-supported records through 2000. A population increase and westward range expansion in the 1970s led to the prediction that the kite would colonize southern California (Parker and Ogden 1979), but all that followed was a spike in its frequency here in the early 1980s. This spike accounts for all records for San Diego County.

Migration: The California Bird Records Committee has accepted three identifications of the Mississippi Kite in San Diego County, of one seen in the Tijuana River valley (V11) 18 July 1982 (G. McCaskie, Morlan 1985), one photographed at Pio Pico Campground (T15) 12 June–30 July 1983 (D. W. Povey, Morlan 1985), and one seen at Point Loma (S7) 21 September 1985 (G. McCaskie, Bevier 1990). The committee considered to be a fourth record also in the early 1980s to be inadequately supported.



Photo by Anthony Mercieca