

Ovenbird *Seiurus aurocapilla*

The Ovenbird is the most terrestrial of the warblers, walking inconspicuously on the ground. In spite of concerns about a population decline due to fragmentation of the forests where it breeds, the Ovenbird remains a regular vagrant to California. In San Diego County, it is recorded at a rate of about two per fall and about one every other spring. The atlas study yielded one unprecedented summer sighting of the Ovenbird on Palomar Mountain.

Migration: Fall records of the Ovenbird in San Diego County are all coastal except for a sighting of two at Agua Caliente Springs (M26) 4 October 1977 (AB 32:263, 1978). Their dates range from 17 August (1982, found dead at Ocean Beach, R7, preservable as skeleton only, SDNHM 47987) to 27 November (1982, AB 37:225, 1983), peaking from mid September through October. There are at least 25 county records in spring, most from Point Loma, the others from elsewhere in the coastal lowland, except for sightings of one at Tamarisk Grove (I24) 23 May 1977 (C. Stuteville) and one along the Azalea Glen Trail, Cuyamaca Rancho State Park (M20), 8 May 1999 (G. L. Rogers). Spring records range from 1 May (2003, Cabrillo National Monument, S7, S. E. Smith) to 18 June (1988, San Diego, B. and I. Mazin, AB 42:1341, 1988), with a strong concentration in late May and early June.

The unique summer record is of one along Kolb Creek,



Photo by Anthony Mercieca

Palomar Mountain (D15), 7 July 1998 (K. L. Weaver, FN 52:504, 1998).

Winter: San Diego County has two early winter records of the Ovenbird, at Point Loma 23 December 1983 (J. M. Langham, AB 38:359, 1984) and at Western Hills Park (Q8) 26 December 2001 (T. Brashear, NAB 56:224, 2002).

Taxonomy: The two specimens for San Diego County preserved as study skins, from Point Loma 22 May 1966 (SDNHM 36029) and Bonita (T11) 17 October 1999 (SDNHM 50339), are both nominate *S. a. aurocapilla* (Linnaeus, 1766), being as dark and green as specimens from New York.