

Tennessee Warbler *Vermivora peregrina*

From the 1960s and through the mid 1980s, the Tennessee Warbler was one of the more frequent eastern warblers reaching San Diego County as a fall vagrant, averaging about 10 per year. By the end of the century, however, that rate had dropped considerably, to about three per fall. The Tennessee Warbler also occurs in the county, though less frequently, as a winter visitor and spring vagrant.

Migration: The Tennessee, like most vagrant warblers, has been found primarily along the coast, especially at Point Loma. The only fall record more than 13 miles inland is of one at Butterfield Ranch (M23) 5 November 1978 (G. McCaskie). The species occurs mainly from mid September to late October, exceptionally as early as 27 August (1972, one in the Tijuana River valley, G. McCaskie). It is also of nearly annual occurrence in spring migration, mainly in late May and early June. Spring records range from 24 April (2000, singing male at Fallbrook Naval Weapons Station, E7, W. E. Haas) and 1 May (1985, Point Loma, E. Copper) to 21 June (1980, Coronado, AB 34:931, 1980; 1982, Point Loma, AB 36:1017, 1982) and 2 July (1970, two at Point Loma, AFN 24:718, 1970). Reports from Culp Valley in late April and early May only (Massey 1998) are unseasonal enough to suggest misidentification.

Winter: Tennessee Warblers have remained on several occasions as late as the third week of December, resulting in one record for an Oceanside Christmas bird count



Photo by Anthony Mercieca

(1979) and six for the San Diego count (1968–83), with up to three individuals in 1980 and 1983. Records later in the winter are fewer but include at least eight extending to mid January or beyond.

Conservation: Of the warblers nesting in Canada's boreal forest, some have decreased sharply as vagrants to southern California, and the Tennessee is among them. Numbers at Point Loma as high as four in a day (4 June 1977, P. Unitt) have not been approached recently, though spring 2002 yielded three (R. E. Webster). The most recent winter record for the county is of one in San Diego 18 January–25 February 1995 (R. E. Webster, NASFN 48:249, 1994).