Biology of Birds Zoology 138

SBCC Fall 2014

**Course Syllabus**

**Objectives**:

* To recognize the birds of the Santa Barbara region by sight and sound and behavior
* To learn and appreciate the diversity of life-history strategies pursued by these birds including habitat selection and migratory patterns
* To learn how to detail and record bird sightings and behaviors in a field journal

**Instructor:**

Dr. Krista Fahy

Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History

2559 Puesta Del Sol Road Santa Barbara, CA 93105

(805) 682-4711 x155 kfahy@sbnature2.org

**Texts**:

One of the following field guides to North American or western North American birds:

National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America (6th edition)

The Sibley Guide to Birds by David Allen Sibley (western edition available)

 *Both are available in our museum store*

**Course Requirements**:

All classes start at 8am at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. Carpooling with other participants is encouraged but all students **must be able to provide their own transportation** to destinations. Several trips are outside bikeable or bus route distances.

Eight trips are scheduled throughout the Fall Semester.   In terms of grading – 28 hours of field time will allow you pass with a ‘c’ or ‘credit’.

**Tentative Schedule: All locations are subject to change based on weather and gas prices!**

September 20th – Introductions: museum grounds, SBMNH bird hall (4 hours)

September 27th – Lake Los Carneros, Stow House (4 hours)

October 4th – Andree Clark Bird Refuge, Mission Creek outfall (4 hours)

October 11th – Carpinteria Salt Marsh (4 hours)

October 18th – Lake Cachuma (4 hours)

October 25th – Oso Flaco (8 hours)

November 8th – Stow Grove, Goleta Beach (4 hours)

November 15th – Morro Bay (8 hours)

**Field Notebook and Journal:**

The notebook is a small handheld book to record in field species counts and small notes, the journal should include detailed entries about your field activities including (but not limited to):

* Field activities performed and observed
* Interesting observations
* Weather conditions
* Any unusual events or conditions that may have influenced your observations or data collection
* Sketches of bird characters your find helpful to identify a species
* Sketches of a bird you cannot identify!
* A complete list of the birds observed on each day

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 JOURNAL 2014

California: Santa Barbara Co.; Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History Grounds.

08 March 2014 0800-1200hrs Weather: 25% high clouds, 2-4 mph wind from NW

Observers: SBCC Zoology 138 Class

[YOUR NARRATIVE] At 0815 hrs the class proceeded through the parking lot to the west end. We observed several Acorn Woodpeckers utilizing the granary in the telephone pole at the corner of Puesta del Sol Road. Many European Starlings were also observed along the wires. Their bright yellow bill and iridescent green sheen are the best identification tips for the species. They are an introduced species that competes with local cavity nesters like woodpeckers for nest sites. Introduced species are bad. Yadda – yadda – words.

Species Seen:

Acorn Woodpecker – 8 American Robin – 5 Oak Titmouse - 7

European Starling – 10 California Towhee – 4 American Crow - 4