

A Black-crowned Night Heron is perched on a branch, facing right. It has a black cap, a white face with a red eye, and a long, pointed beak. Its body is white with greyish-blue wings and back. The bird is surrounded by dry, brown, feathery plant matter and green reeds.

Birds of Sims' Pond

A Month by Month Report
October 2012 - Sept 2013

Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewards, Inc.
El Dorado Audubon Society



Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewards, Inc.

<http://www.lcwstewards.org/>



El Dorado Audubon

<http://www.eldoradoaudubon.org>

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Project Description

Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewards, Inc. partnered with El Dorado Audubon Society to perform a bi-monthly count of the birds at Sims' Pond. This bird census is a baseline of species diversity and population size over a one-year period to span the seasons. It may be used in conjunction with past and future surveys to assess the health of bird populations and to help guide conservation action.

Method

Members of El Dorado Audubon Society walked the perimeter of the pond on the second and fourth Wednesday every month from about 8:00 AM to 10:30 AM. Identifications were made using visual and audio observations enhanced with binoculars, cameras, and sound recording. Counting was performed as a group and in a single direction. We included birds within the fenced area, birds observed from the pond area that were in the surrounding gardens, and those that flew overhead. Conservative numbers were used when a precise number was difficult to establish, such as observing a large group of mallards moving about the pond. One person was designated as the recorder. Numbers are reported as the high count across all checklists for the month.


Project Team and Report Preparation

Overall engagement and direction for the project

 Lenny Arkinstall

Audubon Members

 Mary Parsell (lead)

 Su Anderson

 Kim Moore

Photos (all on-site at Sims' Pond) and Report Preparation

 Kim Moore

Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewards, Inc.

performs natural habitat maintenance for the City of Long Beach, which includes eradication of non-native invasive weeds, mulching, planting native plants, and the removal of debris and other trash at several sites. The Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewardship Program is a community-oriented program focused on wetlands education, community building, and service-learning through stewardship and conservation activities.

El Dorado Audubon Society

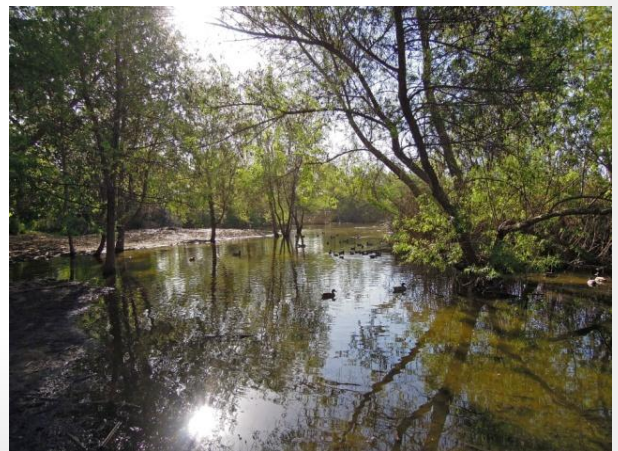
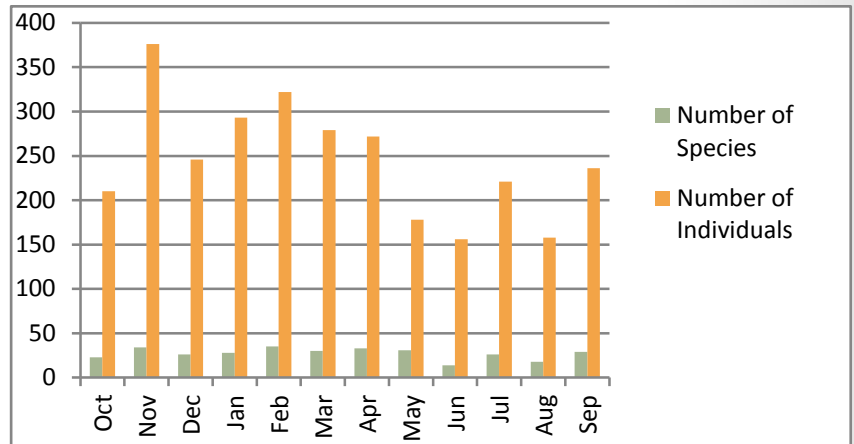
is a California Chapter of the National Audubon Society serving the communities of Artesia, Avalon, Bellflower, Carson, Cypress, Hawaiian Gardens, La Palma, Lakewood, Long Beach, Los Alamitos, Paramount, Rossmoor, San Pedro, Seal Beach, Signal Hill, Sunset Beach, and Wilmington. The mission of the El Dorado Audubon Society is the conservation of native birds and their habitats. The society provides leadership in conservation and educates its members and the community so that they may appreciate birds and participate in the society's conservation efforts.

Seasons on the Pond

Southern California is part of the Pacific Flyway; migratory birds use Sims' Pond as a rest stop during the Autumn and Spring migrations. The habitat is altered seasonally; the water level rises and falls based on seasonal rains, and mosquito fish are stocked.

Changes in species diversity and population sizes were observed from month to month.

Because bird populations at the pond change seasonally, it is important to compare data across years.

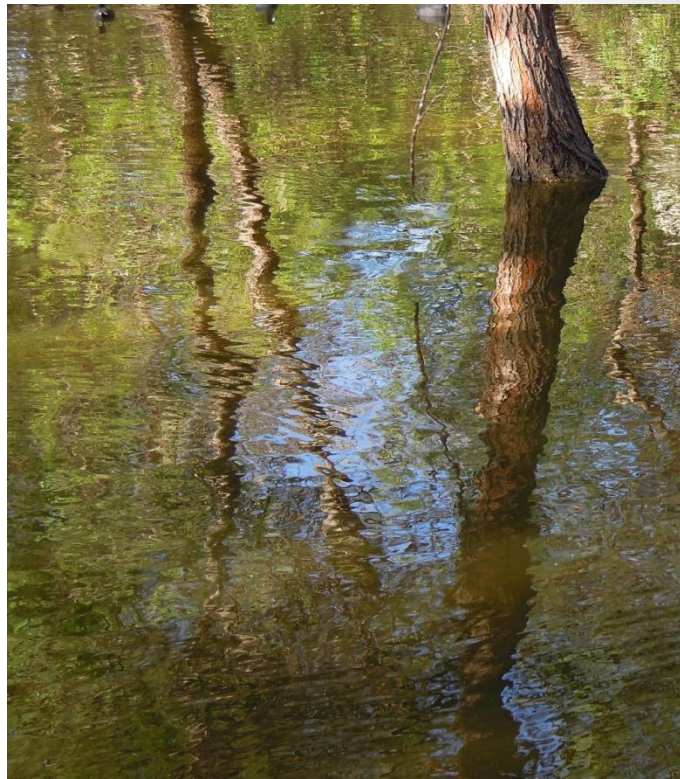


Sims' Pond Biological Reserve

Sims' pond is located at the NW corner of Loynes and PCH in East Long Beach adjacent to the Del Lago private gated community. It was built between 1978 and 1985. Sims' pond is protected by a chain-link fence and is not accessible to the general public.

This 6.06 acre freshwater marsh was originally a saltwater marsh fed by sea water and started as a pond for Sims' Bait Shop. In 1979, The California Coastal Commission, when approving the construction of the area homes, required Del Lago and Bay Harbor Homeowner's Associations to own and maintain the pond as a biological reserve under the direction of the Department of Fish and Game. At that time, Sims' Pond became a freshwater marsh and seasonal pond fed by urban runoff from a local golf course. In 2003 it was deeded to the City of Long Beach. The City now owns and maintains the pond.

Several species of willow trees, bulrushes, cattails, and native plants surround the pond providing habitat for the pond's wildlife. The adjacent homes often have bird feeders and gardens providing seed. The pond supports a variety of animals including insects, fish, frogs, turtles, squirrels, raccoons, birds, and an occasional coyote. The pond is stocked with mosquito fish to eat mosquito larvae.



Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*

Snowy Egrets are in the same family as Herons and Bitterns. The Snowy Egret can be distinguished from the closely related and similar Great Egret by its smaller size, black beak and legs, and yellow feet. They are year-round residents in Long Beach and occasionally visit Sims' Pond.



Green Heron *Butorides virescens*

Green Herons stand motionless at the water's edge as they hunt for fish and amphibians. They typically stand on vegetation or solid ground and don't wade as often as larger herons.



Bird Count October 2012

13	American Wigeon (<i>Anas americana</i>)
94	Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>)
8	Cinnamon Teal (<i>Anas cyanoptera</i>)
6	Northern Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>)
1	Northern Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>)
3	Pied-billed Grebe (<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>)
1	Double-crested Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>)
2	Great Blue Heron (<i>Ardea herodias</i>)
1	Great Egret (<i>Ardea alba</i>)
1	Snowy Egret (<i>Egretta thula</i>)
34	Black-crowned Night-Heron (<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>)
2	Cooper's Hawk (<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>)
1	Red-tailed Hawk (<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>)
1	Sora (<i>Porzana carolina</i>)
13	American Coot (<i>Fulica americana</i>)
3	Western Gull (<i>Larus occidentalis</i>)
1	Allen's Hummingbird (<i>Selasphorus sasin</i>)
8	hummingbird sp.
1	American Crow (<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>)
1	Hermit Thrush (<i>Catharus guttatus</i>)
1	Yellow-rumped Warbler (<i>Setophaga coronata</i>)
8	House Sparrow (<i>Passer domesticus</i>)
6	Nutmeg Mannikin (<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>)

Numbers reflect the high number observed in a single checklist for this month.

Highlights

This month was the first survey of the pond, and in that respect, everything was a highlight. What was particularly notable was the number of Black-crowned Night Herons that call the pond home. There were both adults and juveniles located mostly in one corner of the pond.

Another notable bird was the Sora. These elusive little birds hide in the dense vegetation and are sometimes heard but rarely seen.



Northern Shoveler

Anas clypeata

The Northern Shoveler is a dabbling duck. It filters water through its distinctive bill and sifts for invertebrates. Northern Shovelers are migratory and visit our local ponds in winter.



Canada Goose

Branta canadensis

Common visitors in winter/spring, Canada Geese are often seen in our local parks and golf courses. They occasionally visit Sims' Pond but are seen in greater numbers at the golf course across PCH.

Bird Count November 2012

- 12 American Wigeon (*Anas americana*)
- 86 Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
- 8 Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)
- 36 Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)
- 23 Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*)
- 2 Green-winged Teal (*Anas crecca*)
- 4 Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*)
- 1 Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*)
- 1 Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)
- 1 Great Egret (*Ardea alba*)
- 1 Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*)
- 24 Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)
- 1 Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*)
- 1 Sora (*Porzana carolina*)
- 12 American Coot (*Fulica americana*)
- 1 Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*)
- 3 Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*)
- 11 Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*)
- 1 Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*)
- 5 hummingbird sp.
- 1 Downy Woodpecker (*Picoides pubescens*)
- 4 Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*)
- 55 Bushtit (*Psaltiriparus minimus*)
- 1 Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus palustris*)
- 9 Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*)
- 1 Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*)
- 1 Orange-crowned Warbler (*Oreothlypis celata*)
- 3 Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)
- 3 Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata*)
- 1 Townsend's Warbler (*Setophaga townsendi*)
- 23 House Finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*)
- 6 Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*)
- 25 House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)
- 9 Nutmeg Mannikin (*Lonchura punctulata*)

Numbers reflect the high number
observed over multiple checklists for
the month.

Highlights

Winter migration brought in warblers, a Hermit Thrush, and large numbers of waterfowl including Northern Shovelers and Northern Pintails.



Black-crowned Night-Heron

Nycticorax nycticorax

One of the most numerous birds at Sims' Pond is the Black-crowned Night Heron. They are called night herons because they are most active at dusk and night. In the winter months they are typically found congregating in the southwest corner of the pond. In later spring their numbers decrease as they go to nest in the trees around the marina. Later they come back with their young and are found more widely distributed around the pond.



Bird Count December 2012

- 1 Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*)
- 26 American Wigeon (*Anas americana*)
- 65 Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
- 11 Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)
- 4 Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)
- 3 Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*)
- 1 Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*)
- 3 Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)
- 1 Great Egret (*Ardea alba*)
- 1 Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*)
- 17 Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)
- 23 American Coot (*Fulica americana*)
- 3 Western Gull (*Larus occidentalis*)
- 4 Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*)
- 2 Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*)
- 20 hummingbird sp.
- 4 Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*)
- 4 American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)
- 3 Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus palustris*)
- 1 Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*)
- 1 Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*)
- 7 Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata*)
- 1 Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*)
- 3 House Finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*)
- 2 goldfinch sp.
- 35 House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)

Numbers reflect the high number
observed over multiple checklists for
the month.

Highlights

In December, American Wigeons arrived in greater numbers and Ruddy Ducks showed up.

In addition to the birds, several fungus varieties were present.





Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus*

The Hermit Thrush is a member of the thrush family, along with its cousins the Western Bluebird and American Robin. They are migratory birds nesting in northern forests of the US and Canada and visit our area in the winter. They often forage on the

ground or eat berries on trees and shrubs. A few, likely the same individuals, have been observed at Sims' Pond during winter/spring.

Bushtit *Psaltirparus minimus*

Bushtits are social birds and are almost always found in flocks. The flocks move from tree to tree or bush to bush in small groups and are always on the move. They often hang upside down while foraging for insects and spiders. They are year-round residents. The flock is not always seen at the pond because the birds sometimes move to the surrounding neighborhood. Their nests have been observed at Sims' Pond.



Bird Count January 2013

- 35 American Wigeon (*Anas americana*)
- 105 Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
- 11 Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)
- 4 Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)
- 1 Green-winged Teal (*Anas crecca*)
- 1 Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*)
- 1 Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)
- 2 Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*)
- 4 Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*)
- 25 Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)
- 1 Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*)
- 1 Common Gallinule (*Gallinula galeata*)
- 30 American Coot (*Fulica americana*)
- 3 Western Gull (*Larus occidentalis*)
- 5 gull sp.
- 2 Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*)
- 7 hummingbird sp.
- 2 Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*)
- 20 Bushtit (*Psaltiriparus minimus*)
- 1 Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*)
- 2 Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*)
- 4 Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)
- 2 Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata*)
- 1 Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*)
- 10 House Finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*)
- 6 Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*)
- 5 House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)
- 2 Nutmeg Mannikin (*Lonchura punctulata*)

Highlights

While some Northern Shovelers remained, the majority moved on. A Green-winged Teal showed up. Mallards and American Coots were plentiful.

Numbers reflect the high number observed over multiple checklists for the month.

Common Yellow-throat *Geothlypis trichas*

Common Yellow-throats are warblers. In our area they can be found year-round. In other areas of the country they are migratory, summering (breeding) in the US and wintering in Mexico and Central America. They are found low in the bulrushes, cattails, and low bushes at the edge of the pond. They are often seen and more often heard. The male makes a

distinctive *witchety-witchety-witchety* call. The male is a bright yellow with a dark mask. The female is a drab olive.



Bird Count February 2013

- 1 Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*)
- 37 American Wigeon (*Anas americana*)
- 85 Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
 - 1 Mallard (Domestic type/hybrid)
- 14 Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)
 - 4 Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)
 - 1 Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*)
- 3 Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*)
- 1 Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*)
- 2 Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)
- 1 Great Egret (*Ardea alba*)
- 21 Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)
 - 2 Sora (*Porzana carolina*)
- 41 American Coot (*Fulica americana*)
 - 5 gull sp.
 - 5 Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*)
 - 1 Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*)
 - 5 Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*)
 - 8 hummingbird sp.
 - 1 Belted Kingfisher (*Megasceryle alcyon*)
 - 2 Downy Woodpecker (*Picoides pubescens*)
 - 2 Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*)
 - 6 American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)
 - 1 Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus palustris*)
 - 4 Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*)
 - 1 Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*)
 - 9 Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)
- 13 Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata*)
 - 2 Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*)
 - 1 White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*)
 - 2 Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*)
 - 2 House Finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*)
 - 6 Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*)
- 27 American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*)
 - 5 House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)

Numbers reflect the high number
observed over multiple checklists for
the month.

Highlights

A Belted Kingfisher appeared this month. It is only occasionally at the pond.

Two red-winged Blackbirds were seen. We would have expected to see more, given the habitat. They have been observed in greater abundance a short distance away at the Market Place Marsh.

Cinnamon Teal

Anas cyanoptera

The Cinnamon Teal is found in western North and South America. Most are migratory, although some may stay in our area year-round. At Sims' Pond they were seen in fall with their numbers increasing in fall through winter and then decreasing again in late spring.



Bird Count March 2013

- 2 Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*)
- 1 Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*)
- 15 American Wigeon (*Anas americana*)
- 37 Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
- 14 Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)
- 6 Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)
- 2 Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*)
- 2 Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)
- 17 Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)
- 1 Sora (*Porzana carolina*)
- 39 American Coot (*Fulica americana*)
- 1 Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*)
- 4 Western Gull (*Larus occidentalis*)
- 5 Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*)
- 12 Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*)
- 12 Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*)
- 4 hummingbird sp.
- 2 Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*)
- 4 American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)
- 1 swallow sp.
- 28 Bushtit (*Psaltiriparus minimus*)
- 1 Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*)
- 5 Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)
- 18 Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata*)
- 4 Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*)
- 1 Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*)
- 4 House Finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*)
- 4 Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*)
- 14 American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*)
- 19 House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)

Numbers reflect the high number observed over multiple checklists for the month.

Highlights

The numbers of Black-crowned Night Herons decreased, presumably as they left to nest. The Mallard numbers were also down as they too, were nesting. We saw a Bushtit nest as well as Eastern Fox Squirrel nests.

The Yellow-rumped Warblers were becoming more numerous and a Wood Duck showed up.

A bullfrog made itself known at one end of the pond and continued to appear in the same place through May. We named it 'Jeremiah'. Later in July we heard two bullfrogs on the opposite side of the pond. Perhaps he found a mate.





Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Regulus calendula

The Ruby-crowned Kinglet has a distinctive red patch on its head, which it only occasionally displays. Otherwise, the tiny bird is a drab olive color. It is an insectivore and constantly flits about in the tops of trees. It is an abundant winter visitor.

Yellow-rumped Warbler
Setophaga coronata

Another common and abundant winter visitor is the Yellow-rumped Warbler. It is often referred to as 'Butter Butt' because of the bright yellow patch on its back.

They have a seasonal change of plumage becoming more strikingly vivid before they leave the area in spring.



Bird Count April 2013

- 1 Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*)
- 2 American Wigeon (*Anas americana*)
- 42 Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
- 6 Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)
- 2 Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)
- 3 Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*)
- 1 Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)
- 1 Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*)
- 14 Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)
- 1 Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*)
- 1 Sora (*Porzana carolina*)
- 29 American Coot (*Fulica americana*)
- 1 Western Gull (*Larus occidentalis*)
- 2 gull sp.
- 11 Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*)
- 2 Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*)
- 4 Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*)
- 5 hummingbird sp.
- 1 Belted Kingfisher (*Megasceryle alcyon*)
- 3 Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*)
- 3 American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)
- 3 Northern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*)
- 21 Bushtit (*Psaltiriparus minimus*)
- 2 Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*)
- 1 Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*)
- 3 Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)
- 25 Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata*)
- 10 Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*)
- 2 Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*)
- 3 Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*)
- 15 American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*)
- 35 goldfinch sp.
- 17 House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)

Numbers reflect the high number
observed over multiple checklists for
the month.

Highlights

The last of the Wigeons, Shovelers, and Cinnamon Teal were leaving. We heard lots of bird songs as the birds became more vocal and their songs changed in mating season.

California Poppies, California Sunflower, Ceanothus and Sweet Clover were all blooming, and we saw more insects as the weather got warmer.

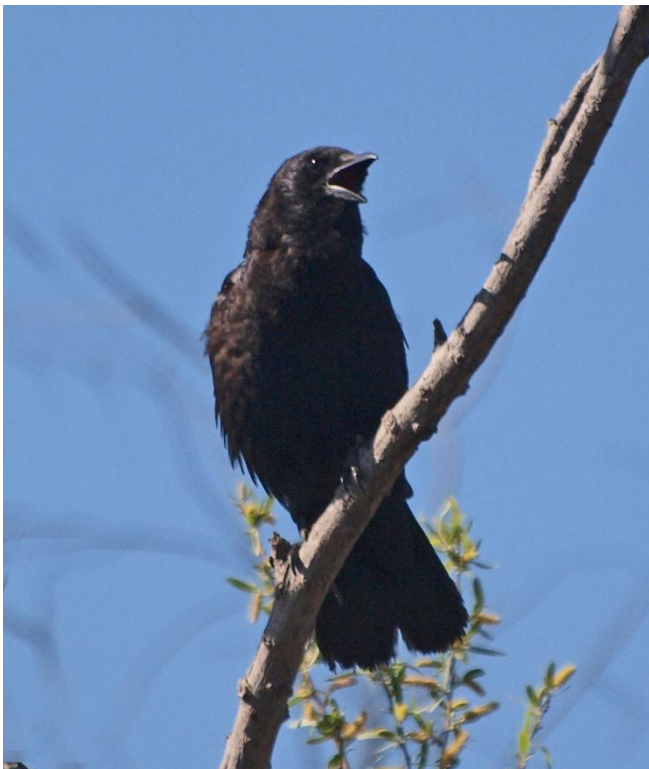
Allen's Hummingbird *Selasphorus sasin*

Allen's Hummingbirds are abundant around Sims' Pond. They can be distinguished from the Anna's Hummingbird by their slightly smaller size and buffy/reddish-brown color. Hummingbirds of both types are seen and heard at the pond but sometimes fly too fast for the observer to make a good ID. The report indicates 'hummingbird sp.' (species) meaning a specific ID cannot be made.



American Crow *Corvus brachyhynchus*

American Crows often fly over Sims' Pond and are found in the surrounding neighborhood. They are well adapted to urban habitats. Occasionally they come into the area of the pond area. Crows are particularly susceptible to West Nile virus. Dead birds are a good bio-indicator for presence of the virus.



Bird Count May 2013

- 2 Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*)
- 1 Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*)
- 51 Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
- 3 Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)
- 1 Great Egret (*Ardea alba*)
- 2 Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*)
- 17 Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)
- 5 American Coot (*Fulica americana*)
- 2 Western Gull (*Larus occidentalis*)
- 2 gull sp.
- 2 Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*)
- 3 Forster's Tern (*Sterna forsteri*)
- 7 Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*)
- 5 Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*)
- 1 Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*)
- 2 Warbling Vireo (*Vireo gilvus*)
- 4 American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)
- 1 Northern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*)
- 1 swallow sp.
- 17 Bushtit (*Psaltiriparus minimus*)
- 5 Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)
- 7 Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata*)
- 1 Wilson's Warbler (*Cardellina pusilla*)
- 4 Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*)
- 1 Great-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus mexicanus*)
- 7 House Finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*)
- 1 Pine Siskin (*Spinus pinus*)
- 5 Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*)
- 6 American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*)
- 10 House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)
- 2 Nutmeg Mannikin (*Lonchura punctulata*)

Numbers reflect the high number
observed over multiple checklists for
the month.

Highlights

American Coots and Mallards had their chicks with them. A Pine Siskin joined the flock of American Goldfinches.

The willow trees started to go to seed.



Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias*

The Great Blue Heron is the largest of the herons and is often seen majestically standing motionless as it watches for prey. They are year-round residents in our area. One or two frequent Sims' Pond regularly. They nest in the tops of tall trees nearby in the marina.



Bird Count June 2013

- 97 Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
- 2 Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*)
- 2 Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)
- 1 Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*)
- 16 Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)
- 4 Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*)
- 1 Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*)
- 2 hummingbird sp.
- 1 Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*)
- 1 American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)
- 2 Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)
- 1 Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*)
- 1 House Finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*)
- 25 House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)

Numbers reflect the high number
observed from a single checklist for the
month.

Highlights

The willow seed fluff was so thick it looked like a thick layer of snow covered the ground.



Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans*

Black Phoebes are flycatchers. They are year-round residents in our area. They are usually found around water or in our urban backyards. They are easy to spot. They perch low and in the open and make a sharp high-pitched chirp.



Bird Count July 2013

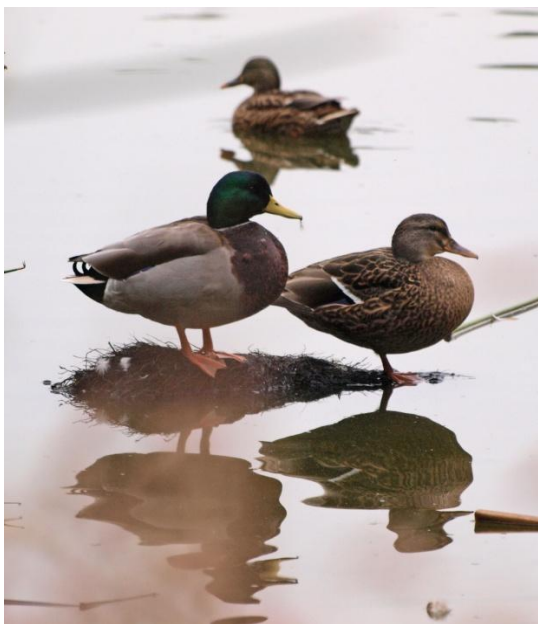
- 93 Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
- 3 Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)
- 5 teal sp.
- 2 Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*)
- 2 Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)
- 2 Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*)
- 2 Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*)
- 20 Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)
- 3 American Coot (*Fulica americana*)
- 5 Western Gull (*Larus occidentalis*)
- 2 Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*)
- 3 Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*)
- 2 Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*)
- 4 hummingbird sp.
- 4 Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*)
- 6 American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)
- 1 Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)
- 36 Bushtit (*Psaltiriparus minimus*)
- 3 Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)
- 1 Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata*)
- 1 California Towhee (*Melospiza crissalis*)
- 5 Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*)
- 2 Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*)
- 2 American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*)
- 8 House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)
- 4 Nutmeg Mannikin (*Lonchura punctulata*)

Numbers reflect the high number
observed over multiple checklists for
the month.

Highlights

On the first visit this month, water levels in the pond became very low. On the second visit water was being pumped back into the pond. Trees around the pond and in the yards around the pond had fruit and berries. Immature orb weaver spiders started to appear.

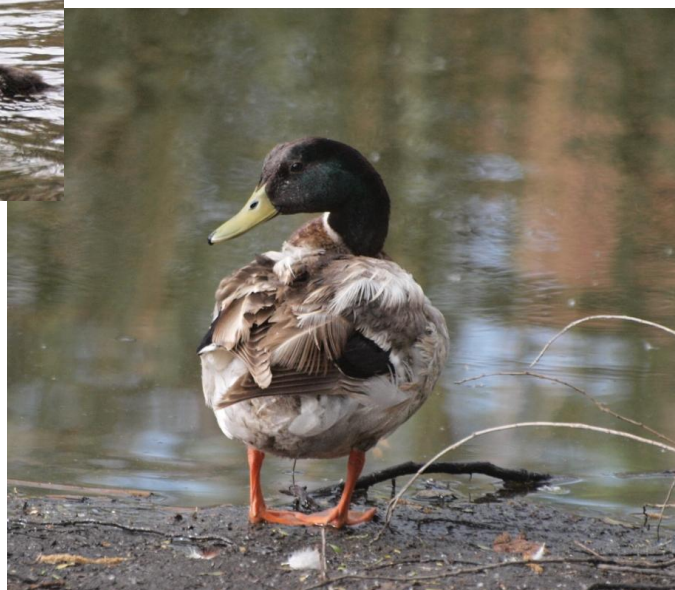
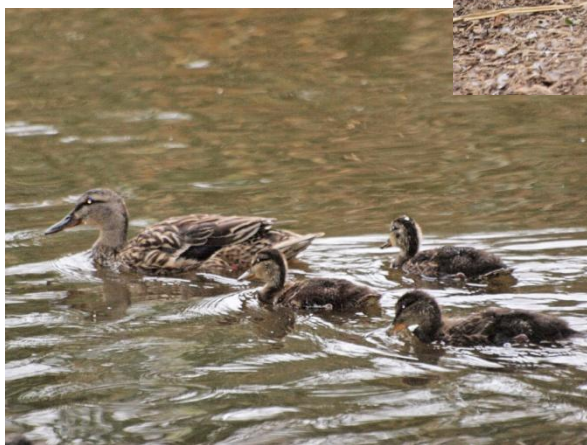
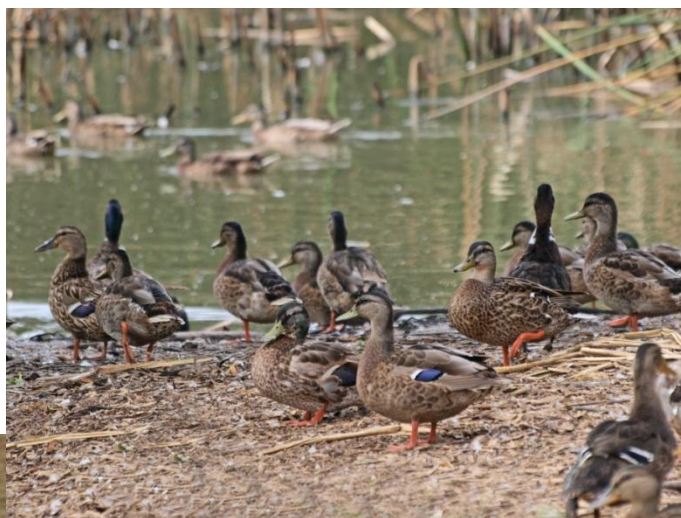




Mallard Duck

Anas platyrhynchos

Mallard Ducks are probably the most identifiable duck for most people and the most abundant of the Sims' Pond residents. Almost all domestic ducks come from this species. These ducks sometimes hybridize with domestic ducks and similar species creating 'funny ducks'.



Bird Count August 2013

- 96 Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
- 4 Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)
- 3 Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*)
- 2 Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)
- 2 Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*)
- 21 Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)
- 3 American Coot (*Fulica americana*)
- 2 Western Gull (*Larus occidentalis*)
- 2 Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*)
- 2 hummingbird sp.
- 1 Belted Kingfisher (*Megasceryle alcyon*)
- 3 Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*)
- 1 American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)
- 9 Bushtit (*Psaltirparus minimus*)
- 1 House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*)
- 1 Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*)
- 2 Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)
- 3 Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*)

Numbers reflect the high number observed from a single checklist for the month.

Highlights

The pond was beautiful as always. A CSULB student started doing a crayfish study, and study nets were seen in the pond. There was a fair amount of duckweed growing in some areas.



American Goldfinch *Carduelis tristis*

American Goldfinch are common and numerous in our area. They are seed eaters, and several homes around Sims' Pond put out bird feeders which attract these birds in large flocks. The breeding males are bright and can often be easily identified, but the females and non-breeding males can be difficult to identify. They sometimes are found in mixed flocks with similar species.



Lesser Goldfinch *Carduelis psaltria*

Sometimes mixed in with flocks of American Goldfinch are their cousins, the smaller, slightly darker, Lesser Goldfinch. These finches primarily eat seeds of plants in the sunflower family.

Bird Count September 2013

- 117 Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
- 6 Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*)
- 9 Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)
- 3 Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*)
- 1 Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*)
- 1 Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)
- 1 Great Egret (*Ardea alba*)
- 2 Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*)
- 15 Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)
- 2 Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*)
- 1 Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)
- 1 Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*)
- 4 American Coot (*Fulica americana*)
- 4 Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularius*)
- 1 Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*)
- 2 Western Gull (*Larus occidentalis*)
- 18 Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*)
- 6 Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*)
- 3 hummingbird sp.
- 1 Belted Kingfisher (*Megaceryle alcyon*)
- 1 Downy Woodpecker (*Picoides pubescens*)
- 2 Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*)
- 10 American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)
- 1 Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)
- 8 Bushtit (*Psaltiriparus minimus*)
- 1 House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*)
- 3 Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)
- 1 Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*)
- 11 House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)

Numbers reflect the high number observed over multiple checklists for the month.

Highlights

This month the water level was at the lowest we had seen.

Most of the Black-crowned Night Herons we saw were juveniles, and they were once again found mostly in one end of the pond. The Northern Shovelers had come back, and we were delighted to see a Belted Kingfisher, a Cooper's Hawk, an Osprey, and shore birds.

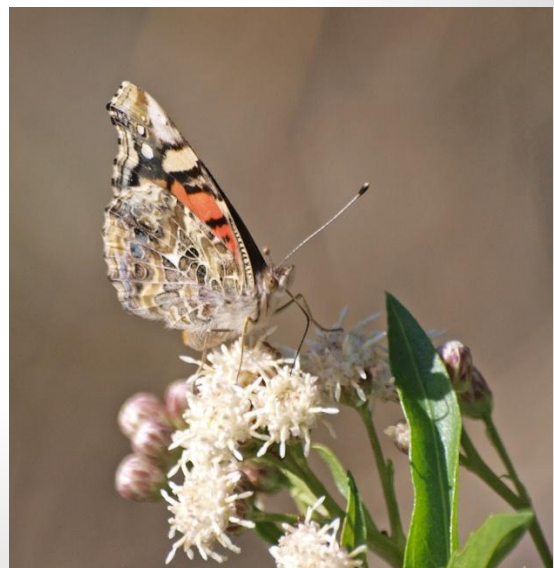


The orb weaver spiders were more mature, some of considerable size.



Other Wildlife

In addition to birds,
Sims' Pond is home to a
variety of other wildlife.



References:

1. "All About Birds." *Your Online Guide to Birds and Bird Watching*. Cornell Lab of Ornithology ,<<http://www.allaboutbirds.org>>

