

# CHECKLIST OF THE WATERBIRDS OF THE CIENEGA DE SANTA CLARA

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This checklist summarizes current knowledge on the status of 95 species of waterbirds in the Ciénega de Santa Clara, based on review work and complemented with field observations. We only included those species from which there is at least one definite record within the Ciénega de Santa Clara.

The annotated checklist follows the taxonomic nomenclature and order of the latest edition of the Check-list of North American Birds (American Ornithologists' Union 1998). Subspecies is given only if it had relevance pertaining legal status or protection in México, as defined in the Norma Oficial Mexicana NOM-059-ECOL-2001 (Diario Oficial de la Federación 2002). Names in Spanish follow Escalante et al. (1996). In cases where there is a different common name used in the region, the official name is given first, followed by the local name.

Designations for abundance and temporal status of birds are based on the categories used by Patten et al. (2001) and Russell & Monson (1998). The designations for abundance are: 1) common - frequently encountered and/or in large numbers; 2) fairly common - encountered in modest numbers; 3) uncommon - present in the area, but found infrequently; 4) rare – seen only on occasion, but range lies within the Ciénega; 5) casual – out of usual range, but could be expected every other year; 6) accidental – away from the normal range and not normally expected.

Designations for temporal occurrence of birds are: 1) resident – occurs during most of the year in the region; 2) visitor – spends a few weeks to a few months in the region; 3) transient – migrant birds that spend a short time (usually a few days) in the region; 4) vagrant – birds that have wandered off their usual range, and occur sporadically in the region.

## **GAVIIFORMES**

### **GAVIIDAE - LOONS**

**Pacific Loon** (*Gavia pacifica*) - Colimbo Ártico. Rare winter visitor.

**Common Loon** (*Gavia immer*) - Colimbo Común. Casual summer visitor.

## **PODICIPEDIFORMES**

### **PODICIPEDIDAE - GREBES**

**Pied-billed Grebe** (*Podilymbus podiceps*) - Zambullidor Piquipinto. Fairly common breeding resident. Common transient and winter visitor.

**Horned Grebe** (*Podiceps auritas*) - Zambullidor Cornudo. Rare winter visitor.

**Eared Grebe** (*Podiceps nigricollis*) - Zambullidor Orejudo. Common winter visitor throughout the region. Uncommon summer resident, but breeding activity has not been documented.

**Western Grebe** (*Aechmophorus occidentales*) - Achichilique Piquiamarillo. Uncommon winter visitor. Formerly a common breeding resident in the Colorado delta, with records from the 1980s (Patten et al. 2001), but there are no recent breeding records.

**Clark's Grebe** (*Aechmophorus clarkii*) - Achichilique Piquinaranja. Uncommon winter visitor, although in fewer numbers than Western Grebes. Probably was also a breeding resident in the Colorado delta (Patten et al. 2001).

## PELECANIFORMES

### PELECANIDAE - PELICANS

**American White Pelican** (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) Pelicano Blanco Americano. Fairly common winter and spring visitor. Uncommon summer visitor as non-breeder.

**Brown Pelican** (*Pelecanus occidentales*) Pelicano Café. Regular but uncommon summer visitor, rare during winter.

### PHALACROCORACIDAE - CORMORANTS

**Double-crested Cormorant** (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) - Cormorán Bicrestado. Common perennial non-breeding visitor, with increased numbers between November and February.

## CICONIIFORMES

### ARDEIDAE – HERONS AND BITTERN

**American Bittern** (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) - Torcomón. Uncommon breeder and winter visitor.

**Least Bittern** (*Ixobrychus exilis*) – Garzita de Tular. Common breeding resident.

**Great Blue Heron** (*Ardea herodias*) - Garzón Cenizo. Common breeding resident.

**Great Egret** (*Ardea alba*) - Garza Blanca. Common breeding resident.

**Snowy Egret** (*Egretta thula*) - Garza Nivea. Common perennial visitor.

**Little Blue Heron** (*Egretta caerulea*) - Garceta Azul. Rare summer visitor.

**Tricolored Heron** (*Egretta tricolor*) - Garza Tricolor. Rare but regular summer visitor. Nesting by two pairs observed on 2002 suggest that the species might be a rare breeder in the region (Mellink et al. 2002).

**Reddish Egret** (*Egretta rufescens*) - Garza Rojiza. Casual vagrant and occasional breeder at Isla Montague (Mellink et al. 2002). Species under special protection in México (Diario Oficial de la Federación 2002).

**Cattle Egret** (*Bubulcus ibis*) - Garza Ganadera. Common breeding resident in the Mexicali Valley, but uncommon at the Ciénega.

**Green Heron** (*Butorides virescens*) - Garza Verde. Common breeding resident.

**Black-crowned Night Heron** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) - Garza-Nocturna Coroninegra. Fairly common breeding resident.

### THRESKIORNITHIDAE – IBISES AND SPOONBILLS

**White Ibis** (*Eudocimus albus*) - Ibis Blanco. Casual vagrant. Seven birds were observed at the Ciénega de Santa Clara on March 11, 1999.

**White-faced Ibis** (*Plegadis chihi*) - Ibis Cariblanco. Common winter and spring visitor. Probably breeds along Río Colorado and Ciénega de Santa Clara.

## ANSERIFORMES

### ANATIDAE – DUCKS, GEESE, AND SWANS

**Greater White-fronted Goose** (*Anser albifrons*) - Ganso Careto Mayor. Rare but regular spring transient.

**Snow Goose** (*Chen caerulescens*) - Ganso Blanco. Fairly common winter visitor.

**Ross's Goose** (*Chen rossi*) - Ganso de Ross. Uncommon winter visitor.

**Canada Goose** (*Branta canadensis*) - Ganso Canadiense. Common winter visitor at Ciénega de Santa Clara and adjacent agricultural fields..

**Brant** (*Branta bernicla*) – Branta. Uncommon spring transient. *B. b. nigricans*, the subspecies that occurs in this region, is protected as threatened in México (Diario Oficial de la Federación 2002).

**Gadwall** (*Anas strepera*) - Pato Pinto. Fairly common winter visitor.

**American Wigeon** (*Anas americana*) - Pato Chalcuán. Fairly common winter visitor and casual summer visitor.

**Mallard** (*Anas platyrhynchos*) - Pato de Collar. Common winter visitor. Uncommon non-breeding visitor in summer.

**Blue-winged Teal** (*Anas discors*) - Cerceta Aliazul. Regular but uncommon winter visitor and transient. Rare summer visitor.

**Cinnamon Teal** (*Anas cyanoptera*) - Cerceta Castaña. Uncommon breeder. Fairly common winter visitor.

**Northern Shoveler** (*Anas clypeata*) - Pato Cucharón Norteño. Common winter visitor. Rare non-breeding summer visitor.

**Northern Pintail** (*Anas acuta*) - Pato Golondrino Norteño. Common winter visitor. Rare non-breeding summer visitor.

**Green-Winged Teal** (*Anas crecca*) - Cerceta Aliverde. Common winter visitor.

**Canvasback** (*Aythya valisineria*) - Pato Coacoxtle. Fairly common winter visitor. Rare summer visitor.

**Redhead** (*Aythya americana*) - Pato Cabecirrojo. Common winter visitor. Rare summer visitor. Breeding has not been documented.

**Ring-necked Duck** (*Aythya collaris*) - Pato Piquianillado. Rare winter visitor.

**Lesser Scaup** (*Aythya affinis*) - Pato-Boludo Menor. Fairly common winter visitor and transient.

**Bufflehead** (*Bucephala albeola*) - Pato Monja. Uncommon winter visitor.

**Common Goldeneye** (*Bucephala clangula*) - Ojodorado Común. Rare winter visitor.

**Hooded Merganser** (*Lophodytes cucullatus*) - Mergo de Caperuza. Rare winter visitor.

**Common Merganser** (*Mergus merganser*) - Mergo Mayor. Rare but sometimes numerous winter visitor and spring transient.

**Red-breasted Merganser** (*Mergus cerrator*) - Mergo Copetón. Uncommon winter visitor.

**Ruddy Duck** (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) - Pato Tepalcate. Common winter visitor. Uncommon breeder.

## FALCONIFORMES

### ACCIPITRIDAE – HAWKS, KITES, AND EAGLES

**Osprey** (*Pandion haliaeetus*) – Águila Pescadora. Fairly common non-breeding resident. Uncommon breeding resident along the Colorado River.

**Bald Eagle** (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) – Águila Cabeza Blanca. Uncommon winter visitor, with few birds regularly visiting the Ciénega de Santa Clara each winter. Protected as an endangered species in México (Diario Oficial de la Federación 2002).

**Northern Harrier** (*Circus cyaneus*) - Gavilán Rastrero. Common winter visitor and transient.

### FALCONIDAE - FALCONS

**Peregrine Falcon** (*Falco peregrinus*) - Halcón Peregrino. Rare but regular winter visitor and transient. Species under special protection in México (Diario Oficial de la Federación 2002).

## GRUIFORMES

### RALLIDAE – RAILS, GALLINULES, AND COOTS

**California Black Rail** (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*) – Polluela Negra, Ralito Negro. Rare but regular breeding resident, with about 50 pairs (Hinojosa-Huerta et al. 2001a).

Subspecies listed as endangered in México (Diario Oficial de la Federación 2002) and as a priority taxon for conservation in the U.S. (California Department of Fish and Game 1999).

**Yuma Clapper Rail** (*Rallus longirostris yumanensis*) – Rascón Picudo de Arizona, Palmoteador de Yuma. Common breeding resident at Ciénega de Santa Clara, with an estimated population of

over 6,000 individuals (Hinojosa-Huerta et al. 2001b). Subspecies endemic to Lower Colorado River and Delta, listed as threatened in México (Diario Oficial de la Federación 2002) and Endangered in the U.S. (Eddleman & Conway 1998).

**Virginia Rail** (*Rallus limicola*) - Rascón Limícola. Common breeding resident, with numbers augmented by winter visitors. Species under special protection in México (Diario Oficial de la Federación 2002).

**Sora** (*Porzana carolina*) - Polluela Sora. Common winter visitor.

**Common Moorhen** (*Gallinula chloropus*) - Gallineta Común. Common breeding resident.

**American Coot** (*Fulica americana*) - Gallareta Americana. Common breeding resident, with numbers augmented by winter visitors.

## **CHARADRIIFORMES**

### **CHARADRIIDAE - PLOVERS**

**Black-bellied Plover** (*Pluvialis squatarola*) - Chorlo Gris. Common transient and winter visitor. Uncommon summer visitor in the same areas.

**Snowy Plover** (*Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus*) – Chorlito Niveo. Uncommon breeding resident. Western populations have declined since the 1920s (Powell 1998), and is listed as threatened in Mexico (Diario Oficial de la Federación 2002) and Endangered in the U.S. (Powell 1998).

**Wilson's Plover** (*Charadrius wilsonia*) - Chorlito Piquigrueso. Uncommon winter visitor.

**Semipalmated Plover** (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) - Chorlito Semipalmeado. Fairly common transient. Uncommon winter visitor.

**Killdeer** (*Charadrius vociferus*) – Chorlito Tildío. Common breeding resident.

### **HAEMATOPODIDAE - OYSTERCATCHERS**

**American Oystercatcher** (*Haematopus palliatus*) - Ostrero Americano. Rare perennial visitor.

### **RECURVIROSTRIDAE – STILTS AND AVOCETS**

**Black-necked Stilt** (*Himantopus mexicanus*) - Candelero Americano. Common breeding resident.

**American Avocet** (*Recurvirostra americana*) - Avoceta Americana. Common perennial visitor. Uncommon breeder.

### **SCOLOPACIDAE – SANDPIPERS AND PHALAROPES**

**Greater Yellowlegs** (*Tringa melanoleuca*) - Patamarilla Mayor. Fairly common transient and winter.

**Lesser Yellowlegs** (*Tringa flavipes*) - Patamarilla Menor. Common transient and uncommon winter visitor.

**Solitary Sandpiper** (*Tringa solitaria*) - Playero Solitario. Rare fall transient and winter.

**Willet** (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*) - Playero Pihuiui. Common transient and winter visitor. Rare summer visitor.

**Wandering Tattler** (*Heteroscelus incanus*) - Playero Vagabundo. Casual winter visitor.

**Spotted Sandpiper** (*Actitis macularia*) - Playero Alzacolita. Fairly common transient and winter visitor. Rare summer visitor.

**Whimbrel** (*Numenius phaeopus*) - Zarapito Trinidad. Common winter visitor and transient.

**Long-billed Curlew** (*Numenius americanus*) - Zarapito Picolargo. Common transient and winter visitor.

**Marbled Godwit** (*Limosa fedoa*) - Picopando Canelo. Common transient and winter visitor.

**Sanderling** (*Calidris alba*) - Playero Blanco. Common transient and winter visitor.

**Western Sandpiper** (*Calidris mauri*) - Playerito Occidental. Common transient and winter visitor.

**Least Sandpiper** (*Calidris minutilla*) - Playerito Mínimo. Common transient and winter visitor, although less numerous than Western Sandpipers.

**Dunlin** (*Calidris alpina*) - Playero Dorsirojo. Fairly common transient winter visitor.

**Stilt Sandpiper** (*Calidris himantopus*) - Playero Zancudo. Uncommon transient.

**Short-billed Dowitcher** (*Limnodromus griseus*) - Costurero Piquicorto. Common winter visitor and spring transient, fairly common fall transient.

**Long-billed Dowitcher** (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) - Costurero Piquilargo. Common transient and winter visitor.

**Common Snipe** (*Gallinago gallinago*) - Agachona Común. Uncommon transient and winter visitor.

**Wilson's Phalarope** (*Phalaropus tricolor*) - Falarapo de Wilson. Common transient.

**Red-necked Phalarope** (*Phalaropus lobatus*) - Falarapo Cuellirrojo. Common transient.

**LARIDAE – JAEGERs, GULLS, TERNS, AND SKIMMERS**

**Laughing Gull** (*Larus atricilla*) - Gaviota Reidora. Fairly common summer and rare winter visitor.

**Franklin's Gull** (*Larus pipixcan*) - Gaviota de Franklin. Rare spring transient and casual summer visitor.

**Bonaparte's Gull** (*Larus philadelphia*) - Gaviota de Bonaparte. Fairly common transient and winter visitor.

**Ring-billed Gull** (*Larus delawarensis*) - Gaviota Piquianillada. Common transient and winter visitor, less numerous as a non-breeding summer visitor.

**California Gull** (*Larus californicus*) - Gaviota Californiana. Common winter visitor and uncommon non-breeding summer visitor.

**Yellow-footed Gull** (*Larus livens*) - Gaviota Patamarilla. Common summer visitor and transient. Species under special protection in México (Diario Oficial de la Federación 2002).

**Gull-billed Tern** (*Sterna nilotica vanrossemi*) – Gallito piquigrueso. Common perennial visitor. Common breeder at Isla Montague and Cerro Prieto ponds. Status of western subspecies *vanrossemi* uncertain, but probably in declining numbers and is under consideration to be listed as Endangered in the U.S. (Parnell et al. 1995).

**Caspian Tern** (*Sterna caspia*) - Golondrina-Marina Cáspica. Fairly common perennial visitor.

**Elegant Tern** (*Sterna elegans*) - Golondrina-Marina Elegante. Fairly common non-breeding visitor. Species under special protection in México (Diario Oficial de la Federación 2002).

**Forster's Tern** (*Sterna forsteri*) - Golondrina-Marina de Forster. Common perennial visitor throughout the region.

**Least Tern** (*Sterna antillarum*) - Golondrina-Marina Mínima. Uncommon breeder. Uncommon spring and summer visitor. Species under special protection in México (Diario Oficial de la Federación 2002).

**Black Tern** (*Chlidonias niger*) - Golondrina-Marina Negra. Common transient.

**Black Skimmer** (*Rhynchops niger*) - Rayador Americano. Casual transient.

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