



NEWS

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Los Angeles Named “America’s Birdiest County” Local Birders and NHM Ornithologist Scour L.A. for Bird Species

July 10, 2006—In this year’s America’s Birdiest City/County Competition, Los Angeles has won the distinction of “America’s Birdiest County.” For the competition, several dozen birders combed L.A. County’s varied habitats during the three-day count period (April 28-30) and located 265 bird species. This exceeded runner-up San Diego County’s total by four species.

Natural History Museum Ornithology Collections Manager Kimball L. Garrett helped Topanga resident Dick Norton collate the results, and announced L.A.’s honors last week. Below are the results.

City Categories (with number of species identified)

Large Coastal City: Corpus Christi, TX 247
Large East Coast City: New York, NY 193
Large West Coast City: San Diego, CA 179
Large Inland City: San Antonio, TX 195
Small Coastal City: Dauphin Island, AL 170
Small Inland City: Duluth, MN 147

County Categories (with number of species identified)

Coastal County: Los Angeles, CA 265
Coastal Gulf County: Nueces County, TX 255
Coastal Atlantic County: Richmond County, NY 160
Inland County: Kern County, CA 247
Inland County, Central Flyway: Bexar County, TX 205
Inland County, Atlantic Flyway: (all Eastern entries were coastal)



This Costa’s Hummingbird is one of the 265 bird species counted in L.A. County during this year’s “America’s Birdiest City/County” competition. Photo by Kimball L. Garrett.

The objectives of the America’s Birdiest City/County contest are simple: to see which cities and counties in the various categories can document the highest count of bird species within its city (or county) limits, identified during a selected 72-hour period in the months of April or May.

The event began three years ago at the hands of the San Diego Audubon Society, but is conducted almost entirely by amateur birders, informed by birding websites (American Birding Society and The Birdwatcher’s Digest, for example), newsletters, and e-mail lists. “Unlike some other bird counting efforts, this has no pretense of valuable science,” Garrett says. “But birding exercises like this do underscore the tremendous biological diversity in the Los Angeles region.”

The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

The Natural History Family of Museums serves more than one million families and visitors in Los Angeles County annually, and is a national leader in research, exhibitions and education. The Museum is L.A.’s second oldest cultural institution, the first to open its doors to the public in 1913, and has amassed one of the world’s most extensive and valuable collections of natural and cultural history — more than 33 million objects, some as old as 500 million years. The Museum is located at 900 Exposition Blvd., Los Angeles. For more information, visit the museum’s website at www.nhm.org or call (213) 763-DINO.