

California Wildlife Habitat Relationships System
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
California Interagency Wildlife Task Group

WANDERING TATTLER

Tringa incana

Family: SCOLOPACIDAE
B169

Order: CHARADRIIFORMES

Class: AVES

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DISTRIBUTION, ABUNDANCE, AND SEASONALITY

Uncommon to fairly common during spring and fall migration in rocky, marine habitats of coastal California, and on offshore islands. Rare to very uncommon from early October until late March. In southern California, very local in distribution, and more numerous on the Channel Islands than on the mainland (Garrett and Dunn 1981). Occurs on rugged, rocky coastlines, jetties, and breakwaters, but during migration also may be found on sandy beaches and coastal estuaries. The few inland records mostly are from the Salton Sea (Garrett and Dunn 1981).

SPECIFIC HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

Feeding: On the breeding grounds, prey includes various adult and larval flies, especially caddisflies and crane flies (Bent 1929, Palmer 1967). On the wintering grounds, forages by probing among the kelp and rocks of outer coast marine habitats. Occasionally wades in deep water, and may immerse the head completely while foraging. Decapod crustaceans, marine worms, and small mollusks are typical prey items (Bent 1929).

Cover: Requires undisturbed rocks, jetties, or other promontories for roosting during high tide period when feeding zones are submerged.

Reproduction: Breeding habitat apparently restricted to gravel bars along mountain streams and ponds in the alpine zone of Alaska and northwestern Canada. Few nests have been found (Johnsgard 1981). The nest is a shallow cup of twigs and roots, located in a hollow among rocks or gravel (Harrison 1978, Johnsgard 1981).

Water: No additional data found.

Pattern: Gravel shores near streams or ponds, close to suitable feeding habitat, are required for nesting. During the nonbreeding season, found in rocky intertidal habitats of marine environments.

SPECIES LIFE HISTORY

Activity Patterns: Yearlong, diurnal activity.

Seasonal Movements/Migration: Begins leaving the breeding grounds in late July, and the major southward movement occurs in August. In California, the major migratory passages occur from late July to early October, and early April to mid-May (McCaskie et al. 1979). Smaller numbers remain through the winter.

Home Range: No data found.

Territory: Two breeding pairs occupied territories that were about 1.6 km (1 mi) apart along a creek (Johnsgard 1981). Nonbreeders defended feeding territories in intertidal habitats (Myers et al. 1979).

Reproduction: Little known of breeding biology. Breeding apparently begins in early June. A solitary nester, and probably monogamous. The usual clutch size is 4 eggs. Incubation period 23-25 days; parents share incubation duties. Precocial young are tended by both parents, at least for the first wk. Age of first flight apparently is not known (Johnsgard 1981).

Niche: Usually occurs solitarily, occasionally in small groups; mostly does not associate with other species (Ehrlich et al. 1988).

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