

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

The Sandwich Tern breeds only on Atlantic coasts but winters in part on the Pacific coast of southern Mexico and Central America. In 1980 one joined the Elegant Terns moving along the Pacific coast and arrived in the Elegant Tern colony in south San Diego Bay. Presumably the same individual accounted for sporadic sightings of the Sandwich Tern at San Diego through 1987. The only other Sandwich Tern known from California (perhaps still the same individual) hybridized with Elegant Terns in the colony at Bolsa Chica, Orange County, from 1993 to 1995 (Collins 1997).

Breeding distribution: The Sandwich Tern in the south San Diego Bay salt works (U10/V10) 11–20 May 1980 unsuccessfully courted Elegant Terns in the colony there (Schaffner 1981). It was seen and photographed again around San Diego Bay and the San Diego River mouth



Photo by Anthony Mercieca

(R7/R8) 15 May–13 June 1982, 12–14 June 1985, and 18 April–16 May 1987 (Morlan 1985, Bevier 1990, Langham 1991).

Taxonomy: *Sterna s. acuflavida* Cabot, 1847, is the subspecies of Sandwich Tern in the New World.