

Return of the Tanager

by Kay Loughman

IN OUR SPRING 2019 ISSUE, John Colbert wrote about a male summer tanager observed intermittently by birders in Claremont Canyon over the previous six months. This handsome all-red bird drew admirers partly for its color, and partly for its being here at all, as this species generally spends the winter months in Mexico and points south.

Apparently the fellow liked it here. The (presumed) same bird was seen several times in Claremont Canyon during February and March this year, frequenting the same trees where he was seen last year. The photo to the right was taken by Steven Hunter on February 27, 2020.

One bird with wanderlust or a cluster of displaced birds? Unique event or the start of a trend? Summer Tanager is considered a *Bird Species of Special Concern*, so we would not expect to see even one individual in our area during the winter. But, as reported a year ago, a male summer tanager was seen in March 2019 in Walnut Creek; and in January 2020



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Summer Tanager on a eucalyptus branch near the entrance to the Claremont Canyon Regional Preserve.

a male summer tanager was reported in Oakland at the Morcom Rose Garden, just a few miles south of Claremont Canyon.

Even more recently, the tanager (likely our bird) spent a week or more in April feasting on bees in a backyard west of College Avenue. We wish him *bon appetit* as he prepares for a migration that will reunite him with others of the species for the breeding season.

Excerpted from: Claremont Canyon Conservancy, Spring 2020 News