

## California



**April 2nd - April 13th 2022**

### **General info:**

The trip aimed to find as many California & West-coast specialties as possible. We had a split flight with landing in Los Angeles and departure in San Francisco. To see as many of the targeted species as possible we had to visit places east as well as west of the Sierra Nevada. Since the passes over the mountains were closed because of snow (as they usually are in the time of our visit) we had to drive from Los Angeles to Bishop and then back to Los Angeles to drive north again along the west coast.

Birding the Bishop area was very rewarding as the species we found were great. However species diversity isn't high especially in the higher elevated sites. In some places we managed to find only seven species in two hours. Nevertheless I would always recommend to go there not only for some great birds but also for the incredible scenery.

Timing was a bit early in the year thus a few species had not yet arrived. Nevertheless we missed only few species of our wish list and managed to find 216 species including all of our top-priority birds.

### **Traffic:**

In most of the areas visited we had no problem. The roads to the sites in and around Los Angeles to Santa Barbara however were quite busy. You should plan some extra time here. For example the drive to Upper Newport Bay Nature Preserve from Pasadena was 90 min instead of 40. The visit of a good spot for Black-headed Grosbeak near Santa Barbara had to be cancelled due to the traffic. Our drive to Maricopa lasted 3:30h instead of 1:50 for the same reason.

### **Credit cards:**

are the way to pay. Others have reported to have problems paying at gas stations because you sometimes have to enter a five digit number. This is the zip code your credit card is registered in. My hometown zip code (as did 00000 or 90210 that are mentioned as possibilities in some reports) didn't work but it is always possible to pay at the cashier without having to enter the code.

### **Accommodation:**

We booked everything in advance. Since many of the motels had no vacancy when we checked in this was probably a good idea. On the other hand there is quite a few motels around and very likely somewhere there is some space left.

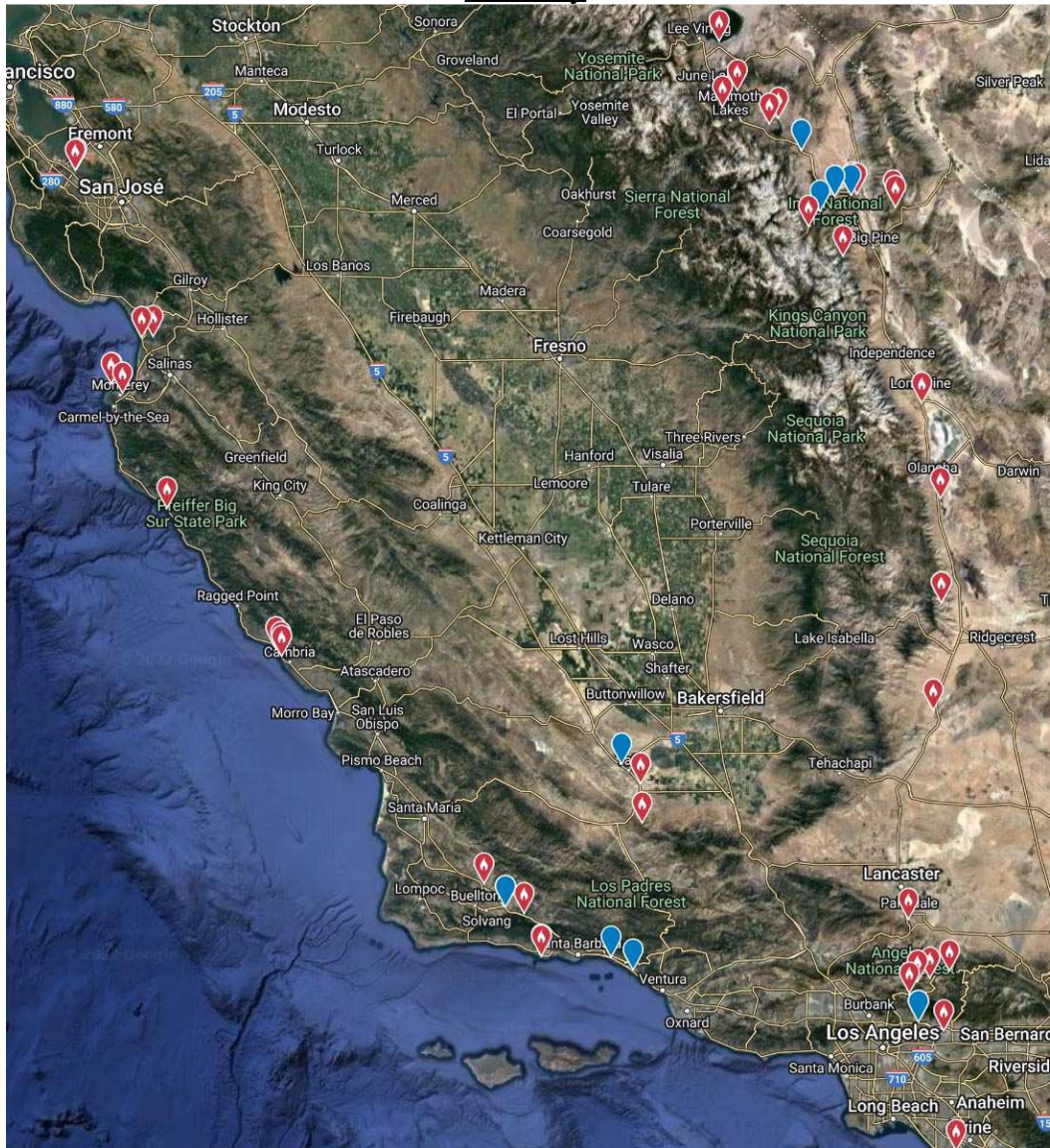
### **Weather:**

During our visit, weather was usually sunny with no clouds. Some areas can be quite cold though. Aspendell is located at >8400 ft/2500m above sea level so it's really fresh in the morning. At Inyo Craters we had to turn around because of too much snow. On the other hand we ran into a heat-wave with 38°C/101 F in Los Angeles.

### **How to use this report:**

The report is **divided into seven areas** that we usually used as a base and for overnight stays. Each site that we visited is described roughly, special birds are mentioned. There usually is a short description on how to get to the site and an **address** that can be used for a car-GPS. There are **coordinates** that can be copied/pasted into Google search that will provide you with the exact spots for parking or where we found special birds.

## Itinerary



- 2.4. Arrival, Drive to Palmdale, very short birding at **Lake Palmdale**. Overnight in Palmdale.
- 3.4. Drive to and birding at **Sand Canyon** / Pearsonville; later to **Big Pine Creek**. Overnight in Bishop.
- 4.4. Birding at **Lake Crowley, Inyo Craters, Big Springs Road & Campground**. Overnight in Bishop.
- 5.4. Birding in **Aspendell** and **White Mountains**. Overnight in Bishop.
- 6.4. Drive to **Gabriel Mountains**. En route birding stops at **Diaz Lake & Red Rock Canyon**. Birding in Gabriel Mountains. Overnight in Pasadena.
- 7.4. Birding in **Upper Newport Bay Nature Preserve** and **Santa Fe Dam Recreational Area**. Overnight in Pasadena.
- 8.4. Drive to Santa Barbara. Birding at **Zaca Station Road** and **Lake Cachuma**. Overnight in Santa Barbara.
- 9.4. Birding at **Coal Oil Point**. Drive to **Bitter Creek NSW**. Birding. Drive to Maricopa and birding at **Petroleum Club Road**. Overnight in Maricopa.
- 10.4. Drive to Monterey via **Pacific Highway 1** with several birding stops. Seawatching at **Point Pinos**. Overnight in Monterey.
- 11.4. **Monterey Municipal Wharf** and Seawatching at **Point Pinos**. Overnight in Monterey.
- 12.4. Birding at **Elkhorn Slough** and **Moss Landing**. Drive to Palo Alto. Birding **Bxybee Park**. Overnight in San Carlos.
- 13.4. Birding **Palo Alto Baylands**. Departure.

## Sites visited

### I. Bishop Area

#### a. Big Pine Creek

This is an upland site with a few species difficult to find elsewhere. The long road near the creek offers several stops to look for birds. We found the Big Pine Creek Campground by far the most rewarding spot. Finding species of upper elevations like *Mountain Chickadee*, *Clark's Nutcracker* or *Red-breasted Sapsucker* should cause no problem. The Thick-billed subspecies of *Fox Sparrow* was seen near the creek. The main reason we visited this site was *Sooty Grouse*. We heard one bird calling shortly after we crossed the bridge entering the campground. It took a while to find the tree it was calling from and another while before we discovered the bird. The males tend to sit quite high and close to the main stem. Usually you see its tail sticking out somewhere. Early morning visits don't seem to be necessary, at least this one still called when we left at about 2pm. *American Dipper* has a traditional nesting site under the bridge leading onto the campground. We waited for 15 minutes or so until the bird showed up. We walked the trail behind the barrier but found hardly any birds except for another Sooty Grouse.



Sooty Grouse

**Getting there:** In Big Pine turn onto W Crocker road which becomes Glacier Lodge Road. Drive to the end (barrier) and park the car.

**Address for car-GPS:** *Glacier Lodge Road* in *Big Pine* takes you to the start of the road. You will have to follow it another 10 miles.

**Coordinates:** Parking (37.125439, -118.437263), Sooty Grouse 1 (37.125670, -118.432646), Sooty Grouse 2 (37.125171, -118.444077), Dipper (37.124894, -118.436862)

#### b. Aspendell

With a sea level of more than 8000 ft. especially montane species can be observed in Aspendell. Species like *Pygmy Nut-hatch*, *Clark's Nut-cracker*, *Red-breasted Sapsucker* or *Cassin's Finch* can be expected here. The whole village is interesting for stationary and migrant birds. *Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches* (as most other birds) can be found at the active feeders. They usually stay until the end of April. We discovered three feeders, those in



Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch

Sumac Rd and in Bishop Creek Camp road were visited by at least 20 Rosy-Finches. Among the numerous "Oregon" Juncos was one "Slate-colored".

**Getting there:** In Bishop turn onto W Line Street (Route 168). Follow this road for approx. 17 miles to Aspendell. The sagebrush area near Cerro Coso Community College has *Sagebrush Sparrow*. Also good chances of finding Rock Wren further up the road.

**Address for car-GPS:** Sumac Rd in Aspendell

**Coordinates:** Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch 1 (37.237966, -118.599634), Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch 2 (37.237799, -118.595535)

### c. **White Mountains**

This site is located at the western limit of distribution of Juniper Titmouse and Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay, so California travelers might want to add these species to their list. Pinyon Jay is another possibility. A good spot to find all of these species is shortly before reaching Bristlecone Pine Forest which is signposted along the US395 in Big Pine. Both Pinyon Nature trail and Grandview Campground should provide the sought after species.



When we arrived at the nature trail the area was quiet with few birds around. However we arrived at about 2pm when things are rather slow everywhere. We managed to pick up *Juniper Titmouse* after a short search even in the heat of midday. *Bushtit* and *Rock Wren* were quite cooperative here. We saw one Jay flying off but couldn't figure out what it was. Pinyon Jay is frequently seen here but we had just a short glimpse at the bird.

The campground also had Juniper Titmouse plus three *Woodhouse's Scrub-Jays* and a few *Mountain Chickadees*. At a stop on our way up we found the only *Vesper's Sparrow* of the trip.

**Getting there:** Coming from Bishop follow the US395 south, turn left onto 168 just when reaching Big Pine (Ancient Bristlecone Forest is signposted here). Follow the road for 13 miles or so, turn left following the signs to Bristlecone Forest. After a few miles Pinyon Pine nature trail is signposted on the right. The Grandview Campground is another 2 miles further down the road.

**Address for car-GPS:** White Mountain Road in Bishop takes you to the start of the road. Follow to the described sites.

**Coordinates:** Nature Trail (37.314434, -118.181189), Grandview Campground (37.333389, -118.187154)

### d. **Lake Crowley**

The northern end of the lake is a place to find *Greater Sage Grouse* that has a lek that is visible from the road (see "Getting there"). In the right season up to a hundred birds can be seen, though quite distantly, dancing and flying around. From the viewpoint scan the area east (towards the lake). The lek is quite distant in an open area with noticeably different vegetation. Others have written that an early visit is essential and the lek was already deserted at 7am. When we left at 8 am there were still more than 70 birds dancing. A pair of *Black-bellied Magpies* was building a nest in the adjacent trees

Benton Crossing Road offers good chances for *Sage Thrasher* and *Sagebrush Sparrow*.

Both were singing and showing well at the described spot (see below).

A small pond at the nearest visible building had a few *Northern Pintails*, otherwise no special birds were found in the area. It is possible to continue Benton Crossing Road and park near Hilltop Hot Spring. From here, you get views of Warm Lake and Alkaline Lake that had a few ducks



Sagebrush Sparrow

(e.g. *Bufflehead*, *Cinnamon Teal*) and Waders (e.g. *American Avocet* & *Greater Yellowlegs*). A *Northern Harrier* flew by and another *Sage Thrasher* showed well.

**Getting there:** Follow the US395 north. When you are about to reach the northern end of Lake Crowley you see some buildings on the right of the freeway. Turn right onto the small road and follow it to the end. Park the car and walk your way along the fence towards the lake.

To reach the spot for Sage Thrasher and Sagebrush Sparrow go back to US395, drive north and turn right at the church. Drive another 1.2 miles until a gravel road splits on the left.

**Address for car-GPS:** Sage Grouse Lek: *Crowley Lake Dr* in *Mammoth Lakes*. Sagebrush Sparrow: *Whitmore Tubs Rd* in *Mammoth Lakes*.

**Coordinates:** Viewpoint for Sage Grouse lek (37.608223, -118.804826), Sage Thrasher and Sagebrush Sparrow (37.633893, -118.810768), Hilltop Hot Spring (37.664195, -118.789072)

#### e. **Inyo Craters**

Despite the lack of burned areas this area is claimed to be a rather reliable spot for **Black-backed Woodpecker**.

During our visit the site was very quiet and a lot of snow made birding difficult. In fact we didn't reach the lake because of too much snow. In the roundabout one hour stay only seven species of bird showed up but no Black-backed Woodpecker. Three or four *Williamson's Sapsuckers* used a dead tree near the entrance towards



Williamson's Sapsucker

Inyo Craters. *Clark's Nutcracker*, *Cassin's Finch* and *Mountain Chickadee* were a bit further down Dry Creek Rd.

**Getting there:** From Bishop follow the US395 north. Pass the turnoff for Mammoth Lakes and stay on US 395. After 5.3 miles turn left onto Mammoth Scenic Loop. After 3.2 miles the track to Inyo Craters is signposted on the right. Park your car here.

**Address for car-GPS:** *Mammoth Scenic Loop* in *Mammoth Lakes* takes you to the road, however it is quite long and you may be driving through Mammoth Lakes if coming from

the south. You need to find the entrance road to Inyo Craters which is signposted (Dry Creek Rd Spur; our GPS didn't know this road).

**Coordinates:** Parking (37.681688, -118.994732), Williamson's Sapsucker (37.682455, -118.994101)

f. **Owens River Road & Big Springs Campground**

Another site of higher elevation and thus interesting for a few sought after birds. The set of species somewhat resembles that of Inyo Craters. There are some areas with burned trees that are attractive for **Black-backed Woodpecker** that we finally found on Big Springs Campground. Other interesting species on the campground were **White-headed Woodpecker** and **Mountain Bluebird**. The whole road between



White-headed Woodpecker

campground and US395 provides good opportunities for birding. The most productive stop was a dirt track leading into the forest halfway between campground and US395. Large numbers of **Cassin's Finch** and **Mountain Chickadee** or individuals of **Brown Creeper**, **White-headed Woodpecker** and **Williamson's Sapsucker** were seen in a rather small area.

**Getting there:** Coming from the south, drive on US395 towards Mono Lake. Once you've passed the (southern) turnoff for Mammoth Lakes drive another 7.4 miles and turn right onto Owens River Road. This will take you to the Big Springs Campground.

**Address for car-GPS:** *Owens River Rd., Mammoth Lakes*. Be aware that this road is quite long and starts near Lake Crowley. Make sure to drive north on US395 to find the correct turnoff.

**Coordinates:** Black-backed Woodpecker (37.748424, -118.938387), White-headed Woodpecker, Cassin's Finch ... (37.736464, -118.962101)

g. **Bishop**

The town of Bishop and its surroundings offer some nice opportunities to find some of the commoner birds. The area south of the airport is a known spot for **Black-billed Magpie**. Among the roundabout 35 species we found here were **Spotted Towhee**, **Say's Phoebe**, **California Quail** and **Bushtit**. Rawson Canal offers more or less the same species though we couldn't find the Magpie here. Bishop City Park has a small pond with lots of **Ameri-**



Black-billed Magpie

*can Wigeons*. *California* and *Ring-billed Gulls* were present, so was *Common Merganser*. One *Black-throated Gray Warbler* was making his way through the trees adjacent to the lake.

**Address for car-GPS:** *Airport Rd.* in *Bishop* will lead you to the correct junction, turn south here to get into the areas good for birdwatching. Rawson Canal can be reached via *E Line St.* in *Bishop*. Turn left and park immediately behind the watercourse.

*Bruce St.* in *Bishop* will take you to Bishop City Park.

**Coordinates:** Bishop City Park (37.367167, -118.392372), Rawson Canal (37.363639, -118.380207), Airport Road (37.353615, -118.367898)

#### **h. US395 north of Bishop**

This open pine woodland next to the US395 has not much to offer but others have seen Pinyon Jay here on various occasions. We tried our luck in the late afternoon having not so much time to search. Not many birds were around though a large group of birds was making its way through the low scrubs with an impressive number of roundabout 50 *Ruby-crowned Kinglets* and a few *Bushtits*. Apart from one *Mountain Chickadee* and one *Yellow-rumped Warbler* no other songbirds were around. We searched for 45 minutes or so until we noticed two Jays flying on the opposite side of the highway. Fortunately they turned out to be *Pinyon Jays*.



**Getting there:** Located along US395. Going south this place is a 13.4 miles drive from the junction to Whitmore Tubs (see d: Lake Crowley).

**Address for car-GPS:** We didn't enter anything here, but *N Sherwin Crossover* in *Bishop* might be helpful.

**Coordinates:** Parking (37.633893, -118.810768), Pinyon Jay (37.525730, -118.620283)

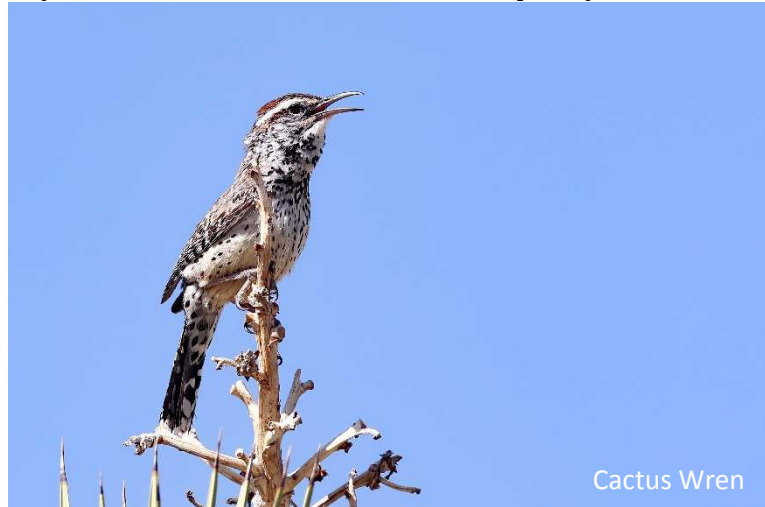


## II. US395 between Los Angeles and Bishop

### a. Red Rock Canyon

Not a must go place but easily reached and with a few birds with patchy distribution.

Ricardo Campground is the place to go. Half way between the visitor center and the rest rooms of the campground there is a few larger trees that are used as a breeding site by **Cactus Wren**. **Black-throated** and **Bell's Sparrow** can be seen from the loop road leading through the campground. We had **Swainson's Hawk**, **Sharp-shinned Hawk**



Cactus Wren

and **Peregrine Falcon** here as well. The rocky areas are used by **Rock Wren**. **Ladder-backed Woodpecker** is a possibility but we didn't find one.

**Getting there:** The Park is located along Highway 14 about 25 miles north of Mojave. Turn left onto Abbot Drive following the signs for the Visitor Center and continue onto the campground.

**Address for car-GPS:** 37749 Abbott Dr, Cantil

**Coordinates:** Cactus Wren (35.373185, -117.992758), Bell's Sparrow (35.371122, -117.996495)

### b. Sand Canyon / Pearsonville

Another place to find **Black-throated Sparrow** which was quite common in the dry shrubby areas. Also a few **Costa's Hummingbird** were flying around. This was the only spot we saw this species. Otherwise not many species were present.

**Getting there:** Located along Highway 395. Going north, pass the Pearsonville Gas Station and continue another 1.2 miles. Turn left behind the Ghost Town Museum and drive on the dust road until reaching the power line.



Costa's Hummingbird

**Address for car-GPS:** 10325-10599 Sterling Rd, Pearsonville is the address for the Ghost Town Museum. From here drive west towards the mountains. We parked at the power line.

**Coordinates:** Costa's Hummingbird (35.815509, -117.888500), Black-throated Sparrow (35.814629, -117.891082)

c. **Diaz Lake**

Used as a recreational area, this place can get quite crowded later in the day. We visited early on our way south towards Los Angeles and found a quiet place with a beautiful scenery and some nice birds. On this occasion we found our only *Lincoln's Sparrows* and *Brown-headed Cowbirds* of the trip. A good number of *Yellow-headed Blackbirds* were displaying. A few water and shorebirds were on the lake with *Bufflehead*, *Hooded Merganser*, *Eared Grebe* and *American Avocet* being the better ones. Migration period should produce a new set of species daily and some surprises should be possible.



Yellow-headed Blackbird

**Getting there:** Diaz Lake is located along the Highway 395 roughly 15 miles south of Lone Pine.

**Address for car-GPS:** 5007 South Main Street, Lone Pine is the address of the campground located on the west side of the lake.

**Coordinates:** 36.560630, -118.051998

### III. Los Angeles Area

a. **Gabriel Mountains**

This is a very large area north of Los Angeles with quite a few spots to try your luck. Especially owls (Flammulated, Saw-Whet, Northern Pygmy and Spotted) are sought and found here. A spot for Flammulated Owl is supposed to be at the Islip Saddle Day Use Area, they can also be heard around the Buckhorn Campground. Others have tried finding Spotted Owl here: 34.258395, -118.105204.



Pygmy Nuthatch

We arrived middays and made several stops on our way to the Buckhorn Day Use area however only few birds were present. This was partly due to the midday heat on the other hand we heard two *Mountain Quails* at 2pm calling at one of the pullouts. Our only *Rufous Hummingbird* was seen here too. Chilao Campground was rather quiet with a few Pygmy Nuthatches and Mountain Chickadees being the best observations. Further up, Buckhorn Day Use area is a stakeout for *Northern Pygmy-Owl*, two males were singing starting 4pm. Our plan to stay until dusk had to be changed as one of us had gotten sick so we had to leave and could not find any other owl species.

**Getting there:** Angel Crest Highway starts from Highway 210 north west of Pasadena. Going all the way up requires a drive of an hour or so and snow may be a problem in April.

**Coordinates:** Mountain Quail and Rufous Hummingbird (34.285012, -117.992537), Chialo Campground (34.319909, -118.011100), Buckhorn day use area (34.345776, -117.920422, Islip Saddle Day Use Area (34.357109, -117.850964)

## b. **Upper Newport Bay Nature Preserve**

Upper Newport Bay used to be a stronghold for **Ridgway's Rail** in the Los Angeles area with 200+ pairs. They stay

hidden in the taller grass areas on the islands within the bay and can be seen mainly when high waters push them out of their hideouts (so check the high tide calendars prior to your visit). However the numbers have dropped by 75% as the taller grass is now reduced. Still, chances of finding

one during high tide are good (though Bolsa Chica offers better chances). The whole area is very rich in birdlife due to a lot of waterfowl. A good spot to bird the area is the Peter and Mary Muth Interpretive Center. From here lots of trails offer good chances to find some special birds, especially along the Bayview Trail. A pair of **California Gnatcatcher** traditionally nests here (check coordinates for exact position). In the same tree as the Gnatcatcher was the only **Ash-throated Flycatcher** of the trip.

**Orange-crowned Warbler, Swinhoe's White-Eye, Cassin's Kingbird** and **Wrentit** were also seen along this short trail. This position is also a good spot for finding Ridgway's Rail during high tide. Good numbers of **Allen's Hummingbird** were around the whole Bayview trail.

A good spot for Herons, Waders and **Black Skimmer** is the San Diego Creek area. This can be viewed best from Eastbluff Drive, where you can park your car and use the vantage point to check the area. We had 6 birds plus several wader species here. Among the many Herons was one **Tricolored Heron**.

Another way to explore the area is to follow Back Bay Drive which turns off Jamboree Road. This one way drive may be used by vehicles at pedestrian speed and offers nice opportunities to get close to some spots used by waders or terns. Many photographers are going here because photo opportunities are supposed to be excellent.

**Getting there:** The Preserve is located in the south of Los Angeles (Santa Ana Heights) between Highway 73 in the north and Highway 1 in the south. Highway 55 is west of the Bay.

**Address for car-GPS:** 2301 University Dr in Newport Beach is the Peter and Mary Muth Interpretive Center (the area for Gnatcatcher). Eastbluff Dr. in Newport Beach for Skimmer and Waders (corner Jamboree Rd.). 1131 Back Bay Dr, Newport Beach is where the Backbay Drive Starts.

**Coordinates:** Parking (33.654811, -117.886667), California Gnatcatcher (33.652189, -117.880975), Skimmer & Waders (33.647182, -117.870776)



California Gnatcatcher



c. **Santa Fe Dam Recreational area**

This site is somewhat divided into two areas: the southern part is stuffed with picnic tables (and people using it). Lots of trees offer a pleasant shade and make this area attractive for migrants. **Black Phoebes, House Finches, Yellow-rumped Warblers** were quite numerous. We found our only **Hutton's Vireo** here. Early morning visits should produce a lot more. **Ross's Goose** and **Snow Goose** occur in semi-wild populations. I don't know



if they're tickable but they are not marked as escapees on ebird. **Great Horned Owls** breed here but we have not found them. 20 **American Pipits** used the short lawns in search of food and a longstaying **Neotropic Cormorant** among the **Double-Crested Cormorants** was a nice surprise. The site is quite reliable for **Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Vermillion Flycatcher** and **Allen's Hummingbird**.

In the northern parts of the area there are residues of the original dry scrubs. Here you can find **California Thrasher, Phainopepla, California Towhee** or **California Scrub-Jay**.

**Getting there:** Santa Fe Dam can be reached via San Gabriel River Fwy (605). Turn onto Arrow highway driving east for less than 3 miles. Santa Fe Dam is signposted here.

**Address for car-GPS:** 15501 Arrow Hwy in Baldwin Park takes you to the entrance of the area.

**Coordinates:** Parking (34.111042, -117.942814), Vermillion Flycatcher (34.112588, -117.941237), California Thrasher (34.117882, -117.944563), Phainopepla (34.115546, -117.943662)

#### IV. **Santa Barbara Area**

a. **Devereux Slough and Coal Oil Point**

The combination of the lagoon, a few wooded spots, scrubby areas and the beach/ocean makes this place quite diverse. The beach is a known breeding site for **Snowy Plovers**, finding these birds should cause no problems. Among the usual waders (**Western & Least Sandpiper, Dunlin, Sanderling, Willet, Whimbrel, Black-bellied** and **Semipalmated Plover**) was one **Pacific Golden-Plover**. On the sea many **Surf Scoters** and **Brants** migrated, a few **Pacific & Red-throated Loons** were present as well.



The scrubs between the parking lot and the beach are good for *California Towhee*, *Bush-tit*, *Anna's Hummingbird* and *California Thrasher* that all showed well. The only *Hooded Orioles* of the trip were found in the trees adjacent to the parking lot.

**Getting there:** Driving on US101 take exit 108 in Santa Barbara and go south onto Storke Rd. After approx. 2 miles drive straight on onto Slough Rd. which takes you to the parking lot.

**Address for car-GPS:** 7070 Seaway Dr in Isla Vista takes you to the parking lot.

**Coordinates:** Parking (34.410822, -119.876801)

**b. Lake Cachuma**

We visited this recreational area in the hot midday hours on our way from Zaca Station Road to Santa Barbara to take a break and get some rest. A visit is costly, they charged 15\$ for entering the area. We managed to find 23 species, mainly by sitting at a picnic table with a cool drink in our hands. Both *Clark's* and *Western Grebe* were present on the lake, *Per-*



Acorn Woodpecker

*egrine Falcon* and *Golden Eagle* were seen flying distantly. The picnic area had rather common species like *Oak Titmouse*, *Acorn Woodpecker*, *California Scrub-Jay*, *Band-tailed Pigeon* and *White-breasted Nuthatch*.

**Getting there:** From Santa Barbara take Road 154 north towards Lake Cachuma. Follow the road for 18.2 miles. The recreational area is signposted on the right hand side.

**Address for car-GPS:** 44 Lakeview Drive in Santa Barbara takes you to the entrance of the area.

**Coordinates:** Entrance (34.572838, -119.959012)

**c. Zaca Station Rd.**

This is a very unspectacular site however very reliable for *Yellow-billed Magpie*. These birds are found only a few hundred feet after the turnoff onto Zaca Station Road. If you continue the road you'll get into an area where vineyards border the street on both sides. Here we had a pair of *Lewis's Woodpeckers* working the wooden poles bordering the road.



Yellow-billed Magpie

**Getting there:** From Santa Barbara take Road 154 north towards Lake Cachuma. Follow the road almost to its end. From Santa Barbara it's a 32.6 miles drive. Shortly before the road merges with Highway 101 take a right turn onto Zaca Station Road.

**Coordinates:** Yellow-billed Magpie (34.687564, -120.152622), Lewis's Woodpecker (34.711593, -120.141646)

## V. Maricopa Area

### a. Petroleum Club Road

This is the place to find *Le Conte's Thrasher*. The birds are very elusive and finding them requires an early morning or late afternoon visit. We arrived around 5:30 pm and walked up and down searching for quite a while. Two birds gave brief looks at 6:30pm only a few meters further on Kerto Road (from the junction between the second and third electricity pole bordering Kerto Road). An early morning visit the next morning was unsuccessful.

Apart from the Thrasher hardly any other birds are around. A pair of *Bell's Sparrows* showed well and a *Greater Roadrunner* was seen distantly.

**Getting there:** From the main junction in Maricopa go north on California street for 1.7 miles. Turn right onto Kerto road and drive another 0.2 miles till it meets Petroleum Club Road. Park the car at this junction.

**Address for car-GPS:** 26099 Kerto Rd., Maricopa.

**Coordinates:** Parking (35.084391, -119.398589), Le Conte's Thrasher (35.085006, -119.395563)

### b. Bitter Creek NWR

This is the place to find *California Condor* and *Tricolored Blackbird*.

The best place to see the Condor is the sign „Bitter Creek NWR“. A pair of Condors roosts on the ridges of the distant mountains below (scope needed). Late morning / early evening is supposed to be the best time of day. In the daytime the birds are skimming the area and can be any-



Tricolored Blackbird

where. At our arrival around 2pm there was no sign of the Condors so we continued birding along the road to the „Los Padres National Forest“-sign. In our 2 hours wait we spotted *Golden Eagle, Prairie Falcon, Brewer's Sparrow & Lark Sparrow*. Finally one Condor showed up at about 4 pm followed by another shortly after.

Hudson Ranch Road is a reliable place for Tricolored Blackbird. We saw several groups on the fences on our way up and down.

**Getting there:** From Maricopa go south on Route 166. Drive approx. 9 miles and turn left onto Hudson Ranch Road. The "bitter Creek NWR"-sign is reached after 8.4 miles, the "Los Padres National Forest"-sign another mile.

**Address for car-GPS:** Hudson Ranch Rd., Maricopa.

**Coordinates:** Tricolored Blackbird (34.928044, -119.406386), "Bitter Creek NWR"-sign (34.904294, -119.377572), "Los Padres National Forest"-sign (34.895212, -119.362938).

## VI. Monterey Area

### a. Pt. Pinos

Monterey Bay has deep waters that are attractive to pelagic species thus the chances to find some sought after species are comparably high. The rocky shores offer good possibilities for Black Turnstone, Black Oystercatcher and Surfbird. Point Pinos is the recommended sea-watching site (the lighthouse area in Pacific Grove at the southwestern end of the bay) however I found no wind-shaded areas to put up the scope here. Light conditions are not too good



later in the day either. We found a good spot a bit further east. Along the rocky shore *Surfbird*, *Black Oystercatcher* and *Black Turnstone* were easy to find. Many *Brandt's Cormorants* were seen flying while *Pelagic Cormorant* was usually seen swimming singly near the shores. On April 10th, wind conditions were perfect (for the birds, not for the scope) with *Sooty Shearwaters* and *Red Phalaropes* in three digits. *Common Murre*, *Pigeon Guillemot*, *Northern Fulmar*, *Black-legged Kittiwake* and *Bonaparte's Gull* were around. Others had Pink-footed Shearwater, Black-legged Albatross and Ashy Storm-Petrel that day. We found a nice *Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel* the next day. *Alcids* were around but refused to get identified.

**Address for car-GPS:** Ocean View BLVD, Pacific Grove.

**Coordinates:** Parking (36.637704, -121.934648)

### b. Municipal Wharf

Municipal Wharf and Del Monte Beach offer some nice opportunities to get close up looks of some of the species otherwise seen further offshore. Probably it can get crowded with people, during our visit cold winds and rain kept the area pretty quiet. *Pigeon Guillemots* seem to breed under the pier, at least around 20 were present, some of them displaying. The beach offers perfect opportunities to observe *Heerman's Gull*. Several species of waders were around, the ocean had species like *Common Loon*, *Red-breasted Merganser*, *Surf Scoter* and *Bonaparte's Gull*.



**Address for car-GPS:** 3 Municipal Wharf 2, Monterey

**Coordinates:** Parking (36.601537, -121.890111), Pigeon Guillemot (36.603397, -121.889173), Heerman's Gull (36.601473, -121.888459)

c. **Elkhorn Slough**

We tried this reserve to see Wild Turkey which is supposed to be around in good numbers. It is one of California's largest wetlands and is part of a National Estuarine Research Reserve, so a wide mixture of species can be expected. We visited on a Tuesday not knowing that it is open only Wed – Sun. So our strategy was to bird from Elkhorn Road which leads around



Wilson's Warbler

the area and offers good views at a couple of places. We easily found a small group of **Wild Turkey** displaying on a small clearing. **Wilson's Warbler** and **Pacific-Slope Flycatcher** were other sought after species that were seen quickly. Among the 53 species found were **Hooded Merganser**, **White-tailed Kite**, **Chestnut-backed Chickadee**, **Wrentit** and **California Towhee**.

**Getting there:** Coming from the south take Highway 1 north to Moss Landing, turn right on Dolan Road. After 3.4 miles turn left onto Elkhorn Road. The entrance to the reserve is on the left after 2.1 miles. The reserve is **closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.**

**Address for car-GPS:** 1700 Elkhorn Road, Watsonville

**Coordinates:** Wild Turkey (36.815611, -121.721808), Wilson's Warbler (36.821036, -121.728368), Pacific Slope Flycatcher (36.826385, -121.732187)

d. **Moss Landing**

Known mainly for its great opportunities to watch Sea Otter this place has a lot to offer for birdwatchers as well. The wetlands on the inland side have lots of ducks, waders, gulls and terns. From a small parking space on Jetty Road we found one of the few **Long-billed Curlews** of the trip, a sleeping **Black-legged Kittiwake** among the more common species and **Horned Grebe** swimming by very close. Moss Landing State beach can be reached by following Jetty Road, a few paths lead towards the ocean. Here you can expect **Snowy Plover** which has a breeding population here. On the ocean was the usual set of birds such as **Surf Scoter**, **Western Grebe** or **Pacific Loon** but also our only **Red-necked Grebe** and few **Pigeon Guillemots**.



Greater Yellowlegs

**Getting there:** Moss Landing lies roughly 20 miles north of Monterey along Highway No. 1. After passing the power plant cross the bridge and turn left onto Jetty Road.

**Address for car-GPS:** Jetty Rd, Moss Landing

**Coordinates:** Jetty Road birdwatching point (36.816966, -121.786902), Snowy Plover breeding (36.809395, -121.789683)



## VII. San Francisco Area

### a. Palo Alto Baylands

Palo Alto Bayland Preserve is one of the largest tracts of undisturbed marshland remaining in the San Francisco Bay and consists of a mixture of tidal and fresh water habitats. It is a known hotspot for Ridgway's Rail that we failed to find in the Los Angeles Area. There is a lot of trails to explore. We tried the Byxbee Park area late on Apr. 12<sup>th</sup> and the area around the Lucy Evans Baylands Nature Interpretive Center early on Apr. 13<sup>th</sup>. Naturally, we saw a broad set of duck and wader species. The only *Canvasbacks* of the trip were seen here. Quite a number of *American Avocets* were around and showed well. Among the song-birds, *Golden-crowned Sparrows* and *Lesser Goldfinches* were quite numerous.

We couldn't find *Ridgways Rail* at Byxbee Park but managed to find one at a small pond only 250 ft from the Interpretive Center.

#### Getting there:

In Palo Alto get off Bayshore Fwy and drive east onto Embarcadero Road. Continue on this road until you reach a T-junction. Going right will take you to thy Byxbee Park, going left will get you to Lucy Evans Baylands Nature Interpretive Center.

Address for car-GPS: 2775 Embarcadero Rd, Palo Alto, CA 94303 (Interpretive Center)

Coordinates: Ridgway's Rail (37.459873, -122.107447)



## The birds:

- 1 **Snow Goose** A semi wild population sticks around at Santa Fe Recreational Dam.
- 2 **Ross Goose** Is found together with the latter species at Santa Fe Recreational Dam. Hybrids of both occur too.
- 3 **Brant** Seen quite commonly migrating at ocean sites.
- 4 **Canada Goose** Common in wetlands.
- 5 **Blue-winged Teal** Seen mainly at the west coast sites (Elkhorn Slough, Moss Landing, Upper Newport Bay).
- 6 **Cinnamon Teal** Seen on three occasions (Upper Newport Bay, Elkhorn Slough and Lake Crowley where especially numerous).
- 7 **Northern Shoveler** Seen commonly in wetlands.
- 8 **Gadwall** Seen at many wetland sites though often few individuals.
- 9 **American Wigeon** Common in Bishop City Park, seen at many sites elsewhere.
- 10 **Mallard** Common.
- 11 **Northern Pintail** Only Lake Crowley and Elkhorn Slough.
- 12 **Green-winged Teal** A few sightings in different wetlands.
- 13 **Canvasback** Seen only at Palo Alto Baylands.
- 14 **Redhead** Seen only Upper Newport Bay.
- 15 **Ring-necked Duck** Seen only Bishop City Park.
- 16 **Greater Scaup** Secure ID only at Moss Landing. Many Scaups however left unidentified.
- 17 **Lesser Scaup** Upper Newport Bay and Moss Landing. Many Scaups left unidentified.
- 18 **Surf Scoter** Common at ocean sites.
- 19 **White-winged Scoter** Two birds at a stop on Highway No. 1 near the elephant seal beach were the only sighting.
- 20 **Bufflehead** Few individuals at five sites (Lake Crowley, Diaz Lake, Upper Newport Bay, Elkhorn Slough, Palo Alto Baylands).
- 21 **Hooded Merganser** Seen only at Elkhorn Slough and Diaz Lake.
- 22 **Common Merganser** A single female in Bishop City Park.
- 23 **Red-breasted Merganser** Seen a few times on the ocean. Most numerous in Monterey.
- 24 **Ruddy Duck** Common.
- 25 **Mountain Quail** Two calling males at a stop on Angeles Crest Highway (see IIIa) were the only birds of this species.
- 26 **California Quail** Fewer sightings than expected but still common.
- 27 **Wild Turkey** Our only sightings were at Elkhorn Slough, supposed to be quite common west of the Sierra.
- 28 **Greater Sage Grouse** Very good chances (in the right season) at the Lake Crowley Lek (see Id).
- 29 **Sooty Grouse** Though there should be several possibilities in the high elevation sites in the Sierra, we recommend Big Pine Creek Campground (see I a).
- 30 **Pied-billed Grebe** Seen only on one occasion at Upper Newport Bay.
- 31 **Horned Grebe** Coastal sightings at Devereux Slough, Pico Creek and Moss Landing.
- 32 **Red-necked Grebe** One individual at Moss Landing State Beach was the only sighting.
- 33 **Eared Grebe** Not uncommon. Up to 17 birds were seen at ten different sites.
- 34 **Western Grebe** Not uncommon, seen mainly on the ocean but also Lake Cachuma.
- 35 **Clark's Grebe** A good chance to find this species is Lake Palmdale north of Los Angeles (not mentioned in this report), seen also Lake Cachuma.
- 36 **Rock Pigeon** Common in cities.
- 37 **Band-tailed Pigeon** Observations confined to the spots west of the Sierra Nevada.
- 38 **Eurasian Collared-Dove** Common.
- 39 **Mourning Dove** Common.
- 40 **Greater Roadrunner** Probably not uncommon in desert-like habitats, we found them only near Maricopa.

|    |                               |   |
|----|-------------------------------|---|
| 41 | <b>White-throated Swift</b>   | Not uncommon, we saw most of them east of the Sierra.   |
| 42 | <b>Anna's Hummingbird</b>     | Not seen east of the Sierra but common in the Los Angeles area and at coastal sites.  |
| 43 | <b>Costa's Hummingbird</b>    | Seen only on one occasion near Pearsonville (see II b).   |
| 44 | <b>Rufous Hummingbird</b>     | Our only Rufous Hummingbird flew by at the same spot as the Mountain Quails (see III a) .   |
| 45 | <b>Allen's Hummingbird</b>    | Very numerous in Upper Newport Bay Nature Preserve, another one at Santa Fe Dam Recreational Area).   |
| 46 | <b>Ridgway's Rail</b>         | after unsuccessful searches in the Los Angeles area we found a bird in Palo Alto Baylands.  |
| 47 | <b>Common Gallinule</b>       | Surprisingly only one observation at Lake Palmdale on Apr. 2 <sup>nd</sup> .  |
| 48 | <b>American Coot</b>          | Common.   |
| 49 | <b>Black-necked Stilt</b>     | Seen on three occasions (Devereux Slough, Elkhorn Slough, Moss Landing).  |
| 50 | <b>American Avocet</b>        | Several sites on both sides of the Sierra.  |
| 51 | <b>Black Oystercatcher</b>    | Coastal sites only. Few sightings on stops along Pacific Highway 1. Easily found Pt. Pinos / Monterey.  |
| 52 | <b>Black-bellied Plover</b>   | Several sightings at coastal sites only.  |
| 53 | <b>Pacific Golden-Plover</b>  | One bird at Devereux Slough attracted quite a few birdwatchers.   |
| 54 | <b>Snowy Plover</b>           | Seen at the breeding sites at Devereux Slough and Moss Landing State Beach.   |
| 55 | <b>Semipalmated Plover</b>    | Seen at a few coastal sites.  |
| 56 | <b>Killdeer</b>               | Usually seen at wetland sites.  |
| 57 | <b>Whimbrel</b>               | Commonly seen at wetland sites.   |
| 58 | <b>Long-billed Curlew</b>     | Only one bird at Moss landing on Apr. 12 <sup>th</sup> .  |
| 59 | <b>Marbled Godwit</b>         | Quite common at coastal sites / beaches.  |
| 60 | <b>Black Turnstone</b>        | A coastal species that is found on rocky shores and adjacent beaches. We had few sightings at various stops along Pacific Highway 1. Easily found Pt. Pinos / Monterey. |
| 61 | <b>Surfbird</b>               | Another bird confined to the rocky shores on the west coast. Pt. Pinos is the only place where we saw this great bird,  |
| 62 | <b>Sanderling</b>             | Seen Devereux Slough and Moss Landing.  |
| 63 | <b>Dunlin</b>                 | Few Individuals at Devereux Slough and Moss Landing. Quite numerous at Palo Alto Baylands.  |
| 64 | <b>Least Sandpiper</b>        | Seen coastal only where quite common.   |
| 65 | <b>Western Sandpiper</b>      | Seen coastal only where quite common.   |
| 66 | <b>Short-billed Dowitcher</b> | Quite a few sightings at coastal sites.   |
| 67 | <b>Long-billed Dowitcher</b>  | The only secure sighting was at Upper Newport Bay. Many Dowitchers remained unidentified though.  |
| 68 | <b>Red Phalarope</b>          | Spectacular numbers on Apr. 10 <sup>th</sup> and 11 <sup>th</sup> at Pt. Pinos during stormy weather. Not seen elsewhere.   |
| 69 | <b>Spotted Sandpiper</b>      | Common but usually small numbers.   |
| 70 | <b>Greater Yellowlegs</b>     | Common in wetlands with mudflats.   |
| 71 | <b>Willet</b>                 | Occasional sightings in wetlands and beaches.   |
| 72 | <b>Lesser Yellowlegs</b>      | Securely seen only Elkhorn Slough.  |
| 73 | <b>Common Murre</b>           | Seen only Pt. Pinos. Quite numerous there but that may have been a result of the stormy weather.  |
| 74 | <b>Pigeon Guillemot</b>       | Displaying close to the shore at the Municipal Wharf in Monterey. Also Pt. Pinos and Moss Landing State Beach.  |
| 75 | <b>Black-legged Kittiwake</b> | A couple of birds were seen flying in Monterey Bay during stormy weather. One single bird resting among other species at Moss Landing.                                  |
| 76 | <b>Bonaparte's Gull</b>       | Both sightings were in Monterey (Pt. Pinos and Municipal Wharf).  |
| 77 | <b>Heerman's Gull</b>         | Seen only in the Monterey area though they usually turn up at several coastal sites that we visited.  |
| 78 | <b>Short-billed Gull</b>      | One bird at Pt. Pinos during the storm on Apr. 10 <sup>th</sup> was the only observation.   |
| 79 | <b>Ring-billed Gull</b>       | Seen several times on both sides of the Sierra.   |

|            |                                  |   |
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| <b>80</b>  | <b>Western Gull</b>              | Coastal sightings only, common there.   |
| <b>81</b>  | <b>California Gull</b>           | A breeder of inland lakes therefore seen commonly at inland wetlands. However they were common at coastal sites as well.  |
| <b>82</b>  | <b>Herring Gull</b>              | We identified only one bird securely (at Devereux Slough). Probably more common. We didn't really try to pick out this species in areas with many gulls.  |
| <b>83</b>  | <b>Glaucous-winged Gull</b>      | Probably common at coastal spots. Care has to be taken when IDing this gull; many birds we photographed turned out to be hybrids.   |
| <b>84</b>  | <b>Caspian Tern</b>              | Sightings at Upper Newport Bay, along Pacific Highway one and at Moss Landing with up to 6 birds.   |
| <b>85</b>  | <b>Forster's Tern</b>            | Only seen on two occasions at Upper Newport Bay and Santa Fe Dam Recreational Area.   |
| <b>86</b>  | <b>Royal Tern</b>                | Seen Devereux Slough only.  |
| <b>87</b>  | <b>Black Skimmer</b>             | Not common at the west coast. They can be seen at Upper Newport Bay where they prefer the San Diego Creek area (see III b).   |
| <b>88</b>  | <b>Red-throated Loon</b>         | Usually one or two out at sea during seawatching.   |
| <b>89</b>  | <b>Pacific Loon</b>              | Seen during seawatching at Devereux Slough, Moss Landing State beach and Pt. Pinos.   |
| <b>90</b>  | <b>Common Loon</b>               | Same as the latter species, most numerous around Monterey   |
| <b>91</b>  | <b>Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel</b>  | One bird flying close to the shore after the storm at Pt. Pinos on Apr. 11 <sup>th</sup> .  |
| <b>92</b>  | <b>Northern Fulmar</b>           | Quite numerous in Monterey Bay on April 10 <sup>th</sup> and 11 <sup>th</sup> .   |
| <b>93</b>  | <b>Sooty Shearwater</b>          | Pt. Pinos only with > 100 birds during the storm on Apr. 10 <sup>th</sup> and still around 40 during calmer weather on Apr. 11 <sup>th</sup> .  |
| <b>94</b>  | <b>Brandt's Cormorant</b>        | Separating the two cormorants isn't always easy when they're far out at sea. Cormorants were seen everywhere we were seawatching, most of them probably were this species. Very large numbers close to the shore at Pt. Pinos on Apr. 10 <sup>th</sup> .            |
| <b>95</b>  | <b>Pelagic Cormorant</b>         | See latter species. Secure ID's at Devereux Slough and Pt. Pinos, numbers much smaller than the latter species.   |
| <b>96</b>  | <b>Double-crested Cormorant</b>  | Common, less pelagic but some were out at sea.  |
| <b>97</b>  | <b>Neotropic Cormorant</b>       | One longstaying bird at Santa Fe Dam Recreational Area showed well.   |
| <b>98</b>  | <b>American White Pelican</b>    | A migrating flock over US 395 while heading towards Bishop. Resting birds were seen at Elkhorn Slough (where numerous) and at Palo Alto Baylands (with just two birds).   |
| <b>99</b>  | <b>Brown Pelican</b>             | Common over the sea.  |
| <b>100</b> | <b>Great Blue Heron</b>          | Common at wetlands.   |
| <b>101</b> | <b>Great Egret</b>               | Seen on two occasions (Devereux Slough & Elkhorn Slough)  |
| <b>102</b> | <b>Snowy Egret</b>               | Common at wetlands.   |
| <b>103</b> | <b>Tricolored Heron</b>          | One bird was seen at Upper Newport Bay in the San Diego Creek area.   |
| <b>104</b> | <b>Black-crowned Night-Heron</b> | The only bird was at Diaz Lake on Apr. 6 <sup>th</sup> .  |
| <b>105</b> | <b>White-faced Ibis</b>          | Seen only at Upper Newport Bay.   |
| <b>106</b> | <b>California Condor</b>         | Condors may be seen at several sites. Many people try Julia Pfeiffer Burns SP along Pacific Highway 1. We found them at Bitter Creek NWR (see V b). Morning or evening visits to the viewpoint should get you looks of a roosting pair in the distant ridges below. |
| <b>107</b> | <b>Turkey Vulture</b>            | Common.   |
| <b>108</b> | <b>Osprey</b>                    | A few birds were seen on both sides of the Sierra.  |
| <b>109</b> | <b>White-tailed Kite</b>         | One bird at Elkhorn Slough (in the Kirby Park region) was the only sighting.  |
| <b>110</b> | <b>Golden Eagle</b>              | Two sightings: One bird crossing Lake Cachuma on Apr. 8 <sup>th</sup> and another one at Bitter Creek NWR.  |
| <b>111</b> | <b>Northern Harrier</b>          | Seen on four occasions on both sides of the Sierra (Lake Crowley, Upper Newport Bay, Bitter Creek, Palo Alto Baylands)  |
| <b>112</b> | <b>Sharp-shinned Hawk</b>        | Seen only Red Rock Canyon   |

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| <b>113</b> | <b>Cooper's Hawk</b>            | Three sightings (Bishop, Santa Fe Dam, Red Rock Canyon)   |
| <b>114</b> | <b>Swainson's Hawk</b>          | Only seen Red Rock Canyon   |
| <b>115</b> | <b>Red-tailed Hawk</b>          | Common  |
| <b>116</b> | <b>Northern Pygmy-Owl</b>       | Two singing males in Buckhorn day use area / Gabriel Mountains. The owls started singing at around 4pm.   |
| <b>117</b> | <b>Williamson's Sapsucker</b>   | Seen only at Inyo Craters.  |
| <b>118</b> | <b>Red-breasted Sapsucker</b>   | Bird of the higher elevation sites east of the Sierra. We've seen this beauty only at Big Pine Creek, Inyo Craters and Aspendell.   |
| <b>119</b> | <b>Lewis's Woodpecker</b>       | seen only at Zaca station road (2 birds)  |
| <b>120</b> | <b>Acorn Woodpecker</b>         | Said to be common. We've not seen it east of the Sierra but quite numerous and conspicuous elsewhere.   |
| <b>121</b> | <b>Black-backed Woodpecker</b>  | This bird is a bit unpredictable as it is a fire-follower. We found one bird near Big Springs Campground in an area of recently burned trees. Inyo Craters is supposed to be a reliable spot but we didn't find it there.                         |
| <b>122</b> | <b>Downy Woodpecker</b>         | Not uncommon. We found it east of the Sierra only: in Bishop (Rawson Canal), Big Springs Campground and Aspendell   |
| <b>123</b> | <b>Hairy Woodpecker</b>         | Widespread but usually less common than the latter. Our only two sightings were in the Bishop area: Big Pine Creek and Aspendell. The latter seems to be quite reliable at least a group of birders we met there was specifically looking for it. |
| <b>124</b> | <b>White-headed Woodpecker</b>  | Found in coniferous forests usually in mountains. Therefore the Bishop area is good for this species. We saw them only in Big Springs road and campground (see I f).  |
| <b>125</b> | <b>Northern Flicker</b>         | Quite common  |
| <b>126</b> | <b>American Kestrel</b>         | common  |
| <b>127</b> | <b>Peregrine Falcon</b>         | Two sightings: Red Rock Canyon and Lake Cachuma.  |
| <b>128</b> | <b>Prairie Falcon</b>           | Two sightings: one (or two) bird(s) at both viewpoints in Bitter Creek NSW and another along Route 33 northwest of Taft. The area Taft - Maricopa - New Cuyama generally offers good chances.   |
| <b>129</b> | <b>Red-crowned Parrot</b>       | 4 of these lovely birds flew right above our heads at our motel in Pasadena.  |
| <b>130</b> | <b>Pacific-slope Flycatcher</b> | Not uncommon in moist mixed forests mainly west of the Sierra. Surprisingly we had only one observation at Elkhorn Slough.  |
| <b>131</b> | <b>Black Phoebe</b>             | Quite common  |
| <b>132</b> | <b>Say's Phoebe</b>             | Quite common  |
| <b>133</b> | <b>Vermillion Flycatcher</b>    | Generally not common in California and confined to the south. Santa Fe Dam Recreational area is said to be a good site. We found one male in the south-eastern end of the picnic area.  |
| <b>134</b> | <b>Ash-throated Flycatcher</b>  | One bird at Upper Newport Bay Nature Preserve.  |
| <b>135</b> | <b>Cassin's Kingbird</b>        | Seen at Upper Newport Bay Nature Preserve and Zaca Station Road.  |
| <b>136</b> | <b>Western Kingbird</b>         | Quite common in open habitat with a few perches. This species was especially numerous in Bitter Creek NSW. Many Kingbirds sitting on the wire around Maricopa were probably this species.   |
| <b>167</b> | <b>Hutton's Vireo</b>           | Quite common in oak woods mainly west of the Sierra. We found just one bird at Santa Fe Dam Recreational area.  |
| <b>138</b> | <b>Loggerhead Shrike</b>        | Probably not uncommon. We saw the on four occasions (in the Bishop area and Bitter Creek NWR).  |
| <b>139</b> | <b>Pinyon Jay</b>               | In California mainly found in open pine forests of the extreme east. We saw two birds along the US395 north of Bishop (see I h). They may turn up anywhere in the Bishop area. Many birders saw them in the White Mountains (I c).                |
| <b>140</b> | <b>Steller's Jay</b>            | Quite common. With the exception of Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park, we saw this species only in higher elevated forests like Big Pine Canyon (see I a) or Buckhorn Day Use Area (see III a).   |
| <b>141</b> | <b>California Scrub-Jay</b>     | Quite common west of the Sierra.  |

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| <b>142</b> | <b>Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay</b>         | In California, restricted to the far east. The only possibility for us were the White Mountains. We easily found three birds on Grandview Campground.  |
| <b>143</b> | <b>Black-billed Magpie</b>           | In Bishop try the area south of the airport. Also a pair seen near the Sage Grouse Lek north of Bishop.  |
| <b>144</b> | <b>Yellow-billed Magpie</b>          | California endemic with somewhat local distribution in oak savannas. Easy to find at Zaca Station Road within the first 0.25 miles after the turnoff.  |
| <b>145</b> | <b>Clark's Nutcracker</b>            | Found only at the higher-elevated sites (Inyo Craters, Big Pine Creek & Aspendell).  |
| <b>146</b> | <b>American Crow</b>                 | Common.  |
| <b>147</b> | <b>Common Raven</b>                  | Very Common.   |
| <b>148</b> | <b>Mountain Chickadee</b>            | Montane species of coniferous forests, therefore we observed this species mainly in the higher elevated sites in the Bishop area (e.g. Big Pine Creek, Aspendell, Big Springs Road) but also Buckhorn Day Use Area (see III a).                                  |
| <b>149</b> | <b>Chestnut-backed Chickadee</b>     | A common species found in moist forests on the west coast. We observed it at Elkhorn Slough and Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park.   |
| <b>150</b> | <b>Oak Titmouse</b>                  | A species with limited distribution. Common in oak forests. Our observations were west of the Sierra only (Lake Cachuma, Chilao Campground).   |
| <b>151</b> | <b>Juniper Titmouse</b>              | Californian birds are restricted to the far east of the state. The only possibility for us was the White Mountains (see I c). We found them at the nature trail and on Grandview Campground  |
| <b>152</b> | <b>Horned Lark</b>                   | Quite common in a variety of sparsely vegetated areas.   |
| <b>153</b> | <b>Northern Rough-winged Swallow</b> | Widespread but usually few individuals. Seen several times many of them possibly migrants. The population at Santa Fe Dam is said to be breeding.  |
| <b>154</b> | <b>Tree Swallow</b>                  | Usually common and widespread. After going through my notes I realized that we've just seen (or noted) this species at Lake Palmdale.  |
| <b>155</b> | <b>Violet-green Swallow</b>          | Widespread.  |
| <b>156</b> | <b>Bank Swallow</b>                  | Probably rather common, we didn't really check all the swallows around. So maybe therefore only one observation of two migrating birds at Sand Canyon.   |
| <b>157</b> | <b>Barn Swallow</b>                  | Common.  |
| <b>158</b> | <b>Cliff Swallow</b>                 | Widespread.  |
| <b>159</b> | <b>Bushtit</b>                       | Rather common. We saw this bird at five different locations on both sides of the Sierra.   |
| <b>160</b> | <b>Wrentit</b>                       | More secretive and rarer than the latter species. We found it in Upper Newport Bay and Elkhorn Slough. Quite a few were singing in Julia Pfeiffer Burns SP (along the McWay Waterfall Trailhead). If you're going along Pacific Highway 1 this is a good option. |
| <b>161</b> | <b>Swinhoe's White-Eye</b>           | Introduced to the Los Angeles area. One bird at Upper Newport Bay Nature Preserve. Ebird lists it "Provisional" which makes it tickable if you're up for exotics as well.  |
| <b>162</b> | <b>Ruby-crowned Kinglet</b>          | Quite common at different sites east of the Sierra.  |
| <b>163</b> | <b>White-breasted Nuthatch</b>       | Seen on five occasions (Big Pine Canyon, Big Springs Road, Aspendell, Chilao Campground, Lake Cachuma)   |
| <b>164</b> | <b>Pygmy Nuthatch</b>                | Found in montane pine and aspen forests. We saw them in Aspendell (see I b) and at Chilao Campground (see III a). Occurs Big Pine Creek but we didn't find it there.   |
| <b>165</b> | <b>Brown Creeper</b>                 | We found just two birds, both in pine forests in the upper elevation sites east of the Sierra: Inyo Craters and Springs road (see I e & f).  |

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| <b>166 California Gnatcatcher</b>  | Near-endemic with very limited range. It is restricted to coastal scrubs in the south of the state. We found a pair in Upper Newport Bay (see III b). Bolsa Chica is said to offer good opportunities as well.   |
| <b>167 Rock Wren</b>               | Widespread but uncommon. We saw it on three occasions east of the Sierra (Aspendell, White Mountains, Red Rock Canyon).  |
| <b>168 Pacific Wren</b>            | A relatively recent split from Winter Wren that inhabits dense and moist forests. Therefore it is found mainly west of the Sierra. Our only observation was one bird along the McWay Waterfall Trailhead in Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park along Pacific Highway 1. |
| <b>169 Cactus Wren</b>             | Restricted to the south of the state. Our only observation was in Red Rock Canyon NP (see II a).   |
| <b>170 American Dipper</b>         | A pair has a traditional nesting site under the bridge leading onto Big Pine Creek Campground (see I a). This was our only sighting.   |
| <b>171 European Starling</b>       | Common.  |
| <b>172 California Thrasher</b>     | Common but obviously difficult to find in dry scrublands on both sides of the Sierra. We found single birds at Santa Fe Dam (III c) and Devereux Slough (IV a).  |
| <b>173 LeConte's Thrasher</b>      | Petroleum Club Road near Maricopa is a good option for this elusive species. We needed a while to find them as they were quiet and they didn't respond to playback (though we tried only very shortly). Very early or rather late visits are said to be essential.   |
| <b>174 Sage Thrasher</b>           | Inhabits the sagebrush plains that are found in the north-eastern parts of California only (though migrants can turn up elsewhere). The area north of Lake Crowley offers good opportunities (see I d).  |
| <b>175 Northern Mockingbird</b>    | Quite common.  |
| <b>176 Western Bluebird</b>        | Common.  |
| <b>177 Mountain Bluebird</b>       | Prefers higher elevations therefore our observations were restricted to mountainous sites (Aspendell, Big Springs Rd.).  |
| <b>178 American Robin</b>          | Common.  |
| <b>179 Phainopepla</b>             | Found only in the scrubs in the north eastern part of the lake in Santa Fe Recreational Area. Quite conspicuous when present, nevertheless this was our only observation.  |
| <b>180 Scaly-breasted Munia</b>    | One observation between the car park and the beach somewhere in Santa Barbara.   |
| <b>181 House Sparrow</b>           | Common near human settlements.   |
| <b>182 American Pipit</b>          | Seen on two occasions only: at least 20 birds at Santa Fe Dam and a single bird at Elkhorn Slough (in the Kirby Park area).  |
| <b>183 Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch</b> | One of the top target birds of the trip. A species of high elevations above the tree line. They can reliably be seen in Aspendell (see I b), at least until mid-April where they visit the feeders.  |
| <b>184 House Finch</b>             | Common.  |
| <b>185 Cassin's Finch</b>          | Inhabits montane coniferous forests therefore high elevated sites east of the Sierra (Aspendell, Big Springs Road, Inyo Craters) were the only places where we found this species.   |
| <b>186 Lesser Goldfinch</b>        | Quite common.  |
| <b>187 American Goldfinch</b>      | Though common, nevertheless we found this species only at Elkhorn Slough.  |
| <b>188 Chipping Sparrow</b>        | Three sightings: White Mountains, Red Rock Canyon, Santa Fe Dam.   |
| <b>189 Brewer's Sparrow</b>        | Three birds at Bitter Creek NWR were the only observation.   |
| <b>190 Black-throated Sparrow</b>  | Within California somewhat restricted to the southeast of the state. Easy to find in Red Rock Canyon (II a) and Sand Canyon (II b).  |
| <b>191 Lark Sparrow</b>            | Only seen at Bitter Creek NWR.   |

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| <b>192 Fox Sparrow</b>                 | The near-endemic subspecies group “Thick-billed” may be seen at higher elevated sites. Our only observation was on Big Spring Creek campground (see I a).   |
| <b>193 Dark-eyed Junco</b>             | Quite frequently seen east of the Sierra, not found west of it. Among the numerous “Oregon”-Juncos in Aspendell was one “Slate-colored”.  |
| <b>194 White-crowned Sparrow</b>       | Very common.  |
| <b>195 Golden-crowned Sparrow</b>      | No sightings east of the Sierra. We found up to ten birds during some of our stops along Pacific Highway 1 (mainly Julia Pfeiffer Burns SP) and Palo Alto Baylands.   |
| <b>196 Sagebrush Sparrow</b>           | Inhabits sagebrush plains and therefore only found in the east of California. They can quite reliably be seen in the area of the Sage Grouse Lek at Lake Crowley (I d). Another observation was on our way to Aspendell (see I b).  |
| <b>197 Bell’s Sparrow</b>              | Another species with limited distribution. There are breeding pairs at both Red Rock Canyon (II a) and Petroleum Club Road (V a). We had no problems finding the species there.   |
| <b>198 Vesper Sparrow</b>              | Our only Vesper Sparrow was somewhere along a road in the White Mountains. I can’t figure out where exactly that was but this species is known to occur in the sagebrush plain at Lake Crowley (though we didn’t find it there).  |
| <b>199 Savannah Sparrow</b>            | Common.   |
| <b>200 Song Sparrow</b>                | Common.   |
| <b>201 Lincoln’s Sparrow</b>           | Considered common, but secretive and difficult to observe. Perhaps that is why one observation at Diaz Lake remained the only one.  |
| <b>202 California Towhee</b>           | Common and often conspicuous in scrublands west of the Sierra (e.g., Upper Newport Bay, Devereux Slough, Elkhorn Slough). In addition, one observation in Red Rock Canyon.  |
| <b>203 Spotted Towhee</b>              | Quite common but a bit secretive. We found a few birds at Rawson canal in Bishop, quite a few were seen along Pacific Highway 1 and Elkhorn Slough.   |
| <b>204 Yellow-headed Blackbird</b>     | I suppose not many spots offered possibilities for finding this incredible bird on our route. We were surprised to find a few birds feeding on some rubbish on the parking lot of our motel in Bishop. Diaz Lake (see II c) should be a dead sure spot, at least quite a number was around during our visit with many males displaying. |
| <b>205 Western Meadowlark</b>          | Common.   |
| <b>206 Hooded Oriole</b>               | Two birds near the parking lot at Devereux Slough was the only observation.   |
| <b>207 Red-winged Blackbird</b>        | Common.   |
| <b>208 Tricolored Blackbird</b>        | One of the must-see-birds. This rare species has a very limited distribution and is found only locally. The Hudson Ranch Road which leads from Maricopa to Bitter Creek NWR (see V b) is a site where these birds can usually be found. They like to sit on the barb wire along the road so spotting them should be no problem.         |
| <b>209 Brown-headed Cowbird</b>        | Only one observation at Lake Diaz.  |
| <b>210 Brewer’s Blackbird</b>          | Quite common around Bishop (Rawson Canal, City Park, Lake Crowley, Aspendell). Not seen along the coast.  |
| <b>211 Great-tailed Grackle</b>        | Seen on a few occasions.  |
| <b>212 Orange-crowned Warbler</b>      | Said to be common but inconspicuous. We found only one bird at Upper Newport Bay.   |
| <b>213 Common Yellowthroat</b>         | Common in marshy areas. Very numerous in Upper Newport Bay, quite a few in Elkhorn Slough. Not seen east of the Sierra.   |
| <b>214 Yellow-rumped Warbler</b>       | Very common east of the Sierra.   |
| <b>215 Black-throated Gray Warbler</b> | Only two sightings: Bishop City Park & Buckhorn Day Use Area.   |
| <b>216 Wilson’s Warbler</b>            | Only one sighting at Elkhorn Slough (see VI c)  |