

CALIFORNIA SPECIALTIES

APRIL 15 – 23, 2006

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TOUR REPORT
CALIFORNIA SPECIALTIES
April 15-23, 2006

By Brad Schram

Although Salton City could be pictured in a dictionary to illustrate the phrase “Grand Illusion,” the morning light at the west shore of the Salton Sea caused shoreline migrants to glow as if self-lit. A quick scan of the shore close at hand produced breeding-plumaged Black-bellied, Semipalmated, and Snowy plovers; Long-billed Dowitchers; a few Willets and Whimbrels; and a small flock of Red Knots amongst the remaining Western and Least sandpipers. Lingering views through the spotting scope brought superlatives to mind, while our excited conversation dwelt on the glories of breeding-plumage shorebirds in the lovely morning light.

The Red Knots were especially singled out for comment, the flock containing birds in a variety of plumage stages as they progressed to full breeding attire. The few birds already in full alternate dress positively glowed. As we watched, groups of shorebirds, by species, got up and resumed their northward journey. Standing out from shore on a jetty as we were, with the sun at our backs, their movement up-coast could be appreciated. The light on the flying birds, as well as their subtle calls, produced a lyrical effect. Although none of the species involved were life birds for any of our group, we were transfixed by their beauty.

Birds were coming from the south in small numbers, landing amongst the remaining birds before us. Scanning through the flock produced a few breeding-plumaged Bonaparte’s Gulls amongst the Ring-bills. The Franklin’s Gull, a decidedly uncommon bird at the Salton Sea, appeared on the shoreline as if it had always been there. A more beautiful Franklin’s Gull has never existed—and the morning light accentuated each aspect of its unique markings. The bird posed long enough for all to get multiple scope views—although it was close enough that it could be fully appreciated with our binoculars. After a little while it resumed its journey, flying low up-shore behind us.

We, too, resumed our journey. Ahead we found Cassin’s and Plumbeous vireos, the latter an unexpected migrant on our route; a cooperative pair of Le Conte’s Thrashers; up-close Yellow-billed Magpies; eye-popping looks at White-headed Woodpecker; Allen’s Hummingbirds coastally and on Santa Cruz Island; fleeing Xantus’s Murrelets on the Santa Barbara Channel; and, of course, the Island Scrub Jay—along with Yellow-billed Magpie, one of California’s two true endemics. Leisurely scope views of Long-eared Owl, Crissal Thrasher, and Black-throated Sparrow in the Anza-Borrego Desert delighted us all. On recapping our trip, these birds, two Ruddy Ground Doves, a wintering Yellow-footed Gull, numerous Lawrence’s Goldfinches, Tri-colored Blackbirds, and two Mountain Quail crossing the road just ahead one crisp morning were mentioned as individual highlights. But, on reflection, all agreed that the birds on the shore at Salton City that morning...

Itinerary

15 April Meet in the evening at hotel in San Diego, get-acquainted dinner.

16 April Bird San Dieguito Regional Park at Lake Hodges; Mission Bay; Tijuana River Estuary; San Diego Bay; San Diego River mouth. Highlights included fine looks at California Gnatcatcher and a wintering *Thick-billed Kingbird*—the kingbird is a true rarity in California.

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- 17 April Drive to Kitchen Creek Road east of San Diego, then to Mission Santa Ysabel by way of the Laguna Mountains in a gale. Neither Gray Vireo nor Black-chinned Sparrows had yet arrived at Kitchen Creek, but at least the cold wind made birding truly miserable. Lunch at Lake Henshaw followed by birding from an overlook below nesting Bald Eagles, then traveling to Anza-Borrego Desert State Park where we birded Tamarisk Grove Campground and a stop in the Borrego Sink for Crissal Thrasher (!) before driving to the Salton Sea. A brief stop at Lack Road south of the Sea for Burrowing Owls before checking in at the Brawley Inn.
- 18 April Birding for the day in the vicinity of the south end of the Salton Sea. The wind continued to be fierce this morning, making passerine birding almost ridiculous. Starting at a small pig farm near Calipatria for ground doves where we saw three species, we then drove to the Wister Unit to tempt fate birding the Palo Verdes in gale conditions. We then drove to Red Hill Marina via Davis Road with some productive shore bird stops. Following Red Hill we went to the Sonny Bono Wildlife Refuge headquarters where we Picnicked and birded. Birding along Lack Road and the southeast edge of the sea weren't as productive as hoped, and we drove to the Brawley Cemetery for land birding followed by birding in Brawley residential areas.
- 19 April Travel to Maricopa with morning birding stops at Salton City, where we had spectacular looks at breeding-plumaged Red Knots and a gorgeous Franklin's Gull; Covington Park and Big Morongo Preserve. Morongo Valley birding yielded few migrants, but both Cassin's and Plumbeous vireos were among them—the Plumbeous a tour first. Late afternoon birding near Maricopa produced Le Conte's Thrasher and Sage Sparrow in wonderful light.
- 20 April Birding along Cerro Noroeste road, Mil Potrero Campground, and the Mount Pinos region. We then traveled to Ballinger Canyon and through the Cuyama Valley to Morro Bay in San Luis Obispo County.
- 21 April Morning birding Morro Bay, Turri Rd., Laguna Lake, and south coastal San Luis Obispo County at Shell Beach Cliffs, and Oceano. After lunch at Deer Canyon, Arroyo Grande, we left for Santa Barbara, stopping to bird in Los Alamos County Park, where the selection of oak savanna birds included close-up Yellow-billed Magpies. A stop in Winchester Canyon in Goleta gave us wonderful looks at a male Allen's Hummingbird.
- 22 April Early morning at Santa Barbara's East Beach for gulls and Black Skimmers. Our boat trip to Santa Cruz Island on choppy seas in a stiff breeze was modestly productive. Many Sooty and one Pink-footed Shearwater were seen as were both Red-necked and Red phalaropes. Although Cassin's Auklets were plentiful, Xantus's Murrelets were uncooperative, hurtling away in the rough seas and wind before they could be well-seen. In keeping with the rest of the trip, the island was unusually devoid of migrants for the date—in fact we saw none at all. The island subspecies of Allen's Hummingbird and Orange-crowned Warbler were cooperative however, and we had multiple good looks at the endemic Island Scrub Jay.
- 23 April Departure for home—after **1264 miles** tour driving distance (plus boat!)

Code: 4/10 = this species has been seen on four of ten California Specialties tours
LH = San Dieguito Regional Park, Lake Hodges
K = Kitchen Creek Rd., SD county
MB = Morro Bay
MPCG = Mil Potrero Camp Ground below Mt. Pinos
MSY = Mission Santa Ysabel
MV = Morongo Valley
SDRM = San Diego River Mouth
SB = Santa Barbara
ShB = Shell Beach
SS = Salton Sea Region (includes Ramer and Finney lakes)
TG = Tamarisk Grove Cpgrd., Anza-Borrego State Park
TRE = Tijuana River Estuary

BIRDS

SWANS, GEESE & DUCKS: ANATIDAE

Canada Goose (*Branta Canadensis*) 5/10 a few at MB
Cackling Goose (*B. minima*) 2/10 a wintering bird at Santa Maria appears to be of the Aleutian subspecies *leucopareia*
Brant (*Branta bernicla*) 10/10 one at Oceano, flocks at MB not a surprise
Gadwall (*Anas strepera*) 10/10 a few where expected: SDRM, SS, MB
American Wigeon (*Anas americana*) 5/10 a few late individuals around SD
Mallard (*A. platyrhynchos*) 10/10 wherever there's fresh water
Blue-winged Teal (*A. discors*) 10/10 SS
Cinnamon Teal (*A. cyanoptera*) 10/10 fewer than usual—SS
Northern Shoveler (*A. clypeata*) 10/10 more at SS than usual
Northern Pintail (*A. acuta*) 3/10 a few pair at SS were unexpected
Green-winged Teal (*A. crecca*) 7/10 scores lingering at MB
Lesser Scaup (*A. affinis*) 10/10 a few at MB
Surf Scoter (*Melanitta perspicillata*) 10/10 a few at MB & Ventura; large flock off Prisoner's
Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*) 6/10 a few lingering females at MB & SS
Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*) 8/10 SD & a couple at MB
Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) 10/10 SS and most fresh water venues

PHEASANTS, GROUSE, and TURKEY: PHASIANIDAE

Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*) 3/10 a cock at SS

NEW WORLD QUAIL: ODONTOPHORIDAE

Mountain Quail (*Oreortyx pictus*) 9/10 a pair close in the road ahead at Kitchen Creek brightened a cold, gray morning! Also heard all around Mt. Pinos
California Quail (*Callipepla californica*) 10/10 seen and heard often in the chaparral
Gambel's Quail (*C. gambelii*) 10/10 seen frequently around SS

LOONS: GAVIIDAE

Red-throated Loon (*Gavia stellata*) 8/10 one off Shell Beach
Pacific Loon (*G. pacifica*) 10/10 a few flocks flying up the SB Channel

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Common Loon (*G. immer*) 10/10 MB, and SB Channel

GREBES: *PODICIPEDIDAE*

Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*) 10/10 here and there where it's wet

Horned Grebe (*Podiceps auritis*) 2/10 a lingering bird at MB

Eared Grebe (*P. nigricollis*) 10/10 small numbers at SS by historic comparison; MB

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) 10/10 LH, ShB, SS, & SB Channel

Clark's Grebe (*A. clarkii*) 10/10 LH, SS, MB

SHEARWATERS & PETRELS: *PROCELLARIDAE*

Pink-footed Shearwater (*Puffinus creatopus*) 6/10 only one on the channel

Sooty Shearwater (*P. griseus*) 9/10 200 +/- on SB Channel

PELICANS: *PELECANIDAE*

American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchus*) 10/10 a few at SS

Brown Pelican (*P. occidentalis*) 10/10 all along the coast

CORMORANTS: *PHALACROCORACIDAE*

Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) 10/10

Brandt's Cormorant (*P. penicillatus*) 10/10 MB, ShB & offshore

Pelagic Cormorant (*P. pelagicus*) 10/10 MB, ShB & offshore

BITTERNS AND HERONS: *ARDEIDAE*

Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) 10/10

Great Egret (*A. albus*) 10/10

Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*) 10/10

Little Blue Heron 8/10 a couple in SD river mouth channel

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) 10/10 common near the Salton Sea

Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*) 10/10 a few at TRE, SS, & MB

Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) 10/10 LH, SS, MB

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*) 1/10 a pair at TRE
unprecedented, a rare bird in California

IBISES & SPOONBILLS: *THRESKIORNITHIDAE*

White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*) 9/10 flocks in fields near SS

AMERICAN VULTURES: *CATHARTIDAE*

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) 10/10 daily

HAWKS, EAGLES, & KITES: *ACCIPITRIDAE*

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) 8/10 SD

White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus*) 10/10 Fine looks at Lake Hodges; also SB

Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) 7/10 LH, Lake Henshaw

Cooper's Hawk (*A. cooperii*) 10/10 Mission Santa Isabel, Mount Pinos area

Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*) 10/10 SDCo, MB & SBCo

Red-tailed Hawk (*B. jamaicensis*) 10/10 commonly seen

Swainson's Hawk (*B. swainsoni*) 4/10 2 in SS region; one near Los Alamos--surprising
Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) 8/10 near Morongo and over Cerro Noroeste Rd.

Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) 3/10 a bird on a nest at Lake Hodges, & an adult
on Santa Cruz Isl.—both breeding locales are re-population by this resurgent sp.

FALCONS & CARACARAS: *FALCONIDAE*

American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) 10/10 commonly seen while driving

Merlin (*F. columbarius*) 6/10 scope looks at LH; a *suckleyi* (NW ssp.) on Mt. Pinos a big
surprise

Peregrine Falcon (*F. peregrinus*) 8/10 adults at MB were exciting to watch

RAILS, GALLINULES & COOTS: *RALLIDAE*

Clapper Rail (*Rallus longirostris*) 2/10 heard only at Wister Unit, SS

Virginia Rail (*Rallus limicola*) 3/10 heard only at Wister and MB

Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*) 9/10 near SS

American Coot (*Fulica americana*) 10/10 ubiquitous where damp

PLOVERS & LAPWINGS: *CHARADRIIDAE*

Black-bellied Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) 10/10 SDRM, SS

Snowy Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) 7/10 SS

Semipalmated Plover (*C. semipalmatus*) 10/10 SDRM & SS

Killdeer (*C. vociferus*) 10/10

OYSTERCATCHERS: *HEMATOPODIDAE*

Black Oystercatcher (*Haematopus bachmani*) 10/10 MB, ShB, and Santa Cruz Island

STILTS AND AVOCETS: *RECURVIROSTRIDAE*

Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*) 10/10 SDRM & SS

American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*) 10/10 SS & MB

SANDPIPERS, PHALAROPES & ALLIES: *SCOLOPACIDAE*

Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*) 9/10 one only at MB!

Willet (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*) 10/10 all sea shores, incl. SS

Wandering Tattler (*Heteroscelus incanus*) 5/10 Shell Beach and Sta. Cruz Isl.

Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*) 10/10 one only at Sta. Cruz Isl.!

Whimbrel (*N. phaeopus*) 10/10 ocean and salt marsh edges, incl. SS

Marbled Godwit (*Limosa fedoa*) 10/10 common at SDRM, TRE, MB, a few at SS

Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) 6/10 Red Hill SS and Ventura—one each

Black Turnstone (*A. melanocephala*) 10/10 ShB, Ventura Harbor

Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*) 7/10 Salton City—gorgeous in morning light!

Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) 10/10 SDRM

Western Sandpiper (*C. mauri*) 10/10 SDRM, SS, MB, TRE

Least Sandpiper (*C. minutilla*) 10/10 SDRM, SS, MB, TRE

Dunlin (*C. alpina*) 8/10 SDRM, SD, TRE

Short-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus griseus*) 10/10 SDRM, a few at SS

Long-billed Dowitcher (*L. scolopaceus*) 10/10 common at SS

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Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*) 10/10 few at SS & SB Channel flocks
Red Phalarope (*P. fulicarius*) 3/10 8-10 on SB Channel amongst Red-necks

SKUAS, GULLS, TERNS & SKIMMERS: LARIDAE

Laughing Gull (*Larus atricilla*) 4/10 SDRM, where rare
Franklin's Gull (*L. pipixcan*) 2/10 1 at Salton City—stunning bird!
Bonaparte's Gull (*L. philadelphia*) 10/10 Lake Henshaw; SS
Heerman's Gull (*L. heermanni*) 8/10 1 at Ventura breakwater the only one
Ring-billed Gull (*L. delawarensis*) 10/10 SDRM, SS, MB, Ventura
California Gull (*L. californicus*) 10/10 all salt water—although few gulls at SS by historic standards
Yellow-footed Gull (*L. livens*) 5/10 1 1st yr. bird at Red Hill a surprise wintering bird!
Western Gull (*L. occidentalis*) 10/10 ubiquitous along coast and SB Channel
Glaucous-winged Gull (*L. glaucescens*) 10/10 Oceano Lagoon
**hybrid Western x Gl-winged Gull "Olympic Gull" at Oceano Lagoon—Mary rejoiced
Gull-billed Tern (*Sterna nilotica*) 5/10 TRE, SS
Caspian Tern (*Sterna caspia*) 10/10 common at salt water incl. SS
Royal Tern (*S. maxima*) 6/10 SD South Bay
Elegant Tern (*S. elegans*) 9/10 SD S. Bay, SDRM & SB Channel
Forster's Tern (*S. forsteri*) 10/10 SDRM, SS, SB Channel
Black Skimmer (*Rynchops niger*) 10/10 a couple disappearing at SS seen by some & big flock at SB East Beach

AUKS, MURRES & PUFFINS: ALCIDAE

Pigeon Guillemot (*Cepphus columba*) 10/10 Shell Beach, MB, and Santa Cruz Island
Xantus's Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus hypoleucus*) 9/10 a few in SB Channel
Cassin's Auklet (*Ptychoramphus aleuticus*) 8/10 50+ in SB Channel
Rhinoceros Auklet (*Cerorhinca monocerata*) 8/10 a couple fleeting looks on SB Channel

PIGEONS AND DOVES: COLUMBIDAE

Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*) 10/10 daily
Band-tailed Pigeon (*C. fasciata*) 9/10 Mt. Pinos, Arroyo Grande (Deer Cyn)
White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) 8/10 a few in the desert
Mourning Dove (*Z. macroura*) 10/10 daily
Inca Dove (*Columbina inca*) 9/10 Brawley, Calipatria
Common-Ground Dove (*C. passerina*) 9/10 Calipatria, SS
Ruddy Ground Dove (*C. talpacoti*) 4/10 extremely rare in CA, two at pig farm near Calipatria where now breeding!
Eurasian Collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*) 9/10 now countable in California, this bird is rapidly extending its range here—everywhere

CUCKOOS, ROADRUNNERS AND ANIS: CUCULIDAE

Greater Roadrunner (*Geococcyx californianus*) 10/10 one at Sonny Bono hdqtrs.

OWLS: STRIGIDAE

Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) 10/10 well-seen on roadside dikes along Lack Rd. south of the Salton Sea

Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*) 2/10 two at Tamarisk Grove CG, Anza-Borrego Desert
SP—late nesting here this year allowed us to see roosting birds up close!

NIGHTJARS: *CAPRIMULGIDAE*

Lesser Nighthawk (*Chordeiles acutipennis*) 9/10 perched for scope at Finney Lake!

SWIFTS: *APODIDAE*

Vaux's Swift (*Chaetura vauxi*) 8/10 migrants at LH, SS, Santa Maria

White-throated Swift (*Aeronautes saxatilis*) 10/10 LH only

HUMMINGBIRDS: *TROCHILIDAE*

Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilocus alexandri*) 10/10 TG, at close range at MV

Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*) 10/10 common

Costa's Hummingbird (*C. costae*) 9/10 at Lake Hodges, in desert

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) 5/10 desert & MV

Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*) 10/10 Goleta & Santa Cruz Isl. *sedentarius*

KINGFISHERS: *ALCENINIDAE*

Belted Kingfisher (*Ceryle alcyon*) 4/10 uncommon in spring here: 1 at TRE

WOODPECKERS & ALLIES: *PICIDAE*

Acorn Woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) 10/10 common among oaks

Gila Woodpecker (*M. uropygialis*) 10/10 Brawley Cemetery

Ladder-backed Woodpecker (*Picoides scalaris*) 5/10 Wister and MV where uncom.

Nuttall's Woodpecker (*P. nuttallii*) 10/10 seen many places in appropriate habitat, & an
apparent hybrid Nuttall's x Ladder-backed at Morongo

White-headed Woodpecker (*P. albobarvatus*) 7/10 jaw-dropping looks at Mt. Pinos!

Hairy Woodpecker (*P. villosus*) 9/10 Mt. Pinos

Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*) 10/10 a few only

TYRANT FLYCATCHERS: *TYRANNIDAE*

Western Wood Pewee (*Contopus sordidulus*) 7/10 1 only at Brawley!

Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondii*) 5/10 a migrant at TG

Pacific-slope Flycatcher (*E. difficilis*) 10/10 TG, Deer Canyon AG, heard on SC Isl.

Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*) 10/10 seen wherever there was water

Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) 10/10 fine looks in Morongo

Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*) 8/10 LH, TG

Cassin's Kingbird (*Tyrannus vociferans*) 10/10 LH, Goleta

Thick-billed Kingbird (*T. crassirostris*) 1/10 extremely rare in Calif., a lingering
wintering bird at del Dios by Lake Hodges posed for leisurely scope views!

Western Kingbird (*T. verticalis*) 10/10 every day but the SC Island trip

SHRIKES: *LANIIDAE*

Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) 8/10 Anza-Borrego, Maricopa, Cerro Noroeste Rd.

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VIREOS: *VIREONIDAE*

Plumbeous Vireo (*Vireo plumbeus*) 1/10 MV, a rare migrant away from scattered mountain breeding territories in S. Calif.—a tour first!
Cassin's Vireo (*V. cassinii*) 7/10 MV only, difficult but seen by all in a cottonwood
Hutton's Vireo (*V. huttoni*) 9/10 Deer Canyon, AG; Sta. Cruz Isl.
Warbling Vireo (*V. gilvus*) 10/10 K, SS: like migrants generally this week, scarce

JAYS, MAGPIES & CROWS: *CORVIDAE*

Steller's Jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*) 10/10 Mt. Pinos
Western Scrub-Jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*) 10/10 wherever habitat is appropriate
Island Scrub-Jay (*A. insularis*) 9/10 multiple looks in scope and bins.
Yellow-billed Magpie (*Pica nuttallii*) 10/10 outstanding up-close looks: Los Alamos
American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) 10/10 common on coastal plain and irrigated farm land, except Imperial Valley
Common Raven (*C. corax*) 10/10 interior and mountains

LARKS: *ALAUDIDAE*

Horned Lark (*Eremophila alpestris*) Cerro Noroeste Rd. only

SWALLOWS: *HIRUNDINIDAE*

Tree Swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*) 10/10 SD, MB only
Violet-green Swallow (*T. thalassina*) 10/10 a few migrants & common on, near Mt Pinos
Northern Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) 9/10 fairly often seen migrants—especially near SS
Cliff Swallow (*Hirundo pyrrhonota*) 10/10 very common
Barn Swallow (*H. rustica*) 10/10 every day but Mt. Pinos drive

CHICKADEES & TITMICE: *PARIDAE*

Mountain Chickadee (*Parus gambeli*) 10/10 common in the mountains; 1 at MV
Chestnut-backed Chickadee (*P. rufescens*) 10/10 riparian along SLO coast
Oak Titmouse (*Baeolophus inornatus*) 10/10 Mt. Pinos, Deer Canyon, Los Alamos

VERDIN: *REMIZIDAE*

Verdin (*Auriparus flaviceps*) 10/10 desert, where common

BUSHTIT: *AEGITHALIDAE*

Bushtit (*Psaltriparus minimus*) 10/10 common in chaparral and oaks

NUTHATCHES: *SITTIDAE*

White-breasted Nuthatch (*S. carolinensis*) 10/10 Mt. Pinos, Los Alamos
Pygmy Nuthatch (*S. pygmaea*) 10/10 Mt. Pinos area

WRENS: *TROGLODYTIDAE*

Cactus Wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*) 10/10 heard only in desert!

Canyon Wren (*Catherpes mexicanus*) 7/10 excellent looks at Morro Rock!
Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*) 10/10 often heard, less often seen, but com.
House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*) 10/10 coast and mtns.
Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus palustris*) 10/10 at Finney Lake

OLD WORLD WARBLERS: *MUSCICAPIDAE* (*Sylviinae*)

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Poliophtila caerulea*) 8/10 Deer Canyon AG
Black-tailed Gnatcatcher (*P. melanura*) 10/10 excellent looks near Finney Lake
California Gnatcatcher (*P. californica*) 10/10 well-seen at Lake Hodges, fine looks at a life-bird all-around!

THRUSHES & ALLIES: *MUSCICAPIDAE* (*Turdinae*)

Western Bluebird (*Sialis mexicana*) 10/10 well seen many places
Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*) 3/10 2 late wintering birds at TG
American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) 10/10 only a few

BABBLERS: *MUSCICAPIDAE* (*Timaliinae*)

Wrentit (*Chamaea fasciata*) 10/10 the voice of the chaparral: LH, K, MB, Oceano

MOCKINGBIRDS, THRASHERS & ALLIES: *MIMIDAE*

Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*) 10/10 daily
California Thrasher (*Toxostoma redivivum*) 10/10 common in chaparral; Maricopa also
Crissal Thrasher (*T. crissale*) 10/10 a single bird at Borrego Sink teed up! Fine looks.
Le Conte's Thrasher (*T. lecontei*) 10/10 truly outstanding looks at a curious bird running up on us for close, leisurely looks—unforgettable!

STARLINGS: *STURNIDAE*

European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) 10/10

WAGTAILS & PIPITS: *MOTACILLIDAE*

American Pipit (*Anthus rubescens*) 4/10 a migrating flock of many 100s at Lack Rd, SS

SILKY-FLYCATCHERS: *PTILOGONATIDAE*

Phainopepla (*Phainopepla nitens*) 10/10 desert shrubs and at Lake Hodges

WOOD-WARBLERS: *EMBERIZIDAE* (*Parulinae*)

Orange-crowned Warbler (*Vermivora celata*) 10/10 a few here and there; common on SCI
Nashville Warbler (*V. ruficapilla*) 10/10 commonest migrant passerine of the trip
Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*) 10/10 Morongo
Yellow-rumped Warbler (*D. coronata*) 10/10 a few migrants
Townsend's Warbler (*D. townsendi*) 10/10 only one (!), a male at MV
Hermit Warbler (*D. occidentalis*) 8/10 outstanding looks at three at Mission Santa Ysabel, and another near SS—a tour highlight
Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*) 10/10 near water usually

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Wilson's Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*) 10/10 only a couple, like other migrants

TANAGERS: *EMBERIZIDAE* (*Thraupinae*)

Western Tanager (*P. ludoviciana*) 9/10 only a few migrants near SS! Unusually few.

SPARROWS: *EMBERIZIDAE* (*Emberizinae*)

Green-tailed Towhee (*Pipilo chlorurus*) 8/10 a responsive bird in scope on Mt. Pinos left us all gasping for superlatives

Spotted Towhee (*P. maculatus*) 10/10 common in chaparral and mtn. slopes

California Towhee (*P. crissalis*) 10/10 one of the commonest birds of the tour

Abert's Towhee (*P. aberti*) 10/10 seen by all near the Salton Sea

Rufous-crowned Sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps*) 9/10 Kitchen Creek only

Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerina*) 8/10 lower slopes of Mt. Pinos

Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*) 10/10 K, Lake Henshaw & Cerro Noroeste Rd.

Black-throated Sparrow (*Amphispiza bilineata*) 6/10 wonderful looks at a responsive pair in Anza-Borrego SP

Sage Sparrow (*Amphispiza belli canescens*) 10/10 the inland *canescens* race seen well at Maricopa

Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) 8/10 "Belding's" subspecies SD Bay, grassland race along Cerro Noroeste

Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca*) 9/10 "thick-billed" *stephensi* race on Mt. Pinos—future split

Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*) 10/10 common, incl. Sta. Cruz Island race

White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*) 10/10 the resident *nuttalli* race was also seen, along the coast at MB

Golden-crowned Sparrow (*Z. atricapilla*) 7/10 lingering birds at Arroyo Grande

Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis*) 10/10 a few

CARDINALS, GROSBEAKS & BUNTINGS: *CARDINALIDAE*

Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*) 9/10 relatively few

Lazuli Bunting (*Passerina amoena*) 8/10 Mission Santa Ysabel: migrants

BLACKBIRDS and ALLIES: *ICTERIDAE*

Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) 10/10

Tricolored Blackbird (*A. tricolor*) 10/10 at MSY, good studies

Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*) 10/10

Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) 10/10

Great-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) 10/10 abundant at SS, spreading fast in CA

Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) 10/10

Hooded Oriole (*Icterus cucullatus*) 10/10 at hotel in Mission Valley, a few elsewhere

Bullock's Oriole (*I. bullockii*) 10/10 relatively few, reflecting lack of migrants this tour

FINCHES: *FRINGILLIDAE*

Purple Finch (*Carpodacus purpureus*) 8/10 Mt. Pinos, Arroyo Grande

Cassin's Finch (*Carpodacus cassinii*) 10/10 only a couple at Mount Pinos

House Finch (*C. mexicanus*) 10/10

Pine Siskin (*Carduelis pinus*) 7/10 MV, Mt. Pinos

Lesser Goldfinch (*C. psaltria*) 10/10

Lawrence's Goldfinch (*C. lawrenci*) 10/10 seen well by all at MSY, also TG, Arroyo Grande
American Goldfinch (*C. tristis*) 9/10 a few LH

OLD WORLD SPARROWS: *PASSERIDAE*

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) 10/10

230 Species

1264 Tour miles

MAMMALS

Sea Otter
Coyote
Mule Deer
California Sea Lion
Harbor Seal
California Ground Squirrel
(nearly ubiquitous)
Gray Squirrel
Brush Rabbit
Desert Cottontail
Cottontail
Black-tailed Jackrabbit

REPTILES

Western Fence Lizard
Western (Great Basin) Whiptail