

The Stilt

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The Newsletter of the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory



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Results of the California Fall Challenge - 1997

by Tom Ryan and Janet Hanson

The 1997 Fall Challenge was a tremendous success. We brought together birders from all over California on 20 teams in 14 counties. A total of 279 species were seen by all the teams. The competition was intense for some, relaxed for others and all who participated reported having a great time. We are now looking towards 1998 to be even bigger and better. Our goal next year is to double participation and the number of counties covered! We also hope to find someone out there who thinks they can beat San Mateo & Santa Clara Counties dominating teams. Any takers?

Highest Percentage of the County List

This is SFBBO's unique twist on the traditional Bird-a-thon that allows for competition on a county-by-county basis. Given California's geographic diversity, it follows that each county's list is as special as its terrain. To level the playing field, we supplied an official CFC county list for each county. These lists were compiled and generously loaned to us by John Sterling, a biologist with the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and an avid California birder. They became our official event lists and participants were encouraged to call John with suggestions to improve the lists.

This year's winner in this category is the team from Sequoia Audubon Society, the "Rowdy Stone-Terners" composed of Peter Metropulos, Francis Toldi, Barry Sauppe and Bert Mckee. They observed 158 species in San Mateo Co. or 57.25% of the normally occurring county list, surviving fog and parking tickets while birding the coast. Steve Glover and Ron Lindeman were a close second in Contra Costa Co. with 142 species or 56.57% of their county list.

Gjon Hazard and John Hunter (Trinity Co.) tied for third with Ed Pandolfino and Tom Ryan (Alameda Co.) with 50.0% of the normally occurring species in the county seen. The Rowdy Stone-Terners will receive a **Leica Spotting Scope** donated by Leica, Inc. plus several other smaller prizes.

P.S. Later, on October 12, a team comprised of Scott Terrill, Steve Rottenborn and Mike Rogers birded Santa Clara Co. and produced a new fall Big Day record for that county of **159** species, by nailing quite a few lingering migrants (e.g. Western Tanager) and a few early arrivals (e.g. Eurasian Wigeon), plus several rarities such as Lesser Black-backed Gull and Ruff. This is 63.85% of Santa Clara's list and would have been a clear winner had they been within our timeframe. They turned in a very exciting report and set the bar much higher for future Santa Clara Co. fall Big Days.

Most Rarities Seen

Two teams tied for first place with three rarities. The winner of the tie-breaker with 142 species seen was Steve Glover and Ron Lindeman who observed Northern Water-



Peter Metropulos of the Rowdy Stone-terners, this year's overall winning team.

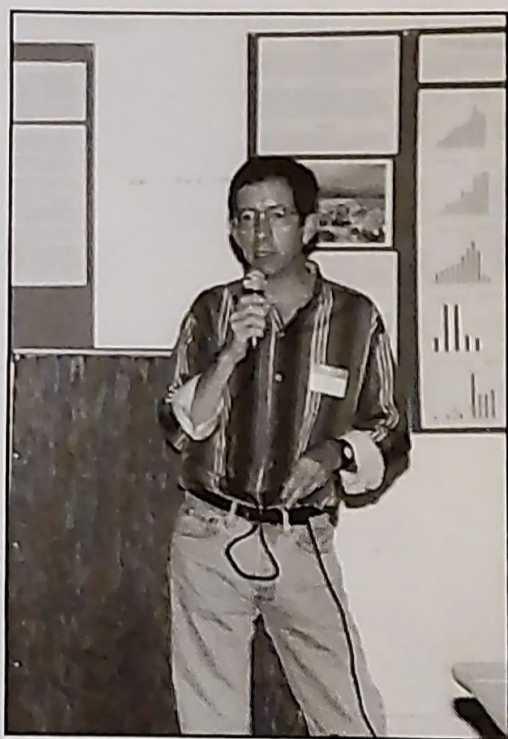


San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory

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Results of the Fall Challenge



Ed Pandolfino, Chairman, CFC, announces the winning teams.

thrush, Black-and-white Warbler and Swainson's Hawk. They received a Cheeseman Ecology / Birding Safaris trip to Monterey Bay and a National Audubon Society CD ROM for North American Birds donated by the Wildbird Center in Los Gatos.

However, for his solo effort resulting in a Sabine's Gull, Grasshopper Sparrow, and a Rufous-crowned Sparrow in Kings Co. Luke Cole received a SFBBO Field Trip Gift Certificate for the Klamath/Tule Lake trip.

Best Bird Seen

Several notable birds were seen during this event in Shasta Co. Carol and Bob Yutzy observed the earliest county record of a Ferruginous Hawk. Lou and Jean Young spotted 3 Fulvous Whistling Ducks which has also raised a few eyebrows. Janet Hanson and Mike Mammoser observed a Stilt Sandpiper in Santa Clara Co. Ed Pandolfino and Tom Ryan heard a Flammulated Owl in Alameda Co. Gjon Hazard and John Hunter observed a Black-crowned Night-Heron which is either the 2nd or 3rd record for Trinity Co. In Kings Co., Canyon Wren and Brewer's Sparrow were excellent observations for this habitat by Rob Hanson. Also in Kings Co. a Sabine's Gull (in agricultural fields in the southeast portion of the county) and a Grasshopper Sparrow were seen by Luke Cole. The winner, however,

is the first county record and a California Rare Birds Committee Review Species, was a Yellow-green Vireo observed by Sequoia Audubon's own Rowdy Stone-

terners, composed of Francis Toldi, Peter Metropulos, Barry Sauppe, and Bert McKee.

Tales from the Fall Challenge

Kings County Motorists Beware...Road Rage?? No, Birder on a Mission!

As any of you who have done a Big Day know, it is nearly impossible to get through an intense, sleep-deprived day in the field without generating some good stories. With that in mind, we offered a prize for the best story to emerge from the California Fall Challenge. We share three of our favorites below.

Whatever works...

The Ohlone Audubon Board of Directors team of Denise and David Hamilton and Pat and Phil Gordon witnessed some interesting (and previously undocumented??) behavior. As they watched a flock of Black-necked Stilts nervously huddling close together in a salt pond, the cause of the birds concern soon became clear—"a powerful female Peregrine Falcon which launched herself again and again off a wooden platform, making short dives just a few feet above the stilts' heads. To the stilts credit (and survival) they stayed grounded, although with each pass of the falcon they closed ranks and waited for a neighbor to make the one false move that would allow life to return to normal."

"Nearby, several Red-necked Phalaropes demonstrated a different survival strategy. They floated quietly on the water, out of the sight of the peregrine under the planks of a boardwalk that stretched across the pond."

Local color in Lassen...

The Lassen Lookups (Lou and Jean Young and Larry Manning) discovered that the natives are friendly, but not too helpful.

"We knew we were close to the Shasta County border, but were clueless. A pair of nice young men in a decrepit pick-up

truck stopped to see if we needed help. We asked them the name of the dirt road we were on. They gave us blank looks until one shrugged and said, 'It's the dirt road'. So we asked if the paved road we had just turned off from was Little Valley Road. Answer: 'We don't know the name, we just call it the *other* road.'"

"That's right captain, this guy claims he was chasing a bird..."

The Best Story prize went to Luke Cole. Luke did Kings County on his own (enough information right there to make you a little leery) and had an adventure in multi-tasking.

"It's 11:30, about 95 degrees and I'm driving down a farm dike in agricultural wasteland in southeast Kings County. Three gulls are flying toward me and, as I've seen Ring-billed and California already today, I am going to try to turn one of these into a Herring Gull. One is definitely different, its got big black triangles on the wingtips, white triangles at the elbow, and a gray back making a gray triangle on the inner wing - holy (expletive deleted), it's a Sabine's Gull! The three gulls fly past me on the levee, paralleling the levee and flying north. I turn the car around and grab for my camera, racing north on the levee to catch the gulls. About a mile north the Sabine's leaves the other two and turns east along another ditch. Luckily there's another levee for me to drive along. I'm racing along with the gull, trying to take its picture at about 25 mph while also staying on the narrow dirt road, which has 10 foot drop-offs into the water on either side. Then I finish the roll of film having only taken two pictures! Now I'm speeding down the levee, trying not to lose the gull, stay on the road, while reloading the camera."

Yes, Luke did manage to shoot half a roll of film and survived to deliver this prize-winning story.

Most Species Seen

The runners-up, Dan Guthrie and Kathi Ellsworth observed 154 species in Los Angeles Co. However, the winners, were again Sequoia Audubon's Rowdy Stone-terners, composed of Francis Toldi, Peter Metropulos, Barry Sauppe, and Bert McKee with 158 species. They will receive: the 50% off coupon for anything in the Brunton Catalog, donated by Brunton; the video entitled "Birds of Costa Rica" donated by Sequoia Audubon Society, Fortress Alcatraz donated by Peg Woodin, and a oil painting of Mallards also donated by Peg Woodin.

Most Funds Raised

For the most funds raised, the competition was tight between two in-house SFBBO teams. As we go to press, it appears that Janet Hanson, Mike Mammoser and Robin Dakin (Mike's Shrikes) with \$2172 have edged out Ed Pandolfino, Adrian Del Nevo and Tom Ryan (Beast of Birdin') with \$1835. In total over \$7500 was raised for next year's research and volunteer programs. We thank everyone for their efforts. The top fundraising team won two pairs of Swift Binoculars donated by Swift and Local Birds/Redwood Trading Post and a mounted color photo of a Caspian Tern donated by Peg Woodin. As we are employees and board members, we naturally cannot keep these prizes ourselves and they will be donated to SFBBO. The binoculars will be a great help for our volunteers for next year's field season, and we are arguing over where to put the Caspian photo in the office.



If you didn't receive your last newsletter . . .

We apologize! Evidently the UPS strike caused quite a backlog at our local post offices, resulting in literally tons of bulk mail sitting on shelves. Some of our newsletters arrived 2 months after mailing and some not at all. If you never received yours, call the office for a replacement copy.

Fall Challenge - 1997

County Breakdown:

In Santa Clara Co. (SCLA) Mike Rogers, Scott Terrill, and Steve Rottenborn saw 159 species (63.8%) on 10/12/97; Mike's Shrikes, Janet Hanson and Mike Mammoser, saw 115 species (46.2%) on 9/13/97; and the Greater Loons, Randy Little, Jim Reyes, and Janet Little, saw 66 species (26.5%) on 9/20/97.

In Alameda Co. (ALA) the Beasts of Birdin, Tom Ryan and Ed Pandolfino, observed 125 species (50.0%) on 9/21/97; the Ohlone Audubon Society team, Phil Gordon, Pat Gordon and Denise Hamilton and David Hamilton, observed 117 species (46.8%) on 9/15/97.

In San Mateo Co. (SM) the Rowdy Stone-terners (Sequoia Audubon) team of Francis Toldi, Peter Metropulos, Barry Saupp and Bert McKee, observed 158 species (57.2%) on 9/27/97.

In Contra Costa Co. (CONT) Steve Glover and Ron Lindeman observed 142 species (56.5%) on 9/12/97.

In Trinity Co. (TRIN) Gjon Hazard and John Hunter saw 92 species (50.0%) on 9/21/97.

In Shasta Co. (SHAS) the BRRDRRS, Bob and Carol Yutzy, observed 114 species (46.7%) on 9/21/97; the Shasta Spishers, Lou and Jean Young and Larry Manning, observed 51 species (21.1%) on 9/22/97.

In Los Angeles Co. (LA) the Pomona Valley Audubon team of Dan Guthrie and Kathi Ellsworth observed 154 species (46.4%) on 9/20/97.

In Modoc Co. (MOD) Steve Shunk and Dorothy Johnson saw 98 species (45.9%) on 9/28/97.

In Kings Co. (KING) Hanson's Biological Consulting, Rob Hanson and Matt Alexander, observed 108 species (49.7%) on 9/21/97; Luke Cole observed 100 species (46.1%) on 9/26/97.

In Santa Barbara Co. (SBAR) the Jaegers, Kathleen Whitney, Krista Fahy, Mark Holmgren, David Kisner and Grant Weyborne, observed 139 species (42.9%) on 9/23/97.

In San Diego Co. (SD) The Belcher Boys & Gulls, Dan Langhoff, and Michael Weinholt, saw 106 species (31.1%) on 9/20/97.

In Lassen Co. (LASS) the Lassen Look-ups, Lou and Jean Young and Larry Manning, observed 71 species (29.1%) on 9/20/97.

And in a valiant effort between writing chapters of her thesis, Jen Parkin saw 48 species (16.1%) at Elkhorn Slough, Monterey Co. (MONT) on 9/20/97 and 36 species (13.5%) at Schwann Lake in Santa Cruz Co. (SCRZ) on 9/26/97.

Expand Your Horizons With a Field Trip or Birding Class in 1998

Carrizo Plains/Morro Bay Field Trip

The Carrizo Plain is known for breathtaking scenery, as well as its unique habitat types. Morro Bay is known for being among the highest Christmas Count totals in the US. We will visit both inland and coastal habitats on one weekend trip. Combining these two unique locations should provide for incredible bird-watching. We hope to find Sandhill Cranes, Mountain Plovers and wintering Raptors at the Carrizo Plain. In the Morro Bay area we will observe numerous species of shorebirds, waterfowl and seabirds. Specialties like Eurasian Wigeon, Black Scoter, Wandering Tattler, Black Oystercatcher will be looked for.

Date: 20-22 February
Leaders: Tom Ryan and Gjon Hazard
Cost: Member \$35/ Non-member \$50

Identification of Pacific Coast Gulls

Don has taped a path through the maze of gull identification. He will help you take a close look at immature and adult plumages of our six common species, plus review the ten more not-so-common species spotted in years past. Field trips help ensure those newly learned field marks carry over into your regular birding.

Class meeting: Tuesday, January 20 and 27;
7:00 - 9:00 PM
Field trips: Saturday, January 24 and 31;
9 AM - 12 Noon; Locations:
TBA
Leader: Don Starks
Cost: Member \$35/ Nonmember \$50

Owl Identification

Paul uses slides and tapes to describe all species west of the Rockies and review profiles, plumages and calls. Then the group takes off for two separate evening of owling in the Santa Cruz Mtns. and along the San Mateo coast.

Class meeting: Thursday, February 26;
7:00 - 9:00 pm
Field trips: Saturday evenings,
February 28 and
March 7; Locations: TBA
Leader: Paul Noble
Cost: Member \$30/ Non-member \$45

SFBBO Updates

AOU Meeting Attendance

We attended the American Ornithologists' Union meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota from August 13-17 and presented a poster entitled "The colonization of southern San Francisco Bay by California Gulls." This was the first time these data were presented on the 5 colonies currently on the bay, since the original colony was discovered in 1980. The poster was enthusiastically received, particularly by Dr. Joe Jehl, who was pleased to see Dick Mewaldt's original work brought to light.

Publications Cleared for take off.

This month Tom submitted three separate reports to various journals for publication. The first and largest is "The Little Blue Heron in Central and Northern California," submitted to *Western Birds*. He also sent off a short communications on Peregrine predation here on the Bay and is preparing one on his observation of Least Terns in the pelagic zone off the coast of West Mexico (see *The Stilt* issue 16.3)

Report of Heron and Egret Status in the South Bay

This past year we received funding from the Santa Clara Valley Water District for the production of the report "Status and Distribution of Herons and Egret in southern San Francisco Bay", which includes our 16 years of data on these species. The draft is currently under review and will also be revised for publication.

Avian Botulism a "No-show" this Year

Project leader Robin Dakin, biologist Jesse Suckow and numerous volunteers have successfully completed a year of monitoring south bay sloughs for signs

of this disease. Although outbreaks were reported in other areas, including Lake Merritt in nearby Oakland, their constant effort seems to have prevented the disease from getting a foothold in this area, a handsome reward for our local waterbirds.

Scientific Advisory Board Meeting

The SAB met on October 24 and 25 here at the Observatory headquarters. Attendees included Charles Collins, Dave Shuford, Adrian del Nevo, Peter Metropulos and Bob Richmond, in addition to staff. This highly productive meeting clarified our research goals for 1998, including review of methodology for waterbird surveys and expansion of our banding program.

Regional Wetlands Ecosystem Goals Project

We continue our involvement with the project with Janet Hanson on the shorebird/waterfowl team and the addition of Tom Ryan to the "other birds" team, along with H. Cogswell. His appointment will aid in the analysis of our large Caspian and Forster's Tern dataset. This project is run by the San Francisco Estuary Institute with input from the California Department of Fish and Game, among numerous other agencies.

Least Tern Surveys in Mexico

In January, SFBBO biologist Tom Ryan will be accompanied by biologists from Humboldt State, UCLA and the University of Kansas to the Mexican states of Nayarit, Jalisco and Colima to search for the wintering grounds of our locally breeding terns. They will also conduct pelagic surveys searching for wintering Least Terns foraging in the waters off San Blas. They will also look for evidence of problems these terns may face on their wintering grounds, as well as observable effects of the current El Nino event

16th Annual Membership Meeting

On the Menu: Barbecued Chicken and Sardines

by Janet Hanson, Executive Director

As is our custom in late September, the Observatory membership met to review the year's work, honor outstanding volunteer efforts and to enjoy an evening of camaraderie, good food and beverages. The subject of birds threads its way through every conversation, whether local birds or someone's latest venture afield, and precedes a specially chosen speaker whose subject is always....*birds!*

Mike Spence once again did a wonderful job on the first bird of the evening, the barbecued chicken (my apologies to our vegetarian friends). And as usual, our members kicked in some fantastic side dishes to compliment it, including Robin Dakin's huge bowl of guacamole that disappeared along with the first round of beverages.

We moved right along with a research report by our no longer "new" senior biologist Tom Ryan. His report of three (count 'em, three) publications on in the works for 1997 brought smiles to the most faithful of our field volunteers. Lou Young, outgoing President and board member, was awarded for his patience (15 years of service) with the Volunteer of the Year award, a beautiful custom certificate and a copy of Rich Kuehn's video of Costa Rica's birds. We also honored Dr. Howard Cogswell, also leaving the board after 6 years, for being a master field observer, board member, fund-raiser, teacher and repairman of banding equipment. Our Research Volunteer of the Year award went to Charles Coston. He seemed to disappear right as we led into the presentation and panicked us a bit (we know we talk too much), but he had stepped out for a moment, probably to identify a fly-by (bird). He was suitably surprised and pleased; we will see how he reacts when he sees next year's field schedule!

The "fun" award this year began as the Golden Rubber Ducky but in the final analysis was changed to the Energizer Bunny, as a fitting description of Tom Ryan's contribution to the Observatory in his first year. Whether it's a state-wide fund-raiser, making sense of ancient data, or paddling across a mile of salt pond with the wind in your face, Tom's motto in life seems to be "hey, why

not?!"

Karlene and Terry Stoker stopped by on their way home from a wedding and were beautifully decked out in formal wear. They looked fabulous and in comparison, we looked....like field biologists. They really added a touch of class to the proceedings.

And at last we arrived at the best part of the evening, the Special Guest Speaker, this year Dr. Adrian del Nevo, our new and highly cherished scientific advisor, who we realized to our horror, had not arrived yet. Ah, but he suddenly appeared with cell phone clutched in sweaty hand, as his wife was due any moment with their first eagerly-awaited baby. She had encouraged him to do his talk as promised and after he did a few breathing exercises, proceeded to give a wonderful talk on the Roseate and Common Tern colonies he has studied in the British Isles and along the west African coast, for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Did you know that migrating terns are often trapped on African beaches by small boys with wire loops and small bait fish? Neither did we! We looked at a slide of one boy's bracelet for several seconds before realizing it was made of color bands.

Adrian's work included clutch size studies of two Roseate Tern colonies in Europe, one averaging one egg per clutch and the other usually laying two. To demonstrate the difference in parental energy expenditures, he pre-selected volunteer "chicks" and "parents" from the audience and set up a clutch of one (Rich Kuehn) and another clutch of two (Tom Ryan and Ed Pandolfino). Then he placed a small plate of sardines on the far side of the cannery space, handed each of the parents (Jan Hintermeister and Bill Parkin) a fork and instructed them to bring as many sardines to their chicks as they could in one minute. The race was on! And good thing those chicks liked sardines! When time was called, Tom and Ed had gotten two sardines each (despite fierce sibling competition) but Rich got five!

As Adrian's bird talk was winding down, his pager went off and after a brief cell phone call, he was off to the hospital. We chased him down the driveway with his briefcase and slide box. (His son Tristan

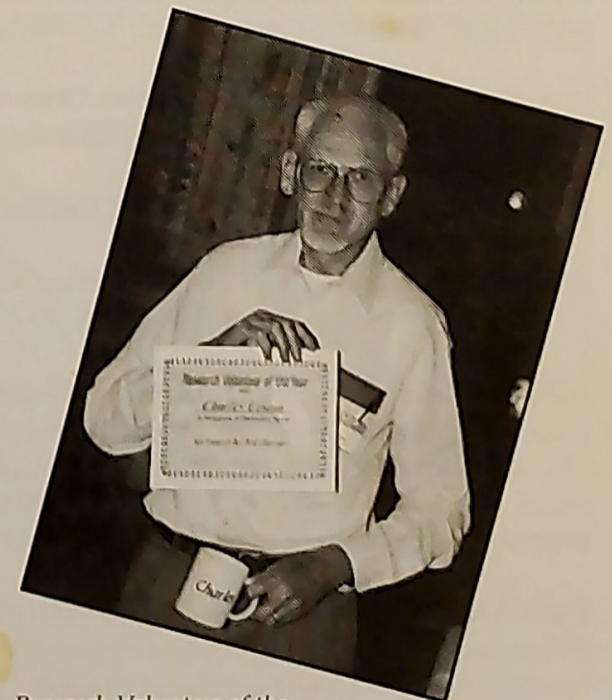
was born the next morning - congratulations, Adrian and Carol!) And thus another exciting Annual Meeting came to a close, on a very high note, a great omen for the coming year here at the Bird Observatory.



Janet Hanson, Executive Director and outgoing board member Howard L. Cogswell, Ph.D.



Past President, Lou Young and Janet Hanson.



Research Volunteer of the Year Charles Coston.

BIRDS OF COSTA RICA

A video guide to many of the more than 840 species

120 minute VHS video

SFBBO and WindandSea Productions are pleased to announce the sale of this video for the special price of only \$35.48*, including tax, shipping and handling.

This film contains many scenes filmed during SFBBO's Costa Rica trip last year. WindandSea Productions will donate \$5 per tape sold, in order to further the mission of SFBBO.



To place your order please Call SFBBO at (408) 946-6548 or WindandSea at (650) 591-4380

*ABA Fall Catalog price is \$39.95 plus shipping/handling.

Volunteer Opportunities

We may be heading into the off-season as we go to press, but we are already thinking about NEXT season! If you are considering becoming a volunteer field observer, please note these dates now. Colonial Waterbird Monitoring Program = CWMP. All meetings here in Alviso. Many of our data collection methods are changing this year, so at least one class in addition to the basis orientation class will be required of everyone (veterans may skip the orientation). Final dates to be announced, according to response.

- 17 or 18 February Volunteer Orientation, 7-9 PM
- 26 or 27 February CWMP: Breeding Biology Classes, 7-9 PM
- 2 or 3 March CWMP: Distribution Classes, 7-9 PM
- 4 or 5 March Diurnal Attendance Pattern Classes, 7-9 PM

Alviso Christmas Count, Sunday, December 21

Once again, Dick Carlson is organizing the Alviso Section of the San Jose area Christmas Count. Birders beginning through advanced welcomed with open arms! Please call Dick at either 415-324-2701 or 415-494-3160. Early morning meeting on the 21st will be here at the Observatory.

Palo Alto Clapper Rail Count, January 9

Every year, SFBBO biologists and volunteers assist Refuge biologists in conducting their annual census of Clapper Rails in the Palo Alto area, by counting rails in the inner Baylands where the refuge airboat cannot go. The count is scheduled for a very high (6.8 ft) tide on the morning of Friday, January 9. Call the Observatory for more information.

Our thanks to these supporters of the Observatory...

Membership

We welcome the following new and returning members of the SFBBO (August, September, October): David Anderson, R. Jay Andrea, Melissa Andres, Morna Baird, John Baker, Kathleen Baker and Tom Peterson, Monika Bjorkman, Edith Black, Bill Bouton, Kim Briones, Joelle Buffa, Floyd Carley, Robert Clement, Luke Cole, Arthur Dawson, Julia Denney, Marcia and Steve Ellis, Kathi Ellsworth, Lee Franks, Diane Garrison, Steve Glover, Laura Gould and Severo Ornstein, Leda Beth Gray and Dave Drake, Nancy Greenfield, Dan Guthrie, Dolores Hansen, Cynthia Hartley-Whitcomb, Claudia and Scott Hein, Martha and Robert Helseth, Tim Holcomb, Steven Holtzclaw, Caralisa Hughes, H. Peter King, Blair Kuropatkin, Dan Langhoff, Randy and Janet Little, Joyce Loughmiller, Lisa Luke, John Luther, Larry Manning, Arnold and Norma Mantyla, Elizabeth Massie, Donald Mayall, Barry McCormick, Beverly McIntosh, Gary Meyer, Karen Miller, Cheryl Millett, Barbara and Kevin Monohan, Sharon Nearn, Carol Oda, Julie Oliver, Dennise Julia Orr, Margaret Panton, Jean Perata, Edith and Bill Pounders, Jim Reyes, Joan Roach, Paul Saraceni, Doni Saunders W. Dave Shuford, Teri Sorensen, Al Spears, Norma Standard, Jim Stopford, Jesse Suckow and Chris Crowell, David and Pam Tashjian, Lucy Vlietstra, R. Heath Wakelee, Phyllis Walker, Nancy Warner, Kathleen Whitney, Alan Wight, Bob and Carol Yutzzy

Contributions

Kathleen Baker and Tom Peterson, Ginny Becchine, Richard and Pat Carlson
Denis Cogswell, Howard and Bessie Cogswell, Luke Cole, Steve and Robin Dakin, Adrian del Nevo, Janice and Frank Delfino, Marcia and Steve Ellis, Dave and Susie Formenti, Steve Glover, Phil and Pat Gordon, Laura Gould and Severo Ornstein, Dan Guthrie, Jay and Janet Hanson, Jan Hintermeister, Lance Hull, D.J. Johnson, Kathy Kennedy and Dave Miller, Rich Kuehn and Dean Schuler, Randy and Janet Little, Mike Mammoser, Ed Pandolfino
Jennifer and Bill Parkin, Tom Ryan, Sandra Skolnik, Sequoia Audubon, Steve Shunk, Sandra Skolnik, Robin Smith, Don and Carol Starks, Susan and Dan Stout, David and Pam Tashjian, Francis Toldi, Alan Walther and Lou and Jean Young.

California Fall Challenge '97

Our sincere thanks to the following corporations for their support:

- The Brunton Company
- Cheeseman's Ecology B
- Leica, Inc.
- Local Birds, Inc.
- Redwood Trading Pc
- Sequoia Audubon
- Swift, Inc.
- Wildbird Center of Los Gatos
- WindnSea Productions

LEICA



LOCAL BIRDS

Photo by Steve Dakin

Bo

Staff

Rese

New



The 97-98 SFBBO Board of Directors (from left to right): Ed Pandolfino, Dennise Julia Orr, Mike Spence, Dick Carlson, Robin Smith, Jan Hintermeister, Anne Moser, outgoing President Lou Young (not pictured: Adrian del Nevo, David McIntyre).

Wish List

Drawings of local birds and wildlife
 Bookcases
 Office volunteers to organize reference materials
 Laptop computer, capable of running Excel 5.0
 GPS unit
 Small double kayaks
 Bench seat cover for our pickup truck

Calling All Keys

Are you carrying around extra keys to Observatory facilities or past projects? Please lighten your load and help us reduce duplication costs by returning keys not currently in use. Please mail to SFBBO, P.O. Box 247, Alviso, CA 95002.

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The Bird Observatory is located at 1290 Hope St. in Alviso. The office is open weekdays and some weekends, but specific hours vary with our field schedule. Before stopping in, call 408/946-6548 and check when we will be available.

The Board meetings are open to the membership. Call the Observatory office for dates and times.

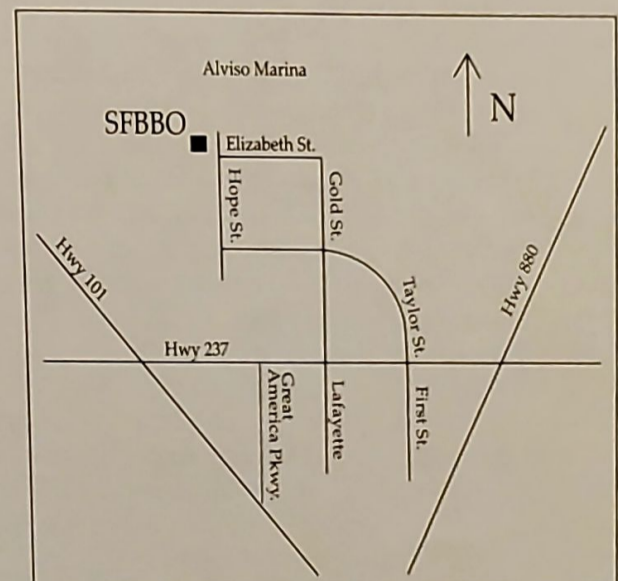
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SFBBO

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The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory is a non-profit (501-C-3) corporation. All memberships and contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Annual memberships are as follows:

Patron: \$2,000	Associate: \$50
Life: \$400	Family: \$35
Sustaining: \$200	Individual: \$25
Contributing: \$100	Student/Senior: \$15



Field Trip Report: Klamath Basin

By Tom Ryan

Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge always has huge waterfowl flocks in the fall, but this year's numbers exceeded anything the refuge biologist, Jim Hainline, had seen in 20 years. They counted 3.4 million ducks on the Lower Klamath, Tule Lake and Upper Klamath NWRs.

This information boded well for the SFBBO field trip in the area on 8-9 November, led by myself and Gjon Hazard from Humboldt State. At our first stop at Deer Lodge off Hwy. 97, we were treated to an exceptional look at a Black-backed Woodpecker. Traveling up the Butte Valley we regularly observed Rough-legged Hawks as well as numerous Red-tailed Hawks, including many "dark-phase" individuals, 3 Ferruginous Hawks, a Sharp-shinned, Prairie Falcon and Golden Eagle. At Juanita Lake, on a tip from a local birder, we observed both male and female Williamson's Sapsuckers at the campground.

Lower Klamath was an unbelievable spectacle of ducks, geese and swans. Here we observed overwhelming numbers of waterfowl including

Tundra Swan, Greater White Fronted Goose, Snow Goose and Ross' Goose. Sandhill Cranes were abundant in the fields just beyond the southern unit and put on quite a show as several hundred launched into the air and moved eastward along the hills. On numerous points through the trip we observed large numbers of ducks and geese taking off and swirling over these ponds, an absolutely breathtaking sight. Several Bald Eagles and Northern Harriers as well as a Merlin were sighted here as well. Several species of shorebird were still present including Black-bellied Plover, Killdeer, Long-billed Curlew, Dunlin, and Long-billed Dowitcher.

The next morning we started out at the NWR headquarters and Tule Lake. Highlights here include Golden Eagle, California Quail, Rock Wren, Bewick's Wren, Golden-crowned Sparrow, American White pelican, American Bittern, Hooded Merganser, Bonaparte's Gull, and Lincoln's Sparrow.

Our last destination for the trip was Lava Beds National Monument. We started off with a beautiful view of a Golden Eagle at 50 yards, as well as Mountain Bluebird and a Loggerhead Shrike.



From left to right, Barbara Henry, Lou & Jean Young, Eldonna Bouton, Randy Little, Barry McCormick, Blair Kuropatkin, Bill Bouton, Luke Cole, Gerry Wienberger, Doug Padley, Sandy Moore, Gjon Hazard and Tom Ryan.

On the way to the visitor's center for lunch several members stopped for Pinyon Jay. At the Visitor's center Cedar Waxwings and a Townsend's Solitair entertained us at lunch. Our last stop was at the crater where we picked up Pygmy Nuthatch, Red Crossbill and a Clark's Nutcracker which flew over just after we had lamented not seeing it as we went over the trip list.

These are just the highlights of the total trip list of 102 species. Special Note: Participant, Luke Cole offered the following response to Tom's trip report: "Tom did not mention, modestly, the excellent guiding provided by him and Gjon Hazard. They pulled out a number of difficult birds with aplomb, including the first bird of the trip -- Black-backed Woodpecker -- which we literally drove up to, got out of our cars, and had Gjon point out to us.

Gjon's patient scanning also got us all the Surf Scoters which is a great bird for Siskiyou county. Despite the sometimes chilly weather, it was a great weekend of birding." Thanks, Luke!

Next Trip: Carrizo Plains, February 20-22. See page 4 for more details.

1997 Fall Challenge Results by County

SPECIES	SCLA	ALA	SM	CONT	TRIN	SHAS	LA	MOD	KING	SBAR	SD	LASS	MONT	SCRZ
RED-THROATED LOON			X											
PACIFIC LOON			X											
COMMON LOON			X	X	X									
PIED-BILLED GREBE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
HORNED GREBE		X		X		X				X				
EARED GREBE	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
WESTERN GREBE	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
CLARK'S GREBE	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X				
SOOTY SHEARWATER			X										X	
BLACK-VENTED SHEARWATER			X											
AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN	X	X				X		X	X		X	X		
BROWN PELICAN	X	X	X	X			X			X	X		X	X
DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
BRANDT'S CORMORANT			X							X				
PELAGIC CORMORANT			X	X			X							
AMERICAN BITTERN						X		X						
GREAT BLUE HERON	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
GREAT EGRET	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
SNOWY EGRET	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
CATTLE EGRET	X	X							X					
GREEN HERON	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X				
BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
WHITE-FACED IBIS								X	X			X		
FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK												X		
GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE	X		X			X		X						
SNOW GOOSE						X								
ROSS' GOOSE						X								
BRANT														X
CANADA GOOSE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X		
WOOD DUCK		X	X		X	X		X		X		X		
GREEN-WINGED TEAL	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X		
MALLARD	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
NORTHERN PINTAIL	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X		
BLUE-WINGED TEAL	X						X			X				
CINNAMON TEAL	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X			
NORTHERN SHOVELER	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
GADWALL	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			
EURASIAN WIGEON	X													
AMERICAN WIGEON	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X				
CANVASBACK	X		X					X	X					
REDHEAD						X	X	X	X	X				
RING-NECKED DUCK	X				X		X		X					
GREATER SCAUP				X										
LESSER SCAUP	X	X						X						
BLACK SCOTER			X											
SURF SCOTER	X	X	X	X							X		X	
WHITE-WINGED SCOTER				X										
BUFFLEHEAD						X								
HOODED MERGANSER								X						
COMMON MERGANSER		X	X		X	X								
RED-BREASTED MERGANSER			X											
RUDDY DUCK	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X				X
TURKEY VULTURE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
OSPREY				X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		
WHITE-TAILED KITE	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X		X	
BALD EAGLE					X									
NORTHERN HARRIER	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK	X		X	X	X			X		X	X			
COOPER'S HAWK		X	X		X		X				X			
NORTHERN GOSHAWK								X						
RED-SHOULDERED HAWK	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X			
SWAINSON'S HAWK				X					X					
RED-TAILED HAWK	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
FERRUGINOUS HAWK						X			X			X		
GOLDEN EAGLE	X	X		X		X	X	X			X			
AMERICAN KESTREL	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
MERLIN	X								X			X		
PEREGRINE FALCON	X	X	X						X					
PRAIRIE FALCON						X		X						
CALIFORNIA QUAIL	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X		
MOUNTAIN QUAIL					X	X					X			
CLAPPER RAIL	X	X	X											
VIRGINIA RAIL	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X				

1997 Fall Challenge Results by County

SPECIES	SCLA	ALA	SM	CONT	TRIN	SHAS	LA	MOD	KING	SBAR	SD	LASS	MONT	SCRZ
SORA	X	X	X		X		X			X				
COMMON MOORHEN	X	X	X	X			X		X		X			
AMERICAN COOT	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
SANDHILL CRANE						X		X				X		
BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X		X	X
PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER			X											
SNOWY PLOVER		X	X				X		X	X			X	
SEMPALMATED PLOVER	X	X	X	X			X			X				
KILLDEER	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
BLACK OYSTERCATCHER			X				X							
BLACK-NECKED STILT	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X		X	
AMERICAN AVOCET	X	X	X	X			X		X	X				
GREATER YELLOWLEGS	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
LESSER YELLOWLEGS	X	X	X	X			X	X	X		X	X		
WILLET	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X		X	X
SPOTTED SANDPIPER		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		
WANDERING TATTLER			X										X	
WHIMBREL	X	X	X				X							
LONG-BILLED CURLEW	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X		X	
MARBLLED GODWIT	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		X	X
RUDDY TURNSTONE		X		X			X						X	
BLACK TURNSTONE		X	X				X			X				
SURFBIRD			X				X							
RED KNOT	X	X	X											
SANDERLING		X	X				X		X	X			X	
WESTERN SANDPIPER	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		X	X
LEAST SANDPIPER	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X			X	X
BAIRD'S SANDPIPER							X							
PECTORAL SANDPIPER	X		X						X	X				
DUNLIN	X		X	X			X			X			X	
RUFF	X													
SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER	X	X	X				X			X				
LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X			
COMMON SNIPE	X			X		X								
WILSON'S PHALAROPE	X	X					X		X			X		X
RED-NECKED PHALAROPE	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X		X	X
POMARINE JAEGER			X											
PARASITIC JAEGER			X											
BONAPARTE'S GULL	X	X		X					X					
HEERMAN'S GULL		X	X				X			X	X		X	X
MEW GULL	X													
RING-BILLED GULL	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
CALIFORNIA GULL	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X
HERRING GULL	X	X					X							
THAYER'S GULL	X													
LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL	X													
WESTERN GULL	X	X	X	X			X			X	X		X	X
GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL	X	X	X	X										
SABINE'S GULL	X								X					
CASPIAN TERN			X				X	X	X	X	X			
ROYAL TERN										X				
ELEGANT TERN		X	X	X			X			X	X			
COMMON TERN		X					X			X				X
FORSTER'S TERN	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X		X	
BLACK SKIMMER	X						X			X	X			
COMMON MURRE			X											
BAND-TAILED PIGEON	X		X	X	X		X			X	X			
WHITE-WINGED DOVE											X			
MOURNING DOVE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
COMMON GROUND-DOVE											X	X		X
GREATER ROADRUNNER		X									X			
BARN-OWL	X		X	X		X		X	X					
FLAMMULATED OWL		X						X						
WESTERN SCREECH-OWL	X	X	X		X	X						X		
GREAT-HORNED OWL	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X		
NORTHERN PYGMY-OWL	X	X	X		X			X						
BURROWING OWL	X	X		X					X					
NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL	X		X	X										
COMMON NIGHTHAWK													X	
VAUX'S SWIFT										X				
WHITE-THROATED SWIFT	X	X				X				X				
BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD		X				X			X					
ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X

1997 Fall Challenge Results by County

SPECIES	SCLA	ALA	SM	CONT	TRIN	SHAS	LA	MOD	KING	SBAR	SD	LASS	MONT	SCRZ
COSTA'S HUMMINGBIRD											X			
ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRD							X							X
SEL SPP HUMMINGBIRD		X							X					
BELTED KINGFISHER	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	
LEWIS WOODPECKER						X						X		
ACORN WOODPECKER	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		
RED-BREASTED SAPSUCKER	X		X			X								
LADDER-BACKED WOODPECKER							X							
NUTTALL'S WOODPECKER	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X			
DOWNY WOODPECKER	X	X	X	X	X	X				X				
HAIRY WOODPECKER	X		X	X		X	X	X		X				
WHITE-HEADED WOODPECKER						X	X			X				
NORTHERN FLICKER	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X
PILEATED WOODPECKER					X									
OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER							X							
WESTERN WOOD-PEWEE			X		X	X	X	X		X	X			
WILLOW FLYCATCHER					X									
DUSKY FLYCATCHER								X						
PACIFIC-SLOPE FLYCATCHER	X	X	X	X			X		X	X				
BLACK PHOEBE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			
SAY'S PHOEBE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
CASSIN'S KINGBIRD											X			
WESTERN KINGBIRD									X			X		
HORNED LARK	X					X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
TREE SWALLOW	X			X	X	X	X		X	X	X			
VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
N. ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW				X					X		X			
CLIFF SWALLOW						X	X		X	X				
BARN SWALLOW	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
STELLER'S JAY	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
WESTERN SCRUB JAY	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
PINYON JAY								X						
CLARK'S NUTCRACKER						X		X						
BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE						X		X				X		
YELLOW-BILLED MAGPIE	X	X		X		X				X				
AMERICAN CROW	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
COMMON RAVEN		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE						X	X	X		X	X			
CHESTNUT-BACKED CHICKADEE	X	X	X	X		X				X				X
OAK TITMOUSE	X	X	X	X		X	X			X				
VERDIN											X			
BUSHTIT	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X
RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH		X		X	X	X		X						
WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X			
PYGMY NUTHATCH	X		X	X			X					X		
BROWN CREEPER		X	X	X		X	X				X			
CACTUS WREN							X				X			
ROCK WREN	X	X		X			X	X		X				
CANYON WREN									X					
BEWICK'S WREN	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			
HOUSE WREN				X			X		X					
WINTER WREN	X		X	X	X									
MARSH WREN	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
AMERICAN DIPPER			X			X		X						
GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET			X	X										
RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET	X		X					X	X	X		X		
BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER							X			X				
BLACK-TAILED GNATCATCHER											X			
CALIFORNIA GNATCATCHER							X				X			
WESTERN BLUEBIRD	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X			
MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD								X						
TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE						X		X				X		
SWAINSON'S THRUSH			X	X										
HERMIT THRUSH	X		X											
AMERICAN ROBIN	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
VARIED THRUSH	X													
WRENTIT	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X			
NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X			X
SAGE THRASHER								X				X		
CALIFORNIA THRASHER	X	X					X			X	X			
AMERICAN PIPIT	X		X		X			X				X		
CEDAR WAXWING	X	X	X		X	X	X							
PHAINOPEPLA		X									X			

1997 Fall Challenge Results by County

SPECIES	SCLA	ALA	SM	CONT	TRIN	SHAS	LA	MOD	KING	SBAR	SD	LASS	MONT	SCRZ
LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X		
HUTTON'S VIREO	X	X	X	X			X			X	X			
WARBLING VIREO	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X			
YELLOW-GREEN VIREO			X											
ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
NASHVILLE WARBLER							X		X					
YELLOW WARBLER	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		X	X		
BLACK-THR. GRAY WARBLER							X							
TOWNSEND'S WARBLER	X		X	X					X	X				
HERMIT WARBLER				X			X			X				
BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER				X										
NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH				X						X				
MACGILLIVRAY'S WARBLER	X						X							
COMMON YELLOWTHROAT	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			
WILSON'S WARBLER	X	X		X			X	X	X	X	X			
SUMMER Tanager							X							
WESTERN Tanager	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X				
BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK	X			X	X		X			X	X			
LAZULI BUNTING							X							
SPOTTED TOWHEE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
CALIFORNIA TOWHEE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X
RUFIOUS-CROWNED SPARROW		X							X	X				
CHIPPING SPARROW					X	X		X	X	X				
BREWER'S SPARROW								X	X					
VESPER SPARROW						X			X					
LARK SPARROW	X	X				X	X		X	X				
BLACK-THROATED SPARROW											X			
SAGE SPARROW								X						
SAVANNAH SPARROW	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
GRASSHOPPER SPARROW									X					
FOX SPARROW	X	X	X	X	X		X			X				
SONG SPARROW	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
LINCOLN'S SPARROW	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X				
WHITE-THROATED SPARROW	X											X		
GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW	X	X	X		X	X								
WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X				
DARK-EYED JUNCO	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X			
RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
TRICOLORED BLACKBIRD	X	X	X	X						X				
WESTERN MEADOWLARK	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD						X	X	X	X			X		
BREWER'S BLACKBIRD	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE							X							
BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X				
HOODED ORIOLE											X			X
BULLOCK'S ORIOLE	X													
PURPLE FINCH	X		X	X	X		X			X				X
CASSIN'S FINCH							X	X						
HOUSE FINCH	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
PINE SISKIN				X	X			X						
LESSER GOLDFINCH	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			
LAWRENCE'S GOLDFINCH							X				X			
AMERICAN GOLDFINCH	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X		
RING-NECKED PHEASANT	X	X		X								X		
WILD TURKEY		X												
EUROPEAN STARLING	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
SPOTTED DOVE							X							
ROCK DOVE	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
HOUSE SPARROW	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
TOTAL	163	147	158	142	92	119	154	100	100	139	106	71	48	37
NORMALLY OCCURRING SPECIES	249	250	276	251	184	242	332	218	217	324	341	244	299	275
PERCENT OF COUNTY LIST SEEN	0.655	0.588	0.572	0.566	0.500	0.492	0.464	0.459	0.461	0.429	0.311	0.291	0.161	0.135