



# Albatross

PHOEBASTRIA NIGRIPES

## Inside CALENDAR OF EVENTS



## SANTA CRUZ BIRDS



Birder's  
Notebook

PARTING SHOT

## Siberia's Forgotten Coast In Search of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper

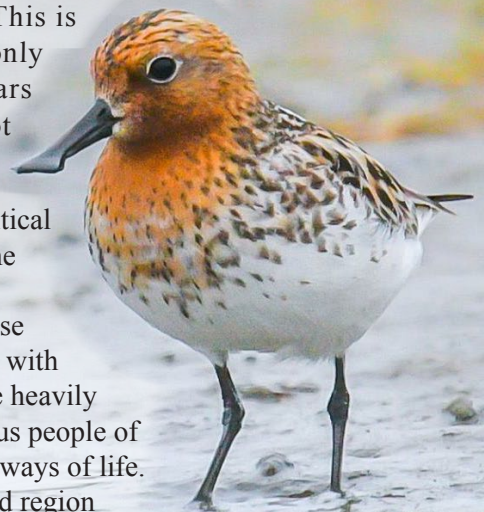
By Debi Shearwater

Mention to your friends that you're heading to the Russian Far East and you'll likely be met with a look of bewilderment. This is not surprising since the RFE only opened up to visitation about twenty years ago. Even Russians themselves could not visit Vladivostok until 1992.

In 19th century Russia, criminals, political radicals, artists and writers were exiled to the infamous labor camps of the Gulags. In the early 1990's with Perestroika and the collapse of the Soviet Union, mass migration ensued with many Russians returning to the West. As the heavily subsidized economy collapsed the indigenous people of the Far East were forced back to traditional ways of life. Today, travel through this remote and rugged region is heavily regulated and virtually impossible for the independent traveler. It is no wonder then that most people have little knowledge of this region.

Throughout its checkered human history, the RFE natural history has largely gone unnoticed and unknown by the rest of the world. It is an amazing coastline dominated by the volcanoes of Kamchatka in the south, the fiords of what was formally the Koryak region and the rich estuarine areas and tundra of Chukotka.

Certainly, I never dreamed of visiting such a remote part of the world. As luck would have it, I found myself on board an expedition voyage in 2003 headed to the Kamchatka Peninsula, part



of the renowned Ring of Fire. I returned, again in 2004 and 2005. In 2016, I spent six fabulous weeks in the RFE.

The Ring of Fire is a major basin of the Pacific Ocean where a large number of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur. Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula is one of the most active volcanic areas in the world, containing over 30 active volcanoes and hundreds of dormant volcanoes. Indeed, I flew by helicopter to the Valley of the Geysers to see these amazing volcanoes. Today, the areas where I walked in 2004, including a boardwalk, is now covered with hardened lava flow!

You cannot take a plane, train or automobile to try to find the Critically Endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper and see other wildlife in the Russian Far East. So, how do you get there? Read on!

With so little infrastructure, travel is very difficult except by expedition ship. Every one of my journeys has been on board an expedition ship. During an expedition cruise your home base is a small vessel. My most recent voyages (two in 2016) were based on a wonderfully comfortable ship with only 40 passengers. Once settled and

unpacked in your cabin, life on board becomes a regular routine of landings by Zodiac. On shore, staff lead hikes to places of special natural history interest. Or, cruising by Zodiac can take place. The object is to get as close to nature as possible without disturbing it. Witnessing 6 million Least Auklets and 3 million Crested Auklets in massive, swirling flocks at dusk flying into their nest crevices is simply beyond belief.



*Above: Steller's Sea Eagle*



*Right: Whiskered Auklet*

*Below: One of many volcanoes in the Ring-of-Fire*

*- Lisle Gwynn*



Think—Spoon-billed Sandpiper, Steller's Sea Eagle, Laysan and Short-tailed Albatrosses, Mottled Petrel, Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel, Red-faced and Pelagic Cormorants, Red-legged and Black-legged Kittiwakes, Horned and Tufted Puffins, Least, Parakeet, Crested and Whiskered Auklets, Red-necked Stint, Bluethroat, Pallas' Reed Bunting,



*Aboard a Zodiac*

Working alongside researchers from BirdLife International and Birds Russia who will be traveling with us, we plan to revisit as many of the breeding colonies along the Koryak and Chukotka coast. This expedition will document the distribution and abundance of the curious Spoon-billed Sandpiper. Only about 200 pairs are thought to exist.

In 2011 and 2016 folks on

this same, unique voyage discovered previously unknown breeding sites. This small sandpiper has a one-of-a-kind black spatulate bill. It winters down the Pacific coast, mainly in Southeast Asia. Loss of stopover habitat and hunting by people on their wintering grounds have caused a serious decline in their population. Few birders in the world will ever see a Spoon-billed Sandpiper at its nest!

I, personally have *never* seen a Spoon-billed Sandpiper. I have made five trips to the Russian Far East, each one with a different itinerary. The upcoming trip in 2016 will be the first one to have a spoon-billed sandpiper on the itinerary.



*Red-legged Kittiwake*

Steller's and King Eiders, Tundra Bean Goose, Great Knot, Long-toed Stint, Gyrfalcon, Siberian Accentor, Asian Rosy Finch, Kittlitz's Murrelet, Emperor Goose, Sandhill

Crane, Whooper Swan, Red Knots, Aleutian Terns and more. Indeed, the Russian Far East is the world center for diversity of alcids. The biomass is astounding.

Set against breath-taking scenery of perfectly shaped, snow-covered volcanoes, we'll also be surrounded by some incredible wildlife including: brown bears, walrus, belugas, red fox, Steller's sea lions, blue, minke, humpback, sperm, gray and Baird's beaked whales, orcas, sea otters, Dall's porpoise, snow sheep and the Kamchatka marmot. The world's largest concentration of brown bears occurs on the Kamchatka Peninsula. The staff strive to present photographic opportunities for both mammals and birds on a daily basis.


Hand's down, the key target species of the particular voyage that I shall be embarking on June 27th is the Critically Endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper which breeds only in Russia.



This upcoming voyage begins in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky the capital of the Kamchatka region, where we embark a comfortable vessel. We shall Zodiac cruise up the Zhupanova River where nesting Steller's Sea Eagles are found. From there, we'll head to the wildlife-rich Commander Islands, first discovered by Vitus Bering when his ship was wrecked here in 1791. It is possible to see a skeleton of the now extinct

Steller's sea cow in the museum. We'll visit uninhabited islands: Karaginskiy and Verkhoturova and the Govena Peninsula. From there, we'll head to Koryak and Chukotka, and finally to Meinypil'gyno a 40 km long shingle spit (a stretch of shore or beach covered with large smooth pebbles) that is the most important site in the world for breeding Spoon-billed Sandpipers. Continuing along the wildlife-rich coastline to the north, we end our journey at the Port of Anadyr.

Fewer people have visited the Russian Far East than have visited Antarctica! If you have a flare for adventure and places unknown, this could be a trip for you!

 Debi Shearwater is well known for establishing Shearwater Journeys, Inc. over forty years ago, providing one day pelagic trips along the central coast of California. She also leads expedition voyages, including the one described above, June 27 to July 10, 2017



*Siberia's Forgotten Coast*

**For more information:**  
[debi@shearwaterjourneys.com](mailto:debi@shearwaterjourneys.com)  
**Spoon-billed Sandpiper:**  
[www.saving-spoon-billed-sandpiper](http://www.saving-spoon-billed-sandpiper)  
[www.birdlife.org/asia/projects/preventing-extinctions-spoon-billed-sandpiper](http://www.birdlife.org/asia/projects/preventing-extinctions-spoon-billed-sandpiper)




*Clockwise from above:*  
 Parakeet Auklet  
 Least Auklet  
 Red-faced Cormorant  
 Crested Auklet  
 Crested Auklets  
 -Lisle Gwynn





## Editor's notes:

### Some Basic Spoon-billed Sandpiper Facts

The Spoon-billed Sandpiper is a small sandpiper resembling other “peeps” but is placed in its own genus, *Eurynorhynchus*, because of its unique, spatulate bill.

#### Appearance

Length: 14–16 cm (roughly 5.5–6.2 in)

Black legs and bill. Winter: pale brown/gray back with white trim around feathers, and white belly. Summer: pale brown/gray back with white trim around feathers, and white belly. Winter: dark back with light brown or reddish edging around feathers, with rusty colors on face, back and neck, streaked breast, pale belly in summer.

#### Voice

Quiet ‘preeeps’ and ‘wheetts’. Way to hard to describe in print!\*

#### Breeding

Monogamous and very territorial, returning to same nesting sites - shallow tundra vegetation.

Clutch is four eggs laid in a shallow depression.

Incubation is 19-23 days, and fledge is approx. 20 days. Chicks are tended by both parents.

#### Food

Adults eat small invertebrates. Chicks eat small insects and seeds , feeding themselves from day one.

#### Status

The spoon-billed sandpiper is classified as Critically Endangered (CR) on the IUCN Red List.

CR: extremely high risk of extinction in the wild  
IUCN Red List Categories:

<http://datazone.birdlife.org/species/spredcat>

\*I *highly* recommend watching videos of these *heartbreakingly cute* birds (YouTube has a few good ones from CornellLab) so you can get a real idea of what they are like!

Лопатень, белоплечего орлана, Ляйсани короткохвостая альбатросы, Пятнистый Буревестник, вилка с хвостом Storm-Буревестник краснолицый и Берингов баклан, красноногий и черные ноги моевки, Рогатые и топорок, наименее, Попугай , хохлатая и усатая конюг, красный шейей воробей, Варакушка, манул Рид Бантинг, Стеллера и король гаги, Tundra гуменник, Великий узел, длиннопалое воробей, кречет, Сибирский Акцентор, сибирский вьюрок, Murrelet Китлиц, в белошей, канадский журавль, лебедь-кликун, песочника, Алеутских крачки

# EVENTS CALENDAR

## January–February 2017



**Friday, January 13**  
**West Cliff & Vicinity**

West Cliff this time of year is good for rocky shore specialists, various swimming birds in the coves, and usually a mix of gulls. Depending on time we may check Bethany Curve to add some land birds, including the possibility of a wintering rarity or two.

**Directions:** Meet at 8:00 am on West Cliff Drive at Woodrow Avenue.

**Leader:** Phil Brown, 831-334-4249, pdpbrown@gmail.com



**Thursday, January 26**  
**SCBC Meeting @ 7:00 pm**  
**Speaker: Karine Tokatlian**  
**Topic: Plovers in a Changing Environment**

Western Snowy Plovers in the south San Francisco Bay nest on former salt evaporation ponds. Since 2003, the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory has monitored these cryptic, federally threatened shorebirds. Unfortunately, their habitat here is declining as a major restoration project continues to convert former salt evaporation ponds back to native tidal marsh habitat. Karine Tokatlian, Plover Program Director, will discuss the investigation of the method of using oyster shell habitat enhancement to maximize breeding success in the wake of the plovers' changing environment. Join us for a relaxed and "open to the audience" presentation.

**Location:** Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History, 1305 East Cliff Drive, Santa Cruz



*West Cliff Drive - Lisa Sheridan*



*Snowy Plover chicks - Karine\_Tokatlian*



**Sunday, January 22**  
**Natural Bridges State Park**

Our local birding hotspot is a great place to get an introduction to the birds of Santa Cruz County. Take a relaxed walk with a local birder at a beautiful local park. A nice variety of habitat should yield a fair number of species.

**Directions:** Meet at 8:00 am at the Delaware Avenue entrance to Natural Bridges State Park.

**Leader:** Phil Brown, 831-334-4249, pdpbrown@gmail.com



*Monarch Butterfly,  
Natural Bridges  
- Lisa Fay Larson*



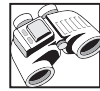


**Saturday, January 28**  
**Rancho del Oso**

A morning walk in search of wintering songsters along the Waddell Creek valley. We will scan the ocean and the beach before walking the road along the west side of the marsh and onto the redwoods.

**Directions:** Meet at 8:00 am at the Waddell Creek Beach parking lot.

**Leader:** Nick Levendosky, nlevendosky@gmail.com



**Friday, February 3**  
**College Lake**

It is winter time, so the best time to see ducks of all varieties. We will bird around College Lake looking for waterfowl of all kinds. A spotting scope is useful.

**Directions:** Meet at 8:00 am in the parking lot of Our Lady Help of Christians (2401 E Lake Ave, Watsonville).

**Leader:** Nick Levendosky, nlevendosky@gmail.com



**Saturday, February 4**  
**Panoche Valley**

This is the long-standing traditional SCBC trip to Panoche Valley, an area first birded by SCBC members Carolyn Frederickson and Steve Allison before their untimely departures from our world. Panoche has since been designated as a globally important bird area by the National Audubon Society.



*Sora - Andy Knorr*



*Above: Banded Mountain Plover - John Fox*  
*Below: Phainopepla male - Lee Jaffe*



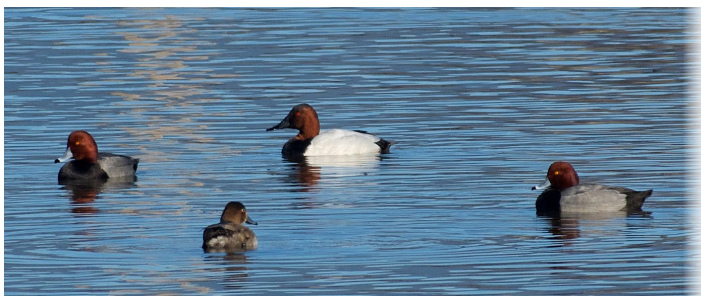
**Sunday, January 29**  
**Quail Hollow County Park**

This will be a relaxed-pace walk around some of the varied habitats here, which almost always produces a nice variety of species.

**Directions:** Meet at 8:00 am in the Quail Hollow County Park parking lot.

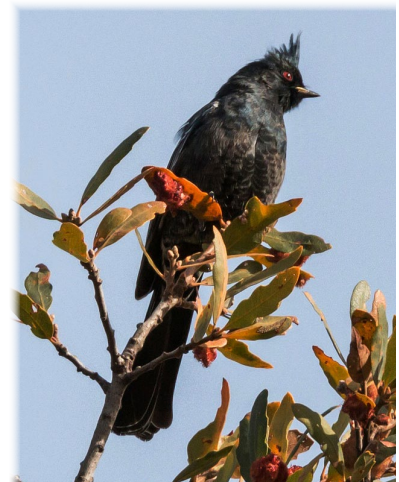
**Leader:** Alex Rinkert, arinkert12@comcast.net

*Redheads and Canvasback ducks, College Lake - Michael Bolte*



The birding trip will seek out all the regional specialties, including Phainopepla, Western and Mountain Bluebird, Lewis' Woodpecker, Greater Roadrunner, Prairie Falcon, Merlin, Ferruginous Hawk, Bald and Golden Eagle, Mountain Plover, Chukar, Vesper Sparrow, and Bell's Sparrow.

Viewing Long-eared Owls now includes a \$25 per person entry fee, so that will be optional. Carpooling encouraged.



Participants wishing to order a lunch from the Panoche Inn (sandwich, soda and chips for \$7) should e-mail your sandwich of choice to me by midnight on Wednesday, February 1st. Choices: Pastrami, Chicken Salad, Tuna Salad, Ham, or vegetarian. Include your choice of bread (wheat, rye, sourdough); condiments (mayo, mustard, tomato, onion, lettuce), and cheese (jack, cheddar, swiss). **Directions:** Meet the leader at 8:00 am at the Paicines Store on Hwy 25, approximately 12 miles south of Hollister. Those coming from Santa Cruz who wish to carpool can meet at the Aptos Wells Fargo at 6:30 am. **Leader:** Clay Kempf (831) 761-8260 or ltjaeger@att.net



**Thursday, February 16  
Struve Slough**

Water birds should be abundant along Struve Slough at this time of the year so we will be carefully searching the slough to see what we can find. Prepare to walk 2-3 miles and possibly drive to other Watsonville Slough locations if time permits.

**Directions:** Meet at 8:00 am at the parking lot behind the West Marine building along Struve Slough off Harkins Slough Road. You will need to drive all the way to the back of the lot to find the meeting place. Rain cancels.

**Leader:** Bernadette and Bob Ramer, rjramer@sbcglobal.net



**Sunday, February 12  
Merced and San Luis National Wildlife  
Refuges**

Come and enjoy the fun of birding in the Central Valley wildlife refuges. We will visit Merced and San Luis NWRs. Our target birds will be Sandhill Cranes, Snow/Ross's Geese, White-faced Ibis, and the many ducks, shorebirds, and raptors of the Central Valley. Bring lunch and liquids for a full day

**Directions:** Meet at 6:30 am at the Aptos Wells Fargo Bank, Soquel Avenue at the State Park exit from Hwy 1, or at 9:00 am at the entrance to the Merced National Wildlife Refuge. To reach Merced NWR, take Highway 152 east, past Los Baños, to Highway 59 north. Follow Highway 59 for several miles to Sandy Mush Road, turn left onto Sandy Mush Rd., watch for the refuge, which will be on your left. We may be stopping along Sandy Mush Road to watch for large flocks of cranes and geese. We may visit Santa Fe Grade road at the end of day for Short-eared Owl. We may visit other roads (Bear Creek, Great Valley Grasslands, etc.), depending upon any unusual sightings in the area.

**Leader:** Eric Feuss (831) 477-0280, mobile on day of trip only: (408) 717-0421



*Say's Phoebe  
- Jeff Roisman*



**Sunday, February 19  
Baldwin Creek**

This trip will visit coastline, marsh, scrub, riparian and agriculture fields in search of a variety species, including rails, sparrows, gulls, and more. Please bring waterproof footwear.

**Directions:** Meet at 8:00 am at the 4 Mile Beach parking area off Highway 1; the parking area is about 3.6 miles north of Western Drive in Santa Cruz.

**Leader:** Phil Brown, 831-334-4249, pdpbrown@gmail.com

*Sandhill Cranes, Merced NWR  
- Lisa Larson*







**Thursday, February 23**  
**SCBC Meeting @ 7:00 pm**  
**Speaker: Nanci Adams**  
**Topic: Trailing Penguins in Patagonia**

In December of 2015, Nanci Adams, the Watsonville/Aptos/Santa Cruz Adult Education birding instructor, headed to Argentina as an Earthwatch Institute volunteer to study Magellanic Penguins. She'll describe her adventures with the tuxedoed torpedoes and give incredibly valuable tips, such as why one never stands behind a penguin in the wild. Enjoy an evening of "ahhs" and (braying) laughter.

**Location:** Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History, 1305 East Cliff Drive, Santa Cruz



*Magellanic Penguin with chick - Nanci Adams*

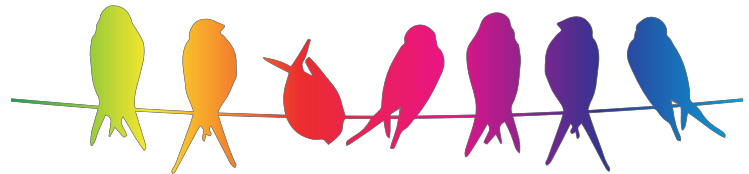


**Sunday February 26**  
**Beginning Birding at Natural Bridges**

Our local birding hotspot is a great place to get an introduction to the birds of Santa Cruz County. Take a relaxed walk with a local birder at a beautiful local park. A nice variety of habitat should yield a fair number of species.

**Directions:** Meet at 8:00 am at the Delaware Road entrance to Natural Bridges.

**Leader:** Bonnie Bedzin, [bupsiesioux@gmail.com](mailto:bupsiesioux@gmail.com)



*Ruby-crowned Kinglet - Cathy Summa-Wolfe*



*Santa Cruz Bird Club programs and field trips are open to the public—non-members are welcome. People needing rides to field trip sites are advised to contact Nicholas Levendosky: [nlevendosky@gmail.com](mailto:nlevendosky@gmail.com). Carpooling is encouraged. Dress in layers and bring liquids. Lunches are optional on half-day trips. Heavy rain cancels.*

*Field trips can pose hazards. Reluctantly, we have decided we must publish and implement this policy:*

*The Santa Cruz Bird Club or its field trip leaders cannot be responsible for damage, injury, or loss incurred by the acts or omissions of any member or visitor during Club field trips or during commutes to or from them.*

*Field trip participants must release the Club from any liability for such damage, injury, or loss.*

*Ordinarily, field trip participants sign a waiver releasing the Club from such liability, but in the absence of such a signed waiver, participation on a Club field trip in itself implies consent to and agreement with this waiver.*

## SANTA CRUZ BIRDS

By Steve Gerow

Including reports from September 1 to October 31, 2016

Multiple Bobolinks but no Blackpoll Warblers? Every fall is different! But keep in mind that most of what is reported below fits into some sort of pattern. On the other hand, new patterns will inevitably emerge over time, so it is worth keeping an eye on what changes and what stays the same from year to year, and over the long term.

The first sign of **Greater White-fronted Goose** migration this season was provided by a flock flying in the dark over the Santa Cruz Mountains, heard near the summit on the evening of September 16 (ST, LT). More reports came in October, including flocks of around 45 flying over Struve Slough on October 17 (SG, MC), and over Harkins Slough on October 20 (HC). While rather common in spring migration, Brant are surprisingly scarce in fall along the Santa Cruz County coast. Apart from a few reports in September from the Pajaro River mouth area (probably lingering summerers), the only migrant reported this period was one off West Cliff Drive on October 30 (AR). **Cackling Geese** were reported from three sites from October 7-28 (AR, GMa, LG, GK), with a total of eight individuals. A **White-winged Scoter** flew down the coast off West Cliff Drive on October 30 (AR). The summering

**Hooded Merganser** cited in the last issue was seen a couple more times through September 3; the first fall arrival appeared October 26 at Neary Lagoon (KS).

A **Laysan Albatross** was in county waters on September 3 (ShJ). There were four reports of **Flesh-footed**

**Shearwaters** from September 25 to October 23, including four in one day on October 8 (ShJ), plus three reports of single birds (AJ, ShJ, MS). **Leach's Storm-Petrels** are rarely reported from Santa Cruz County waters, as they mostly stay further out in the ocean. Thus a total of twelve found within the county's pelagic limits on an October 17 trip is quite notable (ShJ). Otherwise in the Storm-Petrel department, there were various reports of **Ashy-Storm**



**Petrels** ranging up to about 100 birds (v.ob.), and just a single **Black Storm-Petrel** on October 17 (ShJ). A **Brown Booby** was in county waters on October 17 (ShJ).

**White-faced Ibis** away from their usual Pajaro Valley sites included single birds observed at Natural Bridges on September 6 (CB et al.), and flying by Aptos Creek mouth on September 30 (RW). The largest Pajaro Valley

grouping reported was 26 in Struve Slough on September 27 (NU). Two adult **Bald Eagles** continued in the Harkins Slough area through the period, and there were also a couple of reports of an immature (GMA, RW, JR, v.ob.). There was also a second-year Bald Eagle at



Rancho Del Oso on September 5 (WBT, MBr). **Swainson's Hawks** appeared in the Soquel area on September 25 (AGb), Swanton Pond on October 8 (GMa), and at Sunset State Beach on October 19 (LG). **Common Gallinules** away from the Pajaro Valley included one

at Antonelli Pond from September 5 to October 5 (AK, LG, v.ob.), and one at Schwan Lake on October 17 (CSz).

**American Avocets** were out of their typical Pajaro Valley haunts at Wilder Ranch on September 6 (TU), with probably the same bird at Younger Lagoon the same day (TU, LG), and two at Natural Bridges on September 17 (GMc). A **Red Knot** stopped at Black Point on October 1 (GMa). Three additional **Baird's Sandpipers** through September 20 (GMa, PB) brought the fall total up to ten.



*Leach's Storm  
Petrel  
- Alex Rinkert  
Common Gal-  
linule  
- Lisa Larson*

There were multiple reports of **Pectoral Sandpipers** from four sites between September 5 and October 10, with a high count of eleven in the Lee Road area on September 25 (DS). **Lesser Yellowlegs** were well-reported this fall (mostly from Pajaro Valley wetlands), with a high count of eleven at Pajaro Dunes on September 22 (GMa). Four **Tufted Puffins** were found in county waters from September 15-October 1 (ShJ, AJ et al.).

A **Burrowing Owl** had returned to the UCSC campus grasslands on October 6 (AR), and two were there on October 19 (MBo). A **Black-chinned Hummingbird** visited Coyote Canyon in the Soquel area on September 9 (AGb, CF), bringing the fall total to two, the lowest in many years (typically we find 10-15). Were they exceptionally sparse this year, or just undetected? The mostly white leucistic **Anna's Hummingbird** continued at the UCSC Arboretum through the period (v.ob.). A **Red-naped Sapsucker** inhabited Quail Hollow Ranch from September 29 to October 5 (AR, CS). A **Pileated Woodpecker** at New Brighton State Beach on September 6 (MG, LSP) provided another example of fall wandering away from their usual habitats. A **Prairie Falcon** flew by Natural Bridges State Beach on October 19 (AGg).

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** at Lighthouse Field on October 13 was late (SG). Seven **Willow Flycatchers** from September 4-24 (v.ob.) brought the fall total up to eight.

**Tropical Kingbirds** were well-reported from September 17 through the end of this period (v.ob.)

These reports seemed to involve about three individuals at coastal spots from Younger Lagoon to Swanton Pond, and probably 2-3 in the lower Pajaro Valley. Various reports of **Loggerhead Shrikes** through the period probably

involved about 5-6 individuals. Three fall migrant **Cassin's Vireos** were reported from August 23-September 20 (SS, KJ). A **Horned Lark** visited Wilder Ranch State Park on October 13 (AR), and others were found in surveys of the localized areas west of Watsonville where some

are resident (BR, LG, GK). Two late **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** were near Harkins Slough on October 13 (GK). A **Bank Swallow** stayed around Antonelli Pond from September 9-11 (DS, MBo, v.ob.).

Two **White-breasted Nuthatches** seen together near Meder Canyon were unexpected wanderers (TU). A **Hermit Thrush** at Pinto Lake on September 16 was interesting in that it retained a significant amount of juvenile plumage (LL). This suggested that it was a post-breeding dispersant from the local breeding population rather than an arriving fall migrant (the first definite migrants started showing up about a week later). The local nesting birds are rather common in the breeding season in the local mountains, but there are very few records of them wandering to lowland

locations. A **Red-throated Pipit** was a good find in the coastal fields of Wilder Ranch on October 20 (AR), and nicely documented with recordings of its distinctive flight call.

Up to two **Northern Waterthrush** stayed around Antonelli Pond from September 6-14 (AK, v.ob.). Another was on the Monterey County side of the Pajaro River across from CARE Park on September 24 (MD et al.). A **Tennessee Warbler** was first reported from Natural Bridges on September 6 (KJ), then perhaps the same bird (or maybe not) visited Antonelli Pond



*Bank Swallow*  
- Michael Bolte  
*Hermit Thrush* -  
Lisa Larson



*Tennessee Warbler*  
- Michael Bolte  
*Northern Waterthrush*  
- Pete Solé



from September 7-10 (AK, MB, v.ob.). Nine **Nashville Warblers** were reported from August 30-October 24 (v.ob.). Nine **MacGillivray's Warblers** (v.ob.) were detected from August 23 to October 11, for a good fall total. **American Redstarts** included one that landed on a boat during a pelagic trip on September 9 (ShJ), one at Potbelly Gulch on September 16 (LL), and an adult male at Struve Slough on September 18 (NU). **Blackburnian Warblers** were nice surprises at Natural Bridges on September 16 (AK, TB, ZM), and in Ben Lomond on October 3 (WL).

The **Palm Warbler** season started off with eight found between September 20 and October 23 (v.ob.). About 40



another illustration that fall migration, and birding in general, is unpredictable.

About 15 **Chipping Sparrows** were noted from early August through October 15. **Clay-colored Sparrows** included individuals at the Trescony Community Garden in Santa Cruz October 2-3 (AR, RC, SG), in the Homeless Garden from October 3-15 (DG, SP, v.ob.), and at the UCSC Farm on October 4 (SG). **Lark Sparrows** at Antonelli Pond on September 10 (ER, JC), and by West Struve Slough on September 21 (GMa) brought the fall total up to



**Black-throated Gray Warblers** were noted from August through October (at least 21 in August, 11 in September, and 8 in October). Some of the early August reports could have involved birds lingering from the breeding season, rather than passage migrants. Three **Hermit Warblers** in the Loma Prieta area on August 5 were likely migrants, but then no others were reported through the end of October. A **Yellow-breasted Chat** turned up in Bethany Curve Park on September 15 (KJ). With what seemed to be fairly good field coverage this fall, I found it a little surprising that we missed a few of the more regular "rare Eastern warblers", including Chestnut-sided Warbler and Blackpoll Warbler, which have been found almost every year. But this is just



five. A "**Thick-billed**" **Fox Sparrow** was in Castle Rock State Park on October 5 (AR). Fox Sparrows of this form have been found in some numbers in the Loma Prieta area in recent winters, but not elsewhere in the Santa Cruz

*Photos from top:  
Palm Warbler - Lisa Larson  
Black-throated Gray Warbler - Gail West  
Clay-colored Sparrow - Andy Knorr*

Mountains, though there is a lot of apparently suitable chaparral habitat on many of the higher ridges. Ten **White-throated Sparrows** were reported from September 24 through the end of October (v.ob.). A **Swamp Sparrow** was at Corralitos Lagoon on October 22 (EF, SG).

A **Summer Tanager** was heard, and its distinctive call recorded, in Boulder Creek on October 1 (CF), a record that is especially noteworthy for the upper San Lorenzo Valley. Male **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** visited feeders in the Rodeo Gulch area on September 5 (JP), and in Soquel on October 16 (LS). It was an exceptional year for **Bobolinks** in Santa Cruz County. One cooperative bird at the Homeless Garden from October 2-12 (AR, RC, v.ob.) was seen and photographed by numerous birders. Others



*Bobolink - Pete Solé*



*Bobolink - Lisa Fay Larson*

included two at the Baldwin Creek mouth on October 7 (AR), and lone birds near Hanson Slough on October 13 (GK), and at College Lake on October 31 (GK). The fall's second **Orchard Oriole** appeared at Swanton Pond on October 2 (AR, RC). **Lawrence's Goldfinch** reports included three at Crestview Park in Watsonville on September 1 (BM), and four near Loma Prieta on September 21 (AR).



*Swamp Sparrow - Steve Gerow*

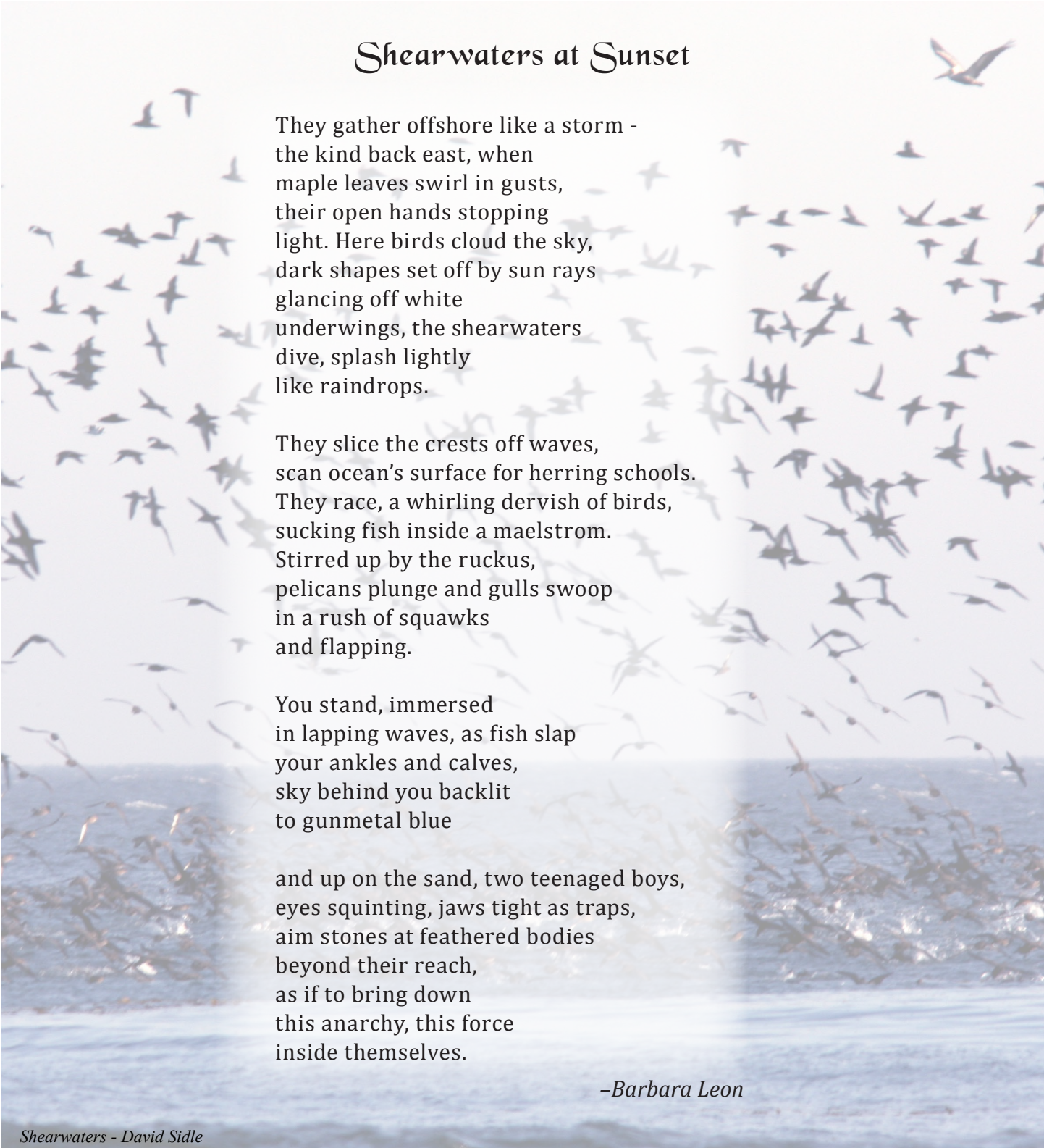
Cited Observers: Theadora Bloch, Michael Bolte (MBo), Chris Brown, Martha Brown (MBr), Phil Brown, Hugo Ceja, Reef Comer, John Colbert, Mary Crouser, Matthew Dodder, Craig Fosdick, Elisabeth Foster, Aaron Gabbe (AGb), Alexander Gaguine (AGg), Steve Gerow, Don Glasco, Lois Goldfrank, Mary Gustafson, Alvaro Jaramillo, Kent Johnson, Gary Kittleson, Anna Kopitov, Lisa Larson, Will Lawton, Gary Martindale (GMa), Gloria McCanless (GMc), Zack Mikalonis, Monterey Seabirds, Bryan Mori, LS Paulson, Shantanu Phukan, Jeff Poklen, Bernadette Ramer, Alex Rinkert, Jeff Roisman, Erica Rutherford, Christian Schwarz, Shearwater Journeys, Lisa Sheridan, David Sidle, Stephanie Singer, Kitty Stein, Scott Terrill,, Linda Terrill, W. Breck Tyler, Tom Unsicker, Norman Uyeda, Randy Wardle, v.ob. = various observers



---

## Birder's Notebook

### Shearwaters at Sunset



They gather offshore like a storm -  
the kind back east, when  
maple leaves swirl in gusts,  
their open hands stopping  
light. Here birds cloud the sky,  
dark shapes set off by sun rays  
glancing off white  
underwings, the shearwaters  
dive, splash lightly  
like raindrops.

They slice the crests off waves,  
scan ocean's surface for herring schools.  
They race, a whirling dervish of birds,  
sucking fish inside a maelstrom.  
Stirred up by the ruckus,  
pelicans plunge and gulls swoop  
in a rush of squawks  
and flapping.

You stand, immersed  
in lapping waves, as fish slap  
your ankles and calves,  
sky behind you backlit  
to gunmetal blue

and up on the sand, two teenaged boys,  
eyes squinting, jaws tight as traps,  
aim stones at feathered bodies  
beyond their reach,  
as if to bring down  
this anarchy, this force  
inside themselves.

*-Barbara Leon*

*Shearwaters - David Sidle*

Submissions NEEDED



**DEADLINE**

for Mar/Apr issue

**Feb 1, 2017**



## New SCBC Members Welcome!

Peter Dileanis Family	Nov 2016
Leonard Hantz	Nov 2016
Melissa McKinney & Family	Nov 2016
Jeff Caplan	Nov 2016
Jan Slay	Nov 2016
Nan & Ray Sherrod	Nov 2016
Karen Asherah	Nov 2016
Katherine Bailey Family	Nov 2016
Eden Alcantar	Dec 2016

## Assembling Your **ALBATROSS** Newsletter

### Submission to the Albatross Guidelines

In addition to regular features—*Events Calendar*, photos for *Santa Cruz Birds*, *Birders Notebook* and *Parting Shot*—the newsletter can include almost anything related to birding in general and to local birding in particular. Depending on space, submissions of any of the following are **needed**:

- Feature articles
- Birding event announcements
- Stories about birds or birders, serious or comic
- Reviews of birding literature or guides
- Conservation & outreach reports/stories
- Birding tips, descriptions of local sites
- Poetry, quotes, field sketches, artwork or photos
- Photos of BIRDS or people at our events (jpg, tif)

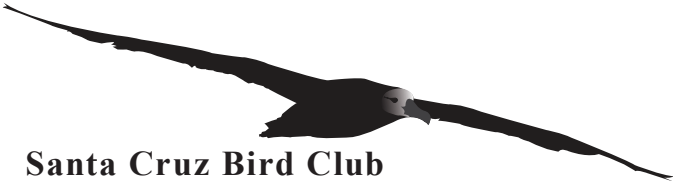
If you wish to submit an article, please contact the editor about it **AT LEAST 2 weeks before** the submission deadline.

I accept plain text, Word, or PDF files. Send items by email to: [scbirdclubeditor@gmail.com](mailto:scbirdclubeditor@gmail.com)

~Lisa Fay Larson, Editor

# FIRST CLASS MAIL

U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
MAILED FROM SANTA CRUZ, CA  
PERMIT NO. 74



Santa Cruz Bird Club  
P.O. Box 1304  
Santa Cruz, CA 95061

## OFFICERS

### *President*

Lisa Sheridan:  
trotrider@aol.com

### *Bird Records Keeper*

Steve Gerow  
stephengerow@aol.com

### *Programs*

Georgette Neal  
gl\_neal@hotmail.com

### *Field Trips*

Nick Levendosky  
n.levendosky@gmail.com

### *Treasurer*

Kent Johnson  
kentjohnson@hotmail.com

### *Secretary*

Tim Jolly  
tjolly3@cruzio.com

### *Editor*

Lisa Fay Larson  
scbirdclubeditor@gmail.com

### *Webmaster*

Phil Brown  
pdpbrown@gmail.com

### *Conservation Director*

Jane Mio  
jmio@earthlink.net

### *Membership Director*

Stephanie Singer  
singersa@aol.com

### *Hospitality Director*

Nickie Zavinsky  
nickiezee0111@gmail.com

### *Historian*

Alex Rinkert  
arinkert12@comcast.net

Printed on partially recycled paper



PARTING SHOT: "Mine!" "No, Mine!"  
ACORN WOODPECKER TUG-O-WAR, UCSC FARM - LEE JAFFE



## ALBATROSS

ALBATROSS

is published five times a year  
by the Santa Cruz Bird Club.  
See the online version and past  
issues on the SCBC website,  
[santacruzbirdclub.org](http://santacruzbirdclub.org)

## Join the Santa Cruz Bird Club

Enjoy walks in and around the County of Santa Cruz, discounted boat trips on Monterey Bay, summer picnics and annual dinners, meetings September through May featuring informative, illustrated talks on wild birds and related topics, and receive the bimonthly newsletter, *Albatross*. Santa Cruz Bird Club memberships run June-May.

Dues are \$20 Individual, \$25 Family, \$5 Youth, \$400 Life.

**To pay with PayPal:** [santacruzbirdclub.org/join-or-renew-online](http://santacruzbirdclub.org/join-or-renew-online).

Or make checks payable to Santa Cruz Bird Club and mail to:  
Box 1304, Santa Cruz, CA 95061, Attention: Membership.