



Albatross

PHOEBASTRIA NIGRIPES

INSIDE
Calendar of Events



CONSERVATION NEWS

SANTA CRUZ BIRDS

ANNOUNCEMENT:
Santa Cruz County
Breeding Bird Atlas II
Year 1 Summary



PARTING SHOT

Snowy Egret fly-by - Lee Jaffe
Female Bushtits - Sharon Hull

EXPERIENCING A VISIT FROM A RARE BIRD... AND HIS FANS

- By Sheri Howe



Broad-billed_Hummingbird - Elizabeth Van Dyke

"Looks like this bird has never been reported in Santa Cruz County before", said my husband Paul from his seat on the couch where he was looking up records for the bird we could see outside the window. Though I don't list, I'm cognizant of the importance of a county first to those who do list and keep records. With his words I knew that I was obligated to report the bird that Madeline Spencer and I were studying. I knew what this meant, as

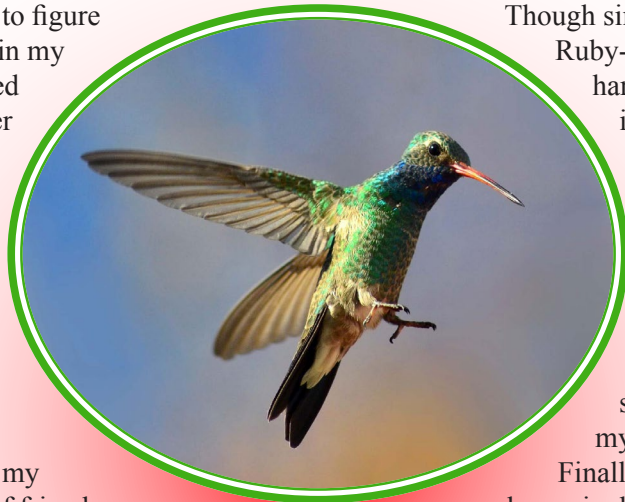
a female Painted Bunting had appeared in my yard in November 1995. Within hours of the bunting report going out dozens of birders flocked to my yard. This was before the internet and eBird. And yet day after day, they appeared. For weeks. Did I really want to report this bird and if I did, would I want to allow birders access to my property to view it?

While contemplating that, we watched this gorgeous hummingbird with its vermilion bill, sapphire blue gorget and emerald green breast and back shimmering in the sun. With a loud ratchety sound it shot up into the air and took off, giving us a look at its notched tail. No doubt about it this was an adult male Broad-billed Hummingbird! He belonged in Mexico. Now what?



BBHU - Michael Bolte

For a couple of days, while trying to figure out if I wanted a bunch of birders in my yard, I studied the bird and watched where it went after it left the feeder and if it visited any of the flowers in the yard or the fountain. I'm sure there are those reading this that cannot believe I didn't immediately report this rarity, but I was realizing it had been here several weeks and I just assumed it would stick around for awhile. During the summer I had spent a lot of time working in my yard getting ready for the arrival of friends and family who would be staying in our guest house. For years I have been trying to create



BBHU - Christian Schwarz

Though similar to the "jidit" calls of the Ruby-crowned Kinglet this seemed harsher and actually louder. Could it be a House Wren? I knew there was a Bewick's Wren in the yard. Maybe there was a House Wren, too. Now I wanted to *see* who was making the noise. When I would see a hummer in the vicinity of the sound, it was either in shade or just a back-lit silhouette, which I assumed was my resident Anna's Hummingbird. Finally, it seemed it could only be a hummingbird, but what kind was so loud and boisterous? I sat down with my Audubon app on my phone and started playing all the hummingbird sounds on it. Bingo. There it was.

Broad-billed Hummingbird. Impossible! Now, belatedly, I put binoculars to the previously anticipated "Anna's" and when I did, I marveled at his beauty. How could I have not seen that neon orange-red bill, that spectacular blue gorget? I texted Madeline and she was at the house in the blink of an eye. Now here my husband and I were trying to decide if we should let the world come rushing in to our back yard.

Not wanting hordes of strangers parked inside our house every day, I spent a day or two studying where the bird liked to be and figuring out the best outdoor viewing sites. I discovered that between forays up to the feeder or to the fountain he liked to perch inside a bush in the neighbor's yard just a few feet from the fence. He didn't seem to mind when I stood there and admired him. He also like to gnat-catch from the branches of the birch tree above the feeders. From these two locations he could dash out and assert ownership of the feeders against the incursions of the Anna's hummers. He was very vocally aggressive during these encounters. In fact he would noisily challenge me whenever I took in a feeder to clean and fill.

My husband and I discussed having lots of people wandering through the yard. We were especially concerned about disturbing the peace of the neighborhood and bothering his cousin who would be using our guest house as a recovery place while undergoing chemo therapy. We decided I would ask folks to be quiet and we decided to limit the visiting hours to 9:00–5:00.

a bird-friendly environment in the yard with plant choice, feeder placement and water features. While working in the yard, I bird by ear. My hearing is much better than my vision anyway so I just mentally check the birds off as I hear them while digging and weeding. If I hear something I am not sure of, or know I've never heard before, I get the binoculars and search out the bird. Every winter I have at least one Ruby-crowned Kinglet. While working I heard what I thought was my kinglet and went on working. It wasn't until after the guests had left and I



Above: BBHU - Lisa Larson
Left: Lois Goldfrank, original photo

was again gardening that I heard the kinglet-like sound, though now I had second thoughts. It wasn't quite right.



We finally decided to post it online via MBB (Monterey Bay Birders) and see what happened. By standing right next to the feeder and waiting for it to appear I managed to get a few (not very good) shots of the bird with my Android that at least showed the red bill, blue gorget and the notched tail. Then I wrote up the description, added directions and posted it.

As soon as I did, I realized I still needed to put up signs. The bird was at the very back of our property and there are two houses here. Folks would need signs directing them where to go. I hastily made signs to put on all the doors of both houses telling folks not to disturb the occupants and that the bird was behind the rear house. I attached signs to the front house saying simply BIRD with an arrow. I added more BIRD→ signs at appropriate spots in the yard. I was still putting up signs telling birders where to look for the hummer when the first visitor arrived only half an hour after posting. The fun had begun!

They came from Santa Cruz and Watsonville, Boulder Creek and Monterey, Hayward and Mountain View, Cupertino and Redwood City, San Francisco, Menlo Park, Fremont, Milpitas, Half Moon Bay. Someone made my address a stake-out spot on eBird and the number of visitors steadily increased. The GPS

coordinates were not right so there were birders in wrong yards, but that was soon corrected and my neighbors were understanding. Birders were here from Portland, Oregon and Colorado, from Pasadena and Grass Valley and Woodland, California. Even Luxembourg!! I'm assuming those from distant places were here visiting Santa Cruz for other reasons, though with birders you never know.

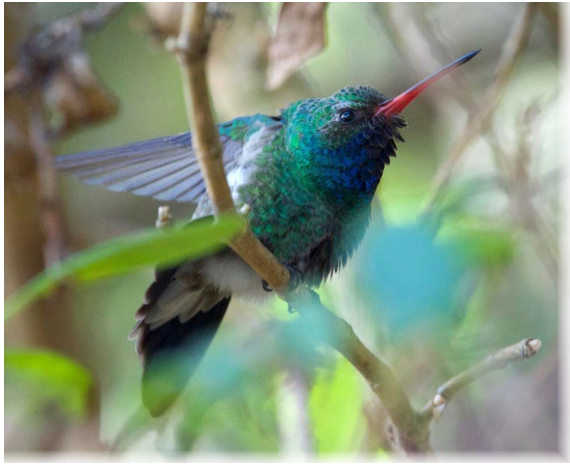
Over 200 birders signed the guest book! Every single person was gracious and quiet and happy. The bird was so predictable and cooperative no one had to wait very long to see him. Some visitors added it to their list and went on their way. Others couldn't get enough and came back several times. I had fun reconnecting with old friends from *The Birdfeeder* days (my former Santa Cruz store for bird lovers) and the Santa Cruz Bird Club. I was especially appreciative of the fact that not only did my yard not get trampled, but many

Crowd shots
Top & bottom - Sheri Howe:
Center - Lisa Larson

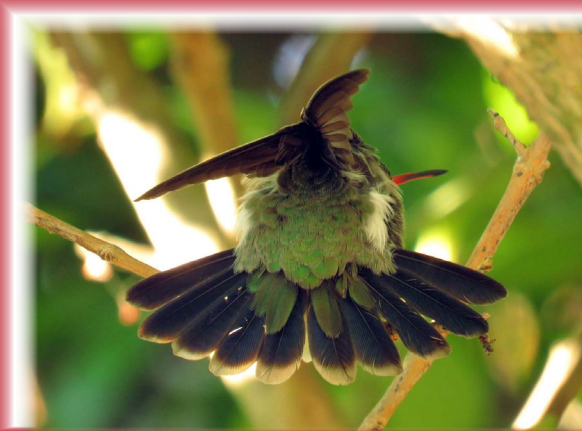


went out of their way to compliment my garden, which is always gratifying to an avid gardener.

After awhile the flood of visitors had slowed to just one or two a day, and it looked like the weather was going to change drastically. I needed to winterize the yard so I posted to MBB that the party was over. Little did I know how prescient I was. The next day it rained and the temperature dropped—our Little BB disappeared. I listened for him everyday, which was made more difficult by the fact that a Ruby-crowned Kinglet was now really in the yard. I watched for BB at the feeders, but to no avail. The party was truly over.



All in all it was a great experience made even better by the polite, considerate behavior of everyone, lovely guest book comments and thank-yous. Folks shared their photos by email and even a thumb drive, left gifts of flowers, bags of sugar, and packets of notecards. I am really happy we opened our yard to birders and would do it again given the grace of another visitation from a rare bird.



Broad-billed Hummingbird
Above:
- Elizabeth Van Dyke
Left:
- Lisa Larson

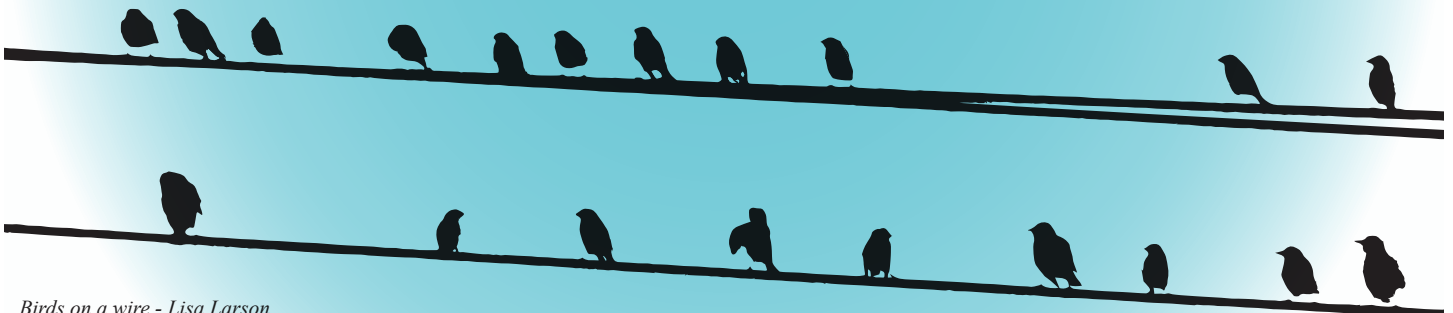
BYLAWS VOTE in JANUARY

The Board has reviewed the club's Bylaws, and recommends the following additions. Members will vote at the January meeting. Current Bylaws are posted on the club's website: santacruzbirdclub.org

Article III. Sec. 3. The Santa Cruz Bird Club respects the privacy of its members and does not share member information, including email lists. [This has been our practice, made official.]

Article IV. Sec. 3. Dues paid by new members joining after February 1 will provide for membership through May 31 of the following year. [This has been our practice, made official.]

Article X. Sec. 3. The Governing Body shall review these Bylaws and revise as needed, at least every 5 years. [Had not been specified, this seemed like a good interval.]



Birds on a wire - Lisa Larson

The Santa Cruz Bird Club needs your help for completing the *Breeding Bird Atlas Project!*

A very generous, anonymous donor has offered to match donations up to \$5,000 per year to the atlas project.

The Atlas is a multi-year, multi-phase undertaking, and it would be great if everyone in the club participated in some way. You can help by actual atlassing, or with behind-the-scenes work like research or fundraising, or by monetary donations. So far, 20% of membership has participated.

Can you help us meet our goal of 100%?



Please send check to:
Santa Cruz Bird Club Box 1304, Santa Cruz, CA 95061
Attention: Breeding Bird Atlas

Thanks to the many people who have graciously and generously donated to the Bird Club since September! Many of these have been in honor and memory of Steve Gerow. In a tribute to him, all donations are being used to support the Breeding Bird Atlas II Project. He was very supportive in getting this project up and running.

Thank you—

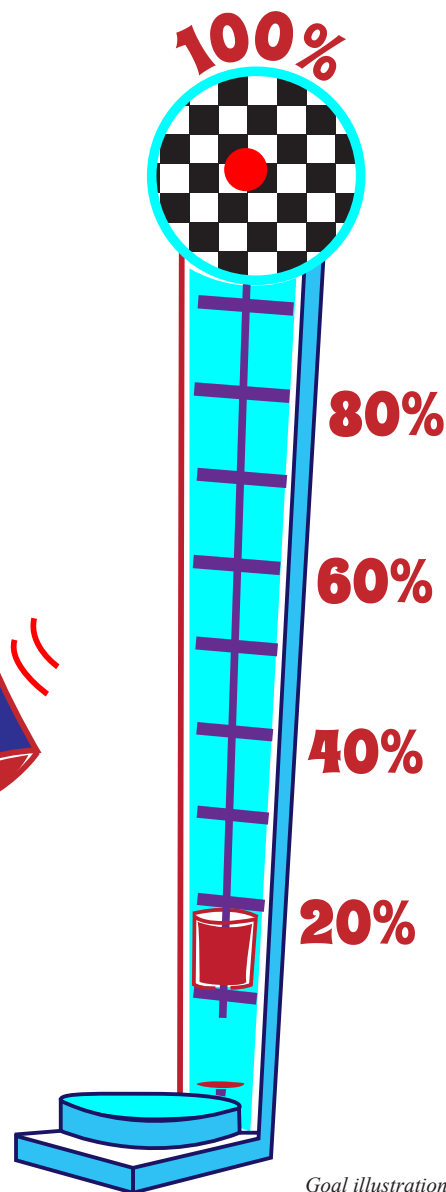
Eric Feuss

Anonymous

Connie & Tom Unsicker

- Substantial amount!

**20% of club members have contributed to the BBA project with time &/or funding.*



*Goal illustration:
- Lisa Larson*

**See Breeding
Bird Atlas II
Year 1 Summary
Announcement
on page 16!!!**

EVENTS CALENDAR

January–February 2018

Changes to event times/ place are sometimes necessary after publication. We suggest checking our Facebook page or our website Calendar for the latest information. Time permitting, we also send out a member-wide email notification. If you haven't been receiving these, please check your spam filter & let us know at: scbirdclub@gmail.com.



Friday, January 12 Schwan Lake

Live oak woodlands, some open meadows, plus willows, marshlands, and other habitats along the lake should yield a variety of birds.

Directions: Meet at 8:00 AM in the parking lot of the Simpkins Family Swim Center, 979 17th Avenue.

Leader: Lisa Larson, scbirdclubeditor@gmail.com



Merlin - Sharon Hull



Saturday, January 20 Quail Hollow

Quail Hollow is a beautiful Santa Cruz County Park with a good variety of species and habitats. Join us for a relaxed morning of birding.

Directions: Meet at 8:00 AM in the Quail Hollow parking lot.

Leader: Alex Rinkert, arinkert12@comcast.net



Surf Scoters - Peter Svensson



Sunday, January 14 Westcliff and Vicinity

West Cliff should have a good mix of nearshore species, rocky shore specialists, gulls, and others, and Bethany Curve Park and/or Lighthouse Field will provide some land birding.

Directions: Meet at 8:00 AM at the intersection of West Cliff Drive and Woodrow Avenue.

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



*Black and White Warbler,
at Bethany Curve - Lisa Larson*



Sunday, January 21 Sunset State Beach

Gulls and other coastal birds, rails, sparrows, raptors and more. Who knows what might show up this time of year in this diverse habitat.

Directions: Meet at 8:00 AM at the parking area near the entrance kiosk. If you have a state park pass, please bring it, otherwise bring \$10 for an entrance fee.

Leader: Reef Comer, reefcomer@gmail.com



**Thursday, January 25, 2018
SCBC Meeting @ 7:30 PM
Speaker: Pete Solé**



Topic: Bird Photography - A Practical Introduction To Better Photos

This will be a 1 to 1.5 hour practical overview of major terms, field techniques and computer post-processing

methods to create better bird photos. Although there will be some images, the presentation is more about sharing knowledge and learning techniques.

About the Presenter: Pete Solé has been photographing birds in the Santa Cruz area for over 10 years. He's learned a bit and is happy to share what he's learned.

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



Black-throated Blue Warbler - Pete Solé



Saturday, January 27
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: Jerry Busch; jerrybusch@comcast.net



Ring-necked Duck - Andy Knorr



Sunday, January 28
Palo Alto Baylands

This day has promising tides (high tide of 9.0 at 9:09 am), providing good opportunities for Ridgway's Rail and any other rail species. We will bird the duck pond, lagoon and trails around the Environmental Education Center (Lucy Evans Baylands Nature Interpretive Center), the Palo Alto flood control basin including the bordering Matadero and Adobe Creeks, Charleston Slough, Mountain View Forebay, Coast-Casey Forebay, Shoreline Lake, Pond A1 and A2, and then possibly further outlying areas such as Crittenden Marsh, etc. We may be moving around a bit if one or more interesting birds have been reported in the vicinity during the week.



Ridgway's Rail - Ingrid Taylor

Directions: Meet at 6:45 AM at the County Government Center (near sign at Ocean Street parking entrance) or at the Palo Alto Baylands at 8:00 AM - preferably at the Environmental Education Center. Sometimes the gate is still locked. If so, there is still a parking lot outside the gate and some great mud flats (right there) in the basin to be birded. Please call leader before trip if meeting at the latter location or if one wishes to make arrangement for another meeting place and time.

Leader: Eric Feuss; 831-477-0280
(408-717-0421 mobile – day of trip only)





**Friday, February 2
Arana Gulch**

We should find a good selection of resident and wintering birds in the mix of grassland, live oaks, riparian, and cypress and eucalyptus groves in this area.

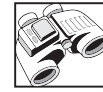
Directions: Meet at 8:00 AM at the entrance on Agnes Street, near the end of Mentel Street (off the south side of Soquel Avenue, two blocks east of the light at Trevethan and Hagemann).

Leader: Lisa Larson, scbirdclubeditor@gmail.com



American Robin - Lisa Larson

Winter is ivy berry feasting time at Arana Gulch, with great viewing and photo opportunities from the big bridge. Hopefully they won't be consumed by February 2nd! The berries are enjoyed by American Robin, Cedar Waxwing, and Hermit Thrush.



**Saturday, February 3
Panoche Valley**



*Clay Kempf
- Karen DeMello*

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. 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 & 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 the leader by midnight on Wednesday, February 1st. Choices are 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 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

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. 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.



**Sunday, February 11
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. 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



Golden-crowned Kinglet - Michael Bolte



**Saturday,
February 17
Seacliff State
Beach**

We will spend the morning scoping above the cement ship for wintering loons, grebes, scoters, gulls, and who knows what else. Then depending on activity, we might take a stroll out to Aptos Creek mouth along the beach, or if conditions are poor along the coast, we can check out the Porter-Sesson area.

Directions: Meet at 7:30 AM in the parking lot above the cliff at Seacliff SB. From Highway 1 take the State Park Drive exit, make a right and continue to the State Park kiosk. The day use fee is \$10. Dress warmly. Rain cancels.

Leader: Nicholas Levendosky, nlevendosky@gmail.com



*American Kestrel
- Lee Jaffe*



**Sunday, February 18
Beginning Birding 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: Phil Brown, 831-334-4249, pdpbrown@gmail.com



**Sunday, February 25
Salinas River Mouth**

We will focus on shorebirds, coastal birds and recently reported sightings there.

Directions: Meet at 7:00 AM from Aptos Wells Fargo Bank or meet before 8:00 AM at the Salinas River mouth parking lot. Take Hwy 1 south beyond Castroville; just after Salinas River, take the Del Monte Ave exit. Turn right (toward bay), follow dirt road to parking lot. A one-stop morning trip with optional afternoon extension at either Moonglow Dairy, Zmudowski State Beach, or (south to) Fort Ord Dunes State Park. Bring snack/drink. Come rain or shine. Please call leader before trip if meeting at the latter location or if one wishes to make arrangement for another meeting place and time.

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

Salinas NWR - Lisa Sheridan





Thursday, February 22, 2018
SCBC Meeting @ 7:30 PM
Speaker: Alex Rinkert
Topic: Santa Cruz Breeding Bird Atlas

The Santa Cruz County Breeding Bird Atlas II will continue with field work in 2018! If you are interested in learning about the history and significance of the BBA, or are considering contributing as an atlaser, please come to this informative meeting!

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



Black-throated Gray Warbler - Lee Jaffe

CONSERVATION NEWS

Dear SCBC Members,

I want to bring your attention to these plans since they will have impacts on the environment. The plans are worthwhile to check out & your submitted comments are important:

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) released documents for their Draft 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP); its Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS); and the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared for the 2040 MTP/SCS and associated Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) for Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz Counties. The public review and comment period begins on December 4, 2017 and ends on February 5, 2018.

- Jane Mio, Conservation Officer

Public Open Houses & Public Hearings

www.ambag.org/programs-services/planning/metro-transport-plan/2040-MTP-SCS

AMBAG will hold open houses and public hearings at the following dates and locations from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Open houses will be held from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.; public hearings begin at 7:00 p.m.

- Thursday, January 11, 2018 – San Benito County Library, 470 5th Street, Hollister
- Monday January 22, 2018 – Toots Vosti Recreation Center, 107 Centennial, Gonzales
- Wednesday, January 24, 2018 – Seaside Community Center, 220 Coe Avenue, Seaside
- Tuesday, January 30, 2018 – Live Oak Community Complex (Simkins), 979 17th Avenue, Santa Cruz

“VISION SANTA CRUZ COUNTY” is gathering community input for their first-ever strategic plan.

Sign up for getting meeting updates & online survey info:

www.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/VisionSantaCruz

Watsonville Wetlands Watch 2018 Docent Training Announced

Community Members are Invited to Attend Training Starting in January

The Watsonville Wetlands Watch will be conducting 2018 Docent Training from January 17 to March 7, 2018. Becoming a docent is a comprehensive option that gives volunteers a broad array of knowledge useful in all of the volunteer positions offered. It is a fun and interesting way to learn about the natural and cultural history of the wetlands from experts. Docent trainees are treated to an inside look at the Pajaro Valley and its wide network of wetlands. Local experts share the ecology, history, and restoration of the wetlands during the 7-week program.

The interactive sessions include Wednesday evening presentations and Saturday morning field trips, visiting sites not normally seen by the public. Join our dedicated team of trained docent volunteers who help with field trips, lead wetland tours, participate in special events, work in the greenhouse and native plant demonstration garden and a whole host of other things. No previous teaching or wetland experience is necessary—beginners are welcome. Come join us—the wetlands are calling! Email ria@watsonvillewetlandswatch.org if interested.

About Watsonville Wetlands Watch

The mission of the Watsonville Wetlands Watch is to protect and restore the land, the waters, and the wildlife of the Pajaro Valley wetlands and adjacent uplands; to educate our youth to value nature and its ecosystems; and to help the public appreciate the unique beauty and importance of this irreplaceable natural treasure. Each year, Watsonville Wetlands Watch's

education programs that serve over 2500 students and partners with many local, state, and federal agencies to restore wetlands and wildlife habitat throughout the Watsonville Slough System.



Pied-billed Grebe - Lisa Larson

For more information
please visit the website at
watsonvillewetlandswatch.org
or visit Watsonville Wetlands
Watch on Facebook and Twitter.

Santa Cruz Birds

By Alex Rinkert

Including reports from September 1 to October 31, 2017



This fall brought the first-county record of Broad-billed Hummingbird that delighted many, as did some widely-viewed rare shorebirds not deterred by high water levels in the Watsonville Slough system in the first half of September. Most winter irruptive species were present, but only Red-breasted Nuthatch and Golden-crowned Kinglet were in moderate abundance this period. Notable this fall was a “fallout” of migrants at Pajaro Dunes in late September; such phenomenon are rarely experienced in the county. Moderate coverage in some areas of the mountains, particularly in Scotts Valley, produced some nice rarities for that area of the county which is so often neglected in fall.



Moderate numbers of **Greater White-fronted** and **Canada Geese** were seen flying over the lowlands of the county throughout this period. Flocks of Greater White-fronts over upper Soquel-San Jose Road on September 30 and October 22 were rare for the mountains (ST). **Cackling Geese**, predominately of the “Aleutian” subspecies *B. h. leucopareia*¹, were present in unprecedented numbers. Over 30 reports were received from along the coast and the Pajaro Valley, with many flocks numbering dozens to over one hundred geese. A flock of 179 flying over Struve Slough on October 22 was a record count for the county (AR, RC), while a flock of 47 passing over upper Soquel-San Jose Road was rare for the mountains (ST). A

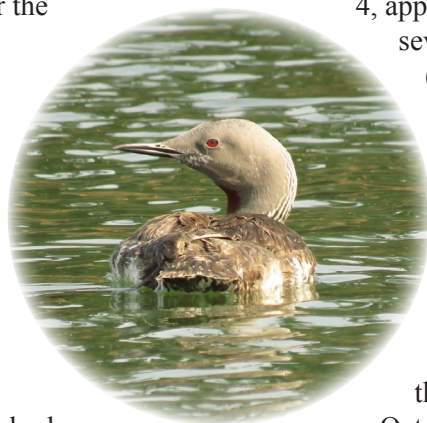
Brant summering near the Pajaro River mouth was last seen on September 23 (MD et al.). Up to 10 **Blue-winged Teal** were at Struve Slough on October 29 (CF, AG).

A **Red-throated Loon** continued to venture up the San Lorenzo River through September 11 (SP). A beach cast

Laysan Albatross found at Waddell SB on October 4, apparently found by BeachCOMBERS² several weeks earlier, was the only one (living or dead) reported this fall (GS). Eight **Flesh-footed Shearwaters** were found on the Monterey Bay this period (SJ, MS). A raft of 190 **Ashy Storm-Petrels** encountered on September 7 contained the only **Black** (3) and **Wilson’s** (1) **Storm-Petrels** this fall (SJ).

A **Pelagic Cormorant** frequented the lower San Lorenzo River between October 1-15 (SP, BRi). While always rare to see off the ocean, the lower San Lorenzo is the only area this species is found off the ocean with some regularity. An **American Bittern** at Antonelli Pond on October 28 was rare away from the Pajaro Valley (DD). A **Cattle Egret** stalked a plowed field near Struve Slough on October 25 (HC).

Many birders enjoyed a rather late brood of **White-tailed Kites** at Natural Bridges SB, with four very recently fledged young first being noted at the park in early October (NU, v.ob.). A



Clockwise from top:
Red -throated Loon - Lisa Larson
White-tailed Kite (juv)- Michael Bolte
Cackling Goose-(Aptos Creek) John Ellis

Ferruginous Hawk soared over Natural Bridges SB on October 3 (AGg), and one present at Swanton Pond by October 5 stayed through the month (CS, v. ob.).

A **Common Gallinule** was at Schwan Lake on September 29 (LL et al.). A Sandhill Crane flying over the upper Westside on September 24 was perhaps blown coastward by eastern winds that blew through the county in late September (MB).

A juvenile **American Golden-Plover** at Struve Slough from September 4-9 was observed by many, and represented one of very few records of this species in the county (NU, v.ob.). A **Ruddy Turnstone** seen at Terrace Point from September 6-9 (SMu, LG, v.ob.).

A **Ruff** at Struve Slough was enjoyed by many birders between September 5-15, the first record in the county since 2011 (RW, RC, v.ob.). Struve Slough also hosted a juvenile **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** on October 8, the 4th record for the county (AR, NL), as well as a **Stilt Sandpiper** from September 5-14 (AR, v. ob.). Only five **Baird's Sandpipers** were found (v.ob.) but one **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was close to par for fall (AG). **Solitary Sandpipers** were at Struve Slough on September 5-9 (RW, LS, v.ob.) and September 23 (HC, MB).

Seven **South Polar Skuas** seen offshore this fall was a slim showing (SJ), but all three species of Mexican murrelets were seen in September with totals of seven **Scripps's**, two **Craveri's**, and two **Guadalupe Murrelets** (SJ). Six **Tufted Puffins** were found on the Monterey Bay this period (SJ, MS). Only a smattering of **Sabine's Gulls** were found offshore, but two reports from land were noteworthy: one at Pajaro Dunes on September 23 (MD



From top:
 American Golden Plover - Pete Solé
 Ruff - Randy Wardle
 Red-breasted Nuthatch - Andy Knorr
 Tropical Kingbird - Lisa Larson

et al.) and one off West Cliff Drive on October 3 (JM).

A **White-winged Dove** was at Struve Slough from October 24-27 (RW, NU, ST). **Long-eared Owls** are rarely encountered in the county so one calling at upper Soquel-San Jose Road on September 27 was noteworthy (ST). Up to 4 **Common Poorwills** were flushed off Mount Madonna Road in the early morning on several days between October 13-27 (JMk). There is little precedence of this species in the county in late fall.

A juvenile **Black Swift** found on the ground at a residence north of Boulder Creek on September 14 was nothing short of remarkable (CF). The swift was not capable of sustained flight so it was taken to a rehab center. Whether it was successfully released is currently unknown.

A **Black-chinned Hummingbird** at Natural Bridges SB on September 25 (STh) brought the fall total to a slim two. The undisputed highlight of this period was an adult male **Broad-billed Hummingbird** visiting a feeder in Santa Cruz from October 20 to November 5 (SH, v.ob.), representing the 1st record for the county. Sheri reports over 200 birders came to see this hovering jewel! An apparent **Nuttall's x Downy Woodpecker** hybrid photographed at Natural Bridges State Beach from September 19-25 represented another 1st record for the county (RW, MB, LJ).

Nine **Willow Flycatchers** were reported this period (v.ob.). Six **Tropical Kingbirds** were found in expected locations along the coast and Pajaro Valley (JM, DSt, RR et al., GK, NL, AR). A **Philadelphia Vireo** seen at Rancho Del Oso from September 29

through October 1 was the 4th record for the county (ST, AG, PS, LG, DS). A **Purple Martin** was at Pajaro Dunes on September 2 (CF) and two were at Pinto Lake CP on September 15 (RW).

Red-breasted Nuthatches were well-reported in the county this period, especially on the mid-county coast, but few remained into November (v.ob.). An **American Dipper** was along the San Lorenzo River at Ben Lomond on September 2 (CS). Sixteen **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were found in the lowlands of the county in October (v.ob.). On October 8 a **Lapland Longspur** landed on a boat in the middle of the Monterey Bay providing the first offshore report of this species in the county (ST, SJ).

Most of the regularly occurring "eastern" warblers were adequately represented this fall. Those found were: 2 **Northern Waterthrushes** (GK, SJ), 3 **Black-and-white Warblers** (DS, GK, AR), 1 **Tennessee Warbler** (CS), 4 **American Redstarts** (SJ, RC, AR, DS), 4 **Chestnut-sided Warblers** (AR, DS, LC, NL), 3 **Blackpoll Warblers** (AG, MD et al., CF), and 1 **Magnolia Warbler** (RC).

"Western" warbler species were found in average to above average numbers. Six **Nashville** and 17 **Palm Warblers** were to be expected (v.ob.), but 3 **Yellow-breasted Chats** exceeded the fall average (JS, PS, STh, LL, HSt, NU, RW, LJ, CS). Of note were at least 38 **Black-throated Gray Warblers** found this period, far exceeding the fall average (v.ob.). A count of 17 **Orange-crowned Warblers** that were part of a fallout at Pajaro Dunes on September 29 was high count for one location in fall (CS). A male **Hooded Warbler** at Rancho Del Oso on October 2 was a nice find (DW), but a **Connecticut Warbler** photographed there on October 22 was even more exciting, providing just the 2nd record for the county (CR, LR).



Photos from top:
Connecticut Warbler - Carole Rose
Green-tailed Towhee - Pete Solé
Yellow-headed Blackbird - Peter Svensson

Grasshopper Sparrows are rare fall migrants in the county, so one at Terrace Point on October 22 was notable (MB). At least eleven **Clay-colored Sparrows** found this period was impressive (v.ob.) One at Scotts Valley High School on September 14 was especially rare in the mountains (AR), while a flock of three at the Homeless Garden from September 11-13 set a record high count at one location (DS, v.ob.). **Brewer's Sparrows** were at Anna Jean Cummings Park on September 24 (AG) and Davenport from October 11-18 (CS, DM, SM, ZM).

Three **Lark Sparrows** were reported this period (CS, ZM, GM, AR, PSv, HS, JS). A "Slate-colored" **Fox Sparrow** was at Pajaro Dunes on October 1 (AG). **Vesper Sparrows** were found at the confluence of Struve and Watsonville Slough on September 16 (AR, AG, BR) and the Homeless Garden on September 25 (AR, NL). Four **Swamp Sparrows** were reported this period, all in expected places except one along the San Lorenzo River in Felton on October 29, a rare find in the mountains (AR).

Quite noteworthy was the discovery of two **Rufous-crowned Sparrows** at Bonny Doon on October 14 (GS). This species is only known to regularly occur near Soda Lake in the southeast corner of the county, and has only been found once away from there, at Chalk Mountain. A **Green-tailed Towhee** visited a backyard in Soquel from October 20-22 (PS, AG, RW, NU).

A **Summer Tanager** was at Natural Bridges SB on September 24 (PS). An immature male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was seen at a feeder near Arana Gulch on October 6 (AW). A **Blue Grosbeak** was near Anna Jean Cummings Park in Soquel on September 23 (EF).



Tricolored Blackbirds do not venture far from the lowlands of the county so three seen at Scotts Valley on September 22 were notable (JS). Two **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** at Scotts Valley High School stayed from September 14-19 (JS, HS, AR), and then another was seen there on September 29 (JS).

Small numbers of **Red Crossbills**, some of which identified as type 3 (AR), were found beginning in mid-September. There were seven reports of **Lawrence's Goldfinches** this period (v.ob.). Four **Evening Grosbeaks** visited a feeder north of Scotts Valley on October 23 were the only ones reported (BM).

Cited Observers: Mike Bolte, Hugo Ceja, Reef Comer, Lucas, Corneliussen, Matthew Dodder, Darren Dowell, Eric Feuss, Craig Fosdick, Aaron Gabbe, Alexander Gaguine (AGg), Lois Goldfrank, Sheri Howe, Lee Jaffe, Shearwater Journeys, Gary Kittleson, Lisa Larson, Nick Levendosky, Jeff Manker (JMk), Samantha Marois, Gary Martindale, Jim Maughn, Dan

Maxwell, Zach Mikalonis, Barbara Monahan, Shirley Murphy (SMu), Christian Schwarz, Gary Strachan, Shantanu Phukan, Bernadette Ramer, Robert Ramer, Alex Rinkert, Barbara Riverwoman (BRi), Carole Rose, Larry Rose, Monterey Seabirds, Lisa Sheridan, David Sidle, Pete Solé, Howard Stephenson (HSt), David Styer (DSt), Hanna Svensson, Jonah Svensson, Peter Svensson (PSv), Scott Terrill, Simon Thornhill (STh), Norman Uyeda, Randy Wardle, Dave Weber, Andrea Welles, "v.ob." means various observers. Please enter interesting observations into eBird or report them to Alex Rinkert at arinkert12@comcast.net.

Footnotes from the Editor:

¹For those of you who are curious and want more information, please see: *Distiguishing Cackling and Canada Goose* (Sibley Guides).

"Aleutian Cackling Goose B. h. leucopareia is a rare goose with a very limited range and few records east of the Sierra-Cascade mountains."

²Read about: **BeachCOMBERs**.

Birds Will Be Birds!

Photography Exhibit

Live Oak Public Library

January 2 - February 2018

foclb.weebly.com



Photos by Keith Angell

Bare Trees - Lisa Larson

Full Report Now Available to Read Online:

Santa Cruz County Breeding Bird Atlas II
Year 1 Summary

By Alex Rinkert

**With contributions from
Simon Thornhill, Analysis
Rusty Scalf, Maps**

At long last the numbers are in from Year 1 of the Santa Cruz County Breeding Bird Atlas II. Overall, we did quite well when compared to the efforts of other atlas projects in the region and are well on our way to complete fieldwork within the next few years. Over 40 atlasers participated in the first year, submitting over 3,000 breeding records! We confirmed breeding for nearly two-thirds of the species known to breed in the county, and already have plans to increase participation and effort in Year 2. **To read the full report, please visit the Santa Cruz Bird Club website: santacruzbirdclub.org.**



*American Kestrel
chicks in nest
- Gail West*



The Ospreys of Harkins Slough

Master photographer, Seraphina Landgrebe, spent five months last year documenting the life of a pair of Ospreys at Harkins Slough. The result is a spectacular photo journal she captured of the Osprey's life. In this presentation, Seraphina will show the beautiful photos she took and talk about her experience observing and photographing the Ospreys.

Seraphina chose to photograph the lives of the Osprey family because of a growing fascination with their nesting activities. The photo journal tells a story of the trials and challenges of rearing a young chick as the Osprey are attacked by Bald Eagles, other Osprey, and harassed by humans. She states: "It was a magical experience to photograph and document nature in action. I created this photo journal to illustrate the beauty of nature and the grace of Ospreys. Only through photography can one see the detailed beauty of their wings and feathers."

Seraphina enjoys sharing her work and teaching others how to photograph birds. Anyone interested in a bird photo class can contact her at 831-462-0718 and visit her website at seraphinalandgrebe.smugmug.com. Visit her Facebook page at Seraphina Landgrebe for more recent Osprey images.

Date: January 23, 2018 **Time:** 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Location:

Fitz WERC located at upper pkg lot at the Pajaro Valley High School, 500 Harkins Slough Road, Watsonville

Attendance is free, but seating is limited so please register early by going to watsonvillewetlandswatch.org



*Birders at Schwan Lake 9/29/17
- Lisa Larson*



Tree-hugging Birders (Left to right)

Margaret Perham, Georgette Neal, Kitty Stein, Sharon Hull,
Mary Crouser, & Rich Griffith

New SCBC Members Welcome!

Jane Simpson	Oct 2017
Margaret Beyer	Oct 2017
Kimlin McDaniel-Keith	Oct 2017
Kimberly Richardson	Oct 2017
Kevin Clark	Oct 2017
Francis Toldi	Oct 2017
Shantanu Phukan	Sep 2017
Eric Feuss	Oct 2017
Carey Ruwe	Oct 2017
Norm Kikuchi &	Oct 2017
Donna Takahashi	Life Membership!
Judith Skenazy	Oct 2017
Sharon Lucchesi	Nov 2017
James Lindsay	Nov 2017

CORRECTIONS from the Editor:

Birder's Notebook feature from
Sep/Oct issue:

Lynda Lewit with a 'y', *not* Linda

Image in Steve Gerow Memorial
heart collage from Sep/Oct issue:

Sue Dumller, *not* Jane Mio

Big Sit article from Nov/Dec issue:
Written by **Shantanu Phukan** and
the photo is **Ray**, *not* Jeff Wall

My sincerest apologies!

Oh the *shame!*
The HORROR!



Great Blue Heron - Lisa Larson

Submissions **NEEDED**



for Mar/Apr Issue

FEB 1, 2018

Birders at Loma Prieta - Sharon Hull



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, birding, or birders
- 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)

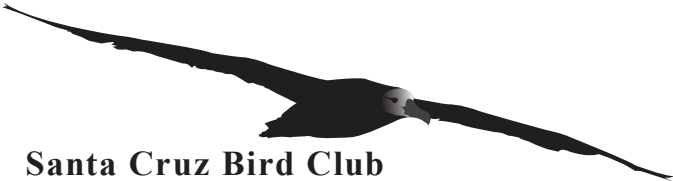
If you wish to submit an article, please contact the editor about it **AT LEAST 2 weeks before** the submission deadline.

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

~Lisa Fay Larson, Editor

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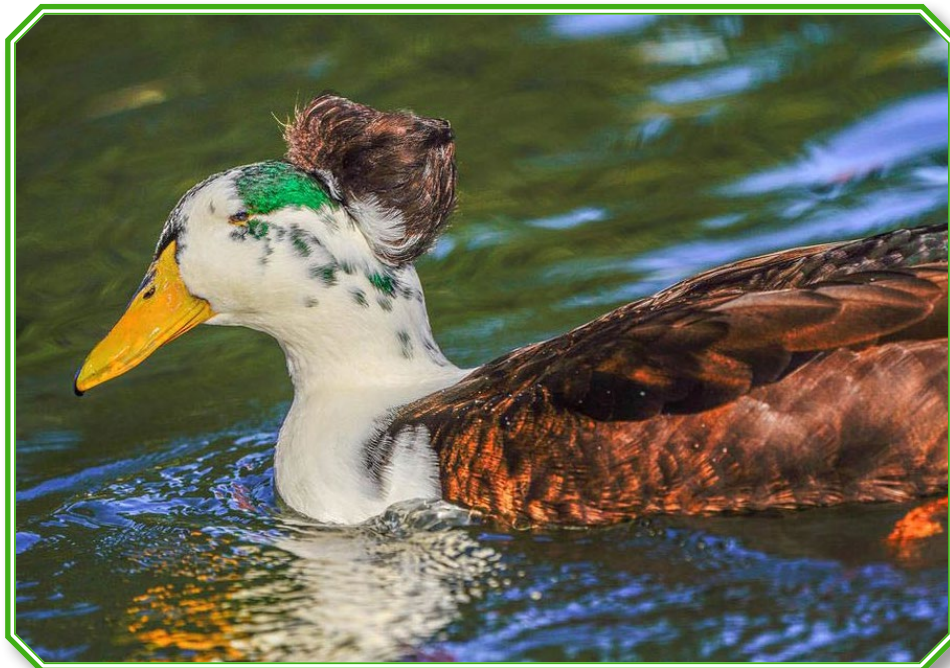
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PARTING SHOT: "DON'T HATE ME BECAUSE I'M BEAUTIFUL"
THE RENOWNED CRESTED DUCK OF WESTLAKE POND (DOMESTIC) - ANDY KNORR



ALBATROSS

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See the online version and past
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santacruzbirdclub.org

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