



Volume 39 Issue 8 Morro Coast Audubon Society

February 2005

Our mission: "To promote the appreciation, conservation and restoration of ecosystems, focusing on the biological diversity of birds, other wildlife, and their habitats, particularly in San Luis Obispo County"

Some Notes from the Audubon State Convention at Stockton in December

Dick Parker and Henry Pontarelli

WHAT ARE THESE NUMBERS?

240K/3700	50K/950	5K/600	200K/5,000
-----/1900	40K/2,000	93K/600	3K/200
2000/650	230K/2000	7K/200	5K/1100
6K/1100	16K/----	20K/2400	6K/570

These numbers are the annual budget and the numbers of members for each of the Chapters who attended the fund raising session at the recent State Convention in Stockton. Nationally there are about 500 chapters and statewide about 50. It looks like MCAS is about the median size in members and budget. There was no attempt to establish the net worth, or breakdown the categories of spending. One of the attendees was from Roseville where they have just settled a lawsuit against some developers. They saved a critical piece of habitat and then they will receive 24 Million dollars over the next 50 years as a half percent tax as the land is developed. The largest chapter must be Los Angeles with 3700 members. They even have their own publishing company. One of the smallest must be Willits in northern Calif. whose representative said that he had all the Audubon stuff in one box in his garage. Of course like some other things, it isn't what you have but what you do with it! I think we do real well with what we have. Below is an account that was given of the SnowyPlover program in Santa Barbara which is of interest because of our own efforts and the efforts of many others in that endeavor.

RESTORING PLOVERS Jennifer Stroh and Darcie Goodman are two graduate students from UC Santa Barbara who presented their Snowy Plover program which Santa Barbara Audubon helped them implement at Coal Oil Point on the beach near the UC SB Campus. Their program was carefully studied and analyzed at every step and heavily interviewed with the public and carefully picked the areas they wanted to rope off for the Plovers before they ever started. The first step was increased awareness of the problem with the general public. Signage, articles in the paper, lectures, leaflets etc. After several years, 90% of the public on the beach can now identify a Snowy plover. Get the public on your side: "We are not trying to close the beach but to figure out ways to keep it open." Their method was labor intensive, almost 100% coverage during the daylight hours with docents. They used the University as a source for docents. They have a color brochure to help recruit docents. They carefully train docents: 2 hour lecture, 2 hour with a current docent, 2 hour tour of the area. Two hours per week are required of the docents. Survivals have gone from 1 in 2001 to 37 in 2004. 100 people have now volunteered to help. Why were they successful? Docent program, Establish Goals with Fish and Wildlife. Modify the original program as necessary.

Disturbances to the nests have been logged for one year, two times a week from 10 am to 2 pm. The number of disturbances per hour or especially the mean time between disturbances are important parameters. They are now down to a disturbance every 43 minutes on week days and 47 minutes on week ends. People disturb some nest 12 times per hour, dogs 3 times per hour and horses 1/2. Get people involved and educate them. Docents explain the plovers to the public loan the use of their spotting scopes and engage them in conversation. Small skunks can defeat the protection given by the wire cages around the nests.

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RARE BIRD ALERT

Morro Coast Audubon	528-7182
Monterey	831 375-9122
Northern California	415 681-7422
Los Angeles/Southern California	323 874-1318
Santa Barbara	964-8240
Pacific wildlife Care	543-WILD

Reporting Marine Mammal Problems

- To report a dead sea otter south of Cambria 772-1135
- To report a dead sea otter north of Cambria 927-3893
- To report a live stranded marine mammal (415) 289-7325

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Electronic Subscription

Morro Coast Audubon Society's newsletter *Pacific Flyway* is available in electronic form as a .PDF file that is distributed by e-mail. You must have an e-mail address and you must have the program Acrobat Reader in order to read it. (If you don't have the program, it is easily downloadable for free.)

The .PDF versions are being archived on the Chapter's Website(see bottom of page). After looking at a .PDF version and if you are a **member of the Audubon Society or otherwise regularly receiving the Flyway in the mail**, and you decide that you wish to no longer receive the printed version, and instead have the PDF version of **each issue** sent to you **automatically** by e-mail, then e-mail Rosalie Valvo at rvalvo@slonet.org *with the name that your Flyway is mailed to*. (Your e-mail address on the message to Rosalie will be used for the electronic subscription). The mailing of the Flyway will be discontinued, but your membership will not be otherwise affected.



Our Website
www.morrocoastaudubon.org

Past issues of the *Flyway* are available at the website
e-mail:morrocoastaudubon.org

MCAS BOARD MEETING

Monday Feb 7 , 2005
6:45 P. M.

The Board Meetings are held at the Los Osos Community Center off of Los Osos Valley Road in Los Osos. All interested members are invited to attend



GENERAL MEETING

Monday, February 21, 2005 – 7:00 PM

The Congregational Church
11245 Los Osos Valley Road
San Luis Obispo

“San Clemente Loggerhead Shrike Recovery Project”

Dr. Eric L Kershner of San Diego
Program Manager for a the Institute for Wildlife Studies

In 1999, the most endangered avian species in the continental USA was the San Clemente Loggerhead Shrike which had dwindled down to 14 individuals. Numbers declined because San Clemente Island is used as a US Navy bombing range as well as habitat degradation by over grazing, and predation by introduced species as well as the endangered Channel Island fox. Learn about on-site captive breeding programs which have increased numbers substantially. This is a must-see event!!!

FORUM: Round table discussion on **Winter Bird Festival** follow-up and suggestions for 2006.

RAFFLE and **REFRESHMENTS** at the end of the program.
Please come and bring a friend to this extraordinary presentation.

Rosemary Flamion, Program Chairperson
For further information, contact Rosemary at 528-8193

BIRDS AT EBB TIDE

Morro Coast Audubon invites visitors and newcomers to our area to come to the Audubon Overlook to enjoy the spectacle. Telescopes, binoculars, and bird field guides are available for your use and Audubon members will be there to help with identification.

Feb 9 at 12:30 pm,
Feb 20 at 11:30 am.

The Overlook is in Baywood Park and can be reached by turning west on Santa Ysabel-the traffic light on South Bay Blvd., then going west to Third Street. Turn right on Third to the end of the street, turn right again onto a short dirt lane to the Overlook parking area.. For further information call 772-1413. Heavy rain cancels! *Gloria Rasmussen*



SECOND SATURDAY AT SWEET SPRINGS 9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon February 12, 2005

The recent heavy rains have caused havoc with the walking trails in the preserve and need a good cleaning. On the positive side the rains have given our struggling oaks and other native plantings a good drink of water. The wild flowers that we planted last fall should be up. Come on out and give the “regulars” a helping hand. In addition to doing a little light maintenance on the trails the weed warriors will remove some exotics such as veldt grass.

Meet at the main entrance to the preserve on the 600 block of Ramona in the community of Los Osos. We’ll do a little birding after wards, rain cancels. For more information contact John at 528-0540.

John Perkins
Chairman, Land Committee

where to start. Somebody willing to help me?
Alan Schmierer aaschmierer@yahoo.com

COMING FIELD TRIPS

FEB 2005 FIELD TRIPS

FEB 5: ESTERO BLUFFS: Leader: Alan Schmierer aaschmierer@yahoo.com OR Tom Edell tedell@aol.com
Meet at 8:00 AM at the southwest corner of the Spencer's Market parking lot (on Main Street, Morro Bay, a few blocks north of the Rte 1 / Rte 41 junction). We will take a leisurely walk, on mostly level trails, along the water's edge looking for a variety of shore and bay birds. Bring scope if you have one. We invite birders of all skill levels. Finish before noon. (Note: There are no formal rest rooms at the destination.)

FEB 19: DINNER AND OWLING: Leader: Jim Royer.
Meet at 4:30 PM for dinner and owling around the San Luis Obispo area. Finish at about 10:00 PM. Wind / rain may cancel. Number limited. Reservations only: call Jim at 528-8933.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Arroyo Grande

December 4 2004

In the morning 16 of us enjoyed birding in the brisk fall air. We had the expected Cassin's Kingbirds along the creek in AG, with good looks thru the scope by us and several interested passers-by. At the Pismo Monarch grove we heard the Summer Tanager several times high in the eucs but did not get any good looks. With patience we got 1 White-throated Sparrow and 1 Lincoln Sparrow along the near edge of the creek. At the mouth of Pismo Creek we had good chances to study a few "peeps" and lots of gulls, but no Herring Gull today.

My thanks to Maggie for her help and for all who showed in making it a fun day of birding!

Alan Schmierer

COMMENTS to the FIELD TRIP CHAIRMAN

I am interested in your input! PLEASE e-mail me.

- Are Saturdays OK? Sundays better? Weekdays?
- In what kind of pelagic trips are you interested? 4 hour? 8? 12? Long ones to deep water? April with better chances for Murphy's and other rare petrels? Late May-early June for same? August for a change-of-pace? Oct-Nov for rare stuff? The usual September trip?
- What other thoughts do you have on field trips?
- I think that we should do field trips for those with disabilities, but I have been intimidated by not knowing

CARRIZO PLAIN CBC

The Jan. 1, 2005, Carrizo Plain CBC final count was 60 species. We were fortunate to have cooperating weather conditions but some of the roads were impassable. A total of 28 observers formed into 10 parties and did a thorough birding census of the Carrizo count circle. There was water in Soda Lake. In the lake were American Wigeons and American Avocets. Three small groups of Sandhill Cranes were separately spotted. Others worth mentioning included 125 Mountain Plovers, 2 Burrowing Owls, 1 Short-eared Owl, 1 Rough-legged Hawk(CW), and 2 Le Conte's Thrashers(southeast corner).

I really appreciated everyone's help---the count was a real success! Next Carrizo CBC will be on December 31, 2005. See you there. By the way, if you would like a complete list of species and numbers---let me know. I'll email you one at the end of the week.

Roger Zachary
Carrizo Plain CBC Compiler



To Our Newest Members

Avila Beach

Adrienne Peterson

Arroyo Grande

Ashley Barnes

Lionel Lerner

Barbara E. O Donnell

Gary Thies

Michelle Fulton

Mr. & Mrs. Scott Page

Corina Kimball

Cambria

Chris Jones

Michael Kenny

Barbara Wilson

Marjorie Fuchs

Grover Beach

Jim Kolozy

Los Osos

W.A. Greene

David A Sprague

Judith Brucher

Judy Copeland

Lovelei Egli

Paula Nunson

Donna Vrooman

Jan Harper

Morro Bay

Reah E Walker

Virgina Bailey

Nipomo

Eugene Debellis

Darlene Hagadus

Fay and Randy Huffman

Charles Stock

Pismo Beach

Larry Spiegel

Phillip Theodosia

Betty Stubblefield

Anthony Vallone

San Luis Obispo

Ann Spence

Colleen Dickenson

Kathryn Engle

Allison Jones

John Krieshok

Dennis-Charles Oderkirk

Brain Roberts

Chrole Wheeler

Rosemary and Cal

Wilvert

Dale Kleinfelter

Pat and Bonnie McKim

Carol McFee Norton

Bruce and Holly Ragsdale

Shell Beach

Nancy and Ben Gilmore

******* DONATIONS*******

The Morro Coast Audubon Society would like to thank the following for contributions received recently.

MCAS Support/General Fund:

From: **Renee Heller Carolyn Robison Anne Spence Alan Schmierer
Kristi0n Miller Harry & Mrs.Tow Steve Jobst Dave Richardson
Dan Rose(car donation proceeds)**

MCAS Memorial Fund:

In memory of **Grace Lang**
From: **Nancy &John Severson**

In memory of**David Roark**

From: **Sherri Gooding Joanna Frawley Joe &Joanne Kleiman
Richard Parker Dominic &Christine Perello**

In Memory of**Josephine Parham**

From: **Dominic &Christine Perello Joanna Frawley**

MCAS Nancy VaughanMemorial Scholarship Fund:

From: **Tom Vaughan**

If you would like to contribute to one of our funds (like Hi MtnCondor Project, Education), please send your check payable to Morro Coast Audubon Society, PO Box 160, Morro Bay, CA 93443-0160. All donations are tax deductible under IRS Code 501(c)(3). THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

Conservation Corner

Dominic Perello

Your Conservation Chair and Committee have two basic responsibilities to the Chair of MCAS and to you, the members. First is to watch for opportunities to protect, enhance, diversify and expand the bird habitat in our area. Our second task is to be aware of any and all issues that would improve bird habitat or bird life and attempt to insure that MCAS did all it possibly could to insure the successful fruition of that issue or those issues; the corollary of course is to be aware of issues that would damage bird life or bird habitat and insure that MCAS does all in its power to prevent these from occurring.

None of this can happen successfully unless we have maximum cooperation from all our members and from our fellow conservation organizations. This means you. If you are aware of any issues that MCAS should be active in pursuing, please email me (dperello@calpoly.edu) or call me at 543-9085 with as much detail as possible.

If any of you has a few hours per month to spend on such issues please join our Conservation Committee. The tasks may include attending meetings, writing letters to decision-makers, or actually working in the field on bird habitat. We belong to you, but are only as effective as your effort to work with us.



*** Gifts of Lasting Support ***

Remembering the Morro Coast Audubon Society (MCAS) in your will or living trust is a thoughtful way to help our chapter continue its programs in habitat conservation and children's environmental education.

Amendments to existing wills and to revocable living trusts can easily be accomplished by an attorney. Bequests of specific dollar amounts or a percentage of your estate can be included in your plans.

The opportunity to leave a lasting gift to MCAS is most needed in the General Fund, where a future Board of Directors could decide how best to use your special gift.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

For more information contact Richard Parker
528-8272 rsparkkp47@aol.com



HI-LIGHTS from DECEMBER 4, 2004 BOARD MEETING

Attending Dominic Perello, John Perkins, Jim Havlena, Henry Pontarelli, Al Schmierer, Linda Tanner, Dick Parker, Kara Hagedorn, Rosemary Flamion, Ted Pope, Dick Boyd, Steph Wald, Mary Adam

State Audubon Meeting in Stockton - Henry and Dick. They divided and conquered to attend as many sessions as possible and managed to get to all but 2 or 3. Dick presented info about the plover program in Santa Barbara and fundraising which are attached to the end of the minutes. Henry reviewed his hand-out on points from State Assembly. Overall point he derived was the need to diversify on all levels of the organization. Dom volunteered to excerpt Audubon Action Network piece that Henry provided. Presenters were impressive overall.

Black Lake Bird Count - Henry reviewed the basics of what the Land Conservancy was requesting for a project in Black Lake regarding restoration, using bird counts as a method of evaluating success. Mary suggested a pre-project point count. Alan suggested a breeding and wintering survey. Mary volunteered to help and be the point of contact with the project if it is carried out scientifically.

Computer and projector for MCAS - Henry indicated that there appears to be a growing need for a projector that will allow use of power point presentations. He researched costs and specifications. Suggestions for borrowing a unit included Bird Festival and RWQCB or to have meetings at locations that had equipment available such as the Natural History Museum. **Mary proposed** that MCAS purchase a unit not to exceed \$2,000 including microphone. Henry will check sources for such. **Proposal passed.**

Fourth Street Overlook Improvements—Henry met with NEP folks and Friends of the Estuary and Wendy Thackery. They talked about funds for signage from NEP and money for wheelchair access/walkway, CCCs to remove exotics and revegetate. Jim suggested that structure could use some attention.

Treasurer's Report—Jim's last board meeting will be January (Havlena's are moving). Funds have come in from National. Contributions in for Dave and Jo Parham memorials. Nancy Vaughn scholarship has been funded by her husband Tom (accounted with Sweet Springs account).

Program/Publicity—. Rosemary suggested having a forum at the general meeting to discuss how the Bird

Festival went. There was discussion on asking speakers to keep presentation to one hour. Quilt raffle will happen in association with Bird Festival booth. Linda reviewed what will be in the MCAS booth at the festival.

Field Trips—Alan indicated that the CBC is not in his hands. The Arroyo Grande trip had 16 people which Alan led. Alan suggested placing items for sale as an exchange of information venue for bird related items in the Flyway.

Conservation—Dom went to CNPS meeting and asked Dave Chipping what issues they are involved in that involve MCAS. He will follow up. Has old Audubon magazines from Kathleen Jones. For Rosemary, perhaps.

Membership—Mary indicated that there are 677 paid members and 12 Flyway only subscriptions. MCAS will be in the Santa Lucia newsletter and the NEP Turning the Tide newsletter.

Education—Kara met with Katie Gordon and Dr. V. on project specifications for pelagic trip. Kara also met with Dean (?), Tom Edell and Katie on boat choices. They determined that CDFG boat won't work for monthly trips.

They are going to try out the Patriot out of Port San Luis this month. MCAS trips could use boat out of Morro Bay.

Birding Trail Brochures - Ted Pope indicated that \$900 has been awarded by the County Board of Supervisors to be combined with funds from MCAS and Wild Birds Unlimited for 5000 brochures. Jim suggested to spend the funds out of the general fund now and reimburse the fund when money comes from the County. **Dom proposed** that action. **Passed.** Total cost is \$1,860. The brochures had been given away in the past. Dick indicated that application to the county for funds didn't indicate they'd be sold. Dick carried the ball on request from Supervisors.

Lands—John indicated that wildflower seed planting and weed pulling would be on the schedule for second Saturday coming up. A tree swallow box from CalPoly student was mounted. Discussed having a common water bird sign or NO BOATS, BIRDS ONLY.

Communications—Dick Boyd now can submit Flyway electronically in a form for printing that allows half-tone reproduction and thus improves B&W photos. Web edition is in color.

Absrtacted by the Flyway from the minutes of Stephanie Wald

2004 Morro Bay Christmas Bird Count Totals

This year marked the 51st year of the Morro Bay Christmas Bird Count. Thanks to the 89 volunteers that contributed to the success of the 2004 count. A special thanks to Bert and Elaine Townsend who coordinated the count, and the sector leaders, Alan Schmierer, Mike Stiles, Jim Royer, and Bill Bouton for organizing the participants. There were approximately 36 parties covering the count circle this year. Together the parties spent 56 hours driving 192 miles, 204 hours walking 116 miles, 9 hours boating and kayaking 15 miles, 1 hour bicycling 3 miles, and 12 hours and 16 miles owling (foot & car). The count total of 50,558 individuals was 2,731 greater than the average of the past 23 years and the count total of 198 species was one shy of the 23 year average. Eurasian Green-winged Teal (count week), Bald Eagle and California Condor (count week) were new for the count and bring the cumulative (1948-2003) species count total to 310 species.

Greater White-fronted Goose – 1	Black-vented Shearwater – 763	Wandering Tattler - CW
Snow Goose – 5	Shearwater species – 25	Spotted Sandpiper – 5
Ross’s Goose – 18	American White Pelican – 116	Whimbrel – 43
Brant – 2951	Brown Pelican – 255	Long-billed Curlew – 326
Canada Goose – 150	Brandt’s Cormorant – 682	Marbled Godwit – 1074
Cackling Goose – 4	Double-crested Cormorant – 562	Black Turnstone – 10
Gadwall – 7	Pelagic Cormorant – 249	Surfbird – 12
Eurasian Wigeon – 4	American Bittern – CW	Red Knot – 8
American Wigeon – 996	Great Blue Heron – 70	Sanderling – 689
Mallard – 315	Great Egret – 80	Western Sandpiper – 716
Blue-winged Teal – 62	Snowy Egret – 80	Least Sandpiper – 4146
Cinnamon Teal – 72	Green Heron – CW	peep sp. – 220
Northern Shoveler – 916	Black-crwned Night Heron – 39	Short-billed Dowitcher – 10
Northern Pintail – 1258	Turkey Vulture – 389	Long-billed Dowitcher – 56
Green-winged Teal – 2031	California Condor – CW	dowitcher sp. – 293
Eurasian Green-winged Teal – CW	Osprey – 1	Wilson’s Snipe – 13
Canvasback – 1	White-tailed Kite – 21	Pomarine Jaeger – 1
Ring-necked Duck – 34	Bald Eagle – 1 immature	Bonaparte’s Gull – 266
Greater Scaup – 3	Northern Harrier – 16	Heermann’s Gull – 313
Lesser Scaup – 920	Sharp-shinned Hawk – 13	Mew Gull – 139
Surf Scoter – 1160	Cooper’s Hawk – 12	Ring-billed Gull – 354
White-winged Scoter – 1	Accipiter sp. – 6	California Gull – 387
Scoter sp. – 1200	Red-shouldered Hawk – 42	Herring Gull – 5
Long-tailed Duck - 1	Red-tailed Hawk – 125	Thayer’s Gull – 1
Bufflehead – 506	Ferruginous Hawk – 6	Western Gull – 646
Hooded Merganser - CW	Golden Eagle – 10 (8 adults)	Glaucous-winged Gull – 4
Red-breasted Merganser – 25	American Kestrel – 111	Caspian Tern – 42
Ruddy Duck – 243	Merlin – 6	Royal Tern – 25
Wild Turkey – 35	Peregrine Falcon – 7	Forster’s Tern – 105
California Quail – 483	Prairie Falcon – 5	Common Murre – 2
Red-throated Loon – 4	Virginia Rail – 3	Rhinoceros Auklet – 2
Pacific Loon – 160	Sora – 8	alcid sp. - 2
Common Loon – 66	Common Moorhen – 1	Rock Pigeon - 195
Loon sp. – 31	American Coot – 1054	Band-tailed Pigeon – 13
Pied-billed Grebe – 46	Black-bellied Plover – 362	Eurasian Collared Dove – 76
Horned Grebe – 12	Snowy Plover – 79	Mourning Dove – 445
Red-necked Grebe – 1	Semipalmated Plover – 88	Greater Roadrunner – 1
Eared Grebe – 75	Killdeer – 131	Barn Owl – 8
Western Grebe – 15	Black Oystercatcher – 22	Western Screech-Owl – 19
Clark’s Grebe – 1	American Avocet – 227	Great Horned Owl – 29
Clark’s/Western Grebe – 47	Greater Yellowlegs – 16	Burrowing Owl – 2
Pink-footed Shearwater – 20	Willet – 689	Spotted Owl – 7

Long-eared Owl – 2
Short-eared Owl – 3
Common Poorwill – 1
White-throated Swift – 85
Anna’s Hummingbird – 359
Selasphorus sp. – 1
Belted Kingfisher – 11
Acorn Woodpecker – 30
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker – 2
Red-naped Sapsucker – 2
Red-breasted Sapsucker – 5
Nuttall’s Woodpecker – 38
Downy Woodpecker – 17
Hairy Woodpecker – 15
Northern (R-s) Flicker – 130
Northern (Y-s) Flicker – CW
Black Phoebe – 178
Eastern Phoebe – 1
Say’s Phoebe – 125
Cassin’s Kingbird – 7
Loggerheaded Shrike – 30
Hutton’s Vireo – 54
Steller’s Jay – 37
Western Scrub-Jay – 357
Yellow-billed Magpie – 2
American Crow – 1418
Horned Lark – 30
Tree Swallow – 11
Violet-green Swallow – CW
Barn Swallow – 4
Chestnut-sided Chickadee – 196

Oak Titmouse – 23
Bushtit – 689
Red-breasted Nuthatch – 32
White-breasted Nuthatch – 5
Brown Creeper – 2
Rock Wren – 12
Canyon Wren – 1
Bewick’s Wren -122
House Wren – 12
Winter Wren – 2
Marsh Wren – 9
Ruby-crowned Kinglet – 491
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher – 17
Western Bluebird – 200
Hermit Thrush – 106
American Robin – 146
Wrentit – 207
Northern Mockingbird – 92
California Thrasher – 73
European Starling – 2388
American Pipit – 495
Cedar Waxwing – 34
Orange-crowned Warbler – 14
Nashville Warbler – 1
Yellow-rumped Warbler – 332
 Y-r (Aud) Warbler– 1144
 Y-r (Myrt) Warbler – 127
Palm Warbler – 1
Black-and-white Warbler – 1
Common Yellowthroat – 64
Wilson’s Warbler – 3

Spotted Sandpiper – 127
California Towhee – 196
Rufous-crowned Sparrow - 10
Chipping Sparrow – 1
Lark Sparrow – 18
Sage Sparrow – 11
Savannah Sparrow – 50
Savannah (Lrg-billed) - CW
Nelsons Sharp-tailed Spw – CW
Fox Sparrow – 78
Song Sparrow – 175
Lincoln’s Sparrow – 55
Swamp Sparrow – 1
White-throated Sparrow – 3
White-crwned Sparrow – 1942
Golden-crwned Sparrow – 816
Dark-eyed Junco – 195
Red-winged Blackbird – 1283
Tricolored Blackbird – 15
Western Meadowlark – 664
Brewer’s Blackbird – 1389
Brown-headed Cowbird - 760
Purple Finch – 60
House Finch – 1045
Pine Siskin – 51
Lesser Goldfinch – 304
American Goldfinch – 209
House Sparrow – 130
Nutmeg Mannikin - 12

Eureka!

THE BIRDS OF SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY – November/December 2004

- Red-necked Grebe – Above average numbers this year. 7-8 Nov three off Shamel Park in Cambria (TME), 11 Dec one off Spooners Cove (MDS), and 18-20 Dec one near the Morro Bay SP Marina (AFS)
- Black-vented Shearwater – Good numbers were present along the coast as indicated by the following counts: 19 Nov, ~40 off the Santa Maria River Mouth (MB), 26 Nov, 2-3000 off Montana de Oro SP (TME), and 13 Dec, 281 on Estero Bay (TME,BKS,BAB)
- Flesh-footed Shearwater -- 13 Dec, one on Estero Bay provided the county's first December record (BKS)
- Pink-footed Shearwater -- 13 Dec, rare in winter, four were on Estero Bay (BKS)
- California Condor – 17 Dec, adult was seen flying over west Cuesta Ridge (MT)
- Greater White-fronted Goose – 8 Nov, one at Santa Rosa Creek (AFS); 20 Nov-18 Dec, one at Laguna Lake (DC, mob)
- Snow Goose – 3 Nov, immature in a field south of Route 33 in the Cuyama Valley (AFS); 13-18 Dec, two on the Morro Bay Estuary (AFS); 16 Dec, one at Laguna Lake (AFS)
- Ross's Goose – 8-18 Dec, 12 at the back of Laguna Lake (MDS)
- Snow/Ross's Goose – 1 Dec, four white geese flew from the Cloisters Pond in Morro Bay (CE)
- Cackling Goose – 3 Nov-18 Dec, up to six on Laguna Lake (TME,mob); 9 Nov, one at Pismo Creek mouth (BKS)
- Eurasian Wigeon – 12 Nov-31 Dec, a high of two males was reported on Morro Bay (mob)
- Blue-winged Teal – 20 Nov-31 Dec, a single male was on Morro Bay on the 20 Nov (DC) increased to 62 males and females on 29 Dec (BAB); 17 Dec, a male and female were on Oso Flaco Lake (JMC)
- Green-winged Teal – 20 Dec, a Eurasian race male was photographed off the Audubon Overlook on Morro Bay (AFS)
- Harlequin Duck – 28 Nov, adult male at the Estero Bluffs property north of Cayucos (TME) is presumed to be the same bird that wintered there last year, and may be the same male seen off Atascadero Point 21-24 Dec (BTM)
- Black Scoter – 13 Nov-12 Dec, a female was off the Port San Luis Pier (TME); 21 Nov-24 Dec, one female was off Atascadero Point (north Morro Bay) with two on the later date (TME)
- Long-tailed Duck – 11-19 Dec, one was off the Morro Bay Harbor mouth (fide BTM, JL)
- Common Moorhen – 14 Nov, a juvenile was at the mouth of Arroyo Grande Creek (RHZ)
- Mountain Plover – 4 Nov, 104+ on the west side of Soda Lake Road along Simmler Road (AFS) with lesser numbers seen later in Nov and Dec (mob)
- Wandering Tattler – 7 Nov, one at Montana de Oro SP (AFS) and another there 17 Dec (RF) were the only reports
- Red Phalarope – 8 Nov, one on a sandy beach along the Estero bluffs (AFS) was the only report
- Franklin's Gull – 12-21 Nov, a first winter bird was at Laguna Lake (MB)
- Thayer's Gull – 30 Nov-18 Dec, two first winter birds at Laguna Lake (TME); 9 Dec, a first winter bird at the mouth of Pismo Beach (BKS); and 12 Dec, one was seen at Spooners Cove (AFS)
- Glaucous Gull – 9-27 Nov, a first winter bird was in Baywood Cove, Los Osos (LT)
- Elegant Tern – late dates: 9 Dec, one at Pismo Creek (BKS); 12 Dec, one at Old Creek in Cayucos (TME)
- Pigeon Guillemot – 18-28 Nov, two first winter birds inside the Morro Bay Harbor were late (MLS)
- Marbled Murrelet – 28 Nov, one flew by the Estero Bluffs (JSR); 4 Dec, one was off Spooner's Cove, Montana de Oro SP (TME); and 13 Dec, one offshore north of Cayucos (BKS)
- Ancient Murrelet – 1-6 Dec, up to four were seen off Montana de Oro SP (MD, TME, AFS)
- White-winged Dove – 12 Nov, one was on 5th Street in Los Osos (KAH)
- Long-eared Owl – 1-2 Nov, two were at a ranch on the southern end of the Carrizo National Monument (KS) and on 1 Dec, 12 to 15 owls seen on the south Chimineas Ranch were most likely this species (DGH)
- Broad-billed Hummingbird** – 5-12 Nov, a male at a feeder in Arroyo Grande (CL) provided the 2nd county record.
- Vaux's Swift – 10 Nov, a small, all dark swift seen over Cerro Alto Road was most likely this species (MDH)
- Lewis's Woodpecker – 26 Nov-20 Dec, up to two were four miles out of Santa Margarita toward Pozo (DML)
- Yellow-bellied Sapsucker – 13 Nov-18 Dec, a female continued in front of the Cal Poly Library (mob); 18-20 Dec, a juvenile was found in an elm tree in Morro Bay (BKS)
- Red-naped Sapsucker – 10-21 Dec, a male was at El Chorro Regional Park (TME); 18-19 Dec, a male was on the east side of Cerro San Luis above the south end of Hill Street (CL)
- Northern Flicker – 8 Dec, a yellow-shafted race bird was on the Nipomo Mesa (MDS)
- Eastern Phoebe** – 3-24 Dec, one wintering at Camp San Luis Obispo (AFS) provided the 13th county record
- Cassin's Kingbird – winter numbers continue to increase: 9 Nov-21 Dec, one was along Arroyo Grande Creek in the "Village" with 14 there on the later date (BKS); others were reported between 10 Nov-18 Dec at Montana de Oro SP (SCS), Los Oso (JSR), Cal Poly (MDS); Nipomo Mesa (MDS); and Camp San Luis (DR)
- American Crow – 28 Nov, two flocks totaling 50 birds were in the Cuyama Valley where they are quite rare (DC)

Barn Swallow – single birds were over Oso Flaco Lake on 28 Nov (MLS) and 17 Dec (JMC)
 Pygmy Nuthatches – 11 Dec, several were heard in the pines on Black Hill, Morro Bay SP (AFS)
 Le Conte’s Thrasher – 17 Nov, five were on the Carrizo Plain (AFS)
 Nashville Warbler – 8 Dec, one at the Pismo Monarch Reserve (JL); 24 Dec, one at Oceano SP Campground (MM)
 Hermit Warbler – 14-24 Dec, first fall male in the Oceano SP Campground (BKS)
 Palm Warbler – 7 Nov, one was at the mouth of Cayucos Creek (TME)
 Vesper Sparrow – 8 Nov, rare on the coast, one was along the Estero Bluffs north of Cayucos (AFS)
 Summer Tanager – 30 Nov-4 Dec, a female on Meadow Creek at the Pismo SB Monarch Grove (RHZ)
 Nelson’s Sharp-tailed Sparrow – 12 Nov-21 Dec, one was across from the Morro Bay SP Marina (mob)
 Savannah Sparrow – 11 Nov-17 Dec, up to three “large-billed” types across from the Morro Bay SP Marina (mob)
 Swamp Sparrow – 17-24 Dec, one near the start of the Oso Flaco Lake boardwalk (JMC)
 White-throated Sparrow – six reported between 2 Nov and 21 Dec at Spooners Cove Campground (AFS), Atascadero (RHZ),
 Pismo Monarch Preserve (AFS), Arroyo Grande (MB), and Morro Bay SP (AFS)
 White-Throated X Golden-Crowned Sparrow – 11 Nov+, bird that wintered in upper Deer Canyon last year returned (BKS)
 White-crowned Sparrow – 13 Nov, partial albino at the San Simeon Cove picnic area returned for 2nd winter (RHZ)
 Rose-breasted Grosbeak – 6 Nov, male at a feeder off San Marcos Road San Miguel (DCol)
 Black-headed Grosbeak – mid-Nov to 2 Dec, a late transient was at a feeder in Los Osos (LT)

Exotics/Escapees reported:

Mute Swan – 23 Nov, four on Atascadero Lake (MDH)
 Ringed Turtle Dove – 7 Nov, one with about 15 Eurasian Collared Doves at the Cayucos Creek mouth (TME)
 Nutmeg Mannikins – 14 Nov-18 Dec, up to 12 at the Audubon Overlook (BT)

OBSERVERS: Thanks to the many birders that report their sightings. The following people are cited above: Jackie Allison, Mick Bondello, Bill A. Bouton, Mark Brown, Jamie M. Chavez, Danielle Collins(DCol), Dave Compton, Mitch Dallas, Chris Edell, Tom M. Edell, Rosemary Flamion, Dave G. Hacker, Dave M. Lawrence, Cheryl Lish, Jim Lomax, Bob T. Maytum, Michael McQuerry, Dave Richardson, Jim S. Royer, Ron M. Ruppert, Alan F. Schmierer, Brad K. Schram, Steve C. Schubert, Kathy Sharum, Gregory P. Smith, Maggie L. Smith, Mike D. Stiles, Linda Tanner, Bonnie Thompson, Mike Tyner, Roger H. Zachary, and many observers (mob). For information about birds or locations mentioned in this report, contact Tom Edell at (805) 995-1691 or tedell@aol.com....
Tom Edell



Photo Dick Boyd

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