

Field Notes

(October-November 2017)

by Pete Dunten

Geese through Hawks

On 1 Oct **Greater White-fronted Geese** were on the move down the bay, with 167 passing over Alviso in groups of up to 45 geese (MMR, MJM, RJ). Smaller numbers were found later in the period, with a single goose at Los Gatos Creek CP on 7 Oct (KB), two at Byxbee Park on 13 Oct (WGB), and ten at Don Edwards NWR on 16 Nov (AR). The first fall sighting of **Cackling Geese** was on 1 Oct, when two were seen over Alviso with a group of Greater White-fronted Geese (MJM, MMR, RJ). Groups of up to six were found at several locations later in the period (m. ob.). The high count was a flock of 36 over Shoreline Lake on 18 Nov (DSu). The first **Snow Goose** of winter was over Morgan Hill on 25 and 26 Nov (SCR), presumably on its way to and from Anderson Reservoir. A hybrid **Blue-winged x Cinnamon Teal** was at Mallard Slough on 28 Nov (GL), and photos suggest it is the same individual that has been seen periodically since 2013 (MJM). Another hybrid, a **Northern Shoveler x Cinnamon Teal**, was found along the entrance to Don Edwards NWR beginning on 10 Nov (STu). A few **Eurasian Green-winged Teal** winter in the South Bay; the first to arrive this fall was one at Charleston Slough on 22 Nov (KaH). Numbers of wintering **Redhead** have been increasing since the late 1990's, and counts of 1500 on Alviso Salt Pond A14 on 31 Oct and 1448 on Pond A1 were encouraging (both AR). A male **Common x Barrow's Goldeneye** returned to Los Capitancillos Ponds for its eleventh winter on 15 Nov (AvE). A **Common Loon** frequented Los Capitancillos Ponds between 8 Nov (EvM) and 22 Nov (STu, m. ob.). Two loons, unidentified to species, were on Lexington Reservoir on 27 Nov (CF). The first **American Bittern** reported was one at Sunnyvale WPCP on 28 Oct (GL et al.). Another was at Mayfield Slough on 18 Nov (DSu). An evening roost of **White-tailed Kites** outside Gilroy hosted an impressive total of 37 kites on 28 Oct, and 35 on 2 Nov (SBr). A **Zone-tailed Hawk** over Laguna Ave in Coyote Valley on 12 Nov (STu) was the second record for the county. Both have been in the first half of November. A **Swainson's Hawk** was over Coyote Creek Field Station (CCFS)

on 22 Nov (DWN). There are fewer than ten November records of Swainson's Hawk, and none in December. **Ferruginous Hawks** were not reported until 5 Nov this year, when one was found along Jamieson Rd in the south county (WP, KON). Two were seen in Coyote Valley, their favored wintering grounds, on 12 Nov (SCR).

Shorebirds through Woodpeckers

Seven **Red Knots** were at the mouth of Stevens Creek on 1 Oct (MMR, MJM, RJ), and one was at Palo Alto Baylands on 29 Oct (LSe). Though the high count of Red Knots in most years since the early 1980's has been in fall, this year and last their numbers peaked in early June. A **Stilt Sandpiper** was found in New Chicago Marsh on 1 Nov (WGB); the last migrants passed through the county in the first two weeks of November. A **Ruff** arrived at New Chicago Marsh on 4 Nov (DN) and remained through the end of the month (m. ob.). A single **Red Phalarope** stopped at Gilroy SCRWA from 12 – 13 Oct (MJM, DN). Red Phalaropes are found about one year in two in our inland county.

communications Hill in San Jose on 6 Nov (RSh). **Lewis's Woodpeckers** are resident in San Antonio Valley, and also occur in other parts of the county in some winters. Three to four have been seen at Chesbro Reservoir beginning on 21 Oct (JPa) and continuing through November (m. ob.). While the majority of our wintering sapsuckers are Red-breasted Sapsuckers, Red-naped, Yellow-bellied, and various hybrid sapsuckers do occur. A **Red-naped Sapsucker** was found in Santa Clara on 24 Nov (CVR), another was found in Morgan Hill on 26 Nov (SCR), and a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was noted in the Hunting Hollow portion of Henry Coe SP on 6 Nov (NS). **Yellow-shafted Flickers**, found here only in winter, were found at three locations. One was along Guadalupe River below Trimble on 21 Oct (SCR), one in Los Gatos beginning on 20 Oct (KB), and one at Ulistac NA beginning on 4 Nov (SJ, PB). A **Pileated Woodpecker** in Henry Coe SP in the Diablo Mountains on 3 Oct was outside the woodpecker's known breeding range, which maps further west in the Santa Cruz Mountains (JY, AL).



Ruff by Louise Liou

A **Sabine's Gull** was a nice find on 30 Oct over a closed refuge pond (MXT, ES). The latest reports of **Elegant Terns** were from the end of October. On 29 Oct, 26 Elegant Terns were tallied at Ponds A3W, A2E, and a nearby closed refuge levee (MJM, MMR). On 31 Oct, ten Elegant Terns were over Alviso Salt Pond A14 (AR). Last year, double-digit numbers were found at the end of November, and a single Elegant Tern remained into the first week of December. The first **Short-eared Owl** of winter, and the only to date, was one on Com-

Flycatchers through Wood-Warblers

At the tail-end of fall migration in October, a **Pacific-slope Flycatcher** was found in Belgatos Park on 15 Oct (EvM), and a **Willow Flycatcher** was at Ulistac NA on 7 Oct (MSm). A **Tropical Kingbird** stopped at the riparian section of Adobe Creek near Charleston Slough between 24 and 25 Oct (WP, EvM). They are found one in every three years, on average. **House Wrens** that might stay for winter were at CCFS as late as 15 Nov (AR), Stevens Creek below Crittenden as late as 27 Nov (WGB), and Ulistac

Field Notes *cont'd*

NA as late as 30 Nov (ChJ). **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** that might stay over winter included one at Chesbro Reservoir on 14 Nov (JPa), two below Anderson Dam on 17 Nov (TE, HE), and two at Santa Teresa CP through the end of November (JRy). **Golden-crowned Kinglets** have been found in October each of the last five years at Sunnyvale Baylands; this fall three were present on 21 Oct (PKe) and two on 2 Nov (CWf). **Phainopeplas** were widespread west of the Diablo Range, with reports from six locations in October and November. The earliest report was of one at Oka Ponds on 8 Oct (KH). One returned to Guadalupe Oak Grove Park on 2 Nov (JPa). This is the third winter in a row Phainopeplas have been in the park, and 2 Nov is the earliest arrival date. A **Lapland Longspur** at Moffett Field was a nice find on 29 Nov (SP, BrS). A **MacGillivray's Warbler** was found along Stevens Creek between Crittenden and La Avenida on 14 Oct (SCR); this is the latest date on record for a migrant. A **Yellow Warbler** at Don Edwards EEC on 5 Nov may be staying for winter (LL). A **Black-throated Blue Warbler** at SCVWD was the sixth county record, and was found on 14 Oct (EvM) and stayed through 17 Oct (m. ob.). A **Blackpoll** stopped at Ulistac NA between 6 Oct (RWR) and 9 Oct (m. ob.). One **Palm Warbler** was at Sunnyvale WPCP on 22 Oct (MJM, PKe) and two were found in New Chicago Marsh beginning on 28 Oct (RJ, MJM). At least one of the latter stayed through 6 Nov (WGB, BB). Two **Black-throated Gray Warblers** were reported in November, one on Graystone Lane along Alamos Creek in Almaden Valley on 10 Nov (JPa) and one at Sunnyvale WPCP on 15 Nov (fide eBird). The only **Hermit Warbler** found during the period was one at Sunnyvale Baylands on 1 Oct (PKe). A **Wilson's Warbler** along Guadalupe River below Blossom Hill Rd on 4 Nov was staying rather late in the year (JPa).

Sparrows through Evening Grosbeak

A migrant **Clay-colored Sparrow** stopped at Ulistac NA on 7 Oct (MSm). **Chipping Sparrows** were found at four locations in the valley, with a high count of three at TJ Martin Park in San Jose on 30 Nov (JPa). Two were along Guadalupe River below Trimble on 21 Oct (SCR), one was at Cuesta Park in Mountain View on 29 and 30 Oct (GL,

GZ), and two were at Guadalupe Oak Grove Park beginning on 2 Nov (JPa). A **Slate-colored Fox Sparrow** was at Stile Ranch trailhead in Santa Teresa CP on 20 Oct (JPa). A few **Song Spar-**

rows each winter are obviously different in appearance when compared to local populations. A Morphna type from the Pacific Northwest was found on 21 Oct along Guadalupe River below Trimble (SCR). The first **Swamp Sparrow** to arrive for winter was found along Adobe Creek on 14 Oct (TM) and seen again on 25 Nov (WBr). Another was found along Guadalupe River below Trimble on 21 Oct (SCR). The first **White-throated Sparrow** of fall arrived at Ulistac NA on 1 Oct (PDU). As many as three have been reported by several observers at that location, beginning on 4 Nov. Single **Western Tanagers** that might stay over winter were noted in the Willow Glen neighborhood on 22 Nov (BM) and along Guadalupe River in downtown San Jose on 30 Nov (KG). A dapper **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was attracted to a yard in San Jose with feeders and a bird bath on 5 Oct (JMo). They are found in the county about three years in every five. A **Bobolink** was an excellent find in the dry lakebed of Lake Lagunita on 2 Oct (RFu). It was the first in the county since fall of 2011. All save one of the previous fifteen recorded have been seen for only one day. A **Bullock's Oriole** was found along the bay-side riparian section of Adobe Creek on 25 Oct (WGB). While most Bullock's Orioles head south for winter, a few do overwinter. A single **Evening Grosbeak** visited Lick Observatory on Mount Hamilton on 27 Oct (EGa). The irrup-



Black-throated Blue Warbler by Gail West

Observers: Patrick Baglee (PB), Bob Bolles (BB), Bill Bousman (WGB), Sam Britton (SBr), Will Brooks (WBr), Karen Burnson (KB), Pete Dunten (PDU), Tom Edell (TE), Herb Elliot (HE), Craig Fosdick (CF), Rob Furrow (RFu), Elinor Gates (EGa), Kevin Gin (KG), Karen Hogan (KaH), Kirsten Holmquist (KH), Richard Jeffers (RJ), Chris Johnson (ChJ), Steve Johnson (SJ), Pat Kenny (PKe), Garrett Lau (GL), Amy Lauterbach (AL), Louise Liou (LL), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Tobin Master (TM), Eve Meier (EvM), Brooke Miller (BM), John Moore (JMo), David Nickerson (DN), Kitty O'Neil (KON), Janna Pauser (JPa), William Pelletier (WP), Stephen Peterson (SP), Bob Reiling (RWR), Alex Rinkert (AR), Mike Rogers (MMR), Nelson Samuels (NS), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Jennifer Rycenga (JRy), Logan Searl (LSe), Robert Shields (RSh), Marc Simmel (MSm), Bridget Sousa (BrS), Emma Stevens (ES), David Suddjian (DSu), Max Tarjan (MXT), Steve Tucker (STu), Ann Verdi (AVe), Chuq Von Rospach (CVR), Dan Wenny (DWn), Christine Wolfe (CWf), James Yurchenco (JY), Gina Zolotar (GZ)

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