



# Bird Notes

Please report rarities to  
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Santa Clara County eBird Reviewer

## Spring & Migration

A **Common Murre** was on Vasona Lake in Los Gatos Creek CP on 2 May (KG). The bird didn't appear healthy and was last seen on 5 May (m. ob.). Murres occur roughly one year in two in the county. **Black Swifts** are one of the latest migrants to pass through the county in the spring. Fourteen were over J Grant CP on 23 May (MMR). Most years a few wayward migrants from the east are found in May or June towards the end of spring migration. This year the sole representative in that category was a singing **Plumbeous Vireo** found near Los Gatos Creek Trail north of Vasona Lake (SCR). An immature male **Yellow-headed Blackbird** put in a brief appearance in the vicinity of the Lockheed marsh on 18 – 19 May (DW, GL).

## Summer & Nesting

One to two **Black Rails** were heard calling at the Sunnyvale WPCP on 19 Jun (GL) and 26 Jun (DA, MDo et al.) One was also calling along Alviso Slough on 7 Jul opposite A11 (EvM, PL) and on 19 Jul opposite A9 (DW). Though their movements are hard to track, we're fortunate to have that problem. A **Golden-Plover** was photographed on 4 Jul at the edge of Alviso pond A9 (fide eBird). The Golden-Plover appeared to be a second-year bird but where it spent the summer is a mystery.

A **Black Tern** found on 23 Jun at the Sunnyvale WPCP (BM) has stayed in the south bay through the period. It's favored Shoreline Lake since mid-July (m. ob.). We find more Black Terns as migrants in the fall than in spring, and even fewer Black Terns over the summer. The **Common Tern** that was found at Emily Renzel Wetlands on 22 Apr has stayed in the south bay over the summer through the end of July (m. ob.) The tern, a second-year bird, has replaced its primary feathers during its stay. On 22 Apr it had five retained juvenile primaries, on 3 May it had four retained primaries, and on 14 July the two outermost primaries were being replaced with new feathers growing in. Inasmuch as this individual was the only Common Tern in the south bay over the summer, its movements were relatively easy to track. In May its daily pattern began with foraging at Emily Renzel, and late in the day it moved to the pilings on A1 (ABu). At the end of June, it was found at the Sunnyvale WPCP in the evenings and early mornings roosting on the floating booms. And in July it was noted frequently at Shoreline Lake.



Purple Martin  
*Carter Gasiorowski*



Common Tern  
*Garrett Lau*



Semipalmated Sandpiper  
*Pete LaTourette*

The **Black Skimmer** colony on the island at Shoreline Lake has had an excellent year, with counts of over 100 on multiple dates breaking all previous records. Highest of those high counts was 132 Skimmers on 2 Jun, including 2 nests with young and 23 nests with eggs (RPh). Another group of Skimmers has been seen on the islands in pond A16, with a high count of 22 on 11 Jul (ChJ).

The **American Bittern** seen at Calero Reservoir in April was reported again on 25 May (MJM) and 20 Jun (BM). On the May date the Bittern paid a visit to the small Tricolored Blackbird colony on the edge of the reservoir, causing much distress for the Blackbirds (MJM). It's not hard to imagine the Bittern may have been taking young blackbirds out of the nests. The male **Vermilion Flycatcher** at J Grant CP continues to be seen, most recently on 20 Jul (WGB).

**Purple Martins** were found in good numbers at Calero Reservoir in the early evenings, with 7 on 24 May (MJM), 11 on 28 May (CG) and 10 on 13 Jun (CG). On 6 Jun it appeared the females were taking shells from the lakeside, possibly as a source of calcium for their own eggshell production (MJM). A **Yellow-breasted Chat** first noted in late April in J Grant CP was found repeatedly through 1 Jun (m. ob.). Two were reported from the park on 26 May (KPn). Chats have nested at J Grant CP in the past. Another Chat was found along Los Alamitos Creek Trail near Pfeiffer Park on 18 Jun (EvM) through 20 Jun (m. ob.).

## Fall & Migration

Several sightings of adult male **Rufous Hummingbirds** on migration came in this year beginning with one at feeders in Morgan Hill on 30 Jun (SCR). One was at Loma Prieta on 2 Jul (Mvr), one visited feeders in the Diablo Range foothills on 17 and 18 Jul (WP, KON), and one found a flowering eucalyptus tree at Saratoga Quarry Park on 20 Jul (DSu). As a rule, the migration route taken by adult male Rufous Hummingbirds during the fall is further east than the routes taken by adult females and young birds, and the adult males typically migrate three to five weeks earlier than the young birds. The most westerly route is taken by hatch-year birds, accounting for most of the migrants in our area. Our first-of-fall **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was an adult on Alviso pond A13 in the company of Western Sandpipers on 26 Jul (PDu). A juvenile was on Mallard Slough on 28 Jul (LWm, KDu).

**Observers** Dorian Anderson (DA), Bill Bousman (WGB), Adam Burnett (ABu), Matthew Dodder (MDo), Konshau Duman (KDu), Pete Dunten (PDu), Carter Gasiorowski (CG), Chris Johnson (ChJ), Garrett Lau (GL), Patricia Lynch (PL), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Eve Meier (EvM), Brooke Miller (BM), Kitty O'Neil (KON), William Pelletier (WP), Ryan Phillips (RPh), Karen Pinckard (KPn), Mike Rogers (MMR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), David Suddjian (DSu), Manny Vara (Mvr), Dave Weber (DW), Lynette Williams (LWm)



## CHUQ *Continued from page 3*

leaders and volunteers, and excited for our future leaders and volunteers, but today I'm thinking especially about Chuq's gentle guidance, wisdom and example.

I've known Chuq for many years; we were both at Apple back in the 1990's and have crossed paths through technology and birding many times. I have had numerous long talks

with Chuq where we troubleshoot website and server issues, exchanged birding stories, brainstormed ideas for the future of SCVAS, and shared our dreams. I'll miss those talks, but I know that we'll still see each other from time to time. Maybe a birding trip to Washington, maybe Chuq coming down to California to see a Black Phoebe again. Or maybe we'll see each other on Zoom—technology bridging the distance—it's all good. Thank you, take care and happy birding in Washington, Chuq! ●