

Bird Notes

Please report rarities to
pdunten@gmail.com

Pete Dunten
Santa Clara County eBird Reviewer

Loons through Vireos

Single **Common Loons** visited bayside locations late last year, with one on Alviso pond A16 on 16 Nov (GG) and one on pond A4 on 2 Dec (ST). The late October sightings of **Sandhill Cranes** overhead were followed by a report of two flying above Alviso pond A17 on 3 Nov (RJ, MJM, MMR). The first (and to date only) **Glaucous Gull** of the winter turned up at Alviso A16 on 11 Jan (SCR) and was found there again on 22 Jan (MJM) and 25 Jan (MJM, STu). A **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was a nice find at Alviso A16 on 11 Jan (SCR). A **Short-eared Owl** was sighted over the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin on 22 Nov (JD), and sightings in that area continued through the end of January (m. ob.). A solo **Lewis's Woodpecker** was found west of the Diablo Range crest at J Grant CP on 20 Jan (WP). Sapsuckers wintering in the area include a **Red-naped Sapsucker** returning for the second winter to Guadalupe Creek in Los Gatos. It was seen on 26 Nov along Guadalupe Creek Trail above Camden Ave (JPa) and again on 26 Jan near Guadalupe Mines Rd and Lavender Creek (MJM). Another Red-naped Sapsucker was photographed in Morgan Hill on 25 Dec (CDv). A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** returned to winter again at the Santa Clara Valley Water District HQ on 2 Jan (JPa). A second Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, an immature spending its first winter in the area, was found near the border of Santa Clara and Sunnyvale on 3 Jan (BLL, VLL). A **Pileated Woodpecker** at Henry Coe SP on 31 Dec was only the 7th record for the Diablo Range (JY, AL). An **Ash-throated Flycatcher** along Yerba Buena Rd near Evergreen Valley College on 22 Nov (HF) remained in Northern California much later than most, though there are a few previous records in the county during all the winter months. One of the two **Tropical Kingbirds** found in October has stayed in the vicinity of Byxbee Park through the end of January, to the delight of many observers. The three months stay, and counting, is the longest period a **Tropical Kingbird** has visited the county. A **Plumbeous Vireo**, loud in voice if not in plumage, moved around the Charleston Rd marsh and nearby Stevens Creek between 4 Nov and 16 Dec (KG, m. ob.). The vireo is only the 9th county record.

Phainopepla through Finches

A single **Phainopepla** was found wintering on the Santa Clara Valley floor, at Guadalupe Oak Grove Park. It was first noted on 8 Nov (JPa) and has remained through the end of



Palm Warbler
Tom Cho



Summer Tanager
Mike Danzenbaker



Plumbeous Vireo
Dorian Anderson

January (m. ob.). The wintering **Palm Warbler** that arrived at the Palo Alto WTP at the end of October has remained into January, with the latest sighting on 17 Jan (DBp). A **Green-tailed Towhee** was banded at the Coyote Creek Field Station on 13 Nov (DO). An **American Tree Sparrow** visited a bird-friendly home where seed was provided NW of J Grant CP between 18 Nov and 4 Dec, for only the 3rd county record (WP, KON). In a manifestation of the Patagonia rest stop effect, a **Clay-colored Sparrow** was found at the Charleston Rd marsh by lucky observers looking for the Plumbeous Vireo. The sparrow was seen between 14 Nov (EGo) and 16 Nov (BT). A **Summer Tanager** was attracted to a feeder offering fruit in Mountain View near Stevens Creek between 15 Jan and 19 Jan (MDa). A second Summer Tanager returned to winter again along the section of Guadalupe Creek above Camden Ave in Los Gatos. It was first noted on 25 Jan this winter (JPa) and seen again on 26 Jan (MJM, GL). In yet another testament to the value of a bird feeder, a **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** graced a feeder in San Jose on 13 Dec (fide LM). A single **Yellow-headed Blackbird** has been present at the Sunnyvale WPCP and nearby locations from 1 Jan (BM) through 23 Jan (m. ob.). Yellow-headed Blackbirds are found most frequently during spring migration; they are rare in winter, with only two previous records during January. This has been a good winter for **Evening Grosbeaks**, unlike the winters of 2016-2017 and 2018-2019 when the Grosbeaks were absent. A group of up to 13 Grosbeaks visited Stanford campus between 8 Dec and 13 Dec (AxG, JsC, ABu, m. ob.). In downtown Los Altos the Grosbeaks arrived on 11 Dec (MAA) and were last reported on 18 Jan, with a high count of 16 on 12 Jan (FP). The calls of the Grosbeaks at both locations were type 1, from the Pacific Northwest, and the band number on one of the Grosbeaks in Los Altos indicated it had been banded in Lane county, Oregon in May of 2015 (STu, CGi). This winter has also seen an invasion of **Red Crossbills**, after an absence spanning the preceding three winters beginning in 2016, 2017, and 2018. They were first reported from Sanborn CP on 10 Nov (RJ, MMR) and have been present there through the end of January (m. ob.). The extent of the invasion is evidenced by the sighting of three Red Crossbills at the Gilroy SCRWA on 15 Nov (SPz, BLL, WP, KON, GRy) and a group of five at Cuesta Park in Mountain View on 6 Jan (BLL, VLL). Recordings of flight calls indicate the Red Crossbills are type 2, the Crossbill with a preference for Ponderosa Pines (BM, JVs).

Observers Mary Ann Allen (MAA), Daniel Bump (DBp), Adam Burnett (ABu), Jason Chou (JsC), Mike Danzenbaker (MDa), Jim Dehnert (JD), Chris Devillers (CDv), Alexandre Gauthier (AxG), George Gibbs (GG), Kevin Gin (KG), Howard Friedman (HF), Casey Girard (CGi), Eric Goodill (EGo), Richard Jeffers (RJ), Barry Langdon-Lassagne (BLL), Virginia Langdon-Lassagne (VLL), Garrett Lau (GL), Amy Lauterbach (AL), Mike Mammoser (MJM), Brooke Miller (BM), Lisa Myers (LM), Kitty O'Neil (KON), Debbie Ottman (DO), Federico Pacheco (FP), Janna Pauser (JPa), William Pelletier (WP), Sergio Perez (SPz), Mike Rogers (MMR), Steve Rottenborn (SCR), Gordon Rydquist (GRy), Bob Toleno (BT), Steve Tracey (ST), Steve Tucker (STu), Jason Vassallo (JVs), James Yurchenco (JY)