

Central Valley Birding Weekend Annual crusade - Dec. 1 & 2, 2007

Quick Overview – This was the 4th year *Let's Go Birding* headed to the Central Valley for a birding weekend amongst the fantastic waterfowl that winter in California. This year we worked our way north by first stopping at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area found just west of the state capital. One of our first birds for the weekend was an un-expected Cattle Egret that flew in to join a Great Egret. We also had incredible views of low flying White Throated Swifts, Horned Larks and Common Goldeneye. Then we were off to enjoy the Tundra Swans that can be found in the thousands just north of Marysville. At one corner alone we simply pivoted to enjoy swans, plus snipe, hundreds of ibis and a Yellow Headed Blackbird hanging out with the red-wings! Now we were off to Gray Lodge for the sunset. We got there just in time to learn a bit about what all the hunters are doing and then drive the auto tour. The waterfowl were here in unbelievable numbers. With the sun disappearing we soon found Black Crowned Night Herons coming out to feed and we visited a bit with calling Great Horned Owls. Our night in Colusa included a wonderful Mexican dinner where they took great care of the entire group. In the morning we awoke to temperatures in the low 40's, a thick cloud cover and some winds. This meant everyone put on all their layers and we had to work hard to find any passerines as they were smart enough to stay out of the elements. We ventured onward and stopped at several places including the Sacramento NWR, Packer Unit off 45, the Sacramento River, and several roads in between as we made it back to the bay area. Each place we stopped we added new experiences and species to the weekend.



*As we worked our way down Colusa County's Sycamore Slough Road we were finding owls throughout. This Barn Owl was fast asleep in the depth of dead tree stump along side the road.
Picture by trip participant Dan Joo*

Total Species Counted for the weekend = 93 includes heard only (H)
Birds are listed in the taxonomic order currently recognized by the AOU

Tundra Swans	Great Blue Heron	Least Sandpiper	Marsh Wren
Greater White-Fronted Goose	Snowy Egret Drive By	Wilson's Snipe	Ruby-crowned Kinglet (H)
Canada Goose – Common	Great Egret	Killdeer	Western Bluebird
Snow Goose	Cattle Egret	California Gull	American Robin
Ross's Goose	Black Crowned Night Heron	Ring-Billed Gull	Northern Mockingbird - town
Mallard	White Faced Ibis	Rock Pigeon	European Starling - town
Gadwall	Turkey Vulture	Mourning Dove	American Pipit
American Wigeon	Bald Eagle	Barn Owl	Cedar Waxwing – fly over
Northern Pintail	Northern Harrier	Great Horned Owl	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Northern Shoveler	White-tail Kite	White Throated Swift	Spotted Towhee
Bufflehead	Red Shouldered Hawk	Belted Kingfisher	California Towhee
Lesser Scaup	Red-tail Hawk	Nuttall's Woodpecker	White-crowned Sparrow
Ring-necked Duck	Ferruginous Hawk	Northern Flicker	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Common Goldeneye	Cooper's Hawk	Downy Woodpecker	Fox Sparrow
Green-winged Teal	American Kestrel	Black Phoebe	Lincoln's Sparrow
Cinnamon Teal	Peregrine Falcon	Western Scrub-Jay	Savannah Sparrow
Ruddy Duck	Prairie Falcon	Yellow-billed Magpie	Red-winged Blackbird
Ring-necked Pheasant	Sandhill Cranes Fly over	American Crow	Yellow Headed Blackbird
California Quail (H)	Sora (H)	Common Raven	Brewer's Blackbird
Pied-billed Grebe	American Coot	Tree Swallow	Western Meadowlark
Eared Grebe	Common Moorhen	Horned Lark	House Finch
American White Pelican	Black-necked Stilt	Bushtit (H)	American Goldfinch
Double-crested Cormorant	Greater Yellowlegs		House Sparrow
	Long-billed Dowitcher		
	Dunlin		



Memorable Observations caught on film!

- Cattle Egret with Great Egret at Yolo Bypass – image by trip participant Gary Pappani
- Composite images put together of White Throated Swift – image provided by Bob Schmoker
- White Faced Ibis were found in large flocks – image by Lisa Myers
- Adult Tundra Swan with juvenile – image by trip participant Dan Joo
- Sunset & thousands of lifting waterfowl at Gray Lodge – image by trip participant Dan Joo
- Yellow Headed Blackbird on the power line - image by trip participant Joe Diandrea





- *Western Bluebirds at Packer Unit – image by trip participant Kathy Gilman*
- *The weekend's group of adventurers having too much fun – taken by Kathy Gilman*
- *Staying warm or about to rob a bank? – image by trip participant Joe Diandrea*
- *Great Horned Owl & Peregrine at Sacramento NWR – by trip participants Nigel & Susan Gore*
- *"Turn left at the cows!" – image by trip participant Dan Joo*
- *Ross's & Snow Geese encountered in huge flocks throughout the weekend – image by Lisa Myers*



And let us not forget our TV antenna Ferruginous Hawk just outside of Colusa, our playful River Otters, the sitting Prairie Falcon and the impressive Bald Eagles that got everyone flying.

Thank you all for another wonderful way to spend a weekend!