

## The Central Valley Birding Weekend December 6 & 7, 2008

**Quick Overview** – It is a **Let's Go Birding** tradition to do a Central Valley over-nighter on the first weekend of December. To provide something different this year the route was changed to bird the hot spots of San Joaquin and Stanislaus Counties. The goal was to find the many species of birds that come to California's Central Valley to winter. To hit as many different habitats as possible we started at Caswell Memorial Park to look for Passerines amongst the giant oaks and then worked our way east to the waters of Woodard Reservoir. After enjoying the Osprey, Common Mergansers and Bald Eagle we headed to the open fields of Flood and Waverly. We spent the night in Lodi where the Holiday Inn Express took fantastic care of us. Dinner at the Lodi Beer Company worked well as they easily accommodated our group of hungry, tired birders. We spent Sunday morning walking the trails around Lodi Lake Park and then traveled off to bird Staten Island Road. We ended the weekend with a Burrowing Owl out on Robinson and Flannery which eased the pain of never locating Mountain Plovers. The temps never got above 45 degrees and the high cloud cover meant we did not see the sun for two days, but all of that was just water off a wintering ducks back. A big thank you to all of you who were a part of this big adventure.

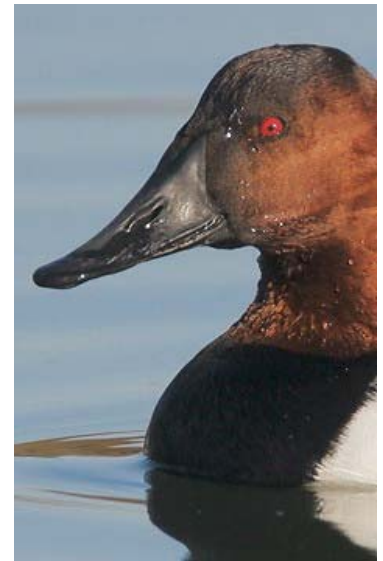


### Horned Lark out on Flood & Waverly

*One of many Horned Larks observed  
in the fields east of Stockton off Flood & Waverly.  
Photo taken by trip participant Sonny Mencher*

**Total Species Counted for the Weekend = 100 includes heard only (H) in route (R) only seen by some (S)  
Birds are listed in the taxonomic order currently recognized by the AOU**

Tundra Swans	Great Egret	Killdeer	White Breasted Nuthatch
Greater White-Fronted Goose	Green Heron	California Gull	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Canada Goose	Black Crowned Night Heron	Ring Billed Gull	Golden Crowned Kinglet
Cackling/Aleutian Goose	Turkey Vulture	Rock Pigeon	(H)American Robin
Snow Goose	Bald Eagle	Mourning Dove	Hermit Thrush
Ross's Goose	Northern Harrier	Eurasian Collared Dove (R)	Western Bluebird
Mallard	White-tail Kite	Burrowing Owl	Northern Mockingbird (R)
Northern Pintail	Red Shouldered Hawk	Belted Kingfisher	European Starling
Northern Shoveler	Ferruginous Hawk	Northern Flicker	American Pipit
Lesser Scaup	Rough Legged Hawk	Downy Woodpecker	Cedar Waxwing – fly over
Canvasback	Red-tail Hawks	Nuttall's Woodpecker	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Bufflehead	Cooper's Hawk	Red Breasted Sapsucker	Orange Crowned Warbler
Hooded Merganser	Prairie Falcon (S)	Acorn Woodpecker	Townsend's Warbler
Common Merganser	Merlin (S)	Black Phoebe	California Towhee
Ring-necked Duck	American Kestrel	Says Phoebe	Spotted Towhee (H)
Common Goldeneye	Sandhill Cranes	Loggerhead Shrike	White-crowned Sparrow
Ruddy Duck	American Coot	Hutton's Vireo	Savannah Sparrow
Ring Necked Pheasant	Common Moorhen	Western Scrub-Jay	Dark Eyed Junco
California Quail (H)	Black-necked Stilt	Yellow-billed Magpie	Red-winged Blackbird
Eared Grebe	Greater Yellowlegs	American Crow	Brewer's Blackbird
Western Grebe	Long-billed Dowitcher	Common Raven	Western Meadowlark
Pied Billed Grebe	Long Billed Curlew	Tree Swallow	Great Tailed Grackle
Double-crested Cormorant	Least Sandpiper	Horned Lark	Lesser Goldfinch
Great Blue Heron	Spotted Sandpiper	Bushtit	American Goldfinch
Snowy Egret	Wilson's Snipe	Oak Titmouse (S)	House Sparrow



**Photo credits** - We never knew if smiling Mike was coming or going!  
The group looking for wintering Passerines at Caswell Memorial Park – Gary Pappani  
Red Shoulder Hawk with fish at Lodi Lake Park – Sonny Mencher  
Found fungi all weekend including this “Lion’s Mane” at Lodi Lake – Debbi Brusco  
Canvasback Ducks were all over Staten Island Road – Image provided by Tom Grey  
A flock of Western Bluebirds were the hi-light of one bathroom stop – Sonny Mencher  
A dog paddling Muskrat was swimming at Woodard Reservoir – Debbi Brusco

### **Memorable Observations!**

- After the coyote, our 1st stop on Saturday was memorable olfactory moment
- The Caswell Spotted Sandpiper arriving right on time.
- Watching both the Osprey & Bald Eagle fishing at Woodard Reservoir
- Listening to and observing the juvenile Western Grebe begging for food



## Memorable Observations!

- Having a 4-point buck walk past us on the trail at Lodi Lake
- Gotta love those beautiful snipe!
- Talking to Tundra Swans and they talked back – *kwooo, kwooooo!*
- Tree Swallows drinking from the flooded fields off Staten Island Road
- Levee roads lined with Pear Orchards and delta waters
- Wintering Rough Legged Hawk trying to catch a sunset meal



**Photo credits** – Green Heron tried to hide itself behind the log at Lodi Lake – *Sonny Mencher*  
 White Breasted Nuthatch were found both days – *Sonny Mencher*  
 Carpooling is good for the environment and can be very team building – *Sonny Mencher*  
 Downy Woodpecker was a great find at Lodi Lake – *Image provided by Tom Grey*  
 We observed Common, Cackling and Aleutian Canada Geese – *Image provided by Tom Grey*  
 In addition to birding some liked to hang out with the fun guys! – *Sonny Mencher*  
 At dusk, our last bird of the weekend was a Burrowing Owl on Flannery Road – *Sonny Mencher*  
 The Sandhill Cranes disappeared into the foggy landscapes – *Sonny Mencher*