

Quick Overview – The "Los Gatos Birdwatcher" provides many opportunities each month to involve people with nature. *Let's Go birding* partners with Los Gatos Birdwatcher providing full day birding adventures. The Gazos Creek Road is known for its Spring and Fall birding, but we selected this destination for July so that we could take folks to a beautiful habitat most had never visited, and to avoid possible summer temperatures. Located on the Pacific coast & north of Santa Cruz, this dead-end road borders Ana Nuevo Reserve, Big Basin State Park and Butano State Park. Before we arrived we first stopped at Rancho Del Oso. This short bathroom stop was actually quite birdy as species were vocalizing in the surrounding evergreens. Finding the Pygmy Nuthatches and Hairy Woodpeckers proved fruitless! We then headed to Gazos Creek Road. The first 3 miles are considered the most active for bird life. Most of our birding was done by ear and the song of every Swainson's Thrush was music to our ears. Taking a left onto Cloverdale brought us up close with several Black Headed Grosbeaks. Males, females and youngsters were actively feeding and singing. With the entrance to Butano State Park near we decided to have lunch in the shade of the giant Redwoods. After lunch we continued farther down Gazos Creek Road entering a fern covered Redwood forest. Banana Slugs were all we found so we headed to Pigeon Point Lighthouse where we ended our day with sea bird species and beautiful blue skies.

Trip Leader - Lisa Myers



*Swainson's Thrush were a heard only bird for our day – image provided by Tom Grey. Habitat along Gazos Creek Road - taken by Lisa Myers
Many more pictures from our day can be found on page two.*

Memorable Observations!

- Male Wilson's Warbler feeding over the road
- Belted Kingfisher flying directly overhead
- Black Headed Grosbeaks plucking bugs out of the air
- Pigeon Guillemots coming in for a landing
- Brown Pelicans in formation
- Finding the American Goldfinch amongst the blooms

Total Species Counted for the Day = 48 includes heard only (H) & in route (r)

Canada Goose	Willet	Olive Sided Flycatcher	European Starling
California Quail	Pigeon Guillemot	Western Scrub Jay	Wilson's Warbler
Western Grebe	Western Gull	Steller's Jay	Spotted Towhee
Brown Pelican	Rock Dove	American Crow	California Towhee
Brandt's Cormorant	Mourning Dove	Barn Swallow	White-crowned Sparrow
Turkey Vulture	Band Tailed Pigeon	Cliff Swallow	Song Sparrow
Great Blue Heron (r)	Rock Pigeon (r)	Chestnut Backed Chickadee	Dark Eyed Junco
Great Egret (r)	Anna's Hummingbird	Pygmy Nuthatch (H)	Black Headed Grosbeak
Red-tail Hawk	Belted Kingfisher	Pacific Wren (H)	Red-winged Blackbird
Red Shouldered Hawk	Acorn Woodpecker	Swainson's Thrush (H)	Brewer's Blackbird
Northern Harrier	Hairy/Downy Woodpecker (H)	American Robin	Purple Finch (H)
Black Oystercatcher	Pacific Slope Flycatcher	Wrentit	American Goldfinch



All pictures were taken during our day by trip participant Hubert DHondt, except for Pigeon Point Lighthouse taken by Lisa Myers – Top right photo is one of the very large Banana Slugs we found about 3.5 miles up Gazos Creek Road. The yellow / orange flowers above are the Sticky Monkey Flower which is also a hummingbird magnet! All other images are various critters and plants we encountered during our day. If you email me their names I promise to update my report!