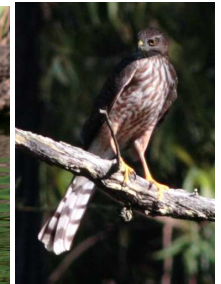
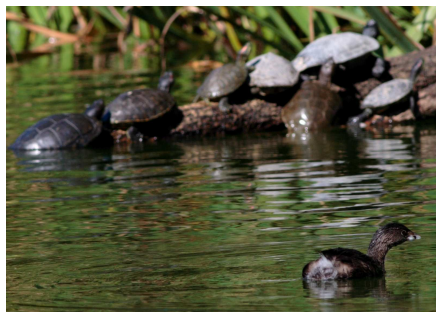
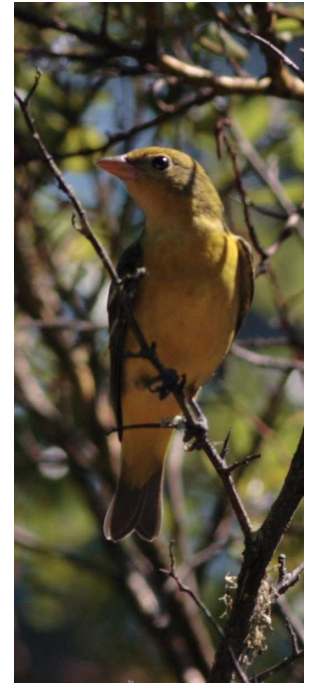


Quick Overview – San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park is an open expanse of land in the middle of one very busy city; kind of like an oasis to birds, providing them a place to find refuge during their fall migration. To date the migration had proven to be rather quiet along the west coast and with record high temperatures forecast to 100 degrees for the day we had no idea what we would find. Often socked in by fog, we arrived in San Francisco to find clear blue skies. Parking next to Stow Lake we spent the morning birding this area. As soon as we got out of our cars we encountered a Sharp Shinned Hawk chasing after Steller’s Jays. Three jays were coming back in force at the little accipiter, but the Sharpie kept going back after the jays. It was as if we were watching them play tag. This went on for such a long time that we continued onward around the lake where we found several Townsend’s Warblers and we were always in the company of chatting Pygmy Nuthatch. The locals were also arriving in force as everyone came out to celebrate the unusually high temps. After lunch we birded within the Strybing Arboretum. At first it was very quiet as we worked our way toward the “Redwood Trail” garden. To escape the heat, our goal was to find shade while looking for birds. We soon found a few Western Tanagers feeding amongst the trees. Then we found many more tanagers and before long it was as if they were raining out of the sky, truly a fall migration experience and one I shall personally never forget. Most were feeding, while some were bathing along the shore of a garden pond. All the birds we observed were in basic plumage. Of the tanager family it is the Western Tanager that travels the farthest north to the Northwest Territories each spring and then flies back south to winter in Central America. We were here on a day many were passing through. As our day came to an end we found a Swainson’s Thrush in the shadows accompanied by more tanagers and Townsend’s Warblers.



Memorable Observations!

- Sharp Shinned Hawk & Steller’s harassing each other
- Wonderful views of male Townsend’s Warblers
- Black Headed Grosbeak in amongst the tanagers
- Finding the heard only Brown Creepers
- All three nuthatches
- Great views of a Western Wood Pewee
- Turtles, turtles everywhere!

Two of the nearly 50 Western Tanagers experienced on this day in Golden Gate Park. Sun basking turtles with a Pied Billed Grebe in the foreground. Sharp Shinned Hawk going after Steller’s Jays at Stow Lake. All pictures provided by trip participant Nate Sanders

Total Species Counted for the Day = 40 includes heard only (H)

Canada Goose	California Gull	Warbling Vireo	American Robin
Mallard	Western Gull	Western Scrub-Jay	Western Bluebird
Pied Billed Grebe	Rock Pigeon	Steller’s Jay	Swainson’s Thrush
Turkey Vulture	Band Tailed Pigeon	American Crow	Orange Crowned Warbler
White Tailed Hawk	Anna’s Hummingbird	Common Raven	Wilson’s Warbler
Red Shouldered Hawk	Acorn Woodpecker	Chestnut Backed Chickadee	Townsend’s Warbler
Red-tail Hawk	Northern Flicker	Red Breasted Nuthatch	Yellow Warbler
Cooper’s Hawk	Downy Woodpecker	White Breasted Nuthatch	Western Tanagers!
Sharp Shinned Hawk	Black Phoebe	Pygmy Nuthatch	Song Sparrow
American Coot	Western Wood Pewee	Brown Creeper	Brewer’s Blackbird