

Quick Overview – *Let's Go Birding* and Freddy's Howell's, *Los Gatos Birdwatcher* participants spent this day birding the rolling hills of Lone Tree Road. Lone Tree is a dead end country road with lots of open space and few people so this leaves lots of habitat for great birding. Spring is the time to visit because birders can find many different species which come here to breed and spend the season. Our morning started with a cloud cover but that did not slow us down as we knew it would eventually burn off and it did. The great birding started at our first stop, in fact, as soon as we drove onto Lone Tree we found the nesting Killdeer pictured here. Sitting on its scrape by the side of the road you have to wonder how they stay out of harms way. In this same area we found a pair of Western Kingbirds building a nest, Yellow Billed Magpie nests and an active Red Tail Hawk nest pictured on page 2. To bird this road you just need to pull over and listen. Bird songs can be heard from all around - grosbeaks, pe-wees, Orange Crowned and Wilson's Warblers, Meadowlark, California Quail, Pacific Slope Flycatchers, Bewick's Wrens..... With water flowing, one pull-over was extremely active and the group had to work to keep up with the species. At lunch we picked a spot in the shade that soon revealed nesting Violet Green Swallows and a Western Tanager. At the end of the road, just before you have to turn around, there is a large oak that has been home to a nesting Great Horned Owl each Spring for many years. This year we again found the nest with only one chick pictured on page two. The tree was large with others near and we knew there were probably more Great Horns watching us. This same area was active with Bullock's Orioles, gnatcatchers and more. It was a wonderful day providing opportunities to enjoy many target species.



Nesting Killdeer on the side of Lone Tree Road photographed by trip participant Julie Bryson. When the Killdeer re-positioned itself its four eggs were seen by trip member Nate Sanders and are pictured on page 2. Male Western Tanager image provided by Ron Wolf

Memorable Observations!

- Turkey Vulture eating a road kill snake
- Lazuli Bunting ever so briefly on the fence
- Western Scrub Jay raiding a 2nd Killdeer nest
- Black Headed Grosbeak pair with the bunting!
- Could HEAR invisible Western Meadowlarks all day
- A Swainson's Thrush peering out of the shadows
- One Lark Sparrow, the sparrows were few all day
- The grill of a four wheel drive truck.

Total Species Counted for the Day = 62 includes heard only (H)

Mallard	White Throated Swift	Yellow-billed Magpie	Wilson's Warbler
Wild Turkey	Anna's Hummingbird	Tree Swallow	Orange Crowned Warbler
California Quail	Nuttall's Woodpecker	Barn Swallow	Western Tanager
Great Egret in route	Northern Flicker	Violet Green Swallow	Spotted Towhee
Turkey Vulture	Acorn Woodpecker	Oak Titmouse	California Towhee
Golden Eagle	Black Phoebe	Bushtit	Lark Sparrow
Northern Harrier	Loggerhead Shrike	White Breasted Nuthatch	Dark-Eyed Junco
Red-tail Hawk	Western Kingbird	Bewick's Wren	Lazuli Bunting
American Kestrel	Ash Throated Flycatcher	Rock Wren	Black Headed Grosbeak
Killdeer	Western Wood Pe-wee (H)	Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher	Red-winged Blackbird
California Gull in route	Pacific Slope Flycatcher	Western Bluebird	Tri-Colored Blackbird
Rock Pigeon	Western Scrub-Jay	American Robin	Brewer's Blackbird
Mourning Dove	Steller's Jay	Swainson's Thrush	Bullock's Oriole
Eurasian Collared Dove	American Crow	Northern Mockingbird	Western Meadowlark (H)
Great Horned Owl	Common Raven	European Starling	House Finch
		Cedar Waxwings in route	Lesser Goldfinch

Birding Lone Tree Road – May 15, 2010



From top left to bottom – Blue Gray Gnatcatcher image provided by Tom Gray / Nesting Red Tail Hawk chicks waiting for mom & dad and curious about us – Nate Sanders / During the overcast morning a calling Red Tail Hawk flew over while being harassed by a pair of blackbirds. One blackbird was actually sitting on the nape of the hawk and was photographed by trip participant Nate Sanders / A pair of Rock Wrens were quite active along the side of Lone Tree Road and were photographed by trip participant Hubert d'Hondt / Ash Throated Flycatchers were near throughout our day – image provided by Garret Lau / Great Horn Owl "brancher", still covered in down; too big to sit in the nest, but too young to leave, photographed at the end of Lone Tree Road - Hubert d'Hondt / A close-up view of the four eggs being incubated by the road side Killdeer – Nate Sanders