

Mitchell Canyon & Mount Diablo!

*In celebration of International Migratory Bird Day.
Spring birding, May 18, 2008*

Quick Overview – Mount Diablo is an oasis of open space in the middle of a highly populated area. At 3800 feet in elevation it is an impressive landmark amongst bustling neighborhoods and busy freeways. The land was spared from developers and offers many different hiking trails and breathtaking views of the bay area. During the spring it is also a migration hot spot and many birders come to the various habitats found on the mountain in order to find returning and visiting species. One of the better areas for spring arrivals is Mitchell Canyon and this is where our day began. On this day we were also on the tail end of an unusual heat wave that had temperatures 20 degrees higher than normal. So we took the trails slowly and looked for the birds we could hear calling from the rolling hillsides. As usual the heat kept the birds in the shade and the challenge was to find all the birds we could hear singing in the shadows. Many on this trip had never before been to Mount Diablo so we worked our way home via the North Gate entrance, and up and over using the South Gate as our exit. It is a location all wish to explore again under cooler temperatures. Ice cream turned out to be a great way to end our adventure.



Elegant Clarkia wildflower
Taken during our day by trip participant Debbi Brusco



Memorable Observations!

- Black Phoebes no where to be found! A memorable first for most of us.
- Turkeys working hard to attract the females
- Great study on the various flycatchers here for the spring
- Fantastic views of White Throated Swifts directly overhead, breeding, chatting, flying and bugging.....
- Eating lunch in the company of Western Bluebirds and White Breasted Nuthatch
- Spotted Towhees heard and seen throughout our day

Total Species Counted for the Day = 49 includes heard only (H) and some seen in route (R)

Birds are listed in the taxonomic order currently recognized by the AOU

Canada Goose (R)	Anna's Hummingbird	American Crow	Cedar Waxwing (R)
Wild Turkey	Nuttall's Woodpecker	Common Raven	Orange Crowned Warbler (H)
California Quail	Acorn Woodpecker	Northern Rough Wing Sw.	Spotted Towhee
American White Pelican	Olive Sided Flycatcher	Violet Green Swallow	California Towhee
Turkey Vulture	Western Wood Pe-wee	Cliff Swallow	Song Sparrow (H)
White-tail Kite (R)	Olive Side Flycatcher	Oak Titmouse	Dark-eyed Junco
Red-tail Hawk	Ash Throated Flycatcher	White Breasted Nuthatch	Lazuli Bunting
American Kestrel	Pacific Slope Flycatcher (H)	House Wren (H)	Red-winged Blackbird
Killdeer flyover	Western Kingbird	Bewick's Wren (H)	Brewer's Blackbird
Rock Pigeon	Cassin's Vireo (H)	Western Bluebird	Brown-headed Cowbird
Mourning Dove	Warbling Vireo (H)	American Robin (R)	House Finch
White Throated Swift	Western Scrub-Jay	European Starling	Lesser Goldfinch
			House Sparrow