

Mt. Hamilton all the way to the top! Spring birding, May 3, 2008

Quick Overview – Living in “Silicon Valley” one can easily look to the east and see the Lick Observatory sitting atop Mount Hamilton at just over 4,000 feet in elevation. The habitat going up to the peak includes rolling grasslands dotted with several species of oak and pine trees. Much of the lands here are protected from development and thus the land remains open for the wildlife and those of us who take the time to check it out. As planned, on this day we found many of the species that return to California each spring to breed and raise young. We stayed on the west side of Mount Hamilton which afforded us the time to find all kinds of species singing, nest building, and bringing food to their young. While at Joseph D. Grant County Park we shared the trails with competitive horse riders and their beautiful horses out for a 50 mile endurance competition, but there was plenty of room for us all. After some education at the observatory we worked our way home with stops on Kincaid Road & Grant Lake adding new species all along our way.



Grasshopper Sparrow heard and then found at Joseph D. Grant County Park was an unexpected treat and a lifer for many.
Our bird was photographed by trip participant Karin Bredfeldt

Memorable Observations!

- Finding one of our target birds – our first of season Lazuli Bunting
- Bullock’s Orioles around us everywhere we stopped all day!
- Eating lunch in the company of nesting orioles and kingbirds
- Watching Acorn Woodpeckers drinking from the water fountain and a California Thrasher hunting
- A Swainson’s hawk harassing a Golden Eagle! Two fantastic raptors to observe all at once!

Total Species Counted for the Day = 73 includes heard only (H)

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

Canada Goose	Spotted Sandpipers	Western Scrub-Jay	Cedar Waxwing
Mallard	Caspian Tern	Steller’s Jay	Orange Crowned Warbler
Cinnamon Teal	Forster’s Tern	American Crow	Western Tanager
Ruddy Duck	Rock Pigeon	Common Raven	Spotted Towhee
Gadwall	Band Tailed Pigeon	Yellow-Billed Magpie	California Towhee
Wild Turkey	Mourning Dove	Tree Swallow	Song Sparrow
California Quail	Barn Owl	Barn Swallow	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Pied-billed Grebe	Vaux’s Swift	Northern Rough Wing Sw.	Grasshopper Sparrow
Double Crested Cormorant	Anna’s Hummingbird	Violet Green Swallow	Dark-eyed Junco
Great Blue Heron	Nuttall’s Woodpecker (H)	Cliff Swallow	Lazuli Bunting
Turkey Vulture	Northern Flicker	Oak Titmouse	Black Headed Grosbeak (H)
Golden Eagle	Acorn Woodpecker	White Breasted Nuthatch (H)	Red-winged Blackbird
White-tail Kite	Black Phoebe	House Wren	Brewer’s Blackbird
Red Shouldered Hawk	Olive Sided Flycatcher	Western Bluebird	Bullock’s Oriole
Red-tail Hawk	Western Wood Pe-wee (H)	American Robin	Brown-headed Cowbird
Swainson’s Hawk	Pacific Slope Flycatcher (H)	Northern Mockingbird	Western Meadowlark
American Kestrel	Western Kingbird	California Thrasher	House Finch
American Coot	Cassin’s Vireo (H)	European Starling	Lesser Goldfinch
	Warbling Vireo		