

Raptors & Cranes of San Joaquin Cty!

Fall birding, November 3, 2007

Quick Overview – This was a day planned around finding raptors and experiencing some of California’s wintering Sandhill Cranes. To do this, we started the day later than most as we planned to arrive at one of San Joaquin County’s best raptor habitats after the day had warmed. And in fact, the temperatures on this day reached into the high 70’s. We took our time scanning the open fields around Flood and Waverly and we were successful in finding several Ferruginous Hawks, many Red-Tail Hawks, more than one American Kestrel and several fly-overs by Turkey Vultures. This dry open habitat also allowed for fantastic views of Horned Larks and Loggerhead Shrikes. We then headed west to the fields off Woodbridge Road. Here too we spent our time finding as many bird species as possible. As the sun lowered in the sky, large flocks of waterfowl flew over in formation. Cackling Geese, Tundra Swans and distant ducks were all observed. We then headed over to some of the flooded fields to wait for the cranes to fly in for the night. As the cranes arrived we listening to their calls and watched them settle in for a landing. We also enjoyed a feeding Peregrine Falcon, several Wilson Snipes, a hunting Red-Tail Hawk and foraging California Quail. It was a great way to spend the day. We left knowing the cranes will be here for many months and we will return for another visit.



Horned Lark and Sandhill Crane images above
provided by Rob Pavey

Memorable Observations!

- Several Ferruginous Hawks!
- Fantastic views of very close Horned Larks
- Killdeer enjoying the lawns of Farmington!
- Western Scrub Jays collecting food for the winter?!
- Listening to cranes and watching them in all their beauty

Total Species Counted for the Day = 55 includes heard only (H)
Birds are listed in the taxonomic order currently recognized by the AOU

Tundra Swans	Red-tail Hawk	Belted Kingfisher	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Canada Goose – Cackling	Ferruginous Hawk	Nuttall’s Woodpecker (H)	California Towhee
Mallard	Cooper’s Hawk	Northern Flicker	Song Sparrow
Ring-necked Pheasant	American Kestrel	Black Phoebe	White-crowned Sparrow
California Quail	Peregrine Falcon	Say’s Phoebe	Golden-crowned Sparrow
American White Pelican	Sandhill Cranes	Loggerhead-Shrike	Lincoln’s Sparrow
Double-crested Cormorant	American Coot	Western Scrub-Jay	Savannah Sparrow
Great Blue Heron	Black-necked Stilt	Yellow-billed Magpie – drive by	Red-winged Blackbird
Great Egret	Greater Yellowlegs	American Crow	Brewer’s Blackbird
Snowy Egret	Wilson’s Snipe	Horned Lark	Yellow-headed Blackbird
Turkey Vulture	Killdeer	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Western Meadowlark
Northern Harrier	Rock Pigeon	American Robin	House Finch
White-tail Kite	Mourning Dove	Northern Mockingbird	House Sparrow
Red Shouldered Hawk	White Throated Swift (in route)	European Starling	