



Final Trip Report – Point Reyes

Birding the fall migration - Oct. 8, 2011

Trip Leader – Lisa Myers

Quick Overview – In the fall, Point Reyes becomes a west coast birding hot spot. Searching the tree tops for movement just may reveal a wonderful vagrant that has found itself quite off course during its migration south. On this day we started at the Bear Valley Visitor Center and headed toward the light house. We stopped along the way to observe a Peregrine Falcon. A mixed flock of blackbirds soon became the hunted as the falcon flushed the birds from the field. This chase took place directly overhead and the energy could be felt by all. We continued to the lighthouse where we encountered wind and fog so we re-directed to Chimney Rock. Here we found the trees rather quiet of bird activity so we concentrated on the three different species of loons in the waters below. Soon a distant BARK caught our attention and we witnessed a Short Eared Owl circling while being chased by two Ravens. We all had great views as the owl worked its way higher and higher and then flew beyond our view. From here we headed back north and parked at the RCA Station. As soon as we got out of our cars we added Yellow Warbler to our day. We then walked down the “driveway” toward the road and found incredible bird activity. A female Western Tanager seemed almost tired as she sat on the fence without concern for us. It was surrounded by Western Bluebirds and crown sparrows. Pine Siskins were also here and all seemed to be busy feeding and jumping back up on the barb wire fence. We spent a lot of time here because the species just kept coming. We had several great views of Lincoln Sparrows and then a Palm Warbler arrived on the scene! All the while a Red Tail Hawk, American Kestrel and Says Phoebe were hunting behind us. We eventually headed over to the Oyster Farm. We added a few shorebirds to our list and decided to visit the historic cemetery across the street. It is here that 11 officers of the former US Lifesaving Service at Point Reyes were buried between 1890 and 1915. We took in some history, paid our respect, and ended our day with a Great Horned Owl that was keeping watch overhead.



Above are examples of the two different forms of Yellow Rumped Warblers. The white throated “Myrtles” and the yellow throated “Audubons”. Both races were seen during our visit to Point Reyes. They are just now arriving back to spend the winter. Image above provided by Bill Schmokler.

Total Species Counted for the Day = 69 includes heard only (H) & those seen en route (R)

Mallard	Turkey Vulture	Great Horned Owl	Yellow Warbler
Gadwall	Red-tail Hawk	Short Eared Owl	Yellow Rumped Warbler
Common Loon	Osprey	Belted Kingfisher (R)	Palm Warbler
Pacific Loon	Northern Harrier	Northern Flicker	Wilson's Warbler (H)
Red Throated Loon	Peregrine Falcon	Nuttall's Woodpecker (H)	Western Tanager
Northern Pintail	American Kestrel	Ash Throated Flycatcher	Song Sparrow
Surf Scoter	California Quail	Say's Phoebe	White Crowned Sparrow
Pied-billed Grebe	Wild Turkey (R)	Black Phoebe	Golden Crowned Sparrow
Eared Grebe	Greater Yellowlegs	Western Scrub-Jay	Lincoln Sparrow
Horned Grebe	Marbled Godwit	Steller's Jay	Red-winged Blackbird
Western Grebe	Black Turnstone	American Crow	Tri-colored Blackbird
Double-crested Cormorant	Ring Billed Gull	Common Raven	Western Meadowlark (H)
Pelagic Cormorant	Western Gull	Chestnut Backed Chickadee	House Finch
American White Pelican	Common Murre	Bewick's Wren	Pine Siskin
Brown Pelican	Rock Dove	Marsh Wren (H)	American Goldfinch
Great Egret	Mourning Dove	Western Bluebird	House Sparrow
Great Blue Heron	Eurasian Collard Dove	European Starling	
	Anna's Hummingbird	Swallows Species	