

**Quick Overview:** It's usually in September when the first Sandhill Cranes start to return to California's Central Valley. They come to winter in our agricultural lands and open spaces and will remain until February. Sandhill Cranes are the most numerous of the world's 15 species of cranes, and this trip was planned so we could see the cranes found in San Joaquin County, but our first stop was Lodi Lake Park. This park offers many different habitats and is home to prime birding. We spent the morning looking for woodland birds as we walked the trail to Pig's Lake. Varied and Hermit Thrush, Spotted Towhees, Green Herons and Wood Ducks were all part of the experience. Most of the birds were hiding amongst the vegetation & we had to work for our finds. Lodi Lake is drained during the winter, but on this day it was still full allowing us to add grebes, gulls, coots and a Blue & Gold Macaw to our day. After lunch we left for the White Slough Wildlife Area. While Pond 9 had few water birds, the field across the trail provided Great Tailed Grackles, Western Meadowlarks and a pair of White Tailed Kites. With Red Tail Hawks circling we had the opportunity to compare a dark morph with the others. We continued to the end of Pond 9 which put us on the edge of several different habitats. Before long we had Lincoln Sparrows, a Ferruginous Hawk, American Pipits and Lesser Goldfinch. We also had our first Sandhill Crane sighting as a lone bird flew over. So we following the crane & headed to Woodbridge Road and drove to its dead end. It was getting late and the air was full of birds moving to their night roosts. V's and V's of geese, ducks and Tundra Swans were flying above. From the ground looking up we ID'd the Ross's from the Snow Geese and the Greater White Fronts from the Cackling Geese. And the swans.....they are magnificent. We moved to the Phil & Marilyn Isenberg Sandhill Crane Reserve and joined the many other people out for the evening's fly-in. It was wonderful to see so many people enjoying these magnificent birds. After watching hundreds and hundreds of birds moving into their evening's location we too headed for home to do the same.



*Our Sunset at Woodbridge – Lisa Myers  
 Wood Ducks provided by Tom Grey  
 Sandhill Crane Family & Red  
 Shouldered Hawk taken during our day  
 by trip participant Karin Bredfelt.*

**Total Species Encountered During our day = 72 includes heard only (H)**

Tundra Swan	Black Crown Night Heron	Anna's Hummingbird	Cedar Waxwing flyover
Greater White-Fronted Goose	Turkey Vulture	Belted Kingfisher	Yellow Rumped Warbler
Aleutian / Cackling Goose	Northern Harrier	Nuttall's Woodpecker	Townsend's Warbler
Snow Goose	White-tail Kite	Northern Flicker	Spotted Towhee
Ross's Goose	Red Shouldered Hawk	Black Phoebe	White-crowned Sparrow
Mallard	Red-tail Hawk	Western Scrub-Jay	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Gadwall	Ferruginous Hawk	American Crow	Lincoln Sparrow
Northern Pintail	American Kestrel	Common Raven	Dark Eyed Junco
Northern Shoveler	Sandhill Cranes	White Breasted Nuthatch (H)	Red-winged Blackbird
Green-winged Teal	American Coot	Bewick's Wren	Brewer's Blackbird
Wood Duck	Black-necked Stilt	Marsh Wren	Great Tailed Grackle
Ringed Neck Pheasant	Long-billed Curlew	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Western Meadowlark
Pied-billed Grebe	Dowitcher	Western Bluebird	House Finch
Western Grebe	Wilson's Snipe	American Robin	American Goldfinch (H)
Double-crested Cormorant	Killdeer	Hermit Thrush	House Sparrow
Great Blue Heron	Ring-billed Gull	Varied Thrush	
Great Egret	California Gull	Northern Mockingbird	
Snowy Egret	Rock Pigeon	European Starling	<i>Lodi Lake -</i>
Green Heron	Mourning Dove	American Pipit	<i>Blue &amp; Gold Macaw (pet)</i>
			<i>Graylag Goose</i>