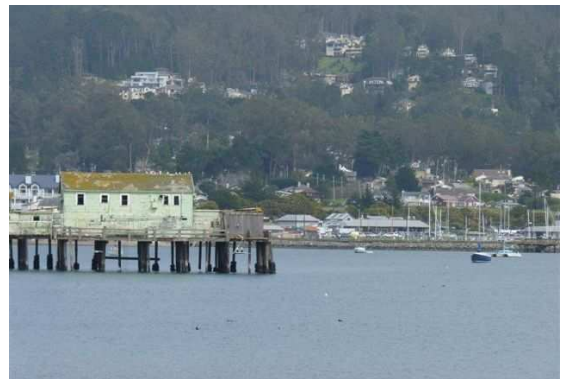


Final Trip Report – San Mateo County Coast – March 20, 2010

Spring has arrived and so have the birds!

Quick Overview – This trip was planned in partnership with *Let's Go Birding* and the *Los Gatos Birdwatcher*. Our goal was to get to the coast and bird two different coastal habitats, but our birding started in the open farm fields around the public restrooms. We were greeted by singing Warbling Vireos, a Brown Headed Cowbird and Violet Green Swallows. Barn Swallows were also here. The Jazzersize class in the adjacent community center provided wonderful background music in which to look for birds. With a peppy tune in the air and a bounce in our stride it felt as if we were actually burning calories while birding, but we soon left the cardiovascular action and headed to Burleigh Murray State Park. This woodland / riparian park is home to all the expected species like California Quail, very vocal Red Shouldered Hawks, Song Sparrows and Hutton's Vireos. The intense energy given off by the Allen's Hummingbirds could actually be felt as they wizzzzzzed past. The antics of three female Downy Woodpeckers and one male were a memorable hi-lite for all. Our morning in the woodland habitat soon changed to an afternoon on the coast as we moved on to Half Moon Bay's Princeton Harbor. It was here we worked on both our dog and shorebird ID. Red Knots, Whimbrels, Sanderlings and Black Oystercatchers were all here. We watched a Common Loon preening and noted its changing plumage from winter to spring. We even talked about the single Glaucous Winged Gull floating on the surface. Yes, really, we talked about gulls. We ended our day with a fabulous giant Bat Ray that was swimming in the harbor at the water's surface. California is a great place to be a birder.



Allen's Hummingbird male image provided by Ron Wolf / Half Moon Bay's Princeton Harbor taken by trip participant Hubert d'Hondt

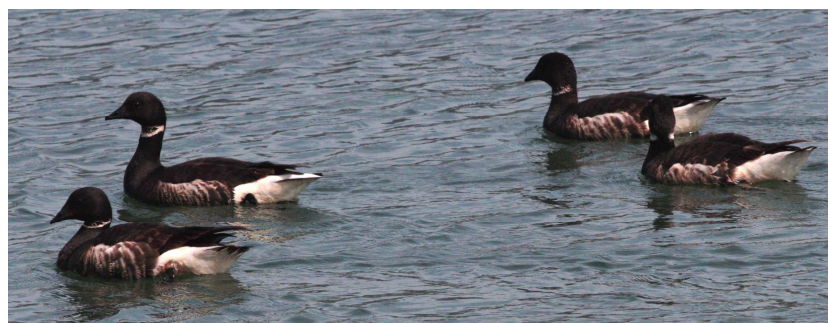
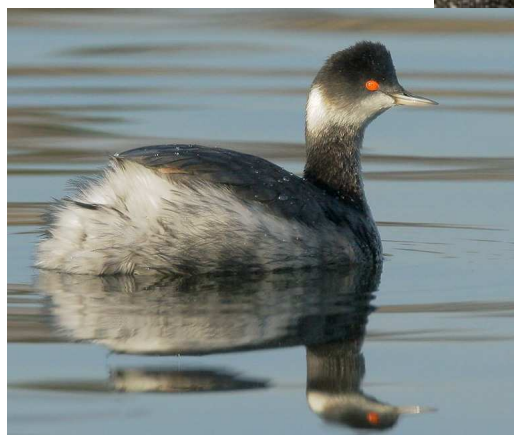
Memorable Observations!

- Orange Crowned Warblers singing loudly for all to hear
- Three female Downy Woodpeckers fighting over one male!
- First of Spring Wilson's Warblers darting across the trail
- Close looks at a curious Wrentit
- Four grebes in one harbor - Western, Clarks, Horned & Eared
- The loon went down and never came back up!
- A striking pair of Red Breasted Mergansers

Total Species Counted for the Day = 70 includes heard only (H)

Mallard	Great Blue Egret	Rock Pigeon	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Brandt	Snowy Egret	Mourning Dove	Wrentit
Red Breasted Merganser	Turkey Vulture	White Throated Swift (in route)	American Robin
Common Goldeneye	Red-tail Hawk	Anna's Hummingbird	European Starling
Surf Scoter	Red Shoulder Hawk	Allen's Hummingbird	Wilson's Warbler
Greater Scaup	Cooper's Hawk	Downy Woodpecker	Orange Crowned Warbler
Bufflehead	American Coot	Black Phoebe	Spotted Towhee
California Quail (H)	Black Bellied Plover	Hutton's Vireo	California Towhee
Common Loon	Black Oystercatcher	Warbling Vireo (H)	White-crowned Sparrow
Pacific Loon	Red Knot	Western Scrub-Jay	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Western Grebe	Sanderling	Steller's Jay	Song Sparrow
Clark's Grebe	Marbled Godwit	American Crow	Red-winged Blackbird
Horned Grebe	Whimbrel	Common Raven	Brewer's Blackbird
Eared Grebe	Willet	Barn Swallow	Brown Headed Cowbird
Brown Pelican	Western Gull	Violet Green Swallow	House Finch
Double-crested Cormorant	Bonaparte's Gull	Bushtit	Lesser Goldfinch
Brandt's Cormorant	Glaucous Winged Gull	Chestnut Backed Chickadee	American Goldfinch
		Pygmy Nuthatch (H)	House Sparrow

Birding the San Mateo County Coast – March 20, 2010



From top left to bottom – California Poison Oak colorfully coming out with the Spring in Burleigh Murray State Park - Hubert d'Hondt / Black Bellied Plover changing from basic winter plumage to alternate plumage and showing the start of its black belly – Hubert d'Hondt / One of several Sanderlings chasing the surf in Princeton Harbor – Nate Sanders / Eared Grebe image provided by Tom Grey / Four Black Brandt Geese were very tolerant of all the people and dogs visiting the coast this day – Nate Sanders / Two female Downy Woodpeckers preparing for battle (male was near) – Nate Sanders / One of many Orange Crowned Warblers found throughout the park. You can see the raised orange crown on this male - Nate Sanders / Bright, yellow mustard was in bloom throughout the county - Hubert d'Hondt