

## Wintering Raptors & Sandhill Cranes! San Joaquin County, November 2, 2008

**Quick Overview** – Birders often go outside to bird in the rain, but with heavy rain and thunderstorms predicted for Sat. Nov. 1, this much anticipated trip was re-scheduled for the next day. We started out later than usual because our goal was to find raptors on the eastern edge of San Joaquin County and bird into the evening to watch the fly-in of Sandhill Cranes. We birded the open country habitats around Flood & Waverly and stopped to observe all the raptors in hopes of finding new species. We had all variations of Red Tailed Hawks including the dark morph, along with several Ferruginous and also added Prairie Falcon to the list with the kestrels and a Merlin. After spending hours with the hawks, we headed west to hit Woodbridge Road for the afternoon and the evening fly-in of Sandhill Cranes and geese. We arrived in time to check out the many shorebirds and ducks that also take advantage of the flooded fields. As the sun set the cranes, geese and swans started to arrive by the hundreds; to hear their calls and observe their graceful flight is a sight to experience. These wild species breed in the northern most habitats of our continent and come to the Central Valley to spend their winter. As the evening grew darker both the stars and the mosquitoes came out and we could hear a Great Horned Owl calling from distant trees. It was our cue to head home.



When you get out to the areas around Flood & Waverly you feel like you are in the middle of nowhere, but all the bullet holes in every street sign remind you that you are not alone. Image taken by trip leader Lisa Myers.  
Enjoy more images on page 2.

### Memorable Observations!

- Prairie Falcon directly over head
- Ferruginous Hawk on the ground preening
- A flock of roughly 150 Horned Larks flying over the road above us
- Listening to the Swans, Geese and Cranes as they flew in for the evening
- Finding snipe – always a BINGO bird!

**Total Species Counted for the Day = 56 includes heard only (H)**  
Birds are listed in the taxonomic order currently recognized by the AOU

Tundra Swan	Northern Harrier	Killdeer	Common Raven
Cackling Goose	White-tail Kite	California Gull	Horned Lark
Greater White Fronted Goose	Red-tail Hawk	Rock Pigeon	Western Bluebird
Mallard	Ferruginous Hawk	Mourning Dove	Northern Mockingbird (H)
American Wigeon	Cooper's Hawk	Great Horned Owl (H)	European Starling
Northern Pintail	American Kestrel	Anna's Hummingbird	American Pipit
Northern Shoveler	Prairie Falcon	Belted Kingfisher	Cedar Waxwing
Green-winged Teal	Merlin	Nuttall's Woodpecker	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Cinnamon Teal	Sandhill Cranes	Black Phoebe	White-crowned Sparrow
Great Blue Heron	American Coot	Say's Phoebe	Savannah Sparrow
Great Egret	Black-necked Stilt	Loggerhead-Shrike	Brewer's Blackbird
Snowy Egret	Greater Yellowlegs	Western Scrub-Jay	Western Meadowlark
White Faced Ibis	Short-billed Dowitcher	Yellow-billed Magpie	Purple Finch
Turkey Vulture	Wilson's Snipe	American Crow	House Finch



*All images above were taken by trip participant Bill McCarey (except for the resident Woodbridge Road guard dog taken by Lisa)*

- 1. Savannah Sparrow out on Waverly*
- 2. Distant storm that never impacted our group*
- 3. Sandhill Cranes on the ground and flying in*
- 4. Our incredible sunset*
- 5. Tundra Swans flying out at dusk*