

BIRD TREKS

COMPLETE CALIFORNIA *Mountains, Oceans & Desert*

Dates Tuesday, 14 September through Monday, 27 September 2010: 14 days and 13 nights.
Plus a 5-day post-tour extension to **Bolsa Chica** and the **Salton Sea**, 27 Sep - 1 Oct.

California conjures up visions of sun-baked landscapes, scenic mountain vistas, the blue Pacific, and the expansive deserts to the south. The birds are no less spectacular, with everything from **Black-footed Albatross** to **Lawrence's Goldfinch**. During this two-week tour we will search for most of the birds that California has to offer. Habitats that we visit include marshlands and tidal wetlands around **Monterey Bay** and **Bodega Bay**, the scenic **Sierras** rich with montane birds, including seven species of woodpeckers, and the sage-filled lands east of the Sierras that harbor **Greater Sage-Grouse** and **Mountain Bluebird**. We will bird mixed oak woodlands that contain several species of owls and passerines not easily found in other habitats. **TWO** Shearwater Journeys pelagic trips are included for species such as **Long-tailed Jaeger**, **South Polar Skua**, **Xantus's Murrelet**, and **Buller's Shearwater**. On these trips and the **Santa Cruz Island** boat ride, there is always a chance for whales, including **Humpback** and the magnificent **Blue Whale**!

If you wish to continue the adventure, there is an extension to **Southern California** with stops in various habitats for **California Gnatcatcher**, **Spotted Dove**, **Allen's Hummingbird**, and a trip to the **Salton Sea**. Please see the separate itinerary for more information.

Some of the target species include . . .

White-tailed Kite	Great Gray Owl	American Dipper
Swainson's Hawk	Common Poorwill	California Gnatcatcher
Prairie Falcon	Black Swift	Mountain Bluebird
Sooty Grouse	Anna's Hummingbird	Townsend's Solitaire
Greater Sage-Grouse	Calliope Hummingbird	Sage Thrasher
Mountain Quail	Allen's Hummingbird	California Thrasher
California Quail	Lewis's Woodpecker	Le Conte's Thrasher
Sora	Williamson's Sapsucker	MacGillivray's Warbler
Pacific Golden-Plover	Red-breasted Sapsucker	Townsend's Warbler
Snowy Plover	Nuttall's Woodpecker	Hermit Warbler
Black Oystercatcher	White-headed Woodpecker	Green-tailed Towhee
American Avocet	Black-backed Woodpecker	California Towhee
Wandering Tattler	Pacific-slope Flycatcher	Black-chinned Sparrow
Long-billed Curlew	Gray Flycatcher	Sage Sparrow
Marbled Godwit	Cassin's Vireo	Brewer's Sparrow
Black Turnstone	Island Scrub-Jay	Tricolored Blackbird



Great Gray Owl - - Randy Miller

Additional target species . . .

Surfbird	Yellow-billed Magpie	Yellow-headed Blackbird
Wilson's Phalarope	Mountain Chickadee	Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch
Spotted Dove	Pygmy Nuthatch	Pine Grosbeak
Spotted Owl	Wrentit	Lawrence's Goldfinch

Pelagic species that we hope to find . . .

Black-footed Albatross	Black-vented Shearwater	Long-tailed Jaeger
Laysan Albatross	Black Storm-Petrel	Arctic Tern
Northern Fulmar	Ashy Storm-Petrel	Marbled Murrelet
Pink-footed Shearwater	Red-necked Phalarope	Xantus's Murrelet
Flesh-footed Shearwater	Red Phalarope	Cassin's Auklet
Buller's Shearwater	South Polar Skua	Rhinoceros Auklet
Sooty Shearwater	Pomarine Jaeger	Tufted Puffin



Pelagic Cormorant

-- John Puschock

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COMPLETE CALIFORNIA

14 - 27 September 2010

DAY AGENDA

- 1 Plan to arrive at the San Jose, California Airport by about noon. This is where the tour begins. We'll spend the afternoon birding in and around Bodega Bay and Point Reyes. A wide variety of passerines and shorebirds is possible but is heavily dependent upon the weather. Overcast and foggy skies can produce large passerine fallouts at Point Reyes and we will hope for this. Other species on Point Reyes to look for include **Tricolored Blackbird** and **American and Pacific Golden-Plovers**. Additional shorebird possibilities include **Baird's, Western, Least, Semipalmated, Stilt** and **Pectoral Sandpipers, Ruff**, and hopefully something Asian! First night near Petaluma.
- 2 We will spend the morning around Bodega Bay and then head southward, with a stop at the Marin Headlands Hawk Watch. Here we may see a variety of raptors including **Sharp-shinned, Cooper's, Red-tailed, and Red-shouldered Hawks, White-tailed Kite, Prairie and Peregrine Falcons**, and possibly **Golden Eagle**. Second night in Petaluma.
- 3 Today will be a travel day. We will start by heading toward the Central Valley to look for **Yellow-billed Magpie** and **Swainson's Hawk**. **Western Bluebird** and **Acorn Woodpecker** are a couple of likely candidates in the Sierra foothills. Late afternoon and evening birding will be near the entrance to Yosemite National Park for **owls** and montane species such as **Mountain Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-headed Woodpecker**, and possibly **American Dipper**. We'll do a dusk search for **Great Gray Owl**. Overnight in Oakhurst.

[Day 4 continues on page 3]

- 4 The entire day will be spent birding in Yosemite looking for species including **Sooty Grouse, Northern Goshawk, Mountain Quail, Black-backed, White-headed, Pileated, and Hairy Woodpeckers, Williamson's and Red-breasted Sapsuckers, Hermit, Nashville, and MacGillivray's Warblers, Pine and Evening Grosbeaks, and Cassin's Finch.** It will be difficult to keep our eyes on the birds, as the scenery is truly spectacular. Evening birding will be at Mono County Park looking for **Yellow-headed Blackbird, Sora, Virginia Rail, Eared Grebe, and Red-necked Phalarope.** Overnight on the eastern side of the Sierras in Lee Vining.
- 5 Our day will be spent in the sage and woodlands east of the Sierras. We will start early with a visit to Crowley Lake for **Greater Sage-Grouse, Prairie Falcon, Sage Thrasher, Sage and Brewer's Sparrows, and Gray Flycatcher.** A special visit will be made to Aspendell for **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch.** Birding in the woodlands and other areas around Lee Vining can produce **Lewis's Woodpecker, Mountain Bluebird, Townsend's Solitaire, Calliope and Rufous Hummingbirds, Green-tailed Towhee, and Pygmy Nuthatch.** We'll go out in the evening to try for owls and **Common Poorwill.** A second night in the same motel in Lee Vining.
- 6 Morning birding in Yosemite will be for any species that we may have missed. Then we head westward toward Monterey Bay with a stop en route to look for **Spotted Owl** and any **rarities** that may be on the hotline. Overnight in Watsonville.



Laysan Albatross is possible
on one of our days at sea.

- - John Puschock

7 The first of our two scheduled pelagic trips will take us into world-famous Monterey Bay. Monterey Bay is bisected by a huge submarine canyon twice the size of the Grand Canyon. This geography allows for rich and diverse wildlife to be viewed within a short distance of land. Potential species include **Pink-footed, Buller's, Sooty, and Black-vented Shearwaters, Black and Ashy Storm-Petrels, all three jaegers, South Polar Skua, Arctic Tern, Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets, and Marbled and Xantus's Murrelets.** We will hope for a rarity such as **Tufted Puffin, Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel, Streaked, Wedge-tailed, and Manx Shearwaters, Laysan Albatross, or a tropicbird.** **Blue and Humpback Whales** are a distinct possibility, as are four additional species of **cetaceans.** We'll do some evening birding looking for species not seen on the previous day. Our second night in Watsonville.

[Day 8 is on page 4]

- 8 We will start on the coast north of Santa Cruz with a visit to Ano Nuevo for **Black Swifts** that nest in shoreline caves. We will then turn our attention to finding passerines that may include a variety of **warblers** such as **Wilson's**, **MacGillivray's**, **Townsend's**, and possibly **Hermit**. We'll return to the habitat that fringes Monterey Bay and look for **Snowy Plover**, **Baird's Sandpiper**, and rocky shorebirds including **Black Oystercatcher**, **Surfbird**, **Wandering Tattler**, and **Black Turnstone**. Passerine opportunities include migrating flocks that may contain **Violet-green Swallow** and **Vaux's Swift**. There will be owling in the evening for those who want to stay up late. Our third night in Watsonville.
- 9 We will bird the Watsonville area on the edge of Monterey Bay with an introduction to some of the common birds of this area, including **Long-billed Curlew**, **Marbled Godwit**, **Wilson's Phalarope**, **Short-billed Dowitcher**, **Black-necked Stilt**, and **American Avocet**. A stop in oak woodland could yield **California Quail**, **Wrentit**, **Anna's Hummingbird**, **California Towhee**, **Nuttall's Woodpecker**, **Hutton's** and **Cassin's Vireos**, and **Chestnut-backed Chickadee**. Fourth night in Watsonville.
- 10 Today is the Monterey Seavalley pelagic, also with Shearwater Journeys. Here are some of Debi's comments from recent trips: This report covers **Shearwater Journeys'** three spectacular sea birding trips on Monterey Bay on Sep 9, 10, and 11. This is surely one of the most productive times to get out to see seabirds. Birders who participated in all three of these trips recorded nearly 35 species of seabirds, including 12 species of tubenoses and 12 species of marine mammals, and enjoyed some of the best weather conditions. Highlights were many. For three days in a row, we found the storm-petrel flocks which included **Wilson's**, **Fork-tailed**, **Ashy**, **Black**, and **Least Storm-Petrels**; one **Manx Shearwater** was found each day; **Flesh-footed Shearwater** was found on two of the three days, with a high count of 10 on Sep 10th; **South Polar Skuas** were found every day; and it was a grand slam on all of the **jaeger species** on two of the three days; on Sep 10th, 201 jaegers were recorded, of these an astounding **152** were **Pomarine Jaegers**; a **Short-finned Mako Shark** made a star performance; and finally, the **Orca** show was just great. For the full species list for these and other California pelagic trips, click on the following Internet address for all of the information: <http://www.shearwaterjourneys.com/>. Fifth and final night in Watsonville.
- 11 Today we journey southward along Highway 1 in search of **California Condors** that have been released in the area. We will spend ample time looking for this spectacular species brought back from the brink of extinction, although we are not guaranteed of seeing them. Our afternoon drive will take us to Ventura, with additional birding stops for migrants en route. Overnight in Taft or Ventura.



Search for **Wandering Tattler** on the rocks.

- 12 Departure for a full day trip to Santa Cruz Island for the endemic **Island Scrub-Jay** and the Santa Cruz Island races of **Bewick's Wren** and **Pacific-slope Flycatcher**. **Royal Tern**, **Xantus's Murrelet**, and **Black-vented Shearwater** are possible on the boat trip to the island, as are **Blue** and **Humpback Whales**. Overnight in the same motel.
- 13 We will head east to southern San Joaquin County in search of **Le Conte's Thrasher** and **Sage Sparrow**. Dependent upon our previous sightings during the tour, we may also bird Mount Pinos in search of **Calliope Hummingbird**, **Mountain Quail**, and **Black-chinned Sparrow**. If this is not necessary, we will continue to the Los Angeles Basin where we will look for **Spotted Dove**, **Allen's Hummingbird** and, time permitting, **California Gnatcatcher**. Overnight near Long Beach or Redondo Beach.
- 14 For those participating in just this portion of the California Tour, we'll arrive in Los Angeles in time for departing flights from Los Angeles International Airport.

**OR, for more California Birding Adventures, you may continue on to
SAN DIEGO & the SALTON SEA, 27 September - 1 October 2010.
See separate itinerary for the complete details.**

A map of the tour route can be seen by clicking on:

<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?hl=en&ie=UTF8&msa=0&msid=117812928873209532533.0004626ecf56496f430c4&ll=37.374523,-121.935196&spn=0.384149,0.881653&z=11>

PLEASE NOTE Portions of the itinerary may need to be adjusted to coincide with dates and locations of the pelagic trips.

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Wilson's is the most likely of the three phalaropes to be seen at an inland location.

- - David Nelson

[Important details on page 6]

Leader Our Complete California Tour will be led by Jason Horn of Emmaus, Pennsylvania, or John Puschock from Seattle. Jason and John are highly experienced birding tour leaders and will help you to have a bird-filled, worry-free experience. They have both led numerous Pacific Coast tours. Jason led our very successful 2007 California Tour.

Price The tour fee is \$4195, based upon double occupancy. Single accommodations can be arranged for an extra fee of \$755.

Includes Expert guide service, THREE pelagic trips, ground transportation and entrance fees within California, ALL meals, and lodging for the entire tour. ALL tips are also included in the tour fee, except for anything that you may wish to give to your tour leader(s) and boat crews.

Does not include the cost of alcoholic beverages, items of a personal nature, or air transportation to San Jose and from Los Angeles. Upon request BIRD TREKS will help you obtain the best possible airfare and coordinate your arrival and departure.

Extra Services We offer the services of our exclusive Bird Treks travel agent, Lori Heathcote, in arranging your air travel. Lori has 24 years of experience in the travel industry and is a veteran birder. Contact her through Bailey Travel at 1-800-224-5399, or you can e-mail Lori at lori@baileytravel.com. By dealing with Lori you have the security of a 24-hour toll-free telephone number in case of any travel emergency. She can also assist you with all pre- and post-tour travel plans. There may be a fee for these services.

Deposit A \$1000 deposit will assure your reservation on the tour. The balance is due 14 July 2010. Send your deposit SOON so that we can secure the least expensive airfare to San Jose and RESERVE YOUR SPOTS ON THE PELAGIC TRIPS, which are always at a premium.



Buller's Shearwater is distinctively marked on the upper wing.

- - John Puschock

Refund & Cancellation Policy With written notice more than 60 days prior to the first day of the tour, 100% of your deposit will be refunded, minus a \$75 service fee. With 30-60 days notice, you will receive a 50% refund of the full cost of the tour. No refund can be made with less than 30 days notice. You will receive a full refund if you provide a replacement for your spot on the tour. No partial refund can be given once your tour begins. We **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect your investment. Contact Access America at 1-800-284-8300 and mention BIRD TREKS (ACCAM # F021096). You can apply by phone or via the Internet at www.accessamerica.com.