

FIELD REPORT

WINTER SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

JANUARY 22–28, 2023



Light-footed Ridgway's Rail ©Brennan Mulrooney

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By Brennan Mulrooney



California Thrasher ©Brennan Mulrooney

Once again, our Winter Southern California tour experienced delightful weather. Temperatures were a little cooler than normal, and our day in the Imperial Valley was a little breezy, but given the extreme weather that California had been enduring this winter, we were very pleased.

We began by visiting the coastal sage scrub of San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve. The native vegetation here is home to many California specialty bird species, many of which are named for the state. The main target bird at this spot is the federally threatened California Gnatcatcher. These birds don't like cold early mornings, so we had to work at it a bit, but we were eventually rewarded with excellent views of one foraging in the fragrant California Sagebrush growing beside the trail. As we tracked the gnatcatcher, we enjoyed great views of Bushtits and Wrentit, California Thrasher, California Scrub-Jay, and California Towhee. California Quail called from the scrub around us but never came out where we could see them.

Our next stop was La Jolla Cove, where we enjoyed stunning views of the Pacific Ocean as we scoured the rocky shoreline finding rocky shore specialists like Black Turnstone, Black Oystercatcher, Pelagic Cormorant, and Brandt's Cormorants. We were entertained by the breeding displays of the Brandt's Cormorants as they sat on their nests mere feet away from us. The Black-vented Shearwaters were foraging well offshore today, but with some scanning we picked up a couple in the scope as they skimmed low over the ocean's surface. "California" Brown Pelicans, beautiful Heermann's Gulls, Harbor Seals, and California Sea Lions all showed wonderfully for us.

After lunch we visited Mission Bay and found a large diversity of waterbirds that included Brant, Greater Scaup, Eared Grebe, Horned Grebe, Pacific Loon, and Common Loon. A wintering Long-tailed Duck was a nice addition and a first for me on this tour!



Black Oystercatcher ©Brennan Mulrooney



Bonaparte's Gull ©Brennan Mulrooney

We continued our day birding the mudflats of the San Diego River. We found a tremendous number and diversity of waterbirds here. There were ducks, gulls, terns, herons, and many shorebirds to sort through. Little Blue Heron and Reddish Egret are both very uncommon in California, and we managed to see both well. Two surprises in the river were a young Snow Goose and a Bonaparte's Gull that foraged almost at our feet!

Our second day along the San Diego coast was full of highlights as we worked our way south of the city and around the bottom of San Diego Bay.

We started with another great waterbird show, this time along the shore of San Diego Bay. Huge numbers of ducks, gulls, grebes, and sandpipers were present, and we managed to find both Long-billed and Short-billed dowitchers, as well as Western and Clark's grebes.

Down in the Tijuana River Valley we picked up a nice mix of new birds including Hutton's Vireo, Townsend's Warbler, and a surprise flock of Greater White-fronted Geese. A gull flock on a recently flooded sod farm produced a Short-billed Gull, which is a species with a new name (no longer Mew Gull) and one that we seldom see on this tour. Along the edge of the salt marsh at the Tijuana Slough we had spectacular looks at the endangered Light-footed Ridgway's Rail and found several Belding's Savannah Sparrows perched up in the cordgrass. The Belding's subspecies is endemic to the salt marshes of Southern California and Baja California. It is on California's endangered species list.

After lunch we moved inland and quickly started adding some new species. At Lake Murray we picked out a tiny little Cackling Goose from a large flock of Canadas. We were also entertained by a Scaly-breasted Munia that was busy gathering nest material from Pampas Grass in the parking lot. At Mission Trails Regional Park we found Golden-crowned and Fox sparrows and had a nice comparison of California and Blue-gray gnatcatchers. Next, we picked up my son Declan on his walk home from school and he accompanied us on a visit to Santee Lakes, where we were treated to fantastic views of a wintering Lewis's Woodpecker. We ended the day chasing a raucous mixed flock of Red-crowned and Lilac-crowned parrots through the town of El Cajon.

On day three, we started out with a visit to South Mission Beach to view a winter roost of Snowy Plovers. Normally we find 20 to 50 individuals nestled down in the sand, but this year we only found one! Massive surf from a recent winter storm had washed over the beach, so I suspect that may have disrupted the normal roost behavior. Next, we scanned the large rocks of the Mission Bay Jetty and were rewarded with a small group of Surfbirds



Golden-crowned Sparrow ©Brennan Mulrooney

foraging near the waterline. We watched as they dodged the breaking waves in search of food in the rocks.

Soon we were heading east to the town of Ramona where we were in a race with the approaching Santa Ana winds to find a Bell's Sparrow. The breezes were just picking up when we found one singing from the Chamise scrub. Out on the nearby Ramona Grasslands we added Bald and Golden eagles, as well as a gorgeous Ferruginous Hawk. Also foraging out in the grasslands were Mountain Bluebirds, Tricolored Blackbirds, and Western Meadowlarks.



Snowy Plover ©Brennan Mulrooney

On our way down the desert slope, we were brought to a screeching halt by a Prairie Falcon perched just off the side of the road. Next, we made a stop at Yaqui Well in Anza Borrego Desert State Park and found a large flock of Phainopepla and some Verdin. Finally, we arrived at the Salton Sea, over 200' below sea level. We spent the end of the day with our first Snow and Ross's geese, Sandhill Cranes, and a huge diversity and number of waterbirds foraging in freshwater impoundments at the Sonny Bono Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge. A careful scanning of the amassed shorebirds revealed several Stilt Sandpipers with their tails in the air as they fed among the dowitchers.

Our full day at the Salton Sea took us all over the Imperial Valley and along the shore of the southeast corner of the Salton Sea. We started at a cluster of ponds that held so many Northern Pintails we could barely see the water. Then we were off to the town of



Prairie Falcon © Brennan Mulrooney

Brawley, where we added several desert species like Abert's Towhee, Gila Woodpecker, and Ladder-backed Woodpecker. A male Vermilion Flycatcher added quite a splash of color, and we had great views of a Red-naped Sapsucker. We found Costa's Hummingbirds at a feeder in the adjacent neighborhood and also saw some White-winged Doves on the wires in town. In the town of Calipatria we paused to see their remarkably tall flagpole that allows the American flag to fly just above sea level. In a yard on the edge of town we found a small group of Inca Doves. A tiny pond by a huge feed lot produced a Neotropic Cormorant, a species that is just starting to get established in California. At the headquarters of the Sonny Bono Salton Sea NWR, we found Common Ground-Doves, Black-tailed Gnatcatchers, and a roosting Barn Owl. The Imperial Valley is known for its population of Burrowing Owls, and we were able to get some excellent looks at a few of them right by the road.

Near the end of the day, we stopped to marvel at a huge flock of gulls in a field and were shocked to see a small group of Mountain Plovers fly across the road in front of us. We watched as they were repeatedly flushed by hunting American Kestrels, and we eventually had nice views as they hid in the furrows of



Sandhill Cranes and mixed white geese ©Brennan Mulrooney

a bare dirt field, their brown backs perfectly matching the color of the soil. This species had been very scarce recently, and we were very pleased to stumble onto these birds.

Our last day brought us back into the mountains, starting low on the desert slope with gorgeous Black-throated Sparrows and nice views of Rock Wren. Then working our way higher, we started adding species like Oak Titmouse and Band-tailed Pigeon. Well-stocked feeders in the little town of Pine Valley produced Steller's Jay along with Pine Siskin and both Cassin's and Purple finches. At the highest elevations, up in the pine forest we found Hairy Woodpecker, Mountain Chickadee, Pygmy Nuthatch, and Red Crossbill.

In all, we tallied 204 species in 5 days of birding in mid-winter—amazing! We saw a great diversity of habitats and enjoyed wonderful weather. I can't wait to see what next year has in store for us.



Burrowing Owl ©Brennan Mulrooney

ITINERARY

January 22 - arrival in San Diego

January 23 – San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve, La Jolla Cove, Mission Bay at Kendall-Frost Marsh, Crown Point Park and Vacation Island, Quivira Basin, San Diego River Flood Control Channel at Robb Field, Ocean Beach and Famosa Slough.

January 24 – Bayfront Park at J Street, Nestor Park, Tijuana River Valley at Dairy Mart Ponds, Sod Farm and Bird and Butterfly Garden. Tijuana Slough National Wildlife Refuge (Seacoast Dr), Imperial Beach, Silver Strand, Lake Murray, Mission Trails, Santee Lakes and El Cajon Valley.

January 25 – South Mission Beach, Quivira Basin, Ramona Bell's Sparrow Spot, Ramona Grasslands, Yaqui Well in Anza Borrego Desert State Park, Unit 1 of the Sonny Bono Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge (SBSSNWR)

January 26 – Keystone Rd Wetlands, Cattle Call Park, Residential Brawley, Calipatria, SBSSNWR Headquarters, Southeastern Shoreline of the Salton Sea from Obsidian Butte to the mouth of the New River.

January 27 – Fig Lagoon, Mountain Springs Rd, Pine Valley, Paso Picacho Campground, Lake Cuyamaca, Stonewall Mine, Lindo Lake

January 28 – Departures for home

KEY

S = San Diego and surrounding areas

M = Mountains, Anza-Borrego Desert

SS = Salton Sea and surrounding agricultural areas of the Imperial Valley

SBSSNWR = Sonny Bono Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge

bold-faced species indicate birds of rare, casual, or accidental occurrence

underlined species indicate birds of very uncommon occurrence or species which occur regularly but in such low densities as to be easily missed

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	NOTES
Waterfowl	Anatidae	
Snow Goose	<i>Anser caerulescens</i>	SBSSNWR
Ross's Goose	<i>Anser rossii</i>	SBSSNWR
<u>Greater White-fronted Goose</u>	<i>Anser albifrons</i>	S,M – a major invasion year
Brant	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	S
<u>Cackling Goose</u>	<i>Branta hutchinsii</i>	S – a single bird at Lake Murray
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	S,M
Wood Duck	<i>Aix sponsa</i>	S
Blue-winged Teal	<i>Spatula discors</i>	S,M
Cinnamon Teal	<i>Spatula cyanoptera</i>	S,SS
Northern Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	S,M,SS
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	S,M,SS
American Wigeon	<i>Mareca americana</i>	S,M,SS
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	S,M,SS
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	S,M,SS
Green-winged Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	S,M,SS
Canvasback	<i>Aythya valisineria</i>	S,M,SS
Redhead	<i>Aythya americana</i>	S,SS

Ring-necked Duck	<i>Aythya collaris</i>	S,SS
<u>Greater Scaup</u>	<i>Aythya marila</i>	S – a few in Mission and San Diego Bays
Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>	S,M,SS
Surf Scoter	<i>Melanitta perspicillata</i>	S
Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	S – a wintering bird in Mission Bay
Bufflehead	<i>Bucephala albeola</i>	S,M,SS
Common Merganser	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	M – one of our last new species
Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	S
Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>	S,M,SS
New World Quail	Odontophoridae	
California Quail	<i>Callipepla californica</i>	S – heard only
Gambel's Quail	<i>Callipepla gambelii</i>	SS
Grouse & Allies	Phasianidae	
Wild Turkey	<i>Meleagris gallopavo</i>	M
Grebes	Podicipedidae	
Pied-billed Grebe	<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	S,M,SS
Horned Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	S
Eared Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	S
Western Grebe	<i>Aechmophorus occidentalis</i>	S
Clark's Grebe	<i>Aechmophorus clarkii</i>	S
Pigeons and Doves	Columbidae	
Rock Pigeon (I)	<i>Columba livia</i>	S,M,SS
Band-tailed Pigeon	<i>Patagioenas fasciata</i>	M
Eurasian Collared-Dove (I)	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	S,M,SS
<u>Inca Dove</u>	<i>Columbina inca</i>	SS – a few in Calipatria
Common Ground-Dove	<i>Columbina passerina</i>	SS
<u>White-winged Dove</u>	<i>Zenaida asiatica</i>	SS – a few in Brawley
Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	S,M,SS
Cuckoos and Allies	Cuculidae	
Greater Roadrunner	<i>Geococcyx californianus</i>	SS – a lucky spot from the freeway
Swifts	Apodidae	
White-throated Swift	<i>Aeronautes saxatalis</i>	S
Hummingbirds	Trochilidae	
Anna's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte anna</i>	S,M,SS
Costa's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte costae</i>	SS
Allen's Hummingbird	<i>Selasphorus sasin</i>	S
Rails and Allies	Rallidae	
Ridgway's Rail	<i>Rallus obsoletus</i>	S,SS – great views of the “Light-

Sora	<i>Porzana carolina</i>	footed" race in the Tijuana Slough,
Common Gallinule	<i>Gallinula galeata</i>	voted favorite bird of the tour
American Coot	<i>Fulica americana</i>	SS – heard only
Cranes	Gruidae	S
Sandhill Crane	<i>Antigone canadensis</i>	S,M,SS
Stilts and Avocets	Recurvirostridae	SS – very few again this year
Black-necked Stilt	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>	SS
American Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra americana</i>	S,SS
Oystercatchers	Haematopodidae	
<u>Black Oystercatcher</u>	<i>Haematopus bachmani</i>	S – absent most years, we had a great view of one at La Jolla
Plovers and Lapwings	Charadriidae	
Black-bellied Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	S,SS
Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	S,SS
Semipalmated Plover	<i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>	S,SS
<u>Mountain Plover</u>	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	SS – There had been no reports for 3 weeks, so we knew the odds were against us, but we got lucky spotting a small flock late in the day
Snowy Plover	<i>Charadrius nivosus</i>	S – a single bird at Mission Beach
Sandpipers and Allies	Scolopacidae	
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	S
Long-billed Curlew	<i>Numenius americanus</i>	S,SS – large flocks in fields in the Imperial Valley are always fun to see
Marbled Godwit	<i>Limosa fedoa</i>	S,SS
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	S
Black Turnstone	<i>Arenaria melanocephala</i>	S
<u>Surfbird</u>	<i>Calidris virgata</i>	S
<u>Stilt Sandpiper</u>	<i>Calidris himantopus</i>	SS
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	S
Least Sandpiper	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>	S,SS
Western Sandpiper	<i>Calidris mauri</i>	S,SS
Short-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus griseus</i>	S
Long-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>	S,SS
Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularius</i>	S,SS
Greater Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>	S,SS
Willet	<i>Tringa semipalmata</i>	S,SS
Gulls and Terns	Laridae	
Bonaparte's Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus philadelphia</i>	S – Robb Field

Heermann's Gull	<i>Larus heermanni</i>	S – Simply beautiful gulls
<u>Short-billed Gull</u>	<i>Larus brachyrhynchus</i>	S – a single bird in a gull flock in the Tijuana River Valley
Ring-billed Gull	<i>Larus delawarensis</i>	S,SS
Western Gull	<i>Larus occidentalis</i>	S
California Gull	<i>Larus californicus</i>	S,SS
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	SS
Forster's Tern	<i>Sterna forsteri</i>	S
Royal Tern	<i>Thalasseus maximus</i>	S
Loons	Gaviidae	
Pacific Loon	<i>Gavia pacifica</i>	S
Common Loon	<i>Gavia immer</i>	S – more than we would have liked?
Shearwaters and Petrels	Procellariidae	
Black-vented Shearwater	<i>Puffinus opisthomelas</i>	S – seen distantly in the scope by a few
Cormorants	Phalacrocoracidae	
Brandt's Cormorant	<i>Urile penicillatus</i>	S – spectacular views of breeding birds on the cliffs at La Jolla
Pelagic Cormorant	<i>Urile pelagicus</i>	S – single bird on the cliff in La Jolla
Double-crested Cormorant	<i>Nannopterum auritum</i>	S,M,SS
<u>Neotropic Cormorant</u>	<i>Nannopterum brasilianum</i>	SS – Now resident in small numbers
Pelicans	Pelecanidae	
American White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>	SS – only one! we had to chase one at Fig Lagoon
Brown Pelican	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	S
Herons and Egrets	Ardeidae	
Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>	S,M,SS
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	S,SS
Snowy Egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>	S,SS
<u>Little Blue Heron</u>	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	S – breeding in very small numbers in San Diego now
<u>Reddish Egret</u>	<i>Egretta rufescens</i>	S – one or two are seen every year in San Diego
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	SS – first found breeding in the Imperial Valley in 1969, now abundant
Black-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	S
<u>Yellow-crowned Night-Heron</u>	<i>Nyctanassa violacea</i>	S – breeding in very small numbers in San Diego now
Ibises and Spoonbills	Threskiornithidae	
White-faced Ibis	<i>Plegadis chihi</i>	S,SS – we had a surprise flock at San Elijo Lagoon

New World Vultures

Turkey Vulture

Cathartidae*Cathartes aura*

S,M,SS

Osprey

Osprey

Pandionidae*Pandion haliaetus*

S – including a pair on a nest by the bay

Hawks Eagles and Kites

White-tailed Kite

Golden Eagle

Northern Harrier

Cooper's Hawk

Bald Eagle

Red-shouldered Hawk

Red-tailed Hawk

Ferruginous Hawk

Accipitridae*Elanus leucurus**Aquila chrysaetos**Circus hudsonius**Accipiter cooperii**Haliaeetus leucocephalus**Buteo lineatus**Buteo jamaicensis**Buteo regalis*

S,SS

S

S,M,SS

S,SS

M – An adult in Ramona

S

S,M,SS

M

Barn Owls

Barn Owl

Tytonidae*Tyto alba*

SS – Roosting in a palm at SBSSNWR

Owls

Burrowing Owl

Strigidae*Athene cunicularia*SS – Great looks in the Imperial Valley.
Voted favorite bird of the tour!**Kingfishers**

Belted Kingfisher

Alcedinidae*Megasceryle alcyon*

S,SS

WoodpeckersRed-naped SapsuckerLewis's Woodpecker

Acorn Woodpecker

Gila Woodpecker

Nuttall's Woodpecker

Ladder-backed Woodpecker

Hairy Woodpecker

Northern Flicker

Picidae*Sphyrapicus nuchalis**Melanerpes lewis**Melanerpes formicivorus**Melanerpes uropygialis**Dryobates nuttallii**Dryobates scalaris**Dryobates villosus**Colaptes auratus*

SS – in Brawley

S – fantastic views at Santee Lakes

M

SS

S

SS

M

M

Falcons and Caracaras

American Kestrel

Merlin

Peregrine Falcon

Prairie Falcon**Falconidae***Falco sparverius**Falco columbarius**Falco peregrinus**Falco mexicanus*

S,M,SS

SS

SS

M – great views of a perched bird

Parrots and Parakeets

Red-crowned Parrot (I)

Lilac-crowned Parrot (I)

Psittacidae*Amazona viridigenalis**Amazona finschi*S – in a large flock with the following
S – just added to the official California
checklist, so should be added to ABA
list soon

(Red-masked Parakeet) (I)	<i>Psittacara erythrogenys</i>	S – not “countable” currently, but probably in the next few years
Tyrant Flycatchers	Tyrannidae	
Black Phoebe	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>	S,M,SS
Say's Phoebe	<i>Sayornis saya</i>	S,M,SS
<u>Vermilion Flycatcher</u>	<i>Pyrocephalus rubinus</i>	SS – a nice surprise in Brawley
Cassin's Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus vociferans</i>	S
Vireos	Vireonidae	
Hutton's Vireo	<i>Vireo huttoni</i>	S – excellent views at Dairy Mart Pond
Shrikes	Laniidae	
Loggerhead Shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	M – a single bird at Stonewall Mine
Crows, Jays & Magpies	Corvidae	
Steller's Jay	<i>Cyanocitta stelleri</i>	M – a potential split to look forward to, this was the coastal <i>stelleri</i> subspecies
California Scrub-Jay	<i>Aphelocoma californica</i>	S,M
American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	S,M
Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	S,M,SS
Penduline-Tits	Remizidae	
Verdin	<i>Auriparus flaviceps</i>	SS
Chickadees and Tits	Paridae	
Mountain Chickadee	<i>Poecile gambeli</i>	S,M
Oak Titmouse	<i>Baeolophus inornatus</i>	M
Larks	Alaudidae	
Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	SS
Swallows	Hirundinidae	
Tree Swallow	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>	S,SS
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>	SS
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	S,SS
Long-tailed Tits	Aegithalidae	
Bushtit	<i>Psaltiriparus minimus</i>	S
Old World Warblers	Sylviidae	
Wrentit	<i>Chamaea fasciata</i>	S
Kinglets	Regulidae	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	<i>Regulus calendula</i>	S,M,SS
Waxwings	Bombycillidae	

Cedar Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>	S
Silky-flycatchers Phainopepla	Ptiliognathidae <i>Phainopepla nitens</i>	M
Nuthatches White-breasted Nuthatch	Sittidae <i>Sitta carolinensis</i>	M – the coastal subspecies known as “Slender-billed Nuthatch”, another potential split to look out for
Pygmy Nuthatch	<i>Sitta pygmaea</i>	M
Gnatcatchers Blue-gray Gnatcatcher California Gnatcatcher Black-tailed Gnatcatcher	Poliophtilidae <i>Poliophtila caerulea</i> <i>Poliophtila californica</i> <i>Poliophtila melanura</i>	SS S – showed well at San Elijo Lagoon SBSSNWR – great views on the Rock Hill trail
Wrens Rock Wren House Wren Marsh Wren Bewick's Wren	Troglodytidae <i>Salpinctes obsoletus</i> <i>Troglodytes aedon</i> <i>Cistothorus palustris</i> <i>Thryomanes bewickii</i>	M SS S,SS – Heard only this year S
Thrashers and Allies California Thrasher Northern Mockingbird	Mimidae <i>Toxostoma redivivum</i> <i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	S,M S,M
Starlings European Starling (I)	Sturnidae <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	S,M,SS
Thrushes and Allies Western Bluebird Mountain Bluebird Hermit Thrush American Robin	Turdidae <i>Sialia mexicana</i> <i>Sialia currucoides</i> <i>Catharus guttatus</i> <i>Turdus migratorius</i>	S,M M,SS S S,M,SS – A HUGE invasion year
Waxbills & Allies Scaly-breasted Munia (I)	Estrildidae <i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	S
Old World Sparrows House Sparrow (I)	Passeridae <i>Passer domesticus</i>	S,M,SS
Wagtails and Pipits American Pipit	Motacillidae <i>Anthus rubescens</i>	S,M
Siskins and Allies House Finch	Fringillidae <i>Haemorhous mexicanus</i>	S,M,SS

Purple Finch	<i>Haemorhous purpureus</i>	M
<u>Cassin's Finch</u>	<i>Haemorhous cassinii</i>	M – not present every winter
Red Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	M – unexpected at Paso Picacho
<u>Pine Siskin</u>	<i>Spinus pinus</i>	M – at the feeders in Pine Valley
Lesser Goldfinch	<i>Spinus psaltria</i>	M
<u>Lawrence's Goldfinch</u>	<i>Spinus lawrencei</i>	M – heard only at In-Koh-Pah
<u>American Goldfinch</u>	<i>Spinus tristis</i>	S

Sparrows and Allies

Black-throated Sparrow
Lark Sparrow
Chipping Sparrow
Fox Sparrow
Dark-eyed Junco
White-crowned Sparrow
Golden-crowned Sparrow
Bell's Sparrow

Savannah Sparrow

Song Sparrow
Abert's Towhee
California Towhee
Rufous-crowned Sparrow
Spotted Towhee

Emberizidae

Amphispiza bilineata
Chondestes grammacus
Spizella passerine
Passerella iliaca
Junco hyemalis
Zonotrichia leucophrys
Zonotrichia atricapilla
Artemisiospiza belli

Passerculus sandwichensis

Melospiza melodia
Melospiza aberti
Melospiza crissalis
Aimophila ruficeps
Pipilo maculatus

M
SS
SS
S,M
M
S,M,SS
S
M – the resident *belli* race in chamise chaparral habitat in Ramona
S,M, SS – including the endangered saltmarsh endemic race *beldingi*
S,M,SS
SS
S,M
S
S,M

Troupials and Allies

Western Meadowlark
Red-winged Blackbird
Tricolored Blackbird
Brown-headed Cowbird
Brewer's Blackbird
Great-tailed Grackle

Icteridae

Sturnella neglecta
Agelaius phoeniceus
Agelaius tricolor
Molothrus ater
Euphagus cyanocephalus
Quiscalus mexicanus

M,SS
S,M,SS
M – at Lake Cuyamaca
S,M,SS
S,M,SS
S,SS

New World Warblers

Orange-crowned Warbler
Common Yellowthroat
Yellow Warbler
Yellow-rumped Warbler
Townsend's Warbler

Parulidae

Oreothlypis celata
Geothlypis trichas
Setophaga petechial
Setophaga coronata
Setophaga townsendi

S
S
SS – Unexpected in Brawley
S,M,SS
S

TOTAL: 204!

MAMMALS

Squirrels

White-tailed Antelope-Squirrel
Merriam's Chipmunk

Sciuridae

Ammospermophilus leucurus
Neotamias merriami

California Ground-Squirrel *Spermophilus beecheyi*

Rabbits & Hares

Desert Cottontail

Leporidae

Sylvilagus audubonii

**Raccoons, Coatis, and
Allies**

Common Raccoon

Procyonidae

Procyon lotor

Sea Lions & Fur Seals

California Sea Lion

Otariidae

Zalophus californianus

Seals

Harbor Seal

Phocidae

Phoca vitulina

BUTTERFLIES

Monarch

Painted Lady

OTHERS

San Diego Bay views

The weather!

Birding below sea level

The world's tallest flagpole(?) At least according to the sign



Brandt's Cormorant ©Brennan Mulrooney



Long-tailed Duck ©Brennan Mulrooney



Scaly-breasted Munia ©Brennan Mulrooney



Bell's Sparrow ©Brennan Mulrooney



Heermann's Gull ©Brennan Mulrooney



Barn Owl ©Brennan Mulrooney