

FIELD REPORT

WINTER SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

JANUARY 16–22, 2024



Light-footed Ridgway's Rail ©Brennan Mulrooney

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By Brennan Mulrooney



Allen's Hummingbird ©Brennan Mulrooney

This year, our Winter Southern California tour lucked out with the weather. For the second consecutive winter, Southern California has been hit with unusually strong storms, and our tour was able to fit in between them, almost entirely untouched. Rain on our last day hampered our efforts a little, but the day after our tour ended saw an absolute deluge in San Diego that caused historic flooding. Other than that one damp day, it was quite comfortable with mild temperatures and great birding.

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. As we worked our way down the trail, our progress was repeatedly stopped by a parade of new birds. We started with dazzling Allen's Hummingbirds with glowing gorgets and furtive Wrentits that darted through the bushes. All the while, California Scrub-Jays scolded us from above as California Towhees scratched the ground on the sides of the trail. A

swirling flock of Bushtits came by close enough to touch, and a White-tailed Kite winged past in the distance. Soon our attention was drawn to the kitten-like mewing call of a California Gnatcatcher, and eventually we were all able to get looks at the pair that was foraging in the dense sage scrub just off the trail. A short drive took us to another access point to the lagoon, and here we were treated to repeated point-blank views of multiple Ridgway's Rails (a federally endangered species) that were foraging just a few feet off the trail. Normally these birds stay out in the middle of the marsh and are heard more often than seen, but unusually high water levels had forced them to the edges—what a scene! They were joined on the marsh edge by the Belding's Savannah Sparrow, a subspecies of Savannah Sparrow endemic to salt marshes of the west coast, which is on the California endangered species list. Such a rare and special experience and such a great way to start the tour.

Our next stop was La Jolla Cove where we enjoyed stunning views of the Pacific Ocean as we scoured the cliffs and rocks, seeking out rocky shore specialists. "California" Brown Pelicans were in full color and dotted the cliffs along with large numbers of cormorants and gulls. Most of the cormorants were Brandt's Cormorants,



Ridgway's Rail ©Brennan Mulrooney



Heermann's Gull ©Brennan Mulrooney

and a few were on nests right next to the sidewalk. We marveled at their electric-blue gular pouches, and we were entertained by their endearingly goofy breeding displays. Black Turnstones weaved in and out of roosting gulls and terns, and we were pleased to find the locally rare Black Oystercatcher here as well. A single Pelagic Cormorant flew by, showing its gleaming white flank patches, and further offshore, flocks of Black-vented Shearwaters skimmed the ocean's surface. Perhaps the most striking birds on the cliffs were the stunningly beautiful Heermann's Gulls. At this time of year the adults have gleaming white heads and glowing red bills that

contrast with their gray and black bodies, making them real standouts among the more mundane California and Western gulls around them. In addition to the birds, we had wonderful looks at hauled-out California Sea Lions and Harbor Seals, both of which make use of this terrific marine sanctuary.

We ended our day at the mouth of the San Diego River, where a fantastic diversity and abundance of birds can always be found. Here we saw 14 species of shorebirds, including Western and Least sandpipers, Black-bellied and Semipalmated plovers, Whimbrels, and Long-billed Curlews. Clark's and Western grebes swam by obligingly, and a flamboyant Reddish Egret danced and leapt in the shallows as we scoured the flats for new species. As we were loading up to leave, the distinctive twittering of a Tropical Kingbird caught our attention. We worked together to track it down and soon had wonderful scope views. This species is a rare migrant along the west coast, but they rarely spend the winter here, so this was a great addition to our list. We ended this first day with nearly 100 species! Quite a start to a mid-winter tour.

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, then inland through Mission Gorge and into El Cajon Valley. We started in the Tijuana River Valley, where a flock of American White Pelicans winged over as we were unloading from the van. Cassin's Kingbirds and Phainopeplas perched on the wires and treetops, and we were surprised by an out-of-season Bullock's Oriole. Common Ground-Doves strolled around some community gardens, and Hutton's Vireos gave close comparisons to the surprisingly similar Ruby-crowned Kinglet. A couple of Red-breasted Nuthatches were evidence of a massive irruption year for this species.

After lunch we moved inland and quickly started adding some new species. At Lake Murray we saw some interesting 'furry' creatures among the large flocks of ducks and blackbirds. At Mission Trails Regional Park we found an uncooperative Golden-crowned Sparrow, followed by a Rufous-crowned Sparrow that came almost too close to focus on.



Brandt's Cormorant ©Brennan Mulrooney

As we were leaving, we found a Merlin perched high in a bare sycamore near the road. Next, we headed off to the city of El Cajon to seek out its resident parrot flock. We had to make a brief stop to admire a swirling flock of White-throated Swifts, but soon we found ourselves down in El Cajon Valley in search of parrots. We started at their favorite roost location but were dismayed to find it eerily quiet. Maybe the problem was a perched Peregrine Falcon that we spotted tearing apart an evening meal. Our time was running short, so we set off in search of the missing parrot flock. We were tantalized by a few distant and brief views of small flocks in flight, but we just couldn't find the mother lode, so I called it a day and we started back to the hotel. But just as I had announced our surrender, a flock flew right in front of our van. We quickly tracked them to a fruiting Chinaberry tree and had excellent looks at both Red-crowned and Lilac-crowned parrots. What an end to an action-packed day!



Long-eared Owl ©Brennan Mulrooney

The remainder of our tour was split between birding the Imperial Valley and the mountains that separate San Diego from the desert. At our highest elevations, up in the Laguna Mountains, we tracked down the enormously cute Pygmy Nuthatch and a very handsome Red-breasted Sapsucker. At Cuyamaca Lake we managed to locate a single Tricolored Blackbird in a flock of Brewer's and Red-wings as rain poured down. In Anza Borrego Desert State Park we tracked down Cactus Wren, Rock

Wren, and Loggerhead Shrike in addition to enjoying absolutely stunning views of a roosting Long-eared Owl. At the Sonny Bono Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge we found huge numbers of waterbirds including massive flocks of Snow and Ross's geese, as well as hundreds of Sandhill Cranes. In the town of Brawley we found a roosting Great Horned Owl, Vermilion Flycatchers, a Red-naped Sapsucker, Abert's Towhee, Gila and Ladder-backed woodpeckers, Costa's Hummingbird, White-winged Dove, and a very rare and wonderfully cooperative Winter Wren.



Ladder-backed Woodpecker ©Brennan Mulrooney

Our main species of interest in the agricultural lands of the Imperial Valley was the elusive and declining Mountain Plover. This species always presents a challenge, as they are quite cryptic, and there is an enormous amount of suitable habitat to search through. We searched throughout the day, and though we weren't successful at first, we added many new species including Ferruginous Hawk, Mountain Bluebird, Lark Sparrow, Yellow-headed Blackbird, and the incredibly endearing Burrowing Owl. It took us right up until late afternoon to finally locate a flock. As the light was quickly dimming with the coming storm, their pale brown backs provided incredible camouflage in a bare dirt field.

These birds with literally nowhere to hide were somehow quite difficult to see. But with a little extra effort, we managed to get good scope views as they settled down into the furrows of the field to spend the night.



Sandhill Cranes at sunset ©Brennan Mulrooney

In all, we tallied almost 200 species in five 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.

ITINERARY

January 16 - arrival in San Diego

January 17 – San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve, La Jolla Cove, Mission Bay at Kendall-Frost Marsh, Crown Point Park, San Diego River Flood Control Channel at Sea World Drive and at Robb Field, and residential Ocean Beach.

January 18 – Tijuana River Valley at Dairy Mart Ponds, Monument Road, Bird and Butterfly Garden and the community gardens. South San Diego Bay at 10th St, Silver Strand, Lake Murray, Mission Trails, and El Cajon Valley.

January 19 – South Mission Beach, Alpine, Pine Valley, detour to the Laguna Mountains due to unscheduled road closure on Hwy 79, Tamarisk Grove Campground in Anza Borrego Desert State Park, Unit 1 of the Sonny Bono Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge (SBSSNWR).

January 20 – Cattle Call Park, Residential Brawley, Calipatria, SBSSNWR Headquarters, Southeastern Shoreline of the Salton Sea from Obsidian Butte, then back to the ag for Mountain Plovers.

January 21 – In Ko Pah Mtns at Mountain Springs Rd, Old Hwy 80 to Cameron Truck Trail, Paso Picacho Campground, Lake Cuyamaca, Stonewall Mine, Ramona Grasslands.

January 22 – Departures for home in an absolute deluge.

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
Brant	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	S
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	S,M
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
<u>Eurasian Wigeon</u>	<i>Mareca Penelope</i>	S – a distant male at San Elijo Lagoon
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
Redhead	<i>Aythya americana</i>	S,SS
Ring-necked Duck	<i>Aythya collaris</i>	S,SS
Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>	S,M,SS
Surf Scoter	<i>Melanitta perspicillata</i>	S
Bufflehead	<i>Bucephala albeola</i>	S,M,SS
Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	SS
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>	M – Hwy 94 at Manzanita
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, SS
Horned Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	S
Eared Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	S, SS
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
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 – amazing views of the “Light-footed” race at San Elijo Lagoon, voted second favorite bird of the tour
Sora	<i>Porzana carolina</i>	S, SS
Common Gallinule	<i>Gallinula galeata</i>	S
American Coot	<i>Fulica americana</i>	S,M,SS
Cranes	Gruidae	
Sandhill Crane	<i>Antigone canadensis</i>	SS – beautiful views at Unit 1
Stilts and Avocets	Recurvirostridae	
Black-necked Stilt	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>	S,SS
American Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra americana</i>	S,SS
Oystercatchers	Haematopodidae	
<u>Black Oystercatcher</u>	<i>Haematopus bachmani</i>	S – very uncommon in San Diego, we found them at La Jolla and in Imperial Beach
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 – always a struggle to find these cryptic birds in the vast expanse of the Imperial Valley, but persistence paid off late in the day with a large flock
Snowy Plover	<i>Charadrius nivosus</i>	SS – a couple along the shore of the Salton Sea

Sandpipers and Allies

Whimbrel
Long-billed Curlew

Marbled Godwit
Black Turnstone
Red Knot
Surfbird
Stilt Sandpiper
Sanderling
Dunlin
Least Sandpiper
Western Sandpiper
Short-billed Dowitcher
Long-billed Dowitcher
Spotted Sandpiper
Greater Yellowlegs
Willet

Skuas and Jaegers

Parasitic Jaeger

Gulls and Terns

Heermann's Gull
Ring-billed Gull
Western Gull
California Gull
Herring Gull
Caspian Tern
Forster's Tern
Royal Tern
Black Skimmer

Loons

Red-throated Loon
Common Loon

Shearwaters and Petrels

Black-vented Shearwater

Cormorants

Brandt's Cormorant

Pelagic Cormorant

Double-crested Cormorant

Scolopacidae

Numenius phaeopus
Numenius americanus

Limosa fedoa
Arenaria melanocephala
Calidris canutus
Calidris virgata
Calidris himantopus
Calidris alba
Calidris alpina
Calidris minutilla
Calidris mauri
Limnodromus griseus
Limnodromus scolopaceus
Actitis macularius
Tringa melanoleuca
Tringa semipalmata

Stercorariidae

Stercorarius parasiticus

Laridae

Larus heermanni
Larus delawarensis
Larus occidentalis
Larus californicus
Larus argentatus
Hydroprogne caspia
Sterna forsteri
Thalasseus maximus
Rynchops miger

Gaviidae

Gavia stellata
Gavia immer

Procellariidae

Puffinus opisthomelas

Phalacrocoracidae

Urile penicillatus

Urile pelagicus
Nannopterum auritum

S
S,SS – large flocks in fields in the Imperial Valley are always fun to see
S,SS
S
S
S
SS
S
S,SS
S,SS
S,SS
S
S,SS
S,SS
S,SS
S,SS

S – distant birds off Mission Beach

S – Simply beautiful gulls
S,SS
S
S,SS
SS
SS
S
S
S

S
S – more than we would have liked?

S – seen distantly foraging off La Jolla

S – spectacular views of breeding birds on the cliffs at La Jolla
S – single bird flying past La Jolla
S,M,SS

Pelicans

American White Pelican

Brown Pelican

Hérons and Egrets

Great Blue Heron

Great Egret

Snowy Egret

Little Blue HeronReddish Egret

Western Cattle Egret

Black-crowned Night-Heron

Ibises and Spoonbills

White-faced Ibis

New World Vultures

Turkey Vulture

Osprey

Osprey

Hawks Eagles and Kites

White-tailed Kite

Golden Eagle

Northern Harrier

Sharp-shinned Hawk

Cooper's Hawk

Bald Eagle

Red-shouldered Hawk

Red-tailed Hawk

Ferruginous Hawk

Barn Owls

Barn Owl

Owls

Great Horned Owl

Burrowing Owl

Pelecanidae*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos**Pelecanus occidentalis***Ardeidae***Ardea herodias**Ardea alba**Egretta thula**Egretta caerulea**Egretta rufescens**Bubulcus ibis**Nycticorax nycticorax***Threskiornithidae***Plegadis chihi***Cathartidae***Cathartes aura***Pandionidae***Pandion haliaetus***Accipitridae***Elanus leucurus**Aquila chrysaetos**Circus hudsonius**Accipiter striatus**Accipiter cooperii**Haliaeetus leucocephalus**Buteo lineatus**Buteo jamaicensis**Buteo regalis***Tytonidae***Tyto alba***Strigidae***Bubo virginianus**Athene cunicularia*

S – a flock seen flying over by my van only at Dairy Mart Ponds

S

S,M,SS

S,SS

S,SS

S – breeding in very small numbers in San Diego now

S – one or two are seen every year in San Diego

SS – first found breeding in the

Imperial Valley in 1969, now abundant

SS – Heard only

S,SS – we had a surprise flock at San Elijo Lagoon

S,M,SS

S

S

S

M,SS

S

S,SS

M – on its nest in Ramona

S

S,M,SS

M,SS – including nice close looks at a perched adult in Ramona

SS – Roosting in a palm at SBSSNWR

SS – A roosting bird in Brawley

SS – Great looks in the Imperial Valley.

<u>Long-eared Owl</u>	<i>Asio otus</i>	M – we were lucky to get fantastic views of a roosting bird, voted favorite bird of the tour
Kingfishers Belted Kingfisher	Alcedinidae <i>Megasceryle alcyon</i>	S,SS
Woodpeckers <u>Red-naped Sapsucker</u> <u>Red-breasted Sapsucker</u> Acorn Woodpecker Gila Woodpecker Nuttall's Woodpecker Ladder-backed Woodpecker Hairy Woodpecker Northern Flicker	Picidae <i>Sphyrapicus nuchalis</i> <i>Sphyrapicus ruber</i> <i>Melanerpes formicivorus</i> <i>Melanerpes uropygialis</i> <i>Dryobates nuttallii</i> <i>Dryobates scalaris</i> <i>Dryobates villosus</i> <i>Colaptes auratus</i>	SS – in Brawley S – fantastic views in the Lagunas M SS S SS M M
Falcons and Caracaras American Kestrel Merlin Peregrine Falcon	Falconidae <i>Falco sparverius</i> <i>Falco columbarius</i> <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	S,M,SS SS SS
Parrots and Parakeets Red-crowned Parrot (I) Lilac-crowned Parrot (I)	Psittacidae <i>Amazona viridigenalis</i> <i>Amazona finschi</i>	S – in a large flock with the following S – side by side with the previous
Tyrant Flycatchers Black Phoebe Say's Phoebe <u>Vermilion Flycatcher</u> Tropical Kingbird Cassin's Kingbird	Tyrannidae <i>Sayornis nigricans</i> <i>Sayornis saya</i> <i>Pyrocephalus rubinus</i> <i>Tyrannus melancholicus</i> <i>Tyrannus vociferans</i>	S,M,SS S,M,SS SS – a nice surprise in Brawley S – a rare wintering individual near the San Diego River mouth S
Vireos Hutton's Vireo	Vireonidae <i>Vireo huttoni</i>	S
Shrikes Loggerhead Shrike	Laniidae <i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	M,SS – best at Tamarisk Grove
Crows, Jays & Magpies Steller's Jay California Scrub-Jay American Crow Common Raven	Corvidae <i>Cyanocitta stelleri</i> <i>Aphelocoma californica</i> <i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i> <i>Corvus corax</i>	M – a potential split to look forward to, this was the coastal <i>stelleri</i> subspecies S,M S,M 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
Swallows	Hirundinidae	
Tree Swallow	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>	S
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	S
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>	M – scarce this winter
Silky-flycatchers	Ptiliogonatidae	
Phainopepla	<i>Phainopepla nitens</i>	S
Nuthatches	Sittidae	
White-breasted Nuthatch	<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
<u>Red-breasted Nuthatch</u>	<i>Sitta canadensis</i>	S – not present most years, but quite common this winter
Gnatcatchers	Poliophtilidae	
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	<i>Poliophtila caerulea</i>	SS
California Gnatcatcher	<i>Poliophtila californica</i>	S – showed well at San Elijo Lagoon
Black-tailed Gnatcatcher	<i>Poliophtila melanura</i>	SBSSNWR – great views on the Rock Hill trail
Wrens	Troglodytidae	
Rock Wren	<i>Salpinctes obsoletus</i>	M
House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>	SS
Winter Wren	<i>Troglodytes hiemalis</i>	SS – great looks in Brawley, a very rare bird in California
Marsh Wren	<i>Cistothorus palustris</i>	S – unusually good views at San Elijo
Bewick's Wren	<i>Thryomanes bewickii</i>	S

<u>Cactus Wren</u>	<i>Campylorhynchus brunneicaillus</i>	M,SS – Tamarisk Grove and Brawley
Thrashers and Allies	Mimidae	
California Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma redivivum</i>	S,M
Northern Mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	S,M
Starlings	Sturnidae	
European Starling (I)	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	S,M,SS
Thrushes and Allies	Turdidae	
Western Bluebird	<i>Sialia mexicana</i>	S
Mountain Bluebird	<i>Sialia currucoides</i>	SS
Hermit Thrush	<i>Catharus guttatus</i>	S
American Robin	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>	S – a single bird this year
Old World Sparrows	Passeridae	
House Sparrow (I)	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	S,SS
Wagtails and Pipits	Motacillidae	
American Pipit	<i>Anthus rubescens</i>	S,SS
Siskins and Allies	Fringillidae	
House Finch	<i>Haemorhous mexicanus</i>	S,M,SS
<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 – a small flock in Pine Valley
<u>American Goldfinch</u>	<i>Spinus tristis</i>	S – a single calling flyover
Sparrows and Allies	Emberizidae	
<u>Brewer’s Sparrow</u>	<i>Spizella breweri</i>	M – In Ko Pah Gorge
Black-throated Sparrow	<i>Amphispiza bilineata</i>	M – In Ko Pah Gorge
Lark Sparrow	<i>Chondestes grammacus</i>	SS
Dark-eyed Junco	<i>Junco hyemalis</i>	M – the Oregon race
White-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>	S,M,SS
<u>Golden-crowned Sparrow</u>	<i>Zonotrichia atricapilla</i>	S – briefly at Mission Trails
Savannah Sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>	S,M, SS – including the endangered saltmarsh endemic race <i>beldingi</i>
<u>Lincoln’s Sparrow</u>	<i>Melospiza lincolnii</i>	S – a single bird at San Elijo
Song Sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	S,M,SS
Abert's Towhee	<i>Melospiza aberti</i>	SS
California Towhee	<i>Melospiza crissalis</i>	S,M
<u>Rufous-crowned Sparrow</u>	<i>Aimophila ruficeps</i>	S – crippling views at Mission Trails
Spotted Towhee	<i>Pipilo maculatus</i>	S,M
Troupials and Allies	Icteridae	

<u>Yellow-headed Blackbird</u>	<i>Xanthocephalus</i>	SS
	<i>xanthocephalus</i>	
Western Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella neglecta</i>	M,SS
<u>Bullock's Oriole</u>	<i>Icterus bullockii</i>	S – a intering bird in the Tijuana River Valley
Red-winged Blackbird	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>	S,M,SS
Tricolored Blackbird	<i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	M – in the rain at Lake Cuyamaca
Brown-headed Cowbird	<i>Molothrus ater</i>	S,M,SS
Brewer's Blackbird	<i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i>	S,M,SS
Great-tailed Grackle	<i>Quiscalus mexicanus</i>	S,SS
New World Warblers	Parulidae	
Orange-crowned Warbler	<i>Oreothlypis celata</i>	S
Common Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>	S
<u>Yellow Warbler</u>	<i>Setophaga petechial</i>	S – Crown Point
Yellow-rumped Warbler	<i>Setophaga coronata</i>	S,M,SS

TOTAL: 196!

MAMMALS

Squirrels

California Ground-Squirrel

Sciuridae

Spermophilus beecheyi

Rabbits & Hares

Brush Rabbit

Desert Cottontail

Leporidae

Sylvilagus bachmani

Sylvilagus audubonii

Dogs

Coyote

Canidae

Canis latrans

Sea Lions & Fur Seals

California Sea Lion

Otariidae

Zalophus californianus

Seals

Harbor Seal

Phocidae

Phoca vitulina

Skunks

Striped Skunk

Mephitidae

Mephitis mephitis

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

San Diego Bay views. The weather! Birding below sea level. The world's tallest flagpole(?) At least according to the sign.



Cooper's Hawk



Brandt's Cormorants



Allen's Hummingbird



Black Oystercatcher



Royal Tern



Mountain Chickadee