

Central Valley and Foothills Bird Highlights: June through July 2016

John Sterling, 26 Palm Ave, Woodland, CA 95965. jsterling@wavecable.com

Two **Least Bitterns** were at Mather Lake, Sacramento County on 26 June –3 July (DK) and another pair at the Davis Wetlands this summer were breeding there. Another was flushed on China Island Unit of the North Grasslands WA in Merced County on 28 June (SA). This secretive species is a rare and highly local in the valley with few documented reports each summer. The usual rare but regular southward migrant shorebirds moved through in July. An **Pacific Golden-Plover** photographed at the Yolo Bypass WA on 10 July (LS) was a migrant, but one photographed at the Los Banos WTP with **Black-bellied Plovers** in Merced County on 23 July (LKh) may have arrived to overwinter with that flock as they often do in that area. A **Snowy Plover** hid among a flock of **Semipalmated Plovers** at the Yolo Bypass WA on 21 July (SCH) where this species has been found regularly in recent years. Adult **Semipalmated Sandpipers** migrated through with two at the Sacramento WTP on 6-7 July (CCo), one at the Ripon WTP (DGY), San Joaquin County, one at the Fresno WTP on 18 July (JSy), one at the Arbuckle WTP in Colusa County on 18-20 July (KS, KD). Juveniles don't arrive until the end of July, so two at the Arbuckle WTP on 27 July (LKh) were right on time. An early **Baird's Sandpiper** visited the Yolo Bypass WA on 11 July (GEw). Another there on 31 July (TC) was a more typical southward arrival time for this rare migrant. The best shorebird sighting of the season was the adult **Stilt Sandpiper** at the Anatolia Vernal Pool Preserve in Sacramento County on 22 July (GEw, SSA).

White-winged Dove is a rare post-breeding visitor to the valley, so one at a yard in Porterville in Tulare County was a big surprise on 20 July (SDS). A juvenile **Northern Saw-whet Owl** perched in a church in Ceres in Stanislaus County also was a big surprise. This montane species was documented nesting in a wood duck nest box in Merced County a few years ago. Perhaps there is a regular breeding population that has yet to be discovered. Also rare anywhere in the valley, a male **Allen's Hummingbird** was along Alpine Road near Stockton in San Joaquin County on 15 June (LP). An unfortunate **Calliope Hummingbird** crashed into a window in Sacramento on 22 July (DA) documented one of few records in July for the valley. A **Cassin's Kingbird** at the Cosumnes River Preserve on 9 July (JTr) was one of few ever reported from Sacramento County. Another was in western Bakersfield, Kern County on 24 July. This is a rare species in the valley with most records in canyons along the eastern and western edges of the valley south of San Joaquin

County. Crossing the El Dorado and Sacramento county lines for several days, an **Eastern Kingbird** was along Payen Road on 5-10 June (DK, CCo). During a regular survey at the Cosumnes River Preserve in Sacramento County, a **Gray Catbird** was found on 14 June (JTr) for only the second county record. A few other eastern vagrants were found highlighted by a **Worm-eating Warbler** along Bear Creek on the valley floor on 4 June (TEa) for the first El Dorado County record. Yuba County's first recorded **Hooded Warbler** was a singing male at Beale Air Force Base on 1 July (MO). A second-year singing male **American Redstart** lived up a backyard in Sacramento on 3 June (MM). Another singing eastern warbler, an **Ovenbird**, was heard in Sacramento along Goethe Road on 15 June (CH). Finally, the male **Summer Tanager** found at the Cosumnes River Preserve continued to sing there through 25 June (CCo, JTr).

Corrections from the Spring 2016 and Winter 2015-16 reports: The three migrant Snowy Plovers were at the Modesto WTP on May 8 (RB), not the Modesto NWR which doesn't exist. Also the Red Crossbills at Jacob Myers Park on 15-22 December were in San Joaquin, not Stanislaus County. Thanks for Sal Salerno for alerting me to these mistakes.

Thanks to Chris Conard (CCo), Steve Hampton (SCH), John Harris and Bruce Deuel (BED) for summaries of several county records and to the following observers who reported their significant findings to the Club's listserver; Dan Airola, Stuart Angerer (SA), Terry Colborn (TC), Kris Dunlap, Todd Easterla (TEa), Gil Ewing (GEw), Cliff Hawley, Logan Kahle (LKh), Dan Kopp, Michelle Ocken, Sonia Santa Ana (SSA), Ken Schneider, Jeff Seay (JSy), Lindsey Smith, Steve Summers (SDS), John Trochet (JTr), and David Yee (DGY). Abbreviations used: WA=State Wildlife Area; WTP=Wastewater Treatment Ponds; NWR=National Wildlife Refuge; Res.=Reservoir.

Swamp Sparrow
(*Melospiza georgiana*)
9 Dec 2017. Yolo
Bypass Wildlife Area,
Yolo, Co.

Photo @ Chris Conard

