



The Birds of Coyote Valley

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Coyote Valley stretches north to south between the Santa Cruz Mountains and Mount Diablo Range, and between south San Jose and north Morgan Hill. Currently it is mostly agricultural land, but once again it is threatened by development. Coyote Valley is an important wildlife corridor for many animals, and provides important habitat for many resident and migratory birds. We created this database of bird species observed in Coyote Valley to demonstrate the importance of the valley to birds and birders.

Methods:

We collected data from online databases: eBird website (<http://ebird.org/>, entered on August 2016), [De Anza College report](#) (Julie Phillips, Ryan Phillips, Neela Srinivasan, Deborah Aso, Wendy Lao; Pat Cornely [2012] Safe Passage for Coyote Valley, A Wildlife Linkage for the Highway 101 Corridor. Kirsch Center for Environmental Studies, De Anza College, 21250 Stevens Creek Boulevard, Cupertino, California 95014), Audubon Society's Christmas bird counts (2013 and 2015), bird lists from Santa Clara County Open Space Authority (CV OSP April 24, 2016, and IBM on 2015 Audubon Christmas Bird Count). We included observations made at Coyote Creek area, between Live Oak Ave. in the south and Tulare Hill in the north, and between Highway 101 in the east and the foothills in the west, including Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve, Ogier Ponds, and Coyote Creek wetlands within CV area (see map). We used the Cornell Lab of Ornithology website – All About Birds (<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/>) – to extract life history data, such as diet, habitat, behavior, and nesting habits. We extracted breeding status in Coyote Valley from the Breeding Bird Atlas of Santa Clara County, California (William G. Bousman [2007] Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society), and updates from personal observations by RP. We used the [Migratory Bird Treaty Act](#) (MBTA) by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service together with other resources, to study the conservation status of the different species (more info in the excel file). We used Santa Clara County rarity scale to state the species abundance status (ranks from 1=common to 6=very rare).



Map: Coyote Valley.
Numbers represent
eBird hot spots used
for this study

Long-distance migrants which form the majority of migratory songbirds include species with at least one population (incomplete migrant), or all populations (complete migrant) that travel from temperate breeding grounds to tropical wintering grounds, or within temperate areas but at lower latitudes prior to the boreal winter. (Yong 2015)

Results and discussion:

The bird fauna of Coyote Valley is very diverse: 224 species have been observed at least once. These species belong to 15 taxonomical orders. The most abundant species were perching birds (passerines, song birds) (45.5%), shorebirds (12%), and ducks and geese (11.6%). 46% of the birds observed are insectivores that feed in alfalfa and other agricultural lands, as well as near water sources. Large flocks of mixed blackbird species including Brewer’s blackbird, red-winged blackbird, and the endangered tricolored blackbird are often observed in the valley. The alfalfa fields also provide rich food source for raptors: many species forage here for mice, including as the rare Ferruginous Hawk. Coyote Valley seems especially important to raptors: 17 species, including hawks, eagles, vultures, and falcons, and five species of owls were observed here. Burrowing owls, a species of special concern, no longer breeds in the valley, but migratory individuals winter in North Coyote Valley.

About 40% of the avian species are residents to Coyote Valley, while 30% of the species only stay during winter or fall. About 10% of the species spend their summers in Coyote Valley. 36% of the species live in open woodland or forest habitats, and 17% live in lake or pond habitats. 217 of the species are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Of these, 22 species are species of special concern, threatened or endangered. 161 of the species are on the neotropical migratory bird list, 15 of the species are on the 2016 SOTB watch list, and 9 are on the 2007 Audubon Society bird watch list. 3 species are covered by the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Plan. There are 48 species that are considered uncommon to rare. 106 of the species were reported breeding in Coyote Valley, 77 of them are confirmed. Of those, 35% nest on trees, 22% in cavities, 13% nest on the ground, and 13% nest on shrubs.

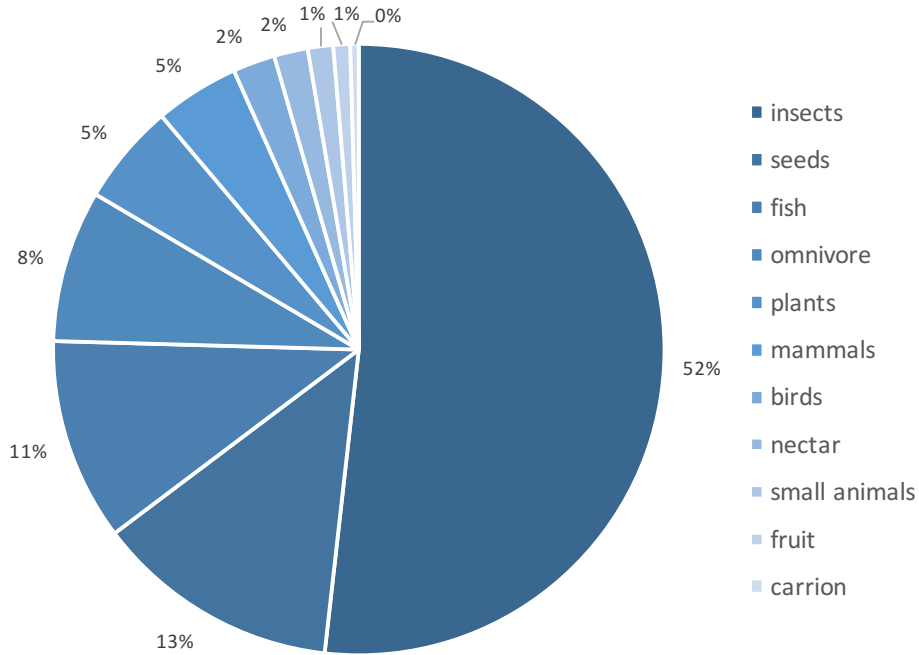
All birds in Coyote Valley:

Order	# of Species	%
Perching Birds (Passerines)	102	46.22
Shorebirds	27	12.00
Ducks and Geese	26	11.56
Pelicans and Herons	13	5.33
Hawks, eagles, vultures	12	5.33
Woodpeckers	8	3.56
Loons	7	3.11
Hummingbirds and Swifts	6	2.67
Falcons	5	2.22
Owls	5	2.22
Pigeons and Doves	4	1.78
Rails and Coots	4	1.78
Turkeys and quails	3	1.33
Cuckoos	1	0.44
Kingfishers	1	0.44
Total	224	100

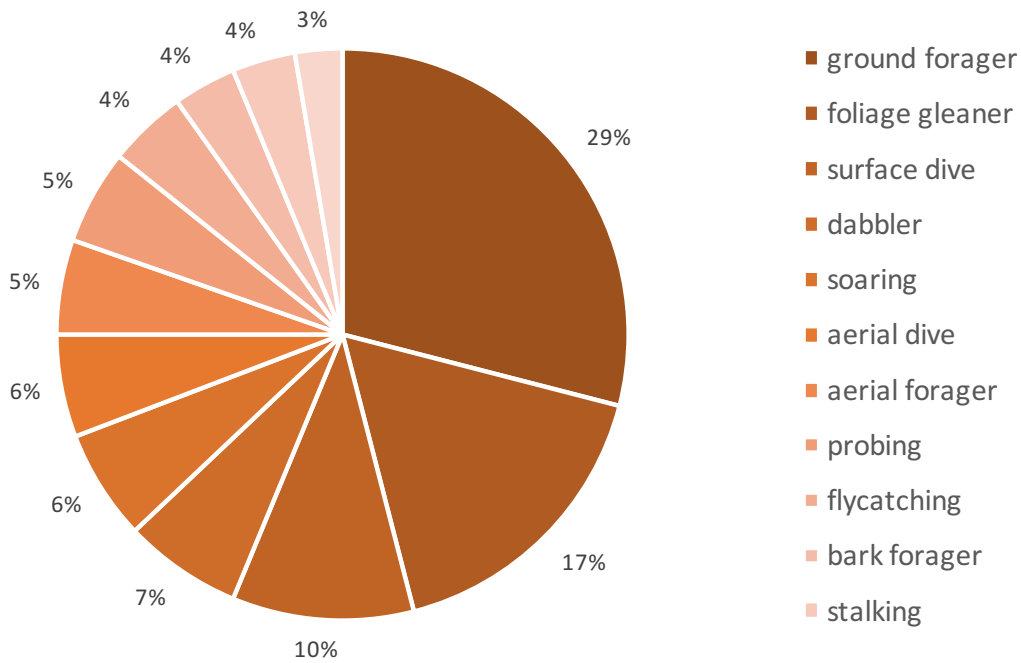
Migratory status:

Migration status	# of Species	%
Resident	86	38.39
CM/S	21	9.375
CM/S/T	1	0.446
CM/T	24	10.71
CM/W	58	25.89
CM/W/S	1	0.446
IM/S/W	7	3.125
Vagrant	26	11.61
Total	224	100
CM=Complete Migrant;		
IM= Incomplete Migrant;		
S=Summer; W=Winter; T= Transient		

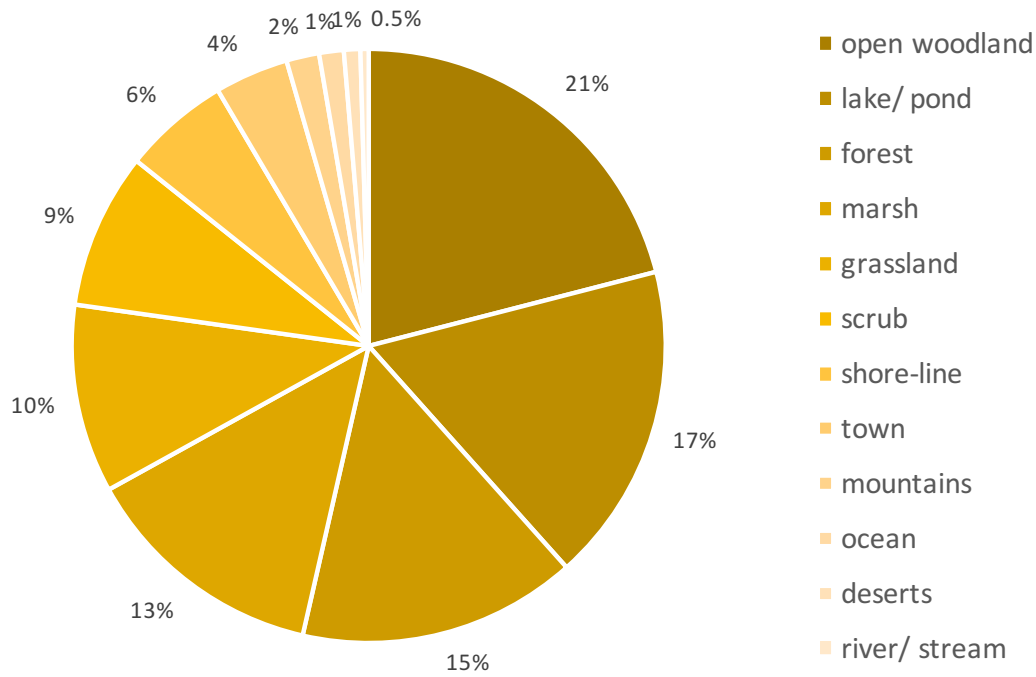
Diet



Behavior

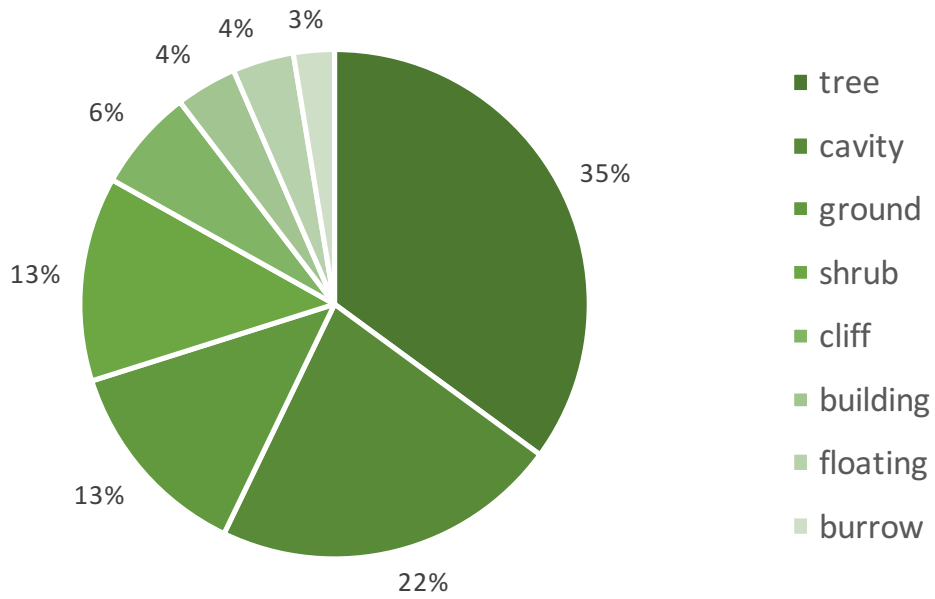


Habitat



Only birds that nest in Coyote Valley:

Nest Placement



Full list – birds of Coyote Valley:

Species in **Bold** are confirmed nesters in Coyote Valley (for more info about abundance or migration status data, see Materials and Methods, and the Excel file).

<u>Common name</u>	<u>Species name</u>	<u>Abundance, migration status</u>
Acorn Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes formicivorus</i>	(1, R)
Allen's Hummingbird	<i>Selasphorus sasin</i>	(3, CM/T)
American Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra americana</i>	(1, R)
American Bittern	<i>Botaurus lentiginosus</i>	(4, R)
American Coot	<i>Fulica americana</i>	(1, IM/S/W)
American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	(1, R)
American Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis tristis</i>	(2, R)
American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>	(1, R)
American Pipit	<i>Anthus rubescens</i>	(2, CM/W)
American Redstart	<i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>	(5, V)
American Robin	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>	(1, R)
American White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>	(2, CM/T)
American Wigeon	<i>Anas americana</i>	(1, CM/W)
Anna's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte anna</i>	(1, R)
Ash-throated Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus cinerascens</i>	(2, CM/S)
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	(4, R)
Band-tailed Pigeon	<i>Patagioenas fasciata</i>	(2, R)
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	(2, R)
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	(1, CM/S)
Barrow's Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala islandica</i>	(4, CM/W)
Belted Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle alcyon</i>	(2, CM/S)
Bewick's Wren	<i>Thryomanes bewickii</i>	(1, R)
Black Phoebe	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>	(2, R)
Black-Bellied Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	(1, CM/T)
Black-crowned Night-Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	(1, R)
Black-headed Grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus melanocephalus</i>	(1, CM/S)
Black-necked Stilt	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>	(1, R)
Black-throated Gray Warbler	<i>Setophaga nigrescens</i>	(3, CM/T)
Blue Grosbeak	<i>Passerina caerulea</i>	(4, CM/S)
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila caerulea</i>	(2, CM/S)
Blue-winged teal	<i>Anas discors</i>	(4, CM/W)
Bonaparte's Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus philadelphia</i>	(2, CM/T)
Brandt's Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax penicillatus</i>	(6, V)
Brewer's Blackbird	<i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i>	(1, R)
Brewer's Sparrow	<i>Spizella breweri</i>	(5, V)
Brown Creeper	<i>Certhia americana</i>	(2, V)

<u>Common name</u>	<u>Species name</u>	<u>Abundance, migration status</u>
Brown Pelican	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	(3, V)
Brown-headed Cowbird	<i>Molothrus ater</i>	(2, IM/S/W)
Bufflehead	<i>Bucephala albeola</i>	(1, CM/W)
Bullock's Oriole	<i>Icterus bullockii</i>	(1, CM/S)
Burrowing Owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	(3, R)
Bushtit	<i>Psaltriparus minimus</i>	(1, R)
Cackling Goose	<i>Branta hutchinsii</i>	(3, CM/W)
California Gull	<i>Larus californicus</i>	(1, R)
California Quail	<i>Callipepla californica</i>	(1, R)
California Scrub-Jay	<i>Aphelocoma californica</i>	(1, R)
California Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma redivivum</i>	(1, R)
California Towhee	<i>Melospiza crissalis</i>	(1, R)
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	(1, R)
Canvasback	<i>Aythya valisineria</i>	(1, CM/W)
Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	(2, CM/T)
Cassin's kingbird	<i>Tyrannus vociferans</i>	(5, V)
Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	(5, V)
Cedar Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>	(1, CM/W)
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	<i>Poecile rufescens</i>	(1, R)
Chipping Sparrow	<i>Spizella passerina</i>	(3, V)
Cinnamon Teal	<i>Anas cyanoptera</i>	(2, CM/W)
Clark's Grebe	<i>Aechmophorus clarkii</i>	(2, R)
Clay-colored Sparrow	<i>Spizella pallida</i>	(5, V)
Cliff Swallow	<i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i>	(1, CM/S)
Common Gallinule	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	(2, R)
Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	(2, CM/W)
Common Loon	<i>Gavia immer</i>	(4, CM/T)
Common Merganser	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	(2, CM/W)
Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	(2, R)
Common Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>	(2, R)
Cooper's Hawk	<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>	(2, IM/S/W)
Costa's Hummingbird	<i>Calypte costae</i>	(5, V)
Crested caracara	<i>Caracara cheriway</i>	(6, V)
Dark-eyed Junco	<i>Junco hyemalis</i>	(1, R)
Double-crested Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>	(1, R)
Downy Woodpecker	<i>Picoides pubescens</i>	(2, R)
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	(1, CM/T)
Eared Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	(1, CM/W)
Eurasian Collared-Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	(3, R)

<u>Common name</u>	<u>Species name</u>	<u>Abundance, migration status</u>
European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	(1, R)
Ferruginous Hawk	<i>Buteo regalis</i>	(4, CM/W)
Forster's Tern	<i>Sterna forsteri</i>	(1, CM/T)
Fox Sparrow	<i>Passerella iliaca</i>	(2, CM/W)
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	(1, CM/W)
Glaucous Gull	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	(4, CM/W)
Glaucous-winged Gull	<i>Larus glaucescens</i>	(1, CM/W)
Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	(2, R)
Golden-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia atricapilla</i>	(1, CM/W)
Grasshopper Sparrow	<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>	(4, CM/S)
Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>	(1, R)
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	(1, R)
Great Horned Owl	<i>Bubo virginianus</i>	(1, R)
Great-tailed Grackle	<i>Quiscalus mexicanus</i>	(5, R)
Greater roadrunner	<i>Geococcyx californianus</i>	(4, R)
Greater Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>	(2, CM/W)
Greater White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons</i>	(4, CM/W)
Greater Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>	(2, CM/T)
Green Heron	<i>Butorides virescens</i>	(3, R)
Green-winged Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	(1, CM/W)
Hairy Woodpecker	<i>Picoides villosus</i>	(2, R)
Hammond's Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax hammondii</i>	(5, CM/T)
Hermit Thrush	<i>Catharus guttatus</i>	(1, CM/W)
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	(1, CM/W)
Hooded Merganser	<i>Lophodytes cucullatus</i>	(2, CM/W)
Hooded Oriole	<i>Icterus cucullatus</i>	(3, CM/S)
Horned Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	(3, CM/W)
Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	(3, R)
House Finch	<i>Haemorhous mexicanus</i>	(1, R)
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	(1, R)
House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>	(2, CM/S)
Hutton's Vireo	<i>Vireo huttoni</i>	(2, R)
Iceland Gull	<i>Larus glaucoides</i>	(6, V)
Indigo Bunting	<i>Passerina cyanea</i>	(5, V)
Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	(1, R)
Lark Sparrow	<i>Chondestes grammacus</i>	(2, R)
Lawrence's Goldfinch	<i>Spinus lawrencei</i>	(3, V)
Lazuli Bunting	<i>Passerina amoena</i>	(2, CM/S)
Least Sandpiper	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>	(1, CM/T)

<u>Common name</u>	<u>Species name</u>	<u>Abundance, migration status</u>
Lesser Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis psaltria</i>	(1, R)
Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>	(1, CM/W)
Lewis's Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes lewis</i>	(3, R)
Lincoln's Sparrow	<i>Melospiza lincolnii</i>	(2, CM/W)
Little Blue Heron	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	(5, V)
Loggerhead Shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	(2, R)
Long-billed Curlew	<i>Numenius americanus</i>	(2, CM/W)
Long-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>	(1, CM/W)
MacGillivray's Warbler	<i>Geothlypis tolmiei</i>	(4, CM/T)
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	(1, R)
Marsh Wren	<i>Cistothorus palustris</i>	(2, R)
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	(3, CM/W)
Mew Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	(2, CM/W)
Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	(1, R)
Nashville Warbler	<i>Oreothlypis ruficapilla</i>	(4, CM/T)
Northern Flicker	<i>Colaptes auratus</i>	(1, IM/S/W)
Northern Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	(2, CM/W)
Northern Mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	(1, R)
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	(1, CM/W)
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>	(2, CM/S)
Northern Shoveler	<i>Anas clypeata</i>	(1, CM/W)
Nuttall's Woodpecker	<i>Picoides nuttallii</i>	(1, R)
Oak Titmouse	<i>Baeolophus inornatus</i>	(1, R)
Olive-Sided Flycatcher	<i>Contopus cooperi</i>	(3, CM/T)
Orange-crowned Warbler	<i>Vermivora celata</i>	(1, CM/S)
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	(3, CM/W/S)
Pacific Wren	<i>Troglodytes pacificus</i>	(3, V)
Pacific-slope Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax difficilis</i>	(2, CM/S)
Palm Warbler	<i>Setophaga palmarum</i>	(5, V)
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	(3, R)
Phainopepla	<i>Phainopepla nitens</i>	(4, R)
Pied-billed Grebe	<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	(1, R)
Pileated Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus pileatus</i>	(4, V)
Pine Siskin	<i>Carduelis pinus</i>	(3, CM/W)
Prairie Falcon	<i>Falco mexicanus</i>	(4, R)
Purple Finch	<i>Haemorhous purpureus</i>	(2, R)
Purple Martin	<i>Progne subis</i>	(4, CM/T)
Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	(3, CM/W)

<u>Common name</u>	<u>Species name</u>	<u>Abundance, migration status</u>
Red-breasted Sapsucker	<i>Sphyrapicus ruber</i>	(3, CM/W)
Red-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>	(5, V)
Red-shouldered Hawk	<i>Buteo lineatus</i>	(2, R)
Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	(1, R)
Red-winged Blackbird	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>	(1, R)
Redhead	<i>Aythya americana</i>	(3, CM/W)
Ring-billed Gull	<i>Larus delawarensis</i>	(1, CM/W)
Ring-necked Duck	<i>Aythya collaris</i>	(2, CM/W)
Ring-necked Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	(3, R)
Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	(1, R)
Rock Wren	<i>Salpinctes obsoletus</i>	(4, R)
Ross's Goose	Chen rossii or Anser rossii	(4, CM/W)
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	<i>Regulus calendula</i>	(1, CM/W)
Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>	(1, CM/W)
Rufous Hummingbird	<i>Selasphorus rufus</i>	(4, CM/T)
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	<i>Aimophila ruficeps</i>	(3, R)
Sage Thrasher	<i>Oreoscoptes montanus</i>	(6, V)
Savannah Sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis alaudinus</i>	(1, CM/W)
Say's Phoebe	<i>Sayornis saya</i>	(3, CM/W)
Semipalmated Plover	<i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>	(2, CM/W)
Sharp-shinned Hawk	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>	(2, CM/W)
Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>	(4, CM/W)
Snow Goose	<i>Chen caerulescens</i>	(4, CM/W)
Snowy Egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>	(1, R)
Solitary Sandpiper	<i>Tringa solitaria</i>	(5, CM/T)
Song Sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	(1, R)
Sora	<i>Porzana carolina</i>	(2, CM/W)
Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularius</i>	(3, IM/S/W)
Spotted Towhee	<i>Pipilo maculatus</i>	(1, R)
Steller's Jay	<i>Cyanocitta stelleri</i>	(1, R)
Swainson's Hawk	<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	(5, CM/S)
Swainson's Thrush	<i>Catharus ustulatus</i>	(2, CM/T)
Swamp Sparrow	<i>Melospiza georgiana</i>	(5, V)
Thayer's Gull	<i>Larus thayeri</i>	(3, CM/W)
Townsend's Warbler	<i>Setophaga townsendi</i>	(2, CM/T)
Tree Swallow	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>	(2, IM/S/W)
Tricolored Blackbird	<i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	(3, R)
Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	(1, R)

<u>Common name</u>	<u>Species name</u>	<u>Abundance, migration status</u>
Varied Thrush	<i>Ixoreus naevius</i>	(3, CM/W)
Vaux's Swift	<i>Chaetura vauxi</i>	(3, CM/T)
Vesper Sparrow	<i>Pooecetes gramineus</i>	(5, V)
Violet-green Swallow	<i>Tachycineta thalassina</i>	(1, CM/S)
Virginia Rail	<i>Rallus limicola</i>	(2, IM/S/W)
Warbling Vireo	<i>Vireo gilvus</i>	(2, CM/S)
Western Bluebird	<i>Sialia mexicana</i>	(2, R)
Western Grebe	<i>Aechmophorus occidentalis</i>	(2, R)
Western Gull	<i>Larus occidentalis</i>	(1, CM/W)
Western Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus verticalis</i>	(2, CM/S)
Western Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella neglecta</i>	(1, R)
Western Sandpiper	<i>Calidris mauri</i>	(1, CM/W)
Western Screech-Owl	<i>Megascops kennicottii</i>	(1, R)
Western Tanager	<i>Piranga ludoviciana</i>	(3, CM/T)
Western Wood-Pewee	<i>Contopus sordidulus</i>	(2, CM/T)
White-breasted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta carolinensis</i>	(2, R)
White-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>	(1, CM/W)
White-faced Ibis	<i>Plegadis chihi</i>	(4, V)
White-tailed Kite	<i>Elanus leucurus</i>	(2, R)
White-throated Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>	(4, CM/W)
White-throated Swift	<i>Aeronautes saxatalis</i>	(2, R)
Wild Turkey	<i>Meleagris gallopavo</i>	(2, R)
Willow Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax traillii</i>	(4, CM/T)
Wilson's Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus tricolor</i>	(2, V)
Wilson's Snipe	<i>Gallinago delicata</i>	(3, CM/W)
Wilson's Warbler	<i>Wilsonia pusilla</i>	(1, CM/S)
Wood Duck	<i>Aix sponsa</i>	(3, R)
Wrentit	<i>Chamaea fasciata</i>	(1, R)
Yellow Warbler	<i>Setophaga petechia</i>	(1, CM/S)
Yellow-billed Magpie	<i>Pica nuttalli</i>	(2, R)
Yellow-breasted Chat	<i>Icteria virens</i>	(5, CM/S/T)
Yellow-headed Blackbird	<i>Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus</i>	(5, V)
Yellow-rumped Warbler	<i>Setophaga coronata</i>	(1, CM/W)
Yellow-throated Vireo	<i>Vireo flavifrons</i>	(6, V)