

Albatross

PHOEBASTRIA NIGRIPES

56th Annual CBC Santa Cruz County

Saturday, December 15, 2012

How many birds...?

Inside:

Calendar

**Santa Cruz
Birds**



Rarity



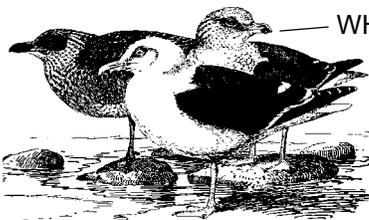
**SCBC:
HELP
WANTED
for ALBY**

December is bird count season--that time when dedicated birders gather to spend one or more winter days along the central California coast counting birds. It's in our genes! Join the 56th annual Christmas Bird Count, and then enjoy the countdown dinner! The CBC helps us track the ups and downs of the local bird populations. This highlight of our birding year is always fun for experienced and new birders alike. All are welcome to join the all-day event which happens rain or shine. Starting this year, the count is free--no fee for participating.

The 15-mile diameter count circle reaches from Davenport to New Brighton and from Boulder Creek to the ocean, encompassing a wide array of habitats. Each year 60 to 80 birders join together to search the woods, walk the fields, and scan the seas. The real fruit of the yearly count is our long-term tracking of numbers of individuals of each species. Rare birds may get the limelight, but the real value is in counting the "regular" birds and tracking down the uncommon ones in each counting area. The end-of-the-day potluck dinner and species countdown wraps it all up as we share the day's adventures and discoveries.

If you want to join the count, email or call Phil Brown to sign up.
pdpbrown@gmail.com -or- (831) 334 4249

The potluck count-down dinner will be at St. Joseph's Church in Capitola. Details, time, and directions are on page 4 in the calendar listing.



— WHOA!

BREAKING NEWS!
**Cuculus species found at Watsonville Slough
in late September. See page 8 for the story.**

Events Calendar

November - December 2012



Friday, November 2 Meder Canyon

An island of habitat within the west Santa Cruz residential area, featuring riparian and coastal scrub, plus extensive eucalyptus groves, which sometimes hold something unexpected.

Directions: Meet at 8:00 AM at the south end of the trail on Grandview Street, just past the Escalona Street intersection. To reach Grandview Street, turn north (inland) from Mission Street onto Swift Street. When Swift Street makes a sharp left turn, it becomes Grandview.

Leader: Steve Gerow, (831) 426-2476, stephengerow@aol.com



Sunday, November 4 Quail Hollow

Quail Hollow is a beautiful Santa Cruz Park with a good variety of species and habitats. Join us for a relaxed morning's birding.

Directions: Meet at 8:00 AM in the Quail Hollow parking lot.

Leader: Eric Feuss, (831) 477-0280



Saturday, November 10 Pogonip

We should find a variety of birds of forest and grassland habitats. If the trends of early fall continue, we may find some of the irregular northern/montane species such as Red Crossbills and Red-breasted Nuthatches. Expect a few miles of walking and some hills.

Directions: Meet at 8:00 AM at the north end of Spring Street, off High Street in Santa Cruz.

Leader: Steve Gerow, (831) 426-2476, stephengerow@aol.com



Sunday, November 11 San Mateo Bayfront and Coast

We'll visit Redwood Shores and Radio Road areas/ in the morning (9+ ft high tide at ~ 9:30 +/- AM) and Half Moon Bay / Princeton Harbor in the afternoon. Itinerary may vary as we attempt for any recent sightings provided on the birding list server appropriate to these locations (pen-bird), even attempting to reach Cascade Ranch if things look good. Bring lunch for a full day's birding. Heavy rain will not cancel this trip because, with a 9+ ft high tide, we'll attempt for black rails at the Palo Alto Baylands.

Directions: Meet at the County Government Center at 7:00 AM (near sign at Ocean Street parking entrance) for carpooling possibilities. Please call leader ahead of time if you want to meet later in the day.

Leader: Eric Feuss, (831) 477-0280, mobile for day of trip only: (408) 717-0421



White-breasted Nuthatch at Quail Hollow County Park—Photo: Alex Rinkert

Santa Cruz Bird Club programs and field trips are open to the public—non-members are welcome. People needing rides to field trip sites are advised to contact field trip leaders. Carpooling is encouraged. Dress in layers and bring liquids. Lunches are optional on half-day trips. Heavy rain cancels.

Field trips can pose hazards. Reluctantly, we have decided we must publish and implement this policy:

The Santa Cruz Bird Club or its field trip leaders cannot be responsible for damage, injury, or loss incurred by the acts or omissions of any member or visitor during Club field trips or during commutes to or from them.

Field trip participants must release the Club from any liability for such damage, injury, or loss.

Ordinarily, field trip participants sign a waiver releasing the Club from such liability, but in the absence of such a signed waiver, participation on a Club field trip in itself implies consent to and agreement with this waiver.



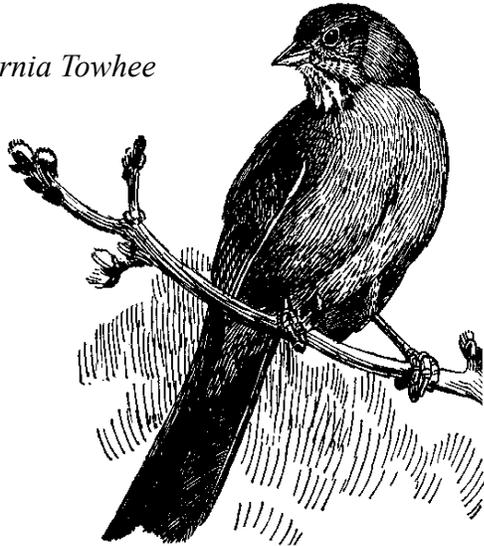
Friday, November 16
Schwan Lake

We'll explore the live oaks, riparian, grassland, and other habitats of the upland portion of Twin Lakes State Beach.

Directions: Meet at 8:00 AM in the parking lot of the Simpkins Family Swim Center, 979 17th Avenue.

Leader: Steve Gerow, (831) 426-2476, stephengerow@aol.com

California Towhee



Friday, November 23
Antonelli Pond

Enjoy a relaxed, post-Thanksgiving walk at a favorite local birding spot.

Directions: Meet at 8:00 AM on the west side of the pond at Delaware Avenue.

Leader: Steve Gerow, (831) 426-2476, stephengerow@aol.com



Sunday, November 25
Beginning Bird Walk
at Natural Bridges

Our local birding hotspot is a great place to get an introduction to the birds of Santa Cruz County. Take a relaxed walk with a local birder at a beautiful local park. A nice variety of habitat should yield a fair number of species.

Directions: Meet at the Delaware Ave. entrance to Natural Bridges at 8:30 AM.

Leader: Phil Brown, pdpbrown@gmail.com



Thursday, November 29
SCBC Meeting @7:30 PM
Speaker: Alvaro Jaramillo

Topic: How our Brains Identify Birds

Most bird identification talks focus on field marks, and the specifics of separating species *A* from species *B*. Few ask exactly how we identify birds. What is our brain going through in order to do this? Truth is that bird identification is pretty tricky, but our brain is wired to short cut much of the thinking involved in doing it. The trick is training yourself to do it like a pro. And that is the aim, a lighthearted but informative explanation of how the heck they do it.

Alvaro Jaramillo was born in Chile but began birding in Toronto, Canada, where he lived as a youth. He was trained in ecology and evolution with a particular interest in bird behavior. He is the author of the Birds of Chile and the Identify Yourself column in Bird Watcher's Digest. He also runs a birding and nature tour company, Alvaro's Adventures.

www.alvarosadventures.com

Location: Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History
1305 East Cliff Drive, Santa Cruz, CA



Friday, November 30
Wilder Ranch State Park

The varied habitats here have potential for a large variety of species.

Directions: Meet at 8:00 AM in the main parking area. The entrance fee is currently \$10 per-vehicle.

Leader: Steve Gerow, (831) 426-2476, stephengerow@aol.com



Friday, December 7
Seabright area

Areas we might cover include the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History grounds, Seabright Beach, outer Santa Cruz Harbor, Ocean View Park, and the lower San Lorenzo River area.

Directions: Meet at 8:00 AM at the whale sculpture at the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History.

Leader: Steve Gerow, (831) 426-2476, stephengerow@aol.com





Sunday, December 9
Fort Ord Dunes State Park

Come see our newest state park. It is a small park, such that this trip can easily fit within a morning excursion. If things are quiet, we may slip down (south) to Laguna Grande Park or back up (north) to the Salinas River mouth. If there are any rare bird sightings in the area, we may try for these birds, instead. Stay a half day or bring snack or lunch for a longer day of birding. Heavy rain cancels.

Directions: The park is off Hwy 1, at the Light Fighter Drive exit. Detailed directions at this link:

http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=580

Call leader for carpooling options or to make arrangement for meeting later in the day. Otherwise meet at Ford Ord Dunes State Park at 8:00 AM.

Leader: Eric Feuss, (831) 477-0280, mobile for day of trip only: (408) 717-0421



Saturday, December 15
Santa Cruz County
CBC

For details, see page 1 or contact:
Phil Brown, pdpbrown@gmail.com



Saturday Evening, December 15
Countdown Potluck Dinner
after the Bird Count.

Location: Parish Hall, St. Joseph's Church
435 Monterey Avenue, Capitola

Doors open: Anytime after 4:30 PM

Bring your bird list and a dish to share—main, vegetable, salad, dessert, bread, and a drink if you want something special. There will be paper plates, cups, and utensils, but bringing your own tableware will reduce waste and cost. Soft drinks and hot water for tea or hot chocolate will be available.

Directions: (You can get a map online.) Coming from Hwy 1, take Bay Street toward the ocean. Go through two stop signs on Bay, and then turn left on Monterey Ave. (If you go too far you will cross the RR tracks and drop down to Capitola Village.) Go left on Monterey for about 0.2 mile, and turn left into the church parking lot, directly across from Washburn Ave. Please continue past the left side of the church down into the lower parking lot to find the parish hall.



Saturday, December 22
Upper UCSC Campus

This walk takes us through mixed evergreen and redwood forest, chaparral, and other habitats—another spot that could be good for northern or montane irruptive species this year. Expect 3-4 miles of walking, and some hills.

Directions: Meet at 8:00 AM in the North Remote Parking Lot, at the north end of Heller Drive at UCSC.

Leader: Steve Gerow, (831) 426-2476, stephengerow@aol.com



Friday, December 28
Natural Bridges and vicinity

We'll see how many species we can find on our last Friday field trip of 2012.

Directions: Meet at 8:00 AM at the Delaware Avenue entrance to Natural Bridges State Beach.

Leader: Steve Gerow, (831) 426-2476, stephengerow@aol.com



Good-bye to 2012 and Welcome to 2013



Tuesday, January 1, 2013
Moss Landing
CBC

The Moss Landing CBC always takes place on NEW YEAR'S DAY. The count circle covers some of the prime birding areas in southern Santa Cruz County and northern Monterey County. As always, we're looking for more observers. Because the week between Christmas and New Year's becomes quite hectic for many people, please let us know your intentions before Christmas, so we can assign people to their territories before the holiday festivities begin. Sign up, join us, and then enjoy the warm, friendly (and delicious) countdown dinner at Pajaro Dunes. If you are interested in participating in this year's count, please contact:

Bob Ramer, 831-426-7342 or rjramer@sbcglobal.net

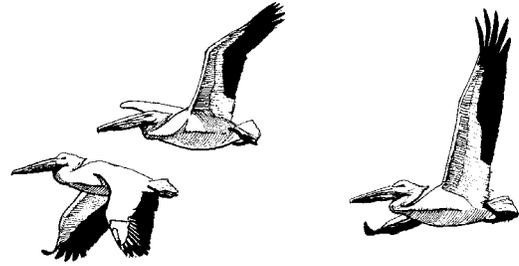
Santa Cruz Birds

*By David Suddjian & Steve Gerow
Including reports
from June 1 to August 31, 2012*

A **Greater White-fronted Goose**, first reported from Shorebirds Pond at Pajaro Dunes on August 6 (JR, RF, AR), most likely spent the summer there and may be the same one that has been there at least since summer of 2011. A flock of six Greater White-fronts flying over Watsonville Slough on August 30 (KK, SH) were presumably the season's first fall migrants, exceptionally early for Santa Cruz County. An apparent **Cackling Goose**, quite rare in the summer in California, was studied at Harkins Slough on July 8 (PB, KK), then what was perhaps the same bird was found again at Watsonville Slough on August 29-30 (RR, BR, NL, KK). Complicating matters were two small, difficult to identify **Cackling/Canada** type geese (maybe different from the July/August geese) photographed in the area on September 4-10 (AR), but more on them next issue. Single **Brant** flying up the coast off Seacliff State Beach on June 19 and 25 may have been very late spring migrants (DSu). Another turned up at Capitola Beach on July 3 (DSu) but was not noted before or after that date. There were also a handful of reports this period from the Pajaro River Mouth area (mostly within Monterey County), a more typical spot for summering Brant. Three **Wood Ducks** in lower Watsonville Slough on July 8 (LG, WG, PB, KK) were notable for the Pajaro Valley.

As usual, a few loons spent the summer, with about 10 reports of **Red-throated Loons**, 16 of **Pacific Loons**, and 8 of **Common Loons** during July and August (v.ob.). An **Eared Grebe** was seen off and on at Watsonville Slough starting June 25 (AR, BR, LG, v.ob.) for one of very few summering records for Santa Cruz County. Relatively large numbers of **Sooty Shearwaters** were regularly noted quite close to shore this summer; for example a congregation of roughly 10,000 off Capitola Beach on July 29 was so close to shore that waves were bumping some into the coastal rocks and rip-rap (DSu). Despite these near-shore spectacles, long-term observers of local seabird populations note that total numbers of this species in the area this season actually have been remarkably low and that this species has been undergoing a steady

decline in recent years (DSh, DSu, et al.). An unidentified booby sp. stopped at the cement ship at Seacliff State Beach on June 24 (KSC), but did not linger long enough for its species to be determined. **Brandt's Cormorants** nested at their usual three spots again this year, with 24 nests at the old Davenport Pier (DS), 21 nests at Natural Bridges (SG), and the big colony at the Seacliff Cement Ship had a maximum of 343 nests on June 19 (DSu), with some nesting efforts there continuing into late August. With the Pinto Lake colony emptied by the Bald Eagle pair, **Double-crested Cormorants** only nested at Schwan Lake this season, with at least 112 nests there as of June 18 (AR).



A flock of 15 **American White Pelicans** flew over the Loma Prieta area from Santa Cruz into Santa Clara County on June 3 (CK, EL, ADM, et. al.), the first time these have been observed flying over the mountains from Santa Cruz County. American White Pelicans are also quite rare in the mid-county area, so one at the San Lorenzo River mouth on July 20 (NW), two at Natural Bridges on August 24 (SG et al.), and two flying by Capitola Beach on August 27 (DSu) were all notable records. The usual areas for White Pelicans in the Pajaro Valley had good numbers starting in late June, with a high count of 95 at Watsonville Slough on August 21 (AR). A **Cattle Egret** was near Harkins Slough August 19-24 (JW, CK, EL, RF). **White-faced Ibis** were regularly reported in the Watsonville Slough System starting July 8, with the largest count being 32 on August 1 (BR, LG).

The **Osprey** pair at Harkins Slough successfully fledged two young by July 14 (JW, v.ob.). An adult **White-tailed Kite** at Porter-Sesnon on August 14 was rare for the Aptos-Seacliff area, particularly in summer (DSu). There were a few reports of 1-2 adult or near-adult **Bald Eagles** in the Pajaro Valley through June 24, presumably most or all involving the pair that attempted nesting. A juvenile Bald Eagle flying down the coast over Wilder Ranch was photographed on August 24 (MB). A pair of **Cooper's Hawks** nested



A juvenile Cooper's Hawk from the Rispin Mansion brood. Photo by David Sidle.

near the Rispin Mansion in Capitola this season, just the second breeding record for Capitola (JD, DSu). A good-sized family of five fledglings was out of the nest by July 4, with most staying near the nest until early August.

A **Solitary Sandpiper** was at Watsonville Slough August 9-12 (GK, PB), and two were at the pond at Quail Hollow Ranch on August 30 (AR). Eighteen **Wilson's Phalaropes** were in Watsonville Slough on July 8 (PB, KK, LG, WG), a large count for Santa Cruz County. A 2nd cycle **Laughing Gull** along Watsonville Slough from August 27- September 8 (CK, JW, AR, DR, v.ob) was a good find, just the 8th for Santa Cruz County and our first for August. **California Gulls** nested on two rooftop sites in Capitola this season, for only the second and the third breeding confirmations for Santa Cruz County (DSu). Two were carrying nesting material to different spots on Capitola Mall rooftops on June 19, and three large young were observed in a rooftop nest at the Brown Bulb Ranch

Marketplace on July 24, both sites among nesting **Western Gulls**. A **Least Tern** stopped at Capitola Beach on August 28 (DSu). Jaegers are rarely noted onshore in Santa Cruz County, so an immature **Pomarine Jaeger** sitting on rip-rap along West Cliff Drive on August 9 was of note (SG). A **Marbled Murrelet** flying down the coast past Seacliff State Beach on June 11(DSu) was rare for the nesting season down the coast past Santa Cruz

Sightings of **Black Swifts** included two reports in early June that probably pertained to migrants and two reports in early July that continued an enigmatic pattern of occurrences at a time when nesting birds might be most expected but evidence of nesting is lacking (ADM, AR, KK, SG). **Black-chinned Hummingbirds** appeared on schedule in mid-August, with a handful of reports and more in September. An adult male at a feeder northeast of Scotts Valley on August 13-17 was notable away from the near coast and very few adult males have been found in the county among the influx of late summer hummers (BM, KM). An immature male **Costa's Hummingbird** near Loma Prieta was the county's latest ever spring occurrence (ADM), with the next latest being May 21. A **Willow Flycatcher** was at Natural Bridges on June 11 (SG). A **Say's Phoebe** at Gray Whale Ranch on July 15 provided only the second summer record for the county (SH, KK, PM). A **Western Kingbird** at Capitola on June 11 was late for mid-county (DS).



Alex Rinkert caught this Pomarine Jaeger in flight on Monterey Bay, August 26, 2012.

Purple Martins continued near Loma Prieta to at least July 8 (v.ob.). Five martins at Summit Ridge at Maymen's Flat, southeast of Loma Prieta on June 15 (AR) may have involved some of the same birds, but the area is over two miles distant and contains many pine snags suitable for nesting created by 2008's Croy Fire. One martin at Olympia Watershed on July 31 was a post-breeding migrant (AR). Decades ago **Bank Swallows** nested in the county, but in recent decades the occasional reports we have are mostly of singles and rarely two. So a big three seen at West Cliff Drive on July 31 provided a record count for the past 50 years or so (JS). **Wrentits** are considered to be largely sedentary, but this summer reports of dispersal through urban habitats well away from local nesting areas included two at Capitola on July 17 (DSu), one at Lighthouse Field State Beach on July 25 (SG), and others at Capitola on August 13 and 22 (DSu, KK).

A **California Thrasher** at Lighthouse Field on July 28 was another supposedly sedentary urban wanderer (SG). The singing male **Northern Parula** found at Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park on May 31 remained to at least July 9 (PB, CB, AR, SH, v.ob.). Another singing male appeared at the UCSC Arboretum from July 7-31 (KK, GT, CC, v.ob.). Two **Townsend's Warblers** at the Byrne-Milliron Forest Preserve on August 11 were 10 days ahead of the average first arrival (DSu). **Black-chinned Sparrows** and **Sage Sparrows** continued to be seen at Summit Ridge near Loma Prieta into July (v.ob.), with observations of breeding evidence for both on July 8 providing rare confirmations of nesting for the county—the first for the Black-chinned in about 15 years (DR, RC). Three **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** were reported in June (JB, AG, CG), and five were found in August (DSu, AS, BS, SGe at al).

A singing male **Indigo Bunting** at Gray Whale Ranch on July 11-15 was widely viewed (SG, LG, JW, KK, v.ob.). Others were at Natural Bridges on July 29-31 (SG, JS) and New Brighton State Beach on August 21 (MS, JS). Some 125 **Tricolored Blackbirds** were near Aromas on June 25 (AR) and seven passing east over Capitola that day were unexpected there in summer (DSu). **Lawrence's Goldfinches** were seen along the mid-county coast at Capitola on July 6 (DSu) and Natural Bridges on July 8 (SG), while a flock was seen

at Watsonville Slough near the confluence with Struve Slough from July 8-16 (PB, LG, WG, KK, JW). Thirty counted on July 14 was an exceptional number for Santa Cruz County (JW).



This Indigo Bunting seen at Gray Whale Ranch in July, was photographed by Alex Rinkert. See the color photo in the Albatross online.

* * *

Cited Observers: Cliff Bixler, Jeff Bleam, Michael Bolte, Phil Brown, Rita Caratello, Carol Chetkovich, Al DeMartini, Judy Donaldson, Rick Fournier, Alexander Gaguine, Cathy Gamble, Steve Gerow, Lois Goldfrank, Wally Goldfrank, Sharon Hull, Clay Kempf, Gary Kittleson, Kathy Kuyper, Earl Lebow, Nick Levendosky, Barbara Monahan, Kevin Monahan, Pam Myers, Alex Rinkert, Bernadette Ramer, Robert Ramer, Don Roberson, Jennifer Rycenga, Jeff Scott, Michelle Scott, Debra L. Shearwater, Kate St.Clair, John Sterling, David Suddjian, Amber Sumrall, Glen Tepke, Jeff Wall, Nat Weber. "v.ob. means many observers.

Please report unusual or interesting observations to dsuddjian@gmail.com

CUCKOO! at the slough—the story from those who found it

Steve Gerow: *The most remarkable birding news of the fall was the discovery of a cuckoo of the Eurasian genus *Cuculus* along Watsonville Slough in Watsonville.* Discovered on a Santa Cruz Bird Club field trip on September 28, the bird is currently believed by most to be a juvenile Common Cuckoo, though separation from the similar Oriental Cuckoo was still being discussed at the time of publication. Either way, it is a new record for the state of California and an extreme rarity for North America outside the Alaskan Islands. Throngs of birders from near and far came to see this bird, which remained through October 2. For some, the sight of dozens of birders, maybe over a hundred at a time, packing the paths along Watsonville Slough was almost as exciting a spectacle as the cuckoo itself. Here we present a few photos of the cuckoo and the crowd that came to see it, and some recollections from some in the group that originally found the bird.

It started out as a fairly ordinary Friday field trip. A walk along Watsonville Slough, starting from Ramsay Park, yielded a nice mix of expected stuff, with a young Black-chinned Hummingbird as a bit of a highlight. The original plan was to bird the Pajaro River next, but it just so happened that Nanci Adams had called me the night before about a Tropical Kingbird at Ford Street, so we headed there instead.

Eight of us—Lois Goldfrank, Wendy Naruo, Tim Jolly, Sue Dumller, Jeff Wall, Norman Kikuchi, Beth Polvino, and myself—arrived at the slough access at Ford and Kearney. Almost as soon as we had our binoculars ready, Lois looked into a willow patch and said, “What’s that orange bird?” I was anticipating an oriole or something, but then I saw the bird—not what I was expecting! In fact it didn’t really fit anything I could think of—orange/rufous above, whitish below, barred all over, long tail, pointed wings, odd bill shape—field marks that didn’t come together into anything that should be there. We tried to make it into a small raptor, a flicker, anything that would make any sense, but none of it worked. Wendy got a couple of photos, we stared at the bird some more, then it flew. It dawned on me that our bird resembled one of the Eurasian cuckoos (which I knew only from pictures in books), and I mentioned that to the group. Lois, who had seen Common Cuckoos and some related species in several countries, said she had been thinking the same thing since shortly after first spotting the bird!

While we were still stunned by the impossibility of that possibility, the bird returned, and perched even more in the open—yes, definitely a cuckoo! Tim had his scope ready, so we were able to get a close detailed study. Wendy was ready with her camera and got several excellent pictures. Sue had a copy of the National Geographic field guide, one of the few North American guides that includes some of the more extreme rarities. A look at the book suggested Common or Oriental Cuckoo, with Common seeming closer to the details we observed. We needed to get the word out as soon as possible. A few people had cell phones and Jeff happened to find phone numbers of a few people who might be able to post to MBB. We finally reached Rich Griffith, who reported the sighting for us. After not too long, Scott Smithson arrived and posted the sighting to CalBirds. The cuckoo flood had begun!



Cuculus species—Photo: Wendy Naruo

A remarkable combination of circumstances put us at just the right place at the right time with just the right resources. The great cooperative effort by everyone allowed us to get a preliminary identification and get the word out quickly about an even more remarkable visitor.

Lois Goldfrank: At what was almost the end of the field trip, I looked into the willows at Ford St. and suddenly saw a flash of the most extraordinary color. Right away I thought this was something different; no North American bird was that color. I shouted, “What’s that orange bird?” and then “Get on that bird!” At first I was thinking raptor, but the head and even the bill seemed more dove-like, the tail was very long, and then I saw that fine barring all over the entire back. Some kind of Eurasian cuckoo, it had to be. At that point Steve turned and said, “I’m thinking Cuckoo,” and I replied, “There’s nothing about it that isn’t right for Cuckoo.” I had seen the Common Cuckoo before in other places but never the hepatic morph. Which Cuckoo could it be? And what was any cuckoo who looked like that doing here?

The rest is history. My grandchildren and non-birding friends have delighted in googling “Cuckoo Lois Goldfrank.” Of all the comments I heard from people who traveled here from far away in search of the bird, my favorite was from the woman who came up to me shaking her finger: “So you’re the one! Do you know you’ve cost me 65,000 frequent flyer miles?”

Final note: if you should ever happen by chance to spot a rare bird, be sure Steve Gerow is standing next to you to verify the ID and Wendy Naruo is on the other side to provide photographic evidence.

Jeff Wall: Lois pointed me at it, and I went through a very short differential, ruling out flicker, then some sort of raptor, and actually thought of some kind of goatsucker or night hawk, but it sounded too crazy to say it out loud. By this time the smart money was going Cuckoo.

Sue Dumler: I recall being amazed that the bird remained in sight for so long a period allowing every one of us a very good look at it. I stood next to Norm for some time as he checked every feature of the bird against the field guide. I also remember that everyone kept a respectful distance allowing Wendy to go in close for excellent photos.

Finally we seemed to dissolve into temporary chaos as it became evident that this find needed to be posted on MBB. No phone numbers, no phones etc. At last somebody came up with a phone and Rich Griffith's number, and it was accomplished. Good lesson for me to keep phone numbers, in my cell, of those who post on MBB.

(continued)



Cuculus species—Photo: Jeff Bleam



The underwing pattern seen in flight—Photo: Brian Sullivan

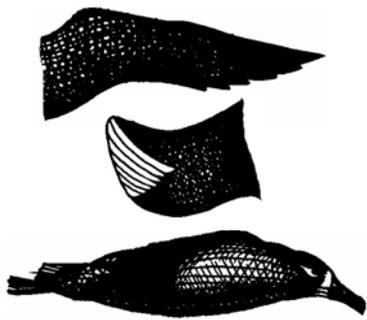
Cuckoo (continued)

Anne Beth Polvino: Coming into town from Cape May, N.J. on vacation, I googled birding clubs and found the link for the Santa Cruz Bird Club on Facebook with the walk listed. The earlier part of the trip was great for me with several new lifers, but when we got to Ford Street there was the cuckoo sitting in the branches. How exciting to find out it was ID'd as a Common Cuckoo and was/is a very rare visitor to the lower 48 states! How wonderful to be there when it was first seen! You can bet when I get back to Watsonville again, I'll be joining any bird walks available.



Some of the "cuckoo crowd" that gathered to see the rare bird. Photo: Barbara Banfield

Help wanted:



(Some assembly required)

New Editor sought for Albatross— to start next Spring

The SCBC is seeking a new editor for the Albatross. As a new editor you could add your unique style to the Albatross—consider updating the format or putting more of it online. Or you might want to focus on the tried & true print format. It's up to you!

Minimum requirements are: Good English editing skills, basic computer skills, internet access, and the ability to create documents with word processing or (preferably) desktop publishing software. Adapting photographs for publication is another useful skill, easily acquired. Perhaps a couple of people with complimentary skills could join forces on this. For more information, please contact me. (Contact info on back page.)

Judy Donaldson, Editor (soon-to-be-retired)

**New SCBC
Members
Welcome!**

Louie & Margie Godinez	Aug 2012
Carol Chetkovich & Glen Tepke	Aug 2012
Mary Eriksen	Sep 2012
Andy Knorr	Sep 2012
Ronald McDow	Sep 2012
Pat Mahoney	Sep 2012
Carol Pecot & Dan Shapiro	Oct 2012
Inman Gollogly & Gloria Linder	Oct 2012
Farnaz Fatemi	Oct 2012
Sol & Ada Lucido	Oct 2012
Howard Stephenson	Oct 2012
Bruce Lyon	Oct 2012
Jan Hanna	Oct 2012
Cole Sutherland	Oct 2012
Chris Campton	Oct 2012
Marie Reed	Oct 2012
Gillian Greensite	Oct 2012
Jean Brubeck	Oct 2012
Larry Corridon	Oct 2012
Joan Kapp	Oct 2012
Maris Sidenstecker	Oct 2012
Laura Revilla	Oct 2012

**Input deadline for
Jan/Feb 2013 issue
of the Albatross—
December 1, 2012**

*Red-breasted
Nuthatch*



**Submission for the
Albatross—Guidelines**

In addition to regular features—calendar, Santa Cruz Birds, trip reports—the newsletter can include almost anything related to birding in general and to local birding in particular. Depending on space, submissions of any of the following are welcome:

- Feature articles
- Birding event announcements
- Stories about birders, serious or comic
- Reviews of birding literature or guides
- Conservation & outreach reports/stories
- Birding tips, descriptions of local sites
- Filler tidbits: Quotes or images
- Photos of people at our events (jpg, tif)

If you wish to submit an article, please contact me about it **before** the submission deadline.

I accept plain text, Word, or PDF files. Send items by email to: calqua@sbcglobal.net

~Judy Donaldson, Editor

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*Black
Oystercatcher*

and chick at

Natural

Bridges

*Photo by
Michael Bolte*



According to David Suddjian, the first record of Black Oystercatchers nesting at Natural Bridges was in 2010, and the second was in 2011. Sadly, it appears that the young did not survive to fledgling in either year. This site is at the end of the species' nesting range in Santa Cruz County. Recently, a survey was done on Black Oystercatcher reproductive success in Monterey County. Results can be seen here:

<http://creagrus.home.montereybay.com/MTYbirdsBLOY2012.html>

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