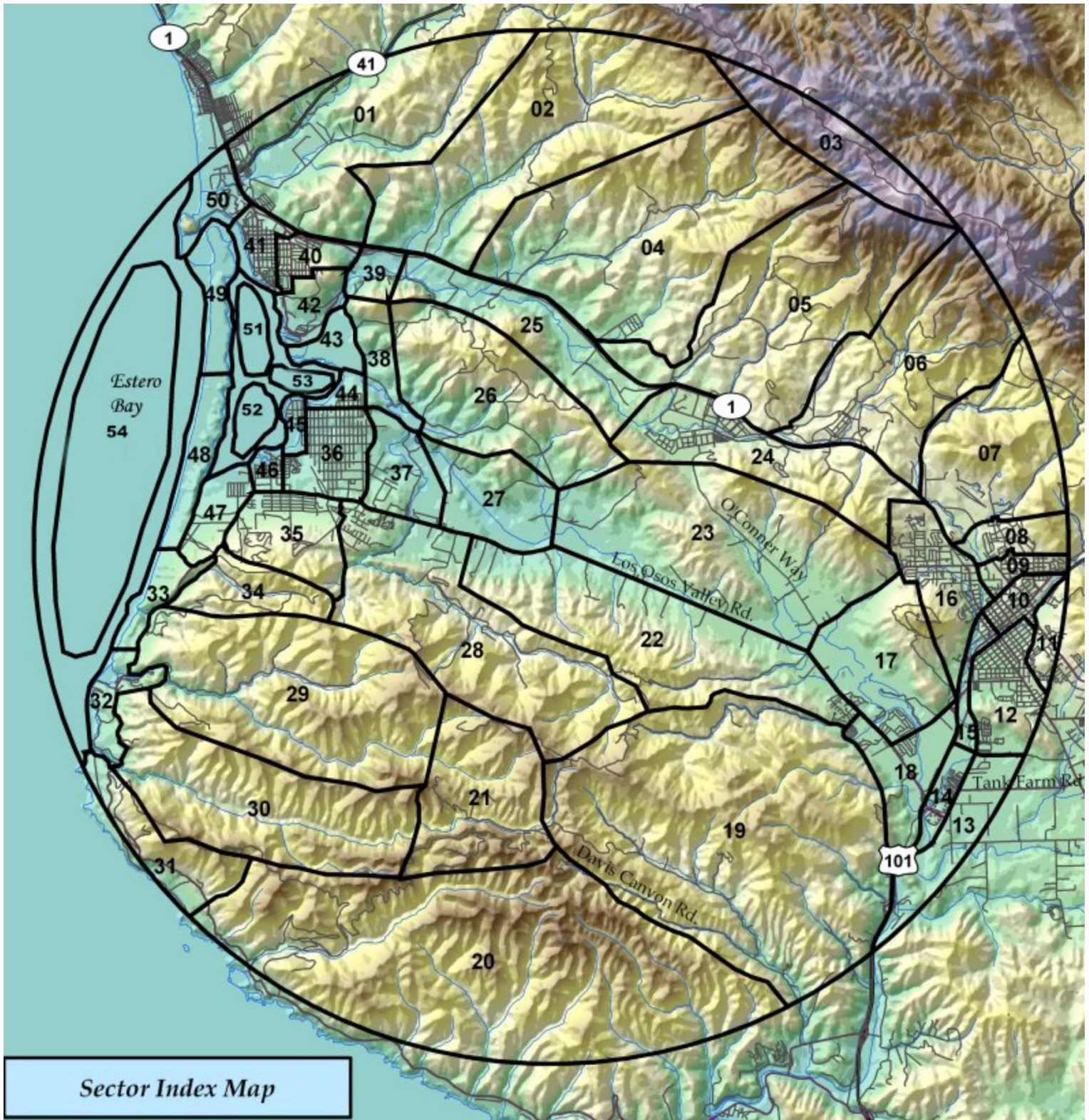




Morro Bay Christmas Bird Count

Sector Information

For Participants



MORRO BAY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT — SECTOR INFORMATION

The following are listings of key locations within each sector that may be the most productive based on past experience. Also noted are species that are hard to find within the count circle and are possible within the habitat of each sector. Please don't limit census to just the areas mentioned, but consider them the most important. Cover as much of your sector(s) as your time and energy allows. **Remember, if your party splits or moves to another sector, please begin a new field card.** Any constructive comments about any sector would be appreciated (e.g., too big or small; access problem; additional key locations, etc.). Please note actual areas covered. Also note contacts for entrance onto private property.

August 2016

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SECTOR 1 - HIGHWAY 41 / LITTLE MORRO CREEK ROAD

Highway 41 - Check willows along Morro Creek. Especially check eucalyptus grove and willows behind Grange Hall. Look for flycatchers, warblers, orioles and *Selasphorus* (Allen's) hummingbirds. Check Miner's Hardware garden center.

Walk Morro Creek upstream of Main Street (access at the Main Street bridge) and check feeders at mobile homes along the creek. Nashville, Lucy's, Palm, and Wilson's warblers plus a Willow Flycatcher have all been found along the creek during the count.

Little Morro Creek Road - Check eucalyptus grove and residences at sharp right turn (1/4 mile from Ratcliff Ave) for orioles, warblers, and *Selasphorus* hummingbirds. Check open hillsides for Burrowing Owl and Roadrunner. Check raptors for Ferruginous Hawk and Prairie Falcon. Watch for Mountain Bluebird in open fields. Check sparrow flocks for unusual species.

If time permits, check the neighborhoods north of Hwy 41 for Great-tailed Grackle and houses with feeders.

SECTOR 2 - SAN BERNARDO CREEK ROAD

Check willows along creek as much as possible. If possible gain access to upper reaches of canyon to check for turkeys and magpies and the pond south of road and east of Hwy 1 for ducks and Wilson's Snipe.

Check fields for Horned Lark, American Pipit, and Lark Sparrow. Watch for raptors. If owling, listen for Pygmy and Screech Owls.

SECTOR 3 - CUESTA RIDGE

The only access is TV Tower Road. Explore area by walking main road and abandoned side roads. Find old road down to rock quarry on west side of road. It is found about 20 yards south of area with metal pipe barrier. This is well past the first tower area near Botanical preserve where pipe barriers have also been constructed.

Throughout sector look and listen for Townsend's Solitaire, Mountain Quail, Band-tailed Pigeon, Mountain Chickadee, Western Tanager, Green-tailed Towhee, Bell's Sparrow, and Cassin's Finch. All have been found on the ridge in winter.

SECTOR 4 - SAN LUISITO CREEK ROAD

San Luisito Creek Road - Watch for raptors. Check any accessible ponds. Try to gain access to upper canyon as turkeys and magpies have been found there in past.

Gilardi Road / Shooting ranges - Check sparse willows near Hwy 1 and wet spots for Wilson's Snipe. Drive roads for Burrowing Owls, Horned Lark, American Pipit, and Lark Sparrow.

SECTOR 5 - RANCHO EL CHORRO / EL CHORRO REGIONAL PARK

Check Pennington and Dairy Creeks - Rancho el Chorro, El Chorro Regional Park, and the Dairy Creek Golf Course, and walk road/trail up canyon from the dog park. Much of this sector must be covered on foot. If owling, be alert for Screech and Pygmy Owls.

Rancho el Chorro - Check pond and around buildings for sparrows. Watch for raptors, Burrowing Owls, and turkeys.

El Chorro Regional Park and Dairy Creek Golf Course - Check pepper trees for sapsuckers and watch for White-tailed Kite.

Check the campground and the ponds on the golf course for geese.

SECTOR 6 - CAMP SAN LUIS / CHORRO RESERVOIR

Access to Camp San Luis is controlled by the National Guard and access must be arranged in advance. Check creeks especially around eucalyptus groves. In open fields, watch for Ferruginous Hawk, Prairie Falcon, Horned

MORRO BAY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT — SECTOR INFORMATION

Lark, Mountain Bluebird, American Pipit, and Lark Sparrow. Upper canyons can have Wild Turkey, Mountain Quail, and Townsend's Solitaire has been found there. Check rocky areas for Rock Wren.

Camp San Luis walnut orchard and pepper trees - Check for sapsuckers as Red-breasted, Red-naped, and Yellow-bellied have been recorded here. In the eucalyptus grove next to the orchard look through sparrows and juncos for oddities. Listen and watch for Cassin's Kingbird and Yellow-billed Magpie.

Chorro Reservoir - Check reservoir and small ponds up northeast drainage for geese and ducks. In particular look for Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-neck Duck, and Hooded Merganser. Be alert for American Bittern, Green Heron, Virginia Rail, Sora, and Wilson's Snipe. Check downstream area for Yellow-billed Magpie.

SECTOR 7 - STENNER CREEK / CAL POLY FIELDS AND PONDS

Stenner Creek Road - Check fields for sparrows. Watch and listen for turkeys and Cassin's Kingbirds in the vineyards and in eucalyptus at Cheda Reservoir. Check pond north of road and west of railroad tracks for American Bittern, Green Heron, rails, and Hooded Merganser. From Railroad trestle to end of road (public access) is good for Common Poorwill at dusk (playing calls is helpful).

Check along Stenner Creek as it parallels Hwy 1 for Chipping Sparrow and other sparrows. Wood Duck and Hooded Merganser have been found at Cheda Reservoir (by eucalyptus grove north of Stenner Creek Road).

Cal Poly ponds - Check all ponds (there are ten) for waterfowl, American Bittern, Green Heron, Sora, Virginia Rail, and Common Moorhen. Look through blackbird flocks for Tricolored and Yellow-headed blackbird, especially at dairy facilities.

Poly Canyon - Watch for Band-tailed Pigeon.

SECTOR 8 - CAL POLY CAMPUS

Walk the campus. All three species of sapsucker have been found in pepper trees in front of the library and along University Drive. Check lawns and hedge rows for sparrow flocks - White-throated and Harris's sparrows have been found on campus. Check pines behind the campus president's residence, alders around campus, and hillsides behind the student housing. Check all flowering eucalyptus for hummingbirds, warblers, Western Tanagers, and orioles.

Walk Stenner Creek and watch for sparrow flocks and unusual warblers. Check the water feature on the lawn by the business building (California Blvd) where Eastern Phoebe has been found.

Check the area around the church across the railroad tracks from the stadium on California Blvd.

SECTOR 9 - CUESTA COUNTY PARK / SANTA ROSA PARK

Check both parks and Stenner Creek. Look for Dipper on San Luis Obispo Creek and flycatchers, warblers, tanagers, and orioles in riparian and ornamental planting along banks, especially adjacent to Sierra Vista Hospital. Search through flocks of bushtits and chickadees for oddities in the parks.

Check areas with mature plantings and feeders in residential neighborhoods.

Cuesta County Park - Check flowering eucalyptus, sycamores, and oaks along creek for warblers, orioles, and tanagers. Look for sparrow and junco flocks. Bell's Sparrow was once reported on hillsides north of park.

SECTOR 10 - DOWNTOWN SLO

Check as much of San Luis Creek as possible; American Dipper and Hooded Merganser are possible. This area requires walking or possibly biking.

The eastern sector near Hwy 101 and the neighborhood around it can be productive. Look for feeders, flowering eucalyptus, and mature plantings as they could hold Rufous/Allen's or other hummingbirds, warblers, tanagers, or orioles.

MORRO BAY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT — SECTOR INFORMATION

SECTOR 11 - SAN LUIS OBISPO HIGH

Check eucalyptus and lawns around San Luis Obispo High and the old Jr. High. Check eucalyptus off Woodland Drive - Townsend's Solitaire has been found on the hillside above.

Check various trees along Fairview Street and Ruth Street watching for sapsuckers, orioles, and tanagers.

Check plantings around French Hospital.

Walk and drive area looking for mature plantings, feeders, and check all creeks and drainages.

SECTOR 12 - MEADOW PARK

Check Meadow and Mitchell parks. Also check the cemetery across the street from the Caltrans office on South Higuera. Walk the drainage that goes through Meadow Park.

Walk the South Hills open space for Rock Wren, Loggerhead Shrike, soaring raptors, and possibly Burrowing Owl.

Also, walk and drive looking for areas of mature plantings and feeders, and check the small creeks and drainages.

SECTOR 13 - SOUTH HIGUERA

Check open fields for raptors, Cattle Egrets, Horned Larks, and pipits.

Check small creeks and willow patches. In southern part of sector, check San Luis Creek from intersection of Higuera and Hwy 101 south (one mile stretch of creek in this sector, walk if possible - boots).

Check east fork of San Luis Obispo Creek from Buckley Road.

SECTOR 14 - SLO SEWAGE PLANT / SOUTH HIGUERA

Check sewage plant and ponds at southern end of bike trail for waterfowl, shorebirds (Black-necked Stilt), gulls, blackbirds (Rusty, Yellow-headed, Tricolored), and sparrows.

Cover as much of San Luis Obispo Creek as possible (walk). Check eucalyptus groves for warblers - Tennessee and Worm-eating warbler have been found along the creek.

SECTOR 15 - SAN LUIS CREEK

Primary goal is to cover as much of San Luis Creek as possible; walking recommended.

Also bird the stretches of Brizzolara and San Luis Obispo creeks and the Promontory development (Nashville, Yellow, and Tennessee warblers and American Redstart have been found here).

The persimmon trees in yard on Dana Street area are worth a check for waxwing and tanagers as is the habitat at the end of the street.

Look for sparrows around Mission School.

Check cemetery along Elks Lane for sapsuckers.

SECTOR 16 - FOOTHILL SECTOR

Check drainage that winds its way east on south side of Foothill and then turns south through residential neighborhood and into Brizzolara Creek.

Check north of foothill around school and any eucalyptus stands for tanagers and orioles. Pre-scout to determine most productive areas.

Check the park on Cuesta Street and Bishop's Peak School.

Check pepper trees on hillside of Cerro San Luis Obispo for sapsuckers from southern end of Hill Street.

Check Bishop Peak Trail that starts from the northern end of Patricia Drive - a Sage Thrasher was here once.

MORRO BAY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT — SECTOR INFORMATION

Check hillsides and neighborhoods at west end of Highland Drive - Painted Redstart and White-breasted Nuthatch have been found in this area.

SECTOR 17 - LAGUNA LAKE

Primary goal is to census around lake looking for water birds, gulls, swallows, and sparrows. Target species include Greater White-fronted, Snow, Ross's, Canada and Cackling goose, Common and Hooded merganser, Thayer's and Herring gull, American Bittern, Virginia Rail, Sora, and swallows. Eastern Phoebe and Swamp Sparrow have been recorded along the peninsula. Past years' birds have included Clark's Grebe, Common Merganser, and Common Moorhen.

Check hillsides for Rock Wren and Rufous-crowned Sparrow, open fields for Burrowing Owl, Cattle Egret, and Mountain Bluebird. Look for Greater Roadrunner over hill in cactus patch behind Madonna center. At dusk check rocky hillsides for Common Poorwill (use recorded calls) and watch for Short-eared Owl.

Prefumo Creek - walk creek from Los Osos Valley Road to lake if possible (boots will be necessary). In past Swamp Sparrow, Eastern Phoebe, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Wilson's Warbler have been found along the creek.

Los Osos Valley Rd. / Foothill Rd. - Drive and watch for raptors, Burrowing Owl, waterfowl, Mountain Bluebird, and Cattle Egret.

SECTOR 18 - PREFUMO CREEK / FROM RANCH / IRISH HILLS NATURAL AREA

The following is a listing of key locations within this sector that may be the most productive based on past experience. Also noted are species that are hard to find within the count circle and are possible within the habitat of this sector. Please don't limit census to just the areas mentioned, but consider them the most important. Cover as much of the sector as your time and energy allows. Remember, if your party splits or moves to another sector, please begin a new field card or start a new checklist. Any constructive comments about this sector would be appreciated (e.g., too big or small, access problem, additional key locations). Please note actual areas covered. Also note contacts for entrance onto private property.

Prefumo Creek / Froom Ranch / Irish Hills Natural Area

This sector is divided into three subsectors 18A, 18B and 18C.

Sector 18A (Prefumo Creek/Froom Ranch) - includes neighborhoods west of Los Osos Valley Road and south of Madonna Road (San Luis Ranch, Froom Ranch Way, Calle and Calle Joaquin.

Walk creek from Madonna Road to Hwy 101 including paths in San Luis Ranch and behind Target Shopping Center, and from Los Osos Valley Road to sector boundary.

Census as much of golf course as possible.

Check open fields and crop lands for raptors and sparrows.

Check eucalyptus groves for hummingbirds, warblers, tanagers, and orioles.

Check residential areas with mature plantings and feeders.

Check parking lot around Costco food court for Great-tailed Grackle, and Froom Ranch marsh and ponds between the Home Depot Center and Calle Joaquin for waterfowl and Wilson's Snipe.

Check grasslands, riparian, coastal scrub and ornamental landscaping along Calle Joaquin up the hill to and around Arise Central Coast/Mountainbrook Church, KSBY and Filipponi Ranch Winery

MORRO BAY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT — SECTOR INFORMATION

Sector 18 B (Irish Hills East) – includes the eastern portion of the Irish Hills Natural Reserve. This includes the trails in and adjacent to Froom Creek and the trails (King Trail) from the trailhead at the terminus of Madonna Road. This sector is sometimes covered by a team that hikes in from Johnson Ranch (Sector 19 C)

Sector 18 C (Irish Hills West) - includes the western portion of the Irish Hills Natural Reserve. This includes the trails from the Prefumo Creek Road Trailhead (Woodland, Bog Thistle, Mariposa Trails).

Look for Varied thrush in creek/shaded woodland areas; Phainopepla in coastal shrub, chaparral and oak woodland areas; and Rufous crowned sparrows in rocky hillsides.

SECTOR 19 - PREFUMO CANYON / SEE CANYON / JOHNSON RANCH TRAIL

The following is a listing of key locations within this sector that may be the most productive based on past experience. Also noted are species that are hard to find within the count circle and are possible within the habitat of this sector. Please don't limit census to just the areas mentioned, but consider them the most important. Cover as much of the sector as your time and energy allows. Remember, if your party splits or moves to another sector, please begin a new field card or start a new checklist. Any constructive comments about this sector would be appreciated (e.g., too big or small, access problem, additional key locations). Please note actual areas covered. Also note contacts for entrance onto private property.

This sector is divided into three subsectors, 19A, 19B and 19C.

Sector 19A (Prefumo Canyon) - split at the top/crest of Prefumo and See Canyons. This subsector includes covering both sides of Prefumo Canyon Road from the juncture with See Canyon Road down to just west of the trailhead for Irish Hills Natural Reserve. Habitats include coastal scrub, grasslands and rocky slopes in the upper canyon areas transitioning into oak woodland and riparian in the mid and lower canyon areas.

Check grasslands for Mountain bluebird, Horned lark, flycatchers and sparrows. Check scattered residential landscaping and orchards for hummingbirds, sapsuckers, and fruit eaters such as tanagers, grosbeaks, and orioles. Listen and watch for Varied Thrush in dense woodlands.

Sector 19B (See Canyon) - split at the top/crest of Prefumo and See Canyons. This subsector includes both sides of See Canyon Road as well as Davis Canyon Road. Habitats include coastal scrub and grasslands in the upper canyon area transitioning quickly into oak woodland and riparian in the mid and lower canyon areas. Numerous orchards are found in the lower canyon area.

Nighttime owling has produced Western Screech, Spotted, Long-eared, Saw-whet, and Pygmy owls in both canyons.

Check orchards for sapsuckers and fruit eaters such as tanagers, grosbeaks, and orioles. Listen and watch for Varied Thrush in dense woodlands.

Davis Canyon - check if time allows.

Sector 19C (Johnson Ranch Open Space) - This subsector includes the Johnson Ranch Open Space and the areas visible from trails on the open space and the connector trail to the Irish Hills Natural Reserve. Habitats include coastal scrub, grasslands, oak woodland and riparian. If access can be obtained from the City of San Luis Obispo, check Forbes Pond located adjacent to the (private) access road through the open space.

SECTOR 20 - DIABLO CANYON / PG&E PROPERTY

Access to the sector is controlled by PG&E and must be prearranged. Drive and walk canyons including Diablo, Pecho, and Irish. Walk areas of riparian habitat and drive ridge road. Some of coastal bluff is within sector, but no shoreline. Crowbar Canyon not in sector. Species recorded here include Greater Roadrunner, Band-tailed Pigeon, Steller's Jay, Varied Thrush, and unusual warblers such as Hermit and Nashville. Check mature oaks for Brown Creeper. Owling could be productive but night access has never been available.

MORRO BAY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT — SECTOR INFORMATION

SECTOR 21 - UPPER COON CREEK

No public access. Trails and dirt roads into area from upper Perfumo / See Canyon road.

SECTOR 22 - LOS OSOS VALLEY ROAD - SOUTHWEST

Drive along Los Osos Valley Road stopping regularly (be very careful of traffic) to scan southwest side of road. Check all roads where access is possible including Sycamore Canyon Road. Watch for Horned Lark, American Pipit, and Tricolored and Yellow-headed blackbirds in blackbird flocks, Burrowing Owl in fields, and raptors. Check willow patches.

Check the pond off Jacaranda Lane.

Check Paradise Lane.

SECTOR 23 - LOS OSOS VALLEY ROAD - NORTHEAST / O'CONNER WAY

Los Osos Valley Road - Drive the road stopping frequently (be very careful of traffic) to check willows (scope?) for birds. Explore any access toward center of sector. Watch for Tricolored and Yellow-headed blackbirds in mixed blackbird flocks. Watch for Cattle Egret, Burrowing Owl and raptors, especially White-tailed Kite, and Ferruginous and Rough-legged hawk. Check fields for Horned Lark and American Pipit.

O'Conner Way - Drive the road looking for species mentioned above.

Foothill Blvd - Same as above plus check wet areas for waterfowl and Wilson's Snipe. There is walking access to Bishop Peak where Canyon Wren is possible.

Turri Road - Same as above.

SECTOR 24 - CUESTA COLLEGE / CAMP SAN LUIS OBISPO

Access to Camp San Luis is controlled by the National Guard and access must be arranged in advance. This sector's main access is Hwy 1 and runs from north of Cuesta College to Stenner Creek Road at Cal Poly. It includes the Men's Colony wastewater evaporation ponds on Cal Poly property north of Cuesta College, the campus, Camp SLO, the County Jail, and other county facilities on Kansas Ave.

This sector is divided into three subsectors, 24A, 24B and 24C.

24A. Evaporation Ponds - (Enter property, with permission, through the gate just inside the Cuesta College west entrance.) - Check all three ponds for waterfowl. Look through blackbird flocks for Tricolored and Yellow-headed - Common and Great-tailed grackle have been found here, as well as Tundra Swan. Watch for raptors. Cuesta College Outer Campus - cover as much of creek riparian as possible (great potential). Check area on southwest side of Chorro Creek to Men's Colony Sewage Treatment Plant for sparrows, etc. Also look through pines on southwest side of creek. Check along road to Achievement house.

24B. Cuesta College Inner Campus - This is an ADA accessible area. Check sparrow flocks on lawns around buildings, and palms for Barn Owl, pepper trees for sapsuckers, and pines for vagrant warblers. Check any honeysuckle, aloe, or bottlebrush shrubs for hummingbirds and orioles.

24C. Camp SLO. Kansas Ave - Check riparian areas for sparrows and warblers. Look over surrounding hillsides for Burrowing Owl. Note that this sector is contiguous with Sectors 5 & 6, and bird lists from these areas may be combined at the direction of the Sector Leader.

Hwy 1 - Drive highway stopping frequently (safely) to check for birds. Utilize any access off highway such as at horse facility.

SECTOR 25 - HOLLISTER PEAK / HWY 1

Stop along Hwy 1 where possible and scan open fields. Drive any access roads such as Canet Road and south Quintana Road to check around residences.

MORRO BAY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT — SECTOR INFORMATION

Attempt to gain access to Chorro Creek Ecological Reserve through the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and cover as much as possible (walking - boots?). Watch for raptors and check sparrow flocks.

Look for mixed flocks along creek that may contain unusual species. Look through blackbird flocks for Tricolored or Yellow-headed blackbird.

Listen for Canyon Wren below Hollister Peak.

SECTOR 26 - TURRI ROAD

Turri Road is the only road in this sector. Walk or drive road stopping frequently (safely) where possible. Watch for raptors such as Ferruginous Hawk and Prairie Falcon. Scope the electrical transmission towers for Golden Eagles or other perched raptors. Check for Horned Lark, American Pipit, and Burrowing Owl. Check eucalyptus grove below the summit for Yellow-billed Magpie. If accessible, walk hillsides.

Obtain permission and complete a Release of Liability Form to enter the Los Osos Wetland property managed by the Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District. Check willow areas for possible Wilson's Warbler or any wintering flycatchers.

SECTOR 27 - WARDEN LAKE

Check fence rows in this area for flycatchers. Cassin's and Tropical kingbirds and Vermilion Flycatcher have wintered here.

Warden Lake (private property) - With access, check the lake for waterfowl. Check all habitats along drainage. Look through willows for warblers and marshy areas for Swamp Sparrow, American Bittern, and Green Heron. Watch for swallows.

Pond off Turri Road - If possible, gain access to this small pond located west of the road. Road to pond located about 1/4 mile from Los Osos Valley Road on Turri Road. Look for waterfowl and swallows.

Fields - Check fields for Horned Lark and American Pipit. Scan hillsides for Burrowing Owl and fence rows for flycatchers and Mountain Bluebird.

Los Osos Cemetery - Check cemetery for Wilson's Snipe and sparrow flocks on lawn.

Los Osos Water Recycling Facility - Check fields around the Water Facility by driving and viewing from access road only. Watch for raptors, and scan any flocks for unusual sparrows. Do not block any roads and obey all parking restrictions. Note that there is no access within the fenced boundary of the Water Facility.

SECTOR 28 - CLARK VALLEY ROAD

This sector is divided into two subsectors that may be covered by two independent parties: **28A** is accessible from Upper Clark Valley Rd. and is mainly private ranch properties that are accessible only with pre-arranged permission from the landowners. **28B** includes the lower elevation areas off of Los Osos Valley Road with open fields, a sod farm, Los Osos Oaks Reserve, and upper sections of Los Osos Creek.

28A. Clark Valley Road

Clark Valley Road - Drive road stopping frequently to look over fields and other habitats. Check with land owners in advance for possible contact in upper valley. Owling good in upper valley as Western Screech, Long-eared, and Spotted have all been found there. Watch for Varied Thrush in areas with dense oak canopy. Check open hillsides for Burrowing Owl.

28B. Los Osos Valley Road

Los Osos Valley Road - Check sod farm and residential areas.

Los Osos Creek - Census creek up into equine farm. Watch for flycatchers, sparrows, warblers, and Varied Thrush.

Los Osos Oaks Reserve and trailer parks - Look through dense oaks for mixed flocks - Wilson's Warbler has been found here. Watch for sapsuckers and Varied Thrush.

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SECTOR 29 - ISLAY CREEK

Islay Creek

Walk road on north side of creek to end. Hike side trails if possible. Check willow riparian for mixed flocks and hopefully something unusual. South facing slopes have Rufous-crowned Sparrow. Common Poorwill possible along road on mild evenings.

Camp KEEP

Arrange permission from the Director to walk the property in and around the Camp KEEP campus. Check bird feeders and ornamental plantings for any unusual species. White-throated Sparrow has been seen here on previous counts.

SECTOR 30 - COON CREEK

Walk creek trail to end. Check riparian area for mixed flocks and unusual species. Sapsuckers have been found drilling mature willows in the past. Pacific Wren can be found in the dense understory along the trail - study calls before count day. Canyon Wren present on rocky hillsides.

SECTOR 31 - PECHO COAST

Walk the three-mile trail from Coon Creek south. Census the willow riparian along Coon Creek from road to ocean looking for mixed flocks and unusual species. Check the fields for raptors, Burrowing Owl, Greater Roadrunner, and unusual sparrows. Check the pond at the southern end for rails, snipe, and sparrows.

Check coast line for rocky shorebirds such as Spotted Sandpiper, Wandering Tattler, Surfbird, and Ruddy and Black turnstone. Be on the lookout for Rock Sandpiper. Scope offshore for shearwaters, gulls, terns, jaegers, and alcids.

NOTE: The trail is open from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. during the winter season. Hikers must sign out at the check-in station 15 minutes before closing.

Crowbar Canyon (requires PG&E permission) - watch for Greater Roadrunner. Check willows and oak woodland in upper drainage for warblers.

Ridge Road (requires PG&E permission) - Drive road watching for areas and birds of interest.

SECTOR 32 - SPOONER'S COVE

Campground - Check campground for unusual species in mixed flocks. Watch for sapsuckers, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Red-breasted Sapsucker, and Wilson's Warbler.

Islay Creek mouth - Check riparian at creek mouth for unusual species.

Bluff and Rocky Shoreline - Census sparrows and other passerines along bluff. Look for Spotted Sandpiper, Wandering Tattler, Surfbird, Ruddy and Black turnstone, and possibly Rock Sandpiper.

Scope offshore for shearwaters, White-winged Scoter, jaegers, alcids, gulls, and terns. Also be on the lookout for waterfowl such as Harlequin Duck and Long-tailed Duck.

SECTOR 33 - HAZARD CANYON

Check the coastal scrub habitat. Check Hazard Canyon for mixed flocks and be alert for Pacific Wren in willow understory. Watch and listen for sapsuckers in eucalyptus. On beach look for rocky shorebirds including Spotted Sandpiper, Wandering Tattler, Surfbird, Ruddy Turnstone, and possibly Rock Sandpiper.

Scope offshore for pelagic species including shearwaters, gulls, terns, jaegers, and alcids.

Sandy shoreline - Check near shore for mixed scoter flocks. Be alert for Harlequin Duck, Long-tailed Duck, and Black and White-winged scoters.

MORRO BAY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT — SECTOR INFORMATION

SECTOR 34 - EAST HAZARD CANYON

Hike up canyon checking various habitats. Watch for sapsuckers in eucalyptus. Look for Pacific Wren in dense understory. Explore as much as possible. Probably good for owling at night and Common Poorwill at dusk.

SECTOR 35 - LOS OSOS HEIGHTS

Check through residential streets and hillsides above. Look for Bell's Sparrow which in past was recorded upslope of Bayview Heights Drive. Check feeders and Los Osos Valley Nursery for warblers, tanagers, orioles, and sparrows. Hike hills to check different habitats.

SECTOR 36 - BAYWOOD / LOS OSOS STREETS

Primary goal is to walk and drive streets checking feeders, pines, and other plantings. Sought after species include Red-breasted, White-breasted, and possibly Pygmy nuthatch. Check mixed flocks of Chestnut-backed Chickadee and Bushtit for unusual warblers such as Hermit, Black-throated Gray, and Wilson's. Check sparrow flocks for unusual species.

Check concentrations of pines such as those between Grocery Outlet and Ralph's markets.

Check doves for White-winged Dove.

South Bay Community Park - Check for sparrows. Check flowering trees around the skate park, and willow patch in open area northwest of park and coastal scrub around willows. The trails around the stormwater retention basin and flowering eucalyptus groves west of the library should be checked for possible Allen's Hummingbird, tanagers, or orioles.

Also check scrub across South Bay Blvd from Los Osos Jr. High.

Los Olivos Ave. - Check willows near Mountain View Dr. and other patches nearby. Watch for Wilson's Warbler.

SECTOR 37 - EASTERN LOS OSOS

Los Osos Creek - cover as much of the creek as accessible. If possible, gain access to Eto Lake. Check eucalyptus grove along the creek near Los Osos Valley Road for hummingbirds, especially Allen's (*selasphorus*), kingbirds, warblers, and tanagers. Lots of good sparrow habitat, so be alert for unusual species such as Harris's, White-throated, or Clay-colored.

Residential - Good sparrow habitat. Drive and walk streets looking for sparrow flocks. Check willows along Willow Drive and other locations for mixed flocks of Chestnut-backed Chickadee and Bushtit.

Los Osos Middle School - Check the campus and coastal scrub around campus. Look for sparrow and goldfinch flocks (Lawrence's Goldfinch has been found here in past). Check pines and willows below sports fields.

Willows at east end of Santa Ysabel Ave - Very important location. Walk east on abandoned east end of Santa Ysabel through willows and across old bridge to creek. Cross small drainage and walk along edge of Los Osos Creek and into willow thicket. Wander around in thicket searching for mixed passerine flocks. Wilson's and Black-and-white warblers and Pacific Wren have been found here and Varied Thrush is also a possibility. A marshy area along the right side of the closed section of Santa Ysabel usually has both Sora and Virginia Rail. Watch overhead for White-tailed Kite.

SECTOR 38 - EAST SOUTH BAY BLVD / BATISTA PROPERTY

Most of area, except south of Turri Road, is State Park Property. Walk or mountain bike the area. Park in lot below old rock quarry and walk into hills. Watch and listen for Canyon Wren and White-throated Swift as they roost in crevices here. Be alert for sparrows here and in rest of sector. Shrubby areas on grassy hillsides have traditionally had Short-eared Owls, which are kicked up by walking the area, or check for flying birds at dawn or dusk. Costa's Hummingbird has wintered in this sector.

MORRO BAY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT — SECTOR INFORMATION

Turri Road - Check slough and tidal ponds along the road for shorebirds and willows for unusual species in mixed flocks. Be alert for Swamp Sparrow. Black Rail was previously found in marsh along Los Osos Creek east of South Bay Blvd.

SECTOR 39 - CHORRO WILLOWS / CHORRO CREEK

Quintana Road / Chorro Creek Road – This sector encompasses the length of Quintana Rd. from South Bay Blvd. east to its intersection with Hwy 1. Park and walk sections of Quintana Road and Chorro Creek Road. Check for sparrow and pipit flocks, and raptors. Watch for White-throated, Nelson's and Swamp Sparrow in wetland vegetation along southwest end of Quintana Rd. Check around trailer park, residences, and eucalyptus groves for hummingbirds, tanagers, orioles, and sapsuckers.

There is limited access to riparian sections including 1) a farm road off of Quintana Road approximately .45 mile east of South Bay Blvd. (obtain permission from San Luis Coastal Resource District to drive on dirt section), and 2) from where Chorro Creek Rd. intersects the creek. Important: Do not cross the creek onto private property south of this intersection. Check mixed flocks for unusual species: Long-eared Owl, Solitary Vireo, and warblers such as Nashville, Black-throated Gray, and Wilson's have been found here. Look for Stellar's Jay, Varied Thrush, and Green Heron.

Chorro Willows - Gated entrances into this large willow complex are at two locations along South Bay Blvd. One is .25 mile south of Quintana Road (some parking on turnout along east side of road). Good idea to wear boots to allow walking in or crossing creek as that is the easiest way to get around—there are no trails. The other is .15 mile south of State Park Road (no parking here – must park along State Park Rd. turnouts and CAREFULLY cross South Bay Blvd. at bridge). Walk the access road beginning on the south side of the bridge (State Park property) to a locked gate at top of rise and scan willow canopy for warblers, vireos and other riparian species.

SECTOR 40 - NORTH BLACK HILL / MORRO BAY STREETS

Check back of Black Hill first. Recently the most active location has been in the pines just east of the Las Tunas and La Loma entrance trail. Look through pines for mixed flocks of chickadee, bushtit, kinglet, and warbler. Also check sparrow and junco flocks for unusual species or races, and sapsuckers.

Walk streets checking concentrations of pines for White-breasted, Red-breasted, and Pygmy nuthatch, Pine Siskin, and Golden-crowned Kinglet. Check for Allen's Hummingbirds at Cape Honeysuckle hedges (especially at 494 Kings), and at any red blooming bottle brush trees.

Watch for feeders where White-throated Sparrow may be found. Kings Ave., Kern Ave., Ridgeway St., and Piney Way should definitely be walked. Check feeders.

SECTOR 41 - STREETS OF MORRO BAY / EMBARCADERO

Walk and drive streets. Check concentrations of pines for mixed flocks. Olive Street, Carrito Place, and Main Street between Olive and Acacia should definitely be covered. Check the eucalyptus along Morro Ave near Olive for orioles and tanagers. Check the red blooming bottle brush trees along Main Street for Allen's Hummingbirds and unusual warblers.

Bay - Check the bay from vantage points along the Embarcadero. Watch for loons, Red-necked Grebe, Long-tailed Duck, Common Goldeneye, and Greater Scaup. Bayshore Bluffs Park at the south end of the sector also has an observation deck for viewing the bay and shoreline. Check ornamental plantings around Inn at Morro Bay.

Scope the inside of the Sandspit across from Oliver Street where shorebirds and gulls accumulate at high tide and Black Skimmer is occasionally found.

SECTOR 42 - MORRO BAY STATE PARK

Walk as much of the park as possible. Check the campground, the maintenance and nursery area, and the pines around the amphitheater.

MORRO BAY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT — SECTOR INFORMATION

Check along the "corner" of the Marina boardwalk for sparrows. This is where Nelson's Sparrow and "large-billed" Savannah Sparrow have been recorded at high tide. Watch for Semipalmated Plover and look and listen for Short-billed Dowitcher (mellow 'tu-tu-tu' call, not the harsh 'keek' of Long-billed). Watch for Merlin and Osprey.

Walk perimeter of golf course and check pines, flowering eucalyptus, and bottlebrush. Check clumps of mixed trees across fairway from campground.

Check Black Hill for mixed flocks and watch for unusual warblers or nuthatches, and Golden-crowned Kinglet

Look for loons and waterfowl, especially Common Goldeneye and Greater Scaup, which seem to prefer Windy Cove.

SECTOR 43 - ESTUARY - CHORRO CREEK TO LOS OSOS CREEK

Priority in this sector is to census ducks, geese and shorebirds in the pickleweed estuary, particularly at maximum high tide. A spotting scope is essential. If time allows, also check the willows along the Chorro Creek drainage (boots).

Check estuary from South Bay Blvd. Park in the Quarry Trail parking area and walk south up onto a bench to scope the bay - especially good for ducks at high tide. Also, parking at the intersection of Turri Road and South Bay Blvd, walking across South Bay Blvd, and scoping from the bluff above the bay can also be very productive at high tide.

At lower tide levels concentrate observations along the channel margins. Listen for Short-billed Dowitcher (mellow 'tu-tu-tu' call, not the harsh 'keek' of Long-billed). Check sparrows for Nelson's and Swamp. Watch for Bald Eagle and Osprey.

SECTOR 44 - ELFIN FOREST / ESTUARY

This sector is divided into two subsectors that may be covered by two independent parties.

44A. Elfin Forest

Walk this area and adjacent neighborhoods. Scan the bay from the two wood deck overlooks. The 13th Street deck is usually best and a scope is essential. Watch for Merlin and for Short-eared Owl during the day and at dusk.

44B. Audubon 4th Street Overlook

Scan bay (scope essential) from overlook watching for geese, Blue-winged Teal, Eurasian Wigeon, Semipalmated Plover, and Short-billed Dowitcher (mellow 'tu-tu-tu' call, not the harsh 'keek' of Long-billed). Watch for Sora, Virginia Rail, and Swamp Sparrow in reeds below.

Residential Streets - Check through sparrow flocks. Investigate areas where groups of trees are found, especially flowering eucalyptus.

SECTOR 45 - SWEET SPRINGS / BAYWOOD PARK

Sweet Springs - Census west to Pine Ave. Watch and listen for Swamp Sparrow at lower pond and in marsh to the east. Scan through waterfowl watching for Clarks's Grebe, Eurasian Wigeon, Blue-winged Teal, Gadwall, Greater Scaup, Canvasback, and Redhead. Check shorebirds closely for Semipalmated Plover, Short-billed Dowitcher (mellow 'tu-tu-tu' call, not the harsh 'keek' of Long-billed), and Red Knot. Scrutinize gulls for Thayer's and Herring. Watch for Bald Eagle and Osprey.

Third and Pismo Streets - Ok to enter property. Look for unusual warblers, possibly White-throated or Swamp sparrows.

Baywood Streets - Check mixed flocks of chickadee and Bushtit for anything unusual.

Pasadena Ave Bay Access - Scan the bay for Clark's Grebe, Common Goldeneye, and terns (especially Royal or Caspian). Check the pines for unusual warblers.

Santa Lucia Ave - The 3rd Street bay access is a good location to scope from for waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls, and terns.

Note on the map boundary that the Audubon 4th Street Overlook is included in Sector 44B.

MORRO BAY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT — SECTOR INFORMATION

SECTOR 46 - MONARCH GROVE

Mudflats - Check for shorebirds including Semipalmated Plover, Red Knot, and Short-billed Dowitcher (mellow “tu-tu-tu” call, not the harsh “keek” of Long-billed). Scan bay for Eurasian Wigeon and Common Goldeneye in particular and watch for Clark's Grebe.

Pecho Marsh - Check willows west of Pecho Road at Henrietta for Swamp Sparrow and look through mixed flocks for anything unusual.

Residential Streets - Walk streets, check areas with mature ornamental plantings. Also census eucalyptus groves. Look for feeders that might host tanager or oriole. Watch for White-winged Dove.

SECTOR 47 - SUNSET TERRACE

Sea Pines Golf Course - Check pines for mixed flocks and unusual species. Small ponds have had geese and Wood Duck in past. Look through sparrows and blackbirds for unusual species. Several rarities have been found here over the years.

Shark Inlet / mudflats - Census shorebirds looking in particular for Semipalmated Plover, Red Knot, and Short-billed Dowitcher (mellow “tu-tu-tu” call, not the harsh “keek” of Long-billed). Watch for Eurasian Wigeon. Also be alert for Swamp and Nelson's sparrows at estuary edge. Watch for raptors, particularly Osprey and Merlin, which have been recorded here in the past.

Coastal Scrub - From Montana de Oro State Park Sandspit Road parking lot, walk trail north into and around area. Be alert for Green-tailed Towhee (seen here once) and possibly Bell's Sparrow.

SECTOR 48 - SOUTH SANDSPIT

Park at Montana de Oro State Park Sandspit Road parking lot, proceed to beach and walk north. Watch for Snowy and Semipalmated plover. Offshore look through scoter flocks for Black and White-winged scoter and for Harlequin Duck and Long-tailed Duck. Also watch for jaegers, shearwaters, and alcids.

In dunes watch for Burrowing Owl.

SECTOR 49 - NORTH SANDSPIT

Access - Sectors 48 and 49 are typically covered by the same party by parking as in Sector 48, walking the entire spit to the north end, and arranging for a boat ride back to the Morro Bay Embarcadero.

Sandspit - Watch for Snowy and Semipalmated plover. Offshore look through scoter flocks for Black and White-winged scoter, Harlequin Duck, and Long-tailed Duck. Also watch for jaegers, shearwaters, alcids, and Royal Tern. In dunes watch for Burrowing Owl, especially at the base of the harbor's south jetty.

North of Jetty - Same as above, but check for unusual loons, and gulls such as Herring or Glaucous.

SECTOR 50 - MORRO ROCK / MORRO CREEK

Morro Rock - Check the harbor mouth. Watch and listen for Canyon Wren (a must, typically on south side) and Peregrine Falcon on Morro Rock or overhead. Scope offshore for shearwaters, alcids, and jaegers. Check the harbor mouth for Black and White-winged scoter, and Long-tailed Duck. Carefully check the loons for Arctic and Yellow-billed.

Morro Creek mouth and beach - Check the creek mouth and willows if possible; watch for Swamp Sparrow. Walk the beach to north of high school looking for Snowy and Semipalmated plovers in particular. Offshore scan (scope?) through scoter flocks for Harlequin Duck, Long-tailed Duck, and Black and White-winged scoter. Watch for shearwaters, alcids, and Royal Tern. Watch and listen for Great-tailed Grackle.

Lila Kiser Park - Check sparrow flocks and willows for warblers such as Nashville and Wilson's. Watch and listen for Great-tailed Grackle.

Morro Bay High School - Walk campus checking lawns and trees for sparrows, warblers, and flycatchers. Watch and listen for Great-tailed Grackle.

MORRO BAY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT — SECTOR INFORMATION

SECTOR 51 - GRASSY ISLAND

Particular shorebirds of interest in this area include Semipalmated Plover, Red Knot, and Short-billed Dowitcher (mellow “tu-tu-tu” call, not the harsh “keek” of the Long-billed). Watch for Clark’s Grebe, Common Goldeneye, Herring Gull, Royal and Caspian terns, Osprey, and Bald Eagle.

SECTOR 52 - SOUTH BAY

Particular shorebirds of interest in this area include Semipalmated Plover, Red Knot, and Short-billed Dowitcher (mellow “tu-tu-tu” call, not the harsh “keek” of the Long-billed). Watch for Clark’s Grebe, Common Goldeneye, Herring Gull, Royal and Caspian terns, Osprey, and Bald Eagle.

SECTOR 53 - MID-BAY

Particular shorebirds of interest in this area include Semipalmated Plover, Red Knot, and Short-billed Dowitcher (mellow “tu-tu-tu” call, not the harsh “keek” of the Long-billed). Watch for Clark’s Grebe, Common Goldeneye, Herring Gull, Royal and Caspian terns, Osprey, and Bald Eagle.

SECTOR 54 - OCEAN

You will need to arrange for a boat to go from Morro Bay to Point Buchon, weather and sea conditions permitting. If there is no team specifically assigned to this sector, partial counts will be included in seawatch lists from adjacent sectors (32 and 33). Look for White-winged Scoter, loons, Northern Fulmar, shearwaters, jaegers, gulls, terns, and alcids.