

Quick Overview – Spring is the time birders head out to Mines Road to see how the breeding season is going. It was the same time last year that the Los Gatos Birdwatcher made this trip, but this year we did the trip all together on the tour bus. We did the route from east to west and started our day just off 1-5 and onto Del Puerto Canyon Road. California is still very dry and we wondered what we would find. While the hillsides were brown and yellow the bird activity seemed to be alive and well. Our first stop had us searching the orchards where we found Loggerhead Shrikes and Western Kingbirds. As we continued our next most active location was around “graffiti rocks”. Here we found White Throated Swift and Canyon Wren nesting in the rocky outcroppings. A Say’s Phoebe was also atop the rock and we wondered if it too had a nest near. Below us along the creek we had great looks at a Western Wood Pewee, Rufous Crowned Sparrow, nesting House Finch and a male Bullock’s Oriole. We made it to Frank Raines Park by lunch and depending on where you had your picnic, different birds were being spotted. A male Western Tanager was a beautiful find out front, but the folks in back had Western Bluebirds. It was here we also had great looks at a very active Gopher Snake. After lunch we stopped across the street at the campground to look for Lawrence’s Goldfinch and with a littler persistence we found them! Our next stop was just before the junction where we took a moment to scan the pond and surrounding aquatic grasses where both Red-wing and Tri-colored Blackbirds were found in addition to a family of Pied-billed Grebes. Using the bus has benefits for all, but there are some limitations. You can’t turn the bus around just anywhere. This meant no looking for Lewis’s Woodpeckers this day. Once at the junction we headed home via Mines Road. For many this was a new adventure and we thank you all for coming out!

- Mallard
- Wild Turkey
- California Quail
- Pied-billed Grebe
- Green Heron
- Turkey Vulture
- Golden Eagle
- Red Shouldered Hawk
- Red-tail Hawk
- Swainson’s Hawk
- Cooper’s Hawk
- Rock Pigeon
- Mourning Dove
- Eurasian Collared Dove
- Anna’s Hummingbird
- White Throated Swift
- Northern Flicker
- Acorn Woodpecker
- American Kestrel
- Black Phoebe
- Say’s Phoebe
- Western Kingbird
- Cassin’s Kingbird (S)
- Western Wood Pewee
- Ash Throated Flycatcher
- Loggerhead-Shrike
- Western Scrub-Jay
- Steller’s Jay
- Yellow-billed Magpie
- American Crow
- Common Raven
- Violet Green Swallow
- Cliff Swallow
- Barn Swallow
- Oak Titmouse
- Bewick’s Wren
- House Wren
- Canyon Wren
- Western Bluebird
- European Starling
- Northern Mockingbird
- California Thrasher
- Phainopepla
- Western Tanager
- Spotted Towhee (H)
- California Towhee
- Lark Sparrow
- Rufous Crowned Sparrow
- Black-Headed Grosbeak
- Red-winged Blackbird
- Tri-colored Blackbird
- Brewer’s Blackbird
- Brown-headed Cowbird
- Western Meadowlark
- Bullock’s Oriole
- House Finch
- Lawrence’s Goldfinch
- House Sparrow



Images of our day - The group getting ready to start the day – J. McClemore / Pond with nesting blackbirds near the Junction & Gopher Snake – L. Myers / Nesting Red-tail Hawks & Western Kingbird – J. McClemore / Lark Sparrow by C. McClemore