

Quick Overview – It had been years since **Let's Go Birding** planned a fall weekend in Point Reyes so it was time to go back. The trip was set in the schedule months before we knew the government shut-down would end up closing all National Parks including this fall migration hot spot. With folks all signed-up and ready to go another plan was put into place, instead we would travel to other great hot spots all around Point Reyes. We traveled north over the Golden Gate Bridge and then we went west up & over Mount Tamalpais. Our first stop would be along the coast as we birded from the shore along Stinson Beach. There was a low cloud cover, with temps in the 50's. We stood along the rugged, rocky coast looking out to see for the recently reported Blue Footed Boobies. Gull Rock was the right place, but we only found hundreds of Brown Pelicans and cormorants of several species. The Yellow-rumped Warblers and Western Bluebirds behind us were a wonderful consolation prize. We continued on to Bolinas and birded the lagoon. The tide was out & in addition to the shorebirds probing the mud we found Harbor Seals everywhere. A distant Peregrine Falcon having just finished a meal was sitting on the mud before disappearing into the mist. We continued to bird around the lagoon and then made an attempt to go find the Tropical Kingbird reported by Bolinas resident, artist, birder and author Keith Hanson, but a food festival in town kept us from locating the bird. So we headed to a local fire road to eat lunch and then look for passerines & raptors. By now the heavy fog was lifting and blue sky was starting to show. We walked the dirt road locating woodpeckers, Townsend's Warblers and sparrows chipping from the scrub. Fox Sparrows were found on several different occasions here & throughout the weekend. With the ridge above us now warming up we observed raptor after raptor passing overhead. This ridge line is an ideal location to observe fall migrating raptors and we identified buteos, accipiters, falcons and TV's. We then headed to the Tomales Bay Resort. *Continued page 2.....*



Images from our weekend

The group taking it all in, low tide at the Bolinas Lagoon / Tomales Bay Resort was ready for us when we arrived / Government shut-down signs were found throughout the Point Reyes area ever reminding us of the turmoil in Washington / Flock of Willets in the midst – Cadao Do



More photos page 2

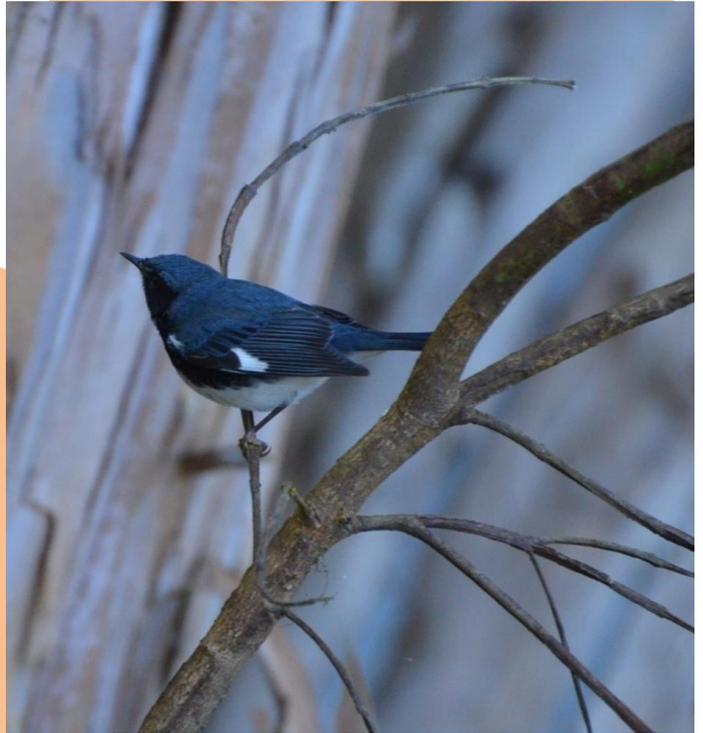
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|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Canada Goose | Rock Pigeon |
| Mallard | Band Tailed Pigeon |
| American Wigeon | Mourning Dove |
| Northern Pintail | Eurasian Collared Dove |
| Northern Shoveler | Anna's Hummingbird |
| Green-winged Teal | Belted Kingfisher |
| Surf Scoter | Nuttall's Woodpecker |
| California Quail | Northern Flicker |
| Common Loon | Acorn Woodpecker |
| Red-throated Loon | Downy Woodpecker |
| Pacific Loon | Black Phoebe |
| Pied-billed Grebe | Western Scrub-Jay |
| Eared Grebe | Steller's Jay |
| Western Grebe | American Crow |
| Double-crested Cormorant | Common Raven |
| Brandt Cormorant | Chestnut Backed Chickadee |
| Pelagic Cormorant | Wrentit |
| Brown Pelican | Ruby Crowned Kinglet |
| American White Pelican | Golden Crowned Kinglet |
| Great Blue Heron | Bushtit |
| Great Egret | Pygmy Nuthatch |
| Snowy Egret | Bewick's Wren |
| Black Crowned Night | Pacific Wren |
| Northern Harrier | Marsh Wren |
| White-tail Kite | Western Bluebird |
| Red Shouldered Hawk | European Starling |
| Red-tail Hawk | Cedar Waxwing |
| Turkey Vulture | Orange-Crowned Warbler |
| Cooper's Hawk | Yellow Warbler |
| Sharp Shinned Hawk | Yellow Rumped Warbler |
| American Kestrel | Black Throated Blue Warbler |
| Peregrine Falcon | Townsend's Warbler |
| Merlin | Common Yellowthroat |
| American Avocets | Western Tanager |
| Black Oystercatcher | Spotted Towhee |
| Black Turnstone | California Towhee |
| Willet | Song Sparrow |
| Greater Yellowlegs (H) | White-crowned Sparrow |
| Long-billed Curlew | Golden-crowned Sparrow |
| Marbled Godwit | White Throated Sparrow |
| Western Sandpiper | Fox Sparrow |
| Least Sandpiper | Lincoln's Sparrow |
| Sanderling | Savannah Sparrow |
| Wilson's Snipe | Dark-eyed Junco |
| Killdeer | Red-winged Blackbird |
| Black-bellied Plover | Brewer's Blackbird |
| Ring-billed Gull | House Finch |
| Western Gull | Purple Finch |
| Heermann's Gull | American Goldfinch |
| | Heard Only = (H) |

Continued from page 1 – After we checked into the Tomales Bay Resort we re-grouped for dinner at the Olema Farm House. A cozy, rustic looking restaurant with a casual feel, the food was fantastic. All enjoyed their meals from salads to pasta to prime rib and fish. Considering we were right in the middle of oyster country many of us enjoyed both raw and cooked oysters. After a long day and a great meal we called it a day, a very successful day. Sunday morning had us waking up to coastal fog. We started our birding right from the parking lot with Hermit Thrush, Pygmy Nuthatch, California Quail, Anna’s Hummingbirds and Western Scrub Jays right there at the resort, but we had to get on the road and soon departed for open spaces around Tomales Bay. A stop at White House Pool Park found us a mixed flock of sparrows including another Fox Sparrow, Crown Sparrows & a White Throated. While here we also attracted the attention of curious Wrentits. The low cloud cover kept some birds out of sight but we heard shorebirds flying over in addition to a Belted Kingfisher. Just before we left a Cooper’s Hawk flew in & flushed everything. We left it sitting in a tree before it caught itself any breakfast. We continued to circle around the bay and soon found the sun. We stopped to scan the open marsh land and found herons, Common Yellowthroats and yellow rumps feeding. All in all it was pretty quiet so we headed north to Bodega Bay and made it to the “Bodega Head” just in time for lunch. It was a spectacular day on the coast and there were many people there enjoying it too. Surf Scoters were flying by and distant loons could be found, but only one, not-so-sure, possible booby flew past so we left it off the trip list. A walk around the area had us investigate the only trees found out there. They seemed an ideal location for a migrating bird to take refuge and it was here we found a single Golden Crowned Kinglet at eye level allowing for great views. Crown Sparrows and a Lincoln Sparrow were also here and we were careful not to step on the caterpillar crossing the trail. *Continued....page 3*



Images from our weekend - A beautiful Tomales Bay, a view from the resort / One of many different butterflies we found over our two days of birding – Cadao Do
 The group out along Tomales Bay - Al Lowder / A morning walking the trails of White House Pool State Park
 Many sparrows were enjoyed during our weekend including this Song Sparrow – Helen Daley / California Poppies, the Birdaloo – Lisa Myers

Continued from page 2 – Many different people asked us what we were doing and we got to share some of the things we were seeing, but we now had two more places to bird before our weekend adventure was over. We headed over the “Owl Canyon”. This is an ideal location to find birds as the area is rugged with only a tight trail. The vegetation is overgrown, allowing for cover, plus, there is a fresh water stream. As we arrived, we found another birder (Scott) who shared he had seen the recently reported Black Throated Blue Warbler 30 minutes earlier so we headed to the shadows to try our luck. Although I seldom use bird recordings to push a bird out of hiding I did play the song of this eastern species. Within moments the bird appeared and was grabbing bugs out of the air all around us as if we were not even there. Quite a “tame” bird; it was quite obliging. We moved on while the bird was still bouncing around eating bugs. Another birder soon arrived and we were happy to point her in the bird’s direction. From here we made one more stop to scan the waters around Bodega Bay allowing us the opportunity to review the differences between Western Sandpipers & juvenile Sanderlings. We also had great looks at Black Bellied Plovers. It was such a beautiful day with more birds to see, but it was time to head south. We still had to cross the Golden Gate and get back down to Santa Clara County. With Point Reyes “closed” we turned a bad situation into a very successful 2 day, **Let’s Go Birding** adventure. I thank everyone who hung in there & trusted we’d see some great birds & visit new locations.



Images of our weekend - We helped move this caterpillar off the trail while out at Bodega Head / A beautiful day on the coast / Our prize bird of the weekend was this male, Black Throated Blue Warbler. Reported in Owl Canyon a few days earlier, we had fantastic views of this very active eastern warbler. Most likely refueling as he continued his fall migration to winter in the tropics – Helen Daley / The group heads to the trees of Bodega Head in search of migrating species – Al Lowder / A final stop along Bodega Bay, here we had Western Sandpipers and Sanderlings – Cadao Do