

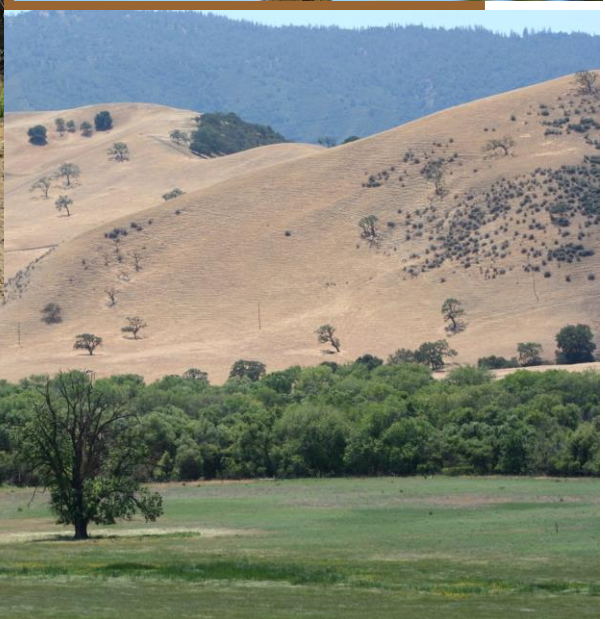
Quick Overview – I met the owner of the Paicines Ranch years ago. Saved from developers, she and her husband purchased the 7000 + acres to produce grass fed beef. Quoting the Paicines Ranch web site, their goal, “...to preserve and enhance both the natural and man-made features of the ranch and make them accessible to visitors, while producing delicious pastured meats. Our pastures and row crop ground are all certified organic, and we manage the ranch using the principles of Holistic Management™.” This was my first trip to the ranch with an eager group of birders. I was able to scout earlier in the week and the folks at the ranch were very accommodating giving us permission to bird all over the property, all we needed to do was look out for electric fences & rattlesnakes! Our first stop this day was at the Paicines Reservoir. This water feature is a winter hot spot so we did not know what we’d find in spring, but an adult Bald Eagle fly over (with a rodent in its grasp) was a magnificent way to start our day. We also found ½ a dozen Spotted Sandpipers in breeding plumage. We headed onto the ranch and were met by a fly-by Prairie Falcon. To take advantage of the morning hours we birded along the San Benito River as riparian habitat is always a great place to find species and we found Wilson’s Warblers, Pacific Slope Flycatchers, Warbling Vireo, California Quail and Tree Swallows. A Lark Sparrow coming out for a drink got everyone’s attention. We slowly birded our way back to the Grogan House adding Cinnamon Teal, Marsh Wren, Western Kingbird and Common Yellowthroat to the list. The temperatures would hit the high 80’s so we were all grateful for the breeze that blew over us the entire day. Because this was a special trip requiring special arrangements **Let’s Go Birding** provided lunch to all on the tour and we ate under the shade of the old barn currently undergoing a restoration. All the time we kept our ears & eyes open for bird song as Bullock’s Orioles, Western Tanager, Great Tailed Grackles, Eurasian Collared Doves, Barn Swallows, Nuttall’s & Acorn Woodpeckers were all around. After lunch we explored the areas around the historic buildings and found nesting species everywhere including Red-shouldered Hawks, House Wren, Barn Owls and Great Blue Herons. We then got back into our cars and headed out onto the ranch’s grasslands. With the temps rising the birds got quiet, but we continued to explore the open spaces, wet meadows & native oaks. Our last stop was on the back side of the reservoir where we found a family of Loggerhead Shrikes. This day on the private ranch proved to be a fantastic adventure & **Let’s Go Birding** is planning another trip back!



Birds Observed –

- Canada Goose
- Mallard
- Gadwall
- Cinnamon Teal
- Ruddy Duck
- Wild Turkey
- California Quail (H)
- Western Grebe
- Great Blue Heron
- Turkey Vulture
- Bald Eagle
- Northern Harrier
- White-tail Kite
- Red Shouldered Hawk
- Red-tail Hawk
- American Kestrel
- Prairie Falcon
- American Coot
- Spotted Sandpiper
- American Avocet
- Greater Yellowlegs
- Killdeer
- Forster’s Terns
- Rock Pigeon
- Mourning Dove
- Eurasian Collared Dove
- Great Horned Owl
- Barn Owls
- Anna’s Hummingbird
- White Throated Swift (R)
- Nuttall’s Woodpecker
- Northern Flicker
- Acorn Woodpecker
- Black Phoebe
- Ash Throated Flycatcher
- Western Kingbird
- Pacific Slope Flycatcher (H)
- Loggerhead Shrike
- Warbling Vireo
- Western Scrub-Jay
- Steller’s Jay
- American Crow
- Yellow Billed Magpie
- Great Tailed Grackle
- Common Raven
- Northern Rough Winged Sw
- Tree Swallow
- Cliff Sallow
- Barn Swallow
- Oak Titmouse
- White Breasted Nuthatch
- Bewick’s Wren
- House Wren
- Marsh Wren (H)
- Western Bluebird
- American Robin
- European Starling
- Cedar Waxwing
- Wilson’s Warbler (H)
- Common Yellowthroat (H)
- Western Tanager
- Spotted Towhee (H)
- Song Sparrow
- Lark Sparrow
- Black-headed Grosbeak
- Red-winged Blackbird
- Brewer’s Blackbird
- Brown Headed Cowbird
- House Finch
- Heard only = (H)
- In Route = (R)

All images taken during our day – Sculpture is found throughout the ranch – Lisa Myers / Great Horned Owl adult in Grogan House Palm – Pati Rouzer / The historic Grogan House – Lisa Myers / Nesting House Wren – Helen Daley / Time for lunch More on page 2.



Continued from page 1, all images taken during our day – One of many bunnies & jackrabbits encountered during our day – Linda Sullivan / American Kestrel male – Pati Rouzer / Tree Swallow – Helen Daley / Red-shouldered Hawk parent tending nestlings – Pati Rouzer / Group shot! / View of the distant ranchlands – Linda Sullivan / Tree Swallow – Helen Daley / Scoping out the landscape and having a great day! – Al Lowder