



TORREYANA

THE DOCENT NEWSLETTER FOR
TORREY PINES
STATE NATURAL RESERVE

Issue 428

March 2021

Local Rock Art Revealed

by Joan R. Simon

Over the past century, researchers have been studying one of the most distinctive rock art styles in North America, the Rancho Bernardo Style (RBS). Most of the sites are found in San Diego County along the Green Valley Creek in Rancho Bernardo, Poway, and Escondido. Greg Erickson, a retired faculty member in the Department of Reproductive Medicine at UCSD and President of the San Diego Rock Art Association, shared his collection of striking rock art images at the February 13 docent meeting (via Zoom).

Dr. Erickson explained that earlier researchers faced a daunting challenge in being able to see the very faint outlines of the rock art, which is often almost impossible to detect with the naked eye. Recently, using a new technology called DStretch (decorrelation stretch), Dr. Erikson has been successful in unveiling a dramatically fuller display of the local rock art. He showed us some dazzling illustrations of what could be seen before and after using DStretch technology.



Docent General Meeting

Date: Saturday, March 13, 9:00 am

Location: Online via Zoom (link to the meeting will be emailed to all docents)

Speaker: Robin Parks from the Mountain Lion Foundation

Topic: Mountain Lions 101

Robin Parks retired in 2004 after a 25-year career with Naval Criminal Investigative Service. He has been a field volunteer & representative for the Mountain Lion Foundation in San Diego and Southern California since 2006, working with law enforcement agencies and civilians on various mountain lion issues.

The design of the RBS pictographs are mostly geometric and rectilinear with signature maze-like motifs. The drawings include diamonds, chevrons, parallel lines, zigzags, cross-hatchings, dots, and fret patterns. They were usually painted on large boulders with red ochre or iron oxide and drawn with a finger, not a brush.

Representational images are extremely rare.

In the 1920s and 1930s, archeologist Malcolm Rogers discovered six original habitation sites in San Diego County with large clusters of boulders containing rock art. His unpublished field notes languished in the Museum of Man (recently renamed the Museum of Us) for 50 years. In the 1970s, Ken Hedges re-examined and photographed these same sites, but most

(Cont. on pg. 3)

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The Torrey Pines Docent Society publishes the *Torreyana* monthly, edited by Joan Simon and Dan Hammer on alternate months, and is formatted and produced by Roger Isaacson. Submissions are due on or about the 20th day of the preceding month and may be emailed to

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President's Message

It's been a year since last March when the Reserve and the beach were closed to the public for months. It was an unexpectedly long closure. We were all forced to hibernate just as spring arrived. When we were able to visit again one day in June, it was delightful to see how nature didn't miss our presence at all. Plants flourished and there were signs of animals abounding on the trails. Nature is very resilient if we leave it alone.



Many of our docents are getting vaccinated and preparing to resume a somewhat normal life with visits to stores, family, and travel. To prepare for the eventual normal volunteer activities, our board members **Cres Torres** and **Gabriele Wienhausen** have inventoried and documented our docent activities list. As I reviewed the list of extra activities docents participate in, I realized that the level of engagement of the docents is what makes this such a special group of volunteers to associate with. Sadly, a lot of activities are not currently available to us. What is available is Roving Interpreter and Beach Cleanup, both very rewarding activities.

The trails are now open and visitors abound, many not knowing the uniqueness of Torrey Pines or the rules of the Reserve. There are a lot more visitors with dogs, more families eating picnics at benches and viewpoints, some thinking the broken tapes at Razor Point mean the trail is no longer closed. Spring is coming and along with the warm weather and the blooming of native flowers, visitor numbers are likely to be overwhelming.

The Reserve can use our help. If you're comfortable, your presence on the trails or at viewpoints with your vests and masks on will do a lot to remind visitors to obey the basic rules of the Reserve.

I spent a lot of time last March wondering if the painted lady butterflies were visiting the Reserve when I wasn't allowed to be there. I intend not to miss the miracle of the thousands of fluttering wings among the black sage this year, if they decide to visit the Reserve.

Be safe, stay healthy, my docent friends. It would be lovely to see your friendly eyes above the masks on the trails.

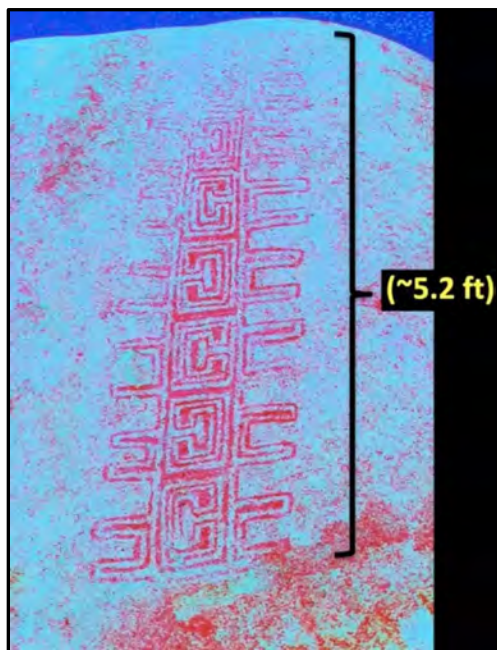
Lynne Truong

TPDS President

(Cont. from pg. 1)

of his images were very faint, with the drawing detail difficult to discern.

When Dr. Erickson retired from UCSD, he turned his focus to local rock art and started using DStretch to rescue these images from near-oblivion. “Most of the rock art has weathered away,” he said, “and is exceedingly difficult to recognize with the naked eye.” The DStretch technology was originally developed by NASA to enhance the images



Dazzling red ochre made visible with DStretch software

coming back from the Mars rover. The algorithm was later adapted for use in the study of rock art to “make visible what is nearly invisible to the naked eye.”

Dr. Erickson went to all the previously discovered sites, most of which were now in the yards of residential homes. Using DStretch, he found “an array of rock art that was mind boggling – I couldn’t believe my eyes.” In addition to the earlier rock art finds, he discovered pictographs on other

boulders within these sites, as well as the first anthropomorphic representation; he also found one drawing which used three colors: red, black and white. Another surprising discovery was a stylized anthropomorphic figure alongside a conical-shaped structure. “It reminded me of a Kumeyaay eewa,” he said, “and I wondered if it could be a depiction of a shaman and his/her eewa,” where ceremonial objects would have been stored (photo below).



Dr. Erickson also worked with the city of San Diego to clean up public sites where graffiti had marred the painted boulders.

The age of the rock art is unknown, since carbon dating has not been done. The possible range is from 600 AD to 1800 AD. There are multiple layers of art, indicating paintings over many generations.

“RBS will eventually disappear either naturally or by human activity,” Dr. Erickson said. “Once it’s gone, it’s gone forever.” But the good news is that Dr. Erikson has documented this precious art form before it is completely invisible.

Dr. Erickson encouraged us to contact him by email if we wanted more information on specific sites he has examined. A recording of his talk (including his email address) can be found on the TPDS Vimeo site if you [click here](#).

Another example of before and after using the DStretch software



General Meeting Minutes

February 13, 2021

The General Meeting was called to order at 9:05 am by TPDS President **Lynne Truong**.

The meeting was conducted via Zoom with 109 docents present.

Invited Speaker

Dr. Greg Erickson spoke about one of the most distinctive rock art styles in North America, the Rancho Bernardo Style. (See article on pp. 1, 3.)

TPDS Business

Lynne shared the following business items:

- *Keeping Better Impact Data Entries Current*
Lynne asked all docents to keep their volunteer hours up to date. She reminded the docents that TPDS's annual activity report to the Department of Parks and Recreation must include docents' volunteer service hours.
- *Docent of the Month*
Thomas Stehlik, a new Lifetime member, was selected for his dedication to the Reserve, serving many years as a Seabee and a Lodge host and currently as a Roving Interpreter, as well as providing all-around support to the TPDS. (See article on pg. 5.)
Lynne encouraged all docents to identify fellow docents who deserve to be honored as Docent of the Month to the TPDS Board for consideration.
- *Guy Fleming Trail Veldt Grass Treatment*
On February 16 and 17, the Guy Fleming Trail will be closed for the annual spraying of South African veldt grass to curb the encroachment of this invasive plant in our sensitive habitat.
- *Signage North/South Parking Lot*
The signage project for the South Beach is close to completion. The project for the North Beach is on hold; Dylan has decided to identify and work with a different vendor.
- *Razor Point Trail Repair Project*
Although TPC funding has been secured, the approval process for the project is still pending. Supervising Ranger Dylan Hardenbrook is concerned that the gnatcatcher breeding season (March – September) will force the Reserve maintenance crew to push back the timeline to October.
- *Beach Trail Stairs*
In February, the Beach Trail stairs will be taken out and recoated and access to the beach from the trail

will not be possible for the duration of the repair work. This is a warranty recoat.

- *Interpretive Signs at the North Grove (Guy Fleming Trail)*
To enhance visitors' perception and understanding of the North Grove's Torrey pine tree devastation by the bark beetle, State Parks Environmental Scientist Darren Smith, in collaboration with [SD Zoo Global](#), has been designing new interpretive signs. The signs will educate the public about the bark beetle and the Torrey pines restoration project (see description in [Zoonooz November 2020](#)). The signage project will be completed by the end of summer 2021.
- *Bear-in-Mind*
Lynne reminded all docents to complete the [Bear-in-Mind training](#) and submit the completed workbook to Park Aide **Louis Sands**.
- *80+ Torreyana Feature*
Janet Ugalde has initiated a new feature for the Torreyana, interviews with one of TPDS's octogenarians. Janet developed this project as a way to express appreciation and respect for these individuals and to nurture a sense of community among the docents. The first article in this series will be an interview Janet conducted with **Ken King** (see pg. 6).
- *Matter of Balance*
Lynne conveyed appreciation for **Kristine Schindler's** Matter of Balance workshop. Lynne reminded docents that participation in the workshop cannot be recorded as volunteer hours.
- *Resuming Docent Activities*
Lynne expressed cautious optimism for most docent activities to resume late summer or early fall. However, volunteers in CA State Parks (including the Reserve) are still not allowed to work in groups of two or more. Activities that can be done alone, such as Roving Interpreter or trash pick-up, are allowed.
Lynne expressed gratitude to docents who have been working extra hard to keep the beach and the most popular trails pristine. During the COVID pandemic the Reserve, including the beach, seemed to increase in popularity. The large number of visitors has put extra pressure on our precious environment.
- *Yearly Reserve Parking Passes*
Lynne announced that the 2021 parking passes will not be mailed. Docents need to pick them up during business hours between 8:30 am – 5 pm at the Ranger's Office in the Reserve. Docents are

encouraged to call ahead to make sure that a ranger or park aide is in the office.

- *Logging Volunteer Hours for Non-TPDS Activities*
Keeping with the policy of allowing hours only for TPDS-sponsored events, Lynne confirmed that participating (via Zoom) in public talks presented by our sister organization TPC cannot be counted as continuing education hours. Lynne reminded docents of the upper limit of twelve hours total per year spent on continuing education.

The meeting ended at 10:27 am.

Many docents remained on Zoom for an additional 30 plus minutes of informal socializing.

TPDS Activities

Below is a list of many TPDS activities. To learn more about each activity and other activities and how to contact their chairs, click [here and select Activity List & Contact Emails](#).

Core Activities

- *Children's Program
- *Lodge Hosting
- *Nature Walks, Public
- Nature Walks, Special
- *Nature Walks, MIN (Mindfulness in Nature)
- TIK/BIK

Education

- Field Trips and other Continuing Education
- Special Events (Earth Day, etc.)
- Publications
- Training, Educator
- Training, Cont. Education

Social Events

- General Meetings
- TP Book Club (no docent hours)

Behind the Scenes

- Bird Surveys (Wildlife Survey)
- Birdbath Maintenance
- IT Services
- Library Management
- Museum Shop
- Program Planning & Committees
- Road Cleanup
- Seabees
- Whacky Weeders
- Weather Station

* Requires training and important to be filled

Docent of the Month:

Thomas Stehlik

Photo by Herb Knüfken

Thank you, Board of Directors, for naming me Docent of the Month, coincidentally on the tenth anniversary of my happy membership in TPDS, which makes this honor even more gratifying.

To those docents who know me, I don't need to introduce myself. I only owe you my sincere gratitude for teaching me a lot and for having lots of patience with me, too. Those who know me only vaguely or not at all and wonder where my rather strange accent comes from will find my background in the June 2013 issue of the *Torreyana* (Pinecone) ([link](#)), published after I was first named DOM. Since then, besides losing my dear mom, hardly a thing has change in my life, except I have become noticeably older and fallen in love with TPSNR even more.

Just like some of you, I also became a docent shortly after my retirement. It helped me to overcome my initial "full monty" sense of loss and purpose. Finding myself with ample time to spare and living close to the Reserve, my visits there became frequent, even to the point of calling it my second home.

From the early days of my docent training, I joined the formidable Seabees, participated in Lodge hosting and got involved in other volunteer activities, such as weeding, roving interpreter, and as of late, road and beach cleanup. Some of the docents became my close friends and none of my out-of-town visitors left San Diego without desiring to return to, in my view, the most beautiful park in the world.

I miss you all and hope that before long our much-cherished docent activities come to life again.



80+: A Conversation with Ken King

Interviewed by Janet Ugalde

This is the first in a series of articles honoring docents who have celebrated their 80th birthday. If you would like to recommend an 80+ docent to be featured in a future article, or volunteer yourself, please contact Janet Ugalde.

Ken King became a docent in 2002 and served as the Docent Society's president in 2011-12 and treasurer in 2009-10. He was named Docent of the Year in 2012. He moved to La Jolla in 1980 and worked for The Signal Companies (Allied/Signal) in financial analysis. In 1988 he started consulting for several small high-tech San Diego companies, serving as their part-time CFO.

Hi Ken. I feel privileged to be conducting this interview, because I am a fan. I admire the way you treat everyone with tremendous kindness and respect.

Please tell me about your childhood.

My dad was away in the war, and when he came back he was only around for a few months before he died of cancer, at age 41. My mom raised me and my older brother as a single parent. She eventually married my father's older brother. He was a hero of mine — a very strict junior high school science teacher. It all ended up pretty well.

Who do you call family?

I've got Sheryl, my wife of about 60 years, and two adult daughters. They are both married, and each has a couple of kids.

Why did you become a docent?

Well, it had a little bit to do with Poppa, the science teacher I mentioned earlier. He was always taking me out on nature trips. When our kids were little, we did a lot of teaching them that way. One day, when my adult daughter was visiting, we went up to Torrey Pines and there was a sign saying "Docent Society training starts in January." My daughter said, "Oh Dad, you've totally got to do that." She knew I was a frustrated naturalist. I became a docent in the class of 2002.

As a docent, what accomplishment are you most proud of?

Docent of the Year in 2012. I guess that was for leading nature walks. Or maybe it was getting the POS system into the museum shop, when I was treasurer.

Apart from your family and career, what achievement was most satisfying?

In 2005, six of us rode our bicycles from Tijuana to Bar Harbor, Maine. It was 3800 miles and took about ten weeks. It was a wonderful experience, and a great way to see the country.



Ken at (you guessed it) Niagara Falls

What makes you happy these days?

Sheryl and I made the decision a couple of years ago to move to a retirement community, and I'll be here the rest of my life. There have been a lot of advantages, especially the comfort of having lots of worries and burdens relieved. I also do a lot of walking.

Is there a philosophy, or some advice, you'd like to share?

Sure, there are two things that make life enjoyable. 1. Have intellectual curiosity. To say, "I wonder why that's happening" -- especially with regard to natural history. 2. Learn and practice to observe. Poppa said to me often, "Keep your eyes open and carefully observe."

Thank you, Ken.

If you would like to hear more from Ken, you may watch this 12-minute interview on Vimeo by clicking [here](#).

Children's Program

by Louis Sands, Children's Program Coordinator

Hello, everyone. Janet Ugalde and I sincerely hope you and yours are well! It is exciting to learn that so many docents have been able to get vaccinated for COVID-19. Hopefully, we have better times ahead.

In terms of the Children's Program, we are in the process of investigating new software options for field trip reservations. Our task is to present purchase recommendations to the board in April. Of course, we do not have any current insights into when our beloved program can resume safely, but we certainly hope that, by the fall of 2021, we can engage with students in some form.

Keep the faith, everyone. We will be in touch with updates as they become available.

Chaparral Plants and Beyond: Chamise (Greasewood), Lemonadeberry, and Toyon

by Pete diGirolamo

Chamise (Greasewood), *Adenostema fasciculatum*

(Kumeyaay: *iipshii*)

Chamise comprises 75% of chaparral vegetation, which is extensive statewide, both coastal and inland into the foothills, and this dark, dense shrub is a dominant member of the Reserve's maritime chaparral habitat. In areas of the open hillsides in the Reserve, where chamise is absent from the plant mix, it indicates the habitat is *coastal sage scrub* or the sparsely vegetated *coastal strand* community bordering the beach bluffs.



The name *chamise* derives from an old Spanish word *chamiso* used for firewood, and the word *chaparral* similarly has roots in the Spanish *chaparro* for a similar dense vegetation. Our word *chaps* comes from the thick leather leg protectors horsemen needed for riding in the thickets.

Chamise has rigid upright growth with tiny dark green needle-shaped leaves on a jumble of rigid branches, blooming in tiny white flower clusters in late spring. The leaves are shiny with flammable oils – hence the alternative name *greasewood* – making it a common choice for cooking fires, as well as a wildfire hazard. The shrub has a thick, dense burl at its base that allows it to quickly resprout after fires.

Chamise is a member of the Rose family (*Rosaceae*), which includes toyon and wart-stem ceanothus in the Reserve.

The Kumeyaay made good use of chamise:

- Medicinally they boiled bark and branches to make a wash or balm for rashes and skin infections.
- The hardness and density of the wood made it useful for construction and for tools like awls.
- An important source of arrow shafts, crooked green branches were drawn through a groove of heated soapstone to make a hardened, dried straight shaft, and points could be heated over coals to make them “iron hard.”

Lemonadeberry, *Rhus integrifolia*

(Kumeyaay: *huusill*, *huutat*)

This large, dense shrub is a part of both the *maritime chaparral* and *coastal sage scrub* plant communities, which often overlap at the Reserve.

While both communities were originally classified chaparral, they differ as the denser, chamise-dominated chaparral tends toward the northern and eastern slopes, and the more open *coastal sage scrub* on southern and western exposures.

Lemonadeberry has the year-round, stiff foliage typical of chaparral plants, but is claimed primarily by the *coastal sage scrub*, given its presence in the “scrub” and a range limited to California’s southern coast.

Clusters of small pink and white blooms in late winter and early spring give way to sticky, tangy berries in the warmer months. The berries can be soaked in water for a lemonade-like flavor, or a wad of them can be sucked to alleviate thirst on long summer hikes. Many find them very tasty, but beware, as some experience an allergic reaction.

Lemonadeberry is a member of the *Anacardiaceae* or Sumac family, which includes the Reserve’s laurel sumac and poison oak.

A good description of Lemonadeberry is provided by Kumeyaay author Delfino Cuero:

“The name used depended upon the berry color, red (*huusill*) or orange (*huutat*); the berries were eaten



fresh or soaked to flavor water; the seed (*keha*) was ground and used with fruit for tea. We also ground the seeds to drink when sick and feverish. The bark was also made into a tea to use after a baby was born.”

Toyon, *Heteromeles arbutifolia*

(Kumeyaay: *hosiill*)

This large, leafy shrub is also popularly known as Christmas berry or California holly due to its showy red berries, which mature in late fall and winter. It was particularly popular in Los Angeles in the 1920s as a source of decorative plant material at Christmas where it grew in the Hollywood hills, and a law was passed to stem its overuse. Toyon was adopted as the official native plant of Los Angeles in 2012.

Toyon is principally identified with the *coastal sage scrub* plant community, although it has large leathery leaves that tend to persist all year like *maritime chaparral* plants, and is found in the overlap of the two communities common at Torrey Pines.

Toyon is a member of the Rose family, *Rosaceae*, which includes ceanothus and chamise in the Reserve. It is particularly susceptible to fire blight, a bacterial disease that gives new leaves and twigs a burnt look. Fortunately, fire blight seems to be uncommon in the Reserve.

The red berries or “pomes” are popular with birds such as the Cedar Waxwing, Hermit Thrush, and California Thrasher, and are also eaten by squirrels, fox, and coyote.

The Kumeyaay used the plant’s parts both as food and medicine. The tart, astringent pomes were made into a porridge or pancakes, usually after drying, storage, and cooking. A pulp from the leaves was used to wash sores and the leaves were brewed into a tea for stomach ailments.



Let the Lemonadeberry Begin

by Rhea Bridy

Nature says hello.

In a quiet little way.

Time to think of Earth,

Of growing in hope.

Rejoice, all ye

inhabitants of the bush.



lemonadeberry

Torrey Pines Book Club

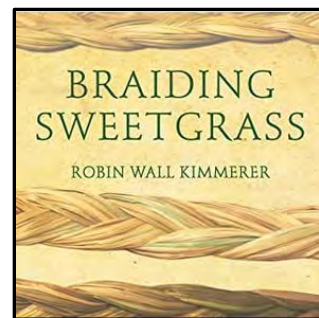
We will continue to meet via Zoom at our regularly scheduled time. Please notify **Ken King** if you plan to participate and if you need any extra help getting connected.

When: Tuesday, March 9, 1:00 pm

What: *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and Teachings of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Amazon says:

Drawing on her life as an indigenous scientist, and as a woman, Kimmerer shows how other living beings — asters and goldenrod, strawberries and squash, salamanders, algae, and sweetgrass — offer us gifts and lessons, even if we’ve forgotten how to hear their voices. In reflections that range from the creation of Turtle Island to the forces that threaten its flourishing today, she circles toward a central argument: that the awakening of ecological consciousness requires the acknowledgment and celebration of our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world. For only when we can hear the languages of other beings will we be capable of understanding the generosity of the earth, and learn to give our own gifts in return.



April 13: *Days of Hope, Miles of Misery: Love and Loss on the Oregon Trail* by Fred Dickey.

Bird of the Month: CA Thrasher

by Jack Friery; photo by Herb Knüfken

Our featured bird this month is the **California Thrasher**, *Toxostoma redivivum*. This bird, a close cousin to our backyard mockingbird, is a resident of the chaparral environment. It has been described as “a long-tailed, lanky songbird with a deeply curved bill,” and its prodigious bill enables it to “thrash” through leaf litter to uncover insects and other invertebrates.

As large as the bird is (over a foot long), it is often difficult to locate, since it normally hides in the thicket. To uncover it, listen for a long series of rather inharmonious notes. However, as nesting season begins in late winter and early spring, the California Thrasher is often found perched atop tall shrubs, marking territory and calling for mates.

The California Thrasher belongs to a bird family called Mimids. The word — from the Latin meaning “mimic”— describes birds, such as thrashers and mockingbirds, that imitate the sounds of other birds, and even car horns and electronic alarms.

Sources: allaboutbirds.org/guide/California_Thrasher/overview; audubon.org/field-guide/bird/california-thrasher; en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mimid.



Torrey Pines Docent Society Bird Survey: February 2021

Number of species: 81
(+4 other taxa)

Blue-winged Teal 7	Ridgway's Rail 1
Cinnamon Teal 4	American Coot 24
Northern Shoveler 1	Killdeer 6
Gadwall 11	Whimbrel 6
American Wigeon 39	Willet 40
Mallard 3	Greater/Lesser Yellowlegs 1
Northern Pintail 29	Heermann's Gull 26
Green-winged Teal 7	Ring-billed Gull 14
Canvasback 1	Western Gull 52
Lesser Scaup 24	California Gull 3
Bufflehead 11	gull sp. 4
Red-breasted Merganser 3	Royal Tern 6
Ruddy Duck 4	Red-throated Loon 4
Pied-billed Grebe 4	Black-vented Shearwater 8
Western Grebe 304	Brandt's Cormorant 8
Eurasian Collared-Dove 2	Double-crested Cormorant 10
Mourning Dove 21	Brown Pelican 21
Anna's Hummingbird 38	Great Blue Heron 3
Allen's Hummingbird 22	Great Egret 7
Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird 1	Snowy Egret 8
	Black-crowned Night-Heron 2
	Osprey 1
	White-tailed Kite 1
	Northern Harrier 1

Sharp-shinned Hawk 1	wren sp. 4
Cooper's Hawk 1	California Thrasher 5
Red-shouldered Hawk 1	Northern Mockingbird 3
Red-tailed Hawk 11	Hermit Thrush 8
Belted Kingfisher 1	House Finch 36
Nuttall's Woodpecker 7	Lesser Goldfinch 55
Northern Flicker 2	Dark-eyed Junco 3
American Kestrel 7	White-crowned Sparrow 35
Merlin 1	Golden-crowned Sparrow 6
Peregrine Falcon 3	Song Sparrow 59
Black Phoebe 10	California Towhee 39
Say's Phoebe 6	Spotted Towhee 27
Cassin's Kingbird 2	Western Meadowlark 6
Hutton's Vireo 5	Red-winged Blackbird 14
California Scrub-Jay 10	Orange-crowned Warbler 19
American Crow 14	Common Yellowthroat 1
Common Raven 17	Yellow-rumped Warbler 123
Bushtit 71	
Wrentit 46	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet 9	
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 3	
California Gnatcatcher 7	
House Wren 1	
Bewick's Wren 16	

Observers: Kathy Dickey, Marty Hales, David Walker, Deborah Walker, Robert Turner, and Anonymous

View this checklist online at ebird.org/checklist/S81747992

Herb Knüfken's amazing photo gallery, including many birds, may be found here: pbase.com/herb1rm



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