

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BIRD TRIP

February 26 - March 2, 2006

Target Birds Seen:

California Gnatcatcher (near Costa Mesa)

Crissal Thrasher (Salton Sea)

Juniper Titmouse (Mojave)

Target Birds Not Seen:

Yellow-footed Gull (Salton Sea, too early for their return)

Gilded Flicker (Mojave, saw Northern Flickers)

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BIRDING SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA 2006

Stanford to Costa Mesa - ~400 miles & ~6 hours

First birding is about 10 miles South of Costa Mesa at Crystal Cove State Park.

ABA = A Birder's Guide to Southern California, ABA/Lane Birdfinding Guide. Brad Schram

S.CaMap = Southern and Central California Atlas & Gazetteer, DeLorme

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Search for CAGN (4 places):

1. Bird Crystal Cove State Park (ABA p. 115, 116) (S.CaMap p. 103, 104) at Pelican Point (per Chris Benesh, Field Guides). Look for CAGN along the bluff.

The main entrance is where the toll road from Costa Mesa joins the coast road. There are three buildings (parking and picnic areas) about a quarter of a mile apart. The first one is Pelican Point, where we found CAGN close to the building in the center of the oval path. The third building down, we also found CAGN close to the building toward the beach. We did not bird the middle building area. There is another parking area on the left side of the coast highway going South, but don't use it. It costs \$10, and you have to walk through a tunnel to get to the coast side of the highway, and then way up the hill to get past a new building they are working on, and then further on to the "third" building mentioned above. Having found the bird at Crystal Cove, we did not go to the places listed below. Both of these areas were told to us by professional bird leaders whose names are mentioned.

2. Then a little further South of Crystal Cove State Park is El Moro Canyon parking lot (ABA p. 115, 116). A better chance of CAGN is across highway along the coast.

3. Then Hwy 1 to Capistrano Beach (3-5 mi) to get back on Hwy 5 (S.CaMap p. 112). Then 27 mi to Oceanside. Continue on Hwy 5 about 16 mi further to San Elijo State Beach (ABA p. 136) (S.CaMap p. 113). Take Lomas Sante Fe Drive West to Rios Ave (turn right) Go 0.8 miles to end of Rios Ave. Bird the trails for CAGN

4. When finished at San Elijo, return to Hwy 5 to Oceanside
Take Hwy 78 East to Escondido. Turn South on Hwy 15 to San Dieguito River Park (Lake Hodges) (per Barry Zimmer, VENT). See directions on ABA p. 152 for CAGN.

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Head for Anza Borrego:

Return North on Hwy 15 to Hwy 78 to Santa Ysabel

North on Hwy 79 toward Warner Springs

Turn right on Hwy S2 then left on Hwy S22

Stop at the Culp Valley Overlook for CRTH

Continue to Headquarters at Anza Borrego

Then take Palm Canyon Road to Christmas Circle

Take Hwy S3 South to Yaqui Pass road and turn left, go to the end

Look for CRTH

Head for Salton Sea:

Return on Yaqui Pass Road to Borrego Springs Rd and turn left,
Take this road to Hwy 78, turn left to Brawley.
Hwy 78 merges with Hwy 86 to Brawley
When you get to Poe Road at the South end of the Sea
Turn left on Poe Road, and drive to the Sea (ABA p. 168, 176).
Look for YFGU and CRTH

Shortly after Poe Road, take Bannister Road to Kalin Road
Do a jog to the right for Rutherford Road
Pass Hwy 111 and turn left on Kershaw
Turn right on Titsworth Road, and left on Smith to Finney Lake (ABA p. 172)
Look for CRTH

Go back to Kersah and take Quay Rood to Hwy 111.
Go North to Calipatria and West to Blair Road.
Southwest of the Prison is a field.
Look for Chestnut-collared, Lapland, McCowan's and Smith's Longspurs
(CCLO, LALO, MCLO, SMLO)

If we still need a YFGU, head for Obsidian Butte (ABA p. 171)
Also, Large-billed Savannah Sparrows (SVAS) along impoundment South of Obsidian Butte

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To Mojave National Preserve:

From Brawley take Hwy 78 to Blythe, then right 4 miles to Hwy 95 to Vidal.
Continue on Hwy 95 to Hwy 40 and Needles.
Continue West on Hwy 40 to the entrance of Mojave (Essex Road).
Take Black Canyon Road to Mid Hills Campground for JUTI.

Then on to Cima, turn right and then left on a dirt road that goes along a power line.
Look for GIFL along road.

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Head for Home:

Then get back to Hwy 40 and head for Barstow.
Take Hwy 68 to Mojave and Bakersfield
Go North on Hwy 99 to Hwy 46 at Famosa
In about 25 miles, turn right on Hwy 5 and HOME



Southern California Birding Trip - February 26 - March 2, 2006

DATE	TIME	COMMENTS	MILEAGE
2/26/06	7:45 AM	Left Home	0.0
	8:33 AM	Arrive Gilroy	49.3
	9:30 AM	First Rest Stop on Hwy 5 South	106.9
	9:38 AM	Leave: M Drives	
	10:35 AM	Rest Stop	172.0
	10:50 AM	Leave: K Drives	
	11:55 AM	Rest Stop Button Willow	233.2
	12:23 PM	Leave: K Drives	
	1:10 PM	Lebec Rest Stop	286.1
	1:17 PM	Leave	
	3:02 PM	Arrive Day's Inn, Costa Mesa	396.9
		To Crystal Cove St. Prk.	421.8 Found CAGN
		Eat at Skosh Monahan's	
2/27/06		To Crystal Cove St. Park	433.4 More CAGN
	8:52 AM	Leave CCSP for Escondido	493.6 Gas
	11:20 AM	At 79-S2 Junction	538.1 Stopped Awhile
		Anza Borrego, Culp Valley Overlook, North end of Yaqui Pass Rd. Salton Sea - Poe Road; NO Crissal Thrashers	
	4:00 PM	Arrive Brawley	625.7
	To Finney Lake & return	642.1 NO Crissal Thrashers	
2/28/06	7:00 AM	To Finney Lake	657.4 NO Crissal Thrashers
	8:25 AM	At Ramer Lake Entrance	659.6 YES Crissal Thrasher
	9:05 AM	Calipatria	664.7 Gas
		Look for Longspurs , found many, but could not identify them	
		To Sonny Bono, Obsidian Butte (wrong side), Red Hill	
		Eat Lunch at Sonny Bono	NO Yellow-footed Gulls
	12:45 PM	Leave Sonny Bono for Needles	692.9
2:45 PM	Arrive Blythe	801.7 M Drives	
4:45 PM	Arrive Needles	896.7 Day's Inn; Gas	
3/1/06	7:00 AM	To Mojave National Preserve	
	7:40 AM	Arrive Essex Road and visit whole area	
		YES Juniper Titmouse (at Mid Hills Campground)	
		NO Gilded Flickler (along powerline road near Cima)	
	2:30 PM	Arrive Back at Hwy 40	1,045.7
	3:20 PM	Rest Stop	M Drives
	5:05 PM	Mojave, CA	1,193.8 K Drives
5:45 PM	Arrive Tehachapi	1,214.6 Best Western, very noisy	
3/2/06	6:45 AM	Leave	
	8:10 AM	Arrive Button Willow	1,281.5 (?) M Drives
	10:02 AM	Rest Stop before Hwy 152	1,405.7 K Drives
	11:45 AM	HOME	1,512.3

COAST

California Gnatcatcher (4.25 in) p338 NGS

Darker gray, less white in outer tail feathers,

less distinct eye ring than Black-tailed Gnatcatcher (4 in)

CAGN on West side of Southern CA, while the BTGN is on the East side

Songs are totally different

Found in sage scrub

ANZA BORREGO

Crissal Thrasher (11.5 in) p356 NGS

Large and slender with a distinctive chestnut under tail patch

Dark malar streak, very secretive

Dense mesquite and willows along streams and washes

Sometimes on lower mountain slopes

SALTON SEA

Yellow-footed Gull (27 in) p206 NGS

Three year gull, adult is like Western Gull but has yellow legs and feet

Note thicker bill with red dot, dark slate gray wings and yellow eyes

First winter juvenile has more white on head and body, upper parts more boldly patterned than Western (p213 NGS); rump whiter

Calls are lower pitched than Westerns

Crissal Thrasher (see above)

Large-billed Savannah Sparrow (5.5 in) p412 NGS

Winters in small numbers on the edge of Salton Sea

Very dull with a large bill

Song is markedly different than other Savannah Sparrows

Short high introductory notes, followed by about three rich, buzzy dzeee's

Call is a soft metallic zink

See next page for Longspurs at Salton Sea

MOJAVE

Juniper Titmouse (5.25 in) p326 NGS

Larger, paler, grayer than Oak (5 in)

Songs quite different

Juniper or pinon-juniper woodland

Gilded Flicker (11.5 in) p276 NGS

Similar to Red-shafted, but underwings and base of tail yellow, crown more cinnamon. One inch smaller than Red-shafted.

Larger black chest patch, paler back with narrow black bars

More crescent-shaped markings on chest, lighter face and chest,

red moustachial stripe, song similar to Red-shafted

Inhabits low desert woodlands; favors saguaro

LONGSPURS (at Calipatria Prison)

Chestnut-collard Longspur (5 in) p420 NGS

White tail marked with blackish triangle

Short primary projection (barely to base of tail)

Breeding: black and white head, buffy face and black underparts

A few have chestnut underparts, whitish wing bar

Lower belly and undertail coverts whitish

Upperparts black, buff and brown, with chestnut collar

Winter: males are paler, dark patch on chest

Distinctive call: kittle

Male has white patch on shoulder

Lapland Longspur (6.25 in) p422 NGS

Outer tail feathers are white, middle black

Breeding male has black top of head, face and neck, yellow bill

White stripe from back of eye and down sides of breast, reddish-brown nape

Winter: is quite different, note black triangle outlining plain, buffy ear patch

Dark streaks (F) or dark patch (M) on upper chest, broad buffy eyebrow

Undertail is white (unlike Smith's)

Rufous bar in shoulder area

McCowan's Longspur (6 in) p420 NGS

White tail with a dark inverted T-shape

Bill is stouter and thicker than the other Longspurs

Primary projection slightly longer than Chestnut-collared

Winter, bill is pinkish with a dark tip, feathers edged with buff and brown

Paler brown than Lapland, no black edge around ear patch

Undertail white, male dark patch on chest

Rufous bar on shoulder area

Smith's Longspur (6.25 in) p422 NGS

Outer two tail feathers are almost all white, middle black

Primary projection short

Dark edging around ear patch

Seen with Lapland in open gassy areas

White bar in shoulder area, under tail buffy

thin reddish-brown streaks on breast and sides

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BIRD TRIP

FEBRUARY 26 - MARCH 2, 2006

Hwy 152

Turkey Vulture 22
Yellow-billed Magpie

Hwy 5

Brewer's Blackbird (lots)
House Sparrow 2
Raven 6

Crystal Cove State Park

Black Phoebe 7
White-tailed Kite
Sharp-shinned Hawk
Yellow-rumped Warbler 4
Song Sparrow 2
Lesser Goldfinch 5
California Gnatcatcher 4 ***
Wrentit (H) 2
Anna's Hummingbird 2
American Crow 10
Common Yellowthroat 1
Mourning Dove
California Towhee 2
California Thrasher 2 (K)
Bushtit 15
Western Grebe 30
Godwit 2
Sanderling 3

Santa Ysable

Red-tailed Hawk

Anza Borrego

Phainopepla
Black-crowned Night-Heron
Loggerhead Shrike
Western Sandpiper
American Coot
White-crowned Sparrow 2
American White Pelican
Ring-billed Gull
Say's Phoebe
Northern Shoveler
Avocet
Northern Harrier
Cinnamon Teal 3

Salton Sea

Belted Kingfisher
Crissal Thrasher ***
Longspurs (up to 4 sp)
American Kestrel 3
Verdin
Abert's Towhee 2
Snow Geese (lots)
Greater Yellowlegs 3
Rufous Hummingbird
Greater Roadrunner
Northern Pintail
Great Blue Heron
Black-necked Stilt
Northern Mockingbird
Cattle Egret (lots)
Long-billed Curlew
White-faced Ibis
Snowy Egret

Mojave Natl. Preserve

Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Juniper Titmouse (several) ***
Western Scrub-Jay
Ladder-backed Woodpecker
Northern Flicker
Cactus Wren (several)

NOTE:

Totals for each species seen are not accurate.

*** = Target life birds

MISSED:

Gilded Flicker at Mojave
Yellow-footed Gull (really too early for them)
Longspurs - couldn't identify, and was windy

TOTAL SPECIES SEEN: 61