

Hassayampa River Preserve

Friday, December 4, 2015

Leader: Dan Bohlmann

It was a gorgeous day and we had a good sized group(12) of birders show up but the bribe I paid to the birds to make an appearance didn't seem to work. Only a few of the possible interesting birds that I mentioned in my write up bothered to come. Driving into the preserve grounds we were greeted by a flock of Starlings on a power pole and a lone Phainopepla on the power line nearby trying to figure out if the Starlings were his relatives. In the parking lot several small flocks of White-crowned Sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos(Oregon form) were celebrating in song the arrival of the sun. When we got to the visitor center there were at least twenty Anna's Hummingbirds at the feeders draining the juice. Inside we found the past days bird list had quite a few interesting birds including a Hooded Merganser. We were hoping that he had decided to hang around, but he must have gotten bored and left. We first went over to the circle of palms in the picnic area hoping that the Cedar Waxwings that usually hang out there in December might be having their palm tree seed picnic. We hung around for sometime but alas they didn't show up. What did arrive was a good number of Yellow-rumped Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Hermit Thrushes, Gila Woodpeckers and Northern Flickers. We then moved south to the marshy area around the lake which we would circle around.

As we approached the water we observed birds that we would be shocked not to see since they are always there. Such as Black Phoebe, American Coot, Mallard, and Song Sparrow. Suddenly we heard the raucous call of the Belted Kingfisher and he flew by scolding us for being there. He made a number of passes telling us to get out of his territory. Then a Great Blue Heron took flight which may have been the target of his wrath, not us. On the other side of the lake there is a desert area where we picked up a Curve-billed Thrasher, Abert's Towhee, Verdin, Cardinal, Raven, Red-tailed Hawk, House Wren, Lincoln Sparrow and Ladder-backed Woodpecker.

After we circled the lake we went North along the Hassayampa River but things were pretty quiet and we didn't see anything new. We did run into another person coming back down the river and he asked us to identify a bird he had taken a picture of on his cell phone. We agreed that it was a Plumbeous Vireo.

So not counting the Vireo we had a not so grand total of 25 species

Attendees: George Shoop, Jean Eddins, Jim Consolloy, Gerry Horton, Helen Hume, Erv Johnson, Maryann Bell, Donna Smith, Audrey Pavitt, Alan & Linda Mayo and Dan Bohlmann

<http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S26247517>