

Field Trip Report - Breeding Birds of West Marin
June 1, 2011
With David Wimpfheimer

What started out as a stormy day turned into a memorable experience for the nine hardy birders who ventured out to West Marin to join David Wimpfheimer, top Inverness birder and naturalist (calnaturalist.com). Seventy species for the day! We started the day by walking through the varied woodlands around the Bear Valley Visitor Center. An unusual and lengthy look at a



Birding on Bolinas Ridge Trail with Black Mountain in the background. Photo by David Wimpfheimer

Pacific-slope Flycatcher was my “bird-of-the day.” **Great-blue Heron** were nesting in a stand of trees and **Chipping Sparrow** made an appearance. The next stop was the open Bolinas Ridge Trail off Sir Francis Drake. Highlights were **Lazuli Bunting**, **Ash-throated Flycatcher**, **Horned Lark**, and **Savannah and Grasshopper Sparrow**. We then moved on to Drakes Beach for lunch. By then the skies were clear and the water was a tropical turquoise. **White-crowned Sparrow**, along with

Song Sparrow made it a six-sparrow day. Moving on to Chimney Rock, we observed **Pigeon Guillemot**, nesting **Common Murre**, **Surf Scoter**, loons, cormorants and a **Black Oystercatcher**. In the trees we had scope-filling views of two **Great-horned Owl**. A young deer bolted through the grass near us and a coyote meandered off in the other direction. We also enjoyed watching the Elephant Seal, Tule Elk and other Blacktail Deer. Enough for a great day? No, we then headed to Giacomini Pond at Pt. Reyes Station to see the **Eastern Phoebe**, a rare visitor from the eastern U.S. This ended our great day in West Marin with David.

By Dave Herrema



Tule Elk on the road to Drakes Beach. Photo by Dave Herrema