

Field Trip Report: Pelagic Trip to the Farallones
August 22, 2010
Trip Leader: David Wimpfheimer

Marin Audubon's third annual trip to the Farallones left Sausalito at 8AM on August 22 aboard Captain Mick Menigoz' 65-ft boat, Superfish. As in the previous two trips, David Wimpfheimer was our able naturalist and trip leader. The day started out under overcast skies as we passed the 390-ft Russian yacht "A" moored in the harbor and out under the Golden Gate. We saw **Common Murres** and various gulls, terns and cormorants as we headed offshore. After about an hour and a half, the skies began to clear and the wind and seas picked up as the Farallones came into view. Capt. Menigoz' fish finder detected a 100 ft deep band of krill just below the surface and suddenly all around us the ocean was alive with Humpback and Blue Whales, porpoises, sea lions and, of course, birds. Highlights included **Pink-footed** and **Sooty Shearwaters**, **Black-footed Albatrosses** and probably thousands of phalarope, both red and red-necked. As we reached the Farallones, David pointed out the Northern Fur Seals and California Sea Lions on the island that we could smell as well as see, since we were downwind. We circled the islands under sunny skies as David explained the interesting biology and history of the area. Several **Tufted Puffins** were sighted near the islands, as well as pods of hundreds of juvenile sea lions leaping in the water. By mid-afternoon we began our return trip, ending with a final circle around the Russian yacht and back to the dock by 4.

Peter Colasanti kindly provided the following list of birds for the day: 1 Western Grebe, 6 Black-footed Albatross, 2 Northern Fulmar, 7 Pink-footed Shearwater, 25 Sooty Shearwater, 5 Ashy Storm-Petrel, 50 Brandt's Cormorant, 10 Pelagic Cormorant, 30 Red-necked Phalarope, 55 Red Phalarope, 7 Sabine's Gull, 8 Heermann's Gull, 90 Western Gull, 33 Arctic Tern, 2 Elegant Tern, 50 Common Murre, 30 Pigeon Guillemot, 18 Cassin's Auklet, 12 Tufted Puffin.

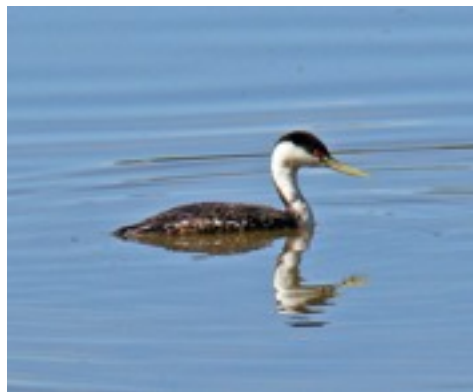


Photo by Bob Chilvers