



The Changing Seasons

Fall migration—from mid-August through October—is the most exciting time at Lands End due to the diversity of species moving through the area. “Fall” migration begins in mid-August and peaks near the end of September. Look for migrant warblers, flycatchers, tanagers, and vireos in the trees, while Parasitic Jaegers can be seen chasing Elegant Terns offshore. **During the winter** there are more birds in the area than at any other time of year. Flocks of Townsend’s and Yellow-rumped Warblers feed in the trees, while Golden-crowned and Fox Sparrows feed on the ground. Offshore, large rafts of scoters, grebes, and loons feed in the churning water. **Spring migration**, April through May, features fewer individuals than in the fall, but the birdsong and brilliant breeding colors more than compensate. **Summer** is nesting time; watch for nesting Oystercatchers, Pigeon Guillemots, and Olive-sided Flycatchers.



Trails Forever is a parkwide initiative sponsored by the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, National Park Service, and the Presidio Trust.

Text and photos by Alan Hopkins, 2007

SEAL ROCKS: Oystercatcher, Brandt’s Cormorant, Brown Pelican, Black Turnstone
SUTRO BATHS: Ring-necked Duck

BLACK OYSTERCATCHER (17.5”) This big, stocky shorebird is easily identified by its black body, red-orange bill, and pink legs. A loud whistled call frequently announces the presence of this permanent resident that can be seen nesting on Seal Rocks. Black Oystercatchers are found along rocky coastal shorelines from Baja California to Alaska.



HERMIT ROCK: Pigeon Guillemot, Brandt’s Cormorant
MILE ROCK: Surf Scoter, Peregrine Falcon, Harlequin Duck, Long-tailed Duck

PIGEON GUILLEMOT (13.5”) This black sea bird with bold white wing patches and bright red feet is more closely related to the puffin than the pigeon. Like other members of the family Alcidae, they use their wings to “fly” underwater to catch fish. A colony of guillemots can be seen on Hermit Rock below the Mile Rock Overlook from March to August.



Lands End, with its spectacular vistas and diverse habitat, provides

wonderful experiences

for both amateur and avid birdwatchers. Due to its location at the tip of the San Francisco Peninsula, Lands End is an important stopover for migratory birds. More than 200 species of migrant and resident birds have been sighted from its trails and overlooks.



Thank You to Our Supporters

The Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy and National Park Service are transforming Lands End through trail and overlook improvements, habitat restoration, and revitalized forest health. The ongoing work at Lands End is made possible by community volunteers and generous contributions from the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Foundation, the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, the California Coastal Conservancy, and members of the Parks Conservancy. To find out how you can help, e-mail volunteer@parksconservancy.org or call (415) 561-3077.

Birds of LANDS END

Grouped by family in accordance
with the 7th A.O.U. checklist

Anatidae (Swans, Geese, Ducks)

- Greater White-fronted Goose **OUM**
- Snow Goose **OEM**
- Ross's Goose **OEM**
- Tundra Swan **Ra,<M**
- Brant **OUM**
- Cackling Goose **OEM**
- Canada Goose **OU**
- Gadwall **OEM**
- American Wigeon **OEM**
- Mallard* **CRe**
- Blue-winged Teal **ORaM**
- Cinnamon Teal **EM**
- Northern Shoveler **OEM**
- Northern Pintail **OEM**
- Green-winged Teal **OEM**
- Canvasback **Ra,EMW**
- Redhead **Ra,<M**
- Ring-necked Duck **CW**
- Tufted Duck **VW**
- Greater Scaup **OU,EMW**
- Lesser Scaup **EM**
- King Eider **ORa,<M**
- Harlequin Duck **OUW**
- Surf Scoter **OA,W;CSu**
- White-winged Scoter **OUW**
- Black Scoter **OUW**
- Long-tailed Duck **ORaW**
- Bufflehead **OUM;UW**
- Common Goldeneye **OUM;UW**
- Barrow's Goldeneye **RaM;RaW**
- Common Merganser **ORaM**
- Red-breasted Merganser **OUMW**
- Ruddy Duck **OUMW**

Odontophoridae (New World Quail)

- California Quail **RaRe**

Gaviidae (Loons)

- Red-throated Loon **OCW**
- Pacific Loon **OCW**
- Common Loon **OUW**

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

- Pied-billed Grebe **UW**
- Horned Grebe **UW**
- Red-necked Grebe **ORaW**
- Eared Grebe **UW**
- Western Grebe **OA,W;USu**

Clark's Grebe **OCW;USu** Procellariiformes (Albatross)

- Laysan Albatross **Ra,<M**

Procellariidae (Shearwaters)

- Northern Fulmar **OEW;EM**
- Pink-footed Shearwater **ORaSu,F**
- Buller's Shearwater **ORaSu,F**
- Sooty Shearwater **OESp,Su,F;UW**
- Manx Shearwater **ORa,<**
- Black-vented Shearwater **OESu,F**

Hydrobatidae (Storm-Petrels)

- Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel **ORaW,Su,F**
- Ashy Storm-Petrel **ORaSu,F**
- Black Storm-Petrel **ORaSu,F**

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

- Brown Pelican **AW,Su,F**

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants)

- Brandt's Cormorant* **ARe**
- Double-crested Cormorant **CRe**
- Pelagic Cormorant* **URe**

Fregatidae (Frigatebirds)

- Magnificent Frigatebird **OV,<**

Ardeidae (Herons)

- Great Blue Heron **URe**
- Great Egret **URe**
- Snowy Egret **URe**
- Cattle Egret **Ra,<M**
- Black-crowned Night Heron **URe**



Tropical Kingbird

Cathartidae (American Vultures)

- Turkey Vulture **URe**

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, Harriers)

- Osprey **URe;UM**
- Northern Harrier **UM**
- Sharp-shinned Hawk **UReW;CM**
- Cooper's Hawk **URe;CM**
- Northern Goshawk **<MF**
- Red-shouldered Hawk **CRe**
- Broad-winged Hawk **RaMF**
- Red-tailed Hawk **CRe**
- Rough-legged Hawk **RaMF**
- Golden Eagle **RaMF**

Falconidae (Falcons)

- American Kestrel **UReW;UM**
- Merlin **UReW;UM**
- Peregrine Falcon **URe**
- Prairie Falcon **RaMF**

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, Coots)

- Virginia Rail **RaW**
- Sora **RaW**
- American Coot **CW**

Charadriidae (Plovers)

- Black-billed Plover **UM**
- Killdeer **UW**

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

- Black Oystercatcher* **CRe**

Recurvirostridae (Stilts)

- American Avocet **RaM**

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers, relatives)

- Spotted Sandpiper **UM**
- Wandering Tattler **CM;UW**
- Greater Yellowlegs **UM**
- Willet **CW**
- Whimbrel **CW**
- Long-billed Curlew **UM**
- Bar-tailed Godwit **V,<**
- Marbled Godwit **CW**
- Ruddy Turnstone **UM;RaW**
- Black Turnstone **CW**
- Surfbird **CW**
- Sanderling **CW**
- Western Sandpiper **UM**
- Least Sandpiper **UM**
- Dunlin **UM**
- Short-billed Dowitcher **UM**
- Long-billed Dowitcher **RaM**

Red-necked Phalarope



- Thayer's Gull **UW**
- Western Gull* **ARe**
- Glaucous-winged Gull **CW**
- Glaucous Gull **RaW**
- Sabine's Gull **ORaM**
- Black-legged Kittiwake **ORaM**
- Caspian Tern **OCSu**
- Common Tern **ORaM**
- Arctic Tern **ORa,<M**
- Forster's Tern **OCSp,Su,F**
- Elegant Tern **OCSu,F**
- Pomarine Jaeger **OUF;RaW**
- Parasitic Jaeger **OCSu,F**
- Long-tailed Jaeger **ORaF**

Alcidae (Auks, Murres, Puffins)

- Common Murre **OERe**
- Pigeon Guillemot* **CSp,Su**
- Marbled Murrelet **OUW,Su,F**
- Ancient Murrelet **ORaW,F**
- Cassin's Auklet **ORaRe**
- Rhinoceros Auklet **ORaRe**
- Tufted Puffin **ORaRe**

Columbidae (Doves, Pigeons)

- Eurasian Collared Dove **RaRe**
- Rock Pigeon* **ARe**
- Band-tailed Pigeon **CM;EW**
- Mourning Dove* **CRe**

Tytonidae (Barn Owls)

- Barn Owl **RaRe**

Strigidae (Typical Owls)

- Great Horned Owl* **URe**
- Burrowing Owl **RaReW**
- Long-eared Owl **Ra,<M**
- Short-eared Owl **Ra,<M**
- Northern Saw-wet Owl **Ra,<W**

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars)

- Common Poorwill **Ra,<M**

Apodidae (Swifts)

- Black Swift **RaM**
- Chimney Swift **V,<M**
- Vaux's Swift **UM**
- White-throated Swift **CM**

Trochilida (Hummingbirds)

- Anna's Hummingbird* **CRe**
- Rufous Hummingbird **UM**
- Allen's Hummingbird* **CW,Sp,Su**

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

- Belted Kingfisher **UW**

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

- Lewis's Woodpecker **RaM**
- Acorn Woodpecker **UM**
- Gilia Woodpecker **V,<**
- Red-breasted Sapsucker **RaW;UM**
- Nuttall's Woodpecker **UM**
- Downy Woodpecker* **CRe**
- Hairy Woodpecker **URe**
- Northern Flicker **CMW**

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

- Olive-sided Flycatcher* **USp,Su**
- Western Wood-Pewee **CM**
- Willow Flycatcher **CM**
- Least Flycatcher **V**
- Hammond's Flycatcher **UM**
- Gray Flycatcher **RaM**
- Dusky Flycatcher **RaM**
- Pacific-slope Flycatcher **CM**
- Black Phoebe* **CRe**
- Say's Phoebe **UM**
- Ash-throated Flycatcher **UM**
- Tropical Kingbird **V**
- Western Kingbird **UM**
- Eastern Kingbird **V,<**
- Scissor-tailed Flycatcher **V,<**

Vireonidae (Vireos)

- Yellow-throated Vireo **V,<**
- Cassin's Vireo **UM**
- Hutton's Vireo* **URe**
- Red-eyed Vireo **V**
- Warbling Vireo **CM**

Corvidae (Jays, Magpies, Crows, Ravens)

- Steller's Jay **URe**
- Western Scrub Jay* **CRe**
- American Crow **CRe**
- Common Raven* **ARe**
- Yellow-billed Magpie **RaM**

Alaudidae (Larks)

- Horned Lark **OEM**

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

- Tree Swallow* **CReSu**
- Violet-green Swallow **CM;UReSu**
- N. Rough-winged Swallow **CM**
- Bank Swallow **UM**
- Cliff Swallow **CM**
- Barn Swallow **CReSu**

Paridae (Chickadees, Titmice)

- Chestnut-backed Chickadee* **CRe**

Aegithalidae (Bushtits)

- Bushtit* **CRe**

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

- Red-breasted Nuthatch **CM;UW**
- White-breasted Nuthatch **RaM**
- Pygmy Nuthatch* **ARe**



Downy Woodpecker

Certhiidae (Creepers)

- Brown Creeper* **CRe**

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

- Rock Wren **<M**
- Bewick's Wren **RaRe**
- House Wren **CM;RaW**
- Winter Wren* **CRe**
- Wrentit **RaRe**

Regulidae (Kinglets)

- Golden-crowned Kinglet **UM;EW**
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet **CM;CW**

Sylviidae (Gnatcatchers)

- Blue-gray Gnatcatcher **UM;RaW**

Turdidae (Thrushes)

- Swainson's Thrush **CM;RaReSu**
- Hermit Thrush **CReW**
- American Robin* **CRe**
- Varied Thrush **EReW;CM**

Mimidae (Mockingbirds, Thrashers)

- Northern Mockingbird **URe**

Sturnidae (Starlings)

- European Starling* **ARe**

Motacillidae (Pipits)

- American Pipit **UM**

Bombycillidae (Waxwings)

- Cedar Waxwing **CM**

Parulidae (Wood-Warblers)

- Tennessee Warbler **V**
- Orange-crowned Warbler **CM;USu;UW**
- Nashville Warbler **UM;RaW**
- Northern Parula **V**
- Yellow Warbler **CM**
- Chestnut-sided Warbler **V**
- Magnolia Warbler **V**
- Black-throated Blue Warbler **V**
- Yellow-rumped Warbler **AM;AW**
- Black-throated Gray Warbler **CM**
- Townsend's Warbler **CM;CW**
- Hermit Warbler **UM**
- Black-throated Green Warbler **V,<**
- Yellow-throated Warbler **V,<**
- Prairie Warbler **V,<**
- Palm Warbler **RaM**
- Bay-breasted Warbler **V,<**
- Blackpoll Warbler **V**
- Black-and-white Warbler **V**
- Worm-eating Warbler **V,<**
- Ovenbird **V,<**
- Northern Waterthrush **V**
- Kentucky Warbler **V,<**
- MacGillivray's Warbler **UM**
- Common Yellowthroat **CM;UW**
- Hooded Warbler **V**
- Wilson's Warbler* **CM;USu**
- Canada Warbler **V,<**
- Yellow-breasted Chat **RaM**

Surfbird



Thraupidae (Tanagers)

- Summer Tanager **V**
- Western Tanager **CM**
- Green-tailed Towhee **RaM**
- Spotted Towhee **UM;UW;Re**
- California Towhee* **CRe**
- Chipping Sparrow **CM**
- Clay-colored Sparrow **UM**
- Brewer's Sparrow **UM**
- Lark Bunting **V,<**
- Savannah Sparrow **UM;UW**
- Fox Sparrow **AW**
- Song Sparrow **CRe**
- Lincoln's Sparrow **UReW;CM**
- White-throated Sparrow **RaReW;UM**
- White-crowned Sparrow* **ARe**
- Golden-crowned Sparrow **AW**
- Dark-eyed Junco* **CRe**

Cardinalidae (Grosbeaks, Buntings)

- Rose-breasted Grosbeak **V**
- Black-headed Grosbeak **CM**
- Blue Grosbeak **Ra,<M**
- Lazuli Bunting **UM**
- Indigo Bunting **V**
- Painted Bunting **V,<**

Icteridae (Blackbirds, relatives)

- Red-winged Blackbird **CReW;USu**
- Tricolored Blackbird **UReW;CM**
- Western Meadowlark **CM;UW**
- Yellow-headed Blackbird **RaM**
- Brewer's Blackbird* **ARe**
- Brown-headed Cowbird* **CRe**
- Orchard Oriole **V**
- Hooded Oriole* **USp,Su**
- Bullock's Oriole **CM**
- Baltimore Oriole **V**

- Purple Finch* **CRe**
- House Finch* **ARe**
- Red Crossbill* **ERe;EM**
- Pine Siskin **EW;EM**
- Lesser Goldfinch* **CRe**
- American Goldfinch* **CRe**
- Lawrence's Goldfinch **RaM**
- Evening Grosbeak **RaM**
- House Sparrow **CRe**

* = Nesting: Nests within
Lands End

O = Offshore

A = Abundant: Many seen during
the proper season

C = Common: A few seen during
the proper season

U = Uncommon: May be missed

Ra = Rare: Not found every year

V = Vagrant: A species considered
outside its normal range

E = Eruptive: Populations fluctuate
greatly daily or annually

< = Fewer than five records

Re = Resident: Resident of the
immediate area, not always
at Lands End

M = Migrant: Species seen only
in transit between nesting
and wintering grounds

W = Winter

Sp = Spring

Su = Summer

F = Fall



Spotted Towhee