

2006

Western Station Reports: San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory Spring Migration

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Western Regional News

Western Station Reports

San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory Spring Migration

On 5 Apr 2006, as a result of the late spring rains in San Jose, Coyote Creek overflowed into the Coyote Creek Field Station's (CCFS) study site with an approximate height of 6-8 feet at its peak. While rescuing some of our nets, we saw moles and rabbits swimming for the safety of the levees, as well as ducks enjoying the new "wetland" habitat. The aftermath of the flood left a few feet of standing water in most places, preventing us from banding for four days in April, our prime migration month. As a result, we will have a hard time measuring numbers of migrants for 2006. Although the water was in no danger of coming over the levees surrounding the site, two of our year-round resident species, Common Yellowthroat and Song Sparrow, had already begun building nests where the water was flowing through, so we are anxious to see how this flood may have affected their breeding success this year.

On the weekend of 20 - 21 May, we had both our high and low capture rates for the month - 61 b/100nh and 6 b/100nh, respectively. On 20 May we had an average spring day weather-wise, while

on 21 May rain threatened all around us and a moisture-laden breeze continued all morning. Not surprisingly, 62% of the birds captured that day were migrants. Of those, 55% were Pacific-slope Flycatchers, which was our only big migration day for this species in 2006. Other highlights for 21 May (also new species for 2006) were: two Warbling Vireos, one MacGillivray's Warbler, and one Black-headed Grosbeak. Other new additions to 2006 included: Black-chinned Hummingbird (6 May), Northern Rough-winged Swallow (6 May), Lazuli Bunting (14 May), Bullock's Oriole (28 May).

See pictures in WBBA's website gallery. Read more about SFBBO at www.sfbbo.org.

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