

The date: 12/17/2019

The week number: 51

The walk number: 1538

The weather: 60 F; partly cloudy

The walkers: Alan Cummings, Viveca Sapin-Areeda, Maximilian Christman, Darren Dowell

The birds (24)

- 3 House Sparrow
- 2 Northern Mockingbird
- 11 Mourning Dove
- 3 House Finch
- 25 Common Raven
- 1 Anna's Hummingbird
- 7 Acorn Woodpecker
- 2 American Crow
- 1 Red-tailed Hawk
- 3 Dark-eyed Junco
- 6 Black Phoebe
- 25 Yellow-rumped Warbler
- 5 Lesser Goldfinch
- 2 California Towhee
- 1 Cooper's Hawk
- 1 Say's Phoebe
- 4 Ruby-crowned Kinglet
- 1 Bewick's Wren
- 1 Hummingbird, Selasphorus
- 15 Band-tailed Pigeon
- 1 Townsend's Warbler
- 1 Spotted Towhee
- 5 Bushtit
- 1 Orange-crowned Warbler

Max Christman, Manager of Sustainability Programs at Caltech, joined us to see what happens on a Caltech bird walk. I am not exactly sure how our bird walk fits into Sustainability, but I will say they have been self-sustaining. This was the 1538th Caltech bird walk. The first one was on 10/15/1986 and we recorded 4 species, all in Tournament Park. It wasn't really a walk; it was a lunch with Ernie Franzgrote, the co-founder of the Caltech Bird Walks. I was a bit reluctant to go on the "walk", actually, but Ernie pushed hard and it turned out that that first "walk" produced a new bird for my life list, the Townsend's Warbler. The rest is history. I have now been on 1356 of these walks. In second place with 526 walks under her shoes is current walker Viveca Sapin-Areeda. Kent Potter logged 462 walks and is in third place. He retired from Caltech in 2016 and moved to Idaho. He is vulnerable to be overtaken, as he apparently deems coming to Pasadena from Idaho every week to do the walk to not be in the cards.

As for today's walk, we identified 24 species, 3 short of the record for week 51 and well above the median. So, it was a good walk. Darren Dowell came along, I think mainly to try to turn the Anna's Hummingbird on Wilson back into the recalled Costa's, but alas we didn't see it.

Alan, 12/19/19