

Golden Gate Audubon
Spring Bird Sounds, February, 2021
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California Ground Squirrel

Otospermophilus beecheyi

Family: Sciuridae (squirrels)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: n/a

Bay Area Status: Year-round resident

Joseph C. Boone

Audubon climate status: N/A



Calls

The alarm call has been confusing birders for many years.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet

Regulus calendula

Family:

Regulidae (kinglets)

Pieplow Guide Page No.:

364

Bay Area Status:

Winter resident

Adult



Evan Lipton, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status:

Summer, highly vulnerable

Songs

Male Ruby-crowned Kinglets start singing a couple of weeks before they migrate in spring. They sing a jumbled but distinctive song that builds to an incredibly loud ending when you consider how small these birds are. The song lasts about 5 seconds. It starts with soft, high notes that accelerate into a musical twittering, and then abruptly shifts into a loud series of 2- or 3-parted notes.

Calls

The most common kinglet call is a harsh, fast, two-parted scold. They may also give a long, chattering series of short notes. This sounds like an old-time dot-matrix printer; a very common sound in brushy habitats in the winter Bay Area. Females sometimes do this as the male sings; females also use it as an alarm call.

Yellow-rumped Warbler

Setophaga coronata

Family: Parulidae (new world warblers)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 502

Bay Area Status: Winter resident

Male (breeding)/Female or Immature



John Nelson, Macaulay Lib.



Ryan Schain, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Moderately vulnerable

Songs

Yellow-rumps don't sing in the Bay Area until just before spring migration. Males sing a slow, soft, sweetly whistled warble or trill. The pitch is mostly even but may rise or fall slightly, speeding up as it ends. Songs last 1-3 seconds and consist of up to 21 individual notes.

Calls

Yellow-rumped Warblers have two main calls. The more common one, a sharp chek, differs between the myrtle (Pieplow calls it a "chip") and Audubon's races (Pieplow; "chwit"). Both forms are quite recognizable and are a key call to learn for a bird watcher hoping to start sorting out migrating warblers in fall. Both sexes make this call frequently, both while foraging and while flying. Audubon's slightly higher-pitched and crisper-sounding than Myrtle. Yellow-rumped Warblers also make a soft psit and a high tsee in flight. The chip notes of flocks feeding in eucalyptus trees in the winter can be quite noisy. It's a characteristic sound of winter Bay Area birding.

Dark-eyed Junco

Junco hyemalis

Family: Passerellidae (sparrows)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 459

Bay Area Status: Year-round resident



Sam Hough, Macaulay Lib.

Male/Female



Robert Hamilton, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Moderately to Highly Vulnerable

Songs

Male Dark-eyed Juncos sing an even, musical trill of 7-23 notes that lasts up to 2 seconds. It's similar to the songs of both the Chipping Sparrow and the Pine Warbler, and is loud enough to be heard from several hundred feet away. Both sexes sing a much quieter song as well, a series of whistles, trills, and warbles that may sound like an American Goldfinch. This song typically doesn't carry any farther than about 40 feet.

Calls

Juncos have a high, short chip note [sounds like a twig breaking] that they often give in rapid succession when they fly and more slowly as they forage; the note may encourage other juncos to follow. A sharp but musical kew seems to indicate aggression and encourages two birds to move apart; it's usually given by the dominant bird. You may also hear juncos give a high, fast twittering call of 6-19 notes during altercations or as birds flush.

Spotted Towhee

Pipilo maculatus

Family:

Passerellidae (sparrows)

Pieplow Guide Page No.:

425

Bay Area Status:

Year-round resident

Male (Female duller)



John Reynolds, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status:

Moderately vulnerable

Songs

Spotted Towhees have a fairly simple song, The song starts with an explosive note and then a fast trill that can sound like a taut rubber band being plucked, or a piece of paper stuck into a fan. Eastern subspecies sing several introductory notes, which are rarely heard in the Bay Area.

Calls

Spotted Towhees make a catlike mew call, a little more than a half-second long. It seems to be used for scolding as well as by perched or foraging birds. Pairs sometimes exchange a soft, lisping call to stay in contact. Spotted Towhees also give a high, thin flight call.

Bewick's Wren

Thryomanes bewickii

Family: Troglodytidae (wrens)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 353

Bay Area Status: Year-round resident

Adult



Greg Gillson, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Stable

Songs Only the male Bewick's Wren sings, to defend territory and attract mates. Songs vary from one geographical area to another, and a single male may possess a repertoire of 9 to 22 distinct songs. Typically, these begin with two or more high, quick introductory notes, drop into a lower, burry phrase, and end on a high trill. Variations can include additional warbles and buzzy notes. Songs last about 2 seconds. Repeats song 20-50 times before switching to different song. Can be mistaken for Song Sparrow, and vice versa.

Calls Foraging Bewick's Wrens stay in contact with short notes that sound like plink plink or pee or—from females—sker. If a male hears another male nearby, he may stop foraging, hurrying to the territorial boundary to chase the interloper away. When agitated, both males and females scold in quick, raspy notes. Immediately before roosting, the male utters series of harsh (spzz) notes. Some harsh calls may be confused with Oak Titmouse.

Song Sparrow

Melospiza melodia

Family: Passerellidae (sparrows)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 454

Bay Area Status: Year-round resident

Adult



Ryan Schain, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Moderately vulnerable

Songs

The Song Sparrow sings a loud, clanking song of 2–6 phrases that typically starts with abrupt, well-spaced notes and finishes with a buzz or trill. In between, the singer may add other trills with different tempo and quality. The song usually lasts 2-4 seconds. Patterns of songs vary over the species' enormous range, so the Song Sparrows you hear when traveling may not sound quite like those from your hometown. May be confused with Bewick's Wren because of the introductory phrase and the buzzy notes.

Calls

Song Sparrows have a sharp chip note to indicate alarm or anxiety (sounds like a small dog bark); both sexes make it when excited or if predators approach a nest. Females make a harsh chatter at their mates during nest-building, or at a female intruding on the territory. Young or subordinate birds make a softer, tsip note.

Orange-crowned Warbler

Cardellina pusilla

Family: Parulidae (new world warblers)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 492

Bay Area Status: Summer resident (a few overwinter)

Audubon climate status: **Highly vulnerable due to habitat loss on breeding grounds**

Adult



Ian Davies, Macaulay Lib.

Songs

Male Orange-crowned Warblers sing a trilling song of sweet, clear notes. The song can remain on a single pitch or it can rise slightly in the middle and end on a distinctive rising or falling note—chee chee chee chew chew. The song pattern varies enough that individual males can be told apart by the version they sing.

Calls

The Orange-crowned Warbler call is a simple, sharp, high-pitched chip, distinctive from that of other warblers. Males and females give the call when foraging, and females call when flushed from the nest or when the nest is threatened.

House Wren

Troglodytes aedon

Family:

Troglodytidae (wrens)

Pieplow Guide Page No.:

349

Bay Area Status:

Mainly summer; a few
overwinter

Adult



Andy Witchger, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status:

Moderately Vulnerable

Songs

Both males and females sing. Males often sing 9-11 times per minute during breeding season. Songs are a long, jumbled bubbling introduced by abrupt churrs and scolds and made up of 12-16 recognizable syllables. Females sing mainly in answer to their mates shortly after pairing up; their songs can include high-pitched squeals unlike any sounds males make.

Calls

House Wrens make a variety of harsh sounds: churrs, chatters, rattles, and scolds, often in response to large animals that might be predators. For this reason, they can often be coaxed into view with squeaks or pishing sounds. [IMO, the most obvious call is what Pieplow terms "Beert." It sounds like someone blowing a "raspberry."]

Other Sounds

Adults may snap beaks softly while harassing predators near the nest.

Lark Sparrow

Chondestes grammacus

Family: Passerellidae (sparrows)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 441

Bay Area Status: Year-round resident



Joshua Vandermeulen, Macaulay Lib.

Adult/Immature



Neil Diaz, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Neutral

Songs

Male Lark Sparrows sing a melodious jumble of clear notes and trills interspersed with harsh buzzes and churrs. The song generally starts with a short buzz followed by 1–3 clear notes, then a few notes at a lower pitch, and finally a clear trill; they often switch up the order of the notes. Listen for the short buzzes within the jumble to help identify the song. Look for them singing from elevated perches including fence posts, shrubs, and telephone wires.

Calls

Both male and female Lark Sparrows give a sharp metallic tink.

Adults

Rufous-crowned Sparrow

Aimophila ruficeps

Family: Passerellidae (sparrows)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 427

Bay Area Status: Year-round resident



Heather Pickard, Macaulay Lib.



Kai Mills, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: High (winter range)

Songs

Males sing in spring and summer from exposed perches or while in flight. They give two kinds of songs: one is a 1-2 second mix of slurs, chips, and chatters, with the bubbly quality of a House Wren song but much shorter. The other type of song is a simpler, fairly long trill.

Calls

Paired individuals give a chattering series of calls to each other to stay in contact and strengthen their pair bond during nest building. They also make a harsh series of alarm calls ["Deer, deer, deer"] in response to danger or while mobbing predators such as rattlesnakes.

Lazuli Bunting

Passerina amoena

Family: Cardinalidae (cardinals & allies)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 521

Bay Area Status: Summer resident



Alix d'Entremont, Macaulay Lib.



Mary Rumble, Macaulay Lib.

Adult male/female

Audubon climate status: Neutral

Songs

Males sing a complex series of jumbling and squeaky notes that they repeat 2–5 times for about 3 seconds. Although the basic elements of the song remain the same, males switch up the order of the notes, giving variety to their songs. During territory establishment, males sing about 4 songs per minute, but they sing more often during territorial disputes and when the female begins incubating.

Calls

The most frequently heard call is a sharp, metallic pik given by both males and females.

Bullock's Oriole

Icterus bullockii

Family: Icteridae (Troupials, blackbirds & allies)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 485

Bay Area Status: Summer resident



Shawn Billerman, Macaulay Lib.

Adult male/female



Janey Woodley, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Neutral

Songs

Bullock's Oriole songs are about 3 seconds long, composed of rich whistled notes interspersed with rattles, often introduced by gruff scratchy notes. The timbre is reminiscent of a child's squeaky-toy. The male's and female's songs are similar in rhythm, pitch, and quality, but the female's final notes are harsher. Females may sing repeatedly from the ground; males usually sing only in trees, often from an inconspicuous perch.

Calls

Both sexes utter a harsh, chattering rattle—sometimes in flight—to signal alarm or maintain contact, or when mobbing or scolding. They also give a sharp one-note call.

Hooded Oriole

Icterus cucullatus

Family: Icteridae (Troupials, blackbirds & allies)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 483

Bay Area Status: Summer resident

Audubon climate status: Neutral

Adult male/female



Steven Mlodinow, Macaulay Lib.



Arlene Ripley, Macaulay Lib.

Songs

As with other orioles, both male and female Hooded Orioles sing. The female's song tends to be less complicated than the male's. They sing a scratchy, abrupt warble interspersed with catlike cries, chatters, and sometimes mimicked parts of the songs of other species. Songs last about 1 to 4 seconds. Their song is highly variable and lacks the sweet melodies of other orioles.

Calls

Their call is a sharp and nasal sounding wheet that sounds a bit like a House Finch call. They also give a harsh chuck. Like most orioles, they string together their calls with nearly nonstop chatter. Their chatter is soft, dry, and throaty sounding, perhaps a bit weaker sounding than Baltimore Oriole chatter.



Immature female Hooded Oriole resenting
the presence of an adult male on "her" feeder

Oak Titmouse

Baeolophus inornatus

Family: Paridae (Chickadees, Titmice)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 332

Bay Area Status: Year-round resident

Adult



Ken Chamberlain, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Low to Moderate

Songs

Oak Titmice males sing several songs, all involving sharp, robust notes, both high and low, in repeated sequences with a steady tempo. Males sing infrequently in the nonbreeding season, singing more and more as spring approaches. Females are capable of singing but do so only rarely.

Calls

Males and females are highly vocal, chattering from elevated perches mostly to defend territories from other Oak Titmice. These calls include both high- and low-pitched notes, some shrill and some scratchy. Oak Titmice also make lisping notes during foraging, hissing and puffing sounds to defend the nest, twittering during courtship, and shrill notes when flushed from a roost. Scratchy call may be confused with Bewick's Wren harsh calls.

White-breasted Nuthatch

Sitta carolinensis

Family: Sittidae (nuthatches)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 342

Bay Area Status: Resident

Male



Ryan Schain, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Moderately Vulnerable

Calls

The White-breasted Nuthatch's most common call is a loud, nasal yank often repeated a few times in a row. Both sexes make this call, and it often has a more trembling, almost bleating quality, than either the bird's song or the Red-breasted Nuthatch's call. When looking for food, males and females exchange a soft yink.

Songs

Male White-breasted Nuthatches sing in late winter and spring, a rapid, nasal, fairly low-pitched wha-wha-wha that lasts 2-3 seconds. It's made up of a half-dozen to a dozen nearly identical notes. Males sing these songs at two rates, with the faster version packing in twice as many notes in the same amount of time. The fast version is thought to be the main one used for mate attraction.

Western Bluebird

Sialia mexicana

Family: Turdidae (thrushes)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 368

Bay Area Status: Year-round resident

Male/Female



Brooke Miller, Macaulay Lib.



Erica Rutherford, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Moderately to Highly Vulnerable

Songs

Western Bluebird songs tend to be a string of various call notes, particularly the kew note (sounds like a muffled sneeze) along with other stuttering or whistled notes. The result is a soft, hesitant song that can last 1-2 seconds.

Calls

The most common call is a soft, quavering kew that may be given from a perch or in flight and is often given several times in succession. They also make a harsher, double-noted che-check when changing position, and a chattering call when disturbed.

Other Sounds

Western Bluebirds clap their bill mandibles together in aggressive situations, making a clicking sound.

Ash-throated Flycatcher

Myiarchus cinerascens

Family: Tyrannidae (Tyrant flycatchers)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 280

Bay Area Status: Summer resident

Adult



Alex Burdo, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Neutral

Songs

Males sing a repeated series of gurgling, burry notes just before dawn until about seven in the morning during the breeding season. Their non-musical song changes in pitch from high to low and sounds rather bumpy and stuttered as if they were sputtering through a whistle. The dawn song may include the ha-wheer call or the ka-brick call. The length of each song varies, but each burst is about 1 second long with about 2–3 seconds of silence between bursts.

Calls

Ash-throated Flycatchers have 4 distinct calls that they give singly, in pairs, or in combination. They make a short and rapid huit call or string them together into a trill that lasts for 4–5 seconds. The br-ick call is less than 1 second long and rises in pitch. They give a wheer that varies from relatively flat in pitch to rising or descending depending on their level of excitement. The final call is a short, low-pitched, burry urg. They combine these 4 basic calls to form 2 additional calls that are often part of the dawn song, the ka-brick and ha-wheer calls.

Western Kingbird

Tyrannus verticalis

Family: Tyrannidae (Tyrant flycatchers)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 288

Bay Area Status: Summer resident

Adult



Andy Wraithmell, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Neutral

Songs

Though it's not technically in the group of birds known as songbirds, the Western Kingbird has one call that functions as a song. Starting just before sunrise, breeding males perch on tree limbs or wires and give a rising series of sharp kips, culminating in a frantic burst of loud descending notes. Each call lasts about 2 seconds, and the male may repeat the pattern for half an hour to proclaim his territory.

Calls

Western Kingbirds give sharp kip notes and squeaky twitters. The male gives a harsh, buzzing call when attacking predators or other kingbirds.

Other Sounds

Both males and females snap their bills while attacking predators or intruders. The male occasionally makes a whirring sound with his wings when fighting with other Western Kingbirds.

Black-headed Grosbeak

Pheucticus melanocephalus

Family: Cardinalidae (cardinals)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 519

Bay Area Status: Summer

Adult male/female or imm.



Eric Ellingson, Macaulay Lib.



Eric Gofreed, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Moderately threatened

Songs

The Black-headed Grosbeak's whistled song rises and falls like an American Robin's, but it's longer, sweeter, more varied, and less choppy in its phrases. It's sometimes likened to that of a "drunk" or "operatic" robin. Both males and females sing. The female's song is usually shorter, simpler, and quieter. She sings less frequently than the male, usually from the nest.

Calls

The Black-headed Grosbeak's typical call is a sharp spik uttered frequently to keep contact with mates while foraging. They utter an upslurring wheet upon taking flight. Their distress call is a series of rapidly repeated notes flung out in response to imminent danger to themselves or their chicks, or in violent altercations with other grosbeaks

American Robin

Turdus migratorius

Family: Turdidae (thrushes)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 376

Bay Area Status: Year-round resident

Adult male/female or imm.



Ashley Bradford, Macaulay Lib.



Shawn Loewen, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Moderately vulnerable

Songs
The musical song of the American Robin is a familiar sound of spring. It's a string of 10 or so clear whistles assembled from a few often-repeated syllables, and often described as cheerily, cheer up, cheer up, cheerily, cheer up. The syllables rise and fall in pitch but are delivered at a steady rhythm, with a pause before the bird begins singing again. At dawn, the song is more rapid. May be confused with Black-headed Grosbeak.

Calls
American Robins often make a mumbled cuck or tuk to communicate with each other or a sharp yep or peek as an alarm call. They also make a repeated chirr that rises in volume and can sound like a laugh or chuckle.

Yellow Warbler

Setophaga petechia

Family: Parulidae (new world warblers)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 501

Bay Area Status: Summer resident

Adult male



Ryan Schain, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Moderately vulnerable

Songs

Males sing a sweet series of 6–10 whistled notes that accelerate over the course of the roughly 1-second song and often end on a rising note. The tone is so sweet that people often remember it with the mnemonic sweet sweet sweet I'm so sweet [but the song is highly variable; see discussion next page] . The songs are a common sound of spring and early summer mornings and may be repeated as often as 10 times per minute.

Calls

Yellow Warblers use a variety of short chip notes, some with a metallic sound and some with a lisping or buzzing quality. Males sometimes alternate chip notes with their songs, and females may answer a song with a high-pitched chip. Both sexes use a high, hissing note in territorial defense, and may confront cowbirds with a seet call.

Yellow Warbler, from Cornell Birds of the World website:

Song. Songs delivered primarily by males; female song recorded rarely ([Hobson and Sealy 1990](#)). Discussion here refers to male song. Songs consist of 2–5 clusters (“phrases”) of usually repeated short units (“syllables”; see illustration in [Spector 1991](#)) for a total of about 6–10 syllables/song. Song about 1 s in length, highly variable in details. For males with >1,000 recorded songs, 10–17 song types identified (n = 8); song types as rare as 1 of 5,628 recorded songs ([Spector 1992](#)). Frequency range typically from 3–8 kHz with greatest concentration of power in range 4.5–5.5 kHz (DAS). Some songs fit the mnemonic “sweet sweet sweet I'm so sweet” or “sweet sweet sweet sweeter than sweet,” but songs can be quite variable within and between populations.

Songs classified as Type I or Type II based on delivery (described below), sometimes referred to as “repeat mode” and “serial mode” songs ([Weary et al. 1992](#)). Characterization as “accented ending” (AE) or “unaccented ending” (UE) songs not generally applicable. In many populations, song endings vary among song types independently of song use; nevertheless, in some ne. U.S. populations, most Type I Songs and few Type II Songs have sharply upsweeping terminal syllables; thus the AE/UE distinction may correspond locally with Type I and Type II categorization ([Morse 1966a](#), [Spector 1991](#)).

Wilson's Warbler

Cardellina pusilla

Family: Parulidae (new world warblers)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 508

Bay Area Status: Summer resident



Ryan Schain, Macaulay Lib.

Adult male.
California females duller
but usually have black
cap.

Audubon climate status: **Highly vulnerable due to habitat loss on breeding grounds**

Songs

The song of the Wilson's Warbler is simple with a sweet quality. Their fast, slightly accelerating song is a string of similar notes, dropping downward in pitch toward the end, that ring loud and clear even next to noisy streams. Males sing for about 2 seconds, pause for several seconds and burst into song again, singing around 5 songs per minute. Unlike other warblers, females also occasionally sing. Males start singing just before they leave the wintering grounds and continue to sing throughout migration and on the breeding grounds. Once they start nesting, they sing less frequently.

Calls

Like other warblers, male and female Wilson's Warblers give a single chip note to communicate with mates and young and to notify territory intruders. The chip sounds similar to someone giving a loud puckering kiss.

Hutton's Vireo

Vireo huttoni

Family: Vireonidae (vireos and others)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 297

Bay Area Status: Resident

Adult



Tim Lenz, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Moderately vulnerable

Songs

Song is a rising zu-wee or a descending zo-zoo, repeated over and over again at about one per second for as long as 10 minutes [can sound fairly sweet, rather than buzzy].

Calls

The most often heard calls are a nasal chu and a flat chit.

Warbling Vireo

Vireo huttoni

Family: Vireonidae (vireos and others)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 300

Bay Area Status: Summer Resident

Adult



Ryan O'Donnell, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Neutral

Songs

Male Warbling Vireos sing a rapid, undulating, highly variable song with a rich, burbling quality lasting about 3 seconds. The song usually concludes with an accented note pitched higher than the preceding melody. Males sometimes sing from the nest.

[Mnemonics: "Rosita, rosita, rosita", "Iggley, pigelly, wigelly, pig;" "if I sees you, I will seize you, and I'll squeeze you till you squirt;" "chase me and if you catch me squeeze me;" and "brigadier, brigadier, brigatee."]

Calls

Warbling Vireos use many calls, particularly a raspy, descending scold call as well as a low spitting note. Female have a courtship call that they sometimes give in a loose duet with the male.

Cassin's Vireo

Vireo cassinii

Family: Vireonidae (vireos and others)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 298

Bay Area Status: Summer Resident

Audubon climate status: Neutral

Adult



Chuck Coxe, Macaulay Lib.

Songs

The male sings a halting, burry song of ascending and descending phrases. There can be 1 second or more of silence between each phrase, and the overall song can go on for long periods. Plumbeous Vireo [east of the Sierra; not normally seen in California] songs are almost identical but the first phrases of its song are less burry than in Cassin's.

Calls

Among the most often heard vocalizations outside the breeding season are harsh, raspy alarm calls (cha-cha-cha) that vary in intensity and duration. Cassin's Vireo's calls sound very similar to the calls of other vireos but are useful to learn, as they often attract other bird species.

Pacific-slope Flycatcher

Empidonax difficilis

Family: Tyrannidae (Tyrant flycatchers)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 272

Bay Area Status: Summer Resident

Adult



Jonathon Vargas, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: Highly vulnerable due to habitat loss on breeding grounds

Songs

Males sing a high-pitched, three-part ps-SEET ptsick tseet!

Calls

The most commonly heard calls are a sweet, upslurred peeWEET! (male) and a high-pitched, short, sibilant tsip (female).

Other Sounds

Males sometimes snap bills loudly at other males that enter the territory.

California Thrasher

Toxostoma redivivum

Family: Mimidae (thrashers, mockingbirds)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 382

Bay Area Status: Year-round

Audubon climate status: **Vulnerable**

Adult



Joan Tisdale, Macaulay Lib.

Songs

Males sing a series of twice-repeated phrases with 2–3 syllables each, usually with a sweet quality [Sweet? They always sound harsh and mechanical to me.], often including imitations of other bird species around them, including California Quail, Wrentit, California Scrub-Jay, Bewick's Wren, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Spotted Towhee, and Lesser Goldfinch. Females sometimes join males in song, and their songs are of similar type and volume.

Calls

Both sexes give a low chup call that is often heard, as well as a rising churreep and harsher chak.

Wrentit

Chamaea fasciata

Family: Silviidae (sylviid warblers)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 365

Bay Area Status: Year-round

Audubon climate status: **Vulnerable**

Adult



DigiBirdTrek, Macaulay Lib.

Songs

Wrentits sing a distinctive song reminiscent of a ball bouncing that lasts for about 4 seconds. In males this starts out as 3 to 5 pits followed by an accelerating trill; the ball bounces away. Females also sing but they catch the ball and sing only 3 to 14 pits without the accelerating trill. Both sexes sing at all hours of the day, all year long, although they are more vocal within the first hour after sunrise and early in the breeding season.

Calls

Wrentits give a churring call which sounds similar to someone rolling their r's. Wrentits give louder more emphatic calls when scolding a predator or intruder.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

Polioptila caerulea

Family: Polioptilidae (gnatcatchers)

Pieplow Guide Page No.: 359

Bay Area Status: Summer resident (a few overwinter)

Audubon climate status: Neutral

Adult male/female




Linda Chittum, Macaulay Lib.



Peter Hawrylyshyn, Macaulay Lib.

Songs. Males have two song types. The simpler is a variable series of 4 to 8 short, soft phrases. This is sung early in the nesting season and, once nesting has begun, shortly after sunrise and in territorial disputes. It may occasionally be sung on wintering grounds. More complex songs are sung from early morning to midday. These continuous jumbles of sharp chips, high-pitched whistles, and mewing notes are 10 seconds or more long and often include mimicked bits from the repertoires of jays, tanagers, towhees, vireos, warblers, sandpipers, and other species. Songs may be sung from elevated perches, while feeding, or while in motion.

Calls and Other Sounds. Both sexes use high-pitched, nasal calls. A sharp, mewing zeee, or chay contact call is uttered in bursts of 2 to 6 notes about a second apart. A two note bee-beee version of this, with the first note slurred downward, seems to indicate mild agitation. Greater agitation provokes high pitched trills. They use a faster, louder, sharper version of the contact call in aggressive encounters. Mobbing calls are similar to these aggressive calls, but more urgent-sounding. Other calls include high-pitched whistles, a two-note hiccup used by the female during nest site selection, and isolated mimicry of other species. Bill snapping.

Pacific Wren		Adult
Troglodytes pacificus		
Family:	Troglodytidae (wrens)	
Pieplow Guide Page No.:	348	
Bay Area Status:	Year round	Cameron Eckert, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: **Low Vulnerability**

Songs

Their song is a sweet series of tumbling, trilling notes with a staccato quality. Pacific Wrens have a large catalog of complex songs. Males sing for 5 to 10 seconds, stringing together as many as 50 different phrases. They sing regularly during the breeding season from mid-April to August but irregularly during the nonbreeding season.

Calls

Male and female Pacific Wrens give one sharp check call similar to the call of a Wilson's Warbler [which may be found in the same habitat.].


Swainson's Thrush		Adult
Catharus ustulatus		
Family:	Turdidae (thrushes)	
Pieplow Guide Page No.:	374	
Bay Area Status:	Summer resident	Blair Bernson, Macaulay Lib.



Audubon climate status: **Highly Vulnerable**

Songs The Swainson's Thrush is best known for its distinctive, fluting song, the upward-spiraling melody that breeding males use to defend nests and territory and also probably to attract mates. While this song varies somewhat from one individual bird to the next, its whistling, constantly ascending quality is always recognizable once you've heard it.

Calls Both sexes emit about a half dozen different one-or-two-note calls, none of which has the flutelike quality of the advertising song. Migrating birds utter a hollow peep or note that resembles the call of a spring peeper frog. Intruders or predators in the vicinity of a nest may hear a whit—a sharp, single note expressing alarm or the intention to distract. The bird may repeat this note to try to lure a human intruder away from a nest, and it may respond to a human imitation of the sound. Swainson's Thrushes also have a thin, high-pitched, single-note whine similar to that of American Robin. They also make a bink like water dropping onto a hard surface, and a single, drawn-out, metallic peep reminiscent of the song of the Varied Thrush, but not as long.

Savannah Sparrow		Adult
Passerculus sandwichensis		
Family:	Passerellidae (sparrows)	
Pieplow Guide Page No.:	461	
Bay Area Status:	Year-round resident	


Audubon climate status: **Highly vulnerable due to habitat loss on breeding grounds**

Songs

During breeding season, the male sings a three-part song that lasts 2 to 3 seconds: opening with a few quick notes; then a high, thin, insect-like buzzy middle; and, ending with a quick lower trill.

Calls

Like many grassland sparrows, this species uses short chip notes when alarmed, warding off intruders, or approaching its nest. A typical chip note is a soft, hissing tss.

Grasshopper Sparrow		Adult
Ammodramus savannarum		
Family:	Passerellidae (sparrows)	
Pieplow Guide Page No.:	462	
Bay Area Status:	Year-round resident	
		Jerry Ting, Macaulay Lib.

Audubon climate status: **Low Vulnerability**

Songs

The Grasshopper Sparrow's typical song is a thin, insect-like buzz preceded by two to three ticking chips, tick tick pzzzzzzz. Males also perform a squeaky, chirping song associated with flight display, though this is less frequently observed.

Calls

The main call note is a high-pitched seet. They also make a series of staccato two-parted tiddick notes when alarmed