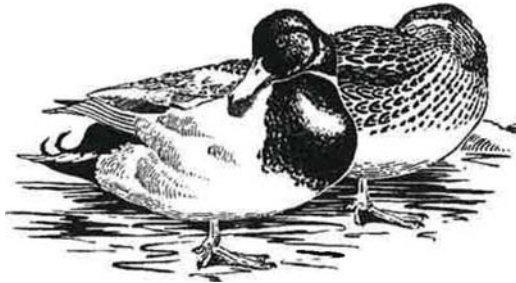


## Mallard

*Anas platyrhynchos*

The Mallard is the most abundant year-round waterfowl resident of California. They feed mainly on plant material but also aquatic insects, snails, small crustaceans, earthworms, tadpoles and small fish. During migration, pairs will travel to the female's place of origin.

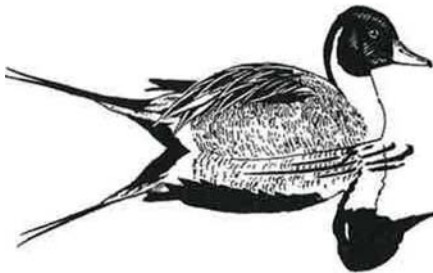


Mallards often interbreed with domestic ducks, producing a variety of odd-looking hybrids.

## Northern Pintail

*Anas acuta*

The Northern Pintail is by far the most abundant wintering waterfowl species in California. Males can be distinguished

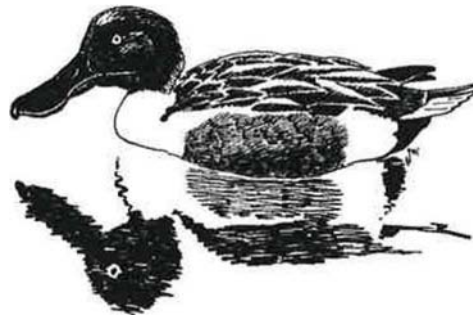


by their brown heads, white neck and underparts, grayish back and sides and long, black, pointed tail. In breeding season, they are found in marshes, prairie ponds and tundra, preferring to rest on exposed muddy or sandy shores. Their diet consists of seeds of aquatic plants, wild grasses, cultivated grains, insects, crustaceans, and mollusks. This species is not known to be territorial, drakes rarely defend their mate against intruding males. However, males are known to aggressively force their attentions on females of other species.

## Northern Shoveler

*Spatula clypeata*

The Northern Shoveler is a common resident in the winter, but rare in the summer, and is known by its large

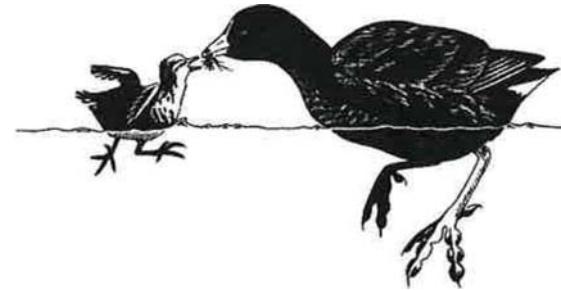


shovel-shaped bill. Known to some as "shoveler", they are specialized feeders, using their bill to strain the water for insect larvae, algae and crustaceans. Breeding occurs in the Northern U.S, Canada and Alaska.

## American Coot

*Fulica americana*

The American Coot is probably the most commonly seen water bird in the Yolo Bypass. Also called "mud hens", these lobed-toed birds are related to rails but behave like ducks, diving, and up-ending for the same menu as their web-footed cousins.



Coot bodies are slate colored, with blackish head and neck, and a white bill. Often found in large flocks, they are awkward in flight, and look like they are walking on the water as their short wings beat feverishly.

## Marsh Wren

*Cistothorus palustris*



You'll hear the Marsh Wren's "tsk-tsk-tsk" in the tules year-round, but particularly in the spring. The male builds an intricate nest woven into reeds, often building several false nests to elude predators.

# Common Birds of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area



Produced by the Yolo Basin Foundation & CA Department of Fish and Wildlife  
[www.yolobasin.org](http://www.yolobasin.org) (530) 758-1018

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## Red-tailed Hawk

*Buteo jamaicensis*

The Red-tailed Hawk is a common resident species. They can be distinguished from other hawks by their whitish breast and rust-colored tail. They prefer deciduous forests and open country where



they hunt small mammals such as rodents. Red-tailed Hawks

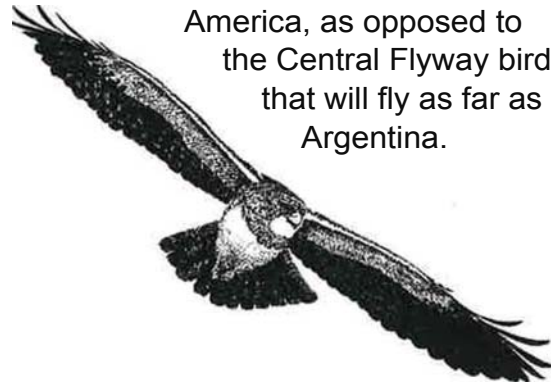
usually nest in large trees near openings, especially in riparian deciduous areas. Nestlings may be killed by blood-sucking flies, Scrub-jays and other avian predators.

## Swainson's Hawk

*Buteo swainsoni*

The Swainson's Hawk is smaller than a Red-tailed hawk with painty shaded underwings, the back edge of the wing darker than the front. Many in our area are "dark morph" with no contrast from breast to belly. The Swainson's Hawk is a locally abundant breeding resident, but is listed as "threatened" in the State of California. They are often found near water and have a varied diet of mice,

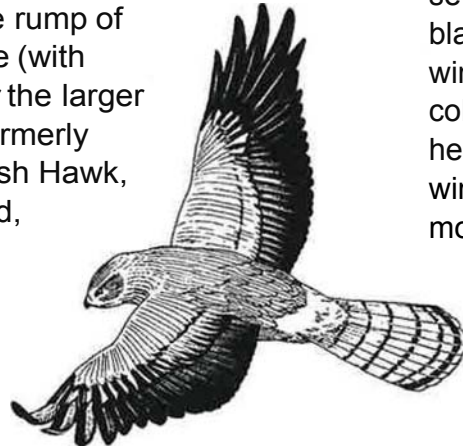
gophers, ground squirrels, rabbits, amphibians, reptiles, and large insects. Swainson's Hawks are known to be highly gregarious, traveling in great soaring flocks of hundreds during migration. Pacific Flyway Swainson's Hawks migrate to Mexico, Central and northern South America, as opposed to the Central Flyway birds that will fly as far as Argentina.



## Northern Harrier

*Circus cyaneus*

You are likely to see a slim Northern Harrier, with long wings and tail, flying low across the grasslands and marshes in search of mice and small birds. As they ascend, look for the telltale white patch on the rump of both the grey male (with black wing tips) or the larger brown female. Formerly known as the Marsh Hawk, they have a curved, sound reflecting face that lets them hunt like owls, by sound as well as sight.



## Western Meadowlark

*Sturnella neglecta*

The Meadowlark is a common Robin-sized bird with streaked brown upper body and bright yellow below with a bold black V on the breast. They are found in meadows, plains and prairies and are best recognized



by their rich flute-like song. The meadowlark's bright colors, fearless behavior, abundance, and above all, its loud cheerful song make it one of the best known of western song birds

## Red-winged Blackbird

*Agelaius phoeniceus*

Wetland marshes in Yolo County are the year-round home of several species of blackbirds including Red-winged, Brewer's, Tricolored and Yellow-headed. The Red-winged Blackbird is the most common blackbird



seen in the Yolo Bypass, especially in the winter when they mass in very large flocks. The male Red-winged is easily identified by scarlet red shoulder patches only. They prefer to nest in large colonies in the thick tules and cattails of permanent ponds, and feed in nearby fields.

## Yellow-billed Magpie

*Pica nuttali*

Unlike its black-billed cousin, the yellow-billed Magpie is found only in the grasslands, farms, and riparian areas of Central California's valleys and foothills.



Males and females are black with dramatic white contrast on the belly, wings and shoulders, and iridescent green highlights in the long tail. They are large, loud, and showy birds, feeding on nuts, insects, and some carrion.