

# Bird Species of Special Concern

## ***California Bird Species of Special Concern: A Ranked Assessment of Species, Subspecies, and Distinct Populations of Birds of Immediate Conservation Concern in California***, a

collaborative project of CDFW, [PRBO Conservation Science](#), and [Western Field Ornithologists](#), was published in 2008 and is available for download at the links below. Within the 450-page book, the authors provide a detailed analysis of the status of California's at-risk birds using the latest data to describe current populations, ranges, and threats. Seabirds, raptors, shorebirds, waterfowl, and perching birds all are represented on the Bird Species of Special Concern list, suggesting that conservation concern spans the length and breadth of the state, from its offshore waters to the higher mountains. Habitats with high numbers of special concern bird species include wetlands, scrublands, grasslands, and riparian forests - all experiencing the highest rates of habitat loss in California. Paralleling continental and worldwide trends, habitat loss and degradation is the greatest threat to California's at-risk birds. Geographic areas with the highest numbers of special concern taxa are southern and central coastal California, where pressures from high and expanding human populations are expected to intensify in coming decades.

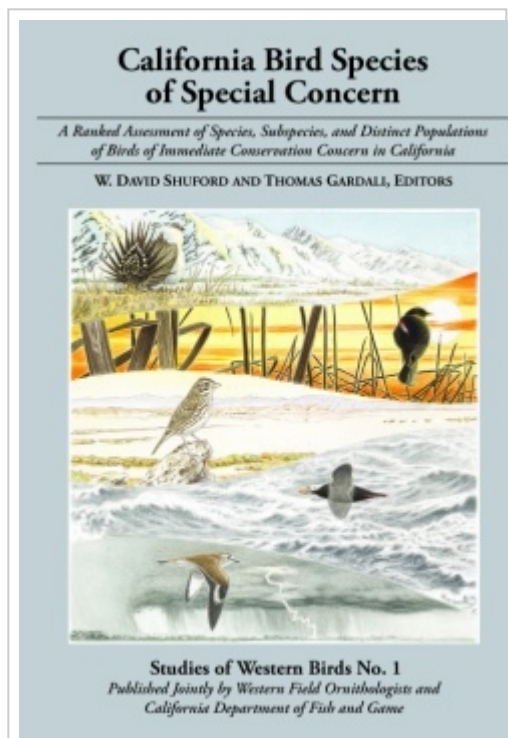
If you are interested in a hard copy of the Bird Species of Special Concern book, please contact CDFW's bird conservation coordinator using the contact info on this page.

## [Collaborative website on California Birds Species of Special Concern](#)

This website includes links to Bird Species of Special Concern data summaries, maps, resources for bird conservation, climate models, and provides a way for the public to suggest changes to the list. The comprehensive database showing criteria scores for all nominee species is available to the public on this website. These data serve as a baseline upon which future revisions of the Bird Species of Special Concern list will be made.

## Definition of a California Bird Species of Special Concern

California Bird Species of Special Concern are defined as those species, subspecies, or distinct populations of native birds that currently satisfy one or more criteria on populations size and trend, range size and



Cover art by [Keith Hansen](#)

*"California Bird Species of Special Concern is an important part of CDFW's comprehensive conservation agenda. It serves to focus attention and resources on those bird species in need of special assistance and will further our goals in implementation of the California Wildlife Action Plan."* - Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director, California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

trend, threats, and population concentration. For more information on the definition of Species of Special Concern and the process by which the lists are developed see the main [Species of Special Concern](#) page.

## California Bird Species of Special Concern list

Seventy-four taxa are included on the current Bird Species of Special Concern list. The list is comprised of three priority categories derived through a scoring and ranking process and two unranked categories derived by definition (see the main [Species of Special Concern](#) page for more information).

- [Current California Bird Species of Special Concern list \(2008\) \(PDF\)](#)

## Overview

The Bird Species of Special Concern book includes an Introduction, Methods (describing the identification and ranking of "at-risk" birds), Results, and Discussion. California's "Bird Responsibility List," a tool for longer-term conservation planning, includes 125 taxa that qualify because all or a very high proportion of their global populations occur in the state. A taxon's co-occurrence on the special concern and responsibility lists indicates a particularly high level of conservation concern in California. An annotated list of "Taxa to Watch" includes bird taxa that are not on the current special concern list but were on previous ones.

- [Front Matter, Table of Contents, Overview, and Appendices \(PDF\)](#)

## Species Accounts

Species accounts were prepared for the 63 ranked taxa to document general range and abundance, seasonal status in California, historical range and abundance in California, ecological requirements, and threats; additionally, management, research and monitoring recommendations are presented. Maps showing current and historic range accompany each account.

- [Fulvous Whistling-Duck \(PDF\)](#)
- [Tule Greater White-fronted Goose \(PDF\)](#)
- [Brant \(PDF\)](#)
- [Redhead \(PDF\)](#)
- [Harlequin Duck \(PDF\)](#)
- [Greater Sage-Grouse \(PDF\)](#)
- [Mount Pinos Sooty Grouse \(PDF\)](#)
- [Catalina California Quail \(PDF\)](#)
- [Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel \(PDF\)](#)
- [Ashy Storm-Petrel \(PDF\)](#)
- [Black Storm-Petrel \(PDF\)](#)
- [American White Pelican \(PDF\)](#)
- [Least Bittern \(PDF\)](#)
- [Wood Stork \(PDF\)](#)

- [Northern Harrier \(PDF\)](#)
- [Northern Goshawk \(PDF\)](#)
- [Yellow Rail \(PDF\)](#)
- [Lesser Sandhill Crane \(PDF\)](#)
- [Snowy Plover \(interior population\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Mountain Plover \(PDF\)](#)
- [Gull-billed Tern \(PDF\)](#)
- [Black Tern \(PDF\)](#)
- [Black Skimmer \(PDF\)](#)
- [Cassin's Auklet \(PDF\)](#)
- [Tufted Puffin \(PDF\)](#)
- [Burrowing Owl \(PDF\)](#)
- [California Spotted Owl \(PDF\)](#)
- [Long-eared Owl \(PDF\)](#)
- [Short-eared Owl \(PDF\)](#)
- [Black Swift \(PDF\)](#)
- [Vaux's Swift \(PDF\)](#)
- [Olive-sided Flycatcher \(PDF\)](#)
- [Vermilion Flycatcher \(PDF\)](#)
- [Loggerhead Shrike \(mainland populations\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Island Loggerhead Shrike \(PDF\)](#)
- [Gray Vireo \(PDF\)](#)
- [Catalina Hutton's Vireo \(PDF\)](#)
- [Purple Martin \(PDF\)](#)
- [San Diego Cactus Wren \(PDF\)](#)
- [Clark's Marsh Wren \(PDF\)](#)
- [Bendire's Thrasher \(PDF\)](#)
- [Crissal Thrasher \(PDF\)](#)
- [Le Conte's Thrasher \(San Joaquin population\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Lucy's Warbler \(PDF\)](#)
- [Yellow Warbler \(PDF\)](#)
- [Sonora Yellow Warbler \(PDF\)](#)
- [San Francisco Common Yellowthroat \(PDF\)](#)
- [Yellow-breasted Chat \(PDF\)](#)
- [Summer Tanager \(PDF\)](#)
- [San Clemente Spotted Towhee \(PDF\)](#)
- [Santa Cruz Is. Rufous-crowned Sparrow \(PDF\)](#)
- [Oregon Vesper Sparrow \(PDF\)](#)
- [Bryant's Savannah Sparrow \(PDF\)](#)
- [Large-billed Savannah Sparrow \(PDF\)](#)
- [Grasshopper Sparrow \(PDF\)](#)
- [Song Sparrow \("Modesto" population\) \(PDF\)](#)

- [Suisun Song Sparrow \(PDF\)](#)
- [Samuels Song Sparrow \(PDF\)](#)
- [Alameda Song Sparrow \(PDF\)](#)
- [Channel Island Song Sparrow \(PDF\)](#)
- [Kern Red-winged Blackbird \(PDF\)](#)
- [Tricolored Blackbird \(PDF\)](#)
- [Yellow-headed Blackbird \(PDF\)](#)

## Previous Bird SSC Lists

- [Remsen 1978 \(PDF\)](#)
- [CDFW 1992 \(PDF\)](#)



### Contact

**Neil Clipperton**

Wildlife Diversity Program - Wildlife Branch

1010 Riverside Pkwy

West Sacramento, CA 95605

[Neil.Clipperton@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Neil.Clipperton@wildlife.ca.gov)

### Related Information

- [Special Animals List \(PDF\)](#)
- [California Natural Diversity Database](#)