



© Charles W. Melton

Clark's Grebe

Aechmophorus clarkii

22-29" (56-74 cm). Very similar to Western Grebe, but black of cap does not reach eyes, so face is largely white; bill bright yellow or orange-yellow.



© Chuck Gordon

Western Grebe

Aechmophorus occidentalis

22-29" (56-74 cm). A large slender grebe with a long neck. Blackish above with black of cap extending below eyes; white below and on front of neck. Bill long, slender, greenish yellow. Long white wing stripe shows in flight.



© Chuck Gordon

Eared Grebe

Podiceps nigricollis

12-14" (30-36 cm). In breeding plumage, black head, back; golden ear tufts; black crest. In winter plumage, dark gray above, white below; neck dusky. Bill appears slightly upturned, sides of face smudged with gray, whitish patch behind ear.



© Chuck Gordon

Horned Grebe

Podiceps auritus

12-15" (30-38 cm). Small, slender-necked, with short, sharply pointed bill. In breeding plumage, body dark, with rufous neck and flanks; head blackish, with conspicuous buff ear tufts. In winter, upperparts dark; chin and foreneck white.



© Arthur Morris

Pied-billed Grebe

Podilymbus podiceps

12-15" (30-38 cm). Pigeon-sized. A stocky, uniformly brownish water bird, with stout whitish bill that has black ring around it during breeding season.



© Brian E. Small

Great Blue Heron

Ardea herodias

39-52" (99-132 cm). W. 5'10" (1.8 m). Large, mainly grayish heron with a pale or yellowish bill. Flies with neck folded, not extended. In southern Florida an all-white form, "Great White Heron," has greenish-yellow rather than black legs.



© Tom Vezo

Great Egret

Ardea alba

35-41" (89-104 cm). W. 4'7" (1.4 m). All-white heron with yellow bill, black legs. Breeding plumage, has long lacy plumes on back. Smaller Snowy Egret has black bill, legs, yellow feet.



© Tom Vezo

Snowy Egret

Egretta thula

20-27" (51-69 cm). W. 3'2" (97 cm). Small, white heron with a slender black bill, black legs, and yellow feet. In breeding season, it has long lacy plumes on its head, neck, and back. Immature bird has yellow stripe up back of leg.



© Stephen G. Maka

Black-crowned Night-Heron

Nycticorax nycticorax

23-28" (58-71 cm). W. 3'8" (1.1 m). A medium-sized, short-necked heron with black crown, back, gray wings, white underparts. Bill short, black, legs pinkish or yellowish. In breeding season it has 2 or more long white plumes on back of head.



© Brian E. Small

American Wigeon

Anas americana

18-23" (46-58 cm). Male is brownish with white crown, green ear patch, and bold white shoulder patches easily visible in flight. Female is mottled brown with grayish head and whitish shoulder patches. Bill pale blue in both sexes.



© Chuck Gordon

Cinnamon Teal

Anas cyanoptera

14-17" (36-43 cm). Male bright rufous with pale blue shoulder patches. Female mottled sandy brown, dusky, with pale blue shoulder patches; face plainer than female Blue-wing's, but the two are often not distinguishable in the field.



© Kathy Lindstrom

Ring-necked Duck

Aythya collaris

14-18" (36-46 cm). Male, black back, breast; purple-glossed, black head; pale gray flanks; vertical white mark on side. Female brownish, narrow white eye ring. Bill pale gray with white ring. Angular shape of head, white ring on bill, distinguish from the scaup.



© Charles W. Melton

Northern Shoveler

Anas clypeata

17-20" (43-51 cm). Large shovel-shaped bill. Male has green head, white body, and chestnut flanks. Female streaked brown with pale blue shoulder patches; similar to female Blue-winged Teal, but bill much larger.



© G. C. Kelley

Green-winged Teal

Anas crecca

12-16" (30-41 cm). Male, chestnut head, green ear patch, flashing green inner wing, pale gray sides, pinkish breast with a vertical white stripe down the side. Female is dark brown without distinctive markings.



© Harold Lindstrom

Canvasback

Aythya valisineria

19-24" (48-61 cm). Male, whitish body, black chest, reddish head with low forehead. Long bill gives head a distinctive sloping profile. Female grayish, sandy-brown head. At a distance males can be distinguished by their white bodies.



© Tim Zurowski

Mallard

Anas platyrhynchos

18-27" (46-69 cm). Male, green head, white neck ring, chestnut breast, grayish body; inner wing, metallic purplish blue, bordered with white. Female, mottled brown, with white tail, purplish-blue inner wing, mottled orange brown bill.



© Chuck Gordon

Gadwall

Anas strepera

18-21" (46-53 cm). Male is a medium-sized grayish duck with white patch on hind edge of wing, black rump, and sandy brown head. Female mottled brown, with white patch on hind edge of wing.



© G. C. Kelley

Ruddy Duck

Oxyura jamaicensis

14-16" (36-41 cm). Long tail, often held straight up. Breeding male, chestnut body, black crown, white cheeks. Female/winter male are dusky brown, whitish cheeks of female crossed by dark stripe. Male's bill is blue in breeding season, black at other times.



© John Gerlach

Double-crested Cormorant

Phalacrocorax auritus

30-35 (76-89 cm). Orange throat pouch and long neck. Long hooked bill tilted upward when swimming. Adults have short tuft of feathers over each eye during breeding season. In flight, the neck shows a slight crook.



© Brian E. Small

Red-shouldered Hawk

Buteo lineatus

16-24" (41-61 cm). W. 3'4" (1 m). Large, long-winged hawk with white barring on dark wings, rusty shoulders, pale underparts barred with rust, narrowly banded tail. In flight shows translucent area near tip of wing, visible from below. Young birds streaked below.



© Jim Roetzel

Red-tailed Hawk

Buteo jamaicensis

18-25" (46-64 cm). W. 4' (1.2 m). Light-phase birds have whitish breast, rust-colored tail. Broad, rounded wings, white chest. Young birds duller, more streaked, lacking rust-colored tail. Variable in color, some blackish in West, these usually retain rusty tail.



© Dale & Marian Zimmerman

Golden Eagle

Aquila chrysaetos

30-41" (76-104 cm). W. 6' 6" (2 m). A large, all-dark eagle with a pale golden nape. Bill smaller and darker than that of Bald Eagle. In young birds, tail white at base, black at tip; white patches on undersides of wings.



© Ron Austing

Northern Harrier

Circus cyaneus

16-24" (41-61 cm). W. 3' 6" (1.1 m). Long-winged, long-tailed hawk with a white rump, often seen gliding over marshes with wings held in a shallow V. Male, pale gray back, head, breast; wing tips black. Female, young, brown above, streaked below.



© Tom Vezo

American Kestrel

Falco sparverius

9-12" (23-30 cm). W. 21" (53 cm). A jay-sized falcon, often seen hovering. Rusty tail and back. Adult male has slate-blue wings. Female has rusty wings and back, narrow bands on tail. Both sexes have 2 black stripes on face.



© Steve Bentsen

White-tailed Kite

Elanus leucurus

15-16" (38-41 cm). W. 3' 4" (1 m). Gull-like bird of prey. Largely white, with gray back, black patch on shoulder, undersurface of the pointed wing, white tail. The back, breast of young are streaked



© Anthony Mercieca

Barn Owl

Tyto alba

18" (46 cm). W. 3' 8" (1.1 m). Crow-sized. Buff-brown above and white below, with heart-shaped face and numerous fine dark dots on white underparts; dark eyes, long legs. with warm brown.



© Arthur Morris

American Coot

Fulica americana

15" (38 cm). A gray, duck-like bird with white bill and frontal shield, white undertail coverts, and lobed toes. Frontal shield has red swelling at upper edge, visible at close range. Immatures similar but paler, with duller bill.



© Tom Vezo

Black-necked Stilt

Himantopus mexicanus

13-16" (33-41 cm). A slender, long-legged shorebird. Black above, white below; head patterned in black and white; neck long; bill long and thin; legs very long, red, and slender.



© Jeffrey Rich

American Avocet

Recurvirostra americana

16-20" (41-51 cm). A large, long-legged shorebird with a slender, upturned bill. Upperparts and wings patterned in black and white; underparts white. Head and neck rust-colored in summer, white in winter.



© Mike Danzenbaker

Long-billed Dowitcher

Limnodromus scolopaceus

12" (30 cm). Dark long bill, white lower back, rump, black/white checkered tail, green legs. Summer, reddish underparts, barring on breast, sides, flanks, reddish edges on feathers of upperparts. Winter, gray overall, with pale eyebrow; white lower back rump.



© Hugh P. Smith, Jr.

Anna's Hummingbird

Calypte anna

3 1/2-4" (9-10 cm). Both sexes metallic green above; male has dark rose-red crown, gorget, grayish chest. Female has spotted throat with central patch of red spots, grayish-white underparts, white-tipped outer tail feathers.



© Tom J. Ulrich

Say's Phoebe

Sayornis saya

7-8" (18-20 cm). Dusky head, breast, and back, with darker wings and black tail. Light rust-colored belly and undertail coverts.



© Brian E. Small

Black Phoebe

Sayornis nigricans

6-7" (15-18 cm). Slate-black except for white belly, undertail coverts, and outer tail feathers. Its tail-wagging, erect posture, and insectivorous feeding habits are helpful in field identification.



© Tim Zurowski

Barn Swallow

Hirundo rustica

5 3/4-7 3/4" (15-20 cm). Sparrow-sized. Our most familiar swallow, and the only one with a deeply forked tail. Upperparts dark steel-blue, underparts buff, throat and forehead rusty.



© Anthony Mercieca

Cliff Swallow

Petrochelidon pyrrhonota

5-6" (13-15 cm). Sparrow-sized. A stocky, square-tailed swallow with pale buff rump. Upperparts dull steel-blue; underparts buff-white; throat dark chestnut; forehead white. Southwestern birds have chestnut foreheads.



© Tim Zurowski

Tree Swallow

Tachycineta bicolor

5-6 1/4"(13-16 cm). Sparrow-sized. Metallic blue or blue-green above and clear white below. Young birds are dull brown above but may be distinguished from Bank and Northern Rough-winged swallows by their clearer white underparts. See Violet-green Swallow.



© Kevin T. Karlson

Loggerhead Shrike

Lanius ludovicianus

8-10" (20-25 cm). Slightly smaller than Northern Shrike, and slightly darker gray above, white below, with black face mask extending over bill.



© Rod Planck

Western Meadowlark

Sturnella neglecta

8 1/2-11" (22-28 cm). Robin-sized. Streaked brown above, bright yellow below, with a bold black V on breast. Very similar to Eastern Meadowlark, but upperparts paler, and yellow of throat extends onto cheeks. Best identified by voice.



© Herbert Clarke

California Towhee

Pipilo fuscus

8-10" (20-25 cm). Uniform gray-brown above and below, with buff or rust-colored undertail coverts.



© Herbert Clarke

Common Yellowthroat

Geothlypis trichas

4 1/2-6" (11-15 cm). Olive-brown above, bright yellow on throat and upper breast. Male has bold black mask, bordered above with white. Females and young males lack face mask, but may be recognized by bright yellow throat and wren-like behavior.



© Mark Turner

Song Sparrow

Melospiza melodia

5-7" (13-18 cm). Heavy brown streaking on white underparts, with prominent central breast spot (sometimes lacking in juveniles). Subspecies, range from pale sandy to dark brown. Pumps its relatively long, rounded tail in flight.



© Herbert Clarke

White-crowned Sparrow

Zonotrichia leucophrys

6-7 1/2" (15-19 cm). Slender, generally erect posture. Crown has bold black and white stripes. Upperparts streaked, underparts clear pearly gray. Pink bill. Young, similar, but crown stripes buff, dark brown, underparts washed with dull buff.



© Tom Vezo

House Finch

Carpodacus mexicanus

5-6" (13-15 cm). Sparrow-sized. Most adult males bright red on crown, breast, rump. Female has plain, unstriped head and heavy streaking on light underside. Immature males less highly colored, often orangish or yellowish on head and breast.



© Darrell Gulin

Brewer's Blackbird

Euphagus cyanocephalus

8-10" (20-25 cm). Male solid black, purplish-blue iridescent head and yellow eyes. Female is gray with dark eyes.



© Sharon Cummings

Red-winged Blackbird

Agelaius phoeniceus

7-9 1/2" (18-24 cm). Smaller than a robin. Male is black with bright red shoulder patches. Female and young are heavily streaked with dusky brown.



© Ron Austing

American Crow

Corvus brachyrhynchos

17-21" (43-53 cm). Stocky black bird with stout bill and fan-shaped tail. Smaller Northwestern Crow has hoarser voice; larger Common Raven has wedge-shaped tail.



© Gerald & Buff Corsi

Common Raven

Corvus corax

21-27" (53-69 cm). Similar to the American Crow but larger, with heavier bill and wedge-shaped tail. At rest, throat appears shaggy because of long, lance-shaped feathers. Often soars like a hawk.

BIRDS OF THE
WATSONVILLE
WETLANDS



Visit the [enature.Com](http://www.enature.com) website for more images.

http://www.enature.com/partners/abc/localguide/localguide_abc_display.asp?curGroupID=1&zipcode=95076&ibalD=14&cur

California Central Coast Area: Including Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve, including Moss Landing Wildlife Area and Moss Landing State Beach.