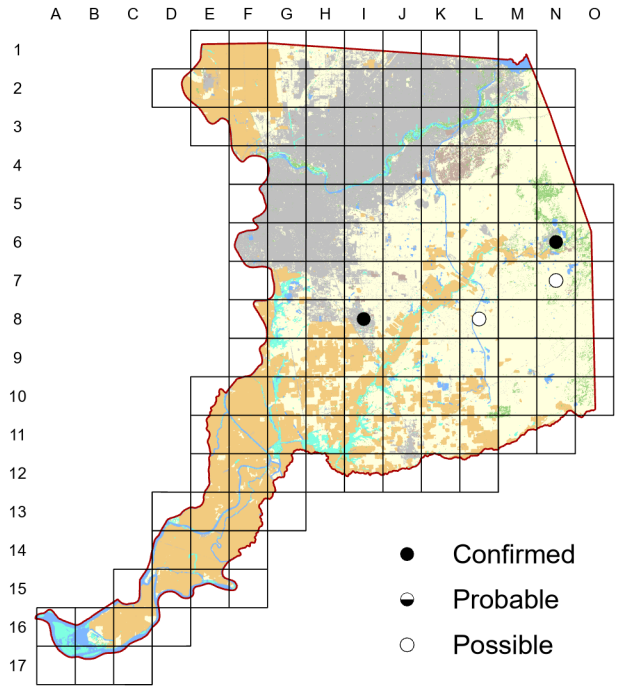
CHAPTER EIGHT
SPECIES ACCOUNTS

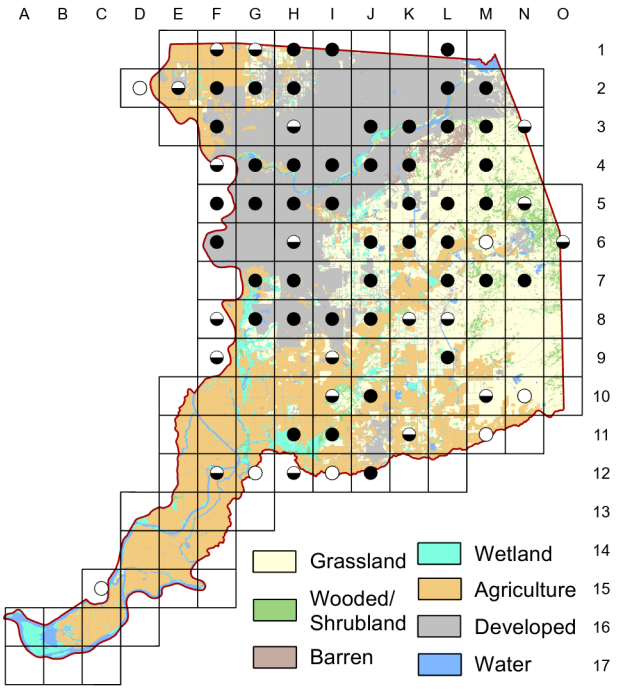
This chapter includes species accounts for each of the 138 species that exhibited breeding behaviors in one or both of the atlases. As noted in the Introduction, these are not the sort of species accounts one would find in most BBAs. Those accounts usually include details of natural history and characteristics of each species. Those sorts of details have already been well covered in several prior California county-level BBAs. Here, instead, we provide minimal information on natural history and focus mainly on comparisons between Atlas 1 and Atlas 2 results. The side-by-side atlas maps and charts showing block breeding status allow the reader to see, at a glance, how the results of two atlases, conducted decades apart, compare. We also include California and rangewide BBS trends for wider context. At the bottom of each account we add a descriptive quote from historical publications or comments by Sacramento BBA participants. In some cases, the comments have been lightly edited for clarity.

Canada Goose
Branta canadensis

Atlas 1

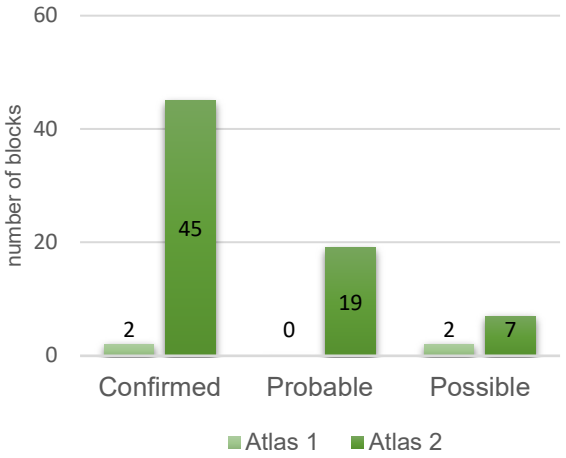


Atlas 2



The dramatic increase in breeding Canada Geese is discussed in Chapter Four. The superb ability of this species to exploit nearly any areas with access to water and some open space for foraging is well demonstrated by our Atlas 2 results. They now breed in nearly every part of the county except the southeastern grasslands and areas of intensive agriculture in the southwest. The quote below sums it up.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
3.08% / year[n]	**7.3**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Ponds/wetland

Nest Type

Scrape with plant material on ground near water

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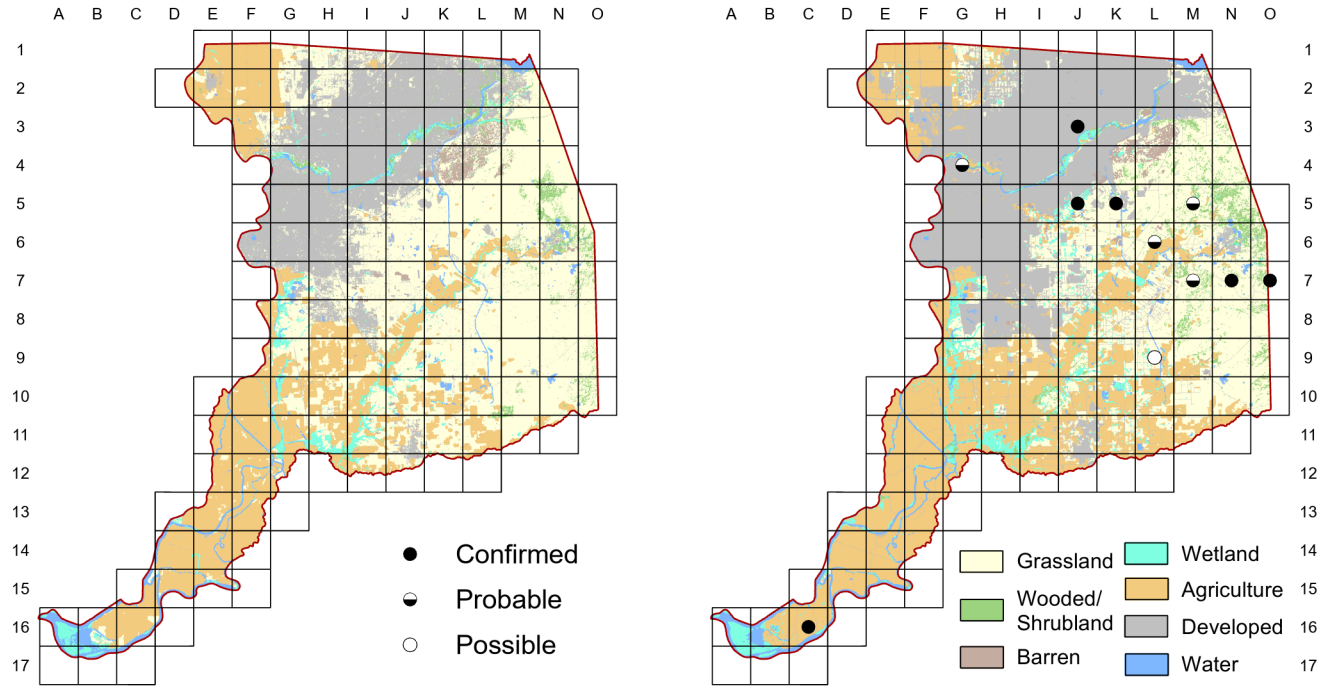
25 May 2017 Block G-7

We're overrun.

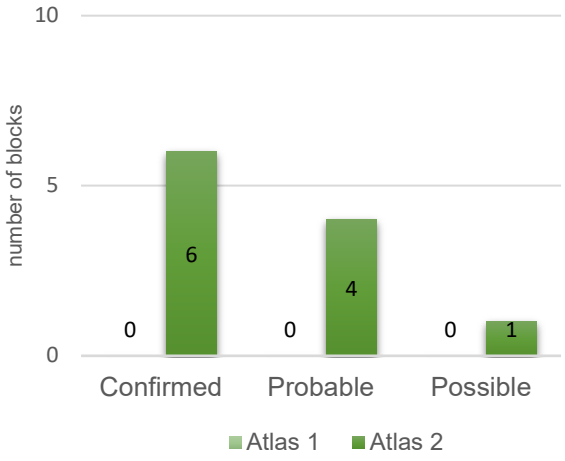
Mute Swan
Cygnus olor

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



As discussed in Chapter Four, there may be no less-welcome new breeder to the county than the Mute Swan. If California follows the pattern seen in several eastern states, programs to control this species will be implemented too late to be effective. The quote below says it all.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
No Data	1.34% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Ponds/wetland

Nest Type

On ground near water

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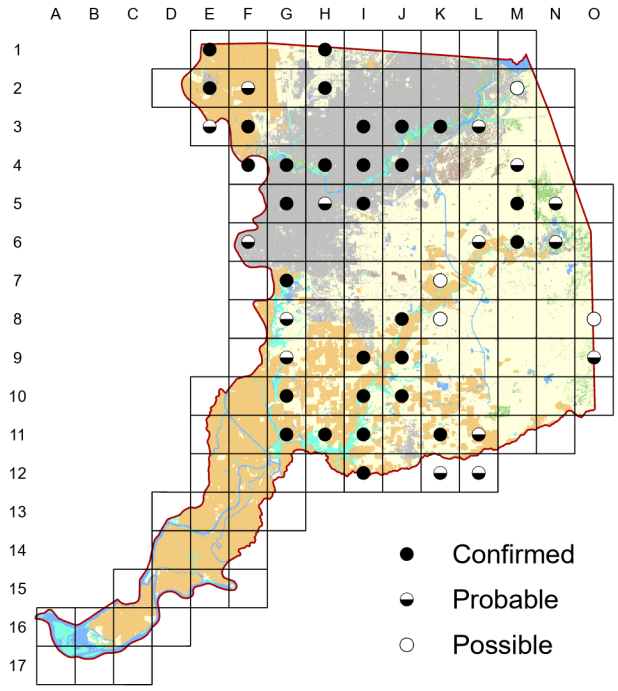
2 June 2019 Block K-5

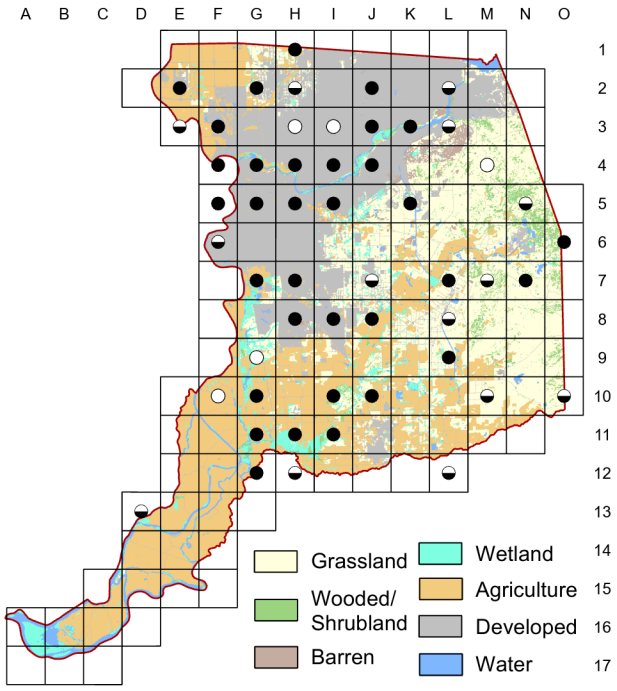
Regular and increasing.

Wood Duck
Aix sponsa

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



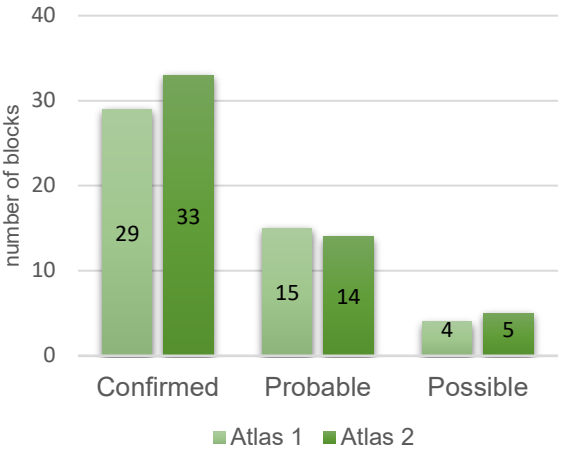
Nest box programs have certainly aided the recovery of the Wood Duck in California and elsewhere. We saw an increase in the apparent breeding range of this species between the two atlases. Continued protection of riparian areas and maintenance of nest boxes (as well as retaining snags with natural cavities), should ensure good prospects for this gaudy duck.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
1.51% / year[n]	**1.16**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Riparian/wetland habitats

Nest Type

Cavity/nest box near water

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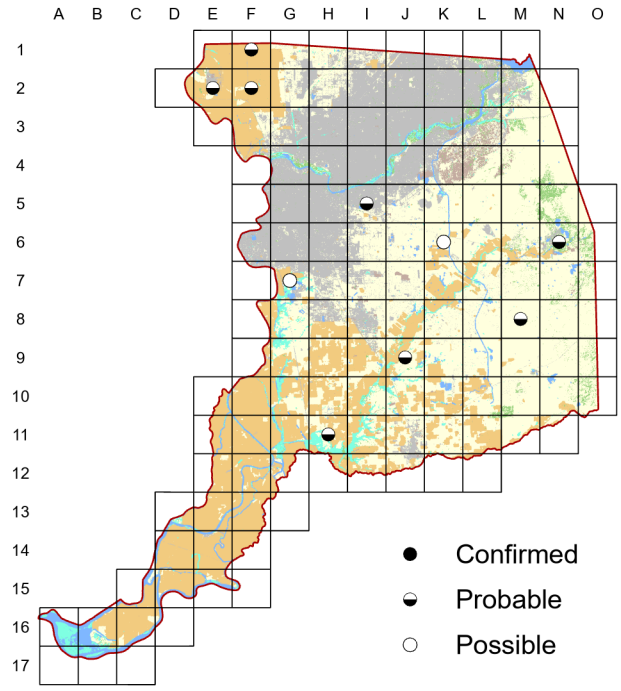
14 April 2018 — Block I-4

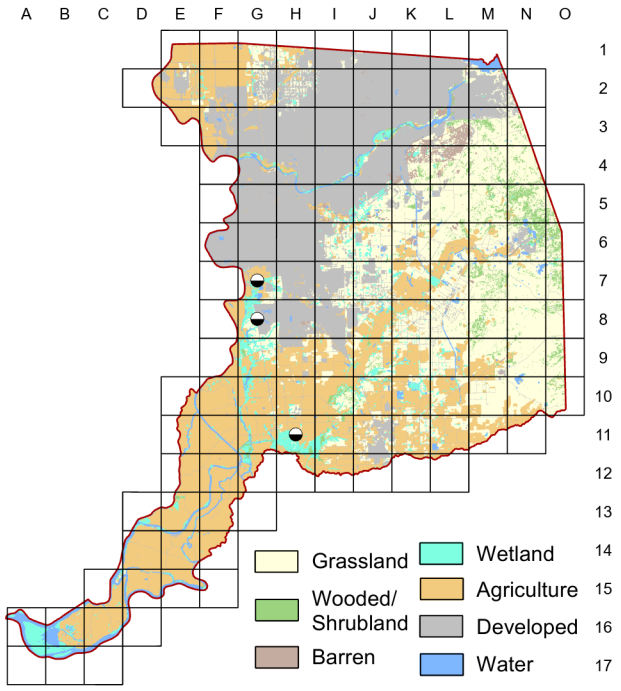
At least six Wood Ducks are incubating eggs in my nest boxes.

Blue-winged Teal
Spatula discors

Atlas 1

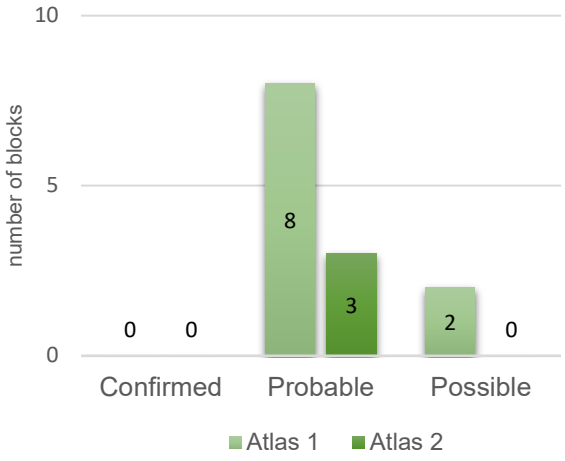


Atlas 2



An uncommon breeding species in the Central Valley, the Blue-winged Teal appears to breed in protected areas of wetlands in the county.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.69% / year[n]	0.27% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Shallow ponds/wetland

Nest Type

Scrape near water, lined with plant matter and down

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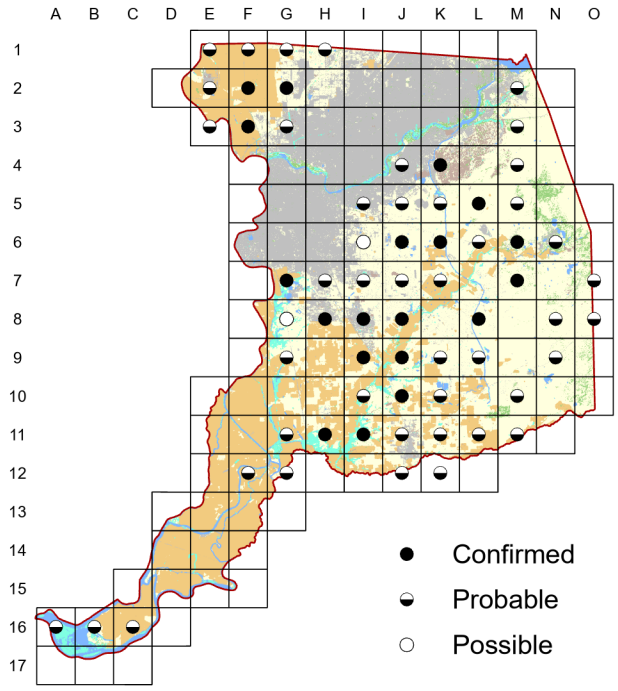
29 April 2016 — Block H-11

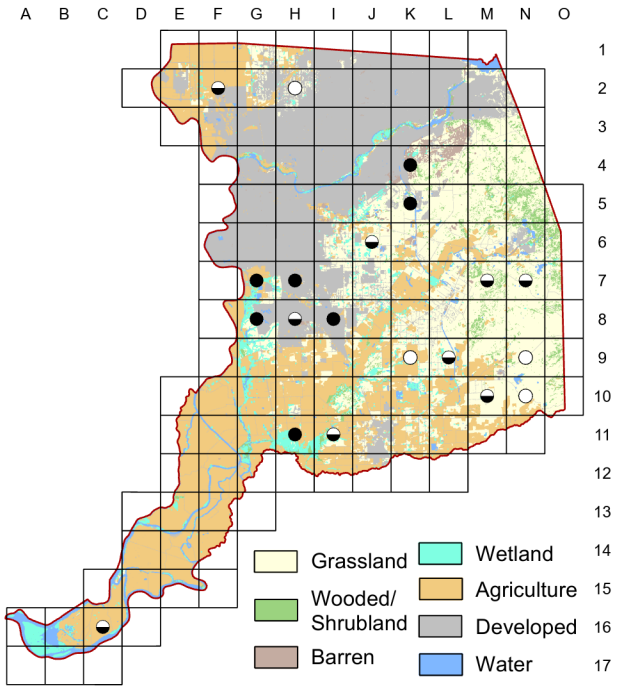
Three separate pairs were visible at one time in the duckiest pond along the road. One pair was demonstrating a head-bobbing courtship display that I have never witnessed before.

Cinnamon Teal
Spatula cyanoptera

Atlas 1

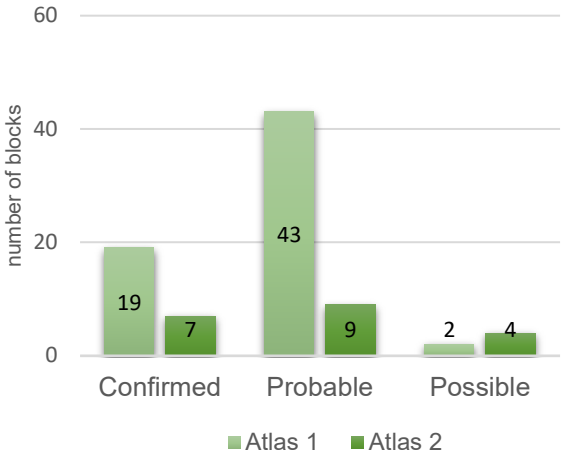


Atlas 2



Further discussed in Chapter Six, negative population trends for breeding waterfowl in the Central Valley overall are reflected in the large decrease in blocks where breeding behaviors of the Cinnamon Teal were observed between the two atlases.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.46% / year[n]	0.85% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Shallow wetlands with emergent vegetation

Nest Type

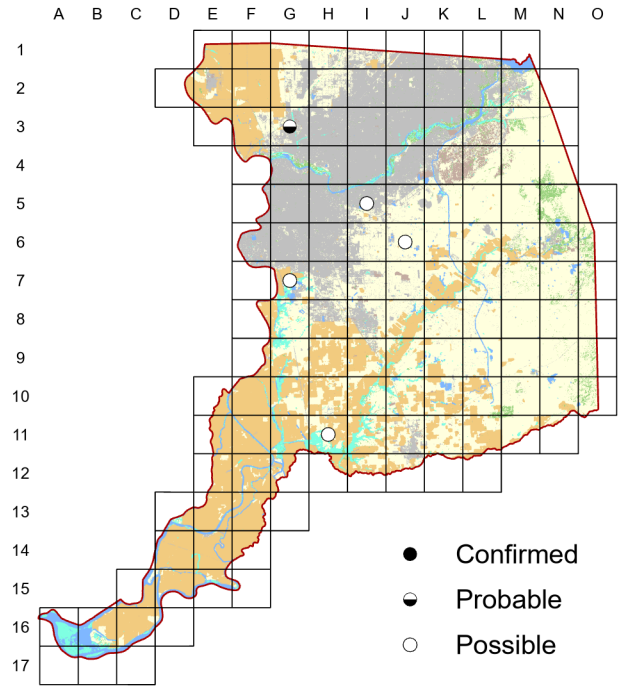
Concealed near water, with plant matter and down

9 May 2018 Block K-4

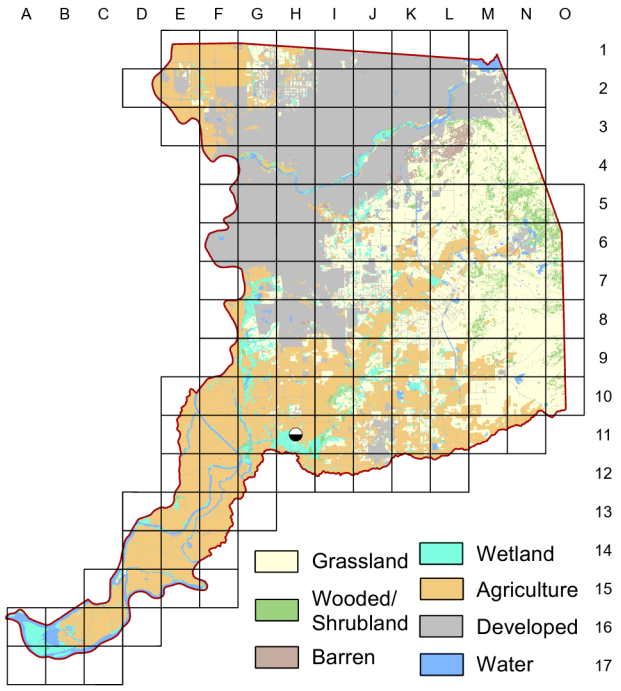
Several adults, and one mom with eleven young.

Northern Shoveler
Spatula clypeata

Atlas 1

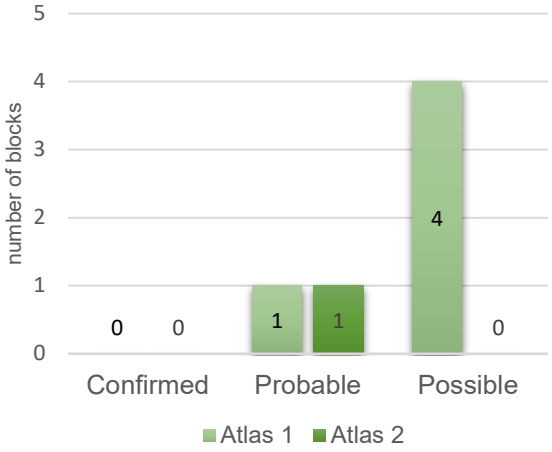


Atlas 2



An uncommon breeding species in the Central Valley, the Northern Shoveler may continue to find suitable breeding habitat in protected areas of wetlands in the county.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.44% / year[n]	0.7% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Shallow wetlands with emergent vegetation

Nest Type

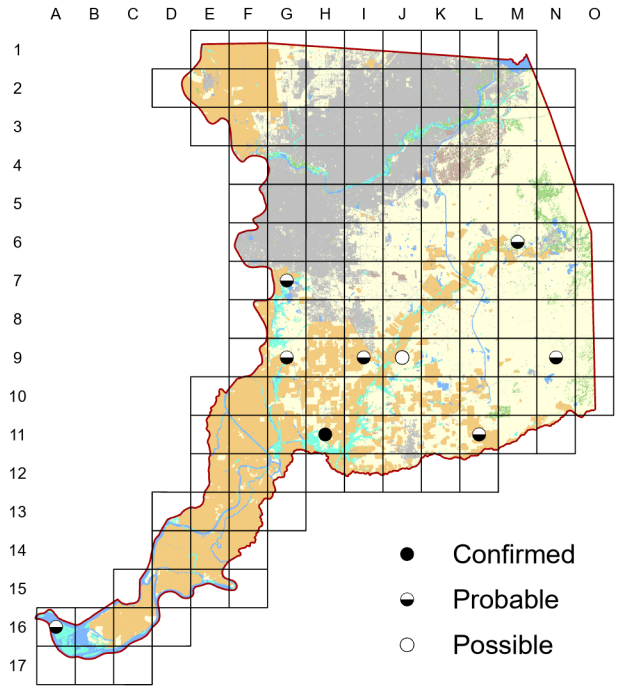
Grassland/open country, with down and plant matter

1977 — H. L. Cogswell

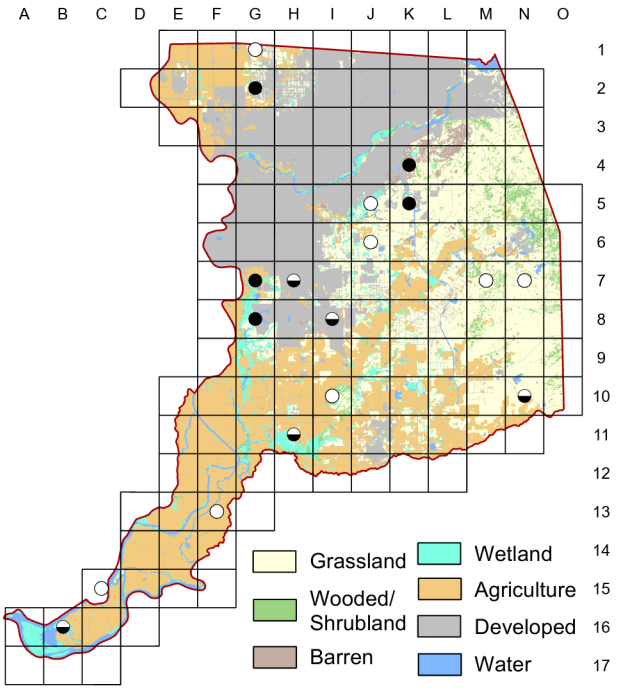
They have simply become specialists at the art of plankton-straining, a little of which various other dabbling ducks also do.

Gadwall
Mareca strepera

Atlas 1

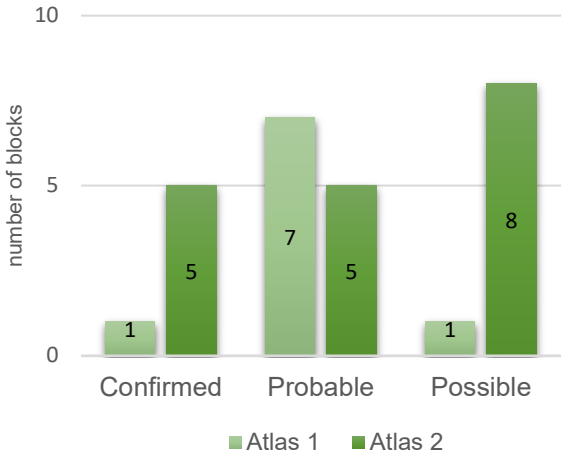


Atlas 2



While many wetland species showed declines between the two atlases, the Gadwall appears to have slightly increased in the county, with both overall and confirmed breeding behaviors observed in more blocks in Atlas 2.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
2.76% / year[s]	**1.68**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Shallow wetlands with nearby dense vegetation

Nest Type

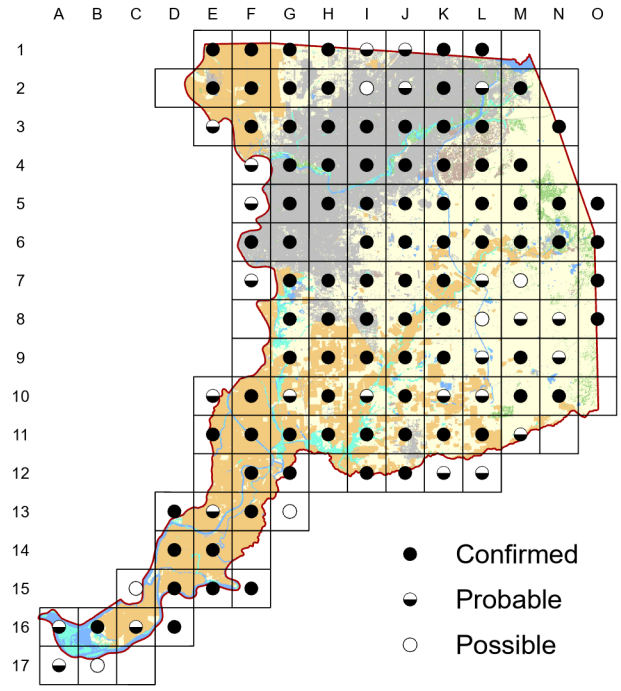
Concealed scrape on ground with plant matter

15 June 2020 Block K-5

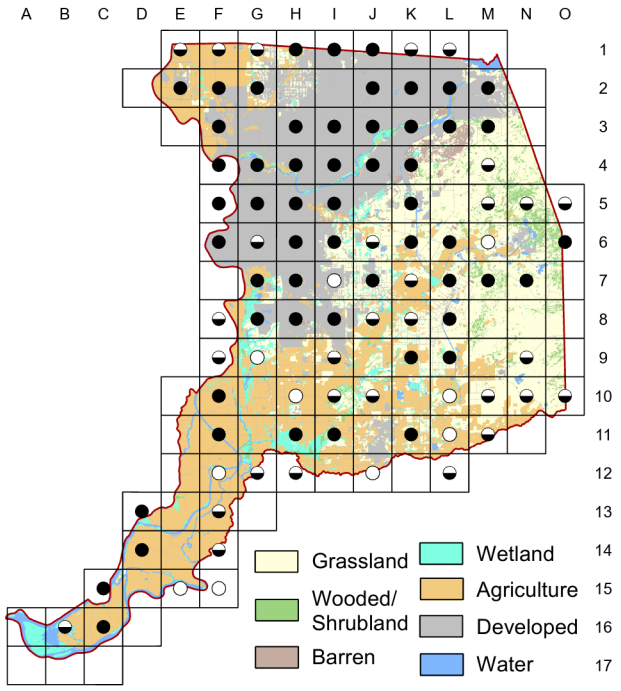
Two adults, including a female with eight young.

Mallard
Anas platyrhynchos

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



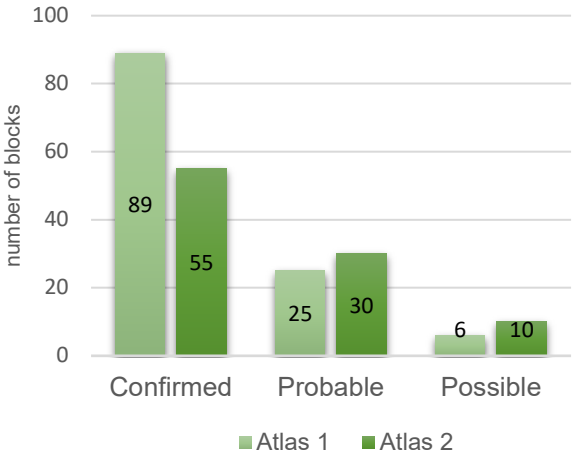
Truly wild Mallards have recently experienced large declines in breeding population in the Central Valley. This decline may be ameliorated in Sacramento County due to the species' adaptability to urban habitats and human disturbance and mixing with feral stock.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
1.26% / year[s]	0.11% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Variety of ponds/wetlands

Nest Type

Concealed scrape on ground with plant matter

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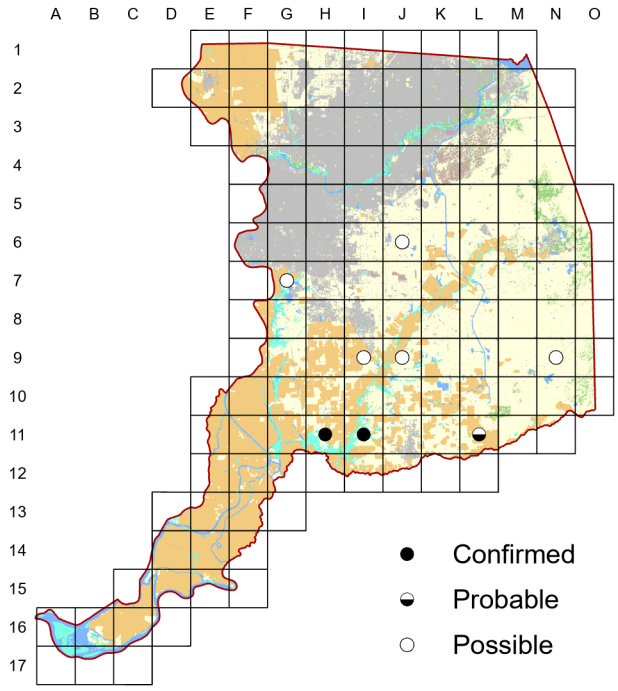
28 April 2019 — Block H-7

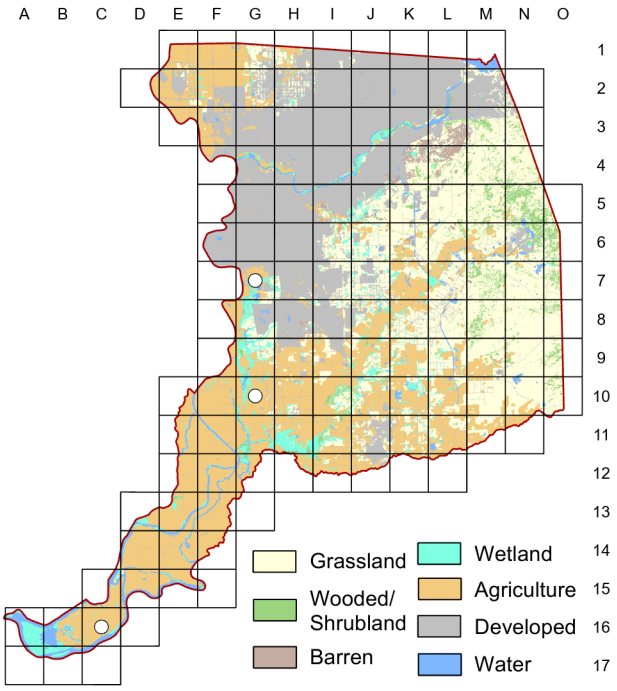
There were four families with young, 11, 6, 12, 8; all different ages, from new to almost adult but still following after parents.

Northern Pintail
Anas acuta

Atlas 1

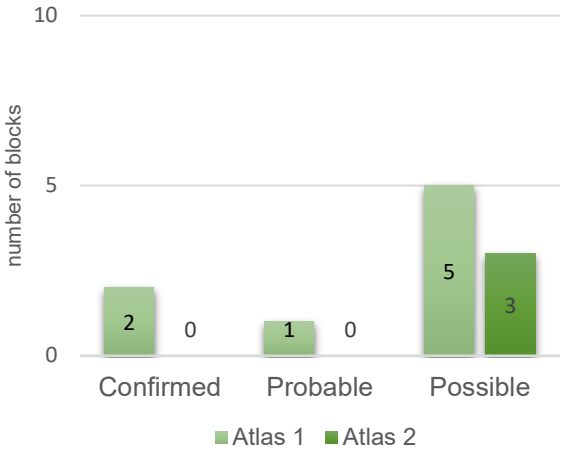


Atlas 2



Abundant winter visitors in the Central Valley, very few Northern Pintails remain into the summer and are only occasionally found breeding. See Chapter Four for additional details.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–4.71% / year[s]	**–2.6**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Shallow wetlands in open country

Nest Type

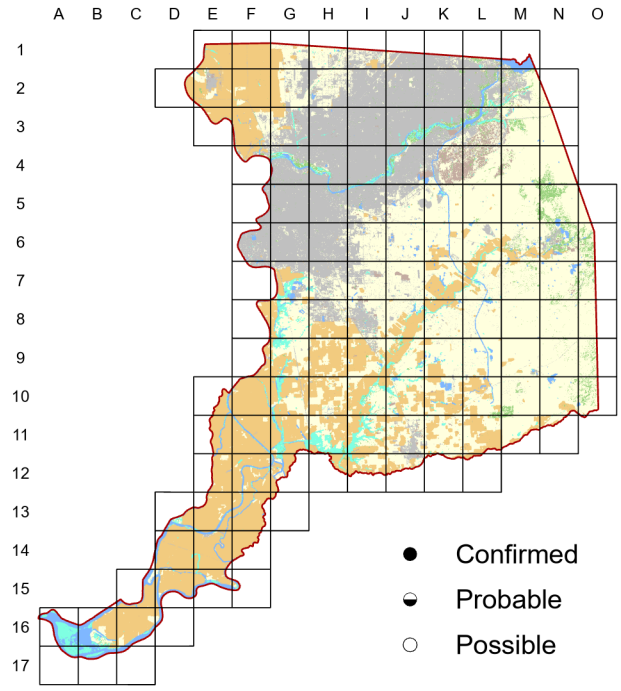
Lined scrape on ground in low vegetation

1967 F. Kortright

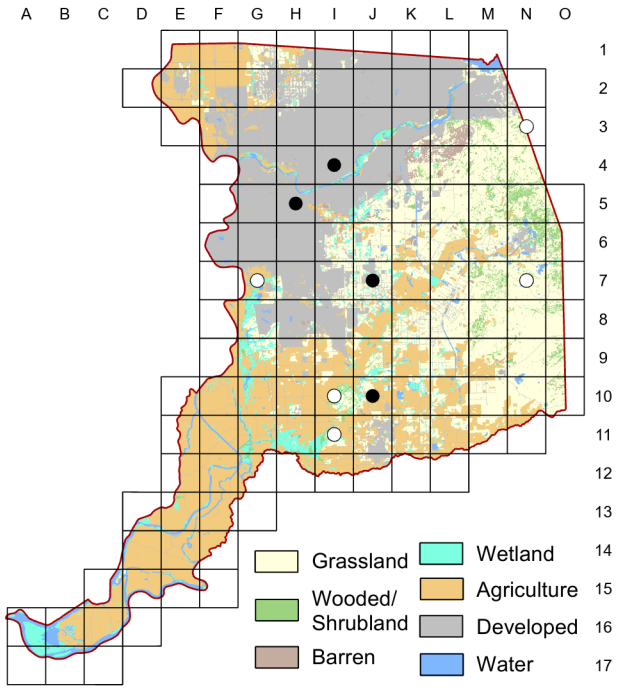
Female Pintails are among the most courageous of all ducks in defense of their young and their demonstrations of parental solicitude are truly remarkable.

Hooded Merganser
Lophodytes cucullatus

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



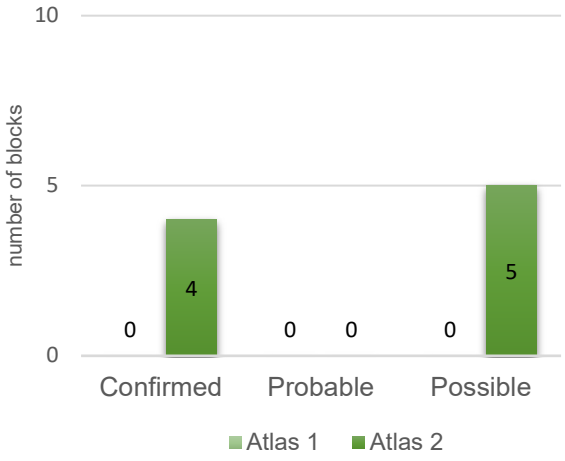
The appearance of Hooded Mergansers as breeders in Sacramento County is discussed in Chapter Four. Although the numbers of Hoodies wintering in the Central Valley was already increasing at the time of Atlas 1, breeding in the valley was not confirmed until 1996, three years after the end of that atlas.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
No Data	**4.77**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Riparian/wetlands with trees

Nest Type

Cavity near water

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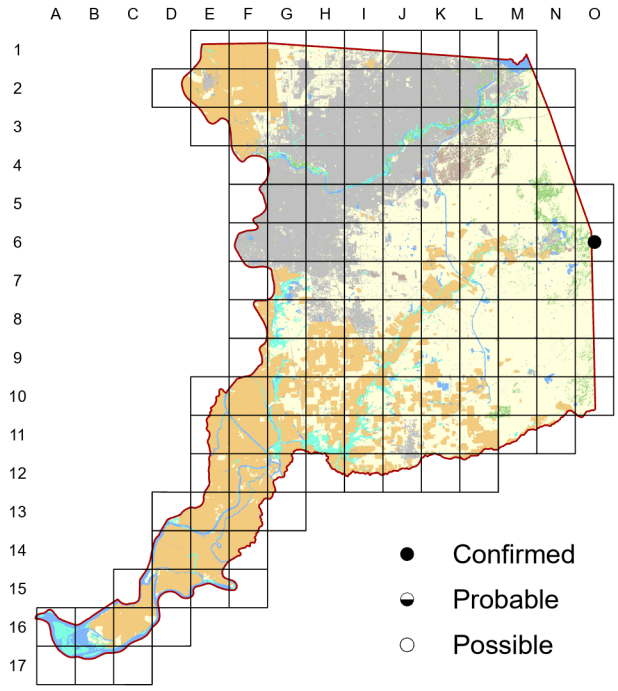
26 April 2020 Block I-11

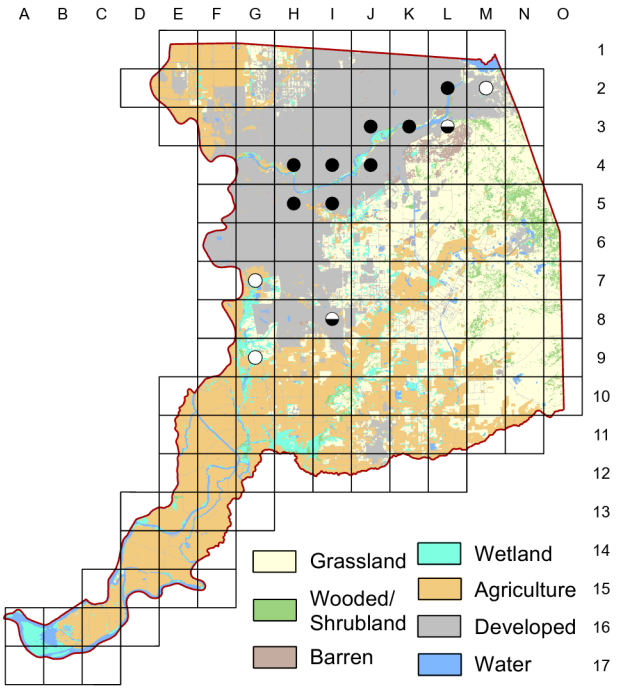
Female flushed along slough. Low, burry calls as she flushed.
Has nested in Wood Duck boxes along slough.

Common Merganser
Mergus merganser

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



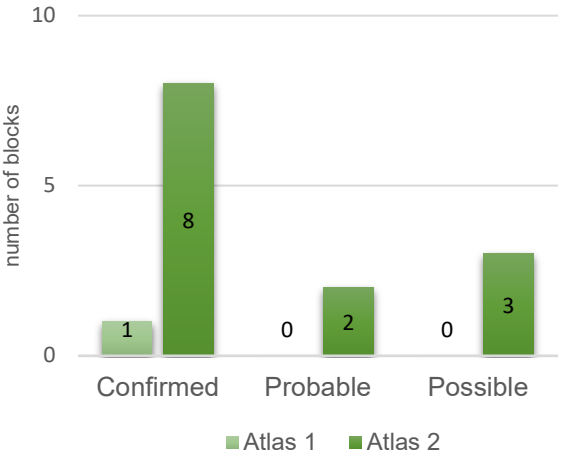
The Common Merganser, confirmed in only a single block along the upper Cosumnes River in Atlas 1, is now an uncommon, but regular breeder along most of the American River. The species has taken advantage of both natural cavities in snags and nest boxes. The historical status of this species on the Central Valley floor is uncertain, but these mergansers now appear to breed in several areas along the Sacramento River north of the county.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.05% / year[n]	–0.4% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Riparian/lakes with nearby trees

Nest Type

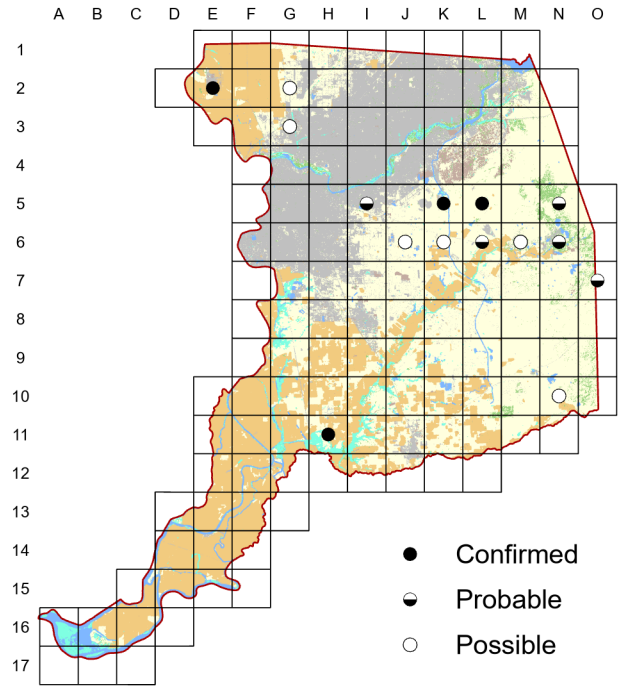
Cavity near water

14 April 2017 Block I-4

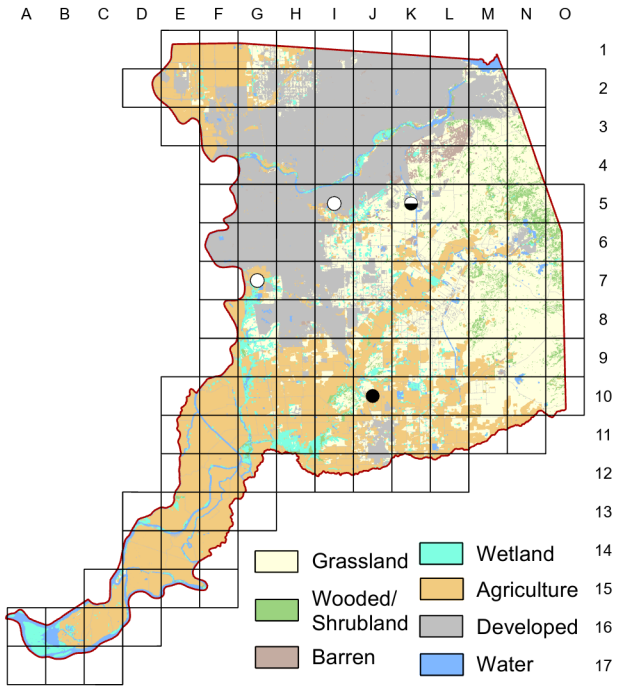
The large nest box used every year by a Common Merganser female had nine eggs when last checked.

Ruddy Duck
Oxyura jamaicensis

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



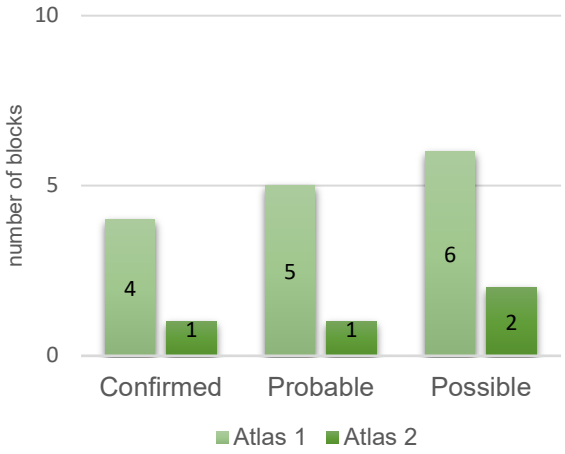
Even by the early 20th century, California breeding populations of the Ruddy Duck had been severely reduced. Its breeding distribution in the Central Valley has been patchy and inconsistent for many years. The comparison of our results from these two atlases suggests a local decline, with breeding in Atlas 2 confirmed in only a single block.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.23% / year[n]	0.43% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Wetlands/ponds

Nest Type

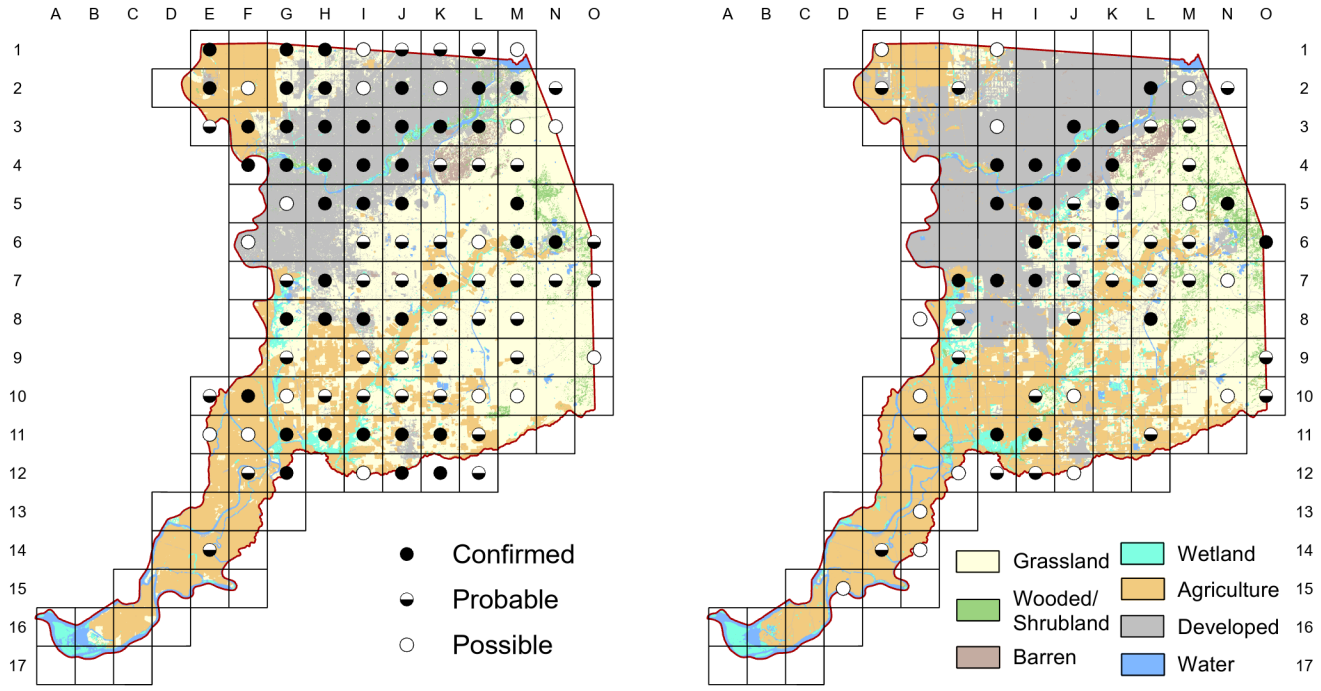
Floating platform in emergent vegetation

1923 W. L. Dawson

These birds are characterized by a certain jauntiness of bearing, quite in keeping with their bewitching chunkiness. They ride the water like corks, and their tails are most frequently cocked up.

California Quail
Callipepla californica

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



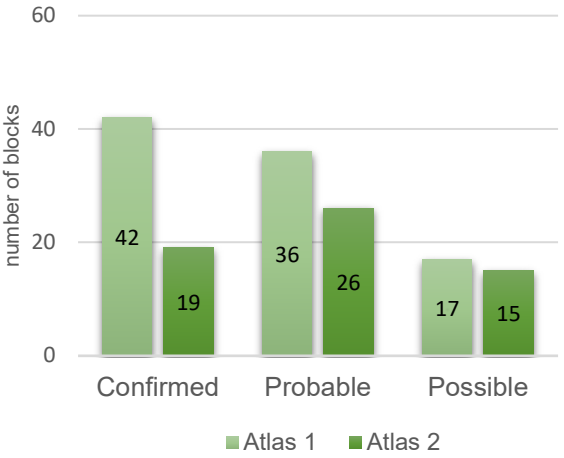
Consistent with long-term statewide trends, it appears the California Quail has declined in Sacramento County between the two atlases. Blocks that have seen increased urbanization north and south of the city of Sacramento seem to account for much of the losses. Development not only consumes breeding habitat, but also brings predators (domestic and wild) into proximity of ground-nesting species such as this quail.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.85% / year[s]	0.81% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Variety; always with significant shrubs/understory

Nest Type

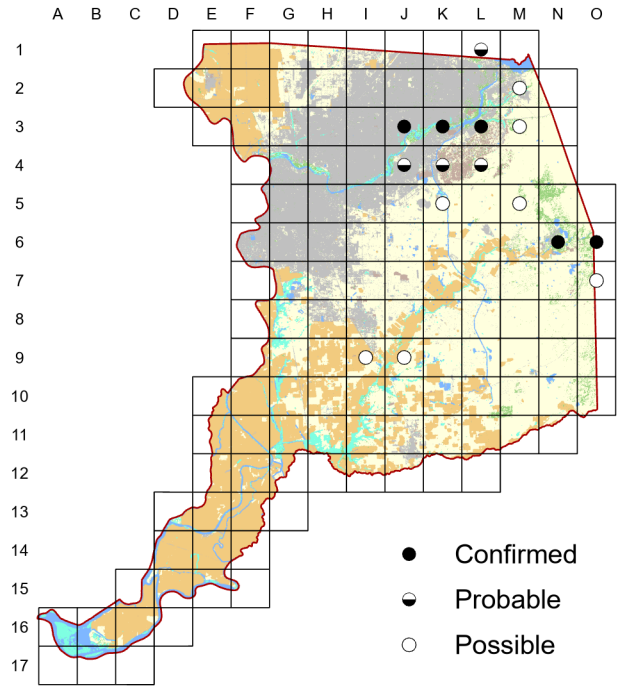
Concealed grassy nest on ground

7 August 2018 Block L-8

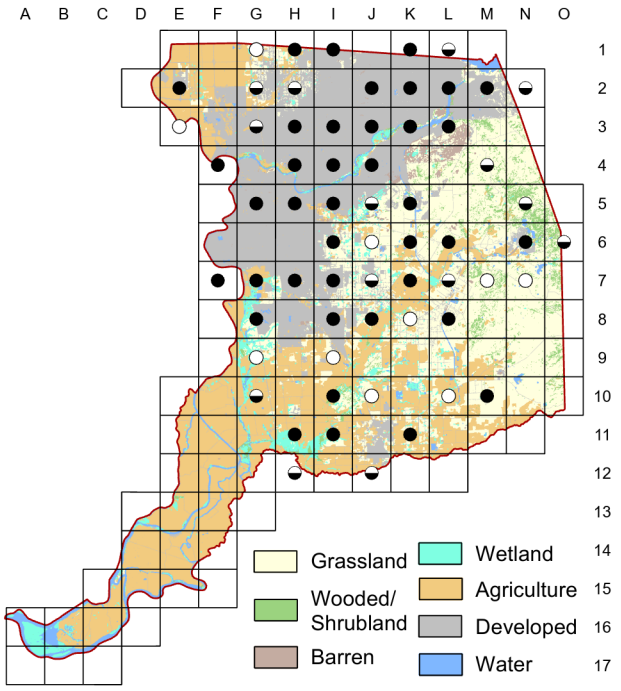
Heard contact calls and got quick glimpse of both adults and at least five recently fledged young before they disappeared in bushes.

Wild Turkey
Meleagris gallopavo

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



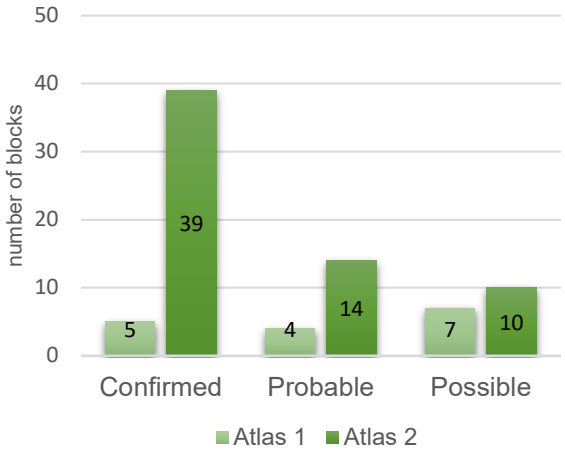
As covered in Chapter Four, the introduced Wild Turkey was just beginning to become well established in Sacramento County during Atlas 1. By Atlas 2, this bird (quite at odds with its common name) had spread through most of the county, even into densely urbanized areas. We can now watch them boldly walking through office complex parking lots and flying to a suburban rooftop for a better view of the neighborhood.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
9.32% / year[s]	**5.12**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Variety of woodland habitats

Nest Type

Scrape on ground; usually under trees

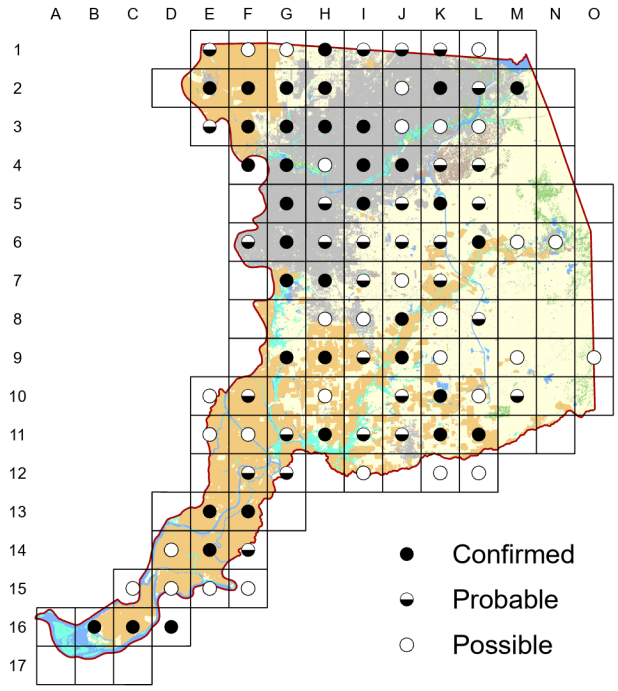
---

25 March 2018 — Block J-3

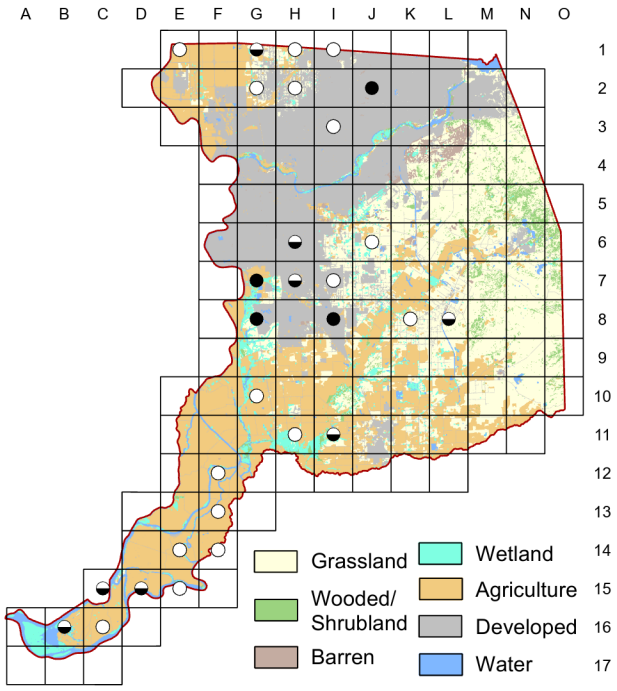
The male was displaying and gobbling so loudly that a family visiting a nearby gravesite told their little boy to chase them away.

Ring-necked Pheasant
Phasianus colchicus

Atlas 1

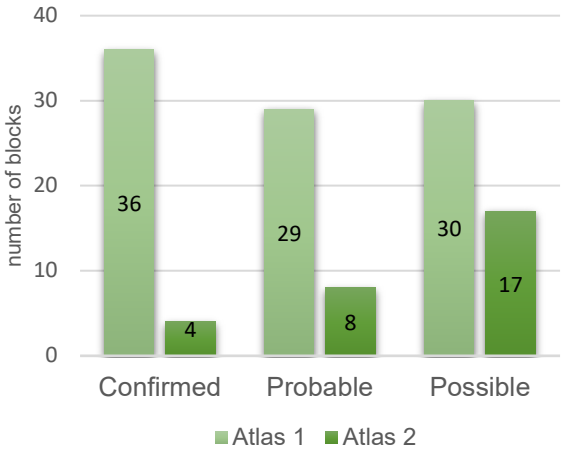


Atlas 2



As discussed in Chapter Four, widespread changes in agricultural practices have led to substantial declines in populations of the introduced Ring-necked Pheasant in California. Some of these changes are shown in Sacramento County, with a subsequent decline in the number of blocks where breeding behaviors were observed between the two atlases.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–4.75% / year[s]	**–0.58**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Open country with patches of tall vegetation

Nest Type

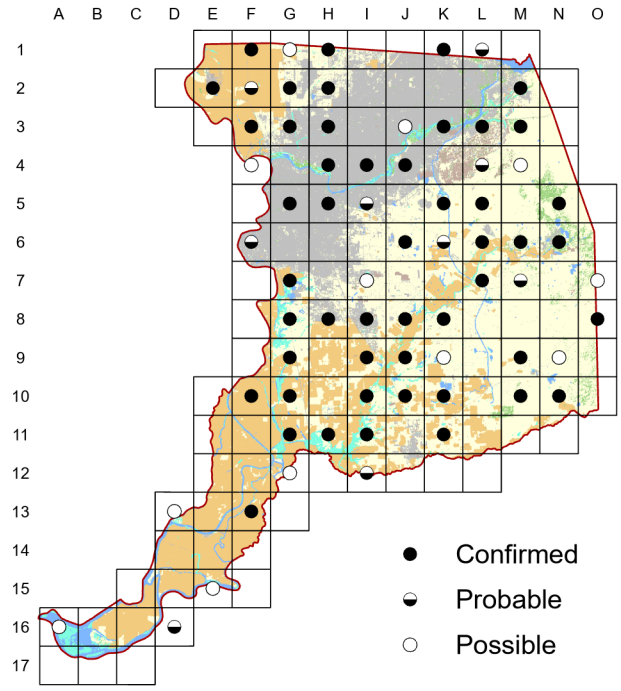
Scrape lined with grasses in dense vegetation

24 May 2020 Block D-15

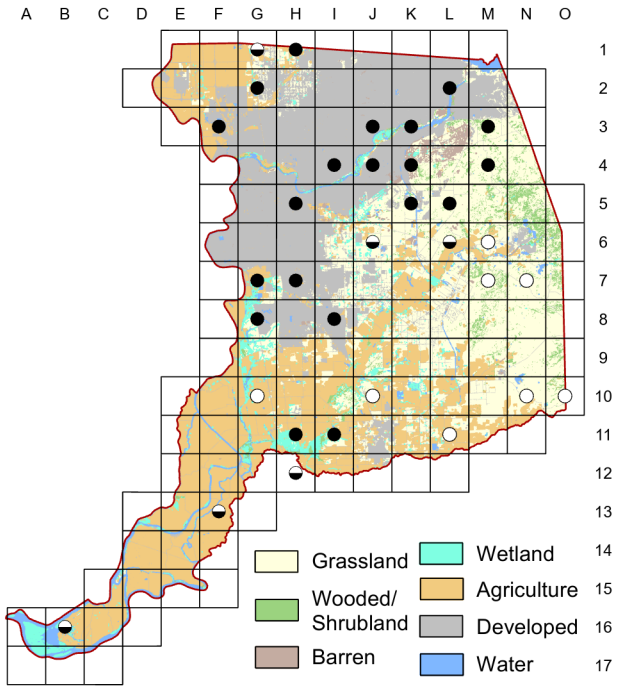
Very common and vocal on island.

Pied-billed Grebe
Podilymbus podiceps

Atlas 1

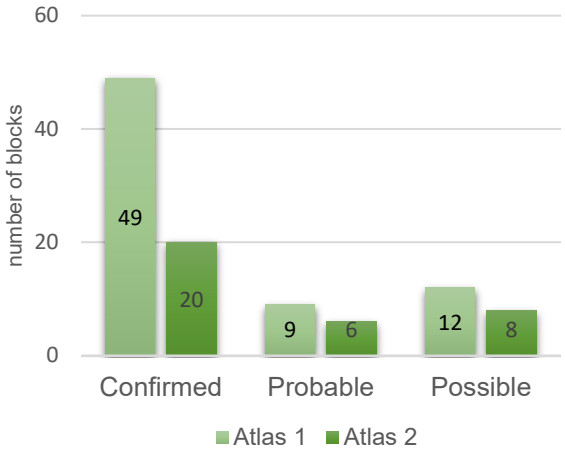


Atlas 2



In Chapter Six we discussed the declines for the Pied-billed Grebe and some other waterbirds that use similar habitats. We speculate that direct and indirect effects of nearby urban/residential development may be contributing to this reduction in breeding distribution in Sacramento County.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.59% / year[n]	0.2% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Ponds/wetlands with emergent vegetation

Nest Type

Floating platform in emergent vegetation

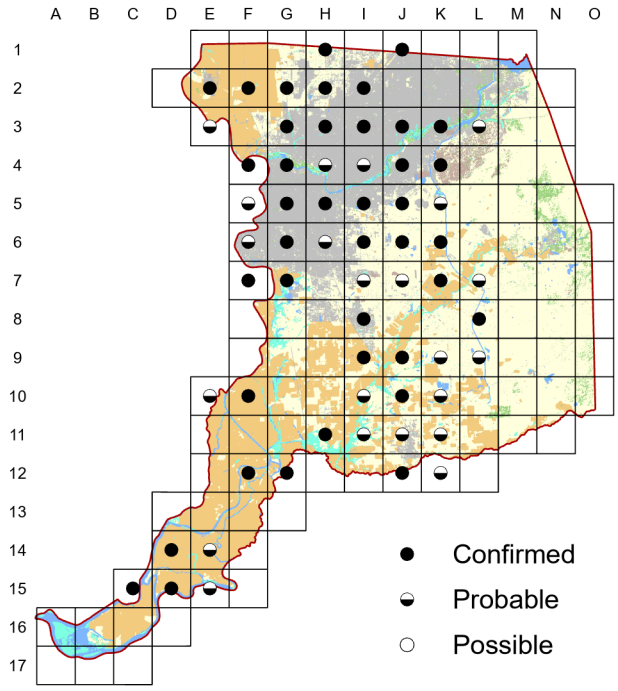
---

28 May 2019 — Block I-8

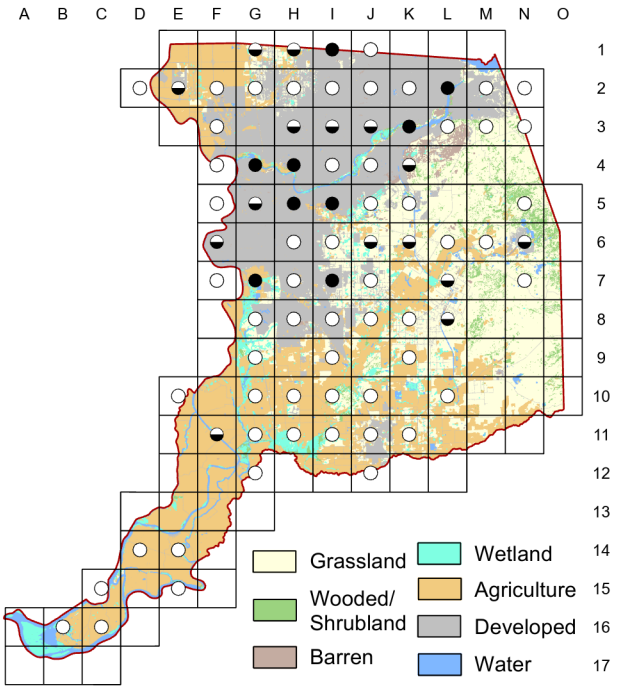
About six newly hatched. Both adults are staying close to the nest. Female is on nest with young hopping on and off. Male comes close to nest to feed the young.

Rock Pigeon
Columba livia

Atlas 1

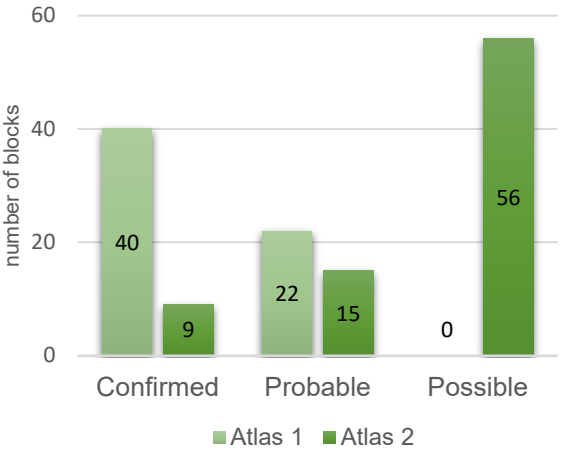


Atlas 2



In spite of being ubiquitous and breeding nearly year-round in many different habitats, confirming breeding for Rock Pigeons requires more diligence than for some other species. As mentioned in Chapter Four, the relative lack of confirmed blocks in Atlas 2 probably reflects this and may be a function of the different methods employed in these two atlases.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
1.42% / year[s]	**–0.17**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

In proximity to human development (urban to rural)

Nest Type

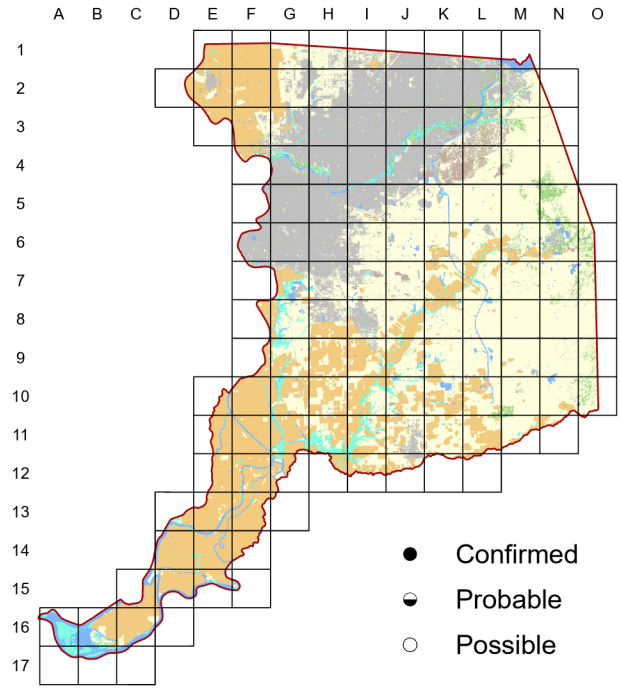
Stick nest on a covered ledge

25 June 2016 Block G-4

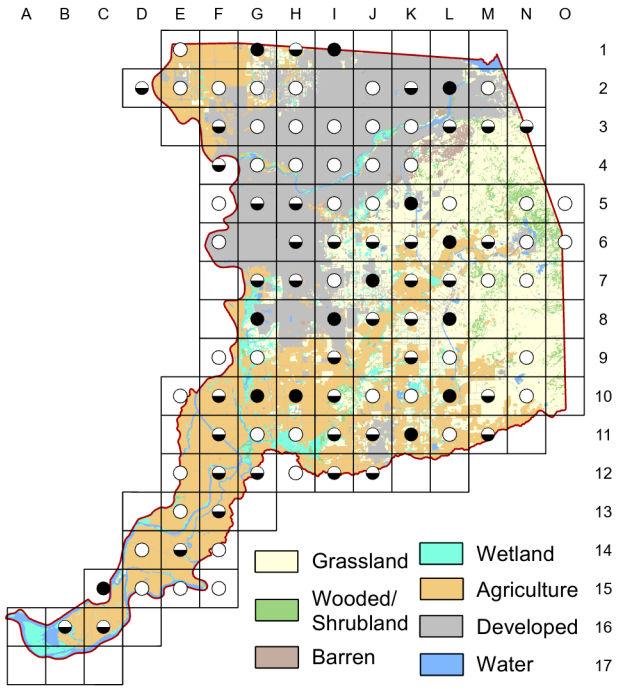
One pair was looking into a nest at what were likely small nestlings under the I Street approach near the Railroad Museum.

Eurasian Collared-Dove
Streptopelia decaocto

Atlas 1

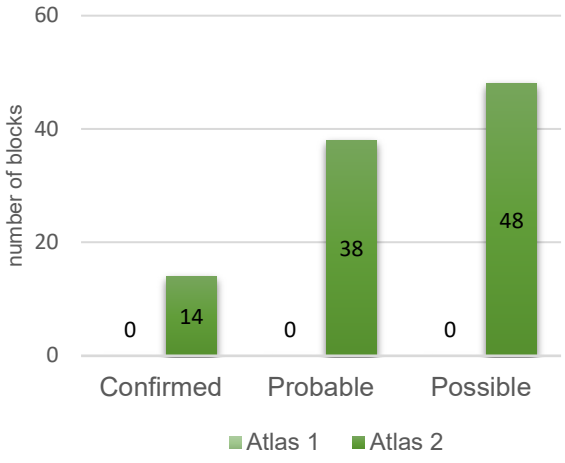


Atlas 2



Present in every part of the county except pure grassland and the most densely urbanized zones, Eurasian Collared-Doves are certainly here to stay. However, there is some evidence from throughout their North American range that their numbers may have peaked, and they may even be in decline in some areas. More details were provided in Chapter Four.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
19.99% / year[s]	**13.03**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Near human development, suburban to rural areas

Nest Type

Stick nest in a tree or on ledge

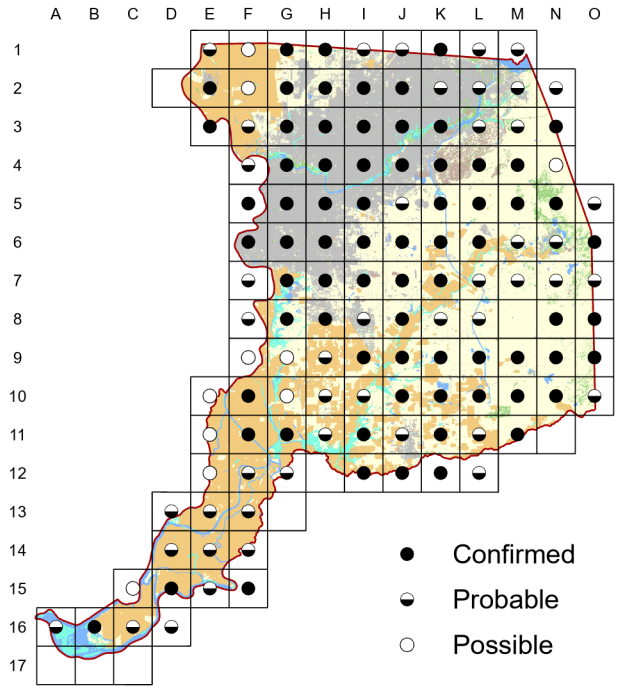
---

23 April 2018 Block L-3

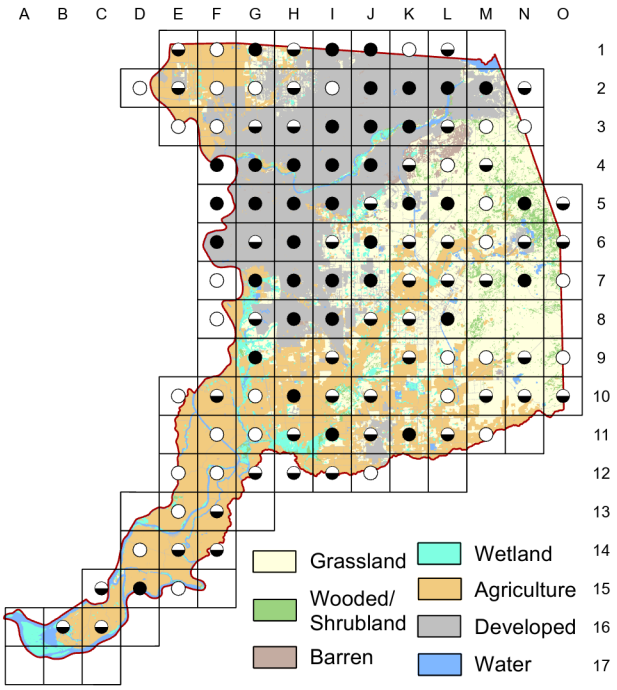
This trio seems to be resident here, with one pair and the third-man-out. Singing, courting, and defending observed.

Mourning Dove
Zenaida macroura

Atlas 1

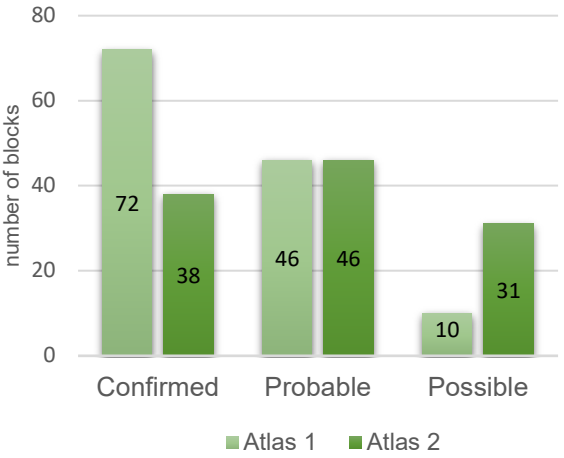


Atlas 2



In contrast to the significant long-term declines reflected in BBS data, our results show little, if any, real change in the breeding distribution of the Mourning Dove. They seem equally at home in nearly any local habitat and, as yet, show no ill effects from the arrival of Eurasian Collared-Doves to the county.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.14% / year[s]	**–0.42**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Wide variety from open to woodland to urban areas

Nest Type

Cup nest in tree, shrub, or ledge

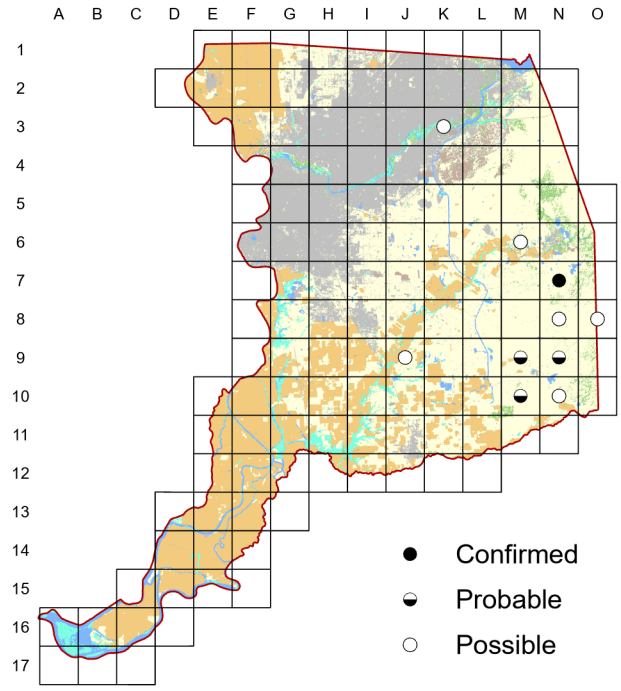
---

18 June 2016 Block H-5

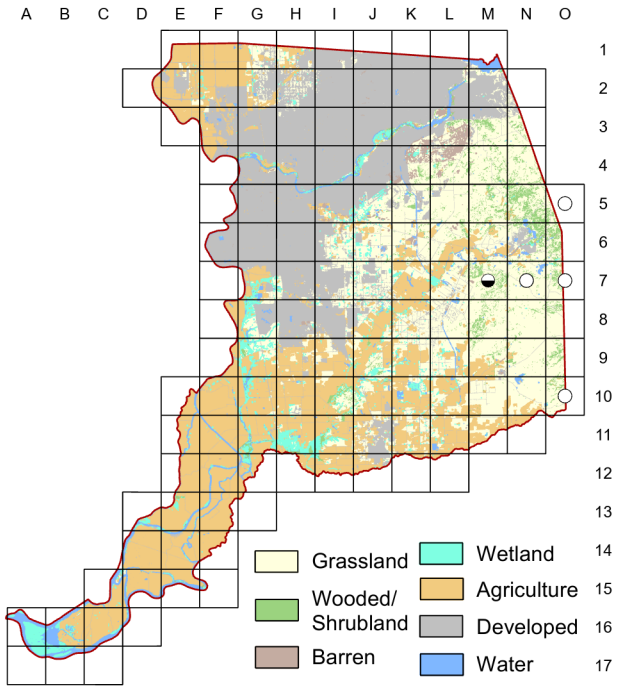
Two young in nest under eaves above kitchen window; third nest of year here.

Lesser Nighthawk
Chordeiles acutipennis

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



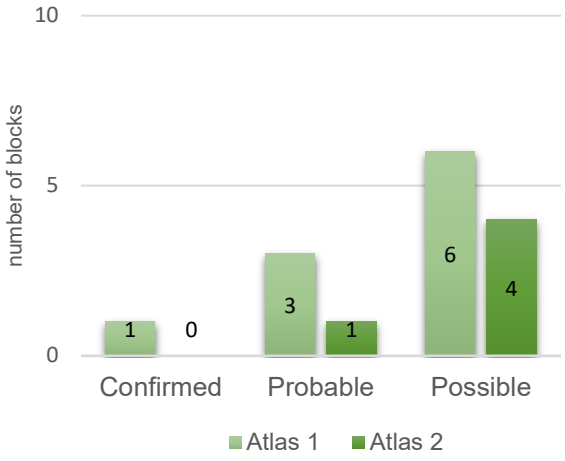
As discussed in Chapter Four, the Lesser Nighthawk has seen most of its historical Central Valley breeding habitats disappear over the past century. With only a single confirmation during Atlas 1, and a handful of breeding season observations in Atlas 2, the current breeding status of this nighthawk in the county is best described as hypothetical. However, it is possible there is some occupied breeding habitat in the southeastern corner inaccessible to atlasers.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.01% / year[n]	0.15% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Sparsely-vegetated, open country

Nest Type

Eggs laid directly on gravelly, pebbly ground

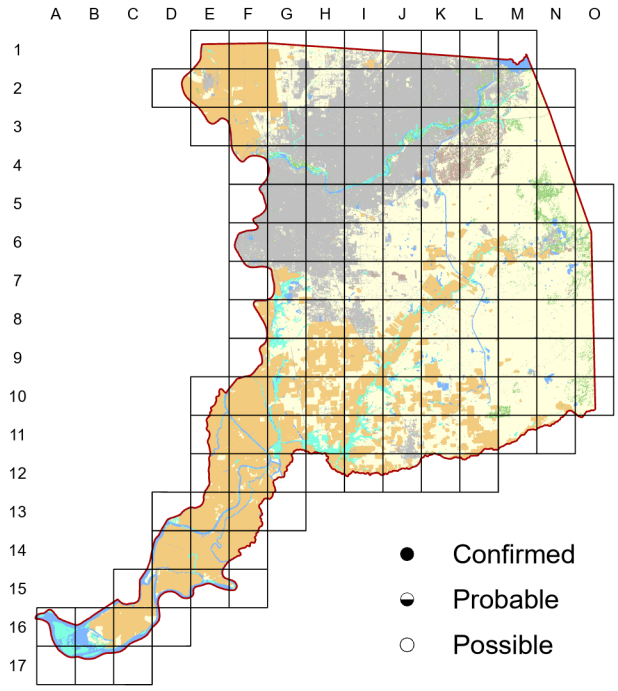
---

13 May 2017 — Block O-7

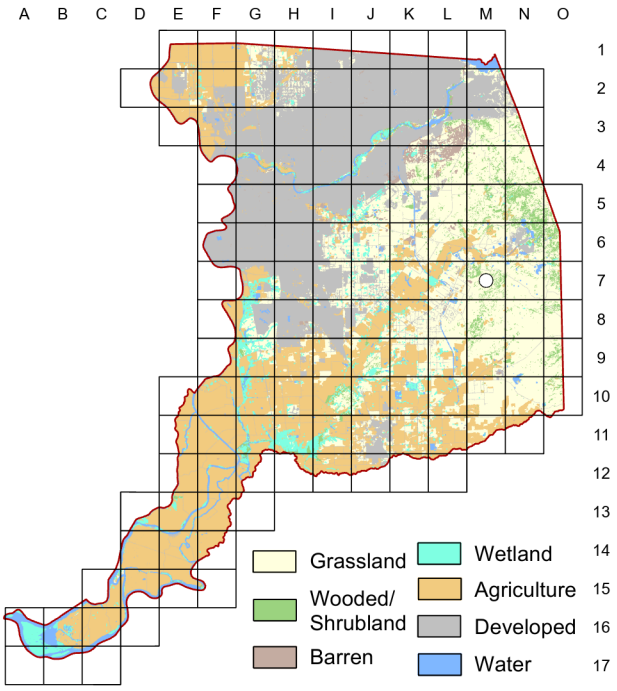
Foraging over pond.

Common Nighthawk
Chordeiles minor

Atlas 1

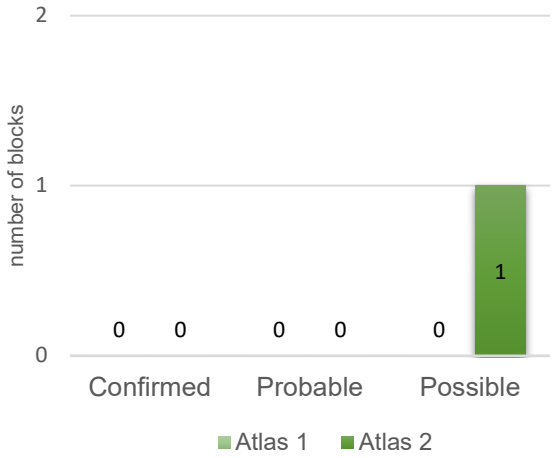


Atlas 2



There are few county records of Common Nighthawks, and they are not recorded in the county every year. At least one was calling and display-diving in the late spring and summer along Meiss Road in the east county from 2005 to 2008, with sporadic appearances since. This location overlaps with the most consistent Lesser Nighthawk sites.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.08% / year[n]	**–1.23**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Variety of open habitats

Nest Type

Eggs laid directly on ground or other flat surface

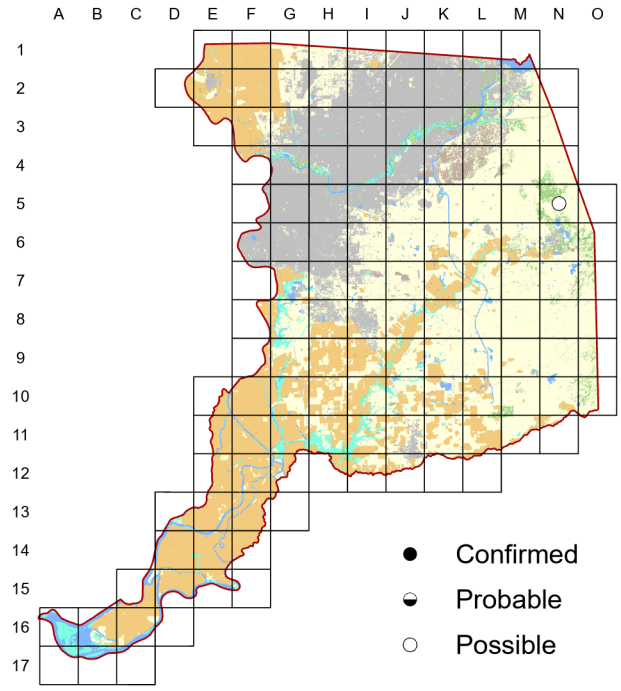
---

11 June 2011 Block M-7

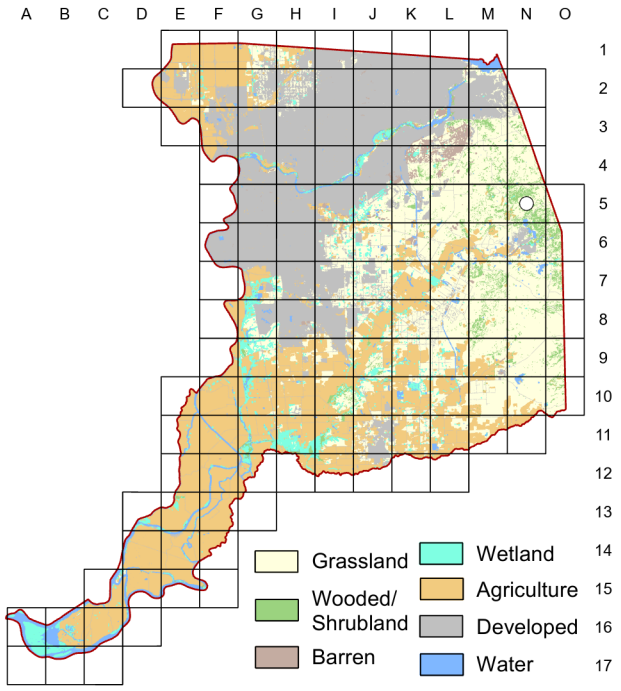
Three came by, "peenting" about five minutes after the Lessers had flown off.

Common Poorwill
Phalaenoptilus nuttallii

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



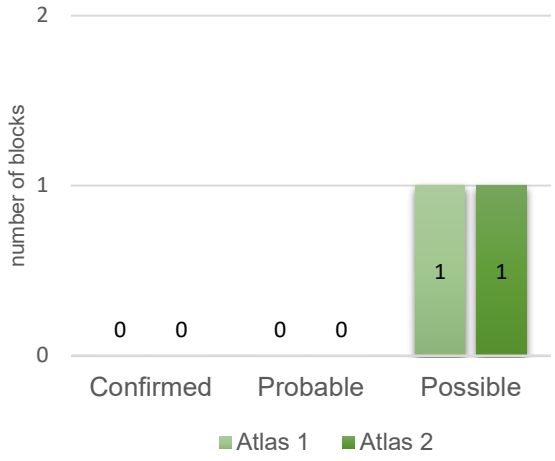
Common Poorwills are occasionally heard singing in breeding season, and they were found in the same block in both atlas periods. Most county records are of fall migrants, primarily in the east, often detected as they forage and roost on roads at night. A few spring migrants are also detected, which can be hard to separate from potential breeders. Limited access and coverage where the species might breed in the low foothills compounds uncertainty.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.23% / year[n]	–0.09% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Open brushy habitats, rocky areas

Nest Type

Eggs laid directly on ground or other flat surface

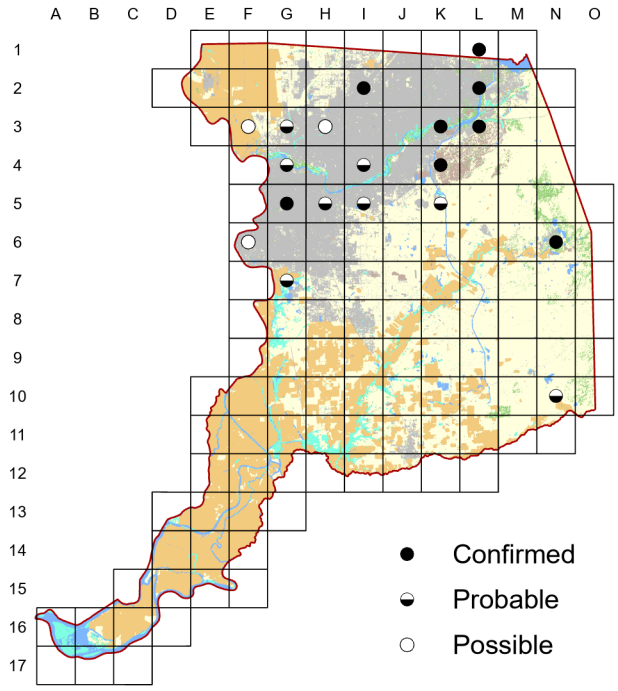
---

14 April 2014 — Block N-5

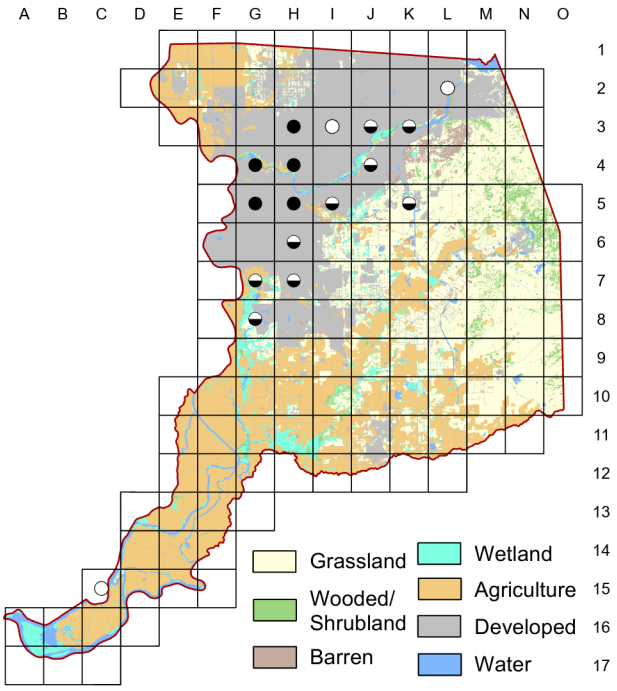
Started calling at 8:10 PM. South side of Latrobe,
about 0.5 miles east of intersection with Stone House Road.

White-throated Swift
Aeronautes saxatalis

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



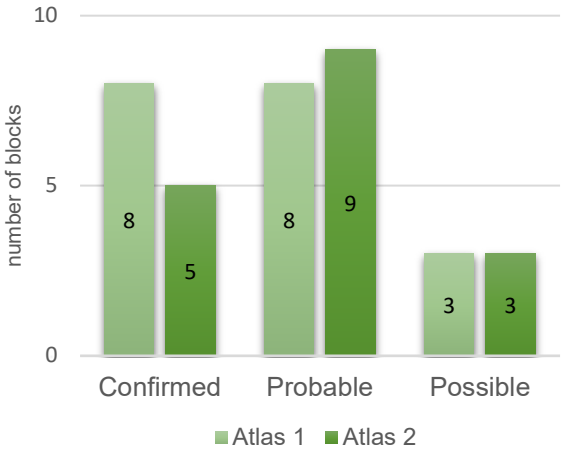
Beginning in the 1970s, White-throated Swifts were noted using "weep" holes under bridges and underpasses in the county for nesting and roosting. By Atlas 1, they were already well established in these sites and expanding. Their breeding status is likely little changed, with differences between the atlas maps possibly due to different levels of local effort or birds occupying recently built structures.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.31% / year[n]	–0.76% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Wide variety with covered structures for nesting

Nest Type

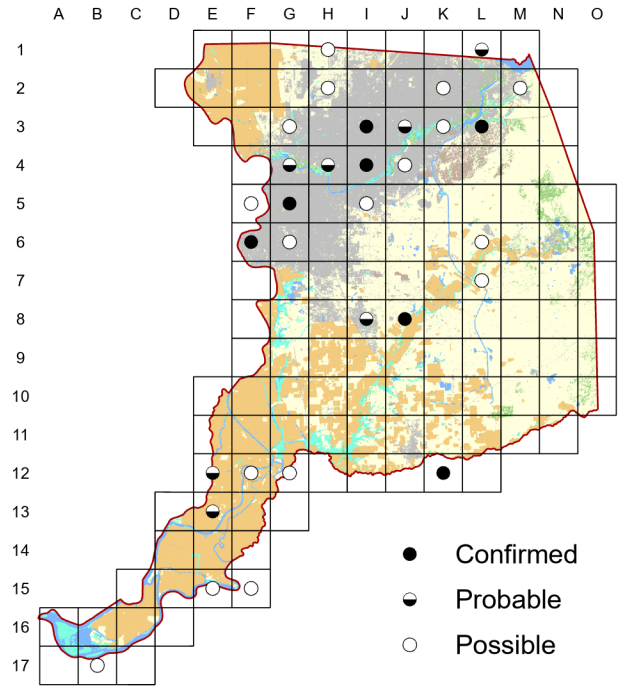
Variety of materials glued with saliva

1923 — W. L. Dawson

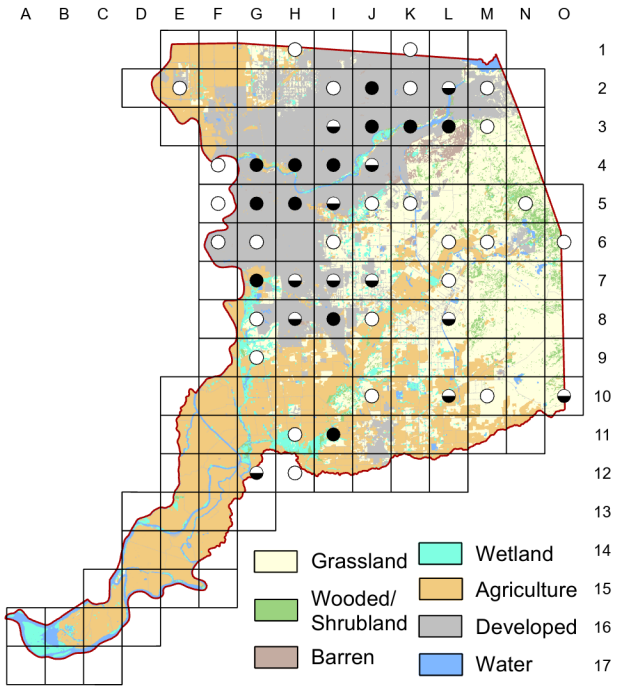
Swifter than swift is the White-throated Swift.

Black-chinned Hummingbird
Archilochus alexandri

Atlas 1

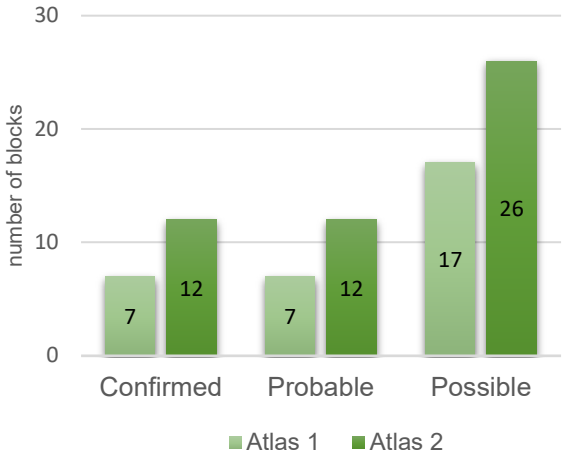


Atlas 2



Similar to other nectar-feeding species, the Black-chinned Hummingbird displayed an apparent expansion, primarily into urban areas, between the two atlases. This can likely be attributed to increases in sugar feeders and the planting of ornamental tree species in these areas.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.92% / year[n]	0.31% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Mainly riparian areas

Nest Type

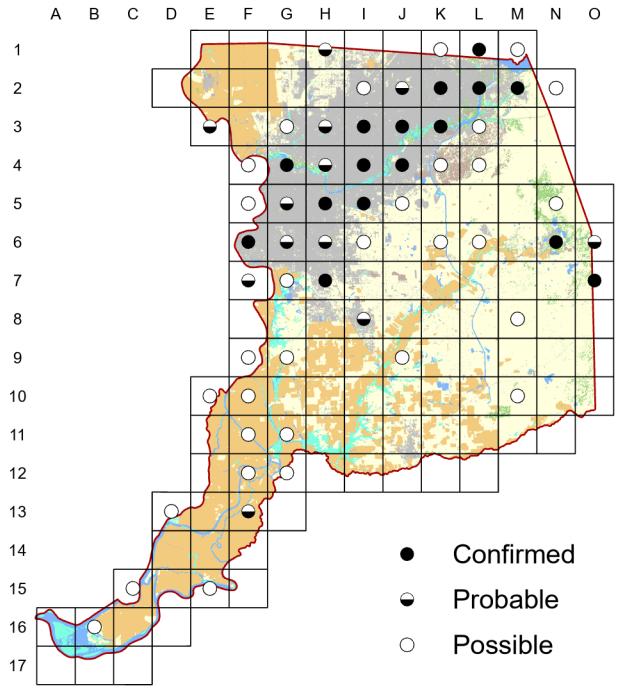
Cup nest

8 May 2017 — Block H-5

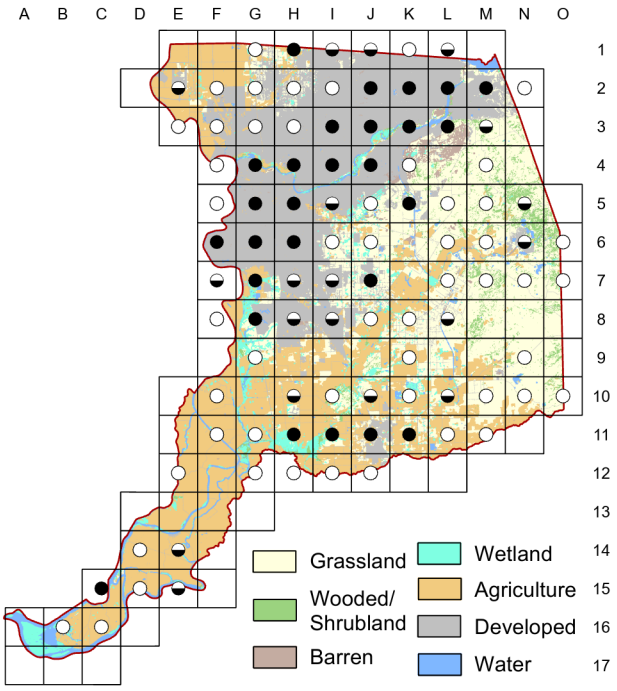
Heard buzzy wings around feeders in the afternoon, then saw two males in the yard and a possible female.

Anna's Hummingbird
Calypte anna

Atlas 1

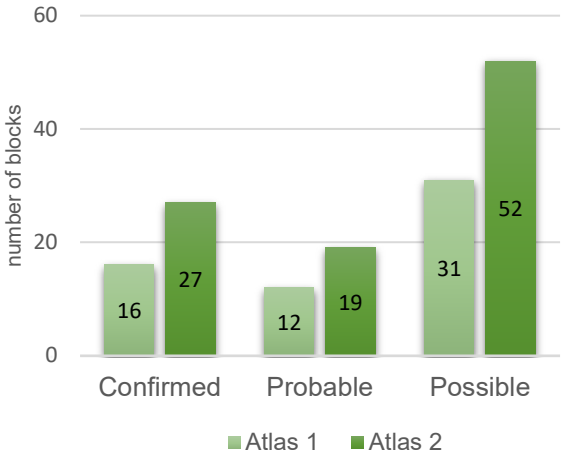


Atlas 2



The expansion of the breeding distribution of the Anna's Hummingbird between the two atlases is discussed in Chapter Five. This increase is certainly consistent with the rangewide expansion of this species.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
1.47% / year[s]	**2.04**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Variety, including urban and suburban areas

Nest Type

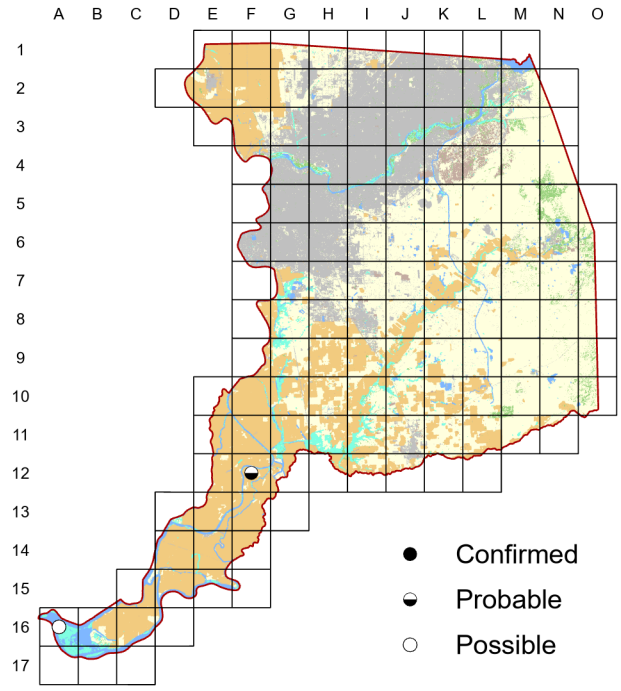
Cup nest

1923 W. L. Dawson

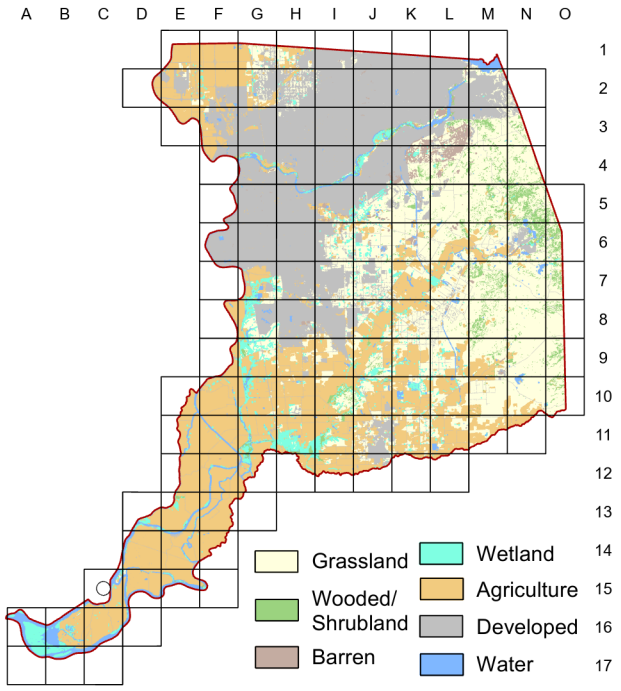
At a turn of the head the entire foreparts assume one cast of rose-purple; at another, the gorget will go to velvet of some dark nameless tint in relief.

Allen's Hummingbird
Selasphorus sasin

Atlas 1

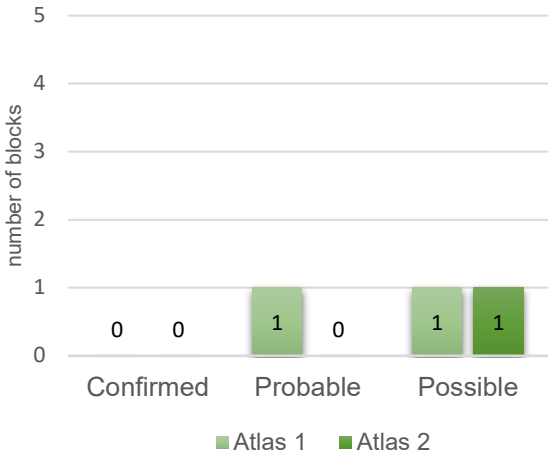


Atlas 2



The Allen's Hummingbird is primarily restricted as a breeding species to the coastal districts, but it has occasionally been found nesting in the southern Sacramento Valley, including southwestern Sacramento County, and further breeding attempts are likely. See Chapter Four for additional details.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–2.95% / year[s]	**–2.95**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Moist woodland, brushy habitats, residential yards

Nest Type

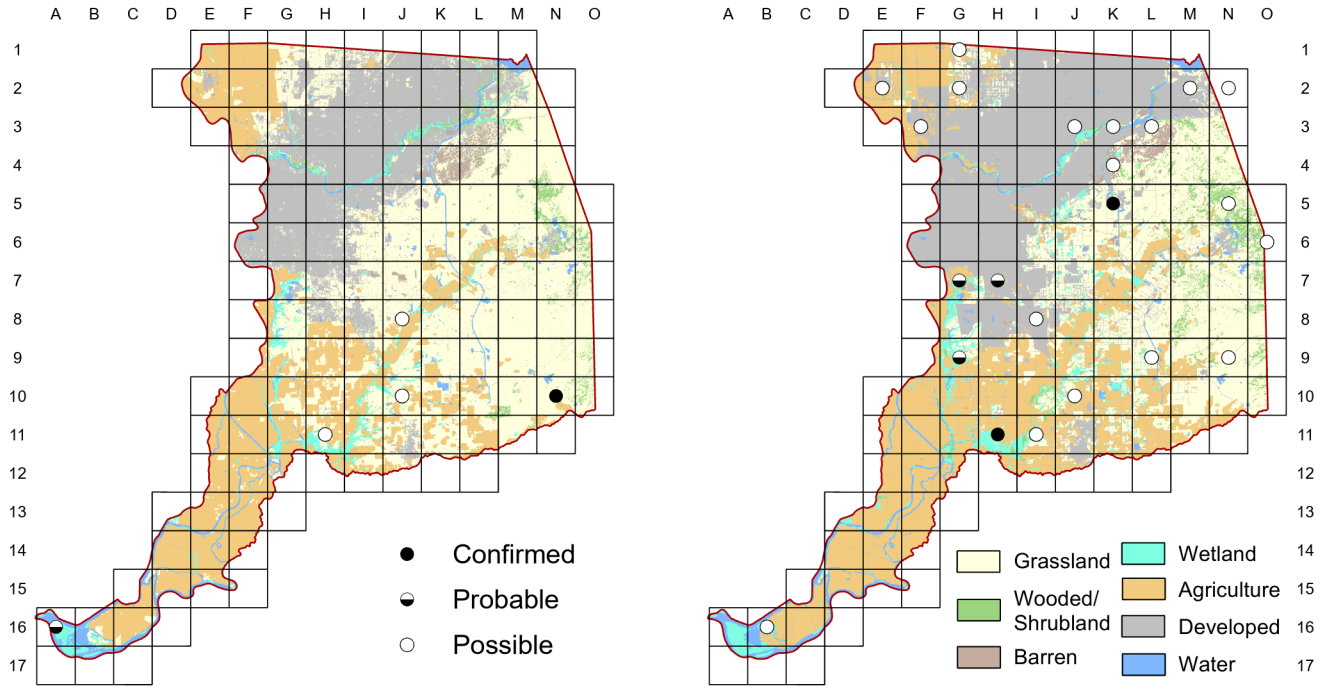
Cup nest

1927 — R. Hoffman

From dawn to dusk their excited squeaks and angry little buzzings sound from their favorite flowering shrubs or vines, as the hot-tempered little creatures pursue each other in rapid flight with reddish tails widespread.

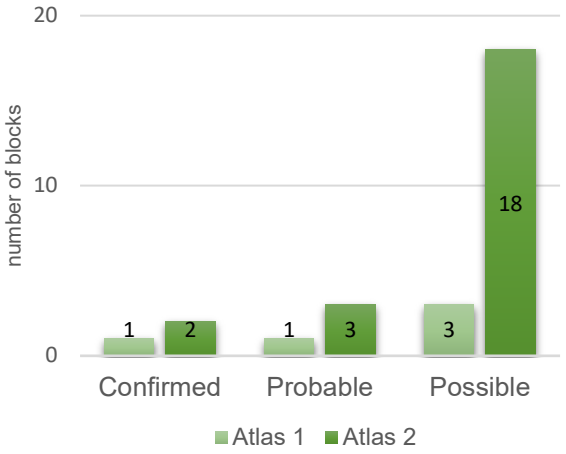
Virginia Rail
Rallus limicola

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



Secretive Virginia Rails are difficult to observe, and confirming breeding is even harder. Continued singing can at least lead to probable status. There were more reports in Atlas 2, likely a result of different methods between the two atlases. The rails use and perhaps breed in wetlands set aside in newly developed areas of Folsom, Elk Grove, and elsewhere. The lack of summer water in wetlands throughout the county is a limiting factor.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
1.0% / year[n]	0.35% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Wetland with emergent vegetation

Nest Type

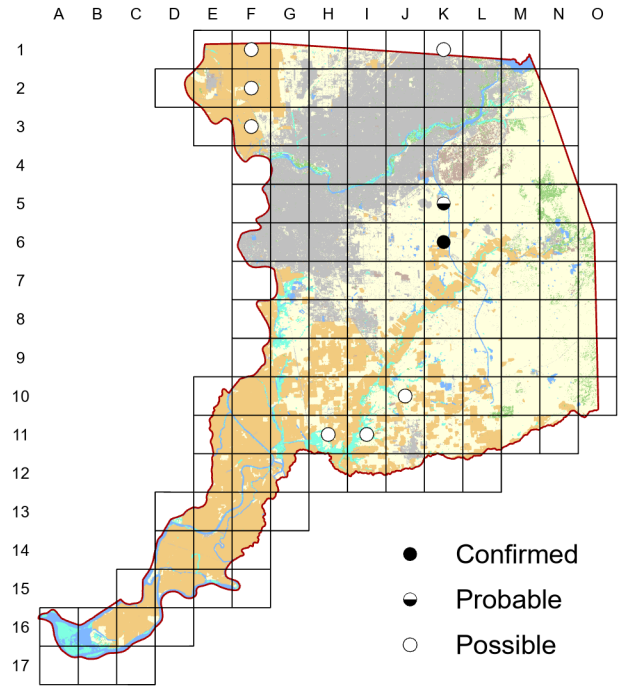
Concealed woven "basket"

15 May 2017 Block H-11

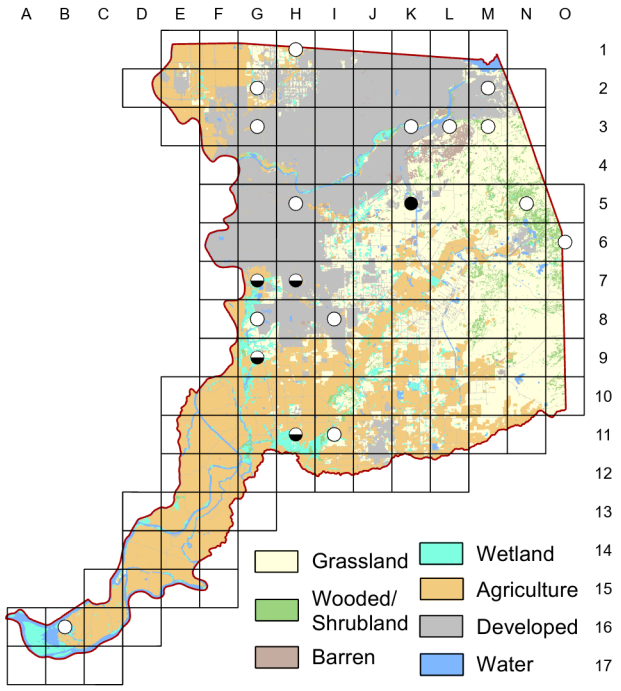
First time I've seen fluffy young rails.

Sora
Porzana carolina

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



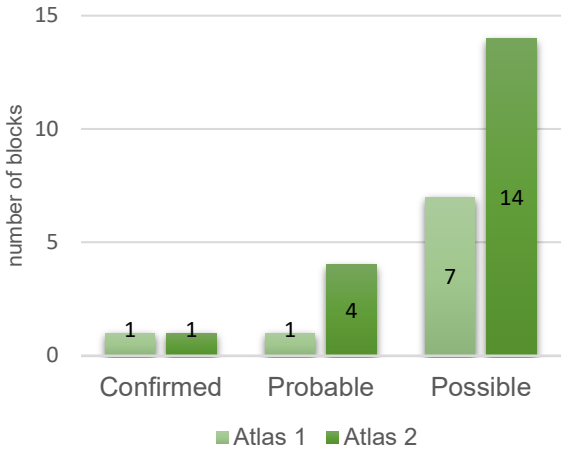
Like the Virginia Rail, confirming breeding for the Sora is difficult. Unlike Virginia Rails, these birds don't "sing," so getting a block to probable status is even harder. Differences shown between the two atlases are likely a reflection of different methods. Soras are using wetlands set aside in developed areas like Folsom and Elk Grove. Status in the Delta with limited access is poorly known, but they likely occur where there is appropriate habitat.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.67% / year[n]	0.93% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Wetland with emergent vegetation

Nest Type

Loosely woven "basket"

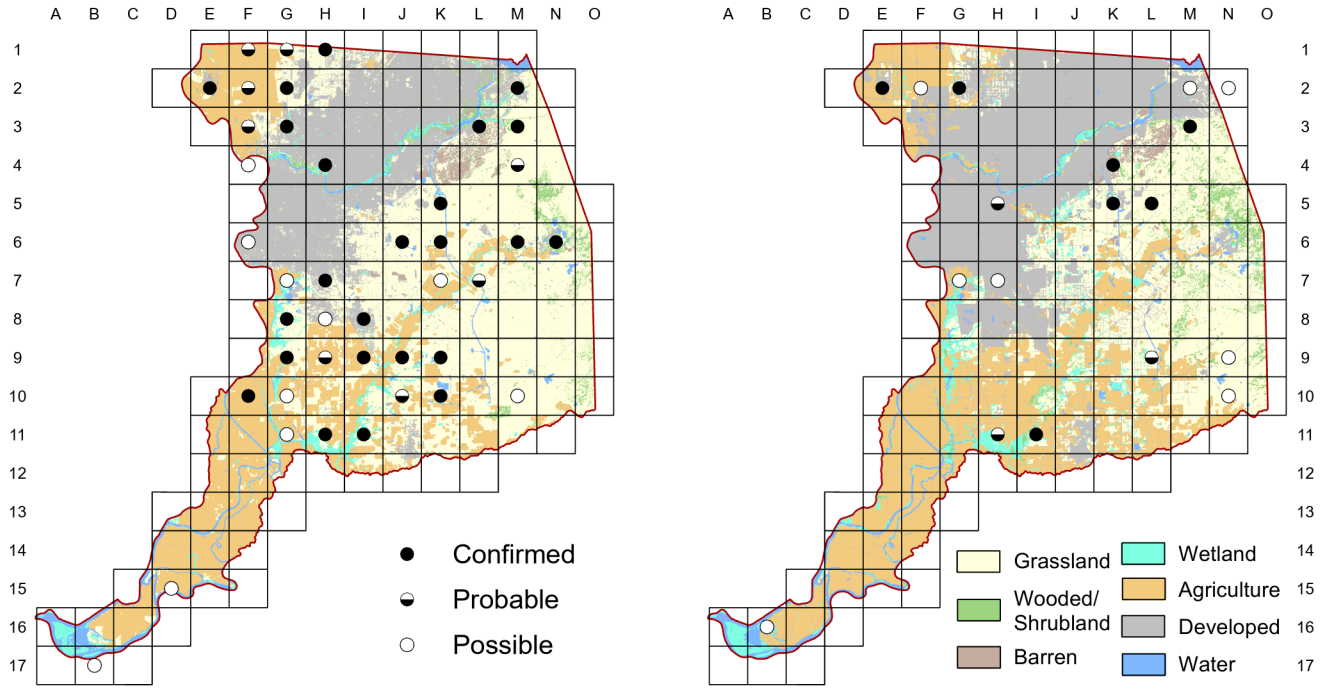
---

21 August 2016 — Block K-5

Observed for several minutes. Rail with short bill, still mostly dark; face mostly buffy; breast dull buffy; flanks with white streaks on a darker background color.

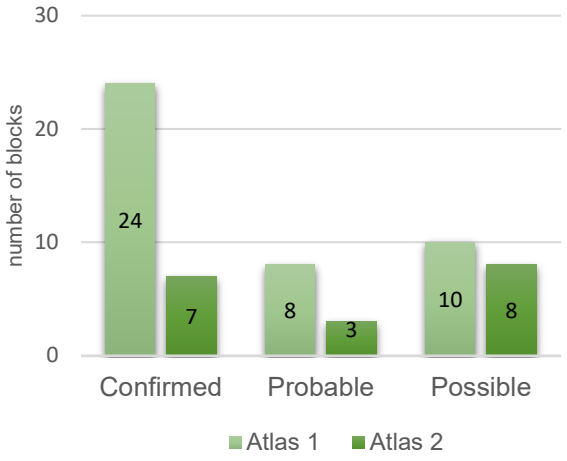
Common Gallinule
Gallinula galeata

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



The decline of the Common Gallinule as a Sacramento County breeder is discussed in Chapter Six. The geographic pattern of decline in the county is very similar to that of the Pied-billed Grebe and American Coot and is likely linked to development impacts on their wetland habitats.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–2.79% / year[n]	–0.81% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Moderately deep wetland with emergent vegetation

Nest Type

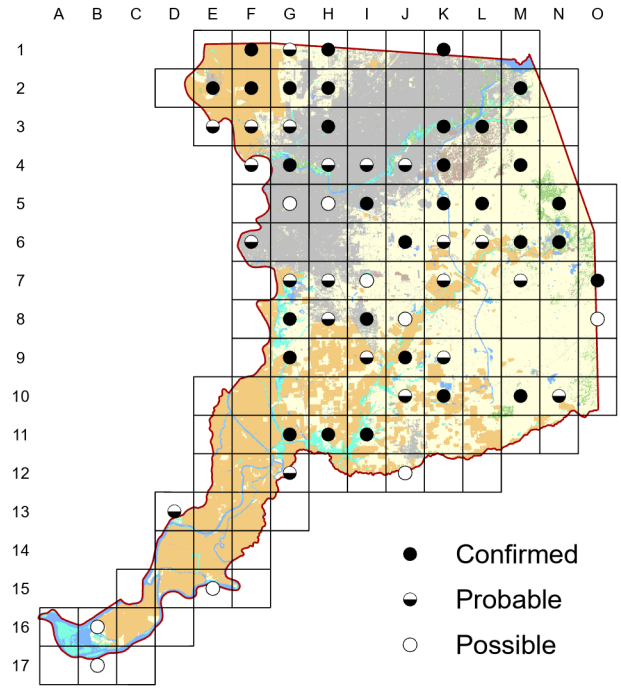
Cup nest on platform

15 July 2020 Block M-3

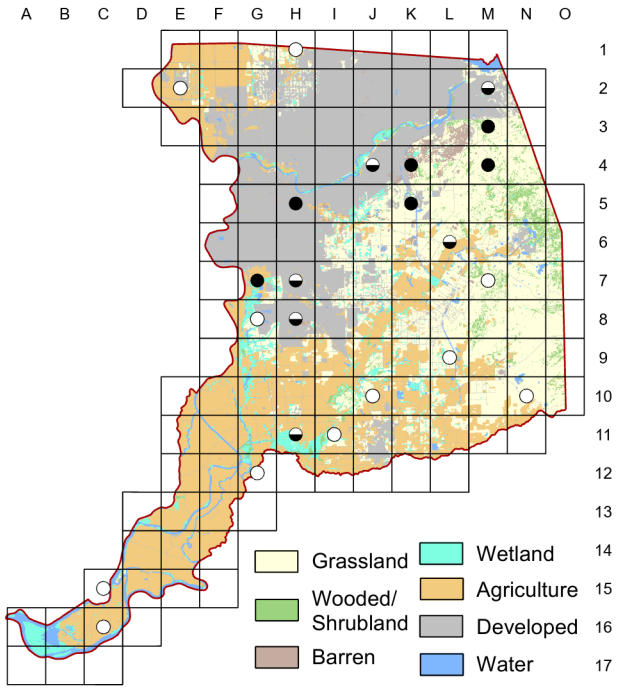
One chick was being fed by an adult and an immature bird, presumably an older sibling from a first breeding attempt.

American Coot
Fulica americana

Atlas 1

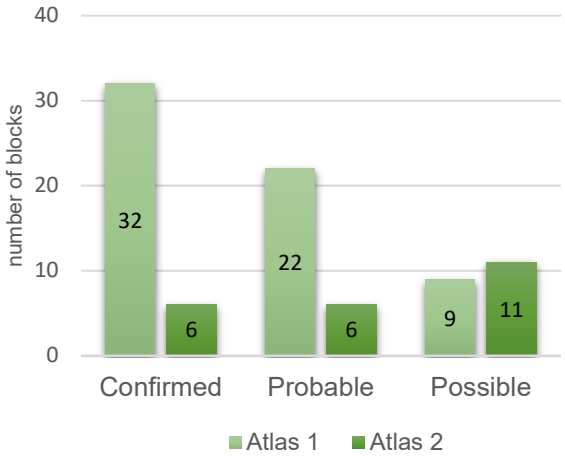


Atlas 2



We discussed the decline of the American Coot in some detail in Chapter Six. This species, along with the Pied-billed Grebe and Common Gallinule, has disappeared as a breeder mainly in areas where development has either destroyed wetlands or impacted them indirectly.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–2.36% / year[s]	–0.96% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Wetland with emergent vegetation

Nest Type

Floating platform

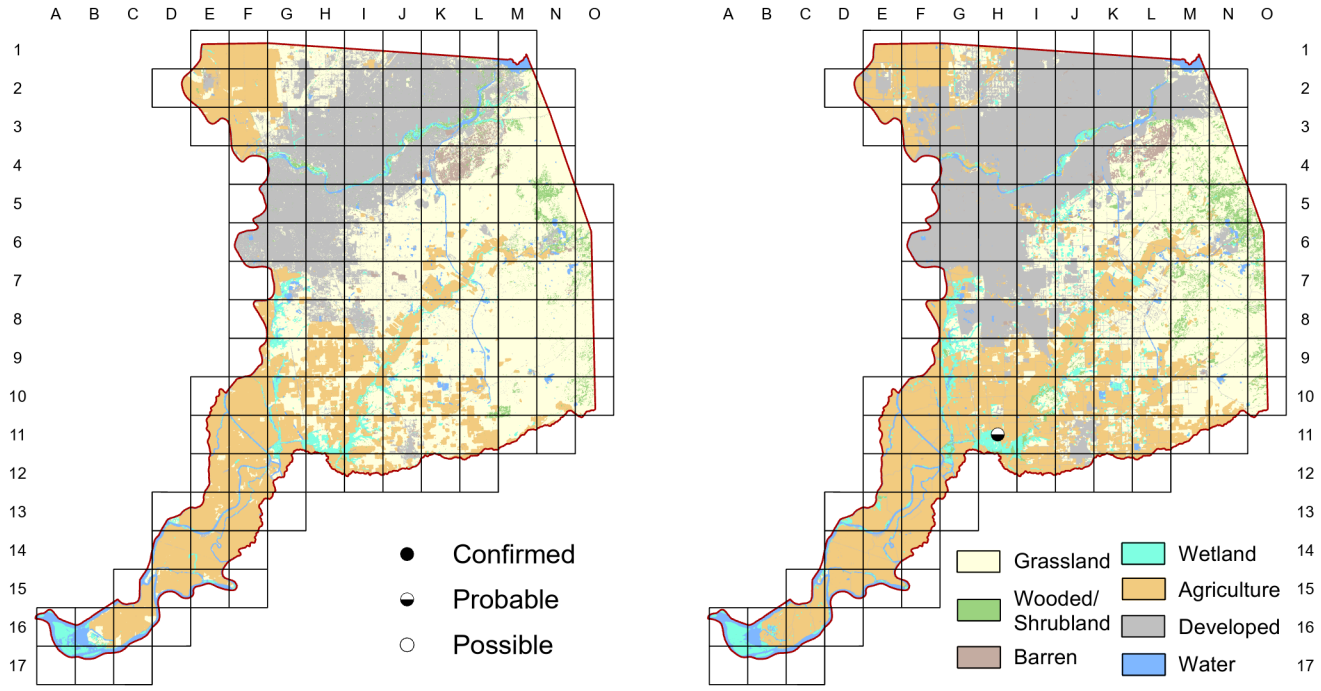
---

24 June 2019 Block M-3

One of the two adults had four recently hatched chicks and was feeding them algae.

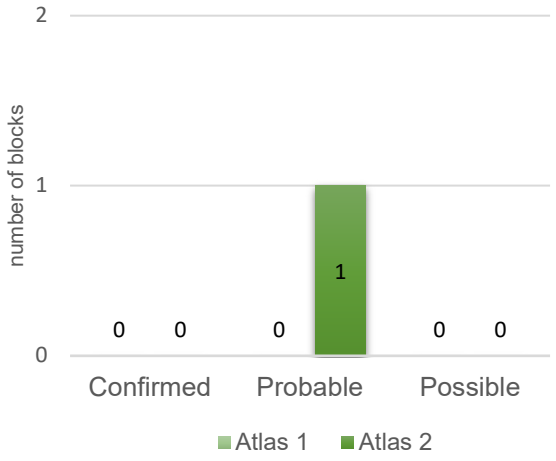
Black Rail
Laterallus jamaicensis

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



As discussed in Chapter Four, the appearance of the Black Rail as a potential breeder outside the Delta would not have been considered at all likely to Atlas 1 participants. Confirming breeding for most rails, and certainly for this very secretive one, is always difficult. But observations of singing birds well into the breeding season indicated probable breeding in at least one block in Atlas 2.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
No Data	No Data

[1]North America; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Shallow wetland with emergent vegetation

Nest Type

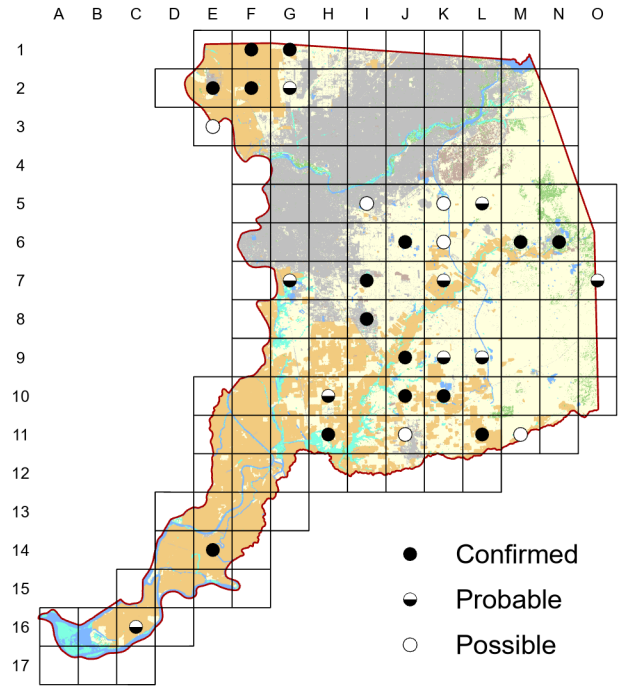
Concealed woven bowl

1927 R. Hoffman

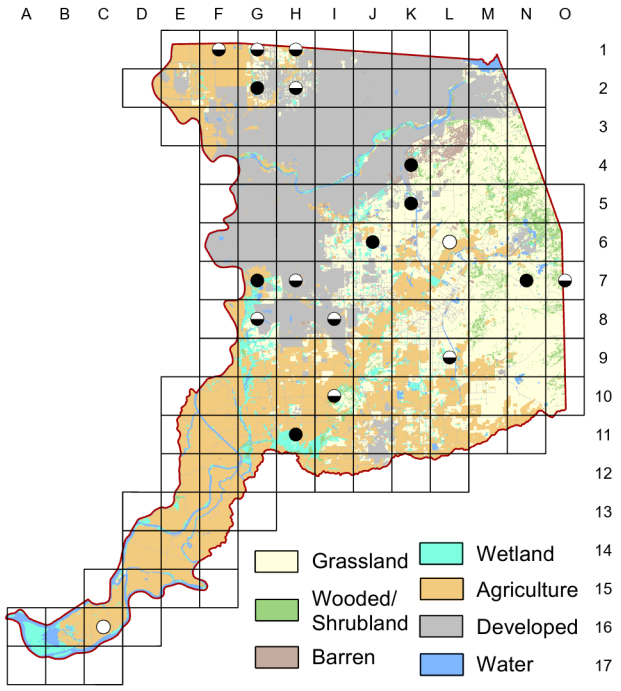
There is probably no bird in the United States that eludes observation more successfully than this mouse-like inhabitant.

Black-necked Stilt
Himantopus mexicanus

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



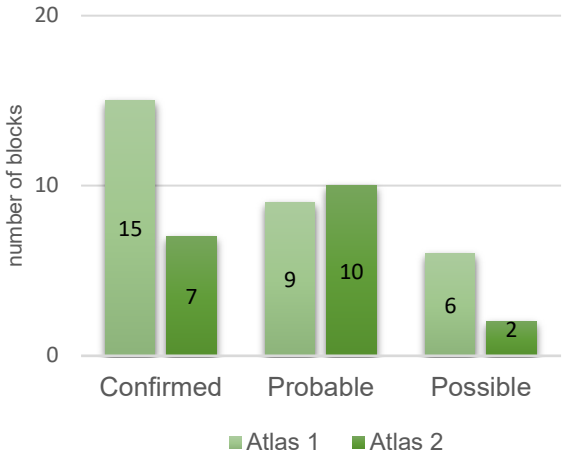
The Black-necked Stilt tends to nest near wetlands with more emergent vegetation than the American Avocet, which may explain why the species was detected in more blocks in each atlas, as many semi-permanent wetlands in the Central Valley are managed as deep-water emergent marsh. However, like the avocet, the stilt apparently declined, detected in fewer blocks in Atlas 2.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.35% / year[n]	1.11% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Shallow wetland with emergent vegetation

Nest Type

Scrape with plant matter

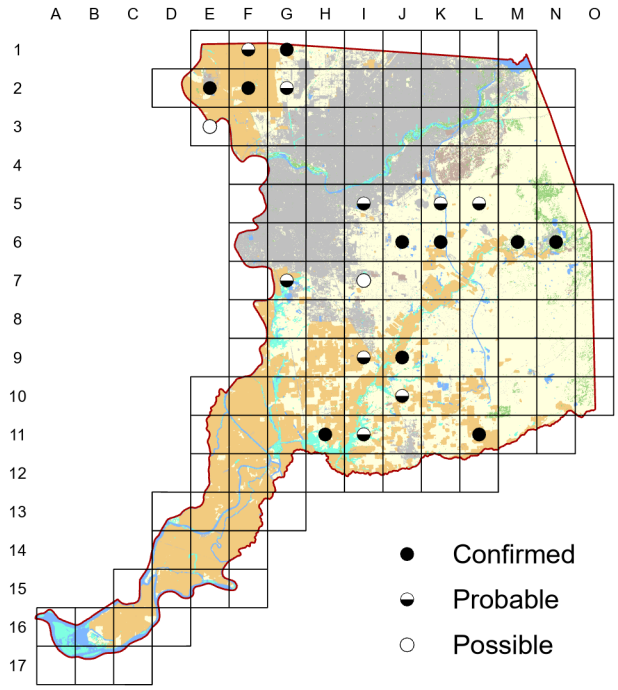
---

23 May 2020 — Block K-4

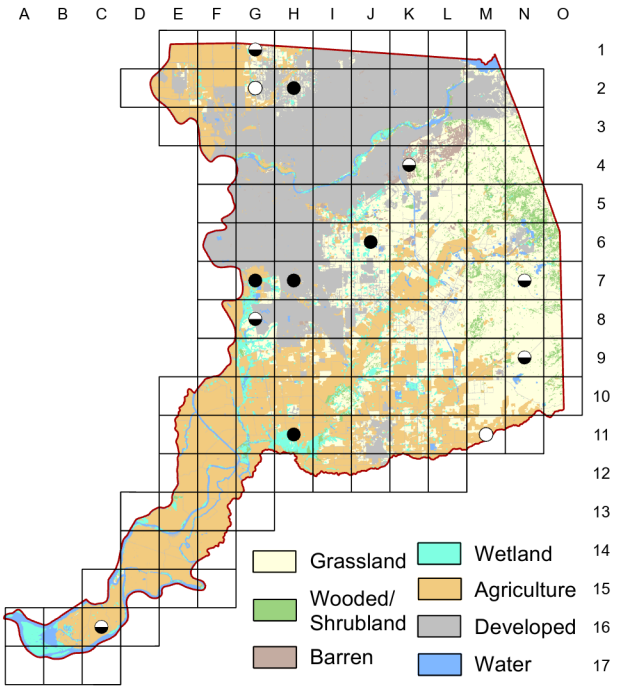
Two adults on nests. Two other adults with young huddled under their wings.

American Avocet
Recurvirostra americana

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



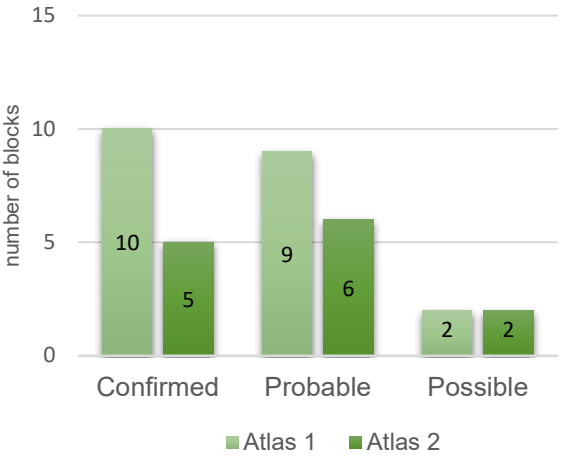
The American Avocet requires shallowly-flooded wetland habitat to persist for the duration of nesting. This habitat is limited in the Central Valley, as many of the remaining wetlands are managed as deep-water marsh habitat or are drained early in the year. Therefore, it is not surprising that the avocet showed an apparent decline between the two atlases, including abandoning the Natomas Basin where it previously nested in flooded rice fields.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.77% / year[n]	0.33% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Shallow wetland with emergent vegetation

Nest Type

Scrape with plant matter

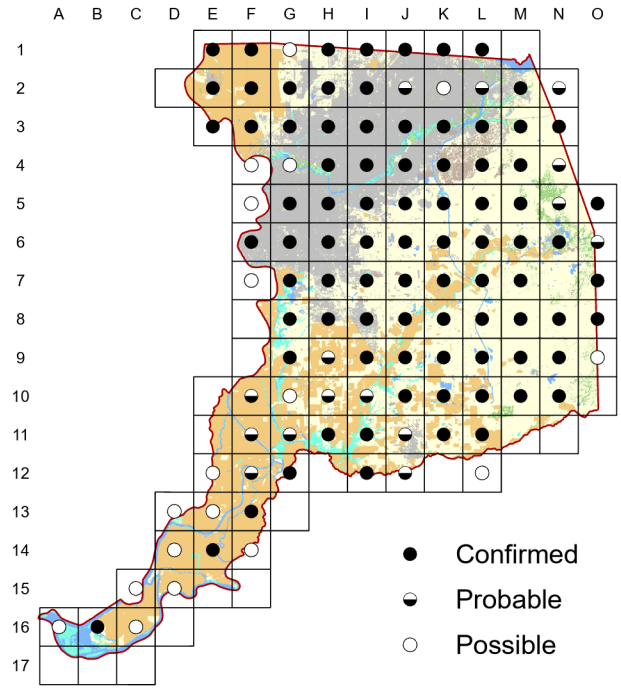
---

15 June 2015 — Block H-11

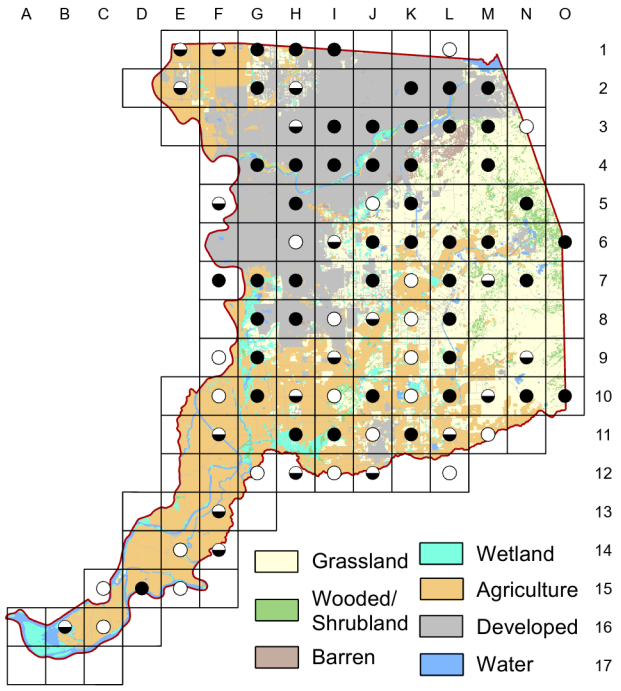
Parents watching over fledglings, one chased a Northern Harrier off.

Killdeer
Charadrius vociferus

Atlas 1

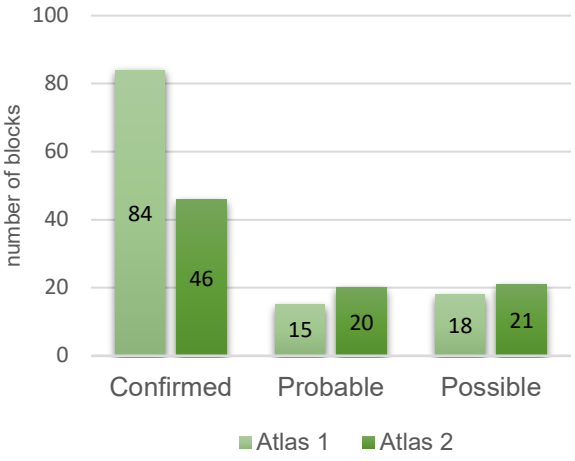


Atlas 2



Vociferously announcing their nests on gravel parking lots or construction sites may give the impression that Killdeer are doing well in the county. However, like our other breeding shorebird species, the Killdeer demonstrated an apparent decline between atlases.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.58% / year[s]	**–0.57**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Variety of open habitats

Nest Type

Scrape, often on pebbly ground

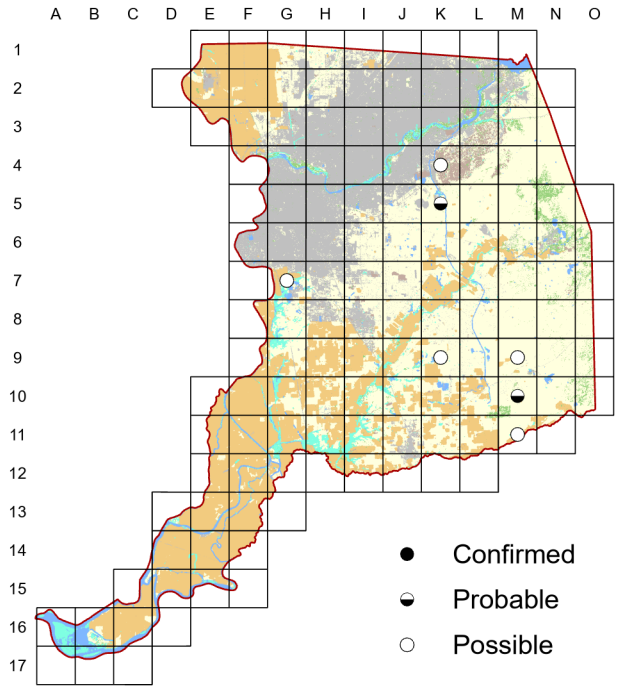
---

16 April 2016 — Block H-1

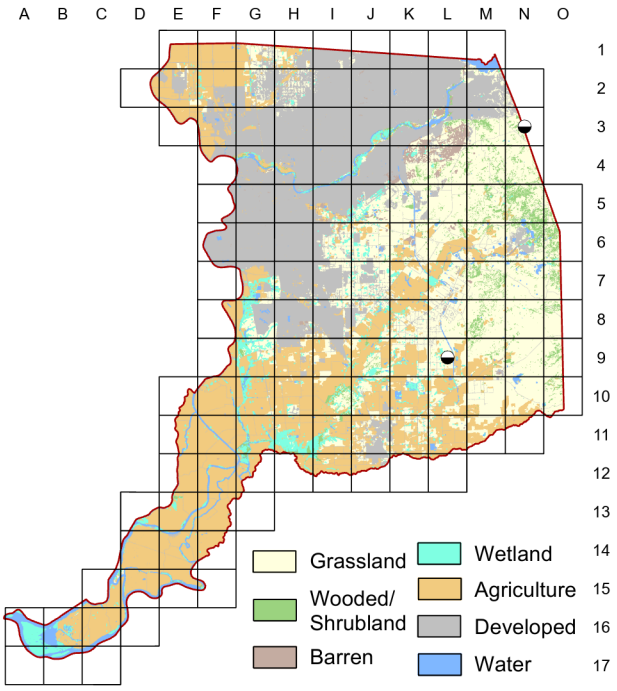
Pair doing broken wing displays while two very small chicks ran away from me.

Wilson's Snipe
Gallinago delicata

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



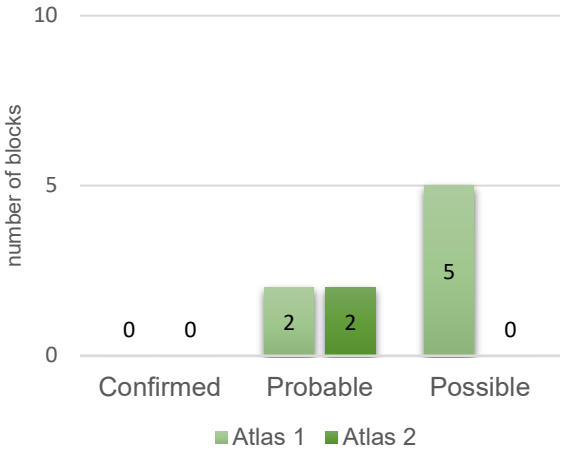
Although neither atlas was able to confirm nesting of the Wilson's Snipe in Sacramento County, the species did nest successfully in the county in 2005. Suitable habitat remains, but mosquito control requirements make it difficult to retain the shallow summer-flooded conditions ideal for this species.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–2.73% / year[s]	0.71% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Shallow grassy wetlands

Nest Type

Scrape lined with plant matter

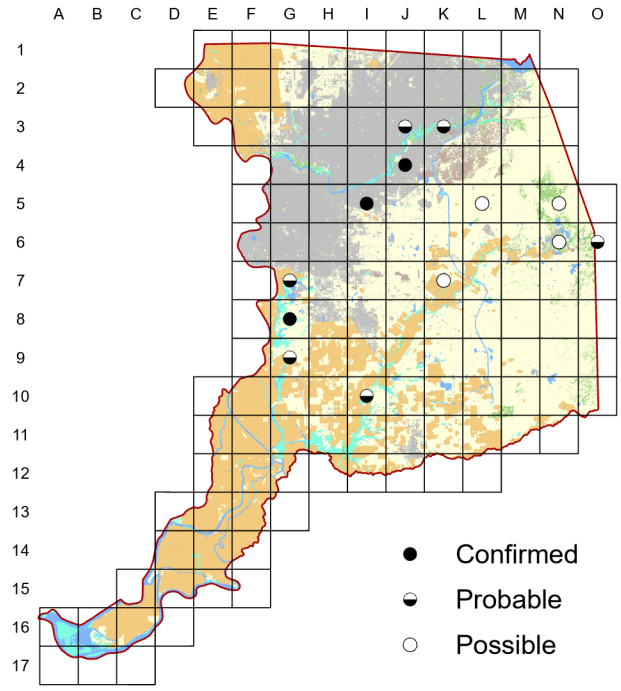
---

25 April 2019 Block N-3

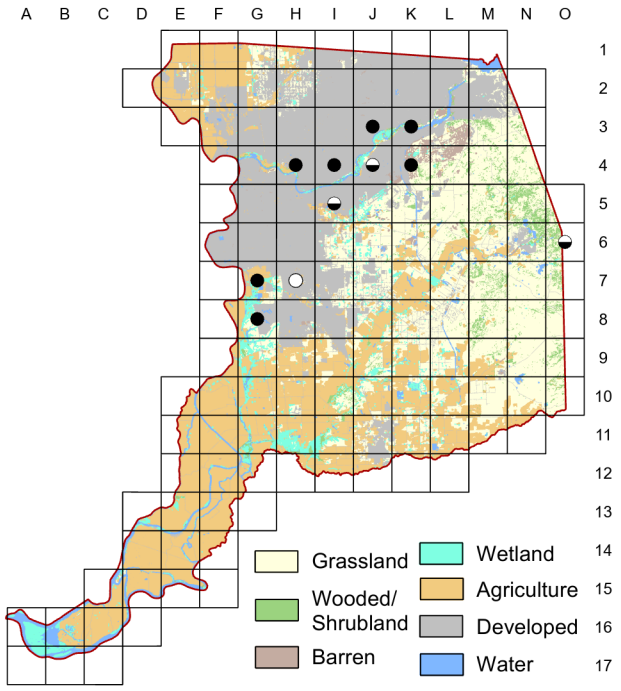
Did courtship flight, circling and displaying before landing in cattail marsh.

Spotted Sandpiper
Actitis macularius

Atlas 1

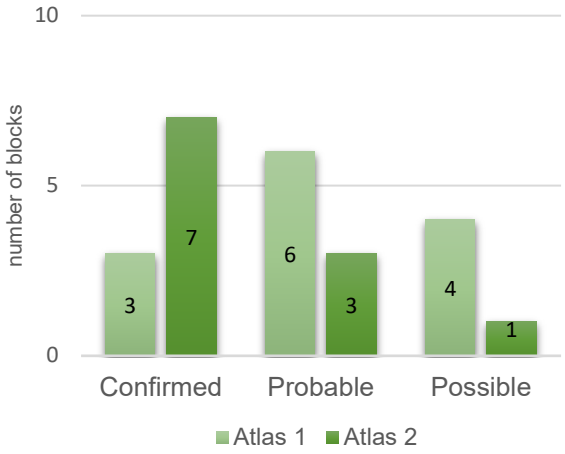


Atlas 2



While the Spotted Sandpiper's range didn't appear to change much between the two atlases, they were not considered local breeders until the 1970s. It is unclear if they were overlooked or truly expanded. Most dependable along the American River, they are found elsewhere in appropriate habitat, such as ponds and retention basins. They are probably more widespread along the Cosumnes River than shown, but access is limited along much of its course.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.92% / year[s]	**–1.45**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Varied habitats, but always near water

Nest Type

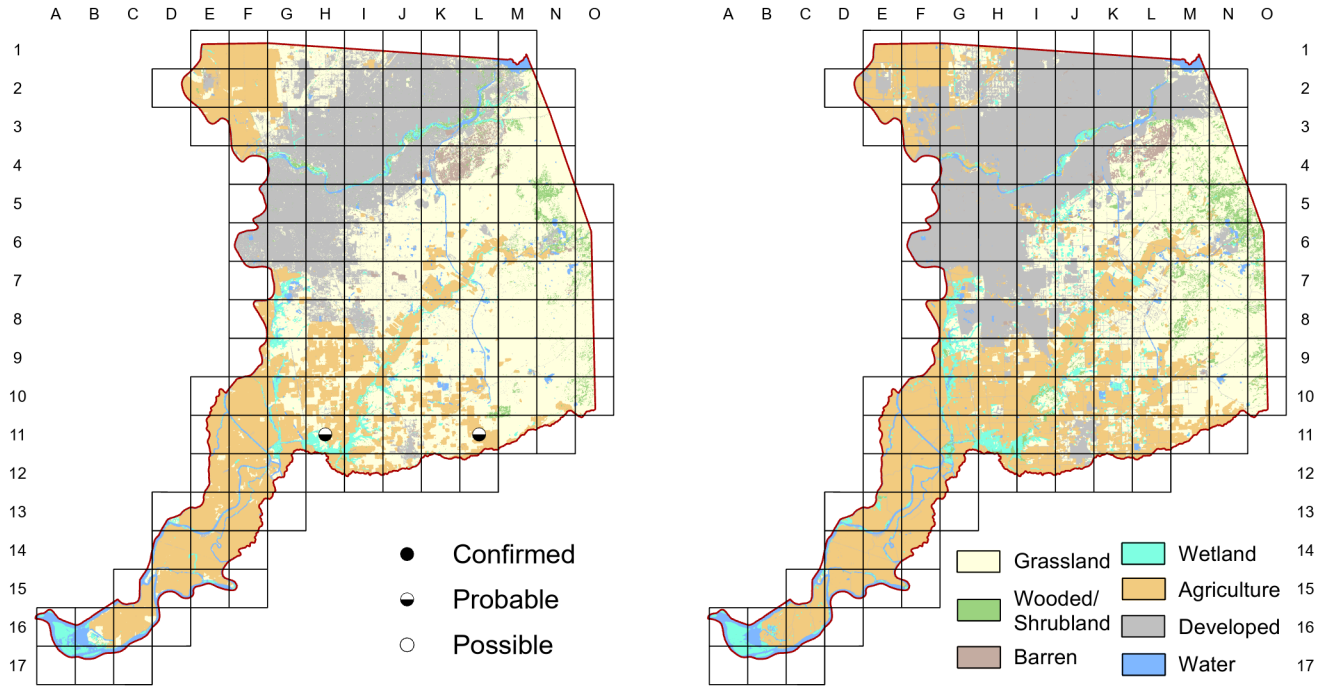
Scrape lined with plant matter; usually shaded

3 July 2016 Block H-4

Still displaying atop buttonwillows on the small island; calling frequently.

Wilson's Phalarope
Phalaropus tricolor

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



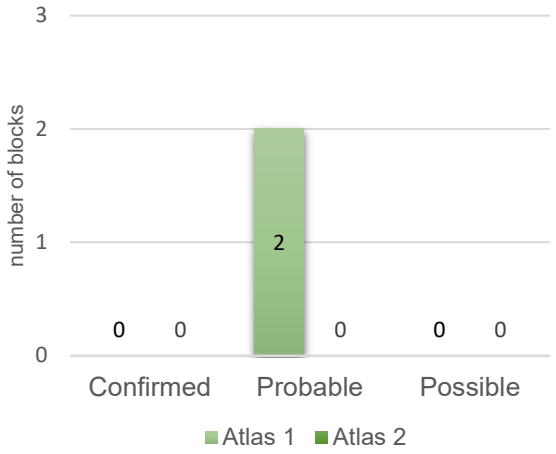
As noted in Chapter Four, Wilson's Phalaropes have nested occasionally in nearby counties and, there are at least two confirmed records of breeding during the summer of 2001, between the two atlas periods. Therefore, we can hope that this beautiful and intriguing species may breed here again. As with Wilson's Snipe, mosquito control issues make it difficult to maintain ideal habitat through the summer.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–3.31% / year[s]	–0.58% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Shallow wetlands with nearby vegetation

Nest Type

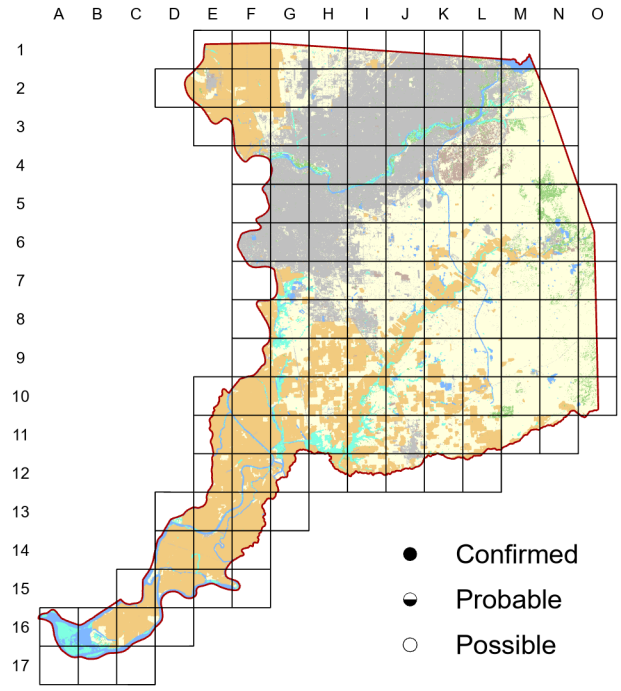
Grass-lined depression in dense vegetation

1923 W. L. Dawson

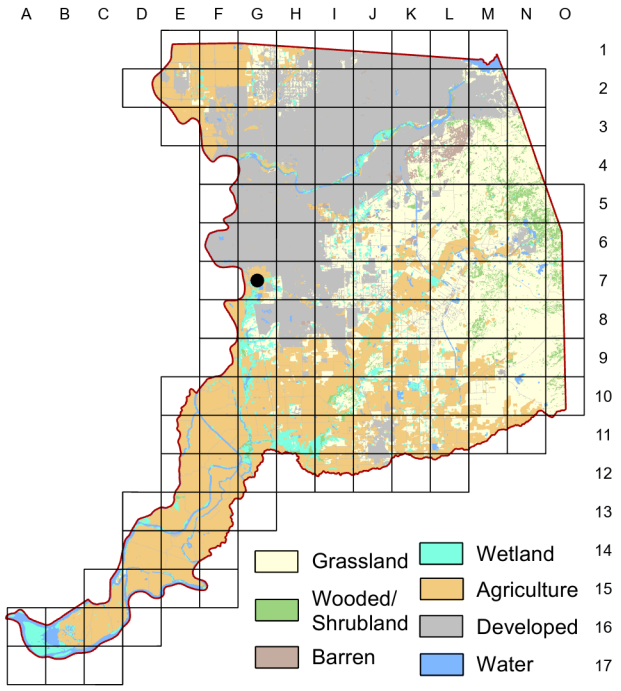
These sturdy pioneers of feminism have assumed all the functions of leadership,... and have delegated to the males all the domestic cares and responsibilities.

Least Tern
Sternula antillarum

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



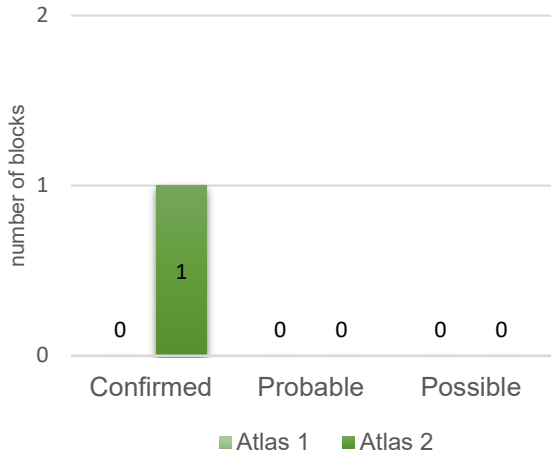
One or two pairs of Least Terns nested at the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant, beginning in 2008 and continuing through 2020 (discussed in more detail in Chapter Four). This new county breeding record is consistent with a general expansion of this Endangered species in Northern California and currently represents the only consistent breeding in the Central Valley.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
No Data	**–2.32**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Sparsely vegetated ground, usually sandy or gravelly

Nest Type

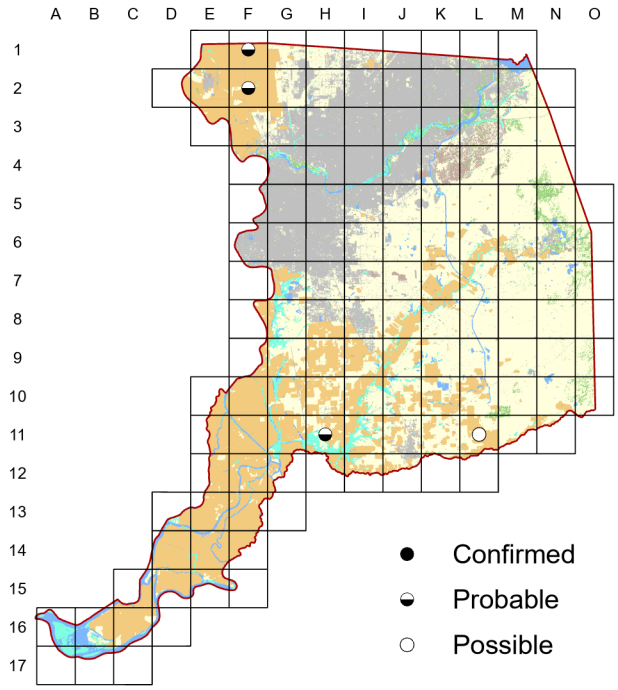
Simple scrape

30 June 2016 — Block G-7

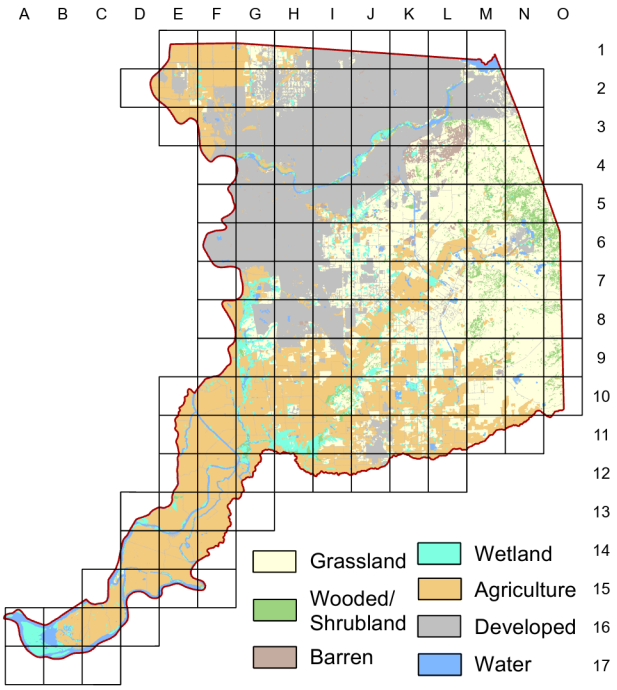
Both adults (one with a fish) diving on a Canada Goose that walked within 25 feet of the chicks.

Black Tern
Chlidonias niger

Atlas 1

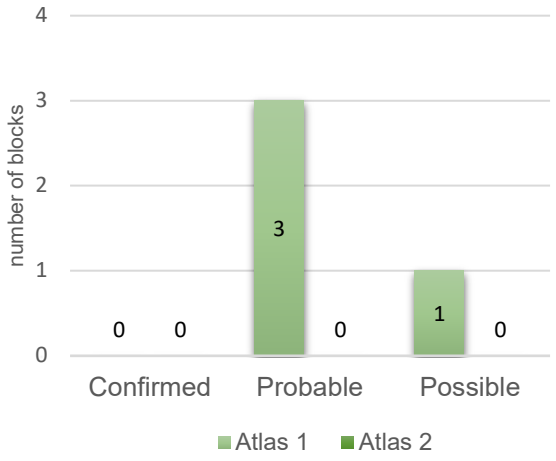


Atlas 2



Mirroring population declines that have been documented in the Central Valley and rangewide, no breeding behaviors of the Black Tern were observed in the county during Atlas 2. As discussed in Chapter Four, with the continued loss of rice acreage in the Natomas Basin and predicted changes in precipitation events, this species may never again breed in Sacramento County.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–2.48% / year[n]	–2.44% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Shallow wetlands; sometimes rice fields

Nest Type

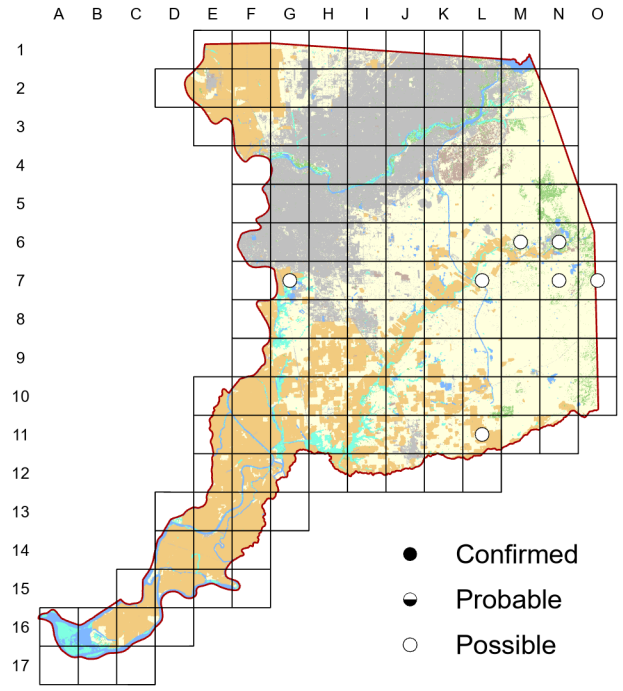
Cup on vegetation pile surrounded by water

1923 W. L. Dawson

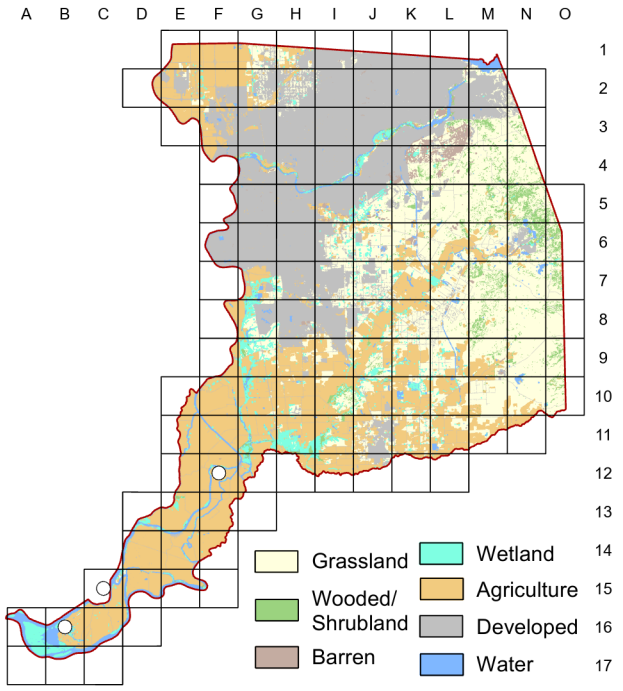
This restless, petulant, graceful water-sprite harries the face of nature, pursues insects, chides intruders, builds adventurous rafts for the use of his offspring.

Forster's Tern
Sterna forsteri

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



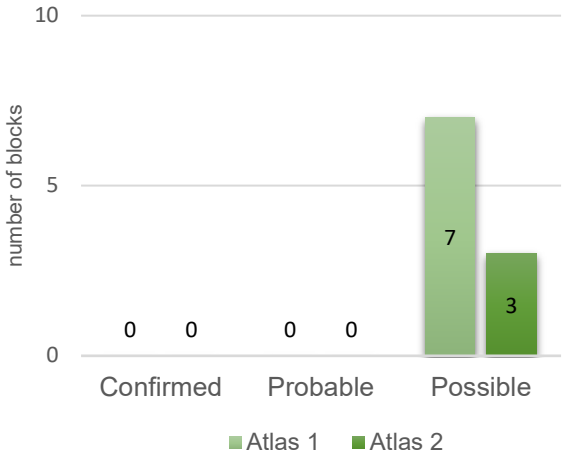
The actual status of the Forster's Tern as a breeder in Sacramento County remains a mystery. Atlas 1 had some interesting observations in the central portions of the county, but Atlas 2 observations were confined to the Delta. Two of these involved birds carrying fish, but were coded as possible since the birds may have been heading west into Solano County or south into Contra Costa. There are potential breeding sites in Sacramento County, but nothing definite as yet.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–2.47% / year[s]	–1.17% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Deep wetlands with expanses of open water

Nest Type

Variety, from simple scrape to floating raft

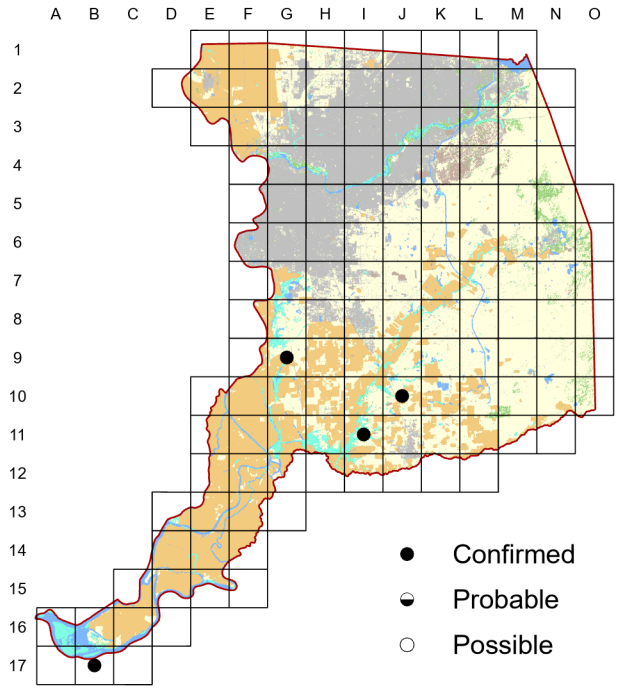
---

5 April 2018 — Block B-16

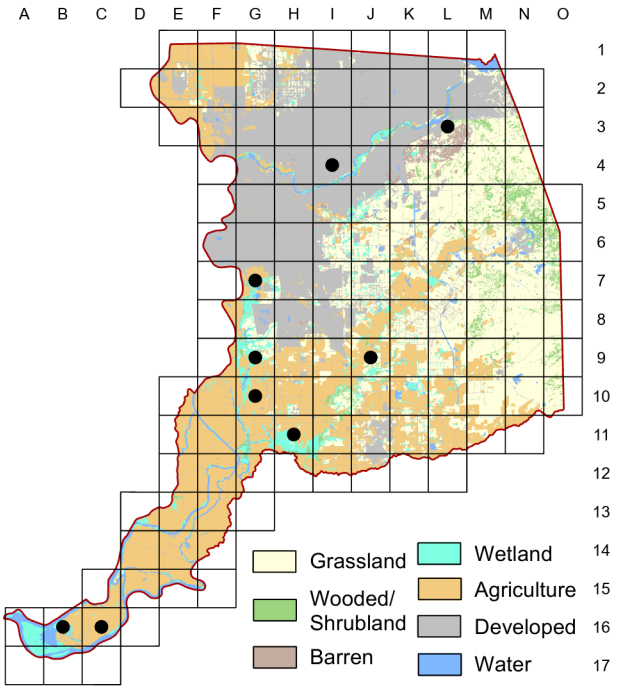
Carrying fish, could have been heading south to Contra Costa.

Double-crested Cormorant
Phalacrocorax auritus

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



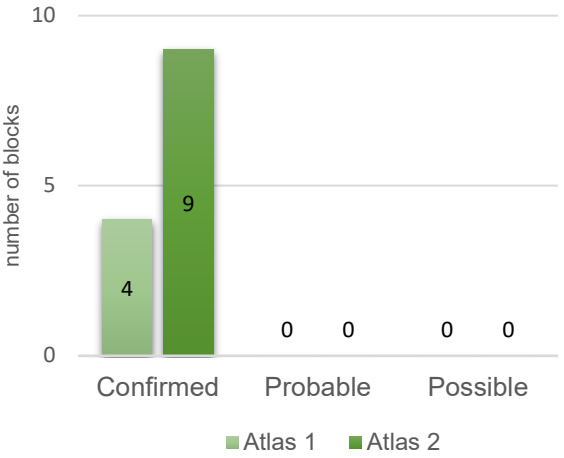
The doubling of occupied blocks (and colonies) by Double-crested Cormorant between atlas projects is somewhat misleading, as breeding in a number of blocks in Atlas 2 involves only a few pairs and occupancy of some large colonies has fluctuated dramatically between atlas periods. See Appendix for additional details.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
2.43% / year[n]	**2.55**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Ponds, lakes, rivers, etc. with nearby trees

Nest Type

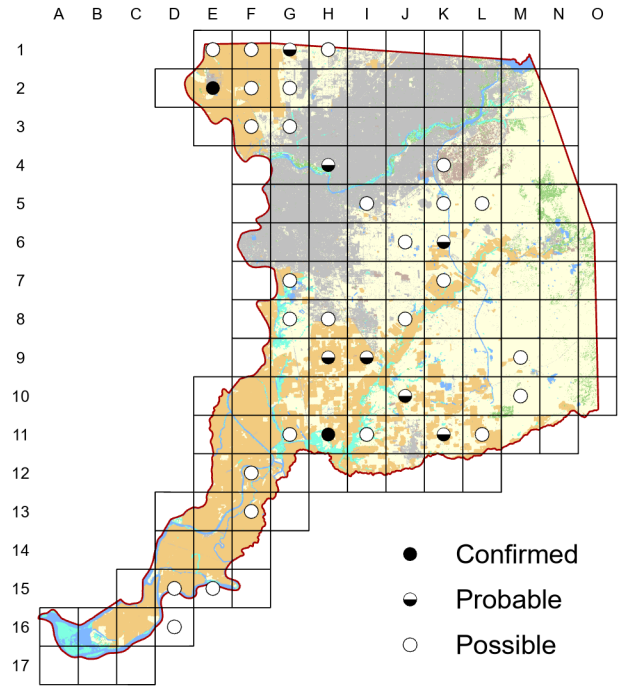
Stick nest in trees or other structures

1940 — I. Gabrielson and S. Jewett

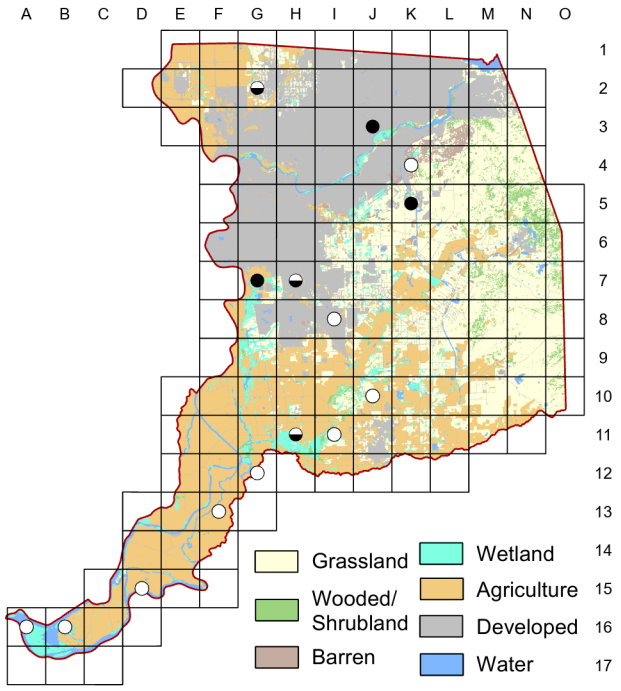
A cormorant colony is usually a rather smelly place. The nests are filthy, and the trees that support them are liberally white-washed with excrement...dead birds, both old and young, add to the stench.

American Bittern
Botaurus lentiginosus

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



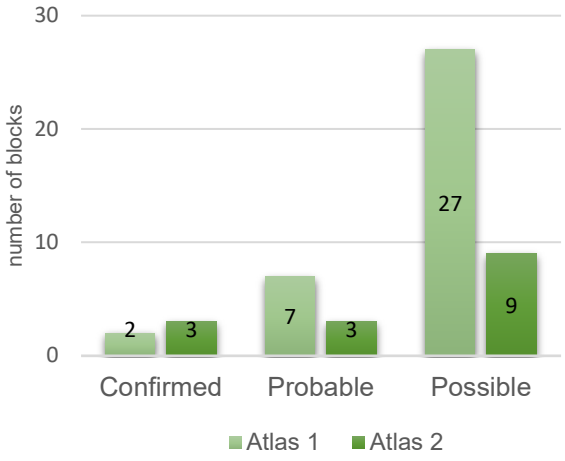
As with many other waterbird species, the reduction in detections of American Bitterns between the two atlases almost certainly reflects a real decline over the past two decades. Most notable is the loss of habitat (largely ricelands) in the northwestern part of the county (Natomas Basin), as well as reduced summer water, discussed in Chapters Four and Six.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.02% / year[n]	–0.74% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Wetland with tall emergent vegetation

Nest Type

Platform of vegetation, usually over water

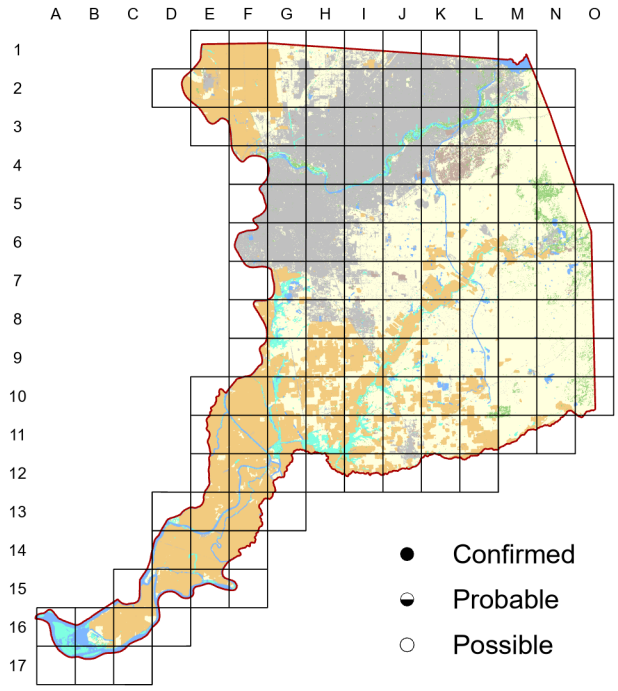
---

6 May 2016 — Block K-5

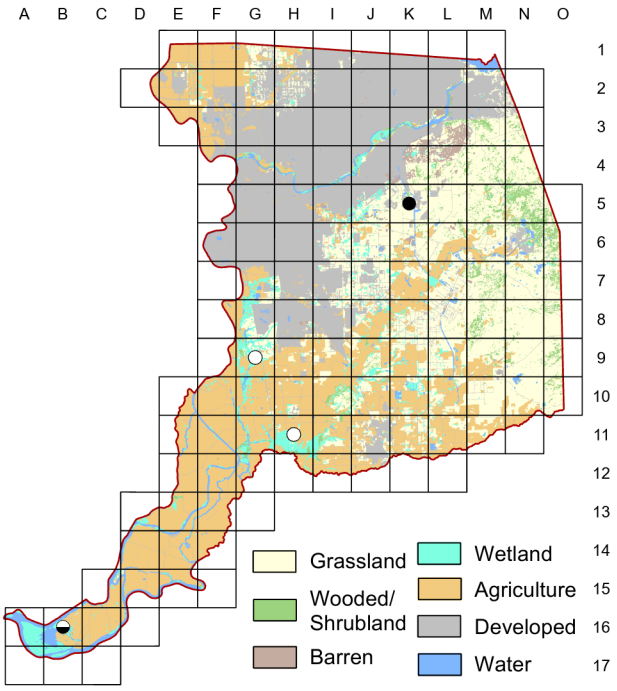
Courting pair was very active, flying circles over the lake at times.

Least Bittern
Ixobrychus exilis

Atlas 1

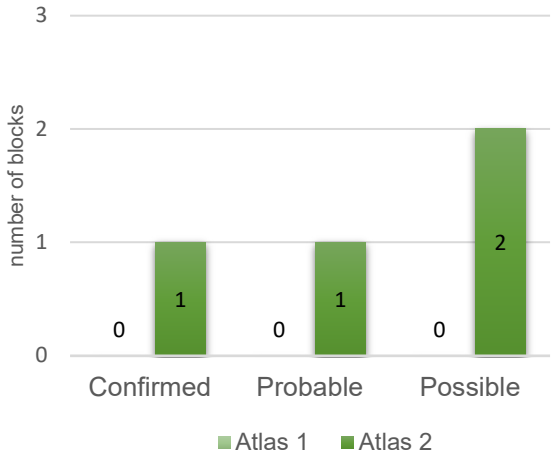


Atlas 2



The Least Bittern was first detected in the county in the mid-1990s, between the atlases, and peaked before Atlas 2 began. A lack of summer water is likely an important limiting factor. The secretive nature of the species and lack of access to survey habitat, especially in the Delta, leave a lot of questions unanswered. A fuller discussion can be found in Chapter Four.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
No Data	–0.11% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Wetland with tall emergent vegetation

Nest Type

Platform of vegetation bent down above water

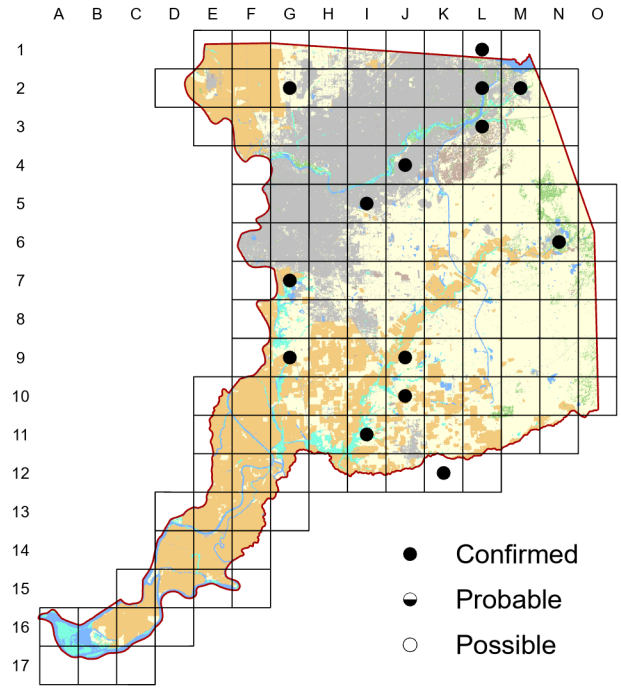
---

12 May 2015 Block K-5

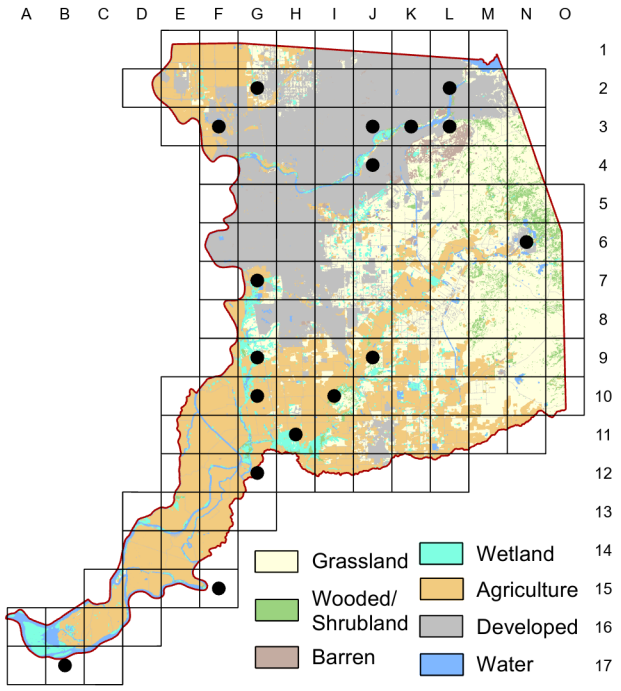
One was "singing" in the tules on the west side, where the path along the lakeside willows ends. It was very close but completely hidden. A second individual answered.

Great Blue Heron
Ardea herodias

Atlas 1

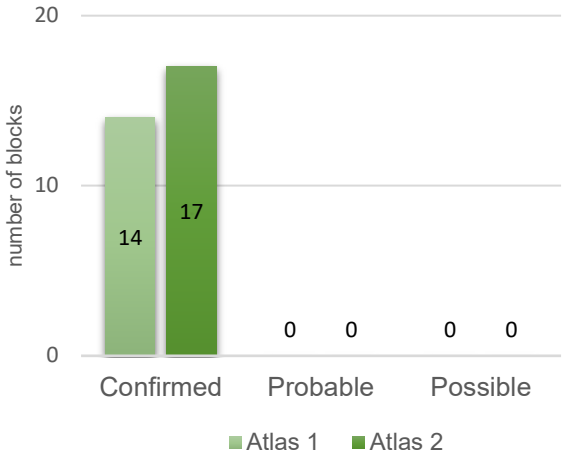


Atlas 2



Breeding status of the Great Blue Heron in Sacramento County has remained fairly stable between the two atlas periods. Most colonies are along or near the major river corridors. See Appendix for additional details.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.22% / year[n]	**0.57**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Stands of trees near water

Nest Type

Stick nest in trees

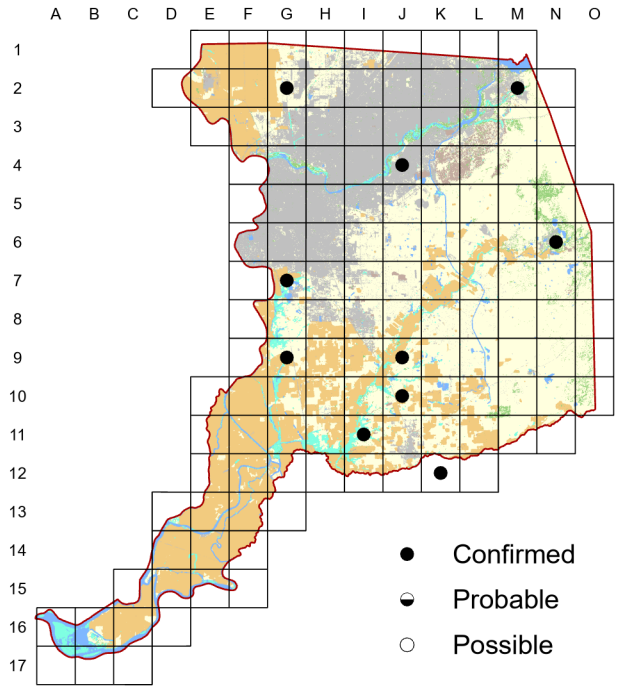
---

4 May 1988 — Block J-4

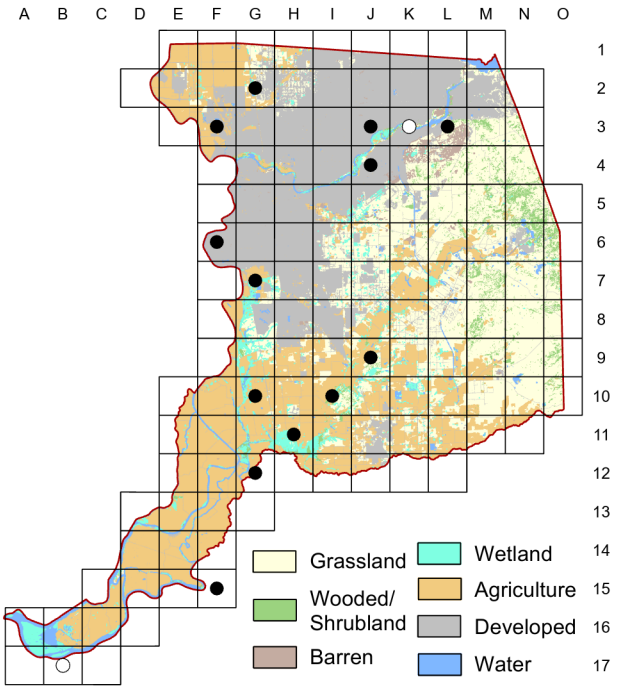
Observed about 24 nests with various stages of young in cottonwoods, black walnuts, valley oaks and introduced evergreens.

Great Egret
Ardea alba

Atlas 1

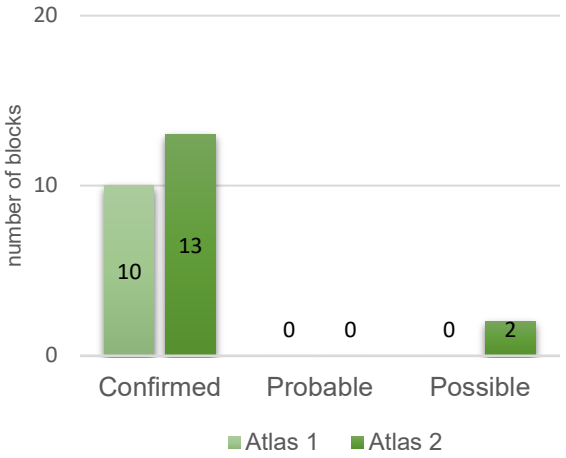


Atlas 2



Great Egrets experienced a modest increase in breeding numbers in the county between atlas periods. They are almost always found breeding in mixed colonies with Great Blue Herons along or near the major rivers. See Appendix for additional details.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
4.31% / year[s]	**1.47**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Stands of trees near water

Nest Type

Stick nest in trees

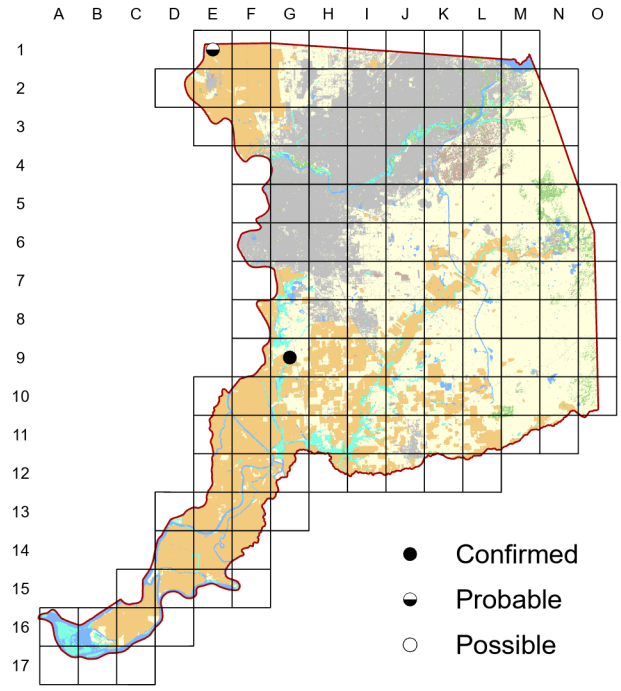
---

7 June 1992 — Block K-12

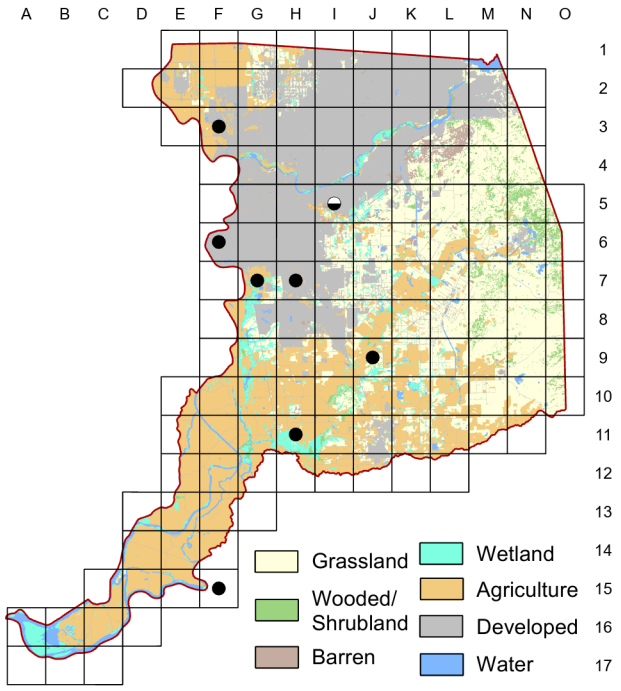
As I approached Cherokee Lane, I heard "egret keening."
I looked over my left shoulder, and saw the rookery.

Snowy Egret
Egretta thula

Atlas 1

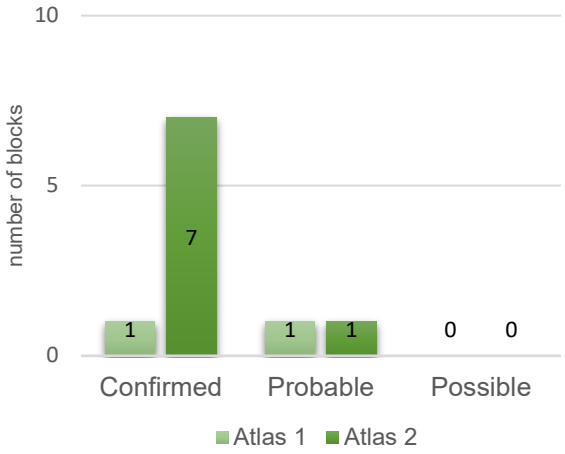


Atlas 2



Numbers of breeding Snowy Egrets fluctuated dramatically within and between atlas periods as colonies were abandoned or destroyed, and new colonies were established. Always found in association with Black-crowned Night-Herons and frequently in suburban residential areas during Atlas 2, but not during Atlas 1. See Appendix for additional details.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
2.59% / year[n]	0.87% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Marshes, swampy woods, suburban residential areas

Nest Type

Stick nest in trees

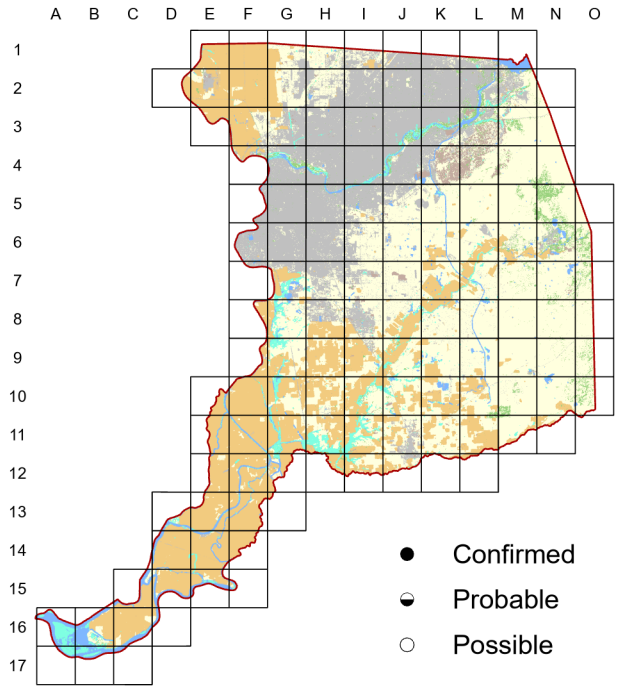
---

9 June 2019 — Block F-6

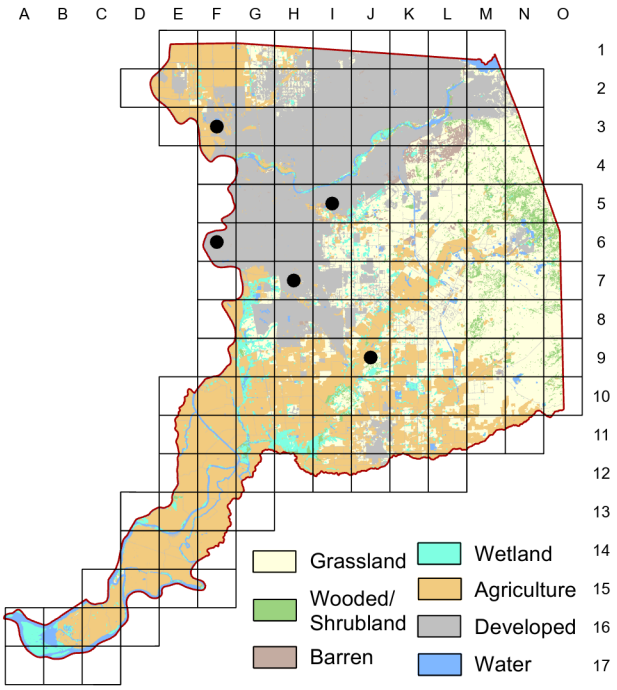
Both adults and fledglings on nests in redwood trees.

Cattle Egret
Bubulcus ibis

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



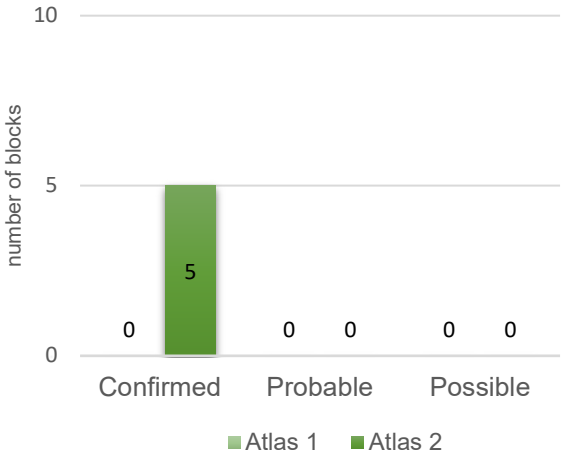
Occasionally observed during Atlas 1, Cattle Egrets were not found breeding in Sacramento County until sometime in the 2000s. They are usually found breeding with Black-crowned Night-Herons and Snowy Egrets in suburban residential areas. See Chapter Four and Appendix for additional details.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
1.84% / year[n]	**–1.0**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Residential areas, marshes, swampy woods

Nest Type

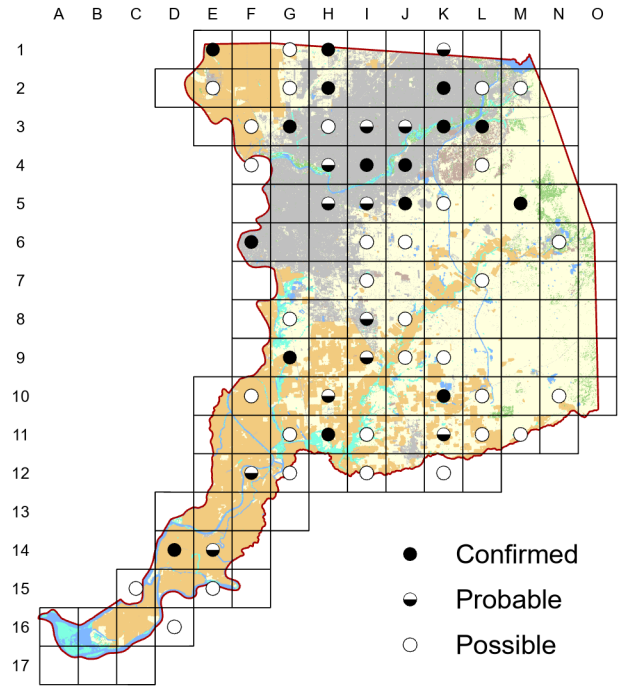
Stick nest; colonial breeder

24 June 2014 Block F-3

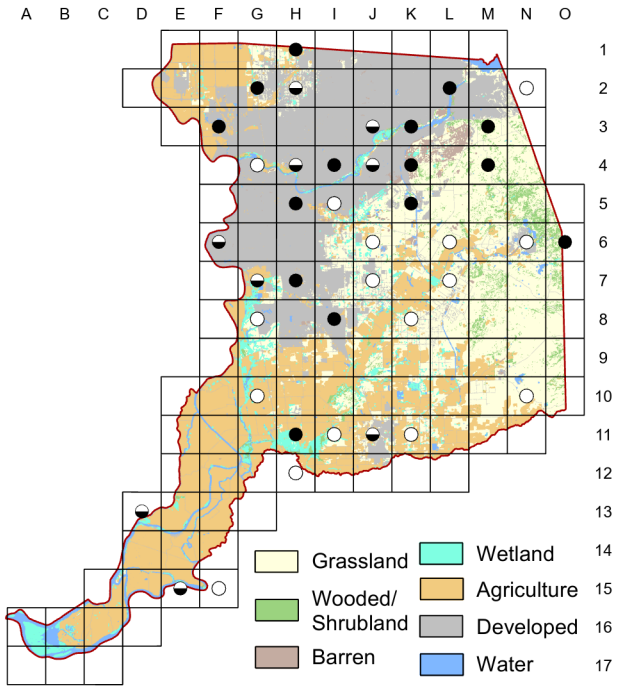
Nesting in pine trees with Snowy Egrets and Black-crowned Night-Herons.

Green Heron
Butorides virescens

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



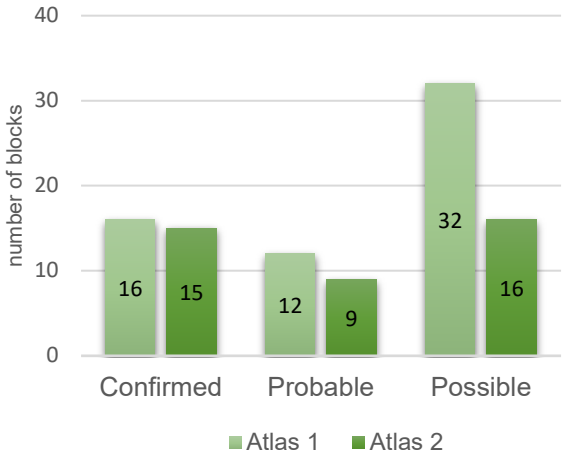
The distribution and numbers of breeding Green Herons in Sacramento County have not changed dramatically between atlas periods. The American River corridor remains the core of the species' range in the county. Since the 1980s, the species has been found nesting in ornamental trees in residential areas, in small, loosely organized colonies in some cases.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.77% / year[n]	**–1.33**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Riparian woods, ornamental suburban trees

Nest Type

Stick nest hidden in tree or bush

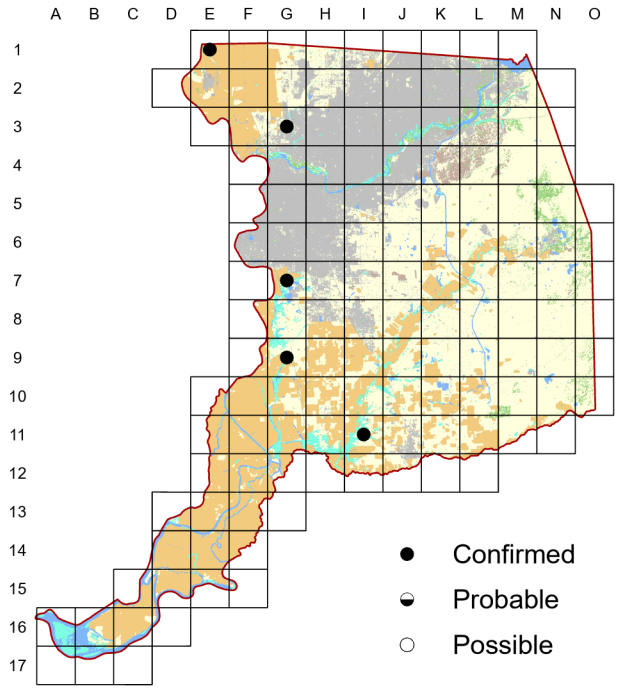
---

5 April 1988 — Block J-4

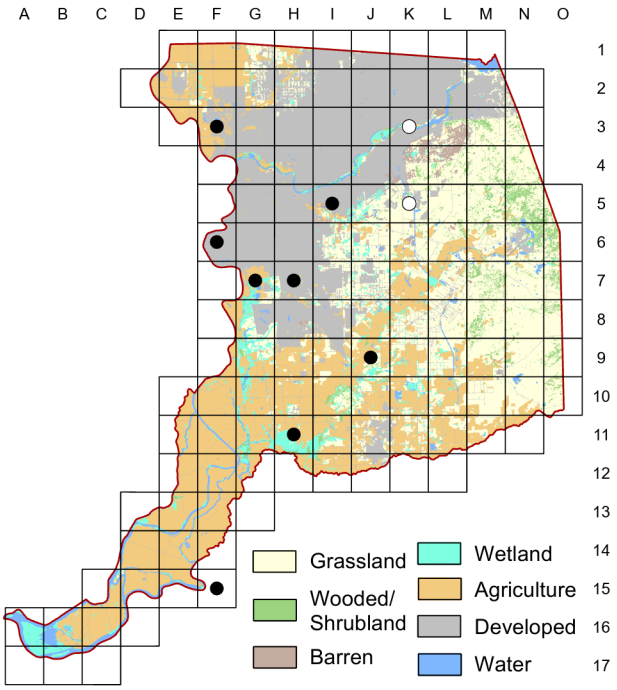
Observed pair flying from American River toward trees in Cordova Park . . . located adult on nest in trees.

Black-crowned Night-Heron
Nycticorax nycticorax

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



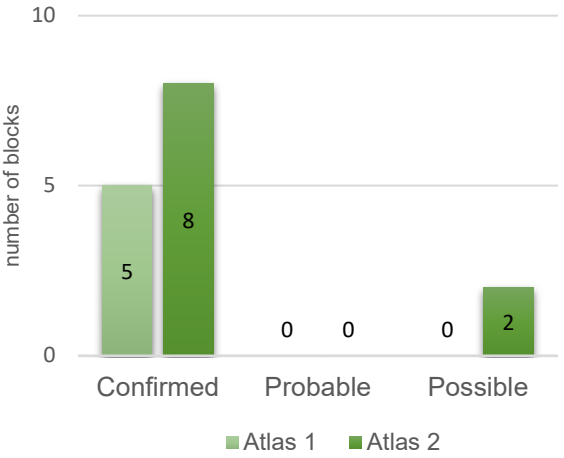
Black-crowned Night-Herons exhibit a pattern like that of Snowy Egrets, in association with which they often nest. Dramatic shifts in colony locations, with frequent abandonment for a variety of reasons, make it very difficult to discern trends or patterns, but breeding in suburban residential areas was a definite change in behavior between atlas projects. See Appendix for additional details.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.5% / year[n]	–0.56% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Marshes, swampy woods, residential areas

Nest Type

Stick nest in tree or bush; often over water

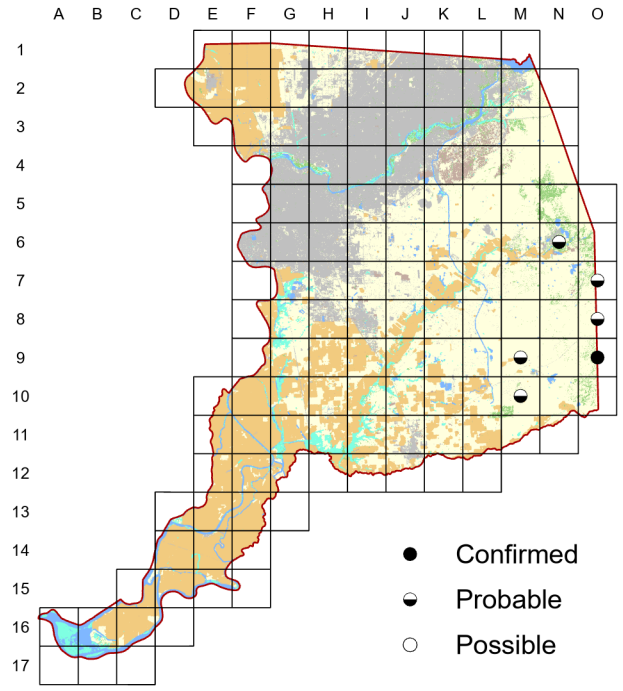
---

31 May 2015 Block F-3

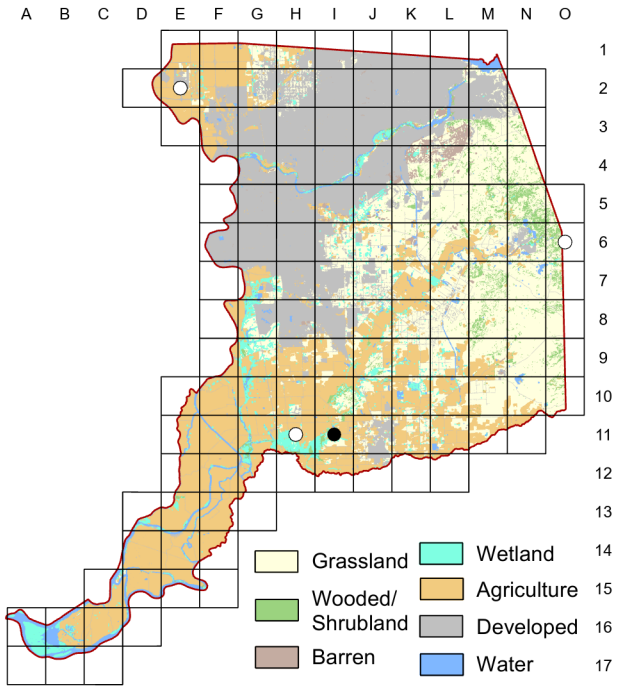
Many nests, many with young, very noisy, egg debris on ground, juveniles on ground.

Turkey Vulture
Cathartes aura

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



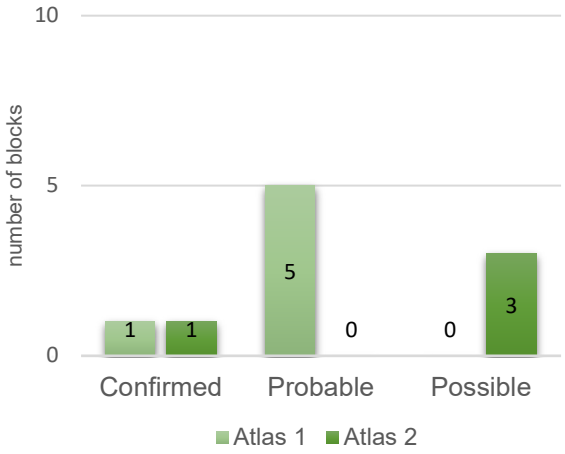
Changes in breeding detections for the Turkey Vulture between atlases probably reflect differences in effort and access. They were nearly unreported as a breeder in the eastern part of the county during Atlas 2 (where most records were found in Atlas 1). Between the atlases and early into Atlas 2, they nested on the ground under dense vegetation in valley oak riparian forest at Cosumnes River Preserve. This bird is quiet and secretive around the nest.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
1.79% / year[s]	**1.78**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Variety of open and forested habitats

Nest Type

Ledges, crevices; the ground under dense vegetation

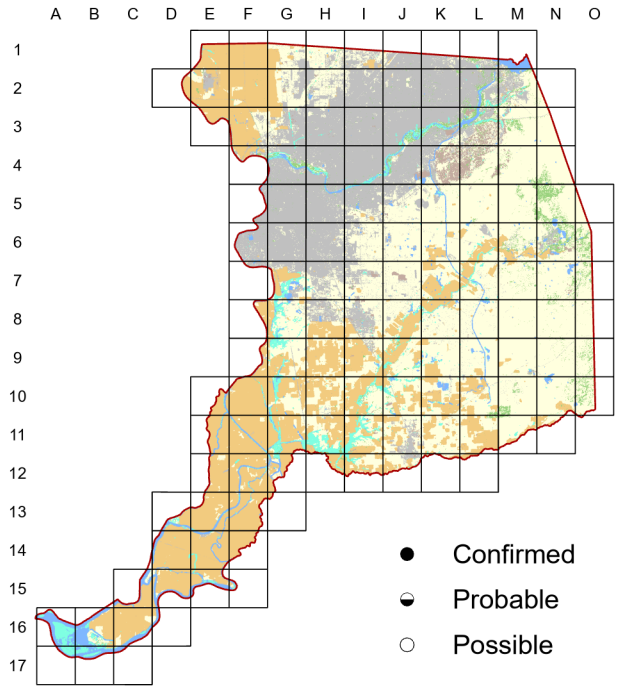
---

24 May 2020 — Block I-11

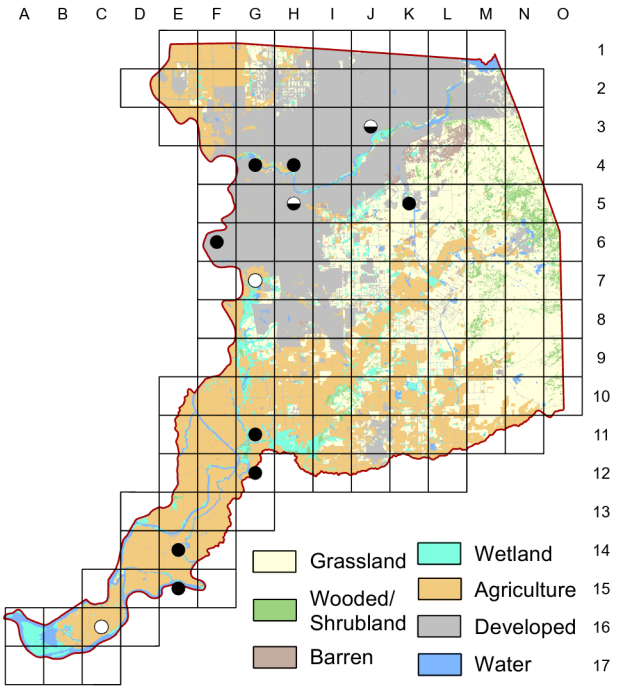
Flushed from forest floor in dense grape and blackberry. Suspect the bird was at least prospecting. John Trochet found a chick near this location several years ago.

Osprey
Pandion haliaetus

Atlas 1

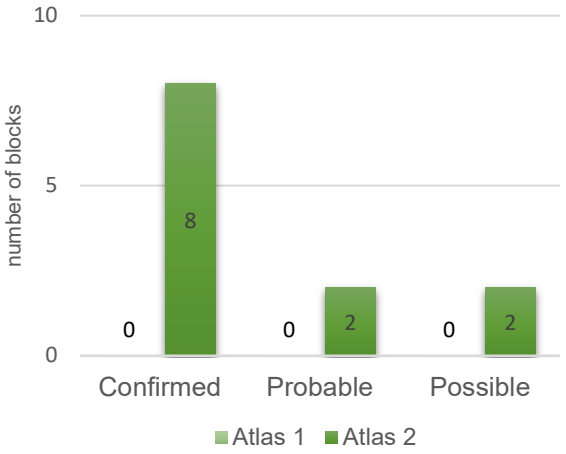


Atlas 2



The remarkable and most welcome recovery of the Osprey since the banning of DDT is discussed in Chapter Four. Based on the pattern of recovery seen elsewhere, we can expect this species to gradually expand to occupy any available habitat with suitable nesting sites. Installation of additional nesting platforms in the county would probably encourage and accelerate this expansion.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
2.2% / year[s]	**1.9**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Variety, but always close to water with ample fish

Nest Type

Stick nest in tree or on platform near water

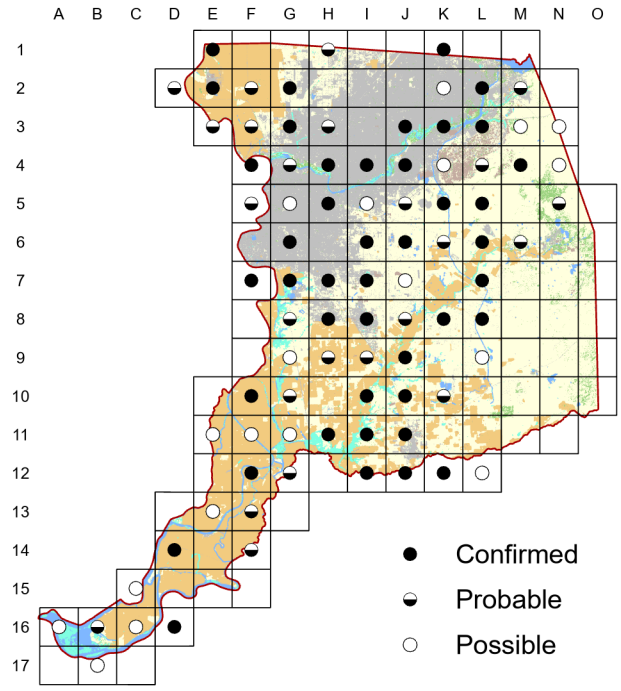
---

1 May 2018 Block G-12

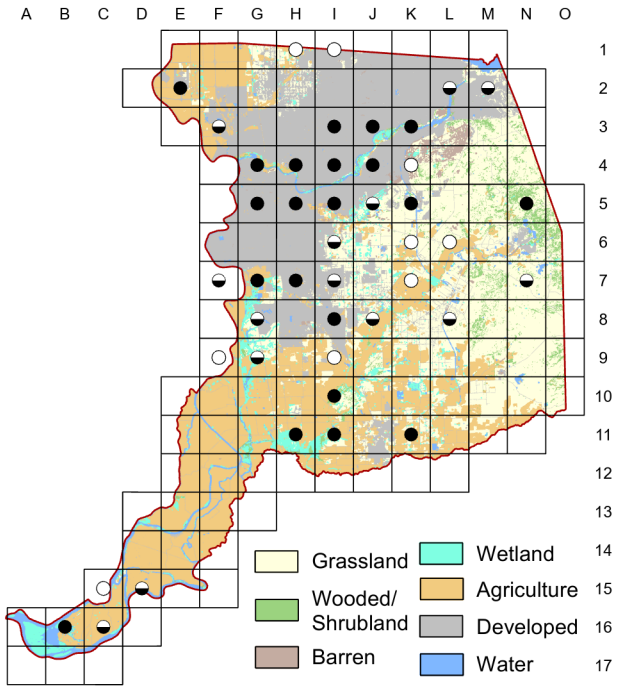
Nest on structure placed on power pole. One adult on nest with one visible young bird.

White-tailed Kite
Elanus leucurus

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



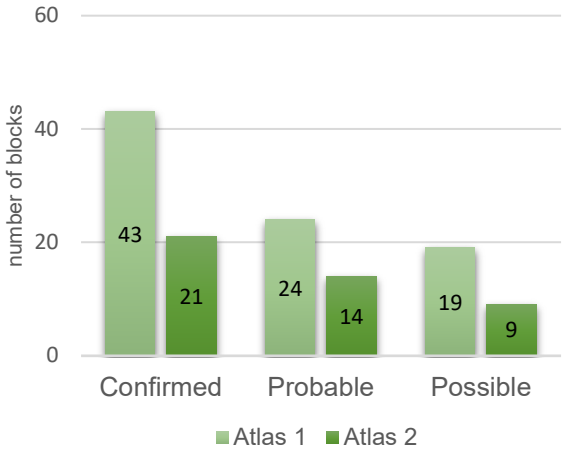
The California population of the White-tailed Kite has undergone significant dips and recoveries over the past century, but the more recent trend has been negative. Our results may mirror that, with kites appearing to no longer breed in several blocks used during Atlas 1. Many of those now empty blocks are in areas significantly impacted by development or conversion to more intensive agriculture, such as orchards or vineyards.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–2.02% / year[s]	–1.2% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Open country with some trees

Nest Type

Lined stick nest in trees

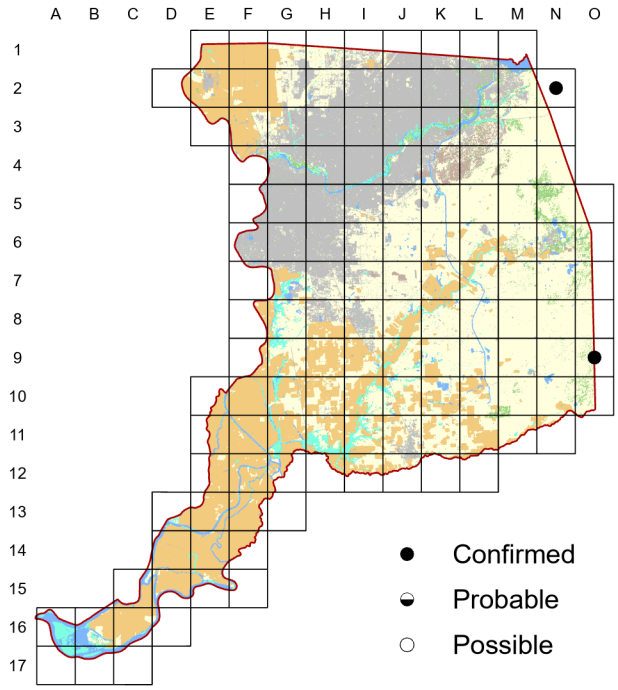
---

24 June 2016 Block I-8

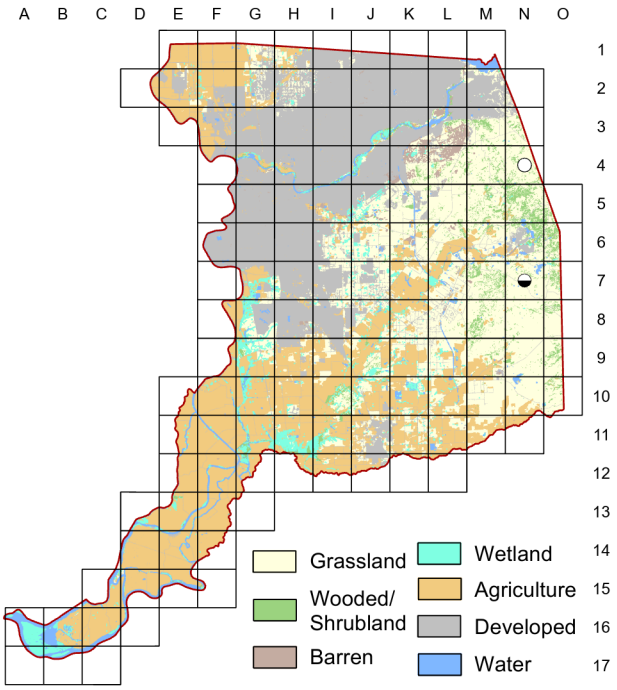
One kept going to dead area of tree and broke off branches for nest.

Golden Eagle
Aquila chrysaetos

Atlas 1

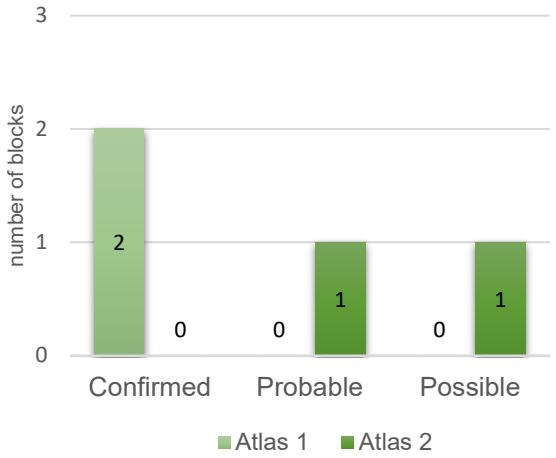


Atlas 2



As the maps confirm, the normal breeding range of the Golden Eagle barely reaches the eastern edge of Sacramento County. The one probable observation from Atlas 2 (block N-7) notes territorial display, but well to the south. Therefore, this could indicate nesting in the nearby block O-9, where this species was confirmed during Atlas 1.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.22% / year[n]	0.21% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Variety, with cliffs and open country nearby

Nest Type

Stick nest on cliff or in tree

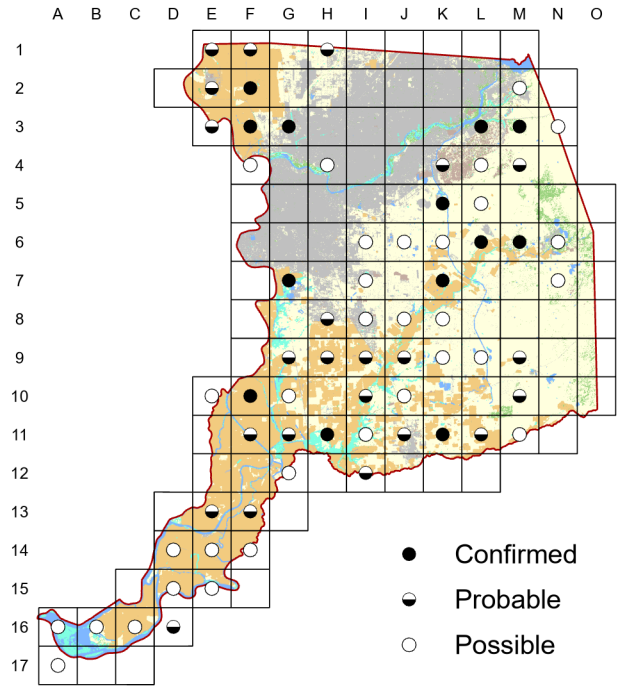
---

28 April 2018 — Block N-7

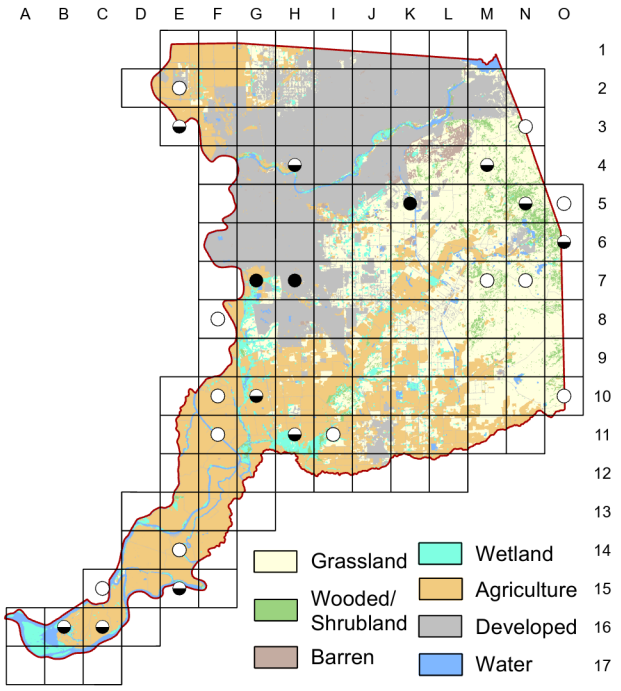
Adult doing territorial displays far to the south.

Northern Harrier
Circus hudsonius

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



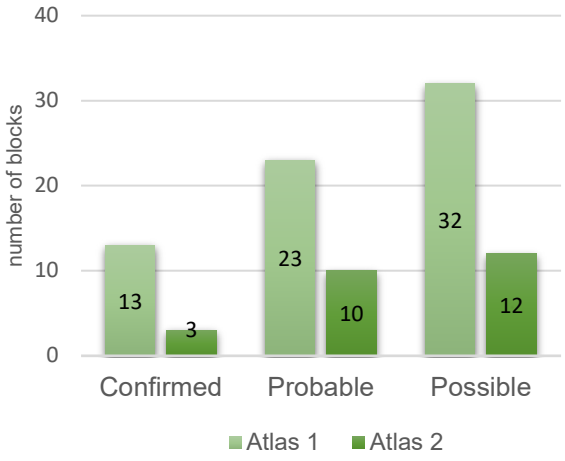
Consistent with trends in California and rangewide, our comparison of the breeding distribution for the Northern Harrier shows a dramatic reduction between atlases (discussed in Chapter Six). Continued expansion of orchards, vineyards, and development into open country leaves scant hope for a local recovery.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.68% / year[s]	**–0.79**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Open country, usually with wetlands

Nest Type

Stick nest on ground in thick vegetation

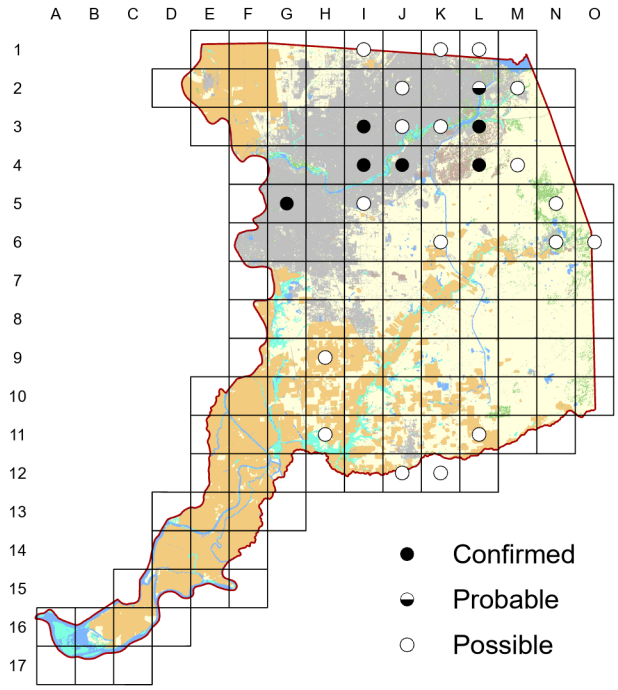
---

20 March 2017 — Block K-5

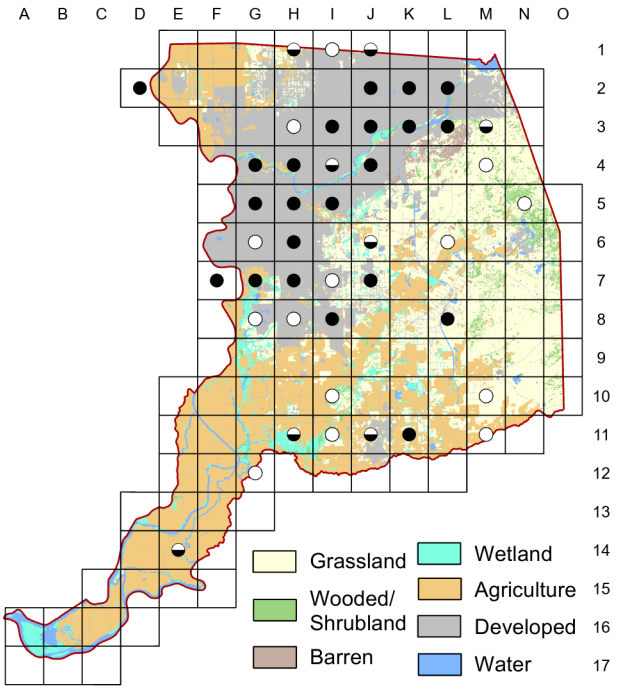
One carrying nesting material flew down in the swampy patch on the other side of the golf course fence.

Cooper's Hawk
Accipiter cooperii

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



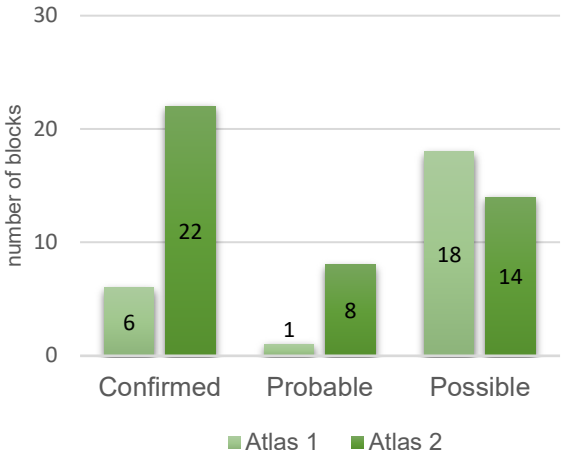
As noted in Chapter Five, the expansion of breeding Cooper's Hawks in Sacramento County occurred mainly in urbanized areas. Backyard birders should grow accustomed to seeing local Coops occasionally taking one of "their" feeder birds and just think of it as feeding the next trophic level up on the food pyramid.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.56% / year[n]	**1.39**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Wooded habitats, including urbanized areas

Nest Type

Stick nest in tree

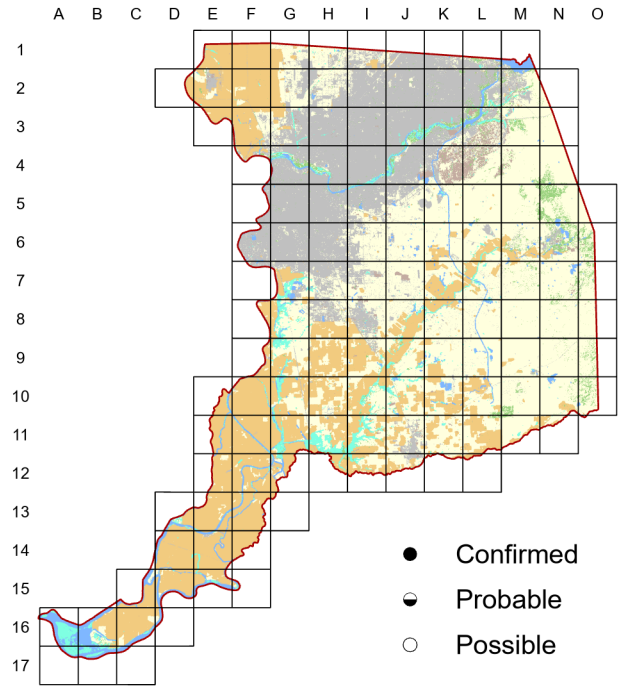
---

12 June 2019 Block L-8

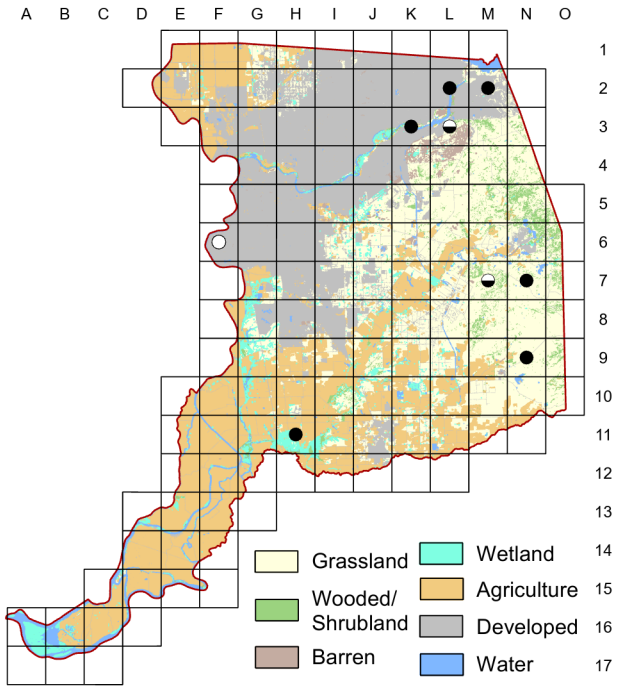
Landed at Western Kingbird nest in eucalyptus and apparently took chicks. Driven off by at least ten kingbirds.

Bald Eagle
Haliaeetus leucocephalus

Atlas 1

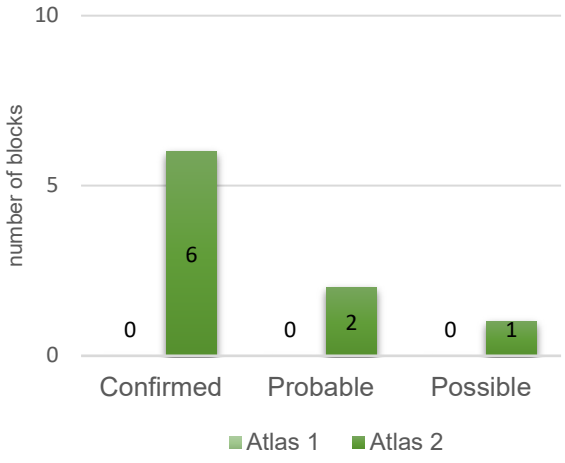


Atlas 2



The welcome reappearance of breeding Bald Eagles was a milestone for Atlas 2. Eagles are now established along the American and Cosumnes rivers in the county and additional nearby breeders have nested on the north side of Folsom Lake (El Dorado County). Chapter Four includes more information about the recovery of this species.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
6.49% / year[s]	**3.96**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Wooded areas near water

Nest Type

Lined stick nest in tree, typically massive

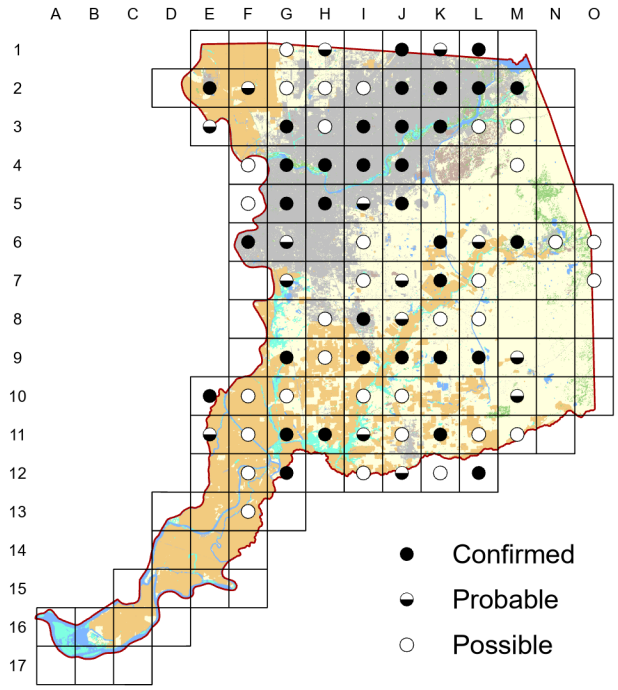
---

13 May 2017 — Block L-2

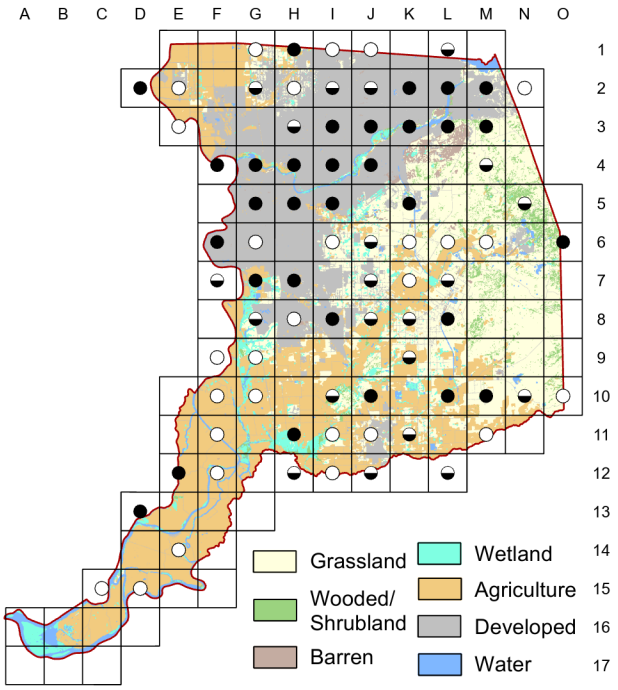
Saw two large nestlings in the nest in a large pine tree across Lake Natoma and saw one adult perched in another pine tree a little further upstream.

Red-shouldered Hawk
Buteo lineatus

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



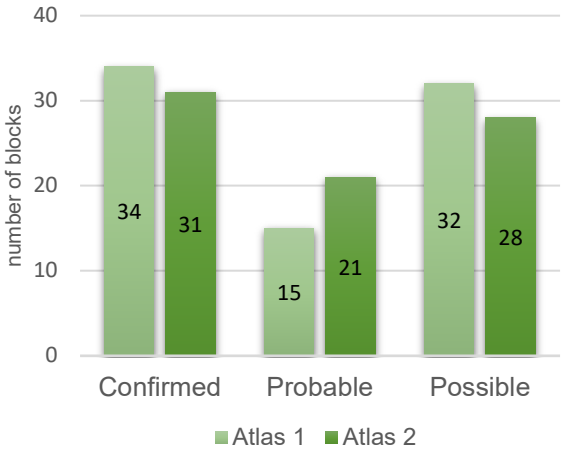
Red-shouldered Hawks increased dramatically in Sacramento County in the 1980s, expanding out from a small core population along the Sacramento and American rivers to occupy nearly all the surrounding urban and suburban woodland habitats. This expansion appeared to be part of a statewide trend. The distribution and population numbers of Red-shouldered Hawks in the county appear to have remained stable between atlas periods.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
3.58% / year[s]	**2.32**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Wooded habitats including urban forests

Nest Type

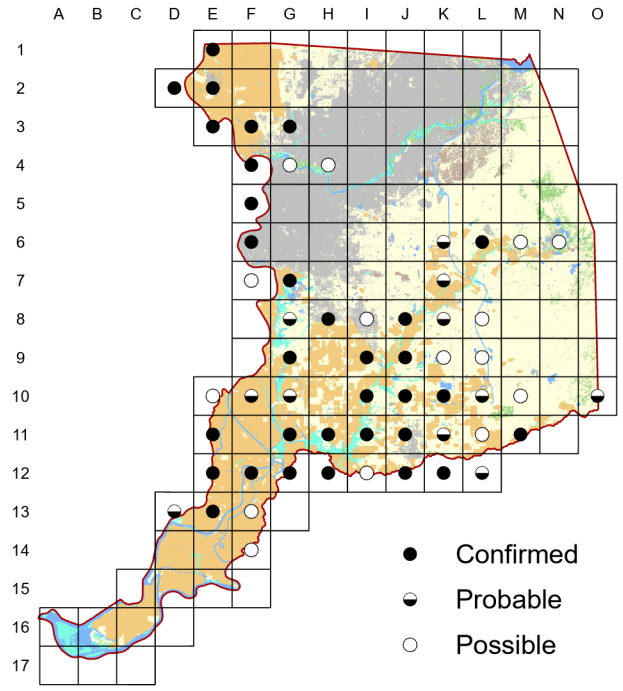
Lined stick nest in tree

1927 R. Hoffmann

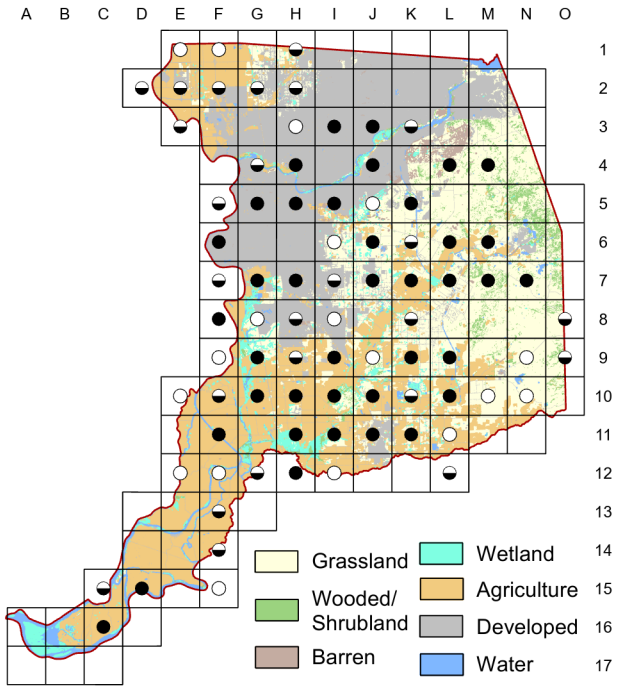
Often a pair of Red-bellied Hawks are seen in spring high overhead, passing and repassing each other in easy circles.

Swainson's Hawk
Buteo swainsoni

Atlas 1

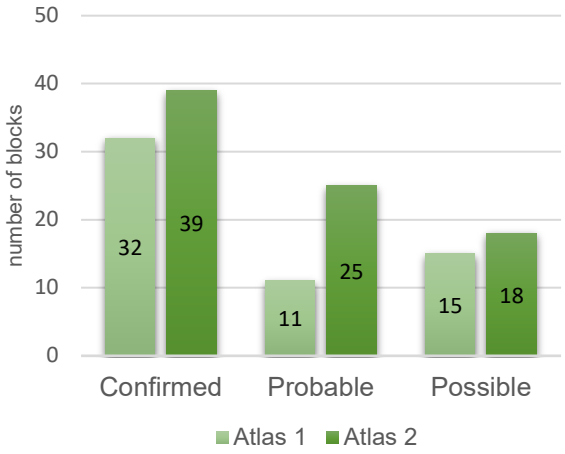


Atlas 2



The Swainson's Hawk, though listed as Threatened in California, seems to be doing well in Sacramento County, and BBS data suggest this may be part of general regional trends. Its county breeding range has expanded northward, even occupying moderately urbanized locations.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
5.05% / year[s]	**1.07**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Generally open country with trees nearby

Nest Type

Stick nest in tree

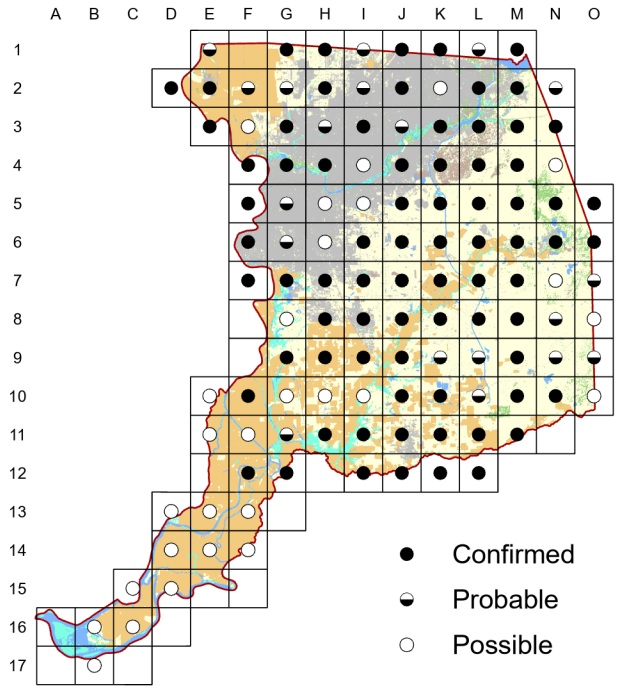
---

15 May 2018 — Block J-3

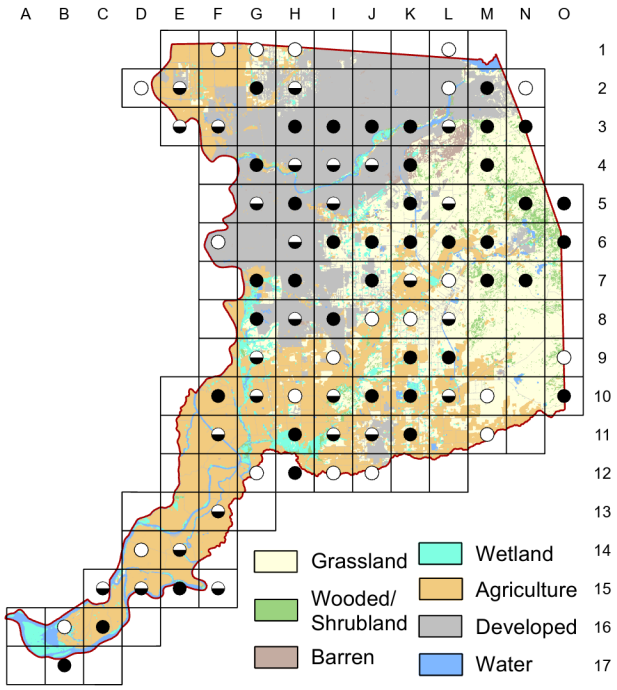
Male came with rodent and passed to female; she took it to one tree, waited a bit, then took it to nest.

Red-tailed Hawk
Buteo jamaicensis

Atlas 1

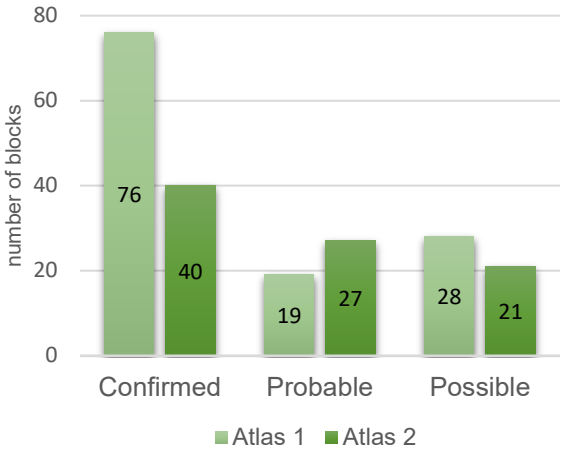


Atlas 2



The willingness of Red-tailed Hawks to nest in nearly any sort of habitat is illustrated in the atlas maps above. This adaptable species shows positive population trends throughout its range. Differences between the atlases probably reflect varied coverage and access rather than major changes in distribution.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.65% / year[s]	**1.29**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Variety of open to semi-open areas

Nest Type

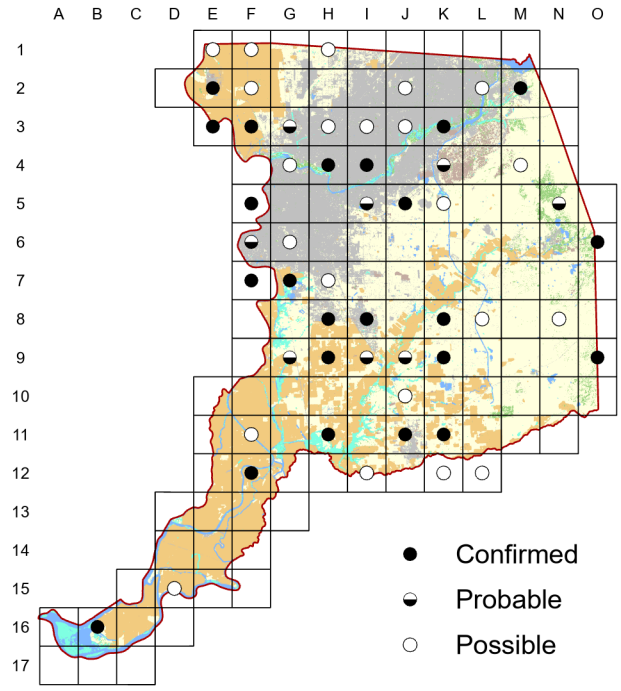
Lined stick nest in tree

28 February 2018 Block J-3

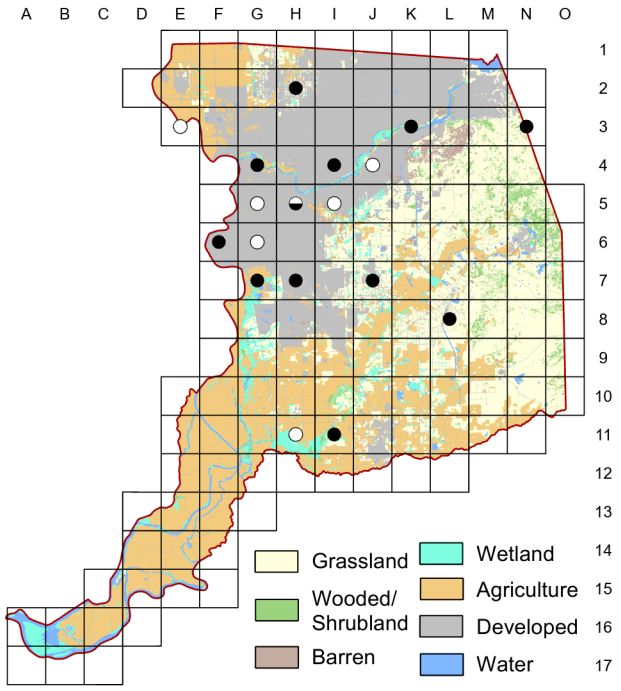
Carrying branch with pine needles toward eucalyptus trees on bluff where this species nested last year.

Barn Owl
Tyto alba

Atlas 1

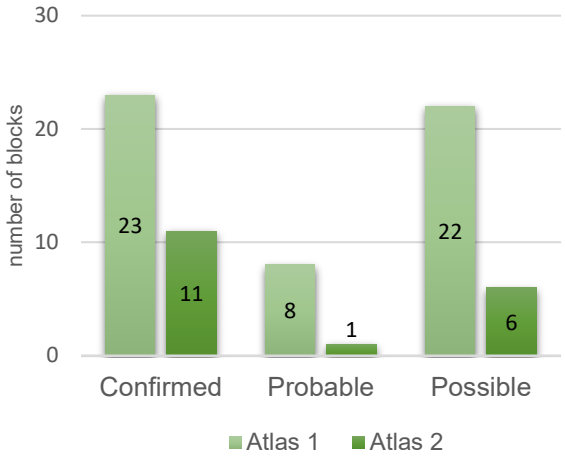


Atlas 2



Some of the decrease in detections of breeding behavior of the Barn Owl in the county may be attributed to differences in methodology and access between the two atlases. However, it is likely that urbanization and intensification of agriculture have contributed to a real decrease.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.34% / year[n]	**1.92**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Wide variety of open habitats

Nest Type

Variety of natural cavities or nest boxes

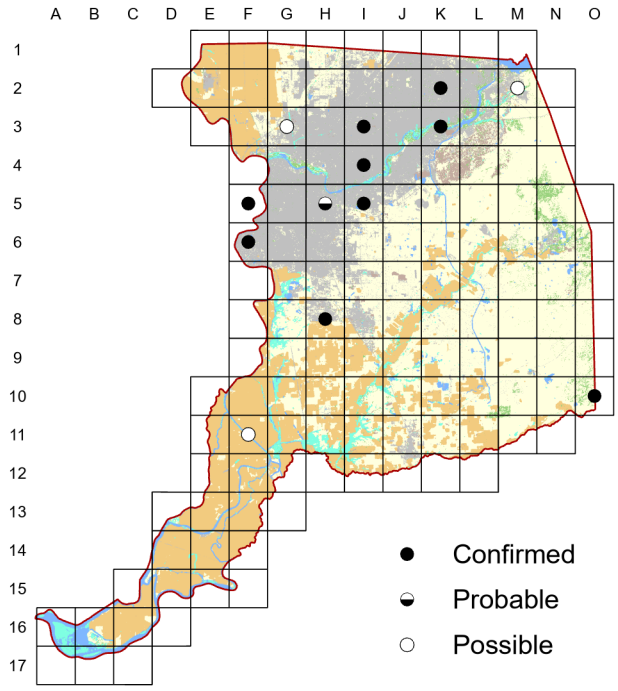
---

10 April 2018 — Block L-8

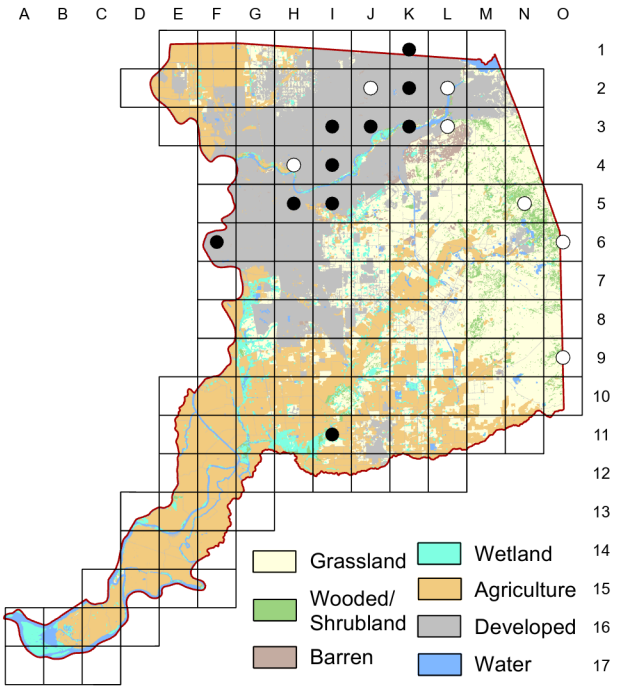
Flushed out of pines and flew to neighbor's Barn Owl nest box.

Western Screech-Owl
Megascops kennicottii

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



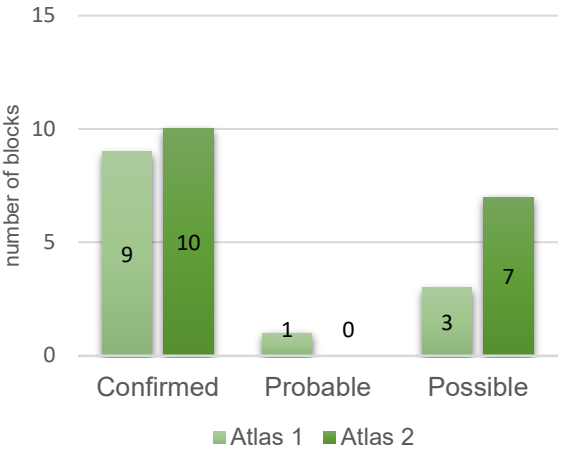
Results for the Western Screech-Owl during both atlases were fairly consistent. Several of the confirmed breeding efforts were detected in Wood Duck nest boxes or boxes put out specifically for the owls. The species is probably more common than shown in portions of the east county, where access and coverage are limited.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.08% / year[n]	–1.05% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Oaks, riparian, or other wooded habitats

Nest Type

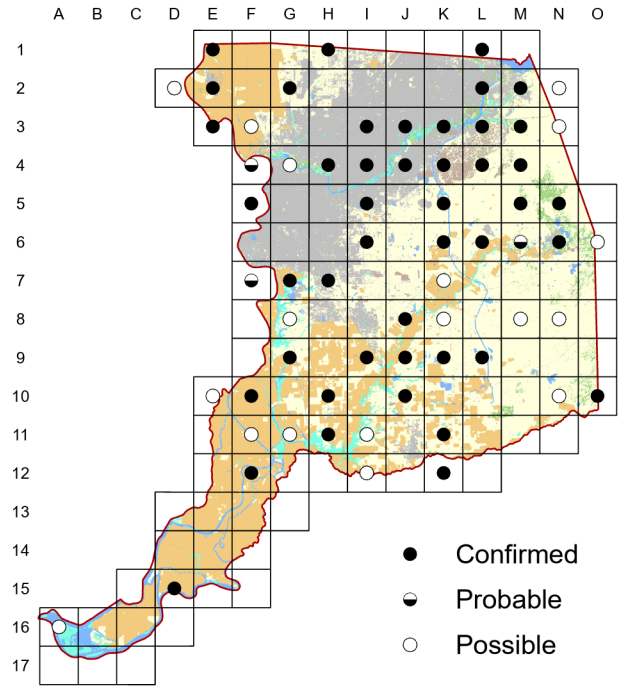
Tree cavity or nest box

30 April 2020 Block K-1

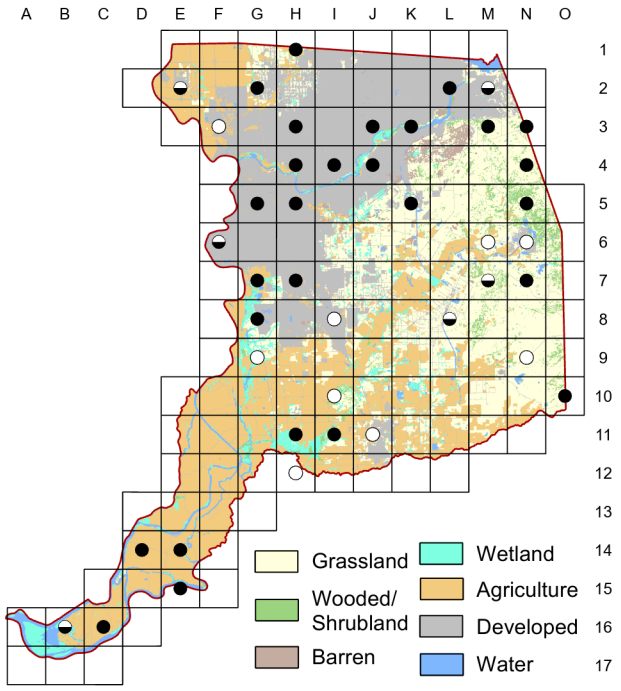
Nesting in pencil pines behind house. Was seen actively finding food and feeding the young.

Great Horned Owl
Bubo virginianus

Atlas 1

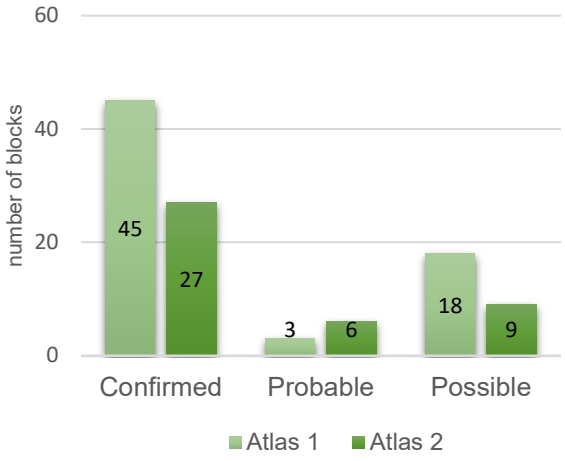


Atlas 2



The apparent lack of Great Horned Owls in the south-central part of the county during Atlas 2 is difficult to explain, and may be an artifact of coverage, as owls are often not well surveyed in atlas projects. The distribution in much of the rest of the county appears relatively unchanged.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
1.36% / year[s]	–0.1% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Variety of wooded habitats

Nest Type

Uses stick nests of other large species

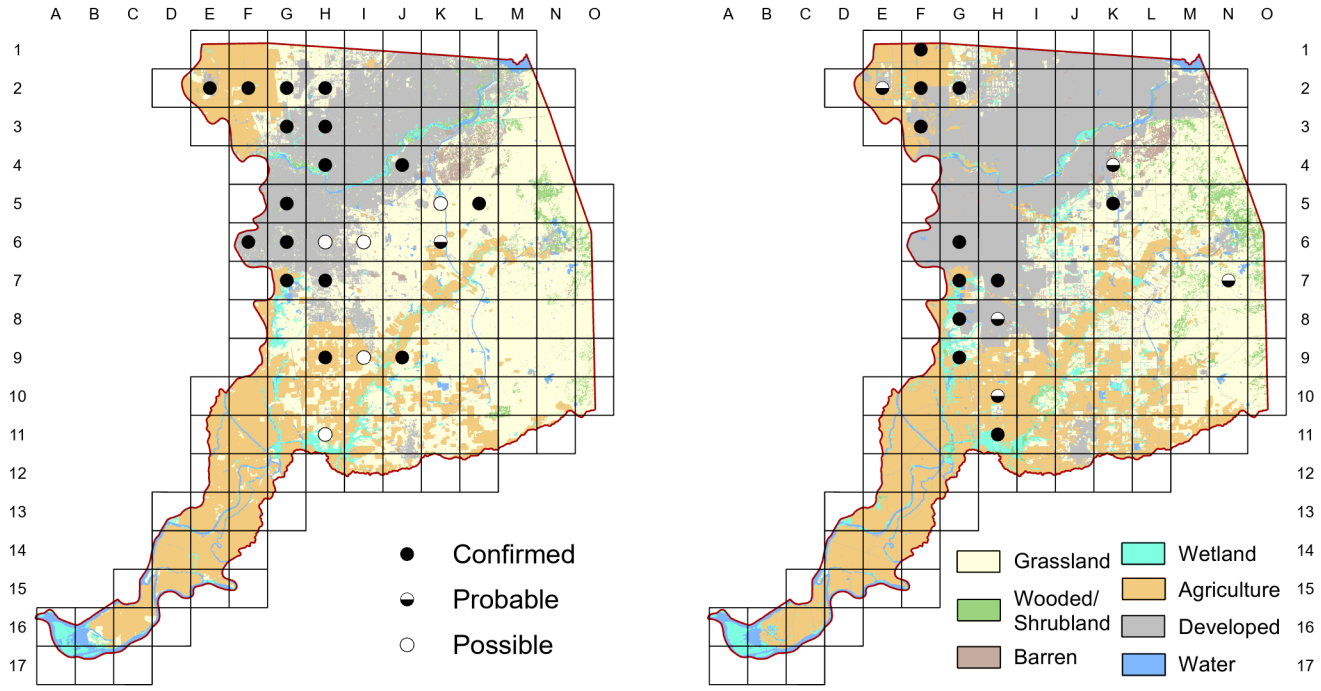
---

9 May 1992 — Block D-15

After dinner we visited a nearby marina where employees had informed us that owls nested in the large Eucalyptus trees. We eventually spotted one adult and one young Great Horned Owl.

Burrowing Owl
Athene cunicularia

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



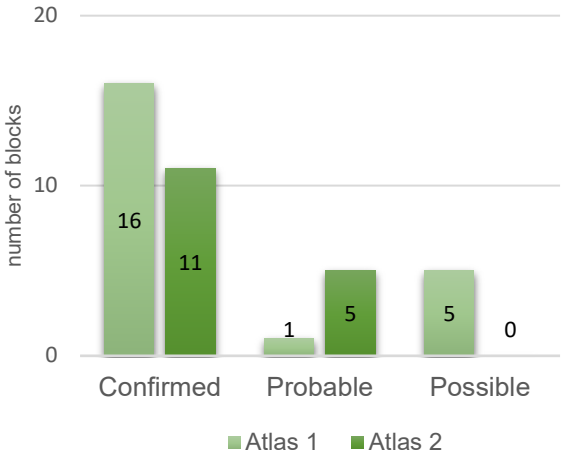
A fairly sharp decline in the total number of breeding Burrowing Owls is partially masked by the intensive effort to search for this charismatic species. The total number of pairs within confirmed blocks has declined in the past decade. There is an influx of wintering owls in fall, but a decreasing number stay to breed, likely dependent on local conditions that may vary year to year, such as vegetation height, disturbance, prey availability, and timing of rain.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.88% / year[n]	–0.73% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Open areas with short grass, roadsides, levees

Nest Type

Burrow (usually ground squirrel) or human-made

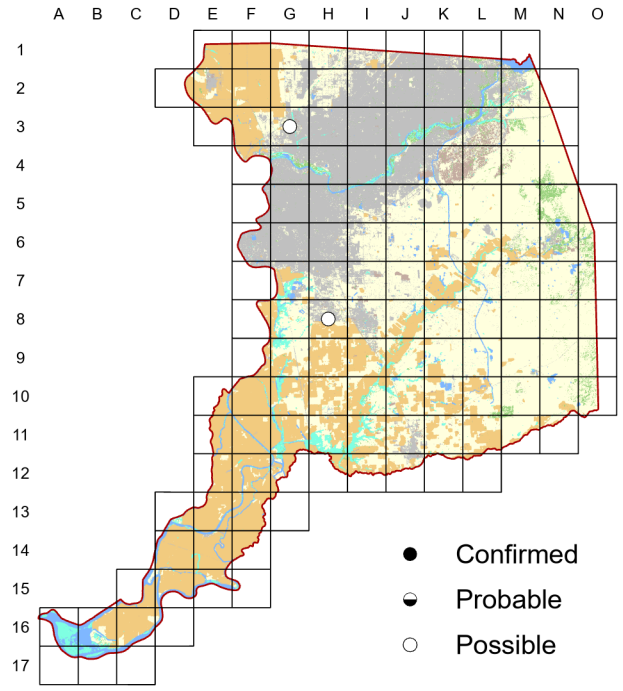
---

28 May 2015 Block G-6

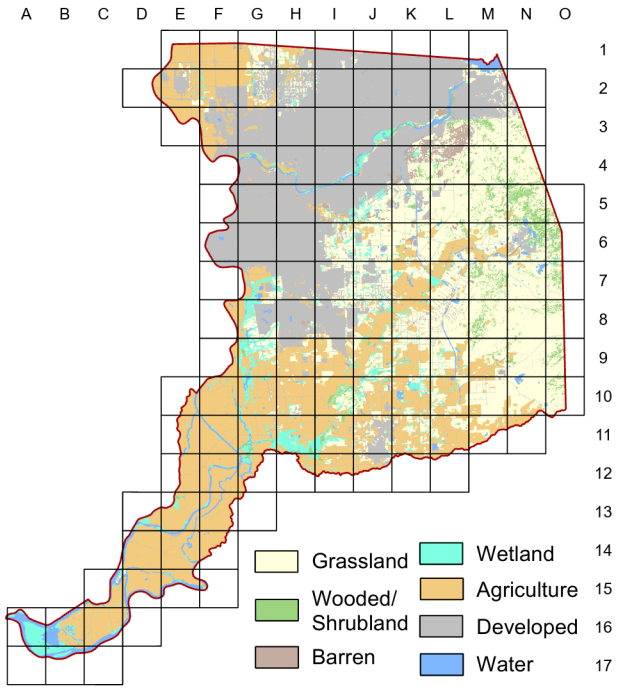
Two nearly adult-sized juveniles were together. An adult flew in with a small food item. Both juveniles ran to the adult and one came away with what appeared to be a large insect.

Short-eared Owl
Asio flammeus

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



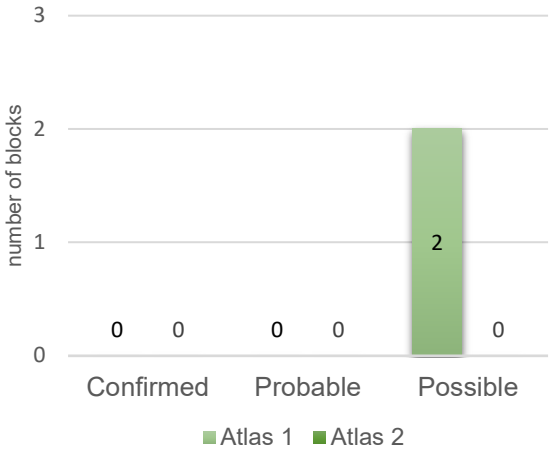
Short-eared Owls were reported as possible breeders in two blocks during Atlas 1, but both blocks have been converted almost entirely to suburbs since then. Breeding was confirmed on the Cosumnes River Preserve between atlases in 1999 (*fide* J. Trochet). Given statewide declines in recent decades, the possibility of Short-eared Owls breeding in the area in the future appears unlikely.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–3.41% / year[s]	–1.68% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Open brush or grasslands

Nest Type

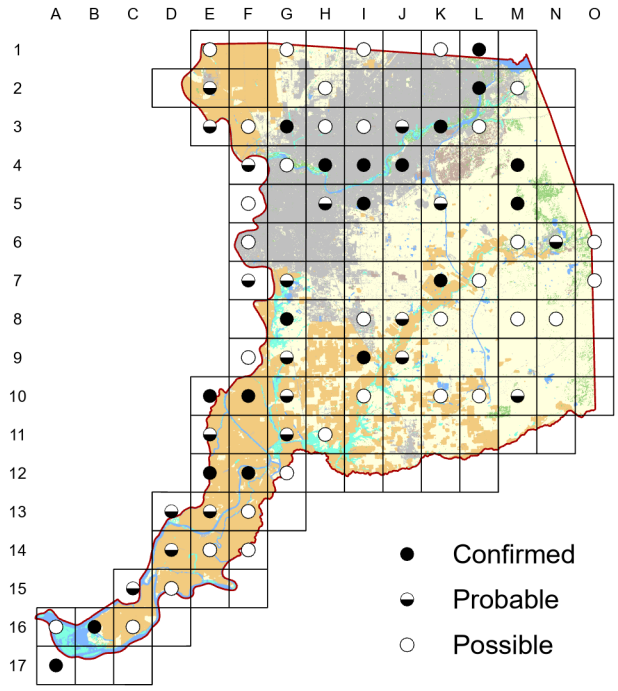
On ground in high grass, weeds, or brush

1940 — I. Gabrielson and S. Jewett

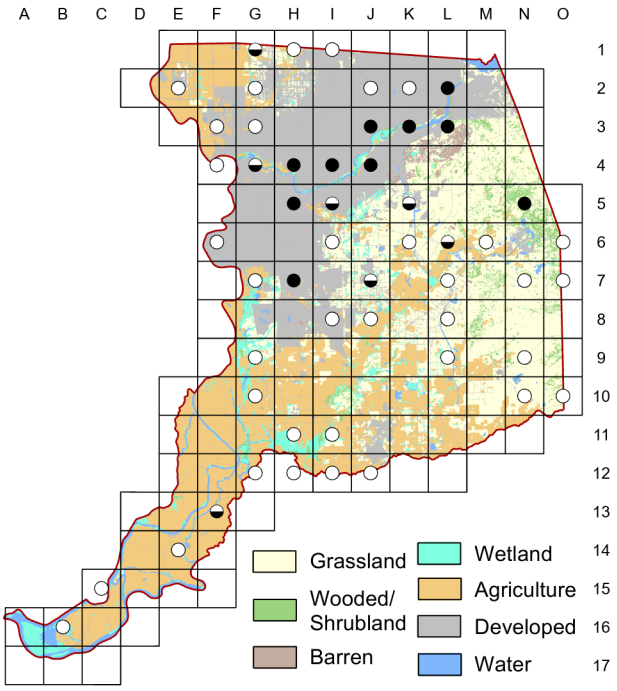
For a nest it gathers together a nondescript mass of material on the ground and there lays its eggs.

Belted Kingfisher
Megaceryle alcyon

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



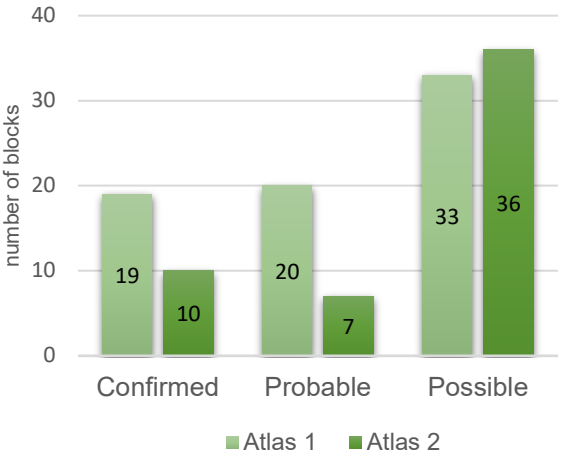
Changes shown between atlases for Belted Kingfishers are likely as not the result of differences in methodology. Breeding sites are a limiting factor, and bank "hardening" and the addition of rip-rap reduces suitable nest burrow sites (see the Chapter Four section on Bank Swallow). Further field investigation is required to determine if the reduction in reports along the lower Sacramento River reflects a true decline in breeding by this species there.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.97% / year[s]	**–0.88**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Rivers, streams, or ponds with steep, friable banks

Nest Type

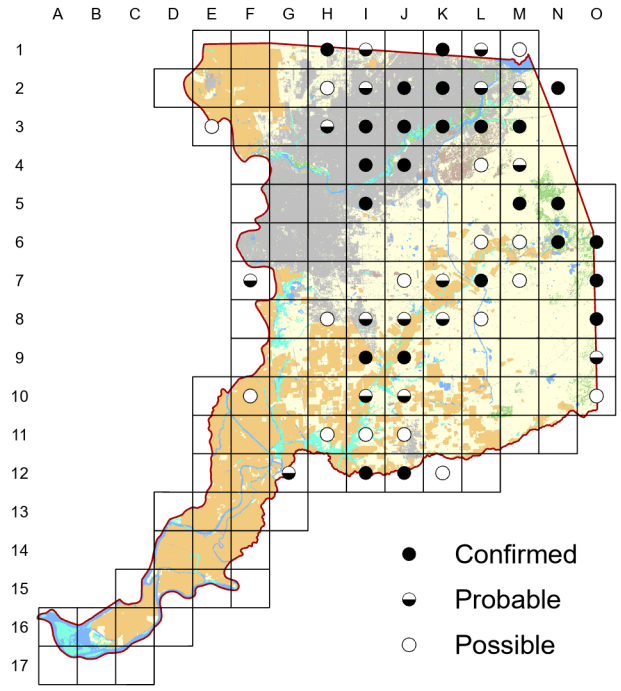
Excavated cavity in steep embankment

28 June 2016 Block H-4

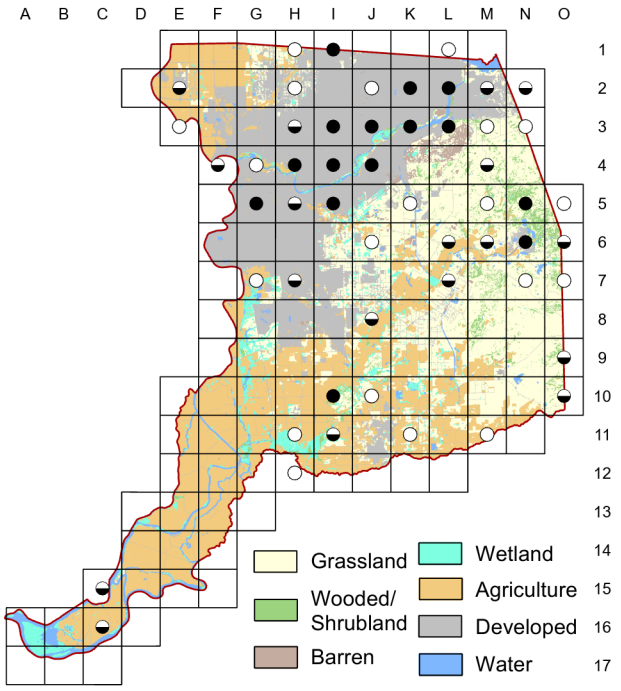
Low flyby carrying food; looked like a crawdad. Headed downriver.

Acorn Woodpecker
Melanerpes formicivorus

Atlas 1

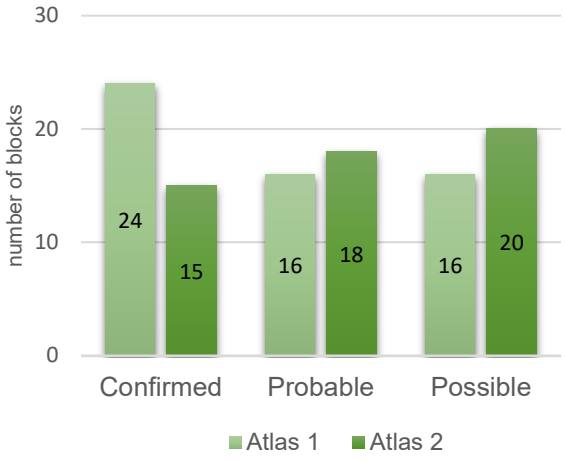


Atlas 2



The Acorn Woodpecker continues to be an expected breeding species primarily along the American and Cosumnes river corridors and in oak woodland areas in the eastern portion of the county.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
No Data	No Data

[1]North America; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Oak woodland

Nest Type

Cavity in tree, communal nester

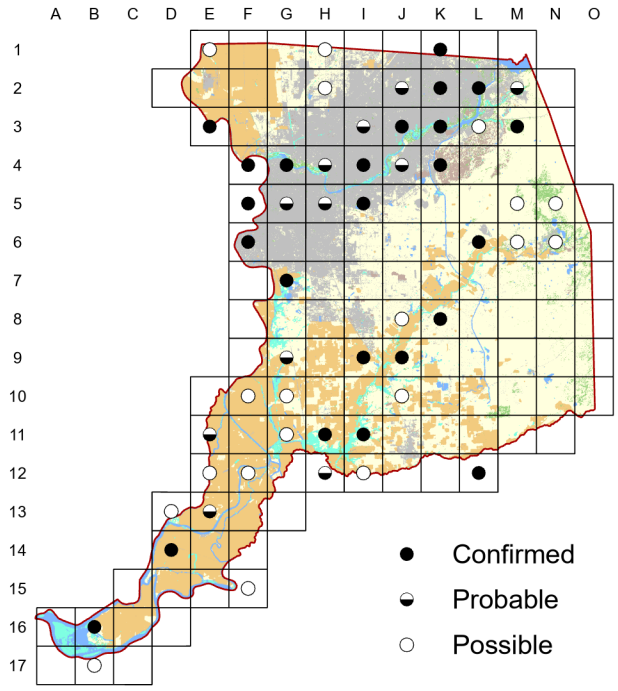
---

16 March 2017 — Block K-3

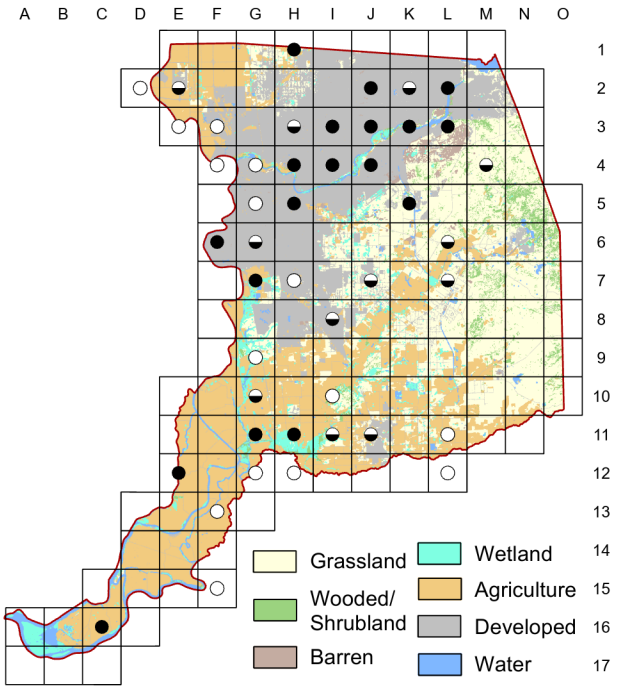
Desperately trying to fend off the starlings from the best nest cavities in the old cottonwood trees, in years past they haven't been successful.

Downy Woodpecker
Dryobates pubescens

Atlas 1

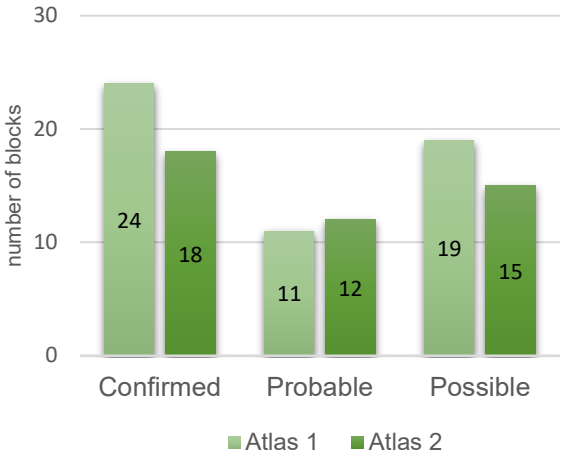


Atlas 2



Downy Woodpeckers, while more common in the county in winter, do breed in modest numbers on the Central Valley floor. As expected, breeding was concentrated in the riparian habitats along the American and Cosumnes rivers. There was relatively little change in apparent breeding range between the two atlases.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2015)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.28% / year[n]	0.30% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Riparian

Nest Type

Cavity

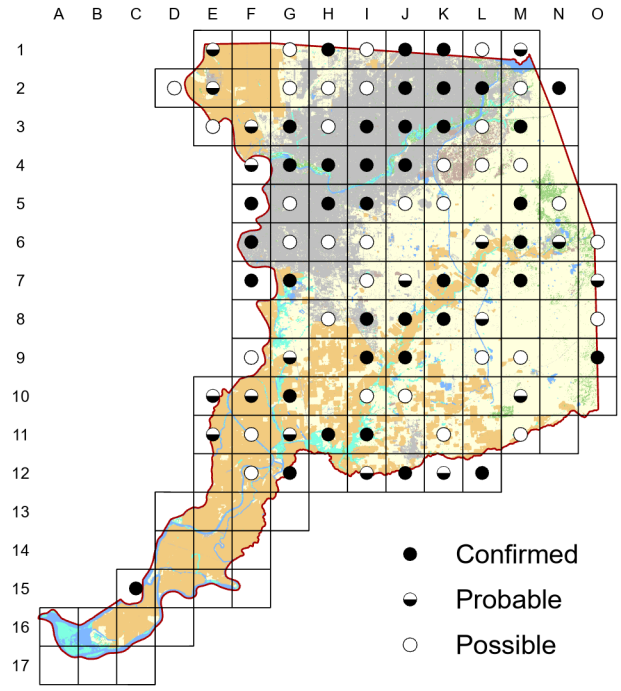
---

23 March 2017 — Block K-5

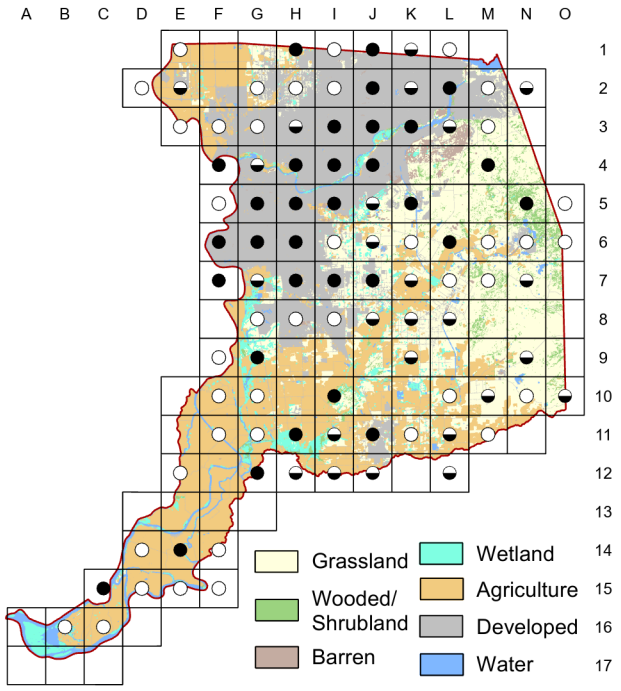
Excavating hole and removing chips. It was entering hole, pecking, exiting hole and dropping wood chips from a broken limb on a live willow growing along the dam.

Nuttall's Woodpecker
Dryobates nuttallii

Atlas 1

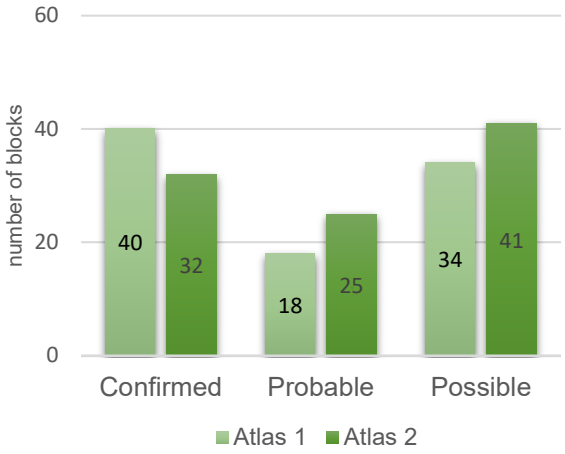


Atlas 2



There was essentially no change in the breeding status of the Nuttall's Woodpecker in the county between the two atlases. This highly adaptable woodpecker is able to breed anywhere it can find or make a suitable cavity, from oak savanna to urban neighborhoods. A near endemic to California, this species showed significant positive trends from BBS data.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.78% / year[s]	**0.78**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Variety of wooded habitats

Nest Type

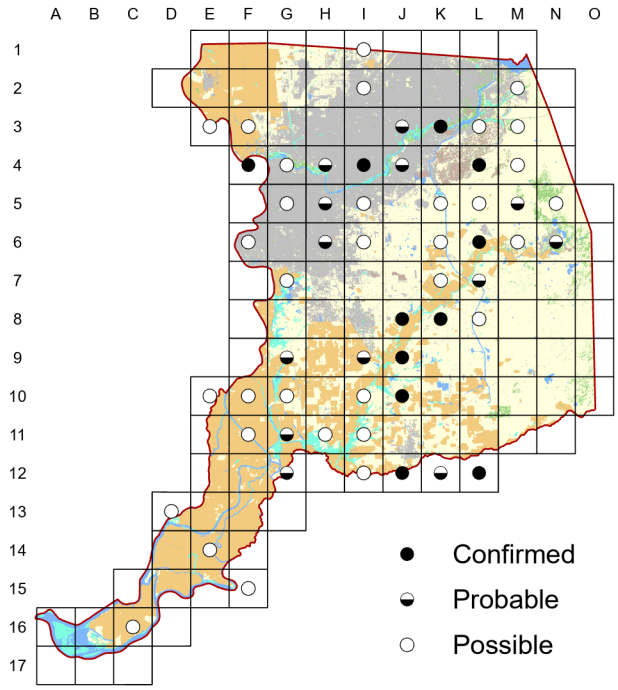
Cavity

1923 — W. L. Dawson

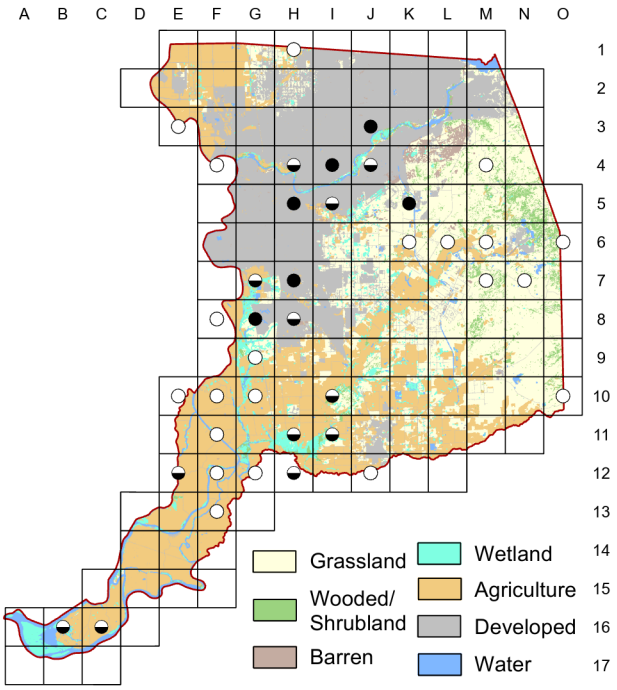
The Nuttall Woodpecker, as a good friend in the Cooper Club declares, always has a grouch on, and you are sure to be challenged as you pass.

Northern Flicker
Colaptes auratus

Atlas 1

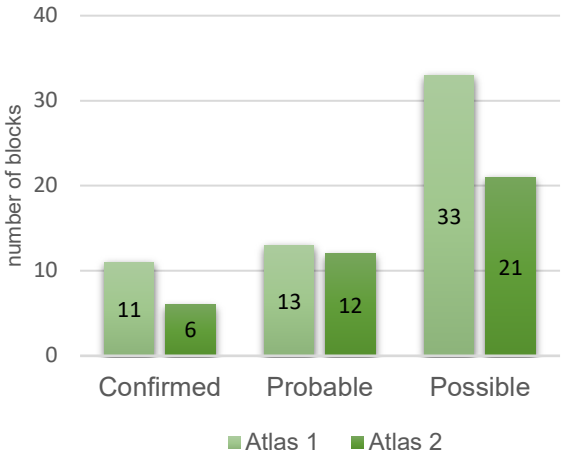


Atlas 2



The Northern Flicker continues to be a sparsely distributed, but regular breeder, mainly in riparian areas. The apparent decline in observations in Atlas 2 along the Cosumnes River may have more to do with lack of access than a lack of flickers.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.29% / year[n]	**–1.21**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Open woodland/riparian woodland

Nest Type

Cavity

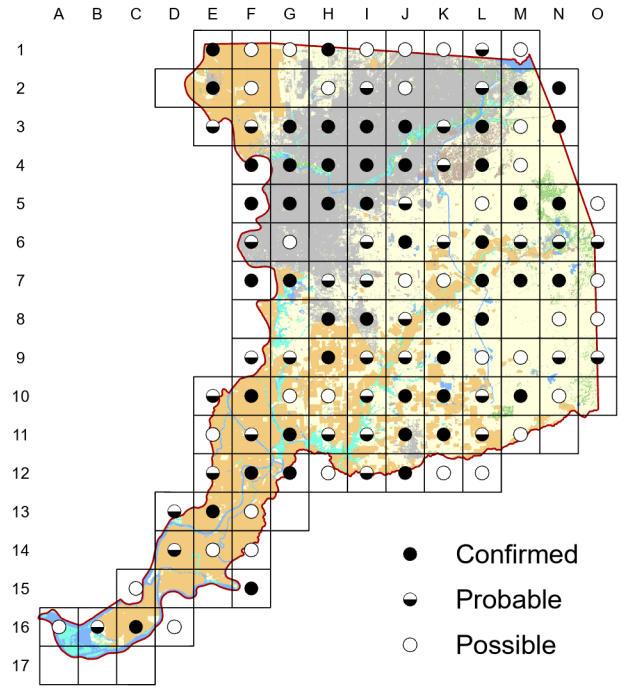
---

14 June 2016 Block J-3

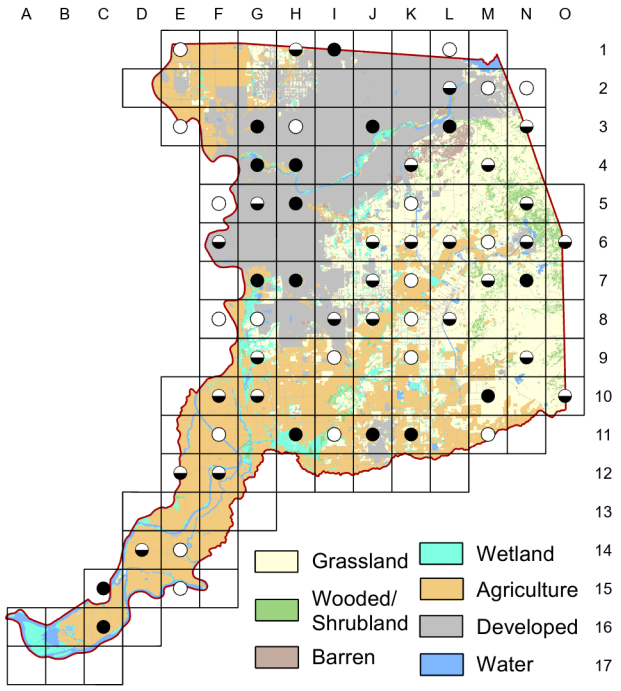
Heard young inside cavity of snag next to pond as adult appeared to feed it.

American Kestrel
Falco sparverius

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



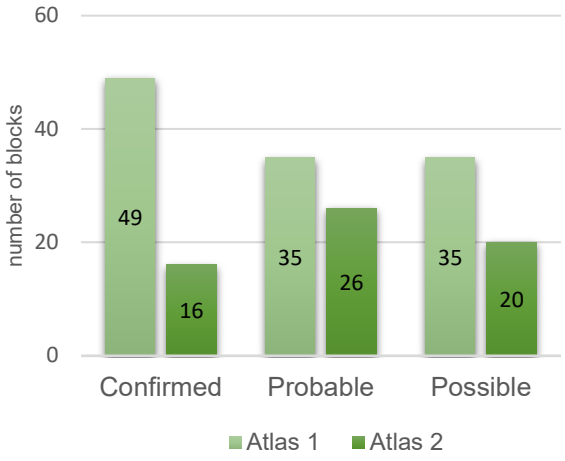
The long-term, widespread decline of the American Kestrel throughout its range has been well documented. Loss of open-country habitat and lack of nest cavities are certainly factors. A comparison of the two atlas maps demonstrates the disappearance of breeding kestrels from areas where development has converted or fragmented areas of previously open habitats.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.88% / year[s]	**–1.41**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Variety of open to semi-open country

Nest Type

Cavity

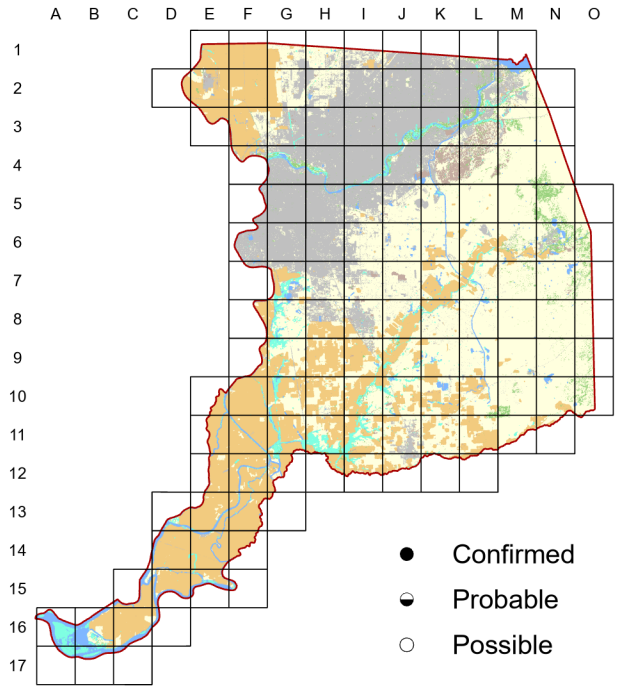
---

28 March 2017 — Block J-11

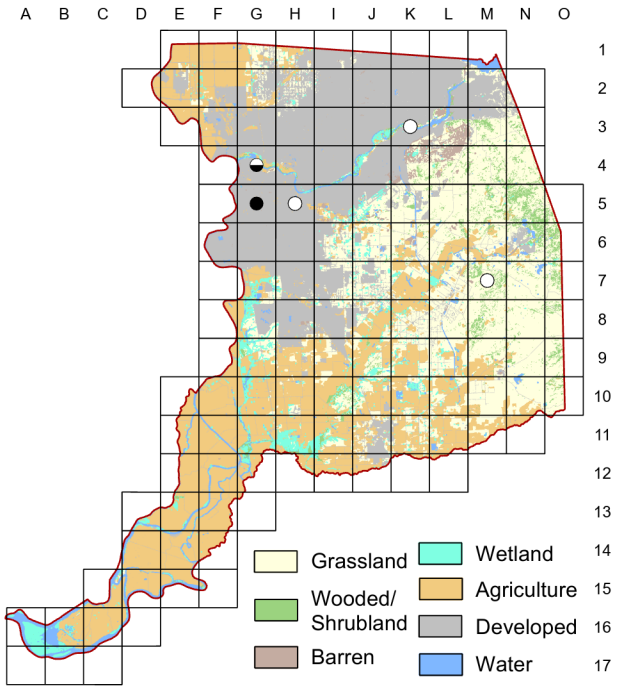
Male guarding possible nest and feeding female. Male chased off a Nuttall's Woodpecker from a snag with a possible nest hole.

Peregrine Falcon
Falco peregrinus

Atlas 1

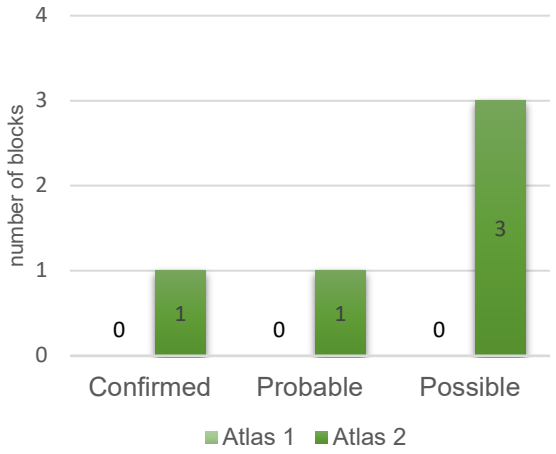


Atlas 2



As noted in Chapter Four, although Peregrine Falcons were confirmed as breeding in only one location, it is likely that, if they have not already expanded to more sites, they will in the future. Sacramento's ample supply of Rock Pigeons should ensure a bright future for this awe-inspiring raptor.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
3.41% / year[s]	**2.1**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Wide variety

Nest Type

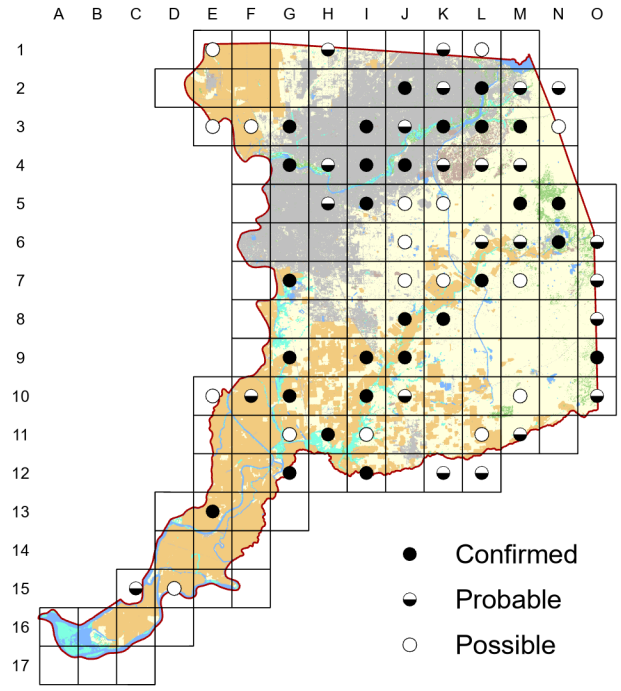
Scrape on a ledge

29 May 2020 Block G-5

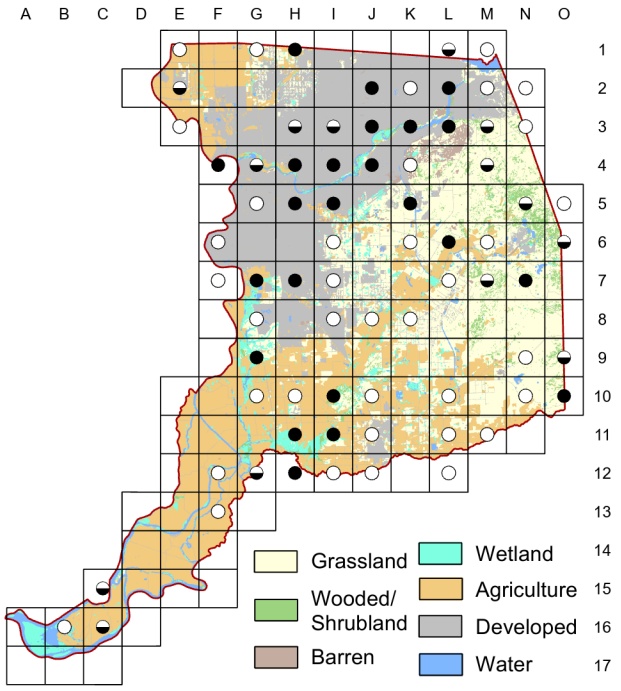
Male brought in food (pigeon?) and female took it but then the male brought it back and fed the young.

Ash-throated Flycatcher
Myiarchus cinerascens

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



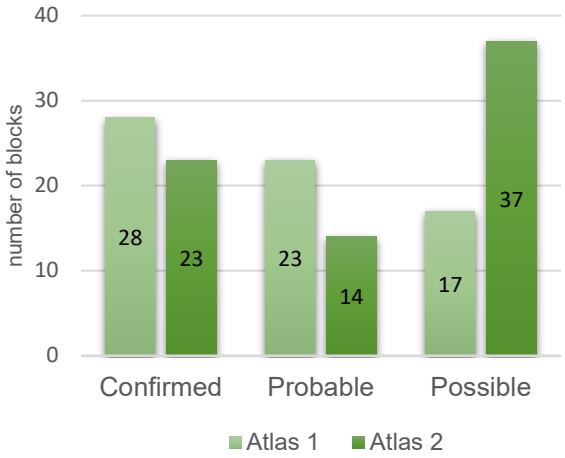
We saw little change in breeding distribution for the Ash-throated Flycatcher between the atlases. Breeding was concentrated mainly along riparian areas of the American and Cosumnes rivers and in oak savanna habitats in the eastern parts of the county. The apparent lack of Atlas 2 confirmations along the Cosumnes River may be due to relative lack of access during that effort.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.2% / year[n]	**0.71**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Open woodland, woodland edges

Nest Type

Cavity

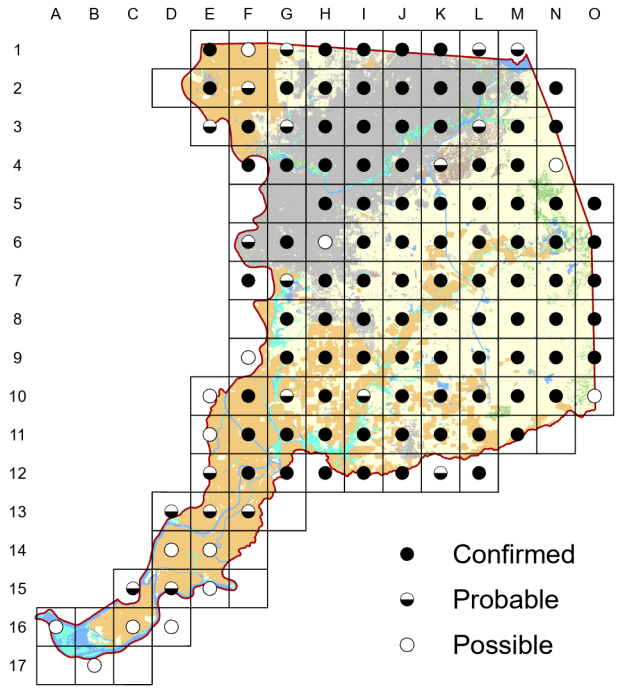
---

5 June 2016 — Block G-7

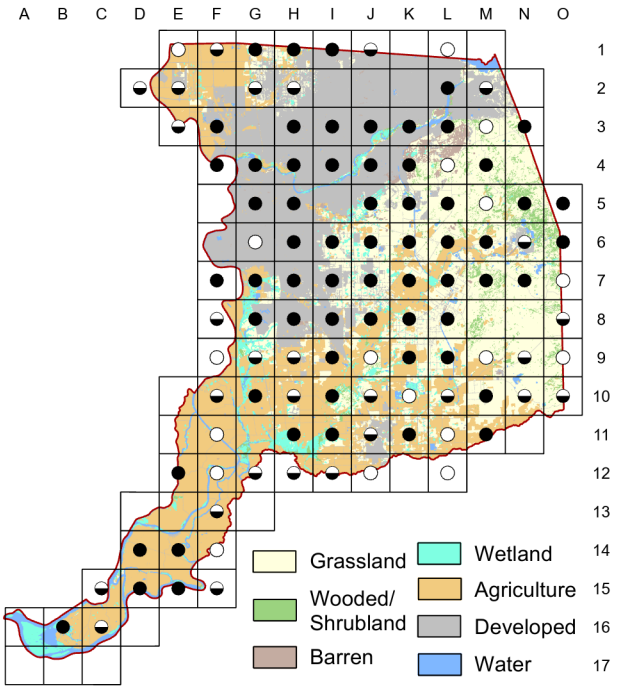
Feeding young in tall kestrel box. Took what looked like a moth into the box and flew out without it.

Western Kingbird
Tyrannus verticalis

Atlas 1

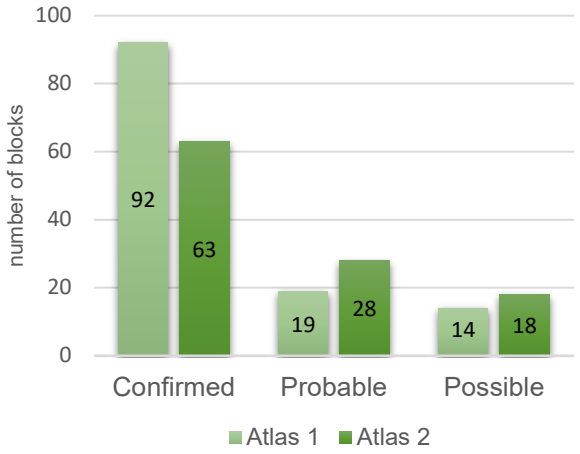


Atlas 2



The status of the Western Kingbird in the county appears to have changed little between the atlases. Empty Atlas 2 blocks in the southeast may be attributed to lack of access, but the ones along the northern edge may represent impacts from increasingly dense development in those areas.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.54% / year[s]	–0.14% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Open country with some trees

Nest Type

Bulky cup in tree, shrub, or on structure

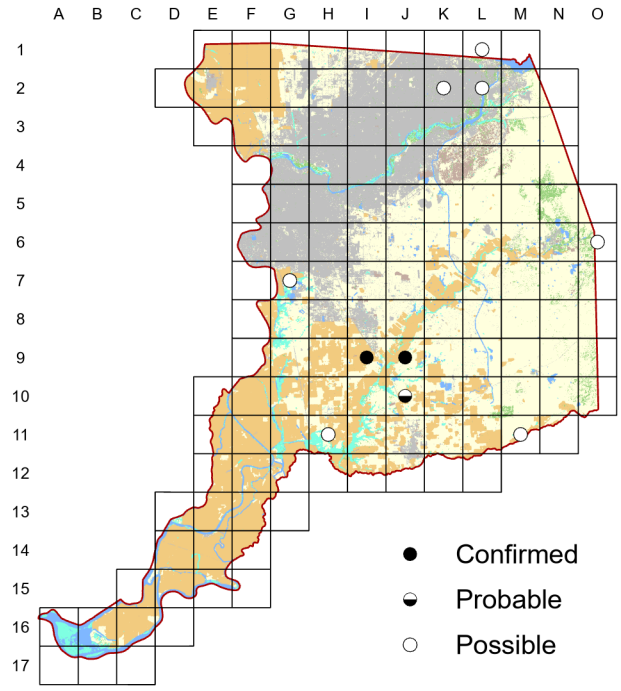
---

23 April 2018 — Block H-4

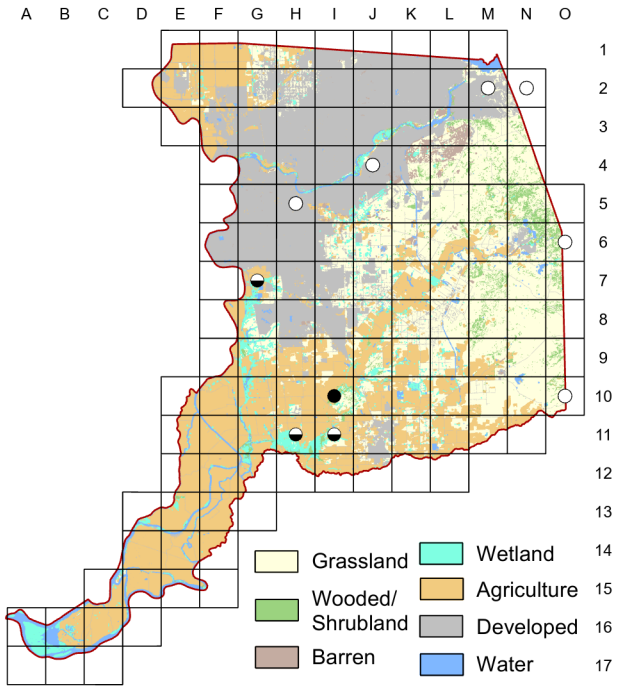
Pair with two large young; saw hatch years eating elderberries by themselves but still being fed insects by parents.

Western Wood-Pewee
Contopus sordidulus

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



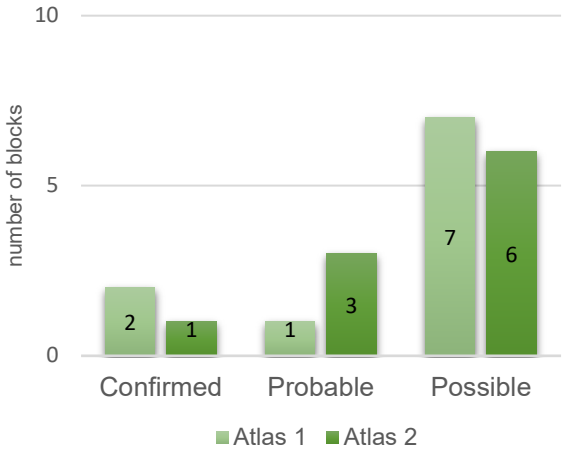
As expected of this uncommon Central Valley breeder, each of the atlases found only a few blocks with Western Wood-Pewees showing signs of breeding. In each case, these birds were in riparian habitats along the American, Sacramento, or Cosumnes rivers. As one of the latest migrants, one must be cautious about reporting breeding behaviors. However, birds lingering through May and well into June and July are most likely local breeders.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.38% / year[s]	**–0.87**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Woodlands, especially riparian

Nest Type

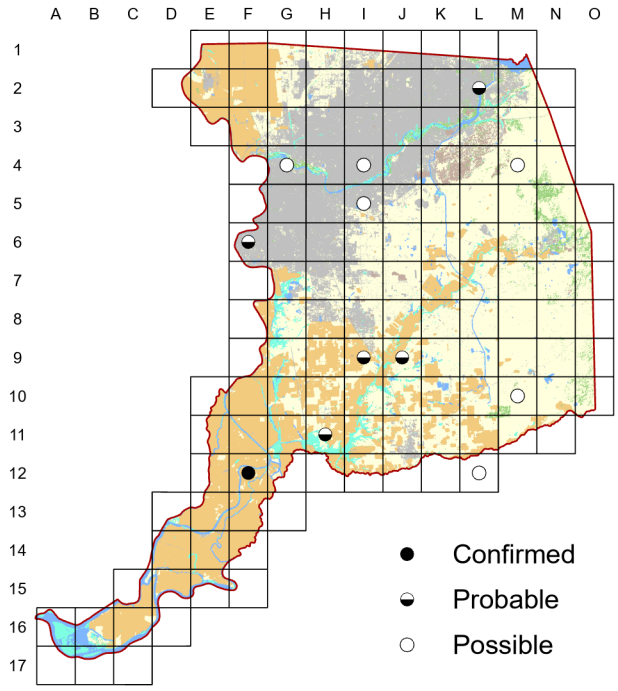
Cup nest in tree

1927 — R. Hoffman

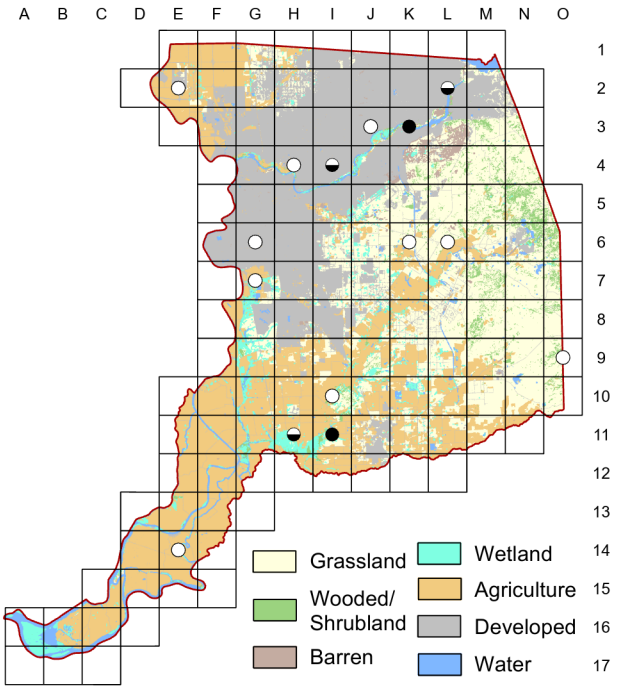
A quick upward launch or downward dash after a passing insect ending with an audible click of the bill is followed by a rapid, twisting sweep back to the perch.

Pacific-slope Flycatcher
Empidonax difficilis

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



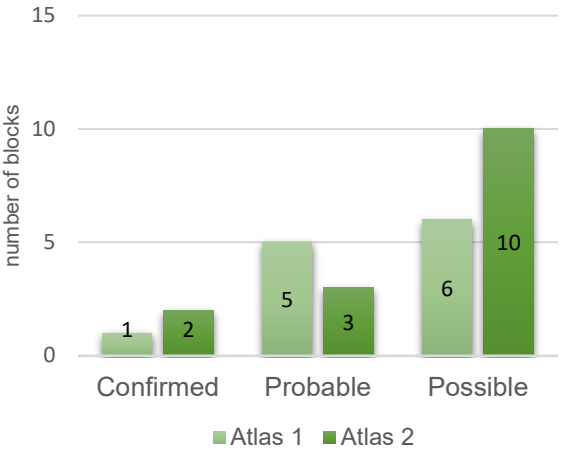
The Pacific-slope Flycatcher is one of those species that atlasers must be cautious about reporting as potential breeders. While most birds breed in dense, moist montane or coastal riparian habitats, a few do breed in similar Central Valley sites. However, pass-through spring migrants may also sing and exhibit some breeding behaviors in these valley locations. Comparison of the results of the two atlases suggests little change in status has occurred.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.68% / year[s]	–0.17% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Riparian woodlands

Nest Type

Cup nest, usually in sheltered site

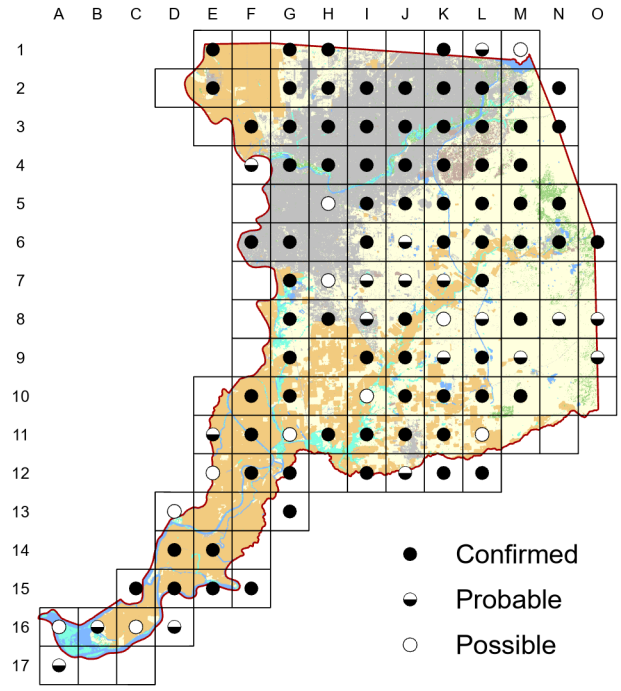
---

29 May 2020 Block I-4

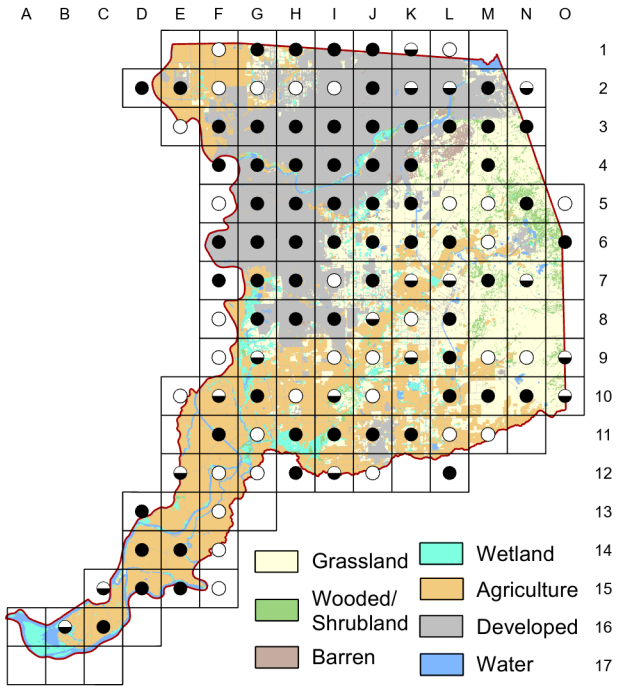
Adult was seen with two fledglings in tow. I highly suspected they were breeding somewhere near my yard this year, and now it's been confirmed.

Black Phoebe
Sayornis nigricans

Atlas 1

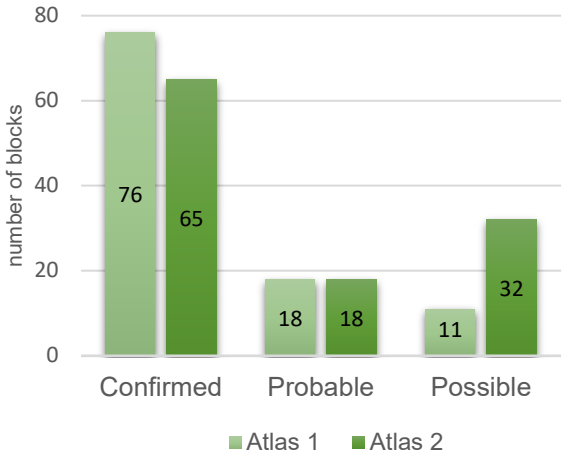


Atlas 2



Frequently securing their nests to human-built structures, the Black Phoebe remains a commonly observed breeding species throughout Sacramento County. The high proportion of confirmations likely reflects just how comfortable this bird seems to be around humans. A remarkably confiding and approachable species.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
2.86% / year[s]	**2.4**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Variety of habitats, but always near water

Nest Type

Cup nest on sheltered ledge or wall

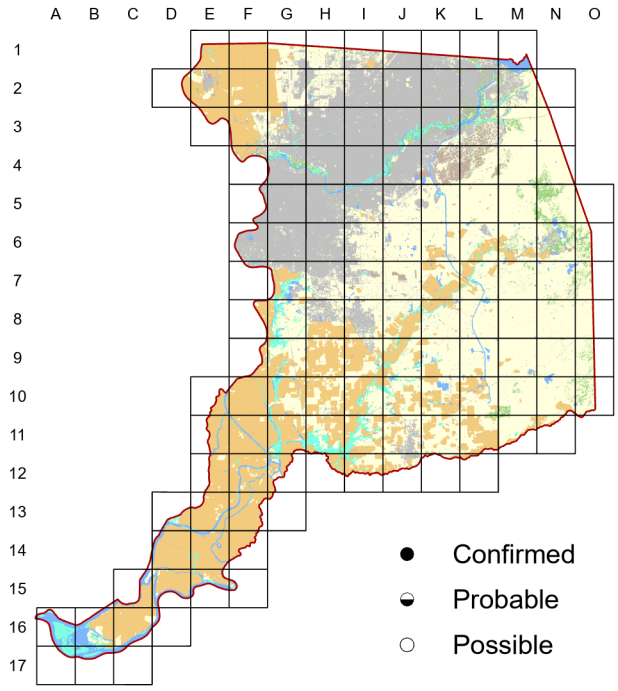
---

18 March 2018 — Block I-8

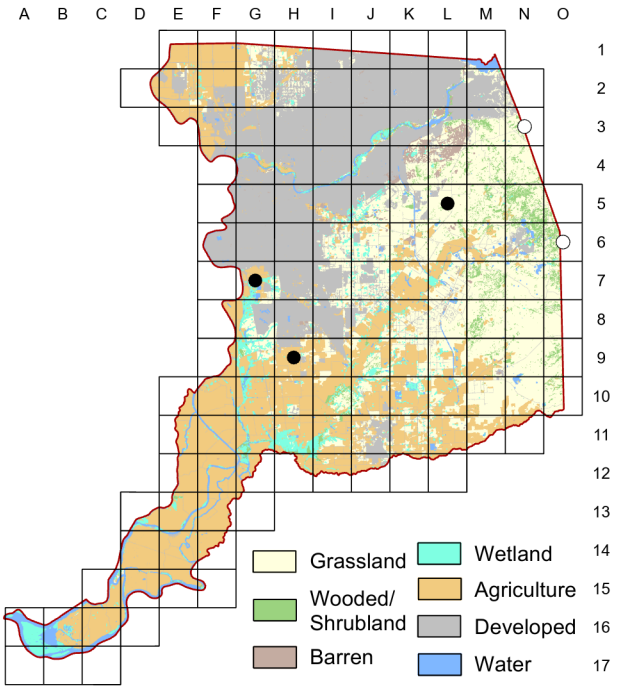
Two individuals that don't seem to mind people. As I was walking around some crane flies flushed from the grass, and one phoebe came towards me and snapped up the crane flies.

Say's Phoebe
Sayornis saya

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



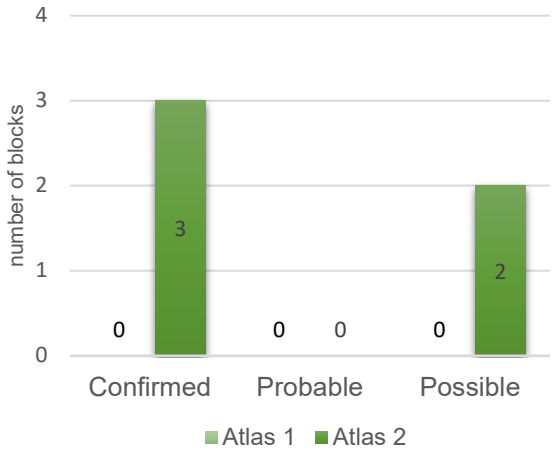
As discussed in Chapter Four, the Say's Phoebe seems to have very recently expanded its breeding range into the lower Sacramento Valley. Whether this handsome flycatcher will become a regular breeder is uncertain, but its affinity for human-altered habitats bodes well.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.99% / year[n]	**0.78**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Variety of open habitats

Nest Type

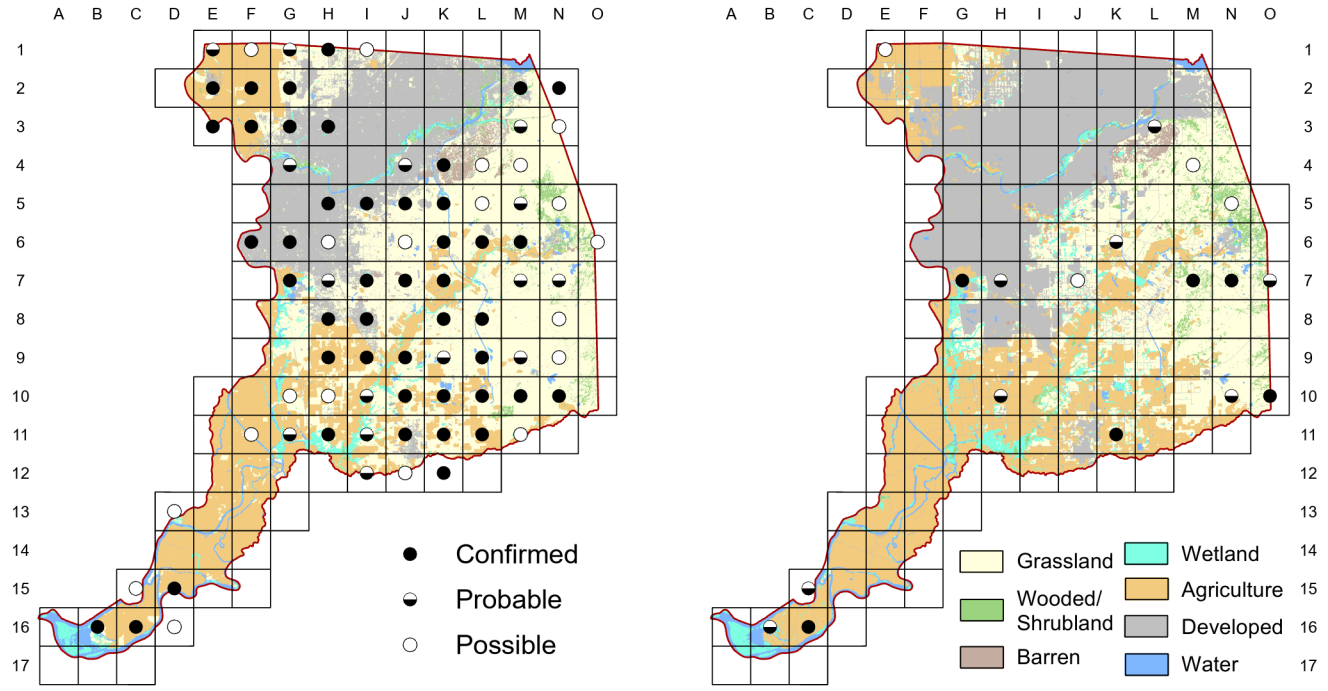
Cup nest on a sheltered ledge

17 May 2020 Block G-7

Surprised to see this all brown phoebe. Blackish tail, orange brown belly, potential breeding habitat. Juvenile just found after the adult.

Loggerhead Shrike
Lanius ludovicianus

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



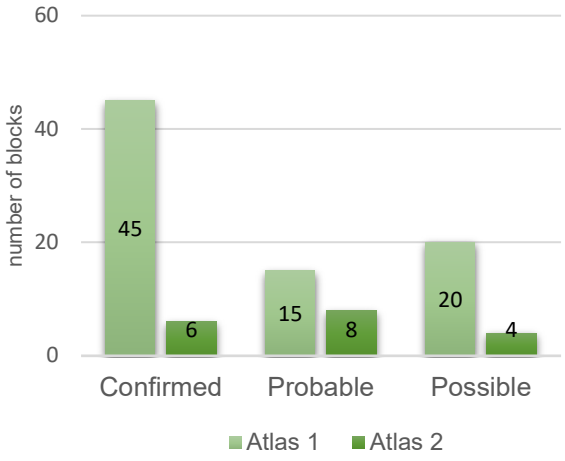
Our comparisons of these two atlases includes no more striking (and alarming) example of decline than that of the Loggerhead Shrike. As noted in Chapter Six, our local results reflect rangewide trends. Habitat loss, West Nile virus, cowbirds, and possible environmental contaminants may all be playing a role in the demise of this fearless and handsome bird. More than one Atlas 2 participant described full days in suitable habitat without a single shrike.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–2.73% / year[s]	**–2.56**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Variety of open habitats with shrubs or trees

Nest Type

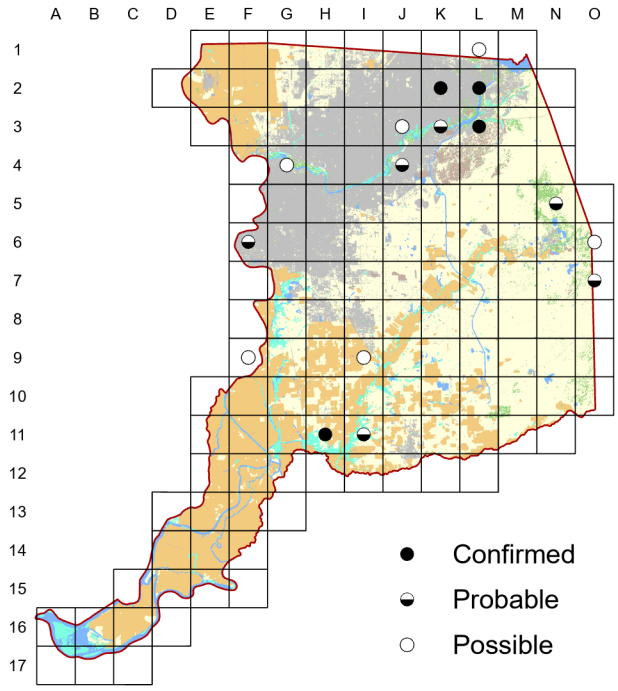
Cup nest, concealed in shrub or tree

29 May 2018 Block G-7

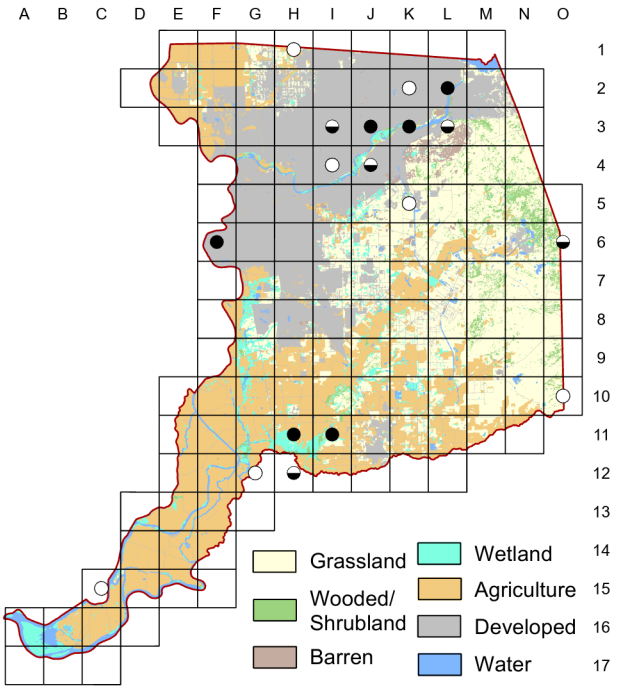
Saw one recently fledged bird being fed by adult.

Hutton's Vireo
Vireo huttoni

Atlas 1

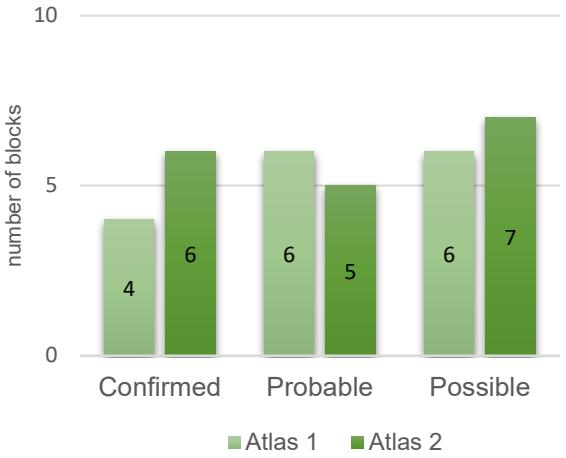


Atlas 2



There was little, if any, change in the breeding distribution of Hutton's Vireos between the two atlases. They continue to breed in patches of dense live oak, singing their incessantly repetitive songs with equal parts enthusiasm and stamina.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.82% / year[n]	**1.35**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Woodlands, especially live oak woodlands

Nest Type

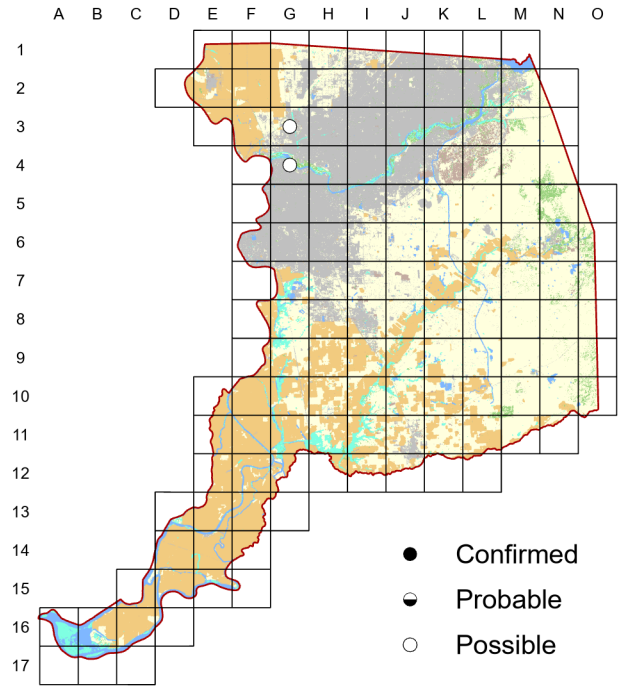
Cup nest in tree

1923 — W. L. Dawson

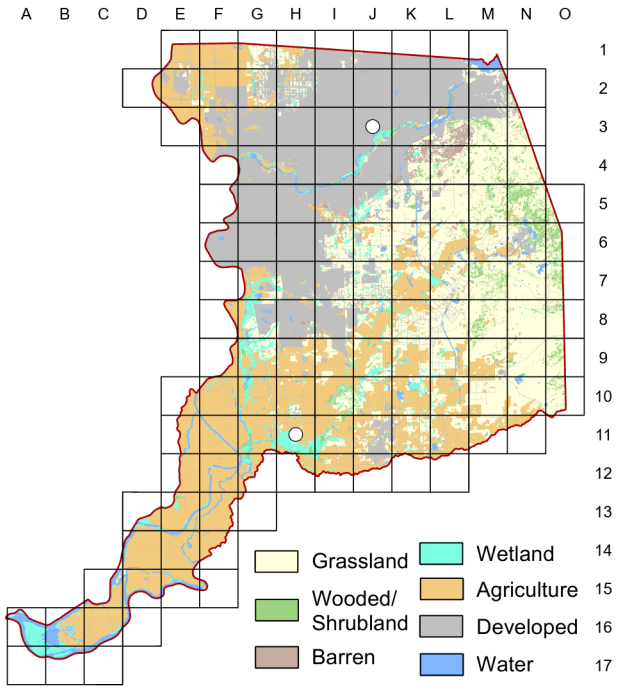
Hutton's Vireo is leisurely, almost sluggish, in all his movements. He never hurries. Why should he?

Warbling Vireo
Vireo gilvus

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



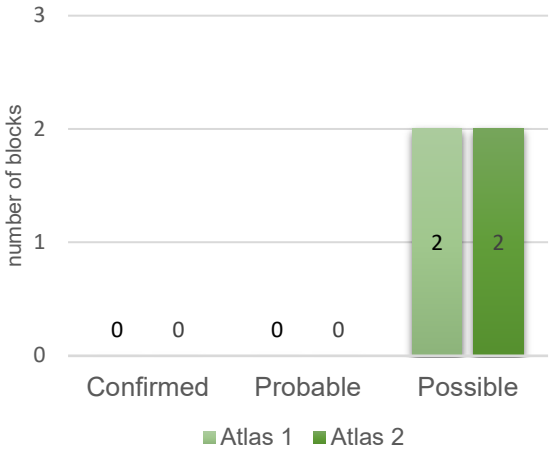
While, historically, Warbling Vireos nested throughout most of California, including willow-riparian habitats of the Central Valley, its current breeding status in Sacramento County is best described as hypothetical. Two blocks in each atlas included breeding behaviors, mostly based on birds singing at the end of May. There was a late April Atlas 1 report of a bird carrying nesting material into a willow, but no nest was built.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.38% / year[n]	**0.64**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Riparian woodland

Nest Type

Cup nest in tree

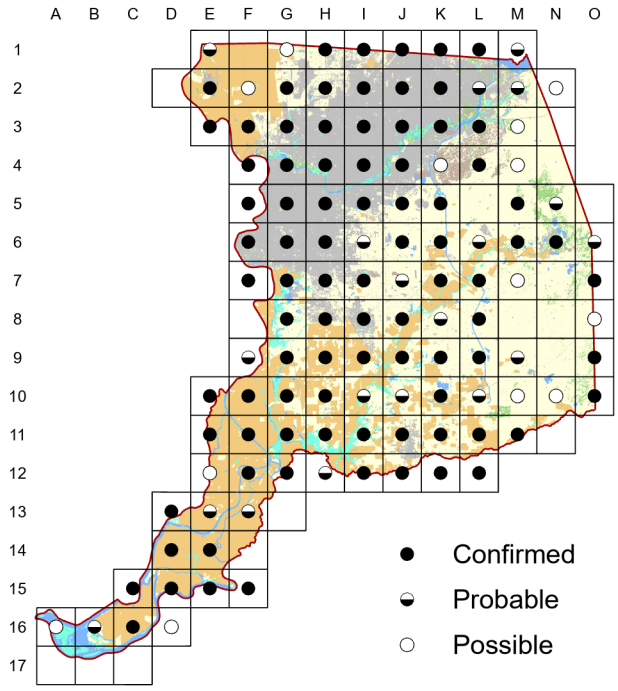
---

29 May 2017 Block H-11

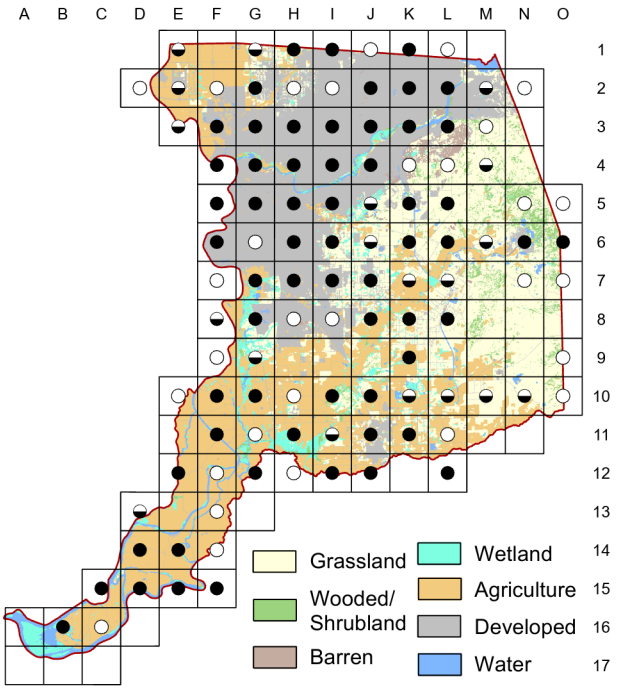
Mostly silent; only gave one song phrase.

California Scrub-Jay
Aphelocoma californica

Atlas 1

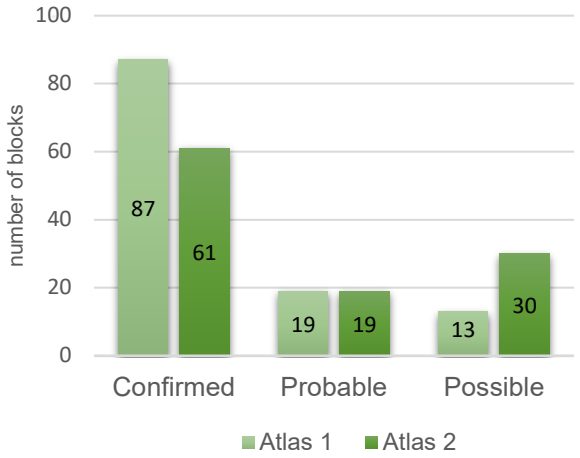


Atlas 2



Adaptable to urban settings, the California Scrub-Jay continues to be a common breeding species in the county, occupying nearly every habitat type except the treeless grasslands in the southeastern corner.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.05% / year[n]	–0.12% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Variety of open woodlands, including urban areas

Nest Type

Cup nest in tree or shrub

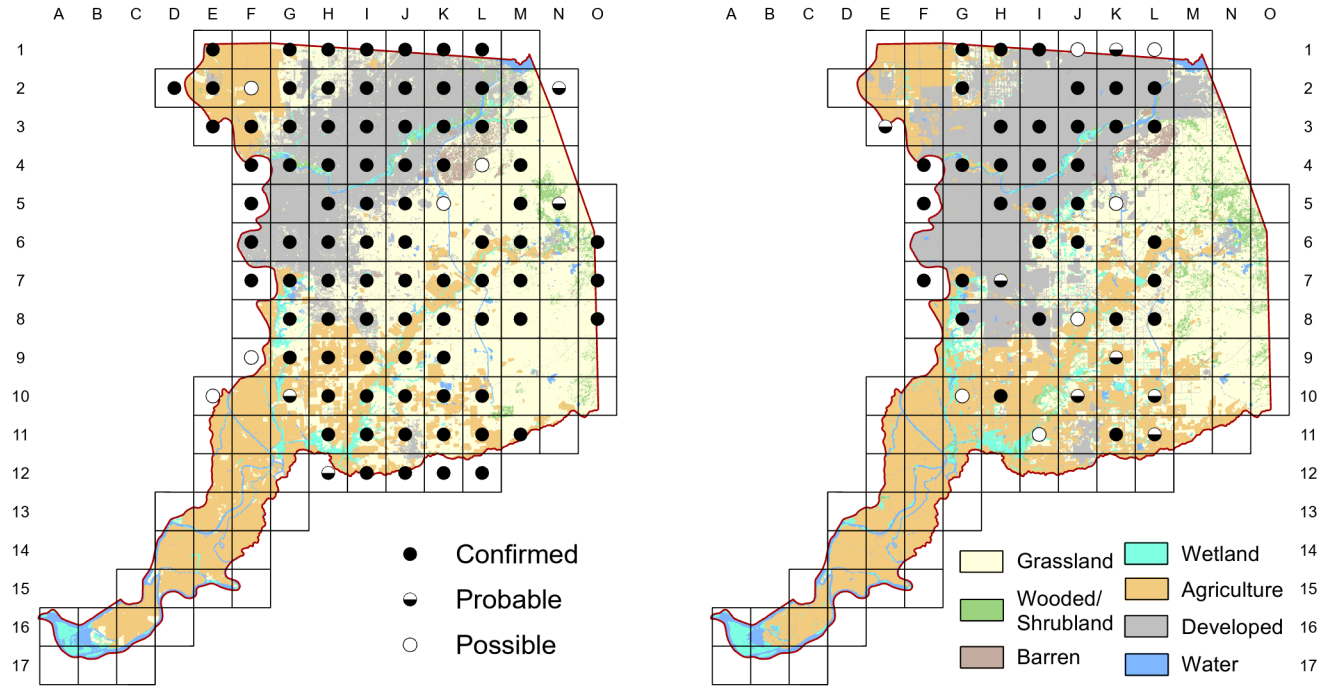
---

29 April 2017 Block H-5

Saw one with what looked like nesting material; turned out to be worms.

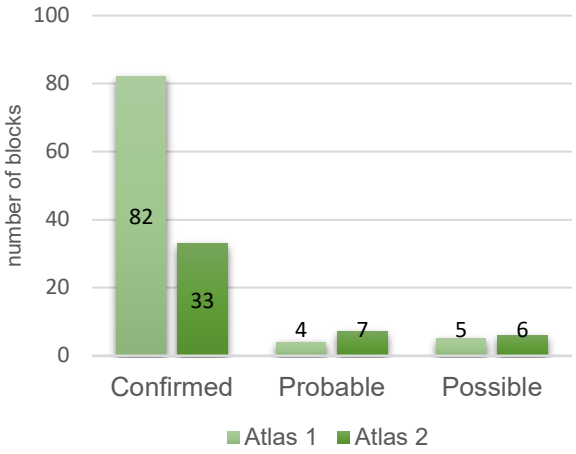
Yellow-billed Magpie
Pica nuttalli

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



As well covered in Chapter Six, and extensively in the published literature, the future of our state-endemic Yellow-billed Magpie is of great concern. While some of the reduced breeding range in the county may be linked to development, the past and ongoing impacts of West Nile virus is certainly the main threat.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–2.81% / year[s]	California endemic

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Oak savanna and semi-open suburban areas

Nest Type

Large dome of sticks with softer lining

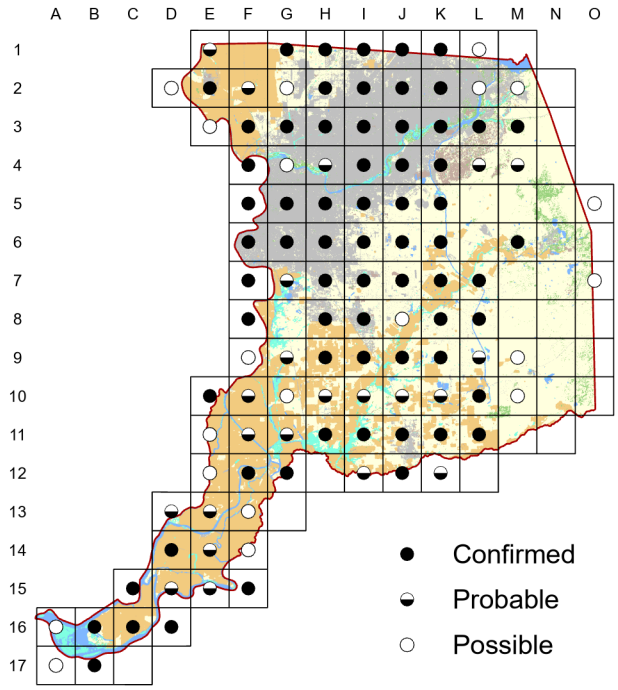
---

7 February 2019 Block I-3

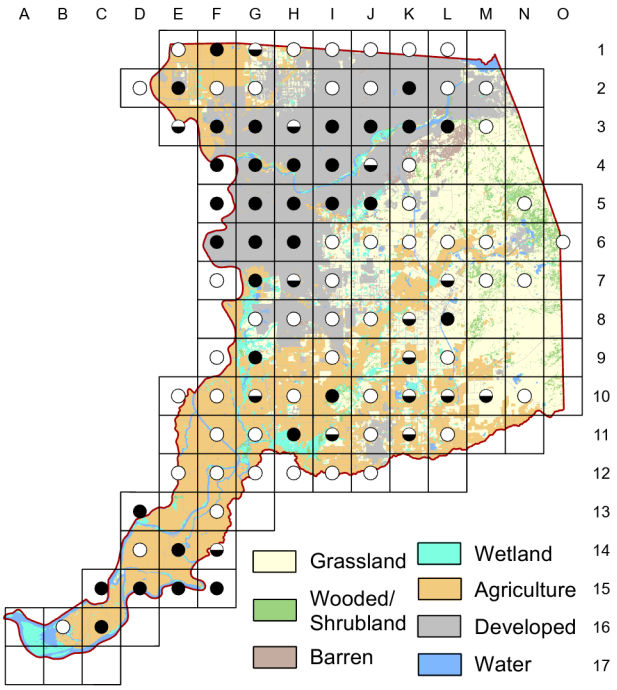
Several birds seen carrying items to nests, others simply seen working on nests.

American Crow
Corvus brachyrhynchos

Atlas 1

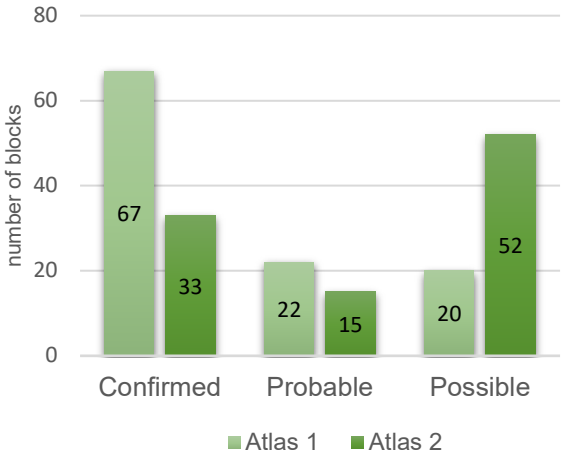


Atlas 2



Overall distribution in the detection of breeding behaviors for the American Crow remained similar between atlases. Differences in the number of each breeding code reported may have to do with the differences in methodology. Despite their large winter roosts and raucous calls, crows can be quite secretive when nesting.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.45% / year[n]	**–0.23**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Wide variety

Nest Type

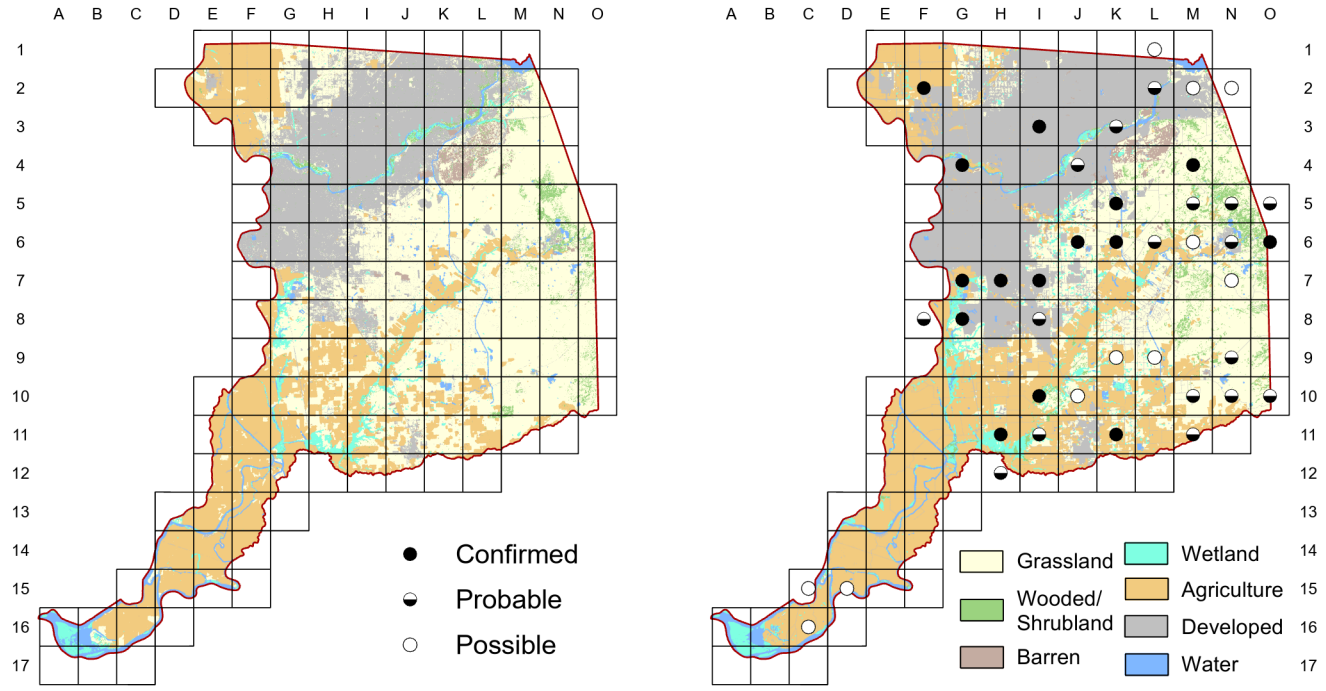
Stick nest in tree

30 April 2018 — Block H-5

Stick nest about 45 feet up in a 60-foot pine tree in a residential area. Both adults visit nest. I can see nestling stretching up and opening its beak for food.

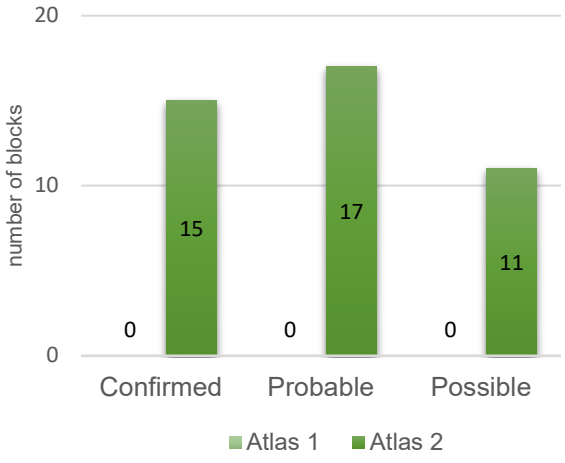
Common Raven
Corvus corax

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



The expansion of the Common Raven's breeding range into Sacramento County is discussed in Chapter Four. While most nesting was in open, rural settings, increasing numbers are moving into more developed parts of the county. It remains to be seen whether the increase in this highly intelligent and resourceful bird will have impacts on other bird species.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
4.19% / year[s]	**1.99**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Variety, but generally open

Nest Type

Stick nest in tree or tall structure

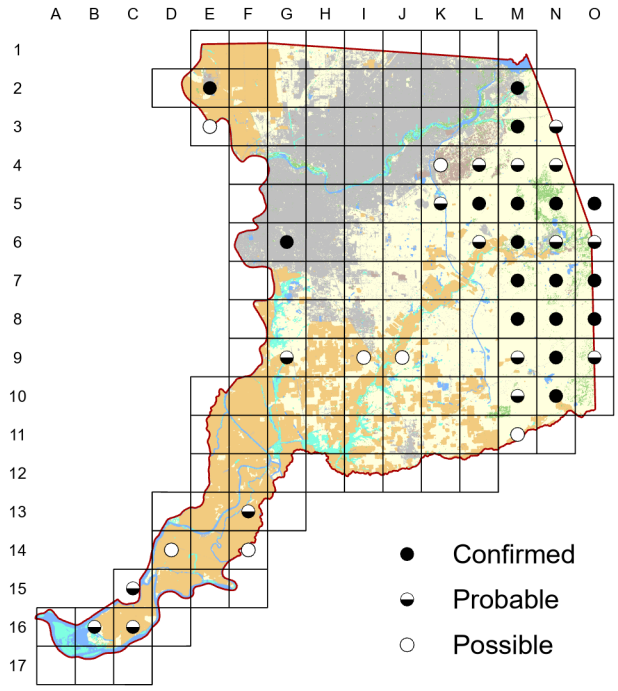
---

12 April 2016 Block G-7

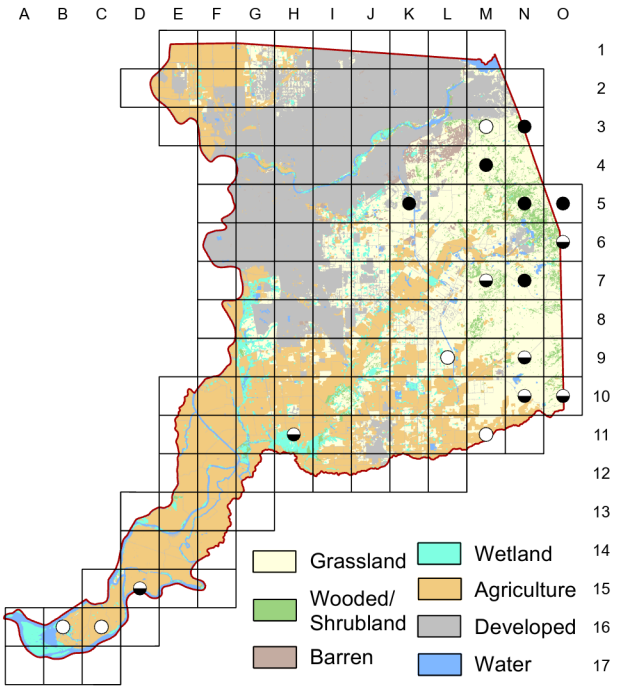
Saw one raven delivering stick to nest in high voltage tower. Other bird sitting in nest.

Horned Lark
Eremophila alpestris

Atlas 1

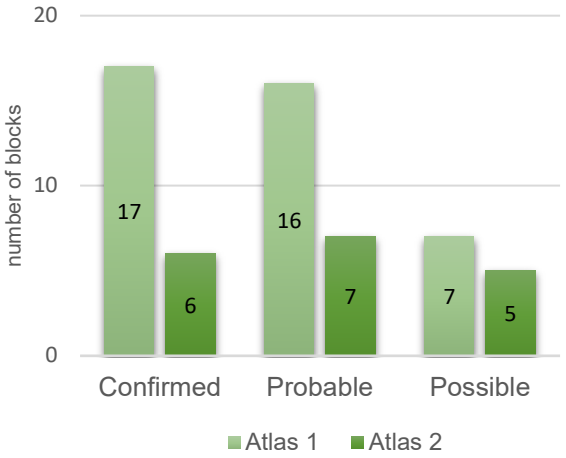


Atlas 2



The dramatic, and not unexpected, decline of the Horned Lark as a Sacramento County breeder is covered in detail in Chapter Six. With little protection for the grassland that remains in the county, long-term prospects for this species are not promising.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.9% / year[s]	**–1.91**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Grassland/open country

Nest Type

Cup nest in depression in bare ground

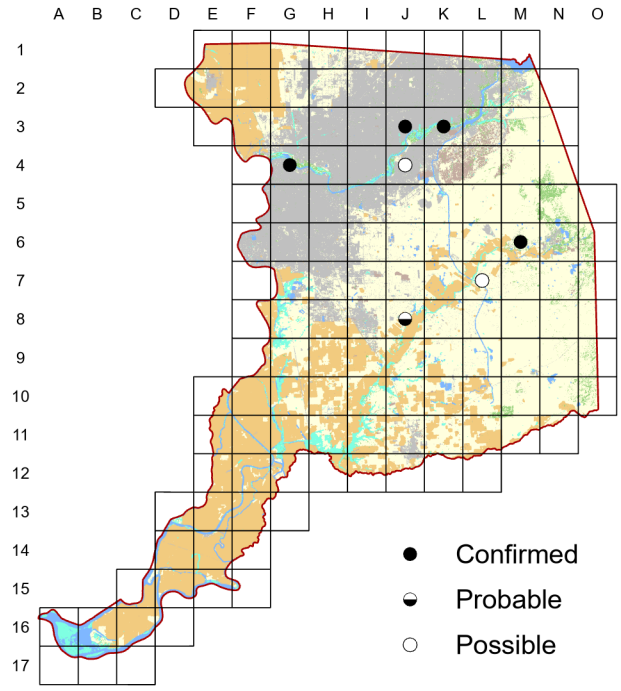
---

24 May 2018 Block M-4

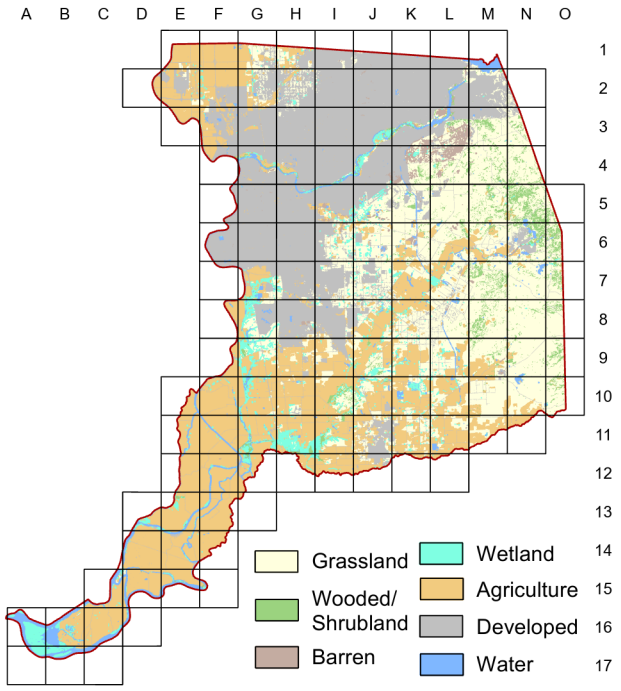
Heard several and my favorite encounter of the day was an adult feeding a fledgling.

Bank Swallow
Riparia riparia

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



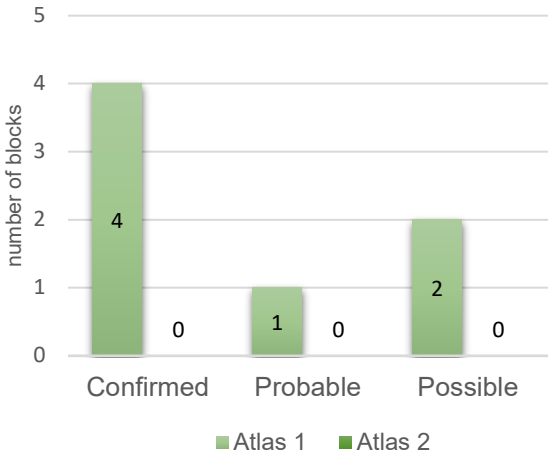
As discussed in Chapter Four, Bank Swallows have declined throughout their range in California and the species has not been observed breeding in the county for many years. The last active site was in the cliffs on the north side of the upper American River Parkway where potential breeding habitat remains. However, only Northern Rough-winged Swallows breed there now.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–3.54% / year[n]	**–3.69**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Open areas near water with suitable nesting sites

Nest Type

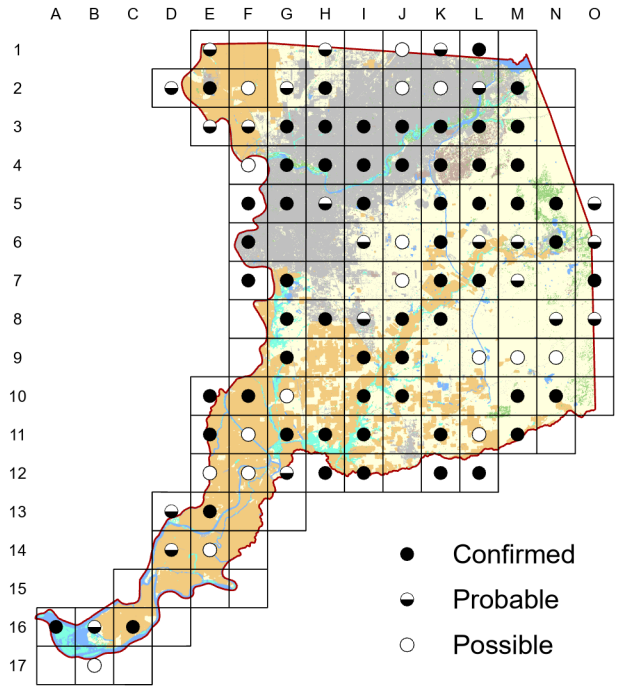
Cavity excavated in sandy or gravelly banks or cliffs

1938 L. K. Beyer

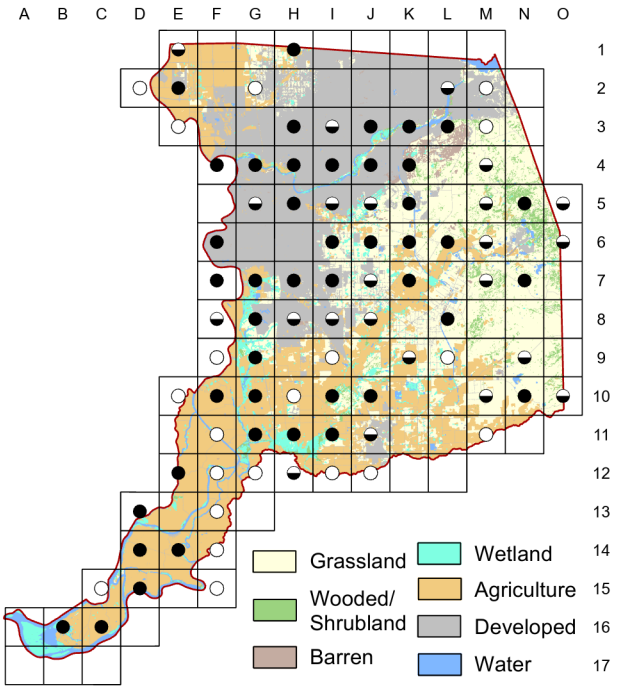
They seem to like to poise on beating wings before the face of the bank where the nests are located, holding their position for a few seconds and then wheeling away.

Tree Swallow
Tachycineta bicolor

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



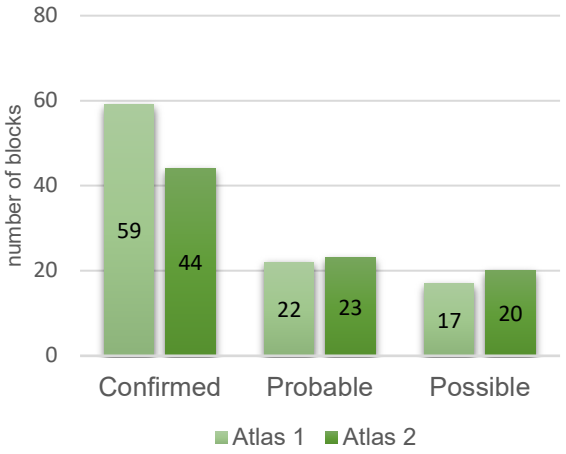
There was little, if any, change in the status of the Tree Swallow between the two atlases. Certainly the installation of numerous nest boxes has helped this bird thrive here and throughout the state. While a sizeable number of these swallows can be found through winter in the county, it is unknown if those birds stay to breed, or depart to breed elsewhere, replaced by migrants from farther south for the nesting season.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
1.42% / year[s]	**–0.67**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Mainly riparian woodlands

Nest Type

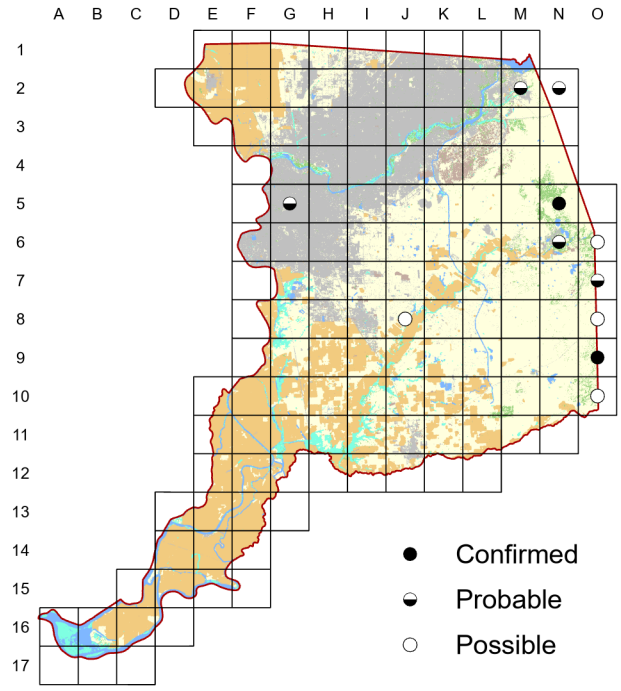
Cavity in tree or nest box

1923 W. L. Dawson

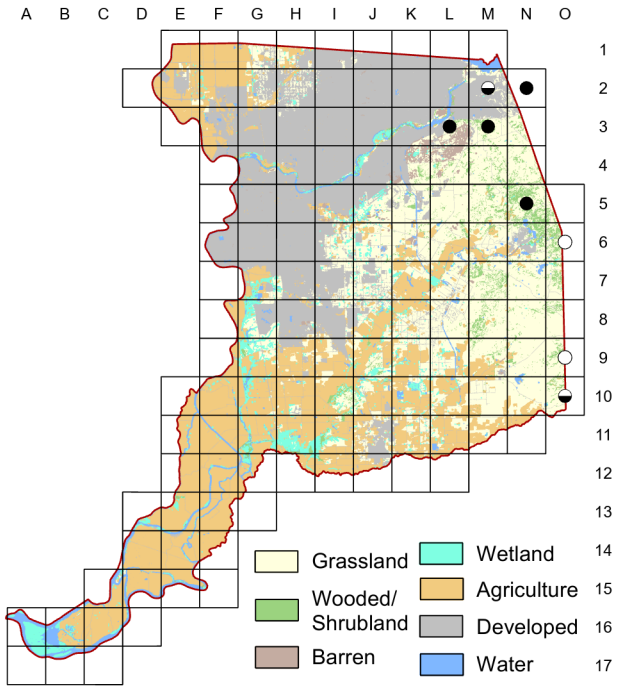
In their immaculate garb of dark blue and white, they seem like crystallizations of heaven and its templed clouds.

Violet-green Swallow
Tachycineta thalassina

Atlas 1

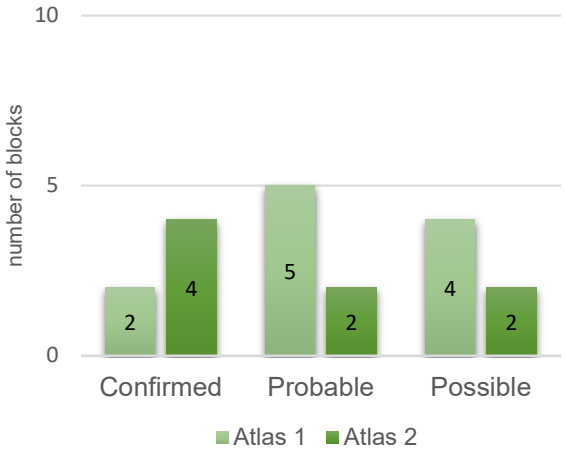


Atlas 2



Although BBS trends suggest a species in decline, we saw no real change in breeding range for the Violet-green Swallow between the two atlases. In both, this species was mostly confined to the very eastern edge of the county, at the western edge of its Sierra breeding range.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.87% / year[s]	**–0.56**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Open woodland

Nest Type

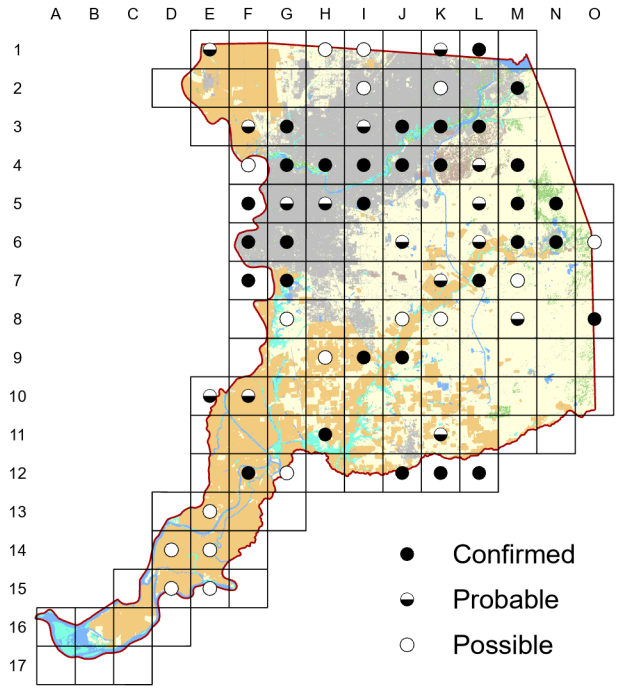
Cavity in tree or nest box

1923 — W. L. Dawson

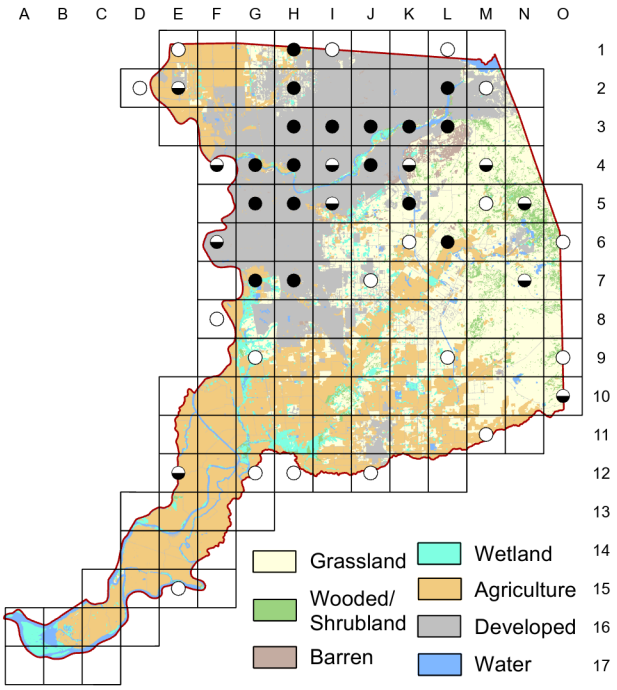
The violet of the upper tail coverts and rump comes into view only in changing flashes; but one catches such visions as a beggar flung coins.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Stelgidopteryx serripennis

Atlas 1

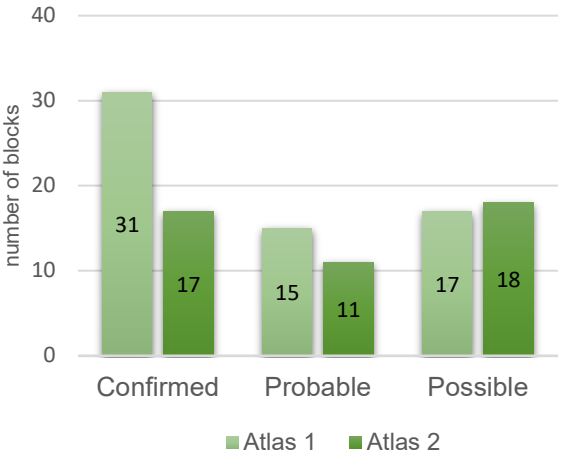


Atlas 2



An apparent decline in the Northern Rough-winged Swallow between atlases may be attributed to a number of factors, including nationwide declines in aerial insectivore species, loss of suitable nesting habitat due to the "hardening" of riverbanks, and/or differences in methodology.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.04% / year[n]	–0.22% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Variety of open habitats with suitable nesting sites

Nest Type

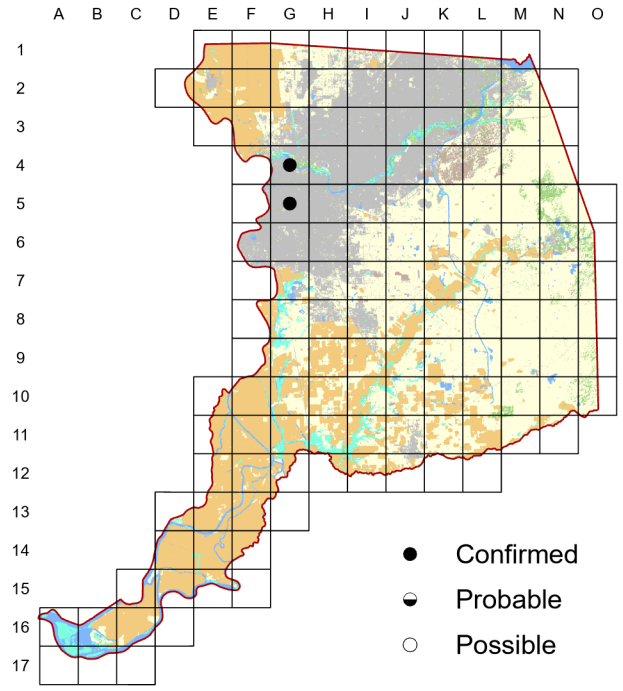
Cup nest in excavated cavity in cliff or bank or cavity in human-made structures

22 April 2018 — Block H-5

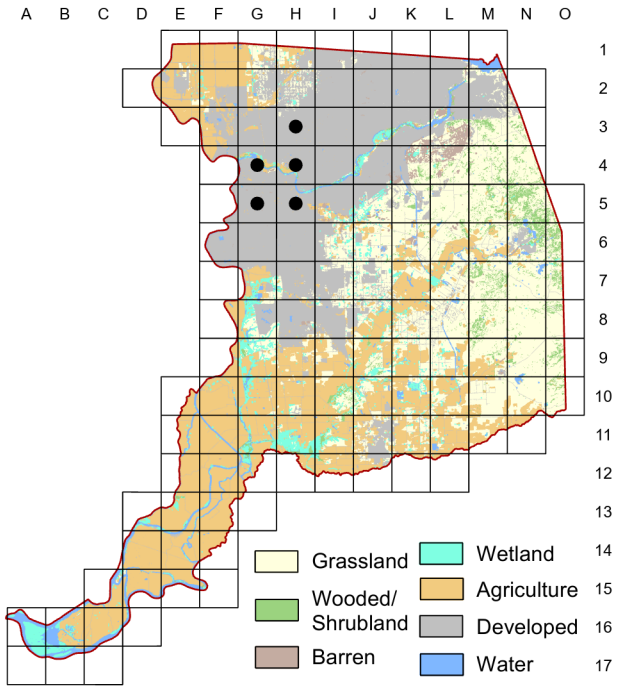
A pair was observed carrying a twig and a feather into one of the freeway weep holes.

Purple Martin
Progne subis

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



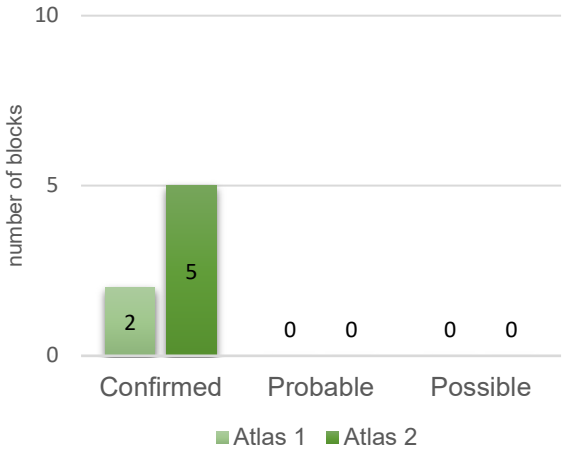
Sacramento Purple Martin nesting is limited to cavities in bridges and overpasses. Recent declines are obscured in Atlas 2 because the intensive focus on the species elevates relative detections. Systematic monitoring began in 2002, and martin numbers peaked in 2004, then declined by 88% to just 21 pairs by 2019, possibly due to local disturbance and, especially, increased use of neonicotinoid insecticides (Airola 2020).

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
1.2% / year[n]	**–0.54**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Variety of open or semi-open sites

Nest Type

Cavity in tree or human-made structures

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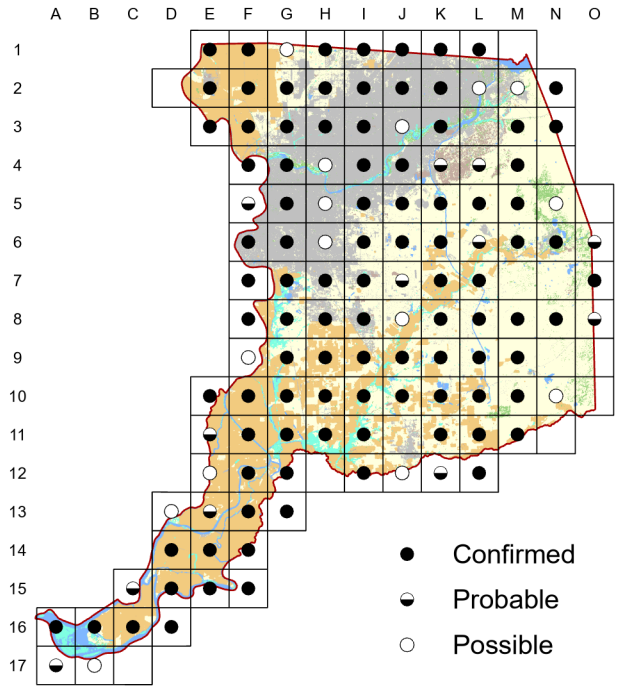
24 June 2016 — Block H-5

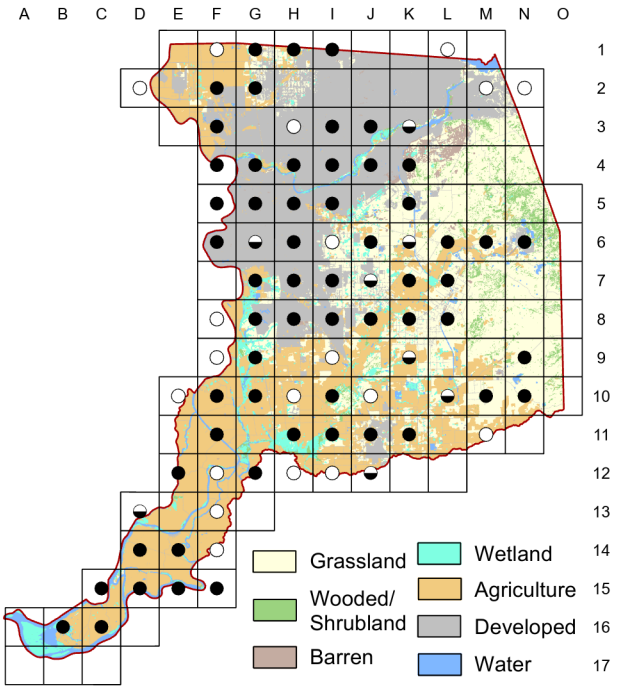
Saw a lot of them foraging low along the railroad right of way south of the colony; lots of dragonflies.

Barn Swallow
Hirundo rustica

Atlas 1

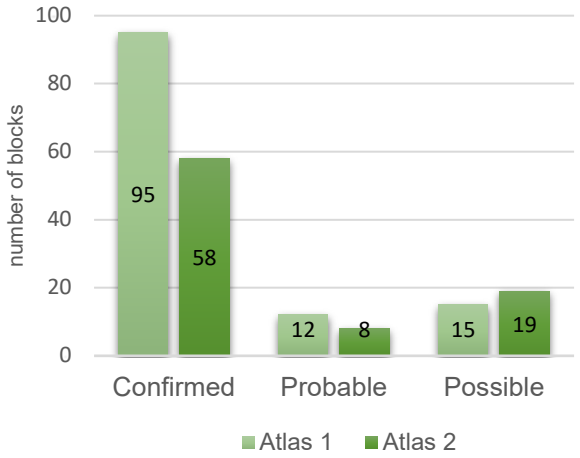


Atlas 2



Despite a proclivity for attaching its nests to human-made structures, the Barn Swallow showed an apparent decline between the two atlases, reflecting the large decline in aerial insectivores that has been recognized nationwide.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.1% / year[s]	**–0.55**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Open country near water

Nest Type

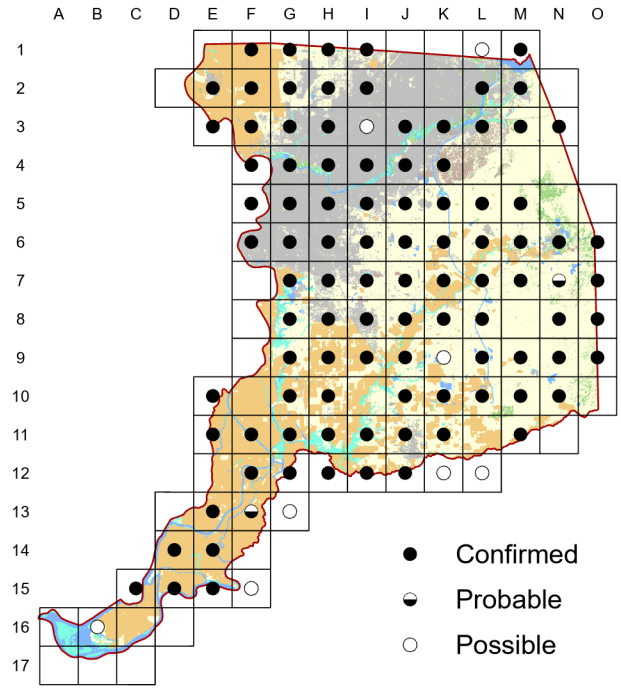
Mud nest on covered ledge or wall

8 May 2018 Block E-12

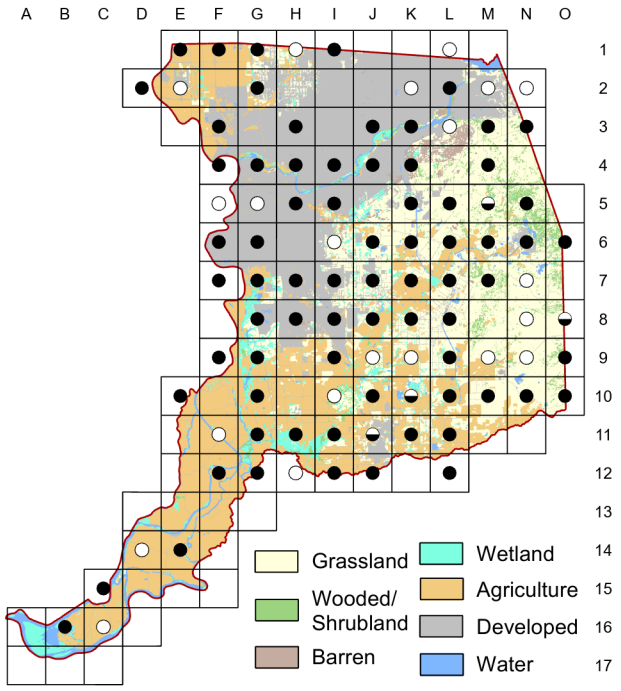
A few to several pairs ride the nearby ferry back and forth, as their nests are under the ferry edges, or wings. It's pretty cute.

Cliff Swallow
Petrochelidon pyrrhonota

Atlas 1

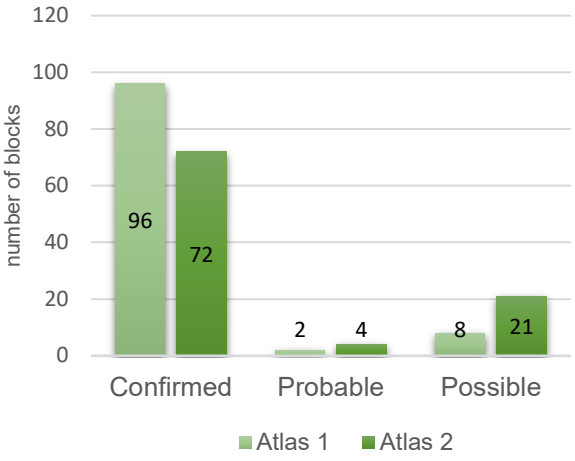


Atlas 2



The Cliff Swallow appears to be relatively stable throughout the county, where their mud nest colonies seem to adorn nearly every water crossing.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.16% / year[s]	0.82% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Variety of open or semi-open habitats

Nest Type

Mud nest attached to covered wall

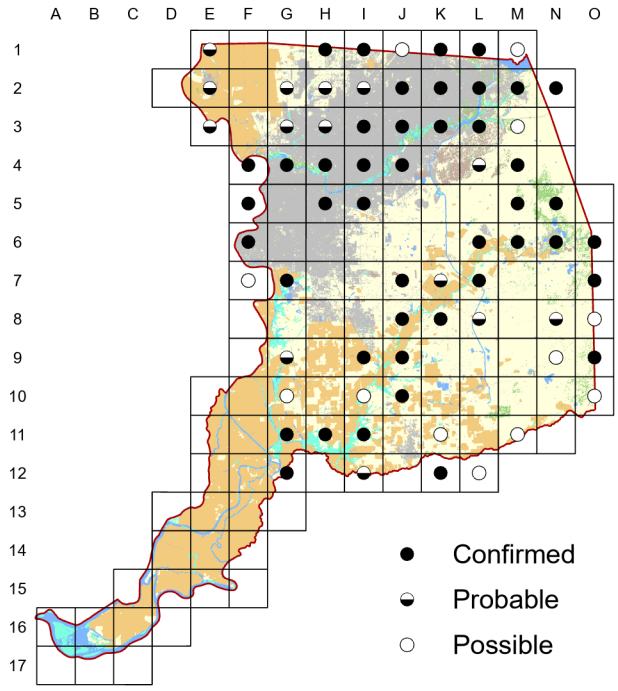
---

9 April 2017 — Block L-8

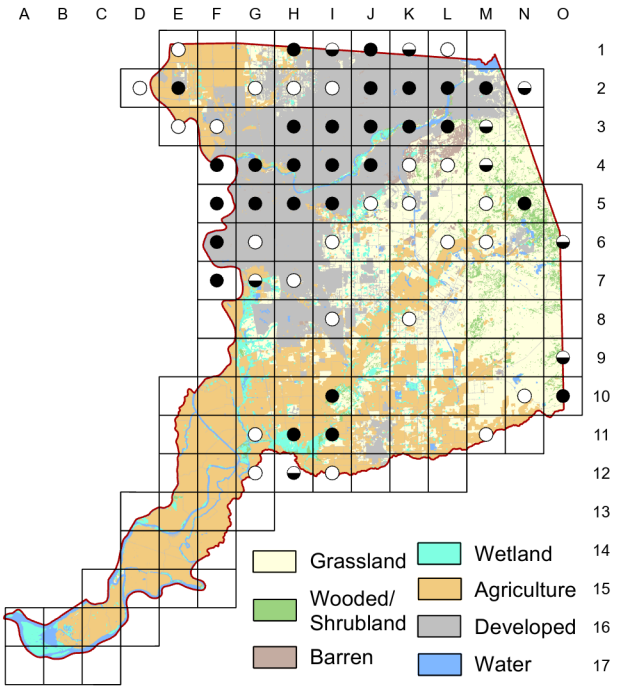
Flying around bridge over canal and gathering mud nearby.

Oak Titmouse
Baeolophus inornatus

Atlas 1

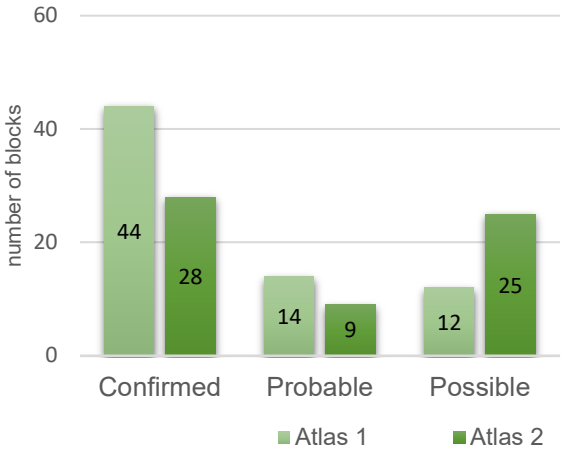


Atlas 2



Still present in areas of oak woodland in the county, the apparent modest decline in detection of breeding behaviors in the Oak Titmouse between atlases may be more of a reflection of methodology and access, particularly along the Cosumnes River corridor.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.07% / year[s]	**–1.07**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Mainly oak woodlands; also uses urbanized areas

Nest Type

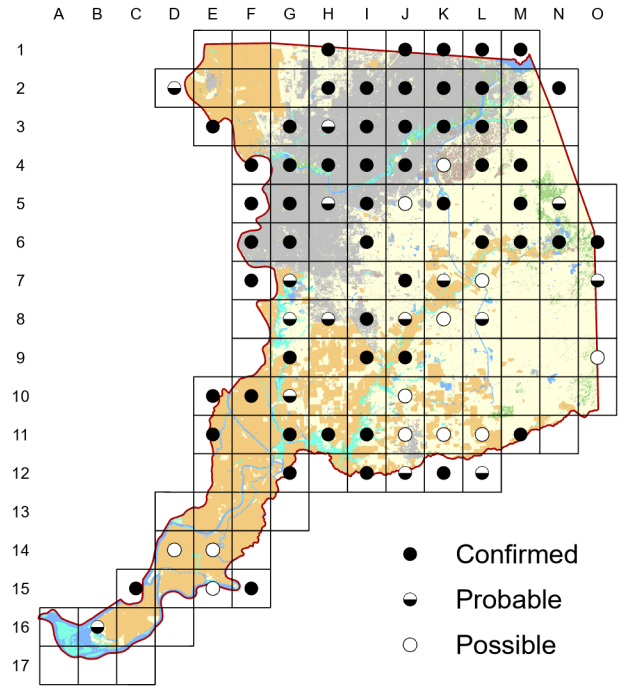
Cavity

21 April 2017 Block K-3

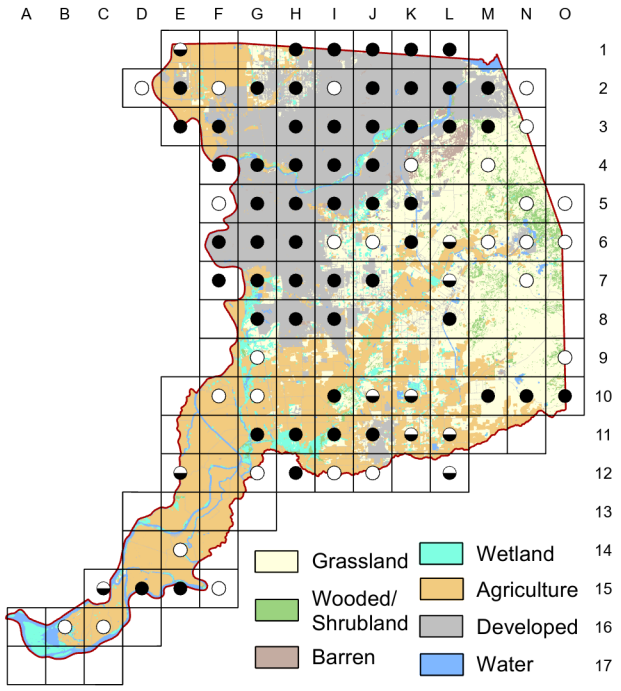
Pair feeding very vocal young in one of the nest boxes in the yard. Nestlings sounded small. Saw adults delivering small green worms and one brought a medium-sized long-winged insect.

Bushtit
Psaltriparus minimus

Atlas 1

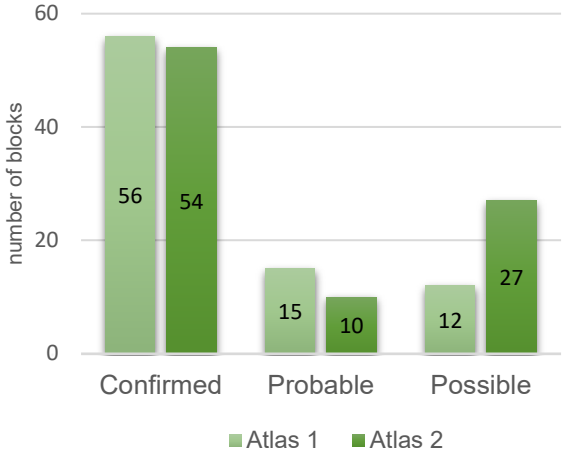


Atlas 2



Whether building their sock-like hanging nest in a native oak or the camellia in front of your house, the Bushtit remains a common breeding species in urban and wooded portions of the county.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.61% / year[n]	–0.72% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Mixed woodland, including urbanized areas

Nest Type

Pendulous, gourd-like nest

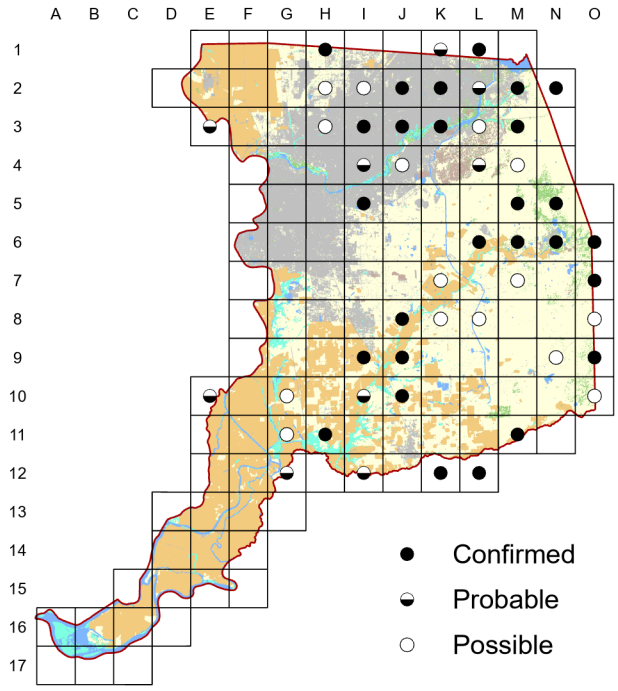
---

16 April 2020 — Block K-3

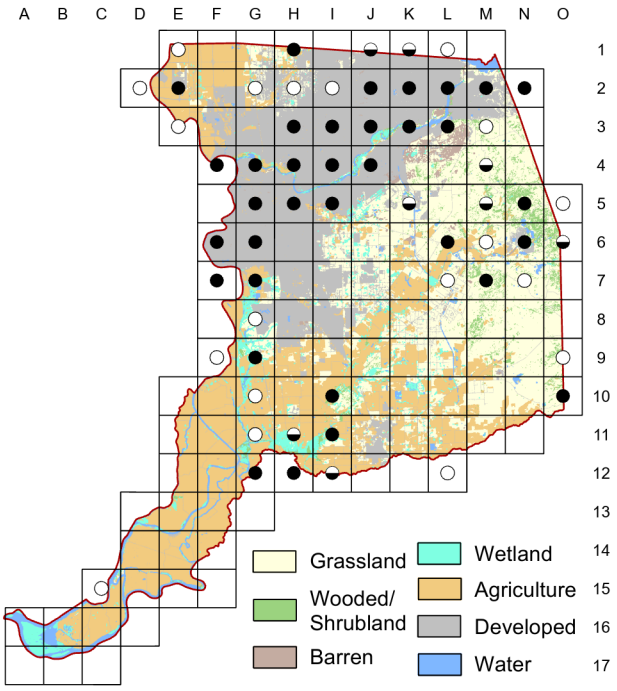
A first for me: one perched on the cap on my head, probably to grab one of many oak worms dropping from the trees.

White-breasted Nuthatch
Sitta carolinensis

Atlas 1

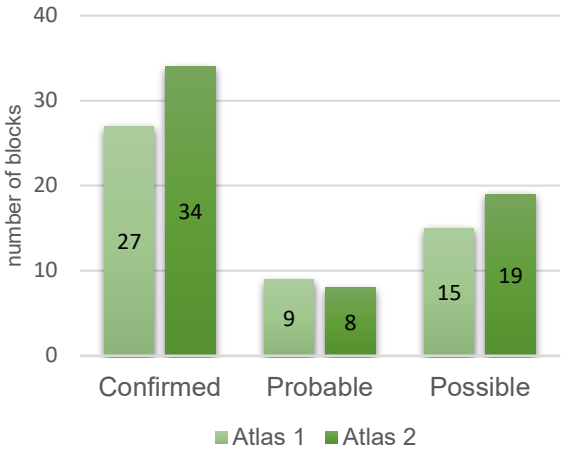


Atlas 2



Although the number of occupied blocks was not substantially different between the two atlases, it does appear that the White-breasted Nuthatch is another bird that is now more common in urbanized area than in earlier times.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.21% / year[n]	**1.15**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Variety of woodlands, including urban woodlands

Nest Type

Cavity

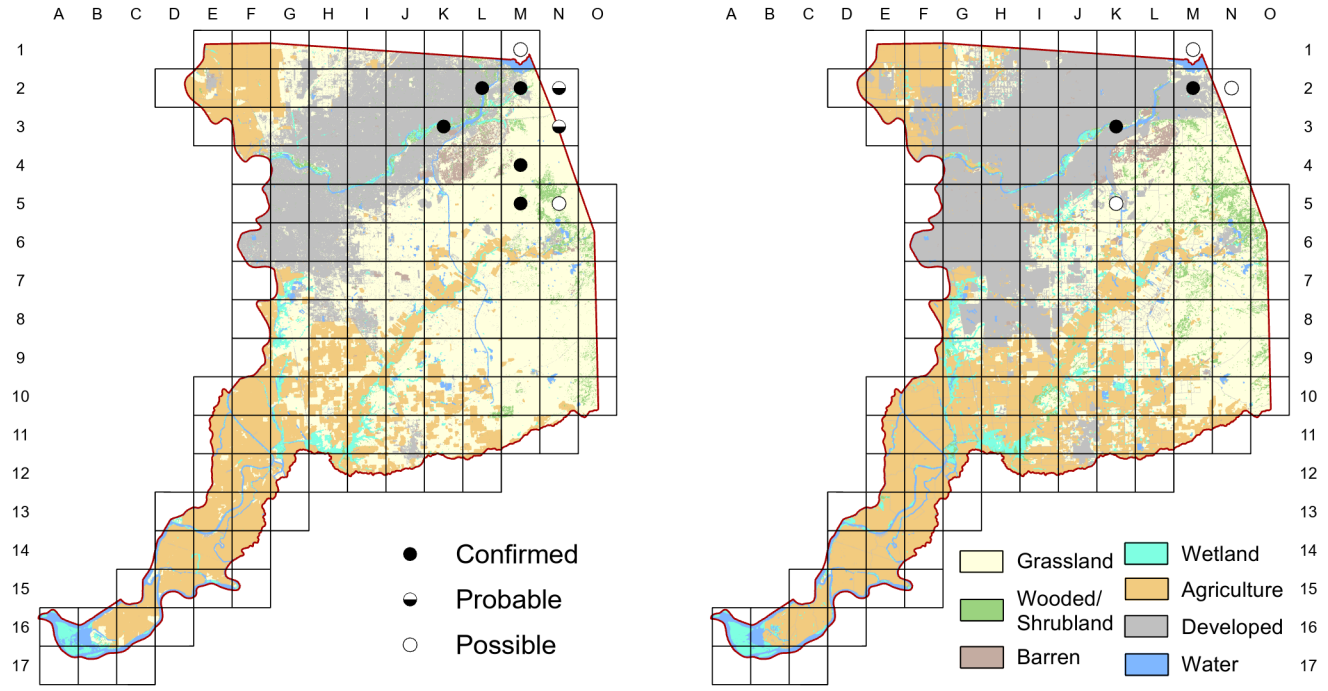
---

1 April 2020 Block K-3

Watched one of a pair approach a broad-handed mole corpse in middle of dirt road, appear to remove hair from its body then fly off.

Rock Wren
Salpinctes obsoletus

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



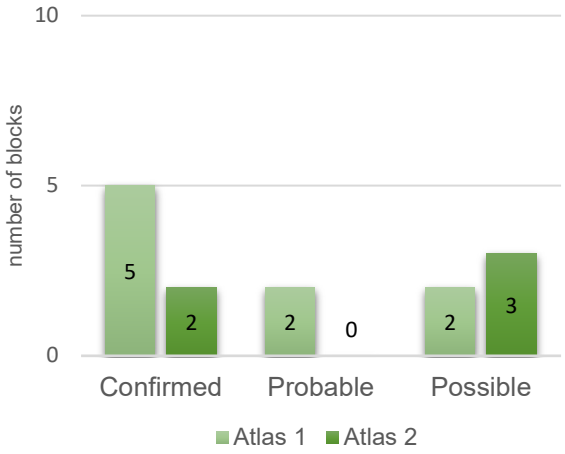
The rocky, open habitats preferred by the Rock Wren are relatively rare in the Central Valley, and the patchy breeding distribution of this species reflects that. In Sacramento County this wren is a regular breeder in suitable habitat on the edges of Folsom Lake, and along the upper portions of the American River. The lack of confirmations in the open country south of Folsom in Atlas 2 may reflect our more limited access during that atlas.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.66% / year[n]	–0.52% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Mostly open rocky habitats

Nest Type

Loose cup nest in rock crevice

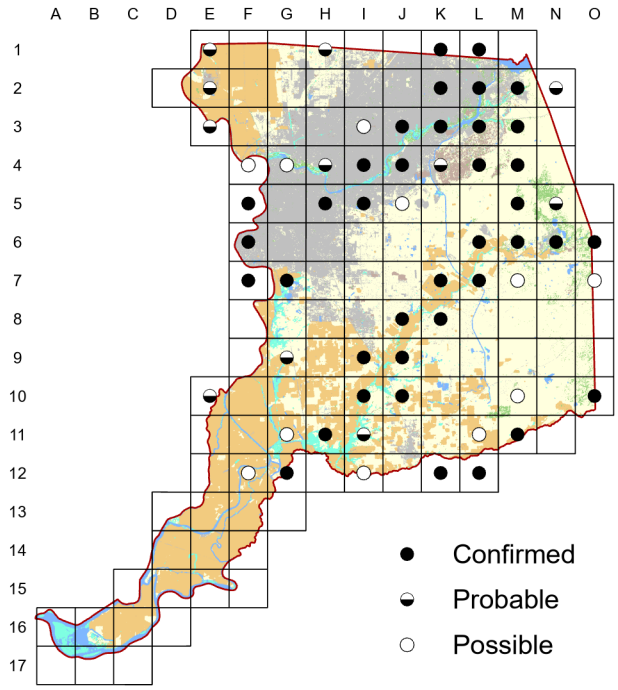
---

13 March 2020 Block K-3

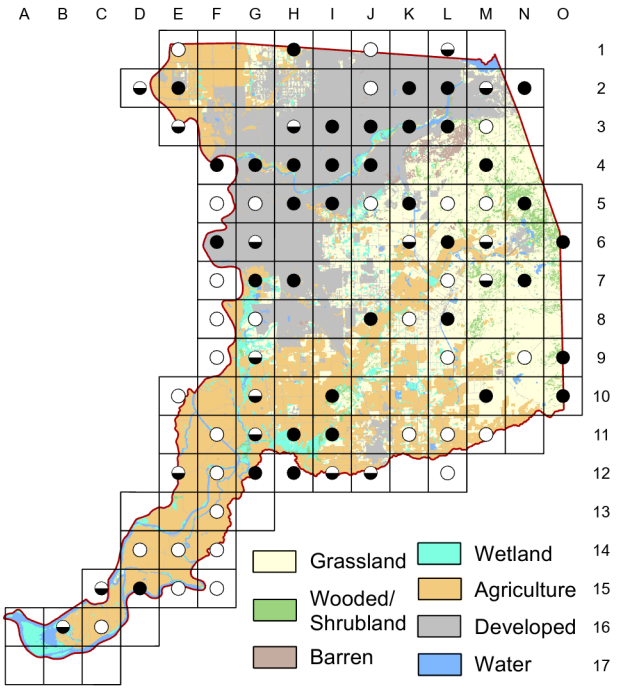
Carrying nesting material into the rocks to the east of Hazel Avenue.

House Wren
Troglodytes aedon

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



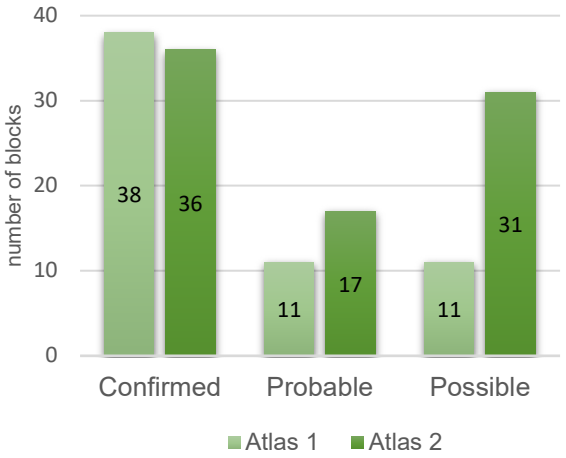
A comparison of the maps for Atlas 1 and 2 suggests that the House Wren has expanded its range in Sacramento County. While breeding is still concentrated in the riparian habitats along the American and Cosumnes rivers, it appears that there may be more breeding in urban areas now than during Atlas 1. We also saw many more observations in the Delta during Atlas 2.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.47% / year[n]	**0.49**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Variety of woodlands, including urban woodlands

Nest Type

Cavity

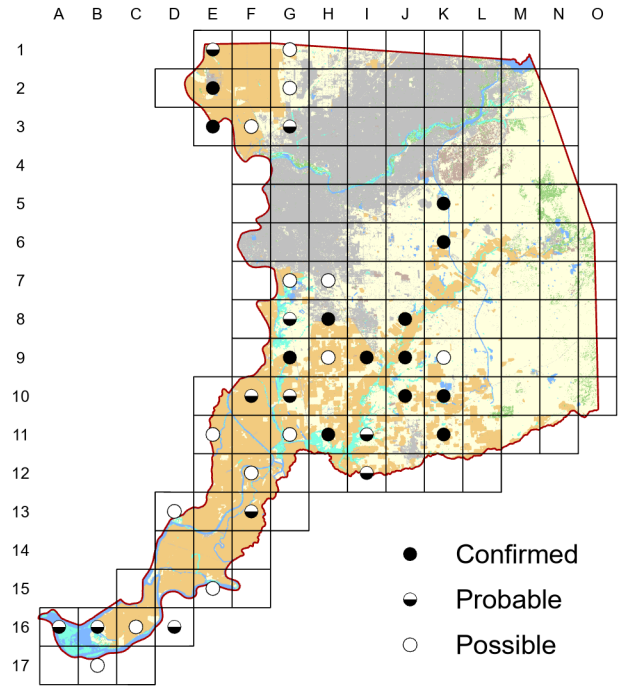
---

20 May 2017 — Block H-5

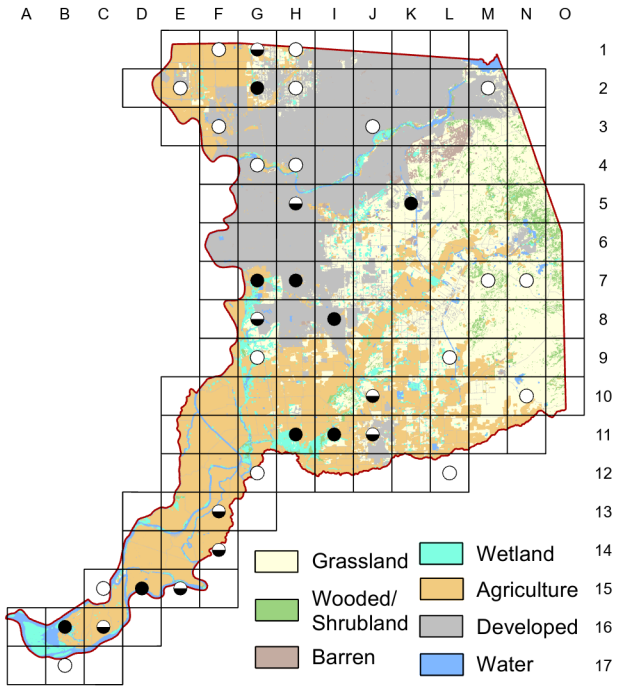
Saw both adults carrying food then heard nestlings after the female entered with a green worm; I checked the box with my camera and saw six small nestlings.

Marsh Wren
Cistothorus palustris

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



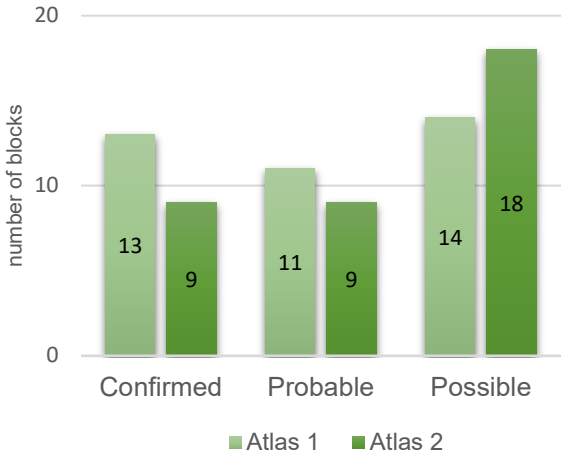
You're unlikely to miss a singing Marsh Wren when in occupied wetland habitat, although confirmation of breeding can be difficult to determine due to the habit of males building numerous dummy nests. The species continues to breed where wetland habitat persists in the county.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
1.66% / year[s]	**1.88**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Wetland with tall emergent vegetation

Nest Type

Woven nest; males build several "unused" nests

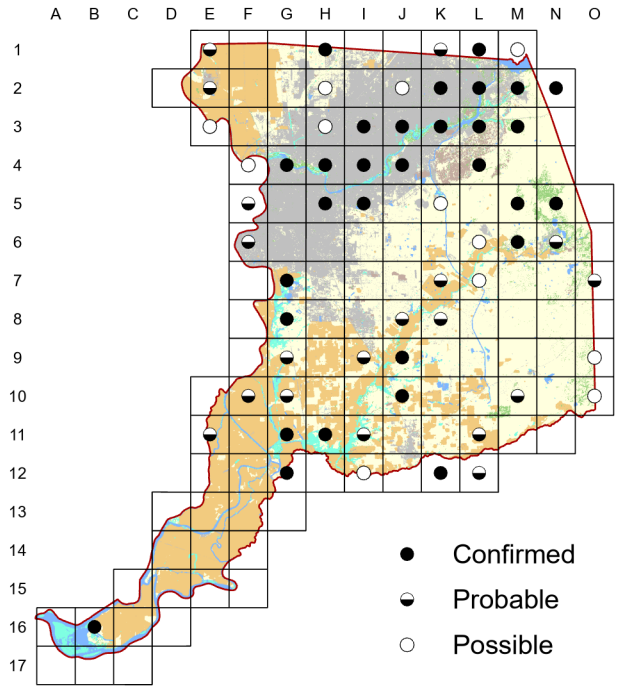
---

31 March 2018 — Block H-11

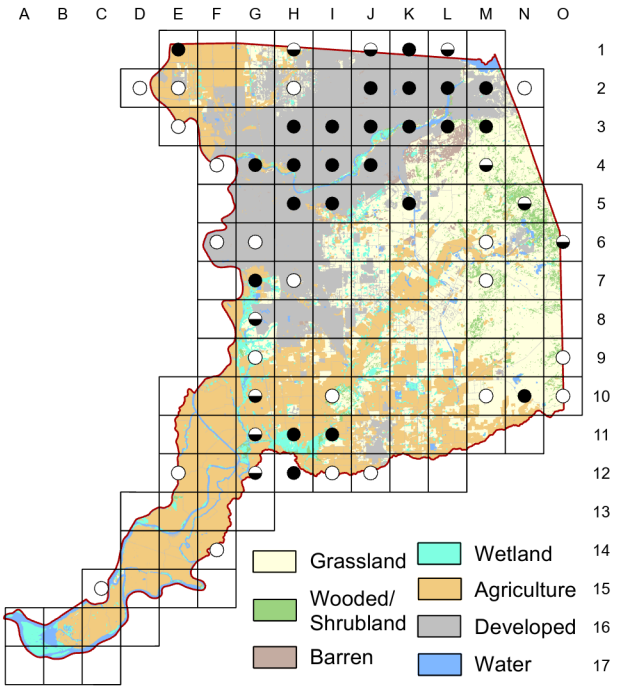
It's their time of year. Males are more out in the open. Also observed two nests being built and many others already finished.

Bewick's Wren
Thryomanes bewickii

Atlas 1

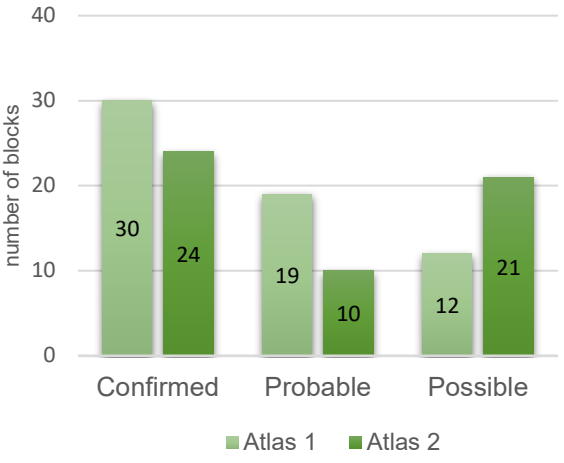


Atlas 2



We saw relatively little change in the distribution of the Bewick's Wren. In both atlases this species was found mainly in riparian habitats, as well as in some residential areas. The relative lack of breeding observations in Atlas 2 in the central areas could be due to conversion of some edge habitats to more intensive agricultural uses or to differences in observer efforts or access.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.24% / year[n]	–0.41% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Riparian and urban woodlands; shrublands

Nest Type

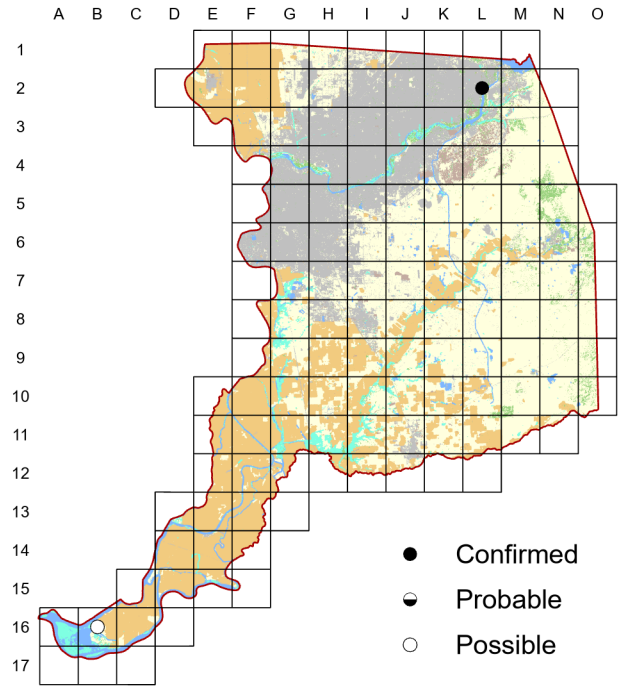
Cavity

1923 W. L. Dawson

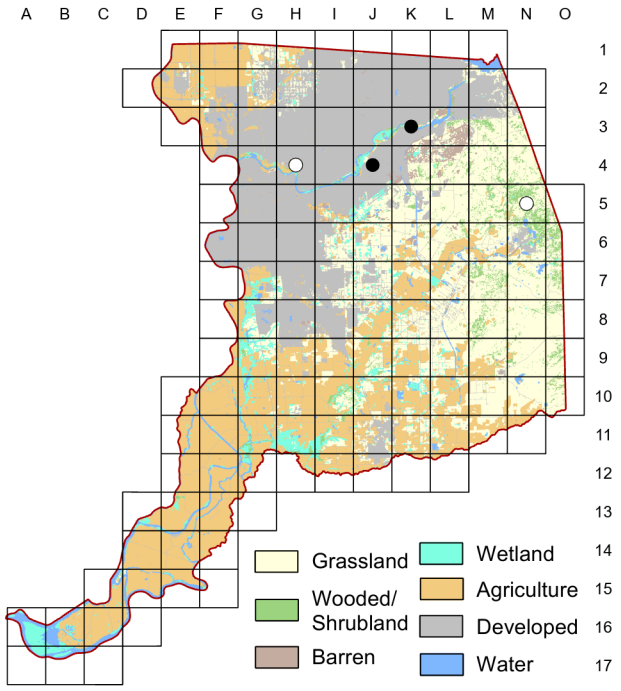
The Bewick Wren knows his ground. And he lets you see exactly as much of himself as he intends and no more.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Polioptila caerulea

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



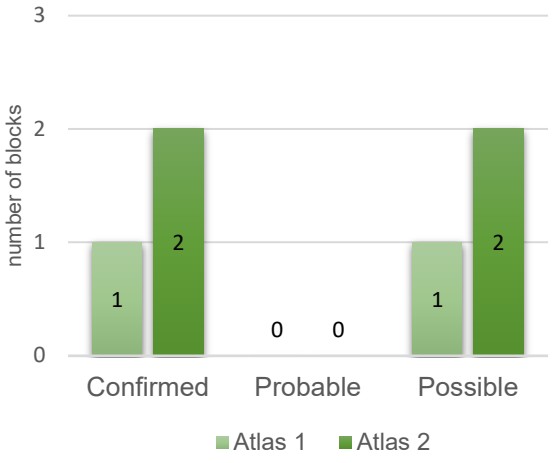
In each atlas, breeding Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were confirmed along the American River in riparian habitats with a shrubby understory. While this species' presence in more blocks during Atlas 2 does not confirm an increase, that would be consistent with the regional and rangewide positive trends. This bird remains a sparsely distributed and uncommon breeder on the Central Valley floor, much more common in Sierra and Coast Range foothills.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
2.19% / year[s]	**0.3**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Variety of woodlands and shrublands

Nest Type

Finely constructed cup nest

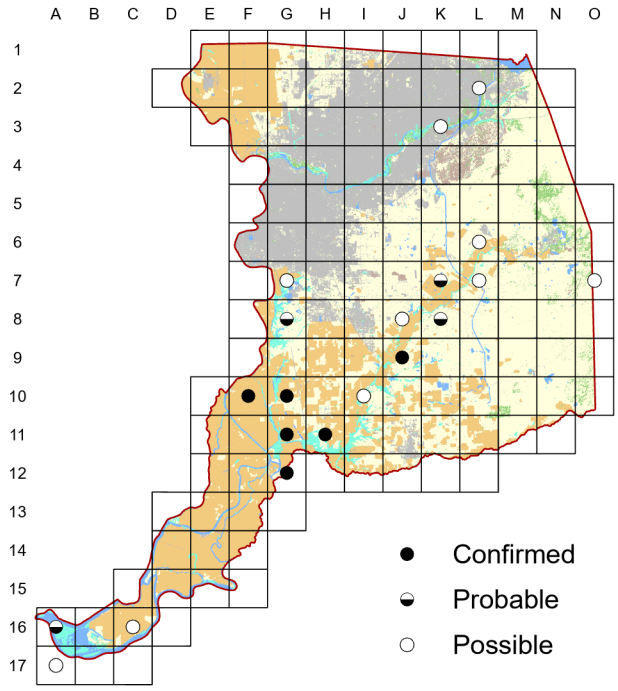
---

10 May 2019 — Block J-4

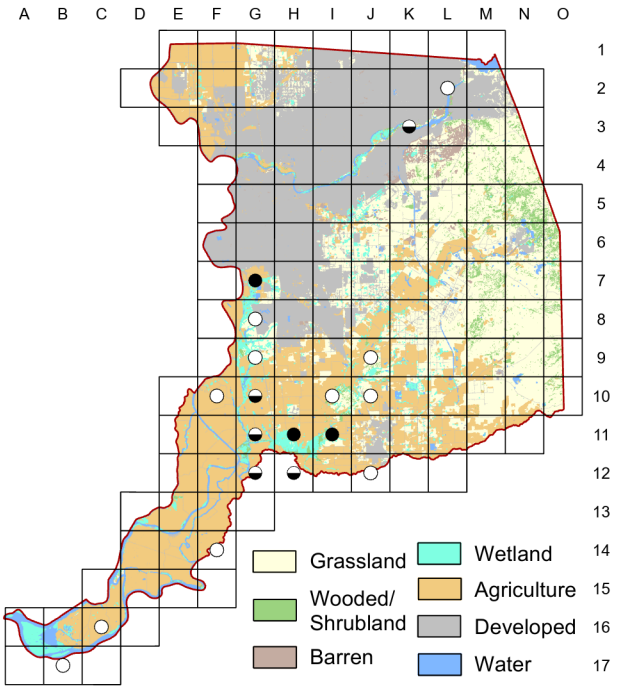
Approximately 70 yards past the horse trailer lot along a main fire road; he attacked an Acorn Woodpecker that landed in his tree.

Wrentit
Chamaea fasciata

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



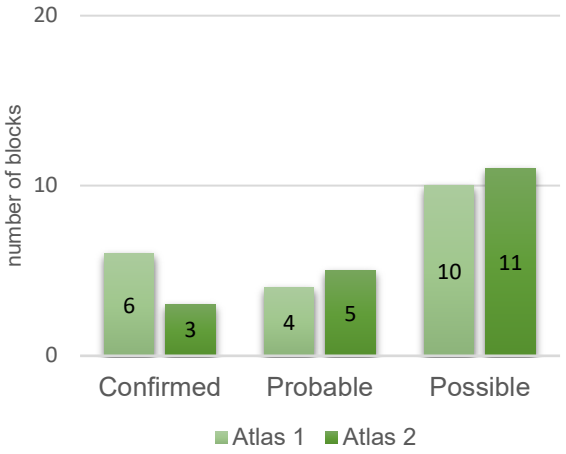
Birders used to hearing (and sometimes seeing) Wrentits in open chaparral habitats are often surprised to hear that bouncing ball song coming from a densely wooded riparian area on the Central Valley floor. Wrentits are well established in many such areas, as long as there is dense understory. We think there has been little change in breeding status, with the small differences attributable to restricted access to some areas during Atlas 2.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.53% / year[s]	**–0.51**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Chaparral and riparian areas with dense understory

Nest Type

Cup nest in shrub

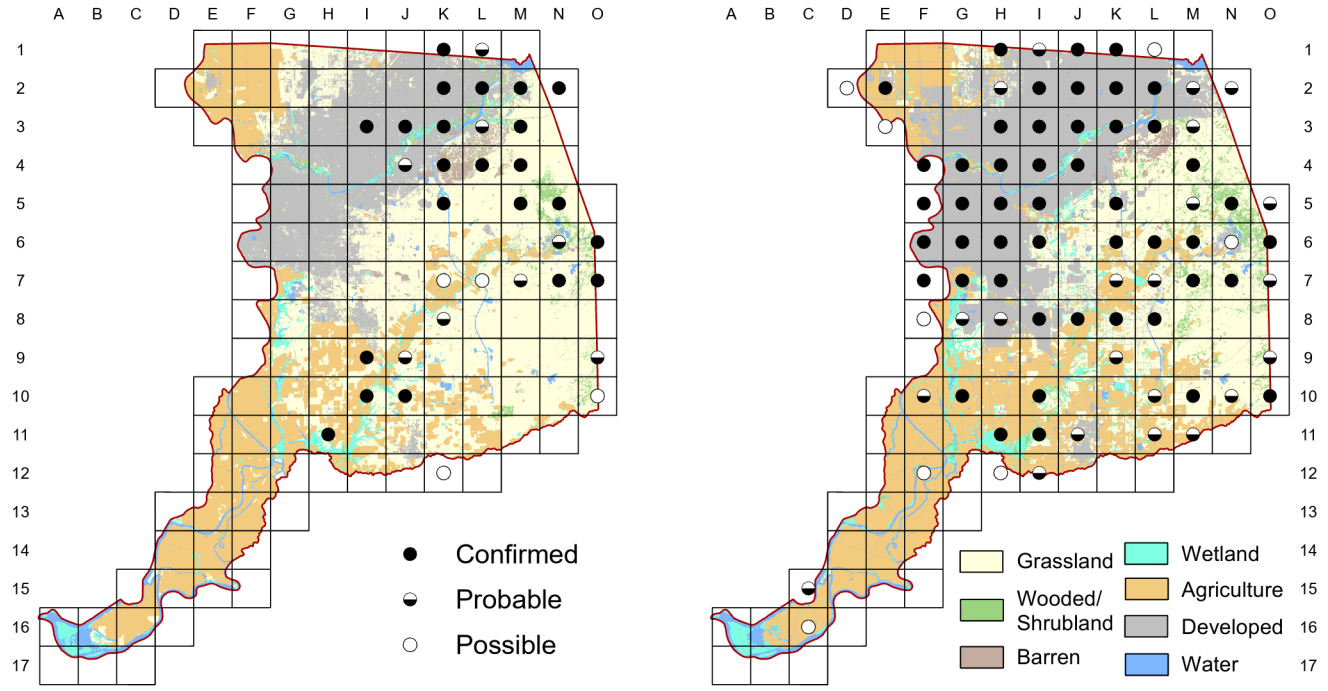
---

8 May 2017 Block G-7

Scolding and chasing a scrub-jay for several minutes near a likely nest site. Chased the jay 20 feet up into a willow.

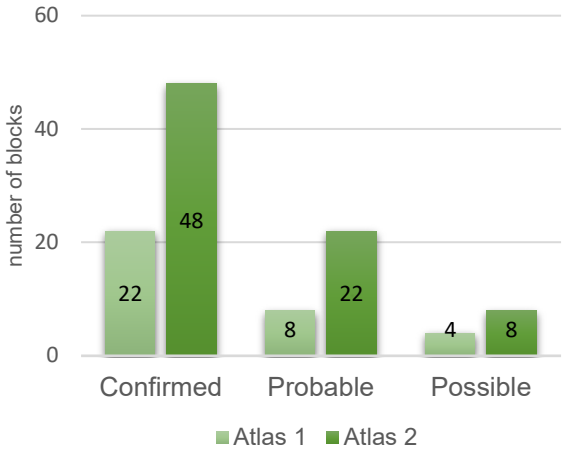
Western Bluebird
Sialia mexicana

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



As discussed in detail in Chapter Five, the dramatic expansion of breeding Western Bluebirds into urban areas in Sacramento County appears to represent a relatively recent adaptation to nesting in these sorts of habitats. It would be interesting to compare reproductive success between urban and nonurban locations, though the persistence in developed areas suggests these birds are doing well.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.64% / year[n]	0.34% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Open woodland

Nest Type

Cavity or nest box

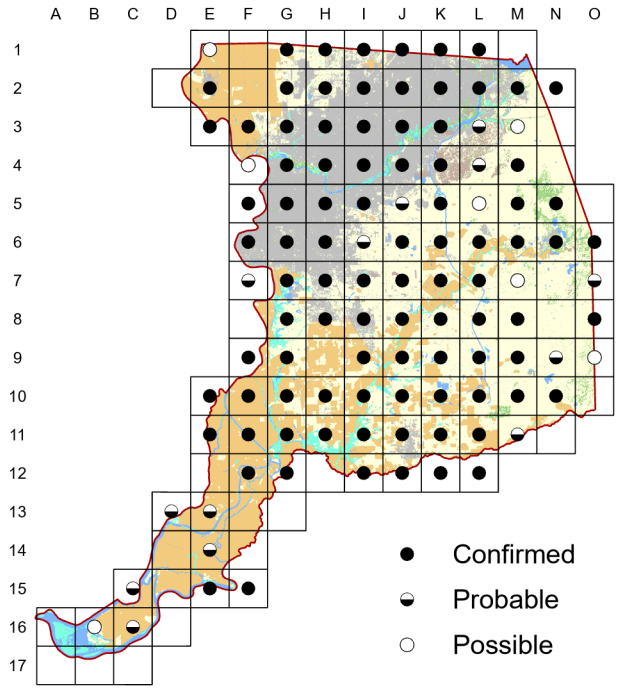
---

23 April 2018 Block L-3

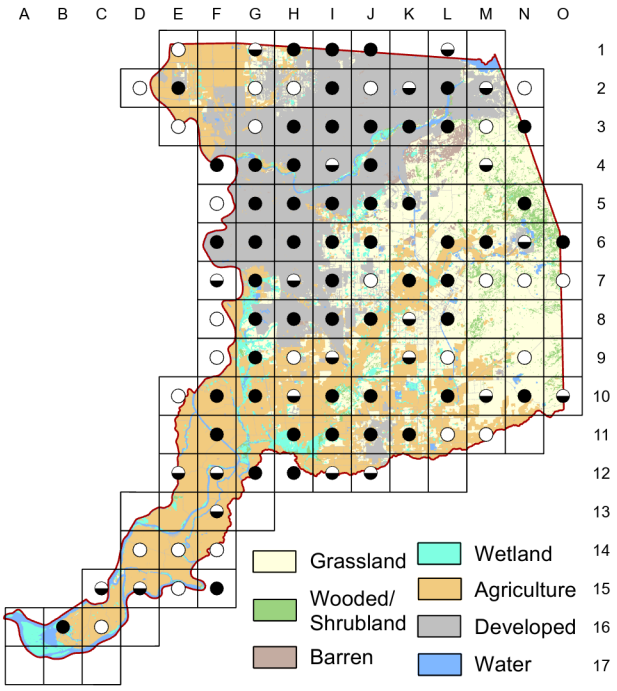
Two nests seen, with pairs both bringing nest material into hole. One is in a big oak between two baseball fields. The other is in a nest box inside the community garden.

American Robin
Turdus migratorius

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



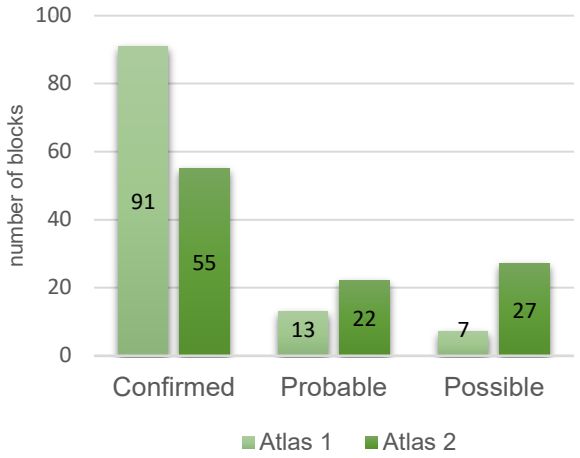
A common and widespread breeder, mapped decline in American Robins between the two atlases may be the result of different methods, though some have noted a reduction in local abundance even as the species remains widespread. Nests are found in suburbs, woodlands, orchards, riparian forests—anywhere with adequate moisture and trees or structures to place nests. Drought-tolerant plantings and reduced watering may discourage robin nesting.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.55% / year[s]	**0.13**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Wide variety, but not dry areas

Nest Type

Cup of grass and twigs worked into mud

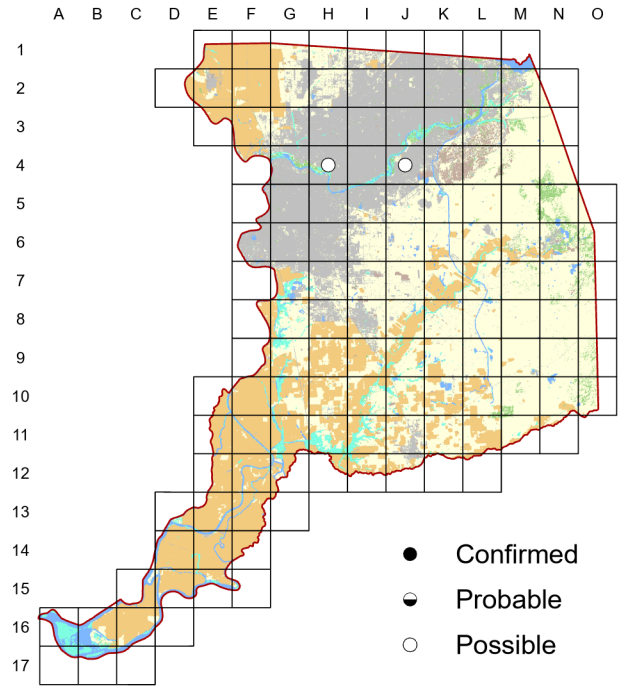
---

17 June 2015 Block H-8

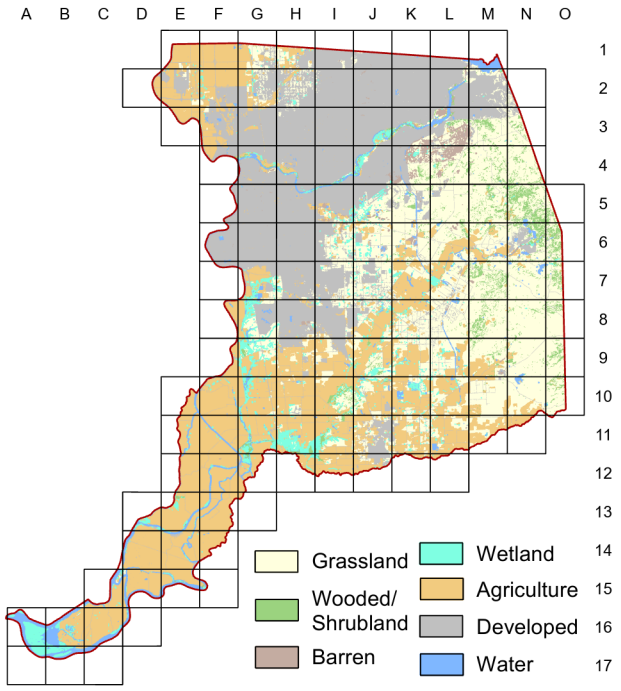
Took numerous trips with several strands from thyme ground cover. Also, flew off with a long strand of gazania trailing behind. Returned to bath to rinse mud off of bill.

California Thrasher
Toxostoma redivivum

Atlas 1

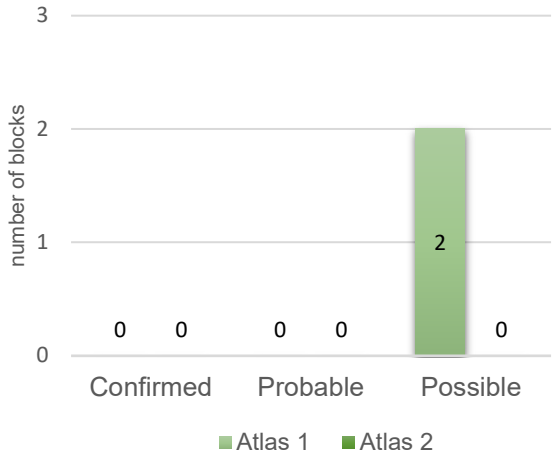


Atlas 2



California Thrashers breed in foothill chaparral, with a few dispersing to the valley floor along riparian corridors. Nearly all records for the county are from the American River Parkway, with breeding suspected but not confirmed at Bushy Lake in the 1970s. Possible records for Atlas 1 involved singing birds in May at two sites along the parkway, one in 1988 and the other in 1988 and 1989.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.7% / year[n]	–0.7% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Chaparral, woodland with dense understory

Nest Type

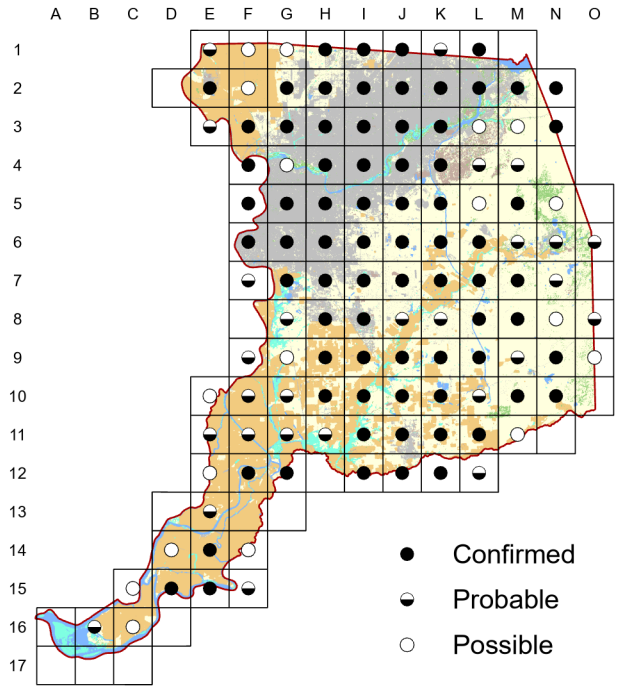
Loose cup nest in shrub

1890 L. Belding

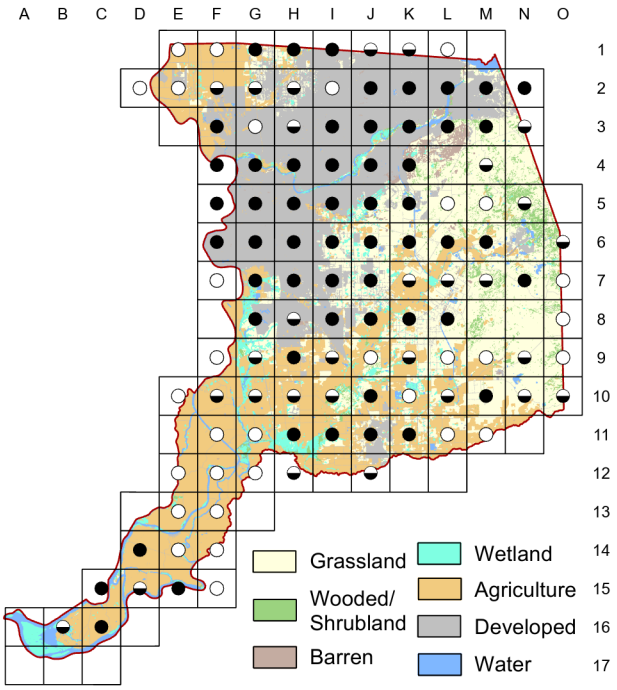
Very common in the foothills, occasionally seen in the valley thickets.

Northern Mockingbird
Mimus polyglottos

Atlas 1

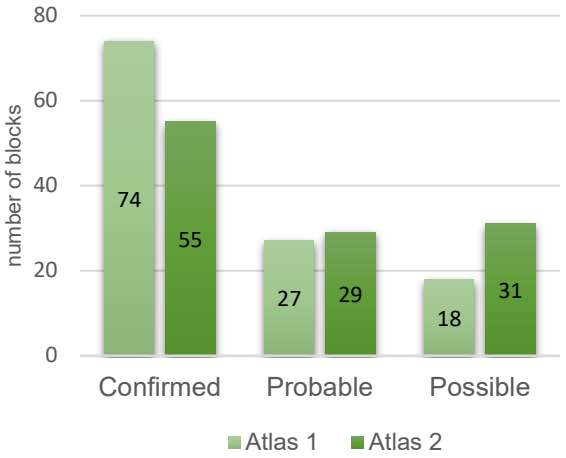


Atlas 2



Northern Mockingbirds, persistent songsters primarily associated with suburban yards and rural farmsteads, have maintained a sizeable population and widespread distribution within Sacramento County between the two atlas periods.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
1.4% / year[s]	**–0.66**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Open habitats with trees, often in residential yards

Nest Type

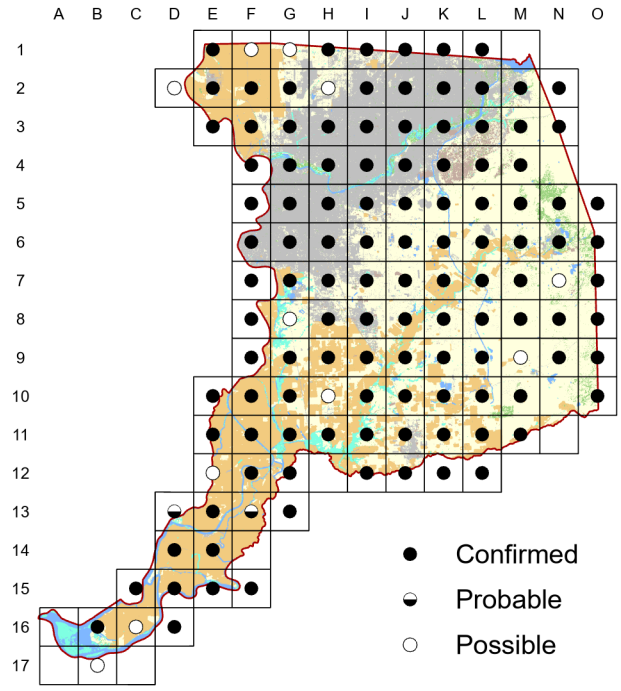
Cup with a base of twigs

1903 — J. Grinnell and E. Grinnell

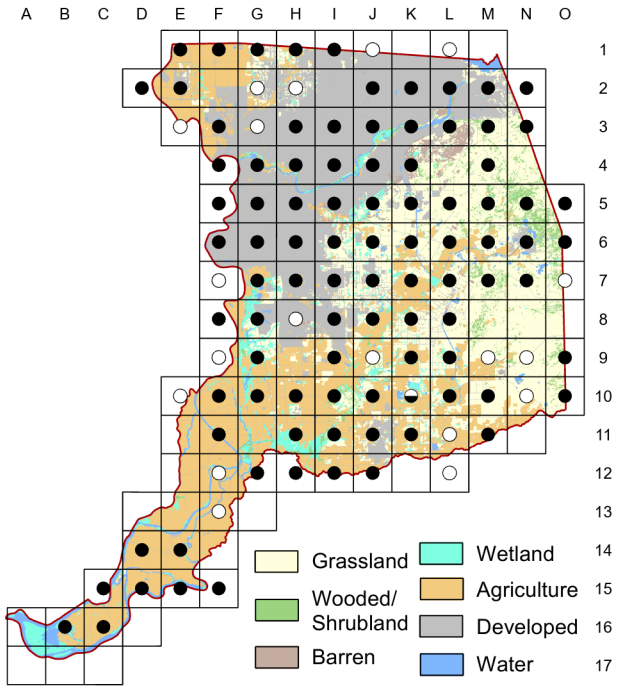
Young mockers will not remain in the nest longer than they can see over the brim.

European Starling
Sturnus vulgaris

Atlas 1

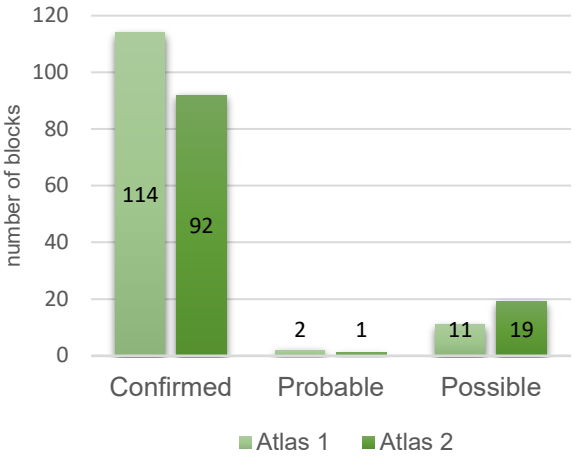


Atlas 2



As discussed in Chapter Four, the European Starling is one of a handful of long-tenured introduced birds that are beginning to show signs of decline. However, the relatively small changes between the two atlases is inconclusive about local trends. The hope is that native cavity-nesters are beginning to adapt to and compete more effectively with these aggressive transplants.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.2% / year[n]	**–1.3**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Wide variety

Nest Type

Cavity

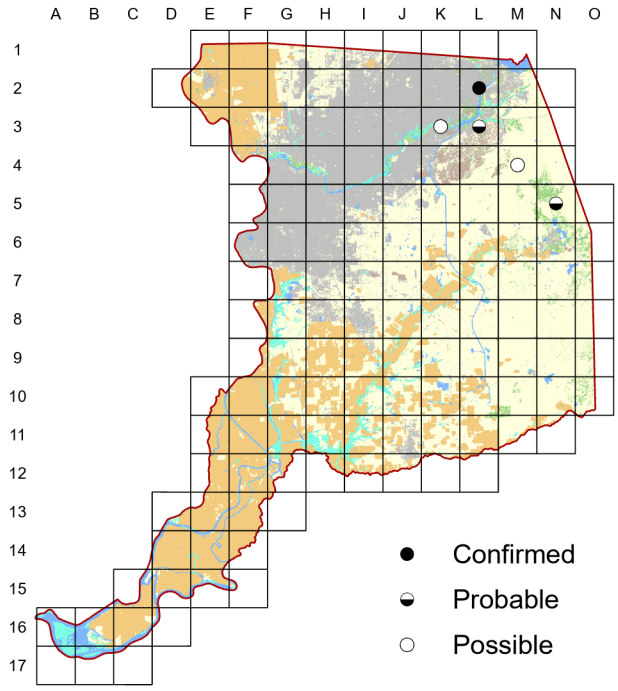
---

11 March 2018 Block F-6

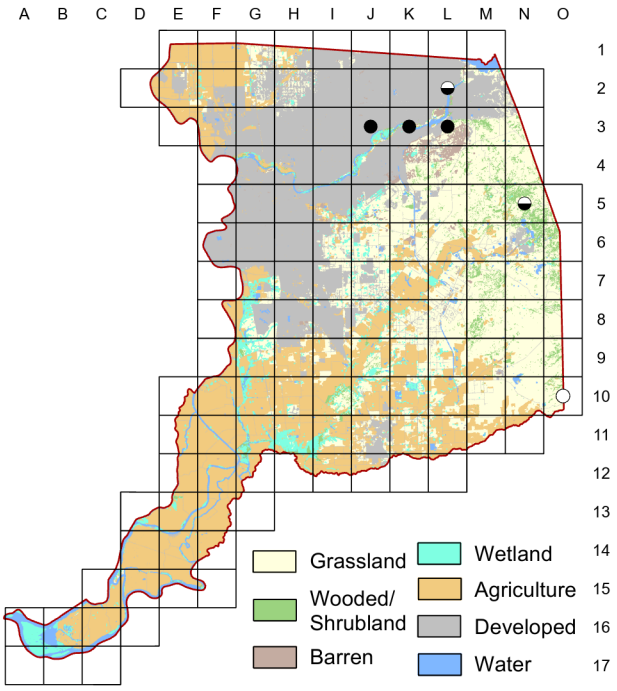
Entering hole in end of soccer goal post that a pair of Western Bluebirds was also exploring.

Phainopepla
Phainopepla nitens

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



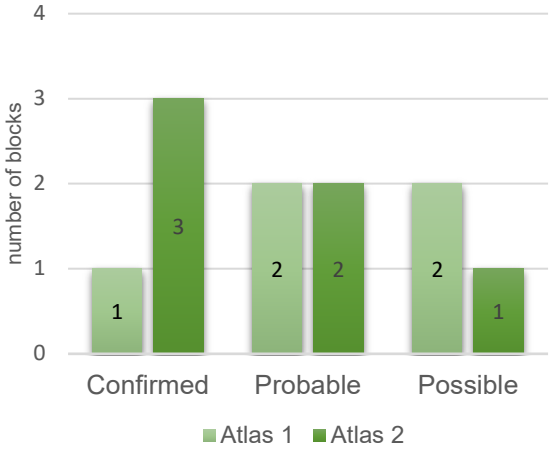
The breeding status of the Phainopepla in California is somewhat mysterious. While most breed early in the year in desert washes in the southeastern corner of the state, small numbers breed later in the foothills and Central Valley edges. Whether this represents a second nesting by desert breeders, or a different breeding population remains uncertain. Our results suggest little change in their Sacramento County breeding distribution between the atlases.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
1.52% / year[s]	1.23% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Desert washes and oak savanna

Nest Type

Cup nest, often within a mistletoe clump

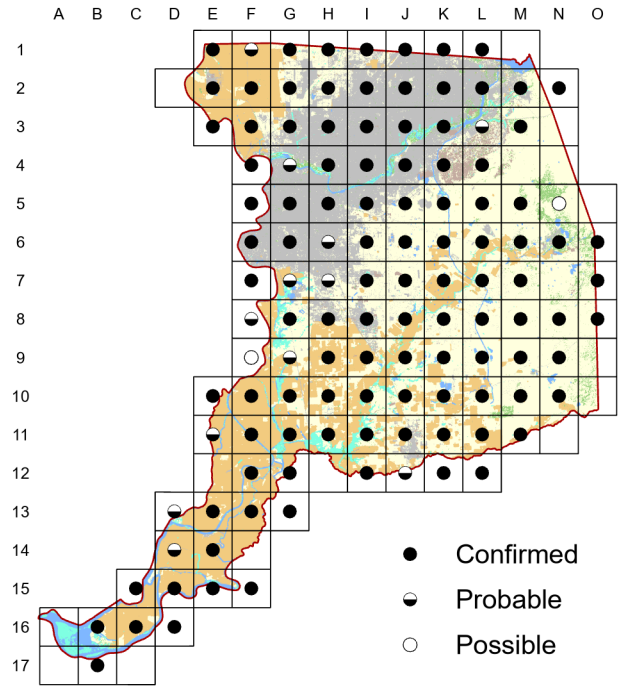
---

29 June 1989 — Block L-2

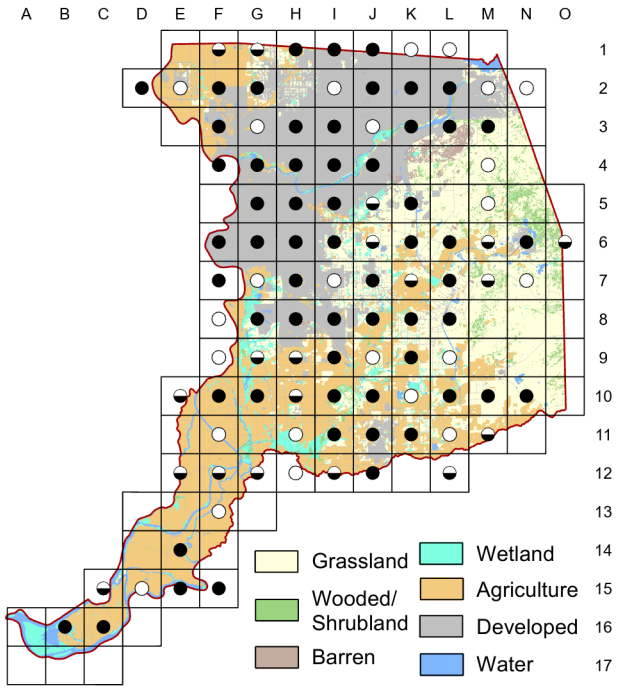
Observed female and later saw male holding tight in oak tree tops.
Male finally led us to the nest.

House Sparrow
Passer domesticus

Atlas 1

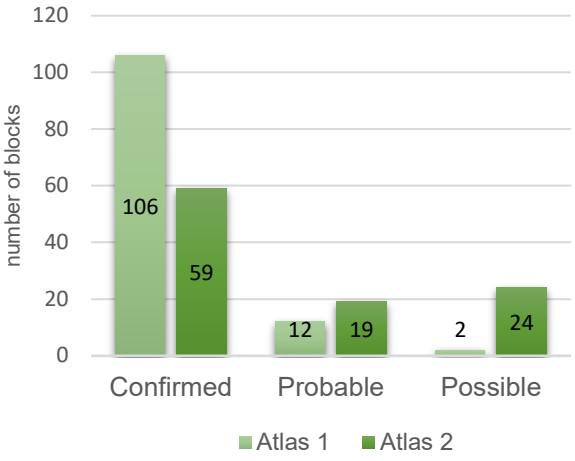


Atlas 2



As noted in Chapter Four (where we cover a trio of long-tenured introduced birds), differences in methodology between the two atlases make it difficult to draw solid conclusions about the House Sparrow's status in the county. However, the apparent decline would be consistent with regional and rangewide trends.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.9% / year[s]	**–2.95**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Variety, usually in human-modified habitats

Nest Type

Cavity

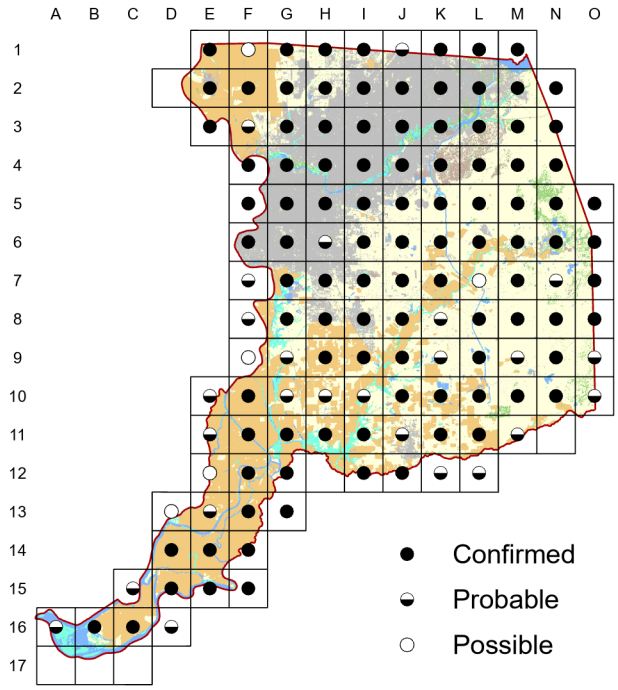
---

31 March 2017 Block L-8

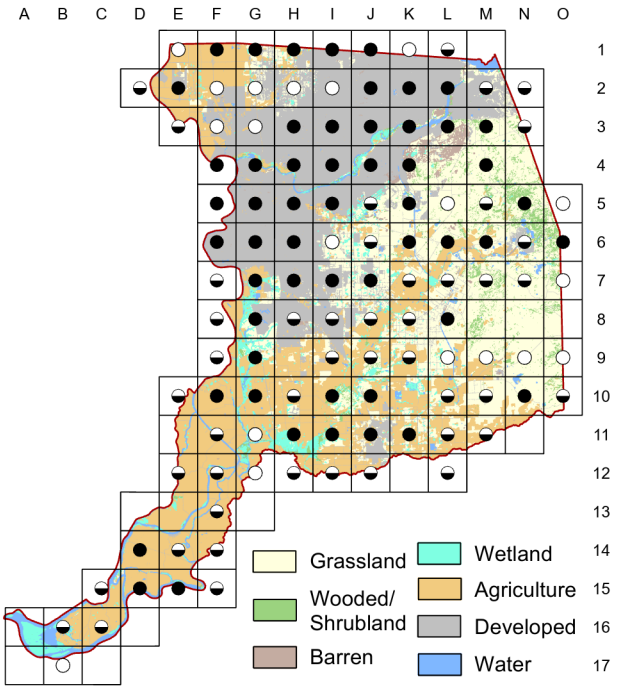
A House Sparrow has taken over one of the bluebird/swallow nest boxes.
Five eggs in nest.

House Finch
Haemorhous mexicanus

Atlas 1

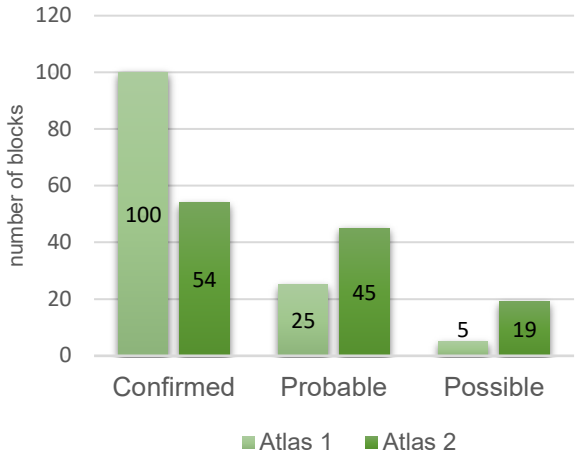


Atlas 2



As their name suggests, House Finches adapt well to urban and suburban habitats. The distributions of the species in Sacramento County appear very similar in the two atlas periods. The difference in the numbers of confirmed blocks between the two atlases probably reflects the difference in methods of data collection.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.51% / year[s]	–0.16% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Woods and brush lands, including urban areas

Nest Type

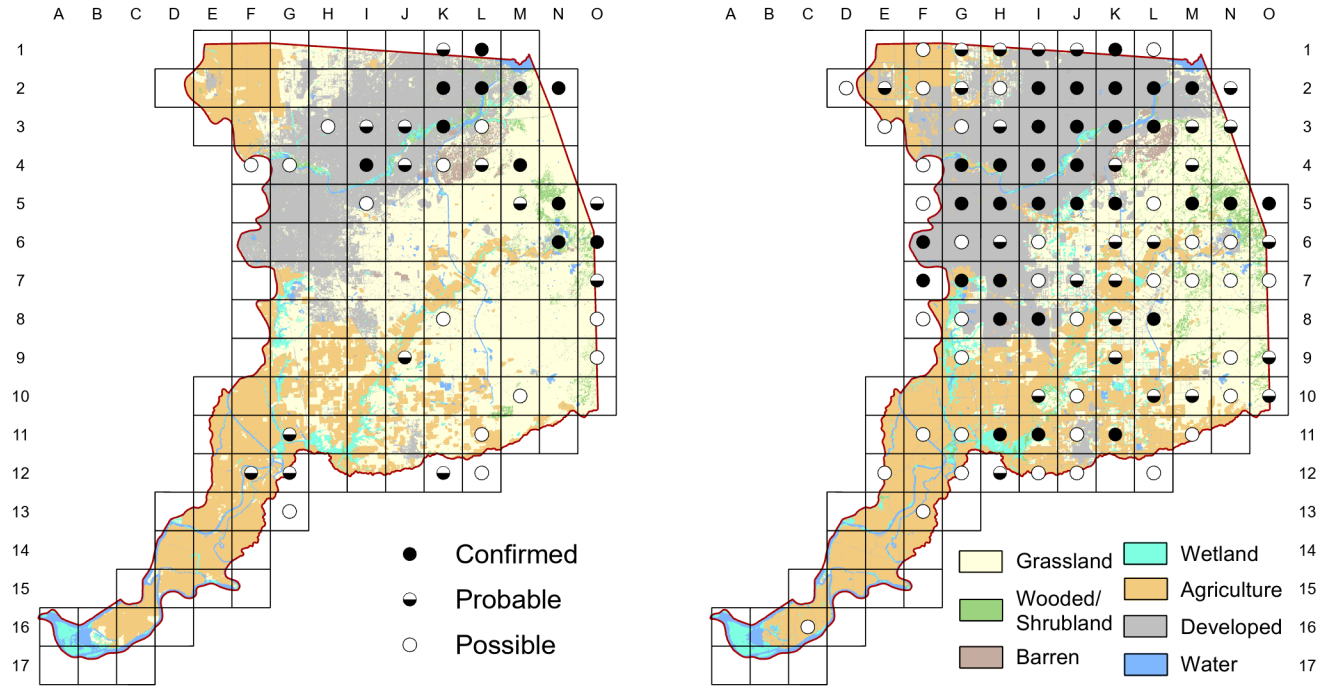
Cup nest

1903 — J. Grinnell and E. Grinnell

The only reason they do not live in the house with us is because they are shut out by the screens.

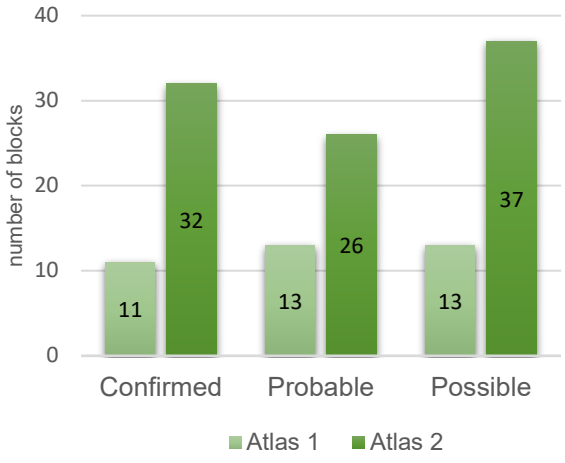
Lesser Goldfinch
Spinus psaltria

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



The remarkable, and largely unexpected, expansion of the Lesser Goldfinch breeding range between the two atlases is discussed in more detail in Chapter Five. The fact that this expansion is mainly into urbanized areas suggests a recent local adaptation to these sorts of habitats.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.08% / year[n]	0.12% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Wide variety; always with some trees or shrubs

Nest Type

Cup nest placed in dense cover in a tree or shrub

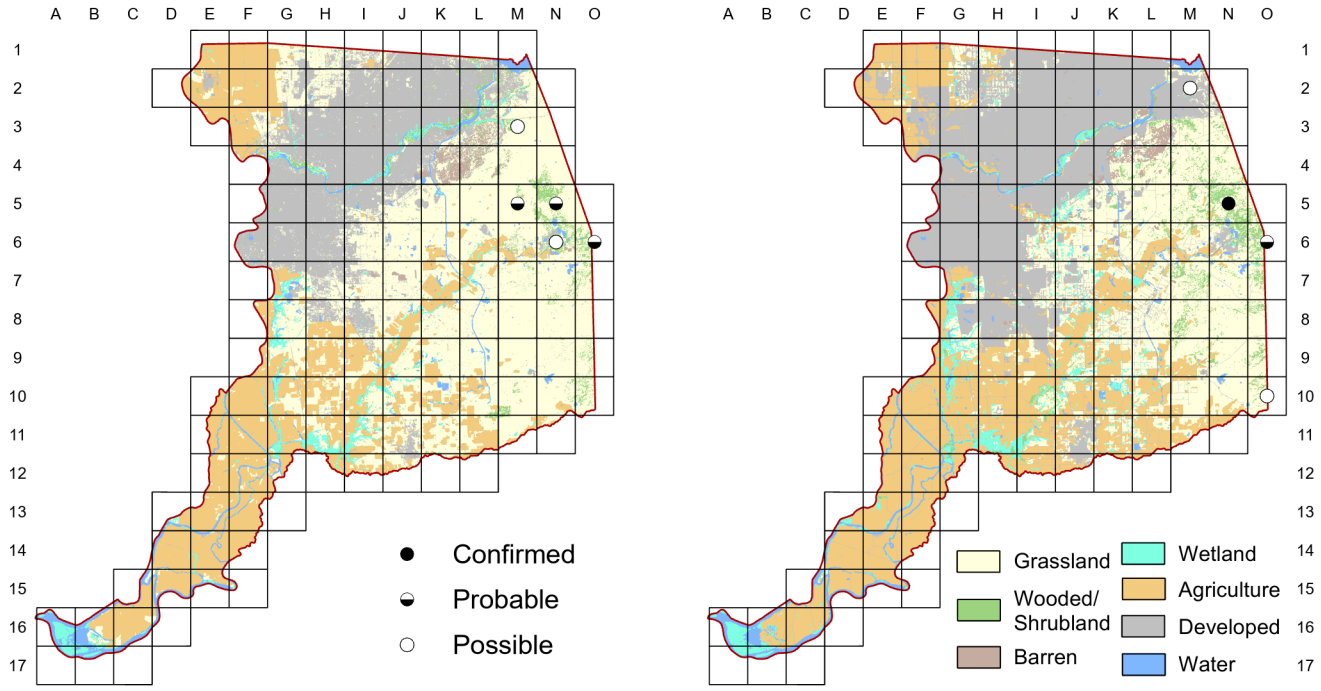
---

23 April 2016 Block L-3

These flew to a particular tree near the sidewalk around the parking lot so often I got curious and discovered a nest they were visiting. It sounded like they were feeding babies.

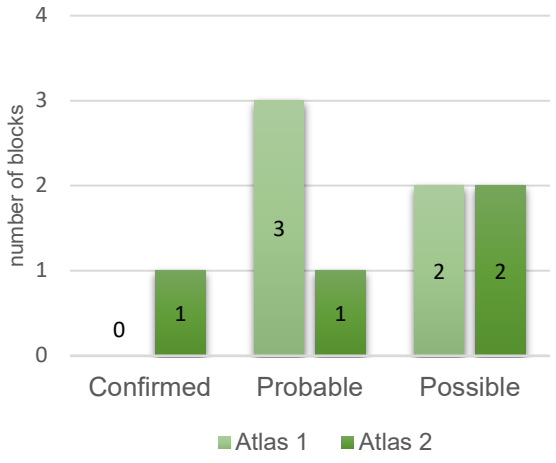
Lawrence's Goldfinch
Spinus lawrencei

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



As discussed in Chapter Four, changes in the distribution of the Lawrence's Goldfinch are difficult to evaluate. Distribution was similar between the two atlases, with breeding behaviors observed in the eastern portion of the county where oak woodland habitat occurs, including a confirmation in the Deer Creek Hills Preserve within block N-5 during Atlas 2.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.08% / year[n]	–0.52% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Open woodland, usually near water

Nest Type

Cup nest

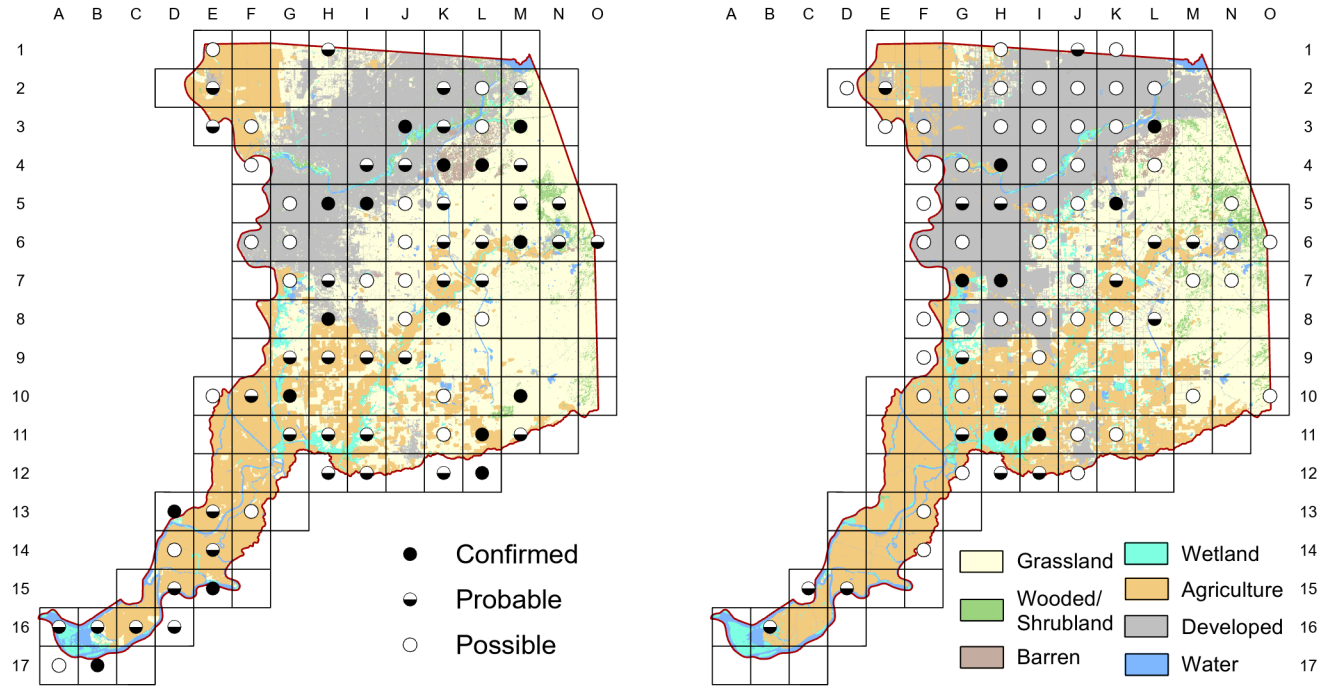
---

13 April 2018 Block N-5

The female of a pair was observed picking up and flying away with a very long blade of grass.

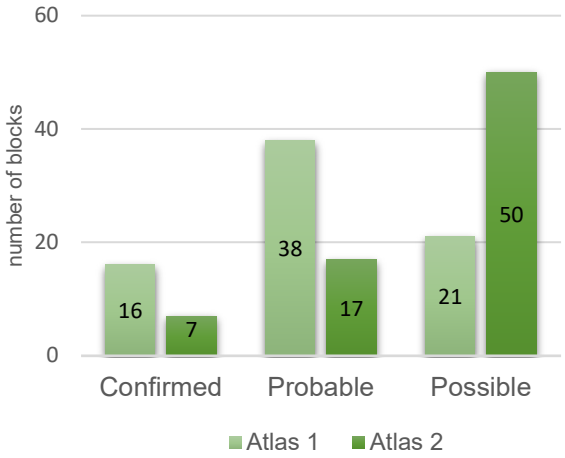
American Goldfinch
Spinus tristis

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



We saw little change in the breeding distribution of American Goldfinches between the two atlases. While frequently observed in urban areas, the great majority of breeding confirmations were in riparian areas during both Atlas 1 and Atlas 2. Interestingly, this species did not show the dramatic expansion into urban areas that we saw from its congeneric cousin, the Lesser Goldfinch.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.36% / year[n]	**–0.6**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Wide variety

Nest Type

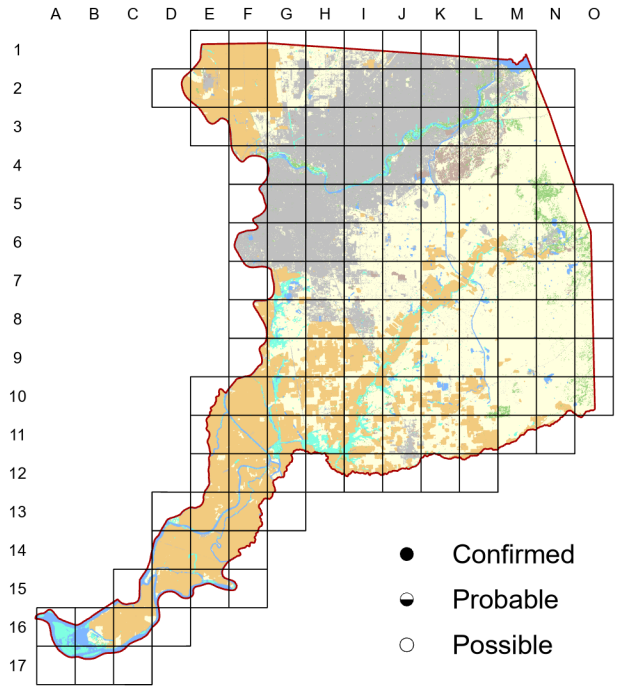
Cup nest

1927 R. Hoffman

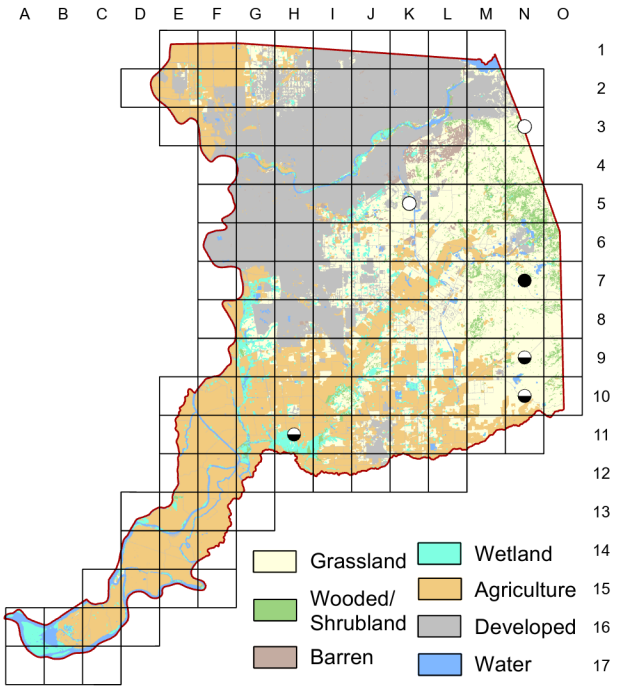
In the breeding season the male with even wing-strokes flutters in broad circles above the brooding female. As he flies he pours forth a continual twittering song.

Grasshopper Sparrow
Ammodramus savannarum

Atlas 1

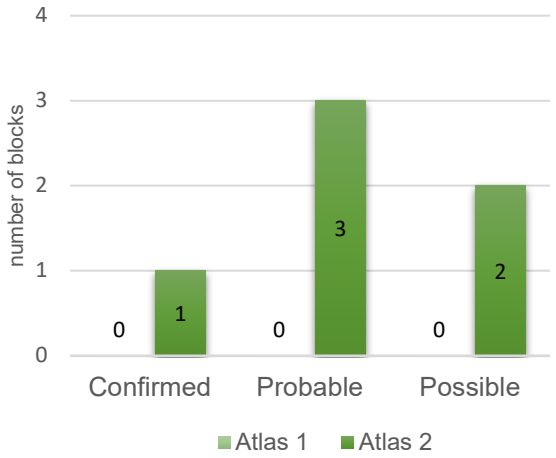


Atlas 2



Given the significant loss of grassland in the county between atlases and population declines rangewide, the reappearance of Grasshopper Sparrow in the county comes as a bit of a surprise. Further discussed in Chapter Four, there are likely additional breeding locations in the grassland portions of the county that have gone undetected.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
1.09% / year[n]	**–2.49**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Grassland/open country

Nest Type

Domed cup nest, concealed on the ground

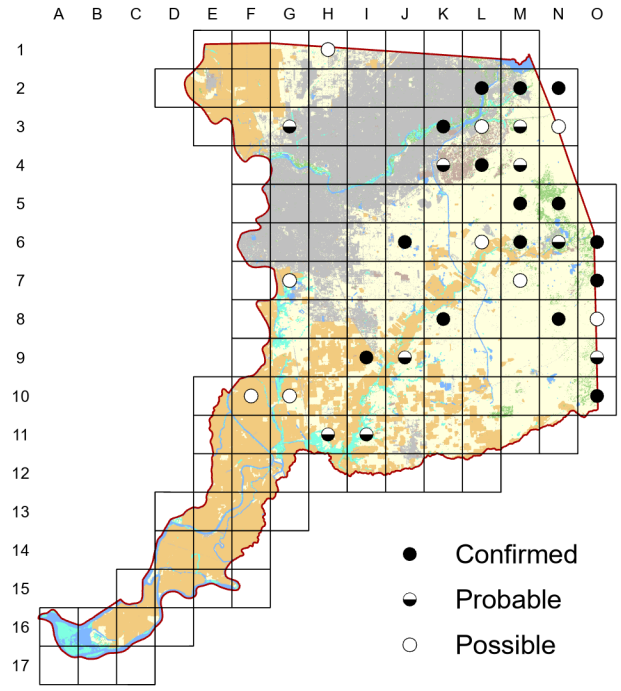
---

10 May 2018 Block N-7

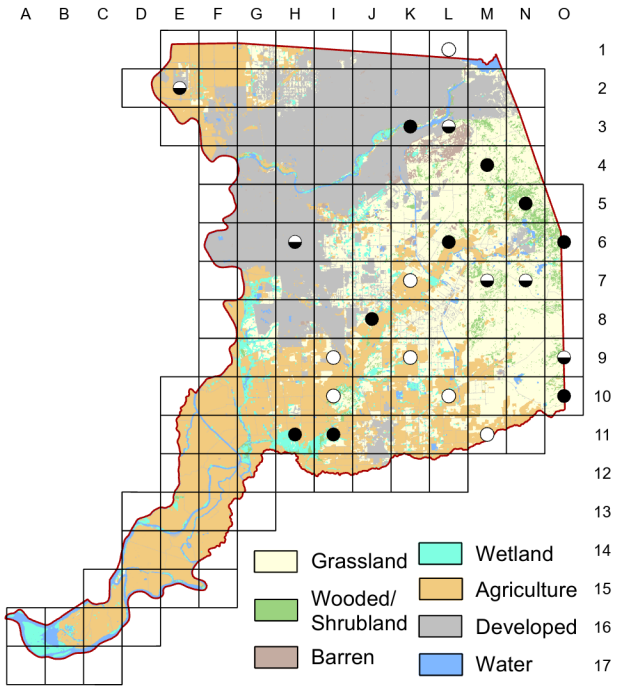
Perched on fence with green caterpillar in bill.

Lark Sparrow
Chondestes grammacus

Atlas 1

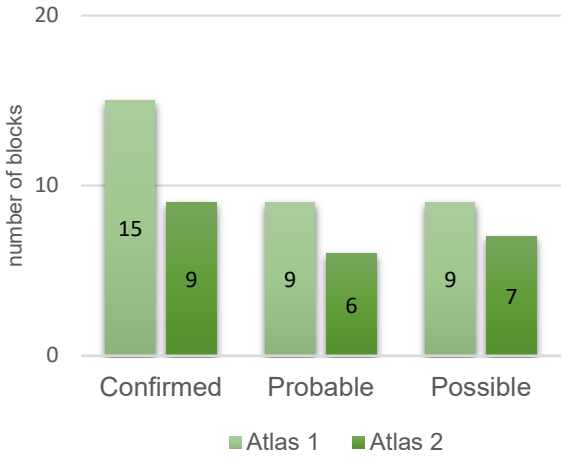


Atlas 2



As with so many grassland birds, the Lark Sparrow is in long-term, widespread decline. Given the conversion of much of this habitat in the county, the reduced breeding range shown above fits with our expectations for this species.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.50% / year[s]	**–1.18%** / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Grassland/open country, oak savanna

Nest Type

Cup nest, usually on the ground

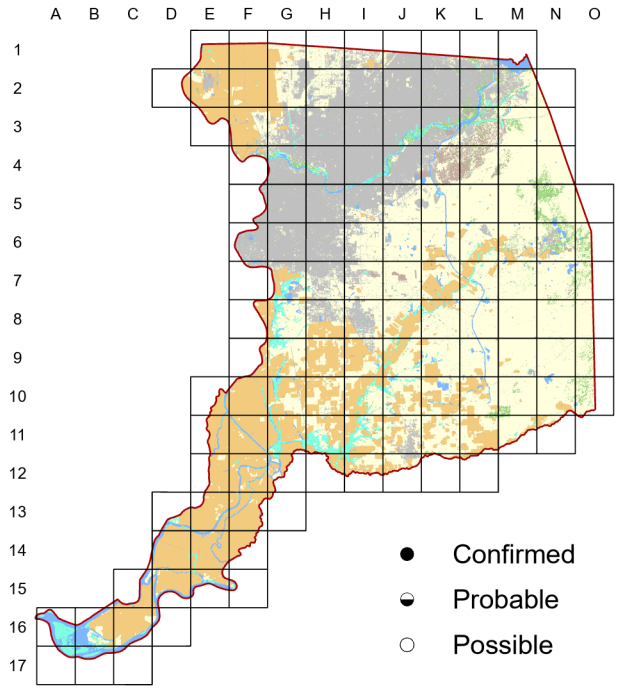
---

10 May 2018 — Block O-10

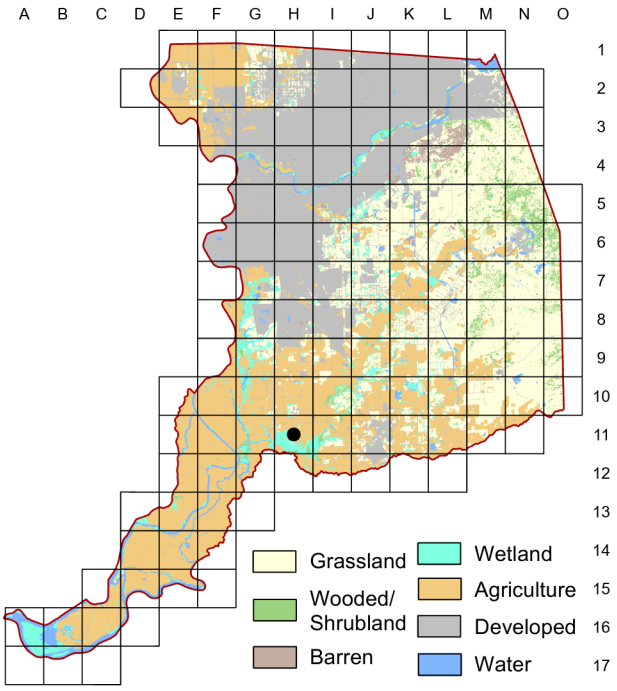
Saw one land on a small ledge along the creek and crawl into a loose tunnel in the grass. When I approached, I could see the bird incubating a nest on the ground.

Chipping Sparrow
Spizella passerina

Atlas 1

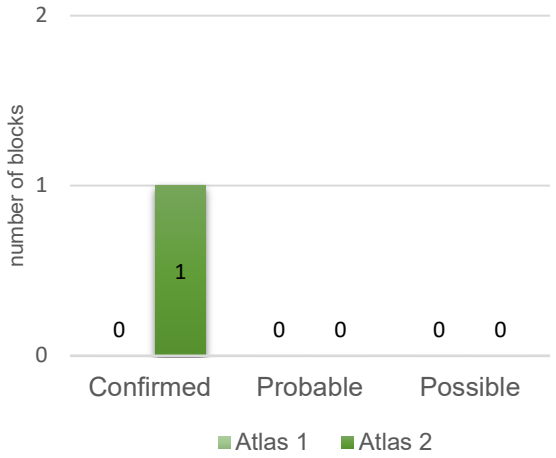


Atlas 2



A single Chipping Sparrow nesting record in the last year of Atlas 2 at Cosumnes River Preserve was unexpected. This species is an uncommon migrant and rare but regular wintering bird. The nearest known nest sites are to the west in the Coast Range and well east of the county line into the mid-elevation Sierra. There is one previous breeding record: an egg set collected in 1886! Further details are included in Chapter Four.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–2.99% / year[s]	**–0.63**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Open woodlands with shrubby understory

Nest Type

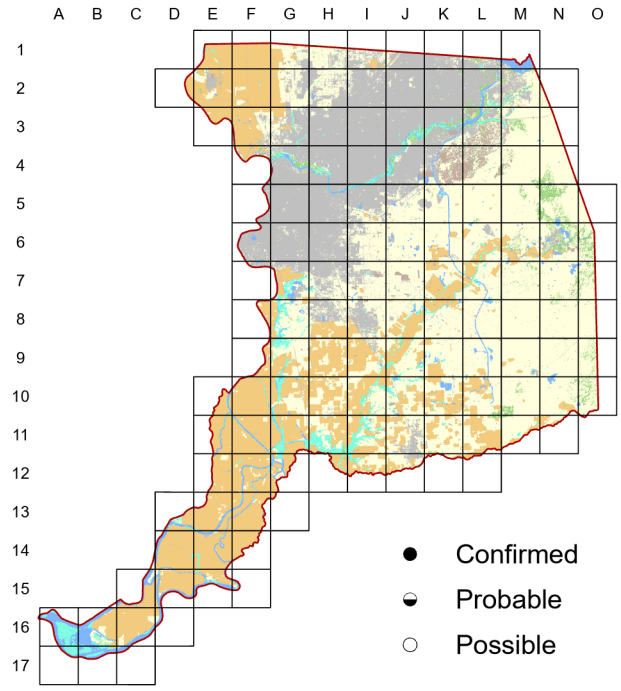
Cup nest low in shrub or tree; sometimes on ground

5 June 2020 Block H-11

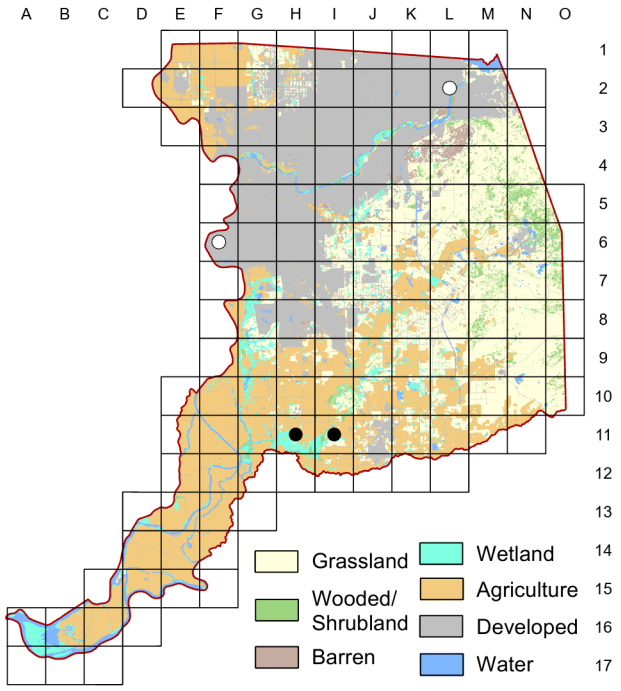
After several more chips, the young ones fell quiet until the adult flew off, still chipping. Two stub-tailed juveniles fluttered after it.

Dark-eyed Junco
Junco hyemalis

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



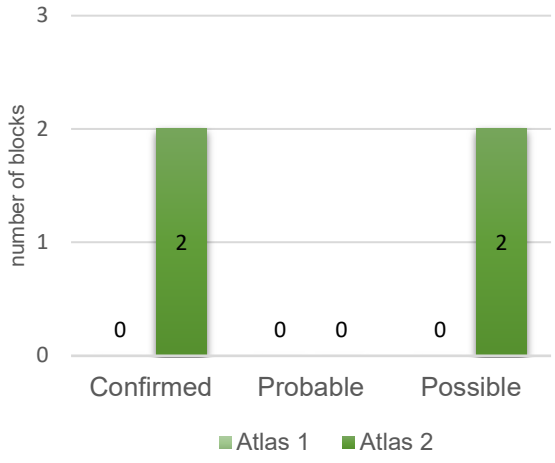
As discussed in Chapter Four, the first nesting record of the Dark-eyed Junco for the county, and apparently for the Central Valley floor, was found in May 2000 at Cosumnes River Preserve. Juncos have nested nearly every year since from a handful of sites within a few km of the first nest. This may be the outer edge of an expansion first noted over 100 years ago in the eastern Bay Area, extending into Solano and Yolo counties in recent decades.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.84% / year[s]	**–0.7**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Wide variety

Nest Type

Cup nest, often in crevice or sheltered depression

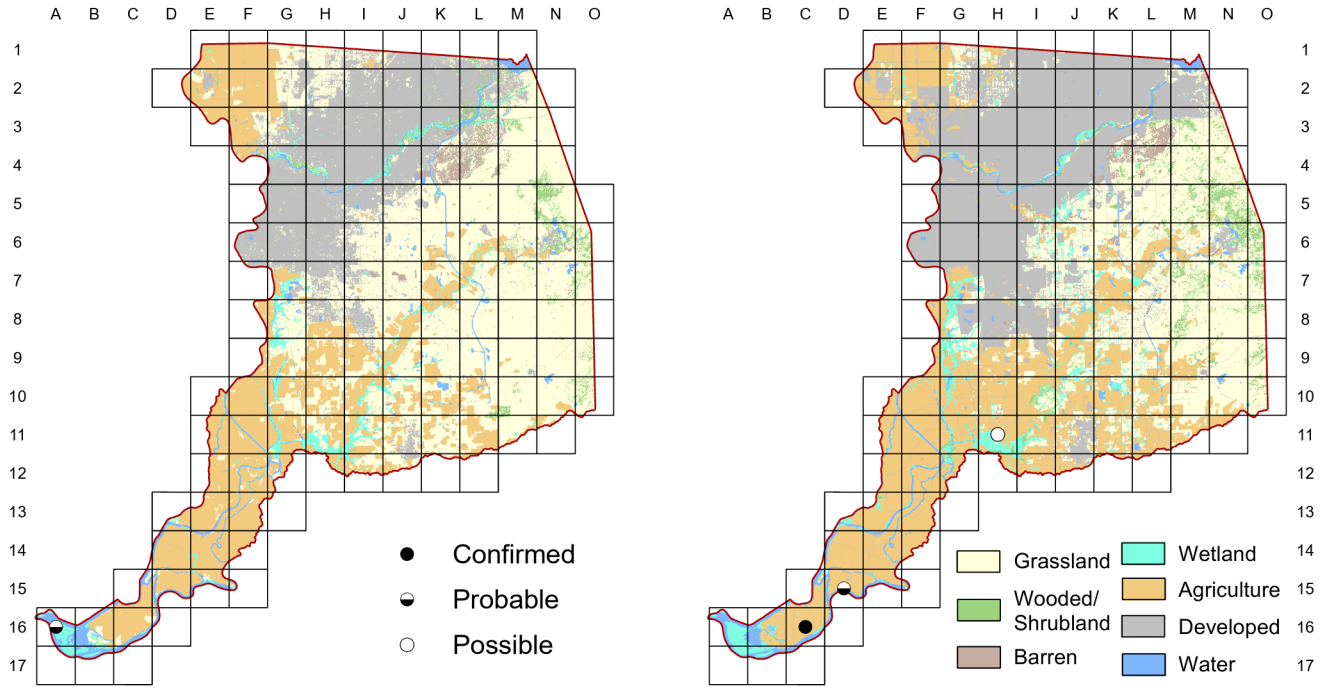
---

18 May 2000 — Block H-11

From a discreet distance I observed the adult juncos feed the young repeatedly and the female fly out with a fecal sac.

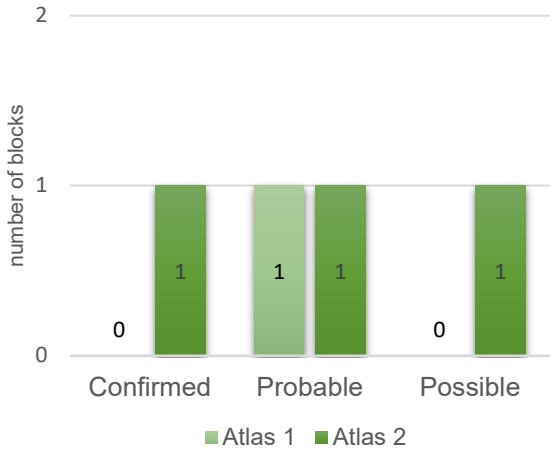
Savannah Sparrow
Passerculus sandwichensis

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



Although Sacramento County grasslands and open habitats host large numbers of Savannah Sparrows from fall well into spring, these sparrows are just visitors and will breed elsewhere. The handful of breeding observations in the county were confined to the Delta and were almost certainly of the "Bryant's" subspecies (*P. s. alaudinus*), a taxon of Special Concern in the state and a resident in the tidal wetlands and wet grasslands of the coast.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.31% / year[n]	**–1.11**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Open country, including wetlands and grasslands

Nest Type

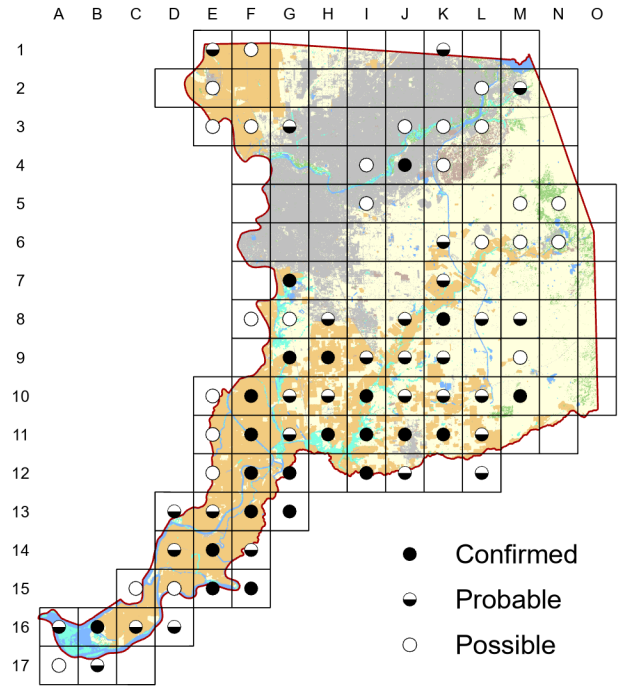
Concealed cup nest on the ground

19 June 2020 Block D-15

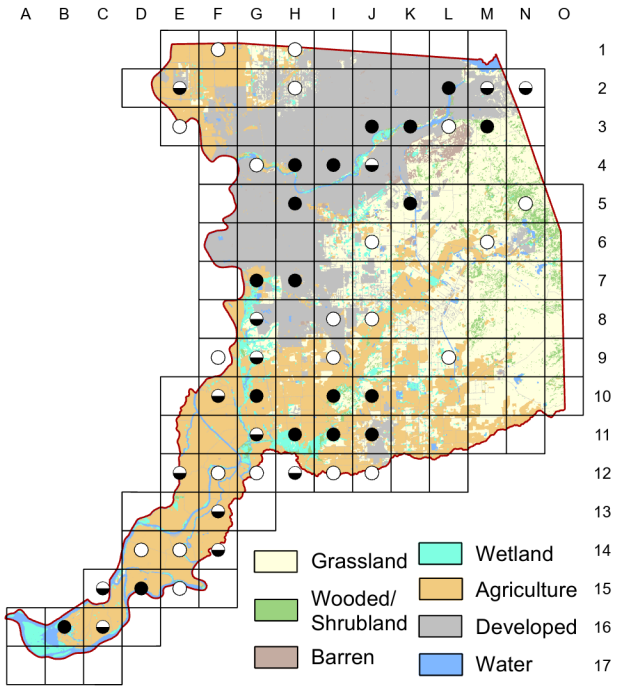
Continuing to sing on territory in pasture and at least one clear pair.

Song Sparrow
Melospiza melodia

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



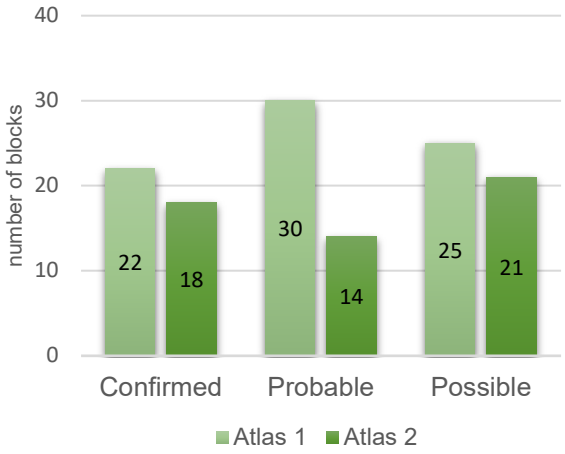
In much of the county the Song Sparrow is the only sparrow left in summer (not including towhees) after the wintering species depart, singing its beautiful song throughout the hot days. Differences between the atlases probably reflect varied coverage and access rather than major changes in distribution. The increased confirmations in Atlas 2 along the American River Parkway could suggest that the habitat there has matured and become more suitable.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.0% / year[n]	**–0.59**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Varied habitats, but always near water

Nest Type

Cup nest on ground or low in a shrub

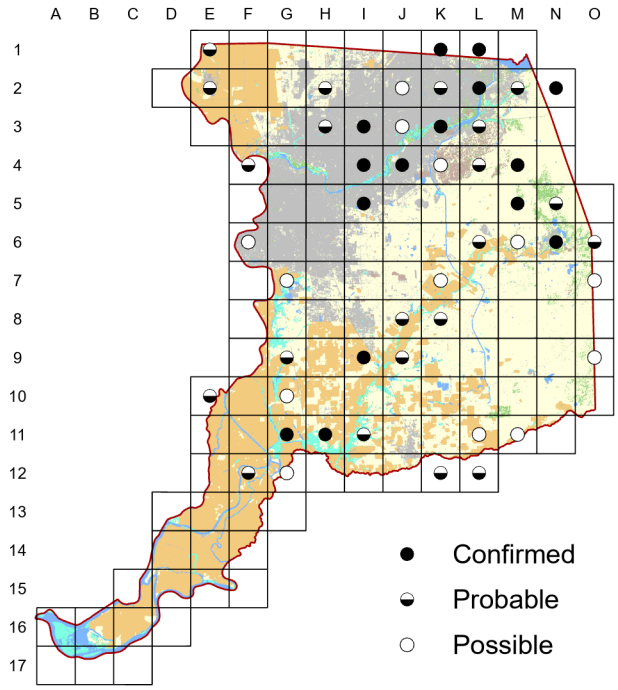
---

6 June 2015 — Block H-4

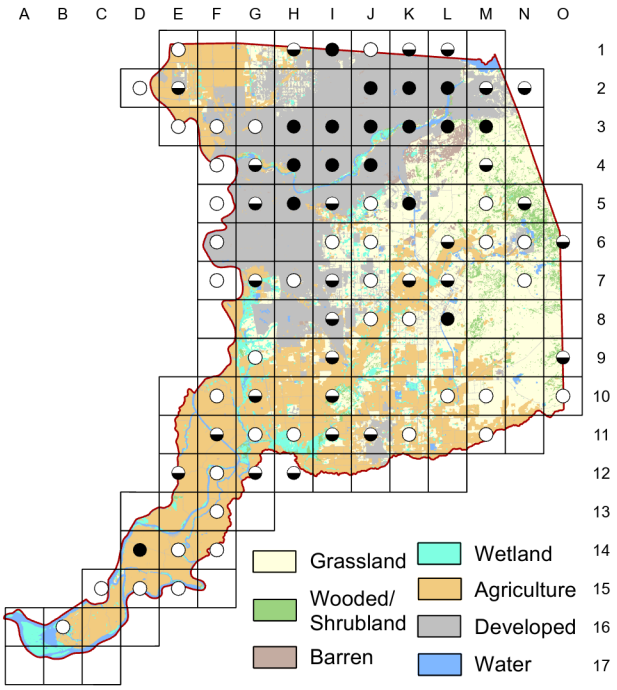
Carrying/holding food (bug of some sort) below us, seemingly wanting to deliver food to a nestling but not wanting us to see where the nest was located.

California Towhee
Melozone crissalis

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



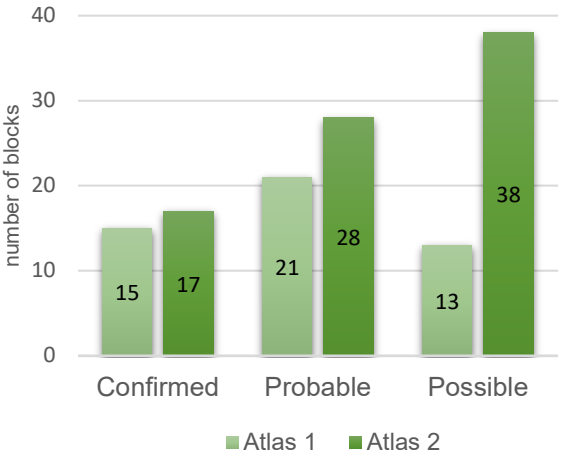
The California Towhee is widely distributed, except for the most open of areas and sites in the low floodplain that regularly flood for extended periods. There was an increase in detections between the atlases even in blocks that had excellent coverage in Atlas 1. This may represent a mostly sedentary species shifting into microhabitats over time, such as along levees or other raised areas surrounded by less suitable habitat.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.27% / year[n]	California near-endemic

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Brushy areas, riparian, suburbs with bushes, levees

Nest Type

Cup nest on or close to the ground

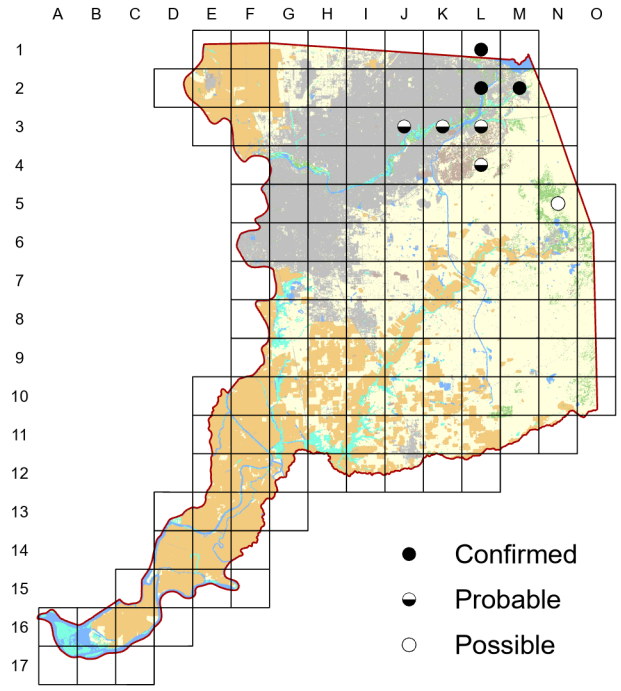
---

7 August 2016 — Block H-5

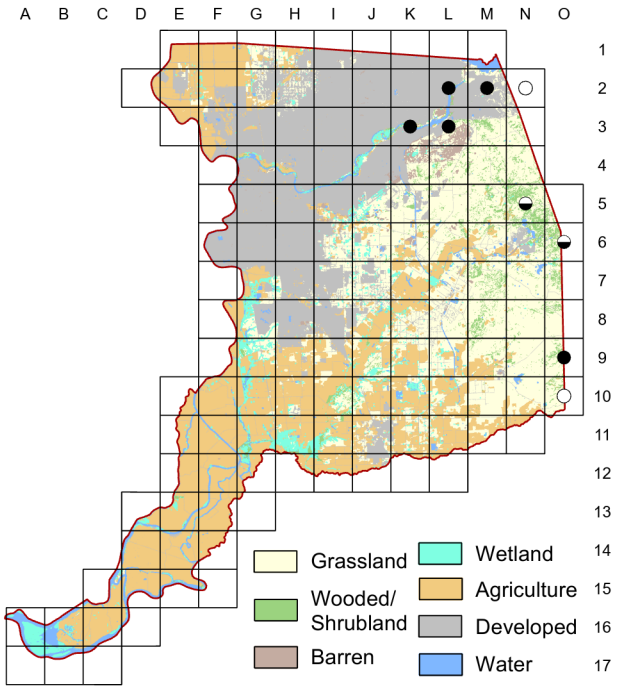
Adult carrying a praying mantis near home.

Rufous-crowned Sparrow
Aimophila ruficeps

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



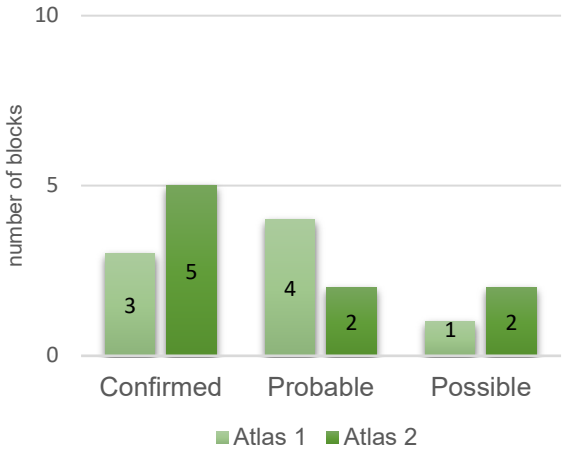
Easily overlooked, the Rufous-crowned Sparrow can appear tame and approachable when found. This species, often seen in pairs year-round, is very rarely found away from breeding sites. This sparrow is restricted to the upper American River Parkway and the eastern part of the county, especially along rocky hillsides with shrubs or open oak woodland. There was no apparent change between the two atlases.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
1.81% / year[s]	0.36% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Often rocky hillsides with shrubs or open oaks

Nest Type

Loose cup nest, usually on the ground

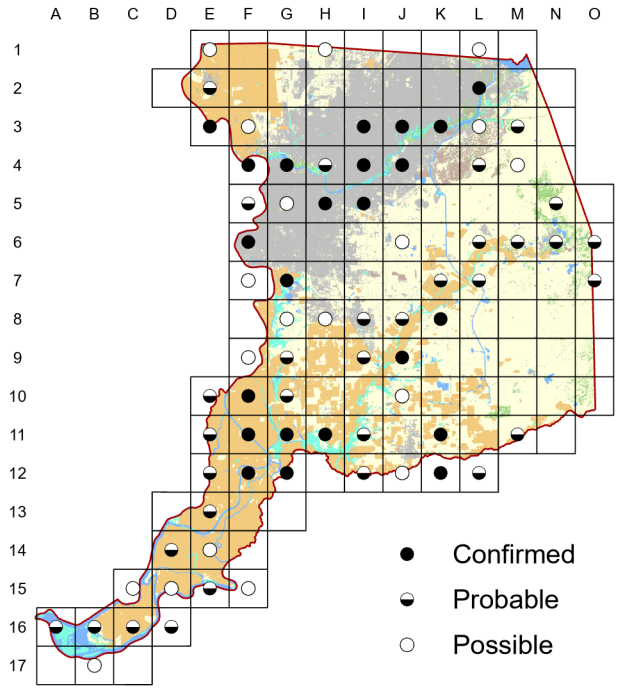
---

16 July 2016 — Block L-2

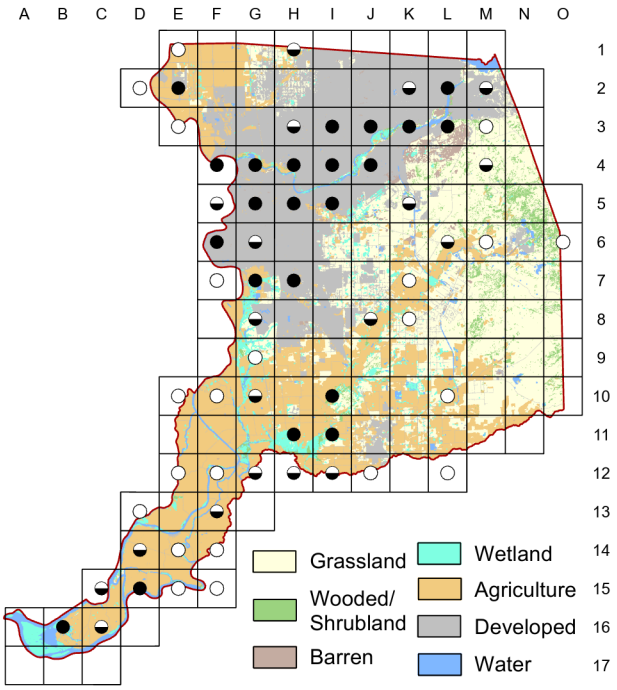
Singing from opposite bank. These seem to be harder to find here in the last couple of years. Drought?

Spotted Towhee
Pipilo maculatus

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



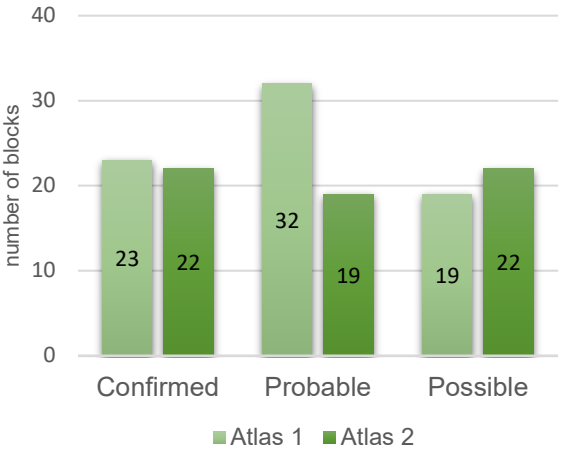
One of the most conspicuous if not the most sonorous of birds in the breeding chorus, what the Spotted Towhee lacks in musicality is more than made up for by its striking appearance. If less common, it might be appreciated even more. In the county it prefers areas with dense vegetation, low to the ground, with or without an overstory of trees. Changes between the two atlases are likely attributable to differing methodology.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.49% / year[s]	–0.08% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Open or wooded sites with dense shrubby vegetation

Nest Type

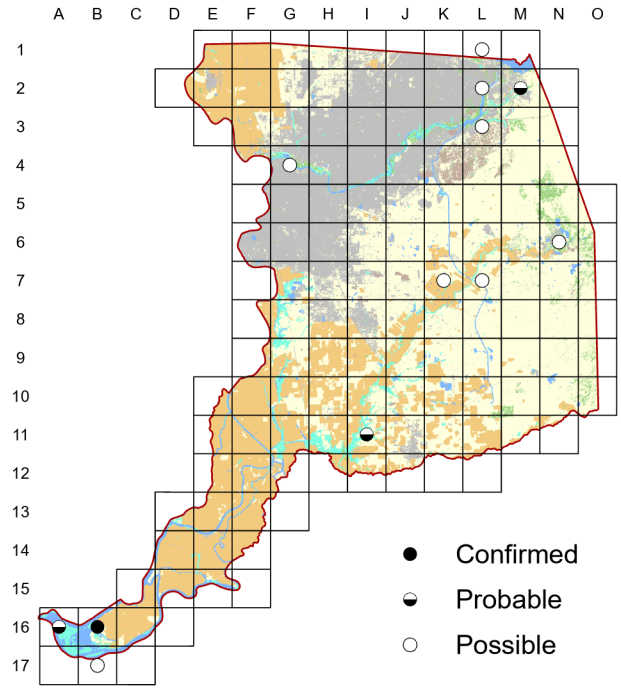
Cup nest, usually on the ground

4 August 2020 Block H-7

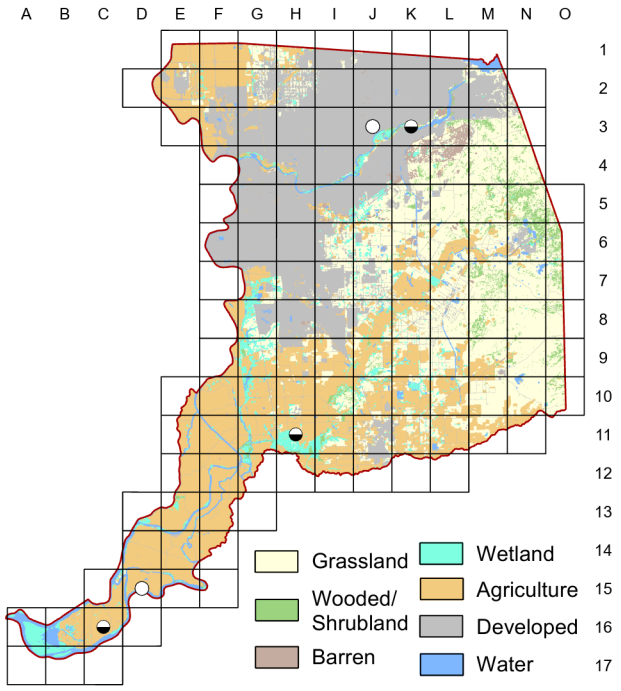
One was singing with a large larva/caterpillar in its mouth.
A second was singing a distance from the first.

Yellow-breasted Chat
Icteria virens

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



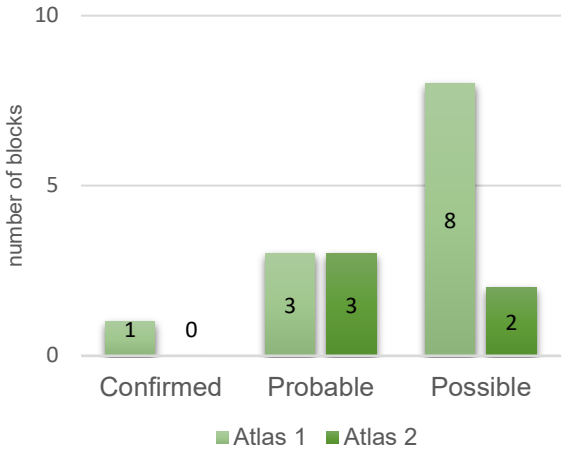
Historically a common and widespread breeder in the Central Valley, the Yellow-breasted Chat is now uncommon and patchily distributed in the valley. Only confirmed in one block during Atlas 1, birds singing into early July during Atlas 2 may have been breeders, but the tendency of this species to migrate later than most leaves some doubt.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.62% / year[n]	**–0.72**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Riparian woodland

Nest Type

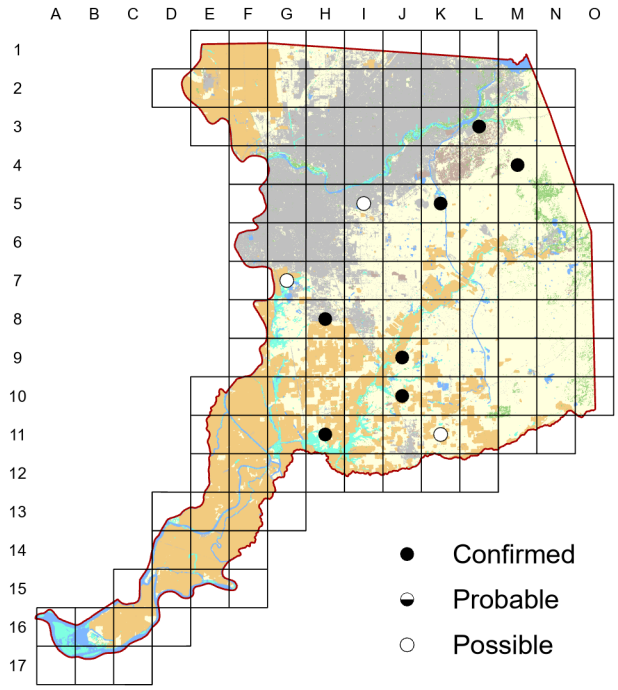
Cup nest near the ground in dense vegetation

1894 — O. T. Miller

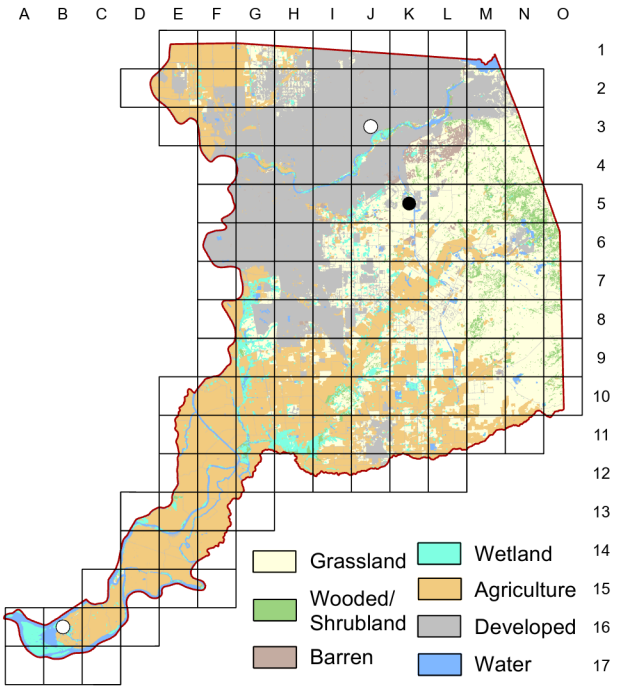
To be seen is, with this particular fellow, a misfortune, an accident, which he avoids with great care, while his voice rings out loud and clear above all others.

Yellow-headed Blackbird
Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



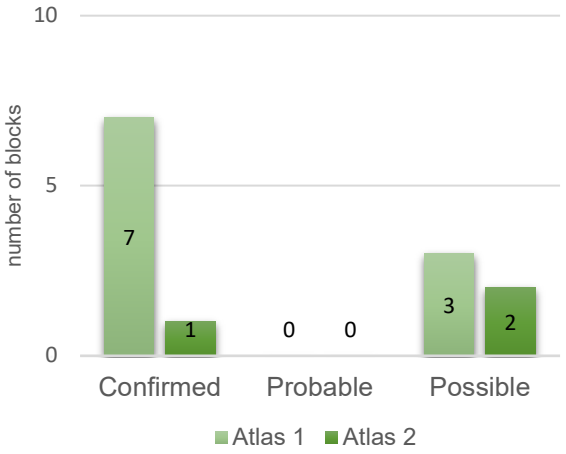
Widespread loss of wetlands in the Central Valley led to declines in the Yellow-headed Blackbird prior to Atlas 1. Despite wetland restoration efforts in the county in the decades following, the summer-flooded, relatively deep-water habitat this species uses for nesting remains limited. Competition with the newly-arrived Great-tailed Grackle may also be a factor, as grackles now nest in at least three of the seven blocks formerly used by the blackbirds.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.16% / year[n]	0.71% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Wetland with tall emergent vegetation

Nest Type

Well-constructed, deep cup nest

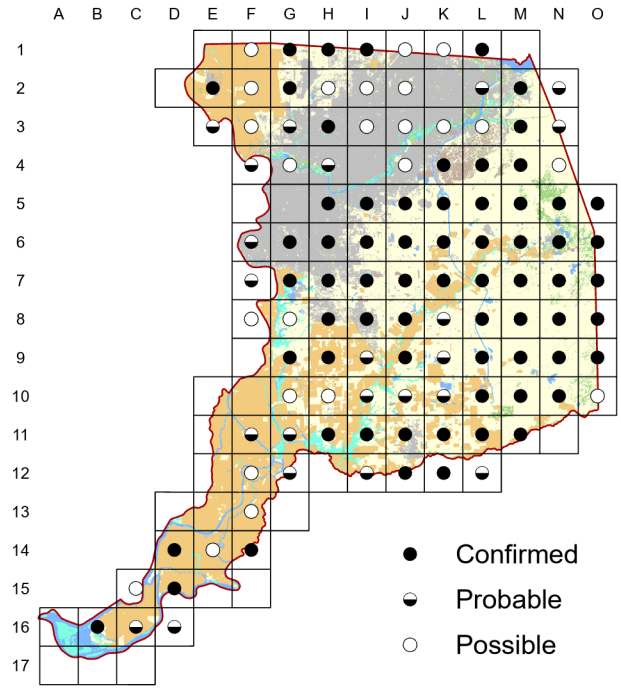
---

24 April 2018 — Block K-5

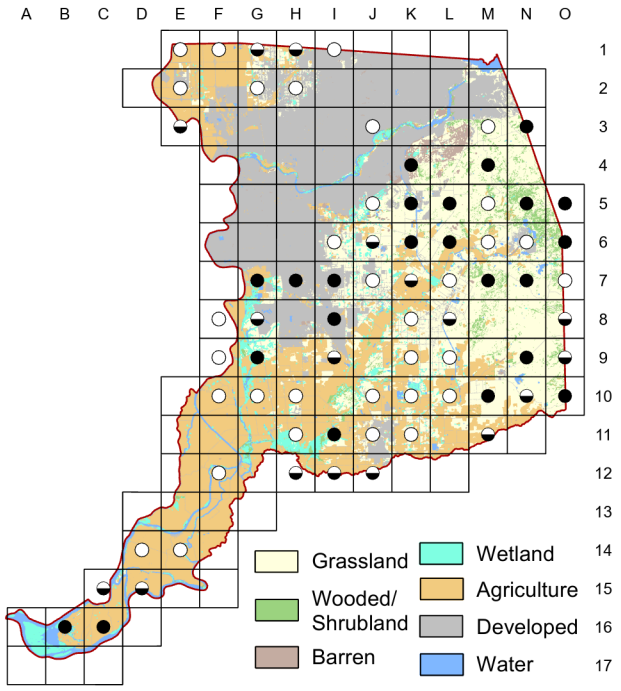
There were three singing males and one female. One the males was displaying for the female, but she seemed unimpressed.

Western Meadowlark
Sturnella neglecta

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



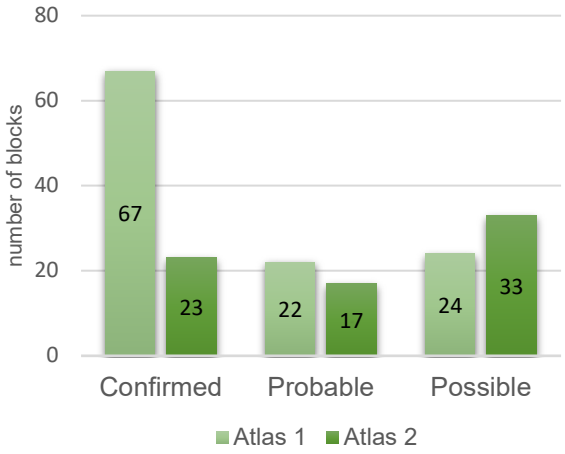
The Western Meadowlark seems to be another bird that has suffered from increased urbanization and more intensive agriculture in Sacramento County. This is certainly not unexpected, given the long-term, widespread declines for this species documented by BBS data. Even though this meadowlark is willing to breed in a wide variety of grassland habitat conditions, this flexibility has not allowed it to sustain a stable population.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–2.05% / year[s]	**–0.88**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Grassland/open country, oak savanna

Nest Type

On ground, grass cup or dome

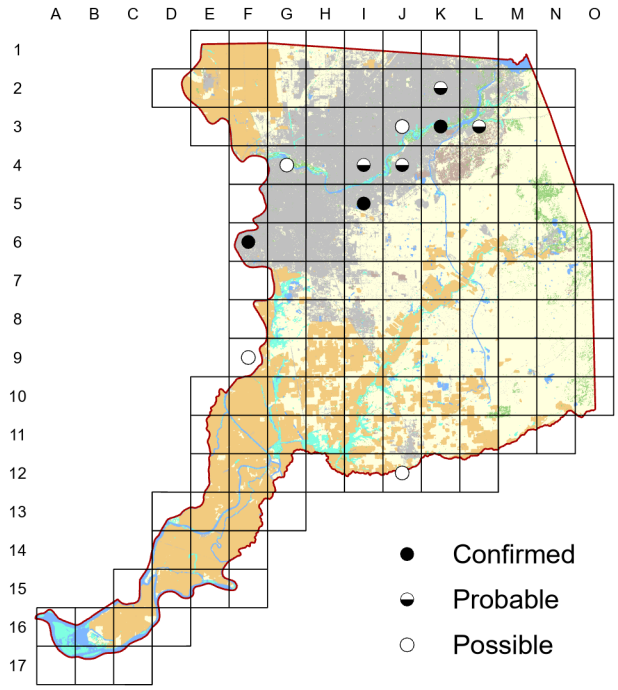
---

23 April 2018 — Block N-7

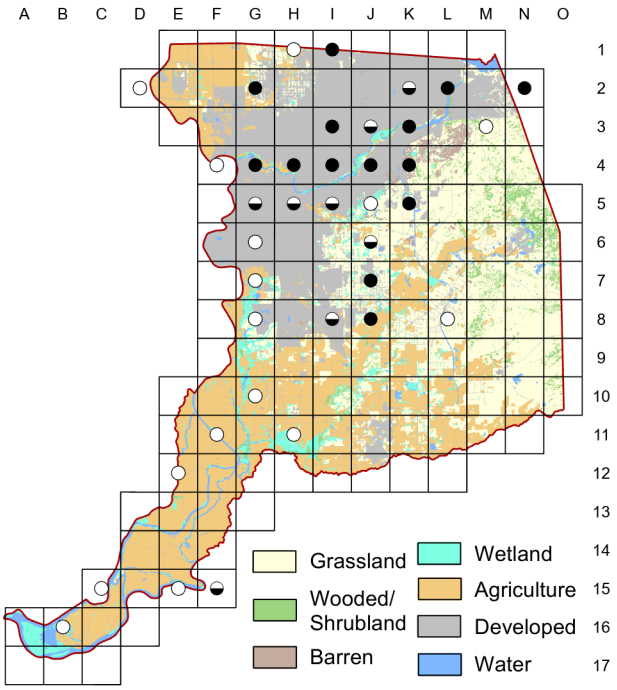
Perched on fence line with a bill full of insects.

Hooded Oriole
Icterus cucullatus

Atlas 1

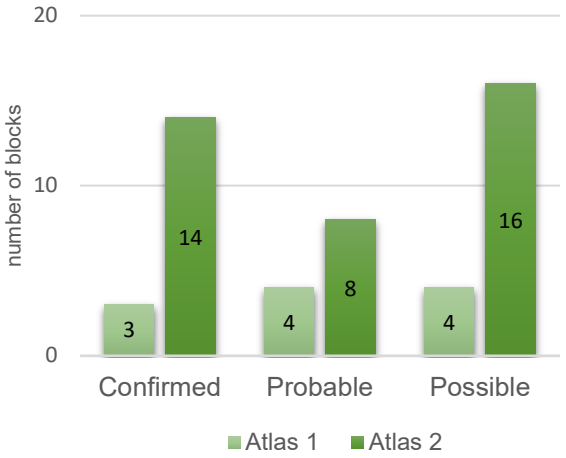


Atlas 2



Further discussed in Chapter Five, the Hooded Oriole's ability to exploit urban resources, such as sugar feeders and ornamental trees, fan palms (*Washingtonia* spp.) in particular, is reflected in the increase of breeding observations between the two atlases.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
3.73% / year[s]	0.66% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Open woodland, especially with palms

Nest Type

Deep, woven cup nest

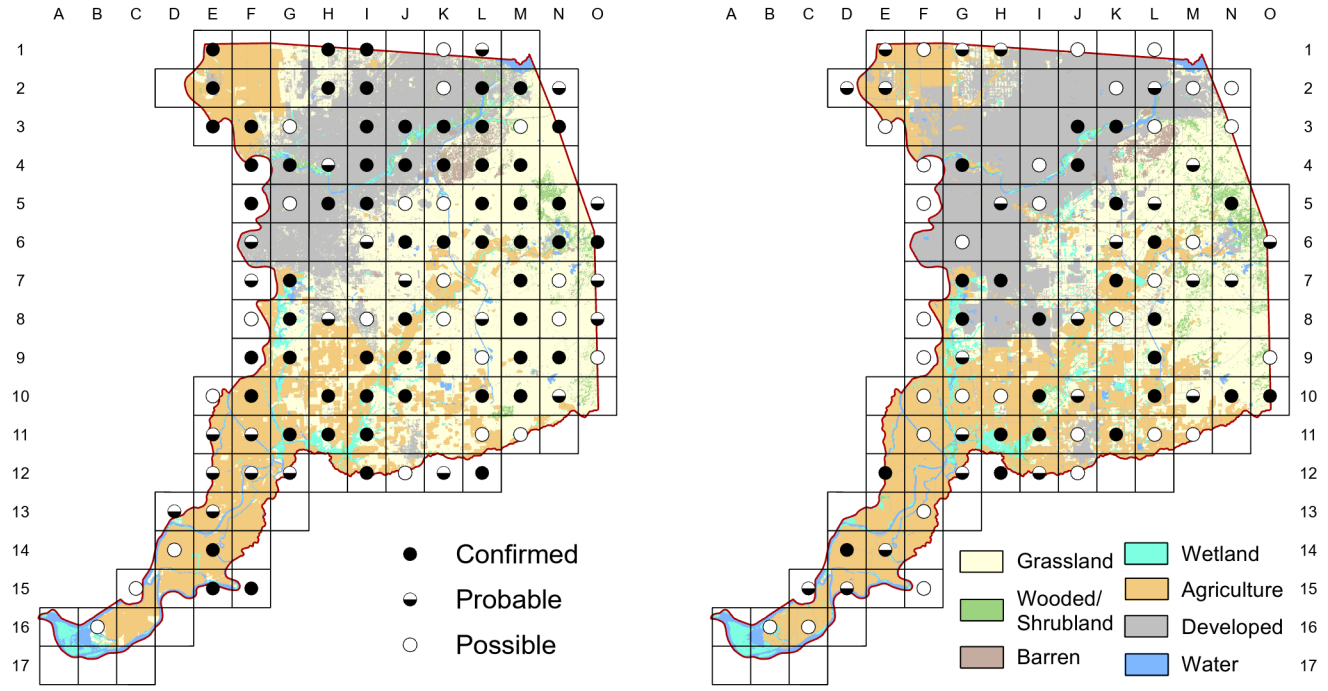
---

3 September 2020 — Block K-3

Three fledglings all came down to the jelly feeder, followed by an adult female. Might have to buy more grape jelly.

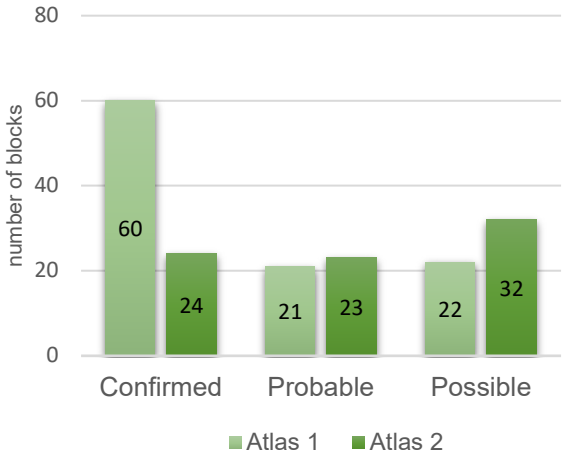
Bullock's Oriole
Icterus bullockii

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



A decline observed in blocks with breeding behaviors between the two atlases likely mirrors negative trends for the Bullock's Oriole documented in California and rangewide. As with several other neotropical migrants, it is unclear whether these declines are due to conditions on the breeding range, or winter range. This oriole also undergoes a molt-migration stopover in the southwest and increasingly rare monsoon events there may also be a factor.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–1.35% / year[s]	**–0.6**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Open woodland

Nest Type

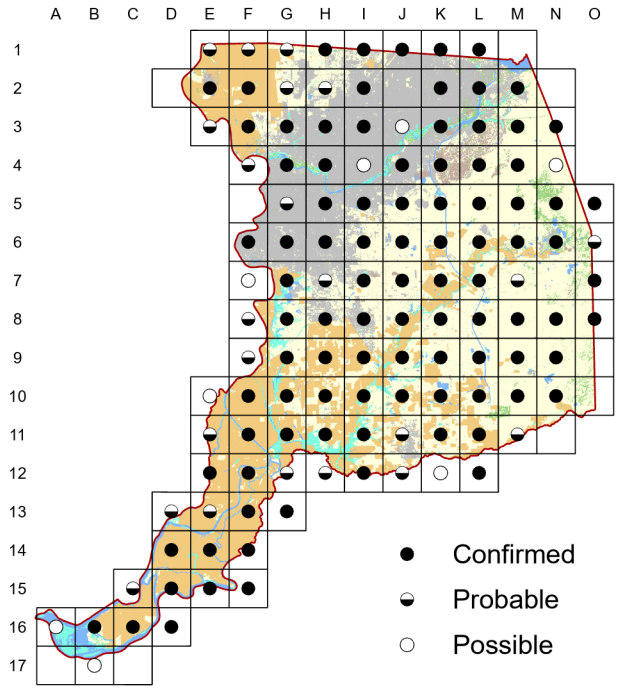
Woven sock-like nest, often suspended from branch

28 April 2017 Block N-10

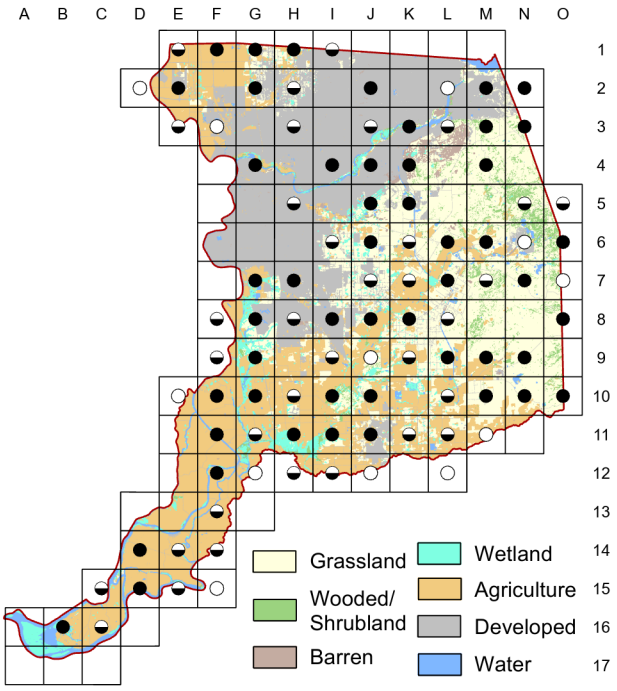
Nest made of fishing line in eucalyptus tree.

Red-winged Blackbird
Agelaius phoeniceus

Atlas 1

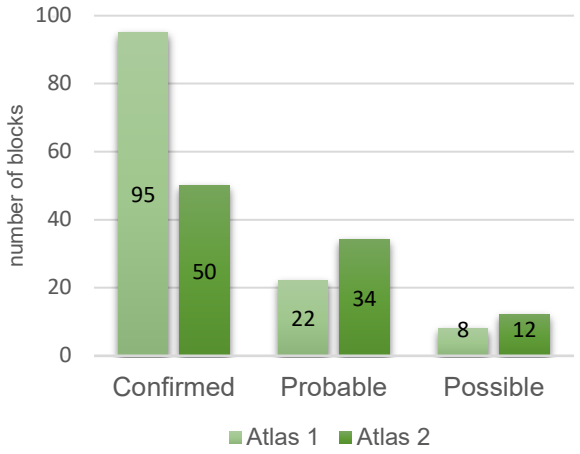


Atlas 2



Red-winged Blackbirds appear to have disappeared from some blocks in urban and open grassland areas between atlas projects, but remain widespread. Whether this reflects an actual shift in distribution or is, at least in part, an artifact of differences in data collection methods and/or access to grassland areas is problematic.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.68% / year[s]	**–0.62**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Wetlands or moist, open areas with brush or grass

Nest Type

Woven cup nest

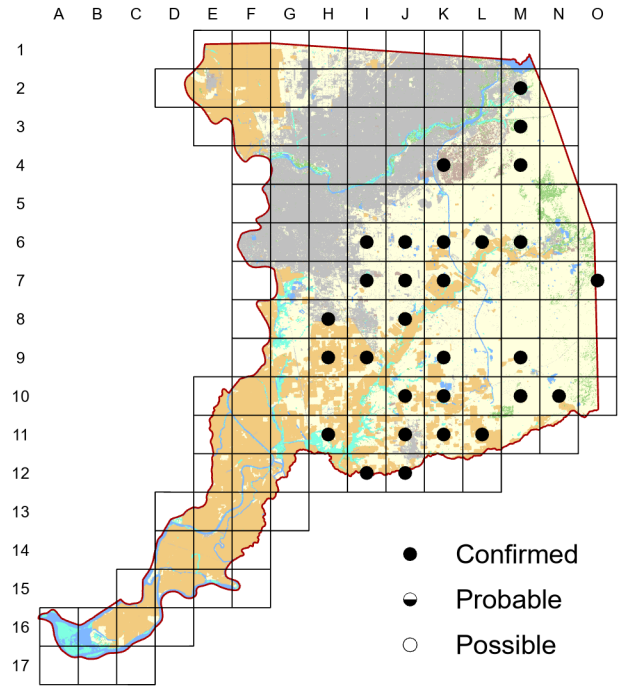
---

11 May 2019 — Block H-11

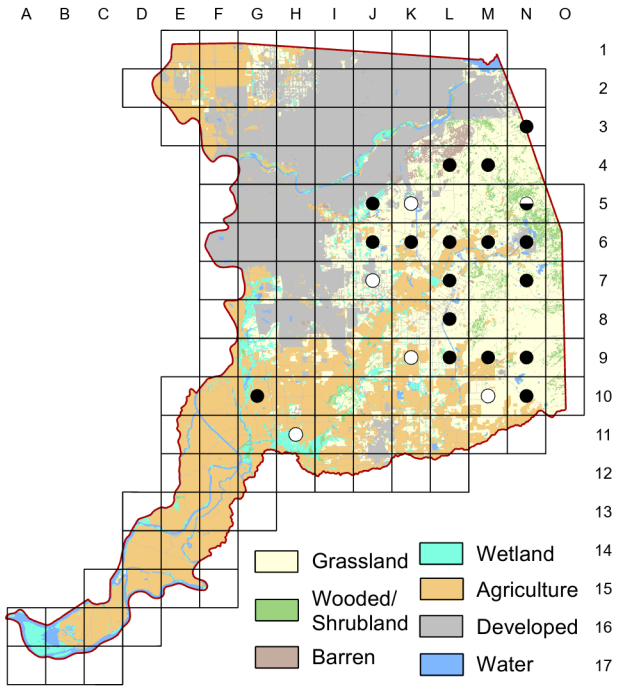
Nest with 2 Red-winged Blackbird eggs and 3–4 smaller, spotted Brown-headed Cowbird eggs.

Tricolored Blackbird
Agelaius tricolor

Atlas 1

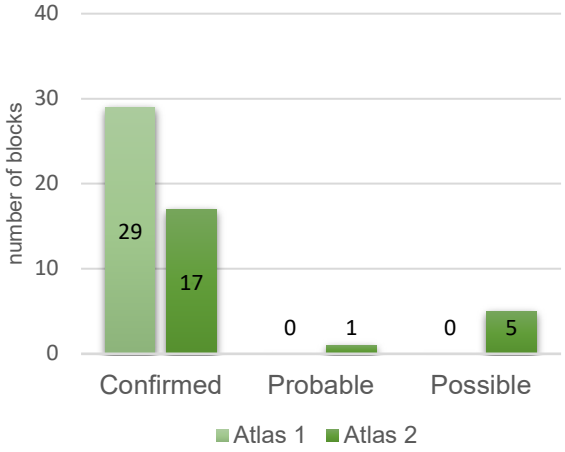


Atlas 2



Expansion of suburban districts and vineyards has significantly reduced breeding sites used by Tricolored Blackbirds in the south-central part of Sacramento County. This colonial breeder appears to be hanging on, but rapidly losing ground.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.62% / year[n]	–0.83% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Marshes, blackberry thickets in open country

Nest Type

Concealed cup nest; strictly colonial breeder

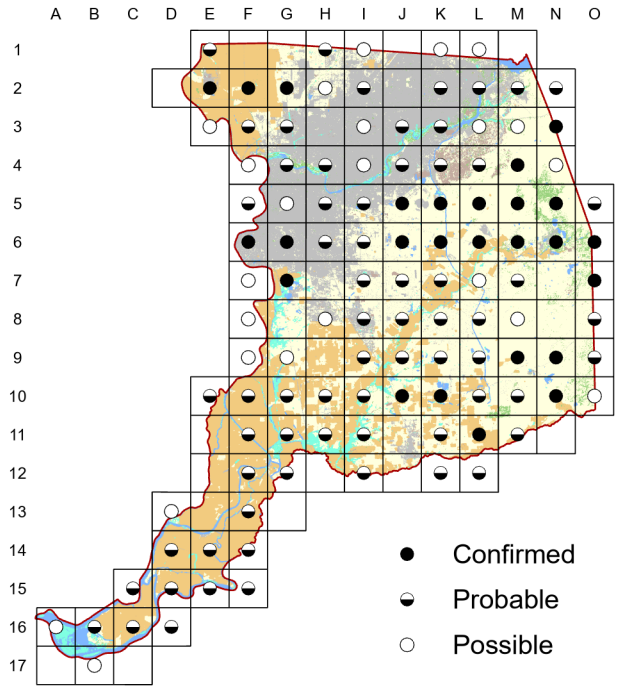
---

6 April 2017 — Block L-6

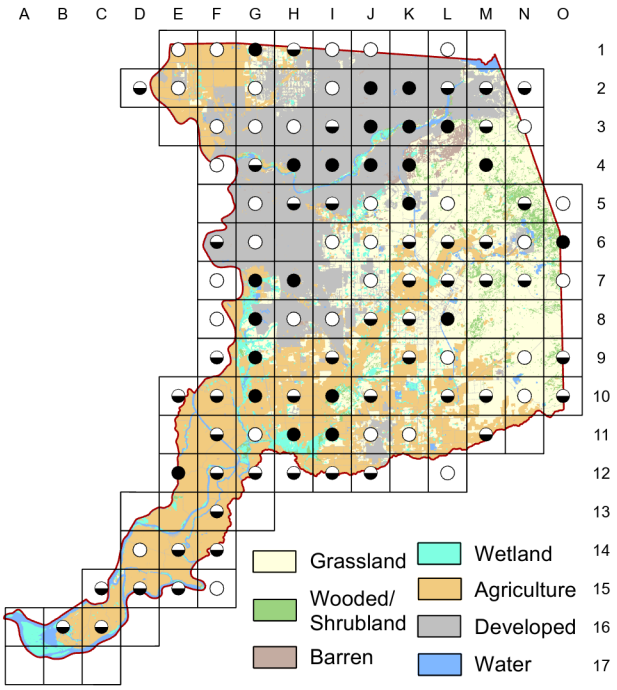
Group in Himalayan Blackberries where they nested several years ago.
Birds in the settling and nest building stages.

Brown-headed Cowbird
Molothrus ater

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



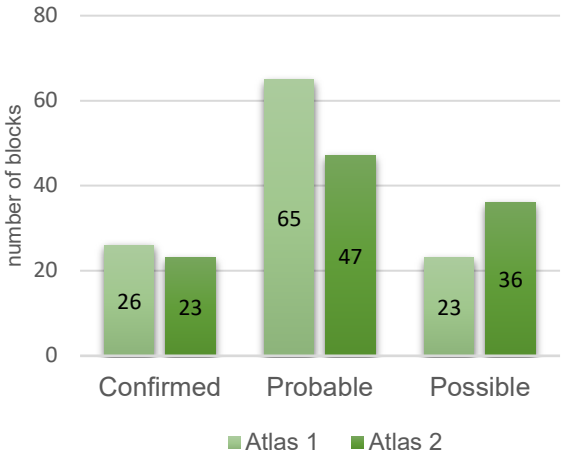
It is a testament to the adaptability of this brood parasite that, in both atlases, Brown-headed Cowbirds were observed exhibiting breeding behaviors in nearly every block. This species first spread into California following the introduction of cattle; however, as the atlas results show, they have learned to expand into all available Sacramento County habitats.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.09% / year[n]	**–0.51**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Wide variety of open and semi-open habitats

Nest Type

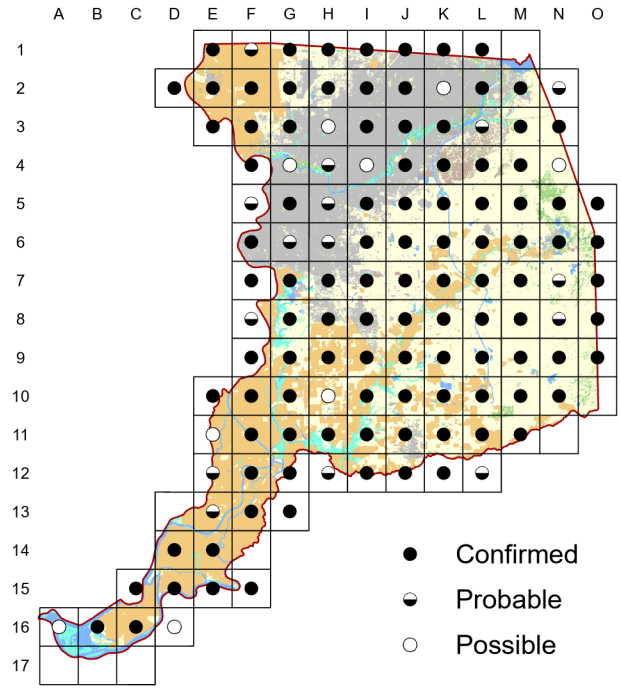
No nest; brood parasite

1923 W. L. Dawson

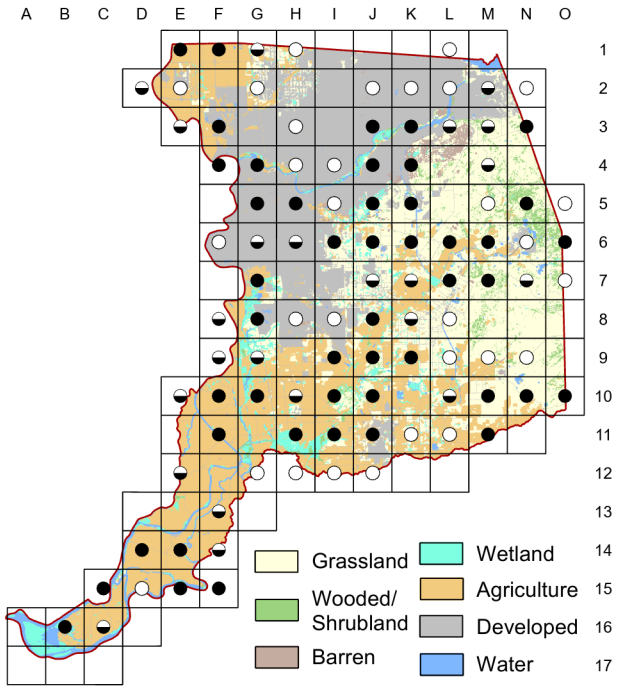
She was dumped at birth into a strange cradle, and left to make shift as best she might, an unblessed and pitiless bastard. Nourished by uncomprehending or reluctant strangers.

Brewer's Blackbird
Euphagus cyanocephalus

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



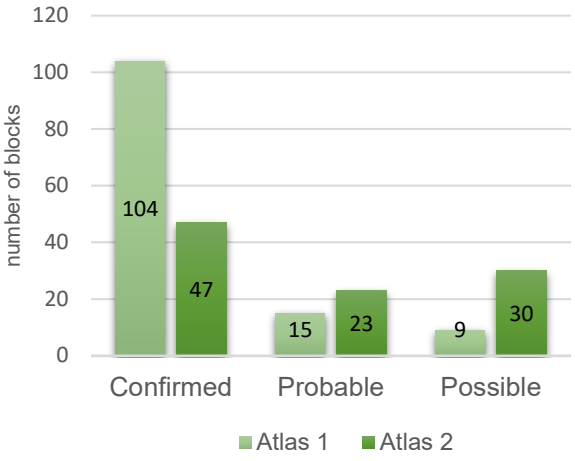
Seemingly ubiquitous in parking lots and inspiring viral videos when vigorously defending their nests from passersby, the Brewer's Blackbird may appear to be doing well at first glance. But despite their visibility, the species is declining both in California and rangewide, a trend reflected when comparing the two atlases.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–2.19% / year[s]	**–1.59**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Variety, including urbanized areas

Nest Type

Cup nest on ground or low in tree or shrub

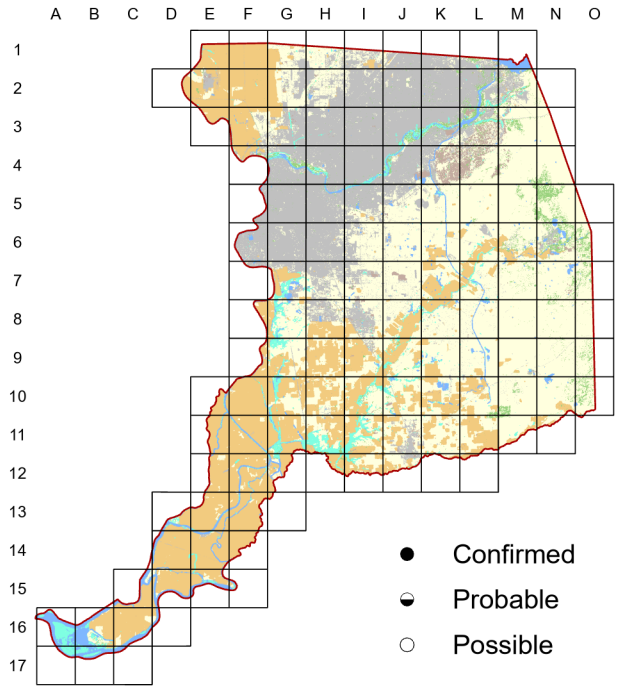
---

1 July 2016 — Block G-4

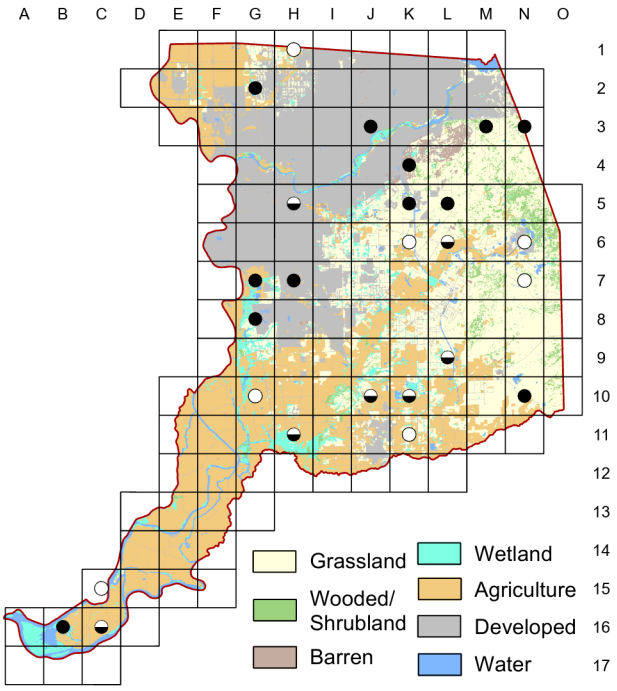
A male went after me a few times as I walked by, contacting my big circular hat. They have nested in the Italian cypress around the hotel.

Great-tailed Grackle
Quiscalus mexicanus

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



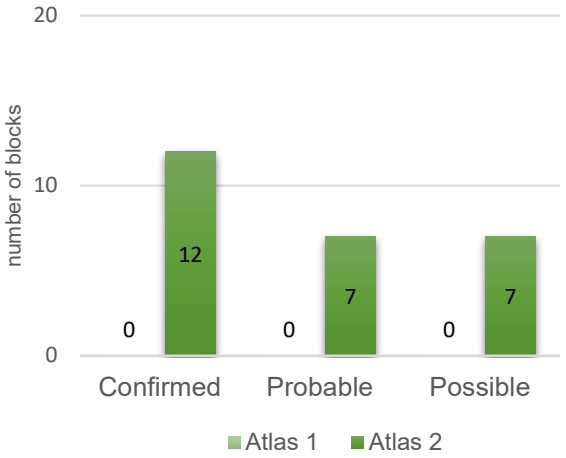
Among recent expansions of range into California, the Great-tailed Grackle briefly held the record for speed and extent, until eclipsed by the Eurasian Collared-Dove. As discussed in Chapter Four, the ability of this species to take advantage of habitats near human development is clearly one factor in their success. It remains to be seen if their range in the county will stabilize, expand, or contract.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
11.06% / year[s]	0.92% / year[n]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Open woodland near water, wetlands

Nest Type

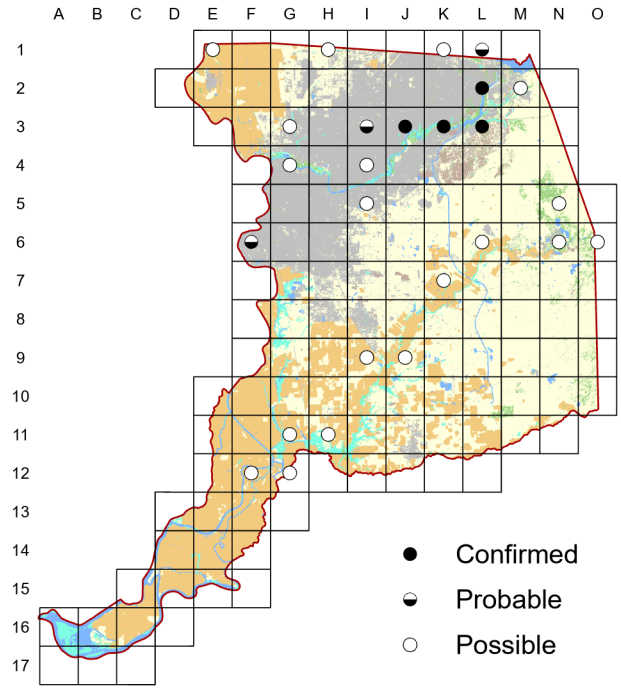
Woven cup nest in emergent vegetation or tree

14 March 2017 Block K-5

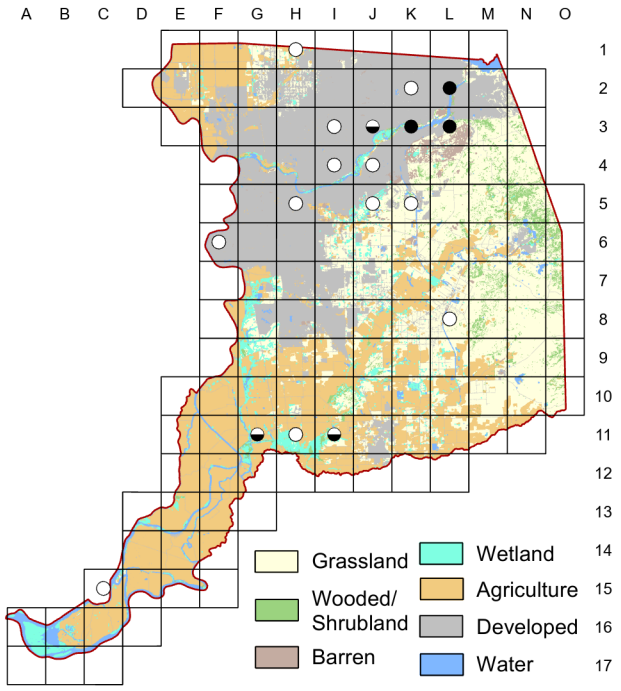
One male doing extreme courting behavior—very fancy display.

Orange-crowned Warbler
Leiothlypis celata

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



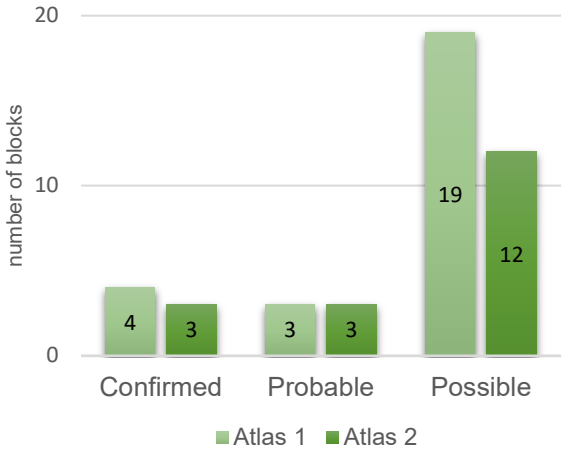
The actual breeding status of the Orange-crowned Warbler can be misleading in any Central Valley floor county, since birds are frequently heard singing beginning in March. However, most of those are probably either migrants or overwintering individuals destined to move upslope to breed. The results from the two atlases show little change in county breeding status, and this warbler remains an uncommon but regular breeder.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.27% / year[n]	**–0.62**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Shrubland or open woodland with shrub understory

Nest Type

Concealed cup nest, on or near the ground

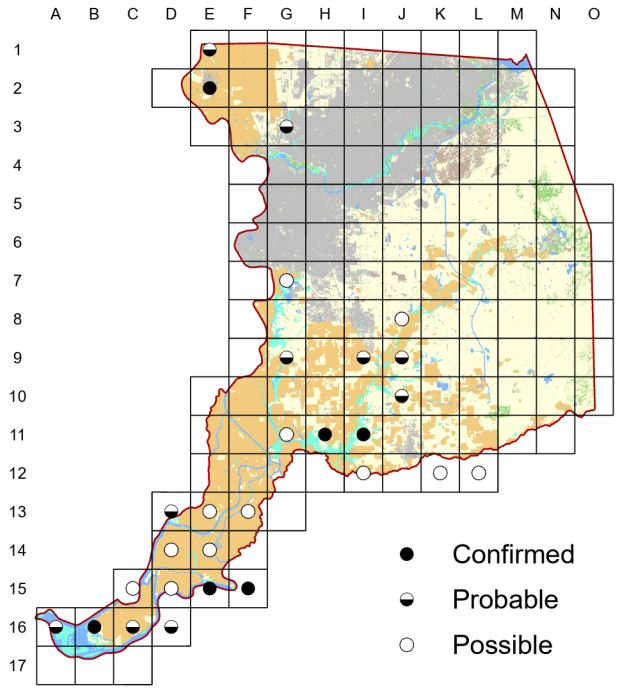
---

19 May 2020 — Block L-2

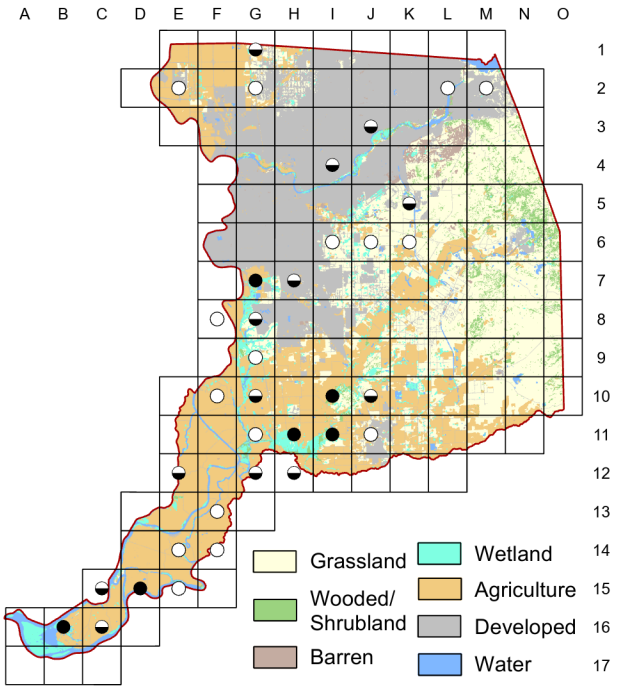
Adult male singing while recently fledged juvenile followed female around, constantly calling for food and eventually seen being fed.

Common Yellowthroat
Geothlypis trichas

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



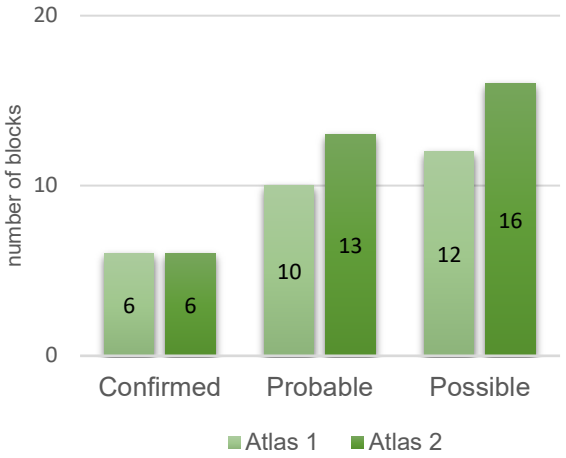
The status of the Common Yellowthroat was similar between the two atlases. Despite losses in the northwestern part of the county (Natomas Basin), overall numbers of blocks slightly increased in Atlas 2. With breeding requirements similar to the Song Sparrow, more breeding documentation in the American River Parkway may indicate maturing habitat. This warbler is quite vocal and conspicuous where present.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
2.34% / year[s]	**–0.56**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Dense vegetation in or near wetlands or riparian

Nest Type

Cup nest on or near the ground

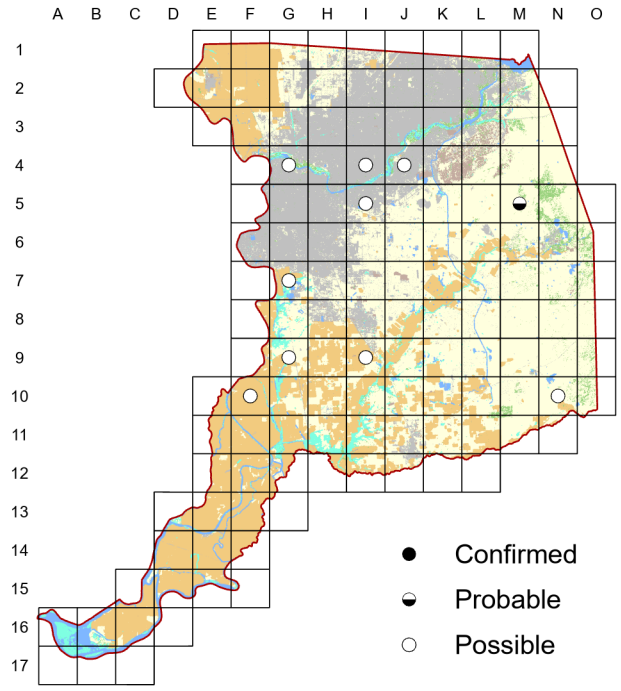
---

14 August 2013 — Block G-7

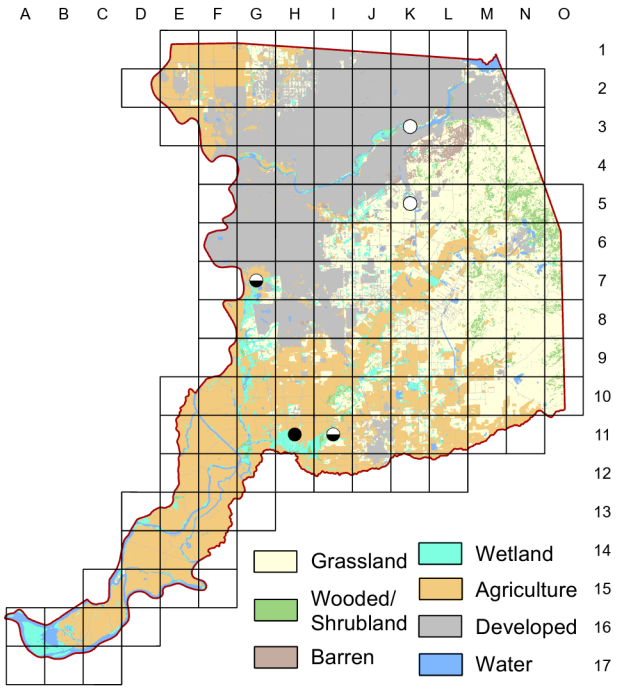
Must have gotten near a nest or new fledglings. Female was flying low in front of me and hopping with wings spread.

Yellow Warbler
Setophaga petechia

Atlas 1

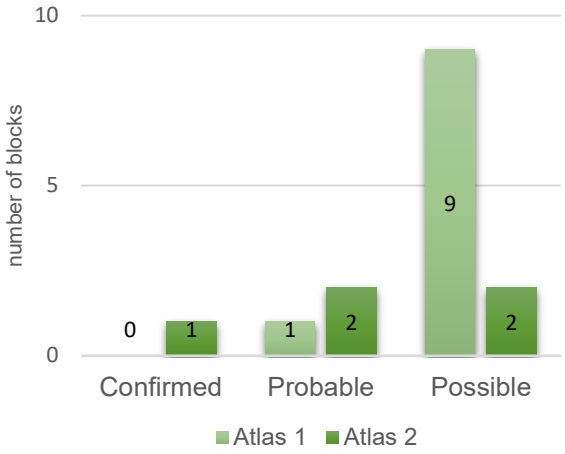


Atlas 2



Yellow Warblers were nearly extirpated as breeding birds in the Central Valley in the 20th century. A small, nascent population may be developing at the Cosumnes River Preserve in south-central Sacramento County. See Chapter Four for additional details.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.5% / year[n]	**–0.4**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Mainly riparian woodland

Nest Type

Cup nest

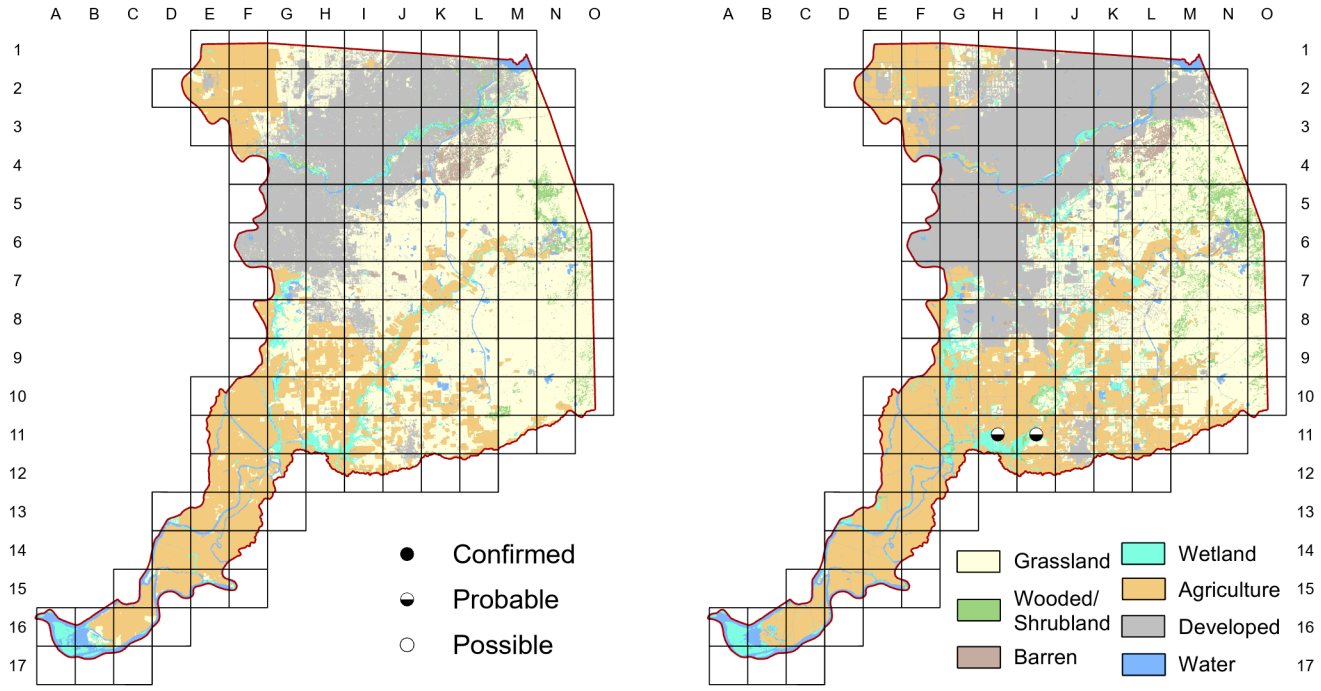
---

2 June 2019 — Block K-3

Have had a persistent singing Yellow Warbler in a particular tract of suitable habitat for several weeks.

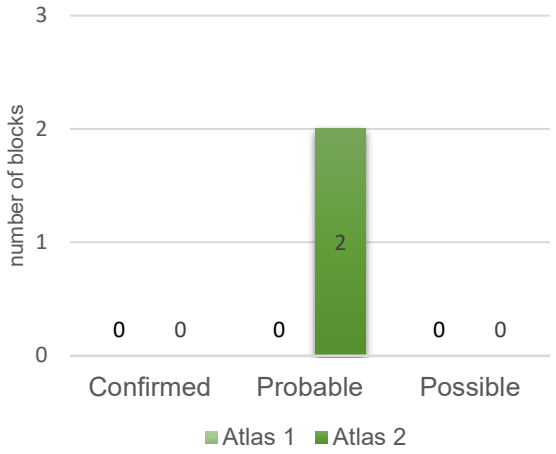
Summer Tanager
Piranga rubra

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



It is tempting to dismiss the occurrence of Summer Tanager breeding as a fluke in the county, yet it is hard to ignore five consecutive breeding seasons with sustained singing of one to four months. Two singing males were found in June 2014, with singles detected in the four subsequent breeding seasons. The nearest regular nesting is nearly 400 km away in Kern County. Further details are included in Chapter Four.

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.34% / year[n]	**0.24**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Breeding Habitat

Primarily riparian areas

Nest Type

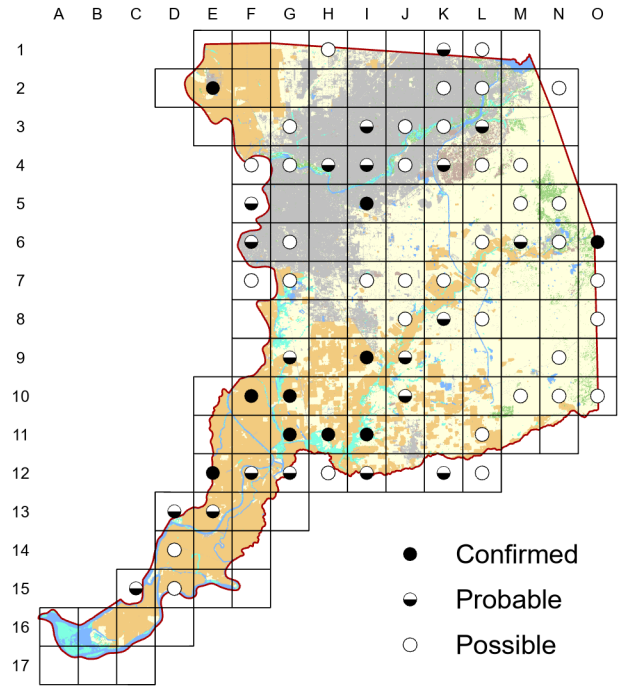
Cup nest

28 July 2018 Block I-11

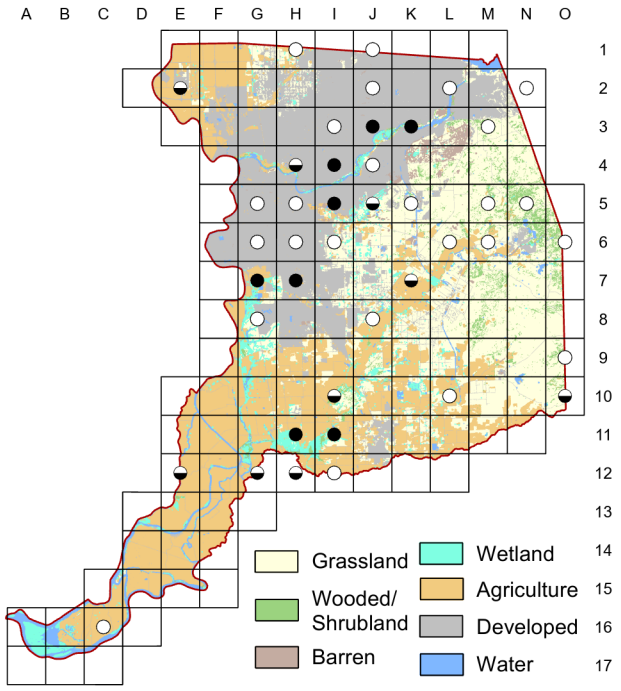
Continuing. Singing south of Ronneberg Meadow and covering a lot of ground. The most conspicuous singer of the morning.

Black-headed Grosbeak
Pheucticus melanocephalus

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



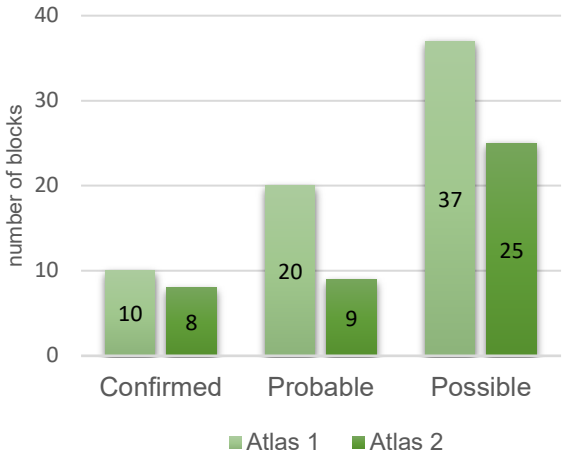
The detection of local breeding Black-headed Grosbeaks can be swamped by abundant singing migrants, so getting a clear picture of breeding activity, especially early in the season, is a challenge. Net reductions in evidence of breeding and confirmations may reflect differences in access, effort, and personnel between the atlas projects, or may indicate modest declines.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.28% / year[n]	**0.42**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Variety of woodlands, especially riparian ones

Nest Type

Cup nest in small tree or bush

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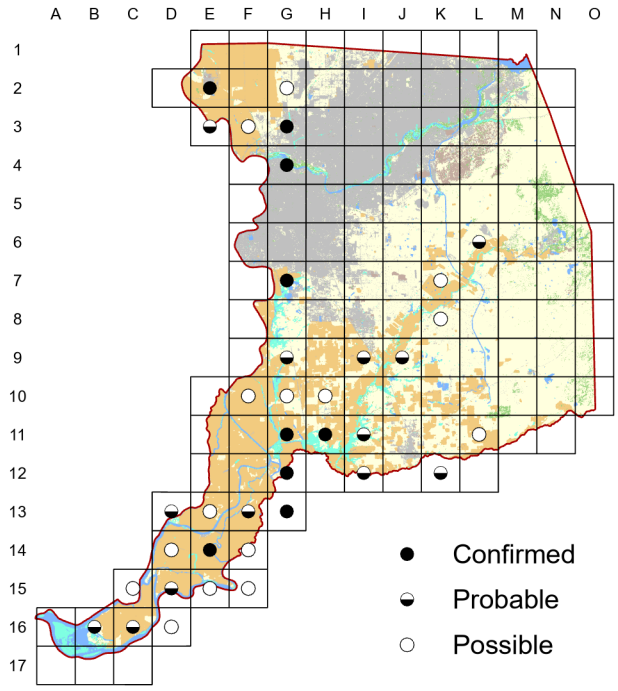
19 June 2020 Block H-11

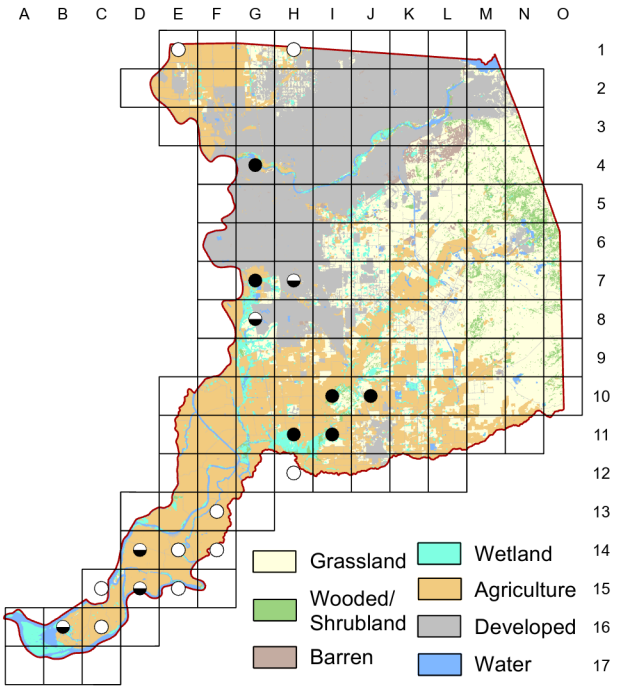
John showed me a nest that had contained large young last week.

Blue Grosbeak
Passerina caerulea

Atlas 1



Atlas 2



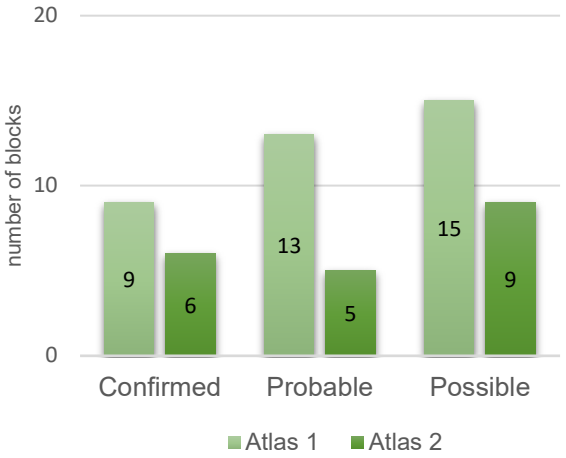
Fairly common in appropriate habitat, but not found regularly in most popular birding sites except for Cosumnes River Preserve, the Blue Grosbeak may be underappreciated as a breeder. With the exception of the northwest county, which has sustained major habitat loss, differences between the atlases mostly reflect differing access and effort.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
0.65% / year[n]	**0.73**% / year[s]

[1]North America; [s]significant, [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Patchy woodland; scrubby edges in open moist sites

Nest Type

Cup nest in weeds, shrub, or small tree

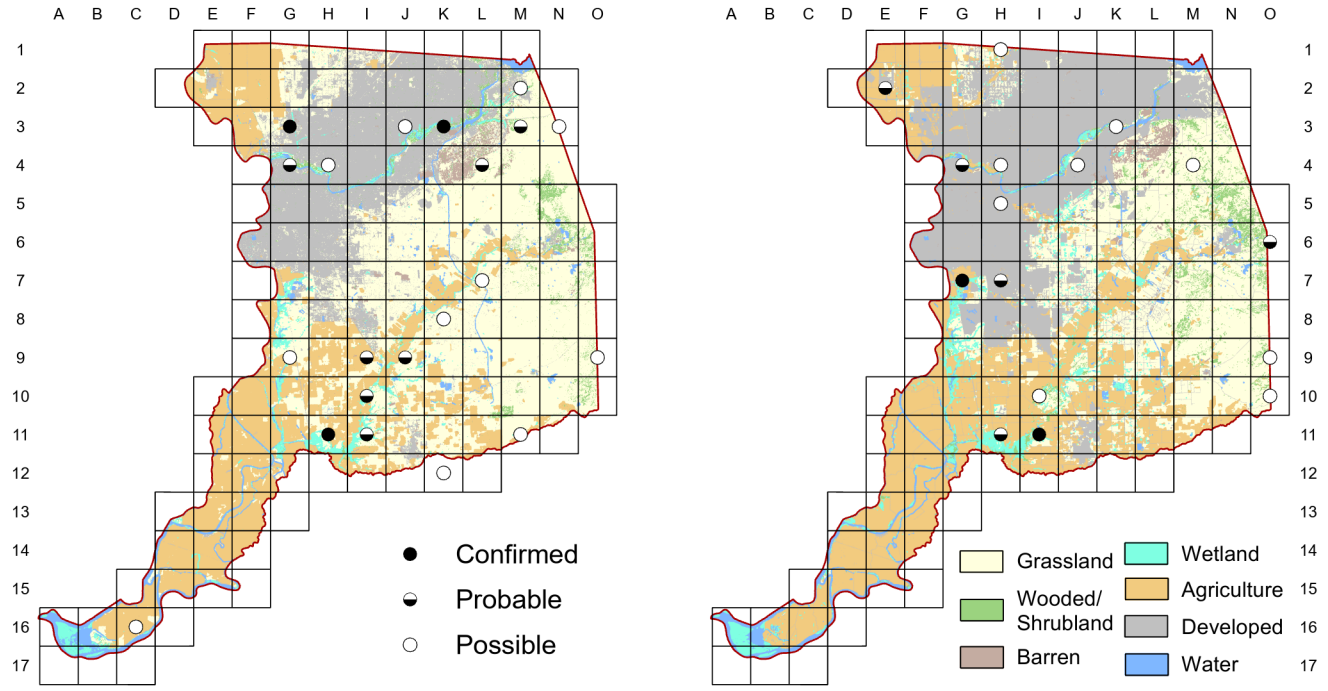
---

30 May 2017 — Block G-7

Female with nest material west of north gate. Looked like long blades of grass or sedge.

Lazuli Bunting
Passerina amoena

Atlas 1 **Atlas 2**



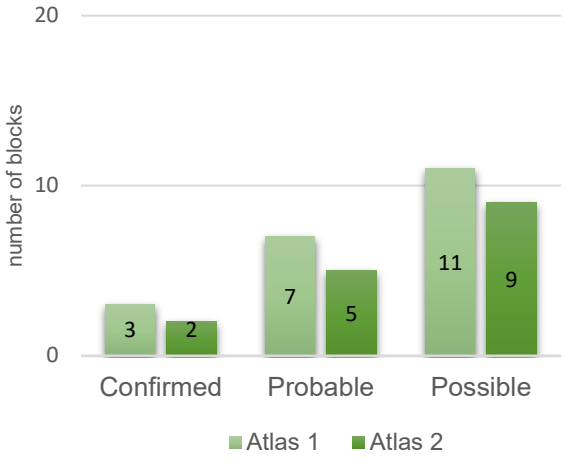
A slight decrease in breeding detections for the Lazuli Bunting between the two atlases may indicate a modest decline or differences in methodology (see Black-headed Grosbeak). This gorgeous bird is quite vocal, but can be difficult to approach closely, compounding uncertainty. Breeding status for this bird is variable, and it is often not present (or as numerous) through the breeding season every year, even at sites with fairly regular nesting.

Breeding Bird Survey Trend (1966–2019)

California	Rangewide[1]
–0.18% / year[n]	0.48% / year[n]

[1]North America; [n]nonsignificant; Source: Sauer et al. 2020

Comparison of Atlas Results



Breeding Habitat

Variety of shrubby habitats

Nest Type

Concealed cup nest, in shrub or small tree

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9 May 2017 Block J-4

Great looks at a male that sang the entire time we were in its area; difficult to find where it was perched at times.

Tricolored Blackbirds by Tim Manolis