

Birding Expedition #2:



Arroyo Burro Beach



Liz Muraoka

(Located off Cliff Drive just west of Los Positas Rd.)

Beach habitats offer plenty of food for shore birds. Time your visit for low tide and you will see birds feeding at tide pools where mussels and clams hold tightly to rocks.

If you visit right after a high tide event, you'll see birds gleaning insects from the kelp that washed up on the beach. Thousands of insects are attracted to the kelp and provide abundant food for birds.

Birds that feed at the shore have bills and legs of various lengths to probe the sand for crabs, snails, and other arthropods.

Observations:

- Watch how different birds are searching for food.
- Do they wade into the waves?
- Do they scurry away as the waves approach?
- What do they seem to be finding in the sand?
- How deep can each bird's bill dig?
- How many different kinds of birds are feeding together?
- Are any birds feeding with only their own kind?
- Pay attention to the length of the bill and the shape. Does the angle go up? Does the beak angle go down?

Mark the following birds in your field guide for quick reference.



Christopher Taylor

California Gull



Jamie Chavez

Western Gull



Jamie Chavez

Western Sandpiper
(winter)



Liz Muraoka

Sanderlings (winter)





Dieter J. Schaefer

Killdeer



Dennis Ringer

Long-billed Curlew



Christopher Taylor

Willet (winter plumage)



Bill Bouton

Brown Pelican



Dieter J. Schaefer

Willet in flight



Christopher Taylor

Double-crested Cormorant



Hugh Ranson

Marbled Godwit



Dieter J. Schaefer

Black Phoebe





Dieter J. Schaefer

Snowy Plover



Jamie Chavez

Elegant Tern



Christopher Taylor

Snowy Egret



Dieter J. Schaefer

Great Blue Heron



Christopher Taylor

Great Egret

