

MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION / Rich Stallcup, Dave DeSante and Russell Greenberg

Locally mild, calm and dry weather made for very pleasant field trips and, perhaps, the late departures of some of our local breeding species, but more widespread weather influences were no doubt responsible for the most phenomenal ornithological autumn on record (See under Wood Warblers). Not only were four new species (all documented with photographs) added to the list of one of the most thoroughly birded regions in the nation, but for some of our "regular vagrant" and "rare vagrant" birds, numbers of individuals nearly equalled or actually surpassed the combined totals of all previous years.



Owing to dry conditions in the southern parts of the region and mild temperatures in the Malheur, Honey, Tule and Klamath Lake refuges, waterfowl were again late in arriving in the Central Valleys (below C.V.) and thus, hunters' bags through mid-October there, were light or empty. By Oct. 23, California Department of Fish and Game (below C.F.G.) aerial surveys indicated that ducks were up 40 per cent and geese up 45 per cent over this time last year (another very dry year). By this date, most rice in the C.V. and corn in the Delta had been harvested and water was being spread on the fields. By Nov. 20 duck populations were down 15 per

cent from this date, 1973, with more than usual remaining in the still-mild Klamath, Tule and Honey L. areas. On Nov. 20th, 3,801,550 geese and 5,050,275 ducks were tallied from the Klamath and Tule Lake refuges, the C.V. and the Sacramento, San Joaquin deltas. The predominant ducks were Pintails and the highest number of ducks (all inclusive) were at San Luis Reservoir with 1,421,200 (C.F.G.).

Probably also the result of the mild fall were the low numbers reported for most of the montane and northern invasion species. The following were notably scarce this fall: Lewis' Woodpecker, Band-tailed Pigeon, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Varied Thrush, Cedar Waxwing, Pine Siskin, Evening Grosbeak, Purple Finch, and Red Crossbill. Except for the nuthatch, all of these species are seed and berry eaters and this may indicate good crop conditions north of our Region. Exceptions to the scarcity of invaders were kinglets. There was a massive incursion of Golden-crowneds to the lowlands. They first appeared in late September on the coast and by mid-October they were everywhere including the C.V. where 110 counted at Thornton (RS, GM) was very high. Ruby-crowned Kinglets preceded Golden-crowneds by about two weeks and were also represented by excellent numbers.

A dagger (†) means that that observer has submitted an acceptable description.

All observations for the Farallon Islands (below F.I.) are to be credited to Point Reyes Bird Observatory.

Some of our regular species have been treated lightly this season owing to more-than-usual space devoted to the rare.

LOONS, GREBES — All loon species were reported as scarce in the Monterey Bay area (J & RW, BGE) perhaps owing to a "red tide" there in late September and October, but observers elsewhere reported normal trends. An apparently healthy Yellow-billed Loon in winter plumage was seen at Tomales Bay from Nov. 13 through the end of the period (Brady, LCB, RS *et al.*). It was found at the exact same spot that the first California specimen was observed Dec. 3, 1967. Red-throated Loons were reported in good numbers on the coast with a high of 50, mostly in breeding plumage Sept. 8 on the ocean near Stone Lagoon, Humboldt Co. (RLeV). Red-throateds outnumbered Commons and Arctics combined along the Contra Costa Co. (below C.C.Co.) shore of San Francisco (below S.F.) Bay (NB) and one was well described from the Los Banos Retention Dam on Oct. 20 (SA † *et al.*). They are very rare at inland localities. Equally rare inland, a single Red-necked Grebe was on the same lake on the same date (SA † *et al.*). Horned Grebes, rare but regular inland, were found at eight lakes including records from the Basin, the Sierra Nevadas, the C.V. and the coast ranges. Usual concentrations of hundreds of thousands of Eared Grebes were on Mono L. in late August and early September (SFB, RS). Western Grebes had good breeding success at Tule L. (BED) and four active nests were found at Mendota Aug. 9 (RLH, JS) where they are irregular breeders. In the e. one-third of Contra Costa Co., 163 Pied-billed Grebes were counted Nov. 5 (NB) and a late downy chick was seen at Alameda Nov. 9 (DE, JM).

TUBENOSES — As is now the usual case in Fall, most observations of Black-footed Albatross came from the ocean off Humboldt Co. where 15 were seen Sept. 10 (RLeV) and 11 were seen Oct. 12 (DE, TS). Northern Fulmars were scarce throughout the period and only one or two, if any, were seen per pelagic trip, north or south. Pink-footed and Sooty Shearwaters were observed as normal on most trips but New Zealand (Buller's) Shearwaters were more common than usual with 750 off Half Moon Bay Oct. 5 (TC, BGE) and 125 off Bodega Bay Oct. 20 (BDP). Several observers remarked that they were the commonest shearwater seen. Single Flesh-footed Shearwaters were seen in Monterey Bay Aug. 8 (BGE), Sept. 17 (LCB), Oct. 5 (C.F.O.†) and Oct. 13 (F.A.S.) and the second Humboldt Co. record was obtained Oct. 12, 11 mi. w. of Eureka (DE, TS). The great storm-petrel rafts appeared again this year off Moss Landing with a total of six to eight thousand from mid-September to mid-October. Blacks outnumbered Ashies 2:1 on Sept. 17 (LCB) but were thought to be about even with no drop in the total by Oct. 13 (F.A.S.). A single Wilson's Storm-Petrel was found near this flock on Oct. 5 (C.F.O.†). Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels were there: four in Sept. (C.F.G., BGE) and one on Oct. 13 (F.A.S.) and two Least Storm-Petrels were clearly observed there Oct. 13 (F.A.S., RS†). Small numbers of Leasts were also seen there in 1969 and 1972.

PELICANS THROUGH HERONS — White Pelicans were in usual numbers along the coast but were down in the C.V. because of low water. Brown Pelicans were on time and in usual numbers on the coast with 25-40 per cent brown-headed immatures depending upon location. At the Pajaro R. mouth, 988 was the peak of the fall on Aug. 7 (J & RW) and over 2000 at Bolinas Lagoon Sept. 8 (P.R.B.O.) was higher than ever there. An imm. Magnificent Frigatebird well described 1 mi. w. of Trinidad Aug. 11 was the second Humboldt County record (*vide* DE, TS). Fewer than usual Green Herons were mentioned and one at Ft. Bragg Nov. 19 (OJK) was the only one reported from the coast. Perhaps due to dry conditions, 85 Great Egrets were hunting mice in the Palo Alto flood basin in November (DDeS *et al.*). A single bird was at Auburn Aug. 12-18 (MA) where they are rare. A usual scattering of Cattle Egret reports, indicating no obvious upsurge, were received. A higher proportion, however, was in the C.V. with four at Mendota Aug. 15 (RLH, JS), a peak of 11 at Gray Lodge Sept. 27 (BED), one, 4 mi. e. of Red Bluff Nov. 15 (SL), two 4 mi. e. of Davis Nov. 23 (DAG) and one, s. of Rio Vista Nov. 30 (J & SL *et al.*). Single Least Bitterns were seen at Gray Lodge Aug. 5, Sept. 5 & Nov. 21 when one was found dead (BED), at Sacramento N.W.R. (below S.N.W.R.) Sept. 9 (NB) and at Clear Lake S.P. Aug. 18 (DD). They are present in small numbers but are seldom seen in this Region. Three Am. Bitterns were mousing with Great Egrets in Palo Alto in November (DDeS *et al.*). A White-faced Ibis was at Mendota Oct. 10 (RLH, *vide* RH); they are rare in Fresno Co.

WATERFOWL — Very few Whistling Swans were seen on the coast or in the C.V. again, the result of dry conditions, and 7000 were carefully estimated at the s.

end of Honey L., Nov. 30 (RS, GM). Honey L. in the Great Basin is often frozen by that time. Not only were few reports of geese received but in the early flocks of Snows very few immatures were noted, indicating poor breeding success (BED, RS). Three blue-phase Snow Geese were reported. An early Ross' Goose was at the Chico Sewage Plant Oct. 17 (RS, BM) and one was at Coyote Hills Park Nov. 17 (FN, †AE).

A botulism die-off in S.F. Bay was the worst in many decades for that area. About 14,000 birds perished, mostly Pintails, N. Shovelers, Ruddy Ducks and Am. Coots along with lesser numbers of waders and gulls. A two-month-long effort by State and Federal Wildlife teams was necessary to bring it under control.

A Fulvous Tree Duck, rare on the coast, was at Pt. Pinos from at least Oct. 20 to the end of the period (m.ob.). Two ♂♂ Eur. Green-winged Teal were found, one, early at Arcata Oct. 2 (GF) and one at Bolinas Nov. 19-23 (RS, many). Nine ♂♂ Eur. Wigeon were noted with the huge flocks of Americans, which is normal. Five Com. Goldeneye were found in Humboldt and Del Norte Cos. in November where they are uncommon (DE, TS), and average numbers were seen elsewhere with the usual sprinkling of Barrow's (14) at coastal ponds and foothill rivers. Seven Oldsquaws reported, all from the coast, is about average. An imm. White-winged Scoter at Avocado L., Fresno Co. (RLH, JS) and a ♀ Surf Scoter at Solano L. Oct. 8, 13 (Wilburn, *fide* BK) are both interesting as inland scoter records are scarce. Hooded Mergansers were up from the average with 24 reported at 12 localities (m.ob.) including a male Dec. 1 at Lodi, San Joaquin Co. (DS) where they are very rare.

RAPTORS THROUGH CRANES — Turkey Vultures were noted migrating in the C.V. as follows: Blue Gum, Glenn Co., 90 Oct. 4 (SL); 100+ at Gray Lodge Oct. 8 (BED) and 85 there Oct. 20 (R & BL). Nine Goshawks were reported, six from the Sierras, one adult at Waddell Creek, Santa Cruz Co., Nov. 11 (MZ), an adult from Pt. Diablo Oct. 20 (WMP†) and an adult from Santa Rosa Oct. 12 (GLB†). Goshawks are normally very rare away from the mountains and great care should be taken in their identification. At Pt. Diablo 141 Sharp-shinned and 155 Cooper's Hawks were tallied in 785 minutes of observation in late September and early October (LCB). Also there, LCB *et al.* recorded 103 Red-tailed, 12 Red-shouldered and over 30 Broad-winged Hawks (including two of the little known dark phase) during nearly the same period of observation. In addition, two Broad-winged Hawks were seen in Golden Gate Park Sept. 27 and one was at Rodeo Lagoon Sept. 14 (LCB). Swainson's Hawks were seen through mid-September in the C.V. and one adult 10 mi. e. of the Salinas R. mouth Sept. 1 (BGE) is noteworthy since they are rare on the coast. Rough-legged Hawks were widely observed in better-than-average numbers but as expected, only a shadow of last year's invasion. Only 11 Ferruginous Hawks were reported which is about half the average number for fall. Eagles of both species seem to be increasing slightly. Bald Eagles, however, were fairly low possibly owing to the late waterfowl migration. Ospreys were far down from last fall but nearly equal to 1971 and 1972. Prairie Falcons, Peregrines and Merlins were well reported. The Sandhill

Crane that summered at Ferndale was last seen Sept. 5 (J & SL, RS, GM). The first cranes arrived at Gray Lodge Oct. 4 (BED) and by Nov. 20, 3000 were counted by the C.F.G.

SHOREBIRDS — Snowy Plovers were reported as 3 at Honey L. Aug. 15 (BED), 25 at Princeton Oct. 30 (PM) and a peak of 95 at the Pajaro R. mouth Aug. 26 (J & RW). A Dotterel arrived on the F.I. Sept. 12, was described and well photographed until Sept. 20 when it left with a small flock of Killdeer (P.R.B.O.). This is the first record for California and the farthest south on the Pacific Coast of North America. Only 17 Am. Golden Plovers were seen, which is the same number as in 1972 but far short of the 159 in 1973. Long-billed Curlews were seen in standard numbers but 1000 Whimbrels west of Firebaugh Aug. and 480 at Mendota Aug. 15 (RLH, JS) are the largest numbers ever recorded in fall and exceptional in the C.V., where they have been thought to be uncommon except in spring. In both cases a few Long-billeds were seen with the flocks. Six Solitary Sandpipers were reported, all at inland localities which is normal, including one at Clear L., Lake Co. (DD) which is a new location for the species. Four Wandering Tattlers at Albany Aug. 11 (RD) is the largest number ever on the e. side of S.F. Bay. The seasonal high for Greater Yellowlegs was at Gray Lodge Aug. 25 when over 100 were in a single field (BED). Fewer Lesser Yellowlegs were seen than usual, however 32 at a Ferndale pond Aug. 24 (DE, TS) is a high number and it is estimated that over 70 individuals passed that pond during the season (DA). Rock Sandpipers arrived in November with four at Bodega (Conners, m.ob.), one at north jetty Humboldt Bay Nov. 10 (DE, TS) and one at s. jetty there Nov. 29 (KT). Fewer than in former years have recently been found at the Humboldt jetties. Fewer Pectoral Sandpipers were found than in any fall for the past five years and only 88 were reported Aug. 13 - Oct. 25. Two or three hundred is normal. A single Sharp-tailed Sandpiper was studied



Curlew Sandpiper, Bolinas, Calif., Sept. 10, 1974. (on rt.) Photo / P.R.B.O.

on Pt. Reyes Sept. 29 (PM†, JM†). This species may prove to be regular in tiny numbers in the fall. A Curlew Sandpiper was found with a flock of Baird's Sept. 7 at Bolinas (P.R.B.O.) was seen by hundreds, was well described and was photographed through Sept. 14. This is the third verified sighting for the Region. Baird's Sandpipers were well represented and 132 were seen,

which is higher than average. Very early Dunlins were seen again this fall. One was at Bodega Bay as early as Aug. 6 (WMP *et al.*), two were at Arcata Aug. 17 (TS) and two were at the Pajaro R. mouth Sept. 11 (J & RW). The third week of September is usually the time for first Dunlin arrivals. An unusual high of 35 Short-billed Dowitchers with over 1000 Long-billeds identified by plumage and all were at Woodland Aug. 26 (RS, DW). One or two is a normal inland high. Stilt Sandpipers, always rare here, were found at Ferndale with two Aug. 24-29 (DA *et al.*), one at Moss Landing Oct. 13 (DA, DW *et al.*) and one, one mi. w. of Skaggs Is., Sept. 9 (LCB, RS). A winter plumaged Semipalmated Sandpiper was captured, carefully identified and photographed at Limantour, Marin Co. Aug. 21 (P.R.B.O.†). Great care must be taken in identifying this rare species from the W. Sandpiper and even more so from the Red-necked (Rufous-necked Sandpiper) and Little Stints of Eurasia which are nearly identical to it in winter plumage but lack partial webbing between the toes. The Bar-tailed Godwit found in July in Arcata was last seen there Sept. 3 (RS, GM, J & SL*). No less than three Ruffs were found this season, the first since 1967 and the fourth through the sixth records. One, found at Martinez Sept. 16 (DE, TS†) was seen by hundreds throughout the period. On Sept. 19, 20, one was at Bodega Bay (GLB, WMP†, LWG) and on Oct. 9, one was well described from a sewage pond at Hanford, Kings Co. (James Stewart, *vide* RH) One thousand Am. Avocets at L. Levitt near Susanville Oct. 14 (SL) is very high for that station. Only four Red Phalaropes were reported, all in August and September.

JAEGERS AND GULLS — A good jaeger year, Pomarines and Parasitics were seen on most offshore trips at a ratio of about 5:1. A high for both was logged Oct. 5 when about 25 Pomarines and 4 Parasitics were in Monterey Bay (C.F.O.). Also on Oct. 5 an ad. Long-tailed Jaeger was seen 2 mi. off Half Moon Bay (TCT, BGE†). At least eight skuas were reported, including one that stayed on the F.I. Sept. 16 - Oct. 14. A high of five was in Monterey Bay Oct. 5 (C.F.O.). Only the South Polar Skua, C.s. macconnickii has been definitely recorded from this region (and possibly from the entire North Pacific) and most likely all of those reported here are of that "race." Gulls, especially Herring had not yet arrived in numbers in the C.V. by the end of the period. Five species of gulls were seen Nov. 30 along the n.e. shore of Eagle L., including one first year Thayer's, two Herring and six Bonaparte's (RS, GM). Another Bonaparte's was at the s. shore of L. Tahoe Oct. 17 (WS). A Mew Gull Aug. 15 at King Salmon (BR, TS) was either very early or had summered, since the first normal returnees were at Arcata Oct. 18 (DE, TS). Four Franklin's Gulls, two at Humboldt Bay in August (DE, TS) and two near Moss Landing during the third week of November (JiM) were noted. High numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls were seen in November, with 1000 at the Pajaro R. mouth Nov. 10 (J & RW), 11,600 at Bolinas and 45,000 at Limantour Nov. 22-28 following strong SW winds (P.R.B.O.). Heermann's Gulls were more abundant than ever around Monterey Bay where about 60,000 were found in late October and early November. Among these less than one per cent were birds of the year and an incredi-

bly unsuccessful breeding season is indicated (RS, LCB, VR). Black-legged Kittiwakes were scarce until mid-November but picked up at that time. A few Sabine's Gulls were reported, the high being seven on Sept. 7 in Monterey Bay (G.G.A.S.).

TERNs AND ALCIDS — Six Arctic Terns seen near the F.I., Oct. 14 (DE, TS) were the most together seen at sea. One adult flew past Pt. Pinos with Elegant Terns Oct. 7 (DDeS *et al.*). Elegants were low in the usual places and only one was at Humboldt Bay Sept. 28 (DE). Black Terns, uncommon on the coast, were at Moss Landing through September with a high of three Sept. 27 (JiM). As is now the usual case, 2-3 Thick-billed Murres were near Monterey harbor throughout the period. A Xantus' Murrelet was found dead on the F.I. (!) Aug. 6 and up to 12 were seen in deeper waters of Monterey Bay on various trips in September and October. A Horned Puffin was picked up dead at Moss Landing Aug. 7 (DAi) and another was seen at the F.I. Sept. 26 - Oct. 23. It was feeding actively, photographed and well described. The bird had no flight feathers on its right wing. It is interesting that of all the California records of Horned Puffin, only one was known to be able to fly! A Tufted Puffin at College Cove, Humboldt Co. Aug. 27 (RLeV), one, 7 mi. w. of Half Moon Bay Oct. 5 (TC, BGE) and at least three in the Gulf of the Farallons Oct. 14 (many) were the only ones reported.

PIGEONS THROUGH NIGHTJARS — A White-winged Dove in McKinleyville Aug. 2 - Oct. was the second Humboldt Co. record (*vide* DE, TS). Four Mourning Doves were found at an unusually high 10,000 ft. elevation near Saddlebag L., Mono Co. Aug. 27 (DDeS, DAG). A Yellow-billed Cuckoo of the eastern race was captured, measured and photographed on the F.I. Sept. 24. Noteworthy Roadrunner reports include four along Mines Rd., Alameda Co., Aug. 15 (RD) and four along Interstate 5 in Fresno Co. Aug. 30 (JM). Four downy young Barn Owls found Sept. 9 in Livermore (AE) was unusual as a fall nesting record. A low-elevation record for Spotted Owl was obtained when one was found injured in Trimmer, Fresno Co., at 1062 ft. Oct. 29 (*vide* RH). Three Long-eared Owls over-summered at Grizzly I. (RGi) and two were found at a roost discovered last winter in Coyote Hills Park Nov. 2 (AE). Lesser Nighthawks have become scarce in the southern C.V.; only one was reported this period (*vide* RH).

SWIFTS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Concentrations of Vaux's Swifts were observed along the c. coast in late September. High counts were 550 in 70 minutes over Twin Peaks, S.F., Sept. 22 (BJM) and 986 over Pt. Diablo Sept. 29 (LCB). A few Black Swifts also reported at this time included ten over Pt. Diablo Sept. 30 (LCB). A high-elevation ad. ♂ Black-chinned Hummingbird was near Saddle Bag L., at elevation 9800 ft. Aug. 26 (*vide* DDeS). Another male was at a Napa feeder Nov. 28 (BDP†). Pileated Woodpeckers were reported from two marginal coastal localities: Muir Woods Nat'l Mon., Sept. 2 (RD) and n. of Santa Cruz (*vide* BGE). They continue to be reported with

greater frequency in the Santa Cruz Mts. A Williamson's Sapsucker was reported from the low elevation of 4500 ft. in Calaveras S.P. Oct. 9 (MK). Nuttall's Woodpeckers were reported from unusual outer-coast localities: Pt. Reyes August through October (RS, LCB) and Limantour Spit Oct. 6 (SL).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH CORVIDS — An E. Kingbird was on Pt. Reyes Sept. 1 (RD). The first regional **Thick-billed Kingbird** remained in McClaren Park S.F., from Nov. 5 through the end of the period. It was photographed and seen by many (Davies, LCB, SFB†). The ninth regional **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** was an adult present near Ano Nuevo, early Sept. through Oct. 5 (LCB, RS *et al.*). With three reports this fall, there are now nine records of **Great-crested Flycatcher**. The reports were from Neary's Lagoon, Sept. 26 (DB†), the F.I. Sept. 27 and Bolinas, Oct. 18 (P.R.B.O.†). An E. Phoebe, only the second regional report in the last four years, was at Pt. Pinos Oct. 27, 28 (DDeS, JF, J & SL†). Two Least Flycatchers were on the F.I., in late September and one was well described from Pt. Reyes Oct. 9 (RS, J & SL†). A pair of Horned Larks was found nesting on Bear R. Ridge this summer in Humboldt Co. at the extreme n.w. limit of its regional breeding range (*fide* DA) and one was at L. Talawa, Del Norte Co. Nov. 3 (DE, TS). Major flights of 550 and 1174 Violet-green Swallows passed over Pt. Diablo Oct. 12 & 13 (LCB). A large flock of 22 Purple Martins was over Arcata Aug. 24 (DE). Unusual concentrations of ravens were 70 in a spiraling flock over Hanford Aug. 5 (*fide* RH) and up to 30 in the hills e. of Livermore in October and November (AE).

PARIDS THROUGH THRUSHES — Mountain Chickadees were found this fall in the chaparral of Grindstone Canyon, Glenn Co. 2500-3500 ft. elevation (AMC). There were several reports of Bushtit flocks at high elevations on the w. slope of the Sierras including up to 46 at Crane Flat, Yosemite N.P. Sept. 7-9 (DDeS, JF). This species has just recently established itself in suburban Fresno (RH, KH). Cañon Wrens continue to be reported regularly from the Trinity-Humboldt Co. border where up to four were found on the Trinity R. in early September (*fide* TS, DE). Three **Gray Catbirds** were found this fall: Mammoth L., Sept. 19-23 (John Derby, DAG), Bodega Bay Sept. 19, 20 (GLB, RLeV, LWG) and on the F.I. Oct. 15. There are now five regional records. Two Brown Thrashers were on the F.I. Oct. 9-11, one was at Fairhaven Oct. 12-13 (RLeV, DE, TS) another returned in October to a feeder in Fairfax for the fourth consecutive year, and one was in Solano Park Nov. 13 & 19 (DAG, RS). The third Humboldt Co. Sage Thrasher was found in the Arcata bottoms Sept. 24, 25 (RLeV). Individuals were seen on the F.I. throughout September and October. The fifth fall individual **Gray-cheeked Thrush** for the region was on the F.I. Sept. 25. Townsend's Solitaires were in abundance in the juniper woodlands in n.e. California in November (RS, GM) but other berry-eating species were noticeably absent.

GNATCATCHERS THROUGH VIREOS — A pair of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers found nesting on Redrock Rd. in e. Lassen Co. June 8 (FN†) is the first county

breeding record and an unusually northern Basin locality for this Region. Two were found at 7500 ft. elevation in Sugarloaf Valley, Kings Canyon N.P. in early September (RGr). The first regional **White Wagtail** was found on the F.I. Oct. 10 (photos on file). Reports this summer and fall indicate that the Loggerhead Shrike is generally holding its own with the possible exception of the S.F. Bay Area. Four Red-eyed Vireos are more than usual. One was on the F.I. Aug. 28 and three were on Pt. Reyes in late September and early October (DE†, J & SL†, WMP). Virtually unknown in recent years, here, a **Bell's Vireo** was carefully observed at Solano County Park Sept. 21 (R & BL†). Since none are now known to nest in this Region, this bird was no doubt either a vagrant or a migrant from a relict population to the north. A Solitary Vireo of the e. Blue-headed race was on Pt. Reyes Sept. 26 (DE, TS†), and at least two were on the F.I. Sept. 25-27. A Solitary of the *plumbeus* race was in Pacific Grove Oct. 6 (RS, LCB). Solitaires were still singing in the Sierras in late August and September (DDeS, RGr). Unusually late individuals at Calaveras S.P. Nov. 23 (MK) and near Santa Rosa Nov. 30 (BDP) were also in full song. A **Philadelphia Vireo**, the fifth regional record, was observed on the exceptionally early date of Aug. 24 at Tilden Park, Berkeley (RD†).

WOOD WARBLERS — Observers along the outer coast of our Region this fall were treated to the most spectacular invasion of vagrant warblers ever recorded. At least 652 individuals of 26 vagrant species were found Aug. 1 - Nov. 30, 2.6 times as many as were recorded during the previous "best" fall (1972). A complete summary of this season's occurrences is presented in Table 1. Data from the F.I., continuously censused since 1968 (P.R.B.O.), indicate that this exceptional number of birds was a real phenomenon and not a result of increased coverage. The record 252 individuals on the F.I. this fall was 2.4 times as many as were recorded during the previous "best" fall on the island (also 1972).

The first major wave of vagrant warblers occurred almost continuously on the F.I. Sept. 12-29 during which time 20 species were recorded. The greatest variety occurred there on Sept. 16, 17 (13 species) and the greatest quantity Sept. 27 (50 individuals!). Mainland observers were similarly far from disappointed as excellent numbers of vagrants were found all along the coast Sept. 21-30. Although never reaching the proportions of the September wave, occurrences of vagrants continued both on the F.I. and the mainland in excellent but not extraordinary numbers throughout October. The few records from November may be considered normal for the Region.

All of our "regular" vagrant warblers, with the single exception of Northern Waterthrush, were found in record or near record numbers. Especially numerous were Chestnut-sideds (12x average number [average based on the mean number of records for the past six years, 1968-1973]) and Magnolias (7x average) whose typically early migration schedules coincide with this fall's major wave. Typically later "regular" vagrants (Tennessee, Virginia's, Black-throated Blue, Blackburnian, Blackpoll, Prairie and Palm Warblers) were recorded in numbers that were 4-5x average. Black-and-white

TABLE 1. Summary of the occurrences of vagrant wood warblers during the fall migration period (Aug. 1 - Nov. 30)

Species	Inclusive dates	1974 fall occurrences						Interior	Total	No. of occur- rences in pre- vious best fall	Total no. of previous fall occurrences
		N. coast Hum- boldt, Del Norte	Sonoma, Marin	SE. Farallon	S. coast S.F., S. Cruz, San Mateo	Mon- terey					
Black-and-white	Sep 4-Nov 29	3	6	2	2	1	3	17	10 (1972)		69
Prothonotary	Sep 28					1		1	1 (1967,69)		2
Golden-winged	Sep 14-16			1				1	0		0
Tennessee	Sep 2-Nov 25	2	10	20	5	4	2	43	13 (1972)		93
Virginia's	Aug 16-Oct 26		4	3		3	1	11	6 (1972)		18
Lucy's	Nov 29					1		1	2 (1970)		5
Parula	Sep 19-Oct 13		5			1		6	2 (1972)		7
Magnolia	Sep 1-Oct 30	3	10	15	2	1		31	9 (1972)		33
Cape May	Sep 21-Oct 12	2	3		1	1		7	3 (1968)		9
Black-thr. Blue	Sep 29-Nov 25	5	5	5		2	5	22	8 (1972)		42
Black-thr. Green	Sep. 29-Oct 25			2				2	2 (1970,72)		6
Blackburnian	Sep 15-Nov 19	3	4	5		2		14	4 (1970,72)		19
Yellow-throated	Sep 16-24	1		1				2	1 (1969)		1
Chestnut-sided	Sep 2-Oct 19	4	10	20	1		1	36	6 (1973)		31
Bay-breasted	Sep 18-Oct 24	1	1	7	1			10	1 (1964,68,71)		3
Blackpoll	Sep 7-Nov 12	19	43	69	8	39		178	63 (1971)		308
Pine	Oct 19			1				1	1 (1970,73)		2
Prairie	Sep 16-Oct 16		1	2	4	1		8	7 (1972)		19
Palm	Sep 20-Nov 23	14	50	53	7	41	1	166	57 (1972)		288
Ovenbird	Sep 15-Oct 25			9				9	10 (1972)		26
N. Waterthrush	Sep 16-Nov 17		1	2	2		1	6	8 (1971,72)		58
Connecticut	Sep 11-29		2	3				5	2 (1968)		3
Mourning	Sep 17-26			5				5	1 (1973)		1
Hooded	Oct 5-30				1	1		2	2 (1971)		5
Canada	Sep 15-Oct 27		1	6	1	1		9	5 (1972)		7
Am. Redstart	Aug 12-Nov 4	8	22	21	4	3	1	59	38 (1972)		199
TOTAL		65	178	252	39	103	15	652	246 (1972)		1254

Warblers, Ovenbirds and Am. Redstarts, for some unknown reason were present in numbers that were only 2-3 times average while the N. Waterthrush was only 1.1 times average. Interestingly, all four of these species breed regularly in British Columbia and winter regularly in w. Mexico, perhaps indicating that most of this fall's vagrants initiated from areas farther east.

Even more exciting than the exceptional numbers of our "regular" vagrants was the amazing variety of truly rare vagrant warblers found this season. A ♂ **Prothonotary Warbler**, the third fall record for the Region, was at Neary's Lagoon, Santa Cruz Co., Sept. 28 (RM+, MW). An ad. ♂ **Golden-winged Warbler**, the first fall record was on the F.I. Sept. 14-16 when it was found dead (*California Academy of Sciences). A **Lucy's Warbler**, the sixth fall record for the Region, was at the Carmel R. mouth Nov. 29 (L & FN+). An amazing six **Northern Parulas** were recorded. Three were near Bodega Bay Sept. 19-27 (DE+, TS, GLB *et al.*), two were on Pt. Reyes Sept. 26-30 (TS, JM, DE+ *et al.*) and one was at the Carmel R. mouth Oct. 13 (RS, BM *et al.*). Seven **Cape May Warblers** this fall included three on Pt. Reyes between Sept. 21 and 30 (RS+, J & SL+, PM+, BS *et al.*), one on a boat, 40 mi. w. of the Humboldt-Del Norte Co. line Sept. 25 (GF), one at Fairhaven Sept. 25-27 (DE+, TS *et al.*), one at Ano Nuevo Oct. 9 (PM, BS) and one at the Carmel R. mouth Oct. 13 (KH+,

DW). Two **Black-throated Green Warblers** were on the F.I., Sept. 29 & Oct. 25. The second and third fall **Yellow-throated Warblers** (both *abilora* race) were, one on the F.I. Sept. 16-19 (P.R.B.O.+) and one at the Samoa Coast Guard Station Sept. 24 (RLeV, GF *et al.*). An incredible 10 **Bay-breasted Warblers** were found. Seven were on the F.I., six from Sept. 18-28 and one Oct. 24, one at Pt. Reyes Sept. 23-26 (DE+, TS, EM), one at the Mad R. mouth Sept. 29 (TS, BR, DE+) and one at Sharp Park Golf Course, San Mateo Co. Oct. 16 (PM+, BS). A **Pine Warbler**, the third fall record, was photographed on the F.I. Oct. 19 (P.R.B.O.+). At least three **Connecticut Warblers**, two of them banded and photographed were on the F.I. Sept. 11-29 while two more were described from Pt. Reyes, one Sept. 26 (TS, DE+) and one Sept. 29 (PM+, AE *et al.*). Five **Mourning Warblers**, four of them banded and photographed, were on the F.I. between Sept. 17 and 26. These are the first substantiated records for the Region although one was previously described from Bolinas Sept. 16, 1973 (DDeS+). Details of all of these birds will be published elsewhere. A ♂ **Hooded Warbler** was at Santa Cruz Oct. 5, 6 (PM+, RS, LCB *et al.*) and another male was at Moss Beach Oct. 27-30 (BS, PM+ *et al.*). At least 9 **Canada Warblers** were recorded, 6, from the F.I. Sept. 15 - Oct. 27, one was on Pt. Reyes Sept. 26 (DE+, TS) another was at Ano Nuevo Sept. 27 (BY+) and one was

in Pacific Grove in early November (Reese, *vide* RS).

The pattern of occurrences of the various species this fall fits, in general, the pattern they have exhibited in past years, as demonstrated by DeSante (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford, 1973) to support the hypothesis of "Mirror Image Misorientation." The question remains, however, why were these birds so abundant this year? Part of the explanation may be found by examining weather patterns during the fall. The stage for this extraordinary fall could have been set as early as the first third of August when high pressure areas became successively "trapped," first over s.-c. Canada and then over Ontario resulting in NE winds coincident with the initiation of migration of many "eastern" warblers. During the period Aug. 25 - Sept. 2, a high pressure area moved north out of the Pacific into the Gulf of Alaska and then eastward across British Columbia. The clockwise northeasterly winds associated with this high could have brought large numbers of vagrants, already moving under the influence of the early August northeasterlies, into staging areas in the Great Basin, the n. Rocky Mts. and the Great Plains. Wind, however, in n. California during this entire period remained westerly because of the action of another high over s. California. Few vagrants were recorded in California before Sept. 12. On that date, however, a major change occurred when another high began moving into s. British Columbia and became "trapped" by the action of a low over the southwest. This resulted in a "weather funnel" with prevailing winds out of the NE all the way from s. c. Canada, across the northern plains, the Rockies and the Great Basin, directly to c. coastal California. This rather unusual weather system remained more or less stable for 14 days until Sept. 28 and during that time the most amazing assortment of vagrant warblers, delineated above, inundated our Region. This weather pattern was followed by a long series of weak, unstable weather fronts, often bringing E and S winds which continued until Nov. 5 at which time a stable system of westerlies prevailed until the end of the period. (Weather data gathered from records of the U.S. Weather Bureau.)

The prevalence of westerly winds in coastal California until mid-September brought smaller than usual numbers of western warblers to the coast during this time. Approximately normal migration occurred through the C.V. and Sierra during this period when most of our western warblers passed through the state. Only fair numbers of our rarer, interior western warblers occurred during late September and October but three records of single Yellow-breasted Chats along the coast were noteworthy: Sept. 5, F.I., Sept. 30 - Oct. 2, Arcata (Hewston, *vide* DE) and Oct. 30, L. Lucerne, San Mateo Co. (JM). The lack of strong weather fronts during October and November brought fewer-than-usual Yellow-rumped Warblers into the Region. Myrtle Warblers, for example, did not reach the S.F. Bay Area until Oct. 24 (DDeS) and both Yellow-rumped forms were still in reduced numbers at the end of November.

ICTERIDS THROUGH TANAGERS — A few Bobolinks were present almost continuously on the F.I. during late September, which is normal, with six present Sept. 22. One was in Arcata Sept. 26-28 (GC, BDP) and two were at the surprising C.V. locality of Jelly's

Ferry Rd. Tehama Co. Sept. 21-27 (SA). A Yellow-headed Blackbird, a rare coastal visitor, was in the Arcata bottoms Sept. 22 (*vide* DE, TS). A Tricolored Blackbird, rare in Humboldt County, was seen in Bear R. Valley Oct. 12 (DS). An ad. ♂ Orchard Oriole at Mono L. Aug. 28 (MB), is the first regional record east of the Sierra. Females were identified this fall at Samoa Oct. 11 (DE, TS *et al.*) and on the F.I. Oct. 25-27. A ♂ N. Oriole (*galbula* race) was on Pt. Reyes Oct. 27 (BDP, LCB). A ♂ Summer Tanager remained near Santa Rosa from Sept. 11 through the end of the period (GLB).

FINCHES — The only Rose-breasted Grosbeaks reported were on the F.I. where at least four were recorded during September and October. Indigo Buntings were reported from the following four locations: Pt. Reyes Sept. 24-29 (WMP, PM), near Santa Rosa Sept. 24 (LWG), the F.I. late September and Pacific Grove Oct. 6 (J & SL, RS, LCB). High elevation House Finch reports include one near Hilton L. Mono Co. (9800 ft.) Aug. 17, eight near Saddlebag L. Aug. 27 (10,500 ft.) (DDeS, JF) and 10-15 at L. Tahoe Oct. 5 (WS). A ♂ Dickcissel was on the F.I. Oct. 14, 15. Lawrence's Goldfinches were reported from three coastal localities including one on the F.I. Oct. 18-22. Lark Buntings were on the F.I. Sept. 12 - Oct. 11 with up to six present in late September. A Savannah Sparrow was at the high elevation of 10,500 ft. near Saddlebag L. Aug. 27 (DDeS, JF). Three Grasshopper Sparrows were present on the F.I. in late September and October. The second regional **Le Conte's Sparrow** was photographed (!) on Pt. Pinos Oct. 19 (B & CY†, EM†, RB). Vesper Sparrows were reported from seven coastal localities which is normal. Black-throated Sparrows were seen at two unusual coastal localities: one at Belmont Oct. 3 (RM†), one on the F.I. Aug. 31 and one there Sept. 16 - Oct. 5.

There were seven coastal reports of Tree Sparrows this fall, which is half the previous all-time total for the coast. Late Chipping Sparrows were reported Nov. 8-10 at Belmont (FN), Nov. 17 in Ukiah (OJK) and Nov. 3 in Coyote Hills Pk. (EM). The usual number of Clay-colored Sparrows were seen. Individuals were at Pt. Reyes Oct. 9-13 (RS, JM, SFB), Samoa, Sept. 25-29 (*vide* DE, TS), on the F.I., September-November with three on a day in late September and Westhaven, Oct. 22 (RLeV, DE, TS). Brewer's Sparrows were present in September and October on the F.I. with up to ten in one day in late September and one was at Bodega Head in late September (GLB, RLeV, MLR). There was a record number of White-throated Sparrows reported with 28 mainland records, and individuals present almost continuously from Sept. 24 on the F.I. A "rusty" Fox Sparrow and an individual of intermediate characteristics were at an Oakland feeder from Nov. 13 on (J & SL). Usually rare, there was an invasion of Swamp Sparrows to the c. coast this fall. Thirty were reported from Marin County, with 22 in Olema Marsh alone (JM *et al.*)! They were also on the F.I. with up to two present during October and November. There was an unprecedented invasion of longspurs to the coast. As many as 50 Laplands and 60 Chestnut-collareds were reported from one field on Pt. Reyes during October and

November; up to 100 Laplands and 20 Chestnut-collareds were in the Arcata Bottoms in October with some still at each of these localities at the end of the period; and up to 120 Laplands and 20 Chestnut-collareds at L. Talawa, Del Norte Co. in mid-October. While these were the major concentrations, small flocks and individuals were reported from other areas of Marin and Humboldt Cos. and the F.I. A most unusual report was that of a Chestnut-collared Longspur seen from a boat 5 mi. off Moss Landing Oct. 5 (RS, GMc†, C.F.O.). Fifty-five Chestnut-collareds, six McCown's and only three Laplands were found at Honey L. Ref., Oct. 10 (RS, BM). Up to three Snow Buntings were present Oct. 19 - Nov. 16 on the F.I. where there is only one previous fall record.

CORRIGENDA — In *AB*: 28, 689 the Tropical Kingbird should be credited to AP not PM. On 28: 848, under Alcids, the statement beginning "Two Xantus . . ." should be corrected to read, "Two murrelets, Xantus' or Craveri's were seen . . ." and on p. 850 add Joseph Morlan to the list of contributors. The name Peter Metropulos (correct) has been spelled wrong in several issues.

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