

## MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION

**/Rich Stallcup and Jon Winter**

Once again, a dry and balmy fall delayed departures of some typically summer birds and created very pleasant days for migrant watching along the coast. Waterfowl were late arriving in the Central Valleys (below C.V.) because of open water and food availability to the north. Those which did arrive during the period were concentrated on refuges and gun clubs, rather than being widespread. Unless some measurable rain soon comes to California to oxygenate standing water we may again expect outbreaks of botulism and fowl cholera, possibly in epidemic proportions.

Four species new to the region were found. They were Streaked Shearwater, Red-footed Booby, Mississippi Kite and Common Grackle.

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

An asterisk means that that observer has submitted an acceptable written description or photograph.

Eareds could be found (RS,SAL *et al.*). The usual "millions" of Eared Grebes on Mono L. Nov. 1 (RS,DE,JL,DRU) had nearly all departed by Nov. 30 (RS,JW *et al.*). A downy young W. Grebe at Tule L. Oct. 31 (BED) may be our mascot for this mild season.

TUBENOSSES — Usual Black-footed Albatross numbers were noted from September through November with the high 15 counted to 25 mi. off Humboldt Bay Oct. 5 (TS,DRu *et al.*). A single Laysan Albatross was seen within 25 mi. of Humboldt Bay Nov. 16 (*fide* TS,DRu). Fifty N. Fulmars off Humboldt Nov. 1 (TS *et al.*) indicate a probable big winter for the species along the coast. A **Streaked Shearwater** (*Calonectris leucomelas*) was collected from a mixed flock of shearwaters on Monterey Bay Oct. 3 (V. Merejohn, *fide* BGE). This is, of course, the first record for California and probably for the e. Pacific. We may expect details to be published elsewhere. The only Flesh-footed Shearwaters reported were singles at Monterey Bay Sept. 27 (FAS,TL,DS) and 18 mi. w. of Eureka Oct. 5 (TS,RLv *et al.*). As last fall, New Zealand (Buller's) Shearwaters were in good evidence and 600-800 in Monterey Bay Oct. 5 (TC,SFB,HLC) was the high estimate. An early Short-tailed Shearwater was seen near the F.I. Nov. 9 (TC\*,M.A.S.). Also early were Manx Shearwaters on Monterey Bay: one on Oct. 4 (C.F.O.) and two there Oct. 5 (G.G.A.S.). Two Fork-taileds were with the usual storm-petrel flocks on Oct. 5, 7 mi. w. of Moss Landing (TC,HLC). High estimates of storm-petrels off Moss Landing were: Ashy 5300, and Black 2700 on Oct. 12 (A.B.A.,RS). It is very difficult to estimate total numbers or species here as loose flocks are spread out over miles of ocean. Most observers agree that almost 10,000 individual birds were present this fall from mid-September to late October. Two or three Wilson's Storm-Petrels were seen in the flocks on Oct. 4 (C.F.O.) and Oct. 5 (G.G.A.S., M.D.A.S.) which is usual.

**PELICANS THROUGH HERONS — Hurray!** Brown Pelicans were present this fall in bigger numbers nearly everywhere on the coast with many (40-60%) immatures. At Honey L., 150 Double-crested Cormorants seemed high Sept. 12 (RS,GM). On Rte 37 through Napa and Solano Counties, Double-crested nested late on high power poles. On Sept. 6, 33 nests were occupied and young were still present on nests in mid-November. This seems to be a new (or temporary) location for nesting (LCB,BDP,RS,m.ob.). Before this period, the **Red-footed Booby** had not been recorded in the e. Pacific north of Mexico. This fall, however, two individuals visited the F.I., one of which came from a known subspecific population. The first, on Aug. 26 was captured by hand, banded and measured and was *Sula sula websterii*. The second, only seen flying by on Oct. 12 may have been *S.s. rubripes* of the Pacific population. Details on the first bird are in the *P.R.B.O. Newsletter December 1975: number 36* and details on the second are on file with the authors. Since boobies of all species are known for riding the rigging of ships, it is possible that one or both of these birds was a ship-board hitchhiker.



**LOONS, GREBES** — Common Loons (5) at Topaz L. and Bridgeport L. (3) Nov. 2 were gone by Nov. 27 (RS *et al.*). Ten others were found inland. Eight Arctic Loons found at mountain lakes and on the Sacramento R. doubled all previous inland records. They were: Oct. 19 - Nov. 30 at Redding (SAL,RS), Oct. 22-24 at Red Bluff (SAL,RS), Nov. 1 at Tule L. (BED), Nov. 2 at Topaz L. (DE,RS,JL,DRu), Nov. 12 at Collins L., Yuba Co. (RS,GM), Nov. 14 Modoc Refuge (RS,SAL *et al.*), Nov. 16 at L. Shastina (RS,SAL *et al.*) and Nov. 23 at Silver L., Mono Co. (TH). At least five of these are first county records. At Limantour, 55 on Sept. 4 were early fall arrivals. Another rare diver inland, the Red-necked Grebe, was carefully observed at Donner L. Nov. 23 (L. Ballard\*). Contrary to popular belief, Horned Grebes are very regular at lakes in foothills bordering the C.V. and inland in the n. counties. They often outnumber Eared Grebes through late November; 87 were reported there including a careful count of 38 on L. Shastina, Nov. 16 when only six

Another 100+ colony of Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets was destroyed in August by wood-chippers. The herony was on "private property" along Butte Creek about 1.5 mi. upstream from its confluence with the Sacramento R. in Sutter County. About 100 acres of dense, prime riparian habitat, known also to support the rare Yellow-billed Cuckoo was severely disrupted. Riparian habitat, now a mere relict of its former area, is very rapidly disappearing in both the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys of California as well as from countless other creek and river borders in North America. The wealth of flora and fauna in the riparians is nowhere equalled in the temperate zones and can only be compared to the tropics. There is still some of this beautiful habitat obtainable in California but if the money doesn't get together with the spirit soon.....say goodbye. (RS,JS).

Three Great and one Snowy Egrets at Tule L. Nov. 15 (RS,SS *et al.*) were late and again reflect mild conditions. The 44 Cattle Egrets reported were slightly above average. Only eight of these were inland including one at Modoc Ref. Nov. 14 (RS,GM,SAL,IL), a first county record. All were in November — the month for the species in this Region. Two Least Bitterns were seen at Gray Lodge Aug. 11 (SAL,PL,JH). Gray Lodge is the best place and late summer the best time to find this bird anywhere in the Region. Three Am. Bitterns together at Arcata Nov. 18 (DRu) was high for that locale. White-faced Ibis usually rare on the coast were noted as follows; one at Crespi Pond Sept. 14 (TS,JM), five at the Salinas R. mouth Oct. 10 (WR,RS), 12 flying SW over Moss Landing Oct. 11 (RS,A.B.A.), one at Moss Landing and one at the Salinas R. mouth Oct. 31 (VR,JM,DR). A single bird near Los Banos Nov. 23 (AE) was slightly early at this regular wintering locality.

**WATERFOWL** — Again this fall very few Whistling Swans were reported w. of the Sierras or s. of the Cascades. Six adults, ten immatures on L. Tahoe (WS,KK) and seven adults, seven immatures on Mono L. (RS,AC *et al.*) were at interesting locations.

Birders who care for more than just the list, may derive great pleasure and at the same time help save rare animal populations by noting field-identifiable subspecies. At least five easily recognizable forms of "Canada" Geese occur each winter in this region and among these are many of the very rare "Aleutian" Goose with a world population of less than 1000 birds. Because government agencies and birders were discriminating between the races and located actual wintering grounds for these birds, much of the w. side of the Sacramento Valley was closed to shooting of any Canada Geese for the entire season. Find out what identifiable races of our birds actually occur here and where they come from. Your birding joys will be greatly expanded.

Five Black Brant were with "Cackling" Geese at Tule L. Nov. 9, 10 (BED). Brant are very rare inland in this Region. White-fronted Geese arrived at Suisun Sept. 24 (BG) and at Gray Lodge Sept. 30 (BED). It is possible that these early arrivals are of the rare and poorly understood race known as "Tule Geese" (*A. a. gambelli*). The main flight of Snow Geese arrived at

Gray Lodge on the night of Nov. 10 when 22,000 there swelled to 138,000 (BED). Unlike last year when virtually no immatures were among the flocks, gray juveniles were very apparent this fall, sometimes exceeding 50% of the total (RS,BED,m.ob.). Two pink-dyed Snows from Siberia were at Sacramento N.W.R. Nov. 20-26 (RS,SAL,LB), and two "Blue" Geese were at Gray Lodge Nov. 11 (BED). At least 18,000 Ross' Geese were at Gray Lodge Nov. 11 (BED), including many immatures.

According to the government agencies' September Waterfowl Inventory 1,278,000 ducks were tallied, which was an increase of 54% over last year and the highest population since 1960. Away from refuges, very little water had yet been spread on agricultural lands in the north, but the largest numbers at this time were on pre-irrigation water being pumped to fields in the Tulare Lake Basin. By Nov. 5, over 4,320,000 ducks were tallied by California Department of Fish and Game (below C.F.G.), 1,091,660 of which were on San Luis Reservoir. By the week of Nov. 19, over 5,104,000 ducks were present but with some more waters available in the C.V., the San Luis Reservoir number was down to 930,000.

Single Fulvous Tree Ducks were at Neary's Lagoon Oct. 6 (EM,RM) and at Grizzly I. Oct. 29 where one was shot by a hunter for the second refuge record (BG). Another Mallard X Gadwall was seen at Tule L. Nov. 10 (BED). At Limantour, 265 Gadwall on Nov. 25 was the season high there (P.R.B.O.). On Aug. 13 the first Pintail migrants arrived at Gray Lodge and on Aug. 18 the first Green-winged Teal (BED). European Wigeon arrived at Gray Lodge Sept. 30 (BED) and usual numbers (six) were reported from the coast (m.ob.). A single male was seen Oct. 1 at Tahoe Keyes (WS\*). First migrant Am. Wigeon were at Gray Lodge Sept. 15 (BED). Wood Ducks were seen in good numbers including 12 at two places near S.L. Tahoe where none could be found last year (WS).

In Southside Park, Sacramento, only five Ring-necked Ducks had returned by the end of the period. "In the 1950s, November would see 60-100 on this lake. The freeway (I-80) cut two-thirds off of the area" (BK). Greater Scaup were found inland at seven locations as follows: three all fall at Chico (RS, m.ob.), Oct. 12, Little Indian Res., Lake Co. (TL), Oct. 22 - Nov. 30, Redding (SAL,RS), Oct. 22 Red Bluff (SAL,RS), Oct. 26, three Lewiston L., Trinity Co. (PL,SAL), Nov. 2 one pair Topaz L. (RS,JL,DE,DRu) and three Nov. 15 Tule L. (SS,SAL,RS *et al.*). Our abilities to identify these birds, not their actual rhythm of occurrence has changed. Common Goldeneye were late in arriving and only eight Barrow's have been reported thus far. Buffleheads arrived at Gray Lodge Oct. 14, were "very common" at Tule L. in mid-November (BED) and clearly "up over previous years" in the Shasta Valley (MT *et al.*). Nine Oldsquaws were found including three inland. One was shot at Tule L. Nov. 14 (*fide* BED), one photographed there Nov. 22-24 (MT,RE\*) and one was at L. Christopher, El Dorado Co. Nov. 22-30 (WS\*,KK,GC). They are very rare inland but were perhaps slightly overshadowed by six Harlequin Ducks at Oroville Oct. 25 (PL,SAL). Harlequins formerly (and perhaps still) bred on rushing Sierra streams but have not been reported inland in

California for many years. These birds were thought to be a female and five young. An imm. ♂ King Eider was shot by a hunter Nov. 19 at the Eel R. mouth (*fide* TS). Four White-winged and four Surf Scoters were found inland, many more than normal. White-wingeds: Nov. 6-30 at Redding (RS,SAL,m.ob.), Nov. 7 at L. Mendocino (C.F.G., *fide* OJK), Nov. 15 at Tule L., Modoc Co. (*fide* RS) and Nov. 22 at Tahoe Keyes (JR\*). Surfs: Oct. 26, two females at Lewiston L. (PL,SAL), Nov. 2 at Heenan L., Alpine Co. (RS,DE,JL,DRu) and Nov. 9 at Greenhorn Res., 2 mi. s. of Yreka (RE, *fide* MT\*). Two Red-breasted Mergansers were at Tahoe Keyes Nov. 22 (JR) & 24 (WS,KK,GC).

**RAPTORS THROUGH CRANES** — Fifty Turkey Vultures were seen "running and jumping after yellow and white butterflies" at Zamora, Yolo Co., Aug. 11 (SAL,PL). Hundreds of southbound migrants were seen mid-September to early October (m.ob.). An imm. **Mississippi Kite** was seen 3 mi. e. of Cape Mendocino atop Cape Ridge Sept. 6 (Clow\* *et al.*). It was watched for hours as it captured and ate dragonflies while hanging on the breeze. This is the first Regional record. White-tailed Kites continue to do very well and 75 at Merced N.W.R. Sept. 17 (BED) and 31 at the Salinas R. mouth Oct. 11 (A.B.A.,RS) were high counts. Fourteen Goshawks were reported, all from usual mountainous haunts. Sharp-shinned Hawk (133), Cooper's Hawk (116) and unidentified accipiters (35) passed Pt. Diablo during 15 hours of observation Sept. 4 - Nov. 5 (LCB). Actual numbers passing in an entire fall must be very large. "High Voltage" the Ft. Barry albino Red-tailed Hawk has returned for its seventh consecutive winter (WMP *et al.*) and 91 Red-taileds passed Marin Headlands during 15 hours of observation this fall (LCB). Only ten Red-shouldered Hawks but 14 Broad-winged Hawks were noted at Pt. Diablo this fall (LCB *et al.*). A single imm. Broad-winged was seen at the Stockton Airport Oct. 29 (BGE\*) for the Region's first inland record. At least 45 Swainson's Hawks were reported, including four from the coast. One at Bodega Head Sept. 13 (BDP,GLB,LCB) was the first Sonoma County record. Rough-legged Hawks were said by most observers to be "way down", "very low" or "quite scarce", with only 31 reported. Twenty-one Ferruginous Hawks were reported; singles Oct. 13-16 at Capetown (m.ob., *fide* TS) and Oct. 18 in the Eel R. Bottoms (PS) were the first Humboldt County records. One at Sacramento Nov. 27 was eating a Burrowing Owl (*fide* BK) and one at Etna, Siskiyou Co. was thought to be a bird wintering for the fifth consecutive year (MT). Sixty-five Golden Eagles and 82 Bald Eagles were reported including 63 on the ice at Tule L. Nov. 30 (J&SL). Prairie Falcons 45, Merlins 21, and Peregrines 13 were encouraging numbers, being slightly above, in each case, the five-year average.

Four Turkeys were near Millville, Trinity Co., Aug. 18 (BK1). Blue Grouse were noted at Tioga Aug. 11 (AE), in the S. Warner Wilderness Area (three males) Aug. 1 (SS,SAL *et al.*) and at Mineral King (7) Sept. 28 (*fide* RH). A pair of Ruffed Grouse at Orick Aug. 4 (*fide* TS) and one at Prairie Creek S.P. (DRu,KT) were the only ones seen. A ♀ and five imm. Sage Grouse were at 11,200 ft. in the White Mts. Aug. 4 (MC).

Sandhill Cranes were seen flying S over Gray Lodge Sept. 21 (BED) and Sacramento (BK) and by Nov. 8 at least 1100 were at Thornton (RS,GM,BBe).

**SHOREBIRDS** — A color-banded Black Oystercatcher at Pt. Pines Nov. 23 (B&CY) had most likely flown to the mainland from the F.I. Twenty-five Semipalmated and no Snowy Plovers were seen inland. American Golden Plover numbers were above average with 61 reported and more-than usual Black-bellied Plovers were noted in the C.V., frequenting the little available damp ground. A Ruddy Turnstone was at Clovis Sept. 14 (RH,KH,BW) for the first fall Fresno County record. Two Long-billed Curlews with two Whimbrels were near Tahoe Keyes Aug. 7 (WS\*). Seven Solitary Sandpipers were reported, all in late August and September, three from the coast, three from the C.V. and one from Honey L. A Wandering Tattler was well photographed near L. Winnemucca, Alpine Co. Aug. 24 for the Region's first inland record (JaW\*,PB). At Tahoe Keys 12 Willets was the high, on Aug. 7 (WS). Two inland Red Knots were of interest. One in breeding plumage was at Tule L. Aug. 3 (JG *et al.*) and one in winter plumage was just w. of Davis Nov. 16 (DAG). The previous latest fall knot for the C.V. was Aug. 22, 1968. A single Baird's Sandpiper was photographed at 10,400 ft. on Mt. Lassen Sept. 6 (*fide* VR). Eight Short-billed Dowitchers were noted in the C.V. among the hundreds of Long-billeds, which is now normal. A Stilt Sandpiper was at Woodland Sept. 1 (BS,PM) & Sept. 14 (DE). Four were present there Sept. 18 (RS). Singles were at Bodega Bay Oct. 3 (DAG,DW\*) and at Alameda Oct. 4 (JM\* *et al.*). They are very rare but regular in fall. **Five Semipalmated Sandpipers** were reported with voluminous descriptions and several photographs. One was at Pescadero Aug. 2-4 (SFB\*,VE,m.ob.), two were at Arcata Aug. 6-10 (m.ob.) and two others were there and photographed Sept. 3-14 (RLv\*,GF,m.ob.). A **Bar-tailed Godwit** in near-breeding plumage was at Schooner Bay, Marin Co. Sept. 28 (F&GBu\*) for the fourth state record. A moulting white-necked **Ruff** was near Ferndale Sept. 8-10 (m.ob., *fide* TS) and a **Reeve** was at the Carmel R. mouth and sewage plant for several days beginning Sept. 13 (CH\*,DRu\*, JM,m.ob.). The latter bird was photographed. Three Sanderlings were at Woodland Sept. 18 (RS). At Bodega Bay Sept. 13 the 114 Am. Avocets (BDP) were the most ever seen there. On Aug. 5, 1974 two avocets at L. Earl were the first Del Norte County records. Nine were there and at L. Talawa in late Sept. 1974, two were at L. Talawa June 1, 1975 and two were present at L. Earl Aug. 28 - Oct. 9 this fall (*fide* TS). A Black-necked Stilt at L. Talawa Nov. 20 was late and the first fall county record (Funderbunk, *fide* TS) and one at L. Merced Nov. 26 (m.ob.) was the first S.F. County record. On Aug. 3, at Lower Klamath, 24 Stilts were present (JG *et al.*). Relatively few Wilson's and N. Phalaropes were reported and Red Phalaropes were, once again almost absent.

**JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS** — Jaegers were in their usual numbers offshore with 114 Pomarines and 34 Parasitics reported which is only slightly more than

a 3:1 ratio. A single ad. Long-tailed Jaeger was seen 18 mi. w. of Humboldt Bay Oct. 5 (TS\*, RLeV.m.ob.). Seven plus Skuas were seen Sept. 10 - Oct. 5 offshore from Humboldt to Monterey Counties. Those identified were *mccormickii* (m.ob.). Three inland Glaucous-winged Gulls were: one at Tahoe Keys Nov. 26 (WS\*), one ad. at Rio Vista Oct. 17 (DE) and one at Clear L., Nov. 1 (JW). Herring Gulls returned to the C.V. in the third week of October (BED,SAL,RS) and were common by mid-November. Single Mew Gulls at the Mad R. mouth Sept. 23 (TS) and at Pt. Pinos Sept. 17 (TS,SL,JM) were early and the first major influx (of 50) was noted at Princeton Harbor Oct. 23 (PM) which is about two weeks later than average. Single Franklin's Gulls at the Arcata Marina Aug. 10 (*vide* TS) and at King Salmon Aug. 16 (DE,JM *et al.*) were the only ones reported. Heermann's Gulls were far fewer than last fall but many more first year birds were present. Seventeen Sabine's Gulls were seen on pelagic trips. One at Horseshoe Cove, Marin Co. Sept. 21 (RS,GF) and one at King Salmon Nov. 11, 12 (*vide* TS) were onshore and, remarkably, one at Chico Sept. 14-16 (JS,RS\*,m.ob.) and one at Fresno Oct. 13 (RH\*) were inland for the second and third C.V. records. Common Terns were in good numbers (125) including one at Bodega Bay Sept. 13 (BDP) where they are thought to be rare. Only five Arctic Terns were seen on Monterey pelagic trips (low) and one was at the S.F.-Oakland bridge toll plaza Aug. 17-19 (SFB,JM). Three Least Terns were seen in S.F. Bay during August and September and one at the Areata Marina Aug. 5-19 (m.ob.) was the fourth county record. Four Elegant Terns at Humboldt Aug. 16 were the earliest ever there (DE) and farther south a few lingered into November including one at Monterey Nov. 23 (JW). A Caspian Tern at the F.I. Sept. 26 was the second island record and two were at Tahoe Keys Aug. 5 where they are rare (WS). An imm. Black Tern at Moss Landing Sept. 8 - Oct. 10 (RS,WR) probably accounts for rumors of other dark terns there. Only five Xantus' Murrelets were seen on Monterey Bay Sept. 16 (G.G.A.S.) and Oct. 12 (A.B.A.) which is far fewer than the five-year average. Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets were late and in relatively small numbers on Monterey Bay. Two Horned Puffins were at the F.I., one Oct. 2 and another Oct. 8. Two Tufted Puffins on rocks at Trinidad Aug. 17 were late there (JM).

**PIGEONS THROUGH GOATSUCKERS** — A significant movement of 258 Band-tailed Pigeons passed over Pt. Diablo Nov. 5 (LCB) and some 596 were banded this fall at the agricultural inspection station w. of Truckee where they were trapped while feeding on spilled grain (*vide* BK). The third Humboldt County record of a White-winged Dove was noted at Big Lagoon Sept. 22, and the bird remained until Oct. 1 (*vide* TS). A Yell.w-billed Cuckoo, an increasingly scarce species throughout the Region, was found at Prairie Creek S.P. Sept. 2 (DW). A seasonal high of ten Barn Owls was found among the willows at Lower Klamath N.W.R. Sept. 14 (SS). Pygmy Owls were reported in good numbers in the Coast Range. Five Burrowing Owls were reported from the fields near Marina, Monterey Co., Nov. 2 (VR). Only two wintering Long-eared

Owls were reported. Single birds were found at Bolinas Lagoon (P.R.B.O.) and Neary's Lagoon (EM) both in November. The status of this species here is far from clear. At least 21 Short-eared Owls were reported this fall along the coast and inland: a high count of ten birds was at Willow Slough n.e. of Davis Nov. 20 (DAG,DS). A confused Saw-whet Owl appeared on the F.I. Nov. 18. A Poor-will was noted just w. of Davis Oct. 7 (DAG). This species is rare on the floor of the Sacramento Valley. The first Com. Nighthawk for the F.I. (see *Corrigenda*) was found Sept. 9-14. A remarkable 20 Lesser Nighthawks were found at the Kingsbury Sewage Ponds, Fresno Co., Aug. 9 (DE).

**SWIFTS THROUGH WOODPECKERS** — A large movement of 408 Black Swifts (in 9 flocks) was noted at Pt. Diablo Sept. 4 (LCB). At the same location some 555 Vaux's Swifts (in 30 flocks) were seen moving south Sept. 23 and the following day a massive movement of 1131 Vaux's (in 34 flocks) passed the point (LCB). Observations like these ( $X=28$  swifts/flock) suggest that massive numbers of birds pass through the Region in small, sometimes unimpressive flocks the numerical significance of which often goes unnoticed. No nest could be found after the Davis Chimney Swifts departed (see AB 29:1027). A ♂ Costa's Hummingbird appeared in Nevada City, north of its normal range, Aug. 19 (*vide* BK). The Region's first November Calliope Hummingbird was seen at Crespi Pond, Monterey Co., Nov. 9 (Bob Hirt\*). The bird may have been present since Oct. 12 (BDP).

A significant movement of Red-shafted Flickers passed through Solano Co. Oct. 15-24. At least 100 were seen on Grizzly I. on Oct. 17 (BG). Eleven Pileated Woodpeckers were reported during the period, including a pair feeding young at Calaveras S.P. Aug. 8 (MK). A period high of 40 Lewis' Woodpeckers was counted at Jelly's Ferry Rd., Tehama Co. Nov. 22 (SAL,RS,GM), but they were noticeably absent in Yolo Co. throughout the period (DAG,TL).

**FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS** — Tropical Kingbirds appeared along the coast this fall as usual. Two birds were found at King Salmon Nov. 19, and a single bird was seen at Fairhaven Nov. 23 (*vide* TS). A single bird was found at Pt. Reyes Oct. 7 (WMP) and at least two birds stayed on Pt. Pinos Sept. 27 - Oct. 15 (m.ob.). One of these kingbirds was seen eating a Pacific Tree Frog (*Hyla regilla*) that it had stolen from a W. Kingbird (VR,BDP)! It is interesting to question what becomes of Tropical Kingbirds along the coast, as spring records are practically nonexistent. They may go south with the first cold weather; perhaps they perish. Single E. Kingbirds were found at Benicia S.P. Sept. 27 (FKB) and at Pt. Pinos Sept. 26 (R. Branson). A very tardy Ash-throated Flycatcher was found Nov. 23 at the U.S. Coast Guard Station near Samoa, Humboldt Co. (RLeV). An E. Pheobe was well described at the Carmel R. mouth Nov. 2 (VR\*,LCB,GLB,BDP). Willow Flycatchers were found to be fairly common in the riparian of Putah Creek in August (DAG). Two more Least Flycatchers were banded on the F.I.; on Oct. 1 & 21 (P.R.B.O.\*). This species has appeared there nearly every fall since 1969.

A Gray Flycatcher remained on the F.I. Oct. 15-19 and was the only coastal report (P.R.B.O.). Apparently, unlike their spring migration, in fall they avoid the coast and move south mainly e. of the Sierra Nevada. A major movement of W. Flycatchers was observed on Pt. Reyes Sept. 14 where 21 were tallied (LCB); a single bird remained late at the Carmel sewage ponds Nov. 23 (B&CY). Casual in the Fresno area, an Olive-sided Flycatcher was found there Sept. 9-11 (*vide* RH). Some 43 Violet-green Swallows were found along the Pajaro R., Santa Cruz Co. Nov. 29 (EM).

Two Tree Swallows, rare during the month of November, were found at Arcata Nov. 27-29 (*vide* TS). Unusually late was a Bank Swallow at Moss Landing Oct. 11 (A.B.A.). A large migratory movement of Barn Swallows passed through the C.V. in late September and early October. A flock estimated at 8800 was observed over fields e. of Los Banos Sept. 28 (RH) and "thousands" were seen over the Davis Sewage Ponds Oct. 2 (DAG). Two interesting Cliff Swallow observations were reported; one of a pure albino noted at Chico Sept. 14 (RS,GM) and another of a single bird seen at 12,343 ft. at Sawtooth Peak, Sequoia N.P. Sept. 1 by Gordon Beebe which may be an elevational record for this species in the Region.

**CORVIDS THROUGH THRUSHES** — Odd was the presence of a Scrub Jay on outer Pt. Reyes Oct. 2 (DE,RS) They are rarely seen away from their preferred oak woodlands. A Black-billed Magpie at Lewiston Res., Trinity Co. Nov. 6 (SAL,RS,GM) was very interesting. One wonders what the status of this species might be in Trinity County; the area is not well birded. Yellow-billed Magpies made an appearance above the floor of the C.V. at Auburn, where five were seen Oct. 16 (BBa). Two Com. Crows were found at a rather high elevation at Crane Flat, Yosemite N.P. Oct. 14 (RS *et al.*). Seven Piñon Jays were found at Bridalveil Campground, Yosemite N.P. Sept. 19 west of the Sierran summit (TH). An impressive flock of 100 Clark's Nutcrackers was found in the Warner Mts. Aug. 31 (SAL,SS).

Red-breasted Nuthatches appear to be making a small invasion this fall along the coast where several observers noted larger-than-normal numbers. Single Dippers appeared at three coastal locations: at San Vicente Creek, Santa Cruz Co., Nov. 11 (EM), Bear Valley, Pt. Reyes N.S., Oct. 26 (T&ZC), and at Prairie Creek S.P., Aug. 21 (OJK). Mockingbirds appear to be firmly established on the north coast and are continuing to expand their range north. The proliferation of yard plantings is probably having a major effect as Mockingbirds are almost always associated with towns and suburbs. The Region's first mainland record of a **Bendire's Thrasher** was found at a feeder in Courtland, Oct. 16 and has remained through the end of the period (AP,RS,m.ob.). A Brown Thrasher was seen by many visiting a feeder in Oakland Nov. 18-30. A single Sage Thrasher was found on F.I. Oct. 27-28, where a handful of fall records for this species have been noted. Varied Thrushes arrived on their wintering grounds the first week of October in good numbers. A wave of Swainson's Thrushes, termed "abundant", was seen passing through the cypress trees of Pt. Reyes Oct. 2

(RM). Records of Gray-cheeked Thrushes continue to mount on the F.I. where one was banded and photographed Sept. 12-14 and another unbanded bird was seen (no details submitted) Sept. 18. The Region's first mainland **Veery** was seen and described Oct. 6 on Pt. Reyes (DR\*). This report will be submitted to the C.F.O. Records Committee. This species was the last of the North American *Catharus* thrushes to be recorded in California, which is remarkable in view of the fact that it breeds so far west. Townsend's Solitaires moved downslope and were found west of their normal range on Mt. St. Helena where 10-11 were seen Nov. 14 (BDP,GLB,JW). Four birds seen just inside the county line provided the first records for Sonoma County.

**GNATCATCHERS THROUGH VIREOS** — A surprisingly large number of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers was seen migrating past Pt. Diablo this fall. Nineteen were noted on Sept. 4 and seven more on Sept. 23 (LCB). Golden-crowned Kinglets appear to be making an invasion along the coast with large numbers noted by many observers near the end of the period. A nearly homogeneous flock of 90 Bohemian Waxwings was found 15 mi. n. of Canby Junction, Modoc Co. Nov. 29 and a single bird was seen at Susanville Nov. 28 (J&SL).

Three N. Shrikes were reported along the coast in Humboldt (*vide* TS). Nine were reported inland, the earliest of which was Oct. 19 at Honey Lake (RS) and the most interesting of which was found at 9300 ft. at Virginia Lakes Nov. 30 (RS,GM). A Loggerhead Shrike was found even higher at 10,400 ft. just e. of Mineral King, Sequoia N.P. Aug. 31 (GBE).

A very late Solitary Vireo remained in Santa Rosa Nov. 11-24 (GLB). Three Red-eyed Vireos were banded on the F.I. Sept. 13-27, one was seen without a band Sept. 28 (P.R.B.O.) and single birds were found on Pt. Reyes Sept. 19 (RS,WMP) and Sept. 27 (DE,DR *et al.*). The seventh regional record of a **Philadelphia Vireo** remained at Fairhaven Sept. 16-22 (m.ob.\*). Apparently because of the temperate weather this fall, Warbling Vireos lingered longer than usual and one was observed Nov. 2 at the Carmel R. mouth (VR,LCB,GLB,BDP).

**WOOD WARBLERS** — "Hunting" for vagrant warblers along the coast of California has become something of a mania with the region's active birders. Although this fall's warbler migration was not up to last fall's remarkable numbers and diversity, persistent watching of the favorite vagrant "traps" turned up an impressive list of observations. The increased number of observer hours spent in key locations has undoubtedly contributed greatly to the numbers of all vagrant warbler records so that comparisons with estimates in past years must be undertaken with caution.

This fall witnessed an impressive number of Black-and-white Warbler reports. Fifteen were reported from coastal areas Aug. 30 - Nov. 9 and four were found inland at Honey L. Aug. 23 - Sept. 12 (RS,GM,SAL). This is far above normal. There are records of this species every month of the year in California. The region's fourth **Prothonotary Warbler** was seen and



well described at Pt. Reyes Oct. 3 (JM\*). One of the rarest Parulids in California, a **Worm-eating Warbler** was present at the north mouth of the Mad R., Humboldt Co., Sept. 14-15 (*fide* TS\*). Two (♀ and ♂) **Golden-winged Warblers** were found at Fairhaven Sept. 19-21 (DE\*, BC *et al.*). There are only three other records for this species in the region and all have occurred on the F.I. An all-time regional high of 49 Tennessee Warblers was reported all from coastal locations Sept. 11 - Nov. 23. Nashville Warblers stayed into November; single birds were found at the Carmel R. mouth Nov. 1-2 (VR) and at Ano Nuevo Nov. 15 (B&CY). A single Virginia's Warbler appeared on Pt. Reyes Sept. 27 (DR, DE *et al.*). This species is a far more common fall migrant in the Southern Pacific Coast Region. Two N. Parula Warblers were found; one was seen at Drakes Beach Sept. 27 (DR, DE *et al.*) and another at the Carmel R. mouth Sept. 13 (JM, TS, CH). Seventy-two Yellow Warblers were banded at Grizzly I., where the peak movement occurred Sept. 21 - Oct. 15 (BG). Although the numbers of Magnolia Warblers found were not up to last year's fall total they were, nonetheless, far above average. At least 21 were found between Humboldt Bay and Halfmoon Bay Aug. 30 - Oct. 24 (m.ob.). Cape May Warblers were found in good numbers along the coast. Two were banded on the F.I. Sept. 17 - Oct. 31 and single birds were found at Samoa Sept. 21 (DE), Fairhaven Oct. 1 (*fide* TS), Mad R. mouth Sept. 30 (TS), Rodeo Lagoon Sept. 27 (TC, SFB), and at Pacific Grove Oct. 4 (RS, SL). There are at least 16 previous fall records for this species. A total of 13 Black-throated Blue Warblers, all on the coast, were found between Samoa and Halfmoon Bay Sept. 16 - Oct. 12 (m.ob.). Several Black-throated Gray Warblers were reported considerably later than normal, remaining on the coast well into November. A very early Townsend's Warbler was found on Inverness Ridge Aug. 9 (JM). Interesting was the banding of an ad. ♂ Townsend's X Hermit hybrid at Crane Flat Aug. 25 (DDeS). Another hybrid of the same type was observed here in late May 1975 (JW). Hybrids of these two species are known. A Black-throated Green Warbler was seen on the F.I. Sept. 12, and another was found at Fairhaven Sept. 15-17 where it appears to represent the first Humboldt County record (*fide* TS). At least four Hermit Warblers were noted along the coast well into November. Nine Blackburnian Warblers were found along the coast from Samoa to Halfmoon Bay Sept. 11 - Oct. 12 (m.ob.). At least 26 Chestnut-sided Warblers (7 on F.I.) were seen along the coast Sept. 10 - Oct. 20. Three Bay-breasted Warblers found their way into the region this fall; two were on the F.I. Sept. 27 & Oct. 1, and a single bird was seen by many observers Sept. 19-21 at Samoa. As expected large numbers of Blackpoll Warblers were found on the coast. At least 130 birds were seen spanning Sept. 7 - Oct. 31. Of this total some 53 birds were on the F.I. One bird at Secret Creek, n. of Litchfield, Lassen Co., Sept. 12 was most unusual as nearly all records are from the coast (RS, GM). This species, first recorded in California in 1961, occurs with such regularity in fall that it can hardly be considered "vagrant" but is best called a regular fall migrant on the coast in small numbers. The editors have more data on this species than many of our common migrants!! A Prairie Warbler was

seen Samoa Sept. 25-30 (*fide* TS) and another, quite late, was seen at the Carmel R. mouth Nov. 2 (VR\*, LCB, GLB, BDP). There are very few November records for this species, about 80 Palm Warblers were reported (25 from the F.I.) Sept. 16 - Nov. 28 including a specimen of the "Yellow" Palm Warbler (*D.p. hypochrysea*) picked up in Santa Rosa Nov. 20 (*fide* LCB). This subspecies is rare in California. Ovenbirds made an excellent showing with a total of 18 (13 on the F.I.) which is a new regional high count for fall. All birds were found on Pt. Reyes and the F.I. Sept. 10 - Oct. 2 with the exception of a single individual found in Santa Cruz Nov. 8-11 (EM\*, RM). There is only one other November record for this species in the Region. An unprecedented 18 (six on the F.I.) N. Waterthrushes records were submitted Aug. 25 - Oct. 23 which is a new regional high for fall (m.ob.), including one inland from Putah Creek Sept. 23-25 (TL). A single **Connecticut Warbler** was seen and described on the F.I. Sept. 29-30 (P.R.B.O.\*). Prior to last fall there was only one record of a **Mourning Warbler** in the Region. Another was found Sept. 19 at Drake's Beach (JW\*, CP, RS\*, WMP) which brings the current total to seven records. Because of the variations this species exhibits and the fact that it is known to hybridize with MacGillivray's Warblers in Alberta, one must exercise extreme caution when identifying it in the field. Wilson's Warblers were reported passing through the Bay Area "earlier this fall" than normal (DE) while a good wave was noted on Pt. Reyes Sept. 17 (LCB). Single Canada Warblers were found on the F.I. Sept. 10 & 18. Other reports included single birds at Pt. Bonita, Marin Co., Oct. 26 (LCB, VR, DR *et al.*) and Eureka Sept. 6 (SS\* *et al.*). American Redstarts were reported on the coast in large numbers, producing a new seasonal high count of at least 96 individuals (41 on the F.I.). There were only two reported inland, both at Honey L. Sept. 13 (RS, GM).

**BLACKBIRDS THROUGH TANAGERS** — Two Bobolinks were on the F.I. Sept. 12 & Oct. 1, and a single male was seen on Pt. Reyes Oct. 2 (DE\*, JM). Yellow-headed Blackbirds made a coastal appearance this fall at Neary's Lagoon, Ano Nuevo, and Arcata, comprising 19 birds (JM, EM, SS) while a male lingered at Tahoe Keys until Nov. 24 (WS). Tricolored Blackbirds invaded the Santa Cruz coast where some 8000 birds were noted (RM). Two Orchard Orioles were banded and photographed on the F.I., Sept. 10 & Oct. 1. A female was found on Pt. Pinos Oct. 15 (PM\*, BS), and another was seen by many Sept. 22-30 at Fairhaven (*fide* TS). A "Bullocks" Oriole remained in Santa Cruz until Nov. 11 (EM). Always scarce in the Region, a Rusty Blackbird remained in Arcata Nov. 25-30 (*fide* TS\*). The Region's first **Common Grackle** was seen and photographed at Arcata Oct. 11 (*fide* TS\*). This species was long overdue in California, the first being recorded only last spring in Death Valley. A rather large concentration of 4500 Brown-headed Cowbirds was seen at the Chico Oxidation Ponds throughout October (RS *et al.*). The Region's fourth **Scarlet Tanager** remained on the F.I. Sept. 29 - Oct. 2 (P.R.B.O.\*). Western Tanagers appeared to have passed the S.F. Bay area "earlier this fall" than normal

(DE) while a good wave was reported on Pt. Reyes Sept. 14 (LCB). A ♂ Summer Tanager at Arcata Aug. 29 - Sept. 7 provided the second Humboldt County record.

**FRINGILLIDS** — Rose-breasted Grosbeak reports comprised a total of 14 birds (five on F.I.) Sept. 10 - Nov. 7 from Humboldt County to San Mateo County (m.ob.). Blue Grosbeaks were reported from several inland and coastal localities in encouraging numbers. A single imm. ♂ Indigo Bunting at Bodega Bay Oct. 5 appears to represent the first Sonoma County record (BDP, GLB) and a pair was at Eureka in early August (KT\*). An imm. ♂ **Painted Bunting** was banded on the F.I. Sept. 10 where it was the first reported for the island. This species has been reported in the Region several times but nearly all records are probably of escaped cagebirds. A single Dickcissel found its way to the F.I. Sept. 17. Evening Grosbeaks also appeared on the coast in small numbers at Carmel R. and San Mateo in November. They were reported as very common in the Sierra Nevada as well. Gray-crowned Rosy Finches were reported from two locations; two were seen at the Shasta Ski Bowl Nov. 16 (RS, SAL) and a flock of 50 (all Hepburn's forms) were found at Surprise Valley Nov. 29 (J&SL). Lawrence's Goldfinches were reported in usual numbers from known locations, however two birds at Crane Flat, Yosemite N.P. Aug. 16 was a most interesting location for them (TH, DDeS). Unusual on the coast was the presence of a Green-tailed Towhee at Wadell Creek, Santa Cruz Co., Aug. 20 (BGE). Two Lark Buntings were reported; one at Moss Beach, San Mateo Co. Sept. 6 (PM\*) and one on the F.I. Sept. 13. A Grasshopper Sparrow, quite late, found its way to the F.I. Nov. 5. A single **Sharp-tailed Sparrow** was seen at Crespi Pond, Pt. Pinos Oct. 12 (SAL\*). At least 12 Tree Sparrows were reported; four from coastal locations and eight from inland areas. Clay-colored Sparrows were seen at Pt. Reyes Sept. 13 (DE), and Sept. 29, at the Carmel R. mouth Sept. 28 (DE, J&SL), with single birds at each location, and three or four were on the F.I. Sept. 11 - Nov. 4. Unusual at such a late date was the presence of a Brewer's Sparrow at Coyote Hills Nov. 23 (LCB). A Black-chinned Sparrow was found at L. Mendocino Oct. 13, providing the second county record for this species (OJK). A Harris' Sparrow that wintered at a feeder in Berkeley last year returned Nov. 19, for another season (m.ob.). An early Swamp Sparrow was seen at Pt. Reyes Sept. 6 (RS, GM) and was followed by 14 more reports mostly from the coast. A single at Chico Oct. 18 was the first recorded in Butte County (JS\*). A maximum of 13 Lapland Longspurs was reported from Pt. Reyes Oct. 9 (VR) and 15 were seen at Honey Lake Nov. 28 (J&SL). Twenty Chestnut-collared Longspurs were seen on the same date at Honey Lake (J&SL) and a few appeared along the coast. Only two McCown's Longspurs were seen, both at Honey L. Oct. 16 (SAL). Snow Buntings, becoming fairly regular in Humboldt Co., were found at Arcata Bottoms Nov. 19, 20 (*fide* TS) at Fairhaven Nov. 7-17 (m.ob.) with single birds in each location and two were found at Samoa Nov. 4 (*fide* TS). Another was seen at Bodega Bay Nov. 16 by Dolores Westrick\*, and Robert Albright\*.

**CORRIGENDA** — In AB: 29,738 the Great Horned Owls was the Oakland CBC figure and was not, obviously, a count on Fickle Hill Feb. 18. Also on this page, Dec. 19 was the last date for the Thick-billed Kingbird—there was no Tropical. In AB: 29, 904 the Nighthawk on the F.I. was a Lesser not a Common. In AB: 29, 1027, 1028 the mixed pair of sapsuckers should be *S. v. nuchalis* x *S. v. daggetti* not *S. v. ruber*. In all issues Steven F. Bailey should read Stephen F. Bailey.

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**77th Christmas Bird Count  
Official Count Period  
Dec. 18, 1976 — Jan. 2, 1977  
inclusive**