

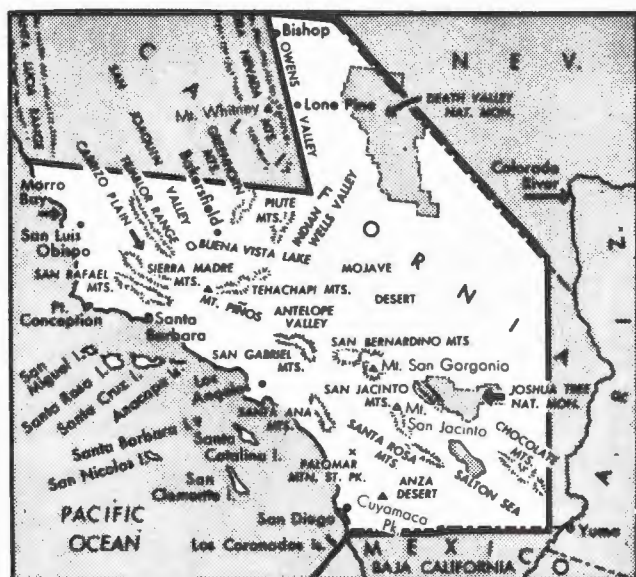
SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

/Guy McCaskie

Wet weather continued through March, but April and May were dry with no strong frontal systems moving down the coast. As was the case last spring, migrants appeared scattered, with no major concentrations of landbirds reported.

The early arrival dates for some of our key migrants were: Wilson's Phalarope Apr. 7, Salton Sea; Northern Phalarope Apr. 15, Ventura; Least Tern Apr. 15, San Diego; Elegant Tern Mar. 10, San Diego; Black Tern Apr. 21, Salton Sea; Lesser Nighthawk Mar. 27, Colorado R. valley; Vaux's Swift Apr. 12, San Diego; Western Kingbird Mar. 11, San Diego; Ash-throated Flycatcher Mar. 31, Ventura; Willow Flycatcher May 7, Colorado R. valley; Hammond's Flycatcher Apr. 7, San Diego; Western Flycatcher Mar. 10, San Luis Obispo; Western Wood Pewee Apr. 16, Colorado R. valley; Olive-sided Flycatcher Apr. 15, San Diego; Swainson's Thrush Apr. 21, Santa Barbara; Bell's Vireo Mar. 31, San Diego; Solitary Vireo Mar. 27, Colorado R. valley; Warbling Vireo Mar. 17, Ventura; Nashville Warbler Mar. 25, e. San Diego Co.; Yellow Warbler Apr. 1, Ventura; Black-throated Gray Warbler Mar. 25, e. San Diego Co.; Hermit Warbler Apr. 14, San Diego and Ventura; MacGillivray's Warbler Mar. 25, Orange Co.; Yellow-breasted Chat Apr. 12, San Diego; Wilson's Warbler Mar. 23, San Diego; Hooded Oriole Mar. 10, San Diego; Northern Oriole Mar. 11, San Diego; Western Tanager Apr. 14, San Diego; Black-headed Grosbeak Mar. 23, San Diego; Blue Grosbeak Apr. 12, San Diego; Lazuli Bunting Apr. 7, e. San Diego Co.; Black-chinned Sparrow Mar. 23, San Diego.

LOONS — Two Com. Loons on L. Cachuma Apr. 29 (LRB), one in the Simi Valley May 6 (REW), two or three on L. Palmdale Apr. 4-8



(JD) and two on L. Cuyamaca Apr. 14 (PU) were inland, and away from the Salton Sea and Colorado R., where small numbers regularly occur each spring. A Horned Grebe at the south end of the Salton Sea (hereafter, S.E.S.S.) May 14-15 (BMW) was the only one reported from an inland locality.

ALBATROSSES, SHEARWATERS, STORM-PETRELS — Black-footed Albatross is a species apparently declining in numbers off s. California; two off Santa Cruz I., May 20 (KG) were the only ones reported. A Manx Shearwater off San Diego May 19 (DPA) and two off Santa Cruz I., May 20 (KG) were unusual as few occur off California so late in the spring. Two Leach's Storm-Petrels off San Diego May 19 (PU) were the only ones reported, the species probably remaining well offshore at this time of the year. Ashy Storm-Petrels were relatively common off San Nicolas I., with 300 seen there May 20 (KG); one off San Diego May 19 (PU) was in an area where few are recorded. Eighty Black Storm-Petrels were seen off San Diego May 19 (PU), but only six were found off San Nicolas I., May 20 (KG), indicating the species' more southerly distribution at this time of year.

PELICANS — An imm. Brown Pelican near the S.E.S.S., May 15 (SG) was most unusual, post-breeding wanderers not normally reaching the Salton Sea until late June with May 24 being the previous early arrival date.

HERONS, BITTERNs — An imm. Little Blue Heron was in Goleta Apr. 15+ (LB), and an adult was seen near Lakeview, Riverside Co., May 9 (ASE); the occurrence of this species in California has recently been reviewed (*W. Birds* 8: 151-154, 1977). Two Cattle Egrets at Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley (hereafter, F.C.R.) May 19 (PL) and five at Baker May 28 (DR) were at unusual localities for the time of the year. A Louisiana Heron at Pt. Mugu Mar. 21 - Apr. 6 (RD) was quite far n., and another on San Diego Bay May 29 (EC) was exceptionally late, the species normally occurring as a winter visitor to the coast s. of Los Angeles. An ad. Yellow-crowned Night Heron, the seventh to be found in the

Region, was in San Diego Apr. 3 (TM, ph., S.D.N.H.M.), and what was probably the same bird remained near Imperial Beach Apr. 15 - May 2 (EC). A Least Bittern at F.C.R., May 19 (PL) and another at Baker Apr. 14 (SC) were migrants at desert oases; one in Goleta May 15 (LRB) is one of the very few recorded in the Santa Barbara region.

GEESE, DUCKS — As usual a few Brant were found inland with up to four at the north end of the Salton Sea (hereafter, N.E.S.S.)

Apr. 28 - May 5 (SC), twelve on L. Henshaw in the mountains of San Diego Co., May 2 (RH), and one on L. Hodges, San Diego Co., Mar. 22 (PU); it is evident that some birds wintering in the Gulf of California moved N in spring through the Salton Sea and/or W over the mountains to the coast. A Fulvous Whistling Duck was at Irvine, Orange Co., Apr. 15 (TS) and another was on Laguna L., near San Luis Obispo May 25 (FRT); whether these were genuine stragglers or escapees is most difficult to determine with the number of free-flying individuals maintained in parks here in s. California. A ♂ Garganey at L. Elsinore, Riverside Co., Mar. 21 - Apr. 4 (RRP) is the second to be recorded in California. A ♂ Eur. Wigeon at Pt. Mugu Mar. 31 - May 6 (REW) establishes one of the latest dates of occurrence of this species in California. A Wood Duck at F.C.R., May 20 - June 2 (PL) was most unusual. The ♂ Harlequin Duck present in Carlsbad during the winter was discovered May 23 (BBo) and appears to be summering at that locality. Totally unexpected was a White-winged Scoter at F.C.R., May 22-27 (PL). Up to 83 Surf Scoters on L. Henshaw Mar. 22-24 (RH) were undoubtedly birds migrating NW from the Gulf of California to the Pacific; one at F.C.R., May 22 (PL) and another at Little Lake, Inyo Co., June 3 (REW) were exceptionally late for migrants, and well into the desert region of e. California.

HAWKS — The only Broad-winged Hawk found this spring was one at Morongo Valley Apr. 19 (R&MW). Swainson's Hawks continue to decline with but 15 individuals reported; one in the Antelope Valley Mar. 20 (JD) was the earliest this year. A Merlin at Camarillo, Ventura Co., Apr. 21 (REW) and another in Goleta Apr. 23 (PL) were both late, the species normally having left the Region by Apr. 1.

SHOREBIRDS — The Anacapa I., Am. Oystercatcher, discovered there in 1964, was still present May 20 (KG). A Semipalmated Plover near Tecopa, Inyo Co., May 24 (JT) was in an area of California where few occur. A Snowy Plover at F.C.R., May 30 (REW) and another at nearby Stovepipe Wells June 1 (REW) were at interesting localities. A Wilson's Plover, only the fourth to be recorded on

the coast of California, was at Pt. Mugu Apr. 21+ (REW). A flock of 25 Mountain Plovers on the Kern N.W.R., Mar. 30 (REW) and ten at S.E.S.S., Mar. 31 (LB) were late, most of these birds have departed from California by early March. Up to 11 wintering Am. Golden Plovers were present near Santa Maria through March (PL) and the bird wintering in Goleta was last seen May 3 (PL); one in Goleta Apr. 30 (PL), another at McGrath S.P., Mar. 27 (REW), one at Pt. Mugu Apr. 29 (REW), a fourth at Imperial Beach Apr. 21-27 (SG,RCS) and one inland at S.E.S.S., May 5 (PL) were all believed to be migrants. A flock of 53 Black-bellied Plovers in the Antelope Valley Mar. 20 (JD) was a large concentration for any inland locality away from the Salton Sea, and suggests that the species may occur regularly in this area. Up to 175 Whimbrels were found in the Antelope Valley during March and April (KG) indicating that the species is of regular occurrence at that locality; one at F.C.R., May 31 (PL) was unexpected. An Upland Sandpiper at Deep Springs May 28 (REW) provided us with our sixth record, four having occurred during May.

A Solitary Sandpiper, rare in spring, was in Goleta Apr. 16 (E & JG), another was near Imperial Beach the same day (DPo) and two were at Zzyzx, San Bernardino Co., Apr. 29 (BBE). A Ruddy Turnstone was at Salton City on the Salton Sea May 5 (PL), 30 were at N.E.S.S., May 9 (ASE), one was found dead near Calipatria May 14 (BMW) and three more were along S.E.S.S., May 14-15 (BMW); small numbers are regularly found on the Salton Sea during migration periods, but the species is casual elsewhere inland in California. A Black Turnstone, a casual straggler to the Salton Sea, was at Salton City Mar. 30 (LB) and Apr. 16 (EAC). As usual a few Red Knots were found on the Salton Sea with a high count of 15 at Salton City Apr. 28 (DPA). Two Sanderlings, rare inland away from the Salton Sea, were near Blythe in the Colorado R. valley Apr. 14 (BH). Four Semipalmated Sandpipers were found with an early individual at S.E.S.S., Apr. 21-24 (GMCC), one on the Kern N.W.R., May 13 (REW), another near Tecopa May 24-27 (JS) and a late bird at Pt. Mugu June 3 (REW); one or two are found every spring but all previous spring records are for the Salton Sea. A Baird's Sandpiper, casual in spring, was near Blythe Apr. 2 (BH) and two more were at Baker Apr. 5 (SC, *S.B.C.M.). Four Pectoral Sandpipers, also exceptionally rare in spring, were reported with one at S.E.S.S., Mar. 31 (LB), another near Lancaster Apr. 1 (FH) and two near Blythe Apr. 15 (BH). Ten Stilt Sandpipers at S.E.S.S., Mar. 31 (LB) were the only ones reported.

SKUAS, GULLS, TERNS, SKIMMERS — Four South Polar Skuas were seen off Santa Rosa I., May 20 (KG) and single individuals were found off San Diego May 19 (GMCC) and June 3 (JB); this species is now being found regularly off s. California at this time of the year. A Glaucous-winged Gull at N.E.S.S., Apr. 14-28 (JD) was at an inland locality. The only Thayer's Gull found away from the coast was one at Salton City Mar. 30 (LB). Two Mew Gulls, rare inland, were found on the Salton Sea Mar. 30, with an immature at Salton City (LB) and an adult at Desert Shores (JD). The only Franklin's Gulls reported were one at

N.E.S.S., Apr. 12 (RH), another near Calipatria Apr. 14 (JD) and a third at Pt. Mugu June 3 (REW). The only large concentrations of Bonaparte's Gulls away from the coast were 490 on L. Henshaw in the mountains of San Diego County Mar. 31 (RH) and 300 at the same place May 2 (RH). Two ad. Heermann's Gulls, an exceptionally rare straggler to the interior, were at S.E.S.S., May 15 (SG). The only Sabine's Gulls encountered were one off Ventura Apr. 28 (JD), 27 there on May 20 (REW) and eight off San Diego May 19 (DPo); it appears that numbers encountered at this time of the year off s. California have declined in recent years.

The arrival date for Com. Tern is difficult to determine this spring owing to the appearance of immature-plumaged birds in early April, ahead of the arrival of breeding-plumaged adults on Apr. 20; early immatures included one in San Diego Apr. 6 (EC) and another at McGrath S.P., Apr. 7 (REW); there is no way of telling whether these birds wintered locally or were spring migrants. As usual a few Arctic Terns were encountered offshore in late May with three off San Diego May 19 (PU) and six off Ventura May 20 (KG); six on the Salton Sea June 10 (GMcC) gives us the third June record for this inland locality. Two Black Skimmers at McGrath S.P., May 19 (REW) were the only ones found away from the Salton Sea and San Diego.

ALCIDS — Xantus' Murrelets appeared common around the n. portion of the Channel Is., with 600 seen there May 20 (KG). Two Horned Puffins, a species whose status in s. California waters is poorly understood, were found near Santa Cruz I., May 20 (KG). Two Tufted Puffins, rare in s. California waters, were seen near San Nicolas I., May 20 (KG).

PIGEONS THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS — Band-tailed Pigeons appeared in a number of out-of-range localities with one at Scotty's Castle in Death Valley June 2 (REW), another at nearby Stovepipe Wells May 24 (PL) and a third in Blythe May 25 (SG) being in the e. part of the Region; one near Oxnard June 6 (REW) and five around San Diego May 3 - June 4 (PU) were on the coast. A White-winged Dove at Oasis, Mono Co., May 31 (REW) was far n., and one near Anaheim May 23 (DRW) along with three around San Diego May 12-26 (PU) were w. of the species' normal range. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo at F.C.R., June 2 (LP) was the only one found away from the Colorado R. valley. Common Nighthawk, one of the latest species to arrive in spring, was first noted May 24; four at Pt. Mugu June 3 (REW) were at a coastal locality, and represent one of the very few records for this species away from known breeding localities. A Black Swift over Mt. Palomar May 9 (RH) and another over Goleta May 19 (BS) were the only two reported. A Chimney Swift was at Pt. Fermin, Los Angeles Co., June 6 (JD); this species is now of annual occurrence in s. California. It appears that Black-chinned Hummingbirds arrived along the Colorado R., substantially earlier than elsewhere in s. California with a male near Blythe Feb. 20 (BMW); late March is a normal time for arrival on the coast. A few Calliope Hummingbirds moved N along the coast during April with ten individuals seen Apr. 8-25 in San Diego, Ventura and Santa Barbara counties.

WOODPECKERS — An Acorn Woodpecker on Pt. Loma, San Diego Co., June 4-6 (CGE) was at an unusual locality. A ♂ Williamson's Sapsucker on Mt. Palomar Apr. 10 (RH) was in an area where nesting is unrecorded. A ♂ Hairy Woodpecker on Clark Mt., May 29 (SC) appears to be the first found there since the last of the breeding population was collected in the 1930s.

FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS — An E. Kingbird at Ft. Piute May 21 (*vide* DR) and another at Deep Spring May 27 (KVV) were the only two reported. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at Needles May 26+ (DMM) was attending a nest containing five eggs and was believed to be paired with a W. Kingbird; needless to say this is far w. of the species' breeding range. Wied's Crested Flycatchers first arrival at Morongo Valley, the extreme n.w. outpost of the species' range, on Apr. 23 (R&MW). The E. Phoebe found during the winter at L. Henshaw was still present Mar. 14 (RH) and another was at Scotty's Castle Mar. 26-30 (JL). A Gray Flycatcher, rare on the coast in spring, was in Santa Barbara Apr. 19 (LB), another was in Goleta May 6 (MP) and a third was on Pt. Loma May 10-11 (DPa). A Vermilion Flycatcher at Deep Springs May 28 (PL) was exceptionally far n. The only migrant Purple Martins reported were single birds at Goleta Apr. 22 (GF) & May 16 (PL); this species has declined drastically in s. California over the past 20 years.

JAYS THROUGH PIPITS — A Scrub Jay near Tecopa Apr. 23 (JT) and another at Scotty's Castle May 26 (JS) were both at desert oases. A Winter Wren at Pt. Mugu Mar. 24 (KG) was quite late for a coastal locality in s. California. A Cactus Wren in Tecopa May 25 (KVV) was somewhat n. of the species' normal range. A Brown Thrasher was on Pt. Loma May 15 (ST) and another was at Deep Springs May 28 (REW); this is a casual straggler to California in spring. A Bendire's Thrasher near Lancaster Apr. 7-8 (JD) was somewhat unexpected. A Varied Thrush at Yucca Valley May 20 (EAC), another at Buckhorn in the San Gabriel Mts., May 26 (FH) and a third at Deep Springs June 1-3 (REW) were all exceptionally late and totally unexpected considering the paucity of records for the past winter. A Water Pipit in the Lanfair Valley May 16 (SC), another at Scotty's Castle May 19 (PL) and one more at F.C.R., May 23 (PL) were late.

VIREOS, WOOD WARBLERS — A White-eyed Vireo, only the fourth to be found in California and the first for this Region, was at Oasis May 31 - June 2 (PL, REW). Gray Vireos had returned to breeding localities in the Laguna Mts. of San Diego County by Mar. 25 (ME). A ♂ Yellow-throated Vireo, a casual straggler to California, was at Ft. Piute May 30 (EC). Interesting were two Solitary Vireos of the gray interior race *plumbeus* on the coast with one near San Diego Apr. 14 (DPa) and the other on Pt. Loma Apr. 22 (GMcC). A Red-eyed Vireo, inexplicably rare in s. California, was at Oasis May 20-21 (PL) and another was near Imperial Beach June 5 (EC).

Black-and-white Warblers were relatively scarce, with only nine reported Apr. 20 - June

2. A Prothonotary Warbler, a rare straggler to the Southwest, was at Oasis May 23 (JS) and another was on Pt. Loma June 1 (EC). Another exceptionally rare straggler to California, a Golden-winged Warbler, was at Scotty's Castle May 24 (KVV). Seven Tennessee Warblers were found in the n.e. part of the Region May 19 - June 2 along with five more in coastal Orange and San Diego counties during the same period: May 13 - June 2. A Virginia's Warbler at Morongo Valley Apr. 19 (R&MW) and another at F.C.R., May 31 (REW) were migrants at desert oases; one in Encinitas, San Diego Co., Apr. 29 (L&SS) was on the coast where rare in spring. A Lucy's Warbler singing at 7000 ft on Clark Mt., May 29 (SC) was at a most unusual locality. Three N. Parulas found in Mono/Inyo counties May 22-25 (PL, BD), a somewhat early individual at Ft. Piute Apr. 22 (SC) and another near Winterhaven, Imperial Co., May 12 (ST) were in the e. part of the Region; whereas, one in Santa Barbara June 4 (PL, †S.B.M.), another near Anaheim May 19 (DRW) and a third in nearby Santa Ana May 23 (SJR) were along the coast. A Magnolia Warbler at Scotty's Castle May 26 (HC) and another 75 mi off San Diego June 5 (JB) were the only two reported. A ♀ Cape May Warbler, casual in spring, was at Scotty's Castle May 29 (DLD). A ♂ **Black-throated Blue Warbler**, only the second to be found in California during spring, was well-studied at Scotty's Castle May 26 (JMacD). A ♀ **Cerulean Warbler** on Pt. Loma May 26-27 (CGE, ph., S.D.N.H.M.) was the fifth to be found in this Region. The Yellow-throated Warbler is an exceptionally rare straggler to California; hence, the appearance of six along the coast this spring comes as a surprise, with one on Pt. Loma Apr. 18 (JD) followed by another there June 3 (DPo) and a third June 4-6 (CGE), one in Encinitas Apr. 29 (L & SS), another in Santa Monica May 12 (KG) and the sixth in Santa Barbara June 9-14 (BS). A ♂ Bay-breasted Warbler was on Pt. Loma June 5-6 (EC); one or two are seen every spring. A ♂ Blackpoll Warbler in Blythe May 10 (BMW) was somewhat early, one at Oasis June 2 (PL) occurring on a more typical date. Two wintering Palm Warblers remained in Goleta to Apr. 21 (LB) and another near Imperial Beach was still present on Apr. 22 (GMcC); single birds in Goleta Apr. 22 (PL) and in Encinitas Apr. 30 (BC) were believed to be migrants, but could well have wintered in the vicinity. Two Palm Warblers at Ft. Piute May 27 (SC) were certainly spring vagrants.

Ovenbirds were scarcer than normal with single birds at Oasis May 22-24 (PL), May 29-30 (KVV) and May 30 (DR), and a fourth in Santa Barbara June 5 (PL). Eight N. Waterthrushes seen in Mono/Inyo counties May 19 - June 2 were in an area of regular occurrence; whereas, one at Pt. Mugu May 12 (REW) and another in Santa Barbara June 3 (MP) were on the coast where rare in spring. A ♂ **Kentucky Warbler**, only the fifth to be found in s. California, was well-studied near Little Lake, Inyo Co., Apr. 30 (DG). Five Hooded Warblers were found, with one in Santa Ana May 23 (SJR), single males at Ft. Piute May 23 (BMW) & May 27 (SC), another at Tollhouse Springs in the White Mts., May 22-23 (KVV) and a female at Oasis May 30 (REW); small numbers are reported every spring. About 25 Am. Redstarts were found in the e. part of the Region May 17 - June 3, but one on Pt. Loma

May 26-27 (CGE) was the only one reported from along the coast. Two Painted Redstarts on Clark Mt., May 29 (SC) were in an area where nesting could occur.

BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES, TANAGERS — A Bobolink was at Oasis May 31 (PL), another was at Scotty's Castle May 23 (PL) and ten were seen at F.C.R., May 17 - June 2; small numbers occur regularly in this area of California each May. Two wintering Orchard Orioles remained in Santa Barbara to Mar. 21 (PL); one at F.C.R., May 27 (PL) was a spring vagrant. A ♂ Hooded Oriole at Oasis May 19 (PL) was quite far n. for the e. side of the Sierra Nevada. Two Scott's Orioles at Oasis May 22 (PL) were near the n. limit of the species' range in California. Five N. (Baltimore) Orioles were found in the n.e. portion of the Region May 20-31, and another was on the coast at Pt. Loma May 26 (EC). A Great-tailed Grackle near Scotty's Castle May 28 (JS) was farther n. than previously reported in e. California, and another near L. Cachuma, Santa Barbara Co., May 12+ (PL) was far to the w. A Com. Grackle, a casual straggler to California, was at Scotty's Castle May 22 (PL).

A ♂ Scarlet Tanager was on Pt. Loma May 26-28 (LD); this is an exceedingly rare straggler to California in spring. A ♀ Hepatic Tanager on Clark Mt., May 29 (SC) was the only one found this spring. A Summer Tanager at Morongo Valley Apr. 21 (R&MW) marked the arrival date at this breeding locality; vagrants outside the species' known breeding range included five in the Deep Springs/Oasis area May 19 - June 2 (PL,REW), one at Ft. Piute May 20 (DR), a ♀ *cooperii* in the Kingston Mts., May 28 (SC), a male in the San Gabriel Mts., May 9 (RL), one in Coronado Apr. 12 (AB), and single birds on Pt. Loma June 2-3 (EC) & 5 (BC).

FINCHES, SPARROWS — As usual a few Rose-breasted Grosbeaks reached s. California with two wintering birds in Santa Barbara Feb. 28 - Apr. 25 (MP) and 22 migrants noted May 14 - June 6. Indigo Buntings appeared in small numbers with an early bird at Morongo Valley Apr. 15 (R & MW), another near Tecopa Apr. 27 (JT), and ca. 30 noted May 19 - June 2, with most in the n.e. part of the Region. An Evening Grosbeak at Oak Glen near San Bernardino Apr. 14 (JD) was the only one reported this spring. An Am. Goldfinch at F.C.R., May 27 (REW) was unexpected at that time of the year. A Lawrence's Goldfinch at Deep Springs May 19 (PL) is one of the very few recorded in that area of California. The only Lark Bunting was a singing male near Temecula, Riverside Co., May 12-14 (IPL). A Grasshopper Sparrow at F.C.R., May 25 (PL) was at an unusual locality. A Lincoln's Sparrow at Deep Springs June 2 (PL) was exceptionally late for a lowland locality. Single Swamp Sparrows near L. Elsinore Mar. 22 (JD), at Saticoy Apr. 8 (REW) and at Pt. Mugu Apr. 21 (REW) could all have wintered locally, but one at Scotty's Castle May 27 (BLaB) was clearly a spring vagrant. A Lapland Longspur in the Cuyama Valley of Kern County Mar. 10 (REW) had probably wintered locally.

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