

MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION

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The fall weather was warm and dry until storms hit October 18-20 and 25. November was mostly dry except for brief rainy periods November 3-4, 18 and 23-26. The first frosts had not occurred in the lowlands by the end of the period.

The most noteworthy event of the fall was the massive "crash" of Red Phalaropes and Ancient Murrelets on the coast in mid-November. The seabirds of the fall were a probable Cook's Petrel and a Red-billed Tropicbird.

Landbird migration was very strong in August in the interior, slow in September (in this regard note the dates of all interior vagrant sightings), but increased again in late September to early October, with the return of winter visitants. Coastally August was very slow and activity did not pick up until mid-September; migration remained strong until late October with notable peaks September 22-24, and 27-29 and October 9. Rains in late October and early November seemed to curtail migration considerably.

All the activity coastally produced spectacular numbers and variety of eastern vagrant and western migrant species, including many outstanding rarities. Numbers of eastern vagrants compared favorably with those of 1974, the best year ever.

All sightings at southeastern Farallon Island (hereafter, F.I.) and Palomarin should be credited to Point Reyes Bird Observatory.

LOONS, GREBES — Migrant Com. Loons were first noted at Pt. Reyes Oct. 13 (JE). Arctic Loons were first seen migrating past Pt. Pinos Oct. 28 (DRO) and migration peaks were thought to be late this year. Inland Arctic Loons were at L. Shastina, Siskiyou Co., Nov. 8 (RE, MR), Alpine L., Marin Co., Nov. 20 (DS) and Silver L., Mono Co., Nov. 19 (DAG). Inland Red-throated Loons were found at Lewiston L., Trinity Co., Nov. 23 (DA) and Andrus L., Sacramento Co., Nov. 5 (DEI).

Five Red-necked Grebes at Limantour, Point Reyes Nat'l Seashore (hereafter, P.R.N.S.) Aug. 14 (JE) were the first seen. A peak of ten was found there Oct. 14 and only two could be found after that (JE). One at L. Merced, San Francisco Co., Nov. 24 was at a strange location. Seven Horned Grebes at Limantour Sept. 5 were at least ten days earlier than the normal first arrival date. The 50 at Tule L., Oct. 17-24 had dwindled to five by Nov. 12 (BED).

TUBENOSES THROUGH CORMORANTS — Black-footed Albatrosses are regular in fall only off Humboldt County where 16 were seen Oct. 6-7 (RLeV). The only others were two on Monterey Bay Aug. 25 (RS) and one there Sept. 22 (L.A.A.S.). Peak numbers of Pink-footed Shearwaters occurred on Monterey Bay Sept. 17 - Oct. 14. Estimates during this period varied 30-600. These are always open to question; on one boat trip they ranged 75-600. More care is needed! An unprecedented 8-10 Flesh-footed Shearwaters were 25 mi s.w. of Pt. Pinos Sept. 17 (RS). Ten Short-tailed Shearwaters on Monterey Bay Oct. 28 (RS)

were the only ones reported. Only six Manx Shearwaters were reported this fall. All were seen in October on Monterey Bay. This is many fewer than in the past two years. One seen Oct. 28 was believed to be of the Atlantic race *puffinus* (DRO).

Single *Pterodroma* petrels were seen 50+ mi off Mendocino County Oct. 4-5 (GF et al.). They were believed to be Cook's Petrels which would establish a first state record if accepted by the state rare birds committee. For further information on sightings of *Pterodroma* petrels see the Southern Pacific Coast Region reports in this issue. The only Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel was one off Cape Mendocino Oct. 6 (Bob Sizoo). Two Leach's Storm-Petrels were found 25 mi s.w. of Pt. Pinos Sept. 17 (RS). The storm-petrel flock off Moss Landing peaked at 8000± Ashies and 5000± Blacks late September - mid-October. One-two Least Storm-Petrels were found with the flock Sept. 28 (DRO), Oct. 6 (Jon Dunn) and Oct. 13 (RS). A Wilson's Storm-Petrel was off Humboldt Bay Oct. 6 (RLeV) providing only the second Regional sighting away from Monterey Bay.

A Red-billed Tropicbird was seen 112 mi off Pt. Arena Oct. 5 (GF) providing only the third Regional record. More than normal numbers of Brown Pelicans were found inside San Francisco Bay (hereafter, S.F. Bay). High counts were 76 at Alviso Slough Aug. 16 (SFB) and 100 at Alameda Sept. 23 (fide ERO). A high-elevation record for Double-crested Cormorant was furnished with two birds at Ellery L., in the Yosemite Sierras at 9600 ft Sept. 1-12 (Dean Taylor, m.ob.). A Magnificent Frigatebird was at Goat Rock, Sonoma Co., Aug. 9 (KVV,JP). Another very late individual was at Bolinas Oct. 14 (KH). An unidentified frigatebird was seen on Monterey Bay Oct. 13 (RS, Alan Baldrige).

HERONS — Sixty-seven Green Herons on the s. and w. shores of Clear L., Lake Co., Aug. 3-4 (SAL,KC) was an unusually high count. Two ad. Little Blue Herons at Alviso Slough in s. S.F. Bay Aug. 16 & 18 were with a Little Blue Heron × Snowy Egret hybrid in calico plumage (SFB). Numbers of Cattle Egrets continued to climb with 371 being reported this fall. The largest groups were 212 at Corcoran Irrigation District, Kings Co., Sept. 9 (JR) and 86 near Los Banos Sept. 15 (RS). At the Corcoran site there were 12 nests and 12 flightless young on that date.

A large flock of 350 Snowy Egrets was feeding in a pond at Sacramento N.W.R., Aug. 10 (SAL). Sixty at Laguna L., Marin Co., Sept. 7 (DS) was also unusual. American Bitterns were reported from coastal locations with six from the outer coast and 11 from s. S.F. Bay (m.ob.). A White-faced Ibis was at Arcata,



where there are very few records, Sept. 23 (RLeV).

WATERFOWL — The mid-September aerial waterfowl survey revealed 30% more ducks than last year indicating good production on the Canadian Prairies (BED). Aleutian Canada Geese continued to make gains with 1750 reported this fall, including 1700 near Colusa Nov. 20 (PS). An imm. Emperor Goose was at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Oct. 27-28 (RE,MR,BED); it was shot by hunters the next day.

Blue-winged Teal were reported in higher-than-normal numbers, with 20 seen at seven coastal locations (m.ob.). Forty-five Cinnamon Teal were seen in the Pt. Reyes area and one was in Arcata Nov. 7 (fide BB). This is many more than normal. A Wood Duck at Tule Lake N.W.R., Nov. 5 (BED) was unusual. A ♀ Canvasback at Bay Bridge Toll Plaza (hereafter, B.B.T.P.) Sept. 9 (DE) was quite early as the normal first arrival occurs mid-October. Two Greater Scaup at Bodega Bay Aug. 1-4 (KVV) either summered or were exceptionally early migrants. Seven at Red Bluff Oct. 24 (SAL,KC) comprised the only flock reported inland. A flock of 40 Lesser Scaup at Abbott's Lagoon, P.R.N.S., Aug. 21 (JE) was a month earlier than the normal first fall arrivals. The ♂ Tufted Duck returned to Muddy Hollow, P.R.N.S., Sept. 29 - Nov. 30+ (DDeS,RS, m.ob.).

Common Goldeneyes were first observed at Tule L., Bolinas Lagoon, and Bodega Bay Nov. 3 (m.ob.). Early birds were at Palo Alto Sept. 25 (WBO), Auburn Oct. 3 (fide BBa) and a surprising 30 on the American R., Oct. 13 (Dave Johnson). Buffleheads were first noted Oct. 31 at Limantour, Bodega Bay and Bolinas Lagoon (m.ob.). A female was at the Bodega Sewage Ponds (JP, m.ob.) throughout August and an early migrant was at Pt. Reyes Station Aug. 23 (JE). Eight coastal Oldsquaws were sighted with the first, Oct. 23 at Bolinas Lagoon (DDeS). The only inland sighting was at L. Shastina Nov. 8 (RE). Harlequin Ducks were well represented with 14 coastal sightings from eight locations. Four or five were seen on the Mokelumne R., Alpine Co., Aug. 9

(Robert Blumenthal) giving hope of nesting at that location.

Thousands of White-winged Scoters were seen streaming past Bodega Head daily Oct. 31 - Nov. 8 (BJM). One at Grant Res., Mono Co., Nov. 15-19 (DAG) was the only report from inland. Surf Scoters were found inland at Grant Res., Oct. 11 (DAG), Tule Lake N.W.R., Oct. 18 (BED), and Chico Oxidation Ponds Oct. 27 (KVV) and Nov. 2 (JS). Four ♀ Red-breasted Mergansers were at L. Shastina Nov. 8-9 (RE,MR) and two were still there Nov. 13 (BED) for the only inland sighting.

RAPTORS THROUGH RAILS — The first Regional California Condor in two years was an adult at Porterville, Tulare Co., Sept. 14 (MEM). Encouraging numbers of White-tailed Kites were reported with 25 near Pt. Reyes Station Sept. 12 (Sue Peaslee), up to 40 at a roost in Livermore, Alameda Co., Oct. 13 (AE) and 32 n. of Davis, Yolo Co., Nov. 20 (DS,CH). Three days of hawkwatching at Pt. Diablo, Marin Co. (RS,SFB) showed Sharp-shinned Hawks constituted 57% of *Accipiters* passing instead of the normal 66% (Binford 1979 *West. Birds* 10:1). The feeling among several observers was that Cooper's Hawks were up in numbers rather than Sharpies being down.

Large numbers of raptors lingered on outer Pt. Reyes owing to the continued microtus outbreak. Peak numbers of Red-tailed Hawks were 64 Oct. 10 (RS) and 57 Nov. 11 (JE). The only Harlan's Red-tailed Hawk was one near Cottonwood, Shasta Co., Nov. 21 (SAL,DS). Broad-winged Hawks were reported from Pt. Diablo in good numbers with 19 seen Sept. 20 - Oct. 6 (m.ob.). Two additional birds were seen on Pt. Reyes Oct. 18 & 28 (JM,DDeS). Swainson's Hawks made news with "old time" numbers, with 30-50 near Galt, Sacramento Co., Sept. 19 (AMC) and 260 in a flock near Riverdale, 20 mi s. of Fresno Oct. 15-16 (RH). Although normally very rare on the coast singles reported were: Ferndale Sept. 17-30 (RLeV), Pt. Diablo Sept. 23 (RS), Cape Mendocino Sept. 29 (BC), Monterey Sept. 30 (LCB) and Pt. Reyes Oct. 10 (RS). A well-described late Swainson's was at Empire Tract, San Joaquin Co., Nov. 20 (†DEI).

Rough-legged Hawks were seen in average numbers. Ferruginous Hawks were reported in record numbers with 45 seen Sept. 15 - Nov. 30+ which almost doubles the previous high. Nine on outer Pt. Reyes Oct. 31 (RS,JE) were remarkable, and Marsh Hawks were noted there in unusual concentrations with 16 on Oct. 10 (RS) and at n. Livermore with 50 in October and November (AE). Many more than usual Prairie Falcons were on the outer coast. The first was at Abbott's Lagoon Aug. 21 (JE) and four were on outer Pt. Reyes by the end of September (RS). Seven additional birds were reported from coastal areas away from the point. Peregrine Falcons appeared in normal numbers and Merlins were again reported as high, equaling 1978's figures.

Twenty Sage Grouse walking around the ghost town of Bodie, Mono Co., Aug. 18 (JM) produced an unusual sight. Observers noted unusually high concentrations of California Quail from Great Basin, mountain, valley and coastal locations, indicating an excellent nesting season. Clapper Rail numbers were still on the increase in the Alameda s. shore area with ten there Nov. 3 (*vide* ERO). One was

reported from Moss Landing Oct. 27-28 (BSa, RS). A Black Rail, rarely seen in the Region, was flushed from the *salicornia* on Limantour Nov. 27 (JE). Six Com. Gallinules were found at coastal locations in late October and November which was more than normal. Nine were at a pond near Anderson, Shasta Co., Nov. 21 (SAL,DS) at the extreme n. edge of their breeding range.

SHOREBIRDS — A Black Oystercatcher at Alviso, s. S.F. Bay Nov. 11 (*vide* WBo) was out of its normal range and habitat. Four Semipalmated Plovers at L. Shastina Oct. 15 (RE) were late for an inland location. Single out-of-range Snowy Plovers were reported at Vallejo Aug. 15 and Sears Point Rd., Napa Co. (KVV). A Mountain Plover was at Pajaro Dunes, Santa Cruz Co., Nov. 6 (J&RW) and up to 100 were found n. of Woodland, Yolo Co., Nov. 13-24 (AEn *et al.*). American Golden Plovers were found in very high numbers with a minimum 75 reported from coastal locations. The only inland sighting was of two at White Slough Sewage Ponds, San Joaquin Co., Oct. 9 (DEI).

Rare inland in fall, Whimbrels were found as follows: one Mono L., Aug. 8 - Sept. 2 (Dan Taylor, DE), 13 Lower Klamath N.W.R., Aug. 28 (SAL *et al.*) and one Davis Oct. 21 (AEn). Lesser Yellowlegs were found in normal numbers, but 28 at Laguna L., Sept. 7 (DS) was of interest as were late records of four at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Nov. 17 (RE,MR) and 22 at Dumbarton Bridge Nov. 20 (SFB). Eight Solitary Sandpipers were reported Aug. 27 - Sept. 16. Willets made a good showing inland with 15 at Grand I., Sacramento Co., Aug. 10 (DEI), three at Clovis, Fresno Co., Aug. 16 (Gary Potter) and one each at s. Wilbur Flood Area and Corcoran Sewer Ponds, Kings Co., Oct. 6 (JR). Three Wandering Tattlers were at the e. end of the Dumbarton Bridge Aug. 1-9 and one remained to Nov. 30 (SFB). Inland single Ruddy Turnstones were at n. Evaporator Ponds, Kings Co., Sept. 16 (JR) and Corcoran Irrigation District Sept. 29 (JR). Twenty-one Black Turnstones at the e. end of Dumbarton Bridge Aug. 22 (SFB) was an unusually high number away from the outer coast.

Late N. Phalaropes were found along the coast, with four November sightings, the latest being one at Moss Landing Nov. 24 (RS,JE). Red Phalaropes invaded the coastal estuaries this fall starting in late September, with the peak occurring Nov. 3-15. Many died and those examined had severely depleted fat reserves (DS). Some peak numbers were 280 at Bodega Bay Nov. 9 (JE), 400 at Fremont Salt Ponds Nov. 14 (CSw), 500 at Pescadero Marsh the same day (PM) and thousands on the San Mateo coast Nov. 17 (JRI). The only inland sighting was of three at Lava Lakes, Siskiyou Co., Nov. 18 (RE *et al.*). Twenty Short-billed Dowitchers were found inland, with ten at White Slough Sewage Plant Oct. 9 (DEI) being the most notable. The only Red Knot inland was a flock of nine at Tule Lake N.W.R., Sept. 28 (B&CY). A census along 59 mi of beach from Bodega Bay to Monterey Bay Sept. 20-28 tallied 5457 Sanderlings (BJM *et al.*). Inland sightings included one at Indian Creek Res., Alpine Co., Aug. 17 (JH), one at Stockton Sewage Ponds Sept. 1 (DE) and two on the s. shore of Mono L., Sept. 2 (DE).

Twelve Semipalmated Sandpipers were

found in coastal locations Aug. 8 - Sept. 12 (m.ob.), the most notable being six at the Arcata Oxidation Ponds Aug. 17-24 (RLeV). Baird's Sandpipers were found in normal numbers while Pectoral Sandpipers set all time high records, with a minimum of 410 reported Aug. 4 - Nov. 15. Peak counts were 58 at the Woodland Sugar Ponds Oct. 6, 50 Arcata Bottoms Sept. 29 (both CH), and 25 at Borax L., Lake Co., Sept. 19 (JMa). Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were at Moss Landing Oct. 27 - Nov. 5 (BSa, m.ob.), Mendosa Ranch, P.R.N.S., Oct. 31 (RS,JE), two at Dumbarton Narrows Nov. 5 (CSw), F.I., Nov. 7 (P.R.B.O.) and two at Bodega Bay Nov. 23 (KVV,JP). A very early Dunlin in breeding plumage was at Sears Point Rd., Aug. 15 (KVV,BDP). The only Stilt Sandpipers were two at Black Butte Res., Glenn Co., Aug. 25 (JS). There are few regional inland records. Buff-breasted Sandpipers were found for the fourth consecutive fall with four at three sites near Arcata Aug. 25 - Sept. 12 (RLeV), two Bodega Bay Sept. 11-16 (DS, m.ob.) and one Hall Ranch, P.R.N.S., Sept. 22-23 (BDP). Single Ruffs were at Watsonville Sewage Ponds Sept. 8-17 (Steven Atkinson, m.ob.), Zmudowski S.P., Sept. 25 - Oct. 11 (DRo,LCB) and Arcata Bottoms Sept. 21 - Oct. 8 (John Brack, RLeV).

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — Single Long-tailed Jaegers were seen on pelagic trips Aug. 26 (DHE) and Sept. 29 (JLu), on Monterey Bay and one off Humboldt Bay Oct. 6 (RLeV). An unprecedented 10-12 were found 20 mi s.w. of Pt. Pinos Sept. 17 (RS *et al.*). Very unusual was one at Crowley L., Mono Co., Sept. 2 (Keith Axelsson).

Two first-year Thayer's Gulls were at Oroville Nov. 22 (SAL,DS). With the demise of the Mono L., breeding colony of California Gulls and the spraying of their eggs with oil in Utah, it is not surprising that very few first-year birds were seen this fall. Only 2% of 625 at Martinez Dump, Contra Costa Co., and 5% of 6000 at Stockton Sept. 1 were immatures (DE). A first year Mew Gull was at Oroville Nov. 22 (SAL,DS). They are very rare inland away from the delta region. Five coastal Franklin's Gulls were found Sept. 3 - Nov. 3 (m.ob.). A mass S migration of hundreds of Heermann's Gulls was noted along the Bodega coast Nov. 1 (BJM). Two different Sabine's Gulls were found inland at Mono L., Sept. 15 & 27 respectively (DAG). Four late Forster's Terns were at Tule Lake N.W.R., Oct. 27-28 (BED). Seven out-of-range Black Terns were along the coast Aug. 4 - Oct. 15, and one was at Clear L., Aug. 3 (SAL,KC).

One Xantus' Murrelet was found 25 mi s.w. of Pt. Pinos Sept. 17 (RS) and two were in Monterey Bay Sept. 22 (L.A.A.S.). Two Craveri's Murrelets were on Monterey Bay Aug. 26 (DHE), and Sept. 29 (JM). The latter were with two unidentified *Endormyichurus*. Fifteen Craveri's and ten unidentified were 25 mi s.w. of Pt. Pinos Sept. 17 (RS). Hundreds of Ancient Murrelets were found along the coast late October - Nov. 30+ including 200+ along the San Mateo coast Nov. 17 (JRI); indicative of a massive movement. Many were found dead including seven on Dillon Beach, Marin Co., Nov. 19 (DS). They may have been reacting to the same stimuli that brought in the Red Phalaropes. An ad. Rhinoceros Auklet at Arch Rock, Sonoma Co., Aug. 4 (BDP,LCB) suggested a possible nesting at that location.

PIGEONS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

— Band-tailed Pigeons were reported in only moderate numbers throughout most of the Region, but three at 10,000 ft at the Hall Natural Area, Mono Co. (hereafter, H.N.A.), Sept. 8 (BE) provided a notable altitudinal sighting. A White-winged Dove was seen Nov. 4-5 at Salmon Cr., Sonoma Co. (BJM,BDP, JM) and a fresh feather was found at Nunes Ranch, P.R.N.S., Nov. 15 (RS, identified by LCB) indicating this species' presence there also this fall. A very late Yellow-billed Cuckoo, quite rare anywhere coastally, was at F.I., Nov. 7. A **Black-billed Cuckoo** was found dead at the n. spit of Humboldt Bay Oct. 3 (Ken Irwin, *fide* RLeV, *H.S.U.). This will have provided only the third regional record following approval of submitted details.

Fifteen to twenty Barn Owls were at Home Bay, P.R.N.S., Nov. 6 and a pair with four young Sept. 1 was at Pt. Reyes Station (Dianne Williams, *fide* JE) at the same spot where six young were seen May 18 (JE). It is assumed that this pair double-clutched this season, owing to the continued microtine outbreak in the Pt. Reyes area. Most unusual was the occurrence of a **Flammulated Owl** near Woodland, Yolo Co., Oct. 16 (*fide* †CH, †TBe). The bird,



Flammulated Owl, Yolo Co., Calif., Oct. 16, 1979. Photo/Ted Beedy.

sick and unable to fly, was found in an asparagus field by a local farmer and taken to the Davis Raptor Center for rehabilitation. Its presence represents only the sixth known California migrant record (*fide* JW). There were several Long-eared Owl sightings: individuals remained until at least Oct. 16 at Palomarin, P.R.N.S.; a stray, exceedingly rare at an elevation of 10,000 ft, was at H.N.A., Sept. 9 - Oct. 7 (DDes, BE); three-four were seen Aug. 27 - Sept. 29 at Cape Mendicino, Humboldt Co. (BC, RLeV, CH); and one was at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Sept. 28 (B&CY). Short-eared Owl concentrations of 25-30 were in one field in Livermore, Alameda Co. Nov. 24 (AE *et al.*) and groups of 11 and 15 were at separate locations on Pt. Reyes in October (*fide* SFB).

An unusual "swarm" of 400 Com. Night-hawks was seen at Indian Creek Res., Alpine Co., Aug. 17 (JH). Peaks of 50-100 migrating Black Swifts were at N. Dunsmuir, Siskiyou Co., Sept. 25 (CSt) and the latest was one Oct. 9 at F.I. Two Vaux's Swifts Nov. 4 at the Pajaro R., were very late (WB). A White-throated Swift Sept. 1 at H.N.A. (BE) was at a lofty elevation. Two Black-chinned Hummingbirds frequented a feeder at Laguna Ranch, P.R.N.S., Sept. 7 (JE); this species is very rare on the immediate coast. Single out-of-place

Costa's Hummingbirds were at feeders in Healdsburg, Sonoma Co., Aug. 7 to the end of October (DEI *et al.*) and at Walnut Cr., Nov. 23 (CSt). A late *Selasphorus* hummingbird, presumed to be Rufous, was at the Carmel R. mouth Oct. 25 (DRo). An imm. ♂ Anna's Hummingbird at Lee Vining, Mono Co., Oct. 9 (DAG, Dean Taylor) provided the Region with its first record in the Great Basin e. of the Sierran escarpment.

Although numbers of Lewis' Woodpeckers were reported way down in most areas, stragglers reached the coast at Pt. Pinos Oct. 3 (DRo) and near Palomarin Aug. 10 (Anne Rovetta, *fide* JE). A ♀ Williamson's Sapsucker was encountered on Mines Rd., Alameda Co., Oct. 7 (AE); this species is a rare but somewhat regular "vagrant" from the higher mountains in fall and winter. A Hairy Woodpecker was near Anderson, Shasta Co., Nov. 21 (SAL, DS, KG); this species is rare on the Central Valley (hereafter, C.V.) floor.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWAL-

LOWS — Nine Tropical Kingbirds along the coast Sept. 21 - Nov. 12 was about average for the fall (m.ob.). An E. Kingbird was recorded at F.I., Aug. 3 and two were seen n. of Canby, Modoc Co., Aug. 19 (SS). Western Kingbird migration was well documented in the Shasta Valley, Siskiyou Co., Aug. 7 - Sept. 3 with a notable peak of 57 Aug. 15 (RE). A very late Ash-throated Flycatcher was sighted near Bodega Bay, Sonoma Co., Nov. 10 (AE, LCB, BDP, JP). Two E. Phoebes frequented F.I., Nov. 5-12 and one aroused interest at Salmon Cr., Sonoma Co., Nov. 3-4 (BJM, BDP). An early migrant Say's Phoebe was at Trinity L., Trinity Co., Sept. 7 (DA). Least Flycatchers at the Pt. Reyes Lighthouse Sept. 27 (†JM) and at the nearby Fish Docks Oct. 6-7 (†RS *et al.*) provided the ninth and tenth mainland regional records (all fall, all coastal); all other records are from F.I., where they have been recorded annually since 1969. This season was no exception as singles were banded there Sept. 24 and Oct. 10. An *Empidonax* flycatcher, identified as a Dusky, made a very late appearance at Dog I., Nov. 26 (†SAL, KC). A W. Flycatcher at a high elevation was at H.N.A., Sept. 13 (BE). A ♀ **Vermilion Flycatcher** treated observers at the Bishop Sewage Ponds, Inyo Co., Nov. 15 (DAG, Dean Taylor); providing only the third regional record.

S.A.

A skylark, believed to be the same individual that startled observers last winter, made a brief appearance at the Hall Ranch, P.R.N.S., Oct. 28 - Nov. 1 (JM *et al.*). Evidence presented by David Snow of the British Museum, in a comprehensive report compiled and submitted to the California Records Committee by Joe Morlan, supports the idea that the bird in question (winter 1978-1979) was in fact a **Common Skylark** (*A. arvensis*) and not an Oriental Skylark (*A. gulgula*). Although the bird's exact racial status could not be determined, it was believed to most closely resemble examples from n.e. Asia and not the nominate race introduced on Victoria I., B.C. (JM). The editors will of course accept the final decision of the Records Committee as to the bird's origin, and hence its place on the official state list.

Although swallow numbers and migratorial peaks were normal, more late sightings than usual were reported. Although generally swallows and other insectivorous migrants are thought to linger later on the coast, interior sightings are well represented in the following records. Late Violet-green Swallows: one at Tule Lake N.W.R., Nov. 3 (BED *et al.*), 40 in the Carmel Valley Nov. 24 (JL, RS, DDeS, JE), and 15 at Palomarin Nov. 28. Late Tree Swallows: eight at Salmon Cr., Nov. 14 (BJM), 10 at Los Banos Nov. 23 (JE), one at the Carmel Valley Nov. 24 (JL *et al.*), and 12 at Limantour Estero Nov. 30 (JE). The Region's latest-ever Bank Swallow graced Chico Oct. 20 (KVV). A very tardy Rough-winged Swallow inspected the Castroville Sewage Ponds, Monterey Co., Nov. 24 (KH *et al.*, *fide* JL). The latest of four November Barn Swallow sightings (three interior, one coastal) was four at Merced N.W.R., Nov. 23 (JL, RS, DDeS, JE). Chico was also host to two laggard Cliff Swallows Nov. 10 (JS).

CORVIDS THROUGH NUTHATCHES

— The appearance of a Steller's Jay at Bidwell P., Chico Oct. 29 (SAL, KC), on the Central Valley floor, followed closely the first sightings of down-mountain drifting individuals in the Sierra foothills of Tulare County Oct. 23 (MEM) and Placer County Oct. 26-28 (MA, BBa). Small flocks of migrant Com. Crows passed through the Mono Basin Oct. 13 - Nov. 19; this is probably a regular but not well documented pattern (DAG). A report of nine Clark's Nutcrackers flying S over Mt. St. Helena, Napa Co., Oct. 6 (JMa, Brad Hanson) was rather anomalous as no other out-of-place sightings occurred this fall; however this species was scarce at H.N.A., all fall presumably owing to the poor whitebark pine crop (DDeS, BE). Three Mountain Chickadees were at Chico Nov. 13 (KVV, SAL); another instance of a montane species quite rare on the C.V. floor.

Red-breasted Nuthatches staged a notable invasion to the C.V. and the coastal strip this fall (m.ob.). Ninety plus were seen Aug. 1 - Sept. 27 on the Sierran crest at H.N.A. (DDeS, BE). Coastally the first incursion was noted Aug. 4 at F.I. By mid-August the invaders were noted at widespread locales w. of the Sierras and numbers increased thereafter with peaks Sept. 23-28 and Oct. 6-9. On Sept. 28 twelve were seen on the U.C. Davis campus (Brennan Davis, *fide* BK) and 30 were counted on outer Pt. Reyes (SFB). Counts of 20 were made Oct. 6 (LCB) at Golden Gate Park, S.F. (hereafter, G.G.P.) and Oct. 9 on outer Pt. Reyes (JE). Numbers dwindled substantially through October with few remaining after mid-November.

A Pygmy Nuthatch in Oakland Sept. 14 (JL) is of note as East Bay records are very scarce and 25 at Land's End, S.F., Sept. 2 (DM) also indicate fall movement. A Dipper at Alpine L., Marin Co., Nov. 28 (Sue Peaslee) was the only one reported away from breeding locations. A Long-billed Marsh Wren Aug. 10 at 10,500 ft at Gardisky L., Mono Co. (BE) established a regional altitudinal record.

MIMIDS THROUGH VIREOS — A Gray Catbird seen at the Fish Docks, Pt. Reyes Oct. 5-6 (†CH, DRu *et al.*) provided the eighth regional record. Single Brown Thrashers were recorded at F.I., Oct. 13 and at Lava Beds

N.M., Oct. 22 (SAL,KC). Ten Sage Thrashers Sept. 12 - Nov. 24 was an impressive number w. of the Sierras (m.ob.). A Gray-cheeked Thrush was at F.I., Oct. 10 (†PH); all but two of the 10 regional records have been at that location. A Mountain Bluebird occurred at Pt. Pinos Oct. 14 (Ron Branson, *vide* DRO). Another coastal rarity was a Townsend's Solitaire Oct. 10-21 at F.I. An early Ruby-crowned Kinglet was at Menlo P., Sept. 3 (WB).

A **Yellow Wagtail** made a brief appearance at Bodega Bay, Sonoma Co., Sept. 16 (BJM). If accepted by the California Records Committee this would furnish the second state record. The most exciting and most observed landbird of the fall was surely the ad. **White Wagtail** at the Watsonville Sewage Ponds, Santa Cruz Co., Aug. 7 - Sept. 22 (†Carolyn Frederiksen, †Steve Allison *et al.*). This provided only the second regional and first mainland record. The bird had a thin dark eyeline on a white cheek which is characteristic of either *M. a. ocularis* or *M. a. lugens*, both from n.e. Asia. However further differentiation was not possible as the two races can be indistinguishable in certain plumages (JM). To round out the vagrant *Motacillids* a **Sprague's Pipit** was described from F.I., Oct. 1. If accepted by the California Records Committee this would provide the first regional record.



White Wagtail, Santa Cruz Co., Calif., Aug. 24, 1979. Photo/Al Ghiorsio.

The first migrant Cedar Waxwings were seen Aug. 18 at F.I. and one Sept. 1 followed by nine Oct. 6, were seen at H.N.A. (DDeS, BE), being very scarce on the Sierran crest. In addition three immatures, although able to fly, were seen sitting on a nest in a willow/alder patch at Field's Landing, Humboldt Co., Sept. 10 (DA). Eleven Phainopeplas were at three sites from Chico to 15 mi n. of Red Bluff Sept. 23 - Nov. 15 (SAL,KC,KVV). The only N. Shrike reported away from the n. Great Basin was one immature on W. Butte Rd., Sutter Co., Nov. 26 (WA). Three races of Solitary Vireo provided interesting records: one *plumbeus* at G.G.P., Oct. 12 (LCB) furnished only the second coastal regional record; one *solitarius* was considered a very rare coastal vagrant Sept. 24 at Nunes Ranch, P.R.N.S. (RS,†JE), and a *cassinii* was

migrating late Nov. 3 at Stinson Beach, Marin Co. (DS,SAL). Single Red-eyed Vireos were at Olema Marsh Sept. 2 (JE); G.G.P., Oct. 12 (LCB); and Carmel R., Oct. 13-15 (KH *et al.*, *vide* DRO). Single well-described Philadelphia Vireos were at Moss Beach, San Mateo Co., Sept. 24 (†PM) and at the Carmel R. mouth Oct. 26 (†DRO); first recorded in 1967 this species has been seen each fall since 1974.

WOOD WARBLERS — The "butterflies of the bird world" as usual attracted much attention in our area with perhaps the best-ever coverage and reporting from coastal vagrant traps, and as usual only sparse coverage of interior locales. Coastal observers were not disappointed as e. *Parulids* abounded in one of the best-ever showings; in addition more than the usual number of interior sightings was reported.

Although the actual number of vagrant warblers sighted compared favorably with 1974, the best year ever, this would appear to be an artifact of increased observer coverage. An analysis of the last 10 years data from Pt. Reyes and a more detailed comparison of data from 1974 and 1979 backs up this contention (see p.). Several e. warbler species sighted this fall, although not mentioned here, are included in the table on p.

Western species also appeared to be in above-average numbers along the coast; most notably Nashvilles, Black-throated Grays, Townsend's, and MacGillivray's (JE,DM, m.ob.). In the interior the Dog I. census data (SAL,KC) showed only two individual Black-throated Grays and no Townsend's or Hermits. MacGillivray's also showed peak's one-third to one-half below the last three years; whereas they were in exceptional numbers at H.N.A. (DDeS,BE). Also at Dog I., Orange-crowns were double normal in August and normal in September and October; Nashvilles were slightly below normal in August with the last seen Sept. 5; Yellows were double average in August and normal in September; Wilson's were average in August and below average in September.

Beside the sheer number of warblers the season also produced many outstanding rarities. A ♂ **Prothonotary Warbler** was observed closely at Año Nuevo, San Mateo Co., Nov. 3 (†Paul O'Brien), for a sixth regional record. A stunning ♂ **Golden-winged Warbler** graced Fairhaven, Humboldt Co., Oct. 8-15 (PS, †RLeV *et al.*) for the seventh regional record. Inland a Tennessee Warbler was at Crowley L., Mono Co., Sept. 2 (Keith Axelsson). The first gray-headed *celata* Orange-crowned Warbler was reported Sept. 14 at Drake's Beach, P.R.N.S., and of 24 Orange-crowns seen Sept. 14 - Nov. 30+ in coastal Marin County, 50% were the *celata* type (JE).

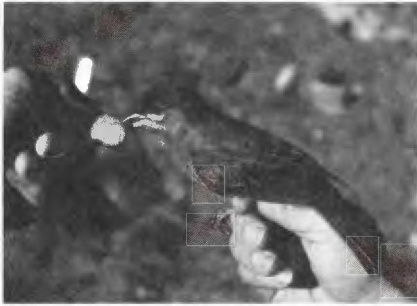
Single Virginia's Warblers occurred Sept. 2-5 at F.I., Sept. 6-9 at Fairhaven (RLeV,LD), and Oct. 24-26 at the Carmel R. (Ron Branson, JL). A Lucy's Warbler was at F.I., Nov. 2-3. A singing N. Parula was at Pine Cr. Wildlife Area, Butte Co., Aug. 17 - Sept. 7 (SAL). A very early "Audubon's" Warbler was at Pajaro Dunes, Santa Cruz Co., Aug. 27 (PM) and major influxes occurred with 150 at Honey L., Oct. 6 (SAL,KC,KVV) and 50 on outer Pt. Reyes Oct. 9 (RS,JE). An early Townsend's Warbler reached H.N.A., Aug. 4 (DDeS,BE) and one was at Brisk Cr., Butte Co., Nov. 28 providing a late record for the Sierra (JS).

Single Townsend's × Hermit Warbler hybrids were at Inverness, Marin Co., Oct. 7 (†RS) and at F.I., Sept. 24 (†PH,†DS). Single Black-throated Green Warblers were at Mendoza Ranch, P.R.N.S., Oct. 16 (†JM,†JR) and Oct. 27 at the Carmel R. mouth (RS *et al.*). An imm. ♂ **Cerulean Warbler** was well described from the Carmel R. mouth Oct. 25 (†DRO) for the fourth regional record. A Chestnut-sided Warbler was inland Aug. 19 at Lundy Canyon, Mono Co. (DAG,DW). One of the most sought-after vagrants in the Region, a **Pine Warbler**, appeared Oct. 16, where else but the F.I. (†PH); this furnished only the fourth regional record, three of which have been at F.I.

A Prairie Warbler Aug. 19 at Lundy Canyon, Mono Co. (DAG,DW) provided only the second regional interior record and 12 coastal sightings was a regional high. The 196 coastal Palm Warblers eclipsed the 1974 record by 30 and considering the extensive unbanded coastal scrub habitat in the Region this species was probably the most common warbler along the *immediate coast* in late September until the arrival of Yellow-rumpeds in early October. An inland Ovenbird skulked around a backyard in Chico Oct. 2 (†Lynn Thomas, JS); establishing a first fall interior record. A N. Waterthrush was *singing* at Pine Cr. Wildlife Area, Butte Co., Aug. 14-21 (SAL). Single Mourning Warblers were banded and photographed at F.I., Sept. 14 (†PH) and 23 (†DS) and one was studied at the Fish Docks Sept. 27-30 (†RS,†JM,†DRO,†JE,JL,DDeS,SFB,DE *et al.*). Single Hooded Warblers were at Muir Woods, Marin Co., Sept. 23 (Peter Vickery, Jim Lane) and at Moss Beach Sept. 26 (†PM). A late interior Wilson's Warbler was near Yreka, Siskiyou Co., Nov. 7 (RE) and two were seen coastally at the Carmel R. mouth Nov. 18 (DE). Inland Am. Redstarts occurred Sept. 3 at Lundy Canyon (DE), Sept. 8 at Mines Rd., Alameda Co. (AE), and Oct. 3-7 at Fresno (RH).

ICTERIDS THROUGH TANAGERS — Three Bobolinks appeared inland at Tule Lake N.W.R., Sept. 19 (†SS) and 17 coastally Sept. 18 - Oct. 14 (m.ob.). This was well above average for fall. The only coastal report of Yellow-headed Blackbird was of one at Mendoza Ranch, P.R.N.S., Oct. 2 (TBe), but 35,000± Nov. 15 at Sacramento N.W.R. (SAL) was truly amazing and probably constitutes a large percentage of the n. California population. Five Orchard Orioles appeared along the coast Sept. 8 - Oct. 9 (m.ob.). Two late N. (Bullock's) Orioles were at Pacific Grove Nov. 24 (JL,RS,DDeS,JE). Single N. (Baltimore) Orioles were at Nunes Ranch Sept. 19 and Pacific Grove Oct. 27 - Nov. 18 (RS *et al.*).

Great-tailed Grackles staged a mini-invasion with sightings at three locations: the original regional sighting in San Francisco, and more recent ones, was thought to pertain to a male and female seen separately and together at a blackbird roost at Walton Square, S.F., Sept. 13 - Oct. 25 (DE); a male was at Gray Lodge S.W.M.A., Nov. 11-28 (BED *et al.*); and a male was seen mid-September to at least Nov. 17 at Sacramento N.W.R. (SAL,KC, Paul Vittori *et al.*). A brilliant ♂ **Hepatic Tanager** was at F.I., Nov. 11 for the fifth regional record (†PH). The Region's sixth record of **Scarlet Tanager** was provided by an adult female banded at Palo-



Male Hepatic Tanager, s.e. Farallon I., Calif., Nov. 11, 1979. Photo/Phil Henderson.

marin Oct. 15 (†DDeS *et al.*). An ad. ♂ Summer Tanager frequented Lands End, S.F., Aug. 29 - Sept. 28 (AH *et al.*).

FRINGILLIDS — Twelve Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were seen coastally Aug. 2 - Oct. 13 (m.ob.); this is above average for fall. Single out-of-place Blue Grosbeaks were at F.I., Aug. 22 and Sept. 5, and more notably at the Mad R., Humboldt Co., Sept. 25 (RLeV). Coastally six Indigo Buntings were observed Aug. 16 - Oct. 31 (m.ob.) and a singing male was near Hamilton City, Butte Co., Aug. 10 & 16 (SAL); this is well above average for fall. A Lazuli Bunting Sept. 13 at H.N.A. (BE) was well above its normal altitudinal range. An ad. ♀ Painted Bunting in very worn plumage was banded and photographed at F.I., Sept. 28 (†PH,†DS). This was only the second regional record. A Dickcissel was at F.I., Aug. 29.

Evening Grosbeaks staged a minor invasion into interior and coastal lowlands this fall (m.ob.). Purple Finches were noted in good numbers coastally, and a female in Lee Vining, Mono Co., Nov. 13 (DAG) provided one of very few Great Basin records. Three Pine Grosbeaks at Lassen Volcano N.P., Tehama Co., Oct. 31 (SAL,KC) were n. of their expected range. Pine Siskins were generally reported in moderate numbers. American Goldfinches were considered numerous with flocks of up to 20 in the Mono Basin during October and November (DAG); this too may prove to be

regular, but has not previously been documented. Single Lesser Goldfinches at H.N.A., Aug. 2 & Sept. 6 were at a very high elevation (DDeS,BE). A ♀ Lawrence's Goldfinch feeding a juvenile Aug. 9 at Salmon Cr., Sonoma Co. (JP,KVV) was of interest and four encounters of this species at Palomarin Sept. 26 - Oct. 26 was surprising as no other sightings were reported in the area despite massive coverage. Red Crossbills were seen in moderate numbers coastally. Four Brown Towhees were near Tule Lake N.W.R., Sept. 14 (SS); this species' status e. of the Shasta Valley is poorly known. Single Lark Buntings visited F.I., Sept. 20 & 24-25 and the Pt. Reyes Lighthouse Oct. 6 (RS). High elevation Savannah Sparrows were one at Gardisky L., Mono Co., at 10,500 ft. Aug. 10 (BE) and seven at H.N.A., Sept. 14-27 (BE). A late Grasshopper Sparrow was at F.I., Nov. 29. A Vesper Sparrow Sept. 24 at H.N.A. (BE) was at a very high elevation but a Lark Sparrow was more out of place there Aug. 23 (DDeS). Three Black-throated Sparrows were at F.I., Sept. 11 - Nov. 22.

A Sage Sparrow was at the Pt. Reyes Lighthouse Sept. 27-29 (RS *et al.*); sightings on the immediate coast are very rare. Coastal Tree Sparrows were seen at Nunes Ranch Oct. 20 (RS), at F.I., Nov. 8, and the "Road Forks Pool," Pt. Reyes Nov. 15 (RS,JE). A late Chipping Sparrow was at Auburn, Placer Co., Nov. 4 (MA). It was a banner fall for Clay-colored Sparrows with 13 coastally Sept. 20 - Nov. 22 (m.ob.) in addition to 16 at F.I., Aug. 31 - Nov. 14. Five Brewer's Sparrows were seen along the coast Sept. 5 - Oct. 16 (m.ob.) and an interesting migrant was at Castle Crags S.P., Siskiyou Co., Aug. 17 (DM). The only Harris' Sparrow reported was at Nunes Ranch Oct. 5 (CH,DRu). Twenty-two White-throated Sparrows were reported Sept. 27 - Nov. 18 (m.ob.). A Fox Sparrow at Land's End Sept. 4 (JRi) was early as was a Lincoln's Sparrow at Dog I., Aug. 29 (SAL,KC). Eight Swamp Sparrows were recorded at four coastal sites Sept. 28 - Nov. 14 (m.ob.) and one was at Honey L., Oct. 6 (KVV,SAL,KC). Single Song Sparrows Aug. 9, 23, and 27 at H.N.A., were well above their usual haunts (DDeS,BE). Lapland Longspurs

occurred in moderate numbers on the coast and in the Great Basin with peaks of 15 on Pt. Reyes Oct. 28-31 (JM,RS), 20 flying over Arcata Oct. 11 (RLeV), and 40-50 at Honey L., Nov. 23 (SAL,DS,KC). However one at Mono L., Oct. 30 provided a first record for the Mono Basin (DAG, Dean Taylor). Groups of two-six Chestnut-collared Longspurs were at the Hall Ranch, P.R.N.S., Oct. 14-31 (m.ob.); Salmon Cr., Sonoma Co., Nov. 2-5 (BJM,BDP,JM); and Mono L., Oct. 12-30 (DAG, Dean Taylor). The only Snow Bunting reported was at F.I., Oct. 22 & 25.

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