

## SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

/Guy McCaskie

A few fronts from the north during March and April gave us some rain but we entered the dry season in early May with a below-average rainfall for the year. Most observers felt that migration was early. Large numbers of migrant landbirds passed through desert oases during mid-April with Warbling Vireos and Nashville Warblers being exceptionally numerous. Along the coast migrant landbirds were most conspicuous during the latter half of April, with Townsend's Warblers more common than usual. The influx of vagrants during late May not only included a larger-than-usual number of birds normally found in the southeastern United States but also included a great variety of wood warblers, resulting in the recording of 34 species during the period!

The early arrival dates for some of our key migrants were: Wilson's Phalarope Apr. 5, Salton Sea; N. Phalarope Apr. 5, Salton Sea; Com. Tern Apr. 23, Ventura; Least Tern Apr. 13, San Diego; Elegant Tern Mar. 14, San Diego; Black Tern Apr. 18, Antelope Valley; Lesser Nighthawk Mar. 25, Ventura County; Vaux's Swift Apr. 4, San Diego; Black-chinned Hummingbird Mar. 22, Los Angeles; W. Kingbird Mar. 5, Orange County; Ash-throated Flycatcher Mar. 31, Orange County; Willow Flycatcher May 2, San Diego; Hammond's Flycatcher Mar. 27, San Diego; W. Flycatcher Mar. 10, Los Angeles; W. Wood Pewee Apr. 10, San Diego; Olive-sided Flycatcher Apr. 10, Orange and San Luis Obispo counties; Swainson's Thrush

Apr. 18, San Diego; Bell's Vireo Mar. 22, San Diego; Solitary Vireo Mar. 24, Orange County; Warbling Vireo Mar. 10, Santa Barbara; Nashville Warbler Mar. 27, Whitewater Canyon; Yellow Warbler Mar. 29, Ventura County; Black-throated Gray Warbler Mar. 21, San Diego; Hermit Warbler Apr. 7 (early), Santa Barbara and Apr. 18, San Diego and Orange counties; MacGillivray's Warbler Mar. 26, Ventura County; Yellow-breasted Chat Apr. 8, San Diego; Wilson's Warbler Mar. 15, Palm Springs and Ventura County; Hooded Oriole Feb. 27, San Diego; N. (Bullock's) Oriole Mar. 11, San Diego; W. Tanager Apr. 11, San Diego; Black-headed Grosbeak Mar. 24, Orange County; Blue Grosbeak Apr. 17, Antelope Valley; Lazuli Bunting Apr. 1, Orange County; Black-chinned Sparrow Apr. 1, San Jacinto Mts.

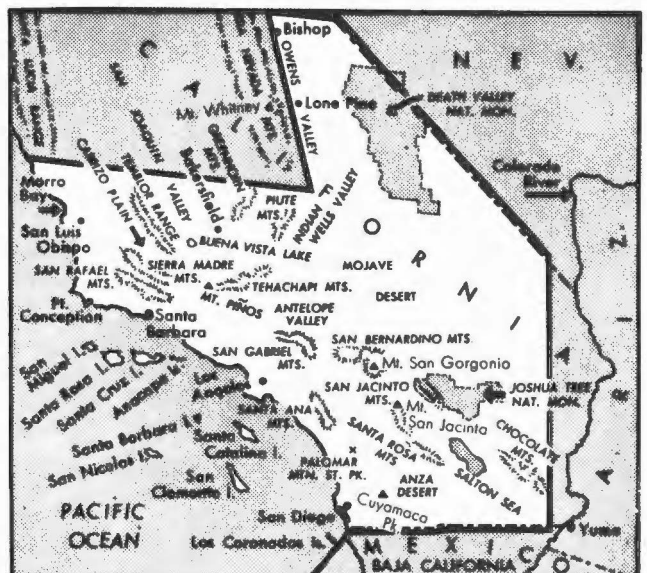
### LOONS, GREBES—A flock of 93 Com.

Loons on L. Henshaw in the mountains of San Diego County Apr. 18 (GMCC) was an exceptionally large concentration for an inland locality; one at Little Lake, Inyo Co., May 22 (PEL) and another at Oasis, Mono Co., May 23-25 (PEL) were in areas where few are recorded. An Arctic Loon on L. Henshaw Apr. 8 (RH) was unexpected since few are recorded inland away from the immediate vicinity of the coast. A Red-necked Grebe in Santa Monica May 23-26 (KLG) was exceptionally late. A Horned Grebe at the north end of the Salton Sea (here-

after, N.E.S.S.) Apr. 5 (RMCK) was the only one found in the e. part of the Region.

**ALBATROSSES, SHEARWATERS, STORM-PETRELS**—A Black-footed Albatross one mi off Pacific Beach, San Diego Co., May 16 (EC) was exceptionally close to shore. A N. Fulmar found dead in Santa Barbara Mar. 19 (LRB) was the only one re-ported. A Flesh-footed Shearwater, rare off California, was 3 mi off Goleta, Santa Barbara Co., May 29 (JA) and two were seen off San Diego May 16 (EC). Six Ashy Storm-Petrels off San Diego May 16 (EC) were in an area where few are recorded.

**HERONS**—The wintering imm. Little Blue Heron in San Diego remained through Mar. 17 (GMCC); an adult in Santa Barbara/Gol-eta May 6-14 (LRB), another in Ojai, Ventura Co., May 1 (JG) and a third at N.E.S.S.,



May 10 (JO) fit the pattern set by spring vagrants to California (see *Western Birds* 8:151-154, 1977). Two Cattle Egrets at Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley (hereafter, F.C.R.) May 28 (JML) and single birds in the Antelope Valley near Lancaster Apr. 26 (DRW) & May 25 (JLD) were the only transients found away from the coastal lowlands. A sub-adult Reddish Egret, rare in California, was near Oceanside, San Diego Co., Apr. 17-May 3 (LS). One of the wintering Louisiana Herons near Imperial Beach, San Diego Co., was still present May 9 (EAC); an adult in Goleta Apr. 30 and in nearby Carpinteria May 1 (LRB) was quite far n., another on San Clemente I., May 20 (WTE) along with one at Bolsa Chica, Orange Co., May 25 (JA) were late, and two at N.E.S.S., May 10 (AS) were inland. A sub-adult Yellow-crowned Night Heron, a casual straggler to California, was at the Santa Clara R. estuary near Ventura (hereafter, S.C.R.E.) Apr. 30-May 3 (REW). Two transient Least Bitterns at F.C.R., May 24-28 (JML) were in an area where small numbers are found each spring, but one in Arcadia, Los Angeles Co., May 8 (B. Cohen, *vide* GSS) was unexpected.

**GEESSE, DUCKS**—As usual a few Brant were found inland during March and April with high counts of 110 at N.E.S.S., Mar. 10 (BW) and 18 on L. Henshaw Apr. 8 (RH); these are birds moving N from winter grounds in the Gulf of California. Eleven White-fronted Geese flying N over Mt. Palomar, San Diego Co., Mar. 13 (RH) were at an unusual locality and two at N.E.S.S., May 10 (JO) were late. A Ross' Goose near Lancaster Apr. 5 (DLD) was the first to be found in the Antelope Valley, and one at N.E.S.S., Apr. 12 (DP) was somewhat late. Unexpected were four Fulvous Whistling Ducks near Lancaster May 16-17 (KLG) since wild birds are accidental away from the vicinity of the south end of the Salton Sea (hereafter, S.E.S.S.). A ♂ Eur. Wigeon on L. Cuyamaca in the mountains of San Diego County Apr. 4 (DP) and another on San Elijo Lagoon, San Diego Co., to Apr. 19 (JO) were the latest reported this spring. A ♂ Eur. x Am. Wigeon was at S.C.R.E., Apr. 10-26 (REW). A ♀ Barrow's Goldeneye, a casual straggler to the coast of s. California, was at Pt. Mugu, Ventura Co., Mar. 29 (REW). An Oldsquaw near Ventura remained May 25 (DSTE), and another was at Redondo Beach, Los Angeles Co., Apr. 24-27 (H&NS). The ♂ Harlequin Duck found in Carlsbad in 1977 was still present at the end of the period (EC). Up to 49 Surf Scoters were present on L. Henshaw Apr. 2-9 (RH); these are birds moving out of the Gulf of California to the Pacific. A flock of 12 Red-breasted Mergansers on L. Henshaw Apr. 8 (RH) had probably moved N out of the Gulf of California.

**KITES, HAWKS, FALCONS**—A White-tailed Kite at N.E.S.S., Apr. 5 (RMCK) was somewhat outside the species' normal range. An ad. **Mississippi Kite** at F.C.R., May 24-25 (JO) was only the tenth to be found in California, but five were at F.C.R., on dates ranging between May 21 and June 14. The only Broad-winged Hawk was an adult at Morongo Valley, San Bernardino Co., Apr. 30 (EAC, ph., S.D.N.H.M.). Swainson's Hawks were rare with five in the Antelope

Valley Apr. 8 (KLG) and five at Yucca Valley, San Bernardino Co., Apr. 24 (RMCK) being the largest concentrations reported; this is a far cry from the "hundreds" seen migrating through this Region 30 years ago. An ad. Bald Eagle over Topanga, Los Angeles Co., Apr. 27 (KLG) and a sub-adult on L. Cachuma, Santa Barbara Co., May 3 (PEL) were somewhat late. An ad. Peregrine Falcon at N.E.S.S., May 2 (EAC) and another on San Clemente I., Apr. 22-23 (HF) were the only ones found away from known nesting sites. A Merlin in Santa Barbara Apr. 13 (PEL), another near Ventura Apr. 24 (REW), and a third at S.C.R.E., May 4 (REW) were the latest reported this spring.

**CRANES, RAILS**—A Sandhill Crane at San Jacinto L., Riverside Co., Mar. 7 (EAC) was away from areas of normal occurrence, and 100± flying N over N.E.S.S., Apr. 5 (RMCK) was clearly a migrant flock, probably moving N from wintering areas near S.E.S.S., or in n.w. Mexico. A Sora at Pt. Mugu May 19 (REW) was somewhat late for along the coast. Six Black Rails calling from marshes bordering Morro Bay May 12 (JR) were in the only area along the coast of s. California known to regularly support this elusive bird.

**SHOREBIRDS**—A Black Oystercatcher in Goleta Apr. 22 (N. States, *vide* PEL) and another in Carpinteria Apr. 24 (J. Chamberlain, *vide* PEL) were wanderers in areas outside the species' normal range. Four Am. Golden Plovers near Santa Maria Apr. 26 (PEL) and one at Seal Beach Apr. 18 (AFP) were the latest of the wintering birds to depart. Twelve Black-bellied Plovers near Lancaster Apr. 8 (JLD) were unusual since this species is rare inland away from the Salton Sea. Solitary Sandpipers are normally rare in spring so reports of six come as a surprise, with an exceptionally early bird on Baldwin L., in the San Bernardino Mts., Apr. 3 (KLG), three found in the Antelope Valley Apr. 21-May 16 (JLD, KLG), and single birds around Tecopa, Inyo Co., Apr. 8 & 23 (JT). A Ruddy Turnstone, exceptionally rare inland away from the Salton Sea, was near Lancaster Apr. 8 (KLG), and a high count of 37 was made at the Salton Sea May 3 (EC). Five Short-billed Dowitchers in the Antelope Valley Apr. 8-21 (JLD) were the only ones found inland away from the Salton Sea. Red Knots were constantly present on the Salton Sea Mar. 28-May 10 with a high count of 45 Apr. 12 (GMCK); one near Lancaster May 16 (B. Obst, *vide* KLG) was the only one found inland away from the Salton Sea. A Sanderling, a rare bird anywhere inland away from the Salton Sea, was near Tecopa May 8 (JT) and five were near Lancaster May 12 (KLG). Eight Semipalmated Sandpipers were reported with single birds in Goleta May 5 & 29 (PEL), four at S.C.R.E., May 3-20 (REW), one near Lancaster May 18 (JLD), and one at S.E.S.S., May 3 (GMCK). A Baird's Sandpiper, rare in spring, was at the Santa Maria R. mouth May 14 (REW) and another was at S.C.R.E., Apr. 29 (REW). A Pectoral Sandpiper, also rare in spring, was at Pt. Mugu May 9 (REW) and another was at S.C.R.E., May 15 (REW). The only Stilt Sandpipers to be found were two at S.E.S.S., May 3 (JO).

A ♂ Ruff at Pt. Mugu Apr. 11 (REW) was definitely a migrant as this area was checked regularly throughout the winter.

**GULLS, TERNS, SKIMMERS**—A first-winter Glaucous Gull was present in Goleta Mar. 14-Apr. 18 (JLD, ph., S.D.N.H.M.). A



*First-winter Glaucous Gull with Western Gulls, Goleta, Calif., Mar. 14-Apr. 18, 1981. Photo/Jim Greaves.*

first-winter Thayer's Gull near N.E.S.S., Mar. 28 (GMCK) was in an area where the species is rare, but a second-winter bird near Lancaster May 18 (JLD) was the first found inland away from the Salton Sea and Colorado R. The first-winter **Black-headed Gull** wintering in Redondo Beach was last seen Apr. 20 (KLG). A Laughing Gull, rare along the coast, was on Laguna L., near Morro Bay Mar. 6-May 15 (JR), one was at Pt. Mugu May 2 (REW), another was in Redondo Beach May 4 (H&NS), and the first-winter bird found in San Diego Feb. 3 was still present Apr. 11 (JO). An exceptionally early ad. Franklin's Gull at the S.C.R.E., Mar. 15 (REW) and another on Baldwin L., Mar. 21 (KLG) were followed by five along the coast May 6-12 (PEL, JR) along with one at F.C.R., May 24 (JSL) and another at N.E.S.S., May 3 (EC). An ad. Heermann's



*Adult Franklin's Gull near Santa Maria, Santa Barbara Co., Calif., May 6, 1981. Photo/Paul Lehman.*

Gull, a rare straggler to the interior, was at N.E.S.S., Apr. 12 (JO) and the first-winter bird found wintering at S.E.S.S., was still present May 30 (RH). An ad. Sabine's Gull near Lancaster May 17-25 (FH, ph., S.D.N.H.M.) was the first to be found inland in spring away from the Salton Sea and Colorado R. As usual a few Arctic Terns passed close to the coast in May, with 15 off San Diego May 16 (EC) and one off Goleta May 29 (LB). Totally unexpected was a Least Tern at F.C.R., May 27 (JML); this species is a casual straggler to the Salton Sea, accidental along the Colorado R., and was previously unrecorded elsewhere from the interior of s. California. Black Skimmers were found to



the n. of San Diego Bay, the only place along the coast where this species nests, with one near Oceanside May 3 (DP), another near San Pedro May 31 (JA), and at least seven at S.C.R.E., Apr. 17-Jun. 3 (REW).

**ALCIDS**—A Pigeon Guillemot off Goleta May 29 (LB) and three off San Pedro Apr. 12 (B. Obst, *vide* KLG) were in areas where the species is considered rare. A Horned Puffin, a casual straggler to California, was at Santa Monica May 23-26 (KLG,\*U.C.L.A.).

**PIGEONS THROUGH GOATSUCKERS**—More than the usual number of Band-tailed Pigeons wandered to the coast of San Diego County with 25± found on Pt. Loma during May; one near Tecopa May 9 (JT) and another in Superior Valley of e. San Bernardino County May 13 (ASE) were both far from areas of normal occurrence. Two White-winged Doves on Pt. Loma May 5 (GCE) and single birds there May 25 (EC) & 27 (DP) were the only ones found along the coast. A Ground Dove near Saticoy, Ventura Co., Apr. 29 (JM) was somewhat to the n.w. of the species' normal range. A Screech Owl at F.C.R., May 27 (JML) was believed to be a migrant since this species does not normally occur at this location. A Flammulated Owl on Mt. Palomar May 24+ (RH) appeared to be on territory. A Long-eared Owl near Imperial Beach Mar. 21 (GMCC) appeared to be a migrant. A migrant Short-eared Owl at Pt. Mugu Apr. 25 (REW) was considered very late. The Whip-poor-will found wintering in Pacific Palisades was last heard Mar. 17 (B. Willets, *vide* GSS). A Poor-will in Coronado, San Diego Co., Apr. 28 (EC) was clearly a migrant.

**SWIFTS THROUGH WOODPECKERS**—An exceptionally early Black Swift at the Ventura R. mouth Apr. 19 (REW) was followed by three over Goleta May 19 (JLD), three over Griffith P., in Los Angeles May 27 (KLG), and one over San Elijo Lagoon May 19 (JO) along the coast, along with two at L. Henshaw May 18 (RH) and three at Finney L., in the Imperial Valley May 3 (GMCC). Two Chimney Swifts over Burbank, Los Angeles Co., May 29 (D. Koeppel, *vide* GSS) were the only ones reported this spring. A ♀ Downy Woodpecker in San Diego Apr. 11 (JO) was a little s. of the species' present range. A ♂ Ladder-backed Woodpecker at F.C.R., Mar. 31 (LN) was a little out of range.

**FLYCATCHERS**—A Tropical Kingbird at Morro Bay Mar. 20-23 (BE) had probably wintered nearby, and the bird present in Goleta all winter was still present on the remarkably late date of May 23 (LB). Nesting Wied's Crested Flycatchers returned to Morongo Valley Apr. 30 (R&MW). An E. Phoebe near Corona, Riverside Co., Mar. 16 (DRW) was undoubtedly wintering locally. A Willow Flycatcher near Imperial Beach May 2+ (GMCC) was somewhat early but on territory; the bulk of these birds are not seen along the coast until the end of May. A Least Flycatcher, casual in spring, was at Oasis May 21-22 (DR). Thirteen Gray Flycatchers were reported along the coast Apr. 11-May 21 indicating that a few migrants reached the coast this spring.

**TITMICE THROUGH VIREOS**—Two Plain Titmice in Morongo Valley May 4 (DRW) were a little out of normal range. A White-breasted Nuthatch at F.C.R., May 24-28 (JSL) was far from the nearest area of normal occurrence. Three Brown Thrashers were reported with one near Morro Bay Apr. 21 (JR), another near San Diego Apr. 10 (DWP), and the third in Kelso, San Bernardino Co., May 21 (ASE). A Bendire's Thrasher in California City, Kern Co., Apr. 4 (GWP) was appreciably n.w. of the species' normal range. A Townsend's Solitaire on Pt. Loma Apr. 18 (DP) was unusual since few reach the coast of California in spring. A Phainopepla at Pt. Mugu May 9 (REW) was in an area where very few are recorded.

Most unusual was a ♂ **White-eyed Vireo** in Whitewater Canyon, Riverside Co., May 9 (HLJ) followed by another in Malibu, Los Angeles Co., May 24-27 (J. Szabo, *vide* KLG, ph., S.D.N.H.M.) for there are only 4 previous records of this species in California. A



*White-eyed Vireo, Malibu Cr., Calif., May 26, 1981. Photo/Donald R. Hoechlin.*

Hutton's Vireo near Lancaster Apr. 18 (FH) was some distance away from areas of normal occurrence. Another real rarity in California, a Yellow-throated Vireo, was in Long Beach May 16-17 (BD) with a second at Deep Springs, Inyo Co., May 22 (DLD). A Solitary Vireo of the gray race, *plumbeus*, on Mt. Palomar May 10 (RH) was a migrant moving to the W of this form's normal range. Unexpected were three Philadelphia Vireos, casual stragglers to California in spring, with one at Oasis May 23-29 (JML), another there May 25-28 (BD), and the third at the same spot May 29-31 (BD).

**WOOD WARBLERS**—Nine Black-and-white Warblers in the e. portion of the Region, along with ten along the coast, Apr. 16-June 6, gave us an average number for the spring migration period. A ♀ Prothonotary Warbler at Oasis May 28-29 (JML) was the only one found this spring. A Worm-eating Warbler, a casual spring straggler to California, was at Oasis May 26 (REW). A ♂ Golden-winged Warbler, another real rarity in California, was at Oasis May 25-26 (P.S. Gordon, *vide* REW). A Tennessee Warbler in Ventura Mar. 28 (GAG) and another in Ojai Apr. 9 (JG) were believed to have wintered nearby; the 20± spring vagrants all occurred Apr. 20-June 1. The wintering Virginia's Warbler in Newport Beach was last seen Mar. 29 (SJR); one near Tecopa Apr. 24 (JT) was the only migrant reported. A N. Parula at San Elijo Lagoon Mar. 8 (JMcN) was undoubtedly wintering locally; six found in the n.e. portion of the Region May 22-30, along

with six along the coast after Apr. 23, were more than normally recorded. Four Magnolia Warblers in the e. part of the Region May 23-29, along with a male at Playa del Rey May 30 (HB), was a little above average. A ♀ Black-throated Green Warbler, a casual spring vagrant to California, was near Malibu May 27 (KLG). A ♂ Blackburnian Warbler at Playa del Rey May 31 (HB) is only the sixth to be found in this Region in spring. Seven Yellow-throated Warblers were found with a male near Goleta May 10 (LB), a female in Santa Barbara May 11+ (LRB), one at Northridge, Los Angeles Co., May 7 (H. Swanton, *vide* GSS), one in Long Beach May 18 (BD), a male near Malibu May 27 (KLG) a female on Pt. Loma Apr. 25 (JO), and a male at Corn Springs in e. Riverside Co., Apr. 25 (AS, ph., S.D.N.H.M.). The ♂ Grace's Warbler that wintered in Santa Barbara was last seen Mar. 28 (PEL); two males on Clark Mt., in e. San Bernardino Co., May 23 (BD) were in an area where nesting could occur. A ♂ Chestnut-sided Warbler in Morongo Valley May 14 (EAC) and another at Oasis May 24-27 (JML) were the only ones reported.

A ♂ Bay-breasted Warbler on Pt. Loma May 25-28 (EC) was the only one found this spring. A ♂ Blackpoll Warbler, quite rare in spring, was at Deep Springs May 28 (B. Brock, *vide* JML). A Palm Warbler in Ventura Mar. 30 (JG) had undoubtedly wintered in that area. A somewhat early Ovenbird at Corn Springs, Apr. 25 (AS) was followed by six more at various locations within the Region during May. A wintering N. Waterthrush remained at Pt. Mugu through Apr. 11 (REW) and another near Imperial Beach was still present May 2 (GMCC); nine migrants were found in the e. part of the Region in late May. A ♂ **Kentucky Warbler**, an accidental straggler to California, was in Morongo Valley May 17-21 (EAC). Six Hooded Warblers along the coast in Goleta/Santa Barbara and around San Diego Apr. 18-May 13 (PEL,EC), along with one in Laguna Beach May 24 (JAJ), one at Deep Springs May 23 (BS,ph., S.D.N.H.M.), and a ninth at Scotty's Castle in Death Valley May 27 (JML) was far more than normally reported. A total of 30± Am. Redstarts was found during May. The Painted Redstart found wintering in San Diego was last seen Mar. 14 (BD).



*Hooded Warbler at Deep Springs, Calif., May 23, 1981. Photo/Donald R. Hoechlin.*

**ORIOLES, BLACKBIRDS, TANAGERS**—Four Bobolinks at F.C.R., May 20-29 (DR,JO) were the only ones reported. A ♂ Yellow-headed Blackbird at Los Osos, San Luis Obispo Co., Apr. 30 (TH) was in an area where the species is considered rare. Four N. (Baltimore) Orioles in Inyo County during late May were clearly spring vagrants; however, two in Santa Barbara Mar. 28-Apr. 15 (PEL), another in Goleta Apr. 12 (DB), and

one in Manhattan Beach Mar. 29 (KLG) could all have wintered locally, considering that a male near Malibu May 17 (HB) was believed to be the same bird seen there throughout the winter. A Great-tailed Grackle on Pt. Fermin, Los Angeles Co., Apr. 15 (J. Ivanov, *vide* GSS) was along the coast, and a male at Oasis May 29-30 (JML) was relatively far n. A ♂ Scarlet Tanager, a casual straggler to California in spring, was at Deep Springs May 25 (BB). A ♂ Hepatic Tanager on Clark Mt., May 23 (DRW) and a pair near Baldwin L., in the San Bernardino Mts., May 31 (RMcK) were in areas where nesting has occurred. Wintering Summer Tanagers lingered to Mar. 28 in Carpinteria (PEL) and to Mar. 9 in Orange (DRW); a male was on breeding territory near Palm Springs on the early date of Apr. 4 (RMcK), and a total of eight vagrants was found in the n.e. corner of the Region during the last week of May along with four around San Diego May 10-June 2.

**FINCHES, SPARROWS**—Fifteen Rose-breasted Grosbeaks reported during May would appear average but 30 Indigo Buntings during May were more than usually reported. A ♀ Dickcissel, quite rare in spring, was at F.C.R., May 25 (AS). Four Red Crossbills at Yucca Valley, Apr. 18 (RMcK) were at an unusual locality. A *Le Conte's Sparrow* at F.C.R., May 24-25 (TW, ph., S.D.N.H.M.)

was only the fifth to be found in this Region, with all but one having occurred at this oasis. A Sage Sparrow on the Palos Verdes Pen., Mar. 23 (JA) was in an area where few have been recorded. A Gray-headed Junco on Pt. Loma May 2-3 (EC) was quite late, as wintering birds normally depart in March. A Brewer's Sparrow at S.C.R.E., Apr. 30 (REW) was unexpected as there appear to be no previous spring records for that area. A Harris' Sparrow, scarce in s.w. California, was in Garden Grove, Orange Co., Mar. 27-Apr. 2 (SJR). A White-throated Sparrow in Goleta through Apr. 22 (KB) was the last of the wintering birds to depart; an exceptionally late migrant was at Deep Springs May 23 (GMcC). A Swamp Sparrow at F.C.R., Mar. 17 (LN) had probably wintered locally but another there May 23 (JO) was an exceptionally late migrant. A ♀ Chestnut-collared Longspur on San Clemente I., Apr. 15-22 (EC,WTE) was late and one of only a few ever found in California during spring migration.

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