

MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION

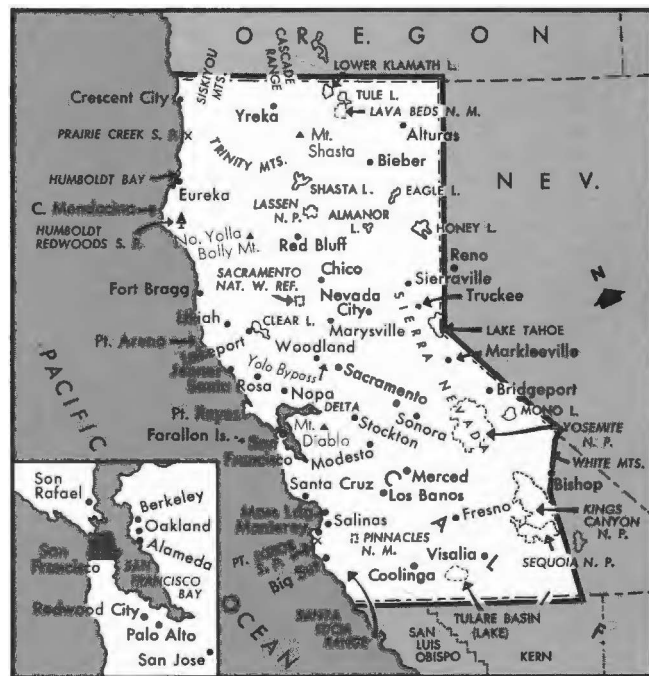
/Ron LeValley and Don Roberson

This fall's weather was almost a repeat of last year's as two small storms passed through the Region in September and October while November was downright wet. The northern Coast Range Mountains experienced a phenomenal wild berry and acorn crop, "the best since the evolution of Pacific Madrone and Evergreen Huckleberry" (RLeV).

Ocean surface temperatures reached their annual maximum in September with 14°C in the north and 15° in the southern part of the Region, slightly cooler than average. After that temperatures varied as passing storm systems brought slightly warmer waters at their leading edge and slightly cooler waters afterwards. By the end of the period the surface temperatures had cooled only slightly, remaining around 14-15°, or about 1° above average. These variable surface water temperatures possibly play a role in the variability of bird species and numbers on our popular pelagic trips. This was particularly evident because of the excellent reporting coverage from Monterey Bay trips this fall.

Landbird migration was termed "dull" by many observers, with long stretches of clear skies in September and October producing very few migrant waves and fewer vagrants than usual (see warbler summary). Equally noticeable, and in high contrast to last fall, was the virtual absence of montane species in the lowlands; Red-breasted Nuthatches, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Varied Thrushes, and even American Robins were noted in only tiny numbers, due at least in part, to large numbers in the berry-rich interior.

Early Dates: Gadwall Aug. 14 Cader Lane Ponds, Petaluma; Sharp-shinned Hawk Aug. 2 Terwer Valley, Del Norte Co.; Cooper's Hawk Aug. 18 Palomarin; Rough-legged Hawk Oct. 25 Lower Klamath N.W.R.; Merlin Sept. 16 Arcata Bottoms; Herring Gull Nov. 2 Central Valley; Thayer's Gull Oct. 24 Crescent City Harbor; Yellow-bellied (Red-breasted) Sapsucker Oct. 1 Carmel R. Mouth, Monterey Co.; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher Aug. 29 P.R.N.S.; Cedar Waxwing Sept. 26 Walnut Creek, Contra Costa Co.; Rufous-sided



Towhee Oct. 5 Lake Talawa, Del Norte Co.; Lincoln's Sparrow Sept. 11 Palomarin.

Late Dates: Swainson's Hawk Sept. 23 Pt. Diablo, Marin Co.; Least Tern Oct. 16 Alameda South Shore; Elegant Tern Nov. 18 Monterey Bay; Caspian Tern Nov. 3 Half Moon Bay; Common Nighthawk Sept. 19 Hoopa, Humboldt Co.; Rufous Hummingbird Sept. 13 Palomarin; Allen's Hummingbird Aug. 13 Palomarin; Hermit Thrush (on breeding area) Sept. 27 Macdoel, Siskiyou Co.; Yellow Warbler Nov. 6 Coyote Hills, Alameda Co.; Wilson's Warbler Oct.

20 Halfmoon Bay, San Mateo Co.; Hooded Oriole (on breeding area) Sept. 4 Alamo, Contra Costa Co.; Lazuli Bunting Oct. 2 Dry Creek, Fresno Co.; Greek-tailed Towhee (in breeding area) Oct. 3 Little Grayback, Del Norte Co.

ABBREVIATIONS — C.V. = Central Valley; F.I. = s.e. Farallon Island; N.P. = Nat'l Park; N.F. = Nat'l Forest; P.R.N.S. = Point Reyes Nat'l Seashore; P.R.B.O. = Point Reyes Bird Observatory; † = description on file; ph. = photo on file. All observation at Palomarin (near Bolinas) and F.I. should be credited to P.R.B.O.

LOONS THROUGH TUBENOSES — A breeding-plumaged Yellow-billed Loon was in Humboldt Bay at King Salmon Aug. 26-Oct. 3 for the first September record and only the third regional breeding plumage sighting (†RLV, LD, SJ). A Red-necked Grebe at Shadow Cliffs Regional P., Alameda Co., Oct. 22 was unusual for its occurrence away from the immediate coast (AE). Five hundred Eared Grebes at the S. Wilbur Flood Area, Kings Co., Aug. 2, was a notable concentration as were 800 W. Grebes there the same day (K & RH). Western Grebes were still on nest mounds at L. Almanor, Plumas Co., as late as Sept. 23 and young were still begging from adults Nov. 10 (DAA). A juv.-plumaged Pied-billed Grebe on the forest floor at the Blodgett Forest Research Station, El Dorado Co., Oct. 1 was at least 5 mi from the nearest water (SAL).

Black-footed Albatrosses were scarcer than normal offshore this season with a maximum of 10 seen off Humboldt County Oct. 3 (SJ). A Laysan Albatross was seen off Eureka Oct. 3 (SJ) and another was near the Ascension Submarine Canyon off Monterey Co., Nov. 8 (*vide* †BL) both in localities where they are expected in small numbers. Northern Fulmars began arriving during October in average numbers for this sporadic species with 70 on Monterey Bay Oct. 16 (SFB), 75 there Nov. 7 (AB) and 75 near the Cordelle Banks Nov. 14 (BDP) being the largest numbers reported. A well-described and photographed **Streaked Shearwater** was 1.5 mi w. of Moss Landing, Monterey Bay Sept. 26 (†AB, †JM *et al.*) for only the fourth United States record, all from Monterey Bay! Pink-footed Shearwaters made an impressive showing on Monterey Bay this fall with maxima of 10-20,000 Sept. 18 (DE, TC, DLS) & 22 (DR, SFB). Along with those good numbers were 5-7 Flesh-footed Shearwaters Sept. 22 (DR, BBt, RW *et al.*) and singles Sept. 21 (RS) and Oct. 3 (AB, DR, JLu *et al.*). New Zealand (Buller's) Shearwaters made one of their finest showings ever in Monterey Bay with the first ones appearing Aug. 28 (AB, DE) and a maximum of 2-3,000 Sept. 22 (DR, RW, SFB, BBt) the largest number ever seen in our Region. Sooty Shearwater numbers in contrast were considered lower than normal in Monterey Bay for most of the season probably correlated with the fact that the commercial squid harvest was about 50% that of last year (AB). Short-tailed Shearwaters were found in numbers of 1-4 on Monterey Bay boat trips during October and November (AB, RS, JLu, JML) while Manx Shearwaters reached a peak of 40 ± there Nov. 14 (AB, JLu, RS, TB). The first Manx Shearwater report was Oct. 10 in Monterey Bay (HLC) which seems to be a normal arrival date for this s. species.

The fall storm-petrel flock in Monterey Bay provided its normal amount of variety and excitement to pelagic trips there. The earliest trip to find storm-petrels was Aug. 4 when two Black Storm-Petrels were present (JD). By Aug. 28 there were 25 Ashy Storm-Petrels along with two Blacks (DE). The maximum numbers of Ashys were found Sept. 21—6000 (RS) and Oct. 3—4800 (DR) while Blacks reached their peak earlier with 2500 Sept. 8 (PJM) and 3000 estimated Sept. 17 (JD). Among the Ashys was an albino thought to be the same individual present in the flock for the past 2 years (DR)! Also present in the flocks Oct. 16 (MC), Nov. 7 (DE, DLS) & 14 (RS, JLu, DLS) were single Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels. Small numbers of Least Storm-Petrels put in appearances beginning Sept. 18 when three were present (TC, DLS). The maximum reported were 5-7 Sept. 26 (AB, DLS), Oct. 9 (RW), 10 (HLC) & 17 (JM) and the last individuals were noted on the late date of Nov. 14 when more than two were present (RS, JLu). Wilson's Storm-Petrels were noted in what is now considered normal numbers of 1-3 beginning Aug. 26 and lingering until Nov. 14 (m.ob.). The Nov. 14 trip not only had all of the storm-petrel species recorded during the fall but established the latest Regional records for both Wilson's and Least storm-petrels!

TROPICBIRDS THROUGH IBISES — An ad. **Red-billed Tropicbird** in Monterey Bay Oct. 10 (†RS) provided only the fifth Regional sighting. The only large concentration of White Pelicans was along

Hwy 37 w. of Vallejo where 2000 were noted Aug. 30 (B & HK). Elsewhere in San Francisco Bay they were considered present in lower-than-usual numbers (HLC, WB). Two Brown Pelicans at Mare I. Strait, Solano Co., Sept. 6 were unusual so far away from the mouth of San Francisco Bay (JLo). For the second consecutive fall Brown Pelicans were remaining later than usual in the n. part of the Region as 33 were still at Stone Lagoon, Humboldt Co., Nov. 30 (GJS). A single Double-crested Cormorant at Green L., at 9000 ft elevation in Mono County Aug. 26 was notable (*vide* DAG).

Noteworthy concentrations of Great Egrets were 120 at L. Talawa, Del Norte Co., Nov. 26 (RAE, PU, KHb), where their numbers continue to increase at the n. edge of their coastal range, and 250 at the Mountain View Salt Ponds, Santa Clara Co. (WB). Two ad. Little Blue Herons have become old news along the w. side of s. San Francisco Bay. Little Blue Herons began frequenting this area in the early 1970s, mostly in the spring, but during the last 5 years at least two adults have been continuously resident. Eighteen Snowy Egrets at L. Earl, Del Norte Co., were at the n. edge of their range along the coast (RAE, GSL, GJS). A Least Bittern, always a rare find in the Region, was at the Palo Alto Baylands Nov. 18 & 20 (FBe, JRI). White-faced Ibises visiting the Palo Alto Baylands and nearby areas established only the third Santa Clara County record. Four made the first appearance Sept. 10 and the flock grew to 15 when they were last seen Sept. 27 (WB *et al.*). Another White-faced Ibis was near Salinas, Monterey Co., Oct. 24 (KVV, KC).

WATERFOWL — Waterfowl in general were considered to be down in numbers throughout our Region, likely due to poor breeding success on the summering grounds rather than conditions in our Region. One to three Fulvous Whistling Ducks frequented Sacramento N.W.R., throughout November (*vide* BED). This species continues to be a rare visitor in our Region. An Emperor Goose shot by a hunter at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Oct. 20 (*vide* SJ) was somewhat early and marks the third consecutive fall that the species has occurred there. The only Snow Geese found on the coast this fall were two at L. Earl, Del Norte Co., Oct. 16 and Nov. 26 (RAE). A Brant at Bodega Bay Aug. 1-Sept. 18 (JRI, FBe, CH) was probably a summering bird. The first Eur. Wigeon of this fall were two Oct. 3 at the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin (*vide* WB). A large and early gathering of Mallards were the 8000+ at Mt. Meadow, Lassen Co., Oct. 10 (HG). They were accompanied by 10,000+ Pintails (HG).

A pair of Canvasbacks with downy young at the S. Wilbur Flood Area, Kings Co., Aug. 2 may have been the southernmost breeding ever (K & RH). The only Tufted Duck reported was an eclipse male at Abbott's Lagoon, Pt. Reyes Nov. 7 (RS). A ♀ Oldsquaw at L. Almanor, Plumas Co., Nov. 10 (DAA) provided one of the few records from the mountainous areas of our Region. Elsewhere the only report was of one at the Klamath R. Estuary, Del Norte Co., Nov. 21 (RAE). Six Barrow's Goldeneye at Foster City, San Mateo Co., were amazingly early (DM); normally they arrive on the coast near mid-October.

VULTURES THROUGH RAILS — A White-tailed Kite at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Nov. 29-Dec. 10 (SJ) was in an area from which there are still few records. An active Bald Eagle nest near Butte Valley, Siskiyou Co., Aug. 16 (SJ) was encouraging. Later in the fall the normal (but phenomenal) winter numbers of this species gathered at Lower Klamath N.W.R., where 300 were estimated Nov. 26 (RLV, LD). This may be the largest wintering Bald Eagle area outside of Alaska. All 3 accipiters were reported in average numbers this fall. Migrant Red-shouldered Hawks on outer Pt. Reyes Sept. 23 and Oct. 9 (JE) and at Pt. Diablo in the Marin Headlands Sept. 29-30 (BBa, JE) continue to raise the question of where our migrants come from as this species is mostly resident along the n. coast.

The big raptor news of the fall was undoubtedly the late and large invasion of Broad-winged Hawks. At least 16 passed Pt. Diablo, Marin Co., Sept. 25-Nov. 21 with the peak number of three Oct. 3 (CF) essentially equal to peak timing suggested by Binford (1979, *Western Birds* 10:1-16). Eight of the Pt. Diablo records, however, came in November; prior to this fall only one November record existed at that popular hawk-watching site. But the real push came Nov. 20 when a minimum of 17 were migrating over Pacific Grove, Monterey Co., mostly in kettles of 4-6 individuals (†DR). Not only was this remarkably late but it marked the first time that kettles of Broad-winged have been seen in the West! One of the preceding group was of the very rare dark phase. Some of these apparently

lingered in the area as one immature was present Nov. 19-23 just s. of Monterey (AB). Five were seen in the Pt. Reyes area with one remaining through Nov. 26 in Inverness P. (RS). At least one immature was near Half Moon Bay, San Mateo Co., Nov. 20-28 (JM, PJM, AE) and even another was near the Cliff House in San Francisco Nov. 13 (JM).

A well-described "Harlan's" Hawk was near Buntingville, Lassen Co., Nov. 20 (†T & AM). An exceptionally early Ferruginous Hawk was photographed 8 mi. e. of Blue Lake, Humboldt Co., Aug. 22 (KR). All 4 species of our normally occurring falcons were well reported with Merlin numbers being somewhat higher than normal.

A calling Clapper Rail at the s. end of Tomales Bay Sept. 12 (JE) had probably wandered there from elsewhere as the last report on file from that locality was in 1962!

SHOREBIRDS — A newly plowed field on Pt. Reyes contained 310 Killdeer Oct. 16 (RS). Normally concentrations such as that do not occur until after the first large winter storms, but then we probably know less about the migrations of common birds present in our Region all year than other groups of birds. Many "resident" species are made up of migratory populations and careful attention to such seasonal gatherings and other migratory clues can provide valuable data. American Golden Plovers were relatively scarce this fall, the largest gatherings were of ten on Pt. Reyes Sept. 9 (DS) and 10-12 in the Arcata Bottoms, Humboldt Co., Sept. 18-19 (RAE, KR). The only *fulva* reported was a juvenile at Elkhorn Slough, Monterey Co., Sept. 1 (DR).

Vigo St. Marsh in Eureka, Humboldt Co., has been dry throughout the drought years but remained wet all of last year. As a consequence good concentrations of shorebirds gathered there, illustrating the adaptability of the migrational patterns of birds depending on annually varying habitats. Up to 50 Lesser Yellowlegs were present there Sept. 18-20 (KR, RLeV). Four Solitary Sandpipers in the Arcata Bottoms Aug. 21 (KR) was a large group for the fall. This shorebird is much more common as a spring migrant here. Elsewhere only three other individuals were reported, Honey L. Wildlife Area, Lassen Co., Aug. 15 (BS), Hunter Cr., Del Norte Co., Sept. 17 (RAE), and Jepson Prairie Preserve, Solano Co., Sept. 22 (JLo). Red Phalaropes were abundant everywhere along the coast throughout November. The only inland sightings included one at Mono L., Oct. 21 (JRJ), constituting the third lake record, and 8-12 at the Stockton Sewage Ponds, San Joaquin Co., Oct. 24-Nov. 9 (DY, RS, AE, B & CY). Single Sanderlings appeared inland at Tulelake N.W.R., Oct. 3 (SS, RE, MRO), at the Woodland Sugar Ponds Sept. 11 (EH) and at the Lodi Sewage Ponds Sept. 18 (DY) while four were at the Stockton Sewage Ponds Sept. 18 (DY). Only a few Semipalmated Sandpipers were found this fall, most notably one at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Aug. 21 (†SS), singles at the Lodi Sewage Ponds Aug. 26 (KHb) and Sept. 19-25 (†DY) and four at Moss Landing Aug. 21 (†DR). Identification of this species is difficult so *all* reports should be accompanied by descriptions! Normal numbers of Baird's Sandpipers passed through on schedule but one thought to be an adult (but undescribed) at Pescadero Marsh, San Mateo Co., Oct. 28 (PJM) was remarkably late.

A record-breaking Pectoral Sandpiper invasion was documented in great detail as nearly 100 reports were received. The first sighting was Aug. 14 in Marin County (JE) while peak numbers occurred Sept. 20-Oct. 20 and the last was Nov. 21 in Bodega Harbor, Sonoma Co. (CH). Remarkable numbers included 100 at Vigo St. Marsh Sept. 20-Oct. 3 (RLeV, KR) and 105 at Elkhorn Slough, Monterey Co. (Oct. 3 (DR). Coinciding with the healthy Pectoral migration was a minimum



Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Mountain View Forebay, Santa Clara Co., Nov. 7, 1982. Photo/P. LaTourrette.

of eight Sharp-tailed Sandpipers spanning Sept. 11-Nov. 12. Singles were at Elkhorn Slough Sept. 11-15 (KVV, KC) and Oct. 4-10 (†DR, RS, †BBt, †HLC), Stone Lagoon, Humboldt Co., Sept. 26 (GJS), Pt. Reyes Oct. 23 (TC, BY, AE), Pescadero Cr. Mouth, San Mateo Co., Oct. 28 (†PJM), Mountain View Forebay, Santa Clara Co., Nov. 6-8 (WB, TC ph., AE, †JM), and at L. Earl, Del Norte Co., Oct. 15, 28 and Nov. 12 (RAE, GSL *et al.*). Three at L. Earl Oct. 16 was the only sighting of multiple birds (RAE). Single Silt Sandpipers were reported from L. Earl Aug. 26 (GSL, RAE, MRO, RE), Pt. Reyes Sept. 28 (SFB, JR) and Oct. 12 (BY) and Mountain View Forebay, Santa Clara Co., Nov. 7-8 (KHb, JM, AE). Five Buff-breasted Sandpipers in the Arcata Bottoms Sept. 15-25 (S. Harris, RLeV, RAE, KR ph.) and one near Petaluma Sept. 2-8 (LCB, BDP, BBt, RL ph.) were the only ones detected this fall. In marked contrast to the past few years only one Ruff was discovered, that a juvenile at the Salinas R. Mouth, Monterey Co., Sept. 19 (KVV, KC).

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS — An imm. Parasitic Jaeger frequented the Stockton Sewage Ponds Sept. 15-26 (DY, JML). Two-four Long-tailed Jaegers found on Monterey Bay Sept. 14-22 (m.ob.) were more than normal. Absolutely unprecedented were 35-40 S. Polar Skuas in Monterey Bay Sept. 22 (DR, SFB *et al.*). Our previous high count for a one-day trip was nine in 1970! Smaller numbers were reported on 5 other dates Sept. 6-Oct. 3 (m.ob.).

An ad. Black-headed Gull returned to the Stockton Sewage Ponds for the fifth consecutive year Oct. 18 with the first wave of Bonaparte's Gulls (DY *et al.*). About 11 individual Franklin's Gulls were found in coastal localities as is normal, but none were found inland. Not to be outdone by the Black-headed Gull, the Stockton Sewage Ponds Little Gull also returned for its fifth year Oct. 18 (DY *et al.*). Another ad. Little Gull was at the Arcata Oxidation Pond Nov. 11-13 (RLeV, LD, KR ph.). Inland Sabine's Gulls are always surprising, three (1 ad., 2 imm.) were at Mono L., Sept. 21 (JRJ, *fide* DAG), one was at the Stockton Sewage Ponds Sept. 24 (DY, JML) and another was at Benton's Crossing on the Owen's R., Mono Co., Sept. 26 (J & ES ph.). These records coincide well with this species' passage offshore in our Region and with its occurrence in Arizona.

A Royal Tern well-described from Elkhorn Slough Aug. 16 (†DR) provided one of our very few documented records in the past 50 years. Prior to that, this species apparently occurred in our Region annually. Elegant Terns were considered present in moderate numbers this fall but up to 120+ around Humboldt Bay Aug. 26-Sept. 19 (RLeV, KR) were farther n. than usual. Up to two plus were at the Klamath R. Estuary Sept. 24-29 (RAE, GSL) for their n. limit this year. Four visited the Farallon Is., Sept. 11 (P.R.B.O., PH), establishing only the second island record for this predominantly coastal species.

The relative occurrence of the 3 forms of *Endomychura murrelets* in our Region is still unclear. Monterey Bay boat trips found Craveri's Murrelets in large numbers when 20+ were counted Sept. 17 (JD) and 32 were present Sept. 18 (TC, DE). Xantus' Murrelets were distinguished in Monterey Bay Oct. 3 when two *hypoleuca* and two *scrippsi* were found (JML, DR, JLu, KHb, PU, AB). Three Xantus' were present Oct. 9 (TC) and one found Oct. 16 was thought to be a Craveri's (DE). Amazingly, no boat trip had both species in one day! It is thought that this remarkable situation exists because of the day-to-day variation in surface water temperatures (and the location of water masses that they indicate) even in such a confined area as Monterey Bay. Tufted Puffins were still lingering at their Castle Rock, Del Norte Co., breeding location Aug. 27 when three were present (RAE). An early winter-plumaged Tufted Puffin was in Monterey Bay Aug. 21 (TC, DLS). Other sightings were of singles in Monterey Bay Oct. 9 (DR, BBt) and near Cordelle Banks Nov. 14 (BDP).

PIGEONS THROUGH GOATSUCKERS — Three White-winged Doves, strictly fall/winter vagrants, appeared at P.R.N.S., Sept. 19 (JML, BY) and Oct. 30-Nov. 5 (RS) and on Pt. Pinos Oct. 29-30 (JMa, JML). A Roadrunner along Hwy. 20 in Yuba County Sept. 7 (BBa) was in an area where they are rarely reported.

A Screech Owl at 6334 ft, at Well's Cabin, Mendocino N.F., Sept. 27 (A. Jayko, *fide* CB) may have established an elevational record for the Coast Range. Another high owl was a Pygmy at 7050 ft, near Perego Meadows, Yosemite N.P., Nov. 26 (BKe). An ongoing U.S.F.S. & W. survey of Spotted Owls in Lassen N.F., reported 65 pairs, which was twice the predicted estimate (DAA). Among these were 16 in e. Shasta County and nine in Lassen County, areas with

but 1-2 previous records, thus extending the known range 40 mi n. of published accounts (Gould, G., 1977, *Western Birds* 8:131-146). Another new area for Spotted Owl was discovered Oct. 17 at Nicasio Res., Marin Co. (BDP). The famed Crescent City **Barred Owl** continued to be found through Sept. 21 (GSL), but more fascinating was another discovered in August and present through the end of the period at Salyer, Trinity Co. (CSi, MSt, KVR). This same bird was heard in summer 1981 and would have constituted the first state record.

Long-eared Owl, poorly understood, was reported from the C.V., at Stockton Sept. 27 (*fide* DY) and San Joaquin Experimental Range, Madera Co., Nov. 19 (KH). One at 8200 ft. at Sardine Meadows, Stanislaus N.F., Alpine Co., Aug. 13 (JLo) may have been an altitudinal record; others continue to be found in high mountain meadows in Yosemite N.P. (BKe), which updates the account in Gaines (1977) *Birds of the Yosemite Sierra*. Short-eared Owls continue to cause concern, with none found all fall in n.w. California (RAE) and only four reported from the n.w. coast. A Poor-will in the Sutter Buttes Oct. 30 (WA) was at one of the few C.V. localities.

SWIFTS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — Vaux's Swift migration spanned Aug. 4-Oct. 13, with peaks noted Sept. 17-18 at Willow Cr., Humboldt Co. (KVR) and King City, Monterey Co. (RR) and Sept. 25 at Bolinas Lagoon when 3000+ were estimated (P.R.B.O.). A ♂ Black-chinned Hummingbird strayed to Stinson Beach Sept. 22-30, where the call notes identified it (RS, JE), but another ♂ Black-chinned/Costa's at Stone Lagoon, Humboldt Co., Sept. 26 (GJS) remained unidentified. Out-of-range Costa's Hummingbirds were on F.I., Aug. 13 and far n. at Killgore Hills, Siskiyou Co., Aug. 13-26 (RE, MRo).

An imm. ♂ Broad-tailed Hummingbird along Pine Cr., Inyo Co., Aug. 6 (HG) may have been a migrant, but might indicate another breeding area e. of the Sierra crest. A ♂ Calliope Hummingbird in P.R.N.S., Sept. 23-Oct. 6 (BY) was one of very few found on the coast in fall.

Vagrant Lewis' Woodpeckers appeared at Sunol, Alameda Co., Sept. 18 (AE), Moss Landing, Monterey Co., Oct. 9 (RS), and Rank I., in the San Joaquin R., C.V., Nov. 2 (KH). Two Acorn Woodpeckers strayed to Palomar Sept. 10. A *nuchalis* Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Friant Dam, Fresno Co., Nov. 8 (KH) was of interest; they are rare away from breeding area in n.e. portions of the Region. Nuttall's Woodpecker tends to be quite resident; birds a few miles out-of-range were at Pt. Sur Sept. 30 (DR) and Berkeley Oct. 26 (SAL).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS — Fifteen Tropical Kingbirds on the coast from Pt. Sur to Pt. St. George (m.ob.) represented a typical fall for this species. Wisely, some observers are now taking the time to describe calls and bill shape to eliminate the remote possibility of a vagrant Couch's Kingbird. Single E. Phoebe was at Big Sur R. mouth Nov. 14 (DR) and Monterey Nov. 23+ (DR), the latter bird returning for its third winter. Willow Flycatcher, essentially extirpated as a breeding species, migrated through the Region Aug. 18-Oct. 13. Twenty-two of 30 reports were coastal with a decided peak the last week of August One at L. Shastina Sept. 30 (RE) was late at that latitude. Vagrant Least Flycatchers were on F.I., Sept. 14 & Oct. 11 and at P.R.N.S., Oct. 1 (†RS *et al.*). Four coastal Hammond's, but no Dusky, flycatchers were identified; both species are scarce fall migrants along the coast. Gray Flycatcher migration is poorly documented; none were found on the coast but 3 inland records are of interest: Aug. 12 near Grenada, Siskiyou Co. (RE—1st fall record for Shasta V., although common in spring), Sept. 25 at Pinecrest, Tuolumne Co. (JH), and Sept. 27 at Hodgdon Meadow, Yosemite N.P. (BKe).

The famed **Eurasian Skylark** returned for a fifth consecutive winter on Pt. Reyes Oct. 31+ (JM, RS, m.ob.). Horned Lark records of interest were of four at Peregrine Meadow, Yosemite N.P., Sept. 29 (BKe), Gold Bluff Beach, Humboldt Co., Oct. 1 (GJS), and four at Pt. St. George Nov. 24-25 (GSL, RAE).

A locally large concentration of 200 Violet-green Swallows was at Willow Cr., Humboldt Co., Sept. 14 (KVR) and 20 still there Oct. 26 were late. A lone Tree Swallow Dec. 7-10 at Lower Klamath N.W.R. (*fide* SJ) was very late for n.e. California. Also late were Barn Swallows Nov. 1 at Lower Klamath N.W.R. (SJ), Nov. 3 near Grenada (RE), and Nov. 29-30 near Ft. Dick, Del Norte Co. (RT, *fide* RAE).

CORVIDS THROUGH THRUSHES — Wandering Clark's Nutcrackers in Del Norte County mountains were three at Harrington L., Sept. 4-6 (GSL) and up to five s. of Red Mt., Oct. 9 (RAE). Post-breeding dispersal accounts included a White-breasted Nuthatch at Harrington Mt., Del Norte Co., Sept. 6 (GSL), but Pygmy Nuthatches may be colonizing an area in the Oakland hills where they wintered: two were there Aug. 5 (MGr). Another was at far out Pt. Reyes Oct. 31 (RS). Seven Brown Creepers on outer Pt. Reyes Oct. 31 (RS) was the highest ever count there, while ten Golden-crowned Kinglets there was the only movement noted all fall, contrasting sharply with last fall's invasion. Late Swainson's Thrushes were studied on Pt. Reyes (RS) and netted at Palomar Oct. 31.

MIMIDS THROUGH VIREOS — The Region's tenth Gray Catbird was on F.I., Oct. 15. A Brown Thrasher was photographed on Pt. Reyes Oct. 17 (G. Neil, BY, JML). Two vagrant Sage Thrashers visited outer Pt. Reyes Oct. 10 (JML, EH, SAL) and another was there Oct. 23 (BDP).

Once again an experienced observer (J. Dunn) picked out a Yellow Wagtail by call, but was only able to see an appropriately-shaped bird in flight with "a yellowish cast to the underparts" and white outer tail feathers. This brief sighting (†JD, RLB), at Pt. Pinos Sept. 19, parallels 2 previous regional reports (as yet unaccepted by the California Records Committee) of equally briefly seen birds on the very similar dates of Sept. 16, 1978 and Sept. 17, 1979. Observers in future Septembers should carefully distinguish this bird from the apparently equally-likely Gray Wagtail, whose existence clouds the acceptance of these reports.

A well-described **Red-throated Pipit** at Gold Bluff Beach Oct. 10 (†GJS) brings our regional records to ten. Out-of-place Phainopepla were at Mono L., Oct. 15 and Lee Vining Canyon, Mono Co., Nov. 7 (*fide* DAG). Northern Shrikes, always of interest on the n. coast, were near L. Talawa, Del Norte Co., Oct. 31 (P. Springer) and Nov. 26 (KHb, PU). A *plumbeus* Solitary Vireo at Little Sur R. mouth Oct. 11 (†DR) was the fifth for the Region of this race, but the third from Monterey County; more typical *cassinii* at Bodega Bay (CY) and Mad R. mouth (RLV), both Nov. 20, were late. Red-eyed Vireos landed on F.I., Sept. 13 & Oct. 19; the latter bird was reported (without details) as a "Yellow-green Vireo", which would be but the third regional record. The lone Philadelphia Vireo on Pt. Reyes Oct. 31 (†RS, AE *et al.*) represents the worst showing for this vagrant since 1975.

WARBLERS — Observers agreed this was a poor fall for vagrant warblers, with numbers well below average for most species. Reports from F.I. illustrate this pattern well, with only minor waves Sept. 22-24 and Oct. 14-15. Presumably this dearth is partially attributable to a season of clear skies, encouraging migrants (and vagrants) to overfly the entire Region.

Another potential difficulty in comparing annual data came forcefully to this editor's attention when dealing with counts of commoner species. Although having access to the same data on Pt. Reyes Palm Warblers, for example, I counted 25 birds while another local compilation published 40. The Farallon log is another example. How many Palm Warblers were present these 3 days: Oct. 13 (3), Oct. 14 (3), Oct. 15 (2)? The observers might know (having carefully evaluated each individual bird), but the editor has no information besides the simple daily log count. Knowing from personal experience that many fall vagrants tend to linger locally for 2-3 days, it seems likely this log contains records of 3 birds, each staying the first 2 days and 2 remaining a third day. Yet the totals of this very item were reported to me as eight Palm Warblers. One wonders how past editors handled similar cases and to what degree differing theories of editing affect the comparison of totals from year-to-year.

Twelve Black-and-white Warblers Sept. 18-Nov. 26 was about half the fall average; all but singles in San Jose Oct. 31 & Nov. 20 (WBa) were on the outer coast. Dazzling many observers were Prothonotary Warblers at Samoa, Humboldt Co., Sept. 18-19 (second county record—SH, †RAE) and on Pt. Reyes Nov. 24 (OA, RS, JE). A Worm-eating Warbler was found in a Sausalito yard Oct. 9 (†M & R Mayer) while another was banded at Lanphere Dunes, Humboldt Co., Dec. 3-7 (CJR, LD *et al.*). Half the average Tennessee Warblers appeared—only 16 (and but one on F.I.) Aug. 30-Nov. 29 including non-coastal birds at Salyer, Trinity Co., Sept. 22 (J. Brack, *fide* KVR), Salinas Oct. 3-6 (BG), and Lee Vining Oct. 27 (DAG). Nashville Warblers on the outer coast were well reported—nearly 30

birds Aug. 21-Nov. 12 illustrate that its status is comparable to Tennessee Warbler and much rarer than such "eastern" vagrants as Blackpoll or Palm Warbler. Virginia's Warblers made one of the best showings ever: Aug. 24 at Creighton Ranch, Tulare Co. (first for C.V.—†KH), Sept. 14 on F.I., Oct. 9 at Big Sur R. mouth (JS), Oct. 11 at Little Sur R. mouth (†DR), and Oct. 30-Nov. 4 at Pt. Pinos (RLB). Lucy's Warblers near Salinas Oct. 9 (BG) and on F.I., Nov. 17 brought the regional total to 19. The summering N. Parula at Salinas was last seen Sept. 26 (BG); two migrants on Pt. Reyes Sept. 30-Oct. 6 (JM, RS) illustrated how scarce it is along the coast in fall. Ten Magnolia Warblers Sept. 19-Oct. 27 from Pt. Pinos to Bodega Bay (four on F.I.) was nearly an average number. Vagrant Cape May Warblers reached a low of three (two on F.I., 1 on Pt. Reyes Sept. 16-Oct. 10), perhaps illustrative of cyclical populations in Canada. As yet no one has used comparative numbers of vagrants to measure population strength, but this technique may yet show potential.

Seven coastal Black-throated Blue Warblers from Seaside, Monterey Co., to Fairhaven, Humboldt Co., Sept. 15-Oct. 29 were fewer than the average of 10/fall. A Yellow-rumped Warbler at Ft. Funston, San Francisco Aug. 17 (DM) was very early, as was a Townsend's Warbler Aug. 20 at Manzanita L., Lassen N.P. (DM). A single Black-throated Green Warbler was on F.I., Oct. 22. The only Hermit x Townsend's Warbler hybrid, often confused with the previous species, was identified at Olema Nov. 4 (†RS). A Hermit Warbler Aug. 17 in San Francisco (DM) was the first of the fall. Two Blackburnian Warblers in Lincoln P., San Francisco Oct. 15 & 26 (AH, *fide Gull*) were the only reports, well down from an average of ten. Only Chestnut-sided Warbler, with 19 reports from Carmel R. mouth to coastal Humboldt County Sept. 10-Oct. 14, was found in average numbers this fall; the latter bird (Carmel R. mouth) lingered to Nov. 11 (DR). The two Bay-breasted Warblers were singles on Pt. Reyes Oct. 10 (JML) and Nov. 5 (JM). Thirty-eight Blackpoll Warblers (only eight on F.I.), all on the outer coast, were well below the fall average of nearly 70.

The only Prairie Warblers were on F.I., Aug. 20-22, San Francisco Oct. 3 (D. Hartman), and Pacific Grove Oct. 13 into winter (AB). Palm Warblers, with 71 reported Sept. 17-Nov. 13 (all coastal), were present in normal numbers. Not a single Ovenbird appeared! Six N. Waterthrushes on the coast Aug. 25-Oct. 15 was a fair showing; one in the C.V. at Gray Lodge W.M.A., Butte Co., Aug. 30 (BED) was of particular interest. In this slow season, F.I. reports (without details) single Connecticut Warblers Sept. 23 and Oct. 10. A Yellow-breasted Chat, rarely found in migration, was at Big Sur R. mouth Sept. 26 (DR, LCB, JML, BDP). Always delightful were Canada Warblers on F.I., Sept. 22 and Pt. Reyes Oct. 22-26 (BRi, †KHb, BDP *et al.*). Seventeen coastal Am. Redstarts were found from Carmel R. mouth to Mad R. mouth Aug. 30-Oct. 15, well below average.

ICTERIDS THROUGH TANAGERS — Among eight Bobolinks was one inland at Mono L., Sept. 30 (DAG). Vagrant Yellow-headed Blackbirds were on F.I., Aug. 13, two on Pt. Pinos Sept. 13 (SHN), Moss Landing Sept. 17 (JD), Ft. Dick, Del Norte Co., Nov. 7-14 (RT), and n. of Ft. Dick Nov. 13 (RAE). A careful estimate of 9600 Tricolored Blackbirds on outer Pt. Reyes Oct. 6 (RS) was a high count there; out-of-range were singles at Pt. Sur Oct. 11 (DR) and Palomarin Nov. 26.

Orchard Orioles, always rare here, were on F.I., Sept. 22 and in an Alamo, Contra Costa Co., garden Sept. 26 (†JRi). A Hooded Oriole Nov. 10 in Fresno (KH) was quite late. Northern "Baltimore" Orioles were found on F.I., Sept. 23-24, n. of Mono L., Sept. 30 (DAG), and on Pt. Reyes Oct. 15 (BY). A Rusty Blackbird was well-described from San Gregorio SB, San Mateo Co., Oct. 24-Nov. 3 (†C. Swarth, PJM). The two San Francisco Great-tailed Grackles were still present Oct. 13 (*fide Gull*). Single Summer Tanagers appeared at Creighton Ranch Aug. 25 (KH) and Pt. Reyes Oct. 2 (JRi, FBe, SW).

FRINGILLIDS — Seven Rose-breasted Grosbeaks Aug. 13-Nov. 22 (all coastal) was a poor showing. An ø Blue Grosbeak Sept. 18-19 on Pt. Reyes (BDP, JML, DS *et al.*) was exceptional. The five Indigo Buntings were birds at Waddell Beach, Santa Cruz Co., Aug. 1 (KHb), near Salinas Sept. 26 & Oct. 10 (BG, KVV), and Oct. 15 & 20 on F.I.

An Evening Grosbeak was at Georgetown on the American R., Sept. 6 (BBt), but none was reported from the coast or lowlands. Out-of-place Lawrence's Goldfinch were two at Pt. Pinos Oct. 1 (DR), one along Hwy. 204 in Madera County Oct. 6 (KH), and another at Susanville, Lassen Co., Nov. 5 (†RNJ).

Grasshopper Sparrows of interest were 1-2 at Kilgore Hills Sept. 1-5 (two on last date) and one at Pt. Pinos Sept. 25 (JL). The Sharp-tailed Sparrow which winters at Palo Alto returned by Oct. 11 (SFB), the earliest known arrival date for a wintering bird (by a week); the Bolinas Lagoon wintering bird was first noted Oct. 23 (D. Sierra, *fide Gull*). Six Vesper Sparrows were found along the Humboldt-Del Norte County coasts Aug. 31-Nov. 5 (RAE, GJS, RT); farther s. were singles at Pt. Reyes Sept. 18 (DS) & Nov. 13 (B & CY) and Bolinas Sept. 24 (BY). Vagrant Lark Sparrows were at Gold Bluff Beach Aug. 31 and near Orick, Del Norte Co., Sept. 1 (both GJS).

Tree Sparrows, always a rarity on the coast, were banded at Lanphere Dunes, Humboldt Co., Oct. 19 & Nov. 8 (CJR) and singles were found on Pt. Reyes Oct. 9, 23, & 31 (m.ob.); more typical were birds at Mono L., Nov. 17 & 30 (3) and three in n.e. California Nov. 28 (RLeV, LD). Thirteen Clay-colored Sparrows along the coast Aug. 29-Nov. 26 was about average; one well described at Trimmer Ranger Station, Fresno Co., Oct. 25-26 (†R. Archer) furnished the first record from the Sierra foothills. Three Brewer's Sparrows Sept. 13 at Willow Cr., inland Humboldt Co. (†KVR) were most unusual; the only coastal vagrant was on Pt. Reyes Oct. 15 (JML).

Coastal Harris' Sparrows were on F.I., Nov. 20 and at Crescent City Nov. 23 into winter (RAE, GSL). Good numbers of White-throated Sparrows appeared, with 23 along the coast Oct. 8-Nov. 13, another inland at Kilgore Hills Oct. 12 (RE), and wintering birds arriving at feeders between mid-October and Nov. 16. Apparent wintering Swamp Sparrows first appeared Oct. 20 (Bolinas), Nov. 4 (Tomales Bay), and Nov. 6 (Olema Marsh), while eight coastal vagrants were noted from Carmel R. mouth to Klamath R. mouth Sept. 30-Nov. 22 (m.ob.). Scattered coastal Lapland Longspurs Sept. 20-Nov. 26 peaked at 15 birds at Lake Talawa Oct. 24 (RAE) and 20+ on Pt. Reyes Oct. 29 (JM *et al.*). Among the latter birds were up to three Chestnut-collared Longspurs Oct. 29-Nov. 25 (JM, RS, JHo); another was on Pt. Reyes Oct. 9 (DS) and a calling bird (but not seen) among larks at Tahoe Keys, S. Lake Tahoe Oct. 17 (†JRi) was probably this species. Four coastal Snow Buntings were at Salmon Creek R. mouth, Sonoma Co., Oct. 23 (CH), F.I., Oct. 30, Pt. Reyes Nov. 5 (JM *et al.*), and n. jetty, Humboldt Bay Nov. 10-12 (*fide* LD).

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