

MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION

/Ron LeValley and Kurt F. Campbell

The Region was warm and dry this spring, in continuation of late winter's conditions, with May temperatures generally 3-6°F above normal. As of June 2 cumulative precipitation for the year was 73% of



average in Eureka and 25-35% of average nearly everywhere away from the north coast. Northwestern winds blew almost continuously along the coast through the period, disappointing vagrant-chasers and probably accounting for a lack of migrants at Southeast Farallon Island and on the coast. The winds were associated with long-overdue coastal upwelling that promised to bring nutrients to the surface and begin the recovery from the effects of El Niño. Sea surface

temperatures along the immediate coast dropped from 11-12°C in March to below 9° in April and May, the lowest since spring 1981. Most landbirds migrated early, with nearly all first arrivals and last

departures on time to two weeks early. The dryness and warmth seemed made-to-order for the event of the season: an unprecedented, Regionwide irruption of dry-climate birds. Costa's Hummingbird, Black-chinned and Black-throated sparrows, and Lawrence's Goldfinches were most prominent in this regard with many individuals apparently breeding in new areas. The most exciting landbirds of the season, Bendire's Thrasher and Cassin's Sparrow, filled out what one observer called our "arid invasion."

ABBREVIATIONS — C.B.R.C. = California Bird Records Committee; C.V. = Central Valley; F.I. = S.E. Farallon Island; P.R.B.O. = Point Reyes Bird Observatory; S.F. = San Francisco; Gray Lodge = Gray Lodge State Wildlife Area, Butte; † = description on file; ph. = photo on file. All observations at Palomar (near Bolinas, Marin) and F.I. should be credited to P.R.B.O. References to the *Gull* refer to Golden Gate Audubon Society's publication, whose observations column is written by S. F. Bailey. *Italicized* names refer to counties.

Following are selected arrival and departure dates of species away from areas of breeding; exceptional dates are indicated with italics.

First dates: Pink-footed Shearwater Mar. 22 Pigeon Pt., *San Mateo* (BS); Am. White Pelican Mar. 10 Indian Tom L., *Siskiyou* (SFB); Blue-winged Teal Mar. 17 L. Earl (GL); Osprey Mar. 17 Crescent City (GL) & Mar. 30 Sacramento (*fide* TM); Swainson's Hawk Mar. 13 Stockton (DY); Caspian Tern Mar. 2 Seaciff Beach, *Santa Cruz* (GS); Pigeon Guillemot Mar. 17 Crescent City (GL); Tufted Puffin Mar. 28 Castle

Rock, *Del Norte* (GL); Lesser Nighthawk Apr. 1 Sutter Buttes (WA); Vaux's Swift Mar. 26 Mt. Diablo S.P. (JRI) then Apr. 12 *Santa Clara* (fide WB); Black-chinned Hummingbird Apr. 9 *San Joaquin* (fide DY); Costa's Hummingbird Mar. 21 Redding (B&CY); Calliope Hummingbird Apr. 3 Yreka (RE); Rufous Hummingbird Mar. 4 *Santa Clara* and *Del Norte* (fide WB, RAE); Olive-sided Flycatcher Apr. 13 Stevens Creek County P., *Santa Clara* (WB); W. Wood-Pewee Apr. 15 Stevens Creek County P. (WB); W. Flycatcher Mar. 21 Pacific Grove (DR); Ash-throated Flycatcher Apr. 8 Carmichael, *Sacramento* (fide TM); Swainson's Thrush Apr. 23 Annadel S.P., *Sonoma* (DE); Solitary Vireo Mar. 27 *Sonoma* (KFC); Warbling Vireo Mar. 17 Palo Alto Foothills P. (WB); Orange-crowned Warbler Mar. 5 *Sonoma* (KFC); Yellow Warbler Apr. 13 Stevens Creek Co. Park (WB); MacGillivray's Warbler Apr. 12 *Trinity* (fide JS); Wilson's Warbler Mar. 19 Inverness (RS); Black-headed Grosbeak Mar. 28 *Placer* and *Contra Costa* (BB, LF); Lazuli Bunting Apr. 14 Rockpile Rd., *Sonoma* (BDP); Blue Grosbeak Apr. 28 Gray Lodge (BED); Black-chinned Sparrow Apr. 21 Corral Hollow, *San Joaquin* (DY); Hooded Oriole Mar. 5 Alamo, *Contra Costa* (JRI), the next Mar. 20 *Santa Clara* (WB); N. Oriole Mar. 20 *Contra Costa* (LF).

Last dates: Pied-billed Grebe May 6 Bodega Harbor (KFC); Horned Grebe May 19 Bodega Harbor (KFC); Red-necked Grebe May 24 Crescent City Harbor (RAE); Eared Grebe May 1 Petaluma *Sonoma* (KFC); Tundra Swan Apr. 5 L. Earl (fide GL); Greater White-fronted Goose Apr. 12 Gray Lodge (BED); Wood Duck Apr. 28 Monterey (DR *et al.*); Blue-winged Teal Mar. 18 Charleston Slough (fide WB); Am. Wigeon May 27 Camanche Res. (DY); Ring-necked Duck Apr. 28 Gray Lodge (BED); Black Scoter May 10 Bodega Bay (KFC, NTC); Com. Goldeneye Apr. 28 Moss Landing (DR *et al.*); Bufflehead Apr. 18 Auburn (BB); Rough-legged Hawk Apr. 1 Big L., *Shasta* (B&CY, BV); Peregrine Falcon Apr. 30 F.I. (P.R.B.O.); Lesser Golden-Plover Apr. 29 Pt. Reyes (fide Gull); Greater Yellowlegs May 19 Big L., *Shasta* (B&CY); Lesser Yellowlegs May 13 Cader Lane Ponds (KFC); Surf Scoter May 26 Fish Rock, *Mendocino* (KFC); Rock Sandpiper Apr. 17 Bodega Head (KFC); Com. Snipe May 12 Fairhaven, *Humboldt* (KVR); Ruby-crowned Kinglet Apr. 30 Gray Lodge (BED); Water Pipit May 8 Sutter Buttes (WA); Fox Sparrow May 8 Oak Grove P., *San Joaquin* (DY); Lincoln's Sparrow May 2 *Del Norte* (RAE); Golden-crowned Sparrow May 11 Gray Lodge (BED); White-crowned Sparrow May 30 Dinuba, *Tulare* (RG).

LOONS THROUGH HERONS — A concentration of 400 Red-throated Loons was found staging at the Russian R. mouth, *Sonoma* Apr. 5 (KFC). Peak movement of Arctic Loons was thought to be around Apr. 26 when 3000+ migrated N by Fish Rock, *Mendocino* in one-half hr (KFC, DE). Notable inland concentrations of Com. Loons were 13 at L. Yosemite, *Merced* Apr. 21 (RB) and 14 on L. Almanor, *Plumas* Apr. 23 (DAA). An unusual inland occurrence of a Red-necked Grebe in Petaluma Apr. 13 (LCB) fit the pattern established by this and other coastal species: most inland records are from migration periods. An extraordinary concentration of 2000-3000 W. Grebes on L. San Antonio, *Monterey* Mar. 24 was particularly interesting as most coastal birds departed around Mar. 12 (AB). Western Grebes have returned to Clear L., *Lake* following their almost complete disappearance during the heavy pesticide usage of the 1950s. Forty were counted Apr. 27 and they were considered "nesting all around the lake" (HLC).

Black-footed Albatrosses displayed their usual spring abundance with 19 sighted from Pigeon Pt., Mar. 29 (BS), 25 in Monterey Bay May 19 (AB) and 25 near the Cordelle Banks, *Marin* May 19 (KFC, AB). Two Laysan Albatrosses were seen: one from Pigeon Pt., Mar. 29 (BS) and another at the Cordelle Banks May 19 (†KFC, †AB). More surprising though were two or three found on shore. One found with a broken wing at Foster City, *San Mateo* Mar. 8 was taken to a rehabilitation center where it subsequently died (fide Gull). Another found in Benicia, *Solano* Mar. 24 (fide Gull) was taken to the Alexander Lindsay Junior Museum who eventually released it near F.I., Apr. 2 (fide P.R.B.O.). A 3rd Laysan of unreported origin was also taken by the Lindsay Museum to F.I., for release Apr. 28 (fide P.R.B.O.). Perhaps this rash of onshore occurrences is due to some assistance from the crew of an unknown ship (or ships?), although there is an unexplained history of March records for Laysan Albatross from the S.F. Bay area (RAE). The only N. Fulmar report was of two near Cordelle Banks May 19 (AB). Although

Sooty Shearwaters did not reach their pre-El Niño numbers in Monterey Bay this spring they were still considered abundant in late April (AB). Unhappily, 205 drowned there in a fishing net set in 66 ft of water May 25 (fide AB). As more emphasis is placed on harvesting new resources or using new techniques to harvest traditional resources from the sea, the importance of considering the effect of harvesting on non-target, but ecologically important species will increase. The last Short-tailed Shearwater of the winter's good showing was reported from Pigeon Pt., Mar. 2 (BS).

Surprisingly 18 Am. White Pelicans were on Humboldt Bay Apr. 28 (fide JS). There are only a handful of records for the coast n. of *Sonoma*. An imm. Brown Pelican in Crescent City Harbor Mar. 17 (GL) was somewhat early. An Am. Bittern at Tule Lake N.W.R., Mar. 11 (SFB *et al.*) was probably an early arrival while 25 at Gray Lodge Apr. 16 (LCB) was a notably large concentration. A Great Egret flying N 6 mi at sea s. of Crescent City Apr. 2 (GL) was certainly unusual as only small numbers occur n. of there, and those mostly in the winter. An ad. Little Blue Heron at Bolinas Lagoon May 19-27 (DDeS) was apparently joined by a 2nd at Audubon Canyon Ranch May 22 (fide Gull). Another adult was present all spring at the Alviso Heronry, San Francisco Bay N.W.R., for the 6th consecutive year (RWL).

WATERFOWL — A single Fulvous Whistling-Duck was at Merced N.W.R., Feb. 10 and again Mar. 7-Apr. 10 (RB) while another was at nearby Los Banos Wildlife Area Apr. 2 (JRI). Lower Klamath N.W.R. had 65 late Greater White-fronted Geese May 19 (PS). A normal, but always impressive, spring concentration of 140,000 Snow Geese at Tule Lake N.W.R., Mar. 10 contained one partial "blue" morph (SFB *et al.*). Coastally, Snow Geese were reported as follows: one at Moffett Field, *San Mateo* Mar. 25-Apr. 23 (WB *et al.*), one immature in Pacific Grove, *Monterey* Mar. 25 (JML), two at Castle Rock and the nearby McLaughlin ranch, *Del Norte* Mar. 25-Apr. 11 (fide RAE), and a late bird at Castle Rock May 23 (GL). A Ross' Goose, always rare on the coast, spent Mar. 9-Apr. 11 with the Aleutian Canada Geese around Castle Rock and L. Earl (fide RAE) while another was along the Hayward Shoreline, *Alameda* Mar. 18 (HLC). A typical spring gathering of 15,000 Ross' Geese at Tule Lake N.W.R., Mar. 10 included one "blue" morph (SFB *et al.*). Four at Lower Klamath N.W.R., May 19 (PS) were definitely late. March 22 was the first calm day at Pigeon Pt. after many windy days and 22,527 Brant were counted migrating north (BS). The peak spring count of Aleutian Canada Geese at L. Earl was 3150 Mar. 29 (PS).

A ♂ Green-winged Teal of the Eurasian race was on the Hunter Liggett Military Reservation Mar. 24-Apr. 28 (†AB, BW, DR); we receive few reports of this form. Five hundred Green-winged Teal at Gray Lodge Apr. 16 (LCB) and 100 still there Apr. 30 (BED) were high numbers for so late. A ♂ Blue-winged x Cinnamon Teal hybrid was at Merced N.W.R., Mar. 17 & Apr. 17 (RB, DY). Cinnamon Teal arrive on their n.e. California breeding grounds by mid-March as indicated by 100+ at Eagle L., *Lassen* Mar. 10 and 300+ at Honey L., Mar. 11 (DAA). Recent work has shown that these are typical arrival dates contrary to earlier beliefs. Wintering single Eur. Wigeons lingered into the spring as follows: Palo Alto Yacht Harbor Mar. 3 (fide WB), Golden Gate Park, S.F., Mar. 29 (KFC), Bolinas Lagoon into April (DDeS).

Redheads lingered near Fall River, *Shasta* through May 19 when 12 were noted (B&CY). A ♂ Tufted Duck was at the Stockton sewage ponds Mar. 17-22 (†DY, JRI). Four Greater Scaup on Big L., *Shasta* Apr. 1 (B&CY) were in an area where they are scarce. A ♂ Harlequin Duck was at Pacific Grove Mar. 8 (fide AB). Two Oldsquaws, one a long-tailed male, were at the Smith R. Estuary, *Del Norte* Mar. 10 (RAE, RS, DDeS) and a single was migrating past Pigeon Pt., Mar. 22 (BS). The Moss Landing Oldsquaw population increased to three until Mar. 24 and one bird lingered until Mar. 28 (DR, LCB, JML). The latest Oldsquaw was a female in Arcata May 12-17 (JS, PS). March 22 saw 10,924 Surf Scoters fly past Pigeon Pt., thanks to the calm day (BS). The wintering ♀ Barrow's Goldeneye at Moss Landing was last seen Mar. 10 (DR *et al.*). A very late ♀ Hooded Merganser was at Essex Pond, *Humboldt* May 20 (KVR); their nesting status on the n. coast is still uncertain. A ♀ Red-breasted Merganser at Big L., *Shasta* Apr. 14 apparently furnished a first county record (RE, CYO).

RAPTORS THROUGH CRANES — An ad. **Mississippi Kite** was

seen over Pigeon Pt., Apr. 5 (†BS); if accepted by the C.B.R.C., this would be the 5th Regional and earliest spring California record. Large numbers of Bald Eagles remained at Lower Klamath N.W.R. until at least Mar. 11 when 204 were counted (SFB *et al.*). High numbers of N. Harriers were also encountered Mar. 11 when 75 were at Lower Klamath N.W.R. and 40 were at the adjacent Tule Lake N.W.R. (SFB *et al.*). Both Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks were poorly reported this season, though few observers expressed concern for either species. An ad. N. Goshawk was being harassed by a pair of Cooper's Hawks at Henry Cowell Redwood S. P., Santa Cruz Mar. 22 (GS). This is far s. of any known breeding locality for goshawks and in an area from which there are few, if any, records. Goshawks are known to invade coastal areas in winter and this was likely a bird that had wintered out of range and was returning to ? Maybe even more surprising was Siskiyou County's first **Broad-winged Hawk** on Mt. Shasta May 6 (†RE, CYo, †MR). This established the first inland record and probably the first true spring migrant record for the Region. An ad. Ferruginous Hawk at Estero Lane, Sonoma Apr. 12 was late (KFC) but another in Surprise Valley, Modoc May 30 (BED) was not too far from known breeding localities outside the Region. Although the recent A.O.U. Check-list lists this species as "probably breeding" in n.e. California, the evidence appears to be only summering adults. A sub-ad. Golden Eagle in Klamath Glen May 27 established the first coastal *Del Norte* record (RAE). A Merlin at Lava Beds N.M., Modoc Apr. 29 (CYo, RE) was notably late.

Ruffed Grouse were reported from 5 locations in *Humboldt*, *Del Norte* and *Siskiyou*. Nine male and 25 ♀ Sage Grouse at the lek n. of Litchfield, Lassen Mar. 17 (JRI) were the best totals reported since 1977, but the number of males is still very low compared to counts prior to the 1970s. A Black Rail was heard calling throughout the period at Bolinas Lagoon (DDeS). An ad. Sora with chicks near Salinas in May provided *Monterey* with its first documented nesting record (*fide* DR). Common Moorhen chicks were seen in May near Salinas (*fide* DR) and Gonzales *Monterey* (RR) where they are quite rare as breeders. *Del Norte* County's first Sandhill Crane at Klamath Glen through Mar. 26 had apparently been present since January (RAE *et al.*).

SHOREBIRDS — The two wintering Lesser Golden-Plovers (*P.d. fulva*) at Lodi sewage ponds were last seen Mar. 26 (JML, DY). Notable inland concentrations of Semipalmated Plovers were 50+ in the Cosumnes R. floodplain, Sacramento Apr. 17 (T&AM) and in the Butte Sink, Sutter Apr. 20 (MRH). Black-necked Stilts staged an unprecedented mini-invasion to the n. coast. Two were first encountered in Eureka, *Humboldt* Apr. 14 (PS) and on the next day four were present there and 13 had arrived at L. Earl, *Del Norte* (GL, JAR). A maximum concentration of 35 was at L. Earl Apr. 19 (JAR) and two were in the Arcata bottoms (JS) on the same day. The last report was of eight at L. Earl Apr. 20 (GL). Prior to this only 2 *Del Norte* and a handful of *Humboldt* records existed. The wintering Solitary Sandpiper near Inverness *Marin* was last seen Mar. 14 (*fide* Gull). At least 11 spring migrants were detected along the coast and four were found inland Apr. 14-May 3; one of the latter near Jolon, *Monterey* Apr. 28 (*fide* DR) was the only one away from *Humboldt*, *Del Norte* and *Siskiyou*. Wandering Tattlers are unusual inside S.F. Bay so one at the Sunnyvale sewage plant, Santa Clara May 6 (*fide* WB) and up to seven at the Alameda Naval Air Station May 8-18 (SFB) were of interest.

The thousands of Marbled Godwits that depart *Humboldt* Bay in late April and early May apparently fly almost immediately inland as evidenced by their scarcity in *Del Norte*. This year only two on May 9 and one on May 11 were detected in Crescent City (RAE). The only Semipalmated Sandpiper found this spring was in Arcata Apr. 29-30 (JS, ph.). A single Baird's Sandpiper at the Lodi sewage ponds Mar. 21 (†DY) was very early. It was followed by two there Apr. 17 (DY) and another at the Smith River estuary, *Del Norte* Apr. 19 (GL *et al.*). This species is now being detected annually in spring in very small numbers. A **Stilt Sandpiper** well-described from Moffett Field, Santa Clara Apr. 14 (†WB *et al.*) established only the 2nd spring record for the Region. A ♀ Ruff at Merced N.W.R., Mar. 7-12 (RB) may have been the same one that was in breeding plumage there Apr. 19 (RB). Wilson's Phalaropes occurred w. of their normal range with three in the Ferndale bottoms, *Humboldt* May 27 (RLeV, KVR, LD), one at Arcata May 28 (KVR, JS) and one near Ft. Dick, *Del Norte* (*fide* RAE).

GULLS THROUGH SKIMMER — The wintering Little Gull at the Stockton sewage ponds was joined by a 2nd bird Apr. 15 and both were last seen Apr. 28 (DY). The Com. Black-headed Gull there was last seen Apr. 9 (DY). Mew Gulls lingered late in the C.V. with one at the Stockton sewage ponds Apr. 15 (DY) and another present near Rio Vista, Sacramento through Apr. 17 (T&AM). A Glaucous Gull at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Mar. 3-17 (CYo, †RE, MR *et al.*) furnished *Siskiyou*'s first record. The wintering adult at Freshwater Lagoon, *Humboldt* was last seen Apr. 15 (†KH). A first-year bird was reported from Princeton Harbor Mar. 11 (*fide* Gull). Five Sabine's Gulls were near the Cordelle Banks May 19 (KFC, AB *et al.*).

Caspian Terns were absent from their breeding colony on Bair Island, S.F. Bay, where in 1983 there were about 400 pairs and in 1982 there were 800-1000 pairs (RWL). The reason for this drastic decline is unknown but it seems to be a local phenomenon. A Royal Tern in Pacific Grove Mar. 7-8 (†AB *et al.*) was only the 3rd or 4th in the Region in the last 15 years. Two Com. Terns were still present at Moss Landing at the late date of May 25 (DDeS) and an Arctic Tern, always rare onshore, was photographed at Pt. Pinos, *Monterey* May 9 (SS). Like the Caspian Tern, Least Terns did not return to their nesting colonies on Bair Island (RWL) and returnees at other n. California colonies were either absent or low in numbers and late (SFB). A Black Tern at the Pajaro River mouth, Santa Cruz May 14 was in an area where they are rarely observed (GS). Black Skimmers continued their presence in the Region with sightings of singles at the Pajaro River mouth May 11 (GS *et al.*) and at Moss Landing May 12 (*fide* Gull).

PIGEONS THROUGH OWLS — Coastal movement of Band-tailed Pigeons was evident, with peaks of 18 at Palomar and 55 at Bodega Harbor (KFC) Apr. 16 & 22 respectively. A Mourning Dove at Blodgett Forest Research Station, *El Dorado* May 30 (SAL) was at 4300 ft; they are rare on the w. slope of the Sierras, but May holds the most records. A Flammulated Owl heard May 27 at Peak 8, *Del Norte* provided a 4th county record (GL *et al.*). Long-eared Owl reports are always of interest; of 3 received, one of a bird heard at 2200 ft on Paper Cabin Ridge, *Tuolumne* May 15 & 23 (MG) was in a county from whence several spring and summer records have come in recent years. A single report of Short-eared Owl for the entire period (one, Mar. 11, Lower Klamath N.W.R., *Siskiyou*—SFB) highlights this once-common species' current plight in our Region.

SWIFTS THROUGH HUMMINGBIRDS — The 4 Black Swift records fell in a short period: one each, May 20 at Dunsuir, *Siskiyou* (CS), May 22 over Lafayette, *Contra Costa* (JRI) and May 30 between Jenner and Ft. Ross, Sonoma (DE); two on May 24 were at the Pine Mt. Airport, *Tuolumne* (†MG). Two Vaux's Swifts n. of Orick, *Humboldt* Mar. 19 (GL) were the last of wintering birds there, and 15+ over Salinas Mar. 17 (GS) wintered in the state, however one Mar. 26 at Mt. Diablo S.P., *Contra Costa* (JRI) may simply have been a very early migrant from the species' more usual winter range.

A ♂ Black-chinned Hummingbird appeared in Lafayette on Apr. 16 (LF), while a female at 3000 ft on Tassajara Rd., *Monterey* was where not known to breed, Apr. 21 (DR). Observers in *Sacramento* and *San Joaquin* commented on the paucity of Anna's Hummingbirds, while at Palomar they were considered abundant. Singles appeared at F.I., where quite rare, Apr. 4 & May 28; the species first arrived at L. Almanor, Lassen Apr. 21 (DAA). The ad. ♂ Costa's Hummingbird which wintered in San Rafael, *Marin* was last seen Mar. 15 (*fide* Gull). The irruption of Costa's through the Region this spring was unprecedented: 9 reports were of 13+ clearly extralimital individuals. Far n. were first county records for *Del Norte* and *Shasta*: a displaying male Apr. 14-27 in Crescent City (GL *et al.*) and three (2♂♂, one ♀) Mar. 21-May 31 (B&CY) in Redding. A male at Greenhorn Park, Yreka, *Siskiyou* Apr. 23+ (RE, MR) set an earliest county record. Additionally, many new locations near the edge of the species' usual range provided records. Breeding was suggested at new locations in *Monterey*, where breeding was first confirmed in 1981 (DR), and perhaps even *Marin* (!), where three to six birds took up residence Apr. 27+ at Rodeo Lagoon (*fide* Gull). Movement of Calliope Hummingbirds through the Region was also impressive. Three were in *Marin* Apr. 16-26 (P.R.B.O., DDeS), and a strong flight was indicated at low elevations in *Sacramento* and *Placer* (EH, TM *et al.*). The species is regular in small numbers

in the coastal ranges e. of S.F. Bay in spring (e.g., five males in Tilden P. Apr. 29, SFB *et al.*), however a report of 50-60 in the Corral Hollow area of *San Joaquin* Apr. 28 (no details) would be amazing if correct (DY). Of all hummers, the most widely reported as present in very high numbers were the *Selasphorus*; up to 45 were in one yard in Bolinas Apr. 25 (DDeS), most of which were felt to be Allen's.

KINGFISHERS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — One ♀ Belted Kingfisher Apr. 4 at F.I. was par there for spring. A Lewis' Woodpecker May 5 at Colusa S.P. (WA) was a little late for the C.V. (where a few still breed?), while a "Red-naped" Sapsucker at Carmichael, *Sacramento* Apr. 1 (*fide* TM) was one of rather few C.V. reports ever received. Two White-headed Woodpeckers were at the previously unrecorded location of Alder Springs, *Glenn* in May (SE). Four "Yellow-shafted" Flickers were reported without descriptions (one, F.I., Apr. 5; singles, *Del Norte*, Mar. 9-Apr. 19, RAE, GL), while the only(!) reported introgressant was a female on Sonoma Mt., Mar. 27 (†KFC).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS — In a dramatic contrast to last spring's excellent flight of W. Wood-Pewees on F.I., they went nearly unrecorded there this season, with three, May 28-30 a striking low. They were unrecorded at Palomarín, and only one was noted at Bodega Harbor all spring (May 29, KFC). Presumably the consistent winds were a factor in their avoidance of the coast, however the only other comment on numbers was by TM, who noted them to be in "small numbers and generally late" in *Sacramento*. Despite this trend one was on Moxon Rd., *Humboldt* Apr. 21; it was felt to be about 2 weeks early for the n. coast (*fide* JS). Others reported a few on-time or slightly early arrivals. Willow Flycatcher passage began light and a little late (even for them!), with six migrants noted in the period, the first May 18 in *San Joaquin* (DY) and *Del Norte* (RAE). Second and 3rd *Monterey* records for Hammond's Flycatcher were established Apr. 21 in the upper Carmel Valley (†DR), with their lowland migration extending from that date to May 2. Dusky Flycatcher migration was noted Apr. 14-May 3. Although unusually numerous away from Great Basin areas, Gray Flycatchers were well down in numbers from last spring's invasion, as well as earlier (Apr. 7-May 8). The distribution however was similar, with 8 of 15 records from the n. coast.

Single wintering Black Phoebes departed F.I., Mar. 1 and Palomarín Mar. 14. Confirmation of nesting for 2-3 pairs of Say's Phoebes at Corral Hollow Rd. was a first for *San Joaquin* (DY). Ash-throated Flycatcher arrival was about typical, with 6 first arrival records Apr. 8-14, while four on the n. coast were termed "rare migrants;" one Apr. 30-May 2 and two on May 4, at Klamath Glen, *Del Norte* (RAE), and one May 20, Essex Pond, *Humboldt* (*fide* JS). A pair of Cassin's Kingbirds near the n. end of Mines Rd., *Alameda* Apr. 15 (BDP) was where the species has bred in years past, while 12-15 mi away along Corral Hollow Rd., where breeding was noted the last 2 years, the only sighting was of one Apr. 28 (DY). The first interior W. Kingbird was about on time Mar. 24 on Meiss Rd., *Sacramento* (*fide* TM), while the first coastward was a little early Apr. 1, s. of Petaluma, *Sonoma* (B. Burridge, *fide* KFC). Thirty-seven + on the n. coast during the period was a large number (*fide* JS, RAE).

It appears normal arrival dates for Purple Martins are 2-3 weeks earlier in the C.V. than coastwardly; thus first arrivals for the C.V. in *Sacramento* Mar. 23 (B & HK) and coastwardly, w. of Ft. Dick, *Del Norte* Apr. 12 (*fide* RAE) seem usual. Records suggesting breeding at locales where not now known include eight at Salt Point S.P., *Sonoma* (DE), six + in Big Basin S.P., *Santa Cruz* May 30 (GS) and a male and female together May 19 at Soldier Mt., *Shasta* (B & CY). The latter record is intriguing, as it is the 6th May-June record in as many years from e. *Shasta*, though breeding is apparently yet to be confirmed; they are quite rare in interior ranges. Northern Rough-winged Swallows were found to be effectively utilizing vertical drain holes in freeway overpasses for nesting, in areas as dispersed as *San Joaquin*, *Marin* to *Mendocino* and, apparently, *Plumas* (DY, KFC, DAA). How widespread is this habit, how old—and how important to the species? The Mar. 6 arrival of Bank Swallow at the King City colony (*fide* DR) set an early record for *Monterey* and nearly so for the Region. A colony with 30 nest holes on the *Sacramento* R., 2 mi below Colusa was apparently new (BED), while two at F.I., May 17 were quite rare there. Both Cliff and Barn swallows were lightly reported; Cliff Swallows were felt to be

in increased numbers after a 2-year slump at Lawrence Livermore Lab, *Alameda* (KH).

JAYS THROUGH WRENS — Reports of Scrub Jays from areas where they are rare included one near Westwood, *Lassen* Apr. 25 (*fide* DAA), three to six at L. Almanor, *Plumas* May 9 (DAA), and "up to seven" in *Del Norte* during the period (RAE); spring movement at both areas has precedents. American Crows were in "unprecedented numbers" at Palomarín with a high of six, Mar. 24 & 27, but went unreported elsewhere. Two Mountain Chickadees at the Folsom L. Peninsula, *El Dorado* Mar. 11 (EH) were extremely low at about 800 ft. The last seen of the n. coast's rare wintering Mountain Chickadees was one Apr. 17 at Klamath (RAE). Curiously, the next coastal records were two with the timing of vagrants: 22 May, Arcata Marsh, *Humboldt* (KVR, JS), and 29 May, outer Pt. Reyes, *Marin* (NTC, †KFC); the latter bird was apparently from a West Coast population, as expected. Red-breasted Nuthatches continued lowland movement well into May; two at Reichmuth Pk., *Sacramento* (TM) and one in Pacific Grove (DR), both May 8; one May 12, Los Altos, *Santa Clara* (*fide* WB), and one present at F.I. through May 27; three on outer Pt. Reyes May 29 had recent precedents (KFC). Brown Creepers were at "an all time low for Palomarín." A pair of Canyon Wrens at Corral Hollow Rd., Apr. 28 furnished the first confirmed breeding for *San Joaquin* (DY). House Wrens were reported in good numbers in *Shasta* and *Plumas* (B & CY, DAA); F.I.'s first-ever wintering bird apparently departed May 22. A Winter Wren on the C.V. floor at Ancil Hoffman Park, *Sacramento* Mar. 10-Apr. 7 (TM) was rare and a little late.

KINGLETS THROUGH WRENS — Ruby-crowned Kinglets departed about 2 weeks early throughout the Region. A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher noted Mar. 5 at Palo Alto Foothills P., *Santa Clara* (WB) probably wintered in the Region. The wintering bird at Palomarín departed Mar. 7. A last Mountain Bluebird departed the Sutter Buttes Mar. 3 (BED), while the first reported on breeding grounds were in *Sierra* and *Lassen* Mar. 10 (JML). Townsend's Solitaires were reported in lowland areas in higher numbers than for any previous spring except the 1982 invasion. As in that year inland and coastal reports were equally split; the last records were of singles Apr. 26, n.w. of Ft. Dick (*fide* RAE) and Apr. 28 at Woodleaf, *Yuba* (BED). At least one of three + Hermit Thrushes on outer Pt. Reyes May 29 (†KFC) appeared to be of the eastern racial group (*C. g. faxoni* etc.), based on size, dark color and brownish sides. This form is apparently previously unrecorded in the state. Varied Thrush provides a good example of the need for caution in interpreting departure dates. In an average spring (and this appears to have been one) most individuals depart the wintering grounds during March, with stragglers giving departure dates through April. A few are seen in May; even June records exist which appear to refer to stragglers far from known breeding areas. Thus this year's "departure date" was of a female at outer Pt. Reyes May 29 + (KFC); the next preceding it was one at Mt. Diablo May 1 (JRI). April 13 was an odd date for a Wrenit to be at 4300 ft; it was said to be the first in 3 years at Blodgett Forest Research Station, *El Dorado* (SAL).

THRASHERS THROUGH VIREOS — A Sage Thrasher noted Apr. 20, w. of Ft. Dick (GL *et al.*) provided a 2nd *Del Norte* record. A well-described **Bendire's Thrasher** on F.I., May 19 (†JP, ph. T. McElroy) was only the 5th individual for the Region—2nd for spring. The last N. Shrike reports were both Mar. 17: an immature on Scott Rd., *El Dorado* (†EH) and one (age?) near Honey L. (JRI). A Loggerhead Shrike Apr. 9-14 was at Pt. St. George, *Del Norte*; they are rare on the n. coast (GL, RAE *et al.*). One singing Bell's Vireo May 25 was near Bradley, *Monterey*, where the species was noted breeding last year (DR). A singing Solitary Vireo May 1-June 8 + in Klamath (RAE) was unusually coastal for the n.w. part of the Region. Five "first arrivals" of Warbling Vireo in the S.F. Bay area Mar. 17-21 indicated a strong, early push there.

WARBLERS — A Tennessee Warbler at the Presidio, S.F., Mar. 4 to at least Mar. 21 (*fide* Gull) wintered locally; the only other report was of a singing male at outer Pt. Reyes May 27 (JM); none were at F.I. The recent (1979-1983) average for March to May is 3.6 on the mainland, and 6-8 for F.I. Orange-crowned Warblers may have nested at Ancil Hoffman P., *Sacramento*; one netted Apr. 27 had a possible brood patch, and a bird was seen carrying food at the same spot in May (TM).

The only C.V. precedent seems to be one carrying food at Blackberry I., *Tehama*, June 19, 1977 (SAL). A Nashville Warbler near San Juan Bautista, *San Benito* Mar. 23 (LCB) probably wintered in the state; one in Yreka Apr. 4 (RE) tied the Region's early spring record. A ♀ N. Parula was at Fairhaven, *Humboldt* May 29 (RLeV). Single Magnolia Warblers at F.I., May 28 & 30 and outer Pt. Reyes May 29 (†KFC) probably represent only one or two birds. Apart from one "Myrtle" Warbler on outer Pt. Reyes May 27 (JM), which was probably an eastern vagrant, the last reported were two at Mt. Diablo May 1 (JRI). The last clearly migrant "Audubon's" was May 3 at Gray Lodge (BED), while a female with nesting material May 15 at Klamath Glen established the 2nd coastal nesting record for *Del Norte* (RAE). The Black-throated Gray Warbler wintering in Arcata was last seen Mar. 28 (*fide* JS), and the first migrants arrived simultaneously on the early date of Mar. 31 in *Sacramento*, Palomar, and Los Altos Hills, *Santa Clara* (TM; P.R.B.O.; *fide* WB). Townsend's Warblers were reported in high numbers away from the immediate coast (TM, DY, JRI), and absent at Palomar; three were at F.I., May 19-30 (recent March to May average: 60!).

An *albilora* Yellow-throated Warbler was at Pt. Lobos, *Monterey* May 24-25 (GS, †AB, †DR), closely matching last year's May 27 record in Pacific Grove. Tantalizing was a report of a probable Prairie Warbler heard singing repeatedly at Audubon Canyon Ranch, *Marin* Mar. 3 (EH). There are but 3 Regional winter records. The last of the four Palm Warblers reported (all from the n. coast) was one in Arcata Mar. 28 (*fide* JS). Of six Black-and-white Warblers in the period (five coastal), one furnished an apparent first *Merced* record May 19 at Merced N.W.R. (RB). No Am. Redstarts were reported, for the first March-May period since 1978. The only Ovenbird was singing at Fairhaven, *Humboldt* May 28-31 (JS, KVR), for a 4th county record. Once a common nester through the C.V., the Com. Yellowthroat has declined there in the last 40 years. Its current status is unclear. It is still at least locally common as a breeder in *Butte* and *San Joaquin* (BED, DY), while it is apparently absent or rare in most of the Valley as a breeder (but not as a migrant). A Yellow-breasted Chat at Salyer, *Trinity* Apr. 17 was said to be 2 weeks early (*fide* JS); both it and one that same day in *Del Puerto Canyon*, *Stanislaus* (JRI) were 3-4 days ahead of the average first arrival for the Region.

TANAGERS THROUGH LONGSPURS — The ♂ Summer Tanager wintering at Golden Gate P., S.F. was last reported Mar. 4 (*fide* Gull). A Mar. 15 W. Tanager noted at Henry Cowell S.P., *Santa Cruz* (GS) wintered in the state, while the subsequent 4 reports, Apr. 15-17, were average to a few days early as firsts for the Region. One feeding young May 15 at Stevens Creek County P. (*fide* WB) was certainly ahead of schedule! Three or four Rose-breasted Grosbeaks May 18-19 were average—a strong contrast to the usual numbers seen at this time on the deserts and coasts of s. California. Black-headed Grosbeaks were a week or so early through much of the Region. Perhaps due to the coastal winds, numbers were clearly low in *Marin* and w. *Sonoma* (DDeS, P.R.B.O., KFC). Lazuli Buntings arrived early and were present in above-average numbers. Several observers commented on the high numbers, although as is often the case, no comparative numbers were offered, making interpretation difficult. The only Indigo Bunting was a male singing in *San Mateo* May 20+ (*fide* WB); the 1979-1983 Regional average for March is 3.4.

Two Brown Towhees at Willow Cr., *Humboldt* during the period (*fide* JS) were near the n. limit of the species there. Pending acceptance by the C.B.R.C., a **Cassin's Sparrow** May 29 at the Little R. mouth, *Humboldt* (JS, †KVR) gave us a 7th Regional and first mainland record. Four of the past records (all F.I.) fell between June 2 & July 12, the other 2 in late September. A Rufous-crowned Sparrow 6 mi. w. of Paskenta, s. *Tehama* May 15 (SE) extended the species' known range n. about 2 mi. First returning Chipping Sparrows were in *Sacramento* Mar. 31 (TM) and *Del Norte* Apr. 3 (RAE). Single Brewer's Sparrows Apr. 16 in *Sutter* (LCB) and May 8 n. of Stockton (DY) were rare C.V. migrants, but two to four singing at Big L., *Shasta* May 17-19 (B & CY) were in a region where the species probably breeds. One was on F.I., May 28. Impressive were reports of about 65 Black-chinned Sparrows at 18 sites, all but a few from areas where irregular at best. Birds were noted as far n. in Sierran foothills as Cohasset Ridge, *Butte* (TM—two males May 26), where the species was noted in 1974, and in the inner coastal

mountains to *Glenn* (SE—26 to 38 at 4 sites, April-May). Coastal records were of singles on Fairfax-Bolinas Rd., *Marin* May 6 (*fide* Gull) and on Sweeney Ridge Trail, Pacifica, *San Mateo* May 20 (*fide* Gull). One pair bred at Palomar, with breeding probable at many other sites. Vesper Sparrows were singing on territory both at Big L., *Shasta* (five on May 19—B & CY) and L. Talawa (eight+, May 14—DDeS); breeding has yet to be confirmed away from the Great Basin in the Region. Six + Lark Sparrows Apr. 30-May 12 in *Humboldt* and *Del Norte* (*fide* JS, RAE) were rare migrants for the n. coast.

Reports of Black-throated Sparrows at 5 sites were received; the first 2 are of vagrants, while the latter 3 probably indicate breeding: one Apr. 22 provided a 2nd Sutter Buttes record (WA), while another was at Requa, *Del Norte* May 23-24 (RAE *et al.*) for a first county record (and 6th coastal spring record for the Region); two + near Yreka were noted May 17 where they are irregularly seen (RE, MR); up to 18 were near Folsom L. Peninsula, *El Dorado* May 21-23+ (JML, EH *et al.*) where they have not been noted before; one was on Cohasset Ridge, *Butte* May 26 (TM) where they were found May-June 1974. Sage Sparrows said to be breeding near Folsom L. Peninsula on May 21 (JML) extended northward the known range of the disjunct Sierran foothill population of *A. b. belli*, but one Apr. 1 on Riley Rd., near Aprno Rd., *Sacramento* (†B & HK) was *A. b. canescens* or *nevadensis*. At least five Lark Buntings appeared in the Sacramento Valley. One male was present near Sacramento mid-March through Apr. 23 (TM *et al.*); two (male and female) were at the s.e. edge of the Sutter Buttes Apr. 14-May 8 (WA, BED *et al.*); another male present Mar. 30-Apr. 21, 6 mi. w. of Woodland, *Yolo* (ph. BM, †KH) may have been one of the two birds seen Mar. 16, 8 mi to the s.e. (JRI), as only one was seen at the latter spot Mar. 18 (*fide* Gull).

A Savannah Sparrow at 4300 ft at the Blodgett Forest Research Station Apr. 21 (SAL) was a very misplaced migrant; eight on May 8 at the Sutter Buttes (WA) were many for a last Regional report away from breeding areas. There appear to be but 2 January-February Grasshopper Sparrow records for the Region (Jan. 3, 1973 & Feb. 18, 1911); both are specimens and from the San Joaquin Valley. There are no known March records for the Region whatsoever. Thus a report of one Mar. 27 near Nicasio, *Marin* (*fide* Gull), ostensibly a very early migrant, must remain a tentative record, as no photo or documentation was apparently made. Early records otherwise were of one Apr. 5 at Hayward Shoreline Pk., *Alameda* (†HG) and another Apr. 6 just w. of Nicasio (JE). The number of sites at which this species is known to be routine continues to grow, as birders explore grasslands. The last of 14 White-throated Sparrows was one May 3, 2 mi. s. of McCloud, *Siskiyou* (CS) which, amazingly, was said to be "acting as if nesting."—with White-crowned?! An "incredible fallout" of Golden-crowned and White-crowned sparrows involved "many 100s" of each, Apr. 30-May 3 in coastal *Humboldt* (RLeV) and *Del Norte* (RAE). A late ad. Harris' Sparrow was at Tracy, *San Joaquin* May 8 (*fide* DY). Seventeen "Slate-colored" Juncos were reported, to Apr. 10. A "Pink-sided" Junco (*J. h. mearnsi*) report lacked details; there are *still* no documented records for the Region, though it surely must occur. A Lapland Longspur in Hayward, *Alameda* to May 12 (BR) was only one day short of the latest-ever Regional date.

ICTERINES — More reports of Tricolored Blackbirds were received this spring than in the previous 3 spring periods combined; the largest number reported was 1500 on White Rock Rd., *Sacramento* Mar. 17 (EH). Hopefully observers will continue to document this species' status. North of Orick, *Humboldt*, 30-40 were "unprecedented numbers for the n. coast" May 27-30 (JS, RAE). A female described from F.I. (†JP), Mar. 7-14, established only the 2nd record there away from fall. Five coastal records of Yellow-headed Blackbird spanned Apr. 15-May 17. The Rusty Blackbird n. of Orick was last seen Apr. 8 (RAE), providing only the 2nd Regional record later than mid-February.

FRINGILLIDS — A Purple Finch Apr. 30 at Gray Lodge was the last for the C.V., and the first report at that spot in 8 years (BED). Red Crossbills were well reported throughout the period, both in the Sierras and coastwardly from Monterey to Gualala, *Mendocino*. Pine Siskins were clearly in much above average numbers through much of the Region despite rather few reports, as the reporters were widespread and unanimously enthusiastic; for instance, "hundreds were present this year on an annual census of the Kilgore Hills near Yreka where normally

none or, at best, a few are present'' (RE, MR). An invasion of hundreds of Lawrence's Goldfinches into the Region this spring was unprecedented in size. The earliest report was of birds at the Sutter Buttes Mar. 11 (WA), with reports building steadily and apparently peaking in late May. No reports were received from the interior n. of *Glenn* or in Great Basin areas; coastwardly the northernmost records were of four on May 26 near Willits, *Mendocino* (AE, KH) and two on May 29 and ''several days prior'' at Cape Mendocino, *Humboldt* (JS, RLeV *et al.*); the latter were said to have been photographed for a 2nd county record. Two May 31 at Ackerson Meadow, *Tuolumne* (MG) were at the high elevation of 4500 ft. Notably, at least ¼ of the reports were of one to six birds, and nesting was probable in many cases. The apparent dependence of this species on native annuals as a food crop, fiddleneck (*Amsinckia* spp.) in particular, may be an important clue in understanding the irruption (see also Bent, 1968, *Life Histories* . . .). ''Huge flocks'' of Evening Grosbeaks totalling 5000+ in the South L. Tahoe area Mar. 1-5 (RS) represented the largest number reported in the Region in 4 years.

CORRIGENDA — The wandering Sabine's Gull (AB 38:242) was at

Tule Lake N.W.R., *not* Lower Klamath N.W.R.

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