

SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

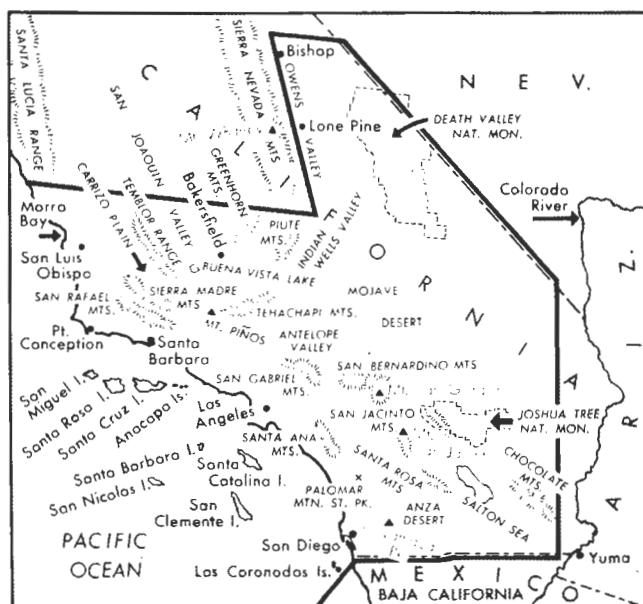
/Guy McCaskie

The dry weather of the winter continued into the spring with only a minimal amount of precipitation during March and April, and none thereafter, leaving us with the second driest January-through-June period on record.

The regularly occurring west coast migrants were most conspicuous during April and the first week of May, with average to above average numbers encountered along the coast, but below average numbers at most desert oases. After the first week of May migrants became unusually scarce throughout the Region, and this remained the situation into early June with fewer of the regular vagrants found.

ABBREVIATIONS — F.C.R. = Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley, Inyo Co.; N.E.S.S. = north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co.; S.D.N.H.M. = San Diego Natural History Museum; S.C.R.E. = Santa Clara River Estuary, Ventura Co.; S.E.S.S. = south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial County. In the text following, place names in *italics* are counties. As virtually all rarities found in southern California are seen by numerous observers, only the observer initially identifying the bird is included. Documentation is on file for all rarities listed in the report.

The early arrival dates for some of our key migrants were: Wilson's Phalarope Apr. 15, Salton Sea; Red-necked Phalarope Apr. 28, Salton Sea; Elegant Tern Mar. 11, San Diego; Common Tern Apr. 14, Morro Bay; Least Tern Apr. 16, Bolsa Chica; Black Tern Apr. 18, Salton Sea; Lesser Nighthawk Mar. 20, Imperial Valley; Vaux's Swift Apr. 6, Venice; Black-chinned Hummingbird Feb. 25, Blythe (Colorado R. Valley) & Mar. 24, Los Angeles; Olive-sided Flycatcher Apr. 14, San Diego; Western Wood-Pewee Apr. 14, San Diego; Willow Flycatcher May 6, San Diego; Hammond's Flycatcher Apr. 1, San Diego County; Western Flycatcher Mar. 11, San Diego; Ash-throated Flycatcher Mar. 22, Orange County; Western Kingbird Mar. 17, Los Angeles; Swainson's Thrush Apr. 21, San Diego; Bell's Vireo Mar. 21, San Diego; Solitary Vireo Mar. 21, San Diego; Warbling Vireo Mar. 1, Orange County; Nashville Warbler Mar. 31, San Diego and Morongo Valley; Yellow Warbler Apr. 8, San Diego; Black-throated Gray Warbler Mar. 24, San Diego; Hermit Warbler Apr. 12, San Diego; MacGillivray's Warbler Mar. 30, San Diego; Wilson's Warbler Mar. 7, Orange County; Yellow-breasted Chat Apr. 8, San Diego; Western Tanager Apr. 8, San Diego; Black-headed Grosbeak Mar. 22, San Diego; Blue Grosbeak Apr. 29, Pt. Mugu; Lazuli Bunting Apr. 1, e. San Diego County; Black-chinned Sparrow Mar. 13, San Diego County; Hooded Oriole Mar. 3, Santa Barbara; Northern Oriole Mar. 21, e. San Diego County.



LOONS, GREBES — Red-throated Loons continued to be found far inland well into April as indicated by one-to-two on L. Perris, *Riverside* Apr. 11-15 (SC) and one on L. Henshaw, *San Diego* Apr. 16 (RH). Up to three Arctic Loons, casual inland, were on L. Perris Apr. 1-15 (SC) and another was on nearby L. Skinner Mar. 12 (RMCK). The imm. **Yellow-billed Loon** found on L. Perris Dec. 20 was last seen May 4 (SC). Two Horned Grebes, rare after the end of April, were on San Diego Bay May 13 (REW), one was still present on L. Perris at the end of the period (SC), and another was at N.E.S.S., May 5+ (REW).

ALBATROSSES — A Black-footed Albatross near Santa Rosa I., May 20 (LB) was in the Santa Barbara Channel where rare. The presence of a **Laysan Albatross** at N.E.S.S., May 21+ (SC) may not be as outlandish as it would initially appear, there being 3 previous records from this general area in May: one seen near Desert Hot Springs about 45 mi n.w. of the Salton Sea May 5, 1976 (W. *Birds* 8:27-28), one photographed in Yuma 75 ± mi s.e. of the Salton Sea May 14, 1981 (*Am. Birds* 35:798-799) and one found dead in Blaire Valley about 40 mi w. of the Salton Sea May 28, 1982 (*Am. Birds* 36:893). Increasing



Horned Grebe, n. end of Salton Sea, Cal., May 6, 1984. Photo/Steven W. Cardiff.

numbers of these are being found around the tip of the Baja California Pen. (B. Pitman, pers. comm.), suggesting that the occasional bird is now finding itself "trapped" at the head of the Gulf of California after moving N from the "Cape Region" along the wrong side of the Baja Pen., and attempting an overland flight to continue its N migration.

BOOBIES, PELICANS, ANHINGA — A sub-ad. **Brown Booby** near Santa Barbara I., Mar. 25 (AS) was very likely the same bird seen in this general area Oct. 29, 1983. A **Brown Pelican** at N.E.S.S., Apr. 7 (REW) was more than 2 weeks ahead of the previous early arrival date for this inland locality, so eight at the same location Apr. 15 (GMcC)

were totally unexpected; 10 were present at the end of the period (REW). The ♀ **Anhinga** found on Lee L., near L. Elsinore, *Riverside* Jan. 29 was still present at the end of the period (SC) but could be difficult to find among the partially submerged trees.

HERONS, STORKS — An ad. **Little Blue Heron** at S.E.S.S., May 27 (HK) was the only one found away from the San Diego area where a small population now appears to be resident. A **Tricolored Heron** still present near Imperial Beach, *San Diego* June 6 (M & DH) was apparently summering in that area. A sub-ad. **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron**, rare-to-casual along the *San Diego* coast, was at the Santa Margarita R. mouth near Oceanside May 9 (LRH). Two ad. **Wood Storks** remained around Oceanside from the winter with one on Windmill L., Apr. 22 (LRH) being the latest sighting.

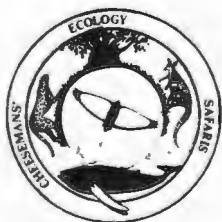
WATERFOWL — Two **Fulvous Whistling-Ducks** at N.E.S.S., May 12 (GMcC) constituted one of a very few records in *Riverside*. A wintering **Greater White-fronted Goose** in Santa Barbara remained to Apr. 30 (RAH), which was unusually late. As usual **Brant** were found inland during March and April with 688 on L. Henshaw, *San Diego* Mar. 14 (RH) being the largest concentration; 75 seen flying W over Yaqui Wells in the Anza Borrego Desert Apr. 19 (BW) were away from water, and single birds on L. Casitas, *Ventura* Mar. 24 (LB) and L. Tinnemaha, *Inyo* June 1 (REW) were at unusual localities. A light-bellied **Brant** (*Branta bernicla hrota*), casual in California, was seen off Goleta Pt., *Santa Barbara* Apr. 19 (JLD). A wintering ♂ **Eur. Green-winged Teal**, very rare along the coast of s. California, remained in Goleta through Apr. 14 (TW), and another in Barstow Apr. 13-28 (SC, ph. S.D.N.H.M.) was the first to have been found at a desert locality in this Region. A ♂ **Eur. Wigeon** in Ramona, *San Diego* Apr. 7 (REW) was somewhat late for s. California. Four **Black Scoters** migrating N off Goleta Pt., Apr. 11 (JLD) and two more at the same place Apr. 17 (JLD) were the only ones reported. **Migrant Surf Scoters** were seen on L. Henshaw between Mar. 12 & May 3 with a high count of 186 present Mar. 14 (RH). Two wintering **Hooded Mergansers** present in Goleta

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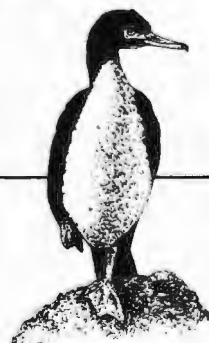
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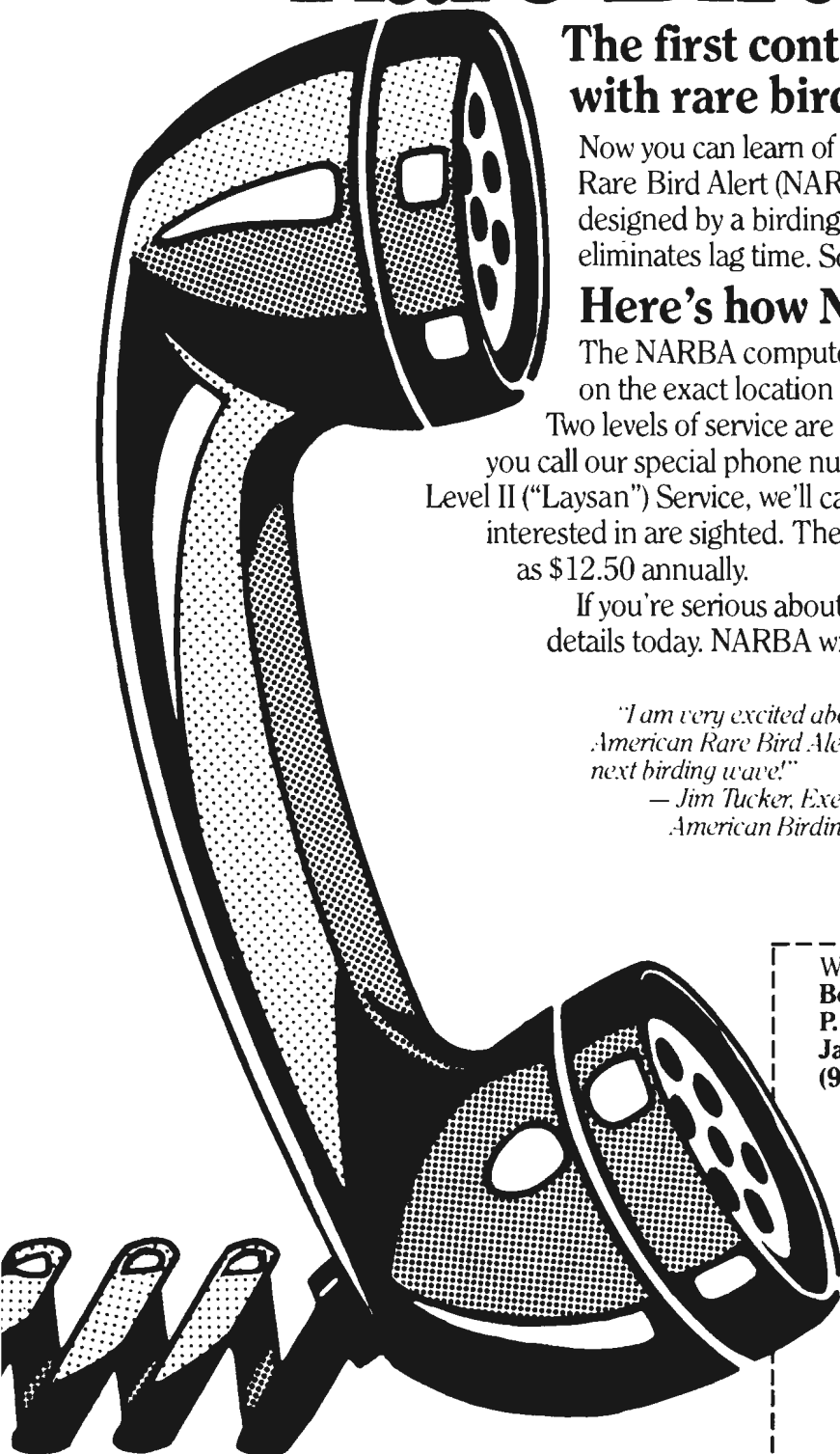
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through Apr. 10 (NC) were late.

HAWKS, FALCONS — A Black-shouldered Kite along the Colorado R., s. of Palo Verde, *Imperial* Mar. 20 (DKr) was at a most unusual locality. A sub-ad. Mississippi Kite, a species now found each year in late May or early June, was at Oasis, *Mono* June 1 (ML). A wintering imm. Bald Eagle present on L. Henshaw through May 4 (RH) was late. An ad. N. Goshawk on Mt. Palomar Mar. 22 (RH) was only the 3rd ever to be found in *San Diego*, and an immature at Oasis May 24 (JLD) was unexpected at this time of the year. An ad. Red-shouldered Hawk at Desert Center, *Riverside* Apr. 18 (RMck) was well e. of the species' range in California. The only Broad-winged Hawk reported was an adult near Mt. Pinos, *Kern* May 27 (DB). Swainson's Hawks continue to decline with one at California City, *Kern* Apr. 7 (MH) and another over Salton City, *Imperial* May 5 (REW) being the only migrants reported. A Merlin at Tehachapi, *Kern* Apr. 27 (MH) was quite late. A Peregrine Falcon at L. Henshaw Mar. 15 (RH) and another at L. Elsinore, *Riverside* Apr. 14 (GMCC) were both at unusual localities.

CRANES — A flock of 15 Sandhill Cranes flying N over S.E.S.S., Apr. 10 (FGB) were undoubtedly migrants moving N either from the small wintering population in the Imperial Valley or from w. Mexico, and established the latest spring date for s. California.

PLOVERS, SANDPIPERS — The only Lesser Golden-Plovers reported were all wintering *fulva*, and included six still present near Santa Maria, *Santa Barbara* May 6 (PS). A Solitary Sandpiper, rare in spring, was in Goleta Apr. 26 (JEL), another was in Mojave, *Kern* Apr. 27 (MH), two were at nearby California City May 1-4 (MOC), two more were in Victorville, *San Bernardino* Apr. 28 (SC) and a 7th was at Imperial Dam, *Imperial* Apr. 27-28 (JML); this was more than normally encountered at this time of year, and all within a very short period, suggesting a movement of these birds through the Region the last week

of April. Three Wandering Tattlers, casual inland, were at Salton City May 5 (GMCC) with two still present May 6 (DLD). An Upland Sandpiper at F.C.R., May 29 (SC) was only the 9th ever found in s. California, but the 4th at this location in late May. Ruddy Turnstones were present inland on the Salton Sea between Apr. 15 & May 12 with a high count of 80 May 5 (REW). Red Knots reached peak numbers on the Salton Sea in late April with 300 at Salton City Apr. 28 (JO). A Semipalmated Sandpiper near Lancaster, *Los Angeles* Apr. 15 (JLD) established the earliest date for this very rare spring migrant in California, and was followed by one in Victorville Apr. 28 (SC), up to six at N.E.S.S., May 2-6 (DLD), and a late straggler at S.E.S.S., June 3 (REW). A Baird's Sandpiper, rare to casual in spring, was near Lancaster Apr. 14 (JLD). A **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** on the Kern N.W.R., *Kern* May 8-10 (JW, ph. S.D.N.H.M.) was only the 2nd ever found in California in spring. The only Stilt Sandpipers found this spring were 30 at S.E.S.S., May 5 (REW). The ♂ Ruff that wintered on San Diego Bay was last seen Mar. 26 (DKi). A flock of 320 Short-billed Dowitchers in Victorville Apr. 25 (SC) was an exceptional concentration for an inland locality away from the Salton Sea.

JAEGERS THROUGH SKIMMER — An ad. Pomarine Jaeger, accidental inland, on L. Elsinore May 18+ (DLD, ph. S.D.N.H.M.) and two more at N.E.S.S., June 4 (PEL) had undoubtedly reached these localities by way of the Gulf of California. One or two Parasitic Jaegers at N.E.S.S., May 27-29 (DV) were the first to have been found inland in s. California in spring. A 2nd-summer Laughing Gull on Morro Bay Mar. 24-May 4 (AMC) was along the coast where considered casual; a 2nd-summer bird at N.E.S.S., May 2 (DLD), another at Salton City May 12 (GMCC) and a 3rd at S.E.S.S. the same day (BB) were early for the Salton Sea. Migrant Franklin's Gulls included two at Arroyo Grande, *San Luis Obispo* May 31 (BS), one at F.C.R., May 25-26 (GMCC), another near Lancaster May 23 (JLD), one near Imperial Beach May 30 (CGE) and up to nine at N.E.S.S., May 21-June 10



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Two pelagic or coastal birds inland at L. Elsinore, Riverside Co., Cal. Above: Pomarine Jaeger (adult or near-adult), May 18, 1984. Below: adult Heermann's Gull, May 4, 1984. Photos/Steven W. Cardiff.

(DLD, PEL). An ad. Heermann's Gull, casual inland, was on L. Elsinore May 4 (SC, ph. S.D.N.H.M.) and another was at N.E.S.S., May 23 (SC, ph. S.D.N.H.M.). An ad. Mew Gull at Salt Cr., on the Salton Sea Mar. 11 (DRW) was far inland. An ad. Herring Gull at California City Apr. 27 (JW) and another at F.C.R., May 19 (GMcC) were both in the desert where previous records are virtually nonexistent. A first-summer W. Gull inland on L. Elsinore Apr. 11 + (SC) was wearing color bands, having been banded as a chick on Santa Barbara I. Up to three Glaucous-winged Gulls at N.E.S.S. at the end of the period (GMcC) were far inland. A first-year Glaucous Gull, rare in s. California, flew N past Goleta Pt., Mar. 26 (JLD).

Two Gull-billed Terns at N.E.S.S., Mar. 11 (DRW) gave us the earliest spring arrival date for this species in California. An Elegant Tern at Carpinteria, Santa Barbara Mar. 23 (LB) was unusually far n. for so early in the year. An ad. Arctic Tern at N.E.S.S., June 9 (DLD) established the 7th record for the interior, all falling between June 1 &

13. A Least Tern, very rare to casual inland, was at Salton City May 6 (REW) and single birds were at N.E.S.S., May 6 & 23 (DLD). One to four Black Skimmers at S.C.R.E., May 4-6 (DB) were the only ones found along the coast north of San Diego.

PIGEONS THROUGH WOODPECKERS — One or two Band-tailed Pigeons at F.C.R., May 26-30 (JO, REW) and another at California City May 5 (MH) were at unusual localities. A migrant Yellow-billed Cuckoo at Oasis June 1 (REW) was the only one reported. One or two Com. Nighthawks at F.C.R., May 26-30 (DLD) were spring migrants at an unusual locality. As usual, a few Chimney Swifts appeared, with one at Deep Springs May 23 (JLD), three over Los Angeles May 29 (RMCK) and four at the Iron Mt. Pump Station in e. San Bernardino June 2 (H & PB). A Vaux's Swift on Pt. Loma June 2 (DP) was exceptionally late, as virtually all *Chaetura* seen along the coast of s. California in late May and early June are Chimney Swifts. A ♂ Magnificent Hummingbird seen for a short period of time in Ridgecrest, Kern Apr. 24 (JBr) when attracted to a lawn sprinkler will establish the first record for California if accepted by the California Rarities Committee. Calliope Hummingbirds were more numerous than usual during April, with 50 ± reported along the coast and a concentration of 10 near Lancaster Apr. 14 (JLD). A ♂ Broad-tailed Hummingbird at Tollhouse Springs in the White Mts., Inyo Mar. 21 (BWK) was early, and single birds at Corn Springs in e. Riverside May 6 (AS) and near Iron Mt. Pump Station Apr. 29 (RMCK) were away from areas of normal occurrence. An obvious ♂ N. (Yellow-shafted) Flicker at Deep Springs May 25-28 (JO) was exceptionally late.

FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS — A Dusky Flycatcher, very rare along the coast, was on Pt. Loma May 3 (REW). Fifteen Gray Flycatchers along the coast between Apr. 14 & May 3 were more than normal. An E. Phoebe at California City May 4-5 (MH) was only the 2nd ever reported in May in s. California. The Dusky-capped Flycatcher found in Los Osos, San Luis Obispo Jan. 22 was last seen May 20 (GPS, ph. S.D.N.H.M.). For the 3rd consecutive year a Brown-crested Flycatcher appeared at F.C.R., being present May 27-30 (SC), and another at Ft. Piute in e. San Bernardino June 1 (SC) was the 2nd ever found in e. Mojave area. A wintering Tropical Kingbird remained in Goleta through Apr. 29 (AB). Three E. Kingbirds were found in the e. portion of the Region with one at Oasis May 27 (AS), another at F.C.R., May 29-31 (DRW) and one at Morongo Valley June 7 (KR). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, a casual straggler to California, was at F.C.R., May 28-30 (JBo). A ♀ Purple Martin over Brawley, Imperial Apr. 28 (GMcC) was at an unusual locality.

JAYS THROUGH VIREOS — A Scrub Jay at Stovepipe Wells in Death Valley May 27-31 (DRW) was certainly lost. A Hermit Thrush on Pt. Loma June 6 (REW) was exceptionally late for a coastal locality. A Varied Thrush near Holtville, Imperial Apr. 12-13 (MJK) was unexpected, and single birds at Pt. Mugu May 6 (H & PB) and on Pt. Loma May 13 (B & MMcl) were late for along the coast. A Brown Thrasher, most unusual in spring, was at Scotty's Castle May 26-27 (B & MMcl). A Water Pipit along the coast on Pt. Loma May 21 (REW) and another on the desert at F.C.R., May 25-27 (JO) were both very late for these localities. A Bell's Vireo at Oasis June 1-3 (REW) was unexpected, and

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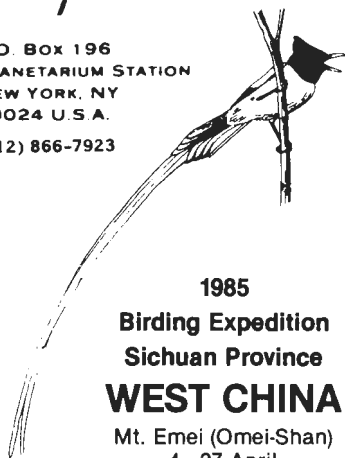
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was felt to be from one of the e. populations because of its relatively
bright coloration. Three Red-eyed Vireos, rare but regular in late spring,
were reported with one at Corn Springs May 13 (OC), another in Cali-
fornia City May 28 (JW), and the 3rd on Figueroa Mt., near Santa
Barbara May 20 (LRB).

WOOD WARBLERS — A ♀ **Blue-winged Warbler** in California
City May 25 (JW) was only the 8th ever found in s. California. A ♂
Golden-winged Warbler, one of the rarest wood warblers to reach Cali-
fornia, was in Carpinteria June 1-2 (TW). A Lucy's Warbler at Oasis
May 29-June 3 (DLD) was exceptionally far n. The only N. Parulas
were an early male at Pismo Beach, *San Luis Obispo* Apr. 1-5 (BS), a
female in California City May 15 (MOC) and another at Oasis May 30-
June 3 (JML). The wintering Chestnut-sided Warbler found in Hunting-
ton Beach, *Orange* Dec. 31 was last seen Apr. 3 (LRH), but a male at
Corn Springs May 13 (OC) was the only spring vagrant. Four Magnolia
Warblers was about an average number with a female in Barstow May
11 (SC, ph. S.D.N.H.M.), and single males at Thousand Palms Oasis,
Riverside May 17 (RMCK), Ft. Piute May 26 (REW) and Oasis May 30-
31 (JML). Two ♂ Cape May Warblers, casual in spring, were together
at F.C.R., May 19 (JO). A ♂ Black-throated Blue Warbler near Ridge-
crest, *Kern* June 4 (HLJ) was only the 3rd to have been found in s.
California in spring. The wintering Black-throated Green Warbler found
at Los Osos Dec. 17 was last seen Mar. 2 (LB) and the female in Costa
Mesa remained through Apr. 6 (LRH). A ♂ Yellow-throated Warbler in
Carpinteria June 2-3 (SC) was of the expected race *albilora*. At least two
Grace's Warblers on Clark Mt., *San Bernardino* May 29 (TW) were
probably spring overshoots as none was found on subsequent visits; this
species nests in the nearby Charleston and Sheep Mts. of s. Nevada. The
wintering Pine Warbler found in San Luis Obispo Jan. 9 remained
through Mar. 14 (CM); a singing male at F.C.R., May 31 (REW)
provided our first spring record. A ♂ Prairie Warbler, virtually unheard



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• Foothills of Western Himalayas: 19 days, 4/18 •
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Male Blackpoll Warbler at Corn Springs, Riverside Co., Cal., May 13, 1984. Photo/Herbert Clarke.

of in spring, was in California City May 8 (MOC). A Palm Warbler known to have been present in Goleta since Dec. 17 remained through Apr. 26 (KB) and another in Los Osos May 8 (PA) could well have wintered locally, this species being exceptionally rare in late May when most other spring vagrants are found. The only Bay-breasted Warbler found was a male in Anaheim June 1 (DRW). A ♂ Blackpoll Warbler, exceptionally rare in spring, was at Corn Springs May 13 (HC, ph. S.D.N.H.M.). A ♂ Prothonotary Warbler, a casual stray to California, was at F.C.R., May 19-20 (HAG) and another was at the same location May 26 (JA). Eight Ovenbirds during May was about average, and

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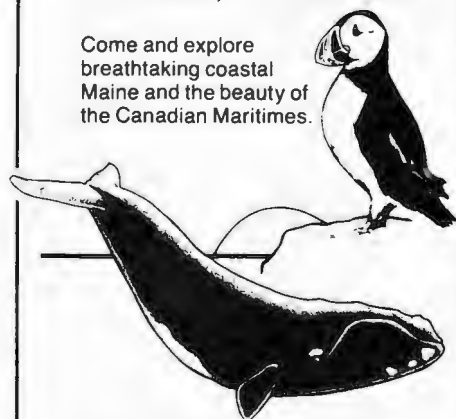
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included a somewhat early individual at Corn Springs May 5 (HC). The only Hooded Warblers found were a male on Pt. Loma May 12 (BF) and another in Tustin, Orange May 26 (V & WG).

TANAGERS THROUGH SPARROWS — The wintering Hepatic Tanager present in Santa Barbara since Nov. 25 was last seen Apr. 8 (VC), and a male at Corn Springs May 6 (AS) was one of very few found in spring away from a known breeding locality. A ♂ Indigo Bunting near S.E.S.S., May 5 (REW) and another in Barstow May 8 (DLD) were somewhat early for this rare but regular stray to s. California. A ♂ Dickcissel, casual in spring, was near Ridgecrest May 18 (HLJ) and another was found at Oasis May 27 (DLD). A Black-throated Sparrow on Pt. Loma May 30 (GJ) was along the coast where considered casual. A Grasshopper Sparrow at F.C.R., May 27 (SC) was at an unusual locality. A Swamp Sparrow near Imperial Dam Apr. 27-28 (JML) and another in Victorville May 3 (SC) were probably spring migrants. A White-throated Sparrow in Mojave May 18 (MH), another at Oasis May 19-20 (JO) and a 3rd at Mesquite Springs in Death Valley N.M., May 19 (HAG) were late. A Golden-crowned Sparrow on Pt. Loma June 7 (REW) was exceptionally late. A migrant Harris' Sparrow was in California City May 11 (JW).

BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES, FINCHES — Bobolinks were scarcer than normal in the e. portion of the Region with six reported May 13-June 2; but along the coast, where decidedly rare in spring, a male was seen in Irvine, Orange May 30 (RS) and another was found at Marina del Rey, Los Angeles June 1 (JS, ph. S.D.N.H.M.). A ♂ Tricolored Blackbird at Stovepipe Wells Mar. 25 (DS) and another at F.C.R., May 29-June 1 (SC) were both in the Death Valley area where far out of



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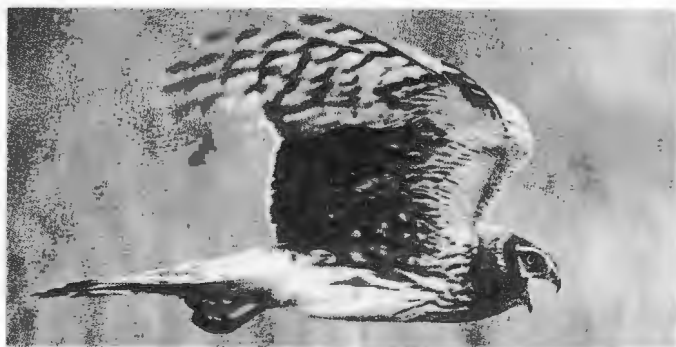
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range. Great-tailed Grackles continued to be found along the coast with a female at Pt. Mugu Mar. 24 (SJR) and another near Imperial Beach June 6 (M & DH). A Com. Grackle, a casual straggler to California, was in Baker May 24-30 (SC) and another was at Iron Mt. Pump Station May 23-29 (RMCK, ph. S.D.N.H.M.). A wintering ♂ Orchard Oriole remained in Goleta through Apr. 1 (HR) and another stayed in San Diego to Apr. 8 (LZ); a male at Pismo Beach, San Luis Obispo Mar. 3-6 (TME) could have been wintering in that general area, but a female in Caruthers Canyon of the New York Mts., May 9 (DLD) and another at Oasis June 3 (JML) were clearly vagrants. A ♂ Scott's Oriole at F.C.R., May 29 (ML) was at an unusual locality.

A Purple Finch at Desert Center Apr. 12 (SC) was in an area where very few have been found. A ♀ Lawrence's Goldfinch at Ft. Piute May 31 (SC) was unexpected. A ♂ Evening Grosbeak near Keystone Canyon in the New York Mts., May 14 (SFB) was the only one found.

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