

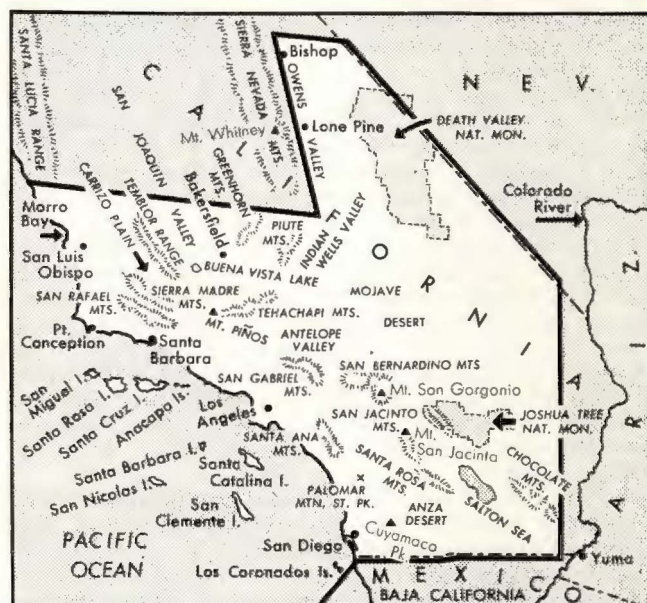
SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

Guy McCaskie

Storms pushed south from Alaska during April, leaving us with above-average rainfall in early May and appearing to delay the main push of spring migrants.

ABBREVIATIONS — F.C.R. = Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley, Inyo; H.D.L. = Harper Dry Lake, northeast of Barstow, San Bernardino; N.E.S.S. = north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside; S.C.R.E. = Santa Clara River Estuary near Ventura, Ventura; S.E.S.S. = south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial. Place names in *italics* are counties. As virtually all rarities found in s. California are seen by numerous observers, only the observer initially identifying the bird is included. Documentation is on file with the California Bird Records Committee (c/o Don Roberson, 282 Grove Acre, Pacific Grove, CA 93950) for all rarities listed in this report, and records submitted without documentation are not published.

LOONS TO STORKS — Four Pacific Loons, considered very rare inland, were on L. Isabella, Kern, Apr. 2 (RS). A Com. Loon in California City, Kern, May 7-8 (AC) and another at Deep Springs, Inyo, May 18 (REW) were both at unusual localities as was a Horned Grebe at F.C.R. Mar. 14 (JLD). A Black-



footed Albatross in the San Pedro Channel between Santa Catalina I. and Long Beach Mar. 6 (KLG) was in an area where few have ever been seen. Two Laysan Albatrosses were at 32°30' N, 122°50' W, far off San Diego May 8 (RRV); this species is evidently attempting to expand its breeding range in the e. Pacific with suspected nesting on Alijos Rocks off s. Baja California in the last 10 years (R.L. Pittman 1985, *W. Birds* 16:81-92) and on Guadalupe I. off central Baja California since 1986 (Kathy Sibit photographed four adults with three young at the extreme s. end of the island during April 1988), suggesting numbers encountered off California can be expected to increase in coming years. Single **Murphy's Petrels** were seen at 31°40' N, 121°40' W, and at 31°20' N, 122°10' W, far offshore May 3 (RRV), adding to the growing number of sightings from off California; in addition, five **Cook's Petrels** were seen equally far from shore May 2 & 8 (RRV).

Of extreme interest was an imm. **Masked Booby** photographed on the Los Coronados Is. off extreme n.w. Baja California Apr. 23 (WTE) since there is only one accepted record for California (*W. Birds* 9:175-176). An imm. Magnificent Frigatebird seen flying N into strong headwinds near Stovepipe Wells in Death Valley Apr. 8 (G & JF) was certainly at a most unusual locality. A Least Bittern at F.C.R. May 22 (MAP) was probably a migrant passing through the area since nesting is unrecorded at this location. A Snowy Egret, rare on the Channel Is., was on Santa Cruz I. Mar. 21 (HPR). A Tricolored Heron, unrecorded in California last winter, was on Los Penasquitos Lagoon, San Diego, May 1 (BM). A Cattle Egret at Stovepipe Wells May 20 (NBB) was unexpected. Single ad. Little Blue Herons on Morro Bay May 10-12 (CM), near Ventura Apr. 24 (JSR), and in the Prado Basin near Corona, Riverside, May 23-26 (LRH) fell into the pattern set by others apparently moving N along the coast in spring. A pair of Wood Storks was again present near Imperial Beach Apr. 2-17 (FB), evidently attempting to nest, but again failing.

WATERFOWL TO QUAIL — A Greater White-fronted Goose at Malibu Lagoon, Los Angeles, Apr. 13-24 (DG) and another in Goleta Mar. 5 (RPH) were along the coast, where now considered rare, and single birds near Lancaster, Los Angeles, May 7-15 (PEL) and in the Fremont Valley north of California City May 24 (JLD) were both unusually late, as was a Ross' Goose at N.E.S.S. from May 7 through the end of the period (GMCC). A Brant near Lancaster May 7-8 (PEL) and another in the Prado Basin Apr. 16 through the end of the period (JP) were inland and away from the Salton Sea, while as many as 120 were present at N.E.S.S. Apr. 16 through the end of the period (GMCC). A ♂ Eur. Green-winged Teal in Goleta Mar. 3-19 (RPH) was thought to be the same bird that has spent the past 6 winters at this locality. The ♂ Harlequin Duck that spent the winter in Bolsa Chica remained through Apr. 5 (DRW). Lingering Oldsquaws were along the coast on Morro Bay Apr. 14-26 (TME), at nearby Pismo Beach Apr. 24-29 (TME), and in Santa Barbara Jan. 16 through the end of the period (JEL), and another was inland on Quail L., Los Angeles, Mar. 5-19 (JKA). Somewhat late Black Scoters were near Morro Bay Apr. 2 (PP), in Goleta Mar. 24-Apr. 24 (JLD), and flying past Goleta Pt. Apr. 28 (PEL). A Surf Scoter in Lancaster May 15 (JKA), two at N.E.S.S. May 14 (GMCC), and another at S.E.S.S. May 3 (AH) were inland as was a White-winged Scoter on Quail L. Mar. 19-Apr. 1 (JKA).

A Black-shouldered Kite near Imperial, Imperial, Apr. 30 (PU) was outside the species' normal range. An ad. Bald Eagle over Arcadia, Los Angeles, May 15-17 (MSanM) and another near Julian, San Diego, May 18 (JS) were both unusually late for s. California. An ad. Broad-winged Hawk, casual in spring, was near Kelso, San Bernardino, Apr. 23 (BAC), and another was photographed near Cantil, Kern, May 8 (PEL). About 65 Swainson's Hawks were reported, including an early individual near San Diego Mar. 20 (GMCC), a concentration of up to 18 in Redlands Apr. 9-14 (EAC), and two late birds in Santa Maria May 29-31 (BS). A Rough-legged Hawk near Cahuilla, River-

side, Apr. 15 (DW) was late, as was a Merlin on the Carrizo Plain, San Luis Obispo, Apr. 24 (GPS).

At least four Gambel's Quail in Homewood Canyon of the Argus Mts., Inyo, Mar. 14 (JLD) were significantly northwest of the n.w. extreme of the species' published range, and a California Quail at H.D.L. Apr. 30 (AM) was significantly east of the species' published range; both species have been introduced into various localities outside their normal ranges but are not known to have been introduced at these 2 locations.

SHOREBIRDS — Four wintering Lesser Golden-Plovers were still present at Seal Beach, Orange, Mar. 24 (NBB), and one on Vandenburg A.F.B., Santa Barbara, Mar. 27 (KH) could also have wintered locally; but a bird of the American race *dominica* near Santa Maria May 29 (BS) and another of the Asiatic race *fulva* inland at N.E.S.S. Apr. 23 (GMCC) were spring migrants. A bird identified as an Am. Oystercatcher x Black Oystercatcher hybrid was at the w. end of Santa Cruz I. Mar. 23 (MAH). Five Black Oystercatchers together on the Palos Verdes Pen. Mar. 3 (JLC) represented a large number for such a location. The wintering Solitary Sandpiper near Imperial Beach remained through Apr. 13 (CGE); seven scattered throughout the Region Apr. 10-May 7 were more than normally reported in spring. Whimbrels were constantly present at H.D.L. Mar. 26-May 19 with a peak of 89 Apr. 11 (EAC)



Solitary Sandpiper at California City, California, May 6, 1988. Photo/Paul Lehman.

clearly defining the period during which northbound spring migrants pass through the interior of s. California. Two Ruddy Turnstones at Edwards on Edwards A.F.B., Kern, May 8 (MH) were the only ones found inland away from the Salton Sea. Single Black Turnstones, casual inland, were at Salton City Apr. 11 (NBB) and May 7 (GMCC); one was photographed at N.E.S.S. May 4 (AH); and two were in China Lake, Kern, May 29 with one remaining through June 4 (DB).

A Red Knot near Lancaster May 7 (JKA) was the only one found inland away from the Salton Sea, but Sanderlings were slightly more widespread with single birds at F.C.R. May 21 (NBB), China Lake May 7 (DB), near Lancaster May 6 (PEL), and at Edwards May 15 & 30 with four there May 8 (MH). As is now expected, a few Semipalmated Sandpipers passed through the Region with a very early one near Lakeview, Riverside, Apr. 18 (RMCK) and single individuals seen at S.E.S.S. Apr. 30 (JO) and May 7 (GMCC), at H.D.L. May 4 (EAC), at Edwards May 8 (MH), and along the coast near Santa Maria Apr. 27 (PEL). A **White-rumped Sandpiper** at S.C.R.E. June 11-12 (JSR) was only the 5th ever to be found in s. California, the three previous spring birds occurring between May 30 and June 16. A Baird's Sandpiper, very rare in spring, was photographed at Galileo Hill, Kern, May 6-8 (PEL), and another was seen near Lakeview May 12 (TM); single Pectoral Sandpipers,

equally rare, were at S.C.R.E. Apr. 10 (RJM) and near Lancaster Apr. 7-10 (HEC). Up to 20 Short-billed Dowitchers were at H.D.L. Apr. 20-May 4 (EAC), suggesting this is the time most pass through the interior of s. California. Fifty thousand Red-necked Phalaropes between Santa Rosa and Santa Cruz Is. May 9 (RRV) furnished an impressive concentration. A Red Phalarope, casual inland, was near Lancaster May 7-8 (JKA), and another was at H.D.L. May 19 (EAC).

SKUAS TO PUFFINS — Three S. Polar Skuas were found between Santa Catalina and Santa Barbara I. May 21 (KLG), this being the prime time of the year to find this species off s. California. Three Laughing Gulls were found along the coast, where considered casual, with an adult over s. San Diego Bay Apr. 28 (AH), another in Bolsa Chica May 19 (DRW), and the 3rd in Oceano, San Luis Obispo, May 26 (TME). The only Franklin's Gulls reported were up to three in Malibu Apr. 11-17 (CF), one off the Palos Verdes Pen. May 21 (JLD), another in Santa Barbara Mar. 6-10 (JMcM), one in San Luis Obispo Apr. 4 (GPS), and one inland at China Lake May 21 (DB). A wintering Glaucous Gull remained at S.C.R.E. through Apr. 24 (JSR), and another was in Santa Barbara Mar. 29 (HM). Three Sabine's Gulls were inland near Lancaster May 5 with two still present May 7 (PEL). Up to seven Gull-billed Terns were present along the coast on s. San Diego Bay Apr. 10 through the end of the period (JO). Elegant Terns were moving N along the coast as early as mid-April, as indicated by 60 passing by Pt. Dume, Los Angeles, Apr. 17 (KLG) and 24 at S.C.R.E. Apr. 11 (JSR), with numbers increasing in May. Two Arctic Terns 20 mi west of San Clemente I. May 2 (RRV) were early for s. California. A Least Tern at H.D.L. May 4 (EAC) was one of very few ever to be found inland away from the Salton Sea.

A Horned Puffin, normally considered casual off California, was seen near Santa Rosa I. May 9 (RRV), but a recent publication (Bird Communities at Sea off California, *Studies in Avian Biology* No. 11) suggested this species may be much commoner than we land-bound birders have considered it to be.



Sabine's Gull surrounded by Bonaparte's Gulls at the sewage ponds at Lancaster, California, May 5, 1988. Photo/Paul Lehman.

DOVES TO WOODPECKERS — Single White-winged Doves in Ridgecrest, Kern, May 8 through the end of the period (BK); at Galileo Hill May 21-24 (MOC); and in the Prado Basin May 19 (LRH) were all a little to the west of the species' normal range. A Com. Ground-Dove in Santa Barbara Mar. 24 (HM) and three in Goleta Mar. 13 (BA) helped document the northward spread of this species up the s. California coast. A Flammulated Owl in Morongo Valley, San Bernardino, Apr. 2-5 (MMT) was at a known "migrant trap" and exceptionally early. A Com. Nighthawk in the Fremont Valley near California City

June 4 (MOC) was the first to be documented in Kern. Two calling Whip-poor-wills in Pacific Palisades Apr. 28 (BW) were unexpected since this locality is away from known breeding localities in the mountains. Single Black Swifts in Ventura Apr. 18 & 21 (JT) and two in Carpinteria Apr. 23 (LRB, MAH) were unusually early, and one at S.E.S.S. May 7 (EAC) was at an unexpected locality. The only Chimney Swift reported was one over the Prado Basin May 31 (MAP). Twenty-five Calliope Hummingbirds at Butterbrecht Springs, Kern, May 7 (PEL) was a significant concentration and undoubtedly marked the peak time for the passage of the northbound migrants through this area of California. A ♂ Broad-billed Hummingbird in Redlands Mar. 28 (EAC) and another near Hesperia, San Bernardino, Apr. 12 (SM) were both well to the west of their normal migration route.

Three Lewis' Woodpeckers on Santa Cruz I. Mar. 25 (MAH) were the first to be found on the Channel Is. in several years; one on Pt. Loma, San Diego, May 11 (REW) was on the immediate coast, where rare; and another in Pomona May 31 (RFC) was quite late. Single Acorn Woodpeckers at Butterbrecht Springs Apr. 29-June 3 (JW), in California City May 29 (DRW), and at In-Ko-Pah, Imperial, Apr. 3 (GMCc) were all outside the species' normal range.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH VIREOS — A calling W. Wood-Pewee well seen in Anaheim Mar. 29 (DRW) was at least 2 weeks early. A Willow Flycatcher on Pt. Loma May 8 (REW) was the earliest reported this spring and marks the current early expected arrival date. Single Dusky Flycatchers on Pt. Loma May 9 & 12 (REW) were on the immediate coast, where considered rare. An E. Phoebe near Glendale Mar. 8 (JKA) had probably wintered locally. A ♀ Vermilion Flycatcher at Galileo Hill May 23 (JLD) was a little to the northwest of its normal range. The Dusky-capped Flycatcher found wintering in Mission Viejo, Orange, remained through Apr. 3 (MMcD). An E. Kingbird at Oasis, Mono, May 28 (BED) was the only one found this spring.

Since Purple Martins are now rarely encountered on migration, five at Salton City Apr. 23 (BED), one over California City May 6 (PEL), and another at F.C.R. May 23 (BED) were of interest. A Scrub Jay at H.D.L. Apr. 11 (CM), two there May 10 (BJ), and a Pinyon Jay at F.C.R. May 16-17 (REW) were all probably associated with the fall/winter movement of corvids. An Am. Dipper near L. Henshaw May 22 (B & MMcI) was one of a very few ever to be found in San Diego. A singing ♂ Black-tailed Gnatcatcher near Tecopa, Inyo, Mar. 30 (BED) and another at Indian Ranch in the Panamint Valley, Inyo, May 29 (DAH) were at the n.w. extreme of the species' range. Single Townsend's Solitaires on Pt. Loma Apr. 11 (B & IM) & 20 (JZ) were along the coast, where rare, and one near Blythe, Riverside, May 15 (AME) was late for such a locality. A Varied Thrush near Needles Apr. 3 (MAP) was along the Colorado R., where rare. A Sage Thrasher on Vandenberg A.F.B. May 15 (KH) was late and along the coast. A Brown Thrasher, a casual straggler to California, was in California City May 12-14 (MOC), another was at Deep Springs May 18-20 (REW), and an exceptionally late bird was at Yaqui Wells in e. San Diego June 19-21 (LW). A Crissal Thrasher at F.C.R. Mar. 14 (JLD) was the first to be found at this well-worked locality. A Water Pipit at F.C.R. May 28 (CM) was exceptionally late for such a locality. A migrant Gray Vireo, virtually never found away from known nesting localities, was at Yaqui Wells Apr. 10 (DRW). A Yellow-throated Vireo, a casual straggler to California, was at Scotty's Castle in Death Valley May 19 (BED).

WOOD WARBLERS — A ♀ Golden-winged Warbler, a real rarity in California, was in Mojave, Kern, May 21-22 (MF). A Tennessee Warbler in Oceano Mar. 19 (BS) had undoubtedly wintered locally, but this species was scarcer than expected during the spring migration period with only three reported May 13-30. A Virginia's Warbler on Pt. Loma May 15 (GMCc)

was along the coast, where rare in spring. A Lucy's Warbler at Oasis May 20 (BED) was north of its normal range. Northern Parulas were a little more numerous than expected with 12 found Apr. 27–May 30. A ♂ Chestnut-sided Warbler in Santa Barbara Apr. 11–21 (BA) would be remarkably early for a spring vagrant and may have wintered locally. A ♂ Magnolia Warbler at Galileo Hill June 2 (JJ) and another in Mojave June 4–5 (HB) were the only ones found. A ♂ Cape May Warbler in Goleta Apr. 9–23 (TEW) probably had spent the winter locally since this would be exceptionally early for a spring vagrant. A Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler in the Fremont Valley June 4 (MOC) was very late. A Yellow-throated Warbler, one of the rarer wood warblers in California, was in California City May 28 (BS).

A Grace's Warbler on Santa Cruz I. Mar. 23 (HPR) was assumed to have wintered on the island. The Pine Warbler that spent the winter in Morro Bay S.P. was last seen Mar. 27 (JW). Two Palm Warblers in Goleta through Apr. 20 (RPH) were known to have been present since November, and single individuals elsewhere in Goleta Apr. 9–12 (HPR), in Huntington Beach Apr. 3–5 (PS), and near Imperial Beach Mar. 5–Apr. 10 (JO) had also probably wintered locally; one at Oak Glen, San Bernardino, May 2 (RMCK) could have been a spring migrant. More than the expected number of Blackpoll Warblers were found with an exceptionally early female in Los Osos, San Luis Obispo, May 11 (JMcD) followed by single males in California City May 15–17 (RS) and May 27–30 (MOC), another in Los Osos June 3–4 (CM), and a 5th in Irvine June 13 (DRW). Fifteen Black-and-white Warblers Apr. 27–June 5 was about average, but nine Am. Redstarts May 16–31 were far fewer than expected. A ♂ Prothonotary Warbler, a casual straggler to California, was at Oasis May 22 (MAP), and a Worm-eating Warbler, equally rare, was in Irvine May 11 (DRW). Ovenbirds were scarcer than expected with only four reported May 19–June 18. A wintering N. Waterthrush remained near Imperial Beach through Apr. 17 (JO), but single birds in Mojave May 20 (JLD), Scotty's Castle May 27 (BED), and at Deep Springs May 18–23 (REW) were the only spring migrants reported. A ♂ Hooded Warbler at Oasis May 27 (CM) was the only one found. A ♂ Canada Warbler at Deep Springs May 24 (FB) was only the 7th ever to be found in s. California in spring.

TANAGERS TO SPARROWS — As expected, a few Summer Tanagers reached the n.e. portion of the Region with six found there May 18–28; one in Morongo Valley Mar. 26 (MMT) had probably wintered locally; and one in Olivenhain, San Diego, May 20 (JK) was the only one found along the coast. A ♀ Pyrrhuloxia in Escondido, San Diego, Apr. 12 (NL) was of unknown origin but occurred during the time of year others have been found far to the west of the species' normal range. Ten Rose-breasted Grosbeaks during May were fewer than in recent years, and eight Indigo Buntings during the same period were substantially fewer than expected.

Rufous-crowned Sparrows, presumably *A. r. scottii*, were seen in the New York Mts. of e. San Bernardino May 19 (SD) and in the nearby Providence Mts. May 21 (SD), adding to our very limited knowledge of the status and distribution of this species in e. California. A Clay-colored Sparrow, most unusual in spring, was at F.C.R. May 22 (REW). A Brewer's Sparrow near Imperial Beach Mar. 21 (PU) was along the coast, where rare in spring. A Lark Bunting near Corona del Mar, Orange, Mar. 5 (JJ) and another near Lakeview, Riverside, Mar. 12 (MAP) had undoubtedly wintered locally. A Grasshopper Sparrow photographed at S.E.S.S. May 3 (AH) was one of very few ever to be found in this area. A Swamp Sparrow at F.C.R. May 23 (BED) was one of the latest ever to be found in s. California. Wintering White-throated Sparrows were present into April with one near Santa Barbara through May 3 (G & JH) and another on Pt. Loma through May 12 (REW) being the latest. An exceptionally late Golden-crowned Sparrow was in Mojave June 4 (CM). Two Lapland Longspurs at Rancho California, Riverside, Apr. 14 (RMCK) were late.

BLACKBIRDS TO FINCHES — Bobolinks were scarcer than expected with single birds at H.D.L. May 19 (GH), at F.C.R. May 21 (NBB), and in California City June 4 (MOC) being the only ones reported. A ♂ Tricolored Blackbird at Oasis May 30 (DAH) could be the first ever to be found in Mono. Great-tailed Grackles continued to be found along the coast with up to seven near Imperial Beach throughout the period (GMCc), one at Upper Newport Bay Mar. 21–May 21 (LRH), single birds in Alhambra Apr. 29 (HP) and at nearby Whittier Narrows May 13 (MCL), four around Ventura Apr. 29–May 30 (JSR, RJM), one in Oceano June 10 (CM), and another in San Luis Obispo Apr. 29–May 9 (MA). A ♂ Com. Grackle, a casual straggler to California, was in California City May 21 (REW), and a female was at F.C.R. May 22–23 (MAP). Single N. (Baltimore) Orioles were found at Montana de Oro S.P., San Luis Obispo, May 19 (CM) and on Pt. Loma May 26 (REW), and two were at Oasis May 23–24 (RST). A few Purple and Cassin's finches were scattered throughout the e. portion of the Region well into May. Red Crossbills were still much in evidence throughout much of the Region into early April with scattered individuals remaining into May as suggested by single birds seen in the e. part of the Region at F.C.R. May 17 (REW) and Scotty's Castle May 28 (BED), along with 2 pairs accompanied by three juveniles in California City at the end of the period (MOC), and single birds along the coast in Goleta May 15 (HPR) and Cambria June 1 (LC). Evening Grosbeaks were found throughout e. San Bernardino and Kern as well as all of Inyo throughout May, suggesting a movement of these birds through the e. portion of the Region at this time with single birds found along the coast on Vandenberg A.F.B. May 15–18 (KH) and in San Luis Obispo May 3–5 (B & LG).

ADDENDUM — A report of an injured N. Saw-whet Owl, found along the coast in Huntington Beach during October, that eventually died and was prepared as a lifemount (*vide* DRW) was known too late to be included in the Fall Migration Report.

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