
SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

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The heavy rains of winter came to an abrupt end in March, but near double the normal precipitation left the entire Region wetter and far lusher than normal. Some of our summer visitors appeared a little earlier than expected, in the flurry of migrant activity of March and early April, but this encouraging onset soon dissipated, particularly along the coast. Several of the low-pressure areas that regularly develop in the Gulf of Alaska at this time of year moved south to Southern California in May. Two of these lows brought rain, leaving the coast clear of the normal overcast that appears to collect migrants; observers at such concentrating localities as Point Loma in San Diego found remarkably few birds where one would expect to find many. The May 9 weather front did ground a large number of western migrants in coastal San Luis Obispo County, but landbird migration elsewhere along the coast was considered "unspectacular," "quite slow," and "well below average" by various active observers.

Inland, heavy movements of landbirds were encountered passing north through Butterbrede Springs in the extreme southern foothills of the Sierra Nevada in late April and early May. Thousands were seen transiting this small oasis early April 17 and May 8 (MTH), and an estimated 12,000 passed through on the morning of April 29 (REW). By mid-May the push appeared to be over, and observers searching for vagrants at desert oases in late May found virtually no migrants, in contrast to sightings of previous years. Could it be that the abundance of lush vegetation throughout the interior permitted migrants to stop anywhere, thereby negating the concentrating effects of oases? Or is there, in fact, a major decline in migrant landbirds?

Abbreviations: C.L. (*China L. Naval Air Weapons Station, extreme n.e. Kern Co.*); E.A.F.B. (*Edwards Air Force Base, s.e. Kern Co.*); F.C.R. (*Furnace Cr. Ranch, Death Valley Nat'l. Monument, Inyo*); H.D.L. (*Harper Dry L., n.w. of Barstow, San Bernardino Co.*); N.E.S.S. (*n. end of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co.*); S.B.C.M. (*San Bernardino Co. Museum*); S.B.M.N.H. (*Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History*); S.E.S.S. (*south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial Co.*); S.F.K.R.P. (*South Fork Kern R. Preserve near Weldon, Kern Co.*). As virtually all rarities in s. California are seen by many observers, only the observer(s) initially finding and identifying the bird are included. Documentation is on file with the California Bird Records Committee (c/o Michael A. Patten, P.O. Box 8612, Riverside, CA 92515) for all rarities listed in this report. Records submitted without documentation are not published.

LOONS TO HERONS

A Red-throated Loon at S.E.S.S., Apr. 24 (PAG) was only the 3rd to be found at the Salton Sea, and another near Chino, *San Bernardino*, Apr. 30 (JEP) was in an unexpected locality. A Pacific Loon, rare inland, on L. Perris, *Riverside*, Mar. 13 (MAP) was believed to have been present for several days. Seventeen Com. Loons on L. Skinner, *Riverside*, Apr. 8–May 11 (RMCK) was a large number for an inland locality. An alternate-plumage Horned Grebe near Cantil, *Kern*, May 8–15 (MTH) was late for a spring migrant and at a desert locality. The Red-necked Grebe in Santa Barbara during the winter remained through May 11 (PEL) to establish one of the latest dates for this species in S. California.

A Laysan Albatross at N.E.S.S., May 2 (RMCK) was the 9th to be seen in s.e. California/s.w. Arizona, with all but a dead bird near Yuma July 18, 1988 (Kenneth V. Rosenberger *et al.*: Birds of the Lower Colorado R. Valley, 1991) found May 2 & 21, all believed to have been "trapped" in the Gulf of California while seeking an overland route back to the Pacific Ocean. A Laysan Albatross near Pt. Sal, *Santa Barbara*, Mar. 21 (JMC, *S.B.M.N.H.) was one of a very few to be found dead on a California beach. A Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel, most unusual in S. California waters, was seen from the Playa del Rey jetty, *Los Angeles*, May 10 (KL). An imm. Magnificent Frigatebird in Goleta, *Santa Barbara*, May 22 (E & LY) was much earlier than expected, as this species is normally found in S. California late June–early September.

An imm. Little Blue Heron at Pt. Mugu, *Ventura*, Mar. 17–early May (BSi) was the only one found along the coast north of *San Diego*, and an adult photographed near Big Pine May 8–9 (T & JH) was the 3rd to be found in *Inyo*. An ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron on San Elijo Lagoon, *San Diego*, May 14 (FH) is assumed to be the individual frequenting this general area of the coast since fall 1981. A Wood Stork in the Prado Basin near Norco, *Riverside*, May 3 (JEP) was unseasonable and far from any area of expected occurrence.

WATERFOWL TO RAPTORS

Three marked first-year Trumpeter Swans on Klondike L. near Big Pine Apr. 5 (BHa) were undoubtedly the same trio working this general vicinity in December and January. A Brant in El Monte, *Los Angeles*, Apr. 11 (PS) and another near Lancaster, *Los Angeles*, May 2–8 (KLG) were the only two reported inland away from the Salton Sea. The ♂ Tufted Duck found on Lopez L., *San Luis Obispo*, Jan. 3 was still present Mar. 14 when accompanied by another male and a female (KAR), and the male that spent the winter near Santa Maria, *Santa Barbara*, was last seen Mar. 7 (JMC). The Oldsquaw observed inland at S.E.S.S. during the winter was still present Mar. 23 (BK).

A Turkey Vulture on San Nicolas I., Apr.

23–30 (GeM) was the first to be found on any of the Channel Is., apart from San Clemente I. A Black-shouldered Kite in the Lanfair Valley of e. *San Bernardino*, May 15–29 (MAP) was far out of range. A Swainson's Hawk in Irvine, *Orange*, Apr. 22 (BED) and another near Moorpark, *Ventura*, Apr. 23 (RAE) were close to the coast, where they are now considered extremely rare. A Zone-tailed Hawk near the coast in Malibu Cr. S.P., *Los Angeles*, Apr. 25 (KFC) would appear to represent the first documented record for *Los Angeles*, another at F.C.R., Apr. 11 (DW) was the 3rd to be found in *Inyo*, and an immature at Ft. Piute in extreme e. *San Bernardino*, May 16 (REW) is the 3rd to be reported from that locality.

SHOREBIRDS TO ALCIDES

A Pacific Golden-Plover near Del Mar, *San Diego*, Apr. 4 (EG), up to 12 near Santa Maria Apr. 30–May 8 (PEL), and six on San Nicolas I., Apr. 22–May 11 (GeM) had all probably wintered locally. A hybrid American x Black Oystercatcher with up to four Black Oystercatchers on Pt. Loma in San Diego Mar. 3–26 (EA) is believed to be the same bird present here last spring (AB 46:480, 1992). A Black-necked Stilt on San Nicolas I., May 17 (GeM) was only the 2nd discovered on the Channel Is. More than the expected number of Solitary Sandpipers passed through the Region, with nine reported Apr. 14–May 7. A Wandering Tattler at C.L., June 4 (MTH) is one of less than a half-dozen to be found inland away from the Salton Sea. An Upland Sandpiper near Independence, *Inyo*, June 13 (AK) was the 6th to be found in California in spring, the previous five sightings occurred May 15–28. Three Whimbrels were found in the high desert portion of the Region, where they are rare—one in Barstow, *San Bernardino*, May 2 (MAP), another on Owens L., *Inyo*, May 5 (T & JH) and a late individual at F.C.R., May 30 (CH). A Ruddy Turnstone at E.A.F.B., May 8 (DVB) was the only one noted inland away from the Salton Sea. A Black Turnstone, very rare to casual inland, was at S.E.S.S., May 1 (GH), and two more were at N.E.S.S., May 4 (GMCC). Casual for inland, a Surfbird was on the Salton Sea at Salton City Apr. 24 (CMCG, MAP, PAG), as was another, May 7 (GMCC). Two Sanderlings at E.A.F.B., May 22 (MTH), another there May 29 (MTH), and a 4th near Lancaster May 8 (KLG) were the only ones found inland away from the Salton Sea. Single Semipalmated Sandpipers were seen an area at N.E.S.S., May 1 (MAP) & 4 (GMCC) where small numbers are found each spring; however, one Semi at H.D.L., May 7 (REW) and another at F.C.R., May 29 (MAP) established first and 2nd spring records, respectively, for *San Bernardino* and *Inyo*. A Baird's Sandpiper, rare in spring, was at C.L., May 1 (JCW). A Pectoral Sandpiper, also rare for the season, turned up near Santa Maria Apr. 30–May 3 (JMC). The spring movement of Stilt Sandpipers through the Salton Sea peaked at 215 Apr. 27 (PEL). A Reeve photographed at Pt.

Mugu May 10–16 (LS) was believed to be the same bird present near Port Hueneme during the winter, and a migrant was in Playa del Rey Apr. 14 (DK). Two Red-necked Phalaropes in the San Pedro Channel off Long Beach, *Los Angeles*, Mar. 21 (NBB) had probably wintered locally.

A S. Polar Skua near Anacapa I., May 22 (SEF) and another in the San Pedro Channel June 5 (KLG) were observed at the peak of the spring records off S. California. A Laughing Gull at S.E.S.S., May 23 (KLG) was earlier than usual. This species is a regular post-breeding visitor to the Salton Sea; an adult in La Jolla, *San Diego*, June 1 (DP) was unexpected along the coast. At least 20 Franklin's Gulls Apr. 17–June 2 was about normal. Two Mew Gulls near Lancaster Apr. 25–May 8 (KLG) were far inland, as was a first-year Glaucous-winged in Salton City May 1 (KFC). Twelve Sabine's Gulls sighted 40–60 naut. mi WSW of Pt. Conception Apr. 17 (MH) were somewhat early.

A stunning ad. Arctic Tern photographed 40 naut. mi WSW of Pt. Conception Apr. 17 (MH) was a month earlier than the previous early-spring bird recorded for California. A first-year Arctic Tern, casual on the Salton Sea in late spring, was at Salton City June 2 (GMCC). A Least Tern, accidental inland away from the Salton Sea, was photographed at F.C.R., May 31 (JM). A Least Tern in Bolsa Chica, *Orange*, Mar. 29 (JSB) was the earliest spring migrant ever to be found in California. Ten Black Terns in Saticoy, *Ventura*, May 7 (VK) and six on Oso Flaco L., *San Luis Obispo*, May 8 (TME) were larger than currently expected numbers along the coast. These observations coincided with a heavy movement through the interior on the latter date—850 in the Antelope Valley of e. *Los Angeles* (KLG) and 90 at E.A.F.B. (MTH). An Ancient Murrelet, rare in S. California waters, captivated Prisoner's Harbor on Santa Cruz I., May 6 (WBT).

DOVES TO VIREOS

A White-winged Dove at Little Lake, *Inyo*, May 3 (RHN) was somewhat n.w. of the species' normal range. A Com. Ground-Dove on Vandenberg A.F.B., May 10 (FS) was north of the species' known range. At least two Ruddy Ground-Doves remained at F.C.R. winter–June 4 (GMCC), and at least one was seen along the Colorado R. near Blythe, *Riverside*, May 25–31 (SC, RJ). A Groove-billed Ani, a first for *Santa Barbara*, was photographed in Goleta Apr. 13–June 8 (KL). The bird was believed to be present earlier and, if so, probably arrived with the influx of last fall/early winter. A N. Saw-whet Owl was met at a most unusual locality, Butterbred Springs near Cantil May 3 (REW). In one hour, 13 Black Swifts traveling N over Butterbred Springs May 21 (SBT) were the first to be seen at this heavily birded "oasis" and among a very few recorded in the deserts of this Region. A Chimney Swift near Cantil June 5 (MTH) was the 2nd for *Kern*.

An exceptional find was two migrant E.

Phoebes—one at well-watched Hollywood Res., *Los Angeles*, Mar. 14–15 (JF) and the other in the equally well-birded Sepulveda Basin in Encino, *Los Angeles*, Mar. 21 (JF). A ♂ Vermilion Flycatcher near Weldon, *Kern*, May 126 (SL) was n.w. of the species' known range. The Thick-billed Kingbird that spent the winter in Seal Beach, *Orange*, was last seen Mar. 20 (NBB). Three E. Kingbirds were found—one (photographed) inland in the Kelso Valley of n.e. *Kern*, May 22 (BHi), another at F.C.R., May 29–30 (GLT), and a 3rd along the coast near Shell Beach, *San Luis Obispo*, June 4 (DS). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in Solana Beach, *San Diego*, Mar. 27–28 (BM) was believed to be the same bird reported in this area Dec. 4, having spent the winter undetected; another near Norco, *Riverside*, Mar. 11–30 (HEC) may also have been present all winter, but single birds at Panamint Springs, *Inyo*, May 30 (SBT) and another at Owens L., June 8 (T & JH) were spring vagrants. Single Purple Martins near Lancaster Mar. 25 (DRW) and in Huntington Beach, *Orange*, Mar. 26 (BED) were early migrants; another at F.C.R., May 27 (REW) was in an area in which few have been found in recent years. A Brown Thrash-



Female Ruff in alternate plumage at Point Mugu, California, May 16, 1993. Photograph/Don Desjardin.

er, casual in spring, was near Laguna Beach, *Orange*, May 7–8 (BED), and another was near Needles, *San Bernardino*, June 10 (FJA).

Unprecedented numbers of White-eyed Vireos, normally considered a casual vagrant anywhere in the West, appeared for the 2nd consecutive year, with single singing males on the coast in Huntington Beach, *Orange*, May 8 (PS) & 31–June 1 (JSB), another in Goleta June 6 (PEL), and a 4th inland near Inyokern, *Kern*, May 23 (H & PB). A Yellow-throated Vireo, another casual straggler to California, was in Huntington Beach May 23 (JEP), and a 2nd was in Goleta June 1 (PEL). A Red-eyed Vireo, a more regular straggler to California than the previous 2 species, was heard singing in Coronado, *San Diego*, June 14 (EC).

WOOD WARBLERS TO FINCHES



Fourteen Tennessee Warblers scattered throughout the Region May 5–June 5 was about normal. We had more than the expected number of N. Parulas, with 22 at various localities throughout the Region Apr. 19–June 9. Four Magnolia Warblers were reported, with single birds on San Nicolas I., May 23 (GeM), Pt. Loma in San Diego May 26 (MBS), in Huntington Beach June 3–4 (JEP), and inland near Cantil June 4 (MTH). A ♂ Black-throated Blue Warbler at Butterbredt Springs May 15 (DVB) was one of just a few to be found in California in spring. Two Yellow-throated Warblers, casual stragglers to California, were found, with one near Hansen Dam near Sunland, *Los Angeles*, May 14 (DA) and the other photographed in Torrance, *Los Angeles*, June 6 (KL). A Palm Warbler in San Luis Obispo Mar. 18 (GPS), another in Goleta Apr. 16 (KB), and a 3rd inland in Banning, *Riverside*, Mar. 15 (RMCK) had all probably overwintered locally. A singing Bay-breasted Warbler in Harbor Regional Park near San Pedro, *Los Angeles*, June 8 (JI) was one of only a few to be found in California in recent years. A ♂ Blackpoll Warbler, always an unusual find in spring, was at Butterbredt Springs May 17 (REW). Black-and-white Warblers appeared to be a little more numerous than usual, with 22 reported Apr. 3–June 6. By contrast, Am. Redstarts were a little scarcer than normal, with only 18 reported May 11–June 6. Two Prothonotaries were found: a male on the coast near Laguna Beach, *Orange*, May 6 (RAE) and a female inland at Iron Mt. Pump Station in e. *San Bernardino*, May 31 (RJ). Ovenbird numbers were slightly lower than normal, with one in Yucca Valley, *San Bernardino*, May 19 (GH) and three more in e. *Kern*, May 17–June 1 (REW, SBT). Far fewer than usual were re-

ports of three N. Waterthrushes in the e. part of the Region May 8–June 1 (BHi, GH, SBT) and one on the coast in Irvine May 14 (DRW); one near Norco Mar. 22 (JEP) had probably wintered in the area. Two Kentucky Warblers were found in *Kern*, with a male at Butterbredt Springs June 4–5 (MTH) and another at S.F.K.R.P., June 10 (SL). Hooded Warblers came in with a respectable nine, but a dim comparison with last year's influx. Single males were noted inland at Mesquite Springs in Death Valley N.M., May 9 (REW), in No Name Canyon near Pearsonville, *Inyo*, May 16–17 (DVB), and at Galileo Hill, *Kern*, May 20–22 (MTH) & 29 (MTH), as well as along the coast near Leucadia, *San Diego*, Apr. 16 (DRW), in Huntington Beach May 15 (BED), at Costa Mesa May 17 (RAH), at Chino Hills S.P., *San Bernardino*, May 22 (BHo), and in Goleta June 9 (PEL). One Hooded at Hansen Dam Apr. 28 (DA) was more likely the same bird present here in January than a migrant.

Reports of Summer Tanagers well outside areas of expected occurrence included single

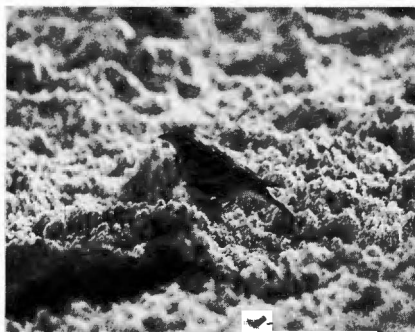


Far inland was this Least Tern at Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley National Monument, California, on May 31, 1993. Photograph/John Mariani.

males at F.C.R., May 27 (REW) and near Big Pine May 30 (T & JH) in the n.e. portion of the Region, as well as another on n. Vandenberg A.F.B., *Santa Barbara*, May 15 (BHi). Nine Rose-breasted Grosbeaks May 14–June 8 was far fewer than expected, as were only 11 Indigo Buntings during the same period.

Up to four singing Cassin's Sparrows were discovered in the Lanfair Valley of e. *San Bernardino* May 8–30 (REW *et al.*, *S.B.C.M.), where 15 were present in 1978 after a similar wet winter (AB 32:1057, 1978). A Rufous-crowned Sparrow at 2300 m on Clark Mt. in e. *San Bernardino*, May 15 (REW) was probably of the race *scottii* previously known only from the New York and Providence Mts. to the south. Four Lark Buntings near Blythe Mar. 20 (RMCK) were at the w. extreme of this species' winter range, but another near Shandon Apr. 3 (JSR) is one of less than a half-dozen to be found in *San Luis Obispo*. A wintering Swamp Sparrow in Irvine remained through Mar. 13 (BED); another near Norco Apr. 5 (JEP) was believed to have wintered in that area, but one in the Sepulveda Basin in Encino Mar. 28 (RB) and another in Harbor Regional Park near Long Beach Mar. 20 (KL) were both believed to be spring transients. A wintering Harris' Sparrow was at F.C.R. through Mar. 31 (T & JH), two more were in Independence through Apr. 28 (AK), and another was in Orange through Apr. 18 (JSB), but one on Pt. Loma in San Diego Apr. 3–11 (TC) was probably a migrant. Two Chestnut-collared Longspurs photographed in the Saline Valley, *Inyo*, Apr. 10 (T & JH) were unusually late.

The only Bobolinks reported were a female



Chestnut-collared Longspur in the Saline Valley, Inyo County, California, on April 10, 1993. Photograph/Jo Ann Heindel.

May 29 (CH) and a male May 30–31 (GMCC), both at F.C.R. A Com. Grackle, a casual straggler to California, was at Cottonwood Springs in Joshua Tree N.M., *Riverside*, Apr. 17 (DEQ). Bronzed Cowbirds were again found north of their known normal range, with a male near Tecopa, *Inyo*, June 1 (JM), a female at F.C.R., May 21–30 (GMCC), and a male photographed at nearby Scotty's Castle May 18 (T & JH). The ♂ Orchard Oriole present in Goleta during winter remained through Mar. 23 (ZL). Four Northern (Baltimore) Orioles were reported, with a male inland at Scotty's Castle May 14 (T & JH), single males on the coast in Huntington Beach May 11 (JSB) and on Pt. Loma in San Diego May 19 (DWA), and a female off the coast on San Nicolas I., May 23 (GeM).

Red Crossbills were widely distributed throughout the desert mountains of *Inyo* and *San Bernardino* during May (REW, T & JH, JM).

Observers (county coordinators in boldface):

Douglas W. Aguillard, Eva Aiken, Dustin Alcalá, Fred J. Alsop, Ron Beck, David V. Blue, Jeffery S. Boyd, Karen Bridgers, N. Bruce Broadbooks, Hank & Priscilla Brodkins (H & PB), Kurt F. Campbell, Eugene A. Cardiff (*San Bernardino*), Jaime M. Chavez, Henry E. Childs, Sue Clark, Therese Clawson, Elizabeth Copper (*San Diego*), Brian E. Daniels, Tom M. Edell (*San Luis Obispo*), Richard A. Erickson, Shawneen E. Finnegan, Jon Fisher, Kimball L. Garrett (*Los Angeles*), Peter A. Ginsberg, Edward Greaves, Freeman Hall, Robert A. Hamilton, Bob Harvey (BHa), Gjon Hazard, Matt T. Heindel (*Kern*), Mitch Heindel, Tom & Jo Heindel (T & JH) (*Inyo*), Brad Hines (BHi), Bob Holcomb (BHo), Charles Hood, John Ivanov, Richard Jeffers, Dan Kahane, Virgil Ketner, Andrew Kirk, B. Kuntz, Zev Labinger, Kevin Larson, Steve Laymon, Paul E. Lehman (*Santa Barbara* and *Ventura*), John Mariani, Gerry McChesney (GeM), Chet McGaugh, Robert McKernan (*Riverside*), Barbara Moore, Richard H. Neuman, Michael A. Patten, James E. Pike, David Povey, David E. Quady, Kurt A. Radamaker, William R. Radke, James S. Royer, Florence Sanchez, Larry Sansone, Brad Sillasen, Gregory P. Smith, David Sterner, Mary Beth Stow, Philip Swan, Scott B. Terrill, Gerald L. Tolman, W. Breck Tyler, Richard E. Webster, Douglas R. Willick (*Orange*), John C. Wilson, David Wimpfheimer, Elaine & Lisle Young (E & LY). An additional 60+ observers who could not be individually acknowledged submitted reports this season.—GUY McCASKIE, San Diego Natural History Museum, Balboa Park, P.O. Box 1390, San Diego, CA 92112.