

MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION.—The first four days of April brought such suddenly warm and dry weather that it seemed summer had begun. But then an intensely stormy period set in, introducing showers and cooler moist weather that lasted for the rest of the period. The north, particularly the northern coastal areas, experienced very wet weather, while



the showers that dampened the central part of the state prolonged the green lushness everywhere and extended the period of bloom of wildflowers. On the whole, it seemed that the land was ready and waiting to welcome the migratory landbirds. Instead, except for the already-arrived Allen's Hummingbirds and Orange-crowned Warblers, little happened.

The end-of-March birds, Western Flycatcher, Warbling Vireos and Wilson's Warblers, were heard, but as days slipped by to the middle of April, one wondered, "Where are the others?" By the end of the month, a few House Wrens, Solitary Vireos and Ash-throated Flycatchers could also be heard, and some Black-headed Grosbeaks and Lazuli Buntings were noted, with a small sprinkling of other warblers. But, the usual species in April were not in their expected numbers at all. It was well into May before migration was really under way in mid-California; at last one could find Calliope Hummers, Western Tanagers, Yellow Warblers, Townsend's and Hermit Warblers, and other birds that one might normally expect by late April. Some species were as much as three weeks late! And, with one exception, there seemed to be no surges at any time anywhere. In San Francisco there was a throng of migrants reported going through about May 10—even then about a week late. These were, in order of decreasing abundance: Wilson's Warblers, Warbling Vireos, tanagers, grosbeaks, Orange-crowned Warblers, Solitary Vireos, and Yellow Warblers (FP). Mostly, migrants just drifted through the Region, sparsely and well-scattered, making it difficult to identify any peak times for any species. Besides the Wilson's Warblers that most agreed were plentiful, the more northern reporters gave better-than-usual comment about Yellow-breasted Chats.

Conditioned as we are to California's unpredictable and widely varying spring weather from one year to the next, we find it difficult to pinpoint the factors that interplay resulting in such a late, drawn-out, but otherwise "normal" migration. Winds seemed of little consequence this spring. One might think that the

long period of intermittent showers was conducive to steady migration. Perhaps it was! Although stormy at times, there was nothing spectacular that seemed to have an effect one way or another. But then, why the delay? Especially when one finds that Western Tanagers, for instance, were passing through Millerton Lake State Park, near Fresno, through April (FHW), but couldn't even be found, to speak of, in the counties near the not-much-farther-north areas around San Francisco Bay! Or why were Calliope Hummingbirds, usually present by April 1 near Yreka, Siskiyou Co., not found until April 26 (MSC)? True, there was a cold spell, recorded by the Santa Maria and Fresno Weather Bureaus (as well as more northern ones) from April 17 to 27, but would this have that much effect? It is a puzzle for this season.

Another puzzling phenomenon occurred that was of some interest: Hermit Thrushes were singing in non-breeding areas during the first two weeks of April. They would not normally have left by that time either. If this commonly occurs, as it does with Varied Thrushes in March briefly, we don't hear of it, for the Hermit Thrushes are usually quite silent except where they do breed.

More to be expected, but still of interest, was the lingering of a few individuals of the northern and montane species that helped stage a widespread lowland visit during the fall and winter: Rough-legged Hawks, Lewis' Woodpeckers in slightly more abundance than usual, Evening Grosbeaks, Red Crossbills, and Pine Siskins. Although there was little of special interest that happened along the ocean shores, a fine report of tallies on the three major wildlife refuges (Sacramento, Sutter, and Colusa) shows how the ducks and geese moved south again (EO'N).

Grebes, Pelagic Birds, Pelicans.—At least 700 Western Grebes were noted just north of Crescent City, Del Norte Co., May 24 (RB). Pied-billed Grebes were especially common on Lake Merced and the San Francisco area all season (BDC). Numbers of Sooty Shearwaters in the "visible offshore" area off Monterey Bay began to increase through April and by the third week of May had become a "huge concentration similar to that of 1959" (GPL, EAA, OA). The presence of at least 12 White Pelicans on San Felipe Lake, about 6 miles east of Gilroy, Santa Clara Co., on April 15 (EDS); and again on May 22 in the same locality (GM); and in June when 32 were counted, without signs of nesting (EDS), points to a non-breeding colony.

Ibis, Waterfowl, Hawks.—A White-faced Ibis, which has come to be quite uncommon in recent years, was noted at Spreckel's Ponds, near Woodland, on May 21 (GMCC); and 5 were located on May 31 on the Colusa National Wildlife Refuge (Ed Buria, *vide* EO'N). By the first week in April, only 25,700 ducks and geese remained on the Sacramento Valley Refuges (Sacramento, Sutter, and Colusa), compared to the 1,200,000 of early January. This dwindled to 2500 by the end of the month and further decreased to about 800, mostly Mallards, Cinnamon Teal, Green-winged Teal, and Shovelers by the end of May (EO'N). Wood Ducks, present on the refuges all

season, increased to about 50 by April 8, and to 100 by the last week of May (EO'N). A late Bufflehead was noted at the mouth of the Carmel River, April 29 (EAA); and even later for an Oldsquaw was one present near the Bay Bridge Toll Plaza, Oakland, on May 6 (FP). Two very late Rough-legged Hawks, April 16, were near Woodland (GMcC); and a Ferruginous Hawk near Winters was noted as late as April 22 (MM).

Shorebirds, Gulls.—Two occurrences of Snowy Plovers, considered "accidental" in the Sacramento area were: 1 on April 23 at Folsom Lake, and 1 found dead near Woodland on April 30 (GMcC). Three Am. Golden Plovers, 2 in breeding plumage, were tallied at Bodega Bay on April 15 by the Marin Audubon Society (*vide* WMP). An unusual number of 12 Ruddy Turnstones in a "tight flock" were at Moss Landing on May 9 (OA). Whimbrels just south of Los Banos, Merced Co., April 11 (JWK) with about 65 near Firebaugh in Fresno County, April 30 (MM) make the inland flight look good. A long-time observer of Bay Farm Island's shorebirds considered the showing of Knots better and for a longer period than she has seen before—then cited an observation of 150 Knots on April 24 to prove it (JWK); about 40 were still present on May 6 (GMcC). A Glaucous Gull, probably in second year plumage, was seen and compared with Glaucous-winged Gulls on April 8 at the Bay Bridge Toll Plaza (MM & EAP).

Pigeons, Swifts.—From March into April, Band-tailed Pigeons were unusually numerous from Sequel to Los Gatos (EDS, FEH); on April 1, at Walnut Creek, at least 1000 foraged on Olive trees (MLS); and hundreds of these pigeons were present in the East Bay area around Oakland all spring (PC). Eighteen Vaux's Swifts, during a heavy shower in Los Gatos on April 25, came down a chimney into a living room, soot and all (EDS).

Hummingbirds, Woodpeckers, Gnatcatchers, and Shrike.—A male Costa's Hummingbird, along with several females of the Costa's-Black-chinned type and many female Anna's and Allen's Hummingbirds, was noted feeding, April 30, at Tree Tobacco plants along the Patterson Road near where 3 were seen a year ago (HM & MM). And on May 20 and 21, in the same area, 2 males and a female were present—nesting?—(HM). A male Allen's Hummer at Whitehall, El Dorado Co., on April 22 after a heavy storm, was trying to feed from ice- and snow-covered apple blossoms (ERP). A pair of Pileated Woodpeckers was seen in Muir Woods National Monument, Marin Co., on April 30 (RDC, *vide* WMP). Blue-gray Gnatcatchers seemed delayed on Mt. Diablo as none were found until mid-April, but they proved scarce in the normally residential chaparral (EAP). A Northern Shrike was noted late on April 8 at Delevan, Colusa Co. (EO'N).

Warblers.—In sharp contrast to the narrowly compressed surge of warblers across Mt. Diablo and the Sacramento Valley a year ago, they were more widespread—and findable on the coast, too. But they were very late, and dribbled through in small numbers at a time, greatly extending the duration of their presence. As an example, one of the earlier species, Nash-

ville Warbler, was represented by a singing male at Juniper Camp, Mt. Diablo, as late as June 7 (EAP)! Audubon's Warblers, normally gone from the lowlands by mid-April, were still present on May 16 in San Francisco (FP), and in Lafayette (LF).

Grosbeaks, Finches, and Sparrows.—Black-headed Grosbeaks appeared to be conspicuously abundant in the Region everywhere. One last late Evening Grosbeak was on Mt. Diablo on the foggy morning of May 16 (EAP). After a marked scarcity of Pine Siskins a year ago, many observers found the species in good numbers all winter and until mid-May. The erratic and unpredictable Lawrence's Goldfinches performed again: almost unmentioned elsewhere, a few were overhead wherever one happened to go on Mt. Diablo all through the late winter and spring season—with no discernible focus of activity apparent—until on June 7, at Juniper Camp, elev. about 3000 ft., a feeding and singing flock of 75 to 100 was found (EAP). Red Crossbills lingered on through May: 4 on Strawberry Hill, in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, May 20 (FP); and 10 at North Lake in Golden Gate Park, May 22 (HM); a few reported from Monterey Peninsula, May 28 (*vide* GPL); and small flocks remaining in the vicinity of Mt. Hermon, Santa Clara Co., into June (EDS). Chipping Sparrows in Contra Costa County seemed in better-than-usual numbers (LF, EAP). Black-chinned Sparrows were present and singing on the chaparral slopes of Mt. Diablo by April 16 (LF & EAP), and subsequently were found in greater abundance than last year.

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