

**MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION.**—Among waterbirds, the 1963 fall migration was notable for three things: 1) the good flight year for four species



which spread northward after breeding in Baja California (Brown Pelican, Heermann's Gull, Elegant Tern, Xantus' Murrelet), suggesting that a common control operates for this northward dispersal (compare also the heron flight in the Southern Pacific Coast Region); 2) the large number of inland occurrences of normally coastal birds; 3) large numbers of several other species (notably Red Phalarope and Sabine's Gull). A few uncommon, variable species were less common this season than in recent years, but on the whole populations were stable or showed a slight increase. Migration dates were generally normal.

The landbird migration was in general not extraordinary, at least insofar as normal western species were concerned. A number of species (Ash-throated and Olive-sided Flycatchers, Bank Swallow, vireos, warblers, Black-headed Grosbeak, Chipping Sparrow) were seen late, but these were single birds rather than the small groups which passed through after the storm of Oct. 12-13, 1962 (see *AFN* 17(1):62). Also, a substantial number of montane finches were already to be seen in the lower parts of the Region.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch**—One of the high lights of the fall season was a marked influx of Red-breasted Nuthatches. Observers in the Central Valley did not mention it (with the exception of one at Chico, *EH*), though the species was much more conspicuous on Sept. 22 near Sacramento than the observer had ever seen it before (*PDeB*). Toward the coast, in central Contra Costa County, as many birds were reported this season as in the previous five years. At Oakland about 50 birds were found in a loose flock in conifers on Sept. 15, gradually decreasing to typical numbers (6-8) by Nov. 11 (*MM*); in Tilden Park (Berkeley-Contra Costa County line) peaks of about three times the normal numbers were noted about Sept. 24 and again Oct. 29; by the end of the season numbers were again normal (*PDeB*). In the Monterey Peninsula, where it is usually "rare" during the fall season, numbers were termed "common" (*GPL*). At Point Reyes the flight was outstanding: about 30 were seen on Sept. 9 (but only about 4 on Sept. 13 (*EW, PDeP*)); the flight peaked at about 230 on Sept. 20; on Sept. 21 there were about 130, and on Sept. 23 about 30; this level remained fairly constant to at least Nov. 3, when most field work had to be discontinued; on Nov. 30 no birds were seen—the usual situation at this location (*RS, JK, et al.*). (See below concerning the habitat.) To summarize, the flight began in September, peaked at the end of September, and seemed to have passed through by the middle of November.

Very few reports were received from the mountains: Red-breasted Nuthatches were seen in large numbers with migrant warblers during the fall (*BCS*); on Nov. 28 numbers were small along Highway 50 (2-3 birds per stop) except at about 5200 ft. where a flock of about 25 was found at the turn-off to Wrights Lake, El Dorado County (*MM*); it is not known, however, how this picture compares with a normal winter.

**Eastern Birds West**—This fall remarkable numbers of eastern species were noted along the coast, including several new species for this Region. It is uncertain whether this total indicates a "flight" or if it is the result of more intensive field work following the lead of Guy McCaskie's remarkable discoveries in San Diego; however, the records printed in last fall's report suggest that the latter explanation may be the case.

The most intensive work done was that by Richard Stallcup and Jan Kroesen in the Point Reyes area of Marin County. This is a high point of land reaching southwestward from the trend of the coast (a natural collection point for birds moving either direction along the coast), covered for the most part with low bush lupine and herbaceous growth, with a few Mon-

terey cypress near buildings. Since a large number of vagrants were noted, and since publication is expected elsewhere, only this summary of their records is offered: \*Black-and-white Warbler, total of 3, Oct. 12 and Nov. 3; \*Magnolia Warbler, 1, Oct. 6; Black-throated Blue Warbler, 1, Oct. 17; \*Chestnut-sided Warbler, 1, Oct. 6; Blackburnian Warbler, 1, Oct. 24-25; \*Blackpoll Warbler, 3, Sept. 10; Prairie Warbler, 1, Sept. 23; \*Palm Warbler, at least 27, Oct. 6-30; \*Ovenbird (specimen identified as *S. a. cinereus*, the Dakota race), 2, Sept. 26 and Oct. 19; \*Am. Redstart, 4, Sept. 10 and 20; \*Bobolink, 1, Oct. 12, and Chestnut-collared Longspur, 6, Oct. 17-20. Those species marked with an asterisk were collected (specimens to Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley); with the exception of the Prairie Warbler, all the remaining species were seen by at least two other observers. Additionally, other observers found within Marin County: single Eastern Kingbirds near Olema, Sept. 5 (CS, HM) and at Point Bonita, Sept. 29 (the DaCostas); single Palm Warblers at Point Bonita, Sept. 29 (the DaCostas), Point Reyes, Oct. 6 (HM), and possibly one or two others at Point Reyes following this date, and a Dickcissel at Point Reyes, Oct. 20 (PDeB, AW). If the total of at least 58 individual vagrant birds seems remarkable (this excluding a few unsatisfactory reports), it is all the more remarkable in that the eastern vagrants were often more conspicuous than the regular western species (e.g., on Sept. 20 the total warblers noted at Point Reyes were 3 Am. Redstarts and 1 Audubon's Warbler; Palm Warbler was perhaps the third or fourth commonest species of warbler at Point Reyes during the entire fall.) Furthermore, records of Sage Thrasher, Brewer's Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, and Lapland Longspur (see species account below) are all of western species which normally pass far east of this coastal location.

Observers in other coastal locations also turned up a number of vagrants: a Brown Thrasher at the mouth of the Carmel River, Oct. 12-13 (RLB, GPL, ATN), provided the second report of this species in the Monterey area in two years; 3 Black-and-white Warblers were found at Asilomar, Oct. 5-6 (GMcC, RLB, MM, et al.), and with them a Blackpoll Warbler (GMcC, Robert Pyle, MM). A Blue-winged Warbler was seen very well at close range in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, Sept. 13 (HM), but could not be relocated after it flew across a small lake. A high plumaged Prairie Warbler spent Oct. 27-29 in Vern Yadon's Pacific Grove back yard, where it was seen by many other observers (GPL, RLB, ATN). Two Palm Warblers were found in Pacific Grove, Oct. 3 (VLY, GPL), another in Carmel, Nov. 13 (RLB), and yet another in Berkeley, late October (William Noble, *vide* TC) (the total of 33 Palm Warblers seen this fall approximately doubles the previous California total.) An adult male Am. Redstart was seen in Carmel, Oct. 13 (RLB), also the second consecutive year noted in this area. An adult male Rose-breasted Grosbeak was seen at Mills College, Oakland, Sept. 3 (HLC), and an immature male flew into a Pacific Grove window, Oct. 12 (specimen in Monterey Peninsula Museum, VLY). However, in

contrast to the list above, observers in Tilden Park (PDeB, EW) found no vagrants this fall, as opposed to 6 last fall, perhaps suggesting that this was not as good a year as last!

**Pelagics, Pelicans**—This appears to be another Fulmar flight year, though not comparable to 1961-2; 200 were noted off Monterey as early as Oct. 13 (RLB), and by Nov. 21 a strong NW wind brought 2000 close to shore (PRL). Only some 40 New Zealand Shearwaters were seen on the Oct. 5 Monterey sea trip of the G. G. A. S., a decrease both absolute and in proportion to the number of Sooty and Pink-footed Shearwaters as compared to October of 1961 and 1962. Only one report was received of Manx Shearwaters (Sept. 10, 5, Pacific Grove—PRL). However, good numbers of Ashy and Black Petrels were seen, and a total of 4 Fork-tailed Petrels were reported, after going unseen in 1962.

The most noteworthy increase was in post-breeding wandering Brown Pelicans. Up to 70 were seen at the Bay Bridge toll plaza (Oakland), 500 at Jenner, Aug. 18; (twice the usual number), and 3000 in Bolinas Bay, Sept. 29 (all reports MM), where no more than 500 had ever been seen before.

**Ducks, Geese**—The 17 summering Black Brant at the mouth of the Salinas River, Aug. 31 (WA), included two banded birds, one with a red band on its right leg. Eight White-fronted Geese at the same location, Sept. 28 (RLB, GPL), suggest that this may be another year for them to spread commonly to the coast. In the week of Nov. 19 there were 138,000 Snow Geese on the Sacramento Nat'l Wildlife Refuge (*vide* PDeB). By Nov. 23 the number of Pintails on Merced Nat'l Wildlife Refuge had almost equaled last year's peak and was still increasing (KMC); Gadwall, Green-winged Teal and Am. Widgeon were also up on this refuge, while Mallard, Shoveler and especially Cinnamon Teal have not reached last year's peaks (early December). However, this may only reflect different distribution among the various refuges of the Central Valley.

**Hawks, Cranes**—Although a few early reports of northern hawks were received (Ferruginous Hawk, Sept. 29, Brionis, Contra Costa Co., LP; Am. Rough-legged Hawk, Point Reyes Penin., Oct. 10, RS & JK; Bald Eagle, Point Reyes Penin., Oct. 9 (RS & JK), few further records have occurred. This does not seem likely to be a good flight year for them. Four Pigeon Hawks were reported, the first on Oct. 3, Pajaro (RLB). Sandhill Cranes built up to a population of about 8000 on Merced Refuge before migrating, Nov. 10 (KMC); this is about half of last year's numbers.

**Shorebirds**—Noteworthy for their inland occurrences, mostly at the Davis sewer ponds, were Semipalmated Plovers (8), Snowy Plovers (2, Davis, Aug. 4 (PDeB), see AFN 17(5):481, for breeding record here), Ruddy Turnstones (1 at Davis, July 28, GMcC; 1 at the south end of Lake Tahoe, Aug. 25, GMcC; the second and third inland records from this Region), and Sanderlings (a total of 7 at Davis, July 28 to Aug. 30, GMcC, PDeB). It is now apparent that Baird's Sandpiper is at least as common inland as along the coast of California, 14 being

reported from the Central Valley (*GMcC*, *PDeB*), as against 7 from the coast (*PDeB*, *RS* & *JK*). Snowy Plovers and Ruddy Turnstones seemed to have increased generally, 200 of the former being seen at Alameda on Sept. 13 (*ER*), and 12 of the latter at Santa Cruz, Nov. 6 (*VEW*, "twice the usual number"). Eight Am. Golden Plovers in a field on the Point Reyes Penin., Oct. 23, (*RS* & *JK*) were the only ones reported. A Solitary Sandpiper, rare in this Region, was observed at San Luis Wasteway Waterfowl Management Area, 6 miles west of Los Banos, on Sept. 12 and 13 (*ROW*). Lesser Yellowlegs (24 reported) were about average, but Knots were less common than in previous years (*PDeB*). Although the peak numbers of Dunlins at the Emeryville mud flats in San Francisco Bay were about the same as last year (see *AFN* 17(1):64), the numbers fell off during November (wintering population?) (*RTH*). Evidence continues to accumulate that the migration of Western Sandpipers, at least within San Francisco Bay, shows two peaks, one in early August, one in late October, with a minimum in late August. Good numbers of Sanderlings were observed, as many as 2000 at Emeryville-Bay Bridge toll plaza (Sept. 8, *RTH*). The great flight of Red Phalaropes (presumably merely a flight along the coast rather than far offshore) began on Oct. 18, when 100 were at Rodeo Lagoon, Marin Co. (*RS*); on Oct. 29 3500 were observed along two miles of coast in Tomales Bay (*RS*). Red Phalaropes were still to be seen to the end of the season, and penetrated as far as 12 miles inland in Monterey County (*RLB*). Northern Phalaropes were seen at least as late as Nov. 14 at the Bay Bridge toll plaza (*PDeB*).

**Jaegers, Gulls**—One Skua was seen on each G.G.A.S. sea trip (Sept. 8, Oct. 5). Parasitic Jaegers were seen at the Davis sewer ponds (1 immature, Sept. 22: *PDeB*, *RS*, *JK*, *AW*, *et al.*) and, a most unique location, eight miles south of Mono Lake in a forest clearing at 9600 ft. (*RS* & *SH*). A flock of over 100 jaegers, mostly Parasitic, at the mouth of the Salinas River, Sept. 22, also contained 6 Pomarine and 1 Long-tailed (*WA*). Two Long-tailed Jaegers, one an adult with one long tail feather, were observed directly over the boat, about 25 miles SW of Monterey, Sept. 8 (*GMcC*, *EDS.*, *G.G.A.S.*); each had only two white primaries in each wing. An early Mew Gull was at Pacific Grove on Sept. 7 (*PDeB*, *G.G.A.S.*); the species normally trickles in early October, becoming numerous in mid-November. The Elegant Tern flight was, as is often the case, accompanied by a good Heermann's Gull flight, which remained late; 125 were at Abbott's Lagoon, Point Reyes Penin., Nov. 16 (*TC*, *ROP*). The Sabine's Gull flight was not only noteworthy at sea (Oct. 5, 100+, *EDS.*, *G.G.A.S.*); single birds were observed at Rodeo Lagoon, Oct. 6-18 (*RS* & *JK*, *PDeB*, *AW*, *et al.*), and at Duncan Point, Sonoma Co., Nov. 9 (*GLB*, *BDP*). A dead bird picked up at the Davis sewer ponds, Sept. 22 (*PDeB*, *RS* & *JK*), was converted into a specimen.

**Terns, Alcids**—McCaskie's observations of Common Terns at the south end of Lake Tahoe were further extended by two on Aug. 23, one of which

was collected. Along the coast they were last seen at the Bay Bridge toll plaza as late as Nov. 14 (4, *PDeB*), and at Moss Landing one was seen with 60 Forster's Terns on Nov. 27 (*RLB*). The Elegant Tern flight, while not equal to that of 1959, was about equal to that of 1960, and much better than that of the last two years: 300 at Moss Landing throughout August (*RLB*); 500 at the mouth of the Salinas River, Aug. 31 (*WA*); a peak of 500 at the Bay Bridge toll plaza, Sept. 23 (*MM*); 200 at Tubbs Is. in San Pablo Bay, Sonoma Co., Sept. 28 (*GLB*, *BDP*, *MM*, *et al.*). Curiously, and unlike 1960, they did not seem to go north of San Francisco Bay along the coast; none were seen at Bolinas, Bodega Bay, or Jenner on Sept. 29 (*MM*). The last were seen at Moss Landing during the first week of November (*RLB*). Perhaps to be correlated with the flight of Elegant Terns and Brown Pelicans were the Xantus' Murrelets seen off Monterey for the first time in many years (Sept. 8, 4; Oct. 5, 5-6; *EDS.*, *G.G.A.S.*). A high of 35 Marbled Murrelets was seen at Pacific Grove, Nov. 21 (*PRL*).

**Cuckoos, Owls, Swifts**—A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was seen along the Sacramento River at Colusa State Park on Sept. 1 (*BM*). At least one pair was present during the nesting season at Aden's Resort, at the mouth of the Stanislaus River, Stanislaus Co., where several were found last year. Three young Long-eared Owls found 8 miles south of Mono Lake on Aug. 6 (banded, *RS*) represent an unusually high breeding station for this species in California. About 35 Black Swifts at Point Lobos, Aug. 19, are an unusually high number for a coastal location (*RS* & *JK*). A group of about 150 seen flying southeast at Springvale, Tulare Co., Aug. 28, probably represents a migratory group; it is also one of the largest single groups ever noted at one locality in our Region (*MEM*).

**Flycatchers, Swallows, Parids**—The only Tropical Kingbird reported this season was at Alameda from Sept. 15 to 25 (*ER*, *RS* & *JK*); none were found at Point Reyes (where it is usually noted) in spite of the intensive field work there. Very late Ash-throated Flycatchers were noted at Point Reyes on Oct. 19 (*RS* & *JK*) and Oct. 27 (*GM*). We have only one previous record of the Olive-sided Flycatcher in this Region after Sept. 18, yet 2 or 3 were noted at Elkhorn Ferry, Yolo Co., on Sept. 22 with other migrants (*EW*, *MS*, *PDeB*). Several reports of large numbers of swallows were received: at Springville numbers were "inestimable" on Oct. 18 (*MEM*); these were mixed with swifts, and the following day all were gone. At Stockton about 5000 swallows (at least some Trees) were seen at the local sewage plant, Sept. 4 (*BM*). Several Bank Swallows, seen Sept. 22, are the latest we have on record by several weeks (*PDeB*, *EW*, *RS*). Following the reports of Bush-tits at high altitudes mentioned in the last issue, two more reports were received: at least ten at Kennedy Meadows, 6500 ft., Tuolumne Co., Aug. 19 (*BM*), and about 60 at Mountainaire, 6500 ft., Tulare Co., Sept. 8 (*MEM*); breeding birds of the race *plumbeus* were found at 9600 ft. in the Piute Mts. south of Mono Lake (*RS*), where, as in many of the



mountains east of the Sierra, many species occur at much higher altitudes than in the main Sierran axis.

**Wrens, Thrashers, Thrushes, Kinglets**—Winter Wrens were present in Tilden Park in better numbers than last fall; first appearing on Sept. 4 (*EW*, *PDeB*). A *Sage Thrasher* at Point Reyes on Oct. 20 (*EW*, *PDeB*) is the fourth record of this species on the coast of central California known to the editors. The various species of berry-eating birds (Robin, Hermit Thrush, Cedar Waxwing), so conspicuously absent last winter, were present in approximately normal numbers this fall. In the coastal coniferous forest of Muir Woods, Marin Co., about 2500 Golden-crowned Kinglets were estimated along 0.7 miles of trail on Nov. 3 (*MM*), a remarkable concentration for any part of California. The first influxes of this species were noted on Oct. 12 at both Point Reyes and Berkeley.

**Vireos, Warblers**—Although a Solitary Vireo at Point Reyes on Oct. 12 (*RS* & *JK*, *AW*) was far later than most of our records, it was much surpassed by the one at Pacific Grove, Nov. 18 (*VLY*) and the two near Santa Rosa on Nov. 10 and 25 (*GLB*). Equally late were a Warbling Vireo at Point Pinos, Nov. 1 (*RS*), a Nashville Warbler at Point Reyes on Oct. 19, a Yellow there on Oct. 27, and a Wilson's near Santa Rosa on Oct. 26.

Although these observers were unable to supply as much data on the fall migration as last fall, both had the following impression of the vireo and warbler migration in Tilden Park (*PDeB*, *EW*): Orange-crowned, Townsend's, Hermit and Black-throated Gray Warblers were much less in evidence than in either of the last two years; the Warbling Vireo also seemed to be reduced. This paucity was most marked in the case of Townsend's Warbler, as only a dozen or so were seen during the entire fall (maximum of 29 in one day last fall). This decrease is undoubtedly merely a local situation, as numbers of Townsend's seemed to be normal in the more typical coastal coniferous forest preferred by this species (*e.g.*, about 75 were found at Muir Woods with the Golden-crowned Kinglets mentioned above). There were also two indications of a heavier migration of some of these species through the interior: on Sept. 22, 30-40 Black-throated Grays, 2 Townsend's, and 10 Hermit Warblers were noted at Elkhorn Ferry; on the following day, Townsend's (at least 14) and Hermit Warblers were numerous at Mountainaire (6400 ft.), Tulare Co. (*MEM*); the number of Townsend's is the highest we have on record for a Sierran locality. Fall singing in Townsend's Warblers, seldom reported, was noted at Pacific Grove, Oct. 5 and 6 (*PDeB*, *MM*), where several males were giving nearly complete songs.

**Finches**—A Black-headed Grosbeak (immature male) at Point Bonita, Oct. 20, was somewhat later than normal (*PDeB*, *EW*). Several "northern finches" made appearances in the Region during the fall: Evening Grosbeaks were noted at Angwin, Napa Co.—1 on Sept. 21, at least 35 on Oct. 5 (*MJW*); near Santa Rosa, up to 10 from Sept. 4 to the end of November (*GLB*); Berkeley, up to 5, Nov. 12, 17 and 19 (*MM*); and Tilden Park, up to 5, Oct. 1 to

the end of November (*PDeB*, *EW*). Red Crossbills were found near Santa Rosa, 12, Sept. 4 and 8, feeding in Douglas firs (*GLB*); in Oakland, up to 12, late October to mid-November (maximum Nov. 9), feeding in pines (*MM*); and Pacific Grove, 5, early December, feeding in pines (*VLY*, *GPL*). In addition, Purple Finches were felt to be commoner than usual in the area east of San Francisco Bay (*MM*, *EW*), and there was some indication of increased numbers of Pine Siskins in the Central Valley near Stockton (*BM*); it is difficult to evaluate these reports fully because of the lack of other comments on these species.

A Vesper Sparrow near McClure's Beach, Marin Co. on Oct. 26 (*MS*, *PDeB*) is one of our few coastal records. Three Chipping Sparrows on Point Reyes, Oct. 12, and one on Oct. 19 (*RS*, *JK*, *PDeB*) are somewhat later than usual, though not the latest on record. Two Brewer's Sparrows on Point Reyes, one each on Oct. 9 and 19 (*RS* & *JK*) represent some of the very few records of this species on the coast. Fox, White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows returned to normal numbers after last year's low. Single Harris' Sparrows were noted south of San Jose, Oct. 18 (*DDMcL*), and at Mt. Hermon, Santa Cruz Co., Oct. 9 (Mrs. A. Boylan, *fide DBH*). Three Lapland Longspurs were found with the Chestnut-collared on Oct. 19 at Point Reyes, and at least 6 were there the following day (*RS*, *JK*, *EA*, *MS*, *EW*, *et al.*); although this record may belong with the other eastern species mentioned above, there are enough other records in coastal California to give the Lapland Longspur regular, though rare, status.

**Observers**—Earl Albertson, William Anderson, Ronald L. Branson, Kenneth M. Cobb (for Merced Refuge personnel), Howard L. Cogswell, Val DaCosta, Lynn Farrar, Golden Gate Audubon Society, Steve Herman, Emilie Hodnette, Richard T. Holmes, Dorothy B. Hunt, Jan Kroesen, George P. Lamont, Phillip R. Lenna, Marie Mans, Guy McCaskie, Donald D. McLean, Hans Meinhardt, Bob Miller, Grace Miller, Mabel E. Mires, A. Todd Newbury, Benjamin D. Parmeter, Robert O. Paxton, Elsie Roemer, Carl Sather, Marianne Shepherd, Beth C. Snyder, Richard Stallcup, Arthur Wang, Viola E. Washburn, M. J. Whitney, Roger O. Wilbur, Edwin Willis, Vernal L. Yadon.—PAUL DEBENEDICTIS, 1901 Grove St., Berkeley 4, Calif., and THEODORE CHASE, JR., 2314 Oregon St., Berkeley 5, Calif.