

**MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION.—General Passerine Migration**—Fall passerine migration in this Region is a long, rather leisurely affair, with



movement clearly in evidence by mid-August and not ended until late November for such species as the Black-throated Gray Warbler. In general, the density of fall passerine migrants appears to be higher in the Central Valley and Sierra than along the coast. In one Coast Range census plot Marie Mans found the density of migrants much lower this fall than in spring. The Sierra, of course, offer an open migration route in fall quite unlike the snow-covered barrier they present in spring. But since the density of bird students, unlike passerines, is higher along the coast, this Region can not yet adequately test these hypotheses.

This fall, notwithstanding generalizations about the long slow character of fall migration in the Region, something resembling "big days" was apparent along the coast and in the Central Valley at the end of August and in the first week of September. On Sept. 1 B. D. Parmeter found "the greatest concentration of landbirds that I have ever seen in California" near Santa Rosa, Sonoma Co. Flycatchers, swallows (with immatures outnumbering adults), warblers, tanagers, Lazuli Buntings, Purple Finches, and Lesser Goldfinches were all "common to abundant." Four days later (Sept. 5) Marie Mans, Marianne Shepard and Arthur Wang found "the highest number of migrants I (MM) have ever observed at Point Reyes" where 95 migrants (flycatchers, warblers, tanagers) were concentrated in two cypress wind-breaks near the point.

Major weather patterns offered inconclusive but tentative support for a favorable winds hypothesis, with the first of the fall's cold fronts passing the northern California coast on Aug. 27-28 and Sept. 2, and with a Great Basin high on Aug. 31 providing easterly winds in the northern Sierra. Then, on Sept. 6 and 7 there were northerly winds in the Central

Valley and rain in the Sierra, perfect grounding weather. At least, the weather was not unfavorable to a larger than usual observed migration.

**Visible Diurnal Migration**—Some of this Region's most interesting and unusual reports this fall referred to visible diurnal migration of passerines, a phenomenon often described in Europe and in the eastern states and undoubtedly commoner in the West than records indicate. At Beale Air Force Base, Yuba Co., Michael Perrone, Jr. had one of his biggest days on Sept. 7 at just the moment when Central Valley weather was confronting migrants with northerly winds and drizzle. As the overcast cleared in the morning of the 7th he could see "migrants passing overhead in a southerly direction. A willow thicket that contained no warblers at 9:30 was teeming with them at 10:30."

On Oct. 26 Bob Miller hiked up an 8500 ft. ridge near Twin Lakes, Alpine Co., where "between 9 and 10 o'clock small flocks of Evening Grosbeaks and Robins, sometimes mixed, would sweep up the ridge and then south down the ridge. There must have been 9 or 10 of these flocks and a total of at least 55 Robins and 26 Evening Grosbeaks along with about 10 smaller finches."

Best documented of all was a remarkable morning flight of Varied Thrushes *northward* at Pacific Grove, following the coast out toward the tip of the Monterey Peninsula. Attracted by an unusual number of Varied Thrushes around his house at 7:15 a.m., William Reese counted flocks of between 20 and 100 birds passing over his house between 7:25 and 8:55. On the basis of sample counts extending over 105 minutes, he estimated that more than 3000 Varied Thrushes passed his observation point. The flocks flew at heights from 150 to 1000 feet. These three observations suggest what a wealth of visible diurnal migration data offer themselves to the observers in this Region.

**Grebes, Tubinares**—An unusual but not unprecedented record of a Red-necked Grebe was one at Stockton, Sept. 23 (BM). No Black-footed Albatrosses were seen on the October and November sea trips off Monterey. For the first time in several years concentrations of Sooty Shearwaters approaching a million were reported, off Marin County, Sept. 11 (VDaC); however, the factors which bring these concentrations close to shore remain unelucidated. Fulmars were fairly common, but not abundant, and not along shores in any numbers (RLB). Two Pale-footed Shearwaters, very rare but regular along this coast, were reported off Monterey: Aug. 28 (DDaS, GMcC); Nov. 13 (GMcC, Eds., RS, et al.) Single Manx Shearwaters were also recorded, Oct. 2 (KRS, Paul Opler) and Nov. 13 (GMcC, Eds., RS, et al.) Ashy Petrels were numerous (about 40) off Monterey on Nov. 13, indicating that they occur very late in the year here; but Leach's and Fork-tailed Petrels were at an apparent seasonal low on the rock off Trinidad Harbor, Humboldt Co., where they have been banded throughout 1965: 58 Leach's (including 28 recaptures) and 8 Fork-tailed, Sept. 25; only 5 Leach's and no Fork-tailed, Oct. 23 (FZ, et al.).

**Hérons, Ibises**—An adult *Little Blue Heron* was

observed at a heron colony in Marin County on August 31 by National Audubon Society warden John Larsen and Calif. Dept. of Fish and Game warden Gil Thompson; and on Sept. 4 and 19 by Larsen and W. Stan Picher of the Marin Audubon Society. The bird approached within 5 feet of, but was not actually seen to land on, a nest (the only active nest in the tree, about 100 feet from any other nest, and not seen to be approached by any Snowy Egrets). On Aug. 31 another adult Little Blue Heron was seen by another Fish and Game warden, at exactly the same hour but several miles away, indicating the presence of two adult birds in the area. On Sept. 19 one of the two nearly fledged young was found dead; it was taken to the Calif. Academy of Sciences, where it was tentatively (in the absence of sufficient comparative material) identified as a Little Blue. No adult was seen later in the area, but an adult was definitively identified on Sept. 25 at Tubbs Island, Sonoma Co. (BDP, JA, JG, et al.). It is hoped that this species (which has only once previously been conclusively recorded in the state: *AFN* 18 (3):382 (1964); *Condor* 66:447 (1964) will be left undisturbed to become established here. A Least Bittern, normally considered a Central Valley bird and rarely seen there, was caught (broken-winged) in a back yard in Palo Alto (SW of San Francisco Bay), Oct. 9 (TCK). Another Central Valley straggler was a White-faced Ibis at San Rafael, Marin Co. in September and October (Aubrey Burns, *vide* Lynn Stafford).

**Waterfowl**—Geese and swans were late arriving at San Joaquin Valley refuges (ROW, KAW). Mild weather kept all species of waterfowl north in the Tule Lake basin until storms in mid-November brought them southward; then they seemed to skip over the Sacramento Valley refuges to the Delta area and the San Joaquin Valley (SRW); correspondingly, goose totals were higher than last fall at Merced Nat'l Wildlife Refuge (KAW). Among migrant species seen flying northward were 100 Canada Geese flying northeastward over Big Lagoon, Humboldt Co., Oct. 14 (EAP). Among (Lesser) Canada Geese at Sacramento Nat'l Wildlife Refuge, Dec. 5, was an albinistic bird with head and neck white with a little black mottling; rest of plumage normal (EDS., Peter Willmann). Besides rare but to be expected Blue Geese at Sacramento Refuge, a Fulvous Tree-Duck was shot at Delevan Refuge, Colusa Co., Oct. 31 (Max Knox, *vide* SRW)—the northernmost record in several years. Gadwall were recorded near the coast in August, suggesting possible breeding; 40 females and immatures at Tubbs Island, Sonoma Co., Aug. 18 (BDP), 1 at Abbotts Lagoon, Marin Co., Aug. 26 (HLC). Numbers of most ducks at Merced Refuge appeared normal, with Mallard and Gadwall up (KAW). Early Oldsquaws were at Rodeo Lagoon, Marin Co., Nov. 9, *et seq.* (VDAc, T & ZCK) and at the mouth of the Klamath River, Del Norte Co., Nov. 21 (EAP). The female Harlequin Duck at Pillar Point, San Mateo Co. continued at least to Nov. 14, when it was seen flying strongly (RS). A Common Merganser at Grizzly Creek State Park, central Humboldt Co., Nov. 25 (MK) was the first

seen there since last December's floods, though the species is usually common there; presumably the floods and consequent heavy deposits of gravel have changed the fish population.

**Vultures, Kites, Hawks, Eagles**—The Turkey Vulture migration, hardly noticeable along the coast where they are permanent residents, was prominent in the Central Valley: 2500-3000 birds were seen passing overhead in 30 minutes at Springville, Tulare Co., Sept. 29 (MEM). Observers in Sonoma County reported White-tailed Kites decreased, but this seemed only a reflection of the absence everywhere of large concentrations such as were noted last year; slighter increases in marginal areas were maintained. A *Harlan's Hawk*, the ninth for the state and fourth for the Region, was at Hatfield State Park, Merced Co., Nov. 14 (EDS., Ken Harte); the bird may be more common than suspected, as five of these records have occurred in the last five years. A special appeal for records of Bald Eagles brought 7 observations: 2 adult, 4 immature, 1 age not stated. The adults were at Lake Almanor (Oct. 10, EH) and Grizzly Creek State Park, Humboldt Co., (Nov. 27, *vide* MK). The immatures were southerly and westerly—Bodega Head, Sonoma Co. (Oct. 17, GLB, JA, et al.); Carmel River mouth, Monterey Co. (Oct. 28-31, RLB); Tomales Bay, Marin Co. (Nov. 11, TCK, R. Greenberg, et al.); and 8 miles west of Santa Rosa (GLB, MS, et al.), suggesting either (or both) that the immatures wander farther from the breeding areas in northeastern California (though adults have been seen in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties in recent years) or that immatures are only identified near the San Francisco Bay area. The ratio of immatures is heartening, though not statistically significant. The same appeal produced only 4 reports of Peregrines (1 adult, 1 immature, 2 not stated).

**Rails, Shorebirds**—A Black Rail was seen in October and November by many observers (GM, VDAc, P. Veitch, et al.) in *Salicornia* behind the home of Mr. and Mrs. Gerard Brady at Inverness (Tomales Bay, Marin Co.). This is a traditional locality, but the first in many years to be a public spectacle. It was a good season for the rarer shorebirds, with 22 Am. Golden Plovers (mostly near Abbotts Lagoon, Point Reyes Peninsula (WTV); some duplication may be involved), 1 Solitary Sandpiper (Woodland, Sept. 9, AW & MS), 9 Lesser Yellowlegs (Aug. 26–Oct. 2), about 100 Pectoral Sandpipers (Sept. 5–Oct. 23), 1 Stilt Sandpiper (Woodland, Sept. 19, MP) and at least 15 Baird's Sandpipers (probably many more; 10 in one observation (EDS.)) being reported. The numbers of Pectoral Sandpipers are particularly noteworthy, since practically all records were from the coast; normally one trip to Woodland will net more than all coastal reports in fall. The numbers of this species in this Region, both along the coast and inland, are known to fluctuate widely, but the reasons are not apparent. A notable concentration of Long-billed Curlews was about 1000 in pastureland south of the mouth of the Salinas River, Nov. 12 (FH). An unusual late record of Knot was 50 at Humboldt Bay, Nov. 7 (FZ and Dean Greenberg); the same observers found one dead on Nov. 12.

**Gulls, Terns, Alcids**—Four Skuas (an average number) were reported: 2 at Fort Point, San Francisco, Aug. 27 (VDAc), 2 off Monterey, Oct. 2 (GMcC, EDS., RS, et al.). A number of observers (RC, GLB, VDAc, FH, TCJr) reported Bonaparte's Gulls in unusually large numbers both along shore and in fields and temporary water slightly inland, especially after the storm of Nov. 12-13. Nine hundred Heermann's Gulls were at Abbotts Lagoon, Point Reyes Peninsula, Sept. 19 (EDS., DDeS); by mid-October the number had decreased greatly, as is normal. Ten Sabine's Gulls off Dry Lagoon State Park, Humboldt Co., Sept. 19, were flying northward (EAP); reverse migration? Although Elegant Terns did not attain the numbers present in some years, there were reports as far north as Bolinas Lagoon (Aug. 28, 225, MM) and Bodega Bay (Aug. 25, 7 [BDP]), and they remained very late: 95 at the Bay Bridge Toll Plaza, Oakland, Oct. 23 (TC, Jr.), and present there to Nov. 12 (KRS, fide VDAc), last at Monterey, Nov. 22 (RLB). A late Caspian Tern was at Moss Landing with Elegants, Nov. 14 (RS). In addition to 24 Marbled Murrelets in Trinidad Harbor, Humboldt Co., Sept. 25 (FZ, et al.), a "regular daybreak flight over Prairie Creek State Park, mid-October through November" was reported (EAP). Breeding has long been suspected in this area, but the birds would be expected to winter on the ocean.

**Cuckoos, Swifts, Hummingbirds, Owls, Woodpeckers**—A *Black-billed Cuckoo*, banded and photographed at the Point Reyes Bird Observatory on Sept. 22 (Enid K. Austen, Lillian K. Henningsen, WTV) is the second record for California, the first (unpublished) being a bird collected at Fresno in March 1918, now in the University of Washington collection. Vaux's Swifts were observed migrating over a long period: at Prairie Creek Redwood State Park, Humboldt Co. 50+ birds were observed on Aug. 31 (TC, Jr.) and hundreds were seen through September, last few Oct. 5 (EAP); migrants in Sonoma Co., ranged from "hundreds" on Sept. 1 through a last report, Sept. 22 (GLB, BDP). The Costa's Hummingbird which had summered north of its usual coastal range at Pacific Grove was not seen after Sept. 13 (WR). In view of recent concern about all raptors, it is noteworthy that the only correspondent in this Region to mention Barn Owls reported their decline in Sonoma County since last year (BDP). More Lewis' Woodpeckers than usual found their way to northern California coastal counties, with 1 to 9 birds near Santa Rosa in September and October (GLB) and a single bird at the remarkable location of Point Reyes on Oct. 1 (WTV), in addition to the usual Central Valley Reports.

**Flycatchers, Swallows**—A Cassin's Kingbird at the Carmel River mouth, Monterey Co., Sept. 12 (RS & AW) was somewhat north and west of its interior metropolis. Northward-wandering Tropical Kingbirds were found no farther north this fall than Big Sur, Monterey Co., where 2 were present on Nov. 2 (RLB). A single Eastern Phoebe at Rodeo Lagoon, Marin Co., on Sept. 1 (VDAc) appears to be the third record in five years for the Region. *Empi-*

*donax* flycatchers were already migrating in mid-August in Tulare County, where the last migrants were seen on Sept. 24 (MEM), underscoring the length of passerine migration in this Region. At Point Reyes, major influxes brought about the same number of *Empidonax*, largely Western Flycatchers, into cypress windbreaks on Sept. 5 (MM, AW & MS) as on Sept. 26 (EDS., WTV), with still larger numbers on Sept. 11 and 12 (MCWE). The late breeding and hurried departure of Barn Swallows, commented on before in these columns, was again evident at Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, Humboldt Co., where the last young left a nest on Sept. 20 and all birds had departed the area by Sept. 26 (EAP).

**Wrens, Mimidae, Thrushes, Gnatcatchers**—Since the House Wren is largely absent from the northwestern coastal belt of California, the presence of a single bird at Rodeo Lagoon, Marin Co., from Nov. 3 through Nov. 24 (VDAc) was unusual. Evidence of post-breeding wandering in Mockingbirds, now established as residents as far north as Sonoma County, was a single bird at Point Reyes on Sept. 5 (MM). Two Sage Thrashers near the Sutter Buttes, Sutter Co., on Nov. 29 (T & ZCk), in the Sacramento drainage, were somewhat north of the usual San Joaquin Valley fall records; these and recent Point Reyes records raise the question where this Great Basin breeder crosses the Sierra to its winter range in the San Joaquin Valley and southward. A number of reports suggest that the Hermit and Varied Thrush wintering populations will be higher than in the last few years, without reaching the peak of the fall of 1961. Varied Thrushes have appeared in a number of marginal migration habitats, such as the Los Banos State Waterfowl Management Area, Merced Co. (ROW). Interior-breeding Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were found westward to the coast more frequently than usual with a bird at Point Reyes on Oct. 3 (ROP); another near Santa Rosa well into November (GLB); and another at Rodeo Lagoon, Marin Co., Nov. 9-19 (VDAc). Two birds at the Yolo Causeway on Nov. 7 (RS & DDeS) were still well north of their San Joaquin Valley winter limit.

**Warblers**—Data received this fall support the view that lowland-breeding Yellow and Wilson's form the bulk of the coastal warbler migrants until the October arrival of wintering Audubon's Warblers. On Sept. 5, a day of heavy migration at Point Reyes, these two species outnumbered other warblers by 45 to 8 in two favored windbreaks (MM & MS). Mountain-breeding Townsend's, Black-throated Gray and Hermit Warblers migrate along the coast in much smaller numbers, while Nashville and MacGillivray's Warblers are even less common along the immediate coast than some "eastern vagrants." In the Central Valley and the Sierra not only are over-all warbler numbers higher in fall migration, but the proportion of these latter warbler species to Yellow and Wilson's Warblers is much higher. At Lower Bidwell Park at Chico, Butte Co., on Sept. 6, 25 Nashville Warblers were present (EH), while three reports of single birds from the immediate coast (Point Reyes, Sept. 5 [MM] and Oct. 3 [ROP], and



near Pigeon Point, San Mateo Co., Nov. 14 [RS]) were a creditable total for the season. Similarly, MacGillivray's Warblers were found in numbers up to 25 with 200 Audubon's Warblers on Aug. 30 at Hat Lake, Lassen Volcanic Nat'l Park (EH), as against a single record for the well-explored Point Reyes Peninsula, one bird on Sept. 26 (ROP & WTV).

As usual, "vagrants" held the spotlight, and it was reassuring that the same westerly breeding species and the same coastal localities as before tended to continue earlier patterns. Eighteen Palm Warblers, with 9 in Monterey County and the farthest inland report from Point San Pablo, Contra Costa Co. (JG); 8 Blackpoll Warblers, all from coastal localities and including one specimen; and 5 Am. Redstarts, equally restricted to coastal promontories, led the procession as before. Other well-documented vagrants—none of them new to California—included two Tennessee Warblers near Santa Rosa, Sept. 1 (GLB & BDP); a Chestnut-sided Warbler collected near Santa Rosa on Sept. 11 (GLB); a Black-throated Blue Warbler found dead on Oct. 29 at the Monterey Country Club and brought to the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History (VLY); a female Black-and-white Warbler near Santa Rosa on Sept. 7 (GLB), an Ovenbird on Point Reyes on Sept. 26 (EDS.); and 2 Northern Waterthrushes on the Monterey Peninsula, including one found dead (Major General Frank Culin, *vide* VLY, RLB). During the same migration period a number of vagrants, including these species and others, were collected on the Farallon Islands by Richard Tenaza, who is preparing to publish these records separately.

**Ploceidae, Icteridae, Finches**—An escaped pair of South African Fire Finches (*Lagonosticta rubricata*) wintered at Pacific Grove, Monterey Co. and were observed on Sept. 30 with 4 wild-reared young (B. Gordon Nelson, *vide* VLY). Since the possibility of another exotic species establishing itself is not excluded, the fate of this first brood will be carefully watched. The only Bobolink record from the Region this fall was a single bird at Abbott's Lagoon, Point Reyes Peninsula, on Sept. 19 (EDS., DDeS). An immature male Baltimore Oriole was banded at Point Reyes on Sept. 12 (MCWE). Evidence of migration of Rufous-sided Towhees was 4 males on Point Reyes, one of them on the bare rock of the Point itself, on Sept. 26 (EDS.). Sporadic recent records of Lark Buntings were continued with one bird banded at Point Reyes on Sept. 12 (MCWE) and a male in winter plumage at the Sutter Buttes, Sutter Co., Nov. 27 (T & ZCk). Two Gray-headed Juncos at Point Reyes on Oct. 2 were well described by Bill Arvey. The *Tree Sparrow* banded and photographed at Point Reyes Bird Observatory on Oct. 11 (WTV) appears to be the fifth California record west of the Sierra. Six White-throated Sparrows, slightly more than normal, included 2 banded at Point Reyes Bird Observatory, where increased banding is likely to turn up increased numbers of many marginal species. Another marginal species which probably occurs in dense habitats more often than it is recorded is the Swamp Sparrow, of which there were four reports, the most for a single season so far: 1 at the

Carmel River mouth, Oct. 2-3 (GMcC, EDS., MM, RLB, *etc.*); 2 at Rodeo Lagoon, Marin Co., in October (VDaC) and 1 at Carmel Highlands on Nov. 7 (Laidlaw Williams). Five Lapland Longspurs at Point Reyes on Oct. 16 (EDS.), 8 there on Oct. 23 and 2 Chestnut-collared Longspurs there on the latter date (TCK) appeared in the same field during the same week as in the two previous years.

Observers—John Arnold, Gordon L. Bolander, Ronald L. Branson, Ted and Zoe Chandik (T & ZCk), Howard L. Cogswell, Rachel Coy, Val DaCosta, Dave De Sante, Michael C. W. Evans, Jack Guggolz, Florence Haas, Margaret Keith, Marie Mans, Guy McCaskie, Bob Miller, Grace Miller, Mabel E. Mires, Benjamin D. Parmeter, Michael Perrone, Jr., Eleanor A. Pugh, William Reese, Kenneth R. Schulz, Marianne Shepard, Richard Stallcup, W. Ted Van Velzen, Arthur Wang, Kenneth A. Walch, Roger O. Wilbur, Sanford R. Wilbur, Vernal L. Yadon.—THEODORE CHASE, JR., 1618 Milvia St., Apt. 2, Berkeley Calif. 94709, and Robert O. Paxton, 51 Canyon Road, Berkeley, Calif. 94704.