

# Southern Pacific Coast Region

## GUY MCCASKIE

In general observers felt migrants arrived a little earlier than normal. Good waves of migrants were evident along the coast during the overcast conditions prevailing in early May, with the largest numbers May 13–14, and numbers of migrants encountered on the desert were considered better than average.

Abbreviations: F.C.R. (*Furnace Creek Ranch, Death Valley National Monument, Inyo.*); H.D.L. (*Harper Dry Lake, n.w. of Barstow, San Bernardino Co.*); N.E.S.S. (*north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co.*); S.C.R.E. (*Santa Clara River Estuary near Ventura, Ventura Co.*); S.E.S.S. (*south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial Co.*); S.F.K.R.P. (*South Fork Kern River Preserve near Weldon, Kern County*). 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 51959, Riverside, CA 92517) for all rarities listed in this report. Reports submitted without documentation are not published.

## Loons to Boobies

A basic-plumage Red-throated Loon on Ramer L., *Imperial* May 28–29 (KLG) was only the fourth to be reported in the area of the Salton Sea. A basic-plumage Pacific Loon on L. Mathews, *Riverside* Apr. 6–May 5 (SJM) could have wintered on this large inland reservoir. Sixteen alternate-plumage Com. Loons on the Highland Canal e. of Calipatria, *Imperial* Apr. 11 (RMcK) was a large number for such a location.

A Laysan Albatross w. of San Nicolas I., Mar. 24 and another well off *San Luis Obispo* Apr. 6 during a CALCOFI Scientific Research Cruise (RAF) were the only two reported within 200 mi of the coast. What was certainly a very confused Laysan Albatross landed in a yard in San Marino, *Los Angeles* Apr. 14 (*fide* KLG); it would be interesting to know whether this bird, and previous birds found under similar conditions in the Los Angeles Basin, moved inland from the

coast or were attempting to reach the coast after moving northward through the area of the Salton Sea from the Gulf of California. The only Cook's Petrels reported within California's waters were very small numbers far off *San Luis Obispo* in April (RAF) and May (SFB). A Flesh-footed Shearwater, rare in S. California waters, was near Santa Rosa I., April 13 (GeM).

An imm. Masked Booby well photographed 3 mi s. of White Pt. on the Palos Verdes Peninsula, *Los Angeles* Apr. 30 (MSM, SWr) was the sixth to be found in California.

## Hérons to Raptors

A Least Bittern near Cantil, *Kern* May 28 (MTH) was only the third to be found in this area of the Mojave Desert. A Little Blue Heron along the Highland Canal e. of Brawley, *Imperial* May 16 (RMcK, KM) was the only one found away from coastal *San Diego*. What was believed to be the Tricolored Heron present at the Tijuana R. mouth, *San Diego* during the winter, was photographed on the late date of May 23 (MBS). Three Reddish Egrets were found along the coast, with one seen flying S past the Palos Verdes Pen., May 1 (KL), another at Seal Beach, *Orange* Apr. 24–30 (JFit), and the third at Bolsa Chica, *Orange* Apr. 29–May 31 (BED).

Brant regularly pass through the area of the Salton Sea on their northward migration from wintering grounds in the Gulf of California, with 350 at N.E.S.S., Apr. 19 (REW) being the peak number there this spring; one near Lakeview, *Riverside* Apr. 2 (TM), 24 in

flight over L. Mathews Apr. 19 (CMcG, SJM), and a tight flock of 64 flying N near Glamis, *Imperial* Apr. 24 (RMcK) were the only ones reported away from the Salton Sea. The Tufted Duck present on Oso Flaco L., *San Luis Obispo* in January and February remained through Mar. 22 (RW). A flock of 200 Surf Scoters on L. Henshaw in the mountains of *San Diego* Mar. 20 (GMcC) were undoubtedly "grounded" by bad weather when migrating northward from the Gulf of California; six at various localities around N.E.S.S. between Mar. 20–May 7 (GMcC) was an average number for this inland location. A White-winged Scoter, much rarer inland than the previous species, was at N.E.S.S. Mar. 20–May 8 (GMcC, TC).

A sub-ad. Mississippi Kite near Big Pine, *Inyo* May 26 (HK) was in the general area of California where most late spring sightings have been made. The ad. Broad-winged Hawk found wintering in Los Osos, *San Luis Obispo* remained through Mar. 12 (KAH); an immature near Valyermo, *Los Angeles* Apr. 28 (KLG) was one of very few to be found in California in spring. Three Zone-tailed Hawks were found at widely separated localities, with one near Valyermo Apr. 25 (MSM), another at Santiago Oaks Regional Park near Orange, *Orange* Apr. 30 (CJ), and the third over California City, *Kern* May 26 (GT, CJ). A Merlin in Santa Barbara May 15 (HPR) was unusually late.

## Shorebirds to Alcids

An Am. Golden-Plover inland at S.E.S.S., May 2 (RMcK) and another at N.E.S.S.,





May 7 (GMcC) were the only two reported. Pacific Golden-Plovers remained at known wintering localities into May, with ten in Seal Beach May 1 (DRW) and two near Santa Maria, *Santa Barbara* May 16 (JMC); five on San Nicolas I., Mar. 25 (GeM) and two in Huntington Beach, *Orange* Apr. 7 (RAE) had also likely wintered locally, but single birds in San Diego Apr. 28–May 8 (DSa) and in Saticoy, *Ventura* Apr. 21–May 3 (DH) were believed to be migrants. A Snowy Plover at F.C.R., May 29 (MAP) was at an unusual locality. The Solitary Sandpiper that wintered in Torrance, *Los Angeles* was last seen Apr. 26 (MH); one near Chino, *San Bernardino* Apr. 26 (JEP) and six near 29 Palms, *San Bernardino*, between Apr. 16–May 23 (RMcK) were the only migrants reported this spring. A concentration of 1720 Whimbrel near the Kern N.W.R., Apr. 19 (MOC) is additional evidence that the large numbers of these birds seen passing through the Salton Sea and the Antelope Valley each spring continue on a n.w. course into the San Joaquin Valley; one at F.C.R., May 21 (GMcC) is one of a very few recorded in *Inyo*. Ruddy Turnstones reached peak numbers of 25 on the Salton Sea Apr. 30–May 7 (GMcC), but were unreported inland away from this area. Two Black Turnstones, very rare inland, were at N.E.S.S., Apr. 24–25 (MAP, GMcC) with seven present there May 26 (GH). A Surf-bird, even rarer inland than the previous species, was at N.E.S.S., Apr. 25 (CH). The only Red Knot found away from the Salton Sea was one on the Kern N.W.R., Apr. 29 (RS). Ten Sanderlings scattered throughout e. *Kern* during May (MTH) was an average number for this inland area, as was probably five at 29 Palms between Apr. 16–May 23 (RMcK). Four Semipalmated Sandpipers were found, with one along the coast in Goleta, *Santa Barbara* May 14–16 (PEL), another at the Santa Ynez R. mouth, *Santa Barbara* (BH), and single individuals inland at N.E.S.S., Apr. 23 (GH) and May 7 (MAP). An unusually early Baird's Sandpiper was at H.D.L., Mar. 11 (EAC) and another was at S.C.R.E., Apr. 10 (WW). A first-year Curlew Sandpiper at N.E.S.S., Apr. 16–26 (GMcC, PAG, TC) was the second to be found in California in spring. A Stilt Sandpiper on the Kern N.W.R., Apr. 21 (RSa) coincided with the peak numbers around S.E.S.S. Two Ruffs were found, with one inland near Lancaster, *Los Angeles* Apr. 28 (KLG) and the other photographed on the coast near Pt. Mugu, *Ventura* on the late date of May 28 (DDJ). A Red Phalarope, always a rare find inland, was at S.E.S.S., Apr. 24

(MAP) and another was on Baldwin L. in the San Bernardino Mts., May 20 (REW).

A Laughing Gull at N.E.S.S., May 15 (KLG) was early; postbreeding visitors from the Gulf of California do not normally appear on the Salton Sea until mid-June. At least 12 Franklin's Gulls scattered throughout the Region between Apr. 10–May 16 was an average number. An alternate-plumage Common Black-headed Gull was reported on the beach with Bonaparte's Gulls at the Santa Maria R. mouth Apr. 29 (WW). An ad. Mew Gull on L. Isabella, *Kern* Apr. 2 (MTH) was far inland where most unusual. A first-year Thayer's Gull on L. Isabella Apr. 1–2 (MTH) was the third to be found in *Kern*. Two Glaucous Gulls were reported, with a first-year bird 5 mi off Pt. Fermin on the Palos Verdes Pen., Mar. 27 (KL) and a somewhat late first-year bird photographed in Cardiff, *San Diego* May 4 (MBS). A Sabine's Gull at N.E.S.S., May 7 (MAP) is one of only a few to be found inland in spring.

Elegant Terns arrived at their breeding localities in *San Diego* and *Orange* during the 2nd week of March as is normal, but appeared n. of these locations much earlier than normal, and in record numbers, as indicated by 85 in Santa Barbara Apr. 20 (DH). Two alternate-plumage Elegant Terns at N.E.S.S., Apr. 2425 (TC) were inland where considered accidental. A Com. Tern on the Salton Sea Apr. 24 (GMcC) was the only one reported inland. A Least Tern in San Diego Mar. 30 (EC) was the earliest ever in spring.

An alternate-plumage Thick-billed Murre photographed 3 mi off Whites Pt. on the Palos Verdes Pen., May 21 (KLG) appeared healthy, and was last seen flying northward; this is the first to be found in S. California waters, virtually all previous records for California coming from Monterey Bay. An alternate-plumage Pigeon Guillemot in La Jolla, *San Diego* Apr. 19–May 13 (SWL) was exceptionally far south.

#### Doves to Swifts

A Band-tailed Pigeon at Iron Mt. Pump Station in s.e. *San Bernardino* May 28 (MAP) was certainly a long way from any area of normal occurrence. Single White-winged Doves at L. Mathews May 5 (CMcG) and in California City May 30 (SBT) were w. of the species' normal range. Up to four Com. Ground-Doves in an avocado orchard near Nipoma between Mar. 6 and the end of the period (PAW) were the first to be found in *San Luis Obispo*. Up to three Ruddy Ground-Doves at F.C.R., May 14–31 (GMcC, BED) were believed to have been present since the fall because coverage of this location in

winter is minimal, and there is no evidence to date of a northward movement of these birds in spring. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo near Norco May 30 (JEP) was close to a normal arrival date at a known breeding locality; single birds in Santa Clarita, *Los Angeles* May 22 (JL), near Cantil June 5 (SF), and in Inyokern, *Kern* May 27 (SS) were migrants well away from known breeding localities.

A Black Swift at a known breeding locality near Arcadia, *Los Angeles* Apr. 24 (MSM) was very early. Continued overcast conditions along the coast during May forced Black Swifts into view, resulting in many more than usual being reported: Over 450 individuals were seen from a dozen localities between *Orange* and *Santa Barbara* May 7–May 25, including 350 in the Santa Barbara/Goleta area May 17–18 (PEL, JEL); one over Galileo Hill in e. *Kern* May 17 (JFis) was at a desert locality where most unusual. Up to six Chimney Swifts were along the *Los Angeles R.* near Glendale May 12+ (MH, KLG), where small numbers have spent recent summers.

#### Flycatchers to Vireos

A W. Wood-Pewee near Imperial, *Imperial* Apr. 3 (PU) was exceptionally early, tying the previous early date for a spring migrant. A ♂ Vermilion Flycatcher in Independence, *Inyo* Apr. 26–28 (A&LK) was a little n.w. of the species normal range. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, always an exciting find in California, was near Oasis, *Mono* May 28 (BED).

Interesting were small numbers of migrant Purple Martins found away from known nesting localities, including early individuals over Chatsworth Res., *Los Angeles* Mar. 20 (DA) and at nearby Hansen Dam Mar. 21 (DA); single birds at 4 localities along the coast between Upper Newport Bay, *Orange* and Goleta between Apr. 9–May 7 (PG, NS, BED, PEL); two together over L. Mathews Apr. 25 (CMcG), another there May 6 (CMcG); and a tenth near S.E.S.S., Apr. 22 (CB).

A Varied Thrush on Pt. Loma in San Diego Apr. 30 (DWA) was unusually far south, especially following a winter when virtually none were reported in S. California; one in Goleta May 9 (FE) was somewhat late, and another on nearby Figueroa Mt., May 25 (JH) was exceptionally so. A Brown Thrasher at F.C.R., Mar 10–11 (T&JH) was either an exceptionally early spring vagrant or, more likely, a bird that had spent the winter undetected.

A singing White-eyed Vireo, a casual straggler to California, was near Corona, *Riverside* May 18 (JEP), and another was at Galileo



Hill in extreme e. *Kern* May 28 (JFis). A Yellow-throated Vireo photographed at Corn Springs near Desert Center May 14 (BES) was only the third to be found in *Riverside*. A Red-eyed Vireo, a very rare visitor to California, was at Butterbrecht Springs in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada n. of California City, *Kern* May 27 (REW), and another was at F.C.R., May 30 (JA, BED).

## Warblers

In addition to the 13 species of wood warblers regularly occurring in the state, 17 more regularly, casually, and accidentally straying to California were found within the Region. A ♂ Golden-winged Warbler, a casual straggler to California, was at Banning Park in Wilmington, *Los Angeles* May 27 (PB). Twenty Tennessee Warblers found scattered throughout the Region during May was about average for this time of the year. A Virginia's Warbler, a local breeder in the mountains along the e. edge of this Region, was in 29 Palms Apr. 26 (RMCK). Single N. Parulas inland in Wyman Canyon, *Inyo* May 28 (HK), near Lone Pine May 28 (A&LK), near Cantil May 29 (MTH), and at Galileo Hill May 29 (NBB), along with one in Malibu May 27 (KLG) and another near Santa Barbara June 2 (LB), were less than expected, but all within a 7-day period! A ♂ Chestnut-sided Warbler near Cantil May 28 (MTH) was the only one reported. Only two Magnolia Warblers were found, with a male inland at F.C.R., May 28 (VH, BED) and the other on the coast at Harbor L. near San Pedro, *Los Angeles* May 29–30 (DSt). The ♂ Black-throated Blue Warbler found near Corona Feb. 3 remained through Apr. 5 (JEP); a female at Butterbrecht Springs June 5 (MTH) was one of very few found in California in spring. Wintering Palm Warblers lingered into April as indicated by up to five in Goleta to May 4 (PEL), up to six at Harbor L. near San Pedro to May 1 (MH), one in Laguna Beach, *Orange* Apr. 6 (RAE), another in Chula Vista, *San Diego* Apr. 30 (RT), at least five in the Prado Basin of extreme w. *San Bernardino/Riverside* Apr. 14–24 (JEP) and another near L. Elsinor in w. *Riverside* Apr. 20 (KFC). A Bay-breasted Warbler, a casual straggler to California, was in California City May 30 (RS). A ♂ Blackpoll Warbler, much rarer in spring than fall, was at the Carrizo Marsh in the Anza Borrego Desert of *San Diego* May 18 (PJ) and another male was at Banning Park in Wilmington May 19 (MSM).

A wintering Black-and-white Warbler remained in Santa Barbara through Apr. 8 (PEL) and another remained in Hunting-

ton Beach through May 7 (BED), but nine in e. *Kern* between Apr. 22–June 5, and one in 29 Palms May 18 (EAC), along with five more along the coast between May 11–15, were spring vagrants. Two wintering Am. Redstarts remained in coastal *San Luis Obispo* to Mar. 11 (TME) and Apr. 6 (TME); fifteen in the e. portion of the Region between May 17–June 5 were in the area of California where small numbers regularly occur at this time of the year, but single birds on Pt. Loma in San Diego May 24 (REW) and in Irvine, *Orange* June 4 (RAH) were the only two found along the coast. A Worm-eating Warbler at Scotty's Castle in Death Valley N.M., May 14 (PAG, TC) was only the fourth to be found in *Inyo*. Twenty Ovenbirds along the e. edge of the Region, including nine in e. *Kern* between May 7–June 4, was more than usual. The only N. Waterthrushes reported were one in Carpinteria, *Santa Barbara* May 1 (SEF), another in Costa Mesa, *Orange* May 8 (LC), and single birds inland at Galileo Hill May 22–26 (MTH) and in nearby California City May 30 (MTH). A Kentucky Warbler in Santa Barbara May 24 (LB) was the only one found this spring, a far cry from the numbers 2 years ago. Seven Hooded Warblers were reported, with three together in the S.F.K.R.P., May 14–18 (SAL), one in Jawbone Canyon n. of California City May 23 (MTH), another at Galileo Hill May 28 (JFis), a female at Nipton in e. *San Bernardino* May 5–6 (WF), and a male on the coast in Los Osos May 11 (JP). The Painted Redstart found near Arroyo Grande Dec. 31 remained through Mar. 29 (MF) and the other wintering in Costa Mesa remained through Mar. 13 (RAH); one in the Sorrento Valley near San Diego May 1 (DA) was a migrant that wandered too far west.

## Tanagers to Orioles

A ♀ Scarlet Tanager photographed near 29 Palms May 18 (EAC) and another female at Banning Park in Wilmington May 23–27 (JI, MH) were two of the very few found in California in spring. A Summer Tanager at Butterbrecht Springs Apr. 30 (MTH) was believed to be of the race *cooperi* moving N to nesting locations on the S.F.K.R.P., but 15 found at scattered locations throughout the Region between May 8–June 1 were more likely vagrants of the nominate race *rubra*. Twenty-five Rose-breasted Grosbeak scattered throughout the Region in May appeared to be a little more than normal, but 20 Indigo Bunting in the same area was about as expected. A ♂ Dickcissel, most unusual in spring, was photographed near Lompoc, *Santa Barbara* May 14–15 (BH).

The Clay-colored Sparrow found in Culver City, *Los Angeles* Dec. 24 remained through Apr. 28 (DSt), and a spring vagrant was photographed at Harbor L. near San Pedro May 14–15 (MH, KL). A singing Black-chinned Sparrow near Lakeview Mar. 2 (SJM) was either an exceptionally early spring migrant or had been wintering locally. A Black-throated Sparrow on Pt. Loma in San Diego May 10–13 (BJ) was on the immediate coast, where rare. An alternate-plumage Lark Bunting in Kelso, *San Bernardino* Apr. 21 (RC) was one of the few found in spring in recent years. Wintering Swamp Sparrows remained into late March as expected, but one at Galileo Hill May 2 (RSt) was a somewhat late migrant, and another in Yucca Valley, *San Bernardino* May 28 (REW) was an exceptionally late migrant. Wintering White-throated Sparrows lingered into late April, with one remaining on Pt. Loma in San Diego through Apr. 25 (JW) and another near Santa Ynez, *Santa Barbara* through Apr. 29 (CP) being the latest; one at Butterbrecht Springs Apr. 30–May 6 (MTH) was a late migrant. A wintering Harris' Sparrow in Ridgecrest, *Kern* through Apr. 30 (SS) and a very late migrant in Jawbone Canyon n. of California City May 23–25 (NBB) were the only two reported.

A Com. Grackle, still considered a casual vagrant to California, was photographed at Panamint Springs, *Inyo* May 29 (SBT). Bronzed Cowbirds were again found far to the north of their limited range in California, with single birds at Iron Mt. Pump Station in e. *San Bernardino* May 21 (MAP), at F.C.R., May 21 (GMCc), and near Onyx, *Kern* May 19+ (BL). Single ♂ N. (Baltimore) Orioles, rare stragglers to California, were near Del Mar, *San Diego* May 11 (MBS), in Ojai, *Ventura* May 15 (BS) and at Galileo Hill May 31 (SBT).

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