

Southern Pacific Coast Region

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The weather this spring was somewhat unusual, with less-than-average amounts of rain, long periods of clear weather along the immediate coast, and continuing windy conditions on the desert.

Over 13,000 Western Sandpipers, along with over 3000 Least Sandpipers and 300 Dunlin, on Rosamond Lake in the Antelope Valley April 21 (MSM), and a flock of 600–700 Short-billed Dowitchers at this same location May 5 (MSM) suggests the number of these birds passing through the southern interior of this Region in late April and early May.

Landbird migrants were in general later than usual, with only small numbers encountered along the coast, but with impressive numbers east of the mountains. *Empidonax* flycatchers, Swainson's Thrushes, Warbling Vireos, Yellow and Wilson's warblers, Western Tanagers, and Black-headed Grosbeaks were seen in impressive

numbers from the Imperial Valley north through Death Valley during the latter half of May, and brought with them more than the average number of Townsend's Warblers for the eastern portion of the Region and a late movement of Green-tailed Towhees.

Abbreviations: C.L. (*China Lake 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 in Death Valley N.P., Inyo.*); H.D.L. (*Harper Dry L., n.w. of Barstow, San Bernardino Co.*); N.E.S.S. (*north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co.*); S.B.C.M. (*San Bernardino County Museum*); S.C.R.E. (*Santa Clara R. Estuary near Ventura, Ventura Co.*); S.D.N.H.M. (*San Diego Natural History Museum*); 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.*); a plus (+) following the date indicates the bird(s) were present from that date through the end of the period (May 31). As virtually all rarities in s. California are seen by many observers, only the observer(s) initially finding and identifying the bird are included. Reports submitted without documentation are generally not published.

Loons to Ibis

A Red-throated Loon photographed at N.E.S.S., Apr. 22 (AS) was one of very few found in the s.e. portion of this Region. An Arctic Loon reported flying N



During 1995, our nation will observe the 50th anniversary of Franklin Roosevelt's death. You are invited to plant a tree grown from seeds hand-picked from the trees that grow at Franklin Delano Roosevelt's home. In your own yard, you can plant a white oak from Hyde Park, New York, or a redbud or southern magnolia from Warm Springs, Georgia. The small trees are the direct offspring of FDR's own trees and are guaranteed to grow. Each small tree comes in a complete planting kit with a special certificate issued in observance of the 50th anniversary of FDR's death.

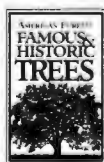
As Governor of New York during the Great Depression, Franklin

Roosevelt arranged for thousands of unemployed people to work on reforestation projects and as president he made the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) a centerpiece of his strategy for putting people back to work. Thus the tree symbolizes FDR's effort to rebuild the country and his faith in the future.

To mark the 50th anniversary of his death, the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute and AMERICAN FORESTS are sponsoring this commemorative tree-planting program and you are encouraged to join us. Place a toll-free call to 800-320-TREE and receive information at no cost.

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Red-throated Loon in first-summer plumage at the north end of the Salton Sea, California, April 22, 1996. Photograph/Arnold Small.

past Pt. Piedras Blancas, *San Luis Obispo*, Apr. 26 (RR, no ♀) was among an estimated 750,000 Pacific Loons migrating past that point this spring (Rowlett monitored the passage of Gray Whales from Pt. Piedras Blancas between mid-March and early June). A Pacific Loon on the New R. near Seeley, *Imperial*, May 18 (KZK) was inland where rare. An alternate-plumage Yellow-billed Loon reported from Pt. Piedras Blancas Apr. 21 (RR, no ♀) was flying N with other loons. Single Horned Grebes at C.L., May 4–7 (MTH) and on Klondike L. near Big Pine, *Inyo*, May 15 (T&JH) were migrants moving N through the interior.

A Laysan Albatross flying over a gull colony on San Nicolas I., May 1 (WW) may have been investigating potential nesting sites. A Shy Albatross well seen from Pt. Piedras Blancas May 28 (RR) is the first to be reported in California waters, but another collected off Washington September 1, 1951 (*Auk* 69:458–459, 1952) indicates this species occasionally reaches n. hemisphere waters. It is also of interest that Rowlett saw 45 Black-footed Albatrosses from Pt. Piedras Blancas between Mar. 18–June 2, and four Laysan Albatrosses from that same point between Mar. 18–31. At least five Murphy's Petrels seen from San Nicolas I., May 19 (RAE) are the first to be reported from land. Two Flesh-footed Shearwaters seen near the Los Coronados Is., Mar. 31 (K&CR), one seen from Pt. La Jolla, *San Diego*, Apr. 9 (SW), and three more seen from Pt. Piedras Blancas between Apr. 10–28 (RR) suggests a few were off S. California during April. A Manx Shearwater seen from Pt. Piedras Blancas Apr. 14 (RR, GPS) was one of at least half-a-dozen reported there between Apr. 2–June 2 (RR).

An imm. Red-footed Booby videotaped at Pt. La Jolla May 24 (PL) is believed to have spent the previous night roosting in ornamental trees at that location, and is the first to be found in *San*

Diego. An influx of Neotropical Cormorants to the area of the Salton Sea produced \leq three near Seeley Apr. 23+ (KZK), two at S.E.S.S., Apr. 27 (MAP), and at least one more at N.E.S.S., May 4+ (GMCC, MAP); this is more individuals than previously recorded in California. An imm. Brandt's Cormorant that crashed into an El Centro yard Apr. 20 (KZK, * S.D.N.H.M) is the first to be found inland in s. California.

The Yellow-crowned Night-Heron that has frequented the coast of *San Diego* since 1981 was present with nesting Black-crowned Night-Herons in La Jolla during April and May (ELM), another adult was with nesting egrets near Ocean Beach, *San Diego*, May 6+ (LB), and an immature along the New R. near Seeley Apr. 27+ (MAP) was the first to be found inland in California. A Wood Stork at S.E.S.S., May 26 (MMR) was the earliest of the post-breeding birds to reach California this year.

Geese to Hawks

Four white-bellied Brant (*B. b. horta*) were seen flying N with the expected black-bellied Brant passing Pt. Piedras Blancas between Apr. 22–May 5 (RR). Thirteen Brant were inland at E.A.F.B., Apr. 27, with one remaining to the end of the period (DVB, MTH); one was at C.L., May 31 (DVB), one was on Klondike L. near Big Pine May 23 (T&JH), and another was on Tinemaha Res. near Big Pine May 27 (T&JH). Large numbers of these geese regularly move N through the Salton Sea on their way from the Gulf of California to the coast each spring, but are rare inland away from the extreme s. portion of the Region. A ♂ Eur. Wigeon on Batiquitos Lagoon, *San Diego*, Apr. 29 (PAG) and another at S.C.R.E., May 12 (ST) were late. The ♂ Tufted Duck that wintered on Oso Flaco L., *San Luis Obispo*, was still present Apr. 14 (JSR). The ♀ Harlequin Duck wintering in Cayucos, *San Luis Obispo*, remained through Mar. 24 (KMH). The Black Scoter on the Colorado R. below Parker Dam, *San Bernardino*, was still present Apr. 13 (EAC) and from the condition of its flight feathers appeared likely to summer; another male at N.E.S.S., May 4+ (MAP) was also inland, where very rare. As usual, small numbers of Surf Scoters moved through the area of the Salton Sea in March and April, with \leq eight remaining at N.E.S.S. through the end of the period (PAG, GMCC, MAP, MSM). Three of four White-winged Scoters found at N.E.S.S., Mar. 23 were still present at the end of the period (MSM, GMCC, MAP).

Up to three Harris' Hawks seen around Borrego Springs, *San Diego*, through at least Mar. 31 (JM) were generally considered naturally occurring birds; one near Spring Valley, *San Diego*, Mar. 31 (PU) and another near Escondido, *San Diego*, Apr. 3 (MBS) were along the coast, where the possibility of escaped birds must be considered. One in the Antelope Valley near Lancaster Mar. 25–Apr. 6 (TK, KLG) was appreciably n.w. of this species' former range in s.e. California, and one near Vidal Junction, *San Bernardino*, Apr. 5 (MSM) was within the species' historic range along the Colorado R., but individuals dispersing from an introduced population nesting around Laguna Dam, *Imperial*, could account for such a record. Encouraging numbers of Swainson's Hawks were reported from throughout the Region between mid-March and the end of April, including a small number on the immediate coast where normally considered rare. The Zone-tailed Hawk that spent the winter around Ojai, *Ventura*, was last seen Mar. 16 (BS), and another was reported around Jamule, *San Diego*, Mar. 6–9 (PM). A "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk, a casual straggler to s. California, was well seen at N.E.S.S., Mar. 9 (AH, VH).

Plovers to Puffins

A Pacific Golden-Plover at N.E.S.S., Mar. 23 (MSM) was either an exceptionally early spring migrant at an inland locality, where very rare, or—even less likely—a bird that had wintered locally. Up to two Am. Golden-Plovers, also very rare inland, at S.E.S.S., May 3–4 (KLG, GMCC) and another on the Piute Ponds near Lancaster, *Los Angeles*, May 9 (NBB) were at the time of year spring migrants are expected. An Am. Oystercatcher on San Nicolas I., Apr. 30–June 6 (WW) appeared to show no signs of hybridization. Solitary Sandpipers were more numerous than usual and included \geq five along the coast, where normally unrecorded in spring. Two Wandering Tattlers, casual inland, were together along the w. shore of the Salton Sea, *Imperial*, May 25 (PAG, GMCC). Six Black Turnstones at N.E.S.S., Apr. 21 (KKS) and a Surfbird at S.E.S.S., May 8 (RH) were also inland where very rare. Four Semipalmated Sandpipers, with single individuals at S.E.S.S., May 4 (EAC), on the Piute Ponds near Lancaster May 5 (MSM), at C.L., May 11 (MTH), and on Klondike L. near Big Pine May 13 (T&JH), provided an average number for this time of the year. A Baird's Sandpiper, most unusual in spring, was inland at E.A.F.B., Apr. 13–27 (MTH) and another was on the coast at S.C.R.E., May 19



Female Red Phalarope at the sewage ponds on Edwards Air Force Base, California, May 19, 1996. Photograph/Matt Heindel.

(ST). Up to two Pectoral Sandpipers, also unusual in spring, were near Santa Maria, *Santa Barbara*, May 28–31 (JMC). Two Red Phalaropes at C.L., May 17–18 (MTH) and another photographed at E.A.F.B., May 19 (MTH) were inland where most unusual in spring.

A Pomarine Jaeger on the New R. near Seeley May 18 (KZK) had undoubtedly moved N from the Gulf of California and been “grounded” by the strong winds in the Imperial Valley at that time. Two S. Polar Skuas in the San Pedro Channel off *Los Angeles* May 18 (KLG) were at the time of the year spring migrants are expected. Franklin’s Gulls appeared more numerous than usual on the Salton Sea, with about 20 reported between Apr. 7–May 9 (DSC, GMcC, MAP, AME); one was in Lancaster May 4 (TK), seven more were found in e. *Kern* between Apr. 21–May 27 (DVB, MTH, SS), one flew past Pt. Piedras Blancas May 9 (RR), and two more were at S.C.R.E., May 25–27 (ST). At least two ad. Little Gulls were around N.E.S.S., Apr. 13–21 (PAG, GMcC, AS), another was there May 27 (MSM, and *Kern*’s 2nd was at C.L., May 4–6 (TM, JS). An ad. Heermann’s Gull, rare inland, was at N.E.S.S., Apr. 7 (TRC), and another was near Seeley Apr. 25–26 (PAG). A first-year Mew Gull was far inland near Niland, *Imperial*, Mar. 15 (KLG). A first-year Glaucous Gull at N.E.S.S., May 11–June 2 (SJP, MAP), with two together May 25 (GMcC), were inland and exceptionally late this far south. About 2000 Sabine’s Gulls passing Pt. Piedras Blancas between Apr. 27–May 26, with half of these between May 6–12 (RR), indicated the migration period for s. California. Two at C.L., May 20, with one remaining to May 25 (SS), were inland where rare, especially so in spring.

Two Elegant Terns, a casual straggler inland to the Salton Sea, were at N.E.S.S., May 18 (MAP) and three more were at

S.E.S.S., May 26 (MMR). A Least Tern at N.E.S.S., May 11 (GMcC) was on the Salton Sea, where one–two are found every year, but another photographed at E.A.F.B., May 12 (MTH) was one of a very few found inland away from the Salton Sea.

A Pigeon Guillemot at Pt. La Jolla Apr. 15+ (SW) was at the s. extreme of this species’ range. Since Tufted Puffins are rare in s. California waters, single birds off Pt. Piedras Blancas May 12 & 21 (RR) are of interest.

Pigeons to Woodpeckers

Single Band-tailed Pigeons in Ridgecrest, *Kern*, May 21–22 (EW), Oasis, *Mono*, May 25 (MAP) and on San Nicolas I., June 1 (WW) were far from areas of normal occurrence. A White-winged Dove at Oasis May 25 (MAP) was n. of this species’ range, and single birds on Pt. Loma in San Diego May 11 (DWA), Beverly Glen, *Los Angeles*, Apr. 15–16 (PB), and in Santa Barbara June 4 (DDJ) were on the coast, w. of this species’ range. An Inca Dove at F.C.R., May 3 (T&JH) was n. of this species’ range, and another in Mojave May 12 (MTH) was the first to be found in *Kern*.

A Yellow-billed Cuckoo in Huntington Beach May 31–June 1 (CR) was the first to be seen in *Orange* in 15 years. The Groove-billed Ani that spent the winter in Harbor City, *Los Angeles*, was last reported May 4 (KLG).

A N. Pygmy-Owl on the w. slope of Walker Pass, *Kern*, May 23 (DSC) was outside this species’ known range. A Com. Nighthawk at Stovepipe Wells in Death Valley, *Inyo*, May 25 (MAP) was typical for a spring arrival date, but at an unusual locality. The first Chimney Swift of the summer was near Glendale, *Los Angeles*, May 23 (KLG) and seven were over Whittier, *Los Angeles*, June 1 (LJS). A ♂ Broad-tailed Hummingbird photographed in *Los Angeles* Mar. 17 (TK) is one of a very few to be found along the coast. A ♂ Allen’s Hummingbird in Weldon, *Kern*, Mar. 10 (SAL) is one of a very few found in the interior of s. California in spring. An Acorn Woodpecker at Galileo Hill in e. *Kern* May 9 (DSC) was far into the desert, and another on San Nicolas I., Apr. 26–27 (WW) had crossed a large expanse of ocean.

Flycatchers to Vireos

The Least Flycatcher present in Manhattan Beach, *Los Angeles*, all winter was still there Apr. 23 (RB). An E. Phoebe in Pasadena Mar. 31 (JF) is one of very few reported in California in spring. A Brown-crested Flycatcher at F.C.R., May 26–29

(SBT, JM) was n. of this species’ range. The Thick-billed Kingbird that spent its 4th winter in Pomona was present through at least Mar. 24 (TK). An E. Kingbird at the upper end of Arastra Cr. in the San Bernardino Mts., May 30 (AS, BS), and another at S.F.K.R.P., June 6 (JHol) were the only two found this spring. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, always an exciting find in California, was photographed along the coast in Malibu, *Los Angeles*, Apr. 27–28 (KR), and another was inland at C.L., May 28–30 (PW).

Single Purple Martins at S.E.S.S., May 18 (MAP), N.E.S.S., Apr. 20 (CMcG), near Lakeview, *Riverside*, May 24 (DRW), near Mission Viejo, *Orange*, Apr. 18 (RAH), Irvine Apr. 20 (DRW), Rancho Palos Verdes, *Los Angeles*, Mar. 25 (RAE), and at the mouth of the Santa Ynez R., *Santa Barbara*, May 24 (BH) were all away from the few known nesting localities remaining in s. California. Numbers of Purple Martins occurring in s. California have declined drastically in recent years, and their population should be monitored.

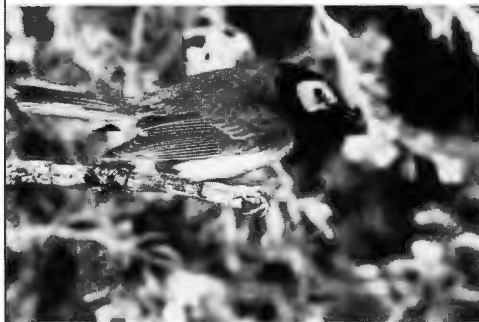
A Pygmy Nuthatch on San Nicolas I., Apr. 28–30 (WW) was certainly lost. A Swainson’s Thrush at the San Mateo Cr. mouth near San Clemente, *Orange*, Apr. 1 (LJE) was exceptionally early. The Rufous-backed Robin found in Borrego Springs Mar. 16 (KE) was last seen Apr. 16. A Varied Thrush at F.C.R., May 18 (GMcC) and another on San Nicolas I., May 31 (WW) were at unusual localities and late. A Gray Catbird, a casual straggler to California, was at Panamint Springs, *Inyo*, May 29 (JM). A Brown Thrasher, rare in California in spring, was in Pt. Mugu S.P., *Ventura*, May 1 (DW). A Bendire’s Thrasher at Scotty’s Castle at the n. end of Death Valley May 26 (AH, VH) was a little n. of this species’ range, and one of a very few found away from suitable nesting habitat in the interior. The imm. Black-backed Wagtail discovered at Dana Pt., Jan. 25 was last seen Apr. 12 (JW).

A Bell’s Vireo on San Nicolas I., Apr. 26 (WW) was at an unexpected locality, but a Hutton’s Vireo at that same locality the same day (WW) was even more of a surprise. A Red-eyed Vireo in Huntington Beach May 5 (LRH) was early for a spring vagrant, but another at Zzyzx, *San Bernardino*, June 7 (EAC) was on a more typical date.

Wood Warblers

Tennessee Warblers appeared scarcer than in most recent springs, with one in Mojave May 25 (MTH), one near the Santa Ynez R. mouth May 4 (BH), and another on San Nicolas I., Apr. 28 (WW) being the only three reported. A Lucy’s

Warbler on San Nicolas I., June 1 (WW) was certainly lost. Single N. Parulas inland at Mojave May 25–28 (SBT) and in nearby California City June 4 (TME), and a 3rd on the coast in Goleta May 23–24 (NS), were far less than normal. The Chestnut-sided Warbler that spent the winter in Santa Barbara was still present Apr. 21 (JHod), and the one in Huntington Beach was still present Apr. 20 (DRW), documenting the approximate time of departure for these birds; the only spring vagrant reported was one in San Pedro, *Los Angeles*, June 9 (JS). Two Magnolia Warblers at Galileo Hill June 2 (JCW, BB) were the only ones reported. A ♂ Black-throated Blue Warbler, most unusual in spring, was at Scotty's Castle at the n. end of Death Valley May 26 (SBT). A Black-throated Green Warbler, also unexpected in spring, was on Pt. Loma in San Diego May 27–29 (REW). A Palm Warbler in Orange, *Orange*, Apr. 27 (BA) and another in Encino, *Los Angeles*, Apr. 14 (RB) had both been present all winter; two banded on San Nicolas I., Mar. 18 (WW) and another banded there Mar. 30 (WW) had probably been present all winter; one on the coast near Playa del Rey, *Los Angeles*, Apr. 16 (RAH) could have wintered locally, but one at Galileo Hill Apr. 27 (DVB) and another at Agua Caliente, *San Diego*, May 4 (GLR) were clearly migrants at desert oases. Nineteen Black-and-white Warblers scattered throughout the Region was slightly below average, but ten Am. Redstarts was



Male Hooded Warbler at Corn Springs, Riverside County, May 16, 1996. Photograph/Brian E. Small.



Canada Warbler at Galileo Hill, Kern County, California, June 1, 1996. Photograph/John C. Wilson.

certainly well below average. The Prothonotary Warbler found in downtown Los Angeles Feb. 24 was last seen Apr. 24 (RB); a somewhat early vagrant was in San Diego May 3 (ME), a male was banded at Deep Springs, *Inyo*, May 14 (T&JH), and a 3rd was seen at Pt. Piedras Blancas May 26 (RR). Eleven Ovenbirds scattered throughout the Region between May 17–June 9 was about average, but eight N. Waterthrushes between Apr. 28–May 26 was less than expected. The Kentucky Warbler that spent the winter in S. Laguna Beach remained through Apr. 8 (JBa). A ♂ Hooded Warbler photographed at Corn Springs, *Riverside*, May 16 (BES) was the only one reported. A Canada Warbler, virtually unrecorded in spring, was photographed at Galileo Hill May 31–June 1 (DVB). A Red-faced Warbler that put in a brief appearance on Pt. Loma in San Diego May 29 (REW, PAG) was only the 2nd to be found on the coast of California in spring.

Tanagers to Finches

A handful of Summer Tanagers were reported from throughout the Region in late May and early June, as expected, these birds generally believed to be of the dominant race reaching us from the East. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were found in about expected numbers, but Indigo Buntings appeared a little scarcer than normal. Since there are only 2 records for Varied Bunting in California, a male reported in Lancaster Apr. 24 (RS) was intriguing; the date is early when compared to arrival dates in Arizona, but the previous 2 occurrences (February and November) were outside expected dates in Arizona. A Dickcissel, a casual vagrant in spring, was at F.C.R., May 26 (SBT).

A singing Clay-colored Sparrow at Death Valley Junction, *Inyo*, May 23 (SBT) and another near Thousand Oaks, *Ventura*, June 1 (NF) were two of very few found in s. California in spring. A Swamp Sparrow at C.L., Apr. 27 (MTH) and another at Galileo Hill Apr. 27–May 5 (MTH) were at desert oases, where unexpected in spring. A Dark-eyed (Gray-headed) Junco in Ridgecrest May 24 (DVB) was noteworthy. The latest White-throated Sparrow reported was one on Clark Mt. in e. *San Bernardino* May 11 (AH, VH). A Golden-crowned Sparrow in Santa Barbara May 28–June 2 (JBo) was exceptionally late. A Chestnut-collared Longspur at H.D.L., Apr. 8 (EAC, * S.B.C.M.) was later than normal.

Two Bobolinks at F.C.R., May 25 (WJM) were the only ones reported. A ♂ Orchard Oriole was banded at Deep Springs May 14 (T&JH) and a female was

seen at Scotty's Castle at the n. end of Death Valley May 16 (T&JH). Remarkably, the only Baltimore Oriole reported was a male in Huntington Beach May 30 (LRH). A flock of ≥35 Tricolored Blackbirds near L. Hemit Mar. 16 (MAP) were high in the San Jacinto Mts. where previously unrecorded. A Rusty Blackbird at Quale L. near Gorman, *Los Angeles*, Mar. 2–24 (TK, MSM) may have wintered locally.

A ♂ Evening Grosbeak near Calipatria May 7 (EAC) was one of very few to be found in *Imperial*.

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