

# WESTERN BIRDS



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## THE 31ST REPORT OF THE CALIFORNIA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE: 2005 RECORDS

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**ABSTRACT:** The California Bird Records Committee reached decisions on 242 records involving 91 species and one species pair evaluated during 2005, endorsing 182. New to California were Parkinson's Petrel (*Procellaria parkinsoni*), Ringed Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma hornbyi*), Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*), and Green Violet-ear (*Colibri thalassinus*). Adjusted for these additions, California's bird list stands at 632 species, ten of which are nonnative. A Falcatad Duck from 1969 (*Anas falcata*) and a Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) accepted from May 2000 predate previous records and thus become the state's earliest of those species.

This 31<sup>st</sup> report of the California Bird Records Committee (hereafter the CBRC or the committee) details the evaluation of 242 records of 91 species and an additional species pair. Although most records pertain to birds found in 2005, the period covered by this report spans the years from 1891 through 2005. The committee accepted 197 records involving 284 individuals of 78 species and one species pair, for an acceptance rate of 79.7%. Forty-five records of 33 species were not accepted because of insufficient documentation or because descriptions were inconsistent with known identification criteria. Four additional records of four species were not accepted because of questions concerning the birds' natural occurrence. Counties best represented by accepted records were Imperial (24 records), Los Angeles (20), Santa Barbara (17), Humboldt (15), San Diego (13), San Francisco (13 records, 11 of which were from Southeast Farallon I.), Monterey (10), Marin (10), Kern (9), and Inyo (8). The acceptance of 11 historical records of 101 individual Roseate Spoonbills (*Platalea ajaja*) affects some statistical data in this report, notably the county totals above, as nine of those records hail from Imperial County.

Highlights of this report include California's first Parkinson's Petrel (*Procellaria parkinsoni*) and Ringed Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma hornbyi*), both of which are new for the United States as well. The Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*) is also new to the California list, with six different individuals accepted in this report. The Green Violet-ear (*Colibri thalassinus*) is also added to the state list because of reassessment of a record from 1977. A 1969 Falcated Duck (*Anas falcata*) and a May 2000 Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) predate other accepted records and thus become the state's earliest. Potential first state records of the Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*) and Common Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*) were not accepted on grounds of questionable natural occurrence, and reports of Solander's Petrel (*Pterodroma solandri*) and Brown-capped Rosy-Finch (*Leucosticte australis*), also potential state firsts, were not accepted because of inadequately supported identifications. Four Galapagos/Hawaiian Petrels (*Pterodroma phaeopygia/sandwichensis*), five Red-tailed Tropicbirds (*Phaethon rubricauda*), four Yellow-crowned Night-Herons (*Nyctanassa violacea*), five Broad-billed Hummingbirds (*Cyanthus latirostris*), an amazing eleven Dusky-capped Flycatchers (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*), three Wood Thrushes (*Hylocichla mustelina*), and six Red-faced Warblers (*Cardellina rubrifrons*) in 2005 represented numbers unusually high for those species. Other especially notable birds reported here include California's sixth Baikal Teal (*Anas formosa*), fourth Common Black-Hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*), first June Red-necked Stint (*Calidris ruficollis*), third Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucooides*), third Chuck-will's-widow (*Caprimulgus carolinensis*), first summering Greater Pewee (*Contopus pertinax*), fourth Arctic Warbler (*Phylloscopus borealis*), second mid-summer Field Sparrow (*Spizella pusilla*), and a winter Pyrrhuloxia (*Cardinalis sinuatus*) from Orange County. The committee also completed a retrospective review of records of the Roseate Spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*), reviewing 34 records of more than 160 individuals and accepting 11 records involving 101 individuals. Accepted first state records of Ross's Gull (*Rhodostethia rosea*) and the Taiga Flycatcher (*Ficedula albicilla*) will be discussed in the 2006 report.

In 2006 the American Ornithologists' Union checklist committee split the Blue Grouse into the Dusky Grouse (*Dendragapus obscurus*) and the Sooty Grouse (*D. fuliginosus*) (Banks et al. 2006). The Dusky occurs in the intermontane West and ranges west to eastern Washington, eastern Nevada, and northern Arizona, while the Sooty Grouse occurs nearer the Pacific coast and is the species found in California. The Sooty Grouse thus replaces the Blue Grouse on the California list.

The list of species reviewed by the CBRC is posted at the Western Field Ornithologists' web site (<http://www.wfo-cbrc.org>). This site also includes the entire California state list, the committee's bylaws, a reporting form for the direct e-mail submission of records to the CBRC, the addresses of current committee members, a photo gallery of recent submissions, including several birds published in this report, and other information about the CBRC, WFO, and its journal, *Western Birds*.

All documentation reviewed by the CBRC, including copies of descriptions, photographs, videotapes, audio recordings, and committee members' comments on records submitted are archived at the Western Foundation of

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Vertebrate Zoology, 439 Calle San Pablo, Camarillo, California 93012, and are available for public review. The CBRC solicits and encourages observers to submit documentation for all species on the review list, as well as species unrecorded in California. Documentation should be sent to Guy McCaskie, CBRC secretary, P. O. Box 275, Imperial Beach, CA 91933-0275 (e-mail: guymcc@pacbell.net).

### NEWS AND FORMAT

*Committee News.* The committee's voting membership after the January 2007 annual meeting consisted of David M. Compton, Kimball L. Garrett, Alvaro Jaramillo, Joseph Morlan (vice chair), Kristie N. Nelson, James E. Pike, Peter Pyle, Daniel S. Singer (chair), and Scott B. Terrill. Guy McCaskie continued in his role as nonvoting secretary. Additional committee members who also voted on many of the records in this report include Luke W. Cole, Jon L. Dunn, Matthew T. Heindel, Marshall J. Iloff, Todd McGrath, Michael M. Rogers, Mike San Miguel, and John C. Sterling.

At the 2007 meeting the committee revisited the issue of field-identifiable subspecies, discussed previously by Erickson and Terrill (1996). While the committee unanimously agreed not to review subspecies formally, it is interested in continuing to archive reports of subspecies rare in California. California birders show increased interest in reporting taxa below the species level, reaffirming for the committee that archiving such reports is essential for understanding the distribution and abundance of California birds; this archive would facilitate review in the event of future splits. Obviously the level of detail required in the documentation of birds on the list below is quite high, and the problems posed by introgression are in some cases intractable, so extensive photographs, field descriptions and sketches, recordings of vocalizations, and (in some cases) a specimen are essential. Erickson and Terrill (1996) presented a list of field-identifiable or possibly field-identifiable subspecies reported in California for which the committee would like to archive records. In 2007 the committee added the Vega Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus vegae*) and Eastern Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus lineatus*), on the basis of recent reports (*N. Am. Birds* 59:321 and Pyle et al. 2004, respectively); records of the former are of particular interest to the committee. The current list includes the following subspecies, reported from California and meeting review-list criteria:

Atlantic, Light-bellied, or American Brant (*Branta bernicla hrota*), including "Gray-bellied" Brant (Buckley and Mitra 2002, Mlodinow and Axelson 2006)

Bewick's Tundra Swan (*Cygnus columbianus bewickii*)

Eastern or Northern Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus lineatus*)

Eurasian Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus variegatus/phaeopus*)

Vega Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus vegae*)

Eastern/Texas Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii bellii/medius*)

Eastern Winter Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes hiemalis*)

Eastern Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus faxonii/euborius*)

Siberian American Pipit (*Anthus rubescens japonicus*)

Yellow Palm Warbler (*Dendroica palmarum hypochrysea*)

White-winged Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis aikenii*)

Eastern Purple Finch (*Carpodacus purpureus purpureus*)

The Siberian Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo longipennis*) had been included by Erickson and Terrill (1996), but the committee unanimously voted to remove that subspecies from the list given that we are aware of no confirmed reports (i.e., photographs, specimens, etc.) of it from the west coast south of Alaska; one in New Jersey (*N. Am. Birds* 57:473, 573) is apparently the only one reported in North America away from western Alaska. Certain other rare field-identifiable subspecies or forms, such as the Eurasian Green-winged or Common Teal (*Anas crecca crecca*) and the Eastern, Yukon, or Red Fox Sparrow (*Passerculus iliaca zaboria/iliaca*) do not meet the review-list threshold of fewer than four records per year. Note that many other subspecies of birds on the California list occur as vagrants but at this point are not yet considered by the CBRC—mainly because they are not readily identified in the field and reports are not being generated by the birding community; an example is the eastern subspecies of the Brown Creeper (*Certhia americana americana*). The committee is interested in archiving information on any additional subspecies previously unknown from California, but any formal review in the future may be limited to those that are split as species or at least to those that are considered field-identifiable. This list is evolving and is sure to undergo revision at subsequent CBRC meetings.

As pointed out by Shuford (2006), *California Birds/Western Birds* is now available online via SORA, the Searchable Ornithological Research Archives, at <http://elibrary.unm.edu/sora>, currently through 2004. All 31 reports of the CBRC, beginning in 1973, have been published in *California Birds/Western Birds*, with at least one report annually since 1990. All journals on the site are searchable, and articles have been scanned individually as PDF or DJVU files; Shuford (2006) gives recommendations on how best to use the site. The CBRC thanks the University of New Mexico for hosting the site and WFO for fundraising that made the inclusion of *California Birds/Western Birds* possible. SORA has become one of the most valuable websites for the active field ornithologist in North America and also includes other prominent journals such as *Auk*, *Condor*, *Journal of Field Ornithology*, *North American Bird Bander*, *Ornithological Monographs*, *Ornitología Neotropical*, *Pacific Coast Avifauna*, and *Wilson Bulletin*.

*Format and Abbreviations.* As in other recent CBRC reports, records are generally listed chronologically by first date of occurrence and/or geographically, from north to south. Included with each record is the location, county abbreviation (see below), and date span. The date span usually follows that published in *North American Birds* (formerly *American Birds* and *Field Notes*), but, if the CBRC accepts a date span that differs from a published source, the differing dates are italicized. Initials of the observer(s) responsible for finding and/or identifying the bird(s)—if known and if they supplied supportive documentation—are followed by a semicolon, then the initials, in alphabetized order by surname, of additional observers submitting supportive documentation, then the CBRC record number consisting of the year of submission and a chronological number assigned by the secretary. All records are sight records unless otherwise indicated: initials followed

by a dagger (†) indicate the observer supplied a supportive photograph, (‡) indicates videotape, (S) indicates a voice recording, and (#) indicates a specimen record, followed by the acronym (see below) of the institution housing the specimen and that institution's specimen catalog number. An asterisk (\*) prior to a species' name indicates that the species is no longer on the CBRC's review list.

During 2003, in preparation for the publication of *Rare Birds of California*, the committee changed the way it reports records and individuals, a change in the committee's tradition that brings its reporting into conformity with its bylaws. In this report, the first number in parentheses after the species' name is the number of *individual birds* accepted by the CBRC through this report, not the number of accepted records; the number of individual birds may be higher than the number of records as historically the committee has treated groups of individuals appearing together with a single record number (e.g., a flock of Common Redpolls, *Carduelis flammea*). The second number is the number of new individuals accepted in this report (because this number excludes records thought to pertain to returning individuals treated in previous reports, it may be zero). Two asterisks (\*\*) after the species' total indicate that the number of accepted records refers only to a restricted review period or includes records accepted for statistical purposes only; see Roberson (1986) for more information.

When individual birds return to a location after a lengthy or seasonal absence, each occurrence is reviewed under a separate record number, and committee members indicate whether or not they believe the bird is the same as one accepted previously. Such decisions follow the opinion of the majority of members, and, if a bird is considered a returning individual, the total number of individuals remains unchanged.

Although the CBRC does not formally review the age, sex, or subspecies of each bird, information on these subjects is often provided during the review process (and in some cases a strong majority or consensus is achieved). We report much of this information; the diagnosis of age, sex, or subspecies is the authors' opinion based on the evidence in the files and committee members' comments. Our terminology for age follows the calendar-based terminology devised by the U.S. Geological Survey's Bird Banding Laboratory and detailed by Pyle (1997); see Cole et al. (2006) for more information on the age terminology used in committee reports.

The CBRC uses standard abbreviations for California counties; those used in this report are ALA, Alameda; BUT, Butte; COL, Colusa; CC, Contra Costa; DN, Del Norte; GLE, Glenn; HUM, Humboldt; IMP, Imperial; INY, Inyo; KER, Kern; KIN, Kings; LAK, Lake; LAS, Lassen; LA, Los Angeles; MRN, Marin; MEN, Mendocino; MNO, Mono; MTY, Monterey; ORA, Orange; RIV, Riverside; SAC, Sacramento; SBE, San Bernardino; SD, San Diego; SF, San Francisco; SLO, San Luis Obispo; SM, San Mateo; SBA, Santa Barbara; SCL, Santa Clara; SCZ, Santa Cruz; SHA, Shasta; SIS, Siskiyou; SOL, Solano; SON, Sonoma; STA, Stanislaus; TRI, Trinity; TUL, Tulare; VEN, Ventura; YOL, Yolo. A list of county abbreviations for all 58 California counties is available on the WFO-CBRC web site and in Langham (1991). Other abbreviations used: Cr., creek; I., island; L., lake; Mt., mountain; n. miles, nautical miles; N.W.R., national wildlife refuge; Pt.,

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point; R., river; W.A., wildlife area; W.M.A., wildlife management area.

Museum collections housing specimens cited in this report, allowing access to committee members for research, or otherwise cited, are the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago (FMNH); Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Los Angeles (LACM); Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley (MVZ); San Bernardino County Museum, Redlands (SBCM); San Diego Natural History Museum, San Diego (SDNHM); Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, Camarillo (WFVZ); and the National Museum of Natural History at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. (USNM).

RECORDS ACCEPTED

TRUMPETER SWAN *Cygnus buccinator* (67, 6). Three adults and three first-fall immatures were together near Durham, BUT, 23 Dec 2005–6 Feb 2006 (BED; JCS†, DWN†; 2005-214). Records for this species are increasing as is the number of individuals; whether this increase reflects increased observer effort and knowledge or reflects increasing numbers reaching California is not clear. See also records not accepted, identification not established.

FALCATED DUCK *Anas falcata* (2, 1). A male on Upper Newport Bay, ORA, 2 Jan–21 Feb 1969 (RBr†, GMcC; 1986-128A; Figure 1) becomes the first Falcated Duck accepted for California. One other record has been accepted by the committee, of a male at Honey L. W. A., LAS, 19 Mar–9 Apr 2002 and 2 Jan–11 Mar 2003 (San Miguel and McGrath 2005). The Orange County bird had previously been considered “identification established, origin uncertain” (Roberson 1993) and had previously been voted onto the supplemental list. On this second review, the Orange County



Figure 1. This adult male Falcated Duck (*Anas falcata*) at Upper Newport Bay, Orange County, January 1969 was accepted by the CBRC as a wild vagrant, after previously being considered an escapee from captivity, and so becomes the first of its species accepted for California.

Photo by Richard Bradley

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record enjoyed 8–1 support on origin, with supporters pointing out the species' blossoming pattern of vagrancy in the Pacific Northwest and this bird's occurrence at a location well-known for wintering dabbling ducks, including several Eurasian Wigeons (*A. penelope*) and occasional Eurasian Green-winged Teals (*A. crecca crecca*). The lone detractor felt that the urban location and the local precedent for other escapee waterfowl, such as the Mandarin Duck (*Aix galericulata*), were strikes against this record. The species is clearly kept by a number of waterfowl collectors, and records from Maryland (Peterjohn and Davis 1996), Virginia, North Carolina, and Europe have been believed to pertain to escapees (AOU 1998).

**BAIKAL TEAL** *Anas formosa* (6, 1). One male, apparently in its first fall, was found at the Mission Hills sewage-treatment plant near Lompoc, SBA, 10 Dec 2005–9 Jan 2006 (WF†; AB†, DMC†, JMG†, LaH, OJ, KHL, CAM, GMcC, JM†, MSanM, DWN†, LS†, BKS†, MBS†; 2005-187) and represents the first live Baikal Teal seen by birders in California. A color photo was published in *N. Am. Birds* 60:319. The five prior records were all of birds killed by hunters 14 Oct–4 Jan in various inland counties. Like the Falcated Duck, the Baikal Teal is kept in captivity, and the question of natural occurrence was considered by some on the committee. In this instance, the bird's immaturity weighed strongly in the acceptance of this record, since an immature was thought more likely to stray to California. The winter date, skittish behavior, and lack of bands or other signs of captivity were taken into account as well. The Baikal Teal is casual in w and n Alaska and has recently appeared in Washington (*N. Am. Birds* 59:314) and Hawaii (*N. Am. Birds* 57:275). Populations in e Asia have apparently responded very well to conservation efforts (following an historical low in the 1980s), and Delaney and Scott (2002) estimated the population at about 300,000.

**YELLOW-BILLED LOON** *Gavia adamsii* (75, 1). One off Otter Pt. in Pacific Grove, MTY, 6 Feb–15 May 2005 (BA†, MB, DR†, DVP; 2005-056) was in an area where this species is found almost annually. Over 80% of the state's records are from Monterey County north and come from November to April. See also records not accepted, identification not established.

**SHORT-TAILED ALBATROSS** *Phoebastria albatrus* (16\*\*, 4). Single immatures were at Prisoner's Harbor on Santa Cruz I., SBA, 6 Jul 2005 (JMM†, SWS†; 2005-081) and at 38.05° N, 123.28° W, near the Cordell Bank, MRN, 4 Dec 2005 (RST†; PE†, EDG, RoH†, EPr†, RS†, LST†, SBT; 2005-174). The bird at Santa Cruz I. is pictured in *N. Am. Birds* 59:654, the one at Cordell Bank in *N. Am. Birds* 60:318. In addition, the committee concluded that reports of an immature at 37° 43.57' N, 123° 11.09' W, west of Middle Farallon I., SF, 26 Jul 2005 (BLS†, JDY; 2005-096) and at 36° 39.3' N, 122° 03.3' W, on Monterey Bay, MTY, 12 Aug 2005 (DD†, DLS; 2005-101) involved the same bird, pictured on the cover of *N. Am. Birds* 60(1). But an immature banded (13B2672) by Hiroshi Hasegawa as a chick on Torishima I., Japan, 22 Apr 2004 and recovered partially decomposed on the Morro Bay sandspit, SLO, 24 Aug 2005 (TJE†; KLG; #LACM 114937; 2005-115) was only possibly the same individual as that near Middle Farallon I. and on Monterey Bay. Pyle (2006) provided photos of all three and feather-by-feather analysis suggesting that all three records pertained to the same bird. The primary breeding colony on Torishima I. hosted 325 pairs that raised 195 chicks in winter 2005–06 (H. Hasegawa in litt.). With a rebounding population it seems clear that some individuals (primarily immatures) are returning to former feeding grounds off California, where the species had been considered "fairly common" (Grinnell and Miller 1944) until drastic declines around the turn of the last century. The committee reviews Short-tailed Albatross reports from 1900 onward.

**MOTTLED PETREL** *Pterodroma inexpectata* (58, 3). Observations of single birds at 37.92° N, 125.50° W, 103 n. miles sw of Pt. Arena, MEN, 4 Nov 2005 (RP,

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TS; 2005-184), 38.01° N, 126.89° W, 182 n. miles w of Southeast Farallon I., SF, 20 Nov 2005 (RP, TS; 2005-185), and 32.49° N, 122.33° W, 132 n. miles sw of San Miguel I., SBA, 1 Dec 2005 (RP, TS; 2005-186) were made from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) research vessel *David Starr Jordan* during oceanographic studies of the waters off western North America. The Mottled Petrel is likely regular from November to February in deep waters far off the central and northern California coast but is reported so rarely that the committee maintains this species on its review list.

GALAPAGOS/HAWAIIAN PETREL *Pterodroma phaeopygia/sandwichensis* (18, 4). Single birds at 40.18° N, 127.93° W, 165 n. miles w of Cape Mendocino, HUM, 9 Aug 2005 (PP; 2005-105) and 40.44° N, 127.83° W, 159 n. miles w of Cape Mendocino, HUM, 9 Aug 2005 (PP; 2005-106) were seen during a NOAA oceanographic cruise. Others at 37° 58' N, 123° 22' W, 16.5 n. miles w of Pt. Reyes, MRN, 9 Aug 2005 (SNGH†; LiH; 2005-109) and 38° 12' N, 123° 24' W, 16.5 n. miles ssw of Bodega Head, SON, 21 Aug 2005 (SBT; RST; 2005-103) were seen from organized pelagic trips, and a photo of the bird off Pt. Reyes on 9 Aug was published by Pyle (2006). The committee has yet to accept a record of either of the component species of this pair. Field characters that might distinguish them are addressed in this issue of *Western Birds* by Force et al. (2007); all California records to date represent birds identified only to the level of the species pair.

STEJNEGER'S PETREL *Pterodroma longirostris* (7, 1). The NOAA oceanographic cruise recorded one at 39.25° N, 125.83° W, 92 n. miles sw of Punta Gorda, MEN/HUM, 18 Oct 2005 (PP†; 2005-147). It was seen in the relatively poorly known waters far off California's northern coast, where the species is probably more regular than the seven records suggest. Pyle (2006) published a distant photo of this bird. Prior records date from 14 to 17 Nov (4 records) and 4 to 10 Jul (2 records).

PARKINSON'S PETREL *Procellaria parkinsoni* (1, 1). One 17.6 n. miles nw of the Pt. Reyes lighthouse, MRN, 1 Oct 2005 (RS†; AD, PE†, EDG†, LiH, CL, LML†, MJM†, BDP, EP†, DCR, JaW, JWh; 2005-129) established the first documented record for North America, though it was quickly followed by one near Heceta Bank, Oregon, 22 Oct 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 60:127). The bird's discovery and identification were discussed in detail by Stallcup and Preston (2006), who included six photographs; another photo appears in Pyle (2006). The primary nonbreeding range of Parkinson's Petrel lies in the eastern Pacific from southern Mexico (about 15° N) to northern Peru (about 5° S) (Pitman and Ballance 1992, Howell and Webb 1995), with a specimen from off Costa Rica (Jehl 1974). Distinguishing the four black species of *Procellaria* at sea, particularly the Westland (*P. westlandica*) and Parkinson's, is a major identification problem; telling Parkinson's Petrel from the similar sized Flesh-footed Shearwater (*Puffinus carneipes*) can be equally challenging (Howell 2006). See also records not accepted, identification not established.

STREAKED SHEARWATER *Calonectris leucomelas* (13, 1). One at 36° 53.5' N, 122° 27.6' W, 12 n. miles wsw of Año Nuevo, SM, 11 Sep 2005 (SBT, DVP; 2005-122) was off the central coast, the region providing the bulk of California's records. Recent years have brought an increase in records (six since 2001); this species might be more regular in our waters than previously thought.

MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus* (87, 5). Five records were accepted with one at 33° 51' N, 118° 32' W, 4.6 n. miles w of Manhattan Beach, LA, 26 Feb 2005 (WW†; 2005-031), one near Santa Cruz I., SBA, 23 Apr 2005 (BKS; 2005-054), one 5.5 n. miles w of Pt. Pinos, MTY, 14 Aug 2005 (DR†, DSS†; 2005-102), one on Monterey Bay, SCZ, 9 Oct 2005 (MB; PE, NKH; 2005-139), and one 1–2 n. miles wnw of Point Pinos, MTY, 21 Aug 2005 (DVP; 2005-111). Monterey Bay accounts for the lion's share of California's Manx Shearwaters; just seven have been recorded



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south of Pt. Conception. The Los Angeles County bird was pictured in *N. Am. Birds* 59:324. The Manx Shearwater has also been found regularly from Oregon north to south-coastal Alaska (Mlodinow 2004), prompting speculation that the species is nesting in the Pacific. One tape-recorded calling from a burrow at Triangle I., British Columbia, in July 1994 (Mlodinow 2005) and two birds showing site tenacity at Middleton I., Alaska, in July 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 59:640) strengthen the evidence for Pacific breeding. A proposal to remove this species from the review list was defeated at the 2007 meeting, but if current trends continue, such removal is likely.

**RINGED STORM-PETREL** *Oceanodroma hornbyi* (1, 1). One at 33.57° N, 120.40° W, 12.0 n. miles wsw of San Miguel I., SBA, 2 Aug 2005 (PP; CO†; 2005-094) provided the first record not only for California but also for North America. Pyle et al. (2006) provided a full account of this remarkable sighting from a NOAA oceanographic cruise that was full of highlights. The Ringed Storm-Petrel ranges at sea from coastal Ecuador south to central Chile, but its breeding grounds are unknown (it may nest in the Andes). The only other record for the Northern Hemisphere is of a specimen taken on Isla Gorgona off Colombia (Hilty and Brown 1986). *Oceanodroma hornbyi* is sometimes known as Hornby's Storm-Petrel, but the ABA Checklist Committee (Pranty et al. 2006) and the South American Classification Committee ([www.museum.lsu.edu/~Remsen/SACCBaseline.html](http://www.museum.lsu.edu/~Remsen/SACCBaseline.html)) prefer Ringed Storm-Petrel as the English name.

**RED-TAILED TROPICBIRD** *Phaethon rubricauda* (27, 5). Single birds at 39.03° N, 128.36° W, 198 n. miles sw of Pt. Gorda, HUM, 8 Aug 2005 (PP; 2005-107), 36.08° N, 126.03° W, 175 n. miles sw of Southeast Farallon I., SF, 5 Nov 2005 (RP†, TS; 2005-180), 32.83° N, 123.87° W, 186 n. miles wsw of San Miguel I., SBA, 9 Nov 2005 (RP, TS; 2005-181), and 34.53° N, 124.74° W, 175 n. miles sw of Pt. Sur, MTY, 24 Nov 2005 (CO†, RP, TS; 2005-182) were all seen during a NOAA oceanographic study of the waters off western North America. Given these four records from California waters, plus another 38 seen outside of the 200-n.-mile limit (Pyle 2006), it seems clear that this species is regular in deep waters far off the California coast. One at Cabrillo Beach, San Pedro, LA, 19 Sep 2005 was taken to the International Bird Rescue Research Center in San Pedro, where it died on 2 Oct 2005; it was retained as a study skin (KLG, SK†; #LACM 114039; 2005-121), providing the first specimen for California. The only previous onshore record for California pertains to one at Bolsa Chica, ORA, 10 Jul 1999 (Rogers and Jamarillo 2002).

**BLUE-FOOTED BOOBY** *Sula nebouxii* (82, 1). Two photographs, retained by the San Diego Natural History Museum, of a captive immature found alive at Camp Denver Fox, 5 km nw of L. Henshaw, SD, about 18 Aug 1977 (MK†; 2006-089) were submitted by Philip Unitt for review. The occurrence was evidently associated with the passage of Hurricane *Doreen*, and the record was previously published (*Am. Birds* 32:256, Unitt 2004).

**BROWN BOOBY** *Sula leucogaster* (86, 5). Two at Southeast Farallon I., SF, 14 May–6 Jun 2005 (BKH; 2005-200) were at a location where the species has recently been recorded annually. One at Pt. Piedras Blancas, SLO, 22 Apr–5 Jun 2005 (KC†, TME, KHL, CAM, GPS†, RST†; 2005-053), one at Wishbone Pt. on Point Reyes, MRN, 2 Jul 2005 (LN†; 2005-090), and one at Scorpion Harbor on Santa Cruz I., SBA, 6 Jul 2005 (SWS†; 2005-082) were additional coastal records. Although most California records of the Brown Booby prior to 1980 were inland, records since then have been overwhelmingly coastal and apparently part of a range expansion that has recently brought breeders (and higher numbers) to the Islas Los Coronados in adjacent Baja California (*N. Am. Birds* 60:441). Because of the surge of recent records, this species was considered for removal from the review list at the 2007 meeting and will likely be removed if current trends continue. See also records not accepted, identification not established.

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TRICOLORED HERON *Egretta tricolor* (44\*\*, 1). An adult was at the mouth of Salt Cr., Salton Sea, RIV, 22 Dec 2005–3 Jan 2006 (DVP†; MJB†, OJ†, TJM†, MSanM; 2005-212). Most of our records are from the Salton Sink and coastal southern California. The committee reviews Tricolored Heron records from 1990 onward.

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON *Nyctanassa violacea* (27, 5). A second-fall bird roosting in Inverness, MRN, 11 Oct–5 Dec 2005 (KB, CL, DEQ, RS, ANW†; 2005-135) established the northernmost record for California. A previously unreviewed photograph of an adult roosting in a eucalyptus at Sea World in San Diego, SD, 3 Apr 1979 (AM†; 2005-113) was published by Unitt (2004). Two two-year-old birds at the Tijuana R. estuary in Imperial Beach, SD, from 27 Jun 2005 (LW-L; MJB, TAB, MJ, GMcC, VM†, TPR†, MS†, RST; 2005-079) and 29 Jun 2005 onward (MJB; GMcC, VM†, MS†; 2005-080) had acquired adult plumage by the end of the year. They paired, built a nest, and fledged three young during the summer of 2006, the first nesting of the Yellow-crowned Night-Heron known for California. A photo appeared in *N. Am. Birds* 59:654. A recently fledged juvenile found struck by a car in El Cajon, SD, 23 Aug 2005 was taken to rehabilitator Meryl Faulkner of Project Wildlife. The bird died, and Philip Unitt prepared the specimen as a study skin (MFP-R†; SDNHM #51156; 2005-117). Photos of the recently dead bird (Figure 2) show an extensively yellow mandible, which concerned some members on the first round that a Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) or hybrid might



Figure 2. This very young Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*), with wisps of down still adhering to its crown feathers, was struck by a car at El Cajon, San Diego County, 23 August 2005, hinting at what might have been California's first breeding by this species. The yellow base to the mandible might suggest a Black-crowned Night-Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) but is a character shared by very young Yellow-crowns as well. The identification as a Yellow-crowned is further confirmed by structure and measurements, as well as the complete white fringes to the greater coverts. The specimen is now number 51156 at the San Diego Natural History Museum.

Photo by Mary Platter-Rieger

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be involved. Measurements confirmed the identification as the Yellow-crowned, as did the complete pale fringes to the greater coverts; very young Yellow-crowned Night-Herons do have a yellow base to the mandible, but this color is typically lost quickly after fledging. The bird's very young age prompted the question of whether it might have hatched locally and so represent California's first breeding of the Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, but it could have fledged in nearby Baja California (though still well north of the species' traditional breeding range). See also records not accepted, identification not established.

GLOSSY IBIS *Plegadis falcinellus* (9, 3). One adult near Calipatria, IMP, 27 May 2000 (MAP†; BDSP; 2000-109B) was initially not accepted (San Miguel and McGrath 2005), but the record was re-reviewed and considered independently from other Glossy Ibis reports from 2001. With acceptance following this reconsideration, it becomes the California's first known Glossy Ibis, predating the bird near Calipatria 1–15 Jul 2000 (McKee and Erickson 2002). An adult near Calipatria, IMP, 16–17 Jul 2005 (PEL; JFe, OJ†, GMcC; 2005-088) and another adult near Westmorland, IMP, 29 Jul 2005 (CC; JHB, GMcC; 2005-092) were likewise in the Imperial Valley south of the Salton Sea, the area responsible for seven of California's nine accepted records. These birds appear to arrive with the large number of White-faced Ibises (*P. chihli*) that move into this area each year. A photo of 2005-088 appeared in *N. Am. Birds* 59:655. The Glossy Ibis has recently been detected as a vagrant to western states at an ever-increasing rate (Patten and Lasley 2000, Faulkner 2004). Since 2001 it has been annual in New Mexico, where the first was recorded in 1995. Arizona's first 19–21 May 2001 (*N. Am. Birds* 55:333) was quickly followed by five more, including three in April and May 2006 (*N. Am. Birds* 60:417). See also records not accepted, identification not established.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL *Platalea ajaja* (121, 103). One in its first fall in Imperial Beach, SD, 14 Oct 2005 (AM†; DWA†, VM†, RTP; 2005-137) represented the second record for San Diego County. Another in its first fall bird at the Whitewater R. mouth at the n end of the Salton Sea, RIV, 14 Nov 2005 (WW; 2005-158) was at a site more usual for the species. The San Diego bird has a published photo in *N. Am. Birds* 60:139.

In 2005 an assembled batch of 34 Roseate Spoonbill records, involving as many as 160 individuals dating between 1903 and 1978, was circulated through the committee to determine which were acceptable and which should remain unreviewed. Many of these records were supported only by citations in publications or journals, but observers' field notes and other such documentation were added when available. The committee required, at a minimum, a description that included the color of the bird(s) and bill shape for acceptance. This process resulted in the acceptance of 11 records involving 101 birds, all from the Salton Sink and involving notable influxes in 1973 (76 birds) and 1977 (16 birds). The accepted records are as follows: up to six along the southeast shore of the Salton Sea, IMP, 23 Jun–8 Oct 1951 (Wooten 1952, *Audubon Field Notes* 5:308 and 6:37; 2004-304); up to two along the south shore of the Salton Sea, IMP, 20 Jul–1 Sep 1969 (GMcC; *Audubon Field Notes* 23:694 and 24:98; 2004-309); up to 45 along the south shore of the Salton Sea, IMP, 14 Jun–26 Oct 1973 (GMcC, *Audubon Field Notes* 27:918 and 28:107; 2004-313); up to 14 at the Whitewater R. mouth at the north end of the Salton Sea, RIV, 16 Jun–16 Sep 1973 (GMcC; *Audubon Field Notes* 27:918 and 28:107; 2004-314); one at Finney L., IMP, 21 Jul 1973 (GMcC; *Audubon Field Notes* 27:918; 2004-315); up to 16 on the New R. near Seeley, IMP, 1–14 Jul 1973 (GMcC; *Audubon Field Notes* 27:918; 2004-316); one on the Wister Unit of the Imperial W. A. at the southeast end of the Salton Sea, IMP, 13 Jun–19 Sep 1976 (GMcC; *Am. Birds* 30:1002 and 31:222; 2004-324); up to seven around the New R. mouth at the south end of the Salton Sea, IMP, 3 Jun–19 Oct 1977 (GMcC, *Am. Birds* 31:1189 and

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32:256; 2004-325); one in the Wister Unit, IMP, 10 Jul–5 Sep 1977 (GMcC; *Am. Birds* 31:1189 and 32:256; 2004-326); up to seven on the New R. near Seeley, IMP, 17 Jul–5 Sep 1977 (GMcC; *Am. Birds* 31:1189 and 32:256; 2004-327); and one at the Whitewater R. mouth, RIV, 25 Aug–23 Sep 1977 (GMcC; *Am. Birds* 32:256; 2004-328). The committee has not yet reviewed two 1977 specimens reported by Patten et al. (2003) but plans to do so in the near future: one from the south end of the Salton Sea, IMP (#SDNHM 38573), and one from the north end of the Salton Sea, RIV (#SBCM M5186). Note also that the Roseate Spoonbill account in Patten et al. (2003) contains many mistaken dates not italicized above.

The spoonbill's pattern in Arizona has been similar to that in California: it reached the lower Colorado R. in 1942, 1959, 1969, 1973, and 1977 (Rosenberg et al. 1991), but the only records since then have been from 1992, 1996 (2 records), 1997 (2), 2000, and 2004 (2) (Rosenberg and Witzeman 1998, Rosenberg 2001, Arizona Bird Committee data).

MISSISSIPPI KITE *Ictinia mississippiensis* (36, 3). One in its first spring at Furnace Cr. Ranch, INY, 29–30 May 2005 (MB; JH†, OJ, DVP; 2005-063) was at California's hotspot for the species on a typical date. A juvenile near Palos Verdes Estates, LA, 18 Sep 2005 (KGL; 2005-126) and a first-fall immature over the Tule R. at Highway 43, TUL, 5 Oct 2005 (MSanM; 2005-131) were less expected, as the Mississippi Kite is more frequent in California in spring.

COMMON BLACK-HAWK *Buteogallus anthracinus* (4, 1). An adult was at Delta Pond near Santa Rosa, SON, 14 May–29 Oct 2005 (KB, JLD, KH†, LiH, SM†, DEQ; 2005-060); its photo was published in *N. Am. Birds* 59:650. Although California's first two records of the Common Black-Hawk were from the state's southeast, as one might expect for this primarily tropical species, the last two, remarkably, are from northern California (see also Cole et al. 2006). See also records not accepted, identification not established.

HARRIS'S HAWK *Parabuteo unicinctus* (45, 1). One adult near California City, KER, 5 Mar 2001 (JAH†; 2001-070) posed a dilemma for many members. A favorite of falconers, this species clearly occurs as an escapee since some have been photographed in California with jesses attached to their legs. Yet, on occasion, it irrupts (Patten and Erickson 2000). Distinguishing which records are acceptable is difficult; future committees may be able to discern a pattern better. In this case, since there were other records from this period and there was no evidence of recent captivity, the record was accepted.

CRESTED CARACARA *Caracara cheriway* (7, 1). A first-winter bird at Finney L., IMP, 1 Jan 2005 (TEW; 2005-017) was unanimously accepted. While some past records, including some that have been accepted, have been questioned on the basis of natural occurrence, this was the first to enjoy unanimous first-round support. Natural vagrancy in this species is perhaps more likely in southeastern California than it is along the central and northern coasts. In Arizona the caracara has a fall-and-winter pattern of dispersal, even as far west as the Colorado R. (Rosenberg et al. 1991), supporting the notion that the Imperial Valley might receive natural vagrants. See also records not accepted, identification not established.

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER *Pluvialis dominica* (10\*\*, 6). One in basic plumage was near Obsidian Butte, IMP, 8 Apr 2004 (JLD†, GMcC; 2004-052; Figure 3). Single juveniles were near Arcata, HUM, 28 Aug–3 Sep 2004 (JT; RF†; 2004-134), at Carmel R. State Beach, MTY, 10–12 Sep 2005 (CL, LML †; 2005-136), on the Oxnard Plain, VEN, 11–23 Sep 2004 (WF; CAM; 2004-142), at Guadalupe, SBA, 2–3 Oct 2005 (WF†; JM†; 2005-138), and inland at the Corcoran Avenue ponds, KIN, 5 Oct 2005 (MSanM†; 2005-132). While the identification of juveniles in fall, based on wing length, primary extension, and overall color and pattern, remains



Figure 3. The committee undertook review of reports of the American Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis dominica*) in California starting in 2004. It has not had an easy time assessing records because of the close similarity of the Pacific Golden-Plover (*P. fulva*) in some plumages, especially in spring. While adult Pacifics attain their breeding plumage in March, Americans molt later and can closely resemble first-spring Pacifics that retain much of their basic plumage. Furthermore, tertial molt can complicate assessment of the extension of the primaries past the tertials. American Golden-Plovers in patchy April plumage are identifiable when they show fresh primaries since first-spring Pacifics have very worn, brownish primaries. This American Golden-Plover was at the south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial County, 8 April 2004.

Photo by Jon L. Dunn

relatively straightforward, the species' identification in spring has proven more difficult for the committee to assess. Although adult Pacific Golden-Plovers (*P. fulva*) molt into alternate plumage much earlier in the spring than do American Golden-Plovers, second-year Pacific Golden-Plovers may not molt into full breeding plumage at all in their first summer (P. Pyle pers. comm.). Thus the committee does not consider it safe to assume that an April golden-plover in basic or transitional plumage is necessarily an American. However, in spring American Golden-Plovers are expected to have fresh blackish primaries with neat pale fringes regardless of the plumage state of the rest of the bird; any Pacific Golden-Plover in comparable plumage from late March on should show the heavily worn juvenal primaries of a first-summer bird (P. Pyle pers. comm.). The committee thus encourages observers to note the condition of the plumage, especially the primaries, of any spring golden-plover carefully. The committee reviews American Golden-Plover reports from 2004 onward. See also records not accepted, identification not established.

LESSER SAND-PLOVER *Charadrius mongolus* (10, 1). One adult at Clam Beach near McKinleyville, HUM, 10–12 Jul 2005 (KB, EAE, KR†; 2005-083; Figure 4) was only the third adult accepted for the state. Plumage features, notably the white forehead bisected by a black line, indicated that this bird (like California's previous



Figure 4. This adult Lesser Sand-Plover (*Charadrius mongolus*) at Clam Beach, Humboldt County, 11 July 2005, is a member of the *mongolus* subspecies group, consisting of *C. m. mongolus* and *C. m. stegmanni*, by virtue of the black line bisecting the white forehead patch. All North American records of adults have been of this subspecies group, with *C. m. stegmanni*, a regular migrant in western Alaska, being the most probable subspecies.

Photo by Kerry Ross

adults) was of the *mongolus* group of subspecies. The subspecies in this group occurring nearest California is *C. m. stegmanni*, which breeds east to the Chukotski Peninsula of easternmost Russia and is a rare migrant in w Alaska, where the first North American breeding was confirmed on St. Lawrence I. in Jun 2006 (*N. Am. Birds* in press). In the lack of a California specimen of the Lesser Sand-Plover, we presume that California records pertain to this subspecies.

WILSON'S PLOVER *Charadrius wilsonia* (10, 1). One male at Batiquitos Lagoon, SD, 2 Jun–1 Jul 2005 (MJB†, DVB, PAG, MTH, MJI, GMcC, MS†; 2005-064) was frequenting a nesting colony of the Snowy Plover (*C. alexandrinus*) and Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*). All but one of California's previous Wilson's Plovers occurred in spring and summer, between 9 Apr and 11 Aug. A fine in-flight photo appears in *N. Am. Birds* 59:656.

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus palliatus* (32, 3). One on Anacapa I., VEN, 16 Oct 2005 (JFe; 2005-170) was probably the same bird seen there on 6 Jun 2004 (2004-116). One at Prisoner's Harbor on Santa Cruz I., SBA, 16 Apr–14 May 2005 (BKH, CH; DMC, BKS, AT†; 2005-055) and another on Santa Barbara I., SBA, 24 Sep 2005 (NL†; 2005-134) were also on the Channel Islands, where most of California's American Oystercatchers have been recorded. A photo of 2005-055 appears in *N. Am. Birds* 59:494. One at Crescent Bay in Laguna Beach, ORA, 27–29 Dec 2005 (KP†; 2006-037) was on the mainland coast. Since hybrids with the Black Oystercatcher (*H. bachmani*) along the west coast of Baja California are frequent (Jehl 1985), the committee carefully considers the extent of hybrid characters for all reports of the American. Although specimens of *H. p. frazari* from the Gulf of California have a clean demarcation between black and white



Figure 5. Reports of the Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucooides*) are among the most difficult records for the committee to assess because of potential confusion and introgression with Thayer's Gull (*L. thayeri*). This second-winter Iceland Gull at Milpitas, Santa Clara County, 22 February 2005 becomes the third accepted for California and the first in this plumage. This bird is especially dainty in structure, with the head rounded and the bill small in comparison to that of other gulls of similar size. It also shows a clean whitish iris and clean white primaries that simplify the identification in this case.

Photo by Alvaro Jamarillo

on the breast, those from the Pacific coast of the Baja California Peninsula show a ragged border, presumably because of introgression with the Black Oystercatcher, so all coastal California American Oystercatchers may have some introgression of Black Oystercatcher genes. However, the committee has long used the scale published by Jehl (1985), reprinted by Erickson and Terrill (1996), as a guide for the acceptability of American Oystercatcher reports. The committee urges observers to familiarize themselves with Jehl's scale and to try to assess all characters possible in any report of the American Oystercatcher.

RED-NECKED STINT *Calidris ruficollis* (10, 1). One, probably in its first summer, at China L., KER, 13 Jun 2005 (SS†; DVB, JLD, MTH†, KHL†, MSanM†, RSt†, JCW; 2005-072) was a real surprise given the location and the date. Color photos of this bird appear in *N. Am. Birds* 59:692 and on the cover of *Western Birds* 37(2). It represents only the second inland record for the state; the mid-June date is also odd in that seven of nine previous records pertain to fall adults (dates 29 Jun–29 Jul). Other inland records in the West are from Henderson, Nevada, 27–28 Jul 1992 (*Am. Birds* 56:1158) and El Paso, Texas, 17–22 Jul 1996 (Lockwood and Freeman 2004).

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea* (35, 1). One on the Los Angeles R. in Long Beach, LA, 13–14 Aug 2005 (RBa; AB†, KLG, RR†, JF†, MSanM; 2005-099) was either a one-year-old or an adult in prebasic molt, which fits with the timing of this southbound migrant. In California the occurrence of adult Curlew Sandpipers peaks from mid-July to mid-August, that of juveniles from September through mid-October.



Figure 6. The Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*) was confirmed for California with repeated occurrences at Half Moon Bay, San Mateo County, beginning in 2001. Three were found there between January and March 2005, and an amazing total of at least ten followed from December 2005 to March 2006. This second-winter individual photographed there 19 December 2005 represented California's sixth record.

*Photo by Alvaro Jamarillo*

LITTLE GULL *Larus minutus* (91, 2). An adult was at Ballona Cr. in Marina del Rey, LA, 29 Jan 2005 (TEW; 2005-042). Another adult near the Cordell Bank, MRN, 4 Dec 2005 (RST; SBT; 2005-191) was seen during a pelagic trip, representing the first offshore record for California. An adult at L. Perris, RIV, 12 Nov 2005–27 Mar 2006 (HBK; BLC; 2005-153) was considered the same bird (2004-193) there the previous winter.

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucooides* (3, 1). A second-winter bird at Hidden L. in Milpitas, SCL, 22 Feb–7 Mar 2005 (AJ†; EDG†, DVP†; 2005-110; Figure 5) was obviously paler than the Thayer's Gulls (*L. thayeri*) nearby and had a delicate pale-based bill and pale eyes matching typical second-winter Iceland Gulls found along the Atlantic coast in winter. The Iceland Gull presents a problem perhaps as complex as any this committee ponders. The difficult and imprecise identification and uncertain taxonomy have resulted in acceptance of only two prior records (see Erickson and Hamilton 2001). Most reports of the Iceland Gull in California pertain to first-year birds, whose identification criteria are still unknown; extremes seem to be rather easy to categorize, but it is difficult to determine where some features indicate one species over the other. In this case, the bird looked like a typical Iceland Gull and outside of the range of presumed Thayer's. See also records not accepted, identification not established.





Figure 7. The spacing of the primaries has been proposed as a field mark useful for distinguishing the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (*Empidonax flaviventris*) from the similar Western Flycatcher (*E. difficilis/occidentalis*). This Yellow-bellied at Galileo Hill, Kern County, 3 October 2004, shows atypical primary spacing yet has the crisp yellowish wing edging, even-width eye ring, lack of a crested appearance, and relatively short tail that allows for identification of silent individuals.

Photo by Bob Steele

**LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** *Larus fuscus* (28, 3). One at the mouth of Zuma Cr., LA, 13 Mar 2005 (KLG; ET†; 2005-039) provided the first coastal record of a bird in first-winter plumage. An adult at Doheny Beach State Park, ORA, 12–15 Dec 2005 (MJH†; 2005-188) was at the same location where an adult spent most winters from December 1994 to March 2002. An adult at Obsidian Butte, IMP, 4 Dec 2005 (GMcC; 2005-169) was the 12<sup>th</sup> Lesser Black-backed Gull recorded from the Salton Sea area.

**SLATY-BACKED GULL** *Larus schistisagus* (6, 6). Venice State Beach, Half Moon Bay, SM, proved to be a magnet for this gull newly verified for California. A second-winter bird was there 1 Mar 2001 (RSTh†; 2006-090, first submitted in 2006), a second-winter bird on 13 Jan and 20 Feb 2005 (AJ†; JM†; 2005-015), a third-winter bird 20 Jan–19 Feb 2005 (AJ†, DVP†; ToE†, RLb†, MJM†, JM†, JeP†, DR†, MMR, DSS†, FT; 2005-016), and a fourth-winter bird or adult 21 Mar 2005 (AJ†; 2005-048). A photo of 2005-015 is in *N. Am. Birds* 59:322, one of 2005-048 in *N. Am. Birds* 59:490. An adult at Venice State Beach 2 Dec 2005–8 Mar

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2006 (RSTh; 2006-044) and a second-winter bird there 19 Dec 2005–8 Mar 2006 (AJ†; RSTh; 2005-199; Figure 6) were the first of 13 reported along the central coast of California during the winter of 2005–06, most at Venice Beach as well; the question how many, if any, of these reports pertain to the same bird is under review. The sudden spate of records seems due in part to observer awareness and the diligence of Ronald S. Thorn and Alvaro Jaramillo. In addition, it appears that Half Moon Bay does have a unique population of gulls, with thousands of the Western (*L. occidentalis*) and Glaucous-winged (*L. glaucescens*), with which the Slaty-backed seem to prefer to associate.

The committee has struggled with the Slaty-backed Gull in the past, previously reviewing and not accepting five records. Hybrids of the Slaty-backed with the Glaucous-winged and Vega Herring Gull (*L. argentatus vegae*) are known and may be regular in eastern Russia (King and Carey 1999), demanding that vagrants to North America be treated with caution. Although Gustafson and Peterjohn (1994) reported significant variation in mantle color within the Slaty-backed Gull and believed it was not due to introgression with paler-mantled species, King and Carey (1999) pointed out published reports of hybrids, providing a contrary view that is almost certainly more accurate. Some extralimital records for North America may represent hybrids, such as that for Ohio 28 Dec 1992–8 Feb 1993 (*Am. Birds* 47:263, Gustafson and Peterjohn 1994), that for Maryland 6–23 Feb 1999 (*N. Am. Birds* 53:154, Ilf in litt. to Maryland/D.C. Records Committee), and a specimen from Guam (USNM 201459, Ilf pers. obs.). The committee concluded that none of the Slaty-backed Gulls accepted for California showed hybrid characters.

A well-documented adult Slaty-backed Gull at St. Louis, Missouri, 20 Dec 1983–29 Jan 1984 (Goetz et al. 1986) first illustrated this species' potential for vagrancy. Records from Texas, New York/Ontario, and the Pacific Northwest followed in the 1990s. Since 2002 the species has been found even more frequently, with records from Key West, Florida, Colorado, New Hampshire (three through January 2007), New York, Minnesota (two through January 2007), and Newfoundland. While the species has almost certainly been overlooked in California in the past, it seems clear from records in the Midwest that the Slaty-backed's frequency has increased substantially in the past decade. The committee is reconsidering two records previously not accepted.

**LONG-BILLED MURRELET** *Brachyramphus perdix* (18, 3). Two were at Salmon Cr. Beach, SON, 7 Jul 2004 (RST†; 2004-102). One found dead at New Brighton State Beach, SCZ, 4 Oct 2004 (HN†; 2005-035; specimen to Moss Landing Marine Laboratory) provided the first specimen from coastal California; the four previous California specimens are from Mono L. Midsummer records such as the one from Sonoma County remain enigmatic: they could represent summering nonbreeders, vagrants from Asia, or even prospective breeders. See also records not accepted, identification not established.

\***RUDDY GROUND-DOVE** *Columbina talpacoti* (107, 1). A singing male at Furnace Cr. Ranch in Death Valley National Park, INY, 23 May 2003 (JLD; 2003-081) was considered the same male present there 11 Oct–3 Nov 2002 (RF†; GMcC, TMcG; 2002-188). The committee reviews Ruddy Ground-Dove records through 2003.

**CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW** *Caprimulgus carolinensis* (3, 1). An overweight female captured in Crescent City, DN, 2 Dec 2005 by Carl Bookhamer was cared for by the Humboldt Wildlife Care Center, then released ~75 miles away at Humboldt Bay, HUM, in Feb 2006 (GF†; 2006-021). The two prior records for California are from Half Moon Bay, SM, 16 Oct 1986 (Bailey 1989, Langham 1991) and near Loleta, HUM, 4 Jan 1989 (Harris & Hawkins 1990, Pyle and McCaskie 1992). That two records are from December and January seems surprising but perhaps reflects the stress of cold, making this cryptic species more likely to be found. Harris and

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Hawkins (1990), however, did not consider the January specimen from Humboldt unhealthy before it was struck by a car.

**GREEN VIOLET-EAR** *Colibri thalassinus* (1, 1). The record of one near Iris Meadow on Mount Pinos, KER, 30 Jul–1 Aug 1977 (DM; EAC, SWC†; 2005-150) was first reviewed in 1986 (1978-040; Roberson 1986) on the basis of field notes and not accepted because of potential confusion with the Sparkling Violet-ear (*C. coruscans*) and concerns about escape from captivity. Photos taken at the time but long unavailable to the committee came to light in 2005; though blurry, they show that this bird had a well-defined violet ear patch and a contrasting greenish chin and throat. The chin color eliminates *C. coruscans*, and the blue wedge on the upper chest specifies the more northerly nominate subspecies of *C. thalassinus*—like other vagrant Green Violet-ears in North America. While concerns about origin were central in committee discussions in 1986, because of the pattern of vagrancy that has since emerged (see Newfield 2001, Williamson 2001) during reconsideration no committee members questioned the bird's origin. Texas claims the bulk of U.S. records, but the species has strayed as far north and east as Ontario (Newfield 2001), West Virginia (*N. Am. Birds* 57:489), and New Jersey (*N. Am. Birds* 60:47); the only prior records west of Texas are of one in Colorado 26–27 Jul 1998 (*N. Am. Birds* 52:483), one in New Mexico 16–18 Nov 2004 (*N. Am. Birds* 59:122), one in Alberta (Williamson 2001), and one at La Paz, Baja California Sur, 25 Jan 1984 (hypothetical; Howell et al. 2001). Amazingly, the only other California report, from Berkeley, ALA, 18 Aug 1977 (1977-159, Roberson 1986) came less than a month after that from Mount Pinos; that record failed the committee's acceptance 2–8 on the question of identification.



Figure 8. The Dusky-capped Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) staged an invasion to California in winter 2005–06, with eleven accepted records (exceeding the previous high annual total of eight). This one was at Brawley 4 December 2005.

Photo by Kenneth Z. Kurland

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**BROAD-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD** *Cynanthus latirostris* (69, 5). The total of five in southern California from October to December was above average. A female in Inyokern, KER, 26–31 Oct 2005 (SS†; RS†, KHL†; 2005-142) and a first-fall male in Big Pine, INY, 29 Oct–16 Nov 2005 (JHe†; JLD, CH†, DeH, D&JP, SSt, TV†; 2005-160) were on the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada, where few are recorded. An adult male in Borrego Springs, SD, 5 Dec 2005–8 Feb 2006 (DWA†, MJB†, ToE†, GMcC, MS†, MSanM, TRS; 2005-172) and two in Mission Viejo, ORA, a first-winter male 6 Dec 2005–22 Feb 2006 (JEP†; MJ†, MSanM; 2005-173) and a female nearby 17 Dec 2005–22 Jan 2006 (JEP, CAM; 2006-038), were at locations in southern California with more precedent. A color photo of the Borrego Springs bird is published in *N. Am. Birds* 60:319, and a photo of the Inyokern bird is in *N. Am. Birds* 60:140.

**RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD** *Archilochus colubris* (8, 2). A female (age undetermined) at Furnace Cr. Ranch in Death Valley National Park, INY, 3 Sep 1988 (JLD†; MTH†, GMcC, MAP; 1988-163) establishes the fourth record for California. The original documentation was lost when it was sent out to experts for review, but some slides remained as a less-than-optimal basis for this record's overdue circulation. Descriptions suggest that the bird was not an immature male, since colored gorget feathers would have been noted if present. Although the photos do not show the diagnostic shape of the outermost (tenth) primary, the committee believed that this bird was identifiable through the combination of a short bill, bright green back, clean



Figure 9. Accurate assessment of a bird's age is often essential to the review process, especially in the case of returning birds. In many species molt limits—the contrast between fresher new feathers generated by a recent molt and older, more worn feathers generated in a previous molt—are critical for this evaluation. On these Thick-billed Kingbirds (*Tyrannus crassirostris*), note a molt limit in the immature (A) where fresh gray-edged inner greater coverts contrast with older cinnamon-edged juvenal coverts. No molt limits are apparent in the adult (B), which also shows more squarish primary tips and rectrices. The first-winter bird (A) was photographed at L. Hodges, San Diego County, 29 November 2005, while the adult (B) was a returning bird photographed at Santa Paula, Ventura County, 4 December 2005.

Photos by Anthony Mercieca (A) and Jim Greaves (B)

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white throat and underparts, and bright green forehead. Especially important were the dark ear coverts and extensively dark lores, which appear to be nearly diagnostic of the female Ruby-throated with respect to the female Black-chinned (*A. alexandri*) (Ilf in comments). Pyle further commented that since in *Archilochus* females are longer-billed than males, the bird's short bill probably excludes the Black-chinned. Also supportive, but not diagnostic, were the blunt fifth rectrix (nipple-shaped in the *adult* female Black-chinned), viewable in one slide, and the lack of tail wagging while feeding (the Black-chinned regularly bobs its tail while feeding in flowers). A first-fall female on Southeast Farallon I., SF, 3–5 Sep 2005 (BKH†; MB; 2005-201) was measured and examined in hand, simplifying the identification considerably.

**GREATER PEWEE** *Contopus pertinax* (37, 1). One singing male near Wooded Hill Campground, Laguna Mts., SD, 11 Jun–3 Jul 2005 (BLC, MMA; MJB, JLD, MTH†, KZK†, GMcC, DP, MS†; 2005-069) established the first summer record for California; the 36 previous records extend from 11 September to 14 April (*contra* Cole et al. 2006). Although no mate was seen in the area, the bird was singing and appeared to be maintaining a territory; rectrix shape indicated that it was in its first summer. A photo of this bird appeared in *N. Am. Birds* 59:692. See the Red-faced Warbler and Dusky-capped Flycatcher for a discussion of other Arizona/west Mexican species in California in 2005.

**YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** *Empidonax flaviventris* (20, 1). One first-fall bird studied at Galileo Hill, KER, 3 Oct 2004 (TEW; KHL†, LS†, RSt†; 2004-160; Figure 7) is the third accepted from fall 2004—a record total (see Cole et al. 2006). No vocalizations were heard, and it is illustrative of the difficulties this species presents that three rounds of review were required for acceptance, despite the excellent photos. Reports of the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher should carefully eliminate not only the Pacific-slope (*E. difficilis*) and Cordilleran (*E. occidentalis*) but also the Acadian (*E. virescens*). Confusion emerged from the fact that this bird and one in Imperial County 3–5 Sep 2004 (2004-130; Cole et al. 2006) showed a large gap between primary 7 and primary 6, which Heindel and Pyle (1999) suggested is more likely in the Pacific-slope/Cordilleran. Erickson et al. (2001) pointed out other problems with over-reliance on primary spacing in this complex. In reports of any *Empidonax* we encourage observers to continue to note primary spacing, when possible, but we strongly caution against using it as a primary basis for identification. Instead, focus on the head shape, wing color (including wingbars and tertial edges), eye ring color and shape, presence of olive or brown tones, presence or absence of breast streaking, bill length and shape, and tail length. See also records not accepted, identification not established.

**DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER** *Myiarchus tuberculifer* (76, 11). The number of Dusky-capped Flycatchers found in California in winter 2005–06 was an unprecedented eleven. One at Arcata, HUM, 23 Nov–11 Dec 2005 (BED, KR†; 2005-162) was California's third north of Sonoma County; those previous two were also in Humboldt County. There is just one record north of California: one at Newport, Oregon, 2–11 Jan 1996 (Marshall et al. 2004). Another northerly bird was at Meder Canyon, Santa Cruz, SCZ, 5 Dec 2005–11 Mar 2006 (SAG; MB, DVP; 2005-176). Imperial County had only three prior records, but four Dusky-capped Flycatchers were found there in 2005–06. The first was on the Colorado R. at Picacho State Recreation Area, IMP, 27 Nov–19 Dec 2005 (GCH; ToE; 2005-194); the others were in the Salton Sink: one at Cattle Call Park, Brawley, IMP, 1–6 Dec 2005 (BM†; MJB†, GMcC, MSanM, KZK†; 2005-167; Figure 8), one at Ramer L., IMP, 20 Dec 2005–17 Feb 2006 (BM†; ToE†, MTH, OJ†, GMcC, DVP; 2005-192), and one at the headquarters of the Wister Unit of the Imperial W. A. near Niland, IMP, 2 Dec 2005–4 Mar 2006 (MJB†, RC†, JLD, MTH†, OJ†, CAM, GMcC, TMcG†, MMe†, DVP; 2005-195). A photo of the bird at Brawley is published in *N. Am. Birds* 60:285. Five others were

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on the coastal slope of southern California, region of nearly half (43%) of California's prior records: one at Mesa Verde Golf Course, Costa Mesa, ORA, 30 Nov 2005–22 Feb 2006 (JEP†; MJH†; 2005-171), one at Heritage Park, La Verne, LA, 6 Dec 2005–10 Jan 2006 (MJSanM†; BMcM†, MSanM; 2005-210), one at Rynerson Park, Lakewood, LA, 18 Dec 2005–3 Mar 2006 (KLG, KSG†, OJ†; 2006-006), one at Los Angeles Arboretum, Arcadia, LA, 17–20 Dec 2005 (JoP†, TEW; 2006-014), and one along lower Atascadero Cr., Goleta, SBA, 31 Dec 2005–20 Feb 2006 (CAM; DMC, JMG†, NL; 2006-002). Most of these birds were photographed, but descriptions of the diagnostic mournful calls were helpful as well; vocalizations are often critical in confirming the identity of *Myiarchus* flycatchers.

Three additional Dusky-capped Flycatchers were within a few miles of the California line—two in Baja California and one in Arizona—further bolstering the total from this remarkable incursion (*N. Am. Birds* 60:270, 288). The Red-faced Warbler, another species of Arizona/west Mexican origin, also occurred in better than average numbers in California in 2005. See also records not accepted, identification not established.

**GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER** *Myiarchus crinitus* (46, 1). One at the Big Sur R. mouth, MTY, 10 Oct 2004 (MB, RST; 2004-171) was seen briefly but ultimately achieved 9–1 support in its third round, after documentation from the second observer was added in round 2. One reviewer was concerned that the identification placed too much emphasis on the pale mandible base; the committee reminds observers that while they are most extensive in the Great Crested, pale mandible bases are shared by some Ash-throated (*M. cinerascens*) and Dusky-capped flycatchers.

**SULPHUR-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** *Myiodynastes luteiventris* (16, 1). One seen by a single observer at Summerland, SCA, 3 Oct 2005 (GR; 2005-133) was described in enough detail to eliminate the similar Variegated (*Empidonomus varius*) and Piratic (*Legatus leucophaeus*) flycatchers from consideration. Although the record was accepted by 9 out of 10 members, the one detractor and most of those accepting commented that Streaked Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes maculatus*) was not eliminated and that the record would need reassessment if Streaked Flycatcher were documented to occur in California. The Streaked is still unknown from the United States but occurs north to s Tamaulipas in e Mexico. Reports of *Myiodynastes* flycatchers can be strengthened considerably if observers note chin color (pale in the Streaked, dark in the Sulphur-bellied), strength of malar stripes (thicker in the Sulphur-bellied), color of wing edging, and voice. Thus far, the committee has been content to consider vagrants of *Myiodynastes* to be Sulphur-bellied unless proven otherwise. Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers in California have been remarkably consistent as to season: with one exception (14 Jun 1998; Erickson and Hamilton 2001), all records fall within the period 13 Sep–20 Oct.

**THICK-BILLED KINGBIRD** *Tyrannus crassirostris* (17, 2). A first-winter bird at Banning Park, Wilmington, LA, 10 Nov 2005–28 Apr 2006 (KGL; KLG, MJH†, OJ†, TMcG†, MMe†, MSanM, TEW; 2005-157) was the second-latest-staying Thick-billed Kingbird known in California, bested only by one also in Los Angeles County 3 Nov 1984–10 May 1985 (1984-266; Dunn 1988). Another first-winter bird in Del Dios at L. Hodges, SD, 28 Nov 2005–13 Apr 2006 (SES; DWA†, LA, MJB, TAB†, JLD, TeE†, DF†, CAM, GMcC, GLR, MBS†, TEW; 2005-163; Figure 9A) is pictured on the cover of *W. Birds* 37(3) and in *N. Am. Birds* 60:286. An adult at River View Ranch, Santa Paula, VEN, 3–19 Dec 2005 (JMG†; 2005-175; Figure 9B) was a returning bird and probably wintered for its eighth consecutive year at that location.

Rufous or cinnamon edging to the upperwing coverts and rectrices and two generations of feathers in the tertials, median coverts, and greater coverts identify a Thick-billed Kingbird as in its first winter. Accurate assessment of the age of a Thick-billed Kingbird, and many other species, is crucial for the CBRC in trying to determine which individuals might be returnees. The arrival of two new birds in winter 2005–06

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may be connected to the record total of the Dusky-capped Flycatcher since both it and the Thick-billed Kingbird reach California from the southeast.

**YELLOW-THROATED VIREO** *Vireo flavifrons* (106, 3). One singing male was at Loch Lomond Recreation Area, near Ben Lomond, SCZ, 1–3 Jun 2005 (DLS; 2005-074), and two individuals were at San Clemente I., LA: 29 May 2005 (SWS†; 2005-073) and 2 Jun 2005 (SWS†; 2005-073A).

The two San Clemente I. birds were initially submitted as a single report, but after two rounds of deliberation the CBRC decided that two individuals were involved since the first sighting was from the southeastern end of the island (Grove Canyon) and the second from the far north (Bar Drainage), about 27 miles away. Two members disagreed, with dissenters pointing out that the bird would have been moving north (as expected in spring) and that Southeast Farallon I. has but one record of the Yellow-throated Vireo (Richardson et al. 2003).

**BLUE-HEADED VIREO** *Vireo solitarius* (43, 2). One at Mason Regional Park, Irvine, ORA, 3 Oct 1998 (JEP; 2006-040) was first submitted in 2006. An adult banded on Southeast Farallon I., SF, 22 Nov 2005 (BKH†; 2005-203) was one of California's latest in fall and extended the late date for the island by 20 days (Richardson et al. 2003). See also records not accepted, identification not established.

**YELLOW-GREEN VIREO** *Vireo flavoviridis* (86, 1). One in its first fall at El Capitan State Beach, SBA, 4 Oct 2005 (GCH; 2005-193) coincided with the species' early October peak. The observer described, among other relevant field marks, extensive pale pinkish at the base of the mandible, a little-known field mark not shown by the similar Red-eyed Vireo (*V. olivaceus*), which typically has a pale blue-gray base to the mandible (matched rarely by the Yellow-green). See also records not accepted, identification not established.

**BLUE JAY** *Cyanocitta cristata* (14, 2). One was in Redwood Valley, HUM, 8 Jan–25 May 2005 (KB, RFo†; 2005-010) and another was between Rockville and Fairfield, SOL, 19 Dec 2005–25 Apr 2006 (DWA†, WGB†, LWC, ToE†, EDG†, JFH†, CL, CAM, GMcC, EPr†, DSS†, JCS†; 2006-003); both were in their first winter. Leong (2006) reported the one in Solano County in more detail, including a cover photo. Both prior California Blue Jays whose age was determined were also first-winter birds; in the Blue Jay, the alula and primary coverts are barred in adults, unbarred in first-year birds (Pyle 1997). The bird in Humboldt County stayed almost a month later than California's previous latest Blue Jay, the state's first: a male *C. c. bromia* collected at Chico, BUT, 24 Apr 1950 (Patten et al. 1995).

**SEDGE WREN** *Cistothorus platensis* (9, 1). One at the mouth of Colma Cr., South San Francisco, SM, 9–26 Jan 2005 (RSTh; DBe, KB, JM, DSS†; 2005-003) was the second for midwinter and the second for San Mateo County, following one at Half Moon Bay 7 Dec 2002–15 Mar 2003 (2002-201; Cole and McCaskie 2004). The one in 2005 preferred the upper reaches of a saltmarsh, the same area frequented by a Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammodramus nelsoni*) the previous year.

**ARCTIC WARBLER** *Phylloscopus borealis* (4, 1). One in its first fall bird banded at Southeast Farallon I., SF, 27 Sep 2005 (MR; RDB, BKH†; 2005-204) was seen on the ground and subsequently chased into a net, furnishing a first record for this well-worked island. A color photo was published in *N. Am. Birds* 60:175. The banders noted the bird's vestigial 10<sup>th</sup> primary (identifying it as a sylviid warbler) and the spike-tipped secondaries, which eliminate all species of *Phylloscopus* other than the Arctic and the Greenish Warbler (*P. trochiloides*). The Greenish, which breeds from northeast Europe to western China and winters from India to Thailand (Clements 2000) but has not occurred in the Western Hemisphere, is eliminated by the streaked auriculars and long, flaring supercilium. This individual was fairly bright with a small bill (exposed culmen 9.8 mm, bill depth 2.9 mm), measurements suggesting the Alaska-breeding *P. b.*

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*kennicotti*. California has three prior records 13 Sep–1 Oct; one from Prince Patrick Island, Northwest Territories, 21 Jul 1949 (Godfrey 1986) and one from the Vizcaino Peninsula of Baja California Sur 12 Oct 1991 (Pyle and Howell 1993) are the only other North American records of the Arctic Warbler away from Alaska.

WOOD THRUSH *Hylocichla mustelina* (21, 3). One singing male at Chalk Mt., SCZ, 16 Jun 2005 (DLS§; 2005-075) was seen only briefly but both its song and chattering call notes were nicely recorded with a hand-held tape recorder. Two records of fall migrants included one at the San Francisco Presidio, SF, 20 Oct 2005 (MDB‡; CL, LML‡; 2005-141) and a very cooperative and photogenic first-fall bird at Waller Park, Santa Maria, SBA, 10–12 Nov 2005 (JMG†, LC; JMC, DMC, DF†, GMcC, MMe†, NL, BKS†; 2005-152; Figure 10); another photo of the last is in *N. Am. Birds* 60:140. These are the first records for both Santa Cruz and Santa Barbara counties.

RUFOUS-BACKED ROBIN *Turdus rufopalliatus* (14, 1). One at the headquarters of the Wister Unit of the Imperial W. A. near Niland, IMP, 21 Dec 2005–20 Jan 2006 (TaE; LWC, JLD, ToE, MTH†, LaH, OJ, ELK†, KZK†, KHL†, CAM, GMcC, CMcG†, MMe†, BM†, MSanM, TRS†, DVP; 2005-198) was the first for the Salton Sink (Patten et al. 2003); the three previous Imperial County records are from the Colorado R. A photograph of this bird appeared in *N. Am. Birds* 60:320.

EASTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla tschutschensis* (14, 2). One in its first fall at Abbott's Lagoon, MRN, 7–8 Sep 2004 (Sj; NF, KH†, SNGH†, KK; 2004-139) was the third recorded at this location. Another in its first fall was along the beach at MacKerricher State Park, Fort Bragg, MEN, 16–17 Sep 2005 (GC, RJK, RL†, CL, LML‡, RST, JRW; 2005-118; Figure 11), with a photo also published in *N. Am. Birds* 60:135.



Figure 10. Three Wood Thrushes (*Hylocichla mustelina*) in California in 2005 were more than average. This individual, in its first winter as attested by the whitish spots on the tips of the greater coverts, was at Santa Maria, Santa Barbara County, 12 Nov 2005.

Photo by Dave Furseth



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With the split of the Eastern from the Western Yellow Wagtail (*M. flava*) in 2004 (Banks et al. 2004), the CBRC was faced with a new and intractable identification issue. *Motacilla tschutschensis* now comprises subspecies *tschutschensis* and *simillima* (Banks et al. 2004). Alström and Mild (2003) subsumed *M. t. simillima* (recognized by Gibson and Kessel 1997) in *tschutschensis* and included *M. t. taivana* (not specifically discussed by Banks et al. 2004) as a subspecies of the Eastern. These three subspecies of Eastern include *plexa*, *angarensis*, and *zaissanensis* as synonyms (Banks et al. 2004), though others have synonymized *plexa* with *thunbergi* (a subspecies of the Western Yellow Wagtail). In Alaska, *tschutschensis* is the common breeder, while *simillima* is an uncommon migrant on the w Aleutians (Gibson and Kessel 1997, Heindel 1999, T. G. Tobish pers. comm.), a rare to casual spring migrant on the Pribilof Islands (G. Beiber pers. comm.), and casual on St. Lawrence I. In lack of a specimen, neither subspecies has been identified conclusively in North America outside of Alaska (Heindel 1999).

Heindel investigated these wagtails' identification. While adults in breeding plumage should be identifiable to species and subspecies (see Alström and Mild 2003), winter adults and immatures are far more difficult to identify. The 14 California records to date are in the fall (27 Aug–21 Sep) and all apparently pertain to first-fall birds, which cannot be reliably identified to species, in many cases even with a specimen. California records have primarily been of grayish birds with white breasts, a pattern that Alström and Mild (2003) noted can occur in all subspecies but is common only in *beema* and *feldegg* within the Western Yellow Wagtail and *tschutschensis* (including *simillima*) and *taivana* within the Eastern Yellow Wagtail. The prominent supercilium shown by



Figure 11. All Yellow Wagtails recorded in California have resembled this bird with its prominent supercilium, grayish body plumage, and whitish breast—features consistent with the expected Eastern Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla tschutschensis*). Although some subspecies of the Western Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*) are indistinguishable in the corresponding plumage from birds such as this one, since the 2004 split the CBRC has been content to consider California records to pertain to the geographically probable Eastern Yellow Wagtail. Photographed 17 September 2005 at MacKerricher State Park, Mendocino County.

Photo by Ron LeValley

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California birds further helps to eliminate other subspecies, including *thunbergi*. However, while all California records are consistent with the Eastern (either *tschutschensis* or *simillima*), none can eliminate the Western conclusively. The committee informally follows Alström and Mild (2003) as the authority on this genus, and their repeated statements cautioning uncertainties in the identification of birds in this complex leads us to take a conservative approach.

At its 2006 annual meeting the committee voted to provisionally consider all accepted California yellow wagtails to be the Eastern, given that species' abundance in Alaska, the lack of records of the Western from North America (Banks et al. 2004), and these birds' almost exclusively west-coast pattern of vagrancy: single accepted records of the Yellow Wagtail (*sensu lato*) from Alabama (29 Sep 2003; *N. Am. Birds* 58:92, McConnell 2006, Duncan and Duncan 2006) and Nevada (Cressman et al. 1988) are the sole exceptions.

**SPRAGUE'S PIPIT** *Anthus spragueii* (84, 6). This species was again found in various farm fields between Calipatria and Niland, IMP. Accepted records from this area are of three on 19 Feb 2005 (RST; MB; 2005-052), one 13 Nov–10 Dec 2005 (GMcC; 2005-155), and one on 20 Dec 2005 (TaE†; GMcC; 2005-197). As discussed by San Miguel and McGrath (2005) and Cole et al. (2006), Sprague's Pipit is now known to be regular in fields of Bermuda Grass (*Cynodon dactylon*) in the Imperial Valley. Although the committee has not accepted any Imperial Valley Sprague's Pipits as returning birds, it seems likely that some records pertain to returnees. One on Santa Barbara I., SBA, 24 Sep 2005 (NL; 2005-130) was early but seen well both in flight and on the ground and gave diagnostic call notes. One at Goleta, SBA, 21–22 Sep 1984 (1984-242, Dunn 1988) represents the only other record before October. See also records not accepted, identification not established.

**BLUE-WINGED WARBLER** *Vermivora pinus* (38, 3). One at Furnace Cr. Ranch, Death Valley National Park, INY, 30 May 2004 (ToE, KNN; 2004-089) was accepted 9–1 after three rounds of circulation; the lone detractor was concerned over the brevity of the observation and less than complete details. A one-year-old female was banded near Hayfork, TRI, 7 Jul 2005 (LOM†, JR†; 2005-093), and a male was at Mt. Davidson, SF, 10 Sep 2005 (MDB, DA; 2005-112). The bird in Trinity County was in wing molt, and its fresh greater coverts were tipped with yellow-whitish. Although yellowish wingbars can be a sign of hybridization with the Golden-winged Warbler (*V. chrysoptera*), some apparently pure Blue-winged Warblers share this feature (Dunn and Garrett 1997). This bird had no other signs of hybridization with the Golden-winged, and the record was accepted unanimously on its first round.

**GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER** *Vermivora chrysoptera* (68, 1). A male at DeForest Park, Long Beach, LA, 28–29 May 2005 (KGL; DBe†, KLG; 2005-067) was the first recorded since 2002. Declines in this species have continued throughout its range, and its frequency in California appears to be decreasing concordantly.

**YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER** *Dendroica dominica* (108, 3). A singing male *D. d. albilora* was at Bishop, INY, 17 Jun 2005 (D&JP; CH, JLD; 2005-077). One at Lebec, KER, 26 Apr 2005 (WW; 2005-058) was early and at a location not known for vagrants, while another early one at Butterbredt Spring, KER, 17 Apr 2005 (RHu; 2005-068) was at a more typical location and identifiable as the expected subspecies *albilora*. See also records not accepted, identification not established.

**GRACE'S WARBLER** *Dendroica graciae* (48, 4). Four Grace's Warblers converged on Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, Pt. Loma, SD, over the winter of 2005–06. A returning adult male was back for his fifth winter 18 Sep 2005–12 Mar 2006 (GMcC; MTH†, VM†; 2005-119), and an adult female returned for her third winter 20 Sep 2005–15 Apr 2006 (GMcC, MTH†; PAG; 2005-125). New birds included a female 22 Sep 2005–12 Mar 2006 (WTH; MTH†; 2005-146) and a male present at least

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12 Nov 2005 (MTH†; 2005-165). A color photo of 2005-125 was published in *N. Am. Birds* 60:176. A Grace's at Del Mar, SD, 22 Dec 2005 (MJB; 2005-211) was judged to be the same bird present in the winters of 2001–02 and 2002–03 (Garrett and Wilson 2003, San Miguel and McGrath 2005). Another at Torrey Pines State Reserve, near Del Mar, SD, 29 Sep 2005 (GBG; 2005-128) was presumably a fall migrant rather than a wintering bird. A singing male was at Charlton Flat, San Gabriel Mts., LA, 13–14 May 2005 (DK, JFa; SS†; 2005-059). See also records not accepted, identification not established.

PINE WARBLER *Dendroica pinus* (73, 2). One fairly bright bird at Mile Square Park, Fountain Valley, ORA, 17–18 Nov 1998 (JEP; 2006-041) was first submitted to the committee in 2006. A male at El Dorado Park, Long Beach, LA, 2 Jan–3 Mar 2005 (KSG†; OJ, MSanM†; 2005-001) was thought possibly to be a returning bird; this park has hosted Pine Warblers over the past several winters.

WORM-EATING WARBLER *Helmitheros vermivorum* (101, 2). One at Santa Barbara Cemetery, Montecito, SBA, 2 Jan–15 Mar 2005 (BKH; DMC, PAGa, JMG†, MJL, OJ; 2005-024) was found on the local Christmas Bird Count; its photo is in *N. Am. Birds* 59:326. Another along Carpinteria Cr., Carpinteria, SBA, 25 Aug 2005 (RAH; JLD; 2005-108) was discovered during the American Ornithologists' Union conference.

CONNECTICUT WARBLER *Oporornis agilis* (100, 5). At Southeast Farallon I., SF, one in its first fall was banded 3 Sep 2005 (BKH†; MB; 2005-205), one was seen 14 Sep 2005 (MB; 2005-206), and one was banded 22 Sep 2005 (MB; BKH†; 2005-207). Southeast Farallon I. claims over 50% of California's records. One first-fall female banded near Bolinas, MRN, 7 Sep 2005 (DiH, LJ†; 2006-046) was on the mainland adjacent to the Farallones. Inland, one at Inyokern, KER, 19–20 Sep 2000 (SS†; 2005-168) was described well and seen walking—behavior diagnostic within the genus *Oporornis*. See also records not accepted, identification not established.

MOURNING WARBLER *Oporornis philadelphia* (130, 3). At Southeast Farallon I., SF, a first-fall female was banded 7 Sep 2005 (MB†; 2005-208) and another individual in its first fall was seen 9 Sep 2005 (MB; 2005-209). Despite being well past the species' September peak, one at Sand Dune Park, Manhattan Beach, LA, 24–25 Oct 2005 (DBe; KGL; 2005-178) was seen and heard calling, eliminating MacGillivray's Warbler (*O. tolmiei*), and was accepted on the first round. See also records not accepted, identification not established.

RED-FACED WARBLER *Cardellina rubrifrons* (20, 6). Six Red-faced Warblers in 2005 made a record-high annual total. The first were two singing males (one heard only) on Clark Mt., SBE, 29 May 2005 (CC†; 2005-065), a location where the species has summered once before. Another singing male at William Heise County Park, near Julian, SD, 6–12 Aug 2005 (MJB†, PAG, AEK, OJ†, GMcC, MS†, SES, RST; 2005-098) may have summered at this location; a photo is in *N. Am. Birds* 59:692. Three other individuals were more likely fall migrants, including one in a yard at El Segundo, LA, 22 Aug 2005 (J&KD†; 2005-120), one at Del Valle Regional Park, ALA, 11 Sep 2005 (SH; 2005-114), and one in its first fall at Canyon Park, Costa Mesa, ORA, 14–15 Sep 2005 (RAH; RC†, PC†, JLD, MJH†; 2005-166). The Alameda County sighting was especially noteworthy for being so far north. The record for Orange County was the first for that small but intensely birded county. The birds in San Diego, Alameda, and Orange counties seemed to prefer live oaks (*Quercus* sp.).

SCARLET TANAGER *Piranga olivacea* (134, 3). One female at Banning Park, Wilmington, LA, 12–13 Nov 2005 (TEW; KGL, MMT†; 2005-159) and one at the South Coast Botanical Garden, Palos Verdes Peninsula, LA, 13 Nov 2005 (KGL; 2005-179) were within the species' expected fall peak (mid-October–mid-November).

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A singing male at Mason Regional Park, ORA, 11 Jun 2005 (DL†; 2005-091) was clearly an adult by virtue of its all black wings; it made only California's second spring record of an adult male. One-year-old males are far more expected in California in spring and are easily aged by the brownish cast to their primaries and secondaries. See also records not accepted, identification not established.

CASSIN'S SPARROW *Aimophila cassinii* (47, 1). A singing male near the intersections of Latrobe Rd. and Michigan Bar Rd. in Deer Cr. Hills Preserve, SAC, 21–30 May 2005 (EPa; SA†, KB, RHa†, EDG†, JCSS, MJM, JM†, DEQ†, SR†; 2005-061) was a first for the Central Valley and the northernmost for California in spring. Other northern California records are split between spring and fall and have hailed primarily from Southeast Farallon I. (12), but there are two coastal records (Marin and Humboldt counties) and a June 1984 record from Mono County (Dunn 1988).

Pandolfino (2005) discussed the Sacramento County bird in more depth and noted that a wet spring may have contributed to lusher conditions favored by Cassin's Sparrow—previous years that have been good for it in California have also had above-average rainfall (e.g., 1978). There are no subspecies recognized in Cassin's Sparrow, but the songs of the Arizona and Texas populations differ on average, as discussed by Borror (1971); Pandolfino (2005) believed that the song suggested that the Sacramento bird may have come from the Texas population.

FIELD SPARROW *Spizella pusilla* (8, 1). A singing male at Blue L., HUM, 11–17 Jul 2005 (KB; RFo†, KR; 2005-085) was extensively gray, consistent with the more westerly *S. p. arenacea*, which has probably accounted for all other California records. For the seven days of its stay it held a territory on a brushy gravel bar adjacent to the Mad R. vegetated primarily with willows (*Salix* spp.). It was the first Field Sparrow recorded as singing in California, although there is one prior midsummer record, of one banded on Southeast Farallon I., SF, 17 Jun–9 Jul 1969 (Roberson 1986). The other six previous California records range in date from 16 October to 12 April, and the four Arizona records range from 14 Oct to 2 Mar (Rosenberg and Witzeman 1999, Rosenberg, 2001, Arizona Bird Committee data).

LE CONTE'S SPARROW *Ammodramus leconteii* (33, 1). One at China Ranch, INY, 11 Oct 2005 (JEP; 2005-148) showed no signs of immaturity. While many first-fall Le Conte's Sparrows still retain some juvenal plumage by this date, others molt early and may be in full first basic plumage (safely aged only by skull pneumatization or condition of the ovary) as early as 11 October (Pyle and Sibley 1992, Pyle 1997), such as ones on Southeast Farallon I., SF, 13 Oct 1970 (Dunn 1988) and 11–12 Oct 1986 (Langham 1991, Pyle and Sibley 1992).

\*NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROW *Ammodramus nelsoni* (30\*\*, 2). We located two old specimens, photographing them for the committee's files. One in its first fall collected at Seaside, MTY, 18 Oct 1921 (MH†; #FMNH 167975; 2005-144) is in poor condition but still clearly identifiable. One adult at Milpitas, SCL, 6 May 1891 (JD†, MJH†, Barlow 1900; #USNM 120310; 2005-143) was the type specimen for *Ammodramus caudacutus becki* (Ridgway 1891). This name was synonymized by Dwight (1896), who correctly identified the specimen as *A. n. nelsoni*, the only subspecies of Sharp-tailed Sparrow known from California. Barlow (1900) reported the bird as a male, but the specimen tags do not identify its sex. The committee reviews records of Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow through 1986.

SMITH'S LONGSPUR *Calcarius pictus* (7, 1). A male with a large flock of longspurs near the Calipatria State Prison, IMP, 20 Dec 2005–17 Feb 2006 (ToE; TRC, JLD, RFo†, OJ, KHL, CAM, GMcC, BM†, RJN, D&JP, SS†, DVP; 2005-196) had its photo published in *N. Am. Birds* 60:286. Most previous California records are of fall migrants (14 Sep–31 Oct), either inland (2 records) or along the coast (3 records), but there is precedent for wintering in the Salton Sink: one near Calipatria 31 Dec

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2001–12 Feb 2002 (Garrett and Wilson 2003). In addition to the one Smith's, the flock in 2005–06 contained up to 15 McCown's (*C. mccownii*), 25 Lapland (*C. lapponicus*), and 300 Chestnut-collared (*C. ornatus*) longspurs (*N. Am. Birds* 60:286), as well as a large number of Horned Larks (*Eremophila alpestris*).

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis* (109, 4). A small flock on the spit of Big Lagoon, HUM, 12 Dec 2005–9 Feb 2006 included three on 12 Dec, two on 19 Jan, and one on 9 Feb (TWL†; 2006-029). One at San Clemente I., LA, was photographed 3–14 Nov 2004 (JMM†; 2005-004) in the precise area where one was observed 15 Nov 2003–27 Feb 2004 (2004-013; San Miguel and McGrath 2005). Record 2005-004 circulated twice through the committee for consideration of the possibility that the two records referred to the same bird. Despite the excellent photos, the bird's age could not be determined with certainty, although some members thought it was most likely in its first fall. After two rounds the committee concluded it was more likely a different bird, citing this species' lack of winter site-fidelity, the tentative age as young, and the six records for the nw Hawaiian Is. (R. Pyle pers. comm). The lone dissenter felt that the unprecedented nature of the record and the fact that a first-fall male had successfully wintered the previous year tipped the scale towards a returning bird. Other than those on San Clemente I., just one Snow Bunting has occurred south of Monterey and Inyo counties: one at Kelso Valley, KER, 23–27 Dec 1978 (Luther et al. 1983). See also records not accepted, identification not established.

PYRRHULOXIA *Cardinalis sinuatus* (23, 1). A female at Fairview Developmental Center, Costa Mesa, ORA, 7 Feb–13 Mar 1999 (JM, JDW†; 1999-078A) had previously been considered "not accepted, identification accepted but natural occurrence questionable" (Garrett and Wilson 2003). It was re-reviewed and accepted in light of the species' emerging pattern of vagrancy, summarized by Patten (2006) shortly after acceptance of this record. After three rounds, two members continued to question the bird's natural occurrence, noting that it had an abraded tail with a broken rectrix, that the species has been found in small numbers in Mexican markets (Hamilton 2001), that the location was a suburb with poor habitat for the species and a sizable Latin-American population which may keep wild-caught cagebirds, and that the winter date is not consistent with other CBRC-accepted coastal records. Supporters of vagrancy pointed to increasing evidence for the Pyrrhuloxia's dispersal north of its normal range in Texas and on the Great Plains (primarily spring and winter; Lockwood and Freeman 2004, Patten 2006) and the pattern of winter dispersal away from breeding areas in Mexico, Arizona, and New Mexico (Monson and Phillips 1981, Patten 2006).

\*PAINTED BUNTING *Passerina ciris* (107, 1). One female at a feeder in Arcata, HUM, 11–15 Dec 2004 (KR†; 2004-215) inspired two rounds of debate over its natural occurrence. The bird's being an adult (according to P. Pyle), 11 days later than the latest previously accepted record, so far to the north, and at a feeder were causes of concern for some members. But the majority responded that December was within the expected fall window for many other passerines (e.g., Scarlet Tanager) and that the Painted Bunting should not be treated differently. Some members believed that the north-coast locale strengthened the record (being away from urban centers of southern and central California), and others pointed out the species' well-established pattern of winter vagrancy along the east coast, which involves primarily birds found at feeders (see Mlodinow and Hamilton 2005). The committee reviews Painted Buntings through 2004.

COMMON GRACKLE *Quiscalus quiscula* (72, 3). One male at the rest area on Interstate 80 w of American Canyon Rd. near Vallejo, SOL, 10 Oct 2004 (DBr†; 2004-161) was earlier than most records. Another male in a flock of blackbirds near Cuesta College, San Luis Obispo, SLO, 27 Nov–22 Dec 2005 (TME, DML†, CAM, GPS†, BKS, DVP, RST†; 2005-164) was the first for San Luis Obispo County. One

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female was in the Tijuana R. valley, SD, 17 Dec 2005–26 Feb 2006 (GMcC; TAB†, TRC, MUE†, PAG, MTH†, LaH, OJ†, CAM, DP, MS†, MSanM, MBS†, LST†; 2005-190), only San Diego County's fifth. A photo of the San Diego bird is published in *N. Am. Birds* 60:284. Like all Common Grackles in California to date, all three of these appeared to be of the more westerly subspecies, *Q. q. versicolor* (Bronzed Grackle).

BLACK ROSY-FINCH *Leucosticte atrata* (13, 1). A female collected at Westgard Pass, INY, 11 Nov 1972 (EAC#, SWC#; GB†; #SBCM 38139; 2006-018) was reviewed in 2006. The specimen's label notes that an adult male Black Rosy-Finch was observed in the same flock on the same date, but there is no documentation, and the committee did not review this report. See also records not accepted, identification not established.

COMMON REDPOLL *Carduelis flamma* (77, 1). A dull-plumaged bird among a flock of American Goldfinches (*C. tristis*) at the Dakin Unit of Honey L. W. A., LAS, 4 Jan 2005 (TMA; 2005-009) was beautifully sketched, eliminating the possibility of the improbable Hoary Redpoll (*C. hornemanni*).

### RECORDS UPGRADED FROM STATISTICALLY ACCEPTED TO ACCEPTED

EMPEROR GOOSE *Chen canagica* (83, 0). Eight specimens that had previously been statistically accepted (Cole et al. 2006) were located and photographed by Cole and are thus upgraded from statistically accepted to fully endorsed by the committee:

First-fall male, Colusa, COL, Nov 1912 (no exact date; LWC†, Bryant 1914; #MVZ 24508; 2004-504)

First-fall, sex undetermined, Rio Vista, SOL, ca. 1921 (LWC†; #MVZ 59137; 2004-509)

First-spring, sex undetermined, Humboldt Bay, HUM, 1 Mar 1925 (LWC†, Grinnell 1931, Zerlang and Fraser 1931; #MVZ 52036; 2004-510)

First-fall, sex undetermined, Humboldt Bay, HUM, 3 Dec 1927 (LWC†; #MVZ 57187; 2004-512)

First-fall, sex undetermined, Limantour, MRN, 13 Dec 1928 (LWC†, Orr 1944; #CAS 43715; 2004-514)

First-fall, sex undetermined, near McArthur, SHA, 20 Jan 1930 (LWC†, Grinnell 1931, Grinnell and Miller 1944; #MVZ 54483; 2004-515)

First-fall male, Humboldt Bay, HUM, 27 Jan 1933 (LWC†; #MVZ 71275; 2004-517)

One, sex undetermined, Willows, GLE, 20 Dec 1932 (LWC†, Beck 1934; #MVZ 63663; 2004-518). Grinnell and Miller (1944) erroneously listed the date as 20 Dec 1933.

PIPING PLOVER *Charadrius melodus* (3, 0). The submission of a photo taken 10 Apr 1972 upgrades the record of a Piping Plover returning to Goleta, SBA, for the second of its three winters, 16 Dec 1971–22 Apr 1972 (BKSt; 2004-531), from statistically accepted to accepted. A published photo appears in *Am. Birds* 26:525.

SKY LARK *Alauda arvensis* (1, 0). One at Pt. Reyes, MRN, 31 Oct 1982–29 Jan 1983 (AG†; 2004-546) had previously been statistically accepted (Cole et al. 2006) but was fully accepted by the CBRC with the submission of a photo taken 11 Nov 1982. This individual, consistent with the migratory *A. a. pekinensis*, returned for seven consecutive winters from 1978–79 through 1984–85 and was discussed in detail by Morlan and Erickson (1983).

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RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED, IDENTIFICATION NOT ESTABLISHED

TRUMPETER SWAN *Cygnus buccinator*. Three on Nicasio Reservoir, MRN, 6–26 Feb 2005 (2005-033) were believed by most of the committee to be Tundra Swans (*C. columbianus*). One flying overhead with Tundra Swans at Sacramento, SAC, 13 Nov 2005 (2005-154) was glimpsed in the moonlight and identified solely by call. Most members were uncomfortable with the identification of a night flyover by call alone, and some members commented that even if the identification was correct, the lack of a clear sighting does not eliminate the possibility of a neck-ringed bird from an introduced population not yet established.

WHOOPER SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*. A swan with extensive yellow on the bill at the Lower Klamath N.W.R., SIS, 7 Feb–13 Mar 2004 (2005-023), and a similar or the same swan there 28 Nov 2004–6 Mar 2005 (2006-079), appeared to be too small for the Whooper, suggesting it may have been a hybrid Whooper × Tundra Swan (*C. columbianus*), or possibly a Bewick's Swan (*C. columbianus bewickii*). Additional and more detailed documentation would have been most helpful.

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*. One female reported from Humboldt Bay N.W.R. at the s end of Humboldt Bay, HUM, 4–6 May 2004 (2004-063) generated three rounds of debate. Observers arriving the next day found a Green-winged Teal (*A. crecca*), which caused considerable confusion. Although the original observers were experienced, the committee was concerned that the bird was not photographed and that several Green-winged Teals have been misidentified recently as the Garganey.

YELLOW-BILLED LOON *Gavia adamsii*. Although this species reaches California annually and is usually a straightforward identification if seen well, the committee still requires a description that covers the key identification features. Three reports were rejected for not meeting these criteria, of single birds at Morro Bay, SLO, 16 Jan 2005 (2005-007), Fields Landing on Humboldt Bay, HUM, 9 Feb 2005 (2005-029), and Pt. Piedras Blancas, SLO, 17–19 May 2005 (2005-078).

SOLANDER'S PETREL *Pterodroma solandri*. A *Pterodroma* photographed at 40.02° N, 128.01° W, 173 n. miles w of Cape Mendocino, HUM, 9 Aug 2005 (2005-104), not 8 Aug as published (*N. Am. Birds* 60:134), may have been this species but received only one vote for acceptance. The one committee member supporting the identification was also the reporting observer and acknowledged that some of the members' problems with the identification were insurmountable with current knowledge. Pyle (2006) published a photo and brief discussion. The bird appeared broad-winged and thick-set in the field and showed extensive white on the face extending above the bill, characters favoring Solander's over Murphy's Petrel (*P. ultima*) or other dark Pacific species of *Pterodroma*. The majority of the committee believed that the photos were too distant to confirm the identification, especially since this bird did not show the bold white crescents on the under-primary coverts or obvious hooded effect typical of most Solander's. However, Pyle (2006) noted that these characters may vary with age and the California record may pertain to a subadult Solander's. Although some early sightings of dark *Pterodroma* petrels off California were reported as Solander's (see Bailey et al. 1989), the species remains unconfirmed for North America (AOU 1998). However, 12–18 were seen and photographed within 180 n. miles of Alaskan waters on 23 Sep 2006 (Ilf, T. G. Tobish et al., unpubl. data), and others have been suspected but not conclusively identified within North American waters (M. Force pers. comm.). Solander's Petrel is a species to be watched for off California.

PARKINSON'S PETREL *Procellaria parkinsoni*. One seen briefly at dawn by at least three participants on an organized long-range pelagic trip off southern Califor-

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nia at 32° 00' N, 120° 30' W, off Santa Barbara I., SBA, 8 Sep 2005 (2005-217) received no support.

**BULWER'S PETREL** *Bulweria bulwerii*. A bird identified as this species was seen 30 miles s of San Clemente I., LA, 4 Sep 2003 (2003-169). The accounts and descriptions by three observers were reviewed by 14 members as it circulated through the committee four times between March 2004 and August 2006. The bird was seen for about one minute late on the first day of a multi-day deepwater pelagic trip by the *Searcher*. Observers with extensive experience with both Bulwer's and Jouanin's (*B. fallax*) Petrels were solicited for opinions; respondents replied that the two can be distinguished readily and that the described size and manner of flight of the bird reported 4 Sep 2003 better matched those of Bulwer's. Support for the record was strong, and, even in the end, the two members declining support believed the bird was probably a Bulwer's Petrel. Both, however, believed the level of documentation was inadequate to support the second record for the western United States. The only prior record for California is of one in Monterey Bay, MTY, 26 Jul 1998 (1998-119; Erickson and Hamilton 2001).

**BROWN BOOBY** *Sula leucogaster*. Although the Brown Booby has occurred annually on Southeast Farallon I., SF, over recent years, the report of one there 14 Sep 2004 (2004-191) did not meet the committee's level for acceptable documentation.

**YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** *Nyctanassa violacea*. An immature seen only in flight at Terrace Pt., SCZ, 19 Jun 2005 (2005-095) failed to gain any committee support.

**GLOSSY IBIS** *Plegadis falcinellus*. A *Plegadis* about 7 miles wnw of Calipatria, IMP, 8 Jul 2000 (2003-205) was not accepted as a Glossy; ibis identification is difficult unless one has excellent views of a bird in alternate plumage. We ask that observers use caution in identifying ibises and note, if possible, the bird's age, state of molt, and soft-part coloration.

**COMMON BLACK-HAWK** *Buteogallus anthracinus*. With the acceptance of a Common Black-Hawk near Santa Rosa, SON, through the summer of 2005 (see above) and the rumored presence of this same bird there in previous summers, the committee took a second look at the documentation for one reported from Santa Rosa on 14 Oct 2000 (2000-156A), previously reviewed as 2000-156 (McKee and Erickson 2002). The record received some support, but the majority of the members still found the documentation inadequate to eliminate the possibility of a Zone-tailed Hawk (*B. albonotatus*), especially since the described descending call seemed to fit that species better. One near Blythe, RIV, 22-25 Jan 2005 (2005-011) was described as feeding on the edges of pools of water in a streambed, consistent with a black-hawk. It received some support from the committee, but most members believed that the photos more closely resembled a *Buteo*, possibly a Zone-tailed Hawk. One reported near Barnwell in the East Mojave Preserve, SBE, 21 May 2005 (2005-066) received no support from the committee.

**CRESTED CARACARA** *Caracara cheriway*. One over El Centro, IMP, 9 Nov 2005 (2005-151) received considerable support from the committee but failed on the third round because the bird was seen only briefly, in flight, and its wings were described as being held in a dihedral. Although El Centro would be a perfect spot for a vagrant caracara, more complete details were needed.

**GYRFALCON** *Falco rusticolus*. One reported from Honey L. W. A., LAS, 7 Feb 2005 (2005-027) generated considerable discussion. The committee was split, as many of the features described did sound correct for this species, but the details fell short of what the majority of members required for such a rarity.



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AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER *Pluvialis dominica*. A golden-plover photographed in Castroville, MTY, 20 Oct 2005 (2005-145) was clearly an adult and believed by most of the committee to be a Pacific (*P. fulva*). The American was added to the CBRC's review list because many members believed that some Pacifics were being misidentified and published as Americans, distorting the true status of the American in California. The committee is not aware of any adult American Golden-Plover adequately documented in California in fall migration.

COMMON GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*. The committee had previously reviewed and not accepted the report of one in Chico, BUT, 1 Dec 1993 (1995-004A) (Erickson and Terrill 1996). Since it has recently accepted this species (2001-137, 2002-174; Garrett and Wilson 2003, Cole and McCaskie 2004), it gave the report from Chico a second review. While they found the report intriguing, most members still believed there was not enough detail to support what would be the first record for California and the contiguous 48 states.

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucooides*. A pale first-winter gull reported by a single observer near Mountain View, SCL, during the Palo Alto Christmas Bird Count of 17 Dec 2001 (2003-087) and a similarly plumaged gull at the Salinas R. mouth, MTY, 18 Jan 2003 (2003-088) may both have been Iceland Gulls, but the documentation was inadequate to eliminate pale Thayer's Gulls (*L. thayeri*) or, with the bird near Mountain View, even a leucistic gull of another species.

LONG-BILLED MURRELET *Brachyramphus perdix*. A report from Waddell Bluffs, SCZ, 19–25 Aug (2003-151) received considerable support but was not accepted. Although the Long-billed Murrelet seems to be appearing with some regularity off the n California coast from July to October, the committee has been conservative about endorsing records since juvenile Marbled Murrelets (*B. marmoratus*), Common Murres (*Uria aalge*), or Pigeon Guillemots (*Cephus columba*) may present problems for birds not seen well or for birders inexperienced with alcids.

SNOWY OWL *Bubo scandiacus*. One at Sunnyvale, SCL, 4–5 Jan 1974 (2005-030) was documented only with a very brief description composed decades after the observation. While the committee was pleased to have documentation on file for this record, and while 1973–74 was an invasion year for the Snowy Owl (over 35 accepted records), the record failed primarily because of the lack of a complete, contemporary description of the bird.

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER *Empidonax flaviventris*. The report of one at the fish docks, Pt. Reyes, MRN, 2–10 Oct 2004 (2004-153) received only minimal support. Call notes heard on 2 October were reportedly consistent with the Yellow-bellied, but a video taped that day was of quality insufficient to confirm the identification. Some photos taken 3 Oct 2004 show a bright Hammond's Flycatcher (*E. hammondi*), while others show a bird more consistent with a Pacific-slope Flycatcher (*E. difficilis*). In the end, the original observers retracted the 2 Oct sighting, since it was clear that much confusion surrounded this record. Another first-fall *Empidonax* banded, measured, and photographed in hand at Starr Ranch Audubon Sanctuary, ORA, 18 Oct 2005 (2005-213) was especially intriguing (Figure 12). Almost all members commented that it looked perfect for the Yellow-bellied, with a complete narrow yellow-tinged eye ring, bright yellow throat and upper breast, rounded head, and very blackish wings contrasting sharply with the wingbars and wing edging. It probably would have been accepted as a Yellow-bellied had the bird not been measured—the reported measurements included a wing chord of 63 mm, tail length of 56 mm, longest secondary 54 mm, and primary 6 of 58 mm. From measurements in Pyle (1997), the wing chord falls in the overlap zone between the Yellow-bellied and Western (*E. difficilis/occidentalis*), the difference between the longest primary and primary 6 rules the Yellow-bellied in and rules the Western out,



Figure 12. Most of the committee agreed that this bird, banded 18 October 2005 at Starr Ranch Audubon Sanctuary, Orange County, showed the classic field marks of a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (*Empidonax flaviventris*). Measurements were inconsistent with that species, however, and no member was comfortable endorsing a record of an *Empidonax* with inconsistent measurements.

Photo by Becky Stewart

and the tail is only 1 mm longer than the extreme for Yellow-bellied, but wing length minus tail length (7 mm) strongly favors the Western (6–15 mm) over the Yellow-bellied (12–19 mm). Unfortunately no other measurements were taken (bill length and width and primary 10 minus primary 6 would have been helpful). In the end no committee member could support the identification with measurements outside of the range of the Yellow-bellied, and members suggested that this bird may have been measured improperly, a very problematical Western (demanding extreme caution for a silent bird identified in the field), or possibly even a hybrid from the contact zone in western Canada. As always, the committee stresses that reports of vagrant *Empidonax* need extreme detail, including description of voice, age, primary spacing, general appearance, overall coloration, and behavior.

DUSKY-CAPPED FLYCATCHER *Myiarchus tuberculifer*. The call described for one at El Dorado Nature Center, Long Beach, LA, 20 Dec 2004 (2005-037) left doubt among several committee members, and the brief description provided little additional support.

WHITE-EYED VIREO *Vireo griseus*. One reported from Montaña de Oro campground, SLO, 24 Sep 2005 (2005-127) was seen briefly, described incompletely, and received only minimal support from the committee.

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BLUE-HEADED VIREO *Vireo solitarius*. The report of one at Owl Canyon, Bodega Bay, SON, 24 Sep 1999 (2005-166) met with little support. Unusually bright Cassin's Vireos (*V. cassinii*) are a source of concern for the committee, and reports of the Blue-headed that do not note the bright white throat, head-back contrast, and tail pattern do not fare well.

YELLOW-GREEN VIREO *Vireo flavoviridis*. One at Boulder Oaks, SD, 6 Sep 2004 (2004-131) was atypically far inland, would tie the earliest date for California, and would have been one of only four prior to 20 September. The description mentions a "dark" eye, does not describe the yellow extending onto the sides of the neck, and does not stress heft or bill size. Most committee members were concerned that the Red-eyed (*V. olivaceus*) and a bright Warbling (*V. gilvus*) were not fully eliminated by the description. Supporters of the record noted that the submitted sketch was a good facsimile of the claimed species and that the noting of a pink base to the mandible, a little-known field mark, indicated the identification was likely correct.

VEERY *Catharus fuscescens*. The report of one silent individual at the fish docks, Pt. Reyes, MRN, 1 Oct 2004 (2004-151) failed after three rounds of circulation. It consisted of written descriptions and many photos, but most discussion centered on the photos. Detractors believed the photos showed a Russet-backed Swainson's Thrush (*C. u. ustulatus* group of subspecies), particularly because of the appearance of a complete, bold, buffy eye ring in the majority of the photos. Also disfavoring the Veery, the flanks seemed brownish, the breast spotting seemed too dark, the back color was not rich enough, the eye ring seemed too bold, there was too much wing contrast, and there was the suggestion of a buff half collar. Even if the pictures were off, they opined, evidence to support the identification was insufficient. At least two members, one of whom had seen the bird in the field, strongly believed that the bird had been identified correctly, citing the descriptions that mentioned the gray flanks and minimal breast spotting. Furthermore, they stated that pictures were taken with an inadequate camera and looked different on various monitors; they disagreed that the marks supported the identification as a Swainson's. A point on which all members could agree is the difficulty in assessing some records of the genus *Catharus*, and particularly with the duller, western race of the Veery (*C. f. salicicola*). More discussion with photos can be found at <http://fog.ccsf.edu/~jmorlan/veer100104.htm>.

SPRAGUE'S PIPIT *Anthus spragueii*. A reported Sprague's Pipit flying over Twin Peaks, SF, 30 Sep 2005 (2005-149) was heard calling and studied in flight, but the circumstances of the record provided little opportunity for committee support, especially for an occurrence well to the north in California and on the early end of the species' fall window of vagrancy.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER *Dendroica dominica*. One at Fallbrook, SD, 20 Sep 2005 (2005-124) was seen briefly, was described incompletely and found very little committee support.

GRACE'S WARBLER *Dendroica graciae*. One at Buckhorn Campground, San Gabriel Mts., LA, 25 Nov 2005 (2005-215) would be only the second montane winter record for California following one at Chilao, LA, 22 Oct 1995–10 Mar 1996 (1996-030; Garrett and Singer 1998). Although the description was largely consistent with Grace's Warbler and received some support, no wing bars were noted, and the majority of the CBRC did not accept the identification.

CONNECTICUT WARBLER *Oporornis agilis*. One described from Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, SF, 9 Oct 2005 (2005-140) received a split vote but failed on its second round. The description was mostly consistent with the Connecticut, but the description of pale wing edging and bright yellow undertail coverts concerned some members; the bird was never photographed and never seen walking, both of which would have helped to confirm the identification.

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**MOURNING WARBLER** *Oporornis philadelphia*. The report of a first-fall male at Wilson Cove, San Clemente I., LA, 13 Oct 2003 (2004-012) received nearly unanimous support on its first round but ultimately failed 2–8 in its third round. A single photo was of little use to identification, so committee members focused on the description. Some detractors thought that a Nashville Warbler (*Vermivora ruficapilla*) may have been involved, partly because the bird was described as smaller and slimmer than the nearby Yellow Warblers (*Dendroica petechia*) and its head was described as gray. The relatively late date was a concern for others. The two supporters of the record stressed that the call was described as “tchich,” utterly unlike the “pink” note (Dunn and Garrett 1997) of the Nashville, that the bill and legs were both pale (unlike the Nashville), that the experienced observer was unlikely to misidentify the bird to genus, and that the description of the eye ring, yellow throat, and partial collar eliminated MacGillivray’s (*O. tolmiei*).

**SCARLET TANAGER** *Piranga olivacea*. One reported from San Clemente I., LA, 9 Nov 2005 (2005-216) was generally thought to have been correctly identified and received support from about half the committee but was ultimately not accepted primarily because of concern over confusion with the Summer Tanager (*P. rubra*).

**SNOW BUNTING** *Plectrophenax nivalis*. One described from Tilden Park, CC, 28 Nov 2002 (2004-115) received strong support from the committee and circulated four rounds before a final decision. The bird was observed feeding along a trail and perched up on a wire fence when startled; its white body plumage, tawny head, and orangish bill were described. The two detractors in the final round were concerned that the relatively brief description did not eliminate a leucistic White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*) and that the perching on a fence is less likely in the Snow Bunting than in sparrows such as the White-crowned.

**BLACK ROSY-FINCH** *Leucosticte atrata*. One reported at Montgomery Cr. Ranch, near Benton, MNO, 10–24 Feb 2001 (2001-057A) had previously been accepted by the CBRC for 16 Feb only (Cole and McCaskie 2004). The committee reviewed documentation from 24 Feb 2001 that would have extended the date span but ultimately did not accept the extension, primarily because of the distant views and inconsistencies between the descriptions from 16 February and 24 February (especially in bill color). The committee thus endorses the record from 16 Feb 2001 only.

**BROWN-CAPPED ROSY-FINCH** *Leucosticte australis*. A first-spring female rosy-finch at Aspendell, INY, 17 Apr–14 May 2005 (2005-049) was closely studied and photographed by many observers (Figure 13). We received excellent documentation that tentatively identified it as this species, which would be new for California. The bird stood out from surrounding Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches (*L. tephrocotis*) as duller, with reduced gray on the crown. The extent of gray on the crown appeared to vary with the lighting and arrangement of the feathers, however, and some photos show fairly extensive gray. The committee agreed that the gray was simply too extensive for a Brown-capped. The lack of black in the vanes of the crown feathers also eliminates the Brown-capped (R. E. Johnson in litt.); the Gray-crowned typically has crown feathers that are gray from edge to edge, while the Brown-capped has blackish centers with gray fringes. In addition, by virtue of the narrow, tapered primary coverts with narrow, worn fringes the bird was in its first spring. The very limited pink of the belly, wings, and rump imply it was a female. In the Brown-capped Rosy-Finch, first-spring females should show little or no gray on the crown; the adult male is the age and sex class likely to show the most extensive gray in the crown. In the Gray-crowned, the first-spring female should be the dullest plumage with the least gray in the crown, corresponding with the bird at Aspendell. Some committee members with extensive experience with the Gray-crowned in California believed that this bird was still outside the range of normal variation and perhaps an aberrant individual. This



Figure 13. This rosy-finch at Aspendell, Inyo County, 29 April 2005 was reported as a Brown-capped (*Leucosticte australis*). Although the very limited gray on the crown suggests that species, the committee concluded it was a one-year-old female Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch (*L. tephrocotis*) with minimal gray on the head. The Brown-capped has crown feathers that are blackish centrally and gray on the edges and a bigger bill.

Photo by Larry Sansone

record was instructive for the committee, since previous assessments of rosy-finches have focused on distinguishing the Black from the Gray-crowned. Most committee members commented that they thought it extremely unlikely for a Brown-capped to reach California, since that species has not yet been known to stray more than 100 miles from its limited breeding range (C. L. Wood pers comm.). Richard E. Johnson pointed out that the bill size may be useful also in eliminating Brown-capped. This fairly small-billed bird did not match the rather large-billed Brown-capped Rosy-Finch and instead matches well the subspecies of the Gray-crowned endemic to the Sierra Nevada, *L. t. dawsoni*.

#### RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED, IDENTIFICATION ACCEPTED BUT NATURAL OCCURRENCE QUESTIONABLE

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK *Dendrocygna autumnalis*. One in the Imperial Valley, IMP, 28 Jul 2004 (2006-015) was apparently tame and considered not a wild bird.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis*. One at the San Joaquin R. N.W.R., STA, 16–18 Jan 2005 (DM†; JM; 2005-025) was unbanded and associating with a flock of Aleutian Cackling Geese (*B. hutchinsii leucopareia*). While this species is migratory and could conceivably occur well out of range, it is also kept frequently in captivity. Most committee members do not believe the Barnacle Goose is likely to make it to California without assistance.

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HARRIS'S HAWK *Parabuteo unicinctus*. One at the Carrizo Plain Natural Area, SLO, 18 Feb 1999 (KSt; 2004-057) points out the difficulty in assessing records of this species. This record predated several occurrences at locations farther southeast; San Luis Obispo County is not where most would think a vagrant Harris's Hawk likely. While some on the CBRC opined that this record could represent a natural vagrant, the majority believed it was premature to consider it as such.

COMMON CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*. The committee unanimously endorsed the identification of a male at Rolling Hills Estates on the Palos Verdes Peninsula, LA, 22 Jan–6 Feb 2005 (RHart; 2006-017), and all members save one questioned the natural occurrence. The subspecies was not determined with certainty but was consistent with the widespread nominate subspecies that ranges from w Europe to Siberia.

The Common Chaffinch breeds throughout Eurasia south to the Mediterranean region, Iran, and w Siberia east to the Angara R.; northern and eastern populations are migratory (AOU 1998, ABA 2002). It is largely unknown east of there, although at least one presumed vagrant has reached Beidahe, China (A. Jaramillo in comments). It is an annual vagrant to Iceland in varying numbers (Cramp and Perrins 1994) and has reached Greenland at least twice in May and September (*F. c. coelebs*; Boertmann 1994). A 21 May 1994 record from Newfoundland has been widely accepted (DeBenedictis 1996, ABA 2002, AOU 1998), as it coincided with a significant flight of Eurasian species (*Field Notes* 48:271). Other records from Newfoundland (25 Feb 1967; Godfrey 1986), Nova Scotia (two in November; *Am. Birds* 43:281, Halliwell 2000), Maine (three, in April, May, and September; L. R. Bevier, L. R. Brinker pers. comm.), New Hampshire (7 May 1989; *Am. Birds* 43:451–452), Massachusetts (three reports; late March–early April), New Jersey, and Quebec (November; *N. Am. Birds* 55:25) are considered to possibly involve natural vagrants; local authorities have accepted the species for Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Maine, and Massachusetts (e.g., Rines 2000). More westerly records from Ohio, Indiana, Louisiana, and Wyoming (AOU 1998) are considered to involve escaped cagebirds. The chaffinch's prevalence in captivity is not well-known, but clearly it is widespread. Dinsmore and Silcock (2004) detailed suspicions of a large-scale release of Eurasian passerines in the Chicago area in 2002, including Common Chaffinches as well as at least four other finches.

The California bird showed good plumage (although the tail was incompletely grown) but was in metropolitan Los Angeles. Most of the committee believed that the pattern of vagrancy gave no support to the idea of a wild origin. The one dissenter pointed out the record from Beidahe and hoped for more information on the species in captivity.

## MISCELLANEOUS

Grinnell and Miller (1944) cited a specimen of the Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*) allegedly taken in California (Sibson 1943), then in the Christchurch Museum, New Zealand. With the help of Kimball L. Garrett and Paul Scofield, curator of vertebrate zoology at the Canterbury Museum in Christchurch, the mystery surrounding the specimen has been clarified. Scofield traced the specimen as most likely being part of the Seebohm collection, which was accessioned into the British Museum over a century ago. Given the make-up of that collection, this Hudsonian Godwit was almost certainly not collected in California; it was exchanged by the British Museum to the Canterbury Museum in 1903. Two other specimens of the Hudsonian Godwit from the Seebohm collection (still at the British Museum) were also labeled as being taken in California (Fleming 1921).

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The CBRC has received no documentation for the following reports published in *North American Birds*: an Emperor Goose at the Eel R. W. A., HUM, 22 Feb 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 59:319), and two at unnamed locations in n. California in Sep 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 60:134); single Manx Shearwaters on Monterey Bay, MTY, 3 Apr 2005, 15 May 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 59:489), and 23 Sep 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 60:134); a Brown Booby on Southeast Farallon I. 22 Feb 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 59:318); single Common Black-Hawks at Kirby Cove, MRN, 31 Mar 2005, Forestville, SON, 16 Apr 2005, and Arcata, HUM, 19 Apr 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 59:490); a Crested Caracara at the Eel R. delta, HUM, Sep 2004–Jan 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 59:319-320) and another at Rodeo Lagoon, MRN, 7 May 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 59:490); single American Golden-Plovers at Cock Robin I., HUM, 15–16 Oct 2005 and the Eel R. mouth, HUM, 2 Nov 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 60:135); an Iceland Gull in Yolo County 20 Jan 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 59:320) and another in Humboldt County 28 Dec 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 60:281); a Long-billed Murrelet off the coast of Humboldt County 26 Aug 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 60:136); a Dusky-capped Flycatcher at Half Moon Bay, SM, 28 Dec 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 60:281); a Blue-headed Vireo on Southeast Farallon I., SF, 20–21 Sep 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 60:136); two Mourning Warblers on Southeast Farallon I., SF, 26 Sep 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 60:137), and single Snow Buntings at Centerville Beach and Redwood Cr. mouth, HUM, 31 Jan 2005 (*N. Am. Birds* 59:322). Therefore these reports should be treated as unsubstantiated until the committee receives and reviews documentation.

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### CORRIGENDA

The following corrections should be made to the Report of the California Bird Records Committee: 2004 Records (Cole et al. 2006). We thank David M. Compton for bringing some of these to our attention.

Jeremy Trimble, listed under "Acknowledgments" and "Contributors," should be changed to Jeremiah Trimble; under "Contributors" David A. Compton should be listed as David M. Compton and Jeff Polken should be changed to Jeff Poklen. The Scarlet Tanager at El Capitan, SBA, 22–25 Oct 1999 was found by Joan E. Lentz but her initials were inadvertently omitted; also change the initials DAC to DMC. The initials DC should be replaced with DMC for the following records: the Goleta, SBA, Yellow-green Vireo (2004-161); the Goleta, SBA, Sedge Wren (2004-162); and the Santa Barbara, SBA, Connecticut Warbler (2004-169). Note also that the Grace's Warbler (2004-145) was returning for its fourth, not third, winter. For Cassin's Sparrow, MJM is cited for contributing photos, but the published photos are from MMe. The citation for the Stonechat should read Sullivan and Kershner.

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