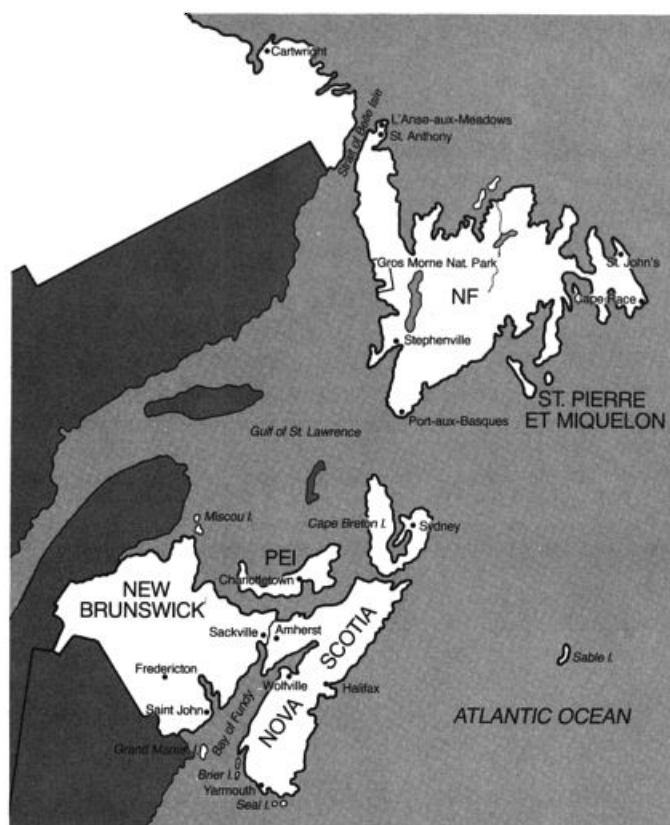


# The Spring Season

March 1 - May 31, 1989

## ATLANTIC PROVINCES REGION

Blake Maybank



Map Illustrations/Denise L. O'Brien

This was my first report as Regional Editor. I was initially concerned that the spring migration might offer relatively little grist for the mill—autumn is typically more exciting in the Maritimes. I need not have worried. Many trends and tendencies emerged among regular species, and there were interesting rarities. Reporting was good from Nova Scotia, Saint-Pierre et Miquelon, and eastern Newfoundland, but only fair everywhere else.

The spring weather was largely benign, with virtually no major unpleasant storms, and no repeat of the particular weather pattern that had brought Newfoundland's large influx of Greater Golden-Plovers in 1988. The last half of May was particularly pleasant, with many warm sunny days owing to a southwestern flow of air: good for the migrants, but poor for migrant watching. The vanguard of the warbler and flycatcher migration was therefore a few days ahead of schedule. For example, on May 26 in Nova Scotia, all the provinces's breeding species of warblers (22) and flycatchers (seven) were heard singing, something usually not possible until the first week of June.

The winter just past was also relatively temperate—which, if equally true somewhat farther south, could

explain an apparent population rebound in some species that overwinter well north of the tropics. Many observers reported increases in Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, and Song Sparrow.

With respect to this spring's vagrants, rarity-chasers were most successful in Nova Scotia and St. Pierre et Miquelon; Newfoundland birders complained of unusually slim pickings. And since you asked, I indeed just missed the outstanding event of the season (see the first S.A. below). But that is another story for another day . . .

**ABBREVIATIONS** — S.P.M. = the French islands of Saint Pierre et Miquelon.

**LOONS TO CORMORANTS** — Of the 6 reports of Red-throated Loons, 12 at Cape Enrage, NB, Apr. 16 was a good number (fide HD). It was an unremarkable spring for Com. Loons, with few major concentrations reported; 23 at Louis Head Beach, NS, Mar. 13 (DY) was a typical count. After a winter that saw lower numbers of grebes than usual, it was good to have 52 Horned Grebes at Black Point, NS, Mar. 4, with 70+ around the Blandford Peninsula, NS, Mar. 24 (G & JT). Only five reports of 28 Red-necked Grebes in Nova Scotia

To quote from the autumn 1988 West Indies Regional summary: "... the Lesser Antilles may serve as the portal for trans-oceanic invasions of African birds, such as Cattle Egret, Western Reef-Heron, Little Egret, and possibly others." They may indeed. This year, during the Region's annual spring overshoot of migrating herons, three different **Little Egrets** were discovered in Nova Scotia, doubling the previous North American (and Canadian) total.

On Apr. 16, at Sambro, NS, a heron that had been present since early April was identified by PM as a Little Egret. The bird remained until Apr. 30, and was observed closely and well by many. In addition to its plumes (which it retains for only a brief period of the year, unfortunately), it differed from the similar Snowy Egret as follows: thicker bill; slightly heavier head with more extended "chin"; lores straw-yellow, not bright yellow, fading and become grayer anteriorly as its stay progressed; upper mandible blackish-gray, with the basal 2/3 of the lower mandible medium-gray; the yellow of the feet not extending up the leg at all. In behavior it was more sedate than the Snowy, stirring the bottom by foot-shuffling; its build was more like that of a Little Blue Heron.

The head plumes clinched its identification as a Little Egret, but its racial origins are much more open to question. The taxonomy of Little Egret is intricate and unresolved. (A full discussion of the various races of *Egretta garzetta* relative to the Sambro bird is in the spring 1989 issue of *Nova Scotia Birds*.) The present conclusion is that the Sambro individual was of the Eurasian race *E. g. garzetta*, despite the yellow lores.

On Apr. 25, PM and IM found a 2nd Little Egret at Round Bay, NS. It had head plumes, and the same behavior as the Sambro bird. The bird was wary, and not seen or photographed as well as the former individual. Finally, FL and JT found a 3rd bird on Bon Portage I., NS, on May 22-24. This bird associated with a small group of Snowy Egrets at a recently established nesting colony. Although only one plume remained, other field marks and actions also confirmed the identification.

Furthermore a report has been received from a resident of Brier I., NS, who mentioned having seen a small white egret with 2 head plumes in the spring of 1988.

The previous North American records were of two different spring birds in Newfoundland and an over-summering bird at Cacouna, Quebec. While any or all



Little Egret at Sambro, Nova Scotia, April 20, 1989. Fourth North American record. Well illustrated here are the two long filamentous head plumes, and the lack of yellow extending up the back of the tarsus. Photograph/Ian A. McLaren/VIREO.

of these earlier birds could have been displaced from Europe, it is perhaps more likely that those in Nova Scotia had flown north from the Caribbean, having been previously displaced there from their winter range in Africa. The 1983 Western Reef-Heron at Nantucket, MA, fits in with this pattern as well. In summary, Ian McLaren states: "Whatever their origin, it is clear that never again can we look casually at small white egrets. Adds to the fun, I think."

was less encouraging, with one a flock of 12 at Hemeon's Head Apr. 12 (DY)

In the "some people just live right" department was the astonishing dry-land observation of a **Yellow-nosed Albatross**, the 3rd for Nova Scotia (FL, IM, ph.). The observers were strolling the beach on Seal I. after a long day's birding May 28 when the bird glided in, made a few passes, and then left. This was likely the same bird seen by local fishermen May 24 two miles west of the island. The only Cory's Shearwater reported was one on George's Bank, NS, May 27 (Raymond d'Entremont). Good numbers of the common shearwaters made it into the reporting period. At Portugal Cove South, NF, May 29, there were 40 Greater, seven Sooty, and seven Manx shearwaters (BMT, JW). Farther south there were hundreds of Sooty and Greater shearwaters on George's Bank, NS, in mid-May. On the earlier date of Apr. 27, 10 Manx Shearwaters were spotted off the n.w. coast of S.P.M. (RE).

Cormorants of both species continued to do well. Great Cormorants have apparently begun breeding on Green I. off Port Hebert, NS, for the first time (DY).

**HERONS** — American Bitterns seem to be holding their own in Newfoundland with regular, albeit scattered, sightings (fide BMT). Great Blue Herons away from their regular haunts on the mainland and the Codroy Valley of Newfoundland were one Apr. 21-23 at St. John's, NF (BMT, DP), and a very lost bird at Goose Bay, Labrador, May 19 (MBT). There were at least five Great Egrets in Nova Scotia this spring, including one in Halifax Apr. 30-May 2 that became a celebrity, making front-page news in the local papers as well as a spot on the evening TV broadcasts.

There were the usual Snowy Egrets this spring as well. One was at S.P.M. Apr. 24-May 8 (RE, ph.), with another at Mary's Point, NB, May 5-7 (RW). There were 8 mainland reports of Snowy Egret in Nova Scotia, but not all were critically separated from Little Egret, which must now be done. The 3 pairs on Bon Portage I. were definitely Snowy Egrets; they were confirmed as breeding there last year, and thus constitute Atlantic Canada's only breeding colony. Other expected spring heron-family overshoots in Nova Scotia were one Cattle Egret and three Little Blue Herons; all arrived in April. At least one Little Blue Heron was also in New Brunswick.

## S.A.

Every spring a very few sightings of Snow Goose can be expected in the Region in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. This year's invasion of Snow Geese was unprecedented, and is recorded here in detail. The great majority of the sightings were from New Brunswick: from Apr. 16 to May 14, between 75 and 120 birds on the Shepody River near Riverside-Albert, 80% immature, and including two blue morph (RW, HD); a flock of 35 at Jemseg Apr. 16 (fide PP); 20 at Sussex Apr. 21 (fide HD); 34 (all immatures) at Young's Cove Apr. 21 (ST, OL); 53 (all immatures) at Upper Coverdale Apr. 21, remaining several weeks (ST, OL); 100+ at Frog Lake until May 9 (fide PP); a flock of 65 at the Turtle Creek Outlet near Moncton in the first week of May (RW); 14 (all immatures) at Waterside between Apr. 20 and May 14 (RW, ST); several uncounted flocks along the St. John R. Valley (RW).

Nova Scotia had many fewer geese by comparison, but still many more than normal: one at Glace Bay Beach Mar. 16 (Edie MacLeod); one adult with 4000 Canada Geese at Chezzetcook Inlet for the last few days

of March (L & PP), a flock of eight in a field near Canning Apr. 10-16; one immature at Economy Marsh Apr. 18-May 8 (FS); two to three others farther west in the Minas Basin at the same time (fide FS). Finally, in Labrador where they may be more regular, three birds were seen at Lake Melville May 14-15 (BMt, JW).

These birds undoubtedly spilled over from the "Greater" Snow Goose population that normally migrates through Quebec, centered on Cap Tourmente. Perhaps they were displaced by the prevailing SW winds in mid-April. On the other hand, the invasion may have been owing to the recent increase in this population, in which case we may experience such invasions more regularly in the future.

**WATERFOWL** — Brant are regular in a few locations in Nova Scotia in winter and spring; Little Harbour on the south shore is a less usual location, but a flock there built up to 355 birds by Apr. 2, with the last 80 leaving around Apr. 23 (DY).

An extralimital Wood Duck was at St. John's, NF, May 24 (BMt, PL), while an early male arrived at Miquelon, S.P.M., Mar. 26 to find all the ponds still frozen—it wandered among the houses of the village of Miquelon, and became dinner. Another Wood Duck, not knowing the fate of its predecessor, showed up on S.P.M. on May 24 (RE). Two Eurasian Green-winged Teal were at Greenwich, NS, Mar. 11-20 (m.ob.).

Mallards appear to be more regular in Labrador than on the island of Newfoundland, where they are rare. Mactavish noted 5 pairs in late May on Lake Melville, near Goose Bay, Labrador. The overwintering N. Shoveler at Yarmouth was last seen Mar. 11 (BD, BMt). Tingley states that there has been a large increase in the numbers of shovelers in New Brunswick this spring.

The only Redhead reported this spring was one at Lower Jemseg, NB, May 3 (HD). An impressive flock of Greater Scaup was of 1000+ at the East River of Pictou, NS, Mar. 25 (BD, L & PP). Elsewhere in Nova Scotia, there were at least 12 reports totalling another 500+ birds, representing a fine recovery for the Greater Scaup from previous lean springs. Good concentrations of Com. Eider were of 4000 migrants at Cape St. Mary's, NF, Apr. 16 (BMt, JW), and 12,000+ at Sambro, NS, Apr. 23 (fide L & PP). Many other reports of flocks of lesser size suggested a continuing recovery of Common Eider in the Region, especially in Nova Scotia. The only King Eider reported was a near-adult male at Cape Sable, NS, May 28 (IM, FL). There were some good numbers of scoters reported from Nova Scotia, with 4000 Black Scoters in Green Bay Mar. 4 (John Cohrs), 1500 Surf Scoters at the same location May 17, and scattered hundreds of White-winged Scoters from the shores of Cape Breton I. Only Nova Scotia reported any Barrow's Goldeneyes, with 5 sightings totalling 18 individuals. A good-sized flock of 162 Bufflehead was at Bear River, NS, Mar. 12 (fide L & PP).

**RAPTORS** — It was a good spring in Nova Scotia for Turkey Vulture, with 6 sightings of nine to 17 birds. Bald Eagles and N. Harriers were widely reported in Nova Scotia. A Cooper's Hawk at Cow Bay, NS, May 18 (PM) was a good find for a spring otherwise unremarkable for accipiters. Rare anywhere in Nova Scotia, a Red-shouldered Hawk at Gunning Cove May 28 (DY) was a first for the local area. Another was more timely on Mar. 23 at Petite Riviere, NS (fide IM). The only other record was of one at Sheffield, NB, May 3 (fide PP). At least two Golden Eagles were sighted in remote areas of the Cape Breton Highlands, NS, in early spring (FL, BD, IM). Could they be breeding?

Although technically the following observation occurred outside the Region, it was definitely a record of note. The following information is extracted from a report by Alan Longhurst of the Bedford Institute of Oceanography in Dartmouth, NS.

"A male **Hobby** came aboard the Canadian research ship *Baffin* at 44N 41W on May 9, 1989, and remained 6 days with the ship at that location, about 320 miles east of St. John's [NF]. It captured Leach's Storm-Petrels



(which are larger than its normal prey) with some difficulty, especially on days when seas were heavy. It used typical falcon hunting techniques, though its rapid stoops were shallow and from no more than 200 feet. It was indifferent to approach until the last day of its stay, when it became extremely wary and obviously ready to depart again; we judged the probability of its reaching land to be high.

"At rest, the wings were noticeably longer than the tail, and the bird much slimmer than a small Peregrine would appear to be. This individual was very dark (perhaps of the northern race), with very prominent black stripes (not bars) on breast and belly. Chestnut thighs were observable, but not prominent. Flight was very fast, with rapid wing-beats, and the wings relatively longer than any North American falcon."

It is surmised the bird was blown off-course during its northward migration from Africa. But where did it go from the ship?

The Peregrine Falcon reintroduction program in New Brunswick is bearing fruit, or more precisely, fledglings. On the harbor bridge in Saint John one pair (banded male from Fundy N.P., wild female) have hatched at least two young. In Fundy, N.P. itself, the starting location of the reintroduction program, a pair had 4 eggs in their nest by May 16. The male, arriving this year Mar. 30, is 5 years old, and was hatched at Fundy N.P. The female is wild, and has been mated to the male for 2 years. There is also a 3rd nest at an undisclosed location in s. New Brunswick which is also successful so far. There were 4 reports of non-nesting Peregrine, one each in

Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and SPM (Peregrine nesting report *fide* PP, BD, RW).

From Mar. 15–Apr. 3 there was one white and one dark Gyrfalcon at St. John's, NF (m.ob.). Another (morph?) was at Riverview, NB, on Apr. 10 (*fide* HD), while the overwintering bird at Grant Pré, NS, was last seen Apr. 6.

**GROUSE TO ALCIDS**—An albino Ruffed Grouse at Terra Nova N.P., NF, Apr. 26 was notable (Bruce Bradbury, ph.). A Wild Turkey found dead on the Trans-Canada Hwy east of Fredricton, NB, was of unknown origin (*fide* PP). The only known release site in New Brunswick is Grand Manan I.

A **Yellow Rail** was at Amherst Pt. May 21, for one of very few Nova Scotia records (BF). An Am. Coot Apr. 25 in S.P.M. was both rare and early (RE). A few Sandhill Cranes are reported every spring, and may yet be found to nest somewhere in the Region. This year two were seen in flight near St. John's, NF, May 29 (*fide* BMT), while one was reported near Scotch Village, NS (*fide* IM).

In a tiny echo of last spring, a single **Greater Golden-Plover** was at S.P.M. Apr. 25 (JD, FU). Piping Plovers are just hanging on in Newfoundland. One, believed to be a male, was at the traditional Cape Freels location May 20 (RB). An **American Avocet** was the shorebird of the spring in New Brunswick, at Harvey May 20–23 (*fide* HD).

In the "if only we could have seen it" category, a wildlife officer reported a **Whimbrel** on Outer Cove, NF, on the remarkable date of Mar. 18. The observer simply assumed that the large sickle-billed shorebird was a Whimbrel, but his description could also apply to Eurasian Curlew, or to the Eurasian race of Whimbrel (*fide* BMT). It could have been equally interesting to have seen the medium-sized shorebird encountered at Ferryland, NF, at the same time. A "**Eurasian**" **Whimbrel** was seen one day only at Hartlen's Pt., NS, May 10 (FL, PM *et al.*), for the 6th or 7th provincial record of this race. Eight Whimbrels at S.P.M. May 15 made an unusually large flock for spring (JD, FU); they were unfortunately not identified as to race. A **Marbled Godwit** at Sand Pt., NS, May 26 (FL, BMy) was almost certainly the same bird seen at the same location in 3 of the previous 4 springs. Two Ruffs were seen this spring, a full breeding-plumaged male at West Chez-zetcook, NS, May 11–13 (FL, BD *et al.*), and a female at Sand Point, NS, May 26 (FL, BMy).

American Woodcocks were well reported on the mainland, while one displaying at Rocky Harbour, NF, Apr. 14 was unusual (*fide* RB), as well as one caught in a poacher's net (and released) on S.P.M. May 8 (*fide* RE). A pair of Wilson's Phalaropes was seen at the North Amherst Marsh, NS, May 26 (BMy, FL). They likely breed here, but firm evidence is still lacking. Indicative of the continued expansion of this species, at least five different Wilson's Phalaropes were seen in New Brunswick (*fide* PP).

It was a good spring for Laughing Gull, with 5 reports: one at Dartmouth, NS, May 10 (m.ob.); one at South Harbour, NS, May 13 (FL, IM); two from the Bluenose ferry May 15 (Hubert Hall); one at Black's Harbour, NB, May 21 (ST); and two on Grand Manan I., NB, May 22 (*fide* ST). The 70 overwintering Com. Black-headed Gulls in St. John's, NF, had departed by May 7 (BMT). An ad. Mew (Common) Gull in St. John's, NF, was last seen Mar. 24 (RB), after its 3rd successful overwintering. Considering how regular Mew Gulls have become in Newfoundland, S.P.M.'s first was long overdue; it was seen Apr. 12–13 (RE, ph.). Some 18,000 Herring Gulls (95% adult) at the St. John's, NF, dump represented a typical spring migration count (BMT). At least six different Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported in the Avalon Peninsula, NF (BMT, RB), where they are definitely now routine, while another was in S.P.M. (RE). The rarest gull of the spring was the **Ivory Gull** at Antigonish, NS, Apr. 22–25 (*fide* RGBB). Far from the nearest breeding colony, a Com. Murre at Deer Arm, NF, May 25 (Isabel Learmonth) furnished one of very few local records.

**DOVES TO FLYCATCHERS**—Nova Scotia's 7th **White-winged Dove** was at a feeder in Dartmouth May 18–20 (m.ob., ph.). Earlier Canadian records were of the southwestern race *Z. a. mearnsi*, whereas the bright buffy throat and upper breast of this bird suggested the Caribbean race *Z. a. asiatica*. Photos are being circulated for analysis.

As many as 10 Snowy Owls were present in the White Hills of St. John's, NF (m.ob.). The enigmatic N. Hawk Owl was seen at Gander, NF, Mar. 2 (BMT). Boreal Owls have always been difficult to find and see. This spring, hard work and good luck paid off. In Newfoundland there were 2 pairs at Butterpot P.P., one incubating in a nest hole in mid-May (BMT, m.ob.). At least five different calling birds were tallied near Carmen-ville (*fide* RB). Another was calling at Bellevue P.P. May 23 (KK). Finally, a single bird near Torbay was regularly taking rats and mice from around a bird feeder from early March onward (*fide* RB). On the mainland, a concerted effort in Cape Breton, NS, was productive. The following individuals were noted: one calling at Neill's Harbour Mar. 24 (BD, L & PP); one heard and seen at Bay St. Lawrence Apr. 15 (BD, L & PP).

Early and unusual was a Com. Nighthawk at S.P.M. May 5 (FU, JD). The Front St. Chimney in Wolfville, NS, is home to over 250 pairs of Chimney Swifts. The chimney, attached to an old dairy building, was due to be torn down as part of a



White-winged Dove at Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, May 18, 1989. Seventh record for the province. Photograph/Ian A. McLaren.

development project. However, persistent and polite public action resulted in a decision by the town to save the chimney, and make it the focus of a picnic-park dedicated to the memory of the renowned Nova Scotia ornithologist Robie Tufts. Occasionally we win some . . .

The only unusual woodpecker this spring was a Red-headed Woodpecker at Mary's Point, NB, May 24 (Dave Christie). An extralimital E. Wood-Pewee was at S.P.M. May 31 (RE).

**SWALLOWS TO SHRIKES**—The bird of the spring for the Region was the **Common House-Martin** discovered on S.P.M. May 26, remaining to the end of the period (RE *et al.*, ph.). It was discovered in a flock of Tree and Barn swallows. This was only the 3rd or 4th record for North America, the others having been in Alaska. Given the amount of ocean traffic between Canada and Europe passing to the south of Newfoundland and S.P.M., a ship-assist cannot be ruled out. A Purple Martin on S.P.M. May 31 (RE) pales by comparison. Two N. Rough-winged Swallows stayed for 3 weeks at Springfield, near Fredricton, NB (*fide* PP). In Nova Scotia they are more rare; one was seen on Brier I. May 20 (IM), while two were at Bear River May 21 (BMy). A Cliff Swallow was seen at Cheeseman P.P., NF, May 28 (KK).

Red-breasted Nuthatches were breeding widely and abundantly in s.e. New Brunswick (*fide* RW). Elsewhere they were merely common. Winter Wrens were up appreciably in numbers everywhere in the Region; the mild winter certainly must have been a factor. I personally recorded as many as 30 in a day. The overwintering **Carolina Wren** at Tusket, NS, was last seen Apr. 11 (S. Bowler).



Of all the species helped by the mild winter, none has responded as well as the Golden-crowned Kinglet. Throughout the Region they were abundant in appropriate habitat, with their high-pitched reedy song being heard everywhere (for those observers who haven't lost the upper register). In Breeding Atlas Squares with good coniferous forest cover, I conservatively estimated a minimum of 100 pairs/km<sup>2</sup>, with the true total certainly higher in some cases. This forecasts a fantastic fall flight for 1989, if breeding success is good. As BMt said for all of us, "you heard it here first folks." Ruby-crowned Kinglet numbers seemed up as well; most reporters suggested an increase.

There were rumors of at least five **Varied Thrushes** in Nova Scotia this spring, but only two were confirmed. One was at Boutlier's Pt. Mar. 9-24 (m.ob.), while the 2nd was at a feeder in White Rock for several days in late March (R. Newell). Northern Mockingbirds may be increasing in Nova Scotia, or perhaps they are just being more readily discovered through atlassing. There were over a dozen reports from the province, including several on territory. They are being reported more frequently in Prince Edward Island as well (fide GH). The overwintering Brown Thrasher at Winterton, NF, was present until at least mid-March (fide BMt). There were 3 spring reports from Nova Scotia.

St John's, NF, had two or three Bohemian Waxwings in late March (RB). After a very quiet winter for this species, only one N. Shrike was reported, at Lobster Cove Head, NF, Apr. 13 (Hank Deichmann).

**VIREOS TO SPARROWS** — Record early was a Solitary Vireo Mar. 29 at Tusket, NS; it could have overwintered as well (fide Keith Keddy). The only unusual vireo of the spring was a Warbling Vireo at Brier I. May 22 (CS).

An overwintering Orange-crowned Warbler was at a suet feeder at Herring Cove, NS, Mar. 8, providing the first March record for the province (fide CS). There are few Northern Parula records for eastern Newfoundland, and most are for the fall, so one at Cape Freels May 20 was a good find (RB). Quite remarkable was a **Yellow-rumped "Audubon's" Warbler** in St. John's Mar. 24 (KK, BMt et al., ph.). It was thought to have overwintered. This was the 3rd Regional record, the first two having been from Nova Scotian offshore islands. Nova Scotia's 6th **Black-throated Gray Warbler** was well-studied May 19 by Peter Ross et al. on Sable Island. The favorable winter assisted the survival of a number of the Pine Warblers that invaded the Region last autumn. Farthest north, three were seen in St. John's, NF, until late March (m.ob.), with one singing in the nearby White Hills Apr. 8 (RB). In Nova Scotia, five or more were reported from various locations, including some in full song. Two Pine Warblers on Seal I May 29 were spring overshoots (IM).

A number of N. Cardinals overwintered in Nova Scotia, and we once again hoped for a confirmation of breeding here; there has been a 10-year hiatus since the last confirmed breeding record. An extralimital Rose-breasted Grosbeak was at Catalina, NF, in early May (fide RB). The only Blue Grosbeak ever to have overwintered in Nova Scotia was last seen Apr. 13, then in full ad. ♂ plumage (Marion Graves). Only one spring arrival was noted, making for a very poor year indeed. Indigo Buntings were similarly down in numbers, with only 6 sightings in Nova Scotia. The overwintering ♀ Dickcissel at RW's feeder near Mary's Point, NB, was last seen May 13.

A Clay-colored Sparrow (a species that may yet nest in New Brunswick) was at Lamec, NB, May 19 (HD). A wintering Field Sparrow made it through to at least Mar. 19 near Wolfville, NS. A Vesper Sparrow discovered Feb. 5 at Shepody, NB, was last seen Mar. 5 (ST, RW, OL). A ♂ **Lark Bunting** near Kentville May 22 (Joe Robertson) was Nova Scotia's 12th,

the 4th in spring. Atlassing is revealing that Fox Sparrows breed fairly commonly along the more windswept edges of the eastern and southern shores of Nova Scotia (BD, BMy).

**ICTERINES, FINCHES** — It was a fine spring for Yellow-headed Blackbirds, with at least 6 different reports from the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia, and 3 reports from Prince Edward Island (fide Geoff Hogan). A Com. Grackle at Rocky Harbour, NF, May 24 furnished only the 3rd local record in the last 10 years (fide RB). Seven Orchard Orioles were in Nova Scotia, a very good number; six of these were from offshore islands. In Prince Edward Island, the numbers of N. Orioles are increasing (fide GH). The **Brambling** in Tusket Falls, NS, stayed until at least Mar. 6.

Although winter finches have been reported to be scarce throughout the northeast, the picture is more complicated in this Region. In Newfoundland Pine Grosbeaks were fairly common and widespread, but there were few reports from the mainland. Purple Finch numbers were reasonably good throughout. It should come as no surprise that House Finches are expanding in the Region, particularly in New Brunswick. A group of seven in Moncton, NB, Mar. 15 provided the highest count for s.e. New Brunswick (fide HD), and they have been confirmed as breeding there (fide BD). Charlottetown, PEI, hosted two House Finches in April and May (fide GH), while Nova Scotia had 8 reports of a total of 10 birds, including 2 pairs. They will soon be breeding here too, I expect. Pine Siskins were common in New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and the northern half of Nova Scotia, moving into the southern half of Nova Scotia in late April. Red Crossbills were scarce everywhere.

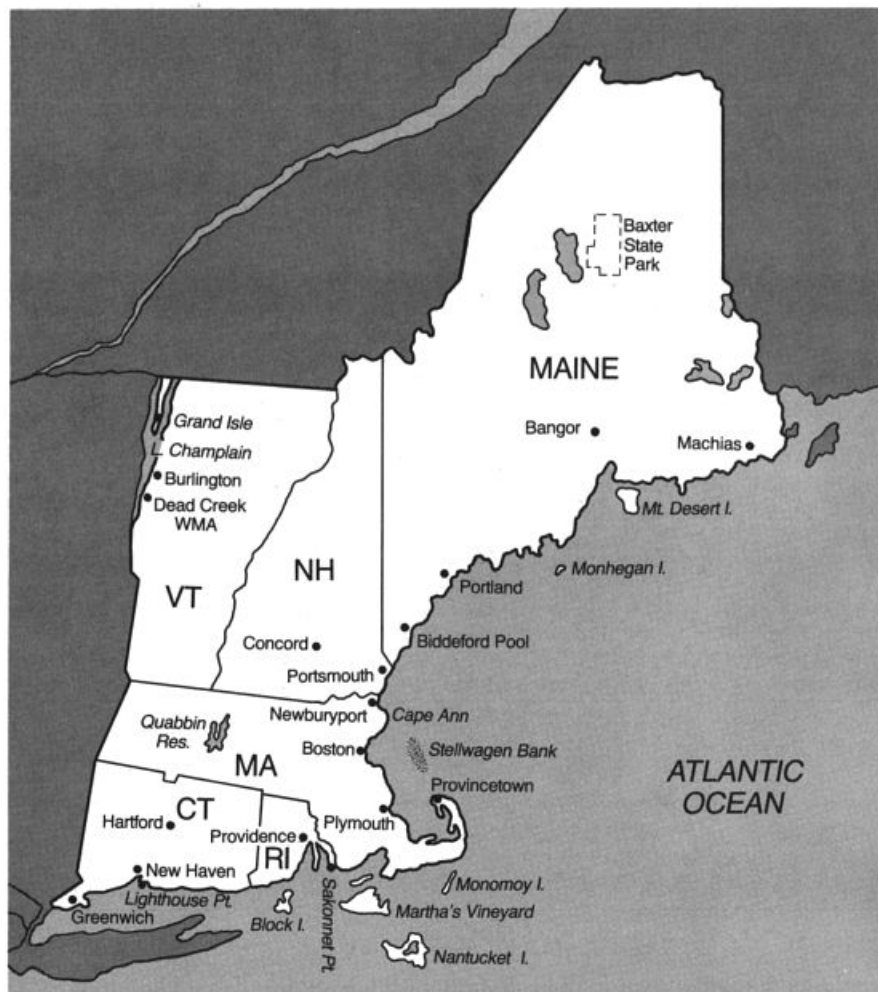
Since July/August 1988 there have been remarkable numbers of White-winged Crossbills throughout the Region, especially New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, central and northern Nova Scotia, and throughout Newfoundland. This was apparently owing entirely to a memorable cone-crop, with Black, Red, and White Spruce busting out all over. Breeding activity (territorial males) and juvenile birds have been detected steadily since last summer; the singing stopped only in late April/early May. In Newfoundland the heaviest nesting was from January to April, while in parts of the mainland the crossbills apparently have bred continuously since last August, shifting from one species of spruce to another as one seed crop was depleted. It is not beyond imagining a pair raising 3 or 4 broods in the past 9 months. One can only speculate regarding the numbers of crossbills involved in this invasion, but it surely is in the tens of millions. And it looks as if another good cone crop is developing.

Common Redpolls were not encountered in any numbers, although several singing on the highlands of Cape Breton I. were of note. A single Hoary Redpoll (race?) was at Aquaforte, NF, Mar. 24 (RB). Evening Grosbeaks were hard to come by, especially in e. Newfoundland, with the lowest numbers in years. They were not much more common elsewhere, but were most likely to be encountered in rural Nova Scotia.

**CONTRIBUTORS (subregional editors in boldface)** — R.G.B. Brown, Roger Burrows, Dave Curry, Brian Dalzell, Halton Dalzell, Joel Detcheverry, Roger Etcheberry, Bernard Forsythe, Geoff Hogan, Ken Knowles, Fulton Lavender, Oscar LeBlanc, Paul Linegar, Bruce Mactavish (BMt), Ian McLaren, William Montevecchi, Linda & Peter Payzant, Peter McLeod, Peter Pierce, Francis Spalding, Richard Stern, Clarence Stevens, Jim Taylor, Stuart Tingley, Gordon & Judy Tufts, Frank Urtiz-Berea, Rob Walker, John Wells, David Young. — **BLAKE MAYBANK (BMy), Site 14A, Box 43, RR#4, Armdale, NS B3L 4J4.**

# NEW ENGLAND REGION

Simon Perkins



The dry weather that prevailed throughout the winter continued until late March when, finally, the pattern broke. Precipitation and temperatures, thereafter, averaged near normal, although in Boston on March 28 the mercury soared to a record 81 degrees, as the winds swung solidly into the south. Predictably, those winds brought with them a goodly collection of early migrants, the most conspicuous of which were scores of Snow Geese.

Southern pioneer species continued a general expansion toward new northern frontiers, and a virtually invisible raptor migration was either very gradual or the hawk "fronts" simply missed traditional lookouts.

The brightest stars of the spring included Swallow-tailed and Mississippi kites, an intriguing *Myiarchus* flycatcher, and first state records for Mountain Bluebird, Boat-tailed Grackle, and Common Chaffinch.

**LOONS TO IBISES** — Forty-five Red-throated Loons tallied at Sherwood Island S.P., Westport, CT, Mar. 3 made a very good count for Long Island Sound (FM). Single Red-throateds, unusual inland, were found on the Connecticut R. at Hinsdale, NH, Apr. 11 (JC), and in Becket, MA, on the late date of May 13 (RL).

For a species that otherwise appears to be declining, the roughly 80 Pied-billed Grebes reported from Massachusetts and 30 from New Hampshire were encouraging. Seventy Horned Grebes were found in Boston Harbor Mar. 12 (T.A.S.L.). While Red-necked Grebes were reported in average numbers coastally this spring, 31 at Shelburne Bay, Lake

Champlain, VT, were unusual (V.I.N.S.), as was the late individual that lingered at Revere Beach, MA, through the end of the spring season May 31 (L. Rogers). Two single Western Grebes made appearances in Rye, NH, Mar. 22 (A. & B. Harper) and Hull, MA, Apr. 9–12 (J. Cameron).

The only tubenoses reported this spring were 19 N. Fulmars on Cox's Ledge, RI, Mar. 11 (J. Magill), and "above average" numbers of Sooty Shearwaters seen off Nantucket I., MA, during the latter half of May (B. Perkins). An ad. Am. White Pelican discovered in Greenwich, CT, May 29 (L. Brinker) was photographed before it flew out of sight eastbound along the Connecticut shore (more details to follow in summer report).

Extralimital Great Egrets were single birds in Franklin, VT, Apr. 14 (P. Mullen), and another found beyond the northernmost colony (Scarborough, ME) in Thomaston, ME, May 28 (D. Reimer). An imm. Little Blue Heron in Wayland, MA, Mar. 30 (RKW) was especially early, and an adult at Petit Manan Pt., Steuben, ME, was far north of its range May 29 (RW). Tricolored Herons were reported from Connecticut (two), Rhode Island (seven), and Massachusetts (eight), and a very early Green-backed Heron appeared in Randolph, MA, Apr. 10 (S. Higginbotham). One hundred twenty-six Glossy Ibises in Ipswich, MA, Mar. 18 (RHS) far eclipsed any other count, and single Glossies seemed out of place in the White Mts. of New Hampshire at Franconia Apr. 5 (C. Foss) and Ossipee Apr. 30 (C. Boyle). Three White Ibises made their way to Massachusetts this spring. On Mar. 21, following a spell of heavy rains, a single adult was found feeding in a

flooded field in Middleboro (T. Aversa), where it was joined Mar. 23 by a second adult (W. Drew). They both disappeared Mar. 29. The 3rd, an immature, appeared briefly in Weymouth Apr. 17 (D. Breen).

**WATERFOWL** — Always a pleasant surprise in New England, especially in spring, Tundra Swans were discovered in 3 locations, all in Massachusetts: two in Pittsfield Mar. 23 (RL), six in Concord Apr. 15 (M. Noland), and two in Middleboro Apr. 18–19 (WRP). First found last fall in New Bedford, MA, two Greater White-fronted Geese (apparently of the Greenland form) and one Barnacle Goose, seen off and on either there or nearby in Rhode Island, were last reported Mar. 11 (L. Taylor) and Apr. 7 (*fide* DE) in Kingston, RI, respectively. Another (?) Greenland White-fronted made a brief stop in Topsfield, MA, Apr. 12 (JM). With the strong SW winds Mar. 27–29 came many Snow Geese. A week prior, an observer counted 476 Snows migrating north above the Connecticut River, from Vernon, VT (JC), but when the main flocks came, that total paled. Apparently, most of the birds passed well inland with single counts during this 3-day period ranging from 1070 over Mansfield, CT (W. Burke), 1000+ over Pomfret, VT (C. Wood), 5200 over Quabbin Res. in central Massachusetts (C. Quinlin), to what must have been an amazing show of “thousands in wave after wave” passing over Missisquoi N.W.R. at the northern end of Lake Champlain, VT (J. Gallegos).

The high count for Brant this spring was of 2579 in Boston Harbor Mar. 12 (T.A.S.L.), but it must have been fun to see the 70 (rarely seen inland) Brant at Quabbin Res. May 19 (T. Gagnon). Small Canada Geese thought to be of the “Richardson’s” race were reported from Grand Isle on Lake Champlain, VT, Mar. 21 (E. Henning) and from Concord, MA, Mar. 15–24 (RAF). Eight Eurasian Green-winged Teal were identified this spring: one from Connecticut, one from Rhode Island, and six from Massachusetts. Six Eurasian Wigeon records included one each in Maine, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, and three in Connecticut.

In w. Massachusetts, Seth Kellogg described this year’s waterfowl flight as “great.” Observers there found Wood Duck, Green-winged Teal, N. Pintail, Blue-winged Teal, Gadwall, Canvasback, and Ring-necked Duck in numbers twice or three times those of that area’s 10-year average! High numbers of pintails were also reported from New Hampshire, and a single count of 80 in Sunderland, MA, was particularly noteworthy.

High spring counts of Canvasbacks included 300 in Cross Mills Pond, RI, Mar. 1 (D. Kraus) and 360 in Lakeville, MA, Mar. 11 (D. Davis). Comparable Ring-necked Duck totals included 200 in S. Hanson, MA, Mar. 25 (WRP) and 300 at Palmyra, ME, Apr. 23 (J. Hinds); Lesser Scaup made news with an intrepid individual “down East” at Petit Manan Pt., Steuben, ME, Mar. 29 (RW) and a surprisingly high count of 435 in Falmouth, MA, Apr. 16 (†SP). Perhaps this total should not be surprising; but not since earlier this century, when scaup hunting was still popular in New England and “bag” entries were available, have we had a clear picture of the local scaup species ratio.

Common Eider numbers remained low following a poor showing this winter, the high count being of 10,000+ off Chatham, MA, Mar. 19 (BN) in an area where totals some years have ranged into the hundreds of thousands. King Eiders were also scarce this past winter and the only individual reported this spring was a female at Nahant, MA, Mar. 12 (RHS). Harlequin Ducks lingering at the usual spots near the southern limit of their winter range included 38 at Martha’s Vineyard, MA, at least until Apr. 2 (VL), and 61 at Sachuest Pt., RI, Mar. 28 (S. Pelizza). The Nantucket, MA, Oldsquaws appeared to be just as numerous Mar. 21 as they had been in mid-winter when 200,000 were estimated (MH). About 2300

Black Scoters off Charlestown Beach, RI, represented the single highest scoter count; migrating Black and Surf scoters were estimated passing Petit Manan Pt., Steuben, ME, Apr. 25 (RW) each at a rate of about 400 per hour, and the largest concentration of White-winged Scoters was of 1000+ off Nantucket Mar. 21 (MH).

Noteworthy among the season’s six Barrow’s Goldeneyes was one at Essex Junction, VT (on a river that feeds into the southern end of Lake Champlain), Mar. 7 (T. Allen). The MAS/T.A.S.L. waterfowl census of Boston Harbor Mar. 12 included 1453 Com. Goldeneyes, 2350 Bufflehead, and 1361 Red-breasted Mergansers; 1100 Red-breasted Mergansers at Monomoy I. May 9 was a high count for that date.

In keeping with the rest of the waterfowl numbers from interior New England, Hooded Mergansers also appeared in healthy numbers this spring. Western Massachusetts reported a total of 306 (nearly 3 times that area’s 10-year average!) and New Hampshire reported roughly 220 (*fide* A.S.N.H.) not including a remarkable and “unprecedented” 246 in one count on the Connecticut River, at Hinsdale, Mar. 24 (JC).

**RAPTORS TO TURKEY** — The raptor scene this spring provided plenty of contrast. Although no significant migrant flights were witnessed, the continued (and increasingly frequent) appearance of kites in our Region buoyed hopes even on the slowest days; and the three species (Osprey, Bald Eagle, and Peregrine Falcon) that took most of the heat in the DDT years seem to be winning their comeback bids. Ospreys continued to increase in s.e. Massachusetts, where there are now 55 pairs on Martha’s Vineyard (A. Ben David), and this May a pair began closing the gap between the populations in s.e. Massachusetts and Maine when it set up shop in Marshfield. Thanks to rigorous hacking programs, Peregrines now nest in every New England state, and Bald Eagles have gained a strong foothold with a recently discovered nest in n. New Hampshire, the first in 40 years (*fide* D. DeLuca), and 2 pairs with chicks in central Massachusetts, the first breeding this century (*fide* B. Davis).

Raptor migration this spring was described as “very slow” and “very poor” by 2 discouraged devotees in Vermont and Massachusetts, and Frank Mantlik in Connecticut “Heard of no noteworthy movement. . . .” Seth Kellogg in Granville, MA, saw a total of 519 Broad-winged Hawks (usually the most numerous migrant) in 57 hours this year, versus twice that total in one day in 1986. The biggest day in Granville this year, Apr. 21, produced 117 Broad-winged, and Apr. 29 yielded 163 at Mt. Watatic in Ashburnham, MA (E.M.H.W.). As low as these numbers were, the migration was not entirely dull. A respectable tally of 250 Am. Kestrels was counted on Plum Island in Newburyport, MA, Apr. 27, and a few days later, May 4, 115 Sharp-shinned Hawks passed the same point (E.M.H.W.). And even though few Turkey Vultures were counted from designated hawk watches, they were still found to be increasing throughout New England. Some 367 were reported in w. Massachusetts (more than twice that region’s 10-year average); farther north, at least 75 were reported from New Hampshire, and 45 from Maine. Most unusual were vultures out over islands in Massachusetts, where three were seen together over Monomoy I. May 29 (D. Reid), and 10 together over the s.w. corner of Martha’s Vineyard Apr. 10 (W. Manter).

Cooper’s Hawks also appeared to be doing well, judging by at least 50 reports from Massachusetts alone this spring. Still very uncommon in New England, an ad. Golden Eagle spent the winter at Quabbin Res. and was last reported Mar. 19 (ML), and two other single Goldenes were seen at Eaglet (!), NH, Apr. 5 (C. Foss) and Mt. Agamenticus, ME, Mar. 27 (LP). A Rough-legged Hawk was late leaving Rockingham, VT, May 30 (WN).

But the real raptor highlights involved kites. Now of annual occurrence in new England, one Am. Swallow-tailed Kite and

four Mississippi Kites were reported this spring. Unfortunately, only one of the reports was accompanied by details. Had other reports included at least age and time, they might have helped in sorting out any possible overlap. The Am. Swallow-tailed put in a typically brief appearance in Truro, MA, May 9 (M. Tuttle), and the Mississippi Kite reports included a very early, well-described, first summer bird at Quicksand Pond, RI, Apr. 7 (*fide* DE), another the same day in Billerica, MA (K. Harte), one in Truro, MA, May 19 (C. Goodrich), and another in Tiverton, RI, May 21 (R. Conway).

The task of finding Spruce Grouse anywhere is difficult at best, so locating nine in the Region in one season (five in Vermont [BB, DC], two in New Hampshire [H. & B. Janeway, L. Barber], and two in Maine [GT]), was commendable! Wild Turkeys are "rapidly becoming more common" in Lincoln, ME (J. Hamlin), have a "profound stronghold" in n.w. Connecticut (FM), but are probably increasing nowhere in New England more rapidly than in Massachusetts. This spring's total of 303 from central and e. Massachusetts represented a sixfold increase over the 10-year average.

**RAILS TO SHOREBIRDS**—At the northern limit of their range in New England, four King Rails this spring (two in Massachusetts and two in Connecticut) were noteworthy, as was an exhausted Purple Gallinule that was captured and later released in Marshfield, MA, May 9 (*fide* D. Clapp). A Com. Moorhen and an Am. Coot, both rare in n. Maine, were relocated in the same pond as last year in Easton May 21 (MT), and a wandering Sandhill Crane strayed far east of its normal flight path and touched down in Newbury, MA, May 21 (V. Yurkunas).

Three Lesser Golden-Plovers (don't forget to check their wing linings!) were spotted this spring, one in Rhode Island and two in Massachusetts; and two rare Wilson's Plovers were reported: one (unspecified sex) in Stratford, CT, May 3 (W. Wehtje) and a female in Westport, MA (same?), May 8–10 (†J. Hill).

Two Piping Plovers in Chatham, MA, Mar. 5 (R. Prescott) were the earliest on record in the state, and a large flock of 35 on Monomoy I., MA, Apr. 15 (BN) was probably composed mostly of migrants. Always rare inland, two Whimbrels were found in South Bay, VT, Apr. 30 (DC), and another was seen at South Windsor, CT, the same day (P. Desjardins). A Whimbrel of the Eurasian race (*N. p. phaeopus*) was identified by its white, dowitcher-like rump on Nantucket I., MA, Apr. 23–24 (M. Litchfield). Although this race is only a rare vagrant to the e. coast of North America, this individual represented the 3rd Nantucket record in about 10 years.

A Marbled Godwit was a nice spring find in Scarborough, ME, May 22 (W. Howes), as was a Western Sandpiper in coastal Rhode Island the same day (*fide* DE). Typically, the Westerns found on the e. coast in spring cut northwest across the continent to arctic Alaska well before they reach New England. A Ruff was found in Rhode Island May 13 (S. Hempstead), and at least four appeared in Newburyport Harbor, MA, between Apr. 17 and May 17 (v.o.).

This spring brought one of the biggest Com. Snipe shows to e. Massachusetts in several years. Heavy rains coincided with their passage, and large concentrations were encountered as they fed in flooded fields and pastures. Highest counts included 50+ in Bolton Apr. 4 (E. Salmela), 100+ the same day in Middleboro (RAF), 150+ in Newbury Apr. 2 (SP), and 300 in Middleboro Apr. 17 (WRP). The only notable phalarope report came from Port Clyde, ME, where on May 19, a very impressive 1500 Reds were counted (M. Plymire, *fide* JD).

**GULLS TO ALCIDS**—Little Gulls numbered three in Connecticut and seven in Massachusetts, and Com. Black-headed Gulls numbered two in Connecticut and eight to 12 in Massachusetts. According to a spring nest survey at Young Island on Lake Champlain, VT, the numbers of breeding Ring-

billed Gulls have continued to increase. The total on May 19 was roughly 13,000 pairs (V.I.N.S.). An ad Thayer's Gull, first discovered at the pier at Provincetown, MA, Jan. 16, was seen periodically until Mar. 5 (DL). Lesser Black-backed Gulls have become regular along the entire New England coast and are now being discovered more frequently inland as more observers tune in to them. Among the 11 reported this spring, three were found inland: Agawam, MA, Mar. 1 (H. Allen), Hadley, MA, Apr. 6 (C. Withgott), and West Bridgeport, VT, May 20 (A. Fenn). Surprisingly, more Glaucous Gulls were reported from inland localities (five in Massachusetts, two in New Hampshire, and one in Vermont) than from the coast. Caspian Tern reports included one in Connecticut, two in Rhode Island, and five in Massachusetts. As of mid-May, 2 pairs of Black Skimmers had returned to nest in Orleans, MA, at the n. limit of the species' range (S. Hecker).

Two Dovekies were reported, one off Ninigret N.W.R., RI, Mar. 12, and another found dead in Orleans, MA, Apr. 24 (E. Williams). Twenty-seven Razorbills made a good spring total on Cox's Ledge, RI, Mar. 11 (S. Haydock); and on Apr. 18, three breeding-plumaged Black Guillemots were noted off Marblehead, MA (RSH). Although guillemots have never been found breeding in Massachusetts, the potential is strong since they breed just to the north on the Isles of Shoals in New Hampshire, and much of the rocky north shore of Massachusetts provides adequate habitat.

**PARROTS TO WOODPECKERS**—Monk Parakeets continued to "thrive" in a colony of 50+ nesting birds in Bridgeport, CT (FM), and they may be facing some competition in coming years, since a pair of Black-hooded Parakeets has nested for the 2nd consecutive year at Sherwood Island State Park in Westport, CT (FM).

With new, scattered outbreaks of gypsy moths, Black-billed and Yellow-billed cuckoos enjoyed a productive spring. In Vermont, Black-billeds put on "quite a showing" (JC), while both species appeared in "good numbers" in Connecticut, and in nearly twice the average numbers in w. Massachusetts.

The last Snowy Owls reported in the Region were single birds at Logan airport Apr. 16 (N. Smith), and Provincetown, MA, Apr. 20 (†K. Jones). On Nantucket I., MA, the New England stronghold for the species, the resident Short-eared Owl population was holding steady at roughly 20 birds (K. Coombs). A mid-May Whip-poor-will census of the Miles Standish forest in Plymouth, MA, yielded a healthy total of 65 birds (G. D'Entremont). At Lincoln Hill, VT, a very early *Chaetura* swift on Apr. 9, reported as a Chimney Swift (W. Beecher), probably was, but. . .

Woodpeckers near the northern limit of their ranges included single Red-headed Woodpeckers at Dead Creek W.M.A., VT, May 20 (*fide* V.I.N.S.), and Monroe, NH, May 29, and Red-bellied Woodpeckers included three in c. Vermont (*fide* V.I.N.S.), one in Chester, NH (A. & B. Delorey), and another on Monhegan I., ME (J. Schultz). Woodpeckers near the southern limit of their ranges were a ♀ Black-backed Woodpecker in Cambridge, VT, May 5 (J. Guyette), and a pair of Black-backed at Island Pond, VT, May 6 (BB).

**FLYCATCHERS TO CROWS**—The first significant Eastern Phoebe numbers appeared Mar. 28, when 21 were noted on Plum Island, MA. Nearly 2 months later, on May 23, 40 Eastern Kingbirds were still migrating over Plum Island, as were 120 Bank Swallows (SP).

A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, discovered on Martha's Vineyard, MA, May 20 (*fide* WRP), was still there 11 days later, unlike the remarkable individual in Maine last summer, this bird showed no interest in nesting! A probable **Ash-throated**

**Flycatcher** was seen briefly in Stratford, CT, May 25 by an observer with experience with the species from the Southwest. Found in *Phragmites*, the bird was described as being sleek, slightly larger than a phoebe, with a medium-gray head, pale gray breast, and a very pale, yellowish wash on the belly (FM). Unfortunately, the bird could not be relocated, but it seems unlikely a Great Crested Flycatcher would have been foraging in a stand of *Phragmites* by the end of May.

Another component of the diurnal migration over Plum Island, MA, May 23 was 80 Blue Jays. Two days later, a flock of 24 was noted in "reverse" migration flying southwest over Kittery, Maine (LP). Migrant jay flocks are an annual, late May feature in coastal New England, and are probably composed primarily of individuals from maritime populations (T. Lloyd-Evans, pers. comm.). New Hampshire cornered the market on Gray Jays this spring with no fewer than 16 reported between Mar. 3 and May 30. These included two far south in Hancock, NH, Apr. 10 (DD). A single Fish Crow was at the species' northeastern outpost in Portland, ME, May 13 (K Gammons), and another was pushing the northern limits in S Londonderry, VT, Apr. 13 (WN).

**NUTHATCHES TO SHRIKES**—The extent to which certain forest passerines were reported this spring varied enormously. However, in all likelihood, this was more a function of the reporting system than a reflection of those species' migration patterns. Nuthatches, creepers, and kinglets were reported in w. Massachusetts in record numbers. Compared to that region's 10-year average, total reported numbers of Red-breasted Nuthatches, Brown Creepers, Golden-crowned Kinglets, and Ruby-crowned Kinglets increased respectively by 76%, 136%, 126%, and 159% (fide SK).

Since Carolina Wrens first began extending their range into New England their numbers, especially north of Connecticut and Rhode Island, have fluctuated dramatically. During a series of mild winters they increase in number, and progress northward, only to be set back again by one severe winter. This year they continued their latest and most extensive push yet. A bird was found in Scarborough, ME (F. Cyr), another one or two were noted on Appledore I., ME, in the Isles of Shoals (D. Holmes), two single birds were located in Hillsboro and Hookset, NH (fide DD), and at least four birds were reported in Vermont, including a pair that nested in the Champlain Valley in Shelburne (B. Racuser).

The New England outlook on the E. Bluebird's post-DDT comeback looked brighter than ever this spring, but the real bluebird story came from Vermont. A ♂ **Mountain Bluebird** was discovered Apr. 2 at Grand Isle on Lake Champlain, where, to the delight of many, it remained until Apr. 8 (R. Lavallee, m.ob). This was the first state record and 2nd for the Region. Incredibly, the first regional Mt. Bluebird was captured after it landed aboard a research vessel 70 miles s.e. of Nantucket I., MA, Apr. 28, 1980!

On Apr. 18, a deep SW wind flow suddenly met a cold front draped across Massachusetts and grounded many Hermit Thrushes in coastal Massachusetts. Reported numbers varied, but the two biggest reports were of 60 birds banded that morning at the Manomet Bird Observatory (fide M. Kasprzyk) and 70 counted within an hour at Marblehead Neck (RSH). The presence of Varied Thrushes in New England often comes to light only when they appear at feeders, in late fall or winter, following the first few heavy snows. With so little snow this past winter, a Varied Thrush found in Eustis, ME, Mar. 31 (fide JD) could have overwintered and easily been overlooked.

Following a winter in which very few were seen anywhere in New England, Bohemian Waxwings put in an unexpectedly late appearance in Massachusetts. Seven were found in Sherborn Mar. 1 (RAF); one in Hardwick Mar. 11 (ML); and one in Essex, very late, Apr. 22 (DL). A Loggerhead Shrike was seen in Athol, MA, Apr. 6-7 (S. Price). This latter species, once a

fairly common breeding and "migrant" shrike in our Region, has all but vanished from New England.

**VIREOS TO FINCHES**—A White-eyed Vireo found in Westport, MA, Apr. 9 (H. D'Entremont) furnished one of the earliest state records.

Warbler migration progressed about as usual. In e. Massachusetts, the first big wave arrived May 10, when nearly 30 species were recorded in Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, MA—the birders' Central Park of New England. All the usual southern species, including Yellow-throated, Cerulean, Prothonotary, and Kentucky made it at least as far north as Massachusetts; and a ♂ Prothonotary Warbler, found in West Haven, VT, May 20 (A. Pistorius), was once seen carrying nesting material into a hole in a stump, but was not seen after May 28. Among the "winged" warblers, the rare "Lawrence's" hybrid was well represented by five single birds: One in Rhode Island (J. Osborn); one in Connecticut (L. Bevier), where it was seen paired with a ♀ Blue-winged Warbler; and three in Massachusetts (J. Carlisle, WD, RKW). As exciting as it is to find these hybrids, their increased frequency could spell the end, in southern New England, for the declining "parent" species, Golden-winged Warbler. In late May at least five singing ♂ Cerulean Warblers were located around Quabbin Res. in central Massachusetts. For several years such birds have been suspected of breeding, but have never been confirmed despite their having been found nesting just to the south in Connecticut, and to the north in Vermont (see the forthcoming summer summary).

A ♂ Painted Bunting, found a tad too late, was picked up dead on the road in Orleans, MA, May 19 (fide BN), and a Dickcissel was present in Smithfield, RI, Mar. 1-Apr. 17 (fide DE). Most spring Dickcissel records likely represent overwinterers rather than migrants, and the Rhode Island bird was probably no exception. Less explicable were a Green-tailed Towhee in Southwest Harbor, ME, Apr. 27 (fide CD), an equally rare (in spring) Lark Bunting in Orleans, MA, Apr. 28-30 (L. Brown), and a Lark Sparrow in Clinton, CT, May 27-28 (J. Zickefoose).

Clay-colored Sparrows nest as far east as upstate New York, and judging by a few spring sightings of singing males in recent years, they may be among the Region's next new breeding species. However, this spring, two single birds overwintering in Hadley, MA, until Mar. 20 (RL) and Smithfield, RI, until Apr. 30 (JO) left too early to cause suspicion. Rounding out the list of western sparrows reported this spring was a Harris' Sparrow that wintered at a feeder in Deerfield, MA, last seen Mar. 21 (H. Allen). Between Mar. 18 and early April, weather conditions similar to those that produced the big Hermit Thrush fallout in mid-April produced one of the biggest Fox Sparrow shows in many years. Most reports came from e. Massachusetts and n. coastal Maine. Those found in Massachusetts included up to 20-25 at several feeders in the Connecticut River Valley, and flocks of five to 10 throughout the eastern half of the state. In Maine, too, many small flocks were found, but the largest numbers were reported from "down east," where 25-50 were counted at a single feeding station in Steuben, ME (RW)!

A ♀ Yellow-headed Blackbird was present on Plum I., MA, May 15-29 (D. Chickering et al.). A **Boat-tailed Grackle** found in Stratford, CT, May 14 stayed at least until May 19 (E. Hagen). This was, apparently, only the 2nd Regional record and first state record; somewhat surprising, since the species is a resident—albeit a scarce one—in Long Island, NY.

#### S.A.

The report of a ♂ **Common Chaffinch** in Oxford, NH, May 7 (BB), once again raises a question of origin. Byron Butler pointed out, in his comprehensive report of the New Hampshire individual, that 5 of the 8 published North American chaffinch records occurred within a narrow spring window between late March and early May. The sample size is still small, but such a pattern,

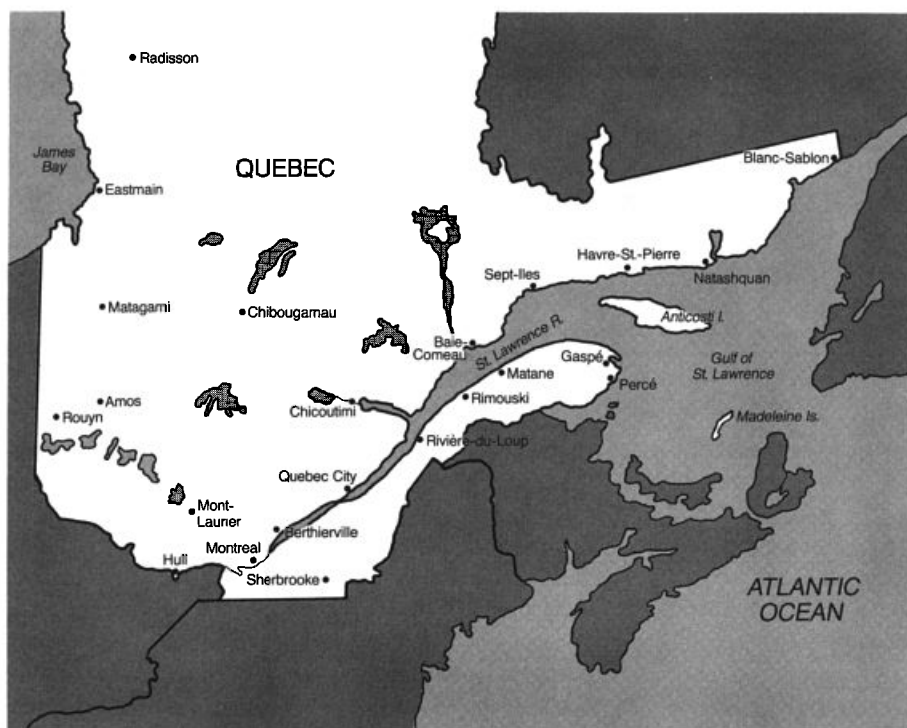
as with Garganey for example strongly suggests legitimate vagrancy. This latest record, escape or not, represented the first New Hampshire record, and probably the 4th Regional record. Clearly, chaffinches will bear watching in the future. For further discussion, see *American Birds* 34: 756, 1980.

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## QUEBEC REGION

Michel Gosselin,  
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**E**arly March was cold, and as a result, temperatures averaged below normal for the month by as much as 6°C in central Quebec. The weekend of March 18–19 brought the first warm air mass into the Region. Precipitation was generally below average except for extreme western Quebec, the Saguenay area, and the Magdalen Islands. April weather was variable: cold, dry weather continued in the west, while warmer and wetter conditions prevailed in the east. Temperatures in May were above the mean, but rainy conditions prevailed in the south during the first one-half of the month. Similar conditions south of the Region delayed the May passerine migration. When the birds did arrive, later in the month, clear weather allowed most of them to reach their breeding territories without pausing at traditional stopovers.

**GREBES TO IBISES** — A **Western Grebe** was carefully identified off Saint-Ignace-de-Loyola May 25 (MMA et al.). The 3 previous sightings of *Aechmophorus* grebes in Quebec, including a previously unpublished report of three birds at Amos May 15, 1985 (AGB), were not sufficiently detailed to eliminate Clark's Grebe. An ad. **American White Pelican** turned up at Saint-Gédéon May 8 (AH, JB) and at nearby Alma May 12 (DS, fide JM) to provide our 2nd record from L. Saint-

Jean. During the past decade, the nesting population of Double-crested Cormorants tripled within the 22 colonies of the St. Lawrence Estuary, and in 1987 numbered an estimated 17,300 breeding pairs. Provincial wildlife management authorities are currently undertaking a controversial 5-year cull in order to reduce the population to 10,000 pairs.

An Am. Bittern flying N over Valleyfield Mar. 19 (BB) was record early by 6 days. As usual, a good variety of large southern waders invaded the Region, with sightings distributed on a broad east-west front along the St. Lawrence Valley. At least four Great Egrets ventured east of Quebec City, including one at Havre-aux-Basques Apr. 17–22 (SD, JY). A Snowy Egret was observed at Hull (YT), single Little Blue Herons visited Shawinigan (YR) and Pointe-au-Père (AB), and an ad. Tricolored Heron was found at Bernières (LSC et al.), all between May 19 & 26. Finally, two Cattle Egrets flew by Sainte-Pétronille May 6 (AGu) and a Glossy Ibis paused at Rimouski May 13–15 (DR, GGe et al.). Possibly the first published record for the Abitibi area, a Black-crowned Night-Heron was sighted May 30 at Rouyn (JLp), well north of its known breeding range.

**WATERFOWL** — Single Tundra Swans graced the Ottawa R. at Thurso May 20 (DSH et al.) and Aylmer May 23–24 (JPA), one month later than expected for this typically early migrant.



A total of four Greater White-fronted Geese was lower than in recent years. Two Bar-headed Geese were seen at Saint-Vallier Apr. 13 in the company of migrating Canada Geese (DL). Such occurrences deserve special attention, since breeding in the wild could develop at any time. Single Bar-headed Geese have previously been observed with other geese on arctic breeding grounds in the Northwest Territories: Southampton I., 1975 (RH), and Digges I., 1981 (IJ *et al.*). On Apr. 8, two Ross' Geese were detected among the 100,000 Snows that staged at Baie-du-Febvre (DJ), while single blue-morph Ross' were encountered at Sainte-Pétronille Apr. 29–May 8 (JLp, GF) and Rivière-Ouelle May 1 (CA, BDs). The only substantial movement of northbound Brant to be reported was of 600 birds passing over Chicoutimi May 31 (CCr, GS, JJ). A Barnacle Goose accompanied Canada Geese staging at Thurso Apr. 22–May 19 (JC, m.ob.), as was the case in 1985 and 1988.

A hybrid teal (Blue-winged x N. Shoveler?), apparently the same one studied at Cap-Tourmente in 1987 and 1988, was present at the latter site Apr. 29 (RL, FH) and perhaps at Saint-Gédéon May 12–13 (GS *et al.*). Six Eur. Wigeon along the St. Lawrence R. represented an average seasonal total, and included a pair off I. des Soeurs in April (PH). A pair of Canvasbacks was unusual at Saint-Gédéon May 10–15 (CGi *et al.*), and several groups of Redheads also lingered in areas where they are considered rare migrants: over 50 were reported from L. Saint-Jean and nearby sites May 5–29 (*fide* GS), 23 gathered at Cacouna May 7 (JPO, ML), a pair reached Baie-Comeau May 7–22 (YF), and 2 pairs remained at Rivière-Héva May 8–30 (SG). One is tempted to associate these occurrences with poor nesting conditions in the prairie provinces, but such conclusions are best drawn from a continent-wide perspective. Locally rare were single ♂ Harlequin Ducks at Victoriaville Apr. 16–28 (AC, MGr) and Pointe-au-Pic Mar. 25 and Apr. 16 (CS), while eight Black Scoters at Havre-aux-Maisons Mar. 16 (SP) were early, if they had not overwintered locally. Five Ruddy Ducks at Saint-Gédéon May 4–31 (CGi, MS *et al.*) included a displaying pair. Numbers elsewhere were considered normal.

**VULTURES TO DOVES** — Northerly Turkey Vulture sightings involved two birds at Alma (CGi) and one each at La Motte (JPu) and Bic (GP, RP, GGe), all during the period May 4–9. A Cooper's Hawk was well seen at Rimouski May 24 (DR, GGe), while a seldom-detected nest of this species was located on Montreal I. Apr. 30 (PB). Valleyfield hawk-watchers tallied a record-high 64 Red-shouldered Hawks, while a dark-morph Red-tailed Hawk was an excellent find at the same site Apr. 2 (MMc, BB).

The oddity of the season was without doubt an Am. Coot found Mar. 27 (JLD) perched in a tree on Mt. Royal! Reports totalling 30 Sandhill Cranes were submitted from 9 locations in Abitibi and Témiscamingue, Apr. 23–May 26, with a peak of 12 birds at Val-Senneville May 3 (SG, v.o.). Away from the extreme w. Quebec staging area, one wandered east to Saint-Germain-de-Kamouraska Apr. 18 (AR). Very few migrant shorebirds strayed off course this season. On May 20, lone Willets paused at La Pocatière (CA) and Cacouna (AC), while another was sighted on I. du Moine May 28 (FBo *et al.*), and single Marbled Godwits stopped at Saint-Fulgence May 21 (JI *et al.*) and Rimouski May 23 (GGe). An undocumented report of up to three Hudsonian Godwits at Havre-aux-Maisons May 4–19 (SP) did not consider the possibility of vagrant Black-tailed Godwits; if Hudsonians, these birds were record early and exceptional so far east in spring. Two Ruddy Turnstones at Havre-aux-Basques May 27 (PF) were also uncommon for the Magdalen Is. in spring. A red-morph Ruff was photographed at Saint-Ignace-de-Loyola May 6–7 (*fide* MMa) and a female was sighted at La Pocatière May 23 (CA). Record early by 3 days was a Wilson's Phalarope seen at Baie-du-Febvre Apr. 19 (MR).

Gulls provided few surprises this season. The only noteworthy sightings came from the St. Lawrence Estuary single ad. Laughing Gulls were seen at Cacouna May 20–24 (LL *et al.*) and La Malbaie May 28 (CGi, MS), three Franklin's were observed at Rivière-Ouelle May 28–30 (CO *et al.*), an ad Thayer's was reported from the Rivière-du-Loup ferry on the late date of Apr. 28 (DR, GGe), and a 3rd-year-Lesser Black-backed Gull was identified at Saint-Irénée May 28 (CGi, MS). Two Roseate Terns at Havre-aux-Maisons May 30 (PF) provided our earliest record from their Magdalen Is. outpost. A winter-plumaged Black Guillemot appeared inland at Saint-Gédéon May 10–14 (AH, JB *et al.*) and was found dead the next day. Inland displacements of this species have previously occurred in late fall or winter. Two Ringed Turtle-Doves were reported from Laval May 24 (JPP), and one that had been visiting a feeder in Bromptonville since the spring of 1988 was still there at the end of May (*fide* VL).

**OWLS TO SHRIKES** — Last winter's owl invasion extended into early spring as three more N. Hawk Owls were reported, a Great Gray ranged eastward to Portneuf-Station Mar. 24 (CM), and four Boreals were added to the already high winter total for s.w. Quebec. A Boreal Owl calling at L. Ministuk May 17–31 provided further evidence of possible breeding in Laurentides P.P. (BDt, SL). Still considered rare visitors to the North Shore, an E. Wood-Pewee was noted at Pointe-aux-Outardes May 26 (AGs) and an E. Phoebe appeared at Baie-Comeau Apr. 10 (GGA). A **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** was reported from Sainte-Luce-sur-Mer May 10 (AO), representing Quebec's 8th record. A N. Rough-winged Swallow seen at Philipsburg Apr. 13 (DD) was unprecedentedly early, as were 10 Cliff Swallows found at Val-du-Lac Apr. 3 (JML).

A Tufted Titmouse at Philipsburg May 27 (JGP) added to the very few previous spring sightings, while a White-breasted Nuthatch at Matane Apr. 16 (CGa) furnished only the 2nd Gaspé Pen. record. At least two Blue-gray Gnatcatchers appeared at Bic May 22 (JR) and another reached Cap-Tourmente 2 days later (JPO). The highlight of the season was the Region's 3rd **Fieldfare**, which made a brief appearance at Rimouski Apr. 8 (GGe, DR). A Wood Thrush was heard May 29 (CCr, GS, JJ) at Larouche, in eastern L. Saint-Jean, where one had been present in 1984; the bird could not be relocated on subsequent days. A Brown Thrasher successfully wintered at Saint-Pacôme (CA), but one at Saint-Roch-de-Richelieu Mar. 18 (JLg) was felt to be an early migrant. Outside their normal range were singles at Baie-Comeau May 12–13 (GC) and Pointe-aux-Outardes May 14 (GC). The Loggerhead Shrike seems to be maintaining its precarious toehold in the province: nesting occurred at Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes this spring (GO), while a lone bird was seen at Sainte-Marthe in May (JH). Another at Rivière-Eternité May 22 (CCr, GS) was beyond the species' breeding range.

**VIREOS TO FINCHES** — A Solitary Vireo closely observed at Cap-Tourmente May 22 (JPO) was judged by its uniform greenish head to be possibly of the far western form *cassinii*. Rarities for the Magdalen Is. were a Philadelphia Vireo at Cap-aux-Meules May 30 (SP) and two Black-throated Blue Warblers at Bassin May 22 (RG). The only "southern" warblers to reach the Region this spring were a singing ♂ Prairie Warbler at La Pocatière May 17 (CA) and a ♂ Hooded on Mt. Royal May 21 (FG *et al.*). A Wilson's Warbler at Longueuil May 3 (DD) tied the previous early arrival record.

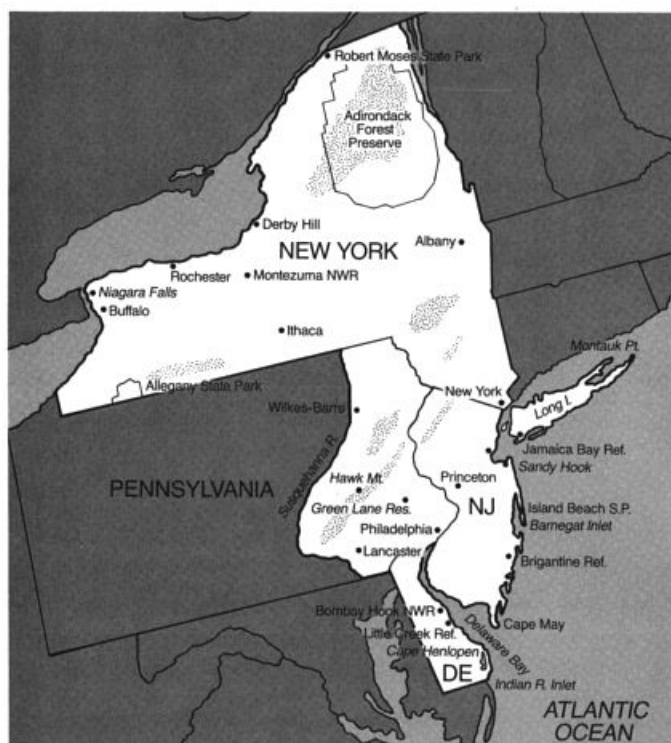
A ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Gaspé Mar. 9 (CCe) broke the provincial arrival record by 3 days. Havre-aux-Maisons received a ♀ Rufous-sided Towhee May 28 (GA) and an eastern male May 30 (SP), for the 2nd and 3rd records for the Mag-

Magdalen Islands. A new site near Sainte-Famille-d'Aumond in w. Quebec hosted two Clay-colored Sparrows May 29 (GB), while one reached Sainte-Foy the next day (ML). Quebec's 10th **Harris Sparrow** was an excellent find at Cap-aux-Meules May 30 (SP). An extralimital Field Sparrow was noted at Pointe-au-Père May 5 (AB), while a Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Victoriaville May 6 (PP, JLv) was a first for this inland locality. A ♂ Bobolink was exceptionally early at Havre-aux-Maisons Apr. 9 (SP). Another among the notable passerine sightings from the Magdalen Is. in late May, several of which were of western origin, was their first ever Yellow-headed Blackbird, a male at Havre-Aubert May 30–21 (LC, LB). A female that reached Pointe-au-Père Apr. 6 (AB) was also worthy of mention, while reports of four birds submitted by Montreal observers were less surprising. Two extralimital N. Orioles brightened the North Shore, at Pointe-aux-Outardes May 21 (AGs) and Tadoussac May 25 (YD). Also along the North Shore, 2 new localities hosted their first House Finches: Tadoussac Apr. 10 (YD) and Sept-Iles May 27 (BDe *et al.*) both produced single males, likely the vanguard for others to come. Within the space of 3 days, Apr. 21–23, single Eur. Goldfinches appeared at Saint-Laurent and Pointe-Claire (*fide* PB), Boucherville (FBI), and Chelsea (RGr, SGr).

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## HUDSON-DELAWARE REGION

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**T**he mild, dry weather that prevailed throughout most of the Region during the winter continued into the early spring, except for northern and western New York, which were cool and wet. The drought conditions threatening the area were washed away in the abundance of rainfall that started with the end of March and continued through most of June. Although upstate New York missed out on the April rains (the month was cool and dry there), the entire Region experienced the wettest May of the century, as many areas in the Delaware River drainage received almost three times the normal amount of precipitation (9.5 inches at Allentown). The cool, wet weather hampered birding much of the time and seems to have

delayed the migration of many species by a week or more. A freak snowstorm in western New York on May 7 had a negative impact on some early nesting species.

Although a few locales experienced some good waves of migrant songbirds [e.g., mid-May, Hawk Mountain, Pennsylvania [LG]; May 18–20, Kaiser-Manitou Beach Banding Station, Monroe County, New York [EB]], many observers commented on the reasonable variety but very small numbers of birds, especially those that winter in the tropics. While the evidence is largely anecdotal, almost every birder who has observed the spring migration for the past 10–20 years has the same impression—we see the same species, but far fewer individuals. Waterfowl were

found in good variety, but likewise modest numbers, while shorebird numbers were poor everywhere except for the usual concentrations along the Delaware Bayshore. An average number of local and Regional rarities helped to enliven an unexceptional spring.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — Braddock Bay = Braddock Bay State Park and vicinity, Monroe, NY; Bombay Hook = Bombay Hook Nat'l Wildlife Ref., near Smyrna, DE; Brig = Brigantine Unit, Forsythe Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Atlantic, NJ; Dunkirk = Dunkirk Harbor, Chautauqua, NY; Little Creek = Little Creek Wildlife Area, near Dover, DE; L.I. = Long Island, NY; Montauk = Montauk Point and vicinity, Long Island, NY. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO IBISES** — A heavy migration of Com. Loons in mid-May brought small numbers to lakes and reservoirs throughout the southern half of the Region, but those sites had fewer Red-necked Grebes than usual, mainly in April. Along the shore of Lake Ontario in w. Monroe, NY, where Red-necked Grebe is far more regular, a maximum concentration of 215 was noted Apr. 6 (KCG). Unusually late were three at Swartswood Lake, Sussex, NJ, May 11–13 (*fide* GH), and one at Bangor, Northampton, PA, May 12 (S. Boyce). An Eared Grebe was reported at Holgate, Ocean, NJ, Mar. 4 (B. Marx), but more unusual were three at Little Buffalo S.P., Perry, PA, Mar. 28 (O. Stephenson). This group appeared on the 8th anniversary of the discovery of four (increasing to five a few days later) at Lake Marburg, York, PA, about 50 mi to the south; most records of this species in the Region are of single birds.

Pelagic birding produced little of interest this spring. A N. Fulmar was seen 35–40 mi off Cape May on Mar. 12 (P. Guris, A. Covington), six were 70 mi off Cape May on Mar. 27 (TK), and a whale-watching trip out of Montauk produced 10 on May 20 (MO). The whale-watching trip and the annual trip out of Barnegat Light, NJ, May 27 located two and one Manx Shearwaters, respectively, plus numerous Sooty Shearwaters, and a few Cory's and Greater shearwaters.

American White Pelicans staged a mini-invasion of the Region in May. The first appeared at Canandaigua Lake, Ontario, NY, May 8–9 (*fide* CKM), while the 2nd passed over Braddock Bay on the 9th (JD, CC). Another was farther west at Four Mile Creek S.P., Niagara, May 24 (W. Klabunde), while one flying east at Greenwich Point, CT, May 29 was coming from New York, although it had not been seen there (L. Brimber *et al.*). In Cape May, NJ, a White Pelican was at McNamara W.M.A. May 17, (J. Ward), two were at Hereford Inlet May 29 (R. Widmer), and another at Goshen Landing May 31 (CS); others appeared in June and July.

Brown Pelicans made an early return to Cape May on Apr. 5 (DWd, PK), but there were no big concentrations. A pair was across the bay at Cape Henlopen, DE, May 27 (F. Buhl). With the increasing winter populations of Great Cormorant, there are more lingering birds in spring, but the increase in reports from Rockland, NY, up the Hudson River, was unexpected. A maximum of nine, mostly adults with white flank patches, flew by Nyack S.P. Mar. 28, but most extraordinary were five flying by the Hook Mt. hawk watch on the late date of May 26 (PF).

Few herons wandered north of their usual ranges, a few making it into upstate New York. Farthest afield was a Tricolored Heron at Westport on Lake Champlain May 26, only the 2nd for Essex and the Adirondack Park (G. Carleton); another was reported from Dryden Lake, Tompkins, May 25 (*fide* CKM). A Cattle Egret was at Massena, St. Lawrence, May 6 (M. Badger), while a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron near Scio, Allegany, May 11 furnished only the 2nd county record (L. & D. Burton *et al.*). A Glossy Ibis at Navarino, Onondaga, Apr. 7–8 (m.ob.) was the first for the Syracuse area in 3 years.

**WATERFOWL** — Greater White-fronted Goose was widely reported this spring, from a pair at Green Lane Res., Montgomery, PA, Mar. 18 (BLM, JHo, m.ob.), to individuals at Lawrenceville, Mercer, NJ, Mar. 11 (C. Fox), also seen earlier in the winter, another in Salem, NJ, Apr. 2 (RK), and no fewer than eight in upstate New York from Syracuse and Ithaca west to Iroquois N.W.R., Orleans-Genesee, with a maximum of three at Braddock Bay Apr. 9. The much rarer Ross' Goose, now annual in fall but unusual in spring, was also noted in 3 different places. A pair at Bombay Hook in early April (A Hill, m.ob.) was not too surprising, but two at Pennellville, Oswego, Mar. 28 (D. Crumb) and another pair at Kendall, Orleans, Apr. 2 (RGS, S. Spahn) furnished outstanding local records.

Most waterfowl departed early from the southern parts of the Region and moved rapidly through the north. The duck migration peaked at Montezuma N.W.R., Seneca, NY, Mar. 15–25, although the biggest numbers of geese were recorded Apr. 12. Drake Green-winged Teal of the Eurasian subspecies were noted at Brig, Mar. 25 (PBa) and at Quogue Wildlife Refuge, Suffolk, L.I., in early May (*fide* TWB). A hybrid ♂ N Pintail x Am. Wigeon discovered at Middle Creek W.M.A., Lancaster, PA, May 12 (RMS *et al.*) by a big day team provided two for the price of one. Eurasian Wigeon were widely noted this spring, with two in Delaware, four in New Jersey, and four in upstate New York.

Birders in the southern part of the Region, where Redhead is the rarest of the regular migrant ducks, would have been impressed by the concentration of 4000 at Canandaigua L. Mar. 4. Along the coast, pairs of subadult Com. Eiders lingered at Rye, Westchester, NY, to Apr. 29, and at Barnegat Light to the end of May (v.o.). An imm. King Eider was at Cape May until May 3, and it or another was found at Stone Harbor, Cape May, May 13 (RK, DHA, W. Wander). Harlequin Ducks left over from the big winter influx were still at Indian River Inlet, DE, Mar. 15 (a pair); at Barnegat Light Mar. 13 (eleven), at Stone Harbor Apr. 20–24 (three); at Montauk Mar. 11 (seven); and at Lawrence, Nassau, L.I., Mar. 28 (one). More exciting were two females on Lake Erie at Dunkirk Harbor Mar. 3–12, for the 9th Chautauqua record (TM, m.ob.).

Surf Scoter is infrequently noted inland in migration, so three at Leaser Lake, Lehigh, PA, Apr. 29 (JHo) and two at Wild Creek Res., Carbon, May 10 (RWt) were noteworthy. Especially late was one at the Bashakill, Sullivan, May 20 (JPT). A pair of Barrow's Goldeneyes at Crown Point, Essex, on Lake Champlain, Mar. 23 was an outstanding find (G. Furness). No exceptional concentrations of mergansers were noted this spring, as the open water may have kept them dispersed.

**RAPTORS TO CRANES** — In addition to the traditional spring hawk watches of long standing, a number of the other fall spots are now being manned on a regular or semi-regular basis. The top totals, as expected, came from the regular sites along the southern shore of L. Ontario, led by Braddock Bay with 43,989 raptors, followed by Derby Hill with 27,599, and Sodus Bay with 26,007; the Montclair, NJ, hawk watch, not considered a prime spring locale, totaled a record 8784. Although most totals were not exceptional, impressive numbers of eagles and a few rarities were detected.

With Black Vultures spreading across the s. part of the Region, their appearance in the north is not unexpected; but they are still considered prime rarities along the shore of Lake Ontario, where sightings are becoming annual. This spring individuals were seen at Webster, Monroe, Apr. 13, Point Breeze, Orleans, May 19, and Braddock Bay May 24. Downstate, there were a half-dozen reports from the southern tier of counties, Orange, Rockland, and Westchester, bordering the n. New Jersey limit of vulture's present breeding range.

The now-annual Am. Swallow-tailed Kite appeared at Sandy Hook May 3 (ZK), and there were three records from

Cape May on May 7, 21, & 28–29 (PS et al.) An early Mississippi Kite was along the Garden State Parkway at Toms River Apr. 27 (ABe), but the rest of the dozen or so birds were in the Cape May area May 22 to June 11, with a maximum of six on June 3 (CS). There were no reports of either kite away from coastal New Jersey.

Excellent totals of Bald Eagles were reported from the hawk watches and there were many records of individuals from all parts of the Region. Nesting records too are on the increase, as will be summarized in the summer. Braddock Bay recorded 67 Bald Eagles for the spring, while Derby Hill had 49, Sodus Bay 14, and Cape May 22. At Tupper Lake on Apr. 2, Charlie Delehanty watched two ad. Bald Eagles attack and disable a Ring-billed Gull, only to surrender it to an immature eagle that was able to drag the gull out of the water onto the ice.

Sharp-shinned Hawk numbers were unexceptional at the watches, but a nest near Beemerville, Sussex, NJ, was of interest (SA). A Cooper's Hawk nest near Allentown, PA, represented the first local nesting in a decade, and there were several probable nesting pairs in n.w. New Jersey, as expected, along with a similar number of N. Goshawks. Braddock Bay had two Swainson's Hawks late in the season, one May 27 (FN, RGS) and another May 30 (FN), while a Rough-legged Hawk at Jakes Landing, Cape May, was so late it may have decided not to migrate (DWa). The Lake Ontario hawk watches produced good totals of Golden Eagles, with 26 at Derby Hill, 22 at Braddock Bay, and 14 at Sodus Bay; other reports came from Erie (two individuals) and Tompkins.

One of the outstanding finds of the season was a small group (two–three birds) of **Yellow Rails** discovered at Little Creek in the wee hours of May 17 (W. Russell, DAC et al.). The birds were heard and seen by others through May 27. Another Yellow Rail was heard calling at Turkey Point, Cumberland, Apr. 28 during a survey of Black Rail sites (DWd). Black Rails were heard there and at 4 traditional locales in Delaware, but most surprising was the report of a singing Black Rail during daylight hours at South Cape May, Apr. 30 (ABe). One or two were subsequently heard singing even in the middle of the day into early June, and were occasionally seen feeding along the ponds and even walking across the path.

At least four King Rails were at Dragon Run, New Castle, DE, Apr. 18 (APE, JSw), one was seen at Great Swamp N.W.R., Morris, NJ (DHa), and another was in Lancaster, PA, May 10–12 (T. Amico et al.), for only the 4th county record. Surprisingly, there were no reports of Purple Gallinule this spring, but there were more than the usual numbers of Sandhill Cranes, although all reports came from upstate New York where the species is far more regular than in the s. parts of the Region. The total of 16 birds included two from Erie and one from Lewis, but the bulk (12) passed over Braddock Bay, with a maximum of eight Mar. 27.

**SHOREBIRDS** — The wet weather in late spring kept water levels high at non-tidal lakes and reservoirs, and contributed to a poor shorebird season. At Jamaica Bay, numbers of most species were well below average, with the exceptions of Black-bellied Plover and Red Knot. Most of the knots were along the Delaware Bayshore, where they were the most numerous of the several species of shorebirds that peaked at 400,000 on the aerial survey May 25 (R. Clark, DWd). Lesser Golden-Plovers were scarce, with only three in New Jersey Mar. 29–May 15, four near Smyrna, DE, May 12 (JJ, JG), and one late at Oak Beach, Suffolk, L.I., May 27 (fide TWB). One of the seasonal rarities was a **Wilson's Plover** discovered at three in Delaware. The Curlews were at Kitt's Hummock May 7 (PH), Little Creek May 9 (NH), and Prime Hook N.W.R. May 21 (D. Quinn). Pedricktown seems to be fading as the Ruff capital of the northeast; this spring there were only two, a male and a female, Mar. 28–Apr. 16. Elsewhere there were

two in Delaware in April and a total of six in Cumberland, Cape May, and Atlantic, NJ, Apr. 9–May 13.

Except for some pelagics, phalaropes were scarce. A Wilson's Phalarope at Little Creek May 5–7 was the only one in Delaware, while just three in Cape May, May 12–22, were the only ones in New Jersey; New York's single report came from Rye, Westchester, May 29. At least four Red-necked Phalaropes were in Delaware in mid to late May, two were in New Jersey in mid-May, and a single was at Jamaica Bay May 31. Red Phalaropes were onshore at Cape May (two, Mar. 8, PK, B. Glaser) and at Wildwood Crest, Cape May, Mar. 25 (V. DeSanctis), while more typical numbers were 45 seen 70 mi off Cape May on Mar. 27 (TK) and 351 on the Montauk whale-watching trip May 20 (MO).

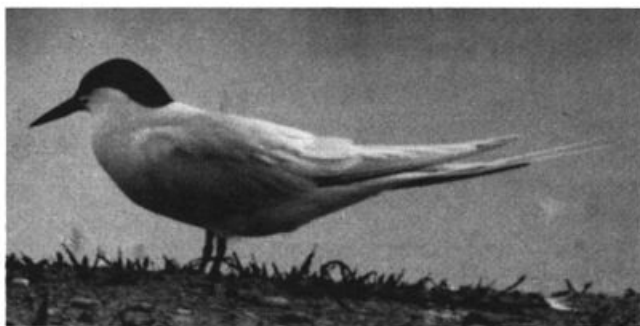
**JAEGERS TO ALCIDS** — Jaegers were unusually scarce this spring, with only one Pomarine and a possible Parasitic noted on the Barnegat Light pelagic trip May 27 (ABr), and a single Parasitic 10 mi off Wildwood Apr. 21 (DWa). Of more interest was a S. Polar Skua seen 70 mi off Cape May on Mar.



This leucistic Great Black-backed Gull at Cape May, New Jersey, photographed May 16, 1989, was present for some time. Photograph/Alan Brady.

27 (TK). A Laughing Gull was a good spring find on the Ontario Lakeshore at Greece, Monroe, and the now-annual ad. Franklin's Gull was at nearby Braddock Bay with Ring-billed Gulls, May 23 (FN). Little Gulls increased significantly over recent springs, with four in Delaware in April, four in New Jersey in May, five on Long Island in March and early April, and two at Braddock Bay Apr. 3. Common Black-headed Gulls were about average, however, with the wintering bird still in Wilmington, DE, in March, one each at Cape May and Sandy Hook in March, and two on Long Island in March and early April; more noteworthy was one at Point Breeze, Orleans, May 8 (W. Listman).

A Thayer's Gull was reported from the Lake Ontario shore at Oswego, NY, Mar. 5 (M. Rusk), but white-winged gulls were uncommon, although a few subadults lingered at Sandy Hook and Braddock Bay into May. Lesser Black-backed Gulls were



Adult Roseate Tern at Cape May, New Jersey, June 8, 1989. One of three individuals first found there in mid-May. Photograph/Alan Brady.

scattered along the coast, as usual, but good local records came from Lake Mohawk, Sussex, NJ, in March (SA), and Ithaca, NY, where two were present in early March. A few Royal Terns appeared along the coast in May, as is now expected; but a highlight of the season in New Jersey was the appearance of first one, and then up to three Roseate Terns at South Cape May in May (E. Bart, B. Pitney, m.ob.). Although they breed on e. Long Island, Roseates have only rarely been found nesting in New Jersey. The recent annual appearance of one of more at S. Cape May raises the possibility that they may nest or have nested in one of the local Common Tern colonies. A Thick-billed Murre swam in to shore at Smith Point Park, Suffolk, L.I., Mar. 5 (BK et al.).

#### S.A.

The highlight of the season in Pennsylvania was a consequence of a continuing study on the part of Rick Wiltraut of the birdlife of Carbon County. This spring he made a special effort to monitor Beltzville Lake and two nearby reservoirs during and after storms to see what might be blown in. On May 2, the rain and easterly winds brought a Black Tern, Common Tern, five Bonaparte's Gulls, and the first Laughing Gull ever for the county. A storm with strong southeast winds overnight produced a Red-throated Loon (a first in spring) and a Caspian Tern on May 6. Heavy rains and easterly winds on May 10 put 10 Forster's Terns on the beach at Beltzville and five White-winged Scoters on the lake. The same day, two Surf Scoters (far less often noted inland) were on nearby Wild Creek Reservoir. The bonanza came with the northeaster of May 16, when Wiltraut discovered two Arctic Terns flying over and then perched along the shore at Beltzville Lake. Satisfactory photographs were obtained and a fortunate 7 other birders were able to rush to the lake and see the birds that afternoon. They were gone the next morning, but represented the first documented record for Pennsylvania since 1890. Another Laughing Gull was there the same day. Birders living near the larger inland bodies of water would do well to take note and try to check the lakes and reservoirs during storms, especially at migration times.

**OWLS TO SHRIKES** — Four Snowy Owls were still on Long Island in early March, but the only other owl news of note concerned Short-eared Owl. Three Short-eareds lingered in Montgomery Township, Somerset, NJ, until Apr. 27 (PR), but were not seen thereafter, dashing hopes of a local nesting. On a more positive note, a pair of Short-eared Owls did apparently nest in a duck blind, accessible only by boat (to humans, that is) at Supawna Meadows N.W.R., Salem, NJ (C. Githens, WD). Although there have been no recent records,

Short-eareds nested historically in the marshes of upper Delaware Bay and have occasionally nested up the river at Tinicum National Environmental Center near Philadelphia.

A Red-bellied Woodpecker wintered and remained until Mar. 30 at a Saranac Lake, Franklin, NY, feeder, well north of the expanding range of this southern species (S. Martin). The flycatcher family provided two of the rarities of the season, both on Long Island. A Fork-tailed Flycatcher, a probable immature with a short tail, was seen and photographed at Oak Beach, Suffolk, May 7 (D. Cartwright, ph.), but did not linger. Two weeks later, the same shrubby thicket that was so productive last fall at Robert Moses S.P., Suffolk, harbored an apparent Ash-throated Flycatcher, a rare vagrant in fall and unprecedented in spring (TL).

The snow of May 7 caught swallows by surprise in the Buffalo area, as they were forced to desert their nesting areas and forage far afield for sustenance (SWE). A Fish Crow at Braddock Bay Apr. 6 (FN) and another at nearby Greece May 7 (KCG) were part of a continuing increase in occurrence of the species along the Lake Ontario shore as it spreads north in the Region. The same can be said of Com. Raven, which is spreading south and away from the mountains. Singles were at Braddock Bay Mar. 27 and Apr. 5 (FN), for the first and 2nd records for the hawk watch there; to the east, Derby Hill had a record five for the season. Ravens are regularly reported in Allegany, NY, and in the s. Catskills, and one was along the Delaware River at Bushkill, Pike, PA, May 6 (B & NM).

A Red-breasted Nuthatch carrying food in Southampton Township, Burlington, NJ, Mar. 30 was a surprise after the poor winter showing (B. Confer), but eight Brown-headed Nuthatches located on the Delaware Ornithological Society spring roundup, May 13, suggested a stable population of that species at the northern limit of its range. Carolina Wrens continued to recover strongly from their lows of a decade ago, spreading into southern and central New York, but the declining Sedge Wren was represented by only 3 reports: an individual at Pickering Beach, Kent, DE, May 10-15 (CP, H. Armistead), another at Moses-Saunders Dam, St. Lawrence, NY, May 28 (M. Badger), and one at Braddock Bay May 31 (R. O'Hara).

Eastern Bluebirds were reported doing well everywhere in the Region, although there was some loss of young in w. New York because of the May snowstorm. A Gray-cheeked Thrush at Bombay Hook May 15 (D. Clear) and two at Rehobeth, Sussex (MVB, JRu), were lucky finds of a species seldom noted in spring in Delaware. Among the Cedar Waxwings banded at Crown Point, Essex, NY, in May was a 2nd-year male whose tail tip was described as burnt orange. A similar bird was seen a few days later, and some intergrades were banded, including one with a red-tipped yellow tail band (JMCP, ph.). K. C. Parkes of the Carnegie Museum of Natural History is soliciting information on this unusual phenomenon among waxwings (fide JMCP).

There were 9 reports of N. Shrikes, all in March and all in upstate New York, except for one captured at Beltzville L. Mar. 6 (G. Yoder, ph. RWt). There were only a half-dozen reports of the declining Loggerhead Shrike and these, too, were mainly in upstate New York. Three were seen in Monroe in late March and early April, one at Montezuma, Apr. 22, and another in W. Potsdam, St. Lawrence, in April. The only more southerly bird was at Oceanside, Nassau, L.I., Apr. 10 (J. Bull).

**VIREOS, WARBLERS** — Philadelphia Vireos were seen in fair numbers in the Rochester area, but were missed farther east at Syracuse. In the s. part of the Region, where the species is rare in spring, individuals were at Bethlehem, PA, on the extremely early date of Apr. 19 (JE, D. Gemmel), and at the Montclair hawk watch May 3 (EG). There were numerous reports of Orange-crowned Warbler from upstate New York, and a better-than-average five in southern areas, including three around New York City in late April-early May (fide

TWB) and one in Rocky Hill, Somerset, NJ, May 2 (PR et al.), the bird that had wintered in Eatontown, NJ, was still present in mid-March (N. Kazanjian).

An "Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler was in the same thicket as the Ash-throated Flycatcher at Robert Moses S. P., L.I., May 21 (TL). Three reports of Yellow-throated Warbler from upstate New York in May were unusual for a species normally recorded less than annually. One was at Allegany S.P., Cattaraugus, mid-month (A. Schaffner), one at Greece, Monroe, May 13 (N. Miller), and another at nearby Island Cottage Woods May 22 (CC). A ♂ Yellow-throated Warbler singing at Mattituck, Suffolk, near the eastern end of Long Island, was far out of range (A. Dove), while the Yellow-throated that sings a Cerulean Warbler song returned to Ravine Lake, Somerset, NJ, Apr. 20 (SS). A half-dozen Prothonotary Warblers were found on Long Island this spring, including a pair of possible breeders at Southampton, Suffolk.

Worm-eating Warblers were observed in w. New York, well north of the breeding range, with an individual at Orchard Park, Erie, May 16 (D. Happ), and four in the Rochester area in May. A **Swainson's Warbler** was reported from Lancaster, Erie, NY, May 18 (A. Bauer), for only the 4th record for w. New York. Equally rare was a probable Swainson's Warbler heard singing in Belleplain State Forest, Cape May, NJ, May 14; the bird responded to a tape recording, sang at length, and was glimpsed briefly by a party of four. Although not well seen, the brownish back and unstreaked whitish breast, combined with the other factors, appear to rule out any other possible species (R. Cech, R. Machover, D. Mandell, S. Saphir). Interestingly, another birder, unaware of the May 14 report, 4 days later heard a bird sing twice at the same spot that he believed to be a Swainson's (RBA).

A Louisiana Waterthrush arrived at Unami Creek Valley, Montgomery, PA, on the early date of Mar. 21 (GLF). Four Kentucky Warblers in Monroe, NY, in May represented a good spring total, and one at Dewit, Onondaga, NY, May 15 was a local rarity (m.ob.). The only other Kentucky noted north of traditional breeding areas was one at the Bashakill, Sullivan, NY, May 26 (E. Treacy). Two Connecticut Warblers, extremely rare anywhere in the Region in spring, were reported from Monroe, NY. One was at Webster May 6 (D & DT), while the 2nd was at the local migrant trap, Island Cottage Woods, May 26 (m.ob.).

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — The only reports of Summer Tanagers north of their breeding grounds were a few from n. New Jersey, an average five from the New York City area, and one at Piermont Pier, Rockland, NY, May 9 (CH). A Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Harmony, Warren, NY, on the incredibly early date of Mar. 31, must have wintered at a feeder well north of its usual range. One of the prime rarities of the season was a **Black-headed Grosbeak** at an Elizabethtown, Essex, NY, feeder May 7 (B. & I. Bailey); unlike most vagrants from the west, the majority of New York records for this species are in spring. Despite the influx of last summer and fall, there was only a handful of reports of Dickcissels, mainly in New Jersey and the New York City area, but one at Leaser Lake, Lehigh, PA, May 27 (S. Smith, AK) was unusual in spring.

A Clay-colored Sparrow was singing at Amity, Allegany, NY, May 15 (VP), and three were found in the Rochester area in mid-May. A Lark Sparrow at Jones Beach, L.I., May 18 provided an unusual spring record of a species ordinarily found only in fall and early winter (R. Stanford). The only reports of Henslow's Sparrows came from their c. and w. New York breeding areas, but even there they are seriously declining, as are Vesper Sparrow and Grasshopper Sparrow (RGS). A Dark-eyed Junco of one of the "Oregon" subspecies was photographed at West Ellicott, Chautauqua, Apr. 7 (RSu, L. & B. O'Brien), and there were 2 reports from New Jersey.

A half-dozen records of Yellow-headed Blackbird was about average, with three in Salem, NJ, one in Easton, PA, Apr. 20–27 (AK, m.ob.), one on Long Island at Shinnecock Bay, Suffolk, Apr. 11 (MO), one at Braddock Bay May 13, and one at Chittenango, Madison, NY, Apr. 17–25 (m.ob.). The only Brewer's Blackbird was one observed by many at Tift Nature Preserve, Erie, NY, Apr. 16. Two Orchard Orioles banded at Crown Pt., Essex, NY, were local rarities near the northern limit of the breeding range (JMCP). Following a poor winter, it was, not unexpectedly, a poor spring for northern finches.

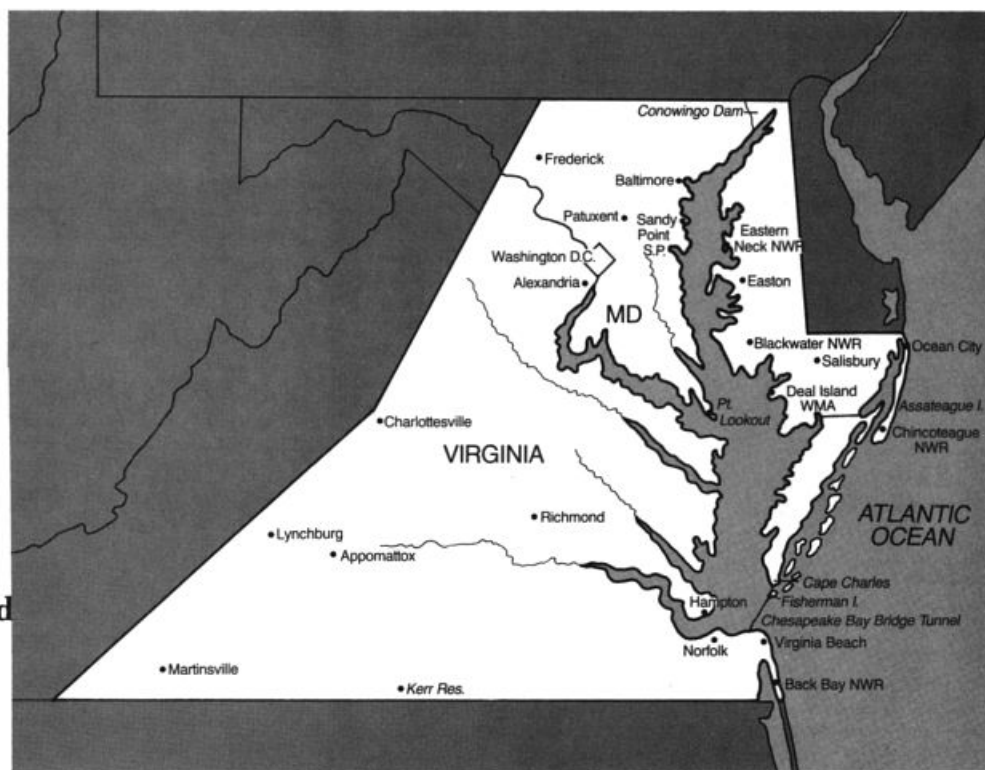
**EXOTICS** — Among the few exotics reported this spring was a Monk Parakeet at Pedricktown, NJ, indicating that the state authorities have not completely eliminated these escapees (RK).

**OBSERVERS (Subregional compilers in boldface)** — Bob Ambrose, Robert Andrie, Scott Angus, **Peter Bacinski** (coastal NJ 260 Page Ave., Lyndhurst, NJ 07071), Tom Bailey, Robert Barber (RBA), M.V. Barnhill, Alan Bennett (ABe), **Irving Black** (n.e. NJ: Eagle Rock Village, Bldg. 26, Apt. 8B, Budd Lake, NJ 07828), **R. J. Blicharz** (n.c. NJ: 827 Pennsylvania Ave., Trenton, NJ 08638), Alan Brady (ABr), Elizabeth Brooks, **T. W. Burke** (New York Rare Bird Alert), Carolyn Cass, **K.L. Crowell** (St. Lawrence Region, NY RD 4, Box 97, Canton, NY 13617), **Ward Dasey** (s.w. NJ: 29 Ark Road, Medford, NJ 08055), **Paul DeBenedictis** (Oneida Lake Basin, NY: 306 Kensington Place, Syracuse, NY 13110), **Peter Derven** (Rockland, NY: 70 Third Ave., Nyack, NY 10960), Jeff Dodge, Jim Dowdell, **A.P. Ednie** (New Castle and Kent, DE: 21 N. Wells Ave., Glenolden, PA 19036), **S.W. Eaton** (Niagara Frontier, NY: Ten Mile Rd., Allegany, NY 14706), John Ebner, Vincent Elia, Sheryl Forte, **W.W. Frech** (Sussex, DE: Carr. Rt. 3, Box 1144, Lewes, DE 19958), G.L. Freed, Padraic French, Michael Galas, Paul Gillen, Laurie Goodrich, Jeff Gordon, Else Greenstone, **K.C. Griffith** (Genesee Region, NY: 61 Grandview Lane, Rochester, NY 14612), Joe Gula, Sr. & Jr., Jerry Haag (JHa), **Greg Hanisek** (n.w. NJ: 4 Marnel Rd., Phillipsburg, NJ 08865), David Harrison (DHa), Chuck Harten, Dan Heathcote (DHe), Norman Holgerson, Jason Horn (JHo), Phyllis Hurlock, Rich Kane, Dale Karlson, Kevin Karlson, Paul Kerlinger, Zack Klyver, Arlene Koch, Tim Koebel, Bob Kurtz, John Janowski, Tony Lauro, Gary Lee, **Jay Lehman** (Susquehanna Region, NY: RD 2, Box 68C, Norwich, NY 11815), Mearns Bird Club, **Helen Manson** (Lower Hudson Valley, NY: Moores Mill, RD 4, Pleasant Valley, NY 12569), **C.K. Melin** (Finger Lakes Region, NY: 449 Irish Settlement Rd., Freeville, NY 13068), J.K. Meritt, Brian Mongi, Arthur Morris (AMo), **B.L. Morris** (e. PA: 825 Muhlenberg St., Allentown, PA 18104), Brian Moscatello (BMo), Terry Mosher, Bill & Naomi Murphy, Mike Newlon, Frank Nicoletti, Michael O'Brien, Carl Perry, **J.M.C. Peterson** (Adirondack-Champlain Region, NY: Discovery Farm, RD 1, Elizabethtown, NY 12932), Vivian Pitzrick, **William Reid** (n.e. PA: 73 W. Ross St., Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702), Rochester Birding Association, Paul Rodewald, J.J. Ruscica, Joe Russell (JRu), **Sy Schiff** (Long Island 603 Mead Terrace, S. Hempstead, NY 11550), R.M. Schutsky, **G.A. Smith** (St. Lawrence Region, NY: Box 498, Mexico, NY 13114), Steve Sobosinski, R.G. Spahn (Genesee Ornithological Society), Sullivan County Audubon Society, Robert Sundell, Clay Sutton, Pat Sutton, Joe Swertinski, **J.P. Tramontano** (Orange and Sullivan, NY: Orange Co. Community College, Middletown, NY 10940), Don & Donna Traver, Steve Walter, Dave Ward (DWa), W.J. Wayne, Dave Wiedner (RWd), Rick Wiltraut (RWt), Eric Witmer, **Al Wollin** (Long Island: 4 Meadow Lane, Rockville Center, NY 11570). Many other observers (approximately 300) who sent reports to us or to their Regional compilers could not be listed, but their contributions are gratefully acknowledged. — **WILLIAM J. BOYLE, JR.**, 12 Glenwood Rd., Denville, NJ 07834; **ROBERT O. PAXTON**, 460 Riverside Dr., Apt. 72, New York, NY 10027; and **DAVID A. CUTLER**, 1110 Rock Creek Dr., Wyncote, PA 19095.



# MIDDLE ATLANTIC COAST REGION

Henry T. Armistead



**W**et, cold weather made for a poor passerine migration in May, especially for warblers, but also kept many birds lingering later than usual. Rainfall set a record for May in Baltimore, when it rained on 13 consecutive days (RFR). Reston, Virginia, had its seventh wettest May with over seven inches (DFA). No doubt this adversely affected many breeding species. Reporting was poor for shorebirds and for Virginia, since the hotline reports from that state were lost in the mail. Thanks to a fine compiling job by Stasz the complete results of the Maryland Statewide Bird Count in May were available for the first time (except for two delinquent counties), a treasure trove of information from 450 observers in 210 parties. Owing to high water levels in many inland areas, and only average coverage of the coast, the reports of shorebirds were down. Warmth in late March resulted in some early arrivals. Unfortunately more problems with the mails led to incomplete receipt of weather data forms, except for March, which averaged 1.0°F above normal and 1.7 inches of precipitation over the norm.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — Back Bay = Back Bay Nat'l Wildlife Ref., VA; the Bay = Chesapeake Bay; Blackwater = Blackwater Nat'l Wildlife Ref., MD; C.B.B.T. = Chesapeake Bay Bridge & Tunnel, VA; Chinc. = Chincoteague Nat'l Wildlife Ref., VA; Craney I. = Craney Island Disposal Area, Portsmouth, VA; D.C. = Washington, D.C.; MD Count = Maryland Statewide Bird Count of May 13. Place names in *italics* are counties.

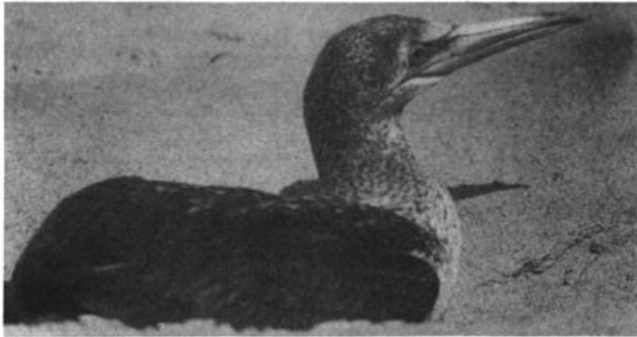
**LOONS TO IBISES** — Usually no one is looking out on the Bay when loons reach peak numbers. This spring they were, with results such as 550 Common and 20 Red-throated loons on the rather late date of Apr. 25 in the c. Bay between Talbot and Calvert (PRS). Stasz achieved excellent Com. Loon totals at N. Beach, Calvert, with 147 as early as Apr. 4, 785 on Apr. 7, 816 the next day, 758 on Apr. 10, 387 on Apr. 14, 56 on May 3, and eight as late as May 18. South of Annapolis,

112 were seen in 1½ hours Apr. 19 (JWT). In addition to these Maryland counts, in Mathews, VA, Spitzer found 325 loons, presumably mostly Commons, as early as Mar. 11, and Bazuin saw 125 Common and 90 Red-throated loons Mar. 25 and four of each species May 26. Honors for Pied-billed Grebe high went to Simon, who counted 27 at Loch Raven Res., n. of Baltimore, Mar. 10. The troubled Horned Grebe failed to reach the impressive concentrations it sometimes does in April, with highs of only 350 at Swan Pt., Kent, MD, Apr. 5 (JG), 139 at N. Beach Apr. 14, and 150 there Apr. 7 & 16 (JLS). Red-necked Grebe was reported at 4 localities with one to two at Loch Raven Apr. 7–16 (SWS) and one at Nanticoke Harbor, Wicomico, Mar. 28 (C & ES). The star grebe was an Eared at N. Beach Apr. 12–May 19 (JLS et al., ph.).

Dyke saw four Wilson's Storm-Petrels in Cobb Bay, VA, well back from the sea southwest of Cobb I. May 19. Out from Rudee Inlet, Virginia Beach, VA, 181 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, two Leach's Storm-Petrels, and six Sooty Shearwaters were found May 27 (DFA, BP, BT, HFD et al.). A trip into the latter area May 29 reported 49 Sooty, seven Manx, 13 Greater, and seven Cory's shearwaters, plus 518 Wilson's Storm-Petrels (DFA, BP et al.). Unprecedented counts of N. Gannets were forthcoming from the Maryland part of the Bay, where usually only one to 20 are seen on the few days when they appear. They were seen Mar. 18–Apr. 16 in the Bay off Calvert where Stasz saw 189 on Mar. 19, 433 on Mar. 20, 40 on Mar. 21, 31 on Mar. 22, 29 on Mar. 28, and 36 on Apr. 8 (JLS, EB), many of these totals made in spite of winds adverse to the birds with the observers able to be present only a few hours in the morning.

Completely unprecedented for the Region was a flock of 15 Am. White Pelicans reported by Gabler n. of Kiptopeke, VA, Mar. 25 flying N along the shore of the Bay. The more usual singles were seen at Wallops I., VA, Mar. 22 (CRV) and Hog I., Surry, VA, May 7 (fide BT). Brown Pelicans made a good Maryland showing with one up the Patuxent R. near Barstow May 13 (HB, fide JLS), five at Ocean City Apr. 8 (SHD), and 18 there by Reese Apr. 27. In Virginia, where small numbers have been seen through the winter the past few years, peak

numbers were at Craney I. where Wolfe saw 162 on Apr. 24. Small numbers were in the Chinc./Wallops I. area by late May (EMW, CRV). At C.B.B.T., 34 Great Cormorants and 2100 Double-crested Cormorants were seen Mar. 18 (HTA, GLA, CCW). Great Cormorants made a strong Maryland showing with eight at Cobb I., Charles, Mar. 12 (RFR, BD), three at N. Beach Mar. 20 (JLS), six at Sharps I. light, Talbot, Apr. 22 (PRS, HTA), and a very late adult at Hooper's I., Dorchester, May 13 (GLA, HTA, CCW, CP), the latter two records new for their



*Immature Northern Gannet at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Virginia, May 13, 1989. Photograph/David F. Abbott.*

respective counties. Interesting Double-crested Cormorant totals were of 110 in D.C. May 7 (RPH), 75 nearby in Dyke Marsh, VA, Apr. 16 (EMW), 658 by Hampton Roads Bird Club Apr. 29 in Virginia (new spring count high for there), 2637 at Cove Pt., Calvert, MD, Apr. 16 (JLS), and 200 at Barren I., Dorchester, MD, May 28 (GLA, CCW, HTA).

Generally held to be in severe decline, Am. Bittern was reported in the highest numbers in years, such as six at McKee-Beshers W.M.A. (Hughes Hollow) n.w. of D.C. Apr. 22-29 (RWH, DC), three at Cove Pt. Apr. 16 & 30 (JLS), and five at Huntley Meadows County Park, Fairfax, VA, Apr. 27 (EMW) and May 13 (EPW et al.). On the MD Count May 13 they were reported in 7 counties, vs. only 2 in 1988 [fide JLS]. At Cove Pt. May 20, 12 Least Bitterns were counted (JLS). The first Cattle Egrets were detected Mar. 30 in Maryland with eight at Patuxent Naval Air Station, St. Marys (KR, MB), and one at Swan Creek, Kent (JG). An early Green-backed Heron was in s.e. Fairfax, VA, Apr. 4 (SE). A total of 58 Black-crowned Night-Herons with 30 nests was at the famous National Zoo colony in D.C. on May 13 (DC). The seasonal high for Yellow-crowned Night-Herons was of 19 by the Hampton Roads Bird Club Apr. 29 [fide TK]. Early were 17 Glossy Ibises Mar. 13 in Talbot, MD (JE).

**WATERFOWL** — At Hooper's I., their southern stronghold on the Bay, 110 Mute Swans (and 2 nests) were found May 28, up from 55 birds there May 6 & 13 (HTA, GLA, CCW). This is a big summer staging area for these huge birds. Top tallies of "Blue" Snow Geese were of 728 at Ruthsberg, MD, Mar. 22 with 30,000 white Snow Geese (JG) and 700 at Black-



*Mute Swan on nest at Barren Island, Dorchester County, Maryland, May 28, 1989. This is virtually the southern limit of the species' nesting range on Chesapeake Bay. Photograph/George L. Armistead.*

water Mar. 25 with 380 white Snows (HTA). Late winter concentrations included 1508 Tundra Swans at Cove Pt. Mar. 12 (JLS) and 220 Brant at Wallops I. Mar. 2 (CRV). Twelve hutchinsii Canada Geese were at Archer Pond s.e. of Richmond, VA, Mar. 15 (HFD), a tremendous count by Regional standards. Unique was a Eur. Green-winged Teal at Chinc. Mar. 19 (HTA, GLA, CCW). A Eur. Wigeon was at Piscataway Creek, Prince Georges, MD, Mar. 10 (CS).

Top counts of divers, all in Maryland, included concentrations of 9000 Canvasbacks in Kent in early March (JG) and 2500 at N. Beach Mar. 19 (JLS), 12,000 Lesser Scaup in Kent Mar. 2 (JG) and 3750 at N. Beach Mar. 26 (JLS), 12,000 Oldsquaws from Swan Pt.-Love Pt. Mar. 29 (JG) plus 5000 at N. Beach Mar. 11 and Apr. 12 (JLS) and 4210 in the Choptank R. mouth Mar. 25 (HTA), 2800 Surf Scoters around Sharps I. light Apr. 22 (PRS, HTA), and 4000 Com. Goldeneyes and 2500 Buffleheads at N. Beach Mar. 11 (JLS). Rarer divers were single Com. Eiders at Little Creek, VA, May 21 (RLA) and Ocean City Apr. 8 (SHD), and five Harlequin Ducks at Ocean City Mar. 4-10 (CRV, C & ES et al.) with seven at C.B.B.T. all of March (RAA, WLA, HTA, ph.) and six at Wallops I. Mar. 2 (CRV). Single Common and King eiders were at C.B.B.T. Mar. 3 & 10 (CP, DFA). At N. Beach 500 White-winged Scoters were seen Apr. 13 (JLS) and 400 were at Sharps I. light Apr. 22 (HTA, PRS). At Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, MD, 951 Ring-necked Ducks were counted Mar. 2. One of the few Maryland breeding records for Hooded Merganser was represented by a female with six downy young at Meyers Station at the junction of the Patuxent and Little Patuxent rivers Apr. 30 (SRI, RFR). At Back Bay/False Cape S.P., VA, 28 Red-breasted Mergansers were seen on the late date of May 18 (DS). The high for Ruddy Ducks was of 3000 at St. Leonards Creek, Calvert, MD, Mar. 12 (JLS).

Exotic species included two Ruddy Shelducks at Ruthsberg Mar. 16 (JG), one at St. Michaels Mar. 25-26 (BPo), a Com. Shelduck at Piney Run P., Carroll, May 8 (RFR) with a Falcated Teal there through Apr. 26 (RFR et al.), these all in Maryland, and in Virginia a Garganey was seen n. of Kiptopeke Mar. 24-28 (HG).

**RAPTORS TO CRANES** — For the 3rd year, Ospreys attempted breeding in D.C., and had one young in their nest May 29 (DC). The first arrival was one at St. Michaels Mar. 7 (JGR). The Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources continued its survey of Bald Eagle nests, monitoring 175 nests of which 97 were occupied and 94 were active, producing 117 young (vs. 135 in 1988) from 72 successful nests in 17 counties. The most productive counties were Dorchester (36 young from 19 nests), Kent (14 young from 7 nests), and Charles (13 young from 11 nests) (GDT). The roost at Blackwater held up to 50 birds in late winter and 38 were seen on the May count in this area May 13, a record for that count (CP, GLA, HTA, CCW).

#### S.A.

Unfortunately, uncontrolled "controlled" marsh burning on the lower Eastern Shore of Maryland damages many of the marsh edge hammocks that Bald Eagles find attractive for nesting and in fact killed the nest tree along the drive of Blackwater, which was unsuccessful for the 2nd straight year. Several other active nest trees have been burned in Dorchester within the past 10 years. Marsh burning has its virtues for wildlife management purposes but it seems to be getting increasingly out of control. It may very well rejuvenate the grasses and help a few trappers, but I doubt it does much for Bald Eagles unless it is restricted to the marshes.

At Ft. Smallwood, s.e. of Baltimore, 992 Sharp-shinned and 106 Broad-winged were among the 1203 hawks counted May 3 (DM), and 172 Sharp-shinned, five Merlins, and 80 Am.

Kestrels were there Apr. 22 (BMu) Murphy also saw 112 Sharp-shinned there Apr. 23 and 191 on May 4. The Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources monitored the state's Peregrine Falcon breeding sites. Of 8 sites, 6 had eggs that hatched, ultimately fledging 10 young from 5 sites (GDT), down from 16 young in 1988.

Outstanding was a Yellow Rail flushed from grass at N. Beach Mar. 26 (JLS). Season highs were 15 Black and 60 Virginia rails in Dorchester, MD, May 13, most of these at Elliott I. (HTA, GLA, CCW). At Poquoson, VA, n. of Norfolk, Rottenborn found one Sora, one Virginia, two King, and 25 Clapper rails May 2. At least 4 pairs of King Rails were at Huntley Meadows County Park near D.C. this spring (EPW). Thirteen Soras were at Cove Pt. May 13 (JLS). Good Am. Coot counts were of 2000 at Piscataway Creek Mar. 10 (CS) and 328 at Loch Raven Res. Apr. 7 (SWS). The Sandhill Crane at Poolsville, Montgomery, MD, was present through the period, extending its stay to over one year (m.ob.).

**SHOREBIRDS** — In spite of some outstanding individual counts, shorebirds in many areas were late and in low numbers. At Chinc., Wilds found these waders on May 19: 925 Semipalmated Plovers, 176 Whimbrels, 35 White-rumped Sandpipers, 4317 Dunlin, 656 Short-billed Dowitchers, three Stilt Sandpipers, 8265 Semipalmated Sandpipers, two Black-necked Stilts, and a Red-necked Phalarope. The Long-billed Curlew nearby on the causeway was present at least until Mar. 19 (RPH, HTA et al.) and one was reported from C.B.B.T. Apr. 21 (DFA). Some good early counts, also on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, were of 205 Ruddy Turnstones at Willis Wharf and 67 Greater Yellowlegs with 40 Short-billed Dowitchers at Oyster, all on Mar. 19 (HTA, GLA, CCW). Schwab continued to census the beach at Back Bay and False Cape S.P., with outstanding counts such as 1096 Sanderlings May 18, with a record 7503 there May 24 along with 1416 Ruddy Turnstones and 43 Whimbrels (DS, TMP), his previous Sanderling high for here being 5913 in August 1988. At Hart and Miller Is. e. of Baltimore, Ringler et al. had some excellent counts including two Black-necked Stilts, 3000 Semipalmated Sandpipers, 16 White-rumped Sandpipers, and one Wilson's and one Red-necked phalarope May 28. At Wallops I., Vaughn saw 10 Wilson's and 15 Piping plovers and two Black-necked Stilts May 26. Black-necked Stilts were widely reported by Regional standards with two at Blackwater May 6 (RFR, HTA), a record Maryland count of 12 at Deal Island W.M.A. the same day (CRV et al.), and from two to four in the Back Bay/False Cape S.P. area Apr. 22–May 28 (DS, TRW, DFA), while the two Chinc. birds were present during much of May (VBK, RAA, EMW).

A Wilson's Plover on Assateague I., MD, May 29 provided the first state record in 4 years (JL, fide RFR). The high for Am. Avocet was a modest 15 at Craney I. Apr. 21 (D & MM). Five Upland Sandpipers were in the Lucketts area, Loudoun, VA, May 28 (EMW) with six there in 3 locations June 5 (JBB). They are uncommon breeders here and at few other locales in the Region. An extremely early Stilt Sandpiper was seen w. of Salisbury, MD, Apr. 16 (AH), two were at False Cape S.P. May 4 (SR) and six there Apr. 22 (DFA, BP), and one was at Blackwater May 13 (CP, HTA, GLA, CCW). An exceptional rarity was a Ruff at Cove Pt. Apr. 29 (JLS). At Jug Bay up the Patuxent R. in Maryland, 150 Com. Snipe were found Apr. 12 (DMu). Perry found 13 Am. Woodcock under adverse weather conditions Mar. 6 on C.B.B.T. Two Wilson's Phalaropes were at Blackwater May 13 (CP, HTA et al.).

**JAEGERS TO SKIMMER** — Two Parasitic Jaegers were seen from Ft. Story at Cape Henry, VA, May 13 (DFA, BP). A Little Gull was at Bethel Beach, Mathews, VA, Mar. 24 (JBB).



*Laughing Gull nest at Barren Island, Dorchester County, Maryland, May 28, 1989. First nesting in the Maryland part of Chesapeake Bay in at least 35 years. Photograph/George L. Armistead.*

Single Com. Black-headed Gulls were reported from Chesapeake Beach, Calvert, MD, May 9 (WK) and Ft. Story Mar. 5 (DFA). This was an outstanding spring for Bonaparte's Gulls, especially so at inland bodies of water. On the MD Count May 13, some 549 were seen vs. only four on this count in 1988. At inland Centennial L., Columbia, MD, 250 were seen Apr. 2 (JFr). Czaplak recorded the best flight ever in D.C. with 120 there Apr. 11 and May 13. At Piney Run, 35 on Apr. 20 were the most ever seen there by one observer (RFR). Five hundred were at Back R. Sewage Treatment Plant e. of Baltimore Apr. 12 (CES) and 49 were at Loch Raven Res. Apr. 14 (SWS). Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported only from D.C., Mar. 17–18 and Apr. 5 (DC), at Ft. McHenry in Baltimore Mar. 6 (PW), and at N. Beach May 27 (JLS). Semi-rare were a Glaucous Gull at Prince William Landfill in Virginia until Apr. 20 (KHB) and a Black-legged Kittiwake at Ft. Story Mar. 25 (DFA).

Interesting breeding records from the Barren I. area May 28 were 7 Royal Tern nests (first breeding in the Maryland part of the Bay), three Laughing Gull nests (first breeding in the Maryland part of the Bay since 1954), and 23 Black Skimmer nests as well as these nests: one Am. Oystercatcher, 2 Willet,



*Royal Terns at North Beach, Calvert County, Maryland, April 13, 1989. Photograph/David Czaplak.*

9 Herring Gull, and hundreds of Forster's Tern nests (HTA, GLA, CCW, ph.), all these species at their northern breeding limit on the Bay. Caspian Terns were widely reported during the first week of April in Maryland, the high count being of just 35 at Hart and Miller Is. May 28 (RFR). Royal Terns were widely reported in the c. Bay in Maryland, such as 52 at N. Beach Apr. 14 (JLS) with 95 there May 3, and 66 were up the Potomac at Charles, MD, May 13 (GBW et al.). Two Roseate Terns were seen in Virginia, a bird at Chinc. May 19–22 (SA, VBK, RAA et al.) and one at Back Bay May 18 (DS). Two Com. Terns at Piney Run Park in Carroll, MD, May 11 were new for that inland county (RFR). Rare terns included an Arctic on May 27 (DFA et al.) and an extremely early Bridled May 29 (DFA et al.) both well at sea out from Rudee Inlet in Virginia Beach. Least Terns attempted breeding at Hart and Miller Is., where a nest with 2 eggs was found May 28 (RFR), and on the roof of Sandy Bottom Elementary School at Cambridge, MD, where Reese saw six adults May 20. The best Black Tern counts were of 20 at Piney Run Park May 11 (RFR) and 20 at Ocean City May 12 (MO).

**DOVES TO SHRIKES** — An outstanding rarity was a *White-winged Dove* at Appleton near Elkton, Cecil, MD, Mar 9–27 (PB et al., ph.) and another was at Back Bay, VA, May 18 (DS et al.). Single Monk Parakeets were at Hampton Roads, VA, Apr. 29 (fide TK) and Patuxent Naval Air Station, MD, Apr. 14–28 (KR, MB). The only Short-eared Owl report was of three at Baltimore Mar. 6 and two there Apr. 8 (PW et al.). Northern Saw-whet Owls were seen only at McKee-Beshers W.M.A. n. of D.C., with two Mar. 12 (HE), and one was dead on the road at Rock Hall, Kent, MD, Apr. 12 (JG). Caprimulgids seemed down to some observers. For example, on the MD Count only 33 Whip-poor-wills were heard May 13 vs. 77 last year, a dramatically lower figure, even considering the absence of totals from 2 counties at press time this year. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were late this spring, the earliest one in Talbot, MD, Apr. 15 (AF, fide JGR). The Rufous Hummingbird that overwintered at Takoma Park, MD, near the boundary with D.C. was last seen Apr. 12 (fide EMW).

Red-headed Woodpeckers seem to be continuing a modest increase with eight in Dorchester, MD, May 6 (RFR, HTA) and nine in Talbot, MD, in mid-May (JGR). At Wakefield, VA, a Red-cockaded Woodpecker was seen Mar. 23 (WLA), and two were there Apr. 21 along route 460 (DFA). Olive-sided Flycatchers were reported from 10 places, mostly May 20–26 (v.o.). Some flycatchers seemed late and in low numbers this spring with a marked lowering of numbers on the 1989 MD Count vs. 1988, as seen by these respective totals: E. Wood-Pewee (261/709), Acadian Flycatcher (461/617), Willow Flycatcher (1/15), and Least Flycatcher (16/23), this in a year when the numbers of almost all species of birds were higher in 1989 for this count. An Alder Flycatcher at Huntley Meadows County Park, VA, May 29 was new for there (EPW et al.). Least Flycatchers were more widely reported than usual, most of them in mid-May. The first swallows of all six Regional species were a few days later than usual, with no excitingly early March records this year, and Purple Martins nested about 10 days late owing to the cold (MKK).

A few big flights of Blue Jays were noticed, with 700 at N. Beach Apr. 27 (JLS), and at Ft. Smallwood Mozurkewich saw 5300 on Apr. 30 and 1090 on May 13. Following a winter in which they were scarce, Red-breasted Nuthatches, usually singles, were seen at no more than 10 localities on widely scattered dates until mid-May. Very late was a Winter Wren at McKeldin in s. Carroll, MD, May 13 (RFR). An indication of the lateness of the migration was the 1989/1988 differential in numbers of Ruby-crowned Kinglets on the May 13 MD Count, which was 114 to 17. Eastern Bluebirds continued to show up in excellent numbers, with 1246 on the MD Count vs. 993 last year. The thrush migration was lackluster once more. American Pipits lingered later than usual into May with as many as 50 in Howard, MD, May 6 and three still there May 13 (SA); 150 were at Kerr Dam in the extreme s. Virginia Piedmont Mar. 26 (JB). Cedar Waxwings were in mediocre numbers this spring. The troubled Loggerhead Shrike was reported from only 4 localities.

**VIREOS, WARBLERS** — Many felt the warbler/passerine migration was poor, although there were some excellent days and as usual the flight varied widely depending on locality and date. The MD Count recorded about 12,000 warblers, 4000 more than last year, and the warbler flight that day was excellent in some counties, for example, in Dorchester, which had the 2nd best day out of 44 May counts there in terms of species and numbers. Exceptional was a single-party list of 134 species in D.C. May 6, including 24 warbler species (DC et al.). Early vireos included a White-eyed at Jug Bay Apr. 6 in Anne Arundel, MD (SRi, CSR), a Solitary at Stevenson, Baltimore, Apr. 5 (fide BR), and a Yellow-throated at Elm I. near Pennyfield along the Potomac in Maryland Apr. 8 (MG). Another White-eyed Vireo was at Waldorf, MD, Apr. 2 in Charles (GJ).

Hybrid warbler reports included "Brewster's" at D.C. May 11 (DC), at Tolchester Beach May 13 (JG) and in Baltimore May 8 & 12 (BY), as well as "Lawrence's" at Harford Glen, Harford, MD, May 13 (fide DLK) and in Alexandria, VA, May 14 (fide RPH). During the course of the spring Ringler encountered both Blue-winged and Golden-winged warblers singing each other's songs. The rare Orange-crowned Warbler, much more likely to be seen during the fall here, was seen at Dismal Swamp N.W.R., VA, Apr. 2 (SR) and near Baltimore at Woodlawn through Apr. 9 (JWi; present since Dec. 31). An early N. Parula was at Seneca, MD, Mar. 29 (LDB). This was a good spring for Black-throated Blue Warblers (DFA, RAA, PZ) with 425 seen on the MD Count May 13 vs. 81 in 1988. An example of the late spring was the presence of 2373 Yellow-rumped Warblers on the MD Count, compared with only 161 last year! An early Black-throated Green Warbler was at Columbia, MD, Apr. 8–9 (JFr).

One of the few warblers that can regularly show up in March, a Yellow-throated was at Williamsburg, VA, on the 27th (BT) and one on the C.B.B.T. Mar. 30 (VBK) was unusual there. Excellent counts (of breeding birds, presumably) were 37 Prairie Warblers and 61 Yellow-breasted Chats in Brunswick, VA, n. of the Kerr Dam (SR). A Swainson's Warbler was in the Pocomoke Swamp, MD, May 7 (J & LS) and one was at Twilley Bridge Rd., Wicomico, MD, May 9 (C & DB). This species has not been reliable in that state in recent years. An early Ovenbird was in Gloucester, VA, Apr. 3 (TK). The first Louisiana Waterthrushes were detected in Maryland on Mar. 26 in Charles (GBW) and Kent (JL, fide FLP). Three reports of Connecticut Warblers were received. In the absence of details I have no choice but to cashier these. Six Mourning Warblers were banded at Adventure Sanctuary May 21–31, with two May 23 at this banding center near Potomac, MD (MD). This was a good spring for Wilson's Warblers.

Even when one considers that there were 36 parties in Baltimore on the MD Count, some of their totals are still impressive, such as 429 Red-eyed Vireos, 144 N. Parulas, 138 Black-throated Blue Warblers, 11 Wilson's Warblers, 200 Scarlet Tanagers, 69 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, and 233 Indigo Buntings.

**BUNTINGS TO FINCHES** — The Painted Bunting present all winter at Pungo, VA, near Back Bay, was only reported on Mar. 27 (RAA). Dickcissels were seen only at Greensboro, Caroline, MD, May 29 (three by MN, CD), in Kent, MD, May 13 (two, fide FLP) and at Curles Neck Farm, Henrico, VA, May 19 (BW). A late Am. Tree Sparrow was at Stevenson, MD, Apr. 8 (BR). Very rare in the spring, a Clay-colored Sparrow was at Dyke Marsh, VA, May 13 (RW, fide DC). One indication of how the rainy, cool weather delayed the departure of some migrants was in the higher numbers of sparrow species on May 13 MD Count compared with last year's, as shown by these respective numbers from those 2 counts: Savannah Sparrow (43/88), Swamp Sparrow (69/132), White-throated Sparrow (68/774), White-crowned Sparrow (14/73), and Slate-colored Junco (three/16).

The only Ipswich (Savannah) Sparrow report was of three on Fisherman's Island N.W.R., VA, Mar. 18 (HTA, GLA, CCW). Very late Savannah Sparrows were four at Cove Pt. May 20 and one at N. Beach May 18–19 (JLS). The first Grasshopper Sparrow sighting was of one at Kinnaird's Pt., Kent, MD, Apr. 10 (SH). A Henslow's Sparrow was at Ellicott I., MD, May 20 (LMD, HLW) where, starting last year, they have become alarmingly difficult to find. Another (plus two Savannah Sparrows and a Dickcissel) were seen along Rt. 625 in Campbell, VA, s. of Lynchburg May 12–13 (C & MH, PM), and by the end of May there were at least three singing ♂ Dickcissels at this site deep into the Piedmont (J & TD). Among the landbirds stranded on the C.B.B.T. by inclement weather Mar. 6 were 64 Song, 17 Savannah, and nine Fox sparrows plus 15 Slate-

colored Juncos and a Pine Warbler (CP) Too many of us, perhaps, think of this unusual structure as a migrant trap in the fall only. Eight Lincoln's Sparrows were banded at Adventure Sanctuary May 2-25 with two captured on May 15 (MD). A late White-throated Sparrow was at Bellevue, Talbot, MD, May 27 (GLA, CCW).

Tiresome as it may be to say so, it is worth mentioning that House Finches are still increasing. At Hampton Roads, VA, the spring count on Apr. 29 found 216 (TK et al.), a new high. In 9 of the past 10 years this count has topped its previous record high for this species. The MD Count recorded 2989 vs. 1769 in 1988, some of this huge increase probably owing to the birds being delayed by the cool, rainy weather. House Finches continue to increase in southern peninsular areas, such as Hampton Roads, which are among the last parts of the Region where they have become established. Following a pathetic showing this past winter, Pine Siskins curiously turned up at Salisbury, MD, where five were present Apr. 19, one remaining until Apr. 21 (C & DB, ph.). A flight of 960 Am. Goldfinches was witnessed at Ft. Smallwood Park, Anne Arundel, MD, May 3 (DM).

**OBSERVERS** — D.F. Abbott, I.W. Ailes, R.A. Anderson, R.L. Anderson, W.L. Argabrite, G.L. Armistead, Scott Atkinson, K.H. Bass, J.B. Bazuin, Ken Berlin, J.A. Bjerke, Jeff Blalock, L.D. Bonham, Ed Boyd, Carol & Don Broderick, Mrs. Henry Brown, Mike Bryan, Paul Bystrak, Martha Chestem, David Czaplak (D.C.), John

& Thelma Dalmas, L M Davidson, H F Day, Bob Dixon **Margaret Donald** (Adventure Sanctuary banding station), Chris Dorset, Sam Droege, S.H. Dyke, Les Eastman, Stephen Eccles, Jeff Effinger, Howard Elitzak, Ethel Engle, Alice Fairbanks, J. Fales, Jane Farrell (JFr), **A.J. Fletcher** (Caroline, MD), R.B. Fletcher, Hans Gabler, Mark Garland, J.S. Gottschalk, Greg Gough, **James Gruber** (Kent, MD), Patricia Gruber, Alex Hammer, Charles & Melva Hansrote, Margaret Hawk, Dick Hegner, M.W. Hewitt, R.P. Hilton, Steve Hitchner, Ottavio Janni, P. Jayne, George Jett, **Teta Kain** (C.B.B.T.), D.L. Kirkwood, V.B. Kitchens, M.K. Klimkiewicz, Alicia Knotts, Walter Kraus, H.E. LeGrand, John Loegering, John Lorentz (JLz), Merrill Lynch, Nancy Magnusson, Kathy Mariano, Elwood Martin, Paul McQuarry, Brooke Meanley, Dorothy & Mike Mitchell, Myriam Moore, Dave Mozurkewich, Dotty Mumford (DMu), Bill Murphy (BMu), Marianna Nuttle, Holly Obrecht, Mike O'Brien, Paul O'Brien, F.L. Parks, Brian Patteson, Carl Perry, Paul Pisano, **E.L. Pitney** (lower E. Shore of MD), Marie Plante, Bill Porter (BPo), Kyle Rambo, **J.G. Reese** (Talbot, MD), Sue Ricciardi (SRi), R.S. Ridgely, **R.F. Ringler** (entire state of MD), Wilbur Rittenhouse, C.S. Robbins, Barbara Ross, Stephen Rottenborn, Len & Jo Satloff, Don Schwab, F.R. Scott, S.W. Simon, Chris & Eddie Slaughter, **Jo Solem** (Howard, MD), P.R. Spitzer, **J.L. Stasz** (MD Count & Calvert, MD), Chris Swarth, C.E. Swift, Brian Taber, J.W. Taylor, G.D. Therres, R.J. Tripician, Guy Tudor, **C.R. Vaughn** (lower E. Shore of MD), Robert Warfield (RWa), Pete Webb, E.P. Weigel, Joy Wheeler, Ron White (RWh), H.L. Wierenga, Richard Wiesler, C.P. Wilds, Jim Wilkinson (JWi), Bill Williams, Ernest Willoughby, G.B. Wilmot, **E.M. Wilson** (greater D.C. area), C.C. Witt, T.R. Wolfe, Ben Yokel, Howard Youth, Paul Zucker.—**HENRY T. ARMISTEAD, 523 E. Durham St., Philadelphia, PA 19119.**

## SOUTHERN ATLANTIC COAST REGION

Harry E. LeGrand, Jr.  
Winter 1988-1989 report



**T**his was a topsy-turvy winter in terms of weather in the Southeast. A surprising freak snowstorm hit the coast in mid-December. Yet, January was unusually warm, with many locales in the 70s on a regular basis. February had everything but hurricanes—tornadoes, at least two heavy snowstorms, temperatures in the 80s, strong winds,

and bitter cold spells. Overall, it was one of the more bizarre winters in recent memory.

Birding was again rather dull. The winter finches again decided to remain in the North, and the long-term decline in waterfowl (except for Tundra Swans) continued. Feeder watchers hope for cold temperatures and snowstorms in

January and February to make their birding worthwhile, but the warm January and hot-and-cold February just did not cause birds to flock to feeders. The main highlights were several pelagic species seen (live and dead) from the North Carolina shore, including an unprecedented "invasion" of Red Phalaropes, and a surprising array of lingering songbirds collected for first winter specimens in South Carolina.

**LOONS TO STORKS**—The only inland record of Red-throated Loon for the season was of one at Falls L., e. of Durham, NC, Feb. 11 (HL). Disappointingly, only three species of grebes were encountered, with the only reports of Red-necked being at Hatteras Inlet, NC, Dec. 30 (BPe) and far s. at Sea I., GA, Dec. 28 (HG). The only tubenose report came from shore, as pelagic trips were almost nonexistent this winter. Strong NE winds blew a Manx Shearwater close enough to Bodie I., NC, to be identified by Patteson Feb. 4. The Am. White Pelican returned to Hatteras Inlet, NC, where it was seen on several occasions in January (RD, HL, JW) and February (DD). One at Pea I., NC, Dec. 10 (JC, AC, DS) was unusual at that site. Brown Pelicans continue to winter in larger numbers in North Carolina each year; and as many as 75 were well "inland" at Chocowinity Bay Jan. 29 (RiC).

Great Cormorants are becoming mundane along the North Carolina coast, at least where an abundance of channel markers (for perches) are present; the best count was of 12 at Ft. Fisher (on markers) Jan. 21 (SC). Few birds are increasing in the Region as dramatically as the Double-crested Cormorant. In inland Georgia, where rare only a few years ago, excellent counts were of 50 at Augusta Dec. 23 (AW) and 25 at L. Oconee Feb. 11 (PY); one was also far n. at Commerce L. Dec. 3–21 (JP) with another or the same in February (JP). Anhingas also seem to be increasing as breeders in much of the Region, and winter reports also are on the rise. The best such records were of 18 on the Augusta CBC Dec. 23 (*fide* AW) and one well n. at New Bern, NC, Dec. 3 (BH).

Single Am. Bitterns were rare well inland in South Carolina in n. York Feb. 14 (HW) and at L. Wateree S.P. Jan. 14 (TK). Notable waders at Augusta included an excellent total of 39 Great Egrets Dec. 23 (*fide* AW) and a Green-backed Heron Jan. 16 and Feb. 25 (AW). A Green-backed Heron in the upper Piedmont near Alpharetta, GA, Jan. 22 (HO, CL) was unusual. A White Ibis, seldom seen in winter in North Carolina away from the coast, was encountered at L. Mattamuskeet Dec. 28 (ED) through late January (JW). Glossy Ibis, rapidly disappearing from the Region in the breeding season, is infrequently seen in winter, but 31 at Darien, GA, Jan. 28 (HO, EH) made an excellent winter total for anywhere in our area. A Wood Stork Feb. 4 at Bear Island W.M.A., SC (LG), was notable for that state in winter.

**WATERFOWL**—All reports of Fulvous Whistling-Duck came from coastal South Carolina: eight in early December at Magnolia Gardens near Charleston (DF), two flying over I-95 in Jasper Jan. 8 (RC, CE), and two on Feb. 4 at Bear Island W.M.A. (JB, KC, LG). Single Tundra Swans were found well inland near Greensboro, NC, Dec. 25 (HH), at Silver Bluff Sanctuary, Aiken, SC, Nov. 21 (DCo), and on the Savannah R. near Augusta late December to Feb. 24 (AW). Always noteworthy in Georgia, one remained for about a month, last seen in late January, at Darien (*fide* HO); and a good count of swans in South Carolina was of 76 at Poco Sabo Plantation, Colleton, Jan. 16 (PN, CW). Three imm. Mute Swans were present Dec. 11–31 at Pine I., Santee N.W.R., SC (DF, LG). The species is not known to be resident in this area and is of hypothetical status in the state.

Remarkably, there were five reports of Greater White-fronted Goose, with reports from each of the 3 states. Birds believed to be of the orange-billed, Greenland race (*flavirostris*) were found near L. Mattamuskeet, NC, where three were seen Dec. 28–30 (ML, RD, DC, JN) and at Poco Sabo Plantation,

Colleton, SC, where four were seen Jan. 15 (DF *et al.*) Additional records, without reference to race, were of three at Savannah N.W.R., SC, Jan. 14 (CLe *et al.*), two at Commerce L., GA, Dec. 17–Feb. 26 (JP), and one in n.e. Laurens, GA, Jan. 22–Feb. 28 and later (TKP). In addition to a few inland records in North Carolina, Snow Geese were also found in inland Georgia near Athens (PY), at Commerce L. (JP), and at Sweetwater Creek S.P. (PR). Most unusual were 39 Snows in Charleston, SC, Dec. 14 (DF). Georgia's first **Ross' Goose** was present beginning in late February at Lake Point Resort at Eufaula, AL, and was noted flying across the Chattahoochee R. into Georgia airspace in March (*fide* TM). One at Pea I., NC, Dec. 31 (BL, ED, HL) added to a growing number of recent records for this site. Far south of its usual range was a Brant at Patriots Pt. near Charleston Dec. 21–26 (DF, GS).

Only one Eur. Wigeon was reported, a male at an impoundment near Davis, Carteret, NC, Feb. 4–28 and later (JF *et al.*). Greater Scaup are rare inland in winter; thus, notable were four at Gaston, NC, Jan. 1 (ML, MT, RY); one at Tryon, NC, Jan. 18 (ST); three in Greene, GA, Feb. 11 (PY), with two there Feb. 25 (PS, PY, DSi); and a remarkable 44, reported without details, in Monroe, GA, in January. Just the 2nd record of **Common Eider** for Georgia was furnished by a female Dec. 17 at the s. end of St. Catherine's I. (BW, JNi, *fide* AW). A year ago, a mixed flock of Common and King eiders wintered at Oregon Inlet, NC; however, this winter only a single ♀ Common appeared, and just for one day (Dec. 10—DS). Another ♀ Common was at Hatteras Inlet Dec. 30 (BP). Surprisingly, no King Eiders were reported from the Region. On the other hand, at Oregon Inlet two Harlequin Ducks spent the entire winter (AC, DS, JC *et al.*), and a male and a female Harlequin were present Jan. 14 at Ft. Macon S.P., NC (SH).

Rare for Georgia was an Oldsquaw Dec. 31–Jan. 1 at Sapelo I. (BS, MH); and quite unusual was one at Saluda, NC, at the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Dec. 17–25 (ST). Even rarer inland than Oldsquaw was a Black Scoter at a pond near Columbia, SC, Dec. 17 (LG). Common Goldeneyes appeared inland in somewhat smaller numbers than usual, with the only such record of more than two individuals being of four at Plant Scherer, Monroe, GA, Feb. 4 (TJ). A notable count of Com. Mergansers for the Region, especially for Georgia, was of six at Sapelo I. Dec. 31 (MH). Elsewhere, Commons were reported only in inland North Carolina, with the peak a lackluster four, in Davie in February (MHa). Five Red-breasted Mergansers Feb. 25 at L. Oconee, GA (PY), made the best inland report.

**VULTURES TO CRANES**—A Turkey Vulture at Pea Island N.W.R. Feb. 10 (JF) was unusual, as the species is generally absent on the Outer Banks in winter. An Osprey spent the winter in Laurens, GA (TKP); this was the only inland report this season. The first nesting of Bald Eagle in North Carolina away from tidewater was documented from Wake in late winter (PD, JWa, WI). The nest was attended by both adults, but the presence of young, or even eggs, was never verified. A count of 23 eagles at Jordan L., Chatham, NC, in December (JK *et al.*) was notable. Only one report of Rough-legged Hawk was made, a dark-morph bird Jan. 14 at Simpsonville, SC (PW). Always noteworthy in the Region, single Golden Eagles were found on the Piedmont N.W.R., GA, CBC Dec. 19 (*fide* TJ) and at Bear Island W.M.A., SC, Jan. 15–21 (DF, RC, CE, GM). Rare inland in winter were single Peregrine Falcons at Santee N.W.R., SC, Jan. 29 (TK), Piedmont N.W.R., GA, Dec. 19 (*fide* TJ), and north of Atlanta, GA, chasing pigeons Dec. 27 (FM).

On the evening of Dec. 30, at the close of the Cape Hatteras, NC, CBC, Dean and Lewis decided to search for Yellow Rail by clicking rocks at a marsh near Cape Hatteras point. To their surprise, and to other count birders' dismay, a Yellow Rail responded to the clicking by walking out into a ditch, where they observed it in a flashlight beam. This record, added to other recent records in the tidewater of that state,



indicate a more widespread population than previously suspected. Seldom reported in winter was a Purple Gallinule near Sunbury, Liberty, GA, Dec. 30 (SCa). A Sandhill Crane at an impoundment near Aurora, NC, Feb. 9 (SC) was rare for that state. In Georgia, where large numbers pass through each spring and fall, the northbound migration seemed to be earlier than usual, with a surprising 330 seen at Conyers on the early date of Feb. 14 (FMi), and 66 flying over Athens Feb. 7 (DS).

**SHOREBIRDS** — One of the few winter records for the Region of **Lesser Golden-Plover** was of one seen and heard calling south of Raleigh, in a pasture with Killdeer, Dec. 11 (RH, HL). Wintering numbers of Piping Plovers continued to decline. The peak count in the Beaufort, NC, area was of just 18 (JF); ten years ago, 50 or more plovers wintered in this area, and the CBC there at times led the country in Piping numbers. Quite rare inland in winter were single Lesser Yellowlegs at Goldsboro, NC, Dec. 15 (ED) and at Augusta Jan. 29 (AW), with two at the latter site Feb. 11 (AW). Notable at this season for the North Carolina Outer Banks was a Whimbrel Dec. 31 at Pea I. (HA, CP). A Long-billed Curlew at Ft. Fisher, NC, much of the winter (SC, RD, KK) was presumably the same bird as seen at this locale in previous winters. Least Sandpipers were reported from at least 6 inland sites, with the best count being of 28 on the Goldsboro CBC Dec. 17 (fide ED). An excellent total of 69 Long-billed Dowitchers was present along the causeway at L. Mattamuskeet Dec. 28 (ML).

#### S.A.

Certainly the most unusual avian phenomenon of the season was the apparently unprecedented (in winter) near-shore invasion of **Red Phalaropes** between Shackleford Banks and Bear I., NC, Feb. 3-5 (C.B.C.). At least 10,000 individuals were seen around inlets and in the breakers, feeding on a particular species of copepod that normally occurs far offshore. Strong S winds for several days in late January and early February probably pushed the copepod concentration inshore. Red Phalaropes are fairly common to common in winter offshore, but are seldom seen from shore, and even then normally only one or two birds are observed at a time.

**JAEGERS TO ALCIDS** — The **Pomarine Jaeger** seen in late November far inland at L. Wylie, SC, was last noted Dec. 3 (RC, CE); this was the 2nd inland record for the state. A few Parasitic Jaegers were reported on coastal North Carolina CBCs, but the best "jaeger" was a Great Skua found dead at Ft. Macon S.P., NC, Jan. 10 (SH, \*N.C.S.M.). There are now several confirmed state records for Great Skua, all in the winter season. All S. Polar Skua records for the state, conveniently, have been during the warmer months, with no overlapping dates with Great Skuas.

A notable count of Little Gulls was of five at Bodie I., Feb. 4 (BP), the same day another Little was found at Pine Knoll Shores, NC (BO, DW, TP). The only other Little Gull for the season was on the Bodie-Pea Island CBC Dec. 29 (BPo). North Carolina, as usual, also had the only Com. Black-headed Gull reports: single adults near the Pamlico R. ferry landing (south side) Jan. 12 (SC) and at Ocean Isle Beach Feb. 1 (MM). Good inland totals of Bonaparte's Gulls for Georgia were of 69 at Rum Creek W.M.A. Dec. 16 (TJ) and 59 at L. Oconee Feb. 11 (PY). One wonders how rare **Thayer's Gulls** really are in the East, and whether the species is actually increasing. Until several years ago, North Carolina had just one sight record, but the state now has at least one-half dozen such records, including a few photographs. This winter, single immatures were seen 2½ mi off Atlantic Beach Dec. 18 (MT) and at a landfill near Newport Feb. 3 (MT, HL, DC, RD); and an adult was at the same landfill Jan. 31-Feb. 6 (JF). The 4 reports of Iceland Gull were also limited to North Carolina: Wanchese Dec. 29 (PM), Cape Hatteras Jan. 14 (JW, RT), Hatteras village Dec. 30 (HA party), and in the Morehead City area Feb. 3-6

(JF, DW, TP, ZB). A first inland record (away from tidewater) for the Region of **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was surprisingly in Georgia (rather than North Carolina), where one was present Jan. 21 through February at Macon (TI). Otherwise, Lessers were limited to coastal North Carolina, with the peak count only of four birds. Single Black-legged Kittiwakes were encountered along the coast of that state, and nowhere else, on at least 5 occasions. Belatedly reported was a well-described Common Tern Nov. 21 at Winston-Salem, NC (DD). A few Forster's Terns spent the winter on L. Murray at Dreher Island S.P., SC (TK), and a Forster's was unusual at Augusta Jan. 20 (AW). Observers in the Region usually encounter an alcid or two somewhere along the coast in a given winter, however, no such reports surfaced this season.

**DOVES TO HUMMINGBIRDS** — Common Ground-Doves were seen on 3 occasions near the Fall Line in Aiken, SC, where the status is poorly known; two birds each were found Jan. 1 at Aiken (PSt), Jan. 7 near Silver Bluff Sanctuary (DCo), and Jan. 28 near Jackson (DCo). Far inland Short-eared Owls were found along the South Carolina-North Carolina border south of Charlotte Dec. 31-Jan. 1 (HW, TP) and at a regular site near Cordele, GA, Dec. 4 (BD, DH, NK, AWy). Always of interest, two N. Saw-whet Owls were reported, each from the North Carolina coast, where there have been a surprising number of records (relative to inland locales) in recent winters. One remained most of the winter in a yard in Buxton (CP, MaL), and one was a road-kill victim at Ft. Macon S.P. Jan. 29 (SH). Amazing if correct, a veteran observer reported a Com. Nighthawk calling overhead (but not seen) near Cary, NC, on the evening of Feb. 28. A Whip-poor-will calling at Lugoff, SC, Feb. 2 (LG) was so early that it must have overwintered.

As usual, winter hummingbirds deserve considerable comment. Most significant, perhaps, was the identification of the ♀-plumaged **Archilochus** found a winter ago at Surfside Beach, SC. The bird has been identified as a Ruby-throated, the first winter specimen for the state and perhaps for the Region (WP, \*C.M.). This winter, another Ruby-throated was collected at Kingstree, SC, Dec. 10 (SPR, fide WP; \*C.M.). As usual, a handful of ♀-plumaged **Archilochus** hummingbirds were at feeders in several Carteret, NC, towns (fide JF), and another female/immature, identified as Ruby-throated, was banded at Oriental, NC, Dec. 13 (DFoy). A far inland **Archilochus** was at a Kernersville, NC, feeder as late as Dec. 11 (fide ED). An imm. ♂ Rufous Hummingbird spent the winter at an Atlanta feeder (BT, fide TM), and others of this age and sex wintered near Greenville, SC (PW) and near Masonboro Sound, NC, for much of December and January (RM, KK). A "Rufous" was also reported Dec. 6 at Elizabeth City, NC (fide DFoy), but details were not received. It is encouraging to see some documentation for our winter hummingbirds, in the form of photos, video recordings, banding/trapping for detailed study, and specimens.

**FLYCATCHERS TO SHRIKES** — A first Regional winter specimen of **Eastern Wood-Pewee** was provided by one collected at Kingstree, SC, Dec. 28 (SPR, species determination by WP). Even though the record conclusively proves that pewees really can occur in winter, the great majority of previous sight records for the season are probably of misidentified phoebes. Both a male and a ♀ Vermilion Flycatcher were present in December at Okefenokee Swamp, GA; the female remained at least to the end of January (fide TM). Two Purple Martins were very early at Middleton Place near Charleston, SC, Jan. 10 (BK). A quarry near New Bern, NC, again was refuge for lingering swallows—a N. Rough-winged Dec. 19 (JF, BH) and Jan. 14 (BH) and a Barn Swallow on the first date (JF, BH). Likely a first Regional winter record for **Bank Swallow** was provided by a tardy bird Dec. 3 at Savannah N.W.R., SC (SCa). Calver also had a Barn Swallow with the Bank Swallow, and other winter Barns were noted as late as Dec. 9

at Goldsboro, NC (ED) and as early as Feb. 22 at Bear Island WMA, SC (ML). Absent from the Atlanta area until just a few years ago, Fish Crows are now being reported in winter—at DeKalb Res. (FM), on the Marietta CBC (*fide* TM), and in Atlanta (GSc).

For the 2nd straight winter, Red-breasted Nuthatches were practically absent; most CBCs missed the species again. Rare along the Georgia coast was a White-breasted Nuthatch on the Sapelo Island CBC Dec. 31 (AW, VW). Brown Creepers were considered to be in increased numbers in parts of South Carolina and Georgia where they are normally uncommon. Sedge Wrens and Marsh Wrens winter sparingly over much of the inland parts of the Region, but are easily overlooked. The best such record was of a Sedge Wren seen Jan. 16–Feb. 22 in n. York, SC (TP, HW). Golden-crowned Kinglet continued to draw raves from South Carolina and Georgia birders, and it is now common in winter even in coastal areas. Good details were received of a Gray-cheeked Thrush Dec. 17 at Greenville, SC (GC); however, as usual, no call was heard. Until a specimen or photos are at hand, such records of this species, Swainson's Thrushes, and Veeries must remain unverified and open to question. A thoroughly convincing description of a Wood Thrush was provided; it was seen Dec. 29 near Greensboro, NC (HLi, HH). Gray Catbird records from the Piedmont after December are unusual, but Paget had single birds in Banks, GA, Feb. 5 and in Forsyth, GA, Feb. 25. A Loggerhead Shrike spent the winter along the coast at Ft. Fisher, NC (KK, RD); formerly, the species was regularly found in s.e. North Carolina.

**VIREOS, WARBLERS**—A White-eyed Vireo, seldom found in the Piedmont in winter, was encountered in the Atlanta area Feb. 5 (PB, HG). Solitary Vireo does winter (and breed) to some extent in that province; one at Piedmont N.W.R., GA, Feb. 26 (PS, JS) was notable. There were three Piedmont reports of Orange-crowned Warblers, all from the Atlanta area (*fide* TM), where there are numerous previous records. However, definitely out-of-season in that province were a N. Parula Dec. 16 near Raleigh (MT) and a Cape May Warbler Jan. 24 at Winston-Salem, NC (DD). The 2nd Georgia record, and approximately the 6th Regional record, for **Black-throated Gray Warbler** was furnished by one Feb. 1 at Crooked River S.P. (MR). Casual in winter was a **Black-throated Green Warbler**, collected at Kingtree, SC, Dec. 24 (SPR, \*C.M.); this appears to be the first documentation for the Region at this season. Prairie Warblers apparently do not regularly winter in North Carolina, although they have been found on many CBCs. One on Jan. 27 near Aurora (SC) was notable for its "lateness." Ovenbirds winter sparingly along the coast, perhaps as far north as Buxton, NC, where the species was again found on the Cape Hatteras CBC. However, the total of nine on the count (HA *et al.*) was a complete shock, and a follow-up in late January or February is needed to determine if the species, indeed, overwinters this far north. An Ovenbird was also seen inland at Santee N.W.R. Dec. 26 (RC), for about the 6th winter record for South Carolina. The only Yellow-breasted Chats reported were two near New Bern, NC, Dec. 19 (BH, JF) and one found dead in Gloucester, Carteret, NC, Feb. 28 (KP).

**TANAGERS, EMBERIZID FINCHES**—Oddly enough, the tanager most likely in winter, the Western, went unreported, whereas Summer and Scarlet were each encountered once. Two Summers were seen on the Charleston CBC (CPh party), but more unusual was a Scarlet Tanager at Greensboro Dec. 28–29 (HLi, HH), which still had a few red feathers in the axillary region. For some unknown reason, there was a flurry of winter records of Blue Grosbeak in the early 1970s, but nothing much had been heard from the species in winter until this season, when there were 3 reports. The 3rd South Carolina winter report, and first specimen, came from Kingtree, where an imm. male was collected Jan. 16 (SPR, *fide* WP). Two Blues were also seen Dec. 17 at Thomasville, GA

(RLC), for about the 4th winter record for that state; and another was a feeder visitor in s. Durham, NC, Feb. 27 (J & EPU). Painted Buntings were observed at 4 coastal sites: Beaufort (SCu, LH), Cape Carteret (*fide* BG), and Southport (JN) in North Carolina, and St. Catherine's I. (AW) in Georgia.

A count of 11 Bachman's Sparrows Feb. 3 at 4 sites at Savannah River Plant, SC (BDu, BWa, BDa) was a good winter total. The number of Vesper Sparrows wintering in the Region, especially in North Carolina, is just a fraction of the number 20 years ago. A Vesper near Fairfield, NC, Jan. 21 (ML) would not have been noteworthy a decade ago. A Lark Sparrow was seen Dec. 29–Jan. 1 at Ft. Fisher (MB, RD, KK). Grasshopper Sparrows probably winter over nearly all of the Piedmont of Georgia and South Carolina, but records are dependent on purposeful search. Dunning, Watts, and others did just that, finding a few all winter near Athens, GA, and four at Savannah River Plant Feb. 3. Another was at a New Bern, NC, quarry Dec. 19 (JF, BH). Le Conte's Sparrows also must be found with purposeful search, and birders are realizing that the species is not the very rare species once believed. In North Carolina, four were found near Southport Dec. 31 to late January (SC, KK) and two were seen near Roper Dec. 27–Jan. 29 (HL *et al.*). Singles were seen at Bear I., SC, Jan. 21 (RC), on Sapelo I., GA, Dec. 31 (HK), and in e. Clarke, GA, Jan. 8–Mar. 1 (BWA).

There were 9 reports of Lincoln's Sparrow, including six from the North Carolina Coastal Plain, where now found to be regular in winter. Outside of that state, where undoubtedly regular as well, were two near Eufaula N.W.R., GA, Feb. 11 (BD), one near Sweetwater Creek S.P., GA, Jan. 29 (PR), and one at Savannah N.W.R., SC, Dec. 21 (ST). The all-time Regional record count of Lapland Longspur was upped to 84, which Lynch counted (with just four Horned Larks) Dec. 30 at a previously known site near L. Phelps, NC. Other records in that state included four at Cape Hatteras Dec. 10 (LG, KC), one at Goldsboro Dec. 17 (HL), and five in e. Edgecombe Dec. 26 (RD). In South Carolina, where quite rare, six were at Huntington Beach S.P. Dec. 17 (DF) and one was near Aiken Dec. 26 (PSt). The only Snow Buntings were four that wintered at Cape Hatteras (m.ob.).

**BLACKBIRDS TO CARDUELINE FINCHES**—A ♀ Yellow-headed Blackbird near Pine Mountain, GA, Feb. 5 (D & PMcC) was the only one reported. Brewer's Blackbirds do, indeed, winter regularly "out of range" at Open Grounds Farm, Carteret, NC, as 47 were counted Feb. 3 (DC, RD), a large flock wintered there last year. Other Brewer's in the Carolinas, where considered quite rare, were in a mixed flock of blackbirds in n. Mecklenburg, NC, Jan. 14 (HW) and one near L. Marion, Clarendon, SC, Dec. 26 (RC). A good count for Augusta was of 30 Brewer's on Jan. 14 (AW, VW, CB). Rodgers collected an ad. ♂ **Orchard Oriole** at Kingtree Dec. 24 (*fide* WP) for the first winter specimen and likely 2nd winter record for South Carolina.

Purple Finches do not normally vary in numbers greatly from winter to winter, unlike the notoriously unpredictable Pine Siskin and Evening Grosbeak. However, this winter they were uncommon to rare nearly everywhere and were missed on some CBCs that probably have never missed them before. Hopefully, there is not a continental decline. House Finches are no longer newsworthy and are becoming glorified House Sparrows over much of the Region. No Red Crossbills were reported, and the same could almost be said for Evening Grosbeaks. Fewer than five birders saw grosbeaks during the season. And Pine Siskins were scarcely easier to find, as there were just a handful of reports. One must wonder if "all" the grosbeaks and siskins were even correctly identified, a thought this editor would not even consider in an invasion year!

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## FLORIDA REGION

**H. P. Langridge**



**A**t the Dry Tortugas on March 9 during a severe storm in the Atlantic, stranded boaters reported many warblers on the parade ground and on their boats. After the storm on March 12 two parties reported “thousands” of

displaced seabirds flying north off the Palm Beach County coast.

April and May were hot and dry. May in Palm Beach County was the second hottest and the third driest ever,

with rainfall 5½ inches below average, and rainfall in Collier County was reportedly off 81 percent. The water level at Lake Okeechobee was almost two feet below normal at the end of May. This low water caused some Snail Kites and water birds to wander to deep canals and lakes.

The clear dry weather produced excellent migrating conditions, but poor conditions for observers. Very few migrants were evident on either coast, with most observers generally agreeing that this spring migration was extremely poor, and Ft. DeSoto near St. Petersburg claiming that this year was the worst migration ever. However, Johnnie Johnson reported that the migration offshore was the best in several years. On two separate days twenty miles off Cocoa, he counted over 413 warblers flying by with 33 landing on the boat.

This spring the Bahama Swallow, Bahama Mockingbird, and Bananaquit draw observers from afar, but the alarming news involved the striking number of Shiny Cowbirds invading.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — D.T. = Dry Tortugas; E.N.P. = Everglades Nat'l Park; Ft. DeSoto = Ft. DeSoto County Park, Pinellas; Tally Div. = Tallahassee Division.

**PETRELS TO WADERS** — The strange features about the Black-capped Petrel sighting Apr. 28 (DS, +DF, m.ob.) between Cosgrove Tower and Rebecca Shoals east of D.T. were that this deep-water species was seen in shallow water and in the Gulf of Mexico, only the 2nd known sighting there. Three Greater Shearwaters off Cocoa Apr. 28 were expected, but five Sooty Shearwaters there Apr. 10 were an outstanding find (JJ). An impressive number of over 200 Audubon's Shearwaters were found on flat seas in the Gulf Stream s.e. of Key West Apr. 26 (JH et al.), and two Apr. 29 and May 6 (BA) 50 mi w. of Sanibel I. were surprising. Off Boynton Beach Mar. 12 after the big storm (CP), an ad. Brown Booby flew north with 475 N. Gannets. Totalling 1267 N. Gannets in 9 days at the end of March was an unusually high number for Pinellas (RHW). On Hospital Key, D.T., the high count of Masked Boobies was of 27 Apr. 29 (DF et al.), and during late April and early May (HPL, m.ob.), three appeared to be incubating there again this year. If successful, this nesting would be only the 2nd time in the continental United States. A striking number of 4200 Am. White Pelicans was counted in mine pits in Polk Mar. 25 (PF), but three at Key West Apr. 18 (JAO) were surprising that far south. At Rookery Bay Sanctuary, Collier, 30 Am. White Pelicans were late May 25 (JM). Although Brown Pelicans are now scarce but regular inland in s. and s.c. Florida, three at Gainesville May 24 (CER, LDJ) were unusual inland that far north. During April and May, for only the 2nd time on D.T., Magnificent Frigatebirds nested successfully on Long Key with 40 to 50 nestlings in late May (WR). A Great Blue Heron (white form) was unusual inland in e. Orange May 4-6 (CTR, DWF), and another in Sarasota Bay paired with one of the blue form to raise two dark young (RTP). Roseate Spoonbills, productive this spring, surprised inland observers with one Mar. 23 (DWF) at Orlando Wilderness Park and "several" Apr. 21-23 (GW, HK) in Osceola.

**DUCKS TO RAILS** — In a flooded field near Belle Glade, Palm Beach, May 7 (BS, SSm), 2500 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks with 500 Mottled Ducks emphasized the success of the Fulvous in this area. Finding several different pairs of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks near Myakka River S.P. May 27 (RDG, BP) answered the question of whether the 70 wintering birds of this species migrated out of state during the summer or stayed in Florida. Thoroughly checking registered aviculturists and other possible sources failed to determine whether or not the White-cheeked Pintail w. of W. Palm Beach was a



*This White-cheeked Pintail present for some time at West Palm Beach, Florida, and photographed April 14, 1989, later proved to be an escapee from a nearby farm. Photograph/George F. Wagner.*

valid migrant. Inquiry much later at a nearby farm uncovered that two of this species, not pinioned, were part of a small flock of exotic waterfowl kept there, so the White-cheeked Pintail seen during April and May was a kept bird that wandered regularly. The highest count ever of N. Shovelers in Polk was of 6050 Mar. 25 (PF).

Although 5 pairs of Black-shouldered Kites were found in n.w. Broward Mar. 18 (WG, BH), only 3 pairs stayed to build nests. At the end of May 2 pairs were still attending nests despite heavy smoke and nearby fires, but there were no signs of young. For 2 days in April at E.N.P., a Black-shouldered visited the site where kites nested last year (JCu). Seven very pale Red-tailed Hawks, resembling the so-called "Kriders" form, were reported from Hendry to Polk Mar. 1-16 (RT), and one was seen in Polk Mar. 25 (PF). At D.T. the hawk flight May 7 (KK et al.) was the best this spring with at least 30 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 12 Broad-winged Hawks, 15 Merlins, and seven Peregrines. Always a good find in s. Florida, a calling Virginia Rail was heard at Loxahatchee N.W.R. Mar. 31 (PWS). Two locations produced breeding confirmation of Am. Coot, a rare nester in Polk, May 21 & 27 (PW).

**SHOREBIRDS TO TERNS** — At Ft. DeSoto Apr. 1-8 (LA et al.), the only Lesser Golden-Plover of the season was reported. Ten Piping Plovers, a very good number for the s.e. coast, were counted at Virginia Key, Dade, Mar. 4 (Tropical Audubon Society). Uncommon so far north, a pair of Black-necked Stilts was attempting to nest at Payne's Prairie near Gainesville May 4-31 (JW et al.). The highest numbers of some shorebirds, by species, were: 137 Am. Avocets in Polk Apr. 15 (PF), 25 Solitary Sandpipers at W. Palm Beach Apr. 30 (BDN, JG), 21 White-rumped Sandpipers in e. Orange May 18 (CTR), and 205 Stilt Sandpipers in Polk Mar. 25 (PF). A late Stilt Sandpiper was seen May 21 (DJ) at St. Marks N.W.R. Two Long-billed Curlews, uncommon in Tally Div., turned up at Lanark, Franklin, Mar. 28 (RW) and at Turkey Point, Franklin, Apr. 4 (JEC, RW). Fifteen hundred Red Knots massed at Talbot Island S.P., Duval, May 2 (DP). A Short-billed Dowitcher landed on a boat 25 mi e. of Port Canaveral Apr. 8 (JJ, \*Brevard Museum) and died later, and the impressive number of 654 dowitchers (sp.) was reported in Polk Mar. 25 (PF). The only Wilson's Phalarope, uncommon in spring, was reported in Polk Apr. 23 (PF, PT).

After the big March storm, two displaced jaegers (sp.) were flying N with "thousands" of seabirds off Palm Beach Mar. 12. (CP). An imm. Com. Black-headed Gull was an excellent find at Port Canaveral Mar. 1-2 (JJ, KB). The all-time high count of Lesser Black-backed Gulls at Pompano Beach landfill totalled 27 Apr. 1 (PWS, WG et al.), with only three imm. plumaged birds. A first-year Glaucous Gull at Pompano Beach landfill Mar. 10-Apr. 8 (WG, BH et al.) startled observers because it was inland and so far south. At Port Canaveral an imm. Black-legged Kittiwake showed up Mar. 8 (JJ et al.), and another was seen near Ft. Lauderdale Mar. 10 (JKM et al.). An

**Arctic Tern**, resting in the channel between Bush and Garden Keys, D.T., May 5 (WG, BH, †RDG, m.ob., ph. MP), produced the first sighting for spring in the Gulf for the Florida Region and D.T. Off Cape Canaveral 22 mi, two Roseate Terns were somewhat unusual May 16 (JJ). The rare but regular Black Noddy was seen routinely on Bush Key, D.T., Apr. 25–May 1 (CH, m.ob.).

**DOVES TO THRUSHES**—On Loggerhead Key, D.T., where Merlins and Peregrines were very active, an extremely nervous racing pigeon was captured and released after its band was read May 1 (FA et al.). Considered rare on D.T., a Rock Dove was spotted there May 1 (HPL et al.) & 4–6 (RDG et al.). An alert, well-fed Eur. Collared-Dove visited Garden Key, D.T., Apr. 26 (HPL et al.) for only the 2nd record there. Many reporters mentioned the breeding success of this species this season. An imm. White-crowned Pigeon overshot and stayed on Hypoluxo I., Palm Beach, Mar. 26–Apr. 18 (HPL et al.) The release of White-winged Doves in Highlands in 1977 has proven to be a successful endeavor; 39 were counted May 6 near Lake Placid (RT). A Burrowing Owl provided the first sighting for Madison in the Tally Div., May 3 (GB, JC). Interestingly, two Short-eared Owls were reported on the Keys: a wing and leg were found on Big Pine Key Apr. 24 (MG, \*E.N.P.), probably establishing a first for the lower Keys, and one whole bird was at Loggerhead Key, D.T., May 5 (BH et al., ph. MP). On Mar. 10 (JG) an early Com. Nighthawk called in Miami. A Chuck-will's-widow circled a boat 30 mi w. of Sarasota Apr. 28 (BA) for a surprise. The good number of over 50 Chimney Swifts was noted at E.N.P. May 2 (BS, SSm). A ♂ **Black-chinned Hummingbird**, an excellent find, visited a feeder near Jacksonville Apr. 6–7 (LJ, PP et al.). At Golden Gate, two Hairy Woodpeckers, seldom reported in Collier, were seen Mar. 12 (JD, LD). On Mar. 12 down Snake Bight, E.N.P., a calling Brown-crested Flycatcher, a rare winter visitor, was spotted (MW et al.). The wintering **Cassin's Kingbird**, 2nd sighting and first confirmed record for Florida, tarried until Apr. 22 (TT). The **Bahama Swallow**, rare in Florida, returned to Miami again this year Mar. 30–May 31 (m.ob., ph. GFW, MP). On Apr. 23 (JH, BB) and on later dates, this amorous bird dallied with Cave Swallows nesting nearby. Stray Cave Swallows were seen on D.T. Apr. 24–25 (HPL, DF et al.).

A calling Fish Crow, unusual on the Keys, was reported near Key West Mar. 30–Apr. 9 (JAO, BN). A wintering Red-breasted Nuthatch, rare at the southern edge of its wintering range, stayed late at Cedar Key to May 6 (DTF). A late Brown Creeper Mar. 11 (BP) produced a first for Pasco. On Apr. 22 (†JEC, †RW) at St. George I., a **Bewick's Wren** provided the first sighting in 20 years in the Tally Div., and the latest. Wintering in the same yard for 6 consecutive years, a House Wren, first banded there in 1982, hit the mist nets again at Nokomis, Sarasota, Mar. 11 (AS, SS). A **Bahama Mockingbird**, furnishing the 9th U.S. sighting, lingered at Cape Florida near Miami Apr. 8–11 (†PB, m.ob., ph. GFW, CTR, MP). A tardy Swanson's Thrush banged into a window at Tallahassee May 18 (JEC).

**VIREOS, WARBLERS**—Two carefully described Bell's Vireos, rare in Florida, were reported at St. George I., Franklin, Apr. 11 (†RW). This spring no Black-whiskered Vireos were seen or heard in suitable mangrove habitat in Hillsboro, Terra Ceia, and Sarasota Bays, and none was at Ft. DeSoto again this year, but the Prairie Warblers were still evident in this area despite the presence of Brown-headed Cowbirds (RTP). A Black-whiskered Vireo at St. George Island S.P., Franklin, Apr. 1 (SC) furnished the earliest record for Tally Div. Philadelphia Vireos, rare in spring, were studied at Loggerhead Key May 6 (†KK et al.); at Cocoa Beach May 25 (†BE, KE), first spring sighting for Brevard; and two at Ft. DeSoto May 2 (LH).

Several Blue-winged Warblers were reported. Four Golden-winged Warblers, rare spring migrants, were reported one at Largo Apr. 27 (KN), one at Seminole near St. Petersburg Apr. 29 (JF), one at Ft. DeSoto May 2 (LH), and one at Talbot Island S.P., Duval, May 2 (DP). The only Nashville Warbler reported this spring was at Corkscrew Mar. 28 (VM, fide TB). A Yellow-rumped "**Audubon's**" Warbler, 4th spring sighting for the state, tarried at Loggerhead Key, D.T., Apr. 29–May 1 (DF, DS, m.ob.). A ♀ Black-throated Blue Warbler was very early at Jacksonville Mar. 21 (JPC). A ♂ Prothonotary Warbler produced by far the earliest spring record in Brevard Mar. 3 (JJ), and another was early at Tallahassee Mar. 4 (DJ). An Ovenbird was late at Jacksonville May 28 (JPC). A Wilson's Warbler, a good find, turned up west of W. Palm Beach Mar. 25 (BH). Over 300 mi south of its usual breeding range, a singing Yellow-breasted Chat was found in s.e. Hendry May 27–31 (WG, BH).

**BANANAQUITS TO FINCHES**—The last view of the wintering **Bananaquit** near Ft. Lauderdale was recorded Mar. 6 (EF et al.). A Blue Grosbeak at St. George Island S.P. Apr. 1 (SC) provided the earliest record for the Tally Div. On Garden Key, a ♀ Rufous-sided Towhee Apr. 24 (HPL, WB et al.) and Clay-colored Sparrow May 6 (RT et al.) each provided first spring sightings for D.T. A Grasshopper Sparrow reported in Pasco May 15–16 (DC) was a late migrant, but a singing bird in Osceola May 30 (RT) probably was of the Florida race. A White-crowned Sparrow, unusual in s. Florida, visited a feeder at W. Palm Beach Apr. 8–13 (CP); another was reported at Talbot Island S.P. May 2 (DP); and a late bird was seen near Tallahassee May 20 (BHS). A Lincoln's Sparrow, a scarce wintering bird but a rare migrant, was spotted at Ft. DeSoto very late May 29 (JB, RC). The only Yellow-headed Blackbird was reported at Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary Mar. 7 (DB). A ♂ Brewer's Blackbird Mar. 29 (RT) in Hardee was a surprise

#### S.A.

Here they come! For several years, American Birds editors for Florida have been prophesying doom for s. Florida passerines from the impending invasion of parasitic Shiny Cowbirds. The invasion is now in full swing. Seventeen Shiny Cowbirds were counted on Garden and Loggerhead Keys at D.T. Apr. 25, with a total of 25 more there Apr. 24–May 7 (m.ob.), and 10 more May 25–28 (WR). These Tortugas sightings represented just a portion of the numbers streaming into s. Florida. Rivaling the D.T. numbers were the Key West totals during May, with a high of 44 birds May 16 (JAO). Florida City, Dade, had 3 pairs during April and May (CM, BP et al.); w. Homestead had one pair all spring (BS, SSm); Flamingo, E.N.P., had two May 14 (BS, SSm); Big Coppitt Key had one Apr. 9 (BDN, JAO); and Big Pine Key had five May 11–31 (BS, SSm). To the north, a singing male in Delray Beach provided Palm Beach with its first sighting May 8 (BH), and a pair furnished the 2nd county record in s.w. Palm Beach May 10 (JB, ER).

A ♀ N. "Bullock's" Oriole was found Mar. 19 (†DO, JS) in E.N.P. again this year. An Australian pine, heavy with cones, fell among 3 mist nets in a Nokomis, Sarasota, yard, attracting 146 Am. Goldfinches and one Pine Siskin, both scarce this winter, for banding Mar. 2–4 (AS, SS).

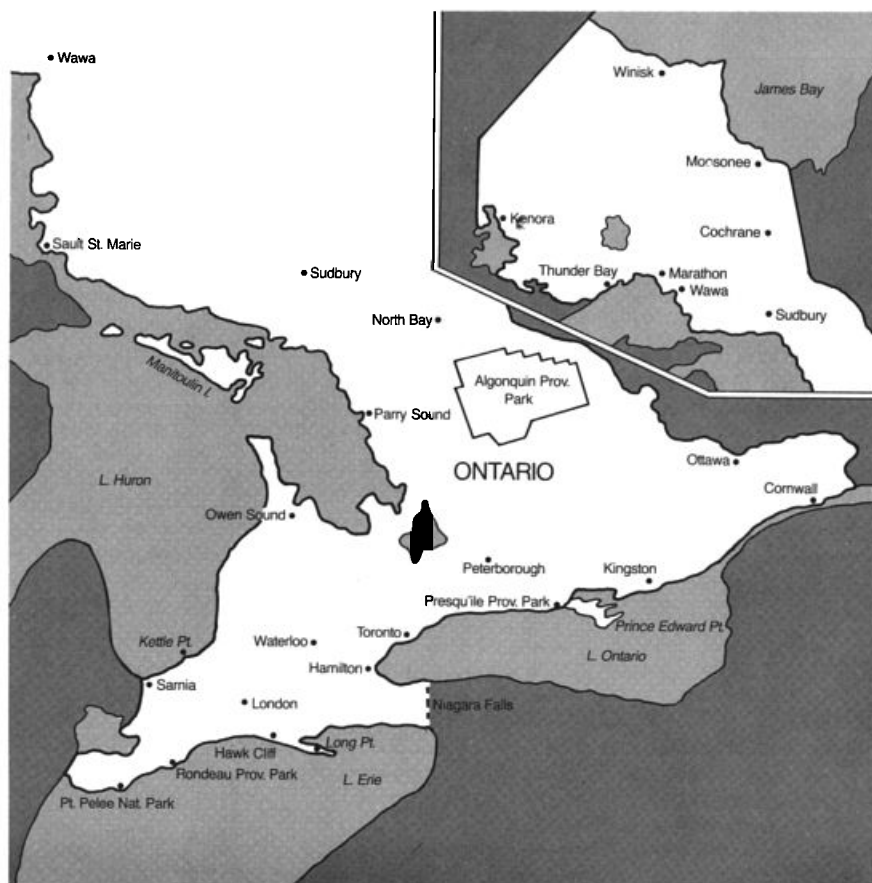
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## ONTARIO REGION

Ron D. Weir



To make a sweeping generalization that describes the weather and the dependent bird migration over all of Ontario seems an impossible task. After all, in this province, some 1600 kilometers separate Pelee in the south (which is on the latitude of California) and Fort Severn on the Hudson Bay coast in the north, and the same distance lies between Cornwall in the east and Kenora in the west. Despite this gargantuan spread, birders everywhere did agree that spring was later than usual and that major delays occurred in the arrival of migrants.

During late March, warm conditions with a storm propelled arrivals into the southwest and into the western end of Lake Superior, but by early April winter clamped down again and slowed migration to a trickle virtually everywhere until mid-May. Ice storms during April were thought to have affected adversely the early fledging of owls from Kingston to Niagara. Heavy snowfall grounded thousands of Hermit Thrushes, Fox and American Tree sparrows, and Rusty Blackbirds May 5–6 at Thunder Bay, where they were forced onto ploughed roads, and it also triggered reverse migration of Tree Swallows May 6. Farther west at Atikokan, dead Yellow-rumped Warblers were testament to the ravages of the cold. Much farther

south in Peterborough County, Tree Swallow mortality was also high as birds crammed en masse into nest boxes where they froze to death. At Pelee during this cold period, notable passage was detected April 25. Some 34 House Wrens, 55 Winter Wrens, 115 Hermit Thrushes, 18 Solitary Vireos, 24 Nashville and 31 Black-throated Green warblers, and 75 Swamp Sparrows among others were present; but then, perhaps these birds were heading southwards again.

By May 15, the dam broke south of Ontario and tens of thousands poured into the province, many of which did not linger for long. The number of passerines overshooting their mid-latitudinal breeding areas in the United States was greatly reduced, which is expected when such cold conditions prevail through the prime time for their movement. Not until the fourth week of May was the flow of migrants back on schedule. Even then, straggling April migrants were still passing through lookouts along the lower Great Lakes. Along the Hudson Bay coast near Fort Severn, heavy snow at the end of May caused problems for the Snow Geese and Black-bellied Plovers that had arrived, as well as for the newly born caribou calves. Apparently the sedentary Willow Ptarmigan there took all the adverse weather in stride.



**ABBREVIATIONS** — Pelee = Point Pelee National Park and vicinity; P E Pt = Prince Edward Point, Algonquin, Presqu'île, and Rondeau are provincial parks. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO IBISES** — The 28 Red-throated Loons represented a sharp increase over the 1982–1988 spring average of 16, and were led by 16 in w. Hamilton Bay Apr. 2 (WSm, J. Cram, PW). The others were reported along L. Ontario and L. Erie from Presqu'île to Long Pt. Apr. 8–May 31, with only one inland at Rideau Ferry, Leeds-Lanark, May 13 (WC, PM). Impressive movement of Com. Loons was also reported. The 61 at Pelee Apr. 3 furnished an all-time spring maximum there (AW) and most of the 775 feeding at P.E.Pt. Apr. 15 had moved out the following day (JHE, RDW). Some 275 were tallied flying over Long Pt. Apr. 22 (IR) and the 39 new arrivals at Lake-of-the-Woods Apr. 26 were concentrated in open leads along the edge of the frozen lake (SFP). The Horned Grebe flight was considered poor nearly everywhere, except in the P E Pt. area where 400 and 100 appeared Apr. 15 & 16 respectively (RDW). Red-necked Grebe movement was strong with concentrations of 476 off 2 points along Manitoulin I. Apr. 24 (JCN), 93 at Silver Islet near Thunder Bay May 4 (AGH, SO), 50 in Dyers Bay, Bruce, Apr. 15 (MP), and 36 inland at Ottawa May 6 (BMD). The flight of Eared Grebes was also very strong and the spring birds exceeded by one the 1972–1988 average for the entire year. Two were at P.E.Pt. Apr. 15 (JHE, RDW). The others were singles near Cobourg Apr. 1–15 (ERM), Dyers Bay Apr. 14 (MP), Kettle Pt. Apr. 28 (AHR), Rondeau May 10 (PC), Pelee May 10–14 (BMC *et al.*), and the Essex lagoons May 13 (HGC). Ontario's first Western Grebe in spring since 1986 appeared in w. Hamilton Bay Apr. 30 (WSm *et al.*) to provide the 6th ever local record.

Great Egret numbers were up in the traditional area of the southwest where early arrivals appeared at Long Pt. Mar. 23 (JDM) and near Woodstock Apr. 6 (JMH). Some 17 were reported beyond this range with an early bird at Presqu'île Apr. 2 (TFMB) and singles north to the Ottawa area Apr. 7 (RVT) and May 7–10 (BK *et al.*), Thunder Bay Apr. 29–30 (NGE *et al.*), and Windy Pt., Rainy R. District, May 13–14 (AW). An ad. Snowy Egret in Clarkson's Rattray Marsh May 23 was joined by an immature May 24 and both were present until about May 27 (RY, BJ, HGC). Another adult appeared on Cherry I. near Key Harbour, Parry Sound, June 1 (AJ). The immature on Sable I., Rainy R., May 13 was only the 3rd ever for n. Ontario (ph. AW). Five would be an average number for spring. The only report of the rare Little Blue Heron was of an adult at Pelee May 23 (AW). The Rattray Marsh also hosted a Tricolored Heron Apr. 7 and May 8 (DEP, JD); the species has been averaging one sighting annually for 1969–1988. Cattle Egret numbers remained at low levels. Singles were in the far southwest at Pelee, Pelee I., Stoney Pt., Rondeau, and Dover Township, Kent, in the period May 1–June 1. The others were lone birds east to Dorland Apr. 8 (J. Donan) and Deseronto May 4 (J. Lewis). The only satisfactory report of the extremely rare **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** came from Long Pt., where one bird tarried May 14–15 (BB). Early Black-crowned Night-Herons were an adult at Toronto's e. Headland Mar. 12 (VH) and three adults at Whitby Mar. 31 (MJB). The only Glossy Ibis report was of an adult in breeding plumage at Pelee Apr. 27–May 1 (ph., *fide* AW). About two per spring have been reported in the province during the 1980s.

**WATERFOWL** — Tundra Swans well e. of normal range were six each at the Murray Canal, Prince Edward, Mar. 18 (HS) and Amherst I. Mar. 20 (PT, AS), and three in Algonquin May 21 (DF). The 29 Greater White-fronted Geese approached the record-setting 39 in spring of 1985. The largest groups contained 18 birds near Smithville, Niagara, Mar. 22–Apr. 1 (JVN *et al.*) and five at Ingersoll Apr. 13 (DNB). The others

were two adults at Embrun, Russell, Apr. 8 (BMD, RRB, PRM) and singles at Whitby Mar. 27 (JJB, BH, DM, *et al.*), Thunder Bay Apr. 20 (R. Sein), Angus, Simcoe, Apr. 29 (TP), and Hurkett in Thunder Bay District May 8 (AW). The largest flock of Snow Geese contained 260 birds at Riceville, Prescott, Apr. 9 (BMD *et al.*). The heavy flight of Brant over Kingston and Presqu'île began May 13 (K.F.N., CEG), the same day flocks arrived along the James Bay coast at Moosonee (EH, JET). An early ♂ Blue-winged Teal appeared at Aylmer, Elgin, Mar. 14 (JMH *et al.*) and was the only dabbler reported early. Northern Shoveler numbers were up sharply at several locations along the lakeshore from Kingston to Pelee. Peak flocks included 232 at Port Rowan Apr. 5 (DAS *et al.*) and 148 at Pelee Mar. 30 (AW). It is difficult to draw an obvious link between the prairie drought of 1988 and this increase during spring as these birds were presumably returning to their nesting grounds. Perhaps more pairs than usual will remain to breed within s. Ontario?

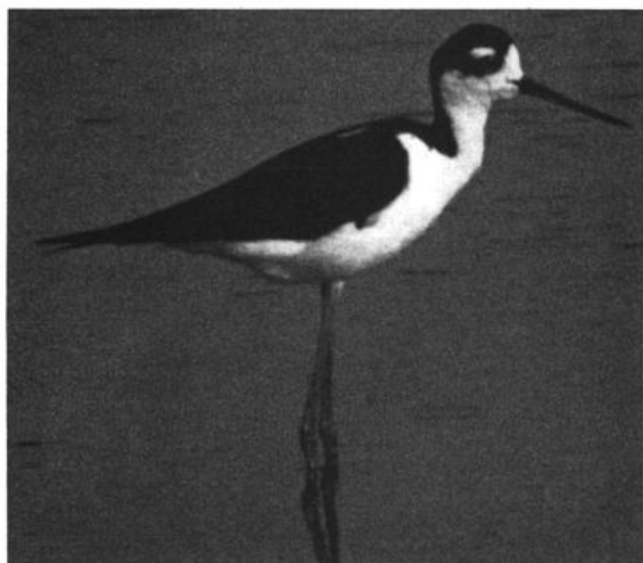
The five Eur. Wigeon equalled the annual average since 1979. All were single males, at Presqu'île Apr. 1–5 (GY *et al.*), Wolfe I. Apr. 2 (RDW), Port Dover Apr. 19–May 13 (B. Jones *et al.*), Townsend May 6 (RVT), and Port Perry May 22–30 (*fide* MJB). The last bird was thought to have reappeared at Lindsay June 1–2 (JM, TB, DCS *et al.*). The Canvasback migration was strong in e. Ontario led by the 3500 along Wolfe I. Apr. 9 (RDW, JH) and the Redhead peak of 400 occurred nearby at Presqu'île Mar. 24 (SML). The Ring-necked Duck passage mimicked that of the N. Shoveler, but was more widespread. The largest single flocks were of 5000 at Presqu'île Mar. 25 (HGC) and 1450 at Port Rowan the same day (DAS). Lesser Scaup movement was also strong, led by the 4700 at Pelee Apr. 7 (AW). The Harlequin Duck averages one sighting per spring, so this season's three males were noteworthy. Toronto's overwintering bird remained to Apr. 3 (FL), while another tarried in the Oshawa harbour Apr. 7–May 7 (*fide* MJB). The 2nd-year male at Atikokan Mar. 29 furnished only the 2nd occurrence since 1959 in that region (DHE, TJN). Noteworthy Surf Scoters in the lacklustre scoter passage were the 20 at Presqu'île Apr. 30 (VM) and eight at Pelee May 6 (DL). The 1100 Com. Goldeneyes at Pelee Mar. 29 represented an unusual concentration there (AW), and this species' heavy passage through eastern L. Ontario was accompanied by at least one ♂ Barrow's at Kingston Mar. 12 (RDW). Two of Ottawa's overwintering Barrow's Goldeneyes lingered to Apr. 17 (BMD).

**VULTURES TO CRANES** — Several early raptors appeared, including Turkey Vultures at Oshawa Mar. 21 (DVR) and Sudbury Apr. 8 (JCN), Ospreys near Dorset, Haliburton, Apr. 3 (RJP) and Toronto Apr. 4 (BJ, CM, MWD), two Broad-winged Hawks at Pinery P.P. Mar. 27 (AHR), and single Merlins near Owen Sound Mar. 9 (TRM) and at Aylmer Mar. 12 (JMH *et al.*). Bald Eagle sightings continued their steady rise begun in the early 1980s, with 84 birds; the 17 at the Grimsby hawkwatch were the most ever (*fide* MEF). Red-shouldered Hawks were also record high there at 1102 (*fide* MEF). The shotgun blasting of Red-shoulders at 2 nest sites near Peterborough underscored the need not to publicize nest locations of raptors (WSc, DCS). Two **Swainson's Hawks** were reported, raising to 12 the provincial total since 1982. One passed Grimsby May 5 (WK, PJS) and a light morph adult was at Pelee May 16 (DKS). The Red-tailed Hawk flight was poor everywhere, probably as a result of weather factors, and the latest of five Rough-legged Hawk sightings during May was at Long Pt. May 24 (JDM). The five Golden Eagles were fewer than the post-1980 spring average of nine birds. Singles were at Rondeau Mar. 4 (PAW), Frontenac P.P. Mar. 19 (DSc), Pinery P.P. Mar. 24–28 (AHR), Sudbury Apr. 20 (JCN), and on Amherst I. May 20–31 (JHE *et al.*). Reports of Peregrine Falcons dropped to 17 birds, below the post-1980 spring average of 23. This downward trend has been noted during autumn in

Ontario since 1985. This spring's birds were in the south at Pelee, Long Pt., Grimsby, Presqu'île, Amherst I., Ottawa, Algonquin, and Georgian Bay Islands N.P. The only Gyrfalcon noted was the overwintering grey morph bird at Thunder Bay until Apr. 15 (AGH).

King Rails were again scarce as the only reports were of singles at Long Pt. May 12–14 (fide JDM, JBM, SJM) and Walpole I. May 27 (SAC). The Virginia Rail in Algonquin May 1 (MR), the Sora killed by a vehicle in Oshawa Apr. 12 (GAS), and the Com. Moorhen at Pickering Apr. 19 (EP) were early arrivals. The 98+ reports of Sandhill Cranes reflected a strong showing; 73 of these were from sites from Minden to Manitoulin I., Sudbury, and Thunder Bay, where an early arrival appeared Apr. 16 (SO, NGE, BA), and 22 were in the southwest at Walpole I., Pelee, Rondeau, Long Pt., Alma, Winona, and Bronte. One pair returned to Ottawa Apr. 29–May 31 (BMD), and a single passed Newboro, Leeds, Apr. 25 (SG).

**SHOREBIRDS** — Peak flocks of plovers, always greatest in the extreme southwest, were the 3000 Black-bellies in Dover Township, Kent, May 27 (DFR) and 450 Lesser Golden Plovers at Blenheim May 4 (SC). Piping Plover, virtually extirpated from Ontario, made its strongest showing since the 1970s with seven birds in all. Four appeared at various Long Pt. sites May



*Black-necked Stilt at Stoney Point, Ontario, late May 1989. Fourth record for the province. Photograph/Alan Wormington.*

6–June 2 (fide JDM), while singles were at Pelee May 10–14 (JEH et al., AGC et al.), Presqu'île May 14–19 (DD et al.), Aylmer May 17 (RS), and Sable I. near Rainy R. May 13 (AW). Ontario's 2nd spring and 4th ever **Black-necked Stilt** appeared at the Stoney Pt. lagoon May 28–31 (ph. RG, HGC et al.). The species last occurred in 1981.

Willetts totalled 25 birds [spring average is 30] of which 22 were at Pelee Apr. 29–May 23 (fide AW) where nine were present May 5 (J & CH). Singles were at Normandale May 13 (BMD et al.), Rondeau May 13 (KW, SC), and Bright's Grove May 25–26 (DPA, AHR). One Upland Sandpiper in Algonquin May 8 (MR) was north of range. The Whimbrel flight was modest along the lower Great Lakes and was led by flocks of 280 at Bright's Grove May 26 (AHR), 230 at Toronto's e. Headland May 22 (HGC), and 100 at Pelee May 26 (fide AW). Groups of 100 to 250 passed Manitoulin I. May 23 & 24 (JCN, AJ). Six Hudsonian Godwits made a normal spring tally, one of which was in Thunder Bay May 21–22 (NGE, BA). The others were at Blenheim May 24 (AW), Pelee May 27 (PAS), and Aberfoyle May 28–29 for Wellington's 2nd ever in spring (BKW, VEW, JEP). However, Marbled Godwit numbers were

double the spring average of five. Six were noted May 12–14 at Rainy R. (AW), the most likely region of the province to locate the species. The other four were singles at Rondeau May 10 (fide KJB), Pelee May 11 (RCR et al.) & 19–21 (TP et al.), and Blenheim until May 28 (SC).

Well represented were Ruddy Turnstones with a peak of 650 at Pelee May 27 (GTH, F & MB) and Red Knots with a high of 110 at Long Pt. May 22 (DJTH). Single Western Sandpipers were at Long Pt. May 7 (DJTH et al.), Bright's Grove May 12–18 (YRT, AHR), Rock Point P.P. May 27 (fide RFA), and Manitoulin I. May 28 (AJ), to equal the spring average of four. Ontario observers have noted one Baird's on average during the 1980s and this season's sighting was from Presqu'île May 4 (AGC, RDM). Two Purple Sandpipers were at the tip of Long Pt. May 7 (PJ) for the 3rd spring record there. The species is extremely rare during spring in Ontario. The Stilt Sandpiper migration was weaker than the usual 11 sightings. Two were at Bright's Grove May 5 (AHR), and the one at the Norwich lagoons May 12 (JSk, JMH) was the first in spring for Oxford. Another tarried at Port Perry May 24–28 (fide MJB).

The four Ruffs were the fewest since 1981, and half the spring normal. One female remained at Pelee Apr. 26–28 (ph. AW et al.). Single males were near Hagersville Apr. 27–30 (MS et al.), and at Tavistock May 4–8 for Oxford's first in spring and 2nd ever (RSK, JMH). The sex was not reported on the bird at Casselman May 28 (VBL et al.). Wilson's Phalaropes continued their strong showing. Some 116 were at the Rainy R. lagoons May 12–13 (AW) and 30 were counted in the lagoons at Russell, Embrun, and Casselman at the e. end of the province (BMD). The eight Red-necked Phalaropes were more than the spring average of five birds. In the north, a male was at Garson May 30 (JCN). Farther south, three females lingered at Port Perry May 24–29 (DB et al.), and single birds appeared at Harrow May 13 (HGC), Alfred May 21 (JRH), Plantagenet May 21 (JRH), and Ottawa May 28 (GP, LN).

Early arrivals by littorals were few but included a Greater Yellowlegs at Aylmer Mar. 14 (JMH), Solitary Sandpiper at Hamilton Apr. 14 (AW, RF, WL), and Spotted Sandpiper in Algonquin Apr. 28 (CC). Early White-rumped Sandpipers were inland at Carleton Place May 12 (T & FP) and north to Rainy R. May 13 (AW). Three Dunlins in basic plumage were very early at Aylmer Mar. 28 (JMH et al.).

**GULLS TO WOODPECKERS** — Following no records during all of 1988, the five Laughing Gulls this spring constituted an invasion for a species that averages only two per spring. Single adults were near Aldershot May 1–3 (ph. KAM, FD et al.), Bronte May 10–12 (DS et al.) which was a different bird, Pelee I. May 13 (YRT), and Whitby's Cranberry marsh May 27–June 2 (D & DD). The one immature was reported at Port Hope May 26 (ERM). The lone Franklin's noted was at Long Pt. May 27 and June 1 (GC et al.). The 25 Little Gulls in Oshawa's Second Marsh Apr. 23 were the most reported (DG et al.). The only birds away from their traditional areas were at least two at Presqu'île May 11–19 (EP et al.) and one in first-summer plumage near Britt, Parry Sound, May 31 (AJ). One Com. Black-headed Gull in first-summer plumage was seen in the Dundas marsh Apr. 16 (KAM, WL et al.), which compares with a spring average of four. In spite of the cold spring, numbers of white-winged gulls were sharply lower at 21 Iceland and 45 Glaucous gulls. Noteworthy among these were two ad. Icebergs in summer plumage at the Marathon dump May 8 & 15 (AW) and one (kumlieni race) at Port Dover Mar. 22 (RDM). The 25 Lesser Black-backed Gulls represented a further increase for spring, and included seven at Long Pt., six at Pelee, four each in Ottawa and Sarnia, two in the Hamilton area, and singles at Pickering and Port Credit, all in the period Mar. 1–May 19. The Great Black-backed Gull in 3rd-summer plumage in Algonquin May 14 (MR) was a first for the park. An early Caspian Tern appeared at Pickering



*Adult Laughing Gull at Grimsby, Ontario, May 3, 1989. Photograph/Alan Wormington.*

Apr. 4 (DM) and three Arctics had arrived in Moosonee by May 31 (JT). The two ad. Forster's Terns in Algonquin May 14 (MR) provided another new species for the park and were well north of range.

A Barn Owl was found in Elderslie Township, Bruce, in December 1988, and was turned over to the Ministry of Natural Resources (TRM). The species is a vagrant in this area of the province. Remnants of the winter's N. Hawk Owl flight in the south were singles at Belleville Mar. 2 (D. Gar), Hepworth Mar. 11 (M. Reid), Ashton, near Ottawa, to Mar. 11 (fide BMD), and Algonquin Apr. 9 (RDS). A **Burrowing Owl** on Walpole I. May 27 was well studied (ph. DPa, SAC, DFR et al.), and represented the 8th record for Ontario since 1940. Late Boreal Owls south of the breeding range were singles near Evansville, Manitoulin I., Mar. 5 (DEB) and Amherst I. Mar. 24 (CF). Two early Com. Nighthawks appeared at Head Lake, Victoria, May 16 (RJP), and a ♂ Chuck-will's-widow in Presqu'île May 28–29 (DW, IR, MM et al.) was well north of range and was a first for the park. Also early was a Chimney Swift passing Toronto's e. Headland Apr. 15 (AJ). The only Black-backed Woodpecker south of the breeding range was one in Presqu'île to May 4 (CB).

**FLYCATCHERS TO SHRIKES** — Reports of Acadian Flycatchers were confined to Pelee, where seven appeared May 10–27 (fide AW), and Long Pt., where six were banded May 21–26 and another heard June 3 (fide JDM). The 550 Least Flycatchers at Long Pt. May 21 made an impressive total (JMH) among many songbirds grounded there. The highlight of this season's flycatchers was the vagrant **Ash-throated Flycatcher** in Toronto's Humber Bay park May 20 (CEG, JEG et al.), Ontario's 4th ever and first in spring. One Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was at Pelee May 26 (JEF); this species has averaged one per spring during the 1980s. The **Cave Swallow** at Pelee Apr. 21 was a first for Ontario (AW) and, perhaps, long overdue. This individual was skillfully picked out of a flock of Cliff Swallows and described thoroughly. The only early Barn Swallow noted was at Turkey Point Apr. 5 (JMH, JSk). Noteworthy parids included a Boreal Chickadee at Etobicoke Apr. 15 (JK) and six Tufted Titmice, which were singles at St. Williams Mar. 28 (JDM et al.), Toronto during the week Apr. 15–22 (DT), and Pelee Apr. 29 (MNF), plus three in the Hamilton area May 1–31 (fide KAM).

Etobicoke's wintering **Rock Wren** remained to at least Mar. 5 (HGC). Carolina Wrens continued to build their numbers following recent warm winters. From 15 to 25 pairs nested this spring at Pelee (fide AW) and 29 others were noted from Toronto and areas to the southwest. Territorial males were e. to Presqu'île Apr. 2–May 27 (TS et al.) and Kingston Mar. 1–May 4 (VPM, EFA). Ontario occurrences of **Bewick's Wren** are semiannual on average, and the one at Pelee May 14 (RCR et al.) was the first since spring of 1986. The 34 House Wrens

and 55 Winter Wrens at Pelee Apr. 25 (AW) were noteworthy for the early date. The ♂ Blue-gray Gnatcatcher on Great Duck I., Manitoulin I., May 22 was a rare occurrence and an overshoot from farther south (AJ). The vagrant **Mountain Bluebird** has become more frequent since 1982 and the three this spring set a record high for any season. In the north, a male was in Thunder Bay Apr. 19 (O & HO). In the south, an imm. male tarried at Flamborough Apr. 15–17, providing the first record for the Hamilton area (WSm, WY et al.), and the wintering female near Arkona was still present in early March (fide SAC).

The severe snowstorm at Thunder Bay May 5–6 grounded 1000+ Hermit Thrushes on a small wooded island (BA) along with hundreds elsewhere in the area (SO et al.). Varied Thrushes lingered on Manitoulin I. to Mar. 27 (fide CTB) and near Goderich to Apr. 7 (WT). Numbers of N. Mockingbird increased at the edge of and beyond the normal range. One spent the period in Sudbury (OZ) and singles were well north at Atikokan May 31 (DHE) and Moosonee May 22 (DPz). Birds were at 9 sites in Kingston (K.F.N.), 5 sites in Ottawa (BMD), and 4 sites within Algonquin (JSk, MR, RGT). The last of the wintering Bohemian Waxwings were 12 in the south at Peterborough Mar. 12 (WM) and three in the north at Atikokan Mar. 28 (DHE). Some 19 Loggerhead Shrikes were reported, typical of the lower numbers in recent years.

Early arrivals included a ♂ Purple Martin at Algonquin May 6 (RGT) and a female at Michipicotin, Algoma, May 7 (AW), Sedge Wren at Bronte Apr. 30 (MJ), Ruby-crowned Kinglet at Whitby Apr. 3 (MJB), single Swainson's Thrushes near Stratford May 6 (MPD) and at Algonquin May 8 (JSk), and Water Pipits at Oshawa May 12 (MJB), Dundas Mar. 24 (JLO), and Algonquin Apr. 30 (RGT).

**VIREOS, WARBLERS** — The 19 White-eyed Vireos were fewer than normal. Noteworthy among them were singles east to Bronte May 6 (GN, KAM), Whitby May 20 & 28 (RGT, DDC et al.), Presqu'île May 21–24 (S & JB), and P.E.Pt. May 21 (RDW). The Yellow-throated Vireo in Algonquin May 19 (JSk) represented a rare occurrence there. Hybrid "Brewster's" Warblers were reported at Pelee, Long Pt., Walsingham, Presqu'île, and Peterborough May 12–25, and the rarer form, the "Lawrence's," was at Pelee May 10–12 (FW et al.) and Ancaster



*Male "Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler at Point Pelee, Ontario, April 29, 1989. Notice the plain-faced appearance, restricted pale throat area, and broad black patches on the chest. Photograph/Alan Wormington.*

May 13–20 (A Epp) Several hundred Magnolia Warblers, as well as 220 Wilson's, were tallied at Long Pt. May 21 (JDM, JMH). The only Yellow-rumped Warbler of the western Audubon's race was an ad. male at Pelee Apr. 29 (ph. AW, STP). Yellow-throated Warbler seemed unaffected by the cold season, as the 7 sightings were typical of most springs. Five were at Pelee Apr. 18–May 19 (fide AW), one at Rondeau May 15 (E & JG), and a male e. to Cherrywood May 18 for Durham's first ever (DM). A poor flight of Prairie Warblers was noted, perhaps their having been delayed into early June. None was



*Yellow-throated Warbler at Point Pelee, Ontario, April 18, 1989. One of five recorded there during the season. Photograph/Alan Wormington.*

seen at Long Pt. (JDM), but the one in the Luther marsh, Wellington (MDC), was only the 2nd ever for the county. Three Palm Warblers of the eastern yellow race were at Pelee Apr. 18 (AW) and May 13 (DMac, RDM et al.), and at Bronte Apr. 29–May 3 (MJ, GN).

The only Prothonotary Warbler reported away from the extreme southwest was near Cayuga May 18 (RD). The 9 reports of Worm-eating Warbler were fewer than usual with only four at Pelee May 14–22 (fide AW) and singles at Long Point P.P. May 21 (JMH), Long Pt. May 18–31 (banded, JDM), Whitby May 5–13 & 19 (FJ, LH et al.), Toronto May 2 & 6 (JL, CEG, JEG et al.), and St. Catharines May 19 (MAR). Noteworthy Louisiana Waterthrushes were in Toronto's High Park Apr. 26 and May 6 (AJ, PB) and Peterborough May 10 (PB). Kentucky Warbler sightings were also fewer, and the only one away from the extreme southwest was at Willow Beach May 21 (RL), the 2nd ever for the Port Hope–Cobourg area. Intriguing was the detailed report on a possible ♀ MacGillivray's Warbler at Port Weller May 25–31 (MEF et al.). Attempts to net the bird were unsuccessful and the question of whether an aberrant ♀ Mourning could fit the description has yet to be answered. One record is known for Ontario, a specimen dating from May 20, 1890. Hooded Warblers beyond the normal range were only five. Singles were at Whitby May 16 & 28 (KH, DDC), P.E.Pt. May 18 & 20 (YB, K.F.N.), and Sarnia May 21 (DFR). Seven Yellow-breasted Chats were beyond normal range, with one female in Whitby May 21 (MJB et al.). Six were at P.E.Pt. May 20–26, of which three were netted and banded (K.F.N., CF).

Some early vireos and warblers were recorded, but these represented isolated sightings, as the main flight of most species was late by up to 14 days. Among early arrivals were a Philadelphia Vireo near Rainy R. May 13 (AW); Chestnut-

sided Warbler, Cape May Warbler, and Louisiana Waterthrush at Pelee Apr. 25, Apr. 25, and Mar. 28 (DEP, AW, fide AW) respectively; and Magnolia; Black-throated Blue, Black-and-white, and Mourning in Algonquin May 5, May 3, Apr. 30, and May 16 (GF, RH, RGT, MR), respectively. Others included a single Blackburnian and Bay-breasted at Whitby Apr. 30 and May 5 (DDC, MJB) respectively, an Am. Redstart at Thunder Bay May 4 (RGo), and a Wilson's Warbler at Burlington Apr. 28 (RC).

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — Summer Tanagers numbered only three at Pelee May 9–20 (fide AW), four at sites in Kent during May (fide KJB), and one east to P.E.Pt. May 20 (JP, DC). A Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Peterborough Apr. 18 was extraordinarily early for the cold spring (RBr). Following last summer's record invasion by Dickcissels into s.w. Ontario, the only reports were of singles at Pelee May 17 (GW et al.) & 23 (JCK, MV, AW). Clay-colored Sparrows appeared May 22 & 25 at 2 sites within Algonquin, where the species is rare (MR, RGT et al.); at Pelee May 17, a bird thought to be a hybrid Clay-colored x Chipping Sparrow was present (AW, JLD et al.). Some 21 Lark Sparrows have occurred during the past 14 springs, so this spring's lone bird at Long Pt. May 11–12 & 15 (KE et al.) represented about an average number. However, Lark Buntings are much rarer in any season. A male turned up near L. Opeongo, Algonquin, May 25 (JSk) for a new park record. Henslow's Sparrows numbered only three at Pelee May 4–18 (fide AW) and nine at St. Williams May 22 (DAS et al.), for the only reports. The trend in recent years is a downward slide for this species. The only Sharp-tailed Sparrows noted were three at Pelee May 16–23 (fide AW). The six Le Conte's Sparrows made a typical number, and were singles in the Thunder Bay area May 9 & 10 (AW, NGE), Pelee I. and Rondeau May 14 (MO, fide KJB), Pelee May 16 (RLB), and South Limestone I., Georgian Bay, May 17 (ph. DVW, AJ). The 100 Fox Sparrows together at Bronte Apr. 15 (GN) represented a rare gathering, and one along the East Thames R., Oxford, May 3 was late (JMH). One White-crowned Sparrow (Gambell's race) was e. of range May 8 at P.E.Pt., where it was banded (ph. CF). The overwintering Harris' Sparrow at Turkey Pt. was last seen at the feeder May 3 (RCR) and another arrived Mar. 26 in Thunder Bay, where it too relied upon a feeder (NGE).

The nine W. Meadowlarks were the most in any spring since the 1970s, when the species' invasion into s. Ontario waned. Perhaps its fortunes are about to be revitalized. This spring's birds were on territory at sites in Pelee, Oxford, Middlesex, Wellington, Bruce, and n.e. to Oshawa and Algonquin. The ♀ Brewer's Blackbird in Algonquin May 25 (JSk, RDS) represented another new species for the park. Others of note were singles at Woodstock Apr. 19 (JMH) and Peterborough Mar. 30 (TB). Pine Grosbeaks were last seen at Presqu'île in the south Mar. 24 (fide SML) and Virginiatown in the north Apr. 24 (PWR). Red Crossbill proved to be scarce with only 17 isolated reports. However, its peripatetic cousin, the White-winged, invaded parts of extreme s. Ontario well removed from the boreal forests. The birds were numerous in Algonquin until late March when all left (RGT). Coincident with this exodus, the species arrived in the southwest in Wellington, Waterloo, Oxford, and Long Point Mar. 15–Apr. 4. A few pushed west into Owen Sound and Port Elgin, and south into central Toronto. Peak flocks were in Oxford, where 1200 arrived in Wildwood Mar. 5 and many remained until late May. Others in the Waterloo area apparently nested, as fledglings were noted along residential streets in the city (TC). Meanwhile, farther north in areas from Manitoulin I. to Sudbury to Virginiatown, the species remained common throughout the period without changes detected in numbers. Large numbers of Pine Siskins converged on Manitoulin I., Sudbury, and Peterborough for most of the season, but the species was scarce elsewhere.

**Table 1 Hawk totals at Grimsby station, Ontario, Spring 1989**

| <i>Species</i>      | <i>1989<sup>1</sup></i> | <i>10-year average</i> |
|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Turkey Vulture      | 1403                    | 994                    |
| Osprey              | 36                      | 31                     |
| Bald Eagle          | 17                      | 9                      |
| N. Harrier          | 174                     | 137                    |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk  | 3532                    | 3988                   |
| Cooper's Hawk       | 179                     | 176                    |
| N. Goshawk          | 14                      | 33                     |
| Red-shouldered Hawk | 1102                    | 796                    |
| Broad-winged Hawk   | 2295                    | 4533                   |
| Red-tailed Hawk     | 2613                    | 3053                   |
| Swainson's Hawk     | 1                       | (1 in 1988)            |
| Rough-legged Hawk   | 45                      | 66                     |
| Golden Eagle        | 7                       | 6                      |
| Am. Kestrel         | 131                     | 112                    |
| Merlin              | 4                       | 4                      |
| Peregrine Falcon    | 2                       | 2                      |
| unidentified        | 592                     | 682                    |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>12147</b>            | <b>14622</b>           |

<sup>1</sup> (MEF *et al.*, Mar. 1–May 15, 68 days)

**CORRIGENDA** — AB 42: 427, column 2, line 14, insert GSA for GS; AB 43: 98, column 2, line 31, replace juv. with first basic plumage; AB 43: 99, column 1, line 21, WL refers to W. Lindley, not W. Lindsay.

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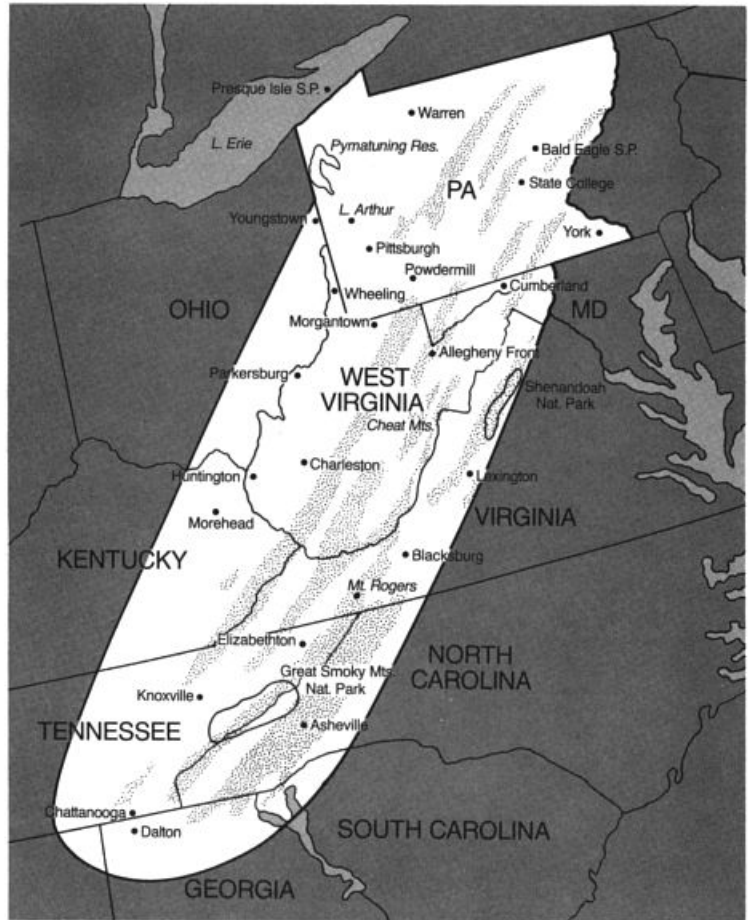
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# APPALACHIAN REGION

George A. Hall



No one would have been surprised if the birds (and other animals) had lined up two by two and started for that large boat the old man and his sons had under construction. It was a very wet season, but the weather produced a fairly interesting spring migration. At Pittsburgh the March weather continued the mildness of the winter, being slightly warmer and somewhat wetter than normal. April was cool and dry, and then came May. At Pittsburgh it rained for 16 straight days and the total rainfall for the month was 6.56 inches, 3 inches above normal. The overall temperature range for the month was above normal, but during the period May 5–12 the rain was accompanied by much cooler temperatures. There was a general snowfall, persistent in the higher elevations, on May 7, even as far south as Elizabethton, Tennessee.

Through the mild March and even the cool April the northbound migration was about on time or even early. There were a number of early record "first seen dates." By the first of May the migration schedule was a little ahead of normal. The cold and wet period came at the time that should have been the peak of the May migration, and many birds were grounded for several days. As a result, some migrants remained at particular areas longer than normal. But other areas did not see some of these birds. Once the cold weather abated, the migration moved rapidly through, and by the last week in May most migrants were gone.

At Powdermill Nature Reserve, Pennsylvania, only one species was banded in below-average numbers, 24 were banded in average numbers, and 27 were banded in above-average numbers (RM, RCL).

S.A.

The cold wet spell in May produced a major catastrophe for some species in some areas. Hardest hit were Scarlet Tanagers. They congregated in large numbers in low perches, some even on the ground, and were so conspicuous that many birders received calls from non-birders asking about those "red birds." Whether numbed by the low temperatures or starved by the dearth of insects, the birds became weaker and more inactive as the critical period extended. Many sitting on the edges of highways were unable to get out of the way of passing cars and were killed. At other places some were found dead. Some observers remarked that they saw more tanagers than usual, but seemed to be unaware of the severe stress the birds were under. This situation obtained from central West Virginia well into southwestern Pennsylvania. Farther south and east the birds were not affected, and farther north they had not yet arrived. In northern West Virginia, late May counts of tanagers showed about normal numbers, so the casualties may have been breeders from farther north.

Besides the tanagers the hardest hit species was the Purple Martin. Many colonies that had been slowly recovering from the disaster of June 1972 were eliminated. Oddly, in central West Virginia, while some colonies were wiped out, others nearby suffered little or no mortality. Whether warblers and other migrants also died in numbers during this period is not known, although there was some suggestion that Red-eyed Vireos may have been hit. The West Virginia Department of Natural Resources collected some dead birds for autopsy, but the results are not yet available [JCr].



**ABBREVIATIONS** — B.E.S.P. = Bald Eagle State Park, Centre Co., PA; Ch.N.F. = Chattahoochee Nat'l Forest, GA; C.F.H. = M.E. Clark Fish Hatchery, Rowan Co., KY; K.C.P.P. = Kyger Creek Power Plant, Gallia Co., OH; P.N.R. = Powdermill Nature Reserve, Westmoreland Co., PA; P.I.S.P. = Presque Isle State Park, Erie Co., PA. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO IBISES** — Red-throated Loons were at Pine Grove Furnace S.P., PA, Apr. 3 (CG), B.E.S.P. Apr. 26 (ES) & 29 (HH), and Rose Valley L., PA, May 11 & 16 (SS). Common Loons were more numerous and more widespread than in recent years, and several remained in the area after June 1. The numbers of Horned Grebes were also greater than in most years, with a high count of 150 at Rose Valley L., PA, Mar. 29 (SS). Red-necked Grebes were at Conneaut L., PA, Apr. 2 (RFL), Rose Valley L., PA, Apr. 8 (G & PS), and B.E.S.P. Apr. 9 (JP et al.). Not long ago it was a real treat to see a Double-crested Cormorant in this Region, but the species continues to explode. This spring 17 locations spread throughout the Region reported cormorants, including some flocks of 40–50.

American Bittern was reported from the unusually high number of 8 locations. Did high water levels make them more evident? Least Bitterns were at Hartstown, PA, Apr. 21 (RFL), Mosquito L., OH, May 13 (CB), and Austin Springs, TN, May



*Least Bittern at Mosquito Lake, northeastern Ohio, May 13, 1989. Photograph/Carole Babyak.*

15 (BC). The established Great Blue Heron nesting colonies in Mercer, PA, had close to 1000 adults nesting (EB). New heronries were reported from Greene, PA (21 nests) (RB), and from 2 islands on the upper Ohio R. (40 nests, 24 nests) (WT). There continued to be more spring sightings of Great Egrets than we have been used to. Several of these birds arrived somewhat early in the last third of March. A Snowy Egret was at Elizabethton, TN, Apr. 15 (GW), seven were at Long Arm Dam, Adams, PA, Apr. 27 (CG), and five were at Fishersville, VA, Apr. 28 (YL). A **Tricolored Heron** at the C.F.H. Apr. 4 might have furnished the first record for Kentucky (G & ME). Cattle Egrets were at Middlebrook, VA, Apr. 15 and Fishersville, VA, Apr. 28 (YL); in Mason, WV, May 5 & 6 (WA); and at Mercersburg, PA, May 14 (JW). A nesting colony of Black-crowned Night-Herons near Elkton, VA, had 24 nests (R.B.C.). At the usual site near Elizabethton, TN, three Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were seen Mar. 29, but they apparently were not there later in the season (RK). One was photographed at the McClintic Wildlife Station, Mason, WV, Apr. 1 (WA, MG). A **Glossy Ibis** in Washington, TN, May 26 (BC et al.) furnished the 2nd local record.

**WATERFOWL** — At Huntington, WV (WA), and Somerset, PA (AM), the waterfowl flight was the best in recent years, while several species were in unusually high numbers in Crawford, PA (RFL), but in the Elizabethton, TN, area some

species were in good numbers while others were missing (RK). The species in low numbers in the south may never have left the north during the mild winter. A storm on the night of Mar. 28–29 forced down 12 species of waterfowl at Lock Haven, PA (PS), and 1500 ducks were found at B.E.S.P. at that time (MC). Some high numbers reported were 1500 Ring-necked Ducks at Woodcock L., PA, Mar. 19, 1000 Lesser Scaup at Hartstown, PA, Mar. 25 (ML, RFL), and 150 Red-breasted Mergansers at Shenango Reservoir, PA, Apr. 27 (EB).

Most of the Tundra Swans apparently moved north before the first of the period, since the only large flights reported were of 200 at P.I.S.P. Mar. 12 (NB) and 150 in Crawford, PA, Mar. 12 (RFL). A few swans remained quite late: Apr. 16 in Somerset, PA (AM), and Apr. 22 in Augusta, VA (SR). Three Mute Swans were at Hartstown, PA, Apr. 13 (fide RFL). Two Greater White-fronted Geese were found at Glenwood Swamp, WV, Mar. 4 (TI), seven were at McClintic Wildlife Area, WV, Mar. 10 (TI), and six were seen at Mosquito Lake, OH, Apr. 9 (S & AT). Snow Geese were reported from Troutville, VA, with two "Blues" Mar. 9–21 (BK, NM) and 35 of the white morph Mar. 26 (BK); from L. Moomaw, VA, Mar. 3 (LT); from Newport, OH, with both color morphs Mar. 22 (EA); and from Pymatuning L., PA, Apr. 8 (NB). At Pymatuning L., PA, Canada Goose numbers peaked at about 8000 on Mar. 25 but had dwindled to fewer than 1000 by May 14 (RFL). Elsewhere in the Region, introduced populations of this species are approaching the pest stage.

Canvasbacks and Redheads continued to be in low numbers. Greater Scaup is normally rare in this Region except on L. Erie and some of the larger impoundments, but this year unusual numbers appeared throughout the northern part of the Region. This was particularly noticeable in some of the mountain areas. Surf Scoters were at P.I.S.P. Mar. 12 (NB), Chickamauga L., TN, Apr. 22 (CBL), Twin Lakes, PA, Mar. 31 for a first local spring record (VC), C.F.H., KY, May 5–7 (FB), and Rose Valley L., PA, May 10 (SS). White-winged Scoters were reported from P.I.S.P. Mar. 12 (NB), Rose Valley L., PA, Mar. 24–May 8 (SS), Warren, PA, Mar. 26 (DW), B.E.S.P. Mar. 29 (MC), and L. Somerset, PA, May 5 (AM). The duck of the season was a **Barrow's Goldeneye** at Pymatuning L., PA, Mar. 11 (RFL).

**RAPTORS TO CRANES** — The only organized watch of the northbound raptor flight was at Tuscarora Summit, PA, where 1311 birds were counted from Mar. 11 to May 9. The highest total counts were of 494 Broad-winged Hawks and 400 Red-tailed Hawks (CG).

A flight of 81 Turkey Vultures leaving a roost in Centre, PA, Apr. 10 was unusual for that area (JPp), and a Black Vulture was seen there Mar. 18 (J & BPp). Ospreys were widespread and more numerous than in any recent year. The count of 192 at Tuscarora Summit was the highest spring count ever there (CG). Ospreys nested at Kingsport, TN, for the 3rd year (FA) and two nestings in e. West Virginia (CS) were no doubt the result of past "hacking" operations there. A total of 20 Bald Eagles (presumed migrants or winterers) was sighted at 7 different localities during the period. The Tuscarora hawk watch listed four (CG). Bald Eagles were found nesting at Mosquito L., OH (CB), and Geneva Marsh, PA (NB), and a nest was found Apr. 1 in Bath, VA (LT). The latter was the first nesting known for the Virginia mountains. At this writing it is unknown as to whether the West Virginia nesting produced young this year (CS).

Northern Harriers were more common than usual in the spring. There was a poor Sharp-shinned Hawk flight at Tuscarora Summit, with only 114 counted (CG), but at P.I.S.P. 225 Sharp-shinneds were counted in a 3-hour watch on May 16 (RSh). Elsewhere the accipiter migration came in for little or no comment. Northern Goshawks nested in Warren, PA (fide WH), and a nest in Pocahontas, WV, furnished the state's 3rd known nesting (WT). A N. Goshawk was also seen near

St. Marys, PA, Apr. 28 (LC), and four were tallied at Tuscarora Summit during the season (CG). Red-shouldered Hawks were in unusually good numbers in the Knoxville, TN, region (CN). Rough-legged Hawks were reported from Pymatuning L., PA, Mar. 25–26 (RFL), Warren, PA, with 4 sightings Mar. 4–Apr. 19 (DW), Fairbrook, PA, Mar. 25 (JPp), and Highland, VA, Mar. 11 (SR) and May 8 (LT). Seven Golden Eagles were counted at the Tuscarora Summit watch (CG) but the only other records were from Highland, VA, Mar. 11 (SR) and Apr. 19 (LT).

The long-time success of the "Operation Bluebird" project near Warren, PA, has inspired the local people to try a similar project for Am. Kestrel. This year 32 of the 38 boxes were occupied (D & BW). A Merlin was seen at Huntington, WV, Apr. 20 (WA) and one was seen several times near St. Marys, PA in late April and early May (LC). Two were seen in the short observation of an extensive flight at P.I.S.P. on May 16 (RSh). There were no reports of Peregrines this season.

Numbers of N. Bobwhite were up slightly at Huntington, WV (MG), and they continued to be found at higher elevations in the Ch.N.F., GA (HD). Common Moorhens were found in Crawford, PA (RFL), Somerset, PA (AM), Turnbull, OH (CB), Cabell, WV (TI), and Rowan, KY (FB). Virginia Rails were reported from Austin Springs, TN, Apr. 5–15 (BC), Centre, PA, Apr. 22 (B & JPp), B.E.S.P. Apr. 26 (ES), and Glenwood Swamp, WV, May 6 (TI), while Soras were reported from these places as well as Hendersonville, NC, May 6 (R & JY), Mosquito L., OH, May 13 (CB), Pinto Marsh, MD, May 12 (MO), and Wood, WV, May 19 (AQ). As usual the only Sandhill Crane sightings came from n. Georgia, where flocks of up to 160 were seen in the Ch.N.F. and Murray and Whitfield, Mar. 3–11 and one as late as May 22 (HD), and in Gilmer, Mar. 8 (CR).

**SHOREBIRDS TO TERNS** — Reports of the shorebird migration were mixed. Heavy rains left many shorebird sites flooded, but flooded fields added some additional habitat, and there were more than the normal numbers of unusual species while the regular species were all in fair numbers. The only Lesser Golden-Plovers reported were five at Pymatuning L., PA, Apr. 30 (WF, CRo), and Black-bellied Plovers were found at Hartstown, PA, Apr. 17 (RCL) and at B.E.S.P. May 7–11 (MC). Semipalmated Plovers were more common than usual. An Am. Avocet was in Franklin, TN, Apr. 22 (JPp). Until recently there had been few records of Willets in West Virginia, but in the past few years they have been turning up in numbers in the Huntington area, and this year 18 were seen there May 4 (WA, MG). Other records came from K.C.P.P. Apr. 29 (WA), C.H.F., KY, May 5 (FB), Austin Springs, TN, May 5 (RK, BC), Sullivan, TN, May 9 (BC), and Rocky Gap, MD, May 12 (MO). Upland Sandpipers returned this year to the recovered strip mine areas in Clarion, PA (WF), and other records came from Fairfield, PA, Apr. 17 (CG) and Greene, PA, Apr. 22 (RB). There was a report of 80 Whimbrels at P.I.S.P. (*fide* JG, no details). Ruddy Turnstones were seen at L. Somerset, PA, May 10 for a first spring record for s.w. Pennsylvania (RM), Huntington, WV, May 12 (WA), and B.E.S.P. May 21–28 for a 9th local record (MW).

Dunlins and Western Sandpipers were unusually common, and the latter were reported more often than Semipalmateds. The only report of White-rumped Sandpiper came from Kingston Steam Plant, TN, May 20 (JPa), and the only report of Stilt Sandpiper came from Eagle Bend Fish Hatchery, TN, Apr. 17 (CN). A ♀ **Ruff** was at Austin Springs May 10–13, for only the 3rd or 4th Tennessee record (RK, m.ob.). Dowitchers were reported from Austin Springs, TN, Mar. 10 (four in winter plumage about 3.5 weeks early) (RK), two at Swoope, VA, Apr. 28 (YL), two at K.C.P.P. Apr. 29 (WA), two at C.F.H., KY, May 5 (FB), three at Lake Somerset, PA, May 5 (AM), one in Mason, WV, May 12 (WA), and 22 (record high count) at Austin Springs, TN, May 15 (BC). Most of these birds were reported as one or the other of the two species, but without any

supporting details it seems best to leave them listed as "dowitcher (sp)"

No great concentrations of gulls were reported but the flight of Bonaparte's Gulls was unusually heavy and widespread. Rare away from L. Erie, a Great Black-backed Gull was seen in Botetourt, VA, Mar. 13 (BK, NM, HT). It was a great year for terns. At the risk of being cornball one might say that "one good tern deserves another" as Caspian, Common, Forster's, and Black terns, all generally scarce in this inland Region, were unusually numerous and were reported from all over the Region. Several observers commented on seeing all four at one time in one place. Formerly the Forster's Tern was considered most unusual in this Region, but in recent years sightings have increased and it now appears to be more common than the Common Tern. It does appear that the Forster's is the earlier migrant of the two.

**DOVES TO WOODPECKERS** — Mourning Dove populations continued to thrive in most of the Region. The only reports of Barn Owls came from the usual stations in Rockingham (R.B.C.) and Johnson City, TN (RK). Single Long-eared Owls were reported from Pittsburgh Apr. 11 (VD) and Centre, PA, May 14 (DB). Short-eared Owls were seen on the strip-mined areas of Clarion, PA, until at least Apr. 14. Courtship displays were observed but no nesting had been confirmed (WF). Other reports came from Vienna, WV, Mar. 27 (JB) and B.E.S.P. Apr. 9 (EZ). A N. Saw-whet Owl was seen at P.I.S.P. Mar. 12 (NB), and one or two were present on Laurel Ridge near P.N.R. from Mar. 17 to the end of the period (RM *et al.*)

Common Nighthawks were generally scarce, and this species may be on a long-term decline in the Region. There is no doubt that the Whip-poor-will has almost disappeared from the Region. On the other hand, the Chuck-will's-widow is moving north. Three were heard on the early date of Apr. 21 at Stuart's Draft, VA (YL), and the species was heard in Wood, WV (LB *et al.*). The mild early spring prompted some early dates for Chimney Swifts with a Mar. 10 record, two weeks early, at Johnson City, TN (DL). Besides the two Rufous Hummingbirds air-lifted out of e. Tennessee as reported in the Winter account, two additional birds turned up at feeders in Chattanooga. These remained until at least Apr. 14 and Apr. 18 (JPa). The Rufous Hummingbird in Knoxville was last seen in late March (JBO).

After many periods of reporting declining numbers of Red-headed Woodpeckers, it was heartening to note that sightings came from 10 locations from n.e. Ohio to n.w. Georgia.

**FLYCATCHERS TO SHRIKES** — Most flycatchers were somewhat late in arrival, no doubt because of the absence of insects in the early part of May. There were more reports of Olive-sided Flycatchers than usual: Johnson City, TN, Apr. 29 (early) (RK, BC); Troutville, VA, May 11 (BK); Highland, VA, May 18 (LT); Montoursville, PA, May 18 (SS); Bear Meadows, PA, May 20 (EZ *et al.*); P.N.R., bandings on May 23 & 24 (RCL, RM). On May 11 a concentration of 28 E. Kingbirds in one field was noted at Rockwood, PA (AM). A **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**, rare in this Region, was seen at Norris L., TN, Apr. 23 (GM).

Despite the mass mortality, some Purple Martin boxes had birds in late May. It was thought that these were first-year birds that had arrived after the bad weather (RB). Swallow species other than the Purple Martin did not seem to suffer mortality during the cold spell. Tree Swallows arrived somewhat late, but appeared to be continuing their southward expansion. Cliff Swallow colonies were reported from Rockingham, VA (R.B.C.), and for the 2nd year in Rowan, KY (FB). In Warren, PA, there were several sightings of Com. Ravens, and 2 of the 3 known nesting attempts were successful (WH). A flight of 40–50 ravens leaving a roost was observed at Blackwater Falls S.P., WV, May 12 (JP). Two very low elevation sightings of ravens came from Johnson City, TN, Apr. 11

(RK) and the Potomac R. near Lander, MD, Apr. 23 (RR)

Carolina Wrens came through the winter in fine style in the North, but once again there were no reports of Bewick's Wren. Marsh Wrens were found at K.C.P.P. Apr. 23 (MG), Austin Springs, TN, May 5 (RK), and Glenwood Swamp, WV, May 8 (WA). Golden-crowned Kinglets may have nested at the rather low elevation of 1350 ft at P.N.R. (RM, RCL). The species is to be expected in the future at low elevations in conifer plantations of sufficient age.

Migrant Gray-cheeked and Swainson's thrushes continued to be in low numbers or even undetected at most places, but in the Knoxville region the Swainson's Thrush was fairly common with 67 being counted on the County Spring Count Apr. 30 (CN). In w. North Carolina, Wood Thrush was also felt to be in reduced numbers (R & JY). Cedar Waxwings were in larger than normal numbers near Knoxville (CN), but other areas did not comment on them. The only reports of American Pipits came from North Branch, MD, Mar. 19 (RR), Woodcock L., PA, Apr. 1 (RFL), and South Avis, PA, Apr. 21 (PP). The N. Shrike that wintered at B.E.S.P. was seen last Apr. 9, almost 3 weeks late (MW). Fourteen nests of Loggerhead Shrikes were under observation within 20–30 miles of Harrisonburg, VA (KF). There were only 3 reports from the Elizabethton-Johnson City area of Tennessee (RK). Other reports came from Highland (LT, SR), Augusta (YL), and Rockbridge (RS) in Virginia, and Morgan, WV (SR).

**WARBLERS**—The warbler flight produced somewhat more unanimity than usual. Most places agreed that numbers were on the low side but that variety of species was very good. Those species that arrive before the first of May were somewhat early, while those that came after the bad weather settled in were late. There were 2 groundings of very large number of birds reported: Rockfish Gap, VA, Apr. 28–29 when 21 species were seen (SR), and Youghiogheny Reservoir, MD, May 13 (LG), while several places reported extensive groundings for the full week of May 5–13. As usual the numbers of each species varied from place to place, but most observers agreed that Yellow Warblers were unusually numerous. There were no reports that warblers suffered any great mortality during the bad weather spell, but this would be difficult to establish for them.

Three Orange-crowned Warblers (rare in spring) were banded at P.N.R., May 14 & 17 (RM, RCL), and one was seen in Morgan, TN, Apr. 23 (JC). Magnolia Warblers appeared to be nesting in the Ligonier Valley, PA (RCL, RM). Yellow-throated Warblers continued their northward advance with reports from State College, PA, Apr. 24 (DK), near St. Marys, PA, May 17 (LC), and Montoursville, PA, May 24 to end of period (SS). A Swainson's Warbler (2nd local record) was banded at P.N.R. May 9 and remained there until May 19 (RCL, RM). Two other southern species occurring farther north than usual were Kentucky Warbler at Montoursville, PA, May 15 (SS) and three reports of Worm-eating Warblers near Williamsport, PA (PS). Both the "Brewster's" and "Lawrence's" hybrids were banded at P.N.R. (RM, RCL) and a "Brewster's" Warbler was seen in Rockingham, VA, May 20 (R.B.C.). A strangely marked Northern Parula(?) singing a "double" song May 24 at Tygart Lake S.P., WV (JP), once again raised thoughts of the phantom hybrid "Sutton's Warbler."

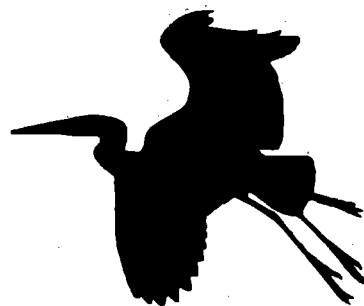
**GROSBEAKS TO FINCHES**—Instead of all passing through in a day or two, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks remained through the cold wet spell and so produced more sightings than usual. Blue Grosbeaks were reported from Swoope, VA, Apr. 28 (YL), Middle River, VA, May 6 (RS), and Wood, WV, May 1 (RP). The only Dickcissel sighting came from Wood, WV, May 5 (NW).

The sparrow flights were about normal, although Song Sparrow was the only bird banded in below-average numbers

at P.N.R. (RM, RCL) and for the first time none nested at a location in Shenandoah, VA (DD). Fox and Lincoln's sparrows were more commonly reported than usual. There were three reports of strays from the west: two "Oregon" Dark-eyed Juncos were at a feeder in State College, PA, Apr. 9–22 (K & JJ); a Clay-colored Sparrow was seen at Rose Valley L., PA, May 2 (SS); and a **Harris' Sparrow** came to a feeder at Blacksville, WV, Apr. 29 to at least May 2 (RSt).

Northern Orioles may have suffered some mortality during the May bad weather, as they disappeared from my yard in Morgantown, WV (GAH). Red Crossbills were reported only from the nesting location on Shenandoah Mt., VA. There were only 3 reports of Pine Siskins: Cocke, TN, Apr. 8 (A & RH), Wood, WV, Apr. 10 & 23 (LR), and one at St. Marys, PA, until May 4 (LC). American Goldfinches were in unusually low numbers in n. West Virginia (GAH). Evening Grosbeaks were reported only from Wood, WV, Mar. 9 (RP) and a feeder in Monongalia, WV (fide GAH).

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# WESTERN GREAT LAKES REGION

David J. Powell



Spring 1989 was much more typically spring than the last two years, with cool wet weather predominating through the period. As is the norm, the weather in Minnesota was more variable and generally colder, particularly in March when temperatures at the beginning of the month were as low as 42 degrees below zero in the north. Blizzards hit Minnesota in early March, with up to a foot of snow in southern and central areas, and again on March 14, which was followed by more sub-zero temperatures in northern Minnesota. Weather in Michigan and Wisconsin was much more normal, with alternating cold and warm spells, but generally cooler than normal. April was typical for the Region, with varying cold and warm days, but generally cooler than normal, and much cooler than the last several years. Snow remained in the woods in the northern parts of the Region into mid-May. May was definitely cooler and wetter than normal, with a brief return of winter weather May 5–6 throughout the Region, when light snow fell even in the southern parts. Minnesota was drier and warmer than the other two states, bringing fears of a return to last summer's drought conditions.

As has become regular in the last few years, the migration was quite sparse throughout the Region. Is it just our memory making things better than they really were as we look back, or are there really fewer birds and fewer good migration days? Minnesota birders had a surprisingly good movement March 24–27, when the weather got into the 70s in the south and migrants flooded in, even into the north where conditions were still essentially winterlike. Nothing notable happened thereafter until mid-May, when scattered locales throughout the Region found locally good numbers of migrants. May 19 produced the only Regionwide good fallout, but this was only a one-day event, with clearing skies on May 20 allowing everything to move on northward. In Duluth, fog and rain produced the best local movement in years, with Eckert commenting that it was the most thrushes he had ever seen, and all 26

regular species of warblers were seen at Park Point. Fog again produced another impressive fallout at Whitefish Point Bird Observatory in Michigan on May 31, with hundreds of birds present. Interestingly, many of the birds were out on the beach and in the grass. Imagine, if you will, Swainson's Thrushes, Blackpoll Warblers, and Connecticut Warblers walking in the grass and sand on the beach. The few fortunate observers to be at Whitefish Point that day were treated to an amazing collection of birds, including 13 Connecticut, 28 Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, 27 Alder Flycatchers, and 200 Swainson's Thrushes.

Rarities were few throughout the Region, with a Western Tanager in Michigan (if accepted by the Michigan Bird Records Committee, it would be the first for the state) the only truly outstanding bird.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — W.P.B.O. = Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, MI; P.M. = Pt. Mouillee State Game Area, Monroe County, MI; S.G.A. = State Game Area; W.M.A. = Wildlife Management Area. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO IBISES** — Red-throated Loons were observed in record numbers at W.P.B.O., with 279 tallied during the period Apr. 25–May 30 and a peak of 45 May 17 (staff). Red-throateds are much less common in Minnesota than in the other 2 states in the Region, so one in Duluth (MH) and two in Cook (AB, BL, S & OL) were more than normal. Inland sightings of Red-throateds were in Midland, MI, and Adams, Dane, and Sawyer, WI. Michigan's 4th record of **Pacific/Arctic Loon** was furnished by one on the incredible loon day of May 17 at W.P.B.O. (LD). In addition to the above noted loons, 1463 Com. Loons were observed at W.P.B.O. May 17 (staff), part of the record 9526 observed there during the season. Whitefish Point has long been known as a hawk migration spot, but I feel it is vastly underappreciated as a waterfowl migration location. Red-necked Grebes were seen at their customary L. Superior and L. Michigan locations, with 276 at W.P.B.O.

during the season representing fewer than the last 3 years. High counts of Red-neckeds were of 49 Apr 28 at Superior (RJ) and 39 on May 17 at W.P.B.O. (staff). The only Eared Grebe reported was one May 20–27 in Dane, WI (SR, A & SS *et al.*). Western Grebes were e. of normal at Burnett, WI, May 11 (JH) and three on May 13 at Wausau, WI (DB). A **Clark's Grebe** was found May 22 at Moorhead, MN (L & CF). While controversy as to the status of this species still rages, it is evident that it is rare/regular in Minnesota, not accidental. American White Pelicans were e. of normal in all 3 states, with more than normal in e. Minnesota, one in Michigan, and 5 reports (34 birds) in Wisconsin.

Bitterns of both species have become increasingly scarce in Michigan, particularly the Least. American Bitterns were reported from 9 locations, certainly not encouraging, but much better than the Least Bittern, which was reported from only one place in the state prior to June. A Great Egret May 19 at W.P.B.O. (LD, RP *et al.*) was north of normal. Snowy Egrets were reported from one Michigan and 3 Wisconsin locations, slightly better than average. The only Little Blue Heron reported was one May 18 at Metrobeach, Macomb, MI (DL, LB). Tricolored Herons lingered in both Michigan and Minnesota, with one May 4–20 at Minneapolis (TH, m.ob.), and one at the mouth of the Tahquamenon River, Chippewa, MI (GHu, WS, m.ob.). Cattle Egrets were found at 4 Michigan and 2 Wisconsin sites, but were only dependable in the Green Bay area, where there were six to 10. A pair of Yellow-crowned Night-Herons was seen again on the Sugar R., Rock, WI, beginning May 14 (RH, JD *et al.*). Another was at Racine, WI, May 6–7 (JD). A breeding-plumaged **Glossy Ibis** was at P.M. May 19 into June (PC, m.ob.), for one of the few ibises identified to species in Michigan.

**WATERFOWL, RAPTORS** — Tundra Swans were seen in good numbers for spring in the Saginaw Bay, MI, area, with 8000 seen Mar. 24 (RW). Greater White-fronted Geese were seen in above-average numbers in e. Minnesota, particularly in the s.e. quarter of the state. White-fronteds were also reported from 4 Michigan sites, comprising 23 birds, slightly more than average for the spring. An unprecedented seven Ross' Geese were seen in Minnesota: one Mar. 31–Apr. 1 in Fillmore (G & MD); two Apr. 2 in Cottonwood (KE); three Apr. 17 at Rice Lake S.P. (RG, AMP); and one in late May at Thief Lake W.M.A. (m.ob.). This species is only casual in Minnesota, but would probably turn out to be regular if it was an easier identification and/or there were more observers in w. Minnesota. A most cooperative Brant was at the Tahquamenon River mouth, Chippewa, MI, Apr. 26–May 23 (SM, EH, ASp, m.ob.). Another was seen at W.P.B.O. May 4 (LG). In both

Michigan and Wisconsin, numbers of ducks seemed to be higher than in recent years, an encouraging sign after last summer's drought. A Eurasian Wigeon was found Apr. 12–13 at the Freeland, Saginaw, MI, sewage ponds (KK). Harlequin Ducks were found in both Michigan and Minnesota: the wintering male at Duluth was joined by a female May 25 (m.ob.), but hopes for a first Minnesota nesting were dashed when they disappeared in early June; single Harlequins were found Mar. 30 (RS) and May 6–16 (KM, TS, PU) at St. Joseph, Berrien. All three scoters were reported from all 3 states, with Minnesota having more than usual from inland (away from L. Superior) locations, Wisconsin having a fair migration but with only a few Blacks, and Michigan also having only a few Blacks; but W.P.B.O. observers found a record number of White-wingeds, with 394 on May 22 and 1867 for the season (staff). A 2nd-year ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye was present May 27–30 at Grand Portage, Cook, MN (AB, BL *et al.*); this species is only casual in the Region at any time, and is seldom reported in spring.

Northern Goshawks were quite scarce, as would be expected, since the species is in the low ebb of its cycle. One lingered until May 23 in Olmsted (B & SE), late for s. Minnesota. Three nests and a territorial female were found s. of normal in Michigan's Lower Peninsula, in Gratiot, Midland, and Wexford. Swainson's Hawks were found Apr. 19 (TL, JK), May 3 (LG, PT), and May 17 (JB *et al.*) at W.P.B.O., and May 23 at Crex Meadows W.M.A., WI (A & SS), about normal for the e. portion of the Region. East of where they are normally seen (and only rare/regular there) was a Ferruginous Hawk May 10 in Dodge, MN (B & SE). Rough-legged Hawks lingered into mid-May in both Michigan and Wisconsin, not early June like last year. Away from W.P.B.O., Golden Eagles were seen at 2 Michigan and 2 Wisconsin sites, comprising eight individuals. Merlins have become considerably more common in the Region in recent years, and the trend continued with the record 82 at W.P.B.O. (Table 1) and 8 other sightings at 7 locations in Michigan. Peregrine Falcons are also doing better in the Region; this spring's sightings were from 11 Minnesota locations (including a returning nesting pair at Palisade Head, Lake) and 5 Michigan sites. Two Gyrfalcons were seen, one at W.P.B.O. Apr. 15 (TL, LC, PT, CB), and one Mar. 30–Apr. 2 at Alma, WI (RB). Two Prairie Falcons were found in Minnesota, one May 18 in Clay (S & DM) and one e. of normal May 5 in Olmsted (JBo).

**RAILS TO PHALAROPES** — Yellow Rails were found at 4 Michigan and 2 Wisconsin locations, above average. King Rails were found in Monroe and Berrien, MI, and Columbia, Dane, and Dodge, WI, decent numbers for this scarce species

**Table 1. Spring Hawk Totals at Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, Michigan.**

|                     | Status | First Date | Last Date | Total Count | Count | Peak Date   |
|---------------------|--------|------------|-----------|-------------|-------|-------------|
| Turkey Vulture      | L      | Apr. 8     | May 31    | 67          | 7     | May 17      |
| Osprey              | H      | Apr. 15    | May 30    | 201         | 18    | May 1, 3    |
| Bald Eagle          | R      | Mar. 24    | May 26    | 81          | 8     | Mar. 27     |
| Northern Harrier    | T      | Apr. 3     | May 30    | 250         | 17    | May 16      |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk  | L      | Mar. 27    | May 30    | 8283        | 940   | May 18      |
| Cooper's Hawk       | H      | Mar. 27    | May 23    | 83          | 12    | Apr. 16     |
| Northern Goshawk    | VL     | Mar. 15    | May 29    | 46          | 4     | Mar. 26     |
| Red-shouldered Hawk | T      | Mar. 24    | May 30    | 26          | 4     | Apr. 6      |
| Broad-winged Hawk   | H      | Apr. 19    | May 30    | 4317        | 656   | May 13      |
| Red-tailed Hawk     | VL     | Mar. 24    | May 30    | 692         | 91    | Apr. 26     |
| Rough-legged Hawk   | VL     | Mar. 27    | May 22    | 426         | 46    | Apr. 21     |
| Golden Eagle        | R      | Mar. 15    | May 16    | 35          | 5     | Mar. 29     |
| American Kestrel    | T      | Mar. 27    | May 29    | 314         | 24    | Apr. 14, 25 |
| Merlin              | R      | Mar. 17    | May 31    | 82          | 6     | May 3       |
| Peregrine Falcon    | H      | May 1      | May 26    | 29          | 4     | May 26      |

Status (relative to average): VL—very low; L—low; T—typical; H—high; R—record.



Michigan observers were treated to the best shorebirding in recent years at P.M. They are trying to return the area to the marshes that were found there in previous years. To do this, they are drawing down a large impoundment this year and will do an even larger one next year. This had produced the best shorebird habitat in Michigan in many years, and the future promises more of the same. Semipalmated Plovers were found in excellent numbers at P.M.: 250 May 18; 350 May 19; 280 May 23 (PC *et al.*). The Piping Plover picture remained bleak in the Region, with once utilized beaches now empty, although Minnesota observers had more than in recent years. Singles on 8 dates in May at W.P.B.O. (staff) and one May 27 at Tawas Point S.P., MI (RP), were the only reports for Michigan, although at least a couple of other pairs are known along the shore of L. Superior. Away from their Lake of the Woods breeding area (8 pairs this year), Piping Plovers have been just casual in Minnesota, so one May 10 in Nobles (RG), and two May 18–19 at Duluth (KE *et al.*) were encouraging. Wisconsin sightings remained low, with one May 7 in Racine (JD *et al.*), and two May 10–11, one May 17, and none thereafter at Long Island, Ashland (DV), the only reports. An impressive 450 Black-bellied Plovers were at P.M. May 18 (RPu, PC, GH).

American Avocets staged a good migration in Wisconsin, with reports from 4 locations: nine at Grassy L., Columbia, Apr. 22 (DT *et al.*); 16 at Milwaukee Apr. 30 (RGU, JD); two May 26 in Chippewa (JP); and one May 26 in Bayfield (LS). A Greater Yellowlegs Mar. 20 in Jefferson, WI (KEH), was early. Willets were plentiful in both Michigan and Wisconsin, with reports from 4 Michigan and 10 Wisconsin locations, ranging from late April through May. One Apr. 2 in Nobles, MN (KE *et al.*) was the 2nd-earliest ever for Minnesota. Whimbrels presented a mixed picture with Wisconsin observers noting a very poor migration, with the largest single group only 13, and Michigan observers having an excellent migration, with hundreds seen in several locations: 650 May 22, and 320 May 26 at P.M. (PC, RPU, RW, DP); 500 May 27 at W.P.B.O. (staff). Whimbrels are certainly more common in the eastern part of the Region, as they are quite rare along the west coast of Michigan but quite regular, sometimes abundant, along the east coast of Michigan. Additionally, their migration is the most concentrated of any of the shorebirds, as evidenced by the date range of this year's movement, May 18–30.

Hudsonian Godwits were somewhat later and poorer in numbers this year in Wisconsin, with sightings from May 4–27 and a maximum count of 10. Only one was sighted in Michigan, May 26 at P.M. (PC, RW, DP). Marbled Godwits were found at 3 Michigan and 4 Wisconsin locations, maximum 11 on May 6 & 7 at P.M. (RPu, KO). An impressive 1200 Ruddy Turnstones were at Manitowoc May 25 (CS). Red Knots were scarce in Wisconsin, with only a few along L. Michigan the last third of May, but were in good numbers in Michigan, with 32 May 20, 72 May 23, and 12 May 26 at P.M. (PC *et al.*). Semipalmated Sandpipers built to good numbers at P.M., with 1000 there May 26 (PC, DP, RW). There were 4 sightings of the rare-in-spring Western Sandpiper: two May 5–7 in Midland, MI (RW, TW) and singles May 19 in Taylor, WI (PR), May 23 in Burnett, WI (A & SS), and May 28 in Green Bay (DT). White-rumped Sandpipers were seen in good numbers in both Michigan and Wisconsin, with 50+ at several Wisconsin locations. Single Baird's Sandpipers were reported at Eau Claire, WI, Apr. 17 (JP) and W.P.B.O. May 25 (LD, JK). Dunlin were seen in exceptional numbers in Michigan, with 4 reports of 2000 or more birds, maximum 7000 May 18 at P.M. (PC, GH). Stilt Sandpipers were more common than usual this spring, with reports from several Wisconsin locations and 6 Michigan locations, maximum six on May 26 at Nayanquing S G A., Bay, MI (DP, PC). Four Long-billed Dowitchers were found May 9 at the Erie Gun Club, Monroe, MI (PC), and single Long-billeds were seen May 12 & 23 at P.M. (PC, JG, GH). Red-necked Phalaropes were seen at 2 Michigan and 2 Wisconsin locations.

**LARIDS** — Jaeger numbers this spring were down from the last couple of springs. One Parasitic, May 17 at W.P.B.O. (TL, LD), and single unidentified jaegers May 27 & 28 at W.P.B.O. (staff) were the only reports. Laughing Gulls were widely dispersed throughout the Region, and in better than average numbers: singles May 5, 26, & 31 at St. Joseph, Berrien, MI (RS, KM), May 18 & 21 at W.P.B.O. (RP, JK, TL, JG, PC, MP), May 19 at Milwaukee (JD), and May 21 at New Buffalo, Berrien (WB); five May 27 at Whitewater W.M.A., MN (AMP, BJ); and two May 28 at Duluth (JGr). Franklin's Gulls were reported from 2 Michigan and 5 Wisconsin locations. The Regional perceptions of birds are quite variable. An example of this is Little Gull, of which Wisconsin observers found a few at Manitowoc during May, and one at Racine May 6 (JD), and commented that they are harder to find along L. Michigan in recent years, not like the "old days;" while one May 10 and two May 18 at W.P.B.O. (JR, RP, LD, JK), and one May 26 at P.M. (PC, DP, RW) were considered more than average in Michigan. Thayer's Gulls were well represented, with three in Michigan, one in Minnesota, and two in Wisconsin. Single Iceland Gulls were found at 3 Michigan locations: Mar. 25 at the Muskegon Wastewater System (PC, JG); May 7 at Benton Harbor (WB); and May 10 at W.P.B.O. (LD), certainly a good showing for spring. A Glaucous Gull remained to the remarkably late date of June 2 at Superior (RJ). The increasingly found Lesser Black-backed Gull was sighted twice, May 6 at Winona, MN (BF *et al.*), only the 6th for Minnesota and the first in spring, and May 6 at the Erie Gun Club, Monroe, MI (JG, RPU). A 2nd-year Black-legged Kittiwake was found Apr. 20 at Bemidji, MN (DJ), for only the 3rd spring record for Minnesota. Both Common and Caspian terns were quite scarce at W.P.B.O. this spring (staff). The only Arctic Tern of the season was one May 6 at Manitowoc (DT).

**CUCKOOS TO WOODPECKERS** — Black-billed Cuckoos were up in numbers along with a tent caterpillar infestation in Minnesota, but Yellow-billed Cuckoos were no more common than normal in Minnesota, and were quite scarce in Michigan. An E. Screech-Owl found dead Mar. 15 in Delta, MI (CT), was the first for Michigan's Upper Peninsula. After last winter's noninvasion, a surprising number of Snowy Owls were seen, three reported in Michigan and six in Wisconsin, with birds lingering into late April in both states. Burrowing Owls are barely regular in the extreme w. part of the Region, so a pair in Rock, MN (m.ob.), and one in Polk, MN (*fide* KH) were about normal. The winter invasion of Great Gray Owls into s. Minnesota and Wisconsin left behind a couple of birds, as one was seen Mar. 22 in Anoka, MN (JHz), one was found dead at La Crosse Mar. 24 (G & JR), and at least five remained in Douglas, WI, with one still present Apr. 8 (LS, RJ *et al.*). While there was no invasion in Michigan last winter, a record 14 were seen at W.P.B.O. this spring (staff). Long-eared Owls were scarce in Michigan, where 13 at W.P.B.O. for the season was considerably below normal. Sixteen Boreal Owls were banded at W.P.B.O. (staff), a typical total, but far below last year's. Two Boreals were found dead in Wisconsin: Mar. 8 in Portage and Mar. 19 in Douglas (*fide* LS), suggesting that there may have been a small invasion into Wisconsin which went undetected last winter. A Boreal Owl May 14 at Grand Rapids, Itasca, MN, may have been a leftover from last winter's invasion, or might have been a nesting bird, as it was just s.w. of their known range; in their "known" range, owl surveyors found 25 in Lake, MN, down from last year's 53, but other surveyors reportedly found more in Cook, although the numbers are not yet known. The Polk, WI, Chuck-will's-widow returned May 17 (JHu), for the 4th consecutive year at this location. An excellent migration of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds took place May 18 & 19 at Tawas Point S.P., Iosco, MI, with 100+ seen each day (RW *et al.*). Black-backed Woodpeckers were reported from 3 Wisconsin and 4 Michigan locations, about normal, but the report of 19 on Mar. 1 at a burn in Delta, MI (GN), was very intriguing.

**FLYCATCHERS TO THRUSHES** — As part of the excellent May 31 movement at W.P.B.O., 18 Yellow-bellied, 27 Alder, and 15 Least flycatchers were counted by W.P.B.O. staff. Acadian Flycatchers are apparently slowly spreading in from the s.e. corner of Minnesota in recent years; they were reported from Winona, Scott, and Hennepin this spring. A Western Kingbird was east of normal in Green, WI, May 27 (DT). Eastern Kingbirds made a good showing in Berrien, MI, May 14 when Booth counted 115. Horned Larks were quite scarce at W.P.B.O., with only 28 for the season (staff). Abundance is all relative; 2988 Blue Jays during the period at W.P.B.O. was considered to be a very low total (staff). Black-billed Magpies are extending their range from n.w. Minnesota to the n.e. part, where they may regularly breed in n. Aitkin and adjacent s.e. St. Louis; two nests were found in Aitkin this spring (fide WN).

Both Black-capped and Boreal chickadees were less common than normal this spring at W.P.B.O., with only 10 Boreals seen, way below normal. With the relatively mild weather of the last couple of winters, it was thought that the Carolina Wren would make a comeback in the Region, and it has; Michigan observers found at least 16 birds spread over 10 locations, and Wisconsin birders found 10 at 6 locations. Even Minnesota, where Carolina Wrens are only casual, got into the act, with the overwintering bird in Anoka, remaining into mid-May (m.ob.). A daredevil Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was at W.P.B.O. at the early date of Apr. 17 (staff). Gnatcatchers have also been expanding in Minnesota in recent years; this spring they were found w. to Nobles and Rock, and n. to Otter Tail and Duluth, where one May 5 (MH) furnished only the 3rd local record. A ♂ Mountain Bluebird was well east of normal May 28 in Waukeasha, WI (DT). More normal were birds Mar. 25 in Brown, MN, and Apr. 1 at Blue Mounds S.P. Catharus thrushes were generally quite scarce throughout the Region, but locally good numbers were seen in Duluth May 19 (KE) and W.P.B.O. May 31 (200 Swainson's).

**MIMIDS TO WARBLERS** — Northern Mockingbirds were surprisingly common in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, with eight seen during May at W.P.B.O. (staff), and at least a couple more near the mouth of the Tahquamenon River, about 16 mi s. of W.P.B.O.. Mockingbirds were also reported from Berrien and Iosco, MI, and Racine and Waupaca, WI. Brown Thrashers successfully overwintered at Kalamazoo, MI (JG, RA) and La Crosse, WI (FL). American Pipits were scarce at W.P.B.O. this spring, with only 165 noted during the season (staff). Michigan's fifth **Sprague's Pipit** was found May 29 at the Shiawassee River S.G.A., Saginaw, by Oklahoma birders (JL, JM, ER, PS) who were returning from having visited the Kirtland's Warbler area in the n.c. part of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. One has to wonder how often rare birds are seen by out-of-state birders and never reported. A scattering of Bohemian Waxwings were seen in n. Michigan and Wisconsin in March and early April, but they were not very common; largest group: 85 Mar. 23 in Douglas, WI (LS). Loggerhead Shrikes continued to struggle in the Region, with only 5 sightings in Wisconsin, including a possible nesting in St. Croix, and 5 sightings in Michigan, with a confirmed nesting at the Allegan S.G.A., where they have nested successfully for the last several years. White-eyed Vireos were seen in good numbers, with reports from 6 Michigan, 2 Wisconsin, and 2 Minnesota sites. Most interesting were the report of 10 singing males in Hillsdale, MI (JR), one n. of normal at Tawas Point S.P., MI, May 20 (M & JH), and the two in Minnesota, where they are only casual: May 13 in Olmsted (m.ob.) and May 28 far to the n.w. in Clay (L & CF). Bell's Vireos were seen at their normals s. Michigan and s. Wisconsin sites.

The May 31 fallout at W.P.B.O. produced among others 20 Chestnut-sided, 30 Magnolia, 150 Blackpoll, 13 Connecticut, 50 Wilson's, and 50 Canada warblers and 70 Am. Redstarts.

This provides further evidence that W P B O is not just for hawks, but is good for a wide variety of species. A Golden-winged Warbler May 30 in Chippewa, MI (TL), was n. of normal. An Orange-crowned Warbler Apr. 22 in Rock, WI (DT), was early. The most impressive event of the May 19 fallout in Duluth was the 12 Black-throated Blue Warblers, easily the most ever seen in Minnesota in one day; normally, this species is a rare migrant, with only a handful of lone individuals seen in a season. Reinoehl was treated to an exceptionally colorful sight May 16 at the Lost Nation S.G.A., Hillsdale, MI, when he had 25 Blackburnian Warblers. Yellow-throated Warblers were seen in excellent numbers in Michigan, with 14 found May 26 along the S. Branch Galien R., Berrien (DE), and one or two in late May in Hillsdale (JR). In Wisconsin, a pair was found along the Sugar R., Rock, in mid-May, with four territorial males found later in the month (m.ob.). One of last year's Kirtland's Warblers returned to its site in Douglas, WI, May 21 (LS, RJ). Minnesota had only its 4th **Prairie Warbler**, when a male was found May 13 in Hennepin (SC); unfortunately, the bird, the first since 1975, could not be relocated later in the day. A Prairie Warbler was n. of normal May 20 at W.P.B.O. (JG), and one was present at its site in Ozaukee, WI, from May 16 (m.ob.), where it has been found in 3 of the last 4 years. Other Prairies were found in Allegan, MI (DE), and Rock, WI (SR). Worm-eating Warblers were back to their usual site in Sauk, WI, with two pairs present. Single migrant overshoot Worm-eatings were at the "lost peninsula," Monroe, MI, May 12 (JG, PC, RPu) and at Metrobeach, Macomb, MI, May 21 (DL et al.). Kentucky Warblers were found in select wooded ravines in s. Wisconsin as usual, but 25+ territorial males in Wyalusing S.P., Grant (DT, A & SS) were most impressive. By contrast, Michigan had only one report, one May 11-12 at Ann Arbor (RW). Yellow-breasted Chats were seen in decent numbers in Wisconsin, with 6 reporting counties, but were less common than usual in Michigan.

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — The only Summer Tanager reported was a male May 22 in Berrien, MI (KM). Scarlet Tanagers were generally scarce in Michigan, but Booth had 100 on May 14 in Berrien. A Western Tanager was seen and photographed by many at a Rochester, MN, feeder May 7-11. Much more exciting was a female **Western Tanager** banded and photographed at Vermillion Pt., Chippewa, MI, May 23 (TA, JK, RU, PRO); if accepted by the Michigan Bird Records Committee, it would be the first accepted for the state. More N. Cardinals were present in the winter in n. Minnesota, and a few were still present in the spring at Bemidji, Aitkin, and Grand Marais. One was n. of normal at Marquette, MI, Mar 11 (NI). Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were in short supply at W.P.B.O., where only seven were seen during the period, but 115 on May 14 in Berrien, MI (WB), hardly constitutes scarcity. An ad. male Black-headed Grosbeak was found May 6 at O L Kipp S.P., MN (TH); the species is only casual in Minnesota. Another casual bird for Minnesota, an ad. male Lazuli Bunting was found May 14 at a Becker feeder (BW). After last year's epic numbers, only a few Dickcissels showed up this spring, and they were late.

An Am. Tree Sparrow at Pt. La Barbe, Mackinaw, MI, May 22 (JG) was late. Lark Sparrows were at the usual nesting locations in Wisconsin. Single Lark Sparrows were at W P B O May 3-6, 25-29, & 31 (staff, m.ob.), where they are quite irregular. **Lark Buntings** were east of normal May 5-6 (a male) in Price, WI (JW), May 19-21 (a male) at W.P.B.O. (JB, m.ob.), and May 20 (a female) about 3 miles s. of W P B O. (TSM, TL, BP), only the 6th or 7th for Michigan. A migrant Le Conte's Sparrow was found May 20 at Saugatuck Dunes S.P., Allegan, MI (DK); it is almost unknown in migration in Michigan. Sharp-tailed Sparrows were found at Powell Marsh, Vilas, WI, during the last third of May (m.ob.), and one was found May 31 at Crex Meadow W.M.A. (JH), where they are normally more common, but the habitat was poor this year.

An impressive 290 Fox Sparrows were found Mar 29 in Shawano, WI (MP). White-crowned Sparrows were less common than usual at W.P.B.O., where only 191 were counted instead of the usual hundreds (staff). A male **Chestnut-collared Longspur** emerging into breeding plumage was found Mar. 6 in Fond du Lac, WI (MEW); if accepted by the Wisconsin Bird Records Committee it would be one of the few for the state. Another Chestnut-collared Longspur, this one May 27 at Silver Bay, Lake, MN, May 27 (AB, BL), was probably the first ever on Minnesota's North Shore, and only the third east of the prairie counties.

Western Meadowlarks remained scarce in Michigan, with reports from only 5 counties. Yellow-headed Blackbirds were seen in reduced numbers at Nayanquing S.G.A., Bay, MI, owing to habitat destruction (TW). Booth had an impressive 500 Northern Orioles wing by him along the L. Michigan, Berrien, MI, shore May 14.

Pine Grosbeaks were very scarce in Michigan and Wisconsin, with only four seen during the period at W.P.B.O. (staff). Purple Finches were also below average during migration in both Michigan and Wisconsin. The one finch that seems to always be reported on the upswing is House Finch, and this spring was no exception. In Michigan, they have become so common that observers rarely comment on them anymore. In Wisconsin, they are continuing to expand, and have become very easy to find in earlier established locales. In Minnesota, they nested at Winona and Mankato; have become rare but regular at feeders in the s.e. quarter of the state; a pair was found in Dawson, Lac Qui Parle in the s.w. part of the state; and lone individuals were found at feeders in n. Minnesota, at Aitkin (WN, second local record) and Duluth (KE, first local record). A few Red Crossbills were seen in Wisconsin, with 100 seen during the period at W.P.B.O. (staff), and scattered sightings of five to seven in other Upper Peninsula areas, more than usual for Michigan. There were also a few widely scattered sightings of White-winged Crossbills, even into s. Wisconsin. However, observers at W.P.B.O. had a bonanza, with 87 on Apr. 22 and 430 during the period, very high totals. Surprisingly, good numbers of Common Redpolls were seen

at W P B O , with 2877 seen during the period (staff) Common Redpolls lingered later than normal in both Michigan and Wisconsin, with the last birds seen May 13 at Superior (RJ) and May 14 at W.P.B.O. (staff). Hoary Redpolls were seen Mar. 24 and Apr. 4 at W.P.B.O. (staff) and Apr. 18-19 at Superior (RJ). Pine Siskins were scarce throughout Michigan and Wisconsin, but the real story was the scarcity of Evening Grosbeaks in the two states, where they were hard to find even at always dependable spots. At W.P.B.O., only 479 were seen during the period, as compared to several thousand in normal years.

**CONTRIBUTORS** — [I wish to thank the many individuals who submitted records for this summary. The nature of this summary precludes listing every individual who sent in reports; therefore, only those individuals with cited records are listed]. Ray Adams, Tom Allen, Rod Bahr, Leon Beitz, Dan Belter, Jim Berkelman, Chip Blake, Al Bolduc, Jerry Bonkoski (JBo), Walter Booth, Lee Carson, Phil Chu, Gordon & Mary Jo Dathe, Jerry DeBoer, Louie Dombrowski, **Kim Eckert** (Minnesota), Bob & Steve Ekblad, Dave Evers, Laurence & Carol Falk, Bruce Fall, Ray Glassel, Leonard Graf, Jim Granlund, Janet Green (JGr), Ronald Gutshow (RGu), Karen Etter Hale, Katie Haws, Mike Hendrickson, Tony Hertz, Geoff Hill, Jim Hoefler, Randy Hoffman, Everett Horton, James Howitz (JHz), Mark & Joanie Hubinger, Joe Hudick, George Hutchinson (GHu), Nick Illicky, Bob Janssen, Doug Johnson, Robby Johnson, Kevin Kane, Joe Kaplan, Doug Klein, Dick Leasure, Fred Lesh, Tony Leukering, Bill Litkey, Jo Loyd, Sandy & Orvis Lunke, Stanley Marcus, Juanita Martin, Steve & Diane Millard, Kip Miller, Ginny Nash, Warren Nelson, Karl Overman, Mark Peterson, Bob Petit, Marlene Planck, Rod Planck, Anne Marie Plunkett, Janine Polk, **David Powell** (Michigan), Robert Putman (RPu), Jack Reineohl, Elaine Renning, Gary & Jean Richser, Paul Risch, Paul Roose (PRO), Sam Robbins, Pat Seibert, Larry Semo, Al & Sue Shea, Roy Smith, Charles Sontag, Al Spaulding (ASp), Tim Smart (TSm), Tom Steele, Warren Studley, Charlotte Taylor, **Daryl Tessen** (Wisconsin), Paul Thompson, Pat Underwood, Russ Utych, Dick Verch, Terry Walsh, Ron Weeks, Mary Ellen Whitty, Jim Willman, W.P.B.O. staff, Bill Wyatt.— **DAVID J. POWELL, 217 Montrose, Kalamazoo, MI 49001.**

## MIDDLE- WESTERN PRAIRIE REGION

Bruce G. Peterjohn



This season continued a series of atypical spring migrations. Only March approached "normal" patterns of weather and bird movements. The first two weeks of April were unseasonably cool, reducing migration to a trickle. However, a warming trend during the last ten days of the month produced the most sustained passage of migrant birds for the entire season. May's weather was quite unusual. A high pressure system centered over the Great Lakes was responsible for unusually cold weather through the 13th, including a freak snow storm extending from northeastern Iowa to northern Ohio May 6-7. Observations of hummingbirds, warblers, and other insectivores foraging among snow-covered trees were not unusual during this storm. This weather pattern changed abruptly, and the hurried passage of most migrant passerines was accomplished between May 14-25. Only small numbers of migrants remained into June.

Precipitation varied considerably from state to state. Iowa, northern Missouri, and portions of northern Illinois remained gripped in last year's drought, receiving less than 12 inches of moisture during the first five months of the year. In contrast, the eastern states were inundated; for example, Cleveland received 9+ inches of rain during May.

As usual, perceptions of this spring's migration varied from locality to locality, although most observers considered it to be a decidedly lackluster season. The passerine migration was particularly dreadful in many areas with only a few localities experiencing "normal" numbers. Flights of migrant songbirds were local phenomena during April 20-25 and May 14-20, but even these flights were relatively small when compared with the past few years. Movements of waterfowl and shorebirds were spotty. In Kentucky, heavy rainfall inundated the transient lakes in Warren County for the first time in many years, producing a number of remarkable records. This pattern was not repeated elsewhere, especially in states still affected by drought, where habitats for these birds were limited. Despite a shortage of expected migrants, exceptional rarities were discovered in every state, providing the only excitement in an otherwise dull season.

**ABBREVIATIONS**—Spfld. = Springfield, IL; S.C.R. = Squaw Creek Nat'l Wildlife Ref., MO; O.W.R. = Ottawa Nat'l Wildlife Ref., OH; Say. Res. = Saylorville Res., IA. *Italicized place names are counties.*

**LOONS TO IBISES** — Noteworthy during spring, single Red-throated Loons were satisfactorily identified at Pleasant Hill Res., OH, Apr. 8 (BPj, MG) and Spfld., Apr. 13 (tDBo), while two were at L. Manawa, IA, Apr. 27-30 (tTB, m.ob.). Even more remarkable was a basic-plumaged Pacific Loon at L. Decatur Apr. 19 (RSa, t.m.ob.) for a first documented spring record for Illinois. The 259 Com. Loons at L. Lemon, IN, Apr. 2 (DW) made an unusually large spring concentration. Normal numbers elsewhere peaked with 52 in Ohio. Grebes noticeably declined, the largest flocks totalled 57 Pied-billeds in Missouri and 66 Horneds in Ohio. Late Horned Grebes lingered at Woodburn, IN, through May 19 (Haw) and in Warren, KY, until May 31 (BP). It was a poor year for Red-necked Grebes with the only report from Strom L., IA, Apr. 14 (DB). In the w. states, Eared Grebes peaked with nine in Iowa. Normal spring numbers for Illinois consisted of a maximum of three Eareds at 3 locations. Single Eareds in Warren Apr. 30 and May 14 (tBP, DP) established two of very few acceptably documented sightings from Kentucky. Rare but regular spring migrants through w. Iowa, as many as three Western Grebes were detected at 4 lakes Apr. 18-23.

A typical passage of Am. White Pelicans through w. Iowa and n.w. Missouri peaked with flocks of 140-665. Casual



American White Pelicans at Eagle Creek Park, Indiana, April 4, 1989. Photograph/Michael Ray Brown.

spring visitors east of the Mississippi R., three pelicans lingered at C.J. Brown Res., OH, Apr. 4-25 (DO, m.ob.), two were noted at Eagle Creek Res., IN, Apr. 5 (m.ob., ph.), and singles appeared in Porter, IN, Apr. 18 (BH) and Clinton L., IL, May 8-21 (MD, RP). As Double-crested Cormorants continue to increase, flocks of 30-60 are no longer unusual. This year's largest concentrations included 210-665 in the w. states, 300 along L. Erie, 205 in n.e. Ohio in Portage Apr. 26 (LR), a record high w. Kentucky count of 350 in Fulton May 3 (BP), 450 at Mississippi R. Dam 18, IL, Apr. 18 (MBa), and 170-250 at 2 other Illinois locations.

Numbers of herons were generally disappointing. An exception was Am. Bittern, which produced 60+ reports. Least Bitterns did not fare as well, and were detected at fewer than 20 locations. Great Egrets staged a noticeable movement into Indiana and n.e. Illinois, producing flocks of 23 at Willow Slough W.M.A., IN, Apr. 22 (WW, fide TKe), 22 in Lake, IN, May 27 (KB et al.), and 21 in DuPage, IL, May 8 (m.ob.). Early Snowy Egrets returned to Horseshoe L., IL, Mar. 18 (G & TBa) and Caruthersville, MO, Mar. 22 (BR). The expected small numbers resided at traditional breeding locations, while five extralimital sightings were fewer than normal for recent years. The 35 Little Blue Herons at Caruthersville, MO, Mar. 22 (BR) were early. The species staged a small movement into Indiana where 9 reports peaked with six in Gibson May 8 (KB et al.). Only four other extralimital Little Blues were reported from the other states. A Tricolored Heron returned to L. Calumet, IL, Apr. 29 (JL, CMo) while one in Logan, OH, May 6 (tNM et al.) provided Ohio's 4th record away from L. Erie. Another **Tricolored Heron** briefly visited Cone Marsh Apr. 29 (tTK), furnishing a first record for Iowa. Cattle Egrets also returned to Caruthersville, MO, by Mar. 22. Their populations remained stable in s.e. Missouri and w. Kentucky but declined elsewhere. The largest Illinois flock was composed of 25, and no more than two appeared along w. Lake Erie. A small influx into Indiana produced 13 reports with a maximum of 20 at Minnehaha W.M.A on Apr. 29 (MB). There were only 11 other extralimital sightings from the other states. Other early herons included Green-backed Herons at Grayson, KY, Apr. 1 (KC) and Carbondale, IL, Apr. 3 (JHr), and a Black-crowned Night-Heron at Louisville Mar. 14 (DP). The 27+ reports of Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were above average; one in Palo Alto May 6 (fide JD) was exceptional for n.w. Iowa. Accidental anywhere east of the Mississippi R., a **White-faced Ibis** was carefully described from Gibson, IN, May 10-11 (tSJ, DJ). The only other *Plegadis* ibis was an unidentified individual in Ohio.

**WATERFOWL** — Tundra Swans staged a poor flight across the n. states. The largest concentration totalled 150 near Lansing, IA, Mar. 24 (MH). The passage of Greater White-

fronted Geese was very good. They were widely reported in the w. states with a maximum of 850 at Riverton W.M.A., IA, Mar. 16 (SD, PH), and a late migrant until May 24 at Spirit L., IA (fide DH). At least 10 Illinois sightings peaked with 50 at Clear L. on Mar. 18 (LA). A flock of 19 in Warren Mar. 19–Apr. 1 (BP et al.) was exceptional for Kentucky, while groups of four to six were reported from single locations in Ohio and Indiana. A typical Snow Goose flight included two late migrants at C.J. Brown Res., OH, May 20 (DO). Small numbers of Ross' Geese are becoming regular migrants through c. Illinois, with sightings from 6 locations of up to five geese Mar. 4–21. Expected numbers were detected in the w. states, as late as May 7 at S.C.R. (DE).

The puddle duck migration was unimpressive. Unusual numbers lingered into May, especially in Warren, KY, where Green-winged Teal, N. Shoveler, Gadwall, and Am. Wigeon were still present May 31 (BP). Cinnamon Teal staged their best flight since 1986. In the w. states, where they are rare but regular spring migrants, there were four reports in Iowa and one in Missouri through May 19–21 at Lylah's Marsh, IA (MH). Exceptional east of the Mississippi R., a **Cinnamon Teal** in Warren, KY, Apr. 23–24 (†BP) furnished that state's 3rd



Cinnamon Teal drake (with Blue-winged Teal) in Wayne County, Ohio, April 14, 1989. Sixth state record. Photograph/Mary Gustafson.

record, while one in Wayne Apr. 9–15 (RRo, †m.ob.) and two in Ottawa Apr. 14 (JP, †VF) established Ohio's 6th and 7th acceptable sightings.

Diving duck concentrations were very locally distributed. Canvasbacks peaked with 4000 at Mississippi R. Dam 19, IA, Mar. 12 (RCe) and 1000–2600 in Ohio and Illinois. One in Clinton, IL, May 29 (KM) was late, as was a Ring-necked Duck in Warren, KY, May 21 (BP).

#### S.A.

A ♂ *Aythya* duck with a somewhat pendant tuft visited the Cleveland lakefront Apr. 2–5 (†) & DHO, m.ob., ph.). The dark gray scaled back, reduced tuft, and other characteristics indicated this individual was a Tufted Duck x scaup hybrid. While its reduced black nail on the bill, eye color and association with a flock of Lesser Scaup suggested it was produced by a Tufted Duck x Lesser Scaup pair, such hybrids have never been definitively recorded in the wild and a positive identification is not possible from photographs (Eric Gillham, pers. comm.). While hybrids between *Aythya* ducks are seldom reported from North America, such hybrids have been known in Europe for many years (see Gillham et al., 1966, Wildfowl Trust Annual Report 17: 49–65). Observers should recognize the possibility of these hybrids, and base their identifications of rare ducks on all characteristics of the species.

A flock of 100 Greater Scaup at Mississippi R. Dam 13, IA, Mar. 13 (PP) was unusual away from the Great Lakes. Late Greater Scaup were singles at S.C.R. May 11 (DE et al.), New L., IA, May 19 (SD), and Cook, IL, May 29 (JN). Holdovers from this winter's flight, as many as three Harlequin Ducks were noted at Cleveland through Mar. 25 (m.ob.), one appeared at Michigan City, IN, Mar. 10 (KB et al.), and up to four remained through Apr. 28 at Chicago (m.ob.) where one was remarkably late June 7 (†JPo). An average Oldsquaw flight included a maximum of 50 on L. Michigan and three or fewer at 10 inland locations. Our rarest spring scoters, single Blacks were reported from Spfld., Apr. 3 (DBo), Say. Res., IA, Apr. 8–9 (BE, †m.ob.), Evanston, IL, Apr. 15 (EW), and Clay, MO, Apr. 17 (†JE). Surf Scoters appeared in unusual numbers. Inland reports were of four at Ft. Wayne, IN, Apr. 9 (TY), Ohio pairs at Killdeer Res. May 8 (BP) and New London Res. May 11 (VF), one at Spfld. Apr. 23 (DBo), and one at the IPL ponds, IA, May 11–19 (SD, m.ob.). Along the Great Lakes, as many as three Surfs on L. Erie and one at Chicago included one through May 27 at Lorain, OH (LR). It was a fairly good spring for White-winged Scoters with a maximum of 12 along L. Erie and nine inland sightings. One lingered at Toledo through June 3 (MA). Other late ducks included two Com. Goldeneyes at Spfld. May 20 (DBo), a Bufflehead in Warren, KY, May 31 (BP), a Com. Merganser at L. Decatur, IL, May 29 (MD), and five Ruddy Ducks in Warren, KY, May 31.

**HAWKS TO CRANES** — The Indiana Dunes recorded its best spring hawk flight, a result of increased coverage as well as more hawks. A total of 2987 individuals was logged during 52 days, including record high seasonal counts of 110 N. Harriers, 418 Sharp-shinned, 67 Cooper's, 95 Red-shoulders, 1230 Red-taileds, and 117 Am. Kestrels (CF, BS et al.). Similar numbers were not detected elsewhere, especially along w. Lake Erie where the flight was poor.

An early Osprey at Caesar Creek Res., OH, Mar. 9 (JS) presaged a good flight, peaking with 11 in Lake, OH, Apr. 30 (LR, RH). The only extralimital Mississippi Kite was reported from Cook, IL, June 5 (CW). Bald Eagle numbers continued to slowly improve in every state. The largest daily flights of Sharp-shinned Hawks totalled 178 in Lake, OH, Apr. 30 (LR, RH) and 66 at Busch W.M.A., MO, Apr. 23 (JZ). As expected, N. Goshawks were scarce with a total of only six reports from Indiana and Illinois. The Broad-winged Hawk movement was unimpressive. The largest flights totalled 400 at Busch W.M.A., MO, Apr. 23 (JZ), 200 at Algona, IA, Apr. 24 (MK), 170 at Ames, IA, Apr. 23 (PM), and 160 in Lake, OH, Apr. 30 (LR, RH). An early Swainson's Hawk returned to Jefferson, MO, Mar. 18 (MP). The expected small numbers appeared in the w. states and n. Illinois. Most remarkable was a **Swainson's Hawk** near Murray May 5 (†MM), for Kentucky's 2nd record. Among the Red-tailed Hawks passing the Indiana Dunes, IN, Apr. 23 was a well-described "Harlan's" (†KB, BS). The last Rough-legged Hawk was detected in c. Ohio May 8. A total of eight Golden Eagle sightings was normal for recent years. Both Merlins and Peregrine Falcons were reported in expected numbers. Wintering Prairie Falcons were last recorded in Iowa Mar. 1 and Kentucky Mar. 27.

Numbers of rails were disappointing, no doubt a result of last year's drought. There were three reports of Yellow Rail's in Iowa, three in Illinois, and one in Missouri, representing above-average numbers of this secretive species. The only Black Rail was flushed while mowing an alfalfa field in Vermilion, IL, May 30 (†JSm). King Rails remained scarce, producing a total of nine records. Earliest migrants were a Virginia Rail at Binder L., MO, Mar. 19 (AC) and Sora at Louisville Mar. 25 (LRa, KC). Peak numbers of both species were 20–30. The unpredictable Purple Gallinule made two

appearances, with an unprecedented six in Montgomery, OH, Mar. 18 (RY, NM, ph.) and one in Cass, MO, Apr. 25–May 15 (JGa, E] et al.). American Coots peaked with 5000 in Kentucky, where small numbers remained through May 31 in Ohio and Warren. Along their traditional migration corridor, Sandhill Cranes were most conspicuous Mar. 10–19. Elsewhere, 11 reports were received from w. and n.e. Ohio, with a maximum of 25 near Dayton, while five or fewer cranes appeared at 9 Iowa locations. The last migrant was reported May 21 in Iowa.

**SHOREBIRDS** — Lesser Golden-Plovers returned to Missouri by Mar. 17, but sizable concentrations developed only in Illinois where 1000–3000+ appeared at several sites. A casual spring visitor to n.w. Missouri, a Snowy Plover was discovered at Big Lake S.P. Apr. 20 (DE). Accidental elsewhere in the Region, Indiana's 3rd **Snowy Plover** obligingly remained in Gibson Apr. 23–26 (†CM, JC, m.ob.). Two early Semipalmated Plovers returned to Pacific Junction, IA, Apr. 9 (DR). The largest flocks totalled 55–85 in Missouri, Kentucky, and s.w. Indiana. Piping Plovers appeared in their best numbers of this decade, beginning with an early arrival at Browning L., MO, Apr. 4 (L & RG). They were reported from 6 locations in Iowa, 3 in Illinois including four at Waukegan Apr. 30 (AST et al.), and 2 sites in Missouri, and one plover was at Huron, OH, May 13 (†ES et al.).

**Black-necked Stilts** made their 3rd appearance in the last 4 springs. Two stilts in Gibson May 7–14 (†CM, DCo, m.ob., ph.) furnished the first acceptable record for Indiana. In Ohio, a stilt at O.W.R., May 22–23, (†JHw, JSh, m.ob., ph.) was rumored to have been present elsewhere along w. Lake Erie



*Black-necked Stilt at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, Ohio, May 23, 1989. Third Ohio record. Photograph/Mary Gustafson.*

earlier in the month. The 11 sightings of Am. Avocets were normal. The largest flocks totalled 40 at L. Manawa, IA, Apr. 18 (BPa), 32 in Gibson, IN, Apr. 30 (DJ), and 31 in Fulton, IL, Apr. 30 (LA). Six avocets at Barren River L., Apr. 29 (WK et al.) were unusual in Kentucky. Early Solitary Sandpipers returned to 2 Illinois sites Apr. 1 while 66 at Riverton W.M.A., IA, Apr. 29 (SD, PH) represented a good spring total. A banner spring for Willets began with an early migrant at Little Wall L., IA, Apr. 3 (JD) and peaked with a noticeable flight Apr. 24–May 5. Flocks of 43 in Warren (BP et al.) and 40 at Barren River L. (JWi, AS et al.) Apr. 29 were unprecedented for Kentucky. Other large flocks included 45 in Gibson, IN, Apr. 16–29 (m.ob.), 45 at Woodburn, IN, May 5 (Haw), 31 at Waukegan, IL, Apr. 30 (KH), and 23–26 at 3 other locations in Illinois and Iowa.

Spotted Sandpipers peaked with 68 at Headlands S.P., OH, May 5 (VF). Scattered Upland Sandpiper reports peaked with 10 in n.e. Ohio. While single Whimbrels were observed at 2

L. Michigan locations, their most noteworthy reports were from inland sites. Casual migrants through Missouri, nine were discovered at Swan L. May 20 (MGo). A **Whimbrel** at Swan Lake W.M.A. (May 3 (BP, ph.) provided only the 3rd sighting for Kentucky. Hudsonian Godwits passed through Iowa and Missouri in respectable numbers, including flocks of 55 at Big Lake S.P., MO, May 7 (DE) and 41 at Riverton W.M.A., IA, May 19 (SD, RS). Five or fewer were also detected at 3 Illinois locations. The earliest Marbled Godwit returned to Iowa Apr. 7 and the season produced a total of 13 records from every state except Missouri. The flock of 25 in Clinton, IL, Apr. 22 (KM) was unprecedented, while four in Warren Apr. 29 (BP et al.) were casual visitors to Kentucky. The wintering Ruddy Turnstone at Lorain, OH, was last observed Mar. 12.

Expected small numbers of Western Sandpipers passed through Iowa, Missouri, and Illinois. Casual spring migrants elsewhere, three were identified in Warren, KY, Apr. 30 (BP, ph.) and one in Wayne, OH, May 16 (†DK et al.). Reports of 2000 White-rumped Sandpipers at Riverton W.M.A., IA, May 19 (SD, RS), 350+ at Big Lake S.P., MO, May 21 (MR), and 55+ in Warren, KY, May 25 (BP) were noteworthy for those states. The earliest Baird's Sandpiper returned to Riverton W.M.A., IA, Mar. 16 (SD, PH) and the largest flock in the w. states was of 205+ at Big Lake S.P., MO, Apr. 20 (DE). Pectoral Sandpipers were most plentiful in Illinois where 1000–3500+ gathered in Clinton Apr. 10–19 (KM). A Dunlin at Deer Creek Res., OH, Mar. 19 (DO) was decidedly early, while 43 in Mercer May 23 (fide FL) constituted a large flock for Kentucky. Small numbers of Stilt Sandpipers appeared in every state except Ohio, with maxima of 28 in Iowa and 13 in Warren, KY, May 20 (BP). A **Ruff** in Mercer Apr. 1. (†FL, WKe) established Kentucky's 3rd record. The only other Ruff detected was at Minnehaha W.M.A., IN, Apr. 29 (†MB).

Except for 102 Short-billed Dowitchers in Boone, KY, May 13 (LM), their flight was unremarkable. The earliest Long-billed Dowitcher returned to Spfld. Mar. 29 (DBo). An exceptional flight produced flocks of 74 at Spfld. May 6 (DBo), 50 at S.C.R. May 7 (DE), 27 at Riverton W.M.A., IA, Apr. 29 (SD, PH), and 22 in Warren, KY, Apr. 29 (BP et al.). The 200 Com. Snipe in Butler Apr. 7 (NK, JSt) were unusual in s.w. Ohio. A Wilson's Phalarope at Spring Valley W.M.A., OH, Apr. 15 (CMA) was early. They peaked with 100–200 in the w. states and five or fewer at scattered sites in the other states. Red-necked Phalaropes appeared at 6 locations with a maximum of four near Decatur, IL, May 15–16 (RSa et al.). One at Warren May 20–23 (BP, GB, ph.) established a first spring record for Kentucky.

**GULLS, TERNS** — Laughing Gulls returned to normal with 3 sightings along the Great Lakes plus three or fewer at a total of 6 inland locations in Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois. The earliest Franklin's Gull returned to L. Barkley, KY, Mar. 4 (DN). The species peaked at 75–130 in the w. states and 112 at Rice Lake Conservation Area, IL, May 14 (LA). Small numbers appeared at 17 other sites east of the Mississippi R. An accidental visitor away from the Great Lakes, an imm. Little Gull visited Gibson, IN, Apr. 22–29 (DJ, †m.ob.). Single Little Gulls at Waukegan, IL, May 22 (JN) and Huron, OH, May 27 (TL) were rare late spring migrants on the Great Lakes. Indiana's wintering Com. Black-headed Gull in Gibson was last observed Mar. 11. Unprecedented numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls congregated on the w. Kentucky lakes during April, including 5000–10,000 at the nocturnal roost on Kentucky L. Apr. 13 (BP). The wintering California Gull at Cleveland remained through Mar. 12, while the only spring migrant was studied at Smithville L., MO, May 7 (†MR et al.). Wintering Thayer's Gulls remained through Mar. 4–5 in w. Kentucky, Apr. 6 at Lorain, OH (VF), and May 6 at Cook, IL (JN). The imm. Iceland Gull at Michigan City Apr. 8 (†KB, CF) provided one of few records for Indiana. Small numbers also remained at Cleveland through April 1.



Lesser Black-backed Gulls appeared at 5 L. Erie locations through Apr. 29. Inland individuals were limited to the wintering bird in Gibson, IN, through Mar. 5 and an immature at Spfld. Apr. 8 (†DBo). A maximum of eight Glaucous Gulls visited several L. Erie locations through Apr. 1. Small numbers also remained in Iowa through Mar. 25 and at Michigan City, IN, Apr. 25 (SB). A Great-Black-backed Gull at L. Rockwell, OH, Mar. 13 (LR, ph.) was unexpected away from the Great Lakes. An apparent Great Black-backed x Herring Gull hybrid was carefully studied at Avon L., OH, Mar. 19 (†VF). Two Black-legged Kittiwakes were noted at Cleveland through



Black-legged Kittiwake in first-year plumage at Cleveland, Ohio, March 11, 1989. Photograph/Larry Rosche.

Mar. 14. Very unusual away from L. Erie during spring, a kittiwake was observed at Alton, MO-IL, Apr. 15 (†BRo et al.). The wintering Sabine's Gull at Cleveland was intermittently observed through Apr. 11. It then took up residence May 7-31 at Lorain, where it became Ohio's first summering Sabine's Gull.

Caspian Terns peaked with 280 at Clear L., IA, May 8 (JH, DB), a record high count for that state. Similar concentrations did not develop elsewhere. A **Sandwich Tern** was carefully described from Waukegan Apr. 26 (†LB), furnishing a first record for Illinois and the Region. Common Terns were most plentiful along L. Michigan where the largest flock totalled 790+ at Waukegan May 14 (EW). Only small numbers appeared in other locations. Forster's Terns returned to L. Erie by Apr. 2. Their numbers continue to increase; a flight of 1396 Forster's at Monroe Res., IN, May 13 (†LS, TT) easily represented the largest inland concentration ever recorded in this Region. Formerly rare along c. Lake Erie, 200 Forster's gathered at Lorain May 7 (J & DHo). Eight or fewer Least Terns were encountered along the lower Mississippi R. and in w. Iowa. Extralimital Leasts were restricted to 3 c. Illinois locations north to Fulton June 1-2 (LA). The Black Tern migration was most conspicuous in the w. states with 350 at Ventura Marsh, IA, May 28 (SD) and flocks of 100-200 at 3 other locations. East of the Mississippi R., the largest concentrations were of 130 at Rice Lake Conservation Area, IL, May 14 (LA) and 90+ in Warren, KY, May 26 (GB, fide BP).

**CUCKOOS TO FLYCATCHERS** — A Black-billed Cuckoo in Warren, IA, Apr. 23 (AJ) was very early, but was the forerunner of a mediocre cuckoo migration in most areas. The few Barn Owls reported were mostly near known nesting areas. Single Snowy Owls were last reported from Iowa and Illinois Mar. 20-23. The expected small numbers of Long-eared Owls were detected in the n. states and Missouri. Following last winter's flight, Short-eared Owls were widely encountered with 25 remaining in Ohio, KY, Apr. 4 (KC). Most departed by late April but migrants were noted through May

12 at Coralville Res., IA (JF TK). Casually detected in Kentucky, an injured N. Saw-whet Owl was discovered in Lyon Mar. 18 (MGU). Only scattered individuals were recorded in passage through the n. states. Chuck-will's-widows were reported only from established summering locations. Except for an early migrant in Newton, MO, Mar. 29 (LC), Whip-poor-wills elicited few comments. The earliest Chimney Swift returned to Murphysboro, IL, Apr. 1 (KM) but their numbers were generally low. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were scarce in many areas.

A **Lewis' Woodpecker** was studied near Gainesville, MO, May 6 (†BJ et al.), representing a 2nd state record. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker numbers improved, peaking with 12-19 in Illinois and Indiana. A late migrant lingered in Columbus, OH, through May 16 (MG). A small population of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers survives in s. Kentucky, as indicated by two at Cumberland Falls S.P. May 7 (JEL). The flycatcher migration drew mixed comments. Some appeared during the last week of April, but the bulk of their movement occurred after May 15. An Olive-sided Flycatcher at Decatur, IL, Apr. 28 (MD) was exceptionally early. Alder Flycatchers staged a large movement through c. Iowa May 25-27, producing 14 in Greene May 26 (SD) and 12 at Backbone S.P. May 27 (AF). Similar numbers were not apparent elsewhere. A Willow Flycatcher in Shelby, IL, Apr. 25 (KF) was very early, as were Great Crested Flycatchers in Grayson, KY, Apr. 3 (KC) and Hardin, IA, Apr. 21 (DC). Western Kingbirds were restricted to Iowa and Missouri. An E. Kingbird returned to Oldham, KY, Apr. 7 (DP). Extralimital Scissor-tailed Flycatchers appeared at Kettleson Hogsback W.M.A., IA, Apr. 25 (fide DH) and near Petersburg, IL, June 6 (†DS).

**SWALLOWS TO SHRIKES** — The first swallows arrived fairly early but their peak movements were on time. A Purple Martin in Mills Mar. 23 (DR, RR) was early for Iowa. Tree Swallows peaked with 5000 estimated in Union, IL, Apr. 8 (KM) and 3500 at L. Lemon, IN, Apr. 1 (CK). A N. Rough-winged Swallow in Pulaski, KY, Mar. 22 (JEL) was early, but a Bank Swallow at the same location and date was remarkable. Other noteworthy swallow concentrations were of 1260 Banks in Massac, IL, May 6 (DRo) and 590 Cliffs in Shelby, IL, May 6 (KF). An early Barn Swallow appeared in Taney, MO, Mar. 12 (JHy). Few Red-breasted Nuthatches passed through the Region this spring. Brown Creepers were plentiful in Ohio, as evidenced by 45 at Cleveland Apr. 30 (VF). Late migrants were noted in the n. states through May 14-21.

In Missouri, Bewick's Wrens are "doing well" in the southwest but are very locally distributed elsewhere. Scattered reports included at least five in St. Clair and two in Cedar during May (MR, TE) and individuals north to Howard (CR), Columbia (BG), and St. Louis. Very few Bewick's Wrens remain in the other states, where this spring's sightings consisted of Kentucky singles at Madisonville Apr. 26 (JHa) and Hart May 13 (MS), two territorial males in Adams, OH (BL), and Illinois reports from Monroe May 6 (RGo) and Makanda May 21 (DRo). Winter Wren numbers improved slightly, peaking with 22 along L. Erie. Late migrants tarried along both Great Lakes until May 17-19. Both Sedge Wrens and Marsh Wrens were relatively scarce. The kinglet migration was impressive. Concentrations of 50-81 Golden-crowned appeared in Illinois, Ohio, and Indiana, while migrants lingered through May 17 at Chicago (HR) and May 18 at Columbus, OH (MG) and Cleveland (fide VF). Ruby-crowned peaked with 180 at Cleveland Apr. 30 (VF) and tarried until May 27-29 in Illinois and Iowa.

Accidental visitors to Iowa, up to seven **Mountain Bluebirds** at Lake Anita S.P. Mar. 7-24 were thought to have overwintered (†RM, m.ob.). Another was discovered in Palo Alto, IA, Mar. 19 (†ET). The Catharus thrush migration was poor for the 4th consecutive spring. Concentrations of 30 Veeries along L. Erie, 35-55 Swainson's in Illinois and Indiana, and 25-45 Hermits along both Great Lakes were not typical,

as most observers reported only scattered individuals. Wintering Varied Thrushes remained through Mar. 27 at Westlake, OH, and Apr. 21 at Des Moines, IA. An early Gray Catbird at Iowa City, IA, Apr. 2 (JHl) might have overwintered. A typical American Pipit migration included a late migrant in Warren, KY, May 14 (BP). Cedar Waxwings exhibited a typical bimodal migration. March migrants were locally distributed. Their 2nd movement began in late April, such as 1500 wax-wings at Louisville Apr. 23 (DN), but was not evident along the Great Lakes until mid-May. At least eight N. Shrikes remained into March in the n. states, as late as Apr. 2 in Lake, IL (JN). Loggerhead Shrikes were slightly more evident at the n. edge of the Region, with one report from n.w. Indiana and a maximum of five at 5 c. and n. Illinois locations.

**VIREOS, WARBLERS** — Except for a few early arrivals and local flights, the migration of both groups was lackluster. Early vireos included a White-eyed in Taney, MO, Apr. 2 (PMa, JHy), a Solitary at Quail Hollow S.P., OH, Mar. 30 (BB), and a Warbling in Taney, MO, Apr. 12 (PMa). A singing Philadelphia Vireo in Randolph, IL, June 11 (DRo) was very late. An early Blue-winged Warbler returned to Grayson, KY, Mar. 27 (KC), while singles in Algona May 10 (MK) and Cherokee May 20 (DB) were unexpected in n.w. Iowa. Migrant Golden-winged Warblers were most plentiful in Illinois, where nine to 12 were recorded from 3 locations. Tennessees returned early, by Apr. 17 in Hopkins, KY (JHa), and Apr. 21–23 in Illinois and Iowa, but their numbers were generally low. Yellow Warblers were locally plentiful, producing concentrations of 115–166 in Indiana and Ohio. Early Magnolia and Cape May warblers were noted at Schell-Osage W.M.A., MO, Apr. 21 (JGa, EJ). Yellow-rumped Warblers appeared in good numbers, such as 500–1000+ in Indiana and Illinois. Other early warblers were a Blackburnian at Roaring River S.P., MO, Apr. 9 (L & RG) and Yellow-throated at Giant City S.P., IL, Mar. 29 (DRo). Pine Warblers were represented by early arrivals in Grayson, KY, Mar. 5 (KC) and Roanoke, IN, Mar. 16 (JM), a late migrant at Euclid, OH, May 28 (LR, VF), and fair numbers in between these dates.

The few n. sightings of Prairie Warblers included one at Yellow River S.F. May 30 (SD); it is a casual visitor to s.e. Iowa. Good numbers of Palm Warblers peaked with 106–150 along both Great Lakes. Both Bay-breasted and Blackpoll warblers appeared in most states Apr. 26–29. An impressive 47 Black-and-white Warblers were counted in Lake, IL, May 6 (JN et al.). Early Am. Redstarts returned to Missouri and Illinois by Apr. 19. It was a good year for Prothonotary Warblers, beginning with an early arrival at Killbuck Marsh W.M.A., OH, Apr. 9 (BGl), and including n.w. Iowa sightings in Dickinson and O'Brien where they are quite rare. Swainson's Warblers were detected only at traditional locations in Missouri, Kentucky, and s. Illinois. The earliest Louisiana Waterthrushes returned to Illinois and Missouri Mar. 25–26. *Oporornis* warblers were encountered in their expected small numbers, while Wilson's and Canada warblers were plentiful only along both Great Lakes.

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — The expected small numbers of Summer Tanagers overflowed their normal breeding range, appearing north to Mason City, IA, May 4–5 (CN, JW). Early Rose-breasted Grosbeaks included six in Grayson, KY, Apr. 4 (KC) and one at Dayton Apr. 17–19 (C & BBe). A strong movement produced maxima of 100 at Headlands S.P., OH, May 14 (LR) and 94 near L. Waveland, IN, May 13 (AB). A Black-headed Grosbeak at Spfld. Apr. 28 (tDBo) furnished one of very few acceptable spring records for this Region. An extralimital Blue Grosbeak appeared in Lucas, OH, May 36 (fMA). The 20+ counted in St. Clair and Cedar May 8 (MR, TE) were representative of their improved numbers in w. Missouri. An impressive 325 Indigo Buntings were counted in Calloway, KY, May 6.

As has been the pattern for the past few years, the sparrow migration was rather poor. Bachman's Sparrow reports consisted of one sighting in s.w. Missouri and two in Calloway, KY, May 6 (JEr), their last strongholds in this Region. An Am. Tree Sparrow in Ottawa, OH, May 1 (VF) was late. It was a good spring for Clay-colored Sparrows, with seven reports from Illinois plus singles at Beverly Shores, IN, May 26 (KB et al.), Tuscarawas, OH, May 1–3 (tL & SSc et al.), and Headlands Beach S.P., OH, May 14 (LR et al.) & 18 (tJ & DHo). Most noteworthy was Kentucky's 2nd **Clay-colored Sparrow** at Louisville May 17 (tBP, tBM). Savannah Sparrows peaked with 45 at Chicago, while Grasshopper Sparrows were noted in small numbers, except for 50+ residing on the extensive strip mines in Ohio, KY (KC et al.). Generally overlooked during migration, Henslow's Sparrows were detected at 6 locations in Illinois and single sites along the Great Lakes in Indiana and Ohio. Expected numbers of Le Conte's Sparrows passed through Iowa, Missouri, and Illinois. A better than average showing of Sharp-tailed Sparrows consisted of singles at 3 Great Lakes locations May 14–26 and inland at Clinton L., IL, May 15–21 (RC), Warren, KY, May 20 (BP et al.), and Snake Creek Marsh, IA, May 21–25 (RM et al.).

Fox Sparrows staged a good movement, peaking with 70+ at Chicago Mar. 27–Apr. 2 (JL, CMo) and 17–40+ at other locations. A late migrant tarried at Cleveland May 17 (J & DHo). Early Lincoln's Sparrows were one at W. Des Moines, IA, Mar. 26 (E & EA) and three near Pomona, IL, Apr. 8 (KM). White-throated Sparrows appeared in low numbers, except for 600 at Chicago Apr. 25 (JL, CMo). The only Harris' Sparrows to appear east of the Mississippi R. were singles at 4 Illinois sites May 4–13. Lapland Longspurs were plentiful only in Iowa, where 5000 congregated near Ames May 17 (SD) and 3000 in Sioux Mar. 19 (JV). Small numbers elsewhere included 25 late migrants near Willow Slough W.M.A., IN, May 13 (KB et al.). Smith's Longspurs were locally distributed in Iowa and Illinois, where the largest flocks totalled 300 near Cone Marsh, IA, Apr. 1–7 (JF, m.ob.) and 250 in Knox, IL, Apr. 6 (MBa, m.ob.). Snow Buntings lingered along both Great Lakes until Mar. 27–31.

Flocks of 35–100+ Bobolinks at 4 locations were noteworthy in Kentucky. Similar numbers appeared in other states. An early Yellow-headed Blackbird at Pokagon S.P., IN, Mar. 23 (FW) was followed by above-average numbers, such as 229 at S.C.R. May 7 (DE) and 22 at L. Calumet, IL, May 20 (WM). Extralimital singles were reported from Marais Temps Clair W.M.A., MO, Apr. 28 (m.ob.), Barberton, OH, May 3 (JWe), and Fulton, IL, May 13–14 (LA). The most noteworthy Brewer's Blackbird sightings were of up to 20+ in Warren, KY, Mar. 25–Apr. 10 (BP). Great-tailed Grackles may have been affected by the drought in Iowa and n. Missouri. The only reports this spring were of Iowa singles at Lamoni May 12 (JG) and Lakin Slough May 25 (SD).

Given the dearth of winter finches this season, two Pine Grosbeaks at Decorah, IA, Mar. 27–28 (tD & ARo) were unexpected. Only Purple Finches were widely encountered as scattered individuals and small flocks. House Finch numbers continue to improve in the w. states, with reports from 16 Iowa counties and at least 5 locations in Missouri west to St. Joseph and Springfield. Only two Com. Redpolls were reported during March. Pine Siskins were very scarce, with fewer than 10 reports from the n. states. Evening Grosbeaks were nonexistent, except for single reports from Kentucky and Illinois.

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## CENTRAL SOUTHERN REGION

Thomas A. Imhof



**T**his year April and May were rather rainy, and trans-Gulf migrants were often common on the coast. Major fallouts were on April 10–11, April 19–20, and April 29 to May 1. The migration was generally considered very good, certainly better than usual—but of course, good for the viewer, not the participant. On the Gulf Coast in fair weather in spring, migrant birds are nowhere to be seen, but in bad weather they are everywhere and in high plumage, and everyone sees an abundance of birds, and says that the migration was good!

Bob Duncan in Pensacola said the migration on Alabama and Florida coasts was “great. Quite a change from previous three years . . . enough frontal activity and rain to bring birds down.” March 22–23 had a heavy, early fallout with birds lingering through March 25. Some early records were made in this period (OF). Rain on April 5 produced no fallout, but on April 10, rain most of the day and a 25 mph northeast to north-northeast wind produced a major fallout that day and the next, with many birds

present for several days. A big thunderstorm the night of April 19–20 grounded more birds and gave Judy Toups the best thrush movement in a long time—100 at Ansley, Mississippi, plus vireos and warblers. And so, enough birds were at Fort Morgan for Bob Sargent and friends (MGS, MO, SO, TI) to band 700 birds of 54 species April 14–22. This included 100 White-eyed Vireos, 69 Hooded Warblers, 47 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, four Swainson’s Warblers, a Black-throated Blue Warbler, and a Black-whiskered Vireo. Long-distance overwater journeys are very stressful, as seen by the concave stomachs, depleted fat deposits, severe weight loss, and other evidence of exhaustion witnessed by banders. An estimated 40% of the 700 birds banded at Fort Morgan were in this condition (RRS). This was checked out on the 77 banded April 19–21 (TAI, GMI, JMI), of which 31 (or 40.3%) fell below the range of weights given by John Dunning, Jr. (Western Bird Banding Association Monograph No. 1, May 1984). All but one of many Wood Thrushes were in poor shape. Two

Yellow-billed Cuckoos weighed 39.6 and 41.6 grams (normal = 50.0–84.6). Of three Worm-eating Warblers (all < normal = 12.1–15.2), the lightest, 10.3 grams, died in the hand exhausted. None of the 47 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds was below the normal 2.4–4.8 grams.

Another front April 29 to May 1 was noted as far east as Cape San Blas, where 13 species of warblers and eight other migrants were seen on May 1 (FAP), and as far west as Cameron Parish, Louisiana, where 88 Bay-breasted Warblers were counted (KVR). On April 29 in Cameron, 804 birds were tallied, and on April 30, 694 (SWC, DLD). Inland, this stormy May produced several migrants that are not seen every year.

The Mississippi coast migration was reported by Judy Toups as “just right, a series of fronts that served to keep the birding from falling into any big slumps, and it was very satisfying right up through early May. Shorebirding was fair/good.”

Steve Cardiff and Donna Dittmann reported the migration in Louisiana “pretty average” with some observers calling it “dull” and “lacklustre,” but the evidence indicates a good one! Steve described fallouts on April 9, 22–23, and 29–30, plus May 7–8 and 19–20–21.

Inland the migration was reported good in the Tennessee Valley and around Birmingham with rainy, unsettled weather and many warblers in evidence. David Vogt reported that most observers in the Nashville area felt that this season was the “best for migration in several years. Warblers, thrushes, vireos, and songbirds in general were present in large numbers and for a good part of the period. Many winter residents . . . lingered unusually late into May.” Drought that had plagued many areas last year affected only the coast at first, but then all areas received moderate to substantial rainfall complete with flash-flood watches.

Bob Duncan, standing at Fort Morgan with Owen Fang on April 10 in the rain seeing the birds struggle against a 25 mph north-northeast wind, was thinking, “For those of us distressed about tropical deforestation and its effect on North American migrants, it was heartening to see so many Scarlet Tanagers and Orchard Orioles make it back again. Thousands of birds passed through that day and we were only witnessing a small part of a migration which took place on a broad front, for . . . Ft. Pickens had a major movement as well.”

**ABBREVIATIONS** — A.O.S. = Alabama Ornithological Society; C.F.H. = Centerton Fish Hatchery, Benton, AR; L.O.S. = Louisiana Ornithological Society; P.R.M. = Pascagoula River Marsh; \* = specimen to L.S.U. Museum of Natural Sciences; B.B.S. = Breeding Bird Survey. Place names in *italics* are parishes (in Louisiana) or counties.

**LOONS TO IBISES** — Two Red-throated Loons Mar. 8 at Muscle Shoals, AL (ALM, ADM), furnished the 4th record in the Tennessee Valley since 1980. One in basic plumage was just n. of Petit Bois I., MS, Mar. 25 (CCC, MF, AD). This year, rainy periods brought many loons and grebes to some deep inland lakes, even in late May: Com. Loons peaked at 14 on Porter L., Jefferson, Mar. 25 (TAI, MJO), and on June 6 at Guntersville, AL, three in basic plumage were recorded (TAI, JCR). Pied-billed Grebes fed three young near Luna, Chicot, AR, May 16 (DRS), and eight were in P.R.M. May 29 (MFH). Twenty Horned Grebes were on L. Ouachita, Garland, AR, Mar. 17 (H & MP). On Porter L., Eared Grebes were seen 5 times Feb. 21–Mar. 25, with a maximum of three on Mar. 16 (TAI, m.o.b.); one was on Robco L., Memphis, Mar. 25 (BBC, LCC); four were on Blakely I., Mobile, Apr. 17 (GDJ, DGJ);

eight were seen Apr. 25 and five May 2 at Seaman Rd Lagoons, Jackson, MS (JAT, PL, SF).

A **Sooty Shearwater**, seen Mar. 4 flying out of Mobile Bay at Fort Morgan (RAD, OEF), might have been the same bird seen Mar. 22 flying along the beach at Long Beach Harbor, MS (JRP, GM, CC, MB), or the unidentified shearwater seen at Fort Pickens Mar. 5 (RAD, LD), but the one seen at Rutherford Beach, Cameron, Apr. 23 (SWC) was probably an Audubon's. Off Pensacola >50 mi two Greater Shearwaters were seen May 27 (KW) and 30 Wilson's Storm-Petrels May 27 & 28 (KW). Another Wilson's Storm-Petrel was noted 12–15 mi s.e. of South Pass, LA, May 29 (DPM, BMM, RDP, DBM). On Mar. 20–24, 150 adult and immature N. Gannets were seen close to the mainland of Harrison and Hancock, MS (JT, m.o.b.). In Cameron, LA, the maximum seen was 14 on Mar. 13 on Holly Beach (RJB). In good numbers were 200 Brown Pelicans Mar. 12 at Fort Walton Beach (DW) and 495 Am White Pelicans in Lonoke, AR, Apr. 6 (JRW). The latter species was widespread, but in flocks only on the coast and in Arkansas. Double-crested Cormorants occurred in bigger flocks than usual, and Olivaceous Cormorants were found farther inland in Calcasieu, LA, Apr. 30 (KVR, m.o.b.) and Vermilion, LA, May 29 (SWC).

Bitterns are usually noteworthy because they are hard to see: Americans were reported from P.R.M. on Mar. 30 (CC, GM); Memphis and Lake, TN, four birds Apr. 16–May 1 (VBR, JRW, WGC); and an early one at C.F.H. Mar. 25 (WF, *fide* MML). Nine Least Bitterns were reported Apr. 21–May 11 in Arkansas (B & PL), Mississippi (MFH, TSc), and Tennessee (WGS). Early for n.w. Arkansas were Great Egret Mar. 26 (MML) and Snowy Egret Apr. 1 (JWa, *fide* MML). These species joined Little Blue Heron and Cattle Egret to establish in nearby Washington their first known Arkansas Ozarks nesting. Little Blues in the colony tallied at 591 blue adults and 42 patchy white second-year birds, the highest number of the species for the Arkansas Ozarks (JCN). At least 7 Mississippi and Louisiana reports of Glossy Ibises Mar. 23–Apr. 29 mentioned the brown eye (CC, RJB, L.O.S., m.ob.). Near Holmwood, Calcasieu, May 21, 33 Roseate Spoonbills were counted (DLD, SWC, m.ob.).

**WATERFOWL** — Six Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks on L. Millwood Apr. 30–May 12 were the first in spring and 4th for the lake and Arkansas (CMI, m.ob.). Seven reports from Vermilion and Cameron included 70± at Lacassine N.W.R. Apr. 28 (DBC, L.O.S.). One tame bird at Arkabutla L., Tate, MS, May 25 (TS, MH) was judged an escape. Fulvous Whistling-Ducks have been occurring regularly on Blakely I., Mobile (GDJ, m.ob.); but in Kiln, Hancock, MS, one on May 2 furnished only the 4th coastal record (JT, GM, CC, JRP); one at Lakeland Farm, Perry, AL, Mar. 4–18 (LM, CWS, m.ob.) was only the 4th >200 miles inland; and two at Venice Apr. 9 provided only the 3rd record for s.e. Louisiana (NN, m.ob.). Yet an Apr. 8 census in Lafayette, Vermilion, Acadia, and Jeff Davis tallied 3260 birds (KVR, m.ob.). Highest among 4 reports of Greater White-fronted Geese e. of the Mississippi this year was 219 in Panola, MS, Mar. 12 (G & SK). Snow Geese peaked at 4000 near Shreveport Mar. 6 (CL, JMB). A Ross' Goose at Eufaula N.W.R., AL, Feb. 17–Apr. 2 (GA, HK, GDJ, m.ob.) was thoroughly identified and photographed; two near Arkadelphia, AR, Mar. 11 were new locally (CMI, DHa, WGR); and 11 were counted on the ground near Shreveport Mar. 4 (CL, JMB). Many reports of Canada Geese indicate local breeding of resident flocks throughout.

Two drake Cinnamon Teal were in Arkadelphia Mar. 11–22 (DHa, m.ob.), and reports of at least three drakes were received from Madison and Cameron during April (HM, RB, PL, m.ob.). A late Redhead was in Columbus, MS, May 4 (TS). The last of the Greater Scaup that wintered on L. Atalanta, Benton, AR, were two males Mar. 10 and one Mar. 18 (MML). But on Mar. 20, some 12,000 Lesser (mostly) Scaup lingered coastally in Harrison, MS (JAT, CD, LJ), and 475—a respectable number inland—were in Octibbeha Mar. 21 (TS). An

Oldsquaw was at Holly Beach Apr 30 (RS, MW) Five Black Scoters were at Ft. Pickens, FL, Mar. 19 (RAD); one was at Waveland, MS, Mar. 23 (JT); and five were at Holly Beach Apr 29-30 (DM, m.ob.). Five Surfs were at Bellefontaine Beach Mar. 24 (TS), and in Cameron they built up to a peak of 10 on Apr. 30 (KVR, m.ob.). A White-winged Scoter, present all winter, remained on Octibbeha County L. until Mar. 5 (TS), and another remained on Porter L. Feb. 2-Mar. 10 (LNT, TAI). Bufflehead numbers reached 100 on Mar. 5 in Octibbeha (TS). Two broods totalling nine Hooded Mergansers were at Noxubee N.W.R. Apr. 20 (TS); and a brood of three young was seen May 16 near Luna, Chicot, AR (DRS). Late ♀ Com. Mergansers were reported from Ocean Springs, MS, Mar. 4-8 (CC, JRP, SM) and five from Waterloo, AL, Mar. 12 (GDJ).

**HAWKS** — Five Am. Swallow-tailed Kites were reported from Escambia and Okaloosa, FL (no dates or observers—CLK); eight were noted Mar. 29 in Hancock, MS (CC, JRP, SM); and one was seen with a Mississippi and a Black-shouldered on May 2 at Pearlinton (JAT, JRP, CC, GM). Other Mississippi Kites were one on a nest in Jackson Apr. 25 (CC, JRP), and at Vicksburg 29 counted on 8 of 12 days Apr. 8-May 5 (JTB). Other Black-shouldered Kites were one to two Mar. 1-Apr. 5 in Hancock and one near Egan, Acadia, May 1 (KR). This last kite is proving to occur in winter, with 4 of Alabama's last 5 records being for the period Nov. 5-Jan. 15. A pair of Bald Eagles in Lauderdale, AL, in attendance from Feb. 12, abandoned 2 eggs about May 1 (P & DK, GNP, JIP, JoP); eggs are to be analysed (JMy). A very late N. Harrier was at Mud L., DeSoto, MS, May 13 (JW).

A total of 2274 Broad-winged Hawks was counted Mar. 19-Apr. 8 in E. Baton Rouge (PMK, CF). A maximum of 23 Swainson's Hawks was seen at Gum Cove, Calcasieu (KR); one was at Ben Lomond, Sevier, AR, Apr. 6 (CMI); and another, well studied and described, was late at the opposite end of the Region at Cape San Blas, FL, May 1 (FAP). A weekly road count of Red-tailed Hawks on I-20 in n.e. Louisiana averaged 20.3 birds/trip Jan. 19-Mar. 7, and 4.8/trip Mar. 14-Apr. 11, total 186; the count showed a drop the 2nd week in March, as in 1988 (JTB). In E. Baton Rouge a record 78 for the season (nine on Mar. 30) were tallied (PMK, CF, JK). A Golden Eagle was at Cross Creeks N.W.R., TN, Mar. 1 (TJW). Merlins were reported 13 times, 10 from the coast. Peregrine Falcons were seen Apr. 20 on Dauphin I. (VBF), Apr. 22 on Blakely I. (GDJ, m.ob.), Apr. 28-29 at Holly Beach, Cameron (L.O.S.), May 1 at Fort Morgan (ALM, ADM), May 2 at Kiln, MS (GM, m.ob.), and inland at Sardis L., MS, May 1 (GK, VT) and Magazine Mt., Logan, AR, May 20 (TS).

**CRANES TO SHOREBIRDS** — Five reports of Sandhill Cranes from Tennessee included 47-48 on Mar. 10-12 in Macedonia, Putnam (RWS) and a late one Apr. 24 in Germantown, Shelby (MG). A shorebird census in 34 party-hours Apr. 8 in Jeff. Davis, Acadia, and Vermilion, LA (KVR, m.ob.) yielded 164,524 birds of 24 species! A high of 10 Piping Plovers was counted Apr. 4 in Cameron (RJB). The best count of Lesser Golden-Plovers was of 1656 Apr. 8 in the ricefields, and the latest bird May 28 in Cameron (KVR). American Oystercatchers are rare between Mobile and Appalachicola Bays, so one Apr. 24-27 in downtown Pensacola (RAD) was notable. Also notable was a pair at P.R.M., in the first Mississippi nesting attempt, May 13 (TS), and one on E. Jetty, Cameron, Apr. 23 (DLD). A Black-necked Stilt was at Holiday Isle, Okaloosa, FL, Mar. 20 (BKe), and three were at Pensacola Beach Apr. 4-18 (RAD). An Am. Avocet was at L. Hamilton, Garland, AR, May 20 (W & PL).

Lesser Yellowlegs hit a maximum of 364 Apr. 3 in Quitman, MS (GK). A Solitary Sandpiper at Baton Rouge Mar. 8 (KR) was early, and a Spotted at L. Yalobousha, MS, Mar. 3 was even earlier (GK). Latest on the coast were four Upland Sandpipers at Bayou Casotte Airport, Jackson, MS, May 2 (JT, GM, CC, JRP). The biggest flock of Hudsonian Godwits for Arkansas was of 35 at C.F.H. May 9 (JCN), and seven at L.

Millwood May 10-11 were the first locally (CMI). Six Marbled Godwits were a good number for Apr. 19 at Gulf Shores, AL (GDJ, DGJ). At Blakely I. on Apr. 22, 1700 W. Sandpipers were tallied (GDJ, A.O.S.). Baird's Sandpiper reports were at C.F.H. on Apr. 8 & 30 and May 27 (MMI); Apr. 10 at Bay St. Louis, MS (JT, m.ob.); and May 13-15 in Lawrence, TN (DJS). An early Pectoral Sandpiper was in Lauderdale, AL, Mar. 4 (GNP), and a peak of 1241 was reached on Apr. 8 in Louisiana rice country (KVR, m.ob.). Two **Purple Sandpipers** remained in Gulfport, MS, from Dec. 2, 1988, until May 2 (JT, m.ob.); one at Cameron Jetties seen off and on since Dec. 17, 1988, was last seen there on Apr. 2 (JN, TM). Peak Stilt Sandpiper count in the ricefields was of 1600 Apr. 29 (KVR, m.ob.). Two Buff-breasted Sandpipers in Jackson, MS, Mar. 23 were the earliest for the coast (CC, GM, SMi). In ricefield counts, Long-billed Dowitchers reached a high of 6295 on Apr. 8, and dowitchers (mostly Short-billed) peaked at 5800+ on Apr. 29 (KVR, m.ob.). A late Com. Snipe was at Muscle Shoals May 13 (GDJ). Wilson's Phalaropes were reported on the coast through May 2 at P.R.M. (CD, JT) and May 7 at Muscle Shoals (GDJ).

**JAEGERS TO HUMMINGBIRDS** — On Apr. 23 off Holly Beach, two Pomarine Jaegers were seen and well described (PL, CM, m.ob.) and at Rutherford Beach six jaegers were seen too far away to identify (SWC, DOD). But on May 28 a Pomarine Jaeger was at Rutherford Beach (\*DLD, SWC). Laughing Gulls are now found more often inland, usually in Louisiana within 100 miles of the Gulf, this year 764 birds (KVR); in the same area were 19 Franklin's Gulls, and one was at Sardis Dam, MS, Mar. 7 (GK). Our friend "Ole one-foot" was last seen May 16 in downtown Pensacola by RAD, who decided to compile a brief history. Probably a female, she lost her foot to fishing line when first seen as an adult in 1977, is now at least 15 years old! She has been called a Lesser Black-backed Gull, a hybrid Lesser Black-backed x Herring Gull, and a Western Gull; no amount of photography or argument seems to solve the problem. She has been seen mostly in downtown Pensacola, annually between Apr. 10 and Dec. 21, once on Feb. 5, and for the last few years in company of an ad. Herring Gull.

An imm. Lesser Black-backed Gull, rare in spring, was noted in Cameron (\*SWC, DLD) May 20. Immature Great Black-backed Gulls were seen at E. Jetty, Cameron, Apr. 28 (DM, m.ob.); Little Dauphin I. May 2 (JHo); and Rutherford Beach, Cameron, May 8. In Vermilion ricefields, Gull-billed Terns were noted on 6 dates Feb. 26-Apr. 8 with a maximum of 28 on Mar. 11; on L. Seminole, FL-GA, on May 21 two possibly breeding were seen (TI, M & MG). On May 29 about 15-20 mi. s. of S. Pass, off Plaquemines, LA, six to 10 Bridled Terns and one Sooty were seen (DM, m.ob.). A Least Tern May 22 and three more May 30 at Sardis Dam established the 3rd consecutive year there after none the prior 23 (WMD, GK).

The Inca Dove was still reported from the vicinity of Lake Charles, LA, Apr. 23 and later (RSB, KVR). Two Groove-billed Anis were seen at Reserve Mar. 24 (RS) and one was at Ft. Pickens Apr. 4 (CT, RR). Early Black-billed Cuckoos were at Biloxi Apr. 16 (P & LD, JT) and 400 mi n. in Lauderdale, AL, Apr. 24 (PK). One was present in Oxford, MS, May 15-20 (WMD). Two Barn Owl nests near Stuttgart, AR, had four 6-week-old chicks (banded) Mar. 17 and three 6-week-olds Mar. 24, and showed a high proportion of bird prey (KY, SY, TM). Two Burrowing Owls were found on Grand Isle Apr. 2 (BMM, RDP, GC). Short-eared Owls were noted in Mississippi in Quitman Mar. 12 (G & SK) and Octibbeha Mar. 18 (TS). A N. Saw-whet Owl was found on Mud I., Memphis, Mar. 2, taken to the zoo, treated, and released (KMa).

The last of two ad. **Buff-bellied Hummingbirds** remained at a Bay St. Louis, MS, feeder from Nov. 1988 to Apr. 12 (LS) after being banded (RRS); an adult remained at a New Orleans feeder Oct. 20 to about Mar. 15 (DM). Newly arriving Ruby-throateds were noted in E. Baton Rouge Mar. 5 (DF, CF) & 15 (PMK). A ♀ Black-chinned was in E. Baton Rouge Nov. 26-

Mar 17 (PMK, BW) Bob Sargent reported banding 15 wintering Rufous Hummingbirds in Florida and Mississippi and five in Alabama; three more were reported wintering in Orleans and E. Baton Rouge (DM, KVR, PMK, BW). A ♂ **Anna's Hummingbird**, present through the winter, molted into ad. plumage for positive identification Mar. 1-9 in E. Baton Rouge, LA (PMK, RBH, ph, DBC).

**FLYCATHERS TO THRUSHES**—A Least Flycatcher discovered at Cameron Mar. 1 (\*SWC) had probably wintered locally. A late Ash-throated Flycatcher was on Dauphin I. Apr. 22 (RRS, MGS, TI). A **Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher** was seen and photographed well May 11 in Holleman Sanctuary, Johnson's Bayou, Cameron, LA (DPa, GB, CAB). Western Kingbirds were reported from Arkadelphia, AR, Apr. 25 (DHa) and Dauphin I. May 2 (JHo). Two Scissor-tailed Flycatchers seen near Florence in May (*fide* GNP) and on June 12-13 (DP) suggested Alabama breeding, not as yet proven, although several times hinted.

An unprecedented Mar. 31 Bank Swallow at L. Washington, the earliest ever for Arkansas, was supported not only by excellent details (MML) but by three more early birds at Noxubee N.W.R. on Apr. 1 (MFH, TS). A Cliff Swallow at C.F.H. Mar. 18 was also the earliest ever for Arkansas (MML). This swallow is expanding its nesting range, especially in the Tennessee Valley of Alabama, and it now also nests in 3 coastal Mississippi locations (*fide* JT). A **Cave Swallow** at Fort Morgan Apr. 20 (GF, PB) made the 3rd year in Alabama since 1984, all in April. Two Barn Swallows Feb. 26 in Iberville (KVR, DS) were earliest ever for Louisiana.

The Brown Creeper continued to occupy its breeding area in w. Tennessee, with one at Wolf R., Fayette, Apr. 25, and another at Reelfoot L. May 26 (BF). Bewick's Wrens were found this spring in 3 places in Rutherford and Williamson, TN (DFV, ALH, TJW) with a fledgling May 21 in Nolensville (DFV). Unusual in spring for n. Mississippi, a Sedge Wren was near Oxford May 3 and a Marsh Wren was below Grenada Dam May 5 (WMD). After exceptional numbers this winter and even occurring in hardwoods, Golden-crowned Kinglets seemed to disappear early; nevertheless, three were still found in Lowndes, MS, Apr. 9 (TS). Ruby-crowned Kinglets followed suit with late birds near Oxford, MS, one May 10 and two May 16 (G & SK), and at Craggie Hope, Cheatham, TN, May 13 (DFV). The thrush flush through Ansley, MS, Apr. 20 produced 70 Veeries, 20 Swainson's, and 40 Woods, with 15 Gray-cheekeds at Gulfport May 5 (JT, m.ob.).

**VIREOS, WARBLERS**—The 236 White-eyed Vireos banded on E. Ship I., MS (FM, AK, TSi) compared with 92 there the previous year (time period?) and 100 Apr. 14-22 at Fort Morgan (RRS, TAl). Solitary Vireo summer records at Cheaha Mt. and Clay, Jefferson, AL, in 1988 and 1989 lend support to its probable breeding in Alabama, and probably also in Arkansas, where birds were seen on May 20 in Washington at Gregory Park and L. Washington (MML). An early Solitary was in Rutherford, TN, Mar. 27 (TJW), and a late one was in Cameron on May 11 (DP, CB, ph.). The Yellow-throated Vireo was definitely more common this year with an early bird Mar. 19 in Lowndes, MS (TS), a peak of 20 on Apr. 20 in Ansley (JT), and singing birds widespread. An early Philadelphia Vireo was on Dauphin I. Apr. 6 (MFF); and one at Vicksburg May 3 (JTB) was in an area and time when migrants are very scarce. Peak Philadelphia's in Cameron were the 15 and 25 listed on Apr. 29 & 30 (SWC, DLD, m.ob.). On Apr. 20 a peak of 150 Red-eyed Vireos was tallied at Ansley (JT, m.ob.). A Black-whiskered Vireo carefully banded, measured, and weighed Apr. 18 at Fort Morgan (RRS, MGS) resembled the Greater Antillean nominate race, not the more likely Floridian *barbatulus* (RAD, TAl). Another **Black-whiskered Vireo** banded Apr. 22 on E. Ship I. (FM, AK, TSi) furnished the 5th record for Mississippi; and another was on Grand Isle, LA, Apr. 8 (BMM, CS, A & GS).

Because of the weather, many warblers were recorded this

spring earliest or latest ever or in largest numbers. A Blue-winged Warbler was seen Mar. 24 at Bellefontaine Beach, MS (TS), and 12 were counted Apr. 10 at Ansley (JT, m.ob.). A ♂ "Lawrence's" Warbler was in Cameron, LA, Apr. 22 (GNP, DP), and a "Brewster's" was there Apr. 29 (DLD). A Golden-winged Warbler was banded on E. Ship I. Apr. 9 (FM, AK, TSi); and in Washington, AR, birds were seen Apr. 29 and May 7 & 14 (JWa, MML, Tulsa Audubon Society). A Tennessee Warbler was on Dauphin I. Mar. 23 (THo), and one was in Washington, AR, May 25 (MML). An Orange-crowned Warbler in Washington, AR, was also late May 14 (MML). Nashville Warblers were at Hot Springs, AR, Apr. 2 (B & PL); at Montrose, Baldwin, Apr. 9 (VF); and in Washington, AR, May 16 (MML). An early Chestnut-sided Warbler was netted on E. Ship I. Apr. 9 (FM) and a late one seen in E. Jetty Woods May 28 (KVR, RTB). Cape May Warblers were banded at Fort Morgan Apr. 16 and E. Ship I. Apr. 20 (RRS, FM, m.ob.), and one was at Fayetteville, AR, May 11.

Black-throated Blue Warblers were banded at Fort Morgan Apr. 16 and E. Ship I. Apr. 30 (RRS, FM, m.ob.), and were noted in Louisiana Mar. 31 in Ft. Jackson Woods (DM, RJ) and May 21 & 28 in Cameron (DLD, SWC, RTB). A Cerulean Warbler was at Vicksburg May 1 (JTB). American Redstart seems to be dropping alarmingly; on the Plattenberg B.B.S., W. Feliciana, May 27, only one bird was noted vs. 13 last year (PMK, MB). On Mar. 26 a Prothonotary Warbler was at Noxubee N.W.R. (MFH, RD, DJ). A pair of Worm-eating Warblers was seen May 27 on the Plattenberg B.B.S., feeding recently-fledged young (PMK, MB). Early Swainson's Warblers were in Birmingham Apr. 3—still present June 9—and in Benton, AR, Apr. 26 (JWa). The only Connecticut Warbler was May 19 at Macedonia, Putnam, TN (RWS). The earliest of 12 Mourning Warblers was Apr. 19 at Memphis (VR), the latest May 19 at Nashville (TJW). Wilson's Warbler was noted about 10 times, as a departing winter bird in Louisiana and as a migrant in Mississippi, between Mar. 4 in Calcasieu (RJB) and May 16 at Sardis N.W.R. (WMD).

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES**—A singing ad. ♂ Western Tanager was seen and described well from Smith L., Cullman, AL, Apr. 30 (B & AB); of 15 records for the state, this was the 3rd inland in spring. One Black-headed Grosbeak was at Vicksburg Feb. 24-Apr. 25 (HMo, m.ob.), and two were at Gum Springs, Clark, AR, Mar. 5-14 (LB, WG, m.ob.). A ♂ Painted Bunting was in Lowndes, MS, Apr. 30 (MFH, TS). Ten Bachman's Sparrows were singing in Bradley, Scott, and Ashley, AR, as early as Mar. 14 (WMS, RSt, JN, MV), and in Mississippi at Noxubee N.W.R. and at Osborn, Oktibbeha, in a new and unusual habitat: "black belt prairie land dominated by e. red cedar with a scattering of pines rather than typical pine woods" (TS, MH). In Arkansas, seven Rufous-crowned Sparrows were reported from Mt. Magazine and Mt. Nebo with three territorial males from a new territory near Mt. Nebo, Mar. 11 through May 18 (WMS, MV, TS). A fledgling was observed on Mt. Nebo May 6 (WMS, JN). Five Sharp-tailed Sparrows remained very late at Cameron until May 20 (DLD, SWC). Two Harris' Sparrows were seen s. of Arkadelphia Mar. 6 (H & MP). In Memphis one to eight Smith's Longspurs were seen Mar. 2-Apr. 16 (JRW, EJR).

The maximum among 5 reports of Yellow-headed Blackbirds from Arkansas and Louisiana was of 14 Apr. 30 at Gum Cove, Calcasieu (KVR, m.ob.). Also seen Apr. 30 was a very late Rusty Blackbird at Robco L., Shelby, TN (BBC, LCC). Bronzed Cowbirds were seen often in Hancock, MS, and on May 13 a pair was seen near Lakeshore in courtship (TS). The **Shiny Cowbird** has given this Region a double whammy! On rainy May 1 near Cape San Blas, FL, a male was seen and carefully identified feeding near Brown-heads on roadside lawn (FAP). On May 20 & 21 at Port Fourchon, LA, another male, first for that state, was found alone (CS, PW, CK, m.ob.), another was found June 4 & 6 in Cameron (SWC). A bird reported from Cameron Apr. 29 as an imm. ♂ **Hooded Oriole**



(DM, ph BMM RDP m ob ) would provide the 2nd Louisiana and Regional record if accepted by the state records committee.

House Finches have gotten as far south as Pensacola, where one was singing from a palm May 22 (RAD); Mobile, where 10–12 have been present 3 years (AD); and Jonesboro, AR, where one was singing on the A.S.U. campus Apr. 5 (NL). Pine Siskins were rare and local with 20± in March at a Clay, AL, feeder (RRS, MGS) and one in Malvern Apr. 6–9 (H & MP). South of Crossett, Ashley, AR, 25 Red Crossbills were in 5 groups on Apr. 22, mostly juveniles following adults and begging (WMS, MV). The only Evening Grosbeak reported was one May 12 at Radnor L., Davidson, TN (ATT).

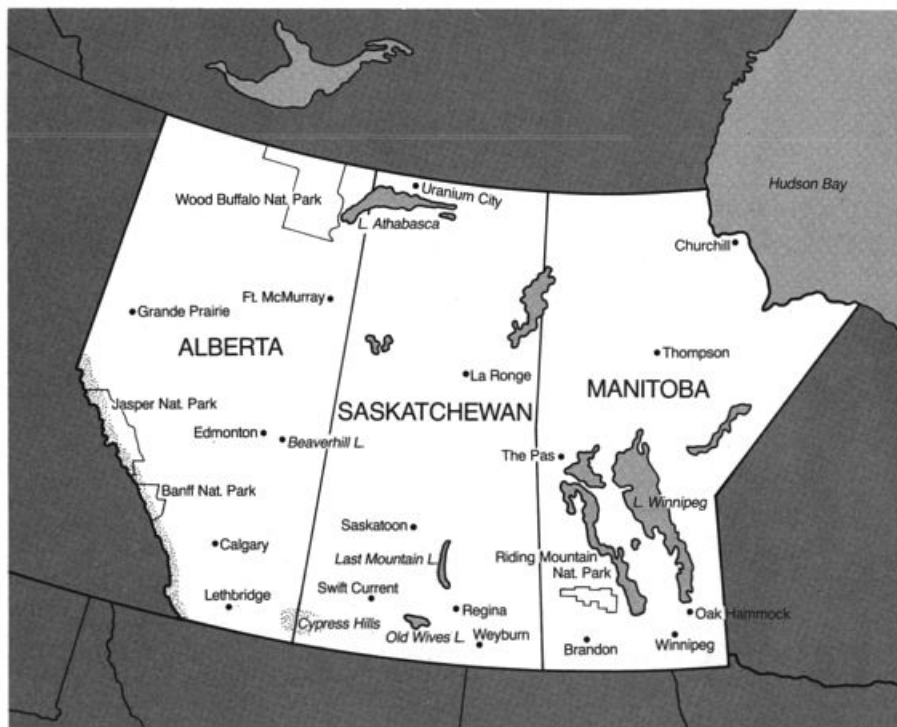
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## PRAIRIE PROVINCES REGION

**Bernie Gollop**



**M**arch temperatures were 2 to 4°C below normal, and the southern half of the Region received only 50–75% of usual precipitation. For the most part, April temperatures ranged from average to 2°C above average, but most of the area experienced 25–75% normal precipitation. During May, temperatures in southern Alberta and

southern Saskatchewan were about normal, but they were 2°C above in southern Manitoba. Precipitation was above normal for most of the southern part of the Region, up to 200% in south-central Saskatchewan. Based on aerial surveys of the same area, wetlands were down 54% (compared to 1988) in Alberta, down 19% in Saskatchewan.

and up 31% in Manitoba (U S F W S , C.W S )

Migration was one to two weeks late and there were no major movements of passerines. The most prominent wave was in Regina May 12, involving the arrival or peak numbers of 17 species.

**LOONS TO WATERFOWL**—Southern Manitoba recorded its 3rd spring record of Red-throated Loon with two on Natalie L. near Seven Sisters Falls (RT, DF), and also its largest concentration ever of Com. Loons (at least 180) on the nearby Winnipeg R. May 6 (PT). Horned Grebes numbered 1400 and Red-necked Grebes 80 on the same lake May 3 (PT). On Little Manitou L., Watrous, SK, Burke Korol found 500+ Eared and 1000+ Western grebes May 6. Clark's Grebe was reported only from Wascana L., Regina, where there were two May 3, one of which may have been mated with a W. Grebe; only one was seen May 29 (RKr, TH, FB).

Great Egrets invaded s. Manitoba with 27± birds reported, 3 to 4 times the usual numbers; included was a flock of four migrating Apr. 15 (GH, Calvin Cuthbert, RKO). The only other Great Egret was in residential Moose Jaw May 1–8 (LK). Southern Manitoba's 10th and 11th Snowy Egrets for this decade were found at St. Adolphe and Oak Hammock Marsh May 4 & 20, respectively (Wayne Capri, GH, RT). There was a single at Buffalo Pound L., SK, May 23, and two at Calgary May 21 (SW, Catherine Letkemann, Richard Clarke, m.ob.). The first confirmed identification of **Glossy Ibis** for Manitoba was made May 24–26 at Oak Hammock Marsh (Martin Siepmann, RT, Gord Griefel).

Two Trumpeter Swans were beyond normal range Apr. 29 n of Regina (FB). In the Pierson, MB, area, Greater White-fronted Geese migrated through in much larger numbers than usual—8000–10,000 compared to 2000± (Ralph Wang). There were an estimated 25,000 Snow Geese near Tregarva, SK, Apr. 18 (FB). There was an apparently reliable report of a flock of 30± **Brant** flying NW over Saskatoon May 8; previously there had been fewer than 11 records of single birds and one of eight (John Bond). There was a significant increase in Canada Geese in the s. half of the Region, but a small decrease was recorded in Manitoba. For our 11 most numerous species of ducks surveyed south of 54° latitude, a significant increase compared to last year was recorded for N. Pintail; decreases for Green-winged Teal, Am. Wigeon, Redhead, and Lesser Scaup; and little change in Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, N. Shoveler, Gadwall, Canvasback, and Ruddy Duck (U.S.F.W.S., C.W.S.).

#### S.A.

On Apr. 15, Manitoba's largest raptor migration ever was documented. More than 3500 birds flew NW along the Pembina River Valley, s.w. of Morden. Included were: 109 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 46 Cooper's Hawks, 3000± Red-tailed Hawks, and six Golden Eagles (AS, DF, m.ob.). Migrating in the same area Apr. 2 were 73 Bald Eagles (AS, GG). Reports indicate this may be a regular occurrence in this valley.

**RAPTORS TO CRANES**—A concentration of 20 Rough-legged Hawks with Red-tails was found near Regina Apr. 15 (John Nelson). An estimated 18 pairs of Merlins were nesting in Regina (Paul James).

Ruffed Grouse were at their highest numbers in years in s. Manitoba (RKO, m.ob.)—as were Wild Turkeys in the Pembina River Valley, with 42 reported Apr. 8 & 9 (A & DS, Doug Barry). In Saskatchewan, Ruffed Grouse populations were about the same as in 1988, but Gray Partridge, Ring-necked Pheasant, and Sharp-tailed Grouse were down 40–50% from last year, which had been the highest in recent years for the

partridge (Saskatchewan Wildlife Branch). A possible Black Rail was flushed underfoot at Oak Hammock Marsh May 22, small size and black wings were noted (Irvine Gardner). The species has not been reported previously from Manitoba nor confirmed in Canada. American Coots were about half as common as last year in the s. half of the Prairie Provinces (U.S.F.W.S., C.W.S.). At Good Spirit L. they peaked at 2000 birds May 7 (W & JA). Nineteen confirmed groups totalling 46 Whooping Cranes (the same number as last year) were reported; all were in Saskatchewan. Five birds in 2 groups remained near Eyebrow and Cudworth to the end of the period (Brian Johns).

**SHOREBIRDS TO OWLS**—Eight **Black-necked Stilts** were found near Calgary Apr. 23; one pair stayed to breed, and produce two young May 31, possibly Alberta's 2nd brood (John & Marion Steeves, RD). Saskatchewan's 6th **Black-necked Stilt** record was furnished by a pair that stayed near Bradwell, SK, through the last part of May (Craig & Lorriene Salisbury). A flock of 30± Whimbrels seen near Beaverlodge May 21 was large for Alberta (Joan Kerr). Red-necked Phalaropes peaked at 3000± birds on Good Spirit L. June 2 (W & JA). There were reports of single Long-tailed Jaegers at Niverville, MB (8th spring record) Apr. 14 (Ron Dueck) and in Regina Apr. 22 (FS).

A flying **Laughing Gull**, Saskatchewan's 2nd, was well seen and described in Regina May 19 (FB). A Mew Gull was an Alberta rarity near Didsbury (Darrell Hutchinson). Lone Thayer's Gulls were described at Regina Apr. 5 and Winnipeg May 29; the species is accidental in the south of both provinces (TH, RKO). Alberta's first **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was photographed in Calgary Apr. 9 & 19 (John Thompson, m.ob.) Most, if not all, of a flock of 10 terns were Arctics May 20 near Seven Sisters Falls, a large number for the s. half of this Region (DF, RKO, PT). A birder familiar with the species in California reported a Greater Roadrunner crossing a road near Poplar Point, MB, Apr. 22 (Bill Thiessen). [This is remarkably far out of range, and the record must represent an escaped pet—K.K.] Short-eared Owls were apparently up in Alberta and Saskatchewan but down in Manitoba (JS, BG, RKO).

**SWIFTS TO FINCHES**—Two Chimney Swifts were accidentals among 800 swallows over Wascana L., Regina, May 25 (RKr, TH). Also on May 25, 150+ Tree, 50± Barn, and 10± Bank swallows were feeding on and over a lawn in cold weather at Good Spirit L. (W & JA). What may have been Canada's 2nd (and was Manitoba's first) **Scrub Jay** came to light in March. It appeared regularly from before Christmas until about Feb. 15 at a feeder in Fisher Branch, 120 km n of Winnipeg; good photographs were taken (Gerry Rosset, Dianne Gard). A pair of Com. Ravens was nesting on an old railway bridge near downtown Winnipeg Mar. 9, a first for the city (Jack Dubois). White-breasted Nuthatches nested in Weyburn, SK, a little west of its published breeding range, in 1988 and 1989; this year four birds were seen at 3 holes Mar 20 (NP). The thrush migration was considered poor. American Robins peaked at Good Spirit L. Apr. 21–26, when 100–200 were seen daily (W & JA). American Pipits were noted for their total absence in s. Manitoba (RKO).

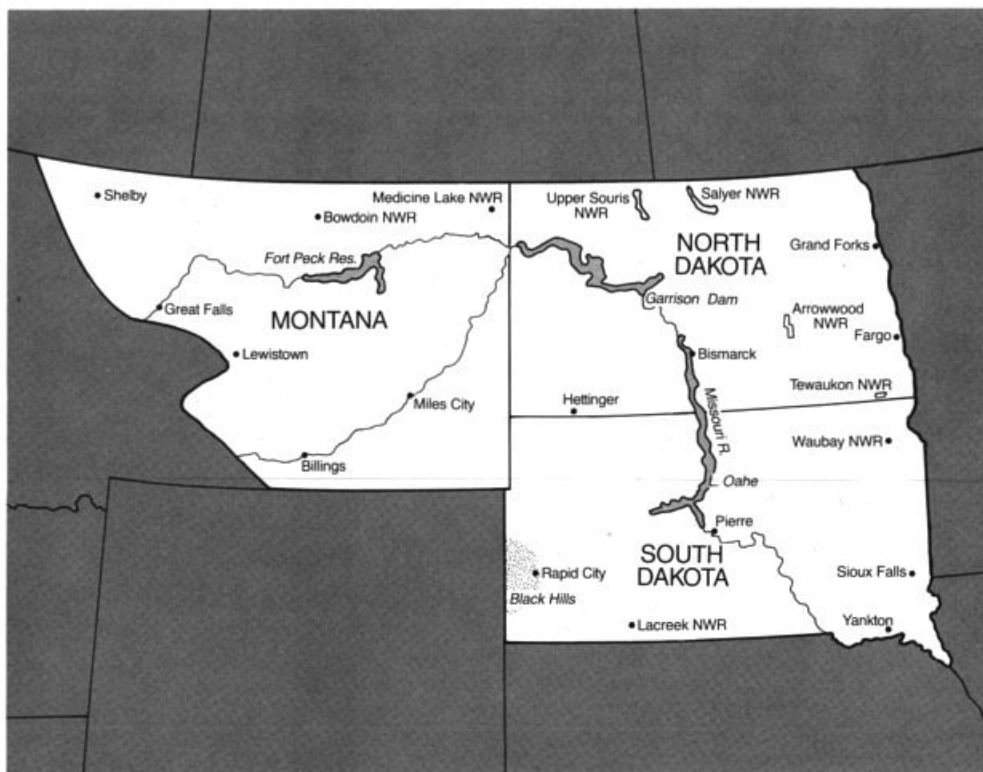
Manitoba's first **Prothonotary Warbler** was studied and described at Delta May 17 (Spencer Sealy). Scarlet Tanager is accidental west of the e. edge of Saskatchewan, but one spent May 13–15 on Regina's Legislative Grounds (TH, FS). Two N Cardinals apparently overwintered in Manitoba: a male at Stonewall was last seen Mar. 24 and a female at East St. Paul was seen until Apr. 4 (A. Boyer, R. Reeves). A major wave of Chipping and Clay-colored sparrows occurred in Regina May 11–12 when flocks of 50–150 were noted (TH). Both species were common in mixed flocks around Saskatoon May 11–13 (BG). Lark Buntings moved a little farther north than usual in good numbers in Saskatchewan—Lumsden, Moose Jaw, and Spring Valley (TH, SW, Flossie Bogdan). High counts for other species in the province were: 1000+ McCown's Longspurs

Apr. 21 in the Consul area (Carol Bjorklund), 1000+ Yellow-headed Blackbirds daily May 7–13 at Buffalo Pound L. (SW); 200± Com. Grackles daily Apr. 23–29 in Weyburn (NP); and flocks of 50–75 Purple Finches at cottage feeders in Duck Mountain P.P. Apr. 22 (TH). With fewer than 10 previous records, Manitoba had a ♂ House Finch at a Winnipeg feeder May 14 (R. & R. Nero, Robert Parsons).

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## NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGION

Gordon Berkey



In contrast to the pervasive heat and drought of last year, the weather was quite variable over the Region this spring. Eastern Montana and extreme western North Dakota had above normal precipitation, and wetlands and reservoirs were in good condition. Central North Dakota looked green after several light showers, but wetlands remained very low and subsoil moisture was practically nonexistent; southern South Dakota also remained extremely dry. The eastern Dakotas had near normal precipitation. While some observers were hopeful that the severe drought was over, the Region has had drought cycles lasting longer than a decade in the past, and we might expect several more years of below normal precipitation.

There was no particular pattern to the migration. While periods of strong southerly winds brought numerous early arrivals, small numbers of individuals were usually involved and the majority of birds seemed to move late.

**LOONS TO WATERFOWL** — A rare Red-throated Loon at Angostura Res., SD, May 7 (RR) was well described. Nine Com. Loons in McLean, ND, Apr. 29 represented a record high count for the state. Horned Grebe arrived very early in Stanley, SD, Mar. 27 (BKH). The brood of Eared Grebes in Burleigh May 29 and the arrival of Clark's Grebe in McLean Apr. 19 (RH) were the earliest ever for North Dakota. A late report was received of a successful nesting of Clark's Grebe at

Hailstone N.W.R., MT, in 1987 (WR). An early Am. White Pelican arrived Mar. 24 at Ft. Peck, MT (CC), and six flying north along the frozen Red River at Grand Forks Apr. 2 (DL) set an early county record; in neither case was the species seen again for some time. The increasing number of spring sightings of Great Egret in North Dakota seems to indicate nesting somewhere in the state. The 25 White-faced Ibises in Brown, SD (JCS), made an outstanding count for that area.

Two Trumpeter Swans in s.e. Todd, SD, Apr. 15 were apparently territorial, but could not be found May 20 (RR); three Trumpeters were photographed at a pond near Slim Buttes, SD (D & CG). Greater White-fronted Geese in Hamlin May 18 (BKH) were the latest ever in South Dakota. A total of 123 neck-banded Snow Geese was found at Freezeout L., MT, this spring; most had been banded in the w. Canadian arctic, Wrangel I. in the USSR, and in n. Alaska. Three very rare blue morph Ross' Geese were also at Freezeout L. Apr. 9–18 (MS); Ross' peaked at 1500 Apr. 17 at Benton Lake N.W.R. (KD).

Duck migration in North Dakota began late and was compressed into a short time interval; most species were greatly reduced in numbers, and water levels for nesting ranged from marginal to poor. Cinnamon Teal arrived on the early date of Mar. 28 at Benton L. (RP). A ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye at Long Lake N.W.R., ND, Mar. 28 (MR) was the 9th for the state. A Red-breasted Merganser on Mar. 24 was the earliest ever at Ft. Peck, MT (CC).

**RAPTORS TO CRANES** — Winter-killed fish attracted large concentrations of Bald Eagles at several locations, including a peak count of 36 adults and 58 immatures at Bowdoin N.W.R. Apr. 2 (KS); the large proportion of immatures was consistent with that reported by others, and indicates how well the species is doing. Two active Bald Eagle nests were along the Missouri R. in North Dakota (BS). Several high raptor counts were reported, probably because the late spring and poor soaring conditions concentrated birds and increased visibility. Sharp-shinned Hawks were more numerous at Ft. Peck and in Ward, ND, with a high of 13 in Ward Apr. 2. A kettle of 20 or more Broad-winged Hawks was in Day, SD, Apr. 23 (DS), and there were far more reports than normal in w North Dakota. Spring kettles of Swainson's Hawk are infrequently reported, so the 350 birds in Fall River, SD, May 7 (RR) were of interest. The 900 Red-tailed Hawks in Ward Apr. 2 set a new high count for North Dakota; included were 20 dark-morph westerns (REM). A total of 162 Am. Kestrels was counted in 300 mi between Lewistown and Big Lake, MT, Apr. 30 (LM). In the rare category, two **Red-shouldered Hawks** at Fargo Mar. 27 (GN) and a single in Grand Forks Apr. 5–15 (EF) raised the total North Dakota records to 11. A Gyrfalcon that wintered at Garrison Dam, ND, was last seen Mar. 19, and another was at Benton Lake N.W.R. Mar. 10 (SM).

Gray Partridge numbers were good, but they were noted as not pairing until March at Ft. Peck and Minot, several weeks later than normal. The description of two **Willow Ptarmigan** in Grand Forks Mar. 31 was sketchy (WS), but the species is the only white grouse likely to occur in North Dakota; this would be the 5th record if accepted. The Whooping Crane in **Grand Forks**, ND, Apr. 5 (EF) was the state's earliest by two days and coincided with early arrivals of several other species following strong south winds.

**SHOREBIRDS** — Given the water conditions, one might have expected shorebird concentrations in a few favored locations, but migration was spotty at best and numbers of most species disappointing. Five Black-bellied Plovers in Ward Apr. 22 were extremely early. Piping Plover set an earliest state date of Apr. 11 in Yankton, SD (WH), and was also early in Westby, MT, Apr. 14 (TN); the species was making heavy use of exposed shoreline of L. Sakakawea in North Dakota, where many of the alkali lakes normally used for nesting are completely dry. A Black-necked Stilt was at Lake Ilo N.W.R., ND, May 23 (MG) and two were at Lostwood N.W.R. (RKM). Sightings of the species are becoming more frequent in the state, and nesting is a distinct possibility.

A peak count of 1000 Lesser Yellowlegs in **Grand Forks**, ND, May 8 set a new state high. Whimbrels were seen in all 3 states, including two n.w. of Billings May 18 (WR) and singles in Jackson, SD, May 20 (RAP, PS, LR) and at Fargo and Grand Forks May 27 (GN, DL). A peak of 50 Hudsonian Godwits was noted Apr. 22 and a Marbled Godwit was early Apr. 8 in Minnehaha, SD (MSS). Baird's Sandpiper arrived early Mar. 21 in Roberts, SD. The peak of 2000 Semipalmated Sandpipers in McLean, ND, May 26 (LO) was the highest ever for the state. Five W. Sandpipers were in Sheridan, ND, May 3 (MN). Pectoral Sandpipers peaked at 300 in Grant, SD, Apr. 29 and 475 in McHenry, ND, May 7. Stilt Sandpipers peaked at several hundred at Westby, MT, May 20.

**GULLS TO CORVIDS** — A peak of 2000 Ring-billed Gulls was in Minnehaha Mar. 28. An imm. Thayer's Gull, rare in spring, was at Ft. Peck Mar. 26; a Caspian Tern at Ft. Peck Apr. 14 was early, and at least 100 pairs were nesting on an island there later in the season (CC). A peak of 220 Com. Terns was in McLean, ND, April 29. An E. Screech-Owl was at Billings, MT, Apr. 6 (WR). Once again few reports of Long-eared and Short-eared owls were received; while Long-eareds are quite inconspicuous, the small number of reports of Short-eareds certainly indicates very low numbers present. A N.

Saw-whet Owl calling in the Missouri R. breaks at the w end of C M Russell N W R , MT, was thought to be nesting (LM). A Com. Poorwill calling at Sawyer May 7 furnished the first Ward record (GB). Twenty-five Belted Kingfishers were counted in 15 mi along the Forest R. in Grand Forks Apr. 30 (DL). Wintering Red-bellied Woodpeckers remained until Mar. 30 at Minot, May 4 at Hettinger, and May 12 at Fargo, ND. A sapsucker at Fargo Apr. 26 (Richard Post) had a black crown, white throat, and black on the breast, but a photograph clearly indicates Yellow-bellied rather than Williamson's, a second sapsucker at New Town, ND, May 1 (BCH) described as having a white throat and no red on the head was also thought to be a Yellow-bellied [Female Yellow-bellieds do occasionally lack all red on the crown—KK].

A peak of 20 Alder Flycatchers was at Minot May 30. A Say's Phoebe at New Town, ND, Apr. 5 (BCH) and a W. Kingbird at L. Ilo Apr. 27 (DB) were very early. The Violet-green Swallow in Meade, SD, Apr. 16 (EM) tied the earliest ever. Northern Rough-winged Swallows were early at Hettinger Apr. 21 and in Ward Apr. 22, but the species was not seen until May 21 at Ft. Peck. The Cliff Swallow at J. Clark Salyer N.W.R. Apr. 22 (RM) was the earliest ever for North Dakota. The only Clark's Nutcracker reported from South Dakota was one in Custer Apr. 13 (DW).

**CREEPER TO WARBLERS** — A high count of 10 Brown Creepers was in Grand Forks Apr. 25. Sedge Wren arrived early Apr. 30 in Moody, SD (DR). The 4th **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** for North Dakota was at Fargo May 16–17 (RO), this species set an earliest arrival date of Apr. 28 in Minnehaha, SD (MSS) and was also early Apr. 30 in Moody. Eastern Bluebird numbers continued to increase in the Dakotas, and birds are encountered much more frequently in natural situations in addition to using nesting boxes. A pair was at a nesting box at the western edge of the species' range in Montana's Bear Paw Mts., June 3 (HM). The Townsend's Solitaire at Rolla May 16 (PH) tied the latest ever for North Dakota. Thrush numbers were quite low; Gray-cheeked at Ft. Peck May 13 (CC) and in Fall River May 14 (RAP) were in areas where they are rare. Five Water Pipits at Gascoyne Res May 31 (D & CG) set a new latest North Dakota date by 8 days. Earliest vireo dates for South Dakota were the Bell's May 9 in Moody (DR) and the Yellow-throated Apr. 30 in Day (DS). The peak of 30 Red-eyed Vireos in Minot May 30 was representative of the late grounding of migrants.

In contrast to the past several years, a few observers reported good numbers of warblers. There were significant groundings in the Dakotas May 11–16 and Minot as late as May 30. Golden-winged Warbler reports were of one at Grand Forks May 12, two at Fargo May 16, and one in Day May 14. The earliest ever Nashville Warbler for South Dakota was in Minnehaha Apr. 29 (MSS). Three N. Parulas were seen in Fargo May 13 (D & DW) and a late one was singing in Minot May 30 (GB). A daily peak of 100 Yellow Warblers was obtained in Ward May 13. There are fewer than 20 records of Magnolia Warbler for Montana, so three at Westby May 22 (TN) and one at Choteau May 31 (MS) were of interest. A **Cape May Warbler** at Bowdoin N.W.R. May 31 through June 2 (JS, DP) provided a new latilong record and only the 4th for Montana. Another Cape May was unusual at Lostwood N.W.R., ND, May 21 (RKM). A warbler fallout in Day, SD, May 13 included five Black-throated Greens and six Black-burnians (DS). A ♂ Pine Warbler was at Grand Forks Apr. 22 (DL), the earliest ever for North Dakota, while the Palm Warbler at Fargo Apr. 25 tied the previous earliest date. A Blackpoll Warbler at Minot Apr. 24 was an earliest ever for North Dakota, but the late peak of 40 on May 30 was perhaps more surprising (GB); more Blackpolls than normal were seen at Ft. Peck, MT, but very few were seen in e. North Dakota. Prothonotary Warblers were present in Brookings, SD, May 14 & 20 (NH, RK). A ♂ MacGillivray's Warbler in Hettinger, ND, May 26–31 (D & CG) was a good find.

**TOWHEES TO FINCHES**—Two Rufous-sided Towhees were the first ever of the eastern race for the Minot, ND, area May 13. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was rather far west near Chester, MT, May 20 (HM). A total of 1500 Am. Tree Sparrows were seen in Ward Apr. 2, with over 1000 in a 3-acre weedy field at Upper Souris N.W.R. A peak count of 200 Clay-colored Sparrows was a new state high at Bismarck May 11 (RH). A Brewer's Sparrow in Fall River Apr. 23 (RAP) set an early state arrival date. Lark Buntings made another strong showing in Montana and most of North Dakota, even though many areas were much more lush than the previous spring. A new spring peak of 20 Swamp Sparrows for North Dakota was in Grand Forks Apr. 29. Despite these good totals, numbers of most sparrows were generally low, and several species arrived late and departed early. White-throated and Harris' sparrows were particularly scarce, and Carlson saw no Harris' at Ft. Peck. A "Gray-headed" Junco was photographed at Bowdoin N.W.R., MT, May 10 (KS). Lapland Longspurs peaked at 20,000 in McHenry, ND, Mar. 31. A Bobolink at Ashley, ND, Apr. 19 was very early (DMR). A snowstorm grounded large numbers of W. Meadowlarks in Grand Forks Apr. 1, when 20 to 30 could be found perched in single small isolated trees.

A late Pine Grosbeak at Grand Forks Apr. 20 (MW) was ironic, considering that it was the only observation in North Dakota this season. The first confirmed nesting of **House Finch** for South Dakota was obtained in Fall River May 28. They were also seen in e. South Dakota in Deuel, Brookings, and Minnehaha, and may be breeding in the latter 2 counties. Thus the state is simultaneously being invaded by the natural population from the west and the introduced population from the east.

S.A.

Orchard Orioles continue to do well and expand to the northwest in our Region; there were more at Ft. Peck this spring than ever before (CC). While some observers to the south of us note a drastic decline in this species and blame it on cowbirds, the Northern Great Plains has thriving populations of both Orchard Orioles and cowbirds. Perhaps the population center is shifting northward for some reason, while total numbers of the species remain basically unchanged. Widespread shelter belts have certainly played a role in the species' success here, but it may be more difficult to explain why they are declining to the south.

**OBSERVERS** (area compilers in boldface)—MONTANA: **Charles Carlson**, Kristi DuBois, Larry Malone, Harriet Marble, Stephen Martin, Ted Nordhagen, Robert Pearson, Dwain Prellwitz, William Roney, Mark Schwitters, Jim & Karen Stutzman.—NORTH DAKOTA: **Gordon Berkey**, Donald Bozovsky, Eve Freeberg, Mike Grabow, Carolyn & David Griffiths, Phyllis Hart, Randy Hill, Bernice C. Houser, **David Lambeth**, Ron E. Martin, Robert K. Murphy, Gary Nielsen, Mike North, Robert O'Connor, Lew Oring, Michael Rabenberg, Donna M. Rieckmann, Brian Stotts, William Sheridan, Diane & Dennis Wiesenborn, Mary Woutat.—SOUTH DAKOTA: Willis Hall, Bruce K. Harris, Nelda Holden, Ross Kindermann, Ernest Miller, Richard A. Peterson, Dan Reinking, Linda Riner, Richard Rosche, **Dennis Skadsen**, Mark S. Skadsen, Paul Springer, Jerry C. Stanford, Duane Weber.—**GORDON BERKEY**, Division of Science, Minot State University, Minot, ND 58701.

## SOUTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGION

Joseph A. Grzybowski



**I**t rained in Oklahoma, but drought conditions continued in central and western portions of Kansas and Nebraska. Even as the rains come, we may still measure these drought effects for years to come. This report implies an impact on nesting marsh birds and migrating shorebirds. Waterfowl also seemed scarce with what appeared to be fewer than the normal number of reports of late departing and possibly nesting species.

Fewer extralimital warblers appeared in western portions of the Region. I had a hard time seeing Least Flycatchers this spring in central and western Oklahoma. Could this species have passed through a "black hole" in its fall migration, losing many individuals? Are other species windowing these bottlenecks to survival as they cross drought-stricken areas? I think I now understand why we saw almost no White-rumped Sandpipers and Swainson's Thrushes in Oklahoma during the fall.

Perhaps also artifacts of the drought are potential shifts in the ranges of some western species east. There were more reports of Common Poorwills, and species such as Rufous-crowned Sparrows and Rock Wrens seemed commoner at some eastern fringe localities in their range. While difficult to evaluate from subjective observations, the drought may form an interesting focus for future speculation and discussion.

The annual spring question: "How were the warblers?" The usual answer: "Pretty good" to "pretty bad." In western portions of the Region, it's a good season if you can mention them in your report. This year: not mentioned. In the central strip, who knows what a wave is? Not this year. In the eastern strip, it was best on May 14 in Tulsa. In eastern Kansas, Lloyd Moore thought it was good. In Omaha this year—no fronts, so no warblers to speak of.

#### S.A.

As a critical and saddening result of the prolonged drought conditions in central Kansas, Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Management Area dried up (!) this spring, and Quivira Nat'l Wildlife Refuge fared only slightly better. These are major islands of habitat for marsh species such as rails, and major staging areas for shorebirds, particularly White-rumped and Baird's sandpipers, Long-billed Dowitchers, Hudsonian Godwits, and Stilt Sandpipers (see last year's Spring Report in *AB* 42:455). While shorebirds were noted in some numbers on the dry flats at Cheyenne Bottoms, populations of some of these species may have passed through a severe bottleneck of stress, and may deserve more reporting attention in the future. Breeding rails at these sites will likely not survive the season if drought relief does not occur, or if they do not move on and locate better areas.

**LOONS TO RAPTORS**—Most unusual, but well studied, was a **Red-throated Loon** in basic plumage Apr. 29 at Smith Lake, *Sheridan*, NE (RCR, DJR). A very high count was made of 120 Com. Loons on Lake Tenkiller, *Sequoyah*, OK, Mar. 30 (JM, JN). A W. Grebe observed Apr. 24–30 in *Sarpy*, NE (BJR *et al.*), and one May 1–4 at *Oklahoma* (ST, MO *et al.*) were the easternmost reported this season.

Jim Woodard estimated 4000–5000 Am. White Pelicans in about 45 groups flying over him, probably to a roost site, on the evening of Apr. 9 in *Grady*, OK. An Olivaceous Cormorant, rare but becoming more regular in Kansas, was reported from *Coffey* Apr. 20 (RF). Flocks of 19 and 12 Anhingas were noted along the Little River in *McCurtain*, OK (BH). This species is of sporadic occurrence in e. Oklahoma.

Three reports of four Am. Bitterns were received. Should we be finding more? A Little Blue Heron May 13 in *Keith*, NE (RCR), was outside its normal range limits for the Region.

Arriving early was a White-faced Ibis Apr. 2 in *Canadian*, OK (MO).

Both Tundra and Trumpeter swans, one of each, were still present Mar. 18 in *Marais des Cygnes*, Linn, KS (LM). Reports of Ross' Geese included one in *Sarpy*, NE, Mar. 23 (BJR), one Mar. 25 (LM, MM) and Apr. 2 (DB, BF) in *Osage*, KS, and three Mar. 27 in *Cimarron*, OK (MO). Cinnamon Teal were observed east to *Tulsa*, OK (JW *et al.*), Apr. 15 and *Knox*, NE (MB, EB), Apr. 16. Among late departing ducks were an Oldsquaw Apr. 16–20 in *Riley*, KS (TTC *et al.*), and a Com. Goldeneye May 9 in *Sarpy*, NE (BJR). Overall, however, reports of waterfowl seemed sparse.

Ospreys were still present in *Mayes*, OK, May 25 (JM *et al.*), and *Cherry*, NE, May 28 (AG). A **Black-shouldered Kite** was observed along I–35 in *Love*, OK, May 27 (BF). Quite a find was a nest of **Bald Eagles** discovered during April in *Douglas*, KS, by Kansas Wildlife and Parks personnel (*fide* LM). This is the first nesting record of this species in Kansas. A N. Goshawk was reported from *Dawes*, NE, Apr. 21 (MB, EB). Always rare on the western edge of the Region, Broad-winged Hawks were noted Apr. 23 in *Keith* and Apr. 29 in *Sheridan*, NE (RCR, DJR). On the opposite edge of the Region, a migrant Golden Eagle Apr. 25 in *Coffey*, KS (LM, MM), represented a rare occurrence for e. Kansas. Ten Peregrines, but only four Merlins, were reported during the period.

**RAILS TO TERNS**—A King Rail was seen at *Quivira* N.W.R., KS, May 7 (PJ, SS). A Virginia Rail was reported from *Tulsa* May 5 (JW, TM). More unusual was an undocumented report of two Virginia Rails Mar. 10 at *Sequoyah*, OK.

The only reports of Piping Plovers received were of one Apr. 15 in *Osage*, KS (SC, LM), one Apr. 17 (JT) and one May 7 (BP, LP) in *Sarpy*, NE, and one at *Quivira* N.W.R., *Stafford*, KS, May 6 (PJ) & 7 (SS, DS). Was this low number of reported migrants also an artifact of the drought? Three Mountain Plovers at *Quivira* Apr. 21 (TTC) were east of the usual occurrences. A Mountain Plover was also noted Apr. 21 in *Keith*, NE (RCR). Black-necked Stilts were reported Apr. 17 from *Sheridan*, NE (RS, SD), the only known recent breeding locality in the state. Severe drought here may affect their breeding this year. One Black-necked Stilt was also noted in *Canadian*, OK, May 20 (RJ).

Whimbrels have been more commonly reported in recent years. This year, one was observed May 14 in *Texas*, OK (BG, RP), four were seen May 16 in *Canadian*, OK (JGN), and two more were noted in *Cherry*, NE (MB, GL), May 20. Two of these reports were notably west in the Region. Slightly east of normal occurrences, a Long-billed Curlew was found at *Rose Lake*, *Canadian*, OK, Apr. 13 (JGN).

Godwits were more common than usual in e. Nebraska with 43 Hudsonians reported Apr. 16 (TB), and again May 7 (BP, LP), and 14 Marbleds Apr. 10 (BJR) in *Sarpy*. A Dunlin noted in *Sarpy*, NE, on the confounding dates of Apr. 5–9 (BJR) was either a very early migrant, or possibly a wintering bird. The first Wilson's Phalaropes were observed in *Canadian*, OK, Mar. 31 (MO), an early arrival date for this species. A Red-necked Phalarope Apr. 29–May 6 in *Sarpy*, NE (JT *et al.*), was east of the main migration corridor in the Region.

A **Little Gull** in first winter plumage at *Manhattan*, *Riley*, KS, May 17–19 (TTC *et al.*) may have been the most eventful sighting for the season. The **Lesser Black-backed Gull** at *Lake Hefner*, *Oklahoma*, was last observed Mar. 10 (*fide* JGN). A Glaucous Gull lingered Mar. 19 in *Lancaster*, NE (TB). The **Black-legged Kittiwake** at *Lake Overholser*, *Oklahoma*, remained until Mar. 19 (*fide* JGN). And, last and "Least" here, a Least Tern noted Mar. 11 in *Tulsa* (E & KH) was exceptionally (!) early.



**DOVES TO VIREOS** — Black-billed Cuckoos, rare in the Region, were reported from 3 locales. A N Saw-whet Owl was heard calling in Sioux, NE, Apr. 21 (MB, EB).

Perhaps an artifact of drier conditions in recent years, Com. Poorwill reports seemed to be more common in s.w. Oklahoma, with breeding documented in the Wichita Mountains N.W.R., Comanche, OK (L & JM). Poorwills were also noted east to Carter, OK, during late May (possibly breeding). In addition, one bird was captured Mar. 25 in Oklahoma (fide JGN), and one was found dead in a residential portion of Norman on Apr. 25 (SSH). Furthermore, one was noted in Pawnee, e. Nebraska, Apr. 25–26 (DR, BJR), and Poorwills and Whip-poor-wills were calling at the same locale in Knox, e. Nebraska (MB, LR).

In Morrill, NE, two to three White-throated Swifts were noted May 12 (RCR). This is somewhat south of currently known breeding localities in the very n.w. corner of the state. A wood-pewee with the song pattern of an Eastern, but the tone quality of a Western, was documented in Cherry, NE, May 21 (RCR, DJR). An Acadian Flycatcher in Carter, OK, May 27 was west of most known breeding localities in Oklahoma.

Tree Swallows nested again in Sequoyah, OK, the southernmost locality for the Region (JM et al.). Cliff Swallows arrived early in Grady, OK, with four noted Mar. 11 (JDT). A Brown Creeper May 31 in Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy, NE was believed to be nesting (BP). A Canyon Wren was located in Blaine, OK, May 6 (and later; JAG) for one of very few scattered breeding localities of the species in n.w. Oklahoma. A Winter Wren lingered until Apr. 13 in Tulsa (SM). A Golden-crowned Kinglet observed Apr. 9 in Adair, OK, was also late in departing (MMI).

Four reports of Veery were received from eastern portions of the Region. Swainson's Thrushes were noted on the early migration dates of Apr. 6 (JW) & 9 (JMa et al.) in Tulsa. A Sage Thrasher lingered until Apr. 27 in Cimarron, OK (JS).

Black-capped Vireos still maintained an outpost population in Blaine, OK, with five or six males observed (JAG). However, they could no longer be found at the Methodist Canyon site in Canadian, and they were found at only one other location outside of the Wichita Mountains (in s.w. Oklahoma).

**WARBLERS TO FINCHES** — A ♂ Golden-winged Warbler was banded May 13 in Delaware, OK (F & MB, GG). Two others of this rare species were reported in n.e. Kansas (fide LM). Magnolia Warblers were present in Wichita, KS, May 12–17 (PJ), the westernmost reported this season. A Yellow-rumped Warbler lingered May 27 in Delaware, OK (GG, JC). A Palm Warbler was noted in far western Oklahoma in Cimarron Apr. 28 (JS). A Worm-eating Warbler, a rare migrant, was reported in Tulsa May 1 (DI, JCH).

A Yellow-throated Warbler gathering nesting material in Sarpy, NE, May 4 provided the first evidence of breeding at this site (JT). Nesting Cerulean Warblers are extremely hard to locate, but they are still present at one locality in Delaware, OK (JN et al.). Two migrant Ceruleans were noted in Linn, KS (DH). A Louisiana Waterthrush was observed in Adair, OK, Mar. 19 (MMI), an early arrival date, and one was heard singing Mar. 31 at the Wichita Mountains N.W.R., Comanche, OK, the very western limit of their range (JAG).

Very rare in the eastern two-thirds of the Region, a Western Tanager was observed Apr. 24 in Johnston, KS (JL). A Lazuli Bunting at Wichita, KS (fide DK), was the easternmost reported this season.

Almost unreported in n.e. Oklahoma, a Rufous-crowned Sparrow was noted at the Fort Gibson Dam, Cherokee, during March (JCH, JM et al.). A Sharp-tailed Sparrow Apr. 15 in Osage, KS (LM, SC), furnished one of very few spring records for the Region. A Harris' Sparrow May 31 in Stafford, KS (TTC), was very late. Sparrows lingering in Tulsa included two Fox Sparrows Apr. 8 (TM), eight Song Sparrows May 6 (m ob.), and one Swamp Sparrow May 6 (KW, JK). Two ♂

Chestnut-collared Longspurs May 29 in Keya Paha, NE (AG), could indicate breeding at this historical nesting locality. Fifteen or more Chestnut-collareds were noted in Holt, NE, one county to the southeast, through the end of the season (MB).

Great-tailed Grackles pushed westward this season along the North Platte in Nebraska to Morrill (RCR, DJR). At least 3 reporters from central Oklahoma and south-central Kansas had difficulty in locating Orchard Orioles, and believe this species to have seriously declined there in the past 10 years.

House Finches were reported at only one new locality this season—Knox, NE (MB)—but most recently reported sites continued to record them! A White-winged Crossbill, very rare in the Region, coming to a feeder in Madison, NE, was present for almost the entire month of May (JO). A not-so-common Common Redpoll was observed Mar. 7 coming to a feeder in Omaha (TB). Pine Siskins were scarce.

**CORRIGENDA** — The caption under the photo of the Black-legged Kittiwake for the 1988 Spring Migration Report (AB 42:455) is incorrect. The caption should read: First-winter Black-legged Kittiwake at Kaw Dam, Osage-Kaw, OK, March 27, 1988. Photo/Mary Gustafson.

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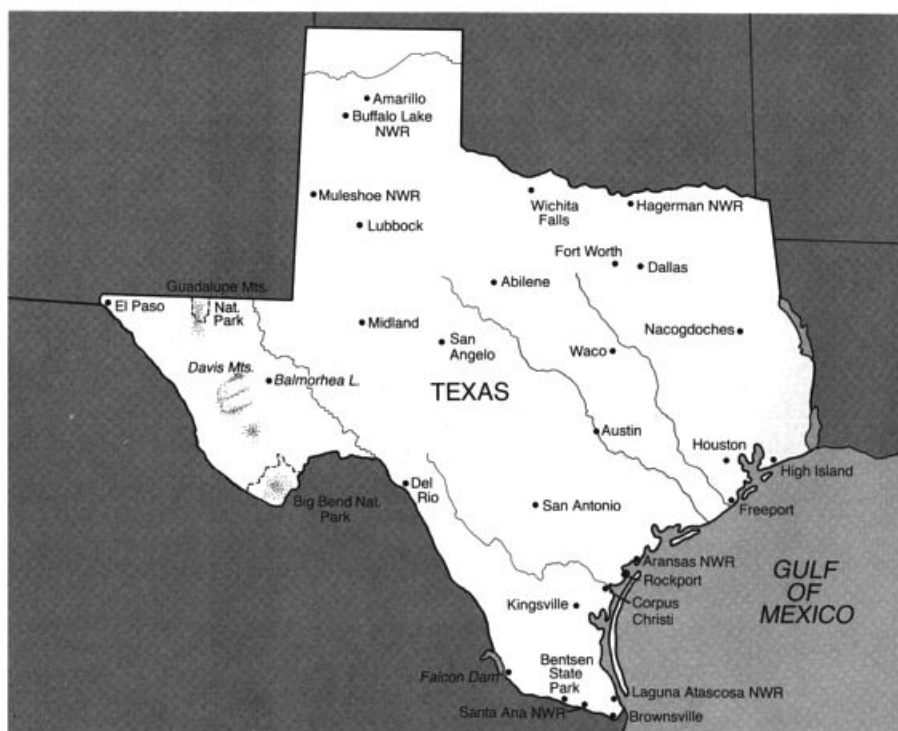
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## TEXAS REGION

**Greg W. Lasley and  
Chuck Sexton**



**T**here seemed to be no even keel this spring. The season was characterized by extremes in weather and avian occurrences, even more than we anticipate in Texas.

The Panhandle and South Plains saw snow in March and April, and wildly gyrating temperatures. These seriously impacted resources for migrant warblers and vireos

when flowering locust and fruit trees budded out early and then were frozen back. It was very wet and turbulent in north-central Texas. March had ice and snow, and May had excessive rainfall. The "sleet-weekend" of March 4-7 caused many home feeders to be inundated with birds. This freeze dropped a good variety of waterfowl onto Lake

Sam Rayburn A tornado on May 4 was blamed for several avian fatalities in the Possum Kingdom Lake area, but the same system contributed to "one of the best migrations in years" in the Dallas area. May 3–5 saw exceptionally good fallouts in the Dallas and Nacogdoches areas, with other good showings in Dallas May 12–14 and May 18. Dallas exceeded its annual rainfall average by mid-June, suffering some of their worst flooding in 30 years. In East Texas, while 1988 brought drought and desolation, early 1989 generated rain, rain, and more rain. The rains in Houston, as in Dallas, surpassed annual totals before the summer had even set in. Predictably, numerous migrants were grounded by these frontal systems and the torrential rains on several occasions. A mid-April front grounded migrants along the entire coast. Good coverage of key areas on April 15 showed substantially different sets of migrants dropping out in different locations, the details of which are too voluminous for this column. At the Sabal Palm Grove in Cameron County, the migration was "consistently good" Apr. 12–May 13, with observers reporting an average of over 14 species of warblers on any given day (maximum 21 species April 16). The "monsoon" of May 18 halted *Empidonax* flycatchers along the Jefferson County coastline.

In central Texas, which shared in some but not all of the rains, even heavy storms on May 12–14 produced only a modest fallout. Fred Webster pronounced it the worst migration he'd seen in 33 years, although other opinions were slightly kinder. Don't expect further reports of Barred Owl or Red-shouldered Hawk from the Brackettville area for some time: a massive tornado May 16 virtually wiped out the ancient pecan and live oak groves along Las Moras Creek there. Corpus Christi saw nearly twice its normal rainfall in April, with a few good groundings, but that was surrounded by dry months (including their hottest May ever) so severe drought conditions continued there and over much of south Texas. Farther to the south, at Kingsville, March temperatures ranged from freezing on the 8th to 104°F on the 31st. The Trans-Pecos was generally hot and dry. El Paso hit the century mark in mid-May, the earliest ever for the city. Sunny clear days devoid of any substantial weather patterns resulted in one of the poorest passerine migrations in recent memory in that area, although there were surprising reports of diverse fallouts in Big Bend, of all places. Perhaps the only region of the state that reported about "average" rainfall, and an "average" migration, was San Angelo, which local observers admit is little to brag about in that warbler-poor area.

On a statewide basis, we saw many species arriving exceptionally early. Prominent among these were shorebirds showing up in early March to mid-April (especially Wilson's Phalaropes), and a variety of landbirds moving into the state March 8–17. An American Swallow-tailed Kite at Attwater in February was the most notable early bird. Late lingering waterbirds were again a topic of note but perhaps not of the same magnitude as similar trends in recent years.

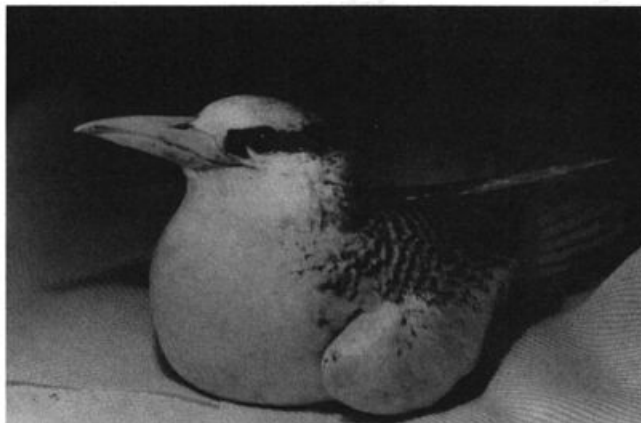
**COVERAGE** — While Seyffert bemoaned a lack of observers and reports that left him at a loss to draw conclusions for the Panhandle, Zimmer said the season was saved in the Trans-Pecos by unusually intensive coverage, especially in Big Bend, and a resultant (or causative?) good selection of vagrants. Kinney and other observers continued to round out the county lists for the heretofore underbirded Van Zandt

County area. Coverage was intense along the coast and in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, as is normal for spring. Our statewide reporting network for this column has increased vastly in the last few years. This is both gratifying and scary to us. We apologize to our many contributors and our diligent and talented sub-regional editors, only a fraction of whose material can be incorporated here.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — G.M.N.P. = Guadalupe Mountains Nat'l Park; L.R.G.V. = Lower Rio Grande Valley; T.B.R.C. = Texas Bird Records Committee; T.C.W.C. = Texas Cooperative Wildlife Collection (Texas A & M Univ.); U.T.C. = Upper Texas Coast. Place names in *italics* are counties. The following are shortened names for respective state or national parks, national wildlife refuges, etc.: Aransas, Attwater, Bentsen, Big Bend, Hagerman, Hueco Tanks, Kickapoo, Laguna Atascosa, Muleshoe, Santa Ana, and Welder.

**LOONS TO IBISES** — The Arctic/Pacific Loon in Galveston reported in winter lingered until Apr. 8 (JBu). Three Com. Loons, rare in the Trans-Pecos, were sighted at Red Bluff L., Loving, Mar. 10 (AW). Common Loons often dally in Texas coastal waters through May (TE). Four in Angelina May 9, however, were noteworthy in lingering at an inland location (SL), as were two at L. Tanglewood, Randall, May 28–29 (TCa, TJ). Least Grebes were absent in the Kingsville area all spring, an unusual situation (N & PP), but a lone Least Grebe in Austin May 9–18 (JCarl, GL, CJo) provided the first spring record ever for that location. A count of 13 Horned Grebes on L. Meredith, Hutchinson and Moore, Mar. 5 (AW) was a high number for the area, and one near Lubbock Apr. 12 (CSt) furnished an unusual record. Two Clark's Grebes, clearly a regular winter visitor to W. Texas, were among the Westerns at L. Balmorhea Mar. 1–May 3 (ML, AW). A **Band-rumped Storm-Petrel** was found dead on the Mustang I. beach May 14 (TA, \*T.C.W.C.), representing the 5th Texas record if accepted by the T.B.R.C. Probably the most exciting rarity of the season was the imm. **Red-billed Tropicbird** found in a residential yard in Zapata following a rainstorm Apr. 29. Wildlife rehabilitator Nancy Umphres obtained the bird May 1 and spent 3 weeks trying to keep it alive, but unfortunately, it died May 23 (\*T.C.W.C.). The only other Texas record of the species was of a bird found in a Houston backyard in Nov. 1985.

American White Pelicans were widely reported from Reeves, Pecos, and Hudspeth during the period with an im-



This Red-billed Tropicbird, the second for Texas, fell into a Zapata backyard on April 29, 1989. Photograph/Nancy Umphres.

pressive count of 210 at Imperial Res Mar 12 (AW) Also noteworthy were two late individuals at Ft. Hancock May 6 (BZ). The Palmers counted an impressive 2000 Am. White Pelicans over Baffin Bay Apr. 15. By the end of the period 500 pairs of Brown Pelicans appeared to be preparing to nest on Pelican I. in Corpus Christi Bay, with another 200 or so birds seen loafing at various U.T.C. and lower Laguna Madre locations (JG). Forty-two Double-crested Cormorants near Takoka, Lynn, Apr. 2 (G), WO) made the highest number ever recorded

#### S.A.

Over the past decade N. Gannets have been reported with increasing frequency in winter along the Texas coast, especially the U.T.C. Yet, as Eubanks remarked, observers were totally unprepared for this spring's wholesale *Sulid* invasion. The largest concentrations were reported along the Jefferson coastline in the 30-mi stretch between High Island and Sabine Pass. Eubanks and Morgan observed 325 N. Gannets there Mar. 26, with 270 still present in the same area Apr. 1. All of these birds flew parallel with the shore in a steady NE stream toward Louisiana (TE). Other notable N. Gannet records included a total of about 60 seen Mar. 22–29 between Matagorda and Freeport (MDe, JC, m.ob.). Masked Boobies associated with this passage were seen along Bolivar Pen., Mar. 31 (GC), and in Jefferson Apr. 1 (four by JM, 23 by DD). Most unexpected were the reports of **Brown Booby**, a species heretofore documented in Texas only 8 times. Brown Booby reports included one at the Matagorda jetty Mar. 15 (JMu), one at S. Padre I., Mar. 27 (MDe), a staggering 170 seen in Galveston Mar. 31 (GC), and two sightings from the Rollover Pass area Apr. 1 (four by DD, one by LA, PG). Readers should remember that, as with all Texas Review Species, the Brown Booby records reported in this column should be considered tentative pending their acceptance by the T.B.R.C.

at one time on the Texas South Plains (KS). Reports of Olivaceous Cormorants in the Trans-Pecos continued to increase with sightings this spring in *El Paso*, *Reeves*, and *Hudspeth* (BZ, JSp, ML).

Nesting Least Bitterns were found in Dallas May 17 (JPe) for the 2nd year in a row. A Snowy Egret, perched in a madrone tree! near the ranger's residence Apr. 9, provided a first (and quite unexpected) record for G.M.N.P. (MaF). A Tricolored Heron at McKinney, Collin, May 17 (KSt) was out of place and out of season, and two Tricoloreds in San Angelo during late April provided only the 4th Concho valley record (DT). Accompanying the Mar. 26 seabird movement in *Jefferson* were thousands of herons and egrets migrating "north." The flocks appeared to orient visually with the coastline, rarely straying farther than a few hundred meters from the shore in their NE flight. A total of 75–100 Black-crowned Night-Herons recorded in Lubbock May 6 (L.E.A.S.) set a record for that area. Over 75 White Ibises, a high count anywhere in inland East Texas, remained in *Nacogdoches* Apr. 8–May 18 (DF). A **Glossy Ibis** appeared in Galveston Apr. 22 (†J & WR), with another found feeding in a small pond near the Port Bolivar Lighthouse Apr. 29 (†BBE, RE, TE, JM).

**WATERFOWL** — One of the most notable discoveries of the season in n.c. Texas was the sighting of six Fulvous Whistling-Ducks at L. Tawakoni Apr. 30 (RK, JN). This was a first record for *Rains* and only about the 6th for that region (CH). Also participating in the Mar. 26 waterbird flight along the coast in *Jefferson* were 250 Fulvous Whistling-Ducks (TE, JM). Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks continued to explore the outer limits of their known range and again showed up in

new locations. Some of the more interesting localities included *Jefferson*, *Chambers*, *McLennan*, *Llano*, *Kendall*, *Milam*, *Reeves*, and *El Paso* (m.ob.). Two of the six Tundra Swans reported in the winter in *Lynn* were present through Apr. 9 (GJ, WO, JQ, DS). Free-flying geese (as opposed to the lame birds that traditionally summer at several locations) at *Attwater* included a flock of 80 Greater White-fronted Geese Apr. 15 (JD), and 18 imm. Snow Geese and two Canada Geese May 13 (DMu, RDP). Spring records of Greater White-fronted Geese in the Panhandle are rare, so reports of 20 at L. Rita Blanca Mar. 6 (AW) and one near Lubbock Mar. 8 (LMK, m.ob.) were noteworthy. A few Snow Geese lingered into May in *El Paso* and *Nacogdoches*. The 12 Ross' Geese at L. Rita Blanca Mar. 6 (AW) represented a new *Hartley* record and one on White River L., Crosby, Mar. 14 (ML) was unusual. Probable wild Muscovy Ducks included one photographed on the Tigre Grande arm of Falcon L. in *Zapata* Mar. 16 (MD, MHo), and 2 pairs flying along the Rio Grande near Rancho Santa Margarita, Starr, May 1 (DR).

Wood Ducks seem on the rise in w. Texas but single males at G.M.N.P. Mar. 9 (AW) and Big Bend May 2 (JD) were still noteworthy. A pair of Wood Ducks at L. Tanglewood, *Randall*, through the end of the season raised thoughts about possible nesting (TJ); the species was last reported nesting in that county 45 years ago (KS). Elsewhere, two Wood Ducks on L. Rita Blanca Mar. 6 (AW) provided a new *Hartley* record, and a pair in Lubbock May 6 (L.E.A.S.) was considered accidental. A pair of Mottled Ducks at Austin May 14 (LBU) was out of place. Arvin observed two "Mexican" Ducks at McAllen Apr. 22–23, a bit downriver from usual haunts. Three Cinnamon Teal in *Fannin* Apr. 19 (TGo) represented a new county record. Wolf reported a raft of 950 Ring-necked Ducks on L. Sam Rayburn Mar. 5, a gathering no doubt associated with the late cold front of that date. A Ring-necked Duck May 17–19 at Rockport was the latest recorded in that area by 22 days (CC). Over 12,000 scaup were seen moving NE along the *Jefferson* coast Mar. 26 (TE, JM), the largest number seen on the U.T.C. in over a decade. This observation lends credence to speculation that scaup that once wintered in immense numbers in Galveston Bay may now be migrating to waters farther south (TE). A late Greater Scaup was on Mustang I Apr. 22 (CC).

There was an above-average number of spring Oldsquaw reports including one at Rockport Mar. 8–April 10 (CC, E & NA), one at Aransas Mar. 13 (C & JMc), and one at L. Meredith, *Hutchinson*, May 2–9 (WP, FC). The L. Meredith bird had a fish hook in its bill, an impediment that may have accounted for the bird remaining so late. Noteworthy was a Surf Scoter at L. Balmorhea May 1 (WL, PS), one of very few records in that area of Texas. A gathering of 52 Com. Goldeneyes at L. Meredith Mar. 5 (AW) was an extraordinary number for so late in the season (KS). A pair of Red-breasted Mergansers reported during the winter near Lubbock was seen again Mar. 11 (CSt). The ♂ Masked Duck reported from *Brazoria* N.W.R. Apr. 26 (†AD, SCo) could not be relocated.

**RAPTORS** — Ospreys were reported to be nesting again at Sam Rayburn Res. in East Texas (*fide* JEc). American Swallow-tailed Kites, once abundant breeders in southeast Texas, have not nested in the state in decades. Beginning Mar. 29, numerous observers followed the exploits of an apparent nesting pair of kites near Hampshire, *Jefferson* (WG *et al.*) Although the kites were observed at various times courting, copulating, and gathering nest material, the nest itself could not be located. Local residents commented that the "scissor-tailed hawks" had summered locally for several years.

A Black-shouldered Kite found at Plano May 13 (BG, PB, SC) provided a first *Collin* record; another near Eden in *Concho* Apr. 13 (DT *et al.*) provided the first record for the *Concho* Valley. Also unusual were two inland East Texas reports of Black-shouldered: one in *Angelina* Mar. 2 and one in *Freestone* Apr. 13 (BO). A count of 1262 Mississippi Kites

Undoubtedly the event of the season was the nesting of a ♂ Gray Hawk with a ♀ Red-shouldered Hawk near Castolon in Big Bend. Various observers watched either a Gray Hawk or a Red-shouldered Hawk (which was often misidentified as an imm. Gray) at a nest there through April and there was a good deal of lively discussion and confusion among birders about which species was nesting where. In early May, various observers saw the Red-shouldered incubating and the Gray flying overhead calling (JA, GL, ph., LA, PG). Finally, suspicions of a mixed pair were confirmed May 18 when Purrington and Muth observed the Gray Hawk deliver a lizard to the nest where it was accepted by the Red-shouldered. One downy chick was clearly visible peeking over the edge of the nest. On May 22 & 24 Gee watched this odd couple standing shoulder to shoulder at the edge of the nest in what he felt was an attempt to shade the eggs or young from the sun. By the last few days of May it was apparent that the pair had deserted the nest (fide BBo) and that the young bird(s) had not survived. This hybridization is almost certainly unprecedented.

was tallied Mar. 24–Apr. 15 through s. Texas with 496 at Kingsville Apr. 11 the largest flock reported (fide JEC). Another 400 Mississippi Kites were seen over Harlingen Apr. 20 (OC). As many as 40 pairs of Mississippi Kites were reported to be nesting in residential areas of San Angelo (DT). Bald Eagles were noted at their traditional nest near Tivoli this spring after not being seen there for several years. Two adults and one immature were seen there Mar. 18–19 (D & RM). Elsewhere, Bald Eagles successfully nested on Toledo Bend Res. (two eaglets fledged, fide RH), but failed on L. Conroe (DP).

Seyffert flushed a ♀ Cooper's Hawk from a nest along the

South Pease R., Cottle, May 29, the first nest reported from that region since 1954. Single Cooper's Hawks, whose status in n.c. Texas is poorly known (CH), were observed on the late dates of May 27–28 (RK) in 2 Van Zandt locations, leading to speculation of nesting in that area. A report of a N. Goshawk in Brazoria Mar. 23 (MDe) is under review by the T.B.R.C. as is another report at Bentsen Apr. 16 (KBar, DMy). There are currently only 4 accepted records of this species in Texas, one of which is a specimen. To our knowledge this species has never been photographed in Texas despite the 50 or more sight reports (without documentation) over the past 100 years.

A juv. Gray Hawk at Big Bend's Rio Grande Village entertained observers May 17–22 as it begged food from the adult in conspicuous locations (DM, JSp, JGe). The Broad-winged Hawk migration was certainly obvious in s. Texas Mar. 24–Apr. 15 (Table 1), but not as spectacular as last spring. No major Broad-winged flights were observed in East Texas this season. The best kettle of Broad-winged Hawks in n.c. Texas contained a "pitiful" 10 birds over Van Zandt Apr. 6 (RK). Haller reported fewer Broad-winged at Hagerman this season than in the past few years, and virtually none was noted in Johnson (CE). Yet Broad-winged were again detected later than normal and in increased numbers west of their documented breeding range.

Swainson's Hawks were commonly seen in the Kingsville area Mar. 25–May 19 (N & PP), but the largest concentration was of only 400 birds Apr. 15. O'Neil reports that Swainson's Hawks were much in evidence around Falfurrias the 3rd week of April when virtually every fence pole in the area had a Swainson's on it. The 19 Swainson's Hawks in Nacogdoches Apr. 10 tripled the area's previous one-day high count (DW). In n.c. Texas the best figure mustered for Swainson's was 77 observed Apr. 6 near Canton, Van Zandt (RK). Seventy-five migrant Swainson's were seen feeding in a freshly burned field near Pecos May 1 (PS). We are obviously missing the major movements of this species in spring. Twenty White-tailed Hawks worked over a burning field near Falfurrias Mar. 2 (AO). These concentrations of White-tailed (which we have reported on in previous seasons) are somewhat unpredictable, but spectacular. A Zone-tailed Hawk nest was discovered on the Devil's R. in Val Verde in April (KB et al.) for a first documented county record. Up to two Ferruginous Hawks lingered until May 18 in Kleberg (N & PP, AO). The Ferruginous Hawk that wintered in Nacogdoches remained through Mar. 19 (MW). This was a first record of a Ferruginous Hawk staying the entire winter in the pineywoods (DW). A Rough-legged Hawk in Matagorda Mar. 23 was unusual (MDe).

Concentrations of up to 33 Crested Caracaras were noted near a chicken farm at Ricardo (fide N & PP). Past roadside counts of Am. Kestrels have shown a pronounced movement through the Panhandle during the last week of March and the first week of April (KS). This year the phenomenon was further reinforced when 100+ were seen in the Palo Duro Canyon vicinity Mar. 30 (F & JE). With the release program at Laguna Atascosa in full swing, the status of "wild" Aplomado Falcons in Texas is probably doomed to remain unknown. An Aplomado Falcon was seen chasing a Wilson's Phalarope near the Port of Brownsville May 2 (MF) and another was seen near the same location May 7 (AM). Federal researchers banded 127 Peregrine Falcons on S. Padre I. Apr. 10–May 18, and reported an unofficial total of 1000 seen there during the period (fide JEC). Interesting Prairie Falcon reports included one in Tom Green in early March (fide DT), one in Calhoun Mar. 5 (RU), one at Roma Mar. 31 (MD), and one Apr. 23 & 30 in Kleberg (N & PP).



Adult Red-shouldered Hawk on the nest that it shared with a Gray Hawk at Big Bend National Park, Texas, May 3, 1989. Photograph/Peter Gottschling.

**Table 1. Major Broad-winged Hawk Movements, Texas, Spring 1989**

| <i>Date</i> | <i>No. of hawks</i> | <i>Location</i> | <i>Observer/Reporter</i> |
|-------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Mar. 24     | 4032                | Kleberg         | JEc                      |
| Mar. 27     | 6671                | Kleberg         | JEc                      |
| Mar. 28     | 5000                | Harlingen       | OC                       |
| Mar. 29     | 1434                | Santa Ana       | <i>fide</i> JEc          |
| Mar. 29     | 2500                | Kleberg         | <i>fide</i> JEc          |
| Mar. 30     | 5000                | Corpus Christi  | JG                       |
| Apr. 7      | 8000                | Kleberg         | HS                       |
| Apr. 12     | 1088                | Hidalgo         | <i>fide</i> JEc          |
| Apr. 15     | 10000               | Duval           | AO                       |
| Apr. 15     | 6000                | Kleberg         | N & PP                   |

**RAILS TO SHOREBIRDS** — A Yellow Rail carefully described from Croton Springs in Big Bend Mar. 27 (B & CL) was an accidental species in w. Texas. A calling King Rail was at L. Meredith Mar. 12 (KS), for the first record from that area earlier than May, at a location where there was evidence of nesting in 1987. A Virginia Rail was in El Paso May 21 (JSp) where the species is not known to breed, and an imm. Virginia Rail at Muleshoe Apr. 24 (DCI) raised speculation of possible nesting there. Grantham reported that "Purple Gallinules staged their usual drop-ins in Corpus Christi this spring." He recorded five birds picked up in backyards there, each associated with a swimming pool. "The last bird I picked up was on May 30 after spending a day in a jacuzzi. When these migrants arrive in Corpus Christi they must literally fold up their wings, close their eyes, and drop into whatever they are over at the time." A Com. Moorhen discovered May 14 in Cleburne constituted only the first or 2nd record for Johnson (CE). By far, the vast majority of Sandhill Cranes passed through n.c. Texas Mar. 11–12 with some reports lasting through Mar. 17. There was an isolated report of 50 Sandhills Apr. 12 in Hunt (GH), and a few Sandhills remained on Galveston I. until Apr 17 (*fide* TE).

Grantham reported that Mar. 21 was the major grounding day of grassland shorebird species on the c. coast. He had reports of thousands of Lesser Golden-Plovers and Pectoral and Upland sandpipers with hundreds of Baird's Sandpipers at Corpus Christi Naval Air Station that day. Grantham also remarked that he had the opportunity to handle several injured Upland Sandpipers during the spring and found each extremely thin and underweight. "During the peak of their migration it was very dry, the ground was parched and cracked and there was literally no green vegetation." He felt that many of these grassland migrants were not able to find food in that area. A major rainstorm Mar. 27 dropped 350 Lesser Golden-Plovers into Nacogdoches (SL, MW), and a cold front Apr. 9 brought an additional 150. Although not impressive by coastal standards, these are noteworthy concentrations for the woodlands of East Texas (TE). Forty Lesser Golden-Plovers in a flooded field near Ft. Worth Apr. 4 (JWS, DM) was an unusually high number for that area, as were 30 at L. Tawakoni Mar. 19 (RK) where they are not normally seen. Three pairs of Snowy Plovers were at the McAllen sewage ponds Apr. 22–23 where the species has nested for several years (JA). Bartels counted 24 Piping Plovers along a 7-mi stretch of Mustang I. during mid-April, and a lone Piping was inland at McAllen Apr. 29 (OC). Mountain Plover is a very rare spring migrant in East Texas and the report of 150+ seen in a Matagorda paddyfield Mar. 13–23 (C & JMc, MDe) boggles the imagination. A flock of 11 Mountain Plovers near Corsicana Mar. 26 was an exciting find as well (AV et al.). A territorial pair of Mountain Plovers was observed w. of Ft. Davis May 3 (JD), and a nest with 2 eggs was photographed there May 6 (ML).

A group of 40+ Black-necked Stilts Apr. 9 in Lynn near Lubbock (L, S, & DM) was an extraordinary gathering for that area. Eubanks and Morgan, joined Apr. 29 by Behrstock and Ellis, conducted their traditional shorebird surveys along the U.T.C. High counts included 647 Semipalmated Plovers and 1279 Pectoral Sandpipers Apr. 29, 690 Whimbrels and 4000 Long-billed Dowitchers May 6, and 305 Hudsonian Godwits, 2540 Ruddy Turnstones, 725 Red Knots, 5000 Sanderlings, 2870 White-rumped Sandpipers, 5000 Dunlins, and 655 Stilt Sandpipers May 13. In n.c. Texas, Haynie remarked that "Overall, however, the shorebird migration was poorer than last year if not poorer than the last several. Very high lake levels offering little or no exposed shoreline were blamed for the low totals in many areas." Haller's careful and frequent censusing of shorebirds this season at Hagerman found Western and Least sandpipers in higher numbers than last year while White-rumped, Baird's, Pectoral, and Stilt sandpipers were all down.

Lower's Long-billed Curlew in Nacogdoches Mar. 11 represented only the 2nd county record and the first for spring. Three Hudsonian Godwits at Midland May 6–9 provided only the 2nd recent record there (FW), and 23 at Waco May 12 (JMu) made an unusual local record. In n.c. Texas, Hudsonian Godwit numbers peaked at 14 birds in Ft. Worth May 10 (JWS, DM) and 32 at Hagerman May 11 (KH). Marbled Godwits in small numbers showed up in Austin, Ft. Worth, Hagerman, Midland, L. Balmorhea, and El Paso Apr. 8–May 13. Up to 75 White-rumped Sandpipers at Midland May 11–20 (FW) made the largest number in that area since 1976. Three Baird's Sandpipers foraged along the bank of the Rio Grande May 3 at Hot Springs in Big Bend (GL, BQ et al.), where the species



Mountain Plover at nest in Jeff Davis County, Texas, May 6, 1989. Photograph/Mark Lockwood.

is considered accidental. Over 500 Long-billed Dowitchers fed along the edges of a playa at Midland Apr. 23 (FW), and at least 75 were still present May 20. Williams commented that never before had so many dowitchers stayed so long in that area. Wilson's Phalaropes peaked at 1000 individuals at the Lewisville sewage ponds in Denton May 6 (KL), and 850 individuals at San Antonio's Mitchell L. May 13 (WS).

**JAEGERS TO TERNS** — Small numbers of jaegers (predominantly Pomarine) regularly winter along the U.T.C., but migrations typically pass without a discernible movement (at least from shore). The jaeger flight along the Jefferson coastline in late March and early April therefore stood out in both its magnitude and diversity. While driving the stretch between Sabine Pass and High I. on Mar. 26, three Pomarines, nine Parasitics, and seven jaegers (sp.) were tallied (JM, TE). Re-



turning to the same area Apr. 1, Morgan recorded an additional Pomarine and four Parasitics. An unidentified jaeger (probably Pomarine) was seen May 27 at the Port Aransas jetty (A & MC).

A Laughing Gull on L. Conroe May 9 provided the 3rd Walker record (KM, DaC, BO). Banding returns have shown that Laughing Gulls fledged from Galveston colonies migrate to the w. coast of Mexico and Central America for their first winter (*fide* TE). However, the emigration of these gulls and the subsequent return trip are normally masked by the large resident population. Therefore, the 30,000 Laughing Gulls between Sabine Pass and High Island May 13, with over 80% in first-year plumage, offered a rare opportunity to see this migratory movement in progress (TE, JM). Franklin's Gulls seemed to be more abundant than usual on the c. coast as well as inland at Midland (E & NA, FW, m.ob.). By far the most exciting find of the season in n.c. Texas had to be the breeding plumaged **Common Black-headed Gull** discovered Mar. 1 (tAW) and reported again Mar. 3 (JWS et al.) at L. Arlington, Tarrant. The sighting constituted the 2nd accepted Texas record. A Bonaparte's Gull Apr. 14 in Midland (RMS) provided the 2nd spring record there (*fide* FW). A 3rd-winter Lesser Black-backed Gull on the Rio Grande at San Ygnacio, Zapata, Apr. 8 (BZ, RB) represented one of very few Texas records away from the immediate coast. Glaucous Gull, a rare but regular U.T.C. winter visitor, appeared at several locations this spring, including San Luis Pass Mar. 4 (LA, PG, BR), Jefferson Apr. 8 (BO, RH), and Bolivar Flats Apr. 15–May 6 (ph JM, TE, m.ob.). There was speculation that all these reports (as well as last winter's in the Freeport area) could pertain to the same wandering bird in first-winter plumage.

A tern May 7 at L. Balmorhea (JA, CBe) was probably an Elegant, but distance and viewing conditions did not allow for a positive identification. There are currently 2 accepted records of this West Coast tern in Texas, one of them at L. Balmorhea. A Least Tern was carefully described in *El Paso* May 28 (JSp), for only the 3rd area record. A Least Tern in Midland Apr. 15 (DK, RMS, m.ob.) was the first in that area for 10 years (FW). A Sooty Tern, a rare but regular breeder on the central and lower coast, wandered N to Galveston Apr. 5 (BDa). The Black Tern passage on the U.T.C. peaked May 13 with 1200 seen in Jefferson (TE, JM). In n.c. Texas a concentration of 200 Black Terns at a Dallas lake May 17 (JPe) was considered unusually large. Elsewhere, a Black Tern found dead near Abilene in Taylor May 13 (KSo, *fide* BH) provided a rare local record. In Midland, the species seems to get more uncommon each year (FW).

**DOVES TO WOODPECKERS** — White-winged Doves continued to spread across Texas this season. Notable records included singles at 2 Ft. Worth locations (JSt, B & CHol), and 2 pairs (one pair nesting) at Midland (JMe). At least two White-tipped Doves were again in Falfurrias (AO), and another was at nearby Kingsville through the spring (N & PP) for the first Kleberg record. A White-tipped Dove was calling in Corpus Christi Apr. 26 (JG, VE et al.) and five were observed in Live Oak Apr. 30 (J & SH). We are uncertain if we are seeing a range expansion or an increasing population of a formerly rarer species. Green Parakeet flocks of up to 40 birds were seen regularly in the McAllen area through March, but only scattered reports of three to seven individuals were reported there later (SWe, m.ob.). Arvin noted several pairs in McAllen Apr. 23. Up to nine Green Parakeets are now probably resident in Harlingen (OC). Red-crowned Parrots and Green Parakeets are almost never seen in winter at Sabal Palm Grove near Brownsville, but this spring both were seen regularly and seemed to be seeking nesting sites in the nearby dead palms left from the December 1983 freeze (M & RF).

Black-billed Cuckoos outnumbered Yellow-billeds at several locations this season. At the Palm Grove 10 or more Black-billeds were tallied Apr. 12–13 compared to only two Yellow-billeds, a reversal of the typical situation (M & RF).

Elsewhere, n.c. Texas had 4 reports of Black-billeds May 2–14 (m.ob., *fide* CH), and on the U.T.C. Eubanks reported that Black-billeds were particularly common during the first week of May. Groove-billed Anis seemed to arrive late in the L.R.G.V. with just a few seen until the last week of May when they began to arrive in numbers, a month behind their typical schedule (M & RF, N & PP, m.ob.).

A W. Screech-Owl at Kickapoo May 18 (KB, DT, RDa) probably represented a first for Kinney. Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls were more conspicuous this season than usual. At Falcon Dam we can confirm at least four ad. owls (one pair nesting) in early May (M & RF) with some unconfirmed reports of up to seven individuals present in the area. Elf Owls were reported throughout the season in scattered L.R.G.V. locations, but more noteworthy were several reports of the species outside their previously known range. Up to seven calling Elf Owls were located in the Devil's River State Natural Area, Val Verde, Apr. 21–22 (BAi, CS, KB et al.) and we also learned that several Elf Owls had been observed in this same area in April 1988 (C & TPa). Another Elf Owl observed at Kickapoo May 18 (ph. KB, DT, RDa) was an exciting find. The above records were firsts for Val Verde and Kinney. We received a convincing report last year, which we did not include in this column, of a calling Elf Owl near Sonora, Sutton, Apr. 19, 1988 (BMc) which subsequently could not be relocated. In light of the 1989 records, we want to bring up the 1988 report, with apologies to McKnight! Whether these recent Elf Owl reports represent a range expansion or merely more observations in an under-birded area of Texas remains to be seen. The only Long-eared Owl reported in the Panhandle this season was one at Muleshoe Mar. 15–30 (DCl), and one was in w. Harris Mar. 12 (RU) for one of few recent U.T.C. reports. A Pauraque calling at Del Rio Apr. 30 and later (VH) was notable for that area.

A well-out-of-range Blue-throated Hummingbird was at Sea Rim Apr. 29 (DP), representing only the 2nd record for the U.T.C. A Black-chinned Hummingbird at Angelina Mar. 28 was only the 2nd for that area (NB). A Broad-tailed Hummingbird May 5–10 in San Marcos (DiH, BWeb) provided a rare Austin-area record. A bird fitting the description of an ad. ♂ Allen's Hummingbird was at Kingsville Feb. 20–Mar. 7 (HS), but without tail feather measurements, etc., we are not able to confirm records of this species in Texas. Wandering Ringed Kingfishers were again seen in the Edwards Plateau region, well away from the Rio Grande. The first report was of a male seen Mar. 19 on the w. fork of the Frio R., 17 mi n. of Leakey, in Real (BuA, *fide* VE). Another male was seen Apr. 28 at Kerrville (JD) and yet another (or the same?) was reported May 21 & 28 along the Guadalupe R. near Comfort (*fide* E & SW). A Green Kingfisher on the San Gabriel R., near Georgetown, Mar. 19 (*fide* TMc) was rare at this n. edge of its range.

The most exciting woodpecker report of the season was of a **Lewis' Woodpecker** at Muleshoe May 9–13 (NT, BLi, ph., JSn, DS, DCl, m.ob.). This well-documented bird represented the latest the species has been recorded in Texas. A Red-headed Woodpecker at Comfort Apr. 12 (ES) was out of place, on the U.T.C., Eubanks reported that the species wandered into the coastal hiatus with one at High Island Apr. 14–20 (JD, PL, m.ob.) and one on Bolivar Pen. Apr. 22 (RU). An Acorn Woodpecker in Kerrville Apr. 28 (ESc) was at a location where the species is sporadically seen, and a Red-bellied Woodpecker at Abilene Apr. 22 (LBl, *fide* BHu) was w. of its regular range. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Corpus Christi to May 5 (CC) was the latest ever by 19 days there, and a Hairy Woodpecker investigating a tree hole in Dickens Apr. 22 (CA) led to speculation of possible nesting in that area (*fide* KS).

**FLYCATCHERS, SWALLOWS** — A wood-pewee (sp.) in Lubbock Mar. 29 (MY) was extremely early, not normally reported there before late April (*fide* KS). The torrential rains that flooded the U.T.C. May 18 grounded large numbers of

flycatchers, particularly *Empidonax*. On that date Morgan and Eubanks recorded the following between High Island and Sabine Pass: 80 E. Wood-Pewees, three Yellow-bellied, eight Acadian, three calling Alder, one calling Willow, 23 Traill's, and two Least Flycatchers, and eight unidentified *Empidonax*. A Willow Flycatcher was identified by song in Midland May 26 (FW), and seven Alder Flycatchers were heard and tape recorded May 14–16 in Austin (JA). A late Least Flycatcher was netted at Driftwood near Austin June 2 (DCo). Dusky Flycatchers were particularly common in Big Bend during late April and early May (JD, JA, GL, m.ob.). A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher netted and banded at Kickapoo (KB) May 11 was unusual for that area, w. of its typical migration range. A Black Phoebe near Conway, Carson, Mar. 30 (F & JE) furnished not only a new county record, but one of very few Panhandle observations (*fide* KS). Elsewhere, a Black Phoebe below Falcon Dam May 30 (A & MC) was unexpected; there had been several winter reports there. The Palmers and Grantham both reported that Ash-throated Flycatchers far outnumbered Great Crested and Brown-crested flycatchers on the coastal bend this season and wondered how much effect the drought may have had on this unusual species composition. Two pairs of Brown-crested Flycatchers on the Devil's River in Val Verde Apr. 21–22 (CS *et al.*) were at the n.w. limit of their range.

A Great Kiskadee near High Island May 7 (BBe *et al.*) was only the 7th for the U.T.C. Great Kiskadees range w. along the Rio Grande to Del Rio, but a kiskadee netted at Kickapoo Apr. 29 (KB) was at an unexpected location on the Edwards Plateau. A Couch's/Tropical Kingbird, rare at any season on the U.T.C., made a brief appearance Apr. 22 in Galveston (J & WR). After a fall record at the same location, a **Thick-billed Kingbird** was discovered at Cottonwood Campground in Big Bend Apr. 12 (WM) and seen regularly through the period (ph. PG, ML, GL). The bird was extremely territorial and by late in the season several observers reported that a 2nd and possibly a 3rd bird were present and nesting was suspected. A W. Kingbird arrived early in Houston Mar. 30 (JeP), and one in Nacogdoches May 30, the area's 4th spring record, was also the latest ever (D & MW). The Rose-throated Becard reported during the winter season at Bentsen was seen through at least Mar. 30 (MDe).

Many Purple Martins apparently perished in a n. Texas ice storm Mar. 4–7, but at least some survived. Valentine reported on five birds that huddled in one compartment of his martin house for 2 days and nights that somehow survived. A month later, a late cold snap Apr. 10–14 on the coastal bend took its toll of martins (JG) with many found dead from starvation. By the end of the season Grantham reported many martins in Corpus Christi were abandoning nests (some with young) owing to a lack of insects in that area. A Bank Swallow colony with about 40 birds was found at a gravel pit near the Rio Grande in Del Rio May 5 (GL, BQ, m.ob.). It is now known that this colony has been present for several years at this location, but not reported here before; there are fewer than 10 known nesting records for the state.

Cliff Swallow is a very rare breeder in far e. Texas, so the colony at Sea Rim, Jefferson, should be considered a significant range expansion. The slow eastward march of Cliff Swallow, however, does not compare to the blitzkrieg of the Cave Swallow (TE). Cave Swallows continued their invasion of the Texas coast, with 2 pairs found nesting with Cliff and Barn swallows at Sea Rim Apr. 24 (JCa, BS, ph. WG, JB, TE). Eubanks reported that the birds appeared to be of the southwestern race (as opposed to the darker Caribbean race). Cave Swallows were reported to have "taken over" the Concho Valley (DT), where it is reported that 95% of the buffy-rumped swallows are now Cave Swallows, and the species continues to inch toward Austin with two noted in Caldwell and three seen in Gonzales during the period (BF). There is evidence from the Palmers in Kleberg and from O'Neil's work in Brooks, Webb, and Duval that Cliff Swallows are reclaiming at least some of their nesting niches that had largely been pre-empted



Cave Swallows nesting at Sea Rim State Park on the Upper Texas Coast, May 13, 1989. Photograph/John Baird.

by Cave Swallows. They do not report any case where Cave Swallows have been pushed out completely, but they noted Cliff Swallows this season in several locations where they were entirely absent the past several years.

**CROWS TO SHRIKES** — Mexican Crows have wintered in the Brownsville area for 20 years, but this spring the Farmers noticed that several lingered into May and they began to suspect a nesting attempt. On May 7 Moorhouse saw one carrying a stick to an abandoned chemical plant near the Port of Brownsville and on May 13 it was determined that 4 nests were being built at the structure on an I-beam 50–70 feet off the ground (M & RF, AM). "Black-crested" Titmice stop short of Tarrant, occurring in the counties west and south, so one studied Apr. 22 at L. Benbrook may represent the first solid record for that area (CH). An extraordinary find was a nesting pair of White-breasted Nuthatches near Miami, Roberts, Apr. 25–May 10 (F & JE, ph. to T.P.R.F.). This represents a first nesting record for the Panhandle, where the species has only occasionally been recorded in summer (KS).

Several Mountain Bluebirds near Spur, Dickens, May 6 (KR) were extremely late, as most are gone from that area by early April (KS). On the U.T.C. the thrush movement overall could be termed fair, with Gray-cheeked Thrushes present in good numbers (TE). The rains of Apr. 30 grounded over 150 at High Island (MaH). Swainson's Thrushes were more common than normal in n.c. Texas this spring and were reported in very high numbers during the first half of May at several locations (RR, GK). Clay-colored Robins remained at Bentsen all period and there were a few reports of individuals seen at Anzalduas and Santa Ana. A **Varied Thrush** was described from Cottonwood Campground in Big Bend Apr. 12 (D & MSh) and was later seen by another observer at the same location Apr. 14 (LD). Pending acceptance by the T.B.R.C. this would represent about the 6th Texas record. A Brown Thrasher in Dog Canyon, G.M.N.P., May 9 and a Long-billed Thrasher at the Old Ranch in Big Bend during April and May (m.ob.) each provided rare park records. At least 2 pairs of Long-billed Thrashers were again present at Midland (FW), and a Long-billed at Victoria May 20 (D & RM) was a little out of its regular range as was a singing Curve-billed Thrasher near Palacios, Matagorda, Apr. 23 (StW). Phainopepla seemed to be popping up out-of-range all over the state in recent months. Records this spring included one at Meridian S.P., Parker, Apr. 16 (RPa) for the northeasternmost record for Texas; one at Kickapoo, Kinney, May 10 (KB), and two near Sonora, Sutton, May 17 (RDa, DT). A well-described N. Shrike was seen near Texline, Dallam, Mar. 6 (†AW) and another very late individual was at Mineral

Wells S P, Parker, Mar 19 (†CH) Following a similar occurrence last year, a pair of Loggerhead Shrikes was attending three recently-fledged young near Alamo May 19 (BWe) for a very rare L.R.G.V. nesting record.

**VIREOS, WARBLERS** — Bell's Vireo numbers seemed better than last year in n.c. Texas with birds reported in several areas where they had not been seen in years (CH). One Bell's Vireo was at Cleburne May 21, the first in 9 years at that location (CE). Bell's Vireos, rare migrants and breeders in the pineywoods, sang in a small clearcut near Nacogdoches May 27–29 (D & MW, SL). Single Yellow-throated Vireos at Big Bend May 2 (JD) and in G.M.N.P. May 25 (JD, MaF) were out-of-range. Red-eyed Vireos apparently poured through the L.R.G.V. Apr. 12–13; over 1000 were seen at the Palm Grove alone (M & RF). A pair of **Yellow-green Vireos** was discovered at Laguna Atascosa May 25 (†MF, TP) near the site where they nested last summer. Others were reported without details at Santa Ana.

The rains associated with the cold front of Apr. 14–15 grounded massive numbers of migrants along the entire Texas coast. A Blue-winged Warbler at Lubbock May 6 (GJ) represented only about the 3rd record for the Panhandle (KS). We received more reports of "Lawrence's" Warblers this season than ever before. One was in Jefferson Apr. 16 (MA, SG), three were in Galveston the same date (BH *et al.*), one was at High Island Apr. 19 (JD, PL *et al.*), one was at Aransas Apr. 20 (*fide* BJ), and one was at Dallas May 5 (DCr, CSn). Tennessee Warblers were the most common migrants through much of the L.R.G.V. during the season (OC, m.ob.), while at Midland, a Tennessee Warbler May 6 (AWe) was considered a rarity (FW). Eastward wandering Virginia's Warblers were reported from Jefferson Apr. 15 (GC) and Houston Apr. 26 (PDH, SS). Lucy's Warblers arrived at Big Bend's Cottonwood Campground area Apr. 15 (ML) and by early May the area was "crawling with territorial, singing birds." Other territorial birds were found Apr. 29 and May 29 in Hudspeth (JSp), where breeding had previously not been known to occur. The Tropical Parula at Corpus Christi from last fall and winter was still present Mar. 11 (ph. JG).

We were intrigued by a well-described report of an apparent imm plumaged Chestnut-sided Warbler in Lubbock Mar. 17 (DS). Besides the unusual plumage, the date is more than a month earlier than the early known date for that area. A Magnolia Warbler in Big Bend May 2 (CBe) was rare that far west. We belatedly report a very well described Cape May Warbler from Big Bend seen May 3, 1988, also well out of range (JaH). Other significant warbler records from the Trans-Pecos included a Hermit Warbler at Boot Springs Apr. 22 (ML), an Ovenbird at Rio Grande Village May 17 (DMu), a dead Kentucky Warbler at Alpine May 13 (*fide* ML), a Worm-eating Warbler at Big Bend during early May (TCO, RKO), a N. Waterthrush at Hueco Tanks May 6 (BZ), and single Hooded Warblers at Big Bend Apr. 30 (JD) and at Hueco Tanks May 6 (BZ). A Black-throated Gray Warbler in Walker Apr. 27 (BO) was e. of its range as was a Townsend's Warbler at Hearne in Robertson Mar. 13 (JY). Although Golden-cheeked Warblers were still numerous in vast cedar breaks in far w. Travis, the species was conspicuously sparse or missing from several tracts closer to Austin. Separating effects of urban influences from recent droughty weather or other forces is difficult (CS). In other areas of the Golden-cheeked Warbler's range, observers felt they were in slightly lower than normal numbers (m.ob.).

Unusual records of Blackpoll Warblers included one in Dallas May 5 (BG, PB), one in Lubbock May 12 (AWF), one at Muleshoe May 13 (AWF, DS), and one in Nacogdoches May 18 (MW). A Swainson's Warbler in Midland Apr. 18 (JMe, m ob ) entertained observers by visiting a lawn sprinkler and provided only the 2nd record for that area (*fide* FW). A MacGillivray's Warbler netted at the Palm Grove Mar. 16 (*fide* M & RF) could have been a locally wintering bird. Other

unusual MacGillivray's Warbler records included one in Houston (where Eubanks reports it is a rare but increasingly regular U.T.C. migrant) Apr. 15 (D & EM), and another at the Sabal Palm Grove May 5 (M & RF). We received 2 well described reports of **Gray-crowned Yellowthroat** this season. The first was at Santa Ana Mar. 8 (DP); the few other reports we received from that area were not convincing. The 2nd was at the Palm Grove in Cameron where the Farmers discovered a singing male May 21 (thought to possibly be the same individual that was there in spring 1988) (ph. BrMc, MK). A Hooded Warbler discovered Mar. 29 in Campbell, Hunt, represented a 2nd county record (MWh).

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — Hundreds of Summer and Scarlet tanagers in about equal numbers moved through the Palm Grove Apr. 12–13 (M & RF), but on the coastal bend, Grantham noted that Scarlet Tanagers were much more common than usual and in many cases outnumbered Summers. A Black-headed Grosbeak in Johnson May 14 (CE) was a first for that county. An extremely early ♂ Lazuli Bunting was carefully studied Mar. 11 at Palo Duro Canyon (MN), the earliest ever for that area by 44 days (KS). Elsewhere, Lazuli Buntings made news with an incredible 5 sightings in n.c. Texas: two in Tarrant May 5 (WC) and May 13 (GK), two at Hagerman May 9 and perhaps a different one May 13 (BG, PB), and another in Collin (*fide* WPU). Closer to central Texas a Lazuli Bunting Apr. 23 in Wilson (WS) was noteworthy, and eight seen Apr. 30 at Utley (near Austin) and another nine there May 1 (BF) were unprecedented. A pair of Varied Buntings at Lost Maples Apr. 23–30 (*fide* JMA, m.ob.) was e. of their normal range, and one at Rancho Santa Margarita Apr. 26 (JA) was among few recent reports from that area. Singing Indigo Buntings in Alpine Apr. 29 (ML) and in Hudspeth May 13 (JSp) were noteworthy for those areas.

Dickcissels were abundant and widely distributed this season with a significant push through s. and e. Texas noted Apr. 23–May 6. Noteworthy observations of migrant Dickcissels included flocks of 300 seen Apr. 23 in Kleberg (N & PP), 1000 Apr. 25 in Victoria (D & RM), 550 on the U.T.C. Apr. 29 (TE, JM, BBe, RE), 1000 in Victoria May 2 (D & RM), and 1200 on the U.T.C. May 6 (TE, JM). The most impressive Dickcissel report, however, occurred well inland when a staggering 10,000 were counted during an all day outing May 1 in Hunt, Rains, and Van Zandt (RK, JN). Olive Sparrows are seldom reported from the Del Rio area, so five there May 5 (GL, BQ *et al.*) were of note. An Olive Sparrow May 14 near Aransas (*fide* BJ) represented only the 3rd record for the refuge area. A Green-tailed Towhee Apr. 14–27 was an unexpected visitor to Kingsville (N & PP, CC). Six to 10 White-collared Seedeaters remained in San Ygnacio through the period.

Botteri's Sparrows were more common than usual along the lower coast between Boca Chica and Laguna Atascosa (M & RF). At Aransas, a singing Botteri's May 24–27 (BJ, TS) represented a first refuge record. Quite late in Lubbock Apr. 14 were eight Am. Tree Sparrows (MN), a species normally gone from the Panhandle area by late March. Clay-colored Sparrows were reported to be more common than normal across most of the state. Two Black-throated Sparrows, the first to reach Cooke, were discovered near the new L. Ray Roberts reservoir n. of Denton May 2 (*fide* WPU). Amazing was a flock of 5000 Lark Buntings near Falfurrias on the late date of Mar. 23 (AO). A very late, lone Lark Bunting in breeding plumage was in Allen, Collin, May 8 (RR). Incredible were four **Baird's Sparrows** near Valentine in Jeff Davis Apr. 15 (†PL, SFin). This is a species whose wintering range in Texas is poorly known, and very few well documented records exist for the state. A Le Conte's Sparrow at Driftwood May 4 (DCO, CS) provided a very late Austin record. First park records for both Chestnut-collared and McCown's longspurs were established Mar. 5 at G.M.N.P. (MiH, MaF).

Good numbers of Bobolinks drifted west into East Texas this season. Wolf termed it the Bobolink's "best showing in at

least 5 years at Nacogdoches." Observers there found Bobolinks May 5–8 in 4 different fields with a high of 15 seen May 5 (SL, D & MW). Graber saw a group of 10–12 Bobolinks at Sea Rim May 6, two were at High Island May 3 (BW), and a lone bird was at Corpus Christi Apr. 22 (JD, A & MC). In n.c. Texas, Bobolinks made news when two showed up in Hunt (TiM), a flock of 25 appeared at Paris, Lamar, May 7 (MP et al.), and 20 more were seen at Seagoville, Dallas, May 15 (fide WPu). One does not normally think of W. Meadowlarks as eating other birds, but during the early March ice storm in Ft. Worth, several were seen to feed on dead juncos and goldfinches having first attacked the former (RDC). A colony of Great-tailed Grackles, very rare in the Pineywoods region, was discovered in Upshur this season (FWillis). Elsewhere, a Great-tailed Grackle in G.M.N.P., May 12 was of note (MaF) as was a Bronzed Cowbird near McNary May 12 (JSp). Arvin and others note that the Hooded Oriole appears to be making a comeback in the L.R.G.V.; JA noted about 20 pairs between Kingsville and Falcon Dam during April. An Audubon's Oriole in Bandera May 20 (E & NA) was well n. of its range, but two in McMullen Apr. 12 were a little closer to home.

A Purple Finch in El Paso Mar. 11 (ML) provided a rare record; it is usually only an accidental fall visitor there (fide BZ). The Com. Redpoll at Glen Rose from the winter was last seen Mar. 1 (ph. AW). Lesser Goldfinches rarely wander into n.c. Texas, but one was carefully documented Mar. 18 near L. Grapevine in Denton (JCu, fide WPu). Two Evening Grosbeaks in G.M.N.P. Mar. 15 (RRe) and one in Walker Apr. 1 (DP) were the only reports of the season.

**CORRIGENDUM** — The Ash-throated Flycatcher at Victoria Aug. 30–Sept. 22, 1988 (AB 43:131) should be corrected to read Brown-crested Flycatcher.

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# NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN- INTERMOUNTAIN REGION

Thomas H. Rogers



**A**fter a very cold February and early March, the weather turned more seasonable, although mostly cool and very wet, helping to relieve the winter's dryness. April was mostly warm and somewhat dry. May again turned cool and wet in most areas. The migration timetable, insofar as observers commented, showed no consistent deviation from the normal, probably reflecting the great diversity of the Region. Mild weather in late March at Fortine, Montana, speeded up the duck migration, but thawing of ponds at Kootenai National Wildlife Refuge, Bonners Ferry, Idaho, was several weeks late. Waterfowl and diving birds were late and many land birds were early at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, Oregon. The Salmon, Idaho, area and the Lewiston, Idaho/Clarkston, Washington area reported some record early arrivals but no correlation with weather was offered for these latter areas. Water conditions appeared good in most areas for the approaching summer.

**LOONS TO IBISES**—Common Loons were appearing in the Region as early as March 24. A pair was nesting on Murphy L. near Fortine, MT (WW), and a pair was nesting on Wenatchee L., Chelan, WA (RO). A vagrant Red-necked Grebe appeared at Rowena, OR, Apr. 2 (DL). Three pairs of Red-necked Grebes arrived at Bull L., s.e. of Fortine (WW). Only three appeared at Kootenai N.W.R., Bonners Ferry, ID (LDN). A single bird at the Yakima R. delta, Richland, WA, May 9 & 15 made Woodley's first spring record there.

The first spring migrant Am. White Pelicans at Malheur N.W.R., Harney, OR, were reported Mar. 18. About 1600 pairs were using the nesting islands there. A few pelicans appeared in the vicinity of Columbia N.W.R., Othello, WA. One was sighted at Ninepipe N.W.R., Charlo, MT, May 13 (VV) and

single birds were seen May 1 on McArthur L., Boundary, ID (PH, SHS), and at Sunnyside on Pend Oreille L., Bonner, ID (EC). A Double-crested Cormorant was also sighted May 1 at Sunnyside (EC). These birds were starting to arrive at Columbia N.W.R. Apr. 17 (WRR). Lind Coulee, Grant, WA, had three Clark's Grebes May 13 (BT), and Metcalf N.W.R., Stevensville, MT, and C.J. Strike Res., Owyhee, ID, each had one (DH, AL, JS).

American Bitterns were observed throughout the winter at Columbia N.W.R. Single Great Egrets were noted at Kootenai N.W.R. (RDC); at Market Lake W.M.A., Roberts, ID (SP); at Siphon Pond, Pocatello, ID (CHT); and at St. Maries Gun Club ponds, Benewah, ID (JP, DP). Snowy and Cattle egrets were reported for the Rupert, ID, vicinity (WHS). Two Green-backed Herons appeared at Cascade Locks, OR, Apr. 22 (DA, DL) and another was at Mosier, OR, the next day (DL). One was sighted near Thorp, WA, May 18 (DPa, TS) and one was along the Clark Fork R. just w. of Missoula, MT, May 19 (CM). It looked like a very good nesting season in store for Black-crowned Night-Herons at Malheur N.W.R. Silcott I. on the Snake R. w. of Clarkston, WA, had an adult in breeding plumage Apr. 2 (CG). An ad. night-heron at Thompson L., Kootenai, ID, May 31 was the latilong's 2nd (SHS). A record 3500 pairs of White-faced Ibises were estimated for the Harney Basin around Malheur, and a colony of 50 pairs, the first on record, was found at Summer Lake, OR (MS).

**WATERFOWL**—The largest concentration of Tundra Swans, numbering 900+, was along Crab Cr. e. of Wilson Creek, WA, Mar. 3 (BT). About 300 Trumpeter Swans were present in the Red Rock Lakes N.W.R. area, Lima, MT. Nest numbers were down a bit there. Two Trumpeters frequenting a lake n.w. of Kamloops, BC, were suspected of nesting (RRH). Four of the birds still persisted at Turnbull N.W.R., Cheney,

WA At Malheur only 2 Trumpeter nests had been located and the spring census revealed only 19 birds. Their numbers have been declining there in recent years, presumably because of a shortage of winter food during severe cold spells. Three Trumpeters appeared on a pond at Plaza, WA, Mar. 13 (CG) and one at Columbia N.W.R. in late March (WRR).

Deer Flat N.W.R., Nampa, ID, counted 300 Greater White-fronted Geese and 400 Snow Geese Mar. 9 (NS). Seventy of the former at Tranquille, BC, made an unusually large number there (SR). Notable was a Snow Goose at Kamloops Mar. 26 (RR). Some 2500 Ross' Geese were sighted near Hines, OR, Apr. 13 (CR). Two appeared at Sunnyside May 1 (EC). A Brant was reported at Abert L., Lake, OR, in late May (CC). An apparent Wood Duck x Cinnamon Teal hybrid male was photographed and sketched in May at Warm Springs, MT. The nest box being occupied by its supposed mate is being watched (DS, KS). A "Eurasian" Green-winged Teal was sighted in the Hines area Apr. 13 (CR). A hybrid ♂ Blue-winged x Cinnamon Teal was reported Apr. 22-23 at the Frenchman Hills-Dodson Road junction, Grant, WA (DPa). A scattering of Eurasian Wigeons was reported, with a notable "many" at Ninepipe N.W.R. (PD, PLW). Four Greater Scaup at Summer L. (MA), one at Anna Res., Lake, OR (MS), and one at Boardman, OR (PM, LW), all in March, were unusual, as were 16 Oldsquaw on Kamloops L., BC, Apr. 13 (SR). Two Harlequin Ducks were seen s.w. of Hood River, OR, Apr. 22 for a rare spring sighting (DA, DL). Surf Scoters peaked at 30 at Tranquille, BC, the first week of May (SR) for the only report. Five female and one ♂ Red-breasted Mergansers were identified at Kootenai N.W.R. Apr. 26 for the first record there (LDN).

**VULTURES TO CRANES**—A Turkey Vulture over Hampton Slough, Columbia N.W.R., May 3 was unusual (WRR). An Osprey lingered near Malheur headquarters Apr. 21-May 30 (m.ob.) and one was sighted to the south in the Blitzen Valley May 27 (*fide* GI). One was reported from Anna Res. May 11 (MS). A Black-shouldered Kite was reported at Gloyd Seeps n. of Moses Lake, WA, Apr. 23 (SV, JV). Bald Eagle numbers in the Harney Basin peaked at 160 Mar. 20-21 (GI). Thirty-six were feeding on a cow carcass near Kamloops Mar. 29 (SR). The pair at Kootenai N.W.R. began incubating around Mar. 23 and hatched one young Apr. 24, two weeks later than last year. Two other nests around Bonners Ferry were unsuccessful (LDN). Five sightings each of Merlin and Peregrine Falcon were reported.

Sage Grouse males at 2 leks at Foster Flats near Malheur totalled 50 in mid-April (CR). Five leks at Hart Mt. National Antelope Refuge, OR, totalled up to 94 males (BP). Three Sage Grouse occupied a lek along Highway 395 at Izee Road s. of John Day, OR, Mar. 24 (PS). In n.e. Oregon, 14 Wild Turkeys were observed on Troy grade and 38 on Lost Prairie between Troy and Flora (PS). The species was reported near Fernan L., Coeur d' Alene, ID (*fide* SHS) and in the Yakima R. canyon area n. of Yakima, WA (EH).

A major push of 7000-10,000 Sandhill Cranes passed Kamloops Apr. 23, for the largest single-day count on record for that area (SR). St. Andrews, WA, had 1200 Apr. 21 (PMA). Unexpected was the species at Sunriver and Bend, OR (DD, CMi), and at Prairie, ID (AL). Some were in the Blackfoot R. valley e. of Missoula, along with a Whooping Crane, in mid-April (PD). A Whooper also appeared at Red Rock Lakes N.W.R. at about the same time (*fide* PLW).

**SHOREBIRDS TO TERNS**—Up to four Black-bellied Plovers appeared at Summer L. in April (Crawford, CC, CCh, CMi, MS) and one was sighted at Flagstaff L. n. of Plush, OR, May 14 (DS, BS). The species was also noted at Indian Creek Res. e. of Boise, ID (CS). Kamloops had a Lesser Golden-Plover May 13 (ASu, RRH). Up to a dozen Snowy Plovers were seen at Summer L. Apr. 27 (CMi). About 250 Semipalmated Plovers were counted there during a spring shorebird census Apr. 27

(CC, CMi, MS). Two were noted at Bend (TC) and three at Emmett, ID (ST). Black-necked Stilts were nesting at Columbia N.W.R. (WRR). They were also seen near George, WA (BT); at the Yakima R. delta (REW); Reardan, WA (HV), Emmett, ID (ST); and Bruneau, ID (AL). An Am. Avocet was found near Douglas L. in the s. Okanagan Valley, BC, about Apr. 15 (RM), and the Kelowna, BC, vicinity had a copulating pair at Robert L. (RC) and another pair at Alki L. (WCW), both May 21.

The first Willet for Deschute was recorded at Bend May 16 (TC). An astounding 24 Whimbrels were reported at Malheur N.W.R. May 20-21 (m.ob., *fide* GI). One Whimbrel showed up at Revelstoke, BC, May 24 (WD, DPo). Two Long-billed Curlews were seen at Kootenai N.W.R. Nesting by Long-billeds has been confirmed in n. Boundary, ID (LDN). Eight Marbled Godwits appeared at Summer L. Apr. 27 and one showed up s. of Burns May 3 (CMi). One was sighted at Revelstoke May 24 and a Red Knot was there the next day (WD, DP). Summer L. had a Red Knot Apr. 27 (CMi, MS) and a Sanderling May 4 (CC). One Sanderling was at Tranquille Apr. 27 (RR). Single Semipalmated Sandpipers were observed at 2 spots in the Okanagan Valley, BC (RC). An impressive 6000 Least Sandpipers visited north Abert L., Lake, OR, Apr. 27 (MA). Baird's Sandpiper, rare in the Region in spring, numbered 10 at Malheur Apr. 22 (JB, CMi) and one was at Summer L. May 7 (SS, PS, TM, AM). The only Pectoral Sandpipers reported were 20 around Kamloops May 13 (RRH). North Abert L. hosted 300+ Dunlin Apr. 27 (MA) and a few were noted at Malheur Tranquille had two Mar. 27-Apr. 9 (SR) and Separation L. in the Kamloops area had seven May 13-15 (RRH). One photographed at Ft. Boise W.M.A., Canyon, ID, was a vagrant (CK). Bend had a Short-billed Dowitcher Apr. 30 (TC).

A Franklin's Gull appeared at Coeur d' Alene L. Apr. 30 (DJ) and one at Swan L., Vernon, BC, May 21 was noteworthy (RC). Mann's L., Lewiston, ID, had a vagrant Bonaparte's Gull May 4 (C.B.). Summer Lake had a Herring Gull Mar. 4 (AA, MA) and two adults of the species were sighted both near Ellensburg (PMA, BT) and at Vantage, WA, Mar. 11 (BT). One Herring Gull was sighted at Clarkston Apr. 6 (CV) and six were at the Orofino, ID, sewage ponds Apr. 11 (CV, OM, MK). Two at Brown's L. s.e. of Ovando, MT, in April made the latilong's first record (PH, JM, PLW). Hood River, OR, had a report of Thayer's Gull Apr. 4 (DA, JE), and one was sighted at Hayden L., ID, Mar. 20 (PH). Hood River's 3rd Western Gull was at Hood River May 20. It was being harassed by a Glaucous-winged Gull (DA). A first-year Glaucous-winged appeared at Vantage Mar. 11 (BT) and one lingered at the Yakima delta until the very late date, for there, of Mar. 10 (REW). Alki L. had one May 21 (GD). Two imm. Glaucous Gulls frequented Coeur d' Alene's landfill Mar. 18 (JP, DP).

A few Caspian Terns were noted at Ft. Boise W.M.A. and Indian Creek Res. May 6 (ST). Hood River was visited by a Com. Tern May 20 (DA, DL) and Clarkston had seven Forster's Terns May 25 (CV).

**PIGEONS TO HUMMINGBIRDS**—More Band-tailed Pigeons than usual, 25, were sighted near Hood River May 20 (DL). The Birds of Prey Natural Area had two Barn Owls May 20 (AL) and one was sighted Apr. 16 on Bateman I. near the Yakima delta, where nesting is suspected (REW). At least 30 Flammulated Owls were found in the Kamloops area in May (RRH *et al.*) and at least three were noted at Blewett Pass w. of Wenatchee, WA, May 12-13 (PMA, JK, PS, CV). One was at Buckhorn Springs in the Blue Mts., n.e. OR, May 28 (PS). The mountains e. of St. Ignatius, MT, furnished a sighting of a Great Gray Owl (EB). Two N. Saw-whet Owls were sighted at Deer Flat N.W.R., Nampa, ID (AL, ST). In Washington one was calling along the San Poil R. s. of Republic Mar. 12; five were heard at Blewett Pass May 14 (BT), and the species was suspected of nesting at Rose Cr. Preserve n. of Pullman (JP, DP).



Two White-throated Swifts 4 mi w. of Coeur d' Alene were latilong firsts (RB). Malheur N.W.R. had three Vaux's Swifts May 13 (*fide* GI). One near Pocatello May 13 was highly unusual (CHT). A White-throated Swift was sighted at the Barry Ranch e. of Adel, OR, May 30 (MA). A Black-chinned Hummingbird at Mitchell, OR, Apr. 29 was well w. of its normal range (PM, LW). A Costa's Hummingbird was noted at Cottonwood Creek, s. of Fields, OR, May 20 (DSw). A Broad-tailed Hummingbird visited a feeder near Culdesac, ID, May 12 for that area's first report since 1980 (KB, CV).

**WOODPECKERS TO PIPITS**—Unusual were Lewis' Woodpeckers near Vantage, WA (BT), at Columbia N.W.R. (WRR), and near Cataldo, ID (SW). An Acorn Woodpecker at Summer L. May 27–28 made a rare sighting (*fide* CMI). Winter Ridge, w. of Summer Lake, had a Red-breasted Sapsucker Apr. 2 (FZ). White-headed Woodpecker was sighted along Daggett Creek n.e. of Boise Apr. 9 (CS). Crawford Caves, Pend Oreille, WA, provided a sighting of a Three-toed Woodpecker May 21 (JP, DP), and two Black-backed Woodpeckers were seen near Blewett Pass May 13 (JK, PS, CV).

A surprising 100+ W. Wood-Pewees were grounded by a rainstorm May 27 at Tranquille (SR). An Ash-throated Flycatcher was found at Cherry Springs s. of Pocatello May 21 and June 1 (DSt, BF). An Alder Flycatcher was singing on territory at Malheur N.W.R. May 28 (TC, JG). Least Flycatchers were reported as regular in the Bitterroot Valley, Ravalli, MT (DH), and a sighting was reported for Red Rock Lakes N.W.R. (CDM). Single birds were found at 2 different spots at Malheur May 29 (TC, JG; JE, HN). A vagrant Gray Flycatcher was described at Turnbull N.W.R. Apr. 22 (HV). Some of this species were back in the Oliver–Summerland, BC, area by May 20 (RC). A nest of the species was found near Summerland (ILR). A real rarity was a **Black Phoebe** described at Clear L., Yakima, WA, May 21–26 (GG, EH, AS, BT, GW, SRA). A Say's Phoebe was in Hood River Apr. 4; the species is a rare migrant there (DA, JE). Two Purple Martins were seen near Cascade Locks, OR, Apr. 30 and May 20 (DA). Two to three Bewick's Wrens were found in s. Wasco, OR, May 21 (DA, DL). On Mar. 26 a Marsh Wren was at The Dalles, OR, where it is rare (DL).

The only Sage Thrashers reported were one near Baker, OR, Mar. 25 (PS, TW) and one at Indian Creek Res. May 20 (AL). A Plain Titmouse was sighted near Hart Mt., Plush, OR, May 28 (MA). A N. Mockingbird was found near Frenchglen May 27 (PM, LW). A Sprague's Pipit remained for some time at Bean L., s. of Augusta, MT (JM, SRe, CP).

**WARBLERS TO FINCHES**—A Tennessee Warbler at Saddle Mt. N.W.R., Grant, WA, was the first for that area (WRR, JC). Singles of the species were reported at 2 localities at Malheur May 28 (PM, LW, TL). A Black-throated Gray Warbler was found along the Owyhee bluebird trail in the Owyhee Mts. of s.w. Idaho May 30 (AL), and two were at Page Springs May 21 (MD). A Hermit Warbler was seen s. of Mt. Rainier N.P. May 14 (JK, PS, CV). Abert L. had a Palm Warbler in late May (CCh). A ♀ Black-and-white Warbler was near Hart Mt. May 28 (MA) and three May sightings were made at Malheur (CO, MO, TW, m.ob.). One reported at Red Rock Lakes N.W.R. was new to the refuge list (*fide* CDM). A N. Waterthrush was banded at Cherry Springs May 13 (DSt) and one was found at Medicine L., e. of Harrison, ID (SW).

A pair of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks appeared 5 mi w. of Helena May 29 (JS) and a female was seen at Malheur headquarters May 28 (JE, HN). The latter place also had a ♀ Indigo Bunting May 29 (TC, JG). A Lark Sparrow was noted at Kamloops May 13 (RRH, RR). At least one Black-throated Sparrow had returned to Wanapum S.P., Vantage, by May 30 (KA). Eastern Oregon's 2nd **Lark Bunting** was spotted near Princeton May 28 (BG). A Baird's Sparrow was sighted at Bean L. s. of Augusta, MT (JM, SRe, CP). A few Golden-crowned

Sparrows appeared at Hart Mt. National Antelope Refuge (DS, BS), one was noted at Ellensburg Mar. 4 (BT), and Summer L. had one Apr. 11 (MS). In Idaho single birds were at Cherry Springs May 5 (DSt, BF) and in Swan Valley, Bonneville (ES), the same day. A White-throated Sparrow was found along the Frenchman Hills road s.w. of Moses Lake, WA, Apr. 14 (GH, WH), and Malheur had one May 20 (MD). A Harris' Sparrow that wintered near Culdesac was still there Apr. 28 (m.ob.). One was sighted at Richland Apr. 19 after the species was absent since December (REW). A Chestnut-collared Longspur at Fortine, MT, was the first there since 1936 (WW).

A ♂ Bobolink was singing at Plush, OR, May 28 (MA). Tamarack Ridge w. of Cataldo had 25 on May 26 (SW). Most surprising was the discovery of a colony of Tricolored Blackbirds near Hermiston, OR, far north of their previously known breeding range (PM, LW). Common Grackles continue to expand their range into w. Montana. They have occurred at Dixon for several years (DT, PD, PLW), at Missoula the last 2 years (PMc), at Deer Lodge (DS), and at Ravalli this year (JM). Two were apparently nesting in Aberdeen, ID (DB), and some were reported in Georgetown, ID (*fide* CHT). A "Baltimore" N. Oriole was reported at Kalispell, MT, June 1 (*fide* Marcy Bishop). Purple Finches were reported for the Hayden L., ID, vicinity (KB, PH). A flock of 15+ of these birds was found along upper Taneum Creek s. of Cle Elum, WA, May 21 (BT) and five were noted at Cle Elum May 12 (EH). An out-of-place Red Crossbill was reported at Fields May 27 (SG).

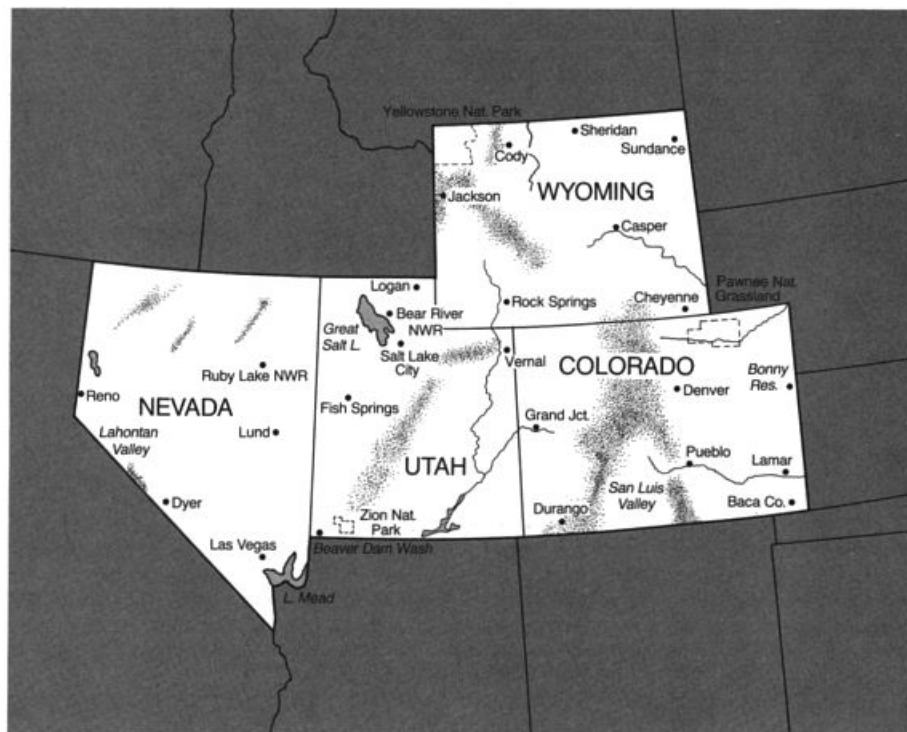
**ADDENDUM**—Some 2000 Oldsquaw were on Green L. near 70 Mile House, BC, in April, 1988 (RM).

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# MOUNTAIN WEST REGION

Hugh E. Kingery



Spring migration seemed early, diverse, and orderly, with a good variety of shorebirds and warblers. Wyoming had three to five new species for its state list—four of them warblers—and Nevada had one. Colorado recorded one first and one second nesting species.

The Region reported 384 species, for the second-highest count in the past dozen years. Colorado and Wyoming recorded the highest species counts yet, 349 in Colorado and 279 in Wyoming; Nevada and Utah had 256 and 246 respectively.

The Mountain West rarely sees fallouts of birds like those that spice birding on the Texas coast, but a wet snowstorm on April 30 produced such an event at Chatfield State Park (D.F.O.). As snow fell during the morning, observers saw few birds, but when the storm broke up at noon, birds seemed to fall from the sky. The trees had so many birds, the trip leaders thought more observers would have added 10 more species to the 96 found that day. Tallies included 7000 Violet-green and Tree swallows, 350 robins, 195 American Pipits, 240 Yellow-rumped Warblers, 110 Chipping and 62 Vesper sparrows, and 15 species of shorebirds.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My thanks to Jean Van Loan for designing a computer program for posting the voluminous records contributed by Mountain West observers.

**ABBREVIATIONS**—† = Written description on file with Regional Editor; ‡ = Written description on file with, and subject to approval of, state or local records committee; # = no written description received; 1st lat = first record for the latilong; I.P.S.C. = Indian Peaks, CO, Spring Count; L/L/B/L = Longmont/Lyons/Berthoud/Loveland area, CO, using Foothills Audubon Club records. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO IBISES**—A big contingent of 321 Com. Loons at Walker L., NV, Apr. 9, plus counts of 40 from Flaming Gorge Nat'l Recr. Area, UT, and from Big Horn, WY, helped to swell the Regional total to 525—four times the average spring totals of the last 3 years. The proportion of Clark's Grebes to Western Grebes at Riverton, WY, reached 50/50, far more Clark's than elsewhere in the Region. At Anaho Island N.W.R., 2400 Am. White Pelicans attempted to nest, but most abandoned the attempt by May 31, with only 480 nests on June 2; apparently the lake simply doesn't have enough fish to feed the young (TB, LN).

Most of Stillwater N.W.R.'s Great Blue Herons abandoned nesting, apparently owing to lack of food. A Little Blue Heron prowled a muddy pond near Alcova, WY, Apr. 26 for a 5th state record (†SF). A pair of Little Blues returned to last year's nest site at Monte Vista N.W.R., CO (RS, E & JR). Cattle Egrets continued to range into new areas; one perched on a window sill at the Black Butte coal mine near Rock Springs, WY (FL). A Green-backed Heron at Pueblo was carrying nesting material in May—a prelude, perhaps, to Colorado's second nesting record (DJ). A Yellow-crowned Night-Heron stopped at Severance, CO, May 14 (KM). Two Glossy Ibises permitted comparison with White-faced in Weld, May 7–9 (††BP, m.ob.), for Colorado's 3rd record. Carson L., NV, sported 4395 White-faced Ibises May 16 (ST, TB, LD), and a healthy 300 stopped at Bear River Flats, UT, May 13 (JP). Observers in Colorado saw fewer than usual, except in the San Luis Valley.

**WATERFOWL, RAPTORS**—As western wildlife refuges like Stillwater and Alamosa/Monte Vista suffer from water shortages, industrial ponds (power plants such as

Bridger, WY, and Rawhide, CO, and oil refineries such as Yants Puddle, WY) attract more waterfowl. Stillwater had poor nesting; Alamosa reported total nests on the May transect up 26% from 1988—perhaps because nesting was timed one to 2 weeks ahead of normal.

The fires did not discourage one pair of Trumpeter Swans in Yellowstone: a pair whose nest on the Madison R. had burned over (adults and cygnets survived) returned to the nest this year (JZ). The Trumpeter at Pueblo during the winter remained until Mar. 12; then Mar. 23 one appeared at Longmont, 135 mi north, and stayed through June 11 (†BP). A Greater White-fronted Goose stopped at Yellowstone May 20 (†JZ). Minersville, UT, hosted 1100 Snow Geese Mar. 29, the highest number ever recorded in s. Utah (SH). As usual, Snows visited Colorado's Arkansas Valley reservoirs, in flocks estimated at 2000–3000 Mar. 5–Apr. 11. Even though Coloradans view Canada Geese as pesky residents, some populations of this species still migrate, as witnessed by the 3000 that passed over Cheyenne, WY, Mar. 10–13.

Wyoming documented its 7th and 8th **Eurasian Wigeons**, at Casper Apr. 15 and Yellowstone May 20 (†SF, J & VH, †JZ). Colorado reported three from Denver, Longmont, and Weld. Two Surf Scoters stayed at Sheridan Apr. 30–May 18 (†ET et al.). The Hooded Merganser at Muddy Gap, WY, provided a 1st Lat (SF), and a female at Rawhide May 31 had remained very late (RAR).

Ospreys had nests at L. Tahoe (2) and Stillwater, NV, where one young hatched. Bald Eagles made nesting news: 2 pairs in s.e. Utah, 2 nests at Sheridan, WY, and one pair with two young at Barr L. that provided regular news reports to Denver media. Reports of Broad-winged Hawks went up, with 21 in e. Colorado, two at Cheyenne, and Yellowstone's first May 2 (†TM). Wheeler reported a decline in nesting Swainson's Hawks in n.e. Colorado. Rough-legged Hawks began to move north in March but observers found late ones near Idalia, CO, May 5 (BRi) and at Stillwater May 15 (TB). Observers reported 13 Merlins, triple last spring, and 40+ Peregrines, perhaps a sign of increasing health for that species.

**SHOREBIRDS** — On a shorebird survey Apr. 21–23, Stillwater biologists counted 110,518 shorebirds in the Lahontan Valley, topped by 39,284 dowitchers, 23,962 Least and 12,313 Western sandpipers, 11,136 Dunlins, and 13,719 other small



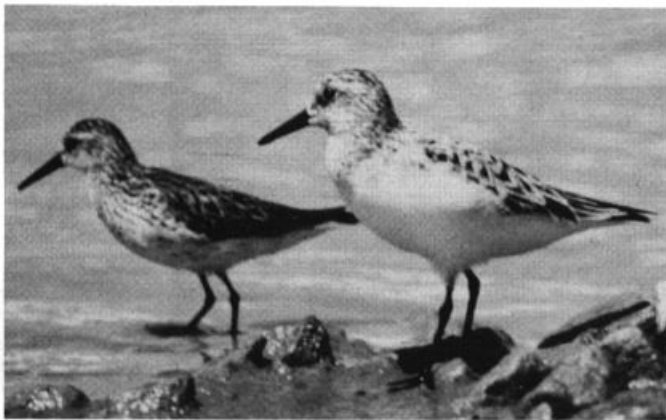
*Piping Plover at Healy Reservoir, northeast of Buffalo, Wyoming, May 13, 1989. Photograph/Esther McWilliams.*

successful breeding (JE). A pair of Piping Plovers May 15 at Cheraw, CO, seemed to be courting (MJ); Colorado has had no nesting records in 50 years. Another Piping Plover visited Sheridan May 13 (†BJ). Surveys counted 405 Black-necked Stilts Apr. 30 at Ogden, UT (JP, JN), and 372 at Fish Springs May 24 (JE). The first young stilts appeared here May 29, but Las Vegas had young first, May 10 (MC). Ogden's survey Apr. 30 tallied 1693 Am. Avocets and 194 Willets. A small colony of Upland Sandpipers was found May 24–25 n. of the Arickaree R. near Idalia, CO (HEK).

Sheridan counted the most Whimbrels—32 on May 12–13 (HD, K & MH) but Denver counted a record 12 on its May 13–14 spring count (D.F.O.). One at Reno Apr. 30–May 2 probably furnished the first n.w. Nevada record (†DBo, HJ, ph.), and another stopped at Overton, NV, May 6 (BE). 1st Lat Whimbrels stopped at Farson and Lander, WY (†SF), and the Region reported 20 others. Webster found five Hudsonian Godwits May 2 in Weld, two of which stayed through May 4; another stopped at Cheraw May 14 (†MJ). The only Red Knot was at Johnstown, CO, May 13 (JH). The drying up of Cheyenne Bottoms, KS, did not drive White-rumped Sandpipers west to Colorado—the state had only its usual complement of scattered reports the last week in May, the highest 25 in Weld, 25 at Pueblo, and 44 at Red Lion W.M.A. near Julesburg. A very tired Baird's Sandpiper hit Las Vegas May 6 (MC). Stilt Sandpiper reports declined from last year, and observers reported only two Short-billed Dowitchers, from Las Vegas and Weld. Rock Springs had 2500 Red-necked Phalaropes May 16 (FL), tops in the Region this spring.

**GULLS TO CUCKOOS** — Franklin's Gulls continued their springtime increases in Wyoming and Colorado: 85 at Rock Springs at the May 22 peak, 150 May 16 at Sheridan, 568 counted through the spring at L/L/B/L, and 650 May 7 at Rawhide. Bonaparte's Gulls moved sparingly through the Region, with groups of 18–25 at Overton, NV, Fish Springs, UT, and Ft. Collins in April, and 100 at Loveland, CO, Apr. 16, as well as smaller numbers elsewhere. California Gulls had 1000 nests at Anaho Island N.W.R., NV. Colorado reported two **Glaucous-winged Gulls**, for its 2nd and 3rd records: a first-year bird at Julesburg Mar. 31 (††JR) and a 2nd-winter bird at Denver Apr. 11–16 (JR, †MJ). On Apr. 10 Himmel reported a 3rd-year **Great Black-backed Gull** near Eaton and on Apr. 22 Janos found a "macho," first-year **Great Black-backed Gull** near Las Animas, CO, for Colorado's 7th and 8th records, the 4th and 5th in 2 years.

Observers found more Caspian Terns this spring. Nevada reported six, including birds at Reno and L. Tahoe. Utah and Wyoming had their usual contingent including an early one at Minersville Mar. 29. Colorado, which rarely sees them, reported 17, including seven at Grand Jct. and one at Colorado City. Four Least Terns graced



*Sanderling (with Western Sandpiper) at Stillwater Point Reservoir near Fallon, Nevada, May 14, 1989. Photograph/Tim Bowman.*

shorebirds, plus 7990 Am. Avocets. Clearly this water-short major shorebird stopover needs nationwide attention from birdwatchers for it and its shorebirds to survive. (See Audubon Nov. 1988, p. 14.)

Except for the Stillwater count of 323, the Region reported few Black-bellied Plovers. Two Lesser Golden-Plovers appeared: one at Greeley, CO, Apr. 16 (BP) and one at Las Vegas May 5 (MC, BE et al.). Fish Springs N.W.R., UT, reported 88 Snowy Plovers May 24; the first young on May 21 suggested



*Glaucous-winged Gull at Cherry Creek Reservoir, Colorado, April 13, 1989. Photograph/Larry Sanders.*

Sundance, WY, Apr. 23–May 2 (JA), and two visited Grand Jct. May 14–15 (†RL, CD, RLa, 1st lat). A White-winged Dove was at Wetmore May 7 (†PM). The Yellow-billed Cuckoo at Browns Park N.W.R., CO, May 28 provided a 1st Lat record (CD).

**OWLS TO CROWS**—An owl survey turned up E. Screech-Owls in Wheatland, Albany, and Worland, WY, the latter surprisingly far west (SF). A Great Gray Owl showed up in a Lander, WY, yard Mar. 24 (SFn, SF). Colorado observers followed a Boreal Owl nest on Cameron Pass; courtship occupied April, the male brought food to the female on the nest on Apr. 25, and the adults were feeding young by May 21. The Rawinskis found a Boreal at Summitville in s.c. Colorado Mar. 24.

At Springdale, UT, hummingbirds arrived in typical awe-some numbers—1075 Black-chinneds May 30 setting a new peak (JG). Colorado's list lacks **Ruby-throated Hummingbird**; the one at Crook May 16 will correct that omission if approved by the state records committee (†BP, †JP, †JC). Las Vegas had Anna's Hummingbirds Mar. 29 and Apr. 2 and later, and one appeared at Reno Apr. 29 (†EK). Broad-taileds arrived a week early in Colorado: Apr. 17 at Evergreen, Apr. 20 at Eagle, and Apr. 21 at McCoy. Utah reported two Lewis' Woodpeckers, at Central May 5 (SH) and Fish Springs Apr. 30 and May 29–30 (†JE, 1st Lat). Woodpeckers have not yet responded to the Yellowstone fires—the park reported only one Three-toed all spring and no Black-backed.

An E. Wood-Pewee returned May 23 to the same tree grove near Denver where one had spent last August (JK et al.). Howe on May 30 discovered a pair of **Great Crested Flycatchers** building a nest at Crook, for Colorado's 2nd breeding record in 2 years. More than the usual Scissor-tailed Flycatchers wandered north, with two in the Denver area Apr. 27–May 14 (D.F.O.) and one at Rawhide for the 4th year, May 29 (RAK). After the fallout from Denver's Apr. 30 snowstorm, the D.F.O. Spring Count May 13–14 also had impressive numbers of swallows: 4633 Trees, 5467 Violet-greens, 4404 Cliffs, and 957 Barns. A **Yellow-billed Magpie** showed up at Fallon, NV, May 13 for a surprising new state record (†LD). An Am. Crow wandered across the desert to Fish Springs May 2–7 for a 1st Lat (JE).

**WRENS TO VIREOS**—After a spate of fall and winter sightings, an alert Denver bird watcher on May 21 discovered Colorado's first nesting **Carolina Wrens**; they fledged two young (MP, ph.; nest and one dead hatchling to D.M.N.H.). Colorado reports persisted, with other Carolinas observed in 2 other Denver locations and Weld. The 20 Bewick's Wrens May 20 at Rock Springs evidenced a surprising Wyoming population (FL). A **Sedge Wren** sang May 6 from a willow carr near Nederland, CO (†BP, 1st Lat). The I.P.S.C. tallied 227 Ruby-crowned Kinglets, 3.3/party-hour, three times the previous high count. They may have arrived in the high country early, and started to nest early. From reports in 2 areas, it

appears that Blue-gray Gnatcatchers are increasing in the Region. On May 29 Luke counted 40 at Dutch John, UT. A pair was nest-building May 9–13 s.w. of Denver (D.F.O., T B) and Breeding Bird Atlas workers found 2 nests s.e. of the city later in May (T.B., D.M.H.H., 1st Lat).

Atlas workers found 5 pairs of nesting E. Bluebirds on 2 mi of the Arickaree R. near Idalia, CO, all feeding young May 9–10 (HEK). To the north, other pairs nested at Iliff and Crook, on the S. Platte R. (WH, DL). Observers reported 11 Veeries and four Gray-cheeked Thrushes in e. Colorado. In Yellowstone on May 29 a migrant wave of 66 Swainson's Thrushes flew by Schreier in a few minutes, in Montana but headed up the Gardiner R. to Wyoming. A Wood Thrush stayed at Rye, CO, Apr. 28–May 5 (MHu, fide DS). Even though Merchant claimed he was seeing Am. Robins "everywhere except swimming in the water," the I.P.S.C. count of robins dropped to 2.6/hour from an average of 5.2. Varied Thrushes made spring stopovers at Jackson, WY, May 7 (RWI) and Denver May 13 (RB). Brown Thrashers visited Ruby Valley, NV, Apr. 21 (CB) and Cody, WY, May 20–23 (LP, 1st Lat). The only Bohemian Waxwing flocks were reported from Yellowstone and Cody Mar. 12–Apr. 6.

Does volume lend credibility? Brief reports of Bell's Vireos, all based on plumage and none mentioning the presumably characteristic tail-wagging, came from 4 new sites: Cheyenne Apr. 26 and May 5 (†D & RP, no state records); Stillwater N.W.R. May 24 (†TB, no n. Nevada records); and n.w. and n.e. Denver (†WL, HEK, both 1st Lat); and one old site—Pueblo May 31 (VT, 2nd Lat). A Philadelphia Vireo stopped at Cheyenne May 20 (†RP, 1st Lat).

**WARBLERS**—Warbler migration seemed pretty good—37 species were reported. The Denver Spring Count tallied 562 warblers of 13 species, including 279 Yellow-rumped May 13–14, swamping the previous high of 164.

Most remarkable were two new warblers for Wyoming. First, Brinkerhoff found a **Red-faced Warbler** in Green River. A skeptical Luke confirmed the identification. Subsequently 14 observers saw the bird, which stayed Apr. 29–May 3 in a residential area with Siberian Elm, box elder, and crabapple trees (†FL, †SF et al.). Two weeks later, a **Yellow-throated Warbler** showed up in residential Rock Springs, among large coniferous and deciduous trees (†FL, J & VH).

Depending on decisions of its new records committee, Wyoming also had either first or 2nd records of two other warblers. Lebsack discovered a **Kentucky Warbler** at Cheyenne's High Plains Research Station on May 16 (†Fle, WV), and Luke described well a **Mourning Warbler** at Fontanelle May 27.

Rare Regional warblers included the following, one bird each: Blue-winged Warbler at Lyons, CO, May 5 (†JP, †AM, BP); Golden-winged at Bonny Res., CO, May 12–15 (DBr) and Denver May 18–19 (MKW); Magnolias at Fontanelle, WY (†FL), and Cheyenne (†Fle); a **Hermit Warbler** at Salt Lake City Apr. 29 (†HS, ES, ph., 4th state record); a Yellow-throated at Loveland, CO (†AM); a Palm Warbler at Cheyenne Apr. 29–May 4 (†Fle) and five in e. Colorado including the first Colorado one thought to be of the e. race (†ASi); a Mourning Warbler at Sterling May 21 (†JR); and a Canada Warbler at Bonny May 21 (DBr).

Other warblers of note, all in May: in Colorado, six Tennessees, two N. Parulas, nine Chestnut-sideds including one at Monte Vista (†E & JR, 1st Lat), three Magnolias, five Black-throated Blues, six Townsend's—unusual in spring, two Black-throated Greens, a Blackburnian, a Bay-breasted, only three Blackpolls, 20 Black-and-whites—a high number, two Worm-eatings, 34 N. Waterthrushes—also a high number, and two Hoodeds. Wyoming had six Tennessees, three Virginia's, one Chestnut-sided, a Black-throated Gray at Cody, a Black-and-white, one Am. Redstart at Rock Springs, and two N. Waterthrushes. Utah reported a rare N. Waterthrush; Las Vegas had one too, along with an Ovenbird and six Black-and-white Warblers.

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — Summer Tanagers stopped briefly at Cody, WY, May 22 (WDO, 2nd Lat), Denver, Boulder, and Prewitt Res., and Scarlet Tanagers were seen at Cheyenne, Crook, and Bonny. Northern Cardinals included one at Sedgwick, CO, May 21 and a territorial but unenthusiastic singer at Idalia May 24 and later (HEK). Killpack banded 345 Lazuli Buntings at Ogden, compared with 475 last year. Four Indigo Buntings appeared May 18 at Salida (H.R.A.S.). Jackson had its first Dickcissel May 8 (#BR). Nevada counted its 2nd **Cassin's Sparrow** May 31–June 4, seen by California birders looking for rarities; its skylarking song confirmed it (tSEF, MPa). Field Sparrows sang on territory at Julesburg, Crook, and Idalia; Colorado has no confirmed nesting records. A Black-throated Sparrow sang from a dense thicket in a Longmont, CO, yard May 9 (tJAm). Breeding Black-chinned Sparrows reportedly dropped by 50% around Las Vegas (J & MC). The Sheridan Spring Count tallied 240 Lark Sparrows, up from a previous high of 110 (B.H.A.S.). Lark Buntings strayed to Las Vegas Apr. 18, Bear L., UT, May 21 (two—JP), and Rock Springs May 15 (three—RSt). A late Golden-crowned Sparrow was at Denver Apr. 11 (DN). Spring Harris' Sparrows included a late one at Dubois, WY, Apr. 3 (MB). Killpack banded 146 Dark-eyed Juncos this spring, up from 36 a year ago.

A late Rusty Blackbird was at Denver Mar. 19 (D.F.O.). Wyoming recorded its first **Great-tailed Grackle**, a female found at Cheyenne May 13 (tRAR). Ogden saw its first one May 14 (MEI, 1st Lat) and they continued to spread in s. Colorado, with dozens at Ft. Garland and Walsenburg. The colony at St. George, UT, declined by 50% because of a loss of nesting habitat. Fish Springs reported one to five Com. Grackles Apr. 30–May 19 (JE). Flocks of Brown-headed Cowbirds doubled at Las Vegas; known victims included Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and Gray Vireo (J & MC).

Red Crossbills blanketed the Colorado high country. The White-winged Crossbills seen carrying nesting material Mar. 2 on Cameron Pass, CO, did not reveal their nesting site; they remain on the list of Colorado breeding species for which breeding has not quite been proved. Pine Siskins also stayed in the high country; 138 banded at Ogden cf. 518 in 1988, 101 at L/L/B/L cf. 474, and only three on D.F.O. field trips. Exceptions: Fremont, CO, with daily flocks at Florence and every other day at Penrose (NP, RWa); Glenwood Springs, CO, and Sheridan, WY. Evening Grosbeaks displayed similar erratic distribution: scarce on the Colorado Front Range, regular

in the mountains, and strays like one at La Junta, CO, Apr 22 (PL) and Yellowstone's first in 5 years—four on May 30 (tBS).

**EXOTICS** — Chapter 5: The Red-backed Buzzard and her Swainson's Hawk consort returned to Gunnison, CO, Mar. 15, 2–3 weeks before the rest of the valley's nesting Swainson's. Apparently she also returned early last year (DR, RM). The 2 early arrival dates might imply that this pair does not winter in Argentina with other Swainson's, or at least does not migrate with them.

**CORRIGENDUM** — Colorado added Piping Plover, not Snowy Plover, to its Endangered Species list (AB 42(5): 1322.)

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# SOUTHWEST REGION

## Arizona

Gary H. Rosenberg and  
David Stejskal



Spring migration in Arizona is more typically referred to as a non-migration; the breeding birds all arrive on their nesting grounds, like clockwork, but we never see much in the way of northbound migrants passing through the state. Not even during spells of adverse weather conditions, usually excellent for the grounding of migrants in other parts of the country, do we see more than a trickle of warblers and thrushes heading for the North. This spring was an exception to the norm with several observers reporting higher than normal numbers of migrant species such as Olive-sided Flycatcher, Swainson's Thrush, and several species of warblers. Kenn Kaufman reported the closest thing to a "wave" of migrants he has seen during his many springs in Arizona during May 10-16, coinciding with a rare wet, cool, period atypical for this time of year. Although actual numbers of "grounded" migrants remained very low (after all, this is the West), they were still higher than what we have come to expect during a typical spring.

Another event that we have come to expect in Arizona is the reporting of rarities from our neighbor to the south, Mexico, by the many birders that pass through our state during spring and summer. The inclusion in current field guides of Mexican strays for which there are no more than a few North American records has inevitably created the illusion that these species are to be "expected" when birding in southeastern Arizona. It is difficult to sift through the many reports, many of which are from out-of-state birders, when the reporting of such rarities is not taken very seriously. This spring the report of a Slate-throated Redstart, a species for which there are only two or three documented North American records, was submitted with just the barest of written details—not readily identifiable to family, let alone species. The same was true of yet another report of Eared Trogon from southern Ari-

zona this spring. If records such as these are to be taken seriously, or even reviewed in the first place, they must be accompanied by documentation worthy of an outstanding record for the United States. It is unfortunate that possibly correct sightings of such rare species may not be accepted owing to the complacency of those reporting them.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — A.B.C. = Arizona Bird Committee; B.T.A. = Boyce Thompson Arboretum, near Superior; L.C.R. = Lower Colorado River; S.P.R. = San Pedro River; S.T.P. = Sewage Treatment Plant. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO WATERFOWL** — Common Loon, an uncommon transient away from the L.C.R. and larger lakes throughout the state, was found in 3 localities this spring: one along the Central Arizona Project aqueduct near Bouse Apr. 10 (J. Call); one on the Hopi Indian Reservation at Cow Springs Lake Apr. 29 (CL); and a late individual at Dead Horse Ranch S.P., Verde River, May 20 (LH et al.). An ad. Western Grebe with two young at Cow Springs Lake provided yet another nesting locality for this species away from its usual haunts around the state.

American White Pelican is a regular spring transient throughout Arizona, usually in small groups, but a flock of about 500 at Many Farms L. Apr. 6 (CL) represented one of the largest concentrations of this species ever recorded in the state. More unusual for spring were 2 reports of Brown Pelican: one at Gila Farms Pond s. of Phoenix May 10 (*fide* SG), and another at Alamo L. May 13 (RF, RN). This species is more regular as a wanderer from Mexico during late summer and fall. The high count this year for Olivaceous Cormorant at L. Patagonia (where regular) was of 13 birds Mar. 11 (KK, LHK). Unexpected was an adult bird at a pond on the upper S.P.R. e. of Sierra Vista Apr. 20 (DK).

After the Great Blue Heron rookery s. of St. David, upper S.P.R., failed last year (having been discovered only 3 years



before), it was reassuring to find it active this spring with at least six adults present throughout the period (DK). An ad Little Blue Heron at Cow Springs L. Apr. 29 (CL) furnished only the 2nd record, the first in spring, for northern Arizona. Very unusual in spring were two Tricolored Herons in southern Arizona this year: one was at P.R.D. May 24 (KG), and another was photographed at Willcox May 27 (†D.P. et al., ph. H. Clarke). Cattle Egrets have become almost regular in northern Arizona in recent years, with most of the reports occurring in fall, but one at Kayenta Apr. 20 and another at Tuba City May 6 (CL) provided 2 of the few spring records for that part of the state.

A Ross' Goose at Many Farms L. Apr. 6 (CL) was not unprecedented and this species may eventually be found to be a rare but regular transient through this part of Arizona. The Oldsquaw found during the winter season at the Gila Farms Pond remained there throughout the period. A ♀ Surf Scoter at Many Farms L. May 27–28 (CL, DS et al.) provided only the 2nd record for Apache, and the latest spring record for the state. A first for n.e. Arizona was a ♂ Barrow's Goldeneye at Kayenta Mar. 10 (CL); there are very few records within the state away from the L.C.R. Also extremely rare in n. Arizona was a group of four Hooded Mergansers at the Peabody Mine, Black Mesa, Mar. 20 (CL); it is surprising how few records there are from this part of the state, considering how regular this species is in southern Arizona in fall and winter.

**RAPTORS TO TERNS**—The only Black-shouldered Kite reported this spring was one n. of Cordes Jct. Apr. 1 (B. Taubert, G. Lollman) providing yet another record for Yavapai, which appears to be the northwestern limit of this species' expanded range within Arizona. An ad. Mississippi Kite seen flying north s. of Charleston May 11 (DK) provided one of the few migrant records of this species from the upper S.P.R., or anywhere within Arizona. Surprisingly, another was reported the same day at Tucson (B. Tweit). A late ♂ N. Harrier was seen near Elfrida May 14 (KK). A Com. Black-Hawk Apr. 6–26 (presumably the same individual throughout) at the Southwest Research Station near Portal was a real surprise; this species was formerly more widespread in southeastern Arizona and now is exceedingly rare as a breeder south of central Arizona. One at California Gulch May 30 was extremely late for a migrant and well west of historical nesting areas (JK). A Harris' Hawk found near Wenden, n.e. of Vicksburg, May 6 (M. McKinnon) was west of its normal breeding range. Two adult and one imm. Swainson's Hawks near the town of Queen Creek, s.e. of Phoenix, May 30–June 6 (DS, C. Thompson) were too late for migrants and may have been attempting to summer locally. A late Rough-legged Hawk was reported from Hart Prairie, San Francisco Peaks, Apr. 17 (E. & E. Gardner). Also very late was a ♀ Merlin hunting Cliff Swallows (successfully, we might add) along the Gila River, near Safford, May 11 (TC, B. Maynard); this probably represented the latest spring record for the state.

Virginia Rail is a known breeder in northern Arizona and along the Colorado River, and has been suspected of nesting in marshes near St. David and the San Bernardino Ranch, e. of Douglas. This year nesting was documented at the Empire-Cienega Ranch n.e. of Sonoita when an adult was accompanied by a chick Apr. 30 and again May 19 (†B. Johnson). Downy young were also seen at the Nogales drive-in ponds in April (Steve & Ruth Russell). These represent the first confirmed nestings of this species in southeastern Arizona. A Sora seen May 21 along the Colorado River, Grand Canyon N.P., furnished only a 2nd local record.

A Lesser Golden-Plover in basic plumage (presumably *P. d. dominica*) was reported from Willcox Apr. 29 (R. Dorrance); this species is exceedingly rare in the state, especially in spring, and considering the upcoming split between *P. d. dominica* and *P. d. fulva*, it becomes increasingly important to document each and every sighting of golden-plover. A

Snowy Plover was at Snyder Hill S T P in Tucson Apr. 21 (W. Clark) and another was at Willcox Apr. 22 (DJ). Numbers at Willcox increased to six by mid-May (DS), but probably represented migrants (they have nested at this locality in the past) as none was seen there May 24 (GR). The shorebird of the season was an **Upland Sandpiper** at Buenos Aires N.W.R. May 9 (†D. Sibley); incredibly, this was the first spring record in southeastern Arizona since May 1887. Very unusual in Arizona in spring were two reports of Sanderling: one Apr. 21 at Tucson (W. Clark), and another May 16 at Willcox (KK, RBo). Unusually high numbers of Baird's Sandpipers were reported from s. Arizona this spring between mid-April and mid-May, with a high count of twelve reported from Tucson Apr. 12 (W. Clark); high numbers such as these are unprecedented in the state in spring. Interesting was a Com. Snipe "winnowing" at Babocomari Ranch, w. of Sierra Vista, Apr. 12 and again Apr. 25 (BH, S. Skagen); this species has not been known to nest in southeastern Arizona. Large concentrations of Red-necked Phalaropes in spring within the state are unusual, so a group of 100+ May 17 along the Colorado River, Grand Canyon N.P., was noteworthy (TG, B. Brown).

Thirty-nine Franklin's Gulls were seen throughout the state (except in the northeast) between Apr. 20 and May 12, with a high count of 10 at Willcox Apr. 30 (JS et al.). An imm. Herring Gull reported at Willcox Apr. 9 (DJ) was quite unexpected away from the L.C.R.; we feel that Herring Gulls away from the L.C.R., especially in spring, are sufficiently unusual to warrant full documentation. Unprecedented was an ad. Black-legged Kittiwake at Willcox Apr. 30–May 2 (†JS, ph. E. Froelich et al.), providing what was probably the first true spring record for the state. Seemingly out of range was a Caspian Tern at Tuba City May 4 (S. Studebaker); this represented only the 3rd record for northeast Arizona. Common Tern, a very sparse spring transient in Arizona, was reported more frequently than usual with one subadult at Martinez L., L.C.R., Apr. 28 (TC, RK), one at Tucson Apr. 30 (WR), one adult at Cibola N.W.R. Apr. 29–30 (TC, RK), and another subadult at Many Farms L. May 27 (DS, CL).

**DOVES TO WOODPECKERS**—Three Band-tailed Pigeons at the B.T.A. May 6 (CT) were at an unusually low elevation for the season. Out of range was a White-winged Dove at Prescott May 25 (CT). A calling Yellow-billed Cuckoo along Sonoita Creek, Patagonia, May 4 (BH) furnished one of the earliest spring records ever for the state. This species typically arrives on the breeding grounds in Arizona during the first week of June. Western Screech-Owl is a sparse resident (?) in Apache, thus one found at Canyon del Muerto, near Chinle, May 19 (CL) was of note. A calling N. Pygmy-Owl (single-note variety) was found out of habitat at Keams Canyon May 28 (CL). Northern Saw-whet Owl was again present in the Chiricahua Mts. this spring with calling individuals heard at Rustler Park May 8 (TC, RK) and in Pinery Canyon May 24 (JK). More unusual was one at Sonsela Buttes, Chuska Mts., Apr. 17 (CL) where this species has not been known to nest.

Buff-collared Nightjars arrived early this year with the first sightings coming from Florida Wash May 2 (KK et al.) when two or three individuals were present. This species was found at 4 other localities this spring (all previously known areas of occurrence): two present at Catalina S.P. beginning May 10 (KK et al.); two at California Gulch May 11 (RBo et al.); three at Guadalupe Canyon May 18 (M. Lockwood); and an unconfirmed report from Aravaipa Canyon, where this species has been known to occur for several years. A Chimney Swift was seen well flying at eye level with a group of swallows e. of Sierra Vista, upper S.P.R., May 16 (†DS).

A ♂ Broad-billed Hummingbird at Globe Mar. 7 and another there Apr. 15–17 (B. & C. McKusick) were slightly northeast of their normal breeding range. A mini-invasion of White-eared Hummingbird occurred this spring, with four being found: one away from feeders along South Fork, Cave Creek

Canyon, May 5 (RM), one male reported from Ramsey Canyon May 16 (K Carris), a male photographed at Cave Creek Ranch, Portal, May 24 and later (GR, ph. R. Behrstock), and another male found at a feeder at the Coronado N.M. (J. Epler). Violet-crowned Hummingbirds returned again this year to Sonoita Creek, s.w. of Patagonia, with two seen on the Circle Z property May 17–19 (DS et al.). More unusual was one found on the early date of Apr. 3 at Green Valley (JK). Lucifer Hummingbird was found again at Portal beginning Apr. 6 (SSp). Noteworthy, but not unprecedented, was a male at a feeder in Sonoita during May (J. Church et al.). A ♂ Costa's Hummingbird coming to a feeder in the Village of Oak Creek May 11 (A. Thornburg) was well north of the species' normal breeding range in Arizona, but two males close to the Utah border, s.w. of Pipe Springs N.M., Apr. 13 (TC), and another male s. of St. George, UT, at Clay Springs, were more surprising, but not unprecedented in this part of the country. Usually quite scarce in spring, Calliope Hummingbirds were reported in small numbers at most of the feeding stations throughout southeast Arizona during the middle 2 weeks of May (m.ob.). Rufous Hummingbird is considered a casual spring migrant north of the Phoenix area within Arizona, so one at Globe Mar. 11 (J.J. Spencer), another one there Mar. 27 (B. & C. McKusick), and one near Sedona Mar. 30 (VG) were noteworthy. Green Kingfisher probably nested again along the upper S.P.R. (although no nest was found yet this year) with one to two individuals present from Mar. 9 through the end of the period (DK). More unusual was one along Sonoita Cr. on the Circle Z property Apr. 7, again there on Apr. 13 (BH), and another down in Sycamore Canyon Apr. 27 (J. Paton). An ad. ♀ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was seen along South Fork, Cave Creek Canyon, May 13 (DS et al.); this date is late for any species of sapsucker in southern Arizona.

**FLYCATCHERS TO VIREOS** — A new breeding area appears to have been established for N. Beardless-Tyrannulet with at least 2 pairs present in the Portal area throughout the spring (RM). A Greater Pewee s. of Fairbank, upper S.P.R., Apr. 18 (BH) was at an unusually low elevation; this species is virtually never recorded away from its normal nesting areas within Arizona during spring migration. A single Buff-breasted Flycatcher at the Florida Canyon Work Camp, Santa Rita Mts., Apr. 30 (R. Balda) was well north and west of this species' main nesting area within the state in the Huachuca Mts. Historically, Buff-breasted's breeding range within Arizona was more widespread and included areas in the Santa Rita Mts. Also at a particularly low elevation, and out of preferred habitat, were three Dusky-capped Flycatchers throughout the period 3 mi w. of Fairbank along the upper S.P.R. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher seen w. of Douglas Apr. 19 (J. Davis) represented the earliest spring report (by one day!) for this species. A first for the upper S.P.R. was a singing ♂ Rose-throated Becard 3 mi n. of Fairbank June 2 (DK); there are very few becard records in Arizona away from their known nesting areas.

Ten Purple Martins at Ganado L. May 27 (DS, SG) were well away from known nesting areas in the state; 19 had been seen at this locality on virtually the same date in 1979. Unexpected was a single Steller's Jay at a very low elevation in n.w. Tucson May 1 (GM). A Gray-breasted Jay n.w. of Strawberry Mar. 19 (TC) was a bit north of its breeding range below the Mogollon Rim. A Black-billed Magpie at Prescott Apr. 19 (A. Boyce) was well south of areas of normal occurrence within Arizona and probably was an escaped individual. A single Red-breasted Nuthatch 3 mi n. of Fairbank, along the upper S.P.R., Mar. 2 (DK) was at an unusually low elevation and could have wintered locally.

A well-described Veery from 3 mi n. of Fairbank, upper S.P.R., May 25 (DK) is pending review by the A.B.C. and would provide only the second record in Arizona away from its isolated breeding population in the White Mts. The two Rufous-backed Robins present in the Patagonia area during

the winter season were reported through Apr. 10 (m.ob.) A Gray Catbird, extremely rare within the state away from its nesting grounds in the White Mts., was reported from the Salt River Canyon Apr. 24 (R. Cannings). A N. Mockingbird on Black Mesa Mar. 14 (CL) was at a higher elevation than usual for n. Arizona. Two Brown Thrashers were reported this spring, one near Hereford Apr. 8 (E. Froelich) and a very late individual at the B.T.A. May 29–30 (CST).

The most tantalizing bird-event of the season involved an extremely well-described ad. ♂ Red-throated Pipit May 2 at the Snyder Hill S.T.P., Tucson (JH). The bird was studied at close range in the company of American Pipits, but unfortunately could not be relocated for confirmation. This species' occurrence in Arizona, as well as the interior West in the spring season, are completely without precedent. Red-throated Pipit has been found in winter in western Mexico, and it is not beyond the realm of possibility that an individual migrated north with American Pipits. Unfortunately, no photograph was obtained. The last of last winter's Northern Shrike invasion to be seen was on Black Mesa Mar. 27 (CL). A pair of Bell's Vireos was present in a suburban Phoenix yard May 6 through the end of the period (D. Todd) and may have been nesting; this species is thought to be pretty much an obligate riparian species and not very adaptable to suburban habitats. Two Yellow-throated Vireos, rare in spring in southern Arizona, were reported this season: one was seen in Cave Creek Canyon May 3 (†T. Beck), and a singing male was seen along South Fork of the Little Colorado R., w. of Springerville, May 27 (†CB). The only Red-eyed Vireo reported this spring was one at Madera Canyon May 4 (fide L. Collister).

**WARBLERS TO FINCHES** — A singing ♂ Tennessee Warbler at South Fork, Cave Creek Canyon, May 13 (DS et al.) was the only one reported this spring. More unusual was a Chestnut-sided Warbler at Madera Canyon May 23 (J. White). A singing ♂ **Magnolia Warbler** 4 mi n. of Fairbank, upper S.P.R., May 24 (†DK) may have provided only the 2nd spring record for Arizona. Two Black-and-white Warblers and five Am. Redstarts were reported from around the state this spring. The Worm-eating Warbler present in a Tempe yard since last November was last seen Mar. 18 (KG); this record represents the first truly wintering individual for Arizona. Eight N. Waterthrushes were seen around the state, all between May 3 & 9 (m.ob.). A singing ♂ Kentucky Warbler was in Carr Canyon, Huachuca Mts., May 22 (†DP); most of Arizona's records for this species are of singing males from May and June. Similarly, many of the Hooded Warbler records for southern Arizona have occurred in late spring. This year one was at the B.T.A. May 8 (SG), and another was in a Tempe yard May 27 (KG).

Pyrrhuloxias were seen this spring in 2 areas outside their normal breeding areas in the state; one was well north at Yarnell, n.e. of Wickenburg, Mar. 22 (BD, PB), and a singing male was west of its normal range at Jose Juan Tank, Cabeza Prieta N.W.R., Mar. 30–31 (GM). Historically, this species has undergone temporary range expansions to the north, and west, that seem to include the areas mentioned above. The only Rose-breasted Grosbeak of the spring was a male at Keams Canyon May 28 (CL).

Two Abert's Towhees found along Cave Creek about one mile downstream from Portal Mar. 29 (RM) may have represented lingering winter visitors, as this species has not been known to breed in that part of the state. A late Swamp Sparrow was reported from Willcox Apr. 22 (DJ); most of Arizona's wintering population leaves by early April. Four White-throated Sparrows were reported from around the state this spring; one at Cameron, n. of Flagstaff, May 21 (CL) represented one of the latest spring records for the state. A single McCown's Longspur one mile n. of Hereford, upper S.P.R., Apr. 10 (DK) was away from this species' normal wintering areas within Arizona and may have been a north-bound migrant. Two Chestnut-collared Longspurs on Black

Mesa, near Kayenta, Mar 30 (CL) were also away from known wintering areas for this species

An exciting find was a Bobolink at Black Mesa May 17 (CL), providing the first local record of this very sparse spring migrant. A singing ♂ Bobolink at Springerville May 28 (RBr, CK) was of more interest, as this species has twice been known to nest in the White Mts. region of northeastern Arizona. Ten singing Western Meadowlarks at Buenos Aires N.W.R. May 10 (DS, GR) were south and west of usual nesting areas within Arizona. A ♀ Great-tailed Grackle at Tule Well, Cabeza Prieta N.W.R., was a local first, but not a great surprise as this species has demonstrated the ability to spread like wildfire throughout the Southwest. The Streak-backed Oriole that returned to a Green Valley feeder for the 2nd winter in a row was last seen Apr. 25. A Red Crossbill at the B.T.A. Apr. 24 (J J Spencer) was at a surprisingly low elevation for the state. This species was successful nesting in at least 2 areas in Arizona this spring; six adults, with six young, were seen on Black Mesa Mar. 10 (CL), and two adults, with two young, were at Bear Canyon, Santa Catalina Mts., May 12 (DS *et al.*).

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## NEW MEXICO

### John P. Hubbard

**ABBREVIATIONS** — Bosque N.W.R. = Bosque del Apache Nat'l Wildlife Ref.; P.O. Canyon = Post Office Canyon, Peloncillo Mts., S.G.R. = State Game Refuge. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO RAPTORS** — A loon at L. McMillan Mar. 25 was reported as a **Red-throated Loon** (BZ *et al.*), but at a quarter-mile distance and in winter plumage the identity of the bird is open to question. About 20 pairs of Clark's Grebes and six of Westerns were in the Rio Grande s. of San Marcial May 23–24 (JH *et al.*). Other noteworthy reports included 12 Clark's and four Westerns at Maxwell N.W.R. May 30–31 (PS) and up to three Clark's in the Pecos basin from Las Vegas to L. McMillan Mar. 25–May 14 (BZ *et al.*). Moderate numbers of Am. White Pelicans followed the usual southeast-northwest corridor in the period Mar. 1–May 5 (v.o.), with peripheral occurrences including a bird at Morgan L., San Juan, Mar. 26 and 16 there Apr. 16 (AN *et al.*), eight at Maxwell N.W.R. May 30–31 (PS), and up to 55 in the Alamogordo area Mar. 24–May 3 (J. Talley *et al.*). Also noteworthy were 30+ over the Magdalena Mts. Apr. 8 and 55 over the San Mateos Apr. 14 (PJ *et al.*). Double-crested Cormorants were nesting s. of San Marcial May 23 (JH), while migrants included one to two at Zuni Mar. 22 and Apr. 14 (DC) and one presumably of this species at Snow L., Catron, May 12 (PJ).

Great Blue Herons were occupying nest sites in s. Eddy in early March, while other nesting herons there included up to 400 Snowy Egrets and 500 Black-crowned Night-Herons by Apr. 27 (SW). Night-herons were again nesting near Española, with 30–32 active nests counted May 25 (CR). About 30 Great Blues were observed in a cormorant nesting colony in upper Caballo L. in the period, including one heron that appeared to be incubating (C.S. Wells, *fide* W. Pulich). Counts of up to 30 Cattle Egrets were recorded in the Socorro area Apr. 4–May 29 (JH *et al.*), with a few birds also at Bitter Lake N.W.R. (SB *et al.*), the Cliff-Mangas Springs area (RF *et al.*), Percha Dam in Sierra (PJ), near Mesilla (LS, EW), and at Rattlesnake Springe (*fide* PC). Notable were single Tricolored Herons at Bosque N.W.R. May 2 (PM) and near Loving May 7 (SW), as were two to four Little Blues at Bitter Lake N.W.R. (SB *et al.*), near Socorro (GH), and s. of San Marcial (JH *et al.*) Apr. 16–May 23. Early were a few White-faced Ibises at Bosque N.W.R. Mar. 6 (RT) and near Tularosa Mar. 10–12 (G. Smith *et al.*), with all other reports in April and May (v.o.).

Up to 15 Greater White-fronted Geese were at Bosque N.W.R. Mar. 6–Apr. 14 (RT *et al.*). Late Snow Geese included one at Farmington May 13 (AN *et al.*) and three at Bosque N.W.R. May 23 (*fide* PM), while also notable were up to 16 near Clayton through Apr. 17 (WC). About 240 birds in a flock of 350–400 "white" geese at Bosque N.W.R. Mar. 10 were Ross' Geese (PJ, JS), while late were seven Snows there May 13–14 (MH). Four Canada Geese on the Chama R. below El Vado L. May 13–14 (CR) were presumably from the stocking program in the area. "Stocked" populations had produced goslings by May 6 at Bitter Lake N.W.R. (SW) and May 22 at La Joya S.G.R. (JH, J. Vaught). A male, apparent **Cinnamon x Blue-winged Teal** at Bosque N.W.R. Mar. 21–Apr. 25 (PM) may have been the same as was there last spring. Rarer ducks included a probable ♂ **Eurasian Wigeon** at L. Avalon, Eddy, Mar. 25 (PJ, JS); up to four possible Greater Scaup at La Joya S.G.R. Mar. 30 (PJ, JS) and Bear Canyon L., Grant, Apr. 22 (RF); and four Red-breasted Mergansers at Evans L., Grant, Mar. 21 (RF).

A pair of Ospreys was reportedly nesting in upper Elephant Butte L. (J. Koons, *fide* RF), but this record needs confirmation. A Black-shouldered Kite was at Rattlesnake Springs Apr. 14 (C. Cook *et al.*), and late N. Harriers included singles at Mangas Springs May 14 (RF), Española May 21 (BL *et al.*), Zuni May 26 (DC), and near Tularosa May 27 (J & NH). Other noteworthy raptors included a Com. Black-Hawk at Albuquerque May 17 (W. Howe, *fide* M. Sifuentes) and a Harris' Hawk at Bosque N.W.R. Mar. 10–11 and Apr. 4 (PJ *et al.*). The earliest acceptable reports of Swainson's Hawks were of singles e. of Carlsbad Mar. 28 (SW) and near Nutt, Luna, Mar. 30 (PS).

**TURKEY TO SWIFTS** — A presumed Wild Turkey near San Jon May 14 (ph. SW) was well e. of the known range and probably the result of an introduction. The introduced population at Bosque N.W.R. continued to prosper, with a high of 59 on Mar. 6 (RT); two birds s. of San Marcial May 24 (JH) were probably from that population. The only reports of the flock introduced in the Rattlesnake Springs area were of one to two birds Apr. 14 and May 18 (*fide* PC). North of the usual range was a Com. Moorhen at Clayton L. Apr. 15 (A. Krehbiel, *fide* WC). Late were single Sandhill Cranes at Bosque N.W.R. Apr. 4 (PM) and near Las Cruces Apr. 22 (B. & H. Harrison), plus three at Las Vegas N.W.R. Apr. 2 (CR). The latest Whooper was one at Bosque N.W.R. Mar. 4 (PM).

Nine Black-bellied Plovers were at Bitter Lake N.W.R. May 6 (PJ, JS). Two Snowy Plovers at Laguna Plata, Lea, Mar. 28 were at a new locality for the species, while the earliest one of the spring was Mar. 9 at Laguna Grande in Eddy (SW)—where the first young were seen May 6 (PJ, JS). Twenty-seven Semipalmated Plovers were reported, with eight at Bosque N.W.R. Mar. 18 (PB, RT) being very early. A **Piping Plover** at Bitter Lake N.W.R. May 6 (SW) represented only the 4th report

for the state. A Mt. Plover near Hatch Apr. 22 (BO) was in an area where the species is infrequent. Early at Bosque N.W.R. were Black-necked Stilts, Am. Avocets, and Long-billed Curlews on or by Mar. 6; Baird's Sandpipers Mar. 18 (PB, RT); and Stilt Sandpiper Mar. 21 and Solitary Sandpiper Mar. 31 (J. Taylor). Notable were single Whimbrels at Bluewater L. May 25 (AS, JT), Bosque Refuge Apr. 29 (PJ), and Bitter Lake N.W.R. May 4 (ph. PJ, JS); a White-rumped Sandpiper at Chicosa L., Harding, May 14 (PS *et al.*) and another at Bitter Lake N.W.R. May 8 (MH); one to three Semipalmated Sandpipers at Bosque N.W.R. (MH), Bitter Lake N.W.R. (PJ *et al.*), and Holloman L. (MH) May 4–13, plus at Las Vegas N.W.R. Apr. 15 & 30 (CR *et al.*); up to eight or nine Dunlins at Bosque N.W.R. Mar. 30–Apr. 25 (JB *et al.*) and Laguna Grande Apr. 13 (SW); two calling Short-billed Dowitchers at Bitter Lake N.W.R. May 8 (MH); and an early phalarope at Holloman L., Otero, Mar. 30 (LS, EW). Moderate numbers of Wilson's Phalaropes moved through the state beginning in early April (v.o.), while the only Red-neckeds were two at Holloman L. May 10 (ph. MH).

Franklin's Gulls were also fairly numerous and widespread in the same period, with notable reports including one at Farmington May 13 (AN *et al.*), five near Tierra Amarilla May 12 (CR), and up to 14 at Zuni Apr. 23–29 (DC). One to three California Gulls were at Zuni May 29 (JT), near Bernalillo May 18 & 20 (MH), Bosque N.W.R. Apr. 9–10 (CR *et al.*), and Caballo L. Mar. 10 (PJ, JS), while late Ring-billeds included several near Española May 21 (BL *et al.*) and in the Cliff area May 18 (RF *et al.*). Unusual were two Caspian Terns at Bluewater L. May 25 (AS, JT), a Common Tern at Holloman L. May 10 (MH), and a Least Tern at Bosque N.W.R. May 15 (R. Edens *et al.*), while early were five Forster's Terns at Bosque Refuge Apr. 9 (SW).

A Ringed Turtle-Dove was at Las Cruces through May 9, where there were also records dating from spring 1988 (LS). Vagrant White-winged Doves were one to two in W. Albuquerque Apr. 25 (R. Tomlinson), Monticello in the Sandia Mts. May 30–31 (HS), and along Cherry Creek in the Pinos Altos Mts. May 24 (MH), while early were birds at Mangas Springs Mar. 6 (RF) and Redrock Mar. 28 (AF). Populations of the species elsewhere and of the Inca Dove appeared stable, although Inca numbers in Socorro and Alamogordo were sparse (v.o.). Early was a fledgling Mourning Dove at Carlsbad Mar. 21 (G. Duran, SW). Unusual was a Com. Ground-Dove at Rattlesnake Springs Apr. 30 (BO), while very early was a Yellow-billed Cuckoo near Virden May 4 (SOW). An Elf Owl in Water Canyon in the Magdalena Mts. Apr. 29 (CB) was at the n. periphery of the species' range, while a new southerly occurrence for **Boreal Owl** was one at 10,800 ft in the Pecos Wilderness Apr. 15 (D. Stahlecker *et al.*). Well north of the usual range was a ♀ Lesser Nighthawk at Zuni May 26 (JT). Unusual was a Whip-poor-will in P.O. Canyon Apr. 1–10 (RS), while northerly were 10 in the Magdalena and San Mateo Mts. May 19–20 (PJ *et al.*). Westerly was a Chimney Swift at Albuquerque Apr. 20 (LG), while early White-throated Swifts were in the Sandia Mts. Mar. 9 (HS), Bandelier Nat'l. Mon. Mar. 13 (PS), and Zuni Mar. 18 (DC). Also early was a ♂ Broad-billed Hummingbird in Guadalupe Canyon Mar. 20 (SOW), while unusual for spring were single ♂ Rufous Hummingbirds at Pleasanton Mar. 29 and earlier (BM *et al.*) and P.O. Canyon Apr. 7–14 (RS) and a ♂ Calliope Hummingbird at Silver City May 28–31 (RF). The first ♂ Lucifer Hummingbird arrived in P.O. Canyon Mar. 24 and a female Apr. 3, with up to 10 birds present by the end of the period (RS). Easterly was a ♂ Broad-tailed Hummingbird at Bell L., Lea, May 6 (PJ, JS).

**WOODPECKERS TO VIREOS** — Easterly were several Lewis' Woodpeckers at Clayton Mar. 23 (WC) and a Red-naped Sapsucker near Caprock, Chaves, Apr. 15 (C. Davis, LG), while westerly was an imm. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Silver City Mar. 2 (D & MZ). A Greater Pewee in Guadalupe Canyon May 7–8 (SOW) may have been a first for that locality,

while even more notable, if correct, was a singing bird thought to be an **Eastern Wood-Pewee** at Boone's Draw, Roosevelt, May 5–6 (MH). Vocal *Empidonax* flycatchers included one to two Willows on the Zuni Reservation May 14 and later (DC, JT), three Hammond's in Big Water Canyon in the Zuni Mts May 28 (JT), and a Gray in the Magdalena Mts. May 4 (JB *et al.*). Westerly was an E. Phoebe near Redrock Mar. 24 (RF), while another was near Villaneuva in mid-May (PS *et al.*). Highly unusual was a **Great Kiskadee** at Clayton May 13–14 and perhaps earlier (G. Cook, WC), for perhaps the 3rd state record. Early were an Ash-throated Flycatcher near Carlsbad Mar. 30 (W. Dunmire, SW) and single Cassin's Kingbirds in the Peloncillo Mts. Mar. 18–19 (SOW) and near Redrock Mar. 31 (PS). Northerly were individual Scissor-tailed Flycatchers near Nara Visa (BO *et al.*), Elida (SW), and at Bitter Lake N.W.R. (SB *et al.*) May 6–14.

An estimated 27,000 Violet-green Swallows were present below Navajo Dam Apr. 26 (JB, W. Black) for one of the highest counts ever for the state. Twenty Bank Swallows were at a new nesting area near Alcalde May 21, after the old site at San Juan Pueblo was destroyed by construction activities (BL *et al.*). The high count of Cave Swallows at Carlsbad Caverns N.P. was 3000 as of May 8 (SW). Twenty-two Barn Swallow nests were counted n. of Rodeo May 17 (RF), an area where the species a very local breeder. Blue Jays were common in Carlsbad in the period (SW), whereas only a few migrants were reported at Clayton (WC). Peripheral Pinyon Jays included about 20 near Glenwood Mar. 2 (JH *et al.*) and 10 near Cliff May 6 (RF *et al.*). Four to five Clark's Nutcrackers were present along the Chama R. between El Vado and Abiquiu lakes May 12–14 (CR) and in the Zuni Mts. Apr. 8 (DC). An Am. Crow nest produced young at Mangas Springs (RF); other records included 14 birds at Farmington May 13 (AN *et al.*) and 200 at Bosque N.W.R. Mar. 11 (PB, RT). Three Verdins were found near Malaga, where the species is more numerous than anywhere else in Eddy (SW). Four Red-breasted Nuthatches and 17 Am. Dippers—plus 2 dipper nests—were along the Chama R. below El Vado L. May 12–14 (CR).

Late Marsh Wrens were singles at Mangas Springs May 18 (RF) and Zuni May 29 (DC). Westerly were one to two E. Bluebirds at Watrous May 12 (P. Snider *et al.*) and near Cliff May 6 (RF *et al.*), while easterly were three or four Mountain Bluebirds near Bell L. Mar. 25 (PJ, JS). A **Varied Thrush** persisted at Carlsbad through Mar. 12 (SW), and a Swainson's Thrush was at Zuni May 29–30 (DC, JT). A concentration of 50 Sage Thrashers was at Bosque N.W.R. Apr. 6 (BO *et al.*), while westerly were single Brown Thrashers at Glenwood in the period (BM), Percha Dam Mar. 30 (PJ), and Las Cruces Mar. 11 (G. Ewing, *fide* EW). Cedar Waxwings occurred statewide but sparsely in the period Apr. 7–May 24 (v.o.). Peripheral Phainopeplas included one to three in the Socorro area Mar. 27–May 23 (JS *et al.*), three at Glenwood May 12 (PJ), and one in Carlsbad Caverns N.P. May 15 (*fide* PC). Gray Vireo reports included up to four birds at Zuni May 14 & 31 (DC, JT) and several in the Glenwood area Apr. 21 and later (D. McKnight). Very unusual for spring were single **Philadelphia Vireos** at Boone's Draw May 6 (MH) and Rattlesnake Springs May 1 (ML). Other notable vireos were an eastern-type Solitary at Boone's Draw May 6, a **Yellow-throated Vireo** at Clovis Apr. 28 (ph. MH), and a Red-eyed Vireo at Rattlesnake Springs May 1 (ML).

**WARBLERS TO FINCHES** — Rattlesnake Springs "cornered the market" as a locality for rarer warblers in the period, including a **Golden-winged Warbler** Apr. 19, Tennessee Warblers Apr. 20 (MF) and May 13 (LG), Chestnut-sided Warbler May 16 (DK *et al.*), Yellow-throated Warbler Apr. 24 (S. Fitton *et al.*), and the state's 2nd modern-day **Cerulean Warbler** Apr. 19 (SW). Close behind was Boone's Draw, with the highlights including a **Golden-winged Warbler**, Black-throated Green Warbler, and Bay-breasted Warbler May 6–7 (MH). Other

reports of rarer species included Chestnut-sided at Albuquerque May 24 (CB), two Black-throated Blues at Clovis May 1–6 (ph. MH), Blackpoll at Percha Dam Apr. 30 (CJ), single Black-and-white Warblers near Cliff May 6 and Pinos Altos May 10 (RF *et al.*), Worm-eating Warbler at Albuquerque May 15 (ph. P & Z. Doherty, *fide* G. Vickrey), Ovenbird at Roswell May 8 (MH), and Kentucky Warbler at Los Alamos Apr. 26 (CJ). Also notable were a Hermit Warbler (rare in spring) in the San Mateo Mts. Apr. 29 (PJ), Am. Redstart at Alamogordo May 10 (KJ), four N. Waterthrushes in the Gila Valley May 6 (RF *et al.*), and Red-faced Warbler near Virden May 5 (SOW). A pair of Painted Redstarts had already fledged young s. of Mule Creek, Grant, May 18 (SOW), and the species was reported without details in Banderier Nat'l. Mon. May 21 (*fide* CJ). Unusual were a **Scarlet Tanager** at House, Quay, May 12 (ph. SW), Hepatic Tanager along the Rio Grande e. of San Antonio May 14 (MH), and two to three Summer Tanagers near Clayton May 17 (WC) and at Boone's Draw May 7 (ph. MH).

At least one pair of N. Cardinals was at Rattlesnake Springs Mar. 9–May 5 (PC *et al.*) and a Pyrrhuloxia was in the Gila Valley May 6 (RF *et al.*). The only Rose-breasted Grosbeaks outside the southeast were singles at Farmington May 13 (AN *et al.*) and near San Antonio May 14 (MH). Indigo Bunting reports included two birds at Farmington May 13 (AN *et al.*) and singles in the Magdalena Mts. Apr. 24 (GH), near Carrizozo May 29, and the Virden area May 19 (SOW), while a Varied Bunting was reported at Rattlesnake Springs Apr. 17 (*fide* PC). A Brown Towhee during the period in Los Alamos (M Bunker, *fide* BL) at 7400 ft, was high. Cassin's Sparrows again appeared at Zuni, with up to three May 16–17 (DC); elsewhere, early singing birds included one to three s. of Silver City Mar. 5 (D & MZ), at Rattlesnake Springs Mar. 9 (PS, *fide* SW), and near Rodeo Mar. 11 (RF). Early were two Chipping Sparrows at Santa Fe Mar. 25–26 (JH), while unusual was a Field Sparrow n.e. of Clayton May 1 (WC). Black-chinned Sparrows were singing s. of Mule Creek Mar. 1 (SOW), in the Sandia Mts. Mar. 24 (HS), and near Carrizozo Mar. 30 (SW); also, a bird was gathering nest material in the Magdalena Mts. Apr. 8 (G. Beck, PJ). The first Vesper Sparrow at Zuni was Mar. 25 (DC), while very early were two Lark Sparrows at Bosque N.W.R. Mar. 11 (PB, RT). Lark Buntings were generally numerous in the east and south from mid-April through mid-May (v.o.), with northwesterly occurrences including one to two at Farmington May 13 (AN *et al.*) and near Gallup Apr. 20 (SI *et al.*); also notable were five at High Rolls, Otero, May 6 (WW). The earliest Savannah Sparrows were at Zuni Mar. 5 (DC), and three Grasshopper Sparrows were singing at Las Vegas N.W.R. May 20 (CR). Unusual was a singing Le Conte's Sparrow at the Waldrop rest stop in a plains area near Caprock Apr. 13 (JB). Swamp Sparrows were present in moderate numbers in the usual areas (v.o.), and other reports included one to two at Las Vegas N.W.R. Apr. 30 (PI, CR), near Gallup Apr. 29 (SI), Zuni May 31 (DC), and the Cliff-Mangas Springs area Mar. 7–May 18 (RF *et al.*). Single Golden-crowned Sparrows were at Santa Fe Apr. 26 (CR) and Bosque N.W.R. Mar. 30 and Apr. 6 (JB *et al.*) and a Harris' Sparrow was near Socorro Apr. 22 (RT).

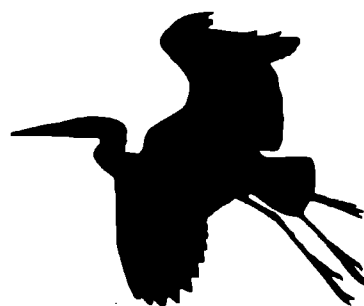
Notable were at least six Chestnut-collared Longspurs at Zuni Mar. 5 (DC) and a Bobolink near Gallup May 12 (SI *et al.*) Peripheral Great-tailed Grackles included one or two in the w. foothills of the Sandia Mts. Apr. 26 (HS) and at Queen in the Guadalupe Mts. (SW). Other reports included up to six at Zuni in the period, 30 near San Rafael May 12 (DC), and small numbers in the Gila Valley vicinity as early as Mar. 21 (RF *et al.*). Unusual was a Com. Grackle at Glenwood Mar. 1 (JH), while also notable were five at Farmington May 13 (AN *et al.*) and one to two at Zuni Mar. 1–May 3 (DC). The species continued to increase at Carlsbad, with one carrying food there May 22 (SW). A local first was furnished by two ♀ Bronzed Cowbirds in the Roswell area May 7–8 (ph. MH), indicating a continued northerly/easterly spread of the species in the state. Also notable was a bird at Alamogordo May

10–19 at the same place where present in 1988 (WW), plus one at Socorro May 10 and later (PJ), up to four at Truth or Consequences beginning Apr. 29 (D. Miller), one or two at Percha Dam May 7 (CR *et al.*), and one at Mangas Springs May 14–15 (RF). Unusual were two Orchard Orioles near Clayton May 8 (WS) and a Hooded Oriole at Las Cruces Mar. 19–Apr. 5 (LS *et al.*). Notable near Redrock were one or two Hoodeds Mar. 24 and a pair of Bullock's (N.) Orioles Mar. 25 (AF), and at Rattlesnake Springs a Hooded May 5–6 (ML) and a ♂ Baltimore (N.) Oriole May 16 (DK).

Cassin's Finches were generally sparse and confined to montane areas, although the birds were common in Waterfall Canyon in the Sandia Mts. (HS); other notable records included several at Chama May 10–31 (LS), up to eight in the Zuni Mts. s. of Gallup May 20 & 27 (DC, JT), and six at Alamogordo Mar. 2 (WW). Two family groups of Red Crossbills were in the Zuni Mts. May 20 (DC, JT); the only other reports were of four birds in the Jemez Mts. near La Cueva Apr. 20 (F. Crisler, M. Swain) and eight at Zuni Apr. 30 (DC). Pine Siskins were common at Zuni in March and April, but the scattered submontane reports elsewhere involved only small numbers of birds. Lesser Goldfinches were common at Zuni in the period (DC) but almost unreported elsewhere (v.o.), while Am. Goldfinches were somewhat more widespread and numerous (v.o.). Evening Grosbeaks were common in Waterfall Canyon in the Sandia Mts. in March and April (HS), and two were reported in the range May 23 (PS). Elsewhere, there were mainly scattered reports from in and near the northern mountains (v.o.), plus up to 12 birds in the Zuni Mts. Apr. 8 & 30 (DC), one at Albuquerque Mar. 30 (JH), and several in the Sacramento Mts. May 13 (SB *et al.*).

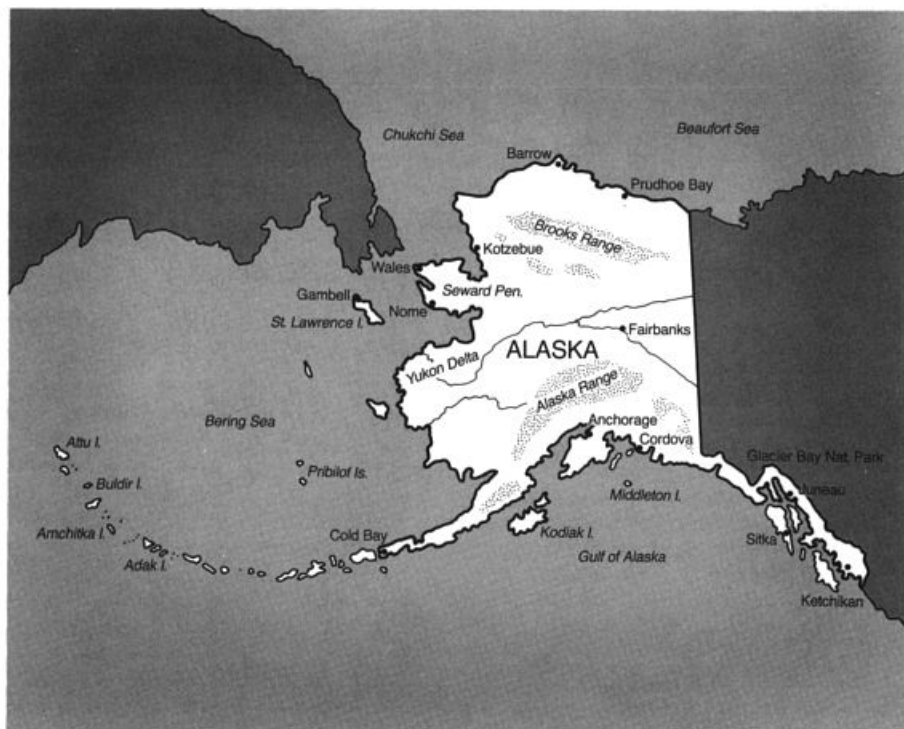
**CORRIGENDA** — The frigatebird at L. McMillan was present through Oct. 12 (AB 43:149, 1989), the Black-bellied Whistling-Duck was at L. Carlsbad rather than L. McMillan (*loc. cit.*), and the report of up to 50 Lewis' Woodpeckers per day over Capillo Peak should have read a total of 53 birds in the period Sept. 4–Oct. 3—with the peak of 31 on Sept. 17 (AB 43:150).

**CITED OBSERVERS** — Pat Basham, Sherry Bixler, Charles Black, James Black, David Cleary, Wes Cook, Phyllis Cremonini, Ralph Fisher, Jr., Mark Flippo, Alton Ford, Larry Gorbet, Mitch Heindel, Gail Hodge, John Hubbard, Joe & Nancy Hutto, Stephen Ingraham, Pat Insley, Kay & Robert Jenness, Carolyn Jervis, Philip Johnson, David Krueper, Burton Lewis, Mark Lockwood, Barbara McKnight, Peggy Mitchusson, Alan Nelson, Bruce Ostyn, Christopher Rustay, Al Schmierer, Robert Scholes, Lorraine Schulte, Hart Schwarz, John Shipman, Paul Steel, Ross Teuber, John Trochet, William Wells, Steve West, Sartor O. Williams III, Eleanor Wootten, Barry Zimmer, Dale & Marian Zimmerman.—**JOHN P. HUBBARD, 2016 Valle Rio, Santa Fe, NM 87501.**



# ALASKA REGION

T. G. Tobish, Jr., and  
M. E. Isleib



Once the winter period's "Omega Block" dissipated in February, warm and relatively dry weather dominated Alaska south of the Brooks Range. April was especially warm as temperatures ranged above average state-wide. Notable was the infrequency of recorded overnight frosts after mid-month south of the Yukon River valley. Such conditions allowed for a thrust of early migrants in good numbers into all regions of the state, but a series of widespread cold fronts slowed northward migration for most of early May. Storm tracks within the North Pacific-Bering Sea low were unusual, and followed the pattern from the winter season that carried systems northeastward out of the central or eastern Aleutians up the Bering Sea coast. This weather pattern no doubt contributed to a wild showing of Asiatic forms at the Pribilofs in mid-May. The Asiatic component of migrants in the western and central Aleutians was poorly represented both in numbers and diversity as that area was basically storm-free after early May. Snowpack over the Seward Peninsula and around Kotzebue Sound, especially near the coast, was record deep. This certainly concentrated migrants both at Nome and Kotzebue, where observers also found more than normal numbers of interesting Asiatic species. Four species were added to the Alaska list this season, three from Attu Island and one from St. Lawrence Island. Details on these records will be published elsewhere. One of these, Rufous Turtle-Dove, had been substantiated in Alaska by three previous records, but all were filed as having questionable origin.

**GREBES TO DUCKS** — The only reports of Pied-billed Grebe were of singles at Mitkof I. May 26 (PJW) and at the Juneau airport May 14–18 (DM). This season's high count of Western Grebe, s.e. of Mitkof I., was about average at 352 on Apr. 22 (PJW). More than a little surprising was a ♀-plumaged **Chinese Little Bittern** (*Ixobrychus sinensis*) at Attu I. May 17–21 (MEI et al., SK, DWS, ph.). This small e. Palearctic bittern breeds north to the s. Kuriles and migrates and winters pre-

## S.A.

The March 24th, 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill in Prince William Sound has caused the direct loss of uncountable thousands of birds. By early July, cleanup crews and biologists had recovered over 28,000 bird carcasses, a small fraction of the total killed. Oiled and dead birds were found in an area between central Prince William Sound, the Kodiak Archipelago, and the s. coast of the Alaska Peninsula. Wintering and resident loons, grebes, diving ducks, cormorants, shorebirds, and alcids were covered by some variant of the 11 million gallons of crude oil. Fortunately, the vast majority of the millions of migrant waterfowl and shorebirds typically overfly the spill areas. Although at this writing it is too early to assess population damages to the various species hit, it is clear that Yellow-billed Loons, Barrow's Goldeneyes, Bald Eagles, and Common Murres may have been very hard hit. Biologists considered that the 81 Yellow-billed Loons recovered, as of late May, represented at most only 10% of the total number lost. Such a loss could represent a significant percentage of the Alaska population. There were coincidentally 3 other significant oil spills in the state after January 1989, one each in Shelikof Strait, at Adak I., and at St. Paul I.

dominantly in the coastal fringe from s. Japan to the Philippines, Micronesia, and the Papuan region.

Very rare in s.e. Alaska and seen for the 2nd time at Juneau was an Emperor Goose present on the Mendenhall wetlands Apr. 13–24 (MEI et al.). A male and two ♀ Garganeys were at Attu I. May 15–24 (m.ob.) while a single drake appeared at St. Paul I.'s Webster L. May 21 (tILJ, RAS). The Nome area's 2nd documented Garganey was found May 30 just west of the city (tMJA). There are very few Garganey records in the Bering Sea away from the w. Aleutians. Cinnamon Teal made a fine showing. Earliest was a drake near Petersburg Apr. 21 (PJW). Walsh figured that up to seven individuals, including a flock of four on May 6, were present in the Petersburg area this season; the latest there was a drake May 14. Another ♂



Cinnamon Teal remained at Anchorage's Potter Marsh May 2-15 (HCE *et al.*) for a 3rd local record. Gadwall numbers declined quickly this spring at Kodiak I., from the record winter numbers there (q.v.); the highest spring count was of 550 Mar. 30 from the island's road system (RAM). Gadwalls appeared in the e. Interior, where casual, at Delta (four Apr. 29, DDG, JJ), and the spring peak at Anchorage reached an above-average 16+ May 2 (RLS, TGT). Eurasian Wigeon were widespread as usual this season; mainland and Gulf of Alaska coast individuals arrived with North American congeners in mid to late April, while Aleutian and Bering Sea individuals arrived in mid-May. Observers recorded individuals from the Interior at Fairbanks (where casual) with three May 2 (JA); from 4 s.c. Alaska locales (maximum 10 for a new record high at Kodiak I., Apr. 20, RAM), from the c. and w. Aleutians (maximum 12 at Attu I. May 21), and from the Bering Sea, at Nome, Gambell, and the Pribilof Is. where a flock of 60 birds at St. Paul I. May 17 constituted a new state high count.

Unusual at Gambell was a ♂ Com. Pochard, found dead June 6 (EH, \*MEI), for a first St. Lawrence I. record. Tufted Ducks also ventured into the n. Bering Sea, where the species is casual. A pair on snowmelt ponds near Kotzebue May 23-26 (E & JR *et al.*) furnished a first local record, and a drake at Nome May 22-31 (WINGS) was also unusual.

**HAWKS TO TERNS** — Attu I.'s adult White-tailed Eagle still survives alone in Temnac Valley, seen again this spring at intervals in May and June (m.ob.). An Apr. 15 Swainson's Hawk in Fairbanks (DRK) was at the early end of the species' arrival time in the Interior. Most interesting was a Merlin at Gambell June 2-3 (†PEL, JLD), that observers described as having warm buffy tones both on the dorsum and towards the vent. We know of no prior St. Lawrence I. record for Merlin.

Shorebird migration was, save for a handful of extralimital or noteworthy reports, extremely dull. Poor numbers of nearly all normal migrant species were recorded away from traditional important staging areas, and several regular Asiatic migrants went unrecorded from the w. Aleutians. Asiatic species were well represented, however, in Bering Sea areas where most are uncommon or casual. The only Common Greenshank report came from Attu, where two were seen between May 21 & 28 (WM *et al.*). A mostly basic-plumaged Greater Yellowlegs at Petersburg Mar. 19 (PJW) was likely a wanderer from a northerly wintering site rather than an early spring arrival. Although there are no winter records for the Region, the normal spring arrival for s.e. Alaska areas is the 2nd week of April. Lesser Yellowlegs made record-early arrivals at Petersburg Apr. 6 (PJW) and at Anchorage Apr. 15 (TGT, RLS). For the first time ever, the peak Wood Sandpiper movement centered in the s.e. Bering Sea, where observers at St. Paul I. tallied 70+, including a flock of 57, May 18 (ILJ). The Seward Peninsula's 3rd spring and 4th ever Wood Sandpiper was a single near Nome May 26 (BGP, MG, ph.).

Observers at Nome May 30 had leisurely looks at a Common Sandpiper (GM, JLD *et al.*) that provided mainland Alaska's first record. Up to four Com. Sandpipers, maximum three May 18, were at St. Paul and St. George Is. May 17-24 (†ILJ, RAS). The Bering Sea's first Spotted Sandpiper was one at St. Paul I. May 31 (†TBF). Single Terek Sandpipers were located at Gambell June 6-7 (MJA, FourPts) and at Nome May 29-30 (BGP, MG, GM). The Nome bird provided the Seward Peninsula's first record. Up to five Upland Sandpipers at Noorvik just inland from the Kobuk R. mouth May 25 (†JW) were likely forced to the coast by record snowpack cover; the species reaches its w. limits of breeding in the Region farther inland up the Kobuk R. A **Little Curlew** (*Numenius minutus*) that flew in off the Bering Sea and landed at Gambell June 7-8 was astonishing (VENT, †KK ph.). This curlew breeds north and east in n.e. Asia only to the w. Kolyma R. drainages but it does winter in Australia. This provided Alaska's first record.

St. Paul I. also was the site of the Bering Sea islands' 3rd

In early May, local fishermen alerted State and Federal biologists that shorebirds had amassed into uncountable flocks on the n. side of Montague I. at the s. entrance to Prince William Sound. These birds were apparently feeding on recently-spawned Pacific herring roe. Although oiled roe and surface oil sheens were in the area, the shorebirds fed on unexposed roe. After biologists ground-truthed a boat-based survey of Rocky and Zaikof Bays on n. Montague I. May 3, they made a conservative tally of 17,700 Surfbirds and 10,100 Black Turnstones (PDM, DWN *et al.*). These flocks quickly dissipated and by May 10 only 2500 Surfbirds and 3400 Black Turnstones remained. The numbers of May 3 certainly represented significant percentages of each species' world populations. Although there are no comprehensive counts of Black Turnstone from within its range, this total from Prince William Sound likely constituted at least half of that species' entire population. It is clear that the Sound provides an abundant food source and critical habitat for migrant Surfbirds and Black Turnstones. And it is these bays on n. Montague I. where a significant portion of the Sound's herring spawn between mid-April and mid-May. Further details of this phenomenon will be published elsewhere.

Black Turnstone where the same bird frequented Salt Lagoon May 14-16 and May 31-June 3 (RAS, ILJ). It remains a mystery why Black Turnstone does not show up, at least casually, on the Bering Sea islands since it breeds to the Bering Sea coast locally from the Yukon R. Delta to the Seward Peninsula. At least two Great Knots were reported this season, one each from the Nome R. mouth May 30-June 3 (MJA) and from Gambell May 22 (FourPts). These 2 areas are clearly the best sites to find Great Knot. For the first time since the early 1970s, we received no reports of Rufous-necked Stint in the Aleutians, where the species had been annual since the first Aleutian record in 1971. Jones and Sundstrom provided excellent details of a Little Stint at St. Paul I. May 19 and three Long-toed Stints May 21 (ILJ, RAS). Both species are casual in the Pribilofs. We now have 6 substantiated spring records of Little Stint from the Region.

The season's only Ring-billed Gull reports came from Kodiak I. May 22 (5th island record, †RAM) and Cordova, where two adults were present May 12-19 (RF). A pair of Caspian Terns appeared near Cordova, record early for the Region, Apr. 27 (DWN, SES). Singles were found throughout the w. Copper R. Delta, where the species apparently bred last summer. Common Terns were widespread, reported from Attu I. (May 25-June 11, maximum two, m.ob.), St. Paul I. (one May 20-28, ILJ, RAS), and Gambell (up to two May 23-31, FourPts, WINGS).

**DOVES TO WRENS** — A flighty **Rufous Turtle-Dove** (*Streptopelia orientalis*) bounded about canyons and gullies at Attu I. May 20-June 12 (SW, SK *et al.*). This furnished Alaska's 4th report. Single birds that landed wet and exhausted on fishing vessels, one s. of Agattu and another off the Pribilofs, and another at St. Paul I. accounted for the 3 previous Alaska reports, which had been considered of equivocal origin. Both major shipping lanes and commercial fishing fleets are generally centered 350-500 km south of Attu, and shipboard observers have never seen captive landbirds aboard such vessels in the N. Pacific. There are observations of passerines and even shorebirds landing on vessels in the N. Pacific and S. Bering Sea, but we have no report of individuals staying on vessels for more than a brief period. By plumage this individual was apparently of the highly migratory nominate race *orientalis*, which wanders widely in migration west of its

*orientalis*, which wanders widely in migration west of its range to W Europe. Since this dove arrived at Attu with other migrants (including two other first Alaska records) during passage of a series of lows that originated over the s. Sea of Okhotsk, and given the details of previous reports and the background information on the species' extralimital propensity, we have no reason to discount its origin or wild occurrence. The 3 previous Alaska records are currently being reevaluated. Details on this and the previous records will be published elsewhere.

Western Screech-Owl reports came from Gustavus (three calling Apr. 24 to late May, BBP), where the species reaches its northern known limits in the Region. Up to five N. Pygmy-Owls on Mitkof I. Mar. 18–May 18 (PJW) provided the highest number ever for this area, where the species bred last summer. The season's only Barred Owl responded to a tape May 1 on Mitkof I. (PJW). Flycatchers were generally early throughout the Region, and several species arrived record early; at Petersburg a Western Flycatcher Apr. 30 (PJW) was the state's earliest ever, and at Anchorage an Olive-sided Flycatcher May 2 (DFD) was early for Upper Cook Inlet by 6 days. A dark-plumaged Bank Swallow at Attu June 7–10 (TGT) furnished a 5th spring report for the w. Aleutians and likely was Palearctic (*Riparia riparia ijimae*). The two Girdwood Valley Chestnut-backed Chickadees remained all season near the feeder that had attracted them in winter (q.v., DM). As a result of the past winter's January cold, MacIntosh felt that upwards of 90% of the eastern portion of Kodiak's Winter Wren population perished. Since January only five or six individuals could be found (RAM).

**MUSCICAPIDS TO ICTERINES** — A flash of color in the willow thickets of Henderson Valley at Attu surprised birders May 20–21 (DWS, ph., et al.) when Alaska's first **Narcissus Flycatcher** (*Ficedula narcissina*) perched up. This gaudy e. Asian flycatcher is a common forest breeder to n. Japan and the s. Kurile Is. Extralimital Hermit Thrushes were noted at St. Paul, where one near Salt Lagoon May 30 (tILJ) was a first for the Pribilofs, and at Gambell, where casual in spring, with singles May 30 and June 5 (WINGS). For the first time since 1975, Eyebrowed Thrush went unrecorded from the Region. A ♂ Black-backed Wagtail was described May 31–June 1 (tPEL) from Gambell, where the species is casual in spring. Single Bohemian Waxwings were found at Adak I. May 17 (fide GVB) and at Attu May 20–25 (JJ, DDG). There is one previous Attu record, and these represent the 3rd Aleutian report. The Attu bird was collected and was definitely not North American *pallidiceps*. Interesting Parulid reports came from Sitka, where a Blackpoll Warbler and a singing Com. Yellowthroat were found May 28 (KH). Both species are casual in the S.E. Archipelago. Noteworthy was a singing Townsend's Warbler in taiga at Denali N.P. June 6 (BCP, MG). This locale is west of the species' known breeding limits, which are in the Fairbanks area to the north and in the w. Talkeetna Mts. foothills to the south.

The Juneau area's latest Harris' Sparrow was reported Apr. 28 (RW). Rustic Buntings were poorly represented and arrived late in the w. Aleutians; earliest (and maximum) was one May 31 at Nizki I. (fide GVB). Up to seven Rustic Buntings at St. Paul I. May 17–June 2 (RAS, ILJ) made a new Pribilof Is. high count; this bunting is at best casual in the Pribilofs. **Common Reed Bunting** made a good showing at Attu where an ad. male and two females were located May 25 and May 28–June 1 respectively (TGT, TLS), for the Region's 5th record.

A singing Red-winged Blackbird was beyond the n. limits of the species' range in the upper Tanana R. valley at Ohtig Lake, 40 mi east of Ft. Yukon, June 1 (JGK, WB). The species is casual in n. Alaska.

**FRINGILLIDS** — For the first time, observers documented the occurrence of all five of the Alaska list's Old World finches in the Region in one season. Brambling reports away from the Aleutians, where the species was on time in very low numbers, came from Gambell, four birds May 28–June 3 (FourPts,

WINGS, ph.) and St. Paul I., where observers witnessed a fallout of 22 birds in a single flock May 17 (ILJ, RAS). Brambling records in the Bering Sea, where the species is casual north of the c. and w. Aleutians, had previously only twice included more than single birds. A bright ♂ Common Rosefinch at Gambell June 10 (tKK, tPEL), furnished the 5th spring record for St. Lawrence I. Elsewhere, a ♀ Com. Rosefinch was found at Attu June 8–9 (TGT, TLS).

Northern finch populations were essentially unrecorded or rare and local (crossbills), or dispersed in below-average numbers (redpolls, Pine Siskin). There was a handful of isolated reports of small flocks of White-winged Crossbills from the w. Brooks Range. Small numbers did begin to enter the Region at the period's close. Redpoll populations remained near average throughout the Region, as they have for the past 3 summers.

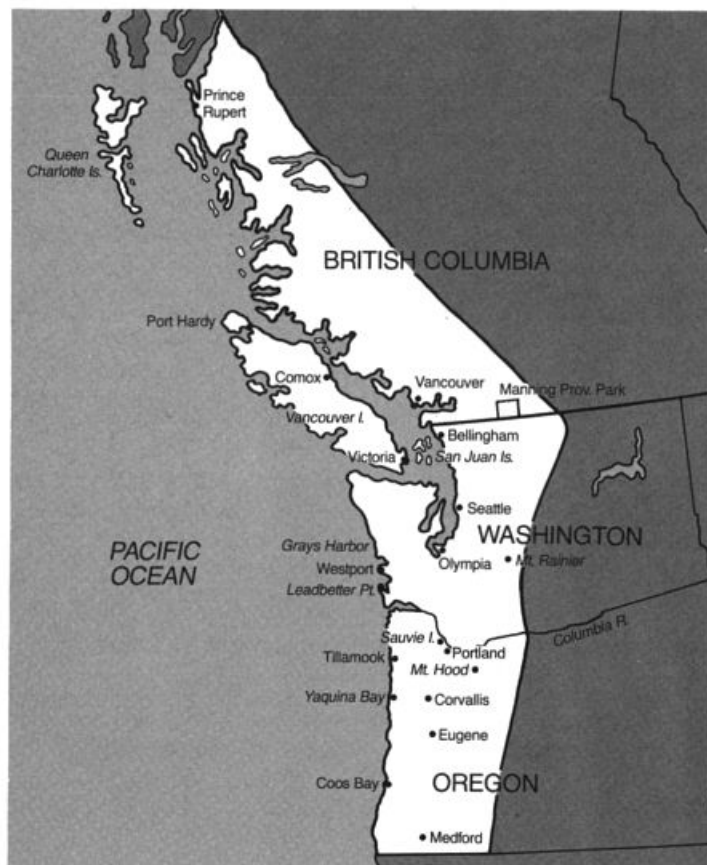
Oriental Greenfinches appeared in the w. Aleutians this season, at Attu with two May 22–24 (TGT, NSP), and at nearby Alaid I. with two June 1 (fide GVB). Oriental Greenfinch remains a casual spring and fall migrant from the w. Aleutians only. Early arriving birders were treated to a brilliant ♂ **Eurasian Bullfinch** at Gambell May 26–30 (DOH, PEL, ph.) There are now 4 spring records for the Region, 3 of which are from Gambell. The Pribilofs' 2nd (and first in spring) Hawfinch was found near East Landing June 3 (tTBF, RM, SC, GH). Elsewhere, Attu birders were actually able to leisurely study the three Hawfinches that arrived there June 9 (TGT, TLS), and one was reported from Buldir I. June 5 (fide GVB). Hawfinches are apparently annual in spring in the w. Aleutians, where the species has been recorded in 9 of the last 14 years, especially at Attu where they key in on Siberian Mountain Ash bushes.

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# NORTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

Bill Tweit and Steve Heinl



**I**t was a rather stormy spring, which may have had an effect on both breeding and migratory species. All three months were wetter than normal. In the northern half of the Region, March began with snowstorms, and then continued with rain on all but four days. The rains tapered off after the first week of April, the rest of the month was slightly warmer than average. Mid and late May saw more stormy periods.

The shorebird migration was lackluster, with lower than usual numbers of most of the regular migrants and all of the scarcer 'eastern' migrants such as stilts, avocets, and Baird's and Pectoral sandpipers. There were more than the usual numbers of some of the interior passerines that are casual migrants on the west side: Say's Phoebe, Townsend's Solitaire, Mountain Bluebird, Loggerhead Shrike, Lark Sparrow, and Black-throated Sparrow.

The summary of sightings from Vancouver Island was not available in time for inclusion in this report.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — R.S. = Ranger Station; S.J.C.R. = south jetty of the Columbia R., OR; V.I. = Vancouver I., BC; W.R.A. = Wildlife Recreation Area.

**LOONS TO HERONS** — A late spring migration of Pacific Loon was noted at Florence, OR, May 20 (300+ in ½ hour) (SH) and at Ocean Shores, WA, May 26 (10 per minute) (G & WH). Such is not noted every year. There was only one report of Yellow-billed Loon, for the lowest spring total in years, one at Yaquina Bay, OR, Mar. 18–23 (Dave & Mary Copeland, Jack Corbett). Three reports of Red-necked Grebe along the Oregon coast May 5–13 were unusually late, as the last sightings are usually in late April. Some or all of the 800 W. Grebes on Bellingham Bay, WA, May 25 (TW) may have remained to summer in that area, an occasional occurrence.

The only documented report of Clark's Grebe was of two at Ocean Shores May 12 (TG & WH).

There were 2 pelagic trips off Westport, WA, Apr. 9 and May 7 (TW), and TT was stationed on a boat off Oregon during April and May. Counts of Black-footed Albatross ranged from nine on Apr. 9 to 75 on May 7, which are normal numbers. Northern Fulmars were almost nonexistent. The only report was of two May 7. Apparently none was seen in April, when they still should have been present in wintering numbers. Pink-footed Shearwaters were not reported until May 7, when one Flesh-footed Shearwater was also found. Sooty Shearwaters were found in the low thousands off both Oregon and Washington during April and May. Small numbers (35) of Short-tailed Shearwaters were with the Sooties off Washington Apr. 9. Two Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels were seen off Heceta Head, OR, Apr. 16. None was found off Washington in April, and 26 were seen May 7. The only Leach's Storm-Petrel was one seen inland near Salem, OR, May 26 (Glen Lindeman), for one of very few inland records unrelated to fall storms.

The northward movement of Brown Pelicans was strong and early. Pelicans were at Yaquina Bay, OR, Apr. 19 (fide Dfa) and at Ocean Shores Apr. 25 (THas). By May 30, 120 were counted in Grays Harbor (Dan Guy, Max Zahn, fide JS), certainly the largest spring count ever for Washington. Aside from 106 Great Egrets in the Coquille Estuary, OR, Apr. 1 (SH, DFi), there were only 3 reports of Great Egrets this spring. The Coquille estuary concentration had dissipated by the end of April. Black-crowned Night-Herons were noted at 2 locations, both areas where breeding is possible. Two were at Finley N.W.R. May 17 (KM) and three were at Reifel Ref., BC, May 8 (JI), with one remaining at Reifel until the end of the month.

**WATERFOWL, RAPTORS** — A Black-bellied Whistling-Duck at Vancouver, WA, from late April through the end of May (Tony Fuchs, JS, +GW) was not toe-clipped and showed no other signs of captivity. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has no records of this species in captivity in either Oregon or Washington. This was the first report of this species in Washington, and now the Records Committee must wrestle with theories about the bird's origin. The last of the wintering Trumpeter Swans in the Puget Sound area and Willamette Valley appear to have left in mid-March. The 20 Trumpeters at Reifel I., BC, Mar. 31 (JI) and one Apr. 9 and May 21 at Saanich, V.I. (J.B. Tatum) were the last reported. Observations of migratory groups of Greater White-fronted Geese included 700 over Toketee R.S., OR, Apr. 17 (DFi) and 800 at S.J.C.R. May 9 (HN). The latter number was unusually large for a coastal locale. The two Emperor Geese that wintered on Coos Bay, OR, until Apr. 9 (m.ob.) were the only ones reported; no migrants were noted.

Wood Ducks are plentiful in the Columbia R. bottomlands, but 120 at Scappoose, OR, Mar. 22 (NH) made a large number for such an early date. Three Eur. Green-winged Teal, a lower than average number, were reported this spring. The last were Apr. 9 at both Lummi Flats, Whatcom, WA (Jim Duemmel) and Reifel I., BC (RTo et al.). A ♀ N. Shoveler with 10 chicks at Fort Stevens S.P., Clatsop, May 3 (HN) represented a very unusual breeding record for w. Oregon as well as being early. Hybrid Eurasian x American Wigeon were reported from Seattle through Mar. 18 (EH, Bob Sundstrom), Vancouver, BC, Mar. 10 (Jost von der Linde), and Surrey, BC, Apr. 17 (H & JM). Most Eur. Wigeon left by mid-April, but a male May 27 at Auburn, WA (TB), was the latest ever for the Region. Three Tufted Duck reports were average for spring, with only the ad. male at Kerby, Josephine, OR, Mar. 11 (†JGi) being well documented.

The bulk of the Turkey Vulture migration in s.w. Oregon occurred Mar. 28 through Apr. 1 (Eric Sutterberg, SH). North of the southern Willamette Valley, migration did not progress until after Apr. 10 (HN). The only migratory group noted in Washington was at Port Townsend Apr. 1 (DP), and only singles were noted in mainland British Columbia. After the very large numbers of Black-shouldered Kites reported during the winter, the spring counts tapered off quickly. Small numbers remained throughout the spring at Raymond, WA (m.ob.), Nehalem Meadows, OR (m.ob.), and at Talent and Denman W.R.A., both in Jackson, OR (MM, Otis Swisher). Breeding is possible at all 4 sites. A single kite on the Skagit Flats, WA, Apr. 1 († Hal Opperman) furnished the northernmost record for the Region and was only 45 miles south of Canada. Reports of both Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks were much scarcer than average, but this may have been an artifact of reporting.

Red-shouldered Hawks were reported 3 times in Oregon north of their regular haunts in the Brookings/Harbor area, which has become typical for this expanding species. A Swainson's Hawk at Randle, Lewis, WA, May 15 (THas, Kevin Aanerud, Paul Cozens) provided a very rare spring record for the Region. The latest Rough-legged Hawks were singles on Apr. 16 at Carlton, OR (JJ) and at Surrey, BC (Jack Williams). All other reports were from March. The 16 reports of Peregrines were about half the average for the spring season. Merlin numbers seemed to be average. The last Gyrfalcon reports were Mar. 12 in n.w. Washington (Joe TerLouw, fide TB) and Mar. 22 in the Vancouver, BC, area (MPr).

**RAILS, SHOREBIRDS** — The first Soras were noted Apr. 6 at Finley N.W.R., OR (RG), Apr. 14 at Ridgefield N.W.R., WA (Robert & Georgia Ramsey), and Apr. 9 at Pitt Meadows, BC (Dan Bastaja). Nehls reported smaller than normal numbers of Black-bellied Plover on the Oregon coast throughout the period, and no large flocks were reported elsewhere. The spring Lesser Golden-Plover flight seemed smaller than average as well. There is no ready explanation why spring

numbers of these two species should positively correlate, but in most springs they seem to. There were nine golden-plover reports, four from Oregon and five from Washington. One was identified as *fulva* (DP) and two in Washington were called *dominica*. There is only one previous Regional report of *dominica* in the spring (AB 41: 479). Until the spring status of the two golden-plovers is better understood, all spring reports of *dominica* should be documented. Two Black-necked Stilts near Ashland, OR, Apr. 20 (Ray Skibby) were the only ones reported. This was the 2nd consecutive spring of small numbers in w. Oregon of this sporadic spring invader to the Region. Seven Am. Avocets, another sporadic invader, made an average showing. Greater Yellowlegs numbers were normal, with flocks of 100+ reported throughout the Region in April. Both Lesser Yellowlegs and Solitary Sandpipers, scarce regular spring migrants, were noted in average numbers. Relatively large flocks of 350 Whimbrels near Tillamook May 5 (Craig Roberts) and 200 at Yaquina Bay May 6 (SJ) were illustrative of the good numbers on the Oregon coast, but Whimbrels were almost unreported elsewhere.

The largest number of Red Knots reported was only 200 along southern Grays Harbor, WA, Apr. 23 (GW), and only five were noted in Oregon. From one to three Semipalmated Sandpipers were reported in the Vancouver, BC, area from Apr. 30 to May 18, and none was reported elsewhere. The W. Sandpiper peak counts were of 15,000 at Bandon, OR, Apr. 28 (DFi), 12,000 at Nisqually N.W.R., WA, Apr. 30 (RTh), and 10,000 at Reifel I., BC, Apr. 27 (JI). These reflect the usual timing and numbers for these locations. Only two Baird's Sandpipers, rare spring migrants, were noted. One Apr. 30 at Iona I., BC (MPr), was typical of their timing in the Region, but the other at Olympia, WA, May 14 (BT) was late. Eight Pectoral Sandpipers were reported from Apr. 15 to May 21, somewhat fewer than average. A ♂ Ruff at Reifel I., BC, Apr. 8–14 (†MPr, JI) provided the 2nd spring record for the Region, both from the Vancouver area. The reported flocks of Short-billed Dowitcher, an abundant spring migrant, were also small. About 5000 at Grays Harbor Apr. 23 (GW) and 200 at Bandon, OR, Apr. 28 (DFi) were the largest flocks reported. Numbers of Wilson's Phalaropes, another sporadic visitant from the east, were much lower than in most years. Red-necked Phalaropes were unusually conspicuous along the outer coast during May. Counts of hundreds came from all coastal locations from May 7 to May 26. One in alternate plumage on Yaquina Bay Mar. 11 (BB) was very early. Despite this heavy onshore movement, only the typical small numbers were noted inland. The only Red Phalarope reports were of one at Baskett Slough N.W.R., OR, Mar. 10 (RG) and 100 seen 20 mi off Heceta Head, OR, May 4 (TT). None was seen on pelagic trips off Westport on Apr. 9 or May 7 (TW).

**LARIDS, ALCIDS** — Very small numbers of Pomarine Jaegers, fewer than 10 each trip, were seen in April and May off Westport (TW). Six Parasitic Jaegers seen off the Oregon coast Apr. 15 (TT) were quite early. They may have been associated with a pelagic movement of Bonaparte's Gulls noted the next day. Otherwise, small numbers of Parasitics were noted during May off the S.J.C.R. and Grays Harbor, as is normal. An ad. Little Gull off Point No Point, Kitsap, WA, Mar. 10–12 & 24 (VN, m.ob., ph.) furnished the 9th Regional spring record. Over 7000 Bonaparte's Gulls off Point No Point Apr. 6 (VN) made the largest migratory group noted. A migratory movement was also noted 20 mi off the Oregon coast Apr. 16, when 500 were seen headed north (TT). There were 4 reports of Glaucous Gulls, a lower than average number, with the last noted Apr. 26 at Vancouver, BC (MPr). An apparent first-year Iceland Gull photographed at Port Angeles, Clallam, Mar. 20 (EH, VN, ph. FS) may have provided the first record for Washington. If not a pure *kumlieni*, the bird was probably a hybrid Thayer's x Kumlien's. This was the first Regional record for an Iceland type since 1987, when a possible individual was seen in Oregon, and 1984 to 1985,



This gull in Clallam County, Washington, on March 20, 1989, was believed to be a (Kumlien's) Iceland Gull, and if so it would probably represent the first state record. Photograph/Fred Sharpe.

when several were found in the Vancouver, BC, area.

Black-legged Kittiwakes were virtually unreported this spring. Only two were reported from Oregon, both in March at Bandon (DFi). Singles were noted along the Washington coast, except for Apr. 9 when 50 were seen at Grays Harbor (TW). Only one Sabine's Gull was noted off Westport May 7 (TW); this was also a very low number. At least 1000 Common Terns in the Grays Harbor channel May 6–14 (DP, G & WH, BT) made a very large concentration for spring. The only other sighting was of 12 at S.J.C.R. May 16 (PP). As with Sabine's Gulls, Arctic Terns were also very scarce on the May 7 pelagic trip off Westport, with only two seen (TW). Three Forster's Terns at Fern Ridge Res., OR, May 16 (SH) and single Black Terns Apr. 30 and May 24 in Snohomish, WA (THas, Terri Spencer) represented the only reports of the 'eastern' terns. Common Murres, Cassin's Auklets, and Tufted Puffins were in low numbers on the April and May pelagic trips off Westport (TW), but Rhinoceros Auklets were in normal numbers. The oil spill last December off Grays Harbor may have been the cause of this discrepancy, as murres and Cassin's Auklets were found dead in much larger numbers than were Rhino Auklets.

**OWLS TO WOODPECKERS** — The last Snowy Owl report, after the poorest winter flight in decades, was of one seen at Richmond, BC (JL), Mar. 17. A Burrowing Owl was at Tenmile on the Oregon coast Apr. 10 (fide Dfa) for a very rare coastal record. A Barred Owl at Larch Mt. May 8 provided a first record for Multnomah, OR (Dave Irons, PP). The season's first Com. Poorwill was found in the Rogue R. valley Apr. 19 (HS). North of there poorwills are accidental, so two in Eugene, OR, Apr. 30 (Bob Bender) and one in Portland May 6 (Owen Schmidt) were noteworthy. Black Swifts were first reported May 10 (RTo) in British Columbia, but most of the reports came after May 22. Vaux's Swifts were reported in only moderate numbers, with the main movement seeming to be a few days late.

An ad. ♂ Black-chinned Hummingbird at a Corvallis, OR, feeder May 20 (Elizabeth MacDonald) was a rare find for western Oregon. An Anna's Hummingbird nest was found in Seattle Apr. 8 (RTh). Actual nest reports of this species are still scarce. A ♂ *Costa's Hummingbird* reported at Shelton, Mason, Apr. 14 (Andrew & Shirley Beelick) would, if accepted, provide the first record for Washington. A ♂ *Costa's Hummingbird* at a Roseburg, Douglas, feeder Apr. 27 to the end of the period (Gwynn Black, m.ob.) furnished the 9th record for

western Oregon. There are also over 5 British Columbia records. Calliope Hummingbirds are rare vagrants from the interior in the Vancouver, BC, area. Singles were seen there Apr. 21–26 (RTo, m.ob.) and May 6 at Reifel I. (JJ). The major wave of Rufous Hummingbirds was noted during the first third of April in the Willamette Valley and the Puget Trough (HN, SH, EH, RTh).

A Lewis' Woodpecker at Kalaloch, Jefferson, WA, Apr. 29 (TH) may have provided a first county record; they are especially rare on the outer coast. Red-naped Sapsucker records included one in Vancouver, BC, Apr. 21–23 (tMP, tWayne Weber), a window kill Apr. 10 in Seattle (fide PM, \*U.W. Burke Museum) and two on Mary's Peak in the coast range of Benton, OR, Apr. 8–9 (RG). Also on Mary's Peak were a ♀ *Williamson's Sapsucker* Mar. 23 (tRG) and a male Apr. 8 (tAl McGie). *Williamson's* are very rare in the Region, while a few Red-naped occur away from their breeding range on the Cascade Crest annually.

**FLYCATCHERS TO SWALLOWS** — Except for the phoebes, flycatcher migration was on time and unremarkable. Olive-sided Flycatchers were first reported Apr. 20 in Vancouver, BC (DT), with most of the 23 other sightings in May. The first W. Wood-Pewee was also reported from Vancouver, BC, Apr. 30 (JL, RTo). First arrival dates for Hammond's Flycatcher were Apr. 15 in Oregon (JJ), Apr. 21 in Washington (FS), and Apr. 19 in British Columbia (DT). No migratory movements of Hammond's were noted. No Dusky Flycatchers were reported from the n. Willamette Valley, where a few spring vagrants have been found each of the past few years. A Gray Flycatcher, a rarity anywhere in the Region, was in Ashland, OR, Apr. 13 (MM). The first Western Flycatchers were noted Apr. 11 in Oregon (JJ), Apr. 13 in Washington (Jack Davis), and Apr. 17 in British Columbia (H & JM). Again, no migratory concentrations were reported. An *Eastern Phoebe* at Reifel I., BC, May 13 (tDale Jensen, tGerry Ansell) furnished the first record for the Region, although the species breeds in n.e. British Columbia. There were nine Say's Phoebe reports, an exceptional number, from Washington, with the latest on Apr. 7 (THas), and five more in Oregon north of their regular range in the southern valleys. Even in the Rogue valley the seven reports in March were well above the average number. There were 10 reports of Western Kingbirds in Oregon north of their usual breeding range, seven from Washington, and three from the Vancouver, BC, area. This was average or somewhat below average.

Breeding Horned Larks have almost disappeared from the Puget Trough and the Willamette Valley. This spring, 2 pairs were apparently breeding on Ft. Lewis, WA (GW), a pair was seen at Baskett Slough N.W.R., OR, May 6 (fide BB), and a singing bird was near Silverton, Marion, OR, May 13 (BB). Purple Martins appeared on schedule, with the first sightings in mid-April. One at Reifel I., BC, May 18 (JJ) furnished the first well-documented record for the Vancouver area since 1979. Formerly, they occurred there regularly. Tree and Violet-green swallow migration did not appear to be adversely affected by the inclement weather. Very early N. Rough-winged Swallows included one at Toketee, Douglas, OR, Mar. 12 (DFi), one at Willamina, Polk, OR, Mar. 17 (RG), and four Mar. 21 at Auburn, King, WA (JGa). There were six reports of Bank Swallow May 6–30: three from Vancouver, BC (MP, JJ), two from Washington (DP, RTh), and one from Oregon (SJ). This was a few more than usual of this interior species for spring. A Cliff Swallow in Yamhill, OR (fide BB), Mar. 8 was very early, but otherwise they were normal or later than their usual end of March arrival. Barn Swallows appeared to arrive on time, beginning Mar. 25.

**CORVIDS TO SHRIKES** — Odd corvids included two Black-billed Magpies at Boring, Clackamas, OR, Apr. 30 (Dorothy Fagner) and a Blue Jay reported Apr. 2 on Whidbey I., WA (Don Cannell), that had apparently been in the vicinity for 2 months. Peak Bushtit nest building time in the Seattle

area this spring was 3 weeks later than in 1988 (Mike Donahue) Canyon Wrens were reported from 3 new locations in Douglas in the s. Oregon Cascades (DFi, Ron Maertz). It is likely that small numbers of this eastside species have been breeding unnoticed in the area for some time. The Rock Wren that wintered at Vancouver, BC, was last seen Mar. 18 (DT et al.). Migrant Rock Wrens were noted in Oregon near Eugene May 2 (SH) and at Corvallis May 5 (Merlin Eltzroth). The first House Wrens appeared, as usual, before Apr. 15 in Oregon and after that date in Washington.

There were 175 W. Bluebird pairs on Ft. Lewis, WA, this spring, compared with 220 and 160 in the last 2 years, respectively (GW). The success of the first nesting was mixed, probably because of the poor weather in May. Thirteen Mountain Bluebirds were reported during March through Apr. 13, somewhat above average numbers. The number of Townsend's Solitaires reported was also above average. There were 32 sightings through Apr. 16. Very early Swainson's Thrushes were found Apr. 21 in Vancouver, BC (DT, RTo), and the next day in Coos, OR (Larry Thornburgh). Otherwise, they appeared May 5–9 throughout the region. Migratory movements were heard May 9 & 10 in the Willamette Valley (SH, Dennis Rogers) and May 26 in the s. Oregon Cascades (DFi). The only N. Mockingbird observations were four in Oregon (Steve Ominski, Durrel Kappan, Norm Barrett). A Sage Thrasher in Seattle May 11 (†Paul Murtaugh) provided the 2nd King record. The last N. Shrike reports were Mar. 19 in Washington at the Skagit R. delta (Dave Baker) and Apr. 10 in the Fraser R. delta, BC (JI). Four Loggerhead Shrike reports were more than usual. Shrikes were seen in Vancouver, BC, Apr. 8 (Bill Lamond), in Seattle Apr. 10 (†THas), at Yaquina Head, OR, Mar. 22 (Kathy Liska), and in the Douglas Cascades, OR, May 8 (DFi).

**VIREOS TO FINCHES**—Both Solitary and Warbling vireos were on time, in the first and second halves of April, respectively. Red-eyed Vireos are very rare on the outer coast; two were at Airport Heights, Coos, OR, May 27 (Ben Fawver). The first wave of Orange-crowned Warblers was Apr. 7 in Oregon and s.w. Washington (SH, BT), and the first individuals were reported in British Columbia the day after. Succeeding waves were noted in Oregon Apr. 16 (SH) and along the Washington coast Apr. 29 (G & WH). Yellow, Black-throated Gray, and MacGillivray's warblers and Com. Yellowthroats arrived on time, and no migratory concentrations of these species were reported. However, the Wilson's Warbler migration was unusually prominent this spring. One at Grants Pass, OR, Mar. 22 (Jim Miller) was very early. Otherwise the first arrivals were on time in early April in Oregon and late April in Washington and s. British Columbia. A large coastal movement was noted at Astoria, OR (MPa), and Grays Harbor, WA (G & WH), Apr. 29–30. In the Puget Trough and in the mountains, Wilson's migration was still going strong at the end of May, when 150 were seen at Reifel I., BC (JI), 40 were in Discovery Park, Seattle (RTh), and numbers were moving in the Douglas Cascades, OR (DFi). The rare warblers this season were all in Oregon. A ♂ **Chestnut-sided Warbler** in Portland May 17 (Joe Evanich) was the 7th for w. Oregon, a **Yellow-throated Warbler** at Airport Heights, Coos, May 27 (Barb Griffin) furnished the 2nd state record, and ♂ Black-and-white Warblers were in Eugene Feb. 26 to Apr. 8 (Bruce Ostyn, m ob.) and Thornton Creek, Lincoln, May 24 (DFa).

Western Tanagers were on time in late April. Late movements were noted in Portland May 20–25 (GL) and in the Douglas foothills May 25 (DFi). The first Black-headed Grosbeak was in Ashland, OR, Apr. 18 (HS), and other first arrival dates were in the last third of April. Lazuli Bunting arrival was in mid-April on their breeding grounds in s. Oregon and in May at their scattered breeding locales in the Cascade foothills. Extralimital birds were noted at 2 locations on the n. Oregon coast (MPa, DFa) and in Seattle and Bellingham (RTh, TW). First Chipping Sparrow arrival dates were Apr. 3

at Salem, OR (Don Pederson), Apr. 8 at Ft. Lewis, WA (GW), and Apr. 16 at Reifel I., BC (JI), their typical arrival pattern. Vesper Sparrows also arrived on schedule: Apr. 1 at 2 Oregon locales (JJ, Paul Sherrell). Singles at Surrey, Apr. 10 (JM) and another in Vancouver May 19 (MPr) were among few records for the s.w. British Columbia area. Lark Sparrows at Newton Hill, Lincoln, OR, May 21 (Janet Lamberson), Point No Point, Kitsap, WA, May 22 (†VN), and Finley N.W.R., OR, May 28 (KM) represented unusually late dates for this casual migrant. A Black-throated Sparrow at Seattle May 19–20 (†THas, †RTh) provided the 7th w. Washington record. A Sage Sparrow was seen near Ashland, OR, Mar. 31 (MM). In w. Oregon, the Sage Sparrow is rarer than the Black-throated, even though Black-throateds are much scarcer than Sage in the interior.

Savannah Sparrow movement was noted Apr. 29 on the Washington coast (G & WH) and May 7 at Seattle (EH). Grasshopper Sparrows returned to their Eagle Point, Jackson, OR, colony by May 5 (HS); this isolated colony is at least 3 years old. Large numbers of Golden-crowned and Fox sparrows were noted in migration on the Washington coast Apr. 29 & 30 (G & WH, JGa). The timing of the movement was normal, but both species were unusually conspicuous, perhaps concentrated by poor weather. The only Lapland Longspur reports were of four at Ocean Shores, WA, Apr. 28–30 (JGa) and a very late bird on the Lane, OR, coast May 24 (Ruth Warren). The **Rustic Bunting** that wintered at Kent, WA, was last seen Apr. 9 (JGa). Snow Buntings were noted Mar. 26 at Port Angeles, WA (Tom Plath) and also May 7 on Mt. Hood, OR (GL, Tom Staudt). The latter record was unusually late and furnished one of very few spring records in the Cascades.

One Tricolored Blackbird returned to an old colony site in the Portland area Apr. 1. A new colony was found in N. Portland Apr. 29 (JGi, m ob.), with as many as 12 males present. Thirty-eight Yellow-headed Blackbirds were reported away from their scattered breeding locales. Northern Orioles were first reported from Oregon in mid-April and then in early May in Washington and British Columbia. A singing ♂ "Baltimore" N. Oriole was in Woodburn, Marion, OR, May 29 and later (†BB). Red Crossbills were numerous in the San Juan Is., WA (TH). Sparse numbers were reported from other parts of western Washington (G & WH, TW) and the s. Oregon Cascades (DFi), and they were unreported elsewhere. The few Pine Siskin and Evening Grosbeak reports indicated unremarkable numbers.

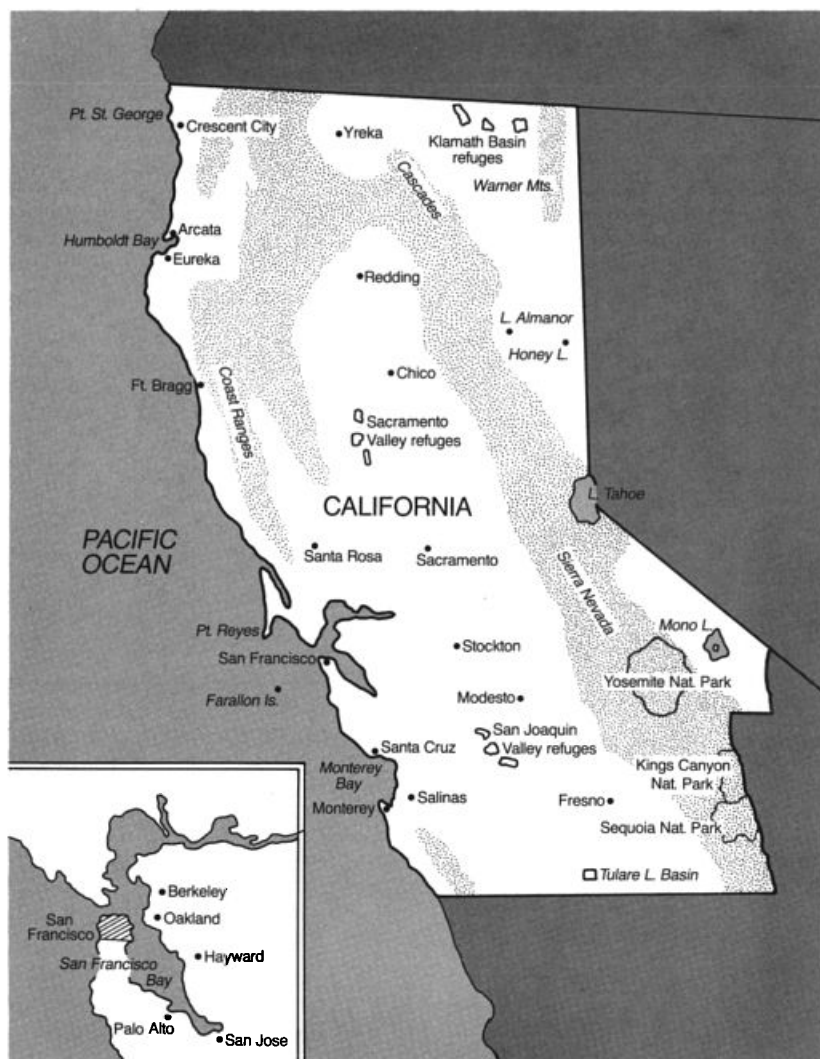
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# MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION

Richard A. Erickson,  
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and David G. Yee



The season's highlights came from offshore waters. The following pelagic accounts may be the tip of an iceberg in the Region's newest frontier. Late winter rains helped the state's drought condition, but waterfowl nesting in some areas still suffered owing to low water levels. Shorebird censuses throughout the state continued to educate us on the status and distribution of many species. Migration began early for many landbird species, and a surprising number of record early arrival dates were established. The vagrant season got off to a very slow start in May.

We are grateful to Kurt F. Campbell for compiling the landbird reports for Erickson's analysis.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — C.A.S. = California Academy of Sciences; C.B.R.C. = California Bird Records Committee; C.C.R.S. = Coyote Creek Riparian banding Station, Santa Clara; C.V. = Central Valley; Cyn. = Canyon; F.I. = Southeast Farallon Island; S.F. = San Francisco; ph. = photo on file with Regional Editors. All records from F.I. should be credited to Point Reyes Bird Observatory (P.R.B.O.). Place names in *italics* are counties.

**GREBES TO PELICANS** — A Red-necked Grebe at Rancho Murieta L., Sacramento, Apr. 29–30 (JCP, DJo) and a Clark's Grebe at F.I. Mar. 28 were considered local rarities. A Laysan Albatross picked up in a back yard in Santa Clara Mar. 29 was released at Santa Cruz (fide N. Yatsko). Although

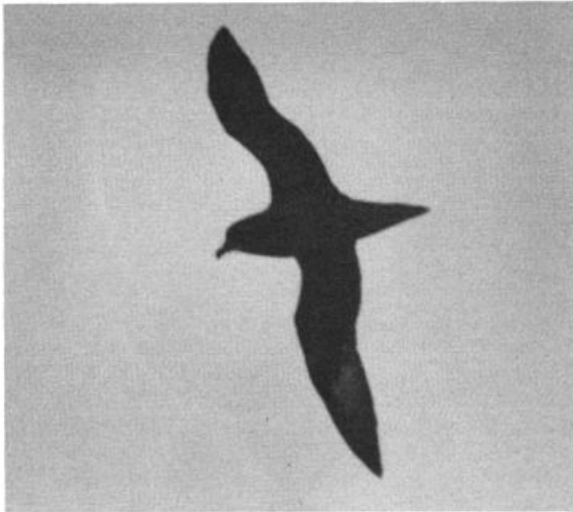
the likelihood of ship passage into S.F. Bay is always suspect, there are now enough records far inland southeast of our Region to suggest that this albatross can arrive anywhere on its own. In more usual habitats were Laysan Albatrosses 28 mi w. of Año Nuevo Pt., San Mateo, Apr. 2 (RSTh), at Cordell Bank, Marin, Apr. 21 (J. McClung), and 85 and 75 mi w.s.w. of Pt. Reyes Apr. 29 (SFB et al.).

An imm. Brown Pelican at Chesbro Res., Santa Clara May 27–June 1 (E. Curtis) was inland almost without seasonal precedent in our Region.



Cook's Petrel 85 miles southwest of Point Reyes, California, April 29, 1989. Photograph/Stephen F. Bailey.

Thanks to the most generous sponsorship and participation of Richard D. Spight of Point Reyes Bird Observatory, a 2-day research cruise over deep ocean waters up to 90 mi offshore from Pt. Reyes, Marin, to Pt. Arena, Mendocino, Apr. 29–30 clarified several mys-



Murphy's Petrel 85 miles southwest of Point Reyes, California, April 29, 1989. Photograph/Stephen F. Bailey.

teries of the N. Pacific Gyre's little-known avifauna. This expedition documented *Pterodroma* petrels in large numbers and eliminated doubt about the identity and abundance of two species. One of the 98 **Murphy's Petrels** became California's first specimen (\*C.A.S.), and many others were identifiably photographed (tph. PP, tph. SFB, +DGY). (For discussion see the related feature article in this issue.) The 113 **Cook's Petrels** were apparently all true Cook's, with both Masatierra and Pyrcroft's petrels clearly eliminated by close looks and photographs of many birds, and all the more distant birds appearing identical to the closer ones in flight, shape, color, and molt (tph. PP, tph. SFB, +DGY). Prior to this expedition the only definite Cook's for California was the specimen from Santa Cruz Nov. 17, 1983. The closest Murphy's Petrel was 32 mi s.w. of Pt. Reyes (the same area as the closest Horned Puffin, see below), but the Cook's Petrels dropped out at 52 mi s.w. of Pt. Reyes. Unexpectedly, three **Murphy's Petrels** and seven more birds that were almost certainly Murphy's were found only 16 mi n.w. of Fort Bragg, Mendocino May 6 (KFC et al.). On Apr. 29–30 the daytime offshore ranges of two storm-petrels were illuminating. All 90 Leach's were over the deep ocean floor beyond the continental slope at least 65 mi offshore, but the 43 Ashy Storm-Petrels were sparser over these waters and denser over the lower slope to 40 mi offshore (SFB et al.).

**EGRETS TO WATERFOWL** — Santa Clara's Little Blue Heron saga continued: the Snowy Egret x Little Blue Heron at Charleston Slough remained until Mar. 24 (WGB, A. Walther) while an ad. Little Blue at the Alviso heronry Apr. 23 (PLN) preceded another adult and a calico bird there May 16 (MJM). An adult at Charleston Slough May 28–June 3 (J. Hintermeister) was probably one of the Alviso birds. These all appeared to be birds cited from last summer/fall. Additionally, Siskiyou's 3rd was an adult at Lower Klamath N.W.R. Apr. 23 (tRE, MFRo).

We have only a handful of Cattle Egret records from our Great Basin regions, so one at Crowley L., Mono, Apr. 23 (M. Prather), five at Mono L. Apr. 22–23 (fide ES), and another at Mono L. May 23 (PJM) constituted quite a passage. The Mono

Basin's 2nd nesting of Black-crowned Night-Herons was observed at Mono L. May 21 (ES). For the 3rd consecutive spring White-faced Ibis made a strong showing, although pale in comparison to last year's invasion. Notables included one at Mono L. Apr. 23 (M. Prather), 21 flying N past Año Nuevo Pt., San Mateo, May 8 (GJS), up to 50 in the south S.F. Bay area May 4–16 (SAL, PJM, MJM et al.), and 50+ in the Arcata area of Humboldt May 7–13 (R. Wilson, FJB).

Two Fulvous Whistling-Ducks at Mendota W.M.A., Fresno, May 18 (BED) provided only our 2nd sighting in 4 years. Ross' Goose put in its customary showing along the coast with three "white" migrants observed Mar. 11–Apr. 30. But it is those gorgeous "blues" that really excite white-geese watchers. Single blue morph Ross' Geese were observed at Ash Cr. Wildlife Area, Lassen, Mar. 19 (tph. D. Klein, WDS, A. Dorfman) and Tule Lake N.W.R., Siskiyou, Mar. 29 (RE). Inland Brant were at Mono L. Apr. 29 (J. Jehl) and May 9–10 (ES, m.ob.).

The healthy rains of March/April helped the state to endure its 3rd straight drought year. These rains were able to raise the water level in many areas of the state to the point where overall breeding pairs of waterfowl were up 54% over last year (fide BED). However, some areas continued to suffer, notably in Monterey (DR) and at Modoc N.W.R. (ECKB). At the latter locale, waterfowl pair counts were at an all-time low, especially among Mallards and N. Pintails.

In sorting out the Eurasians from the Americans there were the following: two coastal Eur. Green-winged Teal during April; an apparent Am. x Eur. Green-winged Teal at s. Humboldt Bay Apr. 23 (RLeV); 15 Eur. Wigeon, including a male at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Siskiyou, on the very late date of May 14 (RE). Again, apparent Blue-winged x Cinnamon Teal hybrids were observed: at Modesto's sewage ponds, Stanislaus, Mar. 5–21 (ERC, +HMR) and Stockton's sewage ponds Mar. 3–17 (tDGY). Ten thousand N. Shovelers in Sunnyvale, Santa Clara, Apr. 1 (PJM) made an impressive concentration.

The pair of wintering Tufted Ducks at S.F.'s old Sutro Baths remained until Mar. 27 (tSFB, m.ob.). An imm. King Eider was the prince of Pomponio State Beach, San Mateo, Apr. 29–May 7 (tMLR, tm.ob.). Two Buffleheads at Mono L. May 24 provided only the 2nd May record for Mono (PJM). There were 4 records of inland Red-breasted Mergansers Apr. 28–May 19.

**RAPTORS** — The imm. Broad-winged Hawk at the S.F. Presidio was last reported Mar. 7 (J. Clark). The well-known pair of Swainson's Hawks at Oak Grove Regional Park, San Joaquin, finally abandoned their traditional nest site owing to unrestrained human pressures, but a pair of Red-tailed Hawks raised a trio of nestlings atop Candlestick Park's stadium lights; "people, bright lights, and the hum of megavolts obviously didn't bother this pair of [S.F.] Giants fans" (both DGY). Another or the same Crested Caracara appeared, this time following a tractor near Fort Dick, Del Norte, Apr. 28–30 (RSTR, ADB, tLPL, +GSL et al.). As expected, this bird generated the usual discussions regarding escape from a falconer versus weather patterns that looked "like a perfect vehicle to deliver our Caracara from Siskiyou." The latter bird in Shasta Valley was last reported Mar. 26 (RE, MFRb), so this may have been the same bird.

**PHEASANT TO SHOREBIRDS** — A pair of Ring-necked Pheasants on the highly urbanized S.F. peninsula near Belmont, San Mateo, during April was felt to be the last wild pair left in the county (PJM, RSTh). Three Black Rails were again found on Bacon I., San Joaquin, Apr. 20–22 (DGY). A pair of Clapper Rails at Steinberger Slough, San Mateo, Apr. 15 "may be [the] last in this area" (PJM). Virginia Rail was finally confirmed breeding in Monterey when an adult with up to three chicks was observed at the Carmel R. mouth May 27–31 (H. Osborn, DR). A Com. Moorhen at F.I. May 13–18 provided a 2nd island record, while a Sandhill Crane at Bolinas Lagoon, Marin, May 12 (KH) was a coastal rarity in addition to being late.

Known wintering Lesser Golden-Plovers totalling about 30 birds of the race *fulva* were last seen Mar 30–May 13. Two hundred eighty-six Semipalmated Plovers at Mono L. Apr. 22–23 (*fide* ES) gave an indication how strong their movement is through the Great Basin. The attempt of Black-necked Stilt to colonize the Humboldt Bay area has for some unknown reason come to a sudden halt, as the only sighting was of two at s Humboldt Bay Apr. 22 (E. Nelson). A concentration of 250–300 Am. Avocets along a stretch of the Sacramento R., Shasta, Mar. 28 (*fide* BY) was noteworthy, as they are considered rare there.

An almost unbelievable 1564 Greater Yellowlegs were tallied during Mono Lake's spring shorebird count Apr. 22–23 (*fide* ES). This was far and away the highest concentration ever recorded in the Region, and came from an area where the former peak count was 23! The departure date for Stanislaus' wintering Ruddy Turnstone and Sanderling was Mar. 22 (ERC). An additional inland Ruddy Turnstone was at the Stockton sewage ponds Apr. 5 (DGY). Reports of seven Baird's Sandpipers from 5 locales were received, spanning Mar. 29–May 6. They are always very rare in spring. Rarer still in spring, single Pectoral Sandpipers were seen at Moss Landing, Monterey (county's first for spring), May 13 (†RAR, †RoM et al.) and Lower Klamath N.W.R., Siskiyou, May 19 (†RE).

**JAEGERS TO ALCIDS**—The Apr. 29–30 offshore expedition counted 85 Pomarine Jaegers, all over the deep ocean floor (SFB et al.), reflecting their more strictly offshore migration in spring versus the fall passage which often brings many birds within range of ordinary pelagic trips. A S. Polar Skua over Soquel Canyon, Monterey Bay, Mar. 19 (RT) made one of very few March records.

Both imm. Franklin's Gulls were at the Stockton sewage ponds the wintering first-year bird through Mar. 20 (DGY, EDG) and a very worn 2-year bird Apr. 18–May 4 (DGY). Four ad. Franklin's appeared: one at L. Talawa, Del Norte, Apr. 22 (ADB) and three at Lower Klamath N.W.R., Siskiyou, May 14 (RE). The ad. Little Gull remained at the Stockton sewage ponds to Apr. 2 (m.ob., Ed Hall). A breeding plumaged Heermann's Gull at Mono L. May 24–25 (PJM, ph. ES) represented a first record for California's Great Basin district. Had it joined California Gulls migrating from the Gulf of California? An ad. Glaucous-winged Gull at the Yreka dump Mar. 17–18 (MFRb) was a Siskiyou rarity. Reports of nine to 11 Glaucous Gulls included both known and suspected holdovers from winter as well as new birds. Hundreds of Black-legged Kittiwakes were offshore San Mateo Feb. 2–Apr. 2 (BS, PJM, RSTh), but only modest numbers appeared elsewhere. A 2nd-summer Sabine's Gull at Lower Klamath N.W.R. May 14 (†RE) was Siskiyou's first for spring and 3rd overall.

Two juv. Caspian Terns begging from adults at Pescadero Beach, San Mateo, Apr. 9 (RSTh) prompted the apt question "When and where did these birds breed?" A few Elegant Terns again returned in April, with the first being three passing Pt. Lobos, Monterey, Apr. 9 (DR). Three Black Terns were found coastally May 4–30.

#### S.A.

The Apr. 29–30 expedition to the offshore waters of the N. Pacific Gyre recorded 136 Horned Puffins (PP, SFB et al.). All of these plus the four imm. Tufted Puffins were on deep ocean water, farther offshore than any of the Common Murres, nearly all of the Cassin's Auklets, and most of the Rhinoceros Auklets. The last three species occurred over the continental slope and increased upwards toward the edge of the continental shelf (SFB, DGY et al.). Nevertheless, one Horned Puffin was found only 16 mi n.w. of Fort Bragg, Mendocino, May 6 (KFC et al.).

**OWLS TO FLYCATCHERS**—A Spotted Owl on the American R. in Fair Oaks Apr. 19–May 26 (M & J Pierce, ph WEH et al.) was apparently first seen in mid-February (G MacWilliams). There are two previous C.V. records from Chico and one from Merced N.W.R., but none for Sacramento. The Howland Hill (Del Norte) Barred Owl was heard Feb. 22–Apr. 8 (ADB, JAR) for the 8th consecutive year there. An out-of-place Lesser Nighthawk found near Petaluma, Sonoma, in late April later died in a bird rescue center (*fide* DN).

A swift at F.I. May 15 was reported as "probably a Chimney" and one at Pt. Reyes May 30 was reported as definitely that species (RS). Lassen's 3rd recorded Black-chinned Hummingbird was a male at Susanville May 20–21 (TDM). A ♂ Broad-tailed Hummingbird at Tom's Place, Mono, Apr. 9 (†CDH) was record early for the Region; last year's San Jose bird was captured Apr. 15, not Mar. 15 as published. The capture of 98 Rufous Hummingbirds Mar. 26–June 5 at C.C.R.S., with 18 banded Apr. 5 alone, gives an indication of how common this species can be as a migrant through our area. One at Tom's Place Apr. 28 (†CDH) was unusual in Mono in spring. Nineteen Allen's Hummingbirds banded at C.C.R.S. Apr. 26–June 5 were judged to be dispersing birds because of an 18-day gap in records prior to that (*fide* WGB).

Red-naped Sapsuckers were found at Ed Levin County Park, Santa Clara, Apr. 2–9 (JMS et al.) and Tom's Place Apr. 15 (†CDH); the species is noteworthy anywhere in the Region away from the extreme northwest. A ♂ Williamson's Sapsucker near Summit Valley (ca. 5000') Apr. 16 (JAR, J. Salyer) provided Del Norte's 2nd record. Although the habitat seems suitable for nesting, this and all previous records from northwesternmost California may only pertain to migrants and wintering birds. Pileated Woodpeckers were found again outside their expected range with one at Table Mt., Santa Clara, Mar. 31 (P. Gongdon) and one at Mt. Diablo, Contra Costa, May 7 (RJR).

An Olive-sided Flycatcher at Ft. Cronkhite, Marin, Mar. 31 (MLR) was the Region's earliest ever, although there are a number of records for the first week of April. Another reported 3 weeks earlier is disregarded lacking full documentation, as are 2 April Willow Flycatcher reports. A massive wave of migrant flycatchers grounded at Mono L. by high winds May 23–25 included: 11 Olive-sideds, 70+ W. Wood-Pewees, 37 Willows, nine Hammond's, five Dusksies, 10 Grays, and three Westerns (PJM). The high number of Willows compared to the other *Empidonax* is indicative of their very late migration. For the 3rd consecutive year, Stanislaus's Del Puerto Canyon hosted the season's first Hammond's Flycatcher, but this year's was record early on Mar. 25 (†HMR). Two or three Hammond's in Green Valley Apr. 8 (†JCL, †MBG) and one in Cold Canyon Apr. 15 (DoM) were thought to provide the first records for Solano; at Modesto on Apr. 30, a Gray Flycatcher was an overdue first for Stanislaus (†HMR). Cassin's Kingbirds maintained their marginal presence in our Region. Three w. of Shitrtail Canyon, Pinnacles N.M., Monterey, Mar. 17 (J. Shipley) had been present since late February, and one at Hospital Canyon Apr. 22 was the first in San Joaquin in 5 years (DGY). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher added substantially to the Pt. Reyes landscape May 28 (†L. Silver, M. Hersh).

**MAGPIES TO WARBLERS**—Two Black-billed Magpies near Coyote, Santa Clara, Mar. 21 (†J. Glass) were problematic Birds as far south as Contra Costa have been considered part of a pattern of genuine vagrants, in n.w. California primarily and in fall/winter almost exclusively. The species is common in captivity, however, and numerous other records throughout the state have been dismissed as escapees. Two birds this far south, out of season, and so close to a major urban area are best added to the latter group.

A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at Fairhaven, Humboldt, May 22 (GSL) was late for a coastal vagrant. Three previous spring records from F.I. span Apr. 17–May 3 and one this year was

seen Apr 14–17 A Townsend's Solitaire on Pt Reyes May 31 (RS) was even farther out of synchrony, and represented our latest coastal record ever. A N. Mockingbird singing at Hoopa, Humboldt, May 15–18 (RAE, GSL) was in an area where nesting might be expected. Except for a small population at Crescent City, however, mockers are primarily scarce winter visitors/migrants in n.w. California with few summer records. A Sage Thrasher at Hospital Canyon Apr. 1 was, surprisingly, only San Joaquin's second (DGY). One on Scott Road, Sacramento, Mar. 4 (DJo) and one at Hayward Regional Shoreline May 14 (RJR) were also local rarities. The wintering Brown Thrasher at F.I. was last seen May 4.

A Tennessee Warbler in S.F. Mar. 4–Apr. 19 (ASH *et al.*) was our latest ever for a wintering bird. A migrant at Mono L. County Park May 13–14 (ABtt) was the only other report.

While hiking in Henry W. Coe S.P. and adjacent San Felipe Ranch, Santa Clara, on May 7, JY and AL estimated they encountered 15 warbler flocks of approximately 100 birds each. Orange-crowned and Wilson's Warblers were present but Townsend's and Hermits were most noticeable. They estimated 500–1000 Townsend's and 75–150 Hermits were present. Never before in many years there had they seen such numbers. Indeed, large April/May flocks of warblers have been noted previously in the Coast Ranges, primarily on Mt. Diablo, but these estimates exceed all other reports known to us. Whereas other concentrations have been in oak woodland/savannah, these birds were in chaparral as well as oaks.

A singing ♂ Prairie Warbler in urban S.F. Mar. 12 (ph. J. McCormick, ASH) furnished a most unusual record. Presumably the bird had wintered somewhere nearby. Wintering Palm Warblers were last reported Mar. 12 at F.I., Mar. 24 at the Carmel R. mouth, Monterey (J. Hughes), and Mar. 31 in Eureka (BED). An alternate-plumaged bird at L. Merced, S.F., Apr. 25 (A. Gaguine) was late enough to be considered a spring migrant. The last of the known wintering Black-and-white Warblers Apr. 17 in S.F. (MLR) was only one day prior to the first of the spring migrants: Apr. 18–20 at F.I.; Apr. 23 at Palomarin; May 20 on the w. shore of Mono L. (*fide* ES). Wintering Am. Redstarts were last seen Mar. 18 in Pescadero, San Mateo (D. Keller), and Apr. 25 in S.F. (S. Cox). A singing N. Waterthrush at Honey Lake W.A. May 28 (†TDM) provided a "long overdue" first county record and no doubt brought special satisfaction to this veteran Lassen birder. An estimated 130 Wilson's Warblers accompanied the grounded flycatchers at Mono L. May 23–25 (PJM).

**TANAGERS TO SPARROWS**—An ad. ♂ W. Tanager singing near Truckee in Placer Mar. 22 (KVV, KaVV) is hard to classify. At nearly 6000' the location seems unlikely for overwintering, but the date is weeks early for a spring arrival. The degree to which extralimital wintering birds, or even common wintering birds, begin to wander late in the season is poorly known. The imm. ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak in Berkeley was last seen Mar. 14 (*fide* HG, JM). Additional males were at Lafayette, Contra Costa, Apr. 30 (M. Grissette) and Pt. Reyes May 19 (RS). A singing Black-headed Grosbeak near Mustang Peak, Stanislaus/Santa Clara, Mar. 20 (HMR) furnished one of our earliest records ever. Blue Grosbeaks are always unusual on our coast; a male was at El Granada, San Mateo, Apr. 27 (BS) and a female at Pt. Reyes May 19 (RS). Record-early for the Region was a Lazuli Bunting on Arroyo Mocho, s.e. of Livermore, Apr. 4 (LJP, HG, DSI). Another was at El Granada by Apr. 7 (BS). Indigo Buntings were s. of Milford May 4 (Lassen's 2nd—D. Fuller), at C.C.R.S. May 23–26, and at Mono L. County Park May 29 (MFRb).

Single Green-tailed Towhees on Mt. Diablo, Contra Costa, May 4 (J. Edgar) and C.C.R.S. May 24 were noteworthy as the species is rarely seen in migration anywhere in the Region. Another wandering Brown Towhee was at McKinleyville, Humboldt, Apr. 23 (P. Stebbins). Two Clay-colored Sparrows were found on the mainland, where almost unknown in spring: Apr. 23 at San Jose (S. Perry) and Apr. 30 at Arcata

Bottoms (JCS *et al.*) One at F.I. May 15–17 was more expected. A singing Brewer's Sparrow at Moss Beach, San Mateo, May 31 (BS) was late and provided the only coastal report this season. Apparently Stanislaus' first Black-chinned Sparrow was singing along the Santa Clara boundary near Mississippi L. May 28 (HMR). As has become expected, two or three Lark Buntings were at the Sutter Buttes, Sutter, Apr. 2–16 (BED, PBS, WA). "Pairs" of Savannah Sparrows in Cholame Valley, s.e. Monterey, in April and birds present throughout the period were believed to indicate local nesting (DR). This area is almost equidistant between the ranges of the coast-hugging race *alaudinus* (= *bryanti*) and the high desert race *nevadensis*, however, so much more conclusive evidence is needed to verify such an extraordinary range extension.

#### S.A.

Grasshopper Sparrows again inspired much discussion. One at Gazelle Flats Mar. 10 (†RE) "defies ready explanation," as other spring Siskiyou records are from May (MFRb). The bird almost certainly did not winter at this cold site. A singing male found at Pt. Saint George May 18 was where two to three apparently had been early in the month and remained into summer (C. J. Ralph, JCS, †GSL *et al.*). It was considered overdue as a first record for Del Norte. Up to four "probably nesting" at Brown's Valley Apr. 13–June 15 were apparently the first ever for Yuba as well (PBS), and a singing bird near Nice Apr. 28 was said to be the first record for Lake in over 20 years (JRW, JPM). Just as Marin did earlier in the decade, Santa Clara is now experiencing a surge in reports of Grasshopper Sparrows as a result of its breeding bird atlas project. Of 126 birds found (also 5 nests), 71 were in the vicinity of Sargent alone Apr. 15 and 35 were near Coyote Apr. 25–28 (both DLSu). And in Monterey, significant differences exist between the timing of nesting on the coast and inland (DR *et al.*). At least six singing males in Cholame Valley Mar. 28–Apr. 16 were absent by May 25 when the vegetation had become desiccated. Yet "dozens" were singing on the s Big Sur coast in early June. Last year sparrows did not arrive at some well-worked sites in n.w. Monterey until June, and similarly late arrivals have been noted in Marin and elsewhere previously. Is it possible that this and some of the other more irregular sparrows could nest early in drier areas and move on to nest a 2nd time in the same season at more mesic sites, as has been suggested for *Phainopepla*?

Wintering Harris' Sparrows were last seen in S.F. Mar. 20 (*fide* HG, JM) and Lee Vining, Mono, Apr. 12 (ES), and a singing male was found in the Arcata Bottoms Apr. 25 (GSL). A "Slate-colored" Junco at Pt. Reyes May 20 (DSg) fit the pattern set by eastern vagrants. The wintering "Gray-headed" Junco in McKinleyville was last seen Mar. 28 (RLeV). The only Lapland Longspur reported was one near Ft. Dick Mar. 26, where up to 60 had been seen in winter (ADB).

**BLACKBIRDS TO FRINGILLIDS**—Tricolored Blackbirds are currently receiving considerable attention, and rightly so. At least 11 colonies were noted in thorough reports from Sacramento, Santa Clara, and Monterey (TDM, WGB, DR). Among other concerns is this species' occasionally fickle nesting behavior. A colony of 600 at Calero Dam, Santa Clara, Apr. 21 was reduced to a few birds Apr. 28 and all were gone by Apr. 30 (DLSu). San Francisco's pair of Great-tailed Grackles was seen at least Mar. 10–Apr. 17 (*fide* HG, JM). A grackle at Mono L. County Park May 10–14 was identified as both a Great-tailed and a Common (*fide* ES, HG, JM). The latter is a C.B.R.C. review species so the committee will ultimately pass judgment on the record.

The ♂ Orchard Oriole wintering in Pacific Grove began singing just prior to its departure Apr. 4 (BJW). California wintering birds like this are thought to be the source of early spring records such as the ♀ Orchard Oriole in Crescent City Mar. 31 (ADB) and the imm. male in Westhaven, Humboldt, Apr. 7 (GSL, LPL). The earliest reported western orioles were both in Santa Clara: a Hooded in Los Altos Mar. 10 (PLN) and a Northern "Bullock's" in Los Gatos Mar. 16 (MFe).

Purple Finches were very scarce in San Joaquin through the winter but up to 18 were at Lodi L. Mar. 22–29 with one still present Apr. 19 (DGY). This species was "unusually abundant" in w. Marin this spring with nesting even evident at isolated "vagrant traps" on outer Pt. Reyes (RS). A nest in Green Valley May 24 (T. Jenkins, †MBG, MFri) was thought to furnish the first confirmed breeding in Solano, though not unexpected. Adult Red Crossbills feeding young at Lincoln Park, S.F., in late May (ASH) were in an area where nesting has taken place for several years. Lawrence's Goldfinches were especially numerous in the Coast Ranges s. of S.F. Bay this spring (m.ob.). In s. Monterey they were "very common" with "lots of confirmed nesting evidence" (DR) and in San Antonio Valley, Santa Clara, about 10 times as many were present as last year (WGB et al.).

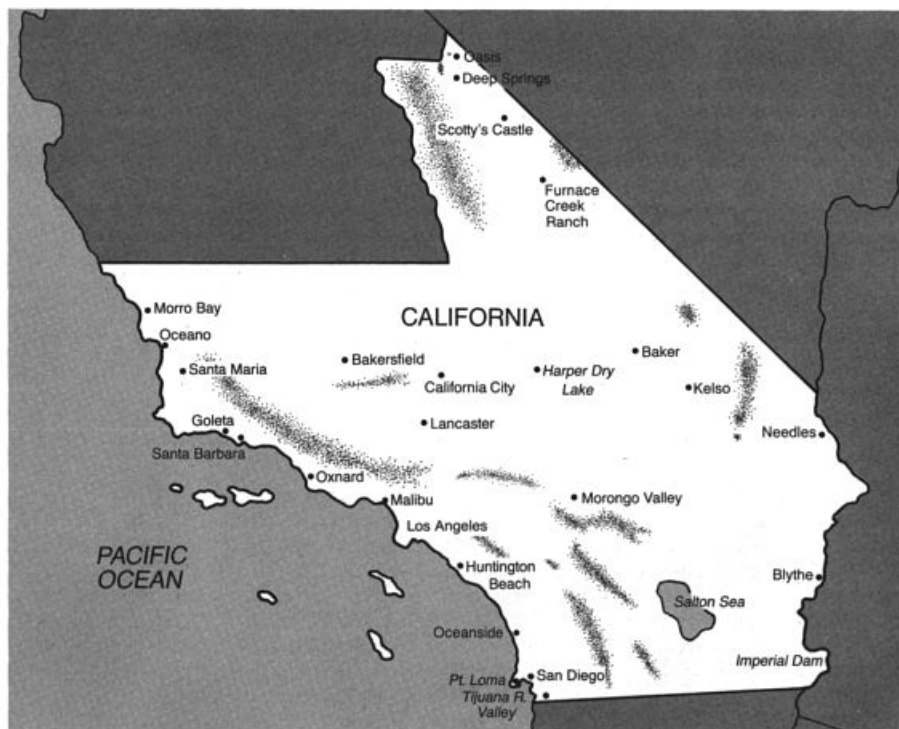
**EXOTIC SPECIES** — A flock of Red-crowned Parrots (now up to 11 birds) present in Pacific Grove since 1983 "again broke up, presumably to nest, during the spring" (DR). Reports of exotics such as this are actively sought by us, as well as the Introduced Bird Subcommittee of the C.B.R.C.

**CORRIGENDUM** — The comments concerning W. Kingbirds at F.I. in last spring's report (AB 42:479) should be disregarded; this species has been recorded there many times in spring and is routine in fall.

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## SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

Guy McCaskie



**V**ery few storms pushed south from Alaska, leaving the Region with well below the average rainfall. Most spring migrants moved through the Region a little later than normal, with large numbers of some landbirds still pushing through the Region in mid-May, as indicated by such concentrations as 100 Yellow Warblers at Furnace

Creek Ranch May 20 (MAP) and 150 Wilson's Warblers in California City May 13 (MAP).

**ABBREVIATIONS** — F.C.R. = Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley, Inyo Co.; N.E.S.S. = north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co.; S.B.C.M. = San Bernardino County Museum; S.C.R.E. = Santa

Clara River Estuary near Ventura, Ventura Co., S D N H M = San Diego Natural History Museum, S E S S = south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial County. Place names in *italics* are counties. As virtually all rarities found in s. California are seen by numerous observers, only the observer initially identifying the bird is included. Documentation is on file with the California Bird Records Committee (c/o Don Roberson, 282 Grove Acre, Pacific Grove, CA 93950) for all rarities listed in this report, and records submitted without documentation are not published.

**LOONS TO STORKS**—A winter-plumaged Red-throated Loon, exceptionally rare far inland, was at Desert Center, Riverside, May 20 (KR). A Pacific Loon on L. Isabella, Kern, Mar. 4 (MOC) had probably spent the winter on this large inland body of water, and was the only one reported inland. A Com. Loon inland at Desert Center May 20 (KR) and another near China Lake, Kern, May 28 (MTH) were late and at unusual localities. Six Horned Grebes at S.E.S.S. Apr. 23 (RMCK) were undoubtedly spring migrants moving northward from the Gulf of California, and another in breeding plumage on Diaz L., Inyo, Apr. 2 (JD) was also clearly on the move.

A Black-footed Albatross 14 mi s.w. of Newport Beach May 30 (JSI) was one of a very few ever sighted off Orange, and another 3 mi off San Diego May 20 (JO'B) was exceptionally close to shore. A Laysan Albatross at 33°10'N–121°10'W on Apr. 26 (BR) was the closest to shore of three encountered off s. California during a scientific survey between Apr. 16 & 30. A N. Fulmar about 90 mi s.w. of Pt. Conception, Santa Barbara, Apr. 27 (BR) was the only one encountered during 2 weeks at sea off s. California, clearly showing that virtually all present during the winter had departed by this time. A **Murphy's Petrel** was at 33°10'–121°30'W on Apr. 26 (BR) and another was at 34°00'N–123°10'W on Apr. 29 (BR), adding to the ever-increasing number of sightings of this species off California. A dark *Pterodroma* showing white shafts on the upper sides of the primaries at 32°10'N–123°30'W on Apr. 25 (BR) was felt to be a dark morph Kermadec Petrel (*Pterodroma neglecta*), indicating observers fortunate enough to spend time far off our coast should keep an open mind as to what may be occurring in these waters. Fourteen Cook's Petrels in the area of 32°00'N–123°00'W Apr. 24–25 (BR) were in an area where this species undoubtedly occurs regularly. A Sooty Shearwater flying across Interstate 10 near Indio, Riverside, Apr. 28 (PLN, DSS) must have been a startling sight; it was only the 3rd ever found inland in California, the other two having been on the nearby Salton Sea. A Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel, very rare in s. California waters, was at 32°15'N–121°50'W on Apr. 24 (BR).

Two Brown Pelicans at the N.E.S.S. Apr. 15 (MAP) and eight at various points around the Salton Sea Apr. 29 (MAP) had probably spent the winter on the Salton Sea. An imm. Magnificent Frigatebird over Upper Newport Bay, Orange, Apr. 20 (BeF), and what may well have been the same bird photographed off San Diego Apr. 23 (BAr), was most unusual considering the time of year. At least six Little Blue Herons were present around San Diego throughout the period (EC) but the species went unreported from elsewhere in the Region. A Tricolored Heron photographed at S.E.S.S. Apr. 17 (RSt) was one of a very few ever found in that area. The imm. Reddish Egret initially found at the mouth of the San Diego R. Nov. 20 was still present at the end of the period (BoF) and appeared to be attempting to summer. The ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron present in La Jolla and on nearby San Elijo Lagoon, San Diego, off and on since October of 1981 was present with nesting Black-crowned Night-Herons in La Jolla after Apr. 26 (GS). Two Wood Storks, very rare away from the S.E.S.S., near Escondido, San Diego, after May 31 (NC) appeared to be attempting to nest.

**WATERFOWL TO RAILS**—A flock of 25 Greater White-fronted Geese at Pt. Mugu, Ventura, Mar. 15 (RJM) was a large number for the coast, and single birds in San Luis

Obispo Apr. 14 (MH) and at N.E.S.S. Apr. 15 (MAP) were a little late. As usual a few Brant appeared on the Salton Sea in April, with 200 at N.E.S.S. Apr. 23 (MAP); four on L. Palmdale near Palmdale, Los Angeles, Mar. 25 (MTH) were the only ones found away from the Salton Sea. A ♂ Eurasian Green-winged Teal was present in Carpinteria, Santa Barbara, Mar. 31–Apr. 16 (BAL) and another was seen at S.E.S.S. Apr. 17 (RSt), this form being a very rare but regular straggler to California. The latest of the wintering Eur. Wigeon was one at the mouth of the San Diego R. Apr. 1 (MBS). An Oldsquaw in Santa Barbara Apr. 2 (SEF) was the latest reported this spring. Two Black Scoters off El Segundo, Los Angeles, Mar. 16 (JKA), one off Newport Beach Mar. 25 (CH), and another off Crystal Cove S.P., Orange, Apr. 16 (MTH) were the only ones found in the Region. Seventeen Surf Scoters were found at various points around the Salton Sea Apr. 15 (MAP) with at least 10 individuals still present at the end of the period, but one in Ridgecrest, Kern, Apr. 22 (DVB) and another in the Fremont Valley, Kern, May 19–24 (JWi) were the only two found inland away from the Salton Sea. A White-winged Scoter at N.E.S.S. Apr. 15 (MAP) was still present at the end of the period, and up to 9000 along the coast off Vandenberg A.F.B. in early March (KH) made an exceptional concentration for s. California. A Hooded Merganser in the Fremont Valley May 24 (MTH) was exceptionally late.

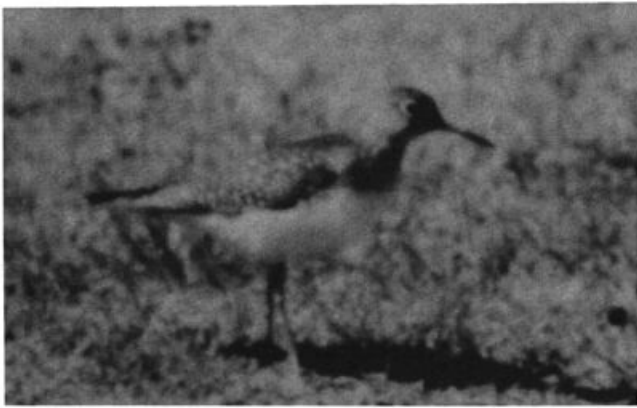
A first-summer Mississippi Kite in Huntington Beach June 5–11 (JP) was the first to be found in Orange, and one of a very few ever found along the coast of California. A N. Goshawk on Pine Mt., Ventura, Apr. 21 (RJM) was in an area where this species may eventually be found nesting. Swanson's Hawks may have been on the move earlier than usual as indicated by the presence of nine near El Centro, Imperial, Mar. 4 (GMcC) and two more near Escondido, San Diego, Mar. 5 (JSc), with small numbers found scattered throughout the Region during April, including six along the coast near San Diego Apr. 4 (GMcC) and a flock of 30 near Lost Hills, Kern, Apr. 9 (GMcC); an exceptionally late bird on the Carrizo Plain, San Luis Obispo, June 3 (GPS) may have been attempting to summer. A Ferruginous Hawk over the Carrizo Plain May 21 (GPS) was exceptionally late, and a Rough-legged Hawk at Oasis, Mono, Apr. 1 (GMcC) was the latest this year. Two Merlins in Ojai, Ventura, Apr. 14 (RJM) and a pale bird of the interior race *richardsonii* at N.E.S.S. Apr. 15 (MAP) were all quite late for s. California.

A bird flushed from *Salicornia* marsh in Upper Newport Bay Apr. 12 (HEC) was identified as a Yellow Rail but could never be refound despite much searching; this species has been found on only 5 or 6 occasions in s. California, although one of these was a bird collected at this locality on Dec. 12, 1896 (Condor 13:108, 1911). A Sora in California City, Kern, May 15 (MAP) and another at Stovepipe Wells in Death Valley, Inyo, May 29 (MAP) were at unusual localities.

**SHOREBIRDS**—A flock of 120 Black-bellied Plovers near Lancaster, Los Angeles, Apr. 8 (MTH) was a large number for such an area. A Lesser Golden-Plover believed to be of the Pacific form *fulva* at S.E.S.S. Apr. 23 (NW) was inland, and a *fulva* at the Santa Maria R. mouth May 21 (BS) was the only migrant of that form reported from along the coast, although eight wintering *fulva* were still present in Seal Beach, Orange, May 2 (NBB). A Black Oystercatcher in Goleta, Santa Barbara, Apr. 10 (HK) was at an unusual locality. A stunning **Spotted Redshank** photographed near Oceanside May 19–23 (ED) was the 5th ever found in California. Since Solitary Sandpipers are quite rare in spring, four together at Desert Center Apr. 12 (PEL), one at Galileo Hills, Kern, Apr. 22 (RSa), and another on Nacimiento L., San Luis Obispo, Apr. 16–22 (TB) were of interest. A Wandering Tattler, very rare to casual inland, was at Salton City, Imperial, May 14 (KR), and another was at the same place May 28 (AME).

Ninety-eight Whimbrels near Chino, San Bernardino, Apr. 9 (MAP) and 1500 near Lancaster Apr. 27 (NBB) were large





Solitary Sandpiper at Galileo Hill, California, April 22, 1989. Photograph/Rick Saval.

concentrations for such areas. The only Ruddy Turnstones reported from inland were 11 found by 2 parties surveying shorebirds on the Salton Sea Apr. 23 (RMCK) and four more in Salton City May 14 (KR). Three Black Turnstones, much rarer inland than the previous species, were at N.E.S.S. Apr. 23 (MAP) along with one more at Salton City the same day (CMcG). Five Surfbirds, also exceptionally rare inland, were at N.E.S.S. Apr. 23 (MAP). Red Knots reached peak numbers on the Salton Sea on Apr. 23 when 582 were counted by 4 parties surveying shorebirds; one at N.E.S.S. May 27 (GMcC) was a little late.

Single Sanderlings on Edwards A.F.B. Apr. 22 (MTH) and near China Lake, Kern, May 7 (DVB), and two more near Lancaster May 11 (JKA), were the only ones found inland away from the Salton Sea. The only Semipalmated Sandpipers reported this spring were one in the Fremont Valley May 19 (MTH) and another near Lancaster May 7 (MAP). An exceptionally early Baird's Sandpiper, casual in spring, was near Lancaster Mar. 3 (KLG) and another was at S.C.R.E. Apr. 30 (JSR). Two Pectoral Sandpipers, equally rare in spring, were in Irvine Apr. 16 (BED), and additional birds were at Malibu Lagoon, Los Angeles, Mar. 7 (BE), the S.C.R.E. Apr. 7 (RJM), and at nearby Pt. Mugu Apr. 9 (REW). Concentrations of 3413 Short-billed Dowitchers on the Salton Sea and 90 at Harper Dry Lake, San Bernardino, on Apr. 23 (RMCK, EAC) were high numbers for inland localities, and indicated this to be the peak time for the spring movement through s. California.

**SKUAS TO SKIMMER** — A S. Polar Skua, regular in s. California waters in late May, was 23 mi west of Oceanside May 21 (JO'B). A Laughing Gull near Imperial Beach May 25 (NW) was along the coast where the species is only a casual straggler, and two at S.E.S.S. May 27 (GMcC) were early for this area. Up to 15 Franklin's Gulls near Lancaster Apr. 30–May 15 (RCR) represented an unusually large concentration for anywhere in California, but up to eight near China Lake between Apr. 13 & 30 (DVB), another there June 4 (MTH), two more at S.E.S.S. Apr. 29 (PLN), one at Bolsa Chica, Orange, May 14 (MW), and another photographed in Goleta May 10 (AB) were also reported during the period. Two ad. Heermann's Gulls, very rare to casual inland, were off Salton City May 28 (RMCK). A first-summer-plumaged Thayer's Gull at N.E.S.S. Apr. 15 (MAP) was the only one to be found inland. Three Sabine's Gulls, casual to accidental inland in spring, were near Lancaster Apr. 21 (BE).

Up to five Gull-billed Terns were present after Apr. 7 on s. San Diego Bay (EC), where the species has nested each of the past 2 summers. A Caspian Tern at F.C.R. May 28 (MAP) was at an unusual locality. An Elegant Tern, only the 4th ever to be found inland in s. California, was foraging with a mixed flock of gulls and terns off Salton City May 28 (RMCK). A Com.

Tern in San Diego Mar. 19 (GMcC) had probably wintered nearby, since the date is almost a month earlier than normal for the first of the spring migrants. An Arctic Tern, casual inland, was near China Lake June 3–4 (MTH) and two more were near Lancaster June 10 (RRV). A Least Tern near Lancaster May 20 (EK) was one of very few indeed to be found inland away from the Salton Sea. Two Black Skimmers on n. Vandenberg A.F.B. May 17 (KH) were the northernmost to be found this spring.

**DOVES TO WOODPECKERS** — A White-winged Dove, most unusual along the coast in spring, was at San Elijo Lagoon, San Diego, May 19 (RP) and another was near Santa Barbara May 27 (SB); one in Ridgecrest May 8 (DM) was a little to the n.w. of the species' normal range. An Inca Dove that spent the winter at F.C.R. was last seen there Apr. 2 (GMcC). A migrant Yellow-billed Cuckoo was encountered in Yucca Valley, San Bernardino, June 3 (DRW) and one in the Prado Basin, Riverside, May 29 (LRH) was the first to arrive at this known nesting locality. A Flammulated Owl on Big Pine Mt. Apr. 21 (JSc) was the first to be found in Santa Barbara. The presence of a Short-eared Owl near Morro Bay May 23 (PMCK) suggested the bird might be nesting locally. Five Com. Nighthawks over Big Pine, Inyo, May 20 (GMcC) gave us the earliest date for spring arrival of this species in s. California.

A Black Swift near Imperial Beach May 14 (RT), six over Newbury Park, Ventura, May 13 (KLG), one over Santa Barbara May 13 (DPe), and another over Goleta May 14 (HPR) were the only spring migrants reported this year. A Chimney Swift was at F.C.R. May 24 (JD), and a recently-dead one was found at Deep Springs, Inyo, May 27 (SEF, \*S.B.C.M.). A ♂ Black-chinned Hummingbird near Santa Barbara Mar. 19 (JH) was unusually early for the coast. Calliope Hummingbirds were more numerous than usual along the coast, as indicated by the presence of 15 on Pt. Loma, San Diego, Apr. 30 (JO); single birds at F.C.R. May 14 (MAP) and at Harper Dry Lake May 24 (KB) were late and at unusual localities. The **Red-headed Woodpecker** found in Goleta Sept. 14 was last seen Apr. 23 (JEL). An Acorn Woodpecker in the Fremont Valley June 2–3 (JW) was far from its normal range.

**FLYCATCHERS TO SHRIKES** — A W. Wood-Pewee at Whale Rock Res., San Luis Obispo, Apr. 8 (GPS) was a little early, and the bulk of these birds passed through the Region in late May as indicated by counts such as 70+ at Harper Dry Lake May 24 (EAC) and 250 at Oasis June 3 (MAP). A Willow Flycatcher in the Prado Basin May 4 (DRW) was a bird returning to a known nesting locality; however, the bulk of this species appear much later, this being the commonly encountered Empidonax at desert oases in very late May and early June, with 42 still present in e. Kern June 10 (MTH). An E. Phoebe, most unusual in spring, was well described from Agua Caliente Springs in e. San Diego Apr. 18 (D & MH). A ♀ Vermilion Flycatcher in Puma Valley, San Diego, Apr. 14 (DR), a male at Holiday L. in the Antelope Valley, Los Angeles, Mar. 26–Apr. 2 (KLG), and another male at Harper Dry Lake May 24 (GH) were all at unusual localities. A Tropical Kingbird, casual in spring and accidental in the interior, was at F.C.R. May 28–29 (GT) for the first record for this well-worked oasis. As expected a few E. Kingbirds appeared along the e. border of the Region as indicated by single birds at F.C.R. May 29 (TEW) and June 3 (REW), another near China Lake June 3–4 (MTH), and a 4th near Niland, Imperial, June 3 (RMCK), and one was along the coast in Fountain Valley, Orange, June 12 (JP). A Purple Martin on Edwards A.F.B. Mar. 25 (MTH) was early, and single individuals at Harper Dry Lake May 24 (GH), Galileo Hills May 6 (MOC), over the Fremont Valley May 23 (MTH), and at F.C.R. June 3 (BED) were all at unusual localities. Fifty Bank Swallows near Lancaster Apr. 26 (KLG) represented an exceptionally large number for anywhere in s. California.

A Winter Wren in Nine Mile Canyon, Inyo, Mar. 17 (DVB)

was in an area where the species is considered rare. A Townsend's Solitaire in Placerita Canyon, Los Angeles, Apr 19 (BE) was at an unusual locality. Swainson's Thrushes pushed through the Region in large numbers during the first half of May as indicated by such concentrations as 50 in Morongo Valley, San Bernardino, May 8 (EAC). A Wrentit, normally considered totally resident, was outside the species' known range in Morongo Valley Mar. 11 (CMcG). A Brown Thrasher, a casual straggler to California, was in Mojave, Kern, May 13-14 (MTH) and another was seen briefly in Morongo Valley May 7 (KR). A Bendire's Thrasher found in the Chocolate Mts., Riverside, Feb. 14 (RMcK) was probably a spring migrant considering how early this species is known to move, and a territorial male in Joshua Tree N.M., Riverside, after Apr. 22 (LRH) was near the western edge of the species' known breeding range. An American Pipit on Edwards A.F.B. May 27 (DVB) was late. The N. Shrike present at China Lake since Dec. 9 was last seen Mar. 14 (RH).

**WOOD WARBLERS** — A Tennessee Warbler in Goleta Mar. 27 (TEW) had probably spent the winter locally, and 17 were encountered at various localities within the Region between May 26 and June 11 for a higher than normal number. A Lucy's Warbler, most unusual along the coast in spring, was in Goleta Mar. 11-17 (TEW), and another at about 4000 ft on the e. slope of the San Bernardino Mts. above Pioneer Town Apr. 22 (DRW) was at a most unusual location. Only four N. Parulas were reported with three around Santa Barbara in May and another on Pt. Loma June 1-4 (DPa). Three Chestnut-sided Warblers, rare but regular spring vagrants, were found with one at California City June 3 (RSa), another at Butterbrecht Springs, Kern, June 3-4 (MTH), and the 3rd at Oasis, Mono, June 4 (MAP). A ♀ Black-throated Blue Warbler, only the 3rd ever to be found in s. California in spring, was in Mojave, Kern, May 27 (BED), and a singing male was present in Irvine June 12 (RRV).

A Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler in Morongo Valley May 31 (EAC) was late, as were 19 Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warblers at Oasis June 3 (MAP). A singing ♂ Black-throated Green Warbler at Oasis June 4 (BED) was only the 9th to be found in spring in s. California. The ♂ Pine Warbler found in Yorba Linda, Orange, Jan. 14 was still present Apr. 2 (MTH). A Palm Warbler at Morro Bay Mar. 31 (TME), four more in Goleta during April (RPH, HPR, BM), another in Huntington Beach Mar. 26 (DRW), and three in the San Diego area during March (JWa, B & IM, DH) had all probably wintered locally, but one photographed at Corn Springs in e. Riverside Apr. 8 (HC) was undoubtedly a migrant. A Bay-breasted Warbler, a species becoming increasingly scarce as a straggler to California, was in the Fremont Valley June 10 (MTH). A ♂ Blackpoll Warbler, a casual spring straggler to California, was at F.C.R. May 27 (MAP).

Eighteen Black-and-white Warblers during May were close to the expected number, but 16 Am. Redstarts during the same period were certainly far fewer than normal. Eight Ovenbirds were found in the n.e. portion of the Region between May 15 and June 3, and one more was along the coast on Pt. Loma May 13 (DPa). The only N. Waterthrushes encountered this spring were single birds at Barker Dam in Joshua Tree N.M. May 6 (TEW) and near Helendale, San Bernardino, May 14 (MAP), and at F.C.R. May 24 (JD) in the interior, and in Huntington Beach May 3 (JP) and in nearby Anaheim Hills June 2 (DRW) along the coast. A ♂ Kentucky Warbler, a rare straggler to California, was at Butterbrecht Springs May 19-21 (JWi). Three ♂ Hooded Warblers were encountered this spring with one that came aboard a research vessel off San Diego Apr. 17 (BR), another at F.C.R. May 20 (BED), and the 3rd near Orange, Orange, June 12-18 (DRW).

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — A ♀ Summer Tanager in Oceano, San Luis Obispo, Mar. 26-28 (JV) had probably wintered locally; a migrant female at Scotty's Castle in Death Valley May 20 (GMcC) was north of the species' normal range,

and a male near Imperial Beach June 1 (PJ), another male in Huntington Beach June 18 (BED), and a 3rd male at S C R E May 21 (RJM) were along the coast where considered vagrants. Sixteen Rose-breasted Grosbeaks at various places within the Region between May 18 and June 4 were close to the expected number, as were the 23 Indigo Buntings between May 13 and June 3. Five Brewer's Sparrows in Orange between Apr. 6 & 19 (DRW, BED, JP) were unusual, since this species is exceptionally rare along the coast in spring. A Swamp Sparrow in California City May 19 (RSa) was a late vagrant. A White-throated Sparrow that spent the winter in Los Osos, San Luis Obispo, remained through the late date of May 10 (M & PC), and a late vagrant was in Jawbone Canyon, Kern, May 23 (BED). A Harris' Sparrow at Deep Springs Apr. 1 (GMcC) had probably wintered locally, and another in California City Apr. 30 (RSa) was considered a migrant. Four Chestnut-collared Longspurs present in the Fremont Valley Mar. 11 (MTH) were considered to be part of the flock found here in November.

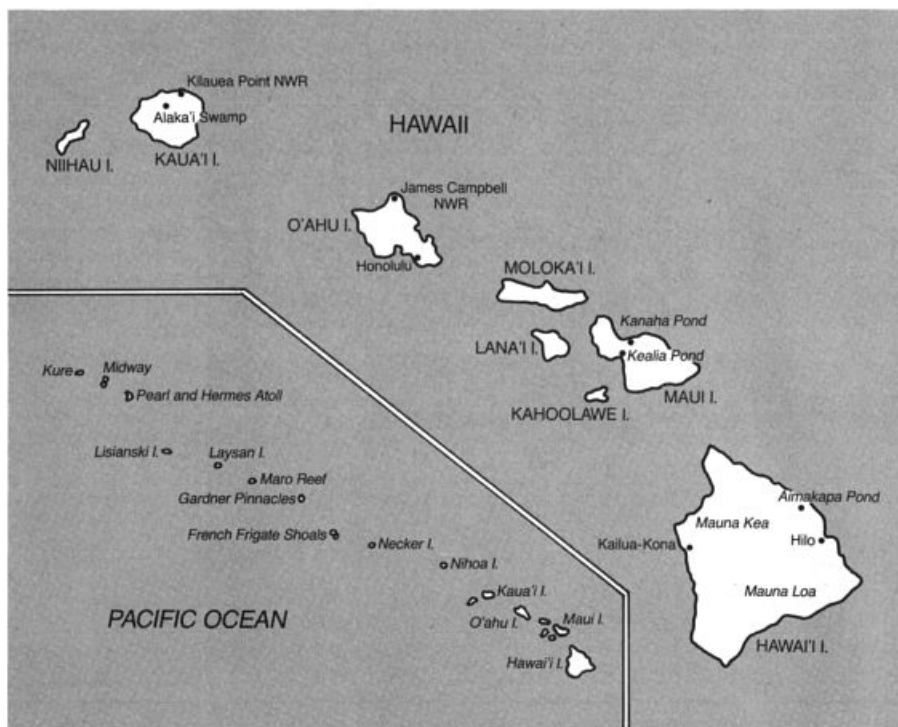
The only Bobolinks found this spring were single females at Scotty's Castle and at F.C.R. on June 3 (MAP), and a male at China Lake the same day (MTH). A ♂ Tricolored Blackbird at F.C.R. May 25 (NBB) was one of a very few ever found in this area of California. Two Great-tailed Grackles at S C R E Apr. 2-16 (JSR), one in Goleta May 20 (MAH), and another in Oceano throughout the period (TME) were along the n. coast of the Region where still considered rare. Two Bronzed Cowbirds had returned by May 27 to Brawley, Imperial (GMcC), where the species now appears to be regular in very small numbers in summer. A ♂ Orchard Oriole visited a feeder in Puma Valley Apr. 30 (FSA) and a female was present in Huntington Beach May 27-30 (LRH), there being only a few records of spring vagrants in s. California. A single Red Crossbill in Yucca Valley Mar. 11 (CMcG) and two in California City May 26 (JWi) were the only ones reported away from the mountains. An Evening Grosbeak in California City Apr. 29 (AC) was the only one found in the Region.

**ADDENDA** — A report of a Leach's Storm-Petrel found inland in El Cajon, San Diego, Sept. 19, 1988 (\*S.D.N.H.M.) has only just come to light.

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# HAWAIIAN ISLANDS REGION

Robert L. Pyle



Rainfall continued above monthly normals in March and April, but slackened off a bit in May. Cumulative precipitation amounts for 1989 through spring were still above normal at 29 of 32 reporting stations. Unusually large numbers of seabirds appeared in near-shore waters off the northern main islands during three days in mid-April. Hearing several Hawaiian Crows ('Alala) on the annual spring survey was very good news indeed, but started a heated controversy over whether or not to try to capture them.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — H. = Hawai'i I.; K. = Kaua'i I.; M. = Maui I.; O. = O'ahu I.; BPBM = prefix for B. P. Bishop Museum specimen catalog numbers; J.C.N.W.R. = James Campbell Nat'l Wildlife Ref., O'ahu; K.M.C.A.S. = Kane'ohe Marine Corps Air Station, O'ahu; K.P.N.W.R. = Kilauea Point Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Kaua'i.

**ALBATROSSES** — A flurry of sightings of Black-footed Albatrosses this season included birds seen from shore off O'ahu, and also from boats several miles off of Kaua'i and in Moloka'i Channel. At least six and probably more were seen at sea near Nihoa I. Apr. 4-5, but none near Kaua'i or Ni'ihau Apr. 3 (PD). One on the ground at Pacific Missile Range, K., was banded and released Apr. 9 (JM). Black-footeds are rarely reported around the main islands, although they breed commonly in the N.W. Hawaiian Is.

Laysan Albatross, on the other hand, continued to flourish on Kaua'i and O'ahu. Although all of this year's chicks at the K.P.N.W.R. colony were lost in a disaster (see last season's report), 13 chicks from the colony at Pacific Missile Range, K., were removed to See Life Park, O., as were two others hatched at University of Hawaii from eggs found unattended at K.M.C.A.S. (JM). All 15 chicks were successfully raised, banded, and released (IK). The albatrosses are a nuisance to operations at Pacific Missile Range and at Dillingham airstrip on O'ahu. Efforts of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Animal Damage Control Unit to discourage the albatrosses at Dillingham seem to be having some effect, as 75% of the birds caught for the first time and color banded were not seen again. Only 57 birds were caught and color banded at Dil-

lingham this year compared to 92 last year. At Pacific Missile Range, 146 were banded this year (JM).

**PROCELLARIIDS, STORM-PETRELS** — Larger numbers of seabirds than expected were seen from a boat between Kaua'i and Ni'ihau Apr. 15 (DP), from a boat between O'ahu and Moloka'i Apr. 16 (JE), and also from shore off J.C.N.W.R. Apr. 17 (PD). All observers commented independently on the large numbers. High winds and squalls during the preceding several days may have been factors. Very few were found on a return visit to the J.C.N.W.R. spot Apr. 20 (PD). Most of the birds were Wedge-tailed Shearwaters, with some Newell's Shearwaters, Sooty Terns, boobies, noddies, and a few other species. Almost all were species breeding on nearby islands. More than 1000 Wedge-taileds were recorded on the trip off Kaua'i Apr. 15 (DP). This is notwithstanding a recent erroneous statement in *American Birds* (42:1225) that a certain photograph represented just the 2nd record of Wedge-tailed Shearwater for the United States [Sorry, my mistake—K.K.].

A [Hawaiian] Dark-rumped Petrel (*Endangered*) was picked up Apr. 29 in the spring shearwater fallout on Kaua'i, and later banded and released (TT). Two were seen from a boat off Port Allen, K., May 5, and three more were seen the following afternoon off Makahu'ena Pt., K. (DP). These were further indications of a small breeding population of this rare species on Kaua'i. Twelve large *Pterodroma* sp. thought to be Juan Fernandez Petrels were seen off J.C.N.W.R. Apr. 17 (PD), and three birds also thought to be Juans were recorded on a boat trip May 5 off Port Allen (DP). This species is apparently widespread in the subtropical Pacific when not at its breeding islands in the southern hemisphere. A Bonin Petrel, presumably found on an O'ahu beach, was brought alive to Sea Life Park Mar. 3, where it died Mar. 11 (IK) and became a specimen in the collection of Hawaii Div. of Forestry & Wildlife (AE). Bonins breed in the N.W. Hawaiian Is., but the species has been recorded in the main islands only once before in recent memory.

This season brought reports of two more Band-rumped Storm-Petrel sightings (enigmatic in Hawaii, see AB 43:172). One was spotted among the other seabirds in the Moloka'i Channel Apr. 16 (JE), and one was caught aboard the cruise

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ship INDEPENDENCE at sea Apr. 27. It was identified, banded, and released in Nawiliwili Harbor, K., the next day (TT). More than 12 storm-petrels with white rumps seen from shore 200 m off J.C.N.W.R. Apr. 17 were judged to be probably Leach's (PD). Leach's Storm-Petrels are regular winter visitors to the central Pacific, although seldom reported in Hawaiian waters. Seeing any storm-petrels around the main Hawaiian Is. is a rare event.

**GEESE TO TERNS** — The 3 known nests of Hawaiian Goose (Nene, *Endangered*) in Kipu Kai, K., this winter each produced three young. One brood disappeared, but the other six goslings were believed to have fledged successfully (TT). On Maui, a citizen sighted a pair of Nene in a field in Kula (fide CN), well down the slope of Haleakala Mt. from the species' normal haunts near the summit. Inside Haleakala Crater at Paliku Cabin, a ranger reported a pair of Nene with two goslings about 2 weeks old Mar. 18 (fide CN). A total of 16 Nene in 4 separate groups flying past Pu'u'anahulu, H., Apr. 30 (DP) made a high count for that fairly low elevation. All were encouraging signs of success both in reproduction in the wild and in existence at lower elevations, which some believe may have been its preferred ancestral range before Polynesian man arrived.

A Hawaiian Hawk ('Io, *Endangered*) was observed catching and eating a 'Tiwi at Hakalau N.W.R., H., Mar. 26 (JL). Although 'Io must have subsisted entirely on birds before rats came to Hawaii with the early Polynesians, observations of them feeding on birds are rarely reported now. Also this spring near Mountain View, H., a 'Io was observed catching a rat and eating it in an ohia tree outside a cabin window (DS).

A Greater Yellowlegs, a rare straggler to Hawaii, was seen at Ki'i Ponds, J.C.N.W.R., May 3 in near breeding plumage (AE). It may have been the same bird as seen there last fall. Another rare straggler, a Whimbrel, was observed carefully near J.C.N.W.R. Apr. 17 & 20 (PD). A Bar-tailed Godwit seen regularly at Kure Atoll during May was found freshly dead May 15 (JH) and appeared to be of the European race *lapponica* (AE, BPBM 178068).

**OWLS TO SPARROWS** — A Barn Owl roosting on sea cliffs at Kalaupapa Peninsula, Moloka'i, Mar. 5 (RLP) and one harassed by small birds along Na La'au Trail, O., Mar. 10 (MS) both represented interesting daytime locality records. (Hawaiian) Short-eared Owls (Pueo) were seen and heard courtship-calling deep in the Alaka'i Wilderness, K., in mid-morning Mar. 16. An owl pellet found nearby containing mostly red 'Apapane feathers was probably from a Pueo (AE). A Short-eared Owl at Midway Atoll May 7-10 (BE) may have been an Asiatic straggler rather than a Pueo.

Although casual sightings of Red-vented Bulbuls on other islands are increasing, they are not yet known to be definitely established anywhere except on O'ahu, where they are abundant. After circulation of a poster this spring by Animal Damage Control unit of U. S. Department of Agriculture, citizens reported this pest species in at least 8 widespread localities on Kaua'i. None of these reports have yet been confirmed. A Red-vented Bulbul was also reported Apr. 18 at, of all places, Kaho'olawe (fide AE), the small barren island w. of Maui used as a bombing target.

Two pairs and four individual Maui Parrotbills were recorded in the Hanawi area of Haleakala Mt., M., May 18-20 (RF). A male and a probable female of the super-rare Nuku pu'u were observed there May 19, and "lots" of Crested Honeycreepers ('Akohekohe) were seen, but none of the very rare Po'ouli (RF). All four species are *Endangered*.

## S.A.

During the annual Hawaiian Crow ('Alala) survey Apr. 13, at least two and perhaps four different birds were heard in a tract not adequately covered in past surveys. No 'Alala (*critically Endangered*) had been seen anywhere during the 1987 or 1988 spring surveys, and fewer than 10 are thought to remain in the wild. The captive flock at Olinda, M., successfully produced one chick last year and one chick this year, bringing the captive population to 10 individuals. Both chicks were from the same pair, the only pair in the captive flock that has bred successfully. This pair is a mother mated to her son. All but one of the other birds in the captive flock are closely related to these two. Thus, the need is desperate for more genetic diversity if captive propagation is to succeed.


Finding the wild birds on April survey immediately set off a heated controversy over whether or not to try to capture them for the captive flock. There are many parallels between the 'Alala and the California Condor (AB 40:527, and 41:492). The 'Alala's future, already bleak indeed, will be irretrievably doomed unless government biologists and private landowners immediately begin working together to rescue this species.

In Hakalau N.W.R., H., this spring 10 nests of the *Endangered* Hawai'i 'Akepa were found, with the first young fledging Apr. 20 (JL). Nests of 'Elepaio, 'Oma'o, Hawai'i Creeper (*Endangered*) and 'Akiapola'au (*Endangered*) were also found in Hakalau during March and April (JL). A family group of five 'Akiapola'au was reported at Kulani Center, H., May 1 (DP), and on Kaua'i a nest of the Kaua'i 'Akepa was found May 4 along Pihea Trail (DP).

An imm. ♂ House Sparrow found on Sand I., Midway, Apr. 10 may have reached there by military cargo plane or ship (BT, fide CR). Lavender Waxbills were recorded on Na La'au Trail at Diamond Head, O., Mar. 10 (three, MS) and Apr. 15 & 29 (seven, AE). Although regular there a decade or two ago, they are infrequently reported now. Lavenders seemed to be increasing this spring in suburban areas around Kailua-Kona, H. (fide RD). Ten Java Sparrows at Lihue Airport, K., Apr. 2 (PB) confirmed their continuing presence in that area.

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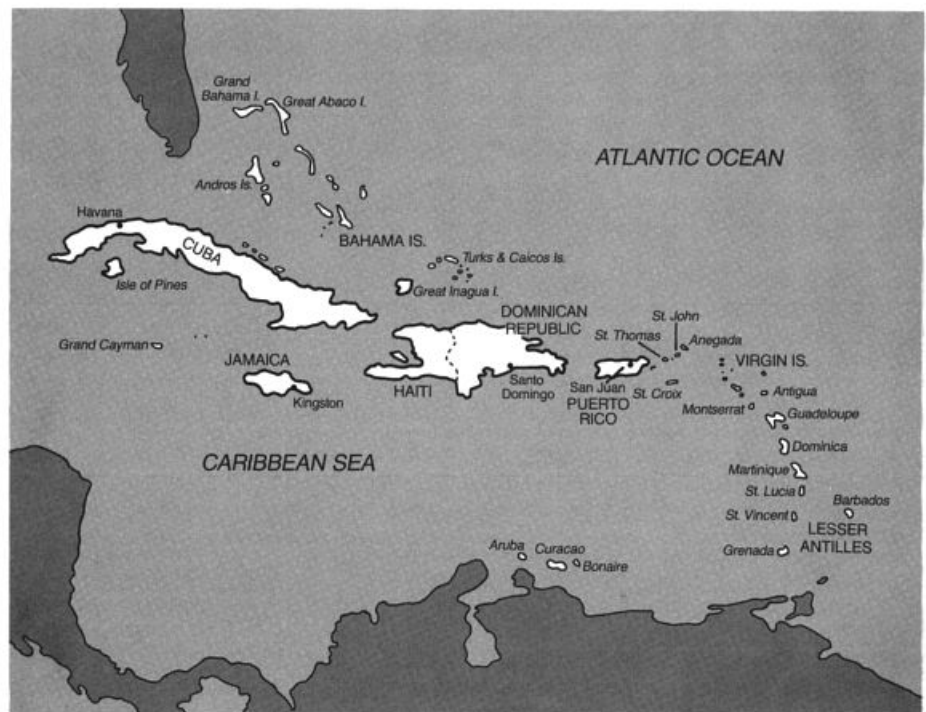
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## WEST INDIES REGION

**Robert L. Norton**



**R**ainfall for the spring period was about 15% above normal at Cruz Bay, St. John, United States Virgin Islands. March rainfall was 57% above average, and April's was 55% above. May—generally the fourth-wettest month, but without rainfall for the first three weeks this year—was 25% below average in rainfall. These conditions suggested a good seabird nesting season, with ample nutrients inshore for the fish, and dry nesting areas for terns and gulls. However, nearly three inches of rain fell on May 30 and 31, potentially flooding sandbars and wiping out nests on rocky cliffs. Roseate Terns apparently made a major shift in nesting location this year, ignoring previously used sites in the United States Virgin Islands and favoring sites in the British Virgin Islands. This suggests the need for international cooperation in any recovery plan for this federally listed species.

A report (RR) on Jamaica's aerial insectivores—Golden Swallow, Cave Swallow, Antillean Palm Swift, and Antillean Nighthawk—suggests that their populations are declining. The long-term effects of Hurricane Gilbert may have some bearing on the abundance and distribution of several species there. Jamaica's Gosse Bird Club is reportedly making an effort to monitor the status of resident species; perhaps local groups throughout the Region could employ the Breeding Bird Census and Christmas Bird Count methods of American Birds.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — B.V.I. = British Virgin Islands; P.R. = Puerto Rico; U.S.V.I. = United States Virgin Islands.

**STORKS TO TERNS** — The mangrove swamp at Falmouth, Jamaica, yielded observations of a Wood Stork May 7 and a "Great White" Heron May 8 (RR). Three West Indian Whistling-Ducks were seen at the spectacular Humacao Ref-

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uge, P.R., Mar. 29 (RW, FS), for one of the few reports from the Puerto Rico region; 42 (35 adults, seven immatures) noted at Barbuda May 19 (FS, RW) represented one of the largest single-day counts for this threatened West Indian endemic. Single Merlins (possibly the same bird) on Dominica were noted Mar. 24 at Trafalgar Valley and Mar. 26 at Anse de May (RW). A Peregrine Falcon was seen north of Canefield, Dominica, Mar. 25 (RW) and another was at Humacao Refuge, P.R., Mar. 29 (RW, FS).

One Red Knot and three Sanderlings were seen at Lejas beaches, e. of San Juan, P.R., Apr. 3 (RLN, RW). A carefully studied 2nd-year Ring-billed Gull in very worn plumage was a habitue of the Beef Island airport, B.V.I., during the last week of May (RLN, TL) for the latest spring record from the Region. A May 29 count of Roseate Terns in the British Virgin Islands found higher numbers than in previous years (RLN). An estimated 650 pairs were noted from the Seal Dog Cays south to Dead Chest Island. Average clutch size at one colony was 1.48, high for May in the Virgin Islands, suggesting that nesting had started slightly ahead of schedule.

**PIGEONS TO FINCHES**—Six Puerto Rican Plain Pigeons, a species of special concern, were seen at Cidra on Apr. 2 (RW, V.I.A.S.). Dominica's endemic parrots were seen in notable numbers at Syndicate Estate Mar. 24 and May 6, with 15 Red-necked Parrots and three to six Imperial Parrots (RW, CF, CH), perhaps testimony to the recovery efforts underway there. A White-tailed Nightjar was noted May 8 on Martinique (CF, CH), its only outpost in the Caribbean. Several Puerto Rican Nightjars were seen in the Guanica Forest on the evening of Mar. 31 (RW, V.I.A.S.) and one roosting bird was seen there Apr. 1 (RLN et al.). A locality where this nightjar may be heard is along the coast upland of the Copamarina Hotel (RLN).

Guadeloupe's endemic woodpecker appears to be locally common, as indicated by the report of 13 Guadeloupe Woodpeckers noted May 4 (CF). A single Cliff Swallow at Martinique May 7 (CF, CH) was late for the Lesser Antilles. One of the most critically endangered West Indian birds is the White-breasted Thrasher, which occurs in extremely limited habitats on only 2 islands, Martinique and St. Lucia. On Martinique, two were seen May 7 at Caravelle de Presque Isle in an area not visited by RW and RLN in fall 1988. Three were seen in northeastern St. Lucia Apr. 27 and May 3 in isolated, but threatened, riparian habitat (RLN).

A Gray-cheeked Thrush mist-netted May 4 (JW) provided only the 4th record for Puerto Rico. A first for that island was a Yellow-throated Vireo observed Mar. 31 (JW, OD). A Puerto Rican Vireo seen at close range Apr. 1 near Lejas beach, e. of San Juan, P.R., furnished one of the few reports from the eastern part of the island. Sightings of Golden-winged Warbler from the P.R. Bank seem to be increasing; one was seen in March in the Luquillo Mts. of the Caribbean Nat'l Forest, P.R. (OD, fide JW). A singing ♂ Black-throated Green Warbler May 23 (JW, AC) provided the latest spring record for Puerto Rico. A Com. Yellowthroat at Trafalgar Valley, Dominica, Mar. 24 (RW) was not a first there, but was one of the few reported for the Lesser Antilles. Six N. Orioles were noted roosting in mangroves at Punta Pitahaya, near Cabo Rojo, P.R., Apr. 1 (RLN, RW); also seen coming to roost there were about 35 Yellow-shouldered Blackbirds and four individuals of their principal nemesis, the Shiny Cowbird (RW, V.I.A.S.).

**ADDENDUM**—A late report from Vieques, P.R., during last winter was highlighted by a Double-crested Cormorant Jan. 15 & 18 and a Grasshopper Sparrow Jan. 17 (DG). Two major additions to Puerto Rico's winter birdlife were represented by a Forster's Tern at Mayaguez Harbor Feb. 20 and a carefully studied **Philadelphia Vireo** at Salinas Feb. 22 (AL).

A major report on a guided trip to western Cuba Feb. 5–10 (GEW, ARK) was received too late to be included in the winter report. Because so little is heard from Cuba, it seems worthwhile to print a selection (Regional Editor's choice) from the 140 species recorded: 10 Reddish Egrets (eight dark, two white) and at least five Wood Storks at La Salina Feb. 7; three Snail Kites at Treasure Lake Feb. 9; one ad. Gundlach's Hawk near Los Canales Feb. 5; single Peregrine Falcons at 3 locations; two Sandhill Cranes of the Cuban subspecies at La Salina Feb. 7; Cuban Parrots seen fairly commonly in groups of four to five; five Bare-legged Owls at Bermejas Feb. 5; one to two Stygian Owls each night; at least six Cuban Green Woodpeckers, at various sites; at least two Fernandina's Woodpeckers at Bermejas Feb. 5; two male Zapata Wrens at Santo Tomas Feb. 8; three Blue-winged Warblers at various sites, suggesting winter residency rather than transient status, one ♀ Summer Tanager at Los Canales Feb. 6; at least five Zapata Sparrows at Santo Tomas Feb. 8; one Cuban Grassquit at Bermejas Feb. 5; large numbers of Tawny-shouldered Blackbirds at Playa Guira; and two to 10 Cuban Blackbirds at Playa Larga.

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