

Bramblings were widespread in good numbers. They arrived at Attu May 19 and peaked at 77 May 22 (ATTOUR), about the 3rd-highest local 1 day tally. Bramblings drifted well E, to Amchitka I., with five May 31 and two to June 2; a single reached Adak I., May 23–25 (both *vide* JW), and a pair was reported from St. Paul I., June 4–5 (FIELD GUIDES). More unusual were up to four different Bramblings around Gambell June 3–7 (WINGS). Hawfinches made one of their best-ever spring showings. They were present around Attu May 19–June 1, with a maximum eight May 22 (ATTOUR), and a female frequented a St. Paul feeder June 4–9+ (FIELD GUIDES *et al.*).

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British Columbia/ Yukon Region

JACK BOWLING

It was a mild season throughout the Region, as Arctic air stayed bottled up close to its source most of the period. The plentiful winter snowpack began melting early but enough precipitation was received to ensure adequate sheet water in the fields for returning waterbirds. Waders put on a good show on the coast and across the southern tier of the Region but essentially hopped central inland sections, where only token numbers were noted. Reports of early migrants outnumbered late ones. Brisk southwest winds across Alaska and Yukon, in combination with persistent northeasterlies across British Columbia early in the period, may have been a factor in the appearance of a pair of Siberian Accentors at a garden pond near Salmon Arm in March—a twitchers delight!

Chris Siddle has passed along the editor's pen after many years of dedicated service. We thank Chris for his perseverance and look forward to seeing his initials beside many records in future *Field Notes*.

Abbreviations: B.C. (*British Columbia*); D.C. (*Dawson Creek*); Ok. (*Okanagan*); Ok. L. (*Okanagan L.*); P.G. (*Prince George*); Q.C.I. (*Queen Charlotte Islands*); Van. (*Vancouver*); Van. I. (*Vancouver I.*); Whse. (*Whitehorse*).

Loons to Ibises

Inland sightings of Yellow-billed Loons on Ok. L. included an alternate-plumaged adult Mar. 12 (CC, JBu), a possible holdover from October, and an immature Mar. 22–Apr. 10 (m.ob.); while an unaged bird at Ross L. near Smithers May 21–22 (RS, BH) provided a 3rd local record. The flock of 41 Yellow-billed in mid-Hecate Strait May 15 (PH) was undoubtedly a migrant gathering. Yukon's first breeding record for Pied-billed Grebe was recorded when a pair took up residence on Rat L. near Whse., May 29 (DVW). The biggest flock of W. Grebes recorded on Ok. L. off Kelowna May 13 (DB) was a paltry 550, about 40% of normal numbers. A Clark's Grebe at the n. end of Ok. L., May 22 (RJC) was the only report.

Likely only a small fraction of the main offshore migrant wave—but high numbers for inshore waters, >5444 Sooty Shearwaters were counted streaming northward past Rose Spit, the northeastern-most tip of the Q.C.I., May 12 (MH, PH) during a 90 minute vigil. Another 2102 Sootys were seen from the ferry in Hecate strait May 15 (PH), along with 179 Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels, the biggest flock of storm-petrels recorded in B.C. away from breeding colonies. Wandering ardeidids included a Great Blue Heron along the Yukon R. near Whse., May 26 (DD) and a single ad. Great Egret near the n. end of Ok. L., Apr. 15 (PG). Of special note was an ad. White-faced Ibis at a flooded field in Kelowna Apr. 13–22 (KJ, BK, m.ob.), the Okanagan's first.

Waterfowl

A single ad. Mute Swan at Guichon Flats s. of Kamloops Apr. 24 (GSD, CS) was the first for the local checklist. Numerous Greater White-fronted Geese strayed inland from their offshore migration route, with an early arrival at Revelstoke Mar. 22 (GSD). Remaining records were from the normal migration window during the last week of April: Yukon with four (CE, GK, LK, PS) and B.C. with 51, the largest flock being >40 at Kispiox Apr. 24 (MeC). From a peak of 8000 Snow Geese at Reifel I. at the mouth of the Fraser R., Mar. 10 (KI), numbers steadily dwindled until the last was seen at Iona I., Apr. 24 (RT). As with the White-fronteds, quite a few departing Snows made it inland, with seven at Vanderhoof Mar. 19 (NK); one on Marsh L., s. Yukon, Apr. 26 (JH, Y.B.C.); an immature at Kelowna Apr. 14–25 (CC,



m.ob.); and four on Toboggan L. near Smithers Apr. 30 (EP). The leisurely Brant migration eased into the inner s. coast in March, with 1200 off Beach Grove and 550 off the Roberts Bank causeway Mar. 26 (GAP). Numbers remained high through April with 1300 off Roberts Bank Apr. 30 (MPL). The curbing of the traditional spring Brant shoot in Boundary Bay will hopefully aid the recovery of this species. An ad. ♂ **Falcated Teal** was foraging on the Tofino mudflats Apr. 19 (AP, †RP, WP). If deemed to be a wild bird, this would be a first record for B.C. An Am. Black Duck at Boundary Bay May 14 (RJC *et al.*) was unusual and possibly a stray from the small colony at Nanaimo on the e. side of Van. I. Rare visits by Cinnamon Teal to the s. Yukon included an ad. male on Swan L., Apr. 23, and another at Lewes Marsh May 28 (CE, PS). Also on this date were three ♂ and one ♀ Gadwall at Judas Cr., s. Yukon (CE, PS), rare away from the coast at these latitudes. Eurasian Wigeon are now too common on the coast to elicit much comment, but inland sightings were more numerous and widespread than usual. with at least 10 separate reports totaling >15 birds. Tufted Ducks made their seemingly requisite yearly visit to Vancouver's Stanley Park with one adult and one imm. male there Mar. 10–Apr. 26 (m.ob.).

Vultures to Rails

Rare so far north, an ad. Turkey Vulture was feeding on a roadkill alongside ravens near Hazelton Apr. 28 (KM). A census of 50 km of power lines between Nakusp and Fauquier in the w. Kootenays in late March tallied at least 30 Osprey nests, of which 20 were occupied (GSD). An ad. White-tailed Kite seen along Hwy 99 s. of Van., Apr. 28 (†VLG) was in the vicinity of several sightings of the past few years and may involve the same bird. A light-morph Broad-winged Hawk returned to P.G., May 28 (NK, JL, DR, EL). Locals feel it is only a matter of time before breeding is confirmed in the area. A Swainson's Hawk made a rare pass through Whse., Apr. 30 (GK, LK), while Rough-legged Hawks lingered late in the Ok., with at least four separate birds reported from Peachland to Vernon Apr. 23–May 22 (CC, GSD, LM, GR, CS). Disturbingly, Am. Kestrel numbers were thought to be less than 50% of normal from Kamloops and Vernon areas through the period (RRH, CS). A window-killed Blue Grouse at Whse., Apr. 10 (JH) provided a first local record. Also in Yukon, an ad. Sharp-tailed Grouse at km 3 of the Dempster Hwy was near the n. edge of its range. Still rare on the Q.C.I. but showing up with increasing frequency at Delkatla Sanctuary at Masset were two Virginia Rails heard Apr. 4–8, with another single bird there May 11–12 (MH, PH).

Shorebirds

A record high 543 Semipalmated Plovers were recorded along N. Beach on Rose Spit May 12 (MH, PH). A Black-necked Stilt was a pleasant and unexpected surprise at Kelowna Apr. 17 (PG), while wandering Am. Avocets included two near Ladner Apr. 27 (GK, JK, RK), and a single bird on nearby Westham I., May 27–30 (AC, JI, VJ). Most likely returning breeders, two avocets returned to Kelowna Apr. 16 (CC) with a total of at least eight birds there up to May 24 (m.ob.). Evidence that the range of Greater Yellowlegs may be expanding N includes five adults seen across the s. Yukon Apr. 23–May 27 (CE, GK, LK, PS), one of which was seen in display flight. The supposedly casual in spring Lesser Yellowlegs touched down "in droves" this year with 8 separate reports totaling 44 birds Apr. 17–May 7 (CC, m.ob.). There was a dynamite passage of Whimbrels through the Boundary Bay area Apr. 17–May 30, with the highest count of 177 noted Apr. 29 (MB). A Bar-tailed Godwit was well-described at Delkatla Sanctuary May 20 (†MH, PH), a reliable spot to see this rare species in B.C. A very good season for Red Knot along the s. coast, with 6 reports totaling about 30 birds from the Fraser delta area May 14–24, peak count being 12 at Boundary Bay May 20 (MBe). Baird's Sandpiper is a very rare spring visitor to most of the s. interior. Notable were two adults at Kelowna Apr. 17 (PG); and one adult near Monte L., se. of Kamloops, May 15 (GSD, †CS). Breeding-plumaged Dunlins were seen twice in s. Yukon, where quite rare: once at Swan L., May 11 (HG, MU) and again May 12–13 at Lewes Marsh (CE). A Stilt Sandpiper at Delkatla Sanctuary May 13–16 (MH, PH) provided the 3rd record for the Q.C.I. and the first one for spring. Stilts also had a good spring showing at the mouth of the Fraser R., with 6 records of at least four individual birds May 1–24 (JD, m.ob.). Short-billed Dowitchers are common spring migrants along the w. coast of Van. I. but are uncommon farther east, thus a flock of 85 at Pigeon Cove Apr. 2 (MDP *et al.*) was exceptional, as were singles near D.C., May 18 & 24 (SK, LL, MP). Long-billed Dowitchers are equally rare in the s. interior, with a single bird near Kelowna May 6 (CC) providing the 3rd Ok. record.

Gulls to Woodpeckers

Numbers of non-breeding Franklin's Gulls were down in the Peace with flocks of ≤400 during late May versus the thousands of the past couple of years (SK, LL, MP, DS), likely due to higher water levels farther east on the prairies. A couple of inland areas re-

ported sightings of locally rare larids during the period: Whitehorse with Ring-billed, California, Thayer's, Glaucous-winged, and Glaucous gulls (CE, HG, GK, LK, PS); and Kelowna with Mew, Thayer's, Glaucous-winged, and Glaucous (m.ob.). The Glaucous-winged in the Ok. valley may soon be considered resident if current trends continue. Two Caspian Terns winging up the Fraser R. at Prince George May 19 (†DTy) were the first for the local checklist area. A Parakeet Auklet 15 mi off the n.w. tip of Van. I., Mar. 20 (IJ) provided the first nearshore sighting in B.C. waters.

Northern Pygmy-Owls are rare in the Peace, but a calling bird seen 3 times at the same location during May near D.C. suggests possible breeding (SK, LL, MP). A Vaux's Swift near Chetwynd Apr. 25 (SK, LL, MP) was an excellent record from the n.e. edge of its range. A male hummer sporting a deep red gorget, a green back and rufous sides at D.C. May 24 (SK, LL, MP ph.) was thought to have been a Ruby-throated x Rufous.

Sawmills seem to be a big attraction for Lewis' Woodpecker in some s. interior valleys, with one straying to a mill in Revelstoke May 22 (GSD). Williamson's Sapsuckers were found n. of their normal range, with a nesting pair discovered in an aspen just s. of Kamloops Apr. 17 (EM), a first record for the local checklist. An ad. ♂ Black-backed Woodpecker at Whse., May 15 (HG) provided a first local record. Also in Yukon, Pileated Woodpeckers are occasional in the extreme s.e., thus a pair farther west at Watson L. in early May (RF) was a surprise.

Flycatchers to Thrushes

A Gray Flycatcher 60 km e. of Osoyoos May 30 (MDP) may have been the first record away from the Ok. valley. A single ♀ Purple Martin heading NE over Iona I., Apr. 23 (†JAM) keeps hope alive that this species may yet recolonize the Van. area. Two interior corvid species which had spent winter in Van. finally departed: The Scrub Jay was last seen Apr. 7 (BW) and the Black-billed Magpie Apr. 10 (BN). Crow identification remains problematic in s. Yukon, where both Northwestern and American are possible, and the only specimen proved intermediate between the 2 species. A crow at Lewes Marsh May 12–13 (CE) was thought to be an American based mainly on vocalizations. Two wren species both stopped in at Nakusp for the 3rd time: a Marsh Mar. 21 and a House May 6 (GSD). A ♂ W. Bluebird was sighted near Nakusp Mar. 25 (GSD) for the first time in 15 years.

SA Canada's first and main-land North America's 2nd Siberian Accentor, a male, was spotted drinking from Doris and Frank Kime's garden pond at Tappen, near Salmon Arm, Mar. 5, and it was joined by a female the next day. Winter pair-bonding has been suggested for this species in literature, thus it is possible that this was a prospective mated couple. The birds stayed in the garden until Apr. 10, allowing time for photographs and even a video. Our thanks to the Kime's for being gracious hosts to many eager birders.

Wood Warblers to Weaver Finches

A singing ad. ♂ Black-throated Blue Warbler was heard, then seen, in s.w. Van., Apr. 20 (KW), the 3rd record for B.C. A hybrid ♂ Hermit x Townsend's Warbler was seen near Vic., May 8 (DP), with another suspected hybrid male seen alongside a pure ♂ Hermit Warbler on c. Van. I., May 18 (DI, MI). This species seems to be increasing on the island. The two Palm Warblers which had overwintered at Delkatla stayed until Apr. 9, providing the first spring records for the Q.C.I. Two more brightly plumaged males arrived the next day, with another two singing males at Sandspit Apr. 13. (MH, PH). Ovenbirds have been pushing steadily SW into the P.G. area over the past few years. Two males were heard singing along Ft. George Canyon trail May 22 (HA, JB, ph. NK, DTy, DW). Wilson's Warblers passed through Vancouver's Queen Elizabeth Park in big numbers with 60 seen May 2 and 75 there May 15 (JDe *et al.*).

An ad. ♀ Dickcissel at a Princeton bird-bath May 20 (†KH) continues this species' recent string of sporadic visits to s. B.C. A striking ♂ Black-throated Sparrow spent May 15–28 at a yard in the Maple Ridge subdivision of Van. (JD, m. ob). Lapland Longspur flocks recovered to more normal numbers after last year's crash. The s. Yukon area reported the species as very common early April–mid-May (m.ob.), while a massive fallout the night of Apr. 22 in D.C. left one field teeming with tens of thousands the next morning (SK, LL, MP). Two Smith's Longspurs made a rare visit to Mt. McIntyre near Whse., May 28 (CE, PS). A flock of 300 Snow Buntings near Vanderhoof Mar. 19 (NK) was a high number for spring.

Encouragingly adaptable, the Yellow-headed Blackbird colony which had been displaced by the construction of the 3rd runway at Van. airport returned to the nearby cattail marsh at Iona I., Apr. 13 (RTo), with ten males and eight females there May 11 (RJ). The ♀ Great-tailed

Grackle which overwintered near Vernon was last seen Apr. 11 (PG), while the two–three Bramblings which overwintered at a Sandspit feeder were last seen Apr. 2 (GD, MH, PH, PP, PhP). The Q.C.I. archipelago continues to be the regional hotspot for Brambling. Purple Finches wandered into the s. interior: the w. Kootenay's first, a female-plumaged type, was at a feeder in Nakusp Mar. 17–22, with another ad. male there Apr. 30 (GSD). Another ad. male stopped at Kelowna May 1 (CC), providing a first local record and the 10th for the Ok. valley. And last, but certainly never least, a lone House Sparrow made it as far north as Dawson City, Yukon May 13 (LK).

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Oregon/ Washington Region

BILL TWEIT AND STEVE SUMMERS

April precipitation was roughly normal, but otherwise it was a dry and warm spring throughout the Region. March in the Tri-Cities, Washington was the second driest on record, and all other areas noted a similar continuation of the drought. This spring brought a significant incursion of interior birds into the Region, most notably Cattle Egret and Black-throated Sparrow. Exceptional rarities included at least two Manx Shearwater off Washington in April, an Eastern Wood Pewee at Malheur and a Rustic Bunting in western Oregon. Unfortunately, this will be Steve's last report. He is moving to Utah, and we are losing a great birder and an outstanding source of knowledge of Oregon birdlife.

Abbreviations: Malheur (*Malheur N.W.R., Harney, OR*); O.S. (*Ocean Shores, Grays Harbor, WA*); Sauvie (*Sauvie I., Columbia and Multnomah, OR*); S.J.C.R. (*south jetty of the Columbia R., Clatsop, OR*).

Loons to Falcons

Common Loons are rare Washington breeders; two young were at Hozomeen L., *Whitcom* May 23 (*fide* BK) and a pair nested at Lost L., *Okanogan* (J. Potter). For the 2nd consecutive spring, no Yellow-billed Loons were reported. Approximately 30,000 Eared Grebe estimated on L. Abert, *Lake, OR* Apr 28 (SS) are a convincing indication of the importance of this alkaline lake for migrants.

The only pelagic trips reported were 3 off Westport, WA Apr. 2, 17 & 30th (TW). All were long-distance trips covering waters beyond the Continental Shelf edge. One-hundred–two-hundred Black-footed Albatross were found per trip, as expected. Northern Fulmar were scarce, with 1–34 per trip. In the e. Strait of Juan de Fuca, two N. Fulmar off Ft. Flagler, *Jefferson* Mar. 3 (M. Gibson, *fide* D&SS) were highly unusual. No Murphy's Petrel were found on the April pelagic trips, although they covered waters where the species was readily found in April 1992. Pink-footed Shearwaters began to appear off Westport in mid-April, with counts of one and nine. Up to 5000 Sooty Shearwaters were found per trip and a total of 15 Short-