

Nov. 15 (SCH), a new local late date. Yellow-rumped, still noteworthy but becoming more common in November, included singles at Petersburg Nov. 5 (PJW) and at an Anchorage suet feeder Oct. 25–Dec. 1 (ph. DFD). Wilson's Warblers are even more unusual in November, so singles at Anchorage Nov. 6 & 9 (TGT, *fide* RLS; new local late record), near Juneau Nov. 6th (DWS), and at Ketchikan to Nov. 12 (SCH) were significant. Notable rarities included Southwest's first-ever—and one of few in fall—**Tennessee Warbler**, netted and collected on the Alaska Pen. south of King Salmon Sept. 16 (*TDE), and single **Palm Warblers** in Fairbanks Sept. 25 (netted, *A.B.O.), at Petersburg Oct. 5 (*PJW), and record late for the Region from Juneau Nov. 6 (DWS). Nearly record late and notable from beyond the Mainland was an Am. Redstart at Ketchikan Sept. 17 (JP).

Towhee to Finches

Alaska's (and Juneau's) 3rd **Rufous-sided Towhee** appeared at a feeder there Nov. 24 and remained in the area into December (no details, *fide* SZ, GVV). Casual from the N. Gulf Coast, and getting late for the Region, was the imm. Chipping Sparrow noted at Seward Oct. 1 (TGT, RLS, PJW). The mid-season storms tracking into the e. Interior, followed by a large Mainland high pressure cell, likely contributed to the appearance of more easterly sparrows into the Region north of more typical sites. A ♀ *inexpectata* Song Sparrow found a Tok feeder Nov. 9–15 (*TJD) provided a first Interior record. This form breeds on the Mainland of Southeast north into n.w. British Columbia and s. Yukon. Two White-throated Sparrows were located with migrant Dark-eyed Junco flocks in Anchorage Oct. 28–Nov. 1+ (*fide* RLS) and Oct. 31–Nov. 2 (TGT *et al.*), the first for Upper Cook Inlet. More expected was one near Ketchikan Nov. 7–9 (SCH). Most surprising, especially given the poor season for Asiatics, was the lone juv. Rustic Bunting at a *Fairbanks* feeder with juncos Nov. 7+ (DDR, DDG *et al.*). This individual, a first Interior record, survived heavy snow and sub-zero weather.

A ♂ Red-winged Blackbird, Southwest Alaska's first, briefly visited a Nelson Lagoon feeder Aug. 8 (JJ, CW, RDW, *fide* CFZ). The nearest known nesting areas are way e. in Anchorage and n.e. in the central Tanana Valley. The fall season ended on an exciting note in Upper Cook Inlet when observers, notified of an "iridescent" blackbird at a Palmer feeder, found a striking ♂ **Common Grackle** (TGT, ph. RLS, ph. DFD *et al.*). This individual, present Nov. 14+, was the Region's first since 1976 and 7th overall. A bland female-type Purple Finch, rare at any

season mainly from Southeast, appeared briefly at a Ketchikan feeder Nov. 29 (†SCH). An Evening Grosbeak, another rare-at-any-season in Southeast, made a similar appearance in Juneau Oct. 12–16+ (GVV, SZ). White-winged Crossbills made a strong and widespread push across the Interior, where they were at least uncommon to locally common all season. Moderate numbers spilled s. of the Alaska Range into Cook Inlet and to Kodiak I., where they seemed on the increase.

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British Columbia/ Yukon Region

JACK BOWLING

Warm weather continued through August and September across most of the Region, turning seasonably cooler in September in Yukon. October was stormy on the coast, while November saw an inexorable push of Arctic air southward, reaching the 49th parallel by the end of the period. The autumn storm trajectory was generally from the west and northwest, which may explain the appearance of Asian vagrants such as Wood Sandpiper and Dusky Thrush. As always, there were species which bucked the mean flow, including an invasion of Blue Jays across the southern tier and a Great-crested Flycatcher on Vancouver Island. The discovery of a Black-vented Shearwater off the Queen Charlotte Islands was no doubt linked to the maturation of the latest El Niño-Southern Oscillation event, which had raised the temperature of most offshore ocean currents about 2° C by the end of the period. Several cooperative banding stations

involving the Canadian Wildlife Service and volunteer birders were set up across British Columbia this season and will contribute greatly to our knowledge base in years to come.

Abbreviations: B.C. (*British Columbia*); N.-W.T. (*Northwest Territories*); Ok. L. (*Okanagan L.*); Ok. Vly (*Okanagan Valley*); P.G. (*Prince George*); Q.C.I. (*Queen Charlotte Islands*); R.P.-M.M.S. (*Rocky Point Migration Monitoring Station, s. tip of Van. I.*); S.T.P. (*Sewage Treatment Plant*); T.I.M.M.S. (*Triangle I. Migration Monitoring Station, off n.w. tip Van. I.*); Van. (*Vancouver*); Van. I. (*Vancouver I.*); Vic. (*Victoria*); Whse. (*Whitehorse*).



Loons to Herons

Making a first appearance in the P.G. checklist area were three Red-throated Loons on Eaglet L., Sept. 11 (NK, LL, P.G.N.C.). Historically, Com. Loons stage on Ok. L. in both spring and fall, with largest flock sizes in the spring. Interesting then was a record raft of 115 off Okanagan Mt. Park Oct. 23 (CC, DW, m.ob.). This is the 2nd consecutive year of such a concentration and is near a local fish spawning bed. There were widely scattered reports of Yellow-billed Loons: an alternate-plumaged adult off Pt. Roberts, WA Sept. 11 (BDa, VF), with possibly the same bird relocated there Sept. 16 (MPL); an unaged bird off Metchosin, w. of Vic., Sept. 24 (BD, m.ob.); an unaged bird off Blackie Spit, Boundary Bay, Oct. 11 (HNM, JAM) and another off nearby White Rock pier Oct 21 (W. Jahnke); a single immature on the Yukon R. near Whse., Oct. 11–24 (m.ob.); and one immature on Wood L. between Vernon and Kelowna Nov. 5–6 (PG).

In a late entry from last season, the observation of six–eight Eared Grebes 38 km n. of Watson L. in s.e. Yukon June 11 was the first of this species for the territory (†LA). Also from the previous season, very encouraging news from the W. Grebe colony at Salmon Arm on Shuswap L.: A census July 21 tallied 314 adult and 145 young in 86 families, an increase of 131% in young and 200% in families from 1993 (FK, S.A.B.N.E.S.)! Only time will tell if this is a real trend or an anomaly. A molting ad. Clark's Grebe was at the n. end of Ok. L., Aug. 11 (CS); an alternate-plumaged adult was off Spanish Banks, Van., Sept. 26–27 (MPR, HNM, JAM, PSp), while another single, possibly the same bird seen earlier, was near the Lion's Gate Bridge over Burrard Inlet, Van., Nov. 30 (RB). At T.I.M.M.S. there were 40 Black-footed Albatrosses Oct. 13, while a count of 12 Buller's Shearwaters passing offshore Oct. 1 (MTo, RTo) was the 2nd largest single flock on record. A cruise of the n. shores of the Q.C.I. turned up a couple of seldom-seen tubenoses: A Flesh-footed Shearwater Sept. 19 off Naden Harbour; and the usually more sedentary **Black-vented Shearwater**, the region's 10th, farther east toward Masset Sept. 20 (CB, †PH). Both these species prefer foraging in warmer ocean currents.

An imm. Am. White Pelican gorged on spawning Kokanee salmon at Powers Cr. near Westside on Ok. L., Sept. 30–Oct. 23 (CC, m.ob.), while a very late unaged bird spent Nov. 18–20 near Okanagan Landing farther north up the lake. A young Brown Pelican delighted birders by staying in the Crescent Beach/Blackie Spit area of Boundary Bay Sept. 13–25 (PD, DJ, HNM, †JAM, m.ob.). There was only a single Am. Bittern reported from s B C this season, at Swan L.

near Vic., Sept. 17 (LC). This species continues to struggle across the southernmost parts of the Region. Well n. of its usual range, a wandering sub-adult Great Blue Heron surprised Yukon observers by foraging at the Ice Water Fish Farm near Whse., Aug. 22–Sept. 1 (ph. CE, HG, GJ, PS). A young **Snowy Egret** provided the first interior record for the Region when it was spotted at the mouth of Coldstream Cr. at Kalamalka L. near Vernon Sept. 25 (MCo, PG, EN, †CS). Likely the same bird was seen on the Salmon Arm foreshore Oct. 10 (CC, FK, PM). Another imm. Snowy Egret spent Nov. 6–7 at a backwater slough near the Harrison R. bridge in Agassiz (†JDo, †RKe, MTo, m.ob.). Whether this was the same bird seen farther east earlier in the season is open to question. Cattle Egrets invaded the w. Kootenays, with 20–30 tallied from various locations Oct. 26–Nov. 8 (m.ob.). The most northerly was a solitary bird reported 30 km n.w. of P.G. in early September (LGr). An imm. Black-crowned Night-Heron was present at the Salts Shipyard, Vic. harbor, Aug. 4–19 (BRG, BWh), the area's fifth.

Waterfowl

A large flock of 240 Tundra Swans was noted at Lake Laberge, n. of Whse., Oct. 2 (PS, Y.B.C.). Several flocks of Trumpeter Swans were also seen in s.w. Yukon; a flock of 50 at Kluane L., Oct. 22 (SBr, HG) included a remarkably high 50% proportion of immatures. The largest reported flock of Trumpeters was about 600 at Fraser L., Oct. 29 (CA, HA, JB, MPh). The Mute Swans of Cowichan Bay, s.e. Van. I., appear to be dispersing, with reports farther south from Salt-spring I. and around the bays of N. Saanich during the period (m.ob.). Seven Mute Swans were seen at the mouth of the Fraser R., Sept. 10. (JI) and again Sept. 29 (JL); another off Blackie Spit, Boundary Bay, Oct. 10 (HNM, JAM, DTy); and another single at Pitt Meadows Oct. 30 (LCo). These reports suggest that the feral s. coast Mute Swans have not only become self-sustaining but are likely increasing their population. Apparently some of the Greater White-fronted Geese began the southbound migration early this season, with six off the s. end of Westham I. at the mouth of the Fraser R., Aug. 18 (MBr), and 42 over Rose Spit, the n.e. tip of the Q.C.I., Aug. 24 (AH, PH). A flock of 70 Greater White-Fronteds was seen winging SE over Whse., Sept. 7 (JH), large numbers for an inland location. Several members of Snow Goose flocks were sporting red collars from their Siberian breeding grounds, with one such adult with an immature at Duncan Oct. 23 (S&E Watts). This coincided with peak numbers of 20,000 at the Reifel Sanctuary of which ten were wear-

ing the red neck tags (M. McDonald). Three Snow Geese strayed inland into the Kamloops area, remaining from late October into early November (SR) at the Tranquille ponds. A cause for celebration was a flock of 29 Aleutian Canada Geese (*B. C. leucopareus*) near Masset Oct. 19 (PH, MH), which stayed in diminishing numbers until Nov 29. This race may now be recovering enough to reestablish some of its former migration routes, given its reappearance in B.C. over the past few years. The Duncan Sewage Ponds were a magnet for Wood Ducks, with 182 there Oct. 9 and 208 Oct. 29 (m.ob.), the latter providing a new high single count for the Region. Notable Eur. Wigeon included: four males and three females at the n. end of Ok. L., Oct. 10 (EN), a number almost equaling the historical autumn total for the s. interior; and 12 at Beach Grove on the w. shore of Boundary Bay Nov. 22 (GAP) Tufted Ducks showed up at several locations. The first was at the Iona Island S.T.P. near the mouth of the Fraser R., Oct. 25–Nov 22 (DTy, m.ob.) with another bird at Lost Lagoon in Van.'s Stanley Park Nov. 12 (DTy, MDa). The most memorable, though, was the female which turned up in a flock of Greater Scaup at the Delkatla Sanctuary near Masset Nov. 11 (OD, PH, MH, BWi), the first for the Q.C.I. Inland Oldsquaw records from the s. interior included: one at Swan L., Vernon; three on Wood Lake, Oyama, Oct 23 (MF, CS); an imm. female on Okeefe's Pond, Vernon, Nov. 13 (EN, PG), and two on Nicola L. near Merritt Nov. 30 (WCW) Either increased observer effort is being rewarded or this species is finding these interior lakes more inviting lately. A raft of >200 White-winged Scoters in Baynes Sound between Royston and Comox Aug. 9 (BMS) was likely made up of non-breeders and ad males returning from inland breeding lakes. Observers are encouraged to try to age and sex scoters as much as possible so we can add to the database of migration and molting sequences. Red-breasted Mergansers are rare cold season visitors to the lakes of the s.c. interior, thus a female at Kelowna Oct. 30–Nov. 12 was a good find (CC, m.ob.). A ♂ Ruddy Duck, rare at these latitudes, was near Pelly Crossing, c. Yukon, Aug. 7 (HG), while another at Sechelt Sept. 30 (TGr) provided only the 3rd or 4th record for the Sunshine Coast. A large flock of 220 Ruddys in Cordova Bay, Vic., Nov. 23 (DP) was without precedent.

Vultures to Cranes

The fall Turkey Vulture migration over R.P.M.M.S., although not in the huge numbers of 1992, was still respectable with 400 Sept. 24 and 450 Oct. 2 (DS). A significant movement of 60 Sharp-shinned Hawks

over R.P.M.M.S., Sept. 17 (DA, m.ob.) was larger than in recent years. On the same day, eight of the 13 Yukon raptor species thrilled observers at Swan Lake (Y.B.C.), including only the 2nd Osprey seen there since 1976 (*fide* HG), and five Sharp-shinned Hawks, a high single-day count so far north. An imm. Broad-winged Hawk flying over T.I.M.M.S., Sept. 3 (MMcN) was totally unexpected. At the other end of Van. I., the much anticipated return of Broad-winged over R.P.M.M.S. brought observers from near and far to witness the passage of three–four birds Sept. 18–28 (DFE, MGS, BWh, m.ob.). The origin of these birds is as yet unknown, with the best guess being the n.e. quarter of B.C. A Swainson's Hawk soaring at the 2000 meter level 50 km n. of Revelstoke Aug. 5 (GSD, ED) was a good find, since the migration corridor for this species through B.C. is unknown and may follow mountain ranges. Migrant Swainson's Hawks thrilled P.G. birders with an extended stay at the airport. The first bird was spotted by a visiting German ornithologist Aug. 28 and was last seen Sept. 14 (JB). At least three individual birds were present, two dark and one light-morph (m.ob.), the first confirmed sightings in central B.C. since 1945. A Rough-legged Hawk on the Sunshine Coast Nov. 10 (TP) provided the 4th record for the area and the first for autumn. A Golden Eagle was seen chasing a Cattle Egret at Craigellachie near Revelstoke Nov. 1 (PMcA). The egret avoided capture by taking refuge in a railway boxcar! A very late ♀ Am. Kestrel arrived at Masset, Q.C.I., Oct. 30 and was still present at the end of the period (ph. PH, MH). A gray-morph Gyrfalcon appeared at Salmon Arm estuary Oct. 12 (MB, TP) and was seen there again Oct. 15 (CC) and Oct. 23 (FK). The first ever Gyr for the R.P.M.M.S. hawk watch appeared Oct. 16 (DA), with likely the same bird frequenting the Martindale Vlly. area of c. Saanich most of November (m.ob.). The first Gyrfalcon arrival on the e. side of Georgia Strait was of a single gray-morph Nov. 9 (KK) at Lighthouse Marine Park, WA. An early Prairie Falcon at Iona S.T.P. Aug. 18 (GC, m.ob.) was seen killing two *calidrids*. An imm. Prairie Falcon 6 km s. of Vernon Nov. 27 (CS) provided a very rare, late-fall n. Ok. Vlly record.

Sharp-tailed Grouse numbers appear to be increasing in the c. interior with 5 sightings totaling 20 birds within a 100 km radius of Vanderhoof Oct. 4–19 (SA, ND, SH). This is hardly surprising given this species penchant for open landscapes, which clear-cutting of forests provides.

Along the coastal flyway, a flock of 28 Sandhill Cranes touched down in e. Delta Oct. 8–10 (BMcMann, M. McDonald).

Shorebirds

Migrant Black-bellied Plovers numbers were up at Boundary Bay, with 3000 at the foot of 112 St. in Delta Sept. 26 (RJC, *et. al.*). An Am. Golden-Plover at Sechelt Aug. 23 (AS) provided, somewhat surprisingly, only the 2nd Sunshine Coast record. More effort separating Pacific from Am. golden-plovers is yielding results, with nine Pacific identified at Boundary Bay Aug. 8–Oct. 25 (m.ob.), and two at Rose Spit, n.e. Q.C.I., Aug. 24 (PH). A report from the previous summer season of an ad. Semipalmated Plover feigning a broken wing near Sapeye L. on the Chilcotin Plateau June 9 (AM) suggested breeding from a previously unknown area. Eclipsing the previous interior autumn high count was a flock of 400 Killdeer on the Salmon Arm foreshore Oct. 1 (PG), with an even higher total of 500 there Oct. 10 (CC). A group of 21 Black Oystercatchers on Bird Islets, W. Van., Oct. 27 (KWr) was a new high total for the Van. area. A flock of 120 Lesser Yellowlegs at Kelowna Aug. 10 (CC, NK) was an exceptionally high number for the Ok. Vlly.

SA The Queen Charlotte Is. continue to be a magnet for vagrants. An ad. Wood Sandpiper at Delkatla Wildlife Sanctuary was spotted by Masset on a routine census Nov. 3 (OD, ph. †PH, †MH, BWI), providing the first Canadian record and, pending acceptance by the Review Committee, the 3rd accepted N. American record away from Alaska, the first two being from New York. The bird kept its distance from neighboring shorebirds, preferring sedge meadows near small creeks. As noted in the excellent documentation, the bird often teetered like a Spotted Sandpiper. The sighting was put on the Victoria and Vancouver RBAs Nov. 5, but inclement weather prevented—or at least discouraged—many interested birders from traveling to the islands. Cold, blustery winds with freezing temperatures seemed to take its toll on the bird when last seen Nov. 9, but its ultimate fate is unknown.

What was likely the best “flight” ever of Upland Sandpipers occurred with a probable bird at Kamloops Aug. 21 (SR); a single at a Sechelt logging landing at 800 meter elevation Aug. 28 (VB, JF), the area's first; at least five birds at Sandspit airport Aug. 25–Sept. 15 (LGI, PH, MH); another single at Boundary Bay Aug. 31 (RV); and another at Cobble Hill, se. Van. I., Sept. 4

(S&E Watts). Most of the life cycle of this species remains a mystery in B.C., with confirmed nest sites for the Region only in Yukon. A Hudsonian Godwit was at Boundary Bay Sept. 11 (HNM, JAM, CSu), while a much rarer ad. ♂ Bar-tailed Godwit of the *baueri* race frequented the n. shore of Boundary Bay Aug. 3–21 (†AJ, †SP, RV, m.ob.). There are now about 10 records of Bar-tailed for the Region, all from the coast. A basic-plumaged Ruddy Turnstone with an injured leg put in a very rare appearance at Carcross, s. Yukon, Oct. 16 (ph. CE, HG, PS), establishing only the 2nd fall record for the greater Whse. area. Sizable flocks of migrant Surf-birds are rare on the s. coast after mid-September. Surprising then were 300 at w. Spanish Banks, Van., Oct. 2 (MP, KI) and 200 at Bird Islets, W. Van., the same day (AM). An unusually large concentration of 1200 Sanderlings was at Rose Spit, Q.C.I., Aug. 23–24 (PH). Only rare visitors to s. Yukon, two Sanderlings were near Whse., Sept. 4 (GK, LK). Western Sandpipers have declined noticeably in the interior over the past few years, with the high count being three near P.G., Aug. 24 (CA). Peak numbers along the s. coast were 6000 at Iona S.T.P., Aug. 8 (JDe *et. al.*) and 5000 along the n. shore of Boundary Bay Aug. 11 (RV), typical of recent years but a far cry from the flocks of 15,000–20,000 tallied at Iona in the fall of 1982. A flock of 300 Least Sandpipers near Whse., Aug. 4 (GK, LK) was among the largest ever recorded for s. Yukon.



Wood Sandpiper at Masset, Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia, in early November 1994. Although the species occurs regularly in western Alaska, this bird furnished the first record for Canada and only the 3rd away from Alaska in North America. Photograph/Margo Hearne and Peter Hamel.

A molting ad. **White-rumped Sandpiper** at Iona S.T.P., Sept. 3–4 (†RTo, ph. STo, m.ob.) provided only the 3rd or 4th fall record for the Region. One of the best flights ever of Baird's Sandpiper was noted across s. sections with 28 individual birds from s.e. Van. I., Aug. 4–Sept. 25 (m.ob.), including an unusually large flock of 13 on Sidney Spit Aug. 8 (JA); 165 at the Kelowna landfill Aug. 10 (CC, NK), a new Ok. Vily high count; and 125 at both Boundary Bay Aug. 11 (RV) and Iona S.T.P., Richmond, Aug. 12 (HMa). No fewer than eight individual Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were seen near the mouth of the Fraser R., Sept. 11–Oct. 8 (m.ob.), the largest flock being four at Reifel Waterfowl Sanctuary Oct. 8 (JI, V.N.H.S.). An imm. Sharp-tailed was at Sandspit Sept. 13 (PH). A Dunlin at Burton near Nakusp Oct. 10 (GSD) provided the first record for the Arrow Lakes Valley. Something is happening with Stilt Sandpipers—sightings have increased noticeably during the past few years. Birds were reported from just about all reporting sub-regions s. of 55°N latitude this season, with a high of 30 at Kamloops Aug. 14 (RRH, SR), a new interior high count. Also interesting was a flock of six Stilts at Riske Cr. in the Chilcotin Plateau Aug. 11 (FC *et. al.*). There were a spate of Ruff sightings: an ad. female Aug. 2–6 (ph. CS) at Vernon, the Ok. Vily's first; a molting individual at Iona S.T.P., Aug. 6 (JDe); and an imm. male at Cowichan Bay Aug. 26 (DM). A Short-billed Dowitcher was at Robert L., Kelowna, Aug. 1 (CC, m.ob.), the local area's first. A total of 2626 Red-necked Phalaropes were tallied in Edge Passage off Prince Rupert Aug. 8 (AH, PH), likely dwindling numbers from the normal July peak. A Red Phalarope in Georgia Strait Oct. 17 (TP) provided a rare near-shore record and was undoubtedly a windblown stray.

Gulls to Woodpeckers

There was a good passage of Parasitic Jaegers through Georgia Strait, with 17 sightings of 31 birds from the area between Iona S.T.P. and Active Pass Aug. 27–Oct. 3 (m.ob.). Of the 20 of these identified to color morph, 15 were light and 5 dark. Yukon observers were surprised to find eight Long-tailed Jaegers resting in the middle of the Dempster Hwy., Aug. 6 (HG, *et. al.*). Another Long-tailed was seen from the Georgia Strait ferry crossing Sept. 9 (BD), while three off Langara I., Q.C.I., Sept. 20 (CB, †PH) were being harassed by a young South Polar Skua. Another South Polar Skua was harassing Herring Gulls at T.I.M.M.S., Oct. 6 (MTo, RTo). Franklin's Gulls came W from the prairies in a big way this season, with reports of groups of up to

four birds at a time from Fraser L., Vanderhoof, Prince George, Kelowna, near Nakusp, Greater Van., and s.e. Van. I. The first was spotted at Iona S.T.P., Aug. 10 (PJ) and the last at the Duncan Sewage lagoons Nov. 2 (DM). Proving just how productive a fall ferry crossing of Georgia Strait can be, the Mackenzies spotted both a first-winter Little Gull and an ad. Com. Black-headed Gull in Active Pass Sept. 22 (†HNM, †JAM). Either of these species alone would be a good find! A concentration of 15,000 Bonaparte's Gulls in Halfmoon Bay, Sunshine Coast, was in the upper percentile of large feeding flocks recorded in the Region (TP). It wasn't too many years ago that Whse. birders recorded the first Thayer's Gull at the local landfill. This season a peak of 35 adult and 75 first-winter Thayer's were tallied Sept. 22 (CE). A news flash from last season: A Slaty-backed Gull was seen at Inuvik, N.W.T., June 17 (ph. †LA), establishing the 2nd or 3rd confirmed record for the Canadian Arctic Slope. Warm-season records of W. Gull are rare away from the w. coast of Van. I. Noteworthy, then, was an adult at Roberts Bank coal port, Georgia Strait, Aug. 4 (MPR, BGS). A first-summer Sabine's Gull, the checklist area's first and one of about a dozen interior records, was at Eaglet L., e. of P.G., Sept. 13–15 (†NK, SK, †LL, m.ob.). Large flocks of migrant Com. Terns are rarely seen in the interior other than at Charlie L. near Fort St. John in n.e. British Columbia. Noteworthy then was a flock of 60 winging down Arrow L. at Nakusp Sept. 18 (GSD). Arctic Terns are usually seen as singles during fall migration; thus five loafing on a log at Iona S.T.P., Aug. 13 (†KR) was a good find. A rare visit by a Forster's Tern to the coast at Blackie Spit, Boundary Bay, Aug. 3 (†JDo, SDo, HMo, †MPL) was well-documented. Another Forster's was spotted at Clover Pt., Victoria, Sept. 7–12 (DA, RS), where the species is becoming an expected fall visitor. Yukon's 2nd documented Black Tern turned up at Whse., June 23 (TF).

A Beached Bird Survey along the shores of the lower Fraser Delta Sept. 4 (m.ob.) tallied 55 Com. Murre and 21 Rhinoceros Auklet carcasses. Casualties of El Niño? Thousands of Ancient Murrelets streamed southward off Sechelt Nov. 26 (TGr). This is an annual passage and can occur anytime between early November to about Dec. 20. A month-old corpse of a Cassin's Auklet was found washed up at Lighthouse Pt., WA Aug. 17 (RSw). This species is casual in Georgia Strait. Horned Puffins are regular non-breeding visitors and possible breeders on both the Q.C.I. and the islands off n.w. Van. I. Six Horneds were counted at T.I.M.M.S., Sept. 2, with the last seen Oct. 7

A **White-winged Dove** at a feeder in the company of Rock Doves at Ucluelet, w. Van. I., Oct. 24–Nov. 5 (D&T Christiansen, ph DM, m.ob.) provided the Region's 3rd record, with both previous sightings from s. Van. I. Although this is a popular cage bird, the Ucluelet-Tofino area of s.w. Van. I. is a known migrant trap with a long track record of vagrants.

Banders at T.I.M.M.S. were stunned to find a Boreal Owl perched atop one of their mistnet poles the morning of Oct. 3 (MTo, RTo, MW). This constituted the 2nd record for Van. I., following a road-killed bird at Tofino in 1993. The owl eluded capture. A ♂ Black-chinned Hummingbird at T.I.M.M.S., Sept. 12–13 (MMcN) was way off course and provided the first record for Van. I. An ad. ♂ Anna's Hummingbird appeared at Francois L., west-central B.C., Sept. 18 (KWa). The bird and feeder were brought inside Oct. 22 but the hummer perished Dec. 22 of apparent starvation, despite eating many small flies from the windows. The bird's health went steadily downhill once it started to molt. A female-plumaged Rufous Hummingbird at Tagish, s. Yukon, Aug. 2 & 14 (TG, WH) provided a rare Yukon record, whereas an imm. Rufous at a Sechelt feeder (with an Anna's) Nov. 20 (AS) was very late. A Red-breasted Sapsucker at Quilchena near Merritt Sept. 30 (MPL) was a surprise in an area dominated by its Red-naped cousin.

Flycatchers to Finches

A Dusky Flycatcher banded at R.P.M.M.S., Sept. 29 (MGS, JJ, NM, COBr) provided the first record for Van. I. Single Pacific-slope Flycatchers at Courtney Oct. 3 (PUMC) and Nov. 18 (NMcl) were very late. Coastal records of Say's Phoebe are always newsworthy, with one at Sechelt Aug. 10 (TP); another banded at R.P.M.M.S., Sept. 17 (DFE, ALM, RS); and a late bird at Sea I., Richmond, Oct. 15 (JK). An Ash-throated Flycatcher at Blackie Spit, Boundary Bay, Aug. 13 (†JAM, LM, m.ob.) was a casual surprise for a beginner's birding class! A **Great-crested Flycatcher** at T.I.M.M.S., Sept. 29–30 (†RTo) would provide the region's first accepted record if passed by the Review Committee. A Tropical Kingbird, casual on Van. I., was discovered at Esquimalt Lagoon, Colwood, Nov. 10 (†JGa) and remained in the area until Nov. 12 (JA, JdE, BRG, RS).

Purple Martin prospects continue to look up with some noteworthy colony totals: >25 birds, including two young, at Cowichan Bay Aug. 2 (D.R. Farr, DFF); eight adults and seven immatures at Esquimalt Harbour Aug. 7 (JGa, CSa); six at the Maplewood Flats site in N Van., Aug. 16 (RKe, TP); and

seven adults at W. Bay Marina, Esquimalt, Aug. 10 (JGa). A swarm of >50 swallows riding the N wind at Sandspit airport Sept. 9 (PH), in addition to Barn Swallows, included three Violet-greens—a locally scarce bird, two Cliff Swallows—establishing the third record for the Q.C.I., and a single Bank Swallow—the Islands' first! This flock was thought to have originated in Alaska since most of the local Barn Swallows had already departed.

SA It was another jay season, with both Steller's and Blue jays showing marked irruptions. The Steller's Jay invasion was most noticeable on the s. coast, with the first recorded influx noted in s.e. Van. I., Aug. 27 when 121 birds were tallied at 4 locations in N. Saanich from 7:10 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. (BB). Flocks of 15–75 birds were noted around the Greater Victoria area through September but seemed to disperse thereafter. A flock of 25 Steller's at Point Grey, Van., Sept. 6 (RJC) was moving south. Perhaps the origin of these birds is from farther up the coast rather than from inland areas. Supportive of this idea is the appearance of at least seven Steller's at feeders in the s. Yukon in September (m.ob.), which were thought to have been blown in from Alaska. The Blue Jay invasion was more widely noted, albeit with smaller flock sizes; the first two were seen in the Victoria area Sept. 1 (DA). However, the flood gates had opened with subsequent reports (estimated total numbers in parentheses) from Prince George (2), Fauquier (1), Castle-gar (3), Nakusp (3), Vancouver (6–10), Greater Victoria (10–12), Vernon (1), Kamloops (3), Kelowna (1), Kimberly-Cranbrook (5), Grand Forks (1), and Creston (1–2) during September and October. Some birds were still being reported at the end of the period. The best invasion of Blues since the fall of 1990!

Another mainland species which staged a mini-invasion on Van. I. was Clark's Nutcracker, with six at Nanaimo Lakes Sept. 18 (SGC, DFF, LRR); one at Mt. Finlayson Sept. 19 (JGo); 19 near Sproat L., Sept. 24 (SMcR); and one at R.P.M.M.S., Sept. 28 (m ob.). White-breasted Nuthatch sightings during the summer months from the c. interior are very rare, thus a bird at a feeder near PG, Aug. 21 & 30 (BN) was noteworthy

Late Ruby-crowned Kinglets were near Whse., Nov. 9 (PS), the latest ever there, and at Kamloops Nov. 24 (SR). Two separate Dusky Thrushes were reported: the first at the Tofino airport, w. Van. I., Oct. 30 (†TGr), unfortunately unconfirmed; and another at the Alaksen Wildlife Refuge on Westham I. near Ladner Nov. 22 (BrB, MG, GK). Both birds were feeding with Am. Robins. It is not inconceivable that these sightings involved the same bird despite the 200 km separation.

A wandering N. Mockingbird which spent 30 minutes at Masset, Q.C.I., Nov. 11 (†PH) provided the 2nd record for the islands. A 5-star event was the discovery of nesting Crested Mynas in s. Richmond Aug. 3 (GT). This species is on its last legs in the Vancouver/Richmond area.

Census work by biologists during the previous summer season in the s.w. N.W.T. turned up many surprises including 20 singing ♂ Philadelphia Vireos on Ft. Simpson I., July 21 (RG, GH, JS). A record-late Yellow-rumped Warbler was in Whse., Nov. 21 (BSt). There was an influx of interior wood-warblers to the s. coast, including several Palm Warblers: one at Blackie Spit, Boundary Bay, Oct. 2 (DMcR); one at T.I.M.M.S., Oct. 5 & Oct. 12 (MTō, RTō); and another on Sea. I., Nov. 12 (TP). At T.I.M.M.S., Oct. 2–3 was a Blackpoll Warbler, Van. I.'s 2nd and likely an Alaskan or Yukon bird. Also noteworthy were two N. Waterthrushes: a single at Jericho Park., Van., Aug. 13–15 (WF, MPr, BGS, m.ob.) and another window-kill in Vic., Aug. 23 (H. Gordon), providing Van. I.'s 5th record. A MacGillivray's Warbler at Kamloops Nov. 24 (CR) was outstandingly late. A golden Wilson's Warbler in the snow-covered forest edge at Swan L., n. of Whse., Oct. 30 (HG) must have been a wonderful sight. Chipping Sparrows are virtually absent as summer birds in the Lower Mainland area, with very few breeding records. Intriguing, then, was a juvenile in pre-basic molt in s.e. Van., Aug. 10 (AJ), too early for the main wave of migrant Chippies. A Clay-colored Sparrow at a yard in the Kitsilano area of Van., Oct. 31–Nov. 1 (WF, JVDL, MPr) was a good find. Very high counts of migrant Song Sparrows from Sea I., Richmond, included 158 Sept. 30 and 144 Oct. 3 (TP). Of interest was the total of 152 Lincoln's Sparrows banded at R.P.M.M.S., Aug. 17–Oct. 16, with high daily counts of 19, 20, and 25 in late August. There were 5 reports of Swamp Sparrow from se. Van. I. during the period, with one individual each at Duncan, Saltspring I., Swan L., Viaduct Flats, and Island View Beach. Two Swamps were noted from the Van. area with one at Stanley Park Sept. 21 (RW), and another at

Jericho Park Oct. 9 (GB). This species has become more common as both a fall migrant and a wintering bird on the s. coast over the past few years. White-throated Sparrows were widely noted from s. B.C. after the 3rd week of September, with reports from Kelowna, Vernon, Kamloops, Vancouver, and Victoria—17 individual birds at Victoria alone. A Harris' Sparrow was at Brentwood Bay, s.e. Van. I., Oct. 19 (†GCu), with another at Martindale Flats, N. Saanich, Nov. 13 (W. Drinnan). On the other side of Georgia Strait, three Harris' were spotted in the Lower Mainland area: one in Kitsilano, Van., Oct. 31–Nov. 18 (RB, WF, JVDL, MPr); one in Langley Nov. 22–25 (KTh); and another at Reifel Waterfowl Sanctuary Nov. 27–28 (JI). A basic-plumaged Smith's Longspur at Masset, Q.C.I., Oct. 15–16 (†PH, MH) provided the Islands' 3rd record. Typically, the bird was a master of concealment, rarely showing itself above the grasses. Also at Masset was a Rustic Bunting Aug. 30 (†PH, †MH), providing the Islands' 2nd record. This bird fed apart from a nearby junco flock. A basic-plumaged Bobolink near the n. shore of Boundary Bay Sept. 10 (†AJ) was well-described, establishing the Van. checklist area's 6th record. Providing the Q.C.I.'s first record was a W. Meadowlark at Sandspit Airport Nov. 14 (RG, †PH). A N. Oriole at Oak Bay, Vic., Nov. 17–18 (M. Blake) was very late. An ad. ♂ Brambling, at Valemount, B.C., Sept. 4 (†JW) was well-described and a good find of this irregular vagrant. November mountain snowfalls were heavy in all areas. This may have prompted the numerous sightings of Pine Grosbeaks throughout the Region, with 30 birds at feeders in Whse. in November being the largest number reported.

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Oregon/ Washington Region

BILL TWEIT AND JEFF GILLIGAN

The fall weather was a continuation of the current drought theme, with rainfall well below normal in all parts of the Region through early October. Late October brought snow to the mountains and November precipitation was normal on the westside. November was cooler than average in the interior, but otherwise temperatures were near average.

Ocean productivity continued to be very low; Sooty Shearwaters, storm-petrels, phalaropes, and jaegers were very scarce. Most westside observers who commented on the shorebird migration indicated that numbers for most species were generally poor, particularly for both species of golden-plover, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, and Ruff. Blue Jays staged a tremendous fall invasion into the Region, with at least 38 individuals reported. The Red-breasted Nuthatch movement through the interior was also spectacular.

Abbreviations: Fern Ridge (*Fern Ridge Res., Lane, OR*); Fields (*Fields, Harney, OR*); Malheur (*Malheur N.W.R., Harney, OR*); Sauvie (*Sauvie I., Columbia, OR*); S.J.-C.R. (*south jetty of the Columbia R., Clatsop, OR*); O.S. (*Ocean Shores, Grays Harbor, WA*); W.W.R.D. (*Walla Walla R. delta, Walla Walla, WA*).

Loons to Ducks

The total of 14 Pacific Loon reports from e. of the Cascades (m.ob.) was relatively normal and considerably below last fall's record numbers. Four Yellow-billed Loons were reported from expected locales: one adult at Point Roberts, *Whatcom, WA* Sept. 11–15 (*vide M. Price*), one near LaConner, *Skagit, WA* Nov. 24 (G. Ritlin), one at Yaq-

uina Bay, *Lincoln, OR* Nov. 1+ (JL), and one near Ilwaco, *Pacific, WA* Nov. 13+ (MP). Clark's Grebe reports away from normal haunts included one at Beulah Res., *Malheur, OR* Sept. 3 (AC), one at Cape Meares, *Tillamook, OR* Sept. 18 (JG), one at O.S., Oct. 7 (†G&WH), one at Port Angeles, *Clallam, WA* Oct. 16 (SM), one at Vashon, *King, WA* Oct. 23 (R. Sanders), and three at Westport, *Grays Harbor, WA* Nov. 1 (†G&WH).

There were 11 pelagic trips off Westport, WA (TW) and 6 off Oregon (BOB, SR, GG, SD, PaSu, MH). Three Laysan Albatross were found Sept. 11, two off Westport (TW) and one off Charleston (†MH); none was reported later. Northern Fulmar numbers were very low until Sept. 24, when 50 were found. Pink-footed Shearwaters were found in normal numbers, but for the 6th consecutive fall Flesh-footed Shearwaters were very scarce. Only four were found, from Sept. 16+. Buller's Shearwater numbers were low as well; they peaked at 79 off Westport Oct. 8. Sooty Shearwater numbers were abysmal: 14 of the 17 counts were less than 1000! The peak was only 2250 Aug. 13, almost certainly the lowest ever peak count for fall pelagic trips. There was only one report of numbers seen from shore, 400/min. were flying S past Long Beach, *Pacific, WA* Aug. 20 (B. Duell). As usual, a few Short-tailed Shearwaters appeared in October; 25 were counted Oct. 8 and two were at Point No Point, *Kitsap, WA* Nov. 18–22 (VN). Very few Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel were seen each trip off Washington through

