

British Columbia, remains on Alaska's Unsubstantiated List. Although Bramblings made a unusually poor showing in the w. Aleutians, with a high count of just five at Attu May 24–June 10, a pair managed to nest. A nest with 2 and then 3 eggs was found in an Attu willow thicket June 9–10 (ATTOUR, PWS), the first for North America. In previous years, when high numbers reached Attu (*i.e.* 1982), singing and displaying birds were found but did not remain. Newly documented for the Region, a ♂ House Finch turned up at Hyder's coastal thickets June 1–2 (*TJD). The subject w. subspecies *C. m. frontalis* was the expected race, which breeds in s.c. British Columbia, but mostly e. of the Fraser R. A fall single-observer sighting from Haines was the Region's only other report. Given the rather poor Fringillid showing from the Aleutians, it was unexpected to get an Oriental Greenfinch report from *St. Paul I.*, June 12–14 (RH, DK *et al.*), the Pribilofs' first and the easternmost for the Region. Four Hawfinches provided the season's high count from Attu May 21–June 7 (ATTOUR). Common Redpolls lingered in strong numbers s. of the Alaska Range into April before dispersing, while White-winged Crossbills remained absent from most of the Region, save scattered local flocks in the Interior and associated with the n. coastal forests.

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British Columbia/ Yukon Region

JACK BOWLING

"Cold Springs bring Good Birds," so the adage goes. About the only reward from this cold, wet, and generally miserable season was that the saying held true. Still, not all areas bemoaned the weather, as Yukon welcomed more normal rainfall after three dry years. Perhaps it was the low freezing levels and frequent snows along the mountains well into May which led to many anomalous concentrations of returning migrants in the valley bottoms of the interior, as well as record-large flocks of shorebirds on the outer coast. Vagrants of note included Hooded Orioles in Victoria and Coquitlam, a Baikal Teal at Sandspit, and Purple Martins in south Yukon and southeast British Columbia. We welcome the input of Doug Leighton of Banff, Alberta, who makes many sorties into the adjacent Upper Columbia River Valley of British Columbia, and of Max Gotz of Whistler, southwest British Columbia, checking in from the Whistler/Pemberton area. Their reports will help fill some of the large gaps in this huge Region's coverage.

Abbreviations: B.C. (*British Columbia*); B&JGPP (*Burges and James Gadsden P. P.*, 15 km n. of Golden, B.C.); Ok. L. (*Okanagan L.*); Ok. Vly (*Okanagan Valley*); P.G. (*Prince George*); p.v. (*pending verification by responsible Bird Records Committee*); Q.C.I. (*Queen Charlotte Is.*); R.P.B.S. (*Rocky Point Banding Station, s. tip Van. I.*); STP (*Sewage Treatment Plant/Ponds*); Van. (*Vancouver*); Van. I. (*Vancouver I.*); Vic. (*Victoria*); Whse. (*Whitehorse*).

Loons to Cranes

In what has become a regular early-spring event, all 4 expected loon species—one imm. Red-throated,

four basic-plumaged Pacifics, two basic and three alternate-plumaged Commons, and one ad. and one imm. Yellow-billed—were seen at the same time off the Harbour Quay, Port Alberni, Mar. 9 (DGC). A staging raft of 1000 Pacific Loons on Cordova Bay, Saanich, Apr. 15 (DP) was a large flock for the area. A Pied-billed Grebe, rare in Yukon, was discovered at Nares L. near Carcross May 26 (LC, CE, HG, PS), and another was heard calling at Rat L., Carcross Rd., the same day (HG). Normally scarce in the c. interior, Horned Grebes were conspicuous around P.G., with a high 30 at Tabor L., May 6 (CA, HA, JB). The largest reported inland flock of W. Grebes was 229 on Kinbasket L., 50 km n. of Donald, May 11 (DL). A single Clark's Grebe, casual on the s. coast, was in with W. Grebes at Sea I., Richmond, Mar. 9–17 (KR, DTy, †JL, m.ob.). A pelagic trip off Tofino May 15 turned up 20 Black-footed Albatrosses, six N. Fulmars, hundreds of Sooty Shearwaters, 10 Fork-tailed Storm-petrels, 20 Red Phalaropes, and 50 Sabine's Gulls (MGS *et al.*). A flock of 40 Sooty Shearwaters seen from Cleland I., off s.w. Van. I., May 9 (AD) was typical of nearshore spring flocks, with numbers increasing later in the summer. There were 2 reports of Black-vented Shearwater, the first sightings since September 1986 and the first ever in the spring. The first was from a ferry in mid-Georgia Strait off Sandheads Lighthouse May 8 (p.v., †RTo), and likely



the same bird was seen again from another ferry about 10 km farther south May 26 (p.v. †JAM). There have been many adjustments to n.e. Pacific seabird ranges since the latest El Niño a couple of years ago, so such sightings can no longer be summarily dismissed.

Twenty Am. White Pelicans at km 60 of the Blackwater Rd., 75 km s.w. of P.G., May 5 (PGNC), were in a field along with seven Sandhill Cranes. Double-crested Cormorants wandered inland to Jackfish Bay, L. Laberge, Yukon May 30 (CE, PS), and to the Ok. Vly, with one at Okanagan Mountain P.P., Apr. 18 (CONC), an adult at Swan L., Vernon, May 19 (CS, MCo, EN, PMcA), and an immature at Ellison L., May 19 (RJC, BM, MF, FC). A gathering of 3330 Brandt's and Pelagic cormorants at a roost on Sea Lion Rocks off Comber's Beach, Pacific Rim N.P., near Tofino May 3 (DGC), was the largest cormorant congregation ever recorded in the area. The approximately 60 breeding pairs of Pelagic Cormorants of Prospect Pt., Stanley Park, Van., have essentially abandoned that area and moved to colonies under most of the larger bridges of the downtown harbor area.

The first Great Blue Heron returned to the 24th St. colony in Vernon Mar. 7 (SS), with the first pair there Mar. 10 (PG). Another Great Blue Heron strayed well N to Whse., May 1 (DO, m.ob.), one of few records for Yukon. A large flock of 81 Great Blue Herons soaring N over Burrard Inlet Mar. 11(MPr) was unusual.

A pair of Trumpeter Swans first seen along the Columbia R. at B&JGPP May 10 (DL, IB, JM) was last seen there May 26, investigating a channel leading to potential nesting habitat in a remote marsh. Near the n. edge of their range, two Trumpeter Swans, an adult and a banded immature, were at km 570 of the Klondike Hwy, c. Yukon May 30 (CE, PS). The Greater White-fronted Goose migration was noted passing over the Q.C.I., Apr. 9–May 15, with >1800 over Sandspit Apr. 16 (PH, MH). The highest single day total was of 2210 flying over and adjacent to Comber's Beach near Tofino Apr. 28 (DGC). A white-morph Snow Goose and a Greater White-fronted Goose, both uncommon migrants through c. B.C., were with >2500 Canada Geese at Vanderhoof Bird Sanctuary Apr. 14 (PGNC).

Increasingly reported from the Q.C.I., 22 "Aleutian" Canada Geese were at Masset May 8–9 (PH, MH). Providing the farthest east record of the form in the Region were two *minima* "Cackling" Canada Geese in a hayfield n. of B&JGPP May 26 (DL). A ♂ **Common Teal**, casual in interior B.C., was discovered near Otter L., n. of Vernon, Mar. 18 (EN) A breeding-plumaged ♂ **Baikal**

Teal at Sandspit Airport May 2 (p.v., †MH) provided the first record for the Q.C.I. A female may have been seen there in a flock of Green-winged Teal the previous evening (PH), coincident with a large northward movement of dabbling ducks. The ♂ **Falcated Teal** discovered at Tofino the previous season was last seen Mar. 25 (BB). The largest number of N. Pintail in the n. Ok. Vly in years concentrated in flooded fields near Otter L., Vernon, Mar. 16–17 when ≥1000 were counted (CS, PG, EN, BKa). A count of 104 N. Shoveler at Sandspit Apr. 30 (PH, MH) was a high total for the Q.C.I. More Gadwalls than usual were seen in Yukon, with two at Shallow Bay, L. Laberge, May 4 (BrB), a pair near the Donjek R., s.w. Yukon May 8 (BrB), and two pairs at Coot L., Pelly Crossing, May 17 (CE, PS, LC). The Eur. Wigeon tally continues to increase, with a male at the Port Alberni Bird Sanctuary Mar. 10–30, joined by another Mar. 30 (DGC); a male at King's Pond, Saanich, Mar. 19 (JGa); two at Cowichan Bay, s.e. Van. I., Mar. 29 (DM); 8 reports from the n. Ok. Vly Mar. 16–Apr. 27 (PG, CS); seven from the P.G./Vanderhoof area Mar. 29–Apr. 28 (m.ob.); two males in Browning Passage off Tofino Apr. 28 (DGC); one–two males from the Whistler/Pemberton area Apr. 27–28 (GM, N&KR); and two males at Carcross, Yukon Apr. 28 (HG, YBC, ph. JMcR). A ♀ **Common Eider** at Skidegate, Q.C.I., May 13 (p.v., †PH, MH) was feeding seaward of a large raft of >750 Harlequin Ducks and >3500 mixed scoters. This may provide the first documented record for the Q.C.I. since the previous Masset specimen of Dec. 4, 1945 has been reidentified as a King Eider.

SA The importance of the spring herring spawn as a food source to diving ducks was illustrated by large rafts gathered off the Parksville-Qualicum Beach coast of e.c. Van. I., Mar. 23 (DGC). The rafts included some 6250 Surf Scoter, 3353 Greater Scaup, 2945 Oldsquaw, 750 Brant, 154 Black Scoter, 124 White-winged Scoter, 68 Harlequin Ducks, and five Lesser Scaup. Also in the area were 620 W. Grebe. The herring lay their eggs on the seaweed and kelp from which the ducks gather the nutritious feast.

The highest count of staging Harlequin Ducks was 1320 at Lawn Hill, Skidegate, Q.C.I., Apr. 16 (PH, MH). Harlequins are uncommonly seen in the interior before they disperse to breeding streams. A lone ♂ Harlequin with seven Ring-necked Ducks at Okanagan Landing, Ok. L., Apr. 28 (CS), and a female on the Nechako R. at PG, May

19 (PGNC) were typical. Notable Oldsquaw sightings included two female-plumaged birds at Port Alberni Mar. 10 (DGC), six at Tranquille, Kamloops, May 5 (MHA), and five breeding-plumaged birds at Swan L., Vernon, May 11 (CS, GSD). One of the first documented records of a ♂ and ♀ Black Scoter for Yukon was obtained at Gravel L., May 20 (LC, ph. CE, HG, PS). Surf Scoters are an uncommon visitor to the s. interior lakes during spring migration. Two pairs appeared on Vernon Arm, Ok. L., May 11 (GSD, CS), and three birds were at Revelstoke May 15 (DPo). However, the species is a regular spring visitor to the c. interior of B.C., with 44 birds on Punchaw L., 65 km s.w. of P.G., May 5 (PGNC), 50 on Eaglet L., 30 km e. of P.G., May 24 (SK, LL), and 10 at Hart L., 80 km n. of P.G., May 29 (SK, LL).

A ♂ Hooded Merganser was spotted along the Fish L. Road, Whse., in early May (m.ob.). There were more inland sightings than usual of Red-breasted Merganser, with three males and one female on Nulki L., s. of Vanderhoof, Apr. 28 (CA, NK); a pair on Bush Harbour, Kinbasket L., May 8 (DL), a pair mating on Eaglet L., P.G., May 11 (CA); a pair on the Columbia R. at B&JGPP May 12 (DL), and a single female there May 17; and another pair on the Okanagan R., Oliver, May 22 (BD, WD). Ruddy Ducks seem to be on the increase in Yukon, with two males and a female at Coot L., Pelly Crossing, May 17 (CE, HG, PS), and a female at the Whse. STP May 25 (BrB).

Two Turkey Vultures flying N over Parksville Mar. 23 (DGC) indicated northward movement. Much rarer on the other side of Van. I., one was seen winging S over Long Beach, Pacific Rim N. P., s. of Tofino May 6 (DCR, SR). Providing a first Yukon record was the Turkey Vulture at Dawson City Apr. 25 (DDi, ph. DCo, SaS, JR, THu), likely the farthest north record for Canada. Two ad. Turkey Vultures were seen daily May 25+ (m.ob.) in the Pemberton Valley, s.w. B.C.. In contrast to their increased numbers elsewhere in North America, Osprey are becoming harder to find on the Q.C.I.; thus one seen at Sandspit Apr. 30 (PH, MH) was notable. Most large concentrations of Bald Eagles are found on the coast. Surprising, then, were >47 (25% adults) staging on ice and feeding on ice-killed fish at Revelstoke Mar. 31 (DPo). Although the first migrant N. Harrier arrived on time at Vernon Mar. 10, numbers were confined to scattered individuals there through the migration period (CS) A harrier nest in riparian meadows along the Illacillawaet R. near Revelstoke was wiped out by flooding in May (DPo). Likely one of the small population of n.e. B.C. Broad-

winged Hawks, a probable first-spring light-morph bird was observed near Donald, Columbia Valley, B.C., May 17 (†DL). One of the P.G. area Broad-wingeds arrived back on schedule when a dark-morph adult was seen just s. of the downtown area May 29 (MAi), and nearby the next day (NK, SH). A few Swainson's Hawks arrived back early to the Vernon area, with one Mar. 30 and two Mar. 31 (PG); they promptly disappeared. The main population began to arrive 2 weeks later (CS).

Returning very early to the interior were Merlins, with an ad. male attacking songbirds at Whse., Mar. 11 (CE), and a pair at a nest at Giscome, 50 km e. of P.G., Mar. 13 (MA). It is possible this last pair overwintered in nearby P.G. city. Peregrine Falcons remain rare in the interior. One was in E. Kelowna Apr. 18 (RK), one at Vanderhoof Apr. 28 (CA, NK, DE), an immature at Goose L., Vernon, May 11 (MCo *et al.*), and a *tundrius* adult along the Dempster Hwy, Yukon May 19 (PS, M&GW) was likely on its way N to the Arctic Slope. Migrant single Gyrfalcons were reported from widely-scattered inland locations, including Mission Ck., Kelowna, Mar. 10 (CC); Otter L. near Vernon Mar. 17 (PG); 15 km s.e. of P.G., Mar. 3 (NK), and likely the same bird just e. of P.G., Mar. 14 (CA). Of the three Gyrs seen in Yukon May 15–31 (m.ob.), the most striking must have been the white-morph bird eating a hare by the Kluane R., s.w. Yukon May 15 (ph. BrB, LC).

A large congregation of 120 Willow Ptarmigan was encountered in the Haines Pass, n.w. B.C., Apr. 8 (CE, HG, PS). Seventeen Sharp-tailed Grouse were tallied between kms 1181–1819 of the Alaska Hwy, s.w. Yukon, Apr. 11 (BrB), and the same observer noted "many" near Snag Rd., s.w. Yukon, May 8.

Certainly a candidate for more extensive field work in the Region, a Virginia Rail was heard in a suitable cattail marsh in the Blaeberry Valley, n. of Golden, B.C., Apr. 28 (DL), for the 3rd consecutive year. Another was heard in B&JGPP May 21 & 26 (DL). A flock of 54 Sandhill Cranes flying over Whse., May 9 (JMcR, PN, HT) was some 400 km w. of the normal migration corridor.

Shorebirds to Woodpeckers

Responding to millions of red sandworms washed ashore, 73 Black-bellied Plovers fed on Long Beach, Pacific Rim N.P., w. Van. I., Apr. 25 (AD), the highest-ever spring count there. Another high count of 202 Black-bellieds was tallied at Sandspit, Q.C.I., May 4 (PH, MH). American Golden-Plovers swept through the Sandspit area Apr. 16–23, with a high of 17 Apr. 23 (PH,

MH). Pacific Golden-Plovers followed Apr. 24–May 10, with 32 May 3 (MH, PH). Running ahead of the coastal push and providing the first confirmed record for the P.G. area was an alternate-plumaged Pacific Golden-Plover at Giscome, 50 km e. of P.G., Apr. 20 (PGNC, ph. MPh, ph. CA). A total 18 Am. Avocets at the Kelowna Landfill May 18 (MG) provided a high one-day count for the Region. Both yellow-leg species are usually early migrants in the c. interior of B.C., but this year Lessers didn't show in P.G. until May 8 (CA), almost 3 weeks late. Willets rarely stray as far north as B.C., with <10 records for the interior; thus one near Oliver May 17–19 (RJC, BM, m.ob.) was noteworthy.

Wandering Tattlers held true to form by sticking to the outer coast. Reports included 15 on Cleland I. off Clayquot Sound, s.w. Van. I., May 9 (AD), and 22 at Sandspit, Q.C.I. the next day (MH, PH). Closer to their breeding grounds, a single tattler was seen at Lewes Marsh, Whse., May 14 (CE); ≤four were along the Dempster Hwy May 18–20 (LC, CE, HG, PS); and one was at Nares L., Carcross, May 26 (LC, CE, HG, PS). Long-billed Curlews were seen along the n. edge of their range. One adult at Reid L., 25 km w. of P.G., Apr. 5 (L&DF) was typically early, with another at Vanderhoof, 100 km w. of P.G., Apr. 21 (LL, SK). Also experiencing an increase is the c. Rocky Mt. Trench, from McBride to Golden. A Long-billed Curlew was seen in a hayfield n. of B&JGPP Apr. 28 (DL); three were in the Bush Arm area of Kinbasket L., May 5 (DL); and one was in the lower Blaeberry Valley May 30 (DL). Six ad. curlews, two accompanied by four downy chicks, were observed in a field adjacent to Hwy 16, just s. of McBride, May 31 (SK, LL, v.t. MPh, SPh), and a male and female in agonistic display were there June 2 (m.ob.). This nest site has been known since the early 1980s.

Always a scarce migrant, a basic-plumaged Hudsonian Godwit was at Sandspit, Q.C.I., May 9 (MH, PH), another alternate-plumaged bird was present at Giscome, 50 km e. of P.G., May 10–11 (ph. CA, MA), and another at Nares L., Carcross, s.w. Yukon May 11 (CE). An apparent alternate-plumaged ♀ **Bar-tailed Godwit** at Sandspit May 7 (MH, †PH) was with Whimbrels. There are only about a dozen records for the Region. A flock of 22 Marbled Godwits was at Long Beach, Pacific Rim N.P., Apr. 24 (AD), with an even larger flock of 37 at Masset, Q.C.I., Apr. 25 (MH, PH), a new Regional high. Over 71 Marbled Godwits were recorded at Masset Apr. 25–May 31. Providing the 2nd-highest flock total for any season were 75 Ruddy Turnstones at Sandspit, Q.C.I., May 10 (MH,

PH). Always rare inland, a Ruddy Turnstone at Wye L., near Watson L., May 23 (BrB, WN) provided a possible first record for s.e. Yukon. Thirteen Sanderlings on the beach of Marsh L., s.w. Yukon May 31 (BrB, HG) furnished a rare treat for the local birdathon. The northward pulsing of W. Sandpipers along the beaches of the Tofino, s.w. Van. I. area, was illustrated by the following totals: 218 Apr. 20; 6000 Apr. 24; 10,000 Apr. 30; 17,400 May 1; 1200 May 4; 40 May 28 (AD, DGC). The Q.C.I. are the place to see Red Knots in the Region, with 37 observed at Old Masset May 6 (PH). Dunlins only rarely stray inland in spring. There were reports of alternate-plumaged birds from Okanagan Mountain P.P., Apr. 19 (CONC), another at Revelstoke May 15 (DPo), and two along the Yukon R., Whse., May 15 (GK, LK, ph. JMcR, m.ob.). The sand beaches of the Tofino area are the preferred staging grounds for Short-billed Dowitcher, with peak numbers of 3500 Apr. 24, 3000 May 1, 4500 May 3 (new high count for Region), and 1100 May 6 (AD). High numbers of both dowitcher sp. were tallied on the Q.C.I., with 240 Short-billeds at Rose Spit Apr. 27 (MH, PH) and 63 Long-billeds at Masset May 8 (PH). These totals represent record-high counts for the archipelago. Noteworthy inland were the single Short-billed near Oliver, s. OK. Vly, May 17–19 (BM), three Long-billeds near Otter L., Vernon, May 5 (CS), and six Long-billeds near Swan L., Vernon, May 12 (GSD, CS).

Red-necked Phalaropes stay offshore for the most part during the spring migration. Nearshore/inshore sightings included a single bird at Ogden Pt., Vic., May 4 (RB), 300 off Vargas I., Tofino, May 9 (AD), a pair at White L., s. OK. Vly, May 19 (DS), and 22 near Spillimacheen, s. of Golden, May 29 (DL).

A rare dark-morph Parasitics Jaeger was along the Dempster Hwy May 19 (HG, PS), and four light-morphs were at Marsh L., May 28 (JH, YBC). Bonaparte's Gulls were seen in larger flocks than usual in many areas, including 350 at Swan L., Vernon, May 4 (CS, PG), 500 at Tabor L., P.G., May 6 (SK, LL), 153 at Bush Arm, Kinbasket L., May 8 (DL), and 10 near Port Alberni May 16 (DGC), the largest flock ever there. However, the biggest flocks were associated with the strong tide rips and upwelling of Active Pass in s.w. Georgia Strait, where 2500 Bonaparte's Gulls were tallied Apr. 26 (B. Hayes). Usually seen passing N overhead the P.G. area in small numbers in spring, Mew Gulls staged in relatively large flocks, e.g. 50 at Tabor L., May 6 (LL, SK) and 20 at Giscome May 11 (CA). The 800 California Gulls at Okanagan Landing, c. Ok. L., Mar. 17

(CS) likely included many migrants as well as breeders from nearby Grant I. Also present Apr. 28 (CS) was a molting first-winter Thayer's Gull. Glaucous Gulls of all age classes were noted from several areas, including four in S. Delta Mar. 7 (RTo), \geq four separate birds around the Kelowna/Vernon area Mar. 10–31 (CC, CS, PG, BKa, EN), four in the Tofino area Apr. 25–May 3 (AD, DGC), and \geq eight at various s. Yukon sites May 4–19 (m.ob.). An ad. Black-legged Kittiwake was a stunning find at Judas Cr., Marsh L., s. Yukon May 5 (JH, †CE, PS). While the species had been previously reported from the Territory's Arctic Coast, this sighting was the first fully documented.

Two Caspian Terns were at Tofino Harbour May 4 (DGC), while three at Port Alberni May 16 (DGC) provided the first record for the local checklist area. Forster's Terns are rarely seen away from their stronghold in s.e. B.C.'s Kootenays. Interesting was an adult May 12 along the Columbia R. at B&JGPP May 12 (DL, TS). Formerly a breeder in the Ok. Vlly, five Black Terns at Rose's Pond, Vernon, May 12 (EN) held out hope that they may yet be found breeding there. The first two returning Tufted Puffins were noted at Cleland I., s.w. Van. I., May 9 (AD). One for the weird file was a Tufted Puffin in full breeding plumage found under a parked car at Goldstream P.P., n.w. of Vic., May 22 (CB *et al.*, v.t.).

SA A survey between Juan de Fuca Strait and Ocean Station Papa at 50°N, 145°W May 8–29 (KM) from the M.V. "J.P. Tully" turned up some interesting birds, including one Parasitic and four Long-tailed jaegers; 12 Sabine's Gulls, more common nearshore in late summer/fall than spring; an Aleutian Tern; 26 Tufted Puffins; and five Horned Puffins. The temporal and spatial pelagic distribution of both puffins and the tern species is poorly understood. However, there was little precedent for a Short-eared Owl which landed aboard at 1700 hours May 15 and was last seen 0200 hours May 16 at 49 34°N, 138 40°W, some 575 km from land! There have been previous sightings of this species lighting on ships within 60 km of shore in the past couple of years, but the mind boggles at how a rodent-eating owl could survive on the open ocean. A theory: Some owls have discovered that ships carry rats and are prowling the shipping lanes in search of a meal.

With only one–two previous records for the Tofino area, a Mourning Dove at Comber's Beach, Pacific Rim N.P., Apr. 28 (DGC) furnished a good find. Another strayed far north to the Upper Liard R. Bridge on the Alaska Hwy, s.e. Yukon May 22 (BrB, WN). A Barn Owl at Lumby May 16 & 19 (CM) was found dead May 25, providing one <10 records for the n. Ok. Vlly. An active N. Pygmy-Owl nest attended by two adults on Swakum Mt. near Merritt, s.c. B.C., May 9 (WCW, RRH, MSh, CSh) added to only 7–8 nests reported for the province. Another pair was calling near Clear L., 20 km s.w. of P.G., May 23 (MPh, SPh). Always notable in the Ok. Vly and likely an isolated breeder at the higher levels, a Great Gray Owl was in E. Kelowna Mar. 9 (CONC), another was at valley-floor level at Vernon Mar. 31 (BKa) and Apr. 1 (EN), while one of a reported two was seen on the Commonage near Vernon Apr. 1. Just as rarely reported farther north, a Great Gray Owl was calling near the Yukon/Alaska border in s.w. Yukon May 9 (BrB). Observed during migration in Yukon were several individual Short-eared Owls, with singles at Shallow Bay, L. Laberge, May 4 (DMo, YBC), Lewes Marsh, Marsh L., May 5 (CE, PS), near the Dezadeash R. Bridge, s.w. Yukon May 5 (THe), Gravel L., May 17 (HG), and at Partridge Cr. Farm, c. Yukon May 20 (LC, CE, HG, PS). A Boreal Owl responded to imitations on Silver Star Mt. near Vernon May 19 (DFF *et al.*).

Three Black Swifts at Tabor L. and another two at Giscome May 19 (CS, SPh) were a bit late. Large flocks of migrating Vaux's Swifts are common on the coast, 900 at Port Alberni May 11 (DGC) being typical. However, flocks in the interior are much smaller, with 51 at Beavermouth, n. of Donald, May 9 (DL), and >43 at Succour Cr. Valley May 11 (DL) being the largest seen.

A ♀ Black-chinned Hummingbird returned to the Blaeberry Valley, near the Banff N. P. border, May 18 and was joined by a male May 25 (DL). A pair had nested there the previous year. This is believed to be near the n. edge of the species' range. A Calliope Hummingbird, casual on Van. I. at best, was netted at R.P.B.S., May 15 (MGS). A ♀ Rufous Hummingbird on eggs Mar. 25 at Swan L., Vic. (A. Scarfe), provided the earliest nesting record in the Region. Rufous Hummingbird migration was easy to pick out in the Port Alberni area, with the first male at the Bird Sanctuary Mar. 30, swelling to 28 males there Apr. 14 (DGC). The fate of a ♂ Rufous Hummingbird observed during a late

spring snow squall at Congdon Cr., Kluane L., s.w. Yukon May 19 (JH) was uncertain

A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker seen at Currie Cr., L. Cowichan, May 24 (MGS) provided one of only a few records for Van I. Providing only the 2nd Yukon record, an overshooting ad. Red-breasted Sapsucker was at Silver City, Kluane L., Mar. 28 (JS, EH). Two ♂ Williamson's Sapsuckers near Merritt Mar. 25 (WCW) were very early. A ♂ Williamson's was seen at the traditional nesting site at Lightning Lakes, Manning P.P., s.w. B.C., May 17 (DS). A ♂ Black-backed Woodpecker was observed courtship feeding a female at Ruby R. Trail Rides, s.w. Yukon May 8 (BrB). A Pileated Woodpecker caused a stir when it flew through the center of Watson L., s.e. Yukon May 22 (BrB, WN, PS).

Flycatchers To Fringillids

Returning record-early by 2 weeks was a Hammond's Flycatcher at the Tofino Municipal Pond Apr. 20 (DGC). Another Hammond's popped up in Whse., Apr. 23 (CE, PS). A Dusky Flycatcher, accidental on Van. I., was seen and heard at R.P.B.S., May 17 (MGS). This is the 2nd Dusky seen there in as many years. A scarce and irregular spring migrant through the c. interior, a Say's Phoebe was observed at Giscome, 50 km e. of P.G., May 19 (CA, SPh). A Horned Lark present in Whse since Feb. 26 (LKI) was still there Mar 9–11 (CE, HG, PS). A rare spring visitor to the outer coast, a Horned Lark stopped off at Chesterman Beach, Pacific Rim N.P., near Tofino May 12 (AD).

SA The w. coastal race of Purple Martin has been making a slow but steady comeback in s.w. B.C. over the past several years. However, the number of visiting individuals attributable to the more widespread e. population can be counted on one hand. Astounding, then, were reports of individual male Purple Martins from Bush Harbour, Kinbasket L. in the Upper Columbia R. Valley, c.e. B.C., May 8 (†DL), and from Whse., s.w. Yukon May 22 (†LK, YBC). Whether the visits were due to E winds or other weather-related phenomena is unknown, but observers should be watchful in the future, given the remote possibility that these were pioneering birds.

Riding a warm wave and returning early to the Fraser R. Delta were one–three Barn Swallows at Serpentine Fen Mar. 2–9 (IK, m.ob.), along with one Cliff Swallow and three–four N. Rough-winged Swal-

lows Mar. 8 (BSp, PSp). Farther west were four record-early Violet-green Swallows at McCoy L., Port Alberni, Mar. 4 (DGC). All six regularly occurring swallow species—Tree, Violet-green, N. Rough-winged, Bank, Cliff, and Barn—staged in large numbers at Tabor L., 10 km e. of P.G., in early May, with 2000 May 6 (LL, SK) and >5000 May 19 (CA, SPh). A banded Blue Jay in the Deep Cove N. Saanich area of s.e. Van. I. was seen several times in March (m.ob.), and another probable (or the same?) bird was heard but not seen in the vicinity May 27–28 (BD). The Blue Jay which overwintered in Kelowna was last seen at Maude Roxby Sanctuary Apr. 13 (JBU). A lone Am. Crow, camped out at the Ft. Nelson Landfill with the more numerous Com. Ravens Mar. 13 (DCR), had likely just arrived from points south. The species is still rather uncommon in the n.e. corner of B.C., even in the warmer seasons. About 20 Northwestern Crows were watched tearing apart an anthill in N. Saanich May 9 (BB). A pair of Com. Ravens, only very rare nesters in the urban areas of s. Van. I., started building a nest on a building in downtown Vic., May 5 (BRG), but moved to a nearby cypress tree May 6, where they had hatched three nestlings by mid-month. At Happy Valley, Metchosin, s. Van. I., May 29 (R. Jenkins), a raven was watched as it snipped off cones from a Douglas Fir and dropped them on a Red-tailed Hawk perched below! A pair of Mt. Chickadees, uncommon near the n. end of their range, was along the Atlin Rd., s. Yukon May 26 (CE, YBC). A Winter Wren, rare in Yukon, was seen and heard at Tom Cr. along the Robert Campbell Hwy, s.c. Yukon May 23 (BrB, WN).

Mountain Bluebirds are noted for irregular and rapid spring movements. The first returning birds, rare in spring in the Greater Van. area, were noted at Colony Farm, Port Coquitlam, Mar. 31 (LCo). Returning in much larger flocks than usual to the c. interior area were >60 Mt. Bluebirds near Reid L., 25 km w. of P.G., Apr. 5 (PGNC), and 50 (60% males) near Vanderhoof Apr. 7 (SK, LL). Passing Gray-cheeked Thrushes were more apparent than usual in s.w. Yukon May 29, with one singing in a Whse. yard (CE, PS), two more just below treeline on nearby Mt. McIntyre, (CE, PS), and one singing along the Dezadeash R. (RA, The). A couple of waves of northbound Am. Robins were noted during the first 2 weeks of March from both Port Alberni (DGC) and Vernon (CS), with territorial singing heard mid-month. Varied Thrushes staged in large numbers in the Kelowna area late

February–early March, with numbers peaking around Mar. 10 (CC).

A N. Mockingbird was seen at Colwood, s. Van. I., Mar. 27 (DA), while another was singing atop a cedar for about 30 minutes just s. of Bush Harbour, Kinbasket L., c.e. B.C., May 25 (ph. DL). A bird singing similarly was heard in the same area May 17, but could not be located. A flock of 90 Am. Pipits stopped over on the Tofino Golf Course Apr. 28 (AD). At least eight N. Shrikes n. of Vanderhoof, c. B.C. Apr. 14 (PGNC) were part of a noticeable movement at that time.

Migrating warblers were conspicuous at low elevations in many areas in April and May, e.g. 18 Orange-crowned Warblers at Port Alberni Apr. 14 (DGC) and >30 at Tofino Apr. 20 (DGC). A singing ♂ Chestnut-sided Warbler observed in N. Kamloops May 27 (MHa, RRH, SyR) was off course. There are about 20 spring/summer records of this vagrant to the Region. "Myrtle" Yellow-rumped Warblers routinely overwinter along the Pacific coast s. from s. Washington State. Thus they are often ahead of their "Audubon's" cousins as they head back N to breed, especially along the outer coast. Surprising, then, were four males and one ♀ Audubon's at Port Alberni Mar. 10 (DGC) after the cold spell. Not only was this a record-early arrival of Audubons for the locality, but the presence of the female was unusual, since the arrival of females usually lags that of males by about 10 days. The first Myrtles did not show up there until Apr. 14, when 57 males and three females were tallied (DGC). This trend was also noted in the Q.C.I., where an ad. ♂ Audubon's was observed in Masset Apr. 26 (PH), providing a first local spring record, and at Tlell Apr. 29 (RWC). Audubon's are usually a fall migrant on the archipelago. Yellow-rumpeds passed through in sizeable flocks and lingered in the P.G. area, with >30 at Cottonwood I. Park Apr. 21 (CA, DiB), >50 in Pineview Apr. 22 (SK, LL), and 100 at Tabor L., May 6 (SK, LL). Townsend's Warblers were found in good numbers inland during the last 10 days of May, with six singing males at Forests for the World, P.G., May 17 (MPh, SPh), three at Bouchie L., near Quesnel, May 20 (DCR, SR), and one at McIntyre Cr., Whse., May 25 (PS, YBC).

A ♂ Palm Warbler at B&JGPP May 10 (DL) was foraging in willows. Ovenbirds show signs of pushing westward into B.C. from e. of the Rockies. Males were heard singing from the Blaeberry Valley May 25 (DL, ML), and from the Aleza L. Research Forest, 50 km e. of P.G., May 31 (MPh, SPh). There are ≥2 other potential Oven-

bird breeding sites around the P.G. area, in addition to the confirmed site along the Ft. George Canyon Trail. What was surely a spectacle were the >30 Wilson's Warblers moving through Cottonwood I. Park, P.G., May 17 (MPh, SPh).

SA The spring movement of W. Tanagers northward is rarely cause for mention, small flocks of a few birds being typical. Not this year! In many interior valleys during mid-May, tanagers were so common and flock sizes so large that local birders' phones were ringing with calls from the public asking what these strange yellow and black birds with red faces were doing in their yards. The largest reported flock was of 100 seen in roadside bushes along the e. side of Swan L., Vernon, May 12 (CS, GSD). In some neighborhoods cat predation was heavy. Thirty tanagers were reported from a one-block section of downtown P.G., May 19 (MPh). Observer reports said these birds were "Concentrating around trees which still held a berry crop from last fall; also hopping on the ground searching for insects, bathing in street puddles, and hiding under parked cars like so many yellow House Sparrows or Eur. Starlings..." The last big flocks were seen in Vernon May 20 (CS), and in P.G., May 25, but migration was still ongoing at the end of May in Kamloops (RRH).

Observers will require a visual confirmation of any singing *Pheucticus* sp. grosbeaks near and along the Rockies s. of Mt. Robson, since recent evidence suggests that both North American sibling grosbeak species may be found in this area, at least in migration. A ♀ Rose-breasted Grosbeak was seen in the Blaeberry Valley, c.e. B.C., May 29, with a different female there June 5 (DL, ML). A ♂ Black-headed Grosbeak was at a feeder at the Robson Shadows Motel just outside the w. gate of Mt. Robson P.P., May 24 (P. Cinnamon, B. Wilkinson *et al.*). Two other Black-headed were far west at Long Beach, Pacific Rim N.P., s.w. Van. I., May 21 (AD).

Lazuli Buntings returned to Mt. Tolmie, Saanich, with two males May 19 (HVP), a female May 20 (JGa), and another male at nearby Mt. Douglas May 27 (N. Johnson). A pair of Lazulis in Gibsons and a single male at Sechelt were reported May 20 (TG), with a pair at their previous breeding location at the Sechelt Airport later in the month. Although still a rare bird on both Van. I. and the Sun-

shine Coast, Lazulis have been pushing W and N over the past decade. An ad. ♂ **Green-tailed Towhee** in brilliant spring plumage was singing at Wilson Cr., Sunshine Coast, May 26 (p.v., TG), the area's first. Very local in the dry s. interior of B.C., an ad. Clay-colored Sparrow arrived with the first flocks of Chipping Sparrows at Lydia Bishop Bird Sanctuary, Vernon, Apr. 29 (MCo), 3 weeks ahead of schedule. Another two Clay-colored were seen at Chopaka, Richter Pass, near the B.C./WA border May 21 (BM). Although a rare breeder in the sub-alpine of the adjacent Rockies, a Brewer's Sparrow at Bush Harbour, Kinbasket L., May 17 (DL) provided a first local record. **Black-throated Sparrows** continue their peripatetic ways of the past several springs with an ad. male at a Sechel feeder May 17–21 (p.v., ph. PGo). A **Sage Sparrow**, casual in the Region, overshot its usual Washington sagebrush haunts and turned up along Grey Canal Rd., Vernon, Mar. 2 (p.v., †CS). Two singing Grasshopper Sparrows were at their traditional Goose Lake Rd. location in Vernon May 19 (MCo, CS, PMcA, EN), and another was at Chopaka the same day (BM). The recent increase in both Swamp and White-throated sparrow overwintering populations in s. B.C. has been documented, and a concomitant increase in spring sightings seems to be occurring. Swamp Sparrows were noted from Somenos Marsh, Duncan, Mar. 24 (DM) and Revelstoke May 19 (BD, DPo). White-throated Sparrow sightings included an immature near Vernon Feb. 19–Mar. 10 (P&HM, CS); another at Predator Ridge Golf Course, Vernon, Apr. 1 (EN); a singing male at Port Alberni, s.w. Van. I., Apr. 27 (DGC); and a tan-striped bird near Whistler, B.C., Apr. 29 (BMG). The White-crowned Sparrow migration was spotty, as usual, with a big movement through the n. Ok. Villy late April–early May. At the peak of the migration, 1400 White-crowns were found in the sage hills above Okanagan Landing May 4 (CS), and 1000 were on the w. slopes of Kalamalka L., May 5 (PG). Given the large concentrations of White-crowns, it was no surprise that a couple Golden-crowned Sparrows turned up, with one at Middleton Mt., Coldstream, May 9 (MCo), and another at Kalamalka P.P., May 11 (GSD, CS). Golden-crowns are common sub-alpine breeders throughout B.C. and s.w. Yukon except in the mountain ranges of the dry s. interior. A large flock of 300 Dark-eyed Juncos was observed in Revelstoke Mar. 31 (DPo). A lost junco landed briefly aboard the ship M.V. "J.P. Tully" returning

from Ocean Station Papa May 27 (KM). The nearest landfall was Solander I., about 120 km to the east.

Bobolinks are firmly established in select hayfields along the Rocky Mt. Trench from the Montana border to McBride, with some spillover westward into the Kootenays and the s. Ok. Villy, as well as around the shoulder of the Cariboo Mts. to P.G. and Quesnel. The birds may fill in from the east rather than the south, though, since the first of 10–15 pairs in Revelstoke returned May 23 (DPo), whereas three males were seen 100 km n.e. near B&JGPP May 21 (DL). A report of a Bobolink at Comox, e. Van. I., May 27 was undocumented; there are no accepted spring records from Van. I. Making rare spring coastal appearances were Lapland Longspurs, with one at Tofino Golf Course Apr. 29 (AD), and one–four observed at Sandspit, Q.C.I., May 3–7 (MH, PH), the latest spring date on record for the local area. Accompanying them at Sandspit May 7 (†PH, MH) was a probable ♀ **Smith's Longspur**, the first for the spring season there and the 4th ever. Yellow-headed Blackbirds were found in unusually large flocks in various interior valleys, with 150 in downtown Revelstoke May 15 (DPo). The Vanderhoof area hosted 3 flocks of Yellow-heads totaling 32 birds Apr. 28 (CA, NK), mostly in with Red-winged blackbirds. Only a rare stray to Van. I., one–two Yellow-headed Blackbirds were at C. Saanich May 3–5 (V. Pirillio, JA), and another two females were on nearby Martindale Flats May 12 (BRG). A well-described pair of **Brewer's Blackbirds** along the Rancheria Loop Rd. near Upper Liard, s.e. Yukon May 29 (ph. TD) provided the first documented record for the Territory. Common Grackles are only casual strays w. of the Rockies, thus two males in the Blaeberry Valley, c.e. B.C., May 20 (DL, ML) provided a good find. A probable first-spring ♂ **Hooded Oriole**, which showed up at a N. Saanich residence May 6–7 (p.v., ph. †A. & B. Wallis, m.ob.) and provided the first B.C. and 2nd Canadian record (†BB, †BRG, †DFE). It was likely the same bird that turned up in Coquitlam on the other side of Georgia Strait May 25 (p.v., †L., V., C. & T. Austin). A Bullock's Oriole at Port Alberni May 27 (DGC) provided a rare record for this part of s.w. Van. Island.

A flock of 18 Gray-crowned Rosy Finches at White Mt., s.w. Yukon Apr. 3 (CE) included 16 individuals of the "gray-crowned" race and two of the "gray-headed" form. Four more were noted in the Haines Pass, extreme n.w. B.C., Apr. 6 (CE, PS), while a flock of 200 Gray-

crowns furnished a highlight at Marsh L., s.w. Yukon Apr. 6 (SMcP, B JW). A ♂ House Finch returned for a 2nd year to the same Whse. yard May 31 (JeB). When will a female show up? A noticeable influx of Com. Redpolls occurred in the Okanagan and Thompson Valleys Mar. 10, with 40 in a Rutland, Kelowna, yard (CC), and many the same day at Kamloops feeders (*vide* RRH). An ad. ♂ Com. Redpoll at Masset, Q.C.I., Mar. 21–23 (AMM, TW, PH) provided the first March record there. There are <5 records for the Islands. Up to four Hoary Redpolls were recorded at Whse. feeders Mar. 2–Apr. 19 (CE, HG, PS), two in Teslin Apr. 13 (CE, PS), and one at Bennett L., s. Yukon Mar. 17 (BrB). Common Redpolls and Pine Siskins exchanged places in the P.G. area. The last few redpolls left and the first few siskins arrived around Apr. 20 (MPH). Pine Siskins were noted as common in Douglas Fir woods throughout March in the Vernon area (CS *et al.*). Begging juvenile siskins were seen at the Lydia Bishop Bird Sanctuary from the 3rd week of April onwards (MCo). Evening Grosbeak numbers showed a steady increase across the Region. A flock of 106 at Port Alberni Mar. 3 (DGC) were thought to have been grounded by a snowstorm. A more normal flock for the area consists of <10 birds! And ten Evening Grosbeaks camped out at a Watson L., s.e. Yukon feeder Mar. 1–May 5 (LE) were far north.

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Middle Pacific Coast Region

STEPHEN F. BAILEY, DANIEL S. SINGER, AND DAVID YEE

Loons to Shearwaters

A large migration brought 46,835 Pacific Loons past El Jarro Pt., *Santa Cruz*, Apr. 19 (DLSu). A late imm. Yellow-billed Loon at the Albion R. mouth May 1+ (R. Weibe, D. Weibe, †DT, ph. †RJK, m.ob.) was *Mendocino's* first.

Laysan Albatross was seen from many boats all period, especially offshore *Monterey*, but the high count was only five there May 18 (JiD, DLSh, SFB, RT). A Laysan Albatross found on a hillside >10 mi inland at Woodside, *San Mateo*, Mar. 6 was released at sea Mar. 8 (*vide* P. Latas). We expect one Laysan inland each spring, but Black-footed Albatross, more common near shore, is unrecorded inland.

Up to four Flesh-footed Shearwaters were seen offshore *Monterey* Mar. 17–Apr. 5 (RT, DLSh). Until recently this species was very rare in spring. Three Manx Shearwaters were seen from shore in early May: Pt. Pinos, *Monterey*, May 2 (†DR); and Pigeon Pt., *San Mateo*, May 5 (†G. Deghi, N. Lethaby) and May 11 (†DPo, RSTh). This recent invader now appears almost year-round. A Black-vented Shearwater at Pt. Pinos May 2 (†DR) was very late.

Hérons to Waterfowl

Great Blue Herons continued their Bay Area breeding expansion with a new nesting site detected in *Santa Clara*, and at least 2 or possibly 3 nests at the S.F. colony in Golden Gate Park. An imm. Little Blue Heron at Lower Klamath N.W.R., *Siskiyou*, May 31 (N. Clark, RE) continued

a trend of rare spring sightings from the Klamath Basin dating back 15 years. Cattle Egrets made a poor showing along the coast except in *Monterey*, where ≤ 18 were present Mar. 30–May 16, mostly around Elkhorn Slough (m.ob.). Ten White-faced Ibis over C.C.R.S., *Santa Clara*, May 11 (SCR) and 17 at n.e. Humboldt Bay, *Humboldt*, May 12 (GLF) represented the only coastal or near-coastal reports.

Blue-morph Ross' Geese were noted in *Siskiyou* Mar. 5 at Lower Klamath N.W.R. and Apr. 1 at Tule L. (RE), where they are regularly found with staging white-morph Ross' in early spring. Three Brant near Volta, *Merced*, May 19 (RMrr) represent one of very few reports from the San Joaquin Valley in spring. This species is very unusual inland away from the Mono and Klamath basins.

An Eur. Wigeon at San Felipe L., *San Benito*, Mar. 30 (SDF) represented only the 2nd county record. Another along the *Mendocino* coast May 18 was one of our latest ever (DT). Migrant Tufted Ducks were noted in San Lucas, *Monterey*, Mar. 10 (J.H. Banks, H. Kronkhyte, †DR), Petaluma, *Sonoma*, Apr. 15–17 (DN, RLe), and Ferndale, *Humboldt*, Apr. 28 (†DFx). A pair of well-documented Harlequin Ducks at Yreka Apr. 20 accounted for *Siskiyou's* first record (†RE).

Raptors

Bald Eagle reintroductions by the Ventana Wilderness Sanctuary on the Big Sur coast

