

ing migrant behavior, a single winter-plumaged ♂ House Sparrow dived into a downtown Ketchikan hedge Oct. 25 (†SCH ph.) and quickly disappeared to the north. There are now 3 Alaska records of this form, two in fall and a single NE Asia form June bird from St. Lawrence I. Both crossbills remained in numbers and locales as observed from the summer season, *i.e.* Reds locally common in SE, with White-wingeds scattered throughout their range in very small numbers (m.ob.).

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British Columbia/ Yukon Region

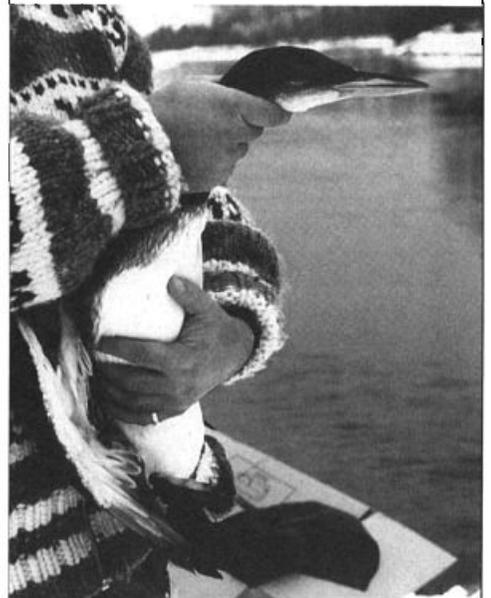
JACK BOWLING

August was a warm month, more so over the southern half of the Region. The remaining three months were cloudy, mostly cool, and wetter than normal. October saw a couple of strong storms slam into the coast. November turned out to be very much a winter month as cold Arctic air which had been sitting over Yukon descended southward, eventually encompassing the entire Region by mid-month. Many sites south of 52°N latitude received record November snowfalls. Southbound Arctic breeding larids, which normally pass by on a more seaward route, strayed inland this season, with numerous Sabine's Gulls and jaegers reported from the interior. And Snowy Owls staged the best invasion to the coast in many years through November.

Abbreviations: B.C. (*British Columbia*); 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.*); Reifel (*Reifel Waterfowl Sanctuary, near Ladner, B.C.*); S.T.P. (*Sewage Treatment Plant/Ponds*); Van. (*Vancouver*); Van. I. (*Vancouver I.*); Vic. (*Victoria*); Whse. (*Whitehorse*).

Loons to Herons

An ad. Red-throated Loon at the n. end of Ok. L., Oct. 4-5 (PG, CS) provided only about the 8th record for the Ok. Vly. Another young bird was at Paddlewheel Park, Vernon, Nov. 2 (PG). It was a banner season for Red-throateds at Port Alberni, s.w. Van. I., with a high seven adults at the Harbour Quay Nov. 2 (DGC); an additional two birds were subsequently found at nearby



This Common Loon was grounded in an ice storm at Prince George, British Columbia, November 12, 1996. It is shown here just before being released the next day on the Nechako River. Photograph/Cathy Antoniazzi.

McCoy L. Usually only a single bird is seen there in the fall. There were a couple of "groundings" of loons and grebes in the P.G. area. The first was a W. Grebe found in a school parking lot Oct. 8 (*fide* BA) and taken to a good samaritan's bathtub and fed smelts for a week before being released. The next was of an imm. Com. Loon, grounded at the P.G. airport in an



icestorm Nov. 12, sequestered overnight, and released the next day into the Nechako R. (MPh, ph. CA). Uncommon to rare on the outer coast, a Pied-billed Grebe was at Tofino, s.w. Van. I., Oct. 19 (AD), and another was at Mayer L., Q.C.I., Oct. 24–Nov. 5 (MH, PH). Two **Eared Grebes** at Skokum Pt., Masset, Sept. 12 (MH, †PH) provided only the 2nd documented record for the Q.C.I. Casual in s. B.C., a Clark's Grebe was in the vicinity of the Iona S.T.P., Richmond, Oct. 25–Nov. 30 (RTo, m.ob.), and another was on the Vedder Canal, Chilliwack, Nov. 20–22 (ph. DTy). A flock of 500 becalmed Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels paddling off Rose Spit, Q.C.I., Aug. 26 (TGe) was the largest flock ever recorded in B.C. waters. Brown Pelicans wandered into Georgia Strait with four seen from the ferry between Swartz Bay and Active Pass Oct. 5 (LCo), a young bird off Iona S. Jetty Oct. 5–14 (RTo, m.ob.), and an adult at Pt. Roberts, WA, Oct. 25 (MWy). Very rare inland, several Double-crested Cormorants were noted around the Kamloops area through the period, with the latest at Tranquille Sept. 22 (RRH, SR). A **Great Egret** on the Peace R. near Taylor Aug. 11 (ph. D. Ford) constituted the farthest north record in B.C. of this rare visitor. The fall influx of Cattle Egrets into B.C. was good, with reports coming from widely scattered locations, including Mackenzie in September, and Nakusp, Delta, Richmond, and Jordan R. in October (m.ob.). A Black-crowned Night-Heron at the s. end of Nicola L. near Merritt, s.c. B.C., Aug. 11 (WCW) provided a first for the local area.

Waterfowl to Cranes

Trumpeter Swans arrived Oct. 1 (BMG) at the Whistler, B.C., lakes—at least a month early. They arrived on time at Fraser L., c. B.C., Oct. 15 (R. Parker). An apparently wounded but recovered Trumpeter Swan which summered at Robert L., Kelowna, was last seen departing southward with nine other Trumpeters Oct. 27 (JB, JBu). A duck with a cultivated palate, a mallard was seen eating a bullfrog at Viaduct Flats, C. Saanich, s. Van. I., Oct. 16 (BB). An imm. ♂ **Common Eider** spotted off the W. Van. shoreline Nov. 11+ (p.v., RTo, KWt, m.ob.) remained in the same general area. This is the 2nd 1996 sighting of this accidental species following the female seen near Skidegate May 13, and potentially only the 4th accepted B.C. record. A Turkey Vulture overflying Nakusp Sept. 13 (GSD) provided a very unusual sighting in the heavily forested terrain of the W Kootenays. A lingering

Osprey was at Eaglet L., P.G., Sept. 28 (MPh, TM) and another was very late over the Tofino mudflats Oct. 19 (DGC, D. Bullard, AD). A N. Goshawk nabbed a Long-billed Dowitcher from a feeding flock of 26 at Vanderhoof Oct. 13 (CA, NK). A light-morph Broad-winged Hawk 15 km n. of Golden, c.e. B.C., Aug. 30 (†DL, ML), and another dark-morph bird s. of Eaglet L., P.G., Sept. 12 (ph. †MPh) added to the dramatic increase in sightings of this small buteo here during the 1990s. The Eaglet L. bird provided the latest record for the P.G. area by about 6 weeks. A spectacular movement of 172 Golden Eagles occurred at Marsh L., s. Yukon, on the afternoon of Oct. 20 (CE, PS, YBC), and ten were there Oct. 29 (RM). Sightings of Peregrine Falcon continue to increase in s.c. B.C., as evidenced by an immature at Robert L., Kelowna, Sept. 14 (BKo); two in the Kamloops area Sept. 15 (RRH, EMc, SR); and a different bird just s. of Kamloops Sept. 28 (SR, RRH). A gray-morph Gyrfalcon at Whse., Sept. 30 (CE) was the only one reported. Sparsely distributed throughout s. B.C. after post-breeding dispersal, a Prairie Falcon spent most of September at Tranquille, Kamloops (RRH), and another was seen 15 km n. of Golden Aug. 29 (†DL). A Prairie Falcon returned to Brunswick Point, Ladner, near the mouth of the Fraser R., Nov. 24+ (m.ob.), at what has become a regular wintering area during the past 5 years.

A flock of 42 Wild Turkeys at Ft. Steele, E. Kootenays, Nov. 10 (GSD, GR) was judged a normal grouping by the locals, evidence of an increasing population spreading from adjacent Washington State. More commonly reported recently from s.w. Van. I., a Virginia Rail was seen skulking around the Tofino S.T.P., Oct. 19 (DGC, D. Bullard), and another was on Stubbs I. off Tofino Oct. 25 (AD). Scarce on the outer coast in migration, a young Sandhill Crane wandered around the Tofino Airport Oct. 19–27 (DGC, AD).

Shorebirds to Woodpeckers

A local record-high 86 Black-bellied Plovers were tallied on the Tofino Mudflats Oct. 19 (DGC). A Semipalmated Plover at Tofino, hanging around with Killdeer, lingered until the exceptionally late date of Nov. 9 (AD). Providing Canada's 2nd accepted record, a **Wood Sandpiper** was on Herschel I. off the n.e. Yukon coast Aug. 9 (ph. †CE, †HG, †PS, LC). Casual inland, a Ruddy Turnstone was at Kamloops Aug. 31 (W. Haras), and two juveniles were at Kelowna Sept. 1–3 (EF, m.ob.). Shades of peak spring migration, a huge flock of 550 Surfbirds was on

the westernmost of the Grebe Islets at the n. tip of the entrance to Burrard Inlet Oct. 20 (MPr, B.I.E.A.P.); more were believed hiding in the rocks. This is certainly the largest flock reported from the Van. area in many years. A one-day total of 2529 Sanderlings on the beaches of n.e. Q.C.I., Sept. 10 (MH, †PH) was the largest on record. This included an incredible 2400 between Tow Hill and Rose Spit. An erratic and usually uncommon fall migrant to the valleys of s.c. B.C., 15–20 W. Sandpipers flocked at Robert L., Kelowna, Sept. 14 (BKo) for a very high local number. A White-rumped Sandpiper circling over s.w. Sea I., Richmond, Aug. 23 (MKM) provided only the 4th or 5th fall record for the Van. checklist area.

The rare Sharp-tailed Sandpiper was more widely reported than in recent falls, with one at Iona S.T.P., Richmond, Sept. 6–19 (m.ob.), another at Reifel Sept. 15 (m.ob.), two juveniles with 250 Pectoral Sandpipers at the Nisutlin Delta, s. Yukon, Sept. 21 (CE, HG, PS), and another juvenile at Iona S.T.P., Oct. 16–19 (DTy, RTy, RTo). Stilt Sandpipers have become a routine in fall in c. interior B.C. over the past 5 years, but still remain very rare in s.c. B.C. Four at Otter L., Vernon, Aug. 5 (CS) represented a high number until eclipsed by ten at Robert L., Kelowna, Sept. 14 (BKo), the highest single flock recorded for the Ok. Vly. A Ruff was at Reifel Sept. 5–8 (JI); another at Sandspit Airport, Q.C.I., Sept. 19 (MH, †PH) provided the 3rd record for the archipelago, all from the fall. A vagrant to inshore waters during fall storms, two Red Phalaropes overflowed the Iona I. South Jetty Oct. 18 (RTo, SH).

Coastal sightings of jaegers were close to the seasonal average, but inland records, where any jaeger sighting is a five-star event, were well above normal. A flock of five Pomarine or Parasitic jaegers was at Nulki L., c. B.C., Sept. 22 (MPh), while an ad. and imm. Long-tailed were there Sept. 7 (CA, NK). Farther south, a dark-morph Parasitic was near the n. end of Ok. L., Vernon, Sept. 8 (CS), and a light-morph adult was at Tranquille, Kamloops, Sept. 22 (RRH, SR). Two light-morph Parasitics were at the Nisutlin Delta, s. Yukon, Sept. 14 (†CE, †HG). A light-morph ad. Long-tailed Jaeger at Tranquille Aug. 17–18 (SR) was seen again closer to Kamloops Aug. 31. Four–five Franklin's Gulls were reported from the Kamloops and Kelowna areas in September (m.ob.), and another was on s. Ok. L., Oct. 14 (C Hackenberg), very good numbers for the s. interior. An ad. Glaucous-winged Gull at Whse landfill provided a first Yukon

fall record (ph. CE). A Glaucous-winged Gull at Nicola L., s.c. B.C., Sept. 15 (RRH, EMc, SR) provided a first local Nicola-Merritt record, but was eclipsed when eight were tallied there Sept. 29 (RRH). This is the first intermediate site recorded between the e. edge of the species coastal range at Hope and the recent inland colonization of Ok. L. While jaegers shifted inland in good numbers, Sabine's Gulls staged a virtual invasion of the interior in August and September (see Table 1.). Inland sightings totaling an unprecedented 20 birds came from widely scattered locations. That is more than the previous cumulative interior fall total!

A large raft of 2570 Com. Murres was in Edye Passage off Prince Rupert Aug. 30 (MH, †PH). Yukon's only colony of Black Guillemots—in an abandoned building on Herschel I.—comprised ≥50 adults Aug. 5–15 (CE, LC, HG, PS). Straying to inshore waters only in very small numbers, a Tufted Puffin was seen in Georgia Strait from a B.C. Ferry Oct. 4 (SRC).

SA Snowy Owls staged the best invasion to the coast in almost 25 years. At the favored Fraser R. lowlands, the first was noted Oct. 28. The total was up to 16 along the foreshore of the n. end of Boundary Bay Nov. 12, and 24 by Nov. 29. At least 30 birds were in that location by the end of November. Scope views showed clumps of ten birds in one field of view. The Q.C.I. also hosted high numbers the first 10 days of November, with the following numbers recorded from e. coast locations: Rose Spit (one), Oanda R. (11), Cape Ball (one), Tiell (seven), and Sandspit (ten), all within a linear distance of 60 km. Owls other than the resident N. Saw-Whets do not fare well on the Q.C.I., and some Snowys succumbed to starvation. Usually one is seen every 5 or so years there. Smaller numbers of Snowys were scattered around Van. I. and s. British Columbia.

A vagrant to s. Van. I., a Burrowing Owl was discovered near the Victoria Golf Course Oct. 11 (B. Houston) and was there Oct. 14–15 (GA, BD, DA). Good news: Short-eared Owls were widely reported in the interior in healthy numbers during the last 2 weeks of October. Twenty were recorded Oct. 19–21 (HG, PS, CE) in s. Yukon alone. Other inland sightings came from the P.G. (five), Nakusp (six), and lower Blaeberry Valley (three) areas (m.ob.). An ad. Black Swift

Table 1. Sabine's Gull Sightings - Fall 1996 (inland sightings marked with *)

Location	Date	number, age (if known)	Observer(s)
*Little Shuswap L., B.C.	Aug. 16	2 ad.	DL, ML, D&EL
west Langara I., Q.C.I.	Aug. 22	1	TGE
Dixon Entrance, off Q.C.I.	Aug. 24	1	TGE
off Lawn Hill, Q.C.I.	Aug. 27	2 ad.	MH, PH
*Eaglet L., P.G.	Sept. 1-2	1 juv.	TM, MPH
*Tabor L., P.G.	Sept. 2	1 juv.	CA
*Vaseux L., s. Ok. Villy	Sept. 5	1	JS
*Vaseux L.	Sept. 6	1 ad.	RJC, DO
*Vaseux L.	Sept. 6–15	1 sub.-ad.	RJC, DO
Georgia Strait	Sept. 7	1	LE
*n. end Ok. L.	Sept. 9	1 ad.	PG
*Nisutlin Delta, Yukon	Sept. 14–15	1 juv.	CE, HG, PS
*Burton, W. Kootenays	Sept. 19–29	1 ad.	NM, MPa, GSD
*Tranquille, Kamloops	Sept. 20	1 ad. 2 juv.	SR
*Burton	Sept. 22	1 juv.	GSD
*Tranquille	Sept. 22	1 ad.	RRH, SR
*Vaseux L.	Sept. 22–28	2 juv.	DO
*Vaseux L.	Sept. 23	1 ad.	DO
Iona STP, Richmond	Sept. 23	1	TP
*Guichon Flats, s.-c. B.C.	Sept. 25	1 ad.	RRH
Hecate Strait, off Q.C.I.	Oct. 3	1 ad.	MH, PH

was watched flying into an apparent nest at Marble Canyon, Kootenay N.P., Aug. 21 (DL), but the nest would not have been visible without climbing gear, so breeding was not confirmed. Very rare in fall in the Yukon, a ♂ Rufous Hummingbird was near Whse., Sept. 15 (YS). A loose flock of 22 Lewis' Woodpeckers at Oliver, s. Ok. Villy, Sept. 6 (RJC) was one of the larger aggregations reported this decade for this beleaguered species.

Flycatchers to Fringillids

A Least Flycatcher spotted at Iona S.T.P., Sept. 1 (MWy, †SML) provided one of only a handful of fall records for the Greater Van. area. An Ash-throated Flycatcher at the Englishman R. estuary Sept. 2–6 was seen by several individuals and is under review. Previously considered accidental, this species has turned up on Van. I. more often in recent years. Two birds fitting the description of Tropical Kingbirds were seen on s. Van. I. in late October: the first near Sooke Oct. 20 (p.v., EA, RiP) and again Oct. 23 & 25 (JM); and the 2nd was 32 km farther west at Jordan R., Oct. 22–30 (p.v., N. Hughes, m.ob.). The recently reestablished Purple Martin colony at Maplewoods Flats, N. Van., continues to expand, with 16 young banded there Aug. 11. An incredibly late Tree Swallow was at Masset, Q.C.I., Nov. 6 (MH, PH); this species is usually gone by

September. More renowned for staying late are Cliff Swallows. In c. B.C., three were seen at Eaglet L., P.G., Oct. 26 (PGNC); another three 140 km farther west the next day (TM, MPH); three found dead at Fraser L., another 50 km w. the following day (*vide* NK); and, strangest of all, three–four were feeding on emerging stoneflies in a snowstorm at Stuart L., Nov. 2 (M. Maguire). The latest report was of eight at Nakusp, W. Kootenays, Nov. 15 (C. Spencer). A Yellow Wagtail observed at Iona S.T.P., Oct. 18 (p.v., RTo, SH) would represent B.C.'s 2nd record. An apparent Eye-browed Thrush was seen with two Am. Robins at Mayer L., Q.C.I., Nov. 5 (p.v., MH, †PH), potentially Canada's first. A flock of >100 Varied Thrushes feeding on Pacific Bayberry at Tofino Nov. 22 (AD) had fled W to escape the mid-month cold snap. A Red-throated Pipit at Esquimalt Lagoon, Vic., Sept. 22 (p.v., KT, m.ob.), and another at Sandspit, Q.C.I., Nov. 4–5 (p.v., MH, †PH) provided 2nd documented records for each locality, if accepted. Seven Bohemian Waxwings were early at Callaghan L., Whistler, B.C., Sept. 21 (ph. N. Ricker).

Both accidental on the s. coast, a Tennessee Warbler at Crescent Park, Surrey, Sept. 2 (†JAM), and a late Magnolia Warbler in Burnaby Oct. 10 (H. Craven) were good finds. The Region's 2nd documented

Northern Parula Warbler, a male, was in the company of Orange-crowned and Townsend's warblers at Port Alberni, s.c. Van. I., Nov. 9–14 (p.v., J. Cruikshank, S. Prince, †DGC, m.ob.). A Palm Warbler near downtown P.G., Sept. 2 (MAi) provided the first record for the local checklist area. A ♀ Rose-breasted Grosbeak strayed W to Van., Aug. 1 (R. Tayler, LCo). A Lark Sparrow, a casual visitor to Van. I., was at a Tofino feeder Oct. 22 (RP, AD). A Grasshopper Sparrow, accidental on Van. I., was feeding at Jordan R., Oct. 20 (KT). Far north of its normal range, an ad. ♀ Yellow-headed Blackbird strayed to Herschel I., n.e. Yukon, Aug. 12–14 (ph. †CE, ph. †HG, †PS, LC), providing the first documented record for the Territory. Casual on the s. coast, a ♂ Cassin's Finch was at a Maple Ridge feeder Nov. 18–21 (C. Buis, m.ob.). A ♀ House Sparrow at Whse., Aug. 1 (†CE) was the Yukon's first well-documented individual.

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Oregon/ Washington Region

BILL TWEIT AND JEFF GILLIGAN

No region has ever before reported four species of albatross in one season; and that distinction was only part of the outstanding pelagic records this fall from off the Oregon coast. The continuing decline of alcid and Sooty Shearwater numbers tempered the appearance of the rarities however.

Initial survey work by AS in the Cold Creek drainage, on the Yakima Training Center, at the west edge of the Columbia Basin produced some very large counts of passerine migrants and some raptors. It fueled speculation about the importance of the west leg of the Columbia River as a migratory corridor; we hope that the surveys will continue.

We wish to acknowledge our continuing debt to Harry Nehls, former regional editor and still the indefatigable compiler for much of Oregon. When we receive Harry's summary, our report is often half written for us. Thanks very much Harry, and we hope to rely on you for innumerable seasons to come!

Abbreviations: P.N.P. (*Point No Point, Kitsap, WA*); *Sauvie (Sauvie I., Columbia Co., OR)*; S.J.C.R. (*south jetty of the Columbia R., Clatsop Co., OR*); O.S. (*Ocean Shores, Grays Harbor Co., WA*); W.W.R.D. (*Walla Walla R. delta, Walla Walla Co., WA*).

Loons to Ducks

Pacific Loon reports in the interior included six along the Columbia R., 15 on Oregon lakes on the e. slope and in the Cascades, and four on Washington low elevation lakes. Three Yellow-billed Loon reports included early sightings of an immature Aug. 8 at the Lyre R. mouth, *Clallam*,

WA (BN) and one Sept. 26 at Salt Cr. Park, *Clallam*, WA (D. MacRae), and a more normally timed sighting Nov. 14 at the Rogue R. mouth, *Curry*, OR (F. Bowen). Eight Clark's Grebes were reported from the interior, the latest reports were from the Columbia R. at Vantage, *Kittitas*, WA Oct. 11 (PtSu) and at John Day Dam Oct. 27 (HN). On the westside, the only Oregon reports were two at Yaquina Head, *Lincoln*, Oct. 6 (KM) and five Washington reports came from Tokeland, *Pacific* (PtSu), Hat I., *Skagit* (F. Sears), Edmonds, *Snohomish* (SM), and P.N.P. (VN).

The Short-tailed Albatross 44 nautical mi due w. of Cape Falcon, *Tillamook*, OR Nov. 9 (†MF) led off the incredible albatross line-up. Black-footed Albatross counts from pelagic trips averaged 80 per trip, with a peak of 235 off Westport Aug. 3 (TW). The record numbers of Laysan Albatross found this summer continued into early August, with four off Westport Aug. 3 (TW), but then dropped to "norma" levels, with one found during September and October. Indisputably in the clean-up position was the *Shy Albatross* well photographed over the Heceta Banks, 30 mi off *Lane* on the c. Oregon coast, Oct. 5 (GG *et al.*). This furnishes only the 2nd Regional record; the first was a specimen collected off Washington in 1951. Northern Fulmar numbers were elevated this fall, with 5 counts >200. The *Streaked Shearwater* found over the Heceta Banks Sept. 13 (†MF, †R. Rowlett, G. Grace) provided the first Oregon record.

