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SPRING MIGRATION
March 1–May 31, 1997

field notes

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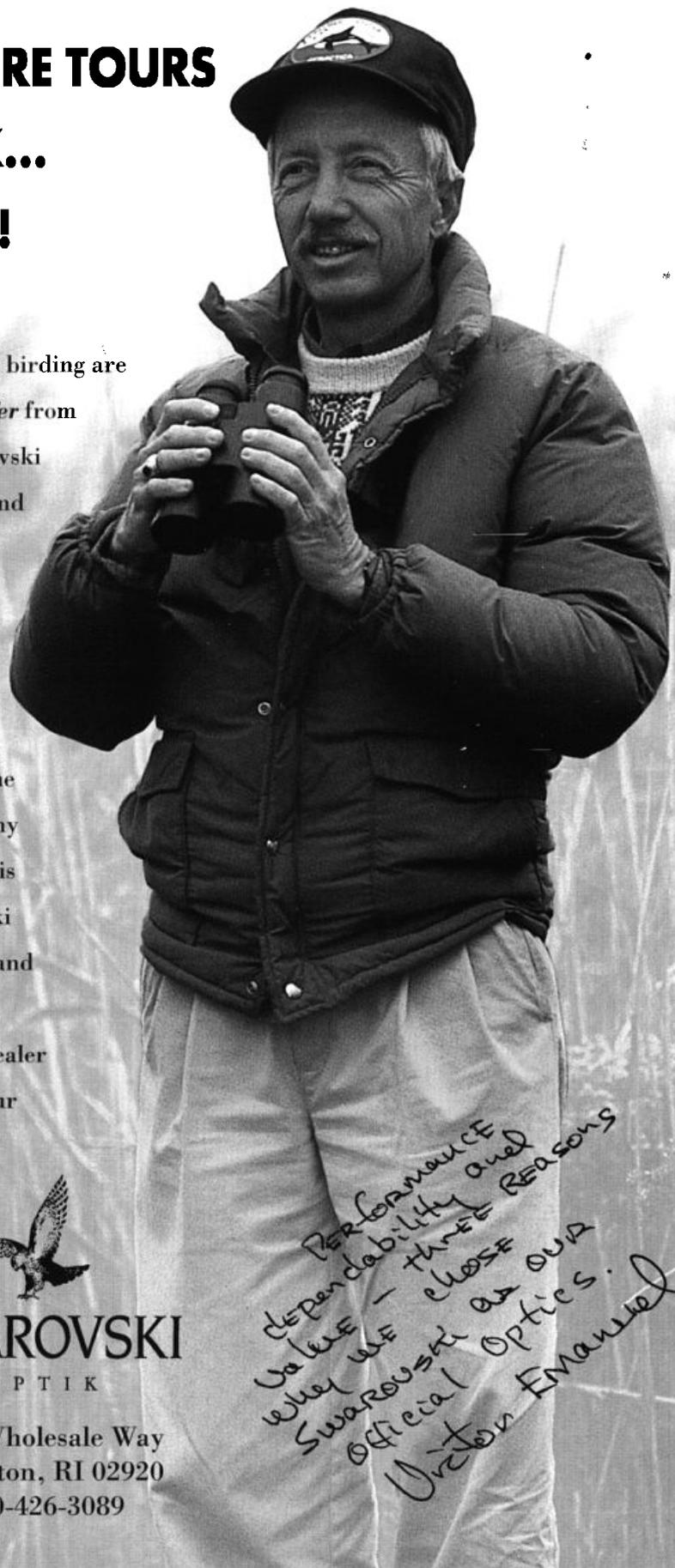
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ON THE COVER

As Spring 1997 began, this gull was sitting in Galveston, Texas, attracting birders and contributing to controversy. Any large dark-backed gull is rare in Texas, so, when this bird was discovered on January 15, 1996, it inspired a round of name-calling—names like Great Black-backed Gull, nominate-race Lesser Black-backed Gull, and Western Gull. Some birders pointed to flaws in all of these diagnoses, and within a month, experts concluded that it was a more exotic find: a Kelp Gull, native to coastlines south of the equator. The bird remained into the spring; what was undoubtedly the same individual returned to the same place on November 30, 1996, and remained at least into the early spring of 1997—the season featured in this issue of *Field Notes*.

Birds identified as Kelp Gulls have had an odd history in the Gulf of Mexico. Two were seen on the coast of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula as long ago as 1987. In 1989, two (or maybe three) were found on Louisiana's offshore islands. There have been records in both places since then, and possibly elsewhere—including a remarkable record from Indiana (see page 879 of this issue). Still, Kelp Gull is not yet on the official *ABA Checklist for North American Birds*. The American Ornithologists' Union recently placed it on the appendix to their list—suggesting that there are questions about the birds, at least in terms of how they made it from the west coast of South America to the Gulf of Mexico. Regardless, the presence of Kelp Gulls in North America adds to the potential challenge and excitement for gull-watchers. The Kelp Gull on the cover was photographed February 7, 1997, by Alan Wormington in Galveston.



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editor's notebook

AS A BIRD-CRAZED KID who had joined the National Audubon Society at the age of nine, I subscribed to a little publication called *Audubon Field Notes* before I entered my teens. Before long, I started sending in records to it as well. I'll never forget how excited I was when I got the next issue and found my initials, my sightings, listed in the regional report for the Southern Great Plains. This journal presented the whole panorama of North America's birdlife, and my observations were, in their own small way, contributing to this grand picture. A lifelong fascination with the status and distribution of birds was cemented in place at that moment.

At that time, in the late 1960s, these regional reports already had a long and varied history (and the history has varied more since then). National Audubon had begun publishing these reports in 1917 in its magazine, *Bird-Lore*, under the heading "The Season." The regional reports became a separate publication, called *Audubon Field Notes*, in 1947. In 1970 the publication was renamed *American Birds*, and was expanded with many articles and features, until it was scaled back to *Field Notes* again in 1994.

During this long history, the National Audubon Society also has gone through major changes. Founded as an association for bird conservation, it maintained this focus until the 1960s, when it expanded its scope to become a broad-based environmental group. Its mission was even broader for a time in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when birds received relatively little attention. About three years ago, however, Audubon went through a major reorganization, and reaffirmed its focus on birds. The rejuvenated NAS is now an exciting organization to watch, moving ahead boldly on specific goals, all of which relate directly to birds, wildlife, and their habitats. It is appropriate that Audubon should have now entered into an alliance with the American Birding Association to continue the publication of *Field Notes*.

Many admirable people work for National Audubon, but I want to make special mention of Susan Roney Drennan, who served *American Birds/Field Notes* for more than twenty years as associate editor and then as editor. I was fortunate to be able to learn a great deal from Susan, especially after I joined the staff of *American Birds* in 1984. Susan is one of those remarkable individuals that you meet only rarely, someone with numerous talents and with an extraordinary capacity for getting things done. Insiders at Audubon know that she has contributed an astonishing amount of work to innumerable projects there. She has also maintained her abilities as a super field birder. As one example among many, I recall a moment on a pelagic trip (sponsored by *American Birds*) when forty pairs of keen eyes were scanning like mad, and it was Susan who spotted and

identified the Bridled Tern coming in—touching off pandemonium, because we were very far north for that species. A gentleman standing near me remarked, admiringly, "Wow, that girl is really good!" I'm not sure he realized that "that girl" was the organizer of the trip, the editor of the magazine, and a vice-president of the National Audubon Society.

During the period when National Audubon was paying relatively little attention to birds, Susan was the main person who kept bird conservation on the table at all, and she kept the regional reports going through challenges large and small. It was no wonder that ABA honored her with the Ludlow Griscom Award in 1988. The fact that *Field Notes* is still alive and well today is, in large measure, a tribute to Susan's efforts.

So as I move into the Editor's chair, I'm thankful for Susan's example—and thankful that she will be continuing with us as chief editorial consultant for *Field Notes*. Also, fortunately, Victoria H. Irwin will continue as managing editor, bringing to bear her impressive background as a professional journalist and sharp birder. Many individuals at ABA have stepped up to help with the transition in publication. I'm delighted that Carol Lawson and Susanna Lawson are involved; their great skills have been responsible for the beautiful appearance and timely production of *Birding* magazine for the last nine years.

However, I have not yet mentioned the two most vital elements in the workings of *Field Notes*.

The heart and soul of this publication are the Regional Reports. For their preparation, we depend completely on the efforts of the Regional Editors. As a group, the Regional Editors command an awesome knowledge of the status and distribution of North America's birdlife, and they contribute a staggering number of hours to the collection and analysis of bird records every season. The reports they write are not mere recountings of data; these columns summarize, analyze, discuss, and elucidate, putting all of the information into context. At their best, they provide a fascinating education in current bird distribution.

And finally, the Regional Editors—even though they are all active observers themselves—must depend upon input from numerous birders in the field to make their columns complete. The reports in these pages are based on sightings made by many thousands of observers; it would be accurate to say that *Field Notes* is produced not only FOR the birders of North America, but BY them as well. We welcome you to the new ABA/NAS publication of *Field Notes*, and invite you to take part in this interactive network as both an observer and a reader.

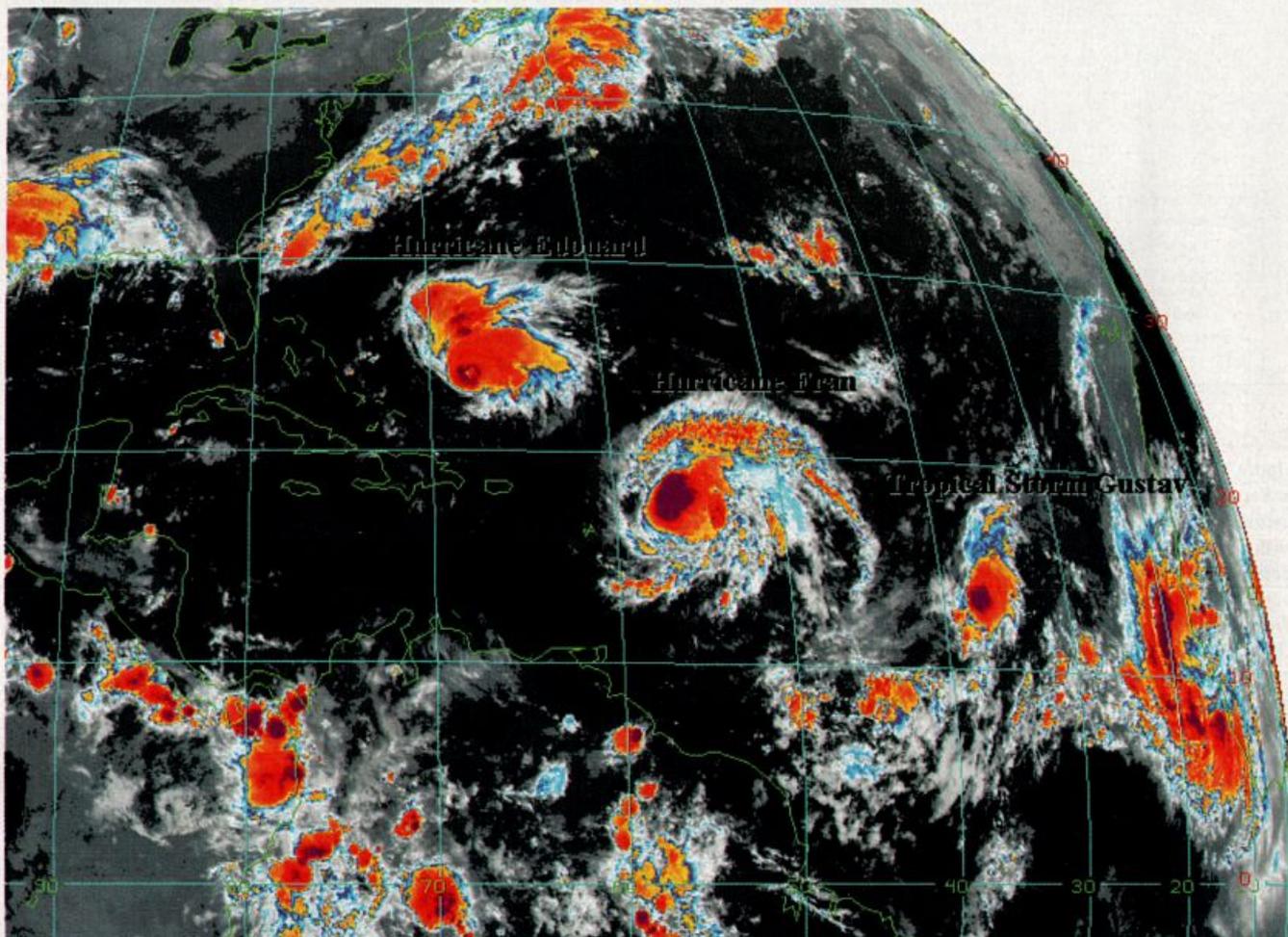
—Kenn Kaufman, Editor



This moribund Sooty Tern was found on the upper beach at Cape May Point, New Jersey, two days following the passage of hurricane *Bertha*, July 15, 1996 Photograph/ Kevin Karlson

THE STORMS OF '96

EDWARD S. BRINKLEY*, TODD HASS†, and JIM LOCKYER‡



NOAA, AUGUST 29, 1996

Over thirty hours in advance of the storm, the skies became blackened with seabirds of every kind, size, color and description, moving rapidly toward the west, as if fleeing from the violence of the coming storm.

—U.S. Army Chief Signal Officer for Carteret County, North Carolina, journal entry for August 24, 1881 (Barnes 1993)

PART 1: THE STORMS AND AND THEIR ASSOCIATED BIRDS

NOWHERE ARE HURRICANES and tropical storms welcome guests. In 1996, the 13 tropical cyclones that moved through the North Atlantic took 135 lives and caused nearly five billion dollars in damage; by far the most devastating of these was *Fran*, which killed 34 people in the United States and caused over four billion dollars' worth of damage. The year was ranked among the ten most active on record for tropical cyclones in the Atlantic (between 1886

and 1996), following hard on the heels of 1995, another top-ten year with 19 named storms. Of the 13 storms in 1996, six were categorized as "major cyclones."

For centuries, mariners and island dwellers have known of the powerful effect of these storms upon seabirds. For about the last 150 years, amateur and professional ornithologists have taken an interest in the displacement of birds by hurricanes and other storms. Though the devastation of the storms is to be feared and avoided, they harbor an enduring fascination for humans—especially for students of bird life, for whom hurricanes have

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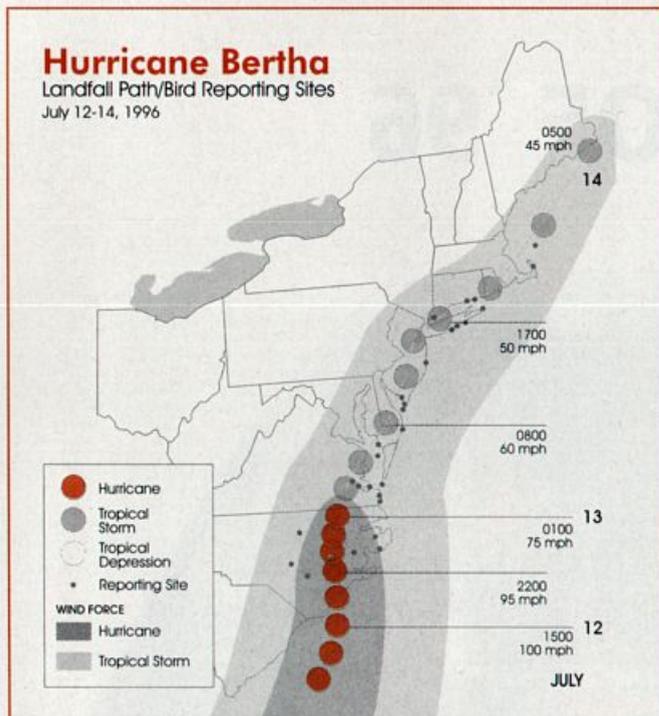


Figure 1. *Bertha* made landfall just before 9 PM on July 12 at Carolina Beach and Kure Beach, south of Wilmington, North Carolina, where the Category 2 hurricane battered the coast with winds of 115 mph. The eye of the storm at that time was well-defined and approximately 20 miles across. *Bertha* then moved northward through eastern North Carolina and, on July 13, into Virginia in the City of Suffolk, thence northward just west of the Chesapeake Bay. What remained of the filling eye of the storm entered the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland waters at about 7 AM, passed onto the Delmarva Peninsula near Cambridge, moving 45 miles south of Dover, Delaware, at 8 AM, then into Delaware Bay. From there, the storm's center passed immediately west of Cape May, up the East Coast, and back out to sea. Although *Bertha* was still classed a Category 1 hurricane at 5 AM, its winds were only 55 to 60 mph sustained in Virginia, and thus it was technically a tropical storm by the time it reached that state. Map/Jim Lockyer

occasionally meant a terrestrial glimpse into the lives of seabirds otherwise virtually never seen on land away from the nesting grounds.

Part 1 of this article presents a detailed account of noteworthy bird observations from eastern North America during, after, or apparently as a result of hurricanes *Bertha*, *Edouard*, *Fran*, and *Hortense* and tropical storm *Josephine*. This compendium was made possible by the large group of observers and contributors listed in the Acknowledgments, many of whom shared their records through the Internet. In this manner, data collection was greatly accelerated relative to that for hurricanes past, in particular through the *Hurricane-Net*, run by Wallace Coffey, and by *BirdChat*, run by Chuck Williamson. Other records were found in *National Audubon Society Field Notes* (Brinkley 1997; Davis 1996, 1997a; Ellison and Martin 1996; Iliff 1996, 1997; Kaufman 1996; Paxton et al. 1996, 1997; Petersen 1997), *Bird Observer* (Forster et al. 1996, 1997), *Birders Journal* (Curry 1996, Curry and Olmsted 1996), *Chat* (Davis 1997b), *Pennsylvania Birds* (Pulcinella 1996), and *Kingbird* (Crowell 1997, D'Anna 1997, Griffith 1997, Kelling 1997, Koeneke and Purcell 1997, Schiff and Wollin 1996, 1997).

Part 2 of the article will treat the species observed during 1996 in historical context, namely in relation to records of hurricane-displaced seabirds over the previous 150 years, beginning with the first such North American record, a Black-capped Petrel found in Florida in 1846. There have been but few such analyses in the scientific literature previously, with the exception of Robert Cushman Murphy's dense but brief section "Birds and Hurricanes" in *Oceanic Birds of South America* (1936). Part 2 will appear in a later issue of *Field Notes*.

BERTHA

The first storm of the 1996 season to make landfall in North America was *Bertha*, an unusually early storm. In fact, this was the first hurricane to track along the interior of the mid-Atlantic coastal plain in the month of July since *Cindy* did so in 1959; the last hurricane to reach this strength this early in the season was *Alma* in 1966. Not to be confused with a storm of the same name of 1990 (LeGrand 1991), *Bertha* was born on July 4, 1996, from an African easterly wave as a tropical depression about 800 miles WSW of the Cape Verde Islands in the eastern tropical Atlantic. In the half-century since systematic

reconnaissance flights for the study of hurricanes commenced, 85 percent of all intense (Category 3, 4, or 5) cyclones have originated here, even though on average only two storms annually are born in this area (Landsea 1993). Within two days, the storm had strengthened into a hurricane. By July 8, *Bertha* brushed eastern Puerto Rico, then moved northward close to the Turks and Caicos Islands and the Bahamas the following day. On July 10, hurricane warnings were posted from Sebastian Inlet, Florida, to the North Carolina-Virginia border, and a hurricane watch was declared north to Chincoteague, Virginia. The storm's lowest barometric pressure measured offshore was 960 mb, a Category 3 storm.

On July 12, radar located the eye of the storm at 9 PM 25 miles WNW of New Bern, North Carolina, with winds of 85 mph, hurricane-force winds extending 115 miles

TABLE 1: BIRDS ASSOCIATED WITH HURRICANE BERTHA, JULY 12-17, 1996

SPECIES	LOCALE	STATE	DATE	BIRDS FOUND
Northern Gannet	Cape May (in backyard)	NJ	07/13	1
Herald Petrel	Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel	VA	07/13	2
	False Cape State Park, Virginia Beach	VA	07/13	1
Black-capped Petrel	Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel	VA	07/13	9
	Fort Story, Virginia Beach	VA	07/13	1
	Cape May (Bay side)	NJ	07/13	8
	Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel	VA	07/14	26
unidentified gadfly petrel	Chesapeake Bay / Cape Charles	VA	07/14	1
	Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel	VA	07/13	1
Cory's Shearwater	Fort Story, Virginia Beach	VA	07/13	1
	Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel	VA	07/13	3
	False Cape State Park, Virginia Beach	VA	07/13	1
	Mecox Bay, Long Island	NY	07/13	1-2
Greater Shearwater	Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel	VA	07/14	2
	Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel	VA	07/13	5
	False Cape State Park, Virginia Beach	VA	07/13	1
	Avalon	NJ	07/13	1
	Mecox Bay, Long Island	NY	07/13	1-2
	Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel	VA	07/14	1
Sooty Shearwater	Cape May / Lewes Ferry	NJ/DE	07/14	1
	Chesapeake Bay (7 mi. s. MD border)	VA	07/16	1
	False Cape State Park, Virginia Beach	VA	07/13	1
	Shark River Inlet	NJ	07/13	1

(table continued on page 823)

from the storm center, and tropical-storm-force winds not more than 200 miles from center. Winds at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel (hereafter, CBBT) were clocked at 110 mph at 10:40 PM on July 12. By the time *Bertha* reached New Jersey at 10 AM on the 13th, sustained wind speeds were under 40 mph, and by 11 PM, the storm had passed off New England, about 60 miles NE of Boston, and out to sea. The track of the storm (Figure 1) resembles those of Hurricane No. 2 of July 5–10, 1946, *Cindy* of July 5–17, 1959, and especially Tropical Storm No. 6 of September 12–15, 1961.

Birds entrained in *Bertha* (Table 1) were nearly as numerous as those of *Fran*. Almost all birds thought to have been displaced by the storm (nearly 6000, not including herons, shorebirds, or land-birds) were observed over the weekend of July 13–14, though small numbers were located in the lower Delaware Bay area as many as five days later, with the discovery of two Band-rumped Storm-Petrels with a large group of Wilson's Storm-Petrels off Cumberland County, New Jersey, on July 17. The storm was most remarkable for its displacement of unprecedented numbers of Black-capped Petrels and Band-rumped Storm-Petrels from Virginia to New Jersey and for its two Virginia records of Herald (Trinidad) Petrel (*Pterodroma [a.] arminjoniana*). Prior to *Bertha*, Virginia had only 11 records of Black-capped Petrel totaling 16 individuals, and only three records of Band-rumped Storm-Petrel totaling 20 birds. Delaware had only a single record of each species, none from shore, and New Jersey had no verified record of either species in its waters, the Hudson Canyon (now considered New York waters) excepted. Herald Petrel is seen regularly in the Gulf Stream off North Carolina, but there existed only a single previous Virginia report (September 22, 1991, just after the passage of hurricane *Bob*, offshore at the Norfolk Canyon [Armistead 1992]), and only one older North American record attributed to hurricane displacement.

In addition to the birds listed in Table 1, a remarkable south-westward movement of gulls, terns, and pelicans occurred at CBBT on July 13 (and to a lesser extent July 14), into the strong (20- to 50-knot) southwest winds following *Bertha's* passage (Table 2). Farther to the north, no increases in Royal Terns or any other white terns were noted, nor were any of the species enumerated in Table 2 observed to be moving ahead of or with the storm. On the western shore of the Chesapeake in Mathews County, Virginia, and the Chesapeake shores of Maryland, no clearly storm-related birds were noted, despite intensive search efforts (Iliff 1996). Apparently, the winds had abated enough by dawn of July 13 in southeastern Virginia for the birds displaced (from the North Carolina seabird colonies and from the coast) to reverse direction, but these birds were concentrated in a fairly narrow band along the eastern edge of the lower Chesapeake Bay. Discussion of the various flight lines of terns and tubenoses during *Bertha* and other storms will be found in Part 2, which will appear in a later issue of *Field Notes*.

Certainly the rarest of the year's storm-waifs was deposited by *Bertha*: a bird identified as a (West Indian) Black Swift, *Cypseloides n. niger*, at Chappaquiddick Island, Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, on July 14 (Forster et al. 1996).

EDOUARD

Hurricane *Edouard* was a classic mid-summer Cape Verde-origin storm that remained well offshore until reaching Long Island and New England, where good numbers of seabirds were noted, particularly from Massachusetts's seawatch sites. The storm was labelled Tropical Depression Five until August 22, at which time tropical storm *Edouard* was recognized about 500 miles WSW of the Cape Verde Islands. By August 15, when *Edouard* was 925 miles east of the



Unprecedented numbers of Black-capped Petrels were found in the interior of North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, and Ontario following hurricane *Fran* in 1996. It is assumed that most of these birds perished; along or near the shores of Lakes Erie and Ontario, there were 17 sight records of live Black-capped Petrels, with 23 specimens (including the one above) discovered dead or dying. Photograph/B. Curry



A veterinarian in Mattydale, New York, examines a young male Black-capped Petrel that wrecked at nearby Skaneateles Lake. Photograph/S. Kuyo

TABLE 2: OTHER MARINE BIRDS OBSERVED FROM SOUTH THIMBLE ISLAND, CHESAPEAKE BAY BRIDGE-TUNNEL, VIRGINIA

SPECIES	JULY 13	JULY 14
Brown Pelican	700	12
Royal Tern	1265	40
Common Tern	334	40
Least Tern	114	0
Sandwich Tern	226	2
Forster's Tern	48	0
Laughing Gull	2430	450
Herring Gull	347	120
Great Black-backed Gull	74	30

entire morning at the CBBT complex to the north. The lowest pressure recorded was 981 mb in the Gulf of Mexico. The only storm-associated records involved two jaegers, one dark-morph (probably Parasitic) and one light-morph Parasitic, along with a Bridled Tern and a Red-necked Phalarope, at Cape Point, Dare County, North Carolina, in the morning, and eight Parasitic and one Long-tailed jaegers (all adults) from the CBBT in the afternoon. Bridled Tern has not been recorded from Cape Point in the past, though it is fairly common offshore in the Gulf Stream only 15 to 20 miles distant in the late summer and fall. Small numbers of Parasitic Jaegers and Red-necked Phalaropes are seen here on a regular basis during migration. The total number of jaegers from the CBBT is without precedent and probably involved birds displaced from the offshore waters by northeasterly winds into Chesapeake Bay, rather than any type of transportation within the storm. Northeasterly winds were clearly responsible for the high count of 127 Peregrine Falcons, a typical pelagic migrant off the East Coast, observed just north of CBBT at the Kiptopeke Hawkwatch on October 7 during and following *Josephine's* passage.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A great debt of thanks is due list-owners Chuck Wilhamson and Wallace Coffey and to the compilers of sightings in their respective regions: Charles "Will" Cook in North Carolina; Nick Pulcinella in Pennsylvania; Paul Lehman in New Jersey; Dorothy Crumb, P. A. Buckley, Tom Burke, and Angus Wilson in New York; and Bob Curry in Ontario. Without the dedication of these observers to data gathering, this article could not have been assembled accurately. Instrumental in the review and improvement of this article were Will Cook, Bob Curry, and Brian Patteson. Finally, this paper could never have been written without the following field observers, who contributed records cited herein: R. L. Anderson, H. T. Armistead, T. Armour, D. Beadle, J. Berry, J. Biggs, E. A. T. Blom, D. Brown, J. Burger, T. Burke, C. Campbell, B. Carl, B. Charlton, D. Clark, G. Coady, C. Cook, J. Cooley, B. Cooper, D. Campbell, P. Craig, M. Cribb, R. Crossley, H. Currie, R. Curry, W. D'Anna, K. David, L. Davidson, F. Day, E. Dean, B. DiLabio, R. Dobos, L. Dole, R. Dole, L. Douglas, W. Evans, A. Farnsworth, G. Felton, K. Fox, L. Frey, J. K. Gabler, T. Garner, C. Gibson, J. Gibson, D. Gill, A. Guarente, M. Gustafson, A. Guthrie, T. Gwynn, B. Haas, F. Haas, D. Hart, M. Hart, R. Heil, B. Henschel, B. Henshaw, P. Hess, R. Hilton, T. Hince, J. M. Holdsworth, A. Humann, J. Hyman, M. Iliff, J. Jensen, A. Keith, S. Kelling, K. Knight, E. Kwater, B. Kurtz, J. Lamey, A. J. Lauro, K. Lebo, L. Lewis, W. Lindley, L. Lynch, M. Lynch,

TABLE 3: HURRICANE FRAN (continued)

SPECIES	LOCALE	STATE / PROVINCE	DATE	BIRDS FOUND
Common Tern	Delaware River, Philadelphia Airport	VA	09/07	10
	Conejohela Flats, Susquehanna River	MD	09/07	12
	Presque Isle Peninsula, Gull Point	PA	09/08	500
	Lake Arthur, Moraine State Park	PA	09/08	1
	Bald Eagle State Park	PA	09/08	5
Roseate Tern	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	1
	Potomac River at Wilson Bridge	DC / MD	09/06	2
	North Beach	MD	09/06	1
Forster's Tern	Lake Pinehurst	NC	09/06	12
	Goldsboro	NC	09/06	15
	Fayetteville	NC	09/06	5
	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	75
	Falls Lake	NC	09/06	35
	Chapel Hill Country Club	NC	09/06	2
	Lake Auman	NC	09/06	20
	Harris Lake	NC	09/06	25
	Kerr Reservoir	NC	09/06	20
	Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel	NC	09/06	50
	Kerr Reservoir	NC	09/06	5
	Rigby's Folly, Bellevue	VA	09/06	204
	Keystone Reservoir, Armstrong Co.	VA	09/06	4
	Yellow Creek State Park	VA	09/06	5
	Bald Eagle State Park	MD	09/06	1
	Lake Marburg, Codorus Creek State Park	PA	09/07	16
Lake Arthur, Moraine State Park	PA	09/07	1	
Gull-billed Tern	North Beach	MD	09/07	1
	Vienna	MD	09/07	2
	Point Lookout	MD	09/08	3
	Point Lookout	MD	09/09	1
Sandwich Tern	Goldsboro	NC	09/06	2
	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	15
	Falls Lake	NC	09/06	3
	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	2
	Briery Creek Reservoir	VA	09/06	1
	Kingsmill, James River	VA	09/06	1
	North Beach	MD	09/07	1
	Lake Anna	VA	09/07	1
	Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel	VA	09/07	60
Montauk Point, Long Island	NY	09/08	1	
Royal Tern	Lake Pinehurst	NC	09/06	12
	Goldsboro	NC	09/06	6
	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	120
	Falls Lake	NC	09/06	15
	Lake Auman	NC	09/06	15
	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	40
	Kingsmill, James River	VA	09/06	65
	Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel	VA	09/07	150
	Rigby's Folly, Bellevue	MD	09/07	31
Fire Island Inlet, Long Island	NY	09/07	8	
Lake Anna	VA	09/08	3	
Caspian Tern	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	18
	Falls Lake	NC	09/06	10
	Lake Auman	NC	09/06	8
	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	3
	Kingsmill, James River	VA	09/06	25
	Pleasant Valley Sewage Ponds	MD	09/06	1
	Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel	VA	09/07	2
	Craney Island	VA	09/07	88
	Oakland	MD	09/07	1
	Yellow Creek State Park	PA	09/07	2
	Lake Marburg, Codorus Creek State Park	PA	09/07	1
	Lake Arthur, Moraine State Park	PA	09/07	3
	Delaware River, Philadelphia airport	PA	09/07	40
	Lake Marburg, Codorus Creek State Park	PA	09/07	1
Conejohela Flats, Susquehanna River	PA	09/07	37	
Black Tern	Curles Neck	VA	09/05	2
	Fayetteville	NC	09/06	40
	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	35
	Falls Lake	NC	09/06	75
	Chapel Hill Country Club	NC	09/06	6
	Lake Auman	NC	09/06	12
	Harris Lake	NC	09/06	35
	Kerr Reservoir	NC	09/06	15
	Briery Creek Reservoir	VA	09/06	2
	Hunting Creek, Alexandria	VA	09/06	3
	Smith Mountain Lake	VA	09/06	2
	Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel	VA	09/07	15
	Kingsmill, James River	VA	09/08	13

(table continued on page 828)

TABLE 3: HURRICANE FRAN (continued)

SPECIES	LOCALE	STATE / PROVINCE	DATE	BIRDS FOUND		
Black Tern	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/07	3		
	Rigby's Folly, Bellevue	MD	09/07	3		
	Yellow Creek State Park	PA	09/07	3		
	Lake Arthur, Moraine State Park	PA	09/07	7		
	Lake Marburg, Codorus Creek State Park	PA	09/07	6		
	Lake Somerset	PA	09/07	1		
	Mount Davis-Meyersdale	PA	09/07	1		
	Jones Inlet, Long Island	NY	09/07	25		
	Presque Isle Peninsula, Gull Point	PA	09/07	53		
	Fort Erie	ON	09/07	150		
Sooty Tern	Higbee Beach, Cape May	NJ	09/08	10		
	Hamilton	ON	09/09	1		
	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	1		
	Harris Lake	NC	09/06	1		
	Falls Lake	NC	09/06	3		
	Lake Auman	NC	09/06	2		
	Hunting Creek, Alexandria	VA	09/06	1		
	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	24		
	Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel	VA	09/06	11		
	Kingsmill, James River	VA	09/06	8		
Bridled Tern	Sandy Point State Park	MD	09/06	20		
	Black Marsh, Baltimore Co.	MD	09/06	15-20		
	Little Seneca Lake, Black Hill Reservoir	MD	09/06	2		
	Ocean City	MD	09/06	2		
	Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel	VA	09/07	6		
	Rigby's Folly, Bellevue	MD	09/07	1		
	North Beach	MD	09/07	1		
	Tilghman Island	MD	09/07	2		
	Cape Henlopen State Park	DE	09/07	3		
	Delaware River, Philadelphia Airport	PA	09/07	5		
Black Skimmer	Conejohela Flats, Susquehanna River	PA	09/07	2		
	Schuykill River, 1-476 & Rt. 422	PA	09/07	2		
	Cape May Point	NJ	09/07	6		
	Cape May/Lewes Ferry	NJ	09/07	1		
	Moriches Inlet, Long Island	NY	09/07	1		
	Newton	NJ	09/08	1		
	Cape May Point	NJ	09/08	1		
	Jones Inlet, Long Island	NY	09/08	2		
	Fire Island Inlet, Long Island	NY	09/08	1		
	Zacks Bay	NY	09/08	1		
American Oystercatcher	Jaeger Rocks, Fort Erie	ON	09/08	1		
	Chub Point	ON	09/08	1		
	Waverly Beach, Fort Erie	ON	09/08	1		
	North Beach	MD	09/08	1		
	Hereford Inlet	NJ	09/09	1		
	Waverly Beach, Fort Erie	ON	09/09	1		
	Hamlin Beach State Park	NY	09/10	1-2		
	Waverly Beach, Fort Erie	ON	09/10	1		
	Red Phalarope	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	4	
		Falls Lake	NC	09/06	1	
Lake Auman		NC	09/06	1		
Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel		VA	09/06	1		
Kingsmill, James River		VA	09/06	1		
Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel		VA	09/07	5		
Bolling Air Force Base		DC	09/07	1		
Black Skimmer		Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	6	
		Chapel Hill Country Club	NC	09/06	1	
		Harris Lake	NC	09/06	1	
	Chapel Hill Country Club	NC	09/06	1		
	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	1		
	Kingsmill, James River	VA	09/06	1		
	Bald Eagle State Park	PA	09/07	1		
	American Oystercatcher	Port Colborne	ON	09/09	2	
		Red Phalarope	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	1
			Burgeson Nature Center	NY	09/08	2
Peace Bridge			ON	09/08	3	
Woodlawn Beach State Park			NY	09/09	1	

(table continued on page 829)

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TABLE 3: HURRICANE FRAN (continued)

SPECIES	LOCALE	STATE / PROVINCE	DATE	BIRDS FOUND
Red-necked Phalarope	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	41
	Falls Lake	NC	09/06	35
	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	43
	Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel	VA	09/07	1
	Craney Island	VA	09/07	8
	Oakland	MD	09/07	1
	Lake Ontelaunee	PA	09/07	2
	Presque Isle Peninsula-Gull Point	PA	09/07	1
	Imperial	PA	09/07	1
	Lawrence Co.	PA	09/07	1
	Woodlawn Beach State Park	NY	09/09	12
Batavia Waste Water Plant	NY	09/09	9	
Stewart Park, Ithaca	NY	09/09	10	
Black-bellied Plover	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	15
	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	25
Semipalmated Plover	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	3
	Chapel Hill Country Club	NC	09/06	1
	Goldsboro	NC	09/06	2
	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	2
Marbled Godwit	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	6
	Falls Lake	NC	09/06	1
	Sandy Point State Park	MD	09/06	1
Greater Yellowlegs	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	7
	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	1
Lesser Yellowlegs	Chapel Hill Country Club	NC	09/06	1
	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	4
	Sandy River Reservoir	VA	09/06	1
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	1
Stilt Sandpiper	Briery Creek Reservoir	VA	09/06	2
	Imperial	PA	09/06	1
	Oakland	MD	09/07	1
	Bald Eagle State Park	PA	09/07	1
Willet	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	6
	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	1
	Goldsboro	NC	09/06	1
Short-billed Dowitcher	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	1
unidentified dowitcher	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	4
Ruddy Turnstone	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	4
	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	6
Pectoral Sandpiper	Chapel Hill Country Club	NC	09/06	1
	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	1
Sanderling	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	22
	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	73
	Briery Creek Reservoir	VA	09/06	1
	Goldsboro	NC	09/06	12
	Bald Eagle State Park	PA	09/07	1
	Yellow Creek State Park	PA	09/07	1
	Dayton Gravel Pits	NY	09/08	1
	Kerr Reservoir	VA	09/06	1
Least Sandpiper	Jordan Lake	NC	09/06	2
	Sandy River Reservoir	VA	09/06	1
	Briery Creek Reservoir	VA	09/06	5

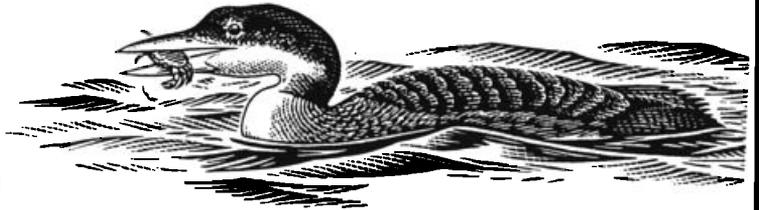
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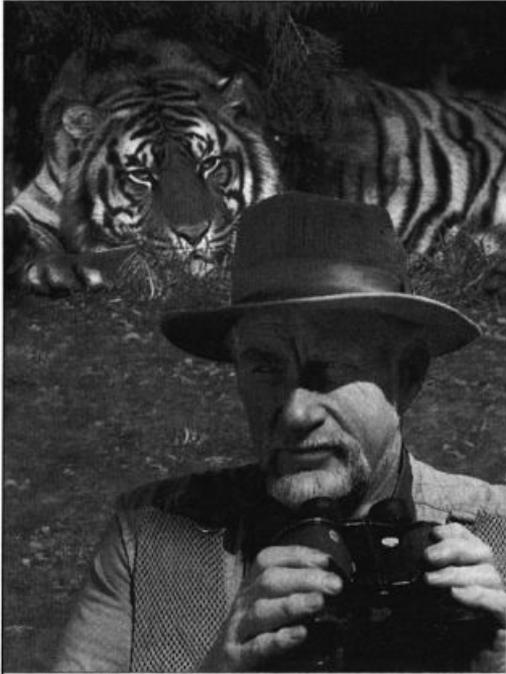
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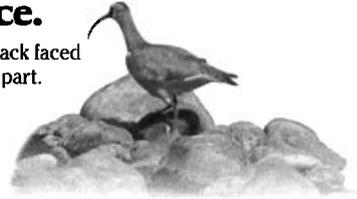
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One of the two Fork-tailed Flycatchers found together at Hornsby Bend, Austin, Texas, on May 6, 1997. Photograph / Mark W. Lockwood

changing seasons

Spring Migration, March 1–May 31, 1997

JEFF PRICE

CLIMATE CHANGE has received a great deal of press in 1997. Amid the short-term attention to El Niño and long-term concern about global warming, there is a sense that our very definitions of the timing of the seasons may be subject to revision.

One study examined satellite data and found that “spring” is arriving up to six days earlier, and “fall” four days later, in northern latitudes. A scientist in the United Kingdom examined changes in the date on which birds laid their first egg; in 20 of the 65 species examined, the first egg was being laid an average of nine days earlier now than in 1971. In northern Michigan, an examination of 30 years of records by a single observer showed that 34% of the species were arriving earlier, some by up to three weeks.

The early part of the spring migration in 1997 was like that. Many areas noted record early arrivals, some species breaking their previous early arrival records by more than a week. In Alaska, 11 species arrived early in the upper Cook Inlet, nine species in the interior near Tok, and three on the North Slope. The pattern did not hold, however, and weather played a principal role in the rest of this spring’s migration.

Climate can be thought of as an average of the weather over time. While there is probably a relationship between climate and

bird migration patterns, it is often the weather of the moment that plays a major role in determining when, and where, birds are found. During the middle to late migration period this year, a series of weather disturbances moved from west to east across the continent. Migration was reported as delayed—by one to three weeks in most areas—and many western species turned up in the east. For example, a Violet-green Swallow was found in Provincetown, Massachusetts, and up to 26 Western Tanagers were found well to the east of their breeding range.

These weather patterns had other effects as well. Some wintering species lingered, and April blizzards and heavy snowstorms had a high human and avian toll in the Upper Midwest and parts of New England. The weather also led to many fallouts being reported this spring. There were as many as five fallouts reported in Florida, three in Texas, two in Ontario and Manitoba, and one each in Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota, and Colorado. Many of these events were widespread. On April 25–26, there were groundings reported in Florida, Louisiana, and Texas. The Texas fallout was reported as the sixth best in 21 years of record-keeping at High Island, and as having grounded an estimated 3000–4000 warblers on Padre Island. (The point has been made before, but birders should remember that these fallouts are not good for birds. For all

of the birds that turn up exhausted in coastal woodlots, many more drown in the Gulf.)

The weather patterns were such that migration was bunched up in most areas, leading to many regional compilers commenting on how good the migration was. This points out the difficulty of assessing bird populations by how many are seen during migration. For years, some regional compilers have decried the poor status of spring migration and wondered whether this might be tied to declines in bird populations. The only way of adequately tracking bird populations is by standardized quantitative surveys. If you are not active in counting birds, either through Christmas Bird Counts, Breeding Bird Surveys, Breeding Bird Censuses, point counts, Project FeederWatch, or other programs, I encourage you to become involved.

Spring also brought the first sign of potential avian impacts from El Niño. El Niño is an irregular variation in ocean currents in equatorial regions of the Pacific Ocean. A strong El Niño can have global effects, bringing droughts to some parts of the world and flooding to others. Increases in sea surface temperatures, and changes in the upwelling currents that bring nutrients to the sea surface, often lead to changes in seabird distributions and numbers. This El Niño started very early in the year and is one of the strongest yet recorded. In Alaska, the El Niño was thought to have affected both the volume and diversity of the avian migrants passing through the state by altering the position of the Aleutian Low. Stay tuned to the summer, fall, and winter Changing Seasons for more on El Niño and its impacts on bird distributions.

MIGRATORY SPECTACLES

Some of the greatest congregations of wildlife in North America can be seen during migration. This spring saw sizable concentrations of many species. In the Grand Manan Archipelago, more than 10,000 Brant (almost 8% of the breeding population of the *hrota* subspecies) were counted in early April. An observer in northern New Brunswick counted 11,700 Black Scoters (23% of the northeastern North American population) in early May. Snow Goose populations are exploding, so flocks of 400,000 in Phelps County, Nebraska, on March 8 and at Baie-du-Febvre, Québec, on April 14 were not unexpected. Other notable concentrations included 500 Trumpeter Swans at Nulki Lake, British Columbia, on April 7, some 50,000 waterfowl in Presque Isle Bay, Pennsylvania, during the last week of March, and 40,000 Ross's Geese (almost 18% of the world's population) at Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge in California on March 8 and 9.

There are several reasons why birds congregate at one spot. One is a restriction or limitation of suitable habitat: For example, wetlands with open water in spring, mudflats for shorebirds, or access to an adequate food supply (e.g., horseshoe crab eggs). Another big reason involves weather. Certain weather conditions can concentrate birds in small areas. Many White Ibises migrated through the Rockport, Texas, area on March 8, with up to 10,000 being counted. Spring congregations of shorebirds can also be impressive. This season, 125,000 Red-necked Phalaropes were counted passing by Goleta Point near Santa Barbara, California, in a 1.5 hour period on April 28. Similar numbers were seen from East Beach in Santa Barbara on April 29. Guy McCaskie commented that "One can only guess at the number of Red-necked Phalaropes that moved through the Santa Barbara Channel April 28–May 1." Weather-related congregations occurred during the fallouts mentioned earlier. In particular, see the Texas, Ontario, and Mountain West regional reports

for more information on the hundreds, or even thousands, of warblers seen in small areas.

The congregation that wasn't this year was of shorebirds gathering along the Delaware Bay shoreline in late May. Numbers were reduced again this year, as were the numbers of horseshoe crabs laying their eggs on the beaches. Shorebirds in Delaware Bay feed on horseshoe crab eggs to fatten up for their journey to their Arctic breeding grounds. Declines in shorebird numbers are thought to be tied to the decline in horseshoe crabs. The governor of New Jersey placed an interim ban on the taking of horseshoe crabs and has since extended the ban by executive order. Fishermen, who use horseshoe crabs for eel bait, are currently contesting the ban in court. Birders need to follow this developing issue and support a ban on the taking of horseshoe crabs until sustainable harvest regulations can be developed.

SPECIES RECOVERING

There was more good news on the endangered species front. Peregrine Falcons bred in Connecticut for the first time since the 1940s and continued to do well in other eastern states. Bald Eagles are also doing particularly well. Despite setbacks in Massachusetts, where the April Fools' Day blizzard was thought responsible for the abandonment of two or three nests, other areas had a good early nesting period. For example, Nevada had its first known chick hatched since 1866. There were 14 pairs of eagles nesting in Delaware, 12 pairs in New Jersey, and six in eastern Pennsylvania. In North Dakota, nine nests were found along the Missouri River system as opposed to the typical two or three in recent years. In Monterey County, California, a pair nested for the first time since 1934. This is just more evidence that the Endangered Species Act can work; but it takes time for a species to recover—just as it took time for the species to become endangered in the first place.

THE LAST (ALMOST) BIRDING FRONTIER

Regularly scheduled pelagic trips are slowly improving our understanding of the distributions of pelagic birds off the coast of North America. This season the pelagic trips off the Outer Banks of North Carolina turned up 111 Black-capped Petrels on one trip, one Fea's Petrel on a different trip, and Herald Petrels were seen on at least four trips. The number of sightings of Herald Petrels suggests we need to reconsider what the distribution of this species might be in the western North Atlantic. A trip off the Alabama coast produced five to six Wilson's Storm-Petrels, 12–15 Band-rumped Storm-Petrels, and one or two Leach's Storm-Petrels, notable numbers for the Gulf of Mexico. In Oregon, a NOAA vessel sighted 14 Murphy's Petrels approximately 110 nautical miles off the southern Oregon coast on May 3, and two more on May 12. In Alaska, there were several May reports of the globally endangered Short-tailed Albatross. At least six individuals were seen associating with fishing vessels south of Kodiak Island, and another two were seen farther west, south of the Shumagin Islands. This species is occasionally hooked by long-line fishing vessels. The fisheries industry is experimenting with ways to reduce the incidental taking of seabirds.

OTHER WATERFOWL OF NOTE

This season brought reports of at least 34 "Eurasian" Green-winged Teal, more than 230 Eurasian Wigeon, and at least 33 Tufted Ducks! The teal (not counting the "Eurasian-type" race resident in the Aleutians) were concentrated in the Atlantic Provinces, but one was also seen in Hawaii. Eurasian Wigeon reports were concentrated in the northeast (Atlantic Provinces and Québec), Alberta, the Great

CHANGING SEASONS

Basin, and Alaska, although undoubtedly many along the Pacific Coast went unmentioned. Finally, Tufted Ducks were also concentrated in the Atlantic Provinces. One suggestion for the numbers of sightings of all three species in the Atlantic Provinces is that the area has become a new wintering or migratory congregation area for European birds. Perhaps more likely is that one or all of these species now breed in North America. This is especially true for Eurasian Wigeon. The question is, where?

Other European species made appearances this spring. Whooper Swans were reported from the New England region with little comment as to their likely provenance (but some known escapees have been wandering that region in recent years). The Whooper Swan pair on Attu nested again this year, so the species remains (barely) a North American breeder. A "Bewick's" Tundra Swan was found in Oregon on March 19. A Pink-footed Goose was seen with a flock of Snow Geese in Berks County, Pennsylvania, from March 29 through at least April 10. Barnacle Geese were reported from five regions this spring. In each region sightings were considered to be of escapees. Two Barnacle Geese were seen in Davidsonville, Maryland (March 17), three were seen at Boothbay Harbor, Maine (April 2), one was in Regina, Saskatchewan (April 9), one was at Montmagny, Québec (May 14), and one was seen at Lake Flower, New York (May 8). The pattern of sightings—with birds moving from south to north, added to the sightings of many other waterfowl of European origin—suggests these could have been wild birds. The records committees in the states and provinces involved should take a careful look at these sightings, in context with prevailing weather patterns and other sightings, before relegating these birds to the escaped category. Finally, a goose not of European origin was the Emperor Goose found among cholera-afflicted waterfowl in Clay County, Nebraska, on March 17. If accepted by the records committee, this would be among the first sightings of this species away from the West Coast. Another Emperor Goose away from the West Coast, but in the opposite direction, turned up in Hawaii.

THE HAWKS SOAR PAST . . .

Migration of hawks is not as pronounced in spring as in fall. Fewer observers are manning fewer hawk watch stations and the migration may be more diffuse in both space and time. There was no real migratory hawk news of note, but Mississippi Kites provided some interesting extralimital patterns. Mississippi Kites arrived early in Florida and returned to North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia in increasing numbers and locations. There appeared to be several different flights producing extralimital records this season. One flight occurred in early May (4–8) with birds reaching Rowley, Massachusetts; Hoopes Reservoir, Delaware; and South Windsor and Bethel, Connecticut. A second flight occurred a few days later (May 11–17) with birds seen at Fort Smallwood, Maryland; Grimsby and Pt. Pelee, Ontario; Hopkins and Estral Beach, Michigan; Regina, Saskatchewan; and Ledges State Park, Iowa. Finally, there was a late May flight (28–30) when birds were seen at Ninigret National Wildlife Refuge and Block Island, Rhode Island; Orleans, Massachusetts; and Cape May, New Jersey. The pattern of these sightings suggests that there may have been a weather-related component to the direction of their flight.

EXTENDED WINTER VACATIONS

The string of weather systems that moved from west to east across the continent held winter in place in many areas. Snow was still on the ground in late April in some northern states. One result of this

weather is that some typical winter birds stayed around. Snowy Owls didn't leave Boston until May 20, Prince Edward Point, Ontario, until May 25, Barrie Island, Ontario, through the end of the reporting period, Marathon County, Wisconsin, until May 24, Duluth, Minnesota, until May 22, and Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, Michigan, until May 28. Several regions also reported late dates for other typical "winter" birds like Golden-crowned Kinglets.

The following reports were probably not related to the string of weather systems specifically but to the lingering of winter in general. The nine Razorbills found on Lake Ontario near Burlington, Ontario, on May 18 must have come as a shock. Eight of them were still present May 23. Northeast gales off the coast of Newfoundland brought hundreds of Ivory Gulls to communities on the tip of the northern peninsula there. A Boreal Owl struck a window of a Lake County, Ohio, home on April 5. This first report of this species for Ohio leads me to wonder whether this was an individual that wintered in the area or a confused migrant.

THE WESTERN EXPRESS

The weather this spring did more than delay migration. It also displaced many species to the east. This spring may be remembered as the year of the Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Record setting numbers were seen in Pinellas County (100+ on April 23) and St. George Island, Florida (40+ on April 23). They were reported coming to feeders in the Mid-Atlantic, Southern Atlantic Coast, and Appalachian regions. In the Southern Atlantic Coast region their occurrence along the coast was described as "unprecedented" and excellent numbers were found across the region. There was also a heavy flight in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Even with this eastern shift in the migration, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks continued to turn up in the west in about average numbers. Seven were seen in the Trans-Pecos of Texas (above average), two in western Nebraska, one each in Colorado, Idaho, Wyoming, and Nevada, more than 10 in New Mexico, four in Arizona, three in the Oregon/Washington region, four in the Mid-Pacific region (one wintered locally), and about fifteen in the Southern Pacific region. I wonder whether the birds turning up in the west winter in a different area than the bulk of those in the east? The birds displaced eastward were almost certainly trans-gulf migrants, while those in the west likely took an overland route.

Along with the Rose-breasted Grosbeaks came a smattering of eastern reports of Black-headed Grosbeaks. The winter ranges of these two species do not overlap to a great extent, and the migratory pathways are also largely different (trans-gulf vs. overland). The pattern of sightings of this species suggests that a few of these birds (Georgia, Florida, Mississippi) likely crossed the gulf and may have been mixed in with migrating Rose-breasted Grosbeaks. The other records likely refer to birds displaced from their typical overland migratory route. Complicating matters further, females of the two species can be difficult to tell apart, so some of these reports may not be valid. Nevertheless, two were reported from Georgia, one from Minnesota, one from Manitoba, one from Gulf Breeze, Florida, and one from Le Flore County, Mississippi. With this string of eastern records it is too bad the two birds reported from Prince Edward Island, Canada, were not documented. Were they really Black-headed Grosbeaks or misidentified Rose-breasted Grosbeaks?

Another species with good representation in the east this year was the Western Tanager. Like the Black-headed Grosbeak, this species' migratory route is largely overland, not trans-gulf. The pattern of sightings of vagrants supports this. Furthermore, examining

the dates of occurrence suggests that the tanagers could have been caught in several different weather systems. The first birds occurred in early May with individuals being seen in Wisconsin (May 6–7) and Iowa (May 3). The second group followed a little later with individuals seen in Pennsylvania (May 10), Wisconsin (May 13 and 15–17), Michigan (May 12–14), North Dakota (May 13), and Iowa (May 8–13). Next came a group of birds seen in New Brunswick (May 19), Ontario (May 19 and 20–21), Illinois (May 18), and Michigan (May 20–23). A fourth wave of birds turned up in Nova Scotia (May 23–24), New Hampshire (May 24), Ontario (May 24–26), and Wisconsin (May 25). Finally, a few late birds were seen in North Dakota (May 29) and New Brunswick (May 31). Seven birds seen in Manitoba were mostly reported without dates.

Many western species turned up as vagrants in the east. Massachusetts recorded its first Violet-green Swallow with an individual at Provincetown on May 12. A Band-tailed Pigeon was seen in Winnipeg, Manitoba, from April 7 to May 2. A Black-billed Magpie all the way east to Marietta, Ohio, in April could have been an escaped captive, but a nesting pair found in Plymouth County, Iowa, in May represented the extreme eastern edge of the breeding range. Iowa's fourth Vermilion Flycatcher was found in Holstein on May 24. Other western birds included a Cassin's (Solitary) Vireo in Vermont, Townsend's Warbler in Massachusetts, Virginia's Warbler in Michigan, and single Black-throated Gray Warblers in Ontario and Iowa.

The mystery bird of the season had to be the White-winged Dove. This species was seen substantially farther north and east than normal. While this species has been expanding its range in recent years, it is not a sufficient explanation for the pattern of occurrence. Single birds this year were seen in Sterling, Connecticut (May 18, first documented state record); Ottumwa, Iowa (April 8–15, first state record); Columbia, Missouri (April–early May); Le Grand, Iowa (April 28 to May 16, second state record); Lawrence County, South Dakota (May 28, second state record); Marion County, Kansas (April 19–24); and Garvin County, Oklahoma (April 22–23). Only time will tell if this was a fluke or if this species is beginning rapidly to extend its range.

RANGE EXPANSIONS

House Finches aren't in the news anymore, having pretty much crossed the continent. Other species, though, may be hot on their heels. These include the Great-tailed Grackle and Eurasian Collared-Dove.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Great-tailed Grackles in the United States were largely restricted to south Texas. They first turned up in Austin, Texas, in 1915, in Arizona in the 1930s, Oklahoma in 1953, Kansas in 1964, and Nevada in 1973. This season brought numerous reports from Iowa and a count of 30 in Columbia, Missouri (where they nested in 1996). South Dakota recorded the species in four counties, with breeding suspected in one. Three females were sighted near Chubbuck, Idaho, and a female Great-tailed/Boat-tailed Grackle seen at Whitefish Point Bird Observatory in Michigan was almost certainly this species. On the west coast, grackles were seen away from their usual haunts in Monterey County and the Yosemite Valley in California and in Harney, Oregon. How far will this species be able to expand its range?

A similar question should be asked for the Eurasian Collared-Dove. Introduced into the Bahamas in 1974, it soon crossed to Florida and has spread rapidly throughout the state. It has pushed north into Colbert County, Alabama; Grenada County, Mississippi;

Benton County, Arkansas; and Allen Parish, Louisiana. Birds this season were also seen in Castroville, Texas; Sherman County, Kansas; Otero and Baca counties and Lamar, Colorado; and Roswell, New Mexico. In parts of Europe, this species is reported to raise six broods per year. If the same is true in North America, then there might not be a limit to the speed and extent of this species' range expansion.

Florida recorded three cowbird species this season. Brown-headed Cowbirds breed in the state, a Bronzed Cowbird was found at St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, and more than 60 Shiny Cowbirds were reported. Shiny Cowbird sightings came from Naples (30), Key West (23), Highlands County (one), Franklin County (one), Fort George Island (four), and Escambia/Santa Rosa County (three). Other Shiny Cowbirds were reported from Dauphin Island, Alabama; Grand Isle and Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana; and Port O'Connor and Tarrant County in Texas. Finally, Cave Swallows (more benign invaders) have finally crossed the Sabine River from Texas into Louisiana.

RARITIES

Rarities this spring came from Eurasia, South America, Central America, and the West Indies. Space does not allow a complete run-down, but some highlights included Canada's first Black-tailed Gull, an individual seen on Sable Island from May 8 through the end of the reporting period. This may have been the same bird that had been present at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel in Virginia, last seen on March 20. Common Cuckoos are reported many years, usually from Alaska. This year's bird was seen on Sand Island, Midway, Hawaii! A Tropical Kingbird found in Keweenaw County, Michigan, on May 23 would be the state's first. With only a little effort, seeing the kingbird and a Snowy Owl in the same day would have been possible.

Other rarities: West Indian species seen in Florida this year included Key West Quail-Dove, two to four La Sagra's Flycatchers, Bahama Mockingbird, and two Stripe-headed Tanagers. Central American/Mexican species included Mangrove Cuckoo, White-collared Swift, and apparent Slate-throated Redstart in Texas, and Black-capped Gnatcatchers (breeding) and Fan-tailed Warbler in Arizona. Finally, Eurasian species included Fieldfare (New Brunswick and Nova Scotia), European Goldfinch (Québec), Common Chaffinch (Massachusetts), Curlew Sandpiper (North Carolina, Louisiana, Texas, and California), Red-necked Stint (British Columbia and Alaska), Little Stint (Yukon), Northern Wheatear (Kansas), Siberian Accentor (Idaho), Common Ringed Plover (Hawaii), and Common Pochard, Eurasian Kestrel, Mongolian Plover, Common Greenshank, Wood Sandpiper, Long-toed Stint, Eyebrowed Thrush, Olive-backed Pipit, Pechora Pipit, Brambling, Eurasian Bullfinch, and Hawfinch (all in Alaska). Readers will need to turn to the appropriate regional reports for more details.

In closing, there was one recurrent thread occurring throughout the accounts this season (and most seasons). Many species were reported without any documentation. Some compilers delete these records in their entirety while others mention them, albeit reluctantly. I encourage all readers to learn how to document their rare bird sightings, and to submit documentation that is as complete as possible. Good birding!

JEFF PRICE is the director of the U.S. Important Bird Areas Program of the American Bird Conservancy. He is also the senior author of *The Summer Atlas of North American Birds* (Academic Press, 1995).

how to read the regional reports

Birds have no respect for range maps. Bird distribution in North America is constantly changing, as birds expand their ranges into new areas, disappear from former strongholds, or alter their patterns of migration.

Our knowledge of bird distribution is also changing constantly, as discoveries continue to come in. Keeping up with all these developments is a challenge for ornithologists, conservationists, and birders.

The Regional Reports, published four times a year, contain a wealth of information about North America's dynamic birdlife. When seeing the reports for the first time, they might appear difficult or technical, but they are not; anyone with any birding experience will find the reports easy to understand. We invite you to read the report from your area of the continent; we predict that the information there will alternately surprise you and confirm your ideas about birdlife in your region. To help you get started, here are answers to some questions that may occur to first-time readers.

What kind of information is included? Do the Regional Editors just report everything that's reported to them?

Regional Editors do not report every sighting of every bird. Such a list would be huge, unwieldy, and not very useful. Instead, they solicit reports from as many observers as possible, screen the records for accuracy, choose those that are most significant, look for trends and patterns of occurrence, connect scattered bits of information, and ultimately come up with a concise, readable summary of the real bird news—the important avian events and trends of the season throughout their region.

Why are there so many abbreviations in the text?

We abbreviate some frequently-used words and phrases to save space. Most of these are easy to understand and remember. (See the list of abbreviations at the end of this section.) In addition to these standard abbreviations, some Regional Editors use short-

ened versions of the names of some birding hot spots; they list these local abbreviations in a separate paragraph, just after their introductory comments and just before their main species accounts.

What do the initials in parentheses mean?

Most records published in each report will be followed by initials, to indicate the source: the person(s) who found or reported the bird(s) mentioned. The initials may be followed by *et al.* (short for *et alia*, meaning “and others”), or preceded by *fide* (literally, “by the faith of”—meaning that this is a second-hand report, and the person initialed is the one who passed it along to the Regional Editor). A dagger (†) before the initials means that this person turned in written details on the sighting.

There are good reasons for giving credit to the observers involved. Readers may be reassured about the accuracy of surprising sightings if they know who the observers were; researchers who want to know more about a certain record may be able to contact the observers directly. In some cases, when a bird was seen by many birders, the Regional Editor may add “v.o.” (for “various observers”) or “m.ob.” (for “many observers”) after the first sets of initials.

Who are the people who send in their sightings?

All observers are invited to send in notes to their Regional Editors: details on rare sightings, species that were scarcer or more numerous than usual during the season, unusual concentrations or migration, and so on. Reading the reports for your region for a few seasons is the best way to find out what kinds of information are desired. Although the Regional Editors cannot cite every record that they receive, every contributor helps them to produce a more thorough and accurate summary.

Why are some bird names in heavier or blacker type?

We use **boldface** type to draw attention to outstanding records of rare birds. General

categories of birds that the Regional Editors would place in boldface would include any species that has been recorded fewer than 10 times previously in a given state or province; any new breeding record for a state or province; or any bird totally outside established patterns of seasonal occurrence (For the most part, records are not boldfaced unless they are backed up with solid details or photographs.) Birders who like to know about rare birds (and most of us do) can get a complete rundown of the season's outstanding rarities by scanning all the Regional Reports for those boldfaced birds

Why are some of the place names in italic type?

In most of the regional reports, place names given in *italic* type refer to counties (Italics represent parishes in Louisiana, and in parts of Ontario they may refer to districts or regional municipalities.)

What are the boxes in the text marked “S.A.”?

“S.A.” stands for “Special Attention” (and, by coincidence, is pronounced “essay”) The purpose of the boxed essays is to draw attention to particularly noteworthy phenomena or trends.

Likely topics for essays include new population trends or new patterns of bird distribution, unusual invasions or migration events, field research projects that have yielded new data, specific conservation problems that have an impact on birdlife, or detailed discussion of some outstanding (or perplexing) rare bird record. Experienced readers of *Field Notes* make it a point to flip through all the Regional Reports and read all the S.A.s, even in regions where they do not read the rest of the text.

**STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS
USED IN THE REGIONAL
REPORTS**

**Abbreviations used
in place names**

In most regions, place names given in *italic* type are counties. Other abbreviations:

- Cr. Creek
- Ft. Fort
- Hwy Highway
- I. Island or Isle
- Is. Islands or Isles
- Jct. Junction
- km kilometer(s)
- L. Lake
- mi mile (s)
- Mt. Mountain or Mount
- Mts. Mountains
- N.F. National Forest
- N.M. National Monument
- N.P. National Park
- N.W.R. National Wildlife Refuge
- P.P. Provincial Park
- Pen. Peninsula
- Pt. Point (not Port)
- R. River
- Ref. Refuge
- Res. Reservoir (not Reservation)
- S.P. State Park
- W.M.A. Wildlife Management Area

**Abbreviations used
in the names of birds:**

- Am. American
- Com. Common
- E. Eastern
- Eur. European or Eurasian
- Mt. Mountain
- N. Northern
- S. Southern
- W. Western

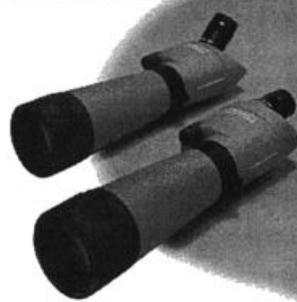
**Other abbreviations
and symbols referring to birds:**

- ad. adult
- imm. immature
- juv. juvenal or juvenile
- sp. species
- v.t. video-taped
- † written details were submitted for a sighting
- * a specimen was collected
- ♂ male
- ♀ female
- CBC Christmas Bird Count

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BLAKE MAYBANK

Editors elsewhere in the East will bemoan the late spring, and we in Atlantic Canada will echo the complaint. The cool, damp season, albeit relatively unstormy, delayed migration by up to three weeks. Birders, although deprived of warmth and sunshine, did not lack for birding excitement, as frequent southwesterly winds propelled numerous rarities into the region. The increasingly popular NatureNB and NatureNS internet discussion groups facilitated the exchange of information, and fuelled birders' enthusiasm. These groups also continue to make this editor's job that much easier.

Reporting was good for New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Saint Pierre et Miquelon, sketchy from the Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland, skimpy from Prince Edward Island, and almost non-existent elsewhere. It is my hope that the newly opened bridge to Prince Edward Island will encourage non-resident birders to explore the island, and improve the coverage provided by the few resident observers.

Abbreviations: BI (*Brier I., Nova Scotia*); BPI (*Bon Portage I., Nova Scotia*); CSI (*Cape Sable I., Nova Scotia*); GM (*Grand Manan archipelago, New Brunswick*); MSI (*Machias Seal I., New Brunswick*); PEI (*Prince Edward I.*); SI (*Sable I., Nova Scotia*); SPM (*Saint Pierre et Miquelon*).

LOONS TO HERONS

The editor failed to receive a summary of the Pt. Lapreau, NB, seabird monitoring efforts this spring, but was aware of 647 Red-throated Loons tallied May 7, reinforcing the importance of the Bay of Fundy for northward migration for this species, as well as scoters and eiders (see the *Spring 1996 Atlantic Provinces* report).

This year's southern heron flight was pleasant, but not impressive. The only Least Bittern was found dead in Lameque, NB, April 10. Three single Great Blue Herons reached the Avalon, NF, in April, an above-average showing. Little Blue Herons were unusually scarce, with but a single adult in Newfoundland, where much appreciated. Glossy Ibis were also reluctant to move north. The New Brunswick Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was particularly obliging, lingering near Hampton from May 5 to the end of the period.

The heron table in the 1996 report was incorrectly printed. The corrected version appears in the corrigenda (page 841).

WATERFOWL

An imm. Greater White-fronted Goose graced the Charlo R. estuary, NB, from May 12–20 (D. Mann, B. Gilles et al.). Flocks of Snow Geese descended on the Region this spring, but—as usual—most favored New Brunswick, where 4 flocks of 12 or more birds were noted, including one of 53 on the Saint John R. May 2. In Nova Scotia, a flock of about 40 ranged between Economy and Advocate, on the n. shore of the Minas Basin, from April 29 to May 11. Brant continue to increase each spring; numbers peaked in early April, with 10,000 on GM (BD), 8000 on CSI (MN), and 2000 around BI.

An unusual number of Blue-winged Teal moved through SPM between April 16 and May 18, with not more than 1 male and 4 females on St. Pierre, and 3 or 4 pair on Miquelon (v.o.). European dabbling ducks (but of European origin?) are sighted with increasing regularity. "Common" Green-winged Teal reports were almost confined to New Brunswick and Newfoundland, except for a male at the Amherst Pt., NS, bird sanctuary Apr. 15. There were 4 separate males in New Brunswick between mid-March and mid-April, while in Newfoundland, Mactavish reported 4 pair in St. John's until mid-April, with 2 pair still present in mid-May. Two other males were noted near Ferryland (CB, JW et al.). Two separate bachelor males in late May may represent post-coital birds—we anxiously await confirmation of the first "Common" Green-winged Teal breeding in North America. Mind you, we've awaited such a confirmation for Eur. Wigeon for some time, for which species sightings proliferated across the Region, too numerous to cite individually. There were four overwintering birds in St. John's, NF, until early May, with two

1997 SOUTHERN HERON SUMMARY, ATLANTIC CANADA

	NOVA SCOTIA	NEW BRUNSWICK	NEWFOUNDLAND
Great Egret	5	5	
Little Blue Heron			1
Snowy Egret	7	4	
Tricolored Heron	1	1	
Cattle Egret	2	3	2
Green Heron	6	*	
Yellow-crowned Night-heron		1	
Glossy Ibis	2	2	

*breeds regularly in s. New Brunswick in small numbers

others in Bonavista. Two pair and three single males and a single female were seen in Nova Scotia through early May, while New Brunswick had a pair and five other single males, all in May.

Always rare and appreciated, a male Canvasback made a brief, but well documented, appearance on the Laplanche R., just inside Nova Scotia, Mar. 31 (T. Erskine et al.). Two other males were hits in New Brunswick: Apr. 17 in Lancaster (D. Johnston), and Apr. 13–May 2 at Saints' Rest Marsh (v.o.). Oddly, there were many more Tufted Duck reports away from Newfoundland—where the two St. John's overwintering females departed mid-April—than in it. In New Brunswick, the overwintering Saint John male was present until late March, and a group of two females with an imm. male was seen near Saint John Mar. 5 (CJ). Tufteds are now almost routine in Nova Scotia. March reports included males in Glace Bay (C. Murrant) and Trenton (C. Brennan, KM), and a male with two females in Eel Brook, *Yarmouth*, Mar. 28 (BMy, IM, EM, MN). Single males were on Sullivan's Pond Apr. 5 (J. Waldron et al.), and at the mouth of Barrington R. Apr. 6–15 (MN et al.). McLaren and Mills observed "a rather amorous pair" at Tiddville Pond, Digby Neck, Apr. 14. How long before Tufted Ducks are confirmed breeding on this side of the Atlantic?

King Eiders bypassed observers in Nova Scotia, but the other provinces fared well, with six males in New Brunswick in late March through mid-April, two off Cape Race May 18, and six birds in SPM during April (O. Poirier). Although the editor doesn't have the seabird counts from Pt. Lapreau, scoters must have passed through as described last year, as 11,700 Black Scoters were counted in the lower Restigouche, in n. New Brunswick, in early May. An interesting description was provided by Michael Lushington, who commendably observes birds in addition to simply counting them:

Further notes on the Black Scoters. Last year, I opined that these birds concentrate in an area of the lower Restigouche, beginning just west of its entry into the Bay of Chaleur and continuing upstream for about ten kilometers, but stopping short of the Campbellton area. My observations this spring are confirming that. We started to see small numbers just west of the point created by the upper government wharf and the chemical plant; as we moved farther north, we encountered raft after raft, several a couple of kilometres in length,

each containing up to 3000 birds. Abruptly, just around the area known as McLeod's Siding, they stopped.

The main rafts were always in an extended ellipse, very narrow at each end, and bulging in the middle, sometimes with two bulges; I have never seen a circular or square or amorphous raft—and these ellipses always face into the current. Scattered flocks can be found inside the main rafts; they, too, are always swimming facing the current, unless a couple are having a fight. When they dive, in these smaller flocks, most of them go together. The singing is very pronounced and there seems to be a great deal of skirmishing going on.

Last year I noted that, in the large rafts, there seemed to be a great deal of excited activity and I guessed that this might be a sign of imminent departure farther north. This year, with a far better scope and more of an awareness as to what to look for, I am realizing that this frenzied activity probably has more to do with breeding excitement and large group dynamics.

Despite the appeal of a short-cut across the Chignecto Neck, some Black Scoters still choose the longer route along the Atlantic coast of Nova Scotia; 1500 were seen off Three Fathom Harbour Apr. 6 (IM).

DIURNAL RAPTORS TO SHOREBIRDS

Turkey Vultures continue their spread in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. In the latter province there were ten or more sightings away from Brier I. and the Digby Neck, while New Brunswick may have had dozens of birds; I found it hard to correlate all the disparate occurrences. A compelling single-observer sighting of a Swallow-tailed Kite took place April 24, between Sydney and Louisbourg, Cape Breton, NS (S. Fudge). This is the first Regional report since the 1905 Nova Scotia specimen, but despite the convincing description, the record must remain "hypothetical," in keeping with treatment of single-observer sightings elsewhere. The overwintering Golden Eagle (sub-adult) on BI was seen until mid-March (CH), and an un-aged bird was at Daniel's Marsh, NB, Mar. 9 (A. Clavette, R. Leblanc). In New Brunswick, the Dalhousie Gyrfalcon was sighted through the first week of March, while in Gyr-friendly Newfoundland, eight–ten different Gyrfalcons (higher than average) were present around St. John's between Mar. 10 and mid-April, all but three being white morphs. A similar arrival was noted at L'Anse-aux-Meadows,

NF, at the same time. Mactavish believes these traditional late-winter influxes of Gyrfalcons (and Snowy Owls) represent the birds' southernmost winter wanderings. Much later than the foregoing sightings was a Gyrfalcon on SI May 15 (MN et al.).

Willow Ptarmigan were reintroduced onto Miquelon, SPM, last year, and four were relocated on the island Mar. 25 (*vide RE*). New Brunswick birders were excited and frustrated by the arrival of a **Purple Gallinule** near Lower Jemseg May 3–4 (J. Goltz et al.). The bird, about the 7th for the province (and only the 2nd in spring), had the potential to linger but was made inaccessible by rising floodwaters of the nearby river; washed-out roads prevented birders from reaching the scene the day after the bird's discovery, and by the time floodwaters subsided, the bird was gone. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick each hosted a Sandhill Crane; the Nova Scotia bird was near Elmsdale May 10–13 (B. Grantmyre), while the New Brunswick individual was found near Hammond R. May 28 (CJ).

American Oystercatchers put on an excellent show this spring, an arrival that foretold great happenings (wait for the *Summer 1997* report). The first bird was found at Advocate Harbour, NS, May 14–20 (J. Mills), while another was briefly seen on GMI May 20 (BD). On May 18 a single bird showed up on CSI, and it was soon joined by another; both stayed through the end of the period. Stay tuned. Black-bellied Plover arrived record-early by a week in SPM, with one Apr. 27–28. Four Willets reached SPM, they are rare both there and on adjacent Newfoundland. All were seen May 20–27 (*vide RE*). Upland Sandpipers were well-represented this year; Nova Scotia had three birds in the first half of May, while SPM had its 4th ever, on May 6 (RE). For the 2nd consecutive spring, Newfoundland did not experience a fall-out of European waders, despite some apparently appropriate winds in late April. However, two different Black-tailed Godwits were fair consolation: one at Whitbourne April 26–May 1 (J. Gosse), the other at Bonavista May 8–11 (J. Joy). Perhaps part of the same movement, a Ruff (reeve) was at Mt. Carmel, St. Mary's Bay, May 9 (T. Boland, G. Stroud). Two Pectoral Sandpipers on GMI April 17 (BD) were the first ever seen in April, and very rare in spring. Short-billed Dowitchers are similarly scarce as spring migrants in the Region, especially on the remarkably early date of April 19, and at the unexpected location of Portugal Cove South, on the Avalon Pen (CB, JW).

GULLS TO ALCIDS

Perhaps coincident with the arrival of Am. Oystercatchers, Laughing Gulls showed up in force across the Region during May, with at least nine individuals in Nova Scotia (seven adults), a dozen in s. New Brunswick (all adults), three in Newfoundland (all adults, including two in St. John's), and an adult and an immature on SPM, only the 4th occurrence for the species locally. It would be wonderful if the species would reestablish its breeding presence in Nova Scotia. Newfoundland continues to be the province of choice in the Region for Franklin's Gull; they are almost annual there, usually in the first 10 days of May. This spring there were two adults, at St. Mary's May 9 (*fide* JP) and Goulds May 17 (BMt et al.). Away from this Franklin's hot-spot, New Brunswick had its 6th spring bird, an adult at Petit Shippagan May 23 (HC). Lesser Black-backed Gulls are now too routine to cite individually, although it's heartening that more sub-adult birds are being identified, as observers grow more familiar with these trickier plumages. There were four birds in New Brunswick, five in Nova Scotia, and several around St. John's, NE, including three into late May. After such a luscious gull report, I've saved the best for last, Canada's first **Black-tailed Gull**, an adult on wretchedly inaccessible Sable I. from May 8 to the end of the period, well-photographed by Lucas. It seems natural to suspect that this may be the Rhode Island bird, perhaps tired of easy scrutiny, and deciding to make life more difficult for the acquisitive lister.

An ad. Ivory Gull on MSI Apr. 3 (*fide* BD) was not associated with an impressive appearance along n.e. Newfoundland Apr. 25–30. Northeast gales brought hundreds of this classy gull to communities along the tip of the Northern Pen., the most local residents had seen in recent years. Only two imm. birds were reported (D. Anderson). The flight reached as far south as the Avalon Pen., with counts from Cape Spear of 12 Apr. 28 and five Apr. 30 (BMt et al.). The reasons for this year's flight are unknown, since pack ice and NE gales prevail along the n.e. coast of Newfoundland annually in late April.

DOVES TO FLYCATCHERS

Mourning Doves, now firmly established (and still increasing) across the Maritimes, may be poised to expand across the Cabot Strait. Five reached SPM, and with sufficient feeders they may be able to hang on. Snowy Owls were well-reported from Newfoundland and SPM in March and



This adult Black-tailed Gull was present on Sable Island, Nova Scotia, May 11–22, 1997, providing a first photographically confirmed record for Canada. Photograph/Zoe Lucas

April, with six different birds on SPM and five at the St. John's dump. Elsewhere in the Region none was reported. A freshly dead N. Saw-whet Owl was found near St. John's, NE, April 10 (K. Knowles); the species continues to be much more rare than Boreal Owl in Newfoundland, with only a handful of records. Southern woodpeckers made a modest incursion into the Region. A single Red-headed Woodpecker was on GMI May 19–21 (*fide* BD). Four Red-bellied Woodpeckers appeared in late May: one in New Brunswick on GMI May 19–22 (*fide* BD), and in Nova Scotia, three in Little Harbour May 22 (DY), Woods Harbour May 25 (*fide* JC), and BI May 27–28 (D. Pugh et al.). For the 2nd consecutive spring an **Acadian Flycatcher** graced BI, this year May 18 (IM, EM, A. Maclean); a photo could not be secured this time, but the written report was thorough. There are about a half-dozen provincial occurrences. A W. Kingbird, typically an autumn vagrant in the Region, was unexpected on BPI May 22–28. An E. Kingbird at Chebucto Head Apr. 6 (K. Tutt, C. Cornell) was record-early in Nova Scotia by over 2 weeks. Four E. Kingbirds together on SPM May 27 (*fide* RE) represented a notable concentration for the n. side of the Cabot Strait. House Wrens are rarely found in the Region in spring, but one was banded on BPI May 10.

SWALLOWS TO WAXWINGS

It's always worthwhile to take the measure of N. Rough-winged Swallow sightings, as the Region is at the extreme edge of their n.e. range. This spring Nova Scotian sightings were restricted to islands, with two on SI May 14 (MN) and one at Freeport, Long I., May 19 (IM, EM). In New Brunswick, a potentially nesting pair was seen at Fredericton Jct. May 28–30 (ST et al.). The St. John's dump, NE, Jackdaw was seen on 5 dates between Mar. 16 and Apr. 29 (BMt et al.); this is considered the same bird present since December 1995. Spring Blue-gray Gnatcatchers are becoming routine in the s. part of the Region, and it would be wonderful to add this species to our list of regular breeders. There were 3 sightings in Nova Scotia: SI May 14 (MN, S. Atwood) & 28, and BI May 23 (RS). In New Brunswick there were 2 mainland reports, May 13 in Alma (D. Melanson) and May 19 in St. Andrew's, but five were unprecedented on GMI May 19 (v.o., *fide* BD).

The New Brunswick Varied Thrush was last reported Mar. 17. Both New Brunswick and Nova Scotia enjoyed a **Fieldfare** this spring, the 2nd record for each province. The New Brunswick bird was much more accessible and cooperative, lingering in Sussex from Feb. 21 to early May (D&J Hughes, m.ob.). The Nova Scotia bird was on remote SI, and seen only on the day of its discovery, Apr. 22 (*fide* IM). Gray-cheeked Thrushes continue to be scarce on SPM, where only three–four individuals were encountered. Also on SPM, and of note, was a singing male Gray Catbird a few hundred meters from where the first local nest was found 2 years ago. An overwintering male Brown Thrasher was belatedly discovered on Cheticamp I., Cape Breton, NS (KM), and by Apr. 26 it was in full song; it was unlikely to attract a mate so far removed from the species' limited breeding range in New Brunswick.

VIREOS TO FINCHES

Unusual vireos were restricted to Nova Scotia. White-eyed Vireos were found on SI May 8 (FL) and BI May 27 (EM, IM), while the 2nd or 3rd spring Yellow-throated Vireo was on SI May 6 (IM, FL). Birders across the Region were desperate for returning warblers, but patience was required; this observer had but 2 species on the North American spring migration count, briefly noted through snow flurries. Almost all the breeding species had been seen before the end of the period, and migration continued well in June. Although the late migration

precluded any conclusions regarding the state of the breeding populations, desperate searching through the slim pickings did reveal a few rarities, modest consolation. Golden-winged Warblers, increasingly scarce, were sighted at Upper Clements May 10 and Gaspereau May 31–June 10 (P. Taylor et al.); both were males, the latter singing cooperatively throughout its stay. McLaren suspected that one of three male Black-throated Blue Warblers on SI May 9 was of the southeast *cairnsi* race, based on its streaked crown and broad black back streaks. Cerulean Warblers are exceptional in spring, so a male on GMI May 19–22 was both rare and cooperative (M. Cormier et al.), while a male reported from Charlottetown, PEI, May 16 had no details (L. Stats). A quartet of southern yellow warblers made island appearances in Nova Scotia, as is their wont; a male Prothonotary on BI May 6–10 (CH, RS), a male Kentucky on BI May 24 (BMy), a male Hooded on SI May 6 (FL, IM), and a female Hooded on BI May 18 (IM, G&J Tufts).

A "Banner Year" is an appropriately bright description of this spring's flight of tanagers into the Region. Nova Scotia perhaps had the brighter pennant, with at least 12 Summers, 20 Scarlets, and a male Western Tanager, this latter bird on BPI May 23–24 (*vide* JC), for about the 15th or 16th provincial record. New Brunswick was not to be outdone; there were six Summer Tanagers in late May among dozens of Scarlet Tanagers, and two **Western Tanagers**, the 6th and 7th provincial records, the first on GMI May 19 (*vide* BD), and a cooperative male in Saint John May 31 and later (W. Lockett et al.). Poorly-covered Prince Edward Island reported but two Scarlet Tanagers. Two separate Black-headed Grosbeak reports from PEI were not documented, and must be discounted in light of the heavy flight of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks monitored across New Brunswick and Nova Scotia (dozens of reports); the Rose-breasted incursion extended across the Cabot Strait, with five birds in the Avalon Pen. of Newfoundland, and ≤ six birds in SPM during May. The Blue Grosbeak flight was moderate. In Nova Scotia there were not more than nine May birds, including four on SI May 12–15, two on BPI, and one in Sand L., Cape Breton, May 15–20 (v.o.). Just three were in New Brunswick, including two on GMI, all in May, and two were reported from Rocky Pt., PEI, May 12–13 (L&C Plourd). In Nova Scotia, many Indigo Buntings were noted, almost all in May, with 12 or more on BI around mid-month.

New Brunswick noted a similar movement, with a remarkable count of 25 birds on GMI May 19 (*vide* BD). Elsewhere in the Region, three single males were found on PEI in May, and five reached the Avalon Pen., NF, at the same time. Spring Dickcissels are always noteworthy. Nova Scotia hosted three, a male Apr. 21 at Canard Pond (T. Regan, no †), a male on BI May 19 (IM et al.), and a female on BI May 31 (*vide* CH). New Brunswick enjoyed a female Dickcissel at Alma May 25–27 (D. Rossiter et al.), while the overwintering bird on SPM remained through the period. The overwintering E. Towhee in Dartmouth departed Apr. 14, and ten others were seen at various locations across the province between Apr. 20 and the end of the period.

Spring Clay-colored Sparrows are expected only in New Brunswick, where males have established territories in earlier years; this year one was in Alma May 22–25 (RW). Two extralimital Chipping Sparrows reached SPM in the 3rd week of May (*vide* RE). A few spring Field Sparrows are routine; one was on SI May 7–12 (FL, IM), with another early on CSI Apr. 14 (MN et al.). New Brunswick had three in May: in Alma May 8 & 13 (RW), and a singing bird at Mary's Pt. May 26 (DAC). An "Ipswich" Savannah Sparrow was w. of its usual spring migration route at Waterside, NB, Apr. 5 (ST), constituting one of few compelling New Brunswick records. A very rare spring Grasshopper Sparrow showed well on SI May 5–9 (FL, IM et al.). It was the finest late-April showing of Fox Sparrows in Nova Scotia in many years, with most feeders reporting several individuals, but the star feeder was one in Port Greville, which hosted at least 60 birds at the peak (*vide* JC). An impressive fall-out of sparrows occurred on the Port-au-port Pen. on Newfoundland's w. coast, a delightful migrant trap that warrants more attention than it receives. Paul Jones, on May 19, counted 53 White-crowned Sparrows, 2500 White-throated Sparrows, and 500 Dark-eyed Juncos, an as-

semblage noteworthy anywhere in the Region. The overwintering Harris's Sparrow in Saint John, NB, was last seen Mar. 8 (C. Malcolm). A singing male "Oregon" Dark-eyed Junco seemed at home on SI May 8–16, but in the end it moved on, its passion unconsummated (IM, FL et al.).

New Brunswick grabbed most of the Yellow-headed Blackbirds that were heading in the direction of Nova Scotia. There were males on Campobello I., Apr. 19–20 (J. Mitchell) and Alma Apr. 22 (RW), and a female on GMI May 11–18 (BD et al.). Prince Edward Island snagged the remaining bird, at Pleasantview May 23 (J. Blanchard). The cool spring seemed to concentrate orioles at feeders across the Region, but especially in more s. locales. In Nova Scotia there were more than 30 Orchard Orioles mixed in with more than 200 Baltimore Orioles, with most on CSI (more than 25), BI (more than

CORRIGENDA (TABLES)

CAPE ENRAGE / WATERSIDE (R. Walker, ST, DSC)

DATE	RTLO	COEI	OLDS	BLSC	SUSC	WWSC
04/18				10,500	1500	
04/28	944	96	15	100	4000	25
04/29	302					

1996 POINT LAPREAU BIRD OBSERVATORY (data *vide* Iris McCurdy)

DATE	RTLO	COEI	OLDS	BLSC	SUSC	WWSC
04/11		691	184	629	145	
04/12		1220		1155		
04/13		554		820	169	
04/14		928		3354	320	
04/17	2893	480		727	967	73
04/18	55	4983	530	16,567	4030	338
04/19		112		726	967	
04/20	8		286	1365	2896	45
04/21				930	170	5
04/22		615		2074		
04/24	88		305	2035	1330	94
04/25	12	488		1776	1161	47
04/28				1635	1366	
05/02	143			1055	1787	
05/04	23	72		189	81	15

1996 SOUTHERN HERON SUMMARY, ATLANTIC CANADA

	NOVA SCOTIA	NEW BRUNSWICK	NEWFOUNDLAND	ST. PIERRE
Great Egret	12	6	2	1
Little Blue Heron	5	1		
Snowy Egret	9	8		
Tricolored Heron	6	3		
Cattle Egret	2	1		
Green Heron	4	*		
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	2			
Glossy Ibis	8	5		

*breeds regularly in s. New Brunswick in small numbers.

These three tables were published with errors in *Field Notes*, Vol. 50, no 3. These are the corrected versions.

35), BPI (more than 15), and SI (more than 20). In New Brunswick similar numbers were reported, and most noteworthy was a group of 20 Orchard Orioles in an orchard on GMI May 19 (*vide* BD). Unbelievably, there was only a single Baltimore reported in PEI. No definitive Bullock's Orioles were found, although claims were made, including a purported female at a PEI feeder for 2 weeks; a photo would have been useful, and likely not hard to secure in such a situation.

Winter finches elicited little comment (no big movements were in evidence), and it seems appropriate to close such an extravagant report on a modest note.

Contributors (subregional editors in bold-face): Chris Brown, **Dave S. Christie** (DSC), John Cohrs, Dave Curry, Joan Czapalay, **Brian Dalzell**, Fred Dobson, Jim Edsall, **Roger Etcheberry**, Roger & Andrew Foxall, Sylvia Fullerton, Carl Haycock, Cecil Johnston, Keith Keddy, Fulton Lavender, Zoe Lucas, **Bruce Mactavish** (BMt), Dave McCorquodale, John McKay, Ken McKenna, Ian McLaren, Eric Mills, Murray Newell, Johnny Nickerson, Francis Spalding, Richard Stern, Stuart Tingley, Rob Walker, Jim Wilson, John Wells.

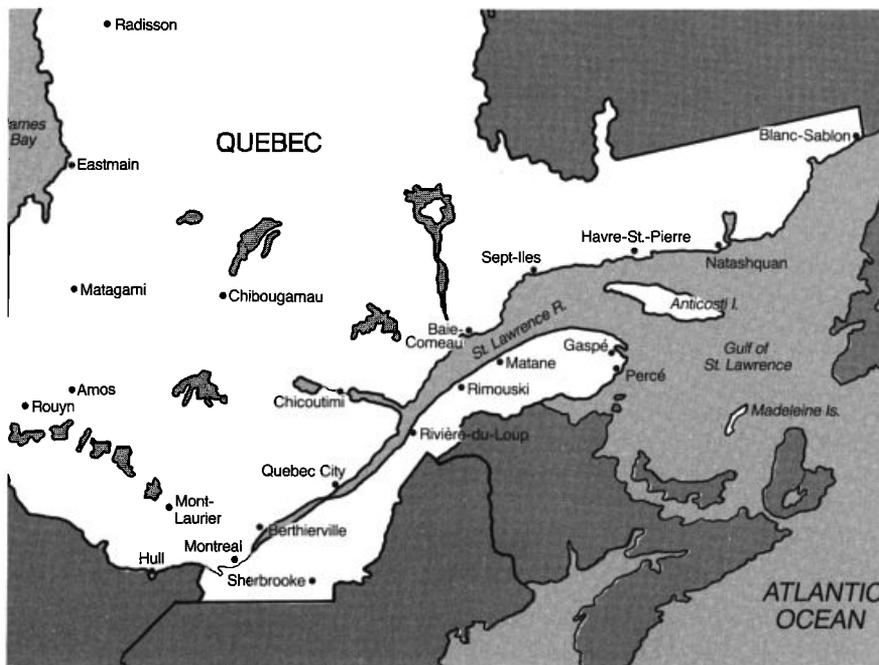
Blake Maybank (BMy), 144 Bayview Drive, White's Lake, NS, Canada, B3T 1Z1 (Blake_Maybank@pch.gc.ca).

Cormorants' nest ever found in the Outaouais region was reported at Hull May 27 (*vide* DT). An inland Great Egret at Mont-Laurier May 24–25 was noteworthy (B. Demers et al.). A Snowy Egret at Richelieu April 2 pulverized the Regional earliest arrival date by 12 days (G. P. de Laborie), while another bird or the same was discovered at nearby Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix April 23 (P. Éthier, DD); a 3rd individual brightened Cacouna May 31 (M. Lafleur, J-P. Ouellet). Other southern waders were meagerly represented by a single Cattle Egret at Chandler May 27 (P. Roy, J. Roy, *vide* JR. Lepage), and single Glossy Ibises at Cacouna May 10 (D. D'Amours) and Pohenagamouk in late April–early May (R. Bélanger). The first **White-faced Ibis** for the Region entertained a group of delighted observers at Val-Senneville, Abitibi, May 11 (AL et al., ph.).

It was a very poor season for the Tundra Swan, as evidenced by the report of only one, seen at Cap Tourmente May 27 (CN). The seven Greater White-fronted Geese represented the lowest Regional total of the last 3 years. Snow Geese apparently peaked at an incredible 400,000 at Baie-du-Febvre April 14. Apparent individuals of the *atlanticus* race were reported at Montbrun, the first time in Abitibi, where *caerulescens* is more likely encountered (D. Migneault, SG). The 15 Ross's Geese included three blue morphs: singles at Noyan Mar. 30 (PB), Trois-Pistoles May 8 (R. Deschesnes), and Deschambault May 21 (F. Dion, R. Dion). A Barnacle Goose made a one-day appearance at Montmagny May 14 (J. Landry). The recent increase in the number of records for the *hutchinsii* race of Canada Goose and for the *crecca* race of Green-winged Teal probably reflects a greater vigilance on the part of Québec observers; the season was highlighted by six *hutchinsii* and three *crecca*. Moreover, two Green-winged Teals showing features of both *crecca* and *carolinensis* were reported for the 2nd consecutive year: one at Saint-Gédéon May 14–18 (SB et al.) and one at Château-Richer May 13 (CN, G. Lemelin). Fifteen Eur. Wigeons included ten in the southwest, one in the Québec City region, one in the Lower St. Lawrence, and three in the Saguenay-L. Saint-Jean.

A male Canvasback wandered E to Barachois, Gaspé, May 17–June 1 (DB et al.), while a pair at Cacouna May 5–6, although still noteworthy, came as no real surprise (JRP). A Tufted Duck caused a sensation when it appeared at La Baie April 22 (H. Simard et al., v.o.). Inland Com.

québec region



PIERRE BANNON and NORMAND DAVID

Average temperatures for spring 1997 were considerably colder than normal. It was the fourth coldest spring for the period 1948–1997. Overall, southern Québec was normal for precipitation, but the boreal forest region of northern Québec was drier than normal. Southern Québec was hit by late snowfalls. As much as 55 centimeters fell along the United States border April 18, and 10–15 centimeters fell east of Montreal

May 7, bringing out some freakish scenes, such as a Northern Waterthrush singing in a snow-covered swamp near Mt. Orford May 8. Not surprisingly, the bulk of the neotropical migrants did not peak until the last week of May in southern Québec, and even later at more northerly locations.

GANNET TO WATERFOWL

A flock of 22 N. Gannets at Cap Tourmente May 19 provided a notable spring concentration so far upstream along the St. Lawrence R. (JL, AC). The first Double-crested

Eiders included six at Mont-Saint-Hilaire Apr 13 (C. Côté), and one at La Baie April 29 (GS). A female Harlequin Duck that overwintered at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu lingered until May 2 (LS), while another individual paused at Morrissou I. April 12 (J. Dubois). A count of 300 Oldsquaws tallied at Saint-Anicet April 30 was unusual for that locale (A. Hogue). A Barrow's Goldeneye at L. Long May 19 was a prize find for birders in Abitibi (S. Lehouiller, L. Gauthier). The presumed hybrid Common x Barrow's Goldeneye present at Côte-Sainte-Catherine last winter reappeared there Mar. 22-23 (PB), while another or the same visited Saint-Stanislas Mar. 30-April 2 (M. Bertrand et al.).

VULTURES TO TERNS

A Black Vulture wandered to Rivière-Madeleine, *Gaspé*, May 20 (R. Blanchette); of the 20 records in the Region, 7 originate from the Gaspé Pen. Turkey Vulture has become a regular spring feature in the Rimouski region, where 50 birds were tallied April 20-May 20 (GG et al.). In the south, a bird at Lac des Loups, *Outaouais*, Mar. 2, was extremely early, considering March's weather (D. Dallaire, C. Legault). Of interest was the predation of young Com Ravens in their nest by a ravenous Turkey Vulture at Mont-Saint-Hilaire April 30 (DD et al.). The hawk migration was unremarkable, except that Bald Eagle was reported in increasing numbers. Gyrfalcon was unreported, a contrast with last spring's high of 10 individuals.

A Com. Moorhen was noteworthy at L'Isle-Verte May 29-31 (*vide* DB et al.), while an Am. Coot was a rare spring visitor to New-Richmond May 29 (R. Caissy). Sandhill Cranes were again well in evidence in Abitibi but—to our great surprise—remained undetected in the Saguenay-L. Saint-Jean region. Elsewhere, seven individuals were reported, including one at Saint-Stanislas April 6 that matched the Regional earliest arrival date (B. Barnhurst).

Shorebirds made a good showing, especially in the Québec City region. A Whimbrel at Portneuf May 24 (CM, P. Otis), and three at Maizerets May 25 (AD, P. Simard), were unique in the Region. Eastern straying Hudsonian Godwits included singles at Métabetchouan-Saint-Gédéon May 19-22 (SB) and at Pointe-au-Père May 31 (G. Bouchard, JRP). After a high count of 12 last spring, Marbled Godwits numbered only three this year; singles were at Saint-Fulgence May 11 (D. Roy), Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix May

15-26 (M. Arnaudin, v.o.), and Rimouski May 24-25 (GG et al.). This year's highly respectable Purple Sandpiper total included 30 at Saint-Vallier (JL), 31 at Maizerets (AD, G. Lord), and 75 at Portneuf (CM), all May 25; a single bird strayed W to Sabrevois May 16 (LS). A Stilt Sandpiper made a rare spring appearance in the Region, in the upper Richelieu valley May 20-24 (JMB, FB, v.o.). This year's Ruffs included a male in the upper Richelieu valley that arrived April 29 and stayed until May 24 (LS, L. Gervais, N. Mayeu, v.o.), and a female at Pointe-au-Père May 11 (GG). A well-described Long-billed Dowitcher was enjoyed by several birders at Berthierville May 28-31 (PB, R. Piché, R. Bannon, v.o.). Rare for Abitibi, a pair of Wilson's Phalaropes turned up at Macamic May 18 (Y. Leclerc et al.), while a female was found at R. Couture May 23 (SG).

The season's Laughing Gulls included singles at Rivière-Madeleine May 14 (G. Blanchette), Rivière-Ouelle May 24 (CA, B. Desmeules), and Pabos May 27 (M. Larrivée). Single ad. Franklin's Gulls brightened La Pocatière (CA) and Saint-Gédéon (SB), both May 22. Two ad. Little Gulls at Chambly May 26 were unique this season (PB). Three Thayer's Gulls were reported for the period Mar. 3-April 1, while the total of seven Lesser Black-backed Gulls represented the highest spring count for the Region. Three imm. Black-legged Kittiwakes at I. de la Visitation April 1 represented a very unusual spring sighting for the Montreal region (G. Lachaine). A Caspian Tern at Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix May 20-23 was the only one to visit the Region (JMB, FB, v.o.). A count of 2200 Arctic Terns at Rivière-Ouelle May 28 was consistent with recent spring counts (CA).

SWALLOWS TO VIREOS

A N. Rough-winged Swallow at Rimouski May 27 (GG) represented a good find. At Val-d'Or May 24, an ad. White-breasted Nuthatch was seen bringing nesting material into a tree hole (AL), providing a first indication that the species breeds (at least irregularly) in the Abitibi area. A Townsend's Solitaire was found at Saint-Fulgence, *Chicoutimi*, Apr. 11 (L. Dion). Huge flocks of Bohemian Waxwings roamed at the head of the Saguenay R. valley during March, with up to 3000 birds in Jonquièrre, and up to 6000 in Chicoutimi (*vide* GS). Since the almost complete disappearance of the Loggerhead Shrike as a nesting bird in the Region, any sighting is noteworthy; this

spring, single birds were found at Rigaud Apr. 6 (LS, P. Simard, GH), and at Scotstown Apr. 12 (P. Wery). A White-eyed Vireo at Oka May 18 (F. Bourguignon) provided the 17th Regional record.

WARBLERS TO ORIOLES

Rare warbler sightings included a Prairie Warbler in Gatineau Park May 24 (B. Ladouceur), a Worm-eating Warbler at I des Soeurs May 19 (S. Dumont), a Kentucky Warbler at Victoriaville May 22 (J. Ducharme), and single Hooded Warblers at Pointe-Claire May 16 (M. Sardi) and at Cap Tourmente May 27 (S. Richard, L. Rivard).

Outside its known breeding range, the N. Cardinal was sighted at Dubuisson, *Abitibi*, Apr. 28 (AL), at Chicoutimi Mar. 19 (R. Guimond), and also at Rivière-du-Loup until Apr. 12 (DB). A W. Meadowlark was found at Saint-Simon, Lower St. Lawrence, May 10, and was seen for several days (GG), of the 12 reports of the species since 1984, eight come from the s. shore of the St. Lawrence R. e. of Québec City, and none from the greater Montreal area, presumably because of unsuitable habitat created by an ever increasing land surface devoted to corn growing. A Yellow-headed Blackbird was seen at Longue Pointe de Mingan May 7-13 (A. Chiasson, C. Kavanagh). A first-year male Orchard Oriole was found at Grande-Île, *Valleyfield*, May 10 (GH).

INTRODUCED

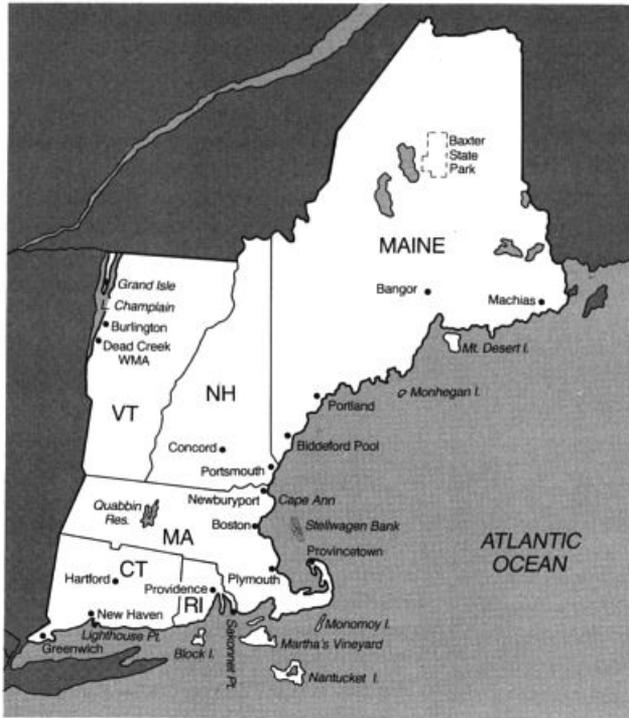
An Emperor Goose stopped at Baie-du-Febvre Apr. 13-14 (A. Luneau, N. Roy). A Greylag Goose was seen near Berthierville May 19 (M. Boulard, LS). A Mandarin Duck was at Otterburn Park Apr. 20 (R. Beauregard, *vide* S. Denault). A Chukar visited a feeder at Saint-Tite-des-Caps May 26 through the season (*vide* R. Bisson). A Eur Goldfinch was seen at a Beaconsfield's feeder May 6 (*vide* PB).

Subregional Editors (boldface) and Initialed

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new england region



SIMON PERKINS

The spring of 1997 will long be remembered for the April Fools' Day Blizzard. This storm dumped 25.4 inches of snow on Boston in less than 24 hours, the greatest accumulation on record in a one-day period, exceeding even the great blizzard of 1978. Yet little indication was found to suggest that birds were affected at all by this event. In Massachusetts, the nesting failure of two–three pairs of Bald Eagles on the Connecticut River, and the presence of a few seabirds seen in Cape Cod Bay, provided the only clear avian evidence that anything had happened. Four days after the storm, virtually all the snow was gone. Ironically, several much less potent weather patterns thereafter caused a number of avian groundings. These affected geese, gulls, and swallows.

Overall, this spring season was significantly cooler than normal. For example, Boston averaged nearly 2°F below normal. For the first time in 26 years, the mercury never reached 80°F. The high mark was 76° F. Consequently, the general arrivals of certain insectivores, such as phoebes and swallows, were delayed.

Rarities were plentiful this spring, especially in Massachusetts. Pending action by respective rarities committees, White-winged Dove could be added to Connecticut's state list, Boat-tailed Grackle to Maine's, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher to Vermont's, and Massachusetts birders submitted Ross's Goose and Violet-green Swallow as new candidates for inclusion on the Bay State list. Amazingly, these latter two represented the fourth and fifth Massachusetts additions in less than a year (following Northern Lapwing, Band-tailed Pigeon, and a not yet—perhaps never to be—identified swift). Quite a

roll. Other highlights (all in Massachusetts) included Swainson's Hawk, the third Regional Rock Wren, two Townsend's Solitaires, a Townsend's Warbler, and a Common Chaffinch.

Though birds appeared to have weathered the April storm, the blizzard cost birders dearly. With a sense of profound loss, this writer reports the passing of Richard Forster, who succumbed to heart failure while shoveling snow April 1. He was 24 days shy of his 53rd birthday. To refer to his death as tragic cannot begin to describe the extent to which he will be missed as a friend and mentor to many, and as a leader in the birding community. No one knew the birds of New England better.

In a state that boasts the oldest continuous ornithological record in the country, and has hosted ornithological giants such as John James Audubon, William Brewster, and Ludlow Griscom—a state in which there appeared to be little room left for avian pioneers—Richard personally added six species of birds to the state list. These were Anhinga, Little Egret, White-faced Ibis, California Gull, Vermilion Flycatcher, and Boat-/Great-tailed Grackle: an amazing legacy. One of the keys to his success

was his uncanny knack for anticipating the next vagrant. Virtually all of his state birds were species he had fully expected to see sooner rather than later, birds for which he had been deliberately and actively searching. Roughly eight weeks before the discovery of the Violet-green Swallow, two weeks before he died, this writer asked Richard where he thought the first Violet-green would appear in the state. In his inimitable manner, obviously having already pondered the question, he answered unhesitatingly, "P'town; Hatches Harbor." He was off by less than a mile!

We in Massachusetts have lost more than a model birder. He was our Ted Parker; our captain of the team.

Abbreviations: D.C.W.M.A. (*Dead Creek W.M.A., Addison, VT*); F.E.B. (*First Encounter Beach, Eastham, MA*); H.B.S.P. (*Hammonasset Beach S.P., Madison, CT*); Monhegan (*Monhegan I., Lincoln Co., ME*); P.R.N.W.R. (*Parker River N.W.R., Newburyport, Newbury, Rowley, Ipswich, Essex Co., MA*).

LOONS TO DUCKS

At least three Pacific Loons were reported this spring, all from Massachusetts. The first was noted off Race Pt. in Provincetown Mar. 4 (SMil), and two others were seen from P.R.N.W.R. May 10 & 24 (SP et al.). Until recently, most "Pacific" Loons in Massachusetts were relegated to the category of "Arctic/Pacific-type." But, based on a growing body of knowledge (much of which is included in an exhaustive article in *Birding* Vol. 24, No. 2), local observers are increasingly comfortable with calling most of the Region's birds Pacifics. Both of the birds at P.R.N.W.R.—the first in full breeding plumage, the latter in basic—were thought to be Pacifics, based on their small bills, rounded heads, silver napes, and dark flanks (lacking any white at the waterline). The latter bird also possessed a distinct "chin strap."

An Eared Grebe, present at Sabin Pt., Providence, RI, since early February, was last seen Mar. 29 (D. Finizia et al.), and another was noted in Stamford, CT, Apr. 11 (P. Dugan).

Small numbers of Sooty Shearwaters and Wilson's Storm-Petrels 20 mi e. of

Monomoy I., Chatham, MA, Apr. 26 (WP) were early, as was a Manx Shearwater off Rockport, MA, Apr. 24 (JS). One-hundred-thirty N. Fulmars and 85 Leach's Storm-Petrels were seen at F.E.B., a day after "The Blizzard" (BN), and another 10 Leach's appeared at Sandy Neck in Barnstable, MA, in the wake of a smaller storm Apr. 19 (B. Volkle).

Three Am. White Pelicans seen Mar. 7 at H B S.P. were probably part of the flock of four that had been present there since late winter (A. Ackerman, *vide* GH), and another single Am. White Pelican was seen on Vinalhaven I., ME, May 8 (*vide* J. Markowsky).

Another enigmatic egret in Rye, NH, Apr. 20–21 (SM et al.) possessed 2 medium-length, Little Egret-like plumes on its nape, but these feathers emerged from a bushy, Snowy Egret-like crest. Birds fitting this same description have been reported in recent years from Connecticut and Massachusetts, but it remains unclear whether these are hybrid Snowy × Little Egrets, or merely Snowys with unusually long plumes.

Cattle Egrets away from their more traditional sites included four early birds in Grand Isle, VT, Mar. 1 (P. Taber), and two in Greenland, NH, May 20 (SM). A very early Yellow-crowned Night-Heron appeared in Pepperell, MA, Mar. 26 (E. Stromsted), and a Yellow-crowned at D.C.W.M.A. May 26 (C. Yates) must have come as a quite a surprise to a Vermont birder.

A Whooper Swan in Hampton, NH, Apr. 5 (A&BD) was probably a wandering individual from the group of four present throughout most of the spring at P.R.N.W.R. An above-average total of nine Tundra Swans, all winter holdovers, were reported. In Massachusetts, one tarried in Newton/Brighton until Apr. 3 (BO); Rhode Island reports included five individuals in 3 localities, the latest of which was last seen Apr. 3 (*vide* DE); and three remained in Naples, ME, through Apr. 3 (J. Preis).

A Greater White-fronted Goose was present in W. Newbury, MA, off and on through most of March (BO), and a 2nd bird, which spent the winter in Wellesley, raised questions about its origins by lingering through May 18 (BO).

Rain and drizzle associated with a weak "Alberta Clipper" Mar. 22 grounded thousands of Snow Geese, primarily along the Connecticut R. Valley. One flock of roughly 1200 Snows in a corn field in Sunderland, MA, was possibly the largest ever seen on the ground in the Connecticut R. Valley. Found among this same flock Mar. 25 were two long-awaited **Ross's Geese** (P. Champ-

lin), the first for the state despite the fact that the species has occurred annually in Vermont for roughly 10 years. The flock, presumably with the Ross's, departed the next day. Most Vermont Ross's Geese occur in autumn, but a single bird was noted this spring in Grand Isle Apr. 4 (DH). We are left to ponder in vain the origin of three Barnacle Geese reported from Boothbay Harbor, ME, Apr. 2 (*vide* WT).

Brant are seldom detected inland in spring as they depart overland to the northwest. This year the only birds reported away from the coast were 30 on Mascoma L., Enfield, NH, May 25 (D. Crook).

Single "Eur." Green-winged Teal were noted in S. Kingstown, RI, Mar. 22 (DF); Scarborough, ME, Apr. 15 (G. Carson); and South Windsor, CT, Apr. 19 (P. Desjardins). The origin of a drake **Cinnamon Teal** in Lonsdale Marsh, Lincoln, RI, Mar. 30–Apr. 5 (B. Gearhart et al.) will, like too many waterfowl, remain a mystery. Wouldn't it be nice if collectors were required to band all their captive birds? A carefully studied hybrid duck in Concord, MA, Apr. 7–13 displayed traits of drake N. Pintail and drake Green-winged Teal (SP). Eleven Eur. Wigeons Regionwide included one in Vermont, one in New Hampshire, four in Maine, and five in Massachusetts.

Redheads were well reported away from their more traditional s.e. wintering strongholds. These included four in 3 New Hampshire localities (*vide* PH). In Massachusetts, two were in Gloucester Mar. 7–10 (JS), two in Framingham Mar. 18–20 (A. Porter), four in Concord Mar. 13–28 (SP), 18 in Brookfield Mar. 15–16 (B. Volkle), and 21 in Northboro Mar. 15–28 (ML). The latter 2 flocks were the two largest ever recorded in *Worcester*.

What has accounted for the sudden increase in **Tufted Ducks** in our Region? Several are now reported annually. This year winter birds lingered in Nantucket, MA, through Apr. 6 (*vide* E. Ray), and Old Saybrook, CT, through Mar. 20 (GH), and another was seen in Plymouth, MA, Apr. 15–16 (SA). An ad. drake Bufflehead still in Manchester, MA, May 29 (MR) was a bit late departing. A tally of 225 Hooded Mergansers coming in to roost on Great Bay, s.e. New Hampshire, during late March (SM) represented a very high count for the Granite State. Comparable numbers elsewhere in the state are likely to come only from stretches of the Connecticut R. A transient Red-breasted Merganser in Gardner, *Worcester*, MA, Apr. 3 (T. Pirro) was a rare find in the county.

VULTURES TO SKIMMER

Black Vultures in Connecticut have become too common to enumerate, especially along the w. border. Their numbers continue to slowly increase in Massachusetts as well, but though they have become annual in the past 10 years, their status in the Bay State still does not approach what it is in Connecticut. Outside Massachusetts and Connecticut, the species is still considered a rarity. In Massachusetts this spring, two Black Vultures that spent part of the winter at a Turkey Vulture roost in S. Dartmouth lingered in that vicinity through mid-March (BO), and a 3rd (?) bird was seen sporadically at another Turkey Vulture roost in Randolph through Mar. 20 (NS). One of these birds may have accounted for a sighting in Barnstable Mar. 28 (G. Martin). However, a Black Vulture at Nantucket May 30 (EFA) was probably a spring wanderer from farther south.

Mississippi Kite reports numbered an all-time-high six. In chronological order, these included a bird of unspecified age in Rowley, MA, May 4 (G. Gove); a sub-adult in South Windsor, CT, May 5 (M. Szantyr); an adult in Bethel, CT, May 8 (L. Harvey); a sub-adult at Ninigret N.W.R., Charlestown, RI, May 21 (J&R Gee); another (?) sub-adult at Block I., RI, May 28 (M&S Carr), and an adult in Orleans May 28–30 (M. Prue et al.). The latter bird remained in the area in which it was discovered for several days, affording many birders a locally rare opportunity to study it at length. As it turned out, the bird was loitering because it was ill; it was found dead May 30.

The only Golden Eagle reported was seen in Charlotte, VT, Apr. 22 (T. Murin). Visiting occidental raptorophile Steve Hoffman must have thought he was still in Utah when an ad. light-morph **Swainson's Hawk** passed overhead while he was helping cover a hawk watch site in West Newbury, MA, May 4 (P. Roberts et al.). A Gyrfalcon was noted at Nantucket, MA, Apr. 20 (E. Ray), and Peregrine Falcon was confirmed breeding in Connecticut for the first time since the 1940s, when a pair hatched three young on the Travelers Tower in Hartford (*vide* GH).

One Clapper and one King Rail seen and heard at least through May, apparently on territory near the n. limit of both species' breeding ranges at P.R.N.W.R., may have been paired. Previous reports of possible Clapper/King pairs and rumored hybrid offspring have come from this same locale, sporadically, since the 1970s. Even farther north and rather early was a single King in

Scarborough Marsh, ME, Apr. 12 (E. Woodin). Reports of eight Com. Moorhens included a single in Massachusetts, three in New Hampshire, and four in Maine. A Sandhill Crane put in a brief showing in Wayland, MA, May 26 (H. Norwood et al.), and two–three birds in Maine included reports from Dixmont Apr. 17–25 (C. Hardy, B. Barber), Kennebunk Apr. 26 (A. Gilbert et al.), and Medway Apr. 26–27 (F. Davis et al.).

Two pairs of Am. Oystercatchers returned to Logan Airport in Boston, MA, the next-to-the-northernmost breeding site for the species; a single bird was seen at P.R.N.W.R. May 10 (S. Sumner et al.), and several returned to the Scarborough Marshes, ME, where they first successfully nested last year. An oystercatcher reported from Schoodic Pt., Hancock, ME, Apr. 29 (C. Witt, *vide* JD) was especially far afield. Eighty Lesser Yellowlegs in Newburyport Harbor, MA, May 10 (RH) represented a record-high count for the Region in the spring. A W. Sandpiper in Chilmark, Martha's Vineyard, MA (VL), furnished a very rare spring record. During spring migration, Stilt Sandpiper, like W. Sandpiper, typically turns NW from the east coast prior to reaching New England, so a breeding-plumaged bird in W. Bridgewater May 10 (WP) was noteworthy. Single Ruffs put in their usual Essex, MA, appearances in the towns of Essex and Ipswich Apr. 19–26 (T. Young et al.), and Newburyport Harbor Apr. 26 (RH). A 3rd Ruff was reported from Harwich, MA, May 17 (P. Kyle). A Wilson's Phalarope in Concord, MA, May 9 (SP) was unusual inland.

A Laughing Gull was a rare inland find at Turner's Falls, MA, Apr. 30 (M. Fairbrother). Two Little Gulls were reported this spring, a 2nd-year bird in Newburyport Harbor, MA, May 10–25 (R. Lewis et al.), and an adult on Mascoma L., Enfield, NH, Apr. 7 (PH). With the exception of four in Rhode Island, and two in Maine, all of the roughly 22 Black-headed Gulls in the Region were reported from Massachusetts. Seven were in Winthrop, MA, where the number of wintering birds has dropped significantly since the quality of the discharge at the Boston Harbor outfall off Deer I. was "improved." In this case, "improved" is a subjective term that differs substantially, depending upon whether you are a gull or a human. The only other Black-headed of note were the two that appeared among a grounded flock of 75 Bonaparte's Gulls in Athol, Worcester, MA, Apr. 6 (B. Fregeau). These furnished only

the 2nd county record. The Bonaparte's were significant in their own right inasmuch as the species is rarely grounded inland, despite the fact that they must regularly overfly interior New England during spring migration. Other Bonaparte's in the state associated with this event included 18 in Concord (D. Diggins) and two in W. Bridgewater (SA). Four Iceland Gulls in Acton, MA, Mar. 20 (RAF) represented a high inland count, while a Regional total of seven Lesser Black-backed Gulls—two in Maine and five in Massachusetts—was below average. An **Ivory Gull** in "first-spring" plumage, discovered at Monhegan May 13 (P. Vickery, D. J. Abbott), may have been the same individual that spent much of the winter in Portland. The Portland bird was last reported Mar. 13 (C. Lemmon, *vide* JD).

A veritable spate of Gull-billed Terns appeared in coastal Massachusetts in May. They included single birds in Chatham May 1 (L. Gill), E. Boston May 10 (R. Cressman et al.), P.R.N.W.R. May 11 (N. Samson), and Edgartown, Martha's Vineyard, May 24 (A. Keith et al.). A Regional total of 10 Caspian Terns included one in Rhode Island, two in New Hampshire, three in Maine, and seven in Massachusetts. One of the Maine birds was inland in Augusta May 3 (D. Ladd), as was a Massachusetts bird (albeit barely) in Halifax Apr. 22 (R. Finch). There were 107 Roseate Terns counted at Napatree Pt., Westerly, RI, May 15 (C. Raithel). Though this count was, no doubt, comprised of birds either converging on, or foraging from, the Great Gull I. colony in Long Island Sound, it nonetheless represented a high total for the Rhode Island shore (*vide* DE). Three Forster's Terns were reported from Massachusetts, and one was seen in Shelburne Bay, VT, Apr. 8 (*vide* JP). Two of the Massachusetts birds were in the salt marshes behind P.R.N.W.R., where the species has bred since at least 1992. A Black Skimmer at P.R.N.W.R. May 31 (S&L Hennin) was pushing the northern limit of the envelope.

DOVES TO SHRIKES

A **White-winged Dove** videotaped in Sterling, CT, 18 May (R. Dixon), if accepted by the records committee, would furnish the first fully documented state record, though a previous unconfirmed sight record exists (*vide* GH). A Barn Owl found roosting in a house on Tuckernuck I., MA, in May (B. LaFarge) represented a first for this Nantucket satellite island. This record is

not especially surprising, given the fact that Barn Owls nest nearby on both Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. But it might prove to be significant, since Tuckernuck represents the last n.e. stronghold for breeding Short-eared Owls (they have all but disappeared from Nantucket). If, as some people suspect, Barn Owls competitively exclude Short-eareds, this could mean that the last of the nesting Short-eareds in New England are in danger of losing their only remaining refuge. A Snowy Owl, color-marked and released from rehabilitation in Duxbury, MA, in late winter, was seen in Pelham, NH, Apr. 13 (*vide* PH), and another Snowy lingered at Logan Airport, Boston, MA, until May 20 (NS). Two of the three **Northern Hawk Owls** that overwintered in Vermont (in Cornwall and Bridport) remained at least through the end of March (VINS), and the one Maine winterer in Newburgh, *Penobscot*, was last reported Mar. 25 (T&D Mohrie).

Sizable flocks of migrant Com. Nighthawks are seldom seen in spring in New England, so a flock of 139 in Concord, MA, May 27 (D. Lange)—part of a total of 319 seen from May 26 to 27 at Concord and two other e. Massachusetts townships—was remarkable. Early nighthawks included one in Westwood, MA, Apr. 16 (EN), and two in Cromwell, CT, Apr. 26 (J. Morin). As usual, a minimum of 10 Chuck-will's-widows returned in May to Edgartown, Martha's Vineyard (VL). Despite the fact that chucks have never been confirmed as breeders in Massachusetts, there can be little doubt that some or all of these birds nest there annually. The question remains: How can it be proven?

A Red-bellied Woodpecker that ran the raptor gauntlet to get to Monhegan in late May (B. Boynton et al.), by January might be asking itself "why?" Vermont's first **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**, in Bethel, May 25 (C. Hoisington), was overdue, though it is perhaps less surprising that Vermont was the last of the New England states to record this species, since it is the only state in the Region lacking a coastline.

Cliff Swallows made a strong showing, especially in e. Massachusetts. On May 10, a day accompanied by cold, damp weather that grounded many migrant swallows, 40 Cliffs (along with more than 700 Barn Swallows) were found in W. Newbury (RH), and 65 Cliffs were tallied in Concord (SP). Other above-average local totals included 67 migrating up Plum I. at P.R.N.W.R. May 24 (SP), and 26 at Napatree Pt., Westerly, RI, May 26 (CR)

Another long-awaited state bird, **Violet-green Swallow**, finally appeared May 12, in Provincetown, MA, where it was found foraging over a small pond in the Beech Forest section of the Cape Cod National Seashore (A. King, M. Tuttle et al.).

Fish Crows continue to baffle anyone who has tried to make sense of their status and distribution in the Region. For example, what was a flock of 26 doing parading N, then returning S, high over Plymouth Beach, MA, May 31 (WP et al.)?

Wandering Com. Ravens e. of their normal range (why don't they regularly come to the coast?) included single birds in Beach Pond, RI, Mar. 12 (D. DeForest); Boxford, MA, May 3 (WP); Quincy, MA, Mar. 1 (NS); and Ipswich, MA, Mar. 3, as well as two birds together in Ipswich Mar 10 (J. MacDougall). The latter birds were observed feeding on a road-killed Fisher!

The 3rd Regional **Rock Wren** was discovered Mar. 30 in Gloucester, MA, where it survived The Blizzard, remaining through April 22 (JB et al.). The 2 previous records also came from Massachusetts. The first was found in 1965 in Rockport (naturally), a mere 2 mi from this year's bird. Single Sedge Wrens, neither of which gave any indications that they intended to nest locally, were discovered in Brandon, VT, May 26 (S. Wetter), and Marshfield, MA, May 7-9 (D. Ludlow).

When B. Loughran found a **Townsend's Solitaire** in Sandwich, MA, Mar. 5, he immediately drove to Barnstable (less than 5 mi as the solitaire flies) to see if the individual that spent the winter there was still present. When he found it was, he no doubt became the only birder ever to see two solitaires in New England in the same day. The Sandwich bird was not seen again, but the Barnstable bird remained at least through Mar. 16 (BO).

Since Loggerhead Shrike has vanished as a nesting species in New England—and it has become a rare migrant—any Loggerhead, including the individual found in Ferrisburgh, VT, Apr. 6 (S. Patten et al.), is a bonus.

VIREOS TO FINCHES

The most significant vireo report involved an apparent Cassin's Vireo that was carefully studied in S. Burlington, VT, May 21 (S. Morrical).

The amazing Cape May Warbler that survived the winter by eating strawberry jam at a feeder in Edgartown, Martha's Vineyard, MA, was still going strong at the end of March (*vide* VL), and a Black-throat-

ed Blue Warbler put in an early appearance across the sound at Nantucket, MA, Apr. 13 (ER).

The warbler of the season was the **Townsend's Warbler** in Provincetown, MA, May 4-7 (SMil), though nearly as rare in the Region in spring was a well-described, singing male Connecticut Warbler in Barrington, RI, May 23 (E. Starring). Remarkably, a 2nd Connecticut, also accompanied by a very good description, was discovered in Nahant, MA, May 28 (L. Pivacek).

A big warbler day in Kent, CT, May 23 included more than 50 Magnolias, more than 20 Ceruleans, and more than 50 Canadas. In e. Massachusetts, May 12 brought a heavy flight of warblers to 2 coastal locales. Totals from Marblehead included 45 N. Parulas, 25 Magnolias, 16 Black-throated Blues, 38 Black-and-whites, 24 Ovenbirds, and 55 Com. Yellowthroats. At the Manomet Center banding station in Plymouth, totals (all banded) included 50 Gray Catbirds, 42 Black-and-whites, 40 Ovenbirds, and 15 N. Waterthrushes (*vide* JA, TLE). Approximately 500 warblers engaged in an apparent "reverse" migration were counted as they departed P.R.N.W.R. in small flocks, southbound, in light rain May 25. Among these were more than 150 Magnolias and more than 200 Am. Redstarts (SP, EN).

The northernmost Yellow-throated Warblers, among a Regional total of eight, were in Concord, NH, May 11 (*vide* PH); East Kingston, NH, in mid-May (D. Finch); and Manchester, VT, May 25 (N. Brown). A Louisiana Waterthrush on Monhegan was somewhat out-of-place on the late date of May 26 (LB).

Among 20 Summer Tanagers reported throughout the season, an individual on Monhegan May 20 (B. Boyton) was the farthest afield, and a male W. Tanager made a surprise appearance in Dublin, NH, May 24 (T. Warren). Western Tanager has become a less-regular fall visitor to New England in the last 20 years, and they have always been rare in spring. Three, of a total of roughly 19, Blue Grosbeaks strayed to Vermont (VINS), and one of four Maine birds was seen on Monhegan (LB).

A high spring total of nine Dickcissels probably included many birds that had spent the winter locally. Nine Clay-colored Sparrows reported from 4 of the 6 New England states reflected that species continued, gradual increase within the Region. A Lark Sparrow was noted in Windsor, CT, May 20 (P. Desjardins), and the Harris's

Sparrow that spent the winter in Salisbury, MA, was last reported Mar. 22 (BO).

A Yellow-headed Blackbird was reported from Penikese I., *Gosnold*, MA, Apr. 13 (T. Quatromoni), and a male Brewer's Blackbird at Martha's Vineyard May 16 (VL) furnished a very rare spring record for New England. A large grackle, identified as a **Boat-tailed Grackle**, was reported from Capistic Pond, Portland, ME, May 31 (K. Gammons). As with another recent Maine sighting, this bird was almost certainly correctly identified, but Great-tailed Grackle could not be ruled out. Meanwhile, in Connecticut, a Boat-tailed was at H.B.S.P., May 22 (D. Sosensky), and a male and two females returned to the Lordship Marshes in Stratford, where the species was first found breeding in 1995 (*vide* GH).

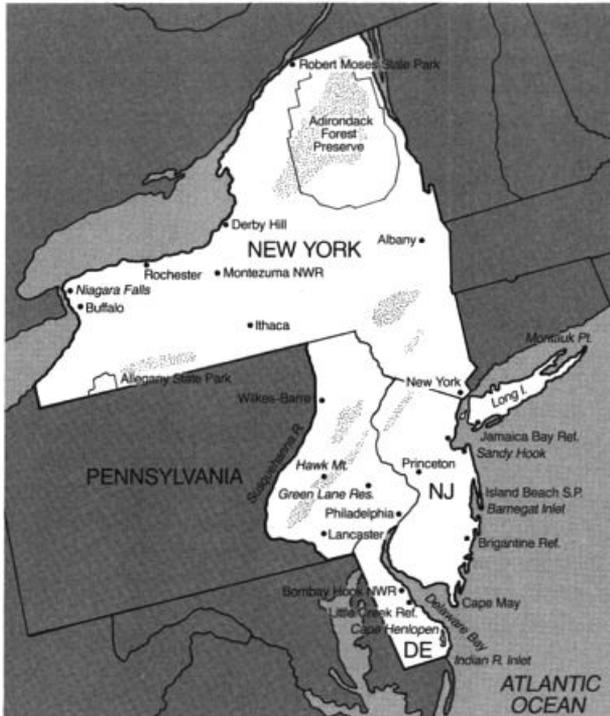
A **Common Chaffinch** was present in Scituate, MA, from about the time of The Blizzard until at least mid-May (ph., *vide* MAS). While the origins of North American chaffinches are generally regarded as suspect, the Scituate bird added to an increasingly prevalent pattern of spring occurrences.

Oddly, as numbers of visiting Evening Grosbeaks have declined in winter within s and e. portions of the Region, this species has shown signs of becoming more common as a breeder in these areas. This was evidenced by the appearance of four adults with one juvenile in Royalston, MA, May 26 (EN).

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HUDSON-DELAWARE REGION



**WILLIAM J. BOYLE JR.,
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Spring 1997 never arrived over most of the Region. The weather for the entire season was much cooler, and generally wetter, than normal. Bird migration was delayed, as well, although a few cold fronts encountered southerly flow in mid- to late May and brought some good flights to a number of locations.

Numerous holdovers from the winter provided some good early spring birding, but there were relatively few rarities to enliven an otherwise chilly birding season. Pelagic birding off New Jersey was poor, although two different trips out of Montauk at either end of the season produced excellent birding. The first, on March 1, found many alcids, while the second, on May 31, was good for tubenoses and jaegers.

Abbreviations: Braddock Bay (*Braddock Bay S.P. and vicinity, Monroe Co., NY*); Bombay Hook (*Bombay Hook N.W.R. near Smyrna, DE*); Brig (*Brigantine Unit, Forsythe N.W.R., Atlantic Co., NJ*); Cape Henlopen (*Cape Henlopen S.P., Sussex, DE*); Conejohela Flats (*mud flats and*

adjacent parts of Susquehanna R., Washington Twp., Lancaster Co., PA); Derby Hill (*Hawk watch near L. Ontario, Oswego, NY*); Hamlin Beach (*Hamlin Beach S.P. and adjacent lakeshore, Monroe Co., NY*); Jamaica Bay (*Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Queens, NYC*); LI (*Long Island, NY*); Port Mahon (*marshes and bayshore along road east of Little Creek, Kent, DE*); Sandy Hook (*Sandy Hook Unit, Gateway Nat'l. Recreation Area, Monmouth Co., NJ*); Thompsons Beach (*bayshore and tidal mudflats, near Heislerville, Cumberland Co., NJ*); D.R.B.C. (*Delaware Rare Birds Committee*); N.J.B.R.C. (*New Jersey Bird Records Committee*); N.Y.S.A.R.C. (*New York State Avian Rarities Committee*); P.O.R.C. (*Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee*).

LOONS TO IBISES

The Pacific Loon reported from Indian R. Inlet, *Sussex, DE*, during winter was noted again March 1 & 17 (*vide APE*); the record has been referred to the D.R.B.C. Another Pacific Loon, this one in breeding plumage, was seen on L. Ontario at Rochester Apr. 27 (RSp, S. Spahn, † to N.Y.S.A.R.C.). The new hawk watch at Cape Henlopen also demonstrated that the site is good for migrating loons, with up to 50 Com. Loons seen there Apr. 2 (CB).

Red-necked Grebes were rather scarce in the south, although one hung around Jones Inlet, LI, all March. So a group of 11 at Cornwall Bay, *Orange, NY*, Apr. 28 was especially noteworthy (E. Treacy). A maximum of 372 on the Ontario lakeshore west of Rochester was an excellent total (RSp). The only Eared Grebes were in New York, with one off Robert Moses S.P., LI, Mar. 9 (S. Mitra), and another at Conesus L., *Monroe, Mar. 28* (Kfo, J. Fox).

The March pelagic trip recorded 55 N.

Fulmars, while the May trip found another 11 fulmars, two Manx and two Cory's shearwaters, as well as numerous Sooty and Greater shearwaters. More Am. White Pelicans were seen than usual, with only Delaware missing out. Some of the reports could represent the same individuals wandering widely, but there were clearly multiple birds. The first was a fly-over enjoyed by multiple observers at Derby Hill Apr. 27. Another was seen over Tobay Sanctuary, LI, May 11 (RP) and again later the same day at Jamaica Bay (S. Wicker), both times heading west. An individual was at Brig May 16 (JDa), and it—or another—at Thompson's Beach May 21–27 (S. Dowling, m.ob.). Yet another was inland at the Conejohela Flats May 17–18 (EW, RMS, TG).

Brown Pelican, on the other hand, went totally unreported for the first time in more than a decade. Although a few sightings probably slipped through the cracks, the turn about from the mass invasions of the late 1980s and early 1990s has been profound. No longer do we anticipate the imminent establishment of breeding colonies in the coastal bays.

Great Cormorant numbers have declined dramatically along the coast during the past few winters, so there were only a few lingering into March, but an individual up the Hudson R. at Cocksackie, *Greene, NY*, May 9–13 was most unexpected (R. Guthrie). A female frigatebird, presumably Magnificent, was over Great Gull I., off the e. end of LI, May 17 (H. Hayes).

Wandering herons included a Little Blue Heron at Mendon Ponds, Rochester, May 17 (R. Cooper) and a Tricolored Heron at Derby Hill May 26, which flew over and then landed within sight, for the enjoyment of the day's hawk-watching crowd (J. Tietz et al.). The now annual White-faced Ibis appeared on schedule at Bombay Hook May 24 into the summer (FR, m.ob.).

WATERFOWL

A pair of Trumpeter Swans, one wearing a band, was at the Conejohela Flats, where a family group of five appeared last spring, from May 17 on (EW et al.); they are presumed to be from the Ontario reintroduction program. The 2nd Regional record of **Pink-footed Goose**, if accepted by

P.O.R.C., was discovered in a flock of Snow Geese at Oley, Berks, PA, Mar. 29, and seen in the area until at least Apr. 10, when the flock departed (m.ob.). Although the ranges of these species do not overlap, several of the previously accepted records of Pink-footed Goose in North America have been birds in large flocks of Snow Geese. The first Regional record was of a bird that arrived with a flock of migratory Canada Geese at Bombay Hook in early November 1953, and remained long enough to make the Christmas Bird Count (DAC, m.ob.).

The Snow Goose flock at Oley also included a Ross's Goose and a possible Ross's × Snow Goose hybrid. Two Ross's Geese in Delaware were normal, but three in upstate New York was exceptional. One was at Howland Island W.M.A., Cayuga, Mar. 9 (SA et al.), while both a blue-morph and a white bird were at Ft. Miller, Washington, on the e. bank of the Hudson R., Mar. 30 (WGE, NLM, B. Putnam). Greater White-fronted Geese were reported in above-average numbers, but a Brant of the black-bellied western subspecies at Sandy Hook Apr. 19 was a rarity (J. Burgiel, F. Lesser et al.). This form is probably overlooked in the Region because of the difficulty of distinguishing Brant sitting on the water, and because of its lesser status since being downgraded to a subspecies in the early 1970s. A Barnacle Goose at L. Flower, Franklin, NY, on the improbable date of May 8, is not likely to be accepted as a wild bird (TD et al.).

Green-winged Teal of the Eurasian subspecies were at Port of Wilmington, DE; Heislerville and Thompsons Beach, Cumberland, NJ; and Brig during March. The usual complement of Eur. Wigeon was scattered around the s. parts of the Region as well. A Redhead at Woodland Beach, DE, May 29 may have been injured (WJW). The pair of Tufted Ducks at Calverton, Suffolk,

LI, lingered well into March (v.o.), while both King (four) and Common eiders (more than 100) were at Montauk at late as May 18 (TWB). A female King Eider was at Longport, Atlantic, NJ, Apr. 6–15 (M. Hyatt). A pair of Harlequin Ducks on the Susquehanna R., Dauphin, off West Fairview, Apr. 5 provided an outstanding record for inland Pennsylvania (DH, R. Henise, ph.), while a very late drake was at Hamlin Beach May 16 (WSy). Breeding Hooded Mergansers were found at 2 sites in Luzerne, and one in Bradford, PA, the later evidence being a female with 13 chicks in Standing Stone Township (WR).

RAPTORS TO CRANES

Derby Hill reported an exceptionally slow season, the 3rd lowest total ever, as the fronts conspired to proliferate a pattern of N and W winds that disperse rather than concentrate migrant raptors along the L. Ontario shore. A new hawk watch initiated at Cape Henlopen by Bennett provided some interesting insight into the migration along the Delmarva Peninsula. With the discontinuation of the Sandy Hook count, this is the only coastal spring hawk watch. Among the birds seen there were two Mississippi Kites, a species unknown in Delaware a decade ago. Another Mississippi Kite was at Hoopes Res., New Castle, DE, May 8 (J. White), and up to five were around Cape May later in the month. For the first time in many years, no Swallow-tailed Kite was reported for the spring season.

The Bald Eagle population continues to expand, with 14 pairs nesting in Delaware, 12 pairs in New Jersey, and six in e. Pennsylvania; the New York total will appear in the summer report. Productivity continues to be good, although there are numerous nest failures. For example, of the 14 nests in Delaware, 7 failed—but the other 7 produced 14 young. A Swainson's Hawk at Hamlin Beach May 1 furnished the only report of the season (WSy). The Cape Henlopen hawk watch tallied an impressive

318 Merlins for the spring, but the most interesting item was a single-observer report of a Eur. Kestrel May 2, which would be a first for the state if accepted by the D.R.B.C. A Gyrfalcon was seen at Snowshoe Pt., Jefferson, NY, Mar. 16 (NL et al., ph.), while another was very late at Pt. Gratiot, Dunkirk, Chautauqua, NY, on the L. Erie shore Apr. 5 (M. O'Connell).

A Yellow Rail was calling from the Port Mahon marshes on the night of Apr. 30 (APE et al.), but not thereafter; another Yellow Rail was heard and tape recorded at Whitesbog, Burlington, NJ, May 7 for one of the few definitive records from the Pine Barrens (A. Sexauer). Black Rails were almost abundant in the Port Mahon marshes in May, and Delaware birders found numerous King Rails at freshwater marshes in Kent and New Castle.

Derby Hill had a total of six Sandhill Cranes for the season. Two birds were at Cape May on May 21 (v.o.), and another pair at Hen Village, Jefferson, NY, May 29 (LBC). Most interesting, however, was the presence of a pair of cranes in Ontario May 31 (RSp, KFo), at a possible breeding location. If confirmed as nesters, this would represent the first modern record of this species breeding in New York State.

SHOREBIRDS

American Golden-Plovers were in short supply this spring, the maximum tally being a modest five along the entrance road to Bombay Hook Apr. 5. Following last year's mini-invasion, the only **Wilson's Plover** of the season appeared at Westhampton Dunes, Suffolk, LI, May 9–14 (K. Meckill, J. Fritz et al.). North of their Delaware breeding grounds, Black-necked Stilts were at Brig May 2, Goshen Landing May 3, and at Cape May on May 17–18 (PL, SF et al.).

An early Upland Sandpiper was near Smyrna, Kent, DE, Apr. 6 (APE, JLS), but this declining migrant was otherwise scarce. A few pairs were at Manorville, Suffolk, LI, during May, remaining to nest (ESa), and Lakehurst Naval Air Station, Monmouth, NJ, had about a dozen pairs (BO). Otherwise there was only the odd pair here and there. The huge concentrations of shorebirds that gather along the Delaware Bayshore in late May were much reduced in numbers again this year. Biologists attribute the decline to a sharp reduction in the numbers of horseshoe crabs coming ashore to lay their eggs. As a result, Governor Whitman of New Jersey instituted an interim ban on the taking of horseshoe crabs, and later extended the ban



An exceptional inland record was provided by this pair of Harlequin Ducks on the Susquehanna River at West Fairview, Pennsylvania, on April 5, 1997. Photograph/Don Henise

by executive order. This order is currently being contested in the courts by fishermen, who use the crabs for bait.

Rarities were relatively few. A Curlew Sandpiper was at Bombay Hook from May 7 to the end of the month (S. Gonzaga, m.ob.), another was at Brig May 9 (v.o.), and a 3rd at Nummy I., *Cape May*, NJ, May 13 (M. Fritz). Stilt Sandpipers, rare in spring, were at Bombay Hook Apr. 30 and Woodland Beach (3) May 7. Ruffs no longer appear at Pedricktown, NJ, but one at Thompsons Beach Mar. 29 stayed for the spring. Others were at Brig from mid-April and at Cape May for most of May. In Delaware, there were three-four in the Bombay Hook-Woodland Beach area during late-March to May, while the most unusual was one at Struble L., *Chester*, PA, May 5 (LL, G. Saunders). Among the scattered reports of Red-necked Phalarope, the most interesting was of a group of four on the Susquehanna R., *Dauphin*, near Marysville May 16 (DH, R. Koury).

GULLS TO ALCIDIS

The May 31 pelagic trip recorded all three jaegers and two South Polar Skuas, in addition to the fine collection of shearwaters. An ad. Franklin's Gull was the highlight of a "four hooded gull" day at South Amboy, *Middlesex*, NJ, for one fortunate observer Apr. 21 (SB, † to N.J.B.R.C.). In addition to the usual Laughing Gulls, the collection included a Little Gull and a Com. Black-headed Gull. Another ad. Franklin's Gull was seen on the Susquehanna R., *Dauphin*, May 15 (D. Bogar) but couldn't be relocated the next day. Up to four Little Gulls were round Cape May in March, and a couple were at Jones Inlet during the month, but the big concentration, as usual, was at the mouth of the Niagara R., where 61 were counted Apr. 17. This impressive total is still short of last spring's record 78.

The gull spectacle along the Delaware R. at Florence, *Burlington*, NJ, continued from the winter season, although diminished somewhat. Following reports of both Mew and Thayer's gulls by various observers during the winter, Dasey reported an ad. California Gull there Mar. 12 and an ad. Thayer's Gull Apr. 28, and supplied details to the New Jersey Bird Records Committee (WDA). There have been no accepted records of either species in the state, although there are numerous sight records of the latter, many of them likely correct. This problem may be resolved after discussion of excellent photos of an apparent first-winter Thayer's Gull at Thompson's Beach May 24-27 (K. Bardon, PL, SF et al.).

Although Thayer's Gull is of regular, though uncommon, occurrence in upstate New York, its status in the s. part of the Region has been controversial. Two Thayer's Gulls were identified among the masses of gulls at the Staten Island dump (a.k.a. sanitary landfill) Apr. 12, by experienced observers (R. Lewis, R. Veit, P. Post, ph.). Also present there that day were up to 17 Lesser Black-backed Gulls, including one on the *intermedius* subspecies. Three early Royal Terns were at Jamaica Bay Apr. 28-May 1, and a Roseate Tern was at Cape May, where they are now annual, May 25.

The Mar. 1 pelagic trip out of Montauk turned up 40 Dovekies, one Com. Murre, 20 Razorbills, 24 Atlantic Puffin, plus another more than 50 unidentified alcidis. One puffin was even seen on the May 31 trip.

DOVES TO SHRIKES

A Black-backed Woodpecker at Irish Settlement Rd., Canton, *St. Lawrence*, NY, Apr. 20 was outside the species' normal range (DD).



Studied at Thompson's Beach, New Jersey, on May 24, 1997, this bird was identified as a Thayer's Gull in first-year plumage. Although wear and fading make determination more difficult by late May, bill shape and wing pattern suggest that the identification was correct. (See also Pictorial Highlights.) Photograph/Karl Bardon

This season's Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were both in New York, the first at Darien, *Genesee*, May 21-22 (C. Laben, WDn et al.), and the 2nd at Iona I., *Rockland*, May 26 (M. Reynolds, N. Bates, et al.). Although Cliff Swallows appear to be increasing over much of the Region, continuing their recovery from the low points of the late 1970s, the colony at Odessa, *Kent*, DE, seems to have been abandoned. Brown-headed Nuthatch, on the other hand, is doing well in s Delaware, with more and more spots—including Cape Henlopen—recording them regularly (*vide* CB).

Up to four Sedge Wrens were in the Port Mahon marshes in mid-May, and a singing bird was in the South Cape May Meadows from May 7 (v.o.). With all the uncertainty about definitive field marks for separating Bicknell's from Gray-cheeked Thrush away from the breeding grounds, voice is probably the most reliable method for distinguishing the two when the opportunity presents itself. Witmer encountered a Gray-cheeked/Bicknell's type and had the bird respond to a recording and repeatedly give the call, though not the song, of the Bicknell's Thrush on the tape (EW). A Varied Thrush was seen by one observer at Roots Tavern Rd., *Genesee*, NY, Apr. 22 (P. Weld).

A Loggerhead Shrike, now very rare as a spring migrant, was at Saranac L., *Franklin*,



Among the huge numbers of gulls studied at the dump at Staten Island, New York, on April 12, 1997, was this apparent adult Thayer's Gull. Note the bill shape, the dark iris, and particularly the details of wingtip pattern as seen from above and below in this shot. Photograph/Robert H. Lewis

NY, Mar. 29 (TD); another was the first in many years for Great Swamp N.W.R., Morris, NJ, Apr. 5 (H. Burk, TH). Three N. Shrikes, including two singing males, were at Massawepie Mire, St. Lawrence, NY, on the very late date of Apr. 20 (DD).

VIREOS TO WARBLERS

The spring migration of passerines, warblers in particular, was delayed by the prolonged cold spring. When it came, there were a few good waves, but mostly birds passed through quickly. A Bell's Vireo, a first for the Genesee Region—if accepted by N.Y.S.A.R.C.—was reported at Rochester May 14 (RSp). Yellow-throated Warblers were noted outside their normal range at Greece, Monroe, NY, May 31 (J. Bounds) and at Hempstead Lake S.P., LI, Apr. 27 (RKu). At least six birds were territorial in Delaware, PA, where they have not nested since the early 1980s (NP).

A **Swainson's Warbler** was present for one day only May 6 at Cape May, where the species has occurred several times in the past few years (T. Leukering, LZ). The first Louisiana Waterthrush of the season was a week early at Belleplain S.F., Cape May (PD). Kentucky Warblers were found in much higher numbers than usual in the greater New York City area, and one was heard only at Carpenters Flats, Clinton, in far upstate New York (BK, C. Mitchell). A Connecticut Warbler was among 25 species of warblers at Wilkes-Barre, PA, May 24 (J. Shoemaker).

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

Far north of its normal range, a Summer Tanager visited a feeder in Irondequoit, Monroe, NY, May 12–21 (R&J Scott et al.). Also well n. of its range, but occurring increasingly in recent years, a female Painted Bunting was at Cape May, May 15–17 (PL et al.). Dickcissels were again reported in above-average numbers, and several pairs set up territories at Bright View Farm, Georgetown, Burlington, NJ, where the landowner delayed mowing until after nesting was complete.

In addition to some holdover Clay-colored Sparrows from the winter season, three birds in the Rochester area in May could have been nesting: a pair at Ft. Drum, Jefferson, NY, May 31 was almost certainly nesting (m.ob.). Grasshopper Sparrows are doing well in appropriate habitat. About 50 pairs were at Manorville, Suffolk, LI (ESa), and many others were at a nearby UPS facility in Calverton (RKu). At Lakehurst Naval Air Station, Monmouth, NJ, several

hundred birds were present in May and thereafter (BO). A Le Conte's Sparrow was seen and heard singing at Woodland Beach, Kent, DE, Apr. 22 (WJW, S. O'Bryan), and another migrant was at Nine Mile Pt. Energy Information Center, Oswego, NY, May 12 (BP, † to N.Y.S.A.R.C.).

A **Western Meadowlark** at Hamlin May 8 was the first report in several years of a formerly regular migrant (RO), but one seen, heard, and tape-recorded at Thompson Grove Park, Monmouth, NJ, May 26, would represent the first state record in many decades, if accepted by N.J.B.R.C. (A. Spears, † to N.J.B.R.C.). The only report of Yellow-headed Blackbird came from Smyrna, DE, Apr. 22–23 (Esh, FR).

There was a small incursion of both Red and White-winged crossbills into the s. Adirondacks in March. Yunick collected numerous road-kills for examination and found all of the Red Crossbills measured to be of the race *minor* of the Pacific Northwest and had *minor* shaped bills (RPY, * to Columbia-Greene Community College). If identification by these criteria is reliable, this result only further substantiates the unpredictability of the nomadic wanderings of this species.

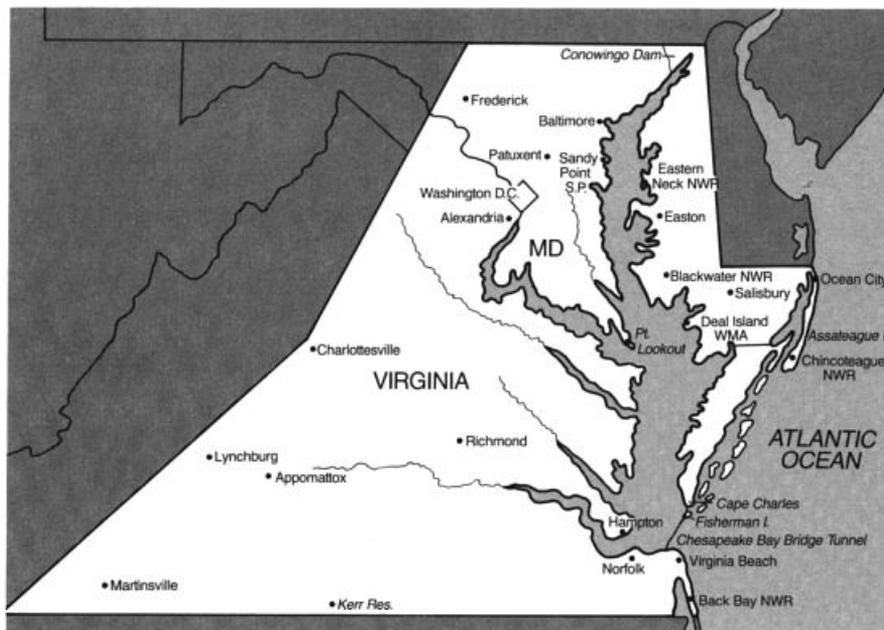
OBSERVERS (SUBREGIONAL COMPILERS IN BOLD-FACE):

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middle atlantic coast region



MARSHALL ILIFF

This winter was one of the warmer on record, resulting in some early nesting and migration activity in the Region. The spring seemed to be ahead of schedule up until about mid-April, at which point most neotropical migrants seemed surprisingly absent. Most migrants did not arrive until early May, when small flights were noted May 3–4 and May 10. Much of early May was cold and wet nonetheless, and most numbers seemed low. Some coastal species, such as Brown Pelicans and American Oystercatchers, continue their push into the Chesapeake Bay, and observers continue to monitor their success. Loon numbers seemed shockingly low, grebes were up, and Red-breasted Nuthatches continued to be absent, but otherwise most species counts seemed to be about average.

Abbreviations: Assat. (*Assateague Island National Seashore*); Bay (*Chesapeake Bay*); Black. (*Blackwater N.W.R.*); C.B.B.T. (*Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel*); Chinc. (*Chincoteague N.W.R.*); Conowingo (*Conowingo Dam*); Craney (*Craney I. Disposal Area*); D.C.

(*District of Columbia*); Hart (*Hart-Miller I.*); p.a. (pending acceptance by state records committee); P.R.N.A.S. (*Patuxent River Naval Air Station*); P.L.S.P. (*Pt. Lookout S.P.*). All locations listed in the text can be assumed to be in Maryland, except that each Virginia location is annotated the first time it is mentioned.

LOONS TO SHOREBIRDS

Counts of both loons from the Bay and elsewhere were absolutely miserable, with 65 Com. Loons at Virginia Beach, VA, earning the dubious title of seasonal high count Mar. 2 (RA), the only count over 26 this season. Horned Grebes fared much better, and had notable concentrations of 300 at P.L.S.P., *Saint Mary's*, Mar. 11 (PC); 131 at Winter Harbor, *Matthews*, VA, Mar. 24 (JBB); and 250 at North Beach, *Calvert*, Apr. 8 (JLS). Four Red-necked Grebes appeared at only 3 localities, well below average compared to the last 3 good years. Three Eared Grebes at Jefferson Patterson Park, *Calvert*, provided a high count for Maryland Mar. 20 (JLS), and a single lingered there through Mar. 29 (GMJ). Another was at North Beach Mar. 16 (JLS), while one at P.L.S.P. Mar. 10–13 (PC, KR) and another at Greenwell S.P. both provid-

ed *Saint Mary's* firsts. Small numbers of N. Gannets did appear in the Maryland portion of the Bay in March and April, with the last two at North Beach, *Calvert*, Apr. 13 (JLS). Brown Pelicans returned to the Bay Mar. 24 when a lone immature appeared in *Matthews* (JBB), followed by others there and farther north at P.L.S.P. (PC). American White Pelicans returned to their recent s. Virginia haunts of Fisherman's I., *Northampton*, VA, Mar. 13 (DC), and Hog I., *Surry*, VA, May 11 (BT). More unusual was a single **American White Pelican** noted flying N past Ft. Smallwood May 1 (p.a., HLW, PF et al.) for *Anne Arundel's* 3rd and Maryland's 20th. Double-crested Cormorant numbers continue to increase, with 785 Apr. 25 (EB) and a late high of 650 May 24 (EB) from Conowingo Dam, *Harford*. Some interesting small inland Great Blue Heron colonies continued at L. Whetstone (2nd year), *Montgomery*, and Conowingo Dam (EB), and at a new location near Vantage Point, *Howard* (JS). A Great Egret in obvious migration over Winter Harbor was very early Mar. 1 (JBB).

Most Tundra Swans appeared to have left the Region Mar. 8–9, when numbers of migrants were reported at inland lakes and overhead. One ad. male Eur. Wigeon visited Chinc., *Accomack*, VA, Mar. 10–Apr. 28 (v.o.). Top duck honors go to the ad. male **Tufted Duck** (p.a.) at Jefferson Patterson Park, *Calvert*, Maryland's 2nd and first since 1979. It was found by Bell and Kostenko Mar. 18, and was seen and photographed by others over the next 2 days. Captive origin is always possible, but the regularity of fall and winter reports in the northeast, especially the Maritimes, suggests that our 4 Regional reports may just be outliers of regular winterers. Additionally, a recent spate of **Barrow's Goldeneye** suggests that this Tufted Duck—and the one last winter at Chinc.—may both be products of a southward shift of some New England waterfowl. The ad. male Barrow's Goldeneye at P.R.N.A.S., *Saint Mary's*, was last seen Mar. 1 (p.a., *fide* PC). The P.L.S.P. King Eider was last seen Mar. 16 (AR), while an imm. male Com. Eider remained

at Ocean City until at least May 10 (JB), and an ad. male Harlequin Duck was still at the C.B.B.T., *Northampton*, VA, May 24 (CV). Harlequin high counts were six at Ocean City Mar. 16 (SHD) and six at the C.B.B.T. Mar. 30 (AW). Counts of most other diving ducks, especially scoters, were notably low, and almost no big concentrations were reported along the Bay shore or inland. The only counts worthy of mention were made at Rigby's Folly, *Talbot*, where 275 Bufflehead and 3750 Surf Scoters were counted Mar. 18 (HTA) and 840 Ruddy Ducks flocked Mar. 29 (HTA). The only scoter even a little out of place was a male White-winged at Violette's Lock, *Montgomery*, Mar. 15–16 (TT, OJ). Two Barnacle Geese reported Mar. 17 from Davidsonville, *Anne Arundel* (CAH), were likely escapes, while two Ruddy Shelducks Mar. 9 at L. Elkhorn, *Howard* (DE), certainly were.

This year Ricciardi, Wierenga, and others logged a record 81 days and 424 hours of coverage at the Ft. Smallwood hawk watch, and—not surprisingly—this effort produced some good days and seasonal records. New spring season highs were recorded for Black Vulture (188), Red-shouldered Hawk (413), and Merlin (100), as well as for total number of raptors (12,512). Some of the better days were Mar. 8, when the 264 Red-shouldered Hawks demolished the previous one-day high by more than 100; April 26, with 583 Sharp-shinned Hawks and 49 Merlin (3 under the record daily total); and May 19, with 508 Broad-winged Hawks. Fort Smallwood is the most reliable location in

Maryland for Mississippi Kites. Singles May 12 & 17 (p.a., SR) brought the total for this location to seven (Maryland has only about 26 records and the Maryland Records Committee still reviews reports of this species). Another was away from regular Virginia locations May 11 at Hog I. (BT). A Swallow-tailed Kite was reported from Quantico, *Prince William*, VA, on the relatively early date of Apr. 20 (MB). The only N. Goshawk was an adult near Brambleton, *Loudoun*, VA, Mar. 15 (SE), and the last Rough-legged Hawk was a light morph at Elliot I., *Dorchester*, Apr. 13 (HTA). An imm. Golden Eagle at Black., *Dorchester*, May 3 (HTA, WCR et al.) furnished one of Maryland's later reports.

RAILS TO SHRIKES

A Black Rail at Cornfield Harbor, *Saint Mary's*, May 10–11 (AB, PC) was almost certainly a migrant, and provided one of very few records for the county. American Coots remained in good numbers this spring, and two lingered at North Tract P.W.R.C., *Anne Arundel*, May 26 (SA). Sandhill Crane reports are becoming ever more frequent. The South Point, *Worcester*, immature was still present Mar. 7 (SHD), and another immature (or the same?) was seen Mar. 23 (JR) feeding on lawns at Tilghman I., *Talbot*, where locals reported it had been for nearly a week. Another probable immature overflowed the crane pens at P.W.R.C., *Prince George's*, Mar. 21 (GGe); the live decoys here make this perhaps the most reliable place in the Region for this species. Other reports, possibly pertaining



This odd-looking Killdeer, apparently a melanistic individual, foraged in fields in St. Mary's County, Maryland, in late March 1997.

Photograph/Patty Craig

to the same bird, came from Lisbon, *Howard*, May 8 (DN); Buckeystown, *Frederick*, May 10 (ph. EF); and Mannassas Airport, *Prince William*, VA, May 11 (MS).

Fifty Am. Avocets at Craney, *Portsmouth*, VA, represented a very high count Apr. 14 (GW), and five were at Hart May 24 (EJS et al.). Black-necked Stilt reports included one at Black. May 3 (HTA, WCR et al.) and two there May 10 (HTA et al.); three at Craney May 5 (LW); four at Huntley Meadows County Park, *Fairfax*, VA, May 20 (JA, EH) for an unusual inland report; and Deal, *Somerset*, May 24 (NS). American Oystercatchers continue to increase as Bay nesters, with 3 nests found in *Mathews*, VA, in May (JBB) and a new Western Shore high count of four which flew by P.L.S.P. Apr. 20 (JK). Three very early returnees were found Mar. 2 in Winter Harbor (JBB). The warm winter and warm early March weather resulted in several reports of early Killdeer nests (DP, v.o.). A strange looking melanistic Killdeer, whose normally white underparts were dusky brown darkening to blackish on the central belly, fed in fields off Camp Brown Rd., *Saint Mary's*, from Mar. 22 to 29 (ph. †PC, AB). A great count of 300 Killdeer was noted in those same fields Mar. 20 (PC). An Am. Golden-Plover flock containing 23 birds was discovered May 12 (DS) in a n.w. *Queen Anne's* field. More Black-bellied Plovers than usual were found in early and mid-May at both inland and Bay sites, probably due to cold, wet weather, which tends to ground them from overland migration. The Piping Plover that wintered at Bethel Beach caused some excitement when it was joined by a second bird Mar. 29 and a third Apr. 4; the count finally built to six



Male Barrow's Goldeneye at Patuxent River Naval Air Station, Maryland, on February 23, 1997. The bird remained until the beginning of March. Photograph/Kyle Rambo

May 2 (J&DM, JBB). But numbers quickly dropped to one, which remained only until May 18 and showed no interest in nesting. Piping Plovers are very unusual at any time in the Bay and this may have been the highest count away from the Bay mouth.

Evidence of yellowlegs migration was already apparent at Winter Harbor Mar. 1–2 (JBB), an early date. An unusual Willet, almost certainly of the western race *inornatus*, was found inland at Laytonsville, *Montgomery*, May 3 (†RH). A little fallout of Spotted Sandpipers brought about 50 down at the C&O Canal near Blackhouse Pt., *Montgomery*, May 18 (DS). Hart's shorebird highlights were Purple Sandpipers, very rare in the Upper Bay, Mar. 28 (EJS) and Apr. 27 (EJS). A male Red-necked Phalarope touched down in the Potomac R. at Great Falls Park, *Montgomery*, May 11 (T&JC), while a female visited Craney May 22 (NB) and three were at Hart May 24 (EJS et al.). Whimbrel flocks were not much in evidence, but 180 were noted over Rigby's Folly flying with five Black-bellied Plover May 24 (HTA); 20 were seen in *Matthews* May 26 (JBB). A small shorebird group at Allen's Fresh, *Charles*, May 11 (GMJ) contained three Black-bellied Plover and one Stilt Sandpiper, for which there are only a couple county records. Some notable shorebird highs were 645 Semipalmated Sandpipers at Hart May 31 (EJS et al.), and 875 Dunlin in *Dorchester* May 10 (HTA et al.). Six Stilt Sandpipers at 4 locations Apr. 20–May 10 (v.o.) was about average.

One ad. Little Gull at Hart Mar. 23 (EJS), three Mar. 28 (EJS), four Apr. 5 (EJS et al.), and two Apr. 13 (EJS) were the only ones reported. Single Black-headed Gulls were at Conowingo Mar. 7 (*vide* LE) and at Back R. Waste Water Treatment Plant, *Baltimore*, Apr. 19 (DBu). An ad. **Franklin's Gull** at Dulles Airport Pond Apr. 13–14 (ph. DFA, KM, m.ob.) would provide a first Regional Piedmont record, pending acceptance by the state records committee. The **Black-tailed Gull** continued at the C.B.B.T. through Mar. 20 (p.a., BP). A first for *Wicomico*, and 2nd ever for Maryland's Eastern Shore, was the ad. **California Gull** seen sporadically at Salisbury between Feb. 24 and Mar. 16 (*vide* SHD), and located by Dyke Mar. 6 (p.a.). The first-winter Iceland Gull at Solomon's, *Calvert*, remained through Mar. 13 (KR), and another—among the latest ever for Maryland—joined eight Lesser Black-backed Gulls at Hart May 31 (EJS et al.). A first-winter Glaucous Gull appeared at Wilde L., *Howard*, May 15–24 (DO, †JF, JS, m.ob.),

providing Maryland's latest inland record for any white-winged gull by at least a month.

Caspian Tern numbers peaked at a record-high 398 at Hart May 24 (EJS et al.). A Roseate Tern furnished a nice find at Wachapreague Inlet, *Accomack*, VA, May 25 (LW). A record-early Least Tern returned to P.R.N.A.S. Apr. 9 (KR), and three were there Apr. 18 (KR). Black Terns were exceptionally scarce, with only 3 reports. An ad. and a sub-ad. Com. Tern were at Hains Pt., D.C., May 30 (PP), where they are unusual, especially in late spring. Two Black Skimmers were at P.L.S.P. May 21 (PC). A Thick-billed Murre at Ft. Story, Virginia Beach, VA, was a great find Mar. 23 (BPe). Even better was the first Maryland Bay report of **Atlantic Puffin**, an ad. bird that flew in and landed next to the King Eider at P.L.S.P. Mar. 16 (p.a., AR).

A Ringed Turtle-Dove at Arlington Apr. 10 was carefully checked to eliminate Eur. Collared-Dove (JBB). A Black-billed Cuckoo at Huntley Meadows was very early Apr. 19 (SS); the species was reported in generally high numbers and generally arrived early this season (v.o.). An ad. Snowy Owl was spotted at National Airport, D.C., on the somewhat late date of Mar. 8 (PP, OJ). Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers remained remarkably scarce, as in most recent years. Two reports each of Olive-sided, Yellow-bellied, and Alder flycatchers were well below average, perhaps due to the late spring. These species are late migrants already, and the shift of this year's migration may have meant that they were missed by most observers, who concentrate their birding effort in mid-May. A **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**, Maryland's 12th and *Montgomery's* 2nd, was found hawking insects over the Potomac R. at Blockhouse Pt. May 3 (p.a., †DS, BS). A N. Rough-winged Swallow at Lilypons, *Frederick*, Mar. 8 (TD, KG) bested Maryland's previous arrival date by a week. At Ft. Smallwood, the best flight day for Blue Jays was Apr. 27, when 1325 were recorded (SR). The Black-capped Chickadee at Dameron, *Saint Mary's*, remained through Mar. 3 (PC). Amazingly, no Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported.

Of the two Sedge Wrens reported, the one heard May 17 (†DS) at Violette's Lock was the most interesting. In what seemed to be a surprisingly poor spring for the species, an astonishingly late female Golden-crowned Kinglet beat the Maryland departure date by 2 days when it was netted at Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary, *Anne Arundel*, May 15 (DB). The first Blue-gray Gnat-

catcher was an early single in Suffolk, *Suffolk*, VA Mar. 18 (LW). Thrush numbers again were notably low, and no Bicknell's were reported, though some were surely overlooked. Gray Catbird migration seemed particularly slow, with mere dribs and drabs reported until the first weekend in May, when numbers finally picked up. The two Loggerhead Shrike reports came from Auburn, *Fauquier*, Mar. 26 (SSh) and Brac-kett's Farm, *Louisa*, Apr. 13 (JBB). The lack of reports from Maryland was a stark reminder of this species' plight in the Northeast.

VIREOS TO SPARROWS

A White-eyed Vireo was singing Mar. 30, 4 days ahead of the record-early arrival, at Jug Bay, *Anne Arundel* (DB). Many were reported in the Great Dismal Swamp, *Suffolk*, VA, Apr. 2 (LW), where some might winter. Two Apr. 5 Yellow-throated Vireos were early in *Prince William*, VA (DSt). An average four Philadelphia Vireos were found between May 3–13 (v.o.).

Warbler migration showed an interesting dichotomy. A number of exceptionally early dates were collected at the start of the migration, and some of the early April migrants arrived in force right on time. But despite a very small push on the mid month weekend of Apr. 13–14, most migrants delayed their arrival in the Region almost entirely until the 2nd week of May. Ten species recorded May arrivals, and 3 others arrived on the last day of April. Reporting from a weekend in late April on an average year might yield almost all species of migrant warblers, and would typically miss only the latest and scarcest warblers. May 3–4 saw the first little push of migrants when the cloudy weather cleared up a bit. The next noteworthy day was May 10, when some great numbers were reported from a few locations, and small numbers of most species appeared across the state. Perhaps the majority of the birds passed right over the Region, or came through during the week or late in the season, when observer activity is low. Black-and-white Warblers returned early, with three late March and a number of early April reports. An Am. Redstart returned on the record-early date of Apr. 4 to *Wicomico* (SHD). Great Dismal Swamp tends to garner many of the earliest warbler reports for the Region, such as the Prairie there Apr. 2 (LW). The more than 17 Palm Warblers reported from 7 locations May 10 was indicative of the late spring; this species is typically quite scarce by this time. Four "Brewster's" and one "Lawrence's" hybrids

were seen this season, along with a typical count of nine Golden-winged Warblers. Of the scarcer warblers, 20 reports each of Nashville and Tennessee, 18 Wilson's, 13 Cape May, 24 Bay-breasted, and seven Mourning warblers were all about average. A fallout of sorts occurred at Observatory Hill, near Charlottesville, *Albemarle*, VA, May 10 (NB), and included 60 Chestnut-sided, 50 Black-throated Green, 26 Blackburnian, 21 Cerulean, and 41 Black-throated Blue warblers. A sensational report of 300 Black-throated Blue and 24 Chestnut-sided warblers along the Gunpowder R., *Baltimore*, the same day (DM) indicated that this was not localized to the Virginia ridges. A Prothonotary Warbler that turned up at Liberty Res. May 17-24 (RFR) represented only *Carroll's* 5th. Often missed entirely in spring, two Connecticut Warblers were found: one at Observatory Hill May 10 (NB) and another seen and heard singing at Greenbelt Park, *Prince George's*, May 22 (GG).

The cold, wet early May pushed many Rose-breasted Grosbeaks to feeders, and consequently the species was well reported (JS, v.o.). Three Dickcissels returned to a field near Lilypons May 18 (WLH), others were at Lucketts, *Loudoun*, VA, May 24 (DBS), and one at Hog I. May 31 (JKa). In a poor year for the species, the Am. Tree Sparrow at Black. Mar. 5 (SHD) was especially unusual: The species is quite rare on the lower Eastern Shore even in a good year. A Henslow's Sparrow at Hart Apr. 13 (EJS) provided the only report for this exceptionally rare migrant. No Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were reported, but a "Sharp-tailed Sparrow" singing in a marsh at Jug Bay, *Anne Arundel*, May 26 (DB) could have been either species, most likely a Nelson's. Also at Jug Bay, *Anne Arundel*, was a Seaside Sparrow, the first for this inland freshwater marsh, May 21-23 (DB). Lincoln's Sparrows were reported in average numbers. The 756 White-throated Sparrows at P.L.S.P. represented a great count Mar. 10 (PC). At Liberty Res., *Carroll*, two female "Oregon" Dark-eyed Juncos lingered into spring, with a paler hooded one departing Mar. 31 (†EJS) and a darker hooded one leaving the next day († ph. EJS).

A Rusty Blackbird at North Tract P.W.R.C., *Anne Arundel*, through May 13 (DB) was relatively late. Bobolinks were not especially numerous, but 450 migrants passing Ft. Smallwood May 15 (SR) provided a good count. A wintering Baltimore Oriole continued at a Williston, *Caroline*, feeder through Apr. 14 (*vide* EE). Fort

Smallwood regularly counts large numbers of migrant Am. Goldfinches. This year, 1289 May 10 (SR) furnished the best count. Fair numbers of Purple Finches passed through in April, but not surprising were only 2 reports each of Pine Siskin and Evening Grosbeak (v.o.), given the depressingly low numbers of these species this winter.

ADDENDA

A late report was received documenting the first solid Maryland record for **Sooty Tern** not associated with a major hurricane: An emaciated female was picked up at Ocean City Aug. 5, 1995, and later expired (p.a., GKH, * to Delaware Museum Natural History No. 80733). Coming before the spate of sightings last September, it provided Maryland's 8th and *Worcester's* first.

Observers (area compilers in boldface):

David F. Abbott, Jane Agee, Robert Anderson, Henry T. Armistead, Stan Arnold, John B. Bazuin Jr., Tyler Bell, Anne Bishop, John Bjerke, Eirik Blom, Mather Boczek, Ned Brinkley, Don Burggraf (DBu), Danny Bystrak, David Clark, **Ian R. Cornelius** (*Frederick*, 7321 Old Middletown Rd., Middletown, MD 21769), **Patty Craig** (*Saint Mary's*, P.O. Box 84, Lexington Park, MD 20653), Tom & Joan Cristensen, Todd Day, Samuel H. Dyke, Les Eastman, Steven Eccles, Darius Ecker, **Ethel Engle** (*Caroline*, MD, 20789 Dover Bridge Rd., Preston, MD 21655), Fred Fallon, Jane Farrell, Earl Fogelberg, **Sam Frieberg** (Montgomery, 8733 Susanna Lane, Chevy Chase, MD 20815-4713), Paul Fritz, Kurt Gaskill, George Gee (GGe), Greg Gough (GGo), **Gary Griffith** (*Cecil*, 55 Sarah Drive, Elkton, MD 21921), Wilbur L. Hershberger, Gene K. Hess, Andy Higgs, Rob Hilton, Mark L. Hoffman, Clifton A. Hornton, Elaine Howe, Ottavio Janni, **George M. Jett** (*Charles*, 9505 Bland Street, Waldorf MD 20603), Julie Kamarcik (JKa), Jane Kostenko (JKo), Donald Mattson, Joyce & Don McKelvey, Katherine Messina, Diane Nagengast, Doug Odermatt, Brian Patteson, Butch Pearce (BPe), Paul Pisano, **Elizabeth Pitney** (*Wicomico*, 7218 Walston Switch Rd., Parsonsburg, MD 21849), Danny Poet, Kyle Rambo, Jan Reese, Sue Ricciardi, Arlene Ripley, Robert F. Ringler, William C. Russell, Norm Saunders, Eugene J. Scarpulla, Susanne Shear (SSh), Don Simonson, Earl Smith, Martha Smith, **Jo Solem** (*Howard*, 10617 Graeloch Rd., Columbia, MD 20723), Don Stein (DSt), David B. Stewart, Sherman Suter, Byron Swift, Brian Taber, Thomas

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Marshall J. Iliff, report to James L. Stasz, P.O. Box 71, North Beach, MD 20714 (jlstasz@aol.com).

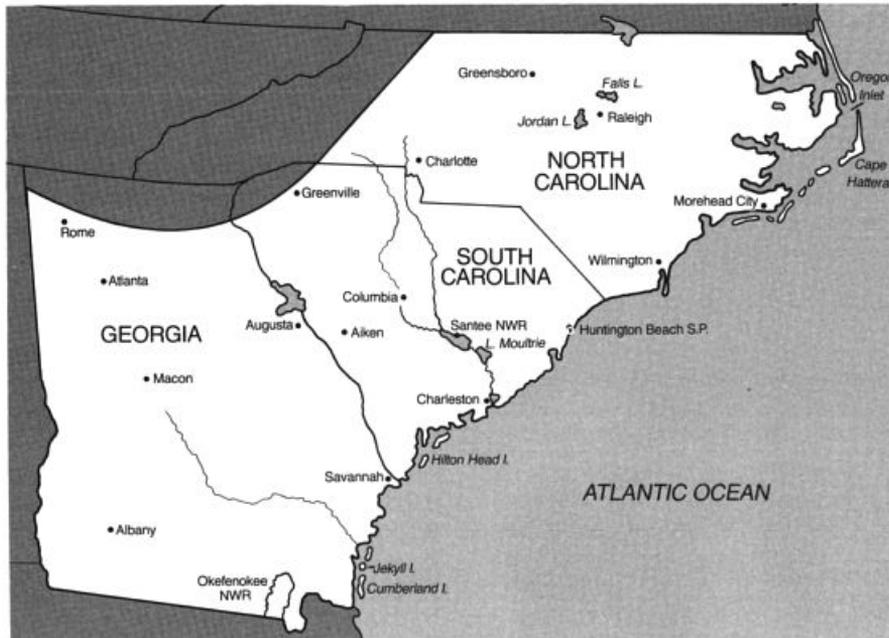
Place names that are frequently mentioned, but very long, may be abbreviated in a form such as "C.B.B.T." or "W.P.B.O." Such local abbreviations will be explained in a key at the beginning of the particular regional report in which they are used. Standard abbreviations that are used throughout *Field Notes* are keyed on page 837.

1998 Directory of Birding Festivals

All across the continent, communities are organizing birding festivals that highlight ornithological wonders and promote bird and habitat conservation through economic activities. The 1998 Directory will be available by the end of 1997. For your copy call **Sharon DeCray (800/850-2473)** at ABA or check out our Web Site: www.americanbirding.org



southern atlantic coast



RICKY DAVIS

Spring 1997 was a welcome season for most of the birders in the Region. Temperatures were much warmer than normal through March and into mid-April. Then a major cold snap put a halt to the rush of early migration for about a week. By late April a series of weather systems brought west winds, cooler temperatures, and much rainfall. This, interspersed with warming conditions, helped to produce good numbers of certain passerines farther to the east than normal (Rose-breasted Grosbeaks along the Atlantic coast, for example). May continued cooler than normal, and numbers of some breeders seemed to be down or just late in arriving. Although there were no major rarities reported, the numbers of migrants and interesting weather made this spring very enjoyable.

Abbreviations: C. Hatt. (*Cape Hatteras, NC*); E.L.H. (*E. L. Huie Land Application Facility, Clayton Co., GA*); H.B.S.P. (*Huntington Beach State Park, SC*); K. Mt. (*Kennesaw Mt. National Battlefield Park, GA*); S.Sp.S. (*Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co., SC*); W.T.P. (*Wastewater Treatment Plant*).

LOONS TO WOOD STORK

Coastal numbers of Com. Loon seemed about normal, but inland at Moss L., *Cleveland, NC*, a count of 30 Apr. 17 (*fide JM*) was noteworthy. Eared Grebes continued from the winter season, with some acquiring alternate plumage before leaving. The latest reports for the Region involved one at the Goldsboro, NC, W.T.P. May 3 (*ED*) and two at North Inlet, Georgetown, SC, May 4 (*WA, fide JP*). Also, the W. Grebe found in the ocean at C. Hatt., NC, during February was seen again Mar. 1 (*SCa et al.*). Seabird migration seemed to be late this year, and pelagic trips from the North Carolina Outer Banks produced no major rarities. The best Black-capped Petrel count was 111 out of Hatteras May 24 (*BP et al.*), and only one definite **Fea's Petrel** was reported out of Oregon Inlet May 23 (*BP et al.*). **Herald Petrels**, on the other hand, put in an excellent showing. Singles were seen out of Oregon Inlet May 24 and June 1, and two were found May 25 (*MT et al.*). From Hatteras, singles were found May 24 & 25 and June 1 (*BP et al.*). The flight past C. Hatt. was uneventful for Sooty and Cory's shearwaters, but five different Manx Shearwaters between May 23–25 was noteworthy (*NB, RD, m.ob.*). Much rarer was the Manx Shearwater found offshore out of

Murrell's Inlet, SC, May 23 (*JP*), providing about the 4th or 5th pelagic sighting for that state. The best Leach's Storm-Petrel total was 26 out of Hatteras, NC, May 24 (*BP et al.*) and the peak Band-rumped Storm-Petrel count was a respectable 66 out of Oregon Inlet, NC, June 1 (*MT et al.*). In North Carolina, tropicbirds also seemed fewer in number, with identified White-taileds being found only twice—one out of Hatteras May 31 (*BP et al.*) and one out of Oregon Inlet June 1 (*MT et al.*). In Georgia waters, where the species is harder to come by, one was found out of Savannah May 1 (*fide TM*). The much rarer Red-billed Tropicbird was found once when an adult was seen out of Hatteras, NC, on the very early date of Mar. 29 (*SS, fide BP*). The only Am. White Pelicans reported were three in flight over the Nags Head, NC, causeway Mar. 30 (*fide DC*). Always unusual away from the coast in our Region, a first-year Brown Pelican was a surprise near Valdosta, GA, Apr. 16 (*BB, fide TM*). The Double-crested Cormorant continues to increase in the Region, especially at inland lakes. This spring at Falls L., NC, an amazing one-day total of 700 was had Apr. 20 (*RD*).

Encouraging was the discovery of 10 nests of Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at a colony in Augusta, GA, Mar. 29 (*AW*), and 4 nests at the established colony in Greensboro, NC, this spring (*HH*). Some early reports of Reddish Egret included one on Ossabaw I., GA, Apr. 12, and one at the Altamaha R. estuary, GA, Apr. 22 and May 5 (*BW*). There were 120 Glossy Ibis at Darien, GA, Mar. 20 (*GB*), an impressive total for the date and area. Also early and unusual was the Wood Stork in flight over Jackson, SC, Apr. 20 (*AW et al.*).

WATERFOWL TO RAILS

After the winter season influx of Greater White-fronted Geese, one was found this spring in n. *Greene, GA*, Mar. 1 & 22 (*PS*). Puddle duck reports were unremarkable in the Region, but several diving ducks were noteworthy. Some lingered exceptionally, such as two Greater Scaup at E.L.H., GA, May 25 (*JS*); two Canvasbacks s. of Fayetteville, NC, May 10 (*PC*); a female Com. Eider at the Morehead City, NC, waterfront until early May (*m.ob.*); and a Surf

Scoter at C. Hatt., NC, May 25 (PM et al.).

There were fewer reports of overshooting migrant Swallow-tailed Kites this spring. The only report from North Carolina was of one near the Trent R., *Jones*, May 8 (NM). Mississippi Kite was reported well from all 3 states, continuing an apparent increase in numbers and locations. Cooper's Hawk reports were about average, with a few found throughout the Region. Much less common in spring, the Sharp-shinned Hawk was found in n. *Granville*, NC, May 24 (HL), either a very late migrant or a potential summer lingerer. There were several noteworthy Broad-winged Hawk reports. A migrating flock of 49 was at K. Mt., GA, Apr 20 (JFI, BD) and the rare-in-the-east dark morph was found at Jordan L., NC, May 18 (RG, *fide* WC). And, not to be outdone, a Rough-legged Hawk appeared at the Raleigh-Durham, NC, Airport Mar. 7-8 (DS, WC et al.), for a rare spring report. Noteworthy inland Merlins included singles in n. *Greene*, GA, Apr. 19 (PS); K. Mt., GA, Apr 19 (JFI, BD); Raven Rock S.P., NC, Apr. 19 (DB); Florence, SC, Apr. 21 (SP); and Southern Pines, NC, May 10 (DB).

Continuing recent trends, rails were plentiful at several inland Georgia sites this spring. An impressive four Black Rails May 10, 15 Virginia Rails Apr. 15, and five Soras May 3 (PS) were all at the n. *Greene* site, illustrating the importance of this spot. The marshes at K. Mt. also had good numbers of Virginias and Kings, and in the weird department was a Sora on the mountain that flew into a tree Apr. 27 (*fide* GB)! Also of note, a Com. Moorhen was found near Chapel Hill, NC, Apr. 26-28 (CW), providing a rare local record.

SHOREBIRDS TO RAZORBILL

The shorebird migration seemed to be related to the westerly winds and wet conditions, especially inland. Noteworthy plover reports included two Black-bellieds at E.L.H., GA, May 4 (JFI et al.); single American Golden-Plovers at Pendleton, SC, Apr. 26 (RY et al.) and S.Sp.S., SC, Apr. 8 (SC); and good counts of Semipalmateds with 10 at E.L.H., GA, May 4 (JFI) and 14 at Rocky Mt., NC, May 17 (RD). Very rare away from the coast was the Black-necked Stilt found at the Goldsboro, NC, W.T.P., May 31 (ED). Also of note were the 2 pairs of Am. Avocets exhibiting nesting behavior at the S.Sp.S., SC, during late May; no nest was found (SC). Breeding in the Region by this species is very rare, and all suspicious behavior needs to be checked wherever the birds are found. Another very local and rare

breeder is the Spotted Sandpiper. This year a pair was seen displaying and courting at the Winston-Salem, NC, W.T.P., May 24 (RS et al.), at a site where breeding occurred in 1993. Rare inland Willets were at Woodlake, *Moore*, NC, May 4 (TH) and at E.L.H., GA, Apr. 28 (BH). This was one of the better spring migrations for Upland Sandpiper in our Region. The best count was an amazing 20 in *Laurens*, GA, Apr. 16 & 23 (TP). The earliest report was of four at the Orangeburg, SC, Sod Farm Apr. 5 (RC, CE), and the latest was four at Townville, SC, May 5 (VP). During the last several years it has become apparent that the South Carolina and Georgia coasts are major staging areas for migrating Whimbrels. This year's big count involved at least 1900 flying over the ocean and beach at Edisto Beach, *Colleton*, SC, May 20 (SP). Future monitoring needs to be done to determine the location and magnitude of this event in the Region. Inland W. Sandpipers were found more often than normal, with the best counts being five in Spartanburg, SC, May 10-11 (LC et al.) and four in N. Augusta, SC, May 10 (AW et al.). White-rumpeds were also in good numbers, with six at Rocky Mt., NC, May 17 (RD), five at E.L.H., May 4 (JS), and five at N. Augusta, SC, May 10 (AW et al.). Undoubtedly the rarest shorebird this season was **Baird's Sandpiper**. This species does not normally appear here in spring, and all reports need to be scrutinized. Nevertheless, one was well-studied in Spartanburg, SC, May 10 (LC et al.) and another was found at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC, May 4 (WF, ST, LF, PF, MW), an area just outside our Regional boundary. It would seem that the westerly winds were responsible for bringing us two Baird's this far east.

Other interesting inland shorebirds included a Pectoral Sandpiper over K. Mt., May 5 (GB); single Dunlin at E.L.H., Mar. 5-23 (m.ob.), DeKalb Res., GA, Apr. 6 (JS), and Rocky Mt., NC, May 11 (RD); four Stilt Sandpipers at E.L.H., May 10 (JS, JFI); and six Short-billed Dowitchers at E.L.H., May 3 (PH). The rare but regular Curlew Sandpiper was found only once, with a single at North Pond, Pea Island N.W.R., NC, May 25 (*fide* DC). Wilson's Phalaropes also staged one of their better migrations in the Region. In what must be close to a record count, 37 were found at the S.Sp.S., SC, May 3 (SC). Inland Wilson's included two at E.L.H., May 2-6 (CL, KD, GB, JD); one at Greenville, NC, May 4 (JW); one at Rocky Mt., NC, May 11 (RD); and one in Dawson, GA, May 18 (JC)

In North Carolina, the jaeger migration seemed to be late this spring, and numbers were reduced when compared to previous years. There were some Long-taileds reported, though, with adults being seen from shore at C. Hatt. May 24 & 25 (NB et al., v.o.); offshore birds included one out of Hatteras May 25 (BP et al.), two out of Oregon Inlet May 30 (BP et al.), and one out of Oregon Inlet May 31 (MT et al.) South Polar Skuas included singles out of Oregon Inlet May 24 (MT et al.), out of Hatteras May 24 & 31 (BP et al.), and two from Hatteras June 1 (BP et al.).

In the gull department, very unexpected was the ad. Little Gull found up the Trent R. at New Bern, NC, Mar. 8 (JF); this species is normally a beach and ocean bird in our Region. Lingerer gulls included an Iceland at C. Hatt., Apr. 19 (R&PT); a Lesser Black-backed at H.B.S.P., SC (*fide* TPI); and a Glaucous at C. Hatt., NC, May 6 (ML). Noteworthy inland tern reports included an impressive 54 Caspians at Falls L., NC, Apr. 20 (RD); two Royals near Jackson, SC, Apr. 20 (AW et al.); a Least near Bennettsville, SC, May 31 (RC, CE); 20 Forster's at Dreher Island S.P., SC (LG); and single Blacks at Columbus, GA, May 3 (*fide* JS), Timmonsville, SC, May 10 (SP), and Fayetteville, NC, May 10 (PC). The only Roseate Tern report came from the usual C. Hatt. area, where from one-three were present May 13-31 (v.o.). Offshore Arctic Terns were found in decent numbers, the best counts being eight out of Hatteras, NC, June 1 (BP et al.) and 10 out of Oregon Inlet, NC, June 1 (MT et al.). Bridled Terns were in their usual low spring numbers, and the only Sooty Tern report was of one-two on land at Hatteras Inlet May 23 until the end of the period (v.o.).

After the modest winter flight of Razorbills, the only spring sighting was of two off Bodie I., NC, Mar. 8 (RD).

DOVES TO VIREOS

White-winged Doves have become almost regular in the Region, and this spring one was in *Lowndes*, GA, June 1 (BB, *fide* JS). And just what is going on with the Com Ground-Dove? As the coastal population continues to decline and even disappear in the n. sections, we are finding several new inland locations for the species. This season six were in Allendale, SC, May 18 (RC, CE), and one was at Watkinsville, GA, May 1 (GB, JFI, MH). The Black-billed Cuckoo was recorded more than normal this spring. This species was reported from the foothills to the coast, with the best counts

being three at K. Mt. in early May (*fide* GB), eight in Alligator River N.W.R., *Dare*, NC, May 25 (M&ILy), and an astounding 16 different individuals in *Dare*, NC, May 17 through the end of the period (JF). Some of the latter birds remained into June—more about this in the summer report. Last season's Calliope and Rufous hummingbirds at a feeder in Hampstead, NC, remained until at least the first week of March (v.o.).

The only report of Olive-sided Flycatcher was of one at K. Mt., May 10 (JFI, BD, KD). Normally very rare in our Region in spring, Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were found twice. One was seen and heard at Raleigh, NC, during May (KK), and another was at K. Mt. May 31 (*fide* GB), providing a first local spring record. Willow Flycatchers also made news: At Mason Farm, Chapel Hill, NC, one and then two were found from early May until the end of the period (HW, m.ob.)! The Gray Kingbirds found nesting at Ft. Caswell, *Brunswick*, NC, last year returned, and one was observed sitting on a nest May 18 (HL, JFn). These birds remained until June. One wonders how many years this pair will come back. Noteworthy migrant Grays included singles at the S.Sp.S., SC, May 15 (SC); Edisto Beach, SC, May 25 (SG, CB, RE); and in Buxton, NC, May 26–28 (v.o.). The always exciting Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was found once—an adult was at the NC 54 Impoundment, Chapel Hill, NC, Apr. 12 (LP et al.). Horned Larks pushed their normal breeding ranges to the south. Three territorial birds were found w. of Estill, *Hampton*, SC, Apr. 5 (RC, CE), and five adults and three fledged young were seen at the E. Georgia Turf farm, *Bulloch*, GA, May 4 (RCh et al.). Other nesting news involved a pair of Tree Swallow that bred at E.L.H., GA, during May (CL), a very rare occurrence in that state.

The thrush migration once again brought mixed reviews. Most observers continued to tell a story of major declines and a general lack of sightings. But some reports give hope. During a predawn count Apr. 30 in Cumming, *Forsyth*, GA, Flynn heard up to 150 Veeries and 300 Swainson's, both very impressive totals. A peak of six Veeries far to the east on Roanoke I., NC, May 11 (JL) was noteworthy. Gray-cheeked were found very sparingly, and no one reported a Bicknell's. Cedar Waxwings were found lingering later than normal and in areas all the way to the coast (m.ob.). This often leads to a rash of nesting reports in the e. part of their range in the summer.

Philadelphia Vireo was not reported in

the Region, but several Warbling Vireos were found. One was in *Cherokee*, SC, May 10 & 13 (*fide* LC); one was on Roanoke I., NC, May 11 (JL, KF); and another was at K. MT., May 11 (JS). A count of 63 Red-eyed Vireos at K. MT., May 11 (GB et al.) was definitely impressive. One was very early in *Orange*, NC, Mar. 15 (GT), obviously due to the warm early spring weather.

WARBLERS TO FINCHES

Many observers felt it was one of the best warbler migrations in years. It was obvious, from the reports received, that many warblers arrived early and that much of the migration shifted to the east this spring. Some of the excellent one-day totals for K. Mt., for example, included five Orange-crowns Apr. 19 (*fide* GB), 17 Chestnut-sideds May 11 (GB et al.), 11 Magnolias May 10 (*fide* GB), 35 Black-throated Greens May 5 (GB), 14 Blackburnians May 11 (GB et al.), 12 Bay-breasteds May 11 (GB et al.), 29 Blackpolls May 5 (GB), 19 Ceruleans Apr. 20 (JFI, BD), and 38 Ovenbirds Apr. 20 (JFI, BD). The very rare "Lawrence's" Warbler hybrid was found once: A male was seen in Spartanburg, SC, May 9–10 (SH, LC et al.). Other notable warbler reports included an early Chestnut-sided at Magnolia Gardens, Charleston, SC, Apr. 10 (J & GH); five different Cape Mays in the Savannah, GA, area during April (SC); an early Black-throated Green in *Dare*, NC (JF); an early Black-throated Blue at Fernbank Forest, *De Kalb*, GA, Mar. 25 (GS); a record-early Blackburnian at Piedmont N.W.R., GA, Mar. 12 (*fide* JD); 22 Blackpolls at the S.Sp.S., SC, May 14 (SC); an early Swainson's in *Jones*, GA, Mar. 25 (J&MA); and an early Hooded near Darien, GA, Mar. 6 (DCo). Connecticut Warbler reports included singles at Landsford Canal S.P., SC, May 17 (IP); Fernbank Forest, *De Kalb*, GA, May 21 (GS); and E.L.H., GA, May 24 (CL). And 4 reports of Wilson's Warbler included singles at Richlands, *Onslow*, NC, May 10 (NM); e. *Edgecombe*, NC, May 11 (RD); Southern Pines, NC, May 11 (SHy); and Spartanburg, SC, May 15 (IP).

If there was one species indicative of the eastern shift in migrants this spring, it would have to be the Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Observers reported excellent numbers across the Region. There were many reports from coastal areas of small flocks present at feeders—an unprecedented occurrence! Many reported that this habit of feeder usage during migration seemed to be a relatively new and developing practice among the transients. There were 2 Georgia

reports of Black-headed Grosbeak. One was at a feeder in n.e. Atlanta Apr. 5 & 6 (*fide* TM), and another was at a feeder in *Bibb* for one day the last week of April (RM, *fide* PJ). One wonders if the westerly winds brought these farther east, too! Dickcissels were reported many times. Sightings spanned all 3 states from the foothills to the coast, with the best counts being the 2 pairs in *Cherokee*, SC, May 10 (*fide* LC); three w. of Shelby, NC, May 10 (JM et al.); and three near Cherryville, *Gaston*, NC, in May (KC)

Some interesting spring sparrow reports included a Lark Sparrow in *Columbus*, GA, May 4 (*fide* JS); a rare Clay-colored in Elko, *Houston*, GA, Apr. 25–27 (D&PG), possibly a first middle-Georgia record; and a late Vesper s. of Fayetteville, NC, May 10 (PC). The Henslow's Sparrows at the 2 VOA in e North Carolina were censused again this year by Wright. At VOA-A in *Beaufort*, there were 90 singing males May 25, and at VOA-B in *Pitt*, there were 65 singing males May 26. The numbers were higher than last year, thus proving again that these sites need to be managed to meet the habitat requirements of the species. The importance of these sites to Henslow's cannot be stressed enough.

A pair of Song Sparrows that fledged two young near L. Wildwood, *Bibb*, GA, May 27 (PJ) provided that state's southernmost breeding record. The rare-in-spring Lincoln's Sparrow was found 3 times: One was in n. *Greene*, GA, Apr. 19 (PS); one was at Clemson, SC, Apr. 26 (ST); and two were at Mason Farm, Chapel Hill, NC, May 2 (JHn). Three Swamp Sparrows were in n. *Greene*, GA, May 10 (PS). One was seen carrying nesting material! This species is not known to breed in the Region; does this behavior suggest something? Also, a Swamp was found freshly dead at New Bern, NC, on the absurdly late date of May 28 (BHo). Last season's dark "mystery" sparrow at Durham, NC, was last seen Apr. 12 (RK), and no vocalizations were heard. In a similar vein, a "melanistic White-throated" was seen on Roanoke I., NC, May 10 (JL). This bird had an all-dark head, throat, and breast, but the wings and rest of the body were apparently normal. Could two abnormal White-throateds in one state be just a coincidence?

Bobolink numbers were locally impressive. What might be record counts were the 1127 at Macon, GA, May 10 (JA) and the 1500 at Augusta, GA, Apr. 25 (AW). No doubt the westerly winds were responsible for these large congregations. Yellow-headed Blackbirds turned up at Ft. Macon,

Carteret, NC, Apr. 27-29 (RN, *fide* JF); at the E. Georgia Turf Farm, Bulloch, GA, May 13 & 15 (RCh et al.); and at Roper, NC, May 23 (BBI, REL). This spring's token Shiny Cowbird report was of a male at the Cedar I., NC, ferry terminal May 15 (JF). Baltimore Orioles were also represented in good numbers farther east than normal, with eight at Pea Island N.W.R., NC, May 3 (DC) and nine on Roanoke I., NC, May 11 (JL). And how can one explain the 48 Purple Finches at K. Mt. Mar. 22 (*fide* GB), after a lackluster winter for the species?

ADDENDUM

A Shiny Cowbird was belatedly reported from the Winston-Salem, NC, W.T.P., Nov. 9, 1996 (RS et al.). The identification was confirmed after the observers got experience with the species earlier this year at the Dry Tortugas. This record represents the farthest inland the species has been found in the Region.

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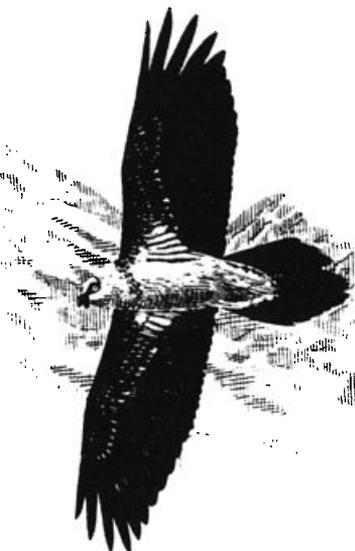
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florida region



BILL PRANTY

Severe storms this spring resulted in spectacular fallouts of migrants throughout the Region. Fronts hit the area March 31, April 13, April 23–24 and 25–26, and May 11. In particular, the storm of April 23–24 resulted in many significant bird reports. *Pinellas* set the rainfall record for April with over 10.5 inches, as did neighboring *Hillsborough* with 10.71 inches (average = 1.15 inches). Large numbers of many species were reported, and the high numbers of Wilson's Phalaropes, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, and Dickcissels reported were unprecedented.

West Indian strays that reached Florida included a Key West Quail-Dove, a West Indian Short-eared Owl, two La Sagra's Flycatchers, three Cave Swallows, one Bahama Mockingbird, two Stripe-headed Tanagers, and numerous Shiny Cowbirds. Other significant birds reported were the Red-billed Tropicbird, White-faced Ibis, Arctic Tern, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo, and Snow Bunting.

After compiling the spring seasonal re-

port for the Florida Region for many years, Howard P. Langridge has retired. This report was compiled by Bill Pranty, the State Compiler of the Florida Ornithological Society Field Observations Committee. Other Committee members are Linda Cooper, Gail Menk, Peggy Powell, Rex Rowan, and Ron Smith.

Abbreviations: A.B.S. (*Archbold Biological Station, Highlands Co.*); A.P.A.F.R. (*Avon Park Air Force Range, Highlands and Polk counties*); B.C.C.P. (*Brooker Creek County Preserve, Pinellas Co.*); D.T.N.P. (*Dry Tortugas N.P., Monroe Co.*); E.N.P. (*Everglades N.P., Dade and Monroe counties*); F.B.R. (*Florida Birding Report hotline, operated by Dotty and Hank Hull*); F.D.C.P. (*Ft. DeSoto County Park, Pinellas Co.*); F.O.S.R.C. (*Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee*); H.I.S.R.A. (*Honeymoon Island S.R.A., Pinellas Co.*); H.T.B.S.R.A. (*Hugh Taylor Birch S.R.A., Broward Co.*); P.P.S.P. (*Paynes Prairie State Preserve, Alachua Co.*); S&A 1994 (*Stevenson and Anderson 1994, The Birdlife of Florida, Univ. Press of Florida, Gainesville*); S.M.N.W.R. (*St. Marks N.W.R., Wakulla Co.*); S.R.A. (*State Recreation Area*); S.R.S.T.F. (*Springhill Road S.T.F., Leon Co.*); S.T.F. (*Sewage Treatment Facility*); T.R.S.T.F. (*Tram Road S.T.F., Leon Co.*); W.I.C.P. (*Weedon I. County Preserve, Pinellas Co.*); W.S.S.P. (*Wekiwa Springs S.P., Orange Co.*).

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LOONS TO WATERFOWL

A rare Pacific Loon was photographed at St. George I. Apr. 23 (JC), and an Eared Grebe was far south at Homestead Mar. 23 (RH). Single Cory's and Sooty shearwaters were observed from St. Augustine Mar. 20 (TT, DW), and a Leach's Storm-Petrel was 20 mi off Port Canaveral May 18 (*vide* RRo). A **Red-billed Tropicbird**, casual in Florida, was found between D.T.N.P. and Key West

Apr. 19 (HL et al.), and 36 Brown Boobies were at D.T.N.P. Apr. 23 (SMI, CH, PL). American White Pelican reports included 1300 at Polk Phosphate Mines Mar. 17 (PF) and 135 migrating along the *Dixie* coast Mar. 27 (PSy, CK). Inland Brown Pelican reports included three birds each at L. Kissimmee Apr. 5 (TP) and near Mulberry, *Polk*, Apr. 30 (JJ). A White Spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*) at McKay Bay May 18 (SBA) probably was the same bird observed since October 1993, an escape from nearby Busch Gardens. A **White-faced Ibis** was photographed at S.M.N.W.R. May 10 (*vide* RW).

Extralimital Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were at St. Petersburg Apr. 29 (JH, LH et al.) and Gainesville (seven birds) May 13 (DO, LO et al.). An exotic Black Swan was found at Shell Key, *Pinellas*, Mar. 17 (BI), but the 26 Canada Geese at L. Denton, *Highlands*, Apr. 1 (CF), and 11 nearby Apr. 11 (*vide* DF) presumably were wild. Lingered ducks included a Redhead at B.C.C.P. May 17 (ASm, RS), a Greater Scaup at T.R.S.T.F. Apr. 5 (BBE, KA, JBx), a Lesser Scaup at Hernando Beach, *Hernando*, May 31 (CB), and an Oldsquaw at H.I.S.R.A. Apr. 18 (WY). A Cinnamon Teal at Wickham Road in *Brevard* remained until Mar. 8 (F.B.R.).

RAPTORS TO TERNS

Single ad. White-tailed Kites at A.B.S. Mar. 9 (ASm, RS), near L. Placid Mar. 15 (CA), and at A.P.A.F.R., *Polk*, May 30 (NH, AM) indicate a continuing increase in c. Florida. Two others were found in E.N.P., *Dade*, Mar. 15 (VM). A Mississippi Kite at Gainesville Mar. 25 (DLe) established the earliest spring report (S&A 1994), and an incredible 200 were at T.R.S.T.F. Apr. 4 (KM). A female N. Harrier at Kissimmee Prairie State Preserve, *Okechobee*, May 18 (TD) was late, and a Broad-winged Hawk at P.P.S.P. Mar. 20 (AF, BM) was early. Numerous Short-tailed Hawks were reported from *Highlands* and *Polk*, plus one pair near Suwannee, *Dixie*, Mar. 26; three birds near Fowlers Bluff, *Levy*, Mar. 27; and one at Sanders Cr., *Dixie*, Mar. 27 (all PSy, CK). One was at E.N.P. Visitor Center May 4 (WB et al.), one near Cedar Key May 25 (TW), and one at W.S.S.P. May 25 (SBe). A lingering Peregrine Falcon was at S.R.S.T.F. May 3 (DH, GMe).

A Yellow Rail was found at S.M.N.W.R. Mar 31 (BHe, DWe) and Apr. 5 (KA, JbX, BBe), and single Black Rails were at Amelia I, *Nassau*, Mar. 12–16 (CW) and Tomoka Aquatic Preserve, *Volusia*, May 22 (DS). A Purple Gallinule arrived at Tall Timbers Research Station Mar. 20 (RW), and one at H.I.S.R.A. Apr. 19 (WY) may be a first for the park. Single Com. Moorhens and Am. Coots found dead at D.T.N.P. Apr. 6 were rare (WB). Two Whooping Cranes were seen over Melrose, *Alachua*, Apr. 9–10 (BBo). Unconfirmed as a breeder in Florida, 26 Am. Avocets were found at H.I.S.R.A. Apr. 26 (WY); two were at S.M.N.W.R. May 4–27 (BoS, BrS, GMe et al.); three at Bienville Plantation, *Hamilton*, May 10 (JK), 35 at Polk Phosphate Mines May 14 (PF), and three at McKay Bay May 18 (SBa). A Solitary Sandpiper at S.R.S.T.F. Mar 11 (GMe) was early, while flocks were reported at Kanapaha S.T.F., *Alachua*, (19 birds) Apr. 23 (RRo); Hague Dairy, *Alachua*, (14 birds) Apr. 23 (MMA); F.D.C.P. (40 birds) Apr. 26 (LA); and W.I.C.P. (12 birds) May 11 (ASm, RS). Similarly, 15 Spotted Sandpipers were at Hague Dairy Apr 23 (MMA), and 50 at Newnans L., *Alachua*, May 12 (AK). A Baird's Sandpiper was found at S.R.S.T.F. May 2 (JC), and another was at D.T.N.P. Apr. 30–May 1 (WB et al.) Other *Calidris* reports were six Pectoral Sandpipers at W.I.C.P. Apr. 27 (ASm, RS et al.), a Purple Sandpiper far south at Big Pine Key Apr. 21 (SML, CH, PL), and many Stilt Sandpiper reports, with 185 at Polk Phosphate Mines Mar. 17 (PF), 54 at Mayport, *Duval*, Apr. 23 (NW), and 35 at Bienville Plantation May 10 (JK). Four Buff-breasted Sandpipers were at F.D.C.P. Apr. 23 (ASm, RS et al.), and a late Com. Snipe was found at A.P.A.F.R., *Polk*, May 5 (BP). Storm-driven Wilson's Phalaropes made news in the Region, with 3 *Pinellas* reports from May 9–17 that were the first in at least 10 years (ASm, RS), and an incredible 150–200 at S.M.N.W.R. Apr. 29 (JDo et al.)—the highest count ever in Florida.

A Franklin's Gull photographed at Newnans L. May 5–11 (RRo et al.) established the Region's latest spring report, while two Lesser Black-backed Gulls were at Boca Chica Key, *Monroe*, Apr. 25 (SML, CH, PL). Inland tern reports included 15 Caspian Terns at L. Istokpoga Apr. 20 (MMc, SMc); one Com. Tern at Orange L., *Alachua*, May 2 (RRo); and two–three Forster's Terns there May 20 (RRo). An Arctic Tern found injured in Ft. Lauderdale May 7 died later (*vide* WG, * to University of Central Florida) The earliest Least Tern

reported was one at S.R.S.T.F. Apr. 7 (DH). There were seven Black Noddies at D.T.N.P. this spring, including five seen at once—the highest North American count (WB et al.). There were 1500 Black Skimmers found at Lower Suwannee N.W.R., *Levy*, Mar. 11 (PSy).

DOVES TO VIREOS

New Eur. Collared-Dove sites yielded six birds near Oxford, *Sumter*, Apr. 30 (CB) and one in *Gadsden* May 30 (GMe, TE). A **Key West Quail-Dove** at Elliott Key, Biscayne N.P., *Dade*, was found May 4 (BD, † to F.O.S.R.C.), but was not relocated. A pair of Monk Parakeets nested at Lakeland Mar. 20 (TP). At Cedar Key Apr. 28, two Black-billed Cuckoos were found (BR) among “hundreds” of Yellow-billed (DHe). Another Black-billed was found at Tallahassee May 1 (GMe), and an early Yellow-billed was at P.P.S.P. Mar. 20 (ML). A “W. Indian” Short-eared Owl was at D.T.N.P. May 6–8 (DG et al.). A Whip-poor-will sang at Key West Mar. 11 (JOn), and an early Chimney Swift was at Tallahassee Mar. 19 (FR). A Black-chinned Hummingbird was found at Fort Clinch S.P., *Nassau*, Apr. 3–6 (RP), and three *Selasphorus* lingered at Tallahassee feeders to Mar. 5 (JS), 8 (JOM), & 15 (RL). At Cedar Key Apr. 20, observers watched a Red-bellied Woodpecker cache a tree-frog in a pine and “hammer it to death” (RRo et al.).

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was found in Miami Apr. 17 (DLy), and a rare Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was identified at F.D.C.P. Apr. 26 (LA et al.). A La Sagra's Flycatcher at Key Largo Mar. 25 (LM) remained until Apr. 13; two birds were heard on other dates (WB). A La Sagra's at H.T.B.S.R.A. Apr. 27 was joined by a 2nd bird Apr. 29–30 (both WG, JbK, JDi et al.). Kingbird reports included a Western at S.M.N.W.R. Apr. 29–May 5 (JDo); early E. Kingbirds Mar. 23 at St. George I. (three birds) and Buck I. Ranch, *Highlands*, Mar. 23 (MMc) and single Gray Kingbirds inland at A.B.S. Apr. 26 (KT, HE), Gainesville Apr. 28 (RRo), and P.P.S.P. May 1–4 (BR). A Tree Swallow over the Green Swamp, *Polk*, May 29 (PF, SR) was late, a Cliff Swallow flew by F.D.C.P. Apr. 24 (LA et al.), and Cave Swallows were at D.T.N.P. (one bird) Apr. 23 (SML, CH) and Key West (two birds) May 22 (JOn). Very late were two Sedge Wrens singing at A.P.A.F.R., *Highlands*, May 30 (BP). A Ruby-crowned Kinglet at D.T.N.P. Apr. 9 (MMA et al.) was thought to be the first spring report from the park (WB). Three nestling Blue-gray Gnatcatchers at Disney

Wilderness Preserve Mar. 29 (LC et al.) represent the Region's earliest breeding report (S&A 1994).

An E. Bluebird at E.N.P., *Dade*, Apr. 18 was believed to be the first park report in more than 20 years (BD, DC, JbA). Storm-driven thrushes included 25 Veeries, 250 “Gray-cheeked” and Swainson's thrushes, and 30 Wood Thrushes at F.D.C.P. Apr. 23 (WY et al.); 22 “Gray-cheekeds” were banded at Casey Key, *Sarasota*, Apr. 24 (AST) Another Veery at W.S.S.P. Mar. 8 (*vide* P Small) was early. Lingered Am. Robins were found at D.T.N.P. Apr. 19 (WM, HL et al.); L. Alfred, *Polk*, May 3 (CG); and Kelly Park, *Orange*, May 13 (PSm). A bird believed to be a Bicknell's Thrush was observed at D.T.N.P. in direct comparison with Gray-cheeked Thrushes May 6 (WB). Forty-five Gray Catbirds were counted at Ft. Pierce Inlet S.R.A., *St. Lucie*, Apr. 24 (JBr), and a Bahama Mockingbird visited H.T.B.S.R.A. May 11–12 (WW, WG, TH) Late Cedar Waxwing reports were 225 at B.C.C.P. May 9 (RS) and 10 over Gainesville May 26 (RRo). A Loggerhead Shrike at Cedar Key Apr. 6 was Dale Henderson's first there in 13 years. A Com Myna nest at Ft. Pierce, *St. Lucie*, contained two nestlings May 31 (JBr). A rare Bell's Vireo was found at SCCP May 13 (PF), a Yellow-throated Vireo was singing at Gainesville Mar. 4 (BR) and nine were at W.S.S.P. Mar. 8 (*vide* PSm). A **Warbling Vireo**, casual in the Region, was at Cedar Key Apr. 20 (GMc, details to FOSRC), while 15 Red-eyed Vireos were at SCCP Mar. 24 (PF). A Black-whiskered Vireo was far north at S.M.N.W.R. May 4 (BoS, BrS), and two were on territory at H.I.S.R.A. May 9 (RS).

WOOD-WARBLERS TO MANNIKINS

A Blue-winged Warbler was found at H.T.B.S.R.A. Apr. 20 (*vide* WG). Golden-winged Warblers at Cedar Key Apr. 20 (LS) and two each at F.D.C.P. Apr. 24 & 27 (both LA et al.) were rare. Nashville Warblers were at H.T.B.S.R.A. Mar. 23 (WG) and Mysterious Waters, *Wakulla*, Apr. 12 (JE) An early high count of N. Parulas was 126 at W.S.S.P. Mar. 8 (*vide* PSm). Unusual warblers included a Chestnut-sided at S.M.N.W.R. Apr. 22–24 (DM, JR), a Cape May at Newnans L. Mar. 28 (GMc), and a Yellow-rumped at A.B.S. May 17 (RR1) Single Bay-breasted Warblers were reported from S.M.N.W.R. Apr. 12 & 22 (DM et al.), San Felasco Hammock, *Alachua*, Apr. 27 (MMA); H.T.B.S.R.A. Apr. 27 (JbK, JDi), and Cedar Key (two birds) Apr. 28 (DHe)

A Pine Warbler at D.T.N.P. Apr. 10 was very rare (WB et al.). Two Blackpoll Warblers at the Peace R., *Polk*, Mar. 16 (CG, PT) were the Region's earliest (S&A 1994). This spring was called "the best in recent memory" for Worm-eating Warblers in *Pinellas*, with one at F.D.C.P. Mar. 23 (BHo, MH) and eight at Bonner Park, Largo, Apr. 16 (JF); seven others were at H.T.B.S.R.A. Apr. 20 (SML, CH). Swainson's Warblers were also reported in good numbers, with one early at Mysterious Waters Mar. 26 (JE); four in *Leon* Apr. 10 (DHa); singles at H.T.B.S.R.A. Apr. 12, 14, 15, 16, 20, & 22 (WG); and 12 in *Pinellas* (*vide* RS), with five at Bonner Park Apr. 16 (JF). A Kentucky Warbler was at Mysterious Waters Mar. 26 (JE), and F.D.C.P. hosted five Apr. 13 (LA, MW et al.). Single Connecticut Warblers were at Casey Key May 3 & 25 (ASt); D.T.N.P. May 7 (WB, RF); O'Leno S.P., *Alachua*, May 10 (CP); H.T.B.S.R.A. May 13 (WG); John U. Lloyd S.R.A., *Broward*, May 13 (JBk); and Bonner Park (two birds) May 17 (KNe, JF). A Com. Yellowthroat lingered at Key West to May 28 (JOn). Seven singing Yellow-breasted Chats were found at Cedar Key Scrub State Reserve April–May (TW), and three–four sang at P.P.S.P. May 1 through the period (RRO).

Single Stripe-headed Tanagers were at Kendall, *Dade*, Apr. 11–13 (WB et al.) and Elliott Key May 11 (BD). Other tanager reports included an early Summer Tanager in *Pasco* Mar. 4 (BP, SP), 50 Scarlet Tanagers at H.I.S.R.A. Apr. 23 (WY), and 25 at F.D.C.P. Apr. 24 (LA et al.). Large numbers of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks included a record-setting more than 100 at H.I.S.R.A. Apr. 23 (WY) and more than 40 at St. George I. Apr. 23 (JC, SJ, KNS, TE). A Blue Grosbeak near Old Town, *Dixie*, Mar. 27 (PSy) was early, while 2 pairs at B.C.C.P. May 9 (RS) were at the s. limit of their breeding range. Sixty Indigo Buntings were at F.D.C.P. Apr. 14 (ASm, RS, MW et al.). Two out-of-range Painted Buntings were singing s. of Gainesville May 10–16 (AK, AF), and one at Homestead May 18 was "remarkably late" (PWS, SS). Amazing numbers of storm-related Dickcissels were reported, with 50–60 at St. George I. Apr. 23 (JC, SJ, KNS, TE) and 116 at F.D.C.P. Apr. 23 (ASm, RS, BHo, MH), with 75–100 there Apr. 26 (LA). A Dickcissel at D.T.N.P. May 25 (BHe, DWe) was the Region's latest (S&A 1994).

A Chipping Sparrow lingered at Key West Apr. 21–25 (SML, CH, PL). A Clay-colored Sparrow at Fort George I., *Duval*, remained to Apr. 23 (RC), and F.D.C.P.'s wintering Lark Sparrow was seen last Apr. 21

(*vide* RS). At Kissimmee Prairie Sanctuary, *Okeechobee*, May 9, Scheuerell found a singing Henslow's Sparrow in the same area where one was found in June 1996. The **Snow Bunting** that wintered at Canaveral National Seashore was seen last Mar. 10 (F.B.R.). Large numbers of Bobolinks included 75–100 over F.D.C.P. Apr. 26 (LA); 80 at W.I.C.P. Apr. 27 (ASm, RS); 185 in *Hillsborough* May 10 (DB); 924 in *Alachua* May 10 (*vide* RRO); and an impressive flock of 2500 in St. Petersburg May 11 (ASm, RS et al.).

A Yellow-headed Blackbird was at Punta Gorda, *Charlotte*, Mar. 6 (F.B.R.), and one at Piney Z L., *Leon*, May 10 (DHa) established the Region's latest spring report (S&A 1994). Among numerous Shiny Cowbird reports were 30 at Naples in March (F.B.R.), 23 at Key West Apr. 29 (JOn), one male displaying at A.B.S. May 13 (GW), singles in *Franklin* May 17 & 18 (JDo), and two "pairs" at Fort George I. May 31 (RC). A male Bronzed Cowbird at S.M.N.W.R. Apr. 20 (RW et al.) was the first for the e. Panhandle (S&A 1994). Finches included 12 Purple Finches at Tallahassee Mar. 17 (FR), a pair of House Finches in Jacksonville Mar. 7 (RC), and a partially leucistic male Am. Goldfinch at Gainesville through May 31 (BM). Four ad. and one juv. Nutmeg Mannikins (*Lonchura punctulata*) at Homestead May 12 (PWS, SS) probably bred locally.

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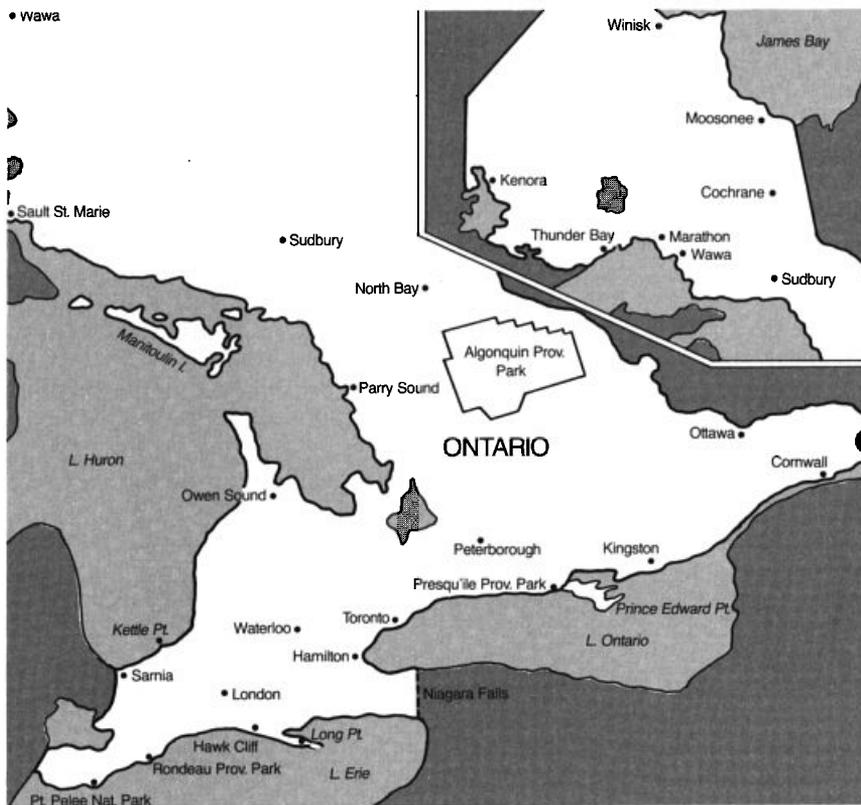
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ontario region



RON RIDOUT

It's hard to imagine a spring that could so soon rival the record cold one of 1996, but this spring came very close to it. With the exception of a very brief warm spell in late March, temperatures remained well below normal until the third week of May. In an almost exact repeat of 1996, a warm front pushed into the province on the evening of May 18, bringing with it the first major wave of migrants across a broad front. Observers afield on May 19 recorded record numbers of many species, particularly the wood warblers.

It's often said that a duck won't migrate until its feet are warm, and this was never more true than this spring. With water temperatures on the lower Great Lakes hovering in the 40s °F well into May, many waterfowl remained late in the south in good numbers.

Cool springs seem to preclude the possibility of many southern overshoots. While northern nesters are bottled up south of the Great Lakes, waiting to move on to the breeding grounds, the "traditional" south-

ern overshoots must settle in where they are stopped, and are less likely to push north of range in the usual sudden rush of spring migration in early May. With the unusual exception of Summer Tanagers, numbers of the "southern overshoots" were noted in very low numbers. Outstanding rarities of the season included a flock of Razorbills and a Sage Thrasher. All rarities mentioned in this report are subject to the approval of the Ontario Bird Records Committee.

Abbreviations: Pelee (*Pt. Pelee N.P.* and vicinity); P.E.Pt. (*Prince Edward Pt., Prince Edward Co.*); L.P.B.O. (*Long Pt. Bird Observatory, Norfolk Co.*); O.B.R.C. (*Ontario Bird Records Committee*); T.C.B.O. (*Thunder Cape Bird Observatory, Thunder Bay*); Algonquin, Presqu'ile and Rondeau are Provincial Parks. Place names in *italics* refer to counties, districts, or regional municipalities.

LOONS TO IBISES

Numbers of Red-throated Loons fell below recent spring totals, though high counts included 16 at Presqu'ile Apr. 14 (BD) and 48

at Hamilton Apr. 5 (RC); individuals inland at L. Whittaker, *Middlesex*, Apr. 13 (DM) and Beachville May 9 (JMH) were noteworthy. Common Loon totals included a record 437 at Rondeau Apr. 13 (JB, KB, SC) and 250 at Toronto May 4 (GC). Counts of Horned Grebes dropped sharply, with peak totals of 40 at Grimsby Mar. 30 (KM), 65 at Presqu'ile Apr. 14 (BD), and 100 at P.E.Pt. Apr. 20 (K.F.N.), well below recent springs. Late birds included two at Portland May 25 (PH) and one at Presqu'ile May 26 (J&JE). More encouraging was the Red-necked picture, with a 10 day tally of 2441 off Bonnybrae Pt., *Durham*, Apr. 21–30 (THO) and inland counts of 15 at Laurel L. *Waterloo* Apr. 12 (JH et al.) and 23 at Wildwood L., *Oxford*, Apr. 13 (JMH).

Sightings of Eared Grebes totaled an above-average eight, including individuals at Toronto Mar. 28–Apr. 4 (m.ob.), Kingston Mar. 29–Apr. 13 (KE, RDW), Blenheim Apr. 27–May 4 (DS et al.), Toronto May 4 (RY), Pelee May 5 (DF, JF, JG), Wheatley Harbour May 7 (S&JLo), and a pair nesting again at Emo May 29 (DE). Single Am. White Pelicans were at Holiday Beach, *Essex*, May 14 (B&RP); Thunder Bay May 23–24 (SB, m.ob.); and Rondeau May 24 (KB, JB). Up to 1300 Double-crested crowding a few small open leads in the mostly frozen Georgian Bay at Dillon Cove May 3 (JN) was a remarkable sight, while an individual with pure white plumes, characteristic of the western subspecies *albociliatus*, was at Hillman Marsh, *Essex*, Apr. 28 (KM).

The first Great Blue Herons reached the still-frozen north Mar. 28 at *Manitoulin* (JL), Kelley L., *Sudbury* (RCa), and Thunder Bay (JA). Two very early Great Egrets were at Long Pt. and Turkey Pt., *Norfolk*, Mar. 10 (MG, MP), while individuals at Gananoque May 8 (JHa) and Carp May 1 & 27 (RH) were unusual. Rarer southern herons included single Snowy Egrets at Oakville May 3 (RG), Niagara-on-the-Lake May 4 (JBI, KR et al.), and Beachville May 28 (JMH); a Tricolored Heron at Amherst I. May 13–June 1 (K.F.N.); and single Cattle Egrets at London Apr. 17 (MM), Erieau May 16 (KB, JB, SC), Long Pt. May 19 (SM), and one well n. at Dillon May 16–20 (JN). An early Black-crowned Night-Heron was at Niagara-on-the-Lake Mar. 19 (GY, AP), while numbers reached 62 birds at

Niagara Falls by Apr. 28 (WB). Individual ibises identified as Glossys were at Dundas May 7 (BPo, RC); Ruscom Shores, *Essex*, May 16 (AB, JBa); Pelee May 17–23 (RPi, JI, KM); and Angus May 23 (DFe, v.o.). An unidentified *Plegadis* was seen at Alfred May 31 (DC).

WATERFOWL TO RAPTORS

For the 2nd consecutive spring, Tundra Swans moved through on a wide front, forsaking the traditional stopovers for inland fields. The highest count of 3000 came from St. Thomas, while birds n.e. of the usual route included one at Nepean May 14–15 (DMe, v.o.) and two at Algonquin Mar. 25 (DSt). Trumpeter Swan sightings included an immature at Norwich May 12 (JMH) and the pair at Portland, the female of which was introduced after the original female was shot. Despite a rocky start, the pair bonded and nesting was underway by the end of the period (WBa). A pair of Mute Swans was well n. at Hurkett May 10–24 (m.ob.). Numbers of Greater White-fronted Geese skyrocketed again, with 102 reported, including one record flock of 75 birds at Komoka Mar. 19 (GP, IP). A flock of 20 Snow Geese at Pelee Mar. 8 (PP) represented a high count there, as did 4000 at Cornwall Mar. 25 (BM). Lone Ross's Geese were seen at Toronto Mar. 11–16 (CM, m.ob.), Kingsville Mar. 15–16 & 26 (K&D Mc), Hillman Marsh Mar. 17 (AW), Dundas Apr. 2–3 (DH, m.ob.), Richmond Hill Apr. 5–6 (SCf, RF et al.), and Teeswater Apr. 5–6 (m.ob.). Brant were also abundant, with a high count of 4000 at Amherst I., *Lennox Addington*, May 24 (K.F.N.); outstanding counts in the southwest included 60 at Port Ryerse May 20 (S&CW) and 25 at Eagle May 24 (MD).

Significant counts of other waterfowl included 340 Green-winged Teal at Hillman Marsh Mar. 28 (AW); 3000 N. Pintail at Riceville Apr. 5 (BD); 3220 and 17050 Canvasbacks Mar. 27 at Presqu'île (MMa) and Long Pt. (RK), respectively; 7600 Redheads at Long Pt. Mar. 27 (RK); 13,000 Greater Scaup at P.E.Pt. Apr. 10 (K.F.N.); 22,435 scaup at Long Pt. Apr. 10 (RK); 30,000 Oldsquaws on L. Ontario off Fifty Pt., *Niagara*, May 17 (MMi, SMa); and 1000 Com. Goldeneyes at P.E.Pt. Mar. 2 (JE, RDW). Most significant was 91 King Eiders off Vineland Mar. 12 (RC, RS).

Unusual species included Atikokan's 3rd-ever Gadwall Apr. 30 (DE); 10 different Eur. Wigeon, including two females at Hillman Marsh apparently paired with Am. Wigeons Mar. 28 (AW) and a Eurasian pair

at Tavistock Apr. 13–19 (JMH); single Tufted Ducks at Presqu'île Mar. 29–30 (J&JT), Vineland Apr. 4 (PB), and Thunder Bay May 4 (NE); lone King Eiders at Long Pt. Apr. 11 & 20 (L.P.B.O.) and Pelee May 28–June 3 (RB, JLe, FM); single Harlequin Ducks at Cotnam I., *Renfrew*, Mar. 1–Apr. 27 (m.ob.), an imm. male at Toronto Mar. 16–May 4 (RSm et al.), a female at Burlington May 3 (RC), and a pair at Toronto Mar. 1–28 (m.ob.); and individual Barrow's Goldeneyes, including a female at Cotnam I. Mar. 1 (BD), a female at Ottawa Mar. 17 & 23 (RPa), a male at Toronto Mar. 22–23 (NM), the wintering male at Ottawa until Mar. 29 (m.ob.), a male at P.E.Pt. Apr. 5 (JE, RDW), and a female at Howdensvale Apr. 23–26 (PL, v.o.).

The lone Black Vulture of the spring was at P.E.Pt. May 21–22 (DCr, v.o.), representing that county's first. Sightings of Mississippi Kite included one at Pelee May 17 (CM, WL, BW) and *Niagara's* first at the Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch, *Grimsby*, May 11. A Bald Eagle successfully overwintered at Atikokan, scavenging at the local dump (DE). *Manitoulin's* breeding population doubled to 2 pairs, both on nests at period's end (m.ob.). The only Swainson's Hawks of the spring involved an unusual two birds on the same day at the Niagara Hawkwatch May 2. Unusual Red-tailed included an albino at London Apr. 27 (DSK) and a rufous *calurus* at Paris Mar. 18 (WL). Several different Rough-leggeds lingered into May, with the most noteworthy at Pelee May 16 (L&BC, TO). Urban Peregrines included 2 pairs at Toronto, and a pair each at Hamilton and London (m.ob.).

GROUSE TO GULLS

Observers at Gore Bay's Sharp-tailed Grouse lek tallied 55 displaying birds Apr. 15 (v.o.). Singing Yellow Rails were reported at Richmond May 24–29 (m.ob.) and near Kirkfield late in May (v.o.). Reports of King Rails included individuals at Keswick May 16 (JM, BB), Melbourne May 17 (PR, IP), Selkirk May 21 (JMi), and at least four birds at St. Clair N.W.A. in late May (JHn). The first Virginia of the season was early at Presqu'île Apr. 1 (ABO). Sandhill Crane numbers continue to increase. A flock of 40 birds at Niagara Falls Mar. 18 (GM) was particularly noteworthy. An Am. Golden-Plover at Embrun May 28 (VL) was e. of the usual migration corridor. Piping Plovers in the south involved individuals at Pelee May 4–5 (JW, Cv, m.ob.) and Long Pt. May 5–8 (JJ), while one was at L. of the Woods, *Rainy River*, May 31 (DE).

Most shorebird numbers were below average, likely due to a general lack of habitat, particularly along the Great Lakes' shoreline where water levels were near record high. Two Am. Avocets were at Blenheim May 11–12 (DS et al.) and Kingsville May 18–25 (DMi, m.ob.). While well off last spring's record numbers, Willet sightings still totaled a respectable 45 birds, including a record 25 at Turkey Pt. May 1 (IF, v.o.) Reports of Hudsonian Godwits included singles at Fifty Pt., *Niagara*, May 17 (SMa, MMi); Embrun May 18–19 (VL); Foxy May 25–26 (CB); and two at Port Perry May 27–31 (m.ob.). Marbleds totaled 17, including a notable seven birds together at Pelee May 6 (KM). High totals of Red Knots included 70 at Long Pt. May 22 (L.P.B.O.) and 150 at Aldolphustown May 25 (K.F.N.). The lone W. Sandpiper of the period was at Schomberg May 18 (KS et al.), while the only Baird's was at Harrow April 27–May 2 (KM, v.o.). Thirty White-rumped at Amherst I. May 24 (K.F.N.) was notable. A Reeve at Harrow May 21 (BPF) was the only one of the season. Reports of Long-billed Dowitchers involved two at Erie Beach May 4 (KB, JB, SC) and one at Port Perry May 19–21 (GCa et al.). Red-necked Phalaropes totaled 14, including a record-early three at Pelee May 12 (BBE).

Sightings of Laughing Gulls were close to the recent average. Lake Erie individuals were at Wheatley Harbour May 5 (KM), Erie Beach (KEc), Long Pt. May 16 (SM), and Port Stanley May 25 (RSr), while one at Nepean May 2 (VL) was notable. Franklin's Gull numbers increased a little, but were still below the long-term average. Singles, all on L. Erie, were seen at Pelee May 4 (JMa) & 18 (*vide* AW), Long Pt. May 16 (JJ), and Rondeau May 24 (KB, JB). The bulk of Little Gulls involved 32 at Oshawa Apr. 27 (GC) and 65 at Niagara-on-the-Lake Mar. 31 (GB, MSm). Most were in the south, though an immature at Almonte May 31 (TH et al.) was interesting. Lone Black-headed were at Toronto Mar. 1 (NM, CM), Erie Beach May 13 (KEc), and Long Pt. May 19–21 (JJ). Lesser Black-backed numbers were about average, with 21 birds reported, including seven at the Nepean dump Apr. 13 (BD). A Black-legged Kittiwake found starving at Kingston Mar. 17 (BF) died the next day. One off Bonnbrae Pt., Durham, May 8 (RPy) was in better health.

TERNS TO CORVIDS

A count of 1000 Com. Terns at the tip of Long Pt. May 16 (JJ) was interesting given that just 15 mi away on Long Pt. Inner Bay,

the species is quite uncommon. A flock of nine **Razorbills** on L. Ontario off Burlington May 18 (*fide* RD) represented the first Ontario record in decades. Eight were seen in the same location May 23 (SMY, WE). As a result of the cool spring, several Snowy Owls lingered in the south well into May, including singles at Hagersville until May 4 (m ob.), P.E.Pt. May 25 (K.F.N.), and at Barrie I., *Manitoulin*, through the end of the period (m.ob.). At least five N. Hawk Owls present around Thunder Bay disappeared in mid-March as soon as the Am. Crows began to arrive back from the south (NE). A pair that wintered at Barrie I. began nesting and had downy young by the end of the period (m.ob.), providing *Manitoulin's* first nesting record. After their s invasion, the last Great Grays had left the south by the first week of April. Of the 12 Boreal Owls reported, four were found dead, most victims of passing cars.

Two Chuck-will's-widows were heard in the south, one each at Long Pt. May 11 (SM) and Pelee May 20 (RCo). In keeping with a general decline in all regions, Kingston reported only one Red-headed Woodpecker May 21 (RW). In contrast, Red-bellieds were widely reported well into c Ontario, and one even successfully wintered at Evansville (m.ob.). Three Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers arrived back at South Baymouth Mar. 28 (CB), the same day they were noted in several s. locations. The male Black-backed Woodpecker at Palgrave was seen again Mar. 1 (PG).

Both Rondeau and Pelee had sightings of four different Acadian Flycatchers, all in mid- to late May (m.ob.). One at P.E.Pt. May 31 (JE, RDW) was very rare there. An exceptionally early E. Phoebe was seen at Craigeith Mar. 9 (DB), while a count of 49 at Pelee Mar. 28 (FU) was high for the date. Interestingly, five reached South Baymouth the same day (CB). A W. Kingbird at Rondeau May 17-20 (KB, JB, SC) was the only report of the period. An E. Kingbird at Balmoral Mar. 28 (FD) set what is likely a record-early arrival date for the province. A Tree Swallow at Fifty Pt. Mar. 3 (SMa) preceded all others by over a week. A colony of Cliff Swallows with more than 400 nests at Kingston May 25 (K.F.N.) was exceptionally large. A Black-billed Magpie at P.E.Pt. Apr. 20 (EM, BJ et al.) raised the usual questions of origin, particularly in a non-irruptive year. Common Ravens well s. of range included one at Toronto Mar. 30-31 (RY), three at Grimsby Apr. 2 (DC, JO), and one at Bonnibrae Pt., *Durham*, Apr. 25 (THo).

WRENS TO WARBLERS

For the 2nd consecutive year, Long Pt. had the only Bewick's Wren May 1-2 (RR, MMc). The late spring probably encouraged a Golden-crowned Kinglet to linger to a record late May 24 at Pelee (RH, RRe). In the mad dash when warm weather finally arrived, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers made it as far north as Howdenvale (JJo) and Mississagi Light, *Manitoulin* (CB), both May 25. A male Mt. Bluebird put in a brief appearance at Dorion Apr. 10 (JA, MJ). A Gray-cheeked Thrush put in an early appearance at Thunder Bay May 12 (NE), while a Swainson's was early at Long Pt. Apr. 24 (F&TW), and seven different Hermit Thrushes were counted on Manitoulin I. Mar. 28 (m.ob.), ahead of most arriving in the south. A record count of 125 Gray Catbirds was tallied along the Thames R., *Oxford*, May 19 (JMH), part of a large passage detailed in the table (below). Three different N. Mockingbirds were seen in the Thunder Bay area, well n. of range, Mar. 24-31 (m.ob.). A **Sage Thrasher** at Wallaceburg Mar 16-Apr. 9 (BM, m.ob.) may well have wintered in the area where it was found. A count of 75 Brown Thrashers at P.E.Pt. May 11 (JE, RDW) was notable given the decline of this species in general. An Am. Pipit at Dewar's Cr., *Manitoulin*, Mar. 29 (DBa) was quite early there. Bohemian Waxwings were noted in average numbers in c. and n. Ontario throughout March into April. The only bird in the south was at Rondeau Mar. 23-26 (KB, JB),

representing the park's first record. Sightings among the 31 Loggerhead Shrikes reported included individuals n. of the usual range at Carling Twp., *Parry Sound*, May 31 (JN) and at Pass L., *Thunder Bay*, May 21 (BMo, Av).

White-eyed Vireos e. of range were at Kingston May 23 (WM) and P.E.Pt. May 25 (RDW). A strong push of warm southerly air that blew into the province on the evening of May 18 brought large numbers of migrants, particularly vireos and warblers. Observers in the southwest enjoyed record numbers of many species (see Table 1), and many claimed the best birding in years, a comment heard just one year earlier on the same date. Farther east, observers had to wait until May 25 for their fallout, a pattern similar to that which occurred in 1996. High counts on May 25 in the east included 60 Philadelphia Vireos, 70 N Parulas, 600 Chestnut-sided Warblers, and 450 Black-throated Blues at P.E.Pt (K.F.N.). One observer noted a secondary wave in the southwest along the W. Thames R. May 26. Numbers included 70 Nashville Warblers, 80 Chestnut-sideds, 55 Magnolias, 150 Yellow-rumpeds, 25 Black-throated Greens, 75 Blackburnians, 110 Bay-breasteds, 25 Blackpolls, 80 Am. Redstarts, 75 Wilson's Warblers, and 40 Canadas (JMH)

Sightings of note, apart from these waves, included two different "Lawrence's" Warblers at Pelee May 15 (D&NMa) & 17 (*fide* AW), and one at Collingwood May 28 (DB). A male Black-throated Blue at

HIGH SPECIES COUNTS—MAY 19, 1997

SPECIES	PELEE (AW, SP)	RONDEAU (KB ET AL.)	Long Pt. (L.P.B.O.)*	W. THAMES R. OXFORD (JMH)	BRONTE
Golden-winged Warbler	—	9	—	—	—
Orange-crowned Warbler	—	—	—	6	—
Nashville Warbler	620	—	30	425	32
Northern Parula	—	19	—	—	—
Yellow Warbler	—	223	50	350	—
Chestnut-sided Warbler	280	165	25	125	23
Magnolia Warbler	—	281	—	250	52
Cape May Warbler	—	—	20	110	—
Black-throated Blue Warbler	—	81	25	35	31
Yellow-rumped Warbler	—	109	250	4500	—
Black-throated Green Warbler	—	73	10	115	33
Blackburnian Warbler	—	54	27	175	—
Palm Warbler	—	68	—	—	—
Black-and-white Warbler	—	86	—	120	33
Ovenbird	—	235	55	50	33
Northern Waterthrush	—	—	16	18	—
Mourning Warbler	—	12	—	—	—
Common Yellowthroat	—	58	—	—	—

*Restricted Census Area

Pittock L., *Oxford*, May 12 (JMH) was believed to be of the *cairnsi* subspecies. An "Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler was reported from Kingsville Apr. 23 (L&WF). A male Black-throated Gray Warbler at Beachville May 2 (JMH) provided the province's 3rd record in as many years. The spring wave of Yellow-throateds involved individuals at Rondeau May 14 (MS, KH) & 18 (JB, BMa), Comber May 17 (RF et al.), and Bronte May 25 (PM). Surprisingly, none was seen at the traditional hotspots of Pelee and Long Pt. It's probably not surprising, with the recent increase in the world population of Kirtland's Warblers, that reports of strays should increase. Sightings during the period included one at Delaware May 13-14 (PC, v.o.) and a singing male near St. Williams May 24 (RGe, SMY, WE), Long Pt.'s first. Reports of Prothonotarys, now classified as endangered in the province, totaled 21, mainly in the southwest, though one at Ottawa May 20 (VL et al.) was exceptional. Other "southern" warblers were poorly represented. Numbers at Pelee and the rest of the southwest were well off the long-term average. The only Kentucky away from Pelee and Rondeau was at Whitby May 27 (MB).

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

Summer Tanagers were the truly bright "southern" light of the season. A total of 24 birds, far exceeding the spring average, was bolstered by a record 14 at Pelee and, for the 2nd consecutive spring, one made it to Manitoulin I., this year at Evansville May 23-24 (W&SCI). Three different male W. Tanagers, an exceptional total, involved singles at Pelee May 19 (W&BMr), Windsor May 20-21 (GG), and Thunder Bay May 24-26 (GR). Lone Blue Grosbeaks included an imm. male at Long Pt. May 11 (JJ), a female there May 17 (SM), and an imm. male at Pickering May 14 (DSh). Sightings of Dickcissels included singles at Timiskaming Apr. 17-22 (LT, PRi), Oshawa Apr. 26 (JMc), Pelee May 15 (E&RTi) and May 17-18 (AW), and a pair at *Rainy River* May 8 (RSi).

A count of 30 Am. Tree Sparrows at Perth May 10 (*vide* AM) was notable for the date, and another indicator of the late spring. Thirty singing Clay-coloreds at Riceville May 21 (BD) represented a high count. A Field Sparrow banded at Thunder Cape May 19 (T.C.B.O.) furnished the northern observatory with its 2nd record. The season's Lark Sparrows included singles at Pelee May 10 (KK et al.) and Missisquoi Light, *Manitoulin*, May 18 (CB, JL). A

Grasshopper Sparrow at Toronto Apr. 6 (RFR, BBo) set a record-early arrival date for the province. Of the 13 Henslow's Sparrows seen, six were at Pelee Apr. 19-May 16 (m.ob.), four at Rondeau May 3-10 (m.ob.), one at Windsor May 8 (LG), and two at Pelee I. May 10 (EMe). One wonders where these migrants ultimately end up. Sightings of Le Conte's totaled 10 birds, one of which dropped into the Algonquin airfield May 23-24 (RT, v.o.). Northbound Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were found at Pelee May 14 (BF) and May 24 (m.ob.), and at Long Pt. May 24 (JJ). Single Harris's Sparrows were at Chatham May 11-12 (DS, PAW) and Thunder Cape May 27-June 7 (T.C.B.O.). A *caniceps* Dark-eyed Junco at Huntsville Mar. 31 (BL, m.ob.) furnished Ontario's 2nd record of this subspecies. A flock of 340 Lapland Longspurs at Beachville Apr. 21 (JMH) represented an unusually high number for the date. A Smith's Longspur was the other rarity of note to drop into the Algonquin airfield, on May 18 (DM, RT, WC).

The only W. Meadowlark of the spring was at Cedar Springs May 24 (DW). Out-of-range Yellow-headed Blackbirds were recorded at P.E.Pt. May 15 (KE, RE), Amherst I., *Lennox Addington*, May 22 (AS); and Foxy, *Manitoulin*, May 18 (m.ob.). A imm. Bullock's Oriole seen at Port Ryerse May 22 (SMY, JM) furnished Long Pt.'s 2nd record. A Purple Finch at Rondeau May 4 (JB, KB) exhibited characters of the subspecies *californicus*. In a non-invasion year, two Com. Redpolls at Perth May 10 (*vide* AM), an Evening Grosbeak at Long Pt. Apr. 16 (DG), and three at Fifty Pt. May 17 (SMA, MMi) were the only reports of these species in the south and, for that matter, most of the province.

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appalachian region



GEORGE A. HALL

No two spring seasons are ever alike, but the 1997 Spring was like no other within memory. The late winter had been warmer than average, and this warm weather continued into March. At the Pittsburgh weather station, March rainfall was slightly below normal, and temperatures were well above average. Cold weather returned in early April and continued through May, which was the coldest in recorded history at Pittsburgh. April had a 1.58 inch deficiency in rainfall, and May was much wetter than normal, with over six inches. Unlike some years, the cool weather continued to the end of the period.

The waterfowl migration had begun before March 1 and some passerines arrived in early March. There were many early arrival dates, and through March and early April the migratory schedule was well ahead of normal. But as the weather turned cold and wet, the migration ground to a halt, and those species expected in late April and early May were ten days to two weeks late. The big push of migrants was in the last two

weeks of May, and a few passage migrants were still coming in early June. However, the overall migration was one of the best in recent years—some reporters thought it the best.

As a result of the cold weather, tree leaves did not develop, and warblers and other passerines were easy to see. With the cold, drizzly weather and the lack of a developed canopy, many migrants remained near the ground where shelter—and presumably insect food—were more available. Thus birding was generally easier than in most years.

The cold, wet weather resulted from a seemingly never-ending stream of weather systems moving in from the West, where violent weather events were common. As a result, the Region was treated to a series of western species which normally do not reach us in spring. Several shorebird species, Orange-crowned Warblers, Western Tanager, Harris's Sparrows, and Black-billed Magpie all added spice to the birding season. There were also more individuals of southern species, which overflowed their normal range and appeared in the north. Some of these are probably forerunners of future range expansions

Abbreviations: B.E.S.P. (*Bald Eagle S.P., Centre Co., PA*); G.S.M.N.P. (*Great Smoky Mountains N.P.*); G.B.W.M.A. (*Green Bottom W.M.A., Cabell Co., WV*); M.L.W.A. (*Mosquito L. Wildlife Area, Trumbull Co., OH*); O.R.I. (*Ohio River Islands N.W.R., Wood Co., WV*); P.I.S.P. (*Presque Isle S.P., Erie Co., PA*); P.N.R. (*Powdermill Nature Reserve, Westmoreland Co., PA*); R.C.B.L. (*Robert C. Byrd Locks, Ohio R., Mason Co., WV*); S.H.L. (*South Holston L., Washington Co., VA/Sullivan Co., TN*); Y.C.S.P. (*Yellow Creek S.P., Indiana Co., PA*).

LOONS TO HERONS

Single Red-throated Loons were found at B.E.S.P. Mar. 4 & 8 (RH, CP); L. Somerset, PA, Mar. 18 (RCL, M&EW); South Avis, PA, Mar. 24 (G&PS); S.H.L., Mar. 15–Apr. 6 (LM, WC), and *Mason, WV*, Apr. 23 (WA). A few Com. Loons were present in mid-May, but overall numbers were low. Horned Grebes were in good numbers, with 130 in *Crawford, PA*, Mar. 23 (RFL); 55 at B.E.S.P. Mar. 15 (P&GS); 50 reported from S.H.L. Mar. 8 (RB, RC); 35 at *Quemahoning Res., PA*, Mar. 18 (E&MW, RCL); and a record count of 29 in *Augusta, VA*, Mar. 14 (*vide YL*). The only reports of Red-necked Grebe came from *Pymatuning L., PA*, Mar. 8 (RFL) and *Venango, PA*, Mar. 23–Apr. 24 (JS). As many as 19 Eared Grebes were in the wintering population at S.H.L., and a straggler was still there Apr. 22 (LM). Eared Grebes were also reported from *Staunton, VA*, Mar. 14 (A&YL) for a 2nd county record, and *L. Arthur, PA*, Mar. 25–31 (m.ob., *vide PH*). Double-crested Cormorant was in good numbers throughout the Region, with the highest counts being 140 at *Meander L., OH*, Apr. 10 (D&JH); and 130 in *Cocke, TN*, May 2 (RK). At *Huntington, WV*, a formal point count tallied 4.2 cormorants per hour of observation flying up the *Ohio R.* in April, and 1.4 birds per hour in May (HS).

American Bitterns were reported from P.I.S.P. Apr. 11–May 14 (*vide JM*); Y.C.S.P. Apr. 11 (GL); P.N.R. Apr. 19 (RM, RCL); *Keystone Res., Armstrong, PA*, Apr. 14 (MH); *Hamilton, TN*, Apr. 19 (KC); *Mason, WV*, Apr. 24–25 (WA); and *Conneaut Marsh, Crawford, PA*, Apr. 27 (DD). Least Bitterns were at *Conneaut Marsh, PA*, Apr. 27 (RFL); at *Indiana, PA*, May 10 (DFr); at G.B.W.M.A. May 11 and later (HS); and at P.I.S.P. from May 13 (m.ob.). Great Blue Herons had 2 new nesting colonies of 10–20 nests each in *Trumbull, OH* (D&JH), and they were nesting in *Wood, WV* (*vide JE*). Great Egrets were more widely reported than usual. A remarkable, for spring, total of five Snowy Egrets was reported: a first county record at *Ligonier, PA*, Apr. 16 (RCL, RM, RS); *Washington, TN*, May 11 (RK); *Centre, PA*, May 13 (TO); P.I.S.P. May 18 (CGe); and a first county record in *Fayette, PA*, May 31 (DK). Also unusual for

spring was the Little Blue Heron in *Washington*, TN, May 11 (RK). Black-crowned Night-Herons were more widely reported than usual. A nesting colony of Yellow-crowned Night-Herons at Fairview, PA, had 4 nests May 31 (DHe); one pair nested near Elizabethton, TN (RK). A Yellow-crowned was seen at Mosquito L., OH, May 10 (CB), and one at R.C.B.L. May 24 (WA, KP).

A Glossy Ibis at Indiana, PA, Mar. 1 (B&KM) was not only a rare find, but remarkably early. Another Glossy was at Newville, PA, May 6 (DHe), and a **White-faced Ibis** in *Hamilton*, TN, Apr. 19–20 (JHe) furnished the first e. Tennessee record.

WATERFOWL

While large numbers of waterfowl had gone north before Mar. 1, most places reported good March flights. Indeed, at Presque Isle Bay on L. Erie an estimated peak of 50,000 birds occurred in the last week of March. This congregation contained 8000 Canvasbacks, 15,000 scaup, and 20,000 Red-breasted Mergansers (JM).

The migration of Tundra Swans apparently skipped the Region this year; the only large number was 231 at Conneaut Marsh, PA, Mar. 8 (RFL). A single Mute Swan was at P.I.S.P. Mar. 15–22 (GC), and 12 were there Apr. 22 (CGe,TC). With the increasing continental population of Snow Geese, this Region receives more reports each season. This spring reports came from 7 locations—from *Erie*, PA (JM), south to *Augusta*, VA (YL), and the S.H.L. area (LM). Most of these reports were of small numbers, but a flock of more than 95 was seen at South Avis, PA, Mar. 6 (P&GS). Replacing the Snow Goose on the Regional rarity list were Greater White-fronted Geese at Lyndhurst, VA, Mar. 11–20 and Swoope, VA, Apr. 25–May 13 (Y&AL), and the **Ross's Goose** in Mercer, PA, Mar. 12 (SB, SM).

Most areas had good lists of dabbling ducks, but the only large flocks were of Am. Wigeon, with 275 at Conneaut Marsh, PA, Mar. 23 (RFL) and 200 at M.L.W.A. Mar. 22 (BJ). On the other hand, some large flocks of diving ducks were reported. Canvasbacks and Redheads were unusually plentiful, with a high count of 520 Redheads at M.L.W.A. (J&DH). Some other high counts were 1500 Ring-necked Ducks at Conneaut Marsh, PA, Mar. 15 (RFL); 262 Lesser Scaup at Conneaut Marsh, PA, Mar. 22 (RFL); 255 Bufflehead at Conneaut Marsh, PA, Apr. 23 (RFL); 175 Ruddy Ducks at Mosquito L.,

OH, Apr. 4 (D&JH); and 500–600 Red-breasted Mergansers at L. Arthur (*fide* PH).

Reports of the more unusual species included Greater Scaup from *Crawford*, PA (RFL), *Venango*, PA (JS), *Franklin*, PA (CG), *Augusta*, VA (YL), *Wise*, VA (RP), and Johnson City and Austin Springs, TN (RK). Black Scoter visited at Colyer L., PA, Mar. 21 (D&BB). Surf and White-winged scoters were more widely reported than normal, with reports from all parts of the Region.

A pair of apparently wild Mallards in *Union*, GA, Apr. 13 suggested possible nesting, which would represent a first for the state (DF). A brood of downy Hooded Mergansers May 25 made the 2nd breeding record for *Venango*, PA, and a pair of Com. Mergansers present there through May suggested possible breeding (JS).

RAPTORS TO CRANES

Turkey Vultures had arrived in the north in February and became more common than usual. A count of 355 at S.H.L. Mar. 3 was a record number for n.e. Tennessee (RB). Ospreys were in better-than-average numbers during migration, and nesting was reported from *Butler* and *Mercer*, PA (*fide* PH); *Somerset*, PA (AM); and *Wood*, WV (JE). A **Mississippi Kite** was at Austin Springs, TN, Apr. 22 for a 2nd local record (FA). The Bald Eagle continues to do well, with reports of 13 immatures at M.L.W.A. Apr. 10 (D&JH) and seven immatures at Kinzua Dam, PA, Mar. 8 (DW); there were numerous singles throughout the Region. Nests included 4 at Pymatuning L., PA, and one at nearby Conneaut Marsh (RFL), one in *Butler*, PA (*fide* PH), and 6 in West Virginia (CS).

A territorial pair of N. Harriers was seen in *Venango*, PA, in late May (JS). There were no N. Goshawks at the 3 known nest sites in *Warren*, PA, Mar. 8 (DW), but single birds were sighted in *Crawford*, PA, Mar. 9 (RFL); *Westmoreland*, PA, May 2 & 10 (KB); near Chilhowie, VA, Apr. 12 (WC, LM); and Blacksburg, VA, Apr. 12 & 26 (BMo). Red-shouldered Hawks were reported to be in very low numbers in the Pittsburgh area (PH). The only reports of Rough-legged Hawks came from Pymatuning L., PA, where two were seen from Mar. 8–Apr. 27 (RFL). On Mar. 15 a Golden Eagle was seen “fighting” in flight with an ad. Bald Eagle at Pymatuning L., PA (RFL). At Tussey Mt., PA, the Spring Hawk Watch logged a remarkable 55 Golden Eagles, with a peak of 15 Mar. 21 (DBr).

There were 3 reports of Merlin in e. Tennessee (RK), and one in *Washington*,

VA, Mar. 9 (LM, WC, JL). Other reports came from South Avis, PA, Apr. 18 (P&GS), *Venango*, PA, Apr. 27 (JS); and P.I.S.P. May 15 (JM). The Peregrine news was all good. The nesting pair in downtown Pittsburgh hatched one young, and a pair in the Oakland district of Pittsburgh was seen copulating, but no nest had as yet been found (PH). A pair in G.S.M.N.P. (RK), and another at Chickamauga Dam, TN, also behaved as if breeding (KC). Other sightings came from *Erie*, PA, Mar. 28 (JC); four at P.I.S.P. from May 11–30 (DS, RMi, JM), downtown Youngstown, OH, Mar. 16 (J &DH); *Venango*, PA, May 1 (JS); B.E.S.P. May 9–20 (BS); and Y.C.S.P. May 27 (MH).

The N. Bobwhite continues to decrease. For the first time in 54 years of the Elizabethton, TN, Spring Count, none was reported (RK). The only reports came from Lyndhurst, VA, Apr. 8; Swoope, VA, May 11 (YL); and G.B.W.M.A. May 17 (HS). If bobwhites are going down, Wild Turkeys are booming. A total of more than 100 was reported from M.L.W.A. Mar. 2 (BJ), and unusually high numbers were reported from n. West Virginia (GAH), s.w. Virginia (LM), and n.e. Tennessee (RK).

Virginia Rails and Soras responded to the increase in marsh habitat resulting from the excessive rains, and both species were more widely reported and in greater numbers than usual. The Com. Moorhen was not so abundant, but was reported from Prince Gallitzin S.P., PA, May 12 (MH), Akeley, PA, May 10 (DW); and G.B.W.M.A. Apr. 27 through May (HS). More unusual were the King Rail at G.B.W.M.A. May 3 & 11 (WA, MG, HS) and the Purple Gallinule at Sand Cr. Marsh, *Wood*, WV, Apr. 10–14 (JE, GH). The bird was found dead Apr. 16 and the specimen was preserved at O R I. Along with the good waterfowl numbers, there were some fine concentrations of Am Coots, with high counts of 860 at Y.C.S.P. during April (MH), and more than 600 at L. Somerset Mar. 11 (RCL).

Three Sandhill Cranes arrived in *Lawrence*, PA, where they have nested in recent years, on the early date of Mar 4 (GW). Other reports came from *Franklin*, PA, Mar 13 & 17 (CG); *Westmoreland*, PA, Apr. 30, for a first county record (DKo), *Centre*, PA, May 3 and later (m.ob.); and P.I.S.P. May 11 (JHr, RMi).

SHOREBIRDS TO TERNS

It was generally a great season for shorebirds. While the flooding of many permanent bodies of water by the heavy rains reduced the shore habitat, there was a net in-

crease in wetlands with the flooding of normally dry areas. As a consequence, some areas saw far more waders than normal. The usual species—Semipalmated Plover, Least and Semipalmated sandpipers, and the two yellowlegs—were in above-normal numbers at most places. Unusually high counts included 50 Greater Yellowlegs at Pymatuning L., PA, Apr. 6 (RFL, IF); 75 Lesser Yellowlegs at M.L.W.A. May 4 (J&DH); and a fantastic 50 Solitary Sandpipers at the Snowden wetlands, PA, May 7 (Bju).

Black-bellied Plovers were reported early from Sand Cr., WV, Apr. 21 (EE, MSh) & 25 (JE); Y.C.S.P. May 6 (MH); Imperial, PA (m.ob.); B.E.S.P. May 10 (BS); and Pymatuning L., PA, May 12 (RFL). An Am. Golden-Plover was seen in *Pulaski*, VA, May 13 (CK, BG). Three Piping Plovers were at P.I.S.P. May 8 (JM).

Willetts were unusually numerous, including records at P.I.S.P., with four May 4 (EK); *Westmoreland*, PA, May 8, for a 2nd county record (KB); *Franklin*, PA, May 15 (CG); *Washington*, OH, with 17 Apr. 17 (NW); G.B.W.M.A., with 14 Apr. 27 (MG); *Hamilton*, TN, with two Apr. 21–22 (TR); and *Boone* L., TN, with six Apr. 26 (RK). Upland Sandpipers were at a traditional nesting area in *Venango*, PA, May 9 (JS); *Kecksburg*, PA, Apr. 21 (DL, KB); and *Elk Garden*, VA, Apr. 20 (BR). Twenty-four Ruddy Turnstones were at M.L.W.A. May 18 (J&DH), and one was seen at Y.C.S.P. May 12 (MH).

Dunlin and White-rumped and Pectoral sandpipers were more widely reported than usual. Western Sandpipers were seen at Pymatuning L., PA, May 15 (RFL); G.B.W.M.A., with 16 May 21 (MG); and *Washington*, TN, May 15 (RK). Baird's Sandpiper is rare in this Region in fall and is almost unheard of in spring, so reports from *Wood*, WV, May 20 (JE); *Washington*, TN, May 5 (RK); and *Hamilton*, TN, May 2 & 10 (TR, JHe) were noteworthy. A Stilt Sandpiper was at G.B.W.M.A. May 3 (MG).

Short-billed Dowitchers were reported from more places and in more numbers than usual, with a remarkable aggregation of 100 at G.B.W.M.A. May 15–17 (MG). The Regionally rare Long-billed Dowitcher was seen at R.C.B.L. Apr. 27 (MG, WA), and in *Greene*, TN, Apr. 30 (DM). Eight Wilson's Phalaropes appeared in the Region: singles at *Greencastle*, PA, May 10 & 11; *Ft. Loudon*, PA, May 11 (CG); *Newville*, PA, May 15–18 (DHe); *Imperial*, PA, May 10 (TF); *Greene*, TN, May 1 (DM); *Hamilton*, TN, Apr. 23–24 (TR); and two at G.B.W.M.A. May 17 (MG).

The flight of Bonaparte's and Ring-billed gulls was excellent, with a high count of 560 Ring-billeds at S.H.L., Mar. 2 (LM et al.). There continue to be more reports of Herring Gulls at locations away from L. Erie and the Ohio R., with records from S.H.L. Mar. 8 (RC, RB); *Fishersville*, VA, Mar. 4 (A&YL); and *Morgantown*, WV (SS). The recently established breeding colony on the Allegheny R. at Pittsburgh had 4 nests (PB).

A Great Black-backed Gull at *Chickamauga* L., TN, Mar. 9 was well out-of-range (KC). The usual rare gulls from P.I.S.P. included Iceland Mar. 15 & 20 (JM, JF), Lesser Black-backed Mar. 15 (JM), Glaucous Mar. 12 & 15 (JM), and a Glaucous × Herring hybrid Mar. 12 (JM). More remarkable was the Iceland Gull away from L. Erie at L. Leboeuf, *Erie*, PA (CGe).

Small numbers of Caspian Terns were reported at 18 locations throughout the Region, with a high count of seven at Y.C.S.P. May 3 (GL). Both Com. and Forster's terns were more widely reported than usual, but the 11 Forster's at *Mosquito* L., OH, May 4 (D&JH) was the largest number reported. As usual, Forster's outnumbered Commons. More Black Terns were reported than usual, with an interesting report of 35 Black Terns flying up the Ohio R. at *Huntington*, WV, in a one-hour watch (MG).

CUCKOOS TO CORVIDS

Northern West Virginia had a moderate outbreak of tent caterpillars, but it did not result in increases in cuckoo numbers (GAH). A Barn Owl was seen at P.I.S.P. May 14 (AT, JM), but the only other reports came from the usual sites in *Johnson City*, TN (RK), and *Stuart's Draft*, VA (YL). The only report of Long-eared Owl was of a nesting in *Indiana*, PA, May 20 (MH et al.). A Short-eared Owl nest with three nestlings was found at *Imperial*, PA, May 30 (CT). Other sightings were at P.I.S.P. Apr. 22 (DS); *Slickville*, PA, Apr. 16 (DL); and *Pulaski*, VA, Apr. 7 (RCa). Nestings were found for N. Saw-whet Owls on *Roan* Mt., TN (FA), and in a cavity used in 1995 in *Warren*, PA (DP). Other reports came from *Venango*, PA, Mar. 18 (JS) and *Gaudineer Knob*, WV, in early May (RW).

Up to four Whip-poor-wills per day were seen at P.I.S.P. May 6–19 (JM et al.), but elsewhere in w. Pennsylvania there were only 4 records, one of which was the first one banded at P.N.R. in 30 years (RM, RCL). One was also reported from *Wood*, WV (JBe), and one from *Rockingham*, VA (MS).

Red-headed Woodpeckers appear to be doing better. Reports came from *Morgantown*, WV, May 2 (SS); *Wood*, WV, May 4 (JBL, JBe) & 17 (CBI); and *Youngstown*, OH, May 16 (NB). Red-bellied Woodpeckers were at 2 locations in *Elk*, PA (LC), indicating continuing northern expansion. Other good woodpecker news was increased reports of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, whose decline has been almost unnoticed.

In n. West Virginia the E. Wood-Pewee was late in arriving and in low numbers (GAH), but was essentially not mentioned in other reports. Is this another species slipping away without notice? Single Olive-sided Flycatchers were reported from 6 w. Pennsylvania locations: *Edinboro* May 25 (DS), *Venango* May 31 (JS), *Imperial* May 19 (CT), *Westmoreland* May 18 (KB), *Centre* May 10 (J&BP), and *Huntingdon* May 10 (NBo). Another Olive-sided was at *Washington*, TN, May 23 (FA). At P.N.R., bandings of Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were 3 standard deviations (S.D.) above the 10-year average (RCL, RM) and the species was reported more than usual throughout the Region. Least Flycatchers were 2 S.D. above average at P.N.R. (RCL, RM).

In *Union*, GA, Purple Martin houses were devoid of birds, and in *Towns*, GA, there were only 2 colonies, of 5 pairs and one pair (DF). Tree and Cliff swallows continue to increase as breeding birds in n.e. Tennessee (RK).

A Black-billed Magpie was seen in *Marietta*, OH, Apr. 19 (A&BBo). Escaped captive, or genuine wild bird? Twenty Fish Crows were seen at *Lock Haven*, PA, Mar. 10 (SH). Four nests of Com. Raven were found in *Somerset*, PA; 3 on the high walls of surface mines and one on the boom of an idle mine dragline (AM).

NUTHATCHES TO VIREOS

Very few migrant Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported. Red-breasted Nuthatches nested for the 2nd year in the Red R. Gorge, *Wolfe*, KY (FR). How many other nests of this species are within sound of singing Swainson's Warblers? Another possible out-of-range nesting came from *Rabun*, GA (MO). Carolina Wren populations remained low in the north, and House Wren populations seemed to be below normal. Winter Wrens were in good numbers at most places. Sedge Wrens were reported from *Imperial*, PA, May 10 (TF) and P.I.S.P. May 17 & 18 (JM, CT), and Marsh Wrens were found at *Austin Springs*, TN, Apr. 26 and May 8 (RK, FA) and in *Centre*, PA, May 10 (MHe).

The Swainson's Thrush migration was somewhat better than in recent years, but still low by earlier standards. At P.N.R., seven Gray-cheeked Thrushes banded represented the best season in years (RCL, RM). Northern Mockingbirds at Niles, OH, Mar. 28 (CB) and Warren, PA, May 1 (DW) were northward stragglers. A count of 240 Am. Pipits at Swoope, VA, Apr. 1 provided a local record count (YL). Pipits at Imperial, PA (TF), and Austin Springs, TN, May 10 (RK) were rather late. Single N. Shrikes were reported from Akeley, PA, Mar. 17 (AC, DC) & 27 (MGr) and at Glades, *Butler*, PA, Mar. 23 (RH). The only reports of Loggerhead Shrikes came from the usual region in the Great Appalachian Valley. Nests were reported from Swoope, VA (YL), *Jefferson*, WV (RD), and *Sullivan*, TN (IM, WC), and other sightings came from *Smyth*, VA, Mar. 22 (JMu), and *Rockingham*, VA, Apr. 27 (MS). A Warbling Vireo in *Hamilton*, TN, Mar. 29 was a local rarity (DV).

WARBLERS

While there were the usual disagreements among reporters about individual species, most areas thought the migration—when it finally came—was good to very good, with some regions calling it the best in years. At P.N.R., 2 species were banded in numbers 3 S.D. above the average, 7 species at 2 S.D. above, and 7 species at one S.D. above average (RCL, RM). But were there really more warblers than in recent years, or were they simply easier to see in the sparsely leaved trees? The persistent inclement weather kept many individuals at lower than usual heights. Did this make them easier to see, and more likely to be netted? The migration results cannot answer this.

The most unusual records were the two **Kirtland's Warblers** sighted: P.I.S.P., May 14 (NH, BMc) and Cranberry Twp., *Butler*, PA, May 15 (MWi). The Orange-crowned Warbler is very rare in spring, but it was reported from Mosquito L., OH (CB); Youngstown, OH (NB); P.I.S.P., (JM); *Venango*, PA (JS); *Wood*, WV (JBe); Y.C.S.P. (MH); P.N.R. (where a record 4 were banded; RM, RCL); and Slippery Rock, PA, where two birds which appeared to be the western race *lutescens* were seen (GW). The Yellow-throated Warbler continues to move northward, with reports from *Warren*, PA, May 17 (BW); *Venango*, PA, Apr. 19 to the end of the period (JS); and n. *Butler*, PA (*fide* PH). Some of these may be overflights, but a **Swainson's Warbler** was reported at *Lawrence*, PA, May 17 (BD); Kentucky Warbler at *Warren*, PA, May 17 (DW); and

Worm-eating Warbler at P.I.S.P. May 3 (BWi) and 18 (WS). The only other reports of Swainson's Warbler came from Chickamauga National Military Park, TN, Apr. 26 (KC); Wise, VA, Apr. 7 (RP); *Kanawha*, WV, May 19 & 30 (TFo); and the Red R. Gorge, KY.

A "Brewster's" Warbler was defending a territory May 7 on Roan Mt., TN, where 5–10 pairs of Golden-winged Warblers are still hanging on (FA, RK). A "Brewster's" was also in *Shenandoah*, VA, May 4 (DDa), and "Lawrence's" Warbler was reported from Imperial, PA, May 8 (BMc) and Irvine, PA, May 17 (BW).

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

Birders saw more Scarlet Tanagers than usual since during cold, drizzly weather many were perched in low shrubs or even on the ground. It is not known whether populations were really high. Another straggler from the west was the **Western Tanager**, at *Indiana*, PA, May 10 (FM). One of the unusual features of the season was the large number of reports of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks coming to feeders. At some places they were joined by Indigo Buntings or Blue Grosbeaks. Out-of-range Blue Grosbeaks were noted at Imperial, PA, May 19(CT) and *Venango*, PA, May 17–18 (first county record; JS). Up to six Dickcissels were at the site of the 1996 nesting in *Washington*, TN (RK), and at least 3 males were present at the 1996 nesting site at R.C.B.L. (HS).

A total of 3 Clay-colored Sparrows was reported from P.I.S.P. May 6–23 (JM, DS, JC), one was seen at Erie May 8–10 (DBo), and one was at Imperial, PA, May 15–17 (JHo, BK). Field Sparrows have been in low numbers in n. West Virginia (GAH), but no reporter commented on them. The only reports of Henslow's Sparrows came from Imperial (TF) and *Indiana*, both Pennsylvania (MH). Lincoln's Sparrows usually manage to slip northward without being seen, but there were more sightings this year than normal. A **Harris's Sparrow**, which had been coming to a feeder in *Wood*, WV, since December, finally came to the attention of the birding community in April and was last seen May 11 (*fide* JE). Another report came from Eighty-Four, PA (DBy et al.). A belated Lapland Longspur was at *Conneautville*, *Erie*, PA, May 14–17 (EER).

Orchard Orioles were reported from Edinboro, PA (DS), and P.I.S.P. (JM), where they do not normally occur; in *Greene*, PA, 5 pairs were nesting on one farm (RB). Baltimore Orioles were in greatly above-

normal numbers in n. West Virginia, and were another species more conspicuous because of the delayed growth of leaves.

Rather remarkable were the 2 Pennsylvania reports of Com. Redpolls May 10 at *Indiana* (MP) and *Butler* (*fide* GW). The only report of Red Crossbills came from Shenandoah Mt., VA, May 4 (LT). There were a few reports of small groups of Pine Siskins on Roan Mt., TN; G.S.M.N.P. (FA, RK); at feeders at 2 locations in *Indiana*, PA (MH, MP); St. Marys, PA (LC); and Terra Alta, WV (WW). American Goldfinches were in excellent numbers in *Elk*, PA (LC), but at P.N.R. (RCL, RM) and Morgantown (GAH) they were unusually scarce.

EXOTICS

A Chilean Flamingo of unknown origin was seen by hundreds of people at M.L.W.A Mar. 7 (D&JH), and two Trumpeter Swans were at M.L.W.A., Mar. 28 (J&DH). It was not reported if these birds were part of the Ohio introduction program.

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western great lakes region



JIM GRANLUND

Each season it seems one state hosts more rarities than the others, and this year it was Michigan, where the season could be categorized as nothing less than phenomenal. When all records are reviewed, Michigan could add as many as four new species to its state list, including White-tailed Kite, Tropical Kingbird, Brewer's Sparrow, and Great/Boat-tailed Grackle. Just as impressive were second state records for Virginia's Warbler and Black Vulture, first photographic evidence of Pacific Loon, and multiple sightings of Western Tanager and Blue Grosbeak. In light of this, it seems improbable that the only accidental species recorded in Minnesota were Arctic Tern and Sage Thrasher, while Wisconsin highlighted Anhinga, Glaucous-winged Gull, and Western Tanager. All three states had a fairly quiet migration of more common species and a good number of lingering species.

Weather has a great deal to do with the disposition of the migration; this season was no exception. The entire Region expe-

rienced a cold, wet spring, with very few southerly winds favorable to migration. Snow remained well into April in the northern parts of the Region, and some even fell in May. Flooding was a real problem in western Minnesota. May was particularly cool, resulting in a delay in the migration of warblers and associated species. When the migration finally did arrive, it came in a compressed wave, providing exceptional viewing for those who were out. This phenomenal migration appeared from May 17-19 in Wisconsin and Michigan, and bit later on May 24 in Minnesota.

Abbreviations: M.B.R.C. (*Michigan Bird Records Committee*), W.P.B.O. (*Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, Chippewa Co., MI*).

LOONS TO IBISES

Michigan recorded an amazing three **Pacific Loons**, including a well photographed breeding-plumaged bird on Hidden L., *Livingston*, Apr. 21-May 13 (m.ob.), and flyby birds May 27 & 28 at W.P.B.O. (PC et al.). All reports are pending M.B.R.C. review. Minnesota reported an

impressive more than 1000 Horned Grebes on L. Superior, *St. Louis*, Apr. 26 (ME). Wisconsin had a record-early Eared Grebe in Kewaunee Mar. 12 (JHo), and other individuals at Virmond Park Apr. 15 (TU) and Goose Pond, *Columbia*, May 17 (TW) and 29 (MPe, DT). Michigan had a good number of reports of Eared Grebes, including individuals in *Berrien* Apr. 5 (DVi); in *Jackson* May 3–5 (DBo); at the Muskegon Wastewater, *Muskegon*, Apr. 28 (JP, GW, ES) and May 17–18 (BM, JP); and four at Reed's L., *Kent*, Apr. 13 (FA). Minnesota recorded a Clark's Grebe in *Big Stone* May 25 (LE). Incredibly, Wisconsin had 2 reports of **Anhinga**, including individuals over Oshkosh May 4 (TZ) and two soaring in s. *Racine* May 17 (JD). These would constitute the 5th and 6th state record for this species, and consequently require review by the Wisconsin records committee.

Snowy Egrets were scarce Regionwide, with no reports in Minnesota, only two intermittently at Green Bay, WI, and from Michigan, one in *Berrien* Apr. 27 (KM), two in *Monroe* May 2 (MM), and one in Bay May 3 (JS). Wisconsin reported an ad. Little Blue Heron in s.e. *Dodge* May 3–6 (BD, SD, DT, DB et al.). Also scarce this season were Cattle Egrets, with only 2 reports in Michigan, individuals in *Ottawa* May 2 (JP, EH) and in *Saginaw* May 5 (BW). Minnesota reported only 2 large flocks of 280 in *Big Stone* May 1 (LE), and 15 in *Traverse* May 24 (WM). Wisconsin had more than 13–20 pairs, nesting at Oshkosh and Green Bay or found in migration at Horicon N.W.R. and *Oconoto*. Minnesota reported two Yellow-crowned Night-Herons in *Lac Qui Parle* Apr. 18 (FE), an unusual location for this species. Wisconsin had a single sighting of an adult Apr. 28 in Milwaukee (BB). Both dark ibises were reported in Wisconsin, with a Glossy in *Prairie du Chien* May 6 (DK et al.) and a White-faced in n. *Door* May 24 (BS).

WATERFOWL

Wisconsin reported at least 150 Greater White-fronted Geese, including flocks of 33 in *Dane*, 22 in *Sheboygan* (DT), and stragglers seen to early May in Ashland and at Horicon N.W.R. May 22 (JB, TS, DT). The migration of White-fronteds peaked in Minnesota Apr. 19, when more than 2500 were found in 4 counties: *Lincoln*, *Lyon*, *Lac Qui Parle*, and *Big Stone* (PJ, DN). The largest flock reported in Minnesota was 620 in *Jackson* Apr. 13 (KB), and stragglers remained in that state to May 17 in *Dakota* (TT) and to May 18 in *Big Stone* (LE).

Michigan had excellent numbers in the "thumb area," with a maximum of 16 at Shiawassee N.W.R. Mar. 20 (DP); five at Fish Point, *Tuscola*, Mar. 15 (MH, JHu, JBu); and 53 near Pigeon, *Huron*, Mar. 23 (MW). Elsewhere in Michigan, two were present from Mar. 26–27 at Arcadia Marsh, *Manistee* (BA, KW). Ross's Goose made a superb showing in the Region. Wisconsin had 21 birds, with individuals at Milwaukee Mar. 2–8 (MK), in *Dodge* Mar. 7 (BD), in *Dane* Mar. 17 (SR), at Ashland May 7 (DV), and two in *Columbia* and *Dodge* Mar. 12 (DT), four from Mar. 29–Apr. 2 in *Dane*, six near Shioc-ton Apr. 3 (DT), and three at Horicon N.W.R. Apr. 7 (DT). The May bird provided a record-late date for that state by one month. Minnesota had an unusual number of reports in the northeast, with three Mar. 27 in *Olmsted* (DA, BE) and seven Mar. 29 in *Meeker*. The state also recorded new late dates, with individuals in Duluth May 26–31 and in Meadowlands, *St. Louis*, May 31 (AH, PS et al.). Single birds were also reported in that state from *Anoka*, *Cottonwood*, *Dakota*, *Jackson*, *Lac Qui Parle*, *Renville*, and *Rice*. Michigan had a record showing with six in *Allegan* Mar. 2 (JG, CF), four Mar. 6 and one Mar. 13 at Shiawassee N.W.R. (DP), one in *Benzie* Mar. 21 (BA, KW, m.ob.), one near Pigeon, *Huron*, Mar. 23 (MW), and one at the *Muskegon Wastewater*, *Muskegon*, Apr. 14 (JP, EH). Two Brant on a pond in Racine, WI, from Apr. 28–May 4 (JD, MK, DT, DG et al.) provided a rare spring record for the Region.

In Minnesota, reports of Cinnamon Teal included two at Whitewater WA, *Winona*, Mar. 27 (*fide* AH), and one at Etter, *Dakota*, May 10 (SW). Unusual were reports of Eur. Wigeon from all 3 states. In Minnesota, where the species is casual, a male was seen in *Lincoln* Apr. 19 (PJ, DN). Michigan reported a male at Maple R. State Game Area, *Gratiot*, Mar. 24–Apr. 20 (JBa, JR, SS, AB). Wisconsin had a banner year for Eur. Wigeons, with two Mar. 29–Apr. 1 in *Calumet* (SB, DT et al.), a male near Green Bay, one in *Chippewa* Apr. 5 (BH), and one Apr. 25–26 in *Dunn* (JPo et al.). In Michigan, the first-year male King Eider remained at Sault Ste. Marie into May, while an eider species was seen at W.P.B.O. May 25. The Harlequin Duck at Milwaukee lingered to Mar. 22 (DG), while a male remained at Sheboygan, WI, Mar. 16–May 20 (DBr et al.). Scoters were particularly scarce in Minnesota, with reports of only one Surf Scoter at Duluth May 17 (*fide* KE) and nine White-winged Scoters in *Cook* May 25

(DN). In contrast, at W.P.B.O.—the other end of L. Superior—scoter migration peaked at 2683 White-wingeds and 84 Surf's May 23. The male Barrow's Goldeneye in *Scott*, MN, remained through Mar. 19 (*fide* AH), while the Wisconsin male at Virmond Park, *Ozaukee*, reappeared in mid-April for several days (TU).

RAPTORS

A possible first Michigan record of **White-tailed Kite** was reported Apr. 13 in n.e. *Kent* (MA); the written report is pending review by the M.B.R.C. Also pending review are reports of Mississippi Kites near Hopkins, *Allegan*, May 13 (DM) and at Estral Beach, *Monroe*, May 16 (CP). Swainson's Hawks were reported from 18 counties in Minnesota between Mar. 30 and May, including an unusual n.e. record at Duluth May 20 (FN). Michigan also had a good number of reports, with six between Apr. 28–May 23 at W.P.B.O. and an immature May 5 (KK) and an adult May 24 (KM) in *Berrien*. Ferruginous Hawk reports in Minnesota included an adult in *Lincoln* May 10 (PS), an immature in *Jackson* May 12 (PS), and another adult in *Lac Qui Parle* May 18 (AH, PH, PS). In Michigan, where the species is accidental, a report of an individual at Port Crescent S.P., *Huron*, Mar. 27 (DD) is pending M.B.R.C. review. The only reports of Prairie Falcons came from Minnesota, where individuals were reported in *Lac Qui Parle* Apr. 26 (BH a et al.) and in *Marshall* May 20 (CMA). Minnesota also reported the only Gyrfalcons, with individuals in *Beltrami* Mar. 2 (DJo) and at Duluth Apr 11 (FN).

RAILS TO SHOREBIRDS

Migrant Yellow Rails were very scarce this season Regionwide, with the only reports of territorial birds in *Aitkin*, *Roseau*, and *St. Louis* in Minnesota, and from Comstock Bog in Wisconsin, where more than 20 individuals were present. The shorebird migration was considered poor throughout the Region. The federally endangered Piping Plover was recorded from all 3 states. Wisconsin had reports at Bailey's Harbor, *Door*, May 1 (JRe) and at Algoma, *Kewaunee*, May 11 (JRe). Minnesota had single migrants in *Renville* May 10 (BL, TT), *Rock* May 11 (PS), *Olmsted* May 12–13 (m.ob.), *Dakota* May 17 (DS, BS), and *Big Stone* May 18 (LE); two arrived at the last known breeding site on Pine-Currys I, *Lake of the Woods*, by May 25. Michigan also had a good number of reports, with singles May 2–3 and a pair May 21–22 at

Tawas Pt., *Iosco* (GNe), singles May 13 & 18–19 in *Presque Isle* (BG), a pair May 17 in *Benzie* (KW), several at Vermilion Pt., *Chippewa* (DO), and six individuals between May 7–20 at W.P.B.O. Both Wisconsin and Minnesota reported lower numbers of Am. Avocet, while Michigan had a better-than-normal migration, with an outstanding report of 15 in *Muskegon* May 1 (GW, ES). Michigan also had an excellent migration of Willets, with 15 individuals from 13 locations, as did Wisconsin, where an estimated 155 birds were seen—including a flock of 60 along L. Michigan in *Ozaukee* May 4 (BD et al.). Minnesota had fewer Willets than normal, although nine May 5 at Hoyt Lakes, *St. Louis* (AE, NJ), were at an unusual location. Whimbrel also appeared at several unusual locations in Minnesota, with a single at L. Byllesby, *Dakota*, May 17 (PBu, DS, BS) and three at *Sherburne N.W.R.*, *Sherburne*, May 24 (DJe). Wisconsin reported Whimbrels as scarce, while Michigan had normal numbers at concentration points such as W.P.B.O. Hudsonian Godwits made a good showing in Wisconsin, with 55–60 birds from 10 sites. Minnesota had more than 100 birds from more than 20 counties, including a first county record single in *Houston* May 13 (PS) and a peak number of 23 in *Roseau* May 25 (m.ob.). The only report in Michigan was of seven Hudsonians at W.P.B.O. May 24 (JG, RPu). The Marbled Godwit migration was good in Wisconsin with about 16 birds from 5 sites, and in Michigan with six birds from 3 sites. All 3 states had an excellent number of Red Knots, including an impressive 31 at W.P.B.O. May 23.

JAEGERS TO TERNS

A jaeger (species) seen at Duluth, *St. Louis*, May 23 (DRa) provided one of less than 10 spring records for Minnesota. In Michigan at W.P.B.O., where spring jaegers are regular, seven Parasitics and three unidentified jaegers were observed between May 23–31, with a peak of two May 24. The only Laughing Gull report came from Michigan, where one was seen in *Presque Isle* May 25 (BG). Franklin's Gulls were quite scarce in Wisconsin, with individuals in *Dane* May 2 (SR), in *Milwaukee* May 14 (SD), and in *Columbia* May 17 (PA, TW). An unusual sighting of this species in n.e. Minnesota was reported from Duluth May 31 (BY et al.) Also in Minnesota were several unusual sightings of Little Gull, including an adult on Minnesota L. May 15, providing first county records for both *Blue Earth* and

Faribault (RJ); an immature May 19 providing a first county record for *Big Stone* (LE); and an adult at Pelican L., *Wright*, May 30 (m.ob.). Wisconsin's only Little Gull report was of two–May 15 in *Milwaukee* (MK et al.), while Michigan's only reports came from W.P.B.O., where seven were seen between May 14–24, with a peak of two May 14 & 24. Exceptional for Michigan was a reported 3rd-winter **California Gull** at New Buffalo, *Berrien*, Apr. 19 (KM); the record is pending M.B.R.C. review. Lesser Black-backed Gull reports continue to increase, particularly in Michigan, where 7 individuals were seen from 6 sites. Minnesota had reports of an adult at *Dakota* Mar. 25 (KB), providing a new early date for that state, and a first-year bird in *Isanti* Apr. 6 (KB). A different adult was found in *Dakota* Apr. 21 (KB). Wisconsin Lesser Black-backed reports included individuals at Two Rivers Mar. 18 (DT), *Dane* Mar. 21–Apr. 5 (SR, DT), *Dodge* Apr. 26–27 (TW), *Sheboygan* Apr. 21 through May (DBr, MB et al.), and at Port Washington May 28 (TU). Wisconsin had another report of **Glaucous-winged Gull**, this time an imm./2nd-year bird at Two Rivers Mar. 9 (TU, CS); the report is pending review by the bird records committee. A 2nd-summer **Arctic Tern** was carefully identified in *Duluth* May 29 (KE et al.), providing a rare spring record for Minnesota. A Forster's Tern in *Ozaukee* Apr. 3 (JF) provided a new early date for Wisconsin.

OWLS TO FLYCATCHERS

Snowy Owls lingered into May in all 3 states. Wisconsin's latest report was an individual from May 23–24 in *Marathon* (DB, CD); in Minnesota one was present in *Duluth* May 22 (*vide* KE), and in Michigan the last was at W.P.B.O. May 28. The N. Hawk Owl at Superior, WI, remained through Mar. 24 (RJo), while in Minnesota individuals were seen in *Roseau* May 25–26 and *Lake of the Woods* May 26 (CMa). All of Michigan's reports came from W.P.B.O., where three were seen between Apr. 3–19. A **Burrowing Owl** May 31 in *Duluth* (PS, m.ob.) provided only the 3rd record ever for this species in n.e. Minnesota. Great Gray Owls continued their invasion from the winter. Wisconsin added several new sightings in March in the n. half of the state, with the latest reports of a bird through Apr. 21 in *Door* (RL, CLu et al.) and two into June in *Bayfield*. Minnesota had one nest found in the Sax-Zim Bog in *St. Louis* (BY et al.), while Michigan had 24 Great Grays reported at W.P.B.O. Apr.

17–May 31, with a peak of five Apr. 27 A single Boreal Owl at the Springbrook Nature Center in *Fridley*, *Anoka*, was seen by "thousands" of Minnesota visitors before it departed Mar. 8 (*vide* AH). Wisconsin had 3 reports of this elusive northern visitor, including an individual in *Polk* Mar. 16, and road-killed individuals in *Green Lake* Mar 18 (TS) and *St. Croix* Mar. 29 (RR). As expected after the invasion of the past winter, W.P.B.O. hosted a good number of Boreal Owls, with a final total of 79 between Apr 11–May 23, with a peak of 19 Apr. 26. Less expected were the five banded between Apr 15–24 farther south in Michigan in *Presque Isle* (BG).

Impressive was the report of 400–500 Chimney Swifts roosting in a single Minnesota chimney in *Battle L.*, *Otter Tail* (SM, DMi). Exceptional in Wisconsin was a Three-toed Woodpecker at *Pottawattomi S.P.*, *Door*, Apr. 9 (KY); the record is pending review by the bird records committee. Both early and rare was a **Say's Phoebe** sighted in *Clay*, MN, Apr. 27 (CFo). The rarest find in the Region was a **Tropical Kingbird** in *Keweenaw* May 23 (LD) which, if accepted by the M.B.R.C., would provide a first state record for Michigan, as well as a first Region record. Michigan had 2 reports of W. Kingbird, including one Apr. 22–23 in *Kentwood*, *Kent* (FA), and one May 24 in *Copper Harbor*, *Keweenaw* (LB). The only **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** in the Region was seen May 20 in *Door*, WI (RL, CLu).

WRENS TO WARBLERS

A **Rock Wren** was seen on the headquarters building of the Minnesota River N.W.R., *Hennepin*, MN, May 5–6 (TT, m.ob.). Also in that state were Mt. Bluebirds in *Freeborn* Mar. 23 (ABa); two different birds in *Jackson*, with one Mar. 30 (KB) and the other Apr. 9 (CMA); and a male nesting with a female E. Bluebird in *Bemidji*, *Beltrami*, May 7 (m.ob.). In Wisconsin, a male Mt. Bluebird appeared at *Bubolz* Nature Center near *Appleton* Apr. 29, the 2nd consecutive spring at that location. The only Townsend's Solitaire reports came from Minnesota, with individuals in *Sibley* Mar. 20 (RJ) and in *Otter Tail* Apr. 13 (SM, DMi). Varied Thrushes remained to Apr. 6 at *Aitkin* (CB) and Apr. 7 in *Kanabec* (CM), both Minnesota, and to Apr. 4 in *Manistee* (BA) and Apr. 9 in *Marquette* (EB, LT), both Michigan. After being quite rare over the winter in Wisconsin, Varied Thrush made a surprisingly good showing: one in March in *Dunn* (*vide* JPo), two at a feeder in *Door* (*vide* RL, CLu), and one near *Herbster* Apr

13 (DV et al.). Minnesota had its 7th state record of **Sage Thrasher** May 1–3 in *Anoka* (JH, m.ob.). Loggerhead Shrikes numbers were down in Minnesota, with reports from only 9 counties, while both Michigan and Wisconsin only had one report: a pair in *Allegan*, MI, Apr. 19 (CF) and a pair in *Shawano*, WI, Apr. 20.

A rare Bell's Vireo was reported in Ann Arbor, *Washtenaw*, MI, May 8 (TWe, DC). The warbler migration was late, probably due to the cool weather; however, once it commenced it was one of the best in recent memory throughout the Region. Not only were there large numbers of birds, but the diversity was outstanding, with many observers encountering more than 20 species of warblers. Birds continued to migrate through the area through late May and into early June. In Wisconsin, an Orange-crowned Warbler in Manitowoc May 31 (CS) was considered late. A **Virginia's Warbler** in *Chippewa* May 20–21 (AB et al.) would constitute Michigan's 2nd state record if accepted by the M.B.R.C. Minnesota had an unprecedented 6 reports of Yellow-throated Warblers, including individuals in *Anoka*, *Dakota*, *Hennepin*, *Marshall*, and *Rice*. Wisconsin had reports in Milwaukee May 15–16, and at least two singing males were at Wylasung S.P. in late May. Yellow-throated Warblers in Michigan returned to their normal breeding areas by Apr. 27. Kirtland's Warblers outside their normal breeding areas in Michigan included individuals at Shiawassee N.W.R. May 24 (JSa) and at Bay City S.P. May 26 (MP, JU). Also in Michigan, good numbers of Prairie Warblers included individuals in *Washtenaw* May 13 (TWe, DC), *Macomb* May 14 (MM), *Berrien* May 17 (JG, RA, KT), and two in *Barry* May 5 (CF). Wisconsin reported Prairies in Manitowoc May 20 (BBr) and at L. Geneva May 24 (PP), while in Minnesota, where the species is considered casual, a single May 18–21 in *Anoka* (SC, GP) represented a good find. Michigan had an unusual number of Kentucky Warbler reports, including individuals in *Wayne* May 10 (AC), *Berrien* May 11 (KM), *Huron* May 18 (DM), *Kent* May 18–19 (FA), and a territorial bird in *Hillsdale* May 14 (JR). Minnesota had a single report of this species May 31 in *Hennepin* (OJ), and Wisconsin had scattered sightings in May, with nesting at several sites.

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

All 3 states reported Summer Tanagers, with five–seven birds seen in Wisconsin and a first-year male banded in Minnesota

at the Westwood Nature Center, *Hennepin* (m.ob.). Michigan had individuals in Iosco May 10 (GNe), *Wayne* May 31 (DO), and one well n. of normal in *Keweenaw* May 18 (LB). **Western Tanagers** made a major incursion into the e. portions of the Region, with reports in Wisconsin of individuals at Eau Claire May 6–7 (JPo), *Crawford* May 13 (DK et al.), *Pierce* May 15–17, and *Bayfield* May 25 (CD). Michigan reported males in *Allegan* May 12–14 (RA, JG, m.ob.) and in *Wexford* May 20–23 (BA, DKo); if accepted by the M.B.R.C. they will represent only the 5th and 6th state records! A male **Black-headed Grosbeak** was photographed in Clay, MN, May 24 (TBr), while a female was reported in Sprague, WI, May 17 (RJ, AS); the latter pending rare bird committee review. Michigan reported a very cooperative **Blue Grosbeak**, which visited a feeder in Okemos May 9–13 (TB); another was seen at University of Michigan, Dearborn, *Wayne*, May 17 (JC). Wisconsin reported a Blue Grosbeak May 22 in Milwaukee (WH). Minnesota had reports of **Lazuli Buntings**, with a male at Lynd, *Lyon*, May 25–26 (RM) and a female May 28 (RJ) at the same location. A **Painted Bunting** was seen at Tahquamenon S.P., *Chippewa*, MI, Apr. 28. (JRa, JSp). Spotted Towhees were recorded in Minnesota in *Lyon* May 10 (RSc, RS) and *Otter Tail* May 14 (SM, DMi). A **Brewer's Sparrow** at W.P.B.O. May 24–25 (LD, m.ob.) would provide a first state record for Michigan, if accepted by the M.B.R.C. Harris's Sparrows in that state included reports in *Berrien* May 15 (KM), in *Shiawassee* May 19–20 (JBU), and in *Keweenaw* May 19 (LB). A **Lark Bunting** was reported in *Eaton* May 6 (LK), providing a rare Michigan record. A female **Great/Boat-tailed Grackle** present at W.P.B.O. Apr. 15 & 17–18 (RP et al.) would provide a first state record for Michigan, if accepted by the M.B.R.C.

CORRIGENDA

Delete the Curlew Sandpiper at Pt. Mouille State Game Area, *Monroe*, MI, Aug. 11, 1996 (AFN, 51: 59), because documentation was not submitted to support the sighting.

Observers: Ray Adams, Brian Allen, Diane Anderson, Martin J. Andree, Frank Apsey, Philip Ashman, Sylvia Barbarich, Karl Bardon, Al Batt (ABa), Jeff Baughman, John Baumgartner (JBa), Dan Belter, Laurie Binford, Ted Black, Elizabeth Blichfeldt, Brian Boldt, David Brassler (DBr), Terry Brashear (TBr), Margaret Brassler,

Don Brooks (DBo), Bernie Brouchoud (BBr), Paul Budde (PBu), Jeff Buecking (JBU), Cindy Butler, Adam Byrne, Steve Carlson, Don Chalfant, Allen Chartier, Phil Chu, Patti-Jean Cousins (PCo), Julie Craves, Jerry DeBoer, Connie Decker, Scott Diehl, Dan Duso, Bob Domagalski, Kim Eckert, Fred Eckhardt, Bob Ekblad, Lee Ellwanger, Molly Evans, Audrey Evers, Cole Foster (CFo), Chip Francke, Jim Frank, Jim Granlund, Bill Grigg, Dennis Gustafson, Jay Hamernick (JHa), Bruce Harris (BHh), Bob Heagle, Anthony Hertzler, Paul Hertzler, Randy Hoffman, William Holmes, Jim Holschbach, Ernie Hoover, Joanie Hubinger (JHu), Mark Hubinger, Nancy Jackson, Robert Janssen, Paul Jantscher, Douglas Jenness (DJe), Oscar Johnson, Robbye Johnson (RJo), Kenn Kaufman, Dennis Kirschbaum, Donald Kogut (DKo), Mark Korducki, Leah Knapp, Carla Larson, Bill Litkey, Charlotte Lukes (CLu), Roy Lukes, Craig Mandel (Cma), Craig Menze, Doug McWhirter, William Marengo, Bill Martinus, Mike Mencotti, Robert Meyer, Diane Millard (DMi), Steve Millard, Kip Miller, David Neitzel, Gary Nelkie (DNe), Frank Nicoletti, Darrin O'Brien, Patricia Parsons, Dave Peters, Mark Peterson (MPe), Mike Petrucha, Greg Pietila, Rod Planck, Janne Polk (JPo), Jim Ponshair, Curt Powell, Robert Putman (RPu), Dan Rau (DRa), Jody Raab (JRa), John Regan (JRe), **Jack Reinoehl** (Michigan), Sam Robbins, Ronald Roettger, Jerry Sadowski (JSa), Steve Santner, Robert Schroeder (RSc), Roger Schroeder, Tom Schultz, Al Shea, Ellen Slater, Joe Soehnel, Chris Sontag, Jon Spieles (JSp), Becky Smith, Drew Smith, Barbara Stover, **Peder Svingen** (Minnesota), Louis Taccolini, **Daryl Tessen** (Wisconsin), Kevin Thomas, Tom Tustison, Jerry Urquhart, Tom Uttech, Dick Verch, David Vinnedge (DVi), Tex Wells (TWe), Steve Weston, Keith Westphal, George Wickstrom, Myles Willard, Bruce Winchell, Tom Wood, Keith Yanda, Ben Yokel, Tom Ziebell.

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midwestern prairie region



Five Red-throated Loons were reported across the northern part of the Middlewestern Prairie Region during the season, including this one at Pleasant Creek Lake, Iowa, on May 2, 1997. The extensively white face and thin, upturned bill are obvious in this view. Photograph/T.H. Kent

LOONS TO IBISES

It was a good spring for loons. Five Red-throated Loons were reported across the 4 n. states; one, discovered May 23 at Tampier L., Cook, IL, lingered through June 14 (†MN, †JL, m.ob., ph.). An imm. Pacific Loon was at West Okoboji, IA, Apr. 15–May 26 (†ET, †LS, †DHk, ph.). Common Loons occurred in unprecedented numbers on the Indiana lakefront, where 743 were counted Apr. 5 (JMc, SB, CF). The season saw a better-than-normal Red-necked Grebe flight, with singletons in Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio, plus four in Iowa. Thirteen Eared Grebes were found e. of the Mississippi R.; the southernmost report came from McElroy L., KY, where one–three were seen during April (Kentucky Ornithological Society).



Pacific Loon at West Okoboji, Iowa, on April 15, 1997. The bird remained at this location for some six weeks. Photograph/Ed Thelen

KENNETH J. BROCK

It was another cold, late spring for the Middlewestern Prairie Region. Mercifully, conditions were not as harsh as those experienced during spring 1996, but they were far more persistent. March temperatures were near normal, April was cold, and May was colder. Indeed, May was one of the coldest on record, with several correspondents reporting average temperatures more than 10°F below normal. Consequently, vegetation development was retarded throughout the Region, and was 10–15 days later than normal in the northern reaches. In addition, much of the Region was plagued by an insistent north wind throughout almost the entire spring season.

The effect of these inhospitable conditions on the spring flight was predictable; most birds arrived late and many lingered well beyond normal departure dates. In Chicago, Paul Clyne estimated that 22 species fewer than normal had arrived by the end of April, and in Fort Wayne, Indiana, Jim Haw reckoned that 30 species were behind schedule at the same point. To avoid

the persistent headwinds, migrant hawks circumnavigated most of the Region; the only significant flights were recorded in extreme northeastern Ohio.

Consequences of the cold spring were most extreme in the western states, where a late storm dropped two feet of snow in mid-April. Chris Hobbs reported that in northern Missouri hundreds of Killdeer were surprised by the freak blizzard and were able to land only in tire tracks along the roads. In keeping with the “every cloud has a silver lining” spirit, Tom Kent pointed out that Iowa’s first and second White-winged Doves appeared on the heels of the storm, and that snow cover forced hard-to-find Chestnut-collared Longspurs into the plowed roads of northwestern Iowa.

Abbreviations: H.B.S.P. (*Headlands Beach S.P., OH*), L. Cal. (*L. Calumet, Chicago*); Jax.P. (*Jackson Park on the Chicago lakefront*); S.C.R. (*Squaw Creek N.W.R., MO*); R.E.D.A. (*Riverlands Environmental Demonstration Area, MO*), Spfld. (*Springfield, IL*).

The best Am. White Pelican tallies were logged at Carlyle L., IL, where 700 were present Mar. 23–Apr. 12 (DKa); at Chautauqua N.W.R., IL, where 381 were seen Apr. 3 (S&RB); and at South Hickman Bottoms, KY, where 59 were seen Apr. 2 (CP). The Double-crested Cormorant expansion continued this spring, with fine counts across the Region, highlighted by a superlative tally of 5000 at Rend L., IL, Apr. 11 (J&CM). Neotropic Cormorant reports are becoming routine in w. portions of the Region. At S.C.R., two immatures were seen May 10 and two adults were observed at that location May 18 (BF).

Most encouragingly, Am. Bitterns were plentiful across the Region. The most impressive report came from the reclaimed Ayrshire Mine in Warrick, IN, where an amazing 20 were seen or heard Apr. 26 (JCb, ML, AT, ph.). Although 100 Cattle Egrets were counted in Vermilion, IL, Apr. 19 (JSm), this species was generally scarce across the Region. In contrast, it was a bountiful spring for Black-crowned Night-Herons. The peak count consisted of 613 seen during the evening dispersal at L. Cal. May 10 (WM), but counts exceeding 100 birds were also logged at Falls of the Ohio, KY, Apr. 11 (FR) and at Michigan City Harbor, IN, May 29 (KB et al.). A breeding-plumaged **Glossy Ibis**, flushed from a wetland in s. Lake, IN, May 17 (†RHe, †LC et al.), provided Indiana's 3rd record.

WATERFOWL

Two **Fulvous Whistling-Ducks** were seen briefly at the Ayrshire Mine, Warrick, IN, June 1 (†JCb, ph.); this constitutes Indiana's 2nd record. The goose expansion continued this spring with numerous large counts and lingering bird in the n. states. Noteworthy Greater White-fronted Goose tallies e. of the Mississippi R. included: 1200 at Clinton L., IL, Mar. 1 (MD); 251 in *Rock Island*, IL, Mar. 20 (PP et al.); and 212 in *McHenry*, IL, Mar. 14 (RBa). Two White-fronteds wandered E to Fairport Harbor, OH, where they were seen Mar. 2 (KMe, LRo), and one lingered at Carlyle L., IL, until May 28 (DKa). Snow Geese followed a similar pattern; noteworthy reports include 198 at Ottawa N.W.R., OH, Mar. 2 (EP et al.) and 10 stragglers at Carlyle L., IL, May 28 (DKa, KMc). Ross's Geese were well represented in the goose expansion, with a dramatic increase in Iowa (*vide* TK), a peak of nine in Santa Fe Bottoms, IL, Mar. 27 (DKa), an adult at McElroy L., KY, Mar. 9, 15, & 22 (BPB), one at Lake St. Mary's Fish Hatchery Mar. 30–Apr. 6 (†DD), and a tardy adult that re-

mained in Schaumburg, IL, through May 10 (MM, GW, DBr, m.ob.). The only Brant report consisted of a singleton at Jax.P. Apr. 5 (†RM, CA, m.ob.).

An ad. female Am. Black Duck, apparently paired with a male Mallard, was carefully studied at the Eagle Bluffs W.M.A., MO, May 24 (†Pmc). Selected peak puddle duck counts included 10,000 Green-winged Teal at Carlyle L., IL, Mar. 29 (DKa), 703 Blue-winged Teal May 10 at Eagle Bluffs W.M.A., MO (Pmc et al.), 1500 N. Shoveler at Little Clear L., IA, Apr. 14 (MBr), and 1225 Gadwall at Saylorville Res., IA, Mar. 24 (SD). Rarities amid this plethora included nine Cinnamon Teal in Iowa, plus singleton males at Carlyle L., IL, Mar. 29–30 (†DKa); at McElroy L., KY, Apr. 19–22 (CL; †BPB, P&JB, m.ob., ph.); in *Calhoun*, IL, May 4 (†RR); and in *Boone*, MO, May 10 (†SH, †JV, MV). Eurasian Wigeons were reported at Castalia, OH, Mar. 16 (RHn, SWa) and a male in *Steuben*, IN, Apr. 1 (†Haw, FH). Without doubt the best duck of the season was Kentucky's first **Tufted Duck**, a male that entertained birders at McElroy L. in March and April (DCo, †BPB, P&JB, m.ob.). A tardy male Redhead lingered at Eagle Bluffs W.M.A., MO, until May 31 (Pmc). On L. Erie, three Harlequin Ducks were found at H.B.S.P. Apr. 12 (RHn, EB), and another was seen at Cleveland Mar. 16 and Apr. 14 (TL). Remarkably, a female Harlequin lingered on the Wilmette-Evanston, IL, L. Michigan lakefront from Apr. 28–May 25 (EW, m.ob.), establishing a record-late date for Illinois (*vide* PC). For the first spring in recent memory, White-winged Scoters were not reported in the Region. Three exceptionally late Com. Mergansers were found at Chautauqua N.W.R., IL, May 29 (S&RB, SC). The 3000 Red-breasted Mergansers at Carlyle L., IL, Mar. 19 (DKa), constituted an excellent count for an inland lake.

HAWKS TO CRANES

Breeding Osprey reports included a pair at the traditional Brookville Res., IN, nest site Mar. 30 (WB); a nest in *Portage*, OH, Mar. 31 (Lro); a nesting pair at Land Between the Lakes, KY, Apr. 23 (CP); and near Barkley L. Bridge, KY, Apr. 23 (CP). A flyby **White-tailed Kite** was seen May 8 at Urbana, IL (†RCh). An extralimital Mississippi Kite was observed at Ledges S.P., IA, from May 12 through the end of the period (PW, †LH). Northern Goshawks were unusually scarce, with only four reported in 3 n. states. Persistent n. winds restricted hawk flights in most areas; the only sizable move-

ments occurred in n.e. Ohio, where good flights were logged at Conneaut. Notable daily tallies included 161 Red-shouldered Hawks Mar. 21 (LY), 1230 Broad-winged Hawks Mar. 26 (ES, LY), and 54 Am Kestrels Mar. 21 (LY). An early Swainson's Hawk was found near one of the traditional *Kane*, IL, nesting areas Apr. 13 (GW, CW), and four were seen in nearby *McHenry*, IL, Apr. 20 (JL). Golden Eagles were widespread with one–two reported in each of the 4 n. states; the easternmost record consisted of an adult at Conneaut, OH, Mar. 21 (LY). Merlin numbers continue to increase across the Region, with 25 reported; the largest numbers were in Ohio, where a dozen were reported. The most remarkable Merlin report involved a female/immature in extreme s.w. Indiana (*Warrick*) June 3 (†JCb). The season's only Prairie Falcon was seen Mar. 9 near Arcola, IL (†RCh).

Regional birders ferreted out five Yellow Rails; records included singletons at Clanton L., IL, Apr. 5 (RCh); at Tucker Prairie, MO, 25 Apr. (SDI); at Merwyn Preserve Prairie, IL, May 5–6 (MF, TBu); at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P., IA, May 9 (JFu); and in *Vermilion*, IL, May 19 (†JSm). King Rails were unusually common, with seven in Illinois, five in Ohio, and three in Indiana. Virginia Rails and Soras were both widely reported; the single most impressive count consisted of 96 Soras at Eagle Bluffs W.M.A. and Columbia sewage treatment plant, MO, May 10 (Pmc et al.). Once again Com. Moorhens may be in trouble. Numbers were uniformly low; the Region's peak report consisted of only two birds. A Purple Gallinule, discovered dead at Steeple Chase Golf Course, Mundelein, IL, 10 April 1997 (TMo, TS, DHg, *), probably died during an April cold period near that time (*vide* DJ). Sandhill Cranes continue to flourish; notable spring reports include sightings at 12 locations in Iowa, a count of 2110 migrants at Saganashkee Slough, IL, Mar. 12 (RBz), and seven birds in Ohio.

SHOREBIRDS TO JAEGERS

Unusual plover reports included an early Black-bellied Plover at H.B.S.P. Apr. 6 (EB, RHn) and a count of 450 Semipalmated Plovers at Fishhook W.M.A., IL, May 17 (RCh et al.). Piping Plovers were remarkably widespread, with two or more reported in every state except Missouri. **Black-necked Stilts** arrived extremely early, with one in *Boone*, IL, Mar. 20 (ABe, †RM, DW et al.) and another at the Louisa Refuge, IA, Mar. 26 (†ASp). The only other Black-necked Stilt report consisted of three at

Cypress Creek N.W.R., IL, May 3 (KMc). The peak count of 19 Am. Avocets was duplicated at 2 locations: East Chicago, IN, Apr. 26 (SB, m.ob.) and at Runnells, IA, May 4 (JSi). Noteworthy peak shorebird counts included more than 100 Greater Yellowlegs at Hickman Bottoms, KY, Mar. 29 (CP); 36 Willets at Wilmette, IL, May 2 (EW); 58 Spotted Sandpipers in Lake, IN, May 8 (Jcd et al.); 14 Whimbrels at Waukegan, IL, May 25 (Jpm) and again at Wilmette, IL, May 30 (RHu); 450 Hudsonian Godwits in Fremont, IA, May 15 (TK); seven Marbled Godwits at L. Lemon, IN, May 1 (J&SH); 82 Ruddy Turnstones at Grand Lake St. Mary's, OH (DD); 20 Ruddy Turnstones at McElroy L., KY, May 17 (L. Doyle, *fide* BPB); 17 Red Knots in Wayne, OH, May 19 (ES); 55 Sanderlings at Lorain, OH, May 25 (TL, CH); 1000 Least Sandpipers at Coralville Res., IA, May 11 (TK); 500 Dunlin at Ottawa N.W.R., OH, May 17 (GH); 100 Short-billed Dowitchers at Carlyle L., IL, May 12 (KMc et al.); and 300 Com. Snipe at Cone Marsh, IA, Apr. 11 (TK). Both of the Region's Ruffs appeared in Henderson, KY; a male was discovered off KY 268 Apr. 17 and a Reeve was found 2 mi e. of the Ruff location the same day (†BPB). Other noteworthy shorebird reports included early Long-billed Dowitchers at Carlyle L., IL, Mar. 23 (DKa) and at Columbia, MO, Mar. 30 (PMc), plus nesting Com. Snipe at the Ayshire Mine in s.w. Indiana, where an adult and two young were found May 21 (†JCb, ML). It was a good spring for Wilson's Phalaropes, with reports from every state except Missouri; peak counts included 20 at Reelfoot Lake N.W.R., KY, in early May (B. Yandell, *fide* BPB), 17 at Colo Ponds, IA, May 7 (HZ), and more than 14 at McElroy L. Apr. 26

SA Spring jaegers are extremely rare on the Great Lakes; consequently, the simultaneous appearance of five Pomarines at the Whiskey I. Marina, Cleveland, OH, is extraordinary. The birds, which were discovered Apr. 16, remained through Apr. 25 (PL, †D & JH, VE, †KMe, m.ob. ph.), providing numerous opportunities for close range study of the rarely seen first-winter plumage (often characterized by a pale nape). This occurrence, which followed last fall's Regional Pomarine Jaeger incursion and sporadic sightings through the winter, raises the possibility that these individuals wintered on L. Erie.

(BPB). Red-necked Phalaropes were restricted to the w. states, with eight in Iowa and one in Missouri.

GULLS TO TERNS

During the first third of May a most remarkable gull movement occurred in s. L. Michigan; the flight produced unprecedented late spring numbers of the larger boreal species. Compared to recent years, Laughing Gull numbers declined this spring; only five birds were reported across the Region. The only Little Gulls were seen at Jax.P. Apr. 13 (†PC) and in Lake, OH, Apr. 23 (Jpo). An alternate-plumaged Mew Gull was seen briefly in Danville, IL, Mar. 26 (†RCh). The presence of nine Thayer's Gulls along the Chicago lakefront May 10 (Rbi, EW, IM) graphically attests to the lateness of the spring migration. Another Thayer's was seen on the Indiana lakefront May 10 (JM). Iceland Gulls also tarried in the Region, with the following May records: a 2nd-year bird at Wilmette, IL, May 10-13 (EW, IM); five on the Chicago lakefront May 10 (Rbi, EW, IM); three immatures at Montrose Beach, Chicago, May 2 (GW); and three first-year birds at Michigan City Harbor, IN, May 1 (KB, JMc). Lesser Black-backed Gulls were also plentiful in the early May flight, as nine were counted on the Chicago lakefront May 10 (Rbi, EW, IM). The Mississippi R. **Glaucous-winged Gull** reported last winter at R.E.D.A. was last seen Mar. 23 (*fide* CH). Most unusual for an inland location was a Glaucous Gull near Barkley Dam, KY, Apr. 13 (HC, CP). Black-legged Kittiwakes were unusually common this spring, with singleton immatures at Clinton L, IL, Mar. 8 (†RCh), R.E.D.A. Mar. 8-15 (JVb), and Kane, IL, May 4 (†ASt).

Illinois' first adequately documented **Gull-billed Tern** was seen at Waukegan, IL, May 30 (†EW). An extremely early Caspian Tern arrived in Jax.P. Apr. 3 (†PC); the Region's peak count consisted of 360 at Michigan City Harbor, IN, May 8 (Jcd, m.ob.). An additional 217 Caspians were counted at Jax.P. May 3 (PC). Illinois' 4th **Arctic Tern**, an adult, was identified at Waukegan Beach May 31 (†DBo, †DKa, †MD, †RCh, JL et al.). Least Terns were reported in every state except Missouri; the peak count was 50 at the Gibson, IN, nesting site May 28 (*fide* JCs). Black Terns remained scarce e. of the Mississippi R., but excellent numbers were logged in Iowa, where the peak count was 2000 in Fremont, May 15 (TK).



A northward stray was this White-winged Dove at Columbia, Missouri, on April 27, 1997. Two others occurred in the region at about the same time. Photograph/David A. Easterla

DOVES TO WOODPECKERS

Birders in the w. states enjoyed three **White-winged Doves** this spring, as two appeared in Iowa (first and 2nd state records) and one in Missouri. The birds appeared at a feeder in Ottumwa, IA, Apr. 8-15 (†NH, ph.), at the Knox McCrory feeder in Columbia, MO, in April and early May (†DE, †PMc, ph. m.ob.), and in Le Grand, IA, Apr. 28-May 16 (†MP, †JFu, †TK, ph. †m.ob.). Spring period Snowy Owl reports included two at La Salle L., IL, Mar. 1 (J&CM), one in Spencer, IA, Mar. 4 (*fide* LS), and a tardy bird at Miegs Airport, Chicago, Apr. 5 (GW, CA). Iowa's wintering Great Gray Owl remained in Cerro Gordo through Mar. 1 (RG).

Common Nighthawks arrived 14 days later than normal in Ohio (*fide* LRo). A very late female Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was found in s. Missouri May 20-21 (MRo).

SA Ohio's first **Boreal Owl** was chased into the window of a Lake home by a flock of crows Apr. 5. Judy Reimer took the bird to the Lake Metroparks Wildlife Center for rehabilitation where it was determined to be a second-year female; it was released Apr. 9 (Jpo). A photograph of the bird was published in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* (*fide* LRo).

FLYCATCHERS TO SHRIKES

Extraordinarily high numbers of Yellow-bellied Flycatcher were recorded this spring, as evidenced by counts of 37 in Chicago's Grant Park May 30 (DS), 18 at A. A. Call S.P., IA, May 25 (MK), and 14 along the Indiana lakefront May 29 (Jcd et al.). Iowa's 4th **Vermilion Flycatcher** was recorded May 24 at Holstein, Sac (†CR). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher visited Ottawa N.W.R., OH, May 14–15 (SWr, m.ob. ph.), much to the delight of Ohio birders. In keeping with the cold spring, martins and swallows arrived late in most areas. Selected peak counts included 60 Purple Martins at Mermet Lake W.M.A., IL Apr. 14 (KMc); 130 N. Rough-winged Swallows in Union, IL, May 3 (KMc); and 2000 Cliff Swallows at Mark Twain N.W.R., IL, (DBo, VK et al.). Clearly bucking the general spring pattern, one overzealous Barn Swallow arrived at Starved Rock S.P. in n. Illinois Mar. 29 (J&CM). A pair of **Black-billed Magpies**, discovered in the Loess Hills of w.c. *Plymouth*, IA, in early May, thrilled birders attending the annual Iowa Ornithological Union meeting May 18 (†JFu, †TK). Good Fish Crow numbers appeared within their expanding range, with counts of 50 in Oakwood Bottoms, IL, Apr. 19 (KMc) and eight along the levee at Hickman Bottoms, KY, Apr. 24 (CP). Red-breasted Nuthatches were uniformly scarce, indeed several observers referred to them as "non-existent." Amid this dearth some excitement was generated when an alarmed Red-breasted displayed territorial behavior at Creation Falls, KY, May 22 (FR); further investigation June 2 revealed a family group of six (BPB). A very late Brown Creeper was seen in Boone, IL, May 26 (MRa). A fine count of 49 Blue-gray Gnatcatchers was logged Apr. 20 in Union, IL (KMc). Townsend's Solitaires appeared in suburban Kansas City, MO, Mar. 2 (SP) and at L. Ahquabi, IA, Apr. 12–13 (JSi, †AJ). Migrant *Catharus* thrushes were reported in above-normal numbers; high counts included 13 Gray-cheekeds in Jax.P. May 10 (PC), 46 Swainsons' at A. A. Call S.P., IA, May 15 (MK), and 54 Hermits in Jax.P. Apr. 16 (PC et al.). In addition, an extremely late Hermit Thrush (tail damaged) was still in Chicago's Grant Park June 3 (DS). Two very early Gray Catbirds were found at Springville Marsh, OH, Apr. 6 (TBa). American Pipits arrived quite early, with one at Naperville, IL, Feb. 28 (DS), and departed very late; the last report was June 4 in Chicago (KHl). Three–four Sprague Pipits were found at the Rosecrans Airport, Buchanan, MO, Apr. 16, and one

was still present May 1 (MRo). Cedar Waxwing numbers were low across the Region, and were entirely absent in Iowa (*vide* TK). A tardy N. Shrike was still present in Lippold Park, *McHenry, IL*, Apr. 15–16 (RBa, DF et al.).



Iowa had fewer than a dozen confirmed records of Lazuli Bunting prior to this spring, when four appeared, all in May. This male was north of Glenwood, Iowa, on May 27, 1997. Photograph/T. H. Kent

VIROES TO BUNTINGS

A White-eyed Vireo in Moorhead Park, *Ida*, IA, May 28 (PE) and a Bell's Vireo at the Migrant Trap, IN, May 25 (EH) were both well beyond their normal ranges. Fine daily Philadelphia Vireo counts were logged in Cook, IL, where nine were seen May 26 (DS), and at H.B.S.P., where seven were tallied May 25 (LRO).

A remarkably late Orange-crowned Warbler was still in Chicago's Grant Park June 3 (DS). Selected peak warbler counts included: 21 Golden-wingeds in Cook, IL, May 17 (DS); 75 Tennessees in Palos, IL, May 20 (DS); 88 Nashvilles in Cook, IL, May 17 (DS); 17 N. Parulas in Jackson, IL, Apr. 21 (KMc); 120 Yellows at H.B.S.P. May 25 (LRO et al.); 43 Chestnut-sideds in Cook, IL, May 17 (DS); 59 Magolias in Cook, IL, May 17 (DS); 30 Mournings in Chicago's Grant Park May 30 (DS); 58 Wilson's in Chicago's Grant Park May 30 (DS); and 30 Canadas in Lucas, OH, May 24 (RHa, SWa). Cape May Warblers were scarce except in Ohio, where they appeared in good numbers (*vide* LRO). The latest among many late Yellow-rumped Warblers was a singing male found in *Randolph, IL*, June 7 (†TD). Iowa's 2nd **Black-throated Gray Warbler**

was discovered near Cedar Bluff May 10 (†JHu, CT, JCo). Among the more interesting warbler reports was a bird displaying the characters of a "Sutton's" hybrid; it was seen at L. Ahquabi, IA, May 5 (†JSi). Ohio birders were treated to two **Kirtland's Warblers**; the first, a singing male, was on Kelly's I. May 14 (†RHn, SWa, m.ob.) and the 2nd was at Magee Marsh, OH, May 15–17 (†JHd, MT, m.ob. ph). A record-early Palm Warbler appeared at Carlyle L., IL, Mar. 29, and, most interestingly, the bird displayed the uniformly yellow underparts of the e. race *D.p. hypochrysea* (†DKa). Four Swainson's Warblers were found in s. Missouri near Van Buren May 31 (PMc). An early Louisiana Waterthrush arrived at Pomona, IL, Mar. 15 (KMc). Connecticut Warblers were more common than normal, with reports from every state except Kentucky. Most notable were four male Connecticuts found in Grindstone Park, Columbia, MO, May 24 (PMc et al.). Hooded Warblers were not reported in Iowa and, according to K. McMullen, numbers were also poor in s. Illinois.

Summer Tanagers pressed northward this spring, yielding multiple Chicago area records and a female at a Burr Oak, IA, feeder, May 6–17 (DCa). Following last spring's W. Tanager invasion, three birds were reported this year. Two males appeared in Iowa: one at Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. May 3 (†JFu) and another at Ames May 8–13 (†KHe, †JDi). In addition, a male was seen briefly in Arlington Heights, IL, May 18 (†JB, †CB, †JFa).

An echo flight of Lazuli Buntings occurred in the w. states, with four males and one female reported in Missouri in mid-May (no †), plus four in Iowa (three of which appeared May 18). The Iowa records included single males in *Plymouth* May 18 (†JSi), at Stone S.P. May 18 (†KK, †AJ), at Mason City May 18–22 (†EM), and at the rural home of Annie and Walter Leich, n. of Glenwood, May 23–29 (†TK, ph.). A male **Painted Bunting** made a colorful appearance at Tiffin, OH, Apr. 17 (VF, LRO, ph.), providing the state's first record.

TOWHEES TO FINCHES

Spotted Towhee reports were restricted to the w. states, with eight in Iowa and one in Missouri. An exceptionally high count of 150 Chipping Sparrows was made along the roads of *Fremont, IA*, May 15 (TK). It was a great spring for Clay-colored Sparrows, with multiple sightings in all 4 n. states. In describing Clay-colored abundance in Iowa, T. Kent commented "I personally saw

more than ever before." In addition, 4 counts along the Chicago lakefront exceeded five birds each (the peak was nine May 18; JL), and three Clay-coloreds wandered E to Ohio, where they were all seen May 10 (the easternmost at H.B.S.P.; LRo, RHn, EB). Chicago's now famous overwintering **Brewer's Sparrow** was last seen Apr. 25 (JL). The Vesper Sparrow requires close attention; numbers were deemed only fair in Ohio (LRO), and in Illinois this species was described as rare across the state (PC). Le Conte's Sparrows were reported in all 4 n. states; one ranged eastward to Bay Village, OH, where it was discovered May 5 (LRi, †TF et al.). Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were restricted to the w. reaches of the Region, with several reported at Dewy's Pasture, Clay, IA, May 18–19 (S. Fairbairn, *vide* JDi), one at S.C.R. May 20 (DE), and five in Illinois. The latest Sharp-tailed was seen in Chicago June 11 (JPu). A Lincoln's Sparrow was documented in Jax.P. on the exceptionally early date of Mar. 25 (†PC), and a phenomenal 106 Lincolns' were counted on the Chicago lakefront May 8 (DS). Another impressive Chicago lakefront tally involved 185 Swamp Sparrows at Grant Park May 8 (DS). In Chicago, a white-lored White-crowned Sparrow (probably *Z. l. gambelli* based on bill color) was seen May 18–21 (JO). A Harris's Sparrow lingered in Dickinson, IA, until May 31, establishing an all-time late departure date, and another appeared at a Wilmot, OH, feeding station

May 8 (PS, m.ob.). Most remarkable was Indiana's 2nd **McCown's Longspur**. This well-described bird was found n. of Hollandsburg, IN, Feb. 19 (†ABu), within 200 yards of the site at which the state's previous record was made. The Region was awash with Lapland Longspurs in mid-March. The peak count consisted of 20,000 at Harrier Marsh, IA, Mar. 15 (SD), and that state had 8 reports exceeding 1000 birds. Farther east, a distinct diurnal flight occurred Mar. 21, when hawk watchers counted 2700 at Maumee Bay S.P., OH (ES), and 1770 at Johnson Beach, IN (KB, JMc). It was a good spring for Smith's Longspurs, with peak counts of 200 in Arcola, IL, Mar. 22 (RCh), 85–100 at Rosecrans Airport, Buchanan, MO, Apr. 16 (MRo), and 23 in Parke, IN, Apr. 12 (ABu). Thirteen Chestnut-collared Longspurs (seven males and six females) were seen at Rosecrans Airport, MO, Apr. 16 (MRo). Chestnut-collared Longspurs were also found in n.w. Iowa, with two breeding-plumaged males in Fremont, Apr. 12 (†B&LP); 16 seen in O'Brien Apr. 10 (†DKo); a male in Lyon Apr. 11 (†DHk); and a single male in Dickinson Apr. 12 (†LS, †ET, ph.).

Bobolink numbers were low in Illinois and Indiana, but counts exceeding 100 birds were made in Kentucky and Ohio. Four E. Meadowlark reports came from n.w. Iowa, where this species is unusual (TK). Extralimital Yellow-headed Blackbird reports included a male in Nobel, IN, May 3–4 (L&NC, TH), plus 4 reports from w. Ohio. Rusty Blackbirds lingered, providing several May records; the latest involved a female in Evanston, IL, May 18 (JE). The eastward Great-tailed Grackle march continued, with numerous reports from Iowa and a count of 20 in Columbia, MO, where this species nested in 1996 (PMc).

The winter finch flight consisted of a modicum of Purple Finch; the peak count was 31 at Mammoth Cave N.P., KY, Mar. 16 (P&JB.). Small numbers of Red Crossbills were reported in every state except Ohio; the peak count was 10 (no date given) at Chautauqua N.W.R., IL (S&RB, SC). Despite the near absence of Pine Siskins across the Region, recently fledged young were detected at Annie Leich's feeder, n. of Glenwood, IA, May 25 (*vide* TK).

CORRIGENDA

In the Fall 1996 report (AFN 51:62–67), the sentence on p. 64 that begins, "The Region's first **Kelp Gull** . . ." should be replaced by the following:

SA On Oct. 19, a black-backed gull, believed to be a third-winter **Kelp Gull**, was found on a L. Michigan beach at the Migrant Trap, IN (†KB, †JDu, †m.ob., ph, video). This site is only one kilometer from the Illinois state line. The gull was seen again at this location the following morning (RHu, †RCh), and at the Gary sanitary landfill Oct. 26 (RHu et al.), but not thereafter. To date, slides of the bird perched bird (but not the video) have been critically examined by two birders with extensive southern hemisphere Kelp Gull experience. One evaluator, familiar with this species in Australia and New Zealand, felt the bird was a fairly typical third-year Kelp Gull. The other, whose experience was in South America, suggested that the gull was most likely a Kelp Gull, but noted that the molt sequence and jizz were not typical for Chile and Argentina birds. If the identification is confirmed, this will constitute the Region's first Kelp Gull record.



After snows in April, scarce migrant Chestnut-collared Longspurs were foraging along exposed roadsides, making them temporarily easier to find. This male was in Dickinson County, Iowa, on April 12, 1997. Photograph/Ed Thelen

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central southern region



STEVEN W. CARDIFF

David P. Muth, after many years of service as editor for the winter or spring seasons, has opted to go into indefinite retirement. His analyses, commentaries, and general knowledge of the Region's diverse avifauna will be greatly missed.

Judging from the volume of records submitted, it was an extraordinary spring throughout the Region—both in terms of observer coverage, and quality and quantity of birds found. Weather-wise, temperatures were unseasonably cool and rainfall was generally average or above-average. Several fronts in April–early May precipitated decent fallouts on the Louisiana coast, with the most massive grounding of the decade witnessed in Cameron Parish April 25–26. These storms almost certainly were partly responsible for sending above-average numbers of many western circum-Gulf migrants east into our Region.

All records of species of "Review List"

quality are pending acceptance by the respective state bird records committees. States are indicated only the first time the county/parish is mentioned in the text, except to avoid confusion.

LOONS TO HERONS

Two Pacific Loons remained in the Pensacola area to Apr. 22 (ph. EC, m.ob.). Four Com. Loons in *Plaquemines*, LA, May 31 (CF) were probably summering. At least one Horned Grebe in *Lake*, TN, to May 14 (WGC) was unexpectedly late. Almost normal in recent years, a few Eared Grebes detoured eastward to Mississippi, n.w. Alabama, and w. Tennessee during March–April (JRW, WMD, GDJ, WGC et al.). The *Oktibbeha* area's first **Western Grebe** May 7 (TLS) was one of few records for Mississippi, and incredibly late. A foray into Alabama waters 43–69 mi s. of *Baldwin* May 24 (GDJ et al.) produced five–six Wilson's Storm-Petrels, one–two **Leach's Storm-Petrels** (3rd record), and 12–15

Band-rumped Storm-Petrels (2nd/3rd record; ph. SWM). Eight Band-rumpeds landed aboard a boat somewhere off the Alabama/Florida line about May 3; delivered to rehabilitators in Pensacola, six were released and two died (EC,* to Archbold Biological Station). Status of these species in our waters remains uncertain; few records are supported by hard evidence. A **Red-billed Tropicbird** 47 mi SSW of



This tropicbird, apparently a Red-billed, was photographed 47 miles southwest of Southwest Pass, Louisiana, on May 24, 1997, to provide a second state record. Photograph/John P. Sevenair

Southwest Pass, LA, May 24 (v.o.) would be the state's 2nd. A bewilderingly early Brown Pelican in *Clark* May 30–31 (WG, DH, K&LN) was Arkansas' 7th, and first adult. Alabama's 13th Great Cormorant was reported in *Baldwin* Apr. 2 (RAD). Neotropic Cormorants ventured N and/or E to *Cleburne* Mar. 28–30 and *Lafayette*, AR, May 25 (K&LN; about 4th & 5th state records); *Shelby*, TN, Mar. 22 (JRW); and *Lafourche*, LA, Mar. 28 (PW, CS, BMM). An Am. Bittern in *Cameron*, LA, May 17 (JPK, DR) was late near the coast. A Glossy Ibis in *Okaloosa*, FL, Apr. 30–May 5 (EC) was locally rare. A White-faced Ibis in *Noxubee*, MS, May 3–4 (TLS, MS, MC) represented an area first and was rare for inland Mississippi; another stray appeared in *Clark* May 10 (DH, P. Price, WG). Wood Storks in *Noxubee* May 18 (TLS, MS) & 28 (three; J. Bradford, D. Richardson), and in *Montgomery*, AL, May 20 (A. Menyhert) were exceptionally early.

DUCKS TO CRANES

Fifteen or more Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were in *Lafayette*, AR, May 25 (K&LN), where breeding occurred in 1996. Snow Geese lingered in *Montgomery* to May 10 (LG) and, exceptionally, in *Oktibbeha* to May 17 (TLS, MS). A Ross's Goose remained in *Lowndes*, MS, to Mar. 2 (MC,

TLS, KK); two were in *Tunica*, MS, Mar. 8–9 (JRW), not more than seven were in w. Tennessee Mar. 2–16 (WGC), and one in *Caddo* Mar. 18–May 1 (PD) was Louisiana's latest. A male **Cinnamon Teal** in *Dyer* Mar. 29–Apr. 12 (WGC) was Tennessee's 6th. Among a spectacular concentration of Lesser Scaup, peaking at 31,000 Mar. 1, was an apparent hybrid male Ring-necked Duck × Greater Scaup in *Jefferson*, LA, Mar. 22 (PY). Oldsquaws were in *Okaloosa* Mar. 3–May 7 (D&CT et al.); *Santa Rosa*, FL, Mar. 4 (R. Bonwit et al.); and *Lee*, MS, Mar. 19 (DP, AJ, NH). Scoters were scarce; most notable were an inland Surf in *Colbert*, AL, Mar. 23 (SWM) and 10 late White-wingeds in *Okaloosa* May 11 (DMW, LF). Generally scarce inland, there were 10 sightings of Red-breasted Mergansers in n. Mississippi and w. Tennessee Mar. 6–May 20 (DP, WMD, TLS, L. C. Coffey, WGC); one in *Plaquemines* May 31 (CF) was probably summering.

In n.w. Florida, 44 Swallow-tailed Kites (including 18 at Pensacola Mar. 19; P. Parrish) through Mar. 27 furnished an all-time high; elsewhere, an outstanding "fall-out" of 40 occurred in *St. Bernard*, LA, Mar. 25 (DPM, RDP, PY, RPR), and one was n. to *Scott*, MS, Apr. 19 (T. Jacobson, F. Manzo). A nest with five young **Northern Harriers** in *Quitman* May 28 (ph. FB) provided confirmation of breeding in Mississippi, and may represent the first record for the Region; one male and three female adults were nearby. Rarely confirmed breeding Cooper's Hawks included a pair nest-building in New Orleans Apr. 8 (PY), and a nest with one chick in *Warren*, MS, May 24 (KH et al.). Truly extralimital Swainson's Hawks in New Orleans May 7 (PW) and *Shelby*, TN, May 3 (JRW, MJW, DS) eclipsed eight in w. Louisiana and Arkansas. A **Ferruginous Hawk** in *Vermilion* May 3 (GB) would furnish Louisiana's first spring record and only the 4th/5th ever for the state. A Crested Caracara was a good find on the immediate coast at *Cameron*, LA, Apr. 26 (MP); there have been one–two Louisiana sightings annually in recent years. Among 11 non-coastal Peregrine Falcons were spring firsts for *Gibson*, TN, Apr. 30 (MAG) and *Oktibbeha* May 3 (TLS, MS); singles in *Cameron* and *Vermilion*, LA, May 17 & 20 (JPK, KF, DR) were record-late on/near the coast. Very rare in Arkansas were three Purple Gallinules in *Lafayette* May 25 (K&LN), and, also late, five Sandhill Cranes in *Pope* Apr. 8 (M&HP).

SHOREBIRDS

Outstanding local highs for otherwise expected species: 46 Am. Oystercatchers in *St. Bernard* Mar. 25 (PY, RDP, DPM, RPR); 28 Hudsonian Godwits in *Benton*, AR, May 14 (JP); 2000 W. Sandpipers Mar. 28 and more than 4000 Short-billed Dowitchers Apr. 5 in *Lafourche/Jefferson* (PW et al.); and 131 Wilson's Phalaropes in *Shelby*, TN, May 1 (JRW). Exceptionally early or late records of less unusual species: a Solitary Sandpiper at Grand Isle May 25 (JPK, DR); Hudsonian Godwit in *Benton* May 27 (MM, JP); Arkansas' earliest-ever W. Sandpiper in *Benton* Apr. 13 (JP, DC, MM) and n.w. Florida's latest-ever May 15 in *Santa Rosa* (PT); and very early White-rumped Sandpipers in *Vermilion* Apr. 12 (CW, JVR) and *Okaloosa* Apr. 14 (RAD).

An Am. Oystercatcher in *Cameron* May 13 (DLD, SWC) was a rare visitor to s.w. Louisiana. Scattered Am. Avocets were encountered inland in Mississippi and Arkansas Apr. 14–May 24 (FB, G&SK, K&LN, B. Verser); 20 in Pensacola Apr. 25–26 (A&DF) were well east. A surprising 14 reports of inland Willets included early records in *Vermilion/Acadia*, LA, Apr. 12 (two; CW, JVR) & 14 (20; SWC, DLD), and *Noxubee* Apr. 16 (two; TLS); 6 other reports of more than 10 individuals Apr. 24–May 18 included 25 in *Colbert* Apr. 26 (Alabama inland high; P.D. Kittle) and 26 in w. Tennessee May 1 (WGC, JRW). Whimbrels in Arkansas (less than 10 records) included three in *Lonoke* May 10 (L&L Peacock, D. Zollner), and one in *Benton* May 14 (MM, JP). Two Hudsonian Godwits in *Prairie*, AR, Apr. 13 (K&LN) were early and east, but not as far as four–five in w. Tennessee Apr. 26–May 15 (JRW, WGC, m.ob.). A Marbled Godwit Apr. 25 was rare for *Escambia* (A&DF), and up to eight in *Lake* Apr. 30–May 1 (WGC) represented a state high and 2nd spring record for w. Tennessee. Five sightings of seldom detected interior Ruddy Turnstones came from *Lonoke*, *Benton*, *Panola*, MS, and w. Tennessee May 13–31 (K&LN, MM, JP, WMD, JRW, WGC).

A Red Knot in *Caddo* May 31 (PD) furnished n. Louisiana's first spring occurrence and one of few inland spring records for the Region. Also extra special inland were Sanderlings in *Shelby*, TN, May 3 (JRW, MJW, DS), *Prairie* May 17 (K&LN), *Benton* May 19 (three; MM), and *Panola* May 30 (WMD, JRW, TLS). Record-shattering numbers of Baird's Sandpipers driven eastward into s.w. Louisiana included 150 in *Vermilion/Cameron* Apr. 23 (DFL), and 250

on Rutherford Beach, *Cameron*, Apr. 28 (SWC, DLD); smaller numbers occurred e. to *Okaloosa* May 10 (DMW et al.), and n.e. to *Colbert* Apr. 29 and May 4 (GDJ, SWM et al.) and *Shelby*, TN, Mar. 22–May 7 (JRW). A **Curlew Sandpiper** in n.e. *Vermilion* May 6 (v.t. GB), and possibly the same bird near-by May 12 (GB), would provide about the 6th Louisiana record. Buff-breasted Sandpipers blown unusually far east/north included one in *Lafayette*, MS, Apr. 28–May 3 (G&SK, WMD); two in *Shelby*, TN, May 6 (JRW); and more than 15 in *Okaloosa* Apr. 29 (new area high; LB). A **Reeve** in *Lafayette* Apr. 26 (G&SK) provided one of few Mississippi records. A Wilson's Phalarope was exceptionally early Mar. 23 in *Tallahatchie*, MS (G&SK). There were 4 records of the rare Red-necked Phalarope: Alabama's 16th in *Shelby* May 7–8 (R. Stork, v.t. GDJ); *Benton* May 14 and five there May 19 (MM, DC, JP); and *Lake* May 15 (WGC).

JAEGERS TO DOVES

A Pomarine Jaeger on the beach near *Cameron* May 26 (ph. MP) was in an area where occasional stragglers or "summering" birds are found. More exciting was a controversial "jaeger species" off Southwest Pass May 24 (ph. IPS, ph. G. Payne, RDB, JPK); photos suggest Louisiana's 3rd **Long-tailed Jaeger**. Counts of more than 300 Franklin's Gulls Apr. 28 (SWC, DLD) and 179 Apr. 29 (DFL) in *Cameron* were an order-of-magnitude higher than previous spring *maxima*; more geographically unusual were two in n. *Vermilion* 25 Apr. (BMM, CS), and one in *Shelby*, TN, May 1 (J&L Zempel). An imm. **Little Gull** was in *Lonoke* Mar. 15 (K&LN). A belated Bonaparte's Gull was in *Cameron* May 14 (SWC, DLD). Alabama's 2nd **California Gull**, and one of few Regional spring records, was at Dauphin I. Mar. 17



A rare sight on the beach was this Pomarine Jaeger near *Cameron*, Louisiana, on May 26, 1997. Photograph/Matt Pontiff

(K. Kearny). Only three Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported: an adult in *Lake* Mar. 15 (WGC, JRW, *fide* MGW), and an adult Mar. 15 (JPK, DR), and first-year May 2–3 (ph. PW) in *Cameron*. Records of imm. Glaucous Gulls at 2 *Cameron* locations Apr. 23–May 3 (ph. DFL, ph. B. P. Gibbons, JPK et al.), and at *Grand Isle* Mar. 26 (R. Bello, G. Worthington) and Apr. 17 (DPM), may have involved one bird in each area. One was also inland in *Panola* Mar. 6 (GK). An ad. Great Black-backed in *Lafourche* Mar. 9 (PW, BMM et al.), an immature at *Dauphin I.* Apr. 15–17 (M. L. Bierly, SWM et al.), and an imm. Black-legged Kittiwake in *Cameron* May 10 (ph. JPK, KF) rounded out the rare gull list. Ten interior records of Com. Terns May 10–31 (w. Tennessee, n.w. Arkansas, and n. Mississippi; MAG, JRW, MM, AJ) was above-average. A well-studied ad. **Arctic Tern** in *Quitman* May 31 (JRW, AJ) would be Mississippi's first. Stray Least Terns were encountered in *Calhoun*, MS, May 25 (three; WMD); *Noxubee*, May 27 (two; TLS); and *Vermilion* May 25 (four; SWC, DLD). One in *Shelby* Apr. 25 (VBR), was Tennessee's earliest ever. An ad. Sooty Tern was a surprise onshore in *Cameron* May 2 (ph. PW, CS).

A **White-crowned Pigeon** in Ft. Walton Beach, *Okaloosa*, Apr. 16–May 11 (B. Fleck, C. King, DMW) will provide a Regional first

Glaucous Gull, (left) apparently in worn first-winter (first-basic) plumage, at Rutherford Beach, *Cameron Parish*, Louisiana, on May 3, 1997. Photograph/D.F. Lane

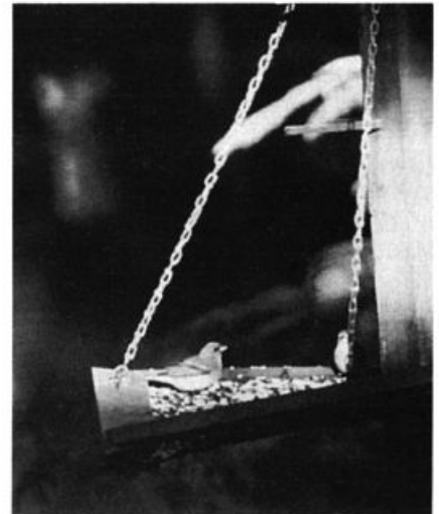
and first-ever record n. of c. Florida, unless questions arise regarding the bird's "origin." Eurasian Collared-Doves pushed N and W to *Colbert* Mar. 21 (first n.w. Alabama; GDJ, DGJ); *Grenada*, MS, Mar. 11 (FB); *Benton* May 10 (2nd n.w. Arkansas; DC, MM); and *Allen*, LA, Apr. 25–26 (JPK, LCB, MMS). A White-winged Dove in *Pascagoula*, MS, Apr. 18 (G&SK, P. Hooper) was in the area where nesting occurred in 1995.



Immature Black-legged Kittiwake (front center with Laughing Gulls and others) at *Holly Beach*, *Cameron Parish*, Louisiana, on May 10, 1997. Photograph/Joseph P. Kleiman

CUCKOOS TO PIPITS

Two Black-billed Cuckoos in *Rutherford*, TN, May 3 (TJW, D. McCarroll) were considered rare. A Short-eared Owl in *Fayette* May 24 (DDP) was Tennessee's latest. Adult and imm. male Broad-tailed Hummingbirds wintering in the same *Baton Rouge* yard remained to mid-March and Apr. 4, respectively (M. Griffith). A Belted Kingfisher in n. *Jefferson*, LA, May 27 into June (PY) was summering or breeding. Olive-sided Flycatchers wandered E to *Jefferson*, AL, May 10 (S. Hamilton), and *Fayette* and *Lake* May 24 & 26 (WRP, VBR, MAG, JRW). Unusual in s.e. Arkansas, singing Willow Flycatchers were located in *Cleveland* May 6 (HP) and *Chicot* May 10 (DSi). A family of E. Phoebes in *Montgomery* May 31 (LG) furnished confirmation of breeding for the Alabama coastal plain. Northwest Florida's first "spring" **Ash-throated Flycatcher** was a wintering bird remaining in *Okaloosa* to Apr. 14 (D&CT, DMW, RAD). Western Kingbirds were relatively widespread: 20 records Apr. 12 to the end of the period, with scattered reports e. to n.w. Florida (5



Male Lazuli Bunting on a feeder at Sulphur, Louisiana, on May 3, 1997. Photograph/Matt Pontiff

see's "earliest" Mar. 21 (N. McWhirter, C. McCrary) had also probably wintered. Good numbers were found e. of normal on the coast. Two singing Bachman's Sparrows in *Scott* Mar. 10 (J. C. Neal) were Arkansas' earliest ever. Rare or late sparrows on or near the Louisiana coast included a Lark Apr. 12 (JS) and a Chipping Apr. 20 (DPM) at Grand Isle; Vesper and Lark Apr. 29, Swamp May 4, and Savannah and Lincoln's May 13 in *Cameron* (DLD, SWC); three Savannahs in *Jefferson Davis* May 17 (JPK, DR); and Le Conte's in *Calcasieu* Apr. 28 (SWC, DLD). Scarce/local breeders in the Region, a pair of Lark Sparrows in *Lincoln*, LA, Mar. 29 appeared territorial (TD). Single Lark Sparrows in the *Oktibbeha* area Apr. 22 and May 3 (TLS) and *Escambia* Mar. 17–25 (PT), and a Grasshopper Sparrow in *Lafayette*, MS, May 12 (GK), were locally unexpected. A female **Lark Bunting** in *Calcasieu* Apr. 26 (W. Caillouet, MMS, LCB, JPK) furnished Louisiana's 5th (and first spring) record. Among 6 reports of Lincoln's Sparrows in n. Mississippi, one Mar. 30–Apr. 3 (TLS, MS) may have wintered in *Oktibbeha*; one in *Morgan* May 1 (SWM) was rare in inland Alabama, and one in *Shelby*, TN, May 29 (JRW) was very late. Rounding out the assortment of late sparrows were Swamps in *Oktibbeha* May 10 (TLS, MS) and *Shelby*, TN, May 16 (latest w. Tennessee; CHB); White-throated in *Iberville* to May 30 (SWC, DLD); and Dark-eyed Junco in *Lake* May 10 (JRW, MAG).

Above-average numbers of Yellow-headed Blackbirds invaded the Louisiana coast, and singles overshot as far as *Oka-loosa* Apr. 29–May 1 (LB), *Noxubee* May 3

reports Apr. 16–May 10, first April records, doubling the number of spring records), and *Fayette*, TN (May 26–31; S. McWhirter, MGW). Several Scissor-tailed Flycatchers penetrated marginally e. to s.e. Louisiana, w. Mississippi, e. Arkansas, and w. Tennessee Apr. 5–May 25. Nesting pairs of **Tree Swallows** in *Union*, LA, Apr. 9 to the end of the period (TD, MMH), and *Bolivar*, MS, Apr. 14 to the end of the period (NH, J. C. Herbert), furnished 2nd breeding records for each state. Northern Rough-winged Swallows arrived early in *Natchitoches*, LA, with five Feb. 24 and 17 Mar. 1 (RS). Cliff Swallows were early, too, with small numbers recorded Mar. 15–30 as far north as *Caddo*, *Union*, and *Natchitoches*, LA (TD, MMH, RS et al.), and *Lowndes*, MS (KK); the first nest for *Obion*, TN, was found May 26 (JRW, MAG). **Cave Swallows** finally joined a Cliff and Barn swallow colony on the *Cameron* side of the Sabine R. (Hwy 82). Found Apr. 17 (J. L. Dunn et al.), up to six were present through the period (LCB, JPK, DLD, ph. SWC; 2nd/3rd record).

A Carolina Chickadee was unusual on the *Cameron* coast Apr. 28 (SWC, DLD). A family of Brown-headed Nuthatches in *Hardin* May 16 (SWM et al.), and a Brown Creeper nest in *Fayette* May 4–24 (M. Watson et al.), provided first and second breeding records, respectively, for w. Tennessee. Singing Bewick's Wrens in *Washington*, AR, May 16 (MM), and *Shelby*, TN, May 22 (JRW) were possibly territorial. A House Wren in *Noxubee* Apr. 29 (TLS) and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet in *Lee* May 10 (AJ, K. Corley, DP) were late. Breeding E. Bluebirds in *Vermilion* mid-March–May (ph. W. Broussard et al.) were beyond their normal s. limit. An Am. Pipit in *Jefferson*, LA, May 1 (PY) was very late near the coast, but more than 150 were still in *Lake* May 5 (JRW, DS).

VIREOS TO WARBLERS

Blue-headed Vireos were early in *Putnam*, TN, Mar. 13 (SJS), and late in *Cameron* Apr. 29 (SWC) and *Oktibbeha* May 10 (D&J Patterson). Late coastal Yellow-throated Vireos were in *Cameron* May 14 (SWC), *New Orleans* May 16 (RDP), and on N. Breton I., *Plaquemines*, May 20 (PY, DPM). A Philadelphia Vireo in *Fayette* May 24 (DDP) was w. Tennessee's latest. Rare Black-whiskered Vireos surfaced in *Oka-loosa* May 7 (RAD) & 11 (LF, DMW), and n. *Jefferson*, LA, May 27–31 (PY, KF). Unusually early records of anticipated warbler species included Blue-winged in *Cameron* Mar. 22 (JPK, DR), two Tennes-

sees in *Caddo* Mar. 22 (RS), and male Black-and-whites in *Orleans* and *Bossier*, LA, Mar. 14 & 16 (PW, RS) and in *Lee* Mar. 18 (NH). Particularly late migrants included Golden-winged in *Cameron* May 14 (DLD, SWC) and *Orleans* May 16 (RDP); Black-throated Blue in *Plaquemines* May 20 (PY); Palms in *Oktibbeha* May 10 (DP, JP) and *Shelby*, TN, May 15 (Tennessee's latest; CHB); and Swainson's May 4 and N. Waterthrush May 25 in *Cameron* (DLD, SWC). Unusual Nashville Warblers included one e. on the coast at Grand Isle Apr. 6 (DPM), and a very late singing bird in *Putnam* May 26 (SJS). Inland Cape May Warblers included one in *Lafayette*, LA, Apr. 28 (B. Fontenot), and—very rare in Arkansas—three in *Washington* and *Cleburne/White* May 12–14 (JP, KN et al.). Amazing were wintering Black-throated Blue Warblers in *Plaquemines* Mar. 2 (since Jan. 5) and Grand Isle Mar. 16–Apr. 27 (both PW, DPM et al.); one in *Hempstead* May 10 (C. Mills) was very rare for Arkansas. Prairie Warblers, surprisingly scarce spring migrants s. of breeding areas, appeared in *Cameron*, *Jefferson*, *Orleans*, and *Iberville*, LA, Apr. 5–27 (JS, DPM, DLD, PW et al.). One in *Cameron* Mar. 15 (MP) was early and may have wintered in the area. A Palm Warbler in *Washington* May 4 (MM et al.) was rare in n.w. Arkansas. A Swainson's Warbler in *Rutherford* Apr. 30 (TJW) provided a county first. Generally rare in the Region, Connecticut Warblers were sleuthed out in *Obion* May 10 (JRW) and *Shelby*, both TN, May 16 (WRP), as well as in *Escambia* (EC) and *Limestone*, AL (GDJ, DGJ), both May 14. A Wilson's Warbler was rare inland/east in *Jefferson*, AL, May 10 (GDJ, DGJ).

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

A wintering Summer Tanager in *Baton Rouge* remained to Mar. 4 (M. Davey). An early Scarlet Tanager was in *Orleans* Mar. 29 (PW), and one was late for the inland coastal plain in *Montgomery* May 17 (LG). Late Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were in *Oktibbeha* May 17 (TLS, MS), and, w. Tennessee's latest in *Fayette* May 24 (DDP). Male **Black-headed Grosbeaks** caused excitement in *Gulf Breeze* Apr. 30–May 4 (G. Boyce et al.; first n.w. Florida spring record), and *Leflore*, MS, May 1 (J. Whicker, KH, P. Barbour et al.). A male **Lazuli Bunting** in *Calcasieu*, LA, Apr. 30–May 3 (L. East, PW, ph. MP) was only Louisiana's 2nd, and the first from spring. A "wintering" Dickcissel in *Baton Rouge* was first seen Mar. 20, departing Apr. 28 (ph. C&J Barre), and w. Tennes-

(NH, TLS, MS), and *Chicot* May 10 (DSi, H&MP). Shiny Cowbirds reappeared in their usual coastal haunts: three different males in *Escambia/Santa Rosa* Apr. 12–May 20 (EC, G. Fleming, B. Bremser); Alabama's 15th at Dauphin I. Apr. 15–19 (J&J Porter, m.ob.); and two each on Grand Isle May 17–25 (PW, ph. BMM, JPS, ph. JPK) and in *Plaquemines* May 20 (DPM, PY). Red Crossbills were widely reported through the period over w. Arkansas, primarily in Ouachita N.E., but s. to *Hempstead*, with flocks of 36 individuals observed (m.ob., *vide* M&HP). Smaller numbers in n. Mississippi during March and May included juveniles and a family group in *Panola* Mar. 12–13 for the state's 2nd breeding record (TLS, GK, WMD et al.); at least two were as far e. as *Winston*, AL, where very rare, Mar. 9 (SWM). An Evening Grosbeak in Gulf Breeze Apr. 22–23 (P. Blakeburn) was remarkably late/out of range.

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prairie provinces region



RUDOLF F. KOES and PETER TAYLOR

A generally cool spring was punctuated with some spectacular weather events. Southeastern Manitoba endured a record-breaking blizzard April 5–6, which exacerbated the “Flood of the Century” in the Red River valley a few weeks later. The Edmonton area received up to 30 centimeters of snow May 21, but a quick melt reduced its impact on migrants.

A promising start to spring migration was cut short by the blizzard; many early arrivals in Manitoba perished, and Western Meadowlarks seemed especially hard hit. Although Saskatchewan and Alberta were not directly affected, the storm doubtless impacted many prairie-bound migrants as it tracked across from Colorado. The “Red Sea” that engulfed a huge slice of Manitoba farmland seemed to divert some waterfowl, especially Tundra Swans, to more moderate flooding conditions elsewhere.

Regionwide, spring migration was typically one to two weeks late. The migration period for many species was more drawn out than usual, whereas much of the warbler and shorebird migration was com-

pressed into the end of the period and the first few days of June. Warbler migration seemed best in the Regina area and in southwestern Manitoba. Significant fallouts occurred in Calgary May 23 and southeast Manitoba May 24, with many warblers feeding at ground level.

Abbreviations: I.B.S. (*Inglewood Bird Sanctuary, Calgary*); O.H.M. (*Oak Hammock Marsh Wildlife Management Area, MB*).

LOONS TO RAPTORS

Forty-three Com. Loons gathered at Calgary's Glenmore Res. May 2 (RB). The peak of 115 Com. Loons at Natalie L., MB, May 5 (PT) was well below last year's record, but 630 Horned Grebes May 10 was the highest count since 1989 (PT et al.). Four Am. White Pelicans were early at Taber, AB, Mar. 29 (LB). A Cattle Egret was found near Glenboro, MB, around the end of April (KDS), and another near Allan, SK, May 10 (FR). A Green Heron was at Winnipeg's Ft. Whyte Nature Centre May 13–15 (GHO, RW), and a White-faced Ibis visited Frank L., AB, May 19 (ASL).

One thousand Tundra Swans graced the Pakowki L., AB, area Mar. 23; this species

was late and more widely dispersed than usual in s. Manitoba. Thirty Trumpeter Swans were reported near Stavely, AB, Mar. 30 (TK). A Barnacle Goose at Regina's Wascana Marsh Apr. 9 (BL) was presumably an escapee. Greater White-fronted Geese, increasingly common migrants in e. Manitoba, peaked at 66 at O.H.M. May 17 (Rko).

Fifty thousand N. Pintails at Pakowki L. Mar. 23 (BV) represented the largest concentration reported in the Region in years; above-average numbers were reported at several other localities Regionwide. Thirty Cinnamon Teal provided an excellent count between Irricana and Frank L., AB, May 2 (WS). At least 26 Eur. Wigeon were reported in Alberta in March and April. There were 34 Oldsquaws and 40 Surf Scoters at Burntstick L., AB, May 10 (MPr, IA), and 40 Oldsquaws May 16 and 70 Surf Scoters May 13 at Lesser Slave L., AB (JRo). Additional good counts of Surf Scoters in Alberta were 20 in the Ft. MacKay area May 16 (PSh) and 23 at Two Jack L., Banff N.P. May 18 (MM). A pair of Barrow's Goldeneyes visited Ft. Qu'Appelle, SK, in early May (RH).

We have no details on a Mississippi Kite report in Regina May 15 (SB). For the 2nd consecutive spring, late snowcover concentrated raptor migration in Manitoba's Red and Pembina river valleys. Peak counts at Windygates, in the Pembina valley, included records of 143 Bald Eagles and 3671 Red-tailed Hawks Apr. 3 (BSh), and secondary Red-tailed peaks of 1515 Apr. 1 (G&AW) and 1738 Apr. 13 (ASc,DS). Moderate concentrations of Rough-legged Hawks this spring included 30 between Irricana and Calgary Apr. 13 (TK). Highlights of the Golden Eagle migration in w. Alberta were local record spring counts of 260 at Windy Pt. Mar. 21 (WS) and 554 at Mound Head Mar. 22 (GHa). A more modest record of eight Golden Eagles passed Windygates Mar. 23 (Rko, ASc).

SA Highlights at St. Adolphe, in the Red River valley s. of Winnipeg (before the inundation), were single **Red-shouldered Hawks**, all apparently migrating, Mar. 28 and Apr. 1, 3 & 25 (m.ob.). A fifth passed Headingley, on the Assiniboine R. just w. of Winnipeg, Apr. 12 (BSh). Although there have been a number of sightings in recent years, this year's migration smacks of more than vagrancy. Is there a small breeding population somewhere in the Region, perhaps along the Assiniboine River?

GROUSE TO WOODPECKERS

No Sage Grouse could be found at 2 traditional leks near Manyberries, AB, Mar. 23 (BV). Three Whooping Cranes were late at Last Mountain L., SK, May 15 (LS). Large, pale (unstained) Sandhill Cranes were the source of at least some Whooping Crane reports in s.e. Manitoba. A Pacific Golden-Plover was carefully identified near Dalroy, AB, May 22 (JS). Black-necked Stilts continue to increase and spread N in Alberta; 35+ were at Kinivie Marsh May 10 (RKR), while sightings at Hay Lakes near Edmonton included 15 Apr. 25 (TT) and 21+ in early May (RDj).

Fourteen hundred Lesser Yellowlegs swirled about a flooded field near O.H.M. May 17-19 (Rko, PT). Good numbers of Whimbrels in Alberta in May included a peak of 40 May 8 near Taber (LB). Other noteworthy shorebird concentrations in Alberta were 3300 Sanderlings near Innisfree May 25 (RDj); 500 Semipalmated Sandpipers at McElroy's Slough May 22; and 1000 Semipalmated and 300 Stilt sandpipers in the Shepard and Chestermere L. areas May 23 (TK). Not often recorded in spring, eight Buff-breasted Sandpipers were near Dalroy, AB, May 22 (JS), nine were in the Richardson and Buck L. area of Saskatchewan May 17-22 (BL et al.), and six were late near Humboldt, SK, May 31 (FR). Saskatchewan's 10th **American Woodcock** visited Porcupine Plain in early May (ID). Impressive totals of Red-necked Phalaropes in Alberta included 11,500 at Birch L. near Innisfree May 19-25 (RDj, B&NR), 6000 at Miquelon L., and 2200 at Bittern L. May 23 (RDj).

A nesting pair of Bonaparte's Gulls was well s. of the normal breeding range at Speers, SK, in May (SHo, *vide* SS). A number of large gulls spiced up the season. An ad. California Gull was well s.e. of the breeding range at Beausejour, MB, May 31 (Rko, GG, PT). Single Thayer's Gulls visited Lumsden Beach, SK, Apr. 22 (BL) and I.B.S. Apr. 23 & 30 (TK, BSt). Iceland (non-Thayer's) Gulls were reported at Regina Apr. 5-10 (RJ et al.) and Winnipeg Apr. 16 (WC, MWa); the former was identified as nominate *glaucoides*. Single Glaucous Gulls visited I.B.S. Mar. 26 (MH) and Apr. 25 (BSt), Saskatoon Apr. 12 (BW, BL), Lumsden Beach Apr. 23 (BL), and Natalie L. Apr. 30 (PT). A peculiar gull near River Hills, MB, May 23 may have been a Herring x Glaucous hybrid (PT). Adult Great Black-backed Gulls were noted in Winnipeg Apr. 12-15 and St. Adolphe Apr. 13 (both LdM, WN), and at La Pérouse Bay, MB, May 30 (RR).

Apparently swept into Manitoba on the tail of the blizzard, the province's 4th or 5th **Band-tailed Pigeon** delighted many observers in Winnipeg approximately Apr. 7-May 2 (JF, SL, m.ob.). Owling binges between Elma and Ft. Alexander, MB, yielded 56 N. Hawk Owls and 32 Great Gray Owls Mar. 2 (Rko, PT), and 57 N. Hawk Owls Mar. 15 (PT). Few of either species remained in early April. Local first records in Alberta were a single Long-eared Owl at Millerville Apr. 11 (WS) and a nesting pair at Police Point P.P., Medicine Hat, in May (DB). Short-eared Owls made a good showing Regionwide, including "the best numbers in several years" near Edmonton (PMk) and "exceptional numbers north and south of Regina" (BL, RKR). Unfortunately, many nests were lost to agricultural activity near Regina. Rare visitors were a Red-headed Woodpecker near Taber Apr. 27 (GS) and a Red-bellied Woodpecker in Winnipeg May 8 (PMn, *vide* GH). A N. Flicker was unusually early at Stonewall, MB, Apr. 1 (KG).

PASSERINES

An early E. Phoebe at Stonewall Apr. 1-2 (KG) and three in Winnipeg Apr. 4 (AE) likely perished in the blizzard. A Say's Phoebe was well e. of the breeding range at Miami, MB, May 9-16 (GH, CC). Well s. of the boreal forest, 3 pairs of Red-breasted Nuthatches nested in Regina (*vide* RKR) and another pair attempted to do so in Stonewall (KG). An early Winter Wren took refuge in a Pinawa, MB, garage Apr. 8 (RS). Eight Gray-cheeked and 75 Swainson's thrushes visited I.B.S. May 21 (JRi, RW). Unwisely early in Winnipeg were three Hermit Thrushes Apr. 4 (AE). A Wood Thrush was banded at Delta, MB, May 9 (HdH); possibly the same bird was there May 21 & 22 (PG). A Varied Thrush was a rare spring visitor to Brandon, MB, May 23 (DCh). The only reported N. Mockingbird was at Delta May 25 (HdH et al.).

Three Am. Pipits were early at Mt. Lorette, AB, Mar. 26 (PSh), and 1000 Bohemian Waxwings represented a good number in Calgary Mar. 11 (MPr). Late single N. Shrikes were near Turner Valley, AB, Apr. 28 (WS), at Mt. Lorette Apr. 28 (PSh), and near Regina May 3 (RKR, BL et al.). A **Blue-winged Warbler** briefly visited a Kleefeld, MB, garden May 25 (Rdu, *vide* DF), and a Golden-winged Warbler visited Lumsden, SK, May 23 (MPo). A "**Brewster's**" Warbler at Saskatoon May 25 was well described (SS, PB). Rare so far west (or east?) were single Nashville

Warblers near Winter Valley, AB, May 10–11 (CH) and near Calgary May 17 (DCo). Additional warbler highlights were a N. Parula near Claresholm, AB, May 27 (GN), a Black-throated Blue Warbler in Regina May 26 (DV et al.), an “Audubon’s” Yellow-rumped Warbler in Regina May 24 (RM), and a Hooded Warbler at Altona May 22–23 (MK et al.). Magnolia and Connecticut warblers were well represented in Regina in late May (m.ob.).

Following the pattern of recent springs, seven W. Tanagers visited feeders at 6 s. Manitoba locations (v.o.); also noteworthy were a pair at Ft. Qu’Appelle May 24–25 (RH), a male in Regina May 17 (JP, DV, PSa), and one in Medicine Hat May 6 (SHa). A male Black-headed Grosbeak visited a Lundar, MB, feeder May 24 (BE). Single Lazuli Buntings were out of range at Regina May 17 (*vide* MB); Swanson, SK, May 18–19 (FR); Mayerthorpe, AB, May 22–23 (EH); Vegreville, AB, May 27 (BH); and near Argyle, MB, June 1 (GL), as was a female Indigo Bunting at Island L., MB, May 31–June 1 (TW).

A Field Sparrow near Regina May 27 was attributed to the western *arenacea* race (RKr). A Vesper Sparrow provided a local first at Lesser Slave Lake P.P. May 11 (JRo). Manitoba’s 2nd confirmed **Golden-crowned Sparrow** was at Delta May 19–20 (J&LH, m.ob.). Twenty-four Snow Buntings were late near Saskatoon May 24 (MWi), whereas a Yellow-headed Blackbird was extremely early at Altona, MB, Mar. 30 (MK). A Bullock’s Oriole was in Regina May 27 (RKr, BR). A Cassin’s Finch was locally rare at Maple Cr., near Medicine Hat, ar. 31–Apr. 1 (MO). Both species of crossbill were well represented from c. Alberta to w. Manitoba. Red Crossbills nested in Vermilion, AB (JRo), Regina (DH, BL), and probably Saskatoon (FR). White-winged Crossbills nested in Regina (DH, BL) and possibly Edmonton (PM), while a hundred or more were courting at Turtle L., SK, Mar. 19 (*vide* RJ).

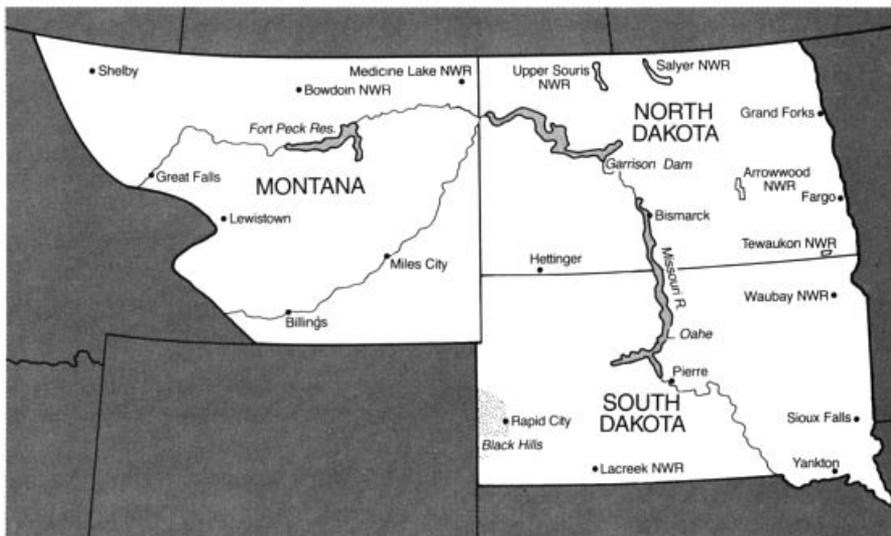
Observers (subregional compilers in bold-face): Inga Allegg, Reid Barclay, Dennis Baresco, Margaret Belcher, Lloyd Bennett, Stefan Bonneville, Pat Bulman, Dan Chranowski (DCh), Ward Christianson, Doug Collister (DCo), Carolyn Curtis, Larry de March, Heidi den Haan, Ken De Smet, Ross Dickson (RD_i), Ron Dueck (RD_i), Jerry Dutcyich, Adolf Ens, Bill Eyolfson, Dennis Fast, Jack Foster, Ken Gardner, Gordon Grief, Paula Grief, Shannon Hadford (SHa), Michael Hagel,

George Halmazna (GHa), John and Lucy Hartwell, Dale Hjertaas, George Holland (GHo), Ron Hooper, Stuart Houston (SHo), Brent Hughes, Clay Hunt, E. Huntley, Roy John, Rudolf Koes (RKO), Terry Korolyk, **Robert Kreba** (RKr), Mary Krueger, Grace Laframboise, Suzanne Lloyd, Bob Luterbach, Peter Mange (PMn), Pat Marklevitz (PMk), Mike McIvor, Ron Myers, Wayne Neily, Grace Norgaard, Mike O’Shea, Marilyn Pollock (MPo), Mike Preston (MPr), Brian Rainey, John Riddell (JRi), Brian and Nancy Ritchie, Rocky Rockwell, Jason Rogers (JRo), Frank Roy,

Pat Sargent (PSa), Lloyd Saul, Al Schritt (ASc), Dorothy Schritt, Stan Shadick, **Peter Sherrington** (PSh), Bob Shettler (BSh), Andrew Slater (ASl), Wayne Smith, John Steeves, Bob Storms (BSt), Roy Styles, Peter Taylor, Terry Thormin, Ben Velner, Dan Vetter, Marlene Waldron (MWA), Glen and Adam Walley, Renee Will, Bill Williams, Michael Williams (MWi), Ted Wilson.

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northern great plains region



RON MARTIN

For the third consecutive year, a cool spring kept much of the migration one–two weeks late. Much of the record snowfalls of the winter had melted by late March, only to be followed by a massive storm April 4–7 that brought 18 inches of snow to some localities, with 50–70 mph winds. Temperatures dropped below zero in some places after the storm, and snowbanks were still visible in northeastern South Dakota May 20. In southeastern North Dakota, the storm was preceded by freezing rain that downed power lines. Some permanent residents and early mi-

grants suffered detectable losses from the storm. This year again there were many flooded roads in the eastern half of the Dakotas, from the snow melt. Precipitation during the spring period, however, was actually below average in many places. Devils Lake continues to grow by the square mile, and record floods from the snow melt in the Red River valley made national news—and brought local birder activity to a virtual standstill. Warblers made a particularly good showing, appearing in good numbers very late in the season. Few rarities were noted in Montana and North Dakota, but South Dakota had several notable sightings.

GREBES TO HAWKS

Horned Grebes were early Mar. 23 in *Charles Mix*, SD (RM), and 23 Clark's Grebes were noted at a Freezeout L., MT, colony, where nesting numbers appear to be on the increase (MS). A Double-crested Cormorant at Audubon N.W.R. Mar. 19 provided the 2nd earliest date for North Dakota (DGP). Casual in Montana, a Great Egret was near Bainville May 17 (LK, MK). Fourteen Trumpeter Swans at Freezeout L. from late March to mid-April was more than double the number in recent years, and possibly reflects the effort to modify swan migration and wintering habits in the Red Rocks L. area of s.w. Montana (MS). Greater White-fronted Geese were late May 15 in *Union*, SD (SVS). Reverse migration of Snow Geese was noted at Freezeout L. this spring following the Apr. 4 storm. Four collared geese seen in Saskatchewan several days earlier were noted back at Freezeout Apr. 6, the birds having backtracked over 300 mi (MS). Five Snow Geese were very late May 26 in *Union*, SD (SVS), and the species was present at Medicine L., MT (LK, TG), and several North Dakota locations at the end of the period. Perhaps a reflection of their increasing numbers, Ross's Geese in North Dakota were record early by 2 days Mar. 26 at Long Lake N.W.R. (PCV), and latest ever by 6 days May 20 in *Richland* (REM).

Waterfowl migration was late, following the blizzard and subsequent cold weather of early April. A good peak of 500 Ring-necked Ducks was in *McHenry*, ND, Apr. 20 (GBB). Very unusual in spring, a pair of **Harlequin Ducks** was at Ft. Peck Mar. 15 and remained for several days (CC). A very late pair of Barrow's Goldeneye was observed at Bowdoin N.W.R., MT, May 28 (SD). Also late was Com. Merganser May 19 in *Hughes*, SD (JSP).

A Turkey Vulture May 10 in Chester, MT, provided the first record for latilong six (HM). Two-three **Bald Eagle** nests have been the maximum in recent years in North Dakota, but this year 9 nests were found along the Missouri R. system. The Red-shouldered Hawk at Fargo Mar. 28 provided the 13th record for North Dakota (DPW). Unusual was a yearling Swainson's Hawk at Clark Salyer N.W.R. May 22, the first ever observed by Berkey.

PARTRIDGE TO WOODPECKERS

The moderate recovery of Gray Partridge numbers mentioned in previous columns seems to have stalled, with very few noted by all observers. High water levels no doubt

contributed to the low numbers of shorebirds noted in North Dakota for the 4th consecutive spring. The same phenomenon was noted in Montana, but South Dakota reported good numbers. A Black-bellied Plover Apr. 17 at Ft. Peck was early (CC). Black-necked Stilts were at Kelly's Slough N.W.R., ND, Apr. 30 (MRN) and in *Brown*, SD, May 2 (SLS). Casual in both states, Whimbrels were noted May 19 in *Hand*, SD (JSP), and an unusually large flock of 17 was at Lostwood N.W.R., ND, May 23 (RD). Providing about the 14th Montana record, three Hudsonian Godwits were at Bowdoin May 26 (SD). South Dakota's 2nd **Ruff** appeared in *Minnehaha* May 6-10 (RFS, JSP).

The 800 Bonaparte's Gulls in *Kidder* Apr. 26 provided a new spring peak for North Dakota. South Dakota's 2nd **Lesser Black-backed Gull**, an adult, was found Apr. 5 in *Lake* (JSP). Unusual in spring, Glaucous Gulls were noted Apr. 12 in *Lake*, SD (JSP), and at Medicine L., MT, May 19 (CW). Providing the 2nd-earliest record for North Dakota were five Caspian Terns in *Cass*, Apr. 12 (GEN).

South Dakota's 2nd **White-winged Dove** was found in *Lawrence* May 28 (RAS). A first for latilong 6, and about the 20th Montana record, a N. Hawk Owl was photographed in Chester May 14 (HM). One of the **Great Gray Owls** present in Sioux Falls, SD, during the winter was last observed Mar. 18 (RFS). A N. Saw-whet Owl was heard in the Ponderosa Pine area of *Slope*, ND, May 31, where they are thought to nest (HCT). A Calliope Hummingbird at Benton L., MT, May 27, appears to be the first observation in latilong 17. A Pileated Woodpecker in *Bottineau*, ND, May 29, provided about the 5th record for the Turtle Mts. (KMF).

FLYCATCHERS TO WARBLERS

Yellow-bellied Flycatchers made an unusually good showing, with 9 observations in North Dakota and five reported for South Dakota. Kingbirds were still migrating at the end of the period. A Violet-green Swallow Apr. 30 in *McKenzie*, ND, provided the 2nd earliest date for that rare nester (JAH), and a new spring peak for Bank Swallow was noted May 22 when 5500 were logged at Salyer N.W.R. (GBB). A single Purple Martin was far west at Benton L., MT, May 27.

Rock Wrens were far s.e. in South Dakota, with one banded May 7 in *Clay*, and another noted May 16 in *Union* (DS). North Dakota's 17th Blue-gray Gnat-

catcher, and 13th since 1989, was at Fargo May 15-20 (GEN et al.). The Varied Thrush that wintered at Bismarck, ND, was last seen Apr. 7 (BM), and one was at Benton L., MT, Apr. 25. South Dakota's earliest by 8 days, a Gray Catbird was found Apr. 18 in *Charles Mix* (LAS). The first May record of N. Shrike for North Dakota was provided by an individual May 10 in Fargo (VO).

Far west was a Yellow-throated Vireo in *Meade*, SD, May 22 (REP). Philadelphia Vireo made a stellar showing in the Dakotas May 20-June 4. A new peak of 11 was noted at Minot and Velva, ND, May 25 (REM, GBB), and 6 observations were recorded in South Dakota. A Blue-winged Warbler was still present at Newton Hills S.P., SD, May 31 (RFS, JSP). The 7 Golden-winged Warbler observations in North Dakota were more than usual, and the species was late May 27 at Fargo (DPW, GEN) and May 30 in *Minnehaha*, SD (RFS). Chestnut-sided Warblers were noted in above-normal numbers in c. North Dakota, and 4 reports of Black-throated Blue Warblers from the Dakotas spanned May 22-28. Unusual were 3 reports of "Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler from North Dakota Apr. 19-May 13. A Blackburnian Warbler was far west May 21 in *Meade*, SD (REP). One or two Pine Warblers were in Fargo, ND, May 1-7 (RHO, DPW); there are now more than 20 records for North Dakota. A Bay-breasted Warbler was unusual in *Hughes*, SD, May 29 (DB). Casual in South Dakota, Worm-eating Warblers were banded in *Clay* May 26 and 30 (DS). Also casual in South Dakota, a Louisiana Waterthrush was in *Union* May 16 (DS). North Dakota's 5th record for **Kentucky Warbler** was furnished by an individual at Minot May 25 (REM, GBB), and another was discovered in Sioux Falls, SD, May 27-29, providing about the 10th record for that state (RFS, JSP, DS). A MacGillivray's Warbler was banded far east in *Brown*, SD, May 24 (DAT).

A banding station was again manned at Westby, MT, and several notable warblers were observed May 23-25. Montana's 10th records for Chestnut-sided and Cape May warblers were noted, and also Montana's 8th **Mourning Warbler** (PLW, TN et al.)

TANAGERS TO CROSSBILLS

A Scarlet Tanager was early and far west in *Bowman*, ND, May 1 (MLJ). Also in North Dakota, W. Tanagers were in Bismarck May 13 (LA) and Fargo May 29 (KC). A Blue Grosbeak in *Ransom*, ND, May 25 provided one of few records for the e. part of the

state (RK). An early Lazuli Bunting was in Hughes, SD, Apr. 20 (EDS). In Montana, a Green-tailed Towhee May 14 at Benton L. provided a first refuge record and a first for latilong 17.

Sparrow migration was unimpressive, with very few species appearing in any numbers. A "White-winged" Junco was too far north May 16 at Ft. Peck, MT (CC). **Great-tailed Grackles** appear to be establishing themselves in South Dakota. There were 4 previous records, all recent, and this spring they were found at 4 locations in the s.e. part of the state, beginning Apr. 19. They were noted in *Miner* (JSP), *Minnehaha* (RFS), *Charles Mix* (LAS), and *Gregory* (RM, LAS, DAT), with possible breeding in the latter.

The House Finch invasion is virtually complete in North Dakota, with birds now found in all small towns and moving into farm shelterbelts. Red Crossbills were confirmed or suspected of nesting at no fewer than 6 locations in n.c. North Dakota this spring, and a nest found Mar. 30 at Denbigh Experimental Forest was destroyed by the April blizzard (GBB). **White-winged Crossbills** also made a notable nesting splash in n.c. North Dakota. Up to 25 birds were present at Denbigh Experimental Forest during the period, with nesting confirmed Apr. 13 when nest building and feeding young were observed for the first nesting record away from a large city. Short-tailed fledglings were also being fed May 23 at the Minot Country Club (REM). There are fewer than 10 nesting confirmations for North Dakota.

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southern great plains region



JOSEPH A. GRZYBOWSKI

This spring provided an assortment of observations and possible insights. The cooperation of observers in providing one of the best-documented series of observations I can remember was gratifying. Outstanding has been the encouragement and reporting from Ross Silcock and Joel Jorgensen, now covering all of Nebraska, and also the long-standing efforts of sub-regional compilers Lloyd Moore of Kansas, Jo Loyd of Tulsa, and Louis McGee of Lawton, Oklahoma. This type of reporting helps distinguish between the patterns of occurrences we can be certain have a biological basis, and those depicting expectancy or other observational biases. This also helps train and attune birders (and want-to-be-birders) to become better observers, and see things they might not have anticipated otherwise, enjoying their sport more and making real contributions.

The season was late, but—this time—with a clear causal event. An early April snowstorm and cold snap that spread across the Region froze out many sensitive and not-so-sensitive plants. Fresh leaves

were turned to tinsel. This event had immediate impacts: discovery of longspurs in Nebraska's snowy landscapes, and some data points on the costs of stochastic risks (as Seltman's observations of failing Killdeer provided). These events turned the leaf-factory clocks back almost a month in Oklahoma and Kansas—early May still looked like early April.

This amounted to some birds acting like they were still in their winter quarters even a month later (into May). It also suggests that the migration stimulus can have some proximate regulating factors. For

example, Spotted Towhees and White-crowned Sparrows in central Oklahoma were still relatively common on dates they should have been almost all gone. This pattern was also notable in waterfowl and other short-distance migrant passerines. This may also have cut down the numbers of some species, such as Orange-crowned Warblers, which seemed scarcer this season.

Superimposed on this pattern was a generally wetter long-term cycle (it's hard to say that for three mid-continental states at once, or when one considers the drought we had the previous winter and spring). This meant better habitats for water, marsh, and shore birds. Some impromptu "wetlands" were wet through the season.

This season also brought out some special rarities. The state records committees will decide their status, but the sightings encompass basic issues of origin and identification difficulty.

Abbreviations: Cheyenne Bottoms (*Cheyenne Bottoms, Barton Co., KS*); Crescent Lake (*Crescent Lake N.W.R., Garden Co., NE*); Fontenelle Forest (*Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co., NE*); K.B.R.C. (*Kansas Bird Records Committee*);

McConaughy (*L. McConaughy, Keith Co., NE*); N.O.U.R.C. (*Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee*); O.B.R.C. (*Oklahoma Bird Records Committee*); Quivira (*Quivira N.W.R., Stafford Co., KS*).

LOONS TO WATERFOWL

A **Red-throated Loon** in *Douglas, KS*, Apr. 20–26 (AP, m.ob.) and another in *Sedgwick, KS*, Apr. 13 (PJ) represented exceptional finds. No less surprising were Pacific Loons, one photographed Mar. 24 in *Bryan, OK* (JW, TW); one Mar. 28–May 21 in *Tulsa* (JWA, m.ob.); and one May 21–22 in *McClain, OK* (JSt). Common Loons were noted to May 31 at McConaughy (JH et al.) Twelve Horned Grebes were still present in *Tulsa* May 3 (TM).

A **Red-necked Grebe** at Quivira Mar. 28 (AS) furnished one of very few spring records, few documented. McConaughy drew spectacular numbers of W. Grebes, peaking at 14,500 Apr. 19 (SJD). With these, reports of Clark's Grebes continue to increase, with 7 reports of 44 birds for Nebraska (*fide* WRS), the high count 23 at McConaughy Apr. 26 (SJD). Nine W. Grebes appear to have been breeding at Cheyenne Bottoms through the end of the period, one mated with a Clark's Grebe (m.ob.).

A Brown Pelican at Quivira May 17–18 (SR et al.) was a surprise. Neotropic Cormorants were noted in *McCurtain* Mar. 10 (JW, TW), *Tulsa*, Mar. 28 (JWA), at Quivira Apr. 20 (m.ob.), and at Cheyenne Bottoms May 24 (BVD). American Bittern reports were a little better than usual this year, with 18 reported from Nebraska (*fide* WRS). Two White-faced Ibises were present in *Tulsa* May 2 (JWA).

Several pairs of Trumpeter Swans were noted breeding at *Grant, NE*, May 4 (WM). Nine Tundra Swans were present at Quivira Mar. 15 (CG). Snow Geese peaked at 400,000 Mar. 8 in *Phelps, NE* (LR, RH). Ross's Goose numbers were also up, with several reports of 187–500 from several locations in Nebraska (*fide* WRS). A few lingered longer than normal, with singles May 10 in *Linn, KS* (KS, RM et al.), and *Blaine, OK* (JAG et al.), May 17 in *Fillmore, NE* (JGJ), and May 21 in *Clay, NE* (BP, LP). A real surprise among cholera-afflicted waterfowl in *Clay, NE*, Mar. 17 was an **Emperor Goose** (WM). It showed no signs of captivity, but its status will be decided by the N.O.U.R.C. It may very well be the first record away from the West Coast.

An Am. Black Duck at Quivira May 3 (MM, GP) was very late or "Mottley"—a

K.B.R.C. issue. A status-wrencher was Nebraska's first potential **Garganey** Mar. 28 in *Kearney, NE* (B&MD); documentation has been forwarded to the N.O.U.R.C. Another wrencher was a **Eurasian Wigeon** Mar. 29 in *Clay, NE* (JGJ, GJ). Among those needing careful looks was a hybrid Cinnamon × Blue-winged Teal Apr. 13 and May 17 in *Tulsa* (JWA). A pair of Cinnamon Teal loitered in *Blaine, OK*, until at least May 24 (JAG).

Among other lingering waterfowl were a Gadwall May 25 in *Tulsa* (JWA), and Ring-necked Ducks to May 24 in *Brown and Rock, NE* (JGJ), and May 26 in *Tulsa* (2–3 birds; JWA). Bufflehead stayed to May 27 in *Crescent Lake* (MF) and Red-breasted Mergansers to May 26 in *Tulsa* (JWA). Greater Scaup, a species whose status is being established or changing, were noted in Nebraska from Mar. 30 (SJD) to May 8 (JGJ), with a high count of 23 at McConaughy Apr. 13 (SJD). Seven were reported from Kansas (*fide* LM). The latest Oldsquaws included two in *Coffey, KS*, Mar. 2–23 (LM, m.ob.) and in *Tulsa* Mar. 28 (JWA, JT, JSi).

The rarest of scoters in the Region—Black Scoter—was noted Apr. 17–28 in *Geary, KS* (CO, m.ob.). The only other scoter reported was a White-winged in *Noble, OK*, Mar. 28 (JWA). Following the discovery of a pair of Barrow's Goldeneyes at *L. Ogallala, Keith, NE*, in February, a sub-adult male was identified at McConaughy Mar. 30 (SJD), and a female was observed in *Douglas, NE*, Mar. 3 (JGJ).

RAPTORS TO RAILS

Bald Eagles may be nesting at more localities than most suspect, but a tally of sites is difficult to accumulate—and perhaps rightfully difficult to extract from those that do know. Perhaps more than 20 pairs may be attempting to breed in Oklahoma, with others reported from Kansas and Nebraska—good news.

A Sharp-shinned Hawk lingered to May 23 at *Crescent Lake* (MF), a late date. A N. Goshawk was identified in *Cheyenne, KS*, Apr. 15 (DB). A Ferruginous Hawk in *Butler, KS*, Apr. 23 (PJ) was out-of-range. A Rough-legged Hawk was still comfortable in *Kimball, NE*, May 3 (SJD).

Perhaps people are tiring of reporting Merlins, now that they are more frequently observed, but only 4 reports were tallied for Nebraska (*fide* WRS), 4 from Kansas (*fide* LM), and 2 from Oklahoma. Peregrine Falcons, on the other hand, were better reported, with 22 from Nebraska Apr. 9–May 19 (*fide* WRS), and 13 from Kansas (*fide* LM),

including 10 from Quivira and Cheyenne Bottoms May 3 (EP, SS).

Rumor has it that Gray Partridges may soon be extirpated in Nebraska, but several were still reported (*fide* WRS). The 21 Sharp-tailed Grouse found in s.w. *Banner and Kimball, NE*, may provide a significant expansion of range if actually breeding (*fide* WRS).

Yellow Rails anyone? On Apr. 16, a controlled burn on a "wet" upland prairie in *Linn, KS*, flushed about 50 small rails with white patches in their wings. One which stunned itself was captured and documented as a Yellow Rail (Holy Cow—50!!; See Swan and Thompson 1997, *Bull. Kansas Ornithol. Soc.* 48:25–27). One other was flushed May 8 in *Douglas, KS* (CC). An early (and well-publicized) Whooping Crane was noted Mar. 9 in *Buffalo, NE* (PT). On the late end, two were present at Quivira (EP) and two at Cheyenne Bottoms (SS, EP), both May 2–3.

PLOVERS TO TERNS

American Golden-Plovers made what some considered a spectacular showing in Nebraska, with high counts in the 100s (JGJ)—nonetheless a far cry from the real "old days." Snowy Plovers edged up into Nebraska, with 5 reports from s.e. Nebraska (*fide* WRS). At least 8 pairs of Piping Plovers set up shop at McConaughy by May 18 (SJD). Early was a Semipalmated Plover Apr. 9 in *Tulsa* (JL, PS). Of small numbers, but of note, were Mt. Plovers that appeared to be nesting in a narrow strip of *Kimball, NE* (SJD, JS); 2 nests were found May 15 in *Morton, KS* (SJD). A recent phenomenon, perhaps (probably?) linked to the recent wetter years, is the increase of Black-necked Stilts in the Region, with pairs found in *Sheridan, NE*, and *Crescent Lake* (MF et al.).

Migrant shorebirds, a staple of spring migration, were reported mostly as expected. Among the regular migrant "delicacies," Whimbrel reports spanned May 4–18, with the high of 45 at *Lancaster, NE*, May 18 (JM). On May 17, 51 were reported from 2 localities in *Noble and Pawnee, OK* (JWA), and nine from *Sequoyah, OK* (SB). Long-billed Curlews were noted in *Rock and Brown, NE*, the e. limits of their range in Nebraska (JGJ). A mid- to late-May surge of 76 Ruddy Turnstones occurred in Nebraska (*fide* WRS). Highly unusual in spring were two Red Knots May 26 in *Pawnee, OK* (JWA); one undocumented report was credited to Nebraska (*fide* WRS). Nice was a count of 62 Dunlin May 21 in

Lancaster, NE (JS). Nebraska birders, assessing a migration "corridor" for Buff-breasted Sandpipers, found their highest counts in a narrow strip, with 163 in *York-Seward* May 10 (JGJ), and 116 in *Fillmore*, NE, May 17 (JGJ); this lines up with the high count of 60 for *Tulsa* May 3 (JL, PS).

The status of Short-billed Dowitchers in the Region may need to be reassessed. Expected as regular, but rare and difficult to identify in e. areas, Nebraska tallied 96 birds "with details" from Apr. 30–May 23 (*vide* WRS), a commendable number of observations which can be used as reliable; 24 were noted at *Quivira* May 10 (SS), and eight in *Pawnee*, OK, May 26 were also documented (JWA). Red-necked Phalarope numbers were not stingy either, with a high count of 250 from *Crescent Lake* May 22 (TLE) and an almost unprecedented 7 reports of 40 birds in s.e. sections of Nebraska (*vide* WRS); 30 were seen May 22 at *Quivira* (SS). A very "hot" prospect was a black-morph male **Ruff** May 24 in *Phelps*, NE (LR, RH), the 3rd record for Nebraska.

A Greater Yellowlegs was early Mar. 2 in *Grant*, KS (LM), as was a Baird's Sandpiper Mar. 8 at *Quivira* (SS). The 300 Willets at *Cheyenne Bottoms* May 3 (SS) represented the largest concentration I can remember reporting.

Nebraska's potential 7th Laughing Gull record was of a bird noted Apr. 4 in *Fillmore* (JGJ); an adult was noted in *Pawnee*, OK, May 17 (JWA). In with the changing times, **Little Gulls** were reported at *McConaughy* Apr. 19 (SJD; a 3rd for Nebraska), with another Mar. 25 in *Mays*, OK (PM, NL). A California Gull in *Douglas*, NE, Mar. 19 (JGJ) may provide only the 4th record for e. Nebraska (*vide* WRS). Others included one Mar. 1 in *Trego*, KS (M&EC), a 2nd-summer bird May 10 in *Rogers*, OK (JWA), and 27 at

McConaughy Apr. 17 (SJD), the latter a more traditional location.

Adult to near-ad. Thayer's Gulls were documented Mar. 29 and Apr. 13 & 19 at *McConaughy* (SJD), providing potential support to a still not well-supported notion that they are a regular—but difficult to convincingly document—species (not to mention the ambiguous taxonomy). **Iceland Gulls** photographed at *L. Ogallala*, *Keith*, NE, Mar. 30 (SJD), and at *Scotts Bluff*, NE, Apr. 19–20 (SJD, WRS) will await review; another Iceland Gull photographed in *Osage*, KS, Mar. 1–2 (AS, LM, m.ob.) appears to meet criteria. A Glaucous Gull lingered to Apr. 12 at *McConaughy* (SJD). And, Silcock's report claimed that **Great Black-backed Gulls** are becoming regular at *McConaughy*, with a 3rd-year bird present Apr. 12–13 (SJD).

Much appreciated details were provided for spring Com. Tern reports from Nebraska, which included a hefty 22 birds, including 14 noted at *McConaughy* May 18–19 (SJD); two were noted in *Jefferson*, KS, May 20 (LM). Very early, or possibly overwintering, were the two Forster's Terns in *Tulsa* Mar. 10 (JL).

DOVES TO VIREOS

It was a little quieter for doves, but the season still produced White-winged Doves in *Marion*, KS, Apr. 19–24 (G&DS, m.ob.) and *Garvin*, OK, Apr. 22–23 (JSt). The three–four Eur. Collared-Doves (for whatever they may be worth) were watched in *Sherman*, KS, May 15–31 (KS). Perhaps more noteworthy was the pair of Inca Doves in *Jackson*, OK, which began nest-building Mar. 8 (*vide* IM); four birds were noted in the area.

A Com. Poorwill was noted e. to *Knox*, NE, May 18 (JH, EH), and a not often found nest of this species, with eggs, was discovered in *Dawes*, NE, May 30 (WM). Early were 14 Chimney Swifts Mar. 24–26 in *McCurtain*,

OK (BH). Not often found in the spring was a Rufous Hummingbird in *Tulsa* Mar. 9 (TH).

Cordilleran Flycatchers were located at 3 locations in Nebraska's Pine Ridge Area, adding new locales to the traditional site at *Sowbelly Canyon* (WRS). An Ash-throated Flycatcher in *Clark*, KS, Apr. 26 (SS) was an exception. A Violet-green Swallow was documented far east in *Harlan*, NE, May 8 (G&WH).

Steller's Jays wintering in *Scotts Bluff*, NE, departed by Apr. 15 (EE). In the aftermath of the winter invasion, breeding by Clark's Nutcrackers apparently occurred in w. Nebraska, with a brown-feathered young appearing with adults May 7 at a feeder in *Scotts Bluff* (ECT, AK). Other nesting was reported in the Pine Ridge country (*vide* WRS), and several flocks were present in *Sowbelly Canyon* May 22–23 (WM). A Clark's in *Grant*, KS, stayed until Mar. 29 (m.ob.). Corvids e. included Black-billed Magpies in *Jefferson* (G&WH), *Lancaster* (LE), and *Pierce*, NE (*vide* WRS) into mid-May. Fish Crows were noted in *Cherokee*, s.e. KS, May 29 (DM), continuing a n. extension of range in the Region.

A Mt. Chickadee in *Cimarron*, OK, May 12 (JSt) was tardy. Molhoff was able to document 6 nesting sites of Pygmy Nuthatches in *Sioux* and *Dawes*, NE; perhaps only one other nesting record exists for Nebraska. A Rock Wren at *Quivira* Apr. 18–26 was an outlier (CG). A **Northern Wheatear** in *Cheyenne*, KS, Apr. 12 (DB) will await review by the K.B.R.C. as a potential first record for Kansas and the Region.

A Golden-crowned Kinglet May 10 in *Pierce*, NE, was rather late (*vide* WRS). A Townsend's Solitaire in *Jefferson*, KS, Apr. 23 was both e. of most and tardy (RR). Eight Veeries were reported from Nebraska (*vide* WRS), including western-race birds (two) at *Kimball*, NE, May 17 (DH), and *Keith*, NE, May 12 (JH, EH). Only one was reported from Kansas, at *Wyandotte*, May 26 (LM), and two from *Tulsa*, OK (*vide* JL). Westward Gray-cheeked Thrushes appeared in *Cimarron*, OK, May 12 (JSt, JMc, JHa) and *Keith*, NE, May 15 (JH, EH). Wood Thrushes wandered W to *Harlan*, NE, May 9 (G&WH) and *Keith*, NE, May 14 (JH, EH).

Among wandering southwestern vagrants was a Curve-billed Thrasher in *Finney*, KS, Mar. 30 and Apr. 13 (L&BR, T&SS). Rare spring migrants, Sage Thrashers were found Apr. 20 in *Banner* and *Kimball*, NE (SJD). An Am. Pipit in



The status of Iceland Gull on the Great Plains is still controversial, but this individual's long wingtips, very pale primaries, and dark bill suggest that it was correctly identified as such. The bird was at Melvern Lake, Osage County, Kansas, on March 1, 1997. Photograph/Lloyd Moore

Fillmore, NE, May 23 (JGJ) was as late as they get in Nebraska. Northern Shrikes were noted from *Keith*, NE, westward Apr. 11–13 (SJD). A Loggerhead Shrike in *Cass*, NE, Mar. 9 (GW) may have been among the few that ever winter.

A Yellow-throated Vireo in *Blaine*, OK, May 11 (JAG) provided a first county record. Tulsa birders kindly provided documentation for six Philadelphia Vireos spanning the period Apr. 29–May 9 (*vide* LM).

WARBLERS TO FINCHES

But what is spring for? Among the “zooties” were Blue-winged Warblers in *Delaware*, OK, May 3 (JSt); *Jefferson*, NE, May 8 (JGJ); *Douglas*, KS, May 10 (PW); and *Johnston*, KS, May 9–11 (SC). Recent years have provided counts for Golden-winged Warblers—the eight from Nebraska (*vide* WRS) and four from Kansas (*vide* LM) were noted w. to *Hall*, NE, May 20 (LR, RH). Cape May Warblers, among the rarest eastern warblers in the Region, were seen in *Sarpy*, NE, May 9–10 (BP, LP); *Harvey*, KS, May 10 (CS, m.ob.); and *Riley*, KS, May 10 (DM). A Connecticut Warbler appeared in *Fontenelle* Forest May 31 (BP, LP); one additional record was undocumented.

Other warblers reported as found in better-than-normal numbers were Chestnut-sideds in e. Nebraska (*vide* WRS), Blackburnian Warblers (27 reports almost statewide in Nebraska, *vide* WRS), and Bay-breasted Warblers, with five from Nebraska (*vide* WRS), two from Kansas (*vide* LM), and two from Tulsa, OK (*vide* JL). Cerulean Warblers were noted w. to *Dakota-Thurston*, NE, May 17–18, carrying nesting material (BFH et al.).

Warbler potpourri included a Yellow-throated in *Cuming*, NE, May 25 (LE), with 10 reported from e. Kansas. Worm-eating Warblers appeared in *Sedgwick*, KS, Apr. 20 (PJ); *Rogers*, OK, May 10 (PS); and *Keith*, NE, May 14 (JH, EH). Louisiana Waterthrushes probing the edges of their normal range were found in *Lancaster*, NE, May 10 (LE) and *Jefferson*, NE, Apr. 25 (JGJ). A Kentucky Warbler in *Dakota*, NE, May 18 (RMA, WRS) was n. of most. Out-of-range was a Mourning Warbler May 27 in *Morrill*, NE, where it was compared with a MacGillivray's (ECT). Eleven Canada Warblers were reported mostly during late May in Nebraska (*vide* WRS). Edge extralimital Hooded Warblers were noted in *Leavenworth* May 7 (CH, MR et al.), and in *Sedgwick*, KS, Apr. 30 (JB).

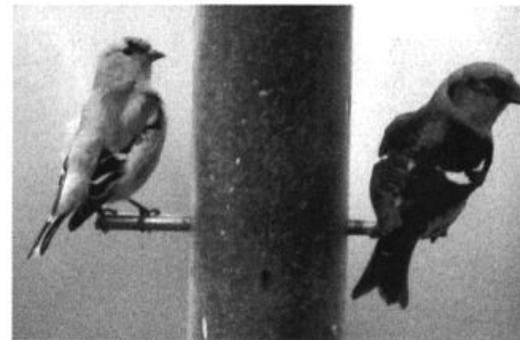
Scarlet Tanagers found their way w. to *Seward*, KS, May 4 (HT); *Scott*, KS, May 10

(T&SS); and *Buffalo*, NE, May 19 (LR, RH). A W. Tanager was located e. in *Douglas*, NE, May 3–4 (NR), the earliest spring arrival date for Nebraska. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, casual in w. Nebraska, were located in *Sioux* May 22 (TLE), and in *Scotts Bluff* May 24–25 (AK, CK). Black-headed Grosbeaks were noted e. to *Butler*, KS, May 14 (BB). Lazuli Buntings were found e. May 16 in *Platte*, NE (LR, RH), and *Jefferson*, KS, May 19 (PH).

Not an everyday find was a Green-tailed Towhee in *Russell*, KS, Mar. 1 (M&EC). Henslow's Sparrows were noted in *Washington*, NE, Apr. 11 (GJ), and w. in Oklahoma to *Noble*, OK, Apr. 20 (JCH) and *Alfalfa*, OK, also Apr. 20 (JAG). Sharp-tailed Sparrow reports included one undocumented in *Lancaster-Saunders*, NE, and a second in *Fillmore*, NE May 19 (JM). Song Sparrows continue an isolated breeding outpost in *Phelps*, NE (WRS). A Golden-crowned Sparrow in *Morton*, KS, May 4 (L&RS) undoubtedly awaits K.B.R.C. review.

Snows April 9–10 made for an unexpected show of longspurs, and some interesting questions on their April status in the Region. A McCown's Longspur drawn to a road by a snowstorm in *Knox*, NE (MB), was e. of many. About 10,000 Lapland Longspurs were noted in *Knox* (MB), a surprising number when considering that the latest spring date on record for Nebraska is Apr. 15 (!!!; *vide* WRS). The several hundred Laplands seen in *Pawnee* and *Rush*, KS (SS), are equally amazing. Among the surprisingly few spring records of Smith's Longspurs for Nebraska, all from the southeast, were those noted in *Washington*, NE (JGJ). Snows also made viewing of 42 Chestnut-collared Longspurs in *Blair*, NE, Apr. 10 (JGJ) possible.

Yellow-headed Blackbirds seem to be getting at it earlier, as the one Mar. 8 in *Clay*, NE (DH), testifies. Two Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches remained until Mar. 13 in *Dawes*, NE (ZU). Perhaps just our imaginations, but Purple Finch numbers just don't seem to be what they used to (WRS, JAG). Red Crossbills continued their story of last summer, with birds present at scattered locations across the Region through the end of the period. Eastern locations for May included *Cuming*, *Otoe*, and *Sarpy*, NE; *Douglas*, KS; and *Cherokee*, *Wagoner*, and *Muskogee*, OK (*vide* WRS, LM, JMc). A **White-winged Crossbill** in Oklahoma City this January reappeared from Mar. 12–28 (SM, m.ob.).



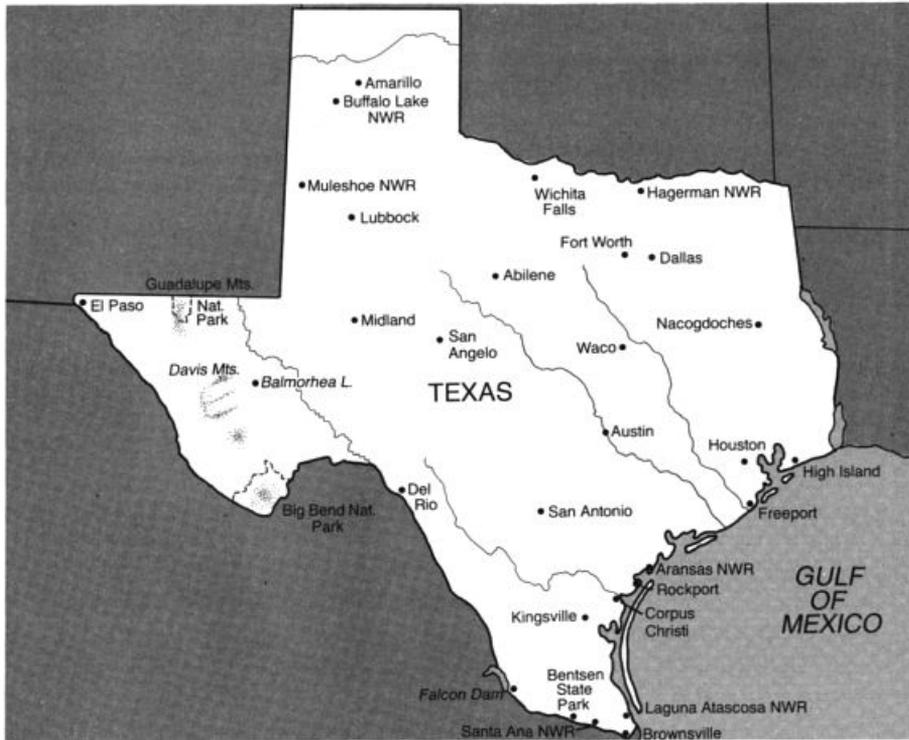
White-winged Crossbill (sharing a feeder with an American Goldfinch) in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on March 16, 1997. Part of an exceptional winter movement of finches and other birds, the crossbill was seen at this location intermittently in January and March. Photograph/Steve Metz

Cited observers (area editors boldfaced):

KANSAS: James Barnes, Bob Broyles, Dan Busse, Calvin Cink, Mark & Elaine Corder, Steve Crawford, Chet Gresham, Pam Hanson, Chris Hobbs, Pete Janzen, Mick McHugh, Roger McNeill, **Lloyd Moore**, Dan Mulhern, Chuck Otte, Galen Pittman, Alexi Powell, Eric Preston, Steve Rhoades, Leonard & Betty Rich, Mark Robbins, Richard Rucker, Carolyn Schwab, Scott Seltman, Tom & Sara Shane, Kevin Sink, Lawrence & Ruth Smith, Glenn & Dorthea Strotkamp, Art Swalwell, Tom Swan, Max Thompson, Hetty Trutza, Beverly Van Dyke, Phil Wedge. NEBRASKA: Mark Brogie, Bill and Mary Kay DeBaets, Stephen J. Dinsmore, Claire Drenowatz, Larry Einemann, Ted L. Eubanks, Edson Ewing, Marlin French, Robin Harding, David Heidt, Glen & Wanda Hoge, Erin Huebschman, Jeff Huebschman, Bill F. Huser, Gerald Jorgensen, **Joel G. Jorgensen**, Alice Kenitz, Clem Klaphake, Ron Martin (RMA), Wayne Mollhoff, James Mountjoy, Babs Padelford, Loren Padelford, Lanny Randolph, Neal Ratzlaff, **W. Ross Silcock**, John Sullivan, Paul Tebbel, Edna Claire Thomas, Zee Uridil, Gertrude Wood. OKLAHOMA: James W. Arterburn, Sandy Berger, Joseph A. Grzybowski, Jim Harmon (JHa), Berlin Heck, James C. Hoffman, Tom Horn, N. Lowrie, **Jo Loyd**, Shirley McFarland, **Louis McGee** (LMc), Jeri McMahan (JMc), Ina Mery, Terry Mitchell, Pam Moser, Pat Seibert, Jerry Sisler (JSi), John Sterling (JSt), Jim Thayer, Jeff Webster, Tina Webster.

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texas region



**GREG W. LASLEY, CHUCK SEXTON,
WILLIE SEKULA,
MARK LOCKWOOD,
AND CLIFF SHACKELFORD**

Summarizing the ebullience of a whole lot of happy birders, David Bradford chimed “Finally, a spring worth reporting.” There was also an uncharacteristic unanimity in descriptions of the conditions this spring across the state. “Cool and wet” were the common terms. Temperatures averaged below normal for all areas all season. A strong cold front brought freezing temperatures as far south as the Hill Country April 12, and yet another froze back vegetation in the Trans-Pecos April 27–28. Rainfall was abundant. To the north, playas were full to overflowing in the Panhandle (conditions which hadn’t been seen in 50 years). Way to the south, many roadside ditches stayed flooded all season on Padre Island. This moist scene stood in special contrast to just a year ago when we were in the midst of a severe drought; this heightened everyone’s sense of gratitude for the meteorological gifts of the season.

The many wet fronts which roared

down to the coast and offshore were often “well-timed” for weekend birding efforts. There were several groundings all along the coast, the most striking of which was Apr. 26, when uncountable thousands of passerines dropped in. Jim Morgan declared it a “real fall-out,” from a quantitative standpoint the sixth best in 21 years of data collection. Morgan had his highest-ever single-day totals for Wood Thrush (383), Ovenbird (438), and total birds (4222). Excellent numbers of Gray Catbird (645), Hooded Warbler (257), Scarlet Tanager (151), Rose-breasted Grosbeak (151), and Indigo Bunting (400) were also tallied. On the same day, Paul Palmer described the largest passerine grounding in years, with an estimated 3000–4000 warblers on North Padre Island. Large numbers of birds lingered for two more days on the coast. Other good fallouts occurred Apr. 12 statewide and in the eastern two-thirds of the state May 9–11.

There was some quirkiness in the patterns of the fallouts. In Central Texas, observers out on the same days as the massive groundings on the coast saw relatively modest numbers and diversity. The impli-

cation was that the weather systems had stopped the waves of migrants short of that area. While “superlatives” were in order for the seasonal diversity in the Panhandle, the Trans-Pecos migration was described as having “two faces”: excellent in March, but dropping off to one of the worst ever for April and May. In the latter area, there was too little water at Fort Bliss to offer good shorebird habitat, but too much water at the reservoirs down the valley. The abundance of water was cited for a relatively poor showing of shorebirds elsewhere away from the coast, but it also hosted a waterfowl migration termed “spectacular” in some of the same areas.

Nesting birds reportedly arrived two to three weeks behind schedule in the Trans-Pecos, a scenario not noted elsewhere. Ro Wauer described the arrival of Colima Warblers in the Chisos Mountains as being initially on time, but then the April freezes drove the birds lower and out of preferred habitat, only to have the birds head back up into suitable areas as the woodlands leafed out anew some weeks later. The remarkable winter finch invasion into north, central, and east Texas lingered into May and beyond and was commonly attributed to the cool weather. A few winter finches simply didn’t leave!

The inaugural Great Texas Birding Classic held Apr. 19–27 was billed as “the biggest, longest and wildest bird watching competition ever staged in the United States” (see <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/nature/birding/bclass/gtbc.htm>). It brought an unprecedented intensity and breadth of focus of birdwatching efforts to the Texas coast. *En masse*, a total of 357 species were tallied by 27 teams during the three formal days of competition. These efforts undoubtedly contributed to the volume of the material we had to assimilate here.

Abbreviations: Ft. Bliss (*Ft. Bliss sewage ponds, El Paso*); G.M.N.P. (*Guadalupe Mountains N.P.*); L.R.G.V. (*Lower Rio Grande Valley*); S.S.W.T.P. (*South Side Water Treatment Plant, Dallas*); T.B.R.C. (*Texas Bird Records Committee/Texas Ornithological Society*); T.C.W.C. (*Texas Cooperative Wildlife Collection/Texas A&M University*); U.T.C. (*Upper Texas Coast*); V.C.D.B. (*Village Cr. Drying Beds, Tarrant*)

Co.). The following are shortened names for the respective county, state, or national parks, wildlife refuges, etc.: Anahuac, Balcones Canyonlands, Bentsen, Big Bend, Brazos Bend, Buffalo L., Colorado Bend, Hagerman, Hueco Tanks, Laguna Atascosa, Palo Duro, Santa Ana, and Sea Rim.

LOONS TO FLAMINGOS

Last winter's Red-throated Loon at L. Balmorhea lingered until May 3 (m.ob.), while one at Cooper L., *Hopkins/Delta*, remained until Mar. 23 (M&KWh). Several Pacific Loons lingered into the spring, with one-three at Offat's Bayou, *Galveston*, through the period (TE, DP et al.), and one at L. Tawakoni, *Rains*, May 13 (ph. MWh). Two W. Grebes in the Panhandle, one in *Gray* May 10 (KS) and one in *Childress* May 16 (BiMc), stayed late. Other W. Grebes of note included one at Cooper L. Mar. 17-21 (M&KWh) and one at Bolivar Flats Apr. 23 (B&JRi). A Masked Booby was on Mustang I. May 23 (TA). The nesting colony of Double-crested Cormorants at McNary Res., *Hudspeth*, increased to 50 pairs; one pair of Neotropic Cormorants was also nesting there May 25 (JPa). Also of note for the area was a single Neotropic Cormorant at Monahans, *Ward*, May 15 (BJP). A Magnificent Frigatebird over Houston May 3 (DB) was an unusual sight. Out of their

usual haunts were single Least Bitterns in *Young* Apr. 26 (KN) and *Comfort, Kerr*, May 10 (ES). A Great Egret at Buffalo L., *Randall*, Apr. 13 (PT) was early for the Panhandle; two in *Hansford* May 20 (BiMc) were also unexpected. Curious in w. Texas were reports of single Little Blue Herons in *Terrell* Apr. 18-19 (JPa) and at Cottonwood Campground, Big Bend, May 2 (BBo). An ad. Reddish Egret at Hagerman, *Grayson*, Mar. 11-19 (KH, LL, ph. JCh) constituted the first well-documented report for n.c. Texas. Providing a 2nd record for the Trans-Pecos, an ad. Glossy Ibis was at L. Balmorhea Apr. 29 (ph. GRos); other single Glossies away from the coast included *Bastrop* Apr. 30 (BF) and *Dallas* May 7 (RR). Numbers of these birds were reported from many areas of the U.T.C. Immense numbers of White Ibises were seen migrating through the Rockport area Mar. 8, with 10,000 counted (RL). The Greater Flamingo at Laguna Atascosa remained through the season; close photos (RJS) suggest that this bird is the African subspecies.

WATERFOWL

Seven Fulvous Whistling-Ducks at V.C.D.B. Apr. 16 (EW) furnished a very rare record for n.c. Texas. The Black-bellied Whistling-Duck in *El Paso* from the winter remained through the spring (LJ). A Ross's Goose in *Lubbock* May 3 (L.E.A.S.) and three Snow Geese in *Oldham* May 16 (EK, RSc, JoHal) were very late. The banded Am. Black Duck reported last winter at Lubbock lingered until May 5 (*vide* CSt). A Eur. Wigeon was photographed at Ft. Bliss Apr. 25 (†BZ); this species is almost annual in that area. A pair of Greater Scaup remained in San Marcos until Mar. 29 (JCr). All 3 scoter species were present in small numbers at Bolivar Flats during April (m.ob.). Seldom reported in the Panhandle, single Red-breasted Mergansers were in Amarillo, *Potter*, Apr. 12 (EK) and at L. Marvin, *Hemphill*, Apr. 19 (JoHal et al.). At least one of the Masked Ducks

from the winter remained at Brazos Bend until Mar. 2; another was reported on w. Galveston I. Apr. 28 (†RRO, WBurch et al.).

RAPTORS

A pair of Swallow-tailed Kites returned to the location in *Chambers* where they nested last summer; the nest was apparently not successful. Migrant Swallow-tailed Kites away from the coastal plain included one in *Bastrop* Mar. 27 (BF) and one in *Hays* Mar. 30 (AH). Like last year, we received almost no mention of significant numbers of migrant Mississippi Kites or Broad-winged Hawks; either the birds were not seen or the reports never reached us. Rarely well-documented in Texas, an ad. N. Goshawk was reported at Rio Grande Village, Big Bend, Apr. 25-26 (†GLE, PAB, BHo, HPL). Common Black-Hawks seem to be increasing in w. Texas; a pair built a nest at Big Bend's Rio Grande Village and was seen there Mar. 22 through the period (m.ob.). The species also nested at their usual locations in the Davis Mts. (KB et al.), and another pair returned to Christoval, *Tom Green*, where they nested last summer (TM). Gray Hawks were reported in small numbers in the L.R.G.V. and Big Bend, as has become typical. Unusual records of *Buteos* included eight Swainson's Hawks in *Delta* (far east) Apr. 5 (MWh); one in *Angelina* (far east) May 10 (CM, LS); a White-tailed Hawk at Concan, *Uvalde*, Apr. 28 (GLE); a Zone-tailed Hawk in *Taylor* Mar. 28 (ACh); and a Ferruginous in Amarillo May 24 (EK) and one in Stamford, *Jones*, May 31 (*vide* LB). A Golden Eagle was reported over *Nueces* May 10 (*vide* GS). A Crested Caracara provided first county records for *Young* and *Palo Pinto* Apr. 28 (KN).

RAILS TO SHOREBIRDS

Only the 6th ever reported in the Panhandle, a Black Rail was well described in *Carson* May 8 (TGr, SP). A little more expected were two Black Rails on S. Padre I. Mar. 31 (BMc), and others calling at the Nueces R. estuary, *San Patricio*, Apr. 17 & 23 (A&MC). A Purple Gallinule at V.C.D.B. May 4-17 (MMo, m.ob.) was at an odd location. Sandhill Cranes lingered late in the Panhandle, including 300 in *Potter* Apr. 12 (JoHal, RSc) and 115 in *Oldham* May 5 (RSc). Seven Whooping Cranes were seen over *DeWitt* Apr. 6 (DMu). American Golden-Plovers provided very rare spring records for the Trans-Pecos, with one at Ft. Bliss May 20-21 (BZ) and one-two at Imperial Res., *Pecos*, May 6-8 (BJP). A breeding-plumaged Snowy Plover at



Notably far inland for this normally-coastal species was this adult Reddish Egret at Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge, in north-central Texas, on March 16, 1997. Photograph/Jack Chiles

Cooper L. May 16–18 was a nice find (M&KWh). Very unusual for e. Texas were three Piping Plovers in *Harrison* Apr. 26 (G&JLu). Six Mt. Plovers were in *Dallam* Mar. 26 (KM); one remained into mid-April. Elsewhere, another late Mt. Plover was in Austin Apr. 28 (DBo). Hard to find in spring in n.e. Texas, nine Am. Avocets at Cooper L. May 16 (M&KWh) and one–two Black-necked Stilts there May 3 & 17 provided good records. A report of a N. Jacana Mar. 4 in *Hidalgo* (†DHel) will be reviewed by the T.B.R.C. Willets were reported in unusual numbers at two w. Texas locations: 25 in *Briscoe* Apr. 27 (TFe) and 23 in *Hudspeth* May 2 (GL, DW).

Notable Whimbrel records included three at L. Balmorhea Mar. 27 (MAd), four there Apr. 29 (GRos), and one at L. Bryan, *Brazos*, May 13 (BeF). Long-billed Curlews were more in evidence in n.c. Texas than normal, with records from *Grayson*, *Dallas*, *Tarrant*, *Rains*, and *Young*. Twenty-nine Hudsonian Godwits on S. Padre I. Apr. 15 (AW) and one at Kirby L., *Taylor*, Apr. 17 (*vide* LB) were noteworthy. From one–nine Hudsonian Godwits dropped in at Cooper L. May 3–27 (M&KWh). Marbled Godwits made news in n.c. Texas, the Panhandle, and at Midland. One Semipalmated Sandpiper at Ft. Bliss Apr. 23 (BZ) and two at L. Balmorhea May 3 (GRos) were of interest in the Trans-Pecos. Unexpected in the spring in w. Texas were two Dunlins at Midland Apr. 16–19 (J&DMe) and one at Imperial Res. May 13 (BJP). With only 6 previous accepted Texas records, the presence of two **Curlew Sandpipers** this spring was a delight. The first was on Bolivar Pen. Apr. 8 (†B&JRI) and the 2nd was at Galveston's East Beach Apr. 30–May 2 (†ph. PDH, m.ob.). American Woodcocks at High I. May 10 (TE) and at Balcones Canyonlands, *Williamson*, Apr. 15–May 10 (EH, CS, CA) were very late, but there was no hard evidence of breeding. A Red-necked Phalarope at Falcon Dam Apr. 12 (AW) was a surprise.

GULLS TO TERNS

A Laughing Gull in Grandfalls, *Ward*, Apr. 27 (BJP) was certainly unexpected. Elsewhere, a Laughing Gull in *Hopkins* Mar. 3–4 (MWh) and three at Wichita Falls May 10 (DMc) provided rare records. A very late Bonaparte's Gull was at Imperial Res. May 29 (BJP). Lingering from the winter, four California Gulls remained at a Corpus Christi landfill through at least Mar. 22 (†WS, m.ob.). Other single California Gulls were reported at L. Balmorhea Apr. 29

(†GRos) and at Galveston Apr. 30 (†PDH). An Iceland Gull was widely reported on Bolivar Pen. Apr. 20 onward and purportedly seen by many. To date, however, all photos made available to these editors or to the T.B.R.C. appear to be a Glaucous Gull. No fewer than 10 Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported from various coastal locations. Unfortunately, very few observers are documenting this species anymore, so the possibility that we are overlooking other dark-backed gull species is significant. The Glaucous Gull situation along the coast this spring was rather confusing; we are still not certain how many individual birds were present. At least three were in the Bolivar Flats/Galveston area, and three more were in the Corpus Christi and N. Padre I. area. This is further evidence of the increasing abundance of certain gull species once considered much rarer in Texas. The **Kelp Gull** present during the winter at Galveston (see cover) remained at least into early March. The 2nd-winter Great Black-backed Gull at Galveston from winter remained through at least Apr. 26 (*vide* ML). Another first- or 2nd-winter Great Black-backed Gull was on Bolivar Flats May 25 (†JW).

A Black-legged Kittiwake was found injured at Port Aransas Mar. 13 (*vide* TA); the bird later died and will eventually be turned over to the T.C.W.C. Another kittiwake was described on Bolivar Pen. Apr. 25 (†JR). A Caspian Tern at McNary Res. May 2 (GL, DW) provided a very rare record for that area of the Trans-Pecos. Common Terns were at 3 locations in the Trans-Pecos May 3 (GRo, LJ). Four Commons at L. Lewisville May 10 (LH) provided a first *Denton* record. Photographs taken of a bird near Sea Rim Apr. 14, *Jefferson*, are very suggestive of an Arctic Tern (†JG, CE); there is some debate whether the photos eliminate all plumages of Com. Tern, however. To date there are still no accepted records of Arctic Tern for Texas, but stay tuned. Least Terns were rather numerous in w. Texas, including 10 reports from the Trans-Pecos. Single Least Terns were at Canyon, *Randall*, Apr. 27 (PT), providing the first April record for the Panhandle; Midland May 9 & 30 (JHe); and Amarillo, *Randall*, on the late date of May 28 (EK). Two Sooty Terns were at S. Padre Is. Apr. 15 (BMc), probably not far from one of the few known Texas breeding colonies.

DOVES TO NIGHTJARS

Eurasian Collared-Doves in Texas continue to proliferate. One found in Castroville Mar. 9 (WS, J&BRI) provided another location for the species. White-winged Doves

continue to be found in the Panhandle, and one in *Grayson* Apr. 11 (LL) provided a new county record. Black-billed Cuckoos were more conspicuous along the coast than usual. Whether this was a side effect of the unusual weather patterns, the increased observer coverage, or an actual increase in birds is unknown. A well-documented **Mangrove Cuckoo** was at Quintana, *Brazoria*, May 11 (†DV, ph. MG). As with all other Texas records, this bird is of the buffy-breasted Mexican subspecies. An owl heard calling at Boot Spring, Big Bend, between Apr. 22 and May 17 was variously identified as a N. Pygmy-Owl or a N. Sawwhet Owl by different observers, and a weak tape-recording seems inconclusive. Either species would be quite rare. Elf Owls were found at higher elevations in the Davis Mts. than ever before. Single birds were at Davis Mountains S.P. Apr. 22, and at Limpia Crossing Apr. 29 through the end of the period (D&LH). Three Long-eared Owls were in Midland Apr. 5–12 (JHe), while another lingered at Buffalo L. until May 4 (KS), a very late date for the Panhandle. Seven Lesser Nighthawks at Midland May 13 surprised observers (JHe, J&DMe), as did a single bird at Texas Point in far s.e. Texas Apr. 22 (BHo, HPL).

SWIFTS TO WOODPECKERS

An apparent **White-collared Swift** was photographed over a Brownsville lake May 18 (†BSum), foraging with a large flock of Cliff Swallows. The photographs, while not diagnostic, support the written description. A Buff-bellied Hummingbird was at Castroville, *Medina*, May 2 (GE). Unusual Trans-Pecos spring records of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds included single birds at Big Bend Apr. 26 (DFa) and at Balmorhea S.P. Apr. 25–26 (TJ). A male **Costa's Hummingbird** was well-described at Big Bend's Rio Grande Village Apr. 26 (†HPL, BHo); it will represent the 6th Texas record if accepted by the T.B.R.C. A Broad-tailed Hummingbird in Austin Apr. 10–19 (PGa, m.ob.) furnished an unusual spring record. A Rufous Hummingbird that remained at the same *Angelina* feeder from fall 1996 was last seen Apr. 16 (LS), providing a rare e. Texas spring record. A Green Kingfisher was at Rio Grande Village Mar. 15–Apr. 1 (MF, DO). Ringed Kingfisher was reported at Park Chalk Bluff, *Uvalde*, throughout most of the period. The two Lewis's Woodpeckers from last season at El Paso remained until Apr. 19 & 27 (*vide* BZ). Another Lewis's was in San Angelo Mar. 11–Apr. 28 (GC, †TM, m.ob.). Unexpected

Pileated Woodpecker occurrences included one at Ft. Worth Apr. 8 (BT), the first record for *Tarrant* since 1974, and another at Colorado Bend, *San Saba*, May 2-31 (DBo, DTh).

FLYCATCHERS

A Vermilion Flycatcher May 16 at Buffalo L. was a great find in the Panhandle (EK, RSc, JoHal). Two reports of Dusky-capped Flycatcher at Big Bend, one Apr. 17 (†NC) and one May 10 (†RW), have been submitted to the T.B.R.C. Rare w. Texas records of Great Crested Flycatcher included one at Big Bend May 4 (MD), two at Palo Duro Canyon May 6 onward (RSc, PT, KS), and one at nearby Ceta Canyon May 24 (EK). A Brown-crested Flycatcher in *Terrell* Apr. 19 (JPa) may provide a first county record; however, the species is fairly common along the Devil's R. in adjacent *Val Verde*. Elsewhere, a Brown-crested Flycatcher in *Hays* May 5 (JGe) was a surprise, as was a Great Kiskadee slightly farther south in San Antonio Apr. 7 (CB) and yet another Kiskadee just n. of its range at Dolan Falls, *Val Verde*, May 7 (BC). Tropical Kingbirds remained at their well-known *Cameron* locations. Last summer the species was documented for the first time at Big Bend; this

season a Tropical was reported at Cottonwood Campground May 17 (RT). Reports of single Thick-billed Kingbirds in *Zavala* Apr. 2 (GeR) and at Big Bend May 8 (RKn) are on their way to the T.B.R.C. There are only about a dozen records of this species in Texas, all from *Brewster* and *Presidio*. Western Kingbirds seemed to continue their eastward range expansion. This season they were detected in *Angelina*, *Harrison*, and *Nacogdoches* in early May (m.ob.).

Lockwood was stunned to find two **Fork-tailed Flycatchers** together at Austin's Hornsby Bend Ponds May 6. He was able to get a photograph of both birds in the same frame; to our knowledge this is the first time that two Fork-tailed have ever been seen together in the United States, and will represent the 9th accepted Texas record of the species. One of the birds stayed overnight and was seen by a number of observers May 7. We received 2 additional third-hand reports of single Fork-tailed Flycatchers (in *Cameron* and *Chambers*) with no documentation.

JAYS TO SHRIKES

Three Steller's Jays that wintered in El Paso lingered into early May (JoK, JMa). In recent seasons Brown Jays have been some-

what scarce; this spring they were reported from *Chapeño*, *Salineño*, and *Santa Margarita Ranch*. A pair of *Tamaulipas* Crows at *Brownsville* Apr. 21 (BMc) appeared to be scouting for a nest site. Red-breasted Nuthatches stayed at several Panhandle and Trans-Pecos locations into mid- and late May. Apparently a first nesting record for *Travis*, four begging young White-breasted Nuthatches were at *Webberville Park* Apr. 17-19 (TFen, ph BF). Very rare in Big Bend, a Sedge Wren was along *Alamo Cr.* Apr. 5 (MF). Black-tailed Gnatcatchers are uncommon to rare residents in *Starr*, but several reports at *Bentsen* and another nearby *Hidalgo* location were worthy of note (MO et al.). Late bluebirds included a Western at *Palo Duro* Mar. 14 (EK, RSc) and a Mountain at *Buffalo L.* May 4 (KS). Somewhat late for the Trans-Pecos were *Townsend's Solitaires*, which lingered in the *Davis Mts.* until May 10 (KB) and at *Hueco Tanks* until May 18 (BJ). *Townsend's Solitaires* appeared in higher-than-expected numbers on the *Edward's Plateau* e. to *Meridian S.P.*, *Bosque*, and *Balcones Canyonlands*, *Travis*, lingering into late April (m.ob.). *Catharus* thrushes were prominent in the April fall-outs along the coast. In the Panhandle, a *Veery* in *Vega* May 12 (RSc) provided one of few area records. The small community of *Fronton* in *Starr* hosted a *Clay-colored Robin* Apr. 25 through the period (†BF, PH). A *Brown Thrasher* in *El Paso* May 2 (DW, GL, m.ob.) furnished a very rare spring find for that region. *San Angelo* was out-of-range for a *Phainopepla* Mar. 18 (ph. MH). A *N. Shrike* remained at the *Rita Blanca National Grassland*, *Dallam*, until Mar. 1 (EK et al.).

VIREOS TO WARBLERS

Seven *Bell's Vireos* singing at various locations around *Rockport* were of interest (CC). *Migrant Black-capped Vireos* away from nesting areas are most unusual; a male Black-capped was netted Apr. 14 on *Padre Island National Seashore*, *Kleberg* (GB), and one-two were seen Apr. 19-20 in *Montague*, providing a first county record (GH, WM). A *Yellow-throated Vireo* at *Lubbock* May 3 was a nice find (L.E.A.S.) The Apr. 12 grounding included over 60 *Warbling Vireos* in the *Brownsville* area (BMc), and an estimated 300 in the *Harlingen* area (OC), remarkable numbers for the species. Two *Philadelphia Vireos* were reported at Big Bend: one Mar. 17 at *Rio Grande Village* (JLi, BMcH) and another at *Laguna Meadow* Apr. 8 (RT) Both of

SOME NOTABLE WARBLER RECORDS IN TEXAS, SPRING 1997

SPECIES	DATE	LOCATION	OBSERVER
Golden-winged	May 6	Donley	KS
Golden-winged	May 11	El Paso	SH
Virginia's	May 3-4	Buffalo L.	P.B.C.
Virginia's	May 5	Amarillo	JoHa
Magnolia	May 2, 19 & 21	Amarillo	RSc
Cape May	May 2	Big Bend	RW, MAd
Black-throated Blue (pair)	April 27	Lubbock	JHau, LeS
Black-throated Blue	May 7	Big Bend	LP
Black-throated Gray	April 21	Packery Channel	JiH
Hermit	April 5	High Island	DMa
Blackburnian	May 12	Vega	RSc
Blackpoll	April 20	Big Bend	MF, MD
Blackpoll	May 12	Vega	RSc
Blackpoll	May 13-14	Amarillo	RSc
Blackpoll	May 17	Buffalo L.	RSc, TFe
Black-and-white	April 3	Canyon	KSch
Prothonotary	April 22	Big Bend	CHe
Prothonotary	May 1	Big Bend	MF
Worm-eating	April 27	Big Bend	KO, AW
Worm-eating	May 6	Palo Duro	RSc, PT
Worm-eating	May 6	Taylor Lakes, Donley	KS
Worm-eating	May 14	Big Bend	GLu
Swanson's	May 30	San Antonio	CCu
Louisiana Waterthrush	May 17 & 20	Buffalo L.	TFe, RSc, PT
Kentucky	April 28	Midland	JMe
Kentucky	May 1	Big Bend	MF
Kentucky	May 4	Amarillo	RSc
Mourning	May 17	Buffalo L.	TFe, RSc
Hooded	April 27	Big Bend	AW, KO
Hooded	May 7	G.M.N.P.	J&BRi
Hooded	May 12-13	Vega	RSc

these are extraordinarily early for the state. Documented Yellow-green Vireos included one at Sarita, *Kenedy*, Apr. 20 (†AJ, JB), one at Big Bend's Rio Grande Village Apr. 24 (†GLE), and one on the Kenedy Ranch May 11 (†BF, m.ob.). A Black-whiskered Vireo at High I. May 10 (†T&PE, BB) will represent about the 12th state record.

As with any good migration year, warbler reports were prominent. A long list of interesting single records are summarized in Table 1 (page 895). At least 120 Nashville Warblers at Brownsville tallied during the Apr. 12 fallout was a substantial total near the coast (BMc). As the live oak woodlands on private ranches in *Kenedy* and *Kleberg* are explored further, the magnitude of Tropical Parula populations become increasingly apparent. Up to fifteen Tropicals were found on the Kenedy Ranch in April and May (PH); the species was also noted on the Norias Division of the King Ranch Apr. 21 (JMCH) and at the old (traditional) and new Sarita rest stops and elsewhere along U.S. 77 (*vide* TP). Nanney discovered a probable breeding population of six Golden-cheeked Warblers in s.e. *Young* Mar. 22–May 31, providing a first county record in an area where researcher Warren Pulich had long ago suggested the species might occur. Blackburnian Warblers were particularly numerous (25–30) in the May 10–11 grounding in *Kenedy* (AD). There were also substantially more reports of Blackpolls in s. Texas than in any year since 1982 (*vide* PP). A Cerulean Warbler provided a first *Van Zandt* record Apr. 24 (RK). A Prothonotary Warbler near Ft. Davis May 5 provided about the 2nd report there (DW). Swainson's Warbler was another species noted more frequently along the s. Texas coast; Palmer heard of about 12 sightings Mar. 31–Apr. 28 (m.ob.). A Red-faced Warbler at Boot Canyon, Big Bend, Apr. 23 furnished the earliest spring report ever (AP). Very out-of-place was a well-described **Slate-throated Redstart** viewed briefly near San Antonio Apr. 17 (PSu); there is only a single accepted sight record of this species for Texas.

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

A Scarlet Tanager at Ft. Davis May 19 provided just the 2nd Davis Mts. record (PM, PE). A W. Tanager netted in San Angelo May 6 was a rare migrant (RD); only a single W. Tanager was reported from the U.T.C., a sparser showing than expected: It was at High I. May 10 (TE). A Pyrrhuloxia in *Young* Apr 12 (KN) was a bit n e of its

usual range; much rarer was another at Canyon, *Randall*, May 11 (ID, WD). Seven Rose-breasted Grosbeaks at various Trans-Pecos localities was a better-than-average number. A Black-headed Grosbeak at a feeder in Nacogdoches Mar. 18 was either a wintering bird or an early migrant (CEL). The last report of the pair of Blue Buntings wintering at Bentsen was Mar. 29 (BMc). Lazuli Buntings were more conspicuous in parts of w. Texas, and there was the usual scattering of sightings in the e. half of the state. Several Varied Buntings were seen in migration on S. Padre I. in April, where they are at best unexpected (ph. SB, OC). The Dickcissel migration clearly shifted westward, with increased numbers noted as far west as Midland. Several remained to nest in areas from Austin to Midland. An E. Towhee was at Palo Duro Mar. 14 (EK, RSc). Spotted Towhees lingered in brushy areas of c. Texas into May, and at least one stayed through the period near Dripping Springs, *Hays* (JGe). A Canyon Towhee in s.e. *Young* Mar. 23–Apr. 13 may represent a small population a few counties n. of the species' known range in the Hill Country (KN).

A count of 30 Botteri's Sparrows on the Kenedy Ranch May 10 suggests how abundant this inconspicuous species can be in good habitat (PH, AD). Rarely reported in the Trans-Pecos, single Am. Tree Sparrows made one-day appearances at Hueco Tanks Mar. 9 (ML) and at Davis Mountains S.P. Mar. 18 (B&MCol). A Henslow's Sparrow at L. Tawakoni, *Rains*, Mar. 26 (BGi, AV) provided one of few records for n.e. Texas. Single late Le Conte's Sparrows remained into mid-May at Balcones Canyonlands and in *Delta* and *Randall* (m.ob.). A Le Conte's in *Young* Apr. 29 provided a first county record (KN). Three Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were detected at Cooper L., *Delta*, May 16, and one was still there May 21–23 (MWh). A late White-throated Sparrow was in *Bastrop* May 14 (BF). Another late seedeater was a Dark-eyed Junco in Quinlan, *Hunt*, May 15 (RK). A flock of 17 McCown's Longspurs in n. *Smith* Mar. 2 (S&TPo et al.) was much farther east than normally expected. Somewhat early were single Bobolinks Apr. 15 (AW) & 22 (BMc) at S. Padre I., and another Apr. 22 at Sea Rim (BHo). Counts of 1000 Yellow-headed Blackbirds near Abilene Apr. 26 (*vide* LB) and 2000 near Smithville, *Bastrop*, Apr. 28 (B&Jri) were notable. A **Shiny Cowbird** was well-described from Port O'Connor Apr. 19 (†PH), as was another in *Tarrant* May 3 (†EW, RH); if accepted these would

represent the 5th and 6th Texas records Counts of 100 Hooded Orioles on the Kenedy Ranch in May were amazing (AD et al.). Veteran Texas observer Arvin remarked that he had not seen numbers of Hoodeds like this in Texas since the early 1970s The Cassin's Finch invasion in the Davis Mts and w. Texas continued into late spring Some birds lingered until the end of the period; however, breeding activities were not noted at any locations (*vide* KB).

The Red Crossbill invasion continued in many areas. Since this began in the fall of 1996, the species has been recorded in 10 e. Texas counties where no previous records had existed (RiS). These included *Anderson*, *Angelina*, *Hardin*, *Harrison*, *Jasper*, *Montgomery*, *Nacogdoches*, *Newton*, *Sabine*, and *San Augustine*. Amazingly, streaked juv crossbills were noted May 3 in *San Augustine*, which strongly suggested local breeding (CSH, ChC). Crossbills remained in 4 Panhandle locations, including *Randall*, *Gray*, *Moore*, and *Hockley* (*vide* KS). Elsewhere, numbers of these birds remained in dozens of locations throughout much of the state, except for the s. Texas brush country. There has never been a Red Crossbill invasion of this magnitude in Texas before

Pine Siskins remained in numbers through the period in the Panhandle (KS) Left over from last winter's influx were two Lawrence's Goldfinches: one at Hueco Tanks until Mar. 9 (ML) and another in El Paso until Apr. 1 (SHo). Evening Grosbeaks remained until late May in a number of Panhandle and w. Texas locations. Elsewhere, 22 were in Brackettville Apr 14–May 12 (ph. TBa), while another 22 birds were counted in *Wichita* Mar. 23–May 9 (B&MCu et al.), providing a first for that area.

UNDOCUMENTED RARITIES

In addition to the documented reportees listed above, we received the following reports of Texas Review List species this season with insufficient or no documentation Brant at Lubbock, Heermann's Gull in *El Paso* (there are only 2 Texas records of this species), Great Black-backed Gull at Corpus Christi, Greater Pewee in *Kerr*, Masked Duck at Port Aransas, Ruff in *Harris*, Fork-tailed Flycatcher in *Cameron & Chambers*, and Yellow-green Vireo at Santa Ana.

Cited observers (subregional editors in boldface): Peggy Abbott (PAb), Carlo Abbruzzese, Mark Adams, Dick Anderson, Fred Armstrong, Nina & Eddie Arnold,

John Arvin, Jerry Askins, Peter Assman, Jim Bangma, Tina Bauguess (TBa), Bob Behrstock, Charles Bender, Steve Bentsen, Peter Billingham, Nancy Bird, Lorie Black, Gene Blacklock, Don Blasingame, Doug Booher (DBo), Bill Bourbon (BBo), **David Bradford** (U.T.C.: 18046 Green Hazel, Houston, TX 77084. email: brdfird@tenet.edu), Scott Brandes, Hugh Brown, Tim Brush, **Kelly Bryan** (Trans-Pecos: P.O. Box 786, Ft. Davis, TX 79734. email: kellyb@phoenix.as.utexas.edu), Frank Bumgardner, William Burch, Oscar Carmona, Bill Carr, Margaret Carrington, Allen Chartier (ACh), Jack Chiles, Charlie Clark, Neal Clark, Scott Clark, Chris Collins (ChC), Bruce & Mary Collins (B&MCol), Arlie & Mel Cooksey, Gordon Creel, Mary Creel, Julie Crouch, Bob & Mary Cummings, Carolyn Cuthbertson (CCU), Isabel Davis, Michelle Davis, Phil Davis, Walt Davis, Ross Dawkins, Louis Debetaz, Sandy Dillard, Robert Doe, Ken Dollar, Andrew Donnelly, Charles Easley, Gilbert Echtle, Ed Edminster, Carol Edwards (CEd), Jan Elston, Chuck Ely (CEl), Pansy Espey, Ted Eubanks, Doug Faulkner (DFa), Tim Fennel (TFe), Terry Ferguson (TFe), Jose Fernandez, Mark Flippo, David Flynt, Connie Fordham, Tony & Phyllis Frank, Brush Freeman, Bert Frenz (BeF), Pam Garriston (PGa), B. Geasey, John Gee (JGe), Brian Gibbons (BGi), Peter Gottschling, Michael Gray, Tim Green (TGr), Jim Hailey (JiH), John Hall (JoHal), Karl Haller, Larry Halsey, Chuck Hamilton, George Harmon, Bruce Harris, Rodney Harris, Jill Haukos, Scott Haywood, Colin Hedderick (CHe), David & Linda Hedges, Dick Heller (DHe), Jim Henderson (JHe), Bob & Nancy Highgate, Petra Hockey, Buddy Hollis (BHo), Sallie Homan, Alton Homesly, Lee Hoy, P.D. Hulce, Mike Husak, Joe Ideker, Ann Johnson, Bob Johnson, Tom Johnson, Larry Jordon, Donna Kelly, Richard Kinney, John Kiseda (JoK), Ron Knaus (RKn), Ed Kutac, H.P. Langridge (HPL), Greg Lasley, Geoff LeBaron (GLe), Lee Lemmons, John Liller (JLi), Ray Little, Llano Estacado Audubon Society, Mark Lockwood, Guy & Joan Luneau (G&JLu), Barry Lyon, Donna Maddox (DMa), Mike Mansen, Jan Martinez (JMa), Elke Matejivich, Terry Maxwell, Karen McBride (KMc), Penny McElroy, Jim McHanney (JMCh), Bruce McHenry (BMCh), Debra McKee, Bill McKinney (BiMc), Brad McKinney (BMc), Sylvia McTague, Joann & Don Merritt (J&DMe), Dorothy Metzler (DMet), Wayne Meyer, Carroll Moore, J. Moore, Matt Moses (MMo), Kevin Mote, Derek

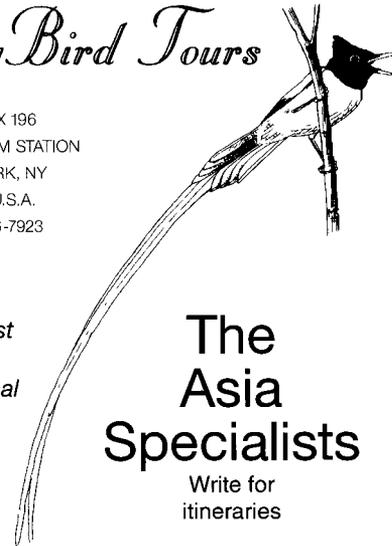
Muschalek (DMu), Ken Nanney, Julius Nussbaum, Maureen O'Reilly, Dale Ohl, June Osborne, Karl Overman, Nancy & **Paul Palmer** (South Texas: 615 South Wanda, Kingsville, TX 78363. email: kfpcp00@tamuk.edu), Panhandle Bird Club (PBC), Helen Parker, Mike Patterson, Dick Payne, Dwight Peake (DPe), Tom Pincelli, Lars Pomara, Steve Pomeroy, Sharon & Truman Powell (S&TPo), John Praiswater, Arvino Punjabi, **Ross Rasmussen** (N.C. Texas: 600 S. Graves No. 1704, McKinney, TX 75069), Janet Rathjen, Ellen Red, Joel Reese (JRe), Martin Reid, Bill Reiner, Barbara & John Ribble (B&JRi), Gary Roberts, Bob Rogers, Richard Rosche (RRo), Gary Rosenberg (GRo), Gerd Rotxoll (GeR), Laura Sare, Rick Schaefer (RiS), Adriel Schoenhals, Kristen Schoenhals, Monty Schoenhals, Rosemary Scott (RSc), **Willie Sekula** (Central Texas: Rt. 1, Box 130, Falls City, TX 78113. email: WSekula@aol.com), Chuck Sexton, **Ken Seyffert** (Panhandle: 2206 S. Lipscomb,

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TIBET
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Lhasa, Xizang Qinghai,
Koko Nor
19 June-18 July

INDONESIA
S Maluku (Moluccas) Is.
Ambon, Seram, Buru,
Kai, Tanimbar
29 July-30 August

VIETNAM
North, South
19 November -13 December

1998 BIRDING TOURS

THAILAND
North, Central, Peninsular
3-25 January

SOUTH INDIA
Western Ghats, Madras,
Andaman Is.
1-24 January

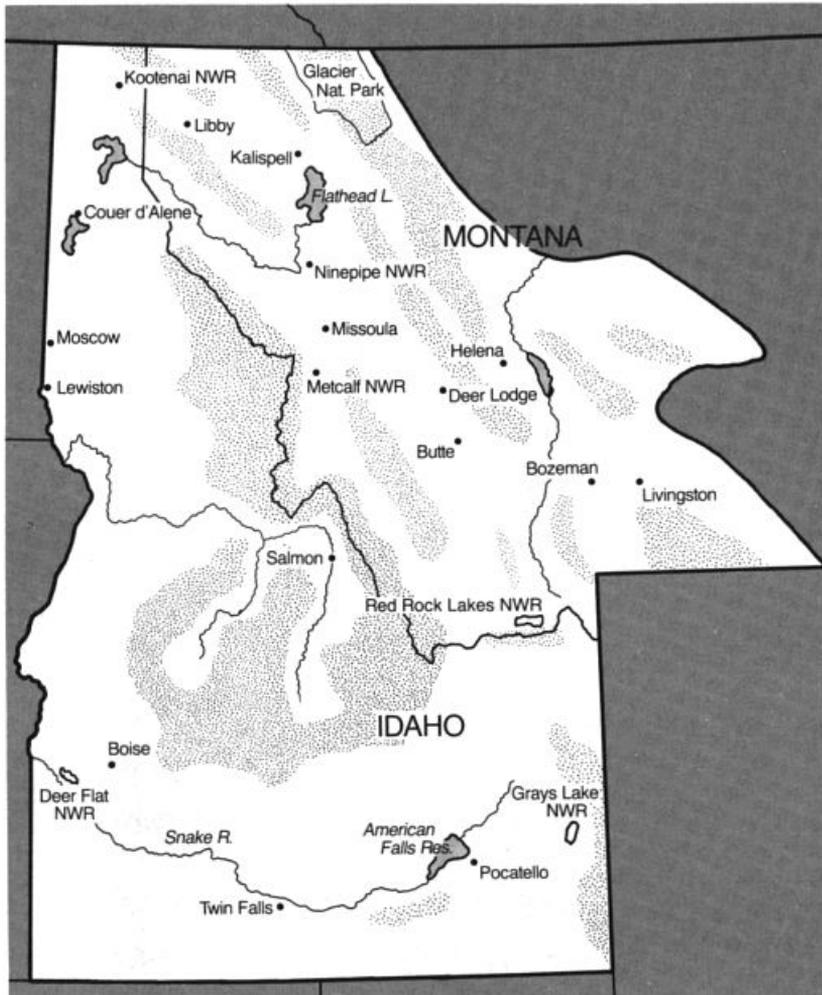
SRI LANKA
24 January - 9 February

PHILIPPINES
Luzon, Mindanao, Cebu,
Palawan, Bohol, Negros
20 February - 23 March

BHUTAN
West to East Traverse
27 March -19 April

MALAYSIA
Malaya, Borneo, Mt. Kinabalu
27 June-19 July

idaho–western montana region



DAN SVINGEN

Most of the Region reported a cool, wet spring with delayed melt of last season's mighty snowpack. The inaccessibility of high-elevation habitats concentrated birds in lowland staging areas. In northwest Montana, Dan Casey noted that Common Loons, Varied Thrushes, White-crowned Sparrows, and Spotted Towhees were among the species most obviously affected.

The majority of observers felt spring migration was tardy, with many species arriving a week or more late. The exception was Salmon, Idaho, where Hadley Roberts reported Snow Geese, Redheads, Ring-necked Ducks, Bonaparte's Gulls, and

Violet-green and Northern Rough-winged swallows record early by 2–21 days.

Abbreviations: A.F.R. (*American Falls Res., American Falls, ID*); P.W.Z.M.: (*Philip L. Wright Zoological Museum, formerly called University of Montana Zoological Museum, but renamed at a dedication May 5 to honor long-time curator, ornithologist, birder, and subregional editor, Dr. Philip Wright*).

GREBES TO RAILS

After successfully raising young last year, Red-necked Grebes are again nesting at Kootenai N.W.R., *Boundary, ID* (JRy). Although increasing in recent years, Am.

White Pelicans are still uncommon and local in n. Idaho and n.w. Montana. Unusual sightings this spring included a single on the Clearwater R. near Lewiston, ID, Apr. 23 (ES), eight at Ninepipe N.W.R., *Lake, MT*, May 20 (DC), and ten on Coeur d'Alene L., *Kootenai, ID*, May 21 (SW, RY, m.ob.). As noted in past reports, Double-crested Cormorants are also increasing in the Region's n. half, so the single on Coeur d'Alene L. May 19 (CC, DCm) was not unexpected. Single Great Egrets were at Boise, ID, Apr. 17 & 25 (MC, FK), and Darby, MT, May 10 (JO), the latter providing about the 30th state record.

Three neck-collared Trumpeter Swans visited McArthur Lake W.M.A., *Boundary, ID*, Apr. 1–3 (PC), where the species is rare. A flock of *eight* Greater White-fronted Geese at Church Slough, *Flathead, MT*, Apr. 12 (DC) was the largest Casey has seen locally in 14 years. A Snow Goose at Lane Marsh, *Kootenai, ID*, Mar. 26 (C.A.S.) was noteworthy. One–four Ross's Geese were at Mann L., *Nez Perce, ID*, Apr. 6–May 8 (JH, MH, J&AR, m.ob.), where annual; the single Ross's 50 mi to the northeast at Elk R. in early May (JE) finished a local first.

Unlike last year, Eur. Wigeons were widely reported in w. Montana this spring (DC, PW), with *nine* males by Somers, MT, Mar. 23 (DC). Idaho sightings were down slightly from last year's strong showing, but included two males persisting in Boise until Apr. 7 (MC, FK); one–two males on Benewah L., *Benewah, ID*, Mar. 2–8 (KD, JM); two males at McArthur Lake W.M.A. Apr. 3 (PC); a male at Market Lake W.M.A., *Jefferson, ID*, Apr. 22 (CT); and "several" at Kootenai N.W.R. throughout spring (JRy). Greater Scaup are regularly reported on Pend Oreille L., *Bonner, ID*, during winter, but often go unmentioned during spring, making the 300 there Apr. 7 (JW) interesting. One–two migrant Harlequin Duck are reported from the South Fork Clearwater R., *Idaho, ID*, almost every year; this year, one was at Elk City Apr. 26 (*vide* SBI). An Oldsquaw near Aberdeen, ID, Mar. 20 (DB) provided a very rare spring sighting.

Turkey Vultures are now common in

Montana's Flathead Valley, *Lake and Flathead* (DC, SY), paralleling their range expansion in the Region's n. half over the last several years. A Broad-winged Hawk, an unusual migrant in w. Montana, was in Helena Valley, *Lewis and Clark*, May 11 (CJ, DSK, ST, m.ob.). A locally rare Swainson's Hawk flew over Grangeville, ID, Apr. 27 (SR). The Gannett, ID, Gyrfalcon persisted through March (*vide* CT). Idaho's 2nd **Common Moorhen** was in a marsh adjacent to Carey WM A., *Blaine*, ID, Apr. 25 (†JRC).

SHOREBIRDS TO GNATCATCHER

Six Black-bellied Plovers were near Somers, MT, May 13 (DC); the species is Regionally rare during spring. Up to 11 Black-necked Stilts were at Mann L., *Nez Perce*, ID, Apr. 26 (CM, JM, m.ob.), providing only the 2nd local record; two were still present May 1 (DH). The single Black-necked Stilt at Fighting Cr. Landfill, *Kootenai*, ID, May 14 (C A S.), was even more unexpected. Single Solitary Sandpipers were near Potlatch, ID, Apr. 20 (JH, MH), and at Mann L. May 1 (DH) Whimbrel are very rare in w. Montana, but a single was at Stevensville Apr. 27 (WT). The 11 Whimbrel n.w. of Kalispell, MT, May 11 (LK, BT) established a new Regional high count. Seventeen Marbled Godwits visited Blacks Creek Res., *Ada*, ID, Apr. 22 (MC, FK). With only about 20 Montana records, the Short-billed Dowitcher at Freezeout L., *Teton*, MT, May 17 (DC) was of interest; it was thought to be of the *caurinus* subspecies (DC).

A Thayer's Gull was still at Coeur d'Alene Mar. 6 (SHS, BG). The first-winter Glaucous-winged Gull at Sandpoint, ID, May 14, was both locally and seasonally rare (C.A.S.). Common Terns are rare migrants in n. Idaho; one visited Chatcolet L., *Benewah*, ID, May 14 (C.A.S.). An Arctic Tern was at A.F.R. May 3 (†RC), where most of Idaho's 11 records have originated.

There are about 20 Idaho records of Band-tailed Pigeon, mostly from feeders and pigeon coops in April and May. Several reports were received this spring, the first a single Band-tailed at a Moscow, ID, feeder Apr. 17-18 (R&BH). An Ola, ID, feeder previously hosted the species several times and, again, produced a Band-tailed arriving Apr. 21 and remaining to at least May 31 (FZ) Surprisingly, a 2nd bird arrived May 7, and also persisted to at least the end of the month (DD, FZ). A 4th Band-tailed visited a feeder in Sun Valley, ID, Apr. 29, remaining for several days (BS).

Single Snowy Owls lingered near Sandpoint until Mar. 6 (EC), and in

Montana's Flathead Valley to Apr. 7 (JB). Snowy Owl sightings at the Coeur d'Alene airport included one Mar. 13 & 31, and two Mar. 28 (BG).

Three Common Poorwills were heard throughout May at Twin Lakes, ID (CL); there are no breeding records for Latilong 2. Persistent Blue Jays included one in Dover, ID, Mar. 14 (EC), three in Lewiston Mar. 22 (JLo), three in Hayden Lake, ID, Mar. 26 (KP), three in Moscow until Apr. 4 (DG), one in Grangeville until May 8 (SR), one in Boise Apr. 17 (MC, FK, DJT, m.ob.), and one in Pocatello, ID, until mid-May (CT).

Two Bewick's Wrens were near Julietta, ID, May 10 (KD), in the same area where most of Idaho's records have originated. A pair of **Blue-gray gnatcatchers**, casual in Montana, nested near Warren, *Carbon*, MT (PH, JMa), providing the state's first breeding record. Incredibly, another pair was discovered nearby (JMa, *P.W.Z.M.).

MOCKINGBIRD TO FINCHES

A N. Mockingbird was in Burley May 10-31 (JL). The **Siberian Accentor** discovered last season at Hailey, ID, remained until Apr. 1 (WW). A N. Shrike near Leadore Mar. 20 (HR) was locally record late.

If accepted, the **Lucy's Warbler** in Boise May 13 (MC, FK) would be Idaho's 2nd, while the **Blackpoll Warbler** at Market Lake W.M.A. May 17 (†GR) would be Idaho's first. A male Black-and-white Warbler in Boise May 15 (MC, FK) provided only the 2nd record for Latilong 17. Rarely noted in migration, an Am. Redstart was in Boise May 15 (MC, FK).

The male **Northern Cardinal** discovered in Lewiston last winter continued to frequent area feeders until at least May 19 (D&MG, WH, L&HH). Most of Idaho's 20 Rose-breasted Grosbeak records are from May, along the Snake R. Plain or near Ketchum. A male Rose-breasted in Sun Valley May 25 (J&MC) fits this pattern nicely. A male Indigo Bunting brightened Pocatello Apr. 24 (MR, CT, m.ob.); there are about 15 previous Idaho records. Four Am. Tree Sparrows were near Prichard, ID, May 14 (CL), a very late date. A locally rare Lark Sparrow was at Pierce, ID, May 18 (PJ). Last year produced an unprecedented Lark Bunting invasion into s.e. Idaho, but the only reports this spring were of single males near Sage Junction May 25 (CT) and Downey, ID, May 26 (CT), and two males near Minidoka N.W.R., Cassia, ID, in late May (SB). A pair of **Baird's Sparrows** at Brown's L., Powell, MT (TT), May 29 provided the Region's 2nd record A Grass-

hopper Sparrow was at Hells Gate S.P., *Nez Perce*, ID, May 22 (WH, MS); the species' n Idaho distribution is largely unknown. A Golden-crowned Sparrow May 8 was at the same Viola, ID, feeder that hosted the species the last 3 years (JH, MH). Harris's Sparrow sightings in Idaho included two in Boise Mar. 1-Apr. 20 (DJT), a single in Lewiston Orchards Mar. 13-22 (WH, DK), and four in nearby Lewiston Mar. 22 (WH).

Three female Great-tailed Grackles were near Chubbuck, ID, Mar. 12 (RC). A very early Bullock's Oriole graced Sandpoint Mar. 14 (EC).

As usual, at least one Lesser Goldfinch pair was on territory along Mink Cr., *Bannock*, ID, by mid-May (MCo). Like last year, the species was also present in s.w Idaho, with a single by Swan Falls Dam, Ada, ID, May 5 (MC, FK), and 19 along the Boise R. in Boise May 15 & 16 (MC, FK)

CORRIDENDUM

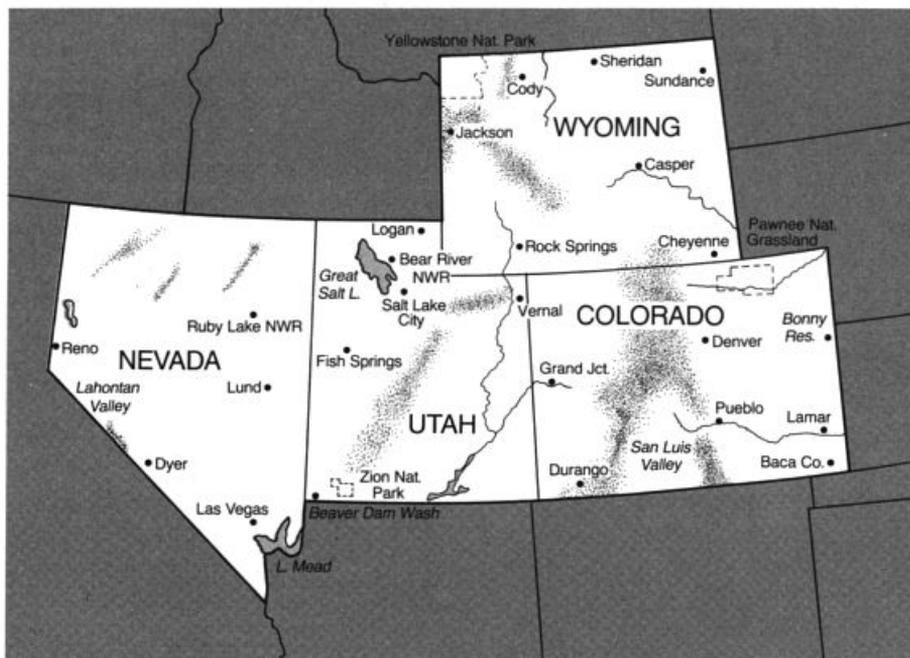
The White-throated Swifts reported in AFN 49:953 were in Latilong 7, not Latilong 8

Observers cited (subregional editors in bold-face):

IDAHO: Steve Blair (SBl), Steve Bouffard (SB), Dave Burrup (DB), Corinne Cameron, Del Cameron (DCm), Earl Chapin, Ray Clark, Jim & Marilyn Clayton (J&MC), Coeur d'Alene Audubon Society (C.A.S.) Pat Cole (PC), Mark Collie, Marty Collar (MCo), David Dudley, **Kas Dumroese**, John Edson, Dale Goble, Don & Mel Grinstead (D&MG), Bill Gundlach, Winne Hepburn, John Hirth, Marty Hirth, Ray & Betty Hoff (R&BH), Dave Holick, Lloyd & Helen Hogden (L&HH), Pat Jacks, Dwight Kilgore, Florence Knoll, Cindy Langlitz, Julane Lowry (JLo), Jason Lynch (JL), Cody Montgomery, John Montgomery (JM), Karen Parker, Jim Reichel (JRC), Jimmie Reynolds (JRy), Greg Rice, Sharon Ritter, John & Amy Roberson (J&AR), **Hadley Roberts**, Marlene Rossiter, Marilyn Smith, Brian Sturges, **Shirley Sturts** (SHS), Elaine Sullivan, Dave Trochlell (DJT), **Chuck Trost**, Wendy Warren, Jennifer Welch, Susan Weller, Roger Young, Fred Zeilemaker. MONTANA: Jim Brown, **Dan Casey** (DC), Paul Hendricks, Cedron Jones, Leo Keane, Jeff Marks (JMa), John Ormiston, **Don Skaar** (DSk), Bruce Tannehill, Terry Toppins, Sara Toubman, Wayne Tree, Roger White, **Philip Wright**, Scott Yeats.

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mountain west region



VAN A. TRUAN and BRANDON K. PERCIVAL

There was a high snow pack in both the Sierras and Rockies this spring. Record flooding occurred in western Nevada, filling lakes and wetland areas. Pyramid Lake gained five feet, Walker Lake four feet, and the Carson Sink was estimated at over 50,000 acres of wetlands. The rest of the season was dry in Nevada. The Rockies were wet and cold into May. It seemed to be the longest, coolest spring in years in eastern Wyoming and Colorado; leaves on many trees didn't appear until mid-May.

Abbreviations: F.C.R.P. (*Fountain Cr. Regional Park, El Paso Co., CO*); F.L.W.E. (*Fort Lyon Wildlife Easement, Bent Co., CO*); S.W.A. (*State Wildlife Area*).

LOONS TO IBIS

Colorado had the only Red-throated Loons this season, singles near Snyder, *Morgan*, May 10 (DAL, JM) and at John Martin Res., *Bent*, May 10 (SD, RB). The Region's only Pacific Loon was at Quail Creek Res., *Washington*, UT, Mar. 2 (SDS). High counts of Com. Loon were reported from New Castle Res., *Iron*, UT, with 21 Apr. 5 (SDS); Highline Res., *Mesa*, CO, with 16 Apr. 5

(RL); and 91 at Quail Creek Res., *Washington*, UT, Apr. 6 (SDS). Still quite rare inland, a **Yellow-billed Loon** was reported from Walker L., *Mineral*, NV, Apr. 19 (LN, GC et al.).

There were counts of 350 Am. White Pelicans at Quichapa L., *Iron*, UT, Apr. 5 (SDS); 5292 at Anaho Island N.W.R., *Washoe*, NV, May 6 (RBu); and 2200 at Walker L., NV, Apr. 20 (NS). Approximately 600 Double-crested Cormorant nests were tallied at Anaho Island N.W.R., NV, Apr. 6 (RBu); 23 nests at Humboldt W.M.A., *Pershing*, NV, May 20 (LN); and 40 nests at S-Line Res., *Churchill*, NV, in May (LN). On Apr. 23, the hawk watch at Dinosaur Ridge, *Jefferson*, recorded a Neotropical Cormorant (BS), unusual in Colorado, and even more so the mountains.

In Colorado, single Great Egrets were reported from Craig, *Moffat*, May 7 (FL); near Loma, *Mesa*, May 18 (PLa); and Alamosa, *Alamosa*, May 21 (TL). At an unusual site, a Snowy Egret graced Clear Creek Res., *Chaffee*, CO, May 29 (VAT); approximately 246 nests were counted in the Lahontan Valley, *Churchill*, NV, May 20 (LN). A Green Heron was at Riverside Drive Pond in St. George, *Washington*, UT, May 26 (SDS, PRS). Forty-five Cattle Egret nests were counted at Canvasback Club,

Churchill, NV, May 20 (LN). Twelve nests of Black-crowned Night-Heron were counted in Humboldt W.M.A., *Pershing*, NV, May 20 (LN), and 173 in Lahontan Valley, NV, May 20 (LN). An ad. Glossy Ibis was w. of Las Animas, *Bent*, CO, Apr. 26 (MJ, BKP). Good numbers of White-faced Ibis were recorded this spring. A group of 400–500 at Highline Res., CO, Apr. 1 (RL); 28 at L. Estes, *Larimer*, CO, May 1 (SR); 6455 in the Lahontan Valley, NV, May 20; and 1000 at Humboldt W.M.A., NV, May 20 (LN) were the more interesting.

WATERFOWL

The Trumpeter Swan in Boulder, *Boulder*, CO, stayed to Mar. 7 (PL). Greater White-fronted Goose were observed to Apr. 13 at Highline Res., CO (CD). Twelve Snow Geese were in s. Utah from Mar. 1–Apr. 27 (SDS), and five lingered at Nee Noshe Res., *Kiowa*, CO, May 31 (BKP, MJ, BD). Unusual in mountain Colorado, three Ross's Geese were in Salida, *Chaffee*, Mar. 7 (VAT); six were at Quichapa L., *Iron*, UT, Mar. 9 (SDS, PRS). A pair of Wood Ducks at Parlin, *Gunnison*, CO, May 2–4 (KP) and one at L. San Cristobal at 8995 ft. in *Hinsdale*, CO, May 4 (PM) were new for those areas. The male Eur. Wigeon in Ft. Collins, *Larimer*, CO, stayed to Apr. 10 (DAL), and another male was at Stillwater, NV, Mar. 22 (MM). Colorado had its first two **Tufted Ducks** this spring: an ad. male at Walden Ponds, *Boulder*, Mar. 21–23 (MP et al.) and a 2nd male in Denver, Apr. 22–26 (BH). These were determined to be different birds by the length of their tufts—the Boulder bird had a longer tuft, as compared by observers who saw both. A late Oldsquaw was at Big Johnson Res., *El Paso*, CO, May 20 (RB, m.ob.). A male White-winged Scoter visited L. Cheraw, *Otero*, CO, Apr. 16 (DA). An estimated high count of 1800 Ruddy Ducks were at Jumbo Res., *Sedgwick*, CO, Apr. 16 (SD).

RAPTORS

An Osprey was reported from Corn Cr., *Clark*, NV, Apr. 5 (RS). A pair of nesting Bald Eagles in the Lahontan Valley, NV, produced the first chick in the state since 1866 (NS, LN discovered a chick May 1). Rare on the plains in spring was an imm. N.

Goshawk at F.L.W.E., *Bent*, CO, May 5 (DAL). A pair of Com. Black-Hawks was reported from Beaver Dam Wash, UT, Apr. 29 (VAS). Colorado had three Red-shouldered Hawks: an adult at L. Henry, *Crowley*, Apr. 19 (DJ) and two immatures at Fossil Cr., *Larimer*, May 20 (RK). The hawk watch site in *Jefferson*, CO, reported 21 Broad-winged Hawks Apr. 28 (BS), 24 Apr. 30 (BS), 55 May 1 (BS), and 25 May 4 (TL)—a good year for this species in Colorado.

GROUSE TO SHOREBIRDS

Sage Grouse counts in the Gunnison Basin, *Gunnison*, CO, reported a total of 645 birds in April and May (KP). Possibly invading from Nebraska, six Sharp-tailed Grouse were seen 4 mi s. of Tamarack Ranch, *Logan*, CO, Apr. 13 (DB). Three Gambel's Quail were recorded at Ash Creek Res., *Washington*, UT, May 25 (SDS, PRS). Black Rails in *Bent* and *Otero*, CO, appear to be maintaining their numbers in established haunts.

The Lahontan Valley, NV, spring shorebird count Apr. 22–25 totaled 39,676 individuals. High counts included 18,386 Am. Avocets, 6557 Black-necked Stilts, 9517 Long-billed Dowitchers, and 67 Black-bellied Plovers. The only Am. Golden-Plovers were one at Carson L., NV, Apr. 26 (EH, EG) and one at Nee Noshe Res., CO, May 17 (DB). Rarely seen in w. Colorado, a Snowy Plover stopped at Clifton, *Mesa*, CO, May 1 (RL). Also at Clifton, a Semipalmated Plover was observed May 1–2 (CD, RL). A Mt. Plover at Blue Mesa Res., *Gunnison*, CO, Apr. 12 (KP) provided a first county record. About 1000 Am. Avocets were counted at Quichapa L., UT, Mar. 22 (SDS, PRS). Single Solitary Sandpipers were noted at Clifton, CO, May 1 (CD); Otter Cr. below the dam, *Piute*, UT, May 3 (SDS, PRS); and at Blue Diamond, *Clark*, NV, May 4 (RSc). A high count of 164 Spotted Sandpipers was made at Big Johnson Res., CO, May 12 (SD). Whimbrels were recorded in unusually high numbers in e. Colorado. There were 76 reported from 8 counties and one in *Mesa* Apr. 26 (*vide* RL). Near Jackson Res., *Morgan*, CO, 92 Long-billed Curlews were noted Apr. 13 (DAL, JM, JFB, JH). A single Hudsonian Godwit was at Nee Noshe Res., CO, May 10 (SD, RB). A Ruddy Turnstone was reported from Carson L., NV, May 11 (JE), and two were at John Martin Res., *Bent*, CO, May 30 (TB, CL). A remarkable six Red Knots were at Highline Res., CO, Apr. 26 (CD) and one was at Nee Noshe Res., CO, May 26 (Sse). Nevada's 3rd **Ruff** was observed at Carson

L., NV, Apr. 20 (LC, MM, GC, LN et al.). Short-billed Dowitcher reports included one at L. Cheraw, CO, Apr. 23 (DB); one at Clifton, CO, Apr. 24 (BGu); two at O'Sullivan Pond (Hwy. 56), *Iron*, UT, May 3 (SDS); three at Gaynor L., near Longmont, *Boulder*, CO, May 17 (BK); one at Lower Latham Res., *Weld*, CO, May 17 (DQ); and six at John Martin Res., CO, May 19 (BKP, MJ). Over 200 Red-necked Phalaropes were reported from Duck L., near Ft. Collins, CO, May 23 (DCE).

GULLS TO DOVES

A breeding-plumaged Laughing Gull visited Adobe Creek Res. (Blue L.), *Bent*, CO, May 26 (Sse). Franklin's Gulls included three in the Lahontan Valley, NV, Apr. 22–25 (LN); one at Stillwater N.W.R., NV, Apr. 25 (MM); and four at Carson L., NV, May 17 (LN). A first-summer Little Gull was at Cherry Creek Res., *Arapahoe*, CO, May 28 (LB, BB). An ad. Mew Gull graced Union Res., *Weld*, CO, Mar. 8–Apr. 14 (PL, TL). The last Thayer's Gull was reported at Jackson Res., CO, Apr. 20 (TL, LNo). An ad. Lesser Black-backed Gull was at Cherry Creek Res., CO, Mar. 18–Apr. 1 (BB). A late imm. Glaucous Gull was at Cherry Creek Res. May 16 (SC). Great Black-backed Gull reports included two in e. Colorado: an adult at Cherry Creek Res. Mar. 10 (SC) and a first-year bird at Nee Noshe Res. Apr. 24–May 31 (SD et al.). Two Caspian Terns were in *Mesa*, CO, Apr. 22 and May 21 (RL). Rare in the mountains, a Com. Tern was at L. George, *Park*, CO, May 22 (VAT). Also in w. Colorado, a Com. Tern was in *Mesa* May 23 (RL); two at Sweitzer L., Delta, May 24 (RL); and two near Mack, *Mesa*, May 27 (RL). Least Terns appeared at normal sites in e. Colorado, but most unusual were four in *Mesa* May 21–25 (RL) and three at Confluence Park, Delta, *Delta*, May 24 (RL, KP).

Up to ten **Eurasian Collared-Doves** continued in Rocky Ford, *Otero*, CO, through the period, but the movement W is definitely on. Two more were in Campo, *Baca*, Apr. 22 (VENT) and one was in Lamar May 30 (DN). Single White-winged Doves were in Pueblo, CO, May 15 (JD, BD, BKP) and Virgin R. Parkway (Bloomington end), *Washington*, UT, May 16 (SDS).

CUCKOOS TO WOODPECKERS

A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was at Elgin, *Lincoln*, NV, May 16 (JWa). Two Barn Owls were recorded in Monte Vista N.W.R., *Rio Grande*, CO, May 18–21 (*vide* TL, BS). An E. Screech-Owl called in Cottonwood Canyon, *Baca*, CO, Apr. 30 (BKP, SD, BD).

On Mar. 21, 17 Boreal Owls were reported on Cameron Pass, *Larimer*, CO (RAR, DAL, JFB, WPL). Unusual on the plains in e. Colorado, a N. Saw-whet Owl was at C.V.C.G., *Weld*, Mar. 2 (DAL); more unusual was a possible nest at F.L.W.E. May 2–9 (BKP, SC, MH, m.ob.). A juv.-plumaged bird was observed in and near a woodpecker hole in an elm tree. A pair (male and female) of Lesser Nighthawks was in Lamar, CO, May 8–10 (VZ, DAL, JM); a male at Holbrook Res., *Otero*, CO, May 12 (MJ, BKP, JRo); a female in Ft. Collins, CO, May 28–29 (DAL); and another at C.V.C.G., CO, May 30 (DAL). These constitute the most in Colorado in one season. A Whip-poor-will was recorded at Mesquite, *Clark*, NV, May 16 (JWa). Rare in the mountains, a Chimney Swift was seen over L. Estes, CO, May 22 (SW).

Possibly two Lewis's Woodpeckers were at Kanarrville Rest Area, *Iron*, UT, Mar. 22–May 10 (SDS, PRS); one graced Craig, *Moffat*, CO, May 5 (FL). A Red-headed Woodpecker was in *Eagle*, CO, May 24 (JMe) for a first area record. An Acorn Woodpecker returned to Durango, *La Plata*, CO, Mar. 31 (DB). Another one was at Lida, *Esmeralda*, NV, May 18 (JBr). The only report of Red-bellied Woodpecker was a singleton at Rocky Ford S.W.A., *Otero*, CO, May 4 (NL). Two Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were reported from e. Colorado: one at Ft. Collins Mar. 6 (DAL) and one at Hasty Campground, *Bent*, Apr. 6 (BKP, MJ). Rarely reported on the plains, a Red-naped Sapsucker was at the F.L.W.E., CO, May 4 (DCE, WPL). A White-headed Woodpecker was observed near Mt. Charleston, Totabe N.E., e. of Las Vegas, May 17 (T&L Blake). Two male Black-backed Woodpeckers were at Spooner Lake S.P., Carson City, NV, May 8 (MM).

FLYCATCHERS TO TANAGERS

A **Greater Pewee** was observed at Las Vegas, NV, May 15 (RSc, JE, m.ob.), providing the first Nevada record. A high count yielded 35 W. Wood-Pewees at Corn Cr., Clark, NV, May 24 (SDS et al.). There was only one E. Wood-Pewee reported, at Chatfield S.P., *Jefferson*, CO, May 31 (BB). In Nevada, two—possibly three—Willow Flycatchers were at Tonopah, *Nye*, May 25–31; one at Dyer, *Esmeralda*, May 26; and one at Corn Cr. May 30 (MM). A Black Phoebe was recorded in s. *Gunnison*, CO, May 24–26 (RL, KP). A Vermilion Flycatcher was seen along the Cimarron R., *Baca*, CO, Apr. 29 (DB). Seven Great Crested Flycatchers were reported from e

Colorado. A Brown-crested Flycatcher was at Corn Cr., NV, May 24 (RS), and an E. Kingbird sallied at Tonopah, NV, May 31 (DTr). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was reported from Baca, CO, May 24 (DQ). Rare in e. Colorado was a female Purple Martin in Lamar May 11 (FL, BB). An estimated 20,000 Tree Swallows passed at Carson L., NV, Apr. 4 (RF). Very rare, but expanding westerly, a Blue Jay was at Montrose, Montrose, CO, May 11–14 (JHo, AR). A Winter Wren was sighted along Lower Calf Cr., Garfield, UT, Mar. 26 (AS). A Golden-crowned Kinglet was recorded at Corn Cr., NV, Apr. 6–13 (RS). Blue-gray Gnatcatchers included two at Glendo S.P., Platte, WY, May 29 (R&DR) and 38 at Guernsey S.P., Platte, WY, May 31 (R&DR). There were 23 reports of Veery in e. Colorado May 11–25. Two Gray-cheeked Thrushes were found at L. Henry, CO, May 8–13 (BD, BKP, MJ, JRo). A Wood Thrush was at F.C.R.P., El Paso, CO, May 26–28 (JDi, BG). A Bendire's Thrasher was at Gold Butte, Clark, NV, May 16 (JWa). Curve-billed Thrashers continue their northerly expansion, with singles in Aurora, Adams, CO, Mar. 2 (ASe) and e. of Boulder, CO, May 10 (BK). Four Phainopepla were at Ash Creek Res., Washington, UT, May 25 (SDS, PRS) and a male was at Fish Springs N.W.R., Juab, UT, May 30 (M. Chabot Halley).

VIREOS TO WARBLERS

A singing White-eyed Vireo was at L. Henry, CO, May 8–10 (BD, FL). Five Bell's Vireos were reported in the Region away from normal areas, included singles in E.L.W.E. May 9 (BKP, MJ); Quail Creek S.P., Washington, UT, May 10 (SDS, JKr); Apishapa S.W.A., Las Animas, CO, May 26 (BS); F.C.R.P. May 29 (RB); and Las Vegas, NV, May 30 (MM). Rare in e. Colorado, a Gray Vireo was reported in suitable habitat in s.w. Teller, CO, May 26 (DA). A Blue-headed Vireo was at Lamar, CO, May 5 (ME); one Cassin's at Tonopah, NV, May 25 (MM); and two Cassin's at Fort Collins, CO, May 29 (DAL). An incomprehensible eight Yellow-throated Vireos visited Colorado, all single birds, at Lamar Apr. 29–May 3 (DB); Two Buttes Res., Baca, May 2–4 (MJ, VZ, JRo); Nee Noshe Res. May 10 (SD, RB); Canon City, Fremont, May 11 (J&RW); Rocky Ford S.W.A., May 12 (BKP, MJ, JRo); Jefferson May 14 (LB, BB); F.L.W.E. May 19–21 (BKP, MJ, JRo, BD); and F.C.R.P. May 31 (BHa). Rare throughout the Region, a Philadelphia Vireo was reported from Cheyenne, WY, May 17 (CSBC).

In Colorado, 36 species of warblers were reported. This includes regular migrants, such as 15 Tennessees May 2–22; 11 Nashvilles Apr. 30–May 19; 17 N. Parulas Apr. 28–May 30 (including four singing males at L. Henry May 9); 11 Chestnut-sideds May 8–27; 15 Magnolias May 4–30;

SA In Colorado, the Comet Hale-Bopp was fantastic. But on May 8–9—within a 20 acre cottonwood/willow riparian lakeshore at L. Henry, Crowley—a phenomenal occurrence in Colorado birding history also took place. An outfall of “eastern” migratory land birds were observed which will go down as one of Colorado's greatest single outfalls. According to the United States Weather Service in Pueblo (the closest weather center), the night of May 7 began with a clear sky and a steady SE wind at 10 mph. At about 2 a.m. May 8, a cold front hit, changing the wind direction to NE at 15–20 mph. Clouds formed and drizzle began. The night was the warmest of the year so far at 54°F, and stayed around that temperature all day. It appears weather happenings like this are what to look for in e. Colorado in the spring. The spectacle began when Bob Dickson stepped out of his vehicle and discovered “warblers everywhere.” He had several Least Flycatchers, a Gray-cheeked Thrush, a singing White-eyed Vireo, more than 200 warblers (mostly “Audubon/Myrtle” Yellow-rumped) of 14 species, two Summer Tanagers, a late White-throated Sparrow, and numerous common migrants. As the word got out, more observers arrived, and 21 species of warblers were found May 9. By Monday, May 12, 13 species of warbler remained, with many other migrants still profuse. Word of the fallout spread within the birding community, and scores of birders visited the site between May 10 & 13, turning it into Colorado's version of the “Boyscout Woods” for a few days. An impressive 21 warbler species were seen during this 5-day event. The L. Henry list included rarities such as three Least Flycatchers, a Veery, two Gray-cheeked Thrush, and a White-eyed Vireo. Rare warblers noted included an incredible three Golden-wingeds, two Tennessees, five N. Parulas, and a Worm-eating. Also notable were two Summer Tanagers and a Baltimore Oriole. See details in the text.

nine Black-throated Blues May 7–23; four Black-throated Grays on the e. plains May 1–15; five Townsend's May 2–18; eight Black-throated Greens Apr. 30–May 31; nine Palms May 2–30; 46 Blackpolls Apr. 30–May 25 (including ten at Bonny Res. May 14); 20 Black-and-whites May 2–21; 36 Am. Redstarts May 9–31; 14 Ovenbirds May 4–28; and 42 N. Waterthrushes May 1–28.

The other states had the following uncommon warblers: a Tennessee at Corn Cr., NV, May 31 (RSc); a Nashville at Cheyenne, WY, May 17 (JLD, RD); a Lucy's at Ash Creek Res., Washington, UT, May 25 (SDS, PRS); single N. Parulas at Cheyenne, WY, May 17–18 (JLD, RD) and Corn Cr., NV, May 30 (JWa); a Chestnut-sided at Torrey, Wayne, UT, May 25 (AS); a Black-throated Gray at Cheyenne, WY, May 20 (GJ); a Townsend's at Boulder Mt., Wayne, UT (AS); and a Palm at Cheyenne, WY, May 17 (CSBC). There were three Blackpolls at Gillette, Campbell (JBW), two at Sheridan May 16–20 (JBW), and one at Cheyenne May 17, all Wyoming (JLD, RD). Single Black-and-whites visited Cheyenne, WY, May 17 (C.S.B.C.); Tonopah, NV, May 19 (DTr); and Corn Cr., NV, May 24 (SDS, JKr et al.). Seven Am. Redstarts were counted in Nevada May 10–31, and another three dropped into Cheyenne, WY, May 17 (CSBC). Single Ovenbirds in Nevada were at Nye May 31 (JBr) and Esmeralda May 31 (MM). Northern Waterthrush reports included three from Wyoming May 15–17; one at Corn Cr., NV, May 30 (JWa); and another in Wayne, UT, May 30 (AS). A fallout of 50 Wilson's Warblers were found at Corn Cr., NV, May 24 (SDS, JKr et al.).

Rare warblers in Colorado included Blue-winged Warblers in Lamar May 1–8 (BKP), Cottonwood Canyon May 3 (JJR, LR, JP), Two Buttes Res. May 7–10 (DB, VZ, FL), F.L.W.E. May 9 (JM, DAL, VZ, DQ), and Bonny Res. May 14 (DB). Golden-winged Warblers were found at L. Henry, CO, with a first-year male May 10 (BKP, PSS, CS), a female May 11–13 (MJ), a singing ad. male May 11–13 (BKP, MJ), and another in Ft. Collins, CO, May 28 (JM). Blackburnian Warblers in Colorado included a female at F.L.W.E. May 2 (MJ), a male at Milton Res., Weld, May 16 (DQ, RO), a singing male at Hasty Campground May 17 (BKP, MJ, BD), a female at C.V.C.G. May 28 (JH), a female at Ovid, Sedgwick, May 28 (DB), and a male at Julesburg, Sedgwick, May 28 (DB). A singing male Yellow-throated Warbler was at L. Henry, CO, May 22 (BKP, DSm), and another was at Prewitt

Res., Washington, CO, May 24 (DB). At least six Grace's Warblers were reported from s. Gunnison, CO, May 24–26 (RL, KP), providing a new location for this species. Five Bay-breasted Warblers were found in Colorado, including a female at L. Henry May 16 (BKP, BD), a female at Lamar May 22–24 (BKP, DSm), a male s. of Monte Vista, Conejos, May 24 (BG, JV; San Luis Valley's 2nd record), a male at Bonny Res. May 25 (MH), and a male at C.V.C.G. May 29 (NEr). The warblers of the season for Colorado were two **Cerulean Warblers**, 3rd and 4th state records if accepted by the C.B.R.C. One was a first-year male at Bonny Res. May 14 (KC, DB), and the other a female in Monte Vista May 25–26 (DSm, CS, PSS). Four **Prothonotary Warblers** were found in the Region; a male was photographed from Cheyenne, WY, May 17 (JLD, RD et al.), providing the 5th record for Wyoming, and a male was found at Corn Creek, NV, May 26–30 (JTh, m.ob.). Two were reported from Colorado: a male at Lamar May 4–5 (BKP, MJ, VZ) and a male at Gregory Canyon, Boulder, May 19–20 (PP, m.ob.). Four Worm-eating Warblers were seen in Colorado: singles at Colorado Springs S.W.A., El Paso, May 2 (DA), L. Henry May 8–12 (BD, FL), Lamar May 9–10 (DAL, JM), and at Louisville, Boulder, May 21 (JLF). Three Kentucky Warblers were found in Colorado, including a male at Two Buttes Res. May 3 (JH, DCE, WPL, JFB), a male at F.C.R.P. May 28 (BG), and a male at C.V.C.G. May 30 (JH). A male **Connecticut Warbler** was found at Lamar, CO, May 16 (BKP). Two Mourning Warblers were reported, one at Hale Ponds, Yuma, May 14 (DB, JBH), and another at F.C.R.P. May 23–25 (BM). Nevada birders found two Hooded Warblers at Corn Cr.: a male Apr. 5 (RS) and another May 26 (KW). Four were reported in Colorado, including one at L. Henry May 7 (DB), another at L. Henry May 16–17 (BKP, BD), one at Bonny Res. May 16 (DAL, DCE, WPL), and at F.C.R.P. May 18 (BG).

TANAGERS TO GROSBEAKS

Six Summer Tanagers were reported from e. Colorado. A male Scarlet Tanager was at Nee Noshe Res., CO, May 9–10 (BKP, MH). Five N. Cardinals were recorded in e. Colorado. Single Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were at Connected L., Mesa, CO, May 24 (RH); in Sheridan, WY, May 17 (SCSBC); and at Corn Cr., NV, May 26 (KW). An Indigo Bunting was at Ash Creek Res., UT, May 25 (SDS, PRS), and two visited Corn Cr., NV, May 26–31 (RS). In Colorado, two

female Painted Buntings were observed, one at Bonny Res., May 16–17 (RB, WPL), and another at Hasty Campground May 17 (BKP, MJ, BD). A pair of E. Towhees dropped in Tamarack Ranch, CO, May 16–23 (DAL, DCE, WPL, JM). Six Field Sparrows were reported in e. Colorado between May 4–17. Rarely observed anywhere in e. Colorado, single Sage Sparrows were at P.N.G., Weld, Apr. 8 & 15 (G&JH) and at L. Estes Apr. 28 (SRo). Grasshopper Sparrows arrived 10 days earlier than the earliest Wyoming record, with 15 at Cheyenne May 4 (AK). The Golden-crowned Sparrow at Red Rocks Park, Jefferson, CO, stayed to Mar. 8 (PL). A late Snow Bunting was in n. Weld, CO, Apr. 6 (SD). Five Tricolored Blackbirds were reported from Centerville, Douglas, NV, May 31 (MM). A Com. Grackle was in Tonopah, NV, May 21 (DTr). Rarely observed in Nevada, a male **Baltimore Oriole** was at Cactus Spring, Clark, NV, May 24 (RS); another visited at L. Henry, CO, May 10–31 (BKP, m.ob.). Red Crossbills remained on the e. plains of Colorado in small flocks through the season. A White-winged Crossbill was reported in Estes Park, CO, Apr. 21 (R&LE). The latest Com. Redpoll was Mar. 7 in Colorado. Six Lesser Goldfinches were at Guernsey S.P., WY, May 31 (R&DR). Evening Grosbeaks invaded most of the Region this spring. Reports included Cedar City, Springdale, Washington City, Panguitch, Garfield, and Washington, UT; Corn Cr., NV; and numerous areas throughout Colorado.

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Place names that are frequently mentioned, but very long, may be abbreviated in a form such as "C.B.B.T." or "W.P.B.O." Such local abbreviations will be explained in a key at the beginning of the particular regional report in which they are used. Standard abbreviations that are used throughout *Field Notes* are keyed on page 837.

arizona region



CHRIS D. BENESH and GARY H. ROSENBERG

It was a relatively quiet spring in much of Arizona. Many observers noted irruptive species from this winter's big invasion lingering well into the period. The status of Least Tern in Arizona continues to change. There were no fewer than eight sightings this spring. Rarities included Black-capped Gnatcatchers and Fan-tailed Warbler. Again, the Arizona Game and Fish Atlas project was at work elucidating the breeding distributions of a number of species.

Abbreviations: A.B.C. (*Arizona Bird Committee*); C.S.L. (*Cow Springs L.*); L.C.R.V. (*Lower Colorado R. Valley*); G.F.P. (*Gila Farms Pond*); M.F.L. (*Many Farms L.*); N.I.R. (*Navajo Indian Reservation*); P.A.P. (*Pinal Air Park*); P.R.D. (*Painted Rock Dam*); S.P.R. (*San Pedro R.*); S.T.P. (*Sewage Treatment Plant*); S.S.V. (*Sulphur Springs Valley*).

LOONS TO HAWKS

A loon identified as a Pacific was present at Del Rio Springs near Prescott Apr. 16 (CT); there are very few spring records for the state away from the L.C.R.V. The **Red-necked Grebe** that was present on L. Powell at Wahweap Marina during the winter season was last reported Apr. 16 (CL). A Horned Grebe at Page May 13 (CL) was very late, but this species apparently winters regularly at nearby L. Powell. Scattered

W. Grebes were reported, with four at Snyder Hill S.T.P. Apr. 5–May 5 (MS et al.), and another at Fountain Hills Apr. 27 (T. Brodner, RD), but 500 birds on San Carlos Res. Apr. 14 (GHe) was exceptional. A single Clark's Grebe at Cow Springs L. May 21 (CL) was the only migrant record received this spring for this species. Twenty-four Am. White Pelicans at Chino Valley May 3 (J. Morgan) provided a good spring count for that region. Single Brown Pelicans were present at Patagonia L. Mar. 8–20 (SH), and at Picacho Res. May 2 through the period (J. Withgott, m.ob.); this species is usually a late summer visitant in s. Arizona, but recently has been found at odd times of the year, perhaps related to recent die-offs at the Salton Sea and Gulf of California. Numbers of Neotropic Cormorants at Patagonia L. remained high into March, with 15 there Mar. 22 (SH), but decreased to only six May 26 (TC). Away from there, numbers continue to increase around s. Arizona, with four present at Picacho Res. May 12 through the period (MS et al.), and another single at Scottsdale May 27–30 (SGa). A greater-than-usual number of Cattle Egrets was seen in n. Arizona; on Apr. 24, six were at C.S.L., six were in Pasture Canyon, one was in Tuba City, and another was at Red L. (all CL). A male Least Bittern was seen again this spring at Patagonia L. Apr. 28 (SH), near where one apparently nested in 1996. Another in cat-tails at Kingfisher Pond, upper S.P.R., May

10 (C. VanCleve) provided only a 5th local record. Single Great Egrets were reported at Willow Tank near Portal Apr. 7 (AC, NMC) and at Wahweap May 14 (CL), where casual at best. Snowy Egrets are fairly unusual in spring in s.e. Arizona away from Picacho Res., therefore one at Sierra Vista S.T.P. Apr. 21 (GC, DR), six at Snyder Hill S.T.P. Apr. 26 (m.ob.), and another at Hereford May 16 (R. Harris), were all noteworthy. White-faced Ibis is a more common migrant during the fall, therefore a large concentration of 200 at Sierra Vista S.T.P. Apr. 21 (GC, DR) was of interest.

A single Ross's Goose was at C.S.L. Mar. 7 (CL), where it is considered casual, particularly in spring. A male Greater Scaup at Wahweap Apr. 21–24 (CL) was late for a locally wintering bird. Considered casual in spring were single Surf Scoters at Snyder Hill S.T.P. Apr. 25–May 2 (L. Baker, NC, ph. MS), at Nogales May 14 (F. Fekel), and at Green Valley May 14 (F. Fekel). More unusual at any season, particularly in spring, was a White-winged Scoter at Page Apr. 28 (R. Radd).

Individual White-tailed Kites were reported from Prescott Valley Mar. 11 (S. Nelly), from near Amado May 1 (†B. Crabtree), from Arlington May 17 (JBo), and from w. of Chiricahua N.M. May 19 (†A. Hunt); this species is still a rare but regular resident in s.e. Arizona. On May 21, a pair of Mississippi Kites was seen nest-building at the Trinity Monastery at St. David (T. Plunkett); this locality is well s. of the nearest nesting locality at Cascabel on the San Pedro R. Another Mississippi Kite was reported from Prescott May 22 (†B. Pranter), well n. and w. of known populations in Arizona. A very late N. Harrier was sighted 10 mi w. of Cedar Ridge, N.I.R., May 29 (TC); there are only a couple of nesting attempts of this species in the state. On a recent visit to Arroyo Cajon Bonito, Sonora, Mexico, Apr. 9, 3 pairs of Com. Black-Hawks were found (JWh); this locality is just s. of the border e. of Douglas, and it is encouraging that good habitat still exists for this species in extreme n. Sonora. A Broad-winged Hawk was reported from Granite Cr. May 4 (†CT); this represented only the 3rd Prescott area record of this casual spring migrant.

PLOVERS THROUGH TERNS

Three Black-bellied Plovers at C.S.L. Apr. 24 were noteworthy, as this species is casual anywhere in the state during spring. Exceptional for spring was an Am. Golden-Plover reported from Cochise College, w. of Douglas, Apr. 19 (J. Oldennettel, A. Craig, N. Moore-Craig); this represents only about the 5th spring record for the s.e. portion of the state. Two pairs of Am. Avocets attempted nesting at the Wahweap S.T.P. May 12 (CL), but neither was successful. A Solitary Sandpiper at Wahweap May 14 (CL) was very late for n. Arizona. A flock of 22 Marbled Godwits at Gilbert Apr. 27 (SG, RD) represented an unusually large spring concentration for the s. portion of the state, whereas a flock of 58 near Cornville Apr. 24 (R. Radd) fits a recent pattern of large flocks being grounded by bad weather in spring in n. and c. Arizona. Sanderling is still a casual spring migrant in the south-east, therefore one at Snyder Hill S.T.P. Apr. 25–May 5 (J. Withgott, NC, MS), and another reported from Willcox May 14 (SH), were of interest. Similarly, Stilt Sandpiper is also considered casual in s.e. Arizona in spring, and one at Willcox May 19 (GHR, MS) was within the span of dates for previous records at that season. A Semipalmated Sandpiper at Willcox May 5 (GR, MS) was the only report of this casual spring migrant this season. A Red Phalarope was found at the Green Valley S.T.P. Apr. 4 (S. Johnson); amazingly, this species has been recorded casually in s.e. Arizona during every month of the year, except March.

Franklin's Gull made a better-than-average showing this spring, particularly in the n. portion of the state; scattered individuals or groups of two–three were seen around the southeast between Mar. 29–May 17. Up north, Apr. 24 was the day to see Franklin's Gulls; 28 were at C.S.L., 36 were at Pasture Canyon, and 46 were at Tuba City. Additionally, 23 were at Wahweap on L. Powell May 13 (all CL). Similarly, scattered Bonaparte's Gulls (six) were found around s. Arizona between Apr. 18–May 15, but up n. a very large concentration of 99 birds was present at Wahweap April 15 (CL). The Mew Gull that was present on L. Powell during the fall and winter was still present Apr. 15 (S. Glover). Large flocks of California Gulls were again seen during spring migration in n. Arizona; on Apr. 24 (the same day he saw large flocks of Franklin's Gulls) LaRue had 60 at C.S.L., 36 at Pasture Canyon, and another 21 at Tuba City. Quite a gull day for Arizona! After recent springs with increasing numbers of

Least Terns seen in Arizona, it was still surprising that no fewer than 8 individuals were seen, perhaps an all-time record for a single year; one was at Sierra Vista Apr. 28–29 (B. Stocku, D. Clark), three (including a one-year-old bird) were at Picacho Res. Apr. 30–May 18 (NB, SGa, ph. MS), one was at Gila Farms Pond May 11 (RD), one was at Willcox May 11–18 (E. Boyd, J. Stasz, ph. BZ), one was at C.S.L. in n. Arizona May 23 (CL), and one was at Patagonia L. May 26 (TC).

DOVES TO WOODPECKERS

Extralimital White-winged Doves were reported from Prescott May 4 (CT), and from Wahweap Marina area May 12 (CL); there are very few n. Arizona records for this dove. Three Com. Ground-Doves at Miami Gardens May 20–21 (J. Spencer) were of local interest. A Flammulated Owl in the Huachuca Mts. Mar. 2 (SH) was about 2 weeks earlier than usual. A Long-eared Owl nest was reported from a saguaro near Apache Jct. May 1 (M. Chew); there are few documented lowland nesting records of this owl from s. Arizona. The Arizona Breeding Bird Atlas volunteers located three Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls "near the Mexican border on the Tohono O'odham Indian Reservation during April and May" (*vide* TC).

Other than the usual male White-eared Hummingbird that spent most of the spring at Ramsey Canyon (m.ob), other single individuals were reported from Miller Canyon (female) May 27 (TC, RK) and from Comfort Spring (male) May 28 (TC, RK). A female Lucifer Hummingbird was at Bisbee Apr. 2–Apr. 19, when it was joined by a male (G&P McCrory, DD, JWh). Another male was located in Chino Canyon Apr. 2, joined by a female by Apr. 13 (RH, NC) By Apr. 20 the female was seen on a nest (NC, ph. D. Nelson, GHR), with the male doing its characteristic flight display to the nest, but by early May the nest had been abandoned. This was the first documented breeding record of this species in Arizona. Elegant Trogons were reported from several odd localities; the one that wintered locally along Sonoita Cr. near Patagonia was seen again Mar. 12–Apr. 4, another was reported from along the upper S.P.R. near Highway 90 Apr. 18 (*vide* DK), one was in Guadalupe Canyon May 25 (NC), and another was in the Patagonia Mts. s.e. of Patagonia May 27 (TC, RK). It was estimated that 3 pairs of Green Kingfishers had territories along a 5-mi stretch of the upper S.P.R. on both sides of Highway 90 (*vide* DK). Another 3 or 4 birds

were seen along Sonoita Cr. May 18 (NC et al.). Very unusual at this season was the report of an Acorn Woodpecker in Tempe May 14 (H. Fibel).

FLYCATCHERS TO VIREOS

Scarce as migrants away from breeding areas, three separate Greater Pewees were noted in migration along the upper S.P.R.; one was near the Highway 90 crossing Apr. 4–6 (GC, DR), one at Hereford Apr. 16 (M. Pretti), and another one at Highway 90 May 18 (D. Hawksworth). A territorial pair of Willow Flycatchers was discovered along the upper S.P.R. at Kingfisher Pond May 14 (J. Ambrose et al.); this pair later provided the first local nesting record since 1977 (*vide* DK). A small influx of Gray Flycatchers was noted in s.e. Arizona; nine were present in Portal Apr. 28–30 (NMC), and five

SA In summer 1996, a **Black-capped Gnatcatcher** was documented in Chino Canyon, where this species nested from 1981–1986. On April 6 this year, a female Black-capped was located with a male gnatcatcher that showed mostly typical Black-capped plumage and vocal characteristics, but had more black at the base of the outer rectrices, and a slightly shorter bill than is typical (RH, ph. MS, ph. tape GHR, v.t. CDB). By Apr. 11, there was no sign of the female Black-capped (WR), and the male was found nest-building with a female Black-tailed Apr. 13 (L. Bryan). That nest subsequently failed, as did a 2nd nesting attempt (likely due to cowbird parasitism). The question of whether the male was aberrant or possibly a hybrid is still under discussion by the A.B.C.

Amazingly, another non-controversial male Black-capped was located in Brown Canyon April 22 (R. Taylor, †NC, R&J Hanson et al.), and a female and nest were located there April 25 (WR, v.t. CDB, ph. GHR). This nest also failed, this time due to predation (*vide* R. Hanson). Also on April 25, a 2nd pair of Black-cappeds was located down the canyon from the first nesting pair (R&J Hanson, WR, ph. GHR; v.t. CDB), but the nest of this 2nd pair was never located. With the availability of suitable habitat in various canyons in s.e. Arizona, one has to wonder just how many Black-capped Gnatcatchers were present in s. Arizona this year!

were noted in Baker Canyon May 13–16 (NC). A territorial Buff-breasted Flycatcher was discovered in Bear Canyon, Santa Catalina Mts., May 10 (M. Kehl), remaining through the period; this is the first record for this species in these mountains since 1985. An E. Phoebe was at Kingfisher Pond, upper S.P.R., May 10 (N. Gross) and again May 22–23 (B. Neville, M&L Keitelman), providing only the 4th spring record for the upper S.P.R. A Vermilion Flycatcher was found May 26 through the period in Lee's Ferry (L. Bush), where it is considered casual. A Dusky-capped Flycatcher was along the upper S.P.R. near Hereford Apr. 25–27 (GC, HB), presumably a migrant. Another Dusky-capped was on Mt. Ord May 11 (M. Larson), only the 3rd record for *Maricopa*. A Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher discovered n.w. of the Santa Teresa Mts. May 14 (PF) was at a new, rather northerly location for this species. Another Sulphur-bellied was observed in Oak Creek Canyon May 24 (JC, K. Gooby).

Clark's Nutcrackers remained in the Huachuca Mts. until at least May 13 (GHR), and in the Chiricahuas through the period (*vide* DJa). The Juniper Titmouse present in Reid Park since November 1996 was still present there Mar. 21 (CDB). Two Winter Wrens were found on territory in the West Fork of Oak Creek Canyon May 24 (JC, K. Gooby) in the precise location where this species was present last June. A rare visitor to Arizona, a Varied Thrush was detected in Skull Valley Mar. 14 (D. Moll). Single Brown Thrashers were reported from Mesa Apr. 11 (H. Payson) and along the upper S.P.R. near Hereford Apr. 26–28 (J. Pike, D. Clark); this species is a casual visitor to the state. Crissal Thrasher was found nesting just n. of the confluence of the Little Colorado R. and the Colorado R. May 9 (TC); this is the first nest recorded away from Cameron in the portion of the state framed by these 2 rivers. Rarely recorded in migration, a single Gray Vireo was reported from the Grand Canyon Apr. 30 (CL). Other single Gray Vireos were reported from the upper San Pedro R. Apr. 23 (B. Eckharts) and again Apr. 29 (P. Gallo), from the Prescott region away from nearby breeding areas Apr. 28–May 3 (CT), from Granite Basin May 9 (B. Pranter, B. Thomen), and another four from Baker Canyon in extreme s.e. Arizona May 14 (NC). Casual in Arizona, a Yellow-throated Vireo was reported with brief details along the upper S.P.R. Apr. 14 (†N. Cergl, J. Mason). Also sparse in Arizona, single Red-eyed Vireos were reported from Scheelite Can-

yon May 6 (R. Taylor), along the upper S.P.R. at Hereford May 10 (C. VanCleve), and from Kingfisher Pond May 16 (†DK).

WARBLERS THROUGH TANAGERS

Casual migrants in the state, single Tennessee Warblers were near Watson L. in Prescott May 17–19 (CT), and at S.W.R.S. Chiricahua Mts. May 24–26 (†C. Hohenberger). Four N. Parulas were reported: One was along the upper S.P.R. near Hereford Apr. 16 (M. Pretti), one was in Portal Apr. 19 (*vide* DJa), one was in Paradise Apr. 21 (D. Julian), and another was along Sonoita Cr. May 17 (L. Bryan). Migrant Grace's Warblers were recorded away from breeding habitat, with one along the upper S.P.R. at Hereford Apr. 11 (DR) and another downstream at the Hwy 90 crossing Apr. 17 (GC, DR). The only Black-and-white Warbler reported was one at Granite Cr., Prescott, May 17 (CT). Two Am. Redstarts were reported, with one at Whitlow Dam May 22 (J. Bartley), and another at Kingfisher Pond, upper S.P.R., May 22–23 (B. Neville et al.). A Prothonotary Warbler was along the upper S.P.R. May 15 (GHR, ph. R. Parry). There were 3 Ovenbird reports this spring; one was in Madera Canyon Apr. 3 (M. Springer), another at the upper S.P.R., May 7 (HB), and a 3rd at Organ Pipe Cactus N.M. May 13 (J. Patterson, W. Leitner). Very rare in Arizona, single Kentucky Warblers were in Flagstaff May 11 (F. Brandt), and at the confluence of Beaver Dam Cr. and the Virgin R. May 24 (†J. Kreitzer). A singing Hooded Warbler was present along Granite Cr. May 20 (CT), and another was heard along Sonoita Cr. May 27 (WR). Wandering Red-faced Warblers were found away from breeding localities as follows: one at Hereford Apr. 24–25 (MD), another near the Hwy 90 crossing Apr. 25 (GC), and a 3rd reported from French Joe Canyon, Whetstone Mts., May 11 (G. Ewing). As many as four Painted Redstarts were found along the upper S.P.R. Apr. 3–16 (GC, DR, HB), where this species is seldom recorded. One of the more frustrating birds this season was the singing **Fan-tailed Warbler**, first heard May 21—but not seen and identified until May 26–27 (JBo, T. Staudt, †WR, †B. Principe, tape DS)—which proved elusive for many who searched for it. There are at best 6 previous records in the state.

A female Hepatic Tanager was on the upper S.P.R. Apr. 26 (GC, DR), providing only the 5th spring record for the river. A female **Flame-colored Tanager** was observed copulating with a male W. Tanager in Miller

Canyon May 29 (†TC, RK). Northern Cardinals inched northwards with sightings from Yavapai Hills Mar. 16 (J. Morgan) and from Prescott May 8 (CT).

GROSBEAKS TO FINCHES

Single Rose-breasted Grosbeaks included one in Portal Apr. 18 (NMC), one in Brown Canyon Apr. 25 (WR et al.), one in Guadalupe Canyon May 13 (NC), and another in Prescott May 16–18 (M. McCroskey). Two Fox Sparrows were reported, with one (*schistacea* type) along the upper S.P.R. Apr. 4 (HB) and one at Patagonia L. Apr. 18 (RH). Rarely reported in n. Arizona, a Swamp Sparrow was at Wahweap Apr. 20 (CL). Golden-crowned Sparrow reports included one 10 mi n.w. of Prescott Mar. 28–Apr. 1 (B. Stewart), one in the Grand Canyon Apr. 2 (CL), one at the Phoenix Zoo Apr. 9 (RJ), one just e. of Prescott May 13 (J. Morgan), and another in Tempe May 14 (H. Fibel). A Harris's Sparrow was visiting a Kingman feeder Apr. 20–24 (ph. N. Miller), there are very few reports from this part of the state. Single Com. Grackles were reported from Wahweap Apr. 24 (CL), and from Lee's Ferry May 28 (CL). A female Baltimore Oriole was in Portal May 17–19 (GHR, ph. A. Bess). At least 100 of the Black Rosy-Finches present since late November were still s. of Page Mar. 7 (CL).

CORRIGENDUM

The amazing report of Pine Grosbeaks from feeders in Paradise, Chiricahua Mts., this past winter was in error.

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new mexico region



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Relatively cool and moist conditions characterized New Mexico's spring weather, with snowstorms occurring well into April, followed in May by an early onset of the "summer" rains. Migration was termed "slow" by some, but energetic birding efforts nevertheless documented several rarities and added a new species to the state list. (Map on page 904)

Abbreviations: B.L.N.W.R. (*Bitter Lake N.W.R.*); Bosque N.W.R. (*Bosque del Apache N.W.R.*); E.B.L. (*Elephant Butte L.*); R.G.V. (*Rio Grande Valley*); Zuni (*Zuni Indian Reservation*).

LOONS TO DUCKS

It was an active loon season, highlighted by a **Red-throated Loon** at Brantley L. Apr. 30 (D&JH), where there was also a Pacific Loon May 5 (JEP, JO); other Pacifics included singles at Cochiti L. Apr. 27 (WH) and Ute L. May 24 (JO), and two at Sumner L. Mar. 5 (PS). Westerly Am. White Pelicans included seven at Bluewater L. Mar. 29–30 (DC, JO) and one at Zuni May 10 (DC). A sub-ad. Brown Pelican found its way to Las Cruces, where it was actively plunge-diving at Burn L. May 26–30 (GE, JEP, phs. JNP, BZ). Double-crested Cormorants wandered to several high-elevation lakes, including singles at L. Roberts May 14 (RF) and

Mescalero L. Apr. 2 & 15 (AP), plus two at Grindstone L. Apr. 23 (AP). Neotropical Cormorants persisted in the Pecos drainage, where there were one at Santa Rosa May 16–31 (JO) and two at L. Avalon Apr. 19–May 10 (v.o.). Five active Great Blue Heron nests were in upper E.B.L. Mar. 22 (SOW), where breeding is seldom recorded. Peripheral Great Egrets included one–two at Zuni Apr. 27–May 31 (DC) and at Heart Bar W.M.A., Catron, May 29 (SOW, M. Conway). A waterbird colony near Anthony contained 10 nests each of Snowy Egrets and Black-crowned Night-Herons, plus 40 Cattle Egret nests Apr. 27 (JNP). Single ad. Little Blue Herons were at Zuni Apr. 26–May 7 (ph. DC), Bosque N.W.R. Apr. 5–May 1 (v.o.), and L. Avalon Apr. 30 (D&JH). An ad. **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** near Ft. Sumner at Bosque Redondo L. May 15 (JEP, ph. JO) furnished a local first; another adult was at Bosque N.W.R. Apr. 4–5 (JEP, ph. JO). Late migrant White-faced Ibises were 13 near Ft. Sumner May 31 (JO) and 10 near Columbus May 25 (SOW). **Fulvous Whistling-Duck** was (finally) verified in New Mexico with the brief appearance of two adults at Holloman L. May 17–18 (GE, SW, JEP, ph. JO); unverified, mainly spring season reports extend back to 1949. Holdovers from the winter, the last Bosque N.W.R. Tundra Swan was seen Mar. 8 (JEP), while the **Trumpeter Swan** at La Joya persisted until Mar. 19 (PS). Among the rarer ducks were a male Eur. Wigeon at Storrie L. Mar. 22–23 (CR, JO) and an ad. male Surf Scoter at Farmington L. Apr. 10 (TR); a female Barrow's Goldeneye on the San Juan R. Mar. 7 (TR) was the last seen.

VULTURES TO QUAILS

The season's first Turkey Vulture arrived about on schedule at Deming Mar. 16 (JO); a record 2521 passed the Sandia Mts. lookout Mar. 19–May 5 (H.W.I.), easily eclipsing the previous record 1785. Ospreys continued to demonstrate their remarkable comeback, with often multiple reports from 23 locales statewide; a record 103 passed the Sandia Mts. lookout Mar. 23–May 6 (H.W.I.), up 90% from the long-term average there, while incubation was underway at 3 Rio Arriba nests by early May



Two Fulvous Whistling-Ducks take off from the water at Holloman Lakes, New Mexico, on May 18, 1997. Although sightings of this species in New Mexico go back almost half a century, this provided the first fully documented record. Photograph/Jerry R. Oldenettel

(DS). The only White-tailed Kites were singles at Redrock Mar. 15 (JO) and near Hachita Mar. 16 (ph. JO). Mississippi Kites where seldom reported were four at Ft. Sumner May 25 (JO) and one at Elida May 9 (BN, DE). A Com. Black-Hawk on a nest at San Patricio, *Lincoln*, Apr. 30 (SB) established a significant breeding range extension; other easterly Black-Hawks were singles at Santa Rosa Apr. 19 (BN, DE) and Percha Mar. 19 (GE). An ad. probable **Gray Hawk** was at Percha Apr. 15 (DL) & 18 (JO), where the situation was complicated by Broad-wingeds. Almost tripling the previous high, a record 19 Broad-winged Hawks migrated past the Sandia Mts. Apr. 20–May 1 (H.W.I.); elsewhere, singles were at Santa Fe Apr. 27 (PS) and near L. Arthur Apr. 27 (JEP, JO), plus one–two at Percha Apr. 18–29 (JO, JEP, DH, ph. BZ). Noteworthy was a congregation of 35 Swainson's Hawks feeding on airborne insects at Animas May 21 (AC). Migrant Merlins continued to show an increase at the Sandia Mts. lookout, where a record 24 were counted Feb. 15–May 3 (H.W.I.). A vocal N. Bobwhite was n.w. to Puerto de Luna, *Guadalupe*, May 31 (JO).

PLOVERS TO TERNS

A Black-bellied Plover near Clovis May 3 (JEP, JO) provided the only report. Snowy Plovers where irregularly reported included two at E.B.L. Apr. 25 (JEP) and May 1 (BN, DE) and one–four at Brantley L. Apr. 15–27 (SW, JO, D&JH). High count for Semipalmated Plover was 20 at B.L.N.W.R. May 3 (JEP, JO); two were late near Columbus May 26 (SOW), as was one at Holloman L. May 18 (JO). A Mt. Plover nest with 3 eggs was at the Farley prairie dog town May 16 (S. Dinsmore). Abundant rains in the e. plains provided good conditions for nesting Am. Avocets, including a colony of 20 adults at San Jon May 31 (JO). Willets were notably widespread and numerous Apr. 21–May 3 from the Pecos Valley westward; earliest were five at Brantley L. Apr. 13 (SW), latest were 13 at Farmington L. May 9 (TR). Single Whimbrels were at Morgan L. May 2 (TR) and Holloman L. May 17 (GE); two were at B.L.N.W.R. Apr. 27 (JEP, JO). A Long-billed Curlew strayed W to Zuni Apr. 27 (ph. DC); four others were in the grassy foothills of the s. Magdalena Mts. Apr. 26 (HS). Marbled Godwits made a strong showing almost statewide Apr. 20–May 6 (m.ob.); among a flock 100 Marbleds at Bosque N.W.R. Apr. 26 was a well-described **Hudsonian Godwit** (BN, DE). Somewhat early was a White-rumped

Sandpiper at Lovington May 8 (JEP, ph. JO); other White-rumped included two each at San Jon (JO) and Clovis (ph. JO) May 31. A Pectoral Sandpiper near Clovis May 16–17 (JEP, JO) and a Dunlin at B.L.N.W.R. Apr. 13 (SW) & 27 (JO) provided the only reports. A **Red Phalarope** at Bosque N.W.R. May 30 (ph. B. Williams) furnished a rare spring treat.

Evidence that Franklin's Gulls migrate through New Mexico on a broad front was furnished by 24 near Mule Cr. Apr. 22 (D&BM), 22 near Deming Apr. 21 (LM), and two at Capitan Apr. 12 (SW). Noteworthy for *Hidalgo* were 35 Ring-billed Gulls at Lordsburg Apr. 13 (JO) and 15 near Road Forks Apr. 25 (D&JH). Among the rarer gulls was a probable Thayer's at E.B.L. Apr. 11 (JO) and a possible Glaucous x Herring hybrid at Brantley L. Apr. 26 (JEP, ph. JO). Least Terns wandered more widely than usual, including singles n. and w. to Farmington May 11 (TR), Bosque N.W.R. May 3 (BZ, JNP), Anthony Apr. 27 (JNP), and Tucumcari May 25 (JO), plus two near Clovis May 7 (JEP, JO). At B.L.N.W.R., the only known breeding locale, only 3 pairs were present and initiating nesting by late May (JBM).

DOVES TO WOODPECKERS

Filling in the gaps in their R.G.V. distribution were one White-winged Dove at Bernardo Mar. 19 (PS) and four at Sevilleta N.W.R. May 8 (WH, AM); northeasterly was one at Boone's Draw May 8 (JEP), while 20 were in the Sacramento Mts. at Mescalero Apr. 12 (SW). Single Inca Doves were n. to Albuquerque Mar. 30 (J. Arnold) and Boone's Draw May 17 (JEP, JO). Still bidding for a place on the New Mexico list, four **Eurasian Collared-Doves** persisted at Roswell through May 10 (SB); first reported there in September 1995, their early association with Ringed Turtle-Doves has clouded their status. Early were single Yellow-billed Cuckoos at Cliff (RF) and Rattlesnake Springs (SW) May 10. A Barn Owl nest with 2 chicks at Bosque N.W.R. May 2 was situated only 5 feet from a similarly active Great Horned Owl nest (JO). A W. Screech-Owl that responded to a tape at Tucumcari L. May 25 (JO) was far east of usual; another Western was singing near Wall L., *Catron*, Mar. 20 (SOW). Earliest Lesser Nighthawks were one near Deming Apr. 27 (LM) and four at Carlsbad Apr. 28 (D&JH). A male Whip-poor-will of undetermined race was at the n. *Roosevelt* trap May 7 (JEP, JO), where another Whip (erroneously reported as a Chuck-will's-

widow) was photographed May 1995. A Chimney Swift was w. to Percha Apr. 25 (JEP); in the east, one–four Chimneys were at Tucumcari, Portales, Roswell, and Carlsbad May 3–28 (JO, JEP, JBM). Five *Chaetura* swifts were at Virden Apr. 12 (JO); the time and location were good for the still unverified Vaux's.

Several observers reported hummingbirds as scarce, but it was conjecture whether hummers suffered losses from an April cold snap or were simply more widely dispersed than usual in response to abundant wildflowers. Continuing their colonization of the Sacramento Mts., two Magnificents were at Ruidoso Apr. 10–23 (AP, D. Harris), in the southwest, P.O. Canyon had a female Magnificent Mar. 21 and a male May 25 (RS), while another male was in the Anumas Valley Apr. 16 (AC, NMC). The first Lucifer of the season reached P.O. Canyon Mar. 29 (RS), but no more than two males—and no females—were there through the period. Suggestive of local breeding were two male Costa's (one displaying) in the Gila Middle Box above Redrock Apr. 15 (DL). The spring passage of both Calliope and Rufous hummers is to the west of New Mexico, so noteworthy were a Calliope near Deming Apr. 26–27 (LM) and an ad. male Rufous in the Animas Valley Apr. 16 (AC, NMC). A Lewis's Woodpecker was s. in the Mimbres Valley to San Juan Mar. 16 (RF), while in the R.G.V. one–two persisted s. to Percha through Apr. 20 (v.o.) and Sunland Park through Apr. 15 (JNP); peripheral were singles n.e. of San Antonio Mar. 16 (JO) and at Quarai May 3 (HS). Westerly was a Red-headed Woodpecker at Pajarito Village, *Santa Fe*, May 28–31 (PS, SW). Encouraging were two Gila Woodpeckers n. to Buckhorn May 11 (RF), while for the 2nd year at least one Gila was e. of the Animas Mts. on Deer Cr. May 26 (SOW). Downy Woodpeckers at the s. edge of their distribution included singles in the Pinos Altos Mts. May 2 (LM) and at Emory Pass, *Grant*, May 3 (BZ, JNP). The recent Dome burn in the Jemez Mts. continued to be dependable for two–three Three-toed Woodpeckers through May (PRS, SW, JEP).

FLYCATCHERS TO THRUSHES

An **Eastern Wood-Pewee** reportedly was banded at Bosque N.W.R. May 12 (DH), but details were lacking. Late for the south was an E. Phoebe at Rattlesnake Springs May 4 (SW); another was at Santa Rosa May 16 (JO), where breeding is a possibility. Noteworthy were single Vermilion Flycatchers at Loving May 10 (J. Yancey, *vide*

SW) and n. to Bosque N.W.R. Apr. 4–27 (v.o.), in the southwest, high counts for Vermilions included 32 in *Grant* May 10 (RF) and 10 in the Animas Valley Mar. 28 (AC, NMC). Unusually early were single W. Kingbirds in the Animas Valley Mar. 12 (AC, NMC) and at Garfield Mar. 29 (JO); high in elevation was a Western weathering a snowstorm near Alto, *Lincoln*, Apr. 12 (SW) Five E. Kingbirds were w. to Española May 17 (BF), while a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher w. to Sevilleta N.W.R. (AM, R. Teuber) provided a local first. Noteworthy for the Sandia Mts. was a male Purple Martin at Cedar Crest May 16 (SW). Cave Swallows again nested in s. *Doña Ana* (BZ), while numbers at Carlsbad Caverns N.P. were judged stable at about 2000 birds (SW) Westerly were two Blue Jays at Socorro through Apr. 27 (DH). Clark's Nutcrackers were conspicuous in the s. Black Range, where rare, including 20 at Iron Creek Camping Ground, *Grant*, May 1 (BN, DE); flocks of 30–40 nutcrackers were in the Sandia Mts. through mid-Apr. (HS, BV), where they foraged down to the pinyon-juniper zone. Mountain Chickadees lingered in submontane areas through March; among the latest was one at Morgan L. Apr. 28 (TR). A Verdin was n. in the R.G.V. to Bernardo Mar 19 (PS). Red-breasted Nuthatches also lingered in the lowlands; notable were singles in n. *Roosevelt* May 17 (JO), at Percha May 3 (BZ), and at Rattlesnake Springs May 9–10 (AC, SW), plus three at Deming Apr 27 (LM). A Brown Creeper at San Andres N.W.R. Mar. 20 (MW) may be the first recorded on that refuge. Wrens on the move included single Cactus Wrens n. to Albuquerque Mar. 23 (BV), where also present in 1996, and e. to e. *Guadalupe* May 26 (JO), plus a Rock Wren at Boone's Draw May 4 (DE) and a singing Canyon at Ft. Sumner May 25 (JO). Black-tailed Gnatcatchers in the southwest included a pair at Hughs Canyon near Virden and a male at San Simon Cienega Apr. 12 (JO). Late for the south was a Townsend's Solitaire at Spring Canyon S.P., Florida Mts, May 7 (LM). A Hermit Thrush near Farmington Mar. 1 (TR) may have wintered locally; an estimated 50 Hermits were part of a large fallout in n. *Roosevelt* May 11 (BN, DE).

THRASHERS TO TANAGERS

The well-publicized **Long-billed Thrasher** at Bosque Redondo L., discovered in late February, continued to perform through May (v.o.); less well studied was yet another

Long-billed reported at Rattlesnake Springs Mar. 2 (SW). One–two Brown Thrashers were at 5 e. locales (including Bosque Redondo L. and Rattlesnake Springs), plus at Las Cruces during the period (v.o.). A Bendire's Thrasher nest was n. of Lordsburg May 1–3 (BZ), where breeding is poorly documented. A pair of Curve-billeds that overwintered at Eldorado near Santa Fe was feeding a stub-tailed juvenile May 9 (SOW); the Crissal that weathered the Los Alamos winter was last seen there Mar. 12 (R. Boicourt). Two possible Sprague's Pipits were among 26 Am. Pipits at Bosque N.W.R. Apr. 30 (GE). Migrant Cedar Waxwings were widespread in May; late were one at Albuquerque May 24 (WH), 18 in the Ft. Sumner vicinity May 25 (JO), and 50 at Rattlesnake Springs May 23 (SW). A singing **White-eyed Vireo** was in Rhodes Canyon, e. *Sierra*, May 18 (J. Puschock); a Bell's at Spring Canyon S.P. May 7 (LM) provided a local first. Although rare, Yellow-throated Vireos recently have become almost regular in migration at Boone's Draw; this season two were there May 7 (AC, NMC, JEP, ph. JO). Single Red-eyed Vireos were at the n. *Roosevelt* trap May 7 (JEP, JO), May 11 (BN, DE), and May 16 (JEP), and at Percha May 31 (BZ).

Among the rarer warblers were single **Blue-winged Warblers** at Clayton May 5 (WC) and Morgan L. May 10 (D&M Longenbauch, ph. TR), a male **Golden-winged Warbler** banded at Bosque N.W.R. May 15 (DH) and a female banded there May 30 (DH), and a westerly Tennessee at Redrock Apr. 24 (D&JH). Single N. Parulas were at Moriarty May 9–11 (BN, DE, JEP, ph. JO) and again May 23 (ph. JO), San Patricio Apr. 30 (SB), Boone's Draw May 17 (JEP), and White Sands N.M. Apr. 15–21 (JM). Keeping things interesting were single Chestnut-sided Warblers at Albuquerque May 9 (BV), n. *Roosevelt* May 11 (BN, DE), and Rattlesnake Springs May 6 (JEP, JO, AC, NMC); a Magnolia at Boone's Draw May 17 (JEP, JO); and a Black-throated Blue in n. *Roosevelt* May 16 (JEP), where there was also an easterly Black-throated Gray May 11 (DE, BN). A well-detailed **Prairie Warbler** at Boone's Draw May 4 (BN, DE, CR) provided the state's 4th report in less than 2 years. A female Bay-breasted Warbler was banded at Bosque N.W.R. May 15 (DH). A male Blackpoll was in n. *Roosevelt* May 11 (BN, DE), where there was a female May 17 (JEP, ph. JO); another female Blackpoll was near Seneca, *Union*, May 24 (JO). Meanwhile, one–three Black-and-whites were at 10 sites from the

R.G.V. eastward May 3–31 (v.o.); west was one at Virden Apr. 26 (D&JH). Two Prothonotary Warblers were found—one in the snow at Cedar Crest Apr. 12 (D Ligon), and another singing at Rattlesnake Springs May 17 (DL). An apparent male **Mourning Warbler** was in n. *Roosevelt* May 7 (JEP, JO), for only the state's 7th well-documented report. Rounding out the warbler crop were single Hoodeds in n. *Roosevelt* May 7–9 (JEP, JO, DE, BN) and s of Vaughn May 31 (SW). Rare in New Mexico, a male **Scarlet Tanager** was at White Sands N.M. May 28 (JM).

CARDINALS TO FINCHES

Still considered scarce in *Doña Ana*, a male N. Cardinal was at Owen's Farm May 2 (ph BZ); continuing a northerly trend were single N. Cardinals at Santa Rosa Mar. 1 (JEP, JO) and Tucumcari L. May 25 (JO), while a northerly Pyrrhuloxia was in n. *Roosevelt* Mar. 1 (JO, AC, NMC). Rose-breasted Grosbeaks staged yet another impressive showing, with one–two at some 10 locales from the R.G.V. eastward May 7–17 (m.ob.), west, late, and a likely local first was a male Rose-breasted at Columbus May 26 (SOW) A Varied Bunting was at Walnut Canyon, *Eddy*, May 26 (SW); another was in San Andres Canyon, *Doña Ana*, in mid- to late May (*fide* WH). A pair of Green-tailed Towhees was s. to Capilla Peak, Manzano Mts., on the late date of May 18 (WH) Low-elevation Canyon Towhees included one near Malaga Apr. 19 (SW) and two e. to *Lea* May 8 (JO). In spite of seemingly favorable habitat conditions, Cassin's Sparrows were absent (or, at least, not detected) on late May surveys in *Luna*, *Grant*, and *Hidalgo*. Only one Field Sparrow was at Rattlesnake Springs Mar. 2 (SW), but one–three migrant Fields passed through Boone's Draw Apr. 20–May 8 (BN, DE, JO), while the last of several that wintered in n. *Roosevelt* was seen May 7 (JEP). Away from the usual range were two Sage Sparrows singing near El Rito May 30 (JEP). Intensive surveys for **Baird's Sparrows** on Ft. Bliss' Otero Mesa found one–six at 6 sites Mar 3–Apr. 14, with "peak" numbers in early April, including three at Shiloh Draw Apr. 9 and six (some singing!) near Mesa Horse Camp Apr. 10 (R. Meyer); to the west, three were near Cloverdale Apr. 13 (JO). Late was a Lincoln's Sparrow at Albuquerque May 24 (WH). Swamp Sparrows where rarely reported were singles in n. *Roosevelt* May 7 (JO) and in *Curry* n. of Texico May 3 (JO) Golden-crowned Sparrows left over from the winter's influx were one at Bosque

Redondo L. Mar. 1 (JEP, JO, BN, DE) and the famous two at Bosque N.W.R. through mid-March (v.o.), with the last there on May 1 (BN, DE); undetailed was one at Santa Fe Apr. 27 (PS). A Harris's Sparrow was banded at Bosque N.W.R. Apr. 28 (DH); another appeared at Rattlesnake Springs May 3-6 (v.o., ph. JO).

Westerly Com. Grackles included singles at Farmington May 28 (TR) and Zuni May 10 (DC), while southerly in the R.G.V. were 10 at Socorro May 27 (PS) and four at Burn L. May 26 (GE). Single Bronzed Cowbirds returned to Las Cruces Apr. 25 (GE) and Owen's Farm May 2 (BZ); to the east were singles at Eunice May 4 (JO) and Jal May 17 (JO). Unusual for the extreme southwest was a male Orchard Oriole in Guadalupe Canyon Apr. 11 (JEP). An ad. male **Baltimore Oriole** was at Cedar Crest May 11 (K. Schneider), where others have been reported in past years. Rosy-Finches made news with a mixed flock including about 15 Gray-crowns, 10 Blacks, and 20 Brown-capped 8 mi n. of Chama Mar. 26 (ph. DC). Another flock including 35 Gray-crowns, five Blacks, and 10 Brown-capped was at the Taos Ski Basin Mar. 29 (WH). Three likely Purple Finches, two males and one female, were at Glenwood Apr. 1 (D&BM). Winter's widespread and massive submontane invasion of Cassin's Finches, Red Crossbills, and Evening Grosbeaks, which reached all corners of the state, gradually receded as the spring season advanced, although stragglers of each species remained in non-breeding habitats well into May (m.ob.). The last of the **Lawrence's Goldfinches** were singles at Caballo Dam Mar. 19 (GE) and Apr. 6 (BN, DE), Mangas Mar. 31 (RF), and Virden Mar. 15 (JO), plus an impressive 21 at Rodeo Mar. 8 (NMC).

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alaska region



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A late winter continental high pressure system protracted a cold snap well into early April, especially north of the Alaska Range, and combined with milder weather conditions south of there and probably into the Pacific Northwest to produce an odd spring 1997. Early migrants were more than a few from all sections north of Southeast, including the following samples of new record early arrivals: for nine species from the eastern Interior in the Tok area, for at least 11 species from Upper Cook Inlet, and at least three species from the North Slope at Prudhoe Bay. Several of these were early by more than a few days. Perhaps because of tardier warming conditions on the Mainland and north of the Alaska Range, these early migrants were most often only a few individuals and there were occasionally significant time gaps until larger numbers were evident in appropriate habitats.

The impacts to Alaska's bird migrations from El Niño systems are finally becoming clear. El Niño influences of any size and significance apparently dissipate or severely alter the position and dominance of the Aleutian Low. This deviation substantially minimizes the strength and frequency of low pressure cells that normally track across the low end of the Aleutian Low, from west to east across the southern Aleutians and into the Gulf of Alaska. This year, these systems were virtually absent

most of the spring, and notable (small) storms only hit the north half of the Bering Sea coast. Indeed, with the pressure anomalies at work by mid-May, several storms actually tracked southeast from the east side of the Chukchi Sea, dipping down into the southern Bering Sea. With the lack of anticyclones, mild clear weather provided ideal migration conditions, and after early spring (by mid-April) there were no aggregations or hold-ups for essentially all species groups. The El Niño influences certainly also directly affect the volume and diversity of Asian migrants along the Philippines-Japan-Kamchatka-Koryak Highlands route, since despite decent coverage, the Asiatic content was rather weak in the western Aleutians. Since field coverage of the western Aleutians commenced with regularity in the mid-1970s, virtually every significant El Niño year(s) produced very poor Asiatic species content in the Aleutians. This was most evident, especially in retrospective reviews of species showings, for the 1981, 1983, and 1993 seasons, which were some of the strongest El Niño events in the recent past. Certainly this can be explained meteorologically, but in each of these years the Aleutians are dominated by variable wind conditions, extended high pressure systems, and/or lengthy periods of north winds. Storm tracks are generally fewer in El Niño years, and these travel well south of "normal" spring alignments, which typically pull developing storms out of the Seas of Japan or Okhotsk and across the North

Pacific centered between 45–54° North Latitudes. What was unusual about this year was that St. Lawrence Island results were equally below average. In past years with even a moderate El Niño showing, the spring season at Gambell often produced notable finds and decent migrant numbers.

Abbreviations: North Gulf (*North Gulf of Alaska*); SE (*Southeast Alaska*); SC (*South-coastal Alaska*); SW (*Southwest Alaska*); UCI (*Upper Cook Inlet*).

LOONS TO COOT

Gambell seawatchers found average numbers of flyby Arctic Loons, with a late peak of 15 at the Point June 5 (WINGS). A latish single 2nd-summer bird at Attu June 6 provided the only other submitted report (ATTOUR). This spring's only Pied-billed Grebe find was also unusual, a single around Juneau May 4–8 (PS, GVV, BA, RA), one of few spring reports for the Region n. of traditional s. SE sites. Several May reports of various-aged Short-tailed Albatross in the n. Gulf were early and encouraging. At least six individuals, described in various stages of juv. plumage, were associated with fishing vessels May 15–18 s. of the Trinity Is., which lie near the Continental Shelf edge s. of Kodiak I. in the Gulf (†EAM). At least another two juveniles were described near the fishing fleet farther west in the n.w. Gulf s. of the Shumagin Is. May 27–29 (EAM). Most Regional reports come in after early June. Although Gulf sightings continue to be sporadic, numbers appear to be on the rise. A single Double-crested Cormorant over Anchorage May 31 (DV) became UCI's earliest, where it is casual. Following a few previous winter reports, **Brandt's Cormorants** were again found s. of Ketchikan in Nichols Passage Mar. 8–Apr. 19 (maximum 5 Mar. 23; †SCH, TH, DWS, SZ), including high alternate and imm.-plumaged birds. Brandt's nest on a few outer coast isolated seastacks between Hinchinbrook Entrance at Prince William Sound and s. SE.

The Attu I. **Whooper Swan** pair was re-found at the n. side L. Nicholas site, where they nested last year (ATTOUR), May 17 through the period—a nest was located with 5 eggs June 4. Straggler Emperor

Turkey Vulture at North Point Higgins, near Ketchikan, Alaska, in late May 1997. One that appeared here the previous year had provided a first record for southwestern Alaska. Photograph/Walter Northrup

Geese always remain in small numbers at traditional winter sites into early spring, but one on Homer Spit Apr. 29 (*fide* GCW) was very late; good numbers were found at Attu into June (ATTOUR). Aleutian Canada Geese continue to make a wide-ranging recovery, with good numbers noted from extreme ends of what must have been this form's traditional migration arrival corridor. Eight at Juneau's Mendenhall wetlands Apr. 20 (GVV) represented possibly SE's first modern report, while 17 were identified around the Pribilofs May 14–20 (ST. PAUL), and numbers peaked at 90 at Attu May 17 (ATTOUR). Records of the subspecies from these sites were unheard of for most of this century, prior to the federal recovery program initiated in the early 1970s. Noteworthy dabbling highlights were few and included a drake Blue-winged Teal beyond its known Interior sites at Bethel May 14–17 (HJ, KL, WNJ), and a nice SE tally of 7 males at Juneau May 31 (GVV, BA); a male Cinnamon Teal also at Juneau May 4–13 (PS, DWS, GVV); above-average Eur. Wigeon numbers from the Aleutians, with 25 at Buldir I. all season (ILJ et al., *fide* JW), 60 at Attu May 26 (ATTOUR), and from SC, including a peak of 11 from Kodiak Apr. 25 (JM). Common Pochard sightings have declined in the w. Aleutians since the mid-1980s, so three females at Attu May 17–31 (ATTOUR) were significant. South-coastal Ring-necked Duck accounts were up from past years, including three around Homer Apr. 23–25 (RK) and a single n. of there at Kasilof May 10 (SL, DL). These early finds may represent individuals that had wintered in the Region. Another drake Ring-necked reached Bethel Apr. 25 (CH), where casual, while two spent late winter to Mar. 31 (SCH) at Ketchikan's Ward L. Late winter King Eiders showed up in good numbers at or beyond traditional sites, including four near Juneau Mar. 9 (GVV), which may have been SE's highest count; another four around Homer were late to May 10 (*fide* GCW). A female Steller's Eider



took up residence on the Elmendorf Air Force Base fish ponds in Anchorage May 20 through the period (TGT, RLS, DWS, ph. DFD, m.ob.), UCI's 3rd spring record. Most years, Herring spawning in protected coves throughout SE support early spring massive numbers of migrant scoters, loons, and gulls. This spring's opportunistic concentration focused 10,000 Surf Scoters on Herring spawn near Juneau's Pt. Bridget early May–May 10 and longer (PS, GVV, BA). Conspicuous Hooded Merganser finds included three n. of Haines Apr. 7 (MS) and a female at Anchorage's Connors L. Apr. 3 (TGT, LJO), UCI's 3rd and earliest spring record.

Another, or potentially the same, **Turkey Vulture** reappeared in "late May" at the same Ketchikan waterfront site as last year's first-ever SE record, remaining into June (ph. WN, *fide* SCH). Perhaps because of the past several warm and long summers, nest occupancy rates for Interior Bald Eagles and especially Ospreys were both >10% above long-term averages. For the first time since 1977, Attu's resident White-tailed Eagle(s) was not found this spring nor reported by Coast Guard personnel from the winter. It was feared that the last adult perished. The Kodiak Archipelago's 4th-ever Golden Eagle nest was discovered on the road system there Mar. 29 (RAM, WED) but appeared inactive after May 22. Alaska's 7th **Eurasian Kestrel**, a female, was described in a brief appearance at Attu May 22 (ATTOUR, †SCH). Extralimital and extremely early was one Am. Kestrel in the Homer area Apr. 12–May 22 (CF, WD), and two at Ketchikan Apr. 13–21 (SCH). There have been several April arrival Am. Kestrels the past few springs, which may involve individuals that wintered in British Columbia. The season's only Am. Coot report was a single in Juneau Apr. 12 (GVV), where there are few spring reports.

PLOVERS TO OWLS

Shorebird passage through the w. Aleutians was generally early and in decent volume, while concentrations at other established North Gulf sites were unspectacular—no doubt because of mild and storm-free conditions. Highlights included rare-in-spring two Black-bellied Plovers at Attu May 18 and May 29–June 2 (ATTOUR); peak counts of seven and six Mongolian Plovers from Buldir May 28 (*fide* JW) and Attu May 18 (ATTOUR); two Com. Greenshanks at Attu May 25–28 (ATTOUR); a low peak of 24 Wood Sandpipers from Attu May 25 (ATTOUR), with three at St. Paul I.

May 17–23 (ST. PAUL); Kodiak's 4th ever Bristle-thighed Curlew, two May 16–18 (JBA); and exceptional and synchronous Asiatic peep counts, with six and nine Red-necked Stints at Buldir May 25 (*fide* JW) and Attu May 26–27 (ATTOUR), and five and nine Long-toed Stints, also at Buldir and Attu, both May 25 (ILJ et al., *fide* JW, ATTOUR).

California Gulls arrived about on time, with a single at Ketchikan Mar. 29 and a spring maximum of 35 Apr. 13 (SCH). Farther north, a single adult was notable at Juneau May 21 (GVV, BA). This spring's Herring spawn Thayer's Gull peak reached >5000 in the Juneau area's Pt. Bridget May 4 (PS). Slaty-backed Gulls made the standard showing with scattered singles at the regular Bering Sea/Aleutian sites—the only extralimital was an adult described as a migrant at Ketchikan Mar. 27–29 (ph. SCH). About the 5th spring Pribilof area Ross's Gull report was an adult inshore at St. Paul I. May 22–27 (ST. PAUL). This High Arctic migrant remains poorly known s. of the Bering Strait. Caspian Terns arrived in early May with five at Juneau May 11 (PS).

The Upper Tanana Valley's 3rd Snowy Owl appeared near Square L. n. of Tok Apr. 6 (DBC), while the North Slope's first report included a latish single at Prudhoe Bay May 30 (EEB). The season's only Barred Owl find was a calling bird on the SE Mainland in Misty Fjords N.M. May 1 (SCH). If Great Gray Owls can ever be considered regular anywhere in the Region, it's in the e. Interior lowlands, which this year produced two singles near Tok Mar. 22–Apr. 11 (KOD, CLG). Taking shelter in the dunes at St. Paul I. was an extralimital Boreal Owl May 19 (ph. ST. PAUL). Of the now approximately six Pribilof records, there are 3 specimens of Nearctic *A. f. richardsoni* and one Palearctic *magnus*.

WOODPECKERS TO TANAGERS

Woodpecker numbers continue to swell in SC Spruce Bark Beetle infested forests, especially with noticeably high populations of Hairy and Three-toed woodpeckers. This trend should continue as another warmish and low-snow winter and warm early spring favored this pest's life cycle for about the 4th consecutive year. This spring's extralimital N. Rough-winged Swallow sighting came from Juneau, where this casual SE visitor seems to overshoot annually, with a single May 15 (LE). Black-billed Magpies lingered late at winter sites where they do not breed, mentioned as tardy from Juneau to Apr. 15 (GVV) and Tok Mar. 25 (TJD). A

very late pair at Sitka lingered to Mar. 30 and on, when they were last seen building a nest (MLW, MT).

Mountain Bluebirds arrived on time from the standard sites, including a single in Juneau Apr. 25 (JS) and an above-average 14 from the Tok area Apr. 16–20 (TJD). One Eyebrowed Thrush from Attu thickets May 19–20 (ATTOUR) provided only report, amid continuance of this species' downward trend since the late 1980s. Red-throated Pipits went unrecorded from Attu all season, a first in probably 20 years, and only three showed early at Buldir I. to the east May 3 (ILJ et al., *fide* JW). American Pipits were also well below the norm, while single Olive-backed Pipits and **Pechora Pipits** skulked briefly in the advancing lush greenery at Attu May 28 (ATTOUR) and Buldir May 21–24 (*fide* JW), respectively. Although recognized as a rare breeder on the Commander Is. w. of the Near Is., Pechora Pipit remains a sporadic casual spring migrant in the w. Aleutians. The earliest and now 3rd record of Bohemian Waxwing, a single at Buldir May 5 (*fide* JW), was likely the East Asian form *centralasiae*, which has been confirmed by specimen from Attu in 1989.

Warblers were generally early, dispersed, and on territory by the 3rd week of May. Notable among the earliest reports was a singing Townsend's Warbler above Anchorage Apr. 11 (GB), record early by >3 weeks, while three in Ketchikan Apr. 12 were earliest there by a day (SCH). These early April Townsend's likely wintered in the Vancouver I.-n. Puget Sound area, since most migrants typically arrive in the last week of April. Over 100 Orange-crowned Warblers around Ketchikan May 4 were indicative of an early movement by nearly a week. Western Tanagers were listed only from Juneau, where five males reported May 21–26 (PS, MS, GVV, BA) represented probably the best ever local spring tally.

EMBERIZIDS TO FRINGILLIDS

Although most observers described a heavy sparrow passage, significant finds, numbers, or dates were few and included only single extralimital Golden-crowned and White-crowned sparrows from St. Paul I. May 28 & 17, respectively, where both are casual in spring (ST. PAUL). An Interior *zaboria* Fox Sparrow found an Anchorage feeder May 16 (TGT), one of few SC spring records. Rustic Bunting went unreported from the Region, and numbers seem to be in decline since about the late 1980s. Ketchikan's first spring Brown-headed Cowbird showed up near

town May 28 (NS)—most SE records are concentrated from urban centers after early June. Bramblings were difficult to find this spring within their regular range, with the Aleutian peak a very low six at Attu May 20 (ATTOUR) and an early single from St. Paul May 14 (ST. PAUL) the sum total for May. Red Crossbills continued to expand into SE and SC coastal sites by the end of the period. The only breeding evidence came from Juneau, where the highest numbers were reported, with a female carrying grasses Mar 31 (PS). Given the poor passerine migration through the Aleutians this season, a male **Eurasian Bullfinch** was anomalous from Buldir May 17 (ILJ et al., *fide* JW), the Aleutians' 4th spring record. Hawfinches made a nice showing and lingered in the w. Aleutians, with two males recorded from Attu May 27–June 6 (ATTOUR, ph. SCH, ph. SW) and another four at Buldir May 24–June 14 (ILJ et al., *fide* JW).

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british columbia–yukon region



JACK BOWLING

Only the Yukon escaped with near normal weather. British Columbia's spring was mostly ugly: March wet and cold, with heavy snow in the mountains. April was drier, but windy and cool. May started and ended damp but had a hot spell in the middle. Flooding in the British Columbia interior was local in March, but widespread in mid-May. The last bout coincided with the first big push of northbound passerines. As bad as the weather was in the west, it was even worse on the prairies, where stiff northerly winds blew most of the season. These winds apparently deflected westward species more typical of the Central Flyway, such as Ross's Geese and White-rumped Sandpipers. As is usual in cold springs, later arriving insectivorous passerines were mostly behind schedule. Indeed, unusual phenology, distribution, and numbers of birds—rather than long-distance vagrancy—dominated the season.

3200 Pacific Loons was off Roberts Cr., Sunshine Coast, Apr. 24 (RTk). This loon is occasionally seen in such large numbers along the coast when staging during their northbound journey. The only Yellow-billed Loon reported was one in basic plumage near the mouth of the middle arm of the Fraser R. Mar. 21 (MKM). Two Clark's Grebes, distinguishable by head coloration, frequented the n. arm of the Fraser R., upstream of its mouth, until at least Apr. 7 (RTo), while only one was there Apr. 25 (MKM). These grebes, holdovers from the previous season, were the first Clark's known to overwinter in the Region. Double-crested Cormorants are still rare inland in B.C., but may be increasing (pers. comm. RWC): Single birds were seen at McBride May 3 (E&G Stanley, m.ob.); Napier L., n. of Merritt, May 10 (RRH); and on the Kootenay R. near Wasa May 24 (GSD, MWh). Three Double-crested returned to their traditional location at

The report for southern Vancouver Island was received incomplete.

Abbreviations: B.C. (British Columbia); Ok. (Okanagan); P.G. (Prince George); p.v. (pending verification by responsible Bird Records Committee); Q.C.I. (Queen Charlotte Is.); RPBS (Rocky Pt. Banding Station, s. tip Van. I.); STP (Sewage Treatment Plant/Ponds); Van. (Vancouver); Van. I. (Vancouver I.); Vic. (Victoria); Whse. (Whitehorse).

LOONS TO CRANES

Rare inland, especially at valley level, was a Red-throated Loon at Kamloops Apr. 21 (SyR). A large flock of

Jackfish Bay, Yukon, May 17 (BDo). Providing only the 2nd Q.C.I. and Regional record was an apparent ad. **Red-faced Cormorant** with six Pelagics at Skonun Pt., Masset, May 7 (p.v., OD, BWi). Despite the long, cold winter, Great Blue Herons returned to the 30-nest urban colony at Vernon in the 2nd week of March, with some birds on eggs by late in the month (CS). This spring's vagrant overshooting Great Egret showed up at Separation L. near Princeton, s.c. B.C., May 9–11 (MS, FBCN, m.ob.).

It sometimes takes a while for the Bird Banding Lab gears to turn, but it always provides interesting information. A Trumpeter Swan seen near Kamloops January 16, 1994, and January 8, 1995, had been banded as a cygnet near Grande Prairie, Alberta, in September 1992. A flock of 500 Trumpeters at Nulki L., Vanderhoof, c. B.C., Apr. 7 (NK, HA) constituted a large spring flock for the interior. Wintering only in small numbers in s. B.C., four Greater White-fronted Geese overwintered at McCoy L., s.c. Van. I., until Mar. 8 (DGC), as they have the past 3 winters. Normally a vagrant during migration—with only one-ten records a decade, and almost all records involving single birds—**Ross's Geese** appeared in exceptional numbers as the goose flocks returned. One was in with a flock of Canada Geese at P.G. Apr. 6–10 (SK, LL, m.ob.); four were with three Snow Geese at Creston, s.e. B.C., Apr. 19 (BKO, LMi); a flock of 11 remained in the Quilchena area near Nicola L., s.c. B.C., Apr. 15–24 (WCW, m.ob.) accompanied by 11 Greater White-fronteds; and two were at Brisco, E. Kootenays, May 5–7 (MWh, EH, m.ob.). In fact, a "grand slam" of inland geese was achieved in the P.G./Vanderhoof areas Apr. 10 when Greater White-fronted, Snow, Ross's, and Canada geese were all seen the same day (NK, HA), a notable event for the interior. A flock of 660 Brant was present in Tofino Harbor, s.w. Van. I., Apr. 19 (DGC). The high count of feeding Brant at Sandspit, Q.C.I., totaled 2967 May 1 (MH, PH), one of the larger aggregations on record from the Islands. A pair of **Wood Ducks** at Lewes Marsh May 10 (†PS)

became the Yukon's first documented record of the species. For the 5th consecutive spring, a "**Eurasian Green-winged Teal**" has appeared at the Tranquille Marshes, Kamloops. This year's bird arrived there Mar. 20 (RR, WH, NS). A **Garganey**, accidental to the Region, spotted on Wayne L near Princeton May 9 (JGr), could not be rediscovered later in the day. It has become apparent that any sizeable flock of Am. Wigeon is likely to harbor a Eur. Wigeon or two across most of B.C. in the spring, with reports of Eurasians coming from all compilers this season. This includes the Yukon, where it is still decidedly rare, with a male at Nares L. Apr. 27 (PS, YBC), and two at McClintock Bay May 18 (CE, HG, PS). Gadwalls are only stragglers to the Q.C.I., making the flock of 24 at Juskatla Mar. 6 (MH, PH) a noteworthy event. An apparent hybrid Canvasback x Ring-necked Duck was observed on Nicola L., s.c. B.C., Mar. 16 (WCW). This drake was the approximate size and shape of a Canvasback, but with a dark gray back, a black head with purplish and red highlights, and a dark bill with a pale ring near the tip. Two Tufted Ducks were last seen on Lost Lagoon in Van.'s Stanley Park Mar. 15 (m.ob.). First seen in Van. Harbor last Nov. 11, the young male **Common Eider** molting into Alternate 1 plumage moved from Iona I. Apr. 18–20 (RTo) to the W. Van. shoreline Apr. 23–May 8 (LH, m.ob.). Oldsquaws pass through the interior in small numbers and are rarely seen in groups of more than half a dozen. Surprising then were 14 at Tunkwa L., s.e. of Kamloops, May 25 (RRH). A Red-breasted Merganser at Wasa L. near Cranbrook, s.e. B.C., May 24 (RMN) provided a rare spring inland record of this sawbill.

Turkey Vultures continued their recent trend of returning early to the Ok. Valley, with the first seen at Naramata near Penticton Mar. 1 (RJC). Interesting was a vulture at Road 22, Oliver, S. Ok., feeding on drowned carp in a flooded field—alongside Bald Eagles and gulls—Mar. 25 (RJC). Five Ospreys patrolling the waters of Tofino Inlet, s.w. Van. I., May 18 (DGC) constituted a large congregation for the area. Northern Harriers were passing through Vanderhoof, c. B.C., in large numbers Apr. 13, with 23 birds, mostly males, tallied in the area (PGNC). A young Cooper's Hawk was watched chasing starlings and pigeons in the middle of a busy city intersection at New Westminster Mar. 20 (MPr), using the cars for concealment—apparently it didn't stop for the red lights, either. The species seems to be expanding n., with recent

breeding evidence from e. of the Rockies near Chetwynd, n.e. B.C. (AS, *fide* DgW). An emaciated and decapitated female Cooper's carcass found near the P.G. airport May 23 had been banded by Dr. M.J. Bechard, 8 mi w. of Idaho City, Idaho, Sept. 18, 1993 (*fide* DgW). A light-morph Broad-winged Hawk at Vernon May 31 (†CS) provided the first documented record for the Ok. Valley, although one had been seen near Enderby in the Spallumcheen Valley only 50 km farther north May 13, 1995; yet more evidence to suggest this species is on the increase in the Region. A rare light-morph "Harlan's" Red-tailed Hawk was spotted at Whse. Apr. 24 (†CE, PS); a very small proportion of the *harlani* population exhibits leucism to some degree. Only a very rare spring straggler to the Sunshine Coast, a Rough-legged Hawk was at Sechelt Apr. 29 (DBr). Golden Eagles returned early to the s. Yukon, with the first seen Mar. 12 at Whse.-Pilot Mt. (BMu), followed by 10 Mar. 21, four Mar. 27, and two Mar. 29 at Mt. Sima (MCon), another single Mar. 29 over Whse.-Porter Cr. (CE, PS), and eight more Mar. 30 moving N over Lewes Marsh (CE, PS). A young Golden Eagle, rare on the s. coast, was seen moving N over New Westminster Mar. 18 (MPr). A Peregrine Falcon winging N over McCoy L., Pt. Alberni, s.c. Van. I., Mar. 28 (DGC) was considered a migrant. Exactly 2 months later, Peregrine Falcons were noted from opposite ends of the Region May 28, with a late bird stooping at Judas Cr., s. Yukon (JH, YBC), and another over the Glenmore Landfill, Kelowna (JW). It is encouraging to note that sightings of Peregrines in the Ok. Valley have increased over the past few years. Gray-morph Gyrfalcons were reported from Vernon, N. Ok., Mar. 16 (CS), and Tranquille, Kamloops, Mar. 22 (SyR). The pair of Prairie Falcons returned to their traditional aerie on The Throne, a rocky bluff near Oliver, S. Ok., Mar. 25 (TE), and another single was at Tranquille, Kamloops, Mar. 1 (SyR).

After rumors of extirpation from the Port Alberni, s.w. Van. I. area, a calling male California Quail at the local J. V. Clyne Bird Sanctuary Mar. 23 (DGC) provided the 2nd record in the past few years. Surveyors for amphibians turned up several Virginia Rails—only recently added to the P.G. checklist—at local marshes, with three at Conrad Slough May 3 (PGNC) & 12 (SK, LL), and two at Buckhorn L. May 13 (SK, LL). A low flock of 28 Sandhill Cranes flying NW over Vanderhoof Apr. 27 (PGNC) may have been members of the little-

known n.w. B.C. population rather than Alaskan birds. Sandhills showed up in May at Delkatla Wildlife Sanctuary in Masset, Q.C.I., with 40 there May 26 (MH PH), the highest count ever for the Islands. The flock remained there, feeding, through the end of the period.

SHOREBIRDS TO WOODPECKERS

There were fewer golden-plovers seen passing through the Q.C.I. this spring than during the past couple of years, with 30 Pacifics at Masset May 5 (PH), and the last American at Sandspit May 22 (MH, PH). Only a scarce and irregular migrant through the c interior, two Am. Golden-Plovers were seen at Giscome, e. of P.G., May 19 (CA). Killdeer arrived early to the Yukon, with the two at Whse. Mar. 31 (HG) being the first returning shorebirds. Seven Am. Avocets were near the mouth of Trout Cr., Summerland, c. Ok., Apr. 15 (CH). These birds were possibly on their way to the Glenmore Landfill, Kelowna, a location to which avocets have taken a shine. Last year's high count of 18, with a couple of pairs breeding, had increased to about 20 pairs nesting during May (JW). This is perhaps the Region's first true avocet colony. A wandering Am. Avocet made it to Maplewood Mudflats, N. Van., May 17. A Willet overwintering at the Tsawwassen Jetty, s. of Van., continued its stay through Apr. 19 (DTy, m.ob.). The Long-billed Curlew population continues to expand into B.C.'s c interior. The first two curlews were back typically early at Vanderhoof Apr. 9 (NK, DG), followed by one at Chubb L. near Hixon May 6 & 16 (SK, LL), and another at Shelley, near P.G., May 17 (JB, MPh, HA). Very unexpected was another Long-billed circling a short-grass field in the concrete jungle of New Westminster, s.w. B.C., Apr. 8 (MPr). Found only in small numbers in the Yukon, four Hudsonian Godwits at McClintock Bay May 18 were interesting. But the sighting of a **Marbled Godwit** there the same day was even more exciting, as it provided one of very few documented Yukon records (†CE, †PS, †HG).

The fever-inducing stints put in brief appearances, with a **Red-necked Stint** at Iona STP, Richmond, May 20 (p.v., †RTo), and an alternate-plumaged **Little Stint**, Yukon's first, at Judas Cr. May 19 (†CE, †PS). This was the best White-rumped Sandpiper flight since the springs of 1985 and 1986. The first single appeared at Judas Cr., s. Yukon, May 19 (†CE, †PS), followed by another at Lewes Marsh May 19 (†HG). Next were two at Neilson L., 50 km n. of PG,

May 25 (PGNC), the first for the local checklist area; and then another four again at Judas Cr. May 28 (JH, †YBC). And just to confirm that the Fort St. John area is still the best place to see White-rumped, eight were at Charlie L., and two more at the N. Sewage Lagoons May 31 (TG). Although a flock of 200–250 Pectoral Sandpipers at Giscome, 30 km e. of P.G., May 15 (CA, JB) was large for the area, it paled in comparison to the 1800–2000 that staged at McClintock Bay, s. Yukon, May 16–18 (CE, PS, HG), perhaps the highest recorded concentration anywhere in the Region for any season. Rare in the Yukon, a Dunlin at McClintock Bay May 16 (†HG) was followed by a 2nd at Lewes Marsh May 30 (BrB, †HG). With only a handful of spring Stilt Sandpiper records w. of the Rockies in B.C., the discovery of an alternate-plumaged bird at Nicola L., s.c. B.C., May 24 (WCW) was noteworthy; meanwhile, the three observed at Judas Cr., s. Yukon, May 28 (JH, †YBC) was considered a low tally for the season.

Three light-morph Parasitic Jaegers were watched flying N together low over the water offshore of the University of B.C. campus, Van., May 25 (MPr). Of the 3 jaeger species, this is the one most likely to be seen in inshore waters. Providing a first Sunshine Coast record was the imm. **Little Gull** at Wakefield Cr. Apr. 26 (TG), a rare vagrant to the coast and more often found in the fall. An ad. Little was seen from the vessel *Yorktown Clipper*, feeding with a flock of 500 Bonaparte's Gulls in Active Pass May 5 (SHD); and another (same one?) was in with 35 Bonaparte's 20 km farther north off the Iona Jetty, Richmond, May 16 (RTo). The Bonaparte's themselves peaked at Active Pass in early April with

5000 Apr. 7 (RJC). A large flock of 1000 Mew Gulls staging at Nares L. May 10 (CE, PS) provided some clues as to this species' migration route through s. Yukon.

Higher-than-normal numbers of Ring-billed Gulls, all adults, were observed in s. Yukon, with one at Whse. Apr. 22 (ph. †CE), two at Nares L. May 10 (†CE, †PS), two more May 13 at Lewes Marsh May 21 (ph. †CE, †PS), and another at Judas Cr. May 31 (JH). A Herring Gull sporting yellow rather than pink legs was at the Whse. Landfill Apr. 22 (ph. †CE) & 23 (†HG). Very rare in spring in the Yukon, a first-summer Thayer's Gull was at Lewes Marsh May 13 (ph. †CE, †PS). Always a controversial "species" out west, an apparent first-winter "Kumlien's" Iceland Gull was found at Mission Pt., Sunshine Coast, Apr. 11 (p.v., †TG). An ad. Slaty-backed Gull was in with a large gull flock in S. Delta Mar. 4 (RTo). It would be useful to band this bird, to try to determine if this is the same bird returning year after year to this site s. of Vancouver. A gathering of 31 W. Gulls (including seven with mixed Glaucous-winged parentage) at Skonun Pt., Masset, Mar. 9 (MH, PH) furnished the highest number of Westerns ever seen on the Q.C.I. A strong NE wind was blowing, which usually concentrates birds at this location.

Glaucous-winged Gulls were also observed in greater numbers than usual around the Whse., Yukon, area. Sightings included a first-summer bird May 6, an adult May 7, and a 3rd-summer bird May 10 (ph. †CE). Three first-summer Glaucous Gulls appeared with 1000 other gulls at the mouth of Vernon Cr., n. Ok. L., Mar. 15 (PG); and a first-winter bird was at Mission Pt., Sunshine Coast, Apr. 12 (TG). Caspian Terns continue to be seen in widely scattered locations far from any known breeding sites. Two were flying together over Laredo Sound, n.c. B.C. coast, May 8 (SHD); three were observed at Vernon, N. Ok., May 10–11 (PG); five were at Sandspit, Q.C.I. May 16 (MH, PH), the highest number yet recorded for the archipelago; and five frequented Eaglet L., P.G. May 23, with two there the next day (SK, LL, DG). An **Arctic Tern** at Skonun Pt., Masset, Apr. 30 (MH, PH) provided the only spring record for the Q.C.I., and was at least a week ahead of the usual northbound window.

The continuous snowcover since mid-November seemed to have little effect on Great Horned Owl cycles, with a pair back at its nest near Vernon, N. Ok., Feb. 17 (M. Koop). However, the same cannot be said for N. Pygmy-Owls around Kamloops,

where many were found starving in March, apparently unable to find rodents on the icy fields (*vide* RRH). Numbers of Snowy Owls gradually thinned out through the period as they headed back north. Most birds were gone from the Boundary Bay area by mid-April. One of those northbound owls caused a media sensation when it touched down at Sechelt Apr. 16 (m.ob.), the Sunshine Coast's 5th Snowy. Great Gray Owls were found at several locations in the Ok. Valley during the period. Two were at the Vernon Commonage in mid-March (EN, BKO, PG); another was in E. Kelowna Mar. 4–5 (J. Casling); and another was seen off Camp McKinney Rd., Oliver, May 18 (MAi). The Kelowna owl had been seen on and off in the same area the past year. Always a hard bird to ferret out, a Long-eared Owl responded to some vigorous human hootings at Nicola L., s.c. B.C., May 10 (RRH). A Boreal Owl in Ladner Mar. 30 (KW) was the 2nd live one seen in the past 2 years in this area s. of Vancouver. The calling schedule of N. Saw-whet Owls was delayed 3 weeks in the c. interior, with the first male heard tooting at P.G. Apr. 28 (JB).

Two Vaux's Swifts observed flying in and out of the same chimney in Pt. Grey, Van.,

SA Reports of gulls with a pink wash on the breast and orangish rather than yellow legs and bills, began coming in from the s. end of Ok. L. near Penticton Mar. 8 (RDY, TL, SD, CH), when a "roseate" ad. Ring-billed Gull was observed. By Mar. 15, one ad. California and nine ad. Ring-billeds there displayed this color variation (PG). Some diligent Internet work by Syd Roberts revealed that this aberration is not all that uncommon among European Black-headed and Little gulls. It is apparently diet and age-related, usually lasts about 3 weeks, and can vary widely in intensity of hue within a flock of birds.

SA This winter the White Spruce forests s.e. of Kluane L., s.w. Yukon, hosted an unprecedented number of three-toed woodpeckers. This high density coincided with a large Spruce Bark Beetle population and considerable numbers of standing dead trees. A record count of 23 Three-toeds on the Dec. 28, 1996, Kluane Lake CBC was followed by a more thorough search for woodpeckers Mar. 9. Four observers (The, CE, HG, PS) covered about 14.8 km in 10 hours and tallied an astonishing 54 woodpeckers. The total consisted of 40 Three-toeds (24 females, 14 males, 2 unknown), four Black-backed, and 10 "three-toed sp." Forest managers routinely label such forests "beetle infested" and have promoted clearcut logging as the best option for dealing with such an "infestation." However, this particular type of forest clearly provides important habitat for an extraordinary density of woodpeckers. The view that clearcut logging is an appropriate response to such increases in beetle populations ignores the complex relationships among insects and forests, and the associated wildlife which depend on these relationships.

May 25 (MPr)—where they had first been seen 2 years previously—suggested potential nesting. Detailed nesting data are lacking for all 3 of the Region's swifts. A male **Costa's Hummingbird**, Van. I.'s 2nd and the Region's 5th, frequented a Saanich feeder Apr. 25–May 17 (R&M McKenzie-Grieve, m.ob.). Becoming a regular spring migrant on the s. coast the past several years, a male Calliope Hummingbird was discovered at Queen Elizabeth Park, Van., Apr. 29 (K. McPherson). Extremely rare was a **Red-breasted Sapsucker** at Annie L. Rd. near Whse. in late April (p.v., AF), the 2nd in as many years and potentially the Yukon's 3rd. Williamson's Sapsuckers are early migrants, as confirmed by the three males on power poles at August L., Princeton, s.c. B.C., Mar. 24 (JHe). The northerly Williamson's pair which bred at Isabel L., Kamloops, in 1996 did not return.

FLYCATCHERS TO FRINGILLIDS

Only rare transients on the s. coast, one–two Say's Phoebes at Iona Reg. Park, Richmond (BS, m.ob.), were a treat. The gradual expansion of the W. Kingbird's range from the Great Basin into B.C., which began in the 1950s, continues to this day. The most noticeable recent push has been coastward. A single W. Kingbird first seen at Mt. Douglas, Vic., May 17 (PP) was likely responsible for a rash of sightings around the Victoria/Saanich areas during the following week (m.ob.). It was last seen May 23 in N. Saanich (HVP, BD). The species now occurs most, but not all, springs in the s.e. Van. I. area. On the other side of Georgia Strait, two W. Kingbirds were observed at Sechelt, Sunshine Coast, May 25

SA Purple Martins returned to their established nesting sites on s. Van. I. and N. Van. in early May, but it appears that the species is continuing to pioneer. There had only been 2 records of martins on the Sunshine Coast in the period 1971–1996 . . . until this spring! First a male was spotted at Sechelt May 2 (TG). This was followed by a pair at Sechelt May 15, defending a nest box against passing crows and kingfishers. We will follow up in next season's summary to check on nesting success. Plans for more nest boxes have already been made in preparation for their return next year, in an attempt to secure the Region's 3rd martin nesting location.

(TG), a location where any kingbird sighting is unexpected.

A N. Rough-winged Swallow returned to McCoy L. Mar. 31 (DGC), a record-early date for the Port Alberni area. A Bank Swallow, rare to uncommon on Van. I., was at Rithet's Bog, Saanich, Apr. 26 (HVP). A Cliff Swallow in with 60 Tree Swallows at Masset, Q.C.I., Apr. 27–30 (PH) added to about 5 or 6 records for the Islands, only a couple from the spring. The Blue Jay that remained in the Deep Cove area of N. Saanich, s.e. Van. I., since the winter of 1995–1996 was last reported Apr. 9 (T. Mays). A Blue Jay first seen in the Cascade Park, Van. Area, mid-November 1996 remained there until May. 3 (S. Hagen), while yet another was found in nearby Surrey Apr. 15 (D. Maynes). A Blue Jay at Tumbler Ridge, n.e. B.C., May 29 (ChH) provided the 2nd local record. A **Black-billed Magpie** first spotted in late March at Esquimalt Lagoon, Colwood (D. Kindall), was later seen in the nearby Metchosin area on 3–4 days around May 12 (I. Tipton et al.). The species is accidental on Van. I. The first returning House Wren to s. Van. I. was noted at Mt. Tolmie, Vic., Apr. 19 (D. Copley). Likely part of the same wave was the House Wren in S. Surrey Apr. 22 (PSP, m.ob.). This wren prefers the dry Mediterranean climate of s.e. Van. I. and the Gulf Islands, and only rarely strays to the much wetter e. side of Georgia Strait. A Golden-crowned Kinglet returned very early to the Whse. area Apr. 9 (CE).

Ruby-crowned Kinglets are regular wintering birds on the Sunshine Coast, but were largely absent this past winter, likely due to the unseasonably deep snow cover. Well, they made up for it when "swarms" of chattering migrants moved through in April (TG, m.ob.). Mountain Bluebirds followed up last spring's good passage through the B.C. interior with another one this year: about 100 were tallied in the Vanderhoof area Apr. 7 (HA, NK) during the peak of the migration. A few stragglers from the interior push made it out to Van. I. A female was at Colwood Mar. 27 (R. Grasman) & 30 (HVP), while a male was farther west at Jordan R. Mar. 27 & 30 (A. Cooper). Later one was at C. Saanich May 1 (L. DeMarch) and the same day another was reported way w. at Frank I., Tofino, s.w. Van. I. (N. Richedy). The Greater Van. area's two showed up at Colony Farm, Coquitlam, Apr. 5–6 (LCo, m.ob.). As is typical of most species at the edges of their range, Sage Thrasher numbers in the S. Ok. fluctuate noticeably from year to year. This year a single bird was seen

at Chopaka near the Washington border May 18 & 25 (RJC, m.ob.).

A Nashville Warbler at Sechelt May 11 (DBr) furnished the first Sunshine Coast record of a live bird, a specimen having been found earlier. It was a good warbler year on the Q.C.I. A Yellow Warbler heard May 18 and another (same?) seen June 1 at Masset (MH, PH) added to only a few records. The 16 Magnolia Warblers at Kinuseo Falls, 40 km s. of Tumbler Ridge, n.e. B.C., May 31 (ChH), signified a major passing wave. Known to nest on the Q.C.I. only at higher elevations on Graham I., any Wilson's Warblers on the coastal plain of Moresby I. are considered migrants, as were the two at Masset May 14, and the single bird there May 31 (MH, PH). Much rarer on the moist w. coast of Van. I. than the drier e. side, a singing male Black-throated Gray Warbler was a surprise at the Wickannish Beach parking lot at Pacific Rim N. P., s.w. Van. I., May 18 (DGC). Near the n. edge of its Canadian range, a Townsend's Warbler put in a rare but timely appearance at a birdsong workshop at Whse. May 24 (PS, YBC). The e. foothills of the Rockies in n.e. B.C. are a contact zone between Townsend's and Black-throated Green warblers, as evidenced by the male Black-throated Green singing just e. of Tumbler Ridge May 27 (ChH), the 2nd local record. A male Blackpoll Warbler at Wasa Sloughs, W. Kootenays, May 24 (GSD, AY) was a good find. The species is rarely found during migration through s. B.C. Having expanded w. across the Rockies into the P.G. area the past several years, one wonders whether the Ovenbird singing at Lindley Cr., Merritt, s.c. B.C., May 24 (WCW) was just a windblown vagrant or a southward trending pioneer. The weather-delayed dam of passerine migrants broke in the 3rd week of May. Typical of the frenzied passages of some species were the 20 Warbling Vireos and 24 N. Waterthrushes located at Hubble Rd. near Amanita L., 50 km n.e. of PG, May 24 (SK, LL, DG).

An Am. Tree Sparrow at Nakusp Mar. 28 (M&J Allard, GSD) paid a rare visit to the W. Kootenays. More commonly reported the past decade, but still scarce on the s. coast, a Vesper Sparrow was at Pitt Meadows on a very early date of Mar 21. Another four Vespers in the Nakusp area May 3 (GSD, NM) hinted at a relatively heavy spring passage through the valleys. A singing male **Grasshopper Sparrow** seen near Cranbrook, E. Kootenays, May 24–25 (GrR, GIR, JLa, GSD) furnished an interesting discovery of this very local s. interior

species. Fox Sparrows are sub-alpine breeders in the Kootenays, and are rarely encountered during spring migration. Surprising, then, was one at valley level near Galena Bay Apr. 27 (GSD). Showing up more often in fall and winter than the spring in the Q.C.I., a Golden-crowned Sparrow at Port Clements Apr. 25, and two more at Masset the next day, were good finds (MH, PH). A spectacular wave of White-crowned Sparrows moved through the Whse. area in early May, with flocks of 200 visiting feeders (m.ob.). A rare and irregular migrant through the Q.C.I., an ad. male Lapland Longspur at Masset May 4 and one at Sandspit May 15 were noteworthy (MH, PH). Very rare on the Sunshine Coast, especially in the spring, a Bullock's Oriole was observed at Sechelt May 27 (DBr) No longer hypothetical on the Q C I, a male Evening Grosbeak attended a feeder at Masset May 6 (OD, BWi), the Islands' first.

CORRIGENDA

In AFN 50:2, delete Gyrfalcon at Klwane L.; photographs do not support original identification. In AFN 50:3, Black-bellied Plovers on Long Beach were feeding on jellyfish, not sandworms.

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oregon-washington region



BILL TWEIT and GERARD LILLIE

The weather was wet—either wetter than average or simply average. Spokane received over seven inches of rain; normal there is three-and-a-half inches. Farther south in the interior, precipitation at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in southeastern Oregon was more nearly normal. Spring seemed to be a continuous series of low-pressure systems and accompanying rain and showers, albeit interspersed with milder conditions. There was one strong storm near the end of April that slowed landbirds, with a noticeable push north afterwards.

The season seemed best characterized by interior birds on the westside: Wilson's Phalarope, Calliope Hummingbird, Western Kingbird, Loggerhead Shrike, Nashville Warbler. Eastern vagrants were unspectacular, but present.

Abbreviations: F.R.R. (*Fern Ridge Res., Lane Co., OR*); Malheur (*Malheur N.W.R., Harney*

Co., OR); O.S. (*Ocean Shores, Grays Harbor Co., WA*); Sauvie (*Sauvie I., Columbia Co. and Multnomah Co., OR*); S.J.C.R. (*south jetty of the Columbia R., Clatsop Co., OR*); W.W.R.D. (*Walla Walla R. delta, Walla Walla Co., WA*).

LOONS TO FALCONS

Two Yellow-billed Loons were found on Puget Sound waters: one at Poulsbo, *Kitsap*, Mar. 9–10 (*vide RR*) and one at Keystone, *Island*, Apr. 6 (SM). Twelve Western and 16 Clark's grebes were at F.R.R. in late May (MH); this is one of the only known breeding sites in w. Oregon for W. Grebe, and the only known breeding location in w. Oregon for Clark's.

It is interesting that Clark's appear to equal or outnumber Westerns at this location, as Clark's are decidedly less numerous than Westerns at interior locations where both species breed. Other Clark's reports away from their accustomed interior locations were singles at Edmonds, *Snohomish*, WA, Mar. 4 (SM); Yaquina Bay, *Lincoln*, OR, Apr. 1 (SD); Winchester Bay, *Douglas*, OR, Apr. 19 (RM); West Medical L., *Spokane*, WA, Apr. 25 (JA); O.S. Apr. 30 (BT); and offshore at Harbor, *Curry*, OR, May 18 (DM). Reported pelagic trips were taken Apr. 26 and May 17 off Westport, WA (TRW). No Laysan Albatrosses were reported, and very low numbers of N. Fulmar (6–20), Pink-footed Shearwater (four–five), and Sooty Shearwater (207–567) were found. In Oregon, an ad. Laysan Albatross was found dead on the beach s. of Manzanita, *Tillamook*, Mar. 28 (*vide GL*). Oregon Sooty numbers were also in the low hundreds off Boiler Bay, *Lincoln*, May 15 (TJ, DVB) and out of Newport, *Lincoln*, May 25 (RL). Force, working on a

NOAA vessel over deep water off Oregon, found 14 **Murphy's Petrels** approximately 110 nautical mi off the s. Oregon coast May 3, and two more approximately 140 nautical mi off the s. coast May 12. These reports would provide the 2d and 3d records for Oregon pending acceptance by the O.B.R.C., and the first spring records since 1992.

American White Pelicans, rare in w. Oregon, were seen at two locations: one at F.R.R. March 27–May 14 (A. McGie, DBr) and one on Sauvie May 26 (J. Morawski). As has been the case in most recent years, Brown Pelicans arrived along the coast in April. The first was observed in Brookings, *Curry*, OR, Apr. 7 (DM). On the Oregon coast, they were present in small numbers through April (m.ob.) and were regular by mid-May (MP). The first Washington reports were Apr. 24 (BW, PtSu), and they were regular on the s. coast by mid-May (BSh, G&W Hoge). Two Great Egrets at Sedro Woolley, *Skagit*, May 13 (C. Blake) were unusually far north for spring in w. Washington. A Snowy Egret at Crow Butte S.P., *Benton*, May 1–7 (WC, m.ob.) provided about the 10th spring record for Washington. Single Cattle Egrets at Attalia, *Walla Walla*, WA, May 24 (DR) and near Coburg, *Lane*, OR, Mar. 30–Apr. 4 (F. Chancey) were highly unusual. White-faced Ibis overshoots were found at Palouse, *Whitman*, WA, May 7 (ph., A. Meyer) and in *Walla Walla*, WA, May 25 (DR).

A "Bewick's" Tundra Swan was at F.R.R. Mar. 19 (D. Jones) for the first Regional report of this race in the 1990s. Counts of 1800 Greater White-fronted Geese on the westside at the Humptulips R. mouth, *Grays Harbor*, WA, Apr. 30 (BT) and 4000 in the Klamath Basin Mar. 21–22 (PaSu) were very high counts for the Region, last equaled in 1990. Numbers of this species in w. Oregon were sufficiently heavy to draw comment (HN). Ross's Geese blanketed the Region: an amazing 30+ were found away from their regular migratory stopovers in s. Oregon. Ten westside reports almost equaled the spring 1994 record of 11: singles at *Snohomish*, *Snohomish*, WA, Mar. 3

(PtSu); Nisqually N.W.R., *Thurston*, WA, Mar 21–22 (BSh); near Pacific City, *Tillamook*, OR, Mar. 21 (HN); near Florence, *Lane*, OR, Mar. 23–27 (DH, J. Simmons); Ridgefield N.W.R., *Clark*, WA, Mar. 24 (E. Anderson, J. Engler); F.R.R. Mar. 25–Apr. 6 (DH, PSh, RgR); Sutherlin, *Douglas*, OR, Apr. 21 (KW); the Hump-tulps R. mouth, *Grays Harbor*, WA, Apr. 30 (BT), and two were at Nisqually N.W.R., *Thurston*, May 5 (PtSu). Twenty in e. Washington was apparently a record: one at Royal L., *Adams*, Mar. 26 (*vide* RR); 11 at Willow Bar, *Garfield*, Apr. 12 (MD, MID); three at Reardan, *Lincoln*, Apr. 27 (†JA); one at Staline Pond, *Walla Walla*, May 4 (MD, MID); one at Wallula, *Walla Walla*, May 5 (DR); one at Rock L., *Whitman*, May 8 (PtSu); and two at Folsom L., *Whitman*, May 9 (PtSu). The Emperor Goose in residence on the Sandy R. near Troutdale, *Multnomah*, OR, remained throughout the period (m.ob.), and the bird found at Hunter Cr., *Curry*, OR, during the winter was last noted Apr. 6 (CD). Three reports of Brant away from the coast is fairly normal: Singles were near Forest Grove, *Washington*, OR, Mar. 2 (HN); Royal L., *Adams*, WA, Mar. 20 (*vide* RR); and Baskett Slough N.W.R., *Polk*, OR, Apr. 21–26 (TS, SD). Five reports of Eur. Green-winged Teal is above average: Singles were on Sauvie Mar. 8 (GL), Fenk Rd. slough, *Tillamook*, OR, Mar. 9 (A. Murray); at Everett, *Snohomish*, WA, Mar. 9 (SM); Crockett L., *Island*, WA, Apr. 6 (SM), and Kent, *King*, WA, Apr. 25 (R. Veit). Sixteen Eur. Wigeon were found in the interior, one at Reardan, *Lincoln*, WA, May 20 (JA) was very late. The confirmed breeding record of N. Shoveler obtained at Camas Swale, near Creswell, *Lane*, when Sally Nelson observed a female with seven chicks Apr. 26, provided one of very few breeding records for w. Oregon. Redheads were being reported from F.R.R. in larger numbers this spring than local observers have ever seen (m.ob.), and were still there at the end of the period. Breeding of this eastside species may be imminent at this westside locale, which hosts numerous other eastside breeders. A hybrid Tufted Duck x scaup (sp) was found n.w. of Silvana, *Snohomish*, WA, Apr. 5 (†SM). Oregon's wintering King Eider at Yaquina Bay, *Lincoln*, was still present Mar. 26 (*vide* GL).

Relatively few White-tailed Kite reports were received this season, totaling 6 from Oregon and one from Washington, at Julia Butler Hansen N.W.R., *Wahkiakum* (PtSu). A pair at South Slough, *Coos*, OR, were observed displaying May 11–14; Oregon

breeding records are few, but nesting appeared probable (DL, KC) at this coastal location. A Golden Eagle at Everett, WA, Mar. 1 (SM) and another Mar. 3 at nearby *Snohomish* (PtSu), were unusual in the Puget Trough. None of last winter's record number of Gyrfalcons was reported lingering past early March: four were noted through Mar. 8 (SM, *vide* RR), including one more Oregon report, a gray sub-adult near Scapoose, *Columbia*, Mar. 6 (HN). Prairie Falcons are rare in the Willamette Valley in spring; one was at F.R.R. May 4 (RT). Sandhill Cranes are rarely reported from s.w. Oregon, so two at the Floras L. bottomlands, *Curry*, May 17 (DL, KC) and two more that same day in the vicinity of Port Orford, *Curry* (TW), were noteworthy, and also late.

CHARADRIFORMS

Both golden-plover species were reported: an American was seen near Brookings, *Curry*, OR, Apr. 28–May 1 (E. Irle et al.) and single Pacifics were at O.S. Apr. 9 (TA) and May 11 (ED) & 16 (BSh). The count of 450 Semipalmated Plovers reported from Clatsop Beach, *Clatsop*, May 4 (MP) represented one of the largest Oregon counts of this species. Only 4 reports were received of Snowy Plover, all from known breeding locations: the Siltcoos R. mouth, *Lane*, OR (B&ZSt, RgR); Leadbetter Pt., *Pacific*, WA (PtSu); and O.S. (ED). Black-necked Stilts were found at several unusual e. Washington locations: Dallesport, *Klickitat* (WC); Atkins L., *Douglas* (AS); St. Andrews, *Douglas* (JA); and Reardan, *Lincoln* (JA). They also graced 2 w. Oregon locations where they are rare: three at F.R.R. Apr. 5 (J. Carlson, S. Gordon, A&TM), and one at Emigrant L., *Jackson*, Apr. 13 (RgR). The only westside Am. Avocet report was one at Yaquina Bay, *Lincoln*, OR, May 13 (TJ, CM, DVB). A total of 31 Lesser Yellowlegs represented an above-average number of this scarce spring migrant. Oregon had unusual numbers on very early dates: seven e. of Florence, *Lane*, Mar. 15 (B&ZSt) and 13 near Astoria, *Clatsop*, Mar. 30–Apr. 2 (MP). Washington had 10 reports during the normal Apr. 25–May 11 time span. Solitary Sandpipers also appeared this spring in good numbers. Western Oregon had eight, e. Oregon four, and Washington seven. Willets at the W.W.R.D. May 11 (DR, B&NL) and at Harbor, *Curry*, OR, Apr. 27 (DM) were locally rare, as was a Long-billed Curlew at Tennant L., *Whatcom*, WA, Apr. 12 (*vide* J. Meche). A Hudsonian Godwit was at Turnbull N.W.R., *Spokane*,

May 19–21 (†RD) for the 2nd Washington interior spring record. Peak coastal counts of Marbled Godwit indicated their respective abundance in Oregon and Washington six in Siletz Bay, *Lincoln*, OR, May 3 (DH), nine at the New R. mouth, *Coos*, OR, May 8 (DL, KC); 135 at Tokeland, *Pacific*, WA, Mar. 29 (MD, MID); and 200 at O.S. Apr. 6 (PtSu). Interior records of Marbled Godwit included six at the W.W.R.D. May 3 (MD, MID) and one at the Hood R. mouth, *Hood River*, OR, May 3 (PaSu).

A total of 4 Semipalmated Sandpiper reports is typical for spring: one at Dugwalla Bay, *Island*, WA, May 3 (SM); two at Conway, *Skagit*, WA, May 4 (SA); and one near Canby, *Clackamas*, OR, May 12 (TS). Also typical numbers were 2 Baird's Sandpiper reports from Steigerwald Lake N.W.R., *Clark*, WA, May 8 (WC) and W.W.R.D. May 11 (B&NL), and 2 Pectoral Sandpiper reports from Beaverton, *Washington*, OR, Apr. 10 (PaSu) and S.J.C.R. May 17–18 (MP). A Rock Sandpiper of the *couesi* race was at Westport, *Grays Harbor*, WA, May 11 (BT); this race is thought to be normally resident in Alaska. A male Ruff was at Pony Slough, *Coos* Bay, *Coos*, OR, Apr. 18 (†DL, †KC), a very rare spring record. A Short-billed Dowitcher found s. of Burns, *Harney*, OR, May 6 (T. Korolyk) was rare in s.e. Oregon. The westside experienced a minor incursion of Wilson's Phalaropes May 9–11, with a few found later. A pair was at Baskett Slough N.W.R., *Polk*, OR, May 9 (SD). Singles were at O.S. (ED); Dungeness, *Clallam*, WA, (B. Boekelheide); and Brady, *Grays Harbor*, WA, May 10 (BT). On May 11, two female Wilson's were near Canby, *Clackamas*, OR, (SD); three were at Steigerwald Lake N.W.R., *Clark*, WA (WC); and two were at Kent, *King*, WA (*vide* RR). Later reports included four at Creswell, *Lane*, OR, May 21 (SN); a male at Forest Grove, *Washington*, OR, May 24 (G. Gilson); singles at Seattle and Edmonds, WA, May 25 (*vide* RR); and one near Canby, *Clackamas*, OR, May 28 (E. Specht). Red Phalaropes went unreported.

Jaeger reports were scarce, with an unexpected preponderance of Long-tailed Jaegers, normally the rarest of the 3 species in spring. The Apr. 26 pelagic off Westport, WA, found only one jaeger, a Long-tailed over deep water (TRW). A flock of 62 Long-tailed was observed approximately 140 nautical mi off the s. Oregon coast May 12 (MF). The May 17 Westport pelagic trip had only one Pomarine and one Parasitic (TRW). Two Franklin's Gulls, rare in w. Oregon, were at Plat I Res., near Sutherlin,

Douglas, Apr. 14 (J. Hein). A wintering Little Gull remained at Point No Point, Kitsap, WA, until Mar. 1 (VN). Heermann's Gull reports from Sequim, Clallam, WA, May 3 (SA) and the Keystone Ferry Landing, Island, WA, May 8 (*fide* BN) were indicative of an early northward flight. A count of more than 30 Mew Gulls at White Salmon, Klickitat, WA, Mar. 22 (MD, MID) was high for an interior location. The remnants of the winter Glaucous Gull reports totaled 19. An imm. **Iceland Gull** was well described from Samish Flats, Skagit, Apr. 6 (†SM); there are 6 previous accepted Washington records. A handful of Black-legged Kittiwakes were reported from the outer coast, with a peak count of seven at O.S. (PtSu). The counts of 118 Caspian Terns at W.W.R.D. May 9 (MD, MID) and 75 at the Palouse R. mouth, Franklin, WA, May 31 (MD, MID) demonstrate the substantial population growth in the interior. Common and Arctic terns were sparingly reported; 13 of the former were seen on the Oregon coast (DD, DL, KC, RL), and two Arctics were at S.J.C.R. May 18 (MP). Black Terns, primarily an interior species, were nesting again this year at F.R.R., with 16 observed in May (MH). The peak count of Marbled Murrelet at Point No Point, Kitsap, WA, was 402 Mar. 24 (VN), a smaller peak than those noted in 1994 and 1995. Cassin's Auklet numbers off Westport had dwindled to one by May 17 (TRW); we believe the Washington populations may be in serious trouble. A Horned Puffin was found dead on the beach at Yaquina Head, Lincoln, OR, Mar. 6 (E. Barkley); 30 were observed approximately 110 nautical mi off the s. Oregon coast May 3, and seven more were off the Oregon coast May 12 (MF). The live counts over deep water are the highest ever for the Region.

PIGEONS TO MIMIDS

Interior reports of Band-tailed Pigeon came from L. Chelan, Chelan, WA, Apr. 16 (*fide* S. Hoover); Spokane, WA, Apr. 18 (RD); Picture Rock Pass, Lake, OR, May 13 (TJ, CM); and Malheur May 13 (AR, CB). Lingering birds from the Snowy Owl invasion continued into mid-March in Oregon: Two were still at the S.J.C.R. Mar. 20 (*fide* GL) and one was along Tillamook Bay Mar. 22 (BSa). Numbers in w. Washington held strong through March, with at least 21 reported. The last sightings in April were two at Edison, Skagit, Apr. 6 (SM); four at O.S. Apr. 9 (TA); one at Bow, Skagit, Apr. 9 (*fide* RR); and two at Stanwood, Snohomish, Apr. 10 (TA). In e. Washington, the 16 birds at

Mondovi, Lincoln, Mar. 18 (JA) had disappeared by Mar. 22, but singles lingered at Creston, Lincoln, until Mar. 4 (M. Houston). The N. Hawk Owl at Cheney, Spokane, WA, remained until Mar. 17 (B. Whelton). A Burrowing Owl hit by a car near Beaverton, Washington, Mar. 27 (BSa) was a w. Oregon rarity. The Great Gray Owl at Bridle Trails S.P., King, WA, Apr. 6 (M. Anderson) was the only remnant of the winter invasion, as the bird at Big Beaver L., Okanogan, WA, May 20 (WC) was in its regular breeding range.

Extreme rarities on the westside n. of the Rogue valley included: the Com. Poorwill heard calling in Gladstone, Clackamas, OR, Apr. 27 (*fide* GL); the White-throated Swift at Finley N.W.R., Benton, OR, May 18 (K. Carter); and the male Black-chinned Hummingbird in St. Helens, Columbia, OR, during the first week of May (S. Nemitz, *fide* HN). The now annual reports of Costa's Hummingbird in Oregon included a male in Bend Apr. 18 (R. Baker) and a male in Portland in late April and early May (P. Shepherd, *fide* HN). Even though transient Calliope Hummingbirds are found almost annually in the lower Willamette valley, they are still considered quite rare in the n. valley and along the coast. This spring, however, there were several reports from the s. Willamette valley and an unusually large number from the n. end: one at Cornelius, Washington, Apr. 6 (*fide* HN); a male in Astoria, Clatsop, Apr. 11 (MP); one s. of Corbett, Multnomah, Apr. 12 (N. Willis); a displaying male at Skinner Butte, Lane, Apr. 12 (A&TM); one near Waterville on the McKenzie R., Lane (A. Reid); one s. of Creswell, Lane, Apr. 25 (D&H Lown); a male in Elmira, Lane, Apr. 26 (D. Pettey); a male in Mt. Tabor Park in Portland Apr. 28 (GL); a male in Corvallis, Benton, Apr. 28 (P. Murtaugh); one in Happy Valley s.e. of Portland, May 2 (D. Sutter); two males at Toketee, Douglas, May 7 (KG); and one at Mary's Peak, Benton, May 10 (J. Plissner). A normal spring total has less than 5 westside reports.

A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was found at Pe Ell, Lewis, Mar. 3–15 (PtSu, SM, m.ob.) for the first w. Washington record. Westside Red-naped Sapsuckers were at Boring, Clackamas, OR, Apr. 15 (N. Pestice) and Seattle Apr. 19 (TA). The only Least Flycatcher reported was one at Davenport, Lincoln, WA, on the early date of Apr. 28 (JA). Dusky Flycatchers, generally irregular on the westside n. of s. Oregon, have proven reliable at Detroit Flats, Marion, OR, in small numbers each spring, with one seen

Apr. 27 (SD) and three May 5 (SD). Elsewhere on the westside, singles were at Seattle, WA, May 6 (SA); along the North Umpqua Rd., Douglas, OR, May 10 (RM), and at Spencer I., Snohomish, WA, May 13 (SM). Gray Flycatchers are even more unusual on the westside; surprising were four at Detroit Flats, Marion, OR, May 5 (SD). Black Phoebes are showing a range expansion, but are still unusual away from coastal Curry and the Coquille Valley of s. Oregon. A pair was found nesting at Creswell, OR, May 15 (SM, SN), a first breeding record for Lane; one was near Peoria, Linn, OR, Mar. 24 (O. Halvorson). The usual sprinkle of Say's Phoebe reports from the westside consisted of one at Toketee, Douglas, OR, Mar. 8 (KG); one at Neah Bay, Clallam, WA, Mar. 21 (BN); and one at Seattle, WA, Mar. 23 (S. Richardson). Western Kingbirds appeared in above-average numbers in Curry and the Willamette Valley, outside of their regular westside range in the Rogue and Umpqua valleys. T. Wahl reported >20 in the Elk R. bottomlands, Curry, OR, May 2, and eight were in Brookings, Curry, in early May (CD, DM). Five were reported in the n. Willamette valley, and six were along the c and n. Oregon coast (m.ob.). In w. Washington, 11 reports from the Puget Trough was above average, but not record-breaking. Bank Swallows are another eastside species that occur irregularly w in the spring: 6 sightings came from Skagit, WA (*fide* BK, SA), where breeding is a possibility, and two were found elsewhere in w. Washington (TA, SM).

A couple of Blue Jays from the winter invasion remained until Apr. 22 in Eugene, OR (D. Wendt et al.); May 3 at Vancouver, Clark, WA, (S&A Hagen); and May 10 at Moro, Sherman, OR (LR). The almost tedious recitation of W. Scrub-Jay reports from their range edges included birds n to Kitsap (VN), King (J. Bragg), and Skagit (*fide* BK), and e. to Rock Cr. (MD, MID) and Goldendale (BT) in Klickitat; Cle Elum, Kittitas, WA (ED); and Moro, Sherman, OR (LR). Other remainders of the winter flights included two Mt. Chickadees in w. Oregon in early March (J. Hannan, DD) and a Pygmy Nuthatch in Wapato, Yakima, WA, Apr. 25 (AS). Rare away from their limited range in Oregon, four Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were found in Lane, OR: one w of Eugene Apr. 24–29 (J. Morcello et al.) and a male and two females found on the s slope of Mt. Pisgah May 1 though the end of the period (Psh et al.). Two Mt. Bluebird reports came from the outer coast: two at Leadbetter Pt., Pacific, WA, Apr. 24 (PtSu)

and one along the Elk R., *Curry*, OR, May 2 (TW) Northern Mockingbirds are rare in w Oregon, and especially so in spring. Eight records is probably a high for spring: one in Brookings, *Curry*, through Apr. 13 (B. Stewart, m.ob.), one just n. of Eugene, *Lane*, Apr 2 (RT); one in Alvadore, *Lane*, May 5 (DBr); three in Portland May 9–23 (L. Carlson, R. Jolly, J. Quincey); and one in Newberg, *Yamhill*, May 22 (F. Shipley). Seven reports from the interior is a bit more than normal: one at Richland, *Benton*, WA, Mar 1–2 (B&NL); three in *Harney*, OR (C. Elshoff, R&J Krabbe, CC, DE); one near Echo, *Umatilla*, OR, Mar. 15 (CC); one in Moro, *Sherman*, OR, through Mar. 22 (LR); and one s. of Vale, *Malheur*, OR, May 18 (PaSu). A Sage Thrasher was at Detroit Flats, *Marion*, May 5 (SD); they are rare in w Oregon. Brown Thrashers, an almost annual vagrant, appeared at 2 Malheur locations May 4 (DE, L. Messick) & 19 (GI).

SHRIKES TO FINCHES

The number of westside Loggerhead Shrike reports was also above average: one at Fisher Butte, *Lane*, OR, Apr. 2 (AP); one at F R R Apr. 5–6 (B. Combs, RgR); one on the deflation plain at the Siuslaw R. mouth, *Lane*, OR, Apr. 7 (B&ZSt); one at Detroit Flats, *Marion*, OR, Apr. 15–May 5 (J. Lundsten, SD); two at Seattle, WA, Apr. 15–16 (*fide* RR); and one–two at Steigerwald Lake N W R., *Clark*, WA, Apr. 22–May 5 (PtSu, WC) Nashville Warblers are another eastside species that is of rare, but annual, spring occurrence in w. Washington lowlands Fourteen reports, from Apr. 11 through May 5, is more than normal. Hermit Warblers in Richland, *Benton*, WA, May 15 (B&NL) and at Malheur May 16 (C&A Elshoff, G. Larson) were interior rarities Palm Warblers were observed at Yaquina Bay, *Lincoln*, OR, Apr. 5 and near the s jetty of the Siuslaw R., *Lane*, OR, also Apr 5 (both B. Newhouse), and at Malheur May 9 (DE). As is often the case in the spring, all the eastern vagrant warblers were reported from *Harney*: Tennessee Warblers at Fields May 24 (M) and at Malheur May 26 (DB), a male Chestnut-sided Warbler at Fields May 23 (M), two Blackpoll Warblers at Malheur May 17 (*fide* DE), Black-and-white Warblers at Fields May 17 (M) & 31 (SRu), and Am. Redstarts at Fields May 25 (M) and Malheur May 26–27 (GI). The other annual spring eastern vagrants, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Indigo Bunting, were also reported primarily from *Harney*. Male Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were at Malheur May 17 (C. Reep) and May 27

(GI), and at Port Townsend, *Jefferson*, WA, May 27 (R. Sikes). Two Indigo Buntings were at Malheur May 29–31 (AR, CB, CC) and another was at Fields May 30 (WC).

Two Clay-colored Sparrows had returned to their Spokane, WA, breeding site May 16 (JA) for at least their 3rd year there. A Brewer's Sparrow on the westside in *Pierce*, WA, May 18 (K. Bettinger) was another wanderer from the interior. One, apparently of the Timberline race (or species?), was found on Upper Cold Cr., *Yakima*, WA, May 17 (†AS). Other eastside sparrows in the west included a Lark Sparrow e. of Sweet Home, *Linn*, OR, May 8 (TJ, DVB), and Black-throated Sparrows in Eugene, *Lane*, OR, May 3 (AP); at Detroit Flats, *Marion*, OR, May 8 (D. Copeland); and n. of Vancouver, *Clark*, WA, May 24 through the period (S. Griffith, *fide* HN). In years now well past, Grasshopper Sparrows bred at F.R.R., their only known breeding location on the westside. Singing males were found at 2 different F.R.R. locations May 10 (TM) & 16 (RT, RgR); is it possible suitable habitat is available for them again? An eastern subspecies Fox Sparrow was in Sutherlin, *Douglas*, OR, Mar. 30–Apr. 1 (KW). The only Swamp Sparrow report was one at Maryhill S.P., *Klickitat*, WA, Apr. 22 (PtSu). Fifteen Golden-crowned Sparrow reports from the interior is normal, with the latest at Davenport, *Lincoln*, WA, May 5 (JA), and the most unusual at Malheur Apr. 13 (P. Bailey).

The Tricolored Blackbird colonies in e. Oregon were apparently all occupied; 110 near Prineville, *Crook*, Mar. 1 (PaSu) was the high count. A male Great-tailed Grackle at Fields, *Harney*, OR, May 23 through the period (M, SRu) was the only report. An imm. male **Orchard Oriole** was in Brookings, *Curry*, Mar. 14 (†CD) for the 5th Oregon record, if the details are accepted by the O.B.R.C. A male Hooded Oriole at Cape Meares Village, *Tillamook*, Apr. 17–21 (M. Tweelinckx et al.) was the only report of this annual spring visitant to w. Oregon. The only area with numerous reports of Red Crossbills was the Washington coast (BT, MD, MID). Two Lesser Goldfinches at Rock Cr., *Klickitat*, Apr. 26 (MD, MID) were e. of their usual Washington haunts in w. *Klickitat*, where several were found in April (PtSu, ED). A **Lawrence's Goldfinch** with a mixed flock of Lesser and American goldfinches near Lower Table Rock, *Jackson*, May 15 (T. Bray, Y. Zharikov) would constitute the 2nd Oregon record, if accepted by the O.B.R.C.

EXOTICS

A N. Cardinal was at Clarkston, *Asotin*, WA, Apr. 14–May 23 (*fide* M. Koliner).

CORRIGENDUM

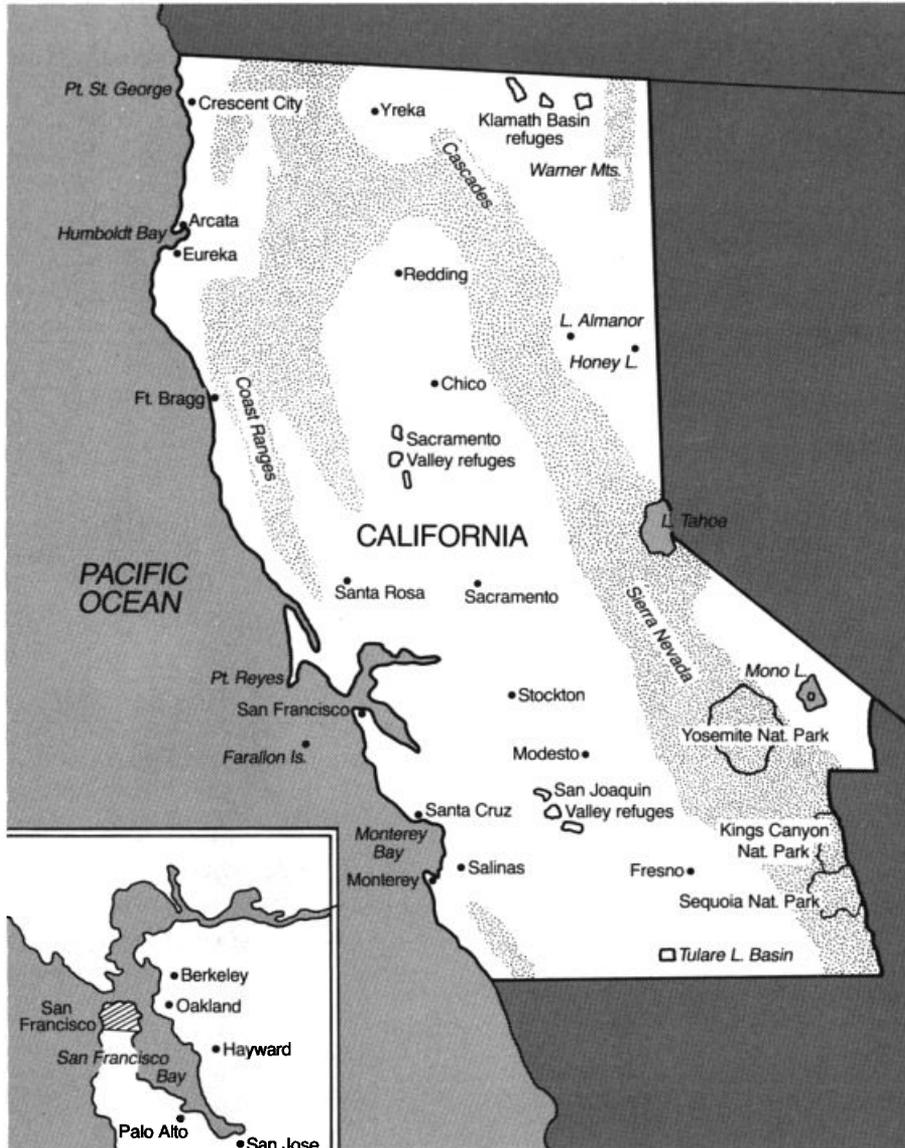
The reference in the Fall 1996 report to a Washington specimen of Red-tailed Tropicbird was quite a blooper by Tweet, the specimen was, of course, the expected species, a Red-billed Tropicbird.

Initialed observers, with subregional editors in boldface:

Jim Acton, Scott Atkinson, Tom Aversa, David Bailey, **Range Bayer** (Lincoln, OR), **Thais Bock** (Tacoma area), Dan Van Den Broek (DVB), David Brown (DBr), Carla Burnside, Wilson Cady, Kathleen Castlein, Craig Corder, Edward Deal, Mike and Merry Lynn Denny, Ron Dexter, Dewidt, **Colin Dillingham** (Curry), Steve Dowlan, Duncan Evered, Michael Force, Jeff Gilligan, Keith Graves, Dan Heyerly, Matt Hunter, **Gary Ivey** (Malheur N.W.R.), Tim Jantzen, Jim Johnson, **Merlene Koliner** (Clarkston area), Bob Kuntz, Bill & Nancy LaFramboise, Dave Lauten, Roy Lowe, Ron Maertz, Maitreya (M), Allison & **Tom Mickel** (Lane), Craig Miller, Steve Mlodinow, Don Munson, **Harry Nehls** (w. Oregon), Sally Nelson, Vic Nelson, Bob Norton, Mike Patterson, Al Prigge, Lew Rems, Andy Renc, Roger Robb (RgR), Dennis Rockwell, **Russell Rogers** (Washington), Tom Rogers, Skip Russell (SRu), Bob Salinger (BSa), Bill Shelmerdine (BSH), Tim Shelmerdine, Paul Sherrell (PSH), Andy Stepnewski, Bill & Zannah Stotz, Patrick Sullivan (PtSu), Paul Sullivan (PaSu), R. Titus, T. Wahl, Terry R. Wahl, Katherine Wilson, Bob Woodley.

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middle pacific coast region



Abbreviations: C.B.R.C. (*California Bird Records Committee*); C.V. (*Central Valley*); S.F. (*San Francisco*); W.A. (*Wildlife Area*). Banded birds from Big Sur R. mouth, *Monterey*, should be credited to Big Sur Ornithology Lab.

LOONS TO SHEARWATERS

Over 200 Red-throated Loons off Ft. Ord Apr. 26 (DR, DSg, ASH, DWm) represented an exceptional concentration for *Monterey*, though they were staging in their preferred habitat of shallow water over sand. An ad. Com. Loon on Paicines Res. May 25 was the first in spring for *San Benito* (DLSh). A striking migrant was an alternate-plumaged Yellow-billed Loon passing Pigeon Pt., *San Mateo*, Apr. 24 (†BMcK, BS, †FrT). Four alternate-plumaged Horned Grebes at Ukiah sewage ponds May 3 was an unusual group inland in *Mendocino* (RKJ, CEV, DAE, JRW). A Red-necked Grebe at Mendota W.A., *Fresno*, Mar. 8 (B. Widowson) was very rare in the San Joaquin Valley. May 9 was a late date for four Red-necked Grebes tarrying at Bodega Bay, *Sonoma* (DN).

The Laysan Albatross at Pt. Arena harbor was last reported Mar. 25–29 (GS, BDP). A Laysan Albatross rescued from a street in South San Francisco Apr. 24 (*vide* J. Moghler) was the 3rd spring bird onshore in *San Mateo*. Some inland Laysans appear to have ridden ships into the Port of Oakland and then were evicted, but recurring onshore records suggest that some arrive unaided. Offshore, three Laysans off *Santa Cruz* May 16 (DLSh, JiD) and four off *Monterey* May 20 (SFB) reflected this albatross' continued increase off our coast. This year's first Flesh-footed Shearwater was off *Monterey* May 24 (DLSh, JiD). Manx Shearwaters continued to be regular in *Monterey Bay*, with singles off *Monterey* Apr. 5 (RT) and at Seabright Beach, *Santa Cruz*, Apr. 16 (†BMcK).

HERONS TO WATERFOWL

Nesting Am. Bitterns created excitement in *Santa Clara*, where 2 nests discovered in May (SCR) represented the first known breeding since 1937. In adjacent *San Benito*,

**DON ROBERSON,
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and DANIEL S. SINGER**

Yet another El Niño gathered strength offshore. Onshore, the spring was rather dry, and dry-country sparrows dominated the landbird news (see discussions of Black-chinned, Black-throated, and Grasshopper sparrows). The “bird-of-the-sea-

son” was also a sparrow (q.v.). Alas, intriguing reports of Kentucky Warbler and Common Grackle were received without details and will not be published; this is the norm for reports of exceptional vagrants submitted without documentation. This general rule extends to claims of firsts for counties; the few included here carry the “no details” comment. Observers should assure their interesting finds are adequately documented.

an individual in Hollister Mar. 12 (JLx, DLSh, ADeM) was considered just the 2nd county record this century, but was quickly followed by another in Hollister Apr. 13–20 (DLSh, ADeM), displaying and pumping; breeding was later confirmed. Is the species increasing locally, or has it been overlooked in past years? Either way the news is encouraging. It is likely that more rainfall throughout this decade has resulted in increased potential breeding habitat at the same time that more observers are covering areas formerly ignored or overlooked. Two White-faced Ibis at San Felipe L., May 27 (SCR) made a rare *San Benito* record.

At least 11 dark-morph Ross's Geese were carefully scrutinized at Lower Klamath N.W.R., *Siskiyou*, March 8–9 (†WEH, JTr), among a flock of an estimated 40,000 Ross's. The wintering Emperor Goose at Bodega Bay, *Sonoma*, lingered until Apr. 30 (m ob.). The "Aleutian" Canada Goose continues its remarkable recovery from near extinction in the early 1960s, with upwards of 24,000 tallied in n.w. *Del Norte* March 15 (M Fisher). A pair of Blue-winged Teal bred successfully in *Marin*, where seven ducklings were noted at the Olema Marsh during the last week of May (RS). Sixty-five Surf Scoters at L. Mendocino, *Mendocino*, May 3 (RJK, CEV, JRW) was an amazing total at an inland location, and begging the question of just how many of these "sea ducks" actually migrate over the interior of our Region. A male Barrow's Goldeneye at the Big Sur R. mouth, *Monterey*, May 22–23 (†TN, RC, JBo, †DR) represented only the 2nd time this species has been recorded along our coast between May and November. One observer saw it do head-back courtship-like displays, evidently "just for practice" since there were no other goldeneyes around.

RAPTORS

A pair of Bald Eagles discovered nesting at Ft. Hunter-Liggett, *Monterey*, was the county's first since 1934. A previous report pertained to nests just over the county line in *San Luis Obispo* (AFN 50:327–328). Political boundaries aside, the Ventana Wilderness Sanctuary reintroduction program appears to be taking hold; this Season's nest included a banded, VWS-released female, which recruited a wild, unbanded male. Red-shouldered Hawks at an occupied nest Apr. 13 in *Trinity* marked a breeding first for that county (JEH, GjH). A Ferruginous Hawk in s. *Monterey* Apr. 21 (†SFB, J&HBa) was later by 3 weeks than any previous year there.

SHOREBIRDS

Migrant Pacific Golden-Plovers were noted at Pigeon Pt., *San Mateo*, where five passed between Apr. 3–26, and one was at the Salinas R. mouth, *Monterey*, Apr. 26. At least 19 Solitary Sandpipers detected Regionwide between Apr. 8–May 19 was a good showing; these were more or less evenly divided between the coast and interior. A **Curlew Sandpiper** at Palo Alto, *Santa Clara*, Apr. 14 marked the 2nd consecutive spring—but only 2nd spring record—for this species in our Region. Subtle differences in structure led the observer to speculate that perhaps it was a different individual than the one he found nearby last year (†SCR). Two Semipalmated and four Baird's sandpipers between Apr. 20–May 12 was an average showing, but two well-described Pectoral Sandpipers seen and heard along Santa Fe Grade, *Merced*, March 3 (KMCK) suggested possible overwintering. Spring migrants are unknown before mid-April.

LARIDS TO ALCIDS

A total of 36 Pomarine Jaegers passing Pigeon Pt. Apr. 3–4 (PJM, BMCK, RSTh) was a high 2-day count from shore in spring. A South Polar Skua 12 mi off the Monterey Pen. May 24 (DLSh, SNGH) provided only about our 11th record in spring, when this species is more regular off s. California.

Three Franklin's Gulls in *Santa Clara* Apr. 13–29 and four in *Marin* in May (*vide* RS) represented a normal total, but none was reported from the Klamath Basin. Of three Mew Gulls lingering to the end of May, the surprise was an adult at Bolinas Lagoon, *Marin* (KH). Coastal "Ring-billed Gulls" away from estuaries are usually misidentified California or Mew gulls. Even though single Ring-billed Gulls at MacKerricher S.P., *Mendocino*, May 3 (RJK) and Big Sur R. mouth May 12 (JBo) were at small estuaries, they were still rare along these long rocky coastlines.

"Kumlien's" Iceland Gulls were reported from the same 2 sites as the previous season, but spring's both wore first-basic plumage. One at Lucchesi Park, *Petaluma*, *Sonoma*, Mar. 15 (JM, N. White) was believed likely the same bird seen there Dec. 15 (†JM), but another at MacKerricher S.P., *Mendocino*, Mar. 11 (†RJK, DAE, CEV, DT) was 2 years younger than the bird seen there Feb. 23 (RS). Alviso's **Lesser Black-backed Gull** remained to Mar. 22 (NLe). Three of 12 Glaucous Gulls that lingered into March or early April were older birds:

an adult at Eureka, *Humboldt*, Mar. 4 (GSL), an adult at Schollenberger Park, *Sonoma*, Mar. 8–15 (A. N. Wight, m.ob.), and a sub-adult at Trestle Ponds, *Yolo*, Apr. 5 (GEw, BDW). Two ad. Sabine's Gulls inland at Shasta Valley W.A. Apr. 20 provided the 2nd spring record for *Siskiyou* (RE). An oiled ad. Sabine's Gull visited Bolinas Lagoon, *Marin*, May 10 (RS, LLu, CLu).

Elegant Terns returned to *Monterey* earlier than ever, except 1987: one over Zmudowski pond Mar. 29 (TAm) and four at Elkhorn Slough Apr. 12 (G. Meyer), where a rare migrant Least Tern appeared Apr. 26 (DSg, DR, ASH, DWm). Thirty Black Terns at San Felipe L. Apr. 26 set a new record number for *San Benito* (KVV, CT).

The five Black Skimmers resided at Charleston Slough, *Santa Clara*, through May 8, when they moved to neighboring areas (m.ob.). On Apr. 27 single skimmers were at Brooks I., *Contra Costa* (SAG), and Pajaro R. mouth, *Monterey* (C. Rodgers), and four sat on a beach at Princeton Harbor, *San Mateo*, May 18 (AJ).

Single alternate-plumaged Marbled Murrelets were out of place, but not unprecedented, at Brooks I., *Contra Costa*, Mar. 15 (SAG) and off the Big Sur R. mouth Apr. 23 (GePh). Two alternate-plumaged Ancient Murrelets sojourned late May 31 near Pt. Reyes (RS, LLu, CLu). A Rhinoceros Auklet at a burrow entrance on Green Rock, *Humboldt*, Apr. 26 (TWL) suggested prospecting a new breeding site, yet only 1–3 Tufted Puffins were seen at this traditional but dwindling puffin colony (GSL, LPL, TWL). Horned Puffins appeared along our coast from *San Mateo* north. One flew N past Pigeon Pt. Apr. 10 (SAG). Singles in *Mendocino* were at MacKerricher S.P. May 25 (S. Snyder) and Pt. Arena Cove May 29 (†DT). Six Horned Puffins were found dead on Pt. Reyes Great Beach, *Marin*, May 26–June 2 (RS et al.); live birds were found nearby at Drake's Beach (†ES, m.ob.) and Chimney Rock (RS, m.ob.); and Horned Puffin visited F.I. about this time (*vide* RS). The causes of May–July Horned Puffin wrecks remain mysterious.

OWLS TO HUMMINGBIRDS

A Spotted Owl n. of Orick, *Humboldt*, was apparently killed and eaten by a pair of Barred Owls Mar. 14 (†TWL); the range expansion of the latter owl continues to cause problems for the endangered bird, not limited to genetic swamping. Additional Barred Owls found during the spring were

at Richardson Grove, s. *Humboldt*, and near Hayfork, *Trinity* (J. Seeger, K. Young). A vagrant Long-eared Owl was on outer Pt. Reyes, *Marin*, Mar. 20 (RS).

There are no *Humboldt* records of Lesser Nighthawk, but a silent nighthawk at Arcata Apr. 14 (EE) must have been this species, given the date (Commons don't arrive until late May). Likewise, an out-of-range nighthawk at Marina, *Monterey*, Apr. 26 (RFT, JS) was presumably a Lesser.

Two Black Swifts in a huge feeding flock of swifts over Alamo, *Contra Costa*, Apr. 19 (JMR) were inexplicable. In our Region, Black Swifts arrive after mid-May, but our files contain a few mysterious mid-April reports. Could these be migrants from the Canadian population, which can arrive by late April (Campbell et al., 1990, *Birds of British Columbia*, Vol. 2)? White-throated Swifts entering a hole in a rocky cutbank on Alder Bluffs Rd. May 5 provided the first nesting evidence for *Trinity* (C. Secor), less than 2 mi from *Humboldt*, where there are no breeding records. Widely dispersed Costa's Hummingbirds included males n. to Redding, *Shasta*, Apr. 22 (CY); near Eureka Apr. 23 (B. Hawkins); and Killgore Hills Apr. 13 and Horseshoe Ranch W.A. May 8-19, both *Siskiyou* (RE).

Among apparent hybrids reported this spring were a female Anna's x Costa's Hummingbird along Pescadero Cr., *San Mateo*, Apr. 13-24 (†BMcK), a Red-breasted x Red-naped Sapsucker in Sacramento Mar. 15 (TDM), and an apparent Tree x Barn Swallow at Blue L., *Humboldt*, Apr. 16 (†GjH). Caution is warranted, because while Barns have hybridized with Cave and Cliff swallows (Auk 97:148-159, *Condor* 77:362-364), there is apparently no report of a pairing with Tree (and it's hard to hypothesize how this could occur).

WOODPECKERS TO KINGLETS

Late dates of wintering Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers at Pescadero and Ed Levin Park, *Santa Clara*, were Mar. 1 (RSTh) and Mar. 11 (JMS), respectively, while *Humboldt's* vagrant White-headed Woodpecker at McKinleyville was last seen Mar. 21 (GSL). An Olive-sided Flycatcher on Underwood Mt. Road, *Trinity*, Apr. 13 was quite early for the northwest (GjH et al.). Rare E. Phoebes were at Coyote Pt., *San Mateo*, Mar. 4-17 (RSTh et al.) and Shady Oaks Park, *Santa Clara*, Mar. 2-15 (MJM et al., a returning bird missed earlier in the winter), but a late May claim for *Colusa* was undocumented. Strangely, Dusky or Willow flycatchers have provoked claims of late

spring/summer E. Phoebes (note a published account of Oregon's first nesting of "E. Phoebe" in *Oregon Birds* 7:88-91); in this Region details will be required. A Say's Phoebe in El Granada, *San Mateo*, May 29 was very late (BS).

A male Vermilion Flycatcher briefly brightened the Carmel R. mouth May 29, for the 4th *Monterey* record (JBo, GePh et al.). Lingering winter flycatchers of note were a Dusky-capped Flycatcher in S.F. to Mar. 22 (ASH) and an Ash-throated near San Jose to Mar. 16 (MMR). Cassin's Kingbirds farther north than usual included six near the Pajaro R., *San Benito*, Apr. 8-11 (nesting; †SCR); *Santa Clara's* first recorded nest on San Felipe Rd. from Apr. 13 on (†SCR); and one at Pt. Reyes lighthouse May 23 (RS), which Stallcup stated was the first "sanitary" *Marin* record since a 1972 nesting effort. Western Kingbirds were also over-represented, with 47 at Gazos Cr. mouth May 4 (AJ) eclipsing all prior *San Mateo* single-day counts. A Bank Swallow over the Garcia R. flats, *Mendocino*, May 15 (†DT) was a county rarity, while about 50 were at *Sacramento's* only remaining colony on Rossmoor Bar Apr. 2 (EDG).

After the fall/winter montane invasions, remnants lingered into spring. Among these were Clark's Nutcrackers in *Monterey* on Cone Peak Mar. 16 (PEG) and Jack's Peak all season (DHpt); in *San Benito* on San Benito Mt. to May 9 (DLSh, ADeM); and in *San Mateo* on Butano Ridge May 2 (DLSu). Wandering Yellow-billed Magpies far from regular locales included two in *Solano* Mar. 9 (Vallejo and Mare Is.; J. Lentz) and one near Carneros, s. *Napa*, Apr. 20 (P. Burton). The spread of Com. Raven in n. *Monterey* accelerated with first records from many sites on the Monterey Pen. and Big Sur coast (DR, JBo et al.), and a nest on San Juan Grade (ADeM, DLSh). Additional evidence of raven range expansion came from a Metcalf Rd., *Santa Clara*, nest (SCR) and an Alamo, *Contra Costa*, pair during March (JMR). Numbers of Red-breasted Nuthatches declined through spring, but some lingered in the lowlands. The last wintering Ruby-crowned Kinglets usually go by early May, but one singing along Butano Cr., *San Mateo*, May 28 was remarkably late (DLSu).

THRUSHES TO DICKCISSEL

Most winter wandering Townsend's Solitaires left by mid-March, but exceptions were on San Benito Mt. to May 9 (†DLSh, ADeM), and vagrants appeared at Piper Slough, *Contra Costa*, Apr. 26 (M. Havman)

and outer Pt. Reyes May 17 (M. Lichen). A Phainopepla over a Sacramento yard Apr. 10 (TDM) was rare on the C.V. floor.

SA A mated pair of **Bell's Vireos** at a likely nest site near Gilroy May 13-28 (ph. †SCR) provided *Santa Clara's* first breeding evidence since 4 eggs were collected in 1932 [W.E. English, *Condor* 39:39-40; another published report of a banded bird (*W. Birds* 19:10) proved erroneous (R. Mewaldt, *fide* WGB)]. Intensive efforts to revive the population of this endangered subspecies in s. California may send more potential colonizers our direction. Meanwhile, efforts to reduce cowbird parasitism (the biggest current hurdle facing this species now that habitat is badly fragmented) resulted in the removal of some 150 cowbirds along the Salinas R., *Monterey/San Luis Obispo* border, an area that also hosted a Bell's Vireo nest in the last decade (JBo).

Vagrant Red-eyed Vireos were at Princeton Harbor, *San Mateo*, May 18 (RSTh); Big Sur R. mouth, *Monterey*, May 29 (JBo); and Golden Gate Park, S.F., also May 29 (ASH). The Big Sur R. mouth also had two Tennessee Warblers (May 9 & 26, the former bird banded), three N. Parulas in May (plus another three in June; JBo, CHo, DR, RC), and two Chestnut-sideds (May 17 & 25), adding to its luster as a premier site for spring rarities. *San Mateo* had a Tennessee at El Granada May 31 (BS) and a N. Parula on San Bruno Mt. May 31 (PJM). A rare spring Magnolia Warbler was at Trinidad S.P., *Humboldt*, May 29 (TWL). Six Palms, four Black-and-whites, and four Am. Redstarts (some of each were lingering winterers) seemed about average for spring. Rarer Ovenbirds were on Pt. Reyes May 18 (RS) and Elk Head, *Humboldt*, May 27 (TWL). Four MacGillivray's Warblers along Gazos and Butano creeks Mar. 31 were very early (BMcK). The wintering Hooded Warbler near San Jose was last seen Mar. 12 (SCR, †AME).

It was an excellent spring for both Yellow-breasted Chats and Blue Grosbeaks, riparian-loving species which have been on the decline in our Region. Some 48 migrant chats were banded at Big Sur R. mouth after Apr. 14, and nesting evidence was obtained at previously unknown sites in *Santa Clara*. The latter county also had its first presumed nesting pair of Blue Grosbeaks in Ed Levin

Park from Apr. 19 on (MMR et al.), plus three widely scattered birds. Elsewhere, a singing male was on territory in *San Benito* Apr. 26 (KVV, CT); 5 territories were located in s. *Monterey* in May (J&HBa, JBo, RFT), and 2 more on Patterson Pass Rd., *Alameda* (R. Cimeno). Rounding out these grosbeak records were three at Piper Slough May 8 (GFi) and one near Hensley L., *Madera*, May 4 (SAG). Four Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were located in *Monterey* and *San Mateo* (the latter included a winterer to Mar. 30). More interesting was a female Dickcissel in a Pescadero yard Apr. 6–17 (†P. M. Saraceni, m.ob.).

SA For Black-chinned, Black-throated, and Grasshopper sparrows, "it was a very good year" (hum Sinatra as you read this). Singing Black-chinneds were present at all sorts of new places in *Santa Clara*, *San Mateo*, and *Stanislaus*, although breeding evidence was obtained only in the first county. Singing birds were near Hume L., *Fresno* (SAG), and at the Red Mt. trailhead, *Trinity* (GjH), in early May, providing data from poorly known locales. The only sour note was an apparent loss of a disjunct northern population on Gunsight Ridge, *Siskiyou*, after the last singing bird there May 18 (RE). Black-throated Sparrows were recorded from such diverse locales as Paicines Apr. 15 (ADeM; potential first for *San Benito*, no †); the Killgore Hills, *Siskiyou*, May 16 (RE); and Black Point, *Mono*, May 24 (ES). But most astonishing were singers on the Sierran w. slope. In fall 1992, the Cleveland Corral fire burned 40,000 acres in El Dorado N.F. In late May, four males were on territory in Crystal Basin along Granite Springs Rd., *El Dorado* (WEH, GFi). Although the Black-throated Sparrow sometimes exhibits dramatic (and temporary) range expansions, its appearance was unexpected. Similar nesting evidence from the w. slope was obtained only in 1974 (*Butte*), 1984 (*El Dorado*), and 1985 (*Tulare*). The incessant buzz of Grasshopper Sparrows was heard in exceptional numbers throughout the coastal range from *Humboldt* to *Monterey* (m.ob.), with outliers to the w. *Yolo* foothills and Cosumnes R. Preserve, *Sacramento*, May 24 (JTr).

SPARROWS TO FINCHES

The only Clay-colored Sparrow was at a Sebastopol, *Sonoma*, feeder Apr. 10 (RoM). A rare coastal Brewer's Sparrow was along Pilarcitos Cr., *San Mateo*, May 18 (RSTh).

Scarce spring Lark Buntings turned up on Crabtree Rd., *Stanislaus*, Apr. 27 (HMR) and near Half Moon Bay, *San Mateo*, May 10 (RSTh). But the rarest of all was a singing **Le Conte's Sparrow** at L. Earl, *Del Norte*, May 21–25 (ADB, †DFx, ph. MMR et al.).

The drum beat of Great-tailed Grackles moving N pounded on with six more in *Monterey* Apr. 7–May 27 (KVV, SRv, GePh, JMa et al.), and males in Yosemite Valley, *Mariposa*, Apr. 6 (S. Recilo) and Mesa L., *Sacramento*, May 2 (LEd). Left-over Cassin's Finches from the fall/winter incursion were stranded from San Benito Mt. (to May 8; ADeM, DLSh) to feeders in Pacific Grove, *Monterey* (AB), and Hayward and Oakland, *Alameda* (all in mid-March; KGH, JSL). Likewise, Red Crossbills lingered on the coast or in piney lowlands (breeding can be expected), and unseasonal Evening Grosbeaks were reported widely into mid-May. Unrelated to the montane invasion, Lawrence's Goldfinches appeared in unusually high numbers, with nesting pairs in coastal *Monterey* and *San Mateo*, scattered birds n. into *Mendocino* and *Trinity* (where they are scarce; RJK, DT, GjH et al.), and around the C.V. foothills of *Yolo*, *El Dorado*, and *Calaveras* (SCH, WEH, JCV et al.).

CORRIGENDA

The Laysan Albatross that has been faithful to Pt. Arena harbor during the past few years was first seen Feb. 27, 1994 (JBo), one year before it was reported to us. Two warbler comments in *AFN* 50:994 need amendment. Breeding Bird Atlas work is proving that MacGillivray's Warbler is rather widespread and local (not "rare") in the coast ranges of *San Mateo/Santa Cruz*, and the nesting Com. Yellowthroats cited were in *San Mateo* (not *Santa Clara*).

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Place names that are frequently mentioned, but very long, may be abbreviated in a form such as "C.B.B.T." or "W.P.B.O." Such local abbreviations will be explained in a key at the beginning of the particular regional report in which they are used. Standard abbreviations that are used throughout *Field Notes* are keyed on page 837.

southern pacific coast region



GUY MCCASKIE

It was unusually dry throughout the period, with none of the storm fronts that push south along the coast at this time of the year reaching Southern California. Observers on the coast were unable to find concentrations of landbirds, even during the peak migration time between late April and early May, and made such comments as “a lackluster spring for landbirds” and “a less than exciting period.” However, some of the summer visitors arrived early, as indicated by the presence of territorial Yellow Warblers and Yellow-breasted Chats in the Prado Basin of northwest *Riverside*/southwest *San Bernardino* on the early dates of March 25 and April 1 reported by Pike. To the east in *Imperial*, *Riverside*, *San Bernardino*, and particularly *Kern*, numbers of migrant landbirds were greater than expected, and included an exceptional variety of rarities, giving observers in that area one of the most exciting springs in memory. Why observers to the north in *Inyo* considered the

period “boring,” except for three days of excitement in late May, is open to speculation. Did the migrants passing through the eastern part of the Region move up into the Sierra Nevada, through such locations as Butterbrecht Springs at the southern end of these mountains, and avoid *Inyo*, or did they fly over the area without stopping at watched locations in the Owens Valley and desert oases to the east?

Abbreviations: C.L. (*China L. Naval Air Weapons Station, extreme n.e. Kern Co.*); E.A.F.B. (*Edwards Air Force Base, s.e. Kern Co.*); F.C.R. (*Furnace Cr. Ranch, Death Valley National Monument, Inyo Co.*); I.M.P.S. (*Iron Mt. Pumping Station in s.e. San Bernardino Co.*); L.A.C.N.H.M. (*Los Angeles County Natural History Museum*); N.E.S.S. (*north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside Co.*); S.B.C.M. (*San Bernardino County Museum*); S.C.R.E. (*Santa Clara R. Estuary near Ventura, Ventura Co.*); S.D.N.H.M. (*San Diego Natural History Museum*); S.E.S.S. (*south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial Co.*); S.F.K.R.P. (*South Fork Kern River*

Preserve near Weldon, Kern Co.). Since virtually all rarities in s. California are seen by many observers, only the observer(s) initially finding and identifying the bird are included. Documentation for species on the California Bird Records Committee (CBRC) review list is forwarded to the CBRC Secretary and archived at the Western Foundation for Vertebrate Zoology in Camarillo.

MOUNTAIN FOREST BIRDS

Some of the mountain forest birds that invaded this Region during the fall of 1996, and remained through the winter, were still in evidence into the spring period.

Most of the Lewis's Woodpeckers had moved N by March, but three remained in e. *Orange* through Apr. 26 (WG), and another was still present in La Cañada Flintridge, *Los Angeles*, at the end of the period (KLG).

A flock of eight Pinyon Jays near Ventucopa in n.e. *Ventura* Mar. 22 (DDJ) was unexpected; 13 in Ridgecrest, *Kern*, May 4 (DMo) and six-eight at nearby Galileo Hill May 11 (SJP) were at desert oases far from any area of normal occurrence. Not unexpected, considering the scale of last fall's influx, were continued reports of out-of-range Clark's Nutcrackers, such as one in the Santa Lucia Mts. of *San Luis Obispo* May 3 (JSR), one in the Laguna Mts. of *San Diego* May 31 (GLR), and a flock of 12 at Weldon, *Kern*, May 15 (KP), with four more near there June 2 (SAL).

Small numbers of Red-breasted Nuthatches were still present in the coastal lowlands and at some desert locations into April, with stragglers remaining to the end of April in *San Diego*, early May in *Santa Barbara*, and to the end of May in *San Luis Obispo*.

Cassin's Finches appeared to have departed the foothill areas of *Santa Barbara* by early April, but numbers were still present in the coastal lowlands of *San Diego* and *Los Angeles* into April, with concentrations such as 500 in Water Canyon at the base of the San Gabriel Mts. of *Los Angeles* Apr. 4 (MSM) suggesting many thousands were still present along the s. edge of these mountains at this time. Red Crossbills were

still to be found in the coastal lowlands of *San Diego* and *Orange* through April and into early May, and similar numbers remained at desert locations in *Los Angeles* and *Kern* into mid- and late May, with six still present as far south as Brawley, *Imperial*, as late as May 3 (RH). A wintering flock of 25 Evening Grosbeaks in the foothills of the San Bernardino Mts. remained through early April, but stragglers were reported into May, with one in Pine Valley, *San Diego*, May 9–13 (ES); another in the nearby Laguna Mts. May 15 (RAH); two in Los Osos, *San Luis Obispo*, May 28 (M&PC); and one in California City, *Kern*, June 1 (MAP) all being noteworthy.

LOOKS TO WATERFOWL

A Horned Grebe at C.L. Apr. 23–May 10 (MTH) was in an area of California where very few have been found. A Red-necked Grebe, rare in S. California, was at the Santa Maria R. mouth, *Santa Barbara*, Apr. 17 (WW).

A sick Short-tailed Shearwater captured on the beach in Coronado, *San Diego*, Apr. 28 (BF) and another found dead there May 2 (EC) were late for S. California. A decomposed Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel on the beach in Coronado May 26 (BF) was unusually far south.

An ad. Little Blue Heron at Bolsa Chica, *Orange*, May 4–18 (TS) was the only one found away from s. coastal *San Diego*, where resident in small numbers. An ad. Tricolored Heron at N.E.S.S. May 3–6 (GMcC) and another adult at S.E.S.S. May 3 (GMcC) were in an area where this species is considered very rare to casual. A Reddish Egret, a rare but regular straggler to the coast of extreme S. California, was at Bolsa Chica Apr. 24–May 11 (PK), joined by a second Apr. 30–May 2 (DPe). An ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was again present with nesting Black-crowned Night-Herons in La Jolla, *San Diego*, Mar. 1–May 3 (AME), having first been seen in this area in October 1981.

A Wood Duck at N.E.S.S. Mar. 29 (GMcC) was in an area where few have occurred. A male Eur. Wigeon near Bishop, *Inyo*, Apr. 10–13 (JMF) and another on San Elijo Lagoon, *San Diego*, Apr. 22 (MT) were the latest of the wintering birds in this Region to depart. The female Harlequin Duck found at the *Los Angeles/Ventura* line Jan. 7 was last seen Mar. 8 (ST). The half-dozen Oldsquaws along the coast in March and April were expected, but two photographed at Pico Rivera, *Los Angeles*, Mar. 9 (LSc) were inland. A flock of 900 Surf

Scoters on L. Henshaw in the mountains of *San Diego* Mar. 23 (GMcC, TRC) were probably forced down by stormy weather, and give an indication as to the number of these birds moving undetected across the interior of s.e. California in spring on their way N from wintering grounds in the Gulf of California.

RAPTORS TO CRANES

An elusive ad. **Common Black-Hawk** at Oasis, *Riverside*, was seen by birders on only 7 occasions between Mar. 28–May 2 (MAP), despite much looking; an adult at nearby Thousand Palms Oasis April 13, 1985 (*W. Birds* 20:11–18, 1989) is the only one previously recorded in California. Up to eight Harris's Hawks remained around Borrego Springs, *San Diego*, through the period (RT), and two more were in Palm Springs, *Riverside*, May 10 (LRS). Nineteen Swainson's Hawks near Borrego Springs Mar. 17 (PRJ) and 16 over S.F.K.R.P. Apr. 6 (SAL) represented the largest flocks reported this spring, and one at Seal Beach, *Orange*, Mar. 30 (SGM) was the only one on the immediate coast. The Zone-tailed Hawk that spent the winter in Santa Barbara/Goleta was last seen Apr. 4 (BN), and an immature photographed at F.C.R. May 24–25 (MAP) was the 4th to be found in *Inyo*. A Peregrine Falcon at E.A.F.B. May 4 (MTH) was only the 3rd to be found in e. *Kern*.

An exceptionally late and out-of-place Sandhill Crane was at Upper Newport Bay, *Orange*, May 4 (JS).

PLOVERS TO TERNS

Six wintering Pacific Golden-Plovers were still present at Seal Beach Apr. 26 (TEW), but an alternate-plumaged individual on s. San Diego Bay May 8–11 (DPa) was the only migrant reported. A Mt. Plover near Bishop, *Inyo*, Mar. 15 (ChH) was away from areas of normal occurrence.

Since Solitary Sandpipers are normally rare in spring, the presence of two inland at Desert Center, *Riverside*, Apr. 26 (GH), one at Baker, *San Bernardino*, May 4 (AME), and two at F.C.R. Apr. 17–19 (CrH), and single birds along the coast in Irvine, *Orange*, Apr. 26 (BAA), San Pedro, *Los Angeles*, Mar. 29 (JAJ), and near Cayucos, *San Luis Obispo*, Apr. 22 (KMH) were of note. Two Black Turnstones, rare to casual inland, were found on the Salton Sea, with one near Salton City May 3 (GMcC) and the other at S.E.S.S. May 25 (KLG). About 2000 Surfbirds, along with hundreds of other shorebirds, feeding along a stretch of



Immature Zone-tailed Hawk at Furnace Creek Ranch, Death Valley, California, on May 25, 1997. Only the fourth record for Inyo County. Photograph/Tom Heindel



Far more Franklin's Gulls than usual passed through the southwestern states this season. This adult was at Edwards Air Force Base, California, on May 11, 1997. Photograph/Matt T. Heindel

beach at Seal Beach Mar. 24 (TJ) were evidently attracted to that location by Grunion (a small fish that lays its eggs in the wet sand during very high tides) eggs. The only Semipalmated Sandpiper reported was one at N.E.S.S. May 10 (GMcC). A Baird's Sandpiper, most unusual in spring, was at E.A.F.B. May 15–26 (MTH). One can only guess at the number of Red-necked Phalaropes that moved N through the Santa Barbara Channel Apr. 28–May 1 from counts such as 125,000 in 1.5 hrs. at Goleta Pt. Apr. 28 (JEL), and similar numbers at East Beach in Santa Barbara Apr. 29 (JEL).

A South Polar Skua off Seal Beach May 18 (DP) would appear to be only the 2nd seen off *Orange*. A Laughing Gull in Goleta, *Santa Barbara*, May 6 (DDJ) was on the coast, where it is rare. Far more than the expected number of Franklin's Gulls passed through the Region as indicated by more

than 175 reported between Apr. 26–June 2, including an impressive 85 on the Salton Sea May 26 (MAP, KLG, MB); one in Anaheim, *Orange*, Mar. 6–22 (DB) had probably wintered locally, and another near Independence, *Inyo*, Apr. 12 (RP) was somewhat early. Heermann's Gulls are rare inland, especially so away from the Salton Sea, so an adult at S.E.S.S. May 4 to the end of the period (KCM) and another at E.A.F.B. May 10–11 (MTH) were of note. Three Herring Gulls in e. *Kern* (Apr. 26 & 27 and May 22–24; MTH) and another at Owens L., *Inyo*, Mar. 27 (RAH) were in an area of California where this species is rarely found. A somewhat late Thayer's Gull was at N.E.S.S. May 3–10 (GMCC). A pale-winged first-year gull in Anaheim Mar. 8–15 (GLT), was joined by a similar looking gull on Mar. 15 (DRW), were variously identified as Iceland and Thayer's gulls; multiple reports of Iceland Gulls in California are currently on hold by the CBRC awaiting a taxonomic decision by the American Ornithologists' Union. Five Glaucous Gulls reported from the coast during March and April were more than expected; a late first-year individual was near Oceanside, *San Diego*, May 4 (RP) and another was inland at N.E.S.S. May 3–10 (GMCC).

A **Sandwich Tern** was present with nesting Elegant Terns at Bolsa Chica, May 9 through the period (JA, CTC), and was believed to be the same individual present at this location each of the past 2 summers. An unprecedented movement of Least Terns into s.e. California placed two near Seeley, *Imperial*, May 31 (GMCC); single birds on Ramer L., *Imperial*, May 3 (RH), N.E.S.S. May 3 (PAG), and Desert Center Apr. 28 (AS) and May 11 (MAP); three together near Lancaster, *Los Angeles*, May 31–June 1 (AH); and single birds in Helendale, *San Bernardino*, June 1 (MAP), California City, *Kern*, May 17–18 (MF), C.L. May 22 (MTH) and at Death Valley Junction, *Inyo*, May 25 (MAP). A **Sooty Tern** with nesting Elegant Terns at Bolsa Chica Mar. 26 through the period (CTC) was believed to be the same individual at this location each of the past 3 summers; another was seen at s. San Diego Bay Apr. 15–16 (MG, DWA).

DOVES TO VIREOS

A White-winged Dove in Goleta May 10 (RPH) was the only one found along the coast, and another in Independence Apr. 10–14 (A&LK) was a little to the north of this species' normal range. Up to six Inca Doves at F.C.R. in May included two juve-

niles believed to have been hatched locally (MSM, T&JH). A pair of Com. Ground-Doves was still present in Nipomo, *San Luis Obispo*, May 29 (PAW), this being at the n. extreme of this species' range along the coast of California. One in Arcadia, *Los Angeles*, May 11 (MSM) was away from areas of normal occurrence.

A Yellow-billed Cuckoo at S.F.K.R.P. May 17 (BM) was unusually early, and another at c. 6500 ft near Big Pines in the San Gabriel Mts., *Los Angeles*, June 2 (TN) was not only at an unusual locality, but also one of a very few found away from the limited breeding localities in California.

Two Chimney Swifts over downtown Los Angeles May 8 (KLG) were the first of the small number now present at this location every summer, and two over California City May 25 (MTH) provided the 4th record for *Kern*. A male Black-chinned Hummingbird on Santa Catalina I. May 9 (PU) is believed to be the first for the Channel Islands.

The wintering Least Flycatcher in Costa Mesa, *Orange*, was last seen Mar. 30 (JEP); a singing Least Flycatcher at S.F.K.R.P. May 14–18 (MHa) was the first to be found in *Kern* in spring. An E. Phoebe on Pt. Loma Apr. 1–2 (REW) is one of a very few to be found in California in spring. A Dusky-capped Flycatcher on Pt. Loma, *San Diego*, Apr. 12–May 1 (PAG) had probably been present all winter, since an unidentified *Myiarchus* was seen at this location Jan. 19 (BF). Single Brown-crested Flycatchers in the Granite Mts. of e. *San Bernardino* May 17–18 (MAP) and at F.C.R. May 27 (MSM) appeared to be migrants far from known nesting localities. Four E. Kingbirds were reported, with single birds in the e. part of the Region at I.M.P.S. May 20 (AS) and Galileo Hill, *Kern*, May 29–30 (MAP), and along the coast in Westminster, *Orange*, May 31 (TEW) and s. Vandenberg A.F.B., *Santa Barbara*, May 21 (MAH).

A Chestnut-backed Chickadee in Carpinteria, *Santa Barbara*, Apr. 19–May 9 (MAH) was s. of this species' range. Two Varied Thrushes on Pt. Loma May 4 (TRC) and another there May 17 (REW) were far south and unusually late. Two Bendire's Thrashers at Smoke Tree Wash in the Anza-Borrego Desert S.P. Mar. 9 (PJ) may have been on a breeding territory, but one near Seeley Mar. 21 (RH) was a migrant.

A White-eyed Vireo photographed near Cantil May 26 (MTH) was the 5th to be found in *Kern*. A singing Bell's Vireo at S.F.K.R.P. Apr. 10 (SAL) was well outside this species' present-day range in California.

A Gray Vireo photographed in Redondo Beach, *Los Angeles*, May 11 (MHe) was one of a very few ever to be found away from known nesting localities in S. California. A male Yellow-throated Vireo, a casual to accidental straggler to California, was present in Westminster May 29–30 (BED), but two others in May lack documentation. Three Red-eyed Vireos were reported, with one at Morongo Valley, *San Bernardino*, May 21 (EAC), another near Chino, *San Bernardino*, June 8 (DPe), and the 3rd at Butterbred Springs, *Kern*, May 29–30 (MAP)

WOOD WARBLERS

A male Blue-winged Warbler, a species rarely found in California, was at Butterbred Springs, located in the foothills at the s. end of the Sierra Nevada Mts n. of California City, *Kern*, June 8 (MTH). A male Golden-winged Warbler, a little more frequent straggler to California than the previous species, was in California City, *Kern*, May 31 (ST). Four Tennessee Warblers—with one at F.C.R. May 31 (CK), another at nearby Indian Ranch May 28 (MSM), a 3rd at Butterbred Springs June 8 (MTH), and the 4th in Huntington Beach, *Orange*, May 17–18 (JSB)—were fewer than expected. A dozen N. Parulas scattered throughout the Region (seven in the e. portion of the Region and five w. of the coast range) between Apr. 27 and June 3 was about the expected number. A Chestnut-sided Warbler in Huntington Beach May 15 (BED) was the only one reported. The only Magnolia Warblers reported were three in e. *Kern*, with one at Galileo Hill May 11 (BD), another in California City May 17 (NF), and the 3rd at Butterbred Springs May 31 (ST). A male Black-throated Blue Warbler, most unusual in spring, was in California City May 26 (JCW). A male Blackburnian Warbler, also most unusual in spring, was on s. Vandenberg AFB June 7 (MAH). Four Yellow-throated Warblers—with single birds on Pt. Loma Apr. 10 (PAG), at Mesquite Springs in Death Valley N.P. May 24 (RPH), Crystal L. in the San Gabriel Mts. May 26 (JF), and in Westminster May 29 (BED)—was more than expected. The Prairie Warbler found in Burbank, *Los Angeles*, Mar. 10 (GP) was last seen Mar. 25, and another at Butterbred Springs May 26 (SS) was the 2nd to be found in *Kern* at this time of the year. A wintering Palm Warbler remained in El Monte, *Los Angeles*, through Apr. 19 (PB), a single bird in Goleta Mar. 20–Apr. 8 (DC) and another there Apr. 20 (JEL) had probably wintered locally rather than being

Among the many interesting eastern strays found in Kern County, California, during the season was this Golden-winged Warbler at California City on May 31, 1997. Photograph/Matt T. Heindel



spring vagrants. A male Bay-breasted Warbler, rarely found in this Region in recent years, was photographed at Butterbredt Springs May 25–26 (TEW). A male **Cerulean Warbler** photographed near Bishop May 23 (T&JH) was the first to be found in *Inyo*, and one of a very few recorded in California. About 20 Black-and-white Warblers reported from as many localities scattered throughout the Region between Apr. 14 and May 30 was close to expected numbers, but less than a dozen Am. Redstarts, all in the e. portion of the Region between May 16 and June 8, was far less than normal. A male Prothonotary Warbler at Galileo Hill May 14–17 (AS) was the only one reported this spring. Thirteen Ovenbirds in the e. portion of the Region between May 11 and June 8 was more than expected, but one on Pt. Loma May 17–18 (REW) was the only one found along the coast. A wintering N. Waterthrush in Irvine, *Orange*, remained through Apr. 5 (RAE); three N. Waterthrushes in the e. part of the Region in May was far below average. A dead Kentucky Warbler was picked up in Ridgecrest, *Kern*, in mid-late May (SE, *L.A.C.M.). Ten Hooded Warblers were found in the e. part of the Region, with one at Cottonwood Springs in Joshua Tree N.M. May 6 (BP), another at I.M.P.S. May 20 (AS), and eight more in e. *Kern* between late April and June 12 (DVB, MTH, MAP, BS, LSa, REW). A Painted Redstart photographed at Butterbredt Springs May 4 (JD) was a long overdue first for *Kern*.

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

Seven Summer Tanagers in May, most probably stragglers from the nominate population, w. and n. of known breeding localities in the s.e. portion of the Region, was about average for this time of the year.

Single wintering Rose-breasted Grosbeaks remained in Santa Barbara through Apr. 10 (FS) and in Ventura through Mar. 8

(JA). Fifteen Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and about 25 Indigo Buntings at as many locations scattered throughout the Region during May was about average for these 2 species. A female Dickcissel, most unusual in spring, was near Bishop May 24 (T&JH).

Since Clay-colored Sparrows are rarely found in spring, single individuals at Desert Center May 11 (MAP) and at I.M.P.S. the same day (MAP) were of note. A Black-chinned Sparrow in California City May 9–11 (DVB) was only the 3rd to be found at a desert oasis in this part of the Region. The Lark Bunting found in Bishop Nov. 10 remained through Apr. 10 (J&DP), and single spring stragglers were near La Panza, *Los Angeles*, Apr. 16 (JS), at L. Perris, *Riverside*, Apr. 19 (PD) and along the Colorado R. north of Needles, *San Bernardino*, May 11 (EAC). A Harris's Sparrow found in Lompoc, *Santa Barbara*, Feb. 9 remained through May 4 (PR) and another was in Lone Pine, *Inyo*, May 10 (JW). The latest of the wintering White-throated Sparrows were single birds in Goleta through Apr. 17 (KB) and Los Osos, *San Luis Obispo*, through May 1 (JP); one in Jawbone Canyon May 10 (REW) and another at nearby Butterbredt Springs May 23 (REW) were spring vagrants. A Golden-crowned Sparrow near Lompoc May 21 (DMi) and a singing Gray-headed Junco at I.M.P.S. May 26 (MAP) were both unusually late migrants.

Only four Bobolinks were found, with two at Desert Center May 11 (MAP), one in California City May 26 (DVB), and the 4th at Galileo Hill June 7 (DVB). The male **Common Grackle** found in Torrance Mar. 3 remained through Mar 24 (MHe) and was accompanied by a female Mar. 17–24 (MHe); another was seen in flight over Pt. Loma May 13 (REW). A male Bronzed Cowbird at Desert Center Apr. 28– May 12 (AS) was the only one found away from along the Colorado R. and around the

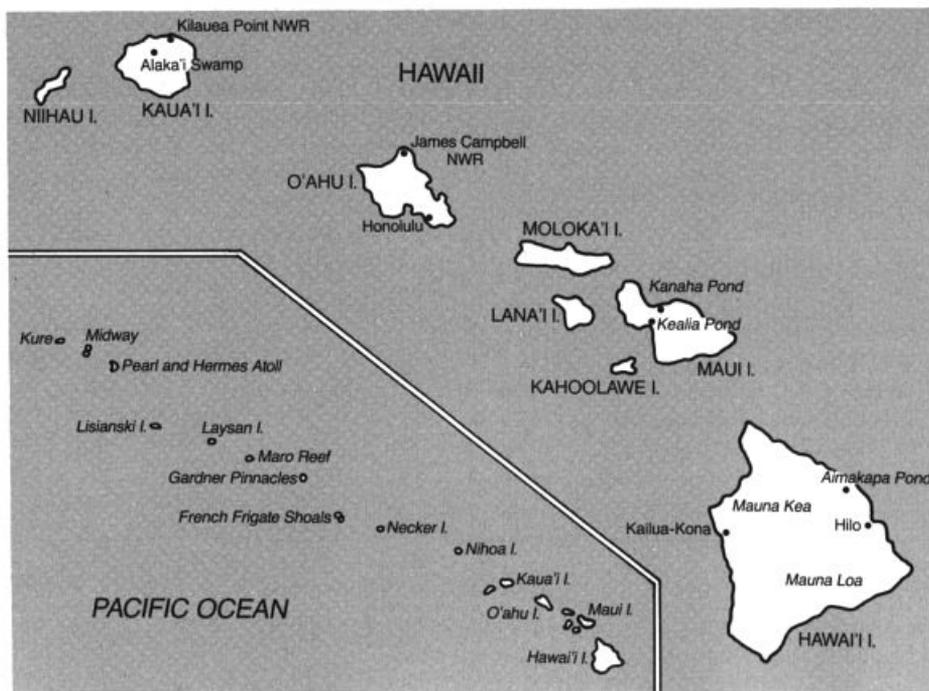
Salton Sea. Single Baltimore Orioles in Huntington Beach May 17 (JSB) & 26 (JEP), and another in Mojave, *Kern*, May 25 (DVB) were the only three reported.

A female **Black Rosy-Finch** in Aspen-dell, *Inyo*, Apr. 6 (SJP) was at the same feeder where a similar looking bird was present Feb. 11–15, 1995.

Cited observers (county coordinators bold-faced): Jim Abernathy, Douglas W. Aguillard, Bruce A. Aird, Peter Barnes, Dick Barth, Marc Better, David V. Blue, Jeffery S. Boyd, Karen Bridgers, Eugene A. Cardiff, Therese R. Clawson, Charles T. Collins, D. Compton, Luke Cole, **Elizabeth Copper** (San Diego), Michael and Peggy Craig (M&PC), Brian E. Daniels, James Danzenbaker, Pat Delahunty, Bill Deppe, **Don Desjardin** (Ventura), **Tom M. Edell** (San Luis Obispo), Alan M. Eisner, Richard A. Erickson, Samuel Fairchild, John M. Finkbeiner, Jon Fisher, Mary Freeman, Nick Freeman, Brian Foster, **Kimball L. Garrett** (Los Angeles), Peter A. Ginsburg, Wayne Gochenour, Michael Green, Murrelet Haltermann (MHa), K. Melody Hamilton, Robert A. Hamilton, **Matthew T. Heindel** (Kern), Mitch Heindel (MHe), **Tom & Jo Heindel** (Inyo), Gail Hightower, Roger Higson, Ron P. Hirst, Craig Hohenberger (CrH), Mark A. Holmgren, Chris Howard (ChH), Andrew Howe, Jerry A. Johnson, Tom Jones, Paul R. Johnson, Paul Jorgensen, Clay Kempf, Andrew and Leah Kirk (A&LK), Peter Knap, Steven A. Laymon, **Joan E. Lentz** (Santa Barbara), Bob Meade, D. Mitchell (DMi), Kathy C. Molina, Donald Moore (DoM), Steven G. Morris, B. Najar, Ted Nordhagen, Dennis Parker (DPa), Jim and Debby Parker (J&DP), Robert Patton, Dharm Pellegrini (DPe), John Perkins, Stacy J. Peterson, Gerald Phillips, Karen Phillips, James E. Pike, Roy Poucher, Brian Prescott, Geoffrey L. Rogers, P. Rosso, James S. Royer, Michael San Miguel, Larry Sansone (LSa), Larry Schmahl (LSc), John Schmitt, Tom Seevey, Arnold Small, Edward Spockcheck, Bob Steele, Susan Steele, F. Stevens, Langdon R. Stevenson, Melanie Tallent, Robert Theriault, Gerald L. Tolman, Steve Tucker, Philip Unitt, Richard E. Webster, Walter Wehtje, Pat A. Wells, Judy Wickman, **Douglas R. Willick** (Orange), Tom E. Wurster, John C. Wilson. An additional 50+ observers who could not be individually acknowledged submitted reports this season.

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hawaiian islands region



ROBERT L. PYLE

Frequent light precipitation continued through the normally dry spring months. At Honolulu airport, 40 inches of rainfall in the 12 months ending in June compares with the annual average of 15–20 inches. Spring nesting conditions were good, and vegetation in drier lowlands remained green into summer. Increasing ecotour visits to Midway Atoll brought more skilled observers and numerous interesting bird sightings, including the first record of Common Cuckoo in the central Pacific.

Abbreviations: H. (*Hawai'i I.*); K. (*Kaua'i I.*); M. (*Maui I.*); O. (*O'ahu I.*); H.R.B.P.: (*prefix for catalog numbers of photos in Hawaii Rare Bird Photograph collection*).

ALBATROSS TO CURLEWS

Among the nesting Black-footed and Laysan albatross at Sand I., Midway, hybrid individuals were sighted 5 times at 4 localities during the first week of April (SB). Interesting transient seabirds observed on a pelagic trip up to 15 mi off Honolulu Apr. 11 included six Mottled Petrels, one **Kermadec Petrel** (excellent †; PP), and 60 Sooty Shearwaters. One grounded Sooty

Shearwater, evidently a victim of light attraction, was picked up on a roadside near Kalaheo, K., Apr. 1, then measured, banded, and released (TT).

The stray Emperor Goose seen by many observers since early January at Kona Village resort, H., was captured and banded Apr. 5, and determined to be a female (P&HB). It departed May 17. Unusual duck species reported included a (Eurasian) Green-winged Teal at Sand I., Midway, May 4–17 (probably wintered; PP); a Cinnamon Teal at Kealia Pond N.W.R., M., Mar. 20–Apr. 16 (MN); and single Gadwalls at 'Ohi'apilo Pond, Moloka'i, Mar. 12 (AE) and at Waiakea Pond in Hilo, H., until at least Apr. 6 (PP). Peregrine Falcons are now regular visitors to Hawaii in winter. Lingers this spring were reported Mar. 21 at Kilauea Military Camp adjacent to Hawaii Volcanoes N.P. (JC); on Mohihi Trail in the Alaka'i Wilderness, K., Mar. 22 (SB,DK); at Sand I., Midway Apr. 2–May 11 (ad. female; SB,PP); and one flying high over downtown Honolulu, O., May 30 (EV).

A small plover identified confidently as a **Common Ringed Plover** was observed well several times Apr. 27–May 27 at Sand I., Midway (PP, JN). Detailed descriptive

notes and photographs (H.R.B.P. 1117–1119) are archived. Toes lacked palmations when examined through scope at 15 meters, and deep tracks in soft mud showed no indication of palmations (H.R.B.P.-1120). A (North American) Whimbrel seen with Bristle-thighed Curlews at Sand I., Midway, May 5–12 (PP; H.R.B.P.-1121, 1122) may have been there since late winter. A flock of 40 Bristle-thigheds was flying high in a thermal over Frigate Pt. on Sand I., Midway, Mar. 27 (SB). Counts of Bristle-thigheds roosting on the taxiway at Sand I. were 51 May 5, 28 May 7, and eight from May 8 onward. Most of the wintering birds probably departed May 7–8, the first clear night after a cloudy, rainy week (PP). Reports of Bristle-thighed Curlews in the Main Hawaiian Islands this spring were three at South Pt., H., Mar. 1 (DK); three at Moloka'i Sea Farms near Kaunakakai, Moloka'i, Mar. 13 (AE; said to have wintered there); and three at James Campbell N.W.R., O., Apr. 10 (PP, RLP), where they definitely did overwinter. In the main islands, Bristle-thigheds have long been scarce transients in fall and rare in spring, but overwintering birds have been reported more frequently in the past decade.

JAEGERS TO OWLS

Wintering Pomarine Jaegers were seen from fishing boats within 15 mi off w. O'ahu Mar. 9 (10; TSu) and Apr. 11 (12; PP et al.), but none May 5 (EV, RLP et al.). The two imm. Ring-billed Gulls at Kealia Pond N.W.R., M., remained until Apr. 8 (PP, MN), and one was last seen Apr. 16 (MN). At Sand I., Midway, first winter individuals of 3 large gull species provided good opportunities for comparison. The Glaucous-winged present in December was last seen Mar. 24, and a Herring Gull was reported Jan. 4–Mar. 25. A fine first-winter Slaty-backed Gull (H.R.B.P.-1123–1127) was present Feb. 11–May 7 (SB, PP et al., good †). A Little Tern in full breeding plumage was at Sand I., Midway, May 22–26, confidently distinguished from Least Tern by the entirely snow-white rump and tail sharply set off from the gray back, and by its characteristic single "check" call (PP et al., good †). Quite high counts of White Terns from boat trips off s.w. O'ahu were made Apr. 11

(25; PP, RLP et al.) and May 5 (60; EV, RLP et al.). Many of the birds were transiting between offshore foraging areas and nesting trees in Honolulu and Waikiki. White Terns in Honolulu are continuing to increase slowly and steadily.

At least one Mourning Dove in a group of three doves was glimpsed briefly May 4 along a road edge near Honu'apo on the s.e. coast of Hawai'i I. (HC, sketch & †), reported by an observer long familiar with Mourning and Spotted doves in California. This locality is well out of normal range for Mourning Doves, which are scarce and localized on the n.w. coast of this island.

At least 12 Hawaiian (Short-eared) Owls, an unusually high concentration, were circling and occasionally landing in fields adjacent to the Lana'i I. airport during the morning of Apr. 17 (PBr).

SA Time marches on for the "old" individual birds that for many years have comprised the last remaining group of wild 'Alala (Hawaiian Crow, severely *Endangered*). Only 2 breeding pairs of "old" wild birds have remained active in recent years. One pair last produced fertile eggs in 1994, and this year produced only one stunted infertile egg. The other pair was unsuccessful last year and did not pair again this year (DB). Two "new" pairs formed this year, and strengthened bonds by beginning initial nest-building attempts. Two birds forming one "new" pair were from the first class incubated and reared in captivity, and released to the wild in 1993. The other "new" pair is a female from the 1993 class, paired with an older wild male of unknown age (DB).

Although indications are encouraging for next year, the major question is whether these captive-reared and released birds can develop the behavioral skills necessary to raise young successfully on their own. If they do, it will mark another successful step forward for the elaborate captive rearing/release program toward the goal of perpetuating a free population of 'Alala successfully reproducing in the wild.

NATIVE HAWAIIAN PASSERINES

In the Mohihi area of the Alaka'i Wilderness Preserve, K., the rare species monitoring team found the season's first nest of Puaiohi

(critically *Endangered*) under construction Mar. 6, a full month earlier than last year. By end of May they had located 60 nests from about 25 pairs, many on their 3rd clutch (TSn). Ten fertile eggs from first clutches were removed and transferred to Keahou Bird Conservation Center near Volcano, H., for incubation. All hatched successfully. The four females hatched at the Center last year from wild eggs laid 4 eggs this spring. All were infertile, since no adult males are yet in the captive flock. Hopes are high that males from this year's hatchings will join females next spring to produce offspring for release later in 1998 (TSn, AL).

An O'ahu 'Amakihi pair nested in a yard in Manoa Valley at the unusually low elevation of 380 ft., well within mosquito range. One chick fledged successfully May 28 (EV). Cooper Society participants on the field trip May 4 to Powerline Rd. off the Saddle Rd., H., found one 'Akiapola'au, six Hawai'i Creepers, and 12 Hawai'i 'Akepa (AE), all *Endangered*.

ALIEN PASSERINES

A Red-vented Bulbul reported flying across the highway near 'Ele'ele, K., Mar. 18 (DK) was not found again, despite intensive searches with audio playbacks and widespread poster displays and requests for information from the community (TT). These bulbuls have become abundant fruit-eating pests throughout O'ahu, and the state wildlife agency is striving to prevent their spread to other islands. One Red-whiskered Bulbul observed in a yard in Kailua, O., May 28 (LP, PP) is further evidence of the impending expansion of this species across the Ko'olau Mts. from Honolulu. Common Waxbills have long been widespread and abundant on O'ahu, but have not been confidently reported from other islands. Three observed at Umipa'a, w. of Kaunakakai, Moloka'i, Mar. 12 (AE) may indicate an incipient expansion. Seven Chestnut Mannikins were seen well at Lana'i I. airport Apr. 17 (PBr). These and the sightings on Maui late last season are the first reports that this species may finally be expanding to islands other than O'ahu and Kaua'i, where it has been well-established for decades.

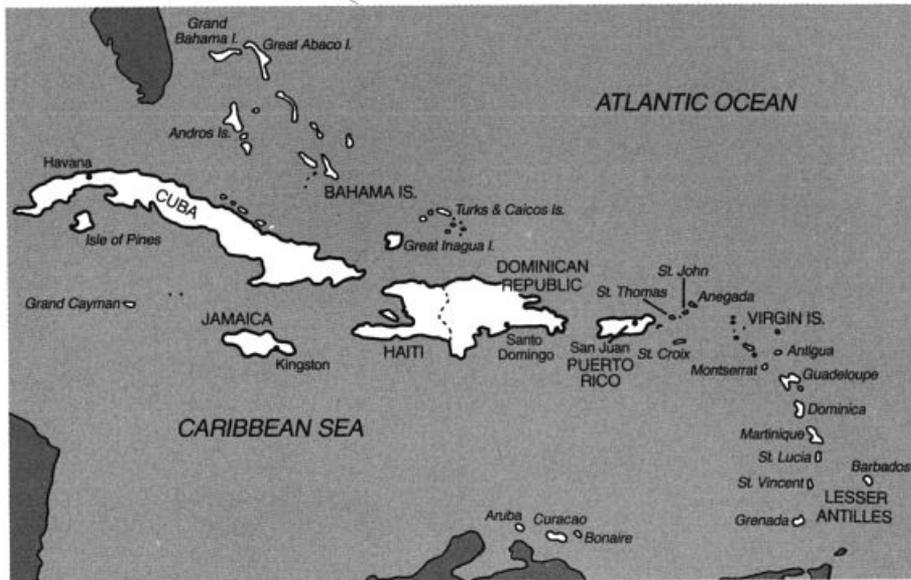
Contributors: Steve Bailey, Paul & Helen Baker, Donna Ball, Phil Bruner, Jay Carlisle, Howard Cogswell, Reg David, Jim Denny, Peter Donaldson, Andrew Engilis, Laura Gorman, Kamal Islam, MaryLou Kelly, Eleanor Koes, David Kuhn, Alan Lieberman, Jim Nestler, Mike Nishimoto, Michael

SA A Eurasian **Common Cuckoo** (*Cuculus canorus*) at Sand I., Midway, May 23 was watched perching and in flight over a period of an hour by at least 6 observers, including 2 very experienced ornithologists (PP, JN). Time in view totaled about 10 minutes at distances as close as 20 meters. The bird was recognized immediately as either a Common or Oriental Cuckoo. The observers made very detailed notes and drawings on the spot, and took some distant but recognizable photographs (H.R.B.P. 1129-1132). Comparing these later with literature and specimens in the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Berkeley established identification of the Midway bird as a Com. Cuckoo, probably of the subspecies *telephonus* with less distinctly marked underparts. Written notes with sketches from 5 observers are archived. No vocalizations were heard. This is the first record of any Eurasian cuckoo for the Hawaiian Is.

Patten, Leilani Pyle, Peter Pyle, Vaughn Sherwood, Kristina Skarin, Ty Smucker, Tom Snetsinger, Don Sterba, Tim Sutterfield, Tom Telfer, Nick Udvardy, Eric VanderWerf, Alice Zacherle.

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west indies region



New Providence, BA, was well e. of its usual spring migration route. Also in the Bahamas, a Limpkin was seen and heard at Harbour Island Mar. 23 (TW et al.), and another was seen at North Eleuthera near Bogue Mar. 24.

POLOVERS THROUGH TERNS

Snowy Plovers, found commonly at Brine Pond, Crooked I., BA, May 4–6 (AB, BH, TW), are probably resident birds. A Piping Plover was seen at Cable Beach, New Providence, BA, Mar. 10 (AB, PD, BH, TW). A Solitary Sandpiper was noted at Great Harbour Cay, South Andros, BA, April 25 (TW). Willets were common on South Andros, BA, Crooked I., and Acklin's I from May 2–8 (AB, BH, TW), both Bahamas. Willets were also noted at Fresh Pond and at Little L., San Salvador, BA (CW et al.). A single Stilt Sandpiper remained until May 10 at the BFS catchment, San Salvador, BA. Remains of a first-winter Bonaparte's Gull were found at Landrail Pt., Crooked I., BA, May 3 (BH) for the first record from the s. Bahamas. Six Herring Gulls were counted Mar. 10 (PD et al.) near the water barge wharf, Nassua, New Providence, BA. A 2nd-year Herring Gull was reported from Spanish Wells Mar. 24 (TW et al.). Gull-billed Terns were considered very common at Crooked I. and Acklin I., BA, May 3–9 (AB, BH, TW). Ten Sandwich and >15 Roseate terns were found roosting at a French Wells sandbar, Crooked I., BA, May 5 (AB, BH, TW). Whether they actually nest at Crooked I. remains to be determined, but their presence in the first week of May suggests they are very close to nesting time and location (RLN). Gull-billed and Least terns were seen at Fresh Pond, San Salvador, BA, while Royal Terns were noted at the s.w. corner off San Salvador, BA, from May 9–11. Bridled and Sooty terns and Brown Noddies were already on territory at Goulding Cay, New Providence, BA, April 30 (AB, TW) where they would very likely be on eggs in 7–10 days. At Gold Rock, Acklins I., BA, Bridled Terns (ca 50 pairs) and Brown Noddies (75 pairs) were also ready to nest by May 9 (AB, AW). Sooty, Bridled, and Noddy terns were very recent arrivals at Gaulin and Cato cays, off San Salvador, BA, May 4 (*vide* CW), where they nest.

ROBERT NORTON

The Bahamas were well represented this season, with reports from Bimini, Berry Islands, New Providence, South Andros, Eleuthera, Long Island, Rum Cay, San Salvador, Crooked Island, Acklins Island, and various satellite cays from late April to mid-May. Ten members of the Ornithological Group of the Bahamas National Trust ventured to Bahamas Field Station, San Salvador, May 9–11 to survey birdlife there. Such reporting of birds at one of the most remote observation sites in the Region—less than 100 kilometers off southeast Florida—in early May is an important indicator of breeding status, as well as habitat use by lingering neotropical migrants from sites close, and accessible, to continental North America.

Abbreviations: BA (*Bahamas*) BFS (*Bahamas Field Station*); BE (*Bermuda*).

TROPICBIRDS THROUGH LIMPKIN

Several pairs of nesting White-tailed Tropicbirds were noted at Gun Bluff and Landrail Pt., Crooked I., BA, May 4 (AB, BH, TW) and another was seen at Gold Rock, Acklins I., BA, May 9 (AB, TW). Brown Pelicans were seen at Acklins I. May 8 and North Bimini (two), BA, May 13–14 (TW), but their breeding status in the Bahamas is still unresolved. Among the

Brown Boobies nesting at White Cay, off San Salvador, BA, May 9–11 (CW et al.) was one pair of nesting Red-footeds that have apparently been established there, in spite of last year's tropical storms and near miss hurricanes, since 1985. Magnificent Frigatebirds were also present with nestlings. Three White Ibis were noted near Stella Maris resort, Long I., BA, Mar. 12 & 15 (TW, BH); and a single White Ibis was recorded daily at Great Harbour Cay, S. Andros, BA, April 26–28 (TW). The juv. White Ibis that wintered at Jubilee Rd., BE, remained until April (AD). Nesting Greater Flamingos (ca 300 nests) have been reported near Salinas Point, Acklins I., BA (*vide* DS). Small flocks were seen at Crooked I., BA, May 5 (AB, BH, TW) and Acklins I., BA, May 8–9 (AB, TW). A Glossy Ibis was seen at Quarters Settlement near Rocky Pt., San Salvador, BA, May 10 (CW et al.). Fifty West Indian Whistling-Ducks appeared for Hallet and White Mar. 14 at Hog Cay, Long I., BA. White-cheeked Pintails numbered 20 at Rum Cay Mar. 14 (TW, BH, WD). A large group (38) of White-cheekeds was noted at Brine Pond, Crooked I., BA, May 3 (AB, BH, TW); adults with six ducklings were noted at French Bay pond, and three others were noted at Crescent Pond near the BFS, San Salvador, BA (CW et al.) from May 9–11. Also at Rum Cay was eight N. Shovelers and 12 Am. Wigeon. A Swallow-tailed Kite reported April 28 (TW) from

DOVES TO BROWN CREEPER

At South Ocean golf course, New Providence, BA, Mar. 18, a Key West Quail-Dove slipped out of the coppice-edge, giving a brief view (BH, TW) for an unexpected treat of this elusive columbid. A singleton Mourning Dove and four White-winged Doves were noted (CW et al.) at San Salvador, BA, May 9–11. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo seen at Crooked I., BA, May 14 (BH, TW) was rather late. Great Lizard-Cuckoos were common at South Andros, BA, May 1–2 (AB, BH, TW). If this species were a part-time nest parasite, what potential host would it choose to raise its young? Five Com. Nighthawks were heard and seen migrating over Bimini May 13 (TW). First arrival Antillean Nighthawks were reported at Lyford Cay, New Providence, BA, April 29 and many were reported thereafter (BH, TW). Courting birds were noted May 7 at Acklins I., BA (AB, AW). Chuck-will's-widows were heard calling (BH) at Lyford Cay, New Providence, BA, Mar. 18. Two Chimney Swifts were seen at Great Harbour Cay, South Andros, BA, April 25 (AW), and two others were noted at Lyford Cay, New Providence, BA, April 30 (AB, AW). An Eastern Kingbird was carefully studied near Sabana Seca, Puerto Rico, Mar. 7 (RR) for one of few recent records of this species in the Greater Antilles. Both N. Rough-winged (two) and Bank swallows (two) were observed at Landrail Pt., Crooked I., BA, May 3, representing new records there (AB, BH, TW). A Brown Creeper overwintered at Bermuda and remained there until Mar. 24 (*vide* AD).

THRASHERS THROUGH ORIOLES

Two Pearly-eyed Thrashers were heard at Rum Cay, BA, Mar. 14 (TW, BH, WD). Although considered fairly common at Crooked I., BA, May 4–6, Pearly-eyed Thrashers were hard to see (AB, BH, TW); and two—possibly four—Pearly-eyed Thrashers were noted near the BFS May 9–11 (CW et al.). It would be worth studying the interactions of this mimid and the resident Bahama and Northern mockingbirds where all 3 species occur. Tantalizingly close to Florida was a Bahama Mockingbird seen at South Bimini, BA, May 14 (TW). A single Cedar Waxwing, a straggler from the larger winter group reported earlier, was noted Mar. 10 at Mt. Vernon, Nassau, New Providence, BA (PD, TW, AB, BH).

And flowing from the mainland to the islands were two Eur. Starlings at North Bimini, BA, May 13 (TW). The quality of

species exchange is, sadly, on the side of the mainland. A Red-eyed Vireo was seen at South Andros, BA, May 1 (TW). Fourteen warbler species were recorded from New Providence, BA, Mar. 18–19 (AB, BH, TW et al.). Blackpoll Warblers were fairly common at Lyford Cay, New Providence, from April 24–May 2 (TW), extending the early passage dates by 2 weeks (Brudenell-Bruce 1975) and at Bimini May 13–14 (AB, BH, TW), although not recorded from Crooked and Acklins Islands. American Redstarts were abundant May 13–14 at Bimini, suggesting a late build-up of migrants leaving the N. Bahamas for mainland destinations (see Table 1.). A female Rose-breasted Grosbeak was noted Mar. 16 at Long I., BA (TW). There's some mixed news on Shiny Cowbird in the Bahamas. No cowbirds were found on South Andros (AB, BH, TW), but a pair [sic] was seen at Lyford Cay, New Providence, April 29–30, not good news. Two Baltimore Orioles were seen at Rum Cay, BA, Mar. 14 (BH). Black-cowled Orioles, a potential host for cowbirds, were considered common at South Andros, BA.

**NEOTROPICAL MIGRANT LANDBIRD
BUILD-UP AT BIMINI, BA, MAY 13–14, 1997**

SPECIES	STATUS
Common Nighthawk	5
Black-throated Blue Warbler	C
Blackpoll Warbler	C
American Redstart	A
Ovenbird	1
Northern Waterthrush	4
Common Yellowthroat	C
Bobolink	8

A = abundant; C = common

ADDENDUM

Included in the report from the Bahamas (TW et al.) was an update on the last date (Feb. 16) the Fish Crow was seen at Grand Bahama (RO).

A late contribution from Iliff on the winter (Dec. 28, 1995–Jan. 4, 1996) birds of Anguilla and St. Martin is appended here, illustrating their meager use by neotropical migrant landbirds in the n.e. Caribbean, whereas migrant shorebirds find salt ponds and lagoons important stopover and wintering sites. Iliff found no migrant landbirds, save one Merlin Dec. 31 at Gulf Pond, Anguilla. Typical winter visitors were Black-bellied (35) and Semipalmated (45) plovers Dec. 30 at Long Salt Pond, Anguilla; however, an Am. Oystercatcher seen Dec. 30 is uncommon in the n.e. Caribbean. Greater (10) and Lesser (100) yellowlegs at

Blowing Pt. pond, Anguilla, Jan. 4 also furnished representative wintering numbers, with smaller counts at various other island locations. Of note were two Whimbrels Jan. 4, also at Blowing Pt. pond, and a host of peeps from Dec. 30–Jan. 4—including regular winter visitors in good numbers: Sanderling (10), and Semipalmated (20), Western (10), and Least (15) sandpipers. Stilt Sandpipers (100), also at Blowing Pt. pond, were in good numbers as well. A Com. Snipe, rather unusual for a dry regime island such as Anguilla, was flushed from its migration roost in sand dunes. Resident Yellow "Golden" Warblers were found in preferred mangrove habitat at Anguilla. Males were already in song (MI).

EXOTICS

Muscovy and Mallards at Hog Cay, Long I., BA; Rock Doves at New Providence, Long I., and N. Eleuthera, BA, and Anguilla and St. Martin; Eur. Collared-Doves at Bimini, South Andros, and Eleuthera, BA; Eur. Starling at Bimini, BA; House Sparrows at Bimini, New Providence, and Eleuthera, BA.

Contributors: Ailene Bainton, Jean Bennett, Sylvia Brown, Barbara Brown, Nancy Cleare, Paul Dean, Wayne Dennis, Bruno Dittmar, Andrew Dobson, Liz Evans, Bruce Hallet, Annabel Hammond, Marshall Iliff, Lionel Levine, David Lincoln, Rick Oliver, Ross Rasmussen, Freddie Schaller, Sloan, Ton Vlugman, Carolyn Wardle, Tony, Trina, and Nelson White, Earl Wilson.

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Contact: Wes Biggs, Florida Nature Tours, P.O. Box 618572, Orlando, FL 32861-8572; (407) 363-1360; fax: (407) 363-1887.

ALASKA and RUSSIAN FAR EAST

Petropavlovsk to Nome via Aleutians and Pribilofs aboard the *World Discovery*. Staff ornithologist Arnold Small. May 22–June 5, 1998. Code OB*
Contact: Jim Toolen, Society Expeditions, 2001 Western Avenue, Suite 300, Seattle, WA 98121; (800) 548-8669.

ALASKA—Nome and the Seward Peninsula. Expect Bar-tailed Godwit, Bristle-thighed Curlew, Gyrfalcon, and Bluethroat among 90–100 species. Led by Forrest Davis. Three trips: June 1–7, 8–14, and 15–21, 1998. Code RA*
Contact: Forrest Davis, High Lonesome Ecotours, 570 S. Little Bear Trail, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635; (520) 458-9446; e-mail: hilonesome@earthlink.net

ALASKA/SIBERIA, ALEUTIANS

Archipelago to Kamchatka aboard the *World Discoverer*. Includes Attu. Expect Whiskered Auklet. Leader Peter Harrison. Seventeen days from June 20, 1998. Code OB**
Contact: Werner Zehnder, Zegrahm Expeditions, 1414 Dexter Avenue North, No. 327, Seattle WA 98109; (800) 628-8747; e-mail: zoe@zeco.com

BERING SEA—Kamchatka to Nome, Alaska, via Kommandor, Pribilof/St. Lawrence, and Little Diomed Islands aboard the *World Discoverer*. Expect Steller's Sea Eagle. Whiskered Auklet and Spoon-billed Sandpiper possible. Led by Peter Harrison. Seventeen days from July 4, 1998. Code OB**

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Africa

SOUTH AFRICA—Transvaal and Natal plus a Western Cape extension. Leaders Ken Newman, author of *Newman's Birds of Southern Africa*, Derek Solomon, Phil Hockey (extension), and Chuck Bell. February 27–March 15, 1998. Code A*

Contact: Chuck Bell, Bellbird Safaris, P.O. Box 158, Livermore, CO 80536; (800) 726-0656.

MOROCCO—Birding North Africa—the fringes of the Western Palearctic. Coastal wetlands, Atlas Mountains, and Sahara Desert. Target species include the endangered Bald Ibis or Waldrapp and Double-spurred Francolin. Led by Peter Robers and Ian Hodgson. April 7–23, 1998. Operated by British Tours. Code R/A*

Contact: Carla White, Siemer and Hand Travel, 101 California Street, Suite 1750, San Francisco, CA 94111; (800) 451-4321; e-mail: siemerhand@aol.com

ZIMBABWE and BOTSWANA

Includes Eastern Highlands, Victoria Falls, Chobe, Savut, Moremi, and Okavango Delta. Leaders Derek Solomon and Chuck Bell. September 26–October 17, 1998. Code A*

Contact: Chuck Bell, Bellbird Safaris, P.O. Box 158, Livermore, CO 80536; (800) 726-0656.

Caribbean, Central and South America

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TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO—Trinidad, Tobago, Netherlands Antilles, Orinoco River—voyage aboard the *Yorktown Clipper*. ABA escort Bill Murphy, author of a *Birder's Guide to Trinidad and Tobago*. Exclusive ABA post-cruise extension in Trinidad, including Asa Wright Nature Center led by Bill Murphy. December 22–January 2, 1998. Extension January 2–5. Code GB/OB**, extension R/A*
Contact: Theresa Sherrill, Clipper Cruise Line (800) 325-0010 ext 485. Extension Bill Murphy, Peregrine Enterprises, 1011 Ann Street, Parkersburg, WV 26101; (304) 485-4710.

COSTA RICA/PANAMA—Voyage aboard the *Yorktown Clipper*, including Curu Wildlife Refuge, Marengo Biological Station, Darien Jungle, Panama Canal plus two days of land birding for ABA members from San José. ABA escort Dan Canterbury. March 18–26, 1998. Code GB/OB**

Contact: Denise McConnell, Clipper Cruise Line, 7711 Bonhomme Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63105-1096; (800) 325-0010 ext 485.

GRAND BAHAMA—Goal is to find all 18 resident Caribbean birds and Florida accidentals. Led by Wes Biggs and Eugene Stoccardo. Two trips April 1–4 or 8–11, 1998. Can combine with Dry Tortugas (see Florida). Code R/A*
Contact: Wes Biggs, Florida Nature Tours, P.O. Box 618572, Orlando, FL 32861-8572; (407) 363-1360; fax: (407) 363-1887.

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Hawaii, South Pacific, and Australasia

NEW ZEALAND

North, South, and Stewart Island. Expect over 50 endemics. Leaders Tony Wilson and Chuck Bell. November 15–December 1, 1998. Code A*

Contact: Chuck Bell, Bellbird Safaris, P.O. Box 158, Livermore, CO 80536; (800) 726-0656.

Europe

ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND—Expedition voyage aboard the *Caledonian Star*, including Scilly Isles, Isle

of Man, Inner Hebrides, St. Kilda, Fair Isle, Shetlands, and Bass Rock. Expect a unique cross-section of sea and land birds. Leader Peter Harrison. Fifteen days from May 19, 1998. Code GB/OB**

Contact: Werner Zehnder, Zegrahm Expeditions, 1414 Dexter Avenue North, No. 327, Seattle, WA 98109; (800) 628-8747; e-mail: zoe@zeco.com

FINLAND/NORWAY—Spring migration under the midnight sun. Leaders Jari Peltomak and Chuck Bell. May 22–June 6, 1998. Code A*

Contact: Chuck Bell, Bellbird Safaris, P.O. Box 158, Livermore, CO 80536; (800) 726-0656.

SPAIN—Central and Northern Regions. Spanish steppes, Sierras, Pyrenes, and Ebra Delta. Search for Spanish Eagle, Lammergeier, and Wallcreeper, among others. Leaders Peter Roberts and Ian Hodgson. May 17–June 1, 1998. Operated by British Tours. Code R/A*
Contact: Lauren Woodhouse, Siemer and Hand Travel, 101 California Street, Suite 1750, San Francisco, CA 94111; (800) 451-4321; e-mail: siemerhand@aol.com

BRITAIN—ABA Birding workshop conducted jointly with British Trust for Ornithology. Surveys, banding research projects, migration counts with top British birders. Leader Peter Roberts. August 16–26, 1998. Operated by British Birding Tours. Code R*
Contact: Carla White, Siemer and Hand Travel, 101 California Street, Suite 1750, San Francisco, CA 94111; (800) 451-4321; e-mail: siemerhand@aol.com

Asia

ISRAEL—Spring birding at a migration crossroad. Includes Kfar Blum, Hula Reserve, Mt. Hermon, and four nights in Eliat. Led by Peter Roberts and Ian Hodgson. March 22–April 6, 1998. Operated by British Birding Tours. Code R/A*
Contact: Carla White, Siemer and Hand Travel, 101 California Street, Suite 1750, San Francisco, CA 94111; (800) 451-4321; e-mail: siemerhand@aol.com

MONGOLIA—Gobi Desert, Lammergeier Valley, and Lake Hovsgel. Search for Relict Gull. Leader Chris Leahy, author of *The Birdwatcher's Companion*. May 22–June 7, 1998. Code A/I*
Contact: Denise Gogarty, Nomadic Expeditions, Princeton Corporate Plaza I, 1 Deerpark Drive, Suite M, Monmouth Junction, NJ 08852; (800) 998-6634; e-mail: NomadicEXP@aol.com

TURKEY—Late spring birding among archaeological artifacts. Goksu Delta, Euphrates River, Central Plateau, and Cappadocia. Led by Ian Hodgson, June 2–17, 1998. Operated by British Birding Tours. Code R/A*
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SIBERIA—See Bering Sea and Alaska/Siberia, Aleutians.under North America.

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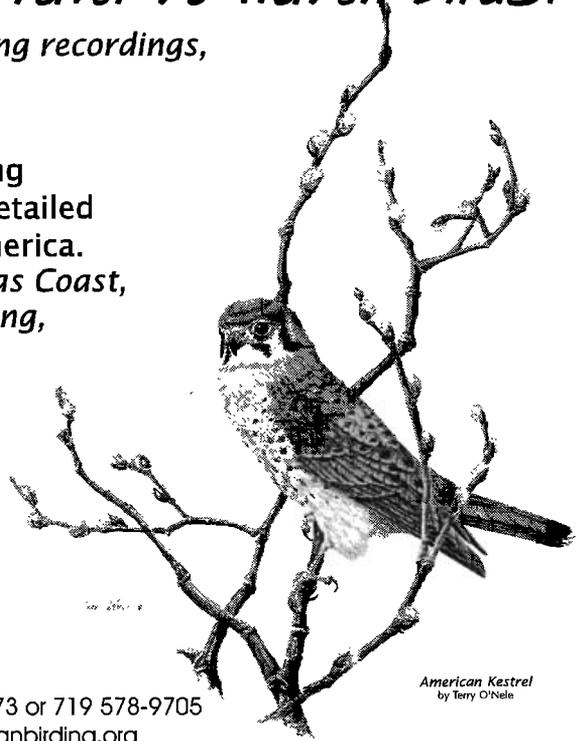
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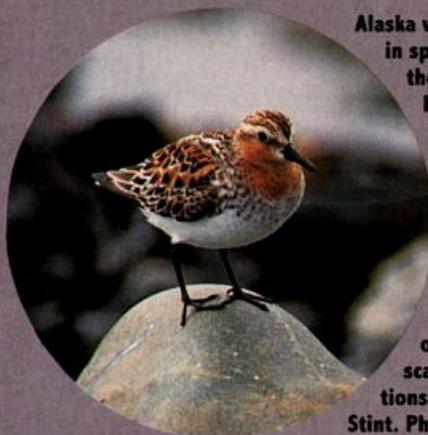
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pictorial highlights

A recent (and ongoing) discovery is the presence of Band-rumped Storm-Petrels, in some numbers, in the Gulf of Mexico. This portrait, taken May 24, 1997, off the Alabama coast, shows the classic pattern of the white from the rump wrapping around to below the plane of the tail. The bird is partway through its wing molt; it appears that the outer three primaries are old, and the rest have been replaced, with one still growing in. Some of the secondaries look fresh, but the impression here is that many of the coverts are still old and worn. As with some other pelagics, questions remain about the timing of molt in this species. Photograph/Steve McConnell



Undoubtedly a first, this photo shows two Fork-tailed Flycatchers together in the United States—at the Hornsby Bend ponds, Austin, Texas, May 6, 1997. This species turns up annually in very small numbers, but the majority of Fork-taileds occur in fall along the Atlantic Coast, and probably come from the (highly migratory) southern South American population. Spring birds in Texas seem likely to have come from Mexico. Photograph/Mark W. Lockwood



Alaska visitors birding Attu Island in spring routinely expect to find the birds that would be anything but routine elsewhere—like this Red-necked Stint photographed there May 28, 1997. This mouth-watering portrait shows the separation between the clear rufous on the neck and the spotted area just below it, and the contrast between dull coverts on the wing and brightly edged scapulars; these are both distinctions from the even rarer Little Stint. Photograph/Steve Heint



Numbers of stray Asian songbirds in the western Aleutians were below average this spring, but a handful of Hawfinches appeared at Attu and Buldir islands in late May and early June. This one was at Attu June 1, 1997. Photograph/Steve Heint



A White-winged Dove (seen here with a Mourning Dove) came to a feeder in Ottumwa, Iowa, starting April 8, 1997, furnishing a first state record. Evidently part of a micro-invasion, it was promptly followed by a second Iowa bird and by one in Missouri. Photograph/Nelson R. Hoskins



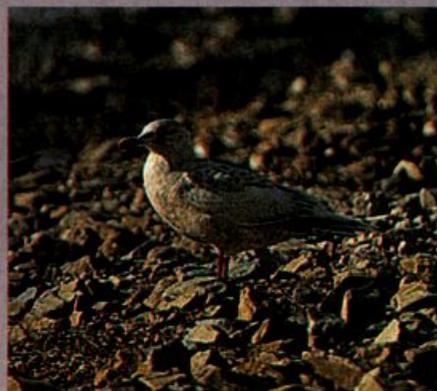
Male Painted Bunting at Tiffin, Ohio, April 17, 1997. Perhaps surprisingly, this bird furnished a first state record. Photograph/Larry Rosche



Even though Kirtland's Warbler populations are increasing, the species is still very rare, and finding a migrant bird (away from the breeding range) is still a red-letter event. This male was at Magee Marsh, Crane Creek State Park, Ohio, May 16, 1997. Photograph/Monte M. Taylor



Pomarine Jaeger (in first-winter plumage) at Cleveland, Ohio, April 1997. Remarkably, five individuals were present here in late April, following a notable "invasion" of the species on the Great Lakes last fall and sporadic sightings during the winter. It is possible that these April birds had overwintered on Lake Erie. Photograph/Vic Fazio



To date, despite several past reports, New Jersey has had no accepted records of Thayer's Gull. That situation may change after consideration of the details on this first-year bird at Thompson's Beach, New Jersey, May 27, 1997. Photograph/Shawneen Finnegan



Red Crossbills, famous for their erratic appearances, having been present at odd times and places on the southern plains almost continuously since summer 1996, and some continued through the end of this season. This one was at a feeder in Cherokee County, Oklahoma, May 1997. Photograph/Ann Wilber



Observers continue to work out the exact distribution of Clark's Grebe relative to the range of its near-lookalike, Western Grebe, but the birds themselves seem confused at times. This Clark's stayed through the end of May 1997 at Cheyenne Bottoms, Kansas, where it was thought to be mated to a Western Grebe (one of a handful of Westerns breeding in the area). Photograph/Lloyd Moore



At Bolsa Chica in southern California, a Sandwich Tern was associating with the nesting Elegant Terns beginning May 9, 1997. An accidental visitor on the west coast, it was believed to be the same individual that had been present at this location during the two previous summers. Photograph/Larry Sansone



Another distinguished visitor at the Elegant Tern colony at Bolsa Chica, California, this Sooty Tern was present beginning March 26, 1997. It was believed to be the same individual coming back for its fourth season. Photograph/Larry Sansone



Black Vultures have been pushing the northern boundaries of their range in recent decades. The only one recorded in Ontario this spring was at Prince Edward Point on May 21, 1997, providing a first record for well-watched Prince Edward County. Photograph/Don Craighead



Although it was not an exceptional season for eastern vagrants in most parts of the West, inland areas of southern California had a much more productive spring than usual. Among the more interesting finds there was this White-eyed Vireo near Cantil, Kern County, May 26, 1997. Photograph/Matt T. Heindel

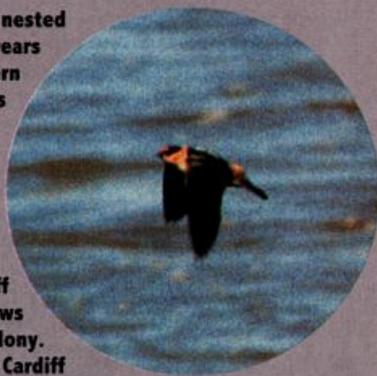


In extreme northwestern California, the first singing male Le Conte's Sparrow ever found in the state held forth for five days in late May 1997 at Lake Earl. The closest known breeding populations are in northwestern Montana and eastern British Columbia. Photograph/Michael M. Rogers



A very rare visitor anywhere east of the Great Plains, this Sage Thrasher caused a stir in southern Ontario at Wallaceburg, where it remained from March 16 to April 9, 1997. The early date of its discovery suggested that it might have wintered locally, although the species is a very early spring migrant in parts of its normal range. Photograph/Jim Flynn

Cave Swallows have nested for several years in extreme eastern Texas, just a few miles from the Louisiana border; this spring, up to half a dozen were found on the Louisiana side of the Sabine River, associating with Cliff and Barn swallows at a nesting colony. Photograph/Steven W. Cardiff



This jaeger, photographed 47 miles south-southwest of Southwest Pass, Louisiana, on May 24, 1997, was the subject of much debate. Expert opinion was leaning toward Long-tailed Jaeger, which would make it a third Louisiana record. Photograph/John P. Sevenair



Providing confirmation that the Northern Harrier breeds in Mississippi, this nest with five downy young was found May 28, 1997, in Quitman County in the northwestern part of the state. It may have represented the first proven nesting in the Central Southern region. Photograph/Fred Broerman

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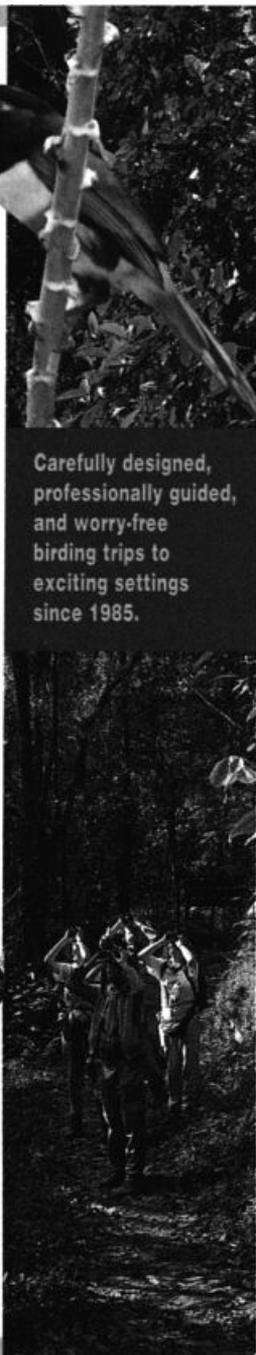
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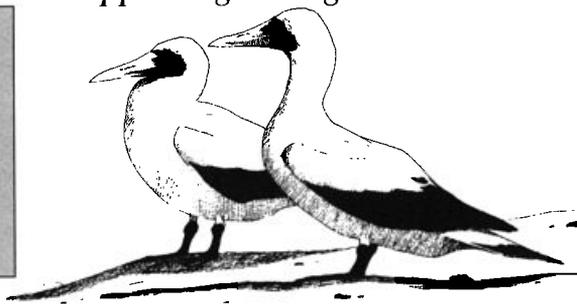
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taking part in the *field* notes reporting network

Every issue of *Field Notes* presents an overview of what the birds were doing all over North America for an entire season. These summaries are based on observations by thousands of birders. If you enjoy *Field Notes*, we urge you to consider becoming a contributor of information as well as a reader.

The columns are written by Regional Editors, all of whom are experts on the birdlife in their areas. All of these hard-working individuals are volunteers. While they are generally glad to receive more reports (to make their accounts more thorough), we need to practice some courtesies to avoid overwhelming them.

As a first step, you should know the significance of the information that you are reporting. Never send in just a list of the birds you saw, expecting the Regional Editors to sift through it. If you are new to this publication, it would be a good idea to read a few issues' worth of reports from your region to get a better idea of the kinds of bird records that are included.

Basically, we cover news. If you see the expected species in normal numbers and at normal places and dates, this is reassuring and important, and well worth recording in your own field notes. But we can't publish all of that in *Field Notes*. (Can you imagine the heft of a *New York Times* that published the daily activities of every resident of the city?) We report the unusual. However, this doesn't mean you should ignore the "common" birds. The regional reports are far more than summaries of rarities. If there is a major invasion of American Robins, for example, or if the Barn Swallows come back exceptionally early, such things are part of the story of what happened during a season.

To find out the "normal" bird situation in your locale, you need to consult other types of publications. Most states and provinces, and many smaller areas, have books or annotated checklists on bird status and distribution. Such references are essential to help you understand the significance of your own observations. Checking

such sources can make your birding not only more educational, but more enjoyable. Another good way to learn about local bird distribution is to establish contact with your nearest Audubon chapter or other bird clubs.

Perhaps you are reporting to *Field Notes* for the first time because you have found a bird that is definitely unusual where or when you saw it. When reporting rarities, it is always important to include the details of the record. Points to cover include:

- Date, time, and exact location.
- Viewing conditions (lighting, weather, distance to bird).
- A detailed description of the bird: appearance, voice, behavior. Include only those things you actually observed. A description written on the spot, during the observation, is always more useful than one written later.
- Names of other observers who identified the same bird.
- Photographs, even of marginal quality, are very worthwhile for establishing records. And if video or audio tapes have been made, it's worth mentioning that they exist, although it's not necessary to send them along in most cases.

In asking for details, Regional Editors are not casting doubt on anyone's abilities. The top bird experts in North America routinely write up details to support their unusual sightings, and all birders would do well to follow their example. Reports of truly rare finds are usually kept on permanent file. Maybe everyone knows today that you're a sharp birder, but what about people fifty years from now who are researching past records? They probably won't know your reputation, and they'll want to see details.

In some regions, especially large ones with lots of birders, reports are funneled through subregional editors, and it is best to send your reports to these individuals. Some regions list the mailing addresses for these subregional compilers. Others do not,

(continued on page 942)

SUBMITTING PHOTOGRAPHS TO FIELD NOTES

The photographs that appear in the regional reports in *Field Notes* add much to the interest and information value of this journal. *Field Notes* does not pay for the use of photographs in this area, but we do provide the opportunity to share your photos with thousands of other active birders.

In each issue, about 20–25 of the photos submitted with the regional reports are selected to be printed in color, in a feature called "Pictorial Highlights." Generally these are very good photographs showing birds of exceptional interest—either very rare vagrants, or birds taking part in unusual invasions or migrations.

The best way to submit photos to *Field Notes* is to send them to the appropriate Regional Editor. To make things easier for these individuals (and for us), please label all photos clearly with the species, place, date, and your name. In particular, print your name legibly, as you would want it to appear in the photo credit. We also need to know the address to which photographs should be returned. All photos will be returned (to the Regional Editors or to the photographers), but it may take several months from the time they were submitted.

Either slides or prints can be reproduced in *Field Notes*, although given a choice we generally prefer slides. Photographs of either kind should be packaged so that they will not be bent or crushed in the mail. Prints should be labeled on the back, but not with ballpoint pen, which may damage the emulsion of the photograph. If felt-tip pens are used for labelling, the prints should be separated with sheets of paper so that the ink from the back of one will not rub off onto the surface of another photo.

but you may be able to find their addresses in the ABA Membership Directory. If you're not sure of the address, it's better to send in notes to the main Regional Editor than to not send them at all.

Don't be discouraged if your sightings are not specifically quoted in a particular report. Even minor observations help the Regional Editors to form a more complete picture of the season. By becoming part of our reporting network, you put your birding observations to good use, and you contribute to the permanent record of North America's birdlife.

For each season, your field reports (along with supporting details and photographs) should reach the Regional Editors as soon as possible after the season ends. The Regional Editors are working on strict deadlines, and it makes their task much easier if they have time to consider and analyze your reports before writing their columns.

Winter season

(December through February),
Notes should reach Regional Editors as soon as possible after March 1.

Spring season

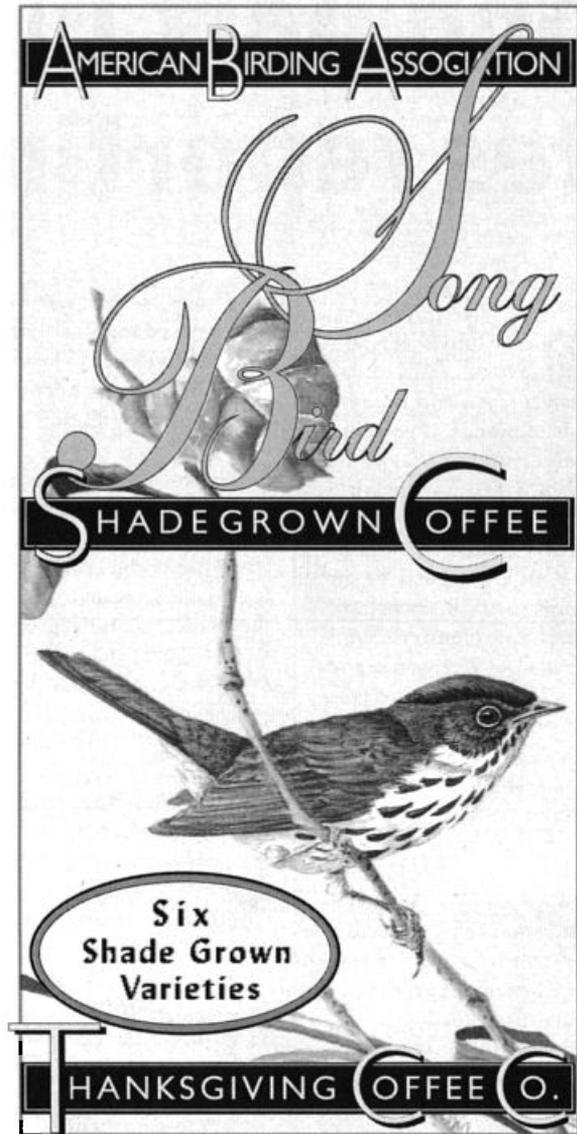
(March through May),
Notes should reach Regional Editors as soon as possible after June 1.

Summer season

(June and July),
Notes should reach Regional Editors as soon as possible after August 1.

Autumn season

(August through November),
Notes should reach Regional Editors as soon as possible after December 1.



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Common Redpoll
Carduelis flammea

CST#2014998-50

S U M M E R

Montana Owls: April 30-May 5

Point Pelee: May 11-18

Spring Grand Washington:

May 27-June 8

Russia, Amurland:

May 30-June 13

Montana June: June 1-10

Churchill I: June 2-14

Churchill II: June 18-30

Gambell/Nome, Alaska:

June 5-12

Grand Alaska:

June 11-26 (sold out)

Pribilof Islands: June 10-15

Alaska Mainland: June 15-26

Barrow, Alaska: June 26-28

Minnesota & North Dakota:

June 21-29

Grand Manan: June 27-July 3

Newfoundland/Nova Scotia:

July 8-18



A N D A U T U M N

Grand Manan Autumn:

August 31-September 6

Fall Washington/British

Columbia:

October 12-19

Polar Bears of Churchill:

November 1-8

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Detail from "Piping Plover" painted by naturalist Cindy House, who uses Bausch & Lomb optics for her field observations.

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