

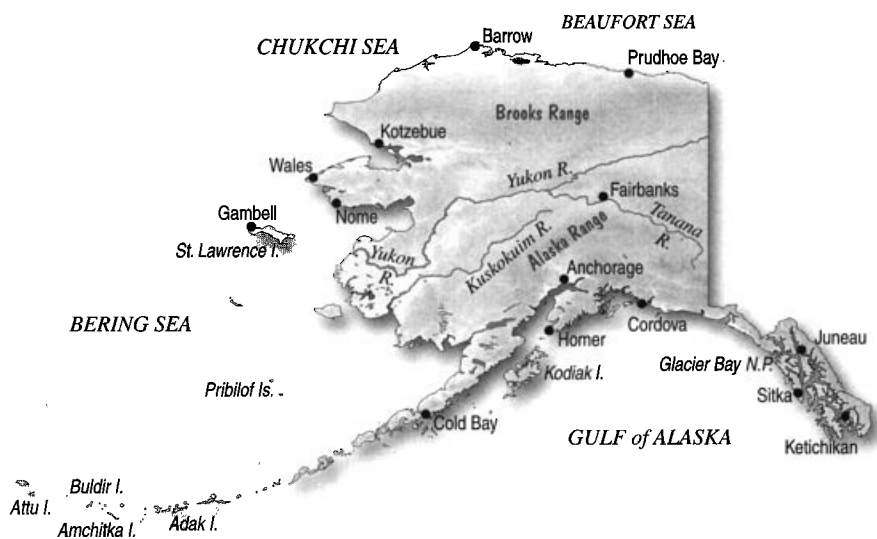
Essentially a repeat of weather conditions and storm patterns of last year, fall 2003 matched its predecessor's amazing highlights, with superlative finds from all points of the compass. Even without decent Aleutian Islands coverage, this year's rarities from the Region's outposts were remarkable all season long. Because of steady mild and mostly storm-free conditions well into November, Alaska breeders, especially passerines, made a systematic and early out-migration, which seemed odd given the extremely late initial accumulating snowfalls and ice-up. Waterbirds and some semi-hardy forms did linger into the winter season, mostly from the North Gulf of Alaska coast and various Southeast locales. A first-ever fall survey from St. Paul Island in the isolated Pribilofs was as fruitful—albeit with mostly Nearctic wanderers—as recent years' Gambell summaries. Among the numerous highlights were accounts of six new Pribilof species and five first records for the autumn season. With this year's consistent Bering Sea coverage came further examples and evidence of an offshore drift of many boreal-forest breeders, which has historically punctuated fall seasonal highlights. With these and recent data from St. Lawrence Island and from Nunivak Island, it appears that many “resident” and migrant passerines from the Mainland end up offshore in very small numbers and focused in a narrow time-frame between the last week of August and the last week of September. Dedicated coverage from other communities, mainly along Alaska's extensive coast from Nome to Ketchikan, contributed excellent supporting documentation for numerous rarities and extralimital species, such that our knowledge of fall dispersal and distribution of migrants and vagrants now rivals that from the spring season.

Abbreviations: A.B.O. (Alaska Bird Observatory); S.E. (Southeast Alaska); S.C. (South-coastal Alaska); U.C.I. (Upper Cook Inlet). Referenced details, specimens, photographs, digital photographs (dph.), and videotape are on file at the University of Alaska Museum. *Italicized place names* denote especially unusual locations for the noted species.

LOONS THROUGH CRANES

Arctic Loon reports came only from the Bering Strait and included singles near Nome 20 Aug and offshore at Gambell 31 Aug, 6 Sep, and 2 Oct (WINGS). Lehman recorded an excellent

Alaska



Yellow-billed Loon passage from the Gambell seawatch, where he noted 98 mostly alternate-plumaged ads. moving eastward, presumably from staging areas, 22 Sep–8 Oct, including a record maxima 28 on 25 Sep (PEL). Perhaps because coastal coverage within their range is sparse, we have few data on the timing and direction of Yellow-billed Loon movements, especially offshore, thus singles at St. Paul I. 6 & 23 Sep and 3 Oct (ST. PAUL) were of interest as well. A single Pied-billed Grebe from Sitka's productive Swan L. 15 Sep was the season's lone find (MLW, MET).

Fortunate to combine work at sea fishing commercially with birding, JBA sits in the “cat-bird seat” for pelagic finds in the North Gulf: his highlight this season was a Pink-footed Shearwater off Kodiak 22 Aug. Certainly a good portion of the North Pacific's vast Short-tailed Shearwater population was feeding off Gambell at the nw. tip of St. Lawrence I. in mid-Sep, when Lehman submitted a conservative estimate of 1.2 million birds there 20 Sep (PEL et al.). Not unprecedented but noteworthy inshore were single Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels near Cordova 5 Oct (MB, AL) and Ketchikan 21 Oct (AWP, SCH), with a storm-related Leach's

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Storm-Petrel also in Ketchikan the same day. Up to 2 Double-crested Cormorants were seen at St. Paul I., where casual, 16 Sep–8 Oct (ST. PAUL).

Perhaps because of the unusually protracted waterbird season, waterfowl highlights were decidedly minor and without clear patterns. Of the few notables, a Snow Goose, casual in the Pribilofs, was on St. Paul I. 6 Oct (ST. PAUL), and a flock of probable “Tule” Greater White-fronted Geese was near Juneau 6–9 Sep (MS, PS, RJG, BA)—including one with a neck-collar radio-transmitter that had been fitted while the bird was in molt. This form is casual in S.E.; most birds have been thought to make non-stop flights to and from Cook Inlet breeding sites and the Columbia R. estuary. Still casual

SA The staff of the *M/V Tiglax* had the fortune of finding and photographing a subad. **Shy Albatross** (*Thalassarche cauta*) near Kasatochi I. in the cen. Aleutians 4 Aug (ph. BB et al.), a first for the Region. The observers have provided documentation that suggests the bird was of the taxon *salvini*, which is treated either as a race of *cauta* or, increasingly, as a separate species, Salvin's Albatross (*T. salvini*). Details and photographic documentation provided by the cadre of observers are being circulated, and the final disposition of the record will be reported in a subsequent report here.

Previous North Pacific records of individuals in this species complex include one of nominate *cauta* from Washington waters (1 Sep 1951), two of *salvini* from California waters (10 Sep 2000, 27 Jul 2001), one of apparent *salvini* from Hawaii at Sand I., Midway (8 Apr 2003), plus others not identified to subspecies off Washington (22 Jan 2000), Oregon (10 Oct 1996), and California (24 Aug 1999, 29 Jul 2000, 17 Sep 2000). North Pacific records (now 10) thus fall between early Apr and late Jan, with half of those from Aug–Sep.

for the Region and especially away from S.E., was a female Wood Duck in the Cordova area 31 Aug (AL). The s. Bering Sea arrival of Eurasian Wigeon was well-tracked on St. Paul I.: the first 2 were noted there 18 Sep, followed by additional birds to a peak of 16 on 7 Oct, as fall coverage came to an end. Two drake Tufted Ducks reported from Cordova 16 Sep (AL, JM) were odd (especially for this mild season); most fall arrivals from w. Aleutian sites, where small numbers are regular, come later in the month. S.C. records of the species are almost entirely from late fall and early winter. Such is also the case for Steller's Eider, a molting drake of which was nicely documented from Petersburg in S.E. 8–10 Oct (†W.P.); most of the few prior S.E. records come from Nov and later.

A juv. Northern Harrier at St. Paul I. 22–24 Sep and probably later (ST. PAUL), only the 2nd ever for the Pribilofs, added to the pattern of most fall Bering Sea/Aleutian records. S.E. observers attempted a few hawk-watches at strategic locations, mainly at open water crossings, and turned up decent raptor concentrations, including "lots more than normal" Red-tailed Hawks off Baranof I.'s se. flank near Port Alexander throughout Sep (AB); a peak 61 raptors (of seven species of regular migrants, excluding Bald Eagles) along the beach n. of Juneau 14 Sep (GVV); and 12 American Kestrels and 37 Red-taileds near Ketchikan 22 Sep (AWP, SCH), a new local high count. These numbers are somewhat surprising, as it has been assumed that most fall migrant raptors moved s. and e. across the Coast Range via the larger mainland river watersheds. The Pribilofs' first ever Merlin ventured offshore in the Bering Sea, where casual, to St. Paul I. 18 Sep (ST. PAUL).

American Coots gathered at Sitka's Swan L. beginning 8 Oct and reached the season's high count of 5 through Nov (MLW, MET). One to 3 near Juneau 19 Sep–mid-Nov (MLK) were the only others reported. A lone Sandhill Crane found St. Paul I. 27 Sep (ST. PAUL), the Pribilofs' first ever in fall, while a group of 20 Sandhills drifted over Kodiak's Narrow Cape 7 Oct (JD, SD), where there are few fall reports.

PLOVERS THROUGH AUKLETS

Pacific Golden-Plovers appeared more numerous than usual at several sites where they are annual but found in sporadic, inconsistent numbers. These included a record-high seasonal total of 335 from Gambell (21 Aug–8 Oct), where most regular, with a few lingering to 5 Oct (PEL); a daily maximum of 89 at St. Paul I. 24 Sep (ST. PAUL); another good tally of 250 at Kodiak's Narrow Cape 28 Sep (SS); a good local count of 10 at Gustavus 30 Sep (ND, PV); and 2 juvs. in Ketchikan 7

Sep (AWP, SCH), where rare. Mongolian Plovers at St. Paul I. totaled 5 between 27 Aug and 12 Sep (ph. DL, ST. PAUL); these and a single farther n. at Gambell 26 Aug (DWS, SB) were the only ones noted. Piston located a staging group of 45 Black Oystercatchers on the outer coast of Dall I. in S.E. 10 Oct (AWP), where conditions probably typically



One of four juvenile Wood Sandpipers on St. Paul Island this fall, this bird stayed 12 (here) through 14 September 2003. Photograph by Derek Lovitch.

support singles or small groups in winter.

Shorebird attractions otherwise were marginal this year, with the highlights including a Greater Yellowlegs at Safety Sound near Nome 20 Aug, where casual (vt. WINGS); a record late for Kodiak Lesser Yellowlegs 5 Oct (JBA); a good fall tally of 4 Wood Sandpipers at St. Paul I. between 26 Aug and 1 Oct (ph. DL, ST. PAUL); at least 4 Solitary Sandpipers from three s. S.E. sites 6–11 Aug (m. ob.); an average peak total of 9 Gray-tailed Tattlers from St. Paul I. 31 Aug (ST. PAUL); a casual-in-fall Temminck's Stint at St. Paul I. 31 Aug–3 Sep, plus a juv.



This Black-tailed Gull provided Ketchikan's fourth record 1 and (here) 2 October 2003. Alaska has about 20 other records of this Asian species. Photograph by S. C. Heintz.

Long-toed Stint (also casual in fall) at Paul I. 16–20 Aug (DL, GB, vt. PEL, WINGS) and a juv. Little Stint (casual; DL, GB) 8–9 Aug as well as a record-late Least Sandpiper there through 24 Sep (ST. PAUL); and a very rare Stilt Sandpiper 10 Sep at St. Paul I., a local fall first (ST. PAUL). Rare but regular species included several Red-necked Stints at both Gambell and St. Paul I. and single juv. Ruffs at St. Paul I. 15–16, 26, & 29 Aug (ST. PAUL). A record-large flight of Sharp-tailed Sandpipers at Gambell and St. Paul I. included 74 for the season at

Gambell and many more on St. Paul, where the single-day peak was of 66 birds 29 Aug (ph. DL), but the season's total was almost impossible to calculate. Very high numbers of Long-billed Dowitcher were noted at St. Paul I., including a count of 113 there 8 Sep (ST. PAUL).

Based on fall surveys of staging Bar-tailed Godwits in the cen. Yukon–Kuskokwim Delta, biologists noted that this was the 5th consecutive year in which the proportion of juvs. in staging flocks was at or below 3% (BJM, REG). Such consistently low proportions of juvs. warrants enough concern that spring and breeding-season studies are planned for 2004 to evaluate the Alaska population's condition and demographic parameters. A juv. Red Knot was at St. Paul I., where casual, 24–25 Sep (ph. DL, ST. PAUL). Systematic coverage at St. Paul I. provided an excellent accounting of fall movements for nominate Rock Sandpipers, with the fall peak 509 on 8 Sep dwindling to 44 by 7 Oct (ST. PAUL). Cook Inlet winter sites begin concentrating these birds by early Nov, with this season's initial spike of arrivals coming on 9 Nov, when 15,453 were tallied on U.C.I.'s w. shore (REG). An early group of (probable) nominate-race Rock Sandpipers showed up on the e. side of U.C.I. near Beluga Pt. 22 Aug (TE, *vide* RLS), where there are few prior reports. One of the expected race *tschuktschorum* at Gambell 7 Oct was perhaps the latest for the n. Bering Sea (PEL). Casual away from the outer S.E. coast were up to 25 Red Phalaropes in Ketchikan after a storm 21–26 Oct, with another 2 even farther inshore on McDonald L. 23 Oct (AWP, SCH).

As is typical, the Ketchikan area grabbed all the attention for rare gulls, where fish-processing activities and geography concentrate vast numbers and a great diversity of fall larids. Up to 3 Franklin's Gulls were at the waterfront there 17 Aug–7 Sep, while another individual showed up on the Mainland at McDonald L. 30 Sep–13 Oct (both AWP, SCH). Another ad. Black-tailed Gull also surfaced in Ketchikan, a local 4th, at the same spot as last fall's bird 1–2 Oct (AWP, ph. SCH). Two Glaucous-winged x Western Gulls were described from Ketchikan 21 Sep and 4 Oct (AWP, SCH), where they are regular puzzles in the gull hordes, while a clean ad. Western Gull was photographed at the waterfront 24 Oct (AWP, ph., †SCH). Both hybrids and Westerns are casual here in fall. At least 4 Slaty-backed Gulls were described from both the Kodiak environs 16 Sep–13 Oct (RAM, ph.) and St. Paul I. 15–17 Aug (ST. PAUL). Lehman's Gambell area surveys have provided an excellent picture of late-season movements of four-year gulls in the n. Bering Sea. Over the past few autumns, he has noticed

small numbers of *vegae* Herring Gulls and Glaucous-winged Gulls off St. Lawrence I. This year's numbers for both species were unprecedented, highlighted by "flights" of 73 and 66 Herring Gulls 3 & 4 Oct and an even more amazing 104 and 89 Glaucous-winged Gulls, also moving westward past the n. side of this island, on the same two days (PEL). Recent data published for St. Mathew I. indicate a rising trend in Glaucous-winged Gull populations at the species' n. limits, certainly corroborated by Lehman's notes for the past few years.

The Gambell seawatch produced sightings of a single basic-plumaged Marbled Murrelet 5–7 Oct (†PEL) and 2 and then a single Kittlitz's Murrelet 5 Sep and 2 Oct (PEL), both casual species in the n. Bering Sea. Something drove unprecedented and widespread numbers of Crested Auklets into nearshore waters at Kodiak, beginning abruptly with a few thousand moving past Narrow Cape 15 Nov (SS) and peaking with "tens of thousands" just offshore there 27 Nov (OH, *fide* RAM). Although thousands winter in small and dispersed groups in the greater Kodiak area offshore waters, these numbers and movements were surprising.

DOVES THROUGH PIPITS

Two early Morning Doves—singles in Ketchikan 7–13 & 15 Sep (AWP, SCH and a single e. of Cordova 19 Oct (KB, NB)—were the season's only finds. A lone Northern Hawk Owl crossed the Coast Range and appeared on the coast near Juneau 1 Oct (GVV); there are few S.E. records. Widespread and early Northern Pygmy-Owls forecasted a fine fall showing, with multiple sightings from Gustavus/Glacier Bay to Ketchikan. Most observations were centered in the Juneau area, where at least 6 birds were present 15 Oct–18 Nov+ (m. ob.; *fide* GVV). Northwest of Juneau were another 3 near Pt. Couverden 17–18 Oct (MB) and at least 2 in Gustavus 5 Oct–30+ Nov (ND, PV). (Ones or twos are more normal in fall, mainly from Juneau and S.E.)

An amazing group of 125 Vaux's Swifts staging around Juneau's Fish Cr. 12 Sep (GVV) was certainly one of the Region's highest ever counts, while 2 in Ketchikan 27 Sep (AWP) were record late for that locale by 12 days and nearly record late for the entire Region. Two solitary Fork-tailed Swifts hawked about protected bluffs at St. Paul I., one 26–31 Aug and the other 28 Aug only (†DL, ph. Brad Murphy, ST. PAUL), only the 5th and 6th records for the Pribilofs. Most of the Region's 15+ records come from early autumn. After a hiatus of several years, Costa's Hummingbirds reappeared, with an imm. well documented as a Kodiak first record 29 Aug–20 Oct (ph. RAM) and an ad.



In company with a few Glaucous-winged Gull x Western Gull hybrids among Ketchikan's fall gull hordes, this adult Western Gull was photographed 24 October 2003. Most of Alaska's few records come from the Ketchikan area in fall. Photograph by S. C. Heint.

male to the e. at Cordova 5 Sep–31 Oct (ph. AL et al.). Most of the Region's few records come from S.C. sites. Two Rufous Hummingbirds reached offshore to Kodiak, where casual, 25 Aug and 26 Oct (ph. RAM), while a female in Juneau 11–12 Oct (GVV) was another of the Region's few Oct reports. A Belted Kingfisher at St. Paul I. 10 Aug (DL) provided the 3rd Pribilof record.

What a rare thrill to report here the occurrence of a Eurasian Wryneck at Gambell, an alert bird that spent most of 2–5 Sep feeding on various insects and larvae on a decaying whale carcass (vt., †PEL, dph. PD, WINGS). Most readers know of the Region's (and continent's) only prior record, a specimen found dead at



The first of two Varied Thrushes on St. Paul Island this fall, this bird frequented a small mine cut 24 September 2003. It was one of several North American strays on the island during three weeks of northeasterly winds in September.

Photograph by Derek Lovitch.

Wales on 8 Sep 1945. The appearance of this Eurasian breeder follows previous years' extreme rarities at Gambell from similar Palearctic ranges, whose travels must have taken them to the e. Bering Sea in "reversed" migration across n. Eurasia. Five Red-breasted Sapsuckers scattered around much of Kodiak I. 14 Oct–28 Nov (ph. RAM, DP, PP, TH, BR, MD) represented an exceptional fall push away from

traditional breeding and migration corridors, which range typically to the Yakutat area of n. S.E. Single Interior, boreal forest *septentrionalis* Hairy and *nelsoni* Downy Woodpeckers (ph. MM) ranged to the coast in S.E., where casual, with one each reported from Juneau mid-Oct into Dec and 26 Oct, respectively (*fide* GVV; ph.). Notable Northern Flicker finds included a single in the alpine zone at Kodiak 3 Sep (IB), where casual, and 2 out in the Bering Sea, where also casual, at St. Paul I. 15 & 27 Sep (ST. PAUL).

A mild early season must have provided fine conditions for insectivorous species, since the only significant tyrannid report was of a Western Kingbird, rare in fall and a first for Ketchikan, 3 Sep (AWP, ph. SCH, TLG, CF, JFK). Nearly all of the Region's

sporadic reports come from Jun and Jul. Only one Sky Lark report came in, a single at St. Paul I. 26–29 Sep (ST. PAUL), a first in fall for the Pribilofs. A Horned Lark of the Asian race *flava* was noted at Gambell 12 Sep (PWS) and another on St. Paul I. 8 Oct, the latter only a 2nd island record for the species and subspecies (ST. PAUL). Single Bank Swallows moved offshore to St. Paul 28 Aug & 4 Sep (ST. PAUL), where occasional in fall, while a group of 10 at Juneau 14 Sep (GVV) and a waif Barn Swallow at Cordova 12 Oct (AL) were both pushing near the season's late extremes. The Cordova bird was probably S.C.'s latest ever. Mostly single Interior Black-capped Chickadees in the Juneau area 5 Oct–29 Nov (LB, DM, BA, MH, SZ, GVV) were notable and included a flock of 4 on 8 Nov; these represent the highest incursion numbers for the Juneau area. Casual in the Bering Sea, and mainly in fall, a single Red-breasted Nuthatch reached St. Paul I. for the first time on 31 Aug (ph. DL, ST. PAUL).

The dispersal of Mainland boreal-forest breeders offshore into the Bering Sea appears to be a regular fall phenomenon, according to data accumulated over the past 20 years. Additional examples this season included 2 Golden-crowned Kinglets at St. Paul I. 19 & 27 Sep (ST. PAUL), where casual, and a single Ruby-crowned to Gambell 23 Sep (PEL), about the 4th record in fall there, and up to 3 on St. Paul I. 19–29 Sep (ST. PAUL). If there could be such a thing as a "cooperative" Middendorff's Grasshopper-Warbler, it was the individual in the Gambell middens 5 Sep (GW, vt., †PEL, PD et al.) that scurried around in taller vegetation to glean insects. Eight of the Region's 12 records of this casual visitor come from fall (30 Aug–25 Sep), with the remaining four from 10 Jun to 11 Jul. Lehman's Gambell forays, along with earlier fall records totaling 5 birds since 1978, reveal that Dusky Warbler is an annual migrant, at least in the Bering Sea, with another single—Gambell's 6th—located

there 14 Sep (†PEL). All Gambell records have been since 1997.

Numbers of Trans-Beringian passerines were considered to be above average at Gambell and the Pribilofs. Of these, single imm. Bluethroats were seen 23 Aug and 25 Sep on St. Paul I., where casual (ST. PAUL). An imm. Red-flanked Bluetail at St. Paul I. 5 Oct (ph., †DL, ST. PAUL) was quite late, one of few fall reports, and a 2nd fall and 3rd ever for the Pribilofs. Returning Gray-cheeked Thrushes from e. Siberia provided record-high numbers at Gambell, with 28 total counted 27 Aug–15 Sep (PEL); 2 were at St. Paul I. 4 & 10 Sep (DL). Occasional off the Mainland into the Bering Sea was a Hermit Thrush also at Gambell 16 Sep (vt. PEL), with 3 at St. Paul I. 19–25 Sep (ST. PAUL), where there are few fall records, probably due to lack of coverage. Adding to the extralimital thrush list were single Varied Thrushes on St. Paul 24 & 29 Sep (ph. DL, ST. PAUL), a Pribilof first and 2nd for fall and only the 2nd and 3rd for the island. Casual in the Bering Sea, 4 American Robins were noted on St. Paul I. 19 Sep–2 Oct (ST. PAUL).

A Northern Mockingbird, casual and sporadic in its appearances in the Region, was found near Cordova 28–29 Jul, a first local record (KB, AL et al.). Siberian Accentor made its best showing ever in the Region, with a season tally of 3 at Gambell 3–22 Sep (vt. PEL, G. Ewing, WINGS) and another 2 to the s. at St. Paul I. 3–7 Oct (ST. PAUL), the first for the Pribilofs.

WAGTAILS THROUGH FRINGILLIDS

Bering Sea observers noted above-average numbers of migrant Yellow Wagtails, mainly within the standard time-frames, with the exception of a very late individual at St. Paul I. 27 Sep through 1 Oct (ST. PAUL); there are few later departure dates for the Region. The Region's first ever fall-season Pechora Pipits skulked around the Gambell middens, where 3 singles were documented 9–14 Sep (vt., †PEL, PD, WINGS). Given this species' retiring habits, we may never fully understand its fall Bering Sea status. It was also a banner year in the Bering Sea, and elsewhere, for Red-throated Pipits, with record counts, both at Gambell, with 94 for the season 21 Aug–21 Sep (PEL), and at St. Paul I., with a peak of 49 on 29 Aug (ST. PAUL). Possibly related to and synchronous with that strong showing were S.E. reports, where the species is casual: one in Ketchikan 7 Sep (AWP, SCH) and 2 in Juneau 7–20 Sep (GVV, MS). American Pipits appearing to be of the Asian race *japonicus* were also noted in very high numbers at Gambell, where 26 between 27 Aug and 28 Sep were counted, the single-day high count being of 13 birds present 30 Aug–3 Sep. On St. Paul I.,

between one and 3 birds were seen most days 1–27 Sep, with a high of 6–8 on 12–18 Sep.

Ketchikan finally produced a Cedar Waxwing nest, with young, 13 Aug (AWP, SCH), while the only extralimital away from S.E. was a single n. in the Gulf at Kodiak 15 Sep–29 Oct (ph. RAM). A few Cedars probably wander into S.C. each fall. Of the surprisingly few late warblers, highlights included a single Yellow Warbler in Ketchikan 27 Oct (AWP, SCH) and one Wilson's in Juneau 17 Nov (GVV). More noteworthy were offshore warblers in the Bering Sea, where all parulids are casual. Highlights included 2 Townsend's at St. Paul I. 7 & 18 Sep, the Pribilofs' first ever (ST. PAUL), 2 Blackpolls there 4–9 Sep, also the Pribilofs' first (ST. PAUL), and a lone Wilson's Warbler at Gambell 22 Sep (PEL). The season's solo Palm Warbler was documented in Ketchikan 19 Oct (AWP, ph. SCH), a 5th for that locale.



This Common Rosefinch, found by Paul Lehman 1 September 2003 at Gambell, Alaska, remained until the next day, a third fall record there. Photograph by Phil Davis.

As is typical in autumn, emberizids were at the fore, from the Bering Sea and S.E. in particular. Bering Sea oddities included a total of 3 American Tree Sparrows, the firsts in fall for the Pribilofs, at St. Paul I. between 23 and 25 Sep (ph. DL, ST. PAUL); 2 Chipping Sparrows at Gambell 16–19 Sep & 3 Oct (vt. PEL, PWS); an incredible first Bering Sea record of Alaska's 5th ever Clay-colored Sparrow, also at Gambell, 20 Sep (vt., †PEL); a Lincoln's Sparrow at St. Paul 23 Sep, a Pribilof first (ST. PAUL); 2 Lincoln's Sparrows at Gambell 9–11 & 19 Sep, only the 2nd and 3rd in fall for St. Lawrence I. (PEL); and amazing seasonal totals of 10 Fox Sparrows 30 Aug–25 Sep and 17 Golden-crowned Sparrows on St. Paul I. 29 Aug–7 Oct (ST. PAUL). Of the 8 Dark-eyed Juncos found at St. Paul I., single *oreganus* were described 18–20 Sep and 4–5 Oct (ST. PAUL). Although a few Nearctic sparrows venture into the Bering Sea most years, this season's totals were especially impressive. Three Swamp Sparrows in s. S.E.—a single on the Mainland at McDonald L. 13 Oct and 2 in the Ketchikan area 29 Oct & 2 Nov (AWP, †SCH)—provided the 16th local records,

by far the bulk of Alaska's complete total.

Three separate Little Buntings turned up around Gambell 25 & 27 Aug and 2–4 Sep (vt., †PEL, WINGS), where nearly a decade's worth of surveys has revealed this n. *Emberiza* to be an almost annual autumn visitor. As in the prior fall, dispersing McKay's Buntings appeared at Gambell 3 Oct (flock of 7; PEL), while a season total of 6 ad. male McKay's Buntings at St. Paul I., where also very conservatively identified, spanned 2–7 Oct, the high count of 3 coming from the last date (ST. PAUL). Continuing a recent fall trend, another Black-headed Grosbeak was discovered in S.E., an imm. near Ketchikan 26 Sep (vt., †TLG), a local first. A short but decent description of an imm. oriole, seen briefly near Ketchikan 2 Sep (AWP, †SCH), certainly sounded like a Bullock's Oriole, but the observers thought that the observation time did not permit conclusive identification. Fringillid highlights from the Bering Sea included a female Common Rosefinch at Gambell 1–2 Sep (vt., †PEL, WINGS, DM et al.), a 3rd St. Lawrence I. fall record, 3 Bramblings on St. Paul I. 10 Sep–3 Oct (ST. PAUL) and one at Gambell 9–16 Sep (J. Huntington, vt. PEL), up to 3 Red Crossbills left over from the summer invasion at Gambell to 29 Aug (vt. PEL), and a season-high 9 Pine Siskins in the Gambell middens 21 Aug–4 Oct (vt. PEL, WINGS), where there had only been a few prior reports. A total of 3 Pine Siskins at St. Paul I. between 6 and 18 Sep were equally noteworthy (ST. PAUL).

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