

**M**irroring recent trends, autumn 2004 was mostly as mild as the past five years' seasons, with only a few major storms that appeared to influence bird movements within the Region. It was a remarkable fall migration, even by Alaskan standards: of all accidental/casual species on the official Alaska checklist, this season's tally of rarities included 13%—and some 31% of the total fall-season casual/accidental possibilities. (Taken as a whole, casual and accidental species comprise 37% of the Alaska checklist.) Shorebird concentrations, diversities, and late dates were notable mostly along the coastal fringe of the Region's southern half, while most passerines (with the usual exceptions because of mild conditions) appeared to exit the state on average dates or even a bit early. A somewhat late freeze-up in the central Interior allowed for a host of very interesting and late dates between Fairbanks and the Canada border.

The real news this season came from the Bering Sea, where lengthy surveys in the Pribilofs and at Gambell, on St. Lawrence Island's northwestern tip, produced a wealth of data. At least four species were new to the Bering Sea this fall, with more than a dozen others either new in fall or previously recorded only once or twice. Coupled with similar informal surveys over the past 10 years, these data revise the status of many species heretofore considered casual or accidental (or unrecorded) in the Bering Sea sections of Alaska. Thanks to these efforts, we now have a portrait of fall bird migration and vagrancy across the Bering Sea that is very different from previous assumptions. In the Bering Sea, together with Alaskan geography and weather, mirror image/reverse migration may be playing a significant role in transporting a great diversity of migratory species from both continental landmasses. This year's Bering Sea weather included significant easterly winds, either as "back-ends" of passing anticyclones or as a moderate flow between systems. So it is probably not just coincidental that this year's set of Bering Sea rarities from the Nearctic represented the strongest showing ever (Table 1).

**Abbreviations:** A.B.O. (Alaska B.O.); North Gulf (North Gulf of Alaska). Referenced details (+), specimens (\*), photographs (ph.), and videotape (vt.) are on file at the University of Alaska Museum. Italicized place names or dates denote especially unusual locations or dates for the noted species.

### LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

Given the mild season, which probably occasioned late coastal movements, loon concentrations and highlights were disappointing. Arctic Loons were, however, well represented, including a single at Adak I., where rare, 13 Sep (Bird Treks, ph. DF) and a rather high

# Alaska



season tally of 5 off Gambell 16–28 Sep (PEL). More unusual was an aggregation of Arctics at a traditional staging site at Safety Sound near Nome 22 Aug–16 Sep, which peaked at 12 together 31 Aug (WINGS). Extremely rare offshore was a Common Loon at Gambell 23 Sep (PEL), only the 2nd or 3rd for St. Lawrence I. The season's running total of 132 Yellow-billed Loons from the Point at Gambell 25 Aug–4 Oct (PEL, m.ob.) represented a new season high by a considerable margin for that locale. Always possible in the fall, single Pied-billed Grebes appeared at Juneau 24 Sep–20 Oct (JM, m.ob.) and Ketchikan 30 Oct (SCH). Unusual for the n. Bering Sea was a single Horned Grebe at Gambell 23 Sep (PEL), a St. Lawrence I. first in fall. Near-record early arriving into the Alaska winter range was a Western Grebe in Ketchikan 5 Sep (AWP).

Seabird reports were negligible, especially given the unseasonably warm sea-surface temperatures from the North Gulf. On the heels of the summer report from just slightly to the se., another Manx Shearwater was described 1 Sep from the Trans-Gulf ferry crossing off Cape Suckling (†SZ, MB, RJG). A single Brandt's Cormorant inshore near Ketchikan 26 Nov (SCH) provided a firm arrival record for the Region's only regular wintering area of this very rare local SE. breeder. An ad. Pelagic Cormorant was a bizarre find in the e. Beaufort Sea off Prudhoe Bay 7–8 Oct (RHD, AAS). I am unaware of any Pelagic Cormorant record e. of Barrow.

Following the recent taxonomic changes, observers were diligent with Cackling Geese

## Thede Tobish

2510 Foraker Drive

Anchorage, Alaska 99517

(tgt@alaska.net)

reports, highlighted by an extremely late single (with Emperors) at Kodiak 21 Nov+ (RAM) and 3 at Ketchikan 12–14 Nov (AWP, ph. SCH), where also casual. Although small numbers of Brant can be expected late into the fall at coastal spots, singles at Barrow during freeze-up 2 Oct (RLS, RAM, WL, TT), one of the North Slope's latest, and at Kodiak 21 Nov (RAM) were noteworthy. Information for Eurasian Wigeon across the species' range provided a complete profile of fall arrivals, all on the early side, including 4 at Gambell 27 Aug (WINGS), one at St. Paul I. 6 Sep (St. Paul Island Tour), one at Attu 12 Sep (DWS, RAM), and one or 2 at Adak I. 15 Sep (Bird Treks). A lone female Green-winged Teal at a freezing freshwater patch in Barrow 2 Oct (RLS, RAM, WL, TT) probably represented the North Slope's latest ever in fall. Green-wingeds are rare and local, mostly in the e. Beaufort Sea coastal plain, and most depart by the first week of Sep. *Aythya* highlights, including both concentrations and Mainland lingerers, were exceptional this year. Notables were a drake Redhead at Fairbanks 14 Oct (ph. LD); record-high Ring-necked Duck counts, with 115 scat-

**SA** For the 3rd consecutive year, the eastbound Ross's Gull passage into the Beaufort Sea was complicated by the pelagic position of pack-ice, which remained over 200 km n. and e. of Barrow well into Oct. Typically, Ross's are moving eastward in a band between the usually much closer pack-ice edges and the littoral zone by the 3rd week of Sep. As far as I know, none were counted at Barrow this season until 4 moved by there 3 Oct (RLS, RAM, WL, TT). I received no additional data on the subsequent timing of this migration, which includes a westward return movement into early Nov. Any observation of fall movements of this species should be submitted, in light of what appears to be a radical change in the extent and location of sea-ice in recent years.

tered on Elmendorf A.F.B. at Anchorage 4 Oct (DFD), 300+ along the Richardson Hwy. e. of Fairbanks 13 Oct (JM), and 36 at Sitka 18 Nov (AWP); an early Aleutian Tufted Duck at Adak 13–19 Sep (Bird Treks); and 2000 Greater Scaup at Kodiak 31 Oct (RAM). An extralimital Hooded Merganser, a female, was in Anchorage ca. 22–23 Oct (TT, m.ob.). An aggregation of 103 Common Mergansers at Anchorage 24 Oct (TT) was an exceptional count away from saltwater wintering sites. Ruddy Ducks made a fine fall showing. In the Interior up to 3 were at Fairbanks 5–9 Oct (ph. LD, NH, EC, JL, JD) and 6 were on Kenny L. 8 Aug (*vide* LD), while in South-Coastal, a female-type was at Anchorage 5–24 Oct (RLS, SS, ph. TT, DWS, RLS). In Southeast, 2 were recorded 10–13 Oct and one 5–6 Nov at Juneau (PS, BA, NM, SZ, GVV). Aside from the Juneau birds, these provided the first local records for the fall season; most of the Region's Ruddy Duck records are from spring.

### RAPTORS THROUGH ALCIDS

The Dillingham area Steller's Sea-Eagle was last reported upstream on the lower Nushagak R. 12 Sep (RMA). Extremely late for n. of the Alaska Range was a Sharp-shinned Hawk hunting at Fairbanks feeders 27–29 Nov (CH). The Pribilofs' 3rd Northern Harrier was noted 18 Sep on St. Lawrence I. (St. Paul Island Tour). Casual on the immediate coast, and local as a breeder mostly in the foothills of the e. North Slope, was an imm. American Kestrel at Barrow 2 Oct (RAM, RLS, WL, TT), certainly the latest of the few North Slope records.

Shorebird migration was punctuated with representative reports of essentially all of the Region's extralimitals and rarer taxa, mostly the less-common Arctic nesters, along the coast from the Bering Sea to the Southeast. Single very late Black-bellied Plovers hung on at coastal sites: at Juneau 5–6 Nov (PS, GVV) and farther n. near Gustavus 13 Nov (ND, PV); there are few records past these dates. More unusual was a juv. American Golden-Plover near Fairbanks 26–29 Oct (ph. LD, NH), the latest ever for the Interior. Nearctic shorebird highlights otherwise focused on coastal sites, where observers turned up most of the rarer species, several near-record late dates, and good concentrations, including: an amazing large group of

27 Killdeer at Juneau 18 Aug (PS); 8 Solitary Sandpipers at Juneau 7 Aug (GVV), one of Southeast's largest single counts; extralimital single Upland Sandpipers at Kodiak 24 Aug (RAM; 2nd Kodiak record) and at Gustavus 31 Aug (BP); possibly the North Slope's latest ever Sanderlings—2 at Barrow 2 Oct (RAM, RLS, WL, TT); and peripheral Buff-breasted Sandpipers 17 Aug at Gambell (WINGS), 21 Aug and 4 Sep at Kodiak (3 birds; RAM), and 29 Aug and 17 Sep in Southeast (2+; ND, PV); 6 were recorded on St. Paul I. 21 Aug–9 Sep (St. Paul Island Tour). A Wilson's Phalarope at Gustavus 4 Aug (†ND) was within the range of the Region's few other fall reports.

Significant finds of the relatively few Palearctic shorebirds included Lesser Sand-Plovers at Gambell (2 on 15–17 Aug; PEL), on Adak (one 16–23 Sep; Bird Treks), and on Attu (one 12 Sep; RAM, DWS); 3 Common Ringed Plovers at Gambell 16–17 Aug (PEL); a Spotted Redshank on St. Paul I. 2–4 Oct (St. Paul Island Tour); a Marsh Sandpiper on Adak 13–16 Sep (ph. D. Farbotnik, Bird Treks), a 4th for the state; a Temminck's Stint, rare in fall, on Adak 13–16 Sep (Bird Treks); and a juv. Curlew Sandpiper from the North Gulf, where there are few reports, at Gustavus 3 Oct (ph., ND, PV). A strong showing of Ruffs this season included singles in Seward 15–16 Sep (ph. EW) and at Savoonga, on n.-cen. St. Lawrence I. 25 Aug (LMS), plus 4 each from St. George and St. Paul Is. in the Pribilofs, 27 Aug (MTS) and 11 Aug–27 Sep (St. Paul Island Tour), respectively.

Jaegers funneling out of the Bering Strait were concentrated 29–30 Aug, with high counts of 770 Pomarines and 16 Parasitics from the Point at Gambell (WINGS). Very late, probably as a result of the season's retarded sea-ice advance, were a single Pomarine over Barrow 3 Oct (RAM, RLS, WL, TT) and a Parasitic off Gambell 1 Oct (PEL). Although post-breeding Ring-billed and California Gulls made an average to strong fall showing, other gull highlights were slim. The Ketchikan waterfront, where most fall Franklin's Gulls are recorded, produced another 3 between 11 Aug and 21 Sep (AWP, SCH). From the Interior came a record-late Glaucous Gull 28 Nov near Fairbanks (ph. LD, NH), where they are not annual, and an equally rare juv. Sabine's Gull near Delta Jct. 18–19 Sep (ph. NH).

Few concentrations of Caspian Terns were noted this season, with 15 at Gustavus 2 Aug (ND) the only sizable flock reported. Following an extremely strong and lengthy e. Bering Sea storm 18–19 Oct, which included a secondary front on the 20th, Least Auklets began showing up onshore on the w. coast in amazing numbers. On the land, often along the roadways, were up to 7 Least located in the vicinity of Nome; 2 appeared to the ne. near Deering; an ad. was found n. at Kotzebue; and one was carried way inland to Ambler 21–22 Oct (*vide* PB, m.ob.). These are the first contemporary Mainland records of Least Auklet and, to my knowledge, mark the first time any *Aethia* auklet has been reported storm-displaced inland.

### CUCKOOS THROUGH SWALLOWS

Unusual for fall were reports of 3 different *Cuculus* cuckoos, including an Oriental Cuckoo at St. Paul I. 21 Sep–1 Oct (St. Paul Island Tour, ph. GB), which constituted the Pribilofs' first in autumn. Two different birds from Adak 13 & 16–21 Sep (Bird Treks, ph. JP) were apparently Orientals but not identifiable from photographs. Northern Pygmy-Owls seemed to be on the move early, but no late-season influx materialized. Two each were located in the Ketchikan area 25 Aug & 30 Oct (AWP, SCH) and around Juneau 29 Aug–14 Nov (GVV, AS), while a single was more unusual farther n. at Gustavus 20 Nov (BP). The only Common Nighthawks reported were singles found around Juneau 8 & 10 Sep (MB), where they may be annual in fall. Nighthawks have been documented breeding on Mainland river bars in the Haines–Skagway region. Obviously staging Vaux's Swifts were found in amazing, perhaps record-high numbers in early Sep, highlighted by 24 at Gustavus 9 Sep (ND, PV) and 150+ at Juneau on the 7th (GVV, PS, SZ). Singles and small groups are the norm during early Sep. Fork-tailed Swift observations from this season shattered previous Alaskan records, with 20+ around Adak 14 Sep+ (Bird Treks) and a loose group of 40+ along Attu's Alexai bluffs 18 Sep (DWS, RAM). Previous high counts of this casual, mostly fall migrant, had been 2 at a time! A rare Bering Sea Belted Kingfisher ventured offshore to St. Paul I. 21 Aug–1 Sep (St. Paul Island Tour), where it became only the 4th for the Pribilofs. Following the first Bering Sea record last year, also in fall at Gambell, Lehman managed to locate 2 more Warbling Vireos this season, 7 Sep and 4 Oct (PEL) in the Gambell mid-dens, with the Oct bird representing one of the later state records. Amazingly, one also showed up to the s. at St. Paul 15 Sep (St. Paul Island Tour), another Pribilof first. At least one Clark's Nutcracker had birders chasing around Gustavus 5–10 Oct (*vide* ND; details needed), in the same timeline with

**SA** With the unprecedented surge of Nearctic passerines, along with more expected Asian passerines, recorded at Bering Sea outposts this season, it is simplest to countenance the season's records in table form. Records are from Gambell, St. Lawrence I. 14 Aug–4 Oct and from St. Paul I., Pribilof Is. 8 Aug–8 Oct. Italics highlight species casual in the Bering Sea and/or unusually high Bering Sea counts; boldfaced birds represent firsts for the Bering Sea region. Species in regular font are regular to rare in the Bering Sea area as trans-Beringian migrants or fall wanderers from the Mainland.

**TABLE 1.** Fall 2004 landbird highlights from Bering Sea island surveys.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Gambell</u>		<u>St. Paul Island</u>	
<u>Species</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Date(s)</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Date(s)</u>
<i>Oriental Cuckoo</i>	1	21 Sep–1 Oct		
<i>Belted Kingfisher</i>	1	21 Aug–1 Sep		
<i>Northern Shrike</i>	1	27 Sep		
<i>Warbling Vireo</i>	2	7 Sep & 4 Oct	1	15 Sep
<i>Sky Lark</i>			1	29 Sep
<i>Tree Swallow</i>	3	18–19 Aug	1	25 Aug
<i>Bank Swallow</i>	12	15–19 Aug	40	13 Aug–15 Sep
<i>Red-breasted Nuthatch</i>	10	6–15 Sep	6	3–30 Sep
<i>Golden-crowned Kinglet</i>			1	17 Sep
<i>Ruby-crowned Kinglet</i>	9	7 Sep–3 Oct	39	24 Aug–5 Oct
<i>Middendorff's Grasshopper-Warbler</i>	1	7 Sep		
<i>Dusky Warbler</i>	1	3–4 Sep		
<b>Wood Warbler</b>			1	7 Oct
<i>Arctic Warbler</i>	70	14 Aug–6 Sep	2	12 Sep & 23 Sep
<i>Red-breasted Flycatcher</i>	1	19 Sep		
<i>Gray-streaked Flycatcher</i>			1	14–21 Sep
<i>Bluethroat</i>	9	18 Aug–5 Sep		
<i>Northern Wheatear</i>	53	15 Aug–9 Sep		
<i>Gray-cheeked Thrush</i>	15	27 Aug–13 Sep	3	1–20 Sep
<i>Swainson's Thrush</i>	7	7–18 Sep	1	10–11 Sep
<i>Hermit Thrush</i>	5	6 Sep–3 Oct	4	2–29 Sep
<i>Eyebrowed Thrush</i>	1	25 Sep		
<i>American Robin</i>	2	18 Sep & 3 Oct	1	22–26 Sep
<i>Varied Thrush</i>			1	25 Sep
<i>Eastern Yellow Wagtail</i>	220	14 Aug–7 Sep	7	8 Aug–1 Sep
<i>White Wagtail</i>	14	14 Aug–18 Sep		
<i>Olive-backed Pipit</i>			2	23–26 Sep
<i>Pechora Pipit</i>	4	24 Aug–19 Sep		
<i>Red-throated Pipit</i>	18	14 Aug–7 Sep	6	13 Sep–5 Oct
<i>American Pipit (pacificus)</i>	13	17 Aug–4 Oct	60	16 Aug–18 Sep
<i>American Pipit (japonicus)</i>	7	28 Aug–3 Oct	15	21 Sep–4 Oct
<i>Orange-crowned Warbler</i>	10	16 Aug–15 Sep	12	22 Aug–3 Oct
<b>Nashville Warbler</b>	1	5–7 Sep		
<i>Yellow Warbler</i>	5	18 Aug–7 Sep	21	22 Aug–22 Sep
<i>Yellow-rumped Warbler</i>	1	3 Oct	8	15 Sep–6 Oct
<i>Townsend's Warbler</i>	2	14 & 25–28 Sep	2	11 & 15–16 Sep
<b>American Redstart</b>	1	18–19 Sep		
<i>Northern Waterthrush</i>	2	15 & 19 Aug	1	25 Aug
<i>Wilson's Warbler</i>	71	18 Aug–18 Sep	23	21 Aug–17 Sep
<i>American Tree Sparrow</i>	3	7–9 Sep	1	27 Aug
<i>Chipping Sparrow</i>	1	3 Oct	1	25–27 Sep
<i>Savannah Sparrow</i>	64	15 Aug–17 Sep	38	22 Aug–6 Oct
<i>Red Fox Sparrow</i>	5	5 Sep–3 Oct	2	25 Sep–1 Oct
<i>Sooty Fox Sparrow</i>	4	18 Aug–13 Sep	20	25 Aug–26 Sep
<i>Lincoln's Sparrow</i>			1	17 Sep
<i>White-crowned Sparrow</i>	19	19 Aug–3 Oct	6	11–30 Sep
<i>Golden-crowned Sparrow</i>	14	31 Aug–3 Oct	43	22 Aug–1 Oct
<i>Slate-colored Junco</i>	3	7–11 Sep	6	22 Aug–1 Oct
<i>Oregon Junco</i>			1	27–30 Sep
<i>Little Bunting</i>	1	7 Sep		
<i>McKay's Bunting</i>	60+	30 Aug–14 Oct		
<i>Rusty Blackbird</i>	1	13 Sep		
<i>Brown-headed Cowbird</i>	3	21–31 Aug & 6–7 Sep		
<b>Bullock's Oriole</b>	1	3 Oct		
<i>Purple Finch</i>	1	7–9 Sep		

most of the Region's few past records. Except for Bank Swallow, other Alaska swallows are rare to casual offshore, so this season's Bering Sea tallies were exceptional, including 3 Tree Swallows at Gambell 18–19 Aug (PEL) and a single to St. Paul I. 25 Aug (St. Paul Island Tour), while counts of 10 Bank Swallows from Gambell 15–19 Aug (WINGS) and 15 at St. Paul 15–16 Aug (St. Paul Island Tour) were high. Record late for South-Coastal was a Tree Swallow near Anchorage 24 Oct (DWS)—most swallows are typically gone from Upper Cook Inlet by early Sep.

## NUTHATCHES THROUGH WAXWINGS

Red-breasted Nuthatches staged a noticeable irruption out into the Bering Sea and s. into Southeast, with incredible counts tallied beginning 3 Sep at St. Paul I., which produced a season total of 6 through Sep (St. Paul Island Tour), followed by a season total of 10 at Gambell 6–15 Sep (PEL). Southeast observers noted a significant influx through the season, with dozens at several Gustavus–Glacier Bay N.M. feeders (*vide ND*), and an incredible count of 55+ at a n. Juneau migrant trap 26 Sep (MB). Interestingly, no significant movement was noted in the area from Cook Inlet/Kenai Pen. to Kodiak. *Thirty-nine* Ruby-crowned Kinglets for the season at St. Paul I. 24 Aug–5 Oct was certainly a Bering Sea record: 5 individual birds had been recorded there previously. The Gambell total of 9 for the season 7 Sep–3 Oct (PEL) was also a record high for St. Lawrence I. Another *Middendorff's Grasshopper-Warbler* was again skulking around the Gambell middens 7 Sep (PWS, ph. BLS, WINGS), the 3rd certain fall record there. Even the surprising numbers and diversity of Nearctic passerines into the Bering Sea could not overshadow the season's prized find at St. Paul I., a fresh-plumaged *Wood Warbler* (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*) 7 Oct (St. Paul Island Tour, ph. GB), Alaska's 2nd ever. Very few have been recorded in the Pacific Basin: a single also in early Oct at Shemya I. and a few fall records from migrant traps in coastal Japan are known. This mainly European breeder typically migrates into sub-Saharan Africa. Another *Dusky Warbler* appeared in the Gambell middens 3–4 Sep (CRK, WINGS, ph. BLS), about the 7th there in fall. A decent peak of 5 *Arctic Warblers* was the season's one-day peak at Attu 20 Sep (DWS, RAM), while about 9 were counted for the duration of that survey 8–22 Sep. Alaska's first-ever fall *Red-breasted Flycatcher* was a dullish bird flitting around the weedy mounds at Gambell 19 Sep (vt., †PEL, †PWS, ND), only the 2nd St. Lawrence I. report; most of the Region's records of this not-annual migrant come from the w. Aleutians in late spring. *Gray-streaked Flycatcher* also made the Region's inaugural fall showing,

with singles documented at Adak 14 Sep (Bird Treks, ph. DF) and St. Paul 14–21 Sep (St. Paul Island Tour, ph. GB) and 2 at Attu 12 & 20 Sep (DWS, RAM). Like the previous species, Gray-streaked has been a rare late spring migrant, mostly in the Aleutians.

Only a single Siberian Rubythroat could be found this season, at Attu on the somewhat early date of 10 Sep (DWS, RAM). Two Mountain Bluebirds were described somewhat late in Fairbanks 27 Sep (LD), where they are unheard of in fall. Casual in fall and St. Lawrence I.'s first for the season, an Eyebrowed Thrush was located seemingly late on 27 Sep (†PEL). Rather late at the limits of its taiga range near Dillingham was a Varied Thrush 8 Nov (RMA), while one offshore at St. Paul I. 25 Sep (St. Paul Island Tour) was only the Pribilof's 4th ever.

On the heels of last year's first ever multiple Pechora Pipit fall report at Gambell, up to 4 were substantiated there this season, 24 Aug–19 Sep (WINGS, vt., †PEL, ph. BLS). Not annual in fall were 2 Olive-backed Pipits described from St. Paul 23–26 Sep (St. Paul Island Tour). A good onshore count of 3 Red-throated Pipits near Nome 21 Aug (BLS et al.) was unusual for the season, as we have few data for departure dates or locations from the Mainland. A Gray Wagtail, just the 2nd for the state in autumn, was photographed on Adak 22 Sep (DF, Bird Treks). Cedar Waxwings continued their historic late-summer wandering across n. Southeast, both at Gustavus and at Juneau, where additional nests and family groups were noted through Sep, highlighted by up to 20 in Gustavus 28–29 Aug (BP) and a staging flock at berry bushes at Juneau of 110 on 4 Sep (GVV), which likely represents the Region's new maximum. Extralimital birds pushed westward across the North Gulf to Kodiak, where singles were flushed out of ornamental berry shrubs 26 Oct and 5–31 Nov (RAM ph.); farther afield in the Interior, where casual, a single was identified in fruit-bearing bushes in the boreal forest at Ester 15 Sep (RH, PDM), just the 2nd Fairbanks area record.

### WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

It was a banner year for late and extralimital New World warblers. Chief among the Bering Sea finds was Alaska's first Nashville Warbler in the rocks and middens offshore at Gambell 5–7 Sep (vt., †PEL, ph. BLS, WINGS); the Bering Sea's first-ever American Redstart, also at Gambell 18–19 Sep (PWS, ND, vt. PEL); 2 more St. Lawrence I. Northern Waterthrushes (vt. PEL) and another on St. Paul I. 25 Aug (St. Paul Island Tour; first for the Pribilofs); and what seemed like boatloads of most of the commoner Alaska taiga breeders (Table 1). The Gambell crew produced excellent documentation to elevate Nashville off the Alaska Unsubstantiated

List—the two prior reports were single-observer fall sightings from the North Gulf. Notable among the late finds included single Orange-crowned Warblers on the North Slope 25–29 Sep (JH) and at Ketchikan 17 Nov (AWP). Unusual were multiple Oct Yellow Warblers, with 2 each at Ketchikan on the 21st (AWP, SCH) and at Sitka on 25–26 Oct (MLW, MET), plus an unprecedented single at a Fairbanks feeder until 31 Oct (ph. JL), where there are certainly no later records. Since most Blackpoll Warblers are gone from the Region by the end of Sep, a single 15 Oct with chickadees at Anchorage (TT) was significantly late. A Palm Warbler 18 Sep (A.B.O.) at Fairbanks, where casual in fall, and another very late 11 Nov at Juneau (GVV) were both notable. An HY Mourning Warbler photographed on the North Slope 15–17 Sep (ph. JH) was without precedent there and only the 3rd state record; both previous records are from fall. Casual away from local Southeast riparian breeding sites, a Western Tanager was in the Interior near Fairbanks 7 Aug (ph. JL), while 2 were getting very late (and unusual offshore) for the Region at Ketchikan 18 & 22 Oct (*vide* SCH).

Given that the previous season high count of Savannah Sparrows from St. Lawrence I. was 9, this year's accounting of 64 at Gambell 15 Aug–17 Sep (PEL), another 17 from Savoonga 21–27 Aug (LMS), and a season count of 38 from St. Paul I. suggested that conditions pooled large numbers of Savannahs in the n. Bering Sea, as either reverse-migrants or weather-displaced migrants. The latest Savannah for the season was a single in Seward 27 Nov (NH, DWS, DDG, TT). Other emberizid highlights included the Pribilof's 2nd Lincoln's Sparrow at St. Paul 17 Sep (St. Paul Island Tour); 3 Smith's Longspurs in Interior lowlands at Fairbanks 29 Aug–1 Sep, where there are few records or departure data (JM); a Little Bunting 7 Sep at Gambell, the site's 10th (PWS, vt. PEL); a Rustic Bunting at Attu 20 Sep (DWS, RAM); and a strong northward push of McKay's Buntings to Gambell, which commenced with a very early single on 30 Aug and reached a peak of 55 by 1 Oct (PEL).

A single Rusty Blackbird at Gambell 13 Sep (vt. PEL) was only the 2nd ever for St. Lawrence I. and the only extralimital one reported this season. More surprising were 3 different juv. Brown-headed Cowbirds at Gambell 21 Aug–7 Sep (vt. PEL, ph. BLS), only the 2nd time that this casual fall dispersant has wandered to the Bering Sea. Completely unexpected and perhaps providing a classic example of reversed migration was a female-plumaged Bullock's Oriole at Gambell 3 Oct (†PEL). There are several Alaska sight records of this icterid, mostly late summer to early fall, still with no photograph or specimen; the species' closest known breeding ar-

ears are e.-cen. British Columbia. Extraordinary for the Bering Sea was a dull-plumaged Purple Finch in the Gambell middens 7–9 Sep (JH, vt. PEL, ph. BLS), only the 2nd ever for the Bering Sea and St. Lawrence I.; no others were reported. Presaging a strong winter coastal push was a single flock of 1500+ Pine Siskins near Juneau in late Nov (PS), although no other similar observations were submitted. A waif American Goldfinch was reported with good details from Sitka 9 Nov (†GS). Casual in fall was a single Oriental Greenfinch at Attu 14 Sep (DWS, RAM); the bulk of Alaska's reports come from the Near Is. Ketchikan's 4th and the season's only Evening Grosbeak was found 17 Oct (SCH), in line with other state records. Another very dull-plumaged House Sparrow ended up at Ketchikan 2 Oct (SCH ph.), a 5th local report from the home of most of Alaska's records.

**Addendum:** Observer persistence with a distant alcid offshore at St. Paul I. led to definitive identification of an alternate-plumaged Long-billed Murrelet 5 Jun (VENT, Field Guides, †MJI). Adequate photographs and excellent descriptions clinch the record, only the Region's 2nd so documented. Two state specimens are known, an Aug bird from Denali N.P. and one from Howkan 28 Feb 1897 (Chicago Field Museum #39627), currently considered problematic.

**Contributors and observers:** Alaska B.O. (N. DeWitt et al.), B. Alger, J. B. Allen, R. Armstrong, Bird Treks (J. Puschock et al.), A. M. Benson, A. Berry, G. Bieber, M. Brooks, E. Clark, D. Coates, D. & K. Cornelius, P. Davis, J. Dearborn, L. DeCicco (Interior Compiler), D. F. Delap, J. Dearborn, B. Dinneford, N. Dobbs, R. Dodelson, J. & S. Doyle, M. Drucker, N. Drumheller, T. Evans, D. Farbotnik, R. M. Fowler, R. Fritz, C. Fultz, D. D. Gibson, R. E. Gill, R. J. Gordon, T. L. Goucher, H. Griese, R. Hadley, N. Hajdukovich, C. Harwood, S. C. Heintz, J. Helmericks, O. Holm, P. Hunt, B. Hunter, T. Hurley, R. Knight, J. F. Koerner, C. Robby Kohley, W. Lamb, A. Lang, P. E. Lehman, J. Levison, T. & R. Lohse, R. MacDonald, M. & R. A. MacIntosh, D. MacPhail, J. Maley, P. D. Martin, J. Mason, J. McCabe, M. McCafferty, R. Meyers, E. Myers, N. Mollett, R. Neterer, L. J. Oakley, B. Paige, A. Palmer, W. Pawuk, A. W. Piston, P. Pourchot, B. Quaccia, B. Rehmer, D. Rudis, K. Russell, J. Sauer, S. Savage, R. L. Scher, M. A. Schultz, W. Schuster, M. Schwan, L. M. Sheffield, S. Senner, D. Shaw, G. Smith, D. W. Sonneborn, St. Paul Island Tour (G. Bieber, K. Kamper, D. Porter, M. Toochin), S. Studebaker, P. Suchanek, B. L. Sullivan, A. Swingle, P. W. Sykes, M. E. Tedin, T. Tobish, R. Uhl, G. Van Vliet, P. Vanselow, VENT (Victor Emanuel Nature Tours), M. L. Ward, WINGS, E. Winkel, M. A. Wood, S. Zimmerman. 🐦