

time in the last four years in Ketchikan 7 May (ph. SCH, AWP). Red Crossbills began pouring into Southeast in early Mar and were inundating feeders well into Apr as far n. as Gustavus (m.ob.). Attesting to a very early breeding season, 2 fledgling Common Redpolls in an Anchorage neighborhood 5 May (TT) were close to the earliest fledging dates on record for the Upper Cook Inlet. Furnishing one of few spring records was an Evening Grosbeak along the Haines Hwy. 21 May (†PEL).

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# British Columbia



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**I**t was a uniformly warm and dry spring across the Region, with only minor showery periods, mostly on the coast. Unlike in cold springs when many northbound migrants are concentrated in valleys, this spring saw few such events, as early receding snowpacks allowed birds to spread out. Weather was unseasonably hot during late April, and there were very few spring fall-outs due to the good weather of late April to late May. Birds migrating during that warm spell produced some early records. British

Columbia's newest vagrant trap, Carmanah Point Lighthouse, which hosted a one-day-wonder Gray Wagtail in the fall, produced a Sage Thrasher and a Common Grackle this spring.

## GREBES THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

Rarely found in the Peace R. area, a Western Grebe was at One Island L. 16 May (MP, JG). Brown Pelicans occasionally wander northward as post-breeders, but one 24 km w. of Ucluelet 7 May was exceptionally early (GG). Double-crested Cormorants were more prevalent in the interior than usual; at least 10 birds were reported, the most out-of-place bird being at Crescent Spur 18 May (RZ). At least 4 Great Egrets overshot their mark and were scattered across the s. interior. Waterfowl arrived with no notable delays or concentrations, perhaps due to the fine weather and the general lack of flooded fields. Snow Geese are rarely found in spring migration in the s. interior; thus 4 at Windermere, e. Kootenays 26 Apr were of interest (MdO). Canada Geese arrived early in Dawson Creek 15 Mar (*fide* MP). A Tufted Duck was on Bouchie L., Quesnel 11 Apr (Manfred Roschwitz), furnishing the 5th record for the Cariboo. A Harlequin Duck, rare in the Okanagan, was at Okanagan Falls 15–17 May (male; *fide* DCa). Red-breasted Mergansers are occasionally found inland during migration, e.g., one at Nakusp 5 Mar (GSD) and 2 there 12 Mar (GSD), and a female over Vaseux L. 29 May (RJC).

Very few Broad-winged Hawks were noted on migration, especially considering their increase in numbers and their recent expanding range in the province. Singles were at Nelson 16 May (JA) and at Kilpoola L., w. of Osoyoos 22 May (LR, ED et al.). A pair of Swainson's

Hawks returning to Rolla 27 May (JG), recent arrivals to the Peace R. area, may be the same pair that nested there in 2001. Notable Peregrine Falcons found in the cen. interior included singles in P.G. 26 Mar (NK), at Newlands 22 May (JB et al.), and at Vanderhoof 22 May (*tundrius*; JB et al.). A Gyrfalcon was rather late in Vanderhoof 29 Mar (NK).

Shorebird migration was particularly lackluster in the interior, owing to a scarcity of habitat, but the coast experienced an average spring. Black-necked Stilts were not as widespread as they have been in spring over the past few years. They were reported from their stronghold at Elizabeth L., Cranbrook—a single 19, 20, & 21 Apr (DN et al.) and 4 there 28 Apr (DN). A pair was also found on a small pond near Kimberley 29 Apr (DC). Greater Yellowlegs arrived on the outer coast in Tofino record early 24 Mar (4 birds; GB). Long-billed Curlews are casual visitors to the outer coast, so 3 on Vargas I. near Tofino 11 May (AD, BK) and one on the Englishman R. estuary, Vancouver I. 29 Apr–1 May (GLM, m.ob.) were good finds. Marbled Godwits were very early in Tofino, with 4 on 7 Apr (RC) and peak numbers of 16 on 20–22 May (AD). Travelling w. of their main spring migration corridor, 2 Baird's Sandpipers were identified at Riske Creek 24 Apr (PR). A Red-necked Stint in alternate plumage provided a 2nd record for Vancouver I. when discovered at the mouth of the Englishman R. Estuary, Parksville 7 May (ph. GLM)—the 3rd spring record for the province.

## GULLS THROUGH FINCHES

Heermann's Gulls typically arrive in summer and depart by Oct, but a hardy individual remained along the Victoria waterfront until 8 Apr (m.ob.); there is one previous record of a wintering bird from White Rock in winter 2001–2002. A Glaucous Gull was very late at Long Beach 22 May (AD). A casual visitor to the Peace R. area, a Forster's Tern was at Swan

2001–2002. A Glaucous Gull was very late at Long Beach 22 May (AD). A casual visitor to the Peace R. area, a Forster's Tern was at Swan L. 15 May (MP). Rare on the n. half of Vancouver I., a Mourning Dove was in the Nimpkish Valley 23 May (MGS, PL). Very rare in the Kootenays, a Western Screech-Owl was discovered at Edgewood 30 Mar (GSD); this species' interior range is essentially limited to the Okanagan, where its population remains a concern. Following a winter of numerous low-elevation sightings, a Boreal Owl was at Reifel 13–24 Mar (ph. JI et al.). A record-early Calliope Hummingbird arrived at an Osoyoos feeder 23 Mar (GH, LH).

Rarely encountered on Vancouver I. at any time of year, a female Red-naped Sapsucker was at Woss, Nimpkish Valley 2–21 May (MGS, PL). At the n. edge of the species' breeding range, a Lewis's Woodpecker was at Williams Lake 29 May (PR). Williamson's Sapsuckers again nested at Kimberley Nature Park, e. Kootenays, with the first to arrive 25 Mar (RG), followed by 3 males and 2 females in the area 7 Apr (RG). Least Flycatchers are now fairly regular in the West Kootenays, but a cluster of 10 singing males 27 May at the n. end of Kootenay L. was unusual (GS). Dusky Flycatchers, rare along the s. coast, put on a good showing this spring, with three reports spanning 2–20 May in the Vancouver area and others at Mount Tolmie, Victoria: 2 there 24–26 Apr (CS, m.ob.) and one there 26 May (Victoria R.B.A.). Say's Phoebes are casual strays to the coast; one was at Qualicum Beach 31 Mar (GLM), and possibly the same bird was seen there during the Brant Festival Big Day competition 9 Apr (JI). Western Kingbirds are annual visitors to the s. coast, with the occasional visitor to Vancouver I., but 3 birds found together at Jordan R. on the sw. coast of the island was unprecedented 20 May (AC).

Ten Blue Jays in a flock made an unusual sight in Cranbrook 15 Mar (DN). Rare and erratic on the lower mainland, 2 ad. Clark's Nutcrackers were found at the Mt. Seymour

parking lot 25 May (†GB, PB). A pair of American Crows was well n. of known range at Coal Cr., just s. of the Yukon border 23 May (PEL). While they have been slowly increasing in the ne. and cen. interior, this constitutes the first record for this far n. and w. of the Rockies. Continuing a recent trend of increasing reports from Vancouver I., a Rock Wren was at Island View Beach, cen. Saanich 13 Mar–2 Apr (MA, m.ob.). A Canyon Wren heard singing at Warfield, W. Kootenays furnished a first area record for this species 22 May (GN). Casual in spring in the Vancouver area, a Veery was at Queen Elizabeth Park 22 May (JL, †DTy et al.). Surprisingly, the only Northern Mockingbird reported this spring came from 101 Mile 20 May (TG). Providing apparently the 3rd record for Vancouver I., a Sage Thrasher was at Carmanah Pt. 3 May (ph. JE)—much before the first birds appear in the s. interior.

A Tennessee Warbler was singing in Tsawwassen 3 May (†MTo); this species is rarely recorded away from the Peace R. and n.-cen. British Columbia. A Townsend's Warbler, rare on the e. side of the Rockies, was at Dawson Creek 19 May (JG). Although Palm Warblers are regular in fall along the coast, they are very rarely found during spring; one in Pitt Meadows 1 May was unexpected there (†WW). Another migrant Palm Warbler was a good find at Dawson Creek 13 May (JG). Two of the most sought-after "eastern" warblers that are found in very small numbers in the ne., Bay-breasted Warbler and Cape May Warbler, were found 31 May near Fort Nelson (TT, ph. GR). An Ovenbird was singing at the most nw. corner of its range, just s. of the Yukon border along the Alaska Hwy. 24 May (PEL). Casual in the Vancouver area, a Yellow-breasted Chat was at Reifel 27–28 May (JR, CG et al.).

Casual on the lower mainland, a Brewer's Sparrow was at Iona I. 9 Apr (CG), providing just the 7th Vancouver record. Lark Sparrows are rarely found away from the Okanagan, yet one was at Lardeau, w. Kootenays

21 May (MJ), and another was at Iona I. 30 May (TP et al., ph. RTo), the latter furnishing the 9th Vancouver area record. A Lincoln's Sparrow arrived during the heat wave at Arras, in the Peace R. area, 27 Apr, besting the earliest record by five days (MP). Rare on the outer coast, especially in spring, a Lapland Longspur was in Tofino 18 May (AD). A Western Meadowlark furnished a first spring record for the Fort St. James area 19 May (RR); there are only 3 previous records for the local area, all from the fall. A Common Grackle at Carmanah Pt. 14 May (ph. JE) represented one of few Vancouver I. records. A second-year male Baltimore Oriole was singing at Woss, Nimpkish Valley 28 May (MGS, LS), also one of few Vancouver I. records. Rarely found in the s. interior, a Purple Finch was singing at Rock Creek 22 May (DGC, DB). Rare on the n. half of Vancouver I., 2 male American Goldfinches were at Woss 25 May (MGS, PL), and just n. of its interior breeding range, one visited a feeder 8 & 29 May at Shelley, cen. interior (SH), an area from which there are few spring records.

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