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The first three months of the period continued the drought conditions prevalent throughout the Region for quite some time now. This changed abruptly at the start of November, as the Pacific storm track revved up. Reservoirs at record-low levels at the start of the month were topped off by the month's end. As well, a batch of Arctic air slid all the way past the coast during the last five days of November, leading to significant snowfalls and blizzard conditions on both the Inner and Outer coasts. Interior snow packs were at normal or above readings by the end of the month, the first "early winter" in a decade. An unprecedented number of accidentals and vagrants were reported from the west coast of Vancouver Island. While it has long been known to be a good vagrant trap, the island has very few resident birders, and much of the coast is inaccessible; however, this fall's showing (the result in part of increased observer effort) was truly remarkable.

WATERFOWL THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

Surprisingly early, a Tundra Swan, likely from the w. Alaska population, was seen in flight over Port Renfrew 2 Sep (JF), nearly six weeks ahead of schedule. A female or eclipse male Garganey was carefully scrutinized among Green-winged Teal at Iona 9-11 Aug (†MT et al.); this would represent the 13th record for the province and the first in six years. The province's 7th Steller's Eider was an imm. male discovered off Botanical Beach near Port Renfrew 30 Sep (†RTo, CI). Breeding Rock Ptarmigan were discovered on Cheam Peak 5 Aug (MD, ph. AF et al.), a female with 4 chicks; this represents the southernmost breeding record on the continent. A basic-

plumaged Yellow-billed Loon was seen near Skidegate, Queen Charlotte Is. 26 Aug (RF, AF). A juv. Short-tailed Albatross that was tagged with a transmitter in Alaska and tracked by satellites spent 31 days in British Columbia waters between 12 Sep and 1 Nov 2006 (fide Robert M. Suryan, Oregon State University); there are only eight modern records of the species for the province. The province's 8th record of Manx Shearwater involved an ad. flying close to shore off Jordan R. 28 Aug (†RTo). Sightings involving this species continue to increase in recent years with more coverage of the outer coast. Following a good spring migration of Brown Pelicans (which tapered off in early Jul), pelicans returned in even greater numbers this fall; flocks of post-breeders and juvs. were reported from various locations around the perimeter of Vancouver I. The largest flock was an astounding 294 off Port San Juan 8 Sep (JC), which more than doubles the previous provincial high count. There were at least four reports of birds lingering into Nov, with the latest, an imm., seen in flight over Ladner 26 Nov (CDC).

Few egrets were reported this season. The most noteworthy reports came from the outer coast of Vancouver I.: a Great Egret was on Long Beach 29 Oct (RD), and a Cattle Egret was at Ucluelet 29 Oct (BS). Broad-winged Hawks are an expected occurrence in mid-Sep off Sooke, where 2 ads. and an imm. were found 16 Sep (CSa, RTo), one ad. was seen 22 Sep (RTo, LH), and a single bird was noted 23 Sep (RS). An ad. Ferruginous Hawk, a species casual in the province, was discovered just s. of Kamloops 1-10 Sep (CC, ph. DGC et al.) and created quite a stir for interior birders and remained in the area over a week, providing many opportunities for study. Another ad. was seen in flight over Creston 29 Sep (†GLM). An imm. Eurasian Hobby was seen perched in a fir tree in Sooke 29 Sep (†RTo, PL); this species has been rare but regular in the w. Aleutians in recent autumns (and has been documented once in Washington state) but has no previous record from British Columbia. Rare but regular along the s. coast in autumn, a Bar-tailed Godwit was at Port Renfrew 1-12 Sep (JF, ph. RTo, TZ et al.). Also rare along the s. coast, a Hudsonian Godwit was at Oyster Bay Shoreline Park s. of Campbell R. 11 Sep (ph. AT); another was at Boundary Bay 10-15 Sep (RTo, IP). Casual in the province, a molting ad. Red-necked Stint

was discovered at Boundary Bay 11 Aug (†IP, GC); the vast majority of records involve ads., as juvs. are very difficult to distinguish from juv. Semipalmated Sandpipers. Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were recorded in average numbers until a count of 12 was made at Reifel 25 Sep (JI), the 3rd largest flock ever recorded in the province. After a few years of very good Buff-breasted Sandpiper migration in the province, numbers were very low this season: 2 juvs were seen on the Salmon Arm mudflats (a regular stopover location) 1 Sep (DGC); one juv. was at Jordan R. 13 Sep (RTo); and 2 were at the Roberts Bank Jetty 26 Sep (fide PC). The Short-billed Dowitcher migration on the outer coast was protracted, and several were noted into Oct, the latest being a flock of 22 at Tofino 31 Oct (AD).

GULLS THROUGH JAYS

Two juv. Franklin's Gulls were along the mudflats 30 Aug-1 Sep in Salmon Arm (DGC) where the species has become a regular autumn visitor. While birding in a storm, a few Victoria birders were able to find a very late Pomarine Jaeger that struggled against the wind 10 Nov (CSa et al.). An ad. Iceland Gull was record early at the mouth of Mission Cr.,



Representing apparently the most southerly breeding record of Rock Ptarmigan for North America, this family group was photographed on Cheam Peak, British Columbia 5 August 2006. Photograph by Andrew Foxall.

Kelowna 29 Sep (RyT); sightings of this species have been increasing in recent years all along the s. coast and s. interior, but the first usually arrive in Nov. The first Slaty-backed Gull of the season was at Cattle Pt., Victoria 13 Oct (CSa); another was 51 km sw of Tofino 14 Oct (ph. AD, GB et al.). A Black-legged Kittiwake—a species unheard of in the s. interior and with only one previous interior record near Prince George—was photographed by a fisheries crew working in the night at Trail 30 Nov (ph. DeB). Casual in the province, aside from their single-known breeding location on Triangle I., a Thick-



Black-legged Kittiwakes are unheard of in the southern interior of British Columbia, so this bird at Trail 30 November 2006 was most unexpected—particularly in that it was found in darkness! Photograph by Demetria Burgoon.

billied Murre was seen on the rising tide at Gordon's Beach near Sooke 20 Sep (RTo, LH). Arriving from much more southerly waters, a Xantus's Murrelet was discovered in Father Charles Channel off Tofino 2 Oct (ph. AD) for an 8th provincial record.

Eurasian Collared-Doves continue to surface in the sw. corner of the province, with 2 in Parksville 22 Aug (GLM) and 2 along River Rd., Delta for at least two months (according to local residents), seen by birders 18-29 Oct (m.ob.); one in Prince George 9-12 Nov (*vide* JB) was even more outlandish. White-headed Woodpeckers continue to be seen on Anarchist Mt. near Osoyoos; one or 2 were sighted there 10 Oct (SL). Casual along the s. coast, a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was in Port Renfrew 25 Sep (†RTo, PL). Least Flycatchers are rarely found along the coast during migration; an imm. in Jordan R. 21 Aug (RTo) was the only one reported. Dusky Flycatcher was early along the coast at Rocky Point B.O. 5-6 Aug (DA, MR); one was at Jordan R. 20 Sep (RTo, LH) and 2 the next day (RTo, LH, MM); and one was at East Sooke Park 22 Sep (RTo, LH, MM). The only Tropical Kingbird of the season was in Parksville 5-6 Nov (MY, GLM et al.); this species is more often encountered in Oct on the s. or w. coast of Vancouver I. Casual in the province, an imm. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was observed at close range in Westbank, near Kelowna 7 Oct (†EB, HB). A Philadelphia Vireo was studied on the outer coast of Vancouver I. at Jordan R. 13-16 Sep; it arrived with a fallout that included many warblers (including a Blackburnian Warbler, below) and a Red-eyed Vireo 13 Sep (†RTo et al., ph. MB). Steller's Jays staged an invasion of the cen. interior and the coast this fall, as they seem to do every five years or so. Many reports were received from various locations, indicating increased numbers of jays or arrivals of jays in

areas where they are either scarce or absent (m.ob.). Presumably, n. areas experienced high breeding success, as the vast majority of birds banded at Rocky Point B.O. were imm. (*vide* AN).

SWALLOWS THROUGH FINCHES

Bank Swallows are rare autumn transients along the coast; one was at Rocky Point B.O. 13 Aug (DA). Chestnut-backed Chickadees almost never grace these pages, but this year they staged a small but widespread invasion into the s. interior. The most significant count was of 9 in Naramata 17 Nov

(RJC). Very rare along the s. coast, a Rock Wren was at the Cypress Parking Lot 9 Oct (MT). A female or imm. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was at Reifel 4 Sep (†QB, MMD), furnishing the 8th provincial record. Right on its heels came the 9th provincial record, with one in Nakusp 14-23 Nov (ph. GSD et al.). A Gray Catbird was rather late in Nakusp 20 Oct (GSD). Casual in the province and found any time of year, a Brown Thrasher was discovered at Long Beach 13-15 Sep (GB, RTo) for a 2nd record for the w. coast of Vancouver I.

A male Tennessee Warbler, a very rare transient in the Okanagan, was heard during a daily census at Vaseux 20 Aug (DB et al.); possibly the same bird was noted in the same spot 8-10 Sep (RJC, BH), and an ad. female was later banded at Vaseux 13 Sep (DB). Northern Parulas have become annual in the province over the past five years, but 2006 was a banner year, with four records Jun–Oct. The province's 9th through 11th records involved single males at Rocky Point B.O., Metchosin 16 Aug (GD, CSa, MR); Swan L., Victoria 2-4 Oct (DL, MH ph, CSa, †BB); and at the mail processing plant in Victoria 7 Oct (†RTo), apparently the same individual relocated. The province's 13th record of Black-throated Blue Warbler came from Sooke 2 Oct, an imm. male (RTo). This species is a casual autumn transient, with three winter records and only one spring record. The province's 11th Blackburnian Warbler was a male discovered in a warbler fallout at Jordan R. 13 Sep (†RTo). An imm. Magnolia Warbler, very rare in the Okanagan, was discovered in Sutherland Hills Park, Kelowna (†RyT). Likely the scarcest of our breeding warblers, from the ne. corner of the province (and rarely recorded on the coast), an imm. Bay-breasted Warbler was found at the Wickaninnish parking lot in Pacific Rim N.P. 15 Sep (RTo); another at Long Beach 14 Sep rounded out warbler rarities

from Vancouver I. (RTo). Vancouver's first photographically documented Blackpoll Warbler was discovered 3 Sep at Burrard and Hastings (ph., †BW); Vancouver has but a handful of records for this species. A Northern Waterthrush, rare but regular along the coast, was at Reifel in Ladner 12 Aug (*vide* DM), and one was at Mt. Douglas Beach, Saanich 13 Aug (JT). An imm. Canada Warbler was at Swan L., Victoria 1-2 Oct (DL, MH). Rarely encountered in the lower mainland, a male Yellow-breasted Chat was singing along River Rd., Delta 22 Sep (MMcN), quite late.

A female or imm. Rose-breasted Grosbeak was a surprise find in Sooke 1 Aug (RTo). A Clay-colored Sparrow, very rare on the coast, was at a feeder in Victoria 2-3 Oct (ph. TA); another was discovered in Victoria 28 Oct (CSa, ph. TA). An imm. Lark Sparrow, well out of range, was in Sooke 15 Sep (RTo, ph. TZ), where a rare Grasshopper Sparrow was found 18 Sep (RTo). A Harris's Sparrow, very rare on Vancouver I., was in Victoria 29 Oct (DA). Casual in the Peace R. area and regularly found only in the extreme nw. corner of the province, a Smith's Longspur was at McQueen's Slough in the Peace R. area 13 Sep (GLM).

A first for the Okanagan, a male Indigo Bunting was seen and heard singing during the daily Vaseux survey 27 Aug (DB), and a female or imm. was at Jordan R. 21 Sep (RTo, MM, LH). A very late Bullock's Oriole was frequenting a suet feeder at Qualicum Beach 26 Nov+ (C&DB, ph. GLM et al.). Pine Grosbeaks arrived early in s. interior valleys and



Xantus's Murrelet, very rarely encountered in British Columbia waters, was documented nicely near Tofino 2 October 2006. Photograph by Adrian Dorst.

staged a mini-invasion of the s. coast and Vancouver I., with many sightings of very small groups suggestive of an altitudinal migration. Rare on Vancouver I., a Common Redpoll was with a flock of Pine Siskins 10 Nov (RTo).

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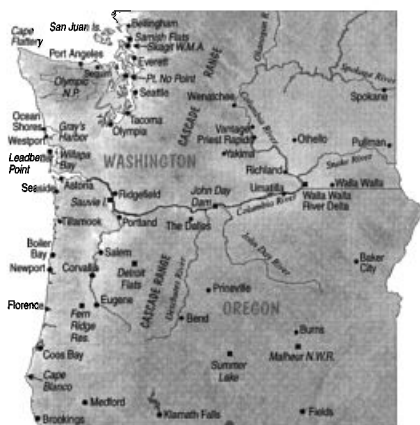
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The season started warm and cuddly, with modestly elevated temperatures and very low rainfall, particularly in August, when the Region received less than one third of its usual precipitation. Then November arrived and unleashed a fury of storms, with high winds and record rainfalls. Washington had its wettest month ever and Oregon its sixth wettest November. Surprisingly, the November lashings did not blow a host of seabirds inshore. Fall 2006 did provide its share of mega-rarities, including two Regional firsts and additional first state records for Washington and Oregon. During August and September, there was a whiff of a montane invasion, perhaps due to extensive forest fires. Finally, shorebird numbers seemed subpar nearly across the board.

Abbreviations: FR.R. (Fern Ridge Res., Lane, OR); Malheur (Malheur N.W.R., Harney, OR); N.S.C.B. (N. Spit Coos Bay, Coos, OR); O.S. (Ocean Shores, Grays Harbor, WA); P.S.B. (Port Susan Bay, Snohomish); P.T. (Puget Trough, WA); W.V. (Willamette Valley, OR);

W.W.R.D. (Walla Walla R. delta, Walla Walla, WA). "Eastside" and "westside" indicate locations e. and w. of the Cascade crest, respectively.

WATERFOWL THROUGH COOTS

A Tule Greater White-fronted Goose (subspecies *gambelli*) at Edmonds, Snohomish 4-10 Nov (ph. SM, C. Riddell, DD) furnished about the 5th record from Washington, all of which were Sep-Dec. The entire Tule Goose population (approximately 7200) breeds in the Alaskan taiga, stages in s.-cen. Oregon, and winters in California's central valley (Pacific Flyways Study Committee 2003). Single Emperor Geese enlivened Shillapoo Bottoms, Clark 28 Oct-11 Nov (WC, C. Ledford), Ferndale, Whatcom 11-12 Nov (J. Meche), and Astoria 2 Nov+ (MP); the Region averages about 2 per fall. At least 4 ad. and 4 imm. Blue Geese graced Fir I., Skagit 4 Nov+ (CW, SM, W. Russell). Almost all of w. Washington's Snow Geese hail from the colony on Wrangel I., Siberia, which has had a growing number of Blue Geese, including 11 ads. that produced 10+ young this year (V. Baranyuk). A Snow Goose at Vanport Wetlands, Multnomah 5 Sep was a month early (AF). Another Snow Goose x Canada/Cackling Goose hybrid visited the Columbia Basin at McNary N.W.R., Walla Walla 11 Nov (M&MD). Par for fall, single errant Ross's Geese appeared at Othello, Adams 14 Oct (BF) and McNary N.W.R. 27 Nov (M&MD). A Lesser Canada Goose (subspecies *parvipes*) at Sun Lakes, Grant 1 Sep was about a month early (SM, BSW). A Cackling Goose, subspecies unknown, at Ho-

quiam, Grays Harbor 13 Aug (G. McWethy) and a *taverneri* Cackling Goose at Lind Coulee, Grant 26 Aug (SM) probably summered locally; migrants typically first appear in late Sep. A congregation of 22 *minima* Cackling Geese at Moses L., Grant 25 Nov likely set an e. Washington record (BF, SM, DSc). Rare away from salt water, a Black Brant inhabited Kent, King 25-29 Oct (D. Swayne), and 2 visited Eugene 1 Nov (DI). A Trumpeter Swan at Lyman, Skagit 2 Sep+ was about two months early (GB), while 2 at Cape Blanco 28 Nov were exceptionally far s., providing Curry's 4th record (LM, TJW).

The male Falcated Duck returned to Coburg, Lane 14 Nov+ for the 4th consecutive year (J. Harding). The only eastside Eurasian Wigeons were at Bingen, Klickitat 3 Nov (SJ) and Hatfield L., Deschutes late Oct+ (fide CG). A very rare Mallard x Gadwall hybrid inhabited Vashon I., King 12 Nov (EH). No Eurasian Teal were detected for the 2nd consecutive fall. Ring-necked Ducks were unusually abundant, evidenced by 1385 at Everett 23 Nov (SM), 1826 at Wells Pool, Okanogan/Douglas 15 Nov (RH), and 1960 at Wanapum Pool, Grant 16 Nov (RH). A male Tufted Duck at Philomath, Benton 5 Nov provided the first fall record since 2000 (J. Fontaine, R. Moore); Tufteds are annual Dec-Apr. A stunning 10,230 scaup, about 80% Greaters, were at Wanapum Pool 16 Nov (RH), likely attracted there by Eurasian Milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) and Curly-leaf Pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*), both introduced species. Washington's 3rd Steller's Eider graced Edmonds 28 Sep (†DD, S. Pink); Washington's prior

SA Washington's first photographically documented **Richardson's Cackling Goose** (subspecies *hutchinsii*) brightened Sun Lakes, Grant 8 Nov (DG). This was followed by 6 Richardson's among a throng of Lesser Canada Geese at Steamboat Rock, Grant 25 Nov (SM, DSc, BF). Previous Regional records include 2 birds in Walla Walla Mar 2006 and one specimen from Klamath Falls (Aldrich 1946, *Wilson Bulletin* 58: 94-103). Since many of the Columbia Basin's wintering Mallards and *moffitti* Canada Geese come from Alberta (D. Kraege), vagrancy by Richardson's Geese to our Region may not be so surprising.