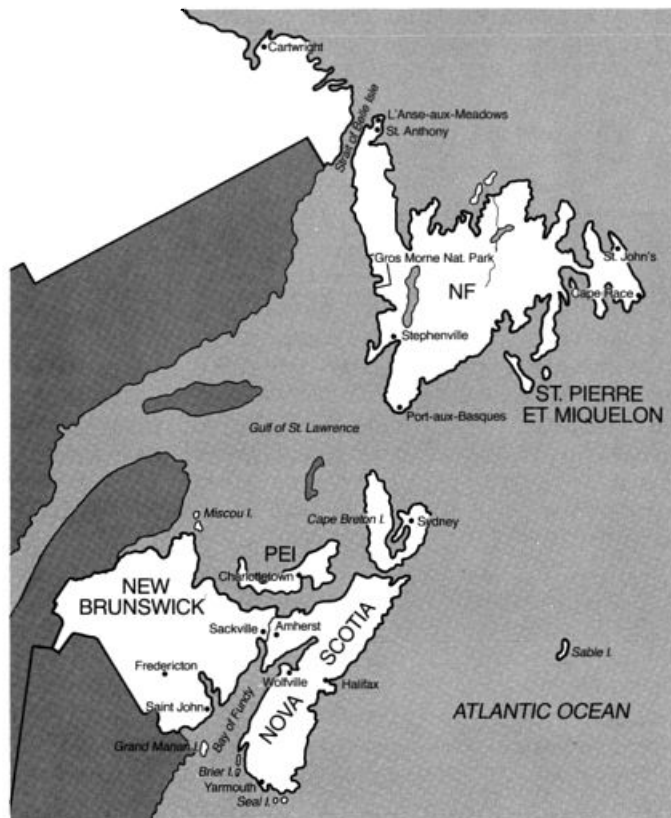


# The Spring Season

## March 1 - May 31, 1990



MAP ILLUSTRATIONS/DENISE O'BRIEN

## ATLANTIC PROVINCES REGION

Blake Maybank

Experienced Maritimers are accustomed to poor weather each spring; indeed, there hardly seems to be a spring at all, as winter fades foggily into summer. This year, however, it was worse than usual. March and April were typically dull, cool, and dreary, enlivened by a few unusually warm spells that propelled a few suicidal migrants northward ahead of schedule. Then came a vicious May, with the monthly temperature a full 5 degrees Celsius below normal. A stalled low pressure system east of Newfoundland kept north and northeast winds, and the accompanying cold weather, pouring into the Region until May 27 (May 28 in Newfoundland). The third and fourth weeks of May were particularly hard on the birds on the mainland, with below-freezing temperatures and widespread snowfall or flurries on several days. Swallows and Purple Martins were the most visible victims of the cold, but the

weather undoubtedly took its toll on other insect-dependent species as well. On Newfoundland, where migration is normally later than the mainland by one to two weeks, the more potentially susceptible migrants had not arrived when the foul weather hit. If these birds perished, they did so south of the province. Bruce Mactavish reports that by the end of May in Newfoundland, there were still no leaves out on the trees, and the passerine migration was at least ten days behind schedule.

If the inclement weather had any effect on the degree of birder effort, it was not apparent with respect to the rarities discovered, which were numerous and exciting, as one comes to expect of the Maritimes. Despite the prevailing northeast winds at this time, there were few European strays in evidence, but some did arrive, as noted below.

Reporting was excellent from Nova Scotia, eastern Newfoundland, and Saint Pierre et Miquelon, good from New Brunswick, fair from western Newfoundland, and poor from Prince Edward Island.

**ABBREVIATIONS:** S.P.M. = Saint Pierre et Miquelon; PEI = Prince Edward Island; G.M.N.P. = Gros Morne National Park, Newfoundland. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO IBISES** — The high counts of the two regular loon species were of 10 Red-throats at Economy, NS, on Apr. 6 (FS), and 100 Commons at Cherry Hill Beach, NS, on Apr. 28 (SC). This latter location also hosted the highest concentration of Horned Grebes, with 78 on Mar. 13 (SC). Smaller numbers of Red-necked Grebes were reported from the mainland, with the largest group being of 60 at Pinkney's Point, NS, on Mar. 26 (JD). However, RE estimated at least 200 around S.P.M. in April.

Too little information regarding tubenoses was received to draw any conclusions; no large numbers of any species were seen. On May 16, RE checked some cliffs in S.P.M. where Northern Fulmar had been apparently prospecting for potential nesting sites a few years earlier, but no birds were located. A Manx Shearwater seen from Bon Portage I., NS, May 19 (FL) makes one wonder if this species might try breeding on the island, which already hosts more than 50,000 Leach's Storm-Petrels. The first Leach's Storm-Petrels reported from Nova Scotia were on May 10, but 30 were seen off Cape St. Francis, NF, on Apr. 25, during a NE gale (KKn, Bmt). One that landed off-course in Moncton, NB, in late May was recovered, but died a few days later (*vide* TE). The N. Gannet migration was well-observed this year, with the peak period being the first 3 weeks of April. JD had 1000/hour flying past Pinkney's Pt., NS, on Apr. 5, while 300–600/hour were seen off Pennant Bay, NS (D. & A. Mackinnon).

This was not a good heron spring. American Bitterns showed average numbers, with 7 reports from Nova Scotia, 3 from S.P.M., and a few from New Brunswick and Newfoundland. Great Blue Herons were late in arriving throughout the mainland, and no large concentrations were found away from Prince Edward Island. The only Great Egrets were singles at Moncton, NB, May 13—end of

period (HD *et al.*) and Grand Manan, NB, May 18 (HD) A **Little Egret** on Bon Portage I., NS, from early May onwards (PS, m.ob.) was presumably the same bird present a year earlier. There is evidence to suggest the bird was also present in spring–summer 1988 as well. This tends to support the theory mentioned a year ago in this report that this Region's Little Egrets have a southern origin, after displacement from Africa, rather than via the North Atlantic. The bird was studied closely by IM on May 20 & 29, and he reports that “*its rangy, larger-headed appearance, and its size (notably larger than two Snowy Egrets) matched last year's birds, but this one had lores that were bluish-grey, with only a small dot of yellow in front.*” Four Snowy Egrets returned to Bon Portage I., NS, in early May, where they apparently have been attempting to establish a colony. By mid-month there were only two birds present, and none could be located at month's end. Their colonization could have been thwarted by the increasing numbers of gulls nesting there. Elsewhere in the Region only three Snowies were reported: at Hacketts Cove, *Halifax*, NS, May 1–15 (BMa *et al.*); on Grand Manan, NB, Apr. 27–May 4 (HD); and at Waterside Marsh, NB, May 25–26 (*fide* PP). There were 3 reports of Green-backed Herons from Nova Scotia, one each from Seal I. (May 9), Brier I. (May 20), and Dartmouth (May 22).

The only member of the heron group to put on a good show was Glossy Ibis. With rumours of hundreds arriving in Maine this spring, we expected some to head our way, and we were not disappointed. Nova Scotia had singles at W Chezzetcook Apr. 12–16, Seal I. Apr. 13, Black Pt. Apr. 14, Overton Apr. 19–22, and Pinkney's Pt. May 23–24, and two at Hartlen Pt. May 10–11. In April (date unspecified), Prince Edward Island hosted a flock of eight at Malpeque (*fide* RC). New Brunswick had the best ibis show, with three at Lower Cloverdale Apr. 12, 10 at Daniel's Harbour Apr. 22 (RW), three at Moncton the same day, and three at Dieppe Apr. 14–18.

**WATERFOWL** — Incomplete reporting provided an incomplete picture of the status of waterfowl populations. The goose situation was clearer than for the ducks. Following last year's Snow Goose invasion, high hopes were held for a repeat show this year. It was not to be, although Maine did very well to the west and south of us. Only one or two were reported from Nova Scotia. In New Brunswick a few small flocks were reported from *Albert* (*fide* DCh) and a single flock of three immatures was at Shepody N.W.A., Apr. 29–May 7 (RW, HD). However, Newfoundland had an unprecedented flock of 18 Snow Geese (four adult, 14 imm.) at Shallow Bay, G.M.N.P., Apr. 10–20, with a few until early May (HDm). Brant were felt to be down in numbers in Nova Scotia, with only one observer reporting more than one hundred in a flock. In New Brunswick, 200 plus at Grand Manan Apr. 15 was considered a good number (HD).

A number of Wood Ducks around St. John's, NF, are considered local escapes or releases (*fide* BMt), but one elsewhere in the province at Deer Lake, May 20, was considered wild (JW *et al.*), as were the three males that overwintered at Sullivan's Pond, Dartmouth, NS (BIL). Eurasian Green-winged Teal are becoming almost routine. One in the Wolfville, NS, area was seen off and on until Apr. 16 (BS). New Brunswick had another at Waterside May 21 (AM), and another at Val Comeau P.P. May 5 (Robert Doiron). The duck of the spring was New Brunswick's 2nd **Garganey**, at Val Comeau P.P., off and on from May 15–23 (*fide* HC). What may well have been the same bird became a first for Prince Edward Island, when

national park staff found it May 29 at Cavendish Bay (*fide* DCh). Northern Shovelers are rare in Newfoundland, but have had a 2nd consecutive good spring showing, with a pair and two males May 11 at Deer Lake, and a male at St Paul's May 19 (both sightings JW *et al.*).

Pictou Harbour, NS, is a known wintering locale for Greater Scaup, but this year the numbers built up to an all-time high of 2300 on Mar. 24 (BMy). Common Eider were well reported from around the Region, with the largest flock 16,000 at Three-Fathom Harbour, NS, Mar. 28 (FL). A Harlequin Duck was locally rare at Le Goule, NB, Apr. 7 (*fide* HC). All three scoter species were reported less frequently than usual, but conclusions would be dangerous to draw. The best report on the mainland was from Hartlen Pt., NS, on Apr. 13, where BMy had over 1000 scoters, with at least 350 White-wingeds, 150 Surfs, 120 Blacks, and the rest Surf/Black. Alain Desbrosse had over 2000 White-wingeds off Langlade, S.P.M., Mar. 31. The only Ruddy Duck reported was at Caraquet, NB, May 12 (MD)

**RAPTORS** — Spring hawk flights are rare in the Maritimes, but RW at Fundy N.P., NB, was treated to one on Apr. 23–24, during a break in the weather. Accurate counts were not possible, but many hundreds of birds were observed, primarily Sharp-shinned Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, American Kestrel, and Merlin.

There were numerous Turkey Vulture reports from New Brunswick and southern Nova Scotia. An out-of-range bird was at Sand L., Cape Breton I., NS, on May 9 (Cathy Murrant). The **Red-shouldered Hawk** in Kentville apparently successfully overwintered. Even more unusual was a Red-shouldered resembling the pale Florida race, seen at Moncton, NB, Mar. 28 (ST). A Broad-winged Hawk near Mahone Bay, NS, Apr. 6 (SC) was Nova Scotia's earliest spring arrival by 5 days. The raptor of greatest interest in this report is a belatedly reported **Swainson's Hawk**, found dead on Spenser's I., *Colchester*, NS, in the spring of 1989. The person who found the bird sent in a band from the hawk's leg; the hawk had been banded as an immature at Cape May, New Jersey, in the autumn of 1988. We would like more details from the bird's discoverer, especially including whether the bird was an old corpse, or a spring arrival. This was the 2nd record of this species for the province, and the first confirmed one.

A Red-tailed Hawk was reported by RB on the Burin Peninsula, NF, May 7. There are only 5 records for insular Newfoundland. The plumage as described in the report was atypical, but a red tail was in evidence. The conclusive patagial marks were not noted. In New Brunswick, Peregrine Falcons have returned to their nests in Fundy N.P. and the harbour bridge at Saint John (*fide* RW & PP). At the latter location the birds shifted their nest location from precarious bridge struts to a nesting platform built for them, and three week-old young were observed May 25. In Newfoundland, away from the regular L'anse-aux-Meadows area, Gyrfalcons were noted at Flatrock, with two white-morph birds Apr. 13–15 (JW *et al.*), and Cape St. Mary's, with a dark-morph bird seen Apr. 1 (JW) and May 1 (RB).

**GROUSE TO SHOREBIRDS** — Chukars were released at W. Pubnico, NS, in the spring of last year. Some apparently survived the winter, for a nest with 13 eggs was found on May 13 (JD). Regardless of this success, their future seems in doubt.

A dead rail found at Eddy Marsh, NS, on May 31 (Allan Hanson) was either a King or a Clapper rail. It has been sent to the national museum in Ottawa for positive

identification. A Common Moorhen was considered a good find at Val Comeau P.P., NB, May 5 (*vide* HC). A new species for S.P.M. was a **Sandhill Crane** May 19–24 (J. & C. Herbert *et al.*, ph.).

Cape Sable is apparently the place to be in Nova Scotia for variety and numbers of our less regular spring shorebirds. The following totals by Sid Smith were the best in the province: 187 Black-bellied Plovers May 27; two Semi-plated Plovers May 27; 10 Piping Plovers Apr. 13; two Whimbrels May 4; two Red Knots May 27; 60 Sanderlings May 4.

In preparation for a live cross-Canada T.V. link-up of birders from Halifax, NS, Pt. Pelee, ON, and Calgary, AB, McLaren discovered Nova Scotia's 2nd **Greater Golden-Plover** at Hartlen Pt. May 22. It stayed for 2 more days, delighting dozens of birders from near and far. This bird may have been caught up in the NE winds that prevailed for much of May. Other Greater Golden-Plovers were two at S.P.M. May 24–25 (RE *et al.*, ph.), and one at St. Paul's, NF, May 16 (JW *et al.*). All the birds were breeding-plumaged adults. This was the 3rd straight spring this species has shown up in the Region. Piping Plovers are declining throughout the Region, but nowhere is the situation more precarious than in Newfoundland. At the last "stronghold" in the province at a beach west of Burgeo, Joe Brazil counted a maximum of six birds. This is not much to build a recovery on.

Three Solitary Sandpipers were a good spring find in G.M.N.P. on May 31 (HDm), as were two singles in New Brunswick, one each at Sackville (TE) and Cape Jourimain (ST), both on May 17. Three Upland Sandpipers at W. Pubnico, NS, were a treat for JD on May 4. Another Upland Sandpiper was out-of-place at Bois Hebert, NB, May 10 (*vide* HC). A Whimbrel of the Eurasian race was on S.P.M. May 20 (Bruna Letournel). A Sanderling at Portugal Cove South, NF, Mar. 11 (CB) suggested a rare successful overwintering.

The bird of the spring for Newfoundland was the province's 3rd **Curllew Sandpiper** at Kilbride May 24–26 (BMT *et al.*, ph.). This bird could have arrived on the same system that brought the Greater Golden-Plovers. A **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** at Conrad's Beach Apr. 7 furnished only the third spring sighting for Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia also had the Region's only Ruffs this spring, with one at Lockeport Apr. 1 (*vide* IM), and one (same bird?) at Little Harbour Apr. 10 (DY). Short-billed Dowitchers are rare in spring; this year one was at G.M.N.P. May 21 (JW, CB). Wilson's Phalarope are more common each year, especially in New Brunswick. This province hosted one at Caraquet May 14 (*vide* HC) and a pair at Sackville Sewage Lagoons May 2–4 (TE). Another was at Port Williams, NS, May 27 (Jim Wolford).

**GULLS TO ALCIDS** — Lost, but much appreciated, was an adult **Long-tailed Jaeger** well inland on a snow-covered field at Gasperaux, NS, Apr. 6–8 (m.ob., ph). Its right eye appeared injured, and it was reduced to eating earthworms, and laboratory mice served on a plywood platter. When it left, however, it appeared in much better health than when it had arrived.

An adult **Franklin's Gull** in G.M.N.P. May 31 (HDm) furnished about the province's 10th record for this gull. There are more Common Black-headed Gull records each year. Newfoundland established new high spring counts with 98 at St. John's Mar. 25, and 99 on Apr. 1, split between 44 at Bellevue Beach and 55 at Harbour Grace. All the other provinces had good, but lesser, counts. Most birds left by early April, particularly in the southern part

of the Region, so it is difficult to explain the origin of 10 immatures at Cole Harbour, NS, Apr. 28, and three adults at Val Comeau P.P., NB, May 24 (*vide* HC). The former were perhaps late migrants from New England, while the latter may have been trying to nest locally. The Mew Gull overwintering in Halifax was last seen Mar. 25. Newfoundland reported two Mew Gulls. The last week of April produced two Ivory Gulls, one in Glace Bay, NS, for several days (*vide* BIL), and one on the CN ferry to Prince Edward Island (*vide* RC).

#### S.A.

I'm saddened to announce another setback for the Region's breeding terns. Here, as elsewhere along the east coast of North America, tern populations have been declining due to the pressures of an increasing gull population. The Canadian Wildlife Service (C.W.S.), in the only accurate survey to date, estimates that 50% of the tern colonies along Nova Scotia's Atlantic coast have already been lost. Gulls are profiting by exploiting garbage dumps, fishing industry waste, and untreated human sewage. The long-term solution requires society to change its habits with respect to waste, but thus far the political and social will to act seems lacking. The terns can't wait. In response to the crisis, the C.W.S. has devised a Tern Recovery Plan to assist the terns in the short term. The goal is to protect certain key tern colonies from depredation by gulls, so that in the future, if gull populations are reduced because society has cleaned up its act, the terns will be able to reclaim their former breeding colonies. The Plan involves eliminating those gull colonies which threaten the core tern colonies.

Sable Island, NS, is the ideal place to begin this effort. It is isolated, located in rich feeding grounds, and can support a large number of terns. Early in this century the breeding population was estimated at "not far short of a million birds," but only about 1000 pairs remain, mostly Common and Arctic terns, with 10 or so pairs of Roseate Terns, the second-largest Roseate colony remaining in Canada. Gulls did not historically breed on Sable Island, but over 3500 pairs do so now, both Herring and Great Black-backed. The C.W.S. planned to poison the gulls with Starlicide, which humanely shuts down the birds' kidneys. It has been approved for use in the U.S. (and the Audubon Society recommends its use), but certification is still pending in Canada. Local natural history and bird clubs, and the major main-stream natural history groups in the country, have not objected to the gull eradication program. Support, however, is not unanimous among the public at large. When the intentions of the C.W.S. were placed before public review, a considerable hue and cry was raised, much of it ill-informed, and most of it originating from the province of Ontario. The media naturally fuelled the controversy. Some critics objected to interference of any kind, preferring, in effect, the extirpation of the terns. Others disliked the method of killing the gulls, preferring a non-poisonous approach. Still others questioned the safety of the actual poison to be used, and whether the adjacently nesting "Ipswich" Savannah Sparrows would be affected, although in field tests the sparrows ignored the bait set for the gulls. The opponents of the Plan flooded the office of the Federal Minister of the Environment with letters and phone calls, while proponents remained quiet, which resulted in a one-year postponement, "pending further review." It is hoped the Plan will proceed in 1991, as every delay hurts the terns further. The 10 remaining pairs of Roseate Terns will have to hang on for another year.

**OWLS TO FLYCATCHERS** — In a Barred Owl nest box in

the Wolfville, NS, area, Bernard Forsythe found the following on May 11. three short-tailed shrews, two red-backed voles, one jumping mouse, two garter snakes, and two small brook trout. A Northern Hawk Owl at Candlestick Pond, G.M.N.P., Apr. 14, furnished only the 2nd local record (*vide* HDm). Boreal Owls were much in evidence in the Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland, with 4 separate sightings of three singles and a pair. A pair at Bay St. Lawrence, *Cape Breton*, NS, Apr. 13, was believed to be nesting (FL). They were discovered in this location a year ago.

No Whip-poor-wills were reported from the Region this season, which suggests they were delayed by the poor May weather. Chimney Swifts, especially in New Brunswick, were hard hit by the May freeze. Fifty or more corpses were found in some chimneys. In Nova Scotia, mortality was much lower. The famous Wolfville swifts described in detail a year ago built up to 800 or more by May 20.

We all would have loved to see the hummingbird sp. that appeared at Mosherville, NS, on Mar. 1 (Carol Taylor); the temperature was a very warm 11 degrees Celcius; this bird must have been something deliciously rare, as western and southwestern hummers migrate much earlier than Ruby-throateds. During the May cold snap, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds flocked to feeders, with one observer in New Brunswick reporting 25 in the yard at one time (*vide* DCh). The feeders certainly aided in the hummers' survival, for numbers seemed normal at the end of the month.

The only unusual woodpeckers were a Red-headed on Seal I., NS, May 14–19 (*vide* IM), and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker on S.P.M. May 1 (*vide* RE).

Flycatchers are normally late migrants here, and were apparently little affected by the adverse weather in May. There are unaccountably few Newfoundland records of Eastern Phoebe, but this spring there were two, one Apr. 22 at Plum Pt. (John Gibbons), and one May 10 on Ramea (RN). A Western Kingbird, normally an autumn vagrant, was discovered May 20 at Germantown Marsh, NB (AM). Cyril Coldwell had a tantalizing but brief sighting of a **Gray Kingbird** at Gasperaux May 12. Cyril provided a good description, but the bird did not cooperate by lingering for others to corroborate the find.

**SWALLOWS TO WAXWINGS** — A warm spell in March resulted in the earliest spring swallow ever for New Brunswick, a Cliff Swallow at Mary's Point Mar. 18 (RW, DCh). A day later in the same location a Tree Swallow appeared (Dr. Majka). Both early birds undoubtedly perished. However, more timely swallows deserved a better fate. Most of the hirundines were severely affected by the mid-May cold. Purple Martins were the hardest hit, with the 3 colonies in Nova Scotia, and many of the colonies in New Brunswick, experiencing a 90% to 100% mortality (*vide* TE, FL, DCh). By the end of May there was a partial recolonization at most places by late-migrating year-old birds. Clearly, however, the population can not withstand 2 springs like this in a row, and the colonies will take several years to reassert themselves. Tree Swallows, Cliff Swallows, and Barn Swallows were also greatly down in numbers after the cold snap, as much as 70% in some areas. Only the late-migrating Bank Swallows appeared untouched by the cold. As an effect of this die-off, many fewer swallows than normal arrived on S.P.M. (*vide* RE).

A singing House Wren was discovered May 20 in Saint John, NB, and was still on territory at the end of the period (*vide* JW). Thrushes and mimids were in normal numbers, except for Northern Mockingbirds, which appeared up in Nova Scotia with over 20 sightings around the province. A Brown Thrasher overwintered in Halifax, NS, and was last

seen Apr. 24. The winter's major invasion of Bohemian Waxwings continued into late April, although the flock sizes gradually decreased. Unprecedented in date and size, however, was a flock of 135 at Port au Choix, NF, May 5 (HDm).

**VIREOS, WARBLERS** — The regular vireos were reported in normal numbers. All vireos are uncommon in Newfoundland, and even the most regular, Philadelphia, has yet to be confirmed nesting, so the sighting of a pair at Millertown May 30 was encouraging (BMT). Rare anytime, but especially so in spring, were a White-eyed Vireo on Bon Portage I., NS, May 20 (IM *et al.*), and a Yellow-throated Vireo in Lunenburg, NS, May 27 (Jim Taylor). Each provided a 4th spring sighting in the province.

Mactavish felt that warbler migration was 10 days late in Newfoundland, with the cold weather once again responsible. Migration was similarly delayed on the mainland, but the birds did arrive, and there was no evidence of any die-off during the cold. The regular breeders evoked little comment from observers, but there were a few rarities to brighten up this dull spring. A **Golden-winged Warbler** at Saint John West, NB, May 5 (*vide* HC) was a good find, as there are fewer than 10 records for the province, most in fall. Nova Scotia's 7th **Black-throated Gray Warbler** was a female at Green Bay May 17–19 (SC). A Pine Warbler, rare in Nova Scotia in spring, was discovered in *Halifax* May 20 (K. & W. Tay). Two were discovered on territory on Curry Mt., NB, Apr. 22 (Hal Hinds). The peculiar warbler of the spring, though, had to be the bright ♂ Prothonotary Warbler at the feeder of Oliver Ross on Cape Sable I., NS, Apr. 3–27. It subsisted on a diet of peanut butter and crab-apple jelly, not likely its normal fare. Another, or the same bird, reappeared a week later. Still another Prothonotary Warbler flew onto the research vessel the "Hudson" on Apr. 5, 100 miles south of Halifax, NS, and died on board (*vide* BIL).

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — There were 2 Summer Tanager reports from Nova Scotia. A male was on Bon Portage I. May 9–23 (PS), and a first-year male was at Middle Stewiacke May 10 (Ross Baker). Rare in Newfoundland, a ♀ Scarlet Tanager was at the unlikely location of a patch of deciduous scrub 15 km east of Millertown, May 30 (BMT). Most vagrants in that province are found at coastal migrant traps, so finding one inland is like winning the lottery. There are few confirmed nestings of Northern Cardinal in this Region; a nest was discovered with just-hatched young on Grand Manan, NB, May 19 (*vide* HD).

It was a banner year for Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, in part because they rushed to feeders during the cold snap and were thus more visible than normal. Hundreds of birds were reported in late May from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, with one in St. John's, NF, as well. There were 2 sightings of **Black-headed Grosbeak** in Nova Scotia, the first a male at Hilton May 16–24 (Henry Dick), and the second (with fewer details) a male at Cheverie in with a flock of Rose-breasteds. This brought the number of sightings for the province to 12, only 3 in the spring. It was an average year for Indigo Buntings, with 6 records of seven birds in Nova Scotia, and 3 records of four birds for New Brunswick. The only Blue Grosbeak was a single at Alma, NB, May 26 (AM).

A Savannah Sparrow of the Ipswich race was noted on Ramea, NF, Apr. 22 and May 7 (RN). The overwintering Field Sparrow at RW's feeder at Mary's Pt., NB, was last seen Apr. 8. Fox Sparrows were more heavily reported than normal, as they frequented people's feeders dur-



ing poor weather. The cold in May encouraged White-crowned Sparrows to stop by and linger during their migration, with many more sightings than normal from Nova Scotia (9 reports totalling 18 birds) and New Brunswick. They stayed in the Fundy N.P., NB, area until the weather broke on May 25 (*vide* RW). In S.P.M. they were also reported as more numerous than usual with several sightings in late May (RE). Not normally a feeder species, the foul weather of May drove Bobolinks to feeders in the Mary's Pt., NB, area (*vide* RW, DCh). Flocks were even seen huddling under the decks of houses for shelter. An imm. ♂ Yellow-headed Blackbird at Riverview, NB, May 29 (HD *et al.*) was the only unusual icterid reported this spring.

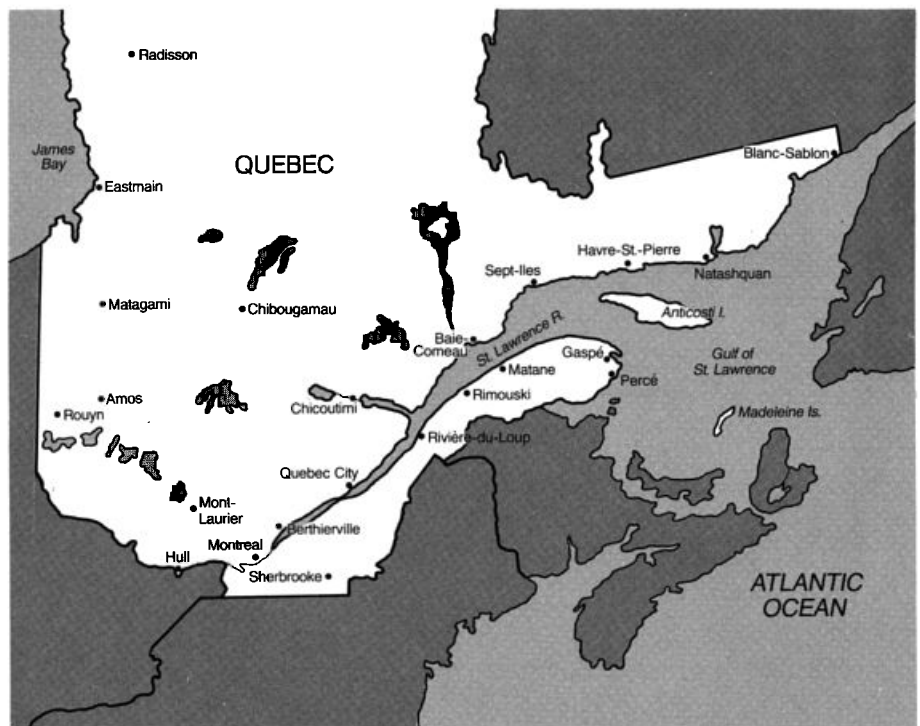
And now the finch report. Pine Grosbeaks were fairly common only on Newfoundland. Purple Finches were widespread by early May after a disappointing winter. House Finches continued their relentless march, with 7 reports in Nova Scotia away from the Annapolis Valley, including a pair in Halifax in late April, and 12 on Seal I. Apr. 14. In New Brunswick they continued to expand in all the southern cities. They have yet to reach Newfound-

land. White-winged Crossbills were virtually absent on the mainland, and scarce in Newfoundland. Red Crossbills in Newfoundland were reported as "all but extinct" (BMt), which, if the provincial subspecies is in fact a valid species, is sad news indeed. Common Redpolls were scarce away from their breeding areas in Newfoundland. Pine Siskins and Evening Grosbeaks, after a winter away somewhere else, showed up in numbers in early May, and have been at feeders since.

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## QUEBEC REGION

Yves Aubry,  
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 and Richard Yank



This spring was generally cool with light precipitation, but was highlighted by brief periods of abnormally warm weather that brought several waves of early migrants into the Region. A warm spell across western Quebec in mid-March produced record early waterfowl and swallows—these conditions giving way to cold and snow again before month's end. A few mild days in early April and a five-day heat wave that reached southwestern Quebec on April 25 raised average monthly temperatures above the mean for the southern one-half of the province, where precipitation levels were also above normal. Warblers of no fewer than 12 species were recorded at Montreal by the end of April, with several new early arrival records being established.

May was cooler than usual throughout the Region, with

below normal precipitation except in extreme southwestern Quebec, and also on the North Shore and the Gaspé Peninsula where record snowfalls occurred. Cold and snow was likely responsible for the discovery of 109 dead swifts at the bottom of a chimney in La Pocatière May 23 (CA); 60 Purple Martins were also found dead near a Laprairie house during the month (*vide* YA). Following a period of cold weather with strong east winds, warm southerly winds brought a noticeable influx of passerines to the Magdalen Islands May 26–27. Most notable were seven Eastern Bluebirds (EL, PBo), a Gray Catbird (CDi), six species of locally rare warblers, a male Scarlet Tanager (AR, CDi), and 15+ Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (AP, v.o.). An Indigo Bunting at Gaspé May 26 (JG, GCa) was likely part of this movement as well.

## NEW EARLY ARRIVAL RECORDS

Date	Species	Location	Observers
13 Mar.	Blue-winged Teal (2)	Longueuil	MP
16 Mar.	Tree Swallows (5)	Valleyfield	MM, BB
17 Mar.	Greater White-fronted Geese (2)	Sainte-Barbe	PBa, RBa
20 Mar.	Lesser Black-backed Gull	Hull	BMD
22 Mar.	Ross' Goose	Baie-du-Febvre	DJ
7 Apr.	Eastern Kingbird	Hudson	FHi <i>et al.</i>
28 Apr.	Magnolia Warbler	Barrière	DP
28 Apr.	Northern Waterthrush	Maniwaki	GBo
28 Apr.	Northern Waterthrush	Aylmer	JDu
29 Apr.	Prairie Warbler	Westmount	Ld'A
29 Apr.	Black-throated Blue Warbler	Westmount	MAi
29 Apr.	Piping Plover	Fatima	RA, SD, UD
30 Apr.	Common Yellowthroat	Longueuil	DD
1 May	Tennessee Warbler	Westmount	MAi
3 May	Blackpoll Warbler	Aylmer	RLD
31 May	Wilson's Storm-Petrel	Grande-Entrée	AP

**LOONS TO WATERFOWL**—An unusually large concentration of 700 Red-throated Loons occurred at Rivière-Ouelle May 25 (JL, LV) following a spell of strong E winds, while warm air from the south brought 70 Horned and 90 Red-necked grebes to Aylmer Apr. 25 (JDu, RLD *et al.*)—one of the largest flocks to be noted in w. Quebec in recent years. Outside its breeding range was an ad. Great Cormorant at Rivière-Ouelle May 3 (CA, JFR), as was another (or same) at Bergeronnes May 14 (ABd). Errant southern waders included a Great Blue Heron on Nue I., Mingan Archipelago, May 9 (SP), a Great Egret at Saint-Paul-du-Nord May 5 (GCy *et al.*), a Snowy Egret at Gros-Cap, Magdalen Is., May 29 (PBo), a breeding-plumaged Little Blue Heron at Georgeville May 27 (PFg, DL), a lone Cattle Egret at Baie-du-Febvre Apr. 29 (CVa) and on nearby I. du Domaine May 5 (RS *et al.*) and, finally, an excellent total of 14 Glossy Ibises reported from 9 widely scattered locations Apr. 21–May 21. A pair of Great Egrets in courtship display at Baie-du-Febvre May 6 (DJ) was of interest, as the nearby Berthier Is. could eventually support a new breeding colony.

Northbound Tundra Swans included two birds exceptionally far east at La Pocatière Apr. 24 (ABe) and Méta

### S.A.

During the course of a colonial breeding bird survey conducted in the St. Lawrence Estuary by the Canadian Wildlife Service, 5 nests of the Greater Snow Goose were discovered May 16 (GCh, PBr, FHo) on Battures aux Loups-Marins (47° 15'N, 70° 25'W), an island e. of Quebec City. At one nest the female was incubating without the presence of a male nearby, while a male was present at the other 4 nests. Clutch sizes were 3, 3, 5, 6, and 7 eggs. The birds flew as nests were approached, thus ruling out the possibility of injured birds. A 6th pair was suspected of nesting on the island but no nest was found. These records represent an anomaly in the breeding range of the Greater Snow Goose as the St. Lawrence Estuary, known as an important spring and fall staging area for this species, is situated 1800 km s. of the main breeding area (1). The dramatic increase in this goose population has been well documented in recent years. Other species nesting on the island were mainly Com. Eider, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Black-crowned Night-Heron, and Great Blue Heron, with a few pairs of Am. Black Duck, N. Pintail, and Gadwall.—G. Chapdelaine.

(1) A somewhat similar event occurred in 1968 when a pair attempted to nest, unsuccessfully, in Connecticut (*vide* RTP).

betchouan May 10–14 (CC, GS *et al.*). Reports of 13 Greater White-fronted Geese included an adult accompanied by three young hybrids (x Canada Goose) at Baie-du-Febvre Apr. 8 (MP). A Bar-headed Goose was noted at Pointe-au-Platon Apr. 15 (LR), and another fed with Canada Geese at Baie-du-Febvre Apr. 29 (DJ). Single Barnacle Geese were spotted among migrating geese at Baie-du-Febvre Apr. 14 (PBa, DJ) and Masson Apr. 28–29 (RLD *et al.*).

Teal provided considerable excitement this season with single Eur. Green-winged Teal at Baie-du-Febvre Apr. 27 (DJ) and La Pocatière Apr. 26 (CA), the Region's 4th **Garganey** at Saint-Paul-du-Nord May 5–11 (JBr *et al.*) and Cacouna May 27–28 (LM *et al.*), and also its 4th **Cinnamon Teal** at Saint-Gédéon May 11–26 (LI, RD, m.ob.)—all were drakes. Two interesting hybrid teal were also found: a



Male Cinnamon Teal among Blue-winged Teal at Saint-Gédéon, Quebec, May 14, 1990. Fourth provincial record. Photograph/ Normand David.

Green-winged Teal x N. Pintail at Mont-Brun Apr. 27 (SG) that closely matched the one illustrated in *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club* 89:100, and a Green-winged Teal x ? photographed at Saint-Zacharie the same day (MSc). Among other ducks, unusual inland were a ♀ Com. Eider at Katevale Apr. 2–3 (PBo) and a ♀ Harlequin Duck at La Baie May 27–31 (HS *et al.*).

**VULTURES TO OWLS**—The Turkey Vulture continues to establish itself in the Region; 2 new nest sites were discovered on mountains near Montreal (FM, GH), a pair still lingered at Cap-Tourmente May 31 (*vide* LM), and April saw individuals wander as far north as Saint-Fabien (RP, GP), Chicoutimi (FGa), Ferland (JBo), and Saint-Bruno, L. *Saint-Jean* (MSa, EG). Hawkwatchers were active at Valleyfield (MM, BB) and Saint-Fabien (RP, GP). The former tallied 4122 Broad-winged Hawks during the season, 3 times the previous spring high, and a record flight of 55 Red-shouldered Hawks on Mar. 16. Five Red-shoulders were counted at Saint-Fabien, where rare, as were good totals of 34 Bald Eagles and 1909 Red-tailed Hawks. An imm. Red-tailed Hawk reached Cap-aux-Meules May 5 (FS, CP), furnishing only the 4th record for the Magdalen Islands.

Two Com. Moorhens at Saint-Gédéon May 20–29 (MG *et al.*) furnished a 3rd L. Saint-Jean record, the first since 1987, while observers of an errant Am. Coot at Mingan May 23 (DB *et al.*) correctly eliminated the possibility of Eurasian Coot. Away from w. Quebec, two Sandhill Cranes were notable at Pointe-Lebel May 13 (CVe, ABn), as was one at Métabetchouan May 20 (DC).

Rare in spring, two Lesser Golden-Plovers were carefully identified at Métabetchouan May 5 (GS, CC, JI) and Saint-Blaise May 13 (RY). Western vagrant shorebirds

involved an **American Avocet** at Berthier-sur-Mer May 1–2 (JYG, JL), two at Beauport May 20 (m.ob.) and at Saint-Prime May 22 (LB), as well as single Marbled Godwits at Saint-Blaise May 21 (MAr) and Rimouski May 25 (JLM, ABr, GG). Baie-du-Febvre was visited by a ♀ Ruff Apr. 22 (DT), while a black-morph Ruff was sighted at Saint-Barthélemy May 7 (JFG). American Woodcock were observed in courtship display at Havre-Saint-Pierre May 12 (SP) and Havre-aux-Maisons, Magdalen Is., May 14 (FS, CP); both locales are beyond the documented breeding range of this species.

Among the many gull reports submitted, an ad. Com. Black-headed Gull at Saint-Fulgence Apr. 14–19 (CC, GS *et al.*) and an ad. Laughing Gull at Saint-Gédéon May 19 (LI *et al.*), and nearby La Baie May 28 (CC, JI), were locally rare. As could be expected following an uneventful winter, owls provided few highlights. Slightly puzzling, therefore, was the origin of 13 Snowy Owls encountered in passage at Baie-du-Febvre Apr. 1 (DJ).

**WOODPECKERS TO FINCHES**—An out-of-range ad. Red-headed Woodpecker brightened La Baie May 14 (PPa *et al.*), while a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was found Apr. 22 & 29 (CVi, AP, BL) on the Magdalen Is., where it is a rare visitor. At Hull Apr. 22, a N. Flicker was observed to have the tail feathers and 3 outer primaries pinkish instead of yellow (GM). A small percentage of the eastern population displays varying amounts of red or orange that is often limited in extent and difficult to detect in the field, and that does not imply hybridization with western birds (*Condor* 71:206–211). Increasingly seen in spring in the province, a Tufted Titmouse appeared at a Saint-Armand feeder Mar. 29 (PFO) and at nearby Philipsburg May 12 (RG). A seldom encountered N. Wheatear paused at Pointe-au-Père May 11 (ABr, GBr *et al.*), while a Brown Thrasher at Carleton Apr. 27 (RC) was locally rare.

Exceptional was a Bohemian Waxwing on Brion I. Mar. 20 (AP *et al.*), as there exist few records for the Magdalen Islands. The Region's 10th **White-eyed Vireo** was found on Mt. Royal May 20 (JL *et al.*). On May 27 (JH), a "Brewster's" Warbler was observed at Argile L., *Papineau*, and locally rare was a ♂ Golden-winged Warbler at Saint-David, *Lévis*, May 23 (GL, AG). A rare **Prairie Warbler** was reported from Westmount Apr. 29 (Ld'A) and, rarely detected during migration in s. Quebec, a Connecticut Warbler was of particular interest at Palissades May 20 (BD). Southern warblers made a rather poor showing, the sole Hooded Warbler being a female at Westmount May 14 (LV, JL). A ♀ **Summer Tanager** was identified on I. des Soeurs May 15 (FGr, JL), and on the same day a bright male appeared at a feeder in Chandler where it fed on peanut-butter and suet until May 23 (PPO). The Rufous-sided Towhee reported at Sept-Îles last season successfully overwintered (NV), and one at Stoneham Apr. 21 (JT) was also farther north than usual. Other slightly out-of-range sparrows included single Field Sparrows at Saint-Eusèbe Apr. 23 (MB) and Saint-David, *Lévis*, May 1 (GL), as well as a Vesper Sparrow at Gaspé May 16–20 (JG, GCa). A ♂ **Lark Bunting** photographed near Baie-Comeau May 6 (MT) was only the 6th for the province. A singing Grasshopper Sparrow was a first for Saint-Pierre-de-Sorel (JC), while a ♂ "Oregon" Dark-eyed Junco showed up at Saint-Honoré May 7 (JV).

Several large flocks of Lapland Longspurs were encountered in *Abitibi* in May (SG, VR, GBo), while an impressive flock of 10,000 Snow Buntings was observed at Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin Mar. 25 (CDu *et al.*). A ♀ Yellow-headed Blackbird was present at the Plaisance marsh May 6–8

(GD, JDe). Beginning in March, a few Com. Redpolls appeared in s. Quebec, where absent last winter, and one still lingered at Saint-Gédéon May 20 (GS, CC).

**EXOTICS**—A number of N. Bobwhites were released near Aylmer in May (*fide* RLD). Rather incongruous but undoubtedly striking was a blue Budgerigar among a flock of Snow Buntings at Havre-Saint-Pierre Apr. 29 (SP)!

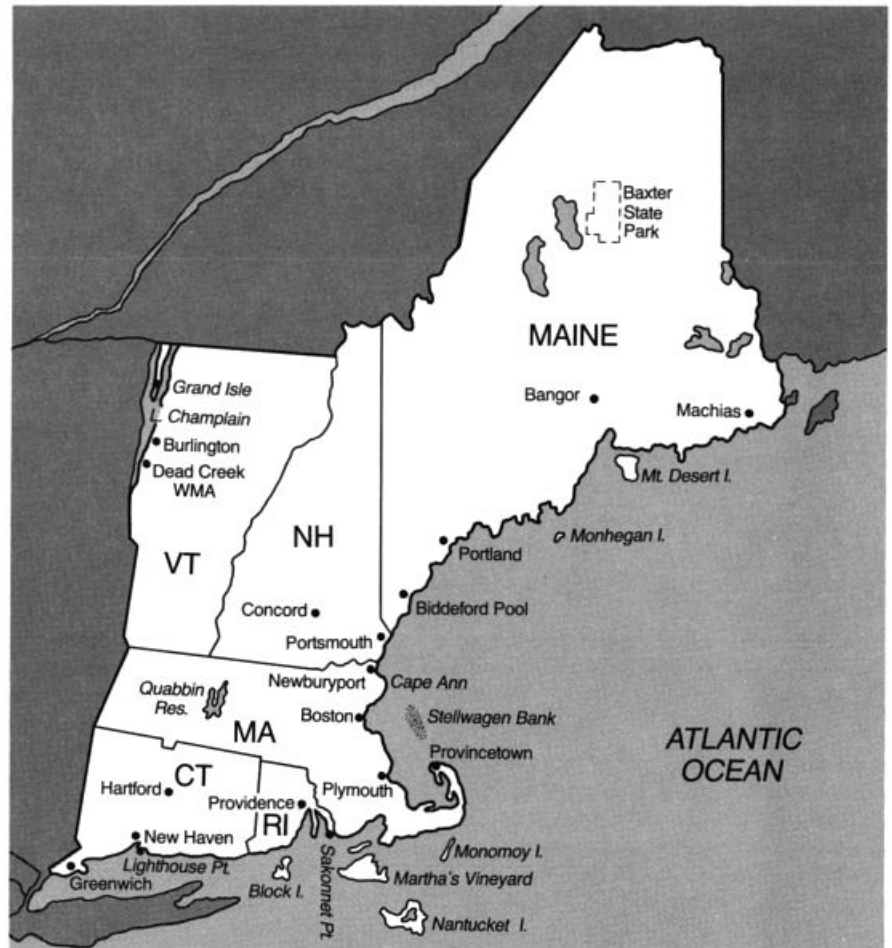
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SHAWNEEN FINNEGAN

# NEW ENGLAND REGION

Simon Perkins



**M**eteorological means and averages rarely reflect the degree to which weather affects the migration of birds over the course of an entire season. What matters to the birds is the meteorological heights and depths of the various peaks and valleys. On average, the weather in the spring of 1990 was near normal. But a few anomalies, and one high peak in particular, produced atypical yet somewhat predictable results.

The most significant event of the season was the nearly simultaneous arrival of a huge assortment of migrants borne on a record hot Southwest airflow, April 27–28. As this “heat pump” sent temperatures throughout New England soaring into the 90s, birds began to arrive from the South *en masse*. Southern species that were swept into the Region included American Swallow-tailed Kite, Black Rail, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Yellow-throated, Prothonotary, and Hooded warblers, Summer Tanager, and Blue Grosbeak; breeding residents that were recorded ahead of schedule on that weekend included Black-billed Cuckoo, Swainson’s Thrush, Blue-winged Warbler, Lincoln’s Sparrow, Bobolink, and Orchard Oriole; and routine arrivals that all arrived more or less together included Common and Roseate terns, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Eastern Kingbird, Least and Great Crested flycatchers, Yellow-throated and Warbling vireos, 14 species of warblers, and Northern Oriole. Even a Little Egret got into the act! This is only a partial list but, while incomplete, it begins to tell of the magnitude and breadth of the flight.

A completely unrelated pattern, and one that was probably coincidental, involved the number of coastal species

that appeared inland this spring. Only one species was unprecedented. Yet, when taken as a group, they added up to something noteworthy. The list included Brant, Barrow’s Goldeneye, Red or Red-necked phalarope, Wilson’s Phalarope, a jaeger, Laughing Gull, and Forster’s Tern.

Little Egret, Black Rail, and Townsend’s Warbler all represented new “state birds” this spring.

**LOONS TO TUBENOSES**—Following a notably lean winter, both Red-throated and Common loons continued to be under-reported. However, compensation came in the form of two different Arctic/Pacific loons. A well-described bird in winter plumage was studied off Steuben, ME, March 3 (RW), and a “near breeding plumage” individual was found at Martha’s Vineyard May 22 (V. Laux). Diagnostic field marks for distinguishing Arctic from Pacific loons are few and somewhat subjective. Nonetheless, we may be on the brink of an identification breakthrough (see especially McCaskie *et al.* 1990, *Birding* 22:70–73). Observers are urged to take careful field notes [and photos] since they may some day allow us to make retrospective identifications. Those lucky enough to find breeding-plumaged individuals should pay close attention to the relative extent of black and white “hash marks” on the sides of the neck, the shade of gray on the nape and hindneck, and the presence or absence of white flank patches. Based on the above criteria, Laux suspected the Vineyard bird was an Arctic. It seems reasonable to think that either species could appear in New England waters so we should keep plugging away at the puzzle even in the

event the two could be, some day, relumped.

Pied-billed Grebes were found in typically low spring numbers except Apr. 16, when 11 were counted in Wayland and Sudbury, MA, along roughly 4 mi of the Sudbury River (SP). Nantucket I., MA, has not been known previously to hold significant numbers of staging spring Red-necked Grebes, so 200+ there Mar. 12 were noteworthy (B. Perkins), as was the maximum of 232 Apr. 8 at a more traditional spot off Hull, MA (RPA). Also at Hull, a Western Grebe seen among the Red-necked (grebes!) between Apr. 8 and 12 was likely the same individual discovered there a day later last year.

Tube-nose reports included 10 N. Fulmars 20 mi east of Chatham, MA, May 19 (W. Harrington), and a single Manx Shearwater in Narragansett Bay at Jamestown, RI, May 20 (J. B.C.). This latter record fueled further speculation about possible nesting in waters literally around the corner from Buzzards Bay where Manx nested in 1973.

**PELICANS TO IBISES**—An American White Pelican in Coventry, VT, May 4–6 furnished the 4th state record, and the first outside the Champlain Valley (P. Wagner, WGE, NLM).

#### S.A.

A breeding-plumaged Little Egret, a first for New Hampshire and only the 2nd for the United States, was discovered in Rye Apr. 28 and was relocated and studied by a privileged few for several subsequent days in Hampton Falls, where it was last noted May 2 (P. Hunt, S. Mirick, ph. DJA *et al.*). This record came a mere 8 months after Massachusetts' first Little Egret in Newburyport, and one cannot help but wonder whether the two records involved the same individual. If some of the multiple Little Egrets seen each year in the West Indies represent migrant forms, it stands to reason that we should expect past visitors to return each spring. The New Hampshire egret was described as possessing two very long head plumes, deep reddish facial skin, and burnt orange toes ("feet"), all indications that the bird was in "high" breeding plumage. Is it still much too early to suggest we start watching for Little Egrets in our local rookeries?

Meanwhile, it appears that Cattle Egret numbers have fallen off somewhat in recent years. Thus, the following records were noteworthy: Jamestown, RI, May 28 (CR), and eight in inland Massachusetts — one, Gill, May 16 (H. Allen); six, Northampton, May 30 (T. Gagnon); one, Barre, May 16 (ML). The only Yellow-crowned Night-Heron reported was not only early Apr. 4, but was found, of all places, in a small brook near downtown Boston, MA (*fide* WRP).

An adult White Ibis in Hadley, MA, Apr. 15 (P. Yeskie) provided the 2nd record for w. Massachusetts, only 8 months after an immature was seen on the Connecticut River. Early Glossy Ibises were widely reported this year. In Connecticut, nine Glossies were at S. Norfolk Mar. 17 (R. Soffer); in Rhode Island, two Glossies arrived at Sachuest Pt. Mar. 18, a full week earlier than ever before in the state (S. Haydock); and in Massachusetts, a single bird appeared in Rochester Mar. 24 (WRP). By Apr. 12 in Middletown, RI, a flock had grown to 200, the largest spring flock ever in Rhode Island (J. Hoftun). It should be interesting to see how the breeding season shapes up.

**WATERFOWL**—Three Tundra Swans were a pleasant spring surprise at Napatree Point, RI, Apr. 16 (CR), but two

inland at Whately, MA, Apr. 13–22 (D. Potter) were doubly surprisingly. We New Englanders see only wisps of a much larger spring Snow Goose flight that passes well to our west. Not surprisingly, when significant numbers are recorded, they are usually seen in w. New England, particularly in the vicinity of Lake Champlain, VT. This year's largest fragment was composed of roughly 3500 birds over Addison, VT, Apr. 1 (WGE, NLM). Brant must regularly overfly portions of our Region during migration, but we rarely observe such flights. Noteworthy were the 8 widely scattered reports of inland Brant, including a total of 500 on the morning of May 23 over the s. White Mountains in Rumney, NH (E. Emery). Two Barnacle Geese were seen in Northumberland, NH, on the Connecticut River May 15 (D. & B. Killam), and another (?) single bird was discovered the same day in Maidstone, VT (D. Killam), roughly seven miles upriver. Did two or three unmarked Barnacle Geese escape together? More likely these were the real thing. A "Richardson's" Canada Goose in Wayland, MA, Apr. 27 (SP) may have been a returnee seen in the same area last year.

With a few exceptions, duck migration was unremarkable. It is a rare year these days in which no "Eurasian" Green-winged Teal are reported, but this year was one. A modest total of 15 N. Shovelers was tallied Apr. 25 at the only New England stronghold on S. Monomoy I in Chatham, MA (D. Houghton), and a total of three Eurasian Wigeons (W. Haven, CT, Mar. 1–26, v.o.; Plymouth, MA, Mar. 1–30, *fide* B.O.; Chatham, MA, Mar. 17–Apr. 8, BN) was about average. The only significant count of Redheads came from Yarmouth, MA, where 85 were tallied Mar. 1 (K. Hamilton). Ring-necked Ducks this year were found in greatest numbers away from more traditional coastal spots, farther inland, as evidenced by a high count of 507 at Wachusett Reservoir in Boylston, MA, Mar. 25 (BB).

Of the roughly 10 King Eiders reported, only one, seen Mar. 17 at Isle Au Haut, ME (JM), was outside Massachusetts; and a small wintering flock of four to five "queens" lingered at Gloucester into early March. Most notable among Harlequin Duck reports were the record winter flock of 85, still at Sachuest Pt., RI, Mar. 1 (G. Sprague), a marvelous record total of 536 counted from a boat around Isle Au Haut, ME, Mar. 9 (G. Mittlehauser), and a late drake that lingered at Lynn, MA, until at least May 24 (*fide* B.O.). Between 1000–2000 Black Scoters reported from Steuben, ME, from early April through mid-May (RW), made an unusually high total so far north for a species whose spring migration, typically, takes most of them directly over land from staging points farther south.

Also exceptional inland were a surprising five Barrow's Goldeneyes this spring. They included individuals in Sandwich, NH, May 1 (D. Erler), Gill, MA, Mar. 31 (B. Coyle), Framingham, MA, Mar. 11 (E. Morrier), Vernon, VT, Mar. 11 (WGE, NLM), and Grand Isle, VT, May 3 (DH).

**RAPTORS TO CRANES**—A complete report of nesting activities among the Region's Ospreys, Bald Eagles, and Peregrine Falcons will appear in the upcoming summer summary. For now, suffice to say each species continued to improve its footing in New England.

Raptor migration this spring saw numbers return to normal following a very slow season last year. Three Black Vultures in the Region, including two in n. Massachusetts, hint of things to come as their ranks continue to swell south of us. The Massachusetts birds were one in Williamstown May 2 (C. & J. Thom) and one in Holland May 15 (A. Bennett); in Connecticut, an individual in Danbury Mar. 23 (J. Snyder, *fide* FM) came as no real surprise since



three were present farther north through mid-February.

Kites continued their annual spring pilgrimages to New England. An Am. Swallow-tailed Kite, seen Apr. 27 at Martha's Vineyard, MA (K. Leuschner), and spotted the next day on Nantucket (P. Dunwiddie), was a passenger aboard the "tropical express" that ushered in the record heat that weekend. Two reports of Mississippi Kite seen in Plymouth, MA, May 3 (S. Hecker) and Truro, MA, May 12 (T. Carollan, BN), each included a good description of an immature bird. Whether the reports involved the same bird is anyone's guess.

Given the infrequency with which Sharp-shinned Hawks are found nesting, reports of a bird at the Great Swamp in Rhode Island May 24 (C. Harten), and particularly a female carrying food in Abington, MA, May 20 (WRP), were intriguing. Hawk watchers in Newburyport, MA, produced this year's highest Regional tallies of 113 Kestrels Apr. 16, and 150 Sharp-shinned Hawks and 11 Merlins May 2 (E.M.H.W.). Similar Sharp-shinned totals of 136 and 145 from two other stations located roughly one and 3 miles farther south along a barrier beach not only showed excellent counter coordination, but also showed that few birds were getting by. The wind was NW that day and, in Massachusetts in spring, such conditions tend to deflect and concentrate birds along the coast. Very rarely seen anywhere in e. North America, an ad. rufous morph Red-tailed Hawk in Sudbury, MA, Mar. 15 came as a puzzling surprise (RAF). A high total of six Golden Eagles in 3 states included, in Connecticut, one Mar. 10 at Ashford (G. Clark), and two Mar. 4 in Roxbury (W. Sullivan, *vide* P. Brady). In Massachusetts, one was noted in Granville May 1 (SK) and a wintering bird at Quabbin Res. remained through Mar. 4; in Maine, an immature was reported in Steuben Apr. 16 & 17 (RW).

#### S.A.

Yellow and Black rails made news this spring. First, a Yellow Rail with an excellent sense of timing began calling in Scarborough Marsh, ME, during a taping of the TODAY show in mid-April (J. Pierson). A month later, a second story began to unfold. As of this writing the picture is not yet clear, but by early accounts a biologist conducting wetlands research in several freshwater marshes east and north of Bangor, ME, between mid-May and early June, heard and recorded five to six Yellow Rails (J. Gibbs)! Were these migrants? Stay tuned!

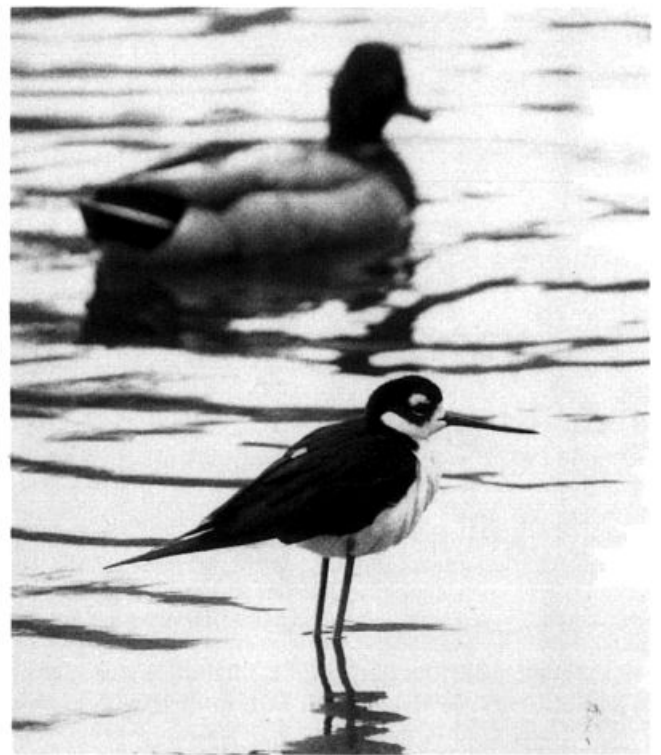
Two Black Rails were heard calling "incessantly" in Stratford, CT, the evening of May 18 (E. Hagen), but more remarkable was a well-described Black Rail seen May 5 in Rutland, VT (B. Shepard *et al.*). If accepted by the Vermont Records Committee, this sighting would constitute the first state record. The Vermont bird probably represented another overshoot swept north by the late April "heat pump."

Three of the four King Rails reported this spring were in Connecticut: Durham Meadows May 12 (PL *et al.*); Stratford May 19–28 (RN); Norwalk May 25 (RN). The fourth was in Rhode Island at Buckeye Brook May 29 (M. Murray). Despite an above-average eight Com. Moorhen reports from Massachusetts, and a stray on Appledore I., ME, May 26 (*vide* DHs), overall numbers suggest the species is continuing to decline. Oddly, however, a single bird returned to Easton, ME, at the far northern limit of the species' breeding range, for the 3rd year in a row (M. Trombley).

Sandhill Cranes put on an impressive (if somewhat confusing) show in Massachusetts this spring. But, despite at least 5 reports from the Commonwealth, none was reported from any other New England state. Some of those in Massachusetts may have been playing tricks. For example, a bird seen rising from a field in Concord May 3 (T. Raymond) climbed to an estimated 5000 feet before unhesitatingly setting off to the northeast. Gone, right? A bird appeared in another field roughly 5 miles away, 7 days later (S. Verrill) and, except for the disposition of the first bird when last seen, we might assume only one bird was involved. Maybe; maybe not. A different problem involved a bird that wandered up and down outer Cape Cod from Apr. 12 to mid-May, which finally settled down at the Provincetown airport. Each day thereafter for several weeks the bird took to endangering itself and all moving aircraft by standing in the middle of the runway until airport personnel could chase it off. A birder's gain was a pilot's pain! Reports also came from Westboro May 3 (B. King) and Newburyport May 27 (B.B.C.).

**SHOREBIRDS**—Three reports of Lesser Golden-Plovers included a carefully scrutinized bird on Martha's Vineyard, MA, Apr. 30–May 1 (VL), two May 19 in Halifax, MA (N. Sferra), and three early birds Apr. 19 in Milford, CT (J. Fengler). A Semipalmated Plover in Acoxet, MA, was very early Apr. 16 (S. Higginbotham).

A Black-necked Stilt seen off and on at Nantucket I.,



Black-necked Stilt on Nantucket Island, Massachusetts, May 1990. Photograph/Claudia Kronenberg, courtesy The Enquirer and Mirror.

MA (Dr. Hayden *et al.*, ph.), May 16–31 was probably different from a bird seen just 30 mi away in Chatham May 28 (R. Barlow, *vide* BN). On the other hand, it seems likely that New Hampshire's 2nd American Avocet, in Rye May 30 (DJA, ph.), was one of the two seen in Scarborough, ME, May 9–18 (Goodale, K. Gammons *et al.*, ph.).

Typically, Greater Yellowlegs perform a sudden northward exodus from New England each spring following a



American Avocet in Rye, New Hampshire, May 30, 1990. Second state record. Photograph/Dennis J. Abbott.

relatively slow buildup. This phenomenon was clearly illustrated this year by two sequential counts in Newburyport, MA, of 800 and five, respectively, only 11 days apart, May 12 and 23 (SP). Unusually high concentrations of Solitary Sandpipers, monitored by E. Salmela at a sewage treatment plant in Hudson, MA, throughout May, provided a rare opportunity to study an encapsulated view of the species' spring movements through New England. The counts (see Table 1) included a new state (and probably Regional) maximum of 67 on May 14.

**Table 1. Daily counts of Solitary Sandpipers at Hudson Sewage Treatment Plant, Hudson, MA, May 1990.**

5/03	7	5/17	27±
5/04	8	5/18	34
5/05	12	5/19	Not counted
5/06	12	5/20	Not counted
5/07	16	5/21	26
5/08	30	5/23	7
5/09	20±	5/24	2
5/10	25	5/25	0
5/11	30	5/26	0
5/12	48		
5/13	45		
5/14	67*		
5/15	64		
5/16	45		

\*State record

Rhode Island's 4th **Curlew Sandpiper**, discovered in Little Compton May 11 (DE), showed no hint of breeding plumage and was probably a yearling. Single Stilt Sandpipers in Scarborough, ME, May 21 (JD) and Ipswich, MA, Apr. 13 (R. Bieda) were unusual spring finds. Scarborough Marsh also yielded four of the five Ruffs this spring, the first of which was very early, Apr. 4–9 (JD). By May 6, two males and one female (D. Thompson, G. Kemper) were present, and at the (former?) Ruff capital of New England, Newburyport, MA, only one individual appeared May 3–8 (J. Soucy).

With no significant coastal storms this spring, the two pelagic phalarope species passed virtually unnoticed. In fact, the only noteworthy report of either was that of two phalaropes identified as either Red or Red-necked on Lake Champlain at Grand Isle, VT, May 29 (RL). Single Wilson's Phalaropes, also unusual in interior New England, were found in Concord, MA, May 15 (SP) and Swanton, VT, May 23 (DC).

**JAEGERS TO ALCIDS**—Among the very few jaegers reported this spring, a probable Pomarine Jaeger seen May 19 from Grand Isle, VT, on Lake Champlain (DH) was the

latest of many recent additions to a growing list of seabirds seen there. A Laughing Gull was found far from its coastal haunts in Newport, VT, Apr. 22 (F. Oatman), and a rare spring Franklin's Gull turned up in Newburyport, MA, May 20 (R. Maker). The standard collection of Little and Common Black-headed gulls included a total of about six Littles in Massachusetts and three in Connecticut, and the eight (of a total of 20 or more) Com. Black-headed counted in Winthrop, MA, Mar. 28 (J. Quigley) were winter holdovers at a spot that usually harbors the Regional winter maxima for the species. The Mew Gull that has spent the last six winters in Quincy, MA, was last recorded Apr. 1 (R. Titus), when it was seen in the company of a 2nd adult bird.

Among the Regional total of eight Lesser Black-backed Gulls, two were reported from Connecticut and the rest were in Massachusetts. Among these, two each were involved in Wellesley, MA, Mar. 18 (C. Quinlan), and Acton, MA, Apr. 15 (RAF). An adult on Martha's Vineyard Apr. 21 was in immaculate breeding plumage. As someone who has spent years combing Herring Gull colonies for Lesser Black-backed, this writer would love to still believe the latter are breeding in North America. But if that is the case, why haven't we seen juveniles in late summer or early fall? If any readers *have* seen (or in the future, see) such a bird earlier than mid-October (Ontario, Quebec, Maritimes?), I would very much like to hear about it. A gull flock on a seaside pond in Gloucester, MA, Mar. 11 contained six first-year Glaucous Gulls and a first-year Glaucous X Herring hybrid (SP).

The fact that three Forster's Terns appeared in the Region this spring was noteworthy by itself. But that two of those three were found at inland locales was probably unprecedented. The coastal bird (which was also the earliest ever in Connecticut) was found in Greenwich, CT, Apr. 14 (J. Zaranski, FP), and the inland birds were in Concord, MA, Apr. 16 (SP, RAF), and Northampton, MA, May 13 (TG). All three birds were adults in breeding plumage, a fact that took on added significance in June (see the summer summary). A Black Guillemot in transitional plumage was found lingering late at Napatree Pt., RI, May 1 (CR).

**PARAKEETS TO FLYCATCHERS**—The colony of 30 or more Monk Parakeets in Bridgeport, CT, "continues to thrive" (FM). Both species of cuckoos were again conspicuously scarce. However, a Black-billed Cuckoo at Southport, CT, that arrived on the "tropical express" was at least 2 weeks early Apr. 30 (C. Barnard).

An imm. ♀ Snowy Owl banded and color marked by N Smith at Logan Airport in Boston Mar. 15 was spotted 17 days later far inland in Strafford, NH (A. & J. Tappan, *vide* DD). Another imm. Snowy Owl seen sporadically at Logan Airport through the end of the period (and beyond!) provided one of the latest Massachusetts records (N. Smith), and two Short-eared Owls, rare in inland New England, lingered in Hadley, MA, until Apr. 2 (*vide* SK). Northern Saw-whet Owls apparently enjoyed a prosperous spring, judging by the 4 to 5 reports of breeding pairs in Massachusetts. But one individual, although lucky in some respects, could have fared better. As the story goes, the bird came on board a fishing vessel 200 miles off shore and was kept alive with steak for more than a month, until the boat came ashore, at which time it was admitted to a raptor rehabilitation facility!

Thirty-one Com. Nighthawks migrating over Princeton, MA, May 27, represented a high spring count (SP). Single Chuck-will's-widows in Middleton, CT, May 19 (J. Morin), Marblehead, MA, May 12–16 (L. Sager *et al.*, ph.), and Walpole, MA, May 28 (D. Munafò) furnished an above-

average total, especially since the species' failed attempt at colonizing Nantucket I. and Martha's Vineyard, MA, roughly 15 years ago. Red-headed Woodpecker numbers were up this spring, as suggested by a total of 13 birds from Connecticut (one), Rhode Island (one), Vermont (two), and Massachusetts (nine). What was a Pileated Woodpecker doing on a coastal peninsula (!) in Marblehead, MA, May 26 (C. Floyd)?

A heavy flight of Yellow-bellied Flycatchers was noted this spring, with an early arrival May 4 in Newtown, CT (P. Brady), and "unprecedented" numbers in w. Massachusetts, particularly along the Connecticut River Valley. The local spring total of 47 was roughly seven times the annual average for that area, and included 29 on one census in Springfield May 19 (*vide* SK)!

#### S.A.

One of the biggest surprises of the spring was the discovery in Massachusetts of a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher and a Fork-tailed Flycatcher within 4 days and 25 miles of one another. The Scissor-tailed was in Manchester Apr. 28–29 (S. Hedman), and the Fork-tailed was in Concord May 2–3 (T. Handley *et al.*, ph.). Both were very likely aided in their passage here by the previously mentioned "heat pump," but of course the Fork-tailed had to have erred long before it came within the influence of that particular weather system. This was only the 4th occurrence in spring of a total of 15 Fork-tailed records in New England, and this ratio is even more skewed among the total sample of North American records (see Monroe and Barron 1980, *Am. Birds* 34:842–845). But why this particular ratio?

Almost all North American Fork-taileds have belonged to the highly migratory South American race *T. s. savana*, the form that migrates northward into the tropics from its southern, temperate breeding range in our spring. Thus, our fall birds are those that appear as a result of a "reverse" migration, and spring birds as a result of overshooting their wintering grounds. If we assume over-shooting represents a lesser mistake than flying in the wrong direction, an assumption that intuitively seems correct, shouldn't we then expect to see more overshoots in the spring than birds that have erred by flying 180 degrees to their normal flight direction in the fall? The record, of course, shows the opposite. One possible explanation, as advanced by Kenn Kaufman (pers. comm.), is that, even if more birds start out as overshoots, fewer of these make it all the way to North America because they have had to fly twice as far as, for example, a September bird that began its errant flight in the tropics. Perhaps many spring birds "run out of gas" before they get here.

**CHICKADEES TO WARBLERS**—The obliging Boreal Chickadee that established a winter residence in November in W. Boylston, MA, finally departed April 19 (m.ob.). Two to three singing ♂ Sedge Wrens in Goshen, CT, seen nearly continuously from May 18 into June (E. Hagen *et al.*), provided a glimmer of hope for a species that has all but disappeared as a breeder in New England. An astonishingly early Wood Thrush found foraging with robins in Kittery, ME, Mar. 17, was inexplicable (L. Phinney). A Varied Thrush seen sporadically on Martha's Vineyard, MA, between Mar. 8 and Apr. 2 furnished a first island record, and another in Bedford, NH, Mar. 1 (J. Newberry) represented a winter holdover. Remnants of an excellent winter flight of Bohemian Waxwings noted in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine included maxima of 425 in

Burlington, VT, Apr. 3 (*vide* V.I.N.S.), 300+ in Lewiston, ME, Apr. 5 (D. Haines), and 250 in Dixmont, ME, Mar. 29 (JM). This spring produced only one Loggerhead Shrike, on Appledore I., ME, May 23 (DHs).

Nine Philadelphia Vireo reports, all from Massachusetts, provided a total well above average; but also raised the question of why we don't see more, since it is a fairly common breeding species in n. New England. Western Massachusetts sub-regional editor Seth Kellogg was particularly "perplexed" upon receiving two reports this spring since, in 20 years of active birding, he has never seen one locally in spring!

Golden-winged Warblers were again reported in lower numbers than previous years, while Blue-winged and the two hybrid types were found in greater numbers. The 3 reports of single "Lawrence's" Warblers from Blackstone, RI, May 9–15 (L. Symynkywicz), Salem, CT, May 19 (D. Miller), and Groveland, MA, May 23–29 (TA) were further indication of the Blue-winged's continued encroachment into the Golden-winged's gene pool. Where males are seen together in Massachusetts, Blue-winged have often been seen behaving aggressively toward Golden-winged, going out of their way to chase them from the premises whenever they appeared in the same clearing. As Blue-winged continue to increase in New England, and they continue to actively exclude Golden-winged from suitable habitat, there seem to be only two hopes for the local survival of the latter: they either find an ecotype in which they can compete on an equal level (powerlines?), or they retreat to refugia at the northern fringes of their range at points possibly beyond the eventual limits of the Blue-winged's influx. (In this light, a ♂ Golden-winged in Lovell, ME, 40 mi n.w. of Portland May 27–29 [E. McNerney] was intriguing.) Observers are reminded to track down birds singing Golden-winged songs, and to check the color of their wingbars since backcrosses can sound and look virtually identical to parental types, yet show differently colored wingbars—Golden-winged's may be white, and Blue-winged's, yellow.

The same May 19 passerine flight in Springfield, MA, that brought a record number of Yellow-bellied Flycatchers also yielded an unprecedented 145 Magnolia Warblers on a single count (*vide* SK). Magnolias also made a splash at the banding station on Appledore, I., ME, where in roughly 3 weeks of work, the total of 286 was more than twice that of any other warbler except Com. Yellowthroat. The biggest hit among the warblers was a ♂ **Townsend's Warbler** that was found dead in Little Compton, RI, May 11 (DE, ph., R. Emerson). This bird furnished not only a first state and 3rd Regional record, but also the first specimen for New England (MCZ #332385).

Noteworthy among the usual southern warbler overshoots were the northernmost Prothonotary Warbler in Lyman, NH, May 20 (S. Bogert), and one to two Yellow-throated Warblers May 7 (N. Currie) & 10 (PL, SF) in Kent, CT. The two Yellow-throateds, thought to be a pair, were seen in the same area through the rest of the month, and were suspected of breeding. If confirmed, this will represent the first such record for New England. Also noted along this stretch of the Housatonic River May 10 was a high count of 12+ Cerulean Warblers (PL, SF). A Palm Warbler was very late at Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, MA, May 22–24 (*vide* B.O.), and an Ovenbird that somehow survived the winter at a feeder in W. Simsbury, CT, was last seen Apr. 19 (G. & R. Knight). Very rare in New England in spring, a **Connecticut Warbler** was well described from Compton, NH, May 23 (J. Fisher). This provided a perfect example of the importance of written

documentation, because without the excellent description, the record may have gotten away.

**TANAGERS TO BLACKBIRDS**—Two other spring overshoots, Summer Tanager and Blue Grosbeak, were well reported from Massachusetts (four tanagers and seven grosbeaks) and Rhode Island (two tanagers and one grosbeak); and a Blue Grosbeak in Ipswich, MA, Apr. 19–25 (S. Burton), was observed with a Rose-breasted Grosbeak and an Evening Grosbeak, simultaneously. That could be a first! A well-described bird at a feeder in Westboro, MA, May 12 & 15, could only have been a ♂ **Painted Bunting** (M. Murphy), and a well-documented Painted Bunting that had wintered at a feeder in Old Lyme, CT, was seen through Apr. 5 (M. Gates). This represented only the 2nd unequivocal record for Connecticut.

Four Dickcissel reports involving at least two overwintering birds furnished a higher-than-average total. Two in Connecticut were at Stamford Mar. 11 (FP) and Southport May 22 (CB), and two in Massachusetts were in Weymouth Mar. 11–Apr. 22 (R. Campbell) and Marblehead Apr. 21 (J. Smith). A Clay-colored Sparrow in Medfield, MA, May 18–31 continued that species' recent pattern of spring appearances, and a Lark Sparrow discovered on Block Island Mar. 26 had probably overwintered in New England. Vermont's first **Green-tailed Towhee**, found on the Brattleboro CBC, was still present May 4 [*vide* V.I.N.S.]. It appeared as though migrant Lincoln's Sparrows put in a

good showing this spring. Maximum counts, both above average, included roughly 25 in Massachusetts (*vide* SK, B.O.), and 15 banded on Appledore I., ME (DHs). This latter total is particularly interesting since it represents only those birds that actually hit the mist nets. How many others got by?

Yellow-headed Blackbirds were slightly more conspicuous this year as shown by a Regional total of six. For the 2nd year in succession, a **Boat-tailed Grackle** was found in Connecticut. If Boat-taileds continue to increase in New England, as we expect they will, we should not let down our guard but remain vigilant for the first visitation by Great-tailed Grackle: a species that is presently undergoing its own rapid range expansion and which, as a vagrant, has already reached Nova Scotia.

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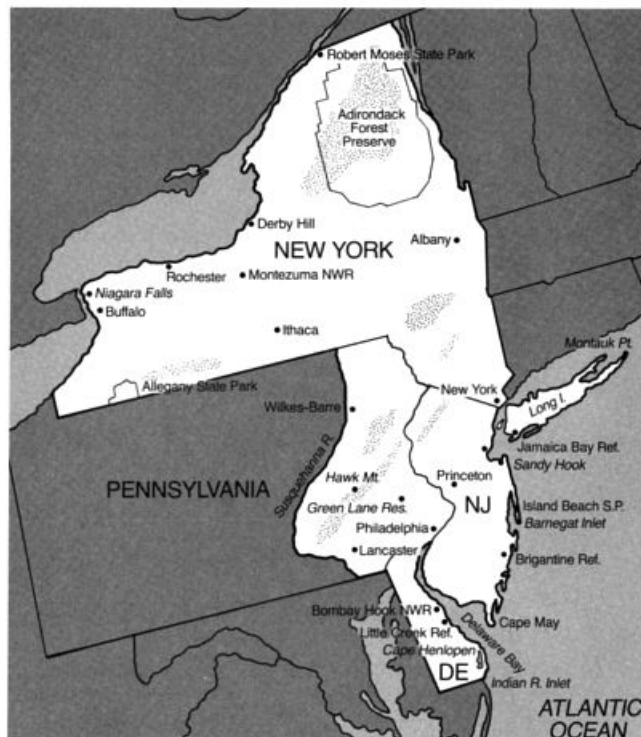
## HUDSON-DELAWARE REGION

William J. Boyle, Jr., Robert O. Paxton,  
and David A. Cutler

Spring started out on the cool side, but turned rapidly swarmer as a push of tropical air spread across the Region in mid-March. Record highs were set on three days each in New York City and Buffalo, including an amazing 85 degrees in the Big Apple on March 13. The mild weather produced a massive exodus of waterfowl and some wintering species from the Region, along with a small influx of short-distance migrants, such as Eastern Phoebe, Tree Swallow, and Ruby-crowned Kinglet. After about March 20th, cooler, wetter weather returned and continued through most of April, until the last week of the month. Then, another record warm spell swept through the Region, with the thermometer hitting 94 in Buffalo on the 28th, making it the warmest city in the country except for the desert southwest. The heat wave produced a corresponding wave of early passerine migrants, many occurring on record early dates throughout the four-state area.

The end of April ushered in a May characterized by cool, extremely wet weather that delayed the bulk of the songbird migration until the last third of the month, when many excellent flights were recorded in most (but not all) areas. Rainfall for the month averaged 225% of normal over New York State and was comparably heavy in the southern part of the Region. Though mid-season was a bit slow, the latter part produced a modest variety of rarities to add to the normal excitement of spring migration.

**ABBREVIATIONS**—Braddock Bay = Braddock Bay S.P. and vicinity, Monroe, NY; Bombay Hook = Bombay Hook



Nat'l Wildlife Ref., near Smyrna, DE; Brig = Brigantine Unit, Forsythe Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Atlantic, NJ; Dunkirk = Dunkirk Harbor, Chautauqua, NY; Indian River = Indian River Inlet, Sussex, DE; Jamaica Bay = Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Queens, NY; Little Creek = Little Creek Wildlife Area, Kent, near Dover, DE; L.I. = Long Island, NY; Montauk = Montauk Point and vicinity, 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, NJ. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO IBISES**—Common Loons were widely reported from inland lakes and reservoirs in mid-May, some non-breeders lingering into the summer. More unusual was a Red-throated Loon that arrived at Merrill Creek Res., Warren, NJ, Apr. 18 and remained there, in full breeding plumage, through the period and later. Red-necked Grebes continued to be scarce, as in the winter, with one at Indian River Apr. 11–13 being the only one south of Long Island (WWF, m.ob.). Farther north, a maximum of 85 was noted along the Ontario Lakeshore near Rochester Mar. 17 (KCG), while 20 at Saratoga Lake, Saratoga, Apr. 13 made a good local count; five at Rye, Westchester, May 14, were rather late (TWB). An Eared Grebe was with the Red-necked and Horned grebes at Indian River Apr. 13 (JJ, BR), and another was at Pt. Look-out, Nassau, L.I., Mar. 11 (SW). More unusual and very late was an individual at Iroquois N.W.R., Orleans, NY, May 27–28 (R. Wagner, m.ob.).

Two chartered pelagic trips to the Hudson Canyon off New Jersey, Apr. 28 and May 26, produced little to excite the interest of the Region's less seaworthy observers. Both trips located a few N. Fulmars, plus small numbers of shearwaters, including a Manx on the latter excursion. In addition to the usual concentration of Wilson's Storm-Petrels, a Leach's Storm-Petrel was seen by at least a few people on each of the trips (ABR).

Two Am. White Pelicans appeared this spring, a big drop from last year's mini invasion, but a noteworthy occurrence for the Region nonetheless. One hung around Braddock Bay May 15–23 (FN, m.ob.); a more unusual visitor to Bombay Hook, May 21, was only the 4th **American**



*American White Pelican at Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge, Delaware, May 21, 1990. Fourth state record. Photograph/ Joe Swertinski.*

**White Pelican** recorded in Delaware (PV, m.ob.). Brown Pelican numbers were down substantially, apparently a result of mortality from Hurricane *Hugo* and a December storm in North Carolina; two were off Higbee Beach, Cape May, Apr. 29 (E. & J. Georges), while scattered singles and small groups were seen in s. New Jersey in May. One at Indian River May 26 was the only other reported (JJ). Hopefully these marvelous fishermen, who have only recently begun to frequent this Region, will recover rapidly from these major setbacks and continue to enliven our summer birding.

A nest of Am. Bittern, discovered at Port Mahon, was the first found in Delaware since the 1970s (CCa). Wandering herons included a Little Blue Heron at Braddock Bay May 23 (FN), a Tricolored Heron there May 31 (FN), and about five Cattle Egrets in w. New York during April and May, plus one along the St. Lawrence River May 4 (MB). A Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Chittenango, Madison, NY, May 16–28 was the first for the Syracuse area in 10 years; another farther east in Slingerlands, Albany, May 17 was also noteworthy (W. Sabin). Two Glossy Ibises near Lewisville, Chester, May 9 were unusual for Pennsylvania. Fourteen at Upper Nyack, Rockland, NY, in mid-April

were the most ever for the county and rare away from the Hudson River (m.ob.); farther upstate at Bulwagga Bay at the south end of Lake Champlain, a Glossy Ibis May 15 was a first for Essex County (K. Murphy). A **White-faced Ibis** paid a brief visit to the S. Cape May Meadows, NJ, Apr. 16 (DSi, CS).

**WATERFOWL**—The waterfowl highlight of the season was the appearance of **Fulvous Whistling-Duck** at Bombay



*Three Fulvous Whistling-Ducks at Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge, Delaware, May 1990. The species was not recorded from adjacent regions at this time, but these birds might have been holdovers from the invasion that reached eastern Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina the preceding November. Photograph/George M. Jett.*

Hook. One was seen there Mar. 16 (WJW, E. & S. Speck), but could not be relocated; however, three appeared May 20 and were seen and photographed by many through the 27th (AH, m.ob., ph. G. Jett). More mundane sightings from Bombay Hook included an imm. Tundra Swan May 17–31 (NH) and an ad. Ross' Goose Mar. 2–3 (v.o.). Two Tundra Swans at Piermont Pier, Rockland, NY, Mar. 9 represented a first spring record for the county, while a wing-tagged Trumpeter Swan at Seneca Falls, Seneca, NY, Mar. 26, was apparently from the release program in Ontario.

Holdover Greater White-fronted Geese from the winter season were on Long Island (two) and in Dutchess, NY, but different birds were discovered at Iroquois N.W.R. Mar. 21 (m.ob.), and at Hamlin, Monroe, where one to two were present Mar. 28–31 (v.o.). The Ross' Goose near Watermill, Suffolk, L.I., remained to at least Mar. 18 (m.ob.), while a second was at Cayuga Lake and vicinity Mar. 8–10 (fide CKM). Yet another holdover from the winter season, the Barnacle Goose at Amenia, Dutchess, NY, was last reported Mar. 11 (m.ob.).

A Green-winged Teal of the Eurasian subspecies was seen by various observers at Tuckahoe W.M.A., Cape May, NJ, in March; a female of the American subspecies with a brood of eight ducklings at Wantage, Sussex, May 26 furnished an unusual breeding record for interior New Jersey (DF). As noted above, waterfowl cleared out early; only about 10,000 N. Pintail remained at Pedricktown, Salem, NJ, Mar. 6, of the estimated 50,000 there 10 days earlier. A Eur. Wigeon remained at Bombay Hook to at least Mar. 28 (m.ob.), while in New York there was one at Jamaica Bay Mar. 17; another at Hamlin Mar. 24 (CCs); and a 3rd at Tonawanda W.M.A., Niagara, Apr. 18 (G. Rising).

A drake Canvasback at Gordon's Pond, Sussex, DE, May 12 was an unusually late straggler (DSh, B. Lego), as was a King Eider at Montauk May 12–13 (m.ob.). The only other King Eider was an imm. male at Braddock Bay Mar. 15 (R. Oswald). As many as 14 Harlequin Ducks were still at Jones Inlet, L.I., Apr. 14, and a ♀-plumaged bird was enjoyed by many birdathon teams at Cape May, May 16–24 (PL, m.ob.). A flock of 75 Oldsquaw at Lake Parsippany, Morris, NJ, Mar. 20, was an extraordinary inland concentration. Other good flights of sea ducks were indicated by 7 sightings of White-winged Scoters at 5 different



locales in east-central Pennsylvania from mid-March to mid-May (*vide* BLM).

A ♀ Barrow's Goldeneye, rare in interior New York, was reported from Cayuga L. Apr. 17 (B. Mitchell). Concentrations of Com. Mergansers were not particularly prevalent with the mild early weather, but a group of 1000 at Lake Mohawk, *Sussex*, NJ, Mar. 12 was noteworthy. A ♀ Hooded Merganser loafing on the sand at Indian River May 7–21 may have been ill (APE, JSk *et al.*).

**RAPTORS TO CRANES**—The spring raptor counts from regularly and irregularly manned hawk watches in New Jersey and Pennsylvania were well below normal. Sandy Hook, for example, which was monitored daily March 10 to May 15, produced only 3289 migrants compared to almost 5000 in 1989. Montclair's 3044 was less than half last season's total. On the Ontario Lakeshore, however, the story was the reverse, with both Braddock Bay and Derby Hill reporting excellent counts. Braddock Bay, with 93 days of observation, recorded 60,307 raptors, including record totals of both eagles, Merlin, and three Mississippi Kites. Derby Hill counters tallied 39,400 birds, with record counts of both eagles, Peregrine Falcon, and their first ever Mississippi Kite.

Fewer wandering Black Vultures were reported from the northern part of the Region, but three were at Hook Mt., *Rockland*, NY, Mar. 13 (PF *et al.*) and one was seen at Dryden Lake, *Tompkins*, NY, May 6 (D. Evans), an unusual record for the Finger Lakes region. Two Turkey Vultures that had wintered on eastern L.I. continued to be seen throughout the period and a few other singles were noted in *Nassau*; this species has never been found nesting on Long Island. Big flights of Ospreys were noted at the hawk watches, including one-day peaks of 171 at Baer Rocks, PA, Apr. 14 (K. Kranick), and 201 at Derby Hill Apr. 29 and May 8.

For the first time in several years, Am. Swallow-tailed Kite failed to show up at Sandy Hook in spring. There were 2 reports from New Jersey, however; one was over the Cook Campus of Rutgers University, *Middlesex*, May 9 (J. Applegate, *vide* C. Leck) and another at Bennett's Bog, *Cape May*, May 15 (RR). In addition to the Mississippi Kites noted at the 2 New York hawk watches, there was the usual late-spring flight at Cape May, where about eight were seen Apr. 29–May 24. Four hawking insects over Higbee Beach W.M.A. May 20 delighted dozens of observers. Mississippi Kites at Sandy Hook May 1 & 9 were the first for that count (LC), while one was over East Creek L., *Cape May*, May 19 (MN, WJB), and two to four were in Allendale, *Bergen*, NJ, May 24 (ST); more unusual was an individual at Ft. Washington S.P., *Montgomery*, PA, May 13 (B & NM).

The record totals of 92 and 54 Bald Eagles at Braddock Bay and Derby Hill, respectively, reflected the continuing recovery of this species; dozens of sightings from the rest of the Region were too numerous to even summarize. Nesting, too, is on the increase, especially in New Jersey, where the number of successful breeding pairs increased from one to three. Reports of nesting N. Goshawks are also on the increase, but one at Moore's Beach, *Cumberland*, NJ, May 27 was surely just wandering (JZ). A flight of 51 Red-shouldered Hawks at Hook Mt. Mar. 13 was unprecedented for that location (PF); interestingly, the season's peak of 956 passed Braddock Bay that same day, while Derby Hill had 617 the following day. Derby Hill had two Swainson's Hawks for the season, and Braddock Bay had one. Among the 8291 Red-tailed Hawks counted at Braddock Bay were a number of birds believed by the observer

to be of western forms, including the so-called "Krider's" (10), Harlan's (one), and *calurus* (five) (FN), if these identifications are correct, one wonders what wintering locations they are coming from and where they are heading.

Braddock Bay tallied 43 Golden Eagles for the spring, while Derby Hill had 31; a scattering of other reports included three in New Jersey in late March and early April. Although Am. Kestrels continue to decline at the hawk watches (only 959 at Sandy Hook, an all-time low), Merlins are doing well (181 at Sandy Hook and a record 29 at inland Braddock Bay). Oddly, there were numerous reports of Merlins in Delaware and coastal New Jersey in mid to late May. A white Gyrfalcon was seen south of Plattsburgh, *Clinton*, NY, Mar. 21 (N. Mason).

For the 2nd year in a row, small numbers of Yellow Rails were found in Delaware during mid-May. Two were at Bombay Hook May 10 (DSh), while up to five were seen and heard at Port Mahon May 14–15 (DSh, DAC *et al.*) Also at Bombay Hook and Port Mahon in mid-May were similar numbers of Black Rails (DSh, DAC, m.ob.); in New Jersey, Black Rails were heard in at least 8 locations, mainly along the Delaware Bayshore of *Cape May* and *Cumberland*, May 18–20 (m.ob.). A King Rail was also at Bombay Hook May 10–15 (DSh *et al.*), enabling some Delaware Big Day teams to make a clean sweep of the rails; five species were heard at Port Mahon in 5 minutes May 15 (DAC, J. Miller, CP). King Rails were found at 3 locations in New Jersey in mid-May and two were noteworthy at Pine Plains, *Dutchess*, NY, May 12 (Waterman Bird Club).

A Purple Gallinule was seen in flight at Delaware City, *New Castle*, DE, May 15 near the Dragon's Run Marsh site where the species nested in the early 1980s (AH); it was not found again. There were again numerous sightings of Sandhill Cranes in upstate New York, including one at Horseheads, *Chemung*, Apr. 23–27, new for the county (m.ob.). Individual reports came from the western counties of *Niagara*, *Chautauqua*, and *Cattaraugus*, in March, and at least 10 from the Rochester area, mainly Braddock Bay, in March and May (FN, m.ob.).

**SHOREBIRDS**—The spring shorebird migration was unremarkable, with numbers slightly below the 7-year average of a regular census at Jamaica Bay (AM, DM) and below average along the Delaware Bayshore, as well. Although Bombay Hook and neighboring areas attract many migrants, the habitat at Brig continues to be largely unsuitable for shorebirds owing to mismanagement practices; consequently, few birds are found at what was once the Region's premier shorebirding location.

The first Lesser Golden-Plover was along Rt. 12 east of Smyrna, *Kent*, DE, Mar. 18 (APE), up to 12 were there Mar 24 (JSw), and small numbers continued to be seen through May 14 (NH). In New Jersey only one was at Pedricktown Apr. 21 (MN), and a single was at Jamaica Bay May 19 (*vide* TWB). A **Wilson's Plover** was found at Hereford Inlet, *Cape May*, NJ, May 12 (DW, BMi), but could not be relocated.

One to two Black-necked Stilts were at Wainscott Pond and vicinity, *Suffolk*, NY, May 11–26 (ABa, JRu *et al.*), and another was found at Cow Meadow Park in Freeport, *Nassau*, May 31 (P. Martin). In New Jersey, a flock of six was in Wildwood Crest, *Cape May*, May 16 (L. Dunne), while singles made brief visits to the South Cape May Meadows May 16 (P. Holt) and to Brig May 24 (PP). In Delaware, nine returned to Bombay Hook Apr. 12, and as many as 71 were counted in May (NH). American Avocets returned to Delaware as early as Mar. 13, and 93 were at Kitts Hummock 3 days later (WJW). Forty-one were at Bombay Hook

Mar. 23 (NH), but they were mostly absent from there in April and May.

A Willet at Hamlin, *Monroe*, May 19 was unusual in spring for the Ontario Lakeshore, as was a Western Sandpiper at nearby Kendall, *Orleans*, the same day (RGS *et al.*). In New Jersey, a Western Sandpiper in full alternate plumage was at Brig May 19 (MN, WJB), and small numbers were among the thousands of Semipalmated Sandpipers along the Delaware Bayshore in late May, including eight at Villas, *Cape May*, May 21 (JDo). At least three Curlew Sandpipers were found in Delaware; one was at the Little Creek impoundments Apr. 29 (NH), and it or another was there May 14 in full alternate plumage (J.P. Myers, KK, S.R. Drennan, G. LeBaron). Two were along the Port Mahon road May 20 (AH, P. Dumont), and a bird seen there on the 27th could have been one of the previous two (MO). Brig hosted one Curlew Sandpiper May 19–24 (F. Lesser, m.ob.), while two were at Sagaponack Pond, *Suffolk*, L.I., May 22–24 (ABa *et al.*).

A Stilt Sandpiper was at Moore's Beach, *Cumberland*, NJ, May 16 (PDu), and another was in Wildwood, *Cape May*, May 17–19 (PL *et al.*). Pedricktown recovered slightly from last year's low total and hosted four to five Ruffs Mar. 31–Apr. 28; nearby Mannington Marsh had two Ruffs in early April, while three were found along the bayshore of *Cumberland*. Delaware did almost as well, with four individuals in the Bombay Hook-Little Creek area Apr. 17–May 20. Phalaropes were again scarce, with only about 15 Wilson's reported from the 3 coastal states, including a few from western New York. Four Red-necked Phalaropes were at 3 sites in the Bombay Hook-Little Creek area in late May, but one on the May 26 Hudson Canyon pelagic trip and another at Eden Township, *Erie*, NY, May 22 were the only others reported.

**JAEGERS TO ALCIDS**—The 2 Hudson Canyon pelagic trips produced a total of only four jaegers, three Pomarine and one Parasitic, plus one unidentified skua. Two Laughing Gulls were at Beltzville Lake, *Carbon*, PA, Apr. 30, for the 2nd spring in a row (DD), while one at Oneida Lake, *Oneida*, NY, May 13–19, was a local rarity (m.ob.). An even better find was the ad. **Franklin's Gull** at Saratoga Lake, NY, May 19, only the 2nd for the Hudson–Mohawk River Valleys (W. Gorman, P. Connor, M. Gruett, M. Kuhrt). Equally rare for that region was a Little Gull at Alcove Res., *Albany*, Apr. 15 (KA); one was at Jones Inlet, L.I., Mar. 25–Apr. 1 (v.o.), and others were at Braddock Bay Mar. 29 (FN) and nearby Greece, *Monroe*, Apr. 11 (KCG).

A gull flock at the hot water vent of the *Salem*, NJ, nuclear power plant, Mar. 7 included a Com. Black-headed Gull and a Glaucous Gull (JKM, WDa). Another bonanza was provided by a gull flock in a farm field near Moorestown, *Burlington*, NJ, Mar. 17, that contained one each of Com. Black-headed, Iceland, and Lesser Black-backed gulls (TBa). Finally, a storm-driven surf provided a feeding frenzy of hundreds of gulls at Sandy Hook Apr. 4; among them were one Little, one Com. Black-headed, two Iceland, and one Glaucous gull (J. Herder). Three other Com. Black-headed Gulls were in New Jersey, about four in the New York City–Long Island area, and one was at the Niagara River in early March.

Two Lesser Black-backed Gulls were at Port Mahon May 27, including one well-photographed in first summer plumage, a dress seldom noted in this Region (MO). At least five Lesser Black-backed were in New Jersey and six in New York, including one wintering at Cayuga Lake, one at Braddock Bay Mar. 11 (FN), and one at Montezuma N.W.R., NY, Apr. 16 (CCs). A noteworthy concentration of



*Lesser Black-backed Gull (front) at Port Mahon, Delaware, May 27, 1990. This bird appears to be in first-summer plumage, seen on this continent far less frequently than older birds. Photograph/Michael O'Brien.*

30+ Great Black-backed Gulls was at Lake Nockamixon, *Bucks*, PA, Mar. 25, where numbers have been increasing in recent years (B & NM), while the 194 tallied by the Buffalo Ornithological Society Apr. 8 was the highest in 40+ years.

Two Gull-billed Terns at Piles Creek, Linden, *Union*, NJ, May 24, were far from any known breeding location (RR). Most unusual for spring was a Sandwich Tern at Hereford Inlet May 21 (DW, P. Grithens); less surprising were two Roseate Terns in Cape May in late May and an Arctic Tern in the S. Cape May Meadows May 31 (DSi). Single Forster's Terns were seen at 3 locations in east-central Pennsylvania in April and May, and a Black Tern was at one of them, Green Lane Res., *Montgomery*, May 21 (K. Crilley). Otherwise, Black Terns were very scarce in the s. part of the Region, with a maximum of nine at Rye, *Westchester*, NY, May 13 (TWB); even in upstate New York they were low, with a maximum of 45 at Oak Orchard W.M.A., *Genesee*, May 14 (FD). The only alcid was a Razorbill in the surf off Tobay, *Nassau*, L.I., Mar. 21 (B. Hines).

**OWLS TO SHRIKES**—A Snowy Owl was reported from Clermont, *Cape May*, Mar. 7 (R. Fisher); at least three remained on Long Island in early March and one was at Orient Beach, *Suffolk*, L.I., Apr. 1 (PG). At Morgan's Hill, *Northampton*, PA, a Short-eared Owl was an unusually late migrant Apr. 22 (A. Koch). Common Nighthawks were generally scarce, but two were reported on the extremely early date of Apr. 12; one was at Mt. Cuba, *New Castle*, DE (J. White), and another at Millburn, *Essex*, NJ (PB). Even more extraordinary was a report of two Chimney Swifts flying over a shopping center in Hillsborough, *Somerset*, NJ, Mar. 18, by an experienced observer (B. Merritt); unfortunately, the possibility of Vaux's Swift or some other vagrant, which may be more likely at that date, was not considered. A Pileated Woodpecker at Burleigh, *Cape*

May, was another in the spate of recent records of this species in s.e. New Jersey (W. Klockner).

The late-April warm spell brought a few early flycatchers to the Region, including an Eastern Wood-Pewee at West Milford, *Passaic*, NJ, Apr. 28 (PB) and an Eastern Kingbird at Albany, NY, the same day. Also arriving the same day was a **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** at Cape May (FM, BMi) that was seen occasionally through May 5.

Warm weather in March brought all the regular swallows back early to Cape May, with Tree Swallow the first on Mar. 14 and Cliff Swallow the last on Apr. 14; a N. Rough-winged Swallow at Pt. Phillips, *Northampton*, PA, Mar. 29 was unusually early so far inland (DD).

#### S. A.

The highlight of the season was the appearance of a **Cave Swallow** at the Cape May Point State Park, NJ. It was first observed Apr. 20, although the identity could not be confirmed; when conclusive identification was made Apr. 22, the word spread rapidly (VE, JDo, m.ob.). Always in the company of Barn Swallows, the Cave Swallow was seen repeatedly the next day, once on the 24th, then disappeared until May 2–3. It vanished again, only to be rediscovered May 19 by a team of British birders participating in the World Series of Birding. The swallow was enjoyed by dozens of birders the next day, and was seen regularly until about June 5.

The only previous records of Cave Swallow north of Florida on the east coast have come from Nova Scotia, in 1968, 1969, 1971, and 1982. All but the last were from islands well offshore during May and June, and included as many as nine birds (one specimen) in 1968 and three in 1969 on Sable Island; the most recent sighting occurred at Cape Breton Island on July 9, 1982.

Based mainly on the color of the rump patch, a dark chestnut, the Cape May bird appears to have been of the Caribbean race, *Hirundo fulva fulva*, as has been the case with the birds in Nova Scotia.

Remarkably, another **Cave Swallow** was discovered at Jamaica Bay, NY, May 23 by AB Associate Editor Kaufman, while leading a group from the National Audubon Society staff. After flying away from the group, the swallow returned to be enjoyed by all for about 15 minutes, but was never seen again (KK, S. R. Drennan, G. LeBaron, P.A.A. Berle *et al.*). Again, based primarily on the color of the rump, Kaufman suggests that the bird was probably of the Caribbean subspecies.

Needless to say, birders will be keeping a closer eye on coastal "Cliff" Swallows in the future.

Common Raven was seen again at Braddock Bay, with two each in March and April, and was noted as increasing in the Finger Lakes area, as it is in other parts of the Region where it occurs. As often happens after strong winter flights, Red-breasted Nuthatches remained to breed in atypical places, such as Rocky Hill, *Somerset*, NJ, and the Albany, NY, area. One at Assawoman W.M.A., *Sussex*, DE, May 24 may have just been late (APE), as were others in the Cape May area in early May.

A group of five Sedge Wrens along the boardwalk at Bombay Hook May 10–14 was the best concentration in Delaware in 15 years (DSh); another was heard along the road to Bennett's Pier, *Kent*, DE, May 14 (KK *et al.*). A single at Cayuga Marsh in May was the only report for upstate New York, where they were formerly much more common.

*Catharus* thrushes were a mixed bag, as were the other migrant passerines; some observers reported good to excellent counts of Swainson's and Gray-cheeked thrushes, while others felt that Swainson's was rare and Gray-

cheeked nonexistent. For example, high counts came from Kaufman (12 Swainson's, 20 Gray-cheeked in 2 hours at Central Park, NYC, May 23); Tudor (many Swainson's, six-plus Gray-cheeked at Prospect Park, Brooklyn, May 24), and Rodewald (10+ Gray-cheeked at Princeton, May 22–24). Observers inland in Pennsylvania and in w. New York, however, found few of either species, although a Swainson's Thrush at Pt. Gratiot in Dunkirk, *Chautauqua*, NY, Apr. 24 was very early (JGu). Also notably early was a Gray-cheeked Thrush at Allentown Apr. 28 (BLM).

The Townsend's Solitaire remained near Pawling, *Dutchess*, NY, to at least Mar. 13 (m.ob.), while the previously reported Varied Thrush at Fredonia, *Chautauqua*, NY, stayed to Mar. 8 (TM, m.ob.). Another **Varied Thrush** was found at Goat Island, *Niagara*, NY, Apr. 19–21 (WDn, m.ob.). Two Bohemian Waxwings were at Crown Point S.P., Lake Champlain, Apr. 8 (E. Johnson) and many others, up to 150 at a time, were around Cape Vincent, *Jefferson*, NY, Apr. 24 (*vide* KLC). A Northern Shrike at Oyster Bay, L.I., in early March was the only one south of upstate New York, while all 4 reports of Loggerhead Shrike were from w. upstate New York.

**VIREOS, WARBLERS**—White-eyed Vireos rode the warm southerlies of late April to reach w. New York ahead of schedule. One was at Canadaway Creek, Dunkirk, Apr. 25 (D. Neveu) and another was banded at Manitou Beach, *Monroe*, Apr. 29 (EB). A pair of Warbling Vireos at a nest in Forest Hills, *Queens*, found May 24 apparently furnished the southernmost confirmed breeding record for New York (GT). Philadelphia Vireos included a very early bird at Hawk Mt. Sanctuary, PA, Apr. 29 (LG), one in New Jersey at Sandy Hook May 19 (R. Ditch), three from the New York City area, and about a dozen from upstate New York.

Warbler migration, like that of the thrushes, produced an interesting mix of reviews. The big heat wave of late April brought an unprecedented variety of early migrants to the entire Region, with many species arriving on record early dates, albeit in very small numbers. After the end of the month, the cool, wet weather delayed the bulk of migration until after mid-May, although there were some good fallouts precipitated by the rainy cold fronts. Many observers in s.e. New York, New Jersey, and s.e. Pennsylvania noted excellent flights, some of the best in recent years, from about May 19–25, though marked more by variety than sheer numbers. Birds moved through rapidly and then, apparently, dispersed, as birders in most of New York State, especially the west, lamented a dearth of migrant warblers of many species.

Nineteen species of warblers arrived in the Rochester area in the last 6 days of April, five of them on record early dates (RGS); the Niagara-Lake Erie region was not far behind with 16 species, including a Bay-breasted Warbler on the 28th (SWE). The Lehigh Valley, PA, region also experienced a big flight, with seven species on record early dates. Migrant traps such as Central Park, *Manhattan* (KK, m.ob.); Forest Park, *Queens* (GT); and Ft. Washington S.P., *Montgomery*, PA (B & NM), produced some of the better concentrations during late May. A flock of several hundred warblers of 18 species spent the morning singing and feeding on a tree-lined street among the high-rises of center-city Philadelphia, May 20 (DAC).

There were far more reports of Orange-crowned Warbler than usual, including three wintering in New Jersey (one at Princeton, two at Eatontown, *Monmouth*). Five others in New Jersey, one in Central Park, and about a half-dozen in upstate New York rounded out the spring total. The

Cape May Warbler that wintered in Princeton was still present in March (LL), but an early migrant at Tamiment, Pike, PA, in the Poconos, Apr. 17 was exceptional (B & NM). Yellow-throated Warblers continue to occur with increasing frequency in w. New York; this spring one was at Fall Creek Gorge, Cayuga, May 19 (*vide* CKM), and another was in Fredonia May 20 (D. Klaybor).

New York State produced two **Swainson's Warblers**; one was in Central Park, where the species has occurred several times, Apr. 28–May 1 (J. Fiore *et al.*), while for the 2nd year in a row one was found in the western part of the state. This one was discovered, well seen, and tape recorded at Letchworth S.P. May 14 (M. Reinhardt); although heard by a number of observers the next day, only one of them was lucky enough to see the bird (L. VanderWerf), the 5th for western New York. A Connecticut Warbler was at Williamsburg Glen, Erie, May 20–21 (Yoerg, *vide* RA), and Mourning Warblers were found in above average numbers in the southern part of the Region in late May (m.ob.). Well north of its usual range was a Hooded Warbler at Massena, St. Lawrence, NY, May 14 (MB).

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES**—Scarlet Tanager, too, was among the early birds at Rochester, Apr. 29 (RGS). Three Dickcissels, two in March, were found in New Jersey during the spring, although others were located in early summer; one wintering at Ghent, Columbia, NY, was present until Apr. 1, and another was in Fredonia Apr. 18 (J. Goetz). A Clay-colored Sparrow was seen at Hogan Point, near Rochester, May 15 (FN), and an even rarer Lark Sparrow was found on the Buffalo Ornithological Soc. survey May 20.

An "Ipswich" Savannah Sparrow was still at Sandy Hook May 19, an unusually late record of this often ignored subspecies (P. Buckley). Henslow's Sparrows continue to decline in western New York, their only significant outpost in the Region; exceptional for spring was a singing male at Wantage Township, Sussex, NJ, May 17 (DF). The Harris' Sparrow wintering at Mendham, Morris, NJ, lingered to mid-March, but one that had been present at a Groton, Tompkins, NY, feeder since November was only identified Mar. 11, after which it was enjoyed by many. As many as 12 Lapland Longspurs, in striking

breeding plumage, were along Rt. 12 east of Smyrna, DE, until mid-April (m.ob.).

Yellow-headed Blackbirds were noted in above average numbers, with two in Delaware, five in New Jersey, and three in New York, including one well-photographed in Sheridan Township, Chautauqua, Apr. 12–14 (R. & C. Budnewski). Five of the Brewer's Blackbirds wintering in Cape May were still present Mar. 6, then eight were found at Week's Landing, Cape May, Mar. 10 (JDo). In w. New York, one was in Hamlin, Monroe, Mar. 18 (A. Clarridge, FD), while a group of three to 16 was in Eden Township, Erie, Apr. 2–18 (RA, m.ob.). A flock of eight to 10 Boat-tailed Grackles near Woodstown, Salem, NJ, Apr. 8 was about ten miles inland from their northernmost Delaware Bayshore outpost at Mad Horse Creek W.M.A. (DAC); farther north, Boat-taileds nested on Staten Island for the first time (H. Flamm).

Two Pine Grosbeaks at Mountainside, Union, NJ, Mar. 1 were the only ones noted south of upstate New York (D. Burk), but both species of crossbills staged a minor invasion to the northern parts of the Region late in the season. White-winged Crossbills were the most widely seen, but at least 2 flocks of Red Crossbills were in the Albany, NY, region in mid-May, and 3 flocks were seen in the highlands of Passaic-Morris, NJ, May 19 (PDU, PB *et al.*); some of this latter group remained into June, although there was no evidence of nesting. White-wingeds were widespread throughout most of New York State in April and May, with nesting suspected in the Allegany S.P. area. In New Jersey, several flocks were in the highlands of Passaic into early June, while the southernmost report was of a pair at Emmaus, Lehigh, PA, Apr. 27 (J. Horn).

There were a few scattered reports of Com. Redpoll in March, all from upstate New York; the only significant concentration was a group of 35–40 at Barcelona, Chautauqua. Pine Siskins were noted in large numbers, especially in upstate New York, through the end of the period, but were present and probably nested at various locations in New Jersey; four were even at Walnut Ridge, New Castle, DE, May 20 (E. Speck). There were numerous reports of nesting birds in the Albany and Finger Lakes regions, and an impressive count of 5000+ at Braddock Bay May 23 (FN). One siskin banded in Wisconsin in January, 1988 was found dead in Hamilton, NY, Dec. 14, 1989 (GL).

**CORRIGENDA**—The report of four to five Eared Grebes at Lake Marburg, York, PA, in 1981, referred to in last spring's column, has been reviewed and not accepted by the Pennsylvania Ornithological Records Committee.

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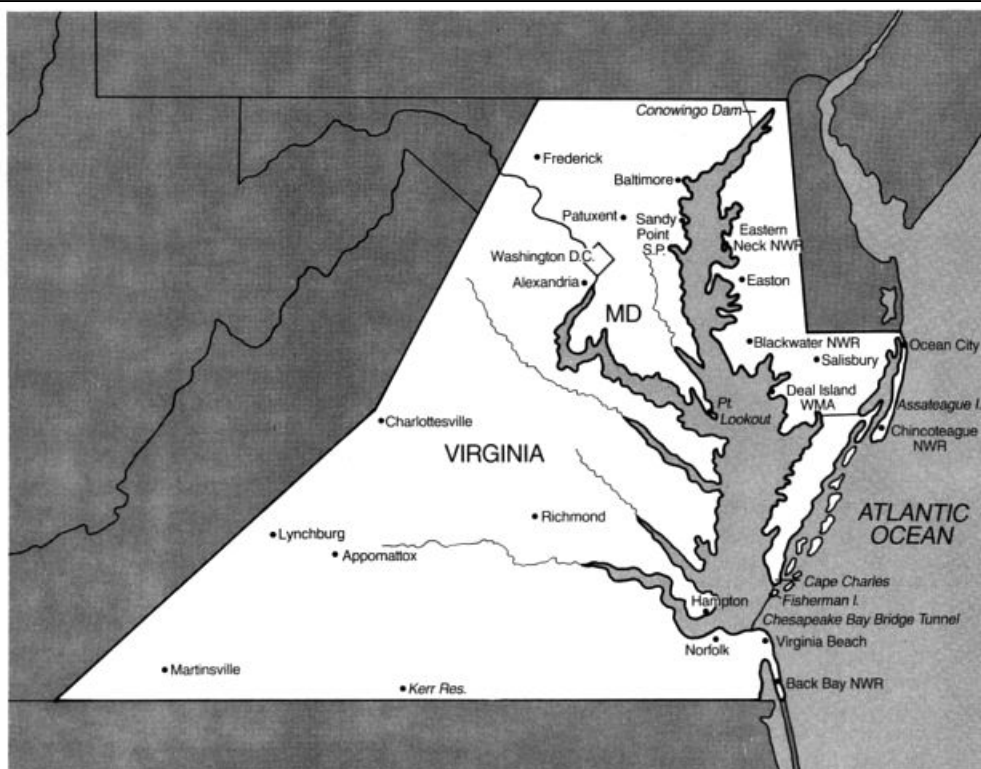
Male Yellow-headed Blackbird in Chautauqua County, New York, April 13, 1990. Rare in western New York. Photograph/Ray Budniewski.

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## MIDDLE ATLANTIC COAST REGION

Henry T. Armistead



**M**arch was exceptionally warm, resulting in some extremely early arrivals, birds that normally might show up in a few areas late in that month appearing in mid or early March instead. Temperatures were close to normal for the rest of the period but with a cooling trend and increasing precipitation into May. The shorebird and passerine migration received mixed to poor reviews. A surprising number of birds lingered later into May than usual, such as Hermit Thrushes, American Pipits, and even several Glaucous Gulls and some northern finches. One bright spot of the spring flight was the good flycatcher showing. Bald Eagle production was excellent but full details will appear next season. Any season with a Ross' Gull well seen by thousands cannot be all bad.

Deviation from normal of temperature: March +4.7°F; April +0.3°; May -0.5°; of precipitation: March +0.0 inches (normal); April +0.5 inches; May +2.1 inches.

**ABBREVIATIONS**—the Bay = Chesapeake Bay; Blackwa-

ters=Blackwater Nat'l Wildlife Ref., MD; C.B.B.T. = Chesapeake Bay Bridge and Tunnel, VA; Chinc. = Chincoteague Nat'l Wildlife Ref., VA; Craney = Craney Island Disposal Area, Portsmouth, VA; Deal I. = Deal Island Wildlife Management Area; MD; F.S.P. = Ft. Smallwood Park, *Anne Arundel*, MD; Hart = Hart and Miller Is., *Baltimore*, MD; H.M.C.P. = Huntley Meadows County Park, *Fairfax*, VA. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO IBISES**—Spitzer's loon studies continued in the Bay, where he found unprecedented non-coastal numbers of Red-throated Loons such as 200 in the Choptank R. mouth, mostly in *Talbot* waters Apr. 14, and 135 the next day, while 70 Com. Loons were still present May 1. Just across the Bay on the western shore Stasz had 12 Red-throateds at N. Beach, *Calvert*, Mar. 31; his best Com. Loon totals there were of 64 as early as March 19, 203 on April 5, and 313 on Apr. 12. All these loon records are from Maryland.



A sparse breeder Regionally, Pied-billed Grebe nested at Grandview, Hampton, VA, where an adult and four chicks were seen May 19 (BT, BW), an unusual location. High counts of Horned Grebe in Maryland were modest ones such as 256 at Patuxent N.A.S., *St. Marys*, Mar. 28 (KR), 200 at Claiborne, *Talbot*, Mar. 19 (JE), and 400 at N. Beach Mar. 21 (JLS). However, the interesting point was that they seemed to peak about 2 weeks before they normally do. It was a good spring for Red-necked Grebe with up to five at Black Hills Res., *Montgomery*, MD, Mar. 11–Apr. 7 RPH, PO, MO, RFR), two at Seneca, MD, Mar. 10 (PO), two at C.B.B.T. Mar. 4 (PMc, BP), and one at York R., VA, Apr. 4 (BT). Eared Grebes were well represented with singles at N. Beach Mar. 3 & 28 (JLS), Rudee Inlet, Virginia Beach, VA, Mar. 24 (SR), on the South R. near Annapolis Mar. 27 (MI), and at D.C. at Haines Pt. Apr. 15, new for the District (DC).

Sooty Shearwaters seen from land were two at Hog I., *Northampton*, May 15 (and a dead bird May 31) plus another dead one at Cobb I. May 30. One was at Rudee Inlet May 27 (DFA). A pelagic trip out of Rudee Inlet that left at 11:32 p.m. May 24 found two Manx, two Cory's, and 55 Sooty shearwaters, three N. Gannets, 296 Wilson's and three Leach's storm-petrels, 14 fin whales, 11 Risso, 21 bottlenose, and 45 common dolphins, five molas, two swordfish, and a blue shark (KHB, ESB *et al.*) on May 25. Northern Gannets continue to penetrate up the Bay in larger numbers than have been seen prior to recent years, with 20 from N. Beach to Kent Pt. Mar. 26 (LMD), 32 at Pt. Lookout S.P. Mar. 17 (JLS, MI, DMD), one at Black Walnut Pt. Mar. 18 (RFR), and birds seen on 16 of 21 days of observation during March by Stasz, all in Maryland waters at least 75 mi from the sea.

An Am. White Pelican was at Chinc. in March (RAA *et al.*), and quite likely the same bird was at Hog I., 40 mi to the s., during May (SR). Brown Pelicans showed up late and in small numbers in coastal Virginia with 32 at Chinc. Apr. 21 (BPk), 16 near Williamsburg May 13 (SR), and 18 at Craney Apr. 24 (TRW). In Virginia 40 Great Cormorants were at C.B.B.T. Mar. 1 (SR, BPn) and a very late bird was nearby at Eastern Shore of Virginia N.W.R. May 22 (SR), while in Maryland three were at Choptank Light, *Talbot*, Mar. 18 (RFR, EB) in the central Bay, five were in *St. Marys* Mar. 17 (MI, JLS, DMd), and seven were at Ocean City Apr. 26–27 (JGR). Double-crested Cormorants returned early with 40 at Ft. Armistead Park near Baltimore by Mar. 11 (HTA *et al.*), a possible record count of 138 in D.C. Apr. 14 (DC), and 1008 at N. Beach Apr. 16 (JLS). Unique was the report accompanied by a fine drawing of three Anhingas soaring over Hampton, VA, Apr. 8 (PS).

For the second straight year, breeding of Am. Bittern was confirmed at H.M.C.P., when an adult and three young were seen May 31 (KH, EPW) at this prime Virginia fresh water marsh near D.C. This species is an extremely rare Regional breeder. Four Least Bitterns were seen at Barren I., MD, May 28, in a small 35 ± acre artificial salt marsh island created by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and seeded with *Spartina alterniflora* in dredge spoil. Seaside Sparrows and Clapper Rails, uncommon on the rest of Barren I., have also become established here in large numbers (HTA *et al.*). The first Cattle Egrets, on typical dates, were singles at Mt. Vernon Mar. 25 (PB) and Nokesville, VA, Mar. 31 (RAA). Black-crowned Night-Herons continue to prosper in the wilds of the National Zoo in D.C. where Czaplak counted 102 adults and 46 nests Apr. 8. The first Glossy Ibises were six at N. Beach Mar. 31 (JLS) and 47 at Patuxent N.A.S. Apr. 3 (KR). Seven Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were at H.M.C.P. during the period, a slight

increase (EPW), and the Hampton Roads Bird Club count recorded 26 on May 12 (DMi).

**WATERFOWL**—Notable Mute Swan counts were of 275 at Barren I. May 28 (CCW, GLA, HTA) and Reese found 218 at the mouth of the Wye R. May 15 and 84 near Royal



*Mute Swan nest photographed May 28, 1990, at Barren Island, Maryland — the southern limit of the species' breeding range on Chesapeake Bay. Photograph/George L. Armistead.*

Oak May 25, these all on the Maryland Eastern Shore. The environmental impact of these huge, increasing birds must be considerable. A Greater White-fronted Goose at Madonna, *Harford*, MD, for the 2nd straight winter remained until Mar. 8 (DK) and the Blackwater Ross' Goose at least until Mar. 10 (*vide* HTA). Late concentrations included 7000 Snow and 53 "Blue" geese plus 1450 Tundra Swans near Centreville, MD, March 11 (JE), 1000 N. Pintails, 1000 Am. Wigeon, and 500 Gadwalls at Deal I. March 31 (SHD), 1200 Canvasbacks at Tilghman's I. Mar. 18 (JGR), 3000 Lesser Scaup at Hart Apr. 22 (RFR), 4000 Surf Scoters at N. Beach Mar. 31 (JLS), and 670 Buffleheads at N. Beach Apr. 16 (JLS). Scoters were in optimal numbers on the Choptank R. with 2560 Surf Scoters Apr. 13, a good count for anytime of year, with 190 plus 65 White-winged Scoters still present May 6 (HTA, CCW, GLA). At Wallops I., VA, Vaughn found 245 Brant still on hand May 2.

Erecting Wood Duck boxes has become a major activity in some areas by sportsmen's groups with spinoff benefits for screech-owls, crested flycatchers, Tree Swallows, and other species. In *Accomack*, VA, 173 boxes produced 67 Wood Duck broods in 1989, an increase from 20 to 39% in one year; one box near Craddockville had feathers of Hooded Merganser, a species almost nonexistent as a Regional breeder (GWR). Very late ducks were two N. Shovelers at Cobb I., VA, May 30 (SR), a Bufflehead at Piney Run Res., *Carroll*, MD, May 25 (RFR), and a Com. Merganser near Royal Oak, MD, May 25 (JGR). At Wallops I., 700 Green-winged Teal Apr. 4 made a good total for so late (CRV). Jetty ducks included four to six Harlequin Ducks at C.B.B.T. Mar. 1–Apr. 11 (SR, BPn), and a King Eider was there Mar. 4 (PMc, BP) and another at Ocean City on the extremely late date of May 19 (DC). Less surprising were 30 Red-breasted Mergansers, notorious lingerers, at Back Bay N.W.R./False Cape S.P., VA, May 18 (DS, TMP) and 26 on Assateague I., MD, May 19 (DC), while 97 made an excellent count for D.C. Apr. 7 (DC). Two exotics were seen, a Com. Shelduck at Piney Run Res., MD, where one was seen at this time last year, May 5 & 7 (RFR), and a Garganey at Back Bay in mid-May (*vide* DFA) of unknown origins.



*Osprey nest at Barren Island, Maryland, May 28, 1990. Ground nesting is not uncommon on Chesapeake Bay, on islands that are some distance from the nearest trees. Photograph George L. Armistead.*

**RAPTORS TO CRANES**—a flight of 111 Turkey Vultures was seen at F.S.P., s.e. of Baltimore, Mar. 13 (SRi). Owing to the mild March, Ospreys returned earlier than usual in many areas. Mid-March is when they usually return in most Maryland areas of the Bay, but arrivals in the first week of March were seen in several Maryland counties (JGR, SRi, LTS), and they were attempting nesting in D.C. again this year where they were seen nest building Apr. 7 (DC). An unprecedented three Mississippi Kites were reported: singles at Rockville, MD, May 11 (MO), F.S.P. Apr. 28 (BM, *fide* SRi), and H.M.C.P. May 8 (KK). At F.S.P. Apr. 28 a Swainson's Hawk was also reported, with details lacking, on a day when 13 raptor species were seen here (SRi, BM, PF). Details were lacking at press time of the Bald Eagle nesting survey. These will appear in the summer 1990 season report. Eight pairs nested on Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD, on the upper Bay (DK), and the nest on the Potomac R. at Great Falls had two young May 5 (GS).

Coverage at F.S.P., the Region's best spring hawk flyway, is usually irregular at best and this year was no exception. However, over 1000 birds were seen May 6 including 786 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 40 Ospreys, two Bald Eagles, five N. Harriers, seven Cooper's, 251 Broad-winged, and three Red-tailed hawks, seven Am. Kestrels, and three Merlins (SRi *et al.*), to give some idea of how good it can be. The last Rough-legged Hawk report was of one at Bellevue, MD, Apr. 14 (GLA, HTA), not especially late. Single Golden Eagles were at Remington Farms Apr. 5 & 13 in Kent, MD (FLP). Rottenborn witnessed an excellent flight of Am. Kestrels at Back Bay Apr. 4 when he saw 318 flying north along the dunes. At Rockville, MD, 150 Broad-winged Hawks were in migration Apr. 22 (MO) and 80 were seen in D.C. the same day (DC).

Up to three Black Rails were heard at Saxix during May on the central Bay w. of Chinc. (ESB, SRd, FD, DFA, BPn), and nine were calling at Elliott I., MD, May 5 (HTA, GLA, *et al.*). In s. *Dorchester*, MD, 118 Virginia Rails were heard on a spring bird count May 12 (CS, HTA). Ten Clapper Rails were at Barren I., MD, May 28, when a nest with 9 eggs was also discovered (HTA, GLA, CCW), and 43 were in the Hampton area May 12 for a spring bird count at this site (DMi *et al.*). As part of a survey by the state in Maryland, marshes on the upper Choptank R. were visited at night (MO). Some of these areas have never been birded before in this manner, and yielded excellent counts of rail-lids on these nights: 19 King Rails Apr. 23–24 and 18 May 30–31; 37 Virginia Rails May 11–12 and 36 May 30–31; ten

Soras May 2–3; 13 Com. Gallinules both May 23–24 and May 30–31. This is a stretch of the Choptank R. from Kingston Landing to Frazier Neck in fresh–slightly brackish marshes of *Talbot & Caroline*, MD. Many of these totals are unprecedented for these two counties and indicate we still have much to learn and new areas to visit even in counties that were already considered to be well birded. At Deal I., Dyke heard 12 Soras Apr. 29. The Poolesville, MD, Sandhill Crane finished out its 2nd year in the area and has become so taken for granted that a big day party stopped by to pick it up by flashlight May 17 (v.o.).

**SHOREBIRDS**—Four Wilson's Plovers at Craney May 2 (*fide* DMi) and one at Grandview May 19 (BW) were somewhat out of place away from the Eastern Shore of Virginia barrier islands. A Piping Plover at Grand View already had two young by May 19 (BW). Many found the shorebird migration to be lackluster, yet there were some outstanding individual counts. Up to 18 Black-necked Stilts were at Deal I. May 12, a new Maryland high count (MO), and one was at Blackwater, May 7–12 (MO, CS, HTA). In Virginia, eight were at False Cape S.P. May 1 (BT) and six were at the Chinc. causeway May 18–19 (JJF), also record state totals. Among the more interesting shorebird totals were those of Rottenborn in Virginia, including these Cobb I. records: 268 Black-bellied Plovers May 9, 1328 Dunlin May 16, and 89 Willets plus 745 Red Knots May 30. At nearby Hog I. he saw 645 Semipalmated Plovers May 15, and 1377 Sanderlings with a W. Sandpiper May 24. In a plowed field near Oyster were 350 Black-bellied Plovers and a Lesser Golden-Plover May 23. At Craney he found 70 White-rumped Sandpipers, a Wilson's Plover, and two Black-necked Stilts May 19. Near Nassawadox he saw 300 Whimbrels May 8. A surprising count of Whimbrels was of 595 at Bellevue, MD, in two large flocks flying north into the dusk calling the evening of May 25 in a central part of the Bay area where the observers had only seen two previous birds of this species (HTA, LA).

The best Sanderling count was of 3034 May 18 in the Back Bay/False Cape part of Virginia (DS, TMP). A half dozen reports were received of W. Sandpipers, most with no descriptions, making these difficult to evaluate. This is a rare bird during the spring here. We need more information on when the Westerns that overwinter leave the Region. Pectoral Sandpipers often show up in small numbers in late March but the only early report this spring was of two birds at Denton, *Caroline*, MD, March 26 (MWH). Purple Sandpipers lingered later than usual with 32 at Ocean City May 20 (DC) and 30 at C.B.B.T. May 21 (DMi) and 15 still there May 27 (DFA). At Wallops I., 1635 Short-billed Dowitchers made an excellent count May 2 (CRV), and 90 Com. Snipe at Tanyard, *Caroline*, MD, Mar. 18 made a good tally for the Eastern Shore, snipe being commoner on the other side of the Bay (RFR, EB). A single Wilson's Phalarope was at Blackwater May 12 (HTA, CS) and two were at Craney May 10 & 25 (*fide* DMi). Another was at Hart May 28 along with seven Red-necked Phalaropes, a Red Knot, and 2500 Semipalmated and 11 White-rumped sandpipers (RD). At sea five Red-necked Phalaropes were seen off Virginia Beach May 25 (KHB, ESB *et al.*).

**JAEGERS TO SKIMMERS**—The only jaeger reported was an unidentified one at Ocean City May 12 (MO).

Single Little Gulls were spotted at N. Beach Apr. 6 (JLS) and at Ft. Story (Cape Henry), VA, Mar. 24 along with a Black-legged Kittiwake (SR). A very late Com. Black-



Ross' Gull at Baltimore, Maryland, March 11, 1990. The background is proof enough that this bird is out of range: most Ross' Gulls live their lives without ever seeing tall trees. Photograph/Dave Czaplak.

#### S.A.

The high point of the season was an ad. **Ross' Gull** discovered at Back R. Sewage Treatment Plant in Essex, MD, e. of Baltimore by Scarpulla and present Mar. 3–12 and, incredibly, again from Apr. 13–24. During March it was seen by at least 2300 people from 16 states. It received extensive media coverage, usually being billed as the "bird of the century." The staff of the sewage plant are to be commended for their hospitality. They erected attractive wooden signs welcoming birders and even had one sign with an arrow pointing to the tanks where the gull was most likely to be seen. This lovely bird consorted with Bonaparte's Gulls and was usually seen in flight, although occasionally it could be seen at rest on land along a nearby tidal creek. Also present were one to two Little Gulls during much of April, but the "Patagonia effect" stopped there.

headed Gull was reported from Chinc. May 20 (JFF). Laughing Gulls returned a week or more earlier than usual, no doubt owing to the March mildness, turning up at several Maryland Bay sites in the 2nd week of the month instead of the 4th when they usually return (v.o.). A nest with one egg was found at Barren I. May 28 for the 2nd straight year, the only breeding records for the Maryland part of the Bay except for a report in 1954 (HTA, GLA, CW, ph.). Also breeding here were Herring Gull (24 nests) and Great Black-backed Gull (one nest), and although there were 6 Black Skimmer scrapes, for the first time in several years no skimmer eggs were found and no tern nests (vs. hundreds last year involving four species).

There was a good flight of Bonaparte's Gulls with counts

such as 1500 on South R. near Annapolis Apr. 9 (MI), 300 at Hog I., Surry, VA, Mar. 4 (BT), 266 in D.C. Apr. 7 (DC), 110 at Centennial Park, Howard, MD, Apr. 6 (JF), and 525 at N. Beach Apr. 10 (JLS). An Iceland Gull was present in the Cambridge–Preston, MD, area during March (DC, AJF, EE, JGR), representing a new record for *Caroline*. One (plus a Glaucous Gull) was at Alpha Ridge Landfill, Howard, Mar. 3 (SA). Glaucous Gulls were surprisingly widespread for this season with records from 7 other localities including four in mid–late May, with one at Rudee Inlet May 27–29 (DFA, KHB, ESB).

The first Caspian Terns were five at Ft. Story, VA, along with six Royals Mar. 24 (SR) and although spectacular counts were not achieved at Hart as in some years, 120 were there May 28 along with a Black Skimmer (RD), and 62 made a good count for inland Triadelphia Res. in Howard, MD, Apr. 22 (JF). In the central Bay 148 Royal Terns made a good tally May 8 at N. Beach (JLS). A single Arctic Tern was seen off Virginia Beach May 25 (KHB, ESB), and the first Forster's Terns were found Mar. 17 at Hunting Creek, VA, s. of D.C. (DC) and at N. Beach (JLS). Up to 55 Black Skimmers were in the Barren I.–Hooper's I. area May 5 & 12 (HTA *et al.*), frequenting the area where they have bred during the past few summers.

**CUCKOOS TO SHRIKES**—This was a better than usual spring for the Regionally scarce Black-billed Cuckoo (v.o.). Another result of the warm winter weather, presumably, was the sighting of an adult and fledgling E. Screech-Owl on the very early date of Mar. 19 in D.C. (DC). Short-eared Owls were seen at only 4 localities, including one at Hains Pt. in D.C. Apr. 15 (DC). Bass heard 24 Whip-poor-wills near Quantico Marine Base, VA, Apr. 29, and an exceptionally early one was heard near Charlottesville, VA, Mar. 11 (RB, *fide* CES). Normally the last few days of March are the earliest they may be expected in this area in Virginia. The high count of Red-headed Woodpeckers was of 10 at Nokesville Mar. 31 (RAA).

There were 9 reports of Olive-sided Flycatchers and one was banded at Stevenson, MD, May 25 (BMR). Six records of Alder Flycatchers were better than average, all in the period May 19–27 and in the Piedmont or very near it, such as one at D.C. May 19 (RPH). Least Flycatchers made a very strong showing during May, much more widely seen than usual, and Czaplak had them on six dates in D.C. May 2–16. Up to 70 E. Kingbirds were counted in D.C. May 5 (MO). Fancy flycatchers in Virginia included a **Gray Kingbird** at Virginia Beach Apr. 28 (TH *et al.*, *fide* JM; fourth state record) and a **Fork-tailed Flycatcher** present at Chinc. May 17–19 (KK, VBK, JB, JFF, JMA *et al.*; second state record), rounding out a 12 flycatcher spring for the Region. Presumably breeding were "shore" Horned Larks found during late May on the Virginia barrier islands of Hog, Cobb, and Wallops (SR, CRV).

The earliest swallows were four Purple Martins over D.C. Mar. 17 (DC) and a N. Rough-winged Swallow the next day at nearby McKee-Beshers W.M.A.; MD (MO), early dates even for these early species. Red-breasted Nuthatches finished off a mediocre winter flight with a smattering of records into mid-May (v.o.). At least 2 pairs of Brown Creepers were on breeding territory at H.M.C.P. (EPW) and two were at Patuxent N.A.S. May 12 (KR, CV). Thirteen Winter Wrens at McKeldin, Carroll, MD, Apr. 9 made a fine count, and the declining Sedge Wren was represented by five birds at Irish Grove Sanctuary, MD, s. of Crisfield Apr. 8 (JLS, MI). Two Golden-crowned Kinglets were in the Carroll portion of the Hanover watershed near the Pennsylvania line May 12, perhaps the only area of the

Region where they have been found breeding (RFR). A nice flight of passerines took place Mar. 11 at F.S.P. when over 100 E. Bluebirds, 1000 Am. Robins, and 100 Am. Pipits were seen (LMD, HLW).

Most felt the thrush migration was again a poor one, although more Gray-cheeked Thrushes were seen than usual with 25 over Rockville, MD, the night of May 27–28 (MO) and 14 there May 19–20 along with hundreds of Veeries and Swainson's Thrushes (MO). More late Hermit Thrushes were found in May than are normally, with several in D.C. as late as May 13 (DC, RPH). Brown Thrashers returned early in the March warmth and were nest building as early as Apr. 1 in Salisbury, MD (D & CB), and four were at Bull Run, VA, Mar. 11 (SDE). American Pipits lingered into May later than expected with 45 in *Howard*, MD, May 12 (SA), one at Ocean City May 19 (DC), and an exceptionally late individual at D.C. May 29 (DC). The only Loggerhead Shrikes reported were singles at Lilypons Apr. 7 (RFR) and Annapolis, an exceptional rarity for this location and time of year, May 12 (MI).

**VIREOS, WARBLERS**—The migration for these birds received very mixed reviews with some excellent flights locally, such as May 5–6 on the coastal plain. Single Philadelphia Vireos were seen at Dismal Swamp N.W.R. (ESB) and Lubber Run Park, Alexandria (RAA), both May 8. Unique were a "Brewster's" Warbler at Barlow Pond, *James City*, VA, Apr. 25 and an Orange-crowned Warbler at Baltimore May 19 (BY). Yokel had good warbler totals at Cylburn Arboretum with 11 Cape Mays May 12, 12 Black-throated Blues May 5, 14 Black-throated Greens May 8, and 21 Blackpolls, nine Canadas, and eight Bay-breasteds May 17. A N. Parula was present at Charlottesville, VA, on the record early dates of Mar. 10 & 12 (RB, *vide* CES). An excellent flight by lower Eastern Shore standards took place at Royal Oak, MD, May 5, when Reese had 12 Magnolia, five Chestnut-sided, 18 Blue-winged, seven Black-throated Blue, six Blackburnian, 18 Black-and-white, and two Tennessee warblers.

It is not unusual for Yellow-throated Warblers to turn up in a few areas each year in late March. This year, however, singles were already in Williamsburg (SR) and Jolly Pond, *James City* (BT), VA, by Mar. 15, with 20 at the latter site Mar. 23 (BT), and in Maryland at two places in *Howard*, Mar. 18 & 19 (JS, CB). Most unusual was a Swainson's Warbler on C.B.B.T. May 21 (MP, DMi *et al.*) and one was at Nassawango Creek, MD, May 29 (CS). Louisiana Waterthrushes also returned earlier than usual with singles at Nassawango Creek Mar. 17 (SHD), Williamsburg Mar. 22 (SR), and Jolly Pond Mar. 23 (BT). This was a good spring for Mourning Warblers, the reports on hand all between May 12–31, with one person banding seven in Fairfax, VA (EP). Unusual for early March was a Com. Yellowthroat at Hog I., *Surry*, VA, on the fourth (BT)—very early, most likely, rather than an overwintering bird. At McKeldin, MD, 14 Canada Warblers May 22 made a good total (RFR). Dyke had the unusual experience of watching various Yellow-throated, Pine, and Black-and-white warblers plus Louisiana Waterthrushes feeding among cypress knees in a cold (28°F.), wet snow Apr. 7 at Nassawango Creek on the lower Eastern Shore of Maryland. In spite of these interesting individual records there was little consensus in the reports received on the quality of the warbler flight.

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES**—A Summer Tanager at

Baltimore May 11 was slightly north of its usual range (BY). Very early was an Indigo Bunting at Berlin, MD, Apr 16 (MH). Dickcissel reporting was good, leading one to hope for another good breeding season. One was at Newport News, VA, Feb. 19–Apr. 21 (DMi), another at Tanyard, *Caroline*, MD, Apr. 25 (MN), three in *Campbell*, VA, along Route 625 May 10 (C & MH), one in Rockville, MD, May 19–20 (MO), eight in *Westmoreland*, VA, May 27 (JFF), and one near Cambridge, MD, May 31–June 12 (HLW). On May 5–6 Hilton found a Bachman's Sparrow in a county, undisclosed at the observer's request for security reasons, in the south-central Virginia Piedmont near the North Carolina line. This is the third consecutive year breeding birds have been found in this general area. Late lingering sparrows included an Am. Tree at Chesapeake City, MD, Apr. 13 (RFR, EB) and three Fox Sparrows at Lilypons, MD, Apr. 7 (RFR). The scarce Henslow's Sparrow was represented by singles at Rockburn Branch Park, *Howard*, MD, Apr. 28–May 2 (BO, NM, RFR), Deal Island W.M.A., MD, May 6 (C & ES), and in *Sussex*, VA, May 5–6 (RPH), none of these regular areas of occurrence. Rarely reported in spring, nine Lapland Longspurs were at Oland Rd., *Frederick*, MD, Mar. 24 (PO).

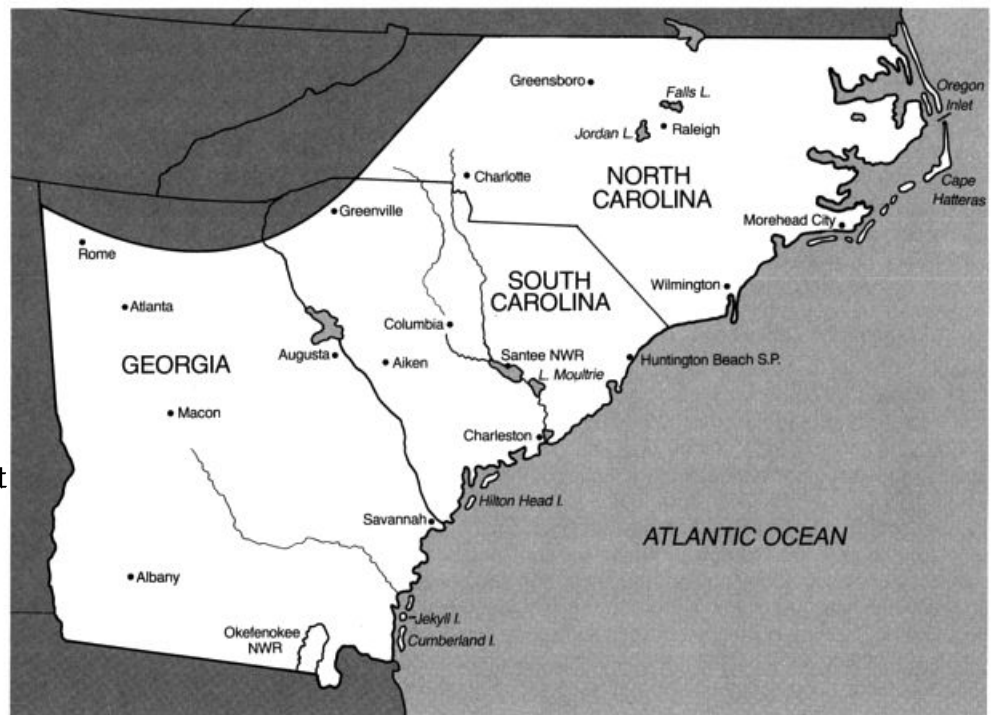
A ♂ Yellow-headed Blackbird was at Back Bay N.W.R., VA, during the 3rd week of May (*vide* DFA). After several winters of showing up in small numbers, Purple Finches made a rather strong flight throughout the Region in April and early May (v.o.). House Finches were noted nesting as early as Apr. 14 on Carroll I., *Baltimore* (RFR). Pine Siskins were rather widely reported during April and early May but did not linger past mid-May as they have during some recent years. Evening Grosbeak was still another northern finch that staged a fairly good spring flight after a mediocre winter, with several sightings into early May (v.o.).

**OBSERVERS**—D.F. Abbott, J.M. Anderson, R.A. Anderson, G.L. Armistead, Gordon Armistead, Liz Armistead, Scott Atkinson, Robert Barbee, K.H. Bass, Polly Batchelder, John Bjerke, Eirik Blom, Connie Bockstie, J.K. Boone, E.S. Brinkley, Don & Carol Broderick, J.H. Buckalew, Barry Cooper, **David Czaplak** (D.C. area), L.M. Davidson, Fenton Day, Robert Dixon, S.H. Dyke, S.D. Eccles, Jeff Effinger, Ethel Engle, Jane Farrell, **A.J. Fletcher** (*Caroline*, MD), S. Ford, Paul Fritz, J.J. Fulton, **Jim & Patricia Gruber** (*Kent*, MD), Terry Haag, Charles & Melva Hansrote, M.W. Hewitt, R.P. Hilton, Ken Howard, Mary Humphreys, Marshall Iliff, George Jett, **Teta Kain** (C.B.B.T.), Kerrie Kirkpatrick, Dennis Kirkwood, V.B. Kitchens, Gail MacKiernan, Nancy Magnusson, Paul McQuarry (PMc), Don Meritt, Jim Meritt, Dorothy Mitchell (DMi), Paul Murphy, Dottie Mumford (DMd), Bill Murphy, Marianna Nuttle, Michael O'Brien, Paul O'Brien, Bonnie Ott, John Overton, T.M. Padgett, F.L. Parks, Brian Patteson (BPn), Elizabeth Peacock, Butch Pearce, Carl Perry, **E.L. Pitney** (lower Eastern Shore of MD), Bill Portlock (BPk), Mary Pulley, Kyle Rambo, **J.G. Reese** (*Talbot*, MD), G.W. Reiger, Sue Ricciardi (SRi), Sue Ridd (SRd), R.F. Ringler, Wilbur Rittenhouse, B.M. Ross, Stephen Rottenborn, E.J. Scarpulla, Greg Schrott, Don Schwab, W. Scudder, Matthew Sharp, L.T. Short, Chris & Eddie Slaughter, Jo Solem (*Howard*, MD), P.R. Spitzer, **J.L. Stasz** (*Calvert*, MD), C.E. Stevens, Paul Sunby, Charles Swift, Brian Taber, J.W. Taylor, G.D. Therres, M.A. Todd, Curt Vacek, **C.R. Vaughn** (lower Eastern Shore of MD), E.P. Weigel, H.L. Wierenga, C.P. Wilds, Bill Williams, G.B. Wilmot, C.C. Witt, T.R. Wolfe, Ben Yokel, P.A. Zucker.—**HENRY T. ARMISTEAD, 523 E. Durham St., Philadelphia, PA 19119.**

# SOUTHERN ATLANTIC COAST REGION

Winter 1989–1990 Report

Harry E. LeGrand, Jr.



No one could possibly forget the weather of Winter 1989–1990 in the Southeast. December, usually the warmest of the three winter months, was by far the coldest, and some cities and towns had their coldest December ever. Topping off the absurdity of the month was the Great Blizzard along the coast of the Carolinas, dumping as much as 15 inches of snow; for some places, it was the greatest snowfall depth ever. As if the snow were not enough, Christmas morning saw temperatures plunge to  $-5$  degrees at Jacksonville, North Carolina; Wilmington in that state hit 0 degrees. Of course, chill factors during that December 23–25 period ran into the  $-20$ s or below. Somehow, January and February were quite mild and were among the warmest on record at many weather stations!

The Great Blizzard provided a good barometer of avian survivability and mortality. Usually, severe storms occur in January, February, or even March, and there is no full-scale census of birdlife after such storms; thus, one can only speculate how warblers, herons, and other birds fared after such storms. In this case, however, a number of coastal Christmas Bird Counts were held after the blizzard, and thus count totals of various species could be compared with numbers from previous winters. Results were shocking; of course, waterfowl were generally in increased numbers on the counts, but ground-dwelling passerines, especially insectivores, were decimated. House, Sedge, and Marsh wrens were hit hard, as were most warblers, particularly Palms. Pelicans, herons, and egrets fared poorly, and shorebirds died in numbers. Many birders commented on the scarcity of shorebirds later in the winter, and even the usually omnipresent Sanderling was a rarity on some beaches. Fussell saw *zero* shorebirds along 22 miles of beach from Ocracoke Inlet to Drum Inlet, North Carolina, on February 24.

**GREBES TO IBISES**—Not surprisingly in a frigid early winter, Red-necked Grebes staged a mini-invasion. Besides two seen from the Ocracoke–Cedar I., NC, ferry Feb. 4 (LG *et al.*), singles in that state were found at Figure

Eight I. Dec. 10 (DC), Atlantic Beach Dec. 17 (PSP), Cape Hatteras Jan. 11 (MaL), Rodanthe Jan. 16 (JF), and Whalebone Feb. 4 (RD, C.B.C.). One was seen in South Carolina at Huntington Beach S.P. on Dec. 31 (LG), and another or the same there Feb. 3 (PW); and in Georgia was a single at St. Catherines I. in early December (RH). Also reported a considerable number of times was Eared Grebe. An Eared lingered at Goldsboro, NC, to Dec. 16 (JW); and at least one bird was reported in the Cape Hatteras area Dec. 12 (MC, TH), Jan. 5 (DL), and Feb. 3–4 (C.B.C.). Georgia again had Eareds at Rum Creek W.M.A., with two there Dec. 3 (TJ, TKP, DaF) and one still there Jan. 26 (TJ, KD).

Disappointingly, no pelagic trips were taken, or at least reported, during the season. The eight to nine Am. White Pelicans that spent part of the fall at Pea I., NC, lingered into the winter and were reported at least to Feb. 23 (RK). Singles were notable elsewhere at Hatteras Inlet, NC, Dec. 2 (HH), the Charleston, SC, airport Jan. 11 (DWA), and Bear Island W.M.A., SC, Feb. 24 (PN *et al.*). Continuing to increase, Great Cormorant is now found in numbers along parts of the central coast of North Carolina, where rare just a few years ago. Fussell noted six Greats on old pilings of a pier at New R. Inlet Jan. 26, and 11 were there Feb. 12. He had three more at Cape Lookout Feb. 11 and three others at Topsail Beach Feb. 12. Somewhat far inland for winter were single Anhingas Jan. 25 at Lugoff, SC (LG), and Feb. 16 in s. *Cumberland*, NC (PJC), the latter presumably just an early spring migrant.

It was a dismal winter for rare wader reports, in part because of the high mortality/departure of such birds with the December blizzard. A Great Egret was present near Morrisville, NC, Jan. 28–Feb. 10 (HL, C.H.B.C.) and another was at Goldsboro, NC, Jan. 6 (ED). Seldom reported in winter in the Piedmont was a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron Jan. 3 at Clayton, GA (NI, *fide* TM). White Ibises well inland included singles at Santee N.W.R., SC, Jan. 2 (TK) and Eufaula N.W.R., GA, Jan. 31 (AA, MK). Excellent winter totals of Glossy Ibises were of 30 at Bear I., SC, Jan. 29 (LG, TMu, KC) and 77 there Feb. 24 (PN party).



**WATERFOWL**—This winter will be remembered negatively for many groups of birds, but it was a positive one for exciting waterfowl records, particularly sea ducks (scoters, eiders, etc.). The only report of Fulvous Whistling-Ducks was of as many as seven birds at an impoundment near Davis, *Carteret*, NC, in December (DS). This impoundment hosted a remarkable number of Tundra Swans this winter, with up to 1000 estimated during the season (DS); this is normally a rare bird in the county. In addition to a few solo birds in the Piedmont of North Carolina, a most significant report for that province was of nine swans at Griffin Res., GA, Dec. 31 (PR). Two Mute Swans were noted on L. Lanier, GA, Jan. 18 (JP) and two more (or the same?) in *Whitfield*, GA, Feb. 5 (HD).

An excellent count of 20 Greater White-fronted Geese was made at the Region's best site for the species — Eufaula N.W.R., GA, Jan. 28 (RM *et al.*). Others were two each in that state at Clayton Dec. 26 (EM) and Augusta Jan. 26 (AW), and one at Santee N.W.R., SC — the most frequently reported White-fronted site in the Carolinas — Dec. 30 (TK). As usual, there were a few scattered Snow Goose records away from the usual wintering locations in n tidewater North Carolina, with the best count being of six at Savannah N.W.R., SC, Dec. 10 (DF *et al.*). North Carolina's first inland **Ross' Goose** was found, with hardly any Snow Geese among which to hide, at Pungo N.W.R. during the winter (DC). Not surprising, however, was one at Pea I. — the usual East Coast haunt of the species — Dec. 28 (MT, PS, m.ob.).

No waterfowl species was more heavily influenced by the December freezes than the Brant, which normally winters in modest numbers in the Region only in Pamlico and Core sounds, North Carolina. As bays and sounds to our north became frozen over by late December, notable numbers of Brant invaded the Region. In Georgia, where extremely rare, four were seen from the Cumberland I. ferry Jan. 27 (HG, PB). In South Carolina, where simply rare, there were several double-digit counts along the coast, topped by a remarkable 107 in Charleston harbor Jan. 27 (PN). Other good counts in that state were of 50+ during the winter at Mount Pleasant (DF), 46 at Raccoon Key Jan. 28 (PN), 25+ at Moore's Landing Dec. 31 (DF), and 20+ at Huntington Beach S.P. Jan. 14 (DF). The lower Cape Fear R.—Southport area of North Carolina also hosted dozens of Brant, with 67 on the CBC at Southport Dec. 31 (*fide* BB).

Puddle ducks made little news this winter; surprising was a Blue-winged Teal far inland Jan. 14 in n. *Mecklenburg*, NC (DW). A Eur. Wigeon again spent the entire winter at Davis, NC (HH, PSa, JF), and singles were seen at both North and South ponds at Pea I., Dec. 28 (MT, PS). Not surprisingly in this unusual winter, Greater Scaup were widely reported inland, with the better counts being a maximum of nine Dec. 31 in *Greene*, GA (PY), five at the Savannah R. Plant, SC, Dec. 19 (AW), and four at Dreher Island S.P., SC, Jan. 9 (TK).

At a few sites along the coast, lucky birders had the rare Regional feat of seeing Common and King eiders and Harlequin Ducks on a single day. Up to two Common Eiders were at Huntington Beach S.P., SC, during the winter (DF, LG, RMcN); elsewhere, all in North Carolina, singles appeared at Pea I., Cape Hatteras, Beaufort/Ft. Macon, and Wrightsville Beach. King Eiders were surprisingly few, with but reports of singles at Wrightsville Beach and Huntington Beach. Harlequin Ducks were definitely widespread along the coast. Four were at Cape Hatteras Jan. 11 (MaL)—Feb. 2 (LG party) and four were also at Topsail I., NC, Jan. 26 (JF, DSq). Three near Surf City, NC, Feb. 12 (JF) might have been part of those at Topsail I. One or

two birds were also reported from Whalebone, Oregon Inlet, Cedar I., and Wrightsville Beach in North Carolina, and from Huntington Beach in South Carolina. Oldsquaws are usually rare on inland lakes, but such was not the case this winter. A remarkable seven were at Augusta Dec. 23 (CB, KW), five were at Jordan L., NC, Jan. 13 (KK, HLi, TS, HHe), two were at Savannah R. Plant Dec. 19 (AW), and one each were at Clemson, SC, Dec. 16–17 (SW, BS) and Dreher Island S.P., SC, Feb. 25–Mar. 3 (TK). Rarely seen on the Georgia coast were six Oldsquaws at Sapelo I. Dec. 31 (AWy, HP, TKP), with four there two days previously.

Five Surf Scoters at Cane Cr. Res., *Orange*, NC, Dec. 2 (DSh, C.H.B.C.) might have made a record Piedmont count for that state; and one inland at Clayton, GA, Dec. 26–28 (PB) was also unusual. Inland White-winged Scoters, all singles, appeared at L. Norman, NC, Dec. 15 (TP, DW), Greensboro, NC, Dec. 16—late January (HLi *et al.*), and Sweetwater Creek S.P., GA, Dec. 29 (CG). Not surprisingly, scoters and Oldsquaws were more numerous along the coast than usual, especially in December. Common Goldeneyes were only slightly up in numbers, but Common Mergansers were definitely more prevalent than usual, with at least 10 localities represented. Completely unexpected was a flock of 205 mergansers on L. Phelps, NC, Jan. 13 (ML); this was perhaps a new Regional high count. Nowhere else had numbers anywhere approaching this figure, but counts of 11 in the lower Cape Fear R. in late December (GM, BB) and eight at Greensboro in January (HHe) were notable.

**RAPTORS TO CRANES**—An Osprey was late near Grimesland, NC, Dec. 30 (HV). Two Bald Eagle nests were found in late winter in the eastern Piedmont of North Carolina (WK, JK); both may have been built by the same pair, as the first nesting failed. The locations are being withheld to protect the birds. Probably the most cooperative Rough-legged Hawk ever for the Region was a dark-morph bird that remained Jan. 22–Feb. 25 between Kinston and LaGrange, NC (BG, ED, m.ob.); it even perched on telephone wires along busy US 70! Other records of Rough-leggeds, all for North Carolina, were of two near Ayden Feb. 1 (JW), one north of Aurora Jan. 20 (RT), and one in *Iredell* near the Yadkin R., Jan. 7–9 (AB, RD). Golden Eagles were reported from all 3 states, but North Carolina's were in the mountains outside of this Region; South Carolina's was at Santee N.W.R. Jan. 13 (TK, MKal) and Georgia's was in *Morgan* Dec. 29 (SR, *fide* TM). A Merlin inland near Goldsboro, NC, was seen Feb. 27 (ED); but surprisingly, inland Peregrine Falcons were noted at 6 sites — Clemson (*fide* SW) and Santee N.W.R. (TK) in South Carolina, and Goldsboro (ED), Greenville (JW), Jordan L. (PSa), and Charlotte (*fide* DW) in North Carolina.

Cely *et al.* again had success in calling up a Yellow Rail in a grassy Carolina bay east of Columbia, SC, it being heard Dec. 8 & 16. Another was heard Dec. 30 at Santee N.W.R. (TK). Of course, there is much to be learned about winter distribution of this species. How widespread and frequent is it inland? Are the birds in the Carolina bays actually present all winter or are they just late fall migrants? Most importantly to birders, has anyone devised a good method for actually seeing birds in the winter, without having to burn a marsh or run marsh buggies or combines through the habitat? Quite unusual in midwinter inland were one or two Soras in s. *Mecklenburg*, NC, Jan. 13 (DW, TP, JeW) and a calling King Rail along the Chattahoochee R. near Atlanta Feb. 1 (PM). At the same marsh (in a quarry) where the Sora was noted, two Com. Moorhens were a real surprise Dec. 30 (DW, KH, HW) A

group of 75 migrating Sandhill Cranes Dec. 16 over St. Catherines I., GA (AW) was late and about 50 mi east of their usual migration corridor.

**SHOREBIRDS**—Many birders remarked on the devastation of shorebirds in late December along the coast and the overall scarcity of the birds in January and February. For example, Fussell *et al.* drove 5 miles of beach north of Corolla, NC, Feb. 4 and found only two shorebirds — Am. Avocets! This species is practically never seen on beaches in the Region. Another avocet was notable Dec. 14–Jan. 12 in the Beaufort, NC, area (JF). Anne Waters found unusual numbers of yellowlegs at Augusta in midwinter, as many as 20 Greater and three Lessers Jan. 13, with both species present to Feb. 6. Three Spotted Sandpipers at Goldsboro Dec. 16 (RT, GH) were quite late. At Bird Shoal near Beaufort, NC, Fussell and others had as many as eight Whimbrels all winter and one to two Long-billed Curlews; these birds obviously survived the blizzard of late December. A probable record Regional count (for recent decades, at least) of six Long-billed Curlews was made by Nugent at Cape Romain N.W.R., SC, Jan. 28.

#### S.A.

A somewhat bizarre-looking, Willet-like shorebird was reported and photographed May 19, 1989, at Huntington Beach S.P., SC (PC). The observer felt the bird might have been a Black-tailed Godwit, but I was not sure what it was, suggesting it was likely a Willet, though it did have a strangely long bill. I assumed that this would be the last I would hear of the bird, but the observer showed his photos to Davis Finch and five British birders, all of whom are familiar with the godwit, and each identified the bird in the photos as a **Black-tailed Godwit**. There is one previous Regional record, documented with photographs, from Bodie I., NC, December 1979 to January 1980, plus another winter record, from Pea I., apparently of this species.

A count of 15 Western Sandpipers at Augusta Feb. 3 (AW *et al.*) was amazing, as the species is seldom seen inland except July to September and rarely in spring. Excellent inland totals for Least Sandpipers, which are locally regular in winter at a handful of sites, included 60 at Augusta Feb. 3 (AW) and 48 at Goldsboro Dec. 16 (*vide* ED). Surprisingly, just one inland report of Dunlin was received, that of a single late migrant at Clayton, GA, Dec. 2 (PB, DB). A count of 100+ Long-billed Dowitchers is notable anywhere except at Bodie-Pea Is.; Cooper had this total on the athletic fields at the University of North Carolina–Wilmington Dec. 2.

**JAEGERS TO ALCIDS**—Strange as it may seem, an ad. Parasitic Jaeger was reported from the Hatteras Inlet, NC, ferry Feb. 2 (HH), and an imm. Pomarine Jaeger was reported from the same ferry two days later (LG *et al.*). Because jaeger identification can be difficult, I wonder just how many birds were actually involved in the above reports. Only three reports of Little Gulls — single adults at Bodie I., Dec. 28 (RD) and nearby Whalebone Feb. 3 (RD, HL), plus several birds Feb. 4 at Pea I. (RD) — equalled a disappointment. However, I feel that many birders do not have the patience to sort through thousands of Bonaparte's Gulls, often 1/4-mile or more at sea, to find a Little. Worse than three Little Gull reports was just one Common Black-headed Gull report — an adult at Morehead City, NC, Dec. 15–18 (JF) and again Jan. 14 (PSa). On the other hand, the cold December at least forced down more of the “unwanted” gulls from farther north, as exemplified by CBC

counts of 8600 Ring-billed Gulls at Jordan L., Dec. 31 (*vide* BR), 252 Herring Gulls at Goldsboro Dec. 16 (*vide* ED), and 16 Herrings at Augusta Dec. 24 (AW).

One of the better finds was a first-winter **Thayer's Gull** at Cape Hatteras point Dec. 5 (DC) for about the 6th North Carolina and Regional record. Surprising was just a single report of Iceland Gull, an adult at a landfill near Newport, NC, Jan. 25 (JF). Fussell had at least three Lesser Black-backed Gulls with the Iceland, but the best count was of six Lessers at Cape Hatteras Dec. 5 (DC). In addition to a few other coastal records for North Carolina, where expected, one was at Tybee I., GA, Jan. 12–14 (BBI, PR, PS). Glaucous Gulls were sighted four times, about average for a winter season: singles Dec. 17–18 at Beaufort (JF), Dec. 28 at Bodie I. (RD), and Jan. 27 in n. *New Hanover* (SC, KM) in North Carolina, and Jan. 10 at Huntington Beach S.P. (PL) in South Carolina. How many reports are there of Glaucous x Herring gull hybrids? One was carefully studied by Tove, LeGrand, John Wright, and others at Cape Hatteras Dec. 26 amid the more common gulls for comparison.

Although they are not unusual even in late November, Sandwich Terns are quite rare by mid-December, and two adults were thus notable Dec. 12 at Cape Hatteras (TH, MC). Five Forster's Terns were notable in inland Georgia at Rum Creek W.M.A. Dec. 18 (TJ). One of these years the Region will see an honest-to-goodness alcid invasion, such as the famous Dovekie invasions of several decades ago. Unfortunately, an injured Razorbill picked up at Atlantic Beach, NC, Feb. 10 (*vide* JF) was the sole report; the bird died a few days later.

**OWLS TO SWALLOWS**—Short-eared Owls winter sparingly over much of the Region, but suitable extensive marshes and old fields are rare inland. Of considerable interest were at least three that wintered near Athens, GA, with five on Feb. 20 (BD). A N. Saw-whet Owl was heard calling from a thicket of cedars just east of Hatteras, NC, Feb. 3 (DW, HW); for some strange reason, most recent winter records are for the immediate coast. Fussell reported that at least seven *Archilochus* hummingbirds were present at feeders in c. *Carteret* in December; however, none appeared to survive the Great Blizzard. Away from this county, the other hummingbird reports were of Rufouses confirmed in the hand; one wintered in a greenhouse at Greenville, SC, Dec. 16–Feb. 28 and later, and was banded by D. Foy on Apr. 3 (MW, PW), and another wintered near Smarr, GA, and was also banded (*vide* TM).

Seldom found in winter, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was reported at the w. end of Emerald Isle, NC, Dec. 5 (BGA, *vide* HH). Horned Larks were presumably more common than usual in December and early January, but as few birders spend time in plowed fields, this presumption was unproven; however, Dunning reported a good Georgia total of 50 in *Oconee* Jan. 5. Over a month late, and quite a shock following the blizzard, was a Barn Swallow over Croatan Sound, NC, Dec. 26 (RD).

**WRENS TO WARBLERS**—Although House Wrens near the coast mostly succumbed to the blizzard, one noted north of Greensboro Jan. 31 (HHe) was quite a surprise; the species does, however, winter regularly in the southeastern portion of North Carolina's Piedmont. Three Blue-gray Gnatcatchers at Goldsboro Dec. 16 (*vide* ED) made an excellent total, whereas one Feb. 16 near Fayetteville, NC (PJC) was possibly an early spring migrant.

Not unexpectedly, noteworthy warbler sightings were downright scarce. The best record was of a Cape May Warbler that visited a Chapel Hill, NC, yard Jan. 16–Feb. 15

(TH) Also near that city was a lingering Black-and-white Warbler Jan. 5 (DSh). Although North Carolina birders are beginning to reveal wintering Ovenbirds along the coast, one at L. Phelps Dec. 30 was surprising at an inland locale (ML). Why is it that a rather rare migrant in the Southeast, that winters north only to southern Texas, should be found practically each winter in the Region? Not one, but two, Wilson's Warblers were seen at Augusta Dec. 23 (CH, AW). A Yellow-breasted Chat, the only one reported, found Fussell's feeder at Morehead City during the blizzard Dec. 23–24; not surprisingly, Fussell found the bird dead later in the season.

**EMBERIZID FINCHES**—Very rare in winter, and seldom reported from a feeder, was an Indigo Bunting at a Gainesville, GA, feeder Feb. 22–24 (JY, *fide* JP). On the other hand, winter Painted Buntings are usually found at feeders, the settings for an ad. male at Buxton, NC, Dec. 22 (*fide* MaL), at least three in the Morehead City–Beaufort area during the winter (LH, SCu), and three more near Queen's Creek, Onslow, NC, all winter (GF). Single Dickcissels, always notable in winter, were at Goldsboro Dec. 16 (RD, ED *et al.*) and Rum Creek W.M.A., GA, Dec. 13 to late December (KD, TJ).

The blizzard and severe cold in December did not push a wave of hoped-for Am. Tree Sparrows into North Carolina. The only reports for the season were CBC birds, perhaps correctly identified, at Pea I. and Greenville, SC. Extremely rare inland in winter was a Clay-colored Sparrow in n. Mecklenburg, NC, Dec. 10–11 (DW, TP, DSe, MH). Grasshopper Sparrows not only winter in the Georgia Piedmont, but they occur in moderate numbers, at least locally, as shown by seven at Arnoldsville, Oglethorpe, Feb. 8 (BD) and six in e. Clarke Nov. 29 (BD). The species is much rarer in North Carolina, apparently, in winter, although it is somewhat regular in the southern portion; one Jan. 31 at Ft. Bragg near Fayetteville (PJC) was probably near the normal n. limits of the range. Henslow's Sparrows do not usually occur in the Piedmont in winter, at least in recent decades, yet one and possibly two were noted Jan. 31 at Townville, SC (PW). The only Le Conte's Sparrow was seen within five feet in c. Gates, NC, Jan. 25 (FW).

There seems to be a misconception about Fox Sparrows and snow. When there is snow cover, Fox Sparrows typically invade the feeders, giving people the impression that the birds are more common than normal during that period. My experience is that the birds are simply in the nearby forests and thickets when there is no snow cover, which is the case during 90–95% of the days in winter. Now that birders are learning the winter habitat of Lincoln's Sparrow, more of the birds are being reported. Two were found in a purposeful search for the species in a clearcut field in n.e. Pitt, NC, Feb. 18 (JW, RT), and two more were found in a regular spot for them near L. Phelps, NC, Dec. 30 (ML). In the Piedmont were two at Townville, SC — another regular wintering site — Jan. 20 (PW, SCox, VC) and one north of Charlotte Feb. 20 (DW).

Somewhat southeast of the wintering range were single White-crowned Sparrows that wintered at Morehead City (JF) and near Mayesville, SC (EDa, LG). A **Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco** was observed at Athens, GA, Dec. 11 and again Jan. 20 (PY). A few Lapland Longspurs were reported, as usual, from n.e. North Carolina, but the only record outside the normal range in the state was of five at Bird Shoal near Beaufort Dec. 14–17, with three still there Jan. 29–31 (JF). Elsewhere, two were seen near Townville, SC, a somewhat regular wintering locale, Dec. 16 (SG, *fide* SW). Snow Buntings were noted only on Currituck Banks, NC,

where eight were north of Corolla Feb. 4 (JF, JW, PW, RT)

**ICTERIDS, CARDUELINE FINCHES**—The only Yellow-headed Blackbird report, from the Charleston area, unfortunately contained no details. Four Brewer's Blackbirds wintered near Santee N.W.R., SC (TK). Is this a regular site for the species? The range of this bird is most peculiar; although it is locally numerous in winter in portions of Georgia, it also winters at one site near the North Carolina coast (*Carteret*) and also apparently near Bombay Hook, Delaware!

From Goldsboro came a good description of a female or imm. Pine Grosbeak at a feeder in late January (*fide* ED), but it could not be confirmed by veteran birders. There are six or seven previous state records, but no specimen or photographs to provide conclusive documentation. Purple Finches fared somewhat better this winter than last, when they seemed to be at an all-time winter low. Nonetheless, Purples are being crowded out of feeders by the ever-increasing House Finch, and many birders are no longer seeing the former at their feeding stations. Red Crossbills were reported twice, in the upper Piedmont — at Table Rock S.P., SC (SS), and near Commerce L., GA, where 13 were counted Jan. 20 (JP). Although the Pine Grosbeak was likely correctly identified, the report of a Common Redpoll at a feeder in Tifton, GA, without details, was likely a misidentification, particularly since there were no reports from states to the north.

Pine Siskins staged a moderate invasion (actually, "good" for the decade of the 1980s). The better counts came from South Carolina feeders, where Glover had 100+ at Lugoff Jan. 20 and Worthington had 80+ at Greenville Jan. 16. Evening Grosbeaks had a rather poor flight again and were definitely spotty in distribution. A count of 30 on Feb. 10 in *Greene*, GA, was quite exceptional (PY)

**CORRIGENDUM**—The Com. Black-headed Gull reported in *AB* 43:1305 was not seen on May 19 but actually on *March 19*

**OBSERVERS**—Anselm Atkins, Clarence Belger, Bill Blakeslee (BBl), Donna Brisse, Patrick Brisse, Bill Brokaw, Allen Bryan, Kevin Calhoun, Carolina Bird Club, Derb Carter, J.E. Cely, Chapel Hill Bird Club, Sam Cooper, Steve Cox (SCox), Vicky Cox, Paul Crawford, Mark Crotteau, P.J. Crutchfield, Shirley Cuthrell (SCu), Evelyn Dabbs (EDa), Kathy Darley, Ricky Davis, Eric Dean, Harriett DiGioia, Barny Dunning, Dan Forster (DaF), Dennis Forsythe, Gus Forte, Dorothy Foy (DFoy), John Fussell, Betsy Gallagher (BGa), Hugh Garrett, Sidney Gauthreaux, Chris Geller, Lex Glover, Betty Grady, Henry Haberyan, Todd Hass, Royce Hayes, Herb Hendrickson (HHe), Kevin Hennings, Mike Hoekstra, Gene Howe, Lois Howland, Christine Huzella, Nancy Iha, Terry Johnson, Mark Kalbach (MKal), Tim Kalbach, Margaret Kavanaugh, Jim Keighton, Ken Knapp, Rick Knight, Wojciech Krol, D Lapeyre, Pete Laurie, Harry LeGrand, Henry Link (HLi), Merrill Lynch, Marcia Lyons (MaL), Robert Manns, Kevin Markham, Greg Massey, Ellery McClintock, Roger McNeill (RMcN), Peggy Moore, Terry Moore, Tom Murphy (TMu), Perry Nugent, John Paget, Hunter Patterson, T.K. Patterson, Taylor Piephoff, Paul Raney, Scott Ranger, Barbara Roth, Dallas Salter, Paul Saraceni (PSa), Don Seriff (DSe), Doug Shadwick (DSh), Ben Sill, Paul Spitzer (PSP), Deb Squires (DSq), Scott Stegenza, Tom Street, Paul Sykes, Mike Tove, Russ Tyn-dall, Howard Vainwright, Steve Wagner, Heathy Walker, Anne Waters, D. Watts (DWa), Muffy Wilkins, Floyd Williams, Peter Worthington, David Wright, Jeff Wright (JeW), John Wright, Kathy Wright, Paula Wright (PWR), Anne Wyand (AWy), John Yarborough, Peter Yaukey. —**HARRY E. LeGRAND, JR., N.C. Natural Heritage Program, P.O. Box 27687, Raleigh, NC 27611.**

# FLORIDA REGION

H.P. Langridge

The two year drought in south Florida created dramatic changes for wildlife: alligators concentrated into canals and drying pools of water, wandered into populated areas, and even entered a house through an open door and took possession of a shower stall. Snail Kites dispersed to canals and roadside ditches before moving northward in search of water. Herons, egrets, and ibises disappeared from vast areas and concentrated farther north. At the end of May, six inches of rain on the lower east coast did not replenish Lake Okeechobee, the major water storage area for the southern region.

Dade County experienced a rather good migration, but other coastal counties reported "worst ever," "very poor," and "terribly disappointing." Despite proper conditions, Pinellas County had no fallouts and the "worst spring ever for thrushes." The phosphate mines in Polk County produced excellent shorebirding this spring.

As usual in spring, Caribbean strays provided observers some thrills: Least Grebe, Bahama Pintail, Bahama Swallow, two Bahama Mockingbirds, Thick-billed Vireo, and many Shiny Cowbirds.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — D.T. = Dry Tortugas; E.N.P. = Everglades Nat'l Park; Tally Div. = Tallahassee Division; St. Marks = St. Marks Nat'l Wildlife Refuge.

**LOONS TO DUCKS** — There have been very few state sightings, so a **Pacific Loon** at St. George I., *Franklin*, Mar. 22 (†ph. JEC) was remarkable. At Stock I. near Key West Apr. 14 (MW, LPB, MB), the sighting of a pair of Pied-billed Grebes with five chicks appeared to establish the southernmost breeding record in the United States. A **Least Grebe**, about the 3rd sighting for Florida, stayed in a pond near Marco I. Mar. 3–Apr. 28 (JD, LD, m.ob.). While returning from D.T. on May 6 (SH *et al.*), a tour group was astonished by a wandering White-tailed Tropicbird over an old fort in Key West; only two sightings were reported from D.T. this spring. Sixteen Brown Boobies, a good number, were counted on outlying buoys at D.T. May 1 (BB, m.ob.). Flying N in formation in *Orange*, 100 Am. White Pelicans were late May 16 (DWF). A Wilson's Storm-Petrel oddly was reported inside the coastal barrier islands in Biscayne Bay May 5 (VPE), and another wandered to w. Florida Bay, E.N.P., in May (*fide* WBR).

## S.A.

Florida lost a valuable veteran observer when Johnnie Johnson passed away this spring. He was the com-modore of pelagic birding in Florida with over 3000 trips off the Cocoa coast. His friendly instructive manner will be deeply missed by all who were fortunate enough to know him. It seemed appropriate to insert this sad news in the pelagic section.

An imm. Roseate Spoonbill, rare in Tally Div., visited St. Marks May 25 (CSG, DS). At Loxahatchee N.W.R. impoundments, Fulvous Whistling-Duck numbers swelled to 650 by Mar. 15 (RB *et al.*), and 500 flocked in *Glades* Mar. 27 (BK, MK). In *Pinellas*, where the species is a rare migrant, 36 were flying over the intracoastal May 9 (DNG). In *Pasco* May 15–31 (DR), the impressive 38 Fulvous that were paired suggested a



substantial n.w. range extension of this species. To emphasize this northerly extension, the Fulvous Whistling-Duck, uncommon in Tally Div., occurred in St. Marks with one Apr. 1 (JG), 11 Apr. 11 (DBr), and seven May 28–31 (DEs). Six Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks Apr. 6 (DRG) produced the first county sighting for *Pinellas*.

Forty Mottled Ducks, a good flock number, flushed at Payne's Prairie Apr. 9 (RWS). A **Bahama Pintail**, a rare visitor, was spotted at Merritt Island N.W.R. Mar. 30–Apr. 8 (HR *et al.*). A late Redhead was found Apr. 26 (BK, MK) at St. Marks. The wintering ♂ Harlequin Duck at Sebastian Inlet lingered to Mar. 20 (RCS).

**RAPTORS** — Three impressive kettles of Am. Swallow-tailed Kites were spotted with one very late flock of 22 over s.w. *Broward* May 24 (JLB, GM), a flock of 24 near Sebring Mar. 8 (BK, MK), and a flock of ten at St. Marks Mar. 16 (SB, CSG). The rare Black-shouldered Kites have been trying to establish themselves in s. Florida the last few years. Three pairs with nests or dummy nests near Hillsboro Canal w. of Hwy 27 Mar. 22 (DF, WG) were encouraging, but later the birds abandoned their nests. However, observers in an airplane found a nest with two fully fledged young ten mi s. of the canal May 17 (TC). A nest in E.N.P. again this year produced four fledglings in late May (JCu). Despite the drought, a number of Snail Kites nested at *Lee Sewage Plant* in early May (WBR, m.ob.). A Mississippi Kite, rare in s. Florida, arrived in Key West May 9 (†JAO); another bird there was released by a bird rehabilitator May 18 (JAO *et al.*). Thirteen in a flock in *Wakulla* May 6 (RC, RLW) indicated an increase in breeding in that area.

Airplane surveys and casual observations produced a good number of Short-tailed Hawk sightings: a pair and

two singles at Fakahatchee Strand May 18 (MR), a pair on the Old Loop Rd. near Tamiami Trail May 18 (MR), a pair at Tiger Creek, *Polk*, throughout the spring (BC, m.ob.), a single at Highland Hammock S.P. Mar. 16 (BK, MK), a pair at Avon Park Apr. 29 (RLW), a single near Lake Placid May 12 (JWF), one late bird at W. Lake, E.N.P., Apr. 15 (BDN, JS, RS), a very late wandering imm. bird 20 mi w. of W. Palm Beach May 4 (CP), and one far n. at *Wakulla*, rare in Tally Div., for only the second sighting for St. Marks Apr. 26 (JEC). A late dark morph Swainson's Hawk circled above Mattheson Hammock in Miami for good views May 5 (WB *et al.*).

**SHOREBIRDS TO TERNS** — Outstanding numbers of shorebirds were tallied this spring: 142 Semipalmated Plovers at the phosphate mines in *Polk* May 5 (PJF, DF), 500 Red Knots at Ft. Myers beach Apr. 16 (VCM), 622 Stilt Sandpipers in *Polk* May 5 (PJF, DF), and 400 Short-billed Dowitchers at *Wakulla* Apr. 7 (NW). A male Am. Woodcock displaying in E.N.P. from January to Mar. 24 (PWS *et al.*) again raised the possibility of nesting for this species in the park. Seeing an adult with young in *Lafayette* Mar. 10 (FJ, JC) was a rare experience in Florida.

The challenging of Iceland Gull sightings in Florida proved again to be a sound practice, as the purported Iceland Gull at Pompano Landfill during March was carefully scrutinized Mar. 24 and was determined to be a leucistic

this year by the end of May, 11 pairs were using the platform. Details of this simple yet effective project will be published elsewhere. Despite diligent searching by many observers, no Black Noddy was found at D.T.

**DOVES TO MYNAS** — The population of Eur. Colared-Doves has exploded in the Homestead area with over 10,000 present this year (PWS), and they have established themselves solidly in other counties as well. Fifteen White-winged Doves at Key West Apr. 6 (JAO) made a good number there. The population of Smooth-billed Anis has sharply declined in *Pinellas*, and there are no longer any known colonies in nearby counties (LSA). A Burrowing Owl, good for D.T., was found Mar. 16 (PH *et al.*). After a tropical depression, *Chaeturas* that looked superficially similar to Chimney Swifts were studied carefully with one at Bottle Key, *Monroe*, May 24 (†RS, AS, TB) and two, along with a dead one, at D.T. at the end of May (WBR, BK). The specimen has been submitted for identification.

A N. Flicker was unusual on Loggerhead Key, D.T., May 1 (BB, DAM *et al.*). The wintering Ash-throated Flycatcher at Delray Beach, very rare for the peninsula, lingered until Apr. 28 (BHH). The rare Brown-crested Flycatcher was seen and heard on Islamorada May 5 (AD, DP, HPL), and another sang May 19 (DLL, KJS) at Cape Florida, *Dade* Twenty-five Western Kingbirds and 15 Scissor-tailed Flycatchers w. of Homestead during March were striking numbers, with three of each species remaining until Apr. 29 (PWS *et al.*). A photographed Gray Kingbird produced a first sighting for *Polk* Apr. 28 (PJF, m.ob.). This species is rare inland this far north. For the 3rd consecutive year, the *Bahama Swallow* joined Cave Swallows near a Cutler Ridge bridge Mar. 19–May 31 (PWS, SAS, FC, m.ob.). A Red-breasted Nuthatch at Cedar Key tarried until May 6 (DCH), the same late date as last year.

A very late Veery was spotted at Key West May 31 (JAO). Two *Bahama Mockingbirds*, the 10th and 11th U.S. sightings, were found: one at Cape Florida, *Dade*, May 20 (†PWS *et al.*) and another at Ft. Lauderdale May 20 (†BBE, CPo). A *Curve-billed Thrasher*, for a 2nd state record, was found last spring at St. George Island S.P. May 29, 1989 (†BHS), but the bird was not reported. The Florida Records Committee accepted the record after reviewing documentation, including a photograph. Flocks of Cedar Waxwings in Florida in March and April were not news, but eight dead in a yard in Delray Beach in late March brought Florida non-game officials on the scene to collect the remains for analysis (MR). A very late waxwing tarried at St. Marks until May 31 (CSG). The population of Com Mynas in s. Florida has not expanded as rapidly as some observers expected, so one at Cocoa May 15 (PT) was interesting that far north.

**VIREOS, WARBLERS**—A *Thick-billed Vireo*, the 7th sighting for the U.S. but one of the few to be fully documented, visited Hypoluxo I., *Palm Beach*, Mar. 10–Apr. 1 (†HPL, m.ob.; videotaped BHH; ph. DE). Two scarce Blue-winged Warblers rested near Miami Apr. 22–29 (SAS, PWS *et al.*), one at Lignum Vitae Key Apr. 20 (RS), and one in E.N.P. May 14 (AS, GTB). A Golden-winged Warbler, uncommon on the s.e. coast, appeared in Miami Apr. 25 (VPE). The seldom seen Nashville Warbler stopped by D.T. May 1 (HR, m.ob.), Miami Apr. 13 (JDG), and Key West May 12 (JAO). A singing ♂ Prothonotary Warbler was late in *Broward* May 24 (WG). Prothonotaries were reported as abundant in *Apalachicola* N.F. (HK).

Swainson's Warblers were unusually common this spring near the *Wakulla* River, the *Apalachicola* N.F., and



The pale gull at center, photographed March 22, 1990 at Pompano Landfill, Florida, was a center of controversy. It was identified first as an Iceland Gull, later as either a leucistic Herring Gull or a hybrid, although "unidentified" would be another reasonable answer. Photograph/Richard Bowen.

Herring Gull or a Glaucous/Herring gull hybrid (BHH, WG *et al.*, ph. RB). At Stock I. Landfill near Key West Mar. 9 (†DS), a first-year Glaucous Gull, far s. for this species, was artfully sketched and carefully compared with nearby smaller Herring and Lesser Black-backed gulls. By placing a 12x20 foot platform over water and using decoys, Joe Reinman was successful in enticing Least Terns to nest on a platform in Tally Div.: last year there were two nests, and



in the Sopchoppy and Oclochknee drainages (RLW). Easterly winds apparently were responsible for some east coast migrants occurring on the Gulf coast; for instance, Worm-eating Warblers were plentiful in Nokomis, with the nets catching 12 during late April (AS, SS). The uncommon Kentucky Warbler was spotted at Key West Apr. 8 (JAO) and at Miami Apr. 10 (VPE). An early Connecticut Warbler hit the nets and was banded at Nokomis Apr. 27 (AS, SS), and late birds were seen at Cedar Key May 26 (DCH) and on Conch Key May 25 (HD). A heavy thunderstorm at St. George I., *Franklin*, May 10 created a fallout that resulted in over 20 Connecticut (JEC), a startling number for that area. *Dade* reported good numbers of Louisiana Waterthrushes and Hooded Warblers (BDN), yet farther n. on the lower e. coast neither species was seen the entire migration despite daily observations. A Wilson's Warbler, a rare migrant, tarried at *Pinellas* Apr. 11-14 (LAH, KDN *et al.*).

**GROSBEAKS TO FINCHES** — A tardy ♂ Rose-breasted Grosbeak fed at a feeder in Lake Worth May 14 (PW). A pair of Painted Buntings was on territory to May 31 (BP *et al.*) at Merritt Island N.W.R., 35 mi s. of the known breeding range. A Dickcissel, uncommon in spring, visited a feeder in Lake Worth Mar. 25-Apr. 2 (DB *et al.*) and sang on Apr. 1. Another attended a feeder in Miami Apr. 17 (PWS). Scarce in s. Florida, a Field Sparrow visited Flamingo, E.N.P., Mar. 18-25 (KG *et al.*). At Delray Beach Mar. 10 (RB), five Lark Sparrows made a good number for s. Florida, especially for the last few years. Occasionally seen in *Brevard*, a White-throated Sparrow stayed until Apr. 15 (BP). The uncommon White-crowned Sparrow at Lake Harbor on Mar. 18 (BRB, HPL) was still there Apr. 6 (BHH), and two were in *Volusia* Apr. 17 (MJR, DF). Early Bobolinks occurred in *Duval* Apr. 2 (JPC). At Lake Harbor e. of Clewiston, the wintering flock of Yellow-headed Blackbirds, unusual in Florida, was evident with five still present Mar. 18 (HPL, BRB) and three Apr. 5 (RL *et al.*). A male attended a feeder in Boynton Beach Mar. 20-27 (MH, AB).

**S.A.**

For the first time at a single location in the U.S., all three species of cowbirds were reported at a Lake Harbor feed lot Mar. 4 (PWS) with hundreds of Brown-headed, one ♂ Bronzed, and one ♂ Shiny. The Shiny Cowbirds are still arriving in the U.S. with five on D.T. May 1 (m.ob.), 12 at Key West during spring (JAO), and about a dozen at Flamingo, E.N.P., May 16 (PWS, SAS, SBT). Established pairs attended feeders on Islamorada May 5 (HPL *et al.*) and in Homestead all spring (CM *et al.*). *Lee*, *Levy*, *Taylor*, and *Wakulla* hosted their first Shinies May 5 (VCM), during May (DCH), May 20 (HK, GS, WB), and May 23 (RKR), respectively, and *Pinellas* found a male, rare there, May 1 (KDN, DJD).

The Scrub Jay biologists at Archbold Biological Station near Lake Placid enthusiastically reported sighting no Brown-headed Cowbirds this spring (FEL). An Orchard Oriole in Miami Apr. 9 (BDN, JS, RS) was unusual for the s.e. coast. Only two flocks of Pine Siskins were reported at feeders during March and April with 36 at Venice (DEs), and over 20 at Tallahassee, two lingering until May 20 (ES). State bird listers can now find House Finches regularly at the FSU campus in Tallahassee (DS *et al.*).

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MARYJO KOCH

# ONTARIO REGION

Ron D. Weir



The spring season was one of weather extremes, and the influences on the migrants were exciting for the birders, but sometimes difficult for the birds. Very warm conditions March 9–19 first broke winter's grip all the way north to Atikokan, Thunder Bay, and Cochrane, where temperatures reached 20° C. This warm southerly air flow propelled unprecedented numbers of early arrivals into Ontario. At Pelee, 15 species set record early dates. Farther north, Manitoulin Island, Sudbury, and Thunder Bay, had record-early dates for 11, nine, and 13 species respectively, typical for areas east to Algonquin Provincial Park and Kingston. However, winter regained control until the second week of April, affecting adversely Killdeer, Purple Martins, swallows, Eastern Phoebes, and Eastern Bluebirds, but fortunately the extent of the kill appears not to have been serious. Snow fell at Pelee April 3 and concentrated some migrants including the 103 Eastern Phoebes, 48 Fox Sparrows, and 525 Song Sparrows. The pendulum then swung back again to record-breaking high temperatures April 20–30, which were felt well north at Matchewan (30° C !!) and Atikokan. Early arrival records fell by the score all across the province. Cooler weather prevailed during most of May, which was conducive only to a few noteworthy groundings, with many migrants overflying. The contrariety in weather produced striking contrasts between late-departing arctic species such as Northern Shrikes, Lapland Longspurs, Snow Buntings, and redpolls, and the early arrivals from the tropics.

This profusion of early arrivals, which involved 106 species breaking records (sometimes in several counties simultaneously) and even more species just barely missing the record, created some difficulty in writing this account, which is always a balancing act between quantity of material and available space. On one hand, important informa-

tion on trends, displacements, and rarities should be included. On the other, the publication of these early arrivals for the historical record is important in assessing long-term climatic change, among other things. To make efficient use of space, therefore, a concise summary is presented in Table 1, and virtually no reference is made to it within the text. The fact that record-keeping and regular coverage by birders date back several decades here underscores the significance of the vast numbers of record early arrivals.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — Pelee = Point Pelee Nat'l Park and vicinity; P.E.Pt. = Prince Edward Point; Algonquin, Presqu'ile and Rondeau are Provincial Parks. Place names in *italics* denote counties.

**LOONS TO IBISES** — The 37 Red-throated Loons Mar. 26–May 21 represented a steady increase since 1987 and were about double the 1982–1989 spring average of 18. The largest group contained nine birds at Presqu'ile May 21 (JS *et al.*). Horned Grebes were numerous and the biggest 'rafts' were of 185 at Pelee Apr. 21 (GTH, STP), 150 at Ottawa Apr. 26 (BMD), and 90 on Pittock L., *Oxford*, Apr. 17 (JMH). Red-necked Grebes were also plentiful, led by 250 near Cabot Head Apr. 20 (DF) and 200 at Ottawa Apr. 26 (BMD). Other noteworthy sightings were of one in Wheatley harbour Apr. 13, where locally rare (D & KM), and three at Moosonee May 14 followed by another there May 25 (AW). The trend to rising numbers of Eared Grebes continued, with seven birds, which compares with the 1972–1989 average of eight for the entire year. Singles were in Stratford Mar. 15 (MPD), Cobourg Apr. 2 (W & LW), Westminster ponds, *Middlesex*, Apr. 7 (RKH), Plattsville, *Waterloo*, Apr. 21 (DE), and Townsend May 19

**Table 1. Record early arrival dates for counties and regions of Ontario, Spring 1990 (Man. I. = Manitoulin Island).**

Com Loon	Mar. 15	Pelee	AW	Bank Swallow	Mar. 13	Long Pt.	L.P.B.O.
Pied-billed Grebe	Mar. 17	Oxford	JMH, DSG	Cliff Swallow	Mar. 17	Pelee	AW, KO
Double-crested Cormorant	Apr. 23	Sudbury	JGL	Brown Creeper	Mar. 10	Pelee	AW
Great Blue Heron	Mar. 17	Man. I.	GVH	Winter Wren	Mar. 14	Pelee	AW
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Mar. 4	Middlesex	WRJ	Sedge Wren	Apr. 26	Man. I.	JCN
Canada Goose	Mar. 14; 18	Man. I.; Thunder Bay	DEB, CTB; ERA	Marsh Wren	Mar. 10	Long Pt.	JMH, DSG
Wood Duck	Mar. 17	Man. I.	JCN	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Mar. 11	Pelee	AW
Green-winged Teal	Mar. 14	Oxford	JMH	E. Bluebird	Mar. 14; 15	Peterborough; Algonquin	EBo; RGT, DT
Am Black Duck	Mar. 16	Thunder Bay	AGH		Mar. 17; 19	Man. I.; Thunder Bay	JCN; R & LM
N Pintail	Mar. 14; 17	Presqu'ile; Thunder Bay	HS; SVP <i>et al.</i>	Gray-cheeked Thrush	Apr. 25	Presqu'ile	J & EC
	Mar. 18	Man. I.	CTB	Wood Thrush	May 5; 8	Man. I.; Algonquin	DBF; RDS
Blue-winged Teal	Mar. 19	Oxford	JMH	Gray Catbird	Apr. 14	Durham	MJB
N Shoveler	Mar. 13	Oxford	JMH	Am. Pipit	Mar. 16; 18	Oxford; Sudbury	JMH, DSG; JGL
Am Wigeon	Mar. 17	Thunder Bay	SVP <i>et al.</i>	White-eyed Vireo	Apr. 28	Durham	KH
Lesser Scaup	Mar. 12	Oxford	JMH	Solitary Vireo	May 3	Sudbury	WRL
Black Scoter	Mar. 18	Pelee	AW, DGC	Yellow-throated Vireo	Apr. 28; 28	Oxford; Peterborough	JMH; PB, DCS
Barrow's Goldeneye	Mar. 18	Pelee	AW, DGC	Philadelphia Vireo	Apr. 29	P.E.Pt.	K.F.N.
Hooded Merganser	Mar. 17	Man. I.; Sudbury	JB, GVH; JGL	Red-eyed Vireo	Apr. 29; May 1	P.E.Pt.; Presqu'ile	RKE; CV
Turkey Vulture	Mar. 27	Man. I.	GG		May 3	Algonquin	MR
Osprey	Mar. 15	Oxford	JMH	Blue-winged Warbler	Apr. 28; 28	Durham; Oxford	MME; JMH
N Harrier	Mar. 22	Algonquin	GF	Golden-winged Warbler	Apr. 29	Durham	MJB
Merlin	Mar. 24	Sudbury	SL	Orange-crowned Warbler	Apr. 29; May 1	Durham; P.E.Pt.	RSh; KFN
Virginia Rail	Apr. 28	Algonquin	RGT	Nashville Warbler	Apr. 22; 22	Durham; Frontenac	MJB; JHE, RDW
Am Coot	Mar. 4	Peterborough	BT		Apr. 28	Algonquin	RGT
Sandhill Crane	Mar. 22	Man. I.	DEB	N. Parula	Apr. 28; May 2	Durham; Algonquin	MJB, BH; MR
Lesser Golden-Plover	Mar. 12	Pelee	AW <i>et al.</i>	Chestnut-sided Warbler	Apr. 28	P.E.Pt.	K.F.N.
Sempalmated Plover	Apr. 25	Pelee	DGC	Black-throated Blue Warbler	Apr. 26; May 2	Frontenac; Algonquin	RR; MR
Killdeer	Mar. 12	Sudbury; Thunder Bay	FM; Jwm	Black-throated Green Warbler	Apr. 27; 29	Man. I.; Sudbury	JCN; CGB
Greater Yellowlegs	Mar. 16; 17	Algonquin	RH	Blackburnian Warbler	Apr. 24; 28	Pelee; P.E.Pt.	DGC; K.F.N.
	Mar. 18	Oxford; Pelee	MO; AW		May 3	Algonquin	MR
Solitary Sandpiper	Apr. 29	Frontenac	RDW	Pine Warbler	Mar. 15; Apr. 28	Pelee; Sudbury	GTH; JGL
Upland Sandpiper	Apr. 19	Algonquin	RGT	Palm Warbler	Apr. 17; 29	Durham; Moosonee	MJB, E. Pegg, AW
Pectoral Sandpiper	Mar. 13	Oxford	JMH	Bay-breasted Warbler	Apr. 28; May 9	Long Pt.; Algonquin	L.P.B.O.; GEW
Dunlin	May 14	Pelee	AW	Cerulean Warbler	Apr. 29	Presqu'ile	D. Shanahan
Short-billed Dowitcher	Apr. 22	Algonquin	MR	Black-and-white Warbler	Apr. 27	Algonquin	RDS
Am Woodcock	Mar. 16	Pelee	DGC	Am. Redstart	Apr. 29	P.E.Pt.	K.F.N.
Little Gull	Apr. 13	Sudbury	HEB	Ovenbird	May 8	Algonquin	MR
Caspian Tern	Apr. 3; 15	P.E.Pt.	K.F.N.	N. Waterthrush	Apr. 28	Algonquin	LF, RGT
Com Tern	Apr. 29	Frontenac; Oxford	RDW; JMH	Mourning Warbler	May 16	Algonquin	MR
Com Nighthawk	May 12	Man. I.	DEB, CTB	Wilson's Warbler	May 13	Algonquin	RGT
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Apr. 30	Agonquin	GEW	Scarlet Tanager	May 9	Algonquin	MR
Red-headed Woodpecker	May 6	Algonquin	GEW	Indigo Bunting	Apr. 28	Oxford	JMH
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Mar. 19	Pelee	L & WF	Rufous-sided Towhee	Mar. 4	Oxford	JMH
N Flicker	Mar. 20	Algonquin	PD	Chipping Sparrow	Mar. 15	Pelee	DGC <i>et al.</i>
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Apr. 25; May 6	Peterborough; Pelee	DCS; BMay	Field Sparrow	Mar. 25	Presqu'ile	RA
Alder Flycatcher	Apr. 25; May 7	Wellington; Pelee	RVT; RAB	Vesper Sparrow	Mar. 13	Long Pt.	JSK
Least Flycatcher	Apr. 24; 25	Pelee; Durham	LM; WF; JF	Savannah Sparrow	Mar. 18	Oxford	JMH
	Apr. 27; 29	Algonquin; Presqu'ile	MK; RPH	Fox Sparrow	Mar. 17	Sudbury	S.O.S.
E Phoebe	Mar. 4; 19	Peterborough; Man. I.	SW; DEB	Song Sparrow	Mar. 16	Sudbury	D & MS
	Mar. 16; 16	Durham; Presqu'ile	MJB; S & DH	Lincoln's Sparrow	Apr. 29; 30	Moosonee; Oxford	AW, JET; JMH
Great Crested Flycatcher	Apr. 26; 28	Durham; Presqu'ile	MJB; RPH	White-throated Sparrow	Mar. 22	Presqu'ile	SML
	May 8	Man. I.	JCN	Lapland Longspur	Mar. 17	Thunder Bay	AGH, CPH
E Kingbird	Apr. 28; 29	Durham; Man. I.	DBA; DEB, CTB	Snow Bunting	Mar. 17	Thunder Bay	BA, SVP
Horned Lark	Mar. 17	Thunder Bay	AGH, CPH	Bobolink	Apr. 28	Presqu'ile	S & JB
Tree Swallow	Mar. 14; 14	Waterloo; Peterborough	TC; FH	Red-winged Blackbird	Mar. 17	Thunder Bay	AGH, CPH
	Mar. 15; 15	Durham; Oxford	MJB; JMH	W. Meadowlark	Mar. 17	Pelee	AW
N Rough-winged Swallow	Mar. 16	Pelee	DGC	Com. Grackle	Mar. 17	Thunder Bay	AGH, CPH
				Brown-headed Cowbird	Mar. 17; 17	Algonquin; Thunder Bay	CCM; AGH; CPH
				N. Oriole	Apr. 28; May 3	Man. I.; Sudbury	CTB <i>et al.</i> ; JCN

(DB, KT), and two were at Strathroy Apr. 15 (JRM). Stray Am. White Pelicans were at Bobcaygeon, Peterborough, Apr. 28 (ph. PB *et al.*) to provide a county first, and at Orangeville May 16 (*vide* MWD).

Extralimital Great Egrets numbered 12, above the 1982-1989 spring average of nine. Singles appeared n. to Fallbrook, Lanark, Apr. 15 (TM, MMcL) and Ottawa Apr. 30 (JcI). The only Little Blue Heron was the immature at Pelee May 8-13 (WC *et al.*). The 10 Cattle Egrets made the best spring showing since 1986, and away from the southwest were singles near Orillia May 2-12 (JMq, ED), Narrows Lock Apr. 30 (VB), Delta May 13-14 (AM *et al.*), and Ottawa May 16-17 (*vide* BMD). The breeding plumaged **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** at Rondeau P.P. lingered May 11-18 (GCo *et al.*) and provided the sighting to maintain the 1961-1989 spring average of one. Single ad. Black-crowned Night-Herons wandered n. to Minden Apr. 18 (GCa) and Algonquin May 10 (GEW), where rare. Lone Glossy Ibises were at Whitby May 3 (JBH) and Ottawa May 13 (DSH), maintaining the 1982-1989 spring average of two.

**WATERFOWL** — A strong flight of Tundra Swans brought 4000 to Verchoyle, Oxford, Mar. 16 (DNB), a record 3500 to Pelee Mar. 7-8 (DGC *et al.*), and strays e. to

Algonquin Apr. 20 & 24 (RDS, RGT). Single untagged Trumpeter Swans appeared at Long Pt. Mar. 10 (RVT), Fanshawe L. Apr. 22 (WLi), and Tavistock Apr. 22-24 (ph. JMH, DSG *et al.*). An echo flight of Greater White-fronted Geese developed; five were around Port Royal Mar. 2-11 (*vide* IR) followed by two in Ottawa Apr. 25-28 (*vide* BMD), and one at Evansville Apr. 16-23 for Manitoulin Island's 3rd ever (DEB, LB, CTB *et al.*). Goose surveys along the Hudson Bay coast resulted in the impressive total of 605,255 Snows flying past the mouth of the Little Shagamu R. May 15 (LL), where 14 ad. Ross' Geese were present May 16 (AW). The Brant flight in the south was strong, led by 5000 over Deep R. May 15 (WW), several thousand in Kingston May 19-24 (K.F.N.), and 2000 at Cobourg May 17-25 (ERM). More than usual were displaced farther west at Etobicoke, where 367 were found May 21 (EAJ), and Long Pt., where one appeared June 1 (JCu, IR).

The only **Cinnamon Teal** was the male at Thunder Bay May 9 (AW, DGC *et al.*). Three Gadwall reached Moosonee Apr. 29 where locally very rare (AW). Male Eur. Wigeon were at Oshawa Apr. 23-25 (*vide* MJB) and Hurkett near Thunder Bay May 16 (DGC, NGE, BA), fewer than the 1982-1989 spring average of four. The Canvasback flight was strongest in e. L. Ontario where rafts of 7700 & 7000



Adult Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Rondeau Provincial Park, Ontario, May 15, 1990. The species averages one record per spring in Ontario. Photograph/James N. Flynn.

were near Kingston Mar. 18 & 26 respectively (K.F.N.), and 2200 at Presqu'île Mar. 22 (DGC). Late individuals were at Schomberg, York, May 21 (RAD *et al.*), Tavistock sewage lagoons May 29 (JMH), and in the Ottawa area at the end of May (BMD), all of which suggested the possibility of nesting. Ring-necked Duck numbers were way up along the n. shores of L. Ontario and L. Erie. Peak tallies included 1800 in the Kingston area Mar. 17–25 (K.F.N.), 1300 at Blenheim Apr. 8 (SC), and 1128 at Pelee Mar. 12 (AW). The record high tally of 14,000 Lesser Scaup at Pelee Mar. 16 (AW) may have resulted from concentrations of Zebra Mussels, as may also have been the case for the 5000+ in Rondeau Bay Mar. 31 (KJB).

A male and female King Eider delighted observers at Pelee Apr. 18–23 (BMC, MLC *et al.*), where the species is very rare. Burlington's overwintering imm. male Harlequin Duck remained to Mar. 10 (KAM, GN), and another male appeared in Oshawa Mar. 17–18 (FJ, DDC). Thunderstorms 'grounded' a pair of Surf Scoters in Pittcock L. May 4 to provide Oxford's 2nd spring occurrence (JMH). Other concentrations of divers at Pelee, possibly attracted by Zebra Mussels, were the 375 White-winged Scoters Apr. 3 and 1200 Com. Goldeneyes Apr. 4 (DGC). Migrant Barrow's Goldeneyes were the ad. male at Pelee Mar. 18 (AW, DGC *et al.*), the Park's 2nd ever, and an imm. male at P.E.Pt. Apr. 13 (RDW, JHE, WP). The 500 female-plumaged Com. Mergansers at Beaverton May 21 were late and judged to be non-breeders (RJP).

**VULTURES TO CRANES** — The trend to earlier arrivals continued for Turkey Vulture as its vanguard reached Middlesex and Peterborough Mar. 15 (PAR, DCS), Frontenac, Leeds, and Grenville Mar. 16 (K.F.N., MH), and Waterloo Mar. 17 (TC *et al.*). One American Swallow-tailed Kite appeared at Wheatley P.P. May 19 (K. Hale), for Ontario's 6th since 1978. Equally rare was the ad. Mississippi Kite at Pelee May 27 (MB, RK) to provide the

province's 12th sighting. Some 89 Bald Eagles were noted, a further increase in that species' gradual but steady rise since the 28 in 1982. Census work this spring to monitor numbers of breeding Red-shouldered Hawks resulted in five on one route within Peterborough (DCS). This contrasts with 23 breeders located on a single route near Kingston, which lies in the heartland of this species' Ontario nesting range (JHE, RDW). Two nests in Algonquin Apr. 18 and May 30 provided the first confirmed breeding evidence for the Park (RDS, RGT). Sadly, however, 2 nests in York were deserted owing to human interference (JRM *et al.*). The 21 Golden Eagles represented a big increase, over double the 1982–1989 spring average of nine. They were reported from Perth, Oxford, Waterloo, Niagara, Prince Edward, Ottawa, Bruce, and Quetico P.P., Mar 7–Apr. 29. Some 30 Peregrine Falcons were reported, up from the 1982–1989 spring average of 23.

The only Yellow Rails noted were one at Long Pt. May 11 (JMH, JSK) and two in the Richmond fen May 27 (VBL). A lone King Rail was well north at Sky Lake, Bruce, May 9 (MJP). The five Am. Coots in the Hearst sewage pond May 13 were significant (AW). Sandhill Crane numbers remained high at 76, the most noteworthy among which were pairs possibly breeding near Ottawa and Long Pt., and three each at Innerkip Apr. 16 for Oxford's first in spring (JSK) and Deep R. May 26 (WW, AH).

**SHOREBIRDS** — Most observers reported a disappointing flight of littorals, thought to have resulted from overflights during the long periods of sunny weather in May. Nevertheless, some outstanding sightings were noted beginning with Ontario's 2nd Snowy Plover, May 9 at Long Pt. (L.P.B.O.), which is where the first was found in 1987. The province's 3rd ever, but first documented, Wilson's Plover excited many observers in e. Hamilton Bay May 26–31 (KAM *et al.*). Following last spring's surge in numbers, Piping Plover reverted to scarcity with singles at Pelee Apr. 18 (JL) and Oliphant Apr. 26 (PM). Six Am Avocets made a respectable showing for a species that



American Avocet at Hamilton, Ontario, May 28, 1990. Photograph/Tim Sabo.

appears every 3rd spring, although there were 25 in 1983. Two were in Thunder Bay Apr. 20 (BP, R. Sein), and the others were singles at 2 Hamilton sites Apr. 25–May 2 & May 28 (RDo *et al.*, RZD), Manitoulin I. May 26–31 (JCN, DEB *et al.*), and Port Rowan June 6 (DJTH *et al.*). The 30 Willets at Pelee Apr. 29 topped a strong flight there (STP, NFS, KAM), but elsewhere only singles were at Strathroy

Apr. 29 (JRM), Long Pt. May 11 (AB, SD), Thunder Bay May 17 (MZ), and Rondeau May 24 (PAW).

The 54 Hudsonian Godwits topped the record-setting 50 in 1988, both of which compare with a 1973–1989 spring average of only six. The 22 in the north included 21 at Thunder Bay May 12 (AW *et al.*) and an early bird at the Little Shagamu R. mouth on Hudson Bay May 16 (AW). The 32 birds in the south were 12 each on Pelee I. May 16 (PAW) and Dunnville May 25 (*vide* MEF), five on Manitoulin I. May 17 & 20 (JCN, CTB, JGL), and one and two at Pelee May 17 & 19 respectively (MEF, LG; KAM, RLW). A strong flight of Marbled Godwits was reported with a pair at the Little Shagamu R. mouth in the north May 30 (AW, NHK *et al.*) and 12 in the south, over double the 1982–1989 spring average of five. Nine frequented Pelee Apr. 27–May 5 (DGC *et al.*) and singles were at Toronto's e. Headland (HGC, AT), Port Perry May 23–June 1 (JBH *et al.*), and Manitoulin I. May 29–31 (JCN, DEB *et al.*).

At the Tavistock lagoons a Sanderling May 17 was a rarity, and a W. Sandpiper there May 29 was a first for Oxford (JMH). Another Western appeared at Maple May 21 (JRM). An early female Wilson's Phalarope was at the Pic R. mouth, Thunder Bay, May 7 (AW, DGC). Ten Red-necked Phalaropes were found, above the 8-year average of five. Three each frequented the Blenheim lagoons May 21 (DM) and the Nonquon lagoons at Port Perry May 26–31 (*vide* MJB). Singles were at Pelee May 15–21 (SWP, LP *et al.*), Townsend ponds May 18–22 (DJTH, EDu), Tavistock ponds May 22 (JMH *et al.*), and e. Hamilton Bay May 31 (MPa).

#### S.A.

Two subspecies of Short-billed Dowitcher (*L. g. griseus* and *L. g. hendersoni*) are known to be regular transients through Ontario and probable breeders along the n. coast. What is not clearly known is their temporal and spatial distribution through the province during migration. Fortunately, these subspecies—when in breeding plumage, May to July—can be identified in the field with fair certainty by experienced observers. It was interesting, therefore, to note the observations by R.J. Pittaway this spring. At Pelee May 15, he noted 16 Short-billed Dowitchers, identified as 15 *hendersoni* and one *griseus*. Farther e. at Port Perry May 19, he found 32 Short-billeds, identified as 31 *hendersoni* and one *griseus*, but two days later only one *hendersoni* was identified with 48 *griseus*. At the e. end of L. Ontario, both subspecies were noted on Amherst I. May 19 (MHE, RDW), but precise information has not been gathered on all the dowitchers there.

**JAEGERS TO TERNS** - At the Tiny Marsh Apr. 18, a Parasitic Jaeger was seen trying to steal a fish from an Osprey (*vide* RLB). The only Laughing Gull reported was the adult at Port Rowan May 11 (RVT *et al.*), thought to be the same bird at Long Pt. June 5 (AB). The 1982–1989 spring average was two. Franklin's Gulls numbered only two, well below the 1976–1989 average of 14, at Pickering Apr. 14 (JMS *et al.*) and near Wheatley during early May (*vide* KJB). A Com. Black-headed Gull lingering around Niagara-on-the-Lake Mar. 1–24 (GBe) was joined by a second adult Mar. 25 (LF). A third appeared at the tip of Long Pt. June 2 (JCu), raising the spring total to equal the 12-year spring average of three. Ontario's 12th **Mew Gull** was the adult in Wheatley harbour May 14 (DRG), the Pelee area's 3rd. The province's 8th **California Gull** materialized at the Moosonee dump May 2 (ph. AW *et al.*); it was the first for the north. Meanwhile, the Ontario Bird Records Committee has accepted a previous sighting (*vide*



Adult California Gull at Moosonee, Ontario, May 2, 1990. First for northern Ontario, and eighth for the province. Photograph Alan Wormington.

[JMH] of a California Gull seen near Wildwood, Oxford, Dec. 18, 1988 (JMH, JSk).

The 12 reports of Thayer's Gulls equalled the 1982–1989 spring average. Among the white-winged, 28 Iceland Gulls were fewer than usual, but 75 Glaucous Gulls were about the norm. Continuing its strong presence was Lesser Black-backed Gull, at 24 birds Mar. 13–May 15. Noteworthy among these was the breeding-plumaged adult at Moosonee May 1 (AW), where two Great Black-backed were found May 19 (AW).

Arctic Terns numbered eight on May 28 migrating past Ottawa, where the species appears annually (BMD *et al.*). However, unexpected were two at Nanticoke Apr. 24 (JBM, SJM, GP) followed by singles on Amherst I. May 19 (MHE, RDW *et al.*) and in e. Hamilton Bay May 27 (PHo, SM *et al.*). The adult at Moosonee May 21 had arrived early (AW). An unusual 11 Forster's Terns were inland at Wildwood L., Oxford, Apr. 14–20 (JMH, JSk), and one was north to Owen Sound Apr. 24 (PM). Peak counts of Black Tern were of 300 at Long Pt. May 20 (JMH) and 150 at the Amherstview sewage ponds May 18 (K.F.N.).

**OWLS TO SHRIKES** — The last Snowy Owls reported were singles in Thunder Bay Apr. 17 (NGE) and Ottawa Apr. 20–21 (BMD). Some 18 Short-eared Owls arrived on Amherst I. Mar. 3 (GY *et al.*) and three were noted at New Liskeard Apr. 20 (LT *et al.*). The only Chuck-will's-widow reported away from usual haunts in the southwest was at Baldwin, York, Apr. 26 (PHa, JRM). Well n. of range was the Whip-poor-will in Quetico P.P. May 31 for the area's 5th ever (*vide* SFP). A male **Black-chinned Hummingbird** lingered at a feeder in Rideau Ferry, Leeds, May 25–26, well seen and described by experienced observers (ph. M & AS, NMM, NRB *et al.*). This was a first sighting for Ontario. Red-bellied Woodpecker numbers remained high, as the species apparently continues to benefit from several successive mild winters. Singles were e. to Cobourg Apr. 23–25 (ERM) and Grenadier I. May 16 (MH); four were at P.E.Pt. May 1–20 (K.F.N.) and three on Amherst I. Apr. 25–May 17 (K.F.N.). The only Three-toed Woodpecker s. of



range was the single at Smith Falls Apr. 26 (D & FR).

The only extralimital Acadian Flycatcher was at P.E.Pt. June 2 (RDW, JHE). Also associated with the push of flycatchers into Ontario in late May–early June was a W. Kingbird at Long Pt. June 4 (AB, SJ). One Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, a typical spring tally, was found at Pelee May 20 (MA, JL, Kemo *et al.*). Cold weather in mid-May forced swallows into large flocks as they searched for food. Among those at the Tavistock lagoons May 17 were 2000 Trees, 700 N. Rough-wingeds, 6000 Banks, 300 Cliffs, and 3000 Barns (JMH). Another 10,000 Bank Swallows gathered at Long Pt. May 21 (IR).

Origins of the Black-billed Magpie at Long Pt. Apr. 11 (BC *et al.*) perplexed observers; it may have originated from the escapes at Woodstock during autumn 1989. A noticeable migration of returning Boreal Chickadees was logged Apr. 14–May 13 at Thunder Bay, where 22 were in one flock Apr. 25 (BA, SVP). Ottawa's wintering Tufted Titmouse was last seen Apr. 14 (MT) and the only other away from the traditional southwest was in Mississauga May 1 (M. Buck). Numbers of Carolina Wrens declined throughout the southwest for no known reason, and the extralimitals were two in Oakville Apr. 9 (DP) and one at Presqu'île Apr. 28–May 10 (RPH, BBt). The 150 Marsh Wrens at Long Pt. May 12 (JMK) were encouraging numbers, and the species was also up in Cobourg marshes (ERM). Single Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were n. to Moosonee Apr. 29 (AW *et al.*), for a 2nd local record, and at Rainy R. June 1–4 (D. Lee, TW, MK).

The female E. Bluebird at Moosonee May 17 was well north (AW, DJA, G. Cox). A male Mountain Bluebird obliged many observers at P.E.Pt. Mar. 31–Apr. 13 (ph. RDW, JHE *et al.*) as it fed on Red Cedar berries. During the 1980s, about one per year has turned up somewhere in the province. The Townsend's Solitaire remained in Ottawa Dec. 27–Apr. 14 (BMD *et al.*). Some 1700 & 840 Swainson's Thrushes were counted in nocturnal migration over Woodstock May 15 & 25 respectively (JMH), and 350 were grounded at Long Pt. May 20 (JMH *et al.*). The wintering Varied Thrushes at Long Pt. and Gore Bay were present until Mar. 22 & 31 (L.P.B.O.; RCa) respectively. Numbers of N. Mockingbirds were up sharply in e. Ontario, where 9 pairs were on territory in Kingston May 1–31 (K.F.N.), and this species continued to pioneer the north. Singles were at 3 different sites within Algonquin, where rare, May 11–23 (RH, RGT, GEW *et al.*) and n. to Matachewan Apr. 28 (LT), Red Rock Apr. 29 (*vide* NGE), Kirkland Lake for 2 weeks during May (*vide* LT), Marathon May 10–13 (SVP *et al.*), Thunder Bay May 7 (AW, DGC), and Moosonee May 6 (EH, JET, AW). The Sage Thrasher at Indian Pt., Manitoulin I., May 24 (DEB) was well seen and nicely documented, providing Ontario's 8th record since 1965.

Following an impressive winter incursion by Bohemian Waxwings into s. Ontario, their departure for the northwest was greatly delayed, setting numerous record late dates. Normally when the irruptions do occur, the birds are virtually gone from everywhere south of Sudbury by mid-March. Some 200 were still in Britt, *Parry Sound*, Apr. 1 (MK), and record late dates were set by 50 in Kingston Apr. 13 (A & HH), 34 in Newcastle Apr. 17 (EA), 12 in Pembroke Apr. 19 (JMB), five on Manitoulin I. Apr. 21 (DEB, CTB), and 10 near Carleton Place May 12 (IP). Cedar Waxwing flocks contained up to 4000 birds at P.E.Pt. Apr. 21–May 20 (K.F.N.). The N. Shrike in Algonquin Apr. 22 tied a latest ever date (RGT). Reports were received on 51 Loggerhead Shrikes, many of these from nesting territories. Numbers continue to vary erratically from year to year.

**VIREOS TO FINCHES** — Thirty White-eyed Vireos represented a strong incursion, but the only three away from the southwest were in *Durham* at Whitby Apr 28–May 10 (KH *et al.*), Newcastle May 20 (EA), and Darlington P.P. May 21 (DT). "Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warblers were a male at P.E.Pt. May 19 (VPM) and a female at Pelee May 21 (D & KM). Yellow-throated Warblers were few, with singles at Long Pt. Apr. 28 (JCu, GA) and Pelee May 14–20 (OA, WAM *et al.*). Lone Kirtland's Warblers, rare stragglers, were along the upper *Bruce* peninsula May 20 (MDC) and in Cobourg May 31 (ph. AKS, JT *et al.*). 'Yellow' Palm Warblers (*D. p. hypochrysea*) were singles at Pelee Apr. 28 (KAM) and May 17 (D. Blue, JW) and at Beachville, *Oxford*, May 2 (JMK). Eight Worm-eating Warblers were the fewest in spring since 1982, and only one



Male Kentucky Warbler singing at Toronto, Ontario, April 30, 1990. Photograph/Tim Sabo.

was away from the far southwest, at Whitby May 21 (JF *et al.*). The 11 Kentucky Warblers were below the 1982–1989 spring average of 17. Away from the southwest were singles in Toronto's High Park Apr. 29–30 and Lakeshore May 19 (VH *et al.*, MWD), Whitby May 20 (JF *et al.*), and P.E.Pt. June 2 (RDW, JHE). The only out-of-range Hooded Warblers were singles at Whitby Apr. 28–29 (JF *et al.*) and P.E.Pt. May 20 (RDW). A similar pattern emerged for Yellow-breasted Chats at Whitby May 18 (DDC, E & BP), P.E.Pt. May 19 & 20 (K.F.N.), and Oshawa May 21–22 (JP, DL).

The 12 Summer Tanagers equalled the 1982–1989 spring average. The only extralimitals were an imm. male



Immature male Summer Tanager at Red Rock, Ontario, May 10, 1990. Photograph/Alan Wormington.

at Red Rock Apr. 28–May 11 (OHC *et al.*) and a female at P.E.Pt. May 14 (D. Brown, DCa). A male Western Tanager near Cobourg May 17 (J. McColl) was seen at close range and described adequately. This was Ontario's first since 1984. Blue Grosbeaks have numbered one per spring since 1981, so single females at Rondeau May 7–10 (M. Apse *et al.*) and P.E.Pt. May 13 (RDW, JHE) made a respectable showing. Dickcissels were again scarce: singles were at Pelee Apr. 24 and May 19 (DGC, SAC *et al.*), Long Pt. Apr. 27 (AB, SD), and Rondeau May 19 (SC).

Ontario's 6th Cassin's Sparrow, a singing male, at Pelee

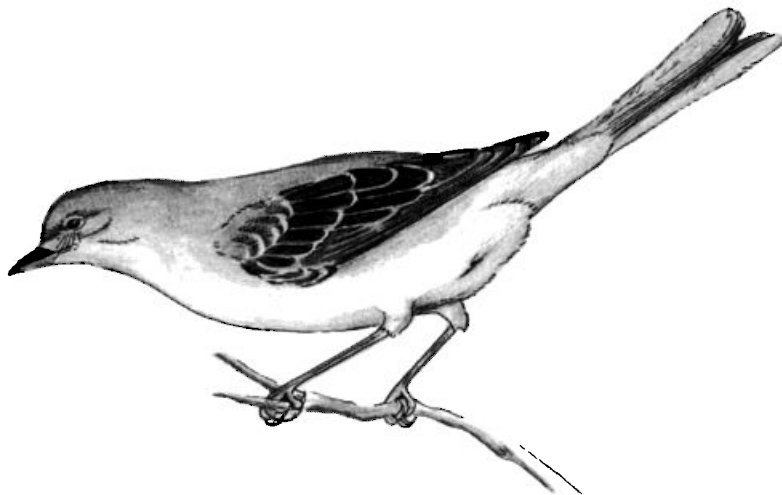
May 17 was the first since 1987 (MJB). A male Lark Bunting at Gore Bay, Manitoulin I., Apr. 14 (ph. G & AA) was the 13th in Ontario since 1974. The only Henslow's Sparrows were singles at Jarvis Apr. 18 (SJM), Pelee Apr. 23 (DGC), and Amherst I. May 19 (RDW). This species appears to be declining significantly in the province. A Le Conte's Sparrow at Moosonee Apr. 29 was very early (AW). Single Sharp-tailed Sparrows were at the Jarvis lagoons Apr. 18 (SJM), Pelee May 15 (C & RL), and Darlington P.P. May 26 (GAS). East of range were lone Harris' Sparrows in Gore Bay, Manitoulin I., Apr. 30–May 15 (C & SW) and Wallaceburg May 13–16 (ph. TCha). Record late Lapland Longspurs were in Tavistock May 19 (JMH) and Algonquin May 31 (MR, RGT). The last Snow Bunting in the south passed Algonquin May 5 (RGT).

The warm surge brought 100,000 Red-winged Blackbirds and 50,000 Com. Grackles to Pittock L., Oxford, Mar. 12 (JMH). Six W. Meadowlarks were above average for recent springs; one was in Moosonee Apr. 24 (AW *et al.*). Noteworthy Yellow-headed Blackbirds were single males in Ottawa May 5 (MJ), Kingston May 17–18 (M & MS *et al.*), and Smithville May 29 (MEF). The only Brewer's Blackbirds away from the southwest were two on Wolfe I. Apr. 1 (RDW, JHE) and another in Stoney Creek Apr. 13 (GN). Orchard Orioles were reported in numbers along the n. shore of L. Ontario, from Whitby, Newcastle, Port Hope, Presqu'île, P.E.Pt., and Amherst I. A male was n. to Evansville, Manitoulin I., Apr. 30 (BB, DEB). Late Pine Grosbeaks were in Algonquin Apr. 8 (RGT) and at Morton, Leeds, May 12 (*fide* MH). A record late date was set by Com. Redpolls over Algonquin May 12 (GEW), and late Hoarries were in Moosonee May 2 and Winisk May 15 (AW). Pine Siskins remained numerous over much of the south into May and nesting was confirmed in Oxford (JMH, JSk).

**CORRIGENDUM** — AB 44:84, column 2, 2nd last line, replace Smith Rock by Smooth Rock.

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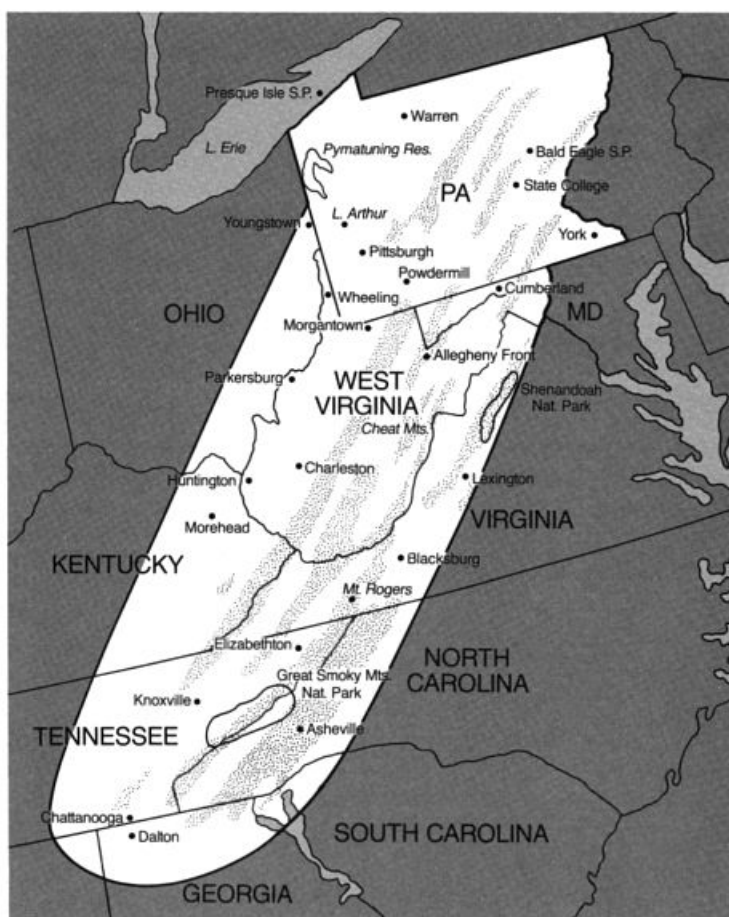
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TIM THOMAS

# APPALACHIAN REGION

George A. Hall



**W**eatherwise it was a mixed up season, and the bird migration was also mixed, being poor at most places but pretty good at a few others.

The first two months of the year had been warmer than normal but March showed almost summerlike conditions. At Pittsburgh the month was much drier than usual but showed a temperature excess of 179 day-degrees. By mid-April, however, more seasonal conditions returned. April had normal rainfall and temperatures but May was much cooler and wetter than normal.

With the mild March weather the first waves of migrants were somewhat early, although not unusually so. Warbler migration appeared to be in progress in the south in late March, and in the north the first wave of Neotropical migrants arrived slightly early. By late April and May, when the peak of migration is expected, the cold-wet weather produced mixed results. During May several cold fronts with northerly winds produced some groundings of migrants at a few places but the majority of locations found few migrants. Since local breeding populations of migrants seemed to be about normal, it was generally thought that the low numbers were not owing to low populations but to the birds overflying the area concerned. There were some exceptions, however, and the spotted thrushes for example remain in low numbers.

At Powdermill Nature Reserve, where the spring banding season was quite successful, the good numbers were attributed in part to the coincidence of the migration with the small-sized instar larvae of the Gypsy Moth, which is having a major outbreak in that region. At that station 25 species were handled in numbers within one standard deviation (S.D.) of the ten-year average, 19 species were

one or more S.D. above that mean, and only six were below (RCL, RM).

As usual the Lake Erie shore produced some rarities, as did the Austin Springs area in eastern Tennessee.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — B.E.S.P. = Bald Eagle State Park, Centre Co., PA; C.F.H. = M.E. Clark Fish Hatchery, Rowan County, KY; G.S.M.N.P. = Great Smoky Mountains Nat'l Park, TN; M.L.B.S. = Mountain Lake Biological Station, Giles Co., VA; P.N.R. = Powdermill Nature Reserve, Westmoreland Co., PA; P.I.S.P. = Presque Isle State Park, Erie Co., PA; Y.C.S.P. = Yellow Creek State Park, Indiana Co., PA. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO IBISES** — Red-throated Loons were reported from Chickamauga Dam, TN, Mar. 26 (RSt), and Y.C.S.P. Apr. 29 & 30 (*vide* JG). The Com. Loon showed some improvement over recent years with good flights at Warren, PA (WH), Cave Run L., KY (FB), and Boone L., TN (RK).

In March there was an excellent influx of the usually rare Red-necked Grebe: P.I.S.P., Mar. 8 (BW) & 10 (EK); Edinboro L., PA, Mar. 13 (JH); Moraine S.P., PA, Mar. 12 (HL); Colyer L., PA (EZ); Balto, MD, Mar. 24 (RKi); and Fishersville, VA, Mar. 7-16 (YL). One was also seen at Rocky Gap S.P., MD, Apr. 3 & 10 (MT). An Eared Grebe at Y.C.S.P. May 16-30 was especially noteworthy (m.ob.). An *Aechmophorus* grebe (probably Western) was seen at Shenango L., PA, Apr. 26 (EB).

The Am. White Pelican is seldom seen in this Region so reports of nine at the Hiwasee River, TN, Mar. 27 (RSt) and five at Ft. Loudon L., TN, Apr. 11 (MD) were noteworthy.

The Double-crested Cormorant continues to increase in numbers throughout the Region and is now found on nearly every large body of water. One of the best records of the season was of an immature **Anhinga** soaring over Brasstown Bald, GA, May 30 (DF).

There was an unusual number of bittern sightings. A flight of eight Am. Bitterns leaving for the north on Apr. 16 was reported from P.I.S.P. (JM) and other sightings there were on May 14 & 15 (JHS, JGS) and May 19 (EK). This species was also reported from P.N.R., Apr. 21 (RM, RCL); from near Cumberland, MD, May 5 (RKi); from Warren, May 21 & 23 (TG); and from State College, PA, May 11–13 (HH, RHa). Least Bitterns were reported from State College, PA, Apr. 12 (HH); Austin Springs, TN, Apr. 29 for a 12th local record (RK); Rowan, KY, May 23–25 (FB); and as many as six seen regularly in May at P.I.S.P. (JM).

Great Blue Heron is increasing as a breeding bird in this Region. In Mercer, PA, 3 colonies had 885 adults and 401 nests (EB), while a colony in Lawrence, PA, had 47 nests (AM), one near Jefferson, PA, had 19 nests (RB), and a new colony in Knox, TN, had 4 nests (BF). There was another new colony in the Knoxville Region (CN). Not too long ago the sight of a Great Egret in spring in this Region was most unusual, but it has now become a rather common bird, with a total of 17 locations reporting up to five birds this season. The only reports of Snowy Egret, May 25 (JM) and Little Blue Heron, May 20 (RKO) & 24 (JM), came from P.I.S.P. Cattle Egrets continue to increase with reports from B.E.S.P. (GB), Mosquito L., OH (CB), New Hope, VA (YL), Lyndhurst, VA (RS), Austin Springs, TN (BC, RK), Boone L., TN (BC), and Washington, TN (FA). There were nesting colonies of Black-crowned Night-Herons at Elkton, VA, with 15–20 nests (KF), and near Kingsport, TN (DN). At P.I.S.P., Black-crowned Night-Herons were frequent with a maximum of 32 from Apr. 16–19, and a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was photographed there Apr. 19 for a 9th county record (JM). A Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was reported from Youngstown, OH, Apr. 29 (NB), and two were at the usual nest site near Elizabethton, TN, through the period (RK). A Glossy Ibis was seen at Austin Springs, TN, Apr. 26 (†RK) and another was reported from near State College, PA, May 7 (J & BPe).

**WATERFOWL** — In general the waterfowl flight was mediocre to poor, although almost all expected species were seen. Unfortunately, few observers report comparative numbers of waterfowl, so it is difficult to judge the status of most species. A fallout of 200 birds of 15 species was reported from the Ligonier Valley, PA (RCL). In Somerset, PA, the broods of Mallards and Wood Ducks were early and were larger than expected (AM).

The large flights of Tundra Swans apparently overflowed the Region as the largest number reported was 200 at Warren, PA, Mar. 5 (TK), and the only record at Pymatuning L., PA, was of three on Apr. 13 (RFL). A Tundra Swan was still present at B.E.S.P. May 12 (B & JPe) and one was seen at State College, PA, as late as May 28 (MW). A Mute Swan was at Williamstown, WV, Mar. 1 to May 12 (EA) and one was at P.I.S.P. May 28–31 (JM). A Greater White-fronted Goose at Swoope, VA, furnished a new *Augusta* record (YL) as well as being noteworthy for the Region. The only reports of Snow Geese came from P.I.S.P., one on Mar. 6 (JHS, JGS) and Fishersville, VA, 11 on Mar. 7 (YL). Two Brant were at P.I.S.P. Apr. 19 (BCa). The introduced population of Canada Geese continues its rampant increase and has reached pest levels in s.w. Pennsylvania (AM), and is the subject of a crop-damage suit against the state in West Virginia (GAH).

Oldsquaw was reported from 10 locations and was in fair numbers, while White-winged Scoter was reported from 10 locations ranging from P.I.S.P. on L. Erie to Chickamauga L., TN. Rather late and most unusual was the flock of 47 White-wingeds at B.E.S.P. May 5 (D & BB). The rarer Surf Scoter was found at Wilbur L., TN, Apr. 4, Boone L., TN, Apr. 6 (RK), and B.E.S.P., May 5 (D & BB). Two Black Scoters were present at the Gavin Power Plant, OH, Apr. 4 (MG).

A ♀ Hooded Merganser with four young was seen in Warren, PA, May 19 (TG). More unusual was the pair of Red-breasted Mergansers apparently nesting in Russell, VA, May 29 (SH). Finally, the only concentration of waterfowl reported was the 20,000 Com. Mergansers at P.I.S.P. May 4 (JM).

**RAPTORS** — The management programs for Osprey and Peregrine appear to be paying off, as both species are being reported more frequently than in the past. The same can be said for several species: N. Harrier, N. Goshawk, and both eagles. On the other hand, the once common buteos are not being reported in their past numbers.

Two pairs of Ospreys were nesting at Cumberland, MD (RKi, MT). At least one of these birds was banded and may have been one of the birds “hacked” along the Potomac River in recent years. The Bald Eagle recovery is even more spectacular with reports coming in from all parts of the Region. Eagles were nesting at Hartstown and Pymatuning L., PA (RFL), Butler, PA (PH), Mosquito L., OH (DH), 2 locations in e. West Virginia (CS), and the Highland, VA, site where they nested in 1989 (LT). At another Butler location an immature pair has been attempting to nest, without success, for 3 years (JG).

This year reports of N. Goshawk came from State College, PA, Mar. 9 (GY), B.E.S.P. Apr. 1 (RH), Black Moshannon S.P. Apr. 18 (B & JPe), near Chattanooga, TN, Mar. 27 (RSt), and Locoming, PA, May 25 (SS), and a nest was found in the Allegheny N.F. near Warren, PA, May 23 (DW). Rough-legged Hawks were last seen at Pymatuning L. Mar. 24 (RFL), and other records came from Lander, PA, Mar. 18 (DW), Dans Rock S.P., MD, Apr. 8 (MT), and Highland, VA, Mar. 19 & 26 (LT). There were few reports of Broad-winged and Red-shouldered hawks. Golden Eagles were reported from: the usual wintering area in Bath (Mar 1) and Highland (Mar. 26), VA (LT); Barton Knob, WV (three immatures), Mar. 23 (MG); Colyer L., PA, Mar. 9 (K & JJ); Laurel Hill, PA, Mar. 10 (B & TR); Johnson City, TN, Apr. 14 (late) (RK); and more unusual as to both date and place, Lumpkin, GA, May 29 (DF).

At Warren, PA, 85% of the 34 nest boxes for Am. Kestrels were occupied (DW). Merlins were reported from Erie, PA, and P.I.S.P. regularly from Apr. 8–May 12 (JM); from Meadville, PA, Apr. 6 (RFL); Austin Springs, TN, Apr. 1 (RK); and Elizabethton, TN, May 12 (DL, GW). A pair of Peregrines has taken up residence on the office buildings of downtown Pittsburgh, and while present from late February to the end of the season no definite nesting was established (JG). They were also present in downtown Knoxville (CN). More conventional reports came from Austin Springs, TN, Mar. 11 (JB), Ooltewah, TN, Mar. 27 (RSt), Mt. LeConte, G.S.M.N.P. (CN), Mountain L., VA, May 17 (CZ), and at least four at P.I.S.P., May 14–22 (JM, RKO, JHS).

**RAILS TO TERNS** — Good details were submitted for a Black Rail at P.I.S.P. May 20, for the first Erie record (BM). A King Rail at Antes Fort, PA, Apr. 26 was the first seen there in 23 years (P & GS). A Virginia Rail at Austin Springs, TN, May 26–29 suggested possible nesting at that

location (RK). More Soras and Virginia Rails were reported than usual. The only report of Sandhill Cranes came from *Whitfield*, GA, a flock of 75 on Mar. 5 (HD).

The shorebird flight was fairly good, as flooded fields offered resting areas in places normally lacking them, and many species arrived somewhat early. There were two fallouts at P.I.S.P. that were impressive even for that location where shorebirds are usually plentiful. Following a cold front on May 13 approximately 2000 birds of 16 species were recorded, 1500 in the first 3 hours of daylight. Highlights were 1100 Short-billed Dowitchers and 400 "peep" (JM, EK). Another flight occurred there May 29, when 600 birds of 15 species included 325 Semipalmated Sandpipers, 42 Ruddy Turnstones, and 24 Whimbrels (DS, JHS, JGS). Lesser Golden-Plovers were reported from Kingston Steam Plant, TN, Mar. 31 (BS), *Washington*, TN, Mar. 31 (RK), and Austin Springs, TN, Apr. 4-6 (RK). Besides the usually common shorebird species, Red Knots, Sanderling, Baird's Sandpiper, Dunlin, and especially White-rumped Sandpipers were more numerous and more widely reported than usual. Willets were reported from Y.C.S.P. Apr. 20 (*vide* JG) and P.I.S.P. May 7 (JHS) & 20 (JHo, BM). The only Whimbrel records came from P.I.S.P. where 66 were tallied from May 13-30, including 44 on May 25 (JM). Two Marbled Godwits at P.I.S.P. May 18 furnished the first spring record and the 14th county record (JGS, JHS). The only Stilt Sandpiper was reported from Antes Fort, PA, May 17, for the 2nd record there in 23 years (PS). A Ruff at P.I.S.P. May 5 furnished the 3rd *Erie* record (JGS). A Wilson's Phalarope was at Niles, OH, May 16 (*vide* CB), and three were at C.F.H. May 18 (FB). A Red-necked Phalarope near Harrisonburg, VA, furnished the first record for *Rockingham* (R.B.C.), and one was seen near Cumberland, MD, May 25 & 27 (RKi, MT).

A Franklin's Gull was at C.F.H. May 4 (FB). The spring flight of Bonaparte's Gulls was unusually heavy at most places, and 358 were counted at Y.C.S.P. in late April (*vide* JG), and 225 at Boone L., TN, Apr. 6 (RK). As usual P.I.S.P. experienced a number of the rarer gulls: Laughing Gull, May 10 (JM); Little Gull, May 25 (JM); **Common Black-headed Gull**, two on May 19—4th state record (EK); Thayer's Gull, Mar. 3 (JM, EK); Iceland Gull, five until Mar. 8 (JM) and a late one May 19 (EK); Lesser Black-backed Gull Mar. 3 & 31 (EK, JM); and Glaucous Gull, 13 on Mar. 3 (JM, EK) and one on Mar. 17 (EK).

Caspian Terns were numerous again this spring, and as mentioned in an earlier account Forster's Terns are now more "common" than Com. Terns. A Least Tern was at P.I.S.P., May 29, the 8th sighting for the county (JGS, DS). The increased number of Black Tern reports is most encouraging as this species had almost vanished from the Region.

**CUCKOOS TO FLYCATCHERS**—Both cuckoo species were in low numbers almost everywhere, but at Jersey Shore, PA, they were in the best numbers in the last 5 years (PS). No comment was made as to whether this had anything to do with the gypsy moth outbreak. There were 4 active nest sites of Barn Owls and 2 or 3 other sightings in *Washington*, TN (RK). Other sightings came from Fishersville, VA, Apr. 20 (MH), and Jersey Shore, PA, May 15 (PS). Up to three Long-eared Owls were sighted at P.I.S.P. Mar. 10 and Apr. 8 & 14 (DD, JHo). Another Long-eared was found in *Berkeley*, WV, May 5 (MG). Short-eared Owls nested in *Jefferson*, OH, for a county first (MA). Other reports came from Weyer's Cave, VA, six on Mar. 4 (YL), Fishersville, VA, four on Mar. 11 (YL), *Somer-*



*Downy young Short-eared Owl in a nest in Jefferson County, Ohio spring 1990. First nesting record for the county. Photograph Michael Arabia.*

*set*, PA, three on a recovered strip mine site Mar. 3 (AM), and P.I.S.P., up to 11, Apr. 14-22 (JM, GR). Northern Saw-whet Owls were reported from Saybrook, PA, Apr. 2 (CNe), Black Moshannon S.P., PA, May 12 (J & BP), and Roan Mt., TN, Apr. 13 (two) (FA, BC).

The Chuck-will's-widow continues to appear in the Shenandoah Valley, with records from *Berkeley*, WV, May 5 (MG), Harrisonburg, VA, the 3rd week in May (R.B.C.), and Lyndhurst, VA, Apr. 27 (LP). It was also reported for the 3rd year in the Ohio valley near Parkersburg, WV, May 5 (LB, JBI). Ruby-throated Hummingbirds arrived quite early, as for example, arrivals on Apr. 26 at Edinboro, PA (JH) and Morgantown, WV (GAH).

There were more reports of Red-headed Woodpeckers than in recent springs. They were present at 5 sites near Elizabethton, TN (RK), and there were 3 new reports of breeding near Harrisonburg, VA, and one in *Hardy*, WV (KF). Other reports came from Kelleetville, PA (TG), Rowlesburg, WV (AC), Clarksville, PA (RB), and Lyndhurst, VA (RS). A nest of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers was found at Cumberland Falls S.P., KY (BP-B). There were reports of 12 Olive-sided Flycatchers from 8 locations from *Gilmer*, GA (an early date of Apr. 29) (CR) to *Erie*, PA, with bandings at P.I.S.P. (RFL) and P.N.R. (RCL, RM). In n. West Virginia, E. Wood-Pewees seemed to be in low numbers (GAH). Both Acadian and Least flycatchers were in unusually high numbers at M.L.B.S. (CZ). Least Flycatchers were found in a possible breeding habitat in *Campbell*, TN, May 28, but were not there June 2 (A & RH).

**SWALLOWS TO VIREOS**—There were mixed reports of Purple Martins: none at Waynesboro, VA (RS), and scarce at Clarksville, PA (RB), but normal at Harrisonburg, VA (KF). Tree Swallows nested at Fishersville, VA, and near Waynesboro, VA, for the first time (RS). The recent colony of Bank Swallows in *Knox*, TN, had 30 nests (A & RH).

A Com. Raven was heard on Big Black Mountain, KY, May 27 (BP-B). This species continues to expand in n. Pennsylvania (WH). Brown-headed Nuthatches were found at an elevation of 1800 ft near Blairsville, GA, May 28 (DF). Carolina Wren populations in the north came through the winter without major decline. A pair spent the winter at a feeder at Warren, PA (WH). The only report of Bewick's Wren came from *Murray*, GA, Mar. 5 (HD); and the only reports of Marsh Wrens were May 12 at Austin Springs, TN (RK), and Erwin, TN (BC).



Golden-crowned Kinglets staged a good migration at Clarksville, PA (RB), but at nearby Morgantown, WV, they were scarce (GAH), and few other reporters mentioned them. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were missing at Meadville, PA (RFL), and were caught in below average numbers at P.N.R. (RM, RCL). The *Catharus* thrushes remained at low numbers. There was more singing from Swainson's Thrushes at Morgantown than I have heard for several years, but the totals were still low. At P.N.R., Swainson's Thrushes were banded in average numbers, but elsewhere no one reported very many and some stations missed the species completely. A Gray-cheeked Thrush at Fairview, NC, May 15 was noteworthy (RY). Veeries were in normal numbers in the breeding grounds of e. Tennessee (RK) but were in low numbers in the Cheat Mountains of West Virginia (GAH). Wood Thrushes were reported as being low at Huntington, WV (MG), but were felt to be common at Clarksville, PA (RB).

The four or five N. Mockingbirds reported in Erie, PA, were more than the normal number at this northern location (JM). A mockingbird nesting in Allegheny, PA, failed because of cold weather in late May (PB). The N. Shrike reported from Lander, PA, in the winter remained until Mar. 18 (DW). Other reports came from P.I.S.P. Mar. 3-10 (DD), Montour, PA, Mar. 12 (SS), and Indiana, PA, in March (MHi). The Loggerhead Shrike picture appeared brighter. In e. Tennessee 7 locations had nine birds (AH) and there were 9 nesting pairs in Rockingham, VA (KF). Other reports came from Petersburg and Renick, WV (KF), Swoope, VA (YL), and Y.C.S.P. (*vide* JG).

White-eyed Vireos at P.I.S.P. May 7 (JHS) & 12 (JHo) and in Warren, PA, May 23 (JK) were somewhat north of the usual range. Philadelphia Vireo is often not reported in spring, so the very early records from the Blue Ridge Parkway, VA, Apr. 14 (MH) and Trumbull, OH, Apr. 30 (DH) were noteworthy. A total of 56 Philadelphia Vireos (6 standard deviations above average) were banded at P.N.R. (RCL, RM).

**WARBLERS TO FINCHES**—With a few exceptions, reporters felt that the warbler flight was very poor. Most observers found all the expected species but total numbers were low. In e. Tennessee, however, the flight was good at Knoxville (CN), and at Elizabethton, TN, most species were in good numbers (RK). The exceptions were a few weather-caused fallouts. One of these occurred at Niles and Mosquito L., OH, May 10 (CB). At P.N.R. the weather was a factor in the banding of 12 species in above average numbers and none in below average (RM, RCL).

A "Brewster's" Warbler was found in Campbell, TN, May 19 (CN). An Orange-crowned Warbler at Chickamauga Dam, TN, Mar. 26, may have furnished the first March record for the area (RSt). Other records of this rare springtime species were at Akeley Swamp, PA (BH, CP), and 4 sightings at P.I.S.P., May 3 to May 20 (JHS, JGS, EK, RKo). One of the few reports of large numbers came from M.L.B.S. Apr. 29 where in excess of 300 Yellow-rumped Warblers were counted (CZ). Yellow-throated Warblers continue to increase in s.w. Pennsylvania (RB) and 44 singing males were counted near Chattanooga, TN, Mar. 28 (RSt). Cerulean Warblers were felt to be unusually numerous in Allegheny, PA (PH), and in Greene, PA (RB). Swainson's Warblers were reported from Letcher, KY (BP-B). An example of the early season was furnished by three Ovenbirds singing in Augusta, VA, Mar. 31, 3.5 weeks early (CES). Northern Waterthrushes apparently nesting at P.N.R. were at rather low elevation (RM, RCL). Connecticut Warbler is usually unreported in spring but one was banded and another seen at P.N.R. (RM, RCL, DK). A Yel-

low-breasted Chat May 15 in Warren, PA (TG), was north of the usual range.

Summer Tanager continues to increase in s.w. Pennsylvania (RB) and one was seen at Edinboro, PA, May 6-8, for the 9th Erie record (JH). Indigo Buntings were thought to be scarce at State College, PA (MW), Morgantown, WV (GAH), and a few other places. Blue Grosbeak was found in Summers, WV, the first in several years (JP), and one was reported from Elizabeth, WV, May 24 (*vide* JE). A Dickcissel wintered at State College, remaining until Mar. 17 (DB), and one was seen at Saegertown, PA, Mar. 27 (TP). A **Sharp-tailed Sparrow** was at Austin Springs, TN, May 12, for the 10th local record, and the first one in spring (RK, JB). At P.N.R., Field, Song, and White-crowned sparrows were banded in below average numbers. A White-crowned Sparrow wintered successfully in Elk, PA (LC). A Harris' Sparrow was seen near Marion, PA, Mar. 15 (RHi).

Bobolinks at Swoope, VA, as late as May 28 suggested possible nesting at this low and southern location (YL). A Brewer's Blackbird was in Sullivan, TN, Mar. 30 (BC). The only report of Red Crossbills came from the breeding station on Shenandoah Mt., VA (LT), but White-winged Crossbills staged a small flight as far south as central Pennsylvania. Reports came from P.I.S.P. Mar. 3 (GR), Union City, PA, Mar. 9-23 (JM), Elk, Mar. 22 (LC), Black Moshannon S.P., PA, Apr. 8 (J & BPe), and Y.C.S.P. Mar. 10 (MHi). Common Redpolls were reported from Cumberland, MD, Mar. 15 (RKi), and Warren, PA, Apr. 9 (BHi).

Pine Siskins were in great numbers at many places, but were missing or only sporadically present at others. Where they did occur flocks of several hundred were common. At P.N.R., 1000 were banded during the period (RM, RCL). Because of the spottiness of occurrence this flight was probably less than that of 2 winters ago. Many of these birds remained in the Region until the end of the period, and while no definite nesting was established some certainly did nest in the Region. Captured birds at P.N.R. showed physiological evidence of breeding. There were scattered records throughout the Region and throughout the period for small flocks of Evening Grosbeaks, but as in the winter report no great invasion occurred.

**CORRIGENDA**—The record for Long-billed Dowitcher at P.I.S.P. Aug. 20-26, 1989 (AB 44:90) should be deleted.

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## WESTERN GREAT LAKES REGION

David J. Powell



**W**hether this spring was mixed, alternating cold and warm, with generally wetter than normal conditions. There was a warm spell in late April that produced an excellent influx of migrants into southern Michigan and southern Wisconsin (20+ species of warblers in each state); but early May was cold, and May 10 produced record snowfall in Wisconsin with three to eight inches, and 20 inches at Marquette, Michigan. May 14–20 also produced a good wave of migrants in Wisconsin. Minnesota observers missed out this spring, with no real waves. The rarities were a little sparse this spring, although the diversity was good. The best bird of the season was probably Minnesota's second Green-tailed Towhee, with a Say's Phoebe in Michigan also good.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — W.P.B.O. = Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, MI; M.W.S. = Muskegon Wastewater System, Muskegon, MI. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO IBISES** — Red-throated Loons are more common eastward in the Region. This was clearly indicated by the record 342 seen Apr. 24–May 31 at W.P.B.O., with a peak of 43 May 12 (staff), versus one May 26 at Duluth (KE, PB *et al.*), where they are rare/regular or casual migrants. Wisconsin observers reported them in normal numbers in their usual L. Michigan locations. One was inland Apr. 18 at Madison, WI (JO, PL). A **Pacific Loon** found Apr. 15 n. of Cleveland, WI (DT) represented one of the few records for Wisconsin. Common Loons were less common than last year's record total, but the 8863 counted during the period at W.P.B.O. (staff) were certainly impressive, as was the peak of 1087 Apr. 29 (staff). Red-necked Grebes were also seen in impressive numbers at W.P.B.O., with 345 Apr. 27 and 754 for the season (staff). Red-neckeds were absent from their Grassy L., Columbia, WI, nesting site, and only one pair was at the Oakridge L., St. Croix, WI, nesting site, although fair num-

bers were at Rush Lake. Eared Grebes were seen at 8 Michigan and 8 Wisconsin locations, with 12+ at Lake Wissota, Chippewa, WI, May 2 (JP), one of the best springs ever for these states. Also notable was an Eared Grebe May 17–18 at Duluth (m.ob.), where they are accidental in spring. Western Grebes were e. of normal Apr. 15 at Tomah, WI (DK); May 13 in St. Louis, MN (AE); May 26, two on Rush Lake, WI (TZ *et al.*); May 28, two on Lake Wissota, Chippewa, WI (JP); and two on May 31 at Crex Meadows, WI (BI, PM). American White Pelicans staged an excellent May migration in Wisconsin, with groups of three to 15 in many sites. Three Am. White Pelicans in Michigan were also considered to be more than normal.

Least Bitterns were reported from 6 locations in Michigan this spring. While not many, it was certainly an improvement over last spring's one report. American Bitterns also remained scarce in Michigan, with reports from only 9 counties. Great Egrets were n. of normal Apr. 20–25 at Superior, WI (RJ), and May 23–25 at Marquette, MI (NI, WR). Snowy Egrets were seen in above average numbers in Michigan, with reports from 5 locations including 3 in the Upper Peninsula, and in Minnesota, where there was a peak of eight in mid-May in Lac Qui Parle (FE) in the vicinity of Big Stone N.W.R., where they used to nest, and maybe will again. The only Little Blue Heron of the season was one seen flying along L. Michigan in Ozaukee, WI (DG). No Tricolored Herons were reported this spring in the Region, certainly fewer than normal. Cattle Egrets were seen in normal numbers in Wisconsin and above average numbers in Minnesota, but only one was seen in Michigan. The only Yellow-crowned Night-Heron reported was one Apr. 23 in Waupaca, WI (JA). The casual **White-faced Ibis** appeared 3 times this spring: Apr. 23–29 in the Minnesota R. bottoms in the Twin Cities (DR *et al.*); Apr. 26–29 at Theresa Marsh, Dodge, WI (MD); and May 8–12 at New Ulm, MN (JS).

**WATERFOWL, RAPTORS** — No large concentrations of Tundra Swans were present in Wisconsin this spring, but a flock of 2000 was present in *Tuscola*, MI, in April (MW). Tundra Swans lingered into late May in *Ashland/Bayfield*, WI (DV), and at Nayanquing Pt. Wildlife Area, *Bay*, MI (RW *et al.*).

S.A.

A Trumpeter Swan was at Nayanquing Point W.A. Apr. 3–14 (RW, JS, E & GP). This bird was released and wing-tagged in 1987 in *Becker*, MN, wintered near Des Moines, IA, in 1987–1988, returned to Minnesota in the spring of 1988, after which it was not seen again until this spring in Michigan. The presence of these released birds in the Great Lakes complicates the job of identifying non-Mute Swans, particularly out of season. Observers in the Great Lakes will need to be extra careful with swans as these introductions continue, so as not to muddy the picture of swan occurrence in the Region.

Greater White-fronted Geese were more frequently reported than usual in Minnesota and Wisconsin, with 400 Mar. 31 in *Martin* (KE *et al.*) particularly noteworthy. In Michigan, White-fronteds made their normal appearance at Fish Point Wildlife Area, *Tuscola*, where up to five were present Mar. 17–21 (MW, MH). White-fronteds lingered into late May at *Crex Meadows*, WI (JH), and *Ashland*, WI (DV). Snow Geese lingered until May 27 in *Columbia*, WI (MM). Ross' Goose is just barely regular in the Region, so four reports were more than normal: Mar. 15–21, three at Fish Point W.A., *Tuscola*, MI (RW); Mar. 24–early April in *Columbia*, WI (DT, SM, m.ob.); late April–early May, three in *Lac Qui Parle*, MN (m.ob.); and Apr. 15 in *Lewiston*, *Winona*, MN (AMP). Cinnamon Teal made two appearances in Wisconsin, a male Apr. 21 in *Dane* (ST), and a pair May 12–13 in *Kenosha* (*fide* JD). Eurasian Wigeon put in appearances in all 3 states (all males): Mar. 25–Apr. 1 in *Columbia*, WI (PA, m.ob.); Apr. 3 at *Frontenac*, *Goodhue*, MN (JL); Apr. 4–19 in *Chippewa* (JP); and Apr. 24–May 2 in *Jackson*, MI (DB, m.ob.). Several Harlequin Ducks were present from March into early May on L. Michigan primarily between *Milwaukee* and *Port Washington*, WI. All three scoters were reported from both Michigan and Wisconsin. White-wingeds were seen in record numbers at W.P.B.O., with 2555 for the season,

**Table 1. Spring Hawk Totals at Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, MI**

	First Date	Last Date	Total Count	Peak Count	Peak Date(s)
Turkey Vulture	Mar. 29	May 31	85	6	Apr. 23
Osprey	Apr. 20	May 31	113	13	Apr. 29
Bald Eagle	Mar. 15	May 27	117	16	Mar. 16
Northern Harrier	Mar. 15	May 31	385	34	Apr. 19
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Mar. 16	May 31	8627	1750	May 8
Cooper's Hawk	Mar. 25	May 31	66	8	Apr. 20
Northern Goshawk	Mar. 15	May 29	60	5	Apr. 7
Red-shouldered Hawk	Mar. 16	May 2	40	5	Mar. 30
Broad-winged Hawk	Apr. 20	May 31	5647	1553	Apr. 26
Swainson's Hawk	Apr. 26	May 26	8	2	May 5, 8
Red-tailed Hawk	Mar. 20	May 31	994	101	Apr. 21
Ferruginous Hawk	May 11	May 11	1		
Rough-legged Hawk	Mar. 16	May 31	1283	131	Apr. 14
Golden Eagle	Mar. 16	May 22	35	5	Mar. 30
American Kestrel	Mar. 15	May 31	600	85	Apr. 23
Merlin	Mar. 16	May 31	98	5	May 8
Peregrine Falcon	Apr. 14	May 25	52	9	May 7
Gyr Falcon	Apr. 7	Apr. 7	1		

and a peak of 752 May 22 (staff). The decidedly uncommon Barrow's Goldeneye was seen twice this spring, Mar. 29–Apr. 13 at *Sherburne N.W.R.*, MN (JHa *et al.*), and Apr. 13 in *Marathon*, WI (PR).

Bald Eagles staged an unprecedented spring flight at Duluth, where a couple of hundred individuals were seen Mar. 15 (m.ob.); all previous Minnesota concentrations of this size have occurred in the fall or winter. A pair of N. Goshawks nested successfully at the far s. location of *Millington*, *Tuscola*, MI (MW). An excellent spring total of 49 Red-shouldered Hawks was seen Mar. 18 at *Port Huron*, MI (DM). The only Swainson's Hawk reported away from W.P.B.O. was one May 7 at *Hayward*, WI (JR). The rare/regular **Ferruginous Hawk** was seen in both Michigan and Minnesota: Apr. 21 at *Fennville*, *Allegan*, MI (TC, JW); May 11 at W.P.B.O. (RP, KM); and May 26 in *Pennington*, MN (K & SS). The Michigan records are pending acceptance by the state records committee. Rough-legged Hawks lingered to the end of May at one Michigan and 2 Wisconsin locations. Golden Eagles away from W.P.B.O. were at no fewer than 5 Wisconsin and 5 Michigan locations. Peregrine Falcons continue to do well in the Region, with good numbers in Minnesota, including the return for the 3rd consecutive year of a pair to *Palisade Head*, *Lake*, and reports from 9 locations away from W.P.B.O. in Michigan. After last winter's good turnout, Prairie Falcons were reported twice in Minnesota this spring: Apr. 13–May 20 in *Clay* (L & CF, MMo) and Apr. 22 in *Polk* (DJ). The only Gyrfalcon was one Apr. 7 at W.P.B.O. (KM, RP).

**TURKEYS TO PHALAROPES** — Wild Turkeys were reported more frequently than normal in both Michigan and Minnesota. The actual cause for this increase in reports is difficult to determine, owing to continued introductions of turkeys in both states. Yellow Rails were reported from 4 Michigan and 5 Wisconsin locations, above average, although the secretive nature of this species makes detection difficult, obscuring their actual abundance. King Rails were found at 2 Michigan and 5 Wisconsin locations, about average for this scarce species.

The shorebird migration was quite sparse in both Michigan and Wisconsin, with the exception of the "large" shorebirds in Wisconsin. Evaluating the shorebird movement is very difficult, because it is so dependent on the availability of a restricted habitat, which appears and disappears variably. As an example, in Michigan last year one of the large ponds at *Pte. Mouillee S.G.A.* was drawn down for the entire period, resulting in excellent habitat and excellent shorebird numbers; this year that pond was not drawn down, there was only restricted habitat, and very few shorebirds were seen. Creation and management of shorebird habitat is one area of conservation that warrants being addressed, particularly because of the susceptibility of this habitat to vagaries in the weather. Only one Lesser Golden-Plover was reported from Michigan this spring, definitely below average. The endangered Piping Plover continued to do poorly in the Region, with reports from only 3 Michigan, 2 Minnesota, and one Wisconsin locations. Excellent numbers of Am. Avocets were reported Regionwide, particularly in Minnesota and Wisconsin. In Wisconsin, there were 150–200 birds reported from around the state, constituting one of the best flights in years. In Michigan, where avocets are less common than in the rest of the Region, they were reported from 6 locations, above average. Early Greater Yellowlegs were at *Ashland*, WI, Mar. 15 (DV) and *Berrien*, MI, Mar. 18 (RS). Willets were also seen in excellent numbers in Wisconsin with flocks of up to 40 birds seen late April to mid May.

Whimbrels were also seen in good numbers in Wisconsin, with flocks of up to 55 seen along L. Michigan. However, two May 27 in *St. Croix* (JSm) were unusual in that they were in w. Wisconsin. Whimbrels were seen in average to slightly below average numbers in Michigan, with only 524 seen during the period at W.P.B.O. (staff). A very cooperative **Long-billed Curlew** was in *Rice*, MN, Apr. 23–26 where it was seen by many. Hudsonian Godwits were the only species of “large” shorebirds seen in unexceptional numbers this spring in Wisconsin, and they were only slightly below average. In Michigan, Hudsonian Godwits were seen at 4 locations, slightly below average. Wisconsin observers also had excellent numbers of Marbled Godwits, with a flock of 43 May 14 on Long Island, *Ashland* (EE), particularly impressive. Contrastingly, in Michigan, none was reported. The distribution of the “large” shorebirds in the Region is spring is interesting in that avocet, Willet, and both godwits are definitely more common westward, while Whimbrel is much more common eastward. Only a few Red Knots were reported, all from along the Great Lakes. A Sanderling Apr. 23 at Ashland, WI (DV) was early. Western Sandpipers are quite scarce in the Region in spring, so one Michigan and 2 Wisconsin sightings was about average. Very early were three Baird’s Sandpipers in *Eau Claire*, WI, Apr. 20 (JP). Also very early was a Dunlin in *Muskegon*, MI, Apr. 4 (BJ). Stilt Sandpipers were reported 5 times during the period in Michigan, about average for this scarce spring migrant. Long-billed Dowitchers were seen twice at Nayanquing Point W.A., Bay, MI: one Apr. 27 (PC, RPu) and six May 12 (RA). Wilson’s Phalaropes were reported from 12 Michigan counties, above average. The normal few Red-necked Phalaropes were seen in Michigan and Wisconsin.

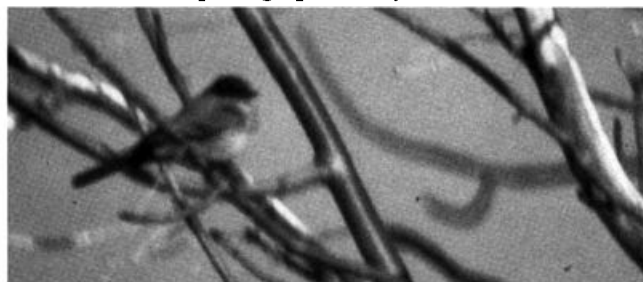
**LARIDS** — As with many species, spring jaegers present a differing picture in the Region. At W.P.B.O., they are regular, with this spring’s three individuals (all Parasitic) about normal (staff); but the two Parasitics at Duluth May 26 (KE, PB), furnished only the 2nd spring record there. An adult Parasitic was also seen May 28 at Port Wing, *Bayfield*, WI (LE). Laughing Gulls were seen in normal numbers with 4 Michigan and 3 Wisconsin reports comprising 11 birds, all but one on L. Michigan. Franklin’s Gulls were found away from L. Michigan in *Jackson*, MI, May 28 (DB), *Ashland*, WI, Apr. 23 (DV) and May 15 (EE), *St. Croix*, WI, May 12 (TS), and *Oshkosh* May 31 (TZ). Little Gulls were seen in all 3 states: May 5 and intermittently thereafter at Manitowoc (PS, CS), but just one bird, where there have been many in the past; two on May 12 at Tawas Point S.P., *Iosco*, MI (LG, MW); May 25 at Duluth (PB); two on May 27 at Oconto Marsh (JWo); and May 31 at *St. Joseph*, *Berrien*, MI (WB). **Mew Gull** is accidental in the Region, so 2 reports were most impressive: Mar. 3 at Sheboygan, WI (JB), and Mar. 18 at Manitowoc, WI (PS).

Thayer’s Gulls were seen in their usual small numbers, with a few along L. Michigan in Wisconsin in March, two on Mar. 3 at M.W.S. (JG, DP, JE), and one Apr. 7 at Sterling S.P., *Monroe*, MI (PC, TW). Iceland Gulls were also seen in their usual small numbers: until Mar. 11 at *Oshkosh* (TZ *et al.*); Mar. 3 at Manitowoc (PS); two on Mar. 3 & 10 at M.W.S. (JG *et al.*); May 5 at Sheboygan (PS); May 7 at W.P.B.O. (LD); and mid-May at Manitowoc/Two Rivers (DT). Lesser Black-backed Gulls have become regular in the Region, as typified by this spring’s records: Mar. 1 & 10 at Milwaukee (VA, PS, TS *et al.*); Mar. 3 & 10 at M.W.S. (DP *et al.*); Apr. 5 in Red Wing, *Goodhue*, MN (RG); Apr. 29 in *Carver*, MN (D & BM); May 25 at Nayanquing Point W.A., Bay, MI (TL, TSm, JBe); and one during the period in

*Berrien*, MI (RS). Excellent numbers of Glaucous Gulls were found in Wisconsin in March, with a few lingering through May. Average numbers of Glaucous Gulls were found in Michigan, all on or near the Great Lakes. Great Black-backed Gulls w. or n. of their normal range were seen in *Berrien*, *Chippewa*, and *Mackinac*, MI, and Port Washington and Manitowoc, WI.

**OWLS TO FLYCATCHERS** — Last winter’s poor showing of Snowy Owls was followed up by a spring with almost no reports. A **Burrowing Owl** in n. *Burnett*, WI, May 26 (RH) was one of the few for Wisconsin. In Minnesota, Burrowing Owls may be making a comeback from their very low numbers of the 1980s, with reports from *Nobles*, *Lincoln*, and *Rock* (where they nested last year). It was a strange season for Great Gray Owls in Minnesota, as none was found in their usual *Aitkin* area, but more than normal were found to the east in *St. Louis* and *Lake*. Great Grays were also found May 31 at *Watson*, *Marquette*, MI (CW), and seven were found during the period Apr. 30– May 27 at W.P.B.O. (staff). After last year’s very low numbers, a much more typical 85 Long-eared Owls were recorded at W.P.B.O. this season (staff). A reflection of the cyclic nature of boreal species is the status of Boreal Owls at W.P.B.O.; just 2 years after the record 160+, only one was recorded this spring at W.P.B.O. (staff). In Minnesota, Boreal Owls were heard calling in their normal range in *Cook*, *Lake*, and *St. Louis* this spring with nesting confirmed near Ely and *Isabella* (SW). A nesting N. Saw-whet Owl fledged five young in *Tuscola*, MI (MW), well s. of their known range, but since this owl is so secretive, it is very possible that it nests in many more places than we realize.

The *Polk*, WI, Chuck-will’s-widow returned for the 5th consecutive year May 16 (JHu), and another was heard w. of Spring Green, *Sauk*, WI, in early May (AS, SS). An unidentified hummingbird Apr. 22 in *Lake*, MN (*fide* KE), was tantalizing; it was so early so far north that it might have been something other than a Ruby-throated. More Red-headed Woodpeckers were reported in Michigan this spring, an encouraging sign for this increasingly scarce species. Black-backed Woodpeckers were generally harder to find than normal in Wisconsin, except in *Vilas*, where four to six birds were found during the period (JB *et al.*). They were found in normal numbers in Michigan, with sightings from 4 locations in the Upper Peninsula. A Say’s Phoebe May 5 in *Big Stone*, MN (TM), was quite interesting, as they are only casual in Minnesota. However, a **Say’s Phoebe** seen and photographed May 5 at Tawas Point S.P.,



Say’s Phoebe at Tawas Point State Park, Michigan, May 5, 1990. Fourth state record. Photograph/Mark Hubinger.

*Iosco*, MI (MH, JHb), was much more exciting, as it was only the 4th for Michigan. Decidedly more W. Kingbirds than normal were found e. of their normal range, with five reported in Wisconsin and two in Michigan, including a female that returned to nest with an E. Kingbird for the 3rd year in a row in *Isabella*, MI. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher

was seen and photographed Apr 24 in Price, WI (MHa, JLu, LGr *et al.*).

**SWALLOWS TO WARBLERS** — A Bank Swallow Mar. 25 in Jackson, MI (DB), was early. A well documented N. Raven Apr. 11–14 at the Cedar Creek Natural History Area, Anoka, MN (GP), furnished one of the few reliable s. Minnesota records ever. Boreal Chickadees were seen in good numbers at W.P.B.O., with 442 seen during the period, 50 on Apr. 25 (staff). Tufted Titmice were n. of normal in Michigan in Cheboygan, Delta, and Menominee. A Rock Wren was at Bloomington, MN, Apr. 29 (BF *et al.*); the species is only casual in Minnesota. Carolina Wrens were found in 7 Michigan, 5 Wisconsin, and 3 Minnesota locations, a good showing for this winter-limited species. A Bewick's Wren in mid-May at Devil's Lake S.P., WI (AS), provided the first Wisconsin sighting in years. A Sedge Wren Apr. 28 at Tawas Point S.P. (G & EP) was early. A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher May 10 in Moorhead, MN (*vide* L & CF) was n. and w. of normal.

Eastern Bluebirds were more commonly reported in Michigan. **Mountain Bluebirds** are continuing to increase in Minnesota; a pair nested in Polk, the first breeding for Minnesota, although a male had nested with a ♀ Eastern Bluebird previously. A Gray-cheeked Thrush Apr. 23 at WPB.O. (staff) was early, particularly for so far north. A Townsend's Solitaire was in Washington, WI, Apr. 3–8 (m ob.), which was very late for Wisconsin. Several Varied Thrushes lingered into mid-March in Wisconsin. Northern Mockingbirds were observed in excellent numbers in Michigan and Wisconsin, with 10–11 birds in Wisconsin, and reports from 12 Michigan counties. Five American Pipits were in Allegan, MI, on Mar. 17 (DP, JG), early. Bohemian Waxwings lingered into early April in Wisconsin and Michigan's Lower Peninsula, and until May 19 at W.P.B.O. (staff). Loggerhead Shrikes were up in numbers in Minnesota, including one May 26 in Duluth (KE *et al.*), where they are accidental. However, they were not found in good numbers in Michigan and Wisconsin, with 6 and 3 reports respectively.

An excellent early migration occurred in both Michigan and Wisconsin Apr. 26–29 when most of the spring migrants, along with several of the rarer species, arrived in both states. In Michigan, four species of thrush, five species of vireo, and 27 species of warbler had returned by Apr. 30. A similar influx occurred in Wisconsin, with five species of vireo and 15–20 species of warblers returning by Apr. 29. White-eyed Vireos were seen in excellent numbers in Wisconsin in late April and May, and in above average numbers in Michigan, with one far n. at Tawas Point S.P., Iosco, May 11 (LG). Bell's Vireos were harder to find than normal in Wisconsin, with observers unable to find birds at several traditional nesting sites. They were seen in their usual small numbers in Michigan, with 5 reports. A Red-eyed Vireo was amazingly early for the far north spot of Ashland, WI, Apr. 19 (DV).

An impressive 1000 Yellow-rumped Warblers per hour were seen on Long Island, Ashland, WI, May 14 (EE). The "Audubon's" form of the Yellow-rumped was noted a surprising 3 times: May 2 in Sawyer, WI (PLa), the 2nd for Wisconsin; May 3 in Moorhead, MN (L & CF); and May 15 in Sherburne N.W.R., MN (JHa). Yellow-throated Warblers returned to their usual nesting areas in Berrien, MI, and Rock, WI. There were only 2 additional sightings, both in Wisconsin: Apr. 25 at LaCrosse (FL) and Apr. 28 at Madison (PA). The scarce Prairie Warbler was reported only twice in Michigan, although no reports were received from their primary range in the state. A Cerulean Warbler

May 20 at WPB O. (JS) was well n. of normal, and the first recorded at the observatory. Prothonotary Warblers were more frequently reported in Minnesota this season.

Worm-eating Warblers were reported 6 times in Michigan (high) and 7 times in Wisconsin, including 2 nesting sites, and an early individual Apr. 23 in Madison (DC). In Minnesota, where the species is still considered casual, one was found Apr. 30 in Sakatah S.P., Rice (WS). A Louisiana Waterthrush was way n. of normal Apr. 28 at Vermillion, Chippewa, MI (TA). Caught, banded, and photographed, this bird was thought to be the first for the Upper Peninsula. Kentucky Warblers were seen in good numbers in their traditional Wyalusing S.P., WI, nesting location, with several other spring overshoots seen at various locations. Michigan observers found five individuals, about average. A Hooded Warbler was well n. of normal May 22 in Superior, WI (RJ). Yellow-breasted Chats were scarcer than normal in Wisconsin.

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — Summer Tanagers staged a mini invasion into Wisconsin, with reports of between 10 and 15 individuals, the most ever. Three Summer Tanagers were found in Michigan, about average for this southern species. A Western Tanager was at Fergus Falls, MN, May 16 (S & DM). A **Western Tanager** seen May 6–13 at Marquette, MI (OJ), would be the 2nd for Michigan if accepted by the Michigan Bird Records Committee. Northern Cardinals continued to do well at the northern edge of their range, with reports from the extreme north in all 3 states. Of particular interest was a cardinal found in Sax-Zim Bog, St. Louis, MN (KE *et al.*), well away from any town/feeder. Dickcissels appeared in good numbers in Wisconsin in mid-late May, but were very scarce in Michigan, although one was found n. of normal in Delta, MI, May 20 (CT). A **Green-tailed Towhee** found May 13 in Moorhead (m.ob.) was only the 2nd for Minnesota. Two Am. Tree Sparrows lingered into June at a Port Wing, Bayfield, WI, feeder (LE). Three Lark Sparrows in Michigan made about an average number, but they were scarcer than normal in Wisconsin, where they returned to some nesting sites but were absent from others. A Savannah Sparrow Mar. 13 in Hillsdale, MI (JRe), was very early. A Grasshopper Sparrow May 30 at the Grand Sable Dunes, Alger, MI (R & NF), was n. of normal. Sharp-tailed Sparrows were present at Crex Meadows W.A. in late May (DT, RH). Harris' Sparrows were seen in good numbers in both Michigan and Wisconsin. In Michigan, there were 5 sightings of six birds; one would be normal. In Wisconsin, the migration of Harris' Sparrows was very localized, but in good numbers, with 18 on May 10 in Pepin (RH) particularly impressive.

Smith's Longspurs were seen in very large numbers (hundreds) in Lac Qui Parle, Big Stone, and Traverse, MN, Apr. 28–30 (m.ob.), following the passage of a strong cold front; they are casual in Minnesota in spring. Snow Buntings lingered to May 21 in Kewaunee, WI (MP), and May 27 in Keweenaw, MI (LB). The House Finch invasion rolled on, with reports from 3 locations in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, and reports from Moorhead, Fergus Falls, Morrison, and Duluth in n. and w. Minnesota. House Finches are now virtually everywhere in s. Minnesota, mostly in medium-sized towns at feeders, although they are also well established in the Twin Cities. It has been fascinating to witness the spread of House Finches across the Region from their initial forays into Michigan in the mid-1970s to their first nesting in 1981, their initial appearance in Wisconsin, and finally their appearance in Minnesota. There are now thousands in Michigan, doubtless hundreds in Wisconsin, and they are widespread in Min-



nesota. Only in the extreme north are they hard to come by, and even that seems to be changing. One wonders what will happen when east meets west as soon they must.

Red Crossbills were scarce in Wisconsin and Michigan until late May, except at W.P.B.O., where a few were present in March. White-winged Crossbills were found in excellent numbers in s. Minnesota and s. Wisconsin even into mid-May after last winter's invasion. While Michigan seemingly missed out on the invasion last winter, apparently a good number of White-wingeds came into the state, as 1820 were counted at W.P.B.O. during the period, with some still present at the end of May (staff). Good numbers of Com. Redpolls were in n. Michigan and n. Wisconsin in March and April, with 1744 counted at W.P.B.O. during the season, the last on May 12 (staff). There were several sightings of Hoary Redpolls in n. Wisconsin and at W.P.B.O. in March and early April, last Apr. 11 at W.P.B.O. (staff).



*Hoary Redpoll at Whitefish Point, Michigan, on the relatively late date of April 7, 1990. This bird shows the white rump and stubby bill typical of the Hoary. Photograph/Jim Granlund.*

**CONTRIBUTORS** — (I wish to thank the many individuals who submitted records for this summary. The nature of this summary precludes listing every individual who sent in reports; therefore, only those individuals with cited records are listed below. State editors are in boldface). Tom Allen, Jim Anderson, Ron Annelin, Philip Ashman, Vern Aune, Parker Backstrom, Jeff Baughman, Joe Bens (JBe), Laurie Binford, Walter Booth, Don Brooks, David Cedarstrom, Phil Chu, Tom Cops, Jerry DeBoer, Louis Dombrowski, Mary Donald, John Eastman, Fred Eckardt, **Kim Eckert** (Minnesota), Eric Epstein, Laura Erickson, Audrey Evers, Laurence & Carol Falk, Bruce Fall, Rob & Nancy French, Ray Glassel, Leonard Graf, **Jim Granlund** (Michigan), Larry Gregg (LGr), Dennis Gustafson, Jay Hamernick (JHa), Maybelle Hardy (MHa), Jim Hoefler, Randy Hoffman, Joanie Hubinger (JHb), Mark Hubinger, Joe Hudick (JHu), Nick Ilnicky, Becky Isenring, Brian Johnson, Doug Johnson, Robbye Johnson, Olive Johnson, Dennis Kuecherer, John Lane, Paul Lauten (PLa), Fred Leshner, Tony Leukering, Peggy Lison, John Lubtala (JLu), Tom McMullen, Peg McNamara, Dennis & Barbara Martin, Mark Martin, Sue Martin, Kevin Metcalf, Steve & Diane Milliard, Dan Miller, Mark Moore (MMo), John Ottinger, Ellen & Glenn Peterson, Mark Peterson, Greg Pietila, Rod Planck, Anne Marie Plunkett, Janine Polk, David Powell, Robert Putman (RPu), Jack Reinoehl, Dick Rengstorf, Paul Risch, John Robinson, William Robinson, Al Shea, Sue Shea, Tim Smart (TSm), Jerry Smith (JSm), Roy Smith, Joe Soehnel, Charles Sontag, Tom Soulen, Jack Sprenger, Keith & Shelly Steva, Paul Sunby, Wally Swanson, Charlotte Taylor, **Daryl Tessen** (Wisconsin), Steve Thiessen, Dick Verch, Charles Walkner, Ron Weeks, Tex Wells, John Will, Myles Williard, Steve Wilson, John Woodcock (JWo), W.P.B.O. staff, Tom Ziebell.—**DAVID J. POWELL**, 217 Montrose, Kalamazoo, MI 49001-4222.

## MIDLEWESTERN PRAIRIE REGION

Bruce G. Peterjohn



This winter's unusually warm weather continued into March when temperatures generally averaged 5–8°F above normal. These favorable conditions allowed waterfowl to pass through the Region rapidly and produced numerous record-early arrivals. Weather patterns abruptly changed in early April. Temperatures were generally

below normal April 1–20 and migration slowed to a trickle except for brief local movements. The return of warm temperatures April 20–28 produced the strongest Regionwide movement of the season. Most breeding passerine species returned during this week and there were numerous overflights of warblers, thrushes, and fly-

catchers. Shorebirds were also well represented in this movement. A series of strong cold fronts produced defined flights during each week of May. While these flights produced impressive numbers of migrants, they largely occurred mid-week and were not witnessed by most birders. As usual, stragglers were still passing through the northern states during early June.

March snowstorms were short-lived events, while April and May were characterized by excessive rainfall throughout the Region. This above-normal precipitation filled ponds and reservoirs, caused local flooding, and signalled an end to the drought conditions that had prevailed in some states since 1988.

While perceptions of this migration varied from state to state, it was generally a fairly eventful season. Most migrants appeared in encouraging numbers, especially when compared with the dearth of sizable flights characteristic of recent springs. Additionally, scattered rarities generated excitement in most states.

**ABBREVIATIONS** —S.C.R. = Squaw Creek Nat'l Wildlife Ref., MO; Say. Res. = Saylorville Reservoir, IA; M.M.W.A. = Magee Marsh Wildlife Management Area, OH; U.S.R. = Union Slough Nat'l Wildlife Ref., IA; Spfld. = Springfield, IL. *Italicized* place names are counties.

**LOONS TO IBISES** — Single Red-throated Loons at Buck Creek S.P., OH, Mar. 25–Apr. 1 (+DO *et al.*) and Evanston, IL, Apr. 4 (EW) represented normal numbers for this very rare spring migrant. One of the wintering Pacific Loons at Table Rock L., MO, lingered through May 9 (CL, m.ob.). An accidental spring migrant, the immature **Pacific Loon** was a surprising visitor to Alum Creek Res.,



*Pacific Loon (with a Common Loon, front, for comparison) at Alum Creek Reservoir, Ohio, May 21, 1990. Second state record. Photograph/Mary Gustafson.*

OH, May 21–22 (+BPj, MG, m.ob., ph.), furnishing the 2nd acceptable state record. The first Com. Loon returned to Illinois by Mar. 16. Their numbers were unimpressive except for 64 at Caesar Creek Res., OH, Apr. 20 (WM). Missouri's wintering **Yellow-billed Loon** also remained at Table Rock L. through May 9, and molted into its stunning breeding plumage before departing (CL, m.ob.).

No large flocks of Pied-billed Grebes were reported. Impressive concentrations of Horned Grebes totalled 250 at Table Rock L., MO, Mar. 11–25 (CL, JH) and 210 in Gibson, IN, Mar. 4 (GB). They were decidedly scarce elsewhere. Small numbers lingered into May in most states, as late as May 23 in Iowa and Indiana. An above normal spring movement of Red-necked Grebes consisted of singles in Iowa, Illinois, and Indiana as well as one or two at 4 Ohio locations. The Red-necked at L. Decatur, IL, lingered through May 7 (MD, RP, m.ob.). It was also a good

spring for Eared Grebes. In the w. states, they peaked at 21 at Dunbar Slough, IA, May 2 (SD). Small numbers were reported from 9 sites in Illinois, as late as May 22–29 at Riverdale (WMA, m.ob.). There were also 3 reports from Ohio. Western Grebes appeared in above-normal numbers with a maximum of four at Thomas Hill Res., MO, Apr. 14–16 (BG, IA). Three or fewer were also noted at 8 Iowa lakes. A casual spring migrant in Illinois, one Western was noted at Charleston May 14–18 (RBU, m.ob.).

Normal numbers of Am. White Pelicans passed through



*Seven American White Pelicans at Lake Renwick, Illinois, April 25, 1990. Although outnumbered by the 105 at Quincy on the western edge of the state, this group set a record high for northeastern Illinois. Photograph/Joe B. Milosevich.*

the w. states, peaking at 1000 in Taney, MO, Apr. 5 (GJ). The 105 White Pelicans near Quincy Apr. 15 (RD) made an unprecedented spring flock for Illinois. There were 2 other Illinois sightings and one wandered E to Patoka Res., IN, Mar. 22 (JCa). A **Brown Pelican** paid a brief visit to L. Erie at Bay Village Apr. 29 (+SS *et al.*). While the details were rather sketchy, this sighting could represent the first acceptable record for Ohio. Another(?) **Brown Pelican** graced the Chicago lakefront, where a tantalizingly distant



*Brown Pelican at Montrose Harbor, Chicago, May 15, 1990. Seventh Illinois record. Photograph/Joe B. Milosevich.*

observation May 7 was followed by confirmed sightings at L. Calumet May 14 (Rbi *et al.*), Montrose harbor May 15–18 (m.ob., ph.), and Evanston May 21 (*vide* EW). It represented Illinois' 7th record. Brown Pelicans were formerly irregular visitors to the midwest, with most records preceding the DDT-induced crash of their populations during the 1950s and 1960s. With their recent resurgence along the Gulf of Mexico, Brown Pelicans may once again become accidental/casual visitors to this Region. The largest flocks of Double-crested Cormorants totalled

850–1400 in Iowa and 300–500+ in Missouri and Illinois, fairly good numbers for recent springs. Improved numbers elsewhere included 200 at Hovey L., Mar. 22 (JCa), a sizable flock for s. Indiana.

Hérons produced few noteworthy records. American Bitterns returned by Mar. 23–31 in normal numbers with a total of 35+ records. The 15+ Least Bittern sightings were also normal for recent years. Great Egrets returned to w. Lake Erie by Mar. 17, and large flocks developed only near heronries. Ten records of extralimital Snowy Egrets were above normal, and outnumbered reports of wandering Little Blues. An early Little Blue Heron returned to *Union*, IL, Mar. 18 (BD). The only Tricolored Heron reported was from the Chicago area, where it has resided for a number of years. Record-early Cattle Egrets returned to Duck Creek W.M.A., MO, Mar. 16 (BR) and *Pickaway*, OH, Mar. 24 (BM *et al.*). Numbers of migrants may be increasing in Illinois, where 100 were noted at Rend L. May 19 (LA), but similar trends were not apparent in the other states. Wandering Cattle Egrets were reported from 11 Iowa counties, and ten individuals were scattered across Indiana, but few appeared elsewhere. Green-backed Herons returned to Kentucky and s. Illinois by Apr. 7–8, but remained scarce at many locations. Black-crowned Night-Herons returned to most states by Mar. 14–21 in normal numbers. An early Yellow-crowned Night-Heron appeared at Louisville Mar. 17 (*fide* AS). The expected number of reports of Yellow-crowned included three records from n. Illinois and one in n.w. Indiana. White-faced Ibises staged a good movement through the w. states, peaking at 35 at S.C.R., Apr. 28 (AB), and producing 4 Iowa records of one or two individuals. A **White-faced Ibis** appeared in Indiana for the 2nd consecutive spring, visiting Kingsbury W.M.A. May 6–7 (BPo, †m.ob., ph.). They are accidental anywhere e. of the Mississippi River.

**WATERFOWL** — While sizable flocks developed at a few localities, the waterfowl migration was generally lackluster, no doubt reflecting the declining continental populations of most species. Two **Fulvous Whistling-Ducks** were carefully identified at Rend L., IL, May 13–14 (BD, †DRo *et al.*), furnishing the 6th state record of a species whose number of midwestern vagrant records has declined markedly since the early 1970s. The Tundra Swan migration bypassed this Region since only small numbers were encountered in the n. states. Extralimital records consisted of one in *Henderson*, KY, Mar. 11 (LRa, BP) and two at S.C.R., Mar. 22–Apr. 3 (RB *et al.*). The only Trumpeter Swan was an immature discovered at M.M.W.A. Apr. 8 (BPj, MG, ph.). Mute Swans continued to increase, especially in Illinois, where 51 were tallied during March 5–19 aerial surveys of the Illinois R. (RC).

A strong flight of Greater White-fronted Geese produced flocks of 1000 at U.S.R. Mar. 25 (MK), 250 in *Taney*, MO, Mar. 1 (JH, PM), and March 5 aerial totals of 710 along the Mississippi R. and 600 along the Illinois R. in Illinois (RC). Smaller flocks were widespread in Illinois, but these geese did not wander E of *Gibson*, IN. Late White-fronteds lingered until May 5 at Rawson L., IL (SSh) and May 28 in *Sioux*, IA (BHu). Surprising numbers of late Snow Geese appeared during May with flocks of 20–21 in Missouri and Iowa May 22–24 and scattered singles in Iowa, Indiana, and Illinois through May 26–31. Ohio's wintering Ross' Goose was still present in *Jackson* May 25 (DM). Migrant Ross' Geese were scattered across the w. states and appeared at 2 Illinois sites during March.

The March 19 aerial survey of the Illinois R. and Mississippi R. valleys, IL, yielded some impressive totals of pud-

dle ducks 3200+ Green-winged Teals, 3900+ Am. Black Ducks, 190,000+ Mallards, 43,000+ N. Pintails, 14,000+ Blue-winged Teals, 37,000+ N. Shovelers, 18,500+ Gadwalls, and 34,000+ Am. Wigeons (RC). With the exception of 4000 N. Pintails in *Gibson*, IN, Mar. 4 (GB), similar numbers were not evident to observers on the ground. Cinnamon Teal appeared in good numbers for the 2nd consecutive spring. One or two were reported from 6 Iowa locations. Farther east, there were single teal at *Sangamon*, IL, Mar. 18–25 (†DB), L. Shelbyville, IL, Apr. 23 (†RCh), and near Salem, IN, Apr. 25 (†TL *et al.*). Two reports of Eur. Wigeon were typical of most springs, with single males at Oberlin Res., OH, Mar. 11 (GG) and Palos, IL, Mar. 25–26 (*fide* EW).

The aerial survey of the Illinois R. and Mississippi R., IL, Mar. 19 also produced noteworthy diving duck numbers: 52,000+ Canvasbacks, 6000+ Redheads, 47,000+ Ring-necked Ducks, 98,000+ scaup, 5500+ Buffleheads, and 5000+ Ruddy Ducks. The March 5 survey of these rivers yielded 43,500+ Com. Goldeneyes, 2000+ Hooded Mergansers, and 17,500+ Com. Mergansers (RC). Other sizable flocks of divers included 1500 Canvasbacks in *Henderson*, IL, Mar. 24 (MBa), 4500 Redheads and 6000 Ring-neckeds in *Gibson*, IN, Mar. 4 (GB), 2600 Ring-neckeds at Mogadore Res., OH, Mar. 8 (LR), and flocks of 1500–6500+ scaup in most states. Late Greater Scaup were still present at Riverton W.M.A., IA, May 24 (SD) and in *Cook*, IL, May 31 (WMA).

Harlequin Ducks were well represented along the Great Lakes with one at Hammond, IN, Mar. 10 (KB *et al.*), another along the Chicago lakefront through Mar. 28 (m.ob.), and at least four individuals along the Cleveland lakefront with one lingering through Apr. 21 (WK). Oldsquaw were scarce on the Great Lakes with a maximum of only nine at Cleveland. The 13 inland records were slightly above normal, scattered across every state with a late migrant at Rice L., IA, May 11 (SD). The only Black Scoters were two at Evanston, IL, Apr. 4 (EW). It was a good spring for Surf Scoters. The Great Lakes maximum was of six at Cleveland, while there were eight inland sightings scattered across the n. states Apr. 15–May 14. Unprecedented numbers of White-winged Scoters appeared on L. Erie at Cleveland where flocks of 30–60 were noted at several locations and 186 were counted Mar. 10 (EP). Only small numbers were reported on L. Michigan, and six inland records from the n. states were typical of recent springs. An impressive 1500 Com. Goldeneyes gathered in *Gibson*, IN, Mar. 4 (GB). Late goldeneyes were noted through May 18–20 in Illinois and Ohio, May 30 at Cardinal Marsh, IA (DC), and May 31 at U.S.R. (MK). The last Com. Mergansers were noted May 15–24 in Iowa and Illinois.

**HAWKS TO CRANES** — The Indiana Dunes area experienced another good hawk flight, tallying 3070 individuals with record seasonal counts of 14 Bald Eagles, 132 N. Harriers, 654 Sharp-shinned, 216 Red-shoulders, and 25 Rough-leggeds (*fide* KB). Similar flights were not encountered elsewhere as most observers found few migrating hawks.

The earliest Osprey returned to c. Illinois by Mar. 23, presaging a good migration with a daily maximum of seven in Missouri. Mississippi Kites returned to s. Illinois Apr. 23, slightly ahead of schedule. In Missouri, extralimital kites wandered to Swan Lake N.W.R. Apr. 27–29 (JG) and near Jefferson City May 17 (PMc). Another **Mississippi Kite** was discovered at Coralville Res. May 19 (†TK), furnishing one of few recent records for Iowa. The largest

daily flight of migrant Bald Eagles totalled ten in the Indiana Dunes Mar. 14 (*vide* KB), while their continued recovery was evident in every state. Northern Harriers received mixed reports, and were most plentiful near the Great Lakes. At the low end of their cyclical movements, N. Goshawks were very scarce with only one acceptable sighting from Illinois. The only sizable Red-shouldered Hawk flight totalled 74 at Indiana Dunes, IN, Mar. 14 (*vide* KB). Broad-winged Hawks returned to c. Illinois and n.e. Indiana by Apr. 4–5, but their northward passage was generally poor. While 572 at Busch W.M.A., Apr. 22 (JZ) represented a record spring count for Missouri, the only other “flight” totalled 165 along w. Lake Erie Apr. 23.

As expected, small numbers of Swainson’s Hawks were scattered across the w. states. In Illinois, Swainson’s appeared near Spfld. Apr. 21 (DB, ph.) and near Rockford May 10–26 (JDo) in addition to the breeding pairs in *Kane*. Rough-legged Hawks staged an unusual flight in early May. This movement was most noticeable in Illinois, where there were scattered sightings May 5–13 and a very late hawk was reported from Belvidere May 30 (EB). Another Rough-legged in *Pike* May 5 (DM, TBa) was very late for s. Ohio. Twelve reports of Golden Eagles were slightly above normal. They were found in every state with a maximum of five in *Union*, IL, Mar. 18 (BD, m.ob.). One at Delaware W.M.A. Apr. 22 (BPj) was unexpected in c. Ohio, where there are few recent records. Merlins and Peregrines continued to increase as migrants, producing 25–30+ sightings of both species. Prairie Falcons were represented by a wintering individual in c. Illinois through Mar. 11 and a migrant near Marshalltown, IA, Apr. 4 (BPr).

As Gray Partridges expand within s. Iowa, occasional birds cross into Missouri, where one was reported from *Nodaway* May 3 (*vide* DE). A wandering Ruffed Grouse was discovered in n.w. Indiana at South Bend Mar. 6 (DS). Numbers of rails remained low, perhaps reflecting the drought conditions in their breeding range. Yellow Rails were reported from one Illinois and 3 Missouri locations Apr. 8–May 14. The only report of the elusive Black Rail was from S.C.R. May 23 (†DE). King Rails were reduced to single sightings from Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio, additional declines in their already small population. A few rails returned early with Virginias in Illinois and Ohio by Apr. 1 and a Sora at Cone Marsh, IA, Mar. 31 (AJ). The largest reported concentrations were of nine Virginias and 20–25 Soras. Common Moorhens were universally scarce. An impressive 181,000+ Am. Coots were tallied on aerial surveys of the Mississippi R. and Illinois R., IL, Mar. 19 (RC), but their numbers were low elsewhere. Sandhill Cranes were plentiful in n.w. Indiana and n.e. Illinois Mar. 11–14 when flocks of 200–650+ were widespread. The seasonal total of 3686 cranes in the Indiana Dunes area was remarkable (*vide* KB). Smaller numbers were widely noted in Kentucky through Mar. 19. Extralimital cranes are becoming more numerous each year. This migration produced records of three to five cranes at 2 Missouri sites, 5 reports from Iowa with a maximum of nine Sandhills, and 10 records from Ohio e. to *Adams* May 23 (DM, PWh) and *Geauga* May 10–15 (BF).

**SHOREBIRDS**—The most pronounced Regionwide shorebird movement occurred Apr. 20–30, while their May migration was generally disappointing. A Lesser Golden-Plover in *Warren*, KY, Mar. 3 was early (BP). Normal numbers passed through Illinois and Iowa with maxima of 6000 in *Jasper*, IL, Apr. 13 (RP) and 1000–2000+ at other locations. Very few appeared e. of Illinois. A **Snowy**

**Plover** was detected in the Region for the 5th consecutive spring when one appeared near Burlington, IA, Apr. 28 (†CF). A Semipalmated Plover at Sangchris L., IL, Apr. 10 was early (DB). It was a good spring for Piping Plovers in Iowa and Illinois with nine and five sightings, respectively. None was found in the other states. The 16+ records of Am. Avocets constituted an above-normal spring flight. Their largest flocks in the w. states totalled 13–21, while locally unusual concentrations included 21 near Spfld. Apr. 15 (DB), 16 in *Henry*, IN, Apr. 21 (LC), and 10 at East Fork Res., OH, Apr. 20–21 (DD *et al.*).

Four Lesser Yellowlegs in *Warren*, KY, Mar. 3 (BP) were fairly early, while a Solitary Sandpiper at Big Island W.M.A., OH, June 4 was late (BPj). An impressive Willet migration produced 40+ reports, peaking at 40 at Swan Lake N.W.R., MO, Apr. 28 (m.ob.), 37 at Bays Branch, IA, Apr. 29 (SD, AF), and 21 in *Hamilton*, OH, Apr. 30 (JD). Flocks of 11–17 Willets were noted at other locations. A Spotted Sandpiper in *Taney*, MO, Mar. 25 was fairly early (JH), while 75 at Cleveland May 13 provided an unusual concentration (*vide* LR). Whimbrels were restricted to the Chicago lakefront May 20–29, peaking at 12 on the last date (JLa, m.ob.). Hudsonian Godwits were fairly scarce in the w. states, although 46 congregated at the IPL ponds, IA, May 24 (SD) and 23 at Colo, IA, May 14 (HZ). Four or fewer appeared at 2 Illinois locations. Small numbers of Marbled Godwits were noted in the w. states. The 6+ Illinois records included 20 near Spfld. Apr. 14 (DB); none was noted e. of Illinois.

Red Knots appeared briefly along both Great Lakes including a sizable spring flock of 60 at Waukegan, IL, May 19 (DDz). Early Sanderlings returned to Spfld. Apr. 15 (DB) and Iowa and Indiana by Apr. 19. Their numbers were generally low, even along the Great Lakes. The expected small numbers of Western Sandpipers were scattered across Iowa, Missouri, and Illinois, while one at Cleveland May 20 (LR, RH) was a casual spring visitor to Ohio. Early Least Sandpipers were discovered Mar. 17 in *Warren*, KY (BP), and Mar. 31 at Sangchris L., IL (DB). White-rumped Sandpipers were plentiful in n.w. Missouri with 400 at S.C.R. May 14 (MR) and 450 in *Holt* May 20 (DE). The first Baird’s Sandpiper appeared in *Taney*, MO, Mar. 25 (JH, PM) and the largest flock in the w. states totalled 84 in Iowa. Single Baird’s at Salamonie Res., IN, Apr. 28, Kingsbury W.M.A., IN, May 7 (Haw *et al.*), and L. Rockwell, OH, May 4 (CH, †LR) were found in states where there are very few confirmed spring records. Early Pectoral Sandpipers returned to *Warren*, KY, Mar. 3 (BP), and Say. Res. Mar. 4 (SD), but their migration was generally unimpressive. A Dunlin in *Warren*, KY, Mar. 31 was early (BP). The expected flocks appeared along the Great Lakes, while above-normal numbers inland included 125 at S.C.R. May 14 (MR) and 95 at Spfld. May 26 (DB).

A remarkable 625 Stilt Sandpipers congregated in *Holt*, MO, May 20 (DE), easily that state’s largest spring flock. Small numbers of Stilt Sandpipers were scattered across the n. states. The only Buff-breasted Sandpipers from the w. states were 22 at Riverton W.M.A., IA, May 19 (DR, RR). One was briefly viewed at Barberton May 28 (†RHa) for only the 2nd spring record from Ohio. The only acceptably documented Ruff graced the Cleveland lakefront May 16–20 (†RH, m.ob.). The dowitcher migration was unremarkable. Common Snipes peaked at 75–105 in Illinois and Iowa, while a large movement of Am. Woodcock totalled 58 at Spoon L., IL, Mar. 12 (MBa). An early Wilson’s Phalarope in *Gibson*, IN, Apr. 18 presaged a fairly good movement with maxima of 96 at S.C.R. Apr. 29 (DE), 24 at U.S.R. May 1 (MK), and 14 at Arcola, IL, May 12

(RCh). An unprecedented flight of Red-necked Phalaropes passed through Iowa with 54 at Spirit L. May 21, 34 at Ventura Marsh May 21, and 27 at South Twin L. May 22 (SD). A maximum of seven appeared in Holt, MO, May 25 (DE), while the only one e. of the Mississippi R. was noted in Illinois.

**GULLS, TERNS**—These groups produced few surprises. An unusually strong spring flight of Laughing Gulls yielded 10+ reports along L. Michigan (some duplication is likely) and 20 sightings on L. Erie. Inland records consisted of 3 sightings in Illinois and single reports from Indiana and Kentucky. The largest flocks of Franklin's Gulls in the w. states totalled 300–440, while the 20+ sightings e. of the Mississippi R. were above normal for recent years. Little Gulls were restricted to Waukegan, IL, where three individuals were identified Apr. 23–May 5 (DDz, MH, ASi *et al.*). Bonaparte's Gulls were locally numerous, producing maxima of 3000+ on L. Michigan and 1000+ in w. Kentucky. A California Gull studied at Sangchris L. May 5 (+DB) furnished the 4th spring record from Illinois. Lingering gulls along the Great Lakes included a Thayer's in n.w. Indiana Apr. 4 and Iceland's in Ohio and Illinois through Apr. 7–9. Lesser Black-backed Gulls were detected only once on the Great Lakes (on L. Michigan), but inland sightings included up to two in Gibson, IN, Apr. 1–22 (GB, ph.), one at L. Rockwell, OH, Apr. 6 (+CH), the wintering gull at L. Barkley, KY, through Apr. 7 (BP), and one near Quincy, IL, Apr. 15 (+TRD). Late Glaucous Gulls remained through May 13 at Clinton L., IL (RP) and May 6 at Waukegan, IL (EW). Great Black-backed Gulls continued to slowly increase along L. Michigan. Inland reports were limited to the wintering immature at L. Barkley, KY, through May 8–9 (BP, ph.) and an unexpected adult at Spfld. May 25 (+DB). An imm. Black-legged Kittiwake at Beaver Creek Res. Mar. 20 (+TBr) established Ohio's first inland spring record.

Early Caspian Terns returned to L. Barkley, KY (BP), and Erie, OH (TBr), by Apr. 1. Their only sizable concentration totalled 156 at Say. Res. May 20 (SD). Exceptional numbers of Com. Terns gathered along L. Michigan in Illinois where 2860 were counted in Lake May 21 (EW) and flocks of 100–500+ were noted at other sites. Their numbers peaked at 200 on L. Erie while large inland flocks included 98 in Gibson, IN, May 12 (GB) and 50 at Spfld. May 13 (DB). Early Forster's Terns also returned to w. Kentucky and 2 Ohio locations by Apr. 1. Their largest flocks totalled 100–186 in Iowa and Illinois. Within their established breeding range, Least Terns peaked at 36 in s. Illinois. Extralimital sightings consisted of one in Nodaway, MO, June 2 (DE, TE), and n. Illinois' 4th record with up to two in Will June 10–11 (DJ, JM). Black Terns staged their best spring flight in a number of years. An incredible 2900+ were estimated along the Mississippi R. between E. St. Louis–Cairo, IL, May 18 (KM). Other large flocks included 200–250 at scattered locations in Missouri and Iowa and 100–116 in c. and n. Illinois.

**CUCKOOS TO FLYCATCHERS**—Both cuckoos were decidedly scarce. While a few early arrivals were noted, such as a Black-billed at Spfld. Apr. 24 (DB) and Yellow-billed in Lucas, OH, Apr. 29 (MA), their migration was very late and many did not return until June. A Greater Roadrunner in Oregon May 7 (TD) was east of its normal range in Missouri. Barn Owl reports were limited to nesting individuals. Following a dismal winter for Snowy Owls there were only 2 spring records, both in Illinois, with an owl at Catlin lingering through Apr. 7 (m.ob.).



Long-eared Owl at Chain o' Lakes State Park, Illinois, March 12, 1990. Relatively few were found in the Middlewestern Prairie Region this spring. Photograph/Jim Solum.

Relatively few Long-eared Owls were detected, with a maximum of 12 in n. Illinois. Short-eared Owls were widespread, and a number of April and May sightings raised the possibility of nesting. Only widely scattered N. Saw-whet Owls were encountered in the n. states. Common Nighthawks returned to s. Illinois by Apr. 21 but they were late arrivals at many other locations. Most observers reported small numbers, with a maximum of 150 in the Chicago area. Whip-poor-wills appear to be declining at a number of locations. Early Chimney Swifts returned to 2 Missouri sites Apr. 4–5. Their largest flocks totalled 345–500+ in Illinois and Indiana. A Ruby-throated Hummingbird in Grayson, KY, Apr. 8 (KC) was also an early migrant. Their numbers were generally low.

Migrant woodpeckers were noted in relatively poor numbers in most areas. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were numerous only along L. Erie, where 30 were counted at Headlands Beach S.P. Apr. 15 (LR). They lingered into May in most states, as late as May 17–23 in the Chicago area. The flycatcher migration was uneventful and few sizable concentrations developed. Their peak movements were somewhat later than normal during late May and early June. Overflight E. Wood-Pewees appeared at several locations by Apr. 22–24, but other typically late flycatchers such as Yellow-bellied, Alder, and Willow did not appear until mid-May. Concentrations of 13 Yellow-bellieds at Spfld. May 25 (DB), 12 Alders at Chicago June 8 (EW), and 30 Least along the Cleveland lakefront during May were representative of their peak numbers this spring. Least Flycatchers were also widespread during late April, appearing north to the Great Lakes. Extralimital Western Kingbirds were restricted to Illinois, where singles were reported from 4 locations in the Chicago area May 16–26 (JLa, RHu, MH *et al.*) and near Rockford June 14 (JBr). Early E. Kingbirds returned to Ozark, IL, Apr. 18 (TF) and Norwalk, IA, Apr. 21 (AJ). Their largest flights produced 90 kingbirds along the Mississippi R. between E. St. Louis–Cairo, IL, May 18 (KM) and 51 at L. Calumet, IL, May 19 (JLa). Single extralimital Scissor-tailed Fly-





Scissor-tailed Flycatcher east of range at Glencoe, Illinois, May 16, 1990. Photograph by Jim Landing.

catchers were discovered at Glencoe, IL, May 14–22 (JS, †m.ob.), Van Buren, IA, May 15 (JF), Horseshoe L., IL, May 22 (†BW), and Champaign, IL, June 6 (RCh).

**SWALLOWS TO SHRIKES**—Swallows produced a number of early records with Purple Martins appearing north to Cincinnati by Mar. 17 (NW) and Tree Swallows at a number of locations by Mar. 10–15. Large flocks included 3000 Trees at L. Waveland, IN, Apr. 1 (AB). The most surprising bird of the season was a **Violet-green Swallow** photographed in Holmes, OH, May 16 (†DK, †BGl *et al.*). It established Ohio's first record and one of very few confirmed reports e. of the Mississippi R. Other early swallows appeared in Taney, MO, with a N. Rough-winged Mar. 17 and a Bank Mar. 31 (PM, JH). The largest flight of Bank Swallows totalled 1575 at Evanston, IL, May 16 (EW). Early Cliff Swallows appeared at Sangchris L., IL, Mar. 31 (DB) and Buck Creek S.P., OH, Apr. 7 (BM); their increasing numbers included flocks of 250–450 in Illinois. Large Barn Swallow flocks consisted of 1850 at Evanston, IL, May 16 (EW) and 1000+ in Pike, OH, May 5 (DM, TBa).

The only sizable Am. Crow flight produced 2300 at Headlands Beach S.P., OH, Mar. 11 (LR *et al.*). Fish Crows are increasing in s. Illinois, peaking at 55 in Union Apr. 15 (DRo). The return flight of Red-breasted Nuthatches resulted in small numbers passing through each state and late migrants appearing at scattered localities until May 26–June 2. Late migrant Brown Creepers were noted along both Great Lakes May 27–28. Other than s. Missouri's population, the only Bewick's Wrens were one at Spfld. Apr. 17 (CO) and another in Kentucky. Winter Wrens were scarce, peaking at 12 along L. Erie. A Sedge Wren at Chicago Apr. 16 was an early migrant (EW), while a Marsh Wren at Duck Creek W.M.A., MO, Mar. 16 (BR) may have wintered. Kinglets were most numerous in Ohio, where concentrations of 40–125 were reported for both species. Late migrants included a Golden-crowned at Cincinnati May 13 (PW) and Ruby-crowned in Iowa and Illinois May 27–28. Two early Blue-gray Gnatcatchers returned to Jefferson, KY, Mar. 20 (LRa). Their numbers continued to increase, with an impressive 78 tallied in Union, IL, Apr. 14 (DRo).

Improved numbers of E. Bluebirds included late migrants along both Great Lakes May 17–June 1. Where these tardy bluebirds are headed remains a mystery. Mis-

souri's 6th and 7th **Mountain Bluebirds** were singles at Prairie S.P. Apr. 2 (†JL) and near Cedar Springs Apr. 10–14 (EJ, †m.ob., ph.). The wintering Townsend's Solitaire at Brown's L., IA, was last observed Apr. 7 (BHu). *Catharus* thrushes staged an excellent flight. Veeries peaked at 95+ at Chicago May 15 (m.ob.) while Gray-cheekeds produced maxima of 10–13 in Illinois and Iowa. Local concentrations of Swainson's Thrushes included 45+ in Barry, MO, May 6 (JH, PM), 200+ at Ledges S.P., IA, May 11 (SD, AF), 59–65 at 2 Illinois sites May 16, and "hundreds" passing over c. Ohio during the night of May 19–20. The largest flights of Hermit Thrushes totalled 29–33 at Chicago. Wood Thrushes were generally scarce. Wintering Varied Thrushes remained through Mar. 10 at Libertyville, IL (WMa), and Apr. 8 at Ft. Wayne, IN (Haw). Migrant mimids included flocks of 40–55 Gray Catbirds along both Great Lakes, and 50 Brown Thrashers in St. Louis, MO, Apr. 21 (JZ). Cedar Waxwings exhibited their typical bimodal migration pattern, although their numbers during May were relatively small in some states. Wintering N. Shrikes remained in n. Illinois and n. Ohio through Mar. 11–19. Loggerhead Shrikes were reported in typical numbers for recent years.

**VIREOS, WARBLERS**—Bell's Vireos were generally reported from traditional locations in the e. states, although one at Headlands Beach S.P. May 19–20 (JVn, LR) was unexpected in n.e. Ohio. Early vireos included a Solitary in Hocking, OH, Mar. 31 (BPj, MG), plus Taney, MO, sightings of a Yellow-throated Apr. 8, Philadelphia Apr. 21, and Red-eyed Apr. 8 (JH). Only Philadelphia Vireos appeared in fairly good numbers, peaking at 10 in s.e. Missouri.

Warblers elicited mixed comments with n. Illinois experiencing the largest flights. Good numbers of Golden-winged Warblers were encouraging with maxima of 20 near Mingo N.W.R., MO, May 5 (BR, RBr), 20 in St. Louis, MO, May 13 (JZ), and 19 at Chicago May 15 (EL). Some records of early warblers included scattered Tennessees Apr. 22–24, an Orange-crowned in Fulton, IL, Apr. 9 (KR), and Louisville reports of a N. Parula Mar. 28 and Yellow Apr. 10 (DN). Cape May Warblers were rather scarce, although 40 were noted in one tree in Chicago May 16 (RBI). Rare migrants in the w. states, single Black-throated Blue Warblers were reported from Mingo N.W.R., MO, May 5 (BR) and Ledges S.P., IA., May 11 (SD, AF). Late Yellow-rumped Warblers in the Chicago area June 8–10 included one exhibiting characteristics of the Audubon's race (†EW). A Yellow-rumped also remained at Euclid, OH, through June 2 (J & DHo). The expanding Yellow-throated Warbler wandered N to Walnut Woods S.P., IA, May 28 (RM) and Pine Lake S.P., IA, May 29 (MP). An early Prairie Warbler returned to Ozark, IL, Apr. 11 (TF) while extralimital records included one at Iowa City, IA, May 23–29 (JF, m.ob.) where they are casual visitors.

An early Palm Warbler at Long L., IN, Mar. 31 (KB *et al.*) presaged a good flight with a maximum of 200 at Chicago May 17 (JP). Other early warblers included a Bay-breasted in Cook, IL, Apr. 17 (*vide* RBI), three Blackpolls at Pomona, IL, Apr. 23 (KM), and a Black-and-white at Mammoth Cave N.P., KY, Apr. 8 (J & PB). Good numbers of Am. Redstarts peaked at 205 in 2 trees at Chicago May 15 (RHg, HR *et al.*). A Prothonotary Warbler at S.C.R. May 4 (DE) was unusual in n.w. Missouri. Overflight Worm-eating Warblers were widespread in n. Illinois, but were overshadowed by the Swainson's Warbler banded in Winnebago, IL, Apr. 28 (LJ, JA). Fifty Ovenbirds at Chicago May 15 (RHg, JP) easily surpassed other concentrations. The earliest Louisiana

Waterthrush appeared in Peoria, IL, Mar. 21 (LA), while one at Stone S.P. May 16 (BHu) was a rare visitor to w. Iowa. An early Wilson's Warbler in *St. Louis*, MO, Apr. 17 (+JZ *et al.*) exhibited characteristics of a w. race. Unusual inland warbler concentrations included 30 Wilson's in *Kossuth*, IA, May 15 (MK) and 50+ Canadas at Trail of Tears S.F., IL, during late May (DRo, SR).

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES**—Both tanagers were reported in low numbers in several states, although overflight Summers were rather plentiful in n. Illinois. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak in *Jefferson*, KY, Mar. 24 (*vide* BP) may have wintered locally. Their spring migration was unimpressive in most states. Blue Grosbeaks continued to expand, producing scattered overflights N to the Great Lakes where singles in *Lake*, IL, Apr. 28–May 2 (MH, DBr, m.ob.) and M.M.W.A., May 20 (MG) were unexpected. One in Ozark, IL, Apr. 18 was fairly early (TF). A well-described ♀ Lazuli Bunting in *Jackson* May 11 (+MM) furnished Missouri's 7th spring record. Normal numbers of Dickcissels included strays E to *Holmes*, OH.

The N passage of sparrows started with numerous March migrants, but their numbers later in the season were generally mediocre. Late Am. Tree Sparrows lingered through May 6 along w. Lake Erie, May 11 at Muscatatuck N.W.R., IN (PW, JBe), and May 12 in *Clermont*, OH (DH). Early Chipping Sparrows returned to *Taney*, MO, Mar. 5 (JH) and Worthington, OH, Mar. 12 (BM), and there were numerous additional sightings later in March. In the w. states, Clay-colored Sparrows peaked at 30 in Sioux Center, IA, May 10 (JV). An excellent migration through Illinois produced 12+ records of Clay-colored with a maximum of five at Evanston May 16 (EW). A casual migrant in w. Iowa, a Lark Bunting was observed at DeSoto N.W.R. Apr. 28 (MB). Savannah Sparrows returned to n. Illinois Mar. 12, and were still passing through n.w. Missouri and n. Illinois June 1–6. Their largest reported concentration totalled 42 in Illinois. Migrant Henslow's Sparrows were found in normal numbers for recent years, including 2 reports from Iowa, where they are proving to be regular in very small numbers. Reports of migrant Sharp-tailed Sparrows at 2 L. Michigan locations, one site on L. Erie, and one Iowa marsh were normal for recent years.

A fairly good flight of Fox Sparrows produced maxima of 35–45 along both Great Lakes and 20 in Missouri. A Lincoln's Sparrow banded in *Seneca*, OH, Apr. 15 (TBr) was early, but later migrants were scarce. Concentrations of 150 Swamp Sparrows at Fermi, IL, May 5 (VB, PK), 500 White-throats in *St. Louis*, MO, Apr. 23 (JZ), and 125 White-crowns at Chicago May 15 (JP) were not representative of the numbers encountered by most observers. The wintering Golden-crowned Sparrow at Green River Conservation Area, IL, was last observed Apr. 11 (JK). It was a good spring for Harris' Sparrows, especially e. of the Mississippi R., where there were 9+ reports from Illinois including five in the Chicago area May 16 (RBi *et al.*). Single Harris' Sparrows at Chesterton, IN, May 21 (BJ *et al.*) and Ottawa N.W.R., OH, May 10 (+BM) were casual spring visitors to those states. The only large movement of Dark-eyed Juncos totalled 500 at Cleveland Apr. 20 (J & DHo). Surprising numbers of late juncos were encountered during May, including scattered sightings in Ohio, Missouri, and Indiana May 21–23 as well as one at S.C.R. May 31 (TB). The largest flocks of Lapland Longspurs consisted of 2000+ in *Knox*, IL, Mar. 7 (mBa) and 400–650 in Iowa and other Illinois locations. They were scarce elsewhere. A fairly typical spring flight of Smith's Longspurs peaked at 517 in *Knox*, IL, Apr. 8 (mBa) and 150 in *Johnson*, IA, Mar.

24–Apr. 12 (TK *et al.*) Six in *Newton*, IN, Apr. 21 (Haw *et al.*) were at the e. edge of their confirmed range.

While good numbers of Bobolinks appeared in Kentucky, the other states did not share in this movement. A territorial W. Meadowlark in *Portage* May 13–31 (LR, m.ob.) furnished one of few recent records for n.e. Ohio. Scattered individuals were noted at other locations in n. Indiana and n. Ohio. Breeding Yellow-headed Blackbirds appeared E to w. Lake Erie. They were plentiful in n.w. Missouri, where 300+ were estimated at S.C.R. Apr. 29 (DE), and wandered widely in Illinois, with 10+ records of extralimital individuals scattered across the state. A Yellow-headed Blackbird was also noted in *Warren*, KY, Mar. 10 (BP *et al.*). Brewer's Blackbirds were also widely reported, peaking at 40–62 in the w. states and 17 in Illinois. Unprecedented totals for Kentucky consisted of 45+ Brewer's in *Warren* Mar. 24 and 75+ in *Hickman* Apr. 3 (BP, BH). Eight near *Medina* Apr. 22 were unusual in n.e. Ohio (JVn). Expected numbers of Great-tailed Grackles were encountered in w. Missouri, while one or two at 7 w and c. Iowa locations fit the expected pattern of occurrence in that state.

The finch migration produced few surprises. Purple Finches were scarce in many areas, although flocks of 80–128 were reported from Illinois, Ohio, and Missouri. The only Red Crossbill report was of a flock of five in e. Iowa. White-wingeds remained the more numerous crossbill with 7+ records from Illinois, 4 sightings in Iowa, one Indiana report, and the most southerly record from Webster Groves, MO, Mar. 11 (JC). Most reports were of six or fewer White-wingeds, although 45+ were discovered at Waukegan, IL, Mar. 4 (DJ, FS). An impressive 158 Com Redpolls were tallied in Ames, IA, Mar. 4–14 (P & RA). This species was scarce elsewhere in Iowa and the other n. states, with only widely scattered encounters of one to four redpolls during March. Pine Siskins remained the most numerous winter finches. Their N migration did not peak until mid-May, producing flocks of 50–200+ in Ohio and 30–50+ in the other states. Evening Grosbeaks remained scarce; there were only 5 reports from the n. states with a maximum of 33 along c. Lake Erie.

**HYPOTHETICAL SIGHTING**—A Rufous-necked Stint was reported by a single observer at S.C.R. May 20. While the documentation is suggestive of this species, the bird disappeared before additional corroborative evidence could be obtained. Since there is only one confirmed record of one stint from the midwest (a breeding-plumaged Rufous-necked photographed at Ashtabula, OH, July 21, 1962), any stint report must be accompanied by unequivocal evidence to constitute a satisfactory record in this Region.

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## CENTRAL SOUTHERN REGION

Greg D. Jackson



The spring of 1990 was favorable for birders in our Region, combining at least moderate numbers of most regular migrants with several outstanding discoveries. As a newcomer to this post, I delighted in both the variety of birds that were recorded and the energy and skill of the recorders. I appreciate the contributions of sightings, and I encourage readers who are not represented below to submit future records to their subregional editors. Please remember to provide details for unusual and/or difficult-to-identify species, as proper documentation is necessary for inclusion both in this column and in the records of individual states.

Weather across the Region was variable, with more wet conditions in the western portion than in the east. Little Rock recorded an end-of-season surplus of 12 inches of rain, whereas Birmingham showed a five-inch deficit for the three month period (with over three inches below normal in April). An exception to this pattern was southwestern Louisiana, which suffered a dry May. There were several cold fronts this spring that were productive in terms of grounding migrants. Some of the best birding days on the coast associated with this bad weather were March 17 and 30, April 7, 11 (Louisiana only), and 27–28, and May 9.

Coastal locations also experienced frequent strong east and southeast winds during the latter part of April and the first week of May, resulting in an unusual movement of

“eastern” passerines. Interestingly, there were also quite a few western vagrants during this same period, especially in Louisiana. Inland sites were busy in May, with May 5–6 yielding an excellent number of migrants in both north central Arkansas and north Alabama. Although a few species arrived ahead of schedule, a general tardiness characterized the season for many transients as well as for departing wintering birds in several localities.

By the time of this writing, few spring records had been received from Mississippi and central Tennessee. Several Mississippi winter records, received too late for inclusion in that season’s report, are detailed below.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — A.B.R.C. = Alabama Bird Records Committee; C.F.H. = Centerton Fish Hatchery, Benton Co., AR; L.B.R.C. = Louisiana Bird Records Committee; p.a. = pending acceptance; T.B.R.C. = Tennessee Bird Records Committee; \* = specimen to Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Sciences. Place names in *italics* are parishes (in Louisiana) or counties.

**LOONS TO STORKS** — There were 3 reports of four lingering Com. Loons in late May from Arkansas (MM, DRS) and n.w. Florida (TAI, JTF). Any tubenoses in our Region are notable, particularly in spring. Unidentified small shearwaters (probably Audubon’s) were noted twice, with 10–12 birds seen from shore Apr. 13 on Santa

Rosa I, FL (CAM, CLC), and an individual 17 mi south of South Pass, LA, May 28 (SWC, DLD, DPM, RDP). Four storm-petrels, two of which were positively identified as Wilson's (one \*), were also discovered 17 mi south of South Pass, LA, May 28 (SWC *et al.*). There is only one previous specimen for Louisiana. Northern Gannets have increased noticeably in the last several years along the n. Gulf; at least moderate numbers can now be found at all seasons, particularly in Alabama and Florida. The 10–20 birds spotted farther west in *Cameron*, LA, Mar. 18 (AWK, CAM *et al.*) were more noteworthy, but not surprising.

Well off course was a **Brown Pelican** at L. Dardanelle, *Pope*, May 31–June 1 (LH, H & MP, ph.) establishing a 3rd Arkansas record. Late Double-crested Cormorants were noted in *Cameron*, LA, May 19 (DLD) and *Plaquemines*, LA, May 28 (DLD, SWC, DPM). There are previous nesting records for Louisiana, but the status of these individuals could not be determined. Magnificent Frigatebirds are often observed in the warmer months along the outer coast, but inland records are generally only associated with strong Gulf storms. The single bird flying over the rice fields of *Lafayette*, LA, May 4 (KVR) in the absence of such weather was therefore very unusual.

Infrequently seen inland on migration, five American Bitterns were reported from n.w. Alabama (PDK, DEK), n.w. Arkansas (MRW), and w. Tennessee (RPF, MG), Mar. 31–May 20. The 13 birds in a single impoundment in *Cameron*, LA, Apr. 23 (SWC, DLD) were surprising. The Least Bittern is unusual in n.w. Alabama; three calling birds were in *Lauderdale* May 11 (PDK, DEK). A Tricolored Heron located at Millwood L., AR, Apr. 14 (LP, CM *et al.*) provided a first local spring record. The adult Black-crowned Night-Heron May 12 at C.F.H. (MM) was the first recorded in May for n.w. Arkansas. More than 150 Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were seen circling at dusk Mar. 15 at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, FL (DB, JWB). Even more impressive was a flight of 3500 White Ibises, mostly adults, Mar. 25 in *Jefferson*, LA (AWK). This species appeared more common than usual in s.w. Arkansas Apr. 28–May 31 (CM, DPh, WMS), with as many as 27 birds (24 adults) recorded. Nesting was considered possible, although no evidence was discovered.

An incursion of **White-faced Ibises** took place in the n.w. portion of our area in mid-April. Five *Plegadis*, two of which were definitely White-faced, were found Apr. 14 in *Miller* (CM, WM, LC) for a first spring s.w. Arkansas record. On Apr. 19, 28 birds were located in *Shelby* (MGW, CHB, DM, JRW, ph. JLL) for a first Tennessee record (accepted T.B.R.C.). Roseate Spoonbills are rare in s.e. Louisiana, so one to six birds in *Terrebonne* Mar. 13–Apr. 3 (CGB, AN, LPR) were interesting. Rounding out the large waders, Wood Storks are quite rare in the eastern portion of the Region in spring. On 5 days from Apr. 10 to May 31, single storks were noted in east *Montgomery*, AL (AM, LG, CMe). There were only 3 previous late winter to early spring records for the state, although there was a suspected nesting near *Montgomery* in 1968.

**WATERFOWL** — Fourteen Fulvous Whistling-Ducks Apr. 28 at Ft. Morgan (AF, DF, PB, GF *et al.*) represented a good number in Alabama for this vagrant. Although the species is commonly found in s.w. and s.c. Louisiana, 10 birds located in *Concordia*, LA, May 5 (E & JT) were out of the usual range. Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, rare but regular in s.w. Louisiana, was seen in *Cameron* Apr. 29 (CAM, MMS, KVR). Swans are rare in our area, and I had late reports from the winter of a small influx in n.w. Mississippi. Thirteen Tundra Swans were in *Carroll* Dec. 3

(PBa, TLS, GK), one was in *Bolivar* Jan. 10–Feb. 10 (N & JCH, m.ob., ph.), and three were spotted in *Tunica* Feb. 11 (JRW). Associating with the *Bolivar* Tundra Swan during the same time period was an ad. **Trumpeter Swan** (N & JCH, m.ob., ph.). There are no modern records for Mississippi, and this bird was unbanded and unmarked. Whether it was from a reintroduced population in the Midwest or from a more distant site is unknown.

Over 600 Greater White-fronted Geese and more than 18,000 Snow Geese were recorded in *Tunica*, MS, Feb. 4 (JRW). A very late ad. White-fronted was at C.F.H. May 26 (MM). **Ross' Geese** continued their recent pattern with several sightings this winter and early spring. A late report in Mississippi was of five to 18 birds in *Tunica* Feb. 4–11 (JRW, m.ob.) for a 4th state record. The species is now regular among flocks of Snow Geese in s.w. Louisiana. I had reports of two Ross' Geese Mar. 3 in *Calcasieu* (SWC, DLD), and an impressive 57 (with over 20,000 Snows) Mar. 4 in *Jefferson Davis* (SWC). A solitary individual was found in *Perry*, AL, Mar. 11 (GDJ, DGJ) for a 6th state record (2nd for Alabama's inland Coastal Plain). The latest observation of this diminutive goose was of five seen Mar. 18–31 in *Little River*, AR (CM).

Oldsquaws appeared more frequently than usual throughout the spring. There were 9 reports spread across the Region of this often difficult-to-find species, and birds at many sites remained much later than normal. The three Oldsquaws Apr. 1 in *Colbert* (GNP, PDK, DEK) provided a first n.w. Alabama record. An individual observed on Dauphin I., AL, Apr. 8 (HHK, GA, m.ob.) was likely the bird seen in the same area Apr. 29 (DoM) (setting a late record for Alabama). One to three birds in *Cameron*, LA, Apr. 27 (DLD, SWC, TAP) to May 4 (AWK, SS) were quite late as well, but the prize for lingering goes to an Oldsquaw seen May 20 in *Santa Rosa*, FL (BM), establishing a late n.w. Florida record. An impressive raft of approximately 100 scoters (of which all identified birds were Surfs) was observed in s.e. *Cameron*, LA, Apr. 23 (DLD, SWC). A single Surf Scoter was noted as late as May 6, also in *Cameron* (JPK, DH). Three White-winged Scoters in *Colbert* Mar. 18 (ALM, ADM) provided a new late record for inland Alabama.

**RAPTORS**—The spring migration of raptors at most sites in our Region is often unimpressive. An exception is the Mississippi R. at Baton Rouge; in the period Mar. 3–Apr. 28, 52 hours of observation yielded 2614 raptors of 12 species (CF, JPK). American Swallow-tailed Kites arrived in force, beginning with an early individual Mar. 8 at Baton Rouge (AWK). High counts of migrant Swallow-taileds included 14 seen Mar. 10 at Pensacola, FL (JP), seven at Ft. Morgan, AL, Mar. 25 (PB, JL, PG), and eight birds (setting a local maximum) at Baton Rouge Mar. 31 (CF). On the breeding grounds May 29 in *Marengo*, AL, eight Swallow-taileds were recorded (RRS, MBS), tying the previous state maximum. These birds were observed feeding over a large field with approximately 65 Mississippi Kites (RRS, MBS), the latter representing a new high count for Alabama. At Baton Rouge Apr. 4–28, 194 Mississippi Kites were spotted, with a high count Apr. 22 of 94 (CF, JPK). An individual May 6 in *Cameron*, LA (DLD, SWC), was both late and unusual for that location in spring.

High counts of Broad-winged Hawks at Baton Rouge (CF, JPK) included 600 birds Apr. 4 and 458 Apr. 15, the total at this site for the spring was 1846. Swainson's Hawks are regular migrants in small numbers in extreme s.w. Louisiana, and this spring there were single birds in

*Calcasieu* Apr. 22 (DLD, SWC) & 29 (CAM, MMS, KVR). I received only 5 reports of six Merlins in Louisiana and Alabama Mar. 3–Apr. 29. Peregrine Falcons are usually seen in small numbers in spring, and there were four birds reported from the Alabama and Louisiana coasts Mar. 16–May 6. More unusual was the single Peregrine May 1 in *Washington*, AR (MM).

**RAILS TO SHOREBIRDS** — Black Rails are always a treat; this spring two were heard in *Cameron*, LA, Apr. 14 (JS, KVR *et al.*), and one bird was seen at Ft. Morgan, AL, Apr. 28 (AF, DF, G & JM). The first record of King Rail in n.w. Alabama since 1911 was of a bird in *Lauderdale* May 4 (PDK). Tennessee's first nesting record for *Sora* was documented Apr. 17–June 8 in *Shelby*, with two young observed several times with an adult (MGW, m.ob., p.a. T.B.R.C.). A Purple Gallinule, a rare migrant in Tennessee, was observed May 18 & 20 in *Putnam* (SJS).

Shorebirds appeared in normal numbers in most areas. The temporary (hopefully) closure to birders of the excellent ponds of Blakely I., AL, should remind all of us that when visitation rules are established for an area, they should be followed by *everyone*. The high inland count this season for Black-bellied Plover was in the rice fields of s.c. Louisiana May 10, when 272 were observed (KVR *et al.*). This species is rare in spring in Arkansas, so seven birds in *Hempstead* May 19 (CM) were noteworthy. The 10 Black-bellieds in *Vermilion*, LA, May 27 (JPK, EB) were late. Although small groups of Lesser Golden-Plovers were noted in several spots in February, the 100 birds in *Cameron*, LA, Mar. 3 made an unusual number for that date. By Apr. 1, approximately 1800 birds were in *Miller*, AR (CM). Eight Wilson's Plovers were recorded in *Jefferson*, LA, as early as Mar. 11 (MMY, RDP). Piping Plover numbers should always be monitored, and this spring there were submissions of 13 reports of up to 28 birds in Alabama and Louisiana Mar. 2–May 6. One seen inland Apr. 8 in *Vermilion*, LA (JPK), was very unusual.

Although Black-necked Stilts are abundant at the head of Mobile Bay, they are uncommonly seen at most other sites in coastal Alabama, and are rare in n.w. Florida. Unusual were one early individual Mar. 2 in s. *Baldwin*, AL (PB), and five birds at 3 localities in n.w. Florida Apr. 6–May 24 (RAD). Locally rare sightings of Am. Avocets included two in *Bradley*, AR, Apr. 14 (JF, P & LB), one in Pensacola, FL, May 3 (RAD), and another May 12 in *Vermilion*, LA (JPK). Good numbers of yellowlegs were noted in *Acadia* and *Vermilion*, LA, Apr. 8, with 1230 Greater and 1200 Lessers (JPK). Willets are rare inland, but this spring I had 5 reports of 132 birds in the w. portion of the Region, including an outstanding 100 Willets at C.F.H. May 1 (MM). Whimbrels seemed especially common this season in s. Louisiana, and 60 were located in *Cameron* Apr. 14 (KVR *et al.*). Large numbers were seen in the rice fields (where usually scarce), with over 40 counted on 4 dates Apr. 12–May 25 (KVR, JPK *et al.*). The maximum count for Hudsonian Godwit was of 16 in *Vermilion*, LA, May 10 (KVR *et al.*).

Impressive numbers of Ruddy Turnstones were noted in the s.c. Louisiana rice fields, with a peak of 193 recorded May 19 (KVR, AWK). Another species that is rare inland is Sanderling. I had reports of single birds May 10 & 25 in *Vermilion*, LA (KVR), and three were spotted May 26 at C.F.H. (MM). The largest number of White-rumped Sandpipers submitted was 970 seen May 10 in the s.c. Louisiana rice fields (KVR *et al.*). Much less numerous in spring is Baird's Sandpiper, especially in the eastern portion of the Region. Three individuals were reported from s.w.



*Curlew Sandpiper in the rice fields of Vermilion Parish, Louisiana, May 4, 1990. Third state record. Photograph/K. V. Rosenberg.*

Louisiana Apr. 11–May 28 (AWK, JS, AS, GS), and two were noted Apr. 26 on the Ft. Morgan Pen., AL (PB, GF). Two Dunlins spotted in *Shelby*, TN, May 5–6 (T.O.S.) were unusual for spring. A near-alternate-plumaged **Curlew Sandpiper** was discovered in *Vermilion*, LA, May 4 (ph. KVR) and relocated May 5 (m.ob.). This was the 3rd Louisiana record of this Eurasian vagrant (p.a. L.B.R.C.). The maximum count of Stilt Sandpipers for the rice fields of s.c. Louisiana was of a noteworthy 2640 birds May 4 (KVR). Only a few Buff-breasted Sandpipers were reported, beginning with one Mar. 16 at Ft. Morgan (PB, GF) that was shy of the Alabama early arrival date by one day. Four seen Apr. 7 in *Lowndes*, MS (TLS) furnished a first local spring record. One to two birds were noted Apr. 14–15 in *Little River*, AR (CM *et al.*), where they are rare. A maximum spring count for Alabama was set by the observation of six Buff-breasteds Apr. 28 in s. *Baldwin* (GDJ, DGJ).

A **Ruff** was reported May 12 in *Vermilion*, LA (JPK, p.a. L.B.R.C.). Although still very rare, this species appears to be increasing in incidence in recent years in our Region. Approximately 3200 Short-billed Dowitchers were tallied May 4 in the s.c. Louisiana rice fields (KVR). A Long-billed Dowitcher calling in *Okaloosa*, FL, Mar. 9 (DB, JWB) provided only the 4th area spring record. The 5420 Long-billeds in *Acadia* and *Vermilion*, LA, Apr. 8 (JPK) represented an impressive number for the Region. The species is rare in spring in Arkansas, and up to four birds were reported in *Benton* and *Washington* May 1–12 (MM). The Am. Woodcock seen May 24 in *Okaloosa*, FL (DMW), was quite late; this species is rare along the coast in the breeding season. At the opposite end of the spectrum was a Wilson's Phalarope found dead in *Cameron*, LA, at the very early date of Mar. 24 (MJM).

**JAEGERS TO HUMMINGBIRDS** — Pomarine Jaegers are rarely seen in our Region, so the three discovered with two unidentified jaegers in *Cameron*, LA, Apr. 14 (JS, KVR *et al.*) were interesting. One immature (\*) roughly 17 mi south of South Pass, May 28 (SWC, DLD, DPM, RDP) provided the 4th record for s.e. Louisiana. Much rarer was the 2nd-summer **Long-tailed Jaeger** (\*) 15–17 mi south of South Pass on the same trip. There is only one previous Louisiana record of this species. The 216 Laughing Gulls May 4 in the s.c. Louisiana rice fields (KVR) were unusual away from the coast, although inland numbers have been on the increase in that area in the last few years. **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** continue to turn up, and this spring there were two reports. A first-winter bird at Pickwick Dam, *Hardin*, TN, Feb. 10 was seen again Mar. 27 and Apr. 11 (DJS); this represented a 3rd state record (p.a. T.B.R.C.). An adult Lesser Black-backed was reported from Ft. Mor-



gan May 3 (JTF, BE), providing both the 4th record and a late date for Alabama (p.a. A.B.R.C.). I received only one report of Great Black-backed Gull; observations of this species in the last several years seem to have gradually increased in the e. portion of the Region. A 3rd-year bird was seen Apr. 3–May 3 at Ft. Morgan and Dauphin I., AL (RAD, ph. GDJ, m.ob., p.a. A.B.R.C.).

Good numbers of inland Caspian Terns were noted, with 20 tying the maximum for inland Alabama Apr. 9 in *Limestone* (GDJ), and 16 counted May 12 at C.F.H. (MM). Unusual Com. Tern reports included seven as early as Mar. 18 in *Cameron*, LA (CAM *et al.*) and three May 26 at C.F.H. (MM). A Forster's Tern Apr. 1 in *Carroll*, AR (MM, FR) was early. A Least Tern at Starkville, MS, May 27 (TLS) provided a first local spring record. At least 25 imm. Bridled Terns (three \*) and three Sooty Terns were located about 17 mi south of South Pass, LA, May 28 (DPM, RDP, DLD, SWC). Bridleds appear to be regular in the warmer months in the n. Gulf, and Sooty Terns often nest in small numbers on islands off s.e. Louisiana. A Black Tern spotted in *Cameron*, LA, Mar. 18–19 (CAM *et al.*), could have been a rare wintering bird or an early migrant. The 108 Black Terns at C.F.H. May 12 (MM) represented a large number for Arkansas. The rarest larid of the season was the exhausted **Brown Noddy** that landed May 9 in a small boat



This *Brown Noddy* landed on a small boat north of Dauphin Island, Alabama, on May 9, 1990, and was later released. Fourth state record. Photograph/Ralph W. Havard.

with Havard and Van Hoose just north of Dauphin I. (ph. RWH)! The bird was released on the island and departed within a few hours. This was only the 4th record for Alabama, and the first for spring (p.a. A.B.R.C.); all previous records have followed tropical storms, though the weather in the Gulf that day was rough.

White-winged Doves wintering at Golden Meadow, *Lafourche*, LA, remained to at least Apr. 1 (DPM, MMy); 57 seen there Mar. 11 provided a new s.e. Louisiana maximum (MMy, RDP). Several calling birds were seen in late April in the town of *Cameron*, LA, and just east of town an adult and a juvenile were discovered May 20 (SWC) for one of the few Louisiana nesting records. Farther east they are rare but regular in spring, and one was observed Apr. 21 at Ft. Morgan, AL (GDJ, DGJ, m.ob.). A Black-billed Cuckoo in *Montgomery* May 28–30 (EMW) set a new late record for Alabama's inland Coastal Plain. Yellow-billed Cuckoos staged a late movement in May; they were "abundant" at Ft. Pickens, FL, May 9 (RAD), and 80 were seen

May 19–20 in *Cameron*, LA (SWC, DLD). The Burrowing Owl noted in December in *Cameron*, LA, was relocated Mar. 18 (CAM *et al.*).

I received only a few records of lingering vagrant hummingbirds from Louisiana. In *Orleans*, a Buff-bellied remained to Apr. 1 (ph.) and a male Rufous was seen until Mar. 22 (AS, GS). A male Black-chinned Hummingbird present Feb. 15–May 2 in *East Baton Rouge* (MLD, RBD) set a new late date for Louisiana. Black-chinneds are rare but regular in Alabama, and the Sargents banded a female at Ft. Morgan Apr. 18.

**WOODPECKERS TO CROWS** — A few late Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were noted in Louisiana and Arkansas in early May. The only Olive-sided Flycatcher reported was May 24 in *Putnam*, TN (SJS); usually small numbers are seen throughout the Region in May. The rare Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was seen and heard May 19–20 at Millwood L., AR (CM), for a 2nd area record. Least Flycatchers (both \*) Apr. 28 and May 20 in *Cameron*, LA (SWC, DLD) were rare for the season, and the May bird established a new late date for the state. Another late flycatcher was the E. Phoebe Apr. 6 in *Baton Rouge* (SWC, DLD). A Great Crested Flycatcher Mar. 10 at Ft. Morgan, AL (PB *et al.*) was quite early. Western Kingbirds are much more difficult to locate in spring than in fall, even on the coast. One bird was noted in *Cameron*, LA, Apr. 27 (DLD, TAP, SWC). The individual May 5 in *St. Clair* (RRR, ER), represented the 3rd sighting in the Mountain Region of Alabama. Gray Kingbird is rare in Louisiana, and this spring one was in *Bernard* May 5 (DS, FG, GO). The last of the unusual flycatcher reports was of a very early Scissor-tailed Mar. 18 in *Garland*, AR (PL).

Swallows seemed to buck the trend this spring by arriving earlier than usual in several areas. Thirteen Purple Martins Feb. 18 at *Grenada Lake*, MS (GK, SK), furnished a new early date for the area. A new early record was also set in n.w. Arkansas by the appearance of a Tree Swallow in *Washington* Mar. 3 (MM). A significant movement of Bank Swallows was witnessed May 5 in *Cameron*, LA, with over 500 birds passing along the coast in a short period (KVR, TAP). The estimated 2500 Cliff Swallows May 11 on the White R. in Arkansas (DMo) must have been a tremendous sight. There are six accepted records for **Cave Swallow** in Alabama, all occurring in April on the coast. The 7th record was of a single bird Apr. 21 on Dauphin I. (WCH, EBa, MLG, GSc *et al.*); another individual was noted May 9 on Dauphin I. (RWH, MVH) providing the 8th state record (both p.a. A.B.R.C.). The first Barn Swallow sighting from Alabama this spring was of a very early bird March 10 in *Montgomery* (JH). Fish Crows appeared to be expanding further into the Mountain Region of Alabama, with multiple reports in early spring as far north as *Etowah* (JH, TAI, m.ob.).

**NUTHATCHES TO VIREOS**—Red-breasted Nuthatches remained later than in most years at several spots in Louisiana, and one noted in s.w. *Hempstead*, AR, May 21 (WMS) was quite late. Unfortunately, few Bewick's Wrens are now noted in the eastern part of our Region, so one Apr. 28 in *Colbert*, AL (PDK, WJR, AW) was a good find. House Wrens nested successfully in Alabama for the 4th time this spring in *Jefferson*, and young were banded May 19 (RRS, MBS). A late Sedge Wren was found in *Cameron*, LA, May 6 (SWC, DLD, CAM). Thrushes seemed scarce in n.w. Florida this spring (RAD). An early movement of many Veeries and several Swainson's Thrushes was detected by ear on the night of Apr. 10 in *Baton Rouge*

(KVR, JS, RB). A Veery in *Washington* May 12 (MM) was unusual for n.w. Arkansas. Two Gray-cheeked Thrushes and a Swainson's Thrush were very late May 28 in *Cameron, LA* (AS, GS), and another late Gray-cheeked was seen in *Putnam, TN*, May 27 (SJS). The 350 Wood Thrushes encountered on Grand Isle, LA, Apr. 16 (JH) were notable. American Robins are rare along the coast in the breeding season, and late reports included single birds May 20 in *Lafourche, LA* (DPM), May 22 in *Santa Rosa, FL* (RAD), and May 28 in *Cameron, LA* (GS, AS).

The Am. Pipit spotted in *Washington* May 1 (MM) was the latest ever for n.w. Arkansas. Cedar Waxwing reports included over 30 on the late date of May 20 in the vicinity of Grand Isle, LA (DPM), and the first nesting of the species in w. Tennessee recorded in *Obion* May 28 (CPN, TDP, GM). I had a late report of a Bell's Vireo Dec. 17 in *Orleans, LA* (RDP), in the same spot where one (likely the same) wintered 2 years ago. There are fewer than 5 winter records for s.e. Louisiana. Bell's Vireos are extremely rare inland in Alabama, and the singing bird in w. *Jefferson* May 5 (TAI, WG, JG) was only the 4th in spring away from the coast. A Solitary Vireo spotted in *Washington* May 22 (MM) was the latest ever noted in n.w. Arkansas. Early May heralded a significant movement of Philadelphia Vireos in western areas, with May 5–6 yielding an amazing 55 birds (40 on May 6) in *Cameron, LA* (SWC, DLD, CAM). Another notable vireo transit was in late May; a total of 119 Red-eyeds was seen in *Putnam, TN*, May 19 (SJS), and 43 were observed in *Cameron, LA*, May 19–20 (SWC, DLD). Black-whiskered Vireos are expected in small numbers each spring along our coast, usually in late April and early May. This season in Louisiana, there were single birds in *Cameron* Apr. 28 and May 5 (both TAP) and at Grand Isle May 14 (GS, AS). One was at Ft. Pickens, FL, Apr. 29 (OEF), but surprisingly I know of none this spring from the Alabama coast.

#### S.A.

This was the "Year of the Cape May Warbler" along the coast, with more birds seen than in any previous season. This likely resulted from the preponderance of E and SE winds in the Gulf in April and May, causing an alteration in the course of birds normally destined for peninsular Florida and the East Coast. Observers in Alabama and n.w. Florida usually see small numbers of Cape Mays each spring; the frequency of sightings drops rapidly as one heads west, and the species is rare in s.w. Louisiana. The first Cape May reported this year was on the early date of Mar. 25 at Ft. Morgan, AL (PB, JL, PG). The peak count in Alabama was of 35 birds at Ft. Morgan Apr. 21 (GDJ, DGJ *et al.*), a new state maximum. In Louisiana, the species was first recorded Apr. 23 with two birds in *Cameron* (SWC, DLD). At least 16 were reported in that state this year, with a high count of five in *Cameron* Apr. 27 (SWC, TAP). Very late Louisiana records on May 20 included two in *Cameron* (SWC) and one at Grand Isle (DPM), the latter report a late date for the s.e. portion of the state. A single Cape May Warbler was spotted in *Putnam, TN*, as late as May 23 (SJS).

Closely related to the invasion of Cape Mays was a much smaller influx of Black-throated Blue Warblers, an Atlantic coast migrant that is even less common in our Region. Four were noted at Ft. Morgan, AL, Apr. 19–22 (RRS, MBS, PB, JH, DSo), and six were in *Cameron, LA*, from Apr. 28 to the late date of May 20 (SWC, DLD, CAM, TAP). Another late Black-throated Blue was at Ft. Pickens, FL, May 11 (DB, JWB).

**WOOD WARBLERS** — The 25 Blue-winged Warblers in *Cameron, LA*, Apr. 11 (AWK, JS) represented a large number for our area. Five Golden-winged Warblers, unusual in n.w. Arkansas, were recorded May 3–11 in *Washington* (MM). A Blue-winged X Golden-winged hybrid (which was close to a Blue-winged in appearance) was spotted at Ft. Morgan, AL, Apr. 19 (PB, GF, JH). Nashville Warblers are rare in spring in n.w. Florida; one was located at Ft. Pickens Apr. 30 (E & HB, TB). The Chestnut-sided Warbler in *Cameron, LA*, May 28 (AS, GS) was very late.

A rare male "Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler was seen at Dauphin I., AL, Apr. 6 (JH, HP, JM). **Townsend's Warbler** is accidental in our Region; the report of a male Apr. 28 in *Cameron, LA* (MJM, JiS) was outstanding, one of the few records for the state (p.a. L.B.R.C.). Three Blackburnian Warblers observed Mar. 17 at Ft. Pickens (FW, m.ob.) provided a new early date for n.w. Florida. The earliest known sighting of a Prairie Warbler in s.e. Louisiana occurred Mar. 18 in *Plaquemines* (RDP). A new early record for Alabama was established Apr. 15 when a Bay-breasted Warbler was spotted at Ft. Morgan (PB). This species is much harder to find in n.w. Arkansas, and one bird was observed in *Carroll* May 13 (MM). Cerulean Warblers appeared in excellent numbers in early April. "Several" were noted Apr. 7 at Ft. Morgan, AL (PB), and up to 11 were seen in a single day during the 2nd week of April in n.w. Florida (*vide* OEF). On Grand Isle, LA, eight Ceruleans were counted Apr. 16 (JH). The Prothonotary Warbler sighted Mar. 17 in *Lee* (JH) set a new early date for the inland Coastal Plain of Alabama. Two Worm-eating Warblers Mar. 17 at Ft. Pickens, FL, established a new early date for the area. In *Cameron, LA*, a high of 45 Worm-eatings was noted Apr. 11 (AWK, JS). The N. Waterthrush Feb. 24 in *St. Charles, LA* (RDP) was likely a rare wintering bird.

Mourning Warblers are rare in spring, especially in the e. part of the Region. This seemed to be a good year for the species, with six birds reported. Single males were in *Cameron, LA*, Apr. 28 (TAP, SWC, DLD *et al.*) and May 12 (CAM, CLC), another male was seen in *Grant, AR*, May 12 (H & MP), and a singing male was at Vicksburg, MS, May 13 (JTB). Farther east, another bird was in *Colbert, AL*, May 17 & 23 (WJR); a singing Mourning Warbler was present May 26–30 in e. *Jefferson* (PF, HHK, RRR), establishing a new late date for Alabama. An exceptional find was the calling male **MacGillivray's Warbler** in *Cameron, LA*, May 5 (DLD *et al.*). This represented a 7th state and 3rd spring record for this western vagrant (p.a. L.B.R.C.). Hooded Warblers were numerous in *Cameron, LA*, Apr. 11, when 65 were counted (AWK, JS). I had 3 reports of single Wilson's Warblers Apr. 19–27 from the Alabama (PB) and Louisiana (TAP) coasts; this species is often difficult to find in spring. Late Canada Warblers were at Gulf Breeze, FL, May 14 (DB, JWB) and in *Cameron, LA*, May 20 (SWC, DLD). The find of the season, if not the year, was the **Red-faced Warbler** at East Jetty Woods, *Cameron, LA*, Apr. 27–30. This incredible first Regional record was discovered by Wallace and Sorrells, and was subsequently seen by over 200 birders, many of whom were attending the L.O.S. spring meeting (ph. DPn).

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — The male Scarlet Tanager May 20 at Grand Isle (GC, DPM, RDP) provided a new late record for s.e. Louisiana. An early arrival record for Rose-breasted Grosbeak for the Mountain Region of Alabama was set by a bird in e. *Jefferson* Mar. 29 (RRS, MBS). A male Black-headed Grosbeak, very rare in Arkansas, was discovered in Independence May 13 (MB). A Dickcissel at a feeder in Montgomery Mar. 4–Apr. 19

(LG, AM) was likely a wintering bird. There has been only one previous wintering record for the inland Coastal Plain of Alabama. A Rufous-crowned Sparrow was seen May 19 on Pinnacle Mt., AR (RL), away from known sites on Magazine Mt. and Mt. Nebo. The Vesper Sparrow Apr. 28 in *Cameron*, LA (TAP, DLD, SWC) was very late. Lark Sparrows are rare in spring in the e. portion of the Region, so the one to two birds noted Apr. 21 & 28 at Ft. Morgan, AL (PB, OEF) were noteworthy. Another unusual report was of one in *East Baton Rouge*, LA, Apr. 8 (DP).

Bobolinks were noted in good numbers in Louisiana and Arkansas in May. Yellow-headed Blackbirds are rare transients in Louisiana, and I received a report of a male Apr. 29 at Johnsons Bayou, *Cameron* (DPM). The species is easier to find in w. Arkansas, and in *Clark* up to 35 males were recorded Apr. 17–23 (BL *et al.*).

#### S.A.



Male Shiny Cowbird at Fort Morgan, Alabama, May 4, 1990. Part of a small invasion, providing a first record for Alabama. Photograph by Greg W. Lasley.

THEY'RE BAAACK! And this time in numbers. The three **Shiny Cowbirds** that visited our Region last spring were just a tease. This season we were invaded, with the brunt of the assault in Alabama. The same E and SE winds that resulted in the influx of Cape May Warblers likely assisted the passage of the cowbirds. Up to 45 birds were reported in the Region, with all but two noted on the Alabama coast. All of this began rather innocently with a male at a feeder Apr. 25 in Bon Secour N.W.R. (JTF), providing Alabama's first record (p.a. A.B.R.C.). The following day at nearby Ft. Morgan at least three birds were discovered (PB, GF, m.ob., ph.). This number had increased to seven by Apr. 27, and many of these remained at the fort until May 12 (RAD). A male was noted at Gulf Shores 20 mi to the east Apr. 26 (JTF), and a few miles north of Gulf Shores four were seen May 3 (PB, GF). Dauphin I., AL, recorded its first Shiny Cowbird Apr. 30 (JH), and this number increased to an amazing 28 birds May 11 (RWH). Several of the Dauphin I. birds lingered to at least mid-June (RWH). Outside Alabama, n.w. Florida's 2nd record was of a male May 9 at Ft. Pickens (RAD), and the 3rd for Louisiana was established (p.a. L.B.R.C.) by a male May 14 at Grand Isle (AS, GS). It is possible that some of these birds are still present at this writing (a scary thought), but even if all have departed, I doubt we have seen the last of the "Puerto Rican Pestilence."

A **Bronzed Cowbird**, only noted once previously in Alabama, was described well from Ft. Morgan Apr. 22 (JH, p.a. A.B.R.C.). A new early record for Orchard Oriole for the w. Panhandle of Florida was provided by a bird at Ft. Pickens Mar. 21 (DB, JWB). The male **Scott's Oriole** present at a feeder in *St. Landry*, LA, since January departed Mar. 2 (BA, *vide* SWC, p.a. L.B.R.C.). House Finch reports

at the periphery of its ever-expanding range included six in *Chicot*, *Craighead*, and *Little River*, AR, Mar. 2–Apr. 11 (CM, WMS, DRS), one in *Chicot*, AR, May 14–23 (DRS), and one to three in Pensacola, FL, as late as May 23 (RAD). Late Pine Siskins included one banded May 27 in *Putnam*, TN (SJS), and three birds May 28 in e. *Jefferson* (RRS, MBS) that established a new late date for Alabama. The over 2000 Am. Goldfinches at Bull Shoals S.P., *Baxter*, AR, Apr. 13 (DMo) must have been an impressive sight.

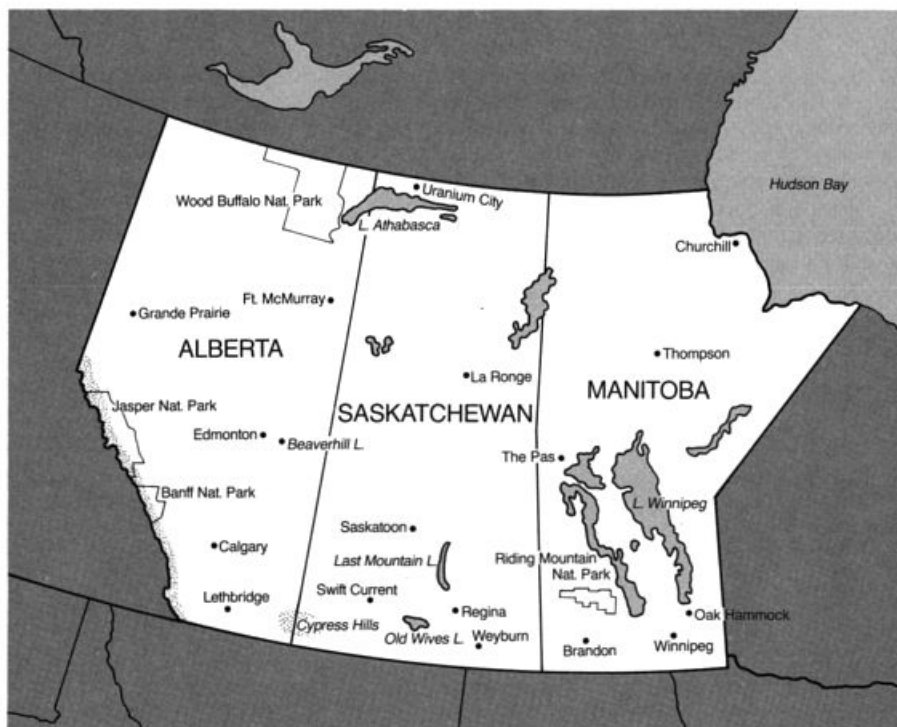
**CORRIGENDUM** — In the Autumn 1989 report (AB 44:105) the number of Black-necked Stilts listed in *Mobile*, AL, Aug. 20 should be 1110 (not 110), setting a new state maximum.

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# PRAIRIE PROVINCES REGION

Rudolf F. Koes and Peter Taylor



Temperatures were 7–15°F higher than average over most of the Region in March, but weather patterns varied from west to east in April and May. In southern Alberta, April and the first half of May were mainly warm, interspersed with several snowfalls, and late May was very wet. In southern Manitoba, cool conditions and northerly winds predominated, with only a few warm days before late May. These included a brief record-breaking hot spell, April 22–23. Then snowstorms on April 28 were followed by two days of near-record lows! Precipitation for the period was above normal across most of the Region.

The timing of migration was one to two weeks late overall in the east, and close to normal in the west. Observed migration, especially of songbirds and shorebirds, was very sparse in Manitoba, with flycatchers and warblers in particular being scarce and late. Increased precipitation, however, resulted in encouraging numbers of most waterfowl across the prairies.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — C.W.S. = Canadian Wildlife Service; O.H.M. = Oak Hammock Marsh Wildlife Management Area, MB; P.P. = Provincial Park.

**HERONS TO WATERFOWL** — American Bittern numbers seemed fairly high in s.e. Manitoba in May (RKO, PT, RTk). The only southern herons reported were four Great Egrets in Manitoba, the most northerly one at Riding Mountain N.P., May 6 (JG, LK). White-faced Ibises, however, appeared in all 3 provinces. At Pakowki L., AB, where the species is now almost annual, up to three were seen Apr. 26–May 6 (OD, RKI). More unusual was one at Big Hill Springs P.P., 30 mi n.w. of Calgary, May 12–14 (J & EM, m.ob.). At Regina, one on May 21 and two May 30 constituted about the 12th Saskatchewan record (KB, TH, PI, m.ob.). A very obliging bird at O.H.M., May 2–6 (BM, m.ob., photo), provided Manitoba's first positive record of **White-faced Ibis**, although five previous undetermined *Plegadis* ibises were all most likely of this species.

One Trumpeter Swan appeared at Tregarva, SK, Apr. 5 (FB) and two at Regina Apr. 8 (CB, MB, RKr, RTE). A flock of 200 Greater White-fronted Geese at O.H.M. May 3 (GH) was exceptionally large so far east. Snow Geese, however, were less abundant than usual at O.H.M., the main migration apparently being displaced west.

Preliminary waterfowl counts showed the highest overall numbers of dabblers in the last 5 years. Green-winged Teal in Manitoba and Saskatchewan showed the strongest increases. Diving duck numbers remained low in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, especially for Ruddy Duck. In Alberta, however, this species increased along with Red-head and Canvasback in response to improving water levels (*vide* BJ, C.W.S.).

Saskatchewan's first **Garganey** visited the Qu'Appelle Valley northeast of Craven, May 11–13 (SD, TH, FB, m.ob., photo). Another Garganey, Alberta's fourth, remained



Male Garganey near Taber, Alberta, May 15, 1990. Fourth provincial record. Photograph/Lloyd Bennett.

near Taber May 6–28 (LB, m.ob., photo). Cinnamon Teal show signs of range expansion in Alberta, with three pairs and a lone drake at scattered locations on Beaverhill L., May 12–26 (JTh), and a pair at L. Winagami May 17 (JS, MSt). A hybrid Cinnamon X Blue-winged teal visited Bretona Pond near Edmonton Apr. 22 (JL). Eurasian Wigeon also featured in central Alberta, with up to three males and two possible females at Bittern L. Apr. 13–29 (TT) and a male at Beaverhill L. Apr. 28 (RKL).

White-winged Scoter numbers at Beaverhill L. were encouraging, with over 10 pairs May 21–27 and 25 birds, mainly single males, May 22 (JTh). Migration of this species at Natalie L., MB, peaked with a local record of 27+ birds, May 18 (PT).

**VULTURES TO SHOREBIRDS** — Two Turkey Vultures were seen at Medicine Hat, AB, May 17 (DB). Hawk counts in the Pembina R. valley at Windygates, MB, were lower than those of last year, but still impressive. Over 7000 birds, mainly Red-tailed Hawks, were seen in 16 days, Mar. 24–Apr. 22 (AS, DS). Peak diversity occurred Apr. 18 with 662 raptors of 15 species, including two Ospreys, 68 Sharp-shinned, 46 Cooper's and four Ferruginous hawks, four Golden Eagles, and two Peregrine Falcons (DS, BS).

A Red-shouldered Hawk at St. Adolphe Mar. 30 was about the 15th for Manitoba (GH, WN *et al.*). Of three Gyrfalcon reports in Manitoba, the most exciting was of a dark-morph bird taking a Sharp-tailed Grouse at full speed near Pinawa Mar. 11. It gave Bob Nero and Herb Copland some consolation for not catching any Great Gray Owls that day.

One hundred thirty Sharp-tailed Grouse dancing grounds within 35 mi of Saskatoon represented a 60% decline over 20 years; they averaged 15 birds per lek (JW). The most unusual Whooping Crane sightings were of two adults and an immature at Cold Lake, AB, Apr. 30–May 1 (RKL), and an adult near Red Deer, AB, from May 15 to early June (Ray Beaubien, m.ob., *vide* RD). Also at Cold Lake May 1 was an early Yellow Rail (RKL).

Early too was a Semipalmated Plover near Winnipeg Apr. 22 (SH). An exceptional 1500 Lesser Golden-Plover congregated at Spruce Grove, west of Edmonton, May 15 (JS). Pakowki L. is becoming a regular spot for Black-necked Stilts as well as ibises; three were seen there May 2 (RD). Will these species remain after the drought recedes? Seven Am. Avocets at L. Winagami May 17 (JS) indicated possible restoration of this species towards its historic range limit in c. Alberta.

A flock of 150 Whimbrels at Keho L. near Lethbridge May 13 (TD) was the largest seen in s. Alberta in at least 30 years (RD); three were at Irricana, AB, May 20 (JS) and three scattered singles appeared in Saskatchewan, May 6–27 (RKr, PC, NP, RB). At Muriel L., south of Bonnyville, AB, over 200 Ruddy Turnstones and 1000 Sanderlings were recorded May 26 (RKL).

Little Quill L., SK, took top shorebird honours again; a peak census of 91,500 birds May 23 included 10,800 Semipalmated, 15,300 White-rumped, and 12,600 Stilt sandpipers, plus 26,000 Red-necked Phalaropes (PC, C W.S.). Single Western Sandpipers were reported at Chaplin L., SK, May 13 (PC) and Beaverhill L. May 17 (EML). An **American Woodcock** in a Regina front yard Apr. 3–4 (TR, RKr, JTr) was the city's first and about the 6th for Saskatchewan.

**GULLS TO THRUSHES** — A Mew Gull, seen with a flock of Ring-billed Gulls at Giroux, MB, Apr. 18, was rea-

sonably well described (JR, VR) A bird identified as a 2nd-year Iceland Gull was photographed near Warren, MB, May 6 (DF *et al.*). Highlights at Calgary were an adult Iceland Gull Apr. 16 (WS), a Glaucous-winged Gull first seen Apr. 3 (MW, m.ob.), and a series of about half a dozen Glaucous Gulls, including one adult, commencing Mar 20 (RW, m.ob.). Glaucous Gulls have occurred there in increasing numbers since the mid-1980s (*vide* RD) A Sabine's Gull was at Cold Lake May 26 (RKL), and three were at Tawayik L., Elk Island N.P., AB, May 29 (BC). An Arctic Tern at St. Ambroise May 22 (MSi) fit the recent pattern of rare but regular occurrence in s. Manitoba; more unusual was one compared with Common and Forster's terns at Brightwater Reservoir w. of Hanley, SK, on the suspiciously early date of Apr. 25 (JW).

A Barred Owl near Reston, MB, Mar. 31 was south of the normal range (D & IB, FM). Long-eared Owl reports included nests at Good Spirit Lake, SK (B & JA) and Medicine Hat, AB (MO). Short-eared Owls were generally scarce. Increased Boreal and N. Saw-whet owl reports in the foothills near Calgary may have simply reflected good owling weather in late winter (*vide* RD); these species were unreported and scarce, respectively, in s.e. Manitoba. An early Whip-poor-will kept some Pinawa, MB, residents awake, April 21–22 (LJ). A Rufous Hummingbird at a Waterton, AB, feeder brightened a May 6 snowstorm (RKL).

Lewis' Woodpecker sightings in Calgary, May 6 & 17, were northeast of this species' limited Alberta range (TK, HG). A Violet-green Swallow was reported in the Qu'Appelle Valley n.e. of Craven, SK, May 11 (FB, JN). Two lingering Com. Ravens were near Saskatoon May 16 (BG). Continuing to fill a prairie gap in the White-breasted Nuthatch's range, one nest was found and two more were suspected at Weyburn, SK (NP).

Townsend's Solitaires, rarer in spring than fall or winter, appeared at Pense, SK, Apr. 17 (EF, *vide* FB) and Winnipeg May 6 (BN *et al.*). The *Catharus* thrush migration was generally poor in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, but peaks of 58 Gray-cheeked May 13 and 42 Swainson's May 17 were reported at Weyburn (NP). Several hundred Hermit Thrushes were grounded in the Cold Lake area, Apr. 29 (RKL). The late April cold snap also grounded many thousands of Am. Robins, in flocks of 50–400 birds, across s.e. Manitoba for about a week (KG, RKO, PT), and over 1000 were seen at Emma and Christopher lakes, SK, May 7 (FR). A Varied Thrush, also infrequently reported in spring, was at Regina May 12 (PI), and the overwintering male at Pinawa, MB, was last seen Apr. 29 (HH).

**WAXWINGS TO FINCHES**—At least 1885 Bohemian Waxwings flew north to Saskatoon from a country roost, Mar. 27 (BG). A Loggerhead Shrike was near the northern range limit at Muriel L., s. of Bonnyville, AB, May 26 (RKL). Rarely seen on migration was a Golden-winged Warbler in Winnipeg, May 25 (RKO). Interesting warblers in Regina were a N. Parula May 24 (RKr), "Audubon's" Warblers Apr. 23 (FL) and May 24 (TH, RTe), and a Pine Warbler May 21 (RTe). A sluggish imm. male Summer Tanager was caught and released at a Dauphin, MB, school May 15 (BW). A Scarlet Tanager, likely still migrating, was singing at Roche Percee, SK, May 27 (DW). Single W. Tanagers were reported in Winnipeg May 22 (Mr. & Mrs Joe Hughes) and Regina May 23–26 (TH, m.ob.).

A Field Sparrow sang near Seven Sisters Falls May 20, but remained for only a few hours (PT); the last one found in that area stayed for three summers! Parts of Saskatchewan received an unprecedented Fox Sparrow invasion Apr. 29–May 3, following blizzard conditions





*Female House Finch at Regina, Saskatchewan, April 23, 1990. First fully documented record for the province. Photograph/Keith Barr.*

Many hundreds were estimated in both Regina and Saskatoon (TH, SS). At least 150 were seen at Cold Lake Apr. 29 (RKL), and there were also good numbers in Winnipeg, where such groundings occur more frequently.

Regina's 4th Golden-crowned Sparrow was reported May 21 (FL). An unusually large flock of 200 McCown's Longspurs appeared n.w. of Regina May 12 (FS). A monstrous flock estimated at over 30,000 Snow Buntings swarmed at Beaverhill L. Apr. 13 (TT). Yellow-headed Blackbird numbers appear to be booming in parts of southern Saskatchewan and Manitoba (NP, PT, RKO).

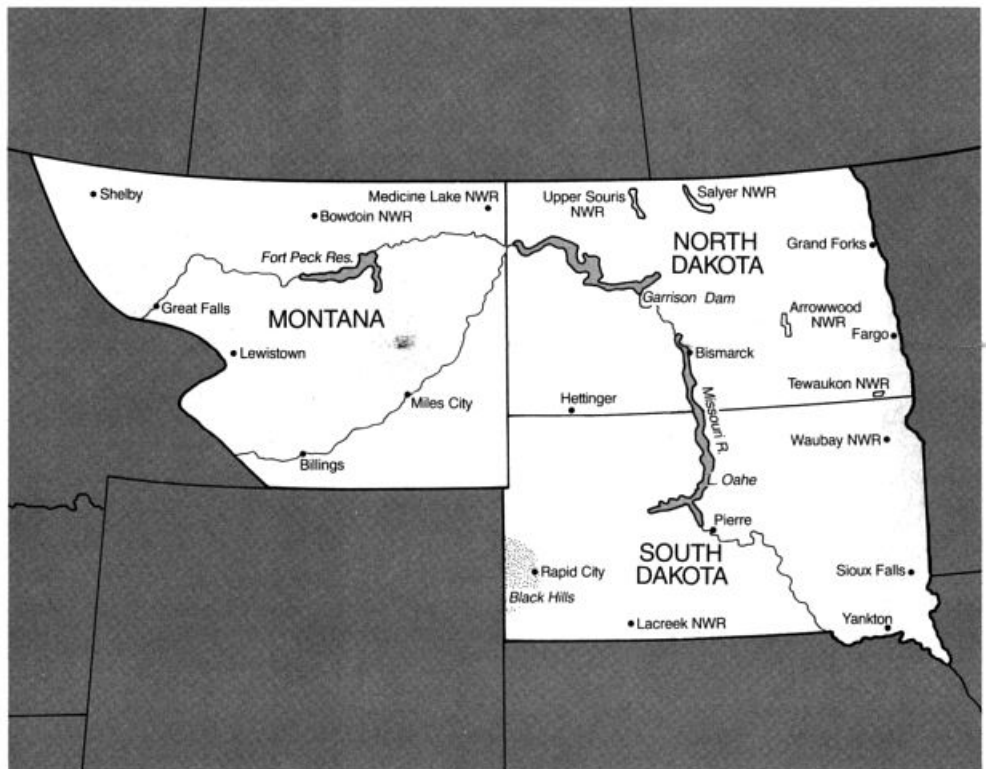
Saskatchewan's first fully documented **House Finch**

(the fifth reported) was photographed at a Regina feeder Apr. 23–24 (KB). Manitoba records this spring included two in Altona Apr. 18 (MK), three males at a Winnipeg feeder May 17 (BL, m.ob.), and at least three elsewhere in Winnipeg May 21 (DC, GD, DH). Can the first nest be far behind? Four White-winged Crossbills in Medicine Hat May 27 were among the few recorded this spring Region-wide (PH). Pine Siskins staged a strong movement through Manitoba and Saskatchewan in May, with several observers noting them in hundreds.

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## NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGION

David O. Lambeth



**M**arch was considerably warmer than usual, and in most areas, very dry. Coming on the heels of a snow-

less, open winter, there was widespread concern that a third consecutive year of drought was imminent. Severe

dust storms occurred almost weekly in central North Dakota, evoking comparisons with the "dirty thirties." Most of North Dakota and northeastern Montana received little precipitation through the end of May and a huge percentage of the wetlands there remained dry. In contrast, South Dakota, eastern North Dakota, and much of Montana were enjoying near or above normal precipitation by early May.

With the exception of the Red River Valley in eastern North Dakota, warm weather and thawing wetlands in early March led to the appearance of waterfowl on or near record early dates. The extreme dry conditions in central North Dakota caused ducks to concentrate on remaining wetlands, and record high daily counts belied the well-publicized decline in overall populations. Migration stalled in early April but resumed with vigor around the 20th. May was generally cool and conditions for migration were poor, particularly in mid-month. The result was a strungout migration of passerines with many species arriving and departing a week or more past the usual dates.

**LOONS TO WATERFOWL** — The first Com. Loons were seen Apr. 7 at both Tewaukon Ref., ND, and Fort Peck, MT. The peak number of 24 occurred Apr. 23 on Lake Elwell near Chester, MT (HM). The highest counts of grebes included 30 Pied-billeds at Upper Souris, ND, Apr. 28 (REM), 409 Horneds at Grand Forks May 3 (EF), and approximately 1000 Eareds at Rattlesnake Lake, MT, May 2 (JP) and at Lake Elwell May 4 (HM). One or two Clark's Grebes were seen in Montana at Rattlesnake Lake Apr. 25 (JP), Bowdoin Ref. May 2 (KS), and Freezeout May 6 (MS). Two were seen with 37 Western Grebes at Grand Forks May 28 (EF).

A Great Egret in *Hamlin*, SD, Apr. 11 was early (BKH). A Great Blue Heron at Fargo Mar. 21 (LLF) tied North Dakota's 2nd earliest date, but one was already at Billings Mar. 1 (JP). A Snowy Egret was at Tewaukon Ref., ND, May 31 (KLN). A Green-backed Heron near Great Falls May 29 provided a rare record for Montana. Four White-faced Ibises in *Brown*, SD, Apr. 20 were also early. Some geese were very late in leaving South Dakota including 45 Greater White-fronteds in *Day* on May 13 (BKH), 14 Snows in *Lake* May 28 (RB), and a Ross' in *Pennington* Apr. 20 (NRW).

Several very unusual records for waterfowl occurred. A Bar-headed Goose, presumably an escapee, was with giant Canada Geese at Upper Souris March 24 (GBB). A Greater White-fronted Goose thought to belong to the Greenland race was seen well n.e. of Binford, ND, Apr. 13 (EF). North Dakota's first **Garganey** was photographed at close range near Bismarck May 12. The photographer, Dave Angell, had set up a blind in hopes of capturing the ultimate Wood Duck photo! A female duck, likely a Blue-winged Teal, accompanied the drake. Eurasian Wigeon arrived at Freezeout, MT, March 20 (MS), and single drakes were seen at Benton Lake N.W.R., MT, Apr. 12 & 17 (SM). Documentation and photos were submitted for a male **Tufted Duck** seen on Priest Butte Lake (near Freezeout Lake) April 17 (MS); the identification was corroborated by a British observer familiar with the species, and the record is a first for Montana. An Oldsquaw At Garrison Dam Mar. 11 was the 2nd-earliest for the state and a rarity for the spring period (REM, GBB). A Surf Scoter in *Yankton* April 23 furnished only the 2nd spring observation in South Dakota (WH).

Highest ever spring counts for waterfowl in North Dakota included: Forty thousand Canada Geese in *McLean*

Mar 25 (GBB), 2100 Green-winged Teal on the McCluskey Canal Apr. 11 (RWH); 220 Bufflehead at Long Lake N.W.R. Mar. 26 (AMV); and 700 Com. Mergansers on the McCluskey Canal Apr. 11 (RWH). Other highs, all at Upper Souris, included 450 Com. Goldeneye Mar. 31; 80,000 Lesser Scaup April 13; and 6000 Gadwall and 4000 Am. Wigeon April 28 (GBB, REM). Earliest ever records for North Dakota included a Ross' Goose at Harvey Mar. 29 (RWH); Canvasbacks Mar. 20 at both Tewaukon (HH) and Stewart Lake N.W.R. (DJB); a Lesser Scaup Mar. 1 at Tewaukon (SMM); and Blue-winged Teal at Long Lake Mar. 13 (AMV). Several thousand Ross' Geese including two blue morph birds passed through Freezeout Lake, MT, around Mar. 19 (MS).

**RAPTORS TO CRANES** — The recovery of three raptor species of special concern appeared to continue. Seven Ospreys in the Minot area Apr. 28 (REM, GBB), and seven at Icelandic State Park in early May (*fide* LFM), exceeded the previous high daily count of four in North Dakota. A pair appeared to be in residence on the Marias R. near Chester, MT, where they had not been seen for years (HM). Peak counts of Bald Eagles at single locations where they were drawn by winter fish kills were of 32 in *Hamlin*, SD, Mar. 27; 36 on Buffalo Lodge Lake, ND, Apr. 8; and 58 at Medicine Lake Ref., MT, Mar. 31. A nest box was provided for a pair of Peregrines frequenting a bank building at Fargo. The female soon left, on May 22, while the one-year-old male remained into early June (WC, MAB). The origin of these birds is unknown although the male was banded. The Regional total of Peregrine sightings exceeded 30, with most of these occurring in mid-May.

Other raptor records of interest included Turkey Vultures in locations where rarely seen including one at Malta, MT, Apr. 28 (D & TP), and singles near Grand Forks Apr. 29 and May 4 (EF). Northern Goshawks at Fargo May 23 (LLF) and Garrison Dam May 26 (DNS) both were later than the previous latest record. A Broad-winged Hawk was seen over Bowdoin May 2 (KS), and another was in the Westby, MT, area May 1-7 (TN). A major movement of Red-tailed Hawks occurred through the Red River Valley Mar. 29 when numbers exceeded 90 per half-hour at both Fargo (GEN) and Grand Forks (EF). A Merlin was near Camp Crook, *Harding*, SD, May 31 (PFS). A Gyrfalcon wintered in *McLean*, ND, for the 2nd consecutive year, and was last seen Mar. 25 (GBB, REM).

Two Greater Prairie-Chickens were seen Apr. 3 at Arrowwood Refuge, ND (RB). A peak of 17,000 Am. Coots at Upper Souris Apr. 28 set a new high for spring in North Dakota. A Whooping Crane that summered in c. North Dakota last year spent all of May in the same area. Fourteen Whooping Cranes were seen near Whitewater, MT, Mar. 27 (Butch Mayer).

**SHOREBIRDS TO TERNS** — Berkey noted that shorebirds seemed to move through very quickly despite the many mudflats along drying sloughs and lakes. However, Piping Plovers and Black-necked Stilts were unlikely to nest in numbers at Nelson Res. and Bowdoin N.W.R., respectively, because of high water conditions. A Piping Plover nest with eggs May 15 at Lake Ilo N.W.R., ND, was unusually early. Two Whimbrels were noted at Lake Bowdoin, MT, May 14-18 (DP, KS), and one at Sand Lake N.W.R. May 28 was South Dakota's latest (FMM). Two Long-billed Curlews were found in *Harding*, SD, May 23 (PFS), and 12 were seen May 22 at Corral Pond in Montana (WR).

A count of 390 Ruddy Turnstones in the Devils Lake

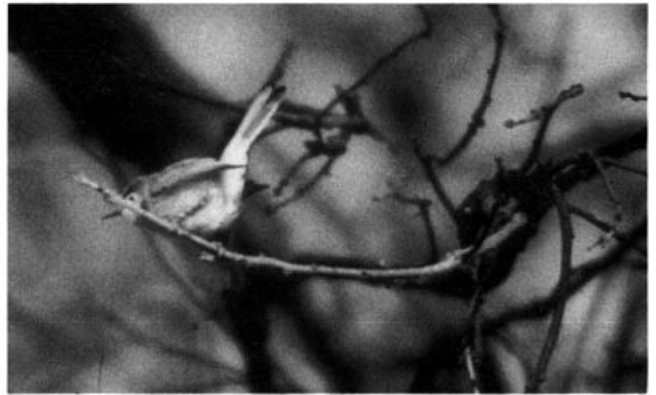
area May 27 (REM) was the 2nd highest for North Dakota. Two Red Knots were seen at Grand Forks May 17 (EF). The 2200 Semipalmated Sandpipers at Devils Lake May 27 (REM) set a new high for the state. While 2525 White-rumped Sandpipers at Devils Lake May 27 made a good number for North Dakota, the six at Westby May 21 (TN) were considered unusual as there are fewer than 15 sightings for Montana. At least 1500 Stilt Sandpipers were in the same area May 20 (TN). An American Woodcock was found in an open garage in *Deuel*, SD, May 14 (GS). This species was also found in *Day*, SD, and in North Dakota at Arrowwood and in *Ransom*. Documentation was received for a **Red Phalarope** in basic plumage seen May 26 in *Perkins*, SD (PFS).

A **Laughing Gull** first observed Jan. 10 in *Yankton*, SD, overwintered and was in breeding plumage when last seen Apr. 28 (SVS). A total of 250 Bonaparte's Gulls was present May 26 at Devils Lake, a favorite stopover in fall. California Gulls had arrived at Freezeout, MT, by Mar. 6 (MS), Ft. Peck by Mar. 10, and Garrison Dam by Mar. 25. A Thayer's Gull May 5 (GBB) and a 2nd-summer Glaucous Gull May 27 (DNS, PHS), both at Garrison Dam, set new late dates for North Dakota. Single Caspian Terns were seen in *Yankton* May 22 (WH) and *Lake* May 28 (RB), and numbers peaked at 27 at Fort Peck, MT, May 10 (CC).

**DOVES TO GNATCATCHERS** — Mourning Doves very rarely winter in North Dakota and one at Fargo Mar. 2, if indeed a migrant, was the state's earliest ever. A more typical arrival date for extreme e. North Dakota is during the last week of March. Inexplicably (and in sharp contrast to waterfowl, which often arrive in the Red River Valley 2–3 weeks later than is the case for central North Dakota westward through Montana), Mourning Doves, along with several other species including several species of nesting sparrows, usually arrive much later at more westerly locations. This year's dates illustrate the point — doves first appeared in w. North Dakota on April 8 while the first dates at several Montana locations were April 11–19. A nest with eggs in *Day*, SD, Apr. 6 was the earliest ever reported for that state (DRS). Two Barred Owls were seen carrying food at mid-day May 12 in the Mirror Pool area along the Sheyenne River s.w. of Fargo (GBB, REM) where the species has been known to be present for a number of years, and one was observed in Fargo May 7 (LLF). Perhaps a high population of voles accounted for many nesting Short-eared Owls at Freezeout (MS), and there were also “many” Short-eareds in the area of Chester, MT, in comparison to past years (HM).

A Whip-poor-will was calling May 16 at Hartford Beach S.P., SD (DR, BKH), and in North Dakota in *Ransom* May 5 (JC), in Fargo May 21 (D & DW), and in Grand Forks May 23 (EF). The arrival of Chimney Swifts in Fargo Apr. 25 (D & DW) tied the previous early date. White-throated Swifts were first noticed at Billings, MT, on Apr. 25 (WR). A female Red-naped Sapsucker was present in the Little Rocky Mountains of Montana May 28 (D & TP). An observer (HM) commented that Hairy Woodpeckers are becoming hard to find in the area of Chester, MT. At least six Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were in the cemetery at Grand Forks May 25 (DOL). A Say's Phoebe arrived near Petersburg, ND, Apr. 19, but was found dead after the snowfall of Apr. 28. A male **Vermilion Flycatcher** at Pick-erel L. State Rec. Area May 12 provided the 3rd record for South Dakota (DRS).

Strong winds from the south Apr. 18–22 probably resulted in the strong influx of swallows over the northern part of the Region. The first Purple Martins, and Tree and Barn swal-



*Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at Fargo, North Dakota, on May 12, 1990. Fifth state record. Photograph/Gordon Berkey.*

lows in North Dakota were found during that period. The first date for N. Rough-winged, Bank, and Cliff swallows in e. North Dakota was April 24; Cliffs arrived in w. North Dakota on the 26th and at Bowdoin N.W.R., MT, on the 27th. Two **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** at Fargo May 7–13 provided the 5th record for North Dakota (RHO, D & DW).

**THRUSHES TO WARBLERS** — An Apr. 27 snow-storm caused 75% of the bluebirds to abandon nests on the Waubay N.W.R. trail (*vide* DRS), and 29 dead Tree Swallows were found in nest boxes throughout the trail. Mountain Bluebirds were nesting in cavities in a rock face near Redstone, MT (TN). Several South Dakota observers reported large numbers of Swainson's Thrushes May 10–11, and one veteran North Dakota observer (LLF) commented that he had never seen so many. A singing Wood Thrush was in Fargo May 29–31 (MAB, RHO). There were a number of sightings of Am. Pipits in North Dakota and Montana during late April, and 24 were seen May 11 at Logan, ND (REM).

A N. Mockingbird was found in *Deuel*, SD, May 10 (BKH), a pair was observed in *Perkins*, SD, May 25 (PFS), and still another was in North Dakota at Hettinger May 31 (D & CG). A Sage Thrasher was seen Apr. 27 and May 11 near Comanche, a ghost town n.w. of Billings (WR).

One example of why some thought this was a “strung-out” migration was provided by Yellow-rumped Warbler, which was first found at Fargo Apr. 9, a typical early date. Yet this species was still around by the hundreds as late as May 19. South Dakota observers considered this the best warbler migration in recent years. Rarities seen included a singing Blue-winged Warbler in *Brookings* May 17 (DR), two Golden-wingeds in *Minnehaha* May 18 (AH), a **Prairie Warbler** (considered accidental) in *Beadle* May 5 (RGR), a latest ever Worm-eating Warbler banded and photographed in *Day* May 27 (DRS), and a singing Louisiana Waterthrush in *Minnehaha* May 18 (AH). The second spring and 5th overall record for **Blue-winged Warbler** in North Dakota was furnished by one at Fargo May 12 (RHO, GEN). A Black-throated Blue Warbler at Bismarck May 20 (EMH, RNR) provided a rare spring record for the Region, and a Blackburnian at Audubon N.W.R. May 16 (DGP) was unusual for w. North Dakota. A Yellow-breasted Chat was sighted at Tewaukon (KLN) May 24; there have been very few records in recent years for e. North Dakota.

**TANAGERS TO SISKINS** — East of range W. Tanagers were found in South Dakota in *Minnehaha* May 7 (AH) and *Day* May 13 (BKH), and in Marmath, ND, May 27 (D & CG). A N. Cardinal was again in the Bismarck area (RNR),

and one appeared at a feeder in Crystal, ND, on Apr. 18 only, a day with strong southerly winds (LFM). Le Conte's Sparrows at Fargo Apr. 22 (LLF) and Grand Forks Apr. 23 (EF) were very early. Very few Fox Sparrows were seen this spring; migratory conditions were poor at the time of their usual occurrence in early April, and they most likely overflowed the Region on the strong southerly winds of Apr. 18 & 19. Some observers in e. South Dakota were surprised to find White-crowned Sparrows outnumbering the usually more common White-throats by 3 to 1. Two Smith's Longspurs were in *McHenry*, ND, May 5, and a Chestnut-collared Longspur had arrived at Upper Souris by Mar. 31 (REM, GBB).

An adequately-described ♂ Bobolink was reported on the incredibly early date of Mar. 29 in *Emmons*, ND (AMV), besting the previous early date by 16 days. A flock of 1400 Com. Grackles in Minot May 2 was unusual both because of its size (in the spring period) and the late date (GBB). Both subspecies of N. Oriole were found near Zeona in *Perkins*, SD, and near Camp Crook in *Harding* in late May (PFS).

Up to 100 Gray-crowned Rosy Finches were using a feeding station in Lewistown Mar. 21–24, and the number of Cassin's Finches there reached 35 Apr. 10 (LM). The last Pine Grosbeaks seen in Fargo and Hope, ND, were on Mar. 4–5 (RHO, DLK). Although the Great Plains may have been a natural barrier keeping House Finches from spreading to the east, this appears not to be so for the eastern population spreading westward. In South Dakota, they are being regularly found in Aberdeen, Brookings, *Davison*, and *Yankton*. In addition to Fargo, they were found in North Dakota in Grand Forks, Hope, Bismarck, and three-fourths of the way across the state near New Town (RAS, BCH). An estimated 1000+ Red Crossbills were present Apr. 14 in the Ponderosa Pines of *Slope*, ND (BWS), where they

undoubtedly nest most years if not every year, and a nest under construction in the Denbigh Experimental Forest Apr. 11 (DOL) apparently fledged young before May 19 (REM). The last sightings of the White-winged Crossbills that had irrupted into the eastern Dakotas were Apr. 21 at Grand Forks (SOL) and May 11 in Aberdeen (DAT). The 2nd-latest record for Common Redpoll occurred at Fargo May 12 (BK). Pine Siskins were present throughout the period and many young were produced in Bismarck, where the first young appeared at a feeder Apr. 20 (RWH).

**ADDENDUM**—Two experts who have examined photos taken by Chuck Carlson of a large-bodied, large-billed gull at Ft. Peck in March of 1985 have concluded that it was a **Glaucous-winged Gull** in first winter plumage. This was the first record for this species in Montana.

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*Unfinished business: This gull photographed at Fort Peck, Montana, in March 1985 has recently been confirmed as a Glaucous-winged Gull in first-winter plumage, thus establishing the first state record. Photograph/Charles Carlson.*

# SOUTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGION

(Winter 1989 – 1990 Report)

Joseph A. Grzybowski

Is no news, good news? Not if you want to write this column, and not if you consider that no news may mean fewer birds. But that may have been the story of this season. The extreme cold temperatures of December engulfed the Region. This condition, along with a generalized and stressing drought that had only minor and local reprieves over the past few years, may have pushed birds south or, as Rosche comments, just killed them outright.

Still, not all birds live in the Region all year, and eruptions or movement of some species into or out of the Region can still occur. And nature is more versatile than to affect all birds the same. While individuals may perish, enough can still survive to maintain the populations.

Waterfowl were left "homeless" by the December freezes, which Chuck Sexton (of our neighboring Region) tells made for some crowded conditions on Texas reservoirs to the south. These waterfowl may have found the warmer January and February weather a useful excuse to leave what could have become their Texas ghettos. A few species of waterbirds were reported in exceptionally high numbers during February. However, most unusual, no scoters were reported for the period.

What other patterns were there to detect? Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were generally thought to be more abundant this year. The eruption of Steller's and Scrub jays noted for the fall provided sightings into the winter. The numbers of Red-breasted Nuthatches faded in the north as the winter progressed. These nuthatches may have succumbed to the combined effects of cold and drought, as their numbers did not pick up farther south.

Although January and February were mild across the Region, fewer birds overall were reported, and some bird species graced the plains in lower numbers or were absent. Red-tailed Hawks and Northern Harriers were exceptions, and were common at some locales, but Rough-legged Hawks staged only a minor incursion. Snowy Owls were a "no-show", and Northern Shrikes were close to it. Pine Siskins were generally widespread but present in unimpressive numbers. Purple Finches failed to materialize any significant showing in Oklahoma for yet another year. Lapland Longspurs were down, and Rosche could not locate any Snow Buntings or Red Crossbills in northwestern Nebraska, where they are normally present. Few people commented about Cedar Waxwings or American Robins; there were just some around.

Yet out of it all, the little details, patterns, and exceptions still accumulate. Not many birds appeared to linger (or survive!) north of their safe winter ranges much into December. Some birds arrived early, or perhaps at the early end of their normal spring arrival dates.

**LOONS TO DUCKS** — Almost unheard of even during migration, 133 Common Loons were summed Feb. 17 by two parties on Lake Tenkiller, *Sequoyah*, OK (JM, JN, MM). An *Aechmophorus* sp. grebe was noted Jan. 17 in *Sequoyah*, OK (JM, JN, ES). Most of these records are



likely of Westerns, but observers are encouraged to make distinctions between Western and Clark's grebes when possible. Only a few Am. White Pelicans were reported this winter, all in e. Oklahoma. Most cormorants depart Oklahoma during February. A concentration of 800+ Double-crested Cormorants in *Muskogee*, OK, Feb. 14 was very high (JN, JM).

A Great Egret lingered in *Johnston*, OK, Dec. 4 (WAC *et al.*). Six Trumpeter Swans were noted in *Osage*, OK, Feb. 5 (MG, DV); three wore neck collars. Ross' Geese were discovered in *Butler*, KS, Feb. 6 (DK, PJ), in *Sequoyah* and *Wagoner*, OK, Dec. 28 to Feb. 10 (JM *et al.*), and in *Custer*, OK, Feb. 6 (TL). An undocumented report of a Barnacle Goose was received for *Custer*, OK. American Black Ducks appear to be less frequently reported in recent years. The only report this season came from *Adair*, OK, Jan. 21 and Feb. 18 (MM). Up to five N. Shovelers survived the December chill to winter in *Garden*, NE (RCR, DJR).

Eight Greater Scaup were photographed Feb. 10 in *Rogers*, OK (JA). It appears that this species is primarily a migrant through the Region, and its migration patterns still need some attention. An Oldsquaw was noted Feb. 7–11 in *Bryan*, OK, for a first local record (JWe). A male Barrow's Goldeneye was found Feb. 25 in *Keith*, NE, the 6th consecutive winter for this species at this location (RCR, DJR). Common Mergansers returned in good numbers at El Dorado State Res., *Butler*, KS, where 5000 were observed Feb. 6 (PJ, DK). But notice—NO scoters to report, except, perhaps, some rumors for *Seward*, KS!

**RAPTORS TO WOODPECKERS** — Turkey Vultures were observed both late (Dec. 16; JH) and early (Feb. 11;





Harris' Hawk at Norman, Oklahoma, January 1, 1990. Second record for central Oklahoma. Photograph/Joseph A. Grzybowski.

TL) in central Oklahoma. One apparently arrived by Jan. 14 in *Comanche*, OK (WA). Northern Goshawks were reported from *Cimarron*, OK, Jan. 7 (imm.) & 8 (ad.; JW *et al.*), and *Holt*, NE, Jan. 27 (MBr)—not much of an invasion year. A **Harris' Hawk** was discovered Dec. 12 in *Cleveland*, OK, and remained through at least Mar. 12 (DP, JAG, TL *et al.*). This species is casual in the Region away from one county along the Red River in Oklahoma.

Some raptors appeared to be present in good numbers in s. Kansas and Oklahoma. Janzen and Kilby both reported that N. Harriers were more numerous than usual. Red-tailed Hawks also seemed more abundant in Kansas and Oklahoma. Red-shouldered Hawks were noted north to *Sarpy*, NE, Dec. 31 (GC), and west to *Alfalfa*, OK, Jan. 6 (GL *et al.*). Golden Eagles were noted east to *Morrill*, NE, Jan. 27 (TB, RSi, RR), and *Rogers*, OK, Dec. 23 (RSt). Up to eight Merlins were reported from the Wichita area (*fide* PJ), three from e. Nebraska (*fide* BP), and a handful from Oklahoma. A Prairie Falcon was noted in *Mayes*, e. Oklahoma, Dec. 2 (JHa *et al.*).

Two Killdeer were able to make it through Dec. 31 on the N. Platte R. in *Keith*, NE, but were not seen after (RCR, DJR). American Woodcocks are increasing westward in the Region in both winter and summer. One in *Cowley*, KS, Feb. 23 was the first for that locale (DK). A Spotted Sandpiper Dec. 5 in *Tulsa* was tardy (JW, DW). Up to five Greater Yellowlegs wintered in *Oklahoma* (MO, JGN *et al.*).

It was clearly not the Franklin's Gull winter of last year, but an adult was noted Jan. 6 in *Keith*, NE (RCR, DJR). One Franklin's Feb. 18 in *Rogers*, OK, was likely an early migrant (DV). Somewhat surprising was a concentration of 600+ Bonaparte's Gulls at the Lake Eufaula dam, *McIntosh*, OK, Jan. 27 (JGN *et al.*). There, numbers are normally much reduced by that time. Glaucous Gulls were noted in *Cedar*, NE, Dec. 2 (MBr) & 10 (BJR), *Keith*, NE, Feb. 25 (RCR, DJR), in *Oklahoma* from Dec. 16 to Feb. 10 (JGN, MO *et al.*), *Cherokee*, OK, Jan. 14 and Feb. 4 (MM), and *Alfalfa*, OK, Feb. 28 (GL, LL). For the 7th consecutive year, a **Lesser Black-backed Gull** appeared at Lake Hefner, *Oklahoma*, this year from Jan. 5 through Feb. 25 (JGN, MO *et al.*).

Arriving early was a Forster's Tern observed Feb. 25 in *Tulsa* (JA). An **Inca Dove** displaced north was observed in *Wichita*, KS, during December (*fide* PJ).

During even the dullest winters, some birds are more abundant than usual. A good acorn crop boosted Red-headed Woodpeckers numbers in e. Nebraska (BP, LP) this winter. They appeared to be more abundant in s.w. Oklahoma as well. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were also more abundant than usual in e. Nebraska (BP, LP) and s. Kansas

(DK), although fluctuations in their numbers may be less readily detectable.

**FLYCATCHERS TO WARBLERS** — Normally-sunny Oklahoma was cold for a Say's Phoebe that was photographed on the ice in *Tulsa* Dec. 9–17 (PS, JCH *et al.*). But it was warm enough for E. Phoebes to return to *Cleveland*, OK, by Feb. 11 (BM, MD), and for Purple Martins in *Canadian*, OK, by Feb. 26.

Part of the invasion, a single Steller's Jay wintered at Sowbelly Canyon, *Sioux*, NE (m.ob.). Up to 24 were counted Dec. 30–Jan. 7 at a feeder near *Kenton*, *Cimarron*, OK (MO, MG, DV *et al.*), and they also wintered in *Morton*, KS (*fide* MT). Probing out onto the Plains, a Scrub Jay wintered in *Woods*, OK (LR, *fide* PN). Others were noted in *Texas*, OK (JW, GH, SM), *Morton*, KS (*fide* MT), and *Boise City*, *Cimarron*, OK (KS).

A Black-capped Chickadee in *Cimarron*, OK, Jan. 7 provided only the 2nd documented record for this species for Oklahoma (MG, DV *et al.*). For Red-breasted Nuthatches the word was "WOW!!" last fall, but just "wow" for the winter. Interestingly enough, their numbers faded during December in e. Nebraska (BP, LP), and by late January in s. Kansas (PJ). In Oklahoma, they were present through the period.

Mountain Bluebirds were noted north to *Keith*, NE, Jan. 27 (TB, RSi, RR), and east to *Oklahoma* Jan. 23–Feb. 11 (MO, JGN *et al.*). The Rosches considered Townsend's Solitaires unusually common this winter in n.w. Nebraska. One descended east to *Boone*, NE, and was observed Jan. 26 (WM).

Of the three **Varied Thrushes** reported in the fall, the



This Varied Thrush, photographed on November 29, 1989, spent the winter of 1989-1990 at a feeder in Omaha, Nebraska. Photograph/B. J. Rose.

one in *Douglas*, NE, wintered (MB *et al.*). The Brown Thrashers predicted to die in *Douglas*, NE, in the fall report were last seen Dec. 12 (RS). One was noted Dec. 18 in *Washington*, NE (AG). In *Cimarron*, far w. Oklahoma, however, a Brown Thrasher did survive the winter (KS).

Only a few N. Shrikes were reported, and those from Nebraska. Only rarely wintering, a Solitary Vireo was noted in *McCurtain*, OK, Jan. 1 (WAC, MDu). Are there any vagrant warblers to report? Nope!

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — A *Pyrrhuloxia* discovered in *Morton*, KS, this fall was reduced to feathers by Dec. 28 (SP, MT). An imm. Rufous-sided Towhee remained until Dec. 2 in *Dawes*, NE (RCR, DJR), and one was noted in *Douglas*, NE, until Dec. 14 (EL). Two Chipping Sparrows were observed in *McCurtain*, OK (BH, PH), where they may winter regularly. Normally departing by October 1st, a Lark Sparrow wintered in *McClain*, OK (RB).

Snow Buntings did not appear in n.w. Nebraska this winter, and Lapland Longspurs were generally scarce there until late February (RCR, DJR). Longspurs also made a poor showing in c. Oklahoma (JAG).

To continue the litany of poor showings, the finch numbers were also unimpressive. Few Purple Finches appeared again in c. and e. Oklahoma although one was noted in *Comanche*, in s.w. Oklahoma (JaM) where they are rare. Red Crossbills were absent everywhere, and Pine Siskin numbers were generally low Regionwide. However, Am. Goldfinches were present in normal to good numbers in many parts of the Region. Sixteen Rosy Finches (Gray-crowned) were observed in *Sioux*, NE Jan. 27 (DH, BP, LP). Their occurrence in w. Nebraska is erratic. House Finches still appear to be increasing in the Region. The two observed in *Payne*, OK, Jan. 5 were the first reported from that locality (GL). Three in *Otoe*, NE (BP, LP, TB), were possibly the first reported at that locality as well.

Eight White-winged Crossbills (the rare crossbill) made an appearance in *Madison*, NE, Jan. 15 (MBr). A number of Common Redpolls were noted in Kansas and Nebraska. The southernmost in the Region included one Feb. 14–15 in *Cowley*, KS (DK, GW), and one Feb. 26 & 27 in *Tulsa* (TM *et al.*). A Lesser Goldfinch, rare in winter, visited a feeder in *Comanche*, OK, Jan. 8–Feb. 28 (JaM). More than 50 Evening Grosbeaks were observed coming to a feeder in *Cimarron*, OK, Jan. 7 (JW, GH).

**CORRIGENDUM** — The pale-winged gull from Nebraska pictured in last winter's report (AB 43:331), whose identity was questioned between Thayer's and Iceland gulls, was accepted by the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee as an Iceland Gull (*vide* BJR).

**CITED OBSERVERS** (area editors boldfaced) — KANSAS: Pete Janzen, Dan Kilby, Sebastian Patti, Max Thompson, Gerald Wiens. NEBRASKA: Mary Babcock, Tanya Bray, Mark Brogie (MBr), Graham Chisholm, Alan Grenon, David Hughson, Eunice Levisay, Wayne Mohlhoff, **Babs Padelford**, Loren Padelford, Dorothy J. Rosche, **Richard C. Rosche**, B.J. Rose, Roger Rose, Roger Sharpe, Ross Silcock (RSi). OKLAHOMA: Wendy Anderson, Jim Arterburn, Robin Brookins, William A. Carter, Mike Denker, Mike Duggan (MDu), Mike Gray, George Hansen, Jim Harman (JHa), Berlin Heck, Pat Heck, Janet Higgs, James C. Hoffman, Tim Lamey, Glenda Leslie, Loyd Leslie, **Jo Loyd**, Janet McGee (JaM), **Louis McGee**, **Jeri McMahon**, Steve Metz, Mike Mlodinow, Terry Moses, Brian Muzny, **John G. Newell**, Paul Nighswonger, Jimmie Norman, Mitchell Oliphant, Darrell Pogue, Lester Rose, Kenneth Saunders, Pat Seibert, Richard Stuart (RSt), Elsie Stubbs, Don Verser, Jeff Webster (JWe), Jim Woodard, Don Woodfin. — **JOSEPH A. GRZYBOWSKI**, 1701 Lenox, Norman, OK 73069.



*Common Redpoll in Tulsa, Oklahoma, February 26, 1990. The state has fewer than ten records. Photograph/Steve Metz.*



## SOUTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGION

Joseph A. Grzybowski

**W**ell, it was not a drought season, except perhaps in eastern Nebraska where the Padelfords could find no wet fields for shorebirds. Now comes the difficult, even humbling, speculation on what lasting effects of the drought (if any) can be observed and deciphered from all the other cause-effect patterns that can emerge. Oftentimes, the patterns that have the highest potential to be deciphered come from observations of the resident species. However, most of these species receive little comment in our reporting system. Also, species collapsing to a few oases will appear to be doing well there.

Populations migrating across the Region can also be affected if they have to cross an exacting gap. In other reports, I commented on Least Flycatchers and Upland Sandpipers. Well, for a poor showing in the fall, the Least Flycatchers were sure abundant this spring across Oklahoma and Kansas. In addition, observers reported good numbers of Yellow-bellied Flycatchers. So much for that.

For Upland Sandpipers, my impression was that there were still fewer flying over at night than I remember. On good nights in past years, I might expect to hear a constant procession of three to five per minute flying overhead. This year that pace was one or two per minute. Still, some populations may not have been affected, and one observer, Loren Blake, wrote me last fall to indicate that numbers of breeding Upland Sandpipers were good in southern

Nebraska. My impression of the overall pace was still down.

If our reporting system can decipher downward changes, it is perhaps in the number of reports of those uncommon species. Here, I would interpret that the modest number of waterfowl and rail reports indicate that these groups may have been impacted by the drought. But then, did we need any data to say that?

Some shorebirds did not appear as common. Baird's Sandpipers may have been off the mark a little. It seems like fewer observers commented on some higher interest and visibility species such as Buff-breasted Sandpiper and Hudsonian Godwit than before. However, herons may not have been unaffected, particularly in Oklahoma. But these are all impressions, not the result of systematic searches. Are they artifacts of our reporting system?

There were more rumblings on declining numbers of Orchard Orioles, this time from Lloyd Moore for eastern Kansas. They have been gone from western and central Oklahoma for some years now. Also, the picture appears to darken for Bell's Vireo, which may be on its way out in much of the Region.

The annual spring question: "How were the warblers?" This year the situation was mixed, but generally good. Most observers east of the middle found a fair number of species. Most considered it a good warbler season, but the Padelfords thought it was still a poor warbler year in eastern Nebraska (except for a few species), even on days when the fronts came through. Impressions. Do some of us have memories of better times? In western portions of the Region, it is a good season if you can mention them in your report. This year they could be mentioned, but it turned cold at the end of the season in northwestern Nebraska, and Rosche had no good warbler days.

Moore thought that numbers of Ovenbirds and Black-poll Warblers were down. Scattered across the Region, the impression was good for the big-three *Vermivora* species, and Yellow-rumped and Mourning warblers. Several species of migrant vireos (Solitary and Philadelphia) also made a good showing east in the Region.

The incidence of tornadoes was up this spring in the Region, and included a number of very powerful storms with winds up to 250 miles per hour. One series of tornadoes in central Nebraska March 13 had a documented catastrophic effect to birds, killing an estimated 10,000 geese (mostly Snows) over a 350 square mile area. This was the most extensive kill documented in Nebraska history.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — Cheyenne Bottoms = Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Management Area, Barton Co., KS; Fontenelle Forest = Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co., NE; Great Salt Plains = Great Salt Plains Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Alfalfa Co., OK; Quivira = Quivira Nat'l Wildlife Ref., Stafford Co., KS.

**LOONS TO WATERFOWL** — Two W. Grebes observed in Pawnee, NE, Apr. 14 (JT, BP, LP) were at the very e. edge of the Region. A Clark's Grebe was noted in Grant, NE, May 17 among six W. Grebes (RCR, DJR). Woodard estimated 6000 Am. White Pelicans were present at Great Salt Plains Apr. 29. It has been several years since Olivaceous Cormorants have been recorded in e. Oklahoma. One Mar. 27 was photographed beside a Double-crested below the Kerr Dam, Sequoyah, OK (BJR). A female Anhinga in Cherokee, KS, Apr. 29 was noted at the same locality at which one was observed during May 1988 (LM, MM, SP).

At least four Am. Bitterns were counted at Quivira on

May 20 [PJ]. Several others were reported across the Region. Little Blue Herons wandered north to *Sarpy*, NE, May 12 (BP, LP) and *Phelps*, NE, May 24 (RCR, DJR). White-faced Ibises can be common in some western portions of the Region, but become more scarce east and north. However, 48 in *Linn*, KS, Apr. 21 were unusual (DB). Singles in *Wagoner*, OK (TM), Apr. 15, *Tulsa* Apr. 17 (JW, ScD), *Sarpy*, NE, Apr. 20 (ML), *Knox*, NE, Apr. 20 (MBr), *Muskogee*, OK, May 1 (LPo, JN), *Dawes*, NE, May 11 (RCR, DJR), along with two Apr. 28 in *Arthur*, NE (RCR, DJR), and four Apr. 22 in *Phelps*, NE, (BJR), provide a general picture of their fringe distribution in the Region.

Seven Tundra Swans were spotted in *Texas*, OK, Mar. 5 (DV, MG). Trumpeter Swans, most likely originating from the LaCreek N.W.R. in South Dakota, are increasing in northcentral Nebraska. The Rosches counted up to 31 individuals at various localities. One in *Cedar*, NE (DS), was east of this group.

Becoming more worthwhile to report because of their potentially declining numbers, an Am. Black Duck was observed in *Douglas*, NE, Apr. 2 (BJR). Cinnamon Teal continue to be reported during their April migrations through *Tulsa* (E & KH, JA) and e. Nebraska (DS, MBr). Wood Ducks have probably established themselves across the Region. The male observed in *Cimarron*, OK, May 16 (GL, LL) added to several recent records for this westernmost county in Oklahoma. Among the less frequently observed diving ducks were four Greater Scaup noted Apr. 15–17 in *Sarpy*, NE (BJR), an Oldsquaw Apr. 24 in *Pierce*, NE (DS), and an ad. ♂ Surf Scoter Apr. 27–28 in *Keith*, NE (RCR, DJR). A ♀ Red-breasted Merganser at Cheyenne Bottoms May 20 was quite late (m.ob.).

**RAPTORS TO CRANES** — A N. Goshawk was observed Mar. 3 in *Cimarron*, OK (DV, JN). Dan Lashelle provided written documentation of a possible ad. **Gray Hawk** observed Apr. 15 & 16 in *Geary*, KS. The status of this record will need to be considered carefully by the Kansas Ornithological Society. Certainly an exciting find was an imm. gray-morph **Gyr Falcon** discovered Mar. 8 at Cheyenne Bottoms (MS), and seen by many observers in the following week.

A listing of records shows the narrow timing of Peregrine Falcon migration through the Region this season. They were noted Apr. 29 (JW *et al.*) and May 12 (JWe) at the Great Salt Plains, May 1 in *Wichita*, KS (DK), May 3 in *Bryan*, OK (JWe), May 6 in *Tulsa* (JK), at *Quivira* May 6 (2; LM, MM, RF) and May 20 (2; PJ), at *Fontenelle Forest* May 10 (BP), and May 13 in *Linn*, KS (LM, CH). However, few reports of Merlin were received.

Three leks of Lesser Prairie-Chickens were active in *Pratt*, KS, perhaps at the northeast corner of their range (PJ). Almost never observed, but likely regular, **Yellow Rails** were observed Apr. 28 and May 3 in *Jefferson*, KS (RR, PR). A **King Rail** Mar. 10 in *Sheridan*, NE, was a surprise for that locale and date, and may have overwintered (RCR, DJR). Thirty **Sandhill Cranes** in *Rogers*, OK, Mar. 12 (RS) were east of normal migration corridors.

**PLOVERS TO TERNS** — Piping Plovers at non-breeding locations were recorded between Apr. 14 and May 12 this season. Seventeen **Black-necked Stilts** were present May 20 at *Quivira* (PJ), where they maintain a breeding outpost. Although these birds and others must migrate through Oklahoma, they are still very rarely reported. However, three were noted Apr. 29 in *Greer*, OK (IM), and one to two were seen in *Cimarron*, OK May 25–June 1 (JS).

**Whimbrels** were reported from *Oklahoma* May 5 (HH),

the **Great Salt Plains** May 6 (GL, LL), and *Wagoner*, OK, May 20 (BJR)—fewer than in the past few years, but still better than 10 years ago. Forty **Hudsonian Godwits** Apr. 14 in *Sarpy*, NE (AG), was the high count for the season. A pair of **Marbled Godwits** was present in a wet meadow in *Morrill*, NE, most of May, and may breed (RCR, DJR). Two **Dunlin** Apr. 15–17 in *Sarpy*, NE (TB *et al.*), were somewhat early.

Reports of **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** seem to be declining. This season, 10 were found in *Tulsa* May 12 (JL, PS) for the only report. Four **Short-billed Dowitchers** were noted May 10 in *Sarpy*, NE (TB), and one was observed May 12 in *Linn*, KS (MM). Five **Long-billed Dowitchers** arrived Mar. 10 in *Oklahoma* (JGN).

**Laughing Gulls** are making an interesting story. They seem to be less of a surprise each year, and more are



Adult Laughing Gull among Franklin's Gulls at Gavin's Point Dam, Nebraska, April 29, 1990. The larger bill of the Laughing is apparent here, backing up the identification suggested by the black wingtips. Photograph/Mark A. Brogie.

appearing in the spring. An adult was photographed Apr. 28–29 in *Cedar*, NE (MBr *et al.*). Another was noted in *Cherokee* May 11 (JM, JH, ES), and up to five were noted below the Kerr Dam in *Sequoyah*, OK, May 20 (BJR) & 21 (JN, JM). In addition, an ad. **California Gull** photographed May 20 at the Kerr Dam (BJR) provided the first documented spring record, and only the 4th documented record for Oklahoma. Three ad. **California Gulls** were also photographed in *Dawes*, NE, May 25 (SD), and a single adult was discovered in *Keith*, NE, May 18 (RCR, DJR).

**DOVES TO SHRIKES** — Loyd comments that **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were late this year, and still remained uncommon in late May. A few **Black-billed Cuckoos** were noted along the eastern border of the Region.

**Long-eared Owls** nested in *Rogers*, OK. One large juvenile was photographed in the nest May 14 (DV, MG). **Short-eared Owls** Apr. 13 & 22 in *Nowata* and *Washington*, OK (DV), were late if not breeding. Paul Wilson found 2 nests of **Short-eared Owls** in *Tulsa* Apr. 28. However, both were later predated. Both *Asio* species are almost unheard of as breeders in Oklahoma, but scattered reports of summering **Long-eareds** do exist for recent times.

A **Black-chinned Hummingbird** was coming to a feeder in *Cimarron*, OK, May 5 (PJ *et al.*). Surprisingly, few actual records exist for this area. Rosche found a ♂ **Broad-tailed Hummingbird** in *Sheridan*, NE, perhaps the first for w. Nebraska during spring. A **Lewis' Woodpecker** was photographed in the *Wichita Mountains N.W.R.*, *Comanche*,



Juvenile Long-eared Owl in a nest in Rogers County, Oklahoma, May 14, 1990. There are few actual nesting records for the state. Photograph/Mike Gray.

OK, Mar. 12–15 (JTh). Many individuals reported good numbers of *Empidonax* flycatchers, mostly Least. Vermilion Flycatchers have been noted erratically over the years breeding in Cimarron, OK, including this year (JWe, TW *et al.*). An Ash-throated Flycatcher Apr. 15 in Jackson, OK (MO), was early.

About 20 Steller's Jays were still present in Cimarron, OK, Mar. 4 (DV, MG), and at least one was observed in Morton, KS, May 6 (PJ, MT *et al.*). At Sowbelly Canyon, Sioux, NE, the wintering Steller's Jay was last noted Apr. 13 (PL). Scrub Jays were noted in Morton, KS, May 6 (PJ, MT), more leftovers from the winter's invasion.

#### S.A.

Fish Crows are considered rare but local breeders in a few e. Oklahoma counties in the Arkansas River drainage. Although confusion with imm. American Crows and lack of familiarity by local birders are confounding the determination of status, they are likely expanding their range. More are being reported farther upstream and along tributaries of the Arkansas R. through Tulsa and Washington, OK, and possibly into Kansas. This season, one to five birds were noted along the Spring River in Cherokee, KS, Apr. 29 through May 12 (LM, MM, SP, GP, SC, RP). They have been reported for several years, including this year, from Adair, OK, (MML, JM). Up to 20 were noted in Leflore, OK, Mar. 23–25 (JAG).

A Red-breasted Nuthatch was still present May 14 in Tulsa (PS, JL). A Townsend's Solitaire was noted east in Stafford, KS, Apr. 29 (GP). With deterioration of some of the bottomlands in the northern plains affecting this species, reports of Veery may be worthy of notice. This year two were reported from Tulsa May 1 (PS, TM) & 6 (JMa *et al.*), and one was noted May 2 in Muskogee (JM). Others were discovered in Wichita, KS, May 21–23 (PJ *et al.*). A Gray-cheeked Thrush May 22 in Tulsa was later than most (PS, JL). The Varied Thrush wintering in Douglas, NE, was last noted Mar. 16 (MB). Northern

Shrikes were almost unreported this past winter. One was present in Douglas, NE, Mar. 24 (BJR).

**VIREOS, WARBLERS** — Bell's Vireos seem to be slipping farther and farther into endangered status in the Region, and may be receiving the same pressures from cowbird parasitism that plummeted the Oklahoma populations of Black-capped Vireos. Only one already banded Black-capped Vireo could be located at traditional locations in Caddo and Canadian counties. However, 6 pairs were found in Blaine County, up from 4 pairs the previous year. Their numbers in the Wichita Mountains may also be higher this year than last (JAG, VF). A White-eyed Vireo crept northward to Sarpy, NE (RG, BG). Philadelphia Vireos were considered more common this year in e. Oklahoma and e. Kansas. A Yellow-throated Vireo was observed May 6 far west in Morton, KS (MT *et al.*).

The "hottest" warblers reported this season were Golden-winged in Leavenworth, KS, May 6 (CH), and Johnson, KS, May 7 (LM) & 14 (MM); Cape May Warblers May 3 in Wichita, KS (PJ), and May 12 in Leavenworth, KS (DB); Black-throated Blue Warblers Apr. 24 in Douglas, KS (PW), May 1 in Muskogee, OK (JM, JN), and May 20 in Wichita, KS (DVA); and Connecticut Warblers May 2 in Johnson, KS (CH), and May 19 in Richardson, NE (KK, PK).

Not as "hot," but not bad, a ♂ Blue-winged Warbler was noted Apr. 21 in Delaware, OK, where they may breed (DV). A N. Parula was observed west to Wichita, KS, May



Chestnut-sided Warbler at Kaw Reservoir Dam, Oklahoma, March 25, 1990. This bird was so early that it was thought possibly to have overwintered. Photograph/Mike Gray.

22 (PJ *et al.*). A Chestnut-sided Warbler discovered Mar. 25 at the Kaw Dam, Osage/Kaw, OK, appeared to be in winter plumage, and was likely a surprising but probable survivor of the December chill (DV, MG). Westernmost of the reports, four were noted in Wichita, KS (*vide* PJ).

Yellow-rumped Warblers were common this spring with 150 noted Apr. 18 in Tulsa (GH). Also more westerly than usual was a Bay-breasted Warbler May 14 in Wichita, KS (PJ), and American Redstarts in Comanche, OK, May 6 (T & DM), and Morton, KS, May 5 (MT). Yellow-throated Warblers were noted at several locations in e. Kansas where they are uncommon breeders. Three made it to



Fontenelle Forest Apr. 24 (AG), perhaps the northernmost outpost for this species in the Region. A pair of Cerulean Warblers was collecting nesting material May 15 in *Delaware*, OK (JM, SM *et al.*). Two males were observed in *Tulsa* May 10 where they are rare (TM, JL *et al.*), and one was observed May 19 in *Richardson*, NE (TB, AG).

Worm-eating Warblers in *Leavenworth*, *Douglas*, and *Sedgwick*, KS, were considered rare transients. One in *Morton*, KS, Apr. 22 (E & RC) and perhaps the same bird May 5 (MT *et al.*) were clearly extralimital. At one locality in *Adair*, OK, where they likely breed, they could not be located this year (MMI). A Hooded Warbler May 3 in *Muskogee* was unusual (JN); even more so was a female in *Wichita*, KS, May 9 (PJ). However, Rosche found them common along the Talimena Drive in *LeFlore*, OK.

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — West of most occurrences was a Scarlet Tanager May 14 in *Wichita*, KS (JoN). Regular, but very rare, was a male Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Black Mesa State Park, *Cimarron*, OK, May 9 (GL, LL). Three Lazuli Buntings in *Johnson*, KS, May 3–13 (JSe, MM, FY) and one in *Tulsa* May 6 (PS, JL) were on the eastern edge of their migration corridor. One Apr. 22 in *Dundy*, NE (BJR, DR, RRo), was slightly early.

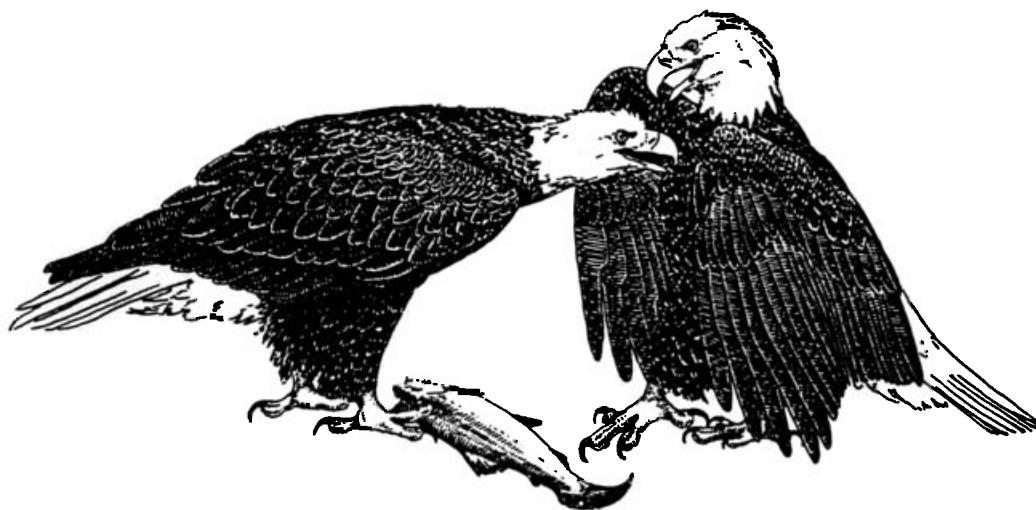
Is there a population of Bachman's Sparrows still left in e. Oklahoma? From the occasional record scattered here and there, it appears that this species deserves more attention. One was noted May 8 in *LeFlore* (JN). Is it part of a hidden low density population, or the last of the remnants? A Cassin's Sparrow again appeared in *Dundy*, NE (BP, LP). A Clay-colored Sparrow May 8–10 in *McCurtain*, OK, furnished one of few local records (BH). Four Field Sparrows Mar. 5 in *Texas*, OK (DV, MG), were slightly west of their normal distribution. A ♀ Lark Bunting May 13 in *Wagoner*, OK (JCH, JA), windows an expected time period for this type of record, but this one was observed in e. Oklahoma.

A Baird's Sparrow in *Cass*, NE, May 4 & 6 (CM) was well east of expected occurrence. The documentation will be under review of the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union

Records Committee. One May 5 in *Morton*, KS (MS, *vide* MT), may be part of a regular migration for this species through the w. portion of the Region. Two records of three to four Sharp-tailed Sparrows in *Tulsa* May 6–7 (M & WD, JW *et al.*) added to a pattern for occurrences of this species during the spring. Song and Swamp sparrows were noted until May 6 in *Tulsa* (m.ob.).

Great-tailed Grackles have expanded northward. One was observed at the northern edge of the Region in *Knox*, NE, Apr. 21 (MB). The story continues expectedly for House Finches, which are losing their novelty. A male was singing in *Cleveland*, OK, Mar. 1 (JAG), for a new locality in the middle strip. Pine Siskins were noted by a number of observers in Oklahoma through the end of the period. A Lesser Goldfinch remained in *Comanche*, OK, until Mar. 2 (J & LM).

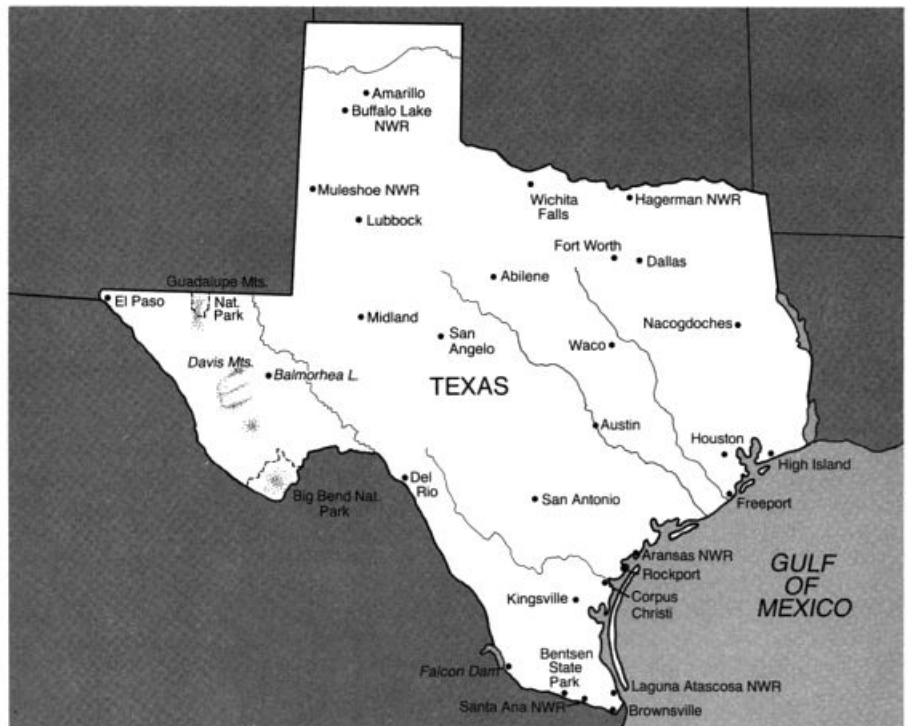
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MARY JO KOCH

## TEXAS REGION

Greg W. Lasley and  
Chuck Sexton



Two-thirds of the state seemed to enjoy a wet spring with notable effects on migration and nesting. Before delving into those reports, it only seems fair to address our “poor cousin,” the Trans-Pecos. Once again, that area was beset with drought conditions. In Alpine, Lockwood noted that “migration...has been almost nonexistent” and the same could be said for El Paso. Yet Big Bend hosted several eastern and western (and southern?) vagrants.

Moisture conditions in the Concho Valley were near normal, which was welcome and “unusual” compared to recent seasons. This resulted in one of the best spring migrations in several years. Despite an unusually wet spring, the drought was not broken in south Texas, leading to a lackluster migration. Nonetheless, the rains there did improve short-term habitat conditions.

Now for the wet and wild. By the first of May, the Panhandle had already received over two times their normal rainfall. May Day in Amarillo had cold rain with a touch of snow. Within a week, this same storm would be headline news statewide, as torrential rains deluged the Red, Sabine, and Trinity River basins, flooding thousands of acres, and washing out everything in a raging romp to the Gulf of Mexico. Flooding in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex was the second worst in history. Obviously, species like Barn Swallows (which often nest in culverts) took a bad hit on their first nesting attempts there. Nanney wryly observed that “pictures on the evening news of rabbits roosting in trees did not bode well for the early nesting success of species like Louisiana Waterthrush and Kentucky Warbler.”

Due to the timing of that main storm, virtually all areas got their best migration birding during the first week of May. Even where rain didn't fall, this weather pattern apparently had a recognizable influence: note the timing of several of the interesting finds in Big Bend. The sequence of rains and weather conditions on the upper Texas coast provided much food for thought, as we highlight in Morgan's description below. The migration and all thoughts of rain came to a halt in mid-May when endless

blue skies and record heat set in over most of the state.

Longtime readers of this column will be familiar with the name Richard Albert. Richard was a dedicated observer from Alice whose knowledge of South Texas plants and animals made his reports to us especially valuable. Richard passed away in April after a long illness. The Texas birding community has lost a friend. We dedicate this column to his memory.

**THE MAY 6 FALLOUT**—Jim Morgan presented us with a thoughtful analysis of weather patterns on the U.T.C. this season including a major fallout on May 6:

“In spite of plentiful rainfall, birders were often left frustrated this spring due to the lack of significant groundings of passerine migrants...”

“What happened this spring? As Ted Eubanks pointed out, during our 15 years of birding together we had never before witnessed the weather pattern that dominated the 1990 spring season on the U.T.C. The prevailing southeasterly winds were unusually strong, upwards of 20 knots for hours, if not days on end. Gusts of 30–40 knots were witnessed on many April days along the U.T.C. The abundant rainfall notwithstanding, the migrant passerines were seemingly ‘pushed’ through the rain by strong southeasterly winds. By the end of April, we had not encountered the classical rain and wind shift associated with strong Pacific or arctic cold fronts, these fronts being extremely weak or nonexistent in this spring.

“On May 3, in advance of a slow-moving cold front, heavy rains blanketed the coast from Corpus Christi into Louisiana. Most coastal areas received 3–4 inches of rainfall, and 6 inches was recorded at Sea Rim State Park. Surely this would bring the long-awaited fallout. Ted and I departed for the coast early on May 4, only to find a lack of grounded migrants. Once again, the culprit appeared to be the wind. The cold front was moving slowly and had seemingly stalled out to the north of us. The southeast winds continued to be strong and were upwards of 25 knots all morning. We completed the day without witness-

ing a wind shift along the coast. By early evening, however, the front cleared the coast bringing relatively strong winds from the northwest.

"On May 5, the makings of the inevitable fallout took place. About mid-day, rain showers and thunderstorms formed out in the Gulf of Mexico from the Coastal Bend to well offshore Louisiana. On weather radar the rain showed to be about 200 miles extent in latitude and it just hugged the coastline on the northern edge. Migrants would now have this extensive rainfall plus the northwest winds impeding their northward passage. The rains over the Gulf and the northwest wind continued through the night, even though little or no rain fell along the coastline or inland.

"On May 6 when I arrived at High Island at 7:00 a.m. it was immediately evident that a fallout had occurred or was in progress. Migrants were swarming the trees...On that day I covered the same areas that Ted and I traversed on May 4. An interesting comparison of numbers of certain species on each of the two days follows:

Species	May 4	May 6
Swanson's Thrush	75	205
Philadelphia Vireo	4	40
Red-eyed Vireo	16	415
Tennessee Warbler	30	290
Chestnut-sided Warbler	20	80
Magnolia Warbler	45	285
Bay-breasted Warbler	75	241
Black-and-white Warbler	4	110

"My 15 years of monitoring U.T.C. fallouts have told me that rain is the dominant ingredient for a passerine fallout. However, until this spring, I had not witnessed abundant rainfall and unusually strong southeasterly winds as a dominant weather pattern. Clearly, this combination does not produce the massive groundings that accompany rain with little or no wind, or the classical rain and wind shift of a frontal passage. The May 6 fallout proved once again that the latter combination is the most reliable event to ground significant numbers of passerine migrants."

**ABBREVIATIONS** — Ft. Bliss = Fort Bliss sewage ponds, El Paso; G.M.N.P. = Guadalupe Mountains Nat'l Park; Laureles = Laureles Division of the King Ranch; L.R.G.V. = Lower Rio Grande Valley; Norias = Norias Division of the King Ranch; T.B.R.C. = Texas Bird Records Committee (Texas Ornithological Society); T.C.W.C. = Texas Cooperative Wildlife Collection (Texas A & M University); T.P.R.F. = Texas Photo Record File (Texas A & M University); U.T.C. = Upper Texas Coast. The following are shortened names for county, state, or national parks, wildlife refuges, etc.: Anahuac, Anzalduas, Aransas, Attwater, Bentsen, Big Bend, Buffalo Lake, Kickapoo, Laguna Atascosa, Sabal Palm, Santa Ana.

**LOONS TO STORKS** = A single Red-throated Loon, a species whose status on the U.T.C. is masked by confusion with the more abundant Com. Loon, appeared along the Freeport Jetty Mar. 19 (GK, EW, BM, † to T.B.R.C.). Arctic/Pacific Loons are normally considered somewhat rare in Texas. This season, however, at least 17 individuals were at 4 locations during April and May alone. A phenomenal *nine* Arctic/Pacific Loons, some in breeding plumage, were at L. Tawakoni in *Raines* and *Van Zandt* Apr. 28–May 5 (GH, RK, RR, MWh, ph., m.ob.). Another was there May 20 (RK). Up to five Arctic/Pacific Loons were with 24 Com. Loons at Galveston's Offat's Bayou Apr. 20–May 2 (DMu, JA, GL, ph., m.ob.), one was seen Apr. 26 from the Bolivar Ferry (KR, LD), and one was at Rockport Apr. 11 (JD).

A **Sooty Shearwater** found dead on Padre I May 15 will represent the 4th accepted Texas record and the first for *Kleberg* (ACh, \*to Welder Ref.). A dead Masked Booby was found on Mustang I. Apr. 25 (TA). Six Brown Boobies were reported Mar. 30 off Freeport (P & TF). Continuing a trend of recent years, several single N. Gannets were seen in the Boca Chica area between Mar. 15 and Apr. 20 (m.ob.) A Brown Pelican strayed inland to L. Sam Rayburn Apr. 13 (DF, NB, MCo), the first for the Pineywoods. Another Brown Pelican at San Antonio's Mitchell L. May 1 was noteworthy (WS). A lone Olivaceous Cormorant at L. Balmorhea Mar. 1–22 (ML) and two at Fort Hancock, *Hudspeth*, May 5 (BZ) were out of place. Notable flocks of migrating Anhingas included 425 over *Wilson* Mar. 22 (WS) and 250 over *Weesatche*, *Goliad*, Apr. 11 (DMu). At Victoria, Melton tallied impressive counts of Anhingas with 110 Mar. 30, 261 Apr. 4, and 225 Apr. 11. An early Magnificent Frigatebird was over Aransas Apr. 18 (TS).

Snowy Egret is regarded as accidental in May in the southern plains area, but one or two were observed in *Lubbock* May 1–22 (L.E.A.S.) and one was in *Terry* May 6 & 15 (DS). Lake Balmorhea hosted two unusual herons, a Little Blue there May 17 (ML) and a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron May 13 (RR). Floodwaters from the Trinity R. inundating pastures near I-10 in *Chambers* created ideal habitat for ibises. Cureton counted 450 White Ibises in a single field there Mar. 19. Glossy Ibis has only been accepted as a valid species for the state within the past few years. Reports this season included one at Anahuac Mar 18–31 († MA, m.ob.) and one in *Chambers* Apr. 29 (†DP, AP). Two Wood Storks flying over L. Corpus Christi S.P Apr. 21 (CH *et al.*) were unusually late (or early?); the fact that one of the birds was carrying a stick makes the record even more interesting.

**WATERFOWL** — After the rains of February and March, Fulvous Whistling-Ducks moved into Laguna Larga on the Laureles; over 50 were seen Apr. 3 and over 200 Apr. 13 (CC, JG, SB, N & PP, LS). Another 200 could be found along the s. boundary of Laguna Atascosa Apr. 3–10 (KR). Five Fulvous at Mitchell L. May 11–22 (WS) were unusual. An out-of-range Fulvous Whistling-Duck showed up in a flooded field Apr. 8 at L. Tawakoni, the 2nd year in a row the species has appeared at that location (RK, GH, MWh). Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were seen in fair numbers in s. Texas. Most unusual were 160 perched atop a Brownsville grain elevator Mar. 23 (H & GA), and 500 were seen in a *Jim Wells* field Mar. 30 (A & MC). A first May record for the Panhandle was provided by a Greater White-fronted Goose in *Lubbock* throughout the season (L.E.A.S.). Three Ross' Geese were seen as late as Mar. 7 in the Rockport area (CC). Muscovy Ducks were reported in small numbers from Falcon Dam to the Salineño area. A ♀ Muscovy investigating potential nesting cavities at Anzalduas May 1 was of particular interest (JA).

The increased presence of Wood Ducks in the Panhandle has aroused interest in possible nesting (KS). A pair was observed at Buffalo Springs L. in *Lubbock* Apr. 4–10 (CSt), and a courting group of five was at L. Tanglewood, *Randall*, Apr. 8 (JH, TJ, KS). Two Wood Ducks near Choke Canyon Res. Apr. 21 were probably the first in spring for *McMullen* (CH, LH, KO, WL). Mottled Duck appears to be expanding its breeding range northward. The pair seen at Longview Mar. 11 (N.E.T.F.O.) continued a pattern established over the past several years. Two to five Cinnamon Teal frequented e. Fort Worth during March and the first half of April (BN, m.ob.). Unusual numbers of ducks lingered at many locations in central Texas. Among the

species commented on were Blue-winged Teal, Gadwall, N Shoveler, and Redhead. Several ducks also lingered late at Attwater including a Canvasback Apr. 19–23 (DMu), a Com. Goldeneye Apr. 27–29, and as many as four Buffleheads Apr. 27–29 (Spoonbill). Greater Scaup remained in e Texas through May when five were seen on L. Winnsborro May 28 (N.E.T.F.O.). A pair of Greater Scaup, casual in the Trans-Pecos, was at Ft. Bliss Apr. 4 (BZ), the latest ever spring date for that area.

An Oldsquaw that wintered on Austin's Town L. remained until at least Mar. 9 and one was in *San Patricio* for 3 weeks in March (E & NA) and was last reported Apr. 2 (A & MC). Surf Scoters were found at Bolivar Apr. 2 (RU), Galveston Apr. 10 (Spoonbill), Mustang I., Apr. 21 (E & NA, A & MC), and in Corpus Christi Apr. 27 (JG *et al.*). Spring records are sporadic. A Hooded Merganser in Midland May 5 was unusual; previous records there have been during the winter (D & JMe, *vide* FW). A ♀ Ruddy Duck with 10 downy chicks on a pond near Santa Maria Mar. 31 (OC, GL, CJ) represented an unusual nesting record for *Hidalgo*. This species occasionally nests in the L.R.G.V. when water conditions are appropriate (*vide* JA).

**RAPTORS** — The 4649 migrating Turkey Vultures recorded at Bentsen during the period far exceeded the previous high count of 2733 made in 1989 (*vide* GD). The freeze of December 1989 seemed to devastate the L.R.G.V. population of tree snails, the primary food of Hook-billed Kites. Hook-billed Kite reports were down considerably during late winter, but there were a few reports of as many as three Hook-billed Kites at Anzalduas during March with a few reported at Bentsen, Santa Ana, and Falcon Dam during the latter part of the season. Most impressive were four Hook-billeds at Fronton, *Starr*, May 2 (JA). About 20 migrant Am. Swallow-tailed Kites were observed between Mar. 24 and Apr. 11 at many coastal plain locations from Brownsville to the U.T.C. (*vide* JEC, PP, TE). A pair of Swallow-tailed Kites took up residence near Hampshire, *Jefferson*, again this spring. First detected Apr. 14 (KZ), they were seen in the area through the season. Given the nest-building activity noted, there seems little doubt that the pair is nesting at that location. Unexpected was an extremely early Mississippi Kite on the Texas Tech campus at Lubbock Mar. 5 (KRy). The species is not expected in the Panhandle area until mid-April (KS). An ad. Bald Eagle in Midland Apr. 17 (K & JCru, *vide* FW) provided a rare area record. Bald Eagles were nesting in *Walker*, *Montgomery*, and *Victoria*.

Donohue reported migration totals from Bentsen as 164 Sharp-shinned and 231 Cooper's hawks between mid-March and mid-May. Cooper's Hawks were seen repeatedly in *Kenedy* and *Kleberg* during April and May (N & PP, BZ, RB *et al.*) which may suggest nesting. O'Neil and Fugate found nesting Cooper's Hawks in s. *Brooks* and n. *Hidalgo* May 3 & 10; two adults were present and 4 eggs were photographed in the *Hidalgo* nest May 3. Cooper's Hawk in e. Texas is a likely yet rarely confirmed breeder. This year Eubanks observed a territorial adult near Lake O' the Pines Apr. 15, and (considering the late date) the May 27 bird near Atlanta (N.E.T.F.O.) should be considered a breeding candidate as well. In the Trans-Pecos a Com. Black-Hawk was sighted in El Paso Apr. 1 (MCh) for the 2nd county record, and one over Big Bend Apr. 18 (MicP, DPi) was noteworthy. One to four Harris' Hawks were at Lake 6, *Lubbock*, Mar. 2–Apr. 7 (L.E.A.S.), a rare concentration for that area (*vide* KS). A few Gray Hawks were reported in the L.R.G.V. A pair of Gray Hawks at Rio Grande Village in Big Bend Apr. 21 (ML *et al.*) appeared

territorial; a nest was discovered there May 6 (DMu) On Mar. 24 Lockwood observed a Red-shouldered Hawk investigating the old nest site of last year's amazing Red-shouldered/Gray Hawk pair. This bird was not reported again, but a lone Gray Hawk was seen in that area Apr. 15.

The radar-screen counts of migrant hawks, begun in fall 1989 by Anse Windham in Kingsville, were continued this season. The hawks apparently fly too high to be seen from the ground on many occasions. Preliminary readings from the radar seem to show migrating hawks in mid-afternoon above 10,000 *per hour* over Kingsville on several occasions during early April, with a peak of 18,000 between 3 & 4 p.m., Apr. 4 (AW).

The first large numbers of Broad-winged in the coastal bend were reported Mar. 31 when the Armisteads saw about 2100 at Kingsville. The Palmers went on to describe some fantastic Broad-winged activity from Kingville. On Apr. 1, "Near Carreta Creek we encountered an almost solid canopy of birds perhaps 400 meters wide and less than 100 meters above the ground. Within a radius of less than one kilometer we saw 10 separate kettles of hawks, each with hundreds of birds...There were at least 18 separate kettles in a more distant tier and probably more. Our final estimate was 35,000 Broad-winged Hawks at that location."

Ruthie Melton in Victoria counted 60,686 Broad-winged from her yard between Mar. 28 and May 6. Peak flight dates were Apr. 3 (23,508) and Apr. 11 (22,250). Carmona counted 9000 Broad-winged at Harlingen Apr. 2. Counters at Bentsen reported only 16,000 Broad-winged during the season; the majority were between Mar. 28 and Apr. 14 (*vide* GD). The Broad-winged flight peaked in e. Texas Apr. 14 when 700 were tallied over Nacogdoches (MW). The only Broad-winged Hawk in the Panhandle was one in *Lubbock* Apr. 18–20 and May 2 (DS, m.ob.). An imm. Broad-winged at Rio Grand Village in Big Bend May 2 (JD) was out-of-place.

Several hundred Swainson's Hawks per day were counted on the last 3 days of March at Bentsen and 2294 were tallied there Apr. 8 (*vide* GD). Two Swainson's arrived on the early date of Mar. 4 in *Lubbock* (L & SMa) Charlie Clark reported one Ferruginous Hawk Mar. 19 near Tivoli, his latest for that area by 30 days; one remained until May 5 in *Kleberg* (N & PP). A Ferruginous Hawk in Galveston Apr. 18 (J & WRi) was late and out of place. A pair of Golden Eagles was found nesting in *Dallam* during March (RGo) at a site heretofore not reported, and an immature seen Mar. 14 in *Houston* provided a rare record (N.E.T.F.O.). Arvin saw an Am. Kestrel leave a possible nest site below Falcon Dam May 3 and reported 5 apparent nesting pairs along a stretch of U.S. 83 in *Dimmit*. This species is not thought to be a regular nester in s. Texas.

**GROUSE TO SHOREBIRDS** — Spring counts of Attwater's Prairie-Chicken revealed 494 birds compared to 432 last year, a modest 14% increase. More intensive field work resulted in finding more birds, but initial results suggest a small increase in the population since 1989 (BAD, SL). A lone Scaled Quail frequented the Mitchell L. area from Apr. 26 through May (WS, S.A.A.S.); there have been few recent records in that region. Four Purple Gallinules were in Nacogdoches May 2 (MW); the species is rare and irregular in the Pineywoods. The last of 141 Whooping Cranes departed Aransas Apr. 25; three subadults and two breeding females of the 146 that had arrived in the fall died during the winter (TS).

Good numbers of Lesser Golden-Plovers were in the coastal bend during March and early April (PP) and 150+ were counted near Falfurrias Apr. 8 (AO). Although

unusual for the Pineywoods, Lesser Golden made use of the closely clipped grass of the *Gregg* airport where 184 were counted Mar. 24–27 (N.E.T.F.O.). In n.c. Texas, Haynie reports that more Lesser Golden were detected than normal with 4 separate reports. A Snowy Plover at Mitchell L. Mar. 29 (WS) was rare for spring, and very early. Snowy Plovers at the McAllen sewer ponds May 1 encouraged suspicions that the species is breeding there (JA). A Wilson's Plover at McAllen Apr. 22 was out of place (JD). Three Piping Plovers at Fort Worth Apr. 18 (JWS) were notable; typically n.c. Texas averages one per migration (*fide* CH). A flock of 100+ Mountain Plovers at Falfurrias on the late date of Apr. 8 (AO) was the largest in that area in recent memory. A very late (injured?) Mountain Plover was at Laguna Atascosa Apr. 30 through May (KR). Two pairs of Mountain Plovers were again apparently nesting in the Davis Mountains in late April.

Two Black-necked Stilts in Nacogdoches May 3 (MW) represented the first record for the Pineywoods. A pair of Am. Avocets attempted nesting at Mitchell L. but the eggs were destroyed the third week of May (WS). This represented the 2nd *Bexar* nesting record. The annual staging of



Five Willets, rare in western Texas, at Lake Balmorhea on April 12, 1990. Photograph/Mark Lockwood.

Am. Avocets at Bolivar Flats culminated with 9000 Mar. 4 (RU). Five Willets at L. Balmorhea Apr. 12 (ph. ML) provided a rare record. A concentration of 700 Willets at Laguna Atascosa Mar. 23 (H & GA) was noteworthy. A Whimbrel, rare in n.c. Texas, fed in a flooded field near Fort Worth Mar. 31 (EW).

Eubanks remarked that excellent counts of late migrants such as Hudsonian Godwit and White-rumped Sandpiper were made possible by the rain-induced delay in the rice crop. High counts reported by Eubanks and Morgan during their shorebird surveys along the U.T.C. included 1826 Lesser Yellowlegs Apr. 24, 685 Hudsonian Godwits May 12, 5235 Semipalmated Sandpipers May 12, 11,151 White-rumped Sandpipers May 12, 3005 Stilt Sandpipers May 12, and 6000 Long-billed Dowitchers Apr. 28.

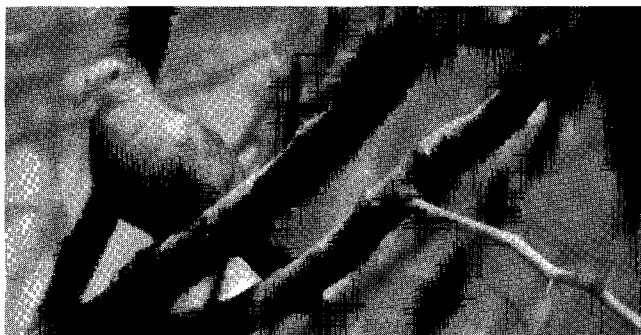
An early Hudsonian Godwit was 40 mi s.w. of Eagle Lake Apr. 11 (JD). Six Hudsonian Godwits provided an overdue first record for *Raines* Apr. 22 (RK, JNu, MWh). Carmona had a remarkable 800–1000 Red Knots at Boca Chica Apr. 22 with 100 still there May 6. Two Semipalmated Sandpipers in *Hudspeth* May 5 (BZ) and a White-rumped Sandpiper at L. Balmorhea May 17 (ML) represented rare Trans-Pecos records. The lone White-rumped Sandpiper in *Galveston* Mar. 3 (LA, PG) was so early that the possibility of the bird having overwintered

might be considered. Over 1000 each of White-rumped and Baird's sandpipers in e. *Cameron* May 6 were notable (OC). A Baird's Sandpiper at Big Bend May 3 (WD, SK, ph.) provided one of very few park records, and a Baird's at Lake Mineral Wells S.P. May 30 (RK, GH, MWh) was late. The **Purple Sandpiper** at Freeport remained through mid-April. Dunlin were particularly common in the U.T.C. paddyfields this season with a high count of 3227 May 12 (TE, JM). A Wilson's Phalarope in *Lubbock* Mar. 4 (RR) was the earliest on record for that area by 3 weeks. A Red-necked Phalarope, very rare in spring, was recorded at Austin May 9 (BF).

**JAEGERS TO SKIMMER** — An unidentified immature jaeger was on a spoil island in *Cameron* Mar. 30 (PM, JN), two subad. jaegers, tentatively identified as Parasitics, were briefly seen on Mustang I. Apr. 29 (TA), and a single Pomarine rested at High I. Apr. 20 (DMu, RT). Most interesting was the report of a subad. jaeger, possibly a Long-tailed, photographed and described May 15 on Mustang Island (to T.B.R.C., TA). An ad. Laughing Gull at L. Tawakoni May 4 provided a first record there and one of very few for n.c. Texas (GH, AV). A worn, first-winter Thayer's Gull was on the beach near High I., Apr. 7–14 (J & WRi, JD, A & GSm, m.ob., ph.). There are now about 12 solid records of this form in Texas. A few Lesser Black-backed Gulls lingered; one was at Aransas Mar. 2–25 (TS, H & GA), one was at Laguna Atascosa at least until Mar. 21 (KR), and Tony Amos' "old reliable" on Mustang I. left Apr. 13. Another ad. Lesser Black-backed was on the beach at High I. Mar. 31 (MA, LA, PG). A Glaucous Gull was at Galveston Mar. 18 (TE, ph.) and another was at High I. Apr. 20 (DMu, RT). A first-winter Black-legged Kittiwake roosted with gulls in a field near High I. Apr. 25 (BB, m.ob.).

Three pairs of Gull-billed Terns were going through mating rituals at the McAllen sewer ponds May 1 (JA). Common Tern is rare away from the coast. Nine were reported from Longview May 17 (N.E.T.F.O.), an extraordinary number for this inland location. Elsewhere, a Com. Tern at L. Tawakoni May 20 (RK, GH, JNu, MWh) provided a first record for *Van Zandt*. A Least Tern at L. Balmorhea May 17 (ML) and another at Midland May 19 (JMer *et al.*) were unusual. An ad. Black Skimmer at Mitchell L., Apr. 26–27 was about 125 miles from the nearest coastline. Although a number of species associated with the coast are seen at Falcon Dam regularly, Behrstock's observation of three Black Skimmers at that location Apr. 20 was a bit more unusual

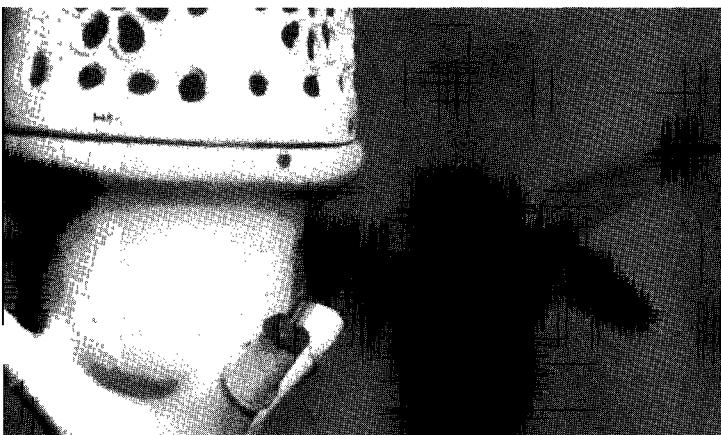
**DOVES TO NIGHTJARS** — Arvin commented on the seeming increased abundance of Red-billed Pigeons in the L.R.G.V. recently. Pairs were seen at Anzalduas, Bentsen, and Santa Ana, and at least 10 pairs were watched from one *Starr* location May 2 (JA). Small numbers of Ringed Turtle-Doves are now being seen in as many as 3 Kingsville locations (SB, N & PP), and in Bedford five were seen Mar. 7–20 (GK, MP, EW *et al.*). Inca Doves are being reported with increasing frequency in the n. Panhandle, three that wintered in Hereford remained this season (A & DCoc). Another Inca Dove took up residence in Amarillo (B & JPr), and yet another was heard there Apr. 9 & 19 (KS) Elsewhere, an Inca Dove at Eagle Mountain L., *Tarrant*, was n. of the species' very local range in n.c. Texas (RDC, *fide* CH). The ♂ **Ruddy Ground-Dove** at Lajitas from the winter report was last seen Mar. 22 (*fide* ML). Green Parakeets continued to be seen in McAllen through the season but their numbers seemed reduced; whereas about 40 were reported Feb. 21, no more than 20 were seen at any one



*Male Ruddy Ground-Dove at Lajitas, Texas, March 9, 1990. This bird is pale enough to suggest the western race (eluta), unrecorded in Texas, if it is not just a worn or exceptionally pallid bird of the eastern race (rufipennis). Photograph/Mark Lockwood.*

time in spring (SWe). An unexpected Red-crowned Parrot showed up in Falfurrias Mar. 7 (AO) and an equally unexpected Green Parakeet was at the Fred Jones Sanctuary, San Patricio, Apr. 14 (A & MC). Three Green Parakeets were at Laguna Atascosa Apr. 22 through May (KR).

A Groove-billed Ani at the Fort Worth Zoo May 8 (AK) was thought to be a legitimate vagrant; the aviary there has no anis in its collection. There are fewer than a dozen records in n.c. Texas (CH). While the Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls of Norias were calling less frequently in March and April, estimates of their numbers continued to increase (RW, PP, LS *et al.*). Three Long-eared Owls were found at Buffalo Lake Mar. 4 (KS) and another was at Big Bend Apr. 17 (SP). A Pauraque in *De Witt* Apr. 11–26 (DMu) was probably at the n.e. edge of the species' range. Quite unexpected was a singing Chuck-will's-widow near Canadian, *Hemphill*, May 19 (KS).



*Male Broad-billed Hummingbird at Midland, Texas, May 22, 1990. About the ninth state record. Photograph/Midge Erskine.*

**HUMMINGBIRDS TO WOODPECKERS**—A Broad-billed Hummingbird visited Del Rio Apr. 9 (B & VH) and another was at Midland May 22 into June (ME, ph.). These two records will, if accepted by the T.B.R.C., constitute the 8th and 9th for Texas, although we suspect the species may be more common in the Big Bend region than our records would suggest. Buff-bellied Hummingbirds were in Falfurrias by Mar. 12 (AO) and Kingsville by Mar. 14 (N & PP). An Anna's Hummingbird at Sarita Apr. 29 (DW *et al.*), furnished a very surprising spring record for s. Texas, and probably a new *Kenedy* record as well. A ♂ Ruby-throated Hummingbird at Alpine May 8 may represent the first record for several years for that area (ML). Many observers commented that the Ringed Kingfisher popula-

tion in the L R G.V seemed alarmingly reduced, but the species seemed to be reported from a number of areas outside its normal haunts. Carmona found two Mar. 2 at Arroyo City near the Laguna Madre, and a pair was investigating a possible nesting cavity in the bank of the Rio Grande n. of Eagle Pass Mar. 16 (KB, JSo, DR). Elsewhere, a Ringed Kingfisher was at Inks Lake S.P. Mar. 2 (EK *et al.*) and another was near Comfort on the Guadalupe R. Apr 29 (E & KM), continuing a trend of recent Hill Country reports.

One of the two Lewis' Woodpeckers at Midland during the winter lingered until May 5 (*vide* FW). Other Lewis' Woodpecker records this season included one in Fort Davis Apr. 29 (†JD), one in *Hartley* May 5 (KS), and one at G.M.N.P. May 9 (†MF). A Red-headed Woodpecker at Muleshoe N.W.R. May 11 (JCl) was the first there in 10 years. A Golden-fronted Woodpecker there the same date furnished a new spring record for the refuge. A ♂ Williamson's Sapsucker was found at Rio Grande Village in Big Bend Mar. 5 (JSe).

**FLYCATCHERS TO SWALLOWS**—Most exciting was the May 5 discovery of a **Greater Pewee** at Boulder Meadow in Big Bend (VE, † to T.B.R.C.). There is only one previous accepted Texas record of this species despite more than a dozen undocumented reports. A singing E. Wood-Pewee in *Jeff Davis* May 19 (ML) was well out of range. A territorial Acadian Flycatcher along the Frio R. near Pearsall May 23 was the first probable breeding bird Arvin had ever found on the Rio Grande plain s. of the Balcones Escarpment. He speculated that this species (as well as others) may routinely follow Hill Country rivers south and nest in riparian areas. A Black Phoebe at Lake 6 in *Lubbock* Mar. 2–4 (GJ, m.ob.) was possibly the same bird seen there in January. A Vermilion Flycatcher in *Garza* Apr 25 (BBo) was noteworthy. Elsewhere, Vermilion Flycatchers unexpectedly showed up at 3 Fort Worth area locations Mar. 15, Mar. 23, and May 1 (TG, ChH, F.W.A.S.). Vermilion Flycatchers were thought to be unusually common in far s. Texas with as many as 12–15 per day at some locations in *Brooks*, *Kenedy*, and *Kleberg* (m.ob.).

A **Social Flycatcher** was reported at Anzalduas Mar 17 and was seen sporadically until Apr. 5 (R & LG, TP, OC, J & EM, † to T.B.R.C.). Unfortunately, no photos were obtained. This species is resident in s. Tamaulipas and has long been expected to stray north. A pair of **Thick-billed Kingbirds** returned to Cottonwood Campground in Big Bend again this spring. The birds were first seen Apr. 7 (ML) and noted throughout the rest of the season (JVR, P & TF, JD, RW, m.ob.). Fisher observed a W. Kingbird near L. Sam Rayburn May 11, an unusual but increasingly regular species in the Pineywoods. At least one Rose-throated Becard was still at Bentsen Mar. 3 (E & NA). The **Masked Tityra** from the winter remained at Bentsen until Mar. 11 but was difficult to locate during its final 7 or 8 days (m.ob.).

Despite the fact that some Purple Martins abandoned nestlings in the drought of last summer in s. Texas, the species seemed to arrive in above normal numbers this year, with birds taking up previously unused nesting sites (PP, m.ob.). Purple Martins seem to be increasing in the Lubbock, Slaton, and White River Lake areas (L.E.A S.), and Amarillo's first nesting birds of last year returned Apr. 30 (RSCO). Purple Martin massings are almost exclusively associated with fall stagings, but over 500 were in a single flock this spring in Longview (N.E.T.F.O.). Rarely reported in the Panhandle area was a Violet-green Swallow seen in *Lubbock* May 4 (CSt). Cave Swallows were seen at Aransas Apr. 2 near the Matagorda I. site where they nested in 1989



(BJ, *fide* TS). Cave Swallows returned to Sea Rim S.P. by Mar. 24 (J & WRI) to nest again this season at the easternmost range extension of the species in Texas.

**JAYS TO THRASHERS**—The montane jay invasion of winter persisted into spring with Steller's Jays lingering in Alpine until Mar. 11 (JSc), in Amarillo until Mar. 16 (JPr), in Big Bend until Apr. 29, and in the Davis Mountains until at least May 9 (PE). Scrub Jays remained in the El Paso area until the all-time late date of May 27 (BZ), and Pinyon Jays were still in the Davis Mountains May 21 (PE). Espy observed Steller's Jays carrying sticks into a pine in the Davis Mountains May 21 (PE), but heavy construction seemed to have discouraged this apparent nesting attempt. A Green Jay in Aransas Pass Apr. 4 (E & NA) was n. of its typical range; one had been at this same location in summer 1989. Farther afield, a Green Jay at Midland Mar. 31 (JBU, BW) was a surprise. Was it an escapee, or a natural vagrant? An apparent San Blas Jay was at Anzalduas Mar. 3–Apr. 5. This is a sedentary bird of the Pacific lowlands of s.w. Mexico and its chances of reaching the U.S. on its own are probably nil. The species has recently been seen for sale in Matamoros and Monterrey, Mexico (TE *et al.*). A pair of Mexican Crows was building a nest at the Brownsville dump Apr. 29 (M & RFa); the species also attempted nesting near there last year. An Am. Crow was at Aransas Apr. 1–2 for the first refuge record in 18 years (TS). A single Chihuahuan Raven made a rare appearance near Falfurrias Apr. 1 (AO). Common Ravens are showing up with increasing frequency in the Austin area; records this spring included one near Seguin Mar. 18, one in n. Hays Mar. 20, and one at McKinney Falls S.P. Apr. 9 (T.A.S.).

Arvin found Carolina Chickadees fairly commonly along the Frio R. all the way s. to Dilley in s. Frio May 23. The distribution of the species in this area is poorly known. A Red-breasted Nuthatch still at Midland May 5 provided only the 2nd May record ever there (FW). A White-breasted Nuthatch at Ft. Clark Springs, Kinney, Mar. 19 provided a rare record for that area (OC). A pair of Canyon Wrens defending a territory along the Frio R. near Pearsall May 23 provided one of very few records off the Balcones Escarpment on the Rio Grande plain (JA). A pair of Carolina Wrens was seen in Lubbock Mar. 10 (CSt), and another was at a different site in the same county May 5 (DS). Another Carolina Wren was at L. Tanglewood, Randall, Apr. 8 (JH, TJo, KS). A pair of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers at Muleshoe N.W.R. May 11 furnished only the 2nd May record for that location (JCl).

A Veery in Plano, Collin, May 10 (RR) and another in Vega, Oldham, May 12 (PA, RScO) provided rare records. A very late Hermit Thrush was banded at Kickapoo May 7 (KB). Unexpected were Wood Thrush records at Lubbock Apr. 4 & 8 (AG) and Apr. 28 (MBI). Two Clay-colored Robins remained at Sabal Palm through Mar. 5 (M & RFa), and one was still at Anzalduas Apr. 7. A Clay-colored Robin was last seen Apr. 21 at Laguna Vista, Cameron (MK), where up to five had been present during the winter, and one or two lingered at Santa Ana at least through Apr. 22 (TE *et al.*). There were also one or more Clay-colored reported at Bentsen through the period. A Varied Thrush visited an El Paso yard for nearly 2 weeks beginning in late April before it departed May 10 (LJ,† to T.B.R.C.). A Gray Catbird in Randall Apr. 8 (JH, TJo, KS) was early for the Panhandle, and another at Big Bend Apr. 27 (RW) was out-of-place. A Long-billed Thrasher was again at the Old Ranch at Big Bend during April and May (m.ob.), and another had returned to Midland by Mar. 26 (*fide* FW). Long-billed Thrashers were seen at Indianola Apr. 26 and

in Victoria May 21 (RMe). Both sites are n. of the expected range of the species.

**VIREOS, WARBLERS**—A pair of Black-capped Vireos at Dinosaur Valley S.P. May 13 (CH) was encouraging, since this species was virtually absent there last year. Elsewhere about 300 Black-capped Vireos were observed by workers censusing in and around Kerr W.M.A., Kerr (*fide* JGr). This remarkable tally was primarily a function of increased observer coverage and access to new properties. Another 100 territories were at the Devil's River State Natural Area, Val Verde, and 80 more were at Kickapoo (*fide* KB). Gray Vireos set up about 18 territories at Kickapoo (KB) and another lone Gray Vireo was discovered in n.e. Kinney May 16 (E & KMU). An out-of-range Yellow-throated Vireo was at Big Bend Apr. 24 (JSe). One of the most amazing records of the season was of a singing Hutton's Vireo discovered and photographed Apr. 20 on a private ranch in the Texas Hill Country in Real (RB, BAR). The next day other observers were able to tape record and photograph a territorial pair there (GL, CJ, VE). The pair was monitored through the season by Armstrong and Gee, who suspected nesting was in progress by mid-May. This record represents a 200+ mi range extension. A Philadelphia Vireo netted at Kickapoo May 1 (KB, ph.) provided a new Kinney record. A Red-eyed Vireo in the Big Bend high country May 8 (RH) was unexpected. By May 6 a pair of Yellow-green Vireos had returned to Laguna Atascosa for the 3rd year in a row (KR).

A Golden-winged Warbler in Big Bend May 1 (J & JTe) was well w. of its typical migration path as was a Tennessee Warbler there May 5–6 (DMU). Single "Lawrence's" Warblers were at High I. Apr. 11 (RR) and at Palmetto S.P. Apr. 27 (DiH, DBE). Unexpected was a Virginia's Warbler in Lubbock May 1 (GJ) and another there May 3 (DS). Lucy's Warblers had returned to Cottonwood Campground in Big Bend by Mar. 23 (JGe), and by the end of April at least 4 pairs were nesting there (JVR, ML, m.ob.). March rains were responsible for the 103 N. Parulas seen Mar. 30 on the U.T.C. (JM). Unusual N. Parula records included one in Lubbock Mar. 22 (MR) and one in Oldham May 1–7 (RScO). A Tropical Parula was in n.w. Kleberg Mar. 16 (JTo, GM, MBU); others were on Norias Mar. 17–18, Apr. 10–11 (RW), and May 17 (MCra, HBU). This species may prove regular in the latter area. A ♂ "Mangrove" Warbler discovered at the mouth of the Rio Grande at Boca Chica Mar. 20 (GaL) sang through Apr. 6 (ph., m.ob.). Curiously, the grove of black mangroves that it defended was quite dead, having been frozen to the ground last winter! To our knowledge, this is only the 2nd occurrence of this tropical subspecies of Yellow Warbler in the U.S.; the first was May 26, 1978 at Rockport, Texas (AB 32:1031). Two Magnolia Warblers in Corpus Christi May 26 were late (CC).

Normally a rare spring migrant in Texas, the Cape May Warbler appeared in exceptional numbers. For example, nine were seen along the U.T.C. Apr. 21 (DMU *et al.*) and five were seen between High I. and Sabine Pass May 4 (JM, TE). Two Cape May Warblers were in Corpus Christi Apr. 21; one was still present Apr. 25 (A & MC). Unusual western records of Black-throated Blue Warblers were of individuals at Big Bend May 10 (RS) & 20 (JaB). A Black-throated Blue near Campbell in n.c. Texas was unusual (WC). Yellow-rumped Warbler, considered to be a facultative migrant, responded to this past winter's exceptional chill with a mass exodus from e. Texas (TE). Wolf remarked that he found the species "present in numbers in Costa Rica this spring where they are normally uncommon." As a result of this movement into the tropics, Yel-

low-rumped Warblers returned through Texas in unusual numbers late in the spring (e.g., lingered to May 11 in Nacogdoches). With this mass migration of "Myrtles" were a few "Audubon's," a subspecies rarely seen in e. Texas. Ortego observed one on Bolivar Pen. Apr. 28, and the breeding plumaged "Audubon's" in Sabine Woods May 4 (TE, JM) represented a new late spring date for the U.T.C. A Townsend's Warbler near Falcon Dam Apr. 25 (BB, JD) was unusual for date and location, as was one in *Oldham* May 1 (JSCO). At least three Hermit Warblers graced the high Chisos in early May (*vide* ML).

#### S.A.

Based on continuing loss and fragmentation of its habitat in the Hill Country, the Golden-cheeked Warbler was listed May 4, 1990, as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The emergency rule bringing the species under the immediate protection of the Endangered Species Act was prompted by ongoing and threatened clearing around urban areas such as Austin, San Antonio, and Kerrville. This action touched off predictable heightened public attention on the warbler and debate over protection of endangered species.

In the meantime, Golden-cheekeds appeared to have an excellent nesting season. Although song activity abruptly diminished about May 15 when record heat set in, numerous fledglings were seen with adults by season's end, including not uncommonly broods of three to four young.

A Blackburnian Warbler at Amarillo May 6 (KS) was a good find, as was one at Big Bend's Old Ranch May 22 (ML). A Yellow-throated Warbler in El Paso Apr. 6 (JSp, JF) was the first for that area in 9 years. A Pine Warbler in



Male Prairie Warbler at Kickapoo Caverns State Park, Texas, May 16, 1990. One of very few documented records for the western half of the state. Photograph/Kelly B. Bryan.

Pampa, Gray, May 4 furnished a new county record (F & JE). Unusual Prairie Warbler records included one at Big Bend Apr. 28 (LA, PG), probably the first park record, and a singing male at Kickapoo May 16 for a first Kinney record (KB). Strong SE winds during most of the spring on the U.T.C. were thought responsible for the unusual abundance of Blackpoll Warblers there. Arvin counted 22 Blackpolls near Sabine Pass Apr. 25, and 102 were tallied along Bolivar Pen. Apr. 20–21 (DMu, RT). A Blackpoll at Lost Maples May 3 (KR) and another at Comfort the same date (E & KMU) provided unusual Hill Country records. Another Blackpoll at Amarillo May 12 (JPr) was out-of-place. A singing Prothonotary Warbler in Ingram, Kerr, May 24 was out-of-range as was a Swainson's Warbler at Comfort May 5 (E & KMU).

A cat in *Lubbock* provided a specimen record for Kentucky Warbler Apr. 20 (GJ) as did another cat in Amarillo May 15 (JPr), both first occurrences in their respective areas since 1982 (*vide* KS). A MacGillivray's Warbler at

Corpus Christi Apr. 27 (JG *et al.*) was a rarity. A Hooded Warbler in *Lubbock* Apr. 26 (DS) was unexpected. Boot Canyon in Big Bend produces exciting warbler records from time to time; this spring was one of those times. A **Red-faced Warbler** was carefully described there May 1–2 (JD, MBI, WD *et al.*) for what will be the 7th accepted



Unusually far east was this Painted Redstart at Fort Clark Springs, Kinney County, Texas, on March 18, 1990. Photograph/Kelly B. Bryan.

Texas record. Undoubtedly the bird-of-the-season was a singing **Slate-throated Redstart** at Boot Springs Apr. 26 & 30 and May 15 (GW, P & TF, ML *et al.*). Although it eluded many who searched for it, this bird was eventually seen well by about 10 people during this 19 day period. No photos were obtained, but excellent descriptions have been submitted to the T.B.R.C. If accepted, it will represent the first Texas record and about the 4th for the United States.

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES**—A ♂ Hepatic Tanager at Hueco Tanks S.P., May 5 (JSp, JF) provided a first park record, and another in *Lubbock* May 2 (L.E.A.S.) was only the 2nd the Panhandle area (*vide* KS). A singing Pyrrhuloxia in Palo Duro Canyon Mar. 28 (KS) raised hopes of nesting, but the bird could not be found later. After the winter influx of Pyrrhuloxias onto the U.T.C. area, a few were noted lingering. Singles were at Indianola Mar. 8 (RMe), Victoria Mar. 13, and Attwater Apr. 10 (MCra). Two Rose-breasted Grosbeaks at San Angelo May 4–5 (RD, M & DT) provided rare records for the Concho Valley. A ♂ Blue Bunting at Bentsen lingered until at least Mar. 15. Several large massings of Dickcissels were noted this season with 1300 in *Matagorda* May 5 (RU) and 4000 in a single *Lamar* field May 12 (DF) of special note. Green-tailed Towhees lingered on the U.T.C. and the coastal bend into mid-April (m.ob.); the latest was at Indianola Apr. 26 (RMe).

Botteri's Sparrows were found Apr. 25 & 27 in *Kleberg* (JG, HBr *et al.*) for a new county record. Cassin's Sparrows were described as particularly common over many areas of the coastal plain of s. Texas such as *Cameron*, *Willacy*, *Brooks*, *Kenedy*, *Kleberg*, and *Aransas*. Many had already fledged young by the end of May (m.ob.). Four Black-throated Sparrows, now quite rare in the coastal bend, were found in w. *Live Oak* May 14 (CC). A Sage Sparrow at Big Bend Mar. 24 (JGe) provided a rare record. A late Savannah Sparrow was at L. Tawakoni May 20 (RK *et al.*) Two reports of migrant Sharp-tailed Sparrows were very unusual; one was well seen Apr. 29 near Comfort in the Hill Country (E & SW) and two were studied in the same area May 3 (E & KMU). A Fox Sparrow at Palo Duro Canyon S.P. Mar. 28 was unusual (KS), and a White-throated Sparrow at Ft. Bliss May 5 (BZ) was late and out-of-place. A **Yellow-eyed Junco** was seen foraging in the leaf litter near Boot Springs, Big Bend Apr. 29 (*vide* RRo) and May 5 (†VE *et al.*). If accepted, this record will be the 3rd for Texas. Two Chestnut-collared Longspurs were photographed at Big Bend Apr. 20–23 for a very late record (RW).

Along with Fisher's E. Kingbird and Dickcissel massings

in *Lamar* were a remarkable 190 Bobolinks May 12. Nine Bobolinks put in a rare appearance in McKinney, *Collin*, May 7–15 (HH, RR, PBI, EW). Amazing was a ♂ Bobolink at L. Balmorhea May 17, representing perhaps the 3rd record for the Trans-Pecos, all in mid-May (ML, ph.). Singing W. Meadowlarks were in *Kleberg* at least until Apr. 13 (NP) and at least one was still at Laguna Atascosa on the extremely late date of May 25 (KR). From Kingsville, Palmer reported that “The optimism triggered by infrequent observations of Bronzed Cowbirds in recent seasons was apparently unwarranted; they have been abundant this spring and so have their brown-headed cousins.” A Bronzed Cowbird captured at Ft. Hood, *Coryell*, May 11 (KM, \*T.C.W.C.) furnished a first county record, and Tarter reports the species is on the increase in the Concho Valley.

#### S.A.

The cowbird family in Texas is, unfortunately, one species larger with the documentation this spring of the first **Shiny Cowbird** in the state. We had been expecting this unwanted species, but thought it would show up on the U.T.C. We were quite surprised when Kenneth Moore contacted us with news that he had captured a Shiny Cowbird in a cowbird trap on a Black-capped Vireo study site May 23 at Ft. Hood, *Bell*. The specimen, identified as a one-year-old male (*vide* Steve Cardiff), has been deposited in the T.C.W.C.

Three Great-tailed Grackles in *Walker* Apr. 27 (DP, AP) represented a new county record. A Com. Grackle in *Lajitas* Mar. 24 (ML) was well w. of its normal range. O’Neil was still seeing Orchard Orioles at the end of the season in Falfurrias and suspected they were nesting there. Hooded Orioles were back at *Sarita* Mar. 14 (JTo, MBu *et al.*) and rapidly increased in the following weeks at many spots in *Kleberg* and *Kenedy* (PP *et al.*). An Altamira Oriole was heard at *Norias* May 17, about 60 mi n. of its normal range (AO). A single Audubon’s Oriole, not recorded at Laguna Atascosa for years, was there Apr. 22 (*vide* KR). Two Scott’s Orioles in n.w. *Bexar* Apr. 8 (S.A.A.S.) were at the e. edge of that species’ range. Less expected was one in s.w. *Austin* May 10 (FD). Pine Siskins lingered late at many locations.

**CORRIGENDUM**—Delete the report of Paurque at Del Rio May 9-29, 1988 (AB 42:460) and Apr. 30, 1989 (AB: 43:507).

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# IDAHO-WESTERN MONTANA REGION

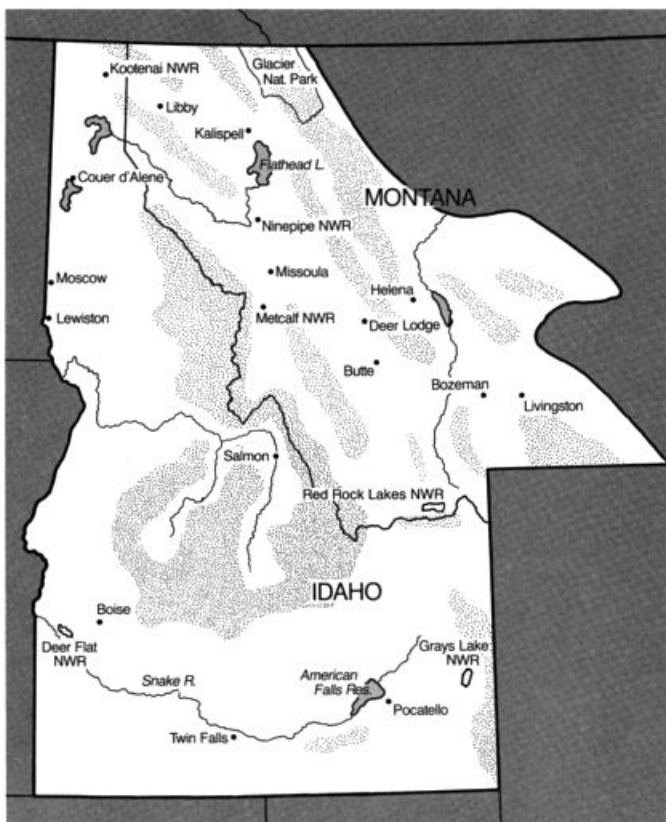
Thomas H. Rogers

**M**arch and April in the Region were mild in most areas while some areas were very dry; in others, precipitation varied. May, by contrast, turned cold and unseasonably wet nearly everywhere. A few reports indicated that the migration was early the first two months, late in May.

**LOONS TO WATERFOWL** — A Red-throated Loon was identified on Hayden L., *Kootenai*, ID, Mar. 20 (PH), as was a Pacific Loon there Mar. 12 (SHS). Twin Lakes near Preston, ID, had 54 Com. Loons Apr. 21, down from a high of 80 last year and 150 several years ago. Fishing was suspected of disturbing them (CHT). One was noted at Winchester Lake S.P., Winchester, ID, Apr. 22 (GT). Red-necked Grebes apparently were again nesting in s.e. Idaho, for three were on Silver L., Harriman S.P., *Fremont*, ID, in late May (DM), and three were on Henrys L., *Fremont*, about the same time (JS). The species was nesting in unusual abundance on Brown's L., Powell, MT (PLW). Two were on Canyon Ferry Res., Helena, MT May 4 (JSm). The species is seldom seen there (GH). One was seen at Salmon, ID, Apr. 23 (HR). A huge raft of about 2000 migrating Eared Grebes was on Canyon Ferry Res. May 4 (JSm). A Clark's Grebe was found on Pablo Res., Polson, on n.w. Montana's birdathon May 19 (DC).

A small group of Am. White Pelicans was again nesting at Minidoka N.W.R., Rupert, ID (CHT). A Great Egret appeared 8 mi s. of Salmon, ID, May 26 for that area's first record (LH). Four or five at American Falls Res. in late April were assumed to be nesting on the Fort Hall Bottoms n.w. of Pocatello, ID (CHT), and seven were with cattle near Idaho Falls, ID in late May (JS). Two of the species were reported from the Bigfork, MT, area Apr. 21 (MV). A White-faced Ibis made the first record for Kootenai N.W.R., Bonners Ferry, ID, May 21 (LDN).

An imm. Trumpeter Swan was sighted at Salmon Apr. 18 (HR). Two Snow Geese stayed on a pond at Lewiston, ID, Mar. 28–Apr. 24 (JM, MK). Single Snow Geese on the Red R. near Elk City, ID, Apr. 22 (SB) and on Hayden L. Feb. 18 (PH) were vagrants. A ♂ Wood Duck, rare at Red Rock Lakes N.W.R., was seen there May 30 (JB). Seemingly verifying the severe drop in N. Pintail numbers was their complete absence at Kootenai N.W.R. (LDN). None was observed on lakes in the Fortine, MT, vicinity either (WW). A ♂ **Garganey** was photographed on the Snake R. near Hammett, ID, in late April (SG) and was again seen May 3 (DT). A Gadwall was on Hayden L. Apr. 3 (PH). A ♂ Eur. Wigeon was on the Snake near Hammett Mar. 2 (CHT, CW), and Hayden L. had one Apr. 19 (PH). Church Slough between Somers and Kalispell, MT, had 30 Greater Scaup Apr. 14 (DC). A pair of Harlequin Ducks was observed on Big Elk Cr., Palisades Res., *Bonneville*, ID, May 27, and one bird was sighted on Hayden L. Apr. 17 (PH). The species is a rare breeder in the state (CG, CHT, CW). A pair of Oldsquaws was on the Clearwater R. near Lewiston Mar. 7 (KC) and two males were on a pond near Somers, MT, Mar. 18 (DC). Pablo Res. hosted three Red-breasted Mergansers May 19 (DC).



MAP ILLUSTRATION/KENN KAUFMAN

**HAWKS TO TERNS** — Normally rare at Red Rock Lakes, one to two Turkey Vultures were seen there late April to late May (JB). At the end of the period, 3 of 4 historic Bald Eagle nests and one of 2 newly found nests in the Kalispell area were successful, with as many as eight surviving young (DC). The pair at Kootenai N.W.R. hatched two young about Apr. 17 (LDN). A pair attempting to nest near North Fork, ID, gave up in late May (HR). A nest with nestlings at Metcalf N.W.R., Stevensville, MT, was good news; other attempts there apparently have been unsuccessful (PLW). The spring raptor migration study in w. Montana counted peaks of 10 Bald Eagles and 155 Golden Eagles in March at the main lookout e. of Rogers Pass n.w. of Helena (FT). The W. Foundation for Raptor Conservation sponsors the project. Notable was a Broad-winged Hawk in the Flathead Valley, n.w. Montana (JR). Sightings of five Peregrines and two Prairie Falcons were reported. Twenty Sharp-tailed Grouse at Mann Cr. e. of Weiser, ID, were notable—the area has been closed to hunting for over a decade (DJ). A feather, scat, and tracks of Wild Turkey were found n. of Culdesac, ID (CV, MK, LP).

A lone Sandhill Crane appeared near Kalispell in late April and a pair with one chick was seen near Boulder, MT, May 28 (DC). Several birds seen near Salmon Mar. 23 provided a new early arrival date (HR). Five Sandhill Cranes at Fortine provided the first spring record there in 70 years' observing (WW). A Whooping Crane there May 23 was apparently the first ever for far n.w. Montana (MD *et al.*, *vide* WW). One Whooping Crane at Red Rock Lakes May 14–16 and June 2–3 was believed to be a 13-year-old male (JB).

A window-killed Piping Plover at Gardiner, MT, made the area's first, \* to MT Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (JQ, TM). Five Am. Avocets, occasional at Kootenai N.W.R.,

were observed May 15 [LDN]. Notable was a Greater Yellowlegs along the Red R. Apr. 6 (SB). Pablo N.W.R. had 44 Marbled Godwits Apr. 19 (DW), and 10 appeared at Salmon Apr. 26 (HR).

Two Franklin's Gulls were sighted at Deer Flat N.W.R. May 12 (AL). Franklin's and Ring-billed gulls were down in numbers at Red Rock Lakes, their previous nesting colony abandoned (JB). Hayden L. had a Glaucous Gull Mar. 10 (PH). A Caspian Tern was sighted along the Snake R. s. of Nampa, ID, May 19 (AL). A Forster's Tern was over Hells Gate S.P., Lewiston, ID, Apr. 30 (AS).

**OWLS TO SHRIKES** — At least two calling Flammulated Owls were found in the South Hills near Twin Falls, ID, in mid-May (JT), and one was heard on Scout Mt. s. of Pocatello May 22 (CHT, CW). A N. Pygmy-Owl was calling in the South Hills in mid-May (JT). A Barred Owl was found at Benewah L., Kootenai, ID, May 5 (DJ), and another was in the Pothatch, ID, area Mar. 7 (ZP). The Red R. had a Boreal Owl Mar. 15 (SB). A pair of Great Gray Owls was again nesting near the ranger station at Island Park, ID (*vide* CHT). A high density of Long-eared Owls was found at Ninepipe N.W.R., Lake, MT, with 7 nests in one shelter belt. Short-eared Owl numbers at Ninepipe were also very high with "hundreds" nesting in the valley there (DH). A high population of microtine rodents was believed responsible. The latter owl species was believed declining at Red Rock Lakes, none having been seen yet this year (JB). Northern Saw-whet Owls were heard and seen around Jette L. n. of Polson, MT (DC), and one was at Deer Flat N.W.R. Apr. 7 (AL).

A Black Swift was with White-throated Swifts at Spar Canyon s. of Challis, ID, in late May (JS). One of the latter at Prairie, ID was unusual (AL). Black-chinned Hummingbirds seemed more common than usual at Fortine (WW) but were reported as scarce in the Coeur d'Alene vicinity. A nest of this species was found at Daggett Creek (BA). Three Lewis' Woodpeckers, rare in s.e. Idaho, were spotted near Ashton in late May (DM, KS). The species was sighted in mid-May near Rathdrum, ID (JT). Red Rock Lakes had 2 sightings in early May (JB). An Ash-throated Flycatcher was incubating in a bluebird box near Pocatello in mid-May (CW). The Tree Swallow population at Fortine was "heavy" but Cliff and Barn swallow numbers there were very low (WW).

A Blue Jay was with Steller's at Missoula during the winter and spring (KL). A Scrub Jay was reported in the vicinity of Mayfield, ID, Mar. 14 (EA). A White-breasted Nuthatch at Prairie Apr. 25 was unusual (AL). A Bewick's Wren was sighted near Lewiston Mar. 10 (CV, LP). A W. Bluebird near Henrys L., Fremont, ID, in late May was a rarity (JS). Mountain Bluebirds were doing "exceedingly well" at Red Rock Lakes (JB). A N. Mockingbird visited a Helena yard May 23 (JP) and another visited the Mayfield vicinity (CS). Two Am. Pipits at Prairie May 20 were noteworthy (AL). The desert w. of Springfield, ID, provided four Loggerhead Shrikes Apr. 12 and at least 2 pairs were on territory w. of Blackfoot, ID (CHT *et al.*).

**WARBLERS TO FINCHES** — A singing ♂ Tennessee Warbler, rare in w. Montana, was found in Missoula's Greenough Park (AB). The species was noted on 3 dates in May in the Gardiner, MT, area (TM *et al.*). A Nashville Warbler in the vicinity of Peck, ID, Apr. 21 was noteworthy (CV, LP). Six Black-and-white Warblers at Fortine Apr. 19 made only the 2nd sighting there in 70 years' observing—the first sighting was of one bird (WW). At Troy, MT, several Am. Redstarts appeared, having been absent there

for a few years (KB). An Ovenbird was singing (taped) at Pocatello for 3 days starting May 31 (ES). A N. Waterthrush was noted in the Gardiner vicinity May 19 (JZ, TM *et al.*) & 25 (WS).

A Rose-breasted Grosbeak was identified at Gardiner May 30 (WS) and a male visited feeders in Ketchum, ID, in late May (BS). A ♂ Clay-colored Sparrow singing s. of Kalispell May 19 was "somewhat unusual" (DC). Lark Buntings were increasing slightly at Red Rock Lakes but there was no evidence of breeding there (JB). A Harris' Sparrow that wintered at a feeder near Culdesac remained through April (C.B.). A Chestnut-collared Longspur at Spotted Bear airstrip up the S. Fork of the Flathead R., n.w. Montana, was very unusual (DC). A Com. Grackle visited a Missoula feeder briefly Mar. 1; others were seen there later (PLW). Several were at their traditional nesting site in Soda Springs, ID, May 3. They were reported in Ashton, ID (*vide* CHT), and s. of Burley, ID (WHS).

A ♂ Purple Finch was reported at a feeder near Coeur d'Alene Mar. 5–6 (RB). At Hayden L., females were noted Apr. 2 and a pair later (PH). A yellow Cassin's Finch with a group of normally colored birds was reported near Dillon, MT, May 12 (TB, BB, DE). Red Crossbills were very common in the Flathead Valley; one White-winged was in a flock near Kalispell May 13 (DC). Common Redpolls, abundant at Missoula during the winter, still lingered there Mar. 29 (VV). A Lesser Goldfinch visited a feeder on Mink Cr. Road s. of Pocatello in late May (JS).

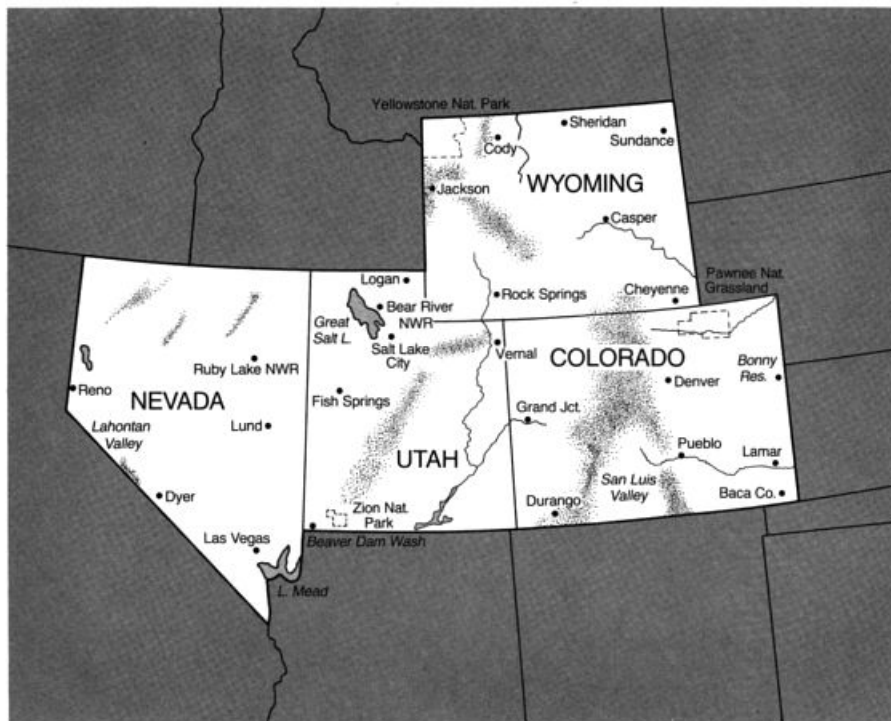
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# MOUNTAIN WEST REGION

Hugh E. Kingery



Colorado's most dramatic bird discovery in years came this spring when Duane Nelson, working for Hawkwatch International, located a major spring raptor migration site 20 minutes from downtown Denver. Located on the Dakota Hogback where the plains meet the mountains, he counted, in 34 days, 2245 migrating raptors of 17 species (10.1/hour).

Observers this spring saw a big diversity of species, and pronounced the migration a good one. Yet, for Regionally nesting birds, the limited number of migrants seen contrasts markedly with high densities on their nesting grounds. In this Region, observer impressions, at least of migrating land birds in April and May, seem to have no relationship to breeding abundance. For example, Colorado observers see very few migrating Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Warbling Vireos, or Green-tailed Towhees—the most abundant species in their respective breeding habitats of the mountains and plateaus.

Observers in the Mountain West see hundreds of sparrows but only dozens of warblers. The plains offer lots of good habitat for sparrows, little habitat for warblers. Each year birdwatchers flock to the same reservoirs to find waterbirds and shorebirds and to the same riparian areas to seek colorful warblers. Few stop along the prairie fencerows to count the hordes of Chipping, Clay-colored, Vesper, and Lark sparrows, or to search those flocks for rarer grassland species, the way Bridges last fall searched successfully for Sprague's Pipits (*AB* 44:132). Perhaps diligent trips along the dusty plains roads would turn up other surprises and provide better data about those plain migrants.

Regardless of what this litany of rare birds does measure, three states this spring recorded new species: Hermit Warbler in Wyoming, Golden-winged Warbler in Nevada, and Garganeys and Bronzed Cowbird in Colorado. The latter bird was not, we hope, a precursor of more to come.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — L/L/B/L = Longmont/Lyons/Bert-houd/Loveland area, CO, using Foothills Audubon Club records; 1st Lat = First latilong record (a latilong is outlined

by one degree each of latitude and longitude, and measures about 50 by 70 miles); † = written description on file with R.E.; †† = written description on file with, and subject to approval of, state or local records committee.

**LOONS TO WATERFOWL** — The mass of 766 Com. Loons at Walker L., NV, Apr. 12 doubled the record count for both the Lahontan Valley and the Mountain West (LN). Western Grebe nesting in Nevada's Lahontan Valley has dropped to "rock bottom" — a researcher wanting to collect *Aechmophorus* grebes on their nesting grounds couldn't fill his permit because of too few nesting pairs (LN). In contrast, L/L/B/L tallied 406 Westerns, cf. 279 last year. L/L/B/L also counted 1215 Am. White Pelicans, 4 times the 1989 count. The Riverside Res., CO, nesting colony had 750 pelicans on Apr. 28.

In Lahontan Valley, nesting Great Egrets increased from 80 pairs in 1988 to 140 this year, Snowy Egrets from 225 pairs to 310 pairs, and Cattle Egrets to 310 pairs; Black-crowned Night-Herons have dropped, though, from 1805 pairs in 1986 to 460 pairs in 1990 (LN). Observers reported three Little Blue Herons in n.e. Colorado. A **Glossy Ibis** at Fort Collins Apr. 29–May 13 was distinguished by, *inter alia*, blue lores (††DL, PO), for Colorado's 4th record. Flocks of 30–200 White-faced Ibises stopped in w. Colorado, but e. Colorado reported lower numbers. At Stillwater a record number of nesting White-faced Ibises timed their nesting to water availability—the 5900 pairs in 3 colonies could easily produce a record number of young.

Fish Springs N.W.R., UT, hosted 65 Tundra Swans Mar. 4, the high count for the Region. A Greater White-fronted Goose stopped at Reno Mar. 28–Apr. 7 (EK), and 10 were at Windsor, CO, Mar. 15 (WH). High counts of Snow Geese came from e. Colorado: 8000 at Cheraw Mar. 4, 50,000 at Lamar Mar. 11–16 (and 10,000 Apr. 14), and 5000 at Crook Mar. 15. Among the Snows at Lamar were 50 Ross' Geese Mar. 11 (MD). Reports of single Ross' Geese came from Las Vegas and Reno (†EK), Yellowstone N.P. (†JZ), and Casper.

Denver noted a big drop in several duck species — N.

Pintail, Am. Wigeon, and Lesser Scaup. Colorado's first **Garganeys**, judged a wild pair, stayed at Jackson Res., Ft. Morgan, CO, Apr. 22–28 (JB +MJ, m.ob.). Most Regional records of Eur. Wigeon come in the spring; this year three were in e. Colorado Mar. 21–May 5. An imm. male Harlequin Duck stopped at Walker L., NV, Apr. 14 (LN,



Male Harlequin Duck on Walker Lake, Nevada, April 14, 1990. Photograph/Larry Neel.

ph.), and Sheridan, WY, had two May 21–22 (RWg), the first there in 11 years. Rawhide Power Plant near Windsor, CO, attracted one to two Surf Scoters and a peak of five White-winged Scoters (RR). Lahontan Valley had a ♀ White-winged Apr. 14 (LN). A Com. Merganser at Ft. Collins already had chicks May 21 (WH).

**RAPTORS** — Until standing at a hawk watch, bird-watchers don't realize the thrill of seeing birds actually migrating. The Dakota Hogback count (Mar. 20–May 4) of 2245 raptors of 17 species comprised 30% *Accipiters*, 23% falcons, 20% *Buteos*, and 18% vultures. Most abundant species were 472 Am. Kestrels, 421 Red-tailed Hawks, 407 Turkey Vultures, 344 Cooper's Hawks, and 224 Sharp-shinned Hawks. The peak came April 11–15, with a count of 1028 raptors at a rate of 27.2/hour. The most in one hour, 11–12 a.m. April 14, was 93.

Hawkwatch International also conducted a hawk watch at the Goshute Mts., near Wendover, NV, which tallied 1887 birds for 15 species Mar. 8–Apr. 29. Top species were 570 Red-taileds, 294 Sharp-shinneds, 261 Cooper's, 176 Am. Kestrels, and 152 Golden Eagles. The 5/hour average was low—apparently the raptors use the Goshutes more in fall than in spring (JM, HW).

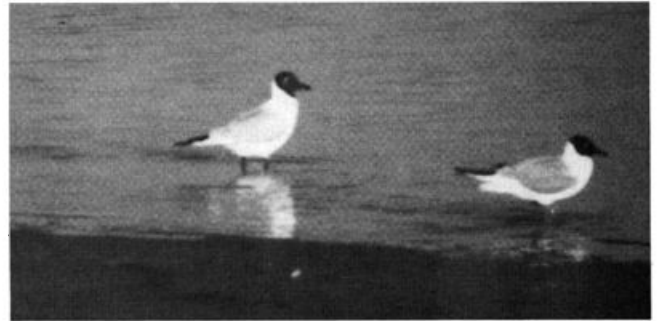
Observers reported the same number of Ospreys as last spring, except for an increase at Yellowstone (48 birds). Nesting had started at Lahontan Valley, L. Tahoe, Fontenelle, WY, Yellowstone, Pueblo, Silverthorne, and Granby, CO. At Jackson Res., CO, 23 Bald Eagles gathered Mar. 8, and 21 assembled near Norwood in w. Colorado Mar. 3. They began nesting at Moab, UT (the state's only 2 nesting pairs), Seedskaadee N.W.R., WY (first time in memory), and Barr L. near Denver. The Com. Black-Hawk seen at Las Vegas Apr. 21 (+MC) was the first reported in the Region in 5 years. A Harris' Hawk stayed at Las Vegas Apr. 7–22 (RR, MC, DC). L/L/B/L reported 83 Swainson's Hawks compared with 29 in 1989, and at Logan 48 swarmed around a recently plowed field May 4–5 (PP). The Pawnee Nat'l Grassland hosted an impressive 100 nesting territories of Swainson's and 24 of Red-tailed Hawks (C.D.O.W.). Reports of Merlins doubled, with 26 reported throughout the Region including a 1st Lat at Cortez, CO, Apr. 1 (AV). Boschen reported Peregrine Falcons occupying 13 territories in s.w. Utah, one nest already with four young.

**SHOREBIRDS** — Regional high counts of Black-bellied Plovers always come from c. Utah—this season 125 at Howard Slough near Odgen (PP). On a Lahontan Valley shorebird survey Apr. 20, Snowy Plovers dropped, with only six, plus 28 at Humboldt W.M.A. (LN). Fish Springs

had a healthy 170 Snowies on May 25, about twice last year's count (JE). Two at Rock Springs, WY, provided a 1st Lat (FL). At Locomotive Springs, W.M.A., on the Great Salt L., 60 Semipalmated Plovers stopped May 10 (PP). The Colorado nesting site of Piping Plovers had 5 pairs May 25 (C.B.O.). At Las Vegas a newly accessible area produced 12 nests of Black-necked Stilts, each with 4 eggs (VM). Their numbers dropped noticeably, though, at Casper, while Am. Avocets were numerous—120 in May (J & VH).

Observers found Whimbrels at 13 sites, the most 19 at Jackson Res., CO, Apr. 30 and seven at Casper May 10. Two Hudsonian Godwits remained at Casper Apr. 27–29 (1st Lat, +JL, FL, J & VH). Good numbers of Marbled Godwits moved through the Region, with 240 at Jackson Res. Apr. 30 and 160 at Casper Apr. 29. Rare May shorebirds along the Great Salt L. included a Ruddy Turnstone and two Dunlins at Locomotive Springs, 18 Red Knots and a Dunlin at Howard Slough (PP). Observers found nine Pectoral Sandpipers (rare spring migrants), at Las Vegas, Humboldt W.M.A., and Casper, but few Stilt Sandpipers: four at Casper and two at Cheraw, CO—a major decline from previous springs. Neel found 20 Short-billed Dowitchers at Fernley W.M.A., NV, Apr. 27, and two at Carson L. Apr. 26; one was at Casper May 14 (J & VH). Buffalo, WY, reported 415 Wilson's Phalaropes on the May 12 Spring Count, up by 100 from the previous high (B.H.A.S.). At Odgen, 3000 Wilson's and 2000 Red-necked phalaropes were at Howard Slough May 19 (PP). Another 1000 Red-neckeds were at Locomotive Springs May 10, and Casper had 300 May 7–14.

**GULLS TO HUMMINGBIRDS** — An adult **Common Black-headed Gull** stopped at Longmont, CO, Apr. 9–16



Adult Common Black-headed Gull (with Bonaparte's Gull) at Longmont, Colorado, April 9, 1990. Second state record. Photograph/David Leatherman.

(JP, +DL, +WH), for Colorado's 2nd record. Since both Franklin's and Bonaparte's gulls were also present, observers had the opportunity for good comparisons. A Mew Gull stopped at Reno Mar. 25 (+DBO). California Gulls may have established a new nesting site in Colorado, at Walden, where some of the 110 seen May 28 appeared to be sitting on nests (WH). A 2nd-year Herring Gull seen at Ogden May 4 was late (PP). Caspian Tern reports doubled in Colorado and Wyoming, and a pair seen at Ft. Collins in May appeared to carry nesting material—Colorado has no nesting records.

Barn Owls had 4 new nest holes near Grand Jct., CO (CD). Smith censused 10 Flammulated Owls near Morgan, UT, May 21–22, and Truan estimated 25 between Beulah and Wetmore, CO, May 12. Of 30 known Great Horned Owl territories in the San Luis Valley, CO, most failed and the successful ones generally fledged only one young; high winds and late snows may have adversely affected them (J & ER). A major census for Spotted Owls in s. Colorado

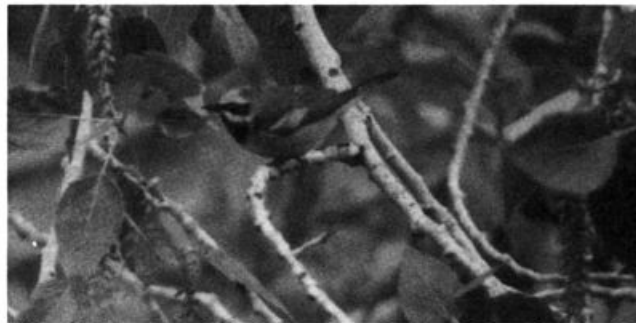
has so far reported only one, in Mesa Verde N.P. (VZ, C.F.O.). Observers identified three Lesser Nighthawks at Two Buttes, CO, May 25–27; although silent, they seemed to fly lower and exhibit the distinguishing field marks in contrast to Commons also present (††MJ). A Lesser was found dead at this site 2 years ago. Springdale, UT, had its usual glut of hummingbirds—an estimated peak of 970 Black-chinneds in Gifford's yard.

**FLYCATCHERS TO WAXWINGS** — May 26–27 saw at least 100 W. Wood-Pewees in Dyer, NV (PL). Voice identified an E. Wood-Pewee at Ft. Collins May 15 (††WH). Call and plumage served to identify birds thought to be Alder Flycatchers at Pueblo and Crook, CO, May 29 & 31 (††MJ, ††WH)—the first claimed sight identifications in the Region (Colorado has a couple of specimens). Colorado's 2nd **Least Flycatcher** nest, under construction May 25, failed, apparently owing to 2 severe rain and hail storms on successive nights (the storms also killed 12 Great Blue Herons and one cormorant—HEK). A **Dusky-capped Flycatcher** described from Two Buttes May 20 (††CB), if accepted by C.F.O., will add a 2nd to Colorado's only record, a controversial specimen which allegedly came from the same section of the state. The controversy involves not the identity of the specimen but rather the identity of the collection site. On May 19 a Great Crested and a Scissor-tailed flycatcher, respectively, strayed to Denver and Pueblo (DD, DDa). Grand Jct. had 10 Purple Martins on May 15 (TT), a high count for Colorado. The Denver Spring Count tallied 3058 swallows May 12–13, including 1274 Violet-greens and 723 Barns. Bank Swallows built 300 nests in a gravel pit at Rawhide Res. n. of Windsor, CO.

The Gray Jays which in March patrol ski area restaurants in Vail and Summit, CO, abandon the slopes in April—which is about the time they start breeding (JM). In *Baca*, remnants of the winter outfall of mountain species persisted, with Steller's Jays Apr. 8 and May 5, and Mt. Chickadees Apr. 8 (MJ). Bushtits nested at Eagle Apr. 7–May 21 (*1st Lat breeding*—JM). A Red-breasted Nuthatch spent May 13 catching midges on the walls of the Rawhide power plant (RR). Again this spring, a Carolina Wren appeared in Denver, but no one found a nest this year (MA). At Monte Vista, CO, hundreds of Hermit Thrushes, grounded by a spring snow storm, "suddenly became very apparent at our feeders and other snow-free areas around town. We fed them pieces of earthworms which they and robins gladly accepted" (J & ER). A Varied Thrush stopped at Barr L., CO, Apr. 17 (AW, SF). After a modest winter dispersal, Bohemian Waxwings spread out more abundantly in March, a few to Pueblo and many to Denver, Boulder, and Grand Jct. Only Casper reported them in April—60 on Apr. 5.

**VIREOS, WARBLERS** — Colorado's 7th **White-eyed Vireo** was at Denver May 16 (†JT *et al.*). Its 13th Yellow-throated Vireo sang vigorously at Chatfield May 22 and later (J & BK *et al.*). Richard Yank, *AB* Regional Editor from Quebec, discovered Nevada's first **Golden-winged Warbler** at Dyer May 27 (†RY, m.ob.). Other Nevada rarities included two N. Parulas at Las Vegas in May (J & MC, VM) and two to three Black-and-whites there May 8 & 19, an Ovenbird and a Hooded Warbler May 27 at Dyer (m.ob., *fide* PL), and a Painted Redstart at Las Vegas Apr. 5 (MC, VM).

Fontenelle, in s.w. Wyoming, seems to act as a trap for warblers. This spring most of Wyoming's notable warblers—17 species—stopped there, including these rarities: N. Parula May 20–28, Chestnut-sided Warbler May 28,



Male Golden-winged Warbler at Fort Collins, Colorado, May 29, 1990. Photograph/David Leatherman.

Magnolia Warbler May 26 (†LB), Wyoming's 2nd **Cape May Warbler** May 26–27 (MA, †FL, ph.), Black-throated Blue May 23–28 (†FL, ph. JS), Wyoming's first **Hermit Warbler** May 26 (MA, †FL), Blackburnian Warbler May 28 (†R & JS), Bay-breasted Warbler May 26–June 2 (†FL), Blackpoll Warbler May 28 (†RS), Black-and-whites May 21



Hermit Warbler at Fontenelle Dam, Wyoming, May 26, 1990. First state record. Photograph/Janis Herman Steenberg.



Worm-eating Warbler at Fontenelle Dam, Wyoming, May 26, 1990. Fifth state record. A surprising number of eastern warblers turned up at this locality in southwestern Wyoming during May. Photograph/Janis Herman Steenberg.

& 28, Wyoming's 5th **Worm-eating Warbler** May 26–June 6 (MA, †FL, ph.), Ovenbird May 23–June 2 (†FL, ph.), and Hooded Warbler May 18–20 (JLa, †BB). Wyoming had some other notables: N. Parula at Rock Springs May 31; Magnolia at Casper May 22 (J & VH); a pair of Black-throated Blues at Cody (*1st Lat*, †MM) and one at Casper; a Chestnut-sided at Lingle May 20 († & VH); Blackburnian Warblers at Green R. May 27 and Sheridan May 26 (†RS, †HC); a Blackpoll Warbler at Yellowstone May 19, the Park's first (†DP); and a **Pine Warbler** at Douglas May 20 († & VH; fewer than 5 state records).



Female Black-throated Blue Warbler at Fontenelle Dam, Wyoming, May 26, 1990. Photograph/Janis Herman Steenberg.

Colorado had a good list of warblers too: most significantly, photographs documented both a **Prairie Warbler** at Rocky Mountain Arsenal May 21, the state's 7th (BRz), and its 3rd **Swainson's Warbler**, a remarkable bird that stayed at Ft. Collins May 27–June 3 (†WH, m.ob.). Two observers described, and others saw, the state's 7th **Mourning Warbler** (††JC, ††DB); and a detailed, single-observer report was submitted for a **Connecticut Warbler** at Ft. Lyon May 24 (if accepted, Colorado's second—††MJ). In addition, the state reported five N. Parulas, six Chestnut-sideds, four Magnolias, three Black-throated Blues, three Black-throated Greens (including one May 4 at Rocky Ford hopping over snow-covered branches—MJ), two Blackburnians, one Pine, a remarkable seven Palms, three Bay-



Palm Warbler at Fort Collins, Colorado, May 14, 1990. Seven birds of this species showed up in Colorado this spring, as part of an unusually strong movement of eastern warblers. Photograph/David Leatherman.

breasteds, 23 Blackpolls including 5 in one tree at Crook on May 15 (DL), 10 Black-and-whites, two Worm-eatings, and one Canada Warbler.

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES**— This spring saw reports of Hepatic Tanagers at 2 sites away from their Colorado nesting locale—at Cañon City May 8 (VT) and Pueblo May 19–20 (C.F.O.). Nevada reported two Summer Tanagers, at Dyer May 26–27 and at Las Vegas May 27, with 30 W. Tanagers (VM). At Ogden, Killpack banded only 176 Lazuli Buntings, compared with 345 and 478 the previous 2 springs. Observations increased, though, at L/L/B/L, with 92 seen over the spring. Three Wyoming locations, Green R., Jackson, and Casper, reported Indigo Buntings May 22–26, and the May 1 snowstorm grounded one at Monte Vista, CO (1st Lat, †J & ER). Several sparrows strayed from their normal migratory routes: a Clay-colored to Eagle, CO, on May 17–19 (1st Lat, †Jm), a Black-throated to Monte Vista Apr. 18 (1st Lat, †J & ER, ph.), a Sage Sparrow to Logan, UT, Mar. 10 (KA), and a Grasshopper Sparrow to Cortez, CO, Apr. 1 (1st Lat, †AV).

Great-tailed Grackles continued their expansion in Col-



Grounded by a late snowstorm on May 1, 1990, this Black-throated Sparrow was a first for Monte Vista, Colorado. Photograph/John J. Rawinski.

orado, which reported them from 13 locations including 1st Lat records from Maybell (JWd) and Burlington (DL, D.F.O.). Wyoming posted its 2nd record of **Great-tailed Grackle** at Cheyenne May 22 (VW). Las Vegas reported s. Nevada's first Com. Grackle in several years, on May 27 (†VM). Feeders apparently sustain too many cowbirds and blackbirds. A Denver feeder attracted Colorado's first **Bronzed Cowbird**, a cooperative bird first noticed on May 17 which stayed on and on (W & JC, m. ob.). One wonders if other Bronzed Cowbirds, consorting with flocks of blackbirds of various ilks, have escaped the eyes of Colorado birders. A Scott's Oriole sipped from a nectar feeder in Eagle May 12–17 (2nd Lat, †JM).

Red Crossbills started to roam along the Front Range, with **Boulder** reporting 53 in April and other reports from Rye, Ft. Collins, and feeders in Evergreen. A displaced White-winged Crossbill appeared at a feeder in suburban Denver May 7 (DSh), and Yellowstone had one female May 28 (†JZ). Common Redpolls lingered into March in n. Wyoming and south to Dillon, Lyons, and Loveland CO, and into April at Buffalo, WY, and Ward, CO. Pine Siskins returned to some plains sites—L/L/B/L tallied 495 cf. 101 last spring, and Florence, CO, and Cheyenne reported many. The Denver Spring Count tallied 82 May 12–13. Evening Grosbeaks also made numerous spring appearances: up to 40/day in Casper yards, 56 at the May 15 peak in Florence, 50 in May at Woodland Park, CO, and a spring total of 382 at L/L/B/L, cf. 295 in 1989.

**EXOTICS** — The Red-backed Buzzard returned to Gunnison, CO, Mar. 26; it had with it the Swainson's Hawk banded as its mate 2 years ago (DR).

**CORRIGENDA** — Three experts have reviewed the description of the Yellow-billed Magpie reported at Fallon, NV, May 13, 1989 (AB 43:516). All concluded that the bird could have been a Yellow-billed Magpie but that the observation and description do not sufficiently document the first record of that species outside the borders of California. Experts from the Smithsonian examined the Goshawk thought to be of the Siberian race (AB 44:299); they pronounced the specimen an aberrant member of some unknown North American subspecies (*vide* FL). Contrary to my statement (AB 44:299), Colorado has one (only one) confirmed specimen of the e. race of the Solitary Vireo (D.M.N.H. 38518, *per* BA). And referring to large shorebird flocks in Colorado (AB 44:131), BA mentions his observations Sept. 4, 1977 at Jackson Res. of 3000 Baird's and 2000 Stilt sandpipers.

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## SOUTHWEST REGION

### ARIZONA

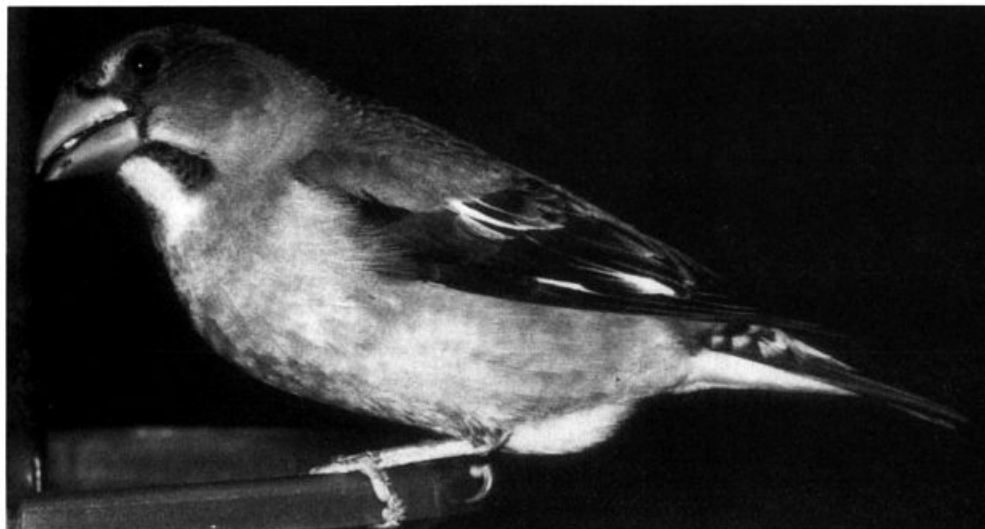
**Gary H. Rosenberg and  
David Stejskal**



**A**s if a hurricane had come and gone, a few remnants of last winter's major invasion of montane species in the lowlands of Arizona were still evident as the spring got under way. As summer residents began filtering back into the state, small bands of Steller's Jays, scattered Williamson's Sapsuckers and Lewis' Woodpeck-

ers, and unprecedented numbers of Evening Grosbeaks and Purple Finches wandered around central and southern Arizona as a stark reminder that somewhere to the north, montane birds had experienced a rough winter.

Relatively cool temperatures throughout the spring made it a pleasure to be out in Arizona despite a carotid of rarities



*Female Evening Grosbeak at feeders at Portal, Arizona, May 1990. This species wandered the lowlands and foothills of the southwest in unusual numbers this season, along with other northern and montane birds, apparently holdovers from last winter's invasion. Photograph/ Rick Bowers.*



to be seen. Continued coverage of the Navajo Reservation in the northeastern portion of the state saw unprecedented gull numbers during the latter part of April. Vagrants from the south highlighted the birding in southern Arizona this spring; a Fulvous Whistling-Duck, Arizona's second record of Elegant Tern, and two Least Terns are perhaps a sign of what the summer has in store for us. And now for a final word about the much talked about Double-striped Thick-knee at Yuma. For those of you who had your doubts as to the validity of the record, you can breathe easy: the Arizona Game and Fish Department found the person who brought the bird from Mexico and released it on that now-famous golf course in Yuma (*vide* JW).

**ABBREVIATIONS** — A.B.C. = Arizona Bird Committee; B T A = Boyce Thompson Arboretum; L.C.R. = Lower Colorado River; S.P.R. = San Pedro River; S.T.P. = Sewage Treatment Plant; V.O.C. = Village of Oak Creek.

**LOONS TO WATERFOWL** — Although Common Loon is a regular winter visitor throughout the state, it can still be considered a very scarce spring migrant, particularly in northern Arizona. Therefore, three on Black Mesa Apr 25, one there May 1, and one at Many Farms Lake May 12 (CL) were of interest. The Yellow-billed Loon (Arizona's 2nd) that wintered on Lake Havasu was last seen on Mar. 14 (KK, GHR). A single Western Grebe at Willcox Apr. 19 (GM) was undoubtedly a northbound migrant, whereas one Clark's Grebe at Many Farms L. Apr. 8–May 12 may well have been a potential breeder; this latter species has been found nesting at Many Farms L. during the past two summers.

American White Pelicans were seen passing in relatively high numbers throughout the state; notable concentrations were of 350 at Alamo L. in early March (BB *et al.*), and 115 at Kayenta Apr. 7 (CL). One of the two Brown Pelicans that wintered on Alamo L. was still present Mar. 26 (BB, AM). A flock of 60 Double-crested Cormorants along the Salt R. in s.w. Phoenix Mar. 21 (D. Rosey) was an unusually high concentration away from known nesting areas in Arizona. In the northeast portion of the state, where this species is at best a very rare transient, three were found at Many Farms L. Apr. 8, one was at Tuba City Apr. 23, one was at Cow Springs L. Apr. 29, and another was at Kayenta May 21 (all CL). Three Olivaceous Cormorants were at Lake Patagonia Apr. 26 (GM) with at least one remaining there throughout May; it is puzzling that this small lake remains the only area in Arizona that this "Mexican" species occurs with regularity.

An American Bittern at Roosevelt L. May 9 (D. Laush *et al.*) was probably a late migrant, as this species has not been found nesting below the Mogollon Rim in Arizona. The Least Bittern found along the Gila R. e. of Estrella Mt. Park during the winter was still present Apr. 14 (TC). Single Great Egrets were seen at Peck's L. on Apr. 26 (VG *et al.*) and at Palominas May 15 (DK); one at Mormon L. Apr. 24 (VG *et al.*) represented one of only a few records for northern Arizona. Small numbers of Cattle Egrets were scattered throughout southern Arizona during the spring. Of particular note was one at Flagstaff Apr. 30 (A. Prennace), and another at Many Farms L. also Apr. 30 (CL); there are still very few records of this invasion species from the northern portion of the state. A Green-backed Heron at Kayenta May 28 (CL) was extremely late as this species has not been found nesting in northern Arizona. White-faced Ibis, typically a fairly common spring migrant, was seen in greater than usual numbers throughout the state with several flocks of 100+ individuals being reported; one such flock of 500+ on the upper S.P.R. Apr.

27 (DK) was reported as the highest single day count in recent history for the San Pedro.

A pleasant surprise this spring was a **Fulvous Whistling-Duck** found on a pond at Kino Springs, just n. of Nogales, Apr. 28–May 15 (D. Pearson, JS, m.ob.); there are only about a dozen recent records for the state, some of which are suspect as being possible escapees from captivity. Extralimital records of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks include one at Peck's L., near Prescott, Apr. 24–25 (VG *et al.*), and three remaining in s.w. Phoenix (out of six that wintered locally) May 19 (TC). Seven, including nesting individuals, were found during the period along the upper S.P.R. (Ed Lehner). Three Tundra Swans at Mormon L. Mar. 17–19 provided only about the 4th spring record for the state, all of which were northbound migrants in n. Arizona. Seemingly out of place was a single Ross' Goose at Cow Springs L. Apr. 2 (CL), establishing a rare spring record for the northeast. A pair of Wood Ducks near Camp Verde Apr. 11 was in the same general area as a pair in May of 1989; this species is almost unknown as a breeder in Arizona. Other late records this spring included one female at Alamo L. May 2–3 (AM, BB), one near Nogales last seen May 15 (m.ob.), and one male at Kayenta Apr 4–May 29 (CL). A ♂ Eur. Wigeon was at Willcox Apr. 14–28 (John O'Brien, m.ob.); there are now about two dozen records for Arizona. Very rare for spring was a White-winged Scoter found at Davis Dam Mar. 13 (GHR, KK); most Arizona records have occurred in fall and winter, suggesting that this individual may have wintered locally. More unusual was a ♀ Surf Scoter at the Sierra Vista S.T.P. Apr. 19 (John Gardner), establishing only the 2nd spring record for s.e. Arizona, the other one occurring May 16, 1976, at Willcox. Exceedingly scarce as a spring transient in the southeast is Red-breasted Merganser, thus five at the Snyder Hill S.T.P., Tucson, Apr. 13 (Mark Stevenson) were noteworthy.

**VULTURES TO TERNS** — A Turkey Vulture Feb. 25 represented one of the earliest spring records for the upper S.P.R. (DK). Nesting pairs of Ospreys were reported from Scholz L. and from Upper Lake Mary, near Flagstaff; this species is a local breeder on lakes above the Mogollon Rim. Records of Black-shouldered Kite continue to pile up with sightings this spring including one at Alamo L. Apr. 6–10 (BB, AM), two at Picacho Res. Apr. 22 (*vide* SGa), and one near Florida Canyon May 1 (R. Stringer). Thirteen young Bald Eagles of the local breeding population were fledged this spring; this number is down from a high of 22 fledged in 1988 (*vide* JW). An ad. Gray Hawk at the Page Springs Fish Hatchery, s. of Sedona, May 6 (TRF) was well north and west of normal nesting areas in Arizona. A Com. Black-Hawk at Alamo L. Mar. 30–31 (AM, BB) was a bit west for a normal migrant; this species has been known to nest due north of this area on the Virgin R. in s.w. Utah. Crested Caracara is a scarce visitor anywhere in Arizona away from the southwest portion of the state; extralimital records this spring included one Apr. 4 in s. Phoenix (*vide* SGa) and one in n.w. Tucson Apr. 19 (GM, BDa). Unusual this late in spring away from known nesting areas was a Peregrine Falcon at Mammoth May 26 (W. Hoag).

At least 3 pairs of Clapper Rails were found along the Gila R. near Arlington May 23 (*vide* TC); this remains one of the few areas in southern Arizona away from the L.C.R. at which this endangered race still nests. Although Virginia Rail nests commonly in marsh habitat throughout n. Arizona, its status as a regular nesting species in the s. portion of the state has yet to be established; several were heard calling from a marsh at the Empire Cienega Ranch throughout the period (m.ob.), two were found in proper

habitat at Nogales May 5 (DJo), and one was calling May 19 from a marsh on the Slaughter Ranch, e. of Douglas, where they have been suspected of breeding in the past (MK *et al.*). A single, presumably lost, Sandhill Crane was seen at Cottonwood in the Verde Valley Apr. 1 (C. Van Cleve) for a first local record.

The only Black-bellied Plover of the season was one found at Alamo L. Apr. 20 (AM, BB). Much more unusual for spring was a Lesser Golden-Plover (*P. dominica*) at Kayenta May 12 (CL); this represents only about the 8th spring record for the state, and only about the 5th ever for n. Arizona. Single Snowy Plovers at Willcox Apr. 21 (JP) and May 5 (JBo) suggested that once again this species may be nesting in the Willcox Playa. One at Kayenta May 1 (CL) represented one of the few spring records for the n. portion of the state. A total of 20 Semipalmated Plovers at Cow Springs L., w. of Kayenta, between Apr. 29 and May 21 (CL) made an unusually high count for n. Arizona; the one there May 21 was also late, as there are virtually no June records for the state.

Unusual concentrations of Willets were seen in April with high counts of 24 at Tucson Apr. 27 (S. Levy) and 30+ at Crescent L., White Mts., Apr. 27 (M. Larson). Also of note was a single bird at Peck's L. Apr. 11 (VG *et al.*), one at Willcox Apr. 19 (GM), two at Peck's L. Apr. 24, and four there Apr. 25 (VG *et al.*). A single Whimbrel at the Pinal Air Park, Marana, Apr. 23–25 (J. Gardner, JHo) was only about the 10th in spring for the state. Although not unprecedented in spring, a flock of 48 Marbled Godwits Apr. 30 (with a total of 119 individuals between Apr. 24 and May 1) at Kayenta (CL) was still a very high concentration for Arizona. Also more frequent than usual were reports of small groups of Sanderlings beginning in late April: one was at Cow Springs L. Apr. 28 (CL); one was at Willcox Apr. 28–29 (SGa); three were at Many Farms L. Apr. 30 with two still there May 5 (CL); one was at the Many Farms S.T.P. May 5 (CL); and two were at the Sierra Vista S.T.P. May 17 (GHR). Very unusual for n. Arizona in spring were single Baird's Sandpipers at Kayenta Apr. 19 and May 1 & 5 (CL).

Unprecedented concentrations of Franklin's Gulls were reported from n.e. Arizona this spring, with an unbelievable total of 292 seen between Mar. 21 and May 28 (275 occurring between Apr. 26 and May 6). More amazing was that the high concentration was of 143 at Many Farms Lake Apr. 30 (CL); the previous high was of 18 seen in Phoenix during November 1979. This apparent invasion was not limited to the northeast: seven were in Tucson Apr. 13 (M. Stevenson), one was at Willcox Apr. 27 (R. Frayman), two were also in Tucson Apr. 27 (DK), and ten were in Flagstaff Apr. 30 (the same day as the major fallout in the northeast; A. Prennace). The northeast also produced numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls, with a total of 17 seen from Tuba City to Many Farms L. between Apr. 4 and May 6 (CL). Fewer were reported from the southeast; one was in Tucson Apr. 13 (M. Stevenson), two were at Willcox Apr. 14 (T. Godfrey), and one was there May 13 (J. Scheibe). A Heermann's Gull was reported from Sierra Vista Apr. 28 (DH); there are only a few valid spring records for the state. California Gull had been considered a scarce spring migrant in the northeast before this year; a total of 136 was reported from the Navajo Indian Reservation between Mar. 12 and May 23, with a high concentration of 45 at Kayenta Apr. 29 (CL). One was also seen in s.w. Phoenix Apr. 27 (CBa), while another was seen at Willcox May 17 (JP). An ad. Herring Gull at Kayenta Apr. 28 (CL) provided only the 2nd spring record for n.e. Arizona. In accordance with the concentrations of gulls in the northeast this spring, over 2000 Ring-billed Gulls were

seen on the Navajo Reservation during the period with a high count of 348 on Many Farms L. Apr. 30.

Scarce anywhere in Arizona away from the L.C.R., Caspian Terns appeared around the state with two in Tucson Apr. 29 (SGa), two at Lake Patagonia May 11–12 (S. McMahon), and two at Kayenta May 8 (CL) providing only the 3rd northeast Arizona record. Two **Elegant Terns** were well described from the Tucson S.T.P. May 24 (†JP), if accepted by the A.B.C., they would represent only the 2nd Arizona record of this highly migratory species. A Common Tern was reported from Willcox May 17 (JP); there are only a few verified spring records of this species for the state. Very exciting were two **Least Terns** found in Tucson this spring, with one at the Tucson S.T.P. Apr. 21–23 (CBe *et al.*) and another at the Snyder Hill S.T.P. May 7–8 (GHR, DF *et al.*); there were only about 10 previous records for the state, only two of them from spring.

**PIGEONS THROUGH WOODPECKERS** — At an unusually low elevation for late spring was a Band-tailed Pigeon near the B.T.A. May 13 (D. Lausch, R. Dummer). New for the B.T.A. was a Common Ground-Dove found there Mar. 30–May 7 (CT). One of the several Ruddy Ground-Doves found last winter in s.w. Phoenix remained until Mar. 21. Extremely early was the report of a Yellow-billed Cuckoo in the Verde Valley May 1 (H. & A. Gaither), as was one reported from Dudleyville May 20 (JBo).

An Elf Owl at Cornville Apr. 27–May 30 (D. Osborne) was well north and west of its normal range in central Arizona; this species has been found casually as far north as lower Oak Creek Canyon in August 1956. A pair was also found in mesquite habitat s. of Charleston on the upper S.P.R. May 21 (DK) where they bred last year for the first time; surprisingly, there are no other Elf Owls known to breed in the lowlands of the upper S.P.R. despite being common in most of the canyons draining the east side of the Huachuca Mts. Of interest were two Burrowing Owls at Marana Apr. 25 (JHo). This species has undergone a drastic reduction of numbers during the past few years throughout most of its range in southern Arizona, and it is our opinion that this owl should be considered for the threatened species list for Arizona. Who says lightning doesn't strike twice? For the 2nd time in 10 years, Sharon Goldwasser found a freshly killed N. Saw-whet Owl in the lowlands of southern Arizona, this time along the Santa Cruz R. n. of Nogales Mar. 10 (\*U. of A.); there are very few lowland records (live or dead) of this boreal species in Arizona. Very early was the Buff-collared Nightjar found in Guadalupe Canyon Apr. 20 (S. Perry). At least two were present in Florida Wash by early May (m.ob.).

Unusual for northeast Arizona were reports of two different *Chaetura* swifts, both identified as Vaux's, May 13 & 19 at Kayenta (CL). A single ♀ Broad-billed Hummingbird was found May 19 at Rio Verde, Phoenix, suggesting the possibility of local nesting (T. Gatz); this species was found nesting at this exact locality in May 1976 (*vide* JW). Both a male and female White-eared Hummingbird had returned to Ramsey Canyon by May 10 (JWh) suggesting that this species may attempt nesting for the second year in a row. Extralimital records for Magnificent Hummingbird well north of its normal breeding range in Arizona included: a pair in Oak Creek Canyon Apr. 21 (VG *et al.*), two at the Cave Springs Camp Ground, Oak Creek Canyon, May 22 (*vide* A. Gaither); one female in the Sierra Ancha Mts., n.w. of Globe, May 31 (TC); and one in Sedona June 3 (J. Fortmann). At least one Lucifer Hummingbird was seen at Portal in early May (SSp). Also north of the regular breeding range were single Costa's Hummingbirds in the

Village of Oak Creek Mar. 20 (A. Thornburg) & 29 (M. McManus).

A single Belted Kingfisher was seen entering a hole in the bank of the upper Salt R., the same locality at which this species was suspected nesting in 1987 and 1988 (Mike Cross); there are still only a couple of confirmed nesting records in Arizona. A single Green Kingfisher was seen along Sonoita Cr. near Patagonia Mar. 13 (M. Stackhouse), and again Apr. 2 (S. Vetault). A male was seen along the upper S.P.R. near Charleston Mar. 4–5 (DK), while a different plumaged male was present sporadically throughout the period along the S.P.R. near the Highway 90 bridge (DK). No nesting has been confirmed in 2 years. Several Lewis' Woodpeckers in lowland areas this spring were probably residual effects of last winter's montane invasion: two in e. Tucson Apr. 9 (M. Simmons), one at Red Rock S.P. May 9 (S. Foster), one below Stewart Mt. Dam May 15 (TG *et al.*), and another n. of Roosevelt L. May 15 (H. Messing). Similarly, an Acorn Woodpecker was at a very unusually low elevation at Chandler Apr. 10 (S. Barnes). A Red-breasted Sapsucker was reported from Fort Apache at the base of the White Mts. Mar. 17 (Brian Heap, *vide* GM). Further remnants of the winter invasion were several Williamson's Sapsuckers away from known breeding areas; a male was at the B.T.A. through the winter period and last seen Mar. 9 (CT), a female was there Mar. 17 (CT), two were in Tucson Apr. 9 (GG), and another female was in Cave Creek Canyon Apr. 28 (SGa).

#### FLYCATCHERS TO VIREOS – S.A.

With the recent splitting of Western Flycatcher into two distinct species, the Cordilleran and Pacific-slope flycatchers, it has become more important determining which forms pass through Arizona during migration. Cordilleran Flycatcher nests commonly in many of the montane areas throughout the state, but "western-type" flycatchers are often seen in riparian areas throughout the lowlands of southern Arizona, particularly during April and May, and specimen evidence has shown that many of these are Pacific-slope Flycatchers. At this stage in our understanding of separating the two forms in the field, vocalizations appear to be the only reliable way; the distinct two-syllable call of Cordilleran compared to the slurred, one-syllable call of the Pacific-slope. Pacific-slopes identified by call included the following: one along the upper S.P.R. Apr. 6 (DK); four at Sabino Canyon Apr. 18 (JHo); one at Seven Springs, near Phoenix May 1 (BD); one at Arivaca May 18 (JBo); and one along the Verde River, May 19 (TC). As little is known about the range of individual variation of calls within each species, we urge caution in attempting to identify "western-type" flycatchers to species away from known breeding grounds.

Buff-breasted Flycatcher has one of the most restricted breeding ranges of any of the summer residents in southeastern Arizona, and is virtually never seen away from those few nesting areas in the Huachuca Mts. Of great interest were a pair near the Southwestern Research Station, Cave Creek Canyon, from late April to May 20 (RT, m.ob.), one seen along Turkey Creek, Chiricahua Mts., Apr. 7 (DJo), and one truly out of place reported from the upper S.P.R. Apr. 20 (*vide* DK). For the 3rd consecutive year a Greater Pewee was seen in the lowlands along the upper S.P.R., Apr. 19–25 (DK). Northern Beardless-Tyrannulets continue to be found a bit north with a pair found along Queen Cr., e. of the B.T.A., Mar. 12 (SGa), and another pair found along the Gila River s. of Globe May 26

(BJ). Spring records of Eastern Phoebe in Arizona are few, and may represent individuals that wintered locally; one was 3 mi s. of St. David Mar. 21 (DK), and another was found at the Snyder Hill S.T.P., Tucson, Apr. 8 (DJo). A Brown-crested Flycatcher in Sabino Canyon Apr. 18 (JHo) was a bit earlier than normal arrival dates. The only Eastern Kingbird of the spring was one photographed at Becker L., Springerville, May 27–28 (CBa). More scarce in spring were two Scissor-tailed Flycatchers found 5 mi s. of Portal on the Portal Rd. May 19 (†M. Emmons *et al.*).

The Blue Jay that dazzled local birders through most of the winter was still present at St. David May 8 (DK). Steller's Jays continued to be found at several lowland locations through at least mid-March. A lost Pinyon Jay was reported from Willcox on the late date of Apr. 15 (JBo). Also apparently lost was a single Am. Crow at the Village of Oak Creek Apr. 13 (W. Turner). A very late Townsend's Solitaire was found in Sycamore Canyon May 19 (JBo). A Varied Thrush found at Camp Creek Mar. 22 (A. Spencer) probably was one that had wintered locally; the individual that wintered at the B.T.A. was last seen Mar. 5 (CT). The Rufous-backed Robin that delighted crowds at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum in Tucson throughout most of the winter was last reported Apr. 5; the one that wintered in a s. Phoenix yard was last seen Mar. 21 (PB). Single Brown Thrashers were reported in n.w. Tucson Mar. 29 (*vide* JK), along Dry Beaver Cr. near Highway 179 May 19 (A. Thornburg), and in Bisbee May 26–28 (C. Gottlund). The only Red-eyed Vireo reported this spring was one in Wickenburg May 14 (Loren Hays).

**WARBLERS TO FINCHES** — Two Tennessee Warblers, one in n.w. Tucson Apr. 29 (S. Edwards) and another along the upper S.P.R. May 16 (DK), were about average for a normal spring. Similarly, three Northern Parulas were reported with one at Peck's L. Apr. 28 (A. Thornburg), one singing male along Granite Cr. outside of Prescott May 10 (CT), and another singing male in Ramsey Canyon May 27 (B. Larson *et al.*). More unusual for spring, and a first for Ramsey Canyon, was a Chestnut-sided Warbler found there May 4 (JWh). Most Palm Warbler records for the state are from the fall, thus one along the upper S.P.R. Apr. 25 (†H. Douglas) was noteworthy. A stunning breeding-plumaged ♂ Bay-breasted Warbler was well described from Cave Creek Canyon May 20 (C. Sandell, RM), providing one of the few spring records for the state. Only one Black-and-white Warbler was reported this period, in Madera Canyon Apr. 29 (W. Monroe). Also sparse this season were Am. Redstarts with only three reported.

Outstanding were 3 sightings of Worm-eating Warbler this spring; one was at Madera Canyon Apr. 20–27 (R. Haaseth), one was in Cave Creek Canyon May 4–6 (JBo, RM), and the third was along Granite Creek May 15 (CT), providing one of the best springs ever for this scarce migrant. Four Ovenbirds in s. Arizona made a greater than normal number. One was along the upper S.P.R. May 9 (DK), one was in Cave Creek Canyon May 19 (John Alcock), one was at the Desert Botanical Gardens in Phoenix May 21 (S. Burns *et al.*), and one was seen at the roadside rest stop just s. of Patagonia May 21 (JBo). No fewer than 15 N. Waterthrushes were around southern Arizona between May 5 & 22 (m.ob.). Likewise, Hooded Warbler put in an excellent showing with one in Madera Canyon Apr. 29 (W. Monroe), one male in Tempe May 1 (*vide* D. Pearson), one male in Miller Canyon May 13 (D. Rosey), and another male in Madera Canyon May 31 (JBo); we wonder why this "southeastern" warbler turns up as regularly as it does in the desert southwest during late spring.

Truly surprising was a ♂ Scarlet Tanager reported from along Sonoita Creek, s. of Patagonia, Mar 31 (†A. Bell); there are still fewer than 20 records from Arizona. An average number (five) of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were scattered around the southeast this spring (m.ob.). A very late Swamp Sparrow remained at Black Mesa, near Kayenta, Apr. 25–27 (CL). Also late was a Golden-crowned Sparrow at Cornville May 3 (CL); of the four that wintered at the B.T.A., one was still present Mar. 23 (CT). A late Harris' Sparrow was photographed at Lukeville Apr. 2–6 (Sylvia Gallagher).



Female Bobolink at Willcox, Arizona, May 18, 1990. Very rare in southeastern Arizona in spring. Photograph/Barry R. Zimmer.

Bobolinks, very rare and irregular migrants within the state, were found in relatively high numbers, mostly in the northeast; a female was located on the Twin Lakes Golf Course, Willcox, May 18 (ph. BZ), five were in Kayenta May 21 (CL), two there May 23 (CL), and one there May 27 (CL). With adequate coverage of the northeast in spring, it would not be surprising to find Bobolink to be a rare but regular migrant there. A Bronzed Cowbird at Flagstaff Apr. 28 (A. Prennace) may have represented a first record for northern Arizona. A male Orchard Oriole was seen at St. David May 8 (DK); this species is surprisingly scarce in southern Arizona when one considers that they nest regularly within 100 miles of the border in central Sonora.

As usual after a flight year, there were several scattered reports of Purple Finches in s.e. Arizona during April. Unprecedented, though, were seemingly huge flocks of 78 and 54 individuals along the Hassayampa River in central Arizona Mar. 14 (CT). Late for the southeast were up to three Cassin's Finches associating with House Finches at the feeders at Madera Canyon in early May (GHR *et al.*). Also late were eight Am. Goldfinches (including singing males) in Guadalupe Canyon May 19 (GHR, DK *et al.*).

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## NEW MEXICO

**Sartor O. Williams III and  
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**ABBREVIATIONS**—Bitter Lake = Bitter Lake Nat'l Wildlife Refuge; Bosque Refuge = Bosque del Apache Nat'l

Wildlife Refuge; E.B.L. = Elephant Butte Lake; L.V.N.W.R. = Las Vegas Nat'l Wildlife Refuge; P.O. Canyon = Post Office Canyon, Peloncillo Mts.; S.P. = State Park; T/C = Truth or Consequences; Zuni = Zuni Indian Reservation. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO DUCKS**—The only loons reported were up to five Commons at E.B.L. Mar. 7–9, with one still there Apr. 27 (JH *et al.*). Up to 70 Eared Grebes were at Zuni May 5–8, but low water was expected to hamper nesting efforts (DC, SI). Over 1000 *Aechmophorus* grebes were on E.B.L. Apr. 13 (DC), while exceptionally early was an ad. Clark's Grebe escorting a large juvenile at Caballo L. Apr. 13 (ph. DC). Elsewhere, single Clark's were at Mesilla Apr. 28 (CS) and Brantley L., *Eddy*, May 16 (PJ, LG), while peripheral Westerns included up to four at Bluewater L. Apr. 7 (DC), Evans L., *Grant*, until mid-May (RF), and Bitter Lake May 16 (PJ, LG). Peripheral Am. White Pelicans included up to 14 at Zuni Apr. 11–21 (DC) and 58 at Bluewater L. Mar. 24 (DC), while unusual were 83 over Rattlesnake Springs, *Eddy*, Apr. 7 (BB, SW). Westerly was an Olivaceous Cormorant in the Gila Valley May 5 (*fide* RF).

A Least Bittern was picked up exhausted on May 2 in Carlsbad (SW), where the species is rarely reported. A Great Egret at Mangas Springs Apr. 30 (ph. RF) was a local first, and established one of the few records for *Grant*. Early was a Snowy Egret at Zuni Apr. 8 (DC); four were in the Gila Valley (RF *et al.*) and 89 at Bitter Lake (SB *et al.*) May 5. Few Cattle Egrets were reported, but reports included vagrants at Chama in early May (LS), up to 15 at Bosque Refuge Apr. 3–May 14 (PJ, CS), and four at T/C Apr. 24 (DM). Unusual in spring was an ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Bosque Refuge May 15 (LG). White-faced Ibises were widely reported in the period Apr. 8–May 24 (m.ob.).

Two probable **Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks** were at Rattlesnake Springs Apr. 16–17 (BB, B. Wright). Late was a Greater White-fronted Goose at Bosque Refuge May 24 (RT, PB), as were two Snow Geese there May 31 (CS) and four at Bitter Lake May 4 (SB *et al.*). One to two Wood Ducks were near Española May 30 (*fide* BL), Percha Dam Mar. 15 (DM), and Mesilla Apr. 29 (CS); one at Roswell May 5 had been there for several months (*fide* SB). A few "Mexican" Mallards were in the Gila Valley Mar. 8 (RF), below E.B.L. Apr. 27 (JH), and at Percha Dam throughout the period (DM). Four possible Greater Scaup associating with Lessers were at Navajo Dam Mar. 26 (PJ). An ad. male Surf Scoter on Johnson Mesa, *Colfax*, May 26 (J. Campbell, R. Tully) was unusual. At least 10 **Barrow's Goldeneyes** were on the San Juan R. below Navajo Dam Mar. 17 (ph. DC), with three still there Mar. 26 (PJ). The only Hooded Mergansers reported were a pair on Dulce L. Mar. 24 (*fide* PRS) and three at Bosque Refuge Mar. 1 (RT, PB). Single Com. Mergansers at Mesilla Apr. 28 (CS) and Bitter Lake May 5 (SB *et al.*) were late, while also noteworthy were a Red-breasted Merganser at Bluewater L. Apr. 7 (DC) and another at Bottomless Lakes S.P. Apr. 21 (CB).

**VULTURES TO PHALAROPES**—Two probable **Black Vultures** were reported circling with 10 Turkey Vultures above the Rio Grande between Radium Springs and Hatch on Apr. 3 (CS); the species remains unverified by specimen or photograph in New Mexico. A count of migratory raptors in the Sandia Mts. Feb. 24–May 7 yielded 3310 birds of 17 species (SH *et al.*). Among the highlights were 1336 Turkey Vultures, beginning March 15 and peaking the first week of April; 38 Ospreys Apr. 1–26; 41 Swainson's Hawks beginning Apr. 4; four Zone-taileds Apr. 21–May 6; and 218 Golden Eagles. Lingering Ospreys included one to three in mid-May at Zuni (DC, SI), Ojo Caliente, *Cibola* (JE), Bitter Lake (PJ, LG), and Rattlesnake

Springs (CB, JB), plus one in the Gila Valley May 27 (RF, D. Henderson). Westerly were two Mississippi Kites at Bosque Refuge May 20 (CB); also notable were five north of Clayton May 15 (*fide* WC) and eight at Bitter Lake May 14 (CB, JB).

A pair of Bald Eagles again nested in *Sierra*, where one young was fledged in 1988 and two in 1989 (K. Stinnett *et al.*), this year, a single chick hatched Mar. 18 but died 2 weeks later. A pair of Com. Black-Hawks near Albuquerque Apr. 4 was defending the site where one young fledged last year (SH); also notable was a bird reported at Percha Dam Apr. 10 (H. Parent, *fide* RF). Harris' Hawks appear to be spreading into the Luna area, with seven there Mar. 9 (RF) and two May 8 (JS, PJ); however, numbers were considered down in *Eddy* (SW). Broad-winged Hawks are irregular in migration in New Mexico, so noteworthy were two over the Sandia Mts. Apr. 27 (SH *et al.*) and singles at Fort Sumner Apr. 22 (CB) and Percha Dam May 3 (PJ, JS). An Am. Kestrel pair was feeding two juveniles in Las Cruces on the early date of Mar. 21 (LS). Late were three Merlins over the Sandia Mts. Apr. 22–28 (SH *et al.*) plus another reportedly in the Gila Valley May 5 (*fide* RF).

The introduced Wild Turkeys at Bosque Refuge continue to thrive, with 60 in one flock Mar. 21 (JS, PJ); seven at San Marcial Mar. 20 (PES) were further evidence of a southward dispersal by birds from this introduction. Late Sandhill Cranes were over Clayton Mar. 31 (WC), and two remained at Caballo L. until Apr. 3 (CS). A Black-bellied Plover was at Zuni Apr. 29 (ph. DC) and two at Holloman L. May 17 (PJ, LG). A Lesser Golden-Plover, rare in New Mexico, was at Zuni Apr. 26 (DC). Snowy Plovers outside the usual range included singles at Zuni Apr. 29 (ph. DC) and Mesilla Apr. 28 (CS); five at Brantley L. May 16 (PJ, LG) could represent a new Pecos Valley breeding locality. Up to 10 Semipalmated Plovers were at Zuni (DC), Bosque Refuge (JB), Bitter Lake (SB *et al.*), and Brantley L. (PJ, LG), Apr. 29–May 16. An adult Killdeer was tending two chicks near Otis, *Eddy*, Apr. 18 (SW).

The earliest Black-necked Stilts were two at Otis Mar. 25 (SW), a high of 98 (plus 320 Am. Avocets) was at Bitter Lake May 5 (SB *et al.*). A Solitary Sandpiper was at Sandia Park in the Sandia Mts. Apr. 22 (HS). Three Long-billed Curlews near Percha Dam Apr. 3 (CS) were the earliest reported; westerly were up to four at Zuni Apr. 8–21 (DC, SI). Single Marbled Godwits were at Bosque Refuge May 20 (CB, C. Troup) and Avalon L., *Eddy*, Apr. 16 (BB, *fide* SW). Long-billed Dowitchers were widespread, with highs of 50 at Bosque Refuge Mar. 1 (RT, PB) and over 300 there Apr. 30 (PJ). Wilson's Phalaropes migrated statewide beginning in mid-April, with a high of 429 at Bitter Lake May 5 (SB *et al.*). Two Red-necked Phalaropes, relatively rare spring migrants, were at Bernardo May 2 (CB).

**GULLS TO WOODPECKERS**—Extremely early was an ad. Franklin's Gull at E.B.L. Mar. 9 (JH, JV). The species was conspicuous at Clayton (WC) and 72 were in the Rio Grande Valley from Socorro to Mesilla Apr. 3–27 (v.o.), while westerly were four to five at Zuni Apr. 13 (SI) and 18 at Bluewater L. Apr. 28 (DC). A late Bonaparte's Gull was at Zuni May 12 (DC). The first-year **Glaucous Gull** was still at E.B.L. Mar. 7 (JH, JV), where one to two ad. California Gulls were also present Mar. 7–9 (JH, JV); another California was at Zuni Apr. 8 (DC). Two imm. Thayer's Gulls, along with over 20 mostly imm. Herring Gulls, were on Caballo L. Mar. 7–9 (JH, JV); one Herring lingered on E.B.L. until Apr. 13 (DC). Rare in New Mexico, a Caspian Tern was at Bluewater L. Apr. 18 (ph. DC). The earliest Least Terns were at Bitter Lake May 10 (SW), where six were present by May 17 (*fide* L. Marlatt); unusual was one at Bosque Refuge May 25 (CB).

Perhaps indicative of a continuing northward expansion, White-winged Doves appeared at 2 Albuquerque localities: two each in the southern part of the city Apr. 2 (ph. A. Swain) and the "north valley" after Apr. 9, the latter carrying nesting material after May 3 (BO). An Inca Dove that wintered at Mangas Springs was last seen Apr. 22 (RF); other peripheral birds were up to three in Socorro into May (PJ, JS), one at T/C May 20 (DM), and a remarkable seven at Roswell May 4 (SB *et al.*). **Whiskered Screech-Owls** were present in the Peloncillo Mts. in the period, with at least one in Cottonwood Canyon Mar. 13–15 (ph. JB, tape-recording LG) and up to three in Clanton Canyon Mar. 8 (DC). A red-morph N. Pygmy-Owl in Clanton Canyon Mar. 14 was giving a two-note call (LG), which is characteristic of the southern race *Glaucidium gnomia*. Over 200 Lesser Nighthawks were at Bosque Refuge May 17 (PJ, LG).

Four Chimney Swifts in Roswell May 5 (SB *et al.*) were the only ones reported. Early White-throated Swifts included up to 10 in the Sandia Mts. (HS), Sevilleta N.W.R. (RT, PB), and E.B.L. (JH, JV), Mar. 7–9. Lucifer Hummingbirds had returned to P.O. Canyon by Mar. 26, where at least six remained through the period (RS). Most unusual in spring, an ad. male Rufous Hummingbird was at P.O. Canyon Mar. 27–28 and April 6 & 11 (RS); even more unusual was an ad. male **Calliope Hummingbird** there Apr. 22 (RS). Two Magnificent Hummingbirds in the Pinos Altos Mts. May 24 (CB) were the only ones reported. Late was a female Belted Kingfisher at Bluewater Canyon May 28 (SI). Very unusual was an easterly Lewis' Woodpecker at Clovis May 12 (LG, CD), while also notable was one in the Gila Valley May 5 (*fide* RF). Southerly were single Downies at Bosque Refuge Mar. 4 (SOW) and Percha Dam Mar. 15 (DM). A pair of Three-toed Woodpeckers was foraging in a burned area in the Zuni Mts. May 20, where the species has been regular lately (DC).

**FLYCATCHERS TO THRUSHES**—Notable was a calling **Eastern Wood-Pewee** at Oasis S.P., *Roosevelt*, May 9 (CB). A possible Dusky Flycatcher in the Sandia Mts. Apr. 12 (HS) was early. Four Black Phoebes were at Española Mar. 24 (PI *et al.*), while westerly was an Eastern Phoebe at Zuni Apr. 8 (DC); other notable Easterns were singles near Clayton May 17 (*fide* WC) and Fort Sumner Apr. 22 (CB). Up to five Vermilion Flycatchers were at Bosque Refuge May 4–5, where the species had wintered (RT, PB). Early were single Ash-throated Flycatchers at White's City Mar. 23 (SW) and Dripping Springs Apr. 4 (CS), plus three Thick-billed Kingbirds in Guadalupe Canyon Apr. 28 (PJ). Westerly were a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at Mangas Springs May 6 (ph. RF) and another, plus an Eastern Kingbird, at Bosque Refuge May 10 (PES, RT).

Following the winter influx, a few Steller's Jays persisted outside the usual range, with numbers decreasing as the season progressed, e.g., at Percha Dam from 10 on Mar. 15 to one on Apr. 26 (DM) and at Rattlesnake Springs from 10 on Mar. 23 to two on Apr. 17 (SW). Others included late singles at Silver City Apr. 30 (D & MZ), Mangas Spring May 26 (RF), and P.O. Canyon May 27 (RS), plus one in creosotebush desert near Hermanas, *Luna*, Apr. 23 (C. Painter). Among the last of the winter-dispersed Scrub Jays were singles at Socorro May 2 (JS), Las Cruces May 8 (CS), and Rattlesnake Springs May 28 (SW), plus four at T/C until May 12 (DM). Westerly Blue Jays, likewise remnants from the winter influx, were one in Santa Fe until May 10 (JH) and up to three each in Albuquerque into May (BO) and Socorro until Apr. 15 (PJ, JS); 20 in Roswell May 5 (SB *et al.*) made a high count, and the species was "conspicuous" in Carlsbad (SW). Southerly were 20 Pinyon



Jays in the Gila Valley May 4 (RF *et al.*) Two Clark's Nutcrackers were in the Datil Mts. May 25 (SOW), where seldom reported; also notable were nine in the Zuni Mts. Mar. 17 (DC). High counts of Am. Crows included 200 at Bosque Refuge Mar. 1 (RT, PB), 13 at Mesilla Apr. 1 (CS), and 52 in the Gila Valley May 5—with fledged young May 27 (RF).

A few Mt. Chickadees persisted in submontane areas following the winter invasion, including three at Bosque Refuge Mar. 15 (RT, PB) and singles at Socorro Apr. 3 (PJ), Dripping Springs Mar. 23 (CS), and Rattlesnake Springs Apr. 6 (SW). A Bridled Titmouse at San Simon Cienega Mar. 9 (CB) was away from the usual habitat. Lowland Red-breasted Nuthatches were singles at Socorro May 2 (PJ, JS) and Bosque Refuge May 10 (PES, RT). Westerly Eastern Bluebirds were one south of Clines Corners, *Torrance*, May 10 (SW), and reportedly two in the Gila Valley May 5 (*vide* RF). Lingering lowland/southern Townsend's Solitaires included singles at Percha Dam May 3 (PJ, JS), P.O. Canyon May 8 (PJ, JS), and Rattlesnake Springs May 17 (PJ, LG), plus six at Roswell May 5 (SB *et al.*). Up to three Swainson's Thrushes were at Rattlesnake Springs May 14–17 (v.o.), plus singles at Bosque Refuge May 2 (CB), Clovis May 10 (CB), and Cass Draw, *Eddy*, May 16 (PJ, LG).

**MIMIDS TO WARBLERS**—Early were a Gray Catbird at Rattlesnake Springs Mar. 31 (J. & L. Temple) and single Sage Thrashers near Gallup Mar. 9 (SI) and Moriarty Mar. 4 (DC). Single westerly Brown Thrashers were at Bosque Refuge Apr. 14 (PB, *vide* RT), Silver City May 11–13 (D & MZ), and Percha Dam Apr. 29 (LG, CD). Four Bendire's Thrashers were at Rinconada Canyon west of Albuquerque Apr. 18 (HS), while over 60 Am. Pipits were at Mangas Springs Mar. 4 (RF). Low to moderate numbers of Cedar Waxwings were reported into May west of the Pecos Valley, with notable records being of up to six near Gallup May 16–23 (SI), Percha Dam through May 17 (DM), and Rattlesnake Springs May 17 (PJ, LG)—plus up to 40 in Albuquerque until May 10 (LG). Phainopeplas were relatively numerous in the lower Rio Grande Valley, with one north to Socorro May 17 (JS), 23 at Percha Dam May 31 (DM), and 34 along the river between Radium Springs and Hatch May 27 (CS). A pair of Loggerhead Shrikes was feeding nestlings near Las Cruces May 11 (CS).

Up to three Bell's Vireos were at Cass Draw near Carlsbad May 17, including one on a nest (PJ, LG). Unusual were a probable Gray Vireo in the Sandia Mts. near Placitas May 21 (CB), a **Yellow-throated Vireo** at Albuquerque Apr. 24 (GV), and a Red-eyed Vireo at Rattlesnake Springs May 17 (PJ, LG).

It was a productive season for rarer warblers, with migrant traps in the eastern plains sharing the spotlight with better-birded sites elsewhere—often associated with cold-front-associated inclement weather. The highlight was a well-described **Swainson's Warbler** near Rattlesnake Springs May 3 (CB), a species still unverified in New Mexico. Other notable reports included a N. Parula at Bosque Refuge May 2 (PJ, JS); one to two Chestnut-sideds at Rattlesnake Springs May 14–16 (v.o., ph. JB) and a male **Magnolia Warbler** there May 16 (ph. LG); a probable **Yellow-throated Warbler** at Bitter Lake Apr. 27 (BO, T. Raveed); single Palm Warblers west of Albuquerque May 13 (HS) and at Bosque Refuge Apr. 28 (P. Echelmeyer, E. Walker); single ♂ **Blackpoll Warblers** at Fort Sumner May 10 (CB), Oasis S.P. May 9 (CB), and Bitter Lake May 5 (SB, D. Russell); Prothonotary Warbler at Bosque Refuge May 10 (RT); single Worm-eating Warblers at Percha Dam May 3 (PJ, JS) and Rattlesnake Springs Apr. 27 (JB *et al.*); a Kentucky Warbler at Las Cruces May 2 (GE) and another at

Roswell April 22–24 (SB *et al.*), and single Hooded Warblers at Percha Dam May 3 (PJ, JS), near Caprock Apr. 30 (ph. GV), and Rattlesnake Springs May 2–3 (GV, R & T. Bodnar). Also worth noting were single Tennessee Warblers at Socorro May 2 (PJ), Ft. Sumner May 10 (CB), and Roswell May 18 (CM); a Black-and-white Warbler at Albuquerque May 4 (RT); up to three Am. Redstarts at Fort Sumner May 10 (CB), plus westerly singles at Bosque Refuge May 20 (CB, C. Troup) and Percha Dam May 13 (CS); and as many as four N. Waterthrushes at San Antonio Apr. 30–May 4 (PJ, JS) and two each in the Gila Valley May 5 (RF *et al.*) and Rattlesnake Springs May 15 (CB). Vagrants were two Red-faced Warblers at Percha Dam Apr. 29 (LG), while a pair in the Datil Mts. May 25 (SOW) was at the northern limit of the usual range. Also vagrant were two Painted Redstarts at Cass Draw Apr. 1 (LG *et al.*, ph.), well east of the usual range.

**GROSBEAKS TO FINCHES**—At least 3 pairs of N. Cardinals were at Rattlesnake Springs through the period, while new *Eddy* localities were Cass Draw and Black River Village (*vide* SW). There were several reports of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, including at least three birds at Rattlesnake Springs May 15–17 (v.o., ph. JB). Indigo Bunting reports included a remarkable 10–15 individuals at Rattlesnake Springs May 14–17 (CB *et al.*); elsewhere, records included one near Gallup May 11–22 (SI) and two at Roswell Apr. 30–May 6 (SB *et al.*). Infrequent in the area, a ♂ Varied Bunting was reported at Rattlesnake Springs Apr. 19 (CB). Late were single Green-tailed Towhees at P.O. Canyon May 16 (RS) and Roswell May 18 (CM).

The first Black-chinned Sparrows were singing at Dripping Springs Mar. 23 (CS). Early was a Sage Sparrow near Gallup Mar. 31 (SI), while two Lark Buntings there May 2 (SI) were west of the usual range. Also notable were a Swamp Sparrow at Zuni Mar. 18 (DC) and an ad. Golden-crowned Sparrow at Santa Fe May 1 & 7 (JH). A Harris' Sparrow that wintered at Las Cruces was last seen May 3 (CS); the only other was at Albuquerque Apr. 7 (LG). Moderate numbers of McCown's and Chestnut-collareds, plus up to six **Lapland Longspurs**, were at the Moriarity turf farm during March (DC, LG).

A Bobolink at Los Alamos May 19 (PRS, *vide* BL) was unusual and the only report. Several Great-tailed Grackles were at Silver City throughout the period, where they were possibly nesting in late May (D & MZ). A local first were six Common Grackles at McGaffey L., *McKinley*, May 26 (SI), while other reports included 25 at Pojoaque May 13 (*vide* BL), three at Bosque Refuge May 24 (RT, PB), and several in T/C Apr. 24 (DM). Up to six Bronzed Cowbirds were at T/C during mid-May (DM), where the species has apparently become regular; also notable were one to two in Las Cruces May 2 (GE) and Rattlesnake Springs May 28 (SW), plus Glenwood May 18 (JH), Mangas Springs May 2 (RF), and P.O. Canyon May 8 (RS). Northerly were Orchard Orioles at Clayton (WC) and a male at Tucumcari May 9 (CB), while unusual was a **Baltimore (Northern) Oriole** in Chama May 12–15 (LS).

Cassin's Finches persisted well into May in southern and submontane areas from the Rio Grande Valley westward, including five in the Gila Valley May 5 (RF *et al.*) and others in Silver City (D & MZ) and P.O. Canyon (RS). At Socorro, numbers peaked at over 50 before declining to the last three birds on May 2 (PJ, JS). A few Pine Siskins lingered into April or May in submontane areas, including at Socorro, Roswell, Silver City, and Percha Dam (v.o.) Following the winter invasion, Evening Grosbeaks remained conspicuous into April or May in lowland areas almost statewide, including in the west from Gallup and

Zuni south to Glenwood, the Gila Valley, and Silver City (m ob ) Notable were an estimated 1200 in Santa Fe May 5-6 (W & J Russer), over 30 in Socorro Apr 22 (PJ), and two at T/C Mar. 21 (DM); easterly reports included a few birds at Clayton (WC), Roswell May 5 (SB *et al.*), and Rattlesnake Springs Apr. 22 and May 6 (BB, *vide* SW).

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Larry Gorbet, John Hubbard, Stephen Hoffman, Stephen Ingraham, Pat Insley, Philip Johnson, Burton Lewis, Curtis Marantz, Doris Miller, Bruce Ostyn, Catherine Sandell, Robert Scholes, Lorraine Schulte, Hart Schwarz, John Shipman, Patricia R. Snider, Paul E. Steel, Ross Teuber, Gordon Vickrey, James Vaught, Steve West, S.O. Williams III, Dale & Marian Zimmerman.—**SARTOR O. WILLIAMS III and JOHN P. HUBBARD**, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Santa Fe, NM 87503.

## ALASKA REGION

T. G. Tobish, Jr.



Spring 1990 was nearly an instant replay of spring 1989. March was mostly a moderating transition period with below average precipitation (snowfall) north of the Gulf of Alaska coast and average rainfall in Southeast Alaska. April was nearly warm on the mainland and into the Aleutians, and the very high winter snow accumulations dissipated quickly. By the first week of May an upper level high pressure system anchored itself in the eastern Gulf of Alaska. The Aleutian low weakened earlier than normal and a large stationary Siberian low formed over the Chukchi Sea. The combination of these upper atmosphere conditions produced excellent weather for coastal migrants throughout the southern portions of Alaska where migration was boring, early, and devoid of concentrations. Most observers voiced disappointment with a spring migration that barely materialized. The Asiatic component in the Bering Sea-North Pacific islands was one of the poorest ever. Indeed, Attu birders reported a condensed migration that peaked on essentially two days in late May. Upper atmosphere pressure gradients produced the dreaded easterly flow in northwest Alaska at St. Lawrence Island and Nome. Nearctic landbirds nearly produced as much excitement at Gambell as individuals from west of the Bering Strait. The Chukchi area low kept ambient temperatures above average on the North Slope and early arrival records were set for at least seven species at Prudhoe Bay. A longtime North Slope resident called spring 1990 the earliest ever.

As usual I received more rumored reports than documented data, especially from areas frequented by the bird

tours. For visitors of the Bering Sea outposts, please submit trip summaries and documentation of rarer species to either myself, the University of Alaska Museum, or Pete Isleib, before July 1. Your data continues to provide us with pioneering information but we cannot go to press without documentation and details.

**GREBES TO DUCKS**—The peak Western Grebe count at the traditional S.E. Alaska stronghold wintering area in Sumner Strait reached 339 May 5 (PJW). Latest there were 26 on May 19 (PJW). We receive only sporadic counts of Western Grebe from elsewhere in the southeast, so the late winter peak of 250 in Ketchikan's Tongass Narrows into mid-April was noteworthy (SH). Observers commented on the paucity of Horned Grebes in passage in the Cook Inlet Basin (DFD, RLS). Although the winter population of Horned Grebes was hard hit by the Exxon Valdez oil, there have been few data released to document the extent of this impact.

The only April Whooper Swans reported were flocks of six and nine in different parts of Adak Apr. 1-9 (*vide* GVB). A single Bean Goose at Attu May 21 (Attour) was the Region's first in several years; this goose remains a sporadic spring migrant in the w. Aleutians. At the e. limit of the species' normal winter distribution, Emperor Geese peaked at a low of 246 Mar. 10 (DM, RAM); for such an early, mild spring season, it was unusual that most of these birds remained to at least Apr. 30. Although the few Emperor Geese that lingered at Attu I. to at least June 8 (Attour) were quite late, the species has been annual in small numbers recently into June and a few likely remain

to summer there where suitable habitat abounds. Sixty Aleutian Canada Geese at *Kodiak I.* May 4 furnished that island's 3rd report in recent times (RAM); 31 remained to May 7 (DM). The spring migration of this Aleutian form historically brought birds to the Shumagin Is. and into the e. Aleutians after an apparent lengthy open ocean flight from staging areas on the Oregon coast. At the west end of the species' range, a few were reported from Attu I. May 22–June 6, with a high of seven May 23 (Attour).

A drake Garganey at Buldir I. June 1 furnished the Region's only report (ILJ, EM, MH, KK). A pair and a single Cinnamon Teal appeared both at Juneau Apr. 21–May 6 and May 15 (RJG) and at the Stikine R. mouth May 1–6 (PJW). Up to four Com. Pochards at Attu May 22–June 1 (Attour) were average and the only ones reported. Canvasbacks were found beyond their normal Interior spring dispersal areas, northwest to Kotzebue Sound in May where three were located May 15–23 (E & JR). A female Canvasback at *Attu I.* May 20–23 (Attour) provided the Near Is.'s 3rd spring record, but was likely a wandering individual from the small wintering population in the c. Aleutians. Tufted Ducks were reported from all the usual c. and w. Aleutian localities in above average numbers; maximum was 33 at Attu May 22–23 (Attour). Good numbers remained into June in the w. Aleutians, where 24 at Nizki June 1–6 (SR, DO) were especially noteworthy. The species is a casual summer visitor in the w. Aleutians. A drake Tufted Duck near Nome June 4 (BJR, SR) provided one of few Seward Pen. records. Casual at any season west of the e. Aleutians, one drake Surf Scoter at Little Tanaga I. Apr. 9 was noteworthy (GVB). A few single Smews were located May 19–June 4 between Adak (SC, LC, GVB) and Attu (Attour).

**RAPTORS TO SHOREBIRDS**—The now famous Taku R. *Steller's Sea-Eagle* was first seen this spring May 15, in the exact area where it was seen last Autumn (*fide* MEI). It was seen whenever birders attempted the trip through the period. Attu's remaining White-tailed Eagle could still be found in Temnac Valley into June (Attour).

One Sora at the Petersburg fish hatchery May 19 was joined by a second bird June 1 and the observer noted possible breeding activity into June (PJW). These furnished only Mitkof I.'s third report, but the species is a rare breeder at the nearby lower Stikine R., where Walsh also located a calling bird May 27. A calling Sora at Juneau's intertidal wetlands *April 26* was the state's earliest ever (JGK, MEI *et al.*).

Shorebird passage was uneventful, likely because of fair weather and few storms during the peak period between April 25 and May 15. Noteworthy was the lack of concentrations of, especially, High Arctic nesters (Black-bellied Plover, Sanderling, Pectoral Sandpiper), which apparently overflowed normal Gulf Coast staging sites at the Copper R. Delta, Homer, and Kodiak. Asiatic shorebirds were unspectacular and late both in numbers and diversity. A brave Black-bellied Plover appeared w. of Prudhoe Bay *May 15* (EB), the earliest ever for the w. Beaufort Sea. Single Common Ringed Plovers were found June 1 & 6 at Gambell (4Points), where the species is nearly annual in spring. More unusual was the Semipalmated Plover at Buldir I. May 31 (ILJ); this plover is a casual migrant in the w. Aleutians.

Greater Yellowlegs made the spotlight this spring. Following the past 2 springs' March reports, a Greater Yellowlegs appeared at Ketchikan March 30 (SH). Given that the species has expanded its winter range in the n. Pacific Northwest (see Buchanan 1988, *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* 102:611), S.E. Alaska observers can expect contin-

ued earlier arrivals and perhaps a winter record. The Greater Yellowlegs that chagrined Asiatic-seekers at Gambell June 4 (4Points) furnished a first St. Lawrence I. record. The species is casual on the Seward Pen. There were no other *Tringa* records of note. Wood Sandpipers were scattered in the w. Aleutians, where only 10 at Attu May 29 made a late peak. Common Sandpipers made a decent showing in the w. Aleutians when the main push occurred between May 26 (two at Buldir to June 1, GVB *et al.*) and June 4 (one at Agattu, HD, SB). A peak of nine at Attu May 30 was above average (Attour). One Common Sandpiper was found at Gambell May 26 (JK). Single Black-tailed Godwits were located at Adak I. May 20–22 (+JO, SC) and at Attu May 30 (Attour). Marbled Godwits touched down at the usual staging areas after a non-stop overwater flight from the Pacific Northwest, at Kodiak May 4 (RAM) to May 18 when JBA counted the peak of 34, and on the Alaska Pen. at Puale Bay May 11 (JH). Four Marbled Godwits at Juneau May 12 (RJG) and three at Sitka May 1 (MW) were noteworthy since the species is not annual and usually found as singles in northern S.E. Alaska in spring.

Arctic-bound Sanderlings were poorly represented on the N. Gulf Coast this season, but they made news in Upper Cook Inlet, where they are historically casual in spring. The group of eight that arrived near Anchorage May 21 (DFD) was noteworthy, but this group formed a nucleus to which numbers increased to an unprecedented 310 May 28 (TGT, JLD). A few remained in the Anchorage area to at least June 2 (TGT). Lone Temminck's Stints at Buldir May 28–29 (GVB, ILJ) and Nizki I. June 3 (SR, DO) furnished the first Aleutian reports in several years. A well-studied Ruff at *Sitka* May 1–8 (MW, TJ, ph.) was one of few for S.E. Alaska and provided a first local spring record. A female Wilson's Phalarope sighted near Juneau May 21–22 (RJG) added to a growing number of S.E. Alaska spring records. A pair arrived in Fairbanks May 30 into June (PDM), where there are a few previous spring reports.

**GULLS TO WOODPECKERS**—Kodiak's 2nd record of Common Black-headed Gull came from Woman's Bay, where one adult was found May 26 (JH, +RAM) in company with a Bonaparte's Gull. This was the 3rd South-coastal spring record in 4 years for this form, which is annual in the southwest. Bonaparte's Gulls wandered to the periphery of their taiga range to Woolly Lagoon near Nome, where four adults were found May 25 (+JK), and beyond to Gambell, where one adult was studied May 28 (4Points). I know of no previous St. Lawrence I. spring records. A Glaucous Gull at the Fairbanks dump May 20 (PDM, BAC) was unusual in the Interior. Seawatchers at Gambell found an Ancient Murrelet June 3–5 (JLD, BH), there are about 4 previous St. Lawrence I. records, scattered between June and August.

Sixteen observations of at least 12 individual N. Pygmy-Owls were made by Walsh this spring on Mitkof I., where this owl has bred and continues to be found in good numbers (PJW). The season's only certain Barred Owl report came from the lower Stikine R. where one was calling April 25 (PJW). The male Anna's Hummingbird that aggressively held a territory at Ketchikan May 11–15 (SH) was surprising, since there are few spring records for the Region. Red-breasted Sapsuckers arrived early in mid-month and were widespread across S.E. Alaska by late March, at least a week ahead of normal times.

**FLYCATCHERS TO THRUSHES**—Furnishing a first record south of the Alaska Range (aside from mainland S.E., where it is a rare nester) was a most unexpected singing Hammond's Flycatcher at *Anchorage* May 15

(+RLS *et al.*). There are few records of this flycatcher away from the Tanana Highlands in the e. Interior, centered around Fairbanks, or from the mainland S.E. river systems. The Eur. Skylark at Gambell May 27 (OBSRV, +DMF) furnished St. Lawrence I.'s 3rd spring record. Elsewhere, singles were at Attu May 21–31 (Attour). The Region's first report in several years of **Purple Martin** came from *Gambell* May 27 (4 Points, but no written details!). Many of the state's 9+ records have come from the Bering Sea coast in late spring to early summer. Tree Swallows entered the Region record early in S.E. Alaska where singles were noted in synchrony April 6 at Ketchikan (SH) and April 7 at Petersburg (PJW), and six were at Craig April 8 (MEI). A mixed flock of 25 Tree and Violet-green swallows at Anchorage April 18 (DFD) also set a record early local arrival for both species. Tying the record for earliest spring arrival was a single N. Rough-winged Swallow on the lower Stikine R. May 7 (PJW).

One of the four Boreal Chickadees that overwintered in Juneau (see winter) remained at feeders through May 7 (*fide* MEI). Quite surprising was the ♀ Golden-crowned Kinglet described from White Spruce woods near *Noorvik*, some 55 km up the Kobuk R. from Kotzebue Sound, May 2 (+JW). This Sitka Spruce–W. Hemlock forest species is casual north of the Alaska Range and accidental away from the Tanana Valley. This individual must have overwintered in the area. Single **Siberian Flycatchers** arrived after the passage of a low pressure system in the w. Aleutians at Attu May 30 (Attour) and at Buldir June 1–2 (GVB, +ILJ, RPS *et al.*). These furnished the Region's 3rd report and 2nd from spring, all from the w. Aleutians. For the 2nd time in spring, and 3rd ever, Bluethroats were found in the Aleutians, again at *Attu* where probably two males were located May 30 and June 1 (Attour). Siberian Rubythroats made a nice showing, found at 4 locations between May 26 (near Tanaga I., ILJ, JP) and June 7 (St. Paul I., +RB, MT, and Attu, Attour); maximum was six at Attu May 28 (Attour).

We know little of the spring movements and timing of Townsend's Solitaire into the S.E. portions of the Region, so 8 separate reports of one to two birds between April 10 (one north of Juneau, RC) and May 3 (lower Stikine R., PJW) were noteworthy. The species probably migrates into S.E. Alaska via the mainland river systems that bisect the Coast Range from British Columbia. One Townsend's Solitaire was beyond the known Interior mountains and Brooks Range breeding areas of the species at *Noorvik* May 5 (JW). Two Eyebrowed Thrushes at Attu May 30 (Attour) and one at nearby Nizki I. June 1 (SR) furnished the only reports. Following last Autumn's report from Petersburg (*q.v.*), a Dusky Thrush appeared briefly in *Juneau* May 12 (MS *et al.*). This was the Region's earliest in spring by a week.

**MOTACILLIDS TO FINCHES**—Black-backed Wagtails arrived at Attu May 21 and up to four could be found there through June 9 (Attour). An active *nest* with 2 eggs was located on an old pier there June 8–9 for a 2nd local nest record. The first nest for North America was also from Attu, in summer 1983. Details of both of these nests will be published elsewhere. A ♂ Black-backed Wagtail was apparently paired with a ♀ White Wagtail at Gambell May 26–June 8 (WINGS, 4Points). Black-backed Wagtail is rare away from the c. and w. Aleutians. The Region's first since 1988 and the first ever away from Attu and St. Lawrence islands was a lone **Pechora Pipit** at Buldir I. May 28 (+GVB, ILJ). A Eur. Starling first discovered in Anchorage

May 11 (TGT) was actually one of a pair that had an active nest there May 30 (EW). This furnished a first Anchorage area nest record, although this pioneer's nesting stronghold (away from S.E. Alaska) lies in Palmer, only 70 km to the northeast. Quite puzzling was the female-plumaged **Palm Warbler** in muskeg at Petersburg April 16 (+PJW). The five previous Alaska records were all from October. This individual certainly must have wintered and moved north with Pacific Coast Yellow-rumped Warblers.

For the 2nd consecutive spring, Rustic Bunting had a disappointing showing in the Aleutians, where singles were found at Attu May 30 and June 9 (Attour) and one carcass was discovered at Buldir May 28 (ILJ). A male was at St. Lawrence I. June 3–7 (Wings, 4Points), where this Emberizid is casual in spring. The McKay's Bunting at *Kodiak I.* March 10–11 (+RAM, DM, TR) likely wintered with Snow Buntings locally. There are now about 4 N. Gulf of Alaska coast records between fall and early spring

Bramblings were on time and in low numbers in the c and w. Aleutians. One at Adak May 15–16 (ILJ *et al.*) was earliest, 11 at Attu May 30 (Attour) was maximum, and two at Attu June 9 (Attour) were latest. 1 ♀ Common Rosefinch made a brief appearance at Attu May 30 (Attour) during a storm-related fallout, for the only spring report. The ♀ Purple Finch that wintered at Petersburg (*q.v.*) remained through Apr. 5 (PJW). Crossbills continued to elude observers statewide, a trend begun last fall when nearly everyone noted an exodus by December. At Kodiak, White-wingeds were fairly common through the winter but numbers decreased dramatically by April (RAM). Red Crossbills were reported only from Kodiak, and only in small numbers there. Common Redpolls were uniformly distributed throughout the range in fairly common numbers, although a spring assessment of both redpolls and Pine Siskins is difficult, as both forms quietly disperse to nest by mid-May (as do most forest "residents"). Following the winter records (*q.v.*) of single birds at *Adak I.*, up to five Pine Siskins visited a feeder there Mar. 21–Apr. 20 (PB, GVB). For the 2nd consecutive spring, Oriental Greenfinch visited Attu, where one could be seen May 30–June 3 (Attour). A rogue female **Evening Grosbeak** remained at Ketchikan Mar. 24–Apr. 1 (+SH); there were no other winter or early spring reports of this casual visitor to the Region. This sighting furnished the Region's 3rd spring record. A ♂ Hawfinch at an Adak feeder May 13–16 (GVB *et al.*) and up to two at Attu May 30–June 7 constituted an average showing, given the species' occurrences over the past 5–6 springs.

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# BRITISH COLUMBIA AND THE YUKON REGION

Chris Siddle

Spring was early in southern British Columbia, but cold sand and snow lingered during March in the northeastern section. The first half of April was summer-like across southern British Columbia, allowing many species to arrive early. However, the last half of April and all of May were wet and cold, possibly causing some nesting failures. In Grand Forks, for instance, the Boundary Naturalists found many bluebird nests abandoned, even some with full clutches. Several boxes occupied by chickadees were also abandoned before egg laying commenced. Daphne Hamilton of Grand Forks notes, "Although the swallows had paired and built nests, they did not lay any eggs up to the end of May."

The weather also affected passerine migration in the Vancouver area, delaying it up to a week in some species. Wayne Weber writes, "Despite the stormy weather, concentrations of grounded passerines were almost nonexistent until the second half of May, and many observers commented that this was one of the worst spring migrations that they had ever seen, with very few 'waves' of migrants."

The birding revolution that has brought us better optics and better field guides has also imposed upon birders a new set of responsibilities. One is documenting the sighting of an unusual bird with a written description, or sketch. British Columbia birders haven't been consistent at documenting rare or unusual birds. In this regard they have fallen behind the rest of the birding world, where a recognizable photo or a written description is requisite before the record will even be considered!

Drawing a rough sketch with arrows pointing out the bird's striking features isn't hard. You do not need to be an artist. If you wish to develop an effective system for making notes on a bird's appearance, borrow or purchase *The New Approach to Identification* by Peter Grant and Killian Mullarney or read Davis Finch's introduction to Volume 1 of *The Master Guide to Birding*.

Sightings of rare birds that are not supported by documentation will not be published in this column. Unfortunately this season alone I have had to ignore a Hermit Warbler from Vancouver Island, a Blackburnian Warbler near Salmon Arm, an Ash-throated Flycatcher in Victoria, and a Loggerhead Shrike at Revelstoke.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — Q.C.I. = Queen Charlotte Islands; Van. = Vancouver; V.I. = Vancouver Island; Vic. = Victoria.

**LOONS TO HERONS** — Forty-eight Red-throated Loons at Royal Roads, Vic., on March 17 were a nice concentration (BW *et al.*). Two Red-throated Loons were observed at their "usual" spot along the Dempster Hwy in the s. Ogilvie Mts. May 19 (HG, MS). Five hundred Pacific Loons were in Active Pass, s. of Galiano I., March 1 (BW), and numbers built off Reifel I., Ladner, from 1000 on Apr. 12 to 3000 on Apr. 29 (JI, m.o.b.). Four Pacific Loons were seen on Gravel L. at Km 628 of the North Klondike Hwy, central Yukon, May 18 (HG, MS). This season's only interior Yellow-billed Loon was on Okanagan L., 3 mi n. of Penticton, Apr. 22 (LR). One in non-breeding plumage was at Rose Harbour, Q.C.I., May 29 (RWC), and three immatures were in Masset Inlet May 22 (CB, PH).



MAP ILLUSTRATION/KENN KAUFMAN

Two Pied-billed Grebes calling at Delkatla Wildlife Sanctuary, Q.C.I., May 22 furnished the first Q.C.I. record of territorial behavior (MH, PH, AH). One of the two birds was heard June 4 (MH) and seen June 6 (RWC). One hundred twenty migrant Red-necked Grebes made a good-sized spring concentration on Eaglet L., near Prince George, Apr. 30 (JB, CA). A migrant flock of 25 Horned Grebes was on the Columbia R. at Revelstoke Apr. 27 (DP). On May 20 Swan L., Vernon, held about 150 Western Grebes (RJC). On May 26 that number had swollen to 1200 (PR). However, 5000 Western Grebes on Okanagan L. at Kelowna May 12 were truly mindnumbing (JB)!

Campbell, aboard the sailing vessel *Darwin Sound*, spotted 116 Black-footed Albatrosses 3–5 mi offshore between Tasu Sound and Sunday Inlet on the w. side of the Q.C.I. May 25. A further 52 were counted from Sunday Inlet to Gowgaia Bay May 27. A record high count of 72 Black-footeds was seen off the east coast between Juan Perez Sound to Skincuttle Island June 2 (RWC). Force, aboard the *W.E. Ricker*, counted 206 Black-footeds over La Perouse Bank w. of V.I. on May 23. Fourteen N. Fulmars were seen along the s.e. coast of Moresby I. between Houston Stewart Channel to Juan Perez Sound, May 29 (RWC). Only four were seen over La Perouse Bank May 23 (MF).

American White Pelicans appeared in the interior from Apr. 20 to May 13. High counts included 26 on Chapperon L., on the Douglas L. Ranch, Apr. 20 (MC, m.ob.), and 30 on May 13 at the n. end of Osoyoos L. (JG). Brown Pelicans are scarce fall visitors, with immatures occurring almost every year around Vic. July through November. Therefore, a Brown Pelican at Point Roberts Mar. 17 (†Asc) was amazing. This was probably the same bird that appeared the next day at Saturna I. (MP).

An ad. Brandt's Cormorant, rare in the Q.C.I., was seen



in Hecate Strait off Juan Perez Sound May 31 (RWC) More expected were large flocks of Brandt's in Active Pass: 1250 Mar 1 and 2300 Apr. 5 (BW). Double-crested Cormorants are casual in the interior. A cormorant, probably an imm. Double-crested, was on Swan L., s. of Dawson Creek, May 28 (CS). Two or three Double-crested showed up at Tranquille, Kamloops, with two there May 6 and one May 30 (SR).

A **Great Egret**, casual in British Columbia, was at William L. May 19 (PR), and one was at Tranquille, Kamloops, May 2 & 3 (SR, RRH). A Great Blue Heron was observed at night May 20 standing on a logging road beside Venner meadows high in the mountains e. of Vaseaux L. A possible food source — toads were crossing the road to congregate in the ponds nearby (RJC, BGS).

**WATERFOWL** — The spring staging areas for waterfowl in the lakes of the s. Yukon had normal numbers of ducks, geese, and swans, including Trumpeter Swans (maximum counted was 182 Apr. 7 — HG, PH, MS, DS). A few Snow Geese wandered into the interior this spring. One, then two, associated with Canadas at Nakusp Mar. 31–Apr. 22 (MA, GD, CS). Two were at Swan L., Vernon, May 12 (MC). A “Cackling” Canada Goose was at Kootenay Inlet, Q.C.I., May 24, a very late date (RWC). Probably the same bird was spotted at Sunday Inlet May 25 (RWC). April 25 was the peak of Canada Goose migration over the Babine Mts. with thousands passing that day (ML). A flock of 60 Greater White-fronted Geese at Tobaggan L. n. of Smithers May 8 was notable (EP), as were 100 birds on Somenos Flats, Duncan, Apr. 18 (SW, EW). A single White-fronted was at Eaglet L., near Prince George, Apr. 30 (CA, JB). Four were at Knutsford, s. of Kamloops, May 8 & 9 (RRH). Some 1056 Brant were in Skidegate Inlet May 4 (MH, MF), and 1134 were censused between Masset Inlet and Wiah Point, Q.C.I., May 22 (PH, CB).

A pair of Wood Ducks was at Buckhorn Rd., Prince George, Apr. 30 (CA). This species breeds locally in that area. Eurasian Wigeon were widely reported in the interior. The Sunshine Coast's first Redhead, a male, was at Sechelt May 8–9 (TG). Three or four **Tufted Ducks**, rare but regular transients, appeared in the Van. area during the spring. Two males and a female frequented Iona I. in March (DMP, m.ob.), while a female was at Reifel I. May 12–21 (JI). A male was on Lulu I. Apr. 3 (MD, GA). On the coast 3000 Oldsquaws were off Denman Is. on March 21 (DVM). Casual in the interior, Oldsquaws wintered in very small numbers in the Okanagan Valley, some lingering into the spring. Latest was a male on Green Lake near Penticton May 20 (CS, LVD, GD, RRH). Two Oldsquaws were on Alkali L. Apr. 29 (PR). One was on Jacko L., Kamloops, Apr. 13, and one was at Rose Hill, near Knutsford, Apr. 27 (RRH). A pair of Harlequin Ducks on Swan L., Vernon, was quite unusual (RJC, RRH). Two Harlequins were also present on Williams L. on May 9 (PR). Ten thousand Surf Scoters were seen off Yellowpoint, s. of Nanaimo, Apr. 9 (DFF). Barrow's Goldeneyes are uncommon in the Q.C.I. One male and two females at Buck Channel May 22 were of interest (RWC).

**RAPTORS TO PTARMIGAN** — A **Black-shouldered Kite**, a first for British Columbia and Canada, was seen independently by two observers at Reifel I. Bird Sanctuary Apr. 26 (+JI, +DS). This individual was very likely a stray from the population at Raymond, Washington. Casual observations indicate that significant Bald Eagle populations build during the lower Skeena R. eulachon run; on March 24–25, 350+ were seen. Two to three hundred were at Denman I. during the herring spawn on Mar. 4 (RT). Sixty gathered at Duke Point and Gabriola I. Mar. 11 (BB *et al.*).

Two male Northern Harriers arrived near Haines Junction, Yukon, Apr. 8 (CR). Accipiters are quite rare in the Q.C.I., so these observations were of interest. A Sharp-shinned Hawk was at Tasu and another was at Kootenay Inlet on May 24 (RWC). A final Sharp-shinned was at Anna Inlet June 4 (RWC). Only one Sharp-shinned report was received for Vic., compared to 12 reports for spring 1989 (DF). On the other hand, the 16 reports of Cooper's Hawks in Vic. and area was up for the second year in a row (DF) A Cooper's Hawk near the Smithers Bridge May 28 was far north of this species' reported range (NT). Also out of their “traditionally understood range” were two Cooper's reported from the Prince George area: one at Pineview Apr 15 (LL) and the other at Pilot Mt. May 29 (SS).

Twelve Rough-legged Hawks rested during migration at the Prince George Airport Apr. 2 (JB, CA, DR). Four Golden Eagles at Telkwa Mar. 11 (EL) were probably spring migrants. Peregrine Falcons were reported on 37 occasions in the Van. area, 25 of these coming from Reifel I. A pair was reported twice at a cliff within 40 km of Vancouver (KMB), which may prove to be a new nesting locality. There were only 3 reports of Peregrines in the interior. Northwestern British Columbia remains the provincial centre for Gyrfalcon. A very pale female was at Tyee L. Mar. 14 (NT). An imm. Gyr was at Woodmere Apr. 19 (WE). One or two Gyrfalcons were seen in the North Fork Pass of the Ogilvie Mts. near the Dempster Hwy, probably attracted by the abundance of Willow and Rock ptarmigan, of which about 150 and 20, respectively, were noted May 19 & 20 (HG, MS).

**RAILS TO ALCIDS** — American Coots, uncommon in the Yukon, seem to be settling in at 2 locations there, as one was seen at Swan L. near Whitehorse May 13 (HG) and at least four were near Pelly Crossing, central Yukon, May 21 (HG, MS). An ad. Virginia Rail and five or six young were seen at Cumberland, V.I., Apr. 29 (PC) where this species breeds but is rarely documented.

Sandhill Crane migration was monitored this spring in the Bulkley Valley. Two hundred Sandhills passed over Telkwa Apr. 15 (WE); 2000 appeared at Woodmere Apr. 19 (DR); 600 went over Moricetown Apr. 20 (WE); 400 left Woodmere Apr. 21 but were replaced by 3000 (DR). Another observer, ML, notes that Apr. 21 was the peak for Sandhill Crane migration over Tyhee L. In the Kamloops area 2000 passed over Apr. 21 and another 1300 Apr. 22 (RRH).

A small invasion of **Black-necked Stilts** managed to avoid the larger urban centres and so came to the attention of few birders. Two stilts were at Mile 150 House, s. of Williams L., Apr. 30 (RWC), while it was rumoured that Salmon Arm had 10 birds. A single at Stump L., near Kamloops, Apr. 4 was reported to Rick Howie secondhand. Once again a handful of Am. Avocets appeared in the Van. area at Serpentine Fen and Iona I. The first bird appeared at the Fen on the record early date of Mar. 31 (TH). Eventually one bird at the Fen appeared to be sitting on a nest. Up to four birds were on Iona I. where one defended a territory (WCW). There were also unusual numbers in the Kamloops area. Up to 5 pairs were at White L. on the Douglas Plateau Apr. 23 to May 12 (RM). Four were at Beresford L. May 8 and two were west of 70 Mile House in late May (RRH).

Giscome, near Prince George, had 30 Lesser Yellowlegs May 17 along with 550 Pectoral Sandpipers, 20 Baird's, 50 Semipalmated, 10 Least's, and eight Long-billed Dowitchers, in fields flooded by the unusually heavy rains. Such shorebird numbers for Prince George are unusual (HA, JB). A **Willet** at Revelstoke May 15 was very rare (DP). The Blackie Spit Willet, present since Aug. 30, 1989, was last

reported Apr. 16 (WCW) A Wandering Tattler was heard at Km 71 of the Dempster Hwy on May 21 (HG).

Six to eight Hudsonian Godwits were at the North Sewage Lagoons, Fort St. John, May 2, well within their usual migration "window" (AW). Marbled Godwits were unusually frequent this spring along the coast. One at Entry Point was the first for the Q.C.I. since 1987, quickly followed by five at Sandspit the same day (MH). A breeding-plumaged Ruddy Turnstone at the s. end of Charlie L. May 28 furnished the 4th or 5th record for the Peace River area (†CS). Forty Red Knots, an unusually large group for V.I., were reported near Tofino May 8 (AD). Four at Entry Point, Q.C.I., were the first there since 1983 (MH). A Long-billed Curlew at Telkwa May 19 was out of range (DH). A compact *Calidris* flock at the North Lagoons, Fort St. John, proved to be 29 Semipalmated Sandpipers and eleven White-rumped Sandpipers on May 28 (†CS). While single White-rumpeds occur annually in the Peace River area around very late May and early June, flocks of this size are very rare. No reports for Rock Sandpiper were received for the Vic. area, where this species is in decline (DF). A Short-billed Dowitcher, very rare in the interior, was spotted just n. of Vernon May 6 (PR). Twelve Wilson's Phalaropes were recorded at Swan L. near Whitehorse May 26, and two were at Shallow Bay, s.w. of Lake Laberge, May 24 (HG).

At least five Long-tailed Jaegers were counted in the North Fork Pass of the s. Ogilvie Mts. May 20 (HG). As usual, Bonaparte's Gulls congregated in Active Pass, with 1300 on Apr. 5 (BW). *Ten thousand gulls*, mostly Glaucous-winged, also Ring-billed and a few Herring gulls, were at the lower Skeena River eulachon run on Mar. 15 (WE). An ad. Ring-billed Gull, very rare in the Q.C.I., was at Lomgong Inlet May 25 (RWC). There were five Glaucous Gulls recorded in the Q.C.I. during May (RWC). An ad. Thayer's Gull, now proving to be rare but regular in fall to spring in the Okanagan, was at Vernon May 2 (CS, MC). During the Okanagan Big Day, May 20, diehard birders braved the ickiness of the Kelowna Dump to ferret out an adult and a first-year Thayer's Gull (CS, RJC). A late lingering flock of Thayer's Gulls associated with late spawning herring involved 11 birds at Yellowpoint s. of Nanaimo (DFF).

The first Arctic Terns to arrive near Kluane L., Yukon, this spring were two on May 12 (FD). Revelstoke had a flock of *Sterna* terns May 25–26. Nine were Common Terns, but the final bird was an Arctic Tern, extremely rare anywhere in the interior (except the Peace River area and its n.w. breeding grounds), a first for Revelstoke (WD, BD, DP). Caspian Terns, casual in the interior, were seen at Kamloops with six May 17 and four May 27 (SR). One adult was at Salmon Arm May 24 (MC, CS, PMc). An ad. Horned Puffin was seen at Marble I. on the central w. coast of Queen Charlotte Is. on May 22 and another adult was at Flat Rock I. near the extreme s. end of Moresby I. (RWC).

**PIGEONS TO WOODPECKERS** — Three Band-tailed Pigeons were at Queen Charlotte City June 6. This species is rare on the Q.C.I. (RWC). It also seems to be declining in the Van. area, where only seven were reported for the spring (WCW, JJ).

Flammulated Owls were found frequently, especially during the May 20 Okanagan Big Day. Six were heard by the "Pygmy Owls" (RH, LVD, CS, GD), one of the Big Day teams, around Penticton between midnight and 4 a.m. on May 20. One was seen in the Bald Range, about 30 km n. of Kelowna, May 13 (JB, m.ob.). At least 10 were on Wheeler Mt., Kamloops, from Apr. 20 through May (RRH). The only Snowy Owl reported was near MacKenzie Mar. 15 (EMc, fide JB). Six Burrowing Owls returned to their Osoyoos release site Mar. 18 (AB). Eventually 21 returned this

spring. A Great Gray Owl, very rare on the Sunshine Coast, was photographed at Halfmoon Bay Mar. 1 (KB). Another at Pinanton, near Kamloops, May 7 was at a more usual location (RRH). One to two Long-eared Owls continued to be seen at Reifel I. throughout March (JI, m.ob.). Two were seen at Quilchena Golf Course, Lulu I., April 14 (AST). A pair of Short-eared Owls nested among the saplings of a cottonwood plantation on the Vernon Commonage in April. Unfortunately the nest's 8 eggs were predated April 28, probably by ravens (MCa, MC). This was one of only about 7 breeding records for the Okanagan. A Boreal Owl, quite rare in southern British Columbia, was heard Mar 24 in the mountains east of Okanagan Falls (DB, WD) The Queen Charlotte Islands' Saw-whet Owl, which may prove to be a separate species, was recorded twice by RWC this spring. Two were calling at Yakulanans Bay on the w. coast May 28, and another two were calling at Ramsey Island May 30.

Vaux's Swifts, uncommon but regular in the Prince George area, arrived back in Cottonwood Park on May 7 (CA, HA, JB). A male Anna's Hummingbird, first for the Q.C.I., was seen on Hotspring I. May 29 (AGW, MSp). The Vic. area reported six Anna's at 4 locations from March 7 until period's end (JGa, BB, BW, m.ob.). Two Calliope Hummingbirds appeared out of range in Van. with one at Stanley Park Apr. 26 (DMP) and the other at Queen Elizabeth Park May 18 (EMac).

At least 2 pairs of Black-backed Woodpeckers were along the Venner Meadows road above Vaseux Lake May 20 (RRH, LVD, GD, CS) and another pair was present near the highway on Anarchist Mt. May 19 (BB). Vancouver retained its Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (first found Dec. 17, 1989) in Shaughnessy Park until March 24 (DTy, RTy). A Red-naped Sapsucker was seen in Queen Elizabeth Park, Van., May 1 (RT). This species now occurs regularly enough (1–2 records a year) to be a regular spring migrant. A male Williamson's Sapsucker appeared May 19 near the gravel pit on Anarchist, a site the birds had not visited for years (BB)

**FLYCATCHERS TO STARLING** — Two Hammond's Flycatchers furnished first and second records for this species on the Q.C.I. The first was seen near Tlell June 6 and the second was at Rose Spit June 7 (RWC). Two Hammond's/Dusky types were heard at km 10 of the Dempster Hwy May 19 (HG, MS) and another was near Whitehorse May 26 (HG). Gray Flycatchers continue to expand into the Okanagan Valley from Washington State. One at Summerland Apr. 30 was an early arrival. RJC and AP, researching the status of this species in British Columbia, counted 38 Grays at Summerland between May and early June. Other populations also exist near Vaseux L. and Oliver. Western Kingbirds, normally very rare transients in spring to Van., were reported 12 times. These sightings involved about five birds (WCW).

Eurasian Skylark counts in the Victoria Airport–central Saanich area resulted in 42 birds at 4–5 locations. Assuming that there were another 11 non-singing females at the airport, the population of the whole Victoria area was estimated at 53 individuals (ALM, BW *et al.*).

Seven Purple Martins appeared at Ladysmith Harbour May 26, a fairly new locale. Eight birds at Cowichan Bay May 20 were more expected (DM). A Tree Swallow was seen at Jordan River on Apr. 28, for perhaps the first confirmed record for s.w. Vancouver Island (KT, JGa) Forty Bank Swallows at Iona I. May 27 made an all time high for this species in Van. (WCW). The unusual weather of this reporting period affected swallows in a dramatic way in the Van. area. Northern Rough-winged Swallows arrived 10 days ahead of normal during the summer-like

period of late March. However, the arrival of the bulk of the Barn Swallows appeared to be greatly delayed by the cool rains of mid to late April. Weber reports that very few Barn Swallows were present even by the end of April. This was also the case in Vernon (CS).

A Blue Jay was discovered at Ladner Harbour Park, Delta, Mar. 3 and was last reported Apr. 22 (CC, m.ob.). However, the jay had been present from about Nov. 20, 1989, according to a local resident, Albert Wigglesworth. This was about the 8th Van. record.

The fine warm weather in March must have "fooled" some species into breeding early. For example, four or five fledgling Canyon Wrens were seen at Vaseux L. May 19, beating the previous earliest fledgling date by 2 weeks (GL, DMcC).

A Northern Wheatear was noted at high elevations in the s. Ogilvie Mts. May 20 (HG, MS). Mountain Bluebird migration in Prince George occurred from Mar. 26 to Apr. 25. The largest flock was of 20 Apr. 11 (CA). The warm weather during early spring allowed bluebirds to nest early in some locales. Two pairs of Mountain Bluebirds were feeding 5-day-old young at White L., near Penticton, May 1, about 3 weeks earlier than normal and 10 days earlier than the previous record (AP, MH). Two pairs of Western Bluebirds, one with five young at Vaseux and the other with seven young at White L., nested one week earlier than previous records. Early clutches such as these seemed to do well; however, later clutches didn't fare so well in the late May rains. Powell notes that Mountain Bluebirds no longer nest at Revelstoke although they did as recently as 5 years ago. The nest of a pair of Townsend's Solitaires with 4 eggs was found in the roadside of the Swan Lake Rd. n. of Whitehorse about a metre away from active, though not very intense, traffic (HG). American Robin migration peaked Apr. 11 when a single flock of 1000 was at Pineview, Prince George (CA).

Seventy Am. Pipits were at Giscome, Prince George, on Apr. 21 (JB, CA, m.ob.). Later, in May, numbers grew with 100 near the Prince George Airport May 6 (JB), and 100 at Pineview the same day (CA, DR, JB). A leucistic Bohemian Waxwing was spotted in Penticton Mar. 17 (SRC). A Cedar Waxwing, rare in the Q.C.I., was seen at Rose Harbour June 2 (RWC). Two Northern Shrikes arrived at Kluane L. Apr. 9, the same that this species arrived in 1989 (MN, FD). European Starlings are rare in the Yukon. One appeared at Kluane L. May 17 for the first time in 1-2 years (MWi).

**VIREOS TO SISKIN** — The warm, summer-like weather of the first half of April allowed some species to set arrival date records around Vancouver. A Warbling Vireo at Queen Elizabeth Park Apr. 21 was the earliest ever (RT). A Townsend's Warbler there Apr. 13 was 12 days earlier than the average arrival date. Common Yellowthroats at Serpentine Fen, Surrey, Apr. 3 were the earliest ever by 2 days and 13 days ahead of the average (BL). Wilson's Warbler Apr. 18 was 9 days earlier than normal (WCW). A singing Tennessee Warbler, rare in the w. Kootenays, was found at Nakusp May 26 (GD). Two were well described from Vancouver May 18 & 19 (+DMP, +DAJ).

Two male Yellow Warblers were at Bigsby Inlet May 30 for a 2nd record for the Q.C.I. (RWC). Black-throated Gray Warbler continues to expand its range on V.I., where it used to be considered rare. An additional report came from the west coast with a pair at Greenpoint Campsite, Pacific Rim N.P., May 10 (SF). At least one pair of Black-throated Green Warblers was at Kiskatinaw P.P. between Dawson Creek and Fort St. John May 28 (CS). Two Palm Warblers were found, representing first March records for southern V.I., one at Cowichan Bay Mar. 19 (DM, KT) and

Apr. 1, the second at Sooke Mar. 19 (EW, SSt). Four Black-poll Warblers at Crooked River P.P., near Bear L., May 27 were part of a sudden increase in this species in the Prince George area (JB, P.G. Naturalists).

Was it the cold wet weather that caused Western Tanagers to concentrate in unusual numbers in the valleys? Ten males and one female were seen in a tree in Penticton May 18 (RJC), while most of the deciduous trees in Okanagan Falls Prov. Campsite held two or three birds during the evening of May 19 (CS, GD, LVD, RRH). Flocks of 20 to 25 birds were seen in Revelstoke early in May, where they are usually seen as singles or pairs (DP).

A male Rose-breasted Grosbeak appeared out-of-range at Revelstoke on May 24-26 (WD, DP). Two male Lazuli Buntings turned up on southern V.I. after a six-year gap in the records. One male was at Mill Bay May 26 (DA), the second was on Mt. Tolmie May 29 & 31 (KT, ALM).

Vesper Sparrows are very local on s. Vancouver Island. A pair set up territory along C. Saanich Rd., and was seen from May 6 through the reporting period (ALM, BW, KT, BB). Vagrant Lark Sparrows appeared in 3 areas: one on Mt. Tolmie, Saanich, May 31 for a 12th record for V.I. (H & JMc), one photographed on Saturna I. May 29 (LF), and one at South Slokan May 27 (LVD). Savannah Sparrows usually appear in concentrations of 100 to 200 near the end of April in the Van. area. This did not happen this spring (WCW). A singing Le Conte's Sparrow was discovered at Mt. Robson P.P. May 30 (CA, JB). This species' range w. of the Rockies is poorly known. A Golden-crowned Sparrow, Nakusp's 4th, was seen May 12 (GD). Another Golden-crowned, rare in the Q.C.I., was seen at Massett Apr. 19 (Patty & Dennis Martin). A late departing Harris' Sparrow, a rare winter visitor, was last seen May 22 at Summerland (A & DMc). The White-crowned Sparrow migration was fairly normal in the Vernon region (CS), but was very poor in the Vancouver area (WCW).

Two male Lapland Longspurs in Sechelt Apr. 22 furnished the first spring records for the Sunshine Coast (TG). The arrival date for Lapland Longspurs was Apr. 1 at Sheep Mountain, Kluane L., Yukon (MN). Seven Snow Buntings appeared at Kelowna Mar. 7 (JBu).

As sometimes happens, Sechelt experienced a minor "fall-out" of interior migrants May 22-23 when a pair of Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Northern Orioles, a Chipping Sparrow, and a Lazuli Bunting were found (ASk). Tony Greenfield notes that of the 5 Sunshine Coast Lazuli Bunting records, 3 have occurred on May 23s and the other 2 on May 28s! Only four Bobolinks were noted near Revelstoke this spring, down from last year's population (DP). However, Bobolinks at Mabel Lake, near Lumby (CS), and at Nakusp seem to be doing well (GD). Two Western Meadowlarks 4 km n. of MacBride May 13 were near the n. edge of their range (JB). Rusty Blackbirds arrived back in their Kluane L. breeding grounds by May 12, when six were seen (FD). Revelstoke's vagrant Common Grackle overwintered and spent all of March at a feeder, as did one of the town's two Bramblings (DP). With 32 reports of Northern Orioles, it is fair to state that this species has been steadily increasing in numbers during the last 20 years in the Vancouver area (WCW).

Fourteen Rosy Finches were on the Kitseguecla Lake Rd. n. of Smithers, near Moricetown, Apr. 11 (WE). Three Pine Grosbeaks of the Queen Charlotte race were seen at Skincuttle Inlet May 31 (RWC). White-winged Crossbills were scarce. However, a few lingered at Massett, Q.C.I., with 10 Mar. 27, 25 Apr. 1 (MH), and nine at Sandspit May 11 (MH, PH). Two were noted near Penticton May 9 (RJC). Red Crossbills were absent from the West Kootenays until

late May when they started to become quite common (GD). A Common Redpoll visited Sechelt feeders with Pine Siskins April 29 to May 2 for the first spring record for the Sunshine Coast (AS). GD noted that Common Redpolls lingered longer than usual around Nakusp, until Apr. 13. In Revelstoke very large flocks, in the thousands, were noted in March (DP). Although Pine Siskin is common throughout most of the province, nests are seldom recorded. A nest in a conifer at 959 West 58th Ave., Van., fledged young June 1 (RT).

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## OREGON/WASHINGTON REGION

Bill Tweit and Dave Fix

April in much of the Region was warmer than average, although a major cold front on April 19 halted migration for a short while in central Oregon. May was not particularly pleasant. Most parts of the Region were cool and wet, particularly during the latter half of the month. Storms at the end of the month brought May precipitation above average for the month, new snow to the mountains, and a few Red Phalaropes onshore.

There were several notable shorebird concentrations in the western half of the Region, inland from the outer coast. The Kirtland Road Sewage Ponds, near Medford in the Rogue valley of Oregon, had excellent numbers and species diversity throughout April and early May. Between three and four thousand "peep" were counted there April 29 (MM). Pastures in the Chehalis valley west of Elma, Washington, held large numbers of shorebirds May 17–18 (RM, JS) and fields in the Skagit valley, Washington, held very large numbers of Whimbrels in early May (BK).

Relatively few of the eastside species such as avocet, stilt, Say's Phoebe, and Rock Wren appeared on the west side this spring. This was an above average spring for eastern vagrant warblers in southeastern Oregon, with records of twelve individuals of seven species in Harney County alone. Numbers and movements of the regular migrant passerines were largely unremarkable.

**ABBREVIATIONS**—Fields = Fields, *Harney*, OR; Finley = Finley Nat'l Wildlife Ref., *Benton*, OR; K.R.S.P. = Kirtland Road Sewage Ponds, near Medford, *Jackson*, OR; Malheur = Malheur Nat'l Wildlife Ref., *Harney*, OR; O.S. = Ocean Shores, *Grays Harbor*, WA; Sauvie = Sauvie Island, *Columbia*, OR; S.J.C.R. = south jetty of the Columbia R., *Clatsop*, OR. Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO CORMORANTS**—Strong migration of Pacific and Common loons was noted along the Washington coast Apr. 22–26 (CCh, BT), with hundreds per hour noted. A pair of Com. Loons on a nest at Lost Lake, *Okanagan*, May 5 (S) was one of the few pairs still breed-



MAP ILLUSTRATION/KENN KAUFMAN

ing in Washington. Yellow-billed Loons at Sequim Bay, *Clallam*, WA, and Netarts Bay, *Tillamook*, OR, both Mar. 5 (BT, CR), had wintered locally. Another was on Yaquina Bay, *Lincoln*, Mar. 19 (Range Bayer), perhaps the most frequent site for the species in Oregon. The Horned Grebe at Bend, OR, Mar. 25 (TC) was two weeks earlier than the average arrival there. There was only one report of Clark's Grebe from w. Oregon, in Central Point, *Jackson*, May 14–18 (Ray Skibby, HS). This species is rarely reported in the Rogue valley. There were two w. Washington reports: one wintering on Willapa Bay Mar. 23 appeared to be an intergrade (tG & WH) and another was reported without details at Dungeness, *Clallam*, May 26 (FS).

There were two pelagic trips off Westport, WA, Apr 22 and May 5 (TW); the April trip was cut short by bad weather. Some 83 Black-footed Albatrosses, 12 N. Fulmars, three Pink-footed Shearwaters, and four Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels were found in May; only the albatross numbers were average. Low numbers of Sooty Shearwaters were found on both trips (4,500 and 6,500), and three Short-tailed Shearwaters were found in April. In Oregon, two Black-footed Albatrosses were found dead on Coos beaches in mid-April (BG, Jack Thomas) and a Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel was seen between the Coos Bay jetties Mar. 11 while the observer (Dan Matthews) was surfing!

American White Pelican colonies at Malheur showed a decline this year; 930 nests were counted. In late May, 200 pelicans at Malheur were killed in a die-off of unknown origins (Gary Ivey). Above average numbers were reported throughout e. Washington, where they do not breed. The normal time period for northern migration of Brown Pelicans into our Region is June–July, but in recent years a few have appeared in May. This spring saw a significant increase in sightings in April and May. The first was an immature flying north past Yaquina Head, *Lincoln*, OR, Apr. 1 (Mike Noack). By the middle of April, it had become obvious that a small movement of post-breeding Brown Pelicans (or mostly non-breeding?) was underway in Oregon. On Apr. 22, six adults, a subadult, and an immature were at Grays Harbor, WA (BT). The number at Grays Harbor had increased to 30 at the end of April (FS) and 51 by May 18 (RM). Some 525 Double-crested Cormorants on Bellingham Bay, WA, Mar. 17 (TW) made a high count for that area, where their numbers continue to increase. A Double-crested Cormorant at Ochoco L., *Crook*, OR, Mar. 24 (J & RK) was 22 days earlier than average.

**HERONS TO MERGANSERS**—The first Great Egret sighting this spring in e. Washington was of two April 14 at Potholes S.P., *Grant* (TSc), which seems an early date for this newly established breeder. Oregon's 3rd **Little Blue Heron**, which appeared Jan. 15 near Brownsmeade, *Clatsop*, remained until Mar. 23 (PSh, m.ob.). Again this spring, White-faced Ibises appeared in w. Oregon. On the coast, three put down briefly at Yaquina Bay, *Lincoln*, May 6 (*fide* HN), one flew past the Yaquina Bay jetties May 16 (*fide* DFa), and three were at Tillamook May 22 (CR). In the Willamette valley, a flock of 18 was at Finley May 17–18 (HH, RH). Ibises have now shown up in spring migration in w. Oregon in about half of the recent spring migrations.

Between Apr. 27 and May 3, a "massive flight" of Greater White-fronted Geese moved through *Lincoln* on the Oregon coast, arriving from the east over the Siletz and Alsea R. drainages, and moving north up the coast. Thousands were seen flying northward from Yachats to Lincoln City (DFa *et al.*). With them were small numbers of Snow Geese and quite a few Canada Geese. On the Washington coast, a good movement was noted Apr. 29 (EH, FS). A **Ross' Goose** at Seattle Apr. 24 (Erica Norwood, †BSu, m.ob., ph.) furnished the 4th w. Washington record; all are spring records. Other Ross' records away from their main migrational path in s.e. Oregon included the first for *Deschutes*, OR, at Hatfield L. Apr. 30–May 1 (TC), one at Reardan, *Lincoln*, WA, Mar. 5 (JA), and one at Clarkston, *Asotin*, WA, May 5–12 (J & DP, m.ob.). The two Emperor Geese that had wintered at Charleston, OR, were still there Apr. 8 (*fide* L. Thackaberry). In Washington, there were two sightings from *Clallam* (D & SS, TB) and three from along Puget Sound (S. Johnson, J. Carroll, R. Droker). Almost all of these may have been feral birds, as only one sighting was not either from freshwater or associated with Canada Geese.

Blue-winged Teal were in very low numbers throughout the spring in e. Washington (JA, PM, G & WH). There were two reports of hybrid teal: a Cinnamon × Green-winged at Hatfield L., *Deschutes*, OR, Apr. 15 (TC) and a Cinnamon × Blue-winged at Diamond L., *Douglas*, OR, May 28 (DFi). A brood of 10 Gadwalls at Siletz Bay furnished a first *Lincoln*, OR, breeding record (Bob & Dona Morris). Gadwalls are rare breeders along the outer coast, but are increasingly common elsewhere, especially in the Puget Sound area. There were 13 reports of Eur. Wigeon from e. Washington and 5 from e. Oregon, an above average number of spring reports for e. Washington. An ad. ♂ King Eider at LaPush, *Clallam*, WA, May 28–June 1 (Matt Nixon) provided the latest ever spring record of this rarity. Two broods of Hooded Merganser, a scarce nesting bird in Oregon, were encountered: a brood of 10 on the Umpqua R. at Tyee, *Douglas*, June 6 (DFi) and another brood on Cabell Marsh, *Finley*, May 27 (K. Merrifield).

**KITES TO QUAIL**—In Oregon, reports of Black-shouldered Kites away from the Rogue valley were few, as most of the wintering birds elsewhere disappear by late winter. There was one report from the coast, near Florence (TM), and 3 from the Willamette valley, in *Benton* (*fide* ME) and at Finley (HH). In the Rogue valley, 2 *nests* were located in s.e. Medford Mar. 30 (MM, OS). Although fledged young have indicated breeding in several areas of the state over the past 15 years, very few actual nests have been located in Oregon. In Washington, there was only one report away from their 2 regular locales: one at Nisqually N.W.R. Mar. 30 (Harold Fray). The regular locales are Toledo, *Lewis*, where one was seen Mar. 28 (Ray Scharpf) and Tokeland, *Pacific*, where two adults were watched in aerial displays Apr. 15 (BL). The albino Red-tailed Hawk near Philomath, *Benton*, OR, persisted into its 18th spring (ME). Rough-legged Hawks were sparingly reported, not surprisingly after a mediocre winter. The last report was Apr. 15 at Tokeland, WA (BL).

American Kestrels seldom draw comment in our Region owing to their general abundance and inconspicuous migrations. A migratory movement was witnessed Apr. 29, along the *Tillamook*, OR, beaches (SR). The latest coastal migrant Merlins were May 3 at Bandon, OR (DFi), and May 12 at Leadbetter Pt., WA (TB). Inland, the last was Apr. 11 at Sauvie (JJ). There were no Merlins reported from the east side of the Cascades. Nine Peregrine reports from w. Washington were fewer than half of average, and there were few reports from w. Oregon. Occupancy of Oregon nest sites this spring was about the same as in the previous several years (Joel Pagel). East of the Cascades, three were reported.

Gray Partridge have not been reported in the Hart Mt., *Lake*, OR, vicinity since the mid-1960s. A pair was seen on Hart Mt. Apr. 30 (G. Kiester). Two Spruce Grouse on Pine Grass Ridge, *Yakima*, May 12 (†Ken Bevis) were far south of their normal range in the n. Washington Cascades. California Quail populations near Spokane were "huge" (JR), probably reflective of the mild winter.

**SHOREBIRDS**—Two Lesser Golden-Plovers, both described as *fulva*, were reported from Oregon. One was seen May 11–12 at K.R.S.P. (OS, MM) and the other at Finley May 19 (M & EE). Seven were reported from Washington, none identified to subspecies. The earliest were two at Ocean Shores Apr. 21 (BW) and five were near Elma, *Grays Harbor*, May 17–18 (RM, JS). These are average spring numbers. There were only 3 Oregon reports of Snowy Plover, but surely more were noted. Two were at their northernmost breeding locale at Ocean Shores Apr. 21 (K. Brown) and one was seen the same day elsewhere



on Grays Harbor (J Wingfield). The first returning Black-necked Stilts were in the Klamath Basin, OR, Mar. 24 (PSu) and they and Am. Avocets had returned to central Washington by Apr. 1 (AS). The only westside stilts were two at K.R.S.P. Apr. 10 (Dick Cronberg) and one there Apr. 22 (MM), and the only westside avocets were one at K.R.S.P. Apr. 23 (MM, OS) and one at Forest Grove, Washington, OR, May 6 (JG). Both species are casual on the west side of the Cascades.

The peak counts of Greater Yellowlegs were of 58 at Olympia, WA, Mar. 27 (Janet Partlow) and 50 at K.R.S.P. Apr. 16 (MM). Lesser Yellowlegs are rarer spring migrants, more common in the interior than the west side. The westside peak count was of eight at K.R.S.P. Apr. 22 (MM), and there were at least 9 other westside reports. The eastside peak count was of 17 near Bend Apr. 30 (TC). There were 10 reports of Solitary Sandpiper on the east side and fourteen more from the west side, the earliest Apr. 15 at W. Richland, Benton, WA (BW). These are average numbers for this scarce migrant. Willets were recorded 3 times from areas where they are unusual: one at Diamond L., Douglas, OR, Apr. 29 (DFi), three at Boardman, Morrow, OR, May 8 (CCo), and one at Kahlolus, L., Franklin, WA, May 12 (J. & M. Hirth).

The peak coastal count of 150 Whimbrels near Tillamook, OR, May 9 (HN) was overshadowed by the count of 750 in Skagit valley fields, Skagit, WA, May 5 (BK) and 450 near Elma, Grays Harbor, WA, May 17–18 (RM, JS). We are accustomed to believing that Whimbrels are primarily coastal migrants in our Region. If they prove to be regular in these numbers in these more inland locales, we shall have to revise our thinking. The peak count of Marbled Godwit, 200 at Ocean Shores Apr. 20 (G & WH), was a very large spring count. One at Finley May 18 (AF) was one of few ever discovered in the Willamette valley. Six Marbled Godwits Apr. 24 in the Warner Basin, Lake, OR (Bill Pyle), and eight at Malheur between Mar. 24 and Apr. 26 (WC, S. Freshman, CM) were the only interior migrants reported. Forty Ruddy Turnstones in fields near Elma May 18 (JS) made a high count for a non-coastal spot. There was only one eastside Ruddy report, a single at Boardman, Morrow, OR, May 8–14 (CCo).

Red Knot counts were lower than normal this spring in w Oregon. The highest count there was of 27 at Bandon May 3 (DFi). As usual, numbers of knots were on Grays Harbor, WA, from Apr. 23 through May 12 (DFi, John Gatchet), but the high count was only 150+, which is low. Three Semipalmated Sandpipers were reported from the west side, and four from the east side, below average counts. The peak counts of W. Sandpipers were of 320,000 at one spot on Grays Harbor Apr. 26 (CCh) and 10,000–15,000 at Bandon May 3 (DFi). Always rare in spring on the west side, three Baird's Sandpipers were found, at the K.R.S.P. Apr. 16 (HS, OS), Sauvie Apr. 21 (JJ), and Aberdeen, WA, Apr. 29 (BL). The peak count on the east side was large, 18 at Malheur Apr. 26 (CM). Pectoral Sandpipers are also scarce spring migrants on the west side: two were at Seattle May 13 (MO). The eastside reports totaled 16 from 3 sites, about normal.

Short-billed Dowitcher numbers peaked on the outer coast during the last week of April. Some 20,000 were at one site on Grays Harbor Apr. 26 (CCh), and 400 each were at Tillamook (HN) and Bandon (DFi). Seven reports of Short-billed Dowitchers came from inland areas, with six seen in w. Oregon and Washington, one at Boardman, Morrow, OR, May 5–8 (Donna Lusthoff, C & MCo), and six in Grant, WA, May 12 (BT, DPa) that were thought to be *hendersoni*. We urge observers of spring migrant Short-billed Dowitchers on the east side of the Cascades to pay

attention to subspecies, when possible. A fair showing of at least 26 Wilson's Phalaropes in w. Oregon included 12 at K.R.S.P. May 11–12 (MM) and seven in Finley (HH), but there was only one sighting in w. Washington, in Seattle (EH). Ten pairs were potential breeders at Diamond Lake, in the s. Oregon Cascades, but the heavy rains of late May flooded out at least one nest (DFi). Some 125 Red-necked Phalaropes, with 10 Red Phalaropes, at the K.R.S.P. May 22 (HS) had probably been driven inland by the late May storms. The Reds represented the first spring record for the Rogue valley and one of few inland spring records in the Region.

**JAEGERS TO DOVES**—Jaeger migration was almost undetected this spring. There were no Oregon sightings. In Washington, only eight Pomarines and two Parasitics were seen on the 2 Westport pelagic trips (TW), and one Pomarine (RM) and seven Parasitics (B & GR) seen from shore at the Grays Harbor channel. An ad. Little Gull was at Point No Point on Puget Sound Mar. 6–Apr. 8 (VN) and possibly the same bird was at Seattle Apr. 5 (RM) for the 10th spring record. An adult also appeared during March 1989 at Point No Point. Bonaparte's Gull migration was noted along the outer coast May 3 at Bandon (DFi) when flocks were steadily moving north along the beaches. Six Heermann's Gulls were early at Ocean Shores May 18 (G & WH), possibly correlated with the early appearance of Brown Pelicans. Three of the 4 Glaucous Gull reports were from March on the lower Columbia R. system (NL, BT), probably attracted by the large smelt run. The only Sabine's Gull report was of two on the pelagic trip off Westport May 5 (TW).

The only known Caspian Tern breeding locales on the west side of the Cascades are on the s. Washington coast. For at least a decade, steadily increasing numbers have been reported on Puget Sound, but no attempts at breeding have been noted. This spring, the highest numbers ever were reported on Bellingham Bay, in northern Puget Sound, with lots of courtship display and nocturnal flights inland noted there, but no breeding (TW). Common Terns went almost unreported this spring, except for the May 3–5 period. On May 3, northbound migrants were passing Bandon on the s. Oregon coast (DFi) and on May 4 & 5, peak counts were reported from Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor (G & WH, TW). Two ad. Arctic Terns had returned to their breeding site at Everett, Snohomish, WA, by May 23 (RM). A **Forster's Tern** in basic plumage at Everett Mar. 17 (DPa) had probably wintered there. If so, this would be the first winter record for the Region.

A pair of Ancient Murrelets in breeding plumage found off Port Angeles, WA, May 29 (JS) were either very late migrants, or from the vestigial breeding population on the Olympic Peninsula. Fifteen Marbled Murrelets noted Apr. 8 flying down the Waatch R., Clallam, from the old growth Cedar Reserve 2.5 mi upstream (FS) helped define the nesting chronology of this species.

Band-tailed Pigeons continued uncommon, or at least uncommonly reported. In Oregon, it has seemed that reasonable numbers have been reported only along the outer coast, with only a smattering reported elsewhere. In Washington, they still seem relatively numerous around Puget Sound, and are scarcer along the coast. Observers are urged to pay attention to this species. A migrant Mourning Dove over the ocean 10 mi off Bandon Apr. 16 (Terry Thompson) had little to coo about. In the same vein, dove numbers were way down around Spokane (JR).

**OWLS TO WOODPECKERS**—Departure dates for wintering owls were Mar. 3 for three Snowy Owls near Moses Lake, Grant, WA (MD), Mar. 15 for two Burrowing

Owls near the K.R S.P. (MM), and Apr 9 for Short-eared Owls at Baskett Slough N.W.R., OR (*vide* BB). There are no confirmed breeding records for Great Gray Owl in Washington, so a report of a hooting bird in *Okanogan* Apr. 7 (AS) was pretty exciting. A Boreal Owl near Rogers L., *Okanogan*, WA, Apr. 12 (RM) was in an area where they are being found regularly. Two Black Swifts were at Fort Rock S.P., *Lake*, May 6 (Mike Houck); they rarely occur in e. Oregon. Vaux's Swifts appeared first in the Willamette valley Apr. 12 (RH) but did not appear in Washington until 3 weeks later, May 4 (FS). White-throated Swifts returned early. Three at Smith Rocks S.P., OR, Mar. 26 (CM) were 3 weeks earlier than average for c. Oregon, and they had returned to 2 e. Washington sites before April (RM, MD). A White-throated Swift at Lower Table Rock Apr. 28 (Stewart Janes, OS) was a first for *Jackson* and one of few for w. Oregon.

An Anna's Hummingbird nest near Portland (J. Beckman) had two young on Apr. 16. They had apparently fledged by Apr. 27. There are still very few definite breeding observations of this recent colonizer. Two Costa's Hummingbirds showed up this spring in Oregon, both males at feeders. One was in Sutherlin, *Douglas*, Apr. 4 (KW) and another was in Ashland May 7 into June (J. Babcock). There are still no accepted Washington records of this spring vagrant. There were 2 reports of Broad-tailed Hummingbird in e. Oregon, where they are uncommon. A male was in Andrews May 27 (JG, NL) and a female was in Fields May 26–28 (m.ob.).

Continuing their winter abundance, Lewis' Woodpeckers were well reported from the central Willamette valley, with most noted mid-March to April. On the east side, the first Lewis' returned to *Deschutes*, OR, Mar. 28 (Dave Danley), about a month early for the area, and to e. Washington Apr. 18 in *Okanogan* (SJ). At least one pair of the **Acorn Woodpecker** flock that appeared near Lyle, *Klickitat*, in October 1989, nested (WC) for the first Washington breeding record.

**FLYCATCHERS TO WRENS**—The only report of Least Flycatcher, an uncommon spring vagrant, was at Fields May 26–30 (HN, m.ob.). The first arrival dates for Hammond's Flycatcher on the west side were about a week earlier than average: Apr. 7 near Salem, OR (Roy Gerig) and Apr. 15 near Tacoma, WA (CCh). A large migratory movement was noted in the interior *Harney*, OR, May 26–30 (SH, JJ) with "hundreds recorded daily." Migratory concentrations of Hammond's have been reported in the interior in the last week of May other years, but not in such impressive numbers. A ♂ Gray Flycatcher 9 mi e.n.e. of Riverside, *Okanogan*, WA, May 16 (SJ) was in the gap between the *Okanogan* valley population in British Columbia and the Washington populations on the e. slope of the Cascades. The presence of three Pacific-slope and no Cordilleran Flycatchers with the large concentration of Hammond's in *Harney* May 27 (SH, JJ) was intriguing. Otherwise, Pacific-slope Flycatchers arrived on time, with no migratory concentrations reported. There was only one report of Cordilleran Flycatcher, at Bend, OR, May 3 (TC).

A Black Phoebe in Fields May 20 (Dale Blackburn) was an e. Oregon rarity. Only five Say's Phoebes were reported from the west side, somewhat below average for this regular wanderer from the east. An Ash-throated Flycatcher, a rare vagrant to w. Washington, was at Auburn May 27–30 (Bob Willison).

Reports of Purple Martins indicated arrival of small numbers at or near known colonies during mid-April or early May, the first report from Fort Lewis, WA, Apr. 12 (GR). Large migratory concentrations of Violet-green Swal-

lows were noted Mar. 4 along the Snake R. south of Asotin, WA (CVV), and Mar. 5 along the Strait of Juan de Fuca at Sequim, WA (BT). Very early N. Rough-winged Swallows were at Skagit Wildlife Area, WA, Mar. 2 (*vide* BK) and at Salem Mar. 19 (Bill Tice). A Bank Swallow at Hammond, *Clatsop*, OR, May 20 (MP) was the only report west of the Cascades, where this swallow is a rare migrant. A Cliff Swallow in the Rogue valley Mar. 9 (Jim Livaudais) was perhaps the earliest ever spring arrival for the Region.

With habitat for Gray Jays becoming increasingly scarce and fragmented in the Oregon Coast Range and along the outer coast, all sightings in those areas are of interest. A pair was seen carrying nest material in Little Lobster Valley, west of Corvallis, Mar. 17 (D. & E. McDonald) and they were noted at Eden Valley, *Coos*, Apr. 29 (Geoff Keller). Two Bushtit nests, one to the west and one to the east of Cle Elum (BSu, Hal Opperman), were the 2nd and 3rd known nests for *Kittitas*. The source of the range expansion was probably over the Cascade Crest from w. Washington. Red-breasted Nuthatches were superabundant this spring in the s. Oregon Cascades, appearing to be among the half-dozen most common forest birds there (DFi). Rock Wrens are casual in the westside lowlands. There were 3 reports this spring, Apr. 18 in Seattle (James West), May 13–14 in coastal *Lane*, OR (Tom & Billy Jo Smith), and May 17 in Eugene (T & AM).

**THRUSHES TO WARBLERS**—Thrush migration went virtually unremarked, with no mention of night migration of Swainson's heard this spring. The first Swainson's was at Sauvie Apr. 21 (JJ) and a few migrants were still present in Washtucna, *Adams*, WA, May 28 (BT). Migrant Veeries, or possibly vagrants, were at Malheur May 24 (James Davis) and at Fields May 31 (K & JK). The first Veery in Washington was May 14 in *Okanogan* (SJ). The pair of N. Mockingbirds wintering near Medford was seen Mar. 25 (HS) and the usual handful of spring records in e. Oregon consisted of two in *Harney*, one May 15 (K. Larsen) and another May 27 (JG, NL, GL). A Sage Thrasher Mar. 4 at Fort Rock S.P. was 3 weeks earlier than average for central Oregon. Others at Enterprise, *Wallowa* May 12 (PSu) and in downtown Eugene Mar. 23 (David Jones, PSh) were in parts of Oregon where they are casual.

The last Bohemian Waxwings of the relatively small winter numbers were singles in Richland, WA, Mar. 12 (BW) and at Frenchglen, *Harney*, OR, Mar. 18 (AF, Marty Campbell). The last N. Shrikes were Apr. 2 on the west side in *Polk*, OR (Barb Rupers), and Apr. 7 on the east side in *Grant*, WA (MD), about average for final departure. A pair of apparently territorial Hutton's Vireos at Wenas Cr., *Yakima*, May 26 (EH) represented a significant range expansion into the east slope of the Washington Cascades for this sedentary species.

*Harney* in e. Oregon held an excellent number of eastern warblers, including three Tennessee Warblers: a female in Catlow Valley May 27 (JJ, SH), and a male and a female at Fields May 30 (SH, JJ). There was one other Oregon record, at Paulina Marsh, *Lake*, May 13 (B & TS), and one documented Washington sighting, at Washtucna, *Adams*, May 28 (†BT, †BL). Washington has far fewer records than Oregon. A first-year ♂ Chestnut-sided Warbler was at Malheur May 30 (SH, JJ, m.ob.), a Magnolia Warbler was at Fields May 25 (PMu, LW), and a ♂ **Bay-breasted Warbler** was at Page Springs, Malheur, May 27 (R & JK, m.ob.). There were three *Harney* records of Black-and-white Warbler: one at Malheur May 13–14 (John Chappo), a first-year male at Malheur May 26–29 (HN, m.ob.), and a female at Alvord Ranch May 27 (JJ, SH), and none elsewhere. The only Am. Redstart was in the Alvord Basin,

*Harney*, May 27 (JG, NL, GL), and two of the 3 Ovenbird records were from Malheur May 27–30 (MP, LW, PMu, m.ob.). The other Ovenbird was a male in Richland, WA, May 31 (†BW).

Except for Orange-crowned and Yellow-rumped warblers, few concentrations of the regular migrants were found (JA, DFi, BT), and most comments indicated that the local breeders were on time. As is usual for Oregon, a few Palm Warblers were encountered: one at Yaquina Bay Mar. 2–5 (Roy Lowe), and at the S.J.C.R. Apr. 14 & 28 (MP). A N. Waterthrush at Paulina Marsh, *Lake*, May 13 (BS) was early for a vagrant and could have been a migrant returning to the small local breeding population. Waterthrushes were back at that breeding area at Gilchrist, *Deschutes*, OR, May 13 (B & TS). There were two very early Yellow-breasted Chats in Oregon: one near Prineville, *Crook* Mar. 24 (R & JK) and another Apr. 5 south of Gold Beach, *Curry* (SR). Their normal arrival time in much of the Region is early May.

**BUNTINGS TO FINCHES**—There were four Rose-breasted Grosbeaks in *Harney* May 25–31 (m.ob.), all males, and one Indigo Bunting in *Harney* May 31 (K & JK). Both are regular spring vagrants in e. Oregon. Arrival of Chipping Sparrows was a few days earlier than usual, with one near Salem, OR, Mar. 15–16 (Jack Evans), one in Corvallis, OR, Mar. 30 (RH), one in Sutherlin, *Douglas*, OR, Mar. 31 (KW), one in Bend, OR, Apr. 1 (TC), and one near Synarep, *Okanogan*, WA, Apr. 19 (SJ). The rarest sparrow of the season was the Brewer's Sparrow with *Zonotrichia* in n.e. Portland Apr. 25 (JJ, David Bailey). Other eastside sparrows that stray more regularly to the west side included a Lark Sparrow at Skykomish, WA, May 28 (D. Batchelder, S. Givan) and a Sage Sparrow at Seattle Mar. 31 (K. Aanerud). A singing Grasshopper Sparrow near Eagle Point, *Jackson*, OR, May 6 (HS) made the 4th consecutive year at that site, the only breeding locale on the west side. Five Swamp Sparrows were noted on the west side, four probably being remnants of the good wintering numbers. A 2nd-year Swamp Sparrow netted at the S.J.C.R. May 5 (MP) was most likely a migrant and furnished the latest spring sighting for w. Oregon. After a good winter for White-throated Sparrows, a few lingered late: one at Sauvie Apr. 29 (JJ), one at Silver L., *Lake*, OR, May 13 (B & TS), and one to mid-May at Bend (TC). White-crowned Sparrow migration was below average in the Spokane area (JA, TR), and unmentioned elsewhere.

The 2 isolated colonies of Tricolored Blackbirds in n. Oregon both were occupied this spring, with 15 birds at Portland (JJ) and 20 at Hermiston, *Umatilla* (PSu). A large colony was reported this spring near the Medford airport, *Jackson* (L. & C. Morris); there are several colonies in the Rogue valley. A Great-tailed Grackle was at Malheur May 16–17 (Dan Browder, Larry Hammond). Most Oregon records are spring records.

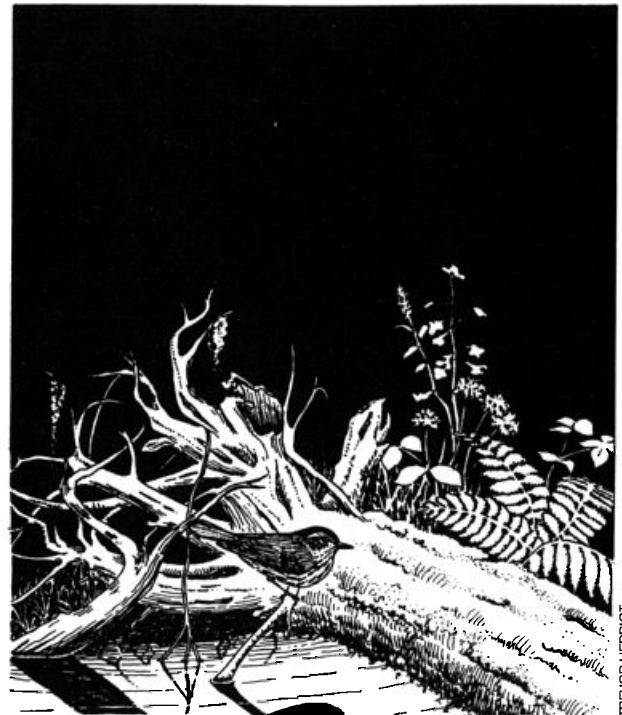
A Pine Grosbeak amid the wheat fields at Davenport, *Lincoln*, WA, May 8 (JA) was surprising. Red Crossbills appeared in notable numbers in several areas. Type III birds were widespread and common throughout the Puget Trough from Bellingham south to Corvallis (TW, CCh, EH, BT, JJ, RH) during mid-April and May. Crossbills of unknown type were also reported along Washington's outer coast (G & WH, MO), were very numerous at lower elevations in central Oregon (TC), and were numerous in pines in the Spokane area (JR). The only reports of White-winged Crossbills were in Washington: one to three at Ocean Shores Apr. 7–May 12 (Bob Morse, MD) and 30 near Arlington, *Snohomish*, May 27 (†TSc). The remnants of the wintering Com. Redpolls trickled north throughout

March (JA, SJ), except for one very late bird in Albion, *Whitman*, WA, May 4–6 (J & DP). The few reports of Evening Grosbeaks from the lowlands indicated there were normal numbers (TW, TR, TB).

**EXOTICA**—The Crested Caracara that appeared in the fall of 1989 in *Curry*, OR, remained about 4 mi up the Rogue R. from Gold Beach until at least Mar. 17 (Angie Cromack, Dorothy Gray). A Eur. Goldfinch visited a feeder at Toketee R.S., in the Douglas Oregon Cascades, May 10–12 (DFi, Martha Sawyer). The North Bend, *Coos*, OR, pair of Eur. Tree Sparrows, present since summer 1989, continued to visit BG's feeder.

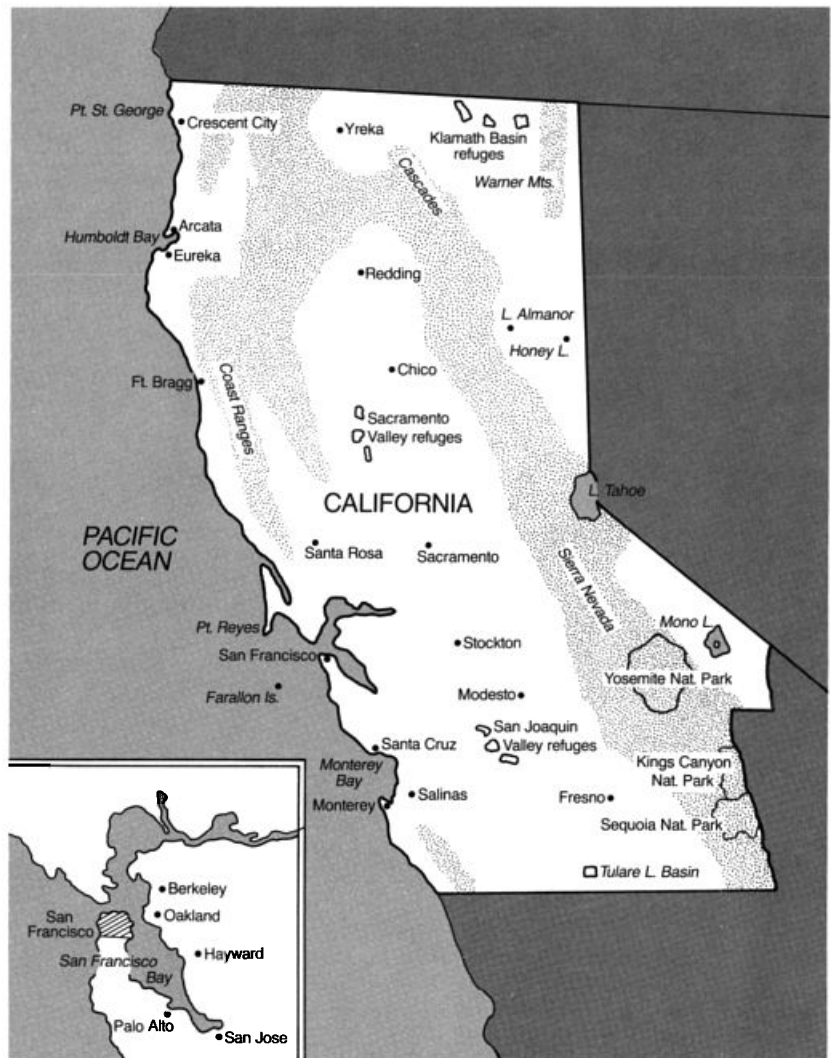
**CORRIGENDUM**—The winter column indicated that the Hooded Warbler in Pullman furnished the 2nd Washington record. It was the 3rd overall record, and the 2nd winter record.

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# MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION

David G. Yee, Bruce E. Deuel,  
and Stephen F. Bailey



The fourth year of drought affected California's waterfowl nesting effort, as several major wetlands in the northeast went dry. The May rains helped some by creating additional brood water, but duck production was reduced from last year. The drought also appeared to have adverse effects on nesting landbirds such as Barn Owl and Tricolored Blackbird. We can only speculate to what degree bird populations will be affected by what is turning out to be one of the worst droughts in this century for the state.

We are grateful to Phyllis Bailey for compiling the land-bird reports for Yee's analysis.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — C.B.R.C. = California Bird Records Committee; C.C.R.S. = Coyote Creek Riparian banding Station, *Santa Clara*; C.V. = Central Valley; F.I. = Southeast Farallon Island; S.F. = San Francisco; ph. = photo *on file* with Regional Editors. All records from F.I. should be credited to Pt. Reyes Bird Observatory (P.R.B.O.). Place names in *italics* are counties.

**LOONS TO PELICANS** — Among Com. Loon counts e. of the Sierra, 27 on Crowley L. Apr. 7 (T. & J. Heindel) and 28 on Topaz L. Apr. 20 (PJM, ES) were record highs for *Mono*. The Season's lone Yellow-billed Loon was at Trinidad, *Humboldt*, Mar. 14–Apr. 15 (+RAE, +LPL). An Eared Grebe at Alviso, *Santa Clara*, late February to Apr. 1 was "90% albinistic" (GHt, MJM).

As in Winter, only two Laysan Albatrosses were found: 20 mi w.s.w. of Ano Nuevo Pt., *San Mateo*, Mar. 31 (RSTh, m.ob.) and 3 mi n.w. of Pt. Pinos Apr. 23 (L. Shumacher, *fide* RT & AB). A boat reached *Pterodroma* waters May 19. Three Murphy's Petrels 35 to 73 mi s.w. of Pt. Reyes and one Cook's Petrel 75 mi s.w. of Pt. Reyes were the reward (+SFB). A Flesh-footed Shearwater offshore Monterey Apr. 7 (DLm, *fide* AB) was during this species' rare season here. A Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel *with a brood patch, mist-netted on F.I.* May 27–28 (GeM, P.R.B.O.) "strengthens suspicions that they may breed here in very low numbers" (see AB 40:1249 and 43:1362–1363). Single Black Storm-Petrels (or the same bird?) over Soquel Canyon, Monterey Bay, May 6 & 17 (RT, *fide* AB) provided the earliest credible reports for the Region.

An imm. **Masked Booby** 2 mi w. of Pt. Lobos Apr. 5 (+DLm, ph.) furnished the first record for the Region. American White Pelicans continued to be unusually widespread and numerous in most coastal and S.F. Bay counties, with the rarest being five at L. Talawa, *Del Norte*, Apr. 18 (RMcN). An ad. Brown Pelican was inland in *Santa Clara* at Vasona Res. about May 24 (JDuB), roughly 15 mi and 3 days removed from last year's immature.

**BITTERNS TO WATERFOWL** — American Bitterns were reported in "good numbers" from the n. coast (J. Hewston, ADB), in contrast to other parts of the Region.

Two pairs of Snowy Egrets displaying and entering nest sites on Prince I. at the Smith R. mouth, *Del Norte*, throughout May (ADB) represented the first nesting record for that county, and the first on our coast n. of Humboldt Bay. Charleston Slough's resident Snowy Egret X Little Blue Heron was present at least through Apr. 26 (PJM). A Cattle Egret and White-faced Ibis nesting colony at Colusa N.W.R. was abandoned by May 14 because the nesting pond went dry, causing collapse of the nest platforms. The ibises may have moved to Sutter N.W.R., where 991 birds were counted May 14 (S. Berendzen). Ibises were reported from 16 counties this spring, with single birds near Vallejo, *Solano*, May 5 (MBG *et al.*) and in Sierra Valley, *Plumas*, May 27 (DGY, L. Jensen), and 40 in a possible nesting location at Ahjumawi Lava Springs S.P., *Shasta*, May 27 (RbL *et al.*) being among the more unusual.

Included in seven coastal Greater White-fronted Goose reports were 10 exceptionally late adults near Ft. Dick, *Del Norte*, May 21 (ADB). A single bird at Topaz L. Apr. 23 was *Mono's* latest ever for spring (PJM, ES). The wintering blue morph Snow Goose at Shorebirds Pond, *Santa Cruz*, was last seen in early April (*fide* DLSu). Another was seen at the Ukiah sewage pond, *Mendocino*, Mar. 24 (OJK, RJK). Six adult Canada Geese with 12 chicks in the Carson-Iceberg Wilderness, *Tuolumne*, June 2 (D. Dow) represented the southernmost nesting record for the Sierra Nevada w. slope.

A Eur. Green-winged Teal in the Arcata Bottoms Mar. 3–Apr. 15 (L. Long, BED) furnished the only report. Mallard X N. Pintail hybrids were seen on Grizzly I. Road., *Solano*, Apr. 18 (J. Ferrera) and at Bridgeport Res., *Mono*, Apr. 23 (†PJM). The duck of the season was an immature ♂ **Garganey** at the Bolinas Sewage Ponds, *Marin*, Mar.



Male Garganey, apparently in first-spring plumage, at Bolinas, California, April 29, 1990. Photograph/Stephen F. Bailey.

27–Apr. 30 (ph. †KH, ph. †SFB, †HG, ph. EDG, m.ob.). This would be the Region's 8th if all the records currently being reviewed by the C.B.R.C. are accepted. Another Blue-winged X Cinnamon Teal hybrid was found at the Stockton Sewage Ponds Apr. 6 (DGY). Much less common was an apparent Blue-winged Teal X N. Shoveler in Palo Alto Apr. 26–May 1 (†PJM). Eurasian Wigeon were last reported from the C.V. Apr. 26 (GEw), from the coast Apr. 27 (RS), and from Bridgeport Res. Apr. 28 (JMHu *et al.*). The latter bird established the first record for the e. side of the Sierras.

Wintering Tufted Ducks remained until Apr. 4 at Warm Springs, *Alameda* (LRF) and Apr. 26 in S.F. (DSg, m.ob.). Additional birds were at Richardson's Bay, *Marin*, Mar. 6 (D. Whitworth) and on Mare I., *Solano*, Mar. 15 (DASH, RbL), the latter being a new locale for this bird. The King Eider that was present at Pt. Reyes since the previous August was last seen Apr. 21 (m.ob.). An Oldsquaw on Mare Island Mar. 15–22 (RbL, DASH, CLO) was the only one reported away from the immediate coast. Eight inland Red-breasted Mergansers were observed Mar. 10–May 22.

**RAPTORS** — A partially albino Turkey Vulture at Sonoma May 1 (A. Cermak) must have been a rare sight. Black-shouldered Kites were considered very few in *Mon-*

*terey* (DR) and *Del Norte* (ADB). Immature Bald Eagles are now being found widely throughout our Region and locally all year, as the reintroduction efforts progress. The increase in reports is reminiscent of Peregrine Falcon, except that adult Bald Eagles will take longer to appear. New nesting range for Red-shouldered Hawks included s.e. *Alameda* (ALE) and e. *Santa Clara* (D. Elliott). A Swainson's Hawk over S.F. Mar. 19 (ASH) was a rare coastal migrant. A survey of *San Joaquin* located about 100 active Swainson's Hawk nests (W. Holt, J. Estep). As the population for the entire state of this Threatened species is estimated at only 550 pairs (J. Estep), it is hoped that the identification of the *San Joaquin* nests will lead to the protection of many as the county is developed.

**GROUSE TO SHOREBIRDS** — Nine drumming ♂ Ruffed Grouse were found in the Region's northwest, way above our recent average. A Sora on F.I. Mar. 28 was only the island's 2nd for spring. When an adult Sora was flushed off a nest with eggs at Hanson Slough May 9 it provided a 2nd *Santa Cruz* breeding record, the first since 1976 (DLSu). A Com. Moorhen found at Arcata Marsh last period lost a wing during the winter, but survived until at least May 19 (*fide* GSL).

All wintering *fulva* Lesser Golden-Plovers were gone by Apr. 22. The only migrants reported were two in breeding plumage at Lake Talawa, *Del Norte*, May 16 (ADB). A breeding-plumaged *dominica*, much rarer in spring, was seen Apr. 28 in Lower Garrissere Canyon, for the first inland Salinas Valley record of any golden-plover and the first in spring to be subspecifically identified in *Monterey* (†DR). Another *dominica* was reported from the Arcata Bottoms May 12 (FJB).

A pair of Black Oystercatchers was found on the Smith R., a mile and a half from the ocean, Mar. 11 (ADB, J. Gartland). An impressive total of 14 Solitary Sandpipers was reported from the coast Apr. 21–May 13. Inland, one was at L. Shastina, *Siskiyou*, Apr. 20 (RE) and one or two were found Apr. 21–28 at Dechambeau Ponds, *Mono* (J. & D. Parker, JMHu *et al.*). The only inland Ruddy Turnstones noted were two at Tule Lake N.W.R. May 9 (ADB, RE, RAE). Thirteen Sanderlings were reported from Lower Klamath N.W.R. May 22, the largest number ever seen in the Klamath Basin (RE), while 23 alternate-plumaged birds at the Lodi Sewage Ponds May 23 were late and a large number for *San Joaquin* (DGY). Single Baird's Sandpipers at Pt. Reyes Apr. 13 (LES) and Hayward Shoreline, *Alameda*, May 5 (RJR) were fewer than most recent springs. Similarly, only two Pectoral Sandpipers were reported: from the Modesto Sewage Ponds May 6 (ERC, N. Selover) and the Hayward Shoreline May 20 (RJR). The Ruff that had wintered along the Hayward Shoreline was last seen Apr. 17 (m.ob.).

**JAEGERS TO ALCIDS** — Amazing was the sight of three ad. Long-tailed Jaegers flying s.w. from S.F. Bay at Palo Alto May 30 (†PJM), for a first for *Santa Clara*. Very unseasonal was a S. Polar Skua 30 mi offshore Humboldt Bay Apr. 8 (GSL, †RAE, SWH).

Our 10 Franklin's Gulls were all adults. Pairs at *Mono* L. Apr. 21 (PJM) and at Crowley L. Apr. 22 (T. & J. Heindel) were firsts for spring in *Mono*. Five at Lower Klamath N.W.R., *Siskiyou*, May 22 (RE) echoed last year's nesting there. The other Franklin's was near Coyote Hills Regional Park, *Alameda*, Apr. 14 (RS), where a Little Gull was found Mar. 3 (†C. Jones). A Com. Black-headed Gull stopped briefly at Pigeon Pt., *San Mateo*, Apr. 7 (BS, †SMo). About 32,000 California Gull nests were counted at *Mono* L. in May (J. Dierks, *fide* I. Mandelbaum), up from the 25,000 average since 1983 (ES). Over 50 Black-legged



Kittiwakes at the Klamath R mouth, *Del Norte*, Mar. 22 (JMa) made a large number ashore in California.

Elegant Terns again returned early, with four at Moss Landing Apr. 21 (CKF), *Santa Clara's* first in spring May 4 at Charleston Slough (PJM), and one at Crescent City May 29, *Del Norte's* earliest by over a month (ADB). Three Black Skimmers at the Carmel R. mouth, *Monterey*, May 17 (P. Eastman) presumably represented the annual migrants that must be nesting somewhere around S.F. Bay.

One of the **Thick-billed Murres** lingered near Monterey to April 9 (m.ob., AB, RS). Five sightings of Xantus' Murrelets near F.I. and offshore Monterey Mar. 7–May 19 (m.ob.) continued to suggest another undetected seabird species nesting locally (see AB 40:1251 and AB 41:139). Residual to February's wreck of Horned Puffins, two more dead or dying individuals were found Mar. 4–19 in each of 3 counties: *Monterey* (fide AB), *Santa Cruz* (DEG), and *Mendocino* (DT). Live birds were still seen at sea: one off *Monterey* Mar. 4 (PtW), two off Humboldt Bay Mar. 15 (GSL, ph. C.L. Vardaman), eight sightings at F.I. peaking at four on Mar. 29, and 15 birds up to 74 mi s.w. of Pt. Reyes May 19 (SFB). The latter appeared to be healthy, and are probably normal at that distance offshore in many years (see AB 43:533).

**OWLS TO WOODPECKERS** — A sharp decline from recent years in nesting Barn Owls within a closely monitored area in s. *Monterey* (G. Work) has DR wondering if the drought is the culprit. The Burrowing Owl seeking refuge under eaves in S.F. Feb. 1–Mar. 17 (L. Keidel, MLR) was one of few found within the city. Short-eared Owls nested successfully in the Arcata Bottoms (FJB). This appears to establish the first nesting record of this species along our coast n. of the S.F. Bay area! Fifteen Com. Nighthawks at Ahjumawi Lava Springs S.P. May 26 (RbL *et al.*) made an impressive early congregation of this late-arriving species.

"Most extraordinary migratory experience I've witnessed" was GSL's description of the spectacular flight of about 2000 Black Swifts at Trinidad State Beach, *Humboldt*, May 27 during a 4-hour evening watch (+GSL, LPL *et al.*). The Region's previous high count was 150! An Anna's Hummingbird at Tom's Place Apr. 12–May 9 (CDH) and a Rufous Hummingbird at Mono L. Apr. 22 (PJM) furnished first and 2nd spring records, respectively, for the Mono Basin.

The decimation of Acorn Woodpecker colonies by the Eur. Starling invasion has been noted in the S.F. Bay area for many years. Thus, pairs attempting to nest in starling-infested areas of Alameda Apr. 18 (HG *et al.* — first nesting attempts here since 1979) and Livermore Apr. 24–May 4 (HLC) were probably observed with excitement and cheering. Rare sapsuckers included a Yellow-bellied in *Monterey*, two Red-naped in *Contra Costa* with another in *Mono*, and a Yellow-bellied/Red-naped in *San Joaquin*. Pileated Woodpecker continued to show signs of increasing its range along the central coast with at least two new nest sites in *Santa Cruz* (DLSu, L. Clark) and a bird in *Moraga, Contra Costa*, Apr. 9–28 (H. Nathan *et al.*).

**FLYCATCHERS TO WRENS** — The passage of 13 Olive-sided Flycatchers through *San Joaquin* May 6–June 8 was 3 times the spring average (DGY). A W. Wood-Pewee at Pine Cyn., Mt. Diablo, *Contra Costa*, Apr. 4 (KGH) was exceptionally early. *Empidonax* flycatchers are justifiably among the big groans in birding identification. Not helping matters is their often enigmatic distribution over our Region. For instance, the Hammond's Flycatcher in Pacific Grove Apr. 15 (AB) furnished one of few *Monterey* records during spring. It maintains this vagrant status along the

central coast up to S.F.; however, slightly inland within the Inner Coast Ranges and from *Marin* northward, they are rare but regular spring migrants.

The wintering Least Flycatcher near Inverness persisted until Mar. 28 (RS). Seemingly territorial Gray Flycatchers at San Benito Mt., *San Benito* (five), May 19 (DSg, DWm) again suggested breeding at this locale. An E. Phoebe at Mono L. May 31 (fide JM) was the Region's first in spring in 7 years. San Francisco's **Dusky-capped Flycatcher** tarried at Pine L. Park until May 20 (DSg, DL), while the wintering Ash-throated Flycatcher in Sacramento remained until Mar. 3 (MJL). A Cassin's Kingbird at Wilder Ranch S.P. Mar. 7 (DEG *et al.*) established a *Santa Cruz* first. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher made a cameo appearance at Crespi Pond, *Monterey*, May 8 (+RER, ph. +DR).

The Steller's Jay near Madison, *Yolo*, Apr. 28 (DLSu) was probably a residual reminder of the winter invasion into the lowlands. Common Ravens continued to increase in numbers and range along the central coast. Moffett Field played host to *Santa Clara's* first nesting record Apr 4 and later (MRo, P. Zell)! They no doubt have nested in the Diablo Range of the county in substantial numbers but have simply gone undetected (WGB). Along the *Santa Cruz/Monterey* line where there were no records prior to 1989, one in the Pajaro R. Valley May 18 was the area's 6th (DLSu). And for only the 2nd time in 21 years, they were seen in Alamo, *Contra Costa*, Apr. 22 (JMR — two birds)

A bird census along 3 mi of the Stanislaus R., including Caswell S.P., *San Joaquin*, May 6, produced an amazing 290 House Wrens (DGY, W. Holt) — all appeared territorial. A Winter Wren at C.C.R.S. May 10 (fide WGB) was lingering late.

**THRASHERS TO WOOD WARBLERS** — Following a belated report of a Le Conte's Thrasher in the Kettleman Hills, Fresno, last summer (RH), two singing males were found in the same area Mar. 24 (+DGY). Except for a bird seen just to the immediate south Apr. 29, 1980, there have been no Regional sightings in almost 20 years. Undoubtedly, their secretive nature keeps them elusive, but their preferred habitat of *Atriplex*-lined washes has all but vanished from our Region, with the Kettleman Hills (and other areas?) probably maintaining a remnant population. The intriguing sighting of a bird well described as a Gray Wagtail at Tuolumne Meadows, Yosemite N.P., May 20 (+D. Bouldin) will draw close scrutiny from the C.B.R.C. With only one previous Phainopepla on record, *Marin's* three birds were exceptional: e. of Olema Feb. 22–Mar. 31 (CSp, M. Ward), Novato Apr. 6–29 (RS), and Pt. Reyes May 22 (RS). Additional birds in Sacramento Mar. 25 (TDM, AM) and Stockton May 2 (W. Holt) were rare on the C V. floor during spring.

It was a very good season for Tennessee Warbler. Excluding the bird that wintered in Golden Gate Park, S.F., until Apr. 1 (MLR), there were four along the coast Apr. 8–May 28 and two at F.I. May 9 & 13. A male N. Parula at Gazos Cr. Road, *San Mateo*, Apr. 21 (fide JM), and one singing at Bear Valley Rd., Pt. Reyes, Apr. 22 (RS, DDeS) were our earliest ever for spring and better fit a pattern of breeding birds (known breeder in *Marin*) than typical vagrants. For the 3rd straight spring a Hermit X Townsend's Warbler was found: a male at Mt. Diablo S P Apr. 29 (+JM *et al.*) was at the same locale as one 2 years ago. Wintering Palm Warblers lingered late in Pacific Grove Apr. 12 (AB) and Arcata Marsh Apr. 13 (B. Widdowson), but six birds along the immediate coast Apr. 18–May 6 were probably migrants. A rare-in-spring Blackpoll Warbler was at F.I. May 24.

A Black-and-white Warbler was at F.I. May 9–10 while

one at the Big Sur R. mouth, *Monterey*, Mar. 3 (PEG) surely had wintered locally. Additional last dates of known wintering warblers included the Am. Redstart at Golden Gate Park, S.F., Apr. 7 (m.ob.) and the N. Waterthrush at Arcata Marsh Apr. 15 (FJB). Single Ovenbirds were at F.I. May 9 (our earliest ever) and June 3. A nesting pair of MacGillivray's Warblers n. of Cascade Cr. May 17 was only *Santa Cruz's* 3rd, but 2nd in 2 years (DLSu). In the delta region of *Sacramento*, 15+ territorial Com. Yellowthroats May 20 (TDM, AM) indicated healthy breeding in a county where they were formerly feared extirpated as a breeder.

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — Corralitos Cr., *Santa Cruz*, and Pine L. Park, S.F., kept their wintering Summer Tanagers content until Mar. 19 (m.ob.) and Apr. 8 (DSg *et al.*), respectively, while another in the "jungles" of Golden Gate Park Mar. 27–Apr. 7 (JMR, m.ob.) had probably wintered locally as well. Our only Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were at F.I. May 17 and Tom's Place, *Mono*, May 30 (CDH). An excellent movement of Black-headed Grosbeaks through *San Joaquin* was highlighted by an impressive 180 along a 3 mi stretch of the Stanislaus R. May 6 (DGY, W. Holt). Two Blue Grosbeaks at San Luis N.W.R., *Merced*, Apr. 1 (JMR) were the earliest in the Region by a day, typical arrival dates being the 3rd week in April. Single ♂ Indigo Buntings were at Rodeo Lagoon, *Marin*, May 26–June 5 (L. Tierney, m.ob.), Mt. Diablo, *Contra Costa*, May 31 and later (MiW *et al.*), and Bennett Valley, *Sonoma*, May 28 and later (*vide* RAR).

Wintering Clay-colored Sparrows were last observed Mar. 11 in Pescadero (RSTh) and Apr. 23 in Blue L., *Humboldt* (M. Morris), with the singing male at Elk Cr., *Del Norte*, May 22 (ADB) a very rare spring vagrant for the mainland. In the past, Black-chinned Sparrow has been thought to invade the Region during drier years. But during the past 2 years of our 4-year drought, there has been little sign of irruptive tendencies from this erratic species. The few birds reported this season were from locales in *Contra Costa*, *Santa Clara*, *San Benito*, and *Monterey* where it is seen annually. With the Lark Bunting at Hayward Regional Shoreline, *Alameda*, Apr. 14 (RJR), this hotspot now has all 3 records of this species (first in spring) for the heavily birded East S.F. Bay area. Interesting Grasshopper Sparrow news included *Napa's* first nesting record w. of *Napa* May 5 (†MBG) and the singing bird returning to Pt. Saint George, *Del Norte*, May 12 (ADB). The singing Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Arcata Marsh May 5–12 (FJB *et al.*) most likely had wintered locally.

Was the ad. Golden-crowned Sparrow with a white crown at Reichmuth Park, *Sacramento*, Apr. 27 (†TDM *et al.*) showing White-crowned introgression, or was it just an aberrant Golden-crowned? Wintering Harris' Sparrows were last noted at the Carmel R. mouth Apr. 15 (H. Osborne, P. Zucker), Pengrove, *Sonoma*, May 2 (H. Boyesen), and Blue L., *Humboldt*, May 7 (M. Morris). Additional birds were in Concord Mar. 17–Apr. 20 (B. & B. Gallagher *et al.*) and Sunny Brae, *Humboldt*, Apr. 10–24 (SWH). A Lapland Longspur at L. Talawa, *Del Norte*, May 16 (ADB) appears to be the Region's latest by 3 days, although there are several questionable birds from F.I. in June.

The only encouraging words on Tricolored Blackbirds were of up to five males at Ft. Dick May 3–13 (RAE, ADB, LPL) for one of few *Del Norte* records; otherwise, only *Sacramento* reported nesting attempts (from 2 sites only), with *Santa Cruz* noting total nesting failures! Has the drought compounded this sensitive species' already erratic nesting behavior? The ♂ Hooded Oriole near Smith R. May 12 (ADB, GSL, LPL) was considered "probably *Del*

*Norte's* most overdue first record." A Purple Finch and two Pine Siskins at Lodi L. May 25 & 29, respectively, were very late on the C.V. floor (DGY). With Lawrence's Goldfinch flocks of up to 75 birds found in the central Inner Coast Ranges and numerous smaller groups in *Santa Clara*, WGB stated they were "...still plentiful in their Diablo Range strongholds...the *Santa Cruz Mts.* invasion appears to be not quite over."

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LYLA R. MESSICK

# SOUTHERN PACIFIC COAST REGION

Guy McCaskie



This spring was dry, with few of the storms generating in the Gulf of Alaska reaching southern California, leaving the entire Region in a serious drought condition. A number of rarities were found immediately before the Memorial Day Weekend; but a cold front passing through during the Memorial Day weekend seemingly pushed the regular migrants and hoped-for vagrants from the Region, leaving many birders working the desert oases in the northeastern portion of the Region disappointed.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — C.L.N.W.C. = China Lake Naval Weapons Center in extreme n.e. Kern; F.C.R. = Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley, Inyo; L.A.C.N.H.M. = Los Angeles County Natural History Museum; N.E.S.S. = north end of the Salton Sea, Riverside; S.C.R.E. = Santa Clara River Estuary near Ventura, Ventura; S.D.N.H.M. = San Diego Natural History Museum; S.E.S.S. = south end of the Salton Sea, Imperial. As virtually all rarities found in s. California are seen by numerous observers, only the observer initially identifying the bird is included. Documentation is on file with the California Bird Records Committee (c/o Don Roberson, 282 Grove Acre, Pacific Grove, CA 93950) for all rarities listed in this report, and records submitted without documentation are not published.

**LOONS TO BOOBIES** — A Pacific Loon, quite rare inland in this Region, was at N.E.S.S. May 20 (CMcG). Small numbers of Com. Loons were found inland during the latter half of April, when this species is obviously moving north through this Region, but one at C.L.N.W.C. May 31 (DVB) was late for such a locality.

A Black-footed Albatross about 20 mi off San Diego May 19 (GMcC) was relatively close to shore for this area. Three Laysan Albatrosses were seen during a scientific cruise off S. California in April with one each at 128 nautical mi s.s.w. of San Nicolas I. Apr. 19, 59 nautical mi s.w. of San Nicolas I. Apr. 22, and 12 nautical mi n.n.w. of San Nicolas I. Apr. 24 (all PPy). Eleven Murphy's Petrels, now considered regular over the deep waters far off California, were again encountered with single birds at 148 nautical mi w.s.w. of San Nicolas I. Apr. 21, 55 nautical mi s.w. of

San Nicolas I. Apr. 22, 149 nautical mi s.w. of San Nicolas I. Apr. 26, 132 nautical mi s.w. of San Miguel I. Apr. 27, and at 99 nautical mi s.w. of San Miguel I. Apr. 27, along with six more between 40 and 78 nautical mi w. of San Nicolas I. Apr. 25 (all PPy). The only Cook's Petrels seen within 200 miles of the coast were five between 84 and 115 nautical mi s.w. of San Miguel I. Apr. 27 (PPy). Two Short-tailed Shearwaters 31 nautical mi s.w. of Pt. Conception, Santa Barbara, Apr. 29 (PPy) were late for S. California waters. A freshly dead Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel was found on Torrance Beach, Los Angeles, May 16 (CW, \*L.A.C.N.H.M.), this record probably associated in some way to the February "wreck." A Least Storm-Petrel 35 nautical mi s.s.w. of San Nicolas I. Apr. 22 (PPy) was the earliest ever to be found in California waters.

Six Red-billed Tropicbirds were reported, all far offshore, with one 52 nautical mi s.w. of San Clemente I. Apr. 18, two at 116 nautical mi s.s.w. of San Nicolas I. Apr. 19, and the other three between 47 and 58 nautical mi s.w. of San Nicolas I. Apr. 22 (all PPy). A dying ad. ♂ **Brown Booby** found on the beach in Imperial Beach, San Diego, Apr. 2 (*fide* PU, \*S.D.N.H.M.) is only the 4th ever to be reported from the coast of s. California.

**HERONS TO FALCONS** — An imm. Little Blue Heron initially found on Upper Newport Bay, Orange, Jan. 28 and still present at the end of the period (DRW), and an adult near Lakeview, Riverside, June 4 (DRW), were the only two found away from coastal San Diego. There was an influx of Reddish Egrets to the coast with the first noted on San Diego Bay Mar. 23 (LS), then three at the mouth of the San Diego R. Apr. 26 (CGE), and finally seven together on s. San Diego Bay May 6 (REW); one at Marina del-Rey, Los Angeles, Apr. 27 (JR) and another at Pt. Mugu, Ventura, Apr. 17–19 (BA) were north of San Diego, where very few have been recorded. Two Cattle Egrets at Deep Springs, Inyo, May 18 (MJL), one at Owens L., Inyo, May 19 (T & JH), and another at F.C.R. May 18–25 (MJL) were unusual for this time of year. The Yellow-crowned Night-Heron that has been present along the

coast of *San Diego* on and off since 1981 was present in La Jolla Mar. 1–24 (DaK). A Wood Stork at Guajome L. near Oceanside Apr. 23–26 (FRT) was along the coast where now considered very rare indeed.

A Ross' Goose that spent the winter on Laguna Lake, *San Luis Obispo*, was still present May 16 (KAH), another that had been present on Santa Catalina I. since Dec. 14 was still there June 4 (MG), and a 3rd around s. San Diego Bay was last seen May 18 (GMcC), these all being late for this species in s. California. As is normal, Brant were found inland in the s.e. portion of the Region during March and April with 200 on L. Henshaw in the mountains of *San Diego* Mar. 11 (GMcC) and 150 at N.E.S.S. Apr. 14 (GMcC) being the largest flocks. A flock of 40 Brant seen flying north over Butterfield Ranch in e. *San Diego* Apr. 8 (BED) was obviously on the move; one bird near Lancaster, *Los Angeles*, May 12 (DVB) and another photographed near Lost Hills, *Kern*, May 13–24 (RAE) were at unusual localities. A "Cackling" Canada Goose, somewhat rare in s. California, in Bishop, *Inyo*, May 2–12 (T & JH) was late.

A ♂ Eur. Wigeon still present on Morro Bay Apr. 15 (KAH) was the latest staying of the wintering birds, and another on Little Lake, *Inyo*, Apr. 16–22 (RHN) was not only at an unusual locality, but also quite late. Two ♂ Harlequin Ducks at Pt. Sal, *Santa Barbara*, May 26 (DeK) were probably summering locally. An Oldsquaw still present on Morro Bay Apr. 30 (TME) and another at the Santa Ynez R. mouth, *Santa Barbara*, Apr. 21–25 (BJM) were both a little late; one on L. Perris, *Riverside*, Mar. 28–31 (CMcG) and another on a small reservoir near Westmorland, *Imperial*, Mar. 31–Apr. 14 (GMcC) were inland where considered casual. A ♀ Black Scoter, casual to accidental inland, was at N.E.S.S. Apr. 14 through the end of the period (KR) and an imm. male was at nearby Desert Shores, *Imperial*, Apr. 13 through May (KR). More than the expected numbers of Surf Scoters were found inland with 100 together on L. Henshaw Mar. 11 (GMcC), six more on nearby L. Cuyamaca Mar. 24 (GMcC), up to 20 at N.E.S.S. after Apr. 14 (GMcC, MAP), and up to four at nearby Desert Shores after Apr. 13 (KR). Up to eight White-winged Scoters at N.E.S.S. after Apr. 14 (GMcC, MAP) made an exceptional number for an inland locality, and another was at nearby Desert Shores Apr. 13–14 (KR). Fifty Red-breasted Mergansers at N.E.S.S. Apr. 14 (GMcC) made a high number for an inland locality.

Three Black-shouldered Kites around S.E.S.S. Apr. 28 (BED) and two more near Holtville, *Imperial*, May 21 (RMcK) were in an area where this species may be expanding its range. A first-year Mississippi Kite, a casual spring vagrant to s. California, was photographed at Oasis, *Mono*, May 25–26 (MF, PR). A pair of Bald Eagles, a species that has only recently reestablished itself as a breeding bird in s. California, was at a nest near Tinemaha Res. in the Owens Valley in March but deserted at the end of April (T & JH), and another pair was at a nest containing 2 eggs near L. Gregory in the San Bernardino Mts. in April (SJM), giving us 2 new breeding localities.

A Sharp-shinned Hawk in suitable nesting habitat in the San Jacinto Mts., *Riverside*, May 27 (RMcK) would be exceptionally late for a migrant, but there is only one record of nesting in s. California. An ad. N. Goshawk, a casual to accidental straggler to the coast of s. California, was near Santa Margarita, *San Luis Obispo*, Mar. 18 (JR). Swainson's Hawks were reported in greater numbers than usual, with the largest flocks being of 110 near Pomona, *Los Angeles*, Apr. 14 (BL), 40 over Pasadena Apr. 18 (MCL), 20 over Piru, *Ventura*, Mar. 11 (RJM) and 19 near Imperial,

*Imperial*, Apr. 7–8 (RH), and groups of up to five, along with a number of single individuals, reported from at least 15 widely scattered localities during April. An ad. Zone-tailed Hawk on Hot Springs Mt., *San Diego*, May 5 & 20 (JO'B, GMcC) was at a known nesting site. A Merlin at Valyermo, *Los Angeles*, Apr. 21 (KLG) was rather late.

**PLOVERS TO PUFFINS** — A Black-bellied Plover at F.C.R. Apr. 1 (MAP) and another there Apr. 18 (T & JH) were among very few ever found in this area of California. A Lesser Golden-Plover, rare inland, near Lancaster Apr. 15 (MTH) and another there May 13 (WD) were both felt to be of the N. American form *dominica*, and a 3rd at S.E.S.S. May 22 (GMcC) was clearly *dominica*; two *fulva* at Seal Beach May 5 (DRW) were the last of the 11 that spent the winter at this location, and a bird photographed on the coast at S.C.R.E. May 15 (RJM) appears to have been *dominica*. Twenty-four Snowy Plovers at Edwards, *Kern*, Mar. 24 (MTH) had not been present earlier so were clearly spring migrants.

Twenty-five Solitary Sandpipers, normally very rare in spring, were reported, with single birds in Irvine Apr. 10 (BED), near Santa Paula, *Ventura*, Apr. 1 (RJM), near Ventura Apr. 29 (DD), and on n. Vandenberg A.F.B. Mar. 31 (TME) and Apr. 26 (KH) being along the coast, and single birds at S.E.S.S. Apr. 28 (KR), 1000 Palms Oasis, *Riverside*, Apr. 29 (CMcG), and at least 18 at various localities in the high desert in the e. portion of the Region between Mar. 31 and May 17. A flock of over 3000 Whimbrels seen flying n. near Brawley, *Imperial*, May 3 (RMcK) illustrated just how numerous this species can be in this area of California at this time of year. A ♂ **Hudsonian Godwit** photographed at S.E.S.S. May 21 (RH) was only the 5th to be found in s. California. As usual, small numbers of Ruddy Turnstones passed through the Salton Sea between Apr. 21 and May 29, with 26 on Apr. 21 (RMcK) being the largest single day count this year; single birds at C.L.N.W.C. Apr. 28 (MTH) and at Edwards May 12 (JLD) were the only two found away from the Salton Sea. A Black Turnstone, very rare to casual inland, was at Salton City Apr. 28 (KR), two more were at N.E.S.S. Apr. 29 (RMcK), and a 4th was at S.E.S.S. May 22–28 (GMcC). A Surf-bird, casual inland, was at N.E.S.S. May 3 (RMcK).

Single Red Knots near Lancaster Apr. 29 (MTH) and at Edwards May 12–13 (JLD), along with up to two near the Kern N.W.R. May 13–24 (RAE), were the only ones found inland away from the Salton Sea. At least 16 Sanderlings, normally quite rare inland away from the Salton Sea, were found at various localities in *Kern* and *San Bernardino* between May 3 and June 3 (MOC, EAC), and more than 250 were found on the Salton Sea Apr. 21 (RMcK). As expected, a few Semipalmated Sandpipers were found, including one along the coast in Goleta May 7 (PEL); two at S.E.S.S. May 22 (GMcC), one at N.E.S.S. Apr. 29 (RMcK), another there June 2 (REW), one near Lakeview, *Riverside*, May 9 (CMcG), one at Harper Dry Lake, *San Bernardino*, May 3 (EAC), and a 7th in the Fremont Valley of e. *Kern* May 11–12 (MTH) were inland. A Baird's Sandpiper, decidedly rare in spring, was at Harper Dry Lake May 17 (EAC) and another was near Lost Hills, *Kern*, Apr. 20 (JCW). Wintering Stilt Sandpipers remained around S.E.S.S. through March and up to 20 there between Apr. 28 and May 12 (GMcC) were considered spring migrants. A **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** photographed at Edwards June 3 (MTH) was the first to be found in s. California in spring. A ♀ Ruff on Batiquitos Lagoon, *San Diego*, Mar. 31 (DRW) was probably a spring migrant, and another female was inland near Lancaster Apr. 21–May 12 (KLG).

An ad. Laughing Gull photographed 41 nautical mi s w

of San Nicolas I. Apr. 22 (PPy) was at an unusual locality, and an adult at S.E.S.S. May 12 (GMcC) was a little early for that locality. Reports of Franklin's Gulls included an



Adult Franklin's Gull at Edwards Air Force Base, California, May 6, 1990. Photograph/Matt T. Heindel.

immature off San Simeon Mar. 24 (JCW), an adult at S.E.S.S. Apr. 14 (GMcC), another adult there May 5–12 (MAP), three adults together at Edwards May 5–6 (MTH), four different adults at C.L.N.W.C. between Apr. 5 and May 7 (DVB), and five different adults around Owens L., Inyo, between Apr. 19 and May 19 (T & JH). An imm. Little Gull photographed at the Santa Ynez R. mouth May 7–June 14



Immature Little Gull (with Bonaparte's Gull) at Santa Ynez River mouth, California, May 10, 1990. Photograph/Alex Abela.

(BH) departed with the Bonaparte's Gulls with which it was associating. A Heermann's Gull, very rare inland, was at Desert Shores near N.E.S.S. Apr. 28 (KR). A 2nd-winter Mew Gull at S.E.S.S. Mar. 31 (GMCC) was far inland. A dark-mantled gull photographed at Edwards Apr. 13 (MTH) was thought by the observer to be Lesser Black-backed Gull rather than W. Gull; either species would be accidental at this location. The only Glaucous-winged Gull found far inland was a first-year bird at N.E.S.S. Apr. 14 (GMcC). A first-year Glaucous Gull, quite rare in s. California, was in Anaheim Mar. 14 (JPi). A Sabine's Gull on the beach near the mouth of Oso Flaco Creek, *San Luis Obispo*, Apr. 21 (PPE) and another 34 nautical mi s. of San Nicolas I. Apr. 23 (PPy) were both a little early.

Gull-billed Terns again appeared along the coast on San Diego Bay with the first noted Apr. 8 (RN) and as many as 15 present by the end of the period. Two Elegant Terns at S.E.S.S. May 12 (GMcC) furnished only the 2nd record for *Imperial*. An Arctic Tern 8 nautical mi n.n.w. of San Nicolas I. Apr. 24 (PPy) was unusually early for s. California waters; one adult at S.E.S.S. June 2 (REW) and an adult and a first-year bird together at N.E.S.S. June 9 (GMcC) were inland and at the time of year previous birds have been found in this area of California.

Four Tufted Puffins, very rare in s. California waters, were seen 2 mi off San Simeon May 3 (JMCD).

**PIGEONS TO PIPITS** — Eight Band-tailed Pigeons at oases in the high deserts of *San Bernardino* and e. *Kern* between May 4 and June 1 were probably related to last winter's movement. A White-winged Dove on Pt. Loma, *San Diego*, May 19 (REW), and another in Claremont, *Los*

*Angeles*, May 6 (DG) were w. of the species' normal range. An Inca Dove, a species that appears to be expanding its range, was at F.C.R. May 15–28 (DG). One of the two Ruddy Ground-Doves that spent the winter at F.C.R. was still present Apr. 7 (DDEs). Two calling Whip-poor-wills had already returned to L. Fulmor in the San Jacinto Mts. by Apr. 27 (BED).

Noteworthy reports of migrant Black Swifts included a flock of 19 over Arroyo Grande, *San Luis Obispo*, May 28 (BS), 40 more over Los Osos June 2 (JSR), single birds over Glendale May 30 (KLG), at S.C.R.E. May 29 (DD), and near L. Cachuma, *Santa Barbara*, May 31 (PEL), two over Chatsworth, *Los Angeles*, May 16 (DD), and three over Pt. Loma May 12 (EC). Up to six Chimney Swifts were around downtown Los Angeles after May 20 (KLG), and single birds in the Fremont Valley May 11 (MTH) and at F.C.R. May 26 (REW) were in the n.e. portion of the Region; in addition, an unidentified *Chaetura* near Carpinteria May 27 (MAH) may also have been a Chimney Swift. A Lewis' Woodpecker at S.E.S.S. May 5 (MAP) was at the most unusual locality of at least 30 reported from the e. portion of the Region in April and early May, all undoubtedly related to the influx of last fall and winter. An Acorn Woodpecker in Huntington Beach May 5 (DRW) was outside the species' normal range, as were about 15 scattered about the high desert of *Riverside*, *San Bernardino*, and e. *Kern* between Apr. 28 and May 26, and another at Deep Springs May 11 (MJL), these all probably associated with last fall's movement of these birds.

More than the expected number of Dusky Flycatchers were found along the s. coast of the Region with at least five on Pt. Loma between Apr. 28 and May 5 (REW, GMcC), and three more in *Orange* between May 10 & 17 (BED, RAE). In addition, Gray Flycatchers were far more numerous than expected along the s. coast with at least 13 on Pt. Loma between Apr. 21 and May 12 (REW, GMcC) and four more in *Orange* during the same period (RH, JB, BED). A singing Cordilleran Flycatcher at Schulman Grove in the White Mts., *Inyo*, May 12 (MJL) gave us additional evidence that this species may breed in this area. The E. Phoebe found wintering in San Simeon remained through Apr. 17 (RS) and another near Lompoc, *Santa Barbara*, Mar. 17 (BH) had probably wintered locally. A Vermilion Flycatcher near Imperial Beach Mar. 14 (EC) and another at the San Diego R. mouth Apr. 28 (REW) were away from any area of regular occurrence, and another near Weldon, *Kern*, May 7 through the end of the period (SaF) was to the n.w. of this species' known range.

✓ The Thick-billed Kingbird that spent its 8th winter near Tustin was last seen Apr. 6 (DRW). The only E. Kingbirds found this spring were one at Little Lake May 25 (RHN) and another at F.C.R. May 26 (REW). A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, a casual straggler to California, was found in Afton Canyon, *San Bernardino*, May 25 (DMW).

A Scrub Jay at Harper Dry Lake May 3 (EAC) was far from suitable habitat. A Chestnut-backed Chickadee along the Santa Clara R. near Santa Paula May 26–June 7 (MAH) was the southernmost ever found in California. A Winter Wren in Mojave, *Kern*, June 1 (TME) was surely lost. A Townsend's Solitaire on Santa Cruz I. Apr. 14 (MW) and another on Pt. Loma May 8–9 (B & IM) were at coastal localities, and more than the expected number were found at desert oases in the n.e. portion of the Region during April and May. A Varied Thrush in Mojave May 24 (MTH) was late. An American Pipit at F.C.R. May 27–28 (RAE) was also late for such a locality.

**VIREOS, WOOD WARBLERS** — A Bell's Vireo in Mojave May 4 (MTH) was one of very few ever found at



migrant traps in this area. A Yellow-throated Vireo, a casual straggler to California, was found near Anaheim Hills, Orange, May 17 (RAE). A Red-eyed Vireo photographed in Mojave June 2-3 (JF) was the only one found this spring.

A ♂ **Blue-winged Warbler** in Huntington Beach May 28 (DRW) was one of very few ever found in California. The only Tennessee Warblers found along the coast this spring were an unusually early one on Pt. Loma Mar. 30-31 (CGE), followed by single birds May 14-15 (REW) and June 3 (REW), and two more in Huntington Beach May 16-19 (BED) & 29 (LRH); in addition, single birds at Mojave May 25-26 (PEL), F.C.R. May 26 (REW), Big Pine May 24 (JLD), and the Fremont Valley June 2-3 (MTH) were the only ones reported from the desert oases. A Virginia's Warbler in the Chocolate Mts. e. of Niland, Imperial, May 16 (RMcK) and another at Deep Springs May 15 (DG) were the only two reported. Up to seven Lucy's Warblers seen in suitable nesting habitat near Borrego Springs, San Diego, during April (JO'B) appeared to be on territories; this area is west of the species' known range in s. California. A Lucy's Warbler at 1000 Palms, Riverside, Apr. 21 (CMcG), another in Desert Center, Riverside, Apr. 7 (MAP), two in Kelso, San Bernardino, Apr. 7-8 (CMcG), and another there May 28 (GH) were also away from known breeding localities.

Northern Parulas were more numerous than usual with 12 found along the coast between Apr. 4 and June 7, and six more in the n.e. portion of the Region between May 15 and June 3. The Chestnut-sided Warbler found wintering at Finney L. near S.E.S.S. was still present Apr. 21 (GMcC), in breeding plumage; a male in Mojave May 27 (JCW) and another in Huntington Beach June 4 (DP) were spring vagrants. A ♀ Black-throated Blue Warbler, exceptionally rare in spring, was found in the Chocolate Mts. June 18 (DRW). A Palm Warbler in Redondo Beach, Los Angeles, Apr. 19 (DM) was felt to be a spring vagrant rather than a bird having wintered locally, and another in Huntington Beach May 3 (BED) was definitely a spring vagrant, as was an individual at F.C.R. May 18-20 (MJL). A ♂ Bay-breasted Warbler, decidedly rare in recent years, was in California City May 25 (ShF). Black-and-white Warblers were scarcer than normal with only six found along the coast in April and May, and five more in the e. portion of the Region between May 5 & 27. An Am. Redstart near Morro Bay June 9 (GPS) was the only one found along the coast, and 20 in the n.e. portion of the Region between Apr. 28 and June 8, along with one more in the Mule Mts. of e. Imperial May 22 (RMcK), were far fewer than normal.

A Worm-eating Warbler in Mojave May 25 (JCW) was one of very few found inland in spring. Reports of Ovenbirds included one along the coast on Pt. Loma May 20 (EP), 10 in the n.e. portion of the Region between May 5 and June 8, and one more in Regina, Imperial, May 18 (RMcK). A singing ♂ **Louisiana Waterthrush** in Mojave May 21 (CM) was only the 4th ever to be found in California and the first during spring. A N. Waterthrush near Imperial Beach Apr. 25 (CGE) was a little early, being followed by another on the coast in Redondo Beach May 3 (DM) and eight more in the e. portion of the Region between Apr. 29 and May 26. A ♂ Mourning Warbler in Mojave May 20 (MAP) was also one of very few to be found in s. California in spring. A ♂ Hooded Warbler at Agua Caliente Hot Springs in e. San Diego Apr. 21 (JO'B) was early for a spring vagrant, with a male in the Fremont Valley June 2 (DVB) and a female in Huntington Beach June 8 (JPi) being on more expected dates. A **Red-faced**



Louisiana Waterthrush at Mojave, California, on May 21, 1990 Fourth state record. Photograph/Matt T. Heindel.

Warbler was well seen in Carruthers Canyon in the New York Mts. of e. San Bernardino May 13 (ES), there being fewer than 10 accepted records of this species for California.

**TANAGERS TO FINCHES** — A Summer Tanager in San Luis Obispo June 3 (GW) was undoubtedly a spring vagrant, as were seven found at desert oases in the e. portion of the Region between May 19 and June 8. The only Rose-breasted Grosbeaks found along the coast were single birds in Goleta May 28 (KB), near Santa Paula May 26 (MAH), and on Pt. Loma June 3 (REW); seven at desert oases in the n.e. portion of the Region between May 14 and June 1 were far fewer than expected. Indigo Buntings were also scarcer than normal with one in Santa Barbara May 20 (BJM) being the only one found along the coast; in addition, a male was found in the San Gabriel Mts., Los Angeles, May 16 (SJM), and only 15 more were found in the e. portion of the Region between May 4 and June 1, far fewer than normal. A ♂ Dickcissel, a casual straggler to California, was present for a short time in Los Osos May 7 (P & SG).

A Green-tailed Towhee near Hi Mt. Lookout Mar. 24 (RZ) was only the 5th to be found in San Luis Obispo. A Clay-colored Sparrow on Santa Catalina I. Mar. 10 (DeK) could well have wintered locally, but two together at Scotty's Castle in Death Valley Nat. Mon., Inyo, May 14 (T & JH) were clearly spring vagrants. A Black-throated Sparrow in Huntington Beach Apr. 23-25 (J & SG) was along the coast where considered very rare, especially in spring. One or two Lark Buntings were present at Agua Caliente Hot Springs Apr. 4-28 (BT) and another was at Finney L. near S.E.S.S. Apr. 21 (JO'B), this being the time of year small numbers are occasionally found in the s.e. portion of the Region, but four together in Palo Verde, Imperial, May 22 (RMcK) were late. A Sharp-tailed Sparrow, a rare strag-



Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Galileo Hill, California, on May 21, 1990 Very rare inland in the west. Photograph/Matt T. Heindel.

gler to California and accidental inland, was in Mojave May 13 (MTH) and another was at Galileo Hill, Kern, May 20-24 (H & PB). A Swamp Sparrow in Fullerton, Orange, Mar. 22 (JPi) had not been present earlier in the winter so was assumed to be on the move, and another in Mojave May 4 (MTH) was clearly a migrant. Four White-throated Sparrows were found in e. Kern after Apr. 29, with one in

the Fremont Valley June 2 (MTH) being exceptionally late. A Harris' Sparrow in Brawley, *Imperial*, Apr. 21–28 (BED), and another in the Fremont Valley May 4 (MTH) were the only two reported this spring.

The only Bobolinks found this spring were singing males at Deep Springs May 19 (MJL), Harper Dry Lake May 24 (EAC), near Bakersfield June 2 (JCW), and on Santa Catalina I. June 4 (MC). The Rusty Blackbird found wintering at C.L.N.W.C. remained through Mar. 17 (DVB). Bronzed Cowbirds had returned to Brawley by Apr. 21 (GMcC) where small numbers have been found in recent summers, with as many as 10 different birds seen there by the end of the period; a female in Morongo Valley Apr. 29 – May 12 (MAP) was well to the n.w. of this species' limited range in California. An imm. ♂ Orchard Oriole found in Santa Ana Feb. 24 was still present Apr. 20 (BED).

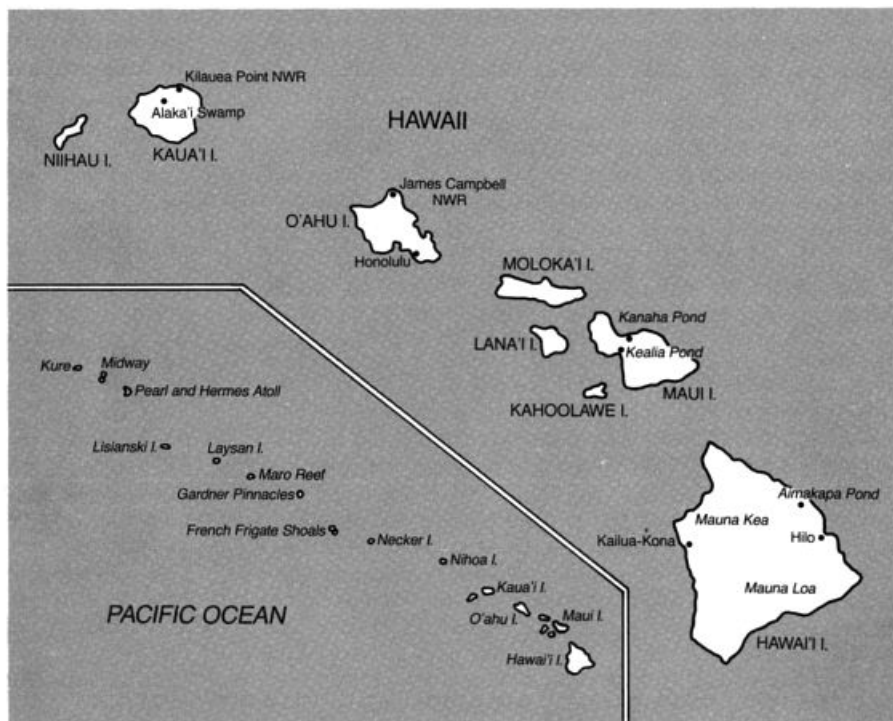
A few Purple and Cassin's finches were found at desert oases in the n.e. portion of the Region including a Cassin's Finch at F.C.R. May 25–29 (BED). A ♂ Evening Grosbeak in Altadena, *Los Angeles*, May 11 (W & BR) was at a somewhat unusual locality, but small numbers were reported from the desert oases in the n.e. portion of the Region at about the same time, including a late individual at F.C.R. May 25–27 (NBB), indicating a small movement of these birds.

**ADDENDUM**—A report of a ♂ Harlequin Duck in Sunset Beach, *Orange*, between Oct. 1989 and Feb. 1990 (Bob & Millie Helder) was received too late to be included in the Winter Report, and may have been the same bird that spent the winters of 1984–1985 to 1987–1988 in nearby Bolsa Chica.

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## HAWAIIAN ISLANDS REGION

Robert L. Pyle



**S**pring rainfall was a bit above normal on Kaua'i, but almost all reporting stations on the other main islands showed below normal amounts. Some were far below normal. Because of the wet winter, cumulative amounts for the calendar year are still above normal at most reporting stations, indicating good vegetative conditions for spring nesting. Season highlights included Hawaii's first record of a live and healthy Northern Fulmar, and some other interesting offshore pelagic observations.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — F.F.S. = French Frigate Shoals; H. = Hawai'i I.; K. = Kaua'i I.; M. = Maui I.; O. = O'ahu I.; J.C.N.W.R. = James Campbell Nat'l Wildlife Ref., O.; P.H.N.W.R. = Pearl Harbor Nat'l Wildlife Ref., O.

**ALBATROSSES TO PETRELS** — Single Black-footed Albatrosses, much scarcer in Hawaiian waters than Laysans, were reported offshore about 3 miles w. of Kaena Pt., O., Apr. 29 (TS, attracted to fishing lures), and the same day near Penguin Banks s.w. of O'ahu (PD). No

Laysans were seen at either locality. A light morph **North-ern Fulmar** was observed well (RD, RLP *et al.*) and photographed several miles off Keahole Pt., H., May 6. The bird was with a large flock of Wedge-tailed Shearwaters, and was observed over a period of 20 minutes. About 10 prior records from Hawaii, including both light and dark morphs, have all been beach wash-ups; two were alive but weakened, the others long dead. Hawaiian (Dark-rumped) Petrels ('U'au, *Endangered*) heard around camp at Sincok's Bog in Alaka'i Wilderness Apr. 12–14 would represent the 2nd colony reported on Kaua'i (TT). None was seen and no burrows were found despite a diligent search.

Going to sea in boats to observe pelagic birds in Hawaiian waters has been growing in interest and in feasibility during the past couple of years. This season comprehensive species counts were received from 6 different trips between Mar. 29 and May 6. Some were from boats chartered specifically for birding, others were from boats-of-opportunity going primarily for whale-watching or fishing. Five departed from Honolulu harbor, O., and one from Honokohau n. of Kailua-Kona, H. One ventured barely a mile offshore, and others got out 10–15 miles. As expected, Wedge-tailed Shearwater was the dominant species on most trips. But unexpected were the 2000+ Wedge-taileds recorded on the May 6 trip (RD, RLP *et al.*) out of Honokohau. These were in large roving flocks at 2, 8, and 13 mi offshore, and were in numbers far greater than had been observed in past years on occasional small boat trips in this same area and season (RD). Other Wedge-tailed counts were from 650 (Apr. 20, PD) down to one and zero on the nearshore trips. A few dark morphs were noted. About 50 Sooty Shearwaters, 30 Newell's Shearwaters, and 15 Bulwer's Petrels were estimated on the May 6 trip, and five to seven Sooties, one to three Newell's, and two to three Bulwer's were seen on other trips that went some miles from shore. Other rarer tubenose species recorded were three Juan Fernandez Petrels, one White-necked Petrel, several Flesh-footed Shearwaters, one Short-tailed and one Christmas shearwater, all on May 6 out of Honokohau (RD *et al.*). Off of Honolulu, one Buller's Shearwater (RD *et al.*) and one possible Short-tailed (DP) were reported Apr. 15, and one Flesh-footed Shearwater was seen Mar. 29 (DP). Among the five storm-petrels reported Apr. 29, at least some seemed most likely to have been Band-rumped (PD).

Several Newell's Shearwaters (*Threatened*) were seen and heard flying up lower Hanapepe Canyon, K., around 7:30 p.m. May 22 (AK, viewing from the overlook on highway 50); and a few were seen at sea 3 mi off Kaena Pt., O., Apr. 29 (TS).

**TROPICBIRDS TO EGRETS** — Three White-tailed Tropicbirds in Iao Valley, M., May 16 (ShM) and one flying north over Hakalau N.W.R., H., at 6500 ft elevation May 28 (JL) represented interesting localities for the species. Red-footed and Brown boobies were recorded on the pelagic trips out of Honolulu, but none on the trip out of Honokohau. Largest counts were of 48 Browns and 174 Red-footeds Apr. 29 (PD), with smaller counts of 33 and below on the other trips. Even the nearest-shore trips found nine and three Brown Boobies. One Masked Booby on the nearshore trip Mar. 30 (PD, RLP) was unexpected. Tern I., F.F.S., continues to be a favored destination for straggling Lesser Frigatebirds. Two adult males were seen there together Mar. 4 & 24, and at least one was reported there almost daily through the month (JM *et al.*). Three adult males in a group were seen flying overhead May 25 (JM).

A white egret observed with adult and immature Cattle Egrets at J.C.N.W.R. Apr. 1 was confidently identified as a Little Egret of subspecies *nigripes* (DP). Detailed notes were

submitted. A bird of similar description was reported there a few days later (PB), and again Apr. 8 (BE). Other observers (PD, RD) searching the area assiduously during that week did not find such a bird among the black-billed juv. Cattle Egrets, thus setting off further intensive research into comparative field identification of the various races of Little Egret and of juv. and imm. Cattle Egrets. Full observational details are in preparation for publication in *'Elepaio*.

Stray Cattle Egrets (for sure, yellow-billed) were reported this season at Sand I., Midway, Mar. 15 (one, CR, KM) and at Tern I., F.F.S., during most of March (one to two, JM *et al.*).

**WATERFOWL TO PARAKEETS** — The wintering Brant at Honouliuli Unit, P.H.N.W.R., was last reported Mar. 31 (RLP). The flock of Hawaiian Geese (Nene, *Endangered*) at Kipu Kai, K., had at least 3 known broods of three goslings each this spring but apparently only one young bird survived (TT). Counts of 46 (Mar. 5) and 38 (Apr. 2) Hawaiian Ducks (Koloa) at Ki'i Unit, J.C.N.W.R. (PD), confirmed this to be still the top concentration locality in the state for this *Endangered* bird, although its genetic makeup here is under suspicion. Northern Pintails remained at Honouliuli until Apr. 20 (PD) and two N. Shovelers were still there May 10 (PD). One female N. Pintail and one N. Shoveler, stragglers, were observed at Sand I., Midway, Mar. 8–15 (CR, KM).

A Hawaiian Hawk ('Io, *Endangered*) attacked an 'Apanane in an aerial mistnet at Hakalau N.W.R., H., Apr. 28, but the prey escaped and the predator did too after a brief entanglement in the net (JL). The 'Io, a good *Buteo*, evolved to feed on birds since Hawaii had no rodents or other terrestrial mammals or reptiles until some arrived with the early Polynesian settlers. The Solitary Sandpiper was seen again Mar. 11 & 12 (PD, RD, RLP), and perhaps the same individual was reported Apr. 24 at nearby Honouliuli Unit in full breeding plumage (DP).

One to two Ring-billed Gulls were reported by numerous observers at Ki'i Unit, J.C.N.W.R., through the season until at least May 5 (PD). Remains of a Black-legged Kittiwake, scarce in Hawaii, were found at Sand I., Midway, Mar. 8 (KM, CR). Three Caspian Terns remained at Kealia Pond, M., through at least Apr. 6 (ShM), and one was still there Apr. 19 (DP). This was an excellent year for migrating Arctic Terns in Hawaii. Three were seen on the pelagic trip off Honolulu Apr. 15 (DP *et al.*) and 30, an unprecedented number, were observed in several groups on the trip off Honokohau May 6 (RD *et al.*). Other reports included one at Ki'i Unit, J.C.N.W.R., Apr. 14 (m.ob.) & 20 (PC), and two there Apr. 23 (PC). One was at Kanaha Pond, M., Apr. 19 (DP) and two near Lihue, K., in early May, one of which was found dead May 9 and preserved as a specimen (TT). A Blue-gray Noddy returned again to roost nightly on Tern I., F.F.S., from Mar. 28 into April (KM). The species is scarce at Tern I., although a few breed regularly 7 km away at La Perouse Pinnacle (also F.F.S.). Good numbers of White Terns (counts of 13–25) were found on the pelagic trips off Honolulu Mar. 29–Apr. 18, but only one (RD) off Honokohau, H., May 6.

A male and female Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse seen and photographed Apr. 21 along a roadside N. of Kailua-Kona, H. (DP), were in an uncommonly accessible location for this normally hard-to-see species. A Barn Owl was noted soaring over the forest at the edge of the Alaka'i Wilderness, K., Apr. 18, and another was seen at Puu Lani Ranch in S. Kohala, H., Apr. 21 (DP). A flock of at least 25 noisy parakeets, probably Rose-ringed, was observed flying overhead 2 mi upslope from Kailua-Kona, H. (GF). The number and location were notable.

**ENDEMIC HAWAIIAN FORESTBIRDS** — In the captive flock of Hawaiian Crow ('Alala, *critically Endangered*) the first chick hatched successfully May 23, and was from a female (Mana) which had not previously had a chick hatch successfully from any of her eggs. More eggs from Mana and Lu'ukia were in incubation during June.

In JL's study area at Hakalau N.W.R., H., 'Amakihi, 'Tiwi, and 'Apapane began to breed in good numbers in April, the latter two much delayed compared to prior years. The first (*Hawaiian*) 'Akepa nest was found Apr. 15, nearly a month later than last year. By the end of May, 15 nests of this *Endangered* species had been located, 5 of which had already had young fledged successfully. The first nest of Hawai'i Creeper (*Endangered*) was found Mar. 19, and several others were located. The first fledgling was netted May 29. The first Oma'o nest was found Apr. 30, and the first 'Elepaio nest was found under construction at the end of May.

During a survey trip to Sincok's Bog deep in the Alaka'i Wilderness, K., Apr. 12-14 [TT], 'Elepaio, 'Amakihi, and 'Apapane were found commonly, and smaller numbers of 'Anianiau, 'Akepa, and 'Tiwi were noted. No Kaua'i Creepers were seen, which is significant considering that the species used to be fairly common in the interior of the Alaka'i, and that reported observations in the more accessible fringes of the Alaka'i have been notably absent in the past couple of years. None of the *critically Endangered* Kama'o, Puaiohi, 'O'u, or Nukupu'u were observed. A tape of the 'O'o'a (*extinct?*) was played

repeatedly in its last known haunt, but elicited no response.

**INTRODUCED FINCHES AND ESTRILIDS** — Two Saffron Finches were coming regularly to scattered bird seed in a residential area of Pearl Harbor, O., in late March and early April (SuM); and up to four Yellow-fronted Canaries were coming to a feeder in Kaaawa on the windward side of O'ahu in late April (MC). Both were interesting localities for these scarce introduced species. Small numbers of Black-rumped Waxbills were found at Pu'uanaulu, H., Apr. 10, but only two were seen there Apr. 21 (DP). This species is now known only in this locality, and is difficult to find. A flock of 50-75 Common Waxbills was reported May 5 at Waimanalo Agriculture Station (SB) near the extreme s.e. corner of O'ahu. The species has become locally common over most of O'ahu except at the southeast end. A milling flock of over 200 Java Sparrows reported at Kailua-Kona, H., May 20 (JL) was an unprecedentedly large concentration for this area where the species first established its foothold on this island.

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## WEST INDIES REGION

Robert L. Norton



Again the weather was the lead story affecting Regional ecosystems and bird populations. At Cruz Bay, St. John, in the United States Virgin Islands, precipitation for each month of the spring was well below average: March -32%, April -22%, and May -70%. Cumulative precipitation for the spring was 49% below average. With few exceptions, spring periods here had been very wet from 1971 to 1987, but now a dry cycle may be setting in.

It has been suggested recently that rainfall at latitude 18 degrees north in the Sahel desert region of West Africa is linked to the number, strength, and trajectory of named

cyclones in the eastern tropical Atlantic. These same factors may also influence rainfall patterns in the western tropical Atlantic — e.g., in the Virgin Islands, also at about 18 degrees north. For about 20 years, as the Sahel suffered through an extended drought, the Virgin Islands experienced a long period of wet seasons. Now the Sahel drought has apparently been broken. With the advent of a wet Sahel, if there is really an inverse relationship, the northeast Caribbean may now expect drier seasons.

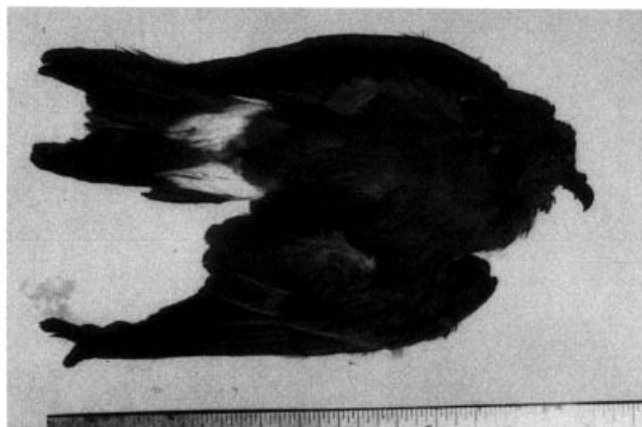
Although this was a dry and hot spring, good rains during the winter had produced a bloom of native plants early

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in the spring, easing stress on frugivores and insectivores after the disaster of Hurricane *Hugo* last September.

**ABBREVIATIONS** — B.V.I. = British Virgin Islands; P.R. = Puerto Rico.

**STORM-PETRELS TO GULLS** — A weakened Leach's



This Leach's Storm-Petrel was brought to shore by fishermen on St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, during spring 1990. Status of storm-petrel species in the West Indies is still incompletely known. On this bird, the dark line down the center of the white rump rules out Wilson's and Band-rumped storm-petrels. Photograph/Robert L. Norton.

Storm-Petrel took refuge aboard a cruise ship, apparently at night, during the passage from St. Croix to San Juan, P.R., Apr. 1 (TK). Another weakened Leach's Storm-Petrel, which died, was brought to shore on St. Thomas by fishermen (*fide* JP, ph. RLN). Three Red-footed Boobies observed working the edge of the St. Kitts marine shelf Mar. 31 (TK) were probably from the Redondo colony located s.w. of Nevis (RLN). An ad. Great Blue Heron was seen May 10 at Prickly Pear I., n. of Virgin Gorda, B.V.I. (RLN), suggesting that breeding may occur in the area.

Northern Shovelers and Am. Wigeon remained at Mary Point Pond, St. John, as late as Mar. 13 (TD). On St. Vincent, one immature and five adult Com. Black-Hawks, as well as three Broad-winged Hawks, were seen Mar. 24 (RLN) at the Vermont Nature Trail parking area. The rare Gundlach's Hawk was reported Mar. 7 near Santo Tomas, Cuba (CF *et al.*). Five of the endangered Cuban race of Sandhill Crane were noted Mar. 6 at the Zapata Swamp (CF *et al.*). At Culebra, P.R., five Long-billed Dowitchers were sorted out from a flock of 200 Short-billeds on Mar. 9

(PH). A Solitary Sandpiper at Vieques in early March (DG) furnished one of the few spring reports from the P.R. shelf. A Whimbrel was seen at Cabo Rojo, P.R., Mar. 11 (PH).

Tom Kemp, aboard a cruise ship west of Dominica, noted at least 10 Pomarine and two Parasitic jaegers, as well as 19+ unidentified jaegers, Mar. 28. The birds were apparently moving west to east, following flocks of Sooty Terns and Brown Noddies. On Mar. 31, e.n.e. of St. Croix, more jaegers were seen harassing pelagic terns; among them were six Pomarine, five Parasitic, and five unidentified jaegers (TK). San Juan Harbor, P.R., was host to two Lesser Black-backed Gulls on Apr. 1 (TK), perhaps only the 2nd report for Puerto Rico.

**DOVES TO COWBIRDS** — A Ruddy Quail-Dove reported from St. John Apr. 3 (*fide* TD) added to the small but increasing number of records east of Puerto Rico. Counts of 30 Cuban Parrots Mar. 4 and 12 Cuban Parakeets Mar. 5 (CF *et al.*) suggested that these two species are still doing well in Cuba. Twelve St. Vincent Parrots were easily heard and observed Mar. 23 on the Vermont Nature Trail (RLN). Chuck-will's-widows apparently breed in the vicinity of the Rand Nature Center, Grand Bahama, where they were singing on the evening of May 9 (PWS, SAS). The Smiths also reported that local residents claim to "hear them all summer."

A Black Swift, rare on St. Croix, was seen there in the company of two Caribbean Martins May 9 (RW). A search for Puerto Rican Woodpeckers on Vieques (DG) failed to turn them up in 3 areas where they had been known prior to Hurricane *Hugo*. Three Yellow-bellied Elaenias and two Grenada Flycatchers sortied in open fields adjacent to the Vermont Nature Trail, St. Vincent, Mar. 24 (RLN). Some 250,000 Tree Swallows at Zapata Swamp, Cuba, Mar. 6 (CF *et al.*) must have made an amazing sight. Although the total population of Cuba's endemic Zapata Wren might now be as low as four to eight individuals, two were reported Mar. 7 (CF *et al.*).

A Pearly-eyed Thrasher noted Mar. 20 at Abaco I., Bahamas, indicated northward expansion (EV). It also raised concern for nesting (Bahama) Cuban Parrots there. On Puerto Rico, competition with this thrasher for nest sites was thought to be a major factor in the decline of the endemic Puerto Rican Parrot. A White-eyed Vireo, rare so far east, was identified Mar. 10 at the observation tower at Maricao Forest, P.R. (PH). A Blue-winged Warbler, rare in the West Indies, was seen on Abaco Mar. 20 (PH). The endemic Yellow-headed Warblers of Cuba appear to be doing well in protected habitats; 25 were noted Mar. 4 (CF *et al.*). Two Whistling Warblers, endemic to St. Vincent, were noted along trails at the Vermont nature reserve Mar. 24 (RLN).

An Indigo Bunting was seen at Estate Hope, Tortola, B.V.I., Mar. 3 (RLN). Two singing Grasshopper Sparrows at Vieques Mar. 4-11 (DG) suggested continued breeding activity in spite of the devastation of Hurricane *Hugo*. During the week of Mar. 4-9 in Cuba, Tawny-shouldered and Cuban blackbirds were both seen commonly, but the former outnumbered the latter ten to one. Shiny Cowbird, the principal nemesis of icterid species in the West Indies, was not seen during this same March period in Cuba (CF *et al.*).

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