

Northern California



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Persistent coastal fog and strong northwesterly winds during the first half of the fall season resulted in a poor land-bird migration along the coast. Low numbers of rarities were reported from most of the Region in general. The notable exception was in Humboldt County, which experienced one of the best vagrant seasons in decades. Regional highlights included our first Neotropic Cormorant, fourth Brown Shrike (just the second for the mainland), our fourth Smith's Longspur, and a generous irruption of Evening Grosbeaks thought to involve birds from northern breeding areas.

Abbreviations: C.B.R.C. (California B.R.C.); C.R.P. (Cosumnes River Preserve, Sacramento); C.V. (Central Valley); FI. (Southeast Farallon I., San Francisco); H.R.S. (Hayward Regional Shoreline, Alameda), PRBO (PRBO Conservation Science); S.F. (San Francisco, not State Forest). Reports of exceptional vagrants submitted without documentation are not published. Documentation of C.B.R.C. review species will be forwarded to Guy McCaskie, Secretary, P. O. Box 275, Imperial Beach, CA 91933.

WATERFOWL THROUGH QUAIL

A large movement of Greater White-fronted Geese spanning every coastal or near-coastal county from Humboldt to San Benito 28-30 Sep included a notable 637 at H.R.S. 29 Sep (RJR) and 245, a record count for San Benito, at Paicines Res. the same day (DLSH). Snow Geese returned early to the Sacramento N.W.R., Glenn, with 14,000 counted 22 Oct and over 20,000 there just a few days later

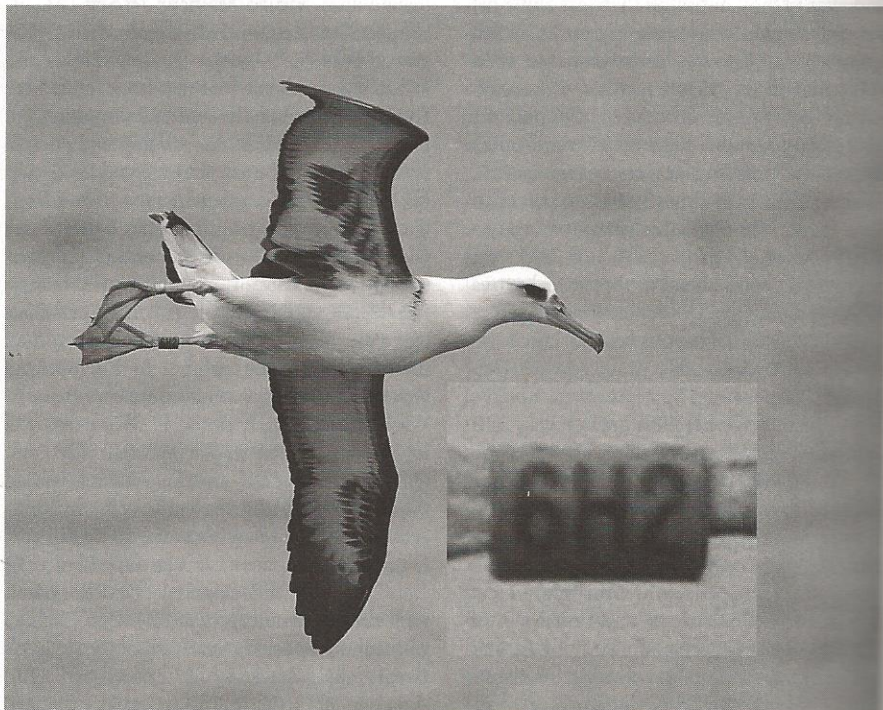
(Frank Hall et al.). Brant inside S.F. Bay included 2 ratty birds at Brooks I., Contra Costa 2 Aug, with 3 there 11 Sep-16 Oct (Pat Bacchetti, RCP), the first Sep record for Santa Clara, in Alviso 26 Sep (MMR, RGJ, ph. MJM), and perhaps the same individual in nearby Sunnyvale 31 Oct (Steve Tracey, RKE, PKE et al.). Elsewhere, one at Mono Lake C.P., Mono continued until 15 Sep (m.ob.), and Tular's first was at L. Success 20-23 Oct (ph. SDS et al.). A Cackling Goose along White Rock Rd. 20 Oct (DLSu) was one of few ever found in Mariposa. Three ad. Trumpeter Swans and 2 Bewick's Swans were reported from near Nelson, Butte 24 Nov (†JHS).

Wood Ducks in unexpected locations included one at Davis Cr., Modoc 5 Sep (SCR) and 2 at Crowley L., Mono 1 Oct (KNN). A Eurasian Teal was at the Yolo Bypass W.A., Yolo 28 Nov (SCH). Redheads bred again at H.R.S., with a duckling accompanying a female 23 Aug (RJR). Three broods of Ring-necked Ducks along the w. side of Crowley L., Mono 1 Aug (DS) were well s. of the species' normal breeding range in the Region. Returning Tufted Ducks were at Stone Lagoon, Humboldt 24 Nov (female; Jeff Allen) and L. Merritt in Oakland, Alameda 27 Oct+ (male; Hilary Powers, m.ob.). Harlequin Ducks inside S.F. Bay included males at Brooks I., Contra Costa 11 Sep-3 Nov (RCP, m.ob.) and Coyote Pt., San Mateo 2 Aug-20 Sep (LBt, RStH et al.), the latter present on and off since at least 6 Aug

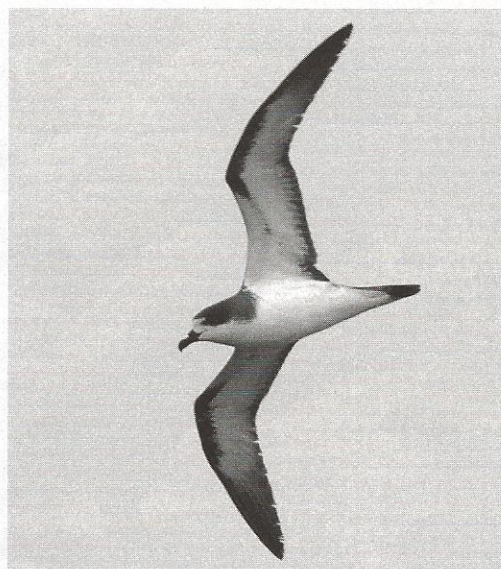
2002. Surf Scoters far inland included one at Eagle L., Lassen 5 Nov (LOR) and 5 at L. Shastina, Siskiyou 29 Oct-17 Nov; the latter group was accompanied by a female Black Scoter 29 Oct (RE, Neal Clark), only the 3rd ever for that county. Five Long-tailed Ducks in five counties 16 Oct+ included one inland at Tule Lake N.W.R., Siskiyou 26 Oct (Dave Menke). A female Hooded Merganser at Pt. Joe 7-8 Aug (Sarah Lane, DR) and at Laguna Grande 17 Aug-10 Sep (Toni Kimple, DR et al.) provided only the 2nd "summer" record for Monterey. Red-breasted Mergansers were more numerous than usual far inland, with an "invasion" of 16 in Siskiyou 30 Oct-11 Nov (BBg, RE, m.ob.), 3 in Surprise Valley, Modoc 27 Nov (ph. SCR), and 2 at Topaz L., Mono 30 Oct (KNN); also notable were one at Folsom L., Placer (Ron Pozzi) and Yolo's 6th at the Winters W.T.P. 22 Nov+ (WEH, m.ob.). Late broods of downy young California Quail were found at Morgan Hill, Santa Clara 9 Sep (SCR) and at Paicines Res., San Benito 29 Sep (DLSH).

LOONS THROUGH PELICANS

Five Pacific Loons at inland locations represented an average showing. Red-throated Loon is rarer inland, so singles at L. Alamanor, Plumas 8-15 Oct (Harv Wilson, Tony Brake, m.ob.) and Crowley L., Mono 26 Nov (†JLD, DVP) were noteworthy. Seasonal high counts included 27,750 Pacific Loons at Pt. Pinos, Monterey 21 Nov (BLS) and 1485 Red-throat-



This hatch-year Laysan Albatross in Monterey Bay, Santa Cruz County, California 6 August 2010 had been banded 6 April by Julio Montoya on Mexico's Guadalupe Island. Photograph by Abe Borker.



Although Hawaiian Petrels are known to forage regularly in the waters off Oregon and northern California during the nesting season, the only one seen in autumn 2010 was this bird, photographed off Fort Bragg 15 August. Photographs by Todd McGrath.

ed Loons at Seacliff S.B., *Santa Cruz* 8 Nov (DLSu). The only Yellow-billed Loon was in Berkeley, *Alameda* 26 Nov+ (Ellen Sasaki, Sheila Dickie, Harold Newman, m.ob., ph. LTer). Inland Horned Grebes included singles at Grant L., *Mono* 15 Oct (Bob & Susan Steele) and L. McClure, *Mariposa* 21 Oct (DLSu) and up to 6 on L. Almanor, *Plumas* 26 Sep–6 Nov (CPD). Just as scarce inland is Red-necked Grebe, represented this season by singles at Bass L., *Madera* 22 Sep (HBu), L. Shastina, *Siskiyou* 26–29 Oct (RE, m.ob.), and O'Neill Forebay, *Merced* 23 Nov (ADeM); up to 2 were at L. Almanor, *Plumas* 8 Oct–6 Nov (Harv Wilson, Tony Brake, m.ob.) and 3 at Fall River L., *Shasta* 12 Oct (KAb).

The Pt. Arena Cove, *Mendocino* Laysan Albatross returned for its 18th winter 22 Nov (Tom Reid). A probable Laysan Albatross × Black-footed Albatross hybrid was on Monterey Bay, *Santa Cruz* 27 Aug (ShJ). A juv. Short-tailed Albatross at Bodega Canyon, *Sonoma* 20 Nov (DSg, TMcG, SNGH, ph. Martijn Verdoes) and a Hawaiian Petrel off Ft. Bragg, *Mendocino* 15 Aug (ShJ, ph. TMcG, ph. SBT) were the season's only representatives of these two species, which have become regular offshore in recent years. The record invasion by Cook's Petrels in Jul did not continue into the fall, at least not within reach of pelagic birding trips; the only report was of a single individual on Monterey Bay, *Monterey* 6 Aug (ShJ). Instead, the standout *Pterodroma* of the season was a *Great-winged Petrel* of subspecies *gouldi* on Monterey Bay 18 Sep (p.a., TEa, ph. Martijn Verdoes, ph. DSg, Monterey Seabirds), providing a first *Santa Cruz* record and the 3rd record for the Region and North

America. An inshore incursion by Northern Fulmars in mid-Nov, exemplified by counts of 470 attracted to a rotting Blue Whale carcass at Bean Hollow S.B., *San Mateo* 20 Nov (GrH) and 1775 at Pt. Pinos, *Monterey* during a storm 21 Nov (BLS), was followed by a significant die-off, with hundreds found dead on beaches over several subsequent weeks. Both the seasonal total of Flesh-footed Shearwater reports (20 between 9 Sep and 25 Oct) and the high of 7 off *Monterey* 8 Oct (ShJ) were higher than average. Three Black-vented Shearwaters flying northward at Pigeon Pt., *San Mateo* 16 Oct (RSTh) were the only ones reported. Eighteen Wilson's Storm-Petrels, an average showing, were reported 13 Aug–3 Oct from *Monterey* n. to *Mendocino*. An observation of 2 each of Leach's and Least Storm-Petrels seen from Pt. Pinos, *Monterey* during a storm 21 Nov (†BLS) was extremely unusual; even during storms, neither species is typically seen from shore (away from Leach's breeding areas) in the Region, and Least Storm-Petrels were in low numbers offshore this season. On 6 Sep at FI., an ad. Brown Booby (MtB, ph. OsJ, JTz) was outshone by a juv. Neotropic Cormorant (ph., †JTz, MtB); the latter bird provided the first Regional record and the state's first coastal record (p.a.). Brandt's Cormorants attempted record-late nesting at Seacliff S.B., *Santa Cruz*, with a dozen new nests initiated in Sep and incubating birds observed as late as 23 Oct. However, none of these late nesting attempts were successful, as the last young successfully fledged in early Sep (DLSu). Brown Pelican numbers at FI. were unusually low, peaking at only 95 on 6 Aug (PRBO). One at Sherman I. 29

Nov–3 Dec (DaW, JSL) provided the 5th record for *Sacramento* and was also seen in *Solano*.

BITTERNS THROUGH CRANES

A notable two or three broods of American Bitterns were found at Struve Slough, *Santa Cruz* 18 Aug (LGo, JPo et al.). Least Bitterns continued near Clear L., *Lake* 6–13 Aug (at least 5 birds in three locations; FHa, mob.) and at Yolo Bypass W.A., *Yolo* 14 Aug (SCH, MP) and 10 Sep (Chuck Brittain); *Sonoma's* 2nd record consisted of 2 birds near Bloomfield late Jul into Aug (Lorri Duckworth). Among five reports of single Cattle Egrets away from the C.V. 2 Aug–21 Nov was *Napa's* first since 30 Nov 1986, at Napa Valley College 21 Nov (LKe). Coastal White-faced Ibis were reported in good numbers throughout the fall; 14 at FI. 24 Aug (MtB, OsJ, JTz) provided the 3rd island record and one at L. Merced, S.F. 30 Oct (DMo, m.ob.) was likewise notable. Five at Salt Springs Valley Res. 2 Sep (Dan Maxwell) were unexpected in *Calaveras*.

Juv. Northern Goshawks were reported from *Sonoma* at Tolay Creek Ranch 17 Nov (RAR) and Westside R.P. at Bodega Bay 21 Nov (RMe). The continuing *Sonoma* Common Black-Hawk was seen again at Laguna de Santa Rosa 5 Aug and 12 Sep (ph. Stan Moore). Migrant Broad-winged Hawks were reported from *Marin*, *San Francisco*, *San Mateo*, *Santa Clara*, and *Santa Cruz* 9 Sep–2 Nov. Swainson's Hawks along Ramal Rd. in e. *Sonoma*, including 2 juvs. 4 Aug (RAR) and 2 ads. 22 Aug (AWgh), may have been the family reported 31 Jul (MBE) from nearby *Napa*. Nine migrant Swainson's reported from five coastal



Neotropic Cormorant was unrecorded in the Northern California region until this juvenile was detected on Southeast Farallon Island, San Francisco County on 6 September 2010. Photograph by Jim Tietz.

and near-coastal counties from Marin to San Benito 30 Aug–10 Nov included a notable 5 birds from Santa Clara; more surprising were 2 juvs. apparently wintering in Half Moon Bay, San Mateo 26 Nov+ (AJ, m.ob.). An ad. dark-morph Harlan's Hawk near the Hwy. 113/Flannery Rd. jct. in e. Solano 12 Nov (Zach Smith, EP) was followed by an ad. light morph there 23 Nov (Zach Smith). The Crested Caracara remained through the season near Ft. Dick, Del Norte (m.ob.). Six Merlins in Aug included very early birds in Humboldt 1 Aug (KI), San Mateo 8 Aug (George Chrisman), and Del Norte 13 Aug (LuB). The Clapper Rail continued at Heron's Head Park, S.F. through the season (m.ob.). A single Greater Sandhill Crane remained at Bridgeport, Mono through 30 Oct (m.ob.), when it was joined by 2 Lesser Sandhill Cranes (KNN), perhaps the first of this latter subspecies for Mono. A southbound Sandhill Crane seen over Rodeo Lagoon, Marin 29 Nov (Eddie Bartley et al.) eventually flew across the Golden Gate, providing the 2nd S.F. record.

SHOREBIRDS

Nine American Golden-Plovers 27 Aug–23 Nov, all juvs., included one at the Fresno W.T.P. 16–22 Nov (ph. GaW, JSy et al.), the first for Fresno. Twenty-two Solitary Sandpipers were reported from 14 counties 1 Aug–28 Sep. An impressive total of 113 Lesser Yellowlegs at Crescent City 16 Aug (LuB) may have represented the highest count ever for Del Norte. Four Hudsonian Godwits, all juvs., were found: near Corcoran, Kings 22–28

Aug (ph. Mark Stacy) and the 7th, 8th, and 9th for Humboldt at Eel River W.A. 5 Sep (ph. SMcA), n. Humboldt Bay 6 Sep (†Dan Maxwell, RHw), and Cock Robin I. 6–9 Oct (ph. SMcA, KBu, TKz, Jesse Sargent). A Black Turnstone at the Upper Truckee R. delta, El Dorado 30 Aug (RPD) was thought to be the first for the Tahoe Basin.

Inland Red Knots included 2 at Crowley L., Mono 16 Sep (PJM) and one n. of Stratford, Kings 30 Sep (JSy). Two juv. Sanderlings at Red Bluff R.A. 18–19 Sep (†BED) provided only the 2nd Tehama record. Semipalmated Sandpipers were well reported, with at least 70 in 17 counties 1 Aug–21 Sep. Over 140 Baird's Sandpipers in 22 counties 1 Aug–2 Oct included a pure flock of 28 juvs. at the sw. corner of Goose L. 5 Sep (SCR), the highest count ever for Modoc. Over 150 Pectoral Sandpipers in 18 counties 1 Aug–8 Nov included one at Salt Springs Valley Res. 16 Sep (JLx), only the 2nd for Calaveras. Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were reported from Yolo Bypass W.A. 7–17 Oct (Yolo's 11th; Scott Hoppe, m.ob.) and H.R.S. 12 Oct (RJR). Santa Cruz's Rock Sandpiper returned to Santa Cruz for an 8th winter 30 Nov (PDB). A total of 11 Stilt Sandpipers in seven counties 14 Aug–20 Nov was about average but included Madera's first at the Madera W.T.P. 14–17 Aug (†LyH, ph. GaW, m.ob.). The only Buff-breasted Sandpiper was a juv. reported from L. Talowa, Del Norte 19 Aug (LuB). Eight Ruffs in five counties 17 Aug–27 Oct continued the weak fall showing of the past two years, although 3 together at Bridgeport, Mono 11 Sep (RS) were notable. Santa

Clara and Humboldt failed to produce any Ruffs in 2010, the first time this has happened in 20 years and 13+ years, respectively. A Wilson's Phalarope at the Lodi W.T.P., San Joaquin 6–21 Nov (TDM et al.) was late. Two Red Phalaropes at Sherman I. 25 Oct (DaW) provided Sacramento with its 2nd record.

GULLS THROUGH ALCIDS

A count of 2200 Sabine's Gulls in the Bodega Canyon/Cordell Bank area, Sonoma/Marin 3 Oct (RS, v.ob.) was extremely high for such a late date, while 550 seen from the n. jetty of Humboldt Bay, Humboldt 17 Aug (DFx, JCP) provided a record-high count from shore. Nine were in Mono, Placer, Siskiyou, and Yolo 17 Sep–early Nov, representing an average showing inland. A juv. Little Gull at the Eel R. mouth 31 Oct–2 Nov (DCo, LTu, ph. SMcA, v.ob.) provided the 6th record for Humboldt. A Laughing Gull, not quite annual in the Region, was in San Rafael, Marin 30 Sep–2 Oct (ph. David R. Moore, Michael Stevenson). Five Franklin's Gulls in five counties 15 Aug–6 Oct provided a below-average total; one of these, off Noyo, Mendocino 15 Aug (ShJ), was offshore, where rarely recorded in the Region. A juv. Mew Gull in Half Moon Bay, San Mateo 22 Aug (AJ) was very early but not unprecedented. The only Thayer's Gulls reported far inland were singles on the Klamath R. below Iron Gate Dam, Siskiyou 31 Oct (RE, Steve Nelson) and in Kings at Hanford 21–24 Nov (ph. MSy) and Corcoran 29 Nov (ph. SDS). Similarly, 3 Glaucous-winged Gulls were inland, with singles at L. Almanor, Plumas 27–30 Oct (CPD, Scott Edwards, Amber Edwards), s. of Corcoran, Kings 26–28 Nov (ph. JLt, MSy), and near Porterville, Tulare 29 Nov (SDS). Inland Western Gulls included singles at San Luis Res., Merced 9 Aug (PJM), Tracy W.T.P., San Joaquin 23 Sep (Terry Ronneberg), and American R. Parkway, Sacramento 1–10 Nov (WEH, DaW). A juv. Lesser Black-backed Gull at Topaz L. 30 Oct (KNN) provided a 3rd Mono record, while a third-cycle bird at the Davis W.T.P. 9 Nov (TEa) represented Yolo's 5th record. Of 3 Glaucous Gulls reported, 2 were inland at the Davis W.T.P., Yolo: an ad. 21 Nov and a second-cycle bird 30 Nov (both TEa). Single migrant Black Terns were in Santa Cruz at Watsonville Slough 22–23 Aug (RgW, Nanci Adams) and Capitola Beach 3 Sep (DLSu) and in Oakley, Contra Costa 20 Sep (ph. RCP). Of 50 Common Terns reported from coastal areas, 38 were in one flock at the n. jetty of Humboldt Bay, Humboldt 17 Aug (DFx, JCP); 43 in inland areas included Madera's first three records, with different individuals at the Madera W.T.P. 16–17 Aug (ph. LyH et al.), 2 Sep (ph. LwH), and 19 Sep (ph. GaW). The only Arctic Tern

onshore was at Tolowa Dunes S.P., *Del Norte* 10 Sep (TKz). At H.R.S., 18 ad. Black Skimmers had 12 nestlings and one fledgling 7 Aug (RJR); 25 (11 of them juvs.) at Redwood Shores, *San Mateo* 16 Oct (RSTh) likely included some of these H.R.S. birds. The only obvious migrant skimmers were 2 at Carmel River S.B., *Monterey* 1-7 Aug (Sarah Lane, Betsy Adler, m.ob.). Inland jaegers included at least 4 Parasitics in *Mono* 4-28 Sep, *Stanislaus*'s first Parasitic at the Modesto W.T.P. 26 Sep (ERC, HMR), and *Placer*'s 4th Long-tailed at N. Lake Tahoe 30 Aug (ph. WRi). At Bodega Canyon and Cordell Bank, *Sonoma/Marin*, 300+ Long-tailed Jaegers 11 Aug (ShJ) nearly doubled last fall's record one-day count; for comparison, that trip recorded only 4 Pomarine and 7 Parasitic Jaegers.

A juv. Common Murre at the Stevens Cr. mouth in Mountain View, *Santa Clara* 3 Sep (WGB et al.) was unusually far inside S.F. Bay. A count of 101 Marbled Murrelets between Moss Beach and Pigeon Pt. 30 Nov (LBT, RSTh) provided one of the highest *San Mateo* counts in recent years. Fourteen Xantus's Murrelets offshore included 2 *hypoleuca* off Half Moon Bay, *San Mateo* 17 Sep (ShJ). One Xantus's Murrelet was seen from Pt. Pinos, *Monterey* after a storm 21 Nov (DR). The season's high count of 6000 Cassin's Auklets off Half Moon Bay, *San Mateo* 2 Oct (ShJ) may have reflected the double-brooding that was documented on FI. last summer.

DOVES THROUGH THRUSHES

Eleven records of White-winged Dove spanned the season 24 Aug-26 Nov. They included *Sacramento*'s first at Citrus Heights 16-18 Sep (ph. MkM), *Mariposa*'s first on White Rock Rd. 18 Sep (DLSu), *Modoc*'s 2nd at Tule L. 26 Nov (ph. SCR), and *Santa Cruz*'s latest ever, also 26 Nov (DLSu). The *Modoc* bird was in the snow, a setting particularly mismatched with this species, which is generally accustomed to more hospitable southerly climes. Common Ground-Doves, exceptional anywhere in the Region, included one at the Carmel R. mouth, *Monterey* 18 Nov (CHo) and the first for *Kings* at Boggs Slough 12 Sep (RH). Among three reports of Yellow-billed Cuckoos was one from outside the current known breeding range, a single bird at C.R.P. 15 Aug (JTr), the first for *Sacramento* in many years. Single Common Poorwills were on the C.V. floor, where rare, at Gustine W.T.P., *Merced* 9 Aug (PJM) and at the bustling River Park Shopping Center in Fresno, *Fresno* 17 Oct (George Folsom). Four Black Swifts, including *Yolo*'s first for fall at L. Solano Diversion Dam 19 Sep (Ron Melcher), was an average showing.

A Chimney Swift over the Mokelumne R.

in Acampo 9 Sep (†DGY) furnished the 2nd record for *San Joaquin* and the 4th for the C.V. The only other record was of one over FI. 14 Sep (PRBO). The last Vaux's Swift of the season was a late migrant over Sacramento, *Sacramento* 29 Nov (Dan Airola). Three reports of Ruby-throated Hummingbird represent our best seasonal showing ever (p.a.). Reported were an ad. female captured and measured on FI. 29 Aug (OsJ, ph. MtB, ph. JTz), an ad. female in Bolinas, *Marin* 9-12 Aug (KH), and a juv. female at the same location 24 Aug (KH). Continuing a recent trend, *Santa Cruz* hosted numerous migrant Black-chinned Hummingbirds. As in the past, most were females or imm. males. The 14-16 reported this season spanned the period 1 Aug-10 Oct (m.ob.). Modest numbers of Lewis's Woodpeckers were reported overall, with a high count of 46 along a 4-km section of White Rock Rd., *Mariposa* 20 Oct (DLSu). Providing a notable record for S.F., a Williamson's Sapsucker was at Presidio N.P. 22 Sep (Andrew Scavullo, JsC).

Captured, banded, measured, and photographed, a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher at FI. 8 Oct (ph. NS, OsJ, ph. †MtB, Dan Maxwell, Sara Chandler) was thoroughly documented. If accepted by the C.B.R.C., it will be the 8th record for the island and only the 9th for the Region. Five Least Flycatchers were all coastal, with one in *Humboldt*, 3 on FI., and one in *Santa Cruz*. Eastern Phoebe were split, with 3 coastal (2 on FI. and one in *Marin*) and 3 inland (singles in *Yolo*, *Merced*, and *Kings*). A Great Crested Flycatcher, representing a first for mainland S.F., was at the S.F. Zoo 28-31 Oct (p.a., ph. †HuC, m.ob.). Standing out among 15 coastal Tropical Kingbirds was one in the interior, *Yolo*'s first at N. Davis Pond 20 Nov+ (Chris Dunford, m.ob.). Constituting another first for *Yolo*, a Cassin's Kingbird was at the w. end of Road 27, 11 km nw. of Winters 15 Oct+ (SHa, MP, m.ob.). A Cassin's at 2286 m at Devils Postpile N.M. 27 Aug (†PBC) set a high-elevation record for *Madera* and probably for the state. A Western Kingbird at Heather Farm Park in Walnut Creek, *Contra Costa* 2 Nov

(Ted Robertson) was late. The only Eastern Kingbirds reported were in *Santa Cruz*: one at Seacliff S.B. 7 Aug (DLSu), one at Twin Lakes S.B. 27 Aug (PDB, SGe et al.), and one at Antonelli Pond 3 Sep (Gabriel Gartner). *Del Norte*'s 5th Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was at the Smith River Bottoms 5-20 Nov (LuB, ph. SMcA, m.ob.).

At the Vista Point ponds in McKinleyville, a Brown Shrike 21 Nov+ (GSL, LPL, m.ob.) provided the first record for *Humboldt* and just the 4th for the state. A Bell's Vireo at L. Success, *Tulare* 15 Sep (SDS) was near the site where a pair was thought to have bred last season. The Region's only Plumbeous Vireo was also in *Tulare*, at Veterans Park in Porterville 7 Oct (SDS). An ad. Hutton's Vireo feeding a juv. at the Big Sur R. mouth, *Monterey* 16 Sep (LGo, WGo) established a record late breeding date for the species anywhere in its range. A Blue-headed Vireo in Eureka, *Humboldt* 26 Oct (ph. SMcA, DCo, TKz, LTu, RbF) awaits C.B.R.C. review. The only Philadelphia Vireo reported was at Pt. Reyes N.S., *Marin* 29 Sep-1 Oct (SNGH, Jim White). Three Red-eyed Vireos included singles at Pt. Reyes N.S. 19 Sep (SBT, LTer), Little R., *Humboldt* 16 Sep (KI), and Babel Slough, *Yolo* 14 Sep (GEW). Completing the trifecta at Pt. Reyes N.S., a Yellow-green Vireo was reported from Chimney Rock 19 Sep (RS).

Out of place on the C.V. floor, a Steller's Jay in Sacramento, *Sacramento* 14 Nov+ (DPM, Dan Airola, m.ob.) drew the attention of many birders. Western Scrub-Jays staged a minor invasion along the immediate coast away from areas of residency, with six reports in *Humboldt*, one in *Del Norte*, and one in *Marin*. A total of 105 American Crows near Topaz L. 13 Nov (KNN) was a high count for *Mono*, especially away from the lowlands. Monitoring Doppler radar images led to the discovery of a roost of roughly 100,000 swallows, mostly Tree Swallows, 26 km e. of Los Banos, *Merced* 19 Oct (Bruce Cousins). A Barn Swallow over FI. 17 Nov (NS, JTz) established the latest fall record for the island. *Del Norte*'s 2nd Oak Titmouse visited a feeder in residential Crescent

SA Photographs of a dark-billed magpie in a flock of Yellow-billed Magpies at Pilot Hill, *El Dorado* 30 Nov (ph. Terry Armstrong) generated much discussion. Black-billed Magpies have occasionally been reported w. of the Sierra Nevada. However, except for one that spent two winters at a high Sierra lake in *Fresno* in the early 1930s (*Condor* 35: 198 and 36: 217), all have been attributed to escaped or released caged birds or were not sufficiently documented. Therefore, if substantiated, this bird would represent the 2nd record w. of the Sierra and the first within the range of the Yellow-billed Magpie. Fueling the discussion was the bird's apparent size and shape. Based on the photographs, the bird appeared structurally identical to the Yellow-billed Magpies with which it associated. Yet there is reportedly little if any overlap in bill size, tail length, and body size between the species, with Black-billed Magpies being larger in all respects. The lack of an obvious difference in structure led to the suggestion that this bird could have been a Yellow-billed Magpie with a pigment abnormality. Unfortunately, the bird was not observed again, and neither its identity nor its provenance could be confirmed.

SA This season, we experienced an irruption of Evening Grosbeaks on a scale not seen since the late 1980s. Reports came from low-elevation coastal and Central Valley sites starting in late Sep in *Humboldt* and spreading southward, with numbers peaking in Sep n. of San Francisco and in Oct s. of San Francisco (Figure 1). Though the number of individuals reported does not compare to historical irruptions, the geographic spread is similar. Figure 2 demonstrates the growing power of eBird to confirm anecdotal reports, allowing one to compare this year's numbers (in terms of percentage of checklists reporting the species) with the past several years. These data also suggest that the irruption may be building steam as we move into winter. Information from Regional Editors in Washington and Oregon and analyses of eBird data confirmed that this season's Evening Grosbeak movements are widespread along the West Coast, with numbers and geographic range of records in both states well above average throughout Sep and into Oct, dipping in Nov and rising again in Dec.

C.B.C. and B.B.S. data show long-term declines in Evening Grosbeak abundance across North America. Major winter irruptions s. of the breeding range in the e. United States, common into the late 1980s, are now a thing of the past. Likewise, C.B.C. data from Washington, Oregon, and California indicate that the large numbers frequently observed on the West Coast prior to the early 1990s have also not been seen in recent decades. These West Coast irruptions have been generally thought to be more altitudinal movements of locally breeding populations of the western subspecies (*brooksii*) than latitudinal movements. However, we have reason to believe that, at least this year, the irruptive birds in California may be moving down from the north. Sewall et al. (*Condor* 106: 161) found that at least four distinct call types among Evening Grosbeaks may allow one to determine the breeding range of these irruptive visitors. For the most part, Sierra-breeding birds give call Type 2 (likely corresponding to a subspecies recognized by Grinnell as *californicus*, currently lumped with *brooksii*). Based on reports from *Yolo* and recordings from *Santa Cruz*, this year's birds are giving Type 1 calls (*vide* Tom Hahn), the call type mainly associated with breeders from the Pacific Northwest and the n. Rockies. In addition, the timing of reports this year is at least suggestive of a southward movement of the phenomenon, if not of the grosbeaks.

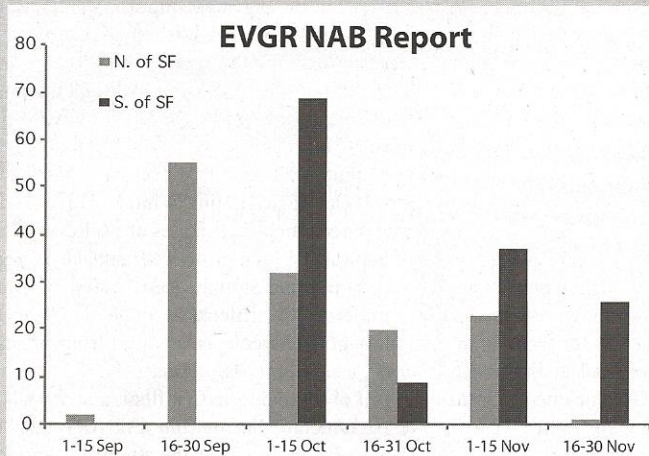


Figure 1. Number of Evening Grosbeak reports from the Region for autumn 2010, comparing totals from north of San Francisco with those from south of San Francisco.

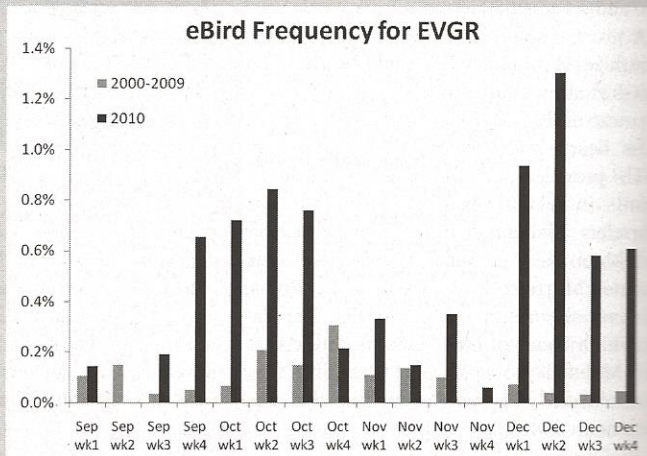


Figure 2. Data from eBird showing percentage of complete checklists for California reporting Evening Grosbeaks, comparing 2010 to the average of 2000-2009.

City 26 Oct–30 Nov (Sky Lloyd). Another, *Del Norte's* 3rd, was at the Smith River Bottoms 12 Nov (ph. TKz). *Lake's* first fall record of Mountain Bluebird was of a female at Hull Mt. 12 Oct (JRW). As many as 20,000 American Robins feasting on juniper berries on the exposed shoreline of Eagle L. in late Nov (LOR) must have been a spectacle.

THRASHERS THROUGH WARBLERS

Five Gray Catbirds furnished the Region's 2nd highest total for any season in the past 20+ years, with 2 birds at Pt. Reyes, *Marin* (10 Sep and 18 Oct) and 3 on FI. (8 & 20 Oct and 9 Nov). Sage Thrashers away from their normal range included *Madera's* earliest fall record 29 Aug se. of *Madera* (ph. GaW), 2 each in *Monterey* and *Tulare*, and singles in *Mendocino*, *Tuolumne*, *Humboldt*, *Santa Cruz*, *San Benito*, and FI. The only Brown Thrasher was at Pt. Pinole R.S. 24 Nov+ (ph. LLK, ph. Linda Pittman) and was *Contra Costa's* first. Seven Red-throated Pipits included one inland at *Yolo Basin W.A.*, *Yolo* 19 Oct (†JCS, JSL, RAR).

Four Bohemian Waxwings were near Eagle L., *Lassen* 20 Nov (LOR). *Trinity's* 2nd Lapland Longspur was an early bird found n. of Coffee Creek 7 Sep (ADB). Other Lapland Longspur reports came from 12 counties 6 Oct–28 Nov. Chestnut-collared Longspurs were at C.R.P. 9 Oct (JTr), Jenner Headlands, *Sonoma* 11 Oct (RDiG), Redwood Creek, *Humboldt* 14 Oct (SMcA), FI. 17–20 Oct (PRBO), and H.R.S. 13–18 Nov (RJR). The longspur event of the season was the 4th Regional and 8th state record of *Smith's Longspur* at FI. 6–8 Nov (ph., †NS; †JTz, ET, EA), a first for the island. A Snow Bunting was along Bald Hills Rd., *Humboldt* 14–15 Nov (TKz, DCo, ph. LTu).

Aside from reports of an outstanding Oct in *Humboldt*, the warbler season was generally unremarkable, with most species showing up in below-average numbers. The total of 25 Tennessee Warblers was just under our 20-year average of 29; however, 5 in *Santa Cruz* set a new county record. Both Virginia Warbler reports came from the same county (*San Mateo*) and same observer, with one in Half Moon Bay 26

Sep (AJ) and the other at Pilarcitos Cr. mouth 6 Oct (AJ et al.). Two Northern Parulas provided our lowest total in at least 20 years, with a late singing bird at C.R.P. 22 Aug (Paul Cordera, JTr, CCo, DKO, Mkm, TFi) and a female in *Trinidad*, *Humboldt* 1 Oct (MHa). *Humboldt* accounted for 9 of our 27 Chestnut-sided Warblers, with all reports coastal except for one that met its end against a window in *Fresno*, *Fresno* 30 Aug (LyH) and another at *Babel Slough*, *Yolo* 28 Sep (TEa, KvG). The total of 10 Magnolia Warblers was half our average, and we missed Cape May Warbler for only the 3rd time in the past 20 years. Eleven Black-throated Blue Warblers hit right on our average number. As with Cape Mays, we received no reports of Black-throated Green Warblers for only the 3rd time in the last two decades. All 10 Blackburnian Warbler reports came from coastal counties. We received only two reports of Prairie Warbler (compared to an average of 11), and both were in *Humboldt*: one at n. spit, *Humboldt Bay*, *Humboldt* 24 Sep (KI) and one at the Eel R. mouth 12 Oct (ph. SMcA). The

highlight among 110 Palm Warblers was one of the e. subspecies *hypochrysea*, a first documented record of this taxon for FI. 30 Nov (ph. NS, ET, JTz, EA, *fide* JLD and PP). A Bay-breasted Warbler at Tolay Creek Ranch 14 Sep (PBC, RAR) was *Sonoma's* 2nd. Our other 2 Bay-breasteds were in *Humboldt*: one in Orick 13 Oct (KI) and the other in Trinidad 14 Oct (MHa). Forty-four Blackpoll Warblers fell well under our fall average of 68. A female Cerulean Warbler banded at Lanphere Dunes, *Humboldt* (LTu, Kim Hollinger, ph. RbF, ph. Vitek Jirinec, m.ob.) was the 10th for the Region and the 18th for the state. Twenty-nine Black-and-white Warblers and 20 American Redstarts were both below-average numbers for these species. A single Ovenbird on FI. 1-3 Oct (PRBO) matched our previous low for this species, and 13 Northern Waterthrushes was just 60% of our average. FI. produced a Mourning Warbler 12 Sep (Dan Maxwell; ph., †OsJ) and a Connecticut Warbler 14 Sep (ph., †MtB; ph., †JTz; †OsJ, Dan Maxwell). Continuing its domination of warbler records this season, *Humboldt* accounted for our only Hooded Warblers, with one at Mad River C.P. 6-12 Sep and another at Mad R. estuary 29 Oct–1 Nov (Brent Campos, TWL et al.). Canada Warblers were at Pine Gulch, *Marin* 10 Sep (KH), Pt. Reyes, *Marin* 23 Sep (ph. David Moore), FI. 3 Oct (PRBO), and Redwood Creek, *Humboldt* 17-22 Oct (LuB, DCo, TKz, m.ob.).

SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES

Six Green-tailed Towhees included 4 on the C.V. floor (3 in *Sacramento* and one in *Yolo*), one in *S.F.*, and one in the foothills of *Solano*. A Cassin's Sparrow along Redwood Cr. in Orick 13-19 Oct (KI, ph. SMcA, m.ob.) was *Humboldt's* 2nd, the 5th non-FI. record for the Region, and only the 2nd non-FI. fall Regional record. American Tree Sparrows were in McKinleyville, *Humboldt* 22-24 Oct (GSL, LPL) and at Davis Creek, *Modoc* 28 Nov (SCR). Forty-nine Clay-colored Sparrows were all in coastal or S.F. Bay Area counties. Black-throated Sparrows were in Coyote Hills R.P., *Alameda* 22-26 Sep (ph. Gail West, Stephanie Floyd, ph. m.ob.), near Arroyo Seco, *Monterey* 25 Sep (ph. Bruce Finocchio, *fide* JSo), and along Little Panoche Rd., *Fresno* 22-23 Oct (ADeM, JSL). Lark Bunting reports continue to be sparse, with just 2 birds this fall, one on FI. 25 Aug (PRBO) and one at Pt. Reyes, *Marin* 16 Sep (Barbara Carlson). Swamp Sparrows put in a decent showing, with 38 reports that included a first record for *Kings* in Hanford 23 Nov+ (ADeM) and a 2nd for *Modoc* at Tule L. 26 Nov (SCR). The total of 89 White-throated Sparrows was below average. Harris's Sparrows were along Millville Plains Rd., *Shasta* 26 Oct (Frank

& Daliss Sanderson), on FI. 11 & 28-29 Nov (PRBO; EA, JTz, NS, ET), and in Crescent City, *Del Norte* 29 Nov (Gary Maschmeyer).

Nine Summer Tanagers were all coastal, with *S.F.* producing 4 of those. We set a new Regional high for any season with 3 Scarlet Tanagers: singles at Pt. Reyes, *Marin* 8 Oct (ph. ET), the *S.F. Zoo*, *S.F.* 28-31 Oct (†DPM, †Alan Ridley, †MWE, m.ob.), and on FI. 6 Nov (NS, JTz et al.). Sixteen Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and 8 Indigo Buntings were close to average numbers for these species. A Painted Bunting at Ferndale Bottoms 8-9 Oct (ph. TKz, Jesse Sargent, m.ob.) was *Humboldt's* 4th. Four of our 11 Bobolinks were on FI. 13 Sep–7 Oct. A Rusty Blackbird at the Woodland W.T.P. 28 Oct (TEa, JCS) would be *Yolo's* 2nd if accepted by the C.B.R.C. Doran R.P., *Sonoma* was the location of two Rusty Blackbird reports, one undocumented report of a female 11 Nov (DHF), followed by a male 18 Nov (ph. Dan Brown). Sixteen Orchard Orioles were all in coastal or S.F. Bay Area counties, but our only Baltimore Oriole was inland at the Sacramento Bypass 11 Sep (*Yolo's* 2nd; TEa, KvG).

Addenda: The following significant records did not make it into the summer 2010 report. The first photographically documented Barred Owl in *Modoc* was paired with a Spotted Owl at a Manzanita Ridge nest site 30 Jun (DEQ, ph. JLD, KAb). Great Gray Owls had been confirmed breeding in the state only as far n. as *El Dorado*, so a fledgling photographed at an undisclosed location in *Modoc* 16 Jul (ph. DEQ) established not only a first county breeding record but also the northernmost breeding record for the state by roughly 300 km.

Corrigendum: *Mendocino's* first winter record of White-throated Swift, cited in the winter 2009-2010 report, was misattributed. The actual observer was JRW. We regret this error.

Cited observers (county coordinators in bold-face): Ken Able (*Lassen*), Elizabeth Ames, Alan D. Barron, Leonie Batkin, Bob Battagin, Murray Berner (*Napa*), William G. Bousman (*Santa Clara*), Matthew Brady (*Stanislaus*), Phil D. Brown, Lucas Brug, Ken Burton, Helen Button, Eric R. Caine, Josiah Clark, Peter B. Colasanti, Daryl Coldren, Chris Conard (*Sacramento*), Hugh Cotter, Rudy Darling (*Nevada*), Jeff N. Davis (*Madera*), Al DeMartini, Bruce E. Deuel (n. C.V. counties), Ryan DiGaudio, Colin P. Dillingham (*Plumas* and *Sierra*), Jon L. Dunn, Robert P. Dunn, Todd Easterla, Mark W. Eaton (*San Francisco*), Ray Ekstrom (*Siskiyou*), Gil C. Ewing, Brian Fitch, Tim Fitzer, David Fix, Rob Fowler (RbF;

Humboldt), Steve Gerow (*Santa Cruz*), Steve A. Glover (*Contra Costa*), Lois Goldfrank, Wally Goldfrank, Kevin Guse, Melody Hamilton, Steve C. Hampton, Keith Hansen, Rob Hansen, W. Edward Harper, Syd Harrison, Garth Harwood, Floyd Hayes, Lynn Hemink, Rob Hewitt, David Hofmann, Craig Hohenberger, Steven N. G. Howell, John E. Hunter (*Trinity*), Ken Irwin, Alvaro Jaramillo, Richard G. Jeffers, Oscar Johnson, Robert J. Keiffer (*Mendocino*), Roland Kenner, Pat Kenny, Larry Kent, Dan Kopp, Tony Kurz, Robin L. C. Leong (*Solano*), Tom W. Leskiw, Gary S. Lester, Lauren P. Lester, John Lockhart, Jim Lomax, Laura Look, John S. Luther, Michael J. Mammoser, Timothy D. Manolis, Mark Martucci, Sean McAllister, Todd McGrath, Richard Merriss, Peter J. Metropulos (*San Mateo*), Dominik Mosur, Dan P. Murphy, Kristie N. Nelson (*Mono*), Frances Oliver (*San Joaquin*), Lew Oring, Ed Pandolfino (*Placer*), Michael Perrone, Eric Pilotte, Jeff Poklen, Gary W. Potter (*Fresno*), Jude C. Power, Robert C. Power, Peter Pyle, David E. Quady, Harold M. Reeve, Will Richardson, Robert J. Richmond (*Alameda*), Don Roberson (*Monterey*), Michael M. Rogers, Stephen C. Rottenborn, Ruth A. Rudesill (*Sonoma*), Adam Searcy (*Marin*), Jeff Seay (*Kings*), Shearwater Journeys, Debra Love Shearwater, David Shuford, Dan Singer, Jim H. Snowden, John Sorensen, Mark Stacy, Rich Stallcup, John C. Sterling (*Modoc*, *Alpine*, *Calaveras*, and *Yolo*), Noah Stryker, David L. Suddjian (*Santa Cruz*), Brian L. Sullivan, Steven D. Summers (*Tulare*), Erika Taketa, Linda Terrill, Scott B. Terrill, Ronald S. Thorn, Jim Tietz (FI.), John Trochet, Leslie Tucci (*Del Norte*), Steve Umland (*Tuolumne*), Kent Van Vuren (*Merced* and *San Benito*), David Vander Pluym (*Mariposa*), Jerry R. White (*Lake*), Alan Wight, Dan Williams, Roger Wolfe, Gary Woods, David Yee, Bob & Carol Yutzky (*Shasta*). Many more observers are not specifically cited; all are appreciated. ☺

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