

com 28 Feb (ph. N. Sanday). A subpar 3 American Tree Sparrows were tallied in w. Washington this winter; this species has been on the decline in w. Washington for over a decade. Similarly, w. Oregon's single American Tree Sparrow at Astoria, *Clatsop* through 2 Dec contrasts with the expected four or five. Chipping Sparrows, less than annual in Washington during winter, included singles at Vancouver Lake, *Clark* 10 Dec (J. Danzenbaker) and Bridgeport, *Douglas* 23 Dec (M. Spencer). Oregon's only Clay-colored Sparrow for the period persisted at Astoria, *Clatsop* through 13 Dec (MP); typically one to 2 is expected. Given that there were only three previous winter Washington records, a Vesper Sparrow at Lake Terrell, *Whatcom* 3 Jan (RK) and another continuing from fall near Burlington, *Shagit* thru 21 Feb (G. Bletsch) were noteworthy. A Lark Sparrow near Ilwaco, *Pacific* 28 Jan (ph. D. Swanson) provided the third winter record for Washington. In Oregon the only Lark Sparrows outside of regular wintering areas in the Rogue Valley were one at Roseburg, *Douglas* 19-24 Dec (J. Billstine) and a very rare coastal winter record at Sunset Beach S.P., *Clatsop* 8 January (D. Osis). A mere 5 Harris's Sparrows were reported in Oregon from *Marion*, *Lincoln*, *Tillamook*, *Curry*, *Josephine*, and *Marion*. The paucity of eastside reports likely reflects limited coverage. Further, the species is regular enough there that some may go unreported. Golden-crowned X White-crowned Sparrows were again detected with singles at Neah Bay, *Clallam* 13 Dec (ph. RM, BW) and Elma, *Grays Harbor* 18 Jan (S. Mills, B. Tweit).

Hooded Oriole has been recorded over 40 times in Oregon, but one at se. Portland 10-12 Feb (E. Edwards) netted *Multnomah*'s first. A Hooded Oriole was also at Seaside 10 Jan-2 Feb.

A Baltimore Oriole at the same Seaside location 12 Dec-11 Feb (MP) represented Oregon's twenty-fourth, and was also the fourth O.B.R.C.-accepted winter record. A Bullock's Oriole enlivened Seattle 9-28 Dec (W. Neufeld-Kaiser) providing the seventeenth winter record for Washington while the only Oregon Bullock's were singles at Newport, *Lincoln* 5 Dec-27 Feb and North Bend, *Coos* 26 Dec-4 Jan. Five Rusty Blackbirds noted in Washington made for a typical winter tally. A Rusty Blackbird was at Roseburg, *Douglas* 1-24 Dec (K. Pheifer); the species was removed from the O.B.R.C. review list within the past year and one detection for this period is to be expected. A **Common Grackle** visiting Acme 21 Dec-2 Jan (ph. N. Sanday) provided a first for *Whatcom*, while one at Wallula, *Walla Walla* 6 Feb was likely a continuing individual from Nov; Washington has just shy of 20 records with only a few in winter. Up to 4 Great-tailed Grackles were at McDermit, *Harney* 2 Jan (W. and P. Bowers), up to 3 wintered at Ontario, *Malheur* (where regular), and 3 were at Nuss Lake, *Klamath* 18 Jan (J. Van Moorhem). Winter records are still barely annual in Oregon, but increasing.

A Nashville Warbler was noted at Port Angeles 20 Dec (C. Wilcox); though nearly annual during winter in Oregon over the last decade, there are only a handful of winter records in Washington. The only Nashville Warbler in OR was at Harbor, *Curry* 18 Jan (S. Chambers). A MacGillivray's Warbler, very rare during winter in Oregon, was at Millicoma Marsh, *Coos* 22 Nov-14 Dec (TR). A **Hooded Warbler**, Washington's seventh, continued from fall and survived the entire winter at Neah Bay, *Clallam* (m.ob.). Two Palm Warblers 6 Dec-24 Jan was a normal winter total for w. Washington. A **Yellow-throated**

Warbler enlivened Longview, *Cowlitz* 13-26 Dec (ph. V. McClelland) and provided the third record for Washington; the previous two Washington records were in e. Washington and included one in *Okanogan* Dec-Jan 2001/2002 and another in *Asotin* Oct 2003. Single Hermit Warblers, rare but annual in Oregon during winter, were at Eugene, *Lane* 8 Feb (D. Gleason) and Portland 9 Jan (Q. Ma). Six Wilson's Warbler reports represented an exceptional winter total in Washington and included a very rare e. Washington record at Spokane 4 Dec (JI). Three Western Tanagers were noted 9-30 Dec; this species is now annual during winter in w. Washington. A female Rose-breasted Grosbeak visited a feeder east of Eugene at Walterville, *Lane* 11-20 Feb (V. Buck).

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The El Niño conditions failed to bring hoped for drought relief. December precipitation was well below normal in most of the Region. A wet January was encouraging, but February was among the driest in history, with much of Northern California receiving only trace amounts of precipitation. El Niño conditions and strong winds were likely responsible for an unprecedented showing of Leach's Storm-Petrels along the coast. Highlights included the

Region's first Nazca Booby, second Brown-crested Flycatcher, and second winter record of Least Tern, and the Central Valley's first Black-headed Gull in 30 years.

Abbreviations: C.B.R.C. (California B.R.C.); C.R.P. (Cosumnes River Preserve, *Sacramento*); C.V. (Central Valley); FI. (Southeast Farallon Island, *San Francisco*); Point Blue (Point Blue 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 Tom Benson, Secretary, secretary@californiabirds.org.

WATERFOWL

A Brant at Clovis, *Fresno* 8-13 Jan (Chris Hiatt, ph. Rick Saxton, m.ob.) was unexpected so far inland. A Cackling Goose at Swanton Pond 27 Nov–4 Jan (ph. Jeff Bleam, ph. Sharon Hull, Pete Sole', m.ob.) was identified as the first of the *taverneri* subspecies to be found in *Santa Cruz*. Trumpeter Swans were widely reported, with the first found northwest of Stockton, *San Joaquin* 20 Dec (†DGY). Up to 6 were found southeast of Chico, *Butte* 3-21 Feb (m.ob.), one was at Manchester S.P. 6 Feb+ (first well-documented *Mendocino* record; TDB, ph., m.ob.), one was at the Smith R. Bottoms, *Del Norte* 12-19 Feb (ph. LBr, ph. TKz, ph. Dave Bengston), and 8 were in two *Modoc* locations 28 Feb (SCR). A Bewick's Tundra Swan was at Goose Lake, *Modoc* 27 Feb (SCR).

Ten Eurasian Green-winged Teal found in seven counties 19 Dec+ included 4 in *Humboldt* (ph., m.ob.). Male Tufted Ducks were at Clifton Court Forebay, *Contra Costa* 17 Dec (Albert Linkowski); Inverness, *Marin* 19-25 Dec (ScC); Stafford Lake, *Marin* 23-29 Feb (Todd Plummer, ph., m.ob.). A female Tufted Duck was at Hudemann Slough, *Sonoma* 5 Dec (Mark Stephenson). The continuing Black Scoter at Richmond was joined by two additional Black Scoters 20 Jan–10 Feb (Albert Linkowski, ph. m.ob.), up to 2 White-winged Scoters through 13 Feb (m.ob.), and a Long-tailed Duck 9-10 Feb (ph., m.ob.); all are scarce in *Contra Costa*. Seven other Long-tailed Ducks were found in four coastal counties (m.ob.). Red-breasted Mergansers continued to be well reported inland, with 15 found in seven C.V. counties throughout the period (m.ob.).

LOONS THROUGH CORMORANTS

Continued operation of Monterey Audubon Society's Pt. Pinos, *Monterey* seawatch (see the Fall 2015 report for details) 1-15 Dec produced 1108 Red-throated Loons and 96,958 Pacific Loons (Tony Leukering et al.). Eighty Red-throated Loons at Coyote Pt., *San Mateo* 4 Jan (RSTh) furnished a high count so far inside S.F. Bay. In addition to 6 inland Pacific Loons, single Red-throateds were at Lake Shastina, *Siskiyou* 15-16 Dec (ph. DbP, JmP) and Folsom Lake, *Placer* 11 Jan (CDu). A Yellow-billed Loon at Heron's Head Park, S.F. 24 Jan (ASH, ph. Bob Gunderson, m.ob.) furnished the sixth record for S.F. Horned Grebes are scarce at most inland locations, but counts of up to 61 at Thermalito Afterbay, *Butte* 31 Dec–14 Jan (BED, JCS, m.ob.), as well as triple-digit counts from Lake Almanor, *Plumas* in winter 2013-2014 indicate that local concentra-

tions can occur. Among the 25 coastal Red-necked Grebes (an average showing), one at Lake Merced 15 Dec (CLO) represented a rare "inland" record for S.F. Others farther inland included up to 3 at Calero Res., *Santa Clara* 27 Dec–4 Feb (RCP, Lucy Clifford, m.ob.); one at South Lake Tahoe, *El Dorado* 1-2 Dec (ScD); a continuing bird at Potter Valley, *Mendocino* to 6 Dec (GEC, ph. RJK, m.ob.); one at Whiskeytown Lake, *Shasta* 12-26 Dec (ph. B&CY, MSw). A concentration of 400 Eared Grebes at Black Butte Res., *Glenn* 10 Jan (LKe, Bruce Mast) was a high count for the Sacramento Valley. In contrast, very few have been present during Dec at Mono Lake, *Mono* the past few years, with double-digit counts only a shadow of the hundreds of thousands recorded there in years past (KNN). A Mottled Petrel found dead at Clam Beach, *Humboldt* 25 Dec (ph. GSL) was the first reported in the Region since Fall 2014. Buller's Shearwaters infrequently linger past early-Nov; 4 seen 16 km off the *Mendocino* coast 1 Dec (Jason Pietrzak et al.) were late. The only Flesh-footed Shearwaters were singles near the aforementioned Buller's and off *Santa Cruz* 19 Dec (AMR, NLv). Leukering's

seawatch at Pt. Pinos, *Monterey* tallied 111 Short-tailed Shearwaters, as compared with 75 Sooty and 102 identified only as Short-tailed/Sooty 1-15 Dec. That location also produced all 5 Manx Shearwaters: singles 12 Dec, 5 Jan, and 17 Feb, and 2 birds 23 Dec (Tony Leukering, BLS, ph. DR, †BTM). Black-vented Shearwaters continued in high numbers after a huge fall influx, with 34,492 recorded at Pt. Pinos 1-15 Dec (Tony Leukering et al.), 15,600 at Pigeon Pt., *San Mateo* 9 Dec (RSTh), and 45 far north at the Klamath R. mouth, *Del Norte* 2 Jan (LBr); 4 birds 60 km southwest of Pt. Arena, *Mendocino* 1 Dec (DVP, LHa et al.) were unusually far offshore.

A second-cycle Masked/Nazca booby at Pt. Pinos, *Monterey* 1 Feb (ph. BLS, PFW, AHO et al.) had orange color appearing on the bill, confirming the Region's first record of Nazca Booby. Brown Booby numbers at F.I. steadily increased from 16-17 in Dec to 30 in Jan before peaking at a Regional record-high 32 on 25 Feb (Point Blue). Birds were even seen carrying nesting material on several occasions! Other Brown Boobies were 65 km west-southwest of Fort Bragg, *Mendocino* 1

SA Leach's Storm-Petrels were recorded in numbers that were unprecedented for winter, with more than 50 reported, mostly from shore during high winds. One at the mouth of Crescent City Harbor, *Del Norte* 10 Dec (ADB) was followed by a pulse of 15 during high winds at Pt. Pinos, *Monterey*, 13-14 Dec (ph. Tony Leukering, m.ob.), including one dark-rumped bird 14 Dec. (ph., †Tony Leukering). One was seen from a cruise ship 61 km west-southwest of F.I. 17 Dec (Michael Harrison et al.), and another was at Pt. Pinos 22 Dec (ph. PFW). High winds 23-24 Jan then brought Leach's inshore over a broader area. On 23 Jan, 11 were at Pt. Pinos (ph. BLS, m.ob.); S.F. recorded its first four City records, with one at Ocean Beach (STu), 2 at Land's End (one being carried by a Peregrine Falcon; ASH, ph. PSar, HuC), and one headed inland at the S.F. Zoo (KnS, †STu, m.ob.); additional singles were at Bodega Harbor, *Sonoma* (Will Anderson, Brook O'Connor) and Drakes Estero at Point Reyes N.S., *Marin* (†Will Anderson, Gordon Bennett, et al.). The next day, a boat 3.2 km off Pt. Pinos recorded 2 (Bernardo Alps), and 6 were seen from Pigeon Pt., *San Mateo* (Lbt, RSTh, MKu). Another was found dead at Mattole Rd., *Humboldt* 27 Jan (Elizabeth Feucht). The last were 7 birds at Pt. Pinos 1 Feb, including one all-dark bird (ph., †BLS, DR et al.). The Region had only a handful of prior winter records, as this species typically winters off Central and South America. Leach's Storm-Petrels may have been enticed to linger farther n. than usual due to unusually warm offshore waters, and strong storms then blew the birds landward where they were detected. The two records of all-dark birds at Pt. Pinos are particularly interesting. Dark Leach's-type storm-petrels are presumably of the subspecies *chapmani* that breeds off Baja California and possibly farther n., though the taxonomy of dark-rumped birds recorded (and possibly breeding) north to the Farallon Islands still requires more investigation. All prior records of dark-rumped birds in the Region were from May–Sep, and none had been seen from shore before this winter. Other storm-petrels seen from Pt. Pinos during these storms included 17 Fork-tailed 24-25 Dec (ph. DR, ph. BLS et al.), 11 Fork-tailed and 6 Ashy 1 Feb (ph. BLS, ph. PFW, †DR et al.).

Dec (Jason K Pietrzak, DVP, LHa); at Devil's Slide, *San Mateo* 2-8 Dec (D. Pomeroy et al.); at Land's End, S.F. 30 Dec+ (BFi, m.ob.); at Crescent City, *Del Norte* 10 Jan (Melissa McDowell; found dead); at Tomales Bay, *Marin* 6 Feb (David Lumpkin, Scott Jennings); at Pt. Pinos, *Monterey* 7-11 Feb (Steffan Rodebrand, BLS et al.). An imm. Blue-footed Booby at FI. 18-29 Feb was accompanied by an ad. on the first date of occurrence (Point Blue). The resident Northern Gannet was seen only sporadically (on 29% of days) at its usual outpost on FI. (Point Blue); it was detected more often than in previous seasons at Pillar Pt. and other *San Mateo* locations north to Pacifica throughout the period (m.ob.). Seventy Brandt's Cormorants at Coyote Pt., *San Mateo* during a herring run 27 Dec (RSTh) provided a high count so far inside S.F. Bay.

BITTERNs THROUGH CRANES

Coastal Cattle Egrets were scarce, with single birds in *Del Norte* 30 Dec (Romain Cooper), *Santa Clara* 4-12 Jan (RPh, m.ob.), and *Humboldt* 27 Feb (TKz); up to 2 birds were in *Santa Cruz* 15-24 Dec (m.ob.), with a single there 20-24 Jan (Norman Uyeda et al.). Coastal White-faced Ibis, on the other hand, were much more numerous, with high counts of up to 24 in *Santa Cruz* 12 Dec (Jeff Roisman) and 33 in *Monterey* 13 Jan (CSc, ph. PFW).

Marin's Black Vulture was seen again, this time over Abbotts Lagoon 28 Feb (Shannon Burke). The continuing *Sonoma* Common Black-Hawk was reported near Delta Pond 12 Feb (PBC). Seven Harlan's Red-tailed Hawks in six counties included *Monterey's* second at Elkhorn Slough 23 Jan-20 Feb (Jane Rudebusch, ph. BLS, ph., m.ob.). Black Rails continued to be detected at Alviso Marina C.P., *Santa Clara* 20 Dec-21 Feb (MMR, SCR et al.); another was seen at C.R.P. 17 Dec (Joanne Katanic, Virginia Bonham). A Sandhill Crane first found 24 Sep near Delta Pond, *Sonoma* remained through the period (Don Kirker, ph., m.ob.).

SHOREBIRDS

Very rare so far south in S.F. Bay, a Black Oystercatcher at Alviso 12 Jan-3 Mar (Victoria Heyse *vide* MJM, PDu et al.) was the fifth for *Santa Clara*. A Solitary Sandpiper returned along Rd. 208 5 km northwest of Millerton Lake, *Madera* for a third consecutive winter 14 Nov-18 Mar (ph., m.ob.). Rare winter C.V. Willets included singles along W. Woodbridge Rd., *San Joaquin* 26 Dec (†Brad Rangell) and Woodruff Lane, *Yuba* 12 Jan (†David Magney). C.V. Marbled Godwits, likewise rare in winter, were found

at Staten Island, *San Joaquin* 20 Dec (LPt, TFi, m.ob.) and Colusa N.W.R., *Colusa* 31 Jan (LaG). Two Lesser Yellowlegs at Anderson River Park 10-12 Jan (ph. Barbara Peck, Brooke McDonald), with one continuing to 23 Feb (†MSw), were unexpected in *Shasta*, particularly in winter. A Ruddy Turnstone near Candlestick S.R.A. 29 Dec-8 Jan (Stephen Berlyant, BFi) was the first in many years on the S.F. bay-side and especially unexpected in winter. Last season's *Contra Costa* Ruff returned to Richmond W.T.P. 15 Dec-20 Jan (LKh, ph., m.ob.); other Ruffs were at Alviso, *Santa Clara* 20 Dec-9 Jan (Steve Tracey, BBrr, m.ob.); at Merced N.W.R., *Merced* 24 Dec-20 Feb (PDu, Hugo Ceja); at Pixley N.W.R., *Tulare* 1 Jan (†Diana Kinder); and at Tulare W.T.P., *Tulare* 12 Feb (ph. DaF). *Contra Costa's* first Stilt Sandpiper was long-overdue at Bethel Island 18-22 Jan (ph. Albert Linkowski, m.ob.). Rare anywhere in the Region in winter, a Wilson's Phalarope was at Ripon W.T.P., *San Joaquin* 2 Jan (ph. CCo, DKo).

ALCIDS THROUGH TERNS

Pigeon Guillemots are Regionally scarce in winter; singles were in *Santa Cruz* at Santa Cruz 19 Dec (CKf) and Terrace Pt. 7 Feb (MSc, LGo), and in *Mendocino* at Mendocino Headlands S.P. 1 Jan (ph. RAD) and Pt. Arena 24 Jan (CEV et al.). Tufted Puffins generally move farther offshore in winter, so singles seen from shore at Moss Beach, *San Mateo* 19 Dec (RSTh) and Pt. Pinos, *Monterey* 31 Jan (Steffan Rodebrand) were noteworthy. The tally of Bonaparte's Gulls wintering at Black Butte Res. peaked at 125 on 10 Jan (LKh, Bruce Mast), providing a high count for *Tehama*. *Stanislaus's* first Black-headed Gull, and the only C.V. record aside from the 1979-1986 string of sightings at Stockton, *San Joaquin*, was at the Modesto W.T.P. 13 Dec (HMR, ERC, RBk, JHG, SSa) before moving to the Ceres W.T.P. 26 Dec-4 Jan (HMR, ph. GaW, ph. Mark Rauzon, m.ob.). The season's sole Laughing Gull was a first-cycle bird recorded in *Santa Cruz* from the Baldwin Creek mouth to the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf 7 Jan-6 Feb (JPo, Adam Romswinkel-Guisse, LGo, Sherree Sheide, ph. AMR, m.ob.). In addition to those reported in fall, Tony Leukering's seabird migration monitoring at Pt. Pinos, *Monterey* documented 11 more migrant Ring-billed Gulls 1-15



The first Black-headed Gull for Stanislaus County, California, and the first in the Central Valley since 1986 appeared at the Modesto Water Treatment Plant 13 December. It later moved to the Ceres Water Treatment Plant (where this photo was taken) 26 December-4 January. Photo © Mark Rauzon.

Dec. Otherwise, reports along rocky coastlines or offshore included only singles near Fort Bragg, *Mendocino* 27 Dec (*vide* TDB) and at FI. 7 Jan (Point Blue). Among a smattering of inland Mew and Glaucous-winged gulls, the standouts (farthest inland) were single individuals of each species at Eagle Lake, *Lassen* 17 Dec (ph. JLD, KAB et al.). Four Glaucous-winged Gulls were scattered in the Sacramento Valley, where the species has become regular in recent years. A Thayer's Gull at Kutras Lake 12 Feb (B&CY) was noteworthy in *Shasta*. Single first-cycle gulls at Moss Landing, *Monterey* 9 Feb (ph. Steffan Rodebrand) and Lucchesi Park in Petaluma, *Sonoma* 28-29 Feb (FHa, ph. Ron Storey, ScC) showed characters of Kumlien's Iceland Gull but were similar to many other individuals that have not been accepted by the C.B.R.C. (for a discussion of the characters of first-cycle Iceland Gulls that have been considered acceptable, see Hampton, S. 2013. Status of the Iceland Gull at the Yolo County Central Landfill. *Central Valley Bird Club Bulletin* 16:1-12).

The season's total of 8 Lesser Black-backed Gulls was well above the 10-year average of 3.7/winter. Individuals included a third cycle at the Gaffery Rd. Recology Plant and Delta Mendota Canal, *Stanislaus* and *San Joaquin*, 6 Dec-2 Jan (DGY, ph. HMR, m.ob.); second for *Stanislaus*; an ad. at the Yolo County Landfill, *Yolo* 30 Dec-4 Mar (ph. SCH), where the species has been annual in recent years; a third cycle at Bravo Lake, *Tulare* 2 Jan (ph. DaF); a second cycle at the Ogier Ponds near Morgan Hill, *Santa Clara* 16 Jan (ph. SCR); a third cycle at Harkins Slough near Watson-

ville 29 Jan (ph., †AMR) that provided an overdue first record for *Santa Cruz*; a first cycle at Folsome Lake, *Placer* 3 Feb with an ad. there 6 Feb (TEa, JCS, m.ob.); an ad. at Upper Crystal Springs Res., *San Mateo* 9 Feb (RSTh). A distinctive ad. Slaty-backed Gull with a white upper-primary covert returned for its fourth winter to Miller/Knox R.S., *Contra Costa* 18-22 Jan (ph. STu, m.ob.). Another ad. was reported east of Suisun City, *Solano* 18-25 Jan (RMu, JCS, LKh). A first-cycle gull at Agua Vista Park, S.F. 3 Jan (ph. Noah Arthur) looked good for a Slaty-backed; identification criteria for first-cycle birds are still being worked out (see McKee, T., P. Pyle, and N. Moores. 2014. Vagrancy and identification in first cycle Slaty-backed Gulls. *Birding* 46:38-51). The season total of 27 Glaucous Gulls was below the 10-year average of 40/winter. Notable individuals included one walking streets in downtown S.F. 20-28 Jan (Everett Clark, ph. Jon Sieker, m.ob.); single ads. well inland at Cosumnes River Preserve, *Sacramento* 17-25 Jan (JTr, ph. Bob Ellis) and Delevan N.W.R., *Colusa* 31 Jan (ph. Mario Balitbit); up to 2 first-cycle birds at the Koster Rd. pond, *San Joaquin* 6 Dec+ (JHm et al.).

Caspian Terns winter regularly in our Region only in *Humboldt*, where up to 8 were present at the Elk R. mouth into early-Feb (EE, m.ob.). They are much rarer in winter elsewhere, therefore three reports of single birds in *Santa Cruz* 1-24 Jan (Jennifer Green, DSy, MSc) were noteworthy. The first north-bound arrivals were noted 23 Feb at both Moss Landing, *Monterey* (DGl et al.) and San Leandro Marina, *Alameda* (RJR). The last Elegant Tern was at Seabright S.B., *Santa Cruz* 13 Dec (AMR). Royal Terns once again made news. Three at South Ocean Beach 2 Jan (†PSar) provided the first modern S.F. record, and one at Twin Lakes S.B. 21 Dec (ph. RyT) provided the first record for *Santa Cruz* since 1988. Up to 5 near Año Nuevo S.R., *San Mateo* throughout most of Jan wandered into *Santa Cruz* 13 & 23 Jan (AMR, JSL). In *Monterey*, 7 were documented at Pt. Pinos through 31 Jan (Tony Leukering, ph. BLS, ph. DR, m.ob.), and one was at Moss Landing 15 Jan (Richard Sandkuhle). Providing a remarkable winter record, a juv. **Least Tern** found dead (Cassie Bednar, ph. Taylor Nairn) furnished a first FI. record 19 Jan. The bird had not been dead more than one-to-two weeks based on the condition of the specimen. Least Terns winter primarily in South America, and there is only one prior winter record for the Region: a bird videotaped at Capitola, *Santa Cruz* 26 Feb 2004. Other small terns (such as Little, Peru-

vian, and Saunders's), which should be considered with such unseasonal records, were not necessarily eliminated in the case of the 2004 bird but appear to be eliminated in the case of the FI. specimen.

DOVES THROUGH THRUSHES

Although hardly notable compared with the results of last winter's incursion, one Band-tailed Pigeon at Lodi Lake N.A., *San Joaquin* 5 Dec (Pat Paternostro) and 47 at Michigan Bar, *Sacramento* 8 Feb (GEW) provided unusual records for the C.V. Four White-winged Doves included one at Moss Landing, *Monterey* that continued from fall through 8 Jan (DSy, ph. DR et al.), one at Benicia, *Solano* Dec 1+ (ph. Danny Swicegood), and 2 at Holland Tract 17 Dec-2 Feb (LKh, Jansen Liu, m.ob.), representing the third record for *Contra Costa* and one of few for the C.V. *Humboldt* has amassed more records of Snowy Owl than any other county in CA; it added another on Humboldt Bay's South Spit 18-19 Feb (ph. Brad Elvert, m.ob.). This was not the only owl to generate buzz in the county, however. *Humboldt's* third Great Gray Owl, at Prairie Creek Redwoods S.P. 19 Jan+, attracted numerous observers (Danielle Westberg, Emily Christian, ph., m.ob.). In contrast with those during last winter's invasion, numbers of Lewis's Woodpeckers in the Region this winter were remarkably low. Also unusually scarce this season was Yellow-bellied Sapsucker; the total of 5 reported was nearly 80% lower than the 10-year average. Although the total of 11 Red-naped Sapsuckers, including *Yolo's* second at Putah Creek Resort 16 Dec (Rick Williams) was closer to the 10-year average for that species, it was still 65% lower than last winter's total.

Only 3 *Empidonax* flycatchers were reported during the period. They included one Least Flycatcher at Ferndale Bottoms, *Humboldt* 3-6 Jan (ph. TKz, m.ob.) and 2 Pacific-slope Flycatchers: one at Clear Lake S.P., *Lake* 15 Dec (DvW) and another at Soquel, *Santa Cruz* 28 Feb (Aaron Gabbe). Three Eastern Phoebes included singles at Merced N.W.R., *Merced* 29 Nov-5 Dec (ph. Dale Swanberg, PDu); Eureka Marsh, *Humboldt* (ph. RbF, Laurie Lawrence); S.F. Zoo, S.F. 29 Dec+ (ph. DPM, ph., m.ob.). A **Brown-crested Flycatcher** at Holland Tract 17 Dec (ph. LKh, m.ob.) furnished the first record for *Contra Costa* and the second for the Region. Tropical Kingbirds have been increasing in the Region and the total of 19 this period represents an all-time seasonal high, more than three times the 10-year average. All were in coastal counties except

one, at Hanford, *Kings* 6-8 Feb (MSy), at the same location where 2 were present in 2012-2013. A total of 11 Cassin's Kingbirds away from areas of regular occurrence, including 4 as far north as *San Joaquin*, made for a good showing. Our only Western Kingbird was a disheveled-looking bird at the Tracy W.T.P., *San Joaquin* 8 Dec (ph. Terry Ronneberg).

Non-resident vireos included 4 Cassin's with 2 from coastal and bayside counties and 2 inland, and one Warbling Vireo singing at Briones R.P., *Contra Costa* 27 Feb (Andrew Rush). *Plumas's* first Blue Jay lingered through the period (Paul Hardy, Gary Rotta, CPD, DPA, ph., m.ob.). Numbers have been building locally, but a group of 114 Common Ravens at Riley Rd. during the Rio Cosumnes C.B.C. 4 Jan (AEn) established a new single-site high count for *Sacramento*. Our only overwintering Northern Rough-winged Swallow was at Bridgeway Island Pond, *Yolo* 24 Dec-7 Jan (Maureen Geiger). Winter (Dec-Jan) Barn Swallows were much more plentiful, with 28 birds tallied in three coastal counties: *Humboldt*, *Santa Clara*, and *Santa Cruz*. Townsend's Solitaire away from areas of residency included 11 birds from five coastal or bayside counties. A Swainson's Thrush at Golden Gate Park, S.F. 24-30 Dec (JsC, ph. m.ob.) provided one of the Region's few verified winter records. Coincidentally, it follows one from *Marin* last winter. Some areas, especially in coastal and bayside counties, witnessed massive numbers of roosting, commuting, and foraging American Robins. Four teams of counters armed with handheld clickers tallied just over 90,000 birds flying into a night roost at Carmel Valley Village, *Monterey* 7 Jan (BLS, PFw, CRo, RC, DR, et al.). Although that number was nearly double the previous single-locality high count for the Region, it paled in comparison to the mind-blowing estimate of 245,000 birds departing roost sites at the same location 20 Jan (BLS, PFw). In contrast, Varied Thrushes were scarce in the Region; perhaps emblematic, numbers in *Santa Clara* were down 75% from the 10-year average (*vide* WGB).

THRASHERS THROUGH WARBLERS

Three Sage Thrashers, a typical showing, were all found in Feb and entailed singles at Shollenberger Park, *Sonoma* 2-4 Feb (Audevard Aurelien, m.ob.); Las Gallinas, *Marin* 13 Feb (David Barry); along Highway 37 in *Napa*, *Solano*, and *Sonoma* 15-20 Feb (Alison Sheehey, MBe). A Le Conte's Thrasher was singing at Fish Slough, *Mono* 1 Jan (Susan Steele). Ferndale and Arcata Bottoms, *Humboldt* produced most of the Region's Lapland

Longspurs this season (34 of 37). The remaining three included one at Abbotts Lagoon, *Marin* 19 Dec–1 Jan (Brian Browne, Mark Dettling) and 2 along Paskenta Rd., *Te-hama* 4-8 Jan (MSW, BED). A Chestnut-collared Longspur was at Crowley Lake, *Mono* 20-21 Dec (JLD, m.ob.), and the season's only Snow Bunting was a male at MacKericher S.P., *Mendocino* 1-3 Dec (DT, ph. RJK, et al.).

Seven Northern Waterthrushes were all in coastal or Bay Area counties, as were all but 2 of 11 Black-and-white Warblers, the exceptions being one at Lodi Lake N.A., *San Joaquin* 22 Nov–30 Dec (DGY, m.ob.) and a fall holdover to 16 Dec at Clear Lake S.P. (Brad Barnwell). A Lucy's Warbler at Loleta 6-24 Dec (Anna Thaler-Peterson, m.ob.) provided *Humboldt* its seventh record. A total of 9 Nashville Warblers was well below average and the first time the Region saw less than 20 since winter 2009-2010. A well-described Virginia's Warbler visited a backyard suet feeder at Watsonville, *Santa Cruz* 30 Nov–1 Dec (†Howard Stephenson). MacGillivray's Warblers are among our least common overwintering western warblers, making the bird at C.R.P. 29 Nov–16 Jan (JTr) noteworthy. The only Northern Parula lingered from fall at Laguna Grande, *Monterey* to 6 Dec (RF, ph. BHi, et al.). A Blackburnian Warbler at the Pilarcitos Creek mouth, *San Mateo* 1 Jan (MDeF, CHy) could have been the same bird found there last winter. Four Yellow Warblers, 13 Palm Warblers, 3 Hermit Warblers, and 4 Wilson's Warblers all represented totals well below recent averages, marking this as a relatively poor warbler winter overall.

SPARROWS THROUGH BLACKBIRDS

A Green-tailed Towhee at the University of California Santa Cruz farm, *Santa Cruz* 18 Dec–4 Jan (Jeff Bleam, m.ob.) was likely the same bird that wintered there the previous year. An American Tree Sparrow was at Modoc N.W.R., *Modoc* 29 Dec (ph. KMCK), where the species is nearly annual. Less expected was the American Tree Sparrow at Fish Slough, *Mono* 29 Dec+ (Susan Steele, m.ob.). Chipping Sparrows put in a good showing along the coast, with over 30 birds in *Mendocino*, *Santa Clara*, and *Santa Cruz*. Clay-colored Sparrows included 2 at El Granada, *San Mateo* 5 Dec (D. Pomeroy) and singles at Ferndale Bottoms, *Humboldt* 12-13 Dec (ph. RbF, George Ziminsky) and along Permanente Creek, *Santa Clara* 20 Jan (AMR). The Black-chinned Sparrow first found at Babel Slough, *Yolo* in fall stayed through the period (ph. Mark Sawyer,

m.ob.). The Le Conte's Sparrow at Abbotts Lagoon, *Marin* 5 Dec–14 Feb (Rich Cimino, m.ob.) was likely the same bird found there last winter. Reports of Swamp Sparrows have been more numerous in recent years. This winter's total of 24, while above the long-term average, was the lowest total in the past six years. Three of 6 Harris's Sparrows (a typical total) were in *Humboldt*.

It was a good winter for *Piranga*, with 9 Summer Tanagers providing a total more than twice the average and 26 Western Tanagers also representing an unusually high tally. The Rose-breasted Grosbeak found in fall at McKinleyville, *Humboldt* continued to 10 Feb (m.ob.), and a female was found at the Guadalupe Creek Trail, *Santa Clara* 6 Feb (Geary Ridings). Of 12 Black-headed Grosbeaks (more than twice the average), 10 were in *Santa Cruz*, an unprecedented total for that county. The ad. male Blue Grosbeak along the Calaveras R., *San Joaquin* 16 Dec–21 Feb (Nancy Ballot, JRow, m.ob.) was almost certainly a returnee from last winter. A Painted Bunting was east of Chittenden, *San Benito*, 8-11 Jan (DLSH, ph. Nelson Samuels, m.ob.). Surprisingly, this was the third consecutive winter with no Indigo Buntings reported, while a Painted Bunting occurred in two of those years. The Rusty Blackbird at ne. Stockton 14 Feb (ph. DGY) was *San Joaquin's* third, a total which may account for more than one-third of all C.V. records. S.F. produced 8 of the Region's 12 Orchard Orioles, three times the long-term average, though roughly consistent with recent numbers. A Hooded Oriole at Visalia 3-28 Jan (ph. RH) was *Tulare's* first in winter, while the male at Almaden Valley, *Santa Clara* 29 Feb (JPa) was likely an early migrant. Twenty-three Bullock's Orioles provided the Region's highest winter total since 1994-1995. The widespread irruption of Red Crossbills, first noted in fall, continued well into winter with nearly every county in the Region reporting large numbers. As with the fall birds, all those documented by call were Type 3s, which breed primarily along the northwest coast of North America from Oregon through British Columbia.

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