



## Ed Pandolfino

(Thrashers to Finches)

## Stephen C. Rottenborn

(Loons to Frigatebirds, Larids to Alcids)

## Michael M. Rogers

(Waterfowl to Quail, Herons to Shorebirds)

## Jeff N. Davis

(Doves to Thrushes)

A steady series of weak fronts produced a very wet December without any significant storms. January was among the driest on record, with dry conditions continuing well into February. The second half of February was marked by several strong storm systems that pushed precipitation totals to near normal for the month. Highlights included the state's first winter Little Stint (pending acceptance) and two Central Valley firsts: Zone-tailed Hawk and Painted Bunting. The Evening Grosbeak irruption noted in our fall report built up steam in December and January before fading in February.

**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 that lack 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, California 91933.

## WATERFOWL

An imm. Snow Goose and an ad. Ross's Goose on the n. side of Comanche Res., Calaveras 14 Dec (Don Marsh) were unexpected, as were 2 imm. Snow Geese along La Grange Rd. near the Hwy. 120 intersection,

Tuolumne 22 Jan (SUM) and an ad. Snow Goose at McSwain Dam, Mariposa 27 Jan (DLSu). A Brant was noted well inside S.F. Bay at H.R.S. 18 Jan (RJR). A *minima* Cackling Goose at FI. 5-28 Feb (ph. Sara Chandler) was apparently only the 2nd ever on the island. Observers are paying more attention to Canada Geese subspecies, with Dusky Canada Geese (*occidentalis*) being identified in Humboldt 22 Feb (ph. RbF), Mendocino 7 Dec (4 birds; RJK), Santa Clara 4 Dec-18 Jan (2 possibly returning birds; ph. SCR, RCP, JPa), and Monterey 1 Jan (ph. DR, RC). A Lesser Canada Goose (*parvipes*) in s. Arcata Bottoms 21 Feb was thought to be Humboldt's first (ph. RbF), whereas one in Morgan Hill, Santa Clara 22 Jan (ph. SCR) was likely returning from last winter. Trumpeter Swans showed up in unprecedented numbers, with up to 14 at Modoc N.W.R. 28-30 Dec and 7 more at the s. end of the Surprise Valley 31 Dec (both *Modoc*; ph., †SCR). Even more were seen in Butte, with 8 found 5 km n. of Richvale 11 Dec (†JHS) and 8 at the Adams Esquon Ranch 8 Jan (JHS); one of the latter birds had a green collar numbered 083, confirming that the bird was from a captive flock in Bend, OR transplanted and released at Summer L. 15 Oct 2010. Up to 11 were at Durnel Rd., Butte 11 Jan (JHS, ph. BWb). Two Trumpeters were in American Valley, Plumas 18 Dec (†David P. Arsenault, Kara Rockett), and 2 were w. of Lincoln, Placer 20-24 Jan (ph., †DeR, Ron Pozzi, Scott Dietrich). Bewick's Swans were also well reported, with birds along Township Rd., Siskiyou 30 Jan (ph. Heather Sherman et al.), at the Modoc N.W.R., Modoc 28-30 Dec (ph. SCR), in District 10, Yuba 4-21 Dec (2-3 birds; MtB, BED, AEn et al.), at King I., San Joaquin 9-15 Jan (up to 3; DGY et al.), and a returning bird at Crowley L., Mono 12 Feb (DHo). Even more notable was an ad. Whooper Swan at King I. 9 Jan (†DGY), the 2nd for San Joaquin.

Notable Eurasian Wigeons included Alpine's first at Indian Springs Res. 5-8 Feb (Don Marsh) and 2 birds each along Hornitos Rd., Mariposa 28 Jan (†DLSu) and at Hensley L. 12 Jan (Madera's 6th record; Lowell Young, *fide* GaW). Eight Eurasian Teal were found in six counties 12 Dec-6 Mar, with 6 more Eurasian Teal × Green-winged Teal in four counties 4 Dec-22 Jan. Seven Tufted Ducks in six counties included returning males at L. Merritt, Alameda through the period (ph., m.ob.) and at Clifton Court Forebay, Contra Costa 2 Jan (ph. Amy McDonald); the others were at Abbotts Lagoon, Marin 19 Dec (male; AKI), L. Mendocino, Mendocino 23 Dec-2 Jan (male; JRW, P. Hawks, m.ob.), Stafford L.,

Marin 4 Feb+ (male; RS, m.ob.), Borax L., Lake 8 Feb (male; JRW), and Shollenberger Park, Sonoma 22 Feb+ (female; ph. Eugene Hunn, RS, RAR). A King Eider graced Tomales Bay, Marin 22-29 Jan (ph. DWm). Harlequin Ducks were again found inside S.F. Bay in Contra Costa, S.F., and San Mateo. Black Scoters inside S.F. Bay were found in Solano, Contra Costa, and several Alameda locations. A notable 27 Long-tailed Ducks in 12 counties included Sacramento's 2nd at Sherman I. 1 Dec (James Holmes). A male Bufflehead × Common Goldeneye hybrid returned to Coyote Pt., San Mateo 15 Dec (RSTh). Barrow's Goldeneyes were well reported, the most notable being 3 at Indian Springs Res. 5-8 Feb, one of few Alpine records (Don Marsh). The Barrow's Goldeneye × Hooded Merganser hybrid returned for an 8th winter to L. Merritt, Alameda 19 Dec (Kristi Whitfield). Two Red-breasted Mergansers continued at L. Shastina, Siskiyou through 6 Jan (RE, Jim Flett), and up to 3 were at L. Almanor, Plumas 17 Dec-31 Jan (David P. Arsenault, BBg et al.).

## LOONS THROUGH CORMORANTS

A Red-throated Loon on Folsom L. 11 Feb (WEH) provided only the 2nd Sacramento record in the past 15 years. Among several reports of Arctic Loon, one at Dillon Beach, Marin 31 Dec-1 Jan (†DaW) was the best described (p.a.). Distinctions between Arctic and Pacific Loons can be difficult to discern in the field, and observers are strongly urged to obtain photographs of any potential Arctics. Six Pacific Loons at far inland locations represented a typical showing. November's juv. Yellow-billed Loon in Berkeley, Alameda continued through 5 Jan (m.ob.), and what was perhaps the same bird was reported nearby at Alameda 19 Dec (Marilyn Nastir) and H.R.S. 28 Dec (RJR). Among a handful of inland Horned Grebes, one at L. McSwain 15 Dec (DLSu) provided the first winter record for Mariposa. Red-necked Grebes were in good numbers along the coast; 30 at King Salmon, Humboldt 31 Jan (MWa) provided one of the highest counts ever for the Region, and 14 on the Monterey Peninsula C.B.C., Monterey 27 Dec (*fide* DR) were notable. Even rarer so far inland were 2 at Trout L., Siskiyou 26 Jan+ (RE, m.ob.) and one at Camanche Res. 28 Feb (KPa, ph. m.ob.), the latter providing the first record for Amador and the 3rd for Calaveras. Aside from the wintering Pt. Arena Cove, Mendocino Laysan Albattross, only 2 were reported: one at Navarro Canyon, Mendocino 16 Dec (JRW et al.) and one seen from the S.F. shoreline 23 Feb (†Bfi). The die-off of Northern Fulmars noted in the fall report apparently peaked in ear-



ly Dec. Approximately 1100 were found dead on 11 beaches in *Santa Cruz* and *Monterey* by BeachCOMBERS volunteers 1-7 Dec, with lesser numbers found n. to Bodega Bay, *Sonoma* (H. Nevins et al., <<http://sanctuarysimon.org>>); poor nutritional condition, possibly due to low food availability, was thought to be the cause. An ad. female Brown Booby was one km off Cypress Pt., *Monterey* 5 Jan (ph. Martijn Verdoes, RT). Brandt's Cormorant is rare in Humboldt Bay, *Humboldt* in winter, so up to 3 there 2-15 Jan (RbF, Curtis Marantz, Louis Bevier, m.ob.) were notable. Providing only the 5th *Sacramento* record, an ad. Brown Pelican at Sherman I. 29 Nov-3 Dec (DaW, JSL) was last seen flying upriver. An ad. Pelagic Cormorant in Alviso, *Santa Clara* 19 Dec (SCR, MMR) was far inside S.F. Bay, though in an area with several records in recent years.

## BITTERNS THROUGH CRANES

A cooperative Least Bittern at Martinez R.S. 26 Dec-15 Jan (Rob Thomas, ph. m.ob.) was just the 2nd for *Contra Costa*; another at Yolo Bypass W.A. 21 Feb (†Kathy DeFay) provided the first winter record for *Yolo*. Four coastal Cattle Egrets included long-staying birds in *Humboldt*, *Mendocino*, and *San Mateo*. White-faced Ibis again wintered coastally, in *Santa Clara* (one bird), *Santa Cruz* (8+), and *Monterey* (3).

*Sonoma's* Common Black-Hawk continued at Laguna de Santa Rosa, being photographed 12 Dec and 21 Jan (ph. Stan Moore). Swainson's Hawks wintering away from their normal Delta wintering areas included a juv. along Valley Ford Franklin School Rd., *Marin* 1 Jan-16 Feb (ph. RCP, Bruce Mast, Eugene Hunn) and 2 juvs. in Half Moon Bay, *San Mateo* 26 Nov-18 Dec (AJ, JRY, m.ob.), with one lingering until at least 24 Dec (MWE); 6 e. of Dos Palos 11 Dec (BLS) constituted the highest winter count for *Madera*. A Zone-tailed Hawk over Babel Slough 22 Jan (Ron Melcer, MP, Rachel Gardiner) was the first for *Yolo* and the 8th for the Region; it was later seen in nearby S. Sacramento 24 Jan and 7 Feb (ph. AEn, Irene Engilis), providing *Sacramento's* first. Reports of Harlan's Hawk included returning wintering birds at Jacoby Cr. mouth, *Humboldt* 5 Dec-17 Feb (RbF, TKz, DCo) and along N. Thornton Rd., *San Joaquin* 15 Feb+ (ph. Linda Pittman, m.ob.). Other Harlan's were reported from along Russell Rd., *Sonoma* 16 Jan (KWi), near Litchfield, *Lassen* 18 Jan (RSTh), at C.R.P. 12 Feb (JTr), and at Stone Lakes N.W.R., *Sacramento* 13 Feb (Sarah Newton, ph. Dan Scott). *Del Norte's* Crested Caracara continued through the season near Ft. Dick (fide ADB).

As during the past two years, a Black Rail was again found calling at Coyote Hills R.P., *Alameda* late in the season, 27 Feb (PJM). The continuing Clapper Rail was found again at Heron's Head Park, *San Francisco* 11 Dec (ASH). A juv. Sandhill Crane that visited L. Cunningham and nearby Thompson Cr. 19 Jan-7 Feb (ph. AV, m.ob.) provided an unusual record for *Santa Clara*.

## SHOREBIRDS

American Golden-Plovers (both juvs.) lingered through record-late dates in Loleta Bottoms, *Humboldt* 8-11 Dec (LTu, SMCA, MtB, TKz, MMR) and Shollenberger Park, *Sonoma* 8-15 Dec (RS; PBC). A juv. Mountain Plover reached the coast at Clam Beach, *Humboldt* 23 Jan-23 Feb (Rich Ridenhour, ph. KGR, RbF, TKz, m.ob.). Others away from established wintering areas included 16 along Cranmore Rd., *Sutter* 3-5 Dec (Tim Guida, JSL, BED, JCS) and 163 near Corcoran, *Kings* 6 Jan (Curtis Marantz, Louis Bevier). A Solitary Sandpiper at L. Cunningham and nearby Thompson Cr. 26 Jan+ (DvWb, ph. m.ob.) provided *Santa Clara's* 3rd winter record and may have been a returning bird, as one was found there 5-8 Jan 2009. A Black Turnstone at the Mare I. jetty 9 Jan (RMu) provided a rare record for *Solano*. A first-winter peep at Abbotts Lagoon, *Marin* 16-17 Dec (ph. AKI, SNHG, ph. KH), identified as a Little Stint, awaits C.B.R.C. review and would constitute the first winter record for the state. Ten Rock Sandpipers at the n. jetty of Humboldt Bay 13 Feb (RbF) established a new high count for *Humboldt*; *Santa Cruz's* wintering bird continued through its 8th winter along West Cliff Dr. in *Santa Cruz* (SGe, Pam Myers, ELb, m.ob.). Winter Long-billed Dowitchers in unexpected locations included one along White Rock Rd., *Mariposa* 26 Jan (DLSu) and 2 in the American Valley, *Plumas* 26 Feb (Scott G. Edwards, Amber D. Edwards). Two wintering Wilson's Phalaropes continued near Stratford, *Kings* through the season (JSy, MSy).

## GULLS THROUGH ALCIDS

There are few winter reports of Sabine's Gull in the Region, so one off Point St. George, *Del Norte* 31 Dec (EE, Jeff Jacobsen) was noteworthy. An ad. Laughing Gull in San Rafael, *Marin* 6 Feb+ (FHa, Doug Weidemann et al.) may have been the same bird present nearby last fall. A Franklin's Gull e. of Woodland, *Yolo* 4 Dec (TEa) was the only one reported. Increased winter coverage of inland areas is finding Mew Gull to be more regular and widespread than was previously known. Still, the species' abundance inland this winter

seemed unusually high. Among 21 far inland, 4 at the Black Butte borrow ponds, *Tehama* 5 Jan (JCS, JSL) and one w. of Tipton, *Tulare* 9 Feb (SDS) provided 2nd county records, and one at Ellis L. 21 Dec (MaS, ADeM) was the 3rd for *Yuba*. Four near the Fresno W.T.P. 1 Dec (GWO) and 3 at L. Shastina 4 Dec (RE, Joey & Raymone Russell) provided new high counts for *Fresno* and *Siskiyou*, respectively. On S.F. Bay, tens of thousands of gulls attending a herring run on the *Contra Costa* shoreline in early Feb included 3000-4000 or more Mew Gulls (Eric Lichtwardt, m.ob.), one of the Region's highest non-C.B.C. totals. The same herring run attracted *Contra Costa's* first Slaty-backed Gulls, 2 ads., to Miller/Knox R.S. 11 Feb (ph. TEa). Other well-documented Slaty-backed Gulls included a second-cycle bird at the Davis W.T.P., *Yolo* 5-21 Feb (ph. TEa, JCS et al.), a first-cycle bird at Half Moon Bay S.B. 23 Feb (ph. AJ), and an ad. near the Potrero Hills Landfill 25 Feb and 2 Mar (†RMu) that provided a first *Solano* record. Among a number of inland Western, Glaucous-winged, and Thayer's Gulls, standouts were an ad. Thayer's at n. Lake Tahoe, *Placer* 2 Dec (WRi), an ad. Western in *Redding*, *Shasta* 10 Feb (Ken Schneider), and *Bates* 3rd Glaucous-winged, at Gray Lodge W.A. 14 Dec (BED).

Once again, several Iceland Gulls (subspecies *kumlieni*) were reported. Photographs of some birds clearly pertained to Glaucous/Glaucous-winged Gulls or hybrids thereof, while in other cases, elimination of paler or faded Thayer's Gulls may be impossible. First-cycle birds are particularly problematic, given the number of very pale first-cycle Thayer's/Kumlieni's-type gulls that occur in the Region, especially in late winter. This season, the most promising and well-documented candidates for true Kumlieni Gulls (p.a.) were second-cycle birds: in *San Mateo*, one at Pillar Pt. Harbor 4 Feb (ph. AJ, PA) and a different bird at Half Moon Bay S.B. 24 Feb (ph. AJ), plus one in *Yolo* at the Davis W.T.P. 19 Feb (ph. TEa). Most of the 50+ Glaucous Gulls reported were coastal or in S.F. Bay, as usual. Farther inland, 4 were at the Davis W.T.P. throughout Dec (TEa, SCH), and singles were at Rosemont, *Sacramento* 6 Feb (ph. Dan Brown), Empire Tract, *San Joaquin* 20 Feb+ (ph. SCR, KPz, JSL), and Whiskeytown L. 31 Dec (Jim Holmes), the latter providing a 2nd *Shasta* record. Four Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported: an ad. at Nimbus Fish Hatchery, *Sacramento* 9 Jan-5 Feb (ph. Brian Gilmore, m.ob.) and first-cycle birds near Crescent City 3 Dec and 30 Jan (†LuB; a *Del Norte* first, p.a., at Miller Pt. Harbor, *San Mateo* 18 Jan (PA), and a first-

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## DOVES

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Davis W.T.P. 20 Feb (ph. TEa). Up to 3 Caspian Terns were seen throughout the period at several locations around Humboldt Bay, *Humboldt* (m.ob.). Up to 16 Black Skimmers wintered in Mountain View, *Santa Clara* (m.ob.). The season's only Thick-billed Murre was a flyby at Pt. Pinos, *Monterey* 29 Jan (†MtB). Pigeon Guillemots are very rare in winter on the n. coast, so singles off Point St. George, *Del Norte* 31 Dec (EE, Jeff Jacobsen) and at Manchester S.B., *Mendocino* 27 Jan (MtB, CEV) were noteworthy. A Long-billed Murrelet off Crescent City Harbor, *Del Norte* 3 Feb (Jeff Jacobsen) continued the string of n. coast records of this species.

## DOVES THROUGH THRUSHES

Band-tailed Pigeons depend on annually fluctuating food crops, such as acorns, and their numbers sometimes fluctuate concomitantly. Perhaps illustrative was a total of 3 found in the San Felipe Cr. drainage portion of the Calero-Morgan Hill C.B.C., *Santa Clara* 26 Dec (MMR), compared with 449 tallied there during the 2009 C.B.C. One on El. 10 Jan (Sara Chandler) represented just the 3rd winter record for the island. Eurasian Collared-Doves continued to set records, establishing new C.B.C. high counts in *San Mateo*, *Santa Cruz*, and *Sierra* and the first winter occurrence for the Tahoe Basin with 2 at Tahoe Keys, *El Dorado* 22 Feb (TS, FS). A White-winged Dove e. of Grayson 2 Jan+ (ph. Joe Devine, m.ob.) provided a first for *Stanislaus*. Also in *Stanislaus*, a total of 27 Barn Owls at Turlock L. campground 22 Dec set a new high count for the La Grange C.B.C. and may represent the highest total for any C.B.C. in the Region. Great Gray Owls generally inhabit mid- to high-elevation Sierra meadows in our area, so one in a low-elevation (375 m) Blue Oak woodland nw. of O'Neals, *Madera* 29 Jan (ph. Kathryn Purcell) was a surprise. A Northern Saw-whet Owl in Royal Oaks 18 Jan (CKF) and another in nearby Walker Valley 29 Jan–2 Feb (RF) were in a portion of *Monterey* previously considered outside their normal range. These and other recent records suggest that the species may in fact be regular here. Outside what is generally considered normal winter range were 2 Common Poorwill in *Humboldt*, one in McKinleyville 4 Feb (Kathleen Brubaker) and another at Lanphere Dunes 9–11 Feb (CJR, Carol Ralph, KBu, Cindy Moyer, DCo, TKz), as well as one found dead at Dye Creek Preserve, *Tehama* 1 Dec (Jackson Shedd).

Vaux's Swifts are exceptionally rare in the Region in winter, and most records are of singles or flocks of 5 or fewer birds. A flock of 20+ over Stinson Beach 17 Dec (RS) es-

tablished a new high winter count not only for *Marin* but for the Region as well. A more typical winter flock of 2 birds was over San Carlos, *San Mateo* 18 Dec (Don Pendelton). Setting a new high count for *Napa* for any season, 100 White-throated Swifts were at Butler Bridge 23 Dec (BDP, John Parmeter). Only 2 Costa's Hummingbirds were reported, both from inland locations: one in Lemoore, *Kings* 4 Feb (ph. MSy) and one at Catheys Valley, *Mariposa* 28 Feb (Karyn O'Hearn). A total of 100+ Lewis's Woodpeckers at Howard Ranch, *Sacramento* 29 Jan (JTr) was a high count. Meanwhile, the species apparently abandoned *Lassen*, where acorn crops failed (*vide* KAB). Furnishing the 3rd or 4th record for *Santa Clara*, a Williamson's Sapsucker made a brief appearance at Foothill College 20–22 Dec (Nancy Teater et al., ph. RWR, FV). Although the species is resident in *Mariposa*, another Williamson's was at the unusually low elevation of 480 m along Buckeye Rd. 27 Jan (DLSu). A total of 18 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, 13 coastal and 5 inland, was nearly twice the seasonal average. Ditto for the total of 15 Red-naped Sapsuckers, 4 of which were coastal and 11 of which were inland. A female Nuttall's Woodpecker at Eagle L., *Lassen* 16 Dec+ (KAB, BLe, Terry Hunt, JLD, DEQ, LOr, Ron Beck) was out of place, well away from oak woodlands. Also out of place and establishing a first for *Sonoma*, a White-headed Woodpecker dropped in at The Sea Ranch 9–11 Dec (Diane & Bryant Hichwa, BDP).

Reports of Hammond's Flycatcher included singles along Gazos Creek Rd., *San Mateo* 2 Jan (George Chrisman), in Springville, *Tulare* 5 Jan (ph. TKz), and *Santa Cruz*'s first in winter along the San Lorenzo R. 7 Jan+ (David Sidle, SGe, OsJ, m.ob.). An *Empidonax* flycatcher at Tilden Park, *Contra Costa* 22 Dec (ph. Mark Rauzon) may have been a Least, but brief observation and associated documentation did not allow for positive identification. Ten or 11 Eastern Phoebe included *Sacramento*'s 2nd at Garden Hwy. 26 Dec–9 Jan (ph. DKo, MkM, ph. CCo, m.ob.) and 3rd at C.R.P. 4 Jan+ (Jim Dunn, Nancy Sage, ph. CCo), *Stanislaus*'s 3rd at Westley 2–8 Jan (ph. Joe Devine, SSa, Daniel Gilman), *Santa Clara*'s 5th at San Jose 26 Dec (BBrr, Rob Paull), *San Benito*'s 7th at Hollister 3 Feb+ (PA, ph. Don Doolittle et al.), 3 or 4 in *Santa Cruz*, one in *Merced*, and one in *Tuolumne*. Our only Vermilion Flycatcher visited Valley Oaks G.C. in Visalia, *Tulare* 6–22 Jan (Deborah Nolan, m.ob.). Three Dusky-capped Flycatchers were reported, including *Humboldt*'s 4th at Trinidad 2–4 Dec (ph. Will Lawton, Justin Brice, m.ob.), *Santa*

*Cruz*'s 8th at Wilder Ranch S.P. 15 Dec–22 Feb (Kathy Kuyper, JHW, SGe, DLSu, m.ob.), and another in *Marin* at Pt. Reyes N.S. 19–21 Dec (Kathi Borgmann). Exceptional in winter, an Ash-throated Flycatcher loitered along Willowside Trail, *Sonoma* 7 Feb+ (Bill Doyle, m.ob.). Tropical Kingbirds included 3 in *Santa Cruz* and a holdover from last season in *Yolo* through 31 Dec. *Yolo* also hosted the only Western Kingbird, thought to be a late migrant, near Davis 3 Dec (Tim Guida, JCS).

Continuing to thrill birders from throughout California, the U.S., and beyond, *Humboldt*'s first Brown Shrike remained at Vista Pt. ponds near McKinleyville through the period. Although expected on the floor of the Sacramento Valley, a Loggerhead Shrike w. of Auburn, *Placer* 18 Dec (CHH et al.) provided an unusual foothill record and a first for the Auburn C.B.C. Our most southerly Northern Shrike was at Howard Ranch, *Sacramento* 29 Jan (JTr). Cassin's Vireos included singles near Sanger, *Fresno* 26 Dec (BBrr), at C.R.P. 22 Jan (JTr), and the Big Sur R. mouth, *Monterey* 12 Feb (MtB et al.). Another, or possibly a Blue-headed, was at Shay Park, *Humboldt* 4 Dec–4 Jan (RbF Greg Chapman, Adam Wachtel, KMS). The only Warbling Vireo was at H.R.S. 5 Feb (RJR).

The wayward Steller's Jay discovered last season in *Sacramento* remained at Curtis Park at least through 27 Feb (DPM, Dan Airola, ph. CCo, m.ob.). Apparently wintering Northern Rough-winged Swallows included 7 birds, all coastal except one at American River Parkway, *Sacramento* 22 Jan (CCo, DKo). The now fairly well-established pattern of mid-winter occurrences of Barn Swallows continued this season, with 18 reports totaling at least 60 birds. Rare anywhere in the C.V., a Pacific Wren discovered in Lemoore, *Kings* in autumn continued through the period (MSy). Six Townsend's Solitaires included singles at Monte Bello Open Space Preserve, *Santa Clara* 28 Dec (RKe, PKe), Mt. Veeder, *Napa* 30 Dec (MBe, MFri), Hood Mountain Regional Park, *Sonoma* 2 Feb (Bill Doyle), and Castle Rock S.P. 13 Feb (Robert Furrow), plus 2 on Skyline Blvd., *Santa Cruz/Santa Clara* 30 Dec (DLSu). We received two reports of Swainson's Thrush. Both may be valid, but neither included documentation. There are very few verifiable winter records of this species in the state, so we urge observers to document such reports carefully in the future.

## THRASHERS THROUGH WARBLERS

Two Northern Mockingbirds in *Trinity*, one in Salyer 26 Dec (KBu, GAB) and the other in



Weaverville 16-23 Jan (JRY, JLY, JSL), made an unprecedented total for that county. Another in Sierraville 4-12 Feb (DeR, EP, m.ob.) supplied a rare winter record for *Sierra*. The only Sage Thrasher report came from near Clarksburg, *Yolo* 4-19 Jan (GML, m.ob.). A Brown Thrasher at Pt. Richmond, *Contra Costa* 5-21 Feb (Eric Lichtwardt, m.ob.) may have been the same bird reported there in fall. A flock of Bohemian Waxwings estimated at up to 120 along Taylor Cr., *El Dorado* 2 Feb-13 Mar (Alice Jones, Phil Stevenson, m.ob.) was likely the largest flock yet recorded in the Tahoe Basin; a flock of about 70 was on Sugar Hill, *Modoc* 28-29 Dec (ph. SCR et al.). The only Lapland Longspurs outside of *Humboldt* were a single flyby near Elkhorn Slough, *Monterey* 1 Jan (PJM), another lone bird at H.R.S. 3-18 Jan (RJR), and 2 in *Sierra Valley*, *Sierra* 6-12 Feb (CPD et al.). Our only Chestnut-collared Longspur was at H.R.S. 3 Jan (RJR).

Tennessee Warblers were near the Majors Cr. mouth, *Santa Cruz* 18 Dec (DLEK et al.) and at the Presidio, *S.F.* 28 Dec (PJM). Twenty Nashville Warblers included the 2nd record for the Benicia C.B.C., *Solano* 20 Dec (MBe, Craig Cummings). A Northern Parula was attracted to a termite swarm in Carmel, *Monterey* 23 Dec (ph. BHL). Nine Yellow Warblers included just one inland bird at Merced N.W.R., *Merced* 24 Jan (PJM, DMO). Our only Chestnut-sided Warbler was along Thompson Cr., *Santa Clara* 20-23 Jan (Ginny Marshall, Anne Kelly, Amy McDonald). A Black-throated Blue Warbler was at Ft. Mason, *S.F.* throughout the period (MWE, m.ob.). Notable Black-throated Gray Warblers included a 2nd for the Red Bluff C.B.C., *Tehama* at Cone Grove Park (same spot as that C.B.C.'s first record from last winter) 19 Dec (EP, ph. PRO), and *Trinity's* first winter record near Willow Creek 26 Dec (COG, RHw). The Año Nuevo C.B.C., *San Mateo* accounted for 7 of our 8 Hermit Warblers 2 Jan (*fide* ADeM), with the 8th in Rancho Del Oso S.P., *Santa Cruz* 6 Jan (DLSu). Palm Warblers turned up in numbers not seen for at least the past 20 winters, with 35 reports from nine coastal or bayside counties. Six Black-and-white Warblers included 2 in *Santa Cruz* and one each in *Alameda*, *Sonoma*, *San Mateo*, and *Humboldt*. If one assumes that birds that appear at the same site each season are the same individuals, one has to wonder just how long Northern Waterthrushes can live, given that at least one bird has been present each of the past 10 winters at Charleston Road Marsh, *Santa Clara* and another has been at Arcata Marsh, *Humboldt* for at least six winters. Both locations again hosted

Northern Waterthrushes this winter (*fide* WGB; *fide* RbF). A MacGillivray's Warbler at Reichmuth Park 26 Dec (vt. CCo) was likely the 2nd winter record for *Sacramento*. That county also hosted our only inland Wilson's Warblers along the American River Parkway 4 Dec (Dan Brown, MkM, Joanne Vinton, Jonilynn Okano) and at the Bufferlands 19 Feb+ (DKo, ph. CCo).

## SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES

Green-tailed Towhees were n. of Boulder Cr., *Santa Cruz* 27 Dec+ (Kent Johnson, SRv, PDB, ph. Wendy Naruo, m.ob.) and along Indian Peak Rd., *Mariposa* 28 Jan (DLSu). Two Rufous-crowned Sparrows along Clear Cr. w. of Redding, *Shasta* 28 Dec (Len Lindstrand, George Horn) may mark the most northerly location for this species in the C.V. Clay-colored Sparrows were in two locations in McKinleyville, *Humboldt* 11 & 27 Dec (both KMS), and another was at Half Moon Bay, *San Mateo* 26 Dec-8 Jan (RSTh, LBT). Lark Buntings were along White Rock Rd., *Mariposa* 16 Dec (DLSu) and at Springville, *Tulare* 4 Jan-13 Feb (JLD, SDS). A Large-billed Savannah Sparrow was at Abbotts Lagoon, *Marin* 21 Dec (OsJ, MtB), and another at Pillar Pt. Harbor 23 Dec (ph. MtB) was *San Mateo's* 3rd. Inverness Park, *Marin* hosted at least 3 Nelson's Sparrows 18 Dec-4 Feb (TEa et al.). Forty-eight Swamp Sparrows represented the highest total seen in at least the past two decades, while 90 White-throated Sparrows was a bit below average. A Harris's Sparrow was along the American River Parkway, *Sacramento* 31 Jan+ (JML, ph. CCo, m.ob.). Interesting Dark-eyed Juncos included a Pink-sided near Acampo, *San Joaquin* 10-11 Dec (+DGY) and *Modoc's* first Gray-headed near Dorris Res. 28 Dec (SCR).

Summer Tanagers were in Deer Park, *Napa* 8-11 Dec (Wendy Cole), Pacific Grove, *Monterey* 9 Jan-20 Feb (ph. RC et al.), and Roeding Park, *Fresno* 30 Jan+ (vt. EE, m.ob.). All Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were coastal, with an imm. in Pacific Grove, *Monterey* 18-27 Dec (ph. BTM), males visiting two Eureka, *Humboldt* residences 24 Dec (David Juliano) and 29 Dec-1 Feb (Kay Rocco et al.), and a female in *Santa Cruz*, *Santa Cruz* 15 Jan (BRA). Six Black-headed Grosbeaks included one in Loyalton 15 Dec (BBg, Jim Battagin) that may be *Sierra's* first in winter. Indigo Buntings were in Golden Gate Park, *S.F.* 1-3 Dec (ph. ASH, BFi, DMO), *Saratoga*, *Santa Clara* 13-19 Feb (Gordon Barrett, ph. Linda Barrett), and Live Oak, *Santa Cruz* 19 Feb (ph. Gary Martindale). An imm. Painted Bunting in Stockton, *San Joaquin* 1 Feb+ (ph. Cheri Pillsbury, DGY, ph. CCo, ph. JCS,

m.ob.) furnished a remarkable winter record for any part of the state and a first for the C.V. During the period this species was reviewed by the C.B.R.C. (through 2004), only two winter records were accepted, both in Dec. Reports of wintering orioles seem to be increasing. This winter, we received reports of 31, including 12 Orchards, 5 Hoodeds, one Hooded/Orchard, 11 Bullocks, and 2 Baltimore. One of the Baltimore Orioles was identified as a first-year female in *Alameda*, *Alameda* 19 Dec (JSL), and the other as a likely second-year male in Ft. Bragg, *Mendocino* 17 Jan+ (MtB, ph. RLeV, m.ob.). The Evening Grosbeak invasion that started in fall accelerated in winter, with reports totaling over 600 birds in 17 counties from *Humboldt* s. to *Madera*.

**Cited observers** (county coordinators in bold-face): Many more observers are not specifically cited; all are appreciated. Ken Able (*Lassen*), Peter Adrians, Bruce Barrett, Alan D. Barron, Leonie Batkin, Bob Battagin, Murray Berner (*Napa*), Gary A. Bloomfield, William G. Bousman (*Santa Clara*), Matthew Brady (*Stanislaus*), Beverly Brock, Phil D. Brown, Lucas Brug, Ken Burton, Rita Carratello, David Coldren, Peter B. Colasanti, Chris Conant (*Sacramento*), Rudy Darling (*Nevada*), Jeff N. Davis (*Madera*), Al DeMartini, Bruce E. Deard (*n. C.V. counties*), Colin P. Dillingham (*Plumas* and *Sierra*), Jon L. Dunn, Todd Easterla, Mark W. Eaton (*San Francisco*), David L. Ekdahl, Ray Ekstrom (*Siskiyou*), Elias Elias, Andrew Engilis, Brian Fitch, Rick Fournier, Rob Fowler (RbF; *Humboldt*), Steve Genow (*Santa Cruz*), Steve A. Glover (*Contra Costa*), Cliff Hawley, Steve C. Hampton, Keith Hansen, W. Edward Harper, Floyd Hayes, Bill Hewitt, Bill Hill, Alan S. Hopkins, Debbie House, Steven N. G. Howell, John E. Hunter (*Trinity*), Alvaro Jaramillo, Oscar Johnson, Robert J. Keiffer (*Mendocino*), Clay Kempf, Roland Kenner, Pat Kenny, Andy Kleimheslink, Dan Kopp, Tony Kurz, Gary M. Langham, Jeri M. Langham, Earl Lebow, Robin L. C. Leong (*Solano*), Ron LeValley, Bob Lewis, Jim Lomax, John S. Luther, Timothy D. Manolis, Blake Matheson, Mark Martucci, Sam McAllister, Peter J. Metropoulos (*San Mateo*), Dominik Mosur, Dan P. Murphy, Roger Muskat, Kristie N. Nelson (*Monoc*), Chris Ogan, Frances Oliver (*San Joaquin*), Lew Oring, Ed Pandolfino (*Placer*), Kathy Parker, Benjamin D. Parmeter, Janna Pauser, Michael Perrone, Gary W. Potter (*Fresno*), Robert C. Power, David E. Quady, C. John Raig, Bernadette Ramer, Robert W. Reiling, Will Richardson, Robert J. Richmond (*Alameda*), Michael F. Rippey, Don Roberson (*Monoc*),

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Phil Robertson, Michael M. Rogers, Deren Ross, Kerry G. Ross, Stephen C. Rottenborn, Steve Rovell, Ruth A. Rudesill (*Sonoma*), Jennifer Rycenga, Mary Schiedt, Adam Searcy (*Marin*), Jeff Seay (*Kings*), Debra Love Shearwater, Keith M. Slauson, Jim H. Snowden, Mark Stacy, Rich Stallcup, John C. Sterling (*Modoc, Alpine, Calaveras, and Yolo*), Fritz Steurer, Tim Steurer (*El Dorado*), David L. Suddjian (*Santa Cruz*), Brian L. Sullivan, Steven D. Summers (*Tulare*), Richard Ternul-

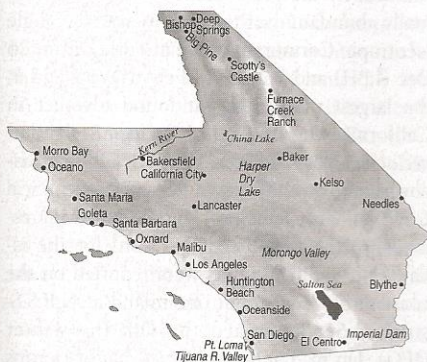
lo, Ronald S. Thorn, Jim Tietz (Fl.), John Trochet, Leslie Tucci (*Del Norte*), Steve Umland (*Tuolumne*), Kent Van Vuren (*Merced and San Benito*), David Vander Pluym (*Mariposa*), Frank Vanslager, Chuck E. Vaughn, Ann Verdi, Matt Wachs, Jeff H. Wall, Bruce Webb (BWb), Dave Weber, Jerry R. White (*Lake*), Dan Williams, Ken Wilson, David Wimpfheimer, Gary Woods, David G. Yee, Bob & Carol Yutzy (*Shasta*). Many more observers are not specifically cited; all are appreciated. ☺

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The Region saw relatively warm temperatures and heavy rain in December and very early January; most of January and early February was dry, and February was colder than normal. Additional storms in late February brought precipitation totals to or above average for the winter in most areas; the cold late February storms also provided the mountains with a deeper than average snowpack (which increased with a series of major storms coming through in March).

Bird highlights included another record of Black-tailed Gull (on the heels of the Region's second record in November, and possibly the same individual) and a window-killed Swainson's Thrush that provided the state's first tangible documentation of a mid-winter occurrence. We have omitted from this report some early winter records that were noted, with end dates, in the fall season's report; this includes the well-documented bean-geese at the south end of the Salton Sea that remained through 12 January.

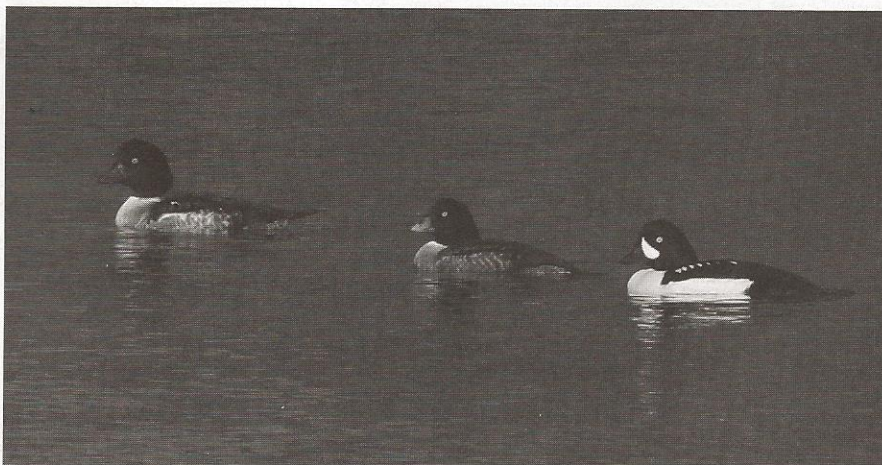
Abbreviations: C.L. (China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station, extreme ne. Kern); F.C.R.

(Furnace Creek Ranch, Death Valley N.P., Inyo); N.E.S.S. (n. end of the Salton Sea, Riverside); S.E.S.S. (s. end of the Salton Sea, Imperial); V.C.G.P. (Ventura County Game Preserve near Pt. Mugu Naval Air Station, Ventura). Museum collections abbreviated in the text are: LACM (Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County) and SDNHM (San Diego Natural History Museum). Because most rarities in s. California are seen by multiple observers, we generally only include the observer(s) initially finding and/or identifying the bird, but may also indicate observers who documented last dates of long-staying birds. Documentation for species on the California Bird Records Committee (C.B.R.C.) review list (see <www.californiabirds.org>) is forwarded to the C.B.R.C. and archived at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology in Camarillo.

## WATERFOWL THROUGH HERONS

Greater White-fronted Geese were in greater-than-usual numbers along the coast, as evidenced by such reports as three flocks totaling

65 in *San Luis Obispo* (TME), 68 on Cachuma L., *Santa Barbara* 15 Jan (LB), 9 in Fountain Valley, *Orange* 8 Oct–28 Jan (DRW), and 32 near Ramona, *San Diego* 22 Jan (EGK). Two dark-morph Ross's Geese were with the "white" geese at S.E.S.S. through the winter. Three Tundra Swans at S.E.S.S. 30 Nov–28 Dec (GMCC) were at the extreme s. limit of this species' winter range. A Eurasian Teal was in Irvine, *Orange* 6–28 Feb (BED), and Eurasian Teal × Green-winged Teal hybrids were in Los Osos, *San Luis Obispo* 14 Jan (CAM) and Irvine 6 Feb (LO); a few Eurasians (and hybrids) are found in s. California every winter. Three male Harlequin Ducks were on the *San Luis Obispo* coast (RHZ, GPS), where present every year, and one was 8 km off Faria S.B., *Ventura* 25 Nov (OJ). Inland, a Surf Scoter was on Senator Wash Res., *Imperial* 27 Nov–17 Jan (BLC, HD), up to 3 were at Salton City, *Imperial* 18 Dec–3 Jan (CAM, BB), and 2 were at S.E.S.S. 28 Dec (GMCC). Single White-winged Scoters were on Pyramid L., *Los Angeles* 4 Dec (KLG), on Quail L., *Los Angeles* 3 Jan–6 Feb (BW), at



Three Barrow's Goldeneyes (first-winter male, adult female, and adult male) on Senator Wash Reservoir, Imperial County, California 12 December 2010 were at the southern limit of the species' winter range. Photograph by Matt Sadowski.