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Rainfall patterns this season were erratic. By mid-December, the Region had received nearly double its normal amount of precipitation. Then the tap closed, and January and February were the driest on record nearly everywhere. The snowpack in the Sierra Nevada was pitiful, raising concerns about low reservoir water levels and increased fire danger. Highlights included the Region's second Common Crane, sixth Field Sparrow, a returning Falcated Duck, and continuing Northern Gannet and Common Black-Hawk. Boreal seed-eating species irrupted in remarkable numbers (see S.A.). Red-breasted Nuthatches in particular were easily found in nearly every part of the Region all through the season. Common Redpolls did not match their incursions of last winter, but flocks were present in several locations in the state's northeastern corner.

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

## WATERFOWL

Brant continued inside S.F. Bay through the period, with 4 seen both at Richmond, Contra Costa 27 Jan (Tara McIntire) and

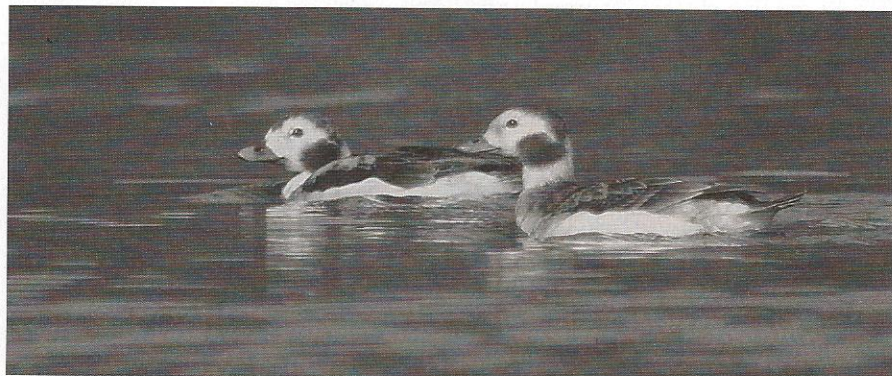
off Berkeley Pier, Alameda 10 Feb (Amy McDonald). Even more unexpected were single inland birds at Lakeport 10 Jan (second Lake record; JRW, DvW), Staten Island, San Joaquin 18-19 Jan (Joe Schultz, m.ob.), Colusa N.W.R., Colusa 19-25 Jan (Steve Emmons, Mike Peters), and along Brewer Rd. 12 Feb (second Placer record; †Stephanie Travanti). A Dusky Canada Goose continued in Morgan Hill, Santa Clara 12-21 Jan (MJM, MMR). Trumpeter Swans continued to be reported from Modoc, with 4 at Modoc N.W.R. 28 Dec (SCR) and 11-12 near Alturas 6-19 Jan (ph. JCS, TEa, WSS et al.); others were at the n. end of Rd. Z, Glenn 2 Jan (JHS) and se. of Nicolaus, Sutter 14-19 Jan (2 imms.; JLa, ph. William Rockey, m.ob.). The only Bewick's Swans reported were 2 birds at the s. end of 7 Mile Lane, Butte 2 Jan (JHS).

Last winter's male Falcated Duck returned to Colusa N.W.R., Colusa 2-22 Dec (Mike Peters, ph. m.ob.) and was seen again nearby at Sacramento N.W.R., Glenn 30 Dec (†Tara Stewart, Loren Merrill). Eurasian Wigeon were widely reported in high numbers, with numerous inland birds, including singles in Nevada, Placer, Alpine, and Tuolumne, and a remarkable 7 birds at Ione, Amador 15-18 Feb (DMr, TS, FS), the most ever found at a single location in the Sierra Nevada foothills. Forty Blue-winged Teal along Gun Club Rd. near Gustine, Merced 20 Jan (PJM, Cedric Duhalde) was a notable high count. Eleven Common Teal in seven counties 22 Dec+ provided a better than average showing; most notable was a male at Bravo Lake, Tulare 22 Dec (TKz). Notable inland high counts of Redhead included 272 at O'Neill Forebay, Merced 18 Jan (KVV) and 804 at Kettleman City, Kings 13 Feb (JSy). The ad. male Tufted Duck continued at Lake Merriitt in Oakland, Alameda through the period (m.ob.), and the nearby imm. male at Oyster Bay R.S., Alameda stayed through

18 Dec (Doug Henderson). Additional males were noted in Marin at Tomales Bay 6 Dec (JGE) and Richardson Bay 24 Jan (TEa), and in Napa at the Napa W.T.P. 14-15 Jan (DeH, DvH, BDP). An imm. male King Eider found at Elkhorn Slough, Monterey 27 Dec (ph. YG et al.) was unfortunately shot by a hunter the following day. A cooperative ad. male Black Scoter wintered again at Richmond, Contra Costa 20 Nov-11 Mar (ph. Tony Brake, ph. m.ob.); another inside S.F. Bay at Bay Farm Island, Alameda was seen 31 Jan (Noah Arthur). Seventeen Long-tailed Ducks in nine counties included 3 inland, one at Yolo Basin W.A. 14-15 Dec (Yolo's fourth; Jenn McKenzie, Dan Smith, ph. m.ob.) and 2 at n. Lake Tahoe 22 Jan-15 Feb (Placer's third record; BWb, Ron Pozzi, ph. WRi, MMy). The male Bufflehead x Common Goldeneye continued at Mountain View, Santa Clara and was nicely photographed 20 Dec (ph. TGr). Red-breasted Mergansers were reported widely and in high numbers inland, including county firsts for Sutter, at Nicolaus 8-20 Jan (CIH, FrO, ph. Ron Hasey, m.ob.), and Alpine, the continuing bird and 3 others at Indian Creek Reservoir 4-6 Dec (JCS, TEa, JSL), with one lingering to 14 Dec. Other notable inland records included one at Salt Spring Valley Reservoir, Calaveras 8-11 Feb (JSL, JCS, JLx, DMr), up to 3 at Comanche Reservoir, Amador 8-17 Feb (JSL, JCS et al.), 9 at Lake Almanor, Plumas 26 Jan (CPD, SEd, ADE), up to 6 all season at Lake Success and Bravo Lake, Tulare (m.ob.), and up to 2 in ne. Fresno, Fresno 27-28 Jan (JND, LyH et al.).

## LOONS THROUGH PELICANS

A well-documented juv. Arctic Loon in Monterey Harbor 5 Jan+ (ph. BLS, m.ob.) was a first for Monterey and only the fifth for the Region. The same location hosted our only Yellow-billed Loon 30 Dec-3 Jan



Long-tailed Ducks are rarely found inland in California, but this pair spent 22 January through 15 (here 4) February 2013 on Lake Tahoe off Tahoe City, Placer County, California. Obtaining this remarkable documentation required the use of a kayak. Photograph by Will Richardson.





This Common Crane arrived with three Sandhill Cranes at Modoc National Wildlife Refuge, Modoc County, California on 27 December 2012, weeks after all the other cranes had left the refuge. It apparently stayed for only a half hour (before heading to Nevada?), but fortunately it was photographed while it touched down. Photograph by John H. Kimura.

(†BTM, †DR, RC). Counts of 921 Red-throated Loons, 8178 Pacific Loons, and 1486 Brandt's Cormorants were all record totals for the Santa Cruz County C.B.C., *Santa Cruz* (fide DLSu), suggesting a localized concentration of prey. Red-necked Grebe numbers were unremarkable save for a concentration of 42 seen during a boat survey of Tomales Bay, *Marin* 9 Feb (PJM, Cedric Duhalde); we have no higher single-party (i.e., non-C.B.C.) count on record. Two Western Grebes on Mono Lake 19 Dec (KNN, ADeM) were very rare so late in *Mono*. "Al" the Laysan Albatross returned to Point Arena Cove, *Mendocino* 22 Dec+ for its twentieth consecutive season (Jeff & Beth Petit, Nancy Morin, m.ob.). Flesh-footed Shearwaters are infrequently seen from shore, but our only one this season was seen from Capitola Beach, *Santa Cruz* 17 Dec (DLSu). Frigatebirds occur less than annually in the Region, so an unidentified frigatebird at Abbotts Lagoon, *Marin* 20 Jan (†Mark Butler) was noteworthy; the presence of "considerable white on the underparts and head" suggested an imm. Magnificent, but the possibility of other species could not be ruled out. An ad. (or perhaps subad.) Brown Booby was at the Cliff House, *S.F.* 6-12 Dec (BFI, ph. m.ob.), and a different subad. was at Monterey Harbor, *Monterey* 27 Dec (John Lucido, Klaus Campbell, ph. CSc, ph. KVV). The **Northern Gannet** at FL., present since 25 Apr 2012, remained through the period (fide P.R.B.O.). Five Brown Pelicans lingering at San Luis Reservoir, *Merced* 6 Dec+ (KVV) provided our highest inland count in winter, though after the unprecedented inland incursion in the summer and fall of 2012, such an occurrence was not entirely unexpected.

### BITTERNS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

An American Bittern survived sub-zero temperatures at the Surprise Valley Hot Springs, *Modoc* 4 Jan (RSTh). Small numbers of Cattle Egrets were found briefly in each of five coastal counties 17 Dec-1 Feb. The only coastal White-faced Ibis this season were in *Santa Cruz* and *Monterey*, with 11 birds at Struve Slough (LGo, WGo) and 4 at Pinto Lake (Lisa Larson) 3 Dec (both *Santa Cruz*), 3-4 birds near Moss Landing, *Monterey* 1-3 Jan (Alex Rinkert, KVV), and 6 back at Struve Slough 7 Jan (DLSu). An apparent imm. Northern Goshawk along N. Thornton Rd. 7 Feb (ph. †DGY) was only the second for *San Joaquin*. The **Sonoma Common Black-Hawk** at Laguna de Santa Rosa was seen again 12 Feb (ph. Stan Moore). Coastal Swainson's Hawks included singles in *Marin* 5 Jan (†Todd Plummer) and *S.F.* 20 Jan (PSar). Single Harlan's Red-tailed Hawks in seven counties included light morph birds in *Fresno* 23 Jan (GaW) and *Madera* 13 Feb (ph. GaW). Rough-legged Hawks continued to be well-reported, including birds in *Napa* and *Nevada*, where rarely found. Single coastal Sandhill Cranes lingered 26 Nov-6 Dec in n. Arcata Bottoms, *Humboldt* (RbF, m.ob.), 28 Dec-18 Jan at the Garcia River Flats, *Mendocino* (RJK, m.ob.), and 19 Dec+ at Moss Landing, *Monterey* (Bob Blevy, ph. m.ob.); 2 over H.R.S. 31 Dec (RJR) were the first reported there since 1986. An unbanded ad. **Common Crane** accompanying an ad. Sandhill Crane and 2 imms. (either Sandhills or possibly hybrids) lingered for only a half hour at Modoc N.W.R., *Modoc* 27 Dec (ph. John H. Kimura, Cameron King, Dominic Bachman). This bird, only the second for California following the 5-8 May

2011 *Del Norte* bird, may have been the same individual responsible for Nevada's first state record (with 5 Sandhill Cranes) at Overton W.M.A. 15 Jan-1 Feb.

Mountain Plover reports of note included an impressive 678 near Kettleman City, *Kings* 29 Dec (JLt, TKz) and 78 along Sandy Mush Rd., *Merced* 11-14 Feb (Jean Okuye, ph. KVV). Sixty Marbled Godwits near Corcoran, *Kings* 29 Dec (JLt, TKz), with 40 remaining to 23 Jan (JLt), was an impressive count for any inland location, especially in winter. Unexpected winter Red Knots included one at Crissy Lagoon, *S.F.* 20

Jan-2 Feb (Bob Toleno, Juli Chamberlin, ph. MWE, m.ob.) and 18 far down S.F. Bay at the mouth of Guadalupe Slough, *Santa Clara* 19 Jan (MMR, MJM, Lea Crisp). Only 2 Ruffs were reported, a male at the Eel River mouth, *Humboldt* 9-13 Jan (ph. KBu, ph. RbF, m.ob.) and another along Santa Fe Grade, *Merced* 24 Jan-20 Feb (ph. GaW, m.ob.).

### GULLS THROUGH ALCIDIS

Single Franklin's Gulls were in the Arcata Bottoms, *Humboldt* 1 Dec (TKz et al.), in the Ferndale Bottoms, *Humboldt* 12 Dec (RbF, ph. STu, MWA), and at Gun Club Rd., *Merced* 18 Dec (KVV). An unusually high concentration of 1420 Heermann's Gulls was at Manresa S.B., *Santa Cruz* 27 Dec (DLSu). A Mew Gull at Trinity Lake 29 Dec (DCR) provided Trinity's fifth record, while one on the Feather River in Yuba City 21-29 Jan (ph. JLa et al.) was seen in both *Yuba* and *Sutter*, furnishing a first record for the latter county. Thayer's Gull is very rare inland north or east of the C.V.; one at Tule Lake N.W.R., *Siskiyou* 5 Jan may have been the same imm. there 6 Feb (Barbara Scoles). The petite, white-winged ad. Iceland Gull present 9-19 Mar 2012 at the Davis WTP, *Yolo* apparently returned, being seen 19-20 Jan (ph. SCH, ph. Caroline Lambert); the only other white-winged ad. Iceland Gull in California was the state's first, at Bodega Bay, *Sonoma* in 1984-1985. Single ad. Kumlien's Iceland Gulls, both seen on 12 Feb., were at Foster City, *San Mateo* (ph., †AJ) and Point Richmond (ph. Noah Arthur), the latter providing a first for *Contra Costa* (p.a.). Six Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported, all from different counties. The most noteworthy were first records for *Marin*, at Sausalito



22 Jan (ph. DSg; second-cycle) and San Joaquin, at the Isenberg Crane Reserve 22-24 Feb (DGY et al.; ad.). An ad. gull at the Yolo County Landfill, *Yolo*, 8 Dec-9 Jan (ph. SCH et al.), originally identified as a Lesser Black-backed, may have been a hybrid between that species and Herring Gull, a combination that is increasingly detected on the East Coast but that had not previously been reported in California. Comparison of photos suggested that ad. Slaty-backed Gulls in Sausalito, *Marin* 23 Jan (ph. DSg, ph. AJ, ph. STu) and at Point Richmond, *Contra Costa* 8-15 Feb (TEa, ph. Michael Park, ph. David R. Moore) likely represented the same individual, with a different individual near Tiburon, *Marin* 24-25 Jan (†JLD, ph. SCH, ph. JCS) and a third bird at Point Richmond, *Contra Costa* 16 Feb (ph. Tony Brake). The most noteworthy Glaucous-winged Gulls were far inland in *Lassen*: an ad. at Shugru Reservoir 18 Dec (ph. JLD, KAb) and a first-cycle bird at Eagle Lake 20 Dec (CPD, DPA). Similarly, among 30 Glaucous Gulls reported, the most unusual was in *Lassen*; a first-cycle bird first observed at Eagle Lake 20 Dec (KAb, ph. JLD) was likely the same bird seen around Shugru Reservoir 17-26 Feb (PJM, DS et al.), providing the county's second record. Scripps's Murrelet is rarely seen from shore, so a bird off Del Monte Beach, *Monterey* 7 Jan (†DR) was noteworthy.

## DOVES THROUGH THRUSHES

Eurasian Collared-Doves continued to flourish, setting new high counts for at least two C.B.C.s, with 99 on the Sierra Valley C.B.C., *Plumas* and *Sierra* 14 Dec (BBg, CPD, DPA, m.ob.) and 152 on the Santa Cruz County C.B.C., *Santa Cruz* 15 Dec (fide DLSu). The species also finally penetrated the heart of the Diablo Range, considered the last frontier in *Santa Clara*, with 3 found during the Mount Hamilton C.B.C. in Isabel Valley 2 Jan (MMR et al.). A White-winged Dove shared a feeder with a flock of these unstoppable invaders at Crowley Lake 22 Dec-15 Feb (ADeM, m.ob.), providing the first record of an overwintering White-winged Dove for *Mono*. Common Ground-Doves continued to establish a pattern of occurrence in s. *Tulare*, with one ne. of Earlimart 22 Feb (DaF). Although presumably present year round, Western Screech-Owl apparently had not been documented in winter in *Plumas* until

one was observed at a nest box in American Valley 5 Jan (ph. Julie Newman, DPA). Out of range Great Gray Owls included singles ne. of Oakhurst, *Madera* 1 Dec+ (ph. GaW; second-year bird, continuing from fall), in rural Grass Valley, *Nevada* 6-10 Dec (ph. Walt Carnahan, m.ob.; suspected second-year bird), and near Mokelumne Hill, *Calaveras* 23 Dec (ph. Tanya Meyer). A Northern Saw-whet Owl documented by remote camera at the San Joaquin River N.W.R. 21-22 Feb (Sean Isley, Elizabeth Parks, ph. Endangered Species Recovery Program) established the third record for *Stanislaus*. Ongoing riparian restoration is creating suitable habitat at the refuge, where this species could nest in the future. Although saw-whet owls are not known to have nested in the C.V. historically, they did nest in a riparian restoration area at the San Luis N.W.R., *Merced* in 1996 (*Central Valley Bird Club Bulletin* 5:57-58, 2002).

Our only Vaux's Swift was over Strawberry Hill in Golden Gate Park, *S.F.* 3 Feb (ASH). Two Costa's Hummingbirds were reported, one in Kentfield, *Marin* 14 Dec (BiL) and one in Woodlake, *Tulare* 22 Dec (TKz). Lewis's Woodpeckers overwintered in good numbers within and near their breeding range in *Shasta* and *Lassen* (fide B&CY and KAb, respectively). Consequently, perhaps, relatively few were reported from most areas farther south. Our only out-of-range Williamson's Sapsucker, a male at Henry Coe S.P. 3 Jan (WGB), furnished the fourth or fifth record for *Santa Clara*. A total of 15 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, 13 coastal and 2 inland, continued the recent trend of much higher-than-average winter numbers. Sharing that trend was a total of 16 Red-naped Sapsuckers, 7

coastal and 9 inland, including *Yolo*'s overdue first at Putah Creek Canyon 13 Feb+ (TEa, m.ob.). *Del Norte*'s Crested Caracara continued near Fort Dick 20 Jan (ADB, Matt Brigham).

A total of 13 Eastern Phoebe, also well above the recent 10-year average, included one inland that spent its second winter at Lemoore, *Kings* 1 Dec-28 Feb (ph. MSy, m.ob.). Six Vermilion Flycatchers included 2 in *Merced*, 2 in *Tulare*, one in *Kings*, and one in *Monterey* at Point Pinos that continued from last season through the end of the period (ph. BHL, ph. DR, m.ob.). Exceptional in winter, an Ash-throated Flycatcher visited Laguna de Santa Rosa, *Sonoma* 13 Jan (Linda Petrulias). Ten Tropical Kingbirds included 2 inland, both birds continuing from the previous season in Hanford, *Kings* 1 Dec, with one lingering through 16 Feb (MSy, m.ob.). Our only Cassin's Kingbird was along Santa Fe Grade, *Merced* 4-20 Feb (Ken Archambault, ph. KVV). A Western Kingbird s. of Kettleman City, *Kings* 18 Feb (JLt) and another e. of Lincoln, *Placer* 24 Feb (John York) were possibly very early northbound migrants, whereas one at County Rd. 105, *Yolo* 7 Dec (TEa, SCH) was likely a holdover from fall.

Our southernmost Northern Shrikes were in *Mono*, one at Bolher Canyon 19 Dec (Todd Vogel, Paul McFarland) and another in Long Valley 1 Dec-23 Jan (JLD, Steve Brad, m.ob.). Unexpected in winter, a Cassin's Vireo was in Porterville, *Tulare* 11 Dec (JLD, SDS, Susan Steele), and a Plumbeous Vireo, likely the same bird that wintered at this location last year, was at San Lorenzo Park, *Santa Cruz* 4 Dec-4 Feb (NLv, LGo, SGe, AMR, DLSu).

Wintering swallows, other than the usual Tree and Violet-green, included a Northern Rough-winged at Lake Cunningham, *Santa Clara* 22 Dec (SCR) and 16 Barns, one at Struve Slough, *Santa Cruz* 27 Dec (CKf, ELb), 13 at the Packard Ranch, *Monterey* 1 Jan (PJM), and 2 at the Sunnyvale W.T.P., *Santa Clara* 6 Feb (Ann Hepenstal et al.). Establishing the first record for *Shasta* and the entire C.V., a Black-capped Chickadee visited a feeder in Redding 17 Dec-28 Feb (ph. Bea Currie, B&CY, m.ob.). Although this species has been increasing in range and numbers in the Region, it seemed an unlikely candidate for reaching the C.V., which is more than 140 km se. of areas of regular occurrence. More expected, but still rare and irregular in the C.V., is Mountain Chickadee. One in Sacramento, *Sacramento* 12 Feb (Dan Sandri) was



Detected by remote infrared camera, this Northern Saw-whet Owl provided a rare Central Valley record at the San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge in Stanislaus County, California 21-22 (here 22) February 2013. Photograph by the Endangered Species Recovery Program.



the only one reported in the C.V. Establishing a first record for the C.V. floor in *San Joaquin* were 2 Chestnut-backed Chickadees at Oak Grove R.P. 23 Jan+ (DGY). These chickadees were of the coastal subspecies (*P. r. barlowi*) rather than the Sierra-breeding subspecies (*P. r. rufescens*), which accounts for most C.V. floor records. All previous records of this species in the county were from Corral Hollow Rd. in the Coast Range. Red-breasted Nuthatches invaded the coast and C.V. in above-average numbers.

The Winter Wren discovered 20 Nov in Putah Creek Canyon, *Yolo* continued through the period (JCS, TEa, m.ob.). American Dippers carrying nesting material in *Mendocino* at an old bridge on Potter Valley Rd 24 Feb (Seth LaRosa and Steve Stump) and at Cape Horn Dam 27 Feb (GEC) represented very early nesting efforts. Another bobbing on Hwy 395 nw. of Mono Lake C.P., *Mono* 1 Dec (Joel Ellis) was well away from any waterway. A total of 5699 American Robins on the Santa Cruz County C.B.C., *Santa Cruz* 15 Dec was 2.5 times the recent 10-year average (fide DLSu).

### THRASHERS THROUGH WARBLERS

*Amador's* first Sage Thrasher pleased many county birders by remaining near Ione 29 Jan–8 Feb (Gwenn Starret, m.ob.). Other Sage Thrashers were along Devils Den Rd., *Kings* 16 Dec–9 Feb (MSy), e. of Bieber, *Lassen* 6 Jan (SBT, LTer), and in Salt Springs Valley, *Calaveras* 18 Feb (ph. Susie Nishio). A Le Conte's Thrasher at Fish Slough, *Mono* 2 Feb was suggestive of possible wintering at this site. Bohemian Waxwings were at two locations e. of the Sierra Nevada Crest, Loy-alton, *Sierra* 14 Dec (one; BBg, Jim Gattagin, DPA, CPD) and Susanville, *Lassen* 5–6 Jan (up to 2; JCS, TEa, SBT, LTer). At least 2 Chestnut-collared Longspurs were at Long Valley, *Mono* 8 Dec (Bob and Susan Steele). A Worm-eating Warbler found in fall in Arcata, *Humboldt* was refound 11 Jan after being undetected for more than two months (RbF, ph. TKz). Both Northern Waterthrushes were holdovers from fall in *Santa Clara* and *Humboldt*. Eleven Black-and-white Warblers and 5 Tennessees were totals just slightly above average, while a total of 37 Nashville Warblers was nearly double our average. A MacGillivray's Warbler in Bethany Curve Park 2 Dec–1 Feb (SGe, m.ob.) was the first to winter in *Santa Cruz* in this century. Our only other MacGillivray's was at Humboldt Bay N.W.R., *Humboldt* 30 Dec (Ralph Bucher, Kristine Keil). A handsome male Cape May Warbler was along San Francisco Creek, *Santa Clara* and *San Mateo* 21 Jan+

(ph. Jeff Fairclough, ph. Laurie Graham, m.ob.) and provided a first for *Santa Clara*. Six Yellow Warblers were all in coastal or bayside counties, and our only Black-throated Blue Warbler was along Pescadero Rd., *San Mateo* (GrH et al.). We set a new Regional winter record with 57 Palm Warblers, more than double our average. Most notable were 2 C.V. Palm Warblers, one at Prairie City O.H.V. Park, *Sacramento* 3 Jan (CrS) and another in Rio Vista, *Solano* 22–28 Feb (ph. Jan Allen, m.ob.). Twenty-nine Hermit Warblers, while well short of last winter's total of 42, was still nearly double our average. Similarly, Wilson's Warblers were present in fairly high numbers (8 vs. an average of 4.6). The anecdotal nature of the data we receive makes it impossible to draw conclusions about trends, but it does appear that western-breeding warblers are wintering in greater numbers in the past decade. When one compares the number of reports from 1992–2001 to the reports since 2001, every species of California-breeding neotropical migrant warbler shows an increase in reports with the single exception of MacGillivray's. The most dramatic change is in Hermit Warbler reports, increasing from an average of 2 prior to 2002 to 15 in the last decade.

### SPARROWS THROUGH FINCHES

Green-tailed Towhees were in St. Helena, *Napa* 28 Dec–8 Feb (ph. Cindy Smith, m.ob.) and in Ripon, *San Joaquin* 4 Feb–4 Mar (RBk, m.ob.). As is typical, our American Tree Sparrows were e. of the Cascade-Sierra Nevada Crest, one found on the Honey Lake C.B.C., *Lassen* 18 Dec (CPD, EP, Bobby Tattman) and the other at Dechambeau ponds, *Mono* 19 Dec (Ken Wells, ADeM). Single Clay-colored Sparrows were in Oakland, *Alameda* 17 Dec (Doug Greenberg) and Asilomar, *Monterey* 24 Dec+ (ph. BTM, m.ob.), and 2 were in Ferndale Bottoms, *Humboldt* 5 Jan (RHw, m.ob.). The first Field Sparrow in the City of San Francisco (the only prior S.F. occurrence was on FI.) was present 28 Dec+, and seen by many (KMCK, ph. MWE, m.ob.). A Nelson's Sparrow at Moonglow Dairy, *Monterey*, first found in fall, remained through winter (Paul Fenwick, m.ob.) and was joined by another in late Feb with both birds lingering into Mar. Swamp Sparrows were found in unusually large numbers with 91 reported from 11 counties. Eight Harris's Sparrows were scattered throughout the Region with reports from *Humboldt*, *Del Norte*, *Siskiyou*, *Lassen*, *Yolo*, *Solano*, *San Mateo*, and *Santa Clara*. Notable among 7 Summer Tanagers was a male returning for its third win-

ter to Roeding Park, *Fresno* 29 Jan (EE). We received only two reports of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, one in El Granada, *San Mateo* 13–17 Dec (Donna Pomeroy) and one in Los Gatos, *Santa Clara* 21 Dec–13 Feb (LSu, m.ob.). Four Black-headed Grosbeaks was an average showing. Indigo Buntings were in Marina, *Monterey* 22–23 Dec (ph. SRv) and S.F. 19 Jan (DMo). An Orchard Oriole in Santa Cruz, *Santa Cruz* 2 Jan (Christian Schwarz, Chris Lay) was the only one reported. A Hooded Oriole in Redding 24 Jan (ph. Gary Stacey) was *Shasta's* second in winter. Our other 2 Hooded Orioles were both in *Santa Cruz* with one in Soquel, continuing from fall through 20 Dec (Elena Laborde), and the other near West Struve Slough 11 Dec (NAd). Among our 14 Bullock's Orioles, 3 first detected in mid-late Feb might have been early arrivals. Three Baltimore Orioles was a notable total with singles in *Loleta*, *Humboldt* 5–10 Jan (ph. RbF, m.ob.), *Crescent City*, *Del Norte* 13 Jan–9 Apr (ph. Sky Lloyd et al.), and along San Francisco Creek, *Santa Clara/San Mateo* 24 Jan+ (JCS, Sandy Koonce, Gena Zolotar, ph. SCR).

Low-elevation flocks of up to 250 Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches were in *Modoc* near New Pine Creek 28–30 Dec (ph. SCR) and e. of Fort Bidwell 3–6 Jan (KMCK, ph. JCS, ph. TEa). Interestingly, both flocks included some brown-cheeked birds in addition to the more expected gray-cheeked Hepburn's subspecies (*Leucosticte tephrocotis littoralis*). Grinnell and Miller (*The Distribution of the Birds of California*, 1944, Cooper Ornithology Club) noted that 7 rosy-finches collected together in late Mar 1941 in s. *Lassen* also included a mix of subspecies. While it may be impossible to tell from photographs, the brown-cheeked birds in *Modoc* may have been the Oregon-breeding *L. t. wallowa*.

From fall through winter, the Region and the entire state experienced a remarkable invasion of boreal seed-eating species (see S.A. feature). Red Crossbills, Pine Siskins, and Evening Grosbeaks were reported from coastal and low elevation sites throughout the Region in extraordinary numbers. In addition, Common Redpolls, while not spreading as far south into the state as last winter, were found in flocks ranging up to 40 birds in the ne. corner of the Region: Fredonyer Peak, *Lassen* 18 Dec (Justin J. Streit); Lower Klamath N.W.R., *Siskiyou* 22 Dec–23 Feb (Russ Namitz, ph. Barbara Scoles, ph. Karan Fairchild); s. Surprise Valley 28 Dec (SCR; first for *Modoc*); e. of Fort Bidwell, *Modoc* 3 Jan (KMCK); *Tule Lake* N.W.R., *Modoc* and *Siskiyou* 5 Jan–16 Feb (ph. Frank Lospalluto, KSp, m.ob.); s. of



**SA** Beginning in fall and continuing through winter, we experienced an irruption of nearly all the boreal-breeding seed-eating species with reports of unusually high numbers of Red-breasted Nuthatches, Red Crossbills, Pine Siskins, and Evening Grosbeaks from throughout the Region. Data from eBird (Figure 1) allow us to confirm these anecdotal observations and show that, in particular, Red-breasted Nuthatches and Pine Siskins were remarkably abundant and widespread. The sizable flocks of Common Redpolls found in the ne. corner of the state may also be linked to the same phenomenon responsible for irruption of the other species. In 2001, Walter

Koenig (*Condor* 103:725) showed that irruptions of five species (including all of the species noted above except Red Crossbill) showed significant synchronicity across nearly four decades of analyses. That is, their irruptions into areas well s. of their normal winter range tended to occur in the same years. These events may be driven by poor seed crops in the boreal forests of Alaska and Canada (Bock and Lepthien 1976; *American Naturalist* 110: 559), or by overpopulation of these species in the year following a particularly good crop (Widrechner and Dragula 1984; *American Birds* 38: 840), or a combination of a good seed year followed by a poor one (Koenig and Knops 2001; *Journal of Animal Ecology* 70: 609).

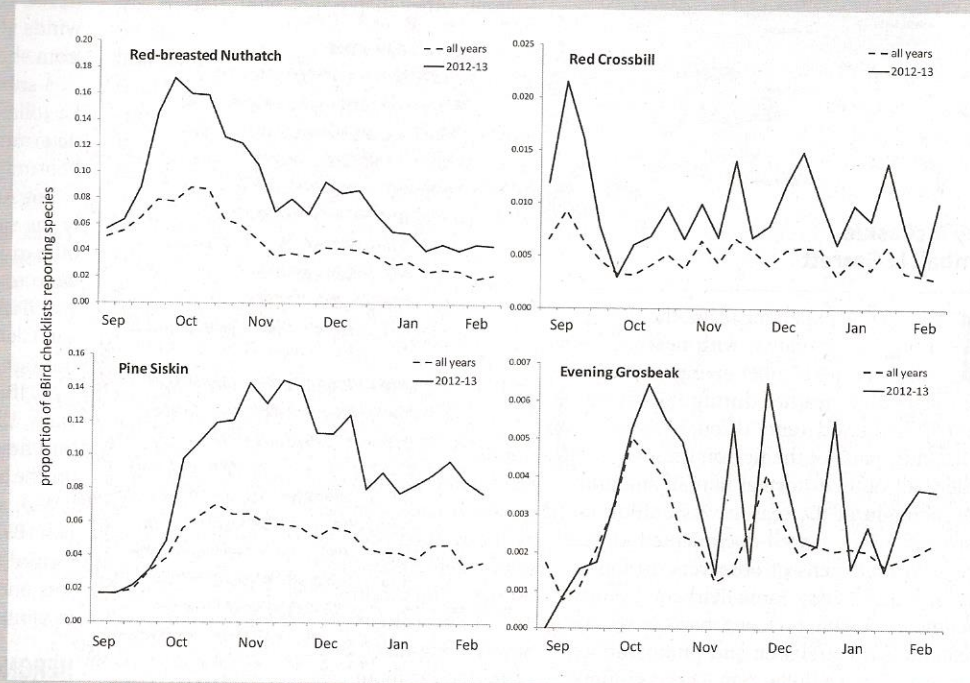


Figure 1. Data from eBird for California comparing the proportion of checklists reporting each species during fall-winter of 2012-13 to all prior years.

Alturas, *Modoc* 5 Jan (RSTh, LBt, ph. SBT, m.ob.); Tule Lake N.W.R. headquarters, *Siskiyou* 5 Jan (Bobbie McGuire); and Alturas, *Modoc* 6 Jan (TEa, ph. JCS). The nw. corner also produced a Common Redpoll in Arcata, *Humboldt* 7 Feb (Allen Chartier). The most southerly Common Redpoll of the season provided a first for *Placer* 31 Dec–1 Jan (ph. John York, m.ob.).

**Cited observers** (county subregional editors in boldface): Many more observers are not specifically cited; all are appreciated. **Ken Able** (*Lassen*), Nanci Adams, David P. Arsenault, Alan D. Barron, Leonie Batkin, Bob Battagin, **Murray Berner** (*Napa*), Gary A. Bloomfield, **William G. Bousman** (*Santa Clara*), Bob Battagin, Ken Burton, Rita Caratello, George E. Chaniot, **Chris Conard** (*Sacramento*), **Rudy C. Darling** (*Nevada*), **Jeff N. Davis** (*Madera*), Al DeMartini, **Bruce E. Deuel** (n. C.V. counties), **Colin P. Dillingham** (*Plumas* and *Sierra*), Jon L. Dunn, Todd Easterla, **Mark W. Eaton** (*San Francisco*), Amber D. Edwards, Scott Edwards, **Ray Ekstrom** (*Siskiyou*), Elias Elias, Jules G. Evens, Dane Fagundes, Brian Fitch,

**Rob Fowler** (*Humboldt*; RbF), **Steve Gerow** (*Santa Cruz*), Yohn Gideon, **Steve A. Glover** (*Contra Costa*), Lois Goldfrank, Wally Goldfrank, Tom Grey, David Hamilton, Denise Hamilton, Steve C. Hampton, **John Harris** (*Stanislaus*), Garth Harwood, Cliff Hawley, Lynn Hemink, Rob Hewitt, Bill Hill, Alan S. Hopkins, **John E. Hunter** (*Trinity*), Alvaro Jaramillo, **Robert J. Keiffer** (*Mendocino*), Clay Kempf, Tony Kurz, Jim Laughlin, Earl Lebow, Bill Lenarz, **Robin L. C. Leong** (*Solano*), Nick Levendosky, John Lockhart, Jim Lomax, John S. Luther, Michael J. Mammoser, Don Marsh, Blake T. Matheson, **Dan J. Maxwell** (*Marin*), Kevin McKereghan, **Peter J. Metropulos** (*San Mateo*), Martin Meyers, Dominik Mosur, **Kristie N. Nelson** (*Mono*), **Frances Oliver** (*San Joaquin*), **Ed Pandolfino** (*Placer*), Benjamin D. Parmeter, David C. Rice, Will Richardson, **Robert J. Richmond** (*Alameda*), Alex M. Rinkert, **Don Roberson** (*Monterey*), Michael M. Rogers, Stephen C. Rottenborn, Steve Rovell, **Ruth A. Rudesill** (*Sonoma*), Paul Saraceni, Cooper Scollan, **Jeff Seay** (*Kings*), David Shuford, Daniel Singer, W. Scott Smithson, Jim H. Snowden, Kevin Spencer, Mark Stacy,

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