	Highlighting the spring season	As expected, Murphy's Petrel was	departed late and that spring
MIDDLE PACIFIC COAST REGION David G. Yee, Stephen F. Bailey, and	were heavy rains in "Miracle March." It did not put an end to the state's five-year drought but brought local relief to water- related nesting birds, such as waterfowl and Tricolored Blackbirds. The Region logged	the most common bird; interest- ing information was obtained on their timing and distribution. Introduced Red Fox continued to ravage waterbird nesting colonies. More will be said on this issue next season. Among	migrants arrived about two weeks later than normal. Mentioned by many were the exceptional numbers of migrants, especially among war-blers and empids. It was widely felt to be one of their best
Bruce E. Deuel	its greatest number of hours on far-offshore waters this spring.	landbirds, most observers felt that many wintering birds	springs ever.



Abbreviations: C.C.R.S. (Coyote Creek Riparian banding Station, Santa Clara Co.); C.V. (Central Valley); D.F.G. (Department of Fish and Game); F.I. (Southeast Farallon Island); I.C.R. (Inner Coast Range); S.F. (San Francisco); ph. (photo on file with Regional Editors). All records from F.I. and Palomarin should be credited to Point Reyes Bird Observatory (P.R.B.O.).

LOONS TO TUBENOSES

Our most inland Red-throated Loon was at Whiskeytown L., *Shasta*, May 17 (RE). A "huge die-off" of Eared Grebes was noted at Mono L. Apr. 27, with 354++ carcasses found (ES).

Excitement was created by a Laysan Albatross on Whiskeytown L. Mar. 15-24 (BVdM, m.ob., *H.S.U.). When the carcass was in hand, the "wound" on its forehead proved to be a neat rectangle of thick paint that the bird could not have acquired accidentally (BY, BED). Chances that this bird was handpainted yet wandered to Shasta on its own are virtually nil. Another Laysan Albatross was found on Alameda streets on April Fool's Day (LRF) and was taken to rehabilitation. Seven Laysans were sighted offshore Monterey to Marin, in their element. A N. Fulmar in S.F. Bay at Hayward Shoreline Mar. 23 was associated with high winds (RJR).

Murphy's Petrel continued to make news. A research cruise Apr. 7-11 logged 122 individuals, including 86 in Monterey waters, one for Santa Cruz (both county firsts), and 35 in San Mateo (†ph. DR). This cruise found Murphy's Petrel to be the most common bird far offshore. Three long-day birding trips from Marin to San Mateo May 3-5 counted from 75 to 171 Murphy's per day (JM, PP, SFB, ph. m.ob.), but another trip on May 11 that repeated the route of the highest count found



Laysan Albatross west of Southeast Farallon Island, California, May 3, 1991. Note the brown back extending posteriorly, thus making the white rump into a "U." Photograph/Adrian Wander.

"only" 47 (BHi, \dagger GMcC). A research cruise in this area May 16–21 tallied 118 (SFB, P. Jones). Decreasing counts after May 5 suggest that the local population peaks in late April and early May, concordant with past results (*AB* 43(3):400-415). On the April cruise, Murphy's were most numerous at the lower edge of the continental slope, but by May most had concentrated over the middle to lower continental slope at 800–1800 fathoms.

Cook's Petrels did not follow the Murphy's up the continental slope but were only found over very deep water. Fifteen were 40-100 mi off *Monterey* Apr. 8–10 (†DR), five were 75-78 mi s.w. of Pigeon Pt. May 5 (SFB, ph. J. O'Brien, m.ob.), and two were in the latter area May 11 (†GMcC, RAE, m.ob.). Blackvented Shearwater sightings at FI. Mar. 1 & 4 were late.

BITTERNS TO WATERFOWL

An Am. Bittern at Mono L. Apr. 28 (HG, PDG) established the first Mono Basin spring record. Introduced Red Foxes destroyed the entire nesting attempt at San Mateo's Bair I. heronry, prompting a few Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets, 100 Snowy Egrets, and 200 Black-crowned Night-Herons to relocate to the Redwood Shores sewer ponds (DSS). Santa Clara's Snowy Egret x Little Blue Heron was observed paired to a Snowy Egret in the Alviso heronry May 4 (PJM, MJM). Rare e. of the Sierra crest, a Green-backed Heron was in Sierra Valley, Plumas, May 22 (LJ, KL, B. Harnack). If accepted by the C.B.R.C., an ad. Yellowcrowned Night-Heron reported from Bodega Bay May 4 (†E. Hutchinson) would be the first in the Region since 1981. Three n. coast, 2 c. coast, and 10 inland reports of White-faced Ibis were about as many as in the last 2 springs; numbers were lower, with 80 in Sierra Valley May 26 (WEH, SMS, v. Vandermeer) the largest group reported.

A Trumpeter Swan on the e. shore of Goose L., *Modoc*, Apr. 28 (†JCS) was very rare for spring. An unusual hybrid, thought to be a Greater Whitefronted Goose X Brant, was described from Staten I., *San Joaquin*, Mar. 2 (†DGY). The Emperor Geese wintering at Pt. Reyes and F.I. were last seen Mar. 10 (fide JM) & 28 (fide PP), respectively. Rare but regular in spring, a light-bellied Brant was at Bolinas Lagoon Mar. 14 (KH). Five Eur. Green-winged Teal reports included four c. coast birds and one at Lower Klamath N.W.R. Apr. 23 (RE), where they have not been reported since 1980.

Reports of hybrid Aythya included a Ring-necked Duck X scaup sp. from L. Merritt, Alameda, Mar. 20-21 (SGl, RJR) and a Tufted Duck X scaup sp. from the Ceres sewer ponds, San Joaquin, May 5-6 (B. Lenz, HMR). There is considerable research interest in these hybrids. Without documentation, however, these records will be of little use to future researchers. Of seven Tufted Ducks reported around S.F. Bay, three were known to have wintered; a male was described from Glen Cove, Solano, Mar. 16-22 (†MBG, DTk, JMR); the other undescribed. three were Without descriptions it cannot be determined how many birds were involved. A King Eider was well described from Monterey Harbor Mar. 18 (†B. Fall).

RAPTORS

A Mississippi Kite was well seen at Pinnacles N.M., San Benito, May 12 (†H. Peeters). Perhaps the same bird was reported 9 hours later at Shoreline Park, Santa Clara (†P. Stevens). There are only 2 accepted records for the Region, both from autumn. An imm. Bald Eagle was late at Livermore May 28 (ALE).

flocks Two large of Swainson's Hawks were seen at harvesting operations: 29 near Westley, Stanislaus, Apr. 13 (DSg, DL) and 60-70 n. of Tracy, San Joaquin, Apr. 20 (DGY, WRH). These seem to be mostly nonbreeders; 80% of the Tracy flock were in imm. plumage (DGY). Migrating Swainson's Hawks strayed toward the coast: singles in Santa Clara Apr. 9 (PJM) & 29 (SBT) were that county's first in over a decade; other singles were in Monterey Mar. 20 (RFT) and Apr. 14 (DR, R. Carratello). "Only a crazy county lister would follow a kettle" of five Swainson's Hawks as they passed over corners of Monterey, San Benito, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz Apr. 5 (†KVV)! An ad.

Ferruginous Hawk near Cedarville, *Modoc*, at least to May 24 (DS *fide* JCS, BED, JCS) was in a likely nesting area. The first California nestings were confirmed in 1988 and 1989 (*AB* 44(5):1182). A very late Merlin May 15, 5 mi s. of Jamestown, *Tuolumne*, was "harassing birds in oak savanna" (DES).

RAILS TO SHOREBIRDS

Single Black Rails were found at 2 new locations from the interior of the Suisun Marsh, Solano, May 22 & 24 (B. Grewell). Clapper Rails were also noted at 4 new interior locales in this marsh Apr. 21-May 24 (B. Grewell). Is the drought increasing salinity in this area? Out-ofrange Com. Moorhens were in Eureka May 19 (MHM) and near Mono L. Apr. 26-29 (D. Parker). A flock of 120 Sandhill Cranes at the Smith R. estuary, Del Norte, Mar. 16 (B. Fazio) constitutes an unprecedented number for the n. coast. A nest found on Hwy 49 w. of Sierraville May 18 (WEH) is apparently a first Sierra record.

Rarely recorded in spring, four dominica Lesser Golden-Plovers were at Bird's Landing, Solano, May 1 (RS). A Snowy Plover at Big L. in Fall River Valley May 11 (RE) provided a first Shasta record. Mountain Plovers invaded Solano, where about 300 were seen near Hwy 113 between Fairfield and Rio Vista Mar. 11-20 (m.ob.). Solitary Sandpipers were noted in slightly above average numbers, with 18 coastal reports Apr. 13-May 12 and inland birds at Bend, Tehama, Apr. 16 (†BAP), Sierra Valley Apr. 28 (†LJ, †KL, †M. McCormick) (a Plumas first), and Fall River Mills, Shasta May 1-2 (JCS). Whimbrels were widespread and numerous inland, establishing a first Shasta record with a lone bird in Fall River Valley May 11 (RE). Five Marbled Godwits, extremely rare transients in Mono, were at Alkali Lakes Apr. 25 (ES), while 121 on Lower Klamath N.W.R. Apr. 27 (RE) were exceptional numbers inland. Other "coastal" shorebirds inland included a Ruddy Turnstone at Lower Klamath N.W.R. May 19 (RE); a Ruddy Turnstone and a Red Knot there May 23 (JCS); and three Sanderlings near Stratford, Kings, May 25 (DGY, WRH). Five Semipalmated Sandpipers were found, with one at Fall River Mills May 14 (JCS) being a Shasta first. Baird's Sandpipers were at Redwood Shores Mar. 30 (RSTh) and Mono L. Apr. 27 & 28 (HG, PDG; two birds). With few spring records, a Stilt Sandpiper at Bird's Landing May 1 (RS) was noteworthy.

LARIDS, ALCIDS

We have few spring records of Long-tailed Jaeger, but as boat trips beyond the continental slope become regular, so should this species. Six far offshore *Marin* May 3 (JM, m.ob.) were followed by three more over the next 2 days (PP, m.ob.). A S. Polar Skua at Pioneer Seamount, *San Mateo*, May 18 (SFB, P. Jones) was doubly rare; it was both unseasonal and a light morph.

Five ad. Franklin's Gulls at Lower Klamath N.W.R. May 27 (BY, CY) matched the last 2 years' highs at this 1989 nesting site (AB 43(5):1363). Four other adults were coastal; five immatures were from the coast to S.F. Bay and the Stockton sewage ponds. An ad. Little Gull foraged at Ravenswood, San Mateo, Mar. 31 (†PJM). A migration of 80 Herring Gulls far offshore Monterey Apr. 8 (DR) made this species the 2nd most common species in that zone after Murphy's Petrel-two species that are not numerically dominant in the rest of California. Thirteen imm. Glaucous Gulls lingered into spring, and a rare adult was at Alviso Apr. 18 (PJM). An imm. Black-legged Kittiwake at Sunnyvale Apr. 8 (PJM) was Santa Clara's 3rd.

An Elegant Tern at the Pajaro R. mouth Apr. 12 (CKf) was early, but nothing like the spring invasions of 1987 and 1988. A Black Tern was coastal at Bolinas Lagoon Apr. 29 (KH). Around S.F. Bay, two were at Alviso May 4 (PJM, MJM) and up to 13 were at Hayward Shoreline May 5–15 (RJR, JMR). As now expected, all 5 boat trips far offshore in May found Horned Puffins, three to 15 birds per trip.

OWLS TO

HUMMINGBIRDS

California D.F.G.'s Spotted Owl census found an impressive 102

nest sites this spring in the Mendocino coast study area. However, only one-third of them fledged young (S. Bunnell). The sporadic nesting of Long-eared Owl in the Region is always of interest, so single birds just s. of the Carmel Valley at Rancho San Carlos and Upper San Jose Cr., Monterey, Apr. 20 (SAL) in suitable habitat were duly acknowledged. A Short-eared Owl at Mono L. Apr. 27 (HG, PDG) provided only the 2nd recent spring record for the Mono Basin, where they formerly nested.

Up to 14 courting Lesser Nighthawks in e. Sacramento Apr. 30-May 28 (TDM) indicated how common they are as breeders along the e. edge of the C.V. For the 2nd consecutive spring, the n. coast experienced a deluge of migrating Black Swifts, this time along the Del Norte coastline, where 670+ were observed at the Smith R. estuary May 17-18 (ADB). Singles early over Alamo Apr. 13 (JMR) and Hayward Shoreline May 22 (RJR) were casual for the S.F. East Bay, while one over Bolinas Lagoon May 12 (PP) and two over Inverness May 26 (DaS) were noteworthy as there are surprisingly few Marin spring records. One over Lodi L. May 17 (DGY) was one of few records for the n. C.V. The rains in "Miracle March" were felt to be responsible for 20+ Whitethroated Swifts found dying at nest sites at Stanford University (C. Dawson). Fortunately most were rehabilitated.

With the continuous monitoring of numerous Blackchinned Hummingbirds at C.C.R.S. since 1988 (AB 43:163), it was not too surprising that Santa Clara's first nests since 1907 were found May 5 & 12 (MJM). A 9 Anna's Hummingbird at Tom's Place May 21-22 (CDHa) was the Mono Basin's 2nd in spring. Among extralimital Costa's Hummingbirds, three coastally Mar. 8-Apr. 13 were typical, but one at Trimmer Ranger Station, Fresno, Apr. 12 (DN) was one of few spring Sierran records.

FLYCATCHERS TO WRENS

The first arrival date for W. Wood-Pewee was Apr. 30, the bird's latest first arrival in 13 years. This may represent the S.A.

The Region experienced Empid euphoria this spring, as migrant Dusky and Gray flycatchers were found in record numbers (22 and 18, respectively), with Pacific-slopes also tallying a hefty total (75 banded at C.C.R.S.). But their noted movements were pale in comparison to those of Hammond's. Conservatively, 177 Hammond's were found away from known breeding grounds Apr. 4-May 23. Our prior high count was 21 in 1989! The peak period was early May, illustrated by the 47 on Mt. Diablo, Contra Costa, May 3 (RJR, DSi) and 12 at Oak Grove Park, Stockton, May 12 (DGY). Consistent with previous years, the majority were found in the Diablo Range of the I.C.R. and the Delta region of the C.V.; the immediate coast reported no action save three Hammond's between San Mateo and S.F., and a Dusky at Pescadero Marsh May 19 (RSTh). Worthy of note were Sutter Butte's first Hammond's Flycatchers May 11-13 (†WA, four birds), Stanlislaus' first Duskys in Del Puerto Canyon Apr. 30 (JMR) and at the Mapes Ranch May 2 (SBT), and the first Grays for the Sutter Buttes Apr. 27 (PBS, BED) and Napan. of Rector Canyon May 3 (†MBG).

"late migration" of landbirds noted by many observers.

The C.V. floor in San Joaquin and Stanislaus does not normally experience a strong movement of Violet-green Swallow in spring but reported good numbers throughout March (DGY, HMR). A pair of Red-breasted Nuthatches excavating a hole in a nectarine tree in early April in n. Stockton fledged young by mid-June (B. & M. Genetti). This established only the 2nd nesting for the C.V. The first was Fresno, 1978. in Pygmy Nuthatch made natal news in the S.F. East Bay: Alameda's 2nd nesting was at Joaquin Miller Park, Oakland, Apr. 9-Mar. 31 (RJR); Contra Costa's 3rd was at Redwood Regional Park Apr. 2 (RJR, GFi, KGH). The Winter Wren at Mono L. May 26 (M. Findling) was exceptionally late.

THRUSHES TO WOOD WARBLERS

Nearly all our April Swainson's Thrush records are from the coast; one along Patterson Pass Road, Alameda, Apr. 13 (RJR, R. Cimino) was very early for the interior. Over 30 Swainson's at Oak Grove Regional Park, San Joaquin, May $\tilde{8}$ (WRH) on an overcast morning showed their regularity in the C.V. when conditions are right. A Varied Thrush at Mt. Diablo May 28 (KGH) was exceptionally late, especially inland. The Brown Thrasher s. of lower Carmel Valley May 5 (SAL, P. Williams) was only the Region's 4th in May. A singing Le Conte's Thrasher was again seen in the Kettleman Hills, Fresno, May 12 (DR, R. Canatello). Our only N. Shrike away from traditional locales was an adult w. of Delevan N.W.R., Colusa, Mar. 18 (†GFi, KGH). For the 2nd consecutive spring, a Yellowthroated Vireo was found on the c. coast: Inverness May 26-June 3 (†DDeS, RS).

A Virginia's Warbler was unexpected in the Kettleman Hills May 12 (†DR, R. Canatello); all previous spring records were either from F.I. or the e. side of the Sierra. Another on F.I. May 29-30 played a more traditional role. A & N. Parula at Sweetwater Cr., El Dorado, May 11 (SMS, VLV, WEH) was very rare for the Sierran foothills, while single males at S.F. May 21 (D. Kelly), Olema May 26-30 (DaS, m.ob.), and Stinson Gulch, Marin, May 30 (DaS) were at more expected sites. Townsend's Warbler epitomized the impressive warbler waves in the I.C.R. and C.V. in early May, illustrated by 250 on Mt. Diablo May 3 (R. Cimino), 65+ in the Sutter Buttes May 4 (PBS), and 60 along the Stanislaus R. at Ripon, San Joaquin, May 6 (DGY, WRH). Single coastal Palm Warblers at McKinleyville May 7 (RLeV) and aboard a research boat in Monterey Bay June 3 (†D. Hunt) were fewer than in past springs; one inland in the Killgore Hills May 12 (†RE) was Siskiyou's first. Rare in spring, Blackpoll Warblers were at Pt. Reyes May 16 (D. Wallace) and F.I. May 19 & 21-23.

The Black-and-white Warbler at Arcata Bottoms Mar. 2 (R. Hewitt) certainly wintered, while three other n. coastal birds Apr. 10–May 25 were spring migrants. Our usual quota of *Seiurus* was fulfilled by an Ovenbird at Palomarin May 22 and single N. Waterthrushes at the n. spit of Humboldt Bay May 22 (BA) and F.I. May 23. A Kentucky Warbler at Lee Vining May 27–28 (†M. Findling, S. Miller) was only the 2nd for the interior in spring.

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

The & Summer Tanager in Oakland Mar. 11-Apr. 5 (N. Dutcher, MFi, †HG) likely wintered. Despite W. Tanager being a common migrant throughout most of the Region, it is surprisingly rare along the S.F. East Bay coast: one at Hayward Shoreline May 4 was "one of few records" (RJR); three in an Alameda yard May 3-24 were the first since 1977 (P. Donato), and none were caught at C.C.R.S. Rosebreasted Grosbeaks at Woodside, San Mateo, Mar. 31-Apr. 5 (B. Bessey, AdW) and Redwood Valley, Mendocino, Apr. 16 (P. & S. Baldwin) were probably checking out from a local winter visit, while a male in Lee Vining May 30-31 (JMHu, M. Findling) wore the vagrant label. For the 2nd year in a row, extremely early Blue an Grosbeak was at San Luis N.W.R. Apr. 7 (JMR). A female returned to Monterey's newly discovered nesting site in the upper Salinas Valley Apr. 14 (DR, BGE). Blue Grosbeak was suspected of breeding in Shasta for the 2nd straight spring, as Redding had a pair May 15 (BY) and a persistently singing male May 16 (RE). The bird's n. breeding frontier in the C.V. has generally been Glenn and Butte. A Lazuli Bunting in Sonoma Apr. 5 (K. Nagel) was almost record early.

Mount Diablo served up single Green-tailed Towhees May 14-19 (KGH, E. Burhmann) & 26 (D. Wight); they are rarely detected in migration. The wintering Clay-colored Sparrow at Half Moon Bay lingered until Apr. 28 (G. Deghi), and one of the wintering birds at Pine Gulch Cr., Marin, remarkably, remained until May 28 (DaS). Coastally, Brewer's Sparrow made its best spring showing ever, with four at F.I. Apr. 22-June 6 and two along the n. coast May 13–19. Single birds e. of Galt Apr. 18 and at Rancho Seco Park May 12 (both TDM) were the 7th and 8th recent records for the greater Sacramento area (TDM).

Breeding bird atlassing at Sherman Island W.M.A. produced a Savannah Sparrow Apr. 27 (†TDM) that strongly resembled the resident coastal form, never recorded in Sacramento. A singing Grasshopper Sparrow just s. of Jamestown, Tuolumne, May 16 (DES) had little precedent from this area. Their status in the Sierran foothills is very poorly understood. A Swamp Sparrow s. of Tracy, San Joaquin, Apr. 20 (RJR) was probably a genuine spring migrant, very rare away from F.I. An apparent White-crowned X Whitethroated sparrow that wintered in Sacramento Dec. 28-Apr. 8 (†TDM, AM) was banded and well studied. Among winter's rare juncos, the assumed wintering "Gray-headed" at Tom's Place, Mono, was last seen Mar. 9 (CDHa); the "White-winged" Junco in San Rafael departed on a stormy Mar. 23 (CLF). A Lapland Longspur at Point St. George May 17 (JKi, ABD) became the Region's latest by a day, though there are questionable birds in June and July. Singles at Redwood Shores Apr. 5-9 (RSTh et al.) and Mendocino Headlands Apr. 29 (SCa) were additional noteworthy migrants.

The rains of "Miracle March" were felt to be responsible for a new colony of 50+ Tricolored Blackbirds in Pancho Rico Canyon, Monterey, May 18 (DR). But the overall drought conditions seemed ripe for Brown-headed Cowbirds, as 1000+ in the lowlands of Del Norte Apr. 27 (ADB) had little precedent this late into the season. A & Scott's Oriole in San Antonio Valley, Santa Clara, Apr. 20 (†H. Karr, C. Morris) was the Region's 10th. Our only extralimital Cassin's Finch was a male e. of Ft. Ross, Mendocino, Mar. 31 (DnB).

Addendum: Concerning the Spotted Owls nesting in 2ndgrowth forests mentioned in AB 45:317, it should be noted that these nestings occurred where the 2nd-growth forests were very similar to ancient forests; e.g., where there was at least a 60% canopy. **Cited Contributors:** (Subregional editors in boldface.) Many more contributors were not specifically cited; all are appreciated. Brooks B. Allen, Walt Anderson, Stephen F. Bailey, Alan D. Barron, Dennis Beall (DnB), William G. Bousman, California Birds Records Committee (C.B.R.C.), Steve Cardwell (SCa), David DeSante (DDeS), Bruce E. Deuel, Arthur L. Edwards, Ray Ekstrom, Bruce G. Elliot, Richard A. Erickson, Carter L. Faust, Leora R. Feeney, Mike Feighner (MiF), George Finger (GFi), Ron H. Gerstenberg, Steve Glover, Helen Green, Paul D. Green, Marguerite B. Gross, Keith Hansen, Charlotte D. Harbeson (CDHa), W. Edward Harper, Kevin G. Hinsta, Bob Hirt (BHi), Waldo R. Holt, Humboldt State University (H.S.U.), Joan M. Humphrey (JMHu), Lin Jensen, Robert J. Keiffer, Clay Kempf (CKf), Jeff Kingery (JKi), Karen Laslo, Stephen A. Laymon, Robin L.C. Leong, Ronald LeValley (RLeV), Donna Lion, Michael J. Mammoser, Annette Manolis, Timothy D. Manolis, Guy McCaskie (GMcC), Peter J. Metropulos, Joseph Morlan, Michael H. Morris, Dan Nelson, Barbara Peck, Peter Pyle, Harold M. Reeve, Jean M. Richmond, Robert J. Richmond, Michael F. Robbins (MFRb), Don Roberson, Ruth A. Rudesill, Peter B. Sands, Donald E. Schmoldt, Susan M. Scott, David Shuford, David Sibley (DaS), Dianne Sierra (DSi), Daniel Singer (DSg), Rich Stallcup, Donald S. Starks, John C. Sterling, Bradley M. Stovall, Emilie Strauss, David L Suddjian (DLSu), David Takeuchi (DTk), Scott B. Terrill, Ronald S. Thorn (RSTh), Robert F. Tintle, Kent Van Vuren, Bill Von der Mehden (BVdM), Adrian Wander (AdW), Jerry R. White, David G. Yee, Bob Yutzy, Carol Yutzy.-STEPHEN F. BAILEY (loons through tubenoses, raptors, larids, and alcids), Dept. of Ornithology and Mammalogy, Calif. Academy of Sciences, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA 94118; BRUCE E. DEUEL (bitterns through waterfowl, rails through shorebirds), 18730 Live Oak Rd., Red Bluff, CA 96080; DAVID G. YEE (owls through finches), 2930 Driftwood Pl., #39, Stockton, CA 95219.