

middle pacific coast region



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Unrelated to El Niño, a fuel oil spill at Humboldt Bay November 5 affected thousands of loons, grebes, scoters, and murre, with 500 dead and 485 live birds delivered to the emergency care center.

Landbird migration was generally considered to be poor, with numbers of "eastern" vagrants well down (contrasting sharply with last autumn's strong showing). Numbers of western migrants were also generally low, according to some banding stations, suggesting poor productivity. However, some of the low numbers might

be attributable to unusually fine weather in September and October (except in the northwest, where weather systems produced more typical numbers of vagrants, bucking the trend for the rest of the coast). What was "poor" for observers may have been excellent for the birds themselves; possibly many overflowed our Region without the need for weather-delayed fallouts. Also we received no Central Valley reports this season, and some rarities posted on rare bird tapes or the Internet were never forwarded to us with details. Nonetheless we were treated to some interesting vagrants, headlined by Dusky Warblers from Asia and a scattering of "Mexican" species well north.

Abbreviations: C.A.S. (California Academy of Sciences, S.F.); C.V. (Central Valley); F.I. (South-east Farallon Island); S.F. (San Francisco); S.B. (State Beach). Banded birds from Big Sur R. mouth, Monterey, should be credited to Big Sur Ornithology Lab, and those from F.I. to Point Reyes Bird Observatory.

LOONS TO FRIGATEBIRDS

A Red-throated Loon on Black Butte Res. Nov. 15 (†SAG) may have been the first for *Tehama*. An ad. Yellow-billed Loon returned Nov. 1 to the site off Pacific Grove, Monterey, where it wintered from 1993 through 1995 but was missed last year (ADeM, DLSh, RT).

A high count of 192 Pied-billed Grebes was on Salt Springs Valley Res., Calaveras, Nov. 20 (JSt). Eight Horned Grebes on L. Alpine, *Alpine*, Sept. 20 (PKB) represented the largest of several inland groups and was at an unexpected site. Red-necked Grebes were also widely reported inland.

Nine of ten offshore Laysan Albatrosses were reported from Oct. 30 on, reflecting its usual time of increase (SCR, m.ob.). A **Dark-rumped Petrel** at Cordell Bank Aug. 1 (PP, †MiF, m.ob.) was at virtually the same site as August 1996's bird.

The F.I. had an Island record 1100 Pink-footed Shearwaters Nov. 7, and although Flesh-footed Shearwaters were not unusually numerous offshore, the eight counted from F.I. was twice all previous records there (PRBO). Another was seen from Pigeon Pt., *San Mateo*, Sept. 27 (RSTh). Despite its usual association with deep, cold waters, Buller's Shearwater peaked impressively at Cordell Bank with 1154 Aug. 23 and 659 Oct. 13 (both DLSh, ADeM).

Now expected, there were 14 sightings of single Manx Shearwaters, six from F.I. Sept. 15–Oct. 9. The eight seen from boats (six documented) were from Monterey Bay up almost to F.I. Aug. 10–Oct. 2 (†R.H. Hogg, BMcK, SFB, JLD, ph. G. Lasley, SCR). This does not include unidentified "small black-and-white shearwaters," only some of which may have been Manx. In recent years there have been several white-vented Black-vented Shearwaters, and this fall singles were at Cordell Bank Aug. 23 and Monterey Bay Sept. 27 (both DLSh, ADeM, m.ob.).

Black-vented Shearwater counts of 1000 or more were reported from Aug. 21–Nov. 30, n. to *Sonoma* and from shore and boat. Peak numbers were 3500 in 4 hours at Pigeon Pt. Oct. 7 (BMcK, RSTh) and 7000 at F.I. Nov. 7, 10 times the previous Island high. Even n. in *Humboldt* and *Del Norte*, where Black-vented Shearwaters are almost



Adult Yellow-billed Loon on Monterey Bay off Pacific Grove, California, on November 9, 1997. This bird wintered at this exact site during 1993–1994 in juvenal plumage, and returned in the two subsequent winters, but was not seen there in 1996–1997.
Photograph/Robert Morford

SA Conditions linked to this year's strong El Niño affected our Region's seabirds in several respects. Many planktivores such as auklets and storm-petrels were scarce or absent from typical haunts such as Monterey Bay. Conversely, the return of sardines to the Farallon Islands attracted huge feeding aggregations of many piscivores, including record numbers of shearwaters and jaegers. From San Mateo County northward, shore observations produced unusually high counts of shearwaters and jaegers, including deep-water species such as Buller's and Pink-footed shearwaters and Long-tailed Jaeger. Following early abundances, Sooty Shearwater, Sabine's Gull, and Arctic Tern departed early for the Southern Hemisphere.

As forecast by the Summer season, many west-Mexican breeders invaded early and/or in high numbers: Black-vented Shearwater, Brown Pelican, Heermann's Gull, Elegant Tern, Xantus's Murrelet, and Craveri's Murrelet. However, Elegant Tern, abundant early, thereafter showed only normal numbers on the north coast. Three more boobies, two more frigatebirds, and a tropicbird also appeared.

Seabird foraging behaviors also differed from expected. Many Elegant Terns foraged far offshore. Hundreds of Arctic Terns rafted on the water, as is more typical of terns in tropical tuna areas. Topping these were the Pink-footed and Buller's shearwaters photographed *perching on drift Bull Kelp* near Cordell Bank, October 25, apparently trying to catch small fishes sheltering underneath (DLSh, ADeM)!

unknown, one–five were seen Sept. 14–Nov. 27 (†DFx, †GjH, †TWL et al.).

Two Wilson's Storm-Petrels at Bodega Canyon, *Sonoma*, Sept. 14–15 (†DN, DLSh) and three nearby at Cordell Bank, *Marin*, Sept. 15 (DLSh) were the only groups. Singles were in Monterey Bay Aug. 10 and Oct. 18–19 (DLSh), and another was 29 mi w.s.w. of F.I. Nov. 8 (†SCR).

Three days of strong NW winds blew 23 Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels and an Ashy Storm-Petrel into Monterey Harbor Oct. 7 (SFB), while 40 more Fork-taileds were seen in Monterey Bay that day (JBo). Thereafter smaller numbers lingered along all our coast and offshore through late October, a few later. Individual Fork-taileds



Immature Brown Booby on Monterey Bay off Pacific Grove, California, on October 5, 1997. This site was the same as the wintering place of the Yellow-billed Loon, but unlike the loon, the booby was seen only once. Photograph/Don Cunningham

were picked up inland at Carmel Valley, *Monterey*, Oct. 7 (*fide* CHO) and Hayward Shoreline, *Alameda*, Oct. 17 (RJR). A Leach's Storm-Petrel, the 4th at Hayward Shoreline, was seen Oct. 31 (RJR). Flocks of Ashy Storm-Petrels were seldom found, with 1750 offshore *Sonoma* Sept. 14 (DN) and 2100 in Monterey Bay Sept. 28 (DR, DLSh) being the only "high" counts. These were much lower than most years. Black Storm-Petrels were very scarce, with estimates of 24 and 60, respectively, in the Ashy flocks cited above. Clearly, the ocean conditions were too extreme for California Current storm-petrels. Nevertheless, one-two Least Storm-Petrels were reported in Monterey Bay Oct. 18–19 (DLSh).

An ad. **Red-billed Tropicbird** was 37.5 mi s.w. of Pt. Reyes Sept. 10 (†SCR, DGA, C. Alexander). An ad. **Masked Booby** was 21 mi w. of Pt. Pinos, *Monterey*, Aug. 29 (†RT). Two imm. **Brown Boobies** appeared concurrently: at F.I. October 3–10 (PRBO) and 0.4 mi off Pacific Grove Oct. 5 (RT, DLSh, ADeM, ph. D. Cunningham).

An ad. Pelagic Cormorant foraging in salt ponds at Alviso, *Santa Clara*, Nov. 9 (PJM, FrT) was unprecedentedly healthy for that area, suggesting that coastal fishing was bad enough to force a strong bird deep into S.F. Bay. Unidentified frigatebirds at Monterey Sept. 10 (J. Mattison, *fide* AB) and Trinidad, *Humboldt*, Sept. 19 (KI) rounded out the tropical "pelecaniformes."

HERONS TO WATERFOWL

The imm. Little Blue Heron present since July continued through Nov. 15 at Tomales Bay, *Marin* (CLu, LLu). A Black-crowned Night-Heron at Hayfork Sept. 20 was only the 2nd for *Trinity* (JEH, GHZ). Forty-five White-faced Ibises in *Mono* Sept. 14 (AME) and ten in *Plumas* Aug. 4 (HG) were high numbers at those locales, but this species was again mostly absent from the coast.

Single Ross's Geese in Bridgeport, *Mono*, Nov. 1 (SAG) and at Pacines Res., *San Benito*, Nov. 23–29 (DLSh, ADeM) represented rare county records. Several reports of female Eur. Wigeons before mid-November all lacked details and one wonders how or if immature males were conclusively eliminated. A male Greater Scaup was at Bridgeport Res., *Mono*, Nov. 1 (SAG). Oldsquaws made a poor showing for the 3rd consecutive fall, with eight noted Oct. 18–Nov. 30 coastally and in S.F. Bay.

RAPTORS

Raptor activity recorded by Golden Gate Raptor Observatory at the *Marin* headlands exceeded even last year's totals, with a new high of 29,476. Turkey Vulture, N. Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Am. Kestrel, and Peregrine Falcon all posted record counts. No doubt totals were impacted by El Niño, which resulted in only 2 fog days during August and September and early rains in November. Sharp-shinned Hawks contin-

ued to decline (new low of 2295) and barely surpassed Cooper's (2063). Northern Goshawks at San Benito Mt., *San Benito*, Oct. 28 (†DLSh, †ADeM) and Yountville, *Napa*, Nov. 8 (S. Bobzien) were exceptional.

SHOREBIRDS

Many species were reported in less than normal numbers, though region-wide species diversity was good. A lack of information from the C.V. was unfortunate and likely contributed to fewer reports of some species.

Only nine Am. Golden-Plovers were reported, all but one along the coast, between Sept. 4–23. A single Pacific Golden-Plover on F.I. October 9 was the only golden-plover there all season. Pyle's comment that "we used to get many more of both species" may be telling. Pacifics were reported in average numbers along the coast, though there was some indication that the species was absent from some known wintering sites late in the season.

A Mt. Plover at Mono L. Aug. 22 (PJM) was one of several August records there, yet the species typically doesn't arrive on wintering grounds before mid- to late October. A well-described juvenile near McKinleyville, *Humboldt*, Oct. 22–23 was a rare and much anticipated n. coast record (TWL, †DFx, ph. SMcA, m.ob.).

An **Upland Sandpiper** at Salinas, *Monterey*, Sept. 12 (†BHG) provided a county first and just the 7th reported for the Region. Of these, only three have garnered CBRC acceptance. A white-rumped Whimbrel showing characters of the race *variegatus* was at Tunitas Cr. mouth, *San Mateo*, Sept. 4–21 (†RSTh). This Eurasian race has been recorded just 4 times in California.

A juv. Bar-tailed Godwit at San Gregorio Beach, *San Mateo*, Aug. 31–Sept. 1 (ph. †DSg, †JM, PK) was quickly succeeded by another at Eel R. Wildlife Area, *Humboldt*, Sept. 4–12 (KI, ph. SMcA, m.ob.). The latter bird was joined by a juv. **Hudsonian Godwit** (ph. SMcA, †RJA, m.ob.) Sept. 9–10. Hudsonian records are outnumbered by Bar-tailed almost 2:1. A report of two more Bar-taileds from *Humboldt* lacked details.

Santa Clara's first **White-rumped Sandpiper**, at Coyote Cr. Riparian Station Sept. 3–5 (NL, †SCR, †JM, m.ob.), was the Region's first since 1986 and represented only the 4th fall record for California. Both Baird's and Pectoral sandpipers occurred in low numbers. One Sharp-tailed Sandpiper in *Humboldt* Sept. 9 (EE, BC) was early. The only other was in Alviso, *Santa Clara*, Oct.

3–18 (NL, m.ob.). Over 300 Red-necked Phalaropes in Hollister, *San Benito*, Sept. 21 (KVV) far exceeded prior counts there, but was perhaps not that surprising given the 4000 in Sunnyvale, *Santa Clara*, Sept. 14 (PJM).

LARIDS TO ALCIDS

South Polar Skuas were common but not numerous at Cordell Bank and Monterey Bay, with a high count of six on 4 trips Aug. 23–Oct. 13 (DLSh). At F.I., 386 Pomarine Jaegers Aug. 31–Nov. 30 and 96 Parasitic Jaegers Sept. 3–Nov. 15 “probably quadrupled entire previous records” (PP). Following Elegant Terns to feeding areas, 76 Parasitic Jaegers flying N past Pillar Pt., *San Mateo*, in 4 hours Aug. 11 (RSTh) were a large coastal concentration.

Only two or three Franklin’s Gulls were reported, a low total: Gazos Cr., *San Mateo*, Aug. 30 (GJS) and Lower Klamath N.W.R., *Siskiyou*, Sept. 1 and Oct. 16 (both RE). An ad. Mew Gull at Sunnyvale Aug. 3–7 (PJM) was unseasonal.

An ad. **Lesser Black-backed Gull** at Alviso, *Santa Clara*, Oct. 11–Nov. 2 (MJM, †JM, †MiF) was presumably the same bird that has wintered there the past 2 years. Another Lesser Black-backed Gull, late in pre-basic II molt, frequented L. Cunningham, San Jose, Oct. 30 into winter (†SCR, MMR, ††m.ob.). Despite its immature plumage, the identification of this gull seems as solid as that of any California adults, with elimination of little-known Asian taxa being the challenge.

Side-by-side first basic Thayer’s and Glaucous-winged gulls far inland at Iron Gate Res., *Siskiyou*, Sept. 14 were both early (RE). A first basic W. Gull inland at San Felipe L. Nov. 19 was the 4th for *San Benito* (ADeM, DLSh). A rare ad. Glaucous Gull at Alviso Nov. 19 may have been somewhat introgressed by Glaucous-winged Gull genes (†SCR).

Single Sabine’s Gulls strayed or were blown ashore Aug. 25 at Hayward Shoreline (RJR) and Oct. 7–19 at Monterey (SFB, SCR) and Alviso (SCR). More impressive were one–two adults and an immature inland at Mono L. Sept. 13 (K. Burton) and one at Utica and Sixth Ave., *Kings*, Sept. 26 (L. Cole). The offshore peak was 450 beyond Cordell Bank Aug. 26 (DN). Four Sabine’s Gulls at F.I. Nov. 10 were late considering the species’ early departure.

A count of 671 Elegant Terns at F.I. Sept. 28 was 3 times the previous Island high. The farthest offshore Elegant Terns foraging beyond F.I. Oct. 2 were 16 mi outside



One of two Bar-tailed Godwits in northern California this season was this bird in juvenal plumage at San Gregorio Beach on August 31, 1997. Photograph/Daniel S. Singer

F.I. and 44 mi from the mainland (SCR, I. Gaffney).

Black Skimmers showed a clear northward migration that led to an unprecedented wintering flock at Charleston Slough, *Santa Clara*. Counts there rapidly increased from two Aug. 29 (JMa) to 14 Sept. 14 (PJM) and reached 17 Nov. 9 (PJM, FrT). Northern *Monterey* had counts of two–four Aug. 14–Sept. 1 (RF et al.) that probably represented more than four birds heading north. Two flying north past Pt. Pinos early Nov. 28 (G. Catley) were seen later that day at Moss Landing (A. Williams). Bands read at Princeton Harbor, *San Mateo*, Sept. 11 (DWO) and at Charleston Slough Oct. 12 (MJM) revealed that both skimmers had been banded in *Orange*, s. California. Two skimmers that overshot S.F. Bay landed at Bolinas Lagoon, *Marin*, Aug. 13 (KH) and another banded bird was at Salmon Cr., *Sonoma*, Sept. 10 (D. Hofmann, †DN, BDP).

On 34 boat trips August–October, Shearwater and associates counted 17 *scrippsi* (northern) Xantus’s Murrelets, four nominate Xantus’s Murrelets, 62 Craveri’s Murrelets, and 87+ unidentified murrelets of these taxa. August in particular built these high numbers. On regular research cruises past F.I., Rottenborn tallied seven *scrippsi*, one nominate Xantus’s, two Craveri’s, and 18 unidentified. Note that both observers left the majority unidentified, and even those that were called proba-

bly included some errors, as photos have often shown.

An early Ancient Murrelet was at Patricks Point S.P., *Humboldt*, Aug. 24 (EE) and another Ancient provided Hayward Shoreline’s 3rd record Oct. 24 (RJR). Three **Parakeet Auklets**, among our most elusive pelagics, appeared in early fall. Two were at the n. end of Cordell Bank Aug. 26 (†DN) and one was 21 mi s.w. of Pt. Reyes Sept. 12 (†SCR). Were they, too, El Niño strays?

DOVES TO WOODPECKERS

Six White-winged Doves along the coast Aug. 2–Oct. 3 was about average. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo nearly banded Aug. 5 (bounced out of the net; T. Fabula, †R. Irwin et al.) and then seen the next day at Navarro R. estuary (†CEV, DT) was a first for *Mendocino*. Vagrant Chimney Swifts were at Alviso Sept. 19 (SBT, †SCR) and near Pigeon Pt. Oct. 4 (RSTh). An imm. male **Broad-billed Hummingbird** in the Eel R. delta, *Humboldt*, Sept. 14 (ph. SMCA) was a spectacular find.

Adult male Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers at Phipps Ranch, *San Mateo*, Oct. 25 (†AME; probably last winter’s bird returning); College L., *Santa Cruz*, Nov. 25 (DLSu); and on *San Benito* Mt. Oct. 28 (ADeM, DLSh) were the only ones reported this fall. A male Red-naped Sapsucker on *San Benito* Mt. Oct. 28–30 provided only a 2nd record in little-worked *San Benito*; there was also an apparent hybrid nearby (both DLSh,

†ADeM). San Benito Mt. also hosted five female Williamson's Sapsuckers Oct. 20–Nov. 8 (DLSh, ADeM, M. Miller) and a male was on Jacks Peak, *Monterey*, Nov. 28–Dec. 5 (G. Catley, †DR, m.ob.), a substantial movement away from the Sierra.

FLYCATCHERS TO JAYS

A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** banded on F.I. Sept. 10 (G. Phillips, †PP) was the 5th for our Region, all between Sept. 8–28 and all on the Farallones. Willow Flycatchers staged a strong migration Aug. 17–Oct. 7 with over 65 individuals reported, including 15 along Hayfork Cr., *Trinity*, Sept. 21 (GjH, JEH); another was late at Meder Canyon, *Santa Cruz*, Oct. 14 (SGe). Least Flycatchers were at Bodega Bay Sept. 9 (†DN), on Pt. Reyes Sept. 30 and Oct. 12 (RS, LLu, CLu), and on F.I. Oct. 20 (PP). An ad. E. Phoebe in heavy molt well-described from Half Moon Bay, *San Mateo*, Aug. 10 (†PJM) must have summered locally, the first ever to do so in California. More typical was one returning to winter at Shady Oaks Park, San Jose, Nov. 30 (GjH). Some 19 Say's Phoebes in the Hayfork and Hyampom areas of *Trinity* Sept. 21 (GjH, JEH) obliterated all prior single-day counts for n.w. California. The Region's 4th **Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher** was at Bodega Bay Sept. 27–28 (D. MacKenzie, †JM, †DN, †BDP). Eight E. Kingbirds in September seemed about average, but 37+ Tropical Kingbirds along the outer coast Sept. 18–Nov. 29 surpassed prior highs in fall 1988 (35) and 1993 (33). Some vocalized, and others were sufficiently photographed to determine Tropical (not Couch's) was the species involved, as is the presumptive identification.

Recalling last autumn's mysterious flight of Cliff Swallows, 24 were heading N over Half Moon Bay Oct. 25 (RSTh) and two were on F.I. Oct. 27–30 (PP). A Gray Jay near Wilson L., 10 mi w. of L. Almanor, was one of very few records for *Tehama* (JTr).

OLD WORLD WARBLERS TO VIREOS

Rare vagrant Brown Thrashers were along Pescadero Cr., *San Mateo*, Oct. 19 (RSTh) and at Pfeiffer-Big Sur S.P., *Monterey*, Nov. 4–6 (J&S Moremen et al.). Sage Thrashers were unusually numerous to the coast, with five reaching F.I., three in *Monterey* (including one among the tourists on Fishermans Wharf; H. Cotter, DLSh), and four scattered elsewhere (n. to *Humboldt*; †DFx). Red-throated Pipits identified by call were at Big Sur R. mouth Sept. 28



Exceptionally far north for the species was this male Broad-billed Hummingbird at Centerville Beach, Humboldt County, California, on September 14, 1997. Photograph/Sean McAllister

(†JBo) and Bodega Bay Oct. 20 (RS). An Am. Pipit showing characters of the Asian race *japonicus* was on F.I. November 12–15 (†PP).

Newly-split Plumbeous Vireos, expected as scarce coastal vagrants, were at Carmel R. mouth, *Monterey*, Sept. 28 (RC, JBo) and Oct. 12 (DGY), and along the San Lorenzo R., *Santa Cruz*, Oct. 23 (DLSu). Red-eyed Vireos had a fine showing, with 10 along the coast from *Humboldt* to *Monterey* Sept. 6–Oct. 4. More exciting were three Yellow-green Vireos: Pescadero, *San Mateo*, Sept. 25–Oct. 4 (†PJM, ph. †BMcK, †JM, m.ob.); Big Sur R. mouth, *Monterey*, Oct. 1 (†JLD, †KLG); and near Fairhaven Oct. 14–18, a 3rd *Humboldt* record (†GjH; †DFx, m.ob.).

NEW WORLD WARBLERS

While variety was good, overall numbers of "eastern warblers" were way down from usual expectations (see introduction). Species having particularly poor coastal showings were Tennessee (only 12, two from Farallones, none from *Marin* or *Monterey*); N. Parula (eight); Black-throated Green (only one reported directly to us: F.I. November 12–17); Blackburnian (three; one each in *San Mateo*, *Humboldt*, and on the Farallones); Palm (about 100, on the low side); Black-and-white (17); Am. Red-start (only 17, not counting locally bred juveniles encountered in early September in

Humboldt and *San Mateo*); and Ovenbird (only one, banded at Big Sur R. mouth Sept. 4). Also well down was Blackpoll Warbler, with only 22 along the coast (but five in *Humboldt*). The Farallones had but two, where a "good year" (e.g., 1974) will drop 65 and an "average" year (1980) will bring 25. A late Blackpoll at Carmel R. mouth Oct. 31–Nov. 4 (RE, m.ob.) fed on creek dogwood berries. Bay-breasted Warblers have been scarce here for a decade, and the only ones this fall were along San Pedro Cr., *San Mateo*, Sept. 24–25 (JM, DShw) and at Hayward Shoreline Sept. 25 (a first there; RJR).

In contrast, some species had average-to-strong showings (and there is a project somewhere in these data to hypothesize the reason this set of warblers was more widely seen): Virginia's (five s. coastal, one w. shore Mono L., *Mono*); Lucy's (six, including n. to headquarters Six Rivers N.E., *Humboldt*, Nov. 30; RS, LLu, CLu); Chestnut-sided (19, including at Greenhorn Park, Yreka, Sept. 8, a first for *Siskiyou*; †RE); Magnolia (13, including one inland at Shasta Valley, *Siskiyou*, Sept. 22; †RE); Prairie (15, including one Aug. 2 in *Santa Cruz* which likely summered; †JND); and N. Waterthrush (24, including inland birds at Napa Sept. 13 [#CAS] and Shasta Valley Sept. 22–25; †RE). Fifteen Black-throated Blue Warblers was a strong incursion, including eight in *Santa Cruz* (J. Clark, DLSu et al., but many without †), a first for Hayward Shoreline (RJR), and a male that circled a boat offshore over Cordell Bank, *Marin*, Oct. 17 (DN, BDP).

A Cape May Warbler, always scarce, was along Soquel Cr., *Santa Cruz*, Oct. 19 (DLSu). A Yellow-throated Warbler was a rare vagrant near Fairhaven, *Humboldt*, Nov. 7 (†GjH). Prothonotary Warblers put in welcome appearances at Big Sur R. mouth Oct. 18 (†RE, JBo); Presidio, S.F., Sept. 28–29 (JM, ASH et al.); Drakes Beach, Pt. Reyes, Oct. 18–19 (JM et al.); Bodega Bay Sept. 22–25 (†DN et al.); and Ferndale, *Humboldt*, Oct. 5 (SMcA, KN). Two rare Canada Warblers reached *Monterey*: Big Sur R. mouth Sept. 5–8 (RT, †RE, †Cho et al.) and Pt. Pinos Oct. 16 (SRv, †DR). Another was at Sycamore Grove Oct. 23 (DLSu), a 5th for *Santa Cruz*. A Yellow-breasted Chat banded Oct. 26 at Big Sur R. mouth (CHO) was quite late.

TANAGERS TO FINCHES

Continuing the poor showing of "eastern" vagrants were but two Summer Tanagers (one each *Marin* and *Mono*), only eight



The bird of the fall for many was Dusky Warbler. This individual skulked around a pond at Santa Cruz, California, from October 14 to 22, 1997, to the delight of many observers. Photograph/Luke Cole

SA When California's first Dusky Warbler appeared on S.E. Farallon I. back in September 1980, it was the first *Phylloscopus* south of Alaska and deserved an "S.A." (*Am. Birds* 35: 223). This fall our Region had two, and possibly four, of this secretive species (and there was another in s. California). Surely the most widely seen **Dusky Warbler** in the New World was at Antonelli Pond, Santa Cruz, Oct. 14–22 (†SGe, †RF; phs. m.ob.). Incredibly, Gerow then found what was possibly a 2nd bird at Bethany Curve Parkway, Santa Cruz, Oct. 24 (it seemed slightly different to the observer, but might have been the Antonelli bird moving a half-mile distance; †SGe). Alas, reports of additional birds in *San Joaquin* and *Marin* were not forwarded to us. Hopefully, details will eventually reach the California Bird Records Committee.

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks along the coast, and three Indigo Buntings (way down from eight last year, which was considered "below par"). A male Indigo was apparently paired with a female Lazuli, who produced three young, Aug. 1–10 along Alameda Cr., *Alameda* (RJR). An unexpected Blue Grosbeak Oct. 3 near Manila, *Humboldt*, treated many observers (KI, †DFx et al.). Views of

an ad. male Painted Bunting along Pescadero Cr., *San Mateo*, Nov. 22 (†AME) were insufficient to determine if the plumage might suggest captivity (escaped males often show orange or pinkish in red underparts, presumably due to inadequate carotenes in cagebird food), but one in post-supplemental plumage on F.I. October 21 (J. King, *fide* PP) was surely a wild vagrant. Two Dickcissels visited the same feeder at Pt. Sur, *Monterey*, Sept. 27–Oct. 1, one of which appeared a short distance away at Big Sur R. mouth Oct. 4 (JBo).

Rare coastal Am. Tree Sparrows were at Carmel R. mouth Oct. 28 (RFT et al.), on F.I. October 24 (PP), and banded at Lanphere Dunes, *Humboldt*, Oct. 18 (KN). Clay-colored and Brewer's sparrows had fairly poor coastal showings, with 36 and six, respectively (a third of each were in *Monterey*). Vagrant coastal Black-throated Sparrows were at Pt. Reyes Sept. 20 (RS, LLu, CLu) and San Gregorio, *San Mateo*, Sept. 21 (RSTh). Among 10 widespread Lark Buntings were three in *Monterey* (BHG, ph. DR, JBo et al.). Among the usual Swamp Sparrows was a 3rd for *Trinity* Nov. 28 (TE) and a 5th for *Lake* Nov. 1 (JRW). A scarce coastal Harris's Sparrow was at Table Rock, *Humboldt*, Nov. 14 (KI). Lapland Longspurs appeared widely, including 21 on F.I. (PP) and one calling as it flew over the *Fresno/Kings* line at Lemoore Naval Air Station Oct. 22 (SCR). More are found as open coastal fields get better coverage. Two Chestnut-collared Longspurs were flying over the Arcata Bottoms, where scarce, Oct. 28 (DFx).

Two **Snow Buntings** were exceptionally far south, and neither was preceded by birds farther north: Asilomar S.B., *Monterey*, Nov. 25–26 (†S&J Harrison, †DR, SFB et al.; 2nd county record) and Venice Beach, Half Moon Bay, Nov. 28 (†D. Powell), a 3rd for *San Mateo*. A rare Rusty Blackbird was along Sir Francis Drake Blvd., *Marin*, Oct. 19 (RS). A Com. Grackle picked up alive Nov. 15 at Rohnert Park, *Sonoma* (A. Lopez, *fide* BDP; *Sonoma State Univ.) and a male in the Smith R. bottoms, *Del Norte*, Nov. 15–17 (ADB; †GjH et al.) were only the 8th & 9th for our Region. Six Orchard and two Baltimore orioles furnished a meager coastal presence; the latter including a male in residential Santa Clara (†SCR). Finally, in stark contrast to last winter/fall, there were no finches of interest to report.

ADDENDA

Two notable seabirds were picked up in late November 1996 and died on the day of dis-

covery, but the specimens were only recently reported. A **Mottled Petrel** was found in Seaside, *Monterey*, Nov. 24, 1996 (*fide* L. Osnes-Erie, *P.G.M.N.H.). This is the 4th Mottled Petrel found wrecked in our Region. A Black-legged Kittiwake was found at Oak Run, *Shasta*, Nov. 20, 1996 (*fide* P. R. Sweet, *A.M.N.H.). Only about three kittiwakes had been seen this far inland in our Region.

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